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The handle <http://hdl.handle.net/1887/20916> holds various files of this Leiden University dissertation.

**Author:** Bobuafor, Mercy

**Title:** A grammar of Tafi

**Issue Date:** 2013-05-30

# **A Grammar of Tafi**

Published by  
LOT  
Trans 10  
3512 JK Utrecht  
The Netherlands

phone: +31 30 253 6006

e-mail: [lot@uu.nl](mailto:lot@uu.nl)  
<http://www.lotschool.nl>

Cover illustration: A family of mona monkeys in the Tafi Atome Monkey  
Sanctuary, VR, Ghana–Picture taken by author

ISBN: 978-94-6093-113-0  
NUR 616

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# **A Grammar of Tafi**

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van

de graad van Doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,

op gezag van Rector Magnificus prof.mr. C.J.J.M. Stolker,

volgens besluit van het College voor Promoties

te verdedigen op donderdag 30 mei 2013

klokke 15:00 uur

door

Mercy Bobuafor

geboren te Accra, Ghana.

in 1970

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Research of this doctoral dissertation was made possible by financial support from the Endangered Languages Programme of the Council of Humanities (GW) and WOTRO of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) as part of the project *The Southern Ghana-Togo Mountain Groups: A description of their languages and cultural heritage* (grant nr. 256-00-500).

## Acknowledgements

During the writing of this thesis, I benefitted immensely from the help of a large number of people, who in various ways supported, encouraged and guided me and I am deeply indebted to them.

First and foremost, I would like to thank Felix Ameka for believing in me and accepting to supervise me as a Ph.D student. Not only did I benefit immensely from his insightful comments on earlier drafts of the manuscript but he also made himself available to assist in whatever way he could with whatever problems there were. Whenever I approached him for advice, be it linguistic or non-linguistic and whether it was the right time or not, he always gave a listening ear and was ready to give the needed advice. His constant encouragements were an enormous support.

I owe my deep gratitude to Prof. Maarten Mous who has helped me at various moments with his advice, guidance and support.

I am also grateful to Prof. Kweku Osam, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana and his family as well as Wing Commander Emmanuel Kwesi Apietu (Wingco) for their immense help and hospitality by offering me a place in their homes anytime I was in Ghana on fieldtrip. Prof. Kweku Osam made his office in the Linguistics Department, University of Ghana available to me to use as and when I needed an office space to work. Wingco was always ready and willing to offer help at anytime despite all the odds. Thank you all for the moral support at all times.

Many thanks go to the chiefs, elders and people of the Tafi traditional area. My principal language consultants, Beatrice Amoadza (Madam) and Nelson Agbley and their families, I say thank you so much for all the help you gave me and making me feel like I was part of your families in Tafi and Accra respectively. I specially want to thank Kumah Avorklai for offering me a place to lay my head during the first few days when I got to Tafi for my first fieldwork, when getting a place was almost impossible. I again want to thank Beatrice Amoadza for agreeing to let me stay in her house after I left Kumah's house until I moved into my rented apartment. Thank you, Madam, also for the sumptuous meals. Furthermore, my heartfelt appreciations go to Emmanuel Amoadza, Johnson Kasu, Manfred Ocras, Juliana Ocras, Michael Agbesi, Wilhemina Sonkro, David Akrong, Ablorde Kwaku, Oscar Akrong, Patricia Amoadza, Charles Akrong, Diana Adzadu, Simon Amoadza, Roland Brese, Patrice Agbatey, Daniel Dzamesi, Frank (Papa), Mawutor (Francisca Agbeti) and all who contributed in various ways to make my stay in Tafi a success. Also to my landlady Cornelia Agbatey for making her house available to me anytime I am in Tafi. Thank you, Kofi Kumah, for assisting me during my stays in Tafi in many ways and offering to come and help switch my generator on and off every evening. I am also grateful to Togbe Afari VIII of Tafi-

Agome for making time to tell me the migration history of the people of Tafi. It is hard to express my gratitude adequately to the Tafi speakers who contributed the data on which this grammar is based, especially Beatrice Amoadza, Nelson Agbley, Emmamuel Amoadza, Euphelia Avorklai, Victoria Amoadza, Ablorde Kwaku, Florence Amoadza, Johnson Kasu, Manfred Ocrah, Juliana Ocrah, Michael Agbesi, Wilhemina Sonkro and Leonard Dzandu.

Moreover, I thank Thomas Payne so much for his kind offer to read one of my chapters and for his very helpful comments.

I was fortunate to benefit from the immense help and company of friends and colleagues at the LUCL (Leiden University Centre for Linguistics) and TCA (African Languages and Cultures Department): Alice Middag, Angela Kluge, Anne-Christine Hellenthal, Azeb Amha, Christian Rapold, Constance Kutsch-Lojenga, Daniela Merolla, Gea Hakker, Heleen Smits, Jean Chavula, Jenneke van der Wal, Juliette Huber, Khalid Mourigh, Kofi Dorvlo, Kristina Riedel, Maarten Kossmann, Maggy Konter-Katani, Mulugeta Seyoum, Ongaye Oda, Oumou Diaby-Kassamba, Ramada Elghamis, Rebecca Voll, Sander Steeman, Sandra Barassa, Stanly Oomen, Thilo Schadeberg and Victoria Nyst. Thank you Victoria, for agreeing to be my paranimf and for providing the Dutch summary.

Being a Ph.D student in a foreign country and in an institution such as the LUCL can, at times, be a mind blowing experience and it was the support, kindness, friendship and encouragement of people like Azeb Amha, Caroline Angenent, Anneke Breedveld, Benedicta Baffour Obeng (B.B), Maggy Konter-Katani and their families, Frits Erades, Marlous Tamminga, Sylvia Amevor, Kofi Dorvlo and Teshome, which helped me carry on and made the bad times bearable and which made me feel at home.

Thanks to Francis Ndi and Ongaye Oda for the bicycle riding lessons they gave me. Though it was pretty tough their patience and desire to see me acquire the skills were rewarding.

Furthermore, I wish to express my gratitude to my cousins Wonder Atakpa and her husband in Amsterdam, Matilda Brenke and Gifty Soltani-Ramati and their families in Hamburg. Thank you all for the invitations and I really enjoyed all my stays with you all. To Nada Gbegble in Antwerp, I say thank you very much for the countless number of times you hosted me any time I was in Antwerp.

I further want to thank James Essegbey and his family for hosting me in their home in Gainesville, Florida, for one whole month during my first visit to the U.S. I really appreciate it. James, thanks also for the company any time we happened to be in the field during the same period. I cherished your visits to Tafi to give me the moral support and the attempts you made to fix some of the problems I was facing

there. I also enjoyed those times we had to work together covering those ceremonies in Nyagbo.

My heartfelt appreciations go to Mercy Akrofi-Ansah and Samuel Atintono who hosted me when I was in Manchester and also to my cousins Mawuli Dikah, Rosina Lebene Dorfie, Godfred Arthur, Gladys Agyeiwaa, Simon Logah and his family, all of whom are in Atlantic City, New Jersey, Akpene Ehla and her family in Texas, Vivian Doh in Connecticut and Jemima Dompseh in New York. Thanks for your support and encouragement during all the six months I spent in the U.S.A. A special thank you to Cecilia Nyarkoa for all the assistance you offered me. I, once again, thank Prof. Osam for introducing Jemima Dompseh to me. Thanks to Margaret Puplampu for her friendship and assistance. I very much cherish all the long distance calls from Canada trying to find out how things were going on with me and my work as well as with my family.

Special thanks to Sulley Amadu (Deputy Chairman, Finance and Administration), Muhammed Adoquaye (Director, Human Resource and General Services), Tony Amedzakey (Director, I.T. Department) and my colleagues Johnson Akafia, Faith Amedzakey, and Philip Adzomadi, all of the Electoral Commission of Ghana, for their prayers and support.

Agatha Augustt of the Linguistics Department, University of Ghana, I am grateful for all the calls and e-mails trying to find out how things were going on, for the chilli sauces and for everything you did for me. I also thank Vera Arhin of the Language Centre, University of Ghana, for all her encouragements. Thank you, Pastor Ben Turkson and your family for all your prayers and support.

I owe many thanks to my family for their endless patience, support and understanding. Thanks to my parents who made me understand that the greatest inheritance a parent can bequeath to a child is education. Through thick and thin, you did your very best to see me and my siblings through our education. Even up to this level, you continue to support me and take over all my responsibilities in my absence. **Efo kple Afeno**, what else can I pray for? May the Good Lord bless you and may He continue to grant you good health and long life to enjoy the fruits of your labour. QT, thank God for your life and the joy you bring into my life. Thank you for accepting to carry on with your life and making the best out of it even in my absence. There were countless times I missed your calling me “**eési**” or “**nánási**”. I am most grateful for who you are. Hope you will forgive me for not being there for you all the time, for all those mornings that you woke up and I was already gone and for all those several months that I was away. Enam, it is real fun being with you. Once again, I extend my heartfelt thanks to you all for all the sacrifices you have made.

Finally, my gratitude goes to God Almighty for bringing me this far. I thank Him for the strength to carry on even when the going seemed tough because His



steadfast love never ceases and His mercies never come to an end. They are new every morning and great is His faithfulness.

Once again, of all the ways to thank everybody, there seems no better way than simply THANK YOU ALL VERY MUCH. Your kindness, support and encouragement are very much appreciated. God richly bless you all.

**Ŵñś bhitiibui pópópó.**

Thank you very much.

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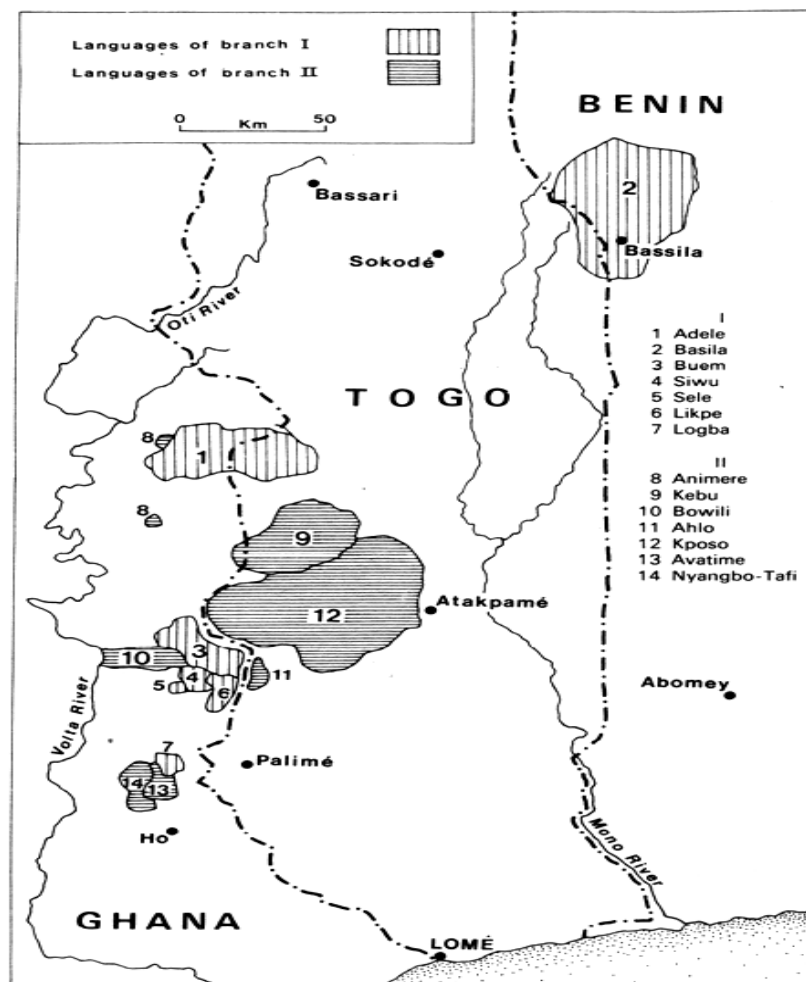
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## Abbreviations

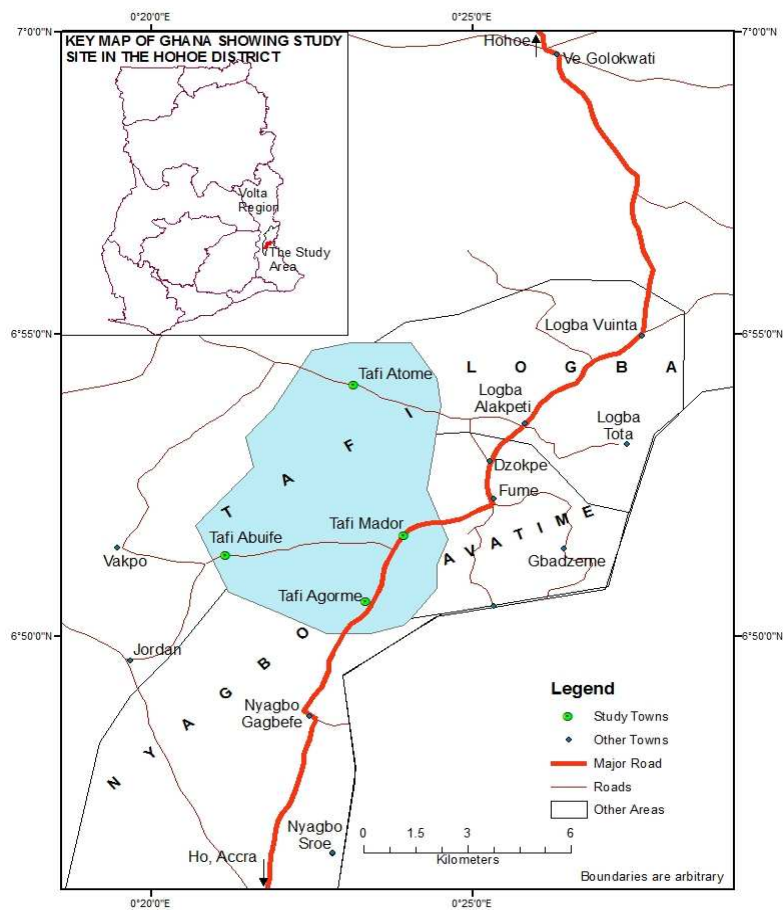
A	Transitive subject	NP	Noun phrase
ADD	Addressive particle	O	Object
ALL	Allative	Obj	Object
AM	Agreement Marker	PERF	Perfective
[ + ATR]	Advanced tongue root	PERS	Persistent
[-ATR]	Unadvanced tongue root	POSSD	Possessed
C	Consonant	PostPp	Postpositional phrase
CERT	Certainty	PRIV	Privative
CFM	Clause final marker	PROHIB	Prohibitive
CM	Class marker	PROX	Proximal
CM.PL	Class marker (plural)	PRSPROG	Present progressive
COM	Comitative	PST	Past
COMP	Complementiser	PSTPROG	Past progressive
COMPL	Completive	PURP	Purpose
COND	Conditional	QP	Question particle
CONJ	Conjunction	RECIP	Reciprocal
COP	Copula	REFL	Reflexive
D	Dative object	REL	Relative marker
DAT	Dative	REP	Repetitive marker
DEF	Definiteness marker	S	Intransitive subject
DEM	Demonstrative	SFX	Suffix
DEP	Dependent	SM	Subject marker
DESID	Desiderative	TAM	Tense-Aspect-Mood
DISJ	Disjunctive	TOP	Topic marker
DIST	Distal	UFP	Utterance final particle
DISTR	Distributive	V	Verb
EXC	Excessive preverb marker	V	Vowel
EXP	Experiential aspect marker	V <sub>1</sub>	Initial verb in SVC
FS	Frog Story	V <sub>2</sub>	Second verb in SVC
FUT	Future	VENT	Ventive
IDEO	Ideophone	VP	Verb Phrase
IND	Independent	VP <sub>1</sub>	Initial Verb Phrase
INDEF	Indefinite	VP <sub>2</sub>	Second Verb Phrase
INT	Intensifier	1SG	First person singular
INTJ	Interjection	2SG	Second person singular
LOC	Locative	3SG	Third person singular
MOD	Modal	1PL	First person plural
NEG	Negative	2PL	Second person plural
NEGCL	Negative cleft	3PL	Third person plural
N	Noun		

Map 1: Map of the Ghana Togo Mountain Languages



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

Map 2: Tafi and Surrounding Towns





## 1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a descriptive grammar of Tafi, a hitherto undescribed Ghana-Togo-Mountain (hereafter GTM) language. It is an outcome of a programme of Tafi language and culture documentation. The fieldwork for this thesis was carried out in Tafi during two field trips over a period of fifteen months. This chapter presents an introduction to the Tafi people, their language, geographical location and sociolinguistic situation, the genetic classification of the language and the linguistic typological profile of the language. It also describes the fieldwork setting and methodology and the kinds of data upon which the grammar is based.

### 1.1 The language and its speakers

Tafi is the name used by other people to refer to the place, language and the people. This name which the Tafis claim was given to them by the neighbouring Ewe groups means ‘thieves of (human) heads’. They refer to themselves as **Baagbo** (sg. **Agbo**) and their language as **Tigbo**. The people live in four communities, namely, Agome, Abui<sup>1</sup>, Mado and Atome located in the Hohoe District of the Volta Region in the south-eastern part of Ghana. The names of these communities are sometimes used in combination with the area name Tafi, hence the names Tafi Agome, Tafi Abui, Tafi Mado and Tafi Atome in Map 2. The 2010 Population and Housing Census figures give the population of Tafi as 16,700 distributed as follows: Mado: 3,500; Atome: 6,000; Abui<sup>1</sup>: 4,200; and Agome: 3,000 (see Map 2 for their geographical location). It must, however, be noted that these figures represent the number of residents during the census period. It does not represent only the speakers of Tafi. Ethnologue (2009) gives 4,400 as the number of speakers of Tafi based on 2003 estimates. This figure possibly excludes Tafi speakers in the diaspora.

#### 1.1.1 Migration history

According to oral tradition, the Tafi people migrated from Assini which some claim is in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. Apparently, they were living together with other ethnic groups but as a result of conflicts, they lost two units of their ethnic group who left earlier, one after the other. The remaining group also migrated from Assini crossing the Kwawu mountains in present day Eastern Region of Ghana. After they left Assini, they regarded that place as a place of bitter memories and a forbidden place so anytime people disagree with what

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<sup>1</sup> **Abui<sup>1</sup>** is the Ewe appellation for this community. The **Tigbo** name is Ofu. **Abui<sup>1</sup>** means Abui’s home, **afé** ‘home’ has been borrowed from Ewe and attached to the name Abui. It appears that the first person who settled in that village is called Abui.



someone is saying or if they want to express disbelief at what the person is saying it is said that '**asírí y'áásí**'<sup>2</sup> it means that 's/he is telling lies'. Then they came to a place called Asrabi Gabi. Funke (1909) and Heine (1968) cited in Dakubu (2009) mention "Srabi Gabi"<sup>3</sup>. Again due to conflicts, from Asrabi Gabi they moved on and they met the Volta River. The Tafis refer to the Volta River as **Kile** meaning 'air/wind' because their leader and king would not let his subjects live near the river since they do not know how to swim. As such, he did not want them to get drowned and get lost in thin air. He, therefore, led them to cross the river by rafts. After that, they continued their journey until they got to the Dayĩ River. Here unfortunately, there were no materials readily available for building rafts. The people became distressed. However the next morning, they saw a large and a long log across the river which they used to cross it. According to one account, before the last person could cross the river, there was a loud shout of distress and they realised that what they thought was a log was indeed a very big **kítsɔpĩ** 'python' and it had swallowed the last person. Another account also has it that all the people crossed the river successfully. It was later revealed that the python was a messenger of the god(dess) **Abõ Dayĩ** which helped them to cross the Dayĩ river. The crossing of the river is now commemorated in the festival called **Dayĩ tsótsókĩ** 'crossing of the Dayĩ River'. All this while, the Tafis were led by Tɔgbe Afari. In the course of their migration, the people of Tafi came across some stones (ore) which they smelted and used in making farm implements and weapons. They claim some of their people remained in present day Santrokofi and they form the Bátisɔná clan. It is reported that a language known as Setafi, whose speakers seem to have been integrated into the Santrokofi people following the destruction of their town has totally vanished (see Dakubu 2009). It is possible that the language of the Bátisɔná is what has been claimed to be Setafi even though the autonym of the language has never been Tafi. The **se-** prefix is the reflex of the language prefix in some GTM languages such as Selee, the language of the Santrokofi people or Sekpele, the language of the Likpe people. So, it is possible that the language those Tafi people who remained in present day Santrokofi spoke was referred to as Setafi in the area.

The Tafis claim that they finally settled at Anatu. The name Anatu, according to them, is derived from the statement **ítíáná 'útú ní 'úwū** (**ítíbaná butú ní buwū**) 'I can no more climb the mountain.' This statement was made by Tɔgbe Afari, their leader who was then old and weak. So he decided to live at the foot of the mountain. It was from here that the people started spreading out and Madɔ, Atome,

<sup>2</sup> It is not clear how **assini** became [**asírí**]. I was informed that the people of Nyagbo still use [**asini**] whereas the Avatimes use [**asíá**].

<sup>3</sup> Some hints that this place is west of the Volta are offered by Dakubu (2009) who reports that Gabi is another name for Nkami, a Guang language closely related to Nkonya, spoken west of the Volta and a related name Asabi is said to be the name for the old Kwawu capital.

and Abuiŋe were established in that order. Those who remained in Anatu are the people of Agɔme today. After some time, the people of Agɔme moved from Anatu and got settled at their present location, Bediaxwé, where the present Agɔme is. The Tafi people were then many and they were in nine divisions. However, due to fighting of wars, five divisions perished leaving only four.

As part of the oral history, the Tafis claim that they were living at their present location before the Avatimes and Ewes arrived. The Tafis stated that they fought the Ewes because they did not want them to take their land from them. So at night, their warriors who were also hunters will go and clandestinely kill the Ewes by beheading them and since the Ewes did not know those who had been committing those heinous acts they asked “*mewoe ke le tã fi tsõ le amewó nu lɛ?*” ‘who were the people secretly beheading people and taking the heads away?’ Thus, anytime people were beheaded and their heads taken away the Ewes said “The ‘*tãfilawo*’ ‘head thieves’ have struck again’. It was later when the Ewes sent their people to scout around that they identified the Tafis as the people who had been committing the crime. This is how the Ewes gave them the ethnonym Tafi. According to the Tafis, some Ewe groups like the Vakpos decided to make peace with them. Later on, the Tafi spies discovered another group of people who were climbing the hills and spreading over the valleys. With time they got to know that these people are speaking a form of their language. They started referring to them as ‘*bééhū*’ meaning ‘they are speaking [a similar language]’. These are the people referred to as the Avatimes by the Ewes. The *Bééhū*, the Tafis are speculating, could be one of the groups that left them earlier on before the migration of the whole ethnic group to their present location. After the arrival of the *Bééhū*, the Batrugbu (Nyagbos) also came to join the Baazē (the people of Emli) who were already at their present location.

According to the people of Tafi, the Baagbo and Baazē had been living in their present settlement long before the arrival of the Ewes from Notsie. It is important to note that when a chief is being installed in Emli, it is the Agɔme chief that administers the oath of office. Some cultural practices observed by both the Baagbo and Baazē, such as marriage and funeral rites, are the same. The Tafis observe Monday as a sacred day or Sabbath day because it is believed that it was on a Monday that the mysterious crossing of the Dayĩ River took place. In Tafi, it is a taboo for a person to die on Monday. If it happens so, “it is believed the person may have wronged the gods of the land. There should be some form of purification with a ram before the soil is dug on Monday for burial.”

### 1.1.2 Geographical location

Tafi is situated within the Hohoe district in the Volta Region of South-eastern Ghana. South of the Tafi area live the Nyagbo people. To the east of Tafi are the Avatime and Logba people (refer to Map 2). As stated earlier, the people of Tafi

live in four (4) communities, namely, Agome, Mado, Abuiŋe and Atome. Agome and Mado are along the Accra-Hohoe trunk road while Abuiŋe and Atome are in the interior, several kilometres from the main road.

The people of Tafi are peasant farmers and the crops they cultivate include maize, yams, groundnuts, and vegetables. Cotton used to be one of the crops cultivated. In those days, the cotton was spinned and woven into cloths and used to make clothings such as hunter's attire, shorts and towels. There are two farms in Abuiŋe where pineapple and mango are grown for commercial purposes and which provide employment opportunities for the youth in Tafi and surrounding towns. Also Abuiŋe is a kente<sup>4</sup>-weaving community where kente is woven in commercial quantities.

Atome has a monkey sanctuary with Mona monkeys in a tropical forest surrounding the community (refer to picture on cover page). According to oral tradition, the Tafi people did not migrate together with the monkeys and neither were they living together with the monkeys before migrating to that place. The claim is that during the migration, the Kágbóém̄ clan carried along a fetish of their forefathers. When they got settled in Atome, at a point in time, for a period, the fetish possessed someone and made the people look for a cool place in the bush for it. They found a swampy place and within a short period, all of a sudden, monkeys came to occupy the trees in the swampy place. Nobody knew the place where they came from. Another account claims that even though they did not migrate with the monkeys they were living with them at Assini and that when they arrived at their present location then the monkeys appeared. The Tafi people believe that the monkeys are messengers of the gods. When the monkeys came into contact with people they did not run away. This was surprising. So the chief who was ruling at that time made a law that since the animals do not run away whenever they see human beings, anytime the monkeys enter anybody's dwelling place or they are on trees nobody should shoot them. The chief also gave orders that during the dry season or the harmattan season before fire will be set to bushes, fire belts should be made around that swampy area such that (after a long time,) it became a very thick forest around the town. The monkey sanctuary has become a tourist attraction site where tourists from all over the world come to visit. In the evenings, there is entertainment which includes drumming, dancing or story telling around a bonfire. Revenue from tourism has brought electricity to the village, as well as improvements to the school and a community clinic.

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<sup>4</sup> Kente is a locally woven cloth mostly used on ceremonial occasions. It is made from thin strips woven on narrow looms. The strips are interlaced to form a fabric. The fabric is used to create different kinds of garments.

### 1.1.3 Some religious and cultural practices

Christianity is practised in Tafi and churches that are in Tafi include Evangelical Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Global Evangelical and Pentecost. There are traditional religion practitioners also. The Tafi people have two fetishes which they worship. One is Ogolokwe which is their god of war. It protects and guides them during wars. It is based in Atome and it is the god that controls the monkeys. The other one is Abodayĩ which is the god(dess) of the river Dayĩ. It was this god(dess), they believe, that helped them to cross river Dayĩ. As a result, the **dayĩ tsótsóki** ‘crossing of the Dayĩ River’ festival was instituted to commemorate the crossing of the river. This festival used to be celebrated yearly, however, now it is celebrated once in so many years. The most recent was in February 2012. During the celebration of the festival, a goat is sacrificed to Abõ Dayĩ. There are also certain cultural practices and beliefs in which the people participate. Some of the cultural practices and customary rites include birth, death, marriage, and puberty rites. Libation is poured during most of these ceremonies.

Puberty rites consist of a number of events. The rites are referred to as either **ehuí kpíkpi** or **kpotí kókó** meaning ‘putting on beads’ or ‘giving of cloth’ respectively. This ceremony is performed to initiate young girls into womanhood. The ritual is usually performed for the girls by elderly women in the community, specifically, the girls’ paternal aunts. During the ceremony, the girls are taught the culture and tradition of their people and the art of playing the expected roles of both wife and mother when they get married. It is expected that all girls participating in the puberty rites are virgins. The ceremony begins on Saturday and ends on Monday.<sup>5</sup> On Saturday evening, the ritual begins with a prayer. Formerly, libation is poured but these days, prayers are said by an elderly woman from the clan. Then **kídó tsítsá** ‘tying of beads’ (lit.: tying thing’) begins in the house of the girl’s paternal uncle. All the beads are tied around various parts of her body including her neck, wrist, and ankles by her paternal aunt. In the evening, after being bedecked with beads, the girl is outdoored and her friends and family will accompany her to go from house to house to invite friends and relatives to accompany her to church on Sunday for thanksgiving. The ritual has thus become syncretised with aspects of traditional lore and Christian practice. After the church service, there is drumming and dancing during which time food and drinks are served to members of the community at large. The ceremony itself is performed on Monday. The climax of the ceremony is on Monday when very early in the morning, a specific cloth, **kíwalo (k)ipoti** ‘Monday cloth’, is wrapped around the girl’s waist by her paternal aunt among other things done on this day. It is only then that the girls can be said to have passed out. She is again accompanied by friends and family to go round the community till the afternoon when the ceremony comes to an end.

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<sup>5</sup> According to another account, the ceremony starts on Friday evening.

## 1.2 Language

Tafi has, hitherto, been one of the least described Ghana-Togo-Mountain (GTM) languages (Ring 1995) spoken in Ghana. The GTM languages are spoken in Ghana, Togo and Benin. Earlier works on these languages referred to them, in German, as “Togorestsprachen” (Struck 1912) or, in English, as “Togo Remnant Languages”. They have also been referred to as “Central-Togo languages” (Kropp Dakubu & Ford 1988).

### 1.2.1 Genetic classification

The genetic affiliation of these languages within Niger-Congo has been much contested. Westermann and Bryan (1952:96) considered them as constituting an isolate group and observed that they have some similarity to the Kwa languages in terms of vocabulary while their noun class system is reminiscent of Bantu languages. Greenberg (1966) puts them in Kwa. Heine (1968a) surveyed the languages, reconstructed a Proto-GTM and sub-classified the group into two: NA and KA based on the root for ‘meat’. These two groups, now called NA-Togo and KA-Togo, are presumed to branch out from Proto-Kwa (Williamson and Blench 2000; Blench 2009). Tafi belongs to the KA-Togo group. Other members of the group are Animere, Kebu, Tuwuli, Igo, Ikposo, Nyagbo (Tutrugbu), and Avatime (Siya). The closely related Nyagbo has together with Tafi, sometimes, been thought of as constituting one group and they show a certain degree of mutual intelligibility. Unlike the other geographically contiguous southern GTM languages – Avatime, Nyagbo and Tafi - Logba stands out as belonging to the NA-Togo group, it is thus genetically not so closely related to them.

### 1.2.2 Previous studies on the language

Prior to this work, Tafi has been one of the least studied languages, not only among the GTM languages but also in Ghana (Ring 2000). The only available studies exclusively on the language are Funke (1910) which is a short grammatical sketch in German and Casali (2005) which is a concise description of Tafi phonology based on elicitation from one speaker of the 1700 word SIL Comparative African Wordlist (Snider and Roberts 2004). Tafi also receives some attention in Heine (1968a), Ford (1973a) and Dakubu & Ford (1988) where it is treated as a sister dialect to Nyagbo. One of the consequences is that Tafi has been presumed to have a seven vowel system like Nyagbo. The current study reveals that Tafi has a nine vowel system. Ford (1973b) also collected some comparative wordlists, e.g. of verbs which he made available to us. Currently, Nyagbo (Tutrugbu) is being documented by Essegbey and some of the works done on it have been referred to in this book, e.g. Essegbey 2009, 2010a, b, Essegbey et al. 2011, 2012.

### 1.2.3 Sociolinguistic situation

The Tafi language is endangered and not documented up till now. Speakers are highly multilingual and every Tafi speaker is bilingual in at least Tafi and Ewe (the dominant regional language). Ewe is the language of communication with their immediate neighbours and in commercial transactions in the market. Some speakers also have Akan and English in their repertoire. Tafi is also threatened by the official language policy in the sense that it is not recognised for official use in the classroom. Tafi is also not used in mass media, e.g. radio or television. UNESCO red book rates it as vulnerable. There are five primary schools, one of which is private, and four Junior High Schools in Tafi and there are also kindergartens in all the Tafi communities. English is the official language and Ewe is taught as a school subject and is the medium of instruction for the first three years of primary school and in the kindergartens. In addition, though Tafi is spoken at home, most children speak Ewe in school and this is because they have to interact with other children who are not Tafi speakers. Having come in contact with these languages has had an effect on the language itself and linguistic practices. Speakers tend to code-mix a lot such that Tafi has a lot of borrowings from Ewe, Akan, English and Ga (see § 2.6 and also Heine (1968b) and Bobuafor (2007)). Moreover, the chief of Tafi, Tɔgbe Afari who led his subjects to their present settlement was a noble leader and he won several appellations to his honour. These appellations are in Akan and they stemmed from his bravery and courage which made him lead them to fight many wars. Some of the appellations include Afari “**Okukurubo**” where he was being likened to a beetle which could lift a stone and yet fly with it easily. Another appellation is “**adikese firi suro beboɔ akyikyideɛ akyi eyɛ ɔkoto anka apae**” meaning ‘a heavy object fell from above and hit the back of a tortoise, if it were a crab it would have got broken into pieces’. Furthermore, some dirges used at funerals are in Akan or Ewe.

Speakers of Tafi also speak and understand Nyagbo since both languages are mutually intelligible. Also some speakers understand and communicate in Avatime as a result of slight similarities between Tafi and Avatime; schooling in the Avatime area where schools were located in the early days; and inter-marriages. Nyagbo, Tafi and Avatime have sometimes been considered a language cluster (Dakubu 2009). Even though Logba is a geographical neighbour and a commercial centre, speakers of Tafi do not speak the Logba language. Knowledge of other GTM languages is virtually non-existent.

With the establishment of the monkey sanctuary in Atome, there is a possibility of many people becoming more competent in English because of the tourists visiting the monkey sanctuary. However, the establishment of the monkey sanctuary has also led to the revival of cultural practices such as story telling by the fireside in the evenings.

Dialect differentiation in Tafi seems to be minimal. One difference I have noticed so far is in the use of the postposition **kumi** ‘in(side)’. In Agome and Abuifé, the **ku**-prefix is totally elided while in Mado and Atome, it is only the initial consonant **k** that is elided. In this study, where the example text is taken from a recording from Agome or Abuifé, and the difference is obvious it is pointed out. Also comparing my data with that of a Swadesh GTM Wordlist, collected by Casali (n.d.) in Ring et. al. (n.d.), based on the speech of one speaker from Agome, one notices a correspondence between **u/u** and **i/i** vowels which may be attributed to dialect differences. Thus in my data gathered mainly from Mado the words for ‘child’, ‘sea’ and ‘rain’ are **anuvɔ**, **afu** and **subha** respectively whereas they are **anuvɔ**, **axwi** and **sibva**<sup>6</sup> in Casali’s data. More systematic investigation is needed to verify the extent of the variation.

### 1.3 Brief outline of the language

Tafi has five syllable types. These are V/N which is a vowel or nasal; VC, made up of a vowel and a consonant; CV, made up of a consonant and a vowel; CVV which consists of a consonant and a long vowel; CCV which is made up of two consonants and a vowel, the second consonant may be a liquid or a glide. Tafi has consonant phonemes made at these places of articulation: bilabial, labio-dental, alveolar, post-alveolar, palatal, velar and glottal. The consonants include **/bh/** and **/f/**. **/bh/** is an aspirated voiced labial stop. It has no voiceless counterpart in the language and occurs in some words including **kábhā** ‘top’ and **bhulí** ‘small’. **/f/** is a voiceless labial fricative which has no voiced counterpart in the language. It appears that this sound was introduced into the language as a result of borrowing from Ewe. It only occurs in two words which are **afu** ‘sea’ and **Abuifé** ‘the name of one of the Tafi communities’. Tafi has double articulated labial velar stops **/kp/** and **/gb/** as well as alveolar and palatal affricates **/ts/**, **/dz/** and **/tʃ/**, **/dʒ/**<sup>7</sup> respectively. Tafi has a nine vowel system. All these vowels except **/o/** have nasalised counterparts. The vowels participate in ATR vowel harmony. Thus, they are divided into two sets, [+ATR] - **/i, e, o, u/** and [-ATR] - **/ɪ, ɛ, ɔ, ʊ/** as shown in Table 2.2 below. The **/a/** vowel occurs with vowels from both sets. ATR vowel harmony in Tafi is stem-controlled, in the sense that the vowel of prefixes harmonises with the vowel of the first syllable of the stem. Thus, depending on the [ATR] value of the initial vowel in the root, the prefix may have varied forms. In connected speech, Tafi displays both level and contour tones. It has three level tonemes: High, Mid and Low. In addition to the three levels, there are two gliding tones: Falling and Rising which are phonetically realised on the peak of one

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<sup>6</sup> The sound I represent as **[bh]** is represented as **[bv]** by Casali.

<sup>7</sup> The orthographic representation of the IPA symbols **/tʃ/** and **/dʒ/** are ‘tsy’ and ‘dzy’ respectively.

syllable.<sup>8</sup> There are three falling tones: High-Mid, High-Low and Mid-Low and two rising tones: Low-Mid and Low-High. The contour tones can be lexical or they can be generated in context. Tones are used for lexical contrast and to express grammatical functions. The notational conventions used for marking tones in this book are as follows: a High tone is marked (´); a Low tone is unmarked or marked (˘) on nasals; a Mid tone is marked (ˊ); the rising tones are marked (ˆ) and (ˋ) representing Low-High and Low-Mid respectively and the falling tones are marked (ˊ), (ˋ), (ˊ) representing High-Mid, High-Low and Mid-Low tones respectively.

Tafi is an active noun class language and nouns are classified into ten classes comprising five singular classes, one non-count class and four plural classes. Tafi is a language whose basic constituent order is SV/AVO/AVDO. Subjects (S/A) are cross-referenced on the verb with markers that agree with the class of the subject NP except for the two **bu-** classes. The classes with prefixes containing the vowel /i/, namely **i-**, **ki-** and **ti-** classes, are either cross-referenced with the corresponding subject markers or zero. Some modifiers show agreement with the head noun while others, like the adjective and the ordinal, maintain no concord relationship with the head noun. As regards the cardinal numerals, it is one to nine that show agreement with the head noun. Some modifiers can be nominalised through the addition of nominal prefixes and the pronominal forms of the various noun classes. In double-object (AVDO) constructions, the Goal or Dative precedes the Theme. In locative constructions, the Theme occurs before the Locative. Moreover, adjuncts may occur after the core arguments in the clause.

Tafi has a marked kinship possessive grammar. Singular kinship possession is marked with the 3SG independent pronoun **yí** referring to the possessor placed between the possessor and the kinship term. Plural kinship possession is expressed by juxtaposition (see Chapter 4 on Noun phrases).

Tafi has two bona fide prepositions and others that have verbal sources, some of which are undergoing grammaticalisation and one that has completely grammaticalised. Spatial regions and parts are specified by about a dozen or so postpositions in the language. These postpositions are spatial nominals or body-part nouns which are at different stages in the process of grammaticalisation.

There are about eight question words which are used to ask content questions. Two of which are interrogative modifiers (**dúwē** ‘which’ and **-shī** ‘how many/much’) so they occur after the head noun. Two of the question words (**-shī** ‘how many/much’ and **-nī** ‘who’) show concord with the head noun. When some of the question

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<sup>8</sup> The tone system of Tafi still presents several analytic challenges which require further investigation. For example, the utterance final pitch or intonation in vocatives needs further investigation.



words are in focus, they are followed by the relative marker **gi** ‘REL’ or the connector **pi** ‘CONN’.

Tafi is a verb serialising language. In serial verb constructions, two or more verbs occur without any overt marker of coordination or subordination. The verbs share at least one argument and same tense and mood which is marked only once on the first verb. The verbs cannot be independently negated. The verbs can be independently focused or questioned. Tense, aspect and mood are mainly marked by preverbs in Tafi and there are about a dozen preverbal markers. Depending on the number of arguments they take, verbs in Tafi are classified as one-place, two-place and three-place predicates and they occur in various argument structure constructions such as one-place, two-place and three-place constructions respectively. Tafi has very few non-derived adjectives. However, derived adjectives are formed through reduplication of property verbs. Relativisation, and the use of nominal property words as complements of predicators, medio-passive constructions as well as the use of other qualifiers are other strategies for expressing adjectival meanings.

Like many other languages in the area, Tafi has ideophonic words – marked words that depict sensory images (Dingemanse 2011). Syntactically, they function as nominal modifiers or verbal modifiers.

Topic is marked by a form **ni** which is also the form of the definiteness marker. In topic constructions, a noun phrase or a postpositional phrase may be fronted to the left periphery as an external argument of the clause, that is, to sentence initial position. An out-of-focus part of focus utterances, especially those where the highlighted elements are marked by intensifiers like **ko** ‘just’, are marked by another marker **ani** ‘TOP’. This form is the same as the proximal demonstrative. Relative clauses are optionally marked off by the topic marker **ni** signalling that they convey background information with respect to the head nominal. Thus, the head noun of the relative clause occurs on the left periphery of the clause and is followed by the relative clause introduced by the marker **gi**. Focus is not marked by a particle but a subject argument in focus is referred to by an independent pronoun. If the argument focused is not the subject then there is a gap left in its position after it has been fronted (Schachter 1973). Verbs are focused by nominalising the verb with the class prefix **bu/bu-** of the **bu<sup>1</sup>**- class and then placing them before the subject NP of the clause. If the subject NP is a pronoun then it is the dependent form of the pronoun that is used.

#### 1.4 Data collection

The data for this study was collected during two field trips to Tafi amounting to fifteen months in total between 2007 and 2009. I was based in Tafi Mado while visiting the other communities regularly. I tried to observe speakers’ behaviour and

also learn to speak the language to help enhance my understanding of it. At the beginning of the fieldwork, I elicited data using the Ibadan 400 wordlist as well as the SIL comparative African wordlist which comprises about 1700 words (Snider and Roberts 2004). The data collected using these questionnaires allowed for a preliminary analysis of the phonology and the identification of loan words as well as the nominal class prefixes.

Direct lexical elicitation has an important role in language documentation, however, it also has its limitations (see e.g. Hellwig 2011). Thus, I also recorded spontaneous spoken texts of different genres in the field including folktales, conversations, proverbs, riddles, some procedural discourses etc. in the language. These were supplemented by a Frog Story (FS) narrative description elicited using the wordless picture book *Frog, where are you?* (Mayer 1969) and various standardised picture and video stimuli designed and developed by the Language and Cognition Group at the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics for the investigation of topological relations and the semantics of positional verbs and for semantics of categories, e.g. ‘Cut and Break’ (Bohnemeyer et al. 2001), ‘Put and Take’ (Bowerman et al. 2004) etc. (see [fieldmanuals.mpi.nl](http://fieldmanuals.mpi.nl)). Data elicited with these picture and video stimuli are marked as TRPS (Topological Relations Picture Series) (Bowerman & Pederson (1993); PSPV (Picture Series for Positional Verbs) (Ameke et al. 1999) and C&B (‘Cut and Break’) (Bohnemeyer et al. 2001) etc. Supplementary information was obtained from direct elicitation based on questionnaires for linguistic and cultural fieldwork derived from manuals (e.g. Bouquiaux and Thomas 1992, Comrie and Smith 1977, McKinney 2000, Payne 1997, Shopen 2007 volumes, and other questionnaires available at <http://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/resources.php>). Informal or structured interviews were also conducted. The data were recorded using a solid state digital audio (Roland Edirol R-09) and video transferred to computer platform for transcription, translation, annotation and interlinearisation. Some phrases, clauses and even full sentences in this grammar have been lifted from the narrative texts as well as from the elicitations.

My principal consultants and assistants in the field were Beatrice Amoadza, Nelson Agbley and Emmanuel Amoadza, all from Tafi Madɔ. Beatrice Amoadza, a retired basic school teacher and Emmanuel Amoadza, an active community member and a farmer, are resident in Tafi Madɔ while Nelson Agbley, a retired secondary school French teacher, is resident in Accra and periodically comes to Tafi Madɔ. Other consultants are Manfred Ocrāh, Juliana Ocrāh, Johnson Kasu, Wilhemina Sonkro, Michael Agbesi, Tɔgbe Afari VIII and Patricia Amoadza. Apart from my consultants, I also recorded information from children, youth and older people, both men and women. These are people of different statuses, chiefs and elders of the community as well as ordinary members. All these people have different educational backgrounds and different levels of exposure to English and Ewe. Some speak Akan and few, Avatime.

I elicited information from some children using stimuli and I also recorded a frog story narrative discourse from a youth after which these recordings were played to some adults for comments and the comments I received included “if you want to be working with children this is what you get” and “don’t work with the children, they are destroying the language”. In addition, there is variation among adult speakers. Some speakers tend to simplify the phonological and grammatical processes. This is reflected in the recordings I made of different speakers. It is evident that the noun class system is in the process of decaying in the sense that the agreement system is being simplified, thus for example, it is the subject-verb agreement markers of the **a’/ba(a)-** classes that are used to cross-reference all subject NPs on the verb, irrespective of their classes. Similarly, the agreement on modifiers within the noun phrase are also being generalised to the **a’/ba(a)** classes, for instance the agreement form of the indefiniteness marker modifying a noun of the **o-** class such as **ɔ-kɔ** ‘place’ should be **tolí**, however, some speakers use **telí**, the agreement form of the **a’/ba(a)-** classes. I also realised that the phonological process of **/i-** insertion after the deletion of the initial **k** of the **ka/ke-** prefix (see § 2.5.3) is gradually getting lost from the speech of children so you hear **kplǎ́ábhā** instead of **kplǎ́iábhā** (**kplǎ́ kábhā** (table top)) ‘on a table’. Moreover, some youth could not enumerate the numerals without mixing them with some Ewe numerals. As regards the adult speakers, most of them condemn the speech of those who make extensive use of Ewe vocabulary however unconsciously some of them indulge in the same practice.

## 1.5 Methodology and theoretical framework

The methodology adopted in this grammar is a field work based approach to the study of linguistic structures and their use in socio-cultural contexts. I try to describe the Tafi language in its own terms or ‘from the inside’, rather than imposing on the language concepts whose primary motivation comes from other languages.

The grammatical description is cast in basic linguistic theory which is a cumulative framework in which most descriptive grammars are written and which is informed by structural, functional, formal and typological insights (Dixon 1997, 2010, Dryer 2006). Emphasis will be placed on rigorous descriptive analysis rather than formal implementation. Therefore, every aspect of the language will be analysed and described in as much detail as possible based on how it is used in context. Explanations for phenomena will be sought in contact history and/or cultural practices and the structures cast in cross-linguistic typological perspective. There is a lot of variation in the speech of the speakers due in part to change in progress in the Tafi language. I have endeavoured to give a flavour of this variation by refraining from making too many categorical statements about Tafi grammatical processes. Thus in this grammar, I will attempt to make use of expressions and abbreviations which in my opinion will not be beyond the understanding of

linguists as well as the interested reader to explain each grammatical phenomenon that will be examined or talked about.

## 1.6 Outline of the grammar and presentation of data

This book is organised as follows: Chapter 2 examines the phonological system of the language. The discussions in Chapters 3 and 4 are devoted to nominals. In Chapter 3, I describe the noun class system of the language whereas in Chapter 4, I look at the various types of noun phrases and the structure of the noun phrase. Chapter 5 focuses on adpositions and adpositional phrases while Chapter 6 examines clause structure and clause types. In Chapter 7, I give a description of verbs and verbal modifiers. Sentence types are presented in Chapter 8 and various clause combinations are described in Chapter 9. In Chapter 10, I discuss Serial Verb Constructions. Routine expressions and formulae used in social interactions are presented in Chapter 11. Three types of words: ideophones, interjections and particles, are discussed in Chapter 12. The final chapter contains a transcription and translation of selected texts in Tafi. Table 1.1 lists the various texts in my corpus showing the ones included or not included in Chapter 13. I have indicated the texts from which various examples are taken against them in the grammar whether they are included in Chapter 13 or not.

Table 1.1: Texts in the corpus

Genre	Included in Chapter 13	Not included in Chapter13
Folk tales	Kásālā ‘tortoise’	Gbaxálī ‘striped mouse’
		Sáhwi ‘spider’
Proverbs	Proverbs	
Riddles	Riddles	
Songs		Songs
Procedural discourse	Palm oil preparation ‘Budzo tuto’	Local soap making
	Preparation of red rice balls ‘kumukó gige’	Yam cultivation
Historical narrative		(History of) the monkeys (Butsé)
		History of kente weaving
		History of the migration of the Tafi.
Descriptions of customs		Saxwí ‘funeral rites for parent-in-law’
		Puberty rites
		Marriage custom
		Butsiugū ‘funeral rites’
Stimulated narrative		Frog Story (FS)

In the grammar, the texts and their translations are presented in four lines as illustrated below:

1. Kásālā adawūsō'iesí.  
**ká-sālā      a-da-wūsō      ke.sí**  
 CM-tortoise SM-ITIVE-lie down  
 'Tortoise went and lay down.' (Kásālā)

The Tafi data is presented on the first line showing word divisions. The apostrophe sign (') is used to indicate deletions. The data is shown in bold with hyphens (-) representing morpheme breaks in the second line. The morphs in the first line are fully spelt out as morphemes in the second line such that initial consonants and syllables deleted are presented in their recoverable forms. The interlinear English gloss and a free English translation given in single quotes are presented in the third and fourth lines respectively. The source of the example if available in the texts is given in brackets. In the above example, the sentence comes from the folk tale of **Kasālā** 'tortoise', hence the name in brackets after the free translation.

Class-markers that are fossilised with grammaticalised nominals are separated from the nominal stems by a full stop indicating the form has a single meaning and to distinguish it from the nominals, e.g., **ke.sí** 'under, beneath' and **ke-sí** 'bottom, down part'.

The object forms of pronouns are the same as the independent forms of the pronouns. In the glosses on the third line, however, the object forms are not glossed as IND partly because the initial consonants on the object forms tend to be elided.

The following IPA representations /b<sup>h</sup>/, /ɸ/, /ɟ/, /ɟ̃/, /tɕ/, /tɕw/, /ɕ̃/, /h/, /j/ and /ɲ/ are written as 'bh', 'f', 'sh', 'zh', 'tsy', 'tsyw', 'dzy', 'h', 'y' and 'ny' respectively. Vowels are written using their IPA symbols. Orthographic vowel sequences where the first vowel is a high front vowel **i** or **ɪ** or a back vowel **o**, **ɔ**, **u**, or **ʊ** are phonologically a sequence of a palatal glide and a labial velar glide respectively. They are written as vowel sequences following the Ewe orthographic convention. Low tones are not marked all other tones are marked with accents.

## 2 PHONOLOGY

This chapter covers the phonology of Tafi. Section 2.1 looks at the syllable structures of the language. Sections 2.2 and 2.3 present the inventory of the consonant and vowel phonemes of Tafi. The tone system of the language and phonological processes are discussed in sections 2.4 and 2.5 respectively. Loanwords are examined in section 2.6 followed by Tafi orthography in section 2.7.

### 2.1 Syllable structure

In Tafi, the syllable is a tone bearing unit and it may be made up of an onset and a peak; a peak; or a peak and a coda. The onset includes any consonant that precedes the peak. The peak which always carries a tone consists of a vowel or a syllabic nasal and it is the most sonorous element in the syllable and it is also the one required component of the syllable. Thus, the smallest syllabic unit in the language consists of a vowel or a syllabic nasal. The coda is made up of a consonant. There is a strong preference for open syllables except for two grammatical contexts – pronouns and numerals – where some closed syllables occur as in (1b). The syllable comprising a peak and a coda occurs as a result of (historical) loss of the second vowel in a (C)VCV sequence. The possible syllable types in the language are as follows<sup>9</sup>:

- 1a. V/N
- 1b. VC
- 1c. CV
- 1d. CVV
- 1e. CCV i.e., CL/GV

#### 2.1.1 The V/N syllable

The V syllable can occur in any position in a word. Syllables consisting of only a vowel element are most often pronouns or prefixes of the stem of a word. The examples in (2) are prefixes of nouns. In the examples given in this section, the syllable boundaries are marked by a dot (.).

- |        |                |               |     |                |              |
|--------|----------------|---------------|-----|----------------|--------------|
| 2. /i/ | <b>i.si.sí</b> | ‘pestle (pl)’ | /u/ | <b>u.go.bó</b> | ‘navel (pl)’ |
|        | <b>i.vu.tó</b> | ‘roof (pl)’   |     | <b>u.mu.nó</b> | ‘cloud (pl)’ |
- 

<sup>9</sup> Casali (2005) identifies a CVN syllable type but I treat such structures as consisting of two syllables where the N is syllabic in all the cases. The N always bears a tone. Sometimes, the tone is different from the surrounding ones.

	<b>i.dzyi</b>	‘heart (pl)’		<b>i.kpá</b>	‘life’
	<b>i.ku.ku</b>	‘elbow (pl)’		<b>i.tsrí</b>	‘leg (pl)’
<b>/e/</b>	<b>e.ku.sí</b>	‘chief’	<b>/a/</b>	<b>á.nyí</b>	‘man’
	<b>e.le.té</b>	‘owner’		<b>a.yí.sí</b>	‘sand’
	<b>e.tsí</b>	‘bee’		<b>a.ga</b>	‘animal’
	<b>é.kū</b>	‘yam (pl)’		<b>a.nú.vɔ̃</b>	‘child’

The 1SG, 2SG and 3SG subject pronouns are also examples of a V syllable, all the plural subject pronouns have an initial consonant. The following are examples:

- 3.
- |              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| <b>í.tú</b>  | ‘I pound’     |
| <b>í.kɔ̃</b> | ‘I give’      |
| <b>ó.bú</b>  | ‘you remove’  |
| <b>ó.vɪ</b>  | ‘you go’      |
| <b>é.yū</b>  | ‘s/he weaves’ |
| <b>á.dɔ̃</b> | ‘s/he says’   |

Nasals can also form syllables by themselves. In Tafi, all the nasals except **/ny/** occur as syllabic consonants. The N syllables occur in word-medial or word-final positions in nouns. Whenever they occur in word-medial position, they are homorganic with the following consonant which belongs to the next syllable. The examples in (4) illustrate this point.

- 4.
- |            |                     |                      |                |
|------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| <b>/m/</b> | <b>ka.m.pé</b>      | ‘a pair of scissors’ | (CV.N.CV)      |
|            | <b>ká-m.pi.e.sí</b> | ‘armpit’             | (CV.N.CV.V.CV) |
| <b>/n/</b> | <b>bú.ŵũ.ñ.dɔ̃</b>  | ‘shoulder’           | (CV.CV.N.CV)   |
| <b>/ŋ/</b> | <b>tú.ŋ.gbá</b>     | ‘a type of antelope’ | (CV.N.CV)      |
|            | <b>kó.ŋ</b>         | ‘very much’          | (CV.N)         |

Moreover, there are instances where we have **/n/** and **/m/** occurring as syllabic consonants in word-final position. This is due to the deletion of the vowel that occurs after them during speech. For instance, when the definiteness article **ní** ‘the’ occurs after a noun, most often, speakers tend to delete its final vowel (see also section 2.5.2). This also happens with the first person object pronoun **mí** ‘me’. When these final vowels are deleted, their tones remain and they are shifted leftwards onto the nasals. The examples in (5) are illustrative of this point.

- 5a.
- |                 |             |           |
|-----------------|-------------|-----------|
| <b>á.nyí.ń</b>  | ‘the man’   | (V.CV.N)  |
| <b>a.dzi.ń</b>  | ‘the woman’ | (V.CV.N)  |
| <b>o.sí.ń</b>   | ‘the tree’  | (V.CV.N)  |
| <b>ki.kū.ń</b>  | ‘the yam’   | (CV.CV.N) |
| <b>ku.kpá.ń</b> | ‘the fish’  | (CV.CV.N) |

- 5b. **sí.nɔ.ɾɪ** ‘greet me’ (CV.CV.N)  
**kɔ.ɾɪ** ‘give me’ (CV.N)  
**plí.nɔ.ɾɪ** ‘help me’ (CV.CV.N)

### 2.1.2 The VC syllable

The VC syllable in Tafi comprises a vowel (peak) and a consonant (coda) which occurs as a result of the deletion of the vowel of the second syllable in numerals, i.e., the multiples of ten except for the word for thirty **áfaatá** and fifty **áfeití**, or when the final vowel of **balí** ‘3PL.IND’ occurs as the final word in a clause. As object pronoun, its initial consonant is also elided yielding **al** a VC syllable. Thus, /f/ and /l/ are the only consonants that occur as the coda. The following are examples:

- 6a. **áf.ta.lĩ** ‘forty’  
**áf.te.gé.né** ‘seventy’  
**áf.ta.sũ** ‘eighty’  
**áf.te.zhi.tá** ‘ninety’
- 6b. Ésí átɔ́ ’édɔ́ kɔ́ ’ál’.  
**Ésí á-tɔ́ kɪ-dɔ́ kɔ́ balí**  
 Ésí SM-cook CM-thing DAT 3PL  
 ‘Esi cooked for them.’

### 2.1.3 The CV syllable

CV syllables are the most common. Most of the monosyllabic words have CV syllables and there are no restrictions on the occurrence of such a syllable in polysyllabic words. Examples are:

7. **wɔ** ‘play’ (CV)  
**tsú** ‘dig’ (CV)  
**dí** ‘look’ (CV)  
**ɔ.kɔ́** ‘place’ (V.CV)  
**bé.kē** ‘finish’ (CV.CV)  
**a.nó.vɔ́** ‘child’ (V.CV.CV)  
**bu.tu.tú** ‘saliva’ (CV.CV.CV)  
**bé.gu.gu.dɔ** ‘mad people’ (CV.CV.CV.CV)

### 2.1.4 The CVV syllable

The CVV syllable is made up of a consonant and a long vowel. This syllable type is found only in loanwords or in ideophones and they can occur in word-initial,



word-medial and word final positions. Examples of words with the CVV syllable type include:

8.	<b>ge.lee</b>	‘much’	(CV.CVV)
	<b>pé.tée</b>	‘all’	(CV.CVV)
	<b>nyáá</b>	‘each, every, any’	(CVV)
	<b>faá.nɔ̃</b>	‘too much’	(CVV.CV)
	<b>ri.dji.dji</b>	‘continuously’	(CV.CVV.CV)

### 2.1.5 The CCV syllable

The CCV syllable comprises a consonant cluster and a peak. The consonant cluster consists of two consonants, the second of which is either a liquid [l] or [r] yielding a CLV subtype as shown in (9); or a glide /w/ or /y/ yielding a CGV subtype as illustrated in (10). This syllable type can occur in any position in a stem. It is significant to note that most often, when a consonant is followed by a [+high] front vowel in a vowel sequence, this vowel is analysed as /y/ and thus it forms a cluster with the consonant onset. Likewise when a consonant is followed by any of the back vowels in a vowel sequence, it is analysed as /w/ which occurs as the second consonant in a consonant cluster.

9.	<b>gbi.gblä</b>		‘big, huge’	(CV.CLV)
	<b>ke.kplĩ.ṁ</b>		‘palm (of hand)’	(CV.CLV.N)
	<b>kla</b>		‘count, read’	(CLV)
	<b>trö</b>		‘spin (thread)’	(CLV)
10.	<b>buia</b>	/bwia/	‘pay’	(CGV.V)
	<b>tiatá<sup>10</sup></b>	/tya.tá/	‘three’	(CGV.CV)
	<b>ɔbhia</b>	/ɔ.bhya/	‘friend’	(V.CGV)
	<b>kámpiesí</b>	/ká.ṁ.pye.sí/	‘armpit’	(CV.N.CGV.CV)

In the phonological system, [l] and [r] are in complementary distribution when they occur as the second C in a CCV syllable. [l] occurs after consonants that are labial, labio-dental, velar and labial velar. These can be characterized as [-coronal]. [r] occurs after alveolar and palatal consonants. One exception to this is the word **frɪdɪ** ‘white’. Some loanwords and ideophones also deviate from this general pattern. Thus, we find [r] after labials and velars as in **prũdũ** ‘fly’ and **ɔbrahĩní<sup>11</sup>** ‘sugarcane’. The allophony and distribution of [l] and [r] in Tafi can also be found in neighbouring Ewe and Logba (Dorvlo 2008).

<sup>10</sup> This is the form the numeral ‘two’ takes when it modifies a noun from the **ba(a)**- class.

<sup>11</sup> Some speakers also call the sugarcane **ɔbrazhĩní**.

## 2.2 Consonants

The consonant sounds in Tafi are shown in Table 2.1 below. The consonants in the chart are described in terms of:

- Place of articulation
- Manner of articulation and
- Phonation

The eight (8) different places of articulation, which are arranged from left to right are bilabial, labio-dental, alveolar, post-alveolar, palatal, velar, labio-velar and glottal. The manners of articulation are arranged vertically on the chart. With regard to manner of articulation, consonants may be described as stops, fricatives, affricates, nasals, liquids and glides. Pertaining to phonation which is the voice feature, the sounds which occur on the left are voiceless and their voiced counterparts are on the right. On the second line in the rows, we have either aspirated, labialised or nasalised sounds. Phonetically /y/ represents the palatal approximant [j].

Table 2.1 The Tafi Consonant Chart

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Alveolar	Post-alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Labio-velar	Glottal
Stops	p    b b <sup>h</sup>		t    d	ɖ		k    g	kp   gb	ʔ
Fricatives	ɸ	f    v fw	s    z		ʃ    ʒ	x    xw		h    fi hw
Affricates			ts   dz		tʃ   dʒ tʃw			
Nasals	m		n		ɲ	ŋ ŋw		
Liquids			l, r					
Glides					y		w w̃	

The representation of some of the sounds in the table deserves to be commented on:

In the table, the representation of the sounds is in IPA symbols. The following IPA representations /b<sup>h</sup>/, /ɸ/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /tʃ/, /tʃw/, /dʒ/, /fi/, and /ɲ/ are orthographically represented as ‘bh’, ‘f’, ‘sh’, ‘zh’, ‘tsy’, ‘tsyw’, ‘dzy’, ‘h’, and ‘ny’ respectively and these are the symbols used throughout this work.

As will become evident in the following discussion, some of the sounds represented in the table are allophones of one another. [ɾ] is in complementary distribution with [l] in the second position in the syllable. [h] and [ɦ] are in free variation. Similarly, [ɲw] and [ɰ̃] are in free variation occurring only before nasalised sounds and are both in complementary distribution with [w]. [ɸ] is a loan phoneme.

/f/ is a voiceless labial fricative which has no voiced counterpart. This sound got introduced into the language as a result of borrowing from Ewe. /f/ occurs intervocalically. In my database, /f/ only occurs in two words as shown in example (11a).

- 11a. /f/      **afu**                    ‘sea’  
                  **Abuiɸe**<sup>12</sup>           ‘the name of one of the Tafi communities’

[ɦ] is a voiced glottal fricative. It seems that it is in free variation with [h] even in the speech of the same speaker. In this work, the two sounds are not orthographically distinguished and are represented as ‘h’. Examples of words in which [ɦ] occurs include:

- 11b. /ɦ/      [o-ɦwi]            ~ [o-hui]            ‘rope’  
                  [ka-ɦukpɔ]        ~ [ka-hukpɔ]       ‘hand’  
                  [kíɰ̃ɰ̃ɦũ]            ~ [kíɰ̃ɰ̃hũ]           ‘eye’  
                  [ɦu]                 ~ [hu]                ‘strike, hit’

A number of words in my database contain the sound [ɰ̃]. The sound [ɰ̃] is a nasalised labial velar glide which occurs immediately before nasalised vowels. In this respect, [ɰ̃] and [w] are in complementary distribution. Depending on the speaker, this sound oscillates between [ɰ̃] and the labialised velar nasal [ɲw].<sup>13</sup> Examples of words with [ɰ̃] include:

12.      [ɰ̃]      **ɰ̃-ɰ̃mĩ**                ‘thread’  
                  **buɰ̃á**                ‘in vain’  
                  **ɰ̃ĩ**                    ‘appear’  
                  **ki-ɰ̃ɰ̃**                ‘a strip (of cloth)’

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<sup>12</sup> See footnote 1 under Chapter 1.

<sup>13</sup> Words that are pronounced by speakers with either of these consonants are represented as such in this thesis.

### 2.2.1 Stops

All the stops in Tafi occur in pairs differentiated by voice. /bh/ and /d/ however do not have voiceless counterparts.

The voiceless bilabial stop /p/ mainly occurs in word-initial position in verbs, conjunctions and ideophones. It also occurs in word-medial position. With regard to nouns, it occurs in stem-initial position and intervocalically. Moreover, it occurs in word-initial position of some few nouns which are loanwords. This is exemplified below:

13.	/p/	<b>prūdū</b>	‘fly (v)’	<b>bu-pá</b>	‘house’
		<b>pó</b>	‘wait (for)’	<b>a-putó</b>	‘mud’
		<b>pī</b>	‘(be) good’	<b>o-púpú</b>	‘door’
		<b>pó</b>	‘but’	<b>ke-plukpá</b>	‘book’
		<b>prītī</b>	‘plate’ (loanword)	<b>kí-pō</b>	‘wound, sore’
		<b>pūi</b>	[pwī] ‘roast’		

The voiced bilabial stop /b/ can occur in word initial position and intervocalically. In nouns, it occurs as the initial consonant of some noun class prefixes. Below are some examples:

14.	/b/	<b>bá</b>	‘come’	<b>ba-pá</b>	‘houses’
		<b>bísi</b>	‘ask’	<b>bu-lí</b>	‘oil palm’
		<b>bāit</b>	‘spill’	<b>be-blidzyā</b>	‘snakes’
		<b>bú</b>	‘remove’	<b>o-brazhíní</b>	‘sugar-cane’
		<b>bubo</b>	‘bend down’	<b>ki-bui</b> [kibwi]	‘case, matter’
		<b>glebe</b>	‘roll’		

In any consonant clusters in which /p/ or /b/ occurs as the first consonant, the following consonant is [l] or [r] or [w] as illustrated by some of the examples in (13) and (14) above.

/bʰ/ is an aspirated voiced bilabial stop. This sound has no voiceless counterpart in the language. The following are examples with this sound:

15.	/bʰ/	<b>kábhā</b>	‘top, on’	<b>o-bhoshi</b>	‘sheep’
		<b>bhutī</b>	‘do, make’	<b>ɪ-bha</b>	‘two’
		<b>sóbha</b>	‘rain’	<b>bu-bhi</b>	‘hunger’
		<b>bhulí</b>	‘small’	<b>bhui</b>	‘cut’

/t/ and /d/ are voiceless and voiced alveolar stops respectively. They occur in word initial position or intervocalically. The following examples illustrate them:

16.	/t/	<b>tá</b>	‘throw’	<b>bu-tó</b>	‘ear, potash’
		<b>tú</b>	‘pound’	<b>ti-sí</b>	‘earth (soil)’

	<b>trõ</b>	‘spin, twist’	<b>é-fleté</b>	‘leopard’
	<b>tí-kā</b>	‘hair, fur’	<b>bu-tú</b>	‘mountain’
17. /d/	<b>dumí</b>	‘like’	<b>á-dá</b>	‘sister’
	<b>dí</b>	‘look’	<b>ki-dri</b>	‘wall’
	<b>danī</b>	‘open’	<b>o-di</b>	‘line’
	<b>dí</b>	‘sell’	<b>ke-de</b>	‘back’

/d/ is a voiced post-alveolar retroflex stop which occurs in stem initial position or intervocalically. This is exemplified in (18) below:

18. /d/	<b>ka-dɔ</b>	‘speech’	<b>prūdū</b>	‘fly’
	<b>o-dútsū</b>	‘stew’	<b>dɔ</b>	‘say’
	<b>ɔ-dá</b>	‘iron, metal’	<b>frɔ́ɔ</b>	‘white’

/k/ and /g/ are velar stops. Both sounds have a wide distribution in the sense that they can occur stem-initially, and also before /l/. /k/ also occurs at the beginning of certain singular noun prefixes in the language. There is an instance where /k/ occurs before [r] in the word /akro/ ‘boat’ which is borrowed from Ewe even though the Baagbo also use the expression **keniabha opúpú** ‘boat, canoe’ which is a direct translation of the Ewe expression ‘**tɔdzivú**’ which literally means ‘river-top vehicle’. The following examples illustrate the consonants /k/ and /g/ in different positions in a word:

19. /k/	<b>kí-pɔ́tí</b>	‘cloth’	<b>ke-sisí</b>	‘mortar’
	<b>ka-wí</b>	‘axe’	<b>kí-níki</b>	‘tongue’
	<b>ɔ-kó</b>	‘place’	<b>kí-kū</b>	‘yam’
20. /g/	<b>bú-glebē</b>	‘wing’	<b>géné</b>	‘seven’
	<b>gɔganí</b>	‘strong, hard’	<b>gɔ</b>	‘remain’
	<b>ágɔlɔ</b>	‘each other’	<b>bú-gū</b>	‘custom’

/kp/ and /gb/ are double articulated labial-velar stops. They have a wide distribution. They can occur before and after any vowel and before /l/ in a cluster as shown in the following examples:

21. /kp/	<b>kpí</b>	‘wear’	<b>ke-plukpá</b>	‘book’
	<b>e-kpú</b>	‘corpse’	<b>ki-kplí</b>	‘fist’
	<b>ke-tukpě</b>	‘hill’	<b>ke-sukpogunū</b>	‘tree stump’
22. /gb/	<b>gbɔgbɔlā</b>	‘big’	<b>gba</b>	‘sweep’
	<b>kí-sígbé</b>	‘ring’	<b>ke-gbu</b>	‘stool’
	<b>gbe</b>	‘refuse (v)’ (loanword)	<b>gbokɔé</b>	‘toad’

There is a glottal stop /ʔ/ in Tafi which is used to mark negative utterances (see Chapter 7, section 7.3.5 for further details). It is considered as a prosodic clause marker and not a contrastive systemic sound in the language. It is included here for the sake of completeness.

### 2.2.2 Fricatives

The voiceless labio-dental fricative /f/ and its voiced counterpart /v/ occur in stem-initial and medial positions as well as intervocalically. In consonant clusters, /f/ occurs as the first consonant before [l] and [r] while /v/ only occurs before /l/. These sounds are illustrated in the examples below:

23. /f/	<b>flă</b>	‘pass (by)’	<b>kí-fṣ</b>	‘ten’
	<b>fátī</b>	‘carve’	<b>é-fleté</b>	‘leopard’
	<b>ki-fú</b>	‘light, fire’	<b>frúḑi</b>	‘white’
24. /v/	<b>vi</b>	‘go’	<b>vu</b>	‘catch’
	<b>vuno</b>	‘hold’	<b>bú-vū</b>	‘building’
	<b>ká-vlṣ</b>	‘towel’	<b>vubṣ</b>	‘bury’

/s/ and /z/ are voiceless and voiced alveolar fricatives respectively. They occur in stem-initial and medial positions. They also occur intervocalically. /s/ and /z/ occur in clusters of /sr/ and /zr/. The former only occurs in loanwords such as **asrā** ‘tobacco’ and **sra** ‘visit, smear (pomade)’. The latter occurs as a result of syncope in words like **zurú** which is pronounced in rapid speech as **zrū**. These sounds are exemplified in (25) and (26) below.

25. /s/	<b>ke-sí</b>	‘beneath’	<b>a-srā</b>	‘tobacco’
	<b>saprādă</b>	‘onion’	<b>ká-sālă</b>	‘tortoise’
	<b>kpásī</b>	‘learn’	<b>a-yísṣ</b>	‘young man’
26. /z/	<b>zi</b>	‘(be) bad, spoilt’	<b>e-zi</b>	‘thief’
	<b>za</b>	‘dwell, stay, sit’	<b>o-lizatṣ</b>	‘dawn’
	<b>zurú</b>	‘steal’	<b>ki-zṣ</b>	‘housefly’

The palatal fricatives /ʃ/ and /ʒ/ occur stem-initially or intervocalically. /ʃ/ sounds like the initial sound of the English word ‘shoe’ and the /ʒ/ sounds like the /s/ in the English word ‘leisure’. In this work, /ʃ/ is represented by ‘sh’ and /ʒ/ is represented by ‘zh’. Here are some examples:

27. /ʃ/ (sh)	<b>i-shú</b>	‘body’	<b>she</b>	‘grow’
	<b>ki-shĩ</b>	‘stick’	<b>shĩ</b>	‘leave’
	<b>a-shǎ</b>	‘horns’	<b>shūkū</b>	‘shake’

28. /ʒ/ (zh)	<b>zhítá</b>	‘nine’	<b>ká-zhuě</b>	‘bird’
	<b>zha</b>	‘sing’	<b>bu-zho</b>	‘cheek’
	<b>zhi</b>	‘descend’	<b>ki-zhuě</b>	‘whistle, flute’

/x/ and /h/ are velar and glottal fricatives respectively. Both sounds are voiceless and they occur in word-initial and medial positions as illustrated in (29) and (30).

29. /x/	<b>kpákpáxě</b>	‘duck’	<b>xogo</b>	‘gather’
	<b>xixā</b>	‘choke’	<b>ki-bhluxǝé</b>	‘spoon, laddle’
	<b>xúń</b>	‘as for’	<b>xátsá</b>	‘bend’
30. /h/	<b>he</b>	‘pull, drag’	<b>o-hui</b>	‘rope’
	<b>huno</b>	‘touch’	<b>ǎ-hě</b>	‘pig’
	<b>ɿ-hě</b>	‘knife’	<b>bú-hihe</b>	‘sweat’
	<b>ho</b>	‘grind’	<b>ki-halí</b>	‘throat’

### 2.2.3 Affricates

Affricates which occur in the language are /ts/, /dz/, /tʃ/ and /dʒ/. /ts/ and /dz/ are voiceless and voiced alveolar affricates respectively and /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ are voiceless and voiced palatal affricates respectively. The palatal /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ are represented orthographically by ‘**tsy**’ and ‘**dzy**’ respectively. These sounds can occur either in stem-initial position or intervocalically. Here are some examples of words in which they occur:

31. /ts/	<b>ki-tsikpǐ</b>	‘pot’	<b>ki-tsá</b>	‘needle’
	<b>tsú</b>	‘dig’	<b>tsí</b>	‘die’
	<b>tsokú</b>	‘enter’	<b>ɔ-tsɿ</b>	‘leg’
32. /dz/	<b>dzɪdzǎ</b>	‘red’	<b>kí-dzě</b>	‘egg’
	<b>dzí</b>	‘sit’	<b>ki-dzō</b>	‘road’
	<b>dzú</b>	‘erect, plant’	<b>ka-tabuiadzō</b>	‘scorpion’
33. /tsy/	<b>tsyínā</b>	‘turn’	<b>tsyómō</b>	‘(be) rotten’
	<b>tsyánō</b>	‘meet’	<b>ki-tsyíní</b>	‘louse’
	<b>tsyūrū</b>	‘wipe (off)’	<b>ká-ńtsyótsyóé</b>	‘bladder’
34. /dzy/	<b>é-dzyuǐ</b>	‘mouse’	<b>dzyíní</b>	‘break’
	<b>é-blidzya</b>	‘snake’	<b>dzyo</b>	‘straighten’
	<b>dzyosǔ</b>	‘blood’	<b>á-dzyā</b>	‘brother’

### 2.2.4 Nasals

The nasals in the language are /m/, /n/, /ɲ/ and /ɳ/. /m/ and /n/ have a wide distribution. They occur as the initial consonants of words or stems, in medial

position or intervocalically. In my database, they occur with all the vowels. /m/ and /n/ also occur in final position in some few words as shown in (35) and (36) respectively. /ɲ/ and /ŋ/ occur in initial, medial, and intervocalic position of a word or stem as in (37) and (38). /ŋ/ occurs in the final position of the loanword **kóŋ** ‘very much’ and some ideophones such as **kpéŋkpéŋ** and **tsíréŋkéŋ**. /ɲ/ does not occur word finally.

35. /m/	<b>mó</b>	‘suck breast’	<b>kí-pluímēké</b>	‘dove’
	<b>ki-mó</b>	‘breast’	<b>ká-pamī</b>	‘matchet’
	<b>muno</b>	‘swallow’	<b>o-tumú</b>	‘darkness’
	<b>míni</b>	‘taste’	<b>ke-kplím</b>	‘palm (of hand)’
36. /n/	<b>némī</b>	‘bite’	<b>tsyínā</b>	‘turn round’
	<b>o-nugbū</b>	‘mouth’	<b>ke-ní</b>	‘river’
	<b>a-nóvó</b>	‘child’	<b>o-bón</b>	‘today’
37. /ɲ/ (ny)	<b>nyínā</b>	‘hold’	<b>nyá</b>	‘tie’
	<b>ki-nyí</b>	‘name’	<b>o-nyó</b>	‘smoke’
	<b>o-nyí</b>	‘firewood’	<b>bu-nyā</b>	‘sickness’
	<b>e-nye</b>	‘male’	<b>nyónó (aga)</b>	‘rear (animal)’
38. /ŋ/	<b>ŋa</b>	‘eat’	<b>kóŋ</b>	‘very much’
	<b>kí-dŋíŋá</b>	‘food’	<b>kuŋa</b>	‘right (side)’
	<b>gběŋgbě</b>	‘praying mantis’	<b>ŋwĩ</b>	‘drink’

Apart from /ɲ/ all the other nasals occur in a sequence of homorganic nasals plus an obstruent and they are homorganic with the consonant that occurs after them. Consider the following examples:

39.	<b>ká-ŋpiesí</b>	‘armpit’
	<b>túŋgbá</b>	‘antelop’
	<b>ká-ŋtsyótsyóé</b>	‘bladder’

There are certain nouns whose roots begin with the syllable **yĩ**.<sup>14</sup> In rapid speech, these syllables get deleted and are replaced by /n/ which is homorganic with the following consonant. The following examples are illustrative of this point:

40.	<b>ká-yĩtsě</b>	→	<b>ká-ŋtsě</b>	‘calabash’	<b>ā-yĩsĩ</b>	→	<b>ā-ŋsĩ</b>	‘sand’
	<b>á-yĩdzi</b>	→	<b>á-ŋdzi</b>	‘mother-in-law’	<b>o-yĩtsí</b>	→	<b>o-ŋtsí</b>	‘hawk’
	<b>ki-yĩtó</b>	→	<b>ki-ŋtó</b>	‘nose’	<b>a-yĩsō</b>	→	<b>a-ŋsō</b>	‘young man’

<sup>14</sup> A similar process happens in the plural noun **awóhũ** ‘eyes’ where the initial syllable of the root **wó** is elided and the nasalisation docks on the prefix yielding **āhũ**. No further instances of this process have been encountered.



### 2.2.5 Liquids

/l/ is an alveolar lateral and it has a wide distribution. It occurs in word-initial position and between vowels. It occurs with all the vowels in the language. /l/ also occurs in consonant clusters as the second consonant after non-coronal consonants. In addition, it occurs syllable-finally in expressions like **al** ‘3SG.IND’ (see § 2.1.2). The examples below illustrate the distribution of /l/:

41. /l/	<b>lɪlā</b>	‘lose (something)’	<b>bu-lu</b>	‘wine, beer’
	<b>bulē</b>	‘take off (cloth)’	<b>ká-vlɔ</b>	‘towel’
	<b>ke-kplīm</b>	‘palm (of hand)’	<b>bú-glebē</b>	‘wing’
	<b>o-blō</b>	‘anger’	<b>ku-bhluxɔé</b>	‘spoon, ladle’

[r] is a voiced alveolar trill. It is an allophone of /l/. They are in complementary distribution when they occur as the second C in CC sequences. /l/ occurs after [-coronal] sounds whereas [r] occurs after alveolar and palatal consonants. Some loanwords and ideophones do not conform to this pattern. The only occurrence of [r] in word-initial position in my data is in the ideophone **ridjɪdɪdɪ** ‘continuously, for a long time’. [r] occurs word internally. In intervocalic or syllable-initial position, it occurs with the vowels /i/, /u/, /a/ or /u/. During fast speech, one is likely to hear some speakers say, for example, **ririiriiri** instead of **ridjɪdɪdɪ** ‘continuously, for a long time’ or **áro st...** in place of **ádɔ st...** ‘s/he said that...’. It appears that in this intervocalic position, [r] is historically /d/. Thus in this environment, [d] and [r] are free alternants. For example,

42. [r]	<b>zurú</b>	‘steal’	<b>tu-rá</b>	‘sleep’
	<b>tsirí</b>	‘be.on’	<b>o-drekekpú</b>	‘corner’
	<b>trō</b>	‘spin (thread)’	<b>ɔ-tsɪ</b>	‘foot’
	<b>frɪdɪ</b>	‘white’	<b>ɔ-brahunɪ</b>	‘sugar-cane’
	<b>trɔ</b>	‘plan (v)’	<b>ka-tsrukɔ</b>	‘foot’

### 2.2.6 Glides

/y/ is a palatal glide and it occurs with all the nine vowels in the language in stem or syllable-initial position as well as intervocalically. This is exemplified below:

43. /y/	<b>yékē</b>	‘swell’	<b>yě</b>	‘split, break’
	<b>á-yakpá</b>	‘bush’	<b>yí</b>	‘kill’
	<b>yofoe yi</b>	‘a white man’	<b>yukɔ</b>	‘take’
	<b>yú</b>	‘weave (cloth)’	<b>yúyɔ</b>	‘damp, cool’

/w/ is a labial-velar glide. It occurs in stem-initial position and intervocalically as illustrated in (44).

44. /w/	<b>wólɪ</b>	‘fall’	<b>tu-wá</b>	‘grass’
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<b>welě</b>	‘moon, month’	<b>kí-wī</b>	‘day’
<b>wulú</b>	‘bathe’	<b>tí-wulé</b>	‘guts, intestines’

/y/ and /w/ also occur as second consonants in CC clusters (see § 2.1.5).

It is important to note that Tafi has some labialised sounds which occur in the environment of unrounded vowels: /fw/ is a labialised voiceless labio-dental fricative; /tsyw/ is a labialised voiceless palatal affricate; /xw/ is a labialised voiceless velar fricative; [ɣw] is a labialised velar nasal and /hw/ is a labialised voiced glottal fricative. Each of these sounds is illustrated below.

45. /fw/      **fwě**      ‘breathe’  
               **ɔfufwě**      ‘spirit’  
               /tʃw/ (tsyw)      **tsywĩ**      ‘tear (v)’  
                                   **otsywĩ**      ‘clitoris’  
               /xw/      **kíxwĩ**      ‘work (n)’  
                                   **xwĩ**      ‘satisfy’
46. /hw/      **sáhwĩ**      ‘spider’  
                   **hwa**      ‘move’  
               [ɣw]      **ɔɣwã**      ‘side (of body)’  
                                   **ɣwĩ**      ‘drink’

## 2.3 Vowels

Vowels are sounds produced without obstruction or audible friction in the vocal tract. Tafi has a nine (9) oral vowel system as presented in Table 2.2 below. These vowels are divided into two (2) sets based on the position of the tongue root. That is, the tongue root can either be advanced, [+ATR], in which case, it is pushed forward or unadvanced, [-ATR], that is, it is retracted. Thus, as shown in Table 2.2 below, the vowels / i, e, o, u / are [+ATR] while / ɪ, ɛ, ɔ, ʊ / are [-ATR]. In Tafi, the [ATR] value of the (initial) vowel of the noun or verb stem determines the [ATR] value of the vowel of the prefix. A stem-initial /a/ vowel triggers a -ATR prefix vowel however a prefix with an /a/ vowel can occur with a ±ATR vowel (see examples (65) – (67) under § 2.3.1). This co-occurrence restriction on vowels in words which is referred to as vowel harmony is discussed in detail in §2.3.1.

Table 2.2 Tafi Vowel Phonemes

	Front		Central	Back	
	[+ATR]	[-ATR]		[+ATR]	[-ATR]
High	i	ɪ		u	ʊ
Mid	e	ɛ		o	ɔ
Low			a		

The vowels are described and exemplified below.

/i/ is an advanced high front unrounded vowel. Examples are:

- |     |              |         |              |         |
|-----|--------------|---------|--------------|---------|
| 47. | <b>e-tsí</b> | ‘bee’   | <b>i-nī</b>  | ‘soups’ |
|     | <b>i-lí</b>  | ‘necks’ | <b>ki-wí</b> | ‘sun’   |

/ɪ/ is an unadvanced high front unrounded vowel. Examples are:

- |     |              |            |             |        |
|-----|--------------|------------|-------------|--------|
| 48. | <b>ka-wī</b> | ‘axe’      | <b>fātī</b> | ‘peel’ |
|     | <b>ɔ-nyí</b> | ‘firewood’ | <b>pī</b>   | ‘want’ |

/e/ is an advanced mid front unrounded vowel. The following are examples:

- |     |             |         |              |          |
|-----|-------------|---------|--------------|----------|
| 49. | <b>she</b>  | ‘grow’  | <b>é-kū</b>  | ‘yams’   |
|     | <b>e-lé</b> | ‘teeth’ | <b>e-kpú</b> | ‘corpse’ |

/ɛ/ is an unadvanced mid front unrounded vowel. Examples are:

- |     |               |         |                 |                |
|-----|---------------|---------|-----------------|----------------|
| 50. | <b>gugɔ́é</b> | ‘last’  | <b>kí-lē</b>    | ‘wind’         |
|     | <b>yě</b>     | ‘break’ | <b>ki-shɔ́é</b> | ‘small basket’ |

/a/ is a low central unrounded vowel. This vowel is illustrated in (51):

- |     |              |         |             |          |
|-----|--------------|---------|-------------|----------|
| 51. | <b>ká-pā</b> | ‘hoe’   | <b>á-dá</b> | ‘sister’ |
|     | <b>ɔ-dá</b>  | ‘metal’ | <b>á-kā</b> | ‘father’ |

/ɔ/ is an unadvanced mid back rounded vowel. Examples are:

- |     |               |         |           |        |
|-----|---------------|---------|-----------|--------|
| 52. | <b>ɔ-tɔmí</b> | ‘beard’ | <b>dɔ</b> | ‘say’  |
|     | <b>ɔ-gɔbɔ</b> | ‘navel’ | <b>tɔ</b> | ‘cook’ |

/o/ is an advanced mid back rounded vowel. The examples in (53) illustrate this vowel:

- |     |             |        |              |          |
|-----|-------------|--------|--------------|----------|
| 53. | <b>o-nī</b> | ‘soup’ | <b>xogo</b>  | ‘gather’ |
|     | <b>o-lí</b> | ‘neck’ | <b>o-blɔ</b> | ‘anger’  |

/u/ is an unadvanced high back rounded vowel. Examples are:

- |     |              |               |                  |                    |
|-----|--------------|---------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 54. | <b>bu-tɔ</b> | ‘ear, potash’ | <b>tu-wulē</b>   | ‘guts, intestines’ |
|     | <b>bu-wā</b> | ‘medicine’    | <b>bú-shúshɔ</b> | ‘urine’            |

/ʊ/ is an advanced high back rounded vowel. Examples are:

55. **dzynosũ** ‘blood’                      **bú** ‘remove’  
**tsú** ‘dig’                                      **o-kuku** ‘elbow’

The examples in (56) illustrate some near minimal pairs:

56. SOUND                      MINIMAL PAIRS
- |          |              |            |              |               |
|----------|--------------|------------|--------------|---------------|
| a. i / ɪ | <b>yí</b>    | ‘kill’     | <b>yí</b>    | ‘3SG.IND’     |
| b. ɪ / e | <b>ɪ-nyí</b> | ‘firewood’ | <b>e-nyí</b> | ‘names’       |
| c. u / i | <b>tsú</b>   | ‘dig’      | <b>tsí</b>   | ‘die’         |
| d. ʊ / a | <b>bu-ya</b> | ‘farm’     | <b>ba-ya</b> | ‘farms’       |
| e. a / u | <b>tá</b>    | ‘shoot’    | <b>tú</b>    | ‘pound’       |
| f. ɪ / u | <b>vɪ</b>    | ‘go’       | <b>vu</b>    | ‘catch’       |
| g. ɔ / i | <b>só</b>    | ‘hoe (v)’  | <b>sí</b>    | ‘run’         |
| h. a / ɔ | <b>má</b>    | ‘divide’   | <b>mó</b>    | ‘suck breast’ |
| i. o / i | <b>o-lí</b>  | ‘neck’     | <b>i-lí</b>  | ‘necks’       |

All these vowels except /o/ have counterparts which are inherently nasalised. They do not necessarily have the nasalised feature because they occur in the vicinity of nasal consonants. So far, only one instance of /ẽ/ has been found. The nasal vowels are illustrated in Table 2.3 and exemplified in (57).

Table 2.3. Tafi nasal vowels

	Front		Central	Back	
	[+ATR]	[-ATR]		[+ATR]	[-ATR]
High	ĩ	ĩ		ũ	ũ
Mid	ẽ	ẽ			õ
Low			ã		

- 57a. **ĩ** **gbĩĩ** ‘heavy’; **kpĩ** ‘plenty’  
b. **ĩ** **ɲwĩ** ‘drink’; **a-yĩsĩ** ‘a young man’; **ã-yĩsĩ** ‘sand’; **tsywĩ** ‘tear’  
c. **ẽ** **tẽ** ‘slash’  
d. **ẽ** **ɔ-shẽ** ‘branch’; **ka-hlõẽ** ‘deer’; **okõẽ** ‘soap’  
e. **ã** **tã** ‘chew; burn (intr.)’; **ká-sālã** ‘tortoise’; **kpã** ‘fade’  
f. **õ** **náwõ** ‘hasten’; **fõ** ‘defecate’; **sõ** ‘be equal’; **kí-sõ** ‘maggot’  
g. **ũ** **wũnõ** ‘you (pl.)’; **kí-wũwĩ** ‘star’; **ká-wũwĩ** ‘broom’; **tɪ-wũlĩ** ‘rubbish’  
h. **ũ** **wũsẽ** ‘repair’; **xũĩ** ‘as for’; **kúmũ** ‘cover’; **lũku** ‘smell’

In the next section, I discuss vowel harmony which is important in accounting for the different types of prefixes that occur with stems of nouns or verbs.

### 2.3.1 Vowel harmony

Vowel harmony in a language can be stem-controlled in the sense that the initial vowel of the stem triggers harmony to its left (Clements 2000). The vowel harmony system of Tafi is stem-controlled and the ATR value of the initial root vowel spreads to the prefixes of a word and in line with this it is possible to find polysyllabic words whose vowels do not belong to the same set. Thus, the stem of words always remains the same but the prefix may have varied forms. Vowels in prefixes have two forms depending on the [ATR] value of the initial vowel of the stem. As already stated, vowels in Tafi are divided into two harmonising sets ( $\pm$ ATR) as shown in Table 2.2 above such that if the initial vowel in the stem is a [+ATR] vowel, then one of the following vowels will be chosen as the prefix vowel: /i/, /e/, /o/, or /u/. On the other hand, if it is [-ATR], then the vowel in the prefix will either be /ɪ/, /ɛ/, /ɔ/ or /ʊ/. Hence, the vowel harmony system accounts for the alternate prefixes in (58a) and (58b), (59a) and (59b), (60a) and (60b), (61a) and (61b), and (62a) and (62b).

58a.	<b>á-nyí</b>	‘man’
58b.	<b>e-pí</b>	‘mosquito’
59a.	<b>kí-níki</b>	‘tongue’
59b.	<b>ki-lé</b>	‘tooth’
60a.	<b>ka-hlɔ́ɛ</b>	‘deer’
60b.	<b>ke-sisí</b>	‘mortar’
61a.	<b>ɔ-tɔ́mí</b>	‘beard’
61b.	<b>o-kuku</b>	‘elbow’
62a.	<b>bu-tsé</b>	‘monkeys’
62b.	<b>bu-pā</b>	‘hoes’

As shown in the vowel chart in Table 2.2, it is obvious that, unlike the other vowels, /a/ occurs with vowels from either set. Its occurrence with +ATR stem vowels is illustrated by the examples in (63). (63d) and (63f) are loanwords from Ewe. (64a) exemplifies the vowel /a/ occurring with -ATR stem vowels.

63a.	<b>ka-kudzɔgɛ</b>	‘dog’
63b.	<b>ká-ɲpiesí</b>	‘armpit’
63c.	<b>a-gudũ</b>	‘bear’
63d.	<b>a-bhlendɛ</b>	‘pineapple’
63e.	<b>a-zĩ</b>	‘groundnut’
63f.	<b>a-hosĩ</b>	‘widow’

The vowel /a/ behaves asymmetrically with regard to vowel harmony. Whereas /a/ may precede vowels from either set as shown by the examples in (63) above and (64a) below, it selects only [-ATR] prefixes when it is the (initial) root vowel in the stem as shown in (64b).

- |      |                |            |      |               |           |
|------|----------------|------------|------|---------------|-----------|
| 64a. | <b>á-nyí</b>   | ‘man’      | 64b. | <b>bu-pá</b>  | ‘house’   |
|      | <b>ka-hlóé</b> | ‘antelope’ |      | <b>ɔ-zakó</b> | ‘shelter’ |
|      | <b>a-núvɔ̃</b> | ‘child’    |      | <b>ki-kpá</b> | ‘knot’    |
|      | <b>a-bó</b>    | ‘termite’  |      | <b>ɪ-tá</b>   | ‘three’   |

The behaviour of /a/ as shown in the examples above is characteristic of many other vowel harmony systems including Akan (Clements 1981, Dolphyne, 1988). In Tafi, nouns with an /a/ prefix vowel and noun stems with a [-ATR] initial vowel are as common as those with a prefix vowel which is [-ATR] and /a/ occurring as the initial vowel of the noun stem as illustrated in (64a) and (64b) respectively. Nouns which have a [+ATR] stem-initial vowel with /a/ as the prefix vowel are very few, and include loanwords as shown in (63).

The distribution of /a/ in nominal prefixes as well as root-initial syllables in nouns in Tafi is summed up in (65) – (68): In (65), we have a (C)V prefix with /a/ as the prefix vowel and a root-initial CV-syllable with a -ATR vowel. In (66), the vowel of the root-initial (C)V-syllable is [+ATR] and the prefix vowel is /a/. In (67), the prefix vowel is [-ATR] in value while the initial vowel of the root is /a/. Finally, as shown in (68), Tafi does not have nouns whose prefix vowel is [+ATR] with the initial vowel of the root being /a/. It should be noted that in nominal prefixes, subject pronouns and agreement markers, /a/ alternates with /e/ as its +ATR counterpart (see Chapter 3).

- |     |                               |            |     |                                |         |
|-----|-------------------------------|------------|-----|--------------------------------|---------|
| 65. | <b>(C)a-CV<sub>-ATR</sub></b> |            | 66. | <b>(C)a-CV<sub>+ATR</sub></b>  |         |
|     | <b>á-kā</b>                   | ‘father’   |     | <b>a-gudũ</b>                  | ‘bear’  |
|     | <b>ka-tsrukpó</b>             | ‘foot’     |     | <b>ká-kudzɔgě</b>              | ‘dog’   |
|     | <b>ká-gbó</b>                 | ‘squirrel’ |     | <b>á-feití</b>                 | ‘fifty’ |
| 67. | <b>(C)V<sub>-ATR</sub>-Ca</b> |            | 68. | <b>*(C)V<sub>+ATR</sub>-Ca</b> |         |
|     | <b>ɔ-ma</b>                   | ‘town’     |     |                                |         |
|     | <b>bu-pá</b>                  | ‘house’    |     |                                |         |
|     | <b>ki-plă</b>                 | ‘buttocks’ |     |                                |         |

Subject pronouns also harmonise with the initial vowel of the verb stem. The examples in (69) illustrate this. The vowel in the verb **tú** ‘pound’ is [+ATR] while that of **tɔ̃** ‘cook’ is [-ATR] so the vowel of the subject pronoun they take is [+ATR] and [-ATR] respectively.

- |         |             |         |         |              |        |
|---------|-------------|---------|---------|--------------|--------|
| 69a.    | <b>tú</b>   | ‘pound’ | 69b.    | <b>tɔ̃</b>   | ‘cook’ |
| Sing. 1 | <b>í-tú</b> |         | Sing. 1 | <b>í-tɔ̃</b> |        |

	2	<b>ó-tú</b>		2	<b>ó-tó</b>
	3	<b>é-tú</b>		3	<b>á-tó</b>
Plural	1	<b>bú-tú</b>	Plural	1	<b>bó-tó</b>
	2	<b>no-tú</b>		2	<b>no-tó</b>
	3	<b>bé-tú</b>		3	<b>bá-tó</b>

When the initial vowel in the verb stem is any of the following [+ATR] vowels /i, e, o, or u/, the vowel of the pronoun is realised as a [+ATR] vowel as in (69a) and when the initial vowel of the verb stem is [-ATR], i.e., /ɪ, ɛ, a, ɔ, or ʊ/, the vowel of the pronoun is realised as [-ATR] as in (69b).

The forms of the preverb markers are also determined by the ATR feature of the initial syllable of the verb root. The sentences in (70) and (71) exemplify variants of the future marker in Tafi. Moreover, apart from ATR vowel harmony there is also rounding harmony triggered by the 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronouns – **ó** ‘2SG’ and **no** ‘2PL’ which spreads as far as to the last preverb before the verb stem as illustrated in (71a) and (71b) (see Chapter 7 on preverb markers). Whereas the initial vowels of noun and verb roots trigger harmony to the left, in the sentences in (71a) and (71b), the second person singular subject triggers harmony to the right.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>70a. Ábató ásí.<br/> <b>á-ba-tó</b>                      <b>á-sí.</b><br/>         3SG-FUT-cook    CM-rice<br/>         ‘S/he will cook rice.’</p> | <p>70b. Ébetú mankaní.<br/> <b>é-be-tú</b>                      <b>mankaní.</b><br/>         3SG-FUT-pound cocoyam<br/>         ‘S/he will pound cocoyam.’</p>                                    |
| <p>71a. Óbotá ásí.<br/> <b>ó-bo-tá</b>                      <b>á-sí.</b><br/>         2SG-FUT-eat CM-rice<br/>         ‘You will eat rice.’</p>       | <p>71b. Óbot’ ósíí.<br/> <b>ó-bo-té</b>                      <b>o-sí</b>                      <b>ní.</b><br/>         2SG-FUT-slash    CM-tree    DEF<br/>         ‘You will slash the tree.’</p> |

## 2.4 Tone

Tone plays a significant role in Tafi and many other African languages. Ford observes that “the Central-Togo languages present some of the most complex data in this area of grammar” (Kropp Dakubu and Ford 1988:128). This observation was made after he had worked at length on the area of intonation in different languages belonging to five language families and also after working extensively on the tone system of Avatime to which he devotes several pages in his thesis (Ford 1971). The tone system of Tafi presents several complications but only the essential features of tone are discussed here. The Tafi tone system requires further investigation.

In connected speech in Tafi, both level and contour tones occur. It has three level tones: Low (L), Mid (M) and High (H). In addition to the three levels, there are

gliding tones which are phonetically realised on the peak of one syllable. There are three falling tones: High-Mid (HM), High-Low (HL) and Mid-Low (ML) and two rising tones: Low-Mid (LM) and Low-High (LH). The contour tones are marked as ML, HM etc., indicating their beginning and end points. The notational conventions used for marking tones are as follows:

H	´	(acute accent)
M	-	(macron)
L	unmarked or ` on nasals	(grave accent)
Rising	LM ˘ or LH ˘	(grave accent and macron (LM) or hacek (LH))
Falling	HM ˆ or HL ˆ or ML ˘	(acute accent and macron (HM) or circumflex (HL) or macron and grave accent (ML)).

Syllable boundaries are marked by a dot between the two letters used to represent the tones. For instance, L.H is a Low-High sequence on two separate syllables while LH represents a Low-High contour on one syllable.

Tone in Tafi functions both lexically and syntactically. Lexically, differences in tone on a word result in differences in meaning as shown in the examples in (72) and (73). The examples in (72) are verbs whereas those in (73) are nouns.

72.	<b>tú</b> ‘pound’	<b>tū</b> ‘beat (a person)’
	<b>yí</b> ‘kill’	<b>yī</b> ‘resemble’
	<b>yó</b> ‘be cold’	<b>yɔ</b> ‘sharpen (knife)’
	<b>bú</b> ‘remove’	<b>bu</b> ‘respect’
	<b>yúkū</b> ‘(be) full’	<b>yūkū</b> ‘vomit’
73.	<b>ki-lé</b> ‘tooth’	<b>ki-lě</b> ‘lizard’
	<b>ki-mǔ</b> ‘breast’	<b>ki-mɔ</b> ‘rubber, gum’
	<b>kí-fū</b> ‘fear’	<b>ki-fú</b> ‘light’
	<b>ki-kpǎ</b> ‘fish’	<b>ki-kpá</b> ‘knot’

For the syntactic function of tone, see section 2.4.2 for more details.

#### 2.4.1 Tone patterns in verbs and nouns

The tone patterns found on monosyllabic verb stems can be any of the following: L, M, H, LH, LM and HM. The examples in (74) are illustrations of these patterns:

74a.	Low tone		
	<b>mɔ</b>	‘see’	<b>bho</b> ‘beat (drum)’
	<b>ɔɔ</b>	‘say’	<b>hɔ</b> ‘grind’



	<b>ge</b>	‘row, drive’	<b>gba</b>	‘sweep’
	<b>sho</b>	‘stab’	<b>dzi</b>	‘buy’
74b.	Mid tone			
	<b>bō</b>	‘crow’	<b>nī</b>	‘extinguish’
	<b>fū</b>	‘blow (of wind)’	<b>hū</b>	‘hit’
	<b>nī</b>	‘enlarge, widen’	<b>kpū</b>	‘hide’
	<b>shī</b>	‘leave’	<b>wū</b>	‘climb’
74c.	High tone			
	<b>ná</b>	‘be perfect’	<b>bú</b>	‘remove’
	<b>dé</b>	‘come from’	<b>ká</b>	‘wring clothes’
	<b>kú</b>	‘arrive’	<b>tsí</b>	‘die’
	<b>tsú</b>	‘dig’	<b>yú</b>	‘weave’
74d.	Low-high Tone			
	<b>flǎ</b>	‘overtake, pass (by)’	<b>fwě</b>	‘breathe’
	<b>srǎ</b>	‘smear (pomade)’	<b>yě</b>	‘break, smash’
	<b>trǒ</b>	‘spin (thread), twist’	<b>tsǐ</b>	‘sneeze’
74e.	Low-Mid			
	<b>nū</b>	‘hear (in the present)’		
	<b>bā</b>	‘come (in the present)’		
74f.	High-Mid tone			
	<b>pī</b>	‘want, desire, look for’		
	<b>fī</b>	‘push’		
	<b>tī</b>	‘throw’		
	<b>kplā</b>	‘mark out (ground)’		

Disyllabic verb stems may carry any of the following tones: L.L, L.M, L.H, M.M, M.H, and H.M. The following are examples:

75a.	Low-Low	
	<b>xogo</b>	‘gather, accumulate’
	<b>vuno</b>	‘hold’
	<b>lūku</b>	‘smell (sth)’
75b.	Low-Mid	
	<b>bhufī</b>	‘do’
	<b>danī</b>	‘open’
	<b>dzikī</b>	‘forget’
	<b>bhusā</b>	‘stir’
	<b>yekē</b>	‘get, receive’

- 75c. Low-High  
**zurú** ‘steal’  
**tsokú** ‘enter’  
**wanyá** ‘sprinkle’  
**tukú** ‘carry’
- 75d. Mid-Mid  
**shūkū** ‘shake’  
**wūlū** ‘blow with mouth’  
**bālī** ‘spill (liquid)’  
**yūkū** ‘vomit (v)’  
**prūdū** ‘fly’  
**tsyūrū** ‘wipe off (excreta)’
- 75e. High-Mid  
**bākā** ‘remember’  
**bīsī** ‘ask’  
**dzyīnī** ‘break’  
**dzyín̩** ‘marry (a man)’  
**fātī** ‘carve, peel’

There are two disyllabic verbs, **wl̩m̩**<sup>15</sup> ‘write’ and **xátsá** ‘bend’, whose tone patterns are HL.M and H.H respectively. **xátsá** ‘bend’ is a loanword from Ewe.

Tafi has very few trisyllabic verbs. So far, the trisyllabic verb stems that I have come across include:

76. **shɪɪɪ** ‘be slippery’ (L.L.L)  
**kpaplín̩** ‘lean against’ (L.H.M)  
**kpatón̩** ‘chase away’ (L.H.M)

**Shɪɪɪ** ‘be slippery’ is an ideophone which is used to describe the way a person slips and falls down. The verbs **kpaplín̩** ‘lean against’ and **kpatón̩** ‘chase away’ also seem to consist of two morphemes **kpa** and **plín̩** and **tón̩** respectively. **Plín̩** means ‘help, add’ and **tón̩** means ‘follow’. The meaning of **kpa** is not yet clear.

Most nouns have prefixes. These prefixes are made up of either V or CV syllables. Tones on the prefixes of nouns are either High or Low.<sup>16</sup> All the three level tones as well as the contour tones may occur in any position in the noun stem. A noun stem in Tafi is either monosyllabic or polysyllabic. This is illustrated in examples in (77) – (79). The examples in (77) illustrate prefix-less nouns, those in (78)

<sup>15</sup> Some speakers pronounce the word for ‘write’ as **ɲwl̩m̩**.

<sup>16</sup> So far, I have come across only one noun **ā-mī** ‘face’ whose prefix carries a HM tone.

illustrate nouns with V or CV prefixes with monosyllabic stems while the examples in (79) illustrate nouns with V or CV prefixes with polysyllabic stems. In (78) and (79), the first letter in the third column indicates the tone on the prefix.

77.	<b>doku</b>	‘turkey’	L.L
	<b>blaf</b>	‘pawpaw’	L.M
	<b>wolē</b>	‘moon’	L.LH
	<b>suká</b>	‘money’	L.H
	<b>dēkē</b>	‘crocodile’	M.M
	<b>Kpáyā</b>	‘God’	H.M
	<b>tédzyí</b>	‘donkey’	H.H
	<b>kpákpáxē</b>	‘duck’	H.H.M
	<b>túńgbá</b>	‘antelope’	H.H.H
	<b>hohlomuá</b>	‘grasshopper’	L.L.L.H
	<b>sāprádā</b>	‘onion’	M.HL.LH

Some loanwords are found among this group of nouns.

The tone on monosyllabic noun roots may be a level or a contour tone as illustrated in the examples below.

78.	<b>o-sí</b>	‘tree’	L.H
	<b>e-kle</b>	‘thatch’	L.L
	<b>ɔ-shě</b>	‘branch’	L.LH
	<b>o-gū</b>	‘root’	L.ML
	<b>a-nɔ̃</b>	‘person’	L.HM
	<b>á-kā</b>	‘father’	H.M
	<b>á-dá</b>	‘sister’	H.H
	<b>tu-pī</b>	‘excrement’	L.M
	<b>ki-lé</b>	‘tooth’	L.H
	<b>kí-kū</b>	‘yam’	H.M

The following are examples of tonal patterns found on polysyllabic noun stems.

79.	<b>o-bhoshi</b>	‘sheep’	L.L.L
	<b>ɔ-tsɪnī</b>	‘okra’	L.L.M
	<b>e-kusí</b>	‘chief’	L.L.H
	<b>a-núvɔ̃</b>	‘child’	L.H.M
	<b>i-shúpí</b>	‘skin’	L.H.H
	<b>a-tokpě</b>	‘hill (pl)’	L.L.LH
	<b>á-dɔyū</b>	‘weaver’	H.L.M
	<b>é-fūfū</b>	‘flower’	H.M.M
	<b>kí-būlí</b>	‘snail’	H.M.H
	<b>o-mumɔ̃é</b>	‘lemon’	L.L.L.H
	<b>ki-kpítsúkū</b>	‘owl’	L.LH.H.M

<b>kí-pósúkú</b>	‘testicle’	H.H.H.H
<b>o-sumúdúdú</b>	‘dust’	L.L.H.H.H
<b>kí-plúíměké</b>	‘pigeon’	H.H.H.M.H

#### 2.4.2 Tonal Morphemes

The difference between the present progressive and past progressive markers is indicated by tone. The progressive is formed by copying the vowel of the morpheme to which it is attached. The progressive morphemes are attached to the element that immediately precedes it. The present progressive is indicated by a high tone and the past progressive by a low tone. These tones are linked to the copied vowel. The sentences in (80) and (81) exemplify the present and past progressive markers respectively.

80. í-í-gā  
**í-í-gā**  
 1SG-PRSPROG-walk  
 ‘I am walking.’
81. í-t-ga  
**í-t-gā**  
 1SG-PSTPROG-walk  
 ‘I was walking.’

#### 2.4.3 Changes in tone

Tones of words in connected speech may be different from their tones they carry when they are said in isolation. These tones may be influenced by tones of preceding or following words. For instance, in NPs with modifiers, a final high tone on the noun spreads rightwards until the penultimate syllable of a nominal modifier when this modifier is a numeral or the interrogative quantifier as shown in (82b) and (83b) respectively. Concerning the numerals, this may not be a global rule. It works without exception for the spread onto the numeral ‘one’ but for the plural numbers it appears to be restricted to the **ba(a)-** and **a<sup>2</sup>-** classes (see Table 3.4 for illustration). In (82a) and (83a), there is no high tone spreading because the final tone of the noun is non-high.

- 82a. L.L                      L.L.H                      L.L                      L.L.H  
**a-ga**                      +                      **tedjìkpó**                      →                      **a-ga**                      **tedjìkpó**                      ‘one animal’
- 82b. H.L.H                      L.L.H                      H.L.H                      H.H.H  
**é-fleté**                      +                      **tedjìkpó**                      →                      **é-fleté**                      **tedjìkpó**                      ‘one leopard’

- 83a. L.L.L + L.L.M → L.L.M L.L.M  
**baa-ga** + **tuashĩ** → **baa-ga** **tuashĩ** ‘how many animals?’
- 83b. H. L.H + L.L.M → H. L.H H.H.M  
**bé-fleté** + **tuashĩ** → **bé-fleté** **tíashĩ** ‘how many leopards?’

Also, when two vowels, i.e., the final and initial vowels of two words following each other, come together, one of them gets elided and in many cases, it is the first vowel. If the elided vowel has a high tone it spreads to the following vowel. The effect is if the following vowel has a [-high] it becomes high and if it is [+high] it stays high. The examples in (84) illustrate body-part possession while those in (85) illustrate two nouns following each other.

- 84a. H L.H → H.H  
**mí** + **olí** → **m’ólí** ‘my neck’
- 84b. H L.M → H.M  
**yí** + **otsrĩ** → **y’ótsrĩ** ‘his/her/its leg’
- 84c. H L.H.H → H.H.H  
**yí** + **ishúpí** → **y’íshúpí** ‘his/her/its skin’
- 85a. L.L.H L.H → L.L.H.H  
**otsuní** + **oní** ‘okra’ + ‘soup’ → **otsun’óní** ‘okra soup’
- 85b. L.L.H L.H → L.L.H.H  
**otsuní** + **eyí** ‘okra’ + ‘seed’ → **otsun’éyí** ‘okra seed’

In pronominal kinship possessive structures, the high-toned final vowel of the pronominal together with its tone are elided. If the prefix tone of the kinship term is high, it becomes low. If the prefix tone is low it stays low. The following examples illustrate this point.

- 86a. **mí** + **ákā** ‘1SG.IND’ + ‘father’ → **m’aka** ‘my father’
- 86b. **yí** + **éni** ‘3SG.IND’ + ‘mother’ → **y’eni** ‘his mother’
- 86c. **mí** + **ádzýā** ‘1SG.IND’ + ‘brother’ → **m’adzyā** ‘my brother’
- 86d. **balí** + **ádá** ‘3PL.IND’ + ‘sister’ → **bal’adá** ‘their sister’

Contrary to what happens in the examples in (84) in which low tones on the prefixes of possessed nouns etc. are replaced by high tones of personal pronouns, in the examples in (86), high tones on the prefixes of kinship nouns are lowered when they occur after possessive pronouns.

## 2.5 Phonological processes

### 2.5.1 Deletion of consonants

In connected speech, initial consonants of prefixes (/b/ and /k/) or even whole prefixes are deleted. This is a case of simplification or erosion of noun class prefixes. Funke (1910) already observed this about Nyagbo-Tafi. This happens when compound nouns are being formed as illustrated in (87), when nouns occur after possessive pronouns as in (88), or when they occur in object position as in (89) and (90).

87. **bé-shēulu**<sup>17</sup> ‘palm wine’ ← **bé-shē** ‘local’ + **bu-lu** ‘drink’  
**be-tsuní** ‘honey’ ← **be-tsí** ‘bees’ + **bu-ní** ‘water’  
**bu-nietsukpú** ‘waterpot’ ← **bu-ní** ‘water’ + **ke-tsukpú** ‘pot’  
**sukūuya** ‘school farm’ ← **sukū** ‘school’ + **bu-ya** ‘farm’
88. **m’upá** ‘my house’ ← **mí** ‘1SG.IND’ + **bu-pá** ‘house’  
**blo ’eshí** ‘our stick’ ← **blš** ‘1PL.IND’ + **ki-shí** ‘stick’  
**kal’ugble** ‘its kennel’ ← **kalí** ‘3SG.IND’ + **bu-gble** ‘kennel’  
**y’uya** ‘his farm’ ← **yí** ‘3SG.IND’ + **bu-ya** ‘farm’
89. **bhui ’itokpú** ‘behead’ ← **bhui** ‘cut’ + **ki-tokpú** ‘head’  
**di ’uya** ‘farm (v)’ ← **di** ‘cultivate’ + **bu-ya** ‘farm’  
**vu ’ifú** ‘be hot’ ← **vu** ‘catch’ + **ki-fú** ‘fire’
- 90a. Ámā átó ’udzo.  
**Ámā á-tó bu-dzo**  
 Ámā SM-cook CM-palm.oil  
 ‘Ama prepared palm oil.’
- 90b. ányín ébúkú ’ulu.  
**á-nyí ní é-búkú bu-lu**  
 CM-man DEF SM-be.drunk CM-drink  
 ‘The man is drunk.’
- 90c. édzí ’íkū.  
**é-dzí kí-kū**  
 3SG-buy CM-yam  
 ‘S/he bought yam.’

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<sup>17</sup> **beshelu** is also used by some speakers. In this case, the whole prefix of **bu-lu** ‘drink’ is deleted.

As can be seen in the sentences in (90), the initial consonants of the prefixes of the object pronouns are not realised. When I once tried to produce the same sentences with the complete prefix, my consultants reacted saying “if you speak like that, everybody will know you are a learner of the language or a stranger”. Moreover, if the full forms of these prefixes are used in such sentences, the native speakers’ judgment is that “the sentence is not wrong but that it is not how we say it”.

### 2.5.2 Vowel elision

Whenever two vowels (final and initial vowels of two words following each other) come together, one of the vowel gets elided. However, in careful speech, speakers do not always elide the vowels as is the case in (91d) which is an elicited sentence. In this sentence, neither the final vowel of the verb **némī** ‘bite’ nor the initial vowel of **áyadī** ‘farmer’ is elided. In the examples in (91a) - (91d), the (final) vowels of **Kofī**, **yí** ‘3SG’, **tá** ‘shoot’ and **é-blidzya** ‘snake’ have been deleted because they are followed by another vowel **a-** in (91a) and (91b) and by **o-** and **e-** in (91c) and (91d) respectively.

- 91a. Ámā Kof’ágbán̄.  
**Ámā Kofī á-gbán̄**  
 Ama Kofi SM-marry  
 ‘AMA Kofi married.’
- 91b. Ámā y’ágbán̄.  
**Ámā yí á-gbán̄**  
 Ama 3SG.IND SM-marry  
 ‘AMA he married.’
- 91c. át’ótún̄.  
**á-tá o-tú ní**  
 3SG-throw CM-gun DEF  
 ‘He shot the gun.’
- 91d. éblidzy’enémī áyadún̄.  
**é-blidzya é-némī á-yadī ní**  
 CM-snake SM-bite CM-farmer DEF  
 ‘A snake bit the farmer.’

Another example of vowel elision involves the definiteness marker. The full form of the definiteness or topic marker in Tafi is **ní** ‘DEF’/‘TOP’. Most often, its final vowel is elided in fast speech and the reduced form is attached to the word immediately preceding it. The tone carried by the deleted vowel, however, remains and it moves leftwards on to the alveolar nasal /**n**/ as shown in examples (91c) and (91d) above and also in (92) and (93) below.

92. **ba-ga ní** → **ba-gań** ‘the animals’  
**ba-ga gbıgblā ní** → **ba-ga gbıgblāń** ‘the big animals’  
**ba-ga gbıgblā tíábhā ní** → **ba-ga gbıgblā tíábhāń** ‘the two big animals’
- 93a. ányínúvǎēń éféké y’áfukpǎń  
**á-nyínúvǎē ní é-féké yí ba-fukpǎ ní**  
 CM-boy DEF SM-lift 3SG.IND CMPL-shoe DEF  
 ‘The boy lifted his shoes.’ (FS)
- 93b. ɔdʒń ótá.  
**ɔ-dʒ ní ɔ-tá**  
 CM-bell DEF SM-strike  
 ‘The bell has sounded.’

Also, most often, when the 1st person singular object pronoun **mí** ‘1SG.IND’ is cliticised to the verb its vowel gets elided and as it is with the definiteness marker, its tone shifts leftwards on to the bilabial nasal. This is illustrated in (94).

94. **tsiré mí** → **tsiréń** ‘tell me’  
**bísí mí** → **bísíń** ‘ask me’  
**tu mí** → **tuń** ‘beat me’  
**kasí mí** → **kasíń** ‘teach me’  
**kafú mí** → **kafúń** ‘praise me’

### 2.5.3 i/t-insertion

The process of **i/t**-insertion occurs after the deletion of the initial consonant **/k/** of the **ka-** class prefix of nouns or postpositions. The choice of **/i/** or **/t/** depends on the [ATR] value of the prefix vowel. The examples in (95) are made up of a noun and a postposition. Those in (96a) and (96b) consist of a verb and a postposition while in (96c) - (96e), we have a verb followed by a noun.

- 95a. **bu-túíábhā** ‘on a mountain’ ← **bu-tú** ‘mountain’ + **kábhā** ‘top’  
 95b. **kplǎíábhā** ‘on a table’ ← **kplǎ** ‘table’ + **kábhā** ‘top’  
 95c. **bú-vūiede** ‘behind a house’ ← **bú-vū** ‘house’ + **kede** ‘behind’  
 95d. **kplǎíésí** ‘under a table’ ← **kplǎ** ‘table’ + **kesí** ‘under’  
 95e. **bu-túíédé** ‘behind a mountain’ ← **bu-tú** ‘mountain’ + **kede** ‘behind’
- 96a. **ɲiabhā** ‘defeat’ ← **ɲa** ‘eat’ + **kábhā** ‘top’  
 96b. **ziesí** ‘sit down’ ← **za** ‘be.at:NPRES’ + **kesí** ‘down’  
 96c. **ɲiedzĩ** ‘be costly, dear’ ← **ɲa** ‘eat’ + **ke-dzĩ** ‘market’  
 96d. **tieyū** ‘fight a war’ ← **tá** ‘throw’ + **ké-yū** ‘war’  
 96e. **viepí** ‘go home’ ← **vi** ‘go’ + **ke-pí** ‘home’



After the **i/ɪ**-insertion, if the noun preceding a postposition has a final high tone, this high tone spreads rightwards on to the **i/ɪ** vowel that has been inserted and then onto the syllables of the postposition or noun that bear low tones until the penultimate syllable as illustrated in (95a) and (95d). In (96), after the prefix consonant **/k/** of the postposition or noun is deleted, the vowel of the verb also gets elided before the vowel **/i/** or **/ɪ/** is inserted. Furthermore, contrary to the high tone spreading in (95a) and (95d), in (96d), the high tone of the deleted vowel of the verb **tá** ‘throw’ is not maintained. Moreover, the high tone on the first syllable of the postposition in (96a) and of the noun in (96d) is also lowered.

#### 2.5.4 Vowel Rounding

In addition to [+ATR] vowel harmony, there are instances of rounding harmony in the language. Rounding harmony is triggered by the 2<sup>nd</sup> person subject pronouns and spreads to preverb markers. The morphemes **ba** and **za** in (97) and (98), for example, mark the future and repetitive respectively. The vowels in these markers assimilate the rounding feature of the vowel of the 2SG and 2PL subject pronouns as illustrated in the sentences in (97b), (98b) and (98c). The (a) sentences are examples with these markers occurring with other subject pronouns. In (98c), we have four preverb markers co-occurring. They are the repetitive, persistive, ‘again’ and future markers.

- 97a. Ábavɪ sukũ.  
**á-ba-vɪ**            **sukũ**  
 3SG-FUT-go school  
 ‘S/he will go to school.’
- 97b. Óbɔvɪ sukũ.  
**ó-bɔ-vɪ**            **sukũ**  
 2SG-FUT-go school  
 ‘You will go to school.’
- 98a. Azavɪ sukũ.  
**a-za-vɪ**            **sukũ**  
 3SG-REP-go school  
 ‘S/he went to school again.’
- 98b. Ózɔvɪ sukũ.  
**ó-zɔ-vɪ**            **sukũ**  
 2SG-REP-go school  
 ‘You went to school again.’
- 98c. Kliso, ɔzɔkɔvɪɔbɔŋwĩ ’ulu?

<b>kliso</b>	<b>ɔ-zɔ-kɔ-vlɔ-bɔ-ŋwĩ</b>	<b>bu-lu</b>
so	2SG-REP-PERS-again-FUT-drink	CM-drink
‘So, you are going to drink again?’		

### 2.5.5 Changes in vowel height/ quality

When two words follow each other and the first word ends with the vowel /a/ while the second word begins with a prefix whose vowel is /i/ or /u/, both vowels become /ɛ/ as shown by the examples in (99). With the exception of (99a), in (99b) – (99e), the prefix consonant, /k/, of the following word is deleted first. After that, the vowel /a/ lowers the prefix vowel i/u in height to become /ɛ/. Subsequently, the /ɛ/ vowel of the verb or noun assimilates the /a/ vowel to become /ɛ/.

99a.	<b>ŋɛ 'ekpá</b>	‘enjoy life’	←	<b>ŋa</b>	‘eat’	+	<b>ɪ-kpá</b>	‘life’
99b.	<b>gɛ 'edzɔ</b>	‘travel’	←	<b>ga</b>	‘walk’	+	<b>ki-dzɔ</b>	‘way’
99c.	<b>ŋɛ 'edɔ</b>	‘eat’	←	<b>ŋa</b>	‘eat’	+	<b>kí-dɔ</b>	‘thing’
99d.	<b>ɔ-dʒéshĩ</b>	‘metal stick’	←	<b>ɔ-dʒá</b>	‘metal’	+	<b>ki-shĩ</b>	‘stick’
99e.	<b>ɔ-hɛeshĩ</b>	‘in a company’	←	<b>ɔ-ha</b>	‘group’	+	<b>ki-shĩ</b>	‘midst’

Similarly, when the vowel /ɔ/ occurs in final position of a preceding word and it is followed by another word whose prefix vowel is /i/, the height of the /i/ vowel is lowered to /ɛ/. In (100a) – (100c), the consonant /k/ of the prefix is, first of all, elided before the vowel /i/ is lowered to /ɛ/.

100a.	<b>a-nɔ 'ɛvu</b>	‘a person’s stomach’	←	<b>a-nɔ</b>	‘person’	+	<b>ki-vu</b>	‘stomach’
100b.	<b>bɔ 'ɛzhuɛ</b>	‘blow a whistle’	←	<b>bɔ</b>	‘blow’	+	<b>ki-zhuɛ</b>	‘whistle’
100c.	<b>tɔ 'ɛdɔ</b>	‘cook’	←	<b>tɔ</b>	‘cook’	+	<b>kí-dɔ</b>	‘thing’

### 2.5.6 [+ATR] feature assimilation

Vowels in a preceding word can assimilate the ATR features of vowels in the following word. This is illustrated by the example sentences in (101). (101a) is a proverb in which we have the verb **mɔ** ‘give birth, bear’ followed by the noun **eyĩ** ‘child’ and in (101b), the verb **tɔ** ‘cook, boil’ precedes the noun **elĩ** ‘palmnuts’. The [-ATR] vowel of these verbs becomes [+ATR] in the environment of the [+ATR] prefix vowel of the following noun. Also in (101c), we have an independent pronoun followed by a verb stem whose vowel is +ATR. In (101c), the final vowel of the independent pronoun is deleted and its initial vowel assimilates the +ATR feature of the following vowel (i.e., the vowel of the subject marker on the verb). In (101d), we have a matrix clause comprising a 2SG subject pronoun **o** and the verb **ti** ‘know’ (**ótĩ** ‘you know’) followed by the complementiser **sĩ** marked by the 2SG pronoun **ɔ** (**ɔsĩ**). The vowel of the verb **ti** ‘know’ is elided and the 2SG subject pronoun on this verb then assimilates the -ATR value of the subject marker on the complementiser.

- 101a. Kásālā 'tīmō eyí gɪ edeyí 'íbulí?  
**ká-sālā**      **ka-tí-m̩**      **e-yí**      **gɪ**  
 CM-tortoise SM-NEG1-bear CM-child REL  
**e-de-yí**      **kí-bulí**  
 3SG.DEP-ITIVE-resemble CM-snail  
 'The offspring of a tortoise will not resemble a snail.' (Proverbs #42)
- 101b. Ábató élin̩ ɔwōlago.  
**á-ba-tó**      **e-lí**      **ní**      **ɔ-wōlago**  
 3SG-FUT-cook CMPL-palmnut DEF CM-evening  
 'S/he will boil the palmnuts in the evening.'
- 101c. Ogugu tolí ol'óyí ní 'klí an̩.  
**o-gugu**      **to-lí**      **olí**      **ó-yí**      **ní**      **ɪ-klí**  
 CM-shout AM-INDEF 3SG.INDEF SM-sound LOC CM-there  
**an̩**  
 TOP  
 'There is a sound coming from there.'
- 101d. Klíso, ót'osí an̩ kásālā ...  
**klíso**      **ó-ti**      **ɔ-sí**      **an̩**      **ká-sālā**  
 so 2SG-know SM-COMP NEGCL CM-tortoise  
 'That is why had it not been that tortoise ...' (Kásālā)

### 2.5.7 Compensatory lengthening

The process of compensatory lengthening occurs in contexts where whole prefixes or syllables of, for instance, some nouns in the **bu-** classes, other nouns and the verb **yuk̩** 'take' get elided in connected speech. Also, when interrogative pronouns are formed out of the interrogative quantifier **-shí** 'how many/much' they usually have two forms, a long and a short form. These interrogative pronouns are formed by prefixing the independent pronouns of the various noun classes to the interrogative quantifier together with its agreement prefix. In the short form, the root of the independent pronoun is elided with the prefix remaining. This deletion is compensated for by lengthening the prefix vowel as shown in (102a) and (102b) (see chapter 3, § 3.2.2.4 for further discussion). With regard to the verb **yuk̩** 'take', in fast speech, speakers at times elide its first syllable and then the vowel of the morpheme immediately preceding it may be lengthened as illustrated in (102c). Similarly, the **bu/bu-** prefix of some nouns in the **bu-** classes also gets elided in rapid speech and then the (final) vowel of the preceding word is lengthened. In the sentences in (102d) and (102e), the vowel of the verbs has been lengthened after the deletion of the initial syllable (102d) and the prefix (102e) of the following word.

- 102a. **ulí tífíshĩ** → **uí-tífíshĩ** ‘how many (of them)?’ (i- class)  
 102b. **alí tááshĩ** → **áá-tááshĩ** ‘how many (of them)?’ (a<sup>2</sup>- class)

102c. ... **ká** **ɔ́-ɔ́kɔ** **ɔ́-balɩ** **ɔ́-kpí** **gazé** **gbɨgblānĩm**.  
 then 2SG-take SM-pour SM-put.into metal.pot big  
**ní kumu**  
 DEF in  
 ‘... then you pour (it) into the big metal pot.’

102d. **Kofí á-ɲa fufuo**  
 Kofí SM-eat fufu  
 ‘Kofi ate fufu.’

102e. **á-za bu-pá kumu kí-wí í-lílíní**  
 3SG-stay CM-house inside CM-day AM-DEM  
 ‘He stayed at home on that day.’

### 2.5.8 Vowel Coalescence

Vowel coalescence is a process in which vowels which were originally distinguishable from each other merge together. In Tafi, this process occurs at morpheme boundaries where two contiguous vowels fuse into a different vowel to which none of the original two are directly related in terms of vowel quality. This can thus be represented as V1 + V2 = V3 where a vowel that ends a preceding word (V1) and a vowel that begins the following word (V2) coalesce into a single vowel (V3) with a different quality. In my corpus, all cases of coalescence involve **a** as V1 and **i** as V2 resulting in **e** as V3. V2 could be a prefix vowel or it could result from the deletion of an initial consonant of a CV syllable such as the consonant **k** in **kumu** ‘inside’ as in example (103a). Vowel coalescence also occurs when the diminutive suffix **-i** is attached to a noun whose final vowel is **a** yielding **-e** as shown in (103b).

- 103a. **bu-ya** ‘farm’ + **kumu** ‘inside’ → **bu-yem** ‘in a farm’  
 103b. **ki-pidzya** ‘CM-goat’ + **-i** ‘DIM’ → **ki-pidzye** ‘a small goat’

## 2.6 Loanwords

Loanwords in Tafi are mainly from inland Ewe<sup>18</sup> in particular, with some few from Akan and English. Heine (1968:131) observes that the main source of borrowing for the southern and eastern Togo Remnant languages is Ewe while for their counterparts on the western side it is Twi. In view of the fact that the contact between the Baagbo and the Ewes is intense, the flow of borrowing from Ewe seems to be greater than from Akan and English. Heine (ibid) also notes that loanwords from other European languages like Portuguese and Dutch found in these languages entered them through Ewe and Twi which are lingua francae. In Tafi, as in Nyagbo, Logba and Avatime, Ewe and English are used as a means of instruction, in schools, in churches, hospitals, markets as well as mass media - radio, TV, and newspapers.

Usually, when a language borrows from another, the ensuing effect on the borrowing language is that there is either loss of linguistic features, addition of features, or replacement of old native linguistic features by new interference features. In the case of Tafi, for instance, in the phonology, we find that the voiceless bilabial fricative /ɸ/ which was previously not in the language got introduced into it as a result of borrowing from Ewe. This is illustrated by the words **afu** ‘sea’ and **Abuifé** which is an Ewe appellation for **Ofú** one of the Tafi communities.

Also, some nouns borrowed into the language are allocated to certain noun classes because their prefixes bear phonological resemblance to either the singular or the plural prefix of that class. Some of these prefixes are maintained while others are modified. For example, the prefixes of the borrowed nouns in (104a) – (104c) seem to bear some phonological resemblance to the plural prefixes of the **ku-/a<sup>2</sup>**-singular/plural and **o-/i-** singular/plural classes while the prefixes of those in (104d) and (104e) also sound like the singular prefix of the **o-/i-** class. The singular form of the loanwords in (104a), (104b), and (104c) are assigned the prefixes **ku-**, **ɔ-**, and **o-** respectively by backformation whereas the plural forms of those in (104d) and (104e) are assigned the prefix **ɪ-** and **i-**, also by backformation.

Tafi				Source language			
104a.	<b>a-kpǎ</b>	‘fish (pl)’	<	Ewe	<b>akpà</b>	‘fish’	
104b.	<b>ɪ-gla</b>	‘jaw (pl)’	<	Ewe	<b>e-glā</b>	‘jaw’	
104c.	<b>i-tú</b>	‘gun (pl)’	<	Ewe	<b>e-tú</b>	‘gun’	
104d.	<b>ɔ-ma</b>	‘town, village’	<	Akan	<b>ɔmán</b>	‘state’	
104e.	<b>o-frákaá</b>	‘flag’	<	Akan	<b>ɔfrɛ̃kaá</b>	‘flag’	

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<sup>18</sup> The inland Ewe dialects are the Ewe varieties spoken in Kpando, Anfoega and Ve.

Moreover, when loanwords are adopted into the language, there may be changes in the vowels and consonants of some of these words as exemplified in (105) below. Some oral vowels are nasalised and vice versa as illustrated in (104a) and (104b) above as well as in (105b).

105a.	<b>a-fukpǎ</b>	<	<b>a-fǒkpǎ</b>	‘shoe’	(Ewe)
105b.	<b>ɪ-hě</b>	<	<b>e-hě</b>	‘knife’	(Ewe)
105c.	<b>ɪ-só</b>	<	<b>e-só</b>	‘horse’	(Ewe)
105d.	<b>pĩ</b>	<	<b>pɛ</b>	‘want’	(Akan)
105e.	<b>i-dzyi</b>	<	<b>e-dzi</b>	‘heart’	(Ewe)
105f.	<b>agbedɔ̃</b> <sup>19</sup>	<	<b>a-gbeli</b>	‘cassava’	(Ewe)
105g.	<b>gelee</b>	<	<b>gedɛe</b>	‘many’	(Ewe)

The tones that these loanwords carry may vary or remain the same. As shown by the following examples in (106) and in (105a) – (105e) above, some prefixes with mid tones in the source language carry low tones in Tafi.

106.	Tafi	Ewe	Gloss
	<b>a-yĩ</b>	<b>ā-yi</b>	‘beans’
	<b>e-nyĩ</b>	<b>ē-nyi</b>	‘elephant’ <sup>20</sup>
	<b>a-zĩ</b>	<b>a-zi</b>	‘groundnuts’

Also, low or high tones on some stem syllables in Ewe become either LH or H while some LM tones become LH in Tafi. This is illustrated by the first example in (107) below and also by the examples in (106) above. There is no change in tones on the last two borrowed words in (107).

107.	Tafi	Ewe	Gloss
	<b>trǒ</b>	<b>tró</b>	‘twist’
	<b>kúnú</b>	<b>kúnú</b>	‘funeral’
	<b>pétée</b>	<b>pétée</b>	‘all’

Loanwords in Tafi whose source is English are only a handful. These words are modified to conform to the syllable structure of the language. For instance, any loanword with a CVC syllable structure is always pronounced with a vowel added to the final consonant. Thus, instead of a single CVC syllable we have two syllables, CVCV, with each syllable bearing its own tone as shown in (108). Also, diphthongs are reduced to monophthongs as illustrated in (109).

<sup>19</sup> Some speakers also use the same form of the Ewe word for cassava.

<sup>20</sup> The original meaning of **ē-nyi** in Ewe is ‘cow’.

	English		Tafi		Ewe
108.	cup	/kʌp/	<b>kópu</b>		<b>kópu</b>
	bucket	/bʌkɪt/	<b>bókiti</b>		<b>bókiti</b>
	cork	/kɔ:k/	<b>kɔki</b>		<b>kóki</b>
	cigarette	/sɪgəret/	<b>sigaréti</b>		<b>sigaréti</b>
109.	trousers	/trauzəz/	<b>trɔza</b>		<b>trɔza</b>
	plate	/pleit/	<b>prɪti</b>		<b>prente</b>
	paint	/peint/	<b>péti</b>		<b>péti</b>

As illustrated in (108) and (109) above, the Tafi loanwords and most of the Ewe loanwords are phonologically similar. Therefore, it is not yet clear whether these loanwords entered Tafi through Ewe or not. It could be that these words were borrowed into Tafi directly from English.

## 2.7 Tafi orthography

As at now, there is no standard orthography available for Tafi. In this section, I present some of the orthographic conventions used in this grammar, some of which are based on the Ewe orthography because Tafi speakers who are literate in Ewe are familiar with the Ewe orthographic conventions. This would facilitate the transition from Ewe writing practices to the Tafi ones.

The consonant sounds in (110) below are represented with the same character and these have more or less the phonetic value of the IPA symbols:

110. /p, b, f, fw, v, t, d, s, z, k, g, kp, gb, x, xw, h, hw, ts, dz, m, n, ŋ, ŋw, l, r, w, w̃/

The following sounds are represented differently from the IPA symbols:

- The voiced aspirated bilabial stop [bʰ] is written as ‘bh’.
- The voiced post-alveolar stop [ɖ] is written as ‘ɖ’.
- The voiceless palatal fricative [ɟ] is written as ‘sh’.
- The voiced palatal fricative [ʒ] is written as ‘zh’.
- The voiceless palatal affricate [tʃ] is written as ‘tsy’.
- The voiceless labialised palatal affricate [tʃw] is written as ‘tsyw’.
- The voiced palatal affricate [dʒ] is written as ‘dzy’.
- The palatal nasal [ɲ] is written as ‘ny’.
- The glide [j] is written as ‘y’.

The vowels /i, ɪ, e, ɛ, a, ɔ, o, u/ are written as i, ɪ, e, ɛ, a, ɔ, o, u and u. Nasal and nasalised vowels are written with a tilde ( ~ ) above the vowel symbol: *ĩ, ɪ̃, ê, ẽ, ã, õ, õ̃* and *ũ*. With respect to tone marks, an acute accent [ ´ ] on a tone-bearing

segment, usually, a vowel or a syllabic nasal, represents a high tone, a macron [ ¯ ] represents a mid tone and instances where a particular vowel is not tone-marked represents a low tone. However, a grave accent [ ` ] on a syllabic nasal represents a low tone. A rising tone is marked with a haček [ ˇ ] or a grave accent and a macron [ ˇ̄ ] on the segment while a circumflex [ ^ ] or an acute accent and a macron [ ^̄ ] or a macron and a grave accent [ ^̄ ] on a tone bearing segment represents a falling tone.

Orthographic vowel sequences where the first vowel is a high front vowel **i** or **ɪ** or a back vowel **o**, **ɔ**, **u**, or **ʊ** are phonologically a sequence of a palatal glide and a labial velar glide respectively. They are written as vowel sequences following the Ewe orthographic convention for such sound sequences as shown by the examples in (112) and (113).

- |      |                        |            |                      |
|------|------------------------|------------|----------------------|
| 111. | <b>zi</b> <b>zia</b>   | /zyazya/   | ‘often, usually’     |
|      | <b>tí</b> <b>áshĩ</b>  | /tyáshĩ/   | ‘how many/ much’     |
|      | <b>tietí</b>           | /tyeti/    | ‘five’               |
|      | <b>kámpiesí</b>        | /kámpyesí/ | ‘armpit’             |
| 112. | <b>kó</b> <b>éyĩ</b>   | /kwéyĩ/    | ‘exit’               |
|      | <b>eh</b> <b>oé</b>    | /ehwě/     | ‘cowries’            |
|      | <b>gug</b> <b>ɔ́é</b>  | /gugwě/    | ‘last’               |
|      | <b>kahl</b> <b>ɔ́é</b> | /kahlwě/   | ‘antelope’           |
| 113. | <b>kib</b> <b>uí</b>   | /kibwĩ/    | ‘word, matter, case’ |
|      | <b>bhui</b>            | /bhwi/     | ‘cut’                |
|      | <b>pú</b> <b>ĩ</b>     | /pwĩ/      | ‘roast, bake’        |
|      | <b>káz</b> <b>hué</b>  | /kázhwě/   | ‘bird’               |
|      | <b>kub</b> <b>uí</b>   | /kubwĩ/    | ‘dew’                |

The verb and its markers – subject markers and preverb markers constitute one phonological word. They are therefore written together as one orthographic word. In sentence (114a), the subject marker /o/ which precedes the verb is written together with it and in (114b), the subject pronoun, the repetitive, persistent, ‘again’ and ventive preverb markers are attached to the verb.

114a. Osín odzyíni.

**o-sí**      **ní**      **o-dzyíni**  
 CM-tree   DEF   SM-break  
 ‘The tree broke.’

114b. Ɔzɔkɔvlɔbɔwĩ ’ulu.

**ɔ-zɔ-kɔ-vlɔ-bɔ-wĩ**      **bu-lu**  
 2SG-REP-PERS-again-VENT-drink   CM-drink  
 ‘You are going to drink again.’



An elided initial consonant or syllable of a noun is indicated by an apostrophe sign ('). Where two sounds in a sequence are elided only one apostrophe is used. I do not show the elision in postpositions where it concerns the elision of their initial consonants. This is because the elision is a process of their grammaticalisation from nominals to postpositions. I also do not indicate the elision of the vowel of the definiteness or topic marker **ní** with an apostrophe because **ní** 'DEF' or 'TOP' is developing from a particle to a clitic. This also applies to the first person singular pronoun **mí** which is also developing into a clitic. The examples in (114a) above and (115) below are illustrations.

Moreover, the noun, the definiteness marker and the reduced form of postpositions are written together as shown in (115a) and (115b) below.

115a. Okútún ókpasí kúsúgbáním.

**o-kútú ní ó-kpasí kí-súgbá ní kum**  
 CM-orange DEF SM-be.in CM-bowl DEF inside  
 'The orange is in the bowl.'

115b. Keplukpán 'étsirí kplǎíábhā.

**ke-plukpá ní ké-tsirí kplǎ kábhā**  
 CM-book DEF SM-be.on table top  
 'The book is on a table.'

As illustrated in (115a) and (115b), the definiteness marker is attached to the subject NP. Also in (115a), the definiteness marker and the postposition following the object NP have been written together with it. In (115b), the postposition which directly follows the object NP is written together with it.

Furthermore, there is a liaison between the reduced forms of words that end in a consonant (e.g. the definiteness marker **ní**) and the following word beginning with a vowel. See for example, the sentences in (115) above.

## 3 Nouns and Noun classes

### 3.1 Nouns

Nouns prototypically express time-stable concepts (Givón 2001:51), for example, **ɔda** ‘metal, iron’. Nouns in the Tafi language typically consist of a nominal prefix and a stem. These prefixes have a (C)V shape. A prefix may have varied forms depending on the [ATR] value of the initial vowel in the stem. The tone on prefixes is either high or low (see footnote 16 for an exception). Nouns without prefixes in the language are not many and they include loan words.

#### 3.1.1 Noun classes

One of the most distinguished features of Niger-Congo languages is the system of noun classes that they possess. Nouns in these languages are assigned to various classes on the basis of their singular and plural forms that are marked by prefixes or suffixes and their agreement patterns. They may be grouped into genders on the basis of their singular/plural pairings. Zulu, a Bantu language of southern Africa, for example, has nine pairs of singular and plural prefixes (Poulos and Msimang 1998). Tafi and the other GTM languages have an active noun class system of the Niger-Congo type. However, they don’t seem to have retained some of the features that go with such a system. For instance, several of these GTM languages do not show agreement between nouns and their qualifiers.

Schuh (1995:130) observes that the term noun class is used in two different ways in the description of African languages, namely, it is used to refer to “a single set of morphological concords which may show up as affixes on noun stems, affixes on modifiers, and pronominal referents to nouns” and “a paired set of [morphological] concords where one member of the pair is a singular referent and the other member is a plural corresponding to that singular.” In this grammar, I use the term following the first usage because one can account better for the noun class system if the individual classes are treated separately since this will avoid the complication of many-to-one relation between singular and plural pairings. Moreover, using the singular to plural pairing leaves the **ti-** class which mainly contains non-count nouns an orphan.

Like in all other GTM languages, in the noun class system of Tafi, each noun belongs to a particular class identified by prefixes. Thus, it marks singular/plural alternations with prefixes and often requires concord of other elements in the sentence with the governing noun. In this way, the head noun determines what affix is used for agreement.

In this grammar, the different noun classes will be labelled as **ki-** class, **ka-** class etc. based on the various prefixes. Where we have more than one prefix with the same shape, numbers are added to them, for instance, **a<sup>1</sup>-** class etc.

### 3.1.2 Noun class prefixes

Tafi has ten individual classes which are made up of five singular classes, four plural classes and one class which mainly contains non-count nouns (Bobuafor 2009a). The singular classes are **a<sup>1</sup>-**, **o-**, **ki-**, **ka-**, **bu<sup>1</sup>-**, and the plural classes are **ba(a)-**, **i-**, **a<sup>2</sup>-**, and **bu<sup>2</sup>-**. The **ti-** class is a non-count class and therefore it has no plural counterpart. The **ba(a)-** and **bu<sup>2</sup>-** classes contain the plural forms of more than one singular class. In less careful or spontaneous speech, whole prefixes or consonantal onsets of prefixes are dropped, an observation already made by Funke (1910), (see also § 2.5.1). In sentence initial position or in isolation, the full forms of all the CV noun class prefixes, **ki-**, **ka-**, **bu<sup>1</sup>-**, **ba(a)-**, **bu<sup>2</sup>-** are used but when they occur elsewhere their initial consonant or the whole prefix may be dropped except for the prefix of the **ti-** class whose full form is used in any position. This is one of the signs that the noun class system of Tafi is in the process of decaying as it is in Nyagbo (see Essegbey 2009). Also historically, Logba is reported to have CV prefixes which have eroded to become only V prefixes (Heine 1968, Dörvlo 2008 and Dörvlo 2009). In the subsections that follow, I discuss the singular classes first followed by the plural classes. The nominal prefixes are given in Table 3.1. In the table, the various classes are listed in the second column and the noun class prefixes are given in the third column. In the third column, we have the different forms of the prefixes the nouns in each class take depending on the [ATR] value of the (initial) vowel of the noun stem.

Table 3.1 Nominal Prefixes

NUMBER	CLASS	NOUN PREFIX
I	<b>a<sup>1</sup>-</b>	<b>a/e/Ø-</b>
II	<b>ba(a)-</b>	<b>ba/be/Ø-</b>
III	<b>o-</b>	<b>ɔ/o-</b>
IV	<b>i-</b>	<b>ɪ/i-</b>
V	<b>ki-</b>	<b>kɪ/ki-</b>
VI	<b>a<sup>2</sup>-</b>	<b>a/e-</b>
VII	<b>ka-</b>	<b>ka/ke-</b>
VIII	<b>bu<sup>1</sup>-</b>	<b>bu/bu-</b>
IX	<b>bu<sup>2</sup>-</b>	<b>bu/bu-</b>
X	<b>ti-</b>	<b>tɪ/ti-</b>

### 3.1.2.1 The a<sup>1</sup>- class

With the exception of some borrowed nouns, nouns in the a<sup>1</sup>- class are characterised by the use of the prefixes **a-** or **e-**, depending on the [ATR] specification of the vowel in the initial syllable of the nominal root. The following are some examples:

- |    |                |           |                  |          |
|----|----------------|-----------|------------------|----------|
| 1. | <b>á-kā</b>    | ‘father’  | <b>é-nī</b>      | ‘mother’ |
|    | <b>á-nyí</b>   | ‘man’     | <b>e-kusí</b>    | ‘chief’  |
|    | <b>a-ga</b>    | ‘animal’  | <b>é-blidzya</b> | ‘snake’  |
|    | <b>a-núvɔ̃</b> | ‘baby’    | <b>é-fū</b>      | ‘guest’  |
|    | <b>a-bó</b>    | ‘termite’ | <b>é-dzyūi</b>   | ‘mouse’  |

Some nouns in this class are prefix-less. These nouns can be said to take a Ø-prefix. They are in this class because they share with the prefixed nouns in this class, the agreement markers. Examples of such nouns are:

- |    |                 |                       |                |                  |
|----|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------|------------------|
| 2. | <b>Kpáyā</b>    | ‘God’                 | <b>dɛkɛ</b>    | ‘crocodile’      |
|    | <b>gbokɔɛ</b>   | ‘toad’                | <b>túŋgbá</b>  | ‘a bush cow’     |
|    | <b>sáhwí</b>    | ‘spider’              | <b>gbɛŋgbɛ</b> | ‘praying mantis’ |
|    | <b>hohlōmuá</b> | ‘(green) grasshopper’ | <b>blaŋ</b>    | ‘pawpaw’         |

Moreover, there are also certain nouns in this class which do not exhibit any singular/plural distinction. They are in this class because their pronominal form and their subject-verb agreement forms are the same as those of the other nouns in this class. Examples of these nouns are:

- |    |               |         |
|----|---------------|---------|
| 3. | <b>súbha</b>  | ‘rain’  |
|    | <b>wolɛ</b>   | ‘moon’  |
|    | <b>dzyosū</b> | ‘blood’ |
|    | <b>nikpɛ</b>  | ‘maize’ |

Furthermore, most borrowed nouns, mostly from Ewe, also belong to this class. Some loanwords retain the prefixes of the source language while others have their prefixes changed or they do not occur with prefixes at all.<sup>21</sup> Examples given here, except the last two words are all words from Ewe origin:

- |    |                 |            |
|----|-----------------|------------|
| 4. | <b>a-fɔmízi</b> | ‘rabbit’   |
|    | <b>a-wi</b>     | ‘dress’    |
|    | <b>ɪ-só</b>     | ‘horse’    |
|    | <b>e-nyí</b>    | ‘elephant’ |
|    | <b>dɔkū</b>     | ‘turkey’   |

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<sup>21</sup> Loanwords will be discussed in detail in section 3.2.

<b>tédzyí</b>	‘donkey’
<b>vudǒ</b>	‘well (n)’
<b>tuṁpá</b>	‘bottle’
<b>háma</b>	‘hammer’

With regard to the semantics of the nouns in this class, it contains most animate nouns, almost all human nouns, some wild and domestic animals, fluids, meteorological phenomena as well as most borrowed words. The semantics of the borrowed words have no limitations.

### 3.1.2.2 The o- class

Nouns belonging to the **o-** class take an **o/o-** prefix, distributed in accordance with the ATR harmony requirements as shown in the following examples:

5.	<b>o-tǒmí</b>	‘beard’	<b>o-nugbù</b>	‘mouth’
	<b>o-ma</b>	‘town’	<b>o-lí</b>	‘neck’
	<b>o-shě</b>	‘branch’	<b>o-sí</b>	‘tree’
	<b>o-dǎ</b>	‘metal, iron’	<b>o-yĩtsí</b>	‘hawk’
	<b>o-bh̩a</b>	‘friend’	<b>o-ní</b>	‘soup’

Among others, nouns in the **o-** class include part-whole relational terms like human and animal body parts, parts of plants and buildings, parts of the day, elements of the environment, some minerals, some animals and some food items.

### 3.1.2.3 The ki- class

The **ki-** class has nouns which take **ki/ki-** prefix. The prefix **ki-** occurs with roots with an initial [-ATR] vowel while **ki-** occurs with those that have an initial [+ATR] vowel as shown in the examples in (6).

6.	<b>kí-gǔ</b>	‘year’	<b>kí-wí</b>	‘day’
	<b>ki-tǒkpú</b>	‘head’	<b>kí-kū</b>	‘yam’
	<b>ki-zǒ</b>	‘housefly’	<b>ki-dri</b>	‘wall’
	<b>ki-kana</b>	‘crab’	<b>ki-lé</b>	‘tooth’

There are certain nouns in this class which do not have plural forms. The following are some examples:

7a.	<b>kí-lē</b>	‘wind’	<b>ki-wí</b>	‘sun’
	<b>ki-buí</b>	‘dew’	<b>ki-widúǔ</b>	‘sunset’
	<b>kí-dǔ</b>	‘thing’	<b>kí-vū</b>	‘yesterday’

The **ki-** class contains semantically diverse nouns including some items whose shape is flat and long like road, lizard, and spear; certain items with a round shape like egg, gourd and stone; some abstract nouns, emotions like fear, most body parts including head, thigh, bone, vagina, testicles; some household items, farm products, some insects and some water-related animals like frogs, among others.

The **ki-/kɪ-** prefix is also a diminutive prefix and it can co-occur with the **-ɪ/i** suffix to form the diminutives of nouns as in following examples in (7b). The **-ɪ/i** suffix interacts with the final vowel of the noun to which it is attached. It becomes **-e** when it occurs after **ɔ** or coalesces with **a** as shown by the examples in (7b).

7b.	<b>kɪ-kukʂé</b>	‘a small chick’	←	<b>ɔ-kúkʂ</b>	‘fowl’
	<b>kɪ-pidzyě</b>	‘a small goat’	←	<b>e-pidzya</b>	‘goat’
	<b>kɪ-núvʂě</b>	‘a very young child’	←	<b>a-núvʂ</b>	‘child’
	<b>kɪ-shoě</b>	‘a small basket’	←	<b>ka-shʂ</b>	‘basket’

### 3.1.2.4 The ka- class

Nouns belonging to this class take a **ka-** or **ke-** prefix. Noun roots with an initial [-ATR] vowel take the **ka-** prefix while those with an initial [+ATR] vowel take the **ke-** prefix. This is illustrated in (8).

8.	<b>ka-hukpó</b>	‘hand’	<b>ke-sukpá</b>	‘ground, floor’
	<b>ka-tsrukpó</b>	‘foot’	<b>ke-sukpogunū</b>	‘tree stump’
	<b>ká-pā</b>	‘hoe’	<b>ke-tsé</b>	‘monkey’
	<b>ka-hlʂě</b>	‘deer’	<b>ke-húí</b>	‘a kind of deer’
	<b>ka-gbā</b>	‘kitchen’	<b>ké-dunú</b>	‘doorway’
	<b>ka-kudzogě</b>	‘dog’	<b>ke-gbu</b>	‘stool’

Nouns in this class include a few human terms referring to age like **ke-bité** ‘young woman’, some body parts, some wild and domestic animals, birds, farm implements and other entities such as parts of a tree. The **ka-** class also contains some locative nouns such as ‘ground’ and ‘land’. Some of such nouns have evolved into postpositions and have retained the nominal prefix which has become lexicalized with the root. Examples include **kábhā** ‘top’, **kesí** ‘bottom, underpart’, **kumu** ‘inside’ and **kenu** ‘entrance’.

### 3.1.2.5 The bu<sup>1</sup>- class

The nouns in the **bu<sup>1</sup>-** class take a **bu-/bu-** prefix. **bu-** occurs with nouns with an initial [-ATR] vowel while **bu-** occurs with nouns with a [+ATR] initial vowel. Below are some examples:

- |    |                  |            |  |                 |            |
|----|------------------|------------|--|-----------------|------------|
| 9. | <b>bu-pá</b>     | ‘house’    |  | <b>bu-tú</b>    | ‘mountain’ |
|    | <b>bu-ya</b>     | ‘farm’     |  | <b>bú-glebē</b> | ‘wing’     |
|    | <b>bu-tó</b>     | ‘ear, ash’ |  | <b>bú-vū</b>    | ‘building’ |
|    | <b>bu-wá</b>     | ‘medicine’ |  | <b>bú-hihē</b>  | ‘sweat’    |
|    | <b>bu-zho</b>    | ‘cheek’    |  | <b>bu-ní</b>    | ‘water’    |
|    | <b>bú-nyínyí</b> | ‘penis’    |  | <b>bu-nuhu</b>  | ‘language’ |
|    | <b>bu-bó</b>     | ‘oil, fat’ |  | <b>bu-lí</b>    | ‘oil palm’ |

Semantically, the nouns in this class belong to a small set consisting of body-parts including some paired body-parts; non-count nouns, tall and large objects.

This class prefix is prefixed to some verbs to form gerunds. This is exemplified by the examples in (10a) and by **butí** ‘crawling’ in the proverb in (10b).

- |      |                |                |   |             |              |
|------|----------------|----------------|---|-------------|--------------|
| 10a. | <b>bu-yí</b>   | ‘killing’      | ← | <b>yí</b>   | ‘kill’       |
|      | <b>bu-pu</b>   | ‘scattering’   | ← | <b>pu</b>   | ‘scatter’    |
|      | <b>bú-gā</b>   | ‘walking’      | ← | <b>ga</b>   | ‘walk’       |
|      | <b>bu-búkú</b> | ‘intoxicating’ | ← | <b>búkú</b> | ‘intoxicate’ |

- 10b. Ónúgí dēkē évu wó ní, y’eyialí butí látí ní anō ’evuabhā.  
**Ónú.gí** **dēkē** **é-vu** **wó** **ní** **yí** **e-yi-álí**  
 COND crocodile SM-catch 2SG TOP 3SG.IND CM-child-PL  
**bu-tí** **lá-tí** **ní** **a-nō** **ki-vu** **kábhā**  
 CM-crawl 3PL.DEF-crawl LOC CM-person CM-stomach top  
 ‘When a crocodile has captured you, baby crocodiles will crawl on your belly.’

Such gerunds are used in predicate focus constructions (see Chapter 6).

The **bu/bu-** prefix can also be added to adjectives to derive nominals. In some cases, the adjective is fully or partially reduplicated and in other cases, there is no reduplication. For example,

- |     |                        |             |   |                |              |
|-----|------------------------|-------------|---|----------------|--------------|
| 11. | <b>bú-féléfélé</b>     | ‘lightness’ | ← | <b>féléé</b>   | ‘light’      |
|     | <b>bú-kplitakplita</b> | ‘shortness’ | ← | <b>kplita</b>  | ‘short’      |
|     | <b>bú-tsótsómō</b>     | ‘ugliness’  | ← | <b>tsómō</b>   | ‘ugly’       |
|     | <b>bú-bhuliyí</b>      | ‘smallness’ | ← | <b>bhuliyí</b> | ‘very small’ |
|     | <b>bu-giganí</b>       | ‘strength’  | ← | <b>giganí</b>  | ‘strong’     |

The next group of prefixes to be described is the plural prefixes.

## 3.1.2.6 The ba(a)- class

The **ba(a)**- class comprises plural forms of nouns in the **a**<sup>1</sup>- class as shown in (12a), the **bu**<sup>1</sup>- class as illustrated in (12b) and a sub-set of the **ki**- and **ka**- classes as shown in (12c). Nouns in this class have the plural prefix **ba(a)**~**be(e)**-. As usual, the **ba(a)**~**be(e)**- alternation is governed by the ATR value of the initial root vowel.

12a.	<b>báá-kā</b>	‘fathers’	<b>béé-nī</b>	‘mothers’
	<b>baa-dzī</b>	‘women’	<b>bee-kusí</b>	‘chiefs’
	<b>baa-ga</b>	‘animals’	<b>bé-blidzya</b>	‘snakes’
	<b>ba-bó</b>	‘termites’	<b>bé-fū</b>	‘guests’
	<b>ba-honī</b>	‘doves’	<b>bé-dzyūī</b>	‘mice’
12b.	<b>ba-ya</b>	‘farms’	<b>be-vu</b>	‘buildings’
	<b>ba-pá</b>	‘houses’	<b>bee-tú</b>	‘mountains’
	<b>bá-wɔ́fú</b>	‘games’	<b>be-pí</b>	‘beams, rafters’
	<b>baa-ká</b>	‘fences’	<b>bé-gū</b>	‘customs’
12c.	<b>ba-zo</b>	‘housefly’	<b>be-ní</b>	‘rivers’
	<b>ba-drɔ́gá</b>	‘bedbug’	<b>be-dzigā</b>	‘traders’

## 3.1.2.7 The i- class

The **i-** class is made up of the plural forms of nouns in the **o-** class. Depending on the [ATR] value of the initial vowel of the noun root, nouns in this class take **i-**/**ɪ-** as prefixes. Below are some examples:

13.	<b>ɪ-tɔ́mí</b>	‘beards’	<b>i-nugbū</b>	‘mouths’
	<b>ɪ-ma</b>	‘towns’	<b>i-lí</b>	‘necks’
	<b>ɪ-shě</b>	‘branches’	<b>i-sí</b>	‘trees’
	<b>ɪ-djá</b>	‘metals, iron’	<b>i-yĩtsí</b>	‘hawks’
	<b>ɪ-bhɪa</b>	‘friends’	<b>i-ní</b>	‘soups’

3.1.2.8 The a<sup>2</sup>- class

The **a**<sup>2</sup>- class has been identified as a separate class, because it comprises plural nouns whereas the **a**<sup>1</sup>- class contains singular nouns. It pairs with the **ki**- class which is a singular class. Noun roots with a [-ATR] initial vowel occur with the **a**- prefix and those with [+ATR] initial vowel with the **e**- prefix as in (14).

14a.	<b>á-gɔ́</b>	‘years’	<b>e-wí</b>	‘days’
	<b>a-tɔ́kpú</b>	‘heads’	<b>é-kū</b>	‘yams’
	<b>a-zo</b>	‘houseflies’	<b>e-dri</b>	‘walls’
	<b>a-kana</b>	‘crabs’	<b>e-lé</b>	‘teeth’



Some collectives with individuated members such as grains also belong to this class. Examples include:

- 14b. **á-sí** 'rice'  
**a-zí** 'peanuts'  
**a-yí** 'beans'  
**a-mó** 'unhusked rice'

### 3.1.2.9 The bu<sup>2</sup>- class

Nouns in the **bu<sup>2</sup>**- class take a **bu-/bu-** prefix when they occur with a noun root with a [-ATR] or [+ATR] initial vowel respectively. The nouns in this class represent the plural forms of the nouns in the **ka-** class as in (15a) and a subset of nouns in the **ki-** class as in (15b).

- |      |                   |            |                     |                    |
|------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 15a. | <b>bu-hukpó</b>   | 'hands'    | <b>bu-sukpá</b>     | 'grounds'          |
|      | <b>bu-tsrukpo</b> | 'feet'     | <b>bu-sukpogunu</b> | 'tree stumps'      |
|      | <b>bu-pa</b>      | 'hoes'     | <b>bu-tsé</b>       | 'monkeys'          |
|      | <b>bu-hlǎ́é</b>   | 'deers'    | <b>bu-kudzɔgě</b>   | 'dogs'             |
|      | <b>bu-gbā</b>     | 'kitchens' | <b>bú-dunú</b>      | 'doorways'         |
|      | <b>bu-gbu</b>     | 'stools'   | <b>bu-plukpá</b>    | 'books'            |
| 15b. | <b>bu-plá</b>     | 'buttocks' | <b>bu-yíscé</b>     | 'young men'        |
|      | <b>bú-kúkóéyí</b> | 'chicken'  | <b>bu-dzimĩ</b>     | 'very young girls' |

### 3.1.2.10 The ti- class

The **ti-** class nouns take the **ti-/ti-** as prefix depending on the [ATR] value of the initial root vowel. This class is made up of collective nouns which are mainly non-liquid such as:

- |     |                |              |                 |             |
|-----|----------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------|
| 16. | <b>ti-sí</b>   | 'clay, soil' | <b>ti-sí</b>    | 'feather'   |
|     | <b>ti-wulé</b> | 'intestines' | <b>ti-pí</b>    | 'excrement' |
|     | <b>ti-wá</b>   | 'grass'      | <b>ti-wulǎ́</b> | 'rubbish'   |
|     | <b>tí-kā</b>   | 'hair'       | <b>ti-rá</b>    | 'sleep'     |

The prefix **ti-/ti-** is also used for the nominalisation of verbs as the following examples show:

- |     |                  |                  |   |             |            |
|-----|------------------|------------------|---|-------------|------------|
| 17. | <b>tí-yíyékē</b> | 'swelling'       | ← | <b>yékē</b> | 'swell'    |
|     | <b>tí-zɔzā</b>   | 'staying, being' | ← | <b>za</b>   | 'stay, be' |
|     | <b>tí-ɲɲā</b>    | 'eating'         | ← | <b>ɲa</b>   | 'eat'      |
|     | <b>tí-vɪvɪ</b>   | 'going'          | ← | <b>vɪ</b>   | 'go'       |
|     | <b>tí-púpó</b>   | 'waiting'        | ← | <b>pó</b>   | 'wait'     |

<b>tí-tsútsú</b>	‘digging’	←	<b>tsú</b>	‘dig’
<b>tí-tutā</b>	‘chewing’	←	<b>tā</b>	‘chew’
<b>tí-fífatī</b>	‘peeling’	←	<b>fātī</b>	‘peel’

As the examples in (17) show, in the process of nominalisation, the initial (or only) syllable of the verb is reduplicated before the prefix is added while the reduplicated part contains a vowel pre-specified as [+high], which adapts its [ATR] value to the [ATR] value of the initial vowel of the verb root.

Moreover, **ti-/tí-** is the prefix attached to language names. For example, **Ti-trugbu** ‘the language of the people of Nyagbo’, **Ti-yǐgbē** ‘Ewe’, **Ti-múí** ‘Akan’ and **Tí-frańsí** ‘French’.

### 3.1.3 Summary of the noun classes

The match between the singular and plural classes in Tafi and how they interrelate is represented by Figure 1. As shown in the figure, the **ba(a)-** class is made up of plurals of nouns in the **a<sup>1</sup>-**, **bu<sup>1</sup>-** and a subset of the **ka-** and **ki-** classes. Also, the **bu<sup>2</sup>-** class comprises most of the plural forms of the **ka-** class and a subset of the **ki-** class. The **ti-** class contains non-count nouns so it has no plural counterpart.

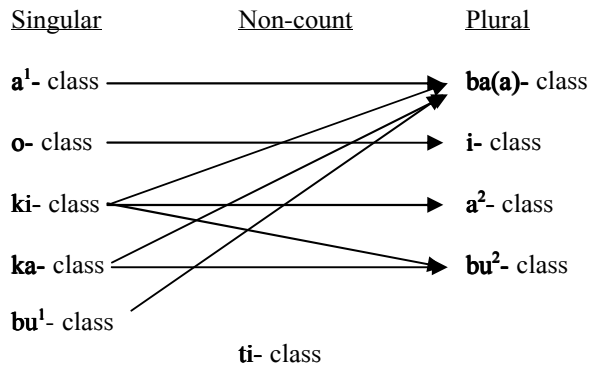


Figure 1. Singular and Plural pairings.

## 3.2 Loanwords

It is well known that languages in contact influence one another. Most often, a borrowed form or pattern diverges from its shape in the source language. For example, the Tafi words **a-kana** ‘crabs’ and **o-ma** ‘town’ are borrowed from Ewe **agalā** ‘crab’ and Akan **omán** ‘town’, respectively (see Chapter 2 § 2.6). It is also possible that in the borrowing process a semantic or functional change takes place, for instance **e-nyi** ‘cow’ in Ewe becomes ‘elephant’ in Tafi. Other loans are

integrated without modification, as the Ewe words **a-srā** ‘tobacco’ and **vudō** ‘well’. Thus, loanwords vary in terms of their degree of phonological and morphological integration into the borrowing language. When formal changes occur, these are usually determined by the structure of the borrowing language. In this section, I will examine the question of how borrowed nouns are incorporated into the noun class system of Tafi.

Heine (1968) mentions three methods of integrating borrowed nouns into noun class systems: (i) automatic, (ii) phonological and (iii) semantic allocations. In Tafi, the first and second methods apply. The third method, the semantic allocation applies in tandem with the phonological.

I. In many noun class languages, loanwords are put in only one or few of the available classes. In Tafi, for instance, the default class is the **a<sup>1</sup>**- class.

Some of the nouns that Tafi borrowed do not have nominal class prefixes. Examples of such nouns include **siká** ‘money’ borrowed from Akan and **kođú** ‘banana’ borrowed from Akan (**kwadu**) via Ewe ((**a**)**kođú**). The subject-verb agreement marker these nouns take is **a/e-** depending on the initial vowel of the verb, which signals that they are functioning like **a<sup>1</sup>**- class nouns as illustrated by the examples in (18).

18. Kođún ébékē.  
**kođú ní é-békē**  
 banana DEF SM-finish  
 ‘The banana is finished.’

II. Some borrowed nouns are allocated to certain noun classes, because their initial syllable bears phonological resemblance to the singular prefix of a particular class, as in (19a) - (19c).

	<u>Singular</u>		<u>Plural</u>			
19a.	<b>a-gbedi</b>	‘cassava’	<b>ba-gbedi</b>	‘cassava’	< Ewe, <b>agbeli</b>	‘cassava’
19b.	<b>a-wi</b>	‘dress’	<b>ba-wi</b>	‘dresses’	< Ewe, <b>awu</b>	‘dress’
19c.	<b>o-dotí</b>	‘cotton’	<b>i-dotí</b>	‘cotton’	< Gã, <b>odóntí</b>	‘cotton’

The loanwords in examples (19a) – (19c) are interpreted in Tafi as consisting of a prefix and a root. The words in the source languages have petrified prefixes. In Tafi the prefixes of these loanwords are identified with the singular prefix of the **a<sup>1</sup>**- class, as in examples (19a) and (19b) which do not conform to its animate semantics, and of the **o-** class, as in example (19c).

III. Some loanwords in Tafi are allocated to a given noun class for both semantic and phonological reasons. For example, the words in example (20a) and (20b) are allocated to the **a<sup>2</sup>**- class on the basis of their form and meaning. Their

initial syllable is analysed as an **a**<sup>2</sup>- class prefix and semantically because they denote water-related animals, which belong to this class. As they are countable, their singular forms are assigned to the **ki**- class.

20a.	<b>ki-kpǎ</b>	‘fish’	<b>a-kpǎ</b>	‘fishes’	< Ewe, <b>akpā</b>
20b.	<b>ki-kana</b>	‘crab’	<b>a-kana</b>	‘crabs’	< Ewe, <b>agalā</b>

Similarly, the examples in (21a) and (21b) are assigned on the basis of their form and meaning. They have an **a**- prefix and the semantics of collectives. Different from the examples in (20), the forms in (21) do not have singular forms.

21a.	<b>a-yĩ</b>	‘beans’	< Ewe <b>āyi</b>
21b.	<b>a-zĩ</b>	‘groundnuts/peanuts’	< Ewe <b>azi</b>

### 3.3 The system of grammatical agreement

Agreement is a purely syntactic phenomenon, in which the grammatical properties of one element in the sentence (the agreeing element, or ‘target’, in the terminology of Corbett 1991) are determined by those of another element (the ‘controller’, in this case the noun).

Apart from the fact that the class of a noun is signalled by a pair of prefixes attached to the nominal stem, one for singular and the other one for plural, Tafi also has a characteristic pattern of grammatical agreement whereby demonstratives, numerals, pronouns, and other elements in a sentence which are co-referential with a noun show concord with that noun in which case they are assigned a prefix that co-indexes the class of the noun. Also, subject-verb agreement markers are used to cross-reference nouns on the verbs they occur with. Thus, nouns in the language are grouped into the various classes based on not only the class prefixes they occur with but primarily on the agreement markers. The definition of ‘noun class’ in Tafi involves reference both to the prefix on the noun (if there is one) and to the pattern of grammatical agreement.

Table 3.2 gives a summary of the noun class prefixes and agreement markers that verbs as well as elements within the noun phrase take. The second column in Table 3.2 contains class prefixes as well as subject-verb agreement markers (SM). The SM for the two **bu**- classes is zero because nouns belonging to these classes are no longer cross-referenced on the verb. Some other classes such as the **ki**-, **i**- and **ti**- classes are also vacillating in agreement marking on the verb. As will become evident throughout this work, they sometimes show agreement overtly with the appropriate subject marker and at other times, the subject marker is zero. Moreover, as indicated against the **a**<sup>1</sup>- class in the second column, nouns in this class either take an **a**-, **e**- or a zero (Ø-) prefix. However, they are all cross-referenced on the verb with an **a**- or **e**- prefix. Furthermore, the SM for the **ti**- class

is **ki/ki-**. As the root of the numeral **-ɖikpó** ‘one’ is [+ATR], the singular classes do not have a [-ATR] counterpart of the numeral prefix.

Table 3.2. Noun class prefixes, agreement markers and pronouns

Class	Class Pfx	SM	Subj Pron	Obj. Pron/ indep. pron.	Dep. pron.	Poss. Pron.	Dem. Pfx	Indef. mrk. Pfx	Num. Pfx	Int. Qrf.	NP-nyáá- NP
a <sup>1</sup> -	a/e-/ Ø-	a/e-	a/e-	yí	a/e-	a-	a-	te-	te-	-	nyáá/ nyéé
ba (a)-	ba-/ be-	ba-/ be-	ba-/ be-	balí	la/ le-	a-N -alí	a-	te-	tta-/ tie-	tta-	nyáá/ nyéé
o-	ɔ/o-	ɔ/o-	ɔ/o- lo/lo-	ɔlí	lo/ lo-	ɔ-	ɔ-	to-	to-	-	nyóó/ nyóó
i-	ɪ/i-	(ɪ/i-)	ɪ/i- li/li-	ɪlí	li/ li-	ɪ-	ɪ-	ti-	ti-/ ti-	tu	nyéé/ nyéé
ki-	kɪ-/ ki-	(kɪ-/ ki-)	kɪ-/ ki-	kulí	li/ li-	ɪ-	ɪ-	ti-	tri-	-	nyéé/ nyéé
a <sup>2</sup> -	a/e-	a/e-	la-/ le-	alí	la/ le-	a-	a-	te-	ta-/ te-	taa-	nyáá/ nyéé
ka-	ka-/ ke-	ka-/ ke-	ka-/ ke-	kalí	kalí	ta-	a-	tie-	tie-	-	nyáá/ nyéé
bu <sup>2</sup> -	bu-/ bu-	-	bu-/ bu-	bulí	lu/ lu-	u-	ɔ-/ u-	tu-	tu-/ tu-	tuu-	nyóó/ nyóó
bu <sup>1</sup> -	bu-/ bu-	-	bu-/ bu-	bulí	lu/ lu-	u-	ɔ-/ u-	tu-	tru-	-	nyóó/ nyóó
ti-	tu/ti-	(kɪ-/ ki-)	kɪ-/ ki-	kulí	li/ li-	ɪ-	ɪ-	ti-	-	taa-	nyéé/ nyéé

### 3.3.1 Subject-verb agreement markers

The subject-verb agreement markers are the same as the noun class prefixes. Like the noun class prefixes, the subject-verb agreement markers have two forms depending on the ATR value of the initial vowel of the verb root. It should be noted that in fast connected speech, where the subject-verb agreement marker is made up of a CV syllable, the consonantal onset is dropped or the whole agreement marker may be dropped. In the examples, the subject-verb agreement marker is indicated by SM while the prefixes on nouns are glossed as CM for singular prefixes and as CM.PL for plural prefixes. These forms are presented in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Subject-verb agreement markers

CLASS	VERBAL CONCORD
<b>a<sup>1</sup>-</b>	<b>a/e-</b>
<b>ba(a)-</b>	<b>ba/be-</b>
<b>o-</b>	<b>o/ɔ-</b>
<b>i-</b>	<b>(i/i-)</b>
<b>ki-</b>	<b>(kɪ/ki-)</b>
<b>a<sup>2</sup>-</b>	<b>a/e-</b>
<b>ka-</b>	<b>ka/ke-</b>
<b>bu<sup>2</sup>-</b>	-
<b>bu<sup>1</sup>-</b>	-
<b>ti-</b>	<b>(kɪ/ki-)</b>

Depending on the ATR value of the first vowel in the verb, the subject-verb agreement marker used to cross-reference nouns in the **a<sup>1</sup>-** class is **a-** or **e-** as exemplified in (22a) and (22b). The examples in (22) are taken from a frog story narration.

22a. Ányínóvǝḗn ámo ozi tolí n'ǝsí gbıgbłǎnı́m.

**á-nyínóvǝḗn** **ní** **á-mo** **o-zi** **to-lí** **ní** **o-sí**  
 CM-boy DEF SM-see CM-hole AM-INDEF LOC CM-tree  
**gbıgbłǎ** **ní** **kımı**  
 big DEF in  
 'The boy saw a hole in the big tree.' (FS)

22b. Ányínóvǝḗn éwu osı́n.

**á-nyínóvǝḗn** **ní** **é-wū** **o-sí** **ní**  
 CM-boy DEF SM-climb CM-tree DEF  
 'The boy climbed up the tree.' (FS)

In (22a) and (22b), the subject NP has been cross-referenced on the verb. The alternation between **a-** and **e-** of the SM is explained by ATR assimilation. In (22a) the verb contains a [-ATR] vowel /ɔ/, so it takes as agreement marker **a-** which is also [-ATR] whereas in (22b), the [+ATR] value of the vowel /u/ of the verb attracts **e-** which is also [+ATR].

As stated in section 3.1.2.1, some prefix-less nouns including some borrowed nouns belong to this class. This is because they share with the prefixed nouns in this class the agreement markers, as in (23a) and (23b). Sentence (23a) has as its subject a prefix-less noun while that of (23b) is a prefix-less borrowed word.

- 23a. Sáhwiń étsirí bupíním.  
**sáhwiń ní é-tsirí bu-pí ní kumí**  
 Spider DEF SM-be.on CM-ceiling DEF in  
 ‘The spider is on the ceiling.’ (TRPS. 7)
- 23b. Bólun ákpasí kadangóniésí.  
 bólú ní á-kpasí kadangó ní ke.sí  
 ball DEF SM-be.in chair DEF under  
 ‘The ball is under the chair.’ (TPRS. 16)

Moreover, there are also some nouns in this class such as **dzyosũ** ‘blood’, **sóbha** ‘rain’, and **welě** ‘moon’ that do not exhibit any singular/plural distinction. They are in this class because their pronominal and subject-verb agreement forms are the same as those of the other nouns in this class as illustrated in the following sentence:

- 24a. Dzyosũ ált y’óhounishú.  
**dzyosũ á-lt yí ohou ní shú**  
 blood SM-be.at 3SG.IND CM-arm DEF surface  
 ‘He has blood on his arm.’

Some speakers, especially young adults and children, tend to generalise the subject-verb agreement marker or pronominal form of the **a<sup>1</sup>**- class for other classes (see §3.5.1 for a discussion of pronouns). Thus, they do not make a distinction between this class and other noun classes such that the subject-verb agreement marker or pronominal form of this class is used to mark other singular and plural noun classes. Some other speakers also do not cross-reference the subject on the verb. All these are indications that the noun class system is gradually decaying. It must however, be noted that the adult speakers do not take lightly to this and are always complaining that the younger ones are ‘destroying the language.’

Nouns in the **o-** class are cross-referenced on the verbs of which they are the subject with **o/o-**. Below are some examples:

- 25a. Oseyuyun ósəmí osínishú.  
**o-seyuyu ní ó-səmí o-sí ní shú**  
 CM-fruit DEF SM-hang CM-tree DEF surface  
 ‘The fruit is hanging on the tree.’ (TRPS. 27)
- 25b. Ohuín ótsirí kesukpogununtabhā.  
**o-hui ní ó-tsirí ke-sukpogunu ní kábhā**  
 CM-rope DEF SM-be.on CM-tree.stump DEF top  
 ‘The rope is on the tree stump.’ (TRPS. 42)

The subject-verb agreement marker of the **a<sup>1</sup>-** prefix tends to be used for the **o-** class as illustrated by the following sentence which I was given during a picture-stimuli elicitation session:

26. Oseyuyuń ákpasí agběńíń.  
**o-seyuyu ní á-kpasí a-gbě ní kumí**  
 CM-fruit DEF SM-be.in CM-bowl DEF inside  
 ‘The fruit is in the bowl.’ (TRPS. 2)

The subject-verb agreement marker for the **ki-** class is **ku/ki-** as in the instantiation of the +ATR variant in (27a). The subject marker may however be left out as shown in (27b).

- 27a. Kiwín ítsú ányín.  
**ki-wí ní ki-tsú á-nyí ní**  
 CM-thorn DEF SM-prick CM-man DEF  
 ‘The thorn pricked the man.’
- 27b. Kızón kpasí `úníníń.  
**ki-zo ní kpasí bu-ní ní kumí**  
 CM-housefly DEF be.in CM-water DEF inside  
 ‘The housefly is in the water.’

The generalisation of the subject-verb agreement marker of the **a<sup>1</sup>-** class is exemplified in sentence (27c). This was a report made to one of my consultants by her niece who was asked to cook yam for lunch. In this sentence, the subject-verb agreement marker used is **a-** instead of **ki-**.

- 27c. Kíkūń átsyóm̃.  
**kí-kū ní á-tsyóm̃**  
 CM-yam DEF SM-rot  
 ‘The yam is rotten.’

Nouns belonging to the **ka-** class are cross-referenced by **ka/ke-** as verbal concord as shown in (28a) and (28b).

- 28a. Kahlóń étsirí kesukpogunūntabhā.  
**ka-hlóń ní ké-tsirí ke-sukpogunū ní kábhā**  
 CM-deer DEF SM-be.on CM-tree.stump DEF top  
 ‘The deer is on the tree-stump.’
- 28b. Keplukpán áwólí.  
**ke-plukpá ní ka-wólí**  
 CM-book DEF SM-fall  
 ‘The book fell.’



The sentences in (29) exemplify nouns in the **bu**<sup>1</sup>- class. As shown in these sentences, the subject is not cross-referenced on the verbs. It appears that the nouns in this class are not cross-referenced on verbs. This is yet another example that the noun class system of the language is in the process of decaying. In these sentences, the verbs **tā** ‘burn’, in (29a), and **kú** ‘reach’, in (29b), occur without any subject-verb agreement marker.

- 29a. Buvú ní **tā** **pétéé** **pétéé** **dzí** ’útó.  
**bu-vú**      **ní**      **tā**      **pétéé** **pétéé** **dzí**      **bu-tó**  
 CM-building DEF burn all all become CM-ash  
 ‘The building burned down completely into ashes.’

- 29b. Bumwí ní **kú** **flá** n’óníní.  
**bu-mwí**    **ní**    **kú**    **flá**    **ní**    **o-ní**    **ní**    **kumí**  
 CM-salt DEF reach pass LOC CM-soup DEF inside  
 ‘There is too much salt in the soup.’

**ba-** and **be-** are used to cross-reference the nouns in the **ba(a)**- class on the verb. Consider the following examples:

- 30a. Bawín ásomí kíhúíníábhā.  
**ba-wí**      **ní**      **bá-sómí**    **kí-húí**      **ní**      **kábhā**  
 CM.PL-dress DEF SM-hang CM-drying.line DEF top  
 ‘The clothes are hanging on the drying line.’ (TRPS. 36)

- 30b. Báányín étsokú ’úpáníní.  
**báá-nyí**    **ní**    **bé-tsokú** **bu-pá**      **ní**    **kumí**  
 CM.PL-man DEF SM-enter CM-house DEF inside  
 ‘The men entered the house.’

As the examples in (30a) and (30b) illustrate the subjects of these sentences are plural nouns, and the agreement markers are **ba-** and **be-**. Sentence (30a) was given during a picture-stimuli elicitation session.

With regard to nouns in the **i-** class, some speakers do not cross-reference the noun on the verb. For those who mark the agreement, these nouns take **i-/i-** as their subject-verb agreement marker as illustrated in (31).

- 31a. Iseyuyuú ísomí osíníshú.  
**i-seyuyu**    **ní**    **i-sómí**    **o-sí**      **ní**    **shú**  
 CM.PL-fruit DEF SM-hang CM-tree DEF surface  
 ‘The fruits are hanging on the tree.’ (TPRS. 45)

- 31b. Ihuiń ísirí kesukpogununtabhā.  
**i-hui ní i-tsirí ke-sukpogunu ní kábhā**  
 CM.PL-rope DEF SM-be.on CM-tree.stump DEF top  
 ‘The ropes are on the tree stump.’

The subject-verb agreement marker of the nouns in the **a<sup>2</sup>-** class is **a-/e-**. The sentences in (32) illustrate this.

- 32a. Ékūń átsyómō  
**é-kū ní á-tsyómō**  
 CM.PL-yam DEF SM-rot  
 ‘The yams are rotten.’
- 32b. Akanan etsí.  
**a-kana ní é-tsí**  
 CM.PL-crab DEF SM-die  
 ‘The crabs are dead.’

As it is with nouns in the **bu<sup>1</sup>-** class, there is no subject-verb agreement marker that is used to cross-reference nouns in the **bu<sup>2</sup>-** class on verbs. Consider the following examples in (33).

- 33a. Butsé ní zi boyem ’idōń.  
**bu-tsé ní zi bu-ya kumi kí-dō ní**  
 CM.PL-monkey DEF destroy CM-farm inside CM-thing DEF  
 ‘The monkeys destroyed the crops.’
- 33b. Butsukpú ní tsirí isubhantabhā.  
**bu-tsukpú ní tsirí i-subha ní kábhā**  
 CM.PL-pot DEF be.on CM.PL-hearth DEF top  
 ‘The pots are on the hearths.’

Finally, **ku/ki-** is the subject-verb agreement marker for nouns in the **ti-** class. This is illustrated by the examples in (34). Some speakers do not mark the agreement between **ti-** class nouns and the verb.

- 34a. Tíwán íishē vlovlo.  
**ti-wá ní kí-í-shē vlovlo**  
 CM-weed DEF SM-PRSPROG-grow fast  
 ‘The weed is growing very fast.’
- 34b. Tíwólǎń ítā békē  
**ti-wólǎń ní kí-tā békē**  
 CM-rubbish DEF SM-burn COMPL  
 ‘The rubbish has finished burning.’

In the next section, I will look at agreement within the noun phrase, to support the noun classes so far identified as well as distinguish between the classes that have identical forms but are treated as different classes.

### 3.3.2 Agreement involving noun modifiers

In Tafi, nominal modifiers follow the noun head. Some modifiers like the quantifiers and demonstratives agree with the head noun. Ordinals, unlike other quantifiers, behave like qualifiers in the sense that they do not show agreement with the head noun (Bobuafor 2012, 2009b). For quantifiers, for example, the agreement prefix is a consonantal prefix **t-** and a concord vowel that agrees with the vowel of the noun prefix. This is a form of vocalic concord (Schuh, 1995).

#### 3.3.2.1 Head noun and numerals

In Tafi, numerals consist of cardinal and ordinal numbers. The cardinal numbers show agreement with the head noun whereas the ordinal numbers do not. The counting forms of cardinal numbers are different from the form they take in attributive position (see Chapter 4, § 3 for details). In attributive position, the numerals, especially ‘one’ to ‘nine’, take the consonantal prefix **t-** and a concord vowel that agrees with the vowel of the noun prefix except for the **ka-** class which takes **ie** as the concord vowel. Thus, agreement is shown on the numbers ‘one’ to ‘nine’, depending on the noun class as exemplified in the table below. In Table 3.4, there is no indication of plural forms for the **bu<sup>1</sup>-** class as these plural nouns belong to the **ba(a)-** class.

Table 3.4 Cardinal numerals

Class	Concord	Meaning
<b>a<sup>1</sup>-</b>	<b>á-nyí t-é-díkpó</b>	‘one man’
<b>ba(a)-</b>	<b>báá-nyí t-á-bhā</b>	‘two men’
	<b>báá-nyí t-íé-tí</b>	‘five men’
<b>o-</b>	<b>o-lí t-ó-dúkpó</b>	‘one neck’
<b>i-</b>	<b>i-lí t-i-bhā</b>	‘two necks’
	<b>i-lí t-i-tí</b>	‘five necks’
<b>ki-</b>	<b>ki-tòkpú t-ríkpó</b>	‘one head’
<b>a<sup>2</sup>-</b>	<b>a-tòkpú t-á-bhā</b>	‘two heads’
	<b>a-tòkpú t-é-tí</b>	‘five heads’
<b>ka-</b>	<b>ká-gbó t-íé-díkpó</b>	‘one squirrel’
<b>bu<sup>2</sup>-</b>	<b>bú-gbó t-u-bha</b>	‘two squirrels’
	<b>bú-gbó t-u-tí</b>	‘five squirrels’
<b>bu<sup>1</sup>-</b>	<b>bu-tó t-rúkpó</b>	‘one ear’
<b>ti-</b>	There are no count nouns in this class.	

### 3.3.2.2 Head noun and indefiniteness marker

The indefiniteness marker in Tafi has the root **-lí** ‘a, a certain, some’ which is the same form used for ‘one’ in counting. When this marker and other quantifying numerals modify a noun, they take the quantifier prefix **t-** and a concord vowel which corresponds to the noun class prefix vowel except for the **ka-** class which takes as the concord vowel **ie**. This concord vowel harmonises with the [ATR] value of the stem-initial vowel. The prefix vowel of the indefiniteness marker is illustrated in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5 The Indefiniteness Marker

Class	Concord	Meaning
<b>a<sup>1</sup>-</b>	<b>a-núvɔ̃ t-e-lí</b>	‘a, some, a certain child’
<b>ba(a)-</b>	<b>baa-núvɔ̃ t-e-lí</b>	‘some children’
<b>o-</b>	<b>o-sí t-o-lí</b>	‘a, some, a certain tree’
<b>i-</b>	<b>i-sí t-i-lí</b>	‘some trees’
<b>ki-</b>	<b>kí-kū t-i-lí</b>	‘a, some, a certain yam’
<b>a<sup>2</sup>-</b>	<b>é-kū t-e-lí</b>	‘some yams’
<b>ka-</b>	<b>ká-gbó t-ie-lí</b>	‘a, some, a certain squirrel’
<b>bu<sup>2</sup>-</b>	<b>bú-gbó t-u-lí</b>	‘some squirrels’
<b>bu<sup>1</sup>-</b>	<b>bu-tó t-u-lí</b>	‘an, some, a certain ear’
<b>ti-</b>	<b>tu-wulé t-i-lí</b>	‘some intestines’

### 3.3.2.3 Head noun and Demonstrative

In Tafi, demonstratives, like the indefiniteness marker, are formed from stems that have to be marked for agreement with the head noun. The demonstrative stems express the relative distance of the referent from the deictic centre. There are two demonstratives, proximal **-ní**<sup>22</sup> ‘this’ and distal **-lílí**<sup>23</sup> ‘that’. They agree with the head noun. The agreement markers are vowel prefixes which correspond to the noun class prefix vowel. These concord vowels are always [-ATR], because the vowels in the roots of the demonstratives also are. However, the agreement markers for the **bu<sup>1</sup>-** and **bu<sup>2</sup>-** classes are more than the concord vowel corresponding to the class prefix vowel. Their choice is also dependent on the

<sup>22</sup> The proximal demonstrative **-ní** ‘this’ is identical in form with the definiteness marker **ní** ‘the’. However, the former always has to take a prefix to show agreement with the head noun whereas the latter does not require a prefix because it does not show concord with the head noun. This heterosemic relation between definiteness markers and demonstratives is observed in other languages as well such as Akan where the definiteness marker **no** ‘the’ is identical with the distal demonstrative as well as the 3SG pronoun and the topic marker.

<sup>23</sup> Most often, the final vowel of **-lílí** ‘that’ is deleted, however, in formal speech it is maintained.

height of the final vowel of the noun root. When the final vowel of the noun root is [+high], the agreement marker of the demonstrative is the [+back], [+high], [-ATR] vowel /u/. When it is [-high], the agreement marker is the [+back], [-high], [-ATR] vowel /ɔ/. The demonstratives are illustrated in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6 Demonstratives

	this	that	Examples with -ní	Examples with -lílíní
a <sup>1</sup> -	a-ní	á-lílíní	ekusí a-ní ‘this chief’	ekusí á-lílíní ‘that chief’
ba(a)-	a-ní	á-lílíní	beekusí a-ní ‘these chiefs’	beekusí á-lílíní ‘those chiefs’
o-	ɔ-ní	ɔ-lílíní	onugbū ɔ-ní ‘this mouth’	onugbū ɔ-lílíní ‘that mouth’
i-	ɪ-ní	í-lílíní	inugbū ɪ-ní ‘these mouths’	inugbū í-lílíní ‘those mouth’
ki-	ɪ-ní	í-lílíní	kíkū ɪ-ní ‘this yam’	kíkū í-lílíní ‘that yam’
a <sup>2</sup> -	a-ní	á-lílíní	ékū a-ní ‘these yams’	ékū á-lílíní ‘those yams’
ka-	a-ní	á-lílíní	kegbu a-ní ‘this stool’	kegbu á-lílíní ‘that stools’
bu <sup>2</sup> -	ɔ-ní u-ní	ɔ-lílíní ó-lílíní	búgbó ɔ-ní ‘these squirrels’ bugbu u-ní ‘these stools’	búgbó ɔ-lílíní ‘those squirrels’ bugbu ó-lílíní ‘those stools’
bu <sup>1</sup> -	ɔ-ní u-ní	ɔ-lílíní ó-lílíní	bútɔ ɔ-ní ‘this ear’ búvū u-ní ‘this building’	bútɔ ɔ-lílíní ‘that ear’ búvū ó-lílíní ‘that building’
ti-	ɪ-ní	í-lílíní	tɪsɪ ɪ-ní ‘these feathers’	tɪsɪ í-lílíní ‘those feathers’

Furthermore, demonstratives can be used substantively when formally marked, as shown in (35b), (35d) and (35f). The demonstrative pronouns are formed by attaching the class prefixes (column 2 on Table 3.2) to the modifying form of the demonstratives, which comprises the prefix and the root. However, the demonstrative pronoun for the **ti**- class is formed by attaching the subject pronoun of this class (**ki**) to the demonstrative stems as illustrated in (35h) and (35j). In the case of the proximal demonstrative **-ní** ‘this’, its root is reduplicated<sup>24</sup>. The initial syllable of the reduplicated root bears a low tone.

- 35a. **bee-kusí-a-ní** ‘these chiefs’  
 35b. **ba-á-nuní/ ba-á-nńn** ‘these ones’  
 35c. **bee-kusí á-lílíní** ‘those chiefs’  
 35d. **ba-á-lílíní** ‘those ones’  
 35e. **bú-vū-u-ní** ‘this building’  
 35f. **bu-ó-nuní/ bu-ó-nńn** ‘this one’  
 35g. **tɪsɪ ɪ-ní** ‘these feathers’  
 35h. **ki-í-nuní/ ki-í-nńn** ‘these ones’

<sup>24</sup> In informal speech, the final vowel of the reduplicated form **-nuní** ‘this’ is elided. The high tone on the deleted vowel, however, remains and it docks on the preceding consonant /n/. The resultant form is **-nńn**. The full form **-nuní** is used especially in emphatic speech.

- 35i. **tusí í-lílíní** 'those feathers'  
 35j. **ku-í-lílíní** 'those ones'

### 3.3.2.4 Head noun and interrogative quantifier -shĩ

The interrogative quantifier **-shĩ** 'how many/ much' agrees with the noun it occurs with. Its agreement prefix has the form **tVV-** where **t-** is the quantifier prefix and the **VV** in the prefix represents the lengthened copy of the prefix vowel of the head noun, except for the **ba(a)-** class prefix. The prefix of the agreement marker for the **ba(a)-** class is the same as the one used for the numerals 'two' to 'nine' when conjoined to 'ten' and its multiples (see Chapter 4, § 4.3.1). For semantic reasons, **-shĩ** 'how many/ much' is used only for plural nouns. When it occurs with countable nouns it is interpreted as 'how many?', and when it occurs with uncountable nouns, as 'how much?' Also, when the head noun ends in a final high tone, this tone spreads rightwards to all but the last syllable of the quantifying word. The interrogative quantifier is illustrated in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7 Concord in the interrogative quantifier

Class	Concord	Meaning
<b>ba(a)-</b>	<b>bee-kusí tía-shĩ?</b>	'how many chiefs?'
<b>i-</b>	<b>i-nugbu tu-shĩ?</b>	'how many mouths?'
<b>a<sup>2</sup>-</b>	<b>a-tòkpú táá-shĩ?</b>	'how many heads?'
<b>bu<sup>2</sup>-</b>	<b>bu-pa tuu-shĩ?</b>	'how many hoes?'
<b>ti-</b>	<b>ti-wúlĩ táá-shĩ?</b> <sup>25</sup>	'how much rubbish?'

Table 3.8 Interrogative pronouns (quantifiers)

Class	Concord	Meaning
<b>ba(a)-</b>	<b>ba-lí tía-shĩ? / baá-tía-shĩ?</b>	'how many (of them)?'
<b>i-</b>	<b>í-lí tii-shĩ? / í-tii-shĩ?</b>	'how many (of them)?'
<b>a<sup>2</sup>-</b>	<b>a-lí táá-shĩ? / aá-táá-shĩ?</b>	'how many (of them)?'
<b>bu<sup>2</sup>-</b>	<b>bu-lí tóó-shĩ? / buó-tóó-shĩ?</b>	'how many (of them)?'
<b>ti-</b>	<b>a-lí táá-shĩ? / aá-táá-shĩ?</b>	'how much (of it)?'

<sup>25</sup> According to one of my consultants, **taashĩ** is used for the **ti-** class because nouns in the **ti-** class are uncountable. As can be seen from the Table 3.7, **taashĩ** is used to modify nouns in the **a<sup>2</sup>-** class which contains some non-count nouns. This can be seen as a case of semantic agreement using the **a<sup>2</sup>-** class agreement pattern for non-count nouns of the **ti-** class.

Moreover, interrogative pronouns are formed by independent pronouns of the classes modified by the interrogative quantifier. The agreement relation is marked in the same way as between a nominal head and a modifying quantifier. Such interrogatives have two forms – a long form consisting of a prefix and a root and a short form in which the root of the independent pronoun is elided and compensated for by lengthening the vowel of the prefix, as shown in the Table 3.8. According to one of my consultants, the full forms are used more often in formal speech or for emphatic reasons, whereas the reduced forms are used in informal speech. The tone on the prefix of the interrogative quantifier depends on the tone of the final syllable of the pronoun, just as with the nouns.

### 3.3.2.5 The modifier **ká-nyáá-ká**<sup>26</sup>

Tafi has a modifier **ká-nyáá-ká** ‘every, each, any’ which occurs in the following frame:

32. [Head nominal + **ká-nyáá-ká**]

**ká-nyáá-ká** does not show concord with the noun, but it can be nominalised in the same way as the adjective and the ordinal (see section 3.2.2.6). For instance, **siká** ‘money’ belongs to the **a<sup>1</sup>**- class, so the **a<sup>1</sup>**- class prefix is added to **ká-nyáá-ká** to derive the pronominal form **á-ká-nyáá-ká** ‘any’. The third column of Table 3.9 illustrates the pronominal forms for all the classes with **ká-nyáá-ká** ‘every, each, any’.

The derivation of the form **ká-nyáá-ká** ‘every, each, any’ is based on the complex NP structure [NP<sub>i</sub> **nyáá** NP<sub>i</sub>]. This structure is used to express the meaning of ‘every, each, any N’ when in affirmative sentences, and in negative sentences, it has a reading of ‘none, no N, not any N’. Consider the following examples:

- 36a. Eyinyéé`yí ákólā y’aka.  
**e-yí-nyáá-é-yí**                      **á-kólā**                      **yí**                      **á-kā**  
 CM-child-DISTR-CM-child      SM-insult                      3SG.IND      CM-father  
 ‘Any child insults the father.’
- 36b. Eyinyéé`yí átkólā y’aka?  
**e-yí-nyáá-é-yí**                      **á-tí-kólā**                      **yí**                      **á-kā**  
 CM-child-DISTR-CM-child      SM-NEG1-insult                      3SG.IND      CM-father  
 ‘No child insults the father.’

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<sup>26</sup> In an earlier analysis of the noun class system of the language (Bobuafor 2009), I stated that **kányááká** is a negative modifier. I think that that analysis did not cover all the data and the one presented here is more adequate.

Agreement within this complex NP between **nyáá** and the nouns is indicated by a vocalic concord on **nyáá**, as shown in the second column of Table 3.9. If the vowel of the noun prefix is /a/, the vowels in **nyáá** stay the same. For this reason, all the vowels in the **ká-nyáá-ká** word are /a/. When the vowel in the noun class prefix is [+front], the **nyáá** word is realized with a front mid vowel depending on its [ATR] value. When the vowel in the noun class prefix is a high back vowel then the concord vowel is /ɔ/. Finally, when the noun class prefix vowel is mid back, the agreement marker is the corresponding [ATR] mid back vowel.

A high tone on the final syllable of the first nominal root in the complex NP becomes a mid tone, while the high tone on the last vowel of **nyáá** spreads rightwards onto the following noun.

Table 3.9 Noun, **nyáá** Noun, and **ká-nyáá-ká**

Class	Noun, <b>nyáá</b> Noun, 'every, each, any N'	<b>ká-nyáá-ká</b> 'every, each, any'
a <sup>1</sup> -	e-kusí-nyéé-kúsí 'every, each chief'	a-ká-nyáá-ká 'each one'
ba(a)-	bee-kusí-nyéé-kúsí 'any/ all chiefs'	ba-ká-nyáá-ká 'any/all of them'
o-	o-nugbu-nyóó-núgbú 'every, each mouth'	o-ká-nyáá-ká 'each one'
i-	i-nugbu-nyéé-núgbú 'any/ all mouth(s)'	ɪ-ká-nyáá-ká 'any/all of them'
ki-	kɪ-tɔkpū-nyéé-tɔkpú 'every, each head'	kɪ-ká-nyáá-ká 'each one'
a <sup>2</sup> -	a-tɔkpū-nyáá-tɔkpú 'any/ all head(s)'	a-ká-nyáá-ká 'any/all of them'
ka-	ke-de-nyéé-dé 'every, each back'	ka-ká-nyáá-ká 'each one'
bu <sup>2</sup> -	bú-gbɔ-nyóó-gbɔ 'any/ all squirrel(s)'	bu-ká-nyáá-ká 'any/all of them'
bu <sup>1</sup> -	bu-tɔ-nyóó-tɔ 'every, each ear'	bu-ká-nyáá-ká 'each one'
	bú-vū-nyóó-vú 'every, each building'	bu-ká-nyáá-ká 'each one'
ti-	tɪ-wa-nyéé-tɪ-wá 'any/ all weed(s)'	kɪ-ká-nyáá-ká 'each one'

As shown by the examples in the second column, apart from the **ti-** prefix, the prefix of the second noun is not realised. This may be an indication that we are dealing with compound formation as the nominal roots in compounds tend not to be prefixed. The vowels of the **ki-** and **ti-** prefixes of the second noun in the **ki-** and **ti-** classes are assimilated to the vowel of **nyáá**.

### 3.3.2.6 Head noun and other modifiers/ qualifiers

Other modifiers including qualifiers such as attributive adjectives, ordinals and the interrogative qualifier **dúwē** 'which' do not show agreement with the head noun. However, these modifiers can be made to function as heads of the noun phrase when they are nominalised by the addition of the nominal prefixes except for the **ti-** prefix which requires the prefixation of its subject pronominal form. When these modifiers are nominalised, they control agreement. The following are examples. As



expected, the [ATR] value of the vowel in the prefixed pronoun depends on the [ATR] value of the initial vowel in the adjectival base as in the following examples.

- 37a. Báányí dɪdama tualí álílín pétée báyadi lenú.  
**báá-nyí**      **dɪdama**      **tua-lí**      **á-lílíní**      **pétée**  
 CM.PL-men tall AM-four AM-DIST all  
**bá-yadi**      **le-nú**  
 CM.PL-farmer 3PL.DEF-be  
 ‘All those four tall men are farmers.’
- 37b. Baɔɔdama tualí álílín pétée báyadi lenú.  
**ba-dɪdama**      **tua-lí**      **á-lílíní**      **pétée**  
 CM.PL-tall AM-four AM-DIST all  
**bá-yadi**      **le-nú**  
 CM.PL-farmer 3PL.DEF-be  
 ‘All those (four) tall ones are farmers.’
- 38a. Kɪkpǎ gbugblǎn ítsirí kplǎníábhā.  
**kɪ-kpǎ**      **gbugblǎ**      **ní**      **ki-tsirí**      **kplǎ**      **ní**      **kábhā**  
 CM-fish big DEF SM-be.on table DEF top  
 ‘The big fish is on the table.’
- 38b. Kɪgbugblǎn ítsirí kplǎníábhā.  
**kɪ-gbugblǎ**      **ní**      **ki-tsirí**      **kplǎ**      **ní**      **kábhā**  
 CM-big DEF SM-be.on table DEF top  
 ‘The big one is on the table.’
- 39a. Tɪsí dzyrodoń ídzyíní.  
**tɪ-sí**      **dzyrodo**      **ní**      **ki-dzyíní**  
 CM-feather long DEF SM-break  
 ‘The long feather is broken.’
- 39b. Kidzyrodoń ídzyíní.  
**ki-dzyrodo**      **ní**      **kí-dzyíní**  
 CM-long DEF SM-break  
 ‘The long one is broken.’

In (37b), and (38b), the nominal prefixes of **báá-nyí** ‘men’ and **kɪ-kpǎ** ‘fish’ have been attached to the adjectives **dɪdama** ‘tall’ and **gbugblǎ** ‘big’, respectively, whereas in (39b), it is the subject pronoun for the **ti-** class that has been prefixed to the adjective **dzyrodō** ‘long’. The ATR value of the vowel in the prefixes of **kɪ-gbugblǎ** ‘big one’ in (38b) and **ki-dzyrodō** ‘long one’ in (39b) are harmonic with the initial vowel of the adjectives. In these examples, **ba-dɪdama** ‘tall ones’, **kɪ-gbugblǎ** ‘big one’ and **ki-dzyrodō** ‘long one’ are pronominals, and can function as nouns.

The following examples illustrate the ordinals. As stated earlier on, in attributive position, ordinals do not take prefixes to mark agreement with the head noun as illustrated in (40a) and (40c). When they are nominalised they control agreement. (40b) and (40d) are nominalised forms of the ordinals in (40a) and (40b) respectively.

- 40a. Eyí trāmīn áŋa kɔɔ́.  
**e-yí trā-mī ní á-ŋa kɔɔ́**  
 CM-child three-ORD DEF SM-eat banana  
 ‘The third child ate banana.’
- 40b. Átrāmīn áŋa kɔɔ́.  
**á-trā-mī ní á-ŋa kɔɔ́**  
 CM-three-ORD DEF SM-eat banana  
 ‘The third one ate the banana.’ (referring to the child in (40a))
- 40c. Obhoshi trāmīn ótsí.  
**o-bhoshi trā-mī ní ó-tsí**  
 CM-tree three-ORD DEF SM-die  
 ‘The third sheep died.’
- 40d. Otrāmīn ótsí.  
**o- trā-mī ní ó-tsí**  
 3SG-three-ORD DEF SM-die  
 ‘The third one died.’

**Ǿúwē** ‘which’ is an interrogative qualifier and like the adjective and the ordinal, it does not show concord with the head noun, as is shown in (41) below:

- 41a. **a-núvǾ Ǿúwē**<sup>27?</sup> ‘which child?’  
 41b. **ba-núvǾ Ǿúwē?** ‘which children?’  
 41c. **Ǿ-ma Ǿúwē?** ‘which town?’  
 41d. **ɪ-ma Ǿúwē?** ‘which towns?’  
 41e. **ka-kudzogǾ Ǿúwē?** ‘which dog?’  
 41f. **bu-kudzogǾ Ǿúwē?** ‘which dogs?’

However, it can be used to form an interrogative pronoun by the addition of the nominal prefixes, except for the **ti-** class, which requires the prefixation of the subject pronoun. The vowels in all the prefixes are [+ATR] because the initial vowel in the interrogative qualifier has the same [+ATR] value. The interrogative pronouns are given in Table 3.10. When the interrogative qualifier is nominalised it

<sup>27</sup> Questions in Tafi end on a low tone that is why the tone on the final syllable of Ǿúwē is mid-low (ML) instead of Mid (M).

controls agreement as illustrated in the sentences in (42b) and (43b) below. In these sentences, the subject-verb agreement marker that the nominalised form takes is the same as the subject marker for the subject NP in (42a) and (43a).

- 42a. Anóvō dǫwē y'ábá sukû?  
**a-nóvō dǫwē yí á-bá sukû**  
 CM-child which 3SG.IND SM-come school  
 'Which child came to school?'
- 42b. Eǫwē y'ábá sukû?  
**e-dǫwē yí á-bá sukû**  
 CM-which 3SG.IND SM-come school  
 'Which one came to school?'
- 43a. Osí dǫwē gɪ ányín étê?  
**o-sí dǫwē gɪ á-nyí ní é-té**  
 CM-tree which REL CM-man DEF SM-slash  
 'Which tree did the man cut?'
- 43b. Oǫwē gɪ ányín étê?  
**o-dǫwē gɪ á-nyí ní é-té**  
 CM-which REL CM-man DEF SM-slash  
 'Which one broke?'

Table 3.10 Interrogative pronouns (qualifiers)

Class	Concord	Meaning
a <sup>1</sup> -	e-dǫwē?	'which one?'
ba(a)-	be-dǫwē?	'which ones?'
o-	o-dǫwē?	'which one?'
i-	i-dǫwē?	'which ones?'
ki-	ki-dǫwē?	'which one?'
a <sup>2</sup> -	e-dǫwē?	'which ones?'
ka-	ke-dǫwē?	'which one?'
bu <sup>2</sup> -	bu-dǫwē?	'which ones?'
bu <sup>1</sup> -	bu-dǫwē?	'which one?'
ti-	ki-dǫwē?	'which ones?'

### 3.4 Compounding

#### 3.4.1 Noun-noun compounds

Noun compounds in Tafi are composed of two noun roots preceded by a single noun class prefix. There are two possible outcomes of this process. The prefix of

the compound is either the same as the prefix of the head (44) or the same as the prefix of the initial noun (45). Usually, it is the second noun that determines the class of the compound. As such, it may be considered as the lexical head of the compound and the initial noun as a modifier. Thus, the compound as a whole expresses a ‘kind of X’ where X represents the entity referred to by the second noun. The following are examples:

44a.	<b>ki-mǔ</b> breast	<b>bu-ní</b> water	<b>bu-mǔní</b>	‘milk’
44b.	<b>bu-pá</b> house	<b>e-leté</b> owner	<b>á-paleté</b>	‘landlord/master’
44c.	<b>bu-dzo</b> palm oil	<b>ké-pluí</b> gourd	<b>ká-dzopluí</b>	‘gourd used for storing palm oil’
44d.	<b>a-dzĩ</b> woman	<b>ki-potí</b> cloth	<b>ki-dzipotí</b>	‘cloth (worn by a woman)’
44e.	<b>bú-vũ</b> house	<b>ke-de</b> back	<b>ké-vude</b>	‘backyard’
44f.	<b>bu-ní</b> water	<b>o-zĩ</b> hole	<b>o-nízi</b>	‘well’ (n)
44g.	<b>bé-shē</b> local	<b>ki-potí</b> cloth	<b>ki-shēpotí</b>	‘a locally woven cloth used to tie children at the back.’

In the following group of compounds, the prefix of the first noun is maintained. That of the second noun may or may not be maintained. If the second noun has a CV prefix, the whole prefix is either deleted (46b) or only the initial consonant is dropped (45c) except for the **ti-** prefix (45b), the whole of which is always maintained. The final vowel of the first noun is dropped (45c) and (45d) or both vowels undergo assimilation yielding a lengthened vowel as in (45a).

45a.	<b>o-wǎ</b> side (of body)	<b>kí-xwā</b> bone	<b>o-wěěxwā</b>	‘rib bone’
45b.	<b>ki-tǎkpú</b> head	<b>tí-kā</b> hair	<b>ki-tǎkputíkā</b>	‘hair (of head)’
45c.	<b>be-tsí</b> bees	<b>bu-ní</b> water	<b>be-tsuní</b>	‘honey’

- 45d. **ɔ-tsɪnĩ**                      **e-yí**                      **ɔ-tsɪnēyí**                      ‘okra seeds’  
okra                      seed (pl)

Interestingly, there are some compounds which have two forms such that in one form, the prefix of the compound is the same as that of the second noun like the examples given in (44) above. The examples in (46) exemplify this. In the other form, the prefix of the second noun is given to the newly formed word however, there still seems to be a trace of this prefix before the second noun root. Thus, when the consonantal onset of the prefix is deleted, the prefix vowel remains as shown in (47). In (47a), the vowel of the prefix of the second noun has undergone assimilation with the final vowel of the first noun and this in turn affects the quality of the final vowel of the first noun yielding a long vowel. In examples (46b) and (47b), both nouns put together to form the compound have the same prefix **ki-**.

- 46a. **ɔ-dǎ**                      **kí-dɔ̃**                      **ki-dǎdɔ̃**                      ‘weapon’  
metal                      thing
- 46b. **ki-mɔ̃**                      **ki-shɔ̃ɛ**                      **ki-mɔ̃shɔ̃ɛ**                      ‘plastic basket’  
rubber                      basket
- 47a. **ɔ-dǎ**                      **kí-dɔ̃**                      **kí-dɛɛdɔ̃**                      ‘weapon’  
metal                      thing
- 47b. **ki-mɔ̃**                      **ki-shɔ̃ɛ**                      **ki-mɔ̃shɔ̃ɛ**                      ‘plastic basket’  
rubber                      basket

### 3.4.2 Postpositional phrase + noun compounds

A few compounds in the language consist of a postpositional phrase followed by a noun. The compound word bears the prefix of the first noun. The prefix of the second noun is maintained but as usual, if it is a CV prefix, its consonantal onset is deleted likewise that of the postposition. Depending on the vowel that ends the preceding noun or postposition and the vowel that begins the following noun (whether the prefix is a vowel or is made up of a CV syllable whose consonant is deleted), there may be vowel coalescence as shown in the last three examples. Also, when two vowels follow each other, (one being the final vowel of a first word and the other being the initial vowel of the second) one gets elided as illustrated in the first example.

- 48a. **ke-ní**                      **kábhā**                      **o-púpú**                      **ke-niabhopúpú**                      ‘canoe’  
river                      top                      vehicle

48b.	<b>ki-tɔkpú</b> head	<b>kumi</b> inside	<b>bu-bó</b> fat	<b>ki-tɔkpumubó</b>	‘brain’
48c.	<b>kplǎ</b> table	<b>kábhā</b> top	<b>ki-potí</b> cloth	<b>kplǎ́ábhēpotí</b>	‘table-cloth’
48d.	<b>bu-ya</b> farm	<b>kumi</b> inside	<b>a-wi</b> garment	<b>bu-yemawi</b>	‘farm attire’
48e.	<b>á-yakpá</b> bush	<b>kumi</b> inside	<b>a-ga</b> animal	<b>á-yakpémaga</b>	‘bush animal’

### 3.4.3 Compounding of noun + sex-determining word

Compound nouns can also be formed by combining an animate noun and the root of the sex determining word **-nye** ‘male’ or **-dzi** ‘female.’ Examples include:

49.	<b>o-bhoshi</b> sheep	<b>-dzi</b> female	<b>o-bhoshidzi</b>	‘ewe’
	<b>ɪ-só</b> horse	<b>-dzi</b> female	<b>ɪ-sódzi</b>	‘mare’
	<b>A-gbo</b> native of Tafi	<b>-dzi</b> female	<b>A-gbodzi</b>	‘a woman from Tafi’
	<b>ɔ-kúkó</b> fowl	<b>-nye</b> male	<b>ɔ-kúkónye</b>	‘cock’
	<b>ǎ-hě</b> pig	<b>-nye</b> male	<b>ǎ-hěnye</b>	‘boar’

### 3.4.4 Compounding of noun + **eyí** ‘child’

Another way of forming compounds is by adding the noun **e-yí** ‘child’ to another noun as illustrated in the examples below. This compound is a kind of genitive construction.

50.	<b>ɔ-kúkó</b> fowl	<b>e-yí</b> child	<b>ki-kúkóeyí</b>	‘chick’
	<b>o-bhoshi</b> sheep	<b>e-yí</b> child	<b>o-bhoshieyí</b>	‘lamb’

<b>e-pidzyā</b> goat	<b>e-yí</b> child	<b>e-pidzeyí</b>	‘small/baby goat’
<b>é-bhī</b> buffalo	<b>e-yí</b> child	<b>é-bheyí</b>	‘small/baby buffalo’
<b>kpósó</b> camel	<b>e-yí</b> child	<b>kpósoeyí</b>	‘small/baby camel’
<b>ǎ-hě</b> pig	<b>e-yí</b> child	<b>a-hieyí</b>	‘piglet’
<b>ka-kudzogě</b> dog	<b>e-yí</b> child	<b>ka-kudzogieyí</b>	‘puppy’

In the first three examples in (50) above, the prefix of the compound is **ki-/kí-** instead of the prefix of the first noun as shown in the rest of the examples. As shown by the second and third examples, speakers also have another name for the lamb and small goat whose prefix is the same as that of the first noun. As regards the last two examples, the vowel /i/ is introduced between the first noun and the second noun after the final vowel /ɛ/ of the first noun is elided.

### 3.4.5 Compounding of noun + **eleté**

Another way of forming compounds is by postposing the word **e-leté** ‘owner’ to a noun stem to express ‘the owner/possessor of something.’ The first noun refers to the possessed item. This is illustrated by the examples in (51).

51.	<b>kí-tsúi</b> poverty	<b>e-leté</b> possessor	<b>kí-tsúélété</b>	‘pauper/poor person’
	<b>á-yĩ</b> laziness	<b>e-leté</b> possessor	<b>á-yíélété</b>	‘lazy person’
	<b>ká-dʒ</b> speech	<b>e-leté</b> possessor	<b>ka-dʒeleté</b>	‘speaker’
	<b>a-kpǎ</b> fishes	<b>e-leté</b> possessor	<b>á-kpěleté</b>	‘fishmonger’
	<b>e-lishí</b> night	<b>e-leté</b> possessor	<b>e-lishíéleté</b> (lit. owner of the night)	‘witch’

<b>a-dzé</b>	<b>e-leté</b>	<b>a-dzéélété</b>	‘witch’	(Ewe-based)
witch	possessor			

### 3.5 Nominalisation and nominal derivation

There are different processes by which nominals are derived. They can be derived from verbs and their complements, from verbs by prefixation, and by reduplication among others. These processes are discussed below.

#### 3.5.1 Agentive nominalisation

Agentive nouns can be derived from transitive verbs together with an expressed object. They are formed by combining the verb stem, the root of the noun object and the **a<sup>1</sup>**- prefix which is the prefix of the class containing almost all the human nouns. Before the prefix is added, there is a permutation of the VO structure which becomes OV. Semantically, these verbs are action related. The following are examples:

52.	<b>di</b>	‘cultivate’	<b>bu-ya</b>	‘farm’	→	<b>á-yadī</b>	‘farmer’
	<b>kasí</b>	‘teach’	<b>kí-dɔ</b>	‘thing’	→	<b>á-dɔkasí</b>	‘teacher’
	<b>bho</b>	‘mould’	<b>kí-dɔ</b>	‘thing’	→	<b>á-dɔbhɔ</b>	‘potter’
	<b>bísí</b>	‘ask’	<b>kí-dɔ</b>	‘thing’	→	<b>á-dɔbísí</b>	‘beggar’
	<b>kámí</b>	‘sew’	<b>kí-dɔ</b>	‘thing’	→	<b>á-dɔkámí</b>	‘tailor’
	<b>sólí</b>	‘catch’	<b>e-yí</b>	‘child’	→	<b>e-yísólí</b>	‘midwife’
	<b>di</b>	‘sell’	<b>kí-dɔ</b>	‘thing’	→	<b>á-dɔdi</b>	‘seller’

#### 3.5.2 Nominalisation involving prefix + verb roots

The **bu<sup>1</sup>**- prefix can be added to some verb roots to derive nouns. The examples in (53) illustrate this. The derived nominal either name the action that results from the activity denoted by the verb, as in the first three examples or the result-state of a change of state verb, as in the last three examples.

53.	<b>ga</b>	‘walk’	→	<b>bú-gā</b>	‘walk (n)’
	<b>káfú</b>	‘praise’	→	<b>bu-káfú</b>	‘praise (n)’
	<b>soli</b>	‘worship’	→	<b>bú-soli</b>	‘worship (n)’
	<b>tɔ</b>	‘be tired’	→	<b>bú-tɔ</b>	‘tiredness’
	<b>xwi</b>	‘satisfy’	→	<b>bú-xwí</b>	‘satisfaction’
	<b>tsí</b>	‘die’	→	<b>bu-tsí</b>	‘death’



### 3.5.3 Nominalisation involving reduplicated verbs

Nominals can also be derived from transitive verb stems and their object nouns. In the process of deriving these nominals, the noun object is fronted and the verb stem is reduplicated as shown in the examples in (54) below. The permutation of the object and the verb is similar to the process involved in the formation of agentive nominals discussed in § 3.5.1. The reduplicated part of the verb stem contains a pre-specified vowel that is [+high]. If the verb root is disyllabic, it is partially reduplicated and only the first syllable is copied.

54.	<b>dzí</b> buy	<b>a-nɔ̃</b> CM-person	→ <b>a-nɔ̃dzídzí</b>	‘a person who has been bought’
	<b>ŋa</b> eat	<b>kí-dɔ̃</b> CM-thing	→ <b>kí-dɔ̃ŋíŋá</b>	‘food’
	<b>ga</b> walk	<b>ki-dzo</b> CM-road	→ <b>ki-dzogíga</b>	‘travel (n)’
	<b>kɔ̃</b> give	<b>kí-dɔ̃</b> CM-thing	→ <b>kí-dɔ̃kókɔ̃</b>	‘gift’
	<b>xé</b> block	<b>ki-dzo</b> CM-road	→ <b>ki-dzoxíxé</b>	‘obstacle’
	<b>he</b> pull	<b>bu-tɔ̃</b> CM-ear	→ <b>bu-tɔ̃hihe</b>	‘punishment’
	<b>tí</b> know	<b>ki-buí</b> CM-matter	→ <b>ki-búítítí</b>	‘knowledge/wisdom’
	<b>dɔ̃</b> contact	<b>ti-rá</b> CM-sleep	→ <b>ti-radúdɔ̃</b>	‘sleep (n)’

The addition of prefixes to reduplicated verb stems is one of the ways of forming nominals. This is illustrated in (55). The meaning of the derived noun conforms to the semantics of the class that the prefix marks. For instance, the forms with the **a/e-** prefix have an agentive noun semantics as in the first three examples. The **ti/ti-** and **bu/bu-** prefixes derive gerundive or manner and stative or dimension nominals as in the last two examples.

55.	<b>bhî</b>	‘hunt’	→	<b>á-bhubhî</b>	‘hunter’
	<b>nyɔ̃</b>	‘wander’	→	<b>á-nyónyɔ̃</b>	‘traveller’
	<b>nya</b>	‘(be) sick’	→	<b>á-nyunya</b>	‘patient’
	<b>fwé</b>	‘breathe’	→	<b>ɔ̃-fufwé</b>	‘spirit/breath’

<b>bhɪtɪ</b>	‘do’	→	<b>ki-bhubhɪtɪ</b>	‘action’
<b>yɪnɔ</b>	‘surprise’	→	<b>tɪ-yiyɪnɔ</b>	‘surprise (n)’
<b>pɪ</b>	‘(be) good’	→	<b>tɪ-pɪpɪ</b>	‘goodness’
<b>zi</b>	‘(be) bad’	→	<b>bú-zizi</b>	‘badness’

Moreover, the **ti/ti-** prefix can be added to reduplicated verb roots to form nominals which are semantically action-related. These nominals can be glossed as ‘the action or act of ...’

56.	<b>za</b>	‘stay’	→	<b>tɪ-zɪza</b>	‘staying’
	<b>ɲa</b>	‘eat’	→	<b>tɪ-ɲɪɲa</b>	‘eating’
	<b>ṽũsɔ</b>	‘lie (down)’	→	<b>tɪ-ṽũṽũsɔ</b>	‘lying (down)’
	<b>tɪ</b>	‘crawl’	→	<b>tɪ-tɪtɪ</b>	‘crawling’
	<b>ga</b>	‘walk’	→	<b>tɪ-gɪga</b>	‘walking’
	<b>sɪnɔ</b>	‘greet’	→	<b>tɪ-sɪsɪnɔ</b>	‘greeting’
	<b>xwi</b>	‘satisfy’	→	<b>tɪ-xuxwi</b>	‘satisfying’
	<b>trɔ</b>	‘plan’	→	<b>tɪ-tɪtrɔ</b>	‘planning’
	<b>yéké</b>	‘swell’	→	<b>tɪ-yíyéké</b>	‘swelling’

### 3.5.4 Compounding of verb + **ɔkɔ** ‘place’

Nominals can also be derived by the combination of a verb stem and the noun **ɔ-kɔ** ‘place.’ The prefix of the noun is given to the newly formed word as it is the head. The prefix may be **ɔ-** or **o-** depending on the ATR value of the (initial) vowel in the verb stem. The following are examples:

57.	<b>za</b> stay	<b>ɔ-kɔ</b> place	→	<b>ɔ-zakɔ</b>	‘dwelling place/shelter’
	<b>fɔ</b> defecate	<b>ɔ-kɔ</b> place	→	<b>ɔ-fɔkɔ</b>	‘anus’
	<b>ṽũsɔ</b> lie	<b>ɔ-kɔ</b> place	→	<b>ʒ-ṽũsɔkɔ</b>	‘bedroom/sleeping place’
	<b>kpú</b> hide	<b>ɔ-kɔ</b> place	→	<b>o-kpukɔ</b>	‘refuge/hiding place’
	<b>vubɔ</b> bury	<b>ɔ-kɔ</b> place	→	<b>ɔ-vubɔkɔ</b>	‘burial place/ cemetery’

### 3.5.5 Instrumental nominals

Certain instrumental nominals are formed by combining the generic noun **kí-d5** ‘thing’, a verb and an instrumental noun. The derived nominal signals the instrument that the kind of activity expressed by the verb stem is specifically used for.

58.	<b>ŋa</b> eat	<b>kí-d5</b> thing	<b>a-gbě</b> plate	<b>kí-d5ŋagbě</b>	‘plate’
	<b>ŋa</b> eat	<b>kí-d5</b> thing	<b>kí-bhluxɔ́é</b> spoon	<b>kí-d5ŋeebhluxɔ́é</b>	‘spoon’
	<b>t5</b> cook	<b>kí-d5</b> thing	<b>ki-tsikpĩ</b> pot	<b>kí-d5t5etsikpĩ</b>	‘cooking pot’

### 3.5.6 Gerunds

Gerunds are formed by the addition of the **bu<sup>1</sup>-** prefix to their roots as shown in (59).

59.	<b>bubo</b>	‘bow’	→	<b>búbubo</b>	‘bowing’
	<b>balı</b>	‘pour’	→	<b>bubalı</b>	‘pouring’
	<b>bísı</b>	‘ask’	→	<b>búbısı</b>	‘asking’
	<b>tı</b>	‘crawl’	→	<b>butı</b>	‘crawling’
	<b>wu</b>	‘increase, ascend’	→	<b>buwu</b>	‘increasing, ascending’

### 3.5.7 Nominalisation involving adjectives

The **bu<sup>1</sup>-** and **ti-** prefixes can also be added to adjectives to derive nominals. Examples in (60) are deadjectival nominals based on derived adjectives while the examples in (61) are based on ideophonic adjectives (see Chapter 4 on adjectives):

60.	<b>gbugblä</b>	‘big’	→	<b>bú-gbugblä</b>	‘bigness’
	<b>gıganı</b>	‘strong, hard’	→	<b>bú-gıganı</b>	‘strength, hardness’
	<b>qıqama</b>	‘tall’	→	<b>bú-qıqama</b>	‘tallness’
	<b>kpıkpā</b>	‘dried’	→	<b>bú-kpıkpā</b>	‘dryness’
	<b>kpıkpā</b>	‘dried’	→	<b>tı-kpıkpā</b>	‘dryness’
	<b>nunı</b>	‘wide’	→	<b>tı-nunı</b>	‘width’
	<b>tsotsyóm5</b>	‘ugly’	→	<b>bú-tsotsyóm5</b>	‘ugliness’
61.	<b>kplıtaa</b>	‘short’	→	<b>bú-kplıtakplıtaa</b>	‘shortness’
	<b>félée</b>	‘light’	→	<b>bú-féléfélée</b>	‘lightness’
	<b>fukuu</b>	‘light’	→	<b>bú-fukufuku</b>	‘lightness’

### 3.5.8 Diminutive nominals

Diminutives are formed by adding the prefix **ki-/kɪ-** and the suffix **-i/-ɛ** depending on the ATR value of the initial or final vowel of the root respectively. Examples of diminutives in the language include the following:

62.	<b>ke-tsukpú</b>	‘pot’	→	<b>ki-tsikpĩ</b>	‘small pot’
	<b>kí-súgbá</b>	‘bowl’	→	<b>kí-sígbe</b>	‘small bowl’
	<b>e-pidzya</b>	‘goat’	→	<b>ki-pidzyě</b>	‘small goat’
	<b>ka-shó</b>	‘basket’	→	<b>kɪ-shoě</b>	‘small basket’
	<b>ke-pidzyaklɔ</b>	‘he-goat’	→	<b>ki-pidzyaklɔě</b>	‘small he-goat’
	<b>a-núvɔ</b>	‘child’	→	<b>kɪ-núvɔě</b>	‘little child’
	<b>ɔ-kúkɔ</b>	‘fowl’	→	<b>kí-kúkɔě</b>	‘chick’
	<b>ke-pluí</b>	‘gourd’	→	<b>ki-pluí</b>	‘container’

As shown in the first example, before the suffix **-i** is added to the noun stem, the final vowel is dropped and in the second and third examples, when the suffix **-ɛ** occurs after the vowel **/a/**, the latter gets elided. Also, in the first and second examples, the initial vowel of the noun root has changed from a high back vowel to a high front vowel. In the last example, the nominal ends in **-i** which seems to block the addition of the diminutive suffix.

## 3.6 Pronouns

Tafi has a rich pronominal system. This system includes the independent, subject and object pronouns as well as possessed pronouns among others. There is a dedicated set of dependent pronouns used for reference tracking in various dependent clauses as well as other information structuring constructions. Tafi also has a set of third person pronouns that match the respective classes. The first and second persons (the speech act participants) are completely independent of noun class.

### 3.6.1 Personal pronouns

The table below shows the personal pronouns in Tafi. They are the independent, subject and object pronouns.

Table 3.11 Personal pronouns

	INDEPENDENT	SUBJECT PRONOUN	OBJECT PRONOUN	DEPENDENT PRONOUN
1SG	<b>mí</b>	<b>i-/ɪ-</b>	<b>m(ɪ)</b>	<b>i-/ɪ-</b>
2SG	<b>wó</b>	<b>o-/ɔ-</b>	<b>wó</b>	<b>o-/ɔ-</b>
3SG	<b>yí</b>	<b>e-/ a-</b>	<b>yí</b>	<b>e-/ a-</b>
1PL	<b>blǎ</b> <sup>28</sup>	<b>bu-/bu-</b>	<b>(b)uló</b>	<b>lo-/lɔ-</b>
2PL	<b>wǔnǎ</b>	<b>no-/nɔ-</b>	<b>(w)ǔnǎ</b>	<b>no-/nɔ-</b>
3PL	<b>balí</b>	<b>be-/ba-</b>	<b>(b)alí</b>	<b>le-/la-</b>

Independent pronouns can be used in elliptical answers. Thus, they could be used in place of an utterance. They are used when emphasis or contrast is to be indicated. They are not bound to the verb. They can function as heads of NPs and can be modified as such. Independent pronouns function in possessive NPs coding the possessor. Example (63b) comprises an independent pronoun which is a response to the question in (63a). The response in (63b) represents a complete utterance (Siewierska 2004:7) which could be rendered as “It is we who beat them” as shown in (63c).

- 63a. Báánī gɪ étu baanóvǎn?  
**báá-nī**      **gɪ**      **bé-tu**      **baa-nóvǎ**      **ní**  
 CM.PL-who REL SM-beat CM.PL-child DEF  
 ‘Who beat the children?’

- 63b. **Blǎ**  
 1PL.IND  
 ‘We’

- 63c. Blǎ tu ‘alí.  
**blǎ**      **tu**      **balí**  
 1PL.IND beat 3PL  
 ‘We beat them’ (Emphatic) or ‘it is we who beat them.’

The independent form of the pronoun is used in coordinate NPs. Like in Logba, when a group of individuals are listed in which at least one is a pronoun, it is the independent form of the pronoun that is used. This is illustrated by the example in (64).

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<sup>28</sup> It appears that the full form of the 1PL is **buló**. However, in fast speech, the vowel of the initial syllable gets elided.

64. Yí, Kofi n'Āmā ábá sukū.  
**yí Kofi n Āmā bá-bá sukū**  
 3SG.IND Kofi COM Ama SM-come school  
 'He, Kofi and Ama came to school.'

If any of the independent pronouns in the group of individuals occurring in subject position is used emphatically and it is the speaker, the hearer or a non-participant then either the 1PL, 2PL or 3PL independent pronoun respectively is indexed on the verb. Here are some examples.

- 65a. Blš nɪ yí blš gbá 'úvūnīm.  
**blš n yí blš gba búvū ní kum**  
 1PL.IND COM 3SG.IND 1PL.IND sweep CM-house DEF inside  
 'We and he swept the room.'

- 65b. W̃ŭnš n'alí w̃ŭnš ɲeédšń.  
**w̃ŭnš n balí w̃ŭnš ɲa kí-dš ní**  
 2PL.IND COM 3PL.IND 2PL.IND eat CM-thing DEF  
 'You and they ate the food.'

However, if the independent pronoun in the group of individuals is not used emphatically, then this group of individuals in subject position is indexed on the verb by the bound form of the pronouns. This is exemplified by the example in (64) above and also by the examples in (66).

- 66a. W̃ŭnš nɪ yí nɔvɪ 'upéɪm.  
**w̃ŭnš n yí nɔ-vɪ bu-pa kum**  
 2PL.IND COM 3SG.IND 2PL-go CM-house inside  
 'You and he (you pl) went home.'

- 66b. Blš nɪ y'ókš 'ŭnš siká.  
**blš n yí bu-kš w̃ŭnš siká**  
 1PL.IND COM 3SG.IND 1PL-give 2PL.IND money  
 'We and he (we) gave you money.'

Interestingly, when the speaker is included in the group of individuals, the 1SG independent pronoun is usually not used. Rather, it is the 1PL.IND that is used. In this context, the use of the 1SG independent form to talk about the speaker is not pragmatically favoured. This may be for reasons of politeness. The following examples illustrate this point. The sentence in (67c) is not ungrammatical but pragmatically odd because instead of **blš** '1PL.IND', **mí** '1SG.IND' has been used. Such sentences, according to my consultants, are uttered only by children or strangers learning the language.

- 67a. Blš n'Āma blš plú 'uvunīm.

**blš n Ámā blš plú bú-vū ní kumī**  
 1PL.IND COM Ama 1PL.IND wash CM-house DEF inside  
 ‘I and Ama (we) scrubbed the room.’

- 67b. Ekusín éklú blš n wŭnŭ sí lóbá tštséém.

**e-kusí ní é-klú blš n wŭnŭ sí**  
 CM-chief DEF SM-invite 1PL.IND COM 2PL.IND COMP  
**lóbá tštséém**  
 1PL.DEP-come CM-meeting  
 ‘The chief invited you (pl) and I for a meeting.’

- 67c. ?? Mí n’alí blš ŋéédŭ.

**mí n balí blš ŋa kí-dŭ ní**  
 1SG.IND COM 3PL.IND 1PL.IND eat thing DEF  
 ‘I and they ate the food.’

The independent pronoun can be modified by adjectives and intensifiers, among others, just like a noun. The adjective **titě** ‘alone, only’ and the intensifiers **pétéé** ‘all’ and **kóŋ** ‘in particular, especially’ modify the independent pronouns **wŭ** ‘2SG.IND’ in (68a) and **wŭnŭ** ‘2PL.IND’ and **wŭ** ‘2SG.IND’ in (68b) respectively.

- 68a. Wŭ titě wŭ bá.

**wŭ titě wŭ bá**  
 2SG.IND alone 2SG.IND come  
 ‘You alone came.’

- 68b. Alasí tš wŭnŭ pétée nóbá wŭ kóŋ.

**a-lí a-sí tš wŭnŭ pétée nóbá**  
 3SG-be.at SM-COMP COMP 2PL.IND all SM-come  
**wŭ kóŋ**  
 2SG.IND INT  
 ‘You all have to come, especially you.’

Subject pronouns may immediately precede the verb stem. They occur as prefixes to the verb with their vowels alternating according to ATR vowel harmony. Thus, depending on the ATR value of the (initial) vowel of the verb, the subject pronouns have two forms. The 1SG and 2PL are exemplified in (69) and (70) below. In the (a) sentences, the subject pronouns contain [-ATR] vowels while in the (b) sentences they have [+ATR] vowels.

- 69a. Íbá.

**í-bá**  
 1SG-come  
 ‘I came.’

- 69b. Ídzyíní ’ishín.

**í-dzyíní ki-shí ní**  
 1SG-break CM-stick DEF  
 ‘I broke the stick.’

- 70a. Bága.  
**bá-ga**  
 3PL-walk  
 ‘They walked.’
- 70b. Bété ósín.  
**bé-té o-sí ní**  
 3PL-slash CM-tree DEF  
 ‘They cut the tree.’

The negative, tense and aspectual markers occur between the subject pronoun and the verb as illustrated by the examples in (71).

- 71a. Nòdòga.  
**nò-dò-ga**  
 2PL-NEG:PSTPROG-walk  
 ‘You (pl) were not walking.’
- 71b. Íbadzu ’uvū.  
**í-ba-dzu bú-vū**  
 1SG-FUT-build CM-house  
 ‘I shall build a house.’

Moreover, the third person plural subject pronoun **ba-/be-** is used as an impersonal pronoun. For example,

72. Bebebhui sáhwĩ ’ítókpú.  
**be-be-bhui sáhwĩ kú-tókpú**  
 3PL-FUT-cut spider CM-head  
 ‘They will cut off spider’s head.’ OR ‘spider’s head will be cut off.’  
 (Sáhwĩ)

The object pronoun occurs in immediate post-verbal position. Their full forms are identical with those of the independent pronouns. Hence, one could say that the independent pronouns are used as object pronouns. In object position, they tend to have a reduced form where the initial consonant or the first syllables of the 1PL, 2PL and 3PL forms are deleted as shown in (73a) and (73b). Also, the vowel of the first person singular object pronoun is usually dropped as illustrated in (73c).

- 73a. Báṅa lɔabhā.  
**bá-ṅa bl̥ kábhā**  
 3PL-eat 1PL.IND top  
 ‘They defeated us.’
- 73b. Bl̥ mɔ ’alí.  
**bl̥ mɔ balí**  
 1PL.IND see 3PL  
 ‘We saw them.’



- 73c. Étuín.  
**é-tu mí**  
 3SG-beat 1SG  
 ‘S/he beat me.’

Each noun class in Tafi has a third person pronoun that occurs in subject or object positions as illustrated in Table 3.12. The independent pronominal forms for the various classes also function as object pronouns. Like the plural independent personal pronouns discussed above, for the object function, in connected speech, a reduced form of the class pronouns can occur, where the initial consonant of disyllabic independent pronouns gets elided. As regards other functions, the full forms of the pronouns are used. (74a) and (74b) are examples. In sentence (74a), we have nouns occurring in both subject and object positions whereas in sentence (74b), we have pronouns referring to these nouns in these positions.

- 74a. Ketsukpúń étsirí osubhantabha.  
**ke-tsukpú ní ke-tsirí o-subha ní kábhā**  
 CM-pot DEF SM-be.on CM-hearth DEF top  
 ‘The pot is on the hearth.’
- 74b. Ketsirí ólíábhā.  
**ke-tsirí olí kábhā**  
 3SG-be.on 3SG.IND top  
 ‘It is on it.’

**ketsukpú** ‘pot’ belongs to the **ka-** class so it is replaced by the pronoun **ke-** in subject position in (74b). **osubha** ‘hearth’, on the other hand, belongs to the **o-** class and the object pronoun for this class is **olí**.

Tafi also has subject dependent pronouns for the various classes which are used in dependent clauses as shown in Table 3.1.2. Usually the subject marker on the verb in the dependent clause tends to be a dependent form of the pronoun. These forms occur in relative, complement and adverbial clauses among others after the subordinate clause introducers such as **gu** ‘REL’, **sí** ‘COMP’, **pu** ‘CONN’ etc. (see Chapter 9 for further details). I must, however, point out that the dependent pronoun for the **ka-** class has the same form as its independent counterpart. It is important to note that the dependent forms for the 1PL and 3PL personal pronouns which are **la/le** and **lo/lo** respectively are distinct from their subject forms in independent clauses. The dependent forms for the other persons remain the same in independent clauses. The following sentences illustrate the dependent pronominal forms of the **ka-** classes as well as the 3PL personal pronoun respectively.

Table 3.12 Third person pronouns for the various noun classes

Class	Subject	Object/ indep. forms	Dependent forms
a <sup>1</sup> -	a/e-	yí	a/e-
ba(a)-	ba/be-	(b)alí	la/le-
o-	ɔ/o/ɔ/lo- <sup>29</sup>	ɔlí	lo/lo
i-	ɪ/i/lɪ/li- <sup>30</sup>	ɪlí	lɪ/li-
ki-	kɪ/ki-	(k)ulí	lu/li-
a <sup>2</sup> -	la/le-	alí	la/le-
ka-	ka/ke-	(k)alí	kalí
bu <sup>2</sup> -	bu/bu-	(b)ulí	lu/lu-
bu <sup>1</sup> -	bu/bu-	(b)ulí	lu/lu-
ti-	kɪ-/ki-	(k)ulí <sup>31</sup>	lu/li-

- 75a. Kegbu ní g' ɪalɪabhā ádɔkasín áshíló keplukpán édzyíní.  
 ke-gbu ní gɪ kalí kabhā á-dɔkasí ní á-shíló  
 CM-chair DEF REL 3SG.DEF top CM-teacher DEF SM-leave  
 ke-plukpá ní ke-dzyíní  
 CM-book DEF SM-break  
 'The chair on which the teacher left the book is broken.'

- 75b. Kánā gɪ látɔ 'udzɔ ní Baagbɔ.  
 ká-nā gɪ lá-tɔ bu-dzɔ ní Baagbɔ  
 CM-manner REL 3PL.DEF-cook CM-palm.oil LOC Tafi  
 'This is how palm oil is prepared in Tafi.'

### 3.6.2 Possessive pronouns

In Tafi, the possessor precedes the possessee and pronominal possessors are juxtaposed to their possessee. The independent pronominal forms code the possessor in possessive construction. In a possessive construction, the initial consonants of CV prefixes of possessed nouns may be deleted except for nouns in the **ti-** class. Also, sometimes, the vowels of the 1SG, 3SG and the final vowel of the 3PL independent pronouns are deleted when they precede nouns beginning with

<sup>29</sup> According to one of my consultants who is over 60 years old and others of his age, they heard their parents and grandparents using **ɔ-** and **o-** but their use is not common these days.

<sup>30</sup> The use of **ɪ-** and **i-** are no longer common in recent years.

<sup>31</sup> According to two of my consultants, sometime ago, **ɪlí** was used as the object pronoun of the **ti-** class.

vowels. The following are examples. In (76a), we have a singular noun while (76b) illustrates its plural counterpart.

76a.	<b>mí</b>	<b>bupá</b>	→	<b>m'upá</b>	'my house'
	<b>wó</b>	<b>bupá</b>	→	<b>wɔɔpá</b>	'your house'
	<b>yí</b>	<b>bupá</b>	→	<b>yí'upá</b>	'his/her house'
	<b>blǎ</b>	<b>bupá</b>	→	<b>bloɔpá</b>	'our house'
	<b>ŵũń</b>	<b>bupá</b>	→	<b>ŵũńɔɔpá</b>	'your house'
	<b>balí</b>	<b>bupá</b>	→	<b>balí'upá</b>	'their house'
76b.	<b>mí</b>	<b>bapá</b>	→	<b>mí bapá/ maapá</b>	'my houses'
	<b>wó</b>	<b>bapá</b>	→	<b>wó bapá/ wɔapá</b>	'your houses'
	<b>yí</b>	<b>bapá</b>	→	<b>yí bapá/ yaapá</b>	'his/her houses'
	<b>blǎ</b>	<b>bapá</b>	→	<b>blǎ bapá/ blo'apá</b>	'our houses'
	<b>ŵũń</b>	<b>bapá</b>	→	<b>ŵũń bapá/ ŵũń'apá</b>	'your houses'
	<b>balí</b>	<b>bapá</b>	→	<b>balí bapá/ balaapá</b>	'their houses'

As illustrated in the examples in (76b), the pronominal possessive construction has two plural forms, one in which the full form of the possessed noun is used and the other in which the initial consonant of the plural prefix is deleted. Where the initial consonant of the plural prefix of the possessed noun is deleted, and a vowel of the pronoun expressing the possessor is also deleted, the prefix vowel of the possessed noun is lengthened (as if to compensate for the deletion of these sounds) as shown by the 1SG, 3SG, and 3PL pronominal possessive constructions in (76b).

Another instance in which vowel lengthening occurs is when the vowel of a singular prefix is the same as the vowel of its corresponding CV plural prefix. When the initial consonant of the plural prefix is deleted the remaining vowel is lengthened so as to distinguish between the singular possessed noun and its plural counterpart. This process applies to all the pronouns in the possessive construction even if none of their vowels is deleted as shown below. The examples in (77a) illustrate a singular possessed noun and those in (77b) its plural counterpart.

77a.	<b>mí</b>	<b>epidzyā</b>	→	<b>m'epidzyā</b>	'my goat'
	<b>wó</b>	<b>epidzyā</b>	→	<b>w'epidzyā</b>	'your goat'
	<b>yí</b>	<b>epidzyā</b>	→	<b>y'epidzyā</b>	'his/her goat'
	<b>blǎ</b>	<b>epidzyā</b>	→	<b>blo epidzyā</b>	'our goat'
	<b>ŵũń</b>	<b>epidzyā</b>	→	<b>ŵũń epidzyā</b>	'your goat'
	<b>balí</b>	<b>epidzyā</b>	→	<b>bal'epidzyā</b>	'their goat'
77b.	<b>mí</b>	<b>bepidzyā</b>	→	<b>mí bepidzyā/ m'eepidzyā</b>	'my goats'
	<b>wó</b>	<b>bepidzyā</b>	→	<b>wó bepidzyā/ w'eepidzyā</b>	'your goats'
	<b>yí</b>	<b>bepidzyā</b>	→	<b>yí bepidzyā/ y'eepidzyā</b>	'his/her goats'
	<b>blǎ</b>	<b>bepidzyā</b>	→	<b>blǎ bepidzyā/ blo eepidzyā</b>	'our goats'
	<b>ŵũń</b>	<b>bepidzyā</b>	→	<b>ŵũń bepidzyā/ ŵũń eepidzyā</b>	'your goats'
	<b>balí</b>	<b>bepidzyā</b>	→	<b>balí bepidzyā/ bal'eepidzyā</b>	'their goats'

Moreover, when **wó**, **blǎ** and **ŵũnǎ** are followed by a noun whose prefix vowel is the unadvanced high back vowel, when the initial consonant of the prefix is dropped, the height of this unadvanced high back vowel is lowered to that of the mid back vowel in these pronouns. Thus we have **wóopá** ‘your house’ instead of **wóupá** and **blóopá** ‘our house’ instead of **blóupá** as shown in (76a) above.

Furthermore, when the prefix vowel of the possessed noun is [+ATR], it may extend its influence to a preceding [-ATR] vowel. Thus, for instance, the [-ATR] vowel /ɔ/ in the 1PL, and 2PL pronouns becomes /o/ which is [+ATR] as shown in (77a) and (77b) above. This feature may apply in fast speech, however, in slow and careful speech the different [ATR] qualities of the two vowels remain clearly perceptible.

The following examples in (78a) and (78b) show the juxtaposition of the pronouns with kinship and body-part nouns respectively.

78a.	<b>mí</b>	<b>ádá</b>	→	<b>m’adá</b>	‘my sister’
	<b>wó</b>	<b>ádá</b>	→	<b>w’adá</b>	‘your sister’
	<b>yí</b>	<b>ádá</b>	→	<b>ya’dá</b>	‘his sister’
	<b>blǎ</b>	<b>ádá</b>	→	<b>bló adá</b>	‘our sister’
	<b>ŵũnǎ</b>	<b>ádá</b>	→	<b>ŵũn’ adá</b>	‘your sister’
	<b>balí</b>	<b>ádá</b>	→	<b>bal’dá</b>	‘their sister’
78b.	<b>mí</b>	<b>olí</b>	→	<b>m’ólí</b>	‘my neck’
	<b>wó</b>	<b>olí</b>	→	<b>w’ólí</b>	‘your neck’
	<b>yí</b>	<b>olí</b>	→	<b>y’ólí</b>	‘his/her/its neck’
	<b>blǎ</b>	<b>olí</b>	→	<b>bl’ólí</b>	‘our neck’
	<b>ŵũnǎ</b>	<b>olí</b>	→	<b>ŵũn’ólí</b>	‘your neck’
	<b>balí</b>	<b>olí</b>	→	<b>bal’ólí</b>	‘their neck’

As shown in the examples in (78a) and (78b), there are tonal modifications in the possessive constructions. In (78a), the vowel and in some cases, final vowel of some the pronouns gets elided together with their tones. Even those pronouns whose vowels are not deleted have their high tones replaced by low tones. Moreover, the high tone on the prefix of the kinship term is also replaced by a low tone. On the other hand, as illustrated in (78b), even though the (final) vowel of the pronoun is dropped, its tone is still maintained. This high tone then shifts on to the vowel of the prefix of the body part term if it bears a non-high tone.

Most plural [+human] nouns which occur in the pronominal possessive constructions have **-alí** suffixed to them. They occur with the singular prefix **a/e-** instead of the plural prefix **ba/be-**. It seems that this plural suffix is derived from

the third person plural independent pronoun **balí** with its initial consonant elided<sup>32</sup>. This is exemplified below:

79.	<b>mí</b>	<b>beyí</b>	→	<b>m'eyíálí</b>	'my fathers'
	<b>wó</b>	<b>beyí</b>	→	<b>w'eyíálí</b>	'your fathers'
	<b>yí</b>	<b>beyí</b>	→	<b>y'eyíálí</b>	'his fathers'
	<b>bló</b>	<b>beyí</b>	→	<b>blo eyíálí</b>	'our fathers'
	<b>wunó</b>	<b>beyí</b>	→	<b>ŵūnō eyíálí</b>	'your fathers'
	<b>balí</b>	<b>beyí</b>	→	<b>bal'eyíálí</b>	'their fathers'

Tafi has a set of possessed pronouns which establish agreement relations with the head noun. Therefore, depending on the class of the head noun, these possessed pronouns take different forms. They are made up of a personal pronoun, a concord vowel and the 3SG independent pronoun **yí**. The concord vowel added to the 3SG **yí** is determined by the class of the possessed noun. Except for the **ka-** class, as is shown in Table 3.13, the concord vowels correspond to the vowels of the class prefixes and they agree in ATR value with the vowel of the 3SG independent pronoun **yí**. The concord vowels for the **ka-** class are the same as those in the prefix of the numeral 'one' when it modifies nouns in this class.

Table 3.13 Independent possessed pronouns

Class	1SG	Gloss	3SG	Gloss
<b>a<sup>1</sup>-</b>	<b>mayí</b>	mine	<b>yayí</b>	his
<b>ba(a)-</b>	<b>mayí / may-álí</b>	mine	<b>yayí / yay-álí</b>	his
<b>o-</b>	<b>moyí</b>	mine	<b>yoyí</b>	his
<b>i-</b>	<b>myí</b>	mine	<b>yíyí</b>	his
<b>ki-</b>	<b>myí</b>	mine	<b>yíyí</b>	his
<b>a<sup>2</sup>-</b>	<b>mayí / may-álí</b>	mine	<b>yayí / yay-álí</b>	his
<b>ka-</b>	<b>mayí</b>	mine	<b>yayí</b>	his
<b>bu<sup>2</sup>-</b>	<b>moyí</b>	mine	<b>yoyí</b>	his
<b>bu<sup>1</sup>-</b>	<b>moyí</b>	mine	<b>yoyí</b>	his
<b>ti-</b>	<b>myí</b>	mine	<b>yíyí</b>	his

Furthermore, the **ba(a)-** and **a<sup>2</sup>-** classes have a plural form of the possessed pronoun.<sup>33</sup> It is formed with a double marking on the 3SG independent form **yí**.

<sup>32</sup> This could be a contact-induced development from Ewe where the 3PL pronoun is in a heterosemic relation with the nominal clitic **wó** 'PL'. Ameka (2006) has observed a similar development in Likpe where a 3PL pronoun **mə** has changed into a plural marker on some kinship terms.

The double marking consists of the plural suffix **-alí** derived as stated above from **balí** ‘3PL.IND’ and the concord vowel of the plural class marker. When the plural suffix **-alí** is attached, the vowel of the 3SG independent pronoun **yí** is deleted. The high tone of the vowel of **yí** ‘3SG.IND’, however, remains and spreads rightward to the initial vowel of the plural suffix. These pronouns function independently as nominal phrases just like in English. The 1SG and 3SG possessed pronoun forms are illustrated in Table 3.13.

### 3.6.3 Reflexive pronouns

In Tafi, the reflexive pronoun is expressed by the use of the root **shú** ‘body.’ It seems obvious that the form originates from the noun root **shú** ‘body’ and has become grammaticalised.

- |     |           |             |            |                                      |
|-----|-----------|-------------|------------|--------------------------------------|
| 80. | <b>í</b>  | <b>némí</b> | <b>shú</b> | ‘I bit myself’                       |
|     | <b>ó</b>  | <b>némí</b> | <b>shú</b> | ‘you bit yourself’                   |
|     | <b>é</b>  | <b>némí</b> | <b>shú</b> | ‘s/he/it bit himself/herself/itself’ |
|     | <b>bú</b> | <b>némí</b> | <b>shú</b> | ‘we bit ourselves’                   |
|     | <b>no</b> | <b>némí</b> | <b>shú</b> | ‘you bit yourselves’                 |
|     | <b>bé</b> | <b>némí</b> | <b>shú</b> | ‘they bit themselves’                |

Interestingly, there is an emphatic construction in the language which is formed by adding the expression **ní ahóu** ‘with hand’ or **X<sub>i</sub> ní X<sub>i</sub> ahóu** ‘X<sub>i</sub> with X<sub>i</sub> hand’ to the independent pronouns. The first X slot in the **X<sub>i</sub> ní X<sub>i</sub> ahóu** is filled by an independent pronoun while the second X slot is filled by an independent form for the singular pronouns and by a dependent form for the plural pronouns as illustrated in (81a) and (81b) below. The emphatic construction can occur as the subject of a clause as illustrated in (81c).

- 81a. **Mí** n’ahóu/ **mí** ní m’áhóu  
**mí**      **ní**      **a-hóu**      /      **mí**      **ní**      **mí**      **a-hóu**  
 1SG.IND COM CM-hand/      1SG.IND COM 1SG.IND CM-hand  
 ‘I myself’ (lit. ‘I and hand/ I and my hand’)
- 81b. **Balí** n’ahóu/ **balí** ní l’áhóu  
**balí**      **ní**      **a-hóu**      /      **balí**      **ní**      **la**      **a-hóu**  
 3PL.IND COM CM-hand/      3PL.IND COM 3PL.DEP CM-hand  
 ‘They themselves’ (‘they and hand/ they and their hand’)

---

<sup>33</sup> Some speakers tend to use this plural suffix for the **a<sup>2</sup>**- class as well probably because of its phonological shape.

- 81c. Mí n'áhəi mí bhítı 'ııı.  
**mí nı a-həi mí bhítı kılı**  
 1SG.IND COM CM-hand 1SG.IND do 3SG  
 'I, myself did it.' or 'I did it by myself.'

In order to express the emphatic form of the reflexive, the expression **nı ahəi** 'with hand' or **X<sub>i</sub> nı X<sub>i</sub> ahəi** 'X<sub>i</sub> with X<sub>i</sub> hand' is combined with **shú** 'body' as illustrated in (82) and by the sentence in (83) below. This combination is used to give more emphasis to the subject or object.

82. **mí nı m'áhəi shú** 'my own self'  
**wó nı wó áhəi shú** 'your own self'  
**yı nı y'áhəi shú** 'his/ her own self'  
**blı nı ló áhəi shú** 'our own selves'  
**wıńń nı nó áhəi shú** 'your own selves'  
**balı nı l'áhəi shú** 'their own selves'
83. Ámó yı nı y'áhəi shú n'azhuzhıńıń  
**Á-mó yı nı yı a-həi shú nı a-zhuzhıı**  
 3SG-see 3SG.IND COM 3SG.IND CM-hand body LOC CM-mirror  
**nı kımı**  
 DEF inside  
 'He saw his own self in the mirror.'

The expression **nı ahəi** 'with hand' or **X<sub>i</sub> nı X<sub>i</sub> ahəi** 'X<sub>i</sub> with X<sub>i</sub> hand' can also be used to modify a noun. In this case, it occurs before the noun and it is glossed as 'own.' The following are examples:

- 84a. Mı n'áhəi enı  
**mı nı a-həi é-nı**  
 1SG.IND COM CM-hand CM-mother  
 'My own mother'
- 84b. Balı n'áhəı' upá  
**balı nı a-həi bu-pá**  
 3PL.IND COM CM-hand CM-house  
 'Their own house'

### 3.6.4 Reciprocal pronouns

The nouns **áglı** 'lover, fiancé(e), etc.' and **ahaglı** 'mate, colleague, etc.' are used to express reciprocity as illustrated in (85a) and (85b) respectively. Both nouns are used interchangeably and they occur in postverbal position and always require a plural antecedent as the subject NP. **ahaglı** can also occur with the plural forms of

the independent pronouns as in (85c). When **ágl̩** is used to express reciprocity it does not occur with any pronoun hence the ungrammaticality of the sentence in (85d).

- 85a. Ányínúv̩ēn n'adzínúv̩ēn ányínā ágl̩.  
**á-nyínúv̩ē** **ní** **ní** **a-dzínúv̩ē** **ní** **bá-nyínā** **ágl̩**  
 CM-boy DEF COM CM-girl DEF SM-hold RECIP  
 'The boy and the girl embraced each other.'
- 85b. Bayísón áákulá óhagl̩.  
**ba-yísón** **ní** **bá-á-kulá** **óhagl̩**  
 CM.PL-young.man DEF SM-PRSPROG-insult RECIP  
 'The young men are insulting one another.'
- 85c. Búplú íd̩ kó bl̩ óhagl̩.  
**bú-plú** **kí-d̩** **kó** **bl̩** **óhagl̩**  
 1PL-wash CM-thing GIVE 1PL.IND RECIP  
 'We washed for one another.'
- 85d. \*Búplú íd̩ kó bl̩ ágl̩.  
**bú-plú** **kí-d̩** **kó** **bl̩** **ágl̩**  
 1PL-wash CM-thing GIVE 1PL.IND RECIP  
 'We washed for one another.'





## 4 NOUN PHRASES AND NOMINAL MODIFIERS

This chapter examines the various types of noun phrases and the structure of the noun phrase. It also looks at nominal modifiers. A noun phrase in Tafi consists minimally of a head nominal. The head nominal which is obligatory may be a common noun, a pronoun or a proper name. As illustrated in sentence (1), **Kofi**, which is a proper noun, constitutes the noun phrase and it is the head noun.

1. Kof'ékóéyĩ.  
[Kofi]<sub>NP</sub> é-kóéyĩ  
Kofi SM-exit  
'Kofi went out.'

The head noun can be accompanied by modifiers which can be any of the following occurring in a fixed order: qualifier, quantifier, interrogative qualifier, determiner, and intensifier. This chapter is organised as follows: first, I introduce the structure of the noun phrase, I then look at the various types of noun phrases. After that, I go to the modifiers including adjectives, numerals and demonstratives.

### 4.1 The structure of the noun phrase

The general structure of a simple Noun Phrase (NP) can be summarised as follows:

**[[NOUN] - (QUALIFIER) - (QUANTIFIER) - (INTERROGATIVE QUALIFIER) - (DETERMINER) – (INTENSIFIER)]**

This structure is illustrated by the NPs in the following examples.

- 2a. Ányín áshĩ.  
á-nyĩ ní á-shĩ  
CM-man DEF SM-leave  
N DET  
'The man left'
- 2b. isí dɪɔama tigéné 'lílín pétée.  
i-sí dɪ-ɔama ti-géné ɪ-lílíní pétée  
CM.PL-tree RED-tall AM-seven AM-those all  
N QUAL QT DET INT  
'all those seven tall trees'
- 2c. bukudzɔgě gbɪgblā tugéné úlílín pétée.  
bu-kudzɔgě gbɪgblā tu-géné ú-lílíní pétée  
CM.PL-dog big AM-seven AM-those all  
N QUAL QT DET INT  
'all those seven big dogs'

The example in (2a) illustrates a simple noun phrase while those in (2b) and (2c), illustrate a fully extended noun phrase. As shown in (2a), the noun slot is occupied by **ányí** ‘man’ and it is modified by the definiteness marker which is a determiner. In (2b), **isí** ‘trees’ and in (2c), **bukudzogě** ‘dogs’ occupy the noun slot, the qualifier slot is filled by **dɪdama** ‘tall’ (2b) and **gbɪgblā** ‘big’ (2c), **tigene** and **tugene** ‘seven’ as well as **ɪlɪnɪ** and **ɔlɪnɪ** ‘those’ in (2b) and (2c) fill the quantifier and the determiner slots respectively while **pétéé** ‘all’ is an intensifier. Each of these categories is further discussed in later sections. All these modifiers are optional elements within the NP.

The noun **isí** ‘trees’ in (2b) is made up of the root **-sí** and the plural prefix **i-** which belongs to the **i-** class whereas **bukudzogě** ‘dogs’ in (2c) consists of the root **-kudzogě** and the plural prefix **bu-**. The qualifier slot can be filled by an adjective as illustrated in (2) above. Adjectives do not show concord with the head noun so **dɪdama** ‘tall’ and **gbɪgblā** ‘big’ in (2b) and (2c) respectively do not occur with any agreement marker. Quantifiers include numerals and interrogative quantifiers such as ‘how many/much?’ Numerals, especially cardinal numerals, agree with the head noun, however, it is only their modifying forms<sup>34</sup> which do so as shown in examples (2b) and (2c). Thus, the prefixes **ti-** in **tigéné** ‘seven’ in (2b) and **tu-** in **tugéné** ‘seven’ in (2c) are the agreement markers cardinal numerals take when they occur with nouns in the **i-** and **bu-** classes respectively. Ordinals, on the other hand, behave like qualifiers in that they do not show agreement with the head noun. The definiteness marker also does not show agreement. Other determiners however show concord with the head noun. For instance, the **ɪ-** and **ɔ-** prefixes attached to the demonstrative **-ɪlɪnɪ** ‘that’ in (2b) and (2c) are the agreement markers that this demonstrative takes when it modifies a noun belonging to the **i-** and **bu-** classes respectively. Intensifiers are the final constituents that occur within the NP. They also do not show concord with the head noun as exemplified in (2) above.

## 4.2 Types of noun phrases

There are different types of noun phrases. They include conjoined, alternate and possessive noun phrases. In each of the following subsections, I describe them in turn.

### 4.2.1 Conjoined Noun Phrase

Noun phrases can be conjoined with the connector or linker **ni** ‘COM’ as exemplified in (3) and (4) below. **ni** ‘COM’ is the same as the comitative preposition and as such Tafi can be viewed as a “WITH-language” following

<sup>34</sup> The discussion of the various forms of the numerals is in section 4.3.

Stassen (2000). In (3a), the names of the animals, **kakudzɔgɛ** ‘dog’ and **gbɔkɔɛ** ‘frog’ just as in (3b), the noun phrases **anɔvɔ ní** ‘the boy’ and **yí ɔbhialí** ‘his friends’ are conjoined with **ni** ‘COM’. In situations where there are more than two noun phrases to be linked together, the linker **ni** ‘COM’ may occur between the last two nouns as shown in (4).

- 3a. Bagan enyí alénũ kakudzɔgɛ ni gbɔkɔɛ.  
**ba-ga ní e-nyí alí é-nũ ka-kudzɔgɛ**  
 CM.PL-animal DEF CM.PL-name 3PL.IND SM-COP CM-dog  
**ni gbɔkɔɛ**  
 COM frog  
 ‘The names of the animals are dog and frog.’ (FS)
- 3b. Anɔvɔn ni y’ɔbhialín áza bupá trúkpóim̃.  
**a-nɔvɔ ní ni yí ɔ-bhia-alí ní bá-za**  
 CM-child DEF COM 3SG.IND CM-friend-PL DEF SM-stay  
**bu-pá tru-kpó kum̃**  
 CM-house AM-one inside  
 ‘The child and his friends were staying in the same house.’ (FS)
4. Blɔ̃, yí ni Kofí, blɔ̃ wúsɛ ’uvũnĩm̃.  
**blɔ̃ yí ni Kofí blɔ̃ wúsɛ bú-vũ ní**  
 1PL.IND 3SG.IND COM Kofi 1PL.IND tidy.up CM-house DEF  
**kum̃**  
 inside  
 ‘It is I, him and Kofi who tidied up the room.’ (see §3.6.1 on pronouns for further comment).

#### 4.2.2 Alternate Noun Phrase

**Pínɔ̃ɔ/púnɔ̃ɔ**<sup>35</sup> ‘or’ is the linker used to link noun phrases when one wants to give or express other options or choices as illustrated in (5). Both forms are used interchangeably. Speakers also use **aló(ó)** or **lóó** ‘or’ which is borrowed from Ewe.

5. Ámā pínɔ̃ɔ y’eyí ábávi ’edzinĩm̃.  
**Ámā pínɔ̃ɔ yí e-yí á-bá-vi ke-dzi ní kɪ-m̃**  
 Ama or 3SG.IND CM-child SM-FUT-go CM-market DEF in  
 ‘Ama or her child will go to the market.’

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<sup>35</sup> **Pínɔ̃ɔ/púnɔ̃ɔ** ‘or’ is also used in questions. See Chapter 8, section 8.2.3 for more details.

## 4.2.3 Possessive Noun Phrase

There are two ways of forming nominal possessive constructions in the language. In both types of possessive noun phrase, the possessor NP precedes the possessed NP which is the head. One way of forming a possessive noun phrase is by simply juxtaposing the two NPs as in (6) and (7). As usual, if the possessed noun has a CV prefix, the consonant is elided.

- 6a.    *adzĩ ʔpɔtĩ*  
          **a-dzĩ**            **kɪ-pɔtĩ**  
          CM-woman CM-cloth  
          ‘A woman’s cloth’
- 6b.    *ekusín ísɔ*  
          **e-kusí**    **ní**    **ɪ-sɔ**  
          CM-chief DEF CM-horse  
          ‘The chief’s horse’
- 7a.    *Máwúto ahɔɪ*  
          **Máwúto**    **a-hɔɪ**  
          Mawuto CM-hand  
          ‘Mawuto’s hand’
- 7b.    *Kɔkú ɔtsrí*  
          **Kɔkú**    **ɔ-tsɾĩ**  
          Kɔkú CM-leg  
          ‘Kɔku’s leg’

This strategy applies to pronominal possessors as well (see Section 3.6 for details). Another way of forming the possessive noun phrase is by placing the third singular independent pronoun **yĩ** ‘3SG.IND’ between the two NPs. In this second type, the possessed NP is a singular kinship term. Thus, for singular kinship possession, the dependent, i.e., the possessor is marked on the head with the independent pronoun **yĩ** ‘3SG.IND’ as shown in (8a) and (8b). The example in (9) illustrates the plural form of the kinship possession where the possessor and possessed NPs are simply juxtaposed.

- 8a.    *Máwúli yʼenídá*  
          **Máwúli**    **yĩ**            **é-nídá**  
          Mawuli 3SG.IND CM-aunt  
          ‘Mawuli’s maternal aunt’
- 8b.    *Kúmá yʼadzyā*  
          **Kumá**    **yĩ**            **á-dzyā**  
          Kumah 3SG.IND CM-brother

‘Kumah’s brother’

9. Banóvõn akā  
**ba-nóvõ ní á-kā**  
 CM.PL-child DEF CM-father  
 ‘The children’s father’

### 4.3 Nominal Modifiers

In the previous section, it was pointed out that the nominal modifiers include qualifiers, quantifiers, interrogative qualifier, determiners, and intensifiers. In this section, the modifiers are looked at.

#### 4.3.1 Adjectives

There is a general consensus among linguists that all languages seem to have noun and verb classes but there is some controversy about whether all languages have an adjective class. Dixon (2004:1) proposes that for every human language a “distinct” adjective class can be identified. He, however, adds that the criteria for distinguishing adjectives from other word classes are quite subtle because “in some languages, adjectives have similar grammatical properties to nouns, in some to verbs, in some to nouns and verbs and in some to neither of them”. For this reason, Welmers (1973:243) advises in relation to African languages that one should “be suspicious of adjectives; some of them are not”.

In this section, I examine how property concepts are coded in Tafi. Some property concepts are coded as adjectives which function in an NP. Adjectives in Tafi are a subset of Qualifiers which occur immediately after the head noun and before the Quantifier phrase in an NP. There is no concord between the head noun and the adjective or Qualifier for that matter as illustrated below. The adjective class in the language is relatively small as compared to the noun and verb classes.

- 10a. Béfleté gbugblā tíá-bhā ní bé-yí tédzyí ní.  
**bé-fleté gbugblā tíá-bhā ní bé-yí tédzyí ní**  
 CM.PL-leopard big AM-two DEF SM-kill donkey DEF  
 ‘The two big leopards killed the donkey.’
- 10b. Adzĩn ébhui ’ipótí vuvõ.  
**a-dzĩ ní é-bhui kɪ-pótí vuvõ**  
 CM-woman DEF SM-cut CM-cloth new  
 ‘The woman has bought a new cloth.’

In (10a), the subject NP is headed by **béfleté** ‘leopards’ which is modified by the adjective **gbugblā** ‘big’ and the numeral **tíábhā** ‘two’ whereas in (10b), **kɪpótí** ‘cloth’

is the head noun within the object NP and it is modified by **vuvɔ̃** ‘new’ which is an adjective.

Property concepts may be expressed with non-derived or derived adjectives; ideophonic forms as well as relative clauses containing an expression denoting a property (see Bobuafor to appear).

#### 4.3.1.1 Non-derived adjectives

So far, only three underived adjectives have been identified. These are **kpá** ‘bad, evil’, **bhulí** ‘small’ and **gunū** ‘short’. **Kpá** ‘bad’ is exemplified in (11) below. This adjective is a value term used to describe people or items that are bad, evil, out of use or unserviceable.

- 11a. **anɔ̃ kpá** ‘a bad/evil person’  
 11b. **káa kpá** ‘an old car that is no longer in use’

#### 4.3.1.2 Ideophonic Adjectives

In Tafi, ideophones are used as qualifiers to modify nouns. Like the non-derived and derived adjectives, the ideophonic forms do not enter any agreement relation with the head noun as shown in (12b) and (12c). Examples include:

- 12a. **hɔyɔhɔyɪ** ‘fat’                      **dzyɔgɔ̃** ‘good’  
       **bubuɪ** ‘cold’                      **kɪtɪkɪtɪ** ‘bitter’  
       **tutu** ‘black’                      **frɪɖʒ** ‘white’  
       **sísíí** ‘slow’                      **tsótsó** ‘pointed’  
       **dzyrodo** ‘long’                      **gelegelee** ‘many/much’  
       **gbĩgbĩ** ‘heavy’                      **gbɔnyɔgbɔnyɔ** ‘fat’
- 12b. **kikutū gbĩgbĩ**  
       **ki-kutū gbĩgbĩ**  
       CM-load IDEO.heavy  
       ‘a heavy load’
- 12c. **adzĩ hɔyɔhɔyɪ**  
       **a-dzĩ hɔyɔhɔyɪ**  
       CM-woman IDEO.fat  
       ‘a fat woman’

The head nouns, **kikutū** ‘load’ in (12b) and **adzĩ** ‘woman’ in (12c) are modified by the ideophones **gbĩgbĩ** ‘heavy’ and **hɔyɔhɔyɪ** ‘fat’ respectively and occur in the qualifier slot in the NP.

## 4.3.1.3 Derived adjectives by reduplication

The principal means by which derived adjectives in Tafi are formed is through the reduplication of intransitive verb stems. The reduplication can be total or partial and the reduplicated part most often contains a pre-specified high vowel which harmonises with the ATR value of the initial stem vowel as in (13) below. If the verb stem has a nasalised vowel, the nasalisation is not copied as shown by the verb **pĩ** ‘be(come) good’.

13.	<b>tsyóm̃</b>	‘be(come).spoilt/rotten’	→	<b>tsútsyóm̃</b>	‘spoilt/bad/rotten’
	<b>dzā</b>	‘be(come).ripe, red’	→	<b>dzúdzā</b>	‘ripe, red’
	<b>vé</b>	‘be(come).bitter’	→	<b>vívé</b>	‘bitter’
	<b>pĩ</b>	‘be(come).good’	→	<b>púpĩ</b>	‘good’
	<b>nĩ</b>	‘be(come).wide’	→	<b>nunĩ</b>	‘wide’
	<b>dama</b>	‘be(come).tall’	→	<b>dídama</b>	‘tall’
	<b>she</b>	‘grow’	→	<b>shishe</b>	‘old’

There are also some adjectives with reduplicated structure, however, their root or derivational source is not clear. This is because forms such as those in the right column of (14) to which they could be related do not exist in the language. Thus, it could be possible that the ‘non-reduplicated’ form of these words may have been used in the past and are no longer part of the lexicon (see also Dorvlo (2008) on Logba, Essegbey (2010a) on Tutrugbu and Ameka (1991) on Ewe).

14.	<b>giganĩ</b>	‘strong, hard’	←	<b>*ganĩ</b>	‘be(come) strong’
	<b>gbugblā</b>	‘big, huge’	←	<b>*gblā</b>	‘become big’
	<b>vuṽ</b>	‘new’	←	<b>*ṽ</b>	‘become new’
	<b>kpkpĩ</b>	‘hot’	←	<b>*kpĩ</b>	‘become hot’
	<b>wuw̃</b>	‘raw, fresh, green’	←	<b>*w̃</b>	‘become raw’

## 4.3.1.4 Derivational possibilities of adjectives

## 4.3.1.4.1 Adverbialisation of adjectives

Some ideophonic adjectives or qualifiers come in two forms: a reduplicated form and a triplicated form. The former functions as adjectives and the latter as adverbials. The triplicated ideophonic forms are used for semantic effects such as intensity. Examples (15a) and (15b) illustrate reduplicated forms functioning as adjectives while (16a) and (16b) are examples of triplicated forms functioning as adverbials.

15a.	Apótĩ tutūn átsywĩ.			
	<b>a-pótĩ</b>	<b>tutū</b>	<b>nĩ</b>	<b>á-tsywĩ</b>
	CM.PL-cloth	IDEO.black	DEF	SM-tear
	‘The black cloths are torn.’			



- 15b. Apotín ánó tututū.

**a-potí ní á-nó tu-tutū**  
 CM.PL-cloth DEF SM-be.black RED-IDEO.black  
 ‘The cloths are very black.’

- 16a. Ákó éfūn ’úní bubui.

**á-kó é-fū ní bu-ní bubui**  
 3SG-give CM-guest DEF CM-water IDEO.cold  
 ‘S/He offered the guest cold water.’

- 16b. Buní ní yó bubuibui.

**bu-ní ní yó bu-buibui**  
 CM-water DEF be.cold RED-IDEO.cold  
 ‘The water is very cold.’

As shown in (15a) and (16a) above, **tutū** ‘black’ and **bubui** ‘cold’ are adjectives modifying **apotí** ‘cloths’ and **buní** ‘water’, however, in (15b) and (16b), their reduplicated forms **tututū** and **bubuibui** are used as adverbs modifying the verbs **nó** ‘be(come) black’ and **yó** ‘be(come) cold’ respectively, yielding an interpretation of intensification.

#### 4.3.1.4.2 Adverbialisation of adjectives by suffixation

One of the non-derived adjectives takes a suffix **-yí** to form an adverbial as shown in (17b).

- 17a. aqáka bhulí

**a-qáka bhulí**  
 CM-box small  
 ‘small box’

- 17b. Aqákan edzyí bhulíyí.

**a-qáka ní e-dzyí bhulí-yí**  
 CM-box DEF SM-be small-SFX  
 ‘The box is small.’

#### 4.3.1.4.3 Nominalisation of adjectives

Adjectives in the language can be made to function as nominals when they are nominalised by the addition of class prefixes with the exception of the **tu/ti-** prefix. Nominalised adjectives for the **ti-** class are formed by attaching the subject pronoun of this class to the adjective. When adjectives are nominalised, they can occur as head nouns and thus control agreement.

- 18a. Aga gbɪgblān éféké anóvɔ́n.  
**a-ga gbɪgblā ní é-féké a-nóvɔ́ ní**  
 CM-animal big DEF SM-lift CM-child DEF  
 ‘The big animal lifted the child.’ (FS)
- 18b. Ágbɪgblān éféké anóvɔ́n.  
**á-gbɪgblā ní é-féké a-nóvɔ́ ní**  
 CM-big DEF SM-lift CM-child DEF  
 ‘The big one lifted the child.’ (referring to the animal)
- 19a. Tɪsɪ dzyroɔ́n ídzyíní.  
**tɪsɪ dzyroɔ́ ní ki-dzyíní**  
 feather long DEF SM-break  
 ‘The long feather is broken.’
- 19b. Kidzyroɔ́n ídzyíní.  
**ki-dzyroɔ́ ní ki-dzyíní**  
 CM-long DEF SM-break  
 ‘The long one is broken.’ (referring to the feather)

In (18a) and (19a), **gbɪgblā** ‘big’ and **dzyroɔ́** ‘long’ are adjectives modifying the head nouns **aga** ‘animal’ and **tɪsɪ** ‘feather’ respectively whereas **ágbɪgblā** ‘big one’ in (18b) and **kidzyroɔ́** ‘long one’ in (19b) are the head nouns in subject position. In both (18a) and (18b), the subject-verb agreement marker **é-** is used to cross-reference the head nouns on the verb **féké** ‘lift’ while **ki-** is used to cross-reference the head nouns in (19a) and (19b) on the verb **dzyíní** ‘break’.

#### 4.3.1.5 Non-adjectival means of coding property concepts

##### 4.3.1.5.1 Modification by relative clauses

Adjectival concepts can also be expressed with relative clauses containing property denoting expressions as in (20) - (22). The relative clause is introduced by an invariable relative marker **gɪ** (see section 9.1 on relative clauses).

20. Áfátí ékúń gɪ átsómɔ́n pétéé.  
**á-fátí é-kú ní gɪ á-tsyómɔ́ ní pétéé**  
 3SG-peel CM.PL-yam DEF REL 3SG.DEF-spoil TOP all  
 ‘S/he peeled all the rotten yams.’ (lit. ‘the yams which are rotten’)
21. Ádzín akpí awí gɪ átsywĩ.  
**a-dzín ní á-kpí a-wi gɪ á-tsywĩ**  
 CM-woman DEF SM-put.on CM-dress REL 3SG.DEF-tear

‘The woman is wearing a torn dress.’ (lit. ‘a dress which is torn’)

22. Ébhui osín nt kawín gt édzyíní.  
**e-bhui o-sí ní nt ka-wí ní gt é-dzyíní**  
 3SG-cut CM-tree DEF COM CM-axe DEF REL 3SG.DEF-break  
 ‘S/He cut the tree with the broken axe.’ (lit. ‘the axe which is broken’)

#### 4.3.1.5.2 Quality/property concepts expressed with verbs

Some adjectival concepts are coded by property denoting verbs. Such verbs are primarily intransitive. They denote a property and predicate it of the NP in subject position in the one-place construction. (23a) and (23b) are illustrations. The verbs **zi** ‘be(come) bad’ in (23a) and **tsyómō** ‘be(come) rotten’ in (23b) state the properties of the subject NPs.

- 23a. Anúvōń ézĩ.  
**a-núvōń ní é-zi**  
 CM-child DEF SM-be.bad  
 ‘The child is bad/spoilt.’
- 23b. Okútún ótsyómō.  
**o-kútú ní ó-tsyómō**  
 CM-orange DEF SM-be.rotten  
 ‘The orange is rotten.’

#### 4.3.1.5.3 Quality/property concepts expressed with verb phrases

Property denoting nouns can be used as complements of verbs in a VP to predicate qualities on a subject NP in a two-place construction. Consider the following examples.

- 24a. lhěń ál’óńá.  
**ɿ-hě ní á-lí ɔ-ńá**  
 CM-knife DEF SM-be.at CM-sharpness  
 ‘The knife is sharp.’
- 24b. Adzúnúvōń éyi ’ubhíté.  
**a-dzúnúvōń ní é-yí bú-bhíté**  
 CM-girl DEF SM-resemble CM-beauty  
 ‘The girl is beautiful.’
- 24c. Onín ól’ ǎdzyɿ.  
**o-ní ní ɔ-lí ǎ-dzyɿ**  
 CM-soup DEF SM-be.at CM-sweetness

‘The soup is tasty.’

In (24a) - (24c), **ihě** ‘knife’, **adzinóvɔ̃ɛ** ‘girl’ and **oní** ‘soup’ may be said to possess the quality of **ɔ̃há** ‘sharpness’, **búbhíté** ‘beauty’ and **ɔ̃dzyi** ‘sweetness’ respectively which occur as complements of the verbs in these sentences.

There is another group of VPs used to predicate qualities of entities. The collocation of the verb and the NP together express properties as illustrated by the examples in (25a) - (25d).

- 25a. Bawin ádó ’íbó.  
**ba-wi ní bá-dó ki-bó**  
 CM.PL-dress DEF SM-contact CM-dirt  
 ‘The clothes are dirty.’
- 25b. Ányín áákp’ ayí.  
**á-nyí ní á-á-kpí á-yí**  
 CM-man DEF SM-PRSPROG-put.on CM-laziness  
 ‘The man is lazy.’
- 25c. Ányín ámo oblö.  
**á-nyí ní á-mo o-blö**  
 CM-man DEF SM-see CM-anger  
 ‘The man is angry.’
- 25d. Buní ní vu ’ifú.  
**bu-ní ní vu ki-fú**  
 CM-water DEF catch CM-fire  
 ‘The water is hot.’

#### 4.3.1.5.4 Quality/Property concepts expressed by a periphrastic “medio-passive” construction

In Tafi, like in Nyagbo (Essegbey 2010a), Tuwuli (Harley 2005), Likpe and Ewe (Ameka 2005), capability properties can be attributed to an Undergoer entity using a dedicated construction which has been labelled medio-passive by Harley (2005) and as Undergoer Voice Construction by Ameka (2005). In the Tafi construction like in the Nyagbo construction, the operator verb is the verb meaning ‘be(come) good’: **pĩ** in Tafi and **pě** in Nyagbo. In Tafi, the construction involves an operator verb and a nominalised verb constituent which functions as a THEME argument to the operator verb. Other features of the construction are:

- 26a. It is a mono-clausal two-place (see e.g. 27a), or three-place construction (see e.g. 27b)

- 26b. The operator verb takes at least one complement which is a nominalised verb and bears a THEME role to the operator verb. The nominalised verb represents the state of affairs being modelled in the clause (see e.g. 27b).
- 26c. The participants in the state of affairs in the nominalised verb are unified with those of the operator verb, for example (27c).
- 26d. The Undergoer-like argument is linked to the A (subject) function of the construction and occurs in subject position in the clause and controls the cross-referencing on the operator verb, for example (27d).
- 26e. The Actor-like argument is either not realised (27a, c, or e) or it is coded as a GOAL argument in a three place construction (27b, d, or f)
- 26f. The construction can be interpreted as ‘the Undergoer entity is V-able’ (to the Goal entity).

The sentences in (27) are illustrations of the ‘medio-passive’ construction.

- 27a. Keplukpán ápuokla.  
**ke-plukpá ní ka-pĩ bu-kla**  
 CM-book DEF SM-be.good CM-read  
 ‘The book was easy to read.’ (Lit. The book was good to read.)
- 27b. Keplukpán ápĩ Kofi ’okla.  
**ke-plukpá ní ka-pĩ Kofi bu-kla**  
 CM-book DEF SM-be.good Kofi CM-read  
 ‘The book was easy to read for Kofi’ OR ‘Kofi likes reading the book’
- 27c. Osín ópuuté.  
**o-sí ní ó-pĩ bu-té**  
 CM-tree DEF SM-be.good CM-cut  
 ‘The tree was easy to cut/ cutable.’ (Lit. ‘The tree was good to cut.’)
- 27d. Osín ópĩ Kofi ’uté.  
**o-sí ní ó-pĩ Kofi bu-té**  
 CM-tree DEF SM-be.good Kofi CM-cut  
 ‘The tree was easy to cut for Kofi.’ (Lit. ‘The tree was good to cut.’)
- 27e. Kíxwĩn ípuuwa.  
**kí-xwĩ ní kí-í-pĩ bu-wa**  
 CM-work DEF SM-PRSPROG-be.good CM-do  
 ‘The work is easy to do.’ (Lit. ‘The work is good to do.’)
- 27f. Kíxwĩn ípĩ Kofi ’owa.  
**kí-xwĩ ní kí-pĩ Kofi bu-wa**  
 CM-work DEF SM-be.good Kofi CM-do  
 ‘The work was easy to do for Kofi.’ (Lit. ‘The work is good to do.’)

## 4.3.1.5.5 Nominals as Qualifiers

There are certain complex noun structures where a nominal immediately follows another noun. This nominal semantically qualifies the first noun. In such cases, the second nominal tends to be a derived nominal relating to human propensity. It must be noted that though these derived nominal forms may denote property concepts, they are not syntactic adjectives. In Tafi, such nominals could be derived, for instance, by attaching the noun **eleté** ‘owner (of)’ to a human propensity term as shown in (28) and (29).

- 28a. adzɪ ehoélété alílín  
**a-dzɪ**            **e-hoélété**            **a-lílín**  
 CM-woman CM-rich.person AM-DIST  
 ‘that rich woman’
- 28b. anyínóvɔ̃ē áyíléleté  
**a-nyínóvɔ̃ē**    **á-yíléleté**  
 CM-boy CM-lazy.person  
 ‘a lazy boy’
- 29a. badzɪ ehoélété alílín  
**ba-dzɪ**            **e-hoélété**            **a-lílín**  
 CM.PL-woman CM-rich.person AM-DIST  
 ‘those rich women’
- 29b. banyínóvɔ̃ē áyíléleté  
**ba-nyínóvɔ̃ē**    **á-yíléleté**  
 CM.PL-boy CM-lazy.person  
 ‘lazy boys’

As the examples above show the qualifier noun does not agree with the head noun as predicted from the fact that qualifiers do not show agreement with the head noun. The implication of this is that the nominal property expression occurs in the Qualifier slot in a simple noun phrase. An alternative analysis of the forms above is that the nominal property word forms a phrase with the rest of the NP and this NP (e.g. those rich people) in turn acts as a modifier in apposition to the main head (women).

From the preceding, it is clear that Tafi has very few non-derived adjectives probably not more than three, however, there are various ways through which adjectival concepts are expressed in the language and these are through reduplication of property verbs to form adjectives, relativisation, nominal property words used as complements of predicators, for example, locative or resemble verbs, medio-passive constructions, property verbs as predicates in one or two place-constructions. Moreover, certain ideophonic forms are also used as adjectives

to modify nouns in the language. Furthermore, like other qualifiers in the language, adjectives do not show agreement with the head noun but they can be nominalised and when they are, they control agreement, i.e., they can head the noun phrase. Semantic types of property concepts á la Dixon (1982, 2004) are distributed across various morpho-syntactic strategies. Words for basic colours are either ideophonic (black and white) or reduplicated verbs (red and green). When adjectival words are used predicatively, they undergo category change, for example, ideophonic adjectives become adverbials. Recall that property verbs are an important source of adjectival concepts. It can be said that adjectival in Tafi are only used attributively and not predicatively (see Ameka 2012 for similar claim in Ewe).

## 4.4 Numerals

The numerals consist of cardinal and ordinal numbers. In a noun phrase, the numerals occur after the adjective and before the interrogative qualifier and the determiner (see Bobuafor (2009b) for an overview).

### 4.3.1 Cardinal numbers

Tafi has a decimal numeral system. The counting forms of cardinal numbers are different from the form they take in attributive position. In the counting form, the words for six, seven, and nine have a zero prefix while the others have prefixes which are vowels.

30.	<b>o-lí</b>	‘one’
	<b>ɪ-bha</b>	‘two’
	<b>ɪ-tá</b>	‘three’
	<b>ĩ-lí</b>	‘four’
	<b>i-tí</b>	‘five’
	<b>holo</b>	‘six’
	<b>géné</b>	‘seven’
	<b>a-suĩ</b>	‘eight’
	<b>hitá</b> or <b>zhítá</b> <sup>36</sup>	‘nine’
	<b>kí-fɔ̃</b>	‘ten’

The multiples of ten, i.e., twenty, thirty etc. are formed by prefixing either the root or stem of the numbers ‘one’ to ‘nine’ with the prefix **áf-**, and the quantifier prefix **t-**, yielding **áf-t-**<sup>37</sup> followed by the vowel /a/ or /e/ depending on the ATR value of

<sup>36</sup> **Zhitá** and **hitá** are used interchangeably.

<sup>37</sup> It appears that there used to be a vowel between /f/ and /t/ which has been elided. A look at other GTM languages that are close to Tafi such as Nyagbo and Avatime, for instance, clearly suggest that there must have been a vowel occurring between the two consonants.

the stem except for the words for ‘thirty’ and ‘fifty’. The word for ‘thirty’ is formed by prefixing **áf-** followed by two vowels /**aa**/ to the root of ‘three’ whereas for ‘fifty’, it is formed by prefixing **áf-** followed by the vowel /**e**/ to the word for ‘five’, that is, the prefix together with the root. Below are the words for the multiples of ‘ten’.

31.	<b>áf-t-a-bha</b>	‘twenty’
	<b>áf-aa-tá</b>	‘thirty’
	<b>áf-t-a-lí</b>	‘forty’
	<b>áf-e-ití</b>	‘fifty’
	<b>áf-t-e-holo</b>	‘sixty’
	<b>áf-t-e-géné</b>	‘seventy’
	<b>áf-t-a-suī</b>	‘eighty’
	<b>áf-t-e-hitā</b>	‘ninety’

The counting forms of the numbers ‘eleven’, ‘twenty-one’, ‘thirty-one’, etc., are formed with the words for ‘ten’ or its multiples, followed by the NP linker **ni** ‘COM’ whose vowel is deleted, and the prefix **t-**, attached to the counting form of ‘one’ as shown below.

32.	<b>kí-fō n’t-o-lí</b> <sup>38</sup>	‘eleven’	(ten and one)
	<b>áf-t-a-bha n’t-o-lí</b>	‘twenty-one’	(twenty and one)
	<b>áf-aa-tā n’t-o-lí</b>	‘thirty-one’	(thirty and one) etc.

The numerals ‘twelve’ to ‘nineteen’, ‘twenty-two’ to ‘twenty-nine’, ‘thirty-two’ to ‘thirty-nine’, etc., are formed in the same way, except that the roots of the numerals ‘two’ up to ‘nine’ are prefixed with **tua-** or **tie-** depending on the [ATR] value of the vowel in the root. These prefixes are the same as the ones numerals take when they modify nouns belonging to the **ba(a)-** class. For example,

33.	<b>kí-fō n’tua-bha</b>	‘twelve’	(ten and two)
	<b>kí-fō n’tua-tá</b>	‘thirteen’	(ten and three)
	<b>kí-fō n’tie-tí</b>	‘fifteen’	(ten and five)
	<b>áf-t-a-bha n’tua-bhā</b>	‘twenty-two’	(twenty and two)
	<b>áf-t-a-bha n’tua-tá</b>	‘twenty-three’	(twenty and three)
	<b>áf-t-a-bha n’tie-tí</b>	‘twenty-five’	(twenty and five)
	<b>áf-aa-tā n’tua-bhā</b>	‘thirty-two’	(thirty and two)
	<b>áf-aa-tā n’tua-tá</b>	‘thirty-three’	(thirty and three)

For example, the word for ‘twenty’ in these two languages is **afetabha** and **avitaua** respectively.

<sup>38</sup> The mid tone on the final syllable of **kí-fō** ‘ten’ becomes low while the high tone on that of **áf-aa-tá** ‘thirty’ has become mid. This is because the following word **ni** ‘and’ has a low tone.



**á-f-aa-tā n'tie-tí** 'thirty-five' (thirty and five)

The words **alafā** 'hundred' and **akpé** 'thousand' are borrowed words from Ewe whereas that for 'million' **míliṣ** is borrowed from English. They can be modified by the forms which the numerals 'two' to 'nine' take when they follow 'ten' and its multiples. When the numerals 'hundred' and 'thousand' are modified by the numeral 'one', the form it takes is **tedjipó** which is different from the form it takes when it follows 'ten' and its multiples.<sup>39</sup> The following are examples.

- |     |                       |                |
|-----|-----------------------|----------------|
| 34. | <b>alafā té-djipó</b> | 'one hundred'  |
|     | <b>akpé té-djipó</b>  | 'one thousand' |
|     | <b>míliṣ te-djipó</b> | 'one million'  |
|     | <b>alafā tíá-bhā</b>  | 'two hundred'  |
|     | <b>akpé tíá-bhā</b>   | 'two thousand' |
|     | <b>míliṣ tua-bhā</b>  | 'two million'  |

In attributive position, the cardinal numerals, especially 'one' to 'nine', agree with the head noun in that they take a prefix made up of the quantifier prefix, the consonantal prefix **t-** and a concord vowel that agrees with the vowel of the noun prefix.<sup>40</sup> Thus, agreement is shown on the numbers 'one' to 'nine', depending on the noun class (Bobuafor 2012). The number 'ten' has a form different from the counting form also, which is **lṣ-fṣ**. However, this functions as a default form, which does not agree with the noun it modifies, so it goes with all the classes. The numbers 'twenty', 'thirty', etc. do not agree with the head noun either. They maintain the same form when they occur with a noun from any of the noun classes. As regards the numbers 'eleven', 'twenty-one', 'thirty-one', etc., their attributive forms are identical to their counting forms, besides 'eleven', which is formed by using **lṣ-fṣ**, the modifier form of 'ten', as shown in Table 3 below. Moreover, the attributive forms of the numerals 'twelve' to 'nineteen', 'twenty-two' to 'twenty-nine', 'thirty-two' to 'thirty-nine', etc., are also formed by using the words for 'ten' or its multiples, the linker **ni** 'COM', without its vowel and the attributive forms of 'two' to 'nine'. Thus, for instance, if we have the number 'twenty-five' modifying a noun, it is only the number 'five' that agrees with the head noun whereas the form for 'twenty' remains the same, as illustrated in Table 3. Therefore, it is only the digits that show agreement.

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<sup>39</sup> This is the form the numeral 'one' takes when it modifies nouns belonging to the **a<sup>1</sup>**- class which is a default class for loanwords.

<sup>40</sup> For the time being, the distinction between the form the numeral 'one' takes in attributive position (i.e., **tedjipó**, **trikpó** etc.) and the form it takes after 'ten' and its multiples (i.e., **t-o-lf**) is not clear. Also, the numeral modifiers of the **ba(a)**- class maintain the counting forms of 'two' to 'nine' which occur after 'ten' and its multiples.

The examples in Table 3 are an illustration of the concord between nouns in the various classes and the numerals they occur with.

Table 4.1 Cardinal numerals

Class	Concord	Meaning
a <sup>1</sup> -	e-kusí té-ḍḍkpó	‘one chief’
ba(a)-	bee-kusí tíá-bhā	‘two chiefs’
	bee-kusí ló-fó n’t-o-lí	‘eleven chiefs’
	bee-kusí áf-t-a-bha n’tie-tí	‘twenty-five chiefs’
o-	o-bhoshi to-ḍḍkpó	‘one sheep’
i-	i-bhoshi tu-bha	‘two sheep’
	i-bhoshi ló-fó n’t-o-lí	‘eleven sheep’
	i-bhoshi af-t-a-bha n’ti-tí	‘twenty-five sheep’
ki-	ki-tókpú tríkpo	‘one head’
a <sup>2</sup> -	a-tókpú tá-bhā	‘two heads’
	a-tókpú ló-fó n’t-o-lí	‘eleven heads’
	a-tókpú áf-t-a-bha n’tie-tí	‘twenty-five heads’
ka-	ká-pā tie-ḍḍkpó	‘one hoe’
bu <sup>2</sup> -	bu-pa tu-bha	‘two hoes’
	bu-pa ló-fó n’t-o-lí	‘eleven hoes’
	bu-pa af-t-a-bha n’tu-tí	‘twenty-five hoes’
bu <sup>1-41</sup>	bu-tó trúkpo	‘one ear’
ti-	There are no count nouns in this class.	

In context, the cardinal numerals which occur in attributive position behave syntactically like pronominal expressions in that they can occur without a noun denoting the enumerated entity; in which case they stand in for the noun as shown in (35b). In this example, the noun head is elided and it is recoverable from the agreement marker on the numeral.

- 35a. Ákó ányín bupā tubha.  
       á-kó    á-nyí    ní    bu-pā    tu-bha  
       3SG-give CM-man DEF CM.PL-hoe AM-two  
       ‘S/he gave the man two hoes.’

- 35b. Ákó ányín tubha.  
       á-kó    á-nyí    ní    tu-bha  
       give    CM-man DEF AM-two

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<sup>41</sup> The plural forms of nouns in the bu<sup>1</sup>- class belong to the ba(a)- class.

‘S/he gave the man two (hoes).’

Moreover, the attributive cardinal numerals can occur in a form of “syntactic iteration” which is a process involving the repetition of words or phrases (Ameka 1999:82). The type of syntactic iteration these numerals undergo is used among others to express a kind of distributive meaning described as “serial ordering” (Reynolds 1995:53) which can be paraphrased as “units of *X* at a time, one after another” (Ameka, *ibid.*). Consider the following examples:

- 36a. akpǎn étsí trikpo trikpo.  
**a-kpǎ ní é-tsí tri-kpó tri-kpó**  
 CM.PL-fish DEF SM-die AM-one AM-one  
 ‘The fishes died one by one’
- 36b. Báshĩ tiabha tiabha.  
**bá-shĩ tua-bha tua-bha**  
 3PL-leave AM-two AM-two  
 ‘They left in pairs.’

The frequency of the occurrence of an event or state of affairs is indicated by nominalising the verb that expresses the state of affairs by prefixing it with /a-/. The nominalised form is then modified by the attributive form of a cardinal number to show the number of times an event occurred or someone performed an action. For example,

- 37a. Ábá abá tábhā.  
**á-bá a-bá tá-bhā**  
 3SG-come CM-come AM-two  
 ‘S/he came twice.’
- 37b. Ámínā y’ishĩ amínā tatá.  
**á-mínā yí ki-shĩ a-mínā ta-tá**  
 3SG-whip 3SG CM-stick CM-whip AM-three  
 ‘S/he whipped him/her three times.’

#### 4.4.2 Fractions

The concept ‘half’ or ‘part’ is rendered by the nouns **kegunū** ‘half’ and **kápĩ** ‘a part/piece of a whole’. These nouns can be modified by cardinal numerals and sometimes they are modified by **zizĩ** ‘whole’ to convey an idea of not more or less than half. **kápĩ** ‘a part/piece of a whole’ can also be modified by **bhulĩ** ‘small’ and **gbigblā** ‘big’ which are adjectives. Moreover, **afǎ** ‘half’ and **akpá** ‘part’ which are borrowed from Ewe are also used. The following are examples:

- 38a. Bis'íápī (gbɪgbɪlǎ)  
**bisí ká-pī (gbɪgbɪlǎ)**  
 cola.nut CM-part (big)  
 'A (big) piece of a cola nut'
- 38b. Idzyin 'íápī tiedjipó  
**i-dzyi ní ká-pī tie-djipó**  
 CM-heart DEF CM-part AM-one  
 'One part of the heart'
- 38c. Yě abhlenděním bupɪ tobha!  
**yě a-bhlendě ní kumu bu-pɪ tu-bha**  
 cut CM-pineapple DEF inside CM.PL-part AM-two  
 'Cut the pineapple into two parts!'
- 38d. Átɔ́ 'edɔ́ nɪ budzo tumpé 'egunū zɪzɪ.  
**á-tɔ́ kí-dɔ́ nɪ bu-dzo tumpá ke-gunū zɪzɪ**  
 3SG-cook CM-thing COM CM-palm.oil bottle CM-half whole  
 'She used half bottle of oil to cook.' (lit. 'she cooked with a whole half bottle of oil.')
- 38e. Édzyíní nikpěním bugunū tobha.  
**é-dzyíní nikpě ní kumu bu-gunū tu-bha**  
 3SG-break maize DEF inside CM-half AM-two  
 'He broke the maize into halves.'
- 38f. budzo tumpá 'fǎ  
**bu-dzo tumpá a-fǎ**  
 CM-palm.oil bottle CM-half  
 'Half bottle of oil'
- 38g. Ámǎ́ boḍoboḍoním akpá tíátá.  
**á-mǎ́ boḍoboḍo ní kumu a-kpá tíá-tá**  
 3SG-divide bread DEF inside CM-part AM-three  
 'S/he divided the bread into three parts.'

It is possible to express fractions with some action verbs denoting the manner in which the item was separated or divided. These verbs are nominalised by being reduplicated and adding the class prefix of the noun being referred to, to the reduplicated stem. The nominalised form is followed by the (reduced form of) the postposition **kumu** 'inside' with its initial consonant elided. The derived form is in turn followed by a cardinal number as in (39). These nominalised forms can occur after the head noun or they can occur alone as the head noun. When these forms occur as the head noun they can only be used in context in order for the speaker to be understood by the addressee(s).

- 39a. bodzo tompá 'mímém tiabha  
**bu-dzo tompá á-mí-má kumi tia-bha**  
 CM-palm.oil bottle CM-RED-divide inside AM-two  
 'half bottle of palm oil' (lit. 'a bottle of oil divided into two parts')
- 39b. ébhubhuím tiabha/tatá  
**é-bhu-bhuí kumi tia-bha / tia-tá**  
 CM-RED-cut inside AM-two / AM-three  
 'two or three parts of something that has been cut into a number of parts'  
 (e.g. **bladzyó** 'plantain')
- 39c. kibhubhuím trikpo  
**ki-bhu-bhuí kumi tri-kpo**  
 CM-RED-cut inside AM-one  
 'One part of something that has been cut into a number of parts' (e.g. **kishĩ** 'stick')
- 39d. osí ótitéím tođukpó  
**o-sí ó-ti-té kumi to-đukpó**  
 CM-tree CM-RED-slash inside AM-one  
 'One part of a tree that has been slashed into a number of parts'
- 39e. osí ítitéím tībha  
**o-sí í-ti-té kumi ti-bha**  
 CM-tree CM-RED-slash inside AM-two  
 'Two parts of a tree (that has been slashed into a number of parts)'

These nouns or nominals used to express the concept of 'half' or 'part' can be followed by two cardinal numbers as illustrated in (40a) – (40c) or the nominals can be followed by a cardinal number and then by **kápĩ** 'part' or **bupĩ** 'parts' and another cardinal number to express 'half', 'one-third', 'one-fourth' etc. as shown in (40d) and (40e).

- 40a. ébhubhuím tiabha tiedjipó  
**é-bhu-bhuí kumi tia-bha tie-djipó**  
 CM-RED-cut inside AM-two AM-one  
 'Half or one part of something cut into two.' (e.g. **bladzyó** 'plantain')
- 40b. ítitéím tutá tībā  
**í-ti-té kumi ti-tá tí-bhā**  
 CM-RED-slash inside AM-three AM-two  
 'Two-thirds or two parts of something slashed into three.' (e.g. a tree)
- 40c. bupĩ tolí tíédjipó

**bu-pɪ**      **tu-lí**      **tíé-djɪkpó**  
 CM.PL-piece AM-four AM-one  
 ‘one-fourth’

- 40d. ébhubhuím̄ tabha káp̄ tiedjɪkpó  
**é-bhu-bhuí**      **kɪmɪ**      **tua-bha**      **ká-p̄**      **tíé-djɪkpó**  
 CM-RED-cut      inside AM-two CM-part AM-one  
 ‘Half or one part of something cut into two.’ (e.g. **bladzyó** ‘plantain’)
- 40e. ébhubhuím̄ tātá bupɪ tubha  
**é-bhu-bhuí**      **kɪmɪ**      **tua-tá**      **bu-pɪ**      **tu-bha**  
 CM-RED-cut      inside AM-three CM.PL-part AM-two  
 ‘Two-thirds of something that has been cut.’ (e.g. **bladzyó** ‘plantain’)

As illustrated in the examples in (40), in the fraction expression the cardinal numeral expressing a part of a whole occurs as the second numeral whereas the one expressing the ‘whole’ occurs first.

#### 4.4.2 Ordinal numbers

Ordinal numbers in the language are formed by adding the formative **-m̄** ‘ORD’ to the roots of numbers, except for **tutopu**<sup>42</sup> ‘first’, **bhlā** ‘second’ and **gugóé**<sup>43</sup> ‘last’. To form the ordinal ‘tenth’, the ordinal suffix is added to the word for ‘ten’ **kí-f̄s**. The root of ‘two’ has [l] inserted after its initial consonant, while those of ‘three’ and ‘five’ have [r] inserted after their initial consonant. The roots of ‘four’ and ‘seven’ are reduplicated. The final vowel of the root of ‘eight’ is elided when the ordinal suffix is added to it. The ‘first’ to ‘tenth’, ‘twentieth’ and ‘thirtieth’ ordinals are illustrated in (41a). When the ordinals are used in isolation without modifying a noun, the form the tenth ordinal takes is **kí-f̄s-m̄** as in (41a), however when it modifies a noun, the form it takes is **l̄s-f̄s-m̄** which comprises the modifier form of ‘ten’ **l̄s-f̄s** and the ordinal suffix **-m̄** as in (41f). Ordinal numbers in the language do not take prefixes to mark agreement with the head noun, as shown in (41b) and (41d). These ordinals may, however, be nominalised in the same way as the adjectives as shown in (41c) and (41e), in which case, they control agreement as in (41e).

- 41a. **tutopū**      -      ‘first’      **gi-géné-m̄**      -      ‘seventh’  
**bhlā**      -      ‘second’      **su-m̄**      -      ‘eighth’

<sup>42</sup> **tutopu** is derived from the verb **put̄** ‘lead’. Speakers also use **gbá** or **gbánt̄** ‘first’, borrowed from Ewe, when the ordinal is used in isolation or when it modifies a noun respectively.

<sup>43</sup> **gugóé** is derived from the verb **gó** ‘remain’. Some speakers also use **gogóé**.

<b>tră-mī</b>	-	‘third’	<b>zhitá-mī</b>	-	‘ninth’
<b>lī-lī-mī</b>	-	‘fourth’	<b>kí-fṣ-mī</b>	-	‘tenth’
<b>trī-mī</b>	-	‘fifth’	<b>á-ftabhā-mī</b>	-	‘twentieth’
<b>holō-mī</b>	-	‘sixth’	<b>á-faatá-mī</b>	-	‘thirtieth’

- 41b. anóvṣ līlīmūn  
**a-nóvṣ lī-lī-mī ní**  
 CM-child RED-four-ORD DEF  
 ‘the fourth child’
- 41c. álīlīmūn  
**á-lī-lī-mī ní**  
 CM-RED-four-ORD DEF  
 ‘the fourth one’
- 41d. Osí līlīmūn ódzyínī  
**o-sí lī-lī-mī ní ó-dzyínī**  
 CM-tree RED-four-ORD DEF SM-break  
 ‘The fourth tree broke.’
- 41e. Olīlīmūn ódzyínī  
**o-lī-lī-mī ní ó-dzyínī**  
 CM-RED-four-ORD DEF SM-break  
 ‘The fourth one broke.’
- 41f. Olófṣmūn ódzyínī  
**o-ló-fṣ-mī ní ó-dzyínī**  
 CM-MOD-ten-ORD DEF SM-break  
 ‘The tenth one broke’ (referring to the tree).

To form the ordinals ‘eleventh’ to ‘nineteenth’, the modifier form of the numeral ‘ten’, **lṣ-fṣ**, is used followed by the linker **ni** ‘COM’ and the nominalised forms of the ordinals ‘first’ to ‘ninth’ for the various noun classes, as illustrated in example (42a). The ordinals ‘twenty-first’ to twenty-ninth’, thirty-first’ to ‘thirty-ninth’, etc., are formed in the same way by using the words for the multiples of ‘ten’, as in (42c). Examples (42b) and (42d) are nominalised forms of (42a) and (42c), respectively.

- 42a. osí lṣfṣ n’otrāmūn  
**o-sí lṣ-fṣ ni o-trā-mī ní**  
 CM-tree MOD-ten COM AM-three-ORD DEF  
 ‘the thirteenth tree’

- 42b. ɔlɔfɔ̃ n'ɔtrāmĩ  
**lɔ-fɔ̃**      **nɪ**      **ɔ-tră-mĩ**      **nĩ**  
 MOD-ten COM AM-three-ORD DEF  
 'the thirteenth one'
- 42c. kakudzɔgɛ̃ áftabha nɪ (k)atutɔpuĩ  
**ka-kudzɔgɛ̃**   **áftabha**   **nɪ**      **ka-tutɔpu**   **nĩ**  
 CM-dog      twenty      COM AM-first DEF  
 'the twenty-first dog'
- 42d. áftabha nɪ (k)atutɔpuĩ  
**áftabha**   **nɪ**      **ka-tutɔpu**   **nĩ**  
 twenty      COM AM-first DEF  
 'the twenty-first one'

The prefix **bu/bu-** can be added to the ordinal numbers to indicate the 'nth time' or frequency time that an event occurred or has been occurring as shown in (43).

43. Ávɪ Igɛ̃ butrāmĩ.  
**á-vɪ**      **I-gɛ̃**      **bu-tră-mĩ**  
 3SG-go      CM-Accra      CM-three-ORD  
 'S/he went to Accra for the third time.'

The ordinal numbers can occur as complements of some verbs such as **nú** 'be', **dzí** 'become' and **yíkĩ** 'receive, get' to predicate an ordered position of the subject referent (with nuances on how the position is perceived to have been attained). This is illustrated in (44).

- 44a. Yénũ átutɔpũ.  
**yĩ**      **é-nũ**      **á-tutɔpũ**  
 3SG.IND SM-be      AM-first  
 'S/he is the first.'
- 44b. Máwúto edzí átutɔpũ.  
**Máwúto**   **e-dzí**      **á-tutɔpũ**  
 Mawuto      SM-become      CM-first  
 'Mawuto became the first.'
- 44c. Áyíkĩ atrāmĩ  
**á-yíkĩ**      **a-tră-mĩ**  
 3SG-get      CM-three-ORD  
 'S/he took the third position.'

**ɔtɔ** 'outside' can be added to **bhlā** 'second' to form **bhlátɔ** to mean 'another/other'. Usually, the initial vowel of **ɔtɔ** is elided. For example,



- 45a. Kibuí bhlátó tilí kalí hãã?  
**ki-buí**    **bhlátó** **ti-lí**            **ka-lí**            **hãã**  
 CM-word other   AM-INDEF   PERS-be.at   UFP  
 ‘Is there any other case (to discuss)?’

**Bhlátó** ‘another/other’ can also be nominalised by adding the class prefixes to mean ‘another one’ or ‘other ones’ as shown in (45b).

- 45b. **ábhlátó**            ‘another one’            (**a<sup>1</sup>**- class)  
**bábhlátó**            ‘other ones’            (**ba(a)**- class)  
**óbhlátó**            ‘another one’            (**o**- class)  
**ibhlátó**            ‘other ones’            (**i**- class)

#### 4.4 The modifier **nyáá**

**Nyáá** ‘DISTR’ occurs in a distributive nominal duplicative construction (see Ameka 1999:91). This is a complex NP structure in which two identical NPs are linked by the modifier **nyáá** as shown in (46a). When this structure is used in affirmative sentences, it means ‘every, each, any N’; when used in negative sentences, it takes on a negative meaning such as ‘none, no N or not any N’ as illustrated in (46b) and (46c) (see Chapter 3, section 3.2.2.5 for more details).

- 46a. [NP<sub>i</sub> **nyáá** NP<sub>i</sub>]

- 46b. Ábá éwī tetinyéé’wī tetí ’édé.  
**á-bá**            **e-wí**            **te-tí**            **nyáá**            **e-wí**            **te-tí**  
 3SG-come    CM.PL-day    AM-five    DISTR    CM.PL-day    AM-five  
**ke.de**  
 back  
 ‘S/he comes every five days.’

- 46c. Onínyóóní ómā kitsikpǐnǐm.  
**o-ní-nyáá-o-ní**            **ó-mā**            **ki-tsikpǐ**    **ní**            **kumī**  
 CM-soup-DISTR-CM-soup   CM-be.at:NEG    CM-pot    DEF    inside  
 ‘There is no soup in the pot.’

The modifier **nyáá** ‘DISTR’ shows concord with the noun in the form of a vocalic concord such that the vowels are sensitive to the vowels of the prefixes of the head noun as illustrated in (46b) and (46c) above. In (46b), the head of the distributive nominal duplicative construction has **e-** as its prefix so the **nyáá** modifier is realised as **nyéé**. Likewise in (46c), the **o-** prefix of the head noun triggers the same vowels in the distributive modifier.

The modifier **nyáá** ‘DISTR’ also occurs in the word **ká-nyáá-ká** ‘each, every, any’ which occurs in the following frame in (47a) and exemplified in (47b):

47a. [Head nominal **ká-nyáá-ká**]

47b. **buni kányááká** ‘any water’

**ká-nyáá-ká** is a qualifier and it does not show concord with the noun, but it can be nominalised in the same way as the adjective or the ordinal as shown in (47c).

47c. **bukányááká** ‘any’ (referring to **buní** ‘water’ in (47b))

The **bu-** prefix in **bukányááká** ‘any’ in (47c) is the class prefix of **buní** ‘water’ that has been attached to **kányááká** ‘each, every, any’ to nominalise it. The vowel in the prefix of the derived form agrees in ATR harmony with the initial vowel in **kányááká** ‘each, every, any’.

#### 4.5 Interrogative quantifier

The interrogative quantifier **-shĩ** ‘how many/much?’ is used for asking for information about the quantity or amount (in terms of the quantity of uncountable nouns) of an entity. Semantically, it modifies only plural nouns and also uncountable nouns. When it modifies the uncountable nouns, it is interpreted as ‘how much?’. The interrogative quantifier occurs after the adjective and there is concord between it and the head noun (a detailed discussion of the interrogative quantifier has been provided under section 3.2.2.4). The following are examples.

48a. Epluí tááshĩ w’ómínā?  
**e-pluí táá-shĩ wó ó-mínā**  
 CM.PL-gourd AM-how.many 2SG.IND SM-bring  
 ‘How many gourds did you bring?’

48b. Bupā tuushĩ wodzĩ?  
**bu-pā tuu-shĩ wó o-dzĩ**  
 CM.PL-hoe AM-how.many 2SG.IND SM-buy  
 ‘How many hoes did you buy?’

48c. Tíwúlĩ taashĩ Kofĩ áyáĩ?  
**ti-wúlĩ taa-shĩ Kofĩ á-yáĩ**  
 CM-rubbish AM-how.much Kofi SM-collect  
 ‘How much rubbish did Kofi collect?’

The following are examples of interrogative proforms of the nouns in (49a) - (49c) which are formed when independent pronouns of the classes are modified by the interrogative quantifier.

- 49a. **a-lí táá-shĩ/áá-táá-shĩ wó-mínā?** ‘How many did you bring?’  
 49b. **bu-lí tóó-shĩ/buú-tóó-shĩ wo-dzí?** ‘How many did you buy?’  
 49c. **ki-lí táá-shĩ/kií-táá-shĩ Kofi áyáŋ?** ‘How much remained?’

As shown in the examples, apart from the full form of the independent pronoun which is modified by the interrogative quantifier, there is also a short form, a bound form, in which the root of the independent pronoun is elided and compensated for by lengthening the vowel of the prefix.

## 4.6 Determiners

In Tafi noun phrases, determiners occur after the interrogative quantifier and before the intensifiers. The determiners include the definiteness and indefiniteness markers and the demonstratives. These are described in turn in the following subsections.

### 4.6.1 Definiteness marker

The definiteness marker is used to refer to entities that are identifiable and assumed to be familiar to the participants or in the discourse context. It indicates that the information conveyed by the noun phrase is part of the shared knowledge of the participants in the conversation or discourse (see Lefebvre 1992). In Tafi, the definiteness marker is **ní**. During speech, its vowel is usually dropped and it becomes cliticised on to the preceding word. The tone of the deleted vowel, however, remains and moves leftward and docks on the /n/. When the definiteness marker is followed by a postposition, it is sometimes cliticised on to the postposition. The following are examples:

- 50a. beekusín  
**bee-kusí ní**  
 CM.PL-chief DEF  
 ‘the chief’
- 50b. Keplukpán étsirí kplǎníábhā  
**ke-plukpá ní ke-tsirí kplǎ ní kábhā**  
 CM-book DEF SM-be.on table DEF top  
 ‘The book is on the table.’

The NP in (50a) as well as the subject NP of (50b) illustrate the definiteness marker with its vowel deleted and it has been cliticised on to the noun. (50b) contains a postpositional phrase with the definiteness marker cliticised on to the postposition **kábhā** ‘top’ (as represented in the first line of the example).

#### 4.6.2 Indefiniteness marker

In Tafi, specific indefinite nouns can be expressed as bare nouns or they are modified by the indefiniteness marker whose root is **-lí** ‘a, a certain, some’ (see Chapter 3, section 3.2.2.2 for more details). The following are examples. The noun in subject position in sentence (51a) is a bare plural noun while in (51b) it is modified by the indefiniteness marker.

- 51a. Bádokas’ átfbá ɔmaníṁ.

**bá-dɔkasí**      **bá-tí-bá**      **ɔ-ma**      **ní**      **kum**  
 CM.PL-teacher SM-PERF-come CM-town DEF inside  
 ‘Teachers have come into the town.’

- 51b. Bádokasí tel’ átfbá ɔmaníṁ.

**bá-dɔkasí**      **te-lí**      **bá-tí-bá**      **ɔ-ma**      **ní**      **kum**  
 CM.PL-teacher AM-INDEF SM-PERF-come CM-town DEF inside  
 ‘Some teachers have come into the town.’

The indefiniteness marker shows agreement with the noun it modifies. Its agreement marker takes the form of an initial consonant /t/ and a concord vowel which agrees with the vowel of the prefix of the noun it modifies except for the **ka**-class (see section 3.3.2.2 for a detailed discussion of the agreement patterns of the indefiniteness marker). The following are examples.

- 52a. Oní tol’ ɔgɔ̃.

**o-ní**      **to-lí**      **ɔ-gɔ̃**  
 CM-soup AM-INDEF SM-remain  
 ‘There is some soup left.’

- 52b. Isí tilí ’kpā.

**i-sí**      **ti-lí**      **t-kpā**  
 CM.PL-tree AM-INDEF SM-fall  
 ‘Some trees fell.’

- 52c. Búgbó tulí wu osín.

**bú-gbó**      **tu-lí**      **wu**<sup>44</sup>      **o-sí**      **ní**  
 CM.PL-squirrel AM-INDEF climb CM-tree DEF  
 ‘Some squirrels climbed the tree.’

The nouns, **oní** ‘soup’, **isí** ‘trees’ and **bugbo** ‘squirrels’ in (52a-c) as well as **bádokasí** ‘teachers’ in (51) above, belong to the **o-**, **i-**, **bu<sup>1</sup>-**, and **ba(a)-** classes

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<sup>44</sup> There is no SM on **wu** ‘climb’ here because nouns in any of the **bu-** classes are not cross-referenced on the verb.

respectively so the indefiniteness marker modifying them takes as concord vowel /o, i, u and e/. All these vowels are [+ATR] because the vowel in the root of the indefiniteness marker is also [+ATR].

Indefinite pronouns are formed by the addition of the noun class prefixes to the indefiniteness marker except for the singular noun classes and the **ti-** class. It appears that when the indefinite pronouns occur without the singular prefixes, they are understood in context as referring to singular nouns. These pronouns can occur in all the syntactic environments in which nouns occur and they control agreement as shown in (53).

- 53a. Betel' ábá.  
**be-te-lí**                      **bá-bá**  
 CM.PL-AM-some    SM-come  
 'Some have come.' (referring to the teachers in (51b))

- 53b. Tol' ɔgɔ̃.  
**to-lí**                      **ɔ-gɔ̃**  
 AM-some    SM-remain  
 'Some remained.' (referring to the soup in (52a))

- 53c. Butulí w'osín.  
**bu-tu-lí**                      **wu**    **o-sí**                      **ní**  
 CM-AM-some    climb    CM-tree    DEF  
 'Some climbed the tree.' (referring to the squirrels in (52c))

Moreover, the indefiniteness marker can modify the independent form of the pronouns. The following are examples.

- 54a. Ulí til'/íítil' ukpā  
**ulí ti-lí/íí-ti-lí**                      **ɪ-kpā**  
 3PL.IND-AM-INDEF    SM-fall  
 'Some fell.' (referring to the trees in (51b))

- 54b. Bolí/buútulí wu osín.  
**bolí/buú-tu-lí**                      **wu**    **o-sí**                      **ní**  
 3PL.IND-AM-INDEF    climb    CM-tree    DEF  
 'Some climbed the tree.' (referring to the squirrels in (52c))

Just like the interrogative quantifier, the indefiniteness pronoun has both a full form and a short form as shown in the examples in (54).

### 4.6.3 Demonstratives

Demonstratives are deictic expressions used to indicate which entities a speaker refers to in order to distinguish those entities from others. Thus, they are used to show whether the entities referred to are close or far, in space or time, from the speaker at the moment of speaking. Tafi distinguishes two forms of demonstratives, proximal **-ní** ‘this’ and distal **-lílíní** ‘that’. The proximal demonstrative **-ní** ‘this’ is used to indicate referents close to the speaker/deictic centre and it has the same form as the definiteness marker except that the definiteness marker does not take prefixes. The distal demonstrative, **-lílíní** ‘that’, denotes referents removed or further away from the speaker/deictic centre.<sup>45</sup> The final syllable of the distal demonstrative also has the same form as the definiteness marker. Both demonstratives agree with the head noun. Like the indefiniteness marker, the agreement markers of the demonstratives are vowel prefixes which agree with the noun class prefix vowel. These concord vowels always agree in [-ATR] with the vowels in the roots of these demonstratives (see Chapter 3, section 3.3.2.3 for more details). The forms in (55) exemplify the proximal demonstrative while those in (56) illustrate the distal demonstratives.

55a. Kíkūín ítānyí.

<b>kí-kū</b>	<b>ɪ-ní</b>	<b>kɪ-tā</b>	<b>ɔ-nyí</b>
CM-yam	AM-PROX	SM-burn	CM-firewood

‘This yam is burnt.’

55b. Ékūān átānyí.

<b>é-kū</b>	<b>a-ní</b>	<b>á-tā</b>	<b>ɔ-nyí</b>
CM.PL-yam	AM-PROX	SM-burn	CM-firewood

‘These yams are burnt.’

55c. Buzhuěń dó osíóním.

<b>bu-zhuě</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>dó</b>	<b>o-sí</b>	<b>ɔ-ní</b>	<b>kum</b>
CM.PL-bird	DEF	land	CM-tree	AM-PROX	inside

‘The birds perch on this tree.’

56a. Évu kɪkpǎ gbɪgbɪě ílílíní.

<b>é-vu</b>	<b>kɪ-kpǎ</b>	<b>gbɪgbɪě</b>	<b>í-lílíní</b>
3SG-catch	CM-fish	big	AM-DIST

‘He caught that big fish.’

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<sup>45</sup> Most often, the final vowel of both demonstratives is deleted, however, in formal speech it is maintained.

- 56b. Otroeleté, ányí alílín éñū.

<b>o-tro.eleté</b>	<b>á-nyí</b>	<b>a-lílíní</b>	<b>é-nū</b>
CM-lie.owner	CM-man	AM-DIST	SM-be

‘That man is a liar.’

- 56c. Os’ólílín ókpā.

<b>o-sí</b>	<b>ó-lílíní</b>	<b>ó-kpā</b>
CM-tree	AM-DIST	SM-fall

‘That tree fell.’

**kíkū** ‘yam’ in (55a) and **kukpā** ‘fish’ in (56a) belong to the **ki-** class so they take /t-/ as agreement marker for both the proximal and distal demonstratives. In (55b) and (56b), the nouns **ékū** ‘yams’ and **ányí** ‘man’ are members of the **a<sup>2</sup>-** and the **a<sup>1</sup>-** classes respectively and they take /a/ as agreement marker. **Osí** ‘tree’ in both (55c) and (56c) which belongs to the **o-** class triggers /ɔ/ as agreement marker. All these agreement markers are the same as the vowels in the noun class prefixes and they have the same ATR value as the (initial) vowel of the demonstrative roots.

Demonstrative pronouns are formed the same way as the interrogative and indefinite pronouns by attaching the class prefixes to the modifying form of the demonstratives, that is, the prefix together with the root. These pronouns are used to replace nouns which can be understood from context, as shown in (57). As regards the proximal demonstrative **-ní** ‘this’, its root is reduplicated (see also section 3.3.2.3).

- |      |  |              |
|------|--|--------------|
| 57a. | <b>kí-kū t-ní</b>                      | ‘this yam’   |
| 57b. | <b>kí-í-nuní/ kí-í-ní<sup>46</sup></b> | ‘this one’   |
| 57c. | <b>kí-í-lílíní</b>                     | ‘that one’   |
| 57d. | <b>é-kū a-ní</b>                       | ‘these yams’ |
| 57e. | <b>a-á-nuní/a-á-ní</b>                 | ‘these ones’ |
| 57f. | <b>a-á-lílíní</b>                      | ‘those ones’ |
| 57g. | <b>o-sí ɔ-ní</b>                       | ‘this tree’  |
| 57h. | <b>ɔ-ó-nuní/ɔ-ó-ní</b>                 | ‘this one’   |
| 57i. | <b>ɔ-ó-lílíní</b>                      | ‘that one’   |

Only the proximal demonstrative has both a full and short form as illustrated in the examples in (57b), (57e), (57h).

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<sup>46</sup> See footnote 3 of section 3.3.2.3 concerning the short form of the demonstrative pronoun of the proximal root **-ní**.

#### 4.7 Intensifiers

Intensifiers are words that add emphasis to the meaning of a word or phrase. In Tafi, an intensifier can modify a simple or fully expanded noun phrase and there is no agreement between it and the head noun. The intensifiers include:

58a.	<b>pétéé</b>	‘all’
	<b>ko</b>	‘only, just’
	<b>kóŋ</b>	‘very much, particular, specific’
	<b>titě</b>	‘only, alone’
	<b>tsyí</b>	‘too, also’
	<b>xúń</b>	‘as for’
	<b>kodzɔ</b>	‘very much’

Looking at the forms, it is evident that the intensifiers are made up of various semantic subgroups including quantifying elements such as **pétéé** ‘all’ and focalising particles such as **ko** ‘only, just’ and **tsyí** ‘too, also’. It appears that **pétéé** ‘all’, **ko** ‘only, just’ and **kóŋ** ‘particular, specific’ are borrowed from Ewe with no change in meaning. Also, **tsyí** ‘too, also’ is related to **tsyé** ‘too, also’ which is used in inland Ewe and probably a borrowing, and **titě** ‘only, alone’ is related to **tete/teti** ‘at least, even, only’ in Ewe. The examples in (59) illustrate the use of some of the intensifiers.

- 59a. Apotí dzidzá taatá álílín pétée ánjedzi.  
**a-potí**      **dzidzá** **taa-tá**      **á-lílíní**      **pétéé** **á-ŋa**      **ke-dzi**  
 CM.PL-cloth red    AM-three AM-DIST    all    SM-eat    CM-price  
 ‘All those three red cloths are expensive.’

- 59b. Badokasí tíábhań ko bal’ ábá.  
**ba-dokasí**      **tíá-bha**      **ní**      **ko**      **ba-lí**      **bá-bá**  
 CM.PL-teacher    AM-two    DEF    only    3PL.IND    SM-come  
 ‘Only the two teachers came.’

In example (59a) above, we have a fully expanded noun phrase in subject position in which all the slots have been filled. The head noun, **apotí** ‘cloths’, is modified by **dzidzá** ‘red’, **taatá** ‘three’, **álílín** ‘that’, and **pétéé** ‘all’ which occupy the qualifier, quantifier, determiner and intensifier slots respectively within the NP. In (59b), the head noun slot is filled by **badokasí** ‘teachers’, **tíábha** ‘two’ is a quantifier, **ní** ‘the’ is a determiner and **ko** ‘only’ is an intensifier.

It has been observed that some of the intensifiers such as **pétéé** ‘all’ and **tsyí** ‘too, also’ tend to lower the high tone of a preceding syllable as illustrated in (59c) and (60c). In (59c), the 2SG.IND pronoun **wó** is realised as **wɔ** when it is followed by **tsyí** ‘too, also’ whereas in (60c), the definiteness marker **ní** is realised as **ɲ** as it is followed by **pétéé** ‘all’.



- 59c. Yoo, wɔ tsyí oo.  
**yoo wɔ tsyí oo**  
 okay 2SG.IND too UFP  
 ‘Okay, you too.’ (Response to a greeting.)

It is worth mentioning that some intensifiers also modify VPs as in (60a) and (60b) or even behave as if they are intensifiers on clauses or connectors such that it is as if they are announcing that there is something coming so they have a connective function as shown in (60b) and (60c).

- 60a. Éshe kój.  
**é-she kój**  
 3SG-grow really  
 ‘S/he is really grown/ very old.’
- 60b. ídzyɔ pétée, ɪkamɔ’el’idi dí.  
**í-dzyɔ pétée ɪ-ka-mɔ kúlí ki-di dí**  
 1SG-happen all 1SG-NEG.PERF-see 3SG CM-type EXP  
 ‘Ever since I was born, I have never seen any such thing.’
- 60c. Baga nɪ petée ákanyááká bávi pétée, békóéyĩ.  
**ba-ga ní petée á-kanyááká bá-vɪ pétée bé-kóéyĩ**  
 CM.PL-animal DEF all AM-each SM-go all SM-exit  
 ‘All the animals, each and every one of them went and came out.’ (Gbaxáĩt)

## 5. ADPOSITIONS AND ADPOSITIONAL PHRASES

This chapter presents the forms that are used to express various relational meanings of the kind coded in adpositions (see Hagège 2010 for a recent typological overview). Tafi has two classes of adpositions, like other Kwa languages, prepositions and postpositions. There are two bona fide prepositions, a locative preposition **ní** ‘LOC’ and a comitative preposition **ni** ‘COM’. In addition to these, there are a number of verb forms that are in the process of grammaticalising into prepositions. These are **kú** ‘reach, arrive’ developing into an ‘ALLative’, **kɔ** ‘give, cause, let, make’ developing into a ‘DATive’ preposition, **gano** ‘pass through’ developing into a ‘PERLative’ preposition and **dénɔ** ‘come from’ has fully grammaticalised into an ‘ABLative’ preposition. Such forms in the Kwa languages have led to debates about whether they are verbs or verbids (Ansre 1966). A grammaticalisation perspective provides an adequate account (see e.g. Heine et al. 1991). I assume that they are grammaticalising. The forms and the arguments for grammaticalisation are discussed in §5.1.

The second class of adpositions is the postpositions. These are even more controversial. Some, e.g. Aboh (2005, 2010) argue that they are postnominal elements and not postpositions as they do not behave like typical postpositions, e.g. they do not assign case. Osam et al. (2011) argue with respect to Akan that some of the elements that have been labelled postpositions in Akan should rather be treated as “relator nouns” as they have not been fully grammaticalised yet. They do concede that postposition is the final stage in the grammaticalisation of various spatial and body part nominals. Following Ameka (2003), Ameka and Essegbey (2006), Lefebvre and Brousseau (2002) among others, I assume that the forms that name parts and regions attached to parts of objects and are structurally bound to their dependent nominals are postpositions. They are typically grammaticalised spatial and body part nominals (see Heine 1997, Heine et al. 1991 for the mechanisms involved). Postpositions in Tafi are discussed in §5.2.

### 5.1 Prepositions

As noted in the introduction, Tafi has two bona fide prepositions which are **ní** ‘LOC’ and **ni** ‘COM’ (see also §7.4.7). Other prepositions have verbal sources and are undergoing grammaticalisation. The preposition **dénɔ** ‘from’ has completely grammaticalised and no longer occurs as a verb.

#### 5.1.1 The locative preposition **ní**

The preposition **ní** ‘LOC’ is a general locative preposition which marks ground phrases in locative constructions. It introduces locative adjuncts, i.e. a place where an event takes place as in (1) – (4). It can also introduce temporal adjuncts (5). The

locative preposition **ní** can take as its complement an NP, as illustrated in (1) and (2), or a postpositional phrase as in (3) – (5).

1. Banóvñí áŋe 'éd5 ní sukū.  
**ba-nóvñ**    **ní**    **bá-ŋa**    **kí-d5**    [**ní**    **sukū**]  
 CM.PL-child DEF SM-eat CM-thing LOC school  
 'The children ate at school.'
2. Báát5 'emokó ní Baagbo.  
**bá-á-t5**    **ki-mukó**    [**ní**    **Baagbo**]  
 3PL-PRSPROG-cook CM-red.rice.porridge LOC Baagbo  
 'They are cooking red rice porridge in Tafi.'
3. Ányínóvñe ábubó n'íégbúníédé.  
**á-nyínóvñe**    **ní**    **á-bubó**    [**ní**    **ke-gbu**    **ní**    **ke.de**]  
 CM-boy DEF SM-bend LOC CM-chair DEF back  
 'The boy squats behind the chair.' (TRPS 64)
4. ... kulí áv'edékpú ní kidzon'út5.  
**kulí**    **yí**    **á-ví**    **e-dé-kpú**    [**ní**    **ki-dzo**    **ní**    **bu.t5**]  
 then 3SG.IND SM-go SM-ITIVE-hide LOC CM-road DEF edge  
 '... then he went and hid beside the road.' (Sáhwī)
5. Bútsú 'íkū ní wolě gugóéním kpí kagbaním.  
**bú-tsú**    **kí-kū**    [**ní**    **wolě**    **gugóé**    **ní**    **kumí**]    **kpí**  
 1PL-dig CM-yam LOC month last DEF inside put.into  
**ka-gba**    **ní**    **kumí**  
 CM-barn DEF inside  
 'We harvest the yam in the last month of the year (i.e. December) and put it into the barn.' (Yam cultivation)

The locative preposition **ní** and its complement can be preposed to the clause and marked by the topic marker **ní** 'TOP' as scene-setting topics.

6. Ní kedziním ní, Ám'edzí bladzyō  
**[ní**    **ke-dzi**    **ní**    **kumí**    **ní ]**    **Ámā**    **e-dzí**    **bladzyō**  
 LOC CM-market DEF inside TOP Ámā SM-buy plantain  
 'In the market, Ama bought plantain.'
7. Ní sukū ní, Agoe átsánī Mensah.  
**[ní**    **sukū**    **ní ]**    **Agoe**    **á-tsá-nī**    **Mensah**  
 LOC school TOP Agoe SM-meet-COM Mensah  
 'At the school, Agoe met Mensah.'

### 5.1.2 The comitative preposition **ni**

The comitative preposition **ni** ‘COM’ is used to introduce participants in different roles such as instrument (8) and comitative (9). When its complement is an abstract NP denoting emotion as in (10), or human propensity, e.g. strength, the phrase is interpreted as doing something with the abstract propensity and hence as doing something in a certain manner. It can thus head manner phrases (10). The comitative preposition **ni** also has an additive function – it is used to link NPs. These NPs linked by **ni** ‘COM’ are co- or joint participants as shown in (11). However, when **ni** ‘COM’ is used to link pronouns it is the independent forms that are used as illustrated in (12), (see §3.6.1). The sentence in (13) is ungrammatical because **ni** ‘COM’ is used in that example to link pronominal clitics (see §3.6.1).

8. Óbósó ’uyaním ni kápā.  
**ó-bó-só bu-ya ní kum [ni ká-pā]**  
 2SG-FUT-weed CM-farm DEF inside COM CM-hoe  
 ‘You will weed the farm with a hoe.’
9. Adıvı sukū ni y’úplúkpa.  
**a-dı-vı sukū [ni yí bu-plukpá]**  
 3SG-NEG2-go school COM 3SG.IND CM.PL-book  
 ‘He did not go to school with his books.’
10. Agoe áshĩ ávı Igẽ ni samı.  
**Agoe á-shĩ á-vı Igẽ [ni samı]**  
 Agoe SM-leave SM-go Accra COM joy  
 ‘Agoe left for Accra with joy (joyfully).’
11. Ésí ni y’eyíalín éplú bawin pétée.  
**[Ésí ni yí e-yí-alí ní ] bẽ-plú ba-wi**  
 Ésí COM 3SG.IND CM-child-PL DEF SM-wash CM.PL-dress  
**ní pétée**  
 DEF all  
 ‘Esi and her children washed all the clothes.’
12. Wó ni yí, nóbá.  
**[wó ni yí] nɔ-bá**  
 2SG.IND COM 3SG.IND 2PL-come  
 ‘You and s/he came.’
13. \*Ó ni á nóbá  
**[ó ni á ] nɔ-bá**  
 2SG COM 3SG 2PL-come  
 ‘You and s/he came.’

The preposition **ni** ‘COM’ becomes **no** when its complement is not adjacent to it, but occurs elsewhere in the clause:

- as a fronted constituent for purposes of information packaging – topic/focus, i.e. when the preposition is stranded and
- in a **yuk3** ‘take’ SVC where the NP with the instrument role occurs as object of V1 – **yuk3** ‘take’ (see Chapter 10 on SVCs).

14. Kápā, Kókú aso ’ed5 ní n5.

**ká-pā** **Kókú** **a-só** **kí-d5** **ní** **n5**  
CM-hoe Kókú SM-weed CM-thing DEF COM

‘It is with a hoe Koku did the weeding.’ (Lit.: ‘A hoe Kókú weeded with.’)

15. Kókú áyíko kápā áso ’ed5 ní n5.

**Kókú** **á-yíko** **ká-pā** **á-só** **kí-d5** **ní** **n5**  
Kókú SM-take CM-hoe SM-weed CM-thing DEF COM

‘Koku used a hoe to weed.’ OR ‘Kókú used a hoe to do the weeding.’

### 5.1.3 Other prepositions

Certain verbs in Tafi are in the process of grammaticalising into prepositions. They include **dén5** ‘come.from’; **kú** ‘reach, arrive’, **k5** ‘give, cause, let, make’ and **gano** ‘pass through’. These verbs are used as ablative, allative, dative and perlative prepositions respectively. When used as prepositions, they do not take agreement markers, i.e. subjects are not marked on them and they have a reduced possibility of co-occurring with preverb markers. These are all signs of grammaticalisation in progress.

#### 5.1.3.1 The preposition **dén5** ‘from’

The preposition **dén5** ‘from’ can be used to express extent. Thus when its complement is a temporal noun, it translates as ‘since’ as in (18). When the head of its complement is the postposition **shú** ‘surface’ it translates as ‘about’, that is the **dén5** prepositional phrase with a **shú** postpositional phrase complement indicates the topic of a speaking event or speech act as in (17). It appears that **dén5** consists of the verb **dé** ‘come from’ and the associative verb extension **-no** ‘ASSOC’. Speakers also use the alternate form **déní**. Both forms are used interchangeably without any discernible semantic difference. Even though **dén5** ‘from’ has a verb source it doesn’t seem to be used as a verb anymore. It has fully grammaticalised into a preposition. The following are examples:

16. Bázhíá típíplín5 dé5 ekusín 5k5.

**bá-zhíá** **tí-pí-plín5** [**dén5** **e-kusí** **ní** **5k5**]  
3PL-need CM-RED-help from CM-chief DEF place

‘They need help from the chief.’

17. Ébísí ebúí dēnō áxwī ní shú.  
**É-bísí e-búí [dēnō á-xwī ní shú]**  
 3SG-ask CM.PL-word from CM.PL-work DEF surface  
 ‘He asked questions about the work.’
18. Bényí Mawutō dēnī kúnóvobe ké.  
**bé-nyí Mawutō [dēnī kú-nóvobe] ké**  
 3PL-know Mawutō from CM-child.period INT  
 ‘They know Mawutor since (her) childhood.’
19. ... dēn’otsōō ní ríqíqí ódónánī ’ibe nō n’ibe gú lóba yíkí síkání  
**[dēnī otsōō] ní ríqíqí ó-dó-nánī ki-be nō**  
 from now TOP continuously 2SG-ITIVE-reach CM-time wh.ever  
**ní kí-be gú ló-ba-yíkí síká ní**  
 DEF CM-time REL 1PL.DEP-VENT-receive money DEF  
 ‘... from now until whenever we receive the money’

As example (19) shows, a **dēnō** ‘from’ prepositional phrase, like a locative prepositional phrase, can be topicalised. In that case, it is fronted and marked by the topic marker **ní** ‘TOP’. Also, the complement of **dēnō** can either be a (temporal) nominal, as in (19), or a postpositional phrase as in examples (16) and (17).

### 5.1.3.2 The preposition **kú** ‘to, towards’

When **kú** is used as a verb, it means ‘reach, arrive’ and it takes subject pronominal prefixes or subject markers as illustrated in (20) where it occurs as V2 in an SVC. In its function as a preposition, it translates as ‘to’ or ‘towards’. It is used to indicate direction to or toward a place. As a preposition, the subject is not cross-referenced on it as shown in (21). The sentence in (21) is a monoverbal clause with a prepositional adjunct phrase.

20. Anóvōn éwu ekú kitrekpúníabhā.  
**a-nóvō ní é-wu e-kú ki-trekpú ní kábhā**  
 CM-child DEF SM-climb SM-reach CM-anthill DEF top  
 ‘The child climbed onto an anthill.’ (FS)
21. Anóvōn awólí kú kením.  
**a-nóvō ní á-wólí kú ke-ní kumí**  
 CM-child DEF SM-fall ALL CM-river inside  
 ‘The child fell into a river.’ (FS)

Because of its allative semantics, a **kú** prepositional phrase does not seem to be able to be fronted for topic.

22. \*Kú kenínīm ní anóvǝ́n áwǝ́lǝ́.

**kú ke-ní ní kumu ní a-nóvǝ́ ní á-wǝ́lǝ́**  
 ALL CM-river DEF inside TOP CM-child DEF SM-fall  
 ‘Into the river the child fell.’

### 5.1.3.3 The preposition **kǝ́** ‘for’

When **kǝ́** has a prepositional function, it is used to mark dative objects in monoverbal clauses and it does not take an agreement marker as in (23) and (24). However, when **kǝ́** functions as a verb meaning ‘give, cause, let, make’, it can occur as the main verb in a monoverbal clause or as the second verb in an SVC. In this verbal function, the subject is cross-referenced on it, as in (25).

23. ... so ní ní badǝ́go ʔédǝ́ŋǝ́n kǝ́ gbaxǝ́lǝ́.

**so ní ní ba-di-go kǝ́-dǝ́ŋǝ́n ní kǝ́ gbaxǝ́lǝ́**  
 so TOP TOP 3PL-NEG2-leave CM-food DEF DAT striped.mouse  
 ‘... for that reason, they did not leave any food for striped mouse.’  
 (Gbaxǝ́lǝ́)

24. Kú ko létsi kǝ́ lǝ́ań.

**kú ko lé-tsi kǝ́ blǝ́ aní**  
 death just 3PL.DEP-tell DAT 1PL TOP  
 ‘It was only the death that was announced to us.’ (Butsiugǝ́)

In (23) and (24), the complement of the dative preposition **kǝ́** is a benefactive and an addressee respectively.

25. Ádǝ́sǝ́ ʔédǝ́ ákǝ́é.

**a-da-sǝ́ kǝ́-dǝ́ á-kǝ́ yǝ́**  
 3SG-ITIVE-weed CM-thing SM-give 3SG  
 ‘S/he went to weed for her (on her farm).’

A **kǝ́** prepositional phrase does not occur clause initially functioning as a topic. However, when **kǝ́** is used as a verb, its complement can be fronted for focus as shown in (26).

26. Anóvǝ́n Ámʔedzǝ́ bawin akǝ́.

**a-nóvǝ́ ní Ámǝ́ e-dzǝ́ ba-wi ní a-kǝ́**  
 CM-child DEF Ámǝ́ SM-buy CM.PL-dress DEF SM-give  
 ‘It was the child Ama bought the dress for.’

As the Dative is the non-local relation, the complement of the **kǝ́** preposition tends to be an NP as opposed to a postpositional phrase as is the case with the local relation prepositions like the ablative and allative.

#### 5.1.3.4 The preposition **gano** ‘through’

**Gano** is a verb which means ‘keep, walk with, pass through’. It is used as an operator verb in habitual aspect constructions (see § 7.3.10). It is grammaticalising into a perlocative preposition, i.e. ‘through’. **Gano** has two alternating forms – **gano/gani**. **Gano** appears to be made up of the verb **ga** ‘walk’ and the associative verb extension **no** ‘COM’. The following sentences in (27) and (28) illustrate the use of **gano** as a verb and as the perlocative preposition respectively.

27. Ágbánī ányín ágano áyakpáním.  
     **á-gbáñí á-nyí ní á-gano á-yakpá ní kumí**  
     3SG-lead CM-man DEF SM-pass.through CM-bush DEF inside  
     ‘S/he led the man through the bush.’
28. Ágbánī ányín gano áyakpáním.  
     **á-gbáñí á-nyí ní [gano á-yakpá ní kumí]**  
     3SG-lead CM-man DEF through CM-bush DEF inside  
     ‘S/he led the man through the bush.’

Unlike **kú** ‘ALL’, and **kó** ‘DAT’ phrases, **gano** phrases can be fronted for topic as illustrated in (29).

29. Gano kílílíní shú ní, ábashĩ obón.  
     **[gano kílílíní shú ] ní á-ba-shĩ o-bón**  
     through AM-DIST surface TOP 3SG-FUT-leave CM-today  
     ‘As a result of that, s/he will leave today.’

Table 5.1 provides a summary of the prepositional forms, their functions and verbal sources where relevant.

Table 5.1: Prepositions in Tafi

Preposition	Function	Gloss	Verbal Source	Source Gloss
<b>ní</b>	LOCATIVE	‘LOC’		
<b>ni</b>	COMITATIVE	‘COM’		
<b>dénĩ</b>	ABLATIVE	‘from’	<b>dé + no</b>	‘come.from + ‘COM’
<b>kó</b>	DATIVE	‘for’	<b>kó</b>	‘give’
<b>kú</b>	ALLATIVE	to, towards	<b>kú</b>	‘reach, arrive’
<b>gano</b>	PERLATIVE	through	<b>ga + no</b>	‘walk’ + ‘COM’



## 5.2 Postpositions

Tafi has a closed set of about a dozen or so members of the postposition class which are used to denote the parts and regions of objects. Some of these are spatial nominals or body-part nouns which are at different stages in the process of grammaticalisation. Table 5.2 lists the postpositions in Tafi.

Table 5.2: Postpositions in Tafi

Postposition	Gloss	Putative Noun Source
<b>kábhā</b>	‘top’	
<b>kumɪ</b>	‘inside’	
<b>kesí</b>	‘under, beneath’	<b>ke-sí</b> ‘bottom, down part’
<b>kede</b>	‘back, behind’	<b>ke-de</b> ‘back’
<b>otúgba</b>	‘in front of’	<b>o-túgba</b> ‘front’
<b>ɔbha</b>	‘beside, near’	
<b>ɔtɔ</b>	‘outside’	
<b>ɔkɔ</b>	‘“chez”, place’	<b>ɔ-kɔ</b> ‘place’
<b>bunú</b>	‘opening, endpoint, tip, mouth’	
<b>kishí</b>	‘between, among’	
<b>kibe</b>	‘side, direction’	
<b>kenú</b>	‘entrance’	
<b>shú</b>	‘surface’	<b>i-shú</b> ‘body’
<b>butɔ</b>	‘edge’	<b>bu-tɔ</b> ‘ear’
<b>kĩwã</b>	‘beside’, ‘at the side of’	
<b>adɛm</b>	‘apex, peak’	<b>a-da</b> ‘top of head’ + <b>kumɪ</b> ‘inside’

As the postpositions have developed from nominals, they share some form properties with them, especially in relation to class prefixes. The majority of them have retained their class markers. The postposition **shú** has lost it completely as shown in (30). Like nouns, those postpositions with CV prefixes have their C-initial segments deleted in speech as in (31). Moreover, for those that have a **ka/ke**-prefix, the **i/ɪ** insertion rule after the deletion of an initial **k** applies as in (32) (see §2.5.3). The postposition **kumɪ** ‘inside’ has different realisations at different stages of grammaticalisation as in (33) and (34). It seems to have lost its prefix in the varieties of Agorme and Abuífé (Ofu). Thus, as shown in (34), the form of the postposition is **m** which may have resulted from the deletion of the final vowel of **mi**. In (33) however, the initial consonant and final vowel of **kumɪ** have been elided yielding **um**. Furthermore, the prefix vowel **ɪ** coalesces with the final vowel of the preceding word and the resulting vowel is **ɛ** (see §2.5.5 for further details).

30. Kánā Baagbo kónúń álı ní adzu gbígbánō shú.  
**ká-nā** **Baa-gbo** **kónú** **ní** **a-lı** **ní**  
 CM-manner CM.PL-Táfi custom DEF SM-be.at LOC  
**a-dzı** **gbı-gbánō** **shú**  
 CM-woman RED-marry surface  
 ‘That is how marriage (of a woman) rites are performed in Tafi.’
31. Anóvōń ébélı fēsřıń ’útó.  
**a-nóvō** **ní** **é-bé-lı** **fēsřı** **ní** **bu.tó**  
 CM-child DEF SM-VENT-be.positioned window DEF edge  
 ‘The child went and stood by the window.’ (FS)
32. Ekusı téđıkpó y’áaŋa ló’tabhā.  
**e-kusı** **te-đıkpó** **yı** **á-a-ŋa** **bló** **kábhā**  
 CM-chief AM-one 3SG.IND SM-PSTPROG-eat 1PL.IND top  
 ‘One king was ruling over all of us.’
33. Ányín áshı́ ávı ’upéń.  
**á-nyı** **nı** **á-shı́** **á-vı** **bu-pá** **kımi**  
 CM-man DEF SM-leave SM-go CM-house inside  
 ‘The man left and went home.’
34. Ányín áshı́ ávı ’upám.  
**á-nyı** **nı** **á-shı́** **á-vı** **bu-pá** **kımi**  
 CM-man DEF SM-leave SM-go CM-house inside  
 ‘The man left and went home.’

Postpositional phrases have the same external properties as NPs. In fact, the grammatical context for the development of the spatial or body part nominals into postpositions is the possessive phrase where the spatial nominal heads it as a possessee. Thus, postpositional phrases function as subjects (36), objects (37) and prepositional objects (39) just like NPs.

35. Sukúnıń gı yımı létu ányínóvōen ní átsyra.  
**sukı** **nı** **kımi** **gı** **yı** **kımi** **lé-tu**  
 school DEF inside REL 3SG.IND inside 3PL.DEF-beat  
**á-nyínóvōē** **nı** **nı** **á-tsyra**  
 CM-boy DEF TOP SM-collapse  
 ‘The school in which the boy was beaten collapsed.’
36. Kplńńábhā ’dó ’ébó.  
**kplń** **nı** **kábhā** **á-dó** **ki-bó**  
 table DEF top CM-contact CM-dirt  
 ‘The top of the table is dirty.’

37. Akú étsuru kplǎ́ ní kábhā.  
**Akú é-tsuru kplǎ́ ní kábhā**  
 Akú SM-wipe table DEF top  
 ‘Aku cleaned the top of the table.’
38. Adıgba ’uvuním.  
**a-dı-gba bú-vū ní kumı**  
 3SG-NEG2-sweep CM-house DEF inside  
 ‘S/he did not sweep the room.’
39. Báṅe ’edɔ ní y’úpém.  
**bá-ṅa kí-dɔ ní yí bu-pá kumı**  
 3PL-eat CM-thing LOC 3SG.IND CM-house inside  
 ‘They ate in his house.’
40. Búvūnım y’ágbā.  
**bú-vū ní kumı yí á-gbā**  
 CM-house DEF inside 3SG.IND SM-sweep  
 ‘The room he swept.’

The sentences below exemplify body-part nouns (41, 42) and spatial nouns (43) - (44) respectively.

41. Wó íshúım umítá.  
**wó i-shúı kumı ı-mítá**  
 2SG CM-body inside SM-be.not.good  
 ‘You are sick.’ Lit: Your body inside is not good.
42. Anúvɔ́n ’útɔ́ ní yéké.  
**a-núvɔ́ ní bu-tɔ́ ní yéké**  
 CM-child DEF CM-ear DEF swell  
 ‘The child’s ear is swollen.’
43. Gı latrɔ́ ’itsikpı́ ni ’ifún pı kesín á ...  
**gı la-trɔ́ ki-tsikpı́ ní ki-fú ní pı**  
 REL 3PL.DEP-put.on CM-pot DEF CM-fire DEF CONN  
**ke-sí ní á**  
 CM-bottom DEF CFM  
 ‘When they put the pot on the fire and the down part...’ (Kásālā)
44. Ónúgı kihuí dıya kede lí yí.  
**ónú.gı ki-huí dıya ke-de lí-yí**  
 COND CM-trap spring CM-back 3SG.DEP-show.up  
 ‘When a trap springs, it moves backwards.’ (Proverbs #9)

Although postpositions denote spatial parts and regions of objects, they can be omitted under certain conditions. For instance, when the Ground where the Figure is located is inherently locative such as **kesukpá** ‘land, ground’ as illustrated in (45) or when the search domain is inferable from the verb, i.e., the information carried by the postposition is specified by the verb and so it becomes redundant. Thus, there is no mention of the search domain in sentence (43) above (see Chapter 6, § 6.6 for further details).

45. ki-shǐ́n ílǐ ’ésúkpá  
**ki-shǐ́**      **ní**      **í-lí**                      **ke-sukpá**  
 CM-stick      DEF      SM-be.positioned      CM-ground  
 ‘The stick is on the ground.’

Postpositions have evolved from nouns, and they are formally distinct from them. Postpositions cannot be pronominalised, nouns can be. They always occur bound to their dependent NPs as in (46). (47) is ungrammatical because the postposition **shú** has been extracted from its position, i.e., after its dependent NP. However, body part nouns, for example, can occur external to their possessors as illustrated in (48).

46. Fótoń étsirí kidri ní shú.  
**fóto**      **ní**      **é-tsirí**      **ki-dri**      **ní**      **shú**  
 picture      DEF      SM-be.on      CM-wall      DEF      surface  
 ‘The picture is on the wall.’ (TRPS 44)

47. \*shú fotoń étsirí kidriń.  
**shú**      **foto**      **ní**      **é-tsirí**      **ki-dri**      **ní**  
 surface      picture      DEF      SM-be.on      CM-wall      DEF  
 ‘The picture is on the wall.’

48. Ishú íitǎń.  
**i-shú**      **í-í-tǎ**                      **mí**  
 CM-body      SM-PRSPROG-ache      1SG  
 ‘My body is aching.’ (Lit.: ‘Body is aching me.’)

From a cross-linguistic point of view, Tafi thus belongs to the group of languages that have two classes of adpositions.



## 6 CLAUSE STRUCTURE AND CLAUSE TYPES

In this chapter, we discuss the structure of a simple clause in Tafi, the order of the constituents in the clause and the grammatical relations arguments hold with the predicate. We then describe various constructions or clause types including predicative possessive, copula, presentational and locative constructions. We draw attention to the roles different constituents receive and the precedence relations that hold between them. The lexical and grammatical factors that determine aspects of their ordering are noted throughout. The semantics of verbs that function in the locative constructions are also examined.

In the second part of the chapter, we look at the positions that are opened up in the left periphery of the clause for information structuring purposes. We argue that as claimed for Kwa languages (Ameka 2010), Tafi also has at least three positions to the immediate left of the subject position in a simple clause. These positions are filled by constituents that are frame or left dislocated topics, contrastive topics and focalised constituents respectively. We describe each of the information structuring clause types noting how they relate to the core of the clause.

### 6.1 Basic clause structure and grammatical relations

In Chapter 7 on verbs and verbal modifiers, we identify various constructions involving predicates: one-place, two-place and three-place constructions. We describe in the same chapter various constructions involving operator verbs that take nominalised verbs as complements. For all these constructions, the basic constituent order is:

- |    |         |      |                 |        |         |
|----|---------|------|-----------------|--------|---------|
| 1. | Subject | Verb | Obj1            | Obj2   | X       |
|    |         |      | DATIVE/<br>GOAL | THEME/ | Adjunct |

Tafi is thus an SV (in intransitive clauses) and an AV(D)O (in transitive clauses) language. Grammatical relations are distinguished by position. Subjects (A/S) occur initially in a simple clause and are cross-referenced on the verb. Subjects are also distinguished from objects by distinct pronominal forms. There is a subject object asymmetry in syntactic processes such as relativisation and focus. The objects, both O and D, occur postverbally. D and O occur in a fixed order where D precedes O but they are represented by the same pronominal forms.

In Tafi, the subject is cross-referenced on the predicate as in (2) – (4) but objects are not, as shown in (2) (see Chapter 3). The subject cross-reference markers are the same as the subject pronominal forms (see §3.6 for more details). Two paradigms of subject cross-reference markers can be distinguished. One group is used to cross-reference subjects in independent clauses while the second group which is made up of dependent pronominal forms is used in dependent clauses

such as relative, complement and adverbial clauses (cf. Table 3.2; Chapter 9). In example (4), the subject of the sentence is an independent pronoun **balí** ‘3PL.IND’ and it has been cross-referenced on the verb with **bá**. This shows that independent pronouns in Tafi behave like full nouns.

2. Anóvõń átsywĩ bawĩń.  
**a-nóvõ**   **ńí**   **á-tsywĩ**   **ba-wi**   **ńí**  
 CM-child DEF SM-tear CM.PL-dress DEF  
 ‘The child tore the dresses.’
3. Bawĩń átsywĩ.  
**ba-wi**   **ńí**   **bá-tsywĩ**  
 CM.PL-dress DEF SM-tear  
 ‘The dresses are torn.’
4. Bal’ átsywĩ.  
**balí**   **bá-tsywĩ**  
 3PL.IND SM-tear  
 ‘THEY are torn.’

As stated above, objects are not cross-referenced on the verb and postverbal objects are represented with the same pronominal form. With regard to the pronominalisation of objects in a double object construction, both Object1 which is the Goal argument and Object2 which is the Theme argument can be pronominalised. Object1 can undergo pronominalisation without difficulty as shown in (6) whereas Object2 cannot. The pronominalisation of Object2 has some restrictions. The clearest is if the Goal argument is not a pronoun then the theme argument cannot be easily pronominalised in a monoverbal clause. The pronominalisation of the Theme argument in such a clause renders the sentence ungrammatical as exemplified by the sentence in (11). Sentence (5) illustrates a double object construction with both objects being animate. The sentence in (9) is an example of a double object construction with the Goal argument, (i.e. Object1) being animate and the Theme (i.e. Object2) being inanimate. In sentence (7), the Theme argument (i.e. Object2) which is animate is pronominalised. Sentence (8) shows both animate objects pronominalised while (10) exemplifies a double object construction in which both the animate and inanimate objects are pronominalised.

5. Ányín ákasí badzinóvõẽń ádókasín.  
**á-nyí**   **ńí**   **á-kasí**   **ba-dzinóvõẽ**   **ńí**   **á-dókasí**   **ńí**  
 CM-man DEF SM-show CM.PL-girl DEF CM-teacher DEF  
 ‘The man showed the girls the teacher.’
6. Ányín ákas’ álí ádókasín.  
**á-nyí**   **ńí**   **á-kasí**   **balí**   **á-dókasí**   **ńí**  
 CM-man DEF SM-show 3PL CM-teacher DEF

‘The man showed them the teacher.’

7. Ányín ákas’ áðokasín ’álí.  
**á-nyí ní á-kasí á-ðokasí ní balí**  
 CM-man DEF SM-show CM-teacher DEF 3PL  
 ‘The man showed them (to) the teacher.’

8. Ányín ákas’ yí ’álí.  
**á-nyí ní á-kasí yí balí**  
 CM-man DEF SM-show 3SG 3PL  
 ‘The man showed them (to) him.’

It appears that if the Theme and Goal arguments differ in animacy and the Goal is not pronominalised, then the inanimate Theme cannot be pronominalised as in (11). In that case, an SVC with **yuk3** ‘take’ is used to express the state of affairs as shown in (12). Thus, there is some asymmetry linked to animacy between Object1 and Object2 (apart from the order in which they appear) in Tafi.

9. Ányín ák3 Kofi ’ikutú.  
**á-nyí ní á-k3 Kofi ki-kutú**  
 CM-man DEF SM-give Kofi CM-hat  
 ‘The man gave Kofi a hat.’

10. Ák3 yí ’ílí.  
**á-k3 yí kulí**  
 3SG-give 3SG 3SG  
 ‘He gave it (to) him.’

11. \*ányín ák3 Kofi ’ílí.  
**á-nyí ní á-k3 Kofi kulí**  
 CM-man DEF SM-give Kofi 3SG  
 ‘The man gave Kofi it.’

12. Ányín áyík3 ’el’ák3 Kofi.  
**á-nyí ní á-yík3 kulí a-k3 Kofi**  
 CM-man DEF SM-take 3SG SM-give Kofi  
 ‘The man gave it to Kofi.’

In the rest of this chapter, we look at other clause types beginning with copula clauses and other predicate constructions which express existence, location, and possession.



## 6.2 Copula clause

Tafi has a copula verb **nu** ‘COP’ which takes a copula subject and a copula complement. It is used to express identity between two NPs (13a, c), or the role/function (13d) of the subject. It can also express classification (13e). For example,

- 13a. Minu Victoria.

**mí**            **i-nū**            **victoria**  
1SG.IND SM-COP      Victoria  
‘I am Victoria.’

- 13b. Bagt baláávubó anón bal’énū ...

**ba-gi**    **balí**            **bá-ba-vubó**    **a-nō**            **ní**    **balí**  
3PL-REL 3PL.IND SM-FUT-bury CM-person DEF 3PL.IND  
**bé-nū**  
SM-COP  
‘Those who will bury the person are...’

- 13c. W’onú Kweku Anansi kílí w’onú ánî?

**wó**            **o-nū**            **Kwekú Ánansi**    **kílí**    **wó**            **o-nū**            **á-ní**  
2SG.IND SM-COP Kwekú Ánansi CONJ 2SG.IND SM-COP AM-who  
‘You are Kweku Ananse therefore who do you think you are?’  
(lit. ‘...therefore you are who?’) (Sáhwi)

- 13d. Bányân enú badokasí.

**bá-nyí**            **a-ní**            **bé-nū**            **ba-dokasí**  
CM.PL-man AM-PROX SM-COP CM.PL-teacher  
‘These men are teachers.’

- 13e. Ányân énū atotopún.

**á-nyí**            **a-ní**            **é-nū**            **a-tutopú**    **ní**  
CM-man AM-PROX SM-COP AM-first DEF  
‘This man is the first.’

Commonly, the copula complement can be topicalised or questioned in which case it is fronted as shown in:

- 14a. Ehoeleté m’inū.

**e-hoeleté**            **mí**            **i-nū**  
CM-cowrie.owner 1SG.IND SM-COP  
‘A rich person, I am.’

- 14b. Sáhwĩ y'ágl̩ y'enū.  
**sáhwĩ yí á-gl̩ yí e-nū**  
 spider 3SG.IND CM-lover 3SG.IND SM-COP  
 'Spider's lover she is.' (i.e. 'she is SPIDER'S LOVER') (Sáhwĩ)
- 14c. Ánī y'eyí w'onū?  
**á-nī yí e-yí wó o-nū**  
 AM-who 3SG.IND CM-child 2SG.IND SM-COP  
 'Whose child are you?'
- 14d. Kikutú linū.  
**ki-kutú li-nū**  
 CM-hat 3SG.DEP-COP  
 'A hat, it is.'

### 6.3 Presentational constructions

The presentational construction is a verbless clause/copula clause made up of a nominal and the proximal or distal demonstrative plus an initial **n-** which presumably could be the copula **nu** 'COP'. However, it does not occur with any subject marker to show agreement with the copula subject. As usual the demonstrative agrees with the class of the noun it is modifying. For example,

- 15a. M'epidzya n'ān.  
**mí e-pidzya nū a-ní**  
 1SG CM-goat COP AM-PROX  
 'This is my goat.' (lit. 'my goat is this.')
- 15b. Kikutú n'ān.  
**ki-kutú nū i-ní**  
 CM-hat COP AM-PROX  
 'This is a hat.'
- 15c. Bl̩ n̩ wó 'uplukpá n'ān.  
**bl̩ n̩ wó bu-plukpá nū u-ní**  
 1SG.IND COM 2SG.IND CM.PL-book COP AM-PROX  
 'These books are mine and yours.'
- 15d. Okókó n'ān.  
**o-kókó nū o-líliní**  
 CM-hen COP AM-PROX  
 'That is a hen.'

- 15e. Bomwɪ n'ɔ́lɪlɪnɪ.  
**bu-mwɪ nū u-lɪlɪnɪ**  
 CM-salt COP AM-DIST  
 'That is salt.'

The copula **nu** is only used for present time reference. When a speaker wants to refer to an event that has a past time reference, then the verb **dzi** 'COP.NPRES, become' is used. For example,

- 16a. Ídzí ádɔkasí.  
**í-dzí á-dɔkasí**  
 1SG-COP.NPRES CM-teacher  
 'I was a teacher.'

Also, for future time reference it is the verb **dzi** 'COP.NPRES, become' that is used instead of **nu** 'COP' as shown in (16b). When this verb combines with the present progressive it expresses a change of state that is currently on-going as in (16c).

- 16b. Kofí ebedzi ádɔkasí.  
**Kofí e-be-dzi á-dɔkasí**  
 Kofi SM-FUT-become CM-teacher  
 'Kofi will be/become a teacher.'
- 16c. Kofí éédzi ádɔkasí.  
**Kofí é-é-dzi á-dɔkasí**  
 Kofi SM-PRSPROG-become CM-teacher  
 'Kofi is becoming a teacher.'

## 6.4 Existential constructions

Existential constructions make use of the locative/existential verb which has two forms **li** 'be.at, exist' and **za** 'be.at:NPRES'. The former is used in the expression of present existence and the latter is used for non-present existence. In these constructions, the entity whose existence is being predicated on or theme occurs in the subject position as illustrated in (17). The example in (17b) was adapted from a story narration.

- 17a. Kpáyā 'lɪ.  
**kpáyā a-lɪ**  
 God SM-be.at  
 'There is God.'

- 17b. ...kulí kásalā abāza.  
**kulí ká-sālā a-bá-za**  
 CONJ CM-tortoise SM-VENT-be.at:NPRES  
 ‘..and tortoise came to exist.’ (Kásalā)

## 6.5 Predicate possessive constructions

Predicate possession in Tafi is expressed in a construction with the locative verb **li** ‘be.at, exist’ and **za** ‘be.at:NPRES’ with the possessed NP occurring as the subject NP while the object NP position is occupied by a possessive NP. The possessive NP consists of a possessor and the body-part **ahɔi** ‘hand’ which are juxtaposed. These sentences literally mean that the possessed item is at the possessor’s hand. The verbs **li** ‘be.at’ and **za** ‘be.at:NPRES’ are used for present and non-present possession respectively. The following are examples.

- 18a. Sik’ áli y’áhɔi.  
**siká á-li yí a-hɔi**  
 money SM-be.at 3SG.IND CM-hand  
 ‘S/he has money.’
- 18b. Aɖaŋu dzyɔgǒ áli Abisí ahɔi.  
**a-daŋu dzyɔgǒ á-li Abisí a-hɔi**  
 CM.PL-idea good SM-be.at Abisí CM-hand  
 ‘Abisi has very good ideas.’
- 18c. Sik’ áza y’áhɔi.  
**siká á-za yí a-hɔi**  
 money SM-be.at 3SG.IND CM-hand  
 ‘S/he had money.’
- 18d. Aɖaŋu dzyɔgǒ áza Abisí ahɔi.  
**a-daŋu dzyɔgǒ á-za Abisí a-hɔi**  
 CM.PL-idea good be.at:NPRES Abisí CM-hand  
 ‘Abisi had very good ideas.’

As shown in the examples in (18), the subject NPs are not definite. When the verbs **li** ‘be.at’ and **za** ‘be.at:NPRES’ occur with a possessed item that is definite then the meaning of the construction is likely to be one of temporary and specific possession (Ameka 1991:227). Thus according to Ameka (ibid), such constructions may be glossed as ‘the Y is with X’ instead of ‘X has Y’. Consider the following examples:

- 19a. Sɪkán̄ áli m'áhɔi.  
**sɪká ní á-li mí a-hɔi**  
 money DEF SM-be.at 1SG.IND CM-hand  
 'I have the money.' or 'the money is with me.'

- 19b. Sɪkán̄ áza m'áhɔi.  
**sɪká ní á-za mí a-hɔi**  
 money DEF SM-be.at 1SG.IND CM-hand  
 'I had the money.' or 'the money was with me.'

Predicate possession involving body-parts as the possessed items can be expressed in two ways. One way is through the use of the construction as described above and the other is to use a construction in which the possessor is expressed as some sort of locative; as such the construction literally means the possessed body-part is at the possessor. This is illustrated in (20). In this example, the body-part occurs as the subject NP while the possessor occurs as the object of the verb **li** 'be.at, exist'.

20. ltsrĩ tɪbha ulí luín.  
**ɪ-tsɪrĩ tɪ-bha ulí ɪ-li mí**  
 CM.PL-foot AM-two 3PL SM-be.at 1SG  
 'I have two feet.'

The verb **mɔ** 'see' is also used to express possession of material things like **sɪká** 'money' or **ehóé** 'money (lit. cowries)', as well as abstract attributes and states as shown in (21). In this construction, the possessor occurs as the subject NP while the possessed item occurs as the object NP.

- 21a. Adzĩn̄ ámo sɪká.  
**a-dzĩ ní á-mɔ sɪká**  
 CM-woman DEF SM-see money  
 'The woman has got money.'
- 21b. Ányínóvɔ̄ēn̄ ámo shuim.  
**a-nyínóvɔ̄ē ní á-mɔ shu kum**  
 CM-boy DEF SM-see body inside  
 'The boy is fat.'

In fact, the experience (or possession) of certain emotional states such as **samu** 'joy, happiness' or **oblö** 'anger' are also expressed using this verb with the nominal denoting the emotion as object.

22. Ádɔkasín̄ ámo oblö nɪ wó.  
**á-dɔkasí ní á-mɔ o-blö nɪ wó**  
 CM-teacher DEF SM-see CM-anger COM 2SG  
 'The teacher is angry with you.'

As illustrated in examples (21) and (22), the verb **mɔ** ‘see’ is used as a possessive verb in which case its object is non-definite. When the object is marked for definiteness then the verb takes on the meaning ‘find’.

23. Adzĩn ámo stkán  
**a-dzĩ ní á-mɔ sɔká ní**  
 CM-woman DEF SM-see money DEF  
 ‘The woman saw or found the money.’

Constructions parallel to the predicative possessive constructions described here for Tafi are also available in Ewe (see Ameka 1991, 2012). Thus Ewe has a [Possessed Subject – **le** ‘be.at’ Possessor **sí** ‘hand’] construction as well as a [Possessed **li** éxist’ **ná** ‘DAT’ Possessor] for expressing body part and kinship possession. Moreover the verb **kpo** ‘see’ is used to express possession of attributes, and emotions with the same constraints on definiteness as in Tafi. This raises the question of whether the grammar of predicate possession in Tafi may have been influenced by Ewe. Ameka 2012b argues that Likpe grammar of possession is influenced by Ewe in some of the same ways, e.g. in the use of the verb for SEE.

## 6.6 Locative constructions

There are a number of constructions that are used to describe locative situations. These constructions include the Basic Locative Construction (BLC) and two other construction types. The Basic Locative Construction (BLC) is a construction which is commonly used to answer a question about the location of an object, ‘Where is X?’ (or simply, a “*where* search”-question) (Levinson and Wilkins 2006a). The “*where* search”-question in Tafi consists of an initial question word **fákó** ‘where’, followed by the Figure which is in turn followed by a locative verb as exemplified in (24a). The BLC in Tafi consists of an NP (i.e. the subject of the clause) which denotes the Figure, a locative verb followed by a postpositional phrase which is made up of an NP which specifies the reference object and a postposition which specifies the Search Domain. The Figure is the entity located, the Ground is the entity with respect to which the Figure is located (Talmy, 1985, 2000) and the Search Domain is the particular region of the Ground where the Figure is located (Ameka, 1995, 1999). The BLC is illustrated by the example in (24b).

- 24a. Fákó kópuń áń?  
**fákó kópu ní á-ń**  
 Where cup DEF SM-be.at  
 Where Figure Locative Verb  
 ‘Where is the cup?’

- 24b. Kópuń étsirí kplǎńíabhā.  
**kópu ní é-tsirí [(kplǎ ní) kábhā]**  
 CM-cup DEF SM-be.on table DEF top  
 Ref. Obj Search Domain  
 Figure Loc. Verb Ground  
 ‘The cup is on the table.’ (TRPS 1)

In Tafi, different constructions are used to describe where an entity is located. The syntactic frames of these constructions are represented below:

	FIG		RELATION	GROUND REFERENCE OBJECT	SEARCH DOMAIN
I.	NP	V <sub>[LOC]</sub>		[NP	(Postposition)] <sub>PostP</sub>
II.	NP	V <sub>[LOC]</sub>		[NP <sub>[Bpart]</sub>	(Postposition)] <sub>PostP</sub>
III.	NP	V	Prep	[NP	(Postposition)] <sub>PostP</sub>
IV.	NP	V <sub>1</sub> V <sub>2</sub>		[NP	(Postposition)] <sub>PostP</sub>

The frames in (I) and (II) constitute the basic locative construction in Tafi. The frames in (III) and (IV) are alternative locative constructions used when there is a deviation from the prototypical basic locative function. In the BLC, the expressions referring to the Figure, the verb and the reference object cannot be absent. However, the postpositions which specify the search domain can be omitted under certain conditions, for instance, when the Ground where the Figure is located is inherently locative such as **kesukpá** ‘land, ground’ as illustrated in (25a) or when the search domain is inferable from the verb, i.e., the information carried by the postposition is specified by the verb and so it is redundant. Thus, there is no mention of the search domain in sentence (25b) below.

- 25a. Kishín ílí ’ésúkpá.  
**ki-shí ní kí-lí ke-sukpá**  
 CM-stick DEF SM-be.positioned CM-ground  
 ‘The stick is on the ground.’

- 25b. Kishín íkplínǎ osí.  
**ki-shí ní kí-kplínǎ o-sí**  
 CM-stick DEF SM-lean.against CM-tree  
 ‘The stick is leaning against a tree.’ (PSPV 1)

A subconstruction of the basic locative construction, as shown in (II), is used to characterise locative situations in which the reference object is a body part. The Figure occurs as the subject and the Ground is spelt out as a body-part on which it is located. Examples of scenes that are described with this construction include a

‘hat on head’ (TRPS 5), and a ‘ring on finger’ (TRPS 10) as exemplified in sentence (26a). In this case, the postposition can be left out. The sentence in (26a) is a reduced form of the BLC because of the absence of a spatial element to denote the specific part of the Ground where the Figure is located (Essegbey 2005, Levinson and Wilkins 2006a, Ameka and Essegbey 2006). The body-part noun may, however, be followed by a postposition when the configuration relation between the Figure and the body-part is one of containment as shown in example (26b).

- 26a. Kísígbén íkpasí ’íwěń.  
**kí-sígbé ní kí-kpasí kí-wě ní**  
 CM-ring DEF SM-be.on CM-finger DEF  
 ‘The ring is on the finger.’ (TRPS 10)

- 26b. Tógēń ákpasí ’útóním.  
**tógē ní á-kpasí bu-tó ní kumí**  
 Ear-ring DEF SM-be.in CM-ear DEF inside  
 ‘The ear-ring is in the ear.’ (TRPS 69)

Alternatively, the sentence in (26b) can be expressed as a possessive construction in which the possessor of the body-part is specified as illustrated in (27).

27. Tógēń ákpasí adzín ’útóním.  
**tógē ní á-kpasí a-dzĩ ní bu-tó ní kumí**  
 Ear-ring DEF SM-be.in CM-woman DEF CM-ear DEF inside  
 ‘The ear-ring is in the woman’s ear.’

The third type of locative construction has a locative adjunct phrase occurring after the verb. The locative adjunct phrase is a prepositional phrase consisting of a preposition as its head and a postpositional phrase as its complement. The sentence in (28) exemplifies this:

28. Anúvōń ábubō ní kegbuniede.  
**a-núvō ní á-bubō ní ke-gbu ní ke.de**  
 CM-child DEF SM-bend LOC CM-chair DEF behind  
 ‘The child squats behind the chair.’ (TRPS 64)

A subtype of the prepositional construction involves the use of the allative preposition **kú** ‘ALL’ to introduce the Ground phrase. Situations characterised by such a construction are dynamic or active as in (29) and (30).

29. Batumpáń ákplā kú tisím.  
**ba-tumpá ní bá-kplā kú ti-sí kumí**  
 CM.PL-bottle DEF SM-be.fixed ALL CM-earth inside  
 ‘The bottles are fixed in the ground.’ (PSPV 28)



30. Kishĩn íkplā kú kesukpogunuĩ.  
**ki-shĩ ní kĩ-kplā kú ke-sukpogunu ní**  
 CM-stick DEF SM-be.fixed ALL CM-tree.stump DEF  
 ‘The stick is fixed into the tree stump.’ (PSPV 38)

In this example, a postposition specifying the search domain is omitted as the relation between Figure and Ground and the region where the Figure is located can be inferred from the verb and preposition.

The fourth type of locative construction is a serial verb construction (SVC). The first verb in the serial construction contributes information as to the manner in which a Figure is located on the Ground whereas the second verb describes how the Figure is positioned. The sentence in (31) is an example of an SVC (see chapter 10 on SVCs).

31. Kishĩn ídzĩ kplĩnĩ osĩ.  
**ki-shĩ ní kĩ-dzĩ kplĩnĩ o-sĩ**  
 CM-stick DEF SM-be.located.on.base lean.against CM-tree  
 ‘The stick is on the ground leaning against a tree.’ (PSPV 1)

In the next section, we describe the meanings that locative verbs take in these constructions.

### 6.6.1 The meaning and use of the verbs

Tafi makes use of 13 verbs in the BLC (Bobuafor 2008b), and is thus a multiverb language according to the typology of locative predication (Ameka and Levinson 2007). Four language types have been identified on the basis of the verbal components used in the basic types of locative constructions. The first type is made up of languages whose BLC is verbless while the second type has in the BLC a copula verb (e.g. English), a locative or an existential verb (e.g. Ewe). The third type of languages tends to use a small contrastive set of between 3-7 positional verbs in the BLC (e.g. Dutch). Tutrugbu (Nyagbo) the sister dialect of Tafi uses only 4 verbs in its BLC and thus belongs to this type (see Essegbey 2010b). The last type makes use of a large set of between 9-100 dispositional verbs (e.g. Likpe, Logba and Akan). Based on this classification, Tafi belongs to the fourth type. This is because apart from the locative verbs **kĩ** ‘be.at’, **tsĩrĩ** ‘be.on’ and **kpasĩ** ‘be.in’, Tafi has about 10 dispositional verbs which occur in its BLC.

The 13 verbs used are listed in Table 6.1. They are grouped semantically.

Table 6.1 Locative verbs used in BLC

Semantic classes	Verbs	Gloss
General Topological	<b>lɛ</b>	‘be.at’
	<b>tsirí</b>	‘be.on’
	<b>kpasí</b>	‘be.in’
	<b>búnɔ</b>	‘be.near’
Postural	<b>lí</b>	‘be.positioned’
	<b>dzí</b>	‘be.located.on.base’
	<b>sómí</b>	‘hang’
	<b>kpaplínɔ</b>	‘lean.against’
	<b>bubɔ</b>	‘bend’
	<b>tá</b>	‘be.fixed’
Adhesion	<b>nyá</b>	‘be.tied’
Attachment	<b>muna</b>	‘be.tied.around’
	<b>kana</b>	‘surround, go.around’
	<b>da</b>	‘cover’

#### 6.6.1.1 The general topological verbs

In this section, I focus on three of the verbs. These are verbs which express the general topological meanings of coincidence, **lɛ** ‘be.at’, contact and support, **tsirí** ‘be.on’, and containment, **kpasí** ‘be.in’.

##### 6.6.1.1.1 **lɛ** ‘be.at’

The verb **lɛ** ‘be.at’ is a general locative verb used to signal the topological relation of coincidence (Ameka 2007). **Lɛ** ‘be.at’ seems to have been borrowed from Ewe and adapted into the language. There is a strong preference for using **lɛ** ‘be.at’ especially to talk about any location of any entity. Thus, this verb is used by some speakers in the topological relations stimuli task to localise, for instance, ‘butter on knife’ (TPRS 12) and a ‘ball under chair’ (TPRS 16) as illustrated in sentences (32a) and (32b) respectively.

- 32a. Bobó ní lɛ thě ní shú.  
**bu-bó ní lɛ ɪ-hě ní shú**  
 CM-fat DEF be.at CM-knife DEF surface  
 ‘The butter is on the knife’. (TRPS 12)

- 32b. Bólu ní a-lɛ ka-dangó ní kesí.  
**bólu ní a-lɛ ka-dangó ní kesí**  
 ball DEF SM-be.at CM-chair DEF under  
 ‘The ball is under the chair.’ (TRPS 16)

The verb **li** ‘be.at’ can also be used in a response to a question as to the where-about of a person. The sentence in (33), for instance, is a response to a question about the where-about of God.

33. Alī oŵūsisé.  
**a-li**                      **o-ŵūsisé**  
 3SG-be.at      CM-heaven  
 ‘He is in heaven.’

The verb **li** ‘be.at’ can also be used in a two-place predicate possessive construction as in (34) (see section 6.4 for further discussion).

34. Sik’ alī Kofī áhɔɪ.  
**siká**      **á-li**      **Kofī**   **a-hɔɪ**  
 Money    SM-be.at   Kofī   CM-hand  
 ‘Kofī has money.’

The verb **li** ‘be.at’ has two alternate lexemes, **má** ‘be.at:NEG’ which is used for negation and a non-present locative verb **za** ‘be.at:NPRES’. These are illustrated in (35) and (36) respectively. The sentence in (36) is taken from a Frog Story narration (Mayer (1969)).

35. Kofī ámā ’uvūnīm.  
**Kofī**   **á-mā**                      **bú-vū**              **ní**      **kɪmɪ**  
 Kofī   SM-be.at:NEG   CM-room      DEF   inside  
 ‘Kofī is not in the room.’
36. Anóvɔ́n nɪ y’óbhɪalí baláza bopá trúkpóim  
**a-nóvɔ́**   **ní**      **nɪ**      **yí**      **ɔ-bhɪa-alí**              **balí**      **bá-za**  
 CM-child DEF   CONJ 3SG   CM-friend-PL      3PL   SM-be.at:NPRES  
**bɔ-pá**              **tru-kpó**      **kɪmɪ**  
 CM-house      AM-one   inside  
 ‘The child and his friends were in the same house.’ (FS)

The verb **li** ‘be.at’ is thus used to localise a figure be it animate or inanimate where the Figure is subject. The verb has two lexical alternants, one for negative existence and the other for non-present location. The verb is also involved in the expression of existence (see section 6.3) showing that Tafi is another language in which location, possession and existence are intimately linked (Clark 1978). Interestingly, the Ewe verb **le** ‘be.at:PRES’ also has a non-present locative alternant **no** ‘be.at:NPRES’ as well as arguably an existential alternant **li** ‘exist’.

### 6.6.1.1.2 **tsirí** ‘be.on’

**tsirí** ‘be.on’ is a contact support verb which is used to describe situations in which the Figure is in contact with the supporting surface, for instance, a ‘cup on a table’ (TPRS 1) as in (24b) above, repeated here as (37) for convenience.

37. Kópuń étsirí kplǎníabhā.  
**kópu ní é-tsirí kplǎ ní kábhā**  
 CM-cup DEF SM-be.on table DEF top  
 ‘The cup is on the table.’ (TRPS 1)

This verb is also used to describe figures firmly attached to the reference object such as a ‘stamp on a letter’ (TPRS 3), a ‘head (embossed) on a stamp’ (TRPS 28) as well as a man standing on a roof (TRPS 34). These are illustrated in (38a) - (38c) respectively. Another type of situation in which **tsirí** ‘be.on’ is used is one in which the Figure is an adornment and the Ground is the body as illustrated in (38d). In each case, the appropriate postposition is used to indicate the place/region of the reference object. In (38c) however, the postposition is omitted as the search domain information can be deduced from the verb.

- 38a. Stámpuń étsirí pépa okotokúniabhā.  
**stámpu ní é-tsirí pépa o-kotokú ní kábhā**  
 stamp DEF SM-be.on paper CM-pocket DEF top  
 ‘The stamp is on the envelope.’ (TRPS 3)

- 38b. Anǎtǎń étsirí stámpuniabhā.  
**a-nǎtǎ ní é-tsirí stámpu ní kabhā**  
 CM-picture DEF SM-be.on stamp DEF top  
 ‘The drawing is on the stamp.’ (TRPS 28)

- 38c. Ányín étsirí ovutǎ.  
**á-nyí ní é-tsirí o-vutǎ**  
 CM-man DEF SM-be.on CM-roof  
 ‘The man is on a roof.’ (TRPS 34)

- 38d. Kikutún ítsirí ányín ádáním.  
**ki-kutú ní kí-tsirí a-nyí ní á-dá ní kumu**  
 CM-hat DEF SM-be.on CM-man DEF CM-top.of.head DEF inside  
 ‘The hat is on (top of) the man’s head.’ (TRPS 5)

The verb is thus used to talk about spatial situations involving contact and support relation between a figure and a ground.

6.6.1.1.3 **kpasí** ‘be.in’

**kpasí** ‘be.in’ is used to express containment. This verb is used to localize animate or inanimate entities which are movable or immovable such as a ‘fruit in a bowl’ (TRPS 2) or ‘a house within a fence’ (TRPS 60). The sentence in (39) is an answer to the question ‘where is the house?’ in relation to the spatial scene in TRPS 60 depicting house in fence.

39. Bupá ní **kpasí** bukáním.  
**bu-pá ní kpasí bu-ká ní kum**  
 CM-house DEF be.in CM-fence DEF inside  
 ‘The house is inside the fence.’ (TRPS 60)

In sentence (39), the Figure, which is the house, is enclosed in the reference object, i.e., the fence, and no part of the house is touching the fence.

**kpasí** ‘be.in’ is also used to describe for example, a ‘foot in shoe’ (TRPS 21) as illustrated in the sentence in (40a).

- 40a. Afukpān ákpasí ɔtsrĩ.  
**a-fukpā ní á-kpasí ɔ-tsri**  
 CM-shoe DEF SM-be.in SM-foot  
 ‘The foot is in a shoe.’ (TRPS 21)

The Figure-Ground relation for this scenario can be reversed and interestingly, as **afukpā** ‘shoe’ is not a body-part, the postposition **kum** ‘inside’ is used to indicate the part of the reference object where the Figure is located.

- 40b. ɔtsrĩn ɔkpasí afukpānīm.  
**ɔ-tsri ní á-kpasí a-fukpā ní kum**  
 CM-foot DEF SM-be.in CM-shoe DEF inside  
 ‘The foot is in the shoe.’

Negative spaces or damages (see Levinson & Wilkins 2006b:516) which are perceived to be contained in the reference object are also described with this verb. For example,

41. Oziń ɔkpasí kávlōnīm.  
**o-zi ní á-kpasí ká-vlō ní kum**  
 CM-hole DEF SM-be.in CM-towel DEF inside  
 ‘The hole is in the towel.’ (TRPS 18)

Moreover, animate Figures which are located in contained regions are localised with **kpasí** ‘be.in’. Thus, it is used to describe a ‘fish in a bowl’ (TRPS 32), a dog in a kennel (TRPS 71) or a human being in a room.

42. Kakudzɔgɛ́n ákpasí kalí 'uvuníṃ.  
**ka-kudzɔgɛ́** **ní** **ka-kpasí** **kalí** **bú-vū** **ní** **kumí**  
 CM-dog DEF SM-be.in 3SG.IND CM-house DEF inside  
 'The dog is in its house.' (TRPS 71)

In most of the situations described so far, the locative verb **kpasí** 'be.in' is used followed by a postpositional phrase which is made up of an NP referring to the Ground and the postposition **kumí** 'in/inside'. This postposition specifies the search domain, i.e., the specific part of the Ground where the Figure is located.

This containment verb **kpasí** 'be.in' is also used to describe spatial scenes in which the reference object is not a prototypical container such as a 'ball under chair' (TRPS 16), a spoon under napkin' (TRPS 24) and a 'handle on door' (TRPS 61) as shown in (43). In situations like those represented in (43), different types of postpositions are employed to show the location where the Figure is contained.

- 43a. Bólu ákpasí kadangóniésí.  
**bólu** **ní** **á-kpasí** **ka-dangó** **ní** **ke.sí**  
 ball DEF SM-be.in CM-chair DEF under  
 'The ball is under the chair.' (TRPS 16)

- 43b. Kékɛ́n ákpasí opúpúníshú.  
**ké-kɛ́** **ní** **ká-kpasí** **o-púpú** **ní** **shú**  
 CM-handle DEF SM-be.in CM-door DEF surface  
 'The handle is on the door'. (TRPS 61)

In (43), for example, the verb **kpasí** 'be.in' is used to represent a scene in which a Figure 'ball' (43a) or 'handle' (43b) is located in an open space or on a door and the postposition **kesí** 'under' or **shú** 'surface' is, respectively, used to indicate the specific part of the chair or door where the ball or handle is located. Thus, speakers who use **kpasí** 'be.in' to describe these spatial scenes construe the space under the chair or the door as a sort of container for the ball or handle whereas those who construed the space under the chair or the door as just a place (as opposed to container) where the ball or handle is located used **li** 'be.at'.

Another context in which **kpasí** 'be.in' is also used is where the Figure is an adornment and the Ground is a part of the body as in a 'ring on finger' (TRPS 10), a 'shoe on foot' (TRPS 21) and a 'necklace on neck' (TRPS 51). Hence, adornments and clothing on the body are considered as containment i.e., the Figure is presumed as contained. This containment feature of the verb is perceived as signalling the location of the Figure (i.e., ring, shoe or necklace) in relation to the reference object (i.e., finger, foot or neck) (Ameka 2007). Contrary to what happens in Ewe where, for all clothing and adornment scenes, the (human) possessor of a body-part on which the Figure is located needs to be expressed (see Ameka and Essegbey 2006), in Tafi, the possessor may be left unexpressed as

shown in the examples below. If left out it is the general location as characteristic of a thing. Example (40a) is repeated here as (44b).

- 44a. Kísígbén íkpasí 'íwéń.  
**kí-sígbé ní kí-kpasí kí-wě ní**  
 CM-ring DEF SM-be.in CM-finger DEF  
 'The ring is on the finger.' (TRPS 10)
- 44b. Afukpǎń ákpasí ɔtsrĩ.  
**a-fukpǎ ní á-kpasí ɔ-tsĩ**  
 CM-shoe DEF SM-be.in SM-leg  
 'The foot is in a shoe.' (lit. 'The shoe is in a leg') (TRPS 21)
- 44c. Oliehúń ókpasí (a-dzĩń) ólí.  
**o-liehui ní ó-kpasí (a-dzĩ ní) o-lí**  
 CM-necklace DEF SM-be.in (CM-woman DEF) CM-neck  
 'The necklace is on the (woman's) neck.' (TRPS 51)

**Kpasí** 'be.in' is also used in situations involving part-whole relations, that is, relations in which the Figure is part of the Ground such as fruits on a tree. This is illustrated by the example in (45).

45. Iseyuyúń íkpasí osíníń.  
**i-seyuyu ní í-kpasí o-sí ní kum**  
 CM.PL-fruit DEF SM-be.in CM-tree DEF inside  
 'The fruits are on the tree.' (lit. 'The fruits are in the tree.') (TRPS 45)

**Kpasí** 'be.in' can be used intransitively as in answer to questions asked about the health of people during greetings as in (46b).

- 46a. W'adzyań?  
**wó á-dzyā-álí**  
 2SG CM-brother-PL  
 'How are your brothers?' (lit. 'Your brothers?')
- 46b. Bákpasí.<sup>47</sup>  
**bá-kpasí**  
 3PL-be.in  
 'They are well.'

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<sup>47</sup> Usually, when **kpasí** 'be.in' is used in a response to questions about someone's health, most speakers drop the subject NP.

In this case, it is perhaps being used as a general locative rather than as a containment verb.

#### 6.6.1.1.4 **búnɔ̃** ‘be.near’

**búnɔ̃** ‘be.near’ is a propinquity verb mainly used for human Figures. It is used to describe a locative scene involving a ‘boy sitting near fire’ (TPRS 38) as illustrated in (47).

47. Ányínúvɔ̃ɛ́n ébúnɔ̃ kifún.  
**á-nyínúvɔ̃ɛ́**   **ní**   **é-búnɔ̃**   **ki-fú**   **ní**  
 CM-boy   DEF   SM-be.near   CM-fire   DEF  
 ‘The boy is near fire.’ (TRPS 38)

Other responses elicited with respect to the scene with a ‘boy sitting near fire’ have verbs such as **lí** ‘be.positioned’ and the posture verb **dzí** ‘be.located on base’.

#### 6.6.1.2 Positional verbs

Positional verbs code information about the Figure’s posture or disposition with respect to the ground, e.g., squat, hang etc.

##### 6.6.1.2.1 The verb **lí** ‘be.positioned’

The verb **lí** ‘be.positioned’ is used to describe both animate and inanimate Figures in a standing, sitting or lying position. Examples of such Figures are human beings, animals, buildings and trees. This verb is used to describe scenes involving a ‘dog near its kennel’ (TRPS 6), a ‘ball under chair’ (TRPS 16), a ‘cat on mat’ (TRPS 40), a ‘bottle lying on tree stump’ (PSPV 26), a ‘ball on ground’ (PSPV 7) and ‘beans on ground’ (PSPV 11) among others.

- 48a. Kakudzɔ̃gɛ́n élí kalí ’ugblén ɔ̃bhā.  
**ka-kudzɔ̃gɛ́**   **ní**   **ké-lí**   **kalí**   **bu-gble**   **ní**  
 CM-dog   DEF   SM-be.positioned   3SG.IND   CM-kennel   DEF  
**ɔ̃bhā**  
 near  
 ‘The dog is near its house.’ (TRPS 71)
- 48b. Ayín élí ’ésúkpá.  
**a-yí**   **ní**   **é-lí**   **ke-sukpá**  
 CM.PL-beans   DEF   SM-be.positioned   CM-ground  
 ‘The beans are on the ground.’ (PSPV 11)



### 6.6.1.2.2 **dzí** ‘be.located.on.base’

The locative verb **dzí** ‘be.located.on.base’ is used to describe Figures whose base is supported from below by a surface. For instance, it is used to describe humans in sitting posture, trees in standing position, sticks or poles that are erected such as ‘poles fixed in the ground’ (PSPV 20) and also for animal Figures such as a ‘cat (on its hind) under table’ (TRPS 31) or a ‘cat sitting on mat’ (TRPS 40). The following are examples. Sentence (49a) was given as a response in describing a ‘cat sitting on a mat’ whereas sentence (49b) was used to describe a ‘tree in front of church’ (TRPS 49).

49a. Adzyramuán édzí opútsóniábhā.

<b>a-dzyramuá</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>é-dzí</b>	<b>o-pútsó</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>kábhā</b>
CM-cat	DEF	SM-be.located.on.base	CM-mat	DEF	top

‘The cat is on the mat.’ (TRPS 40)

49b. Osín ódzí búsolú ’uvū otúgba.

<b>o-sí</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>ó-dzí</b>	<b>bú-solú</b>	<b>bú-vū</b>
CM-tree	DEF	SM-be.located.on.base	CM-worship	CM-house

**otúgba**  
in.front.of  
‘The tree stands in front of a church.’ (TRPS 49)

### 6.6.1.2.3 **sómí** ‘hang’

The verb **sómí** ‘hang’ is used to talk about Figures which are attached to their reference objects by suspension. Thus, the Figure is attached at the highest part and lacks support from below. This verb is used to describe a ‘coat on a hook’ (TRPS 9), ‘dresses on a drying line’ (TRPS 37), a ‘picture on a wall’ (TRPS 44), a ‘flag hoisted’ (TRPS 56), a ‘rope hanging from a tree’ (TRPS 33) or a ‘cloth dangling from a tree’ (PSPV 59). The sentence in (50a) is a response to the question ‘where is the coat?’ in relation to the depiction in TRPS 9. In this sentence, the Figure (**awi**) is attached at a point to the reference object (**ɔdǎ**) and this is emphasised by the use of the postposition **shú** ‘surface’.

50a. Awiń ásómí ɔdǎńishú.

<b>a-wi</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>á-sómí</b>	<b>ɔ-dǎ</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>shú</b>
CM-garment	DEF	SM-hang	CM-metal	DEF	surface

‘The coat hangs on the metal.’ (TRPS 9)

The use of the verb **sómí** is not restricted to relations of attachment to a single point nor to dangling objects since it was used for describing a ‘telephone fixed to a wall’ (TRPS 25) as in (50b). Some speakers chose to use the verb **tsirí** ‘be.on’ for the same scenario.

- 50b. Fônń á-sómí kidrińíshú.

**fôn ní á-sómí ki-dri ní shú**  
 Phone DEF SM-hang CM-wall DEF surface  
 ‘The phone hangs on the wall.’ (TRPS 25)

There are instances where the verb **sómí** is used but there is no contact between the Figure and the reference object such that the Figure is located above the reference object as shown in (51) which was given as a description of a ‘lamp above a table’ (TRPS 13). In this case, **ada** ‘top.of.head’ is used to indicate that the lamp is above the table.

51. Kifúń ísómí kplǎń ádáníń.

**ki-fú ní kí-sómí kplǎ ní á-dá ní kum**  
 CM-lamp DEF SM-hang table DEF CM-top.of.head DEF inside  
 ‘The lamp is above the table.’ (TRPS 13)

#### 6.6.1.2.4 **kpaplínǎ** ‘lean.against’

The verb **kpaplínǎ** ‘lean.against’ is used to characterise locative relations involving a leaning position. In this case, the Figure does not stand straight and it is only in contact with the reference object at the upper part and it is supported at another point external to the reference object but orthogonal to it. Such Figures have to be in a rigid and solid state (Ameka 2007). **kpaplínǎ** ‘lean.against’ is used during the elicitation for this study to describe locative scenes including a ‘ladder against a wall’ (TRPS 58), a ‘stick against a tree’ (PSPV 1) and ‘five tubers of cassava against a tree stump’ (PSPV 28).

- 52a. Kédéńglén ákpaplínǎ kidriń.

**ké-déńglé ní ká-kpaplínǎ ki-dri ní**  
 CM-Ladder DEF SM-lean.against CM-wall DEF  
 ‘The ladder is leaning against the wall.’ (TRPS 58)

- 52b. Agbedjín ákpaplínǎ kesukpogunuń.

**a-gbedj ní á-kpaplínǎ ke-sukpogunu ní**  
 CM-cassava DEF SM-lean.against CM-tree.stump DEF  
 ‘The tubers of cassava are leaning against the tree stump.’ (PSPV 28)

As illustrated in the sentences in (52), the verb **kpaplínǎ** ‘lean.against’ does not take a postpositional complement. This is due to the fact that the search domain is inferable from the verb so it is redundant.

6.6.1.2.5 **bubo** ‘squat’

The verb **bubo** ‘bend, squat’, which appears to have been borrowed from Ewe **bobo** ‘bend down’, is used to characterise Figures which are in squatting or crouching position. This verb was used to describe a ‘boy behind a chair’ in a squatting position (TRPS 64) as shown in example (53) which is a repetition of example (28).

53. Anóvɔ́n ábubɔ ní kegɔniedɛ.  
**a-nóvɔ ní á-bubɔ ní ke-gbu ní ke.de**  
 CM-child DEF SM-bend LOC CM-chair DEF behind  
 ‘The child squats behind the chair.’ (TRPS 64)

## 6.6.1.3 Verb of adhesion

There is one verb of adhesion which is used to code information about how a Figure is firmly attached to the ground and cannot be easily removed or separated from the Ground.

6.6.1.3.1 **tá** ‘be.fixed, be.pasted’

The verb **tá** ‘be.fixed, be.pasted’ is used to characterise locative relationships in which the Figure is firmly attached to a reference object such that it cannot be easily removed. This verb is used to describe a ‘gum attached under table’ (TRPS 53), ‘plaster on a leg’ (TRPS 35), ‘handle on door’ (TRPS 61) as well as ‘hooks in a wall’ (TRPS 50).

- 54a. Plástań áta katsrukɔ́.  
**plásta ní á-tá ka-tsrukɔ́**  
 plaster DEF SM-be.fixed CM-foot  
 ‘The plaster is fixed on the foot.’ (TRPS 35)
- 54b. Behúkuń áta kidriníshú.  
**be-huku ní á-tá ki-dri ní shú**  
 CM.PL-hook DEF SM-be.fixed CM-wall DEF surface  
 ‘The hooks are fixed into the wall.’ (TRPS 50)

**tá** ‘be.fixed, be.pasted’ can also be used in agentive constructions in which the verb has a caused locative reading as illustrated below.

- 54c. Áta keplukpá ní kidriníshú.  
**á-tá ke-plukpá ní ki-dri ní shú**  
 3SG-paste CM-book LOC CM-wall DEF surface  
 ‘S/he pasted a piece of paper on the wall.’

#### 6.6.1.4 Verbs of attachment

These are verbs which code information about Figures which are loosely attached to the Ground.

##### 6.6.1.4.1 **nyá** ‘be.tied’

The verb **nyá** ‘be.tied’ is used in situations in which the Figure is tied around the reference object. The Figure has to be in contact with the reference object and it could be a rope, thread, bandage etc. This verb was used in a response with reference to a ‘ribbon on a candle’ (TRPS 4).

- 55a. Ohuiń anyá tsyéńdeń.  
**o-hui ní ɔ-nyá tsyéńde ní**  
 CM-rope DEF SM-be.tied candle DEF  
 ‘The rope is tied around the candle.’ (TRPS 4)

The verb **nyá** ‘be.tied’ can also occur in an agentive transitive construction. This structure has a caused locative reading as shown in (55b).

- 55b. Adzĩn anyá yĩ ’tɔkputíkā.  
**a-dzĩ ní á-nyá yĩ kɪ-tɔkputíkā**  
 CM-woman DEF SM-tie 3SG CM-hair  
 ‘The woman has plaited her hair.’

The difference between (55a) and (55b) is that the sentence in (55a) describes the resultant state occurring due to a prior action, namely, the rope having been tied around the candle whereas the construction in (55b) describes the action of the woman.

##### 6.6.1.4.2 **muna** ‘be.around’

The verb **muna** ‘be.around’ is used for Figures that are around the reference object such that the Figure is in contact with the reference object. This verb was used to describe a ‘rope around a tree stump’ (TRPS 55) as shown in (56).

56. Ohuiń ɔmuna kesukpogunuń.  
**o-hui ní ɔ-muna ke-sukpogunu ní**  
 CM-rope DEF SM-be.around CM-tree.stump DEF  
 ‘The rope is around the tree stump.’ (TRPS 55)

6.6.1.4.3 **kana** ‘surround, go.around’

**kana** ‘surround, go.around’ is an active verb used to describe situations in which the Figure is around or goes round the reference object. The Figure may or may not be in contact with the reference object such as a ‘fence around a house’ (TRPS 15), a ‘rope around a tree stump’ (TRPS 55) or a ‘rope around a stone’ (PSPV 15). The sentences in (57) are responses to the “where-search” question about a ‘rope around a stone’ (PSPV 15) and a ‘fence around a house’ (TRPS 15).

- 57a. Ohuiń ókana kúklángbu.

<b>o-hui</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>ó-kana</b>	<b>ki-klangbu</b>	<b>ní</b>
CM-rope	DEF	SM-go.around	CM-stone	DEF
‘The rope is around the stone.’			(PSPV 15)	

- 57b. Boká ní kana bupáń.

<b>bu-ká</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>kana</b>	<b>bu-pá</b>	<b>ní</b>
CM-fence	DEF	go.around	CM-house	DEF
‘The fence is around the house.’			(TRPS 15)	

Some speakers also used the verb **kana** as the second verb in an SVC to describe the scene with a ‘fence around a house’ (TRPS 15).

- 57c. Boká ní lí kana bupáń.

<b>bu-ká</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>lí</b>	<b>kana</b>	<b>bu-pá</b>	<b>ní</b>
CM-fence	DEF	be.positioned	go.around	CM-house	DEF
‘The fence is around the house.’			(TRPS 15)		

6.6.1.4.4 **da** ‘be.covered’

The verb **da** ‘be.covered’ is used to describe situations in which the Figure is spread over the reference object or attached to the reference object tightly or loosely. In the elicitation task, **da** ‘be.covered’ is used to describe scenes such as a ‘cloth covering a table’ (TRPS 29) and a ‘cork in a bottle’ (TRPS 62) as illustrated below.

- 58a. Kplǎ́íábhēpótín ’ída kplǎ́.

<b>kplǎ́</b>	<b>kábhā</b>	<b>ki-pótí</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>kí-da</b>	<b>kplǎ́</b>
table	top	CM-cloth	DEF	SM-be.covered	table
‘The table-cloth covers the table.’ (TRPS 29)					

- 58b. Kókúń áda tompáń ’únú.

<b>kókí</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>á-da</b>	<b>tompá ní</b>	<b>bu.nú</b>
cork	DEF	SM-be.covered	bottle DEF	mouth
‘The cork covers the bottle.’ (TRPS 62)				

**da** ‘be.covered’ can also be used in agentive constructions to give a caused locative meaning. Thus, if someone covers a pot with a lid, it can be described as in (59a) involving a comitative prepositional phrase or with a take-SVC as in (59b).

- 59a. Áda kitsikpĩ nĩ ádĩda.  
       **á-da**            **ki-tsikpĩ** **nĩ**    **á-dĩda**  
       3SG-cover    CM-pot    COM    CM-lid  
       ‘S/he covered the pot with a lid.’
- 59b. Áyĩko ádĩdań áda kitsikpĩń.  
       **á-yĩko**    **á-dĩda**    **ńĩ**    **á-da**            **ki-tsikpĩ**    **ńĩ**  
       3SG-take    CM-lid    DEF    SM-cover        CM-pot    DEF  
       S/he took a lid and covered the pot.’

In this section, the use and meaning of 13 verbs available to speakers of Tafi for spatial descriptions have been discussed. Tafi has been shown to be a multiverb language, i.e., a language that uses a comparatively large set of verbs in the Basic Locative Construction (BLC). As we have seen in this section also, in addition to the BLC, there are two other main types of locative constructions that are used in response to the “where-search” question. The verb in all these constructions are obligatory whereas the postposition may be left out under certain conditions such as when the search domain is inherently locative or when it can be deduced from the meaning of the verb or from the noun referring to the reference object. One of the features of multiverb languages is that they tend to have only one (locative) preposition. Tafi also has just one locative preposition.

## 6.7 Information structuring constructions

The order of constituents in a basic clause can be rearranged for information packaging purposes. In Tafi, this involves preposing elements to the clause and fronting some clause constituents. The effect of these processes is the creation of three positions in the left periphery of the clause. Like in other Kwa languages (Ameka 2010), the leftmost position is filled by scene-setting topic constituents and left dislocated constituents typically marked by the topic marker **ńĩ**. The second leftmost position is for contrastive topics usually modified by intensifiers and the immediate position to the left of the subject is the focus position. While all the positions are not obligatorily present in a clause they can all be filled in one clause. (60a) schematically represents the extended basic clause structure while (60b) is an illustration of a clause with a fully expanded left periphery.

- 60a. (Frame Topic) (Contrastive Topic)(Focus) Subject Verb (Dative Object)  
       (Object1) (Adjunct)

- 60b. obón ní mī tsyí fufuo mí baṅá  
 [o-bón ní] [mī tsyí] fufuó mí ba-ṅá  
 CM-today TOP 1SG.IND too fufu 1SG.IND FUT-eat  
 ‘Today, I too, FUFU I will eat.’

There are distinct morpho-syntactic properties associated with the positions and the constructions in which they are involved. For instance, frame topics are marked by a topic marker and contrastive topics are signalled by intensifiers. These constructions are described in subsequent sections.

### 6.7.1 Frame topic constructions

Frame or scene-setting topics are the leftmost constituents in the left periphery of the clause. They provide the framework within which the rest of the clause is to be understood. They can be the entities which the clause is about or they may provide the temporal or locative setting for the situation characterised in the clause. The frame topics are optionally marked by the topic marker **ní**. As is the case in Ga and Ewe, the topic marker is in a heterosemic relation with the definiteness marker (see Dakubu 1992, Ameka 1991). The definiteness marker and the topic marker can both occur on the same constituent (see (62b) for an example). A preposed frame topic in a simple sentence can be an NP, an adverbial phrase or a connective (see below). The topic marker is also used to mark preposed clauses in complex sentences that set the scene for the main clause, and it is also used to mark embedded relative clauses as background information to the rest of the clause (see Chapter 9 on Clause combinations). The topic marker can be doubled on a constituent (see 66a) and it can also be lengthened for emphasis (see 61c).

Left dislocated arguments may be marked by the topic marker and referred to in the rest of the clause showing the relationship between the external topic and the rest of the clause. In (61a), the independent pronoun **balí** ‘3PL.IND’ representing the subject argument is left dislocated and it is cross-referenced on the verb with a subject marker in the rest of the clause. In (61b) the numeral **tedjipó** ‘one’ which occurs in the object position in the rest of the clause agrees with the external topic, bamboo. Similarly in (61c), the address term ‘Madam’ is preposed and represented in the rest of the clause with an agreeing pronoun in object position.

- 61a. Balí xúń ní badíba butsiniesí?  
**balí xúń ní ba-di-bá bu-tsí ní ke.sí**  
 3PL.IND as.for TOP 3PL-NEG2-come CM-death DEF under  
 ‘As for them, they did not come to the funeral.’
- 61b. Pamprò xúń ní, óbotéjúdú tedjipó kó idru títá aloo túlí.  
**pamprò xúń ní ó-bo-téjú-dú te-djipó kó**  
 bamboo as.for TOP 2SG-FUT-can-erect AM-one DAT

**i-dru**                **ti-tá**                **aloo**    **ti-lí**  
 CM.PL-mound    AM-three DISJ    AM-four  
 ‘As for the bamboo sticks, you can erect one for about three or four yam  
 mounds.’ (Yam cultivation)

61c. Madam ní ímóé ’ishūín.<sup>48</sup>

**Madam**    **ní**                **í-mó**                **yí**                **kíshūi ní**  
 Madam    TOP    1SG-see    3SG    Friday DEF  
 ‘Speaking of Madam, I saw her on Friday.’

61d. ...so kǐnǐ ní, kúdaazhĩá sí budayíko kasí abrewa.

**so**    **kǐ-ní**                **ní**                **ki-daa-zhĩá**                **sí**  
 so    CM-PROX    TOP    3SG-NEG:PSTPROG-need COMP  
**bu-da-yíko**                **kasí**                **a-brewa**  
 1PL-ITIVE-take    show    CM-old.woman  
 ‘... so concerning this one, it was not necessary to seek counsel with (the)  
 old lady.’ (Butsiugu)

Examples (61a), (61c) and (61d) also show that items that are inherently definite such as personal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns and address terms can occur as topics and be marked by the form **ní** ‘TOP’.

When an adjunct phrase such as a temporal noun phrase or a locative phrase is preposed to the clause, there is no anaphoric relation marker in the rest of the clause to it. There must be a relevance relation between them. Thus a temporal adjunct can occur juxtaposed to the subject of the clause representing the temporal frame for the interpretation of the rest of the clause. Consider the following examples:

62a. Kípā ɔwólagó búkpí ɔkóniésí.

**kípā**                **ɔwólagó**                **bú-kpí**                **ɔ-kó**                **ní**                **kesí**  
 Saturday evening    1PL-put.in    CM-custom    DEF    under  
 ‘Saturday evening we start with the ceremony.’

62b. Kípā ní ní bowa kúnú, kwesrá búdí kúsòlimi ɔnání ’íwaló.

**[kípā**                **ní**                **ní**                **bó-wa**                **kúnú**                **]**    **[kwesrá**                **bú-dí**  
 Saturday DEF    TOP    1PL-do    funeral    Sunday    1PL-attend  
**kú.sòlimi**                **ɔ-nání**                **kíwaló]**  
 burial.service    2SG-reach    Monday  
 ‘On Saturday, we perform (the) funeral rites, on Sunday, we attend the  
 burial service till Monday.’ (Butsiugu)

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<sup>48</sup> The topic marker may sometimes be lengthened as in this sentence.



63. ...dén'ots<sup>55</sup> ní ridiidi ɔ́dónánī 'ibe n̄ n'ibe gi lɔ́ba yúkɪ kitukún...  
 [dénī ɔts<sup>55</sup>] ní ridiidi ɔ́-dɔ́-nánī ki-be n̄  
 from now TOP continuously 2SG-ITIVE-reach CM-time wh.ever  
 ní kí-be gi lɔ́-ba-yúkɪ ki-tukú ní  
 DEF CM-time REL 1PL.DEP-VENT-receive CM-load DEF  
 '... from now until whenever we receive the load.' (load = corpse)  
 (Butsiugū)

The frame topic phrases in the examples in (62) are temporal phrases with similar reference; in (62a) the temporal noun phrase is not marked for definiteness nor is the topic marker used. In (62b) however, the temporal noun is definitised and then marked as topic. This example shows that the definiteness marker and the topic marker can co-occur on the same constituent. Example (63) illustrates the preposing of a temporal phrase made up of a preposition and temporal nominal. Note that the preposition is pied-piped with it.

Locative prepositional phrases can also occur in the scene setting topic position. In the examples below, the preposition is pied-piped with its complement and preposed to the clause to indicate the place where the event described in the rest of the clause occurs; in (64a) it is the market and in (64b) it is the school.

- 64a. Ní kedziním ní, Ám'edzí bladyō.  
 [ní ke-dzi ní kɪmɪ ní ] Ámā e-dzí bladyō  
 LOC CM-market DEF inside TOP Ámā SM-buy plantain  
 'In the market, Ama bought plantain.'
- 64b. Ní sukū ní, Agoé átsánī Mensah.  
 [ní sukū ní ] Agoé á-tsá-nī Mensah  
 LOC school TOP Agoé SM-meet-COM Mensah  
 'At the school, Agoe met Mensah.'

In some cases where the complement of a locative prepositional phrase is preposed, the preposition may be elided. This is the case in the following example where a complex postpositional phrase is preposed to the clause and there is nothing in the rest of the clause referring back to the constituent the utterance is about.

65. Olizatɔ́ ónúgbúíṁ lólǎnīm̄ ebúítibúí edekóéyī.  
 o-lizatɔ́ o-nugbu kɪmɪ ló-lǎ ní kɪmɪ  
 CM-dawn CM-mouth inside RED-smell DEF inside  
 e-búítibúí e-de-kóéyī  
 CM.PL-word.of.wisdom SM-ITIVE-exit  
 'Out of the smelly mouth of early dawn good counsel flows.'  
 (Proverb #12)

Thus when locative prepositional phrases are preposed to the clause, the preposition may either be pied-piped with its complement or it may be elided. There is nothing in the rest of the clause that will be coreferential to this initial phrase.

Connectives can also occur in the frame topic slot. The examples in (66) illustrate this. (66a) also shows that the topic marker can be doubled on one constituent.

- 66a. ... so ní ní badıgo ʼédɔŋɔ́n kó gbaxáǎĩ?  
so TOP TOP 3PL-NEG2-leave CM-food DEF DAT striped.mouse  
‘... for that reason, they did not leave any food for striped mouse.’  
(Gbaxáǎĩ)

- 66b. Alasí ní élē otroeleté ovutó ní ní bétítsú ɔlí ʼífú bupui lápoi ɔlí?  
alasí TOP CFM CM-lie.owner CM-roof DEF TOP  
bé-tí-tsú ɔlí kí-fú bu-pui lá-pui ɔlí  
3PL-NEG1-set 3SG CM-fire CM-scatter 3PL.DEF-scatter 3SG  
‘The reason is that the roof of a dishonest man’s hut is never burnt, it is dismantled piece by piece.’ (Gbaxáǎĩ)

## 6.7.2 Contrastive topic constructions

The second position in the left periphery is the contrastive topic position. In examples (61a) and (61b) we have contrastive topics marked by the intensifier **xúń** ‘as for’ and marked by the frame topic marker. We also saw in (60b) that a frame topic constituent and a contrastive topic constituent can be different. The main thing about the contrastive topics is that the dimension of the contrast is signalled by an intensifier (see Chapter 4 on noun phrases and nominal modifiers). Typically, the discourse elements that are so marked are presupposed. Examine the following discourse fragments.

- 67a. Balí xúń étínyí ásí ní kánā sáhwĩ édékpu kó alí énú bal’enyí gı le klú?  
balí xúń bé-tí-nyí bá-sí ní ká-nā  
3PL.IND as.for 3PL-NEG1-know SM-COMP TOP CM-manner  
sáhwĩ é-dé-kpu kó balí é-nú balí  
CM-spider SM-ITIVE-hide DAT 3PL 3SG-hear 3PL.IND  
e-nyí gı le-klú  
CM.PL-name REL 3PL.DEF-call  
‘As for them, they did not know that spider was hiding from them and had heard the names they mentioned.’ (Sáhwĩ)

- 67b. Kásālā bǒǵ ébuso aábá o.  
**ká-sālā** **bǒǵ** **é-buso** **a-á-bá** **o**  
 CM-tortoise rather SM-do.first 3SG-PRSPROG-come UFP  
 ‘Tortoise is rather the one who is arriving first.’ (Kásālā)
- 67c. Balí tsyí be-tsiré blǒ sí ní ɔwashui ba-vubó  
**balí** **tsyí** **be-tsiré** **blǒ** **sí** **ní** **ɔwashui** **ba-vubó**  
 3PL.IND too SM-tell 1PL COMP TOP tuesday 3PL-bury  
**a-nǒ** **békē** **ko** **ní** **ká** **bá-wa** **kúnú**  
 CM-person COMPL just TOP then 3PL-do funeral.rites  
**zi** **ɖeká**  
 times one  
 ‘They too said that on Tuesday after burying the person, they will perform the funeral rites at once.’
- 67d. ... sǎhwĩ tsyí évu aló ádákpasí kumanumí ééyu ’ívú plínǒ bekusi edziniín.  
**[sǎhwĩ tsyí é-vu a-ló á-dá-kpasí kɪ-ma**  
 spider too SM-catch SM-get.up SM-ITIVE-be.in CM-dancing.ring  
**ní kumí é-é-yú ki-vu plínǒ be-kusí**  
 DEF inside 3SG-PRSPROG-dance CM-dance add CM.PL-chief  
**e-dzini ní]**  
 CM-wife DEF  
 ‘... spider also got up he went inside the dancing ring dancing with the queens.’ (Sǎhwĩ)

In the examples in (67) the contrastive topics marked by various intensifiers are used. It appears that the contrastive topic tends to be the subject of the clause and it is cross referenced on the verb. When some of the intensifiers that are more focal in their semantics, e.g. **ko** ‘only’, are used to mark the preposed contrastive topic, they are treated morpho-syntactically like focus constructions. Thus, in (68a) the contrastive topic item is the subject argument in the clause. Because of this, there is an independent pronoun referring back to it and it is further cross-referenced on the verb by the appropriate subject marker. In (68b) also the contrastive topic **kú** ‘death’ bears an object relation in the clause and as it has been fronted and marked with **ko** ‘only’, the subject pronoun is realised as the dependent form. In this example also, a postverbal topic marker occurs to mark an out-of-focus part of the clause (see §6.7.4 for further details). These patterns are the same as those for subject focus and object focus constructions (see §6.7.3).

- 68a. édzýúí ko yí é-bé-kóéyí ní o-zi ní  
**é-dzyúí** **ko** **yí** **é-bé-kóéyí** **ní** **o-zi** **ní**  
 CM-rat just 3SG.IND SM-VENT-exit LOC CM-hole DEF  
**kumí** ...  
 inside  
 ‘A MOUSE just popped/came out of the hole ... .’ (FS)

- 68b. Kú ko létsi kó lóañ.  
**kú ko lé-tsi kó blš aní**  
 death just 3PL.DEP-tell DAT 1PL TOP  
 ‘Only the DEATH was announced to us.’ (Butsiugū)

### 6.7.3 Focus constructions

Any of the constituents in a clause can be highlighted for focus. Focusing involves fronting of the constituent to a position immediately adjacent to the subject and applying further measures depending on the role of the constituent in the clause. Unlike neighbouring Kwa languages like Ewe, Ga, Akan and Logba, Tafi does not employ a particle to mark such a fronted constituent for focus. The focus subconstructions are discussed in the subsequent sections below.

#### 6.7.3.1 Subject focus constructions

When a subject argument is focused, it occurs clause initially in the immediate pre-subject position. It is marked as being in focus by an independent pronoun that agrees with it in class and number. This subject form is cross referenced on the verb by an appropriate subject marker. There is thus a marker in the rest of the clause that refers to the subject argument in focus. Consider the following examples.

- 69a. Otsrí kəkulš ol’óvə aput’ otiti ədzyudzycó ní.  
**ɔ-tsrí kəkulš olí ó-və a-putš o-titi**  
 CM-foot crooked 3SG.IND SM-besmeared.with CM.PL-mud SM-smear  
**ɔ-dzyu-dzyo ní**  
 CM-RED-straight DEF  
 ‘THE CROOKED LEG besmears the straight one with mud.’ (Proverbs #1)
- 69b. Age ’etukú kulí d’iepí.  
**a-ga ki-tukú kulí dɪ ke-pí**  
 CM-animal CM-load 3SG.IND go CM-home  
 ‘A FOOL’S LOAD reaches home.’ (Proverbs #56)
- 69c. Ámā y’ésí édékpú.  
**Ámā yí é-sí é-dé-kpú**  
 Ama 3SG.IND SM-run SM-ITIVE-hide  
 ‘AMA ran and hid.’
- 69d. Ekusí tédqkpó y’áaŋa bal’íabhā.  
**e-kusí te-díkpó yí á-a-ŋa balí kábhā**  
 CM-chief AM-one 3SG.IND SM-PSTPROG-eat 3PL.IND top  
 ‘ONE CHIEF was ruling over them.’ (Kásālā)

In example (69d), for instance, the focused NP belongs to the **a**<sup>1</sup> class, the independent pronoun that is used to mark it belongs to that class. It is also cross-referenced on the verb by the appropriate subject form. In (69b), the focused NP is a possessive phrase whose head belongs to the **ki**- class and is therefore marked by the independent pronoun **kí** that agrees with it in class and number. In this case, it is not cross referenced on the verb with the **ki**- subject marker because agreement between a **ki**- class noun subject and the verb is no longer robustly marked. The strategy for signalling subject focus is different from that of non-subject arguments. Thus Tafi also manifests the crosslinguistic tendency of asymmetry between subject focus and non-subject focus (see e.g. Lambrecht 1994).

### 6.7.3.2 Object focus constructions

When an object is in focus, it is fronted and placed immediately adjacent to the subject position. A gap is left in the object position in the rest of the clause. If the subject argument is expressed as a pronoun it is realised as the dependent form as the examples in (70) illustrate. In (70a), the object of the second verb in the SVC **ókó todjúkpó** ‘one place’ is focused and the subject pronoun of the SVC is realised as the dependent form on the first verb. Similarly, the object of the first verb in the SVC in (70b) is in focus and the subject of the SVC is expressed as the subject dependent form on the first verb. Note, however, that in (70c) even though the object is in focus, because the subject is realised as the independent form of the pronoun and cross referenced on the verb, there is no dependent form used.

- 70a. **Ókó todjúkpó** lá-shṣ́ ’elú g’lòbè ’efṣ́.

<b>[ó-kṣ́</b>	<b>tó-djúkpó</b>	<b>lá-shṣ́</b>	<b>be-lú ]</b>	<b>gí</b>
CM-place	AM-one	3PL.DEP-urinate	SM-put.down	REL
<b>lu-bá</b>	<b>kí-fṣ́</b>			
3SG.DEP-come	CM-lather			

‘It is by urinating at ONE PLACE that lather is formed.’ (Proverbs #7)

- 70b. **Osí ní gí lólí aṣ́ ahóú olí layíko** ’ehu éblidzya.

<b>o-sí</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>gí</b>	<b>lò-lí</b>	<b>a-nṣ́</b>	<b>a-hòu</b>	<b>ní</b>
CM-stick	DEF	REL	3SG.DEP-be.at	CM-person	CM-hand	TOP
<b>[olí</b>	<b>la-yíko</b>	<b>be-hu</b>	<b>é-blidzya]</b>			
3SG.IND	3PL.DEP-take	SM-hit	CM-snake			

‘It is THE STICK one has in hand that one uses to hit a snake.’

(Proverbs #23)

- 70c. **Kokó y’anyádè** ’égbā.

<b>kokó</b>	<b>yí</b>	<b>a-nya-dà</b>	<b>kí-gbā</b>
cocoa	3SG.IND	SM-CERT-plant	CM-truth

‘COCOA, he truly did plant (it).’

- 70d. An<sup>5</sup> shishe átínyunyā 'mī kúbhūm y'ányunyā?  
**a-n<sup>5</sup>** **shi-she** **á-tí-nyunyā** **ā-mī** **[kú-bhūm]**  
 CM-person RED-grow SM-NEG1-frown CM-face CM-anus  
**yí** **á-nyunyā]**  
 3SG.IND SM-frown  
 'An elder does not frown his face; he contorts his ANUS'. (Proverbs #44)

A postpositional phrase can also be focused as shown in (71). In this example, the postpositional phrase represents the object of the clause and so it is fronted. The subject argument of the clause is expressed as an independent pronoun and cross referenced on the verb.

71. Búvūnūm y'ágbā.  
**bú-vū** **ní** **kum** **yí** **á-gbā**  
 CM-house DEF inside 3SG.IND SM-sweep  
 'THE ROOM he swept.'

A Dative object of a V2 in an SVC can also be focused like any other object as illustrated in (72).

72. Anóv<sup>5</sup>ń Ám'edzí bawin akó.  
**a-nóv<sup>5</sup>** **ní** **Ámā** **e-dzí** **ba-wi** **ní** **á-kó**  
 CM-child DEF Ámā SM-buy CM.PL-dress DEF SM-give  
 'THE CHILD Ama bought the dress for.'

Similarly, a copula complement constituent can also be focused. Like other objects, a focused copula complement is also fronted and there is nothing left in its original site. In the examples in (73) the copula subject is realised as an independent pronoun and cross-referenced on the copula.

- 73a. Sáhwĩ y'ágl<sup>5</sup> y'enū.  
**sáhwĩ** **yí** **á-gl<sup>5</sup>** **yí** **e-nū**  
 spider 3SG.IND CM-lover 3SG.IND SM-COP  
 'SPIDER'S LOVER she is.' (i.e. 'she is SPIDER'S LOVER') (Sáhwĩ)
- 73b. Kofi ádumí Doxwě 'íbúí alası́ adzinóv<sup>5</sup>ē dzyɔgǒ y'enú.  
**Kofi** **á-dumí** **Doxwě** **ki-búí** **[alası́** **a-dzinóv<sup>5</sup>ē** **dzyɔgǒ**  
 Kofi SM-like Doxwě CM-matter because CM-girl good  
**yí** **e-nú]**  
 3SG.IND SM-COP  
 'Kofi loves Doxwě because she is A GOOD GIRL.'

### 6.7.3.3 Verb focus constructions

Verbs can also be focused. Tafi employs a strategy in which the verb is nominalised and fronted with the original verb left in situ. The verb is nominalised by prefixing the class marker **bu-/bu-** to it. The examples in (74) illustrate verb focus. As is evident from the examples the subject in such clauses can be expressed as the independent form and cross-referenced with an appropriate subject marker on the verb, as in (74a) or as a dependent pronoun marked on the verb as in (74b) and (74c).

- 74a. Boshĩ y'áshĩ ãv'uyem.

**bu-shĩ**    **yí**            **á-shĩ**    **a-vi**            **bu-ya**    **kumi**  
 CM-leave 3SG.IND SM-leave SM-go    CM-farm inside  
 'LEAVE s/he DID leave for the farm.'

- 74b. Bétítsũ oturoeleté ovutó 'éfú bopui lápui olím?

**bé-tí-tsũ**            **o-turo**    **e-leté**            **o-vutó**    **ki-fú**  
 3PL-NEG1-set CM-lie CM-owner CM-roof CM-fire  
**[bu-pui lá-pui olí kumi]**  
 CM-scatter 3PL.DEP-scatter 3SG.IND inside  
 'We do not set fire to the dishonest person's roof, we TEAR it apart.'  
 (Proverbs #32)

- 74c. Ónúgi ðeke évuwó ní y'eyíálí butĩ látĩ ní anó 'evuabhā.

**ónú.gi**    **ðeke**            **é-vu-wó**            **ní**    **yí**            **e-yí-álí**  
 COND crocodile SM-catch-2SG TOP 3SG.IND CM-child-PL  
**[butĩ lá-tĩ ní a-nó ki-vu kabhā]**  
 CM-crawl 3PL.DEP-crawl LOC CM-person CM-stomach top  
 'When a crocodile has captured you (even) baby crocs will CRAWL on your belly.' (Proverbs #33)

Any constituent in a basic clause in Tafi can be focused. The strategies for focusing subjects and other term constituents are different. Verbs are also focused using a slightly different strategy. These devices afford Tafi speakers to structure information they wish to communicate effectively.

### 6.7.4 Post-verbal topic marker **aní**

In example (68b), repeated for convenience here as (75a), there is a form **aní** glossed as 'TOP' which occurs in the predicate part of a clause. It can occur immediately after the verb as in (75b) and (75c), or after a prepositional phrase as in (75a). It seems to mark the part of the clause to its left as a kind of topic. In example (75b), for instance, the form seems to mark 'what you are doing' as topic to what follows 'in vain'.

- 75a. Kú ko létsi kó lóañ.  
**kú ko lé-tsi kó blš aní**  
 death just 3PL.DEP-tell DAT 1PL TOP  
 ‘Only the death was announced to us.’ (Butsiugū)
- 75b. Kɪgɪ w’óóbhutíañ buwǎ/ tǔwǎ.  
**ki-gɪ wó ó-ó-bhutí aní buwǎ/ tǔwǎ**  
 3SG-REL 2SG.IND SM-PRSPROG-do TOP in.vain  
 ‘What you are doing is in vain.’
- 75c. Kílēm ’iyo w’óóbīañ.  
**kí-lē kum yíyo wó ó-ó-bī aní**  
 CM-air inside cry 2SG.IND SM-PRSPROG-cry TOP  
 ‘In vain you are WEEPING.’

The form **aní** ‘TOP’ is similar to the proximal demonstrative form **aní** ‘PROX’, that modifies nouns belonging to the **a<sup>1</sup>-**, **ba(a)-**, **a<sup>2</sup>-** and **ka-** classes (see § 4.6.3), and the negative cleft **aní** ‘NEGCL’ (see § 7.3.5.1). These forms must be related as they have related functions. However, the nature of the relationship is not clear. Further investigation is needed to clarify it.

### 6.7.5 Topic-comment only constructions

Topic-comment only constructions in Tafi are verbless predications. They have the structure [NP<sub>TOPIC</sub> NP<sub>COMMENT</sub>] where the two NPs are simply juxtaposed. Some of these structures are used to express simile-like propositions where the topic NP is likened to the comment NP. For example,

- 76a. Adzī kɪgba.  
**a-dzī ki-gba**  
 CM-woman CM-falling.trap  
 ‘A woman is a trap.’
- 76b. Banódzýrámī telí ’ídī ozi oo.  
**ba-nódzýrámī te-lí kí-dī o-zi oo**  
 CM.PL-human.being AM-INDEF CM-type CM-hole UFP  
 ‘Some human beings are deep pits.’

Some tautologies are expressed using such structures but in this case the first NP contains an intensifier as shown in 77 - 79.

77. Kibenýee’be tsýí kibe.  
**ki-be-nyáá-ki-be tsýí ki-be**  
 CM-time-DISTR-CM-time also CM-time



‘Any time is (good) time.’

78a. Kepí ko kepí.

**ke-pí**            **ko**    **ke-pí**  
CM-home    only    CM-home

‘Home is home.’ (i.e. There is no place like home)

78b. Butsí ko butsí.

**bu-tsí**            **ko**    **bu-tsí**  
CM-death    only    CM-death

‘Death is death.’

79a. Anóvõ ko anóvõ kwã.

**a-nóvõ**    **ko**    **a-nóvõ**    **kwã**  
CM-child only    CM-child INT

‘A child is always a child.’

79b. Adzĩ/ányí ko adzĩ/ányí kwã.

**a-dzĩ/á-nyí**                    **ko**    **a-dzĩ/á-nyí**                    **kwã**  
CM-woman/CM-man    only    CM-woman/CM-man    INT

‘A woman/man is only a woman/man.’

In (77), the first NP is marked by the additive intensifier **tsyí** ‘too, also’ and the second NP made up of a noun with the same referential meaning as the head of the first NP. In (78a) and (78b), the intensifier used is the focusing one **ko** ‘only’ and the head noun is as it were repeated. (79a) and (79b) are similar to (78a) and (78b) where the topic NP is modified by **ko** but different from them in that the comment NP is modified by **kwã**. Interestingly, the nouns involved in this subconstruction are all human category nouns.

The verbless predications discussed in this section are used to drive home a point. They are used to state general truths. For instance, the statement in (76b) can be made to emphasise the fact that one cannot understand human beings or see through their motives while (78a) stresses the point that there is no place like one’s home and that no matter where a person travels to s/he will always come back home.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> This is comparable to a pop song, parts of which go like: There is no place like home, home sweet home; when I go south, west, east and north I will always come back home.

## 7. VERBS AND VERBAL MODIFIERS

Verbs and verbal modifiers are the main focus of this chapter. Verbs differ with regard to the number of arguments they take. This chapter, therefore, looks at the argument structure of Tafi verbs. The verbs are classified as one-place, two-place and three-place predicates depending on the number of arguments they require semantically. Verbs also participate in different argument structure constructions. Hence, various argument structure constructions are also discussed. In addition, the verbs are classified according to their inherent semantics. Tense, aspect and mood as categories for which verbs can be modified are also discussed and finally, adverbs and adverbial phrases are examined.

### 7.1 The structure of verb forms

The following positions or slots can be distinguished in verb forms:

#### 1. SM NEG TAM STEM-SUFFIX

In (1), the initial position is filled by the subject marker (SM). The SM slot is filled by a pronominal which can serve to cross-reference the lexical subject on the verb. When the subject is represented by a noun belonging to any of the **bu-** classes it is not cross-referenced on the verb. The subject marker is followed by a negative marker (NEG) which is in turn followed by the tense, aspect and mood (TAM) markers. The verb stem (STEM) follows the TAM markers and the final slot is occupied by a verb extension such as **-no** ‘COM’ suffix. The underlined parts in sentences in (2) - (4) illustrate the structure of the verb forms. The vowels of the forms that fill any of the slots before the verb stem agree with the (initial) vowel of the stem in ATR value.

2. Kofi átiwe ’éxwī elishí.  
**Kofi á-tí-wa kí-xwī e-lishí**  
Kofi SM-NEG1-work CM-work CM-night  
‘Kofi does not work at night.’
3. Éébho ’ivuń.  
**é-é-bho ki-vu ní**  
3SG-PRSPROG-beat CM-drum DEF  
‘He is beating the drum.’
4. Búbav’ iedzīm obóní.  
**bú-ba-vi ke-dzī kumu o-bóní**  
1PL-FUT-go CM-market in CM-today  
‘We will go to the market today.’

5. Ésí áyíkò agbèṣí ávínò adziàń.  
**Ésí á-yíkò a-gbè ní á-ví-nò a-dzì a-ní**  
 Esi SM-take CM-bowl DEF SM-go-COM CM-woman AM-PROX  
 ‘Esi took the bowl to this woman.’

The verb cluster in the sentence in (2) consists of a subject marker (SM) **a-**, the negative marker **tí-** and the verb stem **wa** ‘work’. In (3), the verb stem **bho** ‘beat’ is preceded by the 3SG pronoun and the form **é-** which signals the present progressive aspect in this context. In (4), the future marker **ba-** occurs before the verb stem **vi** ‘go’. Here too, the subject marker slot is filled by a pronominal form. In example (5), the second verb in the serial verb construction (SVC) has been suffixed with **-nò** ‘COM’, the comitative extension.

## 7.2 Verbs and their argument structure

In communication, speakers construct sentences which represent the states of affairs they wish to express to their interlocutor(s). A clause may comprise a predicate which is often a verb and its arguments. Verbs and other predicated elements are usually used to code the type of states of affairs whereas their arguments denote the participants in these states of affairs. In this section, I classify verbs as one-place, two-place and three-place predicates depending on the number of core arguments they occur with.

### 7.2.1 One-place predicates

One-place predicates occur with only one argument in intransitive clauses or one-place constructions. The single argument occurs before the verb and it is coded as the subject of the clause. The following are examples.

6. Ohuin ɔpó.  
**o-hui ní ɔ-pó**  
 CM-rope DEF SM-snap  
 ‘The rope snapped.’
7. Ádòkasín áshĩ.  
**á-dòkasí ní á-shĩ**  
 CM-teacher DEF SM-leave  
 ‘The teacher left.’
8. Ɔkúkónyēń ńńbõ.  
**ɔ-kúkónyē ní ń-ń-bõ**  
 CM-cock DEF SM-PRSPROG-crow  
 ‘The cock is crowing.’

In sentences (6) - (8) above, the verbs **pó** ‘snap’, **shĩ** ‘leave’ and **bɔ** ‘crow’ occur with a single argument in subject position and are thus one-place verbs.

Essegbey (1999:63-64) identifies three classes of intransitive verbs/one-place predicates for Ewe based on the type of constructions in which they occur. The first and second groups comprise verbs that can occur intransitively as well as transitively. What distinguishes verbs in Group 1 from those in Group 2 is that the expression with the subject function in the intransitive construction in the first group functions as the object NP in its transitive variant whereas the referent with the subject function in the transitive construction in the second group still remains the subject NP of its intransitive counterpart. The two groups of verbs participate in transitivity alternations. These are alternations involving the transitive and intransitive uses of a verb. The transitive use of verbs in Group 1 may be paraphrased as ‘cause to V-intransitive’ (Levin 1993). The third class of intransitive verbs (Group 3) may be described as canonical intransitive verbs. They can only occur intransitively. Intransitive/one place predicates in Tafi also fall into three groups like in Ewe. Examples of verbs in the various groups in Tafi are:

Group 1:

**lɔ́** ‘lose, get lost’; **yɔ́** ‘dissolve, melt, liquefy’; **nɔ** ‘become wide’; **dzyɛ́** ‘fulcrum-break’; **yě** ‘break’; **pó** ‘snap’; **tsyɔ́** ‘tear’; **ní** ‘extinguish’; **da** ‘close, cover’; **danɔ** ‘open’; **zi** ‘spoil’; **xá** ‘be(come) bent’; and **dzɔ** ‘be(come) straight’

Group 2:

**bá** ‘come’; **vi** ‘go’; **bukú** ‘get/be drunk’; **kú** ‘reach, arrive’

Group 3:

**kóeyi** ‘go out, exit’; **prũdũ** ‘fly’; **tri** ‘get/become big’; **kpe**, ‘be plentiful’; **pĩ** ‘be good’; **dzo** ‘bark’; **fũ** ‘blossom (flower)’; **dze** ‘be(come) long’; **dzú** ‘be(come) deep’; **sí** ‘run, flee’; **tã** ‘burn’; **tɔ** ‘get/become tired’; **tsĩ** ‘sneeze’ and **vé** ‘be(come) bitter’

The sentences in (9) and (10) illustrate the verb **zi** ‘spoil’ from Group 1 while those in (11) and (12) exemplify the verb **bá** ‘come’ from Group 2. The verb **sí** ‘run’ in sentence (13) belongs to Group 3.

9. Gasón ézi.

**gasó**      **ní**      **é-zi**  
Bicycle   DEF   SM-spoil  
‘The bicycle is spoilt.’

10. Ézi gasón.

**é-zi**              **gasó**      **ní**  
3SG-spoil      bicycle   DEF

‘He spoilt the bicycle.’

11. Ádɔkasín ábá.  
**á-dɔkasí**      **ní**      **á-bá**  
 CM-teacher DEF SM-come  
 ‘The teacher came.’
12. Ádɔkasín ábá sukú.  
**á-dɔkasí**      **ní**      **á-bá**      **sukú**  
 CM-teacher DEF SM-come school  
 ‘The teacher came to school.’
13. Aga gbɔgbɔlǎn ésí ríqjídj.  
**a-ga**      **gbɔgbɔlǎ**      **ní**      **é-sí**      **ríqjídj**  
 CM-animal big DEF SM-run IDEO  
 ‘The big animal ran continuously.’ (FS)

The sentence in (9) is a one-place construction in which the verb occurs with only one argument which functions as the subject. The verb **zi** ‘spoil’ can occur in a two-place construction as shown in (10). Sentence (10) is the causative alternative of (9). Here, the causer of the state of affairs coded by the verb is introduced in subject position. Thus, the referent with the subject function, **gasó ní** ‘the bicycle’, in the intransitive clause in (9) functions as the object of the transitive clause in (10). As illustrated in (11) and (12), the verb **bá** ‘come’ occurs in both one-place and two-place constructions. However, unlike the verb **zi** ‘spoil’, the expression with the subject function, **ádɔkasí ní** ‘the teacher’, in the one-place construction in (11) is the same as that of the two-place construction in (12) and **sukú** ‘school’ functions as the object of **bá** ‘come’ in (12). The verb **sí** ‘run’ only occurs in a one-place construction as illustrated in sentence (13).

Verbs which occur in one-place constructions fall into various semantic classes. They include directed motion verbs, non-agentive manner of motion verbs, verbs of emission, property verbs, verbs of bodily processes, and achievement verbs (as defined by Levin 1993 and Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995, 2005).

### 7.2.1.1 Directed motion verbs

Directed motion verbs denote movement of an entity to or from a particular place. Examples of directed motion verbs include:

14. **bá**      ‘come’  
**vi**      ‘go’  
**kóéyí**      ‘exit, come/go out’  
**tsí**      ‘crawl’

<b>lɔ</b>	‘rise (up), get up’
<b>wɔlɛ</b>	‘fall’
<b>sɪ</b>	‘run, escape’
<b>nyɔ</b>	‘roam about, wander’

The examples in (15) and (16) illustrate the verbs **nyɔ** ‘roam about’ and **kóéyɪ** ‘go out’.

15. Báányɔ.  
**bá-á-nyɔ**  
 3PL-PRSPROG-roam.about  
 ‘They are roaming about.’ (FS)
16. ... kulí betsi ekóéyɪ n’òsíníṃ.  
**kulí be-tsí e-kóéyɪ ní o-sí ní kɪmɪ**  
 CONJ CM.PL-bee SM-exit LOC CM-tree DEF in  
 ‘... and then bees came out of the tree.’ (FS)

**Bá** ‘3PL’ in (15) and **betsi** ‘bees’ in (16) are moving entities which occur as the subjects of the verbs **nyɔ** ‘enter’ and **kóéyɪ** ‘exit’ respectively. In these sentences, the subjects are cross-referenced on these verbs and in (16), the verb occurs with an adpositional phrase complement introduced by the locative preposition **ní** ‘LOC’.

As illustrated by the examples in (12) above, some of the directed motion verbs can occur in two-place constructions. When they are used in two-place constructions, they take locative nouns as complements.

#### 7.2.1.2 Non-agentive manner of motion

There are two intransitive verbs in my corpus which encode manner of motion and they have alternating transitive and intransitive uses. That is, they undergo the causative alternation. The verbs in question are **trɔ** ‘twist’ (borrowed from Ewe **tró** ‘twist’) and **glebɛ** ‘roll’. These verbs can be predicated of both animate and inanimate entities. The use of **glebɛ** ‘roll’ in the two types of constructions is illustrated below. Example (17) illustrates the intransitive use of the verb **glebɛ** ‘roll’ and (18) exemplifies its transitive use.

17. Kepluíń églébɛ ní kplɔ́ńíábhā.  
**ke-pluíń ní é-glébɛ ní kplɔ́ ní kábhā**  
 CM-gourd DEF SM-roll LOC table DEF on  
 ‘The gourd rolled on the table.’

18.      Ányín églébē kepluí.  
           **á-nyí**    **ní**    **é-glébē**    **ke-pluí**    **ní**  
           CM-man DEF SM-roll CM-gourd DEF  
           ‘The man rolled the gourd.’

In the examples above, the entity that occurs in the subject position in the one-place construction in (17) is the one which occurs in the object position of the two-place construction in (18).

### 7.2.1.3 Verbs of emission

Verbs of emission in Tafi include verbs denoting the emission of sounds, substances, light as well as smell. The verbs listed in (19) and (20) are examples of verbs of sound and substance emission respectively. Light and smell emission verbs are exemplified in (23a) and (23b) below.

19.    **yi**            ‘sound’  
           **dzo**        ‘bark’  
           **bɔ**        ‘crow’
20.    **wi**            ‘leak’  
           **sísí**        ‘drip’  
           **wanyá**    ‘sprinkle’  
           **pí**        ‘spurt’

The verbs of sound emission **dzo** ‘bark’ and **bɔ** ‘crow’ take animate entities as their single participant, whereas **yi** ‘sound’ takes an inanimate entity. The single participant is coded as the subject. These verbs do not undergo the causative alternation. The sentences below illustrate the use of the verb **yi** ‘sound’.

21.    ɔdǎn óyi.  
           **ɔ-dǎ**        **ní**    **ó-yi**  
           CM-metal DEF SM-sound  
           ‘The bell has sounded.’
22.    Bákó ɔdǎn óyi.  
           **bá-kó**        **ɔ-dǎ**        **ní**    **ó-yi**  
           3PL-cause CM-metal DEF SM-sound  
           ‘They caused the bell to sound.’

In the sentence in (21), **ɔdǎ ní** ‘the metal’, the single participant of the verb **yi** ‘sound’ occurs in subject position. In (22), however, this verb occurs in a bi-clausal construction in which the entity supposed to emit the sound occurs in object

position of the causative verb **kɔ** ‘give; cause; let; make’. This verb is used to introduce the causer of the state of affairs designated by the verb **yi** ‘sound’.

So far, only one light emission verb and one smell emission verb have been encountered. They are **tā** ‘shine’ (of the sun, light bulbs, etc.) and **lɔ** ‘smell, stink’. **Tā** ‘shine’ is illustrated in (23).

- 23a. Áwúwín átáátā.  
**á-wúwí ní á-táá-tā**  
 CM.PL-star DEF SM-NEG:PRSPROG-shine  
 ‘The stars are not shining.’
- 23b. Ónúg’ ónyí ósɪ́ ólɔ́ ní bátífɔ́ otshutshuí ní ɔhɛshí?  
**ónú.gɪ ó-nyí ó-sɪ́ ó-ɔ-lɔ́**  
 COND 2SG.DEP-know SM-COMP 2SG.DEP-PRSPROG-smell  
**ní bá-tí-fɔ́ o-tshutshuí ní ɔ-ha ki.shí**  
 TOP 3PL-NEG1-exude CM-fart LOC CM-group midst  
 ‘If you know that you have bad body odours you do not fart in public.’  
 (Proverbs #52)

The verbs of substance emission **sísɪ́** ‘drip, strain’, **wanyá** ‘sprinkle’ and **pí** ‘spurt’ occur with liquid substances while **wi** ‘leak’ occurs with liquid, powdery and grainy substances. The verbs **sísɪ́** ‘drip’, **wanyá** ‘sprinkle’ and **pí** ‘spurt’ but not **wi** ‘leak’ can undergo the causative alternation, thus, they occur in two-place constructions as illustrated by the verb **sísɪ́** ‘drip’ in (25). Example (24) shows the occurrence of this same verb in a one-place construction.

24. Bobó ní sísɪ́.  
**bu-bó ní sísɪ́**  
 CM-oil DEF drip  
 ‘The oil dripped.’
25. Máwúto asísɪ́ bubón.  
**Máwúto a-sísɪ́ bu-bó ní**  
 Máwúto CM-drip CM-oil DEF  
 ‘Mawuto drained the oil.’

The sentence in (24) expresses the manner in which the oil comes out of the container. Here, **bubó ní** ‘the oil’ occurs as the subject whereas in (25), the oil occurs as the object of the two-place construction. Thus, the transitive variants of these verbs are causative. Sentence (25) encodes the notion of cause in that the entity that occurs in the subject position does something to cause the oil to drip.



## 7.2.1.4 Property verbs

Property verbs are used to encode inherent properties or qualities of the entities they are predicated of. Most property verbs in Tafi are primarily intransitive. Depending on the context, these verbs can receive a change of state (inchoative) or stative interpretation. Some examples of property verbs are given in (26) while the sentences in (27) and (28) illustrate two of these verbs.

26.	<b>dzã</b>	‘be(come) red/ripe’	<b>dze</b>	‘be(come) long’
	<b>tsómɔ̃</b>	‘be(come) rotten/ugly’	<b>gɪgamɪ</b>	‘be(come) strong/hard’
	<b>dzú</b>	‘be(come) deep’	<b>yɔ̃</b>	‘be(come) cold’
	<b>bubo</b>	‘be(come) soft’	<b>vẽ</b>	‘be(come) bitter’
	<b>dzɔ</b>	‘be(come) straight’	<b>nɪ</b>	‘be(come) wide’
	<b>tutúrũ</b>	‘be(come) dirty’	<b>dɛama</b>	‘be(come) tall/high’
	<b>shurɪɖɪ</b>	‘be(come) slippery’	<b>sɔ̃no</b>	‘be(come) equal with’
	<b>tri</b>	‘be(come) big’	<b>tɔ̃</b>	‘be(come) tired’

27. Osín ódama.  
**o-sí**    **ní**    **ɔ̃-dama**  
 CM-tree DEF SM-become.tall  
 ‘The tree is tall.’

28. Buní ní yɔ̃.  
**bu-ní**    **ní**    **yɔ̃**  
 CM-water DEF become.cold  
 ‘The water is cold.’

**Osí ní** ‘the tree’ and **buní ní** ‘the water’ which are the single participants of the verbs **dama** ‘be(come) tall’ and **yɔ̃** ‘be(come) cold’ in (27) and (28) respectively are coded as the subject argument and they can be said to possess the qualities or properties described by these verbs.

Some property verbs including **nɪ** ‘be(come) wide’, **dzɔ** ‘be(come) straight’, and **xá** ‘be(come) bent’ can participate in the causative alternation. Thus, they occur in two-place constructions in which the referent with the subject function in the intransitive clause functions as the object of the transitive clause, as shown in (29) – (32).

29. Kidzoń ínĩ.  
**ki-dzo**    **ní**    **kí-nĩ**  
 CM-road DEF SM-become.wide  
 ‘The path is wide.’

30. ɔɖán ɔxá.  
**ɔ-ɖá ní ɔ-xá**  
 CM-rod DEF SM-become.bent  
 ‘The rod is bent.’
31. Ánī kidzoń.  
**á-nī ki-dzo ní**  
 3SG-become.wide CM-road DEF  
 ‘S/he widened the path.’
32. Áxá ɔɖán.  
**á-xá ɔ-ɖá ní**  
 3SG-become.bent CM-rod DEF  
 ‘S/he bent the rod.’

I stated earlier on that some property verbs are intrinsically monovalent. These verbs do not undergo the causative alternation and for such verbs, the causer of the change of state can only be introduced in a bi-clausal construction in which the causer of the change of state occurs as the subject of the verb **kɔ** ‘give; cause; let; make’ which occurs as the first verb of the construction as shown in (33).

33. Ámā ákó oseyyuń ɔbubo  
**Ámā á-kó o-seyyu ní ɔ-bubo**  
 Ámā SM-cause CM-fruit DEF SM-become.soften  
 ‘Ama caused the fruit to soften/become soft.’

In (33), **Ama**, an agent and the causer of the state of affairs expressed by the second verb in the bi-clausal construction occurs as the subject of the first verb **kɔ** ‘cause’ whereas **oseyyu** ‘fruit’ occurs as the subject of the property verb **bubo** ‘be(come) soft’.

### 7.2.1.5 Verbs of (involuntary) bodily processes

The verbs which belong to this class encode bodily processes of humans and in some cases higher animals. Some of these verbs such as **fwě** ‘breathe’; **tsĩ** ‘sneeze’; **kɔlĩ** ‘cough’ and **yaká** ‘yawn’ do not involve voluntary participants and as such they do not control the state of affairs denoted by these verbs. Others like **mwĩ** ‘laugh/smile’ involve participants who exercise some control over the state of affairs expressed by such verbs. The sentence below illustrates the verb **fwě** ‘breathe’.

34. Ányunyān ááfwě pēēpēēpēē.  
**á-nyunyā ní á-á-fwě pēēpēēpēē**  
 CM-patient DEF SM-PRSPROG-breathe IDEO

‘The patient is breathing rapidly.’

As shown in sentence (34), the single participant occurs in subject position and it does not assert any control over the state of affairs indicated by the verb **fwě** ‘breathe’.

#### 7.2.1.5 Achievement verbs

Another group of one-place predicates consists of achievement verbs. The single participant of these verbs is coded as the subject argument and it undergoes a change of state. Examples of achievement verbs include:

35.    **zi**        ‘spoil’  
       **tsí**        ‘die’  
       **tsyrǒ**    ‘destroy’      < Ewe  
       **tsĩ**        ‘dry up’

The sentence in (36) exemplifies the verb **tsyrǒ** ‘destroy’.

36.    Bupán pétée tsyrǒ.  
       **bu-pá**        **ní**        **pétée** **tsyrǒ**  
       CM-house    DEF    all        destroy  
       ‘The whole household perished.’

As shown in (36), the verb occurs with a single argument, **bupá ní** ‘the house(hold)’, in subject position. The verb **tsyrǒ** ‘destroy’ in this sentence simply denotes a state of affairs in which the single participant undergoes a change of state without specifying how the change of state occurred.

Some of the achievement verbs such as **tsyrǒ** ‘destroy’ undergo the causative alternation whereas others like **tsí** ‘die’ do not as illustrated in the examples below:

37.    Obúdĩn ɔtsyrǒ bupán pétée.  
       **o-búdi**        **ní**        **ɔ-tsyrǒ**        **bu-pá**        **ní**        **pétée**  
       CM-fetish    DEF    SM-destroy    CM-household    DEF    all  
       ‘The fetish destroyed the whole household.’
38.    \*Bowá ní tsí epidzyań.  
       **\*bu-wá**        **ní**        **tsí e-pidzya** **ní**  
       CM-medicine    DEF    die CM-goat    DEF  
       \*‘The medicine died the goat.’

39. Bowá ní kó epidzyan etsí.  
**bu-wá ní kó e-pidzya ní e-tsí**  
 CM-medicineDEF cause CM-goat DEF SM-die  
 ‘The medicine caused the goat to die.’

Sentence (37) is a two-place construction in which **bupá ní** ‘the house(hold)’ which is the participant in the subject position in the one-place construction in (36) occurs in the object position in (37). **Obúdi ní** ‘the fetish’ occurs in the subject position in (37) and is an agent. It is responsible for the state of affairs expressed by the verb which results in the change in state of the object NP, the patient. The sentence in (38), on the other hand, is ungrammatical as the verb **tsí** ‘die’ does not participate in a two-place construction. In (39), the causer or the participant responsible for the state of affairs designated by the verb **tsí** ‘die’ is introduced through a bi-clausal construction with the verb **kó** ‘cause, give, let, make’ as the first verb in the series.

### 7.2.2 Two-place predicates

Two-place predicates are bivalent verbs used to describe states of affairs which involve two arguments. One of these arguments is mapped on to the subject role and the other to the object role. Mostly, the argument in the subject position is the one which essentially determines the success of the state of affairs designated by the verb. Depending on the semantics of the verb, the role assigned to the subject NP by the verb may be an agent, an effector or an experiencer whereas the role assigned to the object NP could, among others, be a patient, theme, or location. Consider the following examples:

40. Ányín áyó `iapamū.  
**á-nyí ní á-yó ká-pamī ní**  
 CM-man DEF SM-sharpen CM-matchete DEF  
 ‘The man sharpened the matchete.’
41. Súbhan etsí awulakpán.  
**súbha ní é-tsí a-wulakpá ní**  
 rain DEF SM-wash CM.PL-leaf DEF  
 ‘The rain washes the leaves.’
42. Ímò adz’alílín y’adzyā.  
**í-mò a-dzī á-lílíní yí á-dzyā**  
 1SG-see CM-woman AM-DIST 3SG.IND CM-brother  
 ‘I saw that woman’s brother.’

In (40), the subject and object slots are filled by an agent and a patient respectively. The agent does something which results in a change of state of the patient. In (41), the subject role is filled by an effector whereas the object role is

also filled by a patient. Thus, the rain carries out the state of affairs expressed by the transitive verb which has an effect on the leaves. The subject position in (42) is occupied by an experiencer and the object is a patient.

Two-place predicates in the language are of various semantic kinds. They include verbs of perception and cognition, speech act verbs, verbs of creation, ‘do’ verbs, verbs of planting, body-grooming verbs, verbs of caused change of location and verbs of cutting.

### 7.2.2.1 Verbs of Perception

Perception verbs are bivalent with the perceiver occurring in subject position in the clause and the entity that is perceived occurring in object position. Verbs of perception in Tafi include the following:

43. **mɔ** ‘see’  
**nú** ‘hear’  
**dí** ‘look’  
**lũku** ‘smell (something)’

The following sentences illustrate some of these verbs.

44. Ekénú ’íbúínyéébúí.  
**e-ké-nú** **ki-búí-nyáá-ki-búí**  
 3SG-NEG.PERF-hear CM-matter-DISTR-CM-matter  
 ‘S/he has not heard anything yet.’
45. Anóvõn eféké y’áfokpǎn éd’álím.  
**a-nóvõ ní é-féké yí bá-fokpǎ ní é-dí balí**  
 CM-child DEF SM-lift 3SG.IND CM.PL-shoe DEF SM-look 3PL  
**kum**  
 inside  
 ‘The child lifted his shoe and looked inside.’ (FS)

Some of these verbs also take sentential complements. As illustrated in (46), the verb **dí** ‘look’ occurs with a sentential complement which is introduced by the complementiser **sí** (see Chapter 9, § 9.2).

46. Élũku asrǎn édí sí abó dza.  
**é-lũku a-srǎ ní é-dí sí**  
 3SG-smell CM-tobacco DEF SM-look COMP  
**a-bó dza**  
 3SG.DEP-be.good UFP  
 ‘He smelled the tobacco to see if it is good.’

## 7.2.2.2 Verbs of Cognition

Verbs of cognition in Tafi include **nyí** ‘know’, **tí** ‘know, be aware’, **bákā** ‘remember’, and **dziku** ‘forget’. **Nyí** ‘know’ is exemplified in the sentence below.

47. Ínyí banōn pétée n’ōmanīm.  
**Í-nyí** **ba-nō** **ní** **pétée** **ní** **o-ma** **ní** **kumu**  
 1SG-know CM.PL-person DEF all LOC CM-town DEF in  
 ‘I know all the people in the town.’

As the sentence in (47) illustrates, the pre-verbal subject position is filled by a cognizer **í** ‘1SG’ and the object position is also filled by **banō ní pétée** ‘all the people’ which is the content (i.e. the thing that is known).

Some verbs of cognition can take sentential complements. Example (23) is repeated here as (48). This sentence is a proverb.

48. Ónúgí óny’ ósí óólǒ ní bátí fǒ otsyutsyúí ní òheeshí.  
**Ónú.gí** **ó-nyí** **ó-sí** **ó-ó-lǒ**  
 COND 2SG.DEP-know SM-COMP 2SG.DEP-PRSPROG-smell  
**ní** **bá-tí-fǒ** **o-tsyutsyúí** **ní** **o-ha** **ki.shí**  
 TOP 3PL-NEG1-exude CM-fart LOC CM-group midst  
 ‘If you know that you have bad body odours you do not fart in public.’  
 (Proverb #52)

## 7.2.2.3 Speech act verbs

There are speech act verbs which also take two arguments, that is, a subject and an object. The argument that occupies the subject slot is the speaker and the addressee or topic occurs in the object position. Some speech act verbs in Tafi are listed in (49) below and the verbs **tsiré** ‘tell’ and **klú** ‘call’ are exemplified in (50):

49. **dɔ** ‘say’ **tsiré** ‘tell’  
**kúlā** ‘insult’ **dó gbe dǎ**<sup>50</sup> ‘pray’  
**kulú** ‘call’ **bísi** ‘ask’
50. B’otsiré ’uló n’ ukín kánā le klúi!  
**bá** **o-tsiré** **buló** **ní** **ɪ-kí** **ká-nā** **le-klú** **yí**  
 come 2SG-tell 1PL LOC CM-here CM-manner 3PL.DEP-call3SG  
 ‘Come and tell us here what she is called!’ (Sáhwi)

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<sup>50</sup> **dó gbe dǎ** ‘pray’ is borrowed from Ewe where it literally means ‘send voice in(to) the distance’.

Some of the speech act verbs have multiple argument realisation. For instance, **tsiré** ‘tell’ and **bísi** ‘ask’ can also be used as three-place predicates (see section 7.2.4.1 on three-place predicates). **Bísi** ‘ask’ can also be used in a one-place construction with an unexpressed object as illustrated below:

51. **Íbísi.**  
**í-bísi**  
 1SG-ask  
 ‘I asked.’

#### 7.2.2.4 Verbs of creation

Verbs of creation denote states of affairs in which an agent performs an activity which results in the creation of another entity. They include:

- |     |             |         |            |             |
|-----|-------------|---------|------------|-------------|
| 52. | <b>kámī</b> | ‘sew’   | <b>yú</b>  | ‘weave’     |
|     | <b>nyá</b>  | ‘tie’   | <b>tsā</b> | ‘tie, bind’ |
|     | <b>tá</b>   | ‘draw’  | <b>dzu</b> | ‘build’     |
|     | <b>bho</b>  | ‘mould’ | <b>gba</b> | ‘fry’       |
|     | <b>tó</b>   | ‘cook’  | <b>bú</b>  | ‘create’    |

The sentences in (53), (54) and (55) exemplify the verbs **bho** ‘mould’, **yú** ‘weave’ and **bú** ‘create’ respectively.

53. **Áábh’owúlēn.**  
**á-á-bho** **o-wúlē** **ní**  
 3SG-PRSPROG-mould CM-rice.storage.bin DEF  
 ‘He is moulding the rice storage bin.’ (Kásālā)
54. **Bééyu ’ípótí n’Ofú.**  
**bé-é-yu** **ki-pótí** **ní** **Ofú**  
 3PL-PRSPROG-weave CM-cloth LOC Ofu  
 ‘They are weaving cloth at Ofú.’
55. **Wóbú tıgbó nı tsyí.**  
**wó** **ó-bú** **ti-gbo** **ní** **tsyí**  
 2SG.IND SM-create CM-Tafi.language DEF also  
 ‘You (God) created the Tafi language also.’ (Spontaneous Prayer)

In the above examples, the agent, **á** ‘3SG’ in (53), **bé** ‘3PL’ in (54) and **wó** ‘2SG.IND’ in (55), is expressed as the subject of the sentence and the created entity/product, **owúlē ní** ‘the rice storage bin’ in (53), **kıpótı** ‘cloth’ in (54) and **Tıgbó ní** ‘the Tafi language’ in (55), is expressed as its direct object.

It must be noted that in the cases where some material is involved in the creation of the entity, it can occur as the subject of the sentence as shown in (56).

56. Ihuin iyú apótí tabha ko.  
**i-hui ní i-yú a-pótí ta-bha ko**  
 CM.PL-rope DEF SM-weave CM.PL-cloth AM-two only  
 ‘The yarns wove only two cloths.’

In sentence (56) above, the material, **ihui ní** ‘the rope’, in subject position is understood as being of a measure that was able to be used in weaving two cloths.

#### 7.2.2.5 ‘Do’ verbs

There are two ‘do’ verbs in Tafi which are both used as two-place predicates. One is borrowed. They are:

57. **wa** ‘do’ (borrowed from inland Ewe **wa** ‘do’)  
**bhufi** ‘do, make’

**Wa** ‘do’ collocates with certain nominals to express verbal meanings as listed in (58) and illustrated in (59).

58. **wa** ‘do’ + **kíxwí** ‘work’ [we ’exwí] ‘work’  
**wa** ‘do’ + **kúnú** ‘funeral’ [wa kúnú] ‘perform a funeral’  
**wa** ‘do’ + **buya** ‘farm’ [wa aya] ‘cultivate a farm’  
**wa** ‘do’ + **kídɔ** ‘thing’ [we ’edɔ] ‘weed’  
**wa** ‘do’ + **X shu kíxwí** ‘X body work’ [wa X shú ’íxwí] ‘make use of X’

59. Kásālā ẽẽ awá amó gbugblā telí.  
**ka-sālā ẽẽ a-wá a-mó gbugblā te-lí**  
 CM-tortoise INTJ SM-do CM-rice big AM-INDEF  
 ‘Tortoise made a very big rice farm.’ (Kásālā)

The following sentences in (60) and (61) illustrate the verb **bhufi** ‘do’.

60. Kídɔ nŋ́ gɪ ɔs’ɔbhufi ko, bhufi ’ulí tɪ lɪ nā óó.  
**kí-dɔ nŋ́ ní gɪ ɔ-sí ɔ-bhufi ko bhufi**  
 CM-thing wh.ever DEF REL 2SG.DEP-say SM-do just do  
**kulí tɪ lɪ-nā óó**  
 3SG COMP 3SG.DEP-reach UFP  
 ‘Whatever you want to do, do it the right way.’ (Kásālā)



61. Óbhíti 'idzyɔgö o, óbhíti 'izizi o, wó n'áhɔ.  
**ó-bhíti ki-dzyɔgö o ó-bhíti ki-zizi o wó n**  
 2SG-do CM-good DISJ 2SG-do CM-bad DISJ 2SG.IND COM  
**a-hɔ**  
 CM-hand  
 'Whether you do good or you do bad, you do it for yourself.'

**Bhɪ́** 'do, make' is also used in an idiomatic expression **bhɪ́ (k)ibúí**, literally, 'do case/matter' to express the predicate meaning 'thank' as in:

62. W'óbhɪ́ 'íbúí popoopó.  
**wó ó-bhɪ́ ki-búí popoopó**  
 2SG.IND SM-do CM-matter IDEO.very.much  
 'Thank you very much.'

### 7.2.2.6 Verbs of planting

Planting activities involve at least two participants, an agent who plants and a theme which is the seed or seedling that is planted. Other participants may also be involved such as the location where the theme/seed is planted and at times the instrument used. The different types of planting are referred to by verbs which emphasise the manner in which the seed or seedling is planted. Verbs that name planting activities in Tafi include the following:

63. **dzũ** 'plant seedling' **dá** 'sow/plant'  
**béli** 'plant (rice)' **xwɪ** 'broadcast'
64. Sukúeyín édzú belí ní sukú 'oyaníñ.  
**sukú-be-yí ní bɛ-dzũ be-lí ní sukú**  
 school-CM.PL-child DEF SM-plant CM.PL-oil.palm LOC school  
**bu-ya ní kumɪ**  
 CM-farm DEF inside  
 'The students planted palm trees in the school farm.'
65. Ásɔ 'oyaníñ kulí y'aɖa nikpě.  
**á-sɔ bu-ya ní kumɪ kulí yí á-dá nikpě**  
 3SG-weed CM-farm DEF inside CONJ 3SG.IND SM-sow corn  
 'S/he weeded the farm and then planted corn.'
66. Áyadúń ébeli amó.  
**á-yadɪ ní é-beli a-mó**  
 CM-farmer DEF SM-plant CM-rice  
 'The farmer planted rice.'

The verb **dzũ** ‘plant’ is used to describe the planting of seedlings such as oil-palm, cocoyam, cocoa, coconut, plantain or cassava cuttings. These are planted by placing a part of the plant in the ground. The method of planting grains and seeds including maize, okra, cocoa, groundnut and beans by putting them just beneath the soil is described using the verb **dá** ‘sow’. **Bēli** ‘plant’ is used to describe the planting of rice whereas **xwɪ** ‘broadcast’ is used to describe the broadcasting of seeds such as pepper, okra, tomatoes or garden eggs. In situations where seedlings are transplanted the term **kpě dzũ** ‘transplant’ is used. This term comprises two verbs, **kpě** ‘uproot (plants, grass, etc.)’ and **dzũ** ‘plant’. Thus when seedlings are transplanted, they are said to be ‘uprooted and planted’.

### 7.2.2.7 ‘Peel’ verbs

Peeling events in Tafi are described by different verbs depending on the type of outer covering the item being peeled/pared has and the kind of instrument used. These peel verbs require at least two arguments. Examples of these verbs include:

67. **fātĩ** ‘peel, pare, carve’  
**ŵúsē** ‘peel’

The instrument may be one with a sharp edge as is the case for **fātĩ** ‘peel, pare, carve’ or it may be the hand as is the case for **ŵúsē** ‘peel’. If the outer covering is too hard to be removed with the hand then **fātĩ** ‘peel, pare’ is used otherwise **ŵúsē** ‘peel’ is used. Thus, **fātĩ** ‘pare or peel’ is used for the removal of the outer covering of foods or fruits such as yam, cocoyam, cassava and orange. **Ŵúsē** ‘peel’, on the other hand, is used for the removal of the outer covering of food items including plantain, banana, maize, onions, beans and groundnuts. Here, the hand is used for the removal of the outer covering of these food items. **Ŵúsē** ‘peel’, can also be used for an orange when its outer covering is removed using the hand. Both **fātĩ** ‘peel, pare’ and **ŵúsē** ‘peel’ are illustrated in the following examples:

68. Adzin afāti ’ikūń.  
**a-dzĩ**      **ńí**      **á-fātĩ**      **kí-kũ**      **ńí**  
 CM-woman DEF SM-pare CM-yam DEF  
 ‘The woman pared the yam.’
69. Adzin eéŵúsē bladyó tɪ apút.  
**a-dzĩ**      **ńí**      **e-é-ŵúsé**      **bladyó**      **tɪ**      **a-pút**  
 CM-woman DEF SM-PRSPROG-peel plantain PURP 3SG.DEP-roast  
 ‘The woman is peeling plantains to roast.’

These two verbs can also have the creation interpretation in the sense that **fātĩ** ‘peel, pare, carve’ is used to describe the carving of something, e.g., a statue

whereas **wúse** ‘peel’ is also used to mean ‘mend’ or ‘decorate’. Thus, **fātī** has the readings ‘peel, pare, carve’ while **wúse** has the readings ‘peel, mend or decorate’.

### 7.2.2.8 Body-grooming verbs

There are some verbs of shaving and barbering in my corpus which co-lexicalise instruments and are primarily transitive in that they take an agent as the subject and the part of the body that is shaved or barbered occurs as the object. These verbs are listed in (70) and they are illustrated in (71) and (72).

70. **xlǎ** ‘shave’  
**shī** ‘shave’  
**zhi** ‘shave’  
**tsí** ‘barber’
71. Kofi áxló / ashí / ézhí ɔtómí / ’tampiesí.  
**Kofi á-xló / a-shí / é-zhí ɔ-tómí / ká-mpiesí**  
 Kofi SM-shave CM-beard/ CM-armpit  
 ‘Kofi shaved his beard/ armpit.’

The verb **tsí** ‘barber’ is used to describe the process of using a pair of scissors to cut a person’s hair. The sentence in (72) exemplifies the use of **tsí** ‘barber’.

72. Bátsí ’ítókpú kó anúvǎn.  
**bá-tsí kú-tókpú kó a-núvǎ ní**  
 3PL-barber CM-head DAT CM-child DEF  
 ‘The child’s hair was cut.’ (Lit: They barbered head for the child’)

The verbs **shī** ‘shave’ and **zhi** ‘shave’ can be used intransitively and in this use they take an instrument as the subject.

73. Ihěn ááshī / éézhí.  
**i-hě ní á-á-shī / é-é-zhi**  
 CM-knife DEF SM-PRSPROG-shave  
 ‘The knife shaves.’

When some of these verbs are used intransitively, it is also possible for the agent to occur as the subject and the object is left unexpressed. Here, even though the object is not expressed, it is understood. Sentence (74) is an example involving **shī** ‘shave’.

74. Bááshu.  
**bá-á-shī**  
 3PL-PRSPROG-shave  
 ‘They are shaving.’

#### 7.2.2.9 Verbs of caused change of location

Caused change of location verbs also occur in two-place constructions in that they allow the agent to be expressed as the subject of the verb and the theme as the object. Examples of these verbs are in (75).

75. **he** ‘pull, drag’  
**fi** ‘push’
76. Kofi ééhe kakudzogěń.  
**Kofi é-é-he ka-kudzogě ní**  
 Kofi SM-PRSPROG-drag CM-dog DEF  
 ‘Kofi is dragging the dog.’

As shown in (76), **Kofi**, the subject of the verb causes a change in location of **kakudzogě ní** ‘the dog’ which is the object.

#### 7.2.2.10 Verbs of cutting

The verbs of cutting are used to describe separation events which predicate an agent acting on a patient that brings about a change in the material integrity of a patient and they focus on instrument or manner.<sup>51</sup> Cutting verbs<sup>52</sup> in the language include:

77. **té** ‘slash’  
**bhui** ‘cut’  
**yá** ‘cut’

**Té** ‘slash’ is a highly agentive verb which cannot occur without an agent performing the action expressed by the verb (see Bobuafor 2008a on Tafi and Ameka & Essegbey 2007 on Ewe). The verb **té** ‘slash’ lexicalises a specific manner and/or instrument. It is used to describe cutting events which are done in a

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<sup>51</sup> For a more elaborate discussion on “cut” and “break” verbs, see Bobuafor (2008).

<sup>52</sup> These are verbs elicited using “cut” and “break” video clips designed by Juergen Bohnemeyer, Melissa Bowerman and Penelope Brown (2001) at the Max-Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in Nijmegen, the Netherlands (see fieldmanuals.mpi.nl).

slashing manner. Such events entail the use of prototypical instruments like axes, machetes and big knives which are heavy by nature.

78. Ányín été os'óshěń (n'íapamí).  
**á-nyí ní é-té o-sí ó-shě ní**  
 CM-man DEF SM-slash CM-tree CM-branch DEF  
**(ní ká-pamí)**  
 COM CM-cutlass  
 'The man slashed the tree branch (with a cutlass).' (C&B 3)

79. \*Os'óshěń óté.  
**\*o-sí ó-shě ní ó-té**  
 CM-tree CM-branch DEF SM-slash  
 \*'The branch slashed.'

Sentence (79) is unacceptable because **té** 'slash' only has a transitive use. Any activity expressed by **té** 'slash' requires an agent to perform it, possibly with the use of an instrument and therefore, this verb cannot occur intransitively.

**Bhui** 'cut' is used to describe most cutting events involving a sharp instrument such as a pair of scissors or a knife and like **té** 'slash', it expresses activities performed by an agent as illustrated by the sentence in (80). This verb is used to describe scenarios in which clothes designers cut textiles to make garments as well as the process of chopping vegetables for the preparation of sauce. It is also used in contexts such as **bhui (k)utókpú** 'behead' (lit. 'cut head') and **bhui (b)ónyínyí** 'circumcise' (lit. 'cut penis').

80. Ányínóvǝń ébhui kishín ní sâ.  
**á-nyínóvǝ ní é-bhui ki-shí ní ní sâ**  
 CM-boy DEF SM-cut CM-stick DEF COM saw  
 'The boy cut the stick with a saw.' (C&B 15)

It is interesting to note that the verb **bhui** 'cut' occurs in intransitive constructions in restricted contexts such as formula for ending one's speech as in (81), the cessation of flow of water in a river as in (82) or tap as in (83) and cuts in the body as in (84).

81. Ibhui.  
**i-bhui**  
 1SG-cut  
 'I am done.'
82. Kenín ebhui.  
**ke-ní ní ke-bhui**  
 CM-river DEF SM-cut

‘The river has stopped flowing.’ (Lit. the river has cut.)

83. Buní ní bhui.  
**bu-ní ní bhui**  
 CM-water DEF cut  
 ‘The water has ceased flowing (from the tap)’.

84. Y’ítsrřín íbhui.  
**yí kř-tsrř ní kř-bhui**  
 3SG.IND CM-toe DEF SM-cut  
 ‘His toe got cut.’ (Lit.: ‘His toe cut.’)

The sentence in (81) has an agentive argument and the verb has been routinised. Thus, in ending one’s speech the sentence in (81) can be uttered. The sentences in (82) and (83) have the patient NPs in subject position in which case, the causer of the state of affairs specified by the verb **bhui** ‘cut’ is not stated. In (84), we have the possessed body-part affected by the state of affairs denoted by the verb **bhui** ‘cut’ in subject position. The sentences in (82) – (84) give a resultative reading. That is, the state of affairs expressed by the verb may have come about as a result of a previous one. Thus, the toe that got cut in sentence (84), for instance, could be as a result of stumbling or even the result of the use of an instrument. The agent/effector (the causer) of the change of state in the patients in (82) and (83) can be introduced through the use of **kř** ‘give; cause; let; make’ which occurs as the first verb in a bi-clausal construction as illustrated by the example in (85). With regard to (84), the possessor of the body-part can also be expressed in the clause in which case, it will occur as the subject of the sentence with the possessed body-part occurring as the object as shown in (86). In addition, if the cut was caused by an instrument, the instrument can also be introduced as the subject of the sentence. In such a case, either the possessor together with the possessed body-part or only the possessed body-part will occur as the object of the sentence as in (87). Additionally, the instrument can be introduced through a take-SVC as in (88) or in a **ni** ‘COM’ prepositional phrase.

85. Ekpén ákř kenín ébhui.  
**e-kpé ní á-kř ke-ní ní ké-bhui**  
 CM-dry weather DEF SM-cause CM-river DEF SM-cut  
 ‘The dry weather caused the river to stop flowing.’

86. Kofř ébhui y’ítsrř.  
**Kofř é-bhui yí kř-tsrř**  
 Kofř SM-cut 3SG.IND CM-toe  
 ‘Kofi cut his toe’ or ‘Kofi hurt his toe.’

87. Kápamín ébhui y’ítsrř.

**ká-pamí ní ké-bhui yí kɪ-tsrĩ**  
 CM-cutlass DEF SM-cut 3SG.IND CM-toe  
 ‘The cutlass cut his toe.’

88. Áyíko ká-pamín ébhui y’ítsrĩ.  
**á-yíko ká-pamí ní é-bhui yí kɪ-tsrĩ**  
 3SG-take CM-cutlass DEF SM-cut 3SG.IND CM-toe  
 ‘He used the cutlass to cut his toe.’

**Yá** ‘cut’ is used to describe cuts made on the human body and it involves the use of sharp instruments such as knives and razor blades. For instance, in the ‘cut & break’ video elicitation, this verb was used to describe a woman cutting her finger with a knife (clip 18).

89. Adzĩn éébhui okútú kɪlĩ thěn áyé y’íwě.  
**a-dzĩ ní é-é-bhui o-kútú kɪlĩ ɪ-hě**  
 CM-woman DEF SM-PRSPROG-cut CM-orange CONJ CM-knife  
**ní á-yá yí kɪ-wě**  
 DEF SM-cut 3SG.IND CM-finger  
 ‘The woman is cutting an orange and the knife cut her finger.’

The verb **yá** ‘cut’ can also be used in certain contexts to mean ‘bite-off/break-off a piece of something’ and ‘branch-off (a road).’

#### 7.2.2.10.1 Instruments of verbs of cutting

Typically, cut verbs co-lexicalise instruments (see Bohnemeyer 2007, Guerssel et al 1985, and Majid et al. 2007). This is true of Tafi verbs of cutting also. For example, all the verbs in (90) co-lexicalise instruments.

- |     |             |                     |            |              |
|-----|-------------|---------------------|------------|--------------|
| 90. | <b>bhui</b> | ‘cut, shred, slice’ | <b>tě</b>  | ‘slash, cut’ |
|     | <b>fáti</b> | ‘carve, peel, pare’ | <b>tsí</b> | ‘cut (hair)’ |
|     | <b>shĩ</b>  | ‘shave’             | <b>yá</b>  | ‘cut’        |

There are other two-place predicates in Tafi which are inherently associated with the instrument role even if no instrument is overtly expressed (see Amuzu 1993, Bobuafor 2001 on Ewe). Examples of such verbs include:

91. **nyá** ‘tie, bind’  
**gba** ‘sweep’  
**tsú** ‘dig’  
**kámĩ** ‘sew’  
**só** ‘hoe’ (v)

Most often the semantic role of instrument is not given an overt expression if the instrument involved in the state of affairs described by the verb is the typical one associated with such action and is therefore predictable from the semantics of the verb (Givón 1984). Thus, the expression of such instruments becomes redundant. These instruments may be overtly expressed for certain reasons like:

- 92a. when verbs such as those listed above in (91) involve an instrument other than the typical one they presuppose (see example (94) below);
- b. when it must be specified for reasons of emphasis (illustrated in (93) and (95)) or
- c. when a speaker needs to supply some additional information with regard to the instrument (as in (93)).

In this regard, Fillmore (1968: 39) states with reference to the English verb ‘slap’ that “what is at issue here is not whether SLAP obligatorily refers to hands — one can after all slap someone with a fish — but whether there is some typically understood Instrument which need not be made explicit.” In the following Tafi sentences, there are different motivations for spelling out the instrument participant.

93. Ányín été ósín n’iápani ñáñáñ.  
**á-nyí ní é-té o-sí ní ni ká-pamí**  
 CM-man DEF SM-slash CM-tree DEF COM CM-cutlass  
**ñáñá ní**  
 sharp DEF  
 ‘The man slashed the tree with the sharp cutlass.’
94. Ányínóvǝēñ ébhui kepútakpáníñ n’ahɔi.  
**á-nyínóvǝē ní é-bhui ke-pútakpá ní kɪmɪ ni**  
 CM-boy DEF SM-cut CM-piece.of.cloth DEF in COM  
**a-hɔi**  
 CM-hand  
 ‘The boy cut the piece of cloth with his hand.’
95. Ányín été ósín (n’iápani).  
**á-nyí ní é-té o-sí ní (ni ká-pamí)**  
 CM-man DEF SM-slash CM-tree DEF (COM CM-cutlass)  
 ‘The man slashed the tree (with a cutlass).’

In (93), there is additional information which has been provided concerning the instrument NP. However, in (94), the instrument NP is one that specifies a non-typical instrument in connection with the activity designated by the verb. In (95), the instrumental object is in brackets because it is optional. So even if reference is not explicitly made to this instrument it is perceived that inherently, a sharp-edged instrument was used to perform the state of affairs specified by the verb.



As each of the examples in (93) – (95) above illustrate, in Tafi, the argument specifying the instrument is introduced by the preposition **ni** ‘COM’. Another way of overtly expressing the semantically inherent instrument is through the serial verb construction with the first verb being **yíkɔ** ‘take’ and the second verb being a verb associated with an inherent instrument. For example,

96. Ányín áyíkɔ ʔapamí été osín nɔ.  
**á-nyí ní á-yíkɔ ká-pamí é-té o-sí ní**  
 CM-man DEF SM-take CM-cutlass SM-slash CM-tree DEF  
**nɔ**  
 COM  
 ‘The man used a cutlass to slash the tree.’ (Lit.: ‘The man took the cutlass and slashed the tree.’)

In (96), the overtly specified instrument occurs as the direct object of the verb **yíkɔ** ‘took’. In a ‘take’ SVC where the participant with instrument role is realised as object of the first verb, i.e., ‘take’, a comitative instrumental preposition variant **nɔ** ‘COM’ usually occurs at the end of the clause. This is as if the instrument NP has been moved from its prepositional object position (see also §5.1.2).

### 7.2.3 Obligatory complement verbs

A class of verbs in Tafi take obligatory complements. These complements may be generic, cognate or those that have been traditionally referred to as inherent complements. I will first discuss verbs that take the generic complements **anɔ** ‘person’ or **kídɔ** ‘thing’. Secondly, I will look at those that take cognate objects and finally, I will discuss verbs that take inherent complements.

#### 7.2.3.1 Two-place predicates with generic complements

The generic complements in Tafi are **anɔ** ‘person’ and **kídɔ** ‘thing’. Examples of verbs that take **anɔ** ‘person’ include:

97. **dʒ** ‘love’ **tsyiri** ‘hate’  
**bu** ‘respect’ **kóla** ‘insult’

Among verbs which take **kídɔ** ‘thing’ as their obligatory complement are:

98. **sínɔ** ‘greet’ **gba** ‘sweep, fry’  
**dʒa** ‘plant’ **tɔ** ‘cook’  
**plũ** ‘wash’

Consider the following examples.

99. Étibū án5.  
**é-tí-bū**                      **a-n5**  
 3SG-NEG1-respect CM-person  
 ‘S/he does not respect.’

100. Ámā át5 ’éd5.  
**Ámā a-t5**                      **kí-d5**  
 Ámā SM-cook CM-thing  
 ‘Ama cooked.’

In the above sentences, the subject of the sentence is an agent whereas the object is a patient. In (99) and (100), the generic complements may be said to be umbrella terms. In (100), for instance, **kíd5** ‘thing’ is an umbrella term covering everything edible. As shown in (101) and (102) below, specific nouns may be used to replace the generic complements these verbs take. The object NPs in these sentences name a specific person in (101) and a specific food in (102).

101. Étibū y’akā.  
**é-tí-bū**                      **yí**                      **á-kā**  
 3SG-NEG1-respect 3SG.IND CM-father  
 ‘S/he does not respect his/her father.’

102. Ámā át5 ásí.  
**Ámā á-t5**                      **á-sí**  
 Ama SM-cook CM-rice  
 ‘Ama cooked rice.’

Some of these verbs can take both generic complements, i.e., both **an5** ‘person’ and **kíd5** ‘thing’. They include:

- 103a. **sín5 an5**                      [sín5 án5] ‘greet a person/ someone’  
 103b. **sín5 kíd5**                      [sín5 íd5] ‘greet’
- 104a. **kúlā an5**                      [kúlā án5] ‘insult a person/ someone’  
 104b. **kúlā kíd5**                      [kúlē éd5] ‘throw insults about’ (not specifically insulting any particular person’
- 105a. **sí an5**                      [si an5] ‘fear a person/people’  
 105b. **sí kíd5**                      [si id5] ‘have regard for people or be cautious’

For these verbs, it appears the act of the verb event takes the generic ‘thing’ complement **kíd5**. The generic ‘person’ complement, **an5**, functions as object in situations where there is a target of the action.

### 7.2.3.2 Two-place predicates with cognate objects

Tafi has a number of cognate object taking verbs. Some of these are listed below with their cognate objects. Their use in sentences is illustrated in (107) – (109).

106. **mwí kumwí** ‘laugh’  
**mó kumó** ‘suck breast’  
**dɔ kaɔ** ‘speak, talk’
107. G’itsoku ’uvuním ní Kwamí áaɔ ’iaɔ.  
**gɪ i-tsokú bú-vū ní kumí ní Kwamí**  
REL 1SG.DEP-enter CM-house DEF inside TOP Kwamí  
**á-a-dɔ ka-dɔ**  
SM-PSTPROG-say CM-speech  
‘When I entered the room Kwami was talking.’
108. Kofi áámwí umwí.  
**Kofi á-á-mwí kɪ-mwí**  
Kofi SM-PRSPROG-laugh CM-laughter  
‘Kofi is laughing.’
109. Anóvɔn akaámó ’ém̃.  
**a-nóvɔ ní a-ka-á-mó kɪ-m̃**  
CM-child DEF SM-still-PRSPROG-suck CM-breast  
‘The child is still sucking breast.’

The verbs that take cognate objects can also occur with non-cognate objects. Thus, **dɔ** ‘say, speak’ illustrated in (107) above with a cognate object can also take a specific object as in (110).

110. Kodzó áaɔ ’ebúí tilí.  
**Kodzó á-dɔ kɪ-búí ti-lí**  
Kodzo SM-say CM-word AM-INDEF  
‘Kodzo said something.’

I should perhaps point out that the cognate objects of some verbs can be omitted as shown in (111) below.

111. Kwámi ámwí.  
**Kwámi á-mwí**  
Kwami SM-laugh  
‘Kwami laughed.’

As the sentence in (111) illustrates, the omission of these cognate objects does not result in a change in meaning. Their omission makes the verbs function in one-place constructions. With some other verbs, the cognate objects seem to complete or further specify their meaning (Chafe 1970:156). The cognate object of the verb

**mó** 'suck', for instance, cannot be omitted. The omission of this object renders the sentence meaningless or ungrammatical in Tafi. This is illustrated below.

112. \*Anóvōn á mó  
       \***a-nóvō**      **ní**      **á-mó**  
           CM-child    DEF    SM-suck  
       \*'The child sucked.'

#### 7.2.4 Three-place predicates

A three-place predicate occurs in a three-place construction and it involves three participants. The first, second and third arguments are mapped on to the subject, object1 (Dative) and object2 functions respectively. I will begin with a discussion of verbs in Tafi which are considered canonical three-place predicates and subsequently, I will discuss three-place predicates which have an inherent complement in their frame.

##### 7.2.4.1 Canonical three-place predicates

Verbs in Tafi which are considered as canonical three-place predicates include:

- |      |              |        |                           |                           |
|------|--------------|--------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 114. | <b>kó</b>    | 'give' | <b>kasī</b>               | 'teach/show'              |
|      | <b>bīsī</b>  | 'ask'  | <b>sīsī</b>               | 'send (for)'              |
|      | <b>tsiré</b> | 'tell' | <b>tsyé</b> <sup>53</sup> | 'give as a gift, forgive' |

**Kó** 'give', **kasī** 'teach/show', **tsyé** 'give as a gift' and **tsiré** 'tell' are illustrated below:

115. Ámā ákó Ákú sáká.  
       **Ámā á-kó**      **Ákú sáká**  
       Ama    SM-give    Ákú    money  
       'Ama gave Aku money.'
116. Ámā ákasī Ákú kídō  
       **Ámā á-kasī**      **Ákú kídō**  
       Ama    SM-teach    Aku    CM-thing  
       'Ama taught Aku.'

117. Kristo étsyé 'óló blo ebúi zizin.  
       **Kristo é-tsyé**      **boló**    **boló**      **e-búi**      **zizi**      **ní**  
       Christ    SM-forgive    1PL    1PL.IND    CM.PL-matter    bad    DEF
- 

<sup>53</sup> This verb seems to have been borrowed from Akan via Inland Ewe.

‘Christ forgave us our sins.’

118. Anɔ ʔowã mítsiré wo ʔebúɛn.

**anɔ**            **buwã**            **mí-í-tsiré**            **wó**            **ki-búí**  
NEG.FOC    in.vain    1SG.IND-PRSPROG-tell    2SG    CM-matter

**t-ní**

AM-PROX

‘I am not telling you this in vain.’ (Lit. ‘It is not in vain I am telling you this matter.’)

The sentences above have an agent as the subject NP, a goal or dative argument occurs in immediate post-verbal position as object1 and a theme following the goal as object2. The order of the post-verbal complements is fixed, unlike in Ewe (see e.g. Bobuafor 2001). It is not reversible. In the sentence in (119), the strict order of occurrence of the post-verbal complements has been reversed so the theme precedes the goal. Thus, the sentence is ungrammatical.

119. \*Ámā ákó sɔká Ákú.

\***Ámā á-kó**            **sɔká**            **Ákú**  
Ama SM-give money    Ákú  
‘Ama gave money Aku.’

For most of the verbs, if the emphasis is on the theme and it has to be mentioned before the goal, then it has to be introduced by the verb **yúkó** ‘take’ in a serial verb construction as shown in (120).

120. Ámā áyíkó sɔká ákó Ákú.

**Ámā á-yíkó**            **sɔká**            **á-kó**            **Ákú**  
Ama SM-take money    SM-give    Aku  
‘Ama gave money to Aku.’

Some of the three-place predicates like **kasí** ‘teach, show’ and **bísi** ‘ask’ can also occur in two-place constructions (see section 7.2.2.3 for a discussion on **bísi** ‘ask’). **Kasí** ‘teach, show’ is exemplified in (121) below:

121. M’adzya ákasí akwíntā.

**mí**            **á-dzyā**            **á-kasí**            **a-kwíntā**  
1SG    CM-brother    SM-teach    CM-mathematics  
‘My brother teaches mathematics.’

As shown in the sentence in (121), **mí ádzyā** ‘my brother’ which is the subject NP is an agent whereas **akwíntā** ‘mathematics’, the object NP occurs as the object of the sentence and is the theme.

Certain verbal meanings are expressed mainly by various collocations of a verb plus a nominal complement. These can occur in either two-place or three-place constructions. For instance, the way that the Tafi people express the ‘thank’ idea is by using the verb **hu** ‘hit’ in collocation with the body-part term **ahɔ̃** ‘hand’, i.e., **hu ahɔ̃** ‘strike/hit hand’ expresses ‘to thank’. Other examples include:

122.	<b>sí</b>	‘run, escape’	<b>kífū</b>	‘fear’	‘be afraid’
	<b>tá</b>	‘throw’	<b>otú</b>	‘gun’	‘shoot/ fire a gun’
	<b>tá</b>	‘throw’	<b>kikplí</b>	‘fist’	‘fight’
	<b>tá</b>	‘throw’	<b>kéyū</b>	‘war’	‘fight a battle’
	<b>tí</b>	‘know’	<b>kibúí</b>	‘word’	‘be wise/ intelligent’
	<b>bó</b>	‘relate, report’	<b>amanié</b>	‘message/mission’	‘give a report; recount a mission’

Some of the verbs in these collocations can occur in three-place constructions when the goal or target argument is introduced into the frame. These do not differ from their canonical double object constructions in the sense that the positions of their post-verbal arguments are fixed and cannot be changed with each other. Thus, in every construction with this kind of collocation, it is the goal that immediately follows the verb and the theme (or the restricted collocant) that occurs after the goal.

Consider the following examples:

122. Ábhubhú á tá áhěń otú.  
**á-bhubhú**    **ní**    **á-tá**    **ă-hě**    **ní**    **o-tú**  
 CM-hunter   DEF   SM-throw   CM-pig   DEF   CM-gun  
 ‘The hunter shot the pig.’ or ‘The hunter fired at the pig.’
123. Kofí á tá Kúdzo ’ikplí.  
**Kofí**    **á-tá**    **Kúdzo ki-kplí**  
 Kofi   SM-throw   Kudzo CM-fist  
 ‘Kofi gave Kudzo a blow.’
124. Ábó Kwami amanié.  
**á-bó**    **Kwami**    **a-manié**  
 3SG-give Kwami   CM-message  
 S/he gave Kwami a report.’

There are different constructions for varying the order of the theme and the goal for some of these three-place constructions. With regard to **tá otú** ‘shoot/ fire a gun’, **otú** can occur as the complement of **yukɔ̃** ‘take’ as the first verb in an SVC as shown in (125). For **tá kikplí** ‘fight’ the goal can be expressed as a **ni** ‘COM’ prepositional complement as in (126). For **bó amanié** ‘give a report, recount a

mission', the goal is expressed as an object of **kó** 'give; cause; let; make' which occurs as the second verb in an SVC as in (127).

125. Ábhubhúń áyíkó otú átá àhěń.

**á-bhubhu ní á-yíkó o-tú á-tá à-hě ní**  
 CM-hunter DEF SM-take CM-gun SM-throw CM-pig DEF  
 'The hunter shot the pig.' (Lit. 'The hunter took a gun and shot the pig.')

126. Kofí áte 'ekplí n Kúdzó.

**Kofí á-tá ki-kplí n Kúdzó**  
 Kofi SM-throw CM-fist COM Kudzo  
 'Kofi fought with Kudzo.'

127. Ábó amaniéń ákó Kwami.

**á-bó a-manié ní á-kó Kwami**  
 3SG-give CM-message DEF SM-give Kwami  
 S/he gave a report to Kwami.'

### 7.2.5 Summary

In this section, I have classified Tafi verbs as one-place, two-place, and three-place predicates depending on the number of arguments they take. The semantic roles that a verb assigns to its arguments are determined by the state of affairs this verb codes. Verbs classified as one-place predicates occur in one-place constructions and they take only one argument. Following Essegbey (1999), I identified three groups of one-place predicates based on the constructions in which they occur. They were also categorised into various semantic groups such as verbs of directed motion, non-agentive manner of motion verbs, verbs of emission, property verbs, verbs of bodily processes, and achievement verbs. Some of these verbs can also function in two-place constructions.

As regards two-place predicates, they occur in two-place constructions and they take two arguments. These verbs occur with an agent/effector/experiencer as subject argument. Also, I looked at verbs which take obligatory complements such as generic and cognate objects. Semantically, two-place predicates in the language include verbs of perception and cognition, speech act verbs, verbs of creation, verbs of planting, body-grooming verbs, verbs of caused change of location and verbs of cutting.

The discussion on the canonical three-place predicates shows that the post-verbal arguments that these verbs take have a fixed order of occurrence. The goal always precedes the theme.

Moreover, I also examined verbs which together with nominal complements are used to express verbal meanings. Some of these verbs can occur in both two-place and three-place constructions. Like the canonical three-place predicates when these verbs occur in three-place constructions, they do not have a variable constituent order. The nominal collocant of the verb in the two-place construction, which is the theme, occurs as object2 in the three-place construction with the goal occurring as object1 in immediate post-verbal position. It was also shown that the positions of the goal and the theme can be varied through the use of different constructions such as serial verb constructions.

### 7.3 Tense, aspect and mood

In this section, I examine tense, aspect and mood in Tafi. These are marked largely by preverbs. In Tafi, there is a basic tense distinction between future and non-future and a basic aspectual distinction between perfective and imperfective. The non-future is the unmarked form of the verb whereas the future is overtly marked by a preverb **ba-**. However, in the imperfective, there is a distinction between present progressive and past progressive marked by tone. The former is marked by a high tone and the latter by a low tone.

#### 7.3.1 Future

The future is marked by the morpheme **ba-**. This preverb is used to indicate that the state of affairs described by the verb has not happened, but is expected to happen at a time posterior to the time of speaking. The form of the future marker changes depending on the ATR value of the initial vowel of the verb root as illustrated in (128) and (129). Moreover, when the future marker is preceded by a subject marker (SM) for the **o-** class, or a 2SG/PL subject pronoun which has a rounded vowel its vowel takes on the [+round] as in (130) and (131). Thus, the vowel of the future marker becomes **ɔ/o** depending on the ATR specifications of the initial vowel of verb. Sometimes, in rapid speech, some speakers tend to delete the initial consonant of the future marker and some others replace its initial consonant with a palatal glide especially when this marker occurs after the 1PL subject pronoun **bu/bu** as shown in (132) and (133) respectively.

128. Ányínúvǝḗn ábawééxwī kó ekusín.  
**á-nyínúvǝḗ** **ní** **á-ba-wa** **kí-xwī** **kó** **e-kusí** **ní**  
 CM-boy DEF SM-FUT-do CM-work DAT CM-chief DEF  
 ‘The boy will work for the chief.’
129. Ádɔ́kasín ébetu sukúeyín.  
**á-dɔ́kasí** **ní** **é-be-tu** **sukúeyí** **ní**  
 CM-teacher DEF SM-FUT-beat pupil DEF  
 ‘The teacher will beat the pupil.’



130. Óbokú obón.  
**ó-bo-kú**                **o-bón**  
 2SG-FUT-reach CM-today  
 ‘You will arrive today.’
131. Nóboto así.  
**no-bo-tó**                **á-sí**  
 2PL-FUT-cook CM-rice  
 ‘You will cook rice.’
132. Búatsyá.  
**bú-ba-tsyá**  
 1PL-FUT-meet  
 ‘We will meet.’
133. Búyatsyá.  
**bú-ba-tsyá**  
 1PL-FUT-meet  
 ‘We will meet.’

As indicated in (128), the future marker is **ba-** and this is because it precedes a verb that contains a [-ATR] vowel and in (129) it is **be-** because the vowel of the verb stem is [+ATR]. In (130) and (131), the vowel of the future marker is rounded because it harmonises with the [+round] feature of the 2SG and 2PL subject pronouns. Its vowel is /o/ in (130) and /ɔ/ in (131) because the vowels in the verb stems in these sentences are [+ATR] and [-ATR] respectively. In (132), the future marker occurs without its initial consonant and in (133), we have a palatal glide in place of the initial consonant of the future marker.

Alternatively, one could analyse this form as a potential marker especially given its uses in conditional clauses and procedural discourse. However, the temporal feature cannot be defeated, hence it seems better to analyse it as tense rather than a mood marker (cf. Essegbey 2008 on Ewe, Essegbey 2012 on Nyagbo).

In Tafi, as it is in Logba (Dorvlo 2008), the future marker is used in the description of procedural discourse, or in the apodosis of a conditional clause as illustrated in the sentences in (134) and (135) respectively. The sentence in (134) is about palm oil preparation whereas (135) was also given during the description of local soap preparation.

134. Óboká tɔ́nɔ́n pétéé óbú ní buníníṁ.  
**ó-bo-ká**                **ti-nó**        **ní**        **pétéé**    **ó-bú**                **ní**  
 2SG-FUT-squeeze CM-chaff DEF all SM-remove LOC  
**bu-ní**        **ní**        **kumi**  
 CM-water DEF inside

‘You will squeeze all the chaff out of the water.’ (Palm oil)

135. Ɔsí ɔtɔ béshɔkɔʒě, ɔbɔpút kokɔ aklɔ.  
 ɔ-sí ɔ-tɔ bé-sh(e).ɔkɔʒě ɔ-bɔ-pút kokɔ a-klɔ  
 2SG-say SM-cook CM-local.soap 2SG-FUT-burn cocoa CM.PL-pod  
 ‘If you want to prepare local soap, you will burn cocoa pods.’ (Local soap)

As the above examples illustrate, the future marker is used to talk about one’s intention to do something or an event which is not actual.

The future marker can occur with some other TAM markers in a construction. Consider the following example:

136. Átáábabashĩ.  
 á-táá-ba-ba-shĩ  
 3SG-NEG:PRSGROG-FUT-VENT-leave  
 ‘S/he will not be leaving.’

In (136), the future combines with the negative and progressive markers as well as the ventive to indicate that the state of affairs expressed by the verb will not be ongoing at a future time.

### 7.3.2 Non-future and the aorist

The non-future form of the verb is unmarked. This unmarked form is the same as the aorist (aspectual) form. In the non-future, either there is a tone to indicate the present and past or for some verbs, both the present and past forms are the same. However, the full details of this are not yet completely understood. Further research is necessary to fully establish the patterns.

The aorist or factative is an aspectual category commonly described for West African languages (see Welmers 1973, Ameka & Dakubu 2008). The aorist aspectual form tends to have a past or present interpretation depending on the lexical aspect of the verb. In general, dynamic or action verbs have past interpretation and inchoative or stative verbs get a present interpretation. This is the case in Tafi as well (see (141) below for stative/inchoative verbs). However, some dynamic verbs in the aorist can have a past or present interpretation signalled by tone in context (see 138 below). There are some dynamic or action verbs where the tone does not vary with the present or past interpretation, as illustrated in (137).

- 137a. Ányín ébhui ʼdzyań.  
 á-nyí ní é-bhui kɪ-dzya ní  
 CM-man DEF SM-cut CM-meat DEF  
 ‘The man cuts (up) the meat.’ (Present interpretation)

‘The man cut (up) the meat.’ (Past interpretation)

Other dynamic or action verbs show tonal differences with respect to present or past interpretation. They include:

	Present		Past	
138.	<b>nù</b>		<b>nú</b>	‘hear’
	<b>bà</b>		<b>bá</b>	‘come’
	<b>tě</b>		<b>té</b>	‘cut/ slash’
	<b>hu</b>		<b>hú</b>	‘hit’
	<b>bakā</b>		<b>bákā</b>	‘remember’

There are also suppletive sets for some verbs: one form for the present and one for past/ non-present. For example,

	Present		Past/non-present	
139.	<b>lí</b>		<b>za</b>	‘be.at’
	<b>dzí</b>		<b>za</b>	‘sit’
	<b>nyí</b>		<b>tí</b>	‘know’
	<b>nú</b>		<b>dzí</b>	‘be’

The forms that have present interpretation are sometimes used to render a habitual situation as shown below:

140. Kiwinyééwi adzín áto ’ed5.  
**ki-wi-nyáá-ki-wi**      **a-dzĩ**      **ní**      **a-t5**      **kí-d5**  
 CM-day-DISTR-CM-day   CM-woman   DEF   SM-sweep   CM-thing  
 ‘Everyday the woman cooks.’

Inchoative or stative verbs in the unmarked form have present interpretation. Examples include:

141. **dzã**      ‘be(come) ripe’  
**qama**      ‘be(come) tall’  
**tri**      ‘be(come) big, thick’  
**dze**      ‘be(come) long’  
**nó**      ‘be(come) black’  
**ni**      ‘be(come) wide’  
**dzyo**      ‘be(come) straight’

The idea is that the change of state has occurred before the reference time and hence interpreted as the state occurring now. Thus, it is translated with the present tense into English.

In terms of tense interpretation, the unmarked form of the verb is a non-future and

this reading is reinforced by tonal changes. In terms of aspect such forms are aorist and their temporal interpretation depends on the lexical aspect of the verb.

### 7.3.3 The Perfective

Perfective aspect in Tafi is marked by **tí-/tí-**. The choice of either form is based on vowel harmony rules. The perfective aspect marker indicates a completed situation at a time prior to the moment of speaking. This morpheme has an ‘already’ sense. Temporal nouns and adverbials that locate the state of affairs at a time relative to the time the utterance was made can be used to indicate the time of occurrence of an action/event (e.g., morning, last year, etc.)

142. Ítíhú anóvǎń.

**í-tí-hú**                      **a-nóvǎ**      **ní**  
1SG-PERF-hit      CM-child DEF  
‘I have hit the child (already).’

143. Bétíté isín ’ívũń.

**bé-tí-té**                      **i-sí**                      **ní**      **kí-vũń**  
3PL-PERF-cut      CM.PL-tree DEF      CM-yesterday  
‘They have (already) cut the trees yesterday.’

144. Kásālā átínyá y’oklebhó ní pétée.

**ká-sālā**      **á-tí-nyá**      **yí**      **o-klebhó**                      **ní**      **pétée**  
CM-tortoise      SM-PERF-tie 3SG.IND      CM-bundle.of.thatch      DEF      all  
‘Tortoise had (already) tied completely his bundle of thatch.’ (Kásālā)

### 7.3.4 The Progressive

The progressive aspect in Tafi distinguishes the present progressive, marked by a high tone vowel (**Ŷ**) and the past progressive which is marked by a low tone vowel (**ǎ**). Thus, the difference between the present progressive and the past progressive is indicated by tone. The progressive in the affirmative/positive is marked by a copy of the immediately preceding vowel.

#### 7.3.4.1 The Present Progressive

The present progressive, as I indicated earlier on, is marked by a high tone. It indicates situations/states of affairs taking place simultaneously to the moment of speech. (145) and (146) are conjugations of the verbs **ga** ‘walk’ and **tú** ‘pound’ in the present progressive.

145. **ú-gā**                      ‘I am walking’

- |  |               |                    |
|--|---------------|--------------------|
|  | <b>óó-gā</b>  | ‘You are walking’  |
|  | <b>áá-gā</b>  | ‘S/he is walking’  |
|  | <b>bóó-gā</b> | ‘We are walking’   |
|  | <b>nóó-gā</b> | ‘You are walking’  |
|  | <b>báá-gā</b> | ‘They are walking’ |
- 146.
- |                     |                          |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>íí-tǔ fufuo</b>  | ‘I am pounding fufu’     |
| <b>óó-tǔ fufuo</b>  | ‘You are pounding fufu’  |
| <b>éé-tǔ fufuo</b>  | ‘S/he is pounding fufu’  |
| <b>búú-tǔ fufuo</b> | ‘We are pounding fufu’   |
| <b>noó-tǔ fufuo</b> | ‘You are pounding fufu’  |
| <b>béé-tǔ fufuo</b> | ‘They are pounding fufu’ |

The present progressive can also be used to describe a state of affairs that is planned to occur at a point in time in the future and there is the likelihood that the intended state of affairs being described will surely take place. The example in (147) illustrates this:

147. M'en' ááshĩ av'íédzím̃.
- |           |             |                  |             |               |
|-----------|-------------|------------------|-------------|---------------|
| <b>mí</b> | <b>é-nĩ</b> | <b>á-á-shĩ</b>   | <b>a-vĩ</b> | <b>ke-dzi</b> |
| 1SG.IND   | CM-mother   | SM-PRSPROG-leave | SM-go       | market        |
- kumi**  
inside  
‘My mother is going to the market.’

The statement in (147) above, according to one of my consultants can, for instance, be given as a response by a child whose mother's whereabouts is asked for even though the mother is yet to depart for the market. It can also be said as an announcement of plans.

#### 7.3.4.2 The Past Progressive

The past progressive is marked by a low tone. It is used to describe situations which went on during a stretch of time in the past and has ended, or a customary action which used to take place in the past. (148) and (149) exemplify the same verbs **ga** ‘walk’ and **tú** ‘pound’ in (145) and (146) in the past progressive.

- 148.
- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <b>íí-ga</b>  | ‘I was walking’ or ‘I used to walk’        |
| <b>óó-ga</b>  | ‘You were walking’ or ‘you used to walk’   |
| <b>áá-ga</b>  | ‘S/he was walking’ or ‘S/he used to walk’  |
| <b>bóó-ga</b> | ‘We were walking’ or ‘we used to walk’     |
| <b>nóó-ga</b> | ‘You were walking’ or ‘you used to walk’   |
| <b>báa-ga</b> | ‘They were walking’ or ‘they used to walk’ |

149. **íi-tú fufuo** 'I was pounding fufu'  
**óo-tú fufuo** 'You were pounding fufu'  
**ée-tú fufuo** 'S/he was pounding fufu'  
**búu-tú fufuo** 'We were pounding fufu'  
**nóo-tú fufuo** 'You were pounding fufu'  
**bée-tú fufuo** 'They were pounding fufu'

The tone indicating the past progressive marker is a polar tone because the tone on all the pronouns except the 2PL pronoun is high and that of the past progressive marker is low. However, in the past progressive, the tone on the 2PL pronoun changes to high to maintain the polarity.<sup>54</sup>

### 7.3.5 Negation

Negation in Tafi is expressed by a verbal prefix **tí-/tí-** in the present and **di-/di-** in the non-present depending on the ATR value of the initial vowel in the verb. The form of the present negative marker is homophonous with the perfective aspect marker **tí-/tí-**. However, negative constructions end with a glottal stop producing a sharp or abrupt end of the clause. The present (glossed NEG1) and the non-present (glossed NEG2) negative morphemes are illustrated in the conjugations in (150a) and (150b) and the sentences in (150c) and (150d) respectively.

- |                                       |                                     |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 150a. <b>í-tí-bhutí?</b> 'I don't do' | 150b. <b>í-tí-hu?</b> 'I don't hit' |
| <b>ó-tí-bhutí?</b> 'You don't do'     | <b>ó-tí-hu?</b> 'You don't hit'     |
| <b>é-tí-bhutí?</b> 'S/he doesn't do'  | <b>é-tí-hu?</b> 'S/he doesn't hit'  |
| <b>bú-tí-bhutí?</b> 'We don't do'     | <b>bú-tí-hu?</b> 'We don't hit'     |
| <b>nó-tí-bhutí?</b> 'You don't do'    | <b>no-tí-hu?</b> 'You don't hit'    |
| <b>bá-tí-bhutí?</b> 'They don't do'   | <b>bé-tí-hu?</b> 'They don't hit'   |

- 150c. **Ányín átí bá?**  
**á-nyí ní á-tí-bá**  
 CM-man DEF SM-NEG1-come  
 'The man does not come.'

- 150d. **Osín ódídama?**  
**o-sí ní ɔ-di-dama**  
 CM-tree DEF SM-NEG2-become.tall  
 'The tree is not tall.'

---

<sup>54</sup> The tones on the verb root in the present progressive and the past progressive may also be different. Compare the forms of the verb in (145) and (148) as well as (146) and (149).

The negative morphemes **tí-/ti-** and **di-/di-** are selected on the basis of the temporal as well as the aktionsart features of the predicates they negate. With “active” and “stative” predicates, **tí-/ti-** expresses present negation, while **di-/di-** indicates past negation. For example,

- |      |                |                  |                |                   |
|------|----------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 151. | <b>ítíbá?</b>  | ‘I do not come’  | <b>ídíbá?</b>  | ‘I did not come’  |
|      | <b>ítíwá?</b>  | ‘I do not do’    | <b>ídíwá?</b>  | ‘I did not do’    |
|      | <b>ítíshí?</b> | ‘I do not leave’ | <b>ídíshí?</b> | ‘I did not leave’ |
|      | <b>ítísí?</b>  | ‘I do not run’   | <b>ídísí?</b>  | ‘I did not run’   |

Stative verbs tend to be negated with **tí-/ti-** and yield a present negation reading as illustrated in (152a). (152b) is the past form of the sentence in (152a). In the past, the verb **nyí** ‘know’ becomes **tí**.

- 152a. **Ítínyí?** ‘I do not know.’

- 152b. **Idítí?** ‘I did not know.’

When inchoative/stative property predicates are negated, they select **di-/di-** indicating the non-realisation of the change of state. For example,

- 153a. **di tsobúnǝ** ‘be not near’  
**di tri** ‘be not big’  
**di kpe** ‘be not plenty’  
**di ni** ‘be not wide’

Some closely related lexical predicates distinguished only by aktionsart confirm this. Thus, **za** ‘sit, stay (past)’ is negated by **di-** while the stative **dzi** ‘be seated’ is negated by **tí-**.

Thus **tí-/ti-** always has a present negation reading and **di-/di-** has a present or past negation reading depending on the aktionsart of the verb.

Another negative marker in Tafi is **gu** which is glossed as ‘NEG3’. In fact, the occurrence of this morpheme in my corpus is very limited and it occurs after the verb **sí** ‘say’ and it expresses a meaning such as ‘not intend to do something’. It appears the use of this negative marker is no longer common. The following are examples illustrating its use.

- 153b. Eyí nǝ ní gu así y’ení atúǝ trǝ elishí yí tsyí agúsí abadǝ?  
**e-yí** **nǝ** **ní** **gu** **a-sí** **yí** **é-ní**  
 CM-child wh.ever DEF REL 3SG.DEP-say 3SG.IND CM-mother  
**á-tí-dǝ** **ti-rá** **e-lishí** **yí** **tsyí** **a-gu-sí**  
 SM-NEG1-contact CM-sleep CM-night 3SG.IND too 3SG-NEG3-say

**á-ba-dɔ**

SM-FUT-contact

‘The child who would not let its mother sleep will also not sleep.’

(Proverbs #39)

153c. Ékéwulú ní nía agíst así ti abá banɔ́ ’éshí.

**é-ké-wulú ní ní a a-gɪ-sɪ**

3SG-PERF-bath TOP TOP CFM 3SG-NEG3-say

**a-sí ti a-bá ba-nɔ́ ki.shí**

SM-COMP COMP 3SG.DEP-come CM.PL-person midst

‘If he has not taken his bath, he does not intend to come among people.’

(Gbaxálí)

The future is negated by the negative marker co-occurring with the future marker *ba/be-* as in (153d).

153d. Atíbabá.

**a-tí-ba-bá**

3SG-NEG1-FUT-come

‘S/he will not come.’

Negation interacts with some aspectual categories in Tafi. When the negative and present progressive markers co-occur, vowels of the resultant form are the same as the vowel of the personal pronouns and the subject pronominal forms they occur with, except for the 1PL subject pronoun and nouns in the two **bu-** classes both of which contain the same vowel **u/u** (see Table 3.2). For these, the vowels of the negative present progressive marker are **ɪ/i** which agrees in height with the vowel **u/u** of these forms. As usual, the vowel representing the negative present progressive aspect bears a high tone and that of the negative past progressive also bears a low tone. Example (153d) below is a conjugation of the verb **ga** ‘walk’ in the negative present progressive.

When the negative past progressive aspect marker occurs with the 2SG/PL subject pronominal forms as well as with nouns in the **o-** class, its vowels are **/oo/** or **/ɔɔ/** depending on the ATR value of the (initial) vowel of the verb root. However, when it occurs after the 1SG/PL and 3SG/PL pronouns or nouns belonging to the remaining classes, its vowels are **/aa/**. The example in (153e) is also a conjugation of the verb **ga** ‘walk’ in the past progressive. Compare (153d) and (153e).

- |                 |                        |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| 153d. í-tíí-gā? | ‘I am not walking’     |
| ó-tɔ́ɔ́-gā?     | ‘You are not walking’  |
| á-táá-gā?       | ‘S/he is not walking’  |
| bú-tíí-gā?      | ‘We are not walking’   |
| nɔ́-tɔ́ɔ́-gā?   | ‘You are not walking’  |
| bá-táá-gā?      | ‘They are not walking’ |



- 153e. **ɪ-daa-gā?** 'I was not walking'  
**ɔ-dɔɔ-gā?** 'You were not walking'  
**a-daa-gā?** 'S/he was not walking'  
**bɔ-daa-gā?** 'We were not walking'  
**nɔ-dɔɔ-gā?** 'You were not walking'  
**ba-daa-gā?** 'They were not walking'

### 7.3.5.1 Negative clefts

Negative clefts are introduced by **anɪ**<sup>55</sup> 'NEGCL' with the negated constituent in its scope. In example (154a), a negative cleft is used to show contrast and the example in (154b) is a proverb in which the information in the scope of the negative cleft is something that is not done.

- 154a. Kofi abavɪ anɪ wɔ.  
**Kofi a-ba-vɪ anɪ wɔ**  
 Kofi SM-FUT-go NEGCL 2SG.IND  
 'Kofi will go, not you.'
- 154b. Anɪ 'ɪtsá láyɪko epú ɔwɪsɪ nɔ.  
**anɪ kɪ-tsá lá-yɪko be-pú ɔ-wɪsɪ**  
 NEGCL CM-needle 3PL.DEP-take SM-punch CM-axe.handle  
**nɔ**  
 COM  
 'We do not punch a hole into an axe handle with a needle.' (Proverb #17)

### 7.3.5.2 Prohibitive

The prohibitive construction uses the negative marker **tu/ti** to mark an imperative (singular) or (plural) (cf. Chapter 8, § 8.3.2). For example,

155. Tiklū w'enɪ y'enɪnē edzini ɔsɪ w'enɪ ...  
**ti-klū wɔ é-nɪ yɪ e-nyínē e-dzini**  
 NEG1-call 2SG.IND CM-mother 3SG.IND CM-husband CM-wife  
**ɔ-sɪ wɔ é-nɪ**  
 SM-COMP 2SG.IND CM-mother  
 'Do not call your mother's co-wife your mother, ...' (Proverbs #28)

<sup>55</sup> The form **anɪ**, the negative cleft, is similar to the proximal demonstrative form **anɪ** which modifies nouns in the **a<sup>1</sup>-**, **ba(a)-**, **ka-** and **a<sup>2</sup>-** classes, and to **anɪ**, a post verbal or clausal topic marker. At this stage, these three entities are considered to be similar in form and probably related in function. Further analysis could determine the exact relationship, e.g., whether one developed from the other.

### 7.3.5.3 Privative negation

Tafi, like Ewe, has a way of forming privative negation. The privative negative is derived by prefixing the verb root with **ma-** and then the resulting stem is totally reduplicated. This form appears to have been borrowed from Ewe. Some examples of such privative negative forms are listed in (156a) and their use in sentences is illustrated in (156b).

156a.	<b>mɔ</b>	‘see, get’	<b>mamɔmamɔ</b>	‘unseen, not getting’
	<b>yɔ</b>	‘be(come) cold’	<b>mayɔmayɔ</b>	‘not cool’
	<b>kla</b>	‘read, count’	<b>maklamakla</b>	‘uncountable’
	<b>ti</b>	‘know, be aware’	<b>matimati</b>	‘ignorance’

- 156b. Tɪ kɔ láshĩ ekusí ní mamɔmamɔ.  
**tɪ kɔ lá-shĩ e-kusí ní ma-mɔ-ma-mɔ**  
 NEG1 cause 3PL.DEP-leave CM-chief DEF PRIV-see-PRIV-see  
 ‘Don’t let them leave without seeing the chief.’

### 7.3.5.4 Negative existential

Tafi also makes use of a negative predicate of existence, **má** ‘be.at:NEG’ which is used to negate existential propositions as is shown in (157).

157. Buninyóúní má bunietsukpúnĩ.  
**bu-ni-nyaa-bu-ni má bu-ní ke-tsukpú ní**  
 CM-water-DISTR-CM-water be.at:NEG CM-waterCM-pot DEF  
**kumɪ**  
 inside  
 ‘There is no water in the water-pot.’

This verb **má** is the negative of the locative-existential verb **lí** ‘be.at’ (see Chapter 6, § 6.6.1.1.1 for further details).

### 7.3.5.5 Negative perfective

The negative perfective aspect marker in Tafi is **ká**. It is realised as **ká/ké** or **kɔ́/kó**. The choice of either of these realisations is based on vowel harmony rules. Thus, depending on the ATR value of the (initial) vowel of the verb root, the negative perfective marker is realised as **ká/ké**. If the subject argument is 2SG/PL or a noun belonging to the o- class, this preverb is realised as the rounded counterparts **kɔ́/kó**. The **ká** morpheme indicates that the state of affairs expressed in the rest of the clause has not yet occurred. This is exemplified in the following sentences in (158a) and (158b). The example in (158c) is a proverb.

158a. Akábá.

**a-ká-bá**

3SG-NEG.PERF-come

‘S/he has not yet come.’

158b. Ekénú íbúínyéébúí.

**e-ké-nú**

**ki-búí-nyáá-ki-búí**

3SG-NEG.PERF-hear CM-word-DISTR-CM-word

‘S/he has not heard anything yet.’

158c. Anóvō ní gú ákányó edí ní y’áqō así y’eni y’ényí ’ító dí.

<b>a-nóvō</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>gú</b>	<b>á-ká-nyó</b>	<b>e-dí</b>	<b>ní</b>
CM-child	DEF	REL	3SG.DEP-NEG.PERF-roam	SM-look	TOP
<b>yí</b>	<b>á-qō</b>	<b>a-sí</b>	<b>yí</b>	<b>é-ní</b>	<b>yí</b>
3SG.IND	SM-say	SM-COMP	3SG.IND	CM-mother	3SG.IND
<b>é-nyí</b>	<b>ki-tó</b>	<b>dí</b>			
SM-know	CM-cook	surpass			

‘The child who has never travelled says that his mother is the best cook.’

(Proverbs #49)

### 7.3.6 The persistive aspect

The persistive aspect is expressed by **ka**. This morpheme is realised as **ka**, **ke**, **ko** or **ko** depending on the ATR value of the (initial) vowel of the verb root as well as the person or class of the subject argument. **Ko/ko** is chosen if the subject argument is 2SG/PL or a noun belonging to the **o-** class. The persistive marker can co-occur with any of the other elements in the verbal cluster. It has two main uses: (i) persistive and (ii) repetitive. In its persistive use, it indicates that a state of affairs is or was still on-going over a period of time. For example,

159a. Akalí ’klí.

**a-ka-lí**

**ɪ-klí**

3SG-PERS-be.at CM-there

‘S/he is still there.’

159b. Ekelí ’klí.

**e-ke-lí**

**ɪ-klí**

3SG-PERS-be.positioned CM-there

‘He is still lying there.’

**Ka** combines with the progressive marker to reinforce the persistive reading as in (160).

160. Akaábá.  
**a-ka-á-bá**  
 3SG-PERS-PRSPROG-come  
 ‘He is still coming.’

When the persistive marker **ka** combines with the negative marker, they together express the idea of ‘no longer, anymore’ as illustrated in (161).

161. Bátíkaágban’ ágl̩.  
**bá-tí-ka-á-gban̩**                      **á-gl̩**  
 3PL-NEG1-PERS-PRSPROG CM-RECIP  
 ‘They no longer marry each other.’

In some contexts, the **ka** morpheme can have an ‘again’ or repetitive reading. This is exemplified in (162).

162. Akaábub̩ t̩ eb̩ ʼɪdz̩ya tilí ko...  
**a-ka-á-bub̩**                      **t̩**                      **e-bú**                      **kɪ-dz̩ya**  
 3SG-PERS-PRSPROG-bend    PURP 3SG.DEP-remove    CM-meat  
**t̩-lí**                      **ko**  
 AM-INDEF just  
 ‘Just as he bent again to pick another piece of meat...’

The repetitive reading of the **ka** morpheme is reinforced by the addition of the morpheme **vla** ‘again’ as in (see section 7.3.8 for a discussion of **vla**):

163. lkavlehu anóv̩ñ.  
**ɪ-ka-vle-hu**                      **a-nóv̩ñ**                      **ní**  
 1SG-PERS-again-hit    CM-child DEF  
 ‘I hit the child again.’

### 7.3.7 The repetitive marker

The repetitive marker is **za**. It can co-occur with any of the other elements in the verbal cluster. It is used to indicate the repetition or iteration of a state of affairs. It can thus be interpreted as ‘again’. Depending on vowel harmony rules, person and the class of the subject NP, the repetitive marker **za** is realised as **za**, **ze**, **zi**, **zi**, **zo** or **zo**. If the subject NP is the 1SG or IPL pronoun or any noun from the **i-**, **ki-** or any of the **bu-** classes or their pronominal forms then the choice is **zi/zi** and if it occurs with the 2SG or 2PL pronoun or with nouns belonging to the **o-** class or their pronominal forms then it is realised as **zo/zo**. Moreover, when it occurs with any of the remaining pronouns or nouns from any of the remaining noun classes or

their pronominal forms, then the choice is **za/ze**. The examples in (167) are taken from the text on palm oil preparation.

167a. Óbɔzɔnyonyɔ ɔbɔnánĩ ...

**ɔ-bɔ-zɔ-nyunyɔ**      **ɔ-bɔ-nánĩ**  
 2SG-FUT-REP-knead    SM-FUT-reach  
 ‘You will continue kneading until ...’ (Palm oil)

167b. ... gɪ bɔbɔzɪyabá g’lũ babí.

**gɪ**    **bɔ-ba-zɪ-yabá**      **gɪ**    **lũ-ba-bí**  
 REL   3SG-FUT-REP-boil   REL   3SG.DEP-FUT-be.cooked  
 ‘...while it continues boiling until it is done.’ (Palm oil)

### 7.3.8 The marker **vla** ‘again’

**Vla** ‘again’ like **za** ‘REP’ is a preverb marker which is used to express the repetition of a state of affairs. It is realised as **vla**, **vle**, **vlo**, or **vlo**<sup>56</sup> depending on the person, class of the subject argument as well as ATR harmony. Like for other preverbs such as **za**, **ka**, or **gbla**, **vlo/vlo** is used if the subject argument is 2SG/PL. It can co-occur with any of the preverb markers in the verb cluster including the repetitive marker **za** and the persistive marker **ka**. Consider the following examples:

168a. Kásālā abhɪtɪ ’ibuiɲyéébúí ’ídĩ sí tí kevlékóéyĩ ní ketsukpúníĩ.

**ká-sālā**    **á-bhɪtɪ**    **ki-bui-nyáá-ki-búí**      **kí-dĩ**    **sí**  
 CM-tortoise   SM-make CM-matter-DISTR-CM-matter CM-type   COMP  
**ti**    **ké-vlé-kóéyĩ**    **ní**    **ke-tsukpú ní**    **kum**  
 COMP   3SG.DEP-again-exit LOC   CM-pot   DEF   in  
 ‘Tortoise did every kind of thing to get out of the pot again.’ (Kásālā)

168b. Klíso, ɔzɔkɔvlɔbɔwĩ ’ulu obón tsyí áē?

**klíso**    **ɔ-zɔ-kɔ-vlɔ-bɔ-wĩ**      **bu-lu**  
 so    2SG.DEP-REP-PERS-again-VENT-drink    CM-drink  
**ɔ-bón**    **tsyí**    **áē**  
 CM-today too    UFP  
 ‘So, you are going to drink again today too?’

In (168a), **vle** ‘again’ occurs as the only preverb whereas in (168b), it co-occurs with the repetitive, persistive and future markers.

### 7.3.9 The excessive marker **gbla**

<sup>56</sup> Some speakers also use **fla**, **fle** etc.

The preverb **gbla** is used to express excessiveness of an action or state. It is realised as **gbla** or **gble**, (as in (169a), (169b) and (169d)), depending on the ATR value of the (initial) vowel of the verb root. If the subject argument is the 2SG/PL or a noun belonging to the **o-** class the preverb is realised as the rounded counterparts **gblo** or **gblo** as shown in (169c).

169a. Égbléyi 'ubhíté.

**é-gblé-yi**                      **bu-bhíté**  
3SG-EXC-resemble CM-maiden  
'She is extremely beautiful.'

169b. Ágblápĩ.

**á-gblá-pĩ**  
3SG-EXC-be.good  
'S/he is extremely good.'

169c. Ógblótóónu 'íkanyááká.

**ó-gbló-tóó-nu**                      **ki-kányááká**  
2SG-EXC-NEG:PRSPROG-hear CM-any  
'You are very uncompromising.' (Lit.: You are not hearing anything at all.)

169d. Sam' egblekuń 'ívol'én.

**sam**           **e-gble-kú**           **mí**           **kí-vol5**           **ı-ní**  
happiness SM-EXC-reach 1SG CM-morning AM-PROX  
'I am extremely happy this morning.' (Lit.: 'Happiness excessively reach me this morning.')

### 7.3.10 Habitual

The habitual expresses a customary or generic action which used to take place in the past, or still takes place at a time overlapping with the moment of speech, and predicts that it could take place in the future as well. The habitual in Tafi can relate to present or past time reference. In Tafi, the habitual is expressed by a construction in which the verb **gano/ ganu** 'keep, walk with, pass through' acts as the operator and its complement is either a VP as shown in (170a), (170b) and (171a) or a nominalised event as illustrated in (170c), (170d) and (171b). If the verb in the VP or event nominal is transitive, the object precedes it, thus the VO order is permuted (see (170b) and (170d), for example). The citation form of the operator is **gano** but in context it is **ganu**. It seems this verb stem is made up of the root **ga** 'walk' and the comitative suffix **-no** 'COM'.

#### 7.3.10.1 Present habitual

In the present habitual, the operator verb occurs after the subject as shown in (170). The present habitual is used to express states of affairs that occur regularly with the prediction that they can always occur.

170a. ágan'abá.

**á-gan**            **a-bá**  
3SG-HAB    SM-come  
'S/he usually comes.'

170b. Ágan' iegbuantabhā aza.

**á-gan**            **ke-gbu**    **a-ni**            **kábhā**    **a-za**  
3SG-HAB    CM-chair AM-PROX    top            SM-sit  
'S/he sits on this chair.'

170c. Ágan'ubá

**á-gan**            **bu-bá**  
3SG-HAB    CM-come  
'S/he usually comes.'

170d. Ágan' epidzya 'uyí ní blúnyεem.

**á-gan**            **e-pidzya** **bu-yí**    **ní**            **blúnya**    **kumi**  
3SG-HAB    CM-goat CM-kill    LOC    christmas inside  
'S/he usually kills a goat during Christmas.'

### 7.3.10.2 Past habitual

The past habitual aspect is formed the same way as the present habitual except that **gan** is marked for the past progressive. The past habitual is used to characterise states of affairs that occurred regularly in the past with the implication that they no longer occur. For example,

171a. Áagan' iegbuantabhā aza.

**á-a-gan**            **ke-gbu**    **a-ní**            **kábhā**    **a-za**  
3SG-PSTPROG-HAB    CM-chair AM-PROX    top            SM-sit  
'S/he used to sit on this chair.'

171b. Áagan' epidzya 'uyí ní blúnyεem.

**á-a-gan**            **e-pidzya** **bu-yí**    **ní**            **blúnya**    **kumi**  
3SG-PSTPROG-HAB    CM-goat CM-kill    LOC    Christmas    inside  
'S/he used to kill a goat at Christmas.'

Utterances with verbs that have a present or non-future interpretation can be understood as expressing habitual situations. This habitual interpretation is reinforced by the use of temporal nouns and adverbials such as **kíwinyééwi** 'everyday' and **kibenyéébe** 'always' etc. (see § 7.3.2).

172. Kíwinyééwī adzīn agbē 'ed5.

<b>kí-wī-nyáá-kí-wī</b>	<b>a-dzī</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>á-gba</b>	<b>kí-d5</b>
CM-day-DISTR-CM-day	CM-woman	DEF	SM-sweep	CM-thing
'Everyday the woman sweeps.'				

The sentence in (172) shows that the action referred to is habitual and that it is practised everyday.

### 7.3.11 Phasal Aspect

It is assumed that situations or states of affairs (i.e. events, processes, actions and states, cf. Comrie (1976) and Mourelatos (1981)) are temporally divisible into an *onset* - a first moment, which is a necessary and an obligatory preparatory stage in the development of every situation, a *nucleus* - a main part, and a *coda* - a final temporal phase (Freed (1979:30ff). The nucleus can be further divided into an *initial* period, a *middle*, and a *final* part. As Ameka (2008) explains languages tend to provide linguistic forms for the description of these stages. Hence English, for example, has the aspectual verb *start* and *begin* which are used to refer to the *onset* and the *initial* period of the nucleus of situations respectively (Freed 1979, Wierzbicka 1988). Similarly the verbs *finish* and *end* are used to code the final part of the nucleus and the coda respectively (Wierzbicka 1988:77-78, Dixon 2005). The markers of the *onset*, *nucleus*, and *coda* phases of a situation may be described as ingressive/inceptive, progressive/continuative, and egressive respectively. In the following subsections, I describe the various phasal aspect constructions in Tafi and I use the term 'completive' instead of 'egressive' to describe the coda phase.

#### 7.3.11.1 The inceptive

The inceptive aspect refers to the beginning of a state of affairs. The beginning stage of the states of affairs may be referred to as the onset (Ameka 2008). There are two ways of expressing the inceptive. One is through the use of the verb **tén5** 'start' and the other involves a construction with **kpí X kesí**<sup>57</sup>. Both the verb **kpí** 'put in' together with the postposition **kesí** 'under' co-lexicalise the inceptive aspectual meaning. The specifier (NP) of the postposition **kesí** codes the situation about to begin. **Tén5** 'start' is a phasal verb which is followed by event nominals or nominalised verbs. If the event expression to be nominalised is represented by a transitive verb and its complement, e.g., **té ekle** 'cut thatch', the nominalisation

<sup>57</sup> This is an areal pattern used across many of the languages in the Volta Basin, eg., **dze X gome** 'contact X bottom'; Akan **she X asi** 'put on X bottom'; Ga **je X shishi** 'set out X bottom'; Likpe **kpé X ká.so** 'put X bottom/under'.



involves the permutation of the VO order plus the marking of the V as a nominalised verb. This creates a double object construction with **tén̄** as the verb and the O as object1 and the nominalised verb as object2. The following are examples:

173a. Étén' ekleñ 'útě.

**é-tén̄**   **e-kle**   **ní**   **bu-tě**  
 3SG-start CM-thatch DEF CM-slash  
 'He started cutting the thatch.'

173b. Gí étén' oklebhón 'únyá ko...

**gí**   **é-tén̄**   **o-klebh̄**   **ní**   **bu-nyá**   **ko**  
 REL 3SG.DEP-start CM-bundle.of.thatch DEF CM-tie just  
 'Just as he started tying the bundle of thatch...' (Kásalā)

173c. Flôgo ti búbakp'ibúiniésí ní...

**flôgo**   **ti**   **bú-ba-kpí**   **ki-búí**   **ní**   **ke.sí**   **ní**  
 before COMP 1PL-FUT-put.in CM-matter DEF under TOP  
 'Before we start with the proceedings...' (Saxwí)

173d. Búbakpí okoníésí.

**bú-ba-kpí**   **o-ko**   **ní**   **ke.sí**  
 1PL-FUT-put.in CM-custom DEF under  
 'We will start with the ceremony.'

### 7.3.11.2 The continuative aspect construction

The expression **vi X kábhā** 'continue, go on' (lit. 'go X top') is used to express the continuity of a situation, the nucleus phase of the states of affairs. The verb **vi** 'go' is a motion verb which takes a postpositional phrase headed by **kábhā** 'on, top' as complement. Consider the following examples:

174a. Nókó 'óló ídzó ti búv' ibúiniábhā.

**nó-kó**   **buló**   **ki-dzo**   **ti**   **bú-vi**   **ki-búí**   **ní**  
 2PL-give 1PL CM-way COMP 1PL-go CM-matter DEF  
**kábhā**  
 top  
 'Allow us to continue with the proceedings.' (Saxwí)

174b. Kíxwīn ívī 'ílíábhā.

**kí-xwī**   **ní**   **kí-í-vi**   **kulí**   **kábhā**  
 CM-work DEF SM-PRSPROG-go 3SG.IND top  
 'The work is continuing.'

This is similar to the Ewe continuative construction **yi X dzí** ‘go X top’ (Ameka 2008).

### 7.3.11.3 The durative aspect construction

The durative aspect is expressed by the construction **tsirí X kábhā** ‘be.on X top’ which is an instantiation of the basic locative construction. In this context, it is extended to the temporal domain for the expression of the durative aspect. The verb takes a complement headed by the postposition **kábhā** ‘on, top’. For example,

175a. Blǝ kúnúníábhā lótsirí.

**buló kúnú ní kábhā ló-tsirí**  
1PL funeral DEF top 1PL.DEP-be.on  
‘We are going on with our funeral rites.’

175b. Wǝnótsirí ílábhā.

**wǝnó no-tsirí kílí kábhā**  
2PL.IND SM-be.on 3SG.IND top  
‘You keep working.’ Or ‘You are on it’ i.e. Courage!

The sentence in (175b) is a routine expression used in Tafi in acknowledging people doing some work and urging them to work harder. The 3SG pronoun **kílí** ‘it’ stands for **kíxwí** ‘work’.

### 7.3.11.4 The completive aspect

The completive aspect is indicated by the grammaticalised verb **békē** ‘finish’. This form is used to signal that a situation or event has ended. When **békē** ‘finish’ is used to mark the completive aspect, it occurs after another verb and the subject argument is not cross-referenced on it as shown in the examples in (176b) and (176c). Thus, it appears to have become grammaticalised (see also Ameka 2008, 2006 for a discussion on Ewe). The example in (176a) shows the verb **békē** ‘finish’ occurring as a fully inflected verb.

176a. Onín óbékē.

**o-ní ní ó-békē**  
CM-soup DEF SM-finish  
‘The soup got finished.’

176b. Ámā akáŋe ’edǝ békē.

**Ámā a-ká-ŋa kí-dǝ békē**  
Ama SM-NEG.PERF-eat CM-thing COMPL  
‘Ama has not yet finished eating.’

176c. Gú ámo sí la flǝ békē...

**gi**      **á-mo**      **sí**      **lá-flă**      **békē**  
 REL 3SG.DEP-see COMP 3PL.DEP-pass COMPL  
 ‘When he saw that they have passed...’

In (176a) above, **békē** ‘finish’ occurs as a main verb and the subject is cross-referenced on it whereas in (176b) and (176c), **békē** ‘COMPL’ occurs as a postverbal modifier and functions as a completive aspectual adverbial.

### 7.3.11.5 The cessative/ terminative aspect

**Yíl5/ yól5** is an aspectual verb meaning ‘cease, stop’. Both **yíl5/ yól5** are used interchangeably. It is used as the operator verb where it takes a nominalised complement denoting the main event that has ceased or the speaker wants to be stopped as shown in (177). It thus codes a cessative or termination aspect.

177a. Áyíl5 ’ulu ’owĩ.  
**á-yíl5**    **bu-lu**      **bu-wĩ**  
 3SG-stop CM-drink CM-drink  
 ‘He does not drink anymore.’

177b. Yíl5 ɪdɔŋɔŋan ’ɔŋa!  
**yíl5**    **kɪ-dɔŋɔŋa**    **ní**    **bu-ŋa**  
 stop CM-food DEF CM-eat  
 ‘Don’t eat anymore!’

Phasal aspectual meanings are periphrastically expressed involving verbs that code the deictic or temporal dimension of events as operators. Some of the verbs, e.g., **békē** ‘finish’ have become grammaticalised. Similar structures are involved in the coding of modality which we survey in the next subsections.

## 7.3.12 Modality

Modality is mainly expressed by periphrastic constructions usually involving operator verbs and a nominalised event expression.

### 7.3.12.1 The ability and possibility markers

There are two ability and possibility markers in Tafi. They are **téŋú** ‘can, be able’ and **nā** ‘can, be able’. Both markers occur in different constructions. **Téŋú** ‘can, be able’ is a borrowing from Ewe and in both languages it functions as a preverb as well as a verb as illustrated by the Tafi examples in (178a) and (178b) respectively. **Nā** ‘can, be able’ on the other hand, takes an event nominal or a nominalised verb as a complement and if it is used in a three-place construction, the event nominal occurs as the second object as shown in (178c).

- 178a. Pamprö xúń ní, óbotéńúdzú teđíkpo kó idru ttá aloo tǎí.  
 pamprö xúń ní ó-bo-téńú-dzú te-đíkpo kó  
 bamboo as.for TOP 2SG-FUT-can-erect AM-one DAT  
 i-dru ti-tá aloo ti-ǎí  
 CM.PL-mound AM-three DISJ AM-four  
 ‘As for the bamboo sticks, you can erect one for about three or four yam mounds.’ (Yam cultivation)
- 178b. Étíbetéńú awe ’éxwǎń?  
 é-tí-be-téńú á-wa kí-xwǎ ní  
 3SG-NEG1-FUT-can SM-do CM-work DEF  
 ‘S/he cannot do the work.’
- 178c. Átíbanē ’éxwǎń ’úwa.  
 á-tí-ba-nā kí-xwǎ ní bu-wa  
 3SG-NEG1-FUT-can CM-work DEF CM-do  
 ‘S/he cannot do the work.’

As the examples in (178a) – (178c) show, **téńú** ‘can, be able’ and **nā** ‘can, be able’ can occur with other preverb markers, and in these examples, they occur with the negative marker (178b) and (178c) and the future marker (178a) – (178c).

### 7.3.12.2 Nyá ‘certainly, really’

**Nyá** ‘certainly, really’ has the following realisations: **nyá**, **nyé**, **nyó** or **nyó** depending on ATR harmony of the verb root. **nyó** or **nyó** is triggered by the 2SG/PL subject pronoun or a subject argument which belongs to the **o-** class. The form has a vague epistemic sense which in context, can be interpreted as epistemic certainty as in (179a) and (179b). In some other contexts, it can be interpreted as probability as in (179c) and (179d).

- 179a. Máwúto ényété osín.  
 Máwúto é-nyé-té o-sí ní  
 Mawuto SM-CERT-slash CM-tree DEF  
 ‘Mawuto certainly/did cut the tree.’
- 179b. Kofí ányááwe ’éxwǎń.  
 Kofí á-nyá-á-wa kí-xwǎ ní  
 Kofi SM-CERT-PRSPROG-do CM-work DEF  
 ‘Kofi is really doing the work.’
- 179c. Bal’ ényézúru ’ídōn sí ti ladádu.  
 balí bé-nyé-zúru kí-dō ní sí ti  
 Bal’ SM-CERT-PRSPROG-do CM-work DEF CM-do

3PL.IND SM-CERT-steal CM-thing DEF COMP COMP  
**la-dá-di**

3PL.DEP-ITIVE-sell

‘Perhaps, THEY stole the things (in order) to sell (them).’

179d. Kibúí giganu tilí kulí nyábá.

**ki-búí** **giganu** **ti-lí** **kulí** **nyá-bá**  
 CM-matter difficult AM-INDEF 3SG.IND CERT-come  
 ‘Something serious has probably happened.’

To avoid ambiguity in contexts, speakers choose an adverbial or modal expression to re-enforce the interpretation they intend, for example, **kígbā** ‘truth’ as in (179e) is used to reinforce the veracity of the proposition.

179e. Kokō y’anyáde ’égbā.

**kokō** **yí** **a-nya-ɖa** **kí-gbā**  
 cocoa 3SG.IND SM-CERT-plant CM-truth  
 ‘Cocoa, he truly did plant (it).’

The form **nyá** is probably borrowed from Ewe where there is an epistemic certainty preverb modal **nyá** which evolved from the verb **nyá** ‘know’ (see eg. Ameka 2008).

### 7.3.12.3 Necessity and other modal meanings

Several modal meanings such as necessity and obligation are expressed in constructions in which the matrix clause consists of an impersonal pronoun which is the subject, and a sentential complement introduced by **sí** (which is a quotative or complement clause introducer) for the factual and the realis situations and for the irrealis, a **ti** complementiser combining with the **sí** complementiser (see Chapter 9, § 9.2 on complement clauses). These matrix clauses include those listed in (180a) and exemplified in (180b) and (180c).

- 180a. **alası (ti)** ‘It is necessary that’  
**kuťó sí** ‘It is necessary that’  
**kizhiā sí** ‘It is necessary that’ (lit. ‘it is needed that’)  
**kiwí sí** ‘It is obvious that/ obviously’ (lit. ‘it appears that’)  
**kulí ’mí dání sí** ‘it is obvious/ apparent that (lit. ‘its inside open that’)  
**kulí ’mí bhui sí** ‘it is obvious/ apparent that (lit. ‘its inside cut that’)  
**kulí ’mí tsá sí** ‘it is obvious/ apparent that (lit. ‘its inside clear that’)

180b. Alası (ti) Kofi ávi idzoum.

**a-lí** **a-sí** **(ti)** **Kofi** **á-ví** **ki-dzo** **kumi**  
 3SG-be.at SM-COMP (COMP) Kofi SM-go CM-road inside  
 ‘Kofi must travel.’

180c. ...so kîní ní, kîdaazhĩĩ sí budayĩkɔ kasí abrewa.

**so kî-ní ní kî-daa-zhĩĩ sí**  
so AM-PROX TOP 3SG-NEG:PSTPROG-need COMP

**bu-da-yĩkɔ kasí a-brewa**  
1PL-ITIVE-take show CM-old.woman

‘... so concerning this one, it was not necessary to seek counsel with (the) old lady.’<sup>58</sup>

Other constructions which express modal meanings include those listed in (180d). They indicate epistemic modality and are used to express the speaker’s doubts about the reality of the reported event. **Ébedzi** and **éedzi** as well as **óbhi** and **ébhi** are variants of the same modal expressions respectively.

180d. **ébedzi/ éedzi** ‘maybe, perhaps’ (lit. ‘it will be’)  
**óbhi/ ébhi** ‘maybe/ perhaps’  
**ádipĩ** ‘maybe/ perhaps’ (lit. ‘it not be good’)

These expressions are lexicalised from the kinds of matrix clause structures we have seen above.

#### 7.3.12.4 The desiderative

The preverb **ti/ti** ‘want, desiderative’ is related in form and meaning to the clause introducer **ti** ‘PURP’. It is used to indicate that the participant in the subject role wants to carry out an action represented by the main verb as shown in the following examples.

181a. Kofĩ ávĩ etibu idru.

**Kofĩ á-vĩ e-ti-bu i-dru**  
Kofĩ SM-go SM-DESID-create CM.PL-yam.mound  
‘Kofi went to make yam mounds.’

181b. ... so ótimínĩ ɔlí ní ɔg’ɔkpasí kɪbhluɔɔénímĩ bɔbalɪ lɔbalɪ kú anɔ̃ ǎmĩ?

**so ó-ti-mínĩ ɔlí ní ɔ-gɪ ɔ-kpasí kɪ-bhluɔɔé**  
so 2SG.DEP-DESID-lick 3SG TOP 3SG.REL SM-be.in CM-ladle  
**ní kɪmɪ bɔ-balɪ lɔ-balɪ kú a-nɔ̃ ǎ-mĩ**  
DEF inside CM-pour 3SG.DEP-pour ALL CM-person CM-face  
‘... and you want to lick it as well, the soup in the ladle will spill into your eyes.’ (Proverbs #27)

<sup>58</sup> It is a common practice in Southern-Ghana cultures when elders retire to consult among themselves during an arbitration to say that they go to consult an old lady or grandma.

181c. Ítyíko 'edǝŋǝ́ ko, ítíívi tɪ 'wə 'ɔyaníṃ?

<b>í-tɪ-yíko</b>	<b>kí-dǝŋǝ́ ko</b>	<b>í-tíí-vɪ</b>
1SG-DESID-take	CM-food just	1SG-NEG:PRSPROG-go
<b>tɪ</b>	<b>í-wə</b>	<b>bu-ya ní kumɪ</b>
PURP	1SG.DEP-delay	CM-farm DEF in

'I am just going to take food stuff, I am not going to keep long in the farm.'

In example (181c) for instance, there are three instances of the segmental form **tɪ**. The first is the desiderative in **í-tɪ-yíko** which we are concerned about in this section and the second is in the negative progressive form in **í-tɪ-vɪ** and the third is the purposive **tɪ** introducing the dependent clause 'I keep long in the farm'.

### 7.3.13 The directional preverbs

There are two directional preverbs in Tafi. They are the itive and the ventive. They are described in turn in the subsections below.

#### 7.3.13.1 The itive

The itive in Tafi is expressed by the directional preverb **dá** 'ITIVE'. It is realised as **dá/dé** and **dó/dó** depending on the person of the subject argument and the ATR value of the verb root. As usual, if the subject is 2SG/PL, the forms with the rounded vowels, **dó** and **dó** are used. The itive expresses the idea of a state of affairs occurring away from the deictic centre. From a semantic point of view and considering the forms, the itive could have evolved from the verb **di** 'go'. The examples in (182a) - (182d) are illustrations of the use of **dá** 'ITIVE'.

182a. Ávídékpú ní áyakpáníṃ.

<b>á-vɪ-dé-kpú</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>á-yakpá</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>kumɪ</b>
3SG-go-ITIVE-hide	LOC	CM-bush	DEF	inside

'S/he went and hid in the bush.'

182b. Ádǎwǝ́sǝ́sǝ́.

<b>á-dǎ-wǝ́sǝ́</b>	<b>ke.sí</b>
3SG-ITIVE-lie	down

'S/he went to lie down.'

182c. Kǎ ǝ́dǝ́kǝ́ adzǝ́n sǝ́kǎ.

<b>kǎ</b>	<b>ǝ́-dǝ́-kǝ́</b>	<b>a-dzǝ́</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>sǝ́kǎ</b>
then	2SG.DEP-ITIVE-give	CM-woman	DEF	money

'Then you go and give the woman money.'

182d. Ádǎdǝ́dzǝ́ akpǎ.

**á-dí-dé-dzí**      **a-kpǎ**  
 3SG-go-ITIVE-buy CM.PL-fish  
 ‘S/he went and bought fish.’

### 7.3.13.2 The ventive

The ventive in Tafi is **bá**. It is realized as **bá/bé** and **bó/bó**. Like for the itive, the choice between these forms is based on person of the subject and vowel harmony rules governed by the initial vowel of the verb. **Bá** ‘VENT’ is a directional preverb that is used to indicate that a state of affairs eventually occurs at the deictic centre. It can co-occur with other preverb markers and if it does it occurs in the slot immediately before the verb. It also co-occurs with the verb **bá** ‘come’ from which it grammaticalised as well as with the future marker **ba** which also grammaticalised from the verb **bá** ‘come’. In fact, the three forms can co-occur as in (183c). It seems that when the ventive occurs with the future marker its tone becomes low as shown in (183c).

183a. Bébékú.  
**bé-bé-ku**  
 3PL-VENT-reach  
 ‘They arrived.’

183b. Ábádó ’unya kpata.  
**á-bá-dó**      **bu-nya**      **kpata**  
 3SG-VENT-contact CM-sickness suddenly  
 ‘S/he suddenly fell sick.’

183c. Ábababá kīvū.  
**Á-ba-ba-bá**      **kīvū**  
 3SG-FUT-VENT-come tomorrow  
 ‘S/he is going to come tomorrow.’

### 7.3.14 Operator verbs with “adverbial” meanings

#### 7.3.14.1 **Tiklěñ5** ‘be susceptible to, be prone to, have a high propensity to do something’

The verb **tiklěñ5** is used to indicate that a state of affairs occurs very often. It signals that the referent of the subject argument has a high propensity to be engaged in the state of affairs. **Tiklěñ5** takes an event nominal or a nominalised verb as complement, as shown in (184a). If the event is represented by a transitive verb with its complement, there is a permutation of the VO order, as in (184b) which is a proverb.



- 184a. Adzinóv5ěǎń étíklěń5 'onya.

**a-dzinóv5ě**   **a-ní**   **é-tíklěń5**   **bu-nya**  
 CM-girl   AM-PROX   SM-be.proned.to   CM-sick  
 'This girl easily falls sick.'

- 184b. Ban5 tuabhe 'eshí épídzyá étíklěń5 ɔto 'uzā.

**ba-n5**   **tu-bha**   **ki.shí**   **e-pidzya**   **é-tíklěń5**  
 CM.PL-person   AM-two   midst   CM-goat   SM-be.proned.to  
**ɔ-to**   **bu-za**  
 CM-outside   CM-stay  
 'A goat that is reared between two keepers apart strays very often.' i.e., is  
 prone to straying. (Proverb #26)

7.3.14.2 **tsyi** 'do something in vain'

**Tsyi** 'do something in vain' is a verb with an adverbial meaning. It is used to express a frustrative meaning. Like other TAM operator verbs, it occurs with an event nominal or a nominalised verb as complement. The sentences in (185) illustrate this verb.

- 185a. Bátsyi 'uga.

**bá-tsyi**   **bu-ga**  
 3PL-do.in.vain   CM-walk  
 'They walked in vain.'

- 185b. W'ɔtsyi 'ubhítĩ oo.

**wɔ**   **ɔ-tsyi**   **bu-bhítĩ**   **oo**  
 2SG.IND   SM-do.in.vain   CM-do   UFP  
 'You have tried or worked in vain.'

7.3.14.3 **buso** 'do first'

**Buso** 'do first' is a verb with a temporal sequence meaning. It can occur with an event nominal as a complement as illustrated in (186a) or in a bi-clausal construction as shown in (186b). The examples in (186a) and (186b) are adapted from a riddle and a story respectively.

- 186a. Íkp'anō sí edeklũ Tsě ákóm, Tsě ebuso 'úbá.

**í-kpí**   **a-nō**   **sí**   **e-dé-klũ**   **Tsě**   **á-kó**  
 1SG-send   CM-person   COMP   3SG.DEP-ITIVE-call   Tsě   SM-give  
**mí**   **Tsě**   **e-buso**   **bu-bá**  
 1SG   Tsě   SM-do.first   CM-come  
 'I sent someone to call me Tsě but Tsě arrived before the person.'  
 (Riddle #7)

186b. Kásālā bǒŋ ébuso aábá o.

**ká-sālā**      **bǒŋ**      **é-buso**      **a-á-bá**      **o**  
 CM-tortoise    rather   SM-do.first   SM-PRSPROG-come   UFP  
 ‘Tortoise is rather the one who is arriving first.’ (Kásālā)

#### 7.3.14.4      **tsɔ** ‘do early’

**Tsɔ** ‘early’ is a verb with an adverbial meaning of speed. It takes a nominalised verb as its complement. The following examples in (187a) and (187b) show the use of **tsɔ** ‘do early’.

187a. M’eni ápī sí nɔtsɔ ʔvɪ tɪ nɔtsɔ ʔbá.

**mí**      **é-ní**      **á-pī**      **sí**      **nɔ-tsɔ**      **bu-vɪ**  
 1SG   CM-mother   SM-want   COMP   2PL.DEP-do.early   CM-go  
**tɪ**      **nɔ-tsɔ**      **bu-bá**  
 COMP   2PL.DEP-do.early   CM-come  
 ‘My mother wants you to leave early so that you come back early.’

187b. T’ɔtsɔ ʔbá.

**tɪ**      **ɔ-tsɔ**      **bu-bá**  
 COMP   2SG.DEP-do.early   CM-come  
 ‘May you come back early.’

The sentence in (169b) is a parting expression said to someone going somewhere for a short time, for instance, to the farm, on a day’s journey etc. (see chapter on routine expressions).

## 7.4      Adverbs and adverbial phrases

The adjunct slot in a clause can be filled by expressions from several categories such as adverbs, adverbial phrases, nouns and noun phrases as well as postpositional phrases. All these can be used to modify verbal expressions. Tafi has a limited number of basic adverbs. Semantically, adverbs in the language are classified into the following groups: manner, degree, time, place and modality.

### 7.4.1      Manner

Manner is mostly expressed by ideophones and adverbs. Examples include:

- 188a. **mɔ**      ‘well’  
**zia**      ‘fast, quickly, hurriedly, often’  
**grɔdzyu**      ‘reluctantly’  
**pɛpɛpɛpɛ**      ‘out of breath (sound)’

<b>kídzéé</b>	‘quietly’
<b>bhadaa</b>	‘murky, slimy, grimy’
<b>ḑḑḑḑḑḑ</b>	‘slowly’

188b. Anóvon ááfwě pēpēpēpē.

<b>a-núvo</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>á-á-fwě</b>	<b>pēpēpēpē</b>
CM-child	DEF	SM-PRSPROG-breathe	IDEO.out.of.breath
‘The child is breathing like someone out of breath.’			

188c. Ezin ékpu étsoḑú uvuním kídzéé.

<b>e-zi</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>é-kpu</b>	<b>é-tsokú</b>	<b>bú-vū</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>kími</b>	<b>kídzéé</b>
CM-thief	DEF	SM-hide	SM-enter	CM-house	DEF	in	quietly
‘The thief hid and sneaked into the room.’							

Some of these ideophones can be repeated for intensity as shown in (188d). The number of times an ideophone is repeated is iconic with the degree of intensity as exemplified in (188e) below.

- 188d. **mḑ** → **mḑ mḑ**      ‘very well’  
**zia** → **ziazia**      ‘very fast, quickly, often’

188e. Ékpu ’ídḑń ziaziaziazia.

<b>é-kpu</b>	<b>kí-dḑ</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>ziaziaziazia</b>
3SG-hide	CM-thing	DEF	IDEO.fast
‘S/he hid the thing very very quickly.’			

#### 7.4.2 Degree adverbs

Degree is expressed by some basic adverbial words as well as ideophonic words. They include:

- 189a. **ko**      ‘just, only’      < Ewe  
**klóé**      ‘almost’      < Ewe  
**tso**      ‘completely’  
**kubóé**      ‘a little, nearly’  
**kodzo**      ‘very well/ much, a lot’  
**wéé**      ‘completely’  
**těyĩ**      ‘completely’  
**taywée**      ‘completely’  
**fḑḑḑ**      ‘very much’  
**faánḑ**      ‘too much’  
**kpáwḑ** **kpáwḑ**      ‘too much’      < Ewe

<b>tútúútú</b>	‘exactly’	< Akan via Ewe
<b>pópópó</b>	‘very much’	

The adverbs **ko** ‘just, only’, **klóé** ‘almost’, **kpáwú kpáwú** ‘too much’ and **tútúútú** ‘exactly’ look like borrowed words from Ewe. The examples in (189b) - (189d) illustrate the adverbs **faánɔ̃** ‘too much’, **kodzɔ** ‘very well/much’ and **wéé** ‘completely’ respectively.

189b. Nɔ́wɔ́ faánɔ̃.

<b>nɔ-ɔ-wɔ́</b>	<b>faánɔ̃</b>
2PL-PRSPROG-stay	too.much
‘You are delaying too much.’	

189c. Kakudzɔgɛ́ań évu ídɔ́ kodzɔ.

<b>ka-kudzɔgɛ́</b>	<b>a-ńí</b>	<b>é-vu</b>	<b>kí-dɔ́</b>	<b>kodzɔ</b>
CM-dog	AM-PROX	SM-catch	CM-thing	very.well
‘This dog hunts very well.’				

189d. Ébéké ídɔ́ń wéé.

<b>é-béké</b>	<b>kí-dɔ́</b>	<b>ńí</b>	<b>wéé</b>
3SG-finish	CM-thing	DEF	completely
‘S/he finished it completely.’			

### 7.4.3 Temporal expressions

There are some basic adverbs that have temporal senses. Some of these are listed in (190a). The first adverb seems to have been borrowed from Ewe.

190a. <b>gbo</b>	‘in a moment, in the meantime’
<b>pútɔ́nɔ</b>	‘previously’
<b>otsígo/otsúgo</b>	‘now’

Other time words belong to different word classes but function in the same slot as adverbs. Some of these words are nouns as shown in (190b). Others are ideophones as in (190c). The forms listed in (190d) are adverbs and they may have been borrowed from Ewe.

190b. <b>kívū</b>	‘tomorrow’
<b>kemúzē</b>	‘afternoon’
<b>kíwinyééwī</b>	‘everyday’
<b>kibenyéébe</b>	‘every time, always’
<b>ɔ́wúlago</b>	‘evening’

190c. <b>kúkúúkú</b>	‘already’
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<b>riɖiɖiɖi</b>	‘continuously, for a long time’
<b>ɔtsɔ̃</b>	‘now’
<b>tsĩĩ</b>	‘in a moment’
<b>ɔtsɔ̃tsĩĩ</b>	‘just now’

190d.	<b>kpata(a)</b>	‘suddenly’	< <b>kpata</b> ,	Ewe
	<b>katsyáá</b>	‘as soon as’	< <b>kasia</b> ,	Ewe
	<b>qáá</b>	‘always’	< <b>qáá</b> ,	Ewe from Akan

The examples below illustrate the use of the temporal adverbs **pútɔnɔ** ‘previously’ and **kpata** ‘suddenly’ in (190d) as well as **gbɔ** ‘in the meantime’ in (190e). The example in (190d) was adapted from a recording in which the elders of a clan were informing the chief and elders of the town about the death of a member of the clan and the chief and elders trying to find out what sickness caused his death; whereas the example in (190e) was adapted from a story about how the striped mouse got its stripes.

- 190d. Bátíɖɔ pútɔnɔ sí ábáɖɔ ɔnya kpata.  
**bá-tí-ɖɔ**      **pútɔnɔ**      **sí**      **á-bá-ɖɔ**  
 3PL-PERF-say    previously    COMP    3SG.DEP-VENT-contact  
**bu-nya**      **kpata**  
 CM-sickness suddenly  
 ‘They said earlier on that he fell sick suddenly...’ (Butsiugu)
- 190e. Bubhi káyí yí gbɔ.  
**bu-bhi**      **ká-yí**      **yí**      **gbɔ**  
 CM-hunger    NEG.PERF-kill    3SG    in.the.meantime  
 ‘He is not yet hungry in the meantime.’ (Gbaxálĩ)

#### 7.4.4 Days of the week

Days of the week can also function as adverbials.

191a.	<b>kíwalo</b>	‘Monday’
	<b>ɔwashui</b>	‘Tuesday’
	<b>ɔwashui ɔza</b>	‘Wednesday’
	<b>ehlowi</b>	‘Thursday’
	<b>kíshūi</b>	‘Friday’
	<b>kípā</b>	‘Saturday’
	<b>kípadzíwī</b>	‘Sunday’

It is worth noting that many of the young speakers do not know much about the Tafi names for the days of the week. Generally, the Tafi names for the days of the week are used interchangeably with the Ewe ones especially for Sunday (kwesra),

as illustrated in the example below. Ewe names for the days of the week themselves are ultimately borrowed from Akan. The sentence in (191b) like the one in (190d) was adapted from a recording of a meeting between the elders of a clan and a regent and council of elders of a community.

- 191b. Kípā ní ní bowa kúnú, kwesrá búdí kúsolímú ónání 'íwalo.  
 kípā ní ní bowa kúnú kwesrá búdí  
 Saturday DEF TOP 1PL-do funeral Sunday 1PL-attend  
 kúsolímú ónání kíwalo  
 burial.service 2SG-reach Monday  
 'On Saturday, we perform (the) funeral rites, on Sunday, we attend the  
 burial service till Monday.' (Butsiugu)

#### 7.4.5 Adverbs of place

Deictic expressions in Tafi which are used to indicate direction or as adverbs of place include **ɪkí/ɔkí** 'here' and **ɪklí** 'there'. The following are examples:

- 192a. ɪklí, ekusín áká 'tabu sí...  
 ɪ-klí e-kusí ní á-ká a-tábú sí  
 CM-there CM-chief DEF SM-say CM-oath COMP  
 'There and then, the chief swore an oath that...' (Butsé)
- 192b. Átíbā 'kí?.  
 á-tí-bā ɪ-kí  
 3SG-NEG1-come CM-here  
 'He does not come here.'

#### 7.4.6 Modal adverbials

Modal adverbials in the language include those listed in (191a) below.

- 193a. **buwǎ** 'in vain'  
**twǎ** 'in vain'  
**kɪgbúgbā** 'truly'  
**kookoko** 'certainly, surely' (borrowed from Ewe)  
**dewomahí/ domahí** 'perhaps, maybe' (borrowed from Ewe)

The following are illustrative sentences of modal adverbials:

- 193b. Kɪgi w'óóbhutíán buwǎ/ twǎ.  
 kɪ-gi wó ó-ó-bhutí aní buwǎ/ twǎ  
 3SG-REL 2SG.IND SM-PRSPROG-do TOP in.vain  
 'What you are doing is in vain.'

193c. Adzĩn ébepo wó kokooko.

**a-dzĩ ní é-be-po wó kokooko**  
 CM-woman DEF SM-FUT-wait 2SG surely  
 ‘The woman will surely wait for you.’

#### 7.4.7 Prepositional phrases

Prepositional phrases introduced by the comitative **ni** ‘COM’ and **nĩ** ‘LOC’ can also be used to express adverbial meanings. If the complement of the comitative preposition **ni** is an abstract noun denoting an emotion, for instance, it can be interpreted as manner of performing the action in the clause. The locative preposition **nĩ** is used to introduce the location of an event. It is also used to mark the ground in the basic locative construction. The use of prepositional phrases as adverbials is illustrated below. The sentence in (194a) is adapted from a Frog Story narration while (194b) is taken from another story. (194c) exemplifies the locative preposition **nĩ**. In these sentences, the prepositional phrases **ni samu** ‘with joy’ in (194a) and **ni kiwĩ** ‘with shame’ in (194b) are used in adjunct position and are interpreted adverbially.

194a. Anóvōn ézhi áv’ édebú yí gbokóéni ni samu.

**a-nóvō ní é-zhi á-vi é-de-bú yí**  
 CM-child DEF SM-descend SM-go SM-ITIVE-remove 3SG.IND  
**gbokóé ní ni samu**  
 toad DEF COM joy  
 ‘The child got down and fetched his toad with joy (joyfully).’ (FS)

194b. ... kulí adzinóvōn áló n’iŵĩ gĩ etsódzi avĩ y’eni ni y’aka ’kó.

**kulí a-dzinóvō ní á-ló ni ki-wĩ gĩ**  
 CONJ CM-girl DEF SM-get.up COM CM-shame REL  
**e-tsódzi a-vi yí é-nĩ ni yí**  
 2SG.DEP-return SM-go 3SG.IND CM-mother COM 3SG.IND  
**á-kā o.kó**  
 CM-father place  
 ‘... and then the girl got up with shame and returned to her parents.’

194c. Bázha ’dzi ní sukũ.

**bá-zha o-dzi ní suku**  
 3PL-sing CM-song LOC school  
 ‘They sang in school.’

#### 7.4.8 Postpositional phrases

Some postpositional phrases can also be used to express adverbial concepts. The sentence in (195) below exemplifies this. In this sentence, the postpositional phrase

**kílē kum** ‘(lit. in air)’ is used to express the modal adverbial meaning of ‘in vain’. It is topicalised.

195. Kílēm ’iyo w’óóbāń.  
**kí-lē kum yiyo wó ó-ó-bī aní**  
 CM-air inside cry 2SG.IND SM-PRSPROG-cry TOP  
 ‘In vain you are WEeping.’

#### 7.4.9 Clause positions for adverbials

The unmarked position of most adverbs or adverbials in Tafi is clause final. Few of them can occur in focus or topic position only, i.e., clause initial position whereas there are some that can occur in both initial and final positions of a clause. Below are examples. (196a) consists of examples of adverbs that can occur only clause-initially, in (196b), we have examples of adverbs that occur only in clause final position while (196c) comprises examples of those adverbials which can occur in both initial and final positions in the clause.

The clause initial adverbs and adverbials include:

- 196a. **otsígo/otsúgo** ‘now’  
**kátsyáá** ‘as soon as’

The clause final adverbs and adverbials include:

- 196b. **tso** ‘completely’  
**wéé** ‘completely’  
**kodzo** ‘very much, well’  
**faáno** ‘too much’  
**zia** ‘quickly’  
**gbo** ‘in a moment, in a meantime’  
**tútúútú** ‘exactly’

Clause initial and clause final adverbs and adverbials include the following:

- 196c. **otsǽǽ** ‘now’  
**buwǽ** ‘in vain’  
**twǽ** ‘in vain’  
**kulēm** ‘in vain’  
**ádipĩ** ‘perhaps, maybe’  
**ébhi/ óbhi** ‘perhaps, maybe’  
**kokooko** ‘certainly, surely’

Typically, when these occur clause initially, they function as scene-setting topics.





## 8 SENTENCE TYPES: DECLARATIVES, INTERROGATIVES AND IMPERATIVES

This chapter deals with sentence types. Sentences may be classified according to the meanings or illocutionary force they are used to express or convey in discourse. The main sentence types discussed in this chapter are:

- declaratives
- interrogatives
- imperatives

The chapter is divided into three major parts. The first part discusses declarative sentences and the second part looks at various types of interrogative sentences. Imperative sentences are examined in the final part of the chapter.

### 8.1 Declaratives

Declarative sentences are used to convey information or to make statements. In its most basic sense, a declarative states an idea or a proposition for the sheer purpose of transferring information to the receiver. Declarative sentences are by far the most common type and are thus considered the unmarked clause type (cf. Sadock and Zwicky 1985:165, Payne 1997:294). Declarative sentences may consist of simple or complex sentences as shown in (1) – (5).

1. Ekusí tédjípó y'áaŋa bal'íabhā  
**e-kusí te-djípó yí á-a-ŋa balí kábhā**  
CM-chief AM-one 3SG.IND SM-PSTPROG-eat 3PL.IND top  
'ONE CHIEF was ruling over them.' (Kásālā)
2. Ákányááká ádzíkí y'oklebhó ní 'íbúí.  
**á-kányááká á-dzíkí yí o-kebhó ní**  
CM-every SM-forget 3SG.IND CM-bundle.of.thatch DEF  
**ki-búí**  
CM-matter  
'Everybody forgot about his bundle of thatch.' (Kásālā)
3. Kof' épídzyán étsí.  
**Kofí e-pidzya ní é-tsí**  
Kofí CM-goat DEF SM-die  
'Kofí's goat has died.'
4. lmo sukúeyín g'ezúru 'éplúkpán.  
**ɪ-mo sukúeyí ní gɪ e-zúru ke-plukpá ní**  
1SG-see student DEF REL 3SG.DEP-steal CM-book DEF  
'I saw the student who stole the book.'

5. M'ak' enú ásí ótíshĩ.  
**mí á-kā e-nú a-sí ó-tí-shĩ**  
 1SG.IND CM-father SM-hear SM-COMP 2SG-PERF-leave  
 'My father heard that you have left.'

The examples in (1) – (3) illustrate declarative sentences made up of simple sentences whereas those in (4) and (5) are complex sentences consisting of a main clause and a dependent clause.

## 8.2 Interrogatives

Interrogative sentences are mainly used, among others, for requesting and asking questions. In Tafi, various strategies are employed for the formation of various types of questions. They include:

- 6a. Prosody or intonation.
- 6b. The use of particles
- 6c. The use of question words

### 8.2.1 Propositional or polar questions

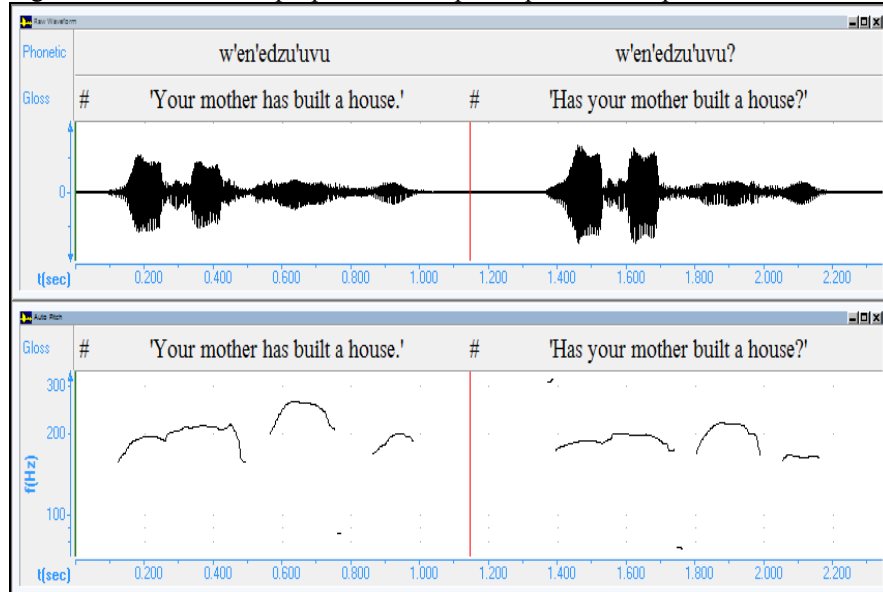
Propositional or polar questions are used to elicit a response as to whether the proposition they express is true or not. According to Watters (2000:204), "most African languages use their basic word order to form yes/no questions". In Tafi, there is no difference in structure and segmental form between a propositional or polar question and a declarative statement. There is only a difference in pitch. The propositional or polar question ends in a slightly lower pitch than its counterpart statement. This is contrary to what happens in Logba and Tuwuli where the difference between a declarative statement and a polar question is a raised pitch over the latter (see Dorvlo 2008, Harley 2005 and Dakubu to appear for a typological overview of interrogative prosody in Kwa and Gur languages). Compare the pitch traces of a declarative statement and a propositional or polar question in Tafi in Figure 1 below.

In Figure 1, the left hand trace is the statement, as in (7) and the right hand trace is the propositional question based on it, as in (8).

7. W'en' edzú 'úvũ.  
**wó é-nĩ e-dzú bú-vũ**  
 2SG.IND CM-mother SM-build CM-house  
 'Your mother has built a house.'

8. W'en' edzú 'úvũ?  
**wó é-ní e-dzú bú-vũ**  
 2SG.IND CM-mother SM-build CM-house  
 'Has your mother built a house?'

Figure 1: Statement and propositional or polar question compared



Many languages that use intonation to signal propositional questions tend to use rising intonation, e.g. English and Dutch, Tafi is like Sesotho, for example, in using lowered pitch on the end of the question (Dryer 2011).

The illocutionary force of a propositional question can be reinforced by the addition of one of a set of utterance final particles which occur in questions. These utterance final particles include **dza**, **xāā/ hāā**, **lo(o)**, and **a**. The intensifying or emotive particles **xāā** and **hāā** are used interchangeably and probably adapted from Ewe **hā** 'UFP' (see Ameka 1998). The vowels of some of the particles such as **lo(o)** and **a** can be lengthened. It is striking that the particle **a** is similar to the Ewe question particle or clitic **a**. All these particles bear low tones and are used to express attitudinal meanings such as impatience, urgency and mild irritation. Consider the following examples:

9. Ómɔ m'eyín dza/hāā?  
**ɔ-mɔ mí e-yí ní dza / hāā**  
 2SG-see 1SG.IND CM-child DEF UFP  
 'Did you see my child? (I want to know now)'

10. Ányín ááshĩ xāā/ hāā?  
**á-nyí ní á-á-shĩ xāā/ hāā**  
 CM-man DEF SM-PRSPROG-leave UFP  
 ‘Is the man leaving?’
11. Báákā ní tsyámĩ alí lo?  
**báá-kā ní tsyámĩ a-lí lo**  
 CM.PL-father DEF spokesperson SM-be.at UFP  
 Is the elders’ spokesperson there?’
12. Ónyí a?  
**ó-nyí a**  
 2SG-know UFP  
 ‘Did/do you know?’

The response to propositional or polar questions could be simply **xee/ ee** ‘yes’ or **hōwo/ ōo** ‘no’ or an elaborate response could be provided after the ‘yes’ or ‘no’ word. For instance, as an elaborate response to (9), one could say:

13. Xee, ímō ’alí.  
**xee í-mō balí**  
 yes 1SG-see 3PL  
 ‘Yes, I saw them.’

Propositional or polar questions can also be introduced by **sí** ‘QP’ which is similar to **sí** ‘COMP’. It is used to introduce propositional or polar questions for which the questioner knows the answer but is seeking confirmation from the addressee(s). So it is used to ask conducive questions. There is a similar resemblance in Akan between a question introducer **sé** and a ‘COMP’ **sé** (Saah 1988).

14. Aa! sí nōómō ɔlishí tɔbhañ?  
**aa sí nō-ɔ-mō ɔlí kishí tɔ-bha ní**  
 INTJ QP 2PL-PRSPROG-see 3SG.IND midst AM-two DEF  
 ‘Ah! Do you see the centre of it (it = circle)?’ (Kásālā)
15. Sí nōómō ekle ní g’etsirí kitokpě níábhā?  
**sí nō-ɔ-mō e-kle ní gu e-tsirí**  
 QP 2PL-PRSPROG-see CM-thatch DEF REL 3SG.DEP-be.on  
**ki-tokpě ní kábhā**  
 CM-hillock DEF top  
 ‘You see the thatch that is on the hillock, don’t you?’ (Kásālā)
16. Sí buní ní békē?  
**sí bu-ní ní békē**  
 QP CM-water DEF finish

‘The water is finished, isn’t it?’

### 8.2.2 Alternative questions

Alternative questions are used to present the addressee(s) with alternative choices to choose from to complete the proposition. Alternative questions in Tafi consist of two or more phrases or clauses conjoined by a disjunctive marker **pún33/lóó/aló(ó)** ‘or’. The form **aló(ó)** ‘or’ appears to be borrowed from Ewe **alóó** ‘or’. As demonstrated in the examples in (17) – (20), the disjunctive marker occurs between the different choices available. In (17) and (18), for example, the choice is between two NPs in alternation whereas in (19) and (20), it is between two clauses.

17. Óvɪ ɔgɔmɪ pún33 Atoem?  
**ɔ-ɔ-vɪ**                      **ɔgɔmɪ**      **pún33 Atoem**  
 2SG-PRSPROG-go Agorme DISJ Atome  
 ‘Are you going to Agorme or to Atome?’
18. Anóvɔ́n ábatá ásí pún33 ’ukupí?  
**a-nóvɔ́n**      **ní**      **á-ba-tá**                      **á-sí**                      **pún33 bu-kupí**  
 CM-child DEF SM-FUT-chew CM-rice DISJ CM.PL-yam.slice  
 ‘Will the child eat rice or yam slices?’
19. Óbɔtɔ ’ɛdɔ́n lóó ɔbɔvɪ ti shui ’uní?  
**ɔ-bɔ-tɔ**                      **kí-dɔ**      **ní**      **lóó**      **ɔ-bɔ-vɪ**                      **tɪ**      **shui**  
 2SG-FUT-cook CM-thing DEF DISJ 2SG-FUT-go PURP fetch  
**bu-ní**  
 CM-water  
 ‘Will you cook the food or you will go to fetch water (from the riverside)?’
20. Adzɪ́n ábato ekū́n alóó ábad’alí?  
**a-dzɪ́**                      **ní**      **á-ba-tɔ**                      **é-kū**                      **ní**      **alóó**  
 CM-woman DEF SM-FUT-cook CM.PL-yam DEF DISJ  
**á-ba-dɪ**                      **alí**  
 SM-FUT-sell 3PL  
 ‘Will the woman cook the yams or she will sell them?’

### 8.2.3 Tag questions

Tag questions are those immediately following a statement and they serve to seek confirmation or rejection of the statement (cf. Payne 1997). In my corpus, tag questions in Tafi can be formed from propositional questions introduced by **sí** ‘QP’ as in example (21) or by using a negative cleft construction as in (22). **Pún33** ‘or’ can also be used as a disjunctive tag without offering an alternative as illustrated in (23). We have already seen the use of **pún33** ‘or’ in alternative questions (§ 8.2.2).

21. Kakudzɔgɛ́n énémi wɔ́, s'âmo?  
**ka-kudzɔgɛ́** **ní** **ké-némi** **wɔ́** **sí** **ɔ-mo**  
 CM-dog DEF SM-bite 2SG QP 2SG-see  
 'The dog bit you, you see?'
22. Buní ní békɛ́, aní 'ana?  
**bu-ní** **ní** **békɛ́** **aní** **ká-nā**  
 CM-water DEF finish NEGCL CM-manner  
 'The water is finished, is it not so?'
23. Áába púnɔ́ɔ?  
**á-á-ba** **púnɔ́ɔ**  
 3SG-PRSPROG-come DISJ  
 'S/he is coming, isn't he?'

#### 8.2.4 Topic only questions

Topic only questions seek information about a topic entity. In Tafi, they are marked by the UFP **hɔ́(ɔ́)**. This particle occurs on NPs. This information can concern the whereabouts or any aspect of the person or thing. It is thus translated into English as 'where', 'how about', etc. Consider the following examples:

- 24a. Tsytámí ní hɔ́ɔ?  
**tsytámí** **ní** **hɔ́ɔ**  
 spokesperson DEF UFP  
 'Where is the spokesperson (= "linguist")?'
- 24b. Oni ní hɔ́?  
**o-ni** **ní** **hɔ́**  
 CM-soup DEF UFP  
 'Where is the soup?'

#### 8.2.5 Content questions

Content questions, also referred to as wh-questions in English, are used to ask for particular information specified through question words. They require more than a yes/no answer. The following question words are used in Tafi:

25. **-ní** 'who/whom/whose'  
**kídɛ́** 'what'  
**fákɔ́** 'where'  
**kuí** 'how'  
**kídɛ́so** 'why'  
**qúwɛ́** 'which'

**kibedúwē**(be)    ‘when’, and  
**-shĩ**                ‘how many/ much’.

Generally, questions with these question words end on a low tone and the effect of this is only realised when the preceding tone is non-low yielding a falling contour tone at the end of these questions. They may occur ex-situ, i.e., fronted and placed in clause-initial position, where they are in focus, or they may occur in-situ, i.e., where they occupy the position in the clause where the constituent being questioned would occur in an otherwise unmarked clause. The question forms **dúwē** ‘which’ and **-shĩ** ‘how many/much’ are interrogative modifiers so they occur after the head noun. Among the content question forms, only **-shĩ** ‘how many/much’ and **-nĩ** ‘who’ show concord with the head noun. **-shĩ** ‘how many/much’ has corresponding forms for the various classes of nouns it modifies. Thus, it behaves like other quantifiers. The question form **-nĩ** ‘who’, on its part, gets agreement for human nouns. In the singular, it takes the prefix **a-** whereas in the plural, it takes the **baa-** prefix. These prefixes correspond with the noun-class prefixes of the **a<sup>1</sup>-/ba(a)-** classes which are typically made up of animate nouns. **dúwē** ‘which’ does not show concord with the head noun it modifies. However, it can be nominalised by the addition of nominal prefixes. As such, it does behave like qualifiers (see Chapter 3 on noun classes for more discussions on **-shĩ** ‘how many/much?’ and **dúwē** ‘which?’). When the content question forms, **-nĩ** ‘who’, **kídē** ‘what’ and **kídēso** ‘why’ are in focus, they occur with **gɔ/pɪ** ‘REL’/‘CONN’ in a kind of cleft construction. All the content question forms except **dúwē** ‘which’ can be used in elliptical questions. For **dúwē** ‘which’ to be used elliptically it has to be nominalised.

The subject pronominal form in an ex-situ question in which a non-subject role is questioned is realised in one of the following ways:

- If it is the 1SG, 2SG, 3SG or 2PL pronoun it is realised as an independent form.
- If it is the 1PL or 3PL pronoun it is realised as a dependent form.

This is illustrated by the following examples where (26) and (27) show the question word ex-situ in clause-initial position and (28) shows the question word in situ:

26.    **Kídē wóóhɔ?**  
       **kídē**    **wó**                **ó-ó-hɔ**  
       what    2SG.IND    2SG-PRSPROG-grind  
       ‘What are you grinding?’

27.    **Kídē lááhɔ?**  
       **kídē**    **lá-á-hɔ**  
       what    3PL.DEP-PRSPROG-grind  
       ‘What are they grinding?’



28. Bááhɔ kídê?  
**bá-á-hɔ** **kídê**  
 3PL-PRSPROG-grind what  
 ‘They are grinding what?’

In the following subsections, the content question words are discussed in turn.

#### 8.2.4.1 -nĩ ‘who’

This question word is used to ask about the identity of a person. It can occur in clause-initial position as illustrated in (29) - (31) as well as in clause-final position as in (32). The questioned constituent can fulfill different grammatical roles in the clause. For instance, it can have a subject function, as in (29) and (31), or object function, as in (30), or a copula complement function, as in (32).

29. Ánĩ y’ábáyíkɔ anóvɔ́n̄ ’ufuɔ́n̄ áŋa?  
**á-nĩ** **yí** **á-bá-yíkɔ** **a-nóvɔ́** **ní** **fufuɔ́** **ní**  
 AM-who 3SG.IND SM-VENT-take CM-child DEF fufu DEF  
**á-ŋa**  
 SM-eat  
 ‘Who came and ate the baby’s fufu?’ (Gbaxáǎĩ)
30. Báánĩ És’ édzí bawin ákô?  
**báá-nĩ** **Ésí** **é-dzí** **ba-wi** **ní** **á-kɔ́**  
 AM-who Esi SM-buy CM.PL-dress DEF SM-give  
 ‘Who (pl) did Esi buy the dresses for?’
31. Ánĩ gɪ atsyánó Ésí ní kedzinínm̄?  
**á-nĩ** **gɪ** **a-tsyánó** **Ésí** **ní** **ke-dzi** **ní** **kɪmɪ**  
 AM-who REL 3SG.DEP-meet Ésí LOC CM-market DEF inside  
 ‘Who met Esi in the market?’
32. W’ónũ ání?  
**wɔ́** **ó-nũ** **á-nĩ**  
 2SG.IND SM-COP AM-who  
 ‘Who are you?’ (lit. ‘You are who?’)

-nĩ can also be used to ask about a possessor. This is when it is followed by a possessed noun. This is demonstrated in (33).

33. Án' epidzya átē ékūn?  
**á-nī e-pidzya á-tā kí-kū ní**  
 AM-who CM-goat SM-chew CM-yam DEF  
 'Whose goat ate the yam?'

#### 8.2.4.2 Kídē 'what'

The content question word **kídē** 'what' is used to ask about non-human entities or situations. The following examples show the use of this question word.

34. Kídē w'oyí obón?  
**kídē wə o-yí o-bón**  
 what 2SG.IND SM-kill CM-today  
 'What did you kill today?'
35. Kídē gi bhítu Ésí?  
**kídē gi bhítu Ésí**  
 what REL do Esi  
 'What happened to Esi?'
36. Kídē Kofi ámo?  
**kídē Kofi á-mo**  
 what Kofi SM-see  
 'What did Kofi see?'
37. Kídē kulí tá Kofi?  
**kídē kulí tá Kofi**  
 what 3SG.IND sting Kofi  
 'What stung Kofi?'

Example (37) follows the structure of a subject focus construction where the subject NP is placed in clause-initial position but is followed by an independent form of the pronoun that refers to it. (35) is also a subject question where the question word is followed by **gi** 'REL' and the rest of the clause (see also example (29) for **ánī** 'who' subject question). It must also be pointed out that the question word in (37) can be followed by **gi** 'REL' instead of the independent pronoun as shown in (35). For ex-situ object questions, the question word appears clause-initially and there is a gap in its normal position in the rest of the clause (see examples (30), (34) and (36) above).

We turn now to adjunct content question words.

8.2.4.3 **Fákó** ‘where’

**Fákó** ‘where’ is the content question word used to ask about a location which the questioner has no idea about, as exemplified in (38) – (41). It appears that **fákó** ‘where’ is a compound made up of two constituents **fá**, the meaning of which is not quite clear and the noun root **-kó** ‘place’. At times, instead of the full form **fákó**, speakers use only **fá** to mean ‘where’ as illustrated in (39). It is also interesting to note that the locative preposition **ní** may be pied piped with the **fákó** ‘where’ question word in clause-initial position as in (40). However, the occurrence of the locative preposition is obligatory when **fákó** ‘where’ occurs in situ as in (41) (cf. Harley 2005 on Tuvuli).

38. **Fákó adzún ááví?**  
**fákó a-dzì ní a-á-ví**  
 where CM-woman DEF SM-PRSPROG-go  
 ‘Where is the woman going?’
39. **Fá w’odê?**  
**fá wó o-dé**  
 where 2SG.IND SM-come.from  
 ‘Where are you from?’
40. (Ní) **fákó adzún ááví?**  
**(ní) fákó a-dzì ní a-á-ví**  
 (LOC) where CM-woman DEF SM-PRSPROG-go  
 ‘Where is the woman going?’
41. **Ámā átsán’ ányín ní fákó?**  
**Ámā á-tsánō á-nyí ní ní fákó**  
 Ama SM-meet CM-man DEF LOC where  
 ‘Ama met the man where?’ OR ‘Where did Ama meet the man?’

8.2.4.4 **Klí** ‘how’

The content question word which is used to ask for information about the condition of someone or something such as health condition or about the performance of an action is **klí** ‘how’. The following examples in (42) - (44) exemplify the use of **klí** ‘how’. The examples in (40) and (41) are questions which are normally addressed to a sick person.

42. **Klí w’odzí oo?**  
**klí wó o-dzì oo**  
 how 2SG.IND SM-be UFP  
 ‘How are you?’

43. Kulí ishúním íbhít wô?  
**kuí i-shú ní kumu í-í-bhít wô**  
 how CM-body DEF inside SM-PRSPROG-do 2SG  
 ‘How are you?’ OR ‘how do you feel in your body?’ (lit.: ‘how is your body inside doing you?’)
44. Kulí lábhutí ’udzô?  
**kuí lá-bhutí bu-dzô**  
 how 3PL.DEF-make CM-palm.oil  
 ‘How is palm oil prepared?’

**Kulí** ‘how’ is also used to ask about the name of an entity or place as in (45) and it may occur elliptically in greetings to mean ‘how are things?’

45. Kulí leklü anóvôñ?  
**kuí le-klü a-nóvôñ ní**  
 how 3PL.DEF-call CM-child DEF  
 ‘How is the child called?’ OR ‘What is the name of the child?’

#### 8.2.4.5 Kídēso ‘why’

To ask for information concerning the reason for an action or event, the question word **kídēso** ‘why’ is used as shown in (46) - (48). (48) shows an elliptical use of **kídēso** ‘why’. This word is made up of the question word **kídē** ‘what’ and **so** ‘so, thus’. In my corpus, **kídēso** ‘why’ is obligatorily followed by the relativiser **gi** ‘REL’ or the connector **pi** when it occurs clause-initially.<sup>59</sup>

46. Kídēso pi óboyú ’ívú nɪ bekus’edziniñ?  
**kídēso pi ó-bo-yú ki-vu nɪ**  
 why CONN 2SG.DEF-VENT-dance CM-dance COM  
**be-kusi e-dzini ní**  
 CM.PL-chief CM-wife DEF  
 ‘Why did you come and dance with the queens?’ (Sáhwi)
47. Ɔdtbá sukú obón, kídēso?  
**ɔ-du-bá suku o-bón kídēso**  
 2SG-NEG2-come school CM-today why  
 ‘You did not come to school today, why?’

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<sup>59</sup> The **gi** ‘REL’ and **pi** ‘CONN’ alternate in a number of environments e.g. **onu.gi** and **onu.pi** ‘if’ and this is one context where such alternation takes place.

48. Kídēso, Yayra?  
**kídēso Yayra**  
 why Yayra  
 ‘Why, Yayra?’

In (47), **kídēso** ‘why’ occurs as if it were a tag attached to a proposition and asking for the reason why the proposition is true.

#### 8.2.4.6 -shĩ ‘how many/much’

The question word which is used to seek information with regard to quantity or amount in Tafi is **-shĩ** ‘how many/much’. **-shĩ** ‘how many/much’ is an interrogative modifier and it takes prefixes to show agreement with the head noun it modifies. The form of the agreement prefix is **tVV-**. **t-** is a quantifier prefix while the double vowel represents a lengthened copy of the prefix vowel of the head noun, except for the **ba(a)-** class prefix (see Chapter 3, § 3.3.2.4 for further discussion). The referent of the question word **-shĩ** ‘how many/much’ may either be human or non-human. When it is used to question count nouns, it is interpreted as ‘how many’ as in (49) whereas when used with non-count nouns, it is interpreted as ‘how much’ as shown in (50). To ask about a sum of money or the price of an item on sale, the noun **ehoi** ‘cowries’ is used modified by the question word **tááshĩ** ‘how many’ as in (51). **Ehoi** ‘cowries’ is used apparently because in the olden days, cowries were used as a form of payment/ in place of money. Also to ask about a person’s age, the noun **ágō** ‘years’ is used and it is modified by **tááshĩ** ‘how many’ as illustrated in (52).

49. Isí tíshĩ ányín étê?  
**I-sí tíí-shĩ á-nyí ní é-té**  
 CM.PL-tree AM-how.many CM-man DEF SM-slash  
 ‘How many trees did the man cut?’
50. Tíwúlĩ tááshĩ Kofi áyáĩ?  
**ti-wúlĩ táá-shĩ Kofi á-yáĩ**  
 CM-rubbish AM-how.many Kofi SM-collect  
 ‘How much rubbish did Kofi collect?’
51. Ehoi tááshĩ Ám’ edzí akanañ?  
**e-hoi táá-shĩ Ámā e-dzí a-kana ní**  
 CM.PL-cowrie AM-how.many Ámā SM-buy CM.PL-crab DEF  
 ‘How much did Ama buy the crabs?’

52. Ágō tááshī Kóku áyíkì?  
**á-gō táá-shī Kóku á-yíkì**  
 CM.PL-year AM-how.many Kóku SM-get  
 ‘How old is Kóku?’ (lit. ‘how many years has Kóku got?’)

#### 8.2.4.7 **dúwedu/ dúwē** ‘which’

**dúwē** ‘which’, like **-shī** ‘how many/much’ is an interrogative modifier of nouns. It is used to ask for information about a particular referent from a number of possible ones as shown in (53) – (55). The full form of this question word is **dúwedu**, however, most often, speakers drop the final syllable.

53. Adzī dúwe(dú) Ésí ámo?  
**a-dzī dúwe(dú) Ésí á-mo**  
 CM-woman which Ésí SM-see  
 ‘Which woman did Esi see?’
54. Kipótí dúwe(dú) Kofí ébhui?  
**ki-pótí dúwe(dú) Kofí é-bhui**  
 CM-cloth which Kofí SM-cut  
 ‘Which cloth did Kofi buy?’
55. Bónya dúwe(dú) bolí ténú yí yí kpata ’anā dza?  
**bú-nya dúwe(dú) bolí ténú yí yí kpata**  
 CM-sickness which 3SG.IND be.able kill 3SG suddenly  
**ká-nā dza**  
 CM-manner UFP  
 ‘Which sickness was able to kill him so suddenly?’

As stated earlier on, **dúwe(dú)** ‘which’ does not show agreement with the head noun it modifies and this is attested in examples (53) – (55) above. This question word can be nominalised by prefixing it with the noun class prefix except for the **ti-** class (see discussion under Chapter 3, § 3.3.2.6). The nominalised forms are used as interrogative pronouns. The interrogative pronouns in examples (56) – (58) represent the nouns modified by **dúwe(dú)** in (53) – (55) above.

56. Edúwe(dú) Ésí ámo?  
**e-dúwe(dú) Ésí ámo**  
 CM-which Ésí SM-see  
 ‘Which one did Esi see?’
57. Kidúwe(dú) Kofí ébhui?  
**ki-dúwe(dú) Kofí é-bhui**  
 CM-which Kofí SM-cut

‘Which one did Kofi buy?’

58. Buđúwe(dú) bolí ténú yí yí kpata anā dza?  
**buđúwe(dú) bolí ténú yí yí kpata kánā dza**  
 CM-which 3SG.IND be.able kill 3SG suddenly thus UFP  
 ‘Which one was able to kill him so suddenly?’

These interrogative pronouns can only be used in a context where both the questioner and the addressee(s) already know what the referents are.

#### 8.2.4.8 Kibedúwedúibe/ kibedúwebe ‘when’

**Kibedúwedúibe/ kibedúwebe** ‘when’ is used to inquire about time. It is a complex NP structure which is made up of the noun **kibe** ‘time’ followed by the question word ‘which’ which is in turn followed by a copy of the initial noun. Thus this complex NP can be interpreted as ‘time which time’. **Kibedúwebe** appears to be a short form of **kibedúwedúibe**. With regard to **kibedúwedúibe**, the initial consonant of the second noun **kibe** ‘time’ has been elided whereas with **kibedúwebe**, the final syllable of the ‘which’ question word has been elided together with the prefix of **kibe** ‘time’. Both **kibedúwedúibe/ kibedúwebe** ‘when’ are used interchangeably. Most often in fast speech both are shortened to **kibedúwē**. The following sentences in (59) – (61) are examples.

59. Ábabá kibedúwebe?  
**á-ba-bá kibedúwebe**  
 3SG-FUT-come when  
 ‘When will s/he come?’
60. Kibedúwē lámósé?  
**kibedúwē lá-mó yí**  
 when 3PL.DEP-born 3SG  
 ‘When was she born?’
61. kibedúwedúibe laḡe ’ékū?  
**kibedúwedúibe la-ḡa kí-kū**  
 when 3PL.DEP-plant CM-yam  
 ‘When is yam planted?’

Another question word used to ask about time is **kibredzyifa** ‘when’ as shown in (62). This word has become archaic, it used to be more common and now it is seldom used and is unknown to the younger speakers.

62. Kibredzyifā Ákú áshĩ?  
**kibredzyifā Ákú á-shĩ**  
 when Ákú SM-leave  
 ‘When did Aku leave?’

At times, interrogative sentences may contain more than one content question word as demonstrated in (63) and (64). This usually happens especially when the questioner misses out on information given by the addressee(s) or speech participants.

63. Kídē gi Kofí áákó ákó ání kibredzyifā?  
**kídē gi Kofí á-yfko á-kó á-nĩ kibredzyifā**  
 what REL Kofí SM-take SM-give AM-who when  
 ‘What did Kofi give to whom and when?’
64. Ání Ákú édzí kídē ákó?  
**á-nĩ Ákú é-dzí kídē á-kó**  
 AM-who Ákú SM-buy what SM-give  
 ‘Who did Aku buy what for?’

### 8.2.5 Some uses of questions

The two main types of questions: polar or propositional and content questions can be used in discourse to serve different functions. Two of such uses are described here, namely, the rhetorical use of questions (§ 8.2.5.1) and the use of questions in the enactment of greeting routines (§ 8.2.5.2).

#### 8.2.5.1 Rhetorical questions

Rhetorical questions are questions asked but for which the questioner does not, in fact, expect the addressee(s) to answer because the answer is known; or because the answer is obvious. In Tafi, rhetorical questions can be in the form of a propositional or a content question. The question in (65) was asked in the context where a woman calls her child to come and another child follows him so she asked that other child whether she has called him to come too. The question in (66), on the other hand, was asked by a parent who had not seen his son the whole of the morning and when they finally met and the child made no attempt to greet, he asks him whether he has seen him (the father) since morning.

65. Íklú wó s’óbā?  
**í-klú wó sí ó-bá**  
 1SG-call 2SG COMP 2SG.DEP-come  
 ‘Did I call you to come?’



66. G'oyi ókóeyi obón 'iélizán átímō m'amī xāā?  
**gi o-yi ó-kóeyi o-bón ke-lizá**  
 REL 2SG.DEP-show.up 2SG.DEP-exit CM-today CM-daybreak  
**ní ó-tí-mō mí ā-mi xāā**  
 TOP 2SG-PERF-see 1SG.IND CM-face UFP  
 'When you woke up and went out today, have you seen my face?'

Sometimes, when something unfortunate happens, one may ask the rhetorical question as in (67).

67. Kibúi dūwē nūn dza?  
**ki-búi dūwē nū i-ní dza**  
 CM-case which COP AM-PROX UFP  
 'What is this?' OR 'What a scandal or problem is this?' (Sáhwĩ)

#### 8.2.5.2 Greeting questions

During the exchange of greetings, participants in the speech situation ask a lot of questions about their own health, about the health of members of their various households and also about places where they stay or are returning from (i.e. from a journey, farm, market, etc.). The following are examples of greetings recorded from Mador. Example (43) is repeated here as (70).

68. W'ókó níe?  
**wó ó-kó ní e**  
 2SG.IND CM-place DEF UFP  
 'How is your place?'
69. Banóvōn alí mǎ`?  
**ba-nóvō ní ba-lí mǎ**  
 CM.PL-child DEF SM-be.at well  
 'Are the kids well?' OR 'How are the kids?'
70. Kulí ishúním íbhítu wō?  
**kulí i-shú ní kumu í-í-bhítu wó**  
 how CM-body DEF inside SM-PRSPROG-do 2SG  
 'How are you?' OR 'how do you feel in your body?' (lit.: 'how is your body inside doing you?')

As the examples show, such questions can be propositional ones as in (68) and (69) or content questions as in (70).

### 8.3 Imperative utterances

#### 8.3.1 Imperatives

Imperative sentences are used by speakers to ask or get someone to perform an action or get into a particular state. The imperative in Tafi is expressed in different ways depending on the person and the number of addressees involved. When the command is directed at the second person singular, the bare form of the verb is employed and the 2SG subject remains unexpressed as illustrated in (71) and (72).

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 71. Kóéyī<br><b>kóéyī</b><br>exit<br>‘Go out!’ | 72. Bá<br><b>ba</b><br>come<br>‘Come!’ |
|--|--|

However, for plural addressees, the 2PL pronoun precedes the bare form of the verb as shown in (73) and (74). The different vowels in the 2PL pronoun in these examples are due to the ATR values of the vowels in the verb. Thus in Tafi, the subject of the 2SG imperative is unexpressed but the plural subject is expressed.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 73. Nóbá!<br><b>no-bá</b><br>2PL-come<br>‘Come!’ (You plural) | 74. Notsú!<br><b>no-tsú</b><br>2PL-dig<br>‘Dig!’ (You plural) |
|---|---|

The following sentences in (75) and (76) are examples of a main clause which comprise an imperative construction and a purpose clause introduced by the irrealis complementiser **ti**.

75. Bá ti lo ŋe ’édǝ!  
**bá ti lo ŋa kí-dǝ**  
come COMP 1PL.DEP eat CM-thing  
‘Come and let’s eat!’ (Lit.: ‘Come in order that we eat!’)
76. Klu al’ enyí ti lonú é!  
**klũ balí e-nyí ti lo-nú é**  
call 3PL CM.PL-name COMP 1PL.DEP-hear UFP  
‘Mention their names so we hear!’ (Sǎhwĩ)

Serial verb constructions (SVCs) also occur as imperative clauses. In such constructions, when the addressee is the 2SG the first verb occurs in the imperative, that is the bare form of the verb and the second verb is marked with a pronominal subject as in (77) and (78). As regards the 2PL imperative, as should be expected, the 2PL pronoun occurs with both verbs as in (79) - (81).

77. D'ɔŋa  
**ɗi ɔ-ŋa**  
 go 2SG-eat  
 'Go eat'.
78. D'owu  
**ɗi o-wu**  
 go 2SG-climb  
 'Go climb'.
79. Nɔd'ɔz'iesí  
**nɔ-ɗi nɔ-za kesí**  
 2PL-go 2PL-sit down  
 'Go sit down (You plural)'.
80. Nɔd'oplū  
**nɔ-ɗi nɔ-plū**  
 2PL-go 2PL-wash  
 'Go wash (You plural)'.
81. Nɔyíko 'ebúín ókó adzín!  
**Nɔ-yíko ki-búí ní nɔ-kó a-dzī ní**  
 2PL-take CM-case DEF SM-give CM-woman DEF  
 'Put the case before the woman'.  
 (Lit.: You (pl) take the case and give to the woman'.) (Saxwí)

The force of imperatives can be attenuated or modified by the use of the routine expression **í ɖe kúkú**<sup>60</sup> 'I beg' or 'please' which literally means 'I take off (my) hat' which occurs before the imperative construction as in (82). Alternatively, adverbials such as **kúbóé** 'a little' and even certain address terms may be used as in (83).

82. Íɖe kúkú nɔkó 'óló 'édzó!  
**í-ɖe kúkú nɔ-kó buló ki-dzo**  
 1SG-take.off hat 2PL-give 1PL CM-way  
 'Please, allow us!' (lit. I take off (my) hat, you (pl) give us way.)
83. M'adá, tsobúnɔ mí 'íbóé!  
**mí ádá tsí o-búnɔ mí kúbóé**  
 1SG.IND CM-sister draw 2SG-be.near 1SG a.little  
 'My sister, draw near me a little!'

### 8.3.2 Prohibitives

Prohibitives or negative imperatives are used when a speaker does not want the addressee(s) to carry out an activity etc. In such a case, the negative marker **tí/tí** 'NEG1' is used. The choice of any of the variants of the negative marker depends on the ATR status of the initial vowel of the verb stem. Thus, for singular, the negative occurs initially followed by the verb. For plural prohibitive, the 2PL subject pronoun occurs followed by the negative marker as shown in (86).

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<sup>60</sup> The phrasal verb **de kúkú** 'beg' or 'please' is borrowed from Ewe and it means 'remove one's hat'.

84. Tiklú 'áltí?  
**ti-klú**            **balí**  
 NEG1-call    3PL  
 'Don't call them!'
85. Tuje 'édḡí?  
**tu-ḡa**        **kí-dḡ**        **ní**  
 NEG1-eat CM-thing DEF  
 'Don't eat the food!'
86. Nḡttá ótún?  
**nḡ-ti-tá**                    **o-tú**        **ní**  
 2PL-NEG1-throw    CM-gun    DEF  
 'Don't fire the gun!' (You plural)

Another prohibitive construction with the form **tḡ** followed by the verb is used to ask someone who is in the process of doing something not to continue doing it. It tends to be translated as 'don't do X again'. This is illustrated below.

87. Tḡḡé 'edḡ.  
**tḡ-ḡa**            **kí-dḡ**  
 PROHIB-eat    CM-thing  
 'Don't eat again!'
88. Nḡtḡvḡ.  
**nḡ-tḡ-vḡ**  
 2PL-PROHIB-go  
 'Don't go again!' (You pl)

Where it involves the prohibition of an action performed prior to the time of speaking, the prohibitive construction is reinforced by the marker **vlá** 'again' (see § 7.3.8 for a discussion on **vla**).

89. Tḡvlḡḡé 'edḡ.  
**tḡ-vlḡ-ḡa**                    **kí-dḡ**  
 PROHIB-again-eat    CM-thing  
 'Don't eat anymore!'
90. Nḡtḡvlḡvḡ.  
**nḡ-tḡ-vlḡ-vḡ**  
 2PL-PROHIB-again-go  
 'Don't go anymore!' (You pl)

## 8.3.3 Optative

The optative is a type of imperative which expresses a wish. The optative in Tafi is expressed by the use of the causative verb **kó** ‘give, let, cause, make’. The causative verb **kó** ‘give, cause, let, make’ is used to introduce the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person imperatives. The following are examples:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 91. Kóm bá!<br><b>kó mí bá</b><br>let 1SG come<br>‘Let me come!’          | 92. Kó y’ázhā!<br><b>kó yí á-zhā</b><br>let 3SG SM-sing<br>‘Let him sing!’ |
| 93. Kó lóshĩ!<br><b>kó ló-shĩ</b><br>let 1PL.DEP-leave<br>‘Let us leave!’ | 94. Kó lázhā!<br><b>kó lá-zhā</b><br>let 3PL.DEP-sing<br>‘Let them sing!’  |

Also, when a prayer is said one of the responses is as shown in the sentence in (95).

95. Kó ulí béélím!  
**kó kulí bá kulí kumu**  
 let 3SG come 3SG.IND inside  
 ‘Let/ May it be so’ or ‘let/ may it come to pass!’ (Lit.: ‘let/ may it come inside!’)

## 9 CLAUSE COMBINATIONS: SUBORDINATION AND COORDINATION

Every language has a means of combining clauses into larger units or complex sentences. This chapter describes some of the various means of doing so in Tafi. I first look at the way units of unequal rank are combined (subordination). I examine the three main types of subordinate clauses, relative clauses (§9.1.1), complement clauses (§9.1.2) and adverbial clauses (§9.1.3). In the various sections, I describe the structure of subordinate clauses, the markers that assist in identifying them within constructions and their position in a construction. The mechanism of combining units (clauses or phrases) of equal rank or coordination (Haspelmath 2007) are then described in §9.2. I focus on conjunction (§9.2.1), disjunction (§9.2.2) and adversative coordination (§9.2.3).

### 9.1 Subordination

Subordinate or dependent clauses in Tafi are typically marked or introduced by specific morphemes: relative clauses by **gɪ**; complement clauses by **sɪ** or **tɪ** or a combination of both. These markers have extended functions which relate to the introduction of adverbial clauses, for example, **tɪ** is also used to mark purpose clauses as we shall see below. Sometimes, the relation of the adverbial clause to the main clause is not overtly marked and has to be inferred as we show below.

Another feature of dependent clauses in Tafi is that the subject marker on the verb tends to be a dependent form of the pronoun (see Chapter 3, Table 3.2).

Relative clauses as well as adverbial clauses that provide background information for the interpretation of the rest of the clause are marked at the end by the topic marker **nɪ**; which is heterosemous with the definiteness marker.<sup>61</sup> The treatment of embedded and dependent clauses as topics is an areal feature (see e.g. Ameka 1990; 2010; Saah 2010; Lefebvre and Brousseau 2002; Dakubu 1992).

#### 9.1.1 Relative clauses

Andrews (2007:206) defines a relative clause as “a subordinate clause which delimits the reference of an NP by specifying the role of the NP referent in the situation described by the NP”. Relative clauses in such languages as English and French are commonly divided into “restrictive” and “non-restrictive”. In Tafi, however, there is no formal distinction between restrictive and non-restrictive

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<sup>61</sup> Because of this, in some traditions, the topic marker at the end of such constructions is labelled Clause Determiner (see Lefebvre and Brousseau 2002; Aboh 2004; Saah 2010).

relative clauses. In English, for instance, non-restrictiveness is indicated prosodically in spoken discourse and set off by comma in written discourse as shown in (1b). Even though the equivalent of the English non-restrictive clause in (1b) is (1a) in Tafi, there is no formal difference between such relative clauses providing non-restrictive information and those providing restrictive information. A relative clause in Tafi is a postnominal modifier introduced by the invariant relative marker **gu** ‘REL’ and most often terminates with the relative clause final particle **ní**. The relative clause together with the noun it modifies (which is referred to as the head noun) form one complex NP, which can perform any of the grammatical functions of an NP in a sentence such as subject as in (2), (4a), (4b), and object as in (3).

- 1a. Septémbe ’ewī gbáántō gu libadzī kípā ní bóamína yí.  
**Septemba kí-wī gbáántō [gu li-ba-dzi kípā**  
 September CM-day first REL 3SG.DEF-FUT-be Saturday  
**ní] bó-ba-mína yí**  
 TOP 1PL-FUT-bring 3SG  
 ‘The first day of September which will be Saturday we will bring him.’  
 (Butsiugu)
- 1b. The first day of September, which will be Saturday, we will bring him.
2. Ányín gu áányān étsí ’ívūn.  
**á-nyí ní [gu á-á-nyā ní ] é-tsí**  
 CM-man DEF REL 3SG.DEF-PRSPROG-be.sick TOP 3SG-die  
**kí-vūn**  
 CM-yesterday  
 ‘The man who is sick died yesterday.’
3. Ámā étúkú ’ítúkú gu lílí fukuu.  
**Ámā é-túkú ki-túkú [gu li-lí fukuu]**  
 Ama SM-carry CM-load REL 3SG.DEF-be.at IDEO.light  
 ‘Ama carried a load which is light.’
- 4a. Kipótín g’íbhui ní kípĩ kodzyo.  
**kí-potí ní [gu í-bhui ní ] kí-pĩ kodzyo**  
 CM-cloth DEF REL 1SG.DEF-cut TOP 3SG-be.good very  
 ‘The cloth which I bought is very beautiful.’
- 4b. ayí ní gu idzí ní lekpe adí ikotoku tulí.  
**a-yí ní [gu i-dzí ní ] le-kpe**  
 CM.PL-bean DEF REL 1SG.DEF-buy TOP 3PL-be.plenty  
**a-dí i-kotoku ti-lí**  
 SM-surpass CM.PL-sack AM-four  
 ‘The beans which I bought are more than 4 sacks.’

These examples demonstrate the general properties of relative clauses in Tafi. In example (2) the subject of the verb **tsí** ‘die’ consists of an initial NP, **ányí ní** ‘the man’ (i.e., the head noun) followed by a clause. This head noun together with the relative clause functions as the subject of the sentence. The head noun **kikutú** ‘hat’ in (3) together with the relative clause functions as the object of the matrix clause. In all the examples above, the head noun which is the head of the relative clause occurs on the left periphery of the clause and is followed by the relative clause marker **gí** and it precedes the relative clause. The relative clause is in turn followed by **ní**, which is the same as the definiteness and topic markers. Here, I gloss this marker as ‘TOP’, i.e. topic. Within the relative clauses in (1a) and (2), the subject position is filled by a dependent pronoun which cross-references the head noun on the verb. This pronoun agrees with the head noun in number and class whereas in (4), where the object of the verb **bhui** ‘cut’ is co-referential with the head of the relative clause, the object is left unexpressed so a gap is left in this position in the relative clause.

Moreover, where the NP head together with its the relative clause functions as subject of the matrix clause, a subject pronominal form, as opposed to the subject marker (SM) form, occurs on the verb of the matrix clause and agrees with it. Evidence that this form on the matrix clause verb is a subject pronominal form rather than a subject marker comes from the classes for which these two forms are different. These classes are the **o-**, **i-**, **a<sup>2</sup>** and the **bu-** classes. Thus in example (7) and (9) below, where the head noun **bupá** ‘house’ belongs to the **bu<sup>1</sup>**- class, the verb of the matrix clause is marked with the **bu-** subject pronominal form. Recall that the **bu-** classes do not have an SM. Similarly, in example (4b), the head noun belongs to the **a<sup>2</sup>**- class whose subject marker is **a-/e-** but the subject pronominal form is **la-/le-**, and **le-** is the form used to mark the subject on the verb of the matrix clause. Unlike these examples, the form marking the subject on the matrix clause agreeing with the head noun **ányí** ‘man’ is **e-** which belongs to the **a<sup>1</sup>**- class. For the **a<sup>1</sup>**- class, both the SM and the subject pronominal form have the same realisations **a-/e-**. In conformity with the other classes where a distinction is made between the SM and the subject pronominal form, the **e-** form in example (2) and similar ones such as **ku-** in example (4a) are analysed as subject pronominal forms.

In sum, Tafi relative clauses have the following main features listed in (5):

- 5a. A head/antecedent NP
- 5b. An obligatory relative clause marker **gí**
- 5c. A pronoun in the relativised subject position that agrees with the head noun is used to mark the subject on the verb of the relative clause (see (2)).
- 5d. Objects, be they direct objects, second objects or objects in SVCs can be relativised with a gap strategy (see (4a) and (4b)).
- 5e. The specifier or dependent NP of a postpositional phrase can be relativised but its place in the PostPp is filled by an independent form of the pronoun (see (6) and (7)).



- 5f. Relative clauses are optionally marked off by the topic marker signalling that they convey background information with respect to the head nominal as shown in the examples in (1a), (2) – (4), (6) and (7).
6. Kegbu ní g' talabhā ádokasín áshíló keplukpán édzyíní  
**ke-gbu ní [gí kálí kabhā á-dokasí ní á-shíló**  
 CM-chair DEF REL 3SG.IND top CM-teacher DEF SM-leave  
**ke-plukpá ní ] ke-dzyíní**  
 CM-book DEF 3SG-break  
 'The chair on which the teacher left the book is broken.'
7. Bupa ní gí bulínt lamóm ní butsyra.  
**bu-pa ní [gí bulí kumí la-mó mí ní ]**  
 CM-house DEF REL 3SG.IND inside 3PL.DEF-born 1SG TOP  
**bu-tsyra**  
 3SG-collapse  
 'The house in which I was born collapsed.'

#### 9.1.1.1 Internal structure of relative clauses

As was earlier mentioned, the relative clause in Tafi consists of the relative clause introducer **gí** and the rest of the clause. The head of the relative clause always occurs outside the relative clause. In this section, I examine the noun phrase (NP) positions which are accessible to relativisation.

One of the major issues in the study of relative clauses relates to the positions within the clause that can undergo relativisation. In view of this, some linguists including Keenan and Comrie (1977), Maxwell (1979) and Comrie (1981) have developed the Accessibility Hierarchy (AH). A simpler version of the AH which is represented in Comrie (1981:149) is shown below:

Figure 1. Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy  
 Subject > Object > Non-Direct Object > Possessor

Where ">" means "is more accessible than"

Thus, according to the AH, subjects are easier to relativise than the other NP positions and that if a language can relativise positions lower in the Accessibility Hierarchy, it can always relativise positions higher up, but not vice versa. As illustrated in the examples already given in the sub-sections above, it has become evident that the positions within the relative clause that can be relativised are the subject, object and possessor positions. The object positions that can be relativised include object of a two-place predicate, dative object and locative object positions, among others.

### 9.1.1.1.1 Subject relativisation

When the head of the relative clause is the subject, it is cross-referenced on the verb of the relative clause with the dependent form of the pronoun. Consider the following examples.

8. Ayadi ní gɪ ávɪ Igẽ ní áányā.  
**a-yadi**      **ní**      **[gɪ**      **á-vɪ**      **Igẽ**      **ní ]**  
 CM-farmer   DEF   REL   3SG.DEP-go   Accra TOP  
**á-á-nyā**  
 3SG-PRSPROG-be.sick  
 ‘The farmer who went to Accra is sick.’
9. Bopá ní g’lɔɖama dí sɔlime ’uvũ ní botã.  
**bu-pá**      **ní**      **[gɪ**      **lu-ɖama**      **dí**      **sɔlime**  
 CM-house   DEF   REL   3SG.DEP-be.tall surpass   church  
**bú-vũ**      **ní]**      **bu-tã**  
 CM-building DEF   3SG-be.burnt  
 ‘The house that is taller than the church got burnt.’

As shown in examples (8) and (9), the dependent pronouns **a-** ‘3SG.DEP’ and **lu-** ‘3SG.DEP’ are used to cross-reference the heads of the relative clauses on the verbs **vɪ** ‘go’ and **ɖama** ‘be.tall’ respectively. Thus, as illustrated in the examples so far, a subject position must be marked in the relative clause.

### 9.1.1.1.2 Object relativisation: objects in transitive and ditransitive constructions

Different kinds of objects can be relativised. The direct object in a transitive clause or two-place construction is relativised using a gap strategy. Similarly, a direct object as well as a dative object in a double object construction also employs a gap strategy. The gap is indicated by the symbol  $\emptyset$  in the following examples.

10. Awi ní gɪ adzinóvɔẽn ákpí ní átsywĩ.  
**a-wi**      **ní**      **[gɪ**      **a-dzinóvɔẽ**      **ní**      **á-kpí**      **∅**      **ní ]**      **á-tsywĩ**  
 CM-dress DEF   REL   CM-girl   DEF   SM-wear   TOP   3SG-tear  
 ‘The dress the girl is wearing is torn.’
11. Bopán gɪ évudzuń ákasí ányín moyí lunũ.  
**bu-pá**      **ní**      **[gɪ**      **é-vudzu**      **ní**      **á-kasí**      **á-nyí**  
 CM-house   DEF   REL   CM-mason   DEF   SM-show   CM-man  
**ní**      **∅]**      **moyí**      **lu-nũ**  
 DEF      1SG.POSS   3SG.DEP-COP  
 ‘The house which the mason showed the man is mine.’

12. Ányín gi évudzuń ákasí bopán áshĩ.  
**á-nyí ní [gi é-vudzu ní á-kasí Ø bu-pá**  
 CM-man DEF REL CM-mason DEF SM-show CM-house  
**ní] á-shĩ**  
 DEF 3SG-leave  
 ‘The man who the mason showed the house left.’

The relative clause in (10) exemplifies a two-place construction while those in (11) and (12) also exemplify a double object or three-place construction. In (11), the direct object position after the verb **kpt** ‘wear’ in the relative clause is null whereas the Theme object position in (11) and the Dative object position in (12) after the verb **kasí** ‘show’ are also empty. These objects are co-referential with the heads of their respective relative clauses.

#### 9.1.1.1.3 Dative Objects in ditransitive and SVCs with three place predicate in V2 position

Different types of objects in an SVC employ different strategies. Patient and theme objects in an SVC are also relativised using a gap strategy (see (13)). The Dative object of a three place predicate in V2 position in SVCs, however, is referred to within the relative clause with the independent form of the pronoun (see (14)). This pronoun occurs ex-situ in that it immediately follows the REL and occurs before the verb. In that sense the structure of such a relative clause resembles a focus structure, (see chapter 6 on topic and focus) where the focused NP is represented by an NP and a co-referring independent pronominal.

13. Bafukpă ní gi m'en'edzí ákó m'adzya ní bézi.  
**ba-fukpă ní [gi mí é-nĩ e-dzí [Ø]**  
 CM.PL-shoe DEF REL 1SG.IND CM-mother SM-buy  
**á-kó mí á-dzya ní ] bé-zi**  
 SM-give 1SG.IND CM-brother TOP 3PL-spoil  
 ‘The shoes which my mother bought for my brother are spoilt.’
14. Ádɔkasín gi yí Ámā áákɔ sɔkán ákó ní, áqɔ así sɔkán álílá.  
**á-dɔkasí ní [gi yí Ámā á-yíko sɔká ní**  
 CM-teacher DEF REL 3SG.IND Ámā SM-take money DEF  
**á-kó Ø ní ] á-qɔ a-sí sɔka ní á-lílá**  
 SM-give TOP 3SG-say SM-COMP money DEF SM-be.lost  
 ‘The teacher who Ama gave the money to said that the money is missing.’

#### 9.1.1.1.4 Prepositional objects: locative and comitative

Objects of prepositional phrases can also be relativised. In (15), **bupá** ‘house’, the object of the locative preposition **ní** ‘LOC’ in the matrix clause which is also the object of **klũ** ‘call’ in the relative clause has been relativised with a gap strategy.

15. ... blakāl’óbúdí gɪ la yíko evuno dénɔ blema ké ní bupá gɪ leklũ sí Kágbóém̃.  
**blɔ̃**        **a-ka-alf**        **ó-búdí**        **gɪ**        **la-yíko**        **be-vuno**  
 1PL.IND CM-father-PL CM-fetish REL 3PL.DEP-take SM-hold  
**dénɔ** **blema**        **ké**        **ní**        **bu-pá**        [**gɪ**        **le-klũ**        **Ø**  
 from olden.days INT LOC CM-house REL 3PL.DEP-call  
**sí**        **Kágbóém̃]**  
 COMP Kágbɔ̃em̃  
 ‘... The fetish of our forefathers which they had from the olden days in the clan known as Kágbɔ̃em̃.’ (Butse)

A postpositional object complement of the locative preposition can also be extracted for relativisation. In that case, the dependent NP of the postpositional phrase occurs to the left of the relative marker **gɪ** and a co-referential independent pronominal form occurs as the immediate specifier of the postposition. A gap is left in the position of the postpositional phrase in the rest of the clause. The postposition is not stranded or pied-piped with its complement. It is rather elided. Compare (16a) and (16b).

- 16a. Ésí átɔ́ ’édɔ́ ní osubhantabhā.  
**Ésí**    **á-tɔ**        **kí-dɔ́**        **ní**        **o-subha**        **ní**        **kábhā**  
 Esi    SM-cook CM-thing LOC CM-hearth DEF top  
 ‘Esi cooked on the hearth.’
- 16b. Osubha ní gɪ ɔlabhā Ésí átɔ́ ’édɔ́ ní loyě.  
**o-subha**        **ní**        [**gɪ**        **ɔlí**        **kábhā** **Ésí**        **á-tɔ**        **kí-dɔ́**  
 CM-hearth DEF REL 3SG.IND top Ésí SM-cook CM-thing  
**ní ] lo-yě**  
 TOP 3SG-break  
 ‘The hearth on which Esi cooked is broken.’

The object of the comitative preposition can also be relativised. Thus in (17), **budzo ní** ‘the palm oil’ and **kawí ní** ‘the axe’ in (18) which are both objects of the comitative preposition **nɪ** ‘COM’ have been relativised. In (17), though **budzo ní** ‘the palm oil’ is an object of the preposition, it is also the subject of the relative clause so it is relativised with a dependent pronoun **lu** ‘3SG.DEP’ after the relative marker **gɪ** whereas in (18), **kawí ní** ‘the axe’ which is an instrument has been relativised with a gap. Since it has been extracted from its position after the comitative preposition **nɪ** as shown in (19), this leaves the preposition stranded so

an alternative of this preposition **no** is used. This happens also in Ewe and Fon where when the object of the prepositions **dé** ‘ALL’ in Ewe and **nú** ‘for/on behalf of’ in Fon are extracted from their original positions through relativisation their counterparts **dó** and **ná** respectively replace them.

17. Ókã tũo nĩ pétéé, budzo úlílín dókotsyáká nĩ budzo nĩ pétéé g’lú kpasí gazéním.

**ś-ká**            **ti-nó**            **ní**    **pétéé**    **bu-dzo**            **ú-lílíní**  
2SG-squeeze CM-chaff    DEF    all    CM-palm.oil AM-DIST

**ś-yíko**    **o-tsyáká**    **nĩ**    [**bu-dzo**            **ní**    **pétéé**    **gĩ**  
2SG-take 2SG-mix COM CM-palm.oil DEF    all    REL

**lu-kpasí**    **gazé**            **ní**    **kĩmĩ**]  
3SG.DEF metal.pot DEF    inside

‘(After) you squeeze all the chaff you will mix that palm oil (from the chaff) with all the palm oil in the metal pot.’ (Palm Oil)

18. Kawín gĩ áyadún été osín nō ní kédzyíní

**ka-wí**            **ní**            [**gĩ**    **á-yadĩ**            **ní**    **é-té**            **o-sí**            **ní**  
CM-axe    DEF    REL    CM-farmer    DEF    SM-slash    CM-tree    DEF

**nō**            **ní**    ]    **ké-dzyíní**  
COM TOP 3SG-break

‘The axe which the farmer cut the tree with is broken.’

19. Áyadún été osín nĩ kawín.

**á-yadĩ**            **ní**            **é-té**            **o-sí**            **ní**            **nĩ**            **ka-wí**            **ní**  
CM-farmer    DEF    SM-slash    CM-tree    DEF    COM    CM-axe    DEF

‘The farmer cut the tree with the axe.’

#### 9.1.1.1.5 Possessors and specifiers/dependent NPs of Postpositional Phrases

When a possessor NP is relativised, the place of the relativised possessor which immediately follows the relative marker **gĩ** is filled by an independent pronoun that agrees with it in number and class. This is consistent with the use of the independent pronoun forms in pronominal possessive constructions. The subject of the relative clause is also marked with an independent pronoun and it controls agreement on the verb.

20. Báanyín gĩ balí’opá bolí dāma dí sōlime ’uvu ní bábá.

**báá-nyí**            **ní**            [**gĩ**    **balí**            **bu-pá**            **bolí**            **dāma**  
CM.PL-man DEF REL 3PL.IND CM-house 3SG.IND be.tall

**dí**            **sōlime**            **bú-vū**            **ní**    ]    **bá-bá**  
surpass church CM-building DEF 3PL-come

‘The men whose building is taller than the church have come.’ (Lit.:The

men who their building ...)

21. Ímo ányín gu y'ádzýramuáń étsín.  
**í-mo á-nyí ní [gu yí á-dzýramuá ní**  
 1SG-see CM-man DEF REL 3SG.IND CM-cat DEF  
**é-tsí ní ]**  
 SM-die TOP  
 'I saw the man whose cat died.' (Lit.: I saw the man who his cat died.)
22. Anóvōń gu y'ídōń wóyíko 'ńań éébi yiyo.  
**a-nóvō ní [gu yí kí-dō ní wó ó-yíko**  
 CM-child DEF REL 3SG.IND CM-thing DEF 2SG.IND SM-take  
**ó-ńa ní ] é-é-bi.yiyo**  
 SM-eat TOP 3SG-PRSPROG-cry  
 'The child whose food you ate is crying.' (Lit.: 'The child who his thing you take eat ...')

In (20) and (21), the possessed NPs as heads of possessive phrases functioning as subjects of the relative clauses are marked by the independent pronouns **bulí** '3SG.IND' and **yí** '3SG.IND' respectively. In (20), the possessed NP belongs to the **bu**<sup>1</sup>- class so it is not cross-referenced on the verb in the relative clause. The possessed NP in (21) is cross-referenced on the verb **tsí** 'die' with **e-**. In (22), however, the possessive NP is the shared object of V1 and V2 so it is marked with a gap in the relative clause. The subject of the relative clause is the independent form of the 2SG pronoun **wó** and it is crossed-referenced on both V1 and V2.

Furthermore, the specifier or dependent NP of a postpositional phrase can be relativised but its place in the PostPp is filled by an independent form of the pronoun. Examples (6) and (7) are repeated here as (23) and (24).

23. Kegbu ní g'ualabhā ádōkasín áshíló keplukpáń édzyíní.  
**ke-gbu ní [gu kalí kabhā á-dōkasí ní á-shíló**  
 CM-chair DEF REL 3SG.IND top CM-teacher DEF SM-leave  
**ke-plukpá ní ] ke-dzyíní**  
 CM-book DEF 3SG-break  
 'The chair on which the teacher left the book is broken.'
24. Bupa ní gu bolími Esí ámó y'eyíalí ní butsyra.  
**bu-pa ní [gu bolí kumi Esí a-mó yí**  
 CM-house DEF REL 3SG.IND inside Esi SM-bear 1SG.IND  
**e-yí-alí ní ] bu-tsyra**  
 CM-child-PL TOP 3SG-collapse  
 'The house in which Esi gave birth to her children collapsed.'

## 9.1.1.2 Types of phrases that can head the relative clause

Various kinds of phrases can head the relative clause in Tafi. These phrases include definite or specific NPs as shown by several of the examples already given. Postpositional Phrases (see (16) above); possessor NPs (see (20) – (22) above); indefinite NPs (25) and (27); quantified distributed NPs (28) – (30); compound nouns (31); cognate NP (32); independent pronouns (33); definite NPs with unique reference (34); locative and temporal NPs (35) and (36) respectively and manner NPs (37).

25. Obúdi ní lonú obúdi tolí gu lonú blo akal'óbúdi.  
**o-búdi ní lo-nú o-búdi to-lí [gu**  
 CM-fetish DEF 3SG-COP CM-fetish AM-INDEF REL  
**lo-nú blš á-kā-alí o-búdi ]**  
 3SG.DEP-COP 1PL.IND CM-father-PL CM-fetish  
 'This fetish is a fetish which is for our fore-fathers.' (Butsé)
26. Ényí ídōnón gu ábabhítí.  
**é-nyí kí-dō nō ní [gu á-ba-bhítí ]**  
 3SG-know CM-thing wh.ever DEF REL 3SG.DEP-FUT-do  
 'He knows what he will do.'
27. Bétíní íkónón gu lu dé.  
**bé-tí-nyí o-kó nō ní [gu**  
 3PL-NEG1-know CM-place wh.ever DEF REL  
**lu-dé ]**  
 3PL.DEP-come.from  
 'They do not know the place where they (the monkeys) came from.'  
 (Butsé)
28. Ānō ní g'ebedzi anō tutōpuń ...  
**ā.nō ní [gí e-be-dzi a-nō tutōpu**  
 3SG.wh.ever DEF REL 3SG.DEP-FUT-become CM-person first  
**ní ]**  
 TOP  
 'Whoever will be the first person ...' (Kásālā)
29. Ányínyáányí gu anyáápì ekus'edzeyín ásí ti agbano ko nía ...  
**á-nyí-nyáá-á-nyí [gu á-nyá-á-pí**  
 CM-man-DISTR-CM-man REL 3SG.DEP-CERT-PRSPROG-want  
**ekusi.edzeyí ní a-sí ti a-gbano**  
 CM-king.female.child DEF SM-COMP COMP 3SG.DEP-marry  
**ko ní a ]**  
 just TOP CFM  
 'Any man who really wants to marry the princess ...' (Kásālā)

30. Kikányááká gu nɔɔnyɔ́yíkɔ ko kɪbadzí tubha tubha ní nɔ ahɔ́mɪ oo.  
**kɪ-kányááká [gɪ nɔ-bɔ-nyɔ́-yíkɔ ko] kɪ-ba-dzí**  
 CM-every REL 2PL.DEF-FUT-CERT-take just 3SG-FUT-become  
**tɪ-bha tɪ-bha ní nɔ a-hɔ kɪmɪ oo**  
 AM-two AM-two LOC 2PL.IND CM-hand inside UFP  
 ‘May you have a double portion of everything that you will touch.’  
 (Saxwí)
31. Oɔtɪ́ ’ɔyań gu láadí ní...  
**o-ɔtɪ́ bu-ya ní [gɪ lá-a-dí ní ]**  
 CM-cotton CM-farm DEF REL 3PL.DEF-PSTPROG-cultivate TOP  
 ‘The cotton farm they were cultivating ...’
32. Ámā étúkú ’ítúkú gu lɪ́l fukuu.  
**Ámā é-túkú kɪ-túkú [gɪ lɪ-lí fukuu]**  
 Ama SM-carry CM-load REL 3SG.DEF-be.at IDEO.light  
 ‘Ama carried a load which is light.’
33. Wɔ́ gu ɔ́tɔ́ga tsyí  
**wɔ́ [gɪ ɔ-tɔ́-ga tsyí]**  
 2SG.IND REL 2SG.DEF-NEG:PRSPROG-walk even  
 ‘You who cannot even walk.’ (Kásālā)
34. Kofi ní gu y’ébúkú ’ulu ’ivuń áshĩ  
**Kofi ní [gɪ yí é-búkú bu-lu kɪ-vu**  
 Kofi DEF REL 3SG.IND SM-be.drunk CM-drink CM-yesterday  
**ní ] á-shĩ**  
 DEF 3SG-leave  
 ‘Kofi who got drunk yesterday has left.’
35. Báába ’klí gu kásālā éébho ’ivun  
**bá-á-ba ɪ-klí [gɪ ká-sālā**  
 3PL-PRSPROG-come CM-there REL CM-tortoise  
**é-é-bho kɪ-vu ní]**  
 SM-PRSPROG-beat CM-drum DEF  
 ‘They are coming where tortoise is beating the drum.’ (Kásālā)
36. ... ɔ́nánĩ kibe nɔ́ ’ibe gu bubaziyabá...  
**ɔ-nánĩ kɪ-be nɔ́ kɪ-be [gɪ bu-ba-zɪ-yabá]**  
 2SG-reach CM-time wh.ever CM-time REL 3SG-FUT-REP-boil  
 ‘... until whatever time that it will boil again ...’ (Palm oil)
37. Kánā gu látɔ́ udzɔ́ ní Baagbɔ́.  
**ká-nā [gɪ lá-tɔ́ bu-dzɔ́ ní Baagbɔ́]**  
 CM-manner REL 3PL.DEF-cook CM-palm.oil LOC Tafi  
 ‘This is how palm oil is prepared in Tafi.’ (Palm oil)



Relative clauses function generally as modifiers of the head of the clause. Thus far, the examples illustrate the modifying function of relative clauses in Tafi. The relative clause restricts the identification of the head nominal. They are also used to attribute qualities to the head NP as illustrated in (32) above.

### 9.1.1.3 Other functions of the relative marker

The relative marker is used to introduce a number of clauses with various functions in discourse. In such clauses, the relative marker occurs without an NP head similar to free relative clauses (Andrews 2007:213). One of these is “addition”, that is, a clause that provides additional information for the development of the plot, especially in a narrative.

38. Kásālā edéwu ekú osínūm gɪ y'ázha 'dzuń ...  
**ká-sālā e-dé-wu e-kú o-sí ní kumɪ**  
 CM-tortoise SM-ITIVE-climb SM-reach CM-tree DEF inside  
**gɪ yí á-zha ɔ-dzu ní**  
 REL 3SG.IND SM-sing CM-song DEF  
 ‘Tortoise went and climbed into the tree and he sang the song...’ (Kásālā)

39. ... gɪ banḡań báló átónḡ kásālā.  
**gɪ ba-nḡ a-ní bá-ló bá-tónḡ ká-sālā**  
 REL CM.PL-person AM-PROX SM-get.upSM-follow CM-tortoise  
 ‘... then all these people rose up against tortoise.’ (Kásālā)

In example (38), the relative clause talks about what tortoise did after the main event of climbing a tree. In example (39), the relative clause talks about what the people did to tortoise after they realised what has happened.

Moreover, the relative clause marker has become lexicalised with the form **ónú**, i.e., **ónú.gɪ** to introduce conditional clauses (see section 9.3.1 below).

40. Ónúgɪ léétén' 'ulón k'óshu' un'əkp'álí 'ábhā.  
**Ónú.gɪ lé-é-ténḡ bu-ló ní ka**  
 COND 3PL.DEP-PRSPROG-start CM-rise TOP then  
**ó-shui bu-ní ó-kpí alí kábhā**  
 2SG.DEP-fetch CM-water SM-put.in 3PL top  
 ‘When/ if it starts rising then you add water.’ (Palm oil)

Perhaps the relative marker is developing into a clause linker.

A second function of the relative marker is to introduce clauses that provide the temporal setting or background to a main clause.

41. Gɪ latrɔ kitsikpɪ ni 'ifún pɪ kesín aá ...  
**gɪ la-trɔ ki-tsikpɪ ní ki-fú ní pɪ**  
 REL 3PL.DEP-put.on CM-pot DEF CM-fire DEF CONN  
**ke-sí ní aá**  
 CM-down.part DEF CFM  
 'When they put the pot on the fire and the down part...' (Kásālā)

A third function of the relative marker is that it is used to introduce reason clauses as in (42).

42. Gɪ ekusí ní gɪ áza ɔman unú kibe ílílín ní así nǝǝ.  
**Gɪ e-ku-sí ní gɪ á-za ɔ-ma ní**  
 REL CM-chief DEF REL 3SG.DEP-be.at:NPRES CM-town DEF  
**bu.nú ki-be í-lílín ní a-sí nǝǝ**  
 mouth CM-time AM-DIST TOP SM-say no  
 'So the chief who was ruling at that time said "no".' (Butsé)

The relative marker combines with an appropriate pronoun to form a relative pronoun. For instance, **bagɪ** (43); **agɪ** (44); and **bugɪ** (45).

43. Bag' aplónǝǝ, bag'adzé éǝǝ, ébeklǝ álí.  
**ba-gɪ bá-plónǝ yí ba-gɪ bá-dza kí-dǝ ní**  
 3PL-REL SM-help 3SG 3PL-REL SM-cut CM-thing TOP  
**é-be-klu balí**  
 3SG-FUT-call 3PL  
 'Those who helped him, those who cleared the bush, he would call them.'

44. W'áɪ ɔbá, w'áɪ ɔdubá wɔ tsyí ɔbohu ivū ɔó.  
**wɔ a-gɪ ɔ-bá wɔ a-gɪ ɔ-du-bá**  
 2SG.IND 3SG-REL SM-come 2SG.IND 3SG-REL SM-NEG2-come  
**wɔ tsyí ɔ-bo-hu kí-vū ɔó**  
 2SG.IND too SM-FUT-hit CM-tomorrow UFP  
 'You who come, you who do not come you will also dehusk (yours) in the future.' (Kásālā)

45. Óyɪ budzɔn tsy' ɔkpí bug' ɔtýíńíábhā.  
**ɔ-yɪ bu-dzɔ ní tsyí ɔ-kpí bu-gɪ**  
 2SG-scrape CM-palm.oil DEF too SM-put.in 3SG-REL  
**ɔ-tí-yí ní kabhā**  
 SM-PERF-scrape TOP top  
 'You scrape the palm oil also and add to that which you have already scraped.' (Palm oil)

### 9.1.2 Complement clauses

Complementation is described as ‘the syntactic situation that arises when a notional sentence or predication is an argument of a predicate’ (Noonan, 2007:52; see also Dixon 2010). In Tafi, like in most languages, certain verbs can take a clause as an argument in place of a noun phrase. These clauses referred to as “complement” clauses are introduced by the complementiser (COMP) **sí**<sup>62</sup> and they occur as arguments of complement-taking predicates. Complement-taking verbs in Tafi are categorised into four semantic classes, namely, utterance, perception-cognitive, manipulative and modality predicates. Examples of these predicates are listed in (46). At times, the complementiser **sí** can be followed by the irrealis complementiser **ti**. The subject of the complement taking predicates is optionally cross-referenced on the complementiser **sí** as shown in the sentences in (47) – (49).

46. Utterance: **dɔ** ‘say’; **sí** ‘say’; **tsiré** ‘tell’; **klũ** ‘call’; **bísí** ‘ask’; **dá** ‘deny’; **dɔ.ngbe** ‘promise’; **ká otú** (lit. ‘say by the gun’) ‘promise’; **kɛ́ kifú** (lit. ‘put.in fear’) ‘threaten’; **ká atábú** (lit. ‘say oath’) ‘swear an oath, pledge’; **bú ... kumi** (lit. ‘remove ... inside’) ‘explain’; **bú ... kesí** (lit. remove ... under) ‘explain’
- Perception-cognitive: **mɔ** ‘see’; **dí** ‘look’ **nú** ‘hear’; **bákā** ‘remember’; **dzíkí** ‘forget’; **susu** ‘think’; **nyí** ‘know’, **tí** ‘know, be aware’; **yíkí ɲa** (lit. ‘receive eat’) ‘believe’; **mɔ dzezi** (lit. see recognise) ‘recognise’
- Manipulative: **kɔ** ‘give; cause; let; make’; **bhutí** ‘make’
- Desiderative: **pí** ‘want’, ‘desire’; **dí kidzoum** (lit.: ‘look road inside’) ‘hope’
- Modality expressions: **alasí (ti)** ‘it is necessary that’  
**klí sí** ‘it is necessary that’  
**kitó** ‘it is necessary’  
**kizhiã** ‘it is necessary’  
**kiwí** ‘it appears’  
**klí ’mú dání** ‘it is obvious’ (lit. ‘its inside open’)  
**klí ’mú bhui** ‘it is apparent’ (lit. ‘its inside cut’)  
**klí ’mú tsá** ‘it is obvious’ (lit. ‘its inside clear’)

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<sup>62</sup> The **sí** complementiser resembles very much the Akan form **se** which is a complementiser (Boadi 2005; Osam 1994).

47. Edisúsú ásí bábakíka yí ní sukúníĩ.  
**e-di-súsú**      **a-sí**      **bá-ba-kíka**      **yí**      **ní**      **sukú**  
 3SG-NEG2-think    SM-COMP    3PL-FUT-sack    3SG    LOC    school  
**ní**      **kumí**  
 DEF    inside  
 ‘He did not think that they will sack him from the school.’
48. Óḍḍo ’sí w’adzy’ áshĩ ávɪ Igẽ.  
**ó-ḍḍo**      **o-sí**      **wó**      **á-dzyā**      **á-shĩ**      **á-vɪ**  
 2SG-say    SM-COMP    2SG.IND    CM-brother    SM-leave    SM-go  
**I-gẽ**  
 CM-Accra  
 ‘You said that your brother left for Accra.’
49. Kof’ ényí s’óóshĩ  
**Kofí**      **é-nyí**      **sí**      **ó-ó-shĩ**  
 Kofí    SM-know    COMP    2SG.DEP-PRSPROG-leave  
 ‘Kofi knows that you are leaving.’

As the examples in (47) – (49) illustrate, the complement clause functions as the object of the verbs **súsú** ‘think’, **ḍḍo** ‘say’, and **nyí** ‘know’ respectively. In (47), the subject of the main clause is cross-referenced on the complementiser **sí**. In (48), the complement clause is an SVC which consists of the verbs **shĩ** ‘leave’ and **vɪ** ‘go’. The subject of the main clause is cross-referenced on the complementiser while that of the complement clause is cross-referenced on both verbs. In (49), however, there is no cross-reference of the subject of the main clause on the COMP.

The complement clause can co-occur with another object of the verb in which case it occurs as the second complement as in (50) and (51). In narrative discourses, the complement clause may also occur with other clauses as in (52) and (53) and it may contain a relative clause as in (54).

50. Áḍḍakasín ákasí banóvõn así lebu banõ shishe.  
**á-ḍḍakasí**      **ní**      **á-kasí**      **ba-nóvõ**      **ní**      **a-sí**  
 CM-teacher    DEF    SM-teach    CM.PL-child    DEF    SM-COMP  
**le-bu**      **ba-nõ**      **shi-she**  
 3PL.DEP-respect    CM.PL-person    RED-grow  
 ‘The teacher taught the children that they should respect elderly people.’
51. M’en’ étsire Agoe así áttvɪ.  
**mí**      **é-nĩ**      **é-tsire**      **Agoe**      **a-sí**  
 1SG.IND    CM-mother    SM-tell    Agoe    SM-COMP  
**á-tt-vɪ**  
 3SG.DEP-NEG1-go  
 ‘My mother told Agoe that she should not go.’

52. Kibe ílílíní ɔ́s' ɔ́gbano ádzín al'así tɪ w'andz' eklú wó sí ɔ́dowa 'uya kɔ́é flôgo tɪ ako w'adzɪn t'ɔ́gbano.
- |              |                  |                  |                |                  |                   |
|--------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <b>ki-be</b> | <b>í-ílílíní</b> | <b>ɔ-sí</b>      | <b>ɔ-gbano</b> | <b>a-dzɪ</b>     | <b>ní</b>         |
| CM-time      | AM-DIST          | 2SG-say          | 2SG.DEP-marry  | CM-woman         | TOP               |
| <b>[a-lí</b> | <b>a-sí</b>      | <b>tɪ</b>        | <b>wó</b>      | <b>á-yíndzɪ</b>  | <b>é-klú]</b>     |
| 3SG-be.at    | SM-COMP          | COMP             | 2SG.IND        | CM-mother.in.law | SM-call           |
| <b>wó</b>    | <b>[sí</b>       | <b>ɔ-do-wa</b>   | <b>bu-ya</b>   | <b>kó</b>        | <b>yí ] flôgo</b> |
| 2SG.IND      | COMP             | 2SG.DEP-ITIVE-do | CM-farm        | DAT              | 3SG before        |
| <b>[tɪ</b>   | <b>á-kó</b>      | <b>wó</b>        | <b>a-dzɪ</b>   | <b>ní ] tɪ</b>   |                   |
| COMP         | 3SG.DEP-give     | 2SG.IND          | CM-woman       | DEF              | PURP              |
- ɔ-gbano]**  
2SG.DEP-marry  
'In those days if you want to marry a wife, your mother-in-law must call you to go and work on her farm before she gave you the woman to marry.'  
(Gbaxálí)

53. Bakpí y'íwǎ́ alasí báɔ́pí sí y'éyí y'akā.
- |               |           |               |              |                |
|---------------|-----------|---------------|--------------|----------------|
| <b>ba-kpí</b> | <b>yí</b> | <b>ki-wǎ́</b> | <b>alasí</b> | <b>bá-ɔ́pí</b> |
| 3PL-put.on    | 3SG       | CM-shame      | because      | 3PL-say        |
| <b>sí</b>     | <b>yí</b> | <b>e-yí</b>   | <b>yí</b>    | <b>á-kā</b>    |
| COMP          | 3SG.IND   | SM-kill       | 3SG          | CM-father      |
- 'He was disgraced because he was said to have killed his father'.
54. Ábhítu sí kidzi nukúnú kó anuááno g' édé ɔ́ma bhlatóém̄ tsyí gɪ ábámɔ
- |                           |               |               |                   |                      |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| <b>á-bhítu</b>            | <b>sí</b>     | <b>ki-dzí</b> | <b>nukúnú</b>     | <b>kó</b>            |
| 3SG-make                  | COMP          | 3SG-become    | wonder            | DAT                  |
| <b>a-nɔ́-nyáá-á-nɔ́</b>   |               | <b>gí</b>     | <b>é-dé</b>       |                      |
| CM-person-DISTR-CM-person |               | REL           | 3SG.DEP-come.from |                      |
| <b>ɔ-ma</b>               | <b>bhlató</b> | <b>kumɪ</b>   | <b>tsyí</b>       | <b>gɪ á-bá-mɔ</b>    |
| CM-town                   | second        | inside        | too               | REL 3SG.DEP-VENT-see |
- 'It made it that it became a wonder for people from other places as well who visit the place.'  
(Butse)

Complement clauses function mainly in object positions. They can also function as copula complements as in (55).

55. Kumukó gige ní Baagbo kulínū sí ɔ́pí amó ...
- |                |                      |           |               |           |                |
|----------------|----------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|----------------|
| <b>ki-mukó</b> | <b>gi-ge</b>         | <b>ní</b> | <b>Baagbo</b> | <b>ní</b> | <b>kulí-nū</b> |
| CM-rice.dish   | RED-drive            | LOC       | Tafi          | TOP       | 3SG.IND-COP    |
| <b>sí</b>      | <b>ɔ́-bo-pí</b>      |           | <b>a-mó</b>   |           |                |
| COMP           | 2SG.DEP-FUT-look.for |           | CM-rice       |           |                |
- 'Red rice porridge preparation in Tafi is that you will look for rice ...'  
(Kumukó)

Complement clauses have, however, not been attested in subject function in Tafi.

## 9.1.2.1 Complement of ‘want’

The complement of **pĩ** ‘want’ is typically introduced by **sí** followed by the irrealis complementiser **ti** as in (56).

56. ...gaké ɔman ɔɔpĩ sí ti ti sí pɔ búnya dúwē bulí ténú yí yí kpata anā dza?  
**gaké** **ɔ-ma** **ní** **ɔ-ɔ-pĩ** **sí** **ti** **ti**  
 but CM-town DEF SM-PRSPROG-want COMP COMP know  
**sí** **pɔ** **bú-nya** **dúwē** **bulí** **ténú** **yí** **yí**  
 COMP but CM-sickness which 3PL.IND be.able kill 3SG  
**kpata** **ká-nā** **dza**  
 suddenly CM-manner UFP  
 ‘... however the elders want to know which sickness caused his sudden death?’

In this example, the subject of the ‘want’ clause is identical to the subject of its complement clause. It appears that because of this there is no subject marked on the complement clause verb. This appears to be a tendency – there are a couple of instances in my database where even though the subject of the complement clause is the same as that of the matrix clause, it is marked on the verb as shown in (57).

57. Ópĩ ɔsí ɔvi ’uyem púnɔɔ ɔza apém?  
**ɔ-pĩ** **ɔ-sí** **ɔ-vi** **bu-ya** **kumi** **púnɔɔ**  
 2SG-want SM-COMP 2SG.DEP-go CM-farm inside DISJ  
**ɔ-za** **bu-pá** **kumi**  
 2SG.DEP-stay CM-house inside  
 ‘Do you want to go to the farm or to stay at home?’

If the subject of the complement clause is different from that of the matrix ‘want’ clause it is expressed as in (58).

58. Kibúí nê ní so gɛ noóklũ ’lɔ ní bopĩ sí ti nɔwól’ul’olú.  
**ki-búí** **nê** **ní** **so** **gɛ** **no-ó-klũ** **blɔ**  
 CM-matter wh.ever DEF so REL 2PL.DEP-PRSPROG-call 1PL  
**ní** **[bu-pĩ]** **sí** **ti** **nɔ-wól** **kilí**  
 TOP 1PL-want COMP COMP 2PL.DEP-drop 3SG  
**no-lú ]]**  
 2PL.DEP-put  
 ‘The matter because of which you called us we would like you to tell us.’

There is variation as to whether the irrealis complementiser **ti** always follows the **sí** complementiser after a ‘want’ matrix verb. Some speakers tend to omit it without any discernible semantic difference implicated.

### 9.1.2.2 Complements of the modal expressions

As pointed out in Chapter 7, modality expressions such as those in (46) take a complement clause expressing the state of affairs which is being modalised. The matrix clause of these expressions has a 3SG impersonal subject followed by a verb. The complement clauses are all introduced by **sí** ‘COMP’. The ones involving the verb **h** ‘be.at’ – **alasí** and **kulí sí** – can optionally be followed by the irrealis complementiser **ti**.

59. Así ní alasí (ti) óbá  
**a-sí ní a-lí a-sí (ti) ó-bá**  
 3SG-say TOP 3SG-be.at SM-COMP (COMP) 2SG.DEP-come  
 ‘S/he said that you should come.’

The negative existential verb **má** ‘be.at:NEG’ is used in negating the expressions involving the verb **h** ‘be.at’. For example,

60. Am’as’óbá  
**a-má a-sí o-bá**  
 3SG-be.at:NEG SM-COMP 2SG.DEP-come  
 ‘You should not come.’

### 9.1.2.3 Functions of **sí**: main verb, quotative and complementiser

**Sí** can be used as a main verb of speaking as used in the proverbs in (61) and (62). As a verb, it can co-occur with preverbs such as the negative and future markers as in (63a) and (63b) respectively. Unlike Akan where the complementiser **se** cannot co-occur with the verb **se** ‘say’ from which it has grammaticalised, the Tafi complementiser **sí** co-occurs with the verb **sí** ‘say’ from which it grammaticalised as shown in (64). Similar to Akan but unlike Tafi, the Ewe complementiser **bé** cannot co-occur with the verb **bé** ‘say’ from which it grammaticalised. **Sí** can also be used as a quotative to introduce a direct speech after a verb of saying as illustrated in (65a) and (65b).

61. Enyī así y’ikutú tídú yí.  
**e-nyí a-sí yí ki-kutú tí-dí yí**  
 CM-elephant SM-say 3SG.IND CM-load NEG1-surpass 3SG  
 ‘The elephant said its load is not too heavy for it.’ (Proverb #53)
62. Ónúgú así átítanyí ní étíbebí?  
**ónú.gú o-sí á-tí-tanyí ní**  
 COND 2SG.DEP-say 3SG-NEG1-burn TOP  
**é-tí-be-bí**  
 3SG-NEG1-FUT-be.cooked  
 ‘If you do not want what you want to roast to burn it will not be done or

well-cooked.’ (Proverb #25)

- 63a. Adísí ábabe ’evū.  
**a-dí-sí**                      **á-ba-bá**                      **kí-vū**  
 3SG-NEG2-say 3SG.DEP-FUT-come CM-tomorrow  
 ‘He did not say he will come tomorrow.’
- 63b. Ayadún ábas’abaḡe ’ekū kokooko.  
**a-yadú**                      **ní**                      **á-ba-sí**                      **á-ba-ḡa**                      **kí-kū**  
 CM-farmer DEF SM-FUT-say 3SG.DEP-FUT-plant CM-yam  
**kokooko**  
 by.all.means  
 ‘The farmer will say he will plant yam by all means.’
64. Éε, kásālā y’ahūm áásī s’adzā.  
**éε**                      **ká-sālā**                      **yí**                      **á-w̃ṣhu**                      **kum**                      **á-á-sí**  
 INTJ CM-tortoise 3SG.IND CM.PL-eye in SM-PRSPROG-say  
**sí**                      **a-dzā**  
 COMP 3PL.DEP-become.red  
 ‘Tortoise is becoming desperate.’
- 65a. Íḡp sí “bá!”  
**í-ḡp**                      **sí**                      **bá**  
 1SG-say COMP come  
 ‘I said come!’
- 65b. Ekusín ásí “buia bepidzya lóf̃ kóm!”  
**e-kusí**                      **ní**                      **a-sí**                      **buia**                      **be-pidzya**                      **lóf̃**                      **kó**                      **mí**  
 CM-chief DEF SM-say pay CM.PL-goat MOD-ten DAT 1SG  
 ‘The chief says “pay me 10 goats!”’.

**Sí** can also be used to introduce the object complement of “call” or naming predicates. This is similar to what happens in Ewe and Akan where such objects are introduced by the quotative.

66. Tiklū woenī y’enyínē edzini osí w’enī ...  
**ti-klú**                      **wó**                      **é-nī**                      **yí**                      **e-nyínē**                      **e-dzini**  
 NEG1-call 2SG.IND CM-mother 3SG.IND CM-husband CM-wife  
**ɔ-sí**                      **wó**                      **é-nī**  
 SM-COMP 2SG.IND CM-mother  
 ‘Do not call your mother’s co-wife your mother ...’ (Proverb #28)

As a complementiser, **sí** sometimes takes an agreement marker which cross-references the subject of the matrix clause as shown in most of the examples, reflecting change in progress.



The complementiser **sí** is in some contexts followed by the topic marker **ní** or topic marker and reinforcing particles. This is similar to the particles that occur after the complementiser **bé** in Ewe such as **bé dɛ** (COMP TOP) or its dialect variants such as the Tɔŋu **bé sé, bé sé tae**. The structure of these is not fully understood yet.

67. Balɔ tsy' ɛtsiré lɔ sí ní ɔwashui bávubɔ anɔ békɛ ko ní ká báwa kúnú zi dɛká.

**balɔ**      **tsyí**      **be-tsiré**      **blɔ**      **sí**      **ní**      **ɔwashui**      **bá-vubɔ**  
 3PL.IND too SM-tell 1PL COMP TOP tuesday 3PL-bury  
**a-nɔ**      **békɛ**      **ko**      **ní**      **ká**      **bá-wa**      **kúnú**  
 CM-person COMPL just TOP then 3PL-do funeral  
**zi**      **dɛká**  
 times one

'They too said that on Tuesday after burying the person, they will perform the funeral rites at once.'

68. Ítsire wɔ sí ní élɛ kídɔ ní gɛ edzi nɛ w'áhɔ ní adɔɔ ababuia.

**i-tsiré**      **wɔ**      **sí**      **ní**      **élɛ**      **kí-dɔ**      **ní**      **gɛ**  
 1SG-tell 2SG COMP TOP CFM CM-thing DEF REL  
**é-é-dzi**      **ní**      **wɔ**      **a-hɔ**      **ní**  
 3SG.DEP-PRSPROG-buy LOC 2SG.IND CM-hand TOP  
**a-dɛ-sí**      **á-ba-buia**  
 3SG-NEG2-say 3SG.DEP-FUT-pay

'I told you that the thing that he is buying from you he will not pay.'

If the matrix clause is negated as in (69) and (70), its scope goes over the whole complex sentence including the complement clause. The complement clause alone can be negated. In that case the NEG preverb occurs before the verb in the complement clause as in (71) and (72).

69. Edisúsú ásí bábakíka yí ní sukúním.

**e-di-súsú**      **á-sí**      **bá-ba-kíka**      **yí**  
 3SG-NEG2-think SM-COMP 3PL-FUT-sack 3SG  
**ní**      **sukú**      **ní**      **kɪmɪ**  
 LOC school DEF inside

'He did not think that they will sack him from school.'

70. Adtyík'anya 'sí bábakíka yí ní sukú.

**a-di-yíki**      **á-ɲa**      **a-sí**      **bá-ba-kíka**      **yí**  
 3SG-NEG2-receive SM-eat SM-COMP 3PL-FUT-sack 3SG  
**ní**      **sukú**      **ní**      **kɪmɪ**  
 LOC school DEF inside

'He did not believe that they will sack him from the school.'

71. M'enī áḍḥ sí átáányā áyĩ ko al'ékúí.  
**mí é-nī á-ḍḥ sí**  
 1SG.IND CM-mother SM-say COMP  
**á-táá-nyā á-yĩ ko alí**  
 3SG.DEP-NEG:PRSPROG-be.sick CM.PL-laziness just 3PL.IND  
**é-kú yĩ**  
 SM-reach 3SG  
 'My mother says that he is not ill but just lazy.' (Lit. 'My mother says he is not ill, laziness just reached him.')
72. M'adá áḍḥ así edizurú kudzya ní pḥ kakudzogě ní kal' áyĩkḥ 'elí.  
**mí á-dá á-ḍḥ a-sí e-di-zurú**  
 1SG.IND CM-sister SM-say SM-COMP 3SG.DEP-NEG2-steal  
**ki-dzya ní pḥ ka-kudzogě ní kalí ka-yĩkḥ kulí**  
 CM-meat DEF but CM-dog DEF 3SG.IND SM-take 3SG  
 'My sister says that she did not steal the meat but that it was taken by the dog.'

### 9.1.3 Adverbial clauses

Adverbial clauses function as modifiers of verb phrases or entire clauses in that they add extra information to the main clause in terms of expressing the time, location, manner, reason etc., of the event of the main clause. In this section, the types of adverbial clauses discussed are conditional clauses (9.1.3.1), temporal clauses (9.1.3.2), purpose clauses (9.1.3.3), manner clauses (9.1.3.4) and reason clauses (9.1.3.5).

#### 9.1.3.1 Conditional clauses

Conditional clauses are introduced by combining the form **ónú** and the relative marker **gi** or the connector **pi**. The meaning of the form **ónú** is not yet clear however it seems that the form consists of the 2SG impersonal subject pronoun **ó** and the copula verb **nu** 'COP'. Thus perhaps **ónú.gi** literally means 'it is that'. The sentences in (73) – (77) are illustrations of conditional clauses. The form **ónú.pi** is used in (76). Examples (73) (repeated from (62)) and (74) illustrate the use of conditional clauses in proverbs while (75) is a riddle.

73. Ónúgi ɔsí atitanyí ní étíbebí?  
**ónú.gi ɔ-sí a-ti-tanyí ní**  
 COND 2SG.DEP-say 3SG-NEG1-burn TOP  
**é-tí-be-bí**  
 SM-NEG1-FUT-be.cooked  
 'If you do not want what you want to roast to burn it will not be done or well-cooked.' (Proverb #25)

74. Ónúgí ónyí ńsí ńńlń ní bítíń otshutshúí ní ńhe'eshí?  
**ónú.gí ó-nyí ń-sí ń-ń-ń**  
 COND 2SG.DEP-know SM-COMP 2SG.DEP-PRSPROG-smell  
**ńí bá-tí-ń o-tshutshúí ní ń-ha kishí**  
 TOP 3PL-NEG1-exude CM-fart LOC CM-group midst  
 'If you know that you have bad body odours you do not fart in public.'  
 (Proverb #52)
75. Ekusí tel'aza ónúgí ńsí ní y'ńsígbe wń y'odziré 'ńábhá kibenyéébe.  
**e-kusí te-lí á-za ónú.gí é-tsí ńí**  
 CM-king AM-INDEF 3SG-be.at:NPRES COND 3SG.DEP-die TOP  
**yí kí-sígbe wń yí ó-dziré kábhá**  
 3SG.IND CM-ring remain 3SG.IND CM-grave top  
**ki-be-nyáá-ki-be**  
 CM-time-DISTR-CM-time  
 'There was a king, when he died his ring remained on his grave.'  
 (Riddle # 12)
76. Ónú tí báákń enú sí onupí bávubń anńń ko kibéké dza?  
**ó-nú tí báá-kń ní be-nú sí onu.pí**  
 2SG-hear PURP CM.PL-father DEF SM-hear COMP COND  
**bá-vubń a-ńń ní ko ki-béké dza**  
 3PL-bury CM-person DEF just 3SG-finish UFP  
 'You hear (it) so that the elders hear: if the person is buried, is that the end?'
77. Kofí ńsí ábashí ónúgí súbha adńń?  
**Kofí á-sí á-ba-shí**  
 Kofí SM-say 3SG.DEP-FUT-leave  
**ónú.gí súbha a-dń-dń**  
 COND rain SM-NEG2-land  
 'Kofi said he will leave if it did not rain.'

As shown in the examples in (73) – (77), the conditional clause may occur before the main clause (73) – (76) or after it (77). However, there seems to be a preference for the conditional clause preceding the main clause. When they precede the main clause, they tend to be marked by the topic marker **ńí**. Its occurrence in proverbs, riddles or narratives attests to this.

The conditional clause can contain a negative cleft as in (78).

78. Otsńlń, gu íbú lááńńń so ní ónúgí anń wń ótsokú kńí óbokoéyń ...  
**otsńlń gu í-bú lá-á-ńń-ń so**  
 now REL CM-trial.by.ordeal 3PL.DEP-PRSPROG-drink-COM so

**ní [ónú.gɪ aní wɔ́ ó-tsokú ɪ-klí ó-bo-koéyí]**  
 TOP COND NEGCL 2SG.IND 2SG-enter CM-there SM-FUT-exit  
 ‘But now, as it is for the purpose of a trial by ordeal, if it is not you if you enter in there you will get out...’ (Gbaxáǎĩ)

At times, there is ambiguity between a conditional and a temporal meaning as it happens also in Fon and several other languages (see Lefebvre and Brousseau (2002 and references cited therein). This is illustrated in (79) – (81), see also (75).

79. Ónúgɪ léétén’ ʔulón k’oshu’ ʔun’ ɔkp’ ál’íábhā.  
**ónú.gɪ lé-é-ténɔ́ bu-lɔ́ ní**  
 COND 3PL.DEP-PRSPROG-start CM-rise TOP  
**ka o-shui bu-ní ɔ-kpí alí kábhā**  
 then 2SG.DEP-fetch CM-water SM-put.in 3PL.IND top  
 ‘When it starts rising then you add water.’ (Palm oil)
80. Ónúgɪ kihuí duya kedē líyí.  
**Ónú.gɪ ki-huí duya ke-de lí-yí**  
 COND CM-trap spring CM-back 3SG.DEP-show.up  
 ‘When a trap springs, it moves backwards.’ (Proverb #9)
81. Ónúgɪ ɖeke évu wɔ́ ní y’eyíálí butí látí ní anɔ́ ʔevutabhā.  
**ónú.gɪ ɖeke é-vu wɔ́ ní yí e-yí-alí**  
 COND crocodile SM-catch 2SG TOP 3SG.IND CM-child-PL  
**bu-tí lá-tí ní a-nɔ́ ki-vu kabhā**  
 CM-crawl 3PL.DEP-crawl LOC CM-person CM-stomach top  
 ‘When a crocodile captures you (even) baby crocodiles will crawl on your belly.’ (Proverb #33)

In some contexts, especially of proverbs and sayings the conditional marker can be omitted. Thus, the conditional relation is expressed by the juxtaposition of clauses as in (82) which is a proverb (Proverb #27).

82. Ósɪ oní ní g’ɖsísɪ ní kɪbhluxɔ́éníésɪ lɔ́tɪsísɪ ɔdo ʔiesɪ so ótimín’ɔlɪ ní ɔg’ɔkpasí kɪbhluxɔ́énúmɪ bɔbɔlɪ lɔ́balɪ kú anɔ́ ǎmɪʔ.  
**ɖ-sí o-ní ní gɪ ɖ-sísɪ ní kɪ-bhluxɔ́ení**  
 2SG-say CM-soup DEF REL 3SG-drip LOC CM-ladle DEF  
**ke.sí lɔ-tɪ-sísɪ ɔ-dɔ́ ke.sí so ó-ti-míní ɔlɪ**  
 down 3SG.DEP-NEG1-drip SM-land down so 2SG-DESID-lick 3SG  
**ní ɔ-gɪ ɔ-kpasí kɪ-bhluxɔ́ení kumɪ bu-balɪ**  
 TOP 3SG.REL SM-be.in CM-ladle DEF inside CM-pour  
**lɔ́-balɪ kú a-nɔ́ ǎ-mɪ**  
 3SG.DEP-pour ALL CM-person CM-face

‘If you insist that drops of soup under the ladle should not drop and so you want to lick it as well, the soup in the ladle will spill into your eyes.’

### 9.1.3.2 Temporal clauses

Temporal clauses can be expressed by means of the relative marker **gi** or the connector **pi**. Consider the following examples:

83. Gi latr<sup>5</sup> 'itsikpĩ ní 'ifúń pi kesín á ...  
**gi la-tr<sup>5</sup> ki-tsikpĩ ní ki-fú ní pi**  
 REL 3PL.DEP-put.on CM-pot DEF CM-fire DEF CONN  
**ke-sí ní á**  
 CM-bottom DEF CFM  
 ‘When they put the pot on the fire and the down part...’ (Kásālā)
84. Kutokpú tíza ákpíkpa pi layíko kikutú ekumú 'íkuísí?  
**ki-tokpú tí-za ákpíkpa pi la-yíko ki-kutú**  
 CM-head NEG1-stay empty CONN 3PL.DEP-take CM-hat  
**be-kumú kí-kuísí**  
 SM-cover CM-knee  
 ‘We do not put the cap on the knee while the bare head lies waiting.’  
 (Proverbs #21)
85. Gi odun obá ní kokoko wũn'ónũ bámaní alásí ti bútsi kú kó nó sí kána  
 lídzyo ní lóíábhā.  
**gi o-du ní o-bá ní kokoko wũnó**  
 REL CM-message DEF SM-come TOP by.all.means 2PL.IND  
**no-nũ bá-maní a-lí a-sí ti**  
 SM-COP CM-town.people 3SG-be.at SM-COMP COMP  
**bú-tsi kú kó nó sí ká-nā**  
 1PL-announce death DAT 2PL COMP CM-manner  
**lí-dzyo ní bíš kábhā**  
 3SG.DEP-happen LOC 1PL.IND top  
 ‘As soon as the message came, you being the elders of the town, it is necessary that we inform you about the death.’ (Butsígũ)
86. Pi latsí 'itsikpĩ ní pi 'al'ááhwa hlohlohlo p'itsikpĩn íwólí ní... agboyaa  
**pi la-tsí ki-tsikpĩ ní pi kalí**  
 CONN 3PL.DEP-take.off CM-pot DEF CONN 3SG.IND  
**ká-á-hwa hlohlohlo ní pi ki-tsikpĩ ní**  
 SM-PRSPROG-move IDEO TOP CONN CM-pot DEF  
**ki-wólí ní agboyaa**  
 SM-fall TOP IDEO.sound

‘When they took the pot from the fire with him moving restlessly in it then the pot fell... (with a loud noise).’ (Kásālā)

87. Así oo ko gɪ lé-dé-kú anóíánó amá?  
**a-sí oo ko gɪ lé-dé-kú**  
 3SG-say INTJ INTJ REL 3PL.DEP-ITIVE-reach  
**a-nɔ̃-nyáá-a-nɔ̃ a-má**  
 CM-person-DISTR-CM-person SM-be.at:NEG  
 ‘They said when they reached there is nobody there’ (Kásālā)

The temporal clause can occur as the complement of a complement-taking verb as shown in (87). As can be seen in the examples, temporal clauses can precede or follow the main clause. When temporal clauses precede the main clause, they are usually marked by the topic marker **ní** ‘TOP’. At times, there is a double marking of the topic marker on the temporal clause for more emphasis as shown in (88).

88. Ko badzĩn ákpasí ’umem ko gɪ léeyú ’ívú ko ní ní sáhwĩ tsyí évu aló  
 ádákpasí kumanumí ééyu ’ívú plínɔ̃ bekus’edziniín.  
**ko ba-dzĩ ní bá-kpasí kɪ-ma kumi gɪ**  
 just CM.PL-woman DEF SM-be.in CM-dancing.ring inside REL  
**lé-e-yú ki-vu ko ní ní sáhwĩ**  
 3PL.DEP-PSTPROG-dance CM-dance just TOP TOP spider  
**tsyí é-vu a-ló á-dá-kpasí kɪ-ma ní**  
 too SM-catch SM-get.up SM-ITIVE-be.in CM-dancing.ring DEF  
**kumi é-é-yú ki-vu plínɔ̃ be-kusí**  
 inside 3SG-PRSPROG-dance CM-dance add CM.PL-chief  
**e-dzini ní**  
 CM-wife DEF  
 ‘Suddenly, just as the women were in the dancing ring, as they were dancing, spider also got up he went inside the dancing ring dancing with the queens.’ (Sáhwĩ)

#### 9.1.3.2.1 ‘Before’ clauses

‘Before’ clauses in Tafi are introduced by **fló(go)** ‘before’. It can occur alone or it may be followed by the relative marker **gɪ** ‘REL’, the connector **pɪ** ‘CONN’ or the irrealis complementiser **tu** ‘COMP’. Temporal clauses introduced by **fló(go)** ‘before’ are used to express situations in which the state of affairs indicated in the ‘before’ clause has not yet occurred by the time of the state of affairs specified in the main clause. These clauses can occur before or after the main clause. When they occur before it, they tend to be marked by or terminate in the topic marker **ní** ‘TOP’. The following are examples:

89. Flôgo ti óbɔgbánú ní òkɔn 'unú tútúútú ní alasi ti ómɔ aɖaká tédjípó ...  
 [flôgo ti ó-bo-gbānī yí ní ɔ-ko  
 before COMP 2SG.DEP-FUT-marry 3SG LOC CM-custom  
 ní bu.nú tútúútú ní ] a-lí a-sí ti  
 DEF mouth exactly TOP 3SG-be.at SM-COMP COMP  
 ó-mɔ a-ɖaká te-djípó  
 2SG.DEP-see CM-box AM-one  
 'Before you marry her according to the exact custom, you must get one suitcase ...'
90. Flôgo g'òbotsyínā 'lí ní óbotsódzī nɔ tɔnó élíliní óka pétée  
 [flôgo gi ó-bo-tyínā bulí ní ] ó-bo-tsódzī-nɔ  
 before REL 2SG.DEP-FUT-turn 3SG TOP 2SG-FUT-return-COM  
 ti-nó í-líliní ó-ká pétée  
 CM-chaff AM-DIST SM-squeeze all  
 'Before you will pour it (the water) out, you will have to completely squeeze that chaff again.' (Palm oil)
91. Imɔsa titá ulí láayíko agbá kikpekpením flôgo pɪ abaho asrá vovo akpí.  
 i-mɔsa ti-tá ulí lá-ba-yíko  
 CM-handful.of.rice.stalk AM-three 3PL.IND 3PL.DEP-FUT-take  
 ba-gbá ki-kpekpe ní kumí [flôgo pɪ  
 SM-sweep CM-snuff.box DEF inside before CONN  
 a-ba-ho a-srá vovo a-kpí ]  
 3SG.DEP-grind CM-tobacco new SM-put  
 'It is three handfuls of rice stalks that will be used to clean the inside of the snuff-box before she will grind new tobacco to put into it.' (Sáhwĩ)
92. Ótíflā Tamale flô' p'obokú Asanti Dadzyra beditsyán.  
 ó-tí-flā Tamale flôgo pɪ ɔ-bo-kú Asanti  
 2SG-PERF-pass Tamale before CONN 2SG-VENT-reach Asanti  
 Dadzyra be-ditsyá ní  
 Dadzyra CM.PL-outskirts DEF  
 'you would have already passed Tamale before you reach Asanti Dadzyra.'  
 (Kásālā)

### 9.1.3.3 Purpose clauses

As we have seen in §9.1.2 there is an irrealis complementiser **ti** 'COMP' which doubles with the **sí** complementiser to introduce complements of 'want' predicates. Some purpose clauses are also introduced by both complementisers **si** **ti** as illustrated in (97) below. A form identical to the complementiser **ti** is also used to introduce purpose clauses in Tafi. Where it clearly introduces a purpose clause, I

gloss it as ‘PURP’ and everywhere else I gloss it as ‘COMP’. The following sentences exemplify the purpose clause.

93. Áába ti abayíkō anóvōń ’ufuo ti akōé.  
**á-á-ba** [ti **a-ba-yíkō** **a-nóvō** **ńí**  
 3SG-PRSPROG-come PURP 3SG.DEP-VENT-take CM-child DEF  
**fufuo**] [ti **a-kō** **yí** ]  
 fufu PURP 3SG.DEP-give 3SG  
 ‘She is coming to take the child’s fufu to give to him.’ (Gbaxáńĩ)
94. Tí efek’ ónúgbú ti aq̣o así “duya” kígbań ítizhí íbā.  
 [ti **efeké** **o-nugbu** ] [ti **a-q̣o**  
 PURP 3SG.DEP-lift CM-mouth PURP 3SG.DEP-say  
**a-sí** “duya”] **kí-gba** **ńí** **kí-ti-zhí**  
 SM-COMP “spring” CM-falling.trap DEF SM-PERF-descend  
**kí-í-bā**  
 SM-PRSPROG-come  
 ‘At the opening of his mouth to say “spring” the trap was already coming down.’ (Gbaxáńĩ)
95. Dan’ onugbu t’oq̣o iaq̣o ti lenú.  
**dan** **o-nugbu** [ti **o-q̣o** **ka-q̣o** ] [ti  
 open CM-mouth PURP 2SG.DEP-speak CM-speech PURP  
**le-nú**]  
 3PL.DEP-hear  
 ‘Open your mouth and speak for them to hear.’ (Sáhwĩ)
96. Akaábubō ti ebu ’idzya tilí ko kásālā kplō kawólĩ kú ketsukpúním.  
**a-ka-á-bubō** ti **e-bú** **kí-dzya**  
 3SG-PERS-PRSPROG-bend PURP 3SG.DEP-remove CM-meat  
**ti-lí** **ko** **ká-sālā** **kplō** **ka-wólĩ** **kú**  
 AM-INDEF just CM-tortoise IDEO.sound.of.falling SM-fall ALL  
**ke-tsukpú** **ńí** **kumí**  
 CM-pot DEF inside  
 ‘Just as he bent again to pick another piece of meat, tortoise fell inside the pot.’ (Kásālā)
97. Kulí y’áv’ tazań sí ti adayo iapamín.  
**kulí** **yí** **á-ví** **ka-za** **ńí** **sí** **ti**  
 CONJ 3SG.IND SM-go CM-camp DEF COMP COMP  
**a-da-yó** **ká-pamí** **ńí**  
 3SG.DEP-ITIVE-sharpen CM-cutlass DEF  
 ‘So he went to the camp to/ in order to whet his cutlass.’ (Gbaxáńĩ)



The sentences in (93) – (96) show that the **ti** complementiser can occur before or after the main clause and that a purpose clause can be followed by another purpose clause (93) –(95). Moreover, the main clause can contain an imperative as in (95).

It has become evident from the discussions so far that the form **ti** has different functions, viz, the complementiser, purpose and desiderative. The contexts in which the **ti** complementiser occurs can all be characterised as irrealis: it introduces the complements of WANT predicates, complement clauses expressing obligation or necessity. As shown in this section, **ti** also introduces clauses with a purpose function which expresses someone doing something in order that something else occurs. The **ti** form is also used as a preverb marker to express the desiderative, i.e., a wanting of the subject to do something. These three functions are syntactically distinguished in Tafi: the irrealis complement clauses are arguments of the matrix clause verb; the purpose clauses are adverbial or adjuncts to the main clauses; and the desiderative function is expressed by a preverb. The conceptual relations between unrealised events, desired situations and intentions (purpose) are cross-linguistically manifested in the functions being expressed in the same form as in Tafi. These functions are also known to be connected in a grammaticalisation chain (e.g. Heine et al. 1991).

#### 9.1.3.4 Reason clauses

As is the case with other subordinate clause types, the relative marker **gi** and the connector **pi** are also used as subordinators to introduce reason clauses. When **gi** ‘REL’ introduces a reason clause it precedes the main clause while reason clauses introduced by **pi** ‘CONN’ follow the main clause, as shown in (98) and (99).

98. **Gi** Doxwě enú adzinóv3ē dzyɔgɔ so Foli ádumí y’ibúí kóǵ.  
**gi**    **Doxwě**    **e-nú**    **a-dzinóv3ē**    **dzyɔgɔ**    **so** **Folí**    **á-dumí**  
REL   Doxwě   SM-COP   CM-girl   good   so Foli   SM-like  
**yí**    **ki-búí**    **kóǵ**  
3SG   CM-matter   INT  
‘Because Doxwě is a good girl Foli loves her so much.’
99. Bhubhī tīyī anɔ pi lakpí kíkūgbē ’efú.  
**bhubhī**    **ti-yī**    **a-nɔ**    **pi**    **la-kpí**  
CM-hunger   NEG1-kill   CM-person   CONN   3PL.DEP-set  
**kí-kūgba**    **ki-fú**  
CM-yam.barn   CM-fire  
‘You don’t set fire to your yam barn because you are hungry.’  
(Proverbs #54)

Reason clauses can also be introduced by the subordinator **alasí** ‘because’. The sentences in (100) and (101) show that reason clauses introduced by **alasí** ‘because’

can precede or follow the main clause and that the reason clause can be (doubly) marked by the topic marker **ní**. Even the subordinator **alasí** ‘because’ can also be marked by the topic marker as in (100).

100. ...alasí ní élē otroeleté ovutó ní ní bétítsú olí ’ífú bopui lápui olí?  
**alasí ní élē o-tro.eleté o-vutó ní ní**  
 because TOP CFM CM-lie.owner CM-roof DEF TOP  
**bé-tí-tsú olí kí-fú bu-pui lá-pui olí**  
 3PL-NEG1-set 3SG CM-fire CM-scatter 3PL.DEF-scatter 3SG  
 ‘...the reason is that the roof of a dishonest man’s hut is never burnt, it is dismantled piece by piece.’ (Gbaxáĩĩ)
101. Kofí ádumí Doxwě ’íbúí alasí adzinóvōē dzyogō y’enú.  
**Kofí á-dumí Doxwě ki-búí alasí a-dzinóvōē dzyogō**  
 Kofi SM-like Doxwě CM-matter because CM-girl good  
**yí e-nú**  
 3SG.IND SM-COP  
 ‘Kofi loves Doxwě because she is a good girl.’

### 9.1.3.5 Result clauses

The subordinator **klíso** or **so** ‘so, as a result’ is used to introduce result clauses. The use of **so** is exemplified in (78), (82), (98) above and (102) below and **klíso** is illustrated in (103) and (104). (102) – (104) are taken from stories.

102. Átáábā ɔmaními ziazia so banō átíkaámō y’édzyesi.  
**á-táá-bā ɔ-ma ní kumi ziazia so**  
 3SG-NEG:PRSPROG-come CM-town DEF inside IDEO.fast so  
**ba-nō bá-tí-ka-á-mō yí be-dzyesi**  
 CM.PL-person SM-NEG1-PERS-PRSPROG-see 3SG SM-recognise  
 ‘He has not been coming to town often so people did not recognise him.’  
 (Sáhwĩ)
103. Klíso gɪ anódzyrámí n’aga bátíkaázani áglō.  
**klíso gɪ a-nódzyrámí nɪ a-ga**  
 so REL CM-human.being COM CM-animal  
**bá-tí-ka-á-zani á-glō**  
 SM-NEG1-PERS-PRSPROG-marry RECIP  
 ‘As a result, human beings and animals do not marry each other anymore.’  
 (Kásālā)
104. Ádɔ sɪ ní a ɔtsɔ́ ní ébeklú ’ál’enyí klíso ní a ónúgɪ ázakp’ ódzińíésí ní a  
 baɔɔ sɪ ní ní a ...

**á-dɔ**    **sí**    **ní**    **a**    **ɔtsɔ̃**    **ní**    **é-be-klú**    **balí**  
 3SG-say    COMP    TOP    CFM    now    TOP    3SG-FUT-call    3PL  
**e-nyí**    **klíso**    **ní**    **a**    **ónú.gɪ**    **á-za-kpí**  
 CM.PL-name so    TOP    CFM    COND    3SG.DEP-REP-put.in  
**ɔ-dzu**    **ní**    **ke.sí**    **ní**    **a**    **ba-dɔ**    **sí**    **ní**    **ní**  
 CM-song    DEF    under    TOP    CFM    3PL-say    COMP    TOP    TOP  
**a**  
 CFM

‘He said that from now he will be calling the names, therefore whenever he starts the song again, they should say...’ (Sáhwĩ)

It is obvious from the sentences illustrating result clauses given so far that the subordinator **klíso** or **so** ‘so, as a result’ can be followed directly by the relative marker **gɪ** ‘REL’ (103) or the topic marker **ní** ‘TOP’ (104). The topic marker, at times, occurs after the reason clause. Also, the result subordinator can be followed by the conditional clause introducer **ónú.gɪ** ‘COND’ (104).

Moreover, a result clause can be introduced by the relative marker **gɪ** as shown in (105).

105. **Gɪ** **ekusí** **ní** **gɪ** **á-za**    **ɔ-ma**    **ní**  
 REL    CM-chief    DEF    REL    3SG.DEP-be.at:NPRES    CM-town    DEF  
**bu.nú**    **ki-be**    **í-lílín**    **ní**    **a-sí**    **nɔ̃**  
 mouth    CM-time    AM-DIST    TOP    SM-say    no  
 ‘So the chief who was ruling at that time said “no”.’ (Butse)

### 9.1.3.6 Simultaneous Clauses

In Tafi two events can be marked as having occurred simultaneously. The relative marker **gɪ** is used to signal simultaneity and at the same time the verb in the **gɪ** clause is marked by the progressive marker. Examples of such clauses are given in (106) and (107).

106. **Gɪ** **éetsi** ‘utsikpínímí **ní** **Akú** **áato** ‘édɔ̃.  
**gɪ**    **é-e-tsí**    **bu-tsikpí**    **ní**    **kumí**    **ní**    **Akú**  
 REL    3SG.DEP-PSTPROG-clean    CM.PL-pot    DEF    inside    TOP    Akú  
**á-a-to**    **kí-dɔ̃**  
 SM-PRSPROG-cook    CM-thing  
 ‘While she was cleaning the pots Aku was cooking.’
107. **Gɪ** **láabán** **bábátlé** ‘édzɔ̃.  
**gɪ**    **lá-a-bá**    **ní**    **bá-bá-lulá**    **ki-dzo**  
 REL    3PL.DEP-PSTPROG-come    TOP    3PL-VENT-lose    CM-road

‘While they were coming they got lost.’

The position of the main clause and the subordinate clause can vary. Hence, the conditional clause can either precede or follow the main clause as shown in (108).

108. Bábálulé ’édzó gɪ láabán.  
**bá-bá-lulá** **ki-dzo** **gɪ** **lá-a-bá** **ní**  
 3PL-VENT-lose CM-road REL 3PL.DEP-PSTPROG-come TOP  
 ‘They got lost while they were coming.’

### 9.1.3.7 Manner clauses

Manner clauses are introduced by **kánā** ‘manner’. They express the way the situation in the main clause is carried out. They can precede or follow the main clause as is illustrated in (109) – (111).

109. Kánā lagbáá, bagbáá, adzyatā ávɪ ékóéyɪ, kehúí ávɪ kekóéyɪ.  
**ká-nā** **la-gbáá** **ba-gbáá** **a-dzyatā** **á-vɪ** **é-kóéyɪ**  
 CM-manner 3PL.DEP-IDEO 3PL-IDEO CM-lion SM-go 3SG-exit  
**ke-húí** **ká-vɪ** **ke-kóéyɪ**  
 CM-antelop SM-go 3SG-exit  
 ‘That was how they went on and on and on, lion went he came out, antelope went he came out.’ (Gbaxáǎĩ)
110. B’otsiré ’óló ní ’kǐn kánā leklui.  
**ba** **o-tsiré** **buló** **ní** **ɪ-kǐ** **ní** **ká-nā** **le-klu**  
 come 2SG-tell 1PL LOC here TOP CM-manner 3PL.DEP-call  
**yí**  
 3SG  
 ‘Come and tell us here how she is called.’ (Sáhwĩ)
111. Balí xǔn étínyí ásí ní kánā sáhwĩ édékpú kó álí, énú bal’enyí gɪ le klú  
**balí** **xǔn** **bé-tí-nyí** **bá-sí** **ní** **ká-nā**  
 3PL.IND as.for 3PL-NEG1-know SM-COMP TOP CM-manner  
**sáhwĩ** **é-dé-kpú** **kó** **balí** **é-nú** **balí**  
 CM-spider SM-ITIVE-hide DAT 3PL SM-hear 3PL.IND  
**e-nyí** **gɪ** **le-klú**  
 CM.PL-name REL 3PL.DEP-call  
 ‘As for them, they did not know that spider was hiding from them and had heard the names they mentioned.’ (Sáhwĩ)

## 9.1.3.8 Concessive clauses

Like conditional clauses, concessive clauses are introduced by **ónú.gi** or **ónú.pi** ‘COND’ and they end with the adverbs **kóráá** ‘even’ followed by **tsyí** ‘also, too’. For example,

112. Ónúgi Nání étínyí klí kóráá tsyí ábaví?  
**ónú.gi** **Nání** **é-tí-nyí** **ı-klí** **kóráá** **tsyí** **á-ba-vı**  
 COND Nání SM-NEG1-know CM-there even too 3SG-FUT-go  
 ‘Even if Nani does not know the place he will go.’
113. Ónúgi áányā kóráá tsyí ábagba ’uvunúm.  
**ónú.gi** **á-á-nyā** **kóráá** **tsyí** **á-ba-gba**  
 COND 3SG.DEP-PRSPROG-be.sick even too 3SG-FUT-sweep  
**bú-vū** **ní** **kumı**  
 CM-house DEF inside  
 ‘Even if s/he is sick s/he will sweep the room.’

## 9.1.3.9 Sequential clauses

Sequential clauses in Tafi are introduced by **ká** ‘then’. They express states of affairs that occur after the state of affairs represented in a preceding clause. For example, the apodosis of a conditional sentence can be introduced by **ká** ‘then’. Similarly, sequential clauses in procedural and narrative discourses that occur in sequence may be linked in discourse through **ká** ‘then’. A clause final **é** particle may terminate such **ká** clauses. This is exemplified in (114) - (116).

114. Ónúg’ óféké kitukún ótrō kíkúisí ní ká ópuoyíko é.  
**ónú.gi** **ó-féke** **ki-tukú** **ní** **ó-trō** **kí-kuísí** **ní**  
 COND 2SG.DEP-lift CM-load DEF SM-put.on CM-knee DEF  
**[ká ó-pĩ bu-yíko é ]**  
 then 2SG.DEP-be.good CM-take CFM  
 ‘When you lift the load onto your knee it becomes easier to help you put it on your head.’ (Proverb #30)
115. Óny’ ósí bubí ko ká ɔtsí ’ólí é.  
**ó-nyí** **ó-sí** **bu-bí** **ko**  
 2SG-know SM-COMP 3SG-cooked just  
**[ká ɔ-tsí bulí é ]**  
 then 2SG.DEP-take.off 3SG CFM  
 ‘You get to know that it is well-cooked and then you take it off (the fire).’  
 (Palm oil)

116. Buayabe 'ebóé ko ká ótsyínā 'lí.  
**bu-ba-yabá** **kibóé** **ko** **[ká** **ó-tsyínā** **bulí]**  
 3SG-PRSPROG-boil little just then 2SG.DEP-turn 3SG  
 'It will boil a little, then you pour it out.' (Palm oil)

## 9.2 Coordination

This section looks at coordination in Tafi. I discuss how constituents are conjoined into larger units. In Tafi, coordination is expressed by overt coordinators, i.e. it is usually syndetic (see e.g. Haspelmath 2007 for types). Coordinators in the language include **ni** 'COM', the comitative preposition which is used as conjunction to link NPs (§9.2.1), **kúfí** 'CONJ' which is another conjunctive marker used to connect clauses (§9.2.2), the disjunctive markers **pín33/alo(o)/lo(o)** 'or' (§9.2.3) and the adversative markers **pó/gaké**<sup>63</sup> 'but' (§9.2.4).

### 9.2.1 The NP coordinator **ni** 'COM'

As already indicated in Chapter 4, **ni** 'COM' is used to link NPs. The sentences in (117) and (118) illustrate the conjoining of simple NPs while (119) exemplifies the conjoining of a simple NP and a complex NP.

117. Áv'iedziním édédzí bawi ni bafókpa.  
**á-ví** **ke-dzi** **ní** **kumu** **é-dé-dzí** **ba-wi** **ni**  
 2SG-go CM-market DEF inside SM-ITIVE-buy CM.PL-dress COM  
**ba-fókpa**  
 CM.PL-shoe  
 'S/he went to the market and bought dresses and shoes.'
118. Béyí shú n'atróé n'akplo.  
**bé-yí** **shú** **ni** **a-tróé** **ni** **a-kplo**  
 3PL-kill REFL COM CM.PL-arrow COM CM.PL-spear  
 'They killed themselves with arrows and spears.'
119. Adzín gi áányān ni y'eyín ábá m'upáním.  
**a-dzĩ** **ní** **gi** **á-á-nyā** **ní**  
 CM-woman DEF REL 3SG.DEP-PRSPROG-be.sick TOP  
**ni** **yí** **e-yí** **ní** **bá-bá** **mí** **bu-pá**  
 COM 3SG.IND CM-child DEF SM-come 1SG.IND CM-house  
**ní** **kumu**  
 DEF inside  
 'The woman who is sick and her child came to my house.'

<sup>63</sup> **gaké** is a loanword from Ewe.

The comitative **ni** has an additive meaning in (117) and (118). In (119) it yields a comitative reading.

### 9.2.2 The conjunctive marker **kuł** ‘CONJ’

The conjunctive marker **kuł** is the most frequently used connector in Tafi. It is used to link two different types of clauses. In one case, it is used to link clauses of equal rank as shown in (120) and in the other case, it introduces a main clause linked to a dependent clause as in (121).

120. Akú étsi butsikpín kuł Ésí átó ’éd5ń.  
**Akú é-tsi bu-tsikpĩ ní kuł Ésí á-t5 kí-d5**  
 Akú SM-wash CM.PL-pot DEF CONJ Ésí SM-cook CM-thing  
**ní**  
 DEF  
 ‘Aku cleaned the pots and Esi cooked the food.’
121. Gı áashĩ adzĩń ’úpánĩm ní kuł y’átsánĩ y’edzini.  
**gı á-a-shĩ a-dzĩ ní bu-pá**  
 REL 3SG.DEP-PSTPROG-leave CM-woman DEF CM-house  
**ní kumi ní kuł yĩ á-tsánĩ yĩ e-dzini**  
 DEF inside TOP CONJ 3SG.IND SM-meet 3SG.IND CM-wife  
 ‘As he was leaving the woman’s house he met his wife.’

The conjunction **kuł** ‘CONJ’ cannot be used to link VPs within a sentence. Hence, the ungrammaticality of the sentence in (122).

122. \*Ésí átó ’éd5 kuł ŋa.  
**Ésí á-t5 kí-d5 kuł ŋa**  
 Ésí SM-cook CM-thing CONJ eat  
 ‘Esi cooked and ate.’

### 9.2.3 The disjunctive markers **pín55/ pún55/aló(ó)/ló(ó)** ‘or’

As already stated in § 4.2.2, **pín55/pún55** ‘or’ is the linker used to connect noun phrases when one wants to give or express other options or choices. Both forms are used interchangeably. Speakers also use **aló(ó)** or **ló(ó)** ‘or’ which are borrowed from Ewe. The disjunctive markers are also used to link sentences as in (125) and (126). (123) and (124) illustrate NPs linked by the disjunctive marker. (126) is an example of a yes/no question in which two alternative clauses are present linked by **pún55**.

123. Máwúto ábaŋa fufuo pín55 kumukó.  
**Máwúto á-ba-ŋa fufuo pín55 kú-mukó**  
 Máwúto SM-FUT-eat fufu DISJ CM-red.rice.porridge  
 ‘Mawutor will eat fufu or red rice porridge.’
124. Kofi pín55 Ámā ábavi.  
**Kofi pín55 Ámā á-ba-vi**  
 Kofi DISJ Ama SM-FUT-go  
 ‘Kofi or Ama will go.’
125. Ítínýí tɪ al’ódzyí pún55 tɪ evē?  
**í-tí-nyí tɪ a-lí ɔ-dzyí pún55**  
 1SG-NEG1-know COMP 3SG.DEP-be.at SM-sweetness DISJ  
**tɪ e-vē**  
 COMP 3SG.DEP-be.bitter  
 ‘I don’t know whether it is sweet or bitter.’
126. Ápí sí ávi ’uyem pún55 aza apém?  
**á-pí sí á-vi bu-ya kum pún55**  
 3SG-want COMP 3SG.DEP-go CM-farm inside DISJ  
**a-za bu-pá kum**  
 3SG.DEP-stay CM-house inside  
 ‘Does he want to go to the farm or to stay at home?’

Like **kulí** ‘CONJ’, the disjunctive markers do not seem to be used to conjoin VPs.

127. \*Ópí ɔsí ɔshí pún55 za apém?  
**ó-pí ɔ-sí ɔ-shí pún55 za bú-pá**  
 2SG-want SM-COMP 2SG.DEP-leave DISJ stay CM-house  
**kum**  
 inside  
 ‘Do you want to leave or stay at home?’

The disjunctive markers can be used in alternative and tag questions (see §8.2.2 and §8.2.3 for further details).

#### 9.2.4 The adversative markers **po/gaké** ‘but’

Adversative co-ordination is expressed by **po** or **gaké**. **Gaké** is a loanword from Ewe.

128. Ídzí ékū telí po étíbékē.  
**í-dzí é-kū te-lí po é-tí-békē**  
 1SG-buy CM.PL-yam AM-INDEF but 3PL-PERF-finish



‘I bought some yams but they got finished.’

129. ... ónúgɪ aní wó, ótsokú klí óbokoéyí gaké ónúgɪ w'ódózúré fufuón óɲa,  
 ótsokú kígbán'iesí ko kígbán ímunɔ wó zũũ k'ótsí.  
**ónú.gɪ aní wó ó-tsokú ɪ-klí ó-bo-koéyí**  
 COND NEGCL 2SG.IND 2SG-enter CM-there SM-FUT-exit  
**gaké ónú.gɪ wó ó-dó-zúré fufuó ní ó-ɲa**  
 but COND 2SG.IND SM-ITIVE-steal fufu DEF SM-eat  
**ó-tsokú kí-gba ní ke.sí ko kí-gba ní**  
 2SG-enter CM-falling.trap DEF under just CM-falling.trap DEF  
**kí-munɔ wó zũũ ká ó-tsí**  
 SM-swallow 2SG IDEO.sound then 2SG.DEP-die  
 ‘... if it is not you, if you enter in there you will get out but if it is you who  
 went and ate the stolen fufu if you went under the falling trap it will fall on  
 you then you die.’ (Gbaxálí)

In (129), the adversative marker **gaké** links two complex sentences both involving conditionals.

### 9.2.5 The correlative disjunctive marker **o(o)...(o(o))**

The correlative disjunctive marker is used to conjoin clauses that are opposites as exemplified below. At times, the second part of this marker is left out as shown in (132).

130. Áɲe 'édɔ́ oo adɲe 'édɔ́ oo ábamɔ shuím?  
**á-ɲa kí-dɔ́ oo a-dɪ-ɲa kí-dɔ́ oo**  
 3SG-eat CM-thing DISJ 3SG-NEG2-eat CM-thing DISJ  
**á-ba-mɔ shú kɪmɪ**  
 3SG-FUT-see body inside  
 ‘Whether she eats or not she will grow fat.’
131. Óbhíti 'idzyɔgɔ́ o, óbhíti 'izizi o, wó n'áhɔɪ.  
**ó-bhíti kí-dzyɔgɔ́ o ó-bhíti kí-zizi o wó nɪ**  
 2SG-do CM-good DISJ 2SG-do CM-bad DISJ 2SG.IND COM  
**a-hɔɪ**  
 CM-hand  
 ‘Whether you do good or you do bad, you do it for yourself.’

132. Ésí ábav'idzoem ónúgɪ ámɔ sɪká oo ádɪmɔɛ tsyɪʔ.  
 Ésí    **á-ba-vɪ**        **ki-dzo**    **kumɪ**    **ónú.gɪ**    **á-mɔ**        **sɪká**  
 Ésí    SM-FUT-go   CM-road   inside   COND    3SG.DEP-see   money  
**oo**    **á-dɪ-mɔ**                    **yí**    **tsyí**  
 DISJ   3SG.DEP-NEG2-see    3SG    also  
 'Whether Esi has money or not she will travel.'

The chapter has presented various means deployed in Tafi to form multi-clausal units. These involve embedding clauses in other units (relativisation and complementation) as well as strategies for connecting clauses to other clauses to form larger units in discourse coordination and the linking of adverbial clauses. In the next chapter, we look at the way in which verbs are integrated in mono-clauses.



## 10 SERIAL VERB CONSTRUCTIONS

Serial verb constructions (SVCs) are widespread in the languages of West Africa and they have been the subject of various studies (e.g. Christaller 1875, Stewart 1963, Osam 2004 on Akan; Westermann 1907, Agbedor 1994, Collins 1997, Ameka 2006 on Ewe; Lefebvre and Brousseau 2002 for Fongbe; Lewis 1993 on Gengbe, Carlson 1994 on Supyire; Bodomo 2002 on Dagaare). There are, nonetheless, difficulties in identifying SVCs which are common to these languages since even within the same language there may be different types (Lord 1993). For instance, it has been suggested that the types of SVCs found in Kwa languages constitute an areal type, however, some variations still exist with regard to the constraints on features of the verbs that combine in these constructions (Ameka 2003, 2005). The goal of this chapter is to examine the properties of serial verb constructions in Tafi. I will explore the constraints on argument sharing among the verbs, and the marking of various categories such as tense-aspect-mood and negation in these constructions. I will also discuss some functional types of SVCs including the benefactive, directional, comparative and instrumental. See Aikhenvald (2006) and Durie (1997) for general overviews of SVCs beyond West Africa.

### 10.1 Serial Verb Constructions in Tafi

SVCs in Tafi are constructions comprising two or more verbs without any overt marker of coordination or subordination. They share at least one argument and same tense and mood. SVCs in the language can function in various sentence types with different illocutionary forces such as:

#### I. Imperatives

- 1a. Yíkɔ kesisín ómínā!  
**yíkɔ ke-sisí ní ó-mínā**  
take CM-mortar DEF 2SG-bring  
'Bring the mortar!'
- 1b. Botsiré úló ní 'kĩ ...  
**bá o-tsiré buló ní ɪ-kĩ**  
come 2SG-tell 1PL LOC CM-here  
'Come and tell us here ...'

#### II. Declaratives

- 2a. Kofi áɖɔ kibúín étsirém.  
**Kofi á-ɖɔ ki-búí ní é-tsiré mí**  
Kofi SM-say CM-matter DEF SM-tell 1SG  
'Kofi narrated the matter to me.'

- 2b. Édzí 'íkū ámínā.

**é-dzí      kí-kū      á-mínā**

3SG-buy CM-yam SM-bring

'He bought yam (and) brought it.'

III. Questions.

- 3a. Ezin es'édékpú xāā?

**e-zi      ní      e-sí      é-dé-kpú      xāā**

CM-thief DEF SM-run SM-ITIVE-hide UFP

'Did the thief run and hid?'

- 3b. Akú ábatɔ ɛdɔ áŋa xāā?

**Akú      á-ba-tɔ      kí-dɔ      á-ŋa      xāā**

Akú SM-FUT-cook CM-thing SM-eat UFP

'Will Aku cook and eat?'

## 10.2 Characteristics of Tafi SVCs

The characteristics of SVCs in Tafi are as follows:

- 4a. They consist of a series of verbs that function as a single predicate.
- 4b. They occur without any overt marker of dependency, i.e., co-ordination or subordination.
- 4c. They constitute a single clause.
- 4d. The verbs cannot be independently negated.
- 4e. They share the same tense and mood, marked only once on the first verb.
- 4f. They share at least one argument.
- 4g. Each of the verbs can occur independently in a monoverbal clause.
- 4h. The verbs can be marked for the same aspect and modality or for different but compatible aspect, modal or directional values.
- 4i. The verbs can be independently focused or questioned.

I now elaborate on these characteristics.

SVCs consist of a series of verbs that function as a single predicate as shown in (5c).

They occur without any overt marker of dependency, i.e., co-ordination or subordination. Verbs that occur in SVCs do not occur with any individual conjunction. Thus, if any conjunction should occur between the verbs the construction can no longer be considered as an SVC. Consider the following examples.

- 5a. Fol' átá ból' ehú Folitsě.  
**Folí á-tá bólú é-hú Folitsě**  
 Folí SM-strike ball SM-hit Folitsě  
 'Folí struck the ball and hit Folitsě.'
- 5b. Fol' átá bólú kulí ehú Folitsě.  
**Folí á-tá bólú kulí é-hú Folitsě**  
 Folí SM-strike ball CONJ 3SG-hit Folitsě  
 'Folí struck the ball and it hit Folitsě.'
- 5c. Ésí és'étsokú 'uvuním.  
**Ésí é-sí é-tsokú bú-vū ní kum**  
 Ésí SM-run SM-enter CM-house DEF inside  
 'Esi ran into the room.'
- 5d. Ésí ésí kulí étsokú 'uvuním.  
**Ésí é-sí kulí é-tsokú bú-vū ní kum**  
 Ésí SM-run CONJ 3SG-enter CM-house DEF inside  
 'Esi ran and entered the room.'

The sentences in (5a) and (5c) are SVCs whereas those in (5b) and (5d) both consist of two clauses which are conjoined by **kulí** 'CONJ'.

SVCs constitute a single clause. They can function in a place where a clause can function. For instance, one part of a complex sentence which is a clause can be realised as an SVC. Moreover, since they have the properties of a single verb clause, there cannot be a sentence pause between the component verbs. For example,

6. Kulí y'av'edékpú ní kidzoń 'útó gú badzĩń abáága aflá av'iením.  
**kulí [yí á-ví é-dé-kpú ní ki-dzo ní**  
 CONJ 3SG.IND SM-go SM-ITIVE-hide LOC CM-road DEF  
**bu.tó] [gú ba-dzĩ ní bá-bá-á-ga**  
 edge REL CM.PL-woman DEF SM-VENT-PRSPROG-walk  
**bá-flá bá-ví ke-ní kum]**  
 SM-pass SM-go CM-river inside  
 'Then he went and hid himself beside the road where the women usually pass to the riverside.' (Sáhwĩ)

The verbs in an SVC cannot be independently negated as shown in (7). The negative marker occurs once per SVC.

7. Agbahlgba átísa adzĩ ohui ákó án5?  
**a-gbahlgba á-tí-sa a-dzĩ o-hui á-kó**  
 CM-bachelor SM-NEG1-tie CM-woman CM-charm SM-give

**a-n5**

CM-person

‘A bachelor does not make a credible seller of love charms.’ (Proverb #14)

In example (7) the negative marker is expressed with VP<sub>1</sub> however, it has scope over the whole clause. Thus this sentence can be interpreted as a bachelor does not make love charms and does not give love charms to people.

SVCs share the same tense and mood and they are marked only once on the first verb. That is the verbs in the series have the same temporal frame and are in the scope of the same temporal operators. It is thus not possible, for example, for the verbs to take different temporal operators as shown in (8b). Thus while (8a) is an SVC, (8b) where there are different operators is not. By sharing the same tense entails that they express one macro-event (see Bohnemeyer et al. 2007 on Macro-Event Property (MEP)).

8a. Kòkú ábatò ’ed5 áṅa.

**Kòkú á-ba-t5 kí-d5 á-ṅa**  
 Kòkú SM-FUT-cook CM-thing SM-eat  
 ‘Kòkú will cook and eat.’

8b. \*Kofí áto ’ed5 obón ábaṅa ’evū.

**Kofí á-t5 kí-d5 o-bón á-ba-ṅa kí-vū**  
 Kofí SM-cook CM-thing CM-today SM-FUT-eat CM-tomorrow  
 \*‘Kofí cooked today and will eat tomorrow.’

The verbs in an SVC share their subject argument which is expressed on each verb as in (9a) (except when it is the 1SG/PL pronoun or a noun from any of the **bu**-classes as in (9b)).

9a. Lólun es’ ékú osíním.

**lólun ní é-sí é-kú o-sí ní kímí**  
 lorry DEF SM-run SM-reach CM-tree DEF inside  
 ‘The car ran into the tree.’

9b. Búvū ní tri dí Ofolí úyín.

**bú-vū ní tri dí Ofolí bu-yí ní**  
 CM-house DEF be.big surpass Ofolí AM-POSSD DEF  
 ‘The house is bigger than Ofolí’s own.’

9c. Ɔtsrí kòkul5 ɔl’5vɔ aput5 otiti ɔdzyudzyɔn.

**ɔ-tsrí kòkul5 ɔl’ 5-vɔ a-put5**  
 CM-foot crooked 3SG.IND SM-besmeared.with CM.PL-mud  
**o-titi ɔ-dzyudzyɔ ní**  
 SM-smear CM-straight DEF

‘It is the crooked leg that besmears the straight one with mud.’ (Proverb #1)

In example (9a), the lexical subject **lɛli** ‘car’ of the SVC is cross-referenced on the two verbs in the SVC by the subject marker **e-**. However, in (9b), the two verbs are unmarked as the lexical subject **búvū ní** ‘the house’ belongs to the **bu<sup>1</sup>-** class. Example (9c) shows that the subject cross-reference on the subsequent verbs in an SVC is a subject marker (SM) as opposed to a subject pronoun form. Here, the subject of the SVC belongs to the **o-** class where the SM and subject pronoun forms are distinguished. If it were the subject pronoun form the cross-reference marker would have been **lo-**.

Also, shared objects are expressed once with the first verb. As illustrated in (10), all the four verbs share the same object which is **kulí** ‘3SG’ expressed only once with the first verb **yukɔ** ‘take’.

10. ... kulí áákɔ ’elɪ pétée áákɔ ábal’akpí ketsukpúním.  
**kulí á-yíko kulí pétée á-yíko á-balɪ a-kpí**  
 CONJ 3SG-take 3SG all SM-take SM-pour SM-put.into  
**ke-tsukpú ní kum**  
 CM-pot DEF inside  
 ‘... and then she put it all into the pot.’ (Kásālā)

Each verb in an SVC can occur with its own complement (when it is not shared) as in (11). These are multiple object SVCs.

11. Shui ’uní óplǔ āmɪ.  
**Shui bu-ní o-plǔ ā-mɪ**  
 Fetch CM-water 2SG-wash CM-face  
 ‘Fetch water and wash your face.’

Another feature of SVCs in Tafi is that each of the verbs can occur independently in a mono-verbal clause as shown in (12b) and (12c).

- 12a. És’ekóéyɪ.  
**é-sí e-kóéyɪ**  
 3SG-run SM-exit  
 ‘S/he ran out.’
- 12b. Ésí.  
**é-sí**  
 3SG-run  
 ‘S/he ran.’



- 12c. Ekóéyĩ.  
**e-kóéyĩ**  
 SM-exit  
 ‘S/he went/came out.’

The example in (12a) and similar utterances satisfy all other conditions for SVC that the verbs should be able to occur in a mono-verbal clause.

Moreover, the verbs can be marked for the same aspect and modality or for different but compatible aspect, modal or directional values as shown in (13a) – (13c).

- 13a. Kalí y’áákò avínò átísó ’éd5 n5.  
**kalí yí á-yíko a-vi-no á-tí-só kí-d5**  
 3SG.IND 3SG.IND SM-take SM-go-COM SM-PERF-weed CM-thing  
**n5**  
 COM  
 ‘That (= cutlass) he took along to do the weeding/to weed with.’
- 13b. Kofĩ ésí édékpú.  
**Kofĩ é-sí é-dé-kpú**  
 Kofĩ SM-run SM-ITIVE-hide  
 ‘Kofi ran away to hide.’
- 13c. Ányínúv5ēn áásh’āv’uyem.  
**á-nyínúv5ē ní á-á-shĩ á-vi bu-ya kum**  
 CM-boy DEF SM-PRSPROG-leave SM-go CM-farm inside  
 ‘The boy is leaving for the farm.’

In (13a), the first two verbs are in the aorist and the third verb is marked for the perfective whereas in (13b), the first verb is in the aorist and the second verb is modified by the itive. In (13c), the first verb is marked for the progressive and the second verb is in the aorist. In example (12a) above, the first and second verbs are both in the aorist.

One of the verbs in an SVC can be independently focused or questioned, as illustrated in (14a) – (14c).

- 14a. Boshĩ y’áshĩ āv’uyem.  
**bu-shĩ yí á-shĩ a-vi bu-ya kum**  
 CM-leave 3SG.IND SM-leave SM-go CM-farm inside  
 ‘LEAVE s/he DID leave for the farm.’

- 14b. Kídē Ámā ébhui 'ipótí ábhítí nɔ?  
**kídē Ámā é-bhui kɪ-pótí ní á-bhítí nɔ**  
 What Ama SM-cut CM-cloth DEF SM-do COM  
 'What did Ama do with the cloth she bought?' (Lit.: 'What did Ama buy the cloth and do (with it)?')
- 14c. Ébhui 'ipótí áákɔ abhítí 'ídē nɔ?  
**é-bhui kɪ-pótí á-yɪkɔ a-bhítí kídē nɔ**  
 3SG-cut CM-cloth SM-take SM-do what COM  
 'She bought the cloth and did what with it?'

In (14a), the first verb in the SVC is focused. In Tafi, VP focus is done by preposing a copy of the verb which is prefixed with **bu-/bu-** depending on the ATR value of the stem vowel. The verb remains in its normal position and any other relevant marking of focus such as the use of the independent pronoun form if the subject of the clause is realised as a pronominal (see Chapter 6 on topic and focus). In (14b) and (14c) the second VP in each of the SVCs is questioned. In the former, the question word complement of the 'do' verb is fronted for focus while in the latter the question word remains in situ.

Subjects as well as objects of SVCs can also be focused or questioned as the following question-answer pairs illustrate:

- 15a. Ánī y'ésí édékpû?  
**á-nī yí é-sí é-dé-kpú**  
 AM-who 3SG.IND SM-run SM-ITIVE-hide  
 'Who ran and hid?'
- 15b. Ámā y'ésí édékpú.  
**Ámā yí é-sí é-dé-kpú**  
 Ama 3SG.IND SM-run SM-ITIVE-hide  
 'AMA ran and hid.'
- 15c. Kídē Ámā ákámī ákpí?  
**kídē Ámā á-kámī á-kpí**  
 What Ama SM-sew SM-wear  
 'What did Ama sew to wear?'
- 15d. Awí y'ákámī ákpí.  
**a-wí yí á-kámī á-kpí**  
 CM-dress 3SG.IND SM-sew SM-wear  
 'A dress she sewed and wore.'

(15a) and (15c) are examples in which the subject and object arguments have been questioned respectively whereas (15b) and (15d) illustrate focusing of subject and

object arguments respectively. (15b) and (15d) can be given as answers to the questions in (15a) and (15c).

### 10.3 Some functional types of SVCs in Tafi

In this section, I look at some functional types of SVCs that occur in Tafi. They include manipulative/handling, directional, dative, comparative, resultative and posture SVCs.

#### 10.3.1 Manipulative/handling SVCs

Manipulative/handling SVCs involve the handling verb **yíkɔ** ‘take’ as VP<sub>1</sub>.<sup>64</sup> Most often, in this type of SVC, VP<sub>1</sub> describes the means by which the state of affairs expressed by VP<sub>2</sub> is carried out. The NP complement of the verb ‘take’, usually the first verb in the series, could be an instrument as in (16a) and (16b) or a theme which undergoes a change of location as in the two SVCs in (16c) and in (16d). For example,

16a. Áyíkɔ kawí adzyá osín.

**á-yíkɔ ka-wí a-dzyá o-sí ní**  
3SG-take CM-axe SM-hack CM-tree DEF  
‘He used an axe and hacked the tree.’

16b. Aní ’tɕsá láytko ’epú ɔwɪsí nɔ.

**aní kɪ-tsá lá-yíkɔ be-pú ɔ-wɪsí nɔ**  
NEG.FOC CM-needle 3PL-take 3PL-punch CM-axe.handle COM  
‘It is not a needle that one uses to punch a hole in the handle of an axe.’  
(Proverb #17)

16c. ...kulí áákɔ ’elɪ pétée áákɔ abal’akpí ketsukpú gbugblä tielí ’mɪ kulí ayíkɔ  
’édɔ ada.

**kulí á-yíkɔ kulí pétée á-yíkɔ a-bal a-kpí**  
CONJ 3SG-take 3SG all SM-take SM-pour SM-put.into

<sup>64</sup> The ‘take’ SVCs involving instrument have two structures, one in which there is a comitative preposition **nɔ** optionally at the end of the sentence as in (16b) and another where there is no preposition as in (16a), for example. The exact conditions under which the preposition appears in such SVCs is not clear at this stage. A tendency that is observed in the Tafi case is that if the internal argument of the ‘take’ verb is in focus, and therefore extracted from its object position, the **nɔ** comitative preposition appears at the end. A similar phenomenon has been observed by Lefebvre and Brousseau (2002:308) for Fon. There too, there is inconclusive evidence for the appearance or not of a preposition at the end of such SVCs. Further research might reveal the motivation.

**ke-tsukpú gbugblā tie-lí kumi kulí á-yíko kí-d5**  
 CM-pot big AM-INDEF inside CONJ SM-take CM-thing  
**á-da**  
 SM-cover  
 ‘... and then she put it all into a big bowl and covered it.’ (Kásālā)

- 16d. Gɪ áŋa békēŋ kulí y’ayíko aklōn afi.  
**gɪ á-ŋa békē ní kulí yí a-yíko a-kl5**  
 REL 3SG-eat COMPL TOP CONJ 3SG.IND 3SG-take CM.PL-peel  
**ní a-ŋi**  
 DEF SM-throw  
 ‘When he finishes eating he throws the peels away.’

In (16a), the verb **yík5** ‘take’ takes as object an instrument, **kawí** ‘axe’, which is used to perform the action expressed by VP<sub>2</sub>. In (16b), the instrument, **kutsá** ‘needle’ is in focus and the comitative preposition **no** occurs at the end of the sentence. In examples (16a) and (16b), the subject argument is shared by both VP<sub>1</sub> and VP<sub>2</sub>. Example (16c) consists of conjoined SVCs in which the first SVC contains four verbs two of which are ‘take’ and all the verbs share the same subject and object which are expressed only once with the first verb. The object argument **kulí** ‘3SG’ which is the Theme undergoes a change of location. The second SVC, however, is a multiple object SVC. The object of VP<sub>1</sub> **yík5** ‘take’ is **kíd5** ‘thing’ which is a Theme also undergoes a change of location whereas the object of VP<sub>2</sub> **da** ‘cover’ is **ketsukpú** ‘pot’. This object has been elided in the sentence because reference has been made to it earlier on in the conversation so it is recoverable from context. In (16d), the object of the ‘take’ verb, **akl5** ‘peels’, undergoes a change of location.

### 10.3.2. Directional SVCs

In directional SVCs, the last verb in the series is a motion verb used to denote the direction of the movement or more generally, the state of affairs being carried out as represented in the rest of the clause. In example (17a), VP<sub>1</sub> expresses manner, VP<sub>2</sub> and VP<sub>3</sub> indicate path and the final verb indicates direction. In (17b), VP<sub>1</sub> expresses manner and VP<sub>2</sub> is a ‘reach’ verb which indicates that the car has reached an end goal. The example in (17c) consists of two SVCs and in both, VP<sub>1</sub> expresses manner of motion and VP<sub>2</sub> expresses direction. In the second SVC, the object argument of V<sub>1</sub> which is an instrument is in focus so the comitative **no** occurs at the end of the sentence. Example (9a) is repeated here as (17b).

- 17a. Bonóv5ē káa bhulín ág’ akana étsódzi ábá y’ózakó.  
**bu-nóv5ē káa bhulí ní á-ga á-kana é-tsódzi**  
 CM.PL-child car small DEF SM-walk SM-go.round SM-return

**á-bá yí ɔ-zakó**  
 SM-come 3SG.IND CM-dwelling.place  
 ‘The toy car went round and came back to its place.’

- 17b. Lólun es’ ékú osíním.  
**lólú ní é-sí é-kú o-sí ní kumí**  
 lorry DEF SM-run SM-reach CM-tree DEF inside  
 ‘The car ran into the tree.’

- 17c. Kof’ adig’avi sukú, gasó y’edo ávì nò?  
**[Kofí a-di-ga a-vì sukú ] [gasó yí e-do**  
 Kofi SM-NEG2-walk SM-go school bicycle 3SG.IND SM-ride  
**á-vì nò ]**  
 SM-go COM  
 ‘Kofi did not walk to school, a bicycle he rode.’

### 10.3.3 Dative SVCs

Like in other serialising languages, dative SVCs in Tafi are used to indicate that a state of affairs occurs with respect to an intended target either for their benefit or their sake (see e.g., Margetts and Austin 2007). The last verb in the series in a dative SVC is always **kó** ‘give’. The verb ‘give’ is used to introduce the role of recipient or beneficiary. VP<sub>1</sub> could be any verb including **yíkó** ‘take’, in that case, the SVC codes a transfer situation. As shown in (18a) and (18b), the state of affairs expressed by VP<sub>1</sub> and VP<sub>2</sub> are performed for the sake/benefit of the object argument of the verb **kó** ‘give’.

- 18a. Agoé ébhui ’ipotí ákám’ ákó y’eyíálí.  
**Agoé é-bhui kú-potí á-kámí á-kó yí é-yí-álí**  
 Agoé SM-cut CM-cloth SM-sew SM-give 3SG.IND CM-child-PL  
 Agoe bought cloth and sewed for her children.’
- 18b. Agoéxwě édz’ásí ám’ákó banóvǎń.  
**Agoéxwě é-dzí á-sí á-má á-kó ba-nóvǎ ní**  
 Agoéxwě SM-buy SM-rice SM-divide SM-give CM.PL-child DEF  
 ‘Agoexwě bought rice and shared for the kids.’

### 10.3.4 Comparative SVCs

Comparative constructions also involve SVCs. The verb **di** ‘surpass’ is used to express comparison and it occurs as VP<sub>2</sub> as shown in the following examples.

- 19a. Adıqama adím’.

**a-dɪ-ɖama**      **a-dɪ**      **mí**  
 3SG-NEG-be.tall    SM-surpass    1SG  
 ‘S/he is not taller than me.’

- 19b. Ányínúvɔ̃ɛ́n ési adɪ Kofɪ nɪ Ésí.  
**á-nyínúvɔ̃ɛ́n**   **ní**    **é-sí**      **a-dɪ**      **Kofɪ**   **nɪ**    **Ésí**  
 CM-boy      DEF    SM-run    SM-surpass    Kofɪ    COM    Esi  
 ‘The boy runs faster than Kofi and Esi.’ (i.e., the boy is the fastest in running.)

In these comparative SVCs,  $V_1$  denotes the property with respect to which the entities are being compared. The standard of comparison is the object of  $V_2$ . The comparee functions as the subject of the SVC. A superlative reading is derived when the standard of comparison contains more than one entity as in (19b).

The verb **sɔ̃** ‘be equal’ is used in SVCs to express equality. It occurs as  $VP_2$ . The verb **sɔ̃** is adapted from Ewe **so** ‘be equal’. In my corpus, all the examples of **sɔ̃** equality comparison involve plural subjects where two or more entities being equated occur together. Consider the following examples.

- 20a. Bésh’asɔ̃.  
**bé-she**      **bá-sɔ̃**  
 3PL-grow    SM-be.equal  
 ‘They are of the same age.’
- 20b. Bétri asɔ̃.  
**bé-tri**      **bá-sɔ̃**  
 3PL-become.big    SM-be.equal  
 ‘They are of the same size’

### 10.3.5 Aspectual SVCs

Some verbs are used in SVCs to convey aspectual meanings. Such verbs occur as the final verb in the series. For instance, the form **dí** ‘look’ can be used as a final verb in an SVC as in (21a) to signal that a situation has existed before or will have happened prior to the time of speech or as an adverbial particle as in (21b). It thus marks experiential aspect.

- 21a. Ámā ádí lgɛ́ edí.  
**Ámā**   **á-dí**      **l-gɛ́**      **e-dí**  
 Ama   SM-go    CM-Accra    SM-look  
 ‘Ama has (ever) been to Accra.’

- 21b. Kibúúín ídi kabá dí.

**ki-búí**      **ı-ní**      **kí-dí**      **ká-bá**      **dí**  
 CM-matter   AM-PROX   CM-type   NEG.PERF-come   EXP  
 ‘This has never happened.’

In (21a), **dí** ‘look’ is used to express a situation that has occurred before the moment of speech and it can be interpreted as ‘ever’ or ‘once’ whereas in (21b), it can be interpreted as ‘never’ or ‘never as yet’ because of the negative perfective marker. In this sentence, **dí** ‘look’ is used to indicate that a situation has never occurred and may never occur. The example in (21b), however, is not an SVC because **dí** ‘look’ has fully grammaticalised so it is not marked for subject. The difference between (21a) and (21b) shows the stages of grammaticalisation of the verb **dí** ‘look’.

### 10.3.6 Resultative SVCs

Resultative SVCs involve situations where the state of affairs expressed by VP<sub>1</sub> involves a kind of causation which results in the state of affairs denoted by VP<sub>2</sub>. The resultative SVCs involve same subjects. Here, the object expressed with VP<sub>1</sub> is shared as an object with VP<sub>2</sub>.

- 22a. Doxwě éfi Kókú éhúíésí.

**Doxwě**   **é-fi**      **Kókú**   **é-hú**      **ke-sí**  
 Doxwě   SM-push   Kókú   SM-hit      CM-downpart  
 ‘Doxwě pushed Koku down.’

- 22b. Adzĩn étũ prítũ áyě nı háma.

**adzĩ**      **ní**      **é-tũ**      **prítũ**   **ní**      **a-yě**      **nı**      **háma**  
 CM-woman   DEF   SM-beat   plate   DEF   SM-break COM   hammer  
 ‘The woman smashed the plate with a hammer.’ (Cut & Break 40)

The actions expressed in examples (22a) and (22b) by VP<sub>1</sub> result in the falling down of **Kókú** (22a) and the plate being smashed (22b).

### 10.3.7 Posture SVCs

Some SVCs are used to describe the position of entities. For instance, an upside down position of an entity like a pot is expressed by the verbs ‘turn’ and ‘cover’ as in (23a).

- 23a. Ketsukpúń étsyínē ékúmũ kesukpogunu.

**ke-tsukpú**   **ní**      **ke-tsyínā**   **ke-kúmũ**   **ke-sukpogunu**  
 CM-pot   DEF   SM-turn   SM-cover   CM-tree.stump  
 ‘The pot is (turned) upside down on the tree stump’. (PSPV. 12)

- 23b. Tompán ákp'elí kashóníñ.

**tompá ní á-kpa é-lí ka-shó ní kumu**  
 bottle DEF SM-tilt SM-be.positioned CM-basket DEF inside  
 'The bottle is lying in the basket.' (PSPV. 22)

### 10.3.8 Causative multiverb constructions

Clauses containing multiple verbs in which the first verb is **kó** 'give, let, cause, make' resemble SVCs in a number of ways: the verbs in such a clause share the same tense; they may share one argument; they do not have an overt marker of coordination or subordination. However, the verbs do not have the same subject and as such, such structures are not mono-clausal. In such clauses, the verb **kó** 'give, let, cause, make' always precedes VP<sub>2</sub> which refers to its effect or result. The sentences below illustrate how the object of the causative verb is understood as the subject of VP<sub>2</sub>. This is clearly visible in example (24a) where the subject and object NPs of VP<sub>1</sub> belong to different classes. Observe that the SM on VP<sub>2</sub> refers to the object of VP<sub>1</sub> which belongs to the **ka-** class.

- 24a. Ekpén ákó kenín 'ébhui.

**e-kpé ní á-kó ke-ní ní ké-bhui**  
 CM-dry.weather DEF SM-cause CM-river DEF SM-cut  
 'The dry weather caused the river to stop flowing.'

- 24b. Ámā ákó Kofí ánáwǝ abá.

**Ámā á-kó Kofí á-náwǝ a-bá**  
 Ama SM-cause Kofi SM-hasten SM-come  
 'Ama made Kofi come in a rush.'

- 24c. Ákó lapóŭ kɔdzyań.

**á-kó la-póŭ kɔ-dzya ní**  
 3SG-cause 3PL.DEF-roast CM-meat DEF  
 'S/he made them roast the meat.'

Where the shared argument is realised as a pronoun, it is expressed only once and its form is the dependent form of the pronoun, overtly signalling dependence. This further shows the difference between these clauses and SVCs as the dependent form of the pronoun does not occur on the VP<sub>2</sub> in SVCs. It is possible to paraphrase such a clause as a complex sentence in which the matrix clause predicate is **kó** and it takes a dependent complement clause introduced by **sí** 'COMP' as shown in (24d).

- 24d. Ákó sí lapóŭ kɔdzyań.

**á-kó sí la-póŭ kɔ-dzya ní**  
 3SG-cause COMP 3PL.DEF-roast CM-meat DEF



‘S/he caused them to roast the meat.’

These causative verb constructions are thus treated as multiverb constructions (see Ameka 2005 on multiverb constructions).

#### 10.4 SVCs and grammaticalisation

A number of verbs in Tafi have grammaticalised or are in the process of grammaticalising into aspectual, modal and directional markers. When these verbs are fully grammaticalised they are not marked for subject or any other verbal markers. For instance, the adverbial particles **békē** ‘completive’, **dí** ‘experiential’, **kó** ‘dative’, and **kú** ‘allative’ have grammaticalised from the verbs ‘finish’, ‘look’, ‘give’ and ‘reach’ respectively (see Chapter 5 on allative and dative). Consider the following examples. In the sentences in (25a) and (26a), the verbs function as full verbs and are therefore marked for subject but in (25b) and (26b), because they are fully grammaticalised they are not marked for subject.

- 25a. Oqutsún óbékē.

**o-qutsú ní o-békē**  
CM-stew DEF SM-finish  
‘The stew got finished.’

- 25b. Ámā átó ’édōn békē.

**Ámā á-tó kí-dō ní békē**  
Ámā SM-cook CM-thing DEF COMPL  
‘Ama has finished cooking.’

- 26a. Anóvōn éwu ekú kitrekpúníabhā.

**a-nóvō ní é-wu é-kú ki-trekpú ní kábhā**  
CM-child DEF SM-climb SM-reach CM-anthill DEF top  
‘The child climbed onto the anthill.’ (FS)

- 26b. Anóvōn áwólí kú kením.

**a-nóvō ní á-wólí kú ke-ní kum**  
CM-child DEF SM-fall ALL CM-river inside  
‘The child fell into a river.’ (FS)

It is well known that SVCs are an important channel for the development of grammatical markers from verbs (see Lord 1993).

## 11. ROUTINE EXPRESSIONS

In every speech community, interaction and communication among members is a daily affair. As such, words and expressions used during those interactions become conventionalised routines. These routine expressions are specific to the speech community in which they are used and they are performed according to the socio-cultural norms, but they can diffuse across linguistic and cultural boundaries. Routine expressions include greetings, expressions used for congratulating and welcoming people, consoling or sympathising with a bereaved person or a family, inviting people to join in a meal, showing gratitude or appreciation. This chapter deals with routine expressions in Tafi. Attention is drawn to the structure and context within which some of these expressions are used.

### 11.1 Social encounters and their act sequences

In the context of communal life in the small villages of Tafi, members of the community encounter each other in different situations and for different purposes. Thus, someone may just decide to visit another person be it a relative or a neighbour just to greet or say hello to him/her, to express condolences to a bereaved person or family, to congratulate or thank him/her, to wish a sick person a speedy recovery among others. Depending on the purpose of the visit, it could be short or lengthy. Ameka 1991:385 with reference to Ewe states that

These social visits could be of varying length. They could be ‘flying’ visits in the sense that the visitor comes around to say hello and departs after that; or they could be ‘sitting’ visits, where the visitor accepts a seat from the host and spends some time with him/her.

The sitting visits include formal ceremonies like marriages, funerals, announcement of death (by the bereaved family to the chief and elders of a community), arbitration etc. Usually, if the visit is formal, the exchanges are done through an intermediary referred to as **tsyámí** ‘spokesperson’ or a ‘linguist’ in Ghanaian English (see also Ameka 1991).

In the following sections, I describe what goes on during a ceremony or a visit to someone. When one pays a visit to somebody, the sequences of acts involved are as follows: attention calling, response to attention, welcome, seat offer, offer of water, exchange of greetings, inquiry about purpose of visit, leave-taking and departure. I must state that the discussion in this section draws heavily on a similar description of Ewe in Ameka (1991).

### 11.1.1 Attention calling

During a visit, attention calling is used by a speaker or visitor to announce his/her approach to a place and also to find out whether the host is present or not. Expressions used for attention calling include those in (1) and some of the responses to attention calling include those given in (2).

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1a. Agoo ((mɔ) lɔ)!<br><b>agoo mɔ lɔ</b><br>agoo ADD ADD<br>‘Attention, please!’ | 1b. kókókó!<br><b>kókókó</b><br>sound of knocking<br>‘Knocking’ |
| 2a. Amee!<br><b>amee</b><br>response<br>‘Come in!’                               | 2b. Tsokú!<br><b>tsokú</b><br>enter<br>‘Enter!’                 |
| 2c. Bókpastí.<br><b>bú-kpastí</b><br>1PL-be.in<br>‘We are in(side).’             | 2d. Ga bá!<br><b>ga bá</b><br>walk come<br>‘Come in!’           |

**Agoo**, as used in Tafi and other languages spoken in southern Ghana, is used to announce the approach or arrival of the speaker or visitor to a place be it a compound of a house, a room etc. As shown in (1a), **agoo** can be used with the addressive and attention getting particle **mɔ** and the addressive advisory particle **lɔ** which means ‘I advise you’. The particle **mɔ** is used only when there is more than one addressee. One could also use the expression **kókókó** ‘knocking’ or physically knock to ask for entry into a place. Also **agoo** can be accompanied by knocking. Two other contexts of use of **agoo** are (i) to call for the attention of a group of people at a public gathering before addressing them and (ii) to ask for the right of way.

The response to **agoo** is **amee**. It is used to permit people to enter a place. It is also used to give people the go-ahead to do something. The use of **agoo** to ask for the right of way does not call for a verbal response but a physical action of the addressee moving out of the way.

### 11.1.2 Welcome

The act of welcoming a visitor is determined by whether the visitor is a traveler from another village or town (in which case, there may be an elaborate welcome) or whether the person is from the same village. The following expressions in (3) are used to welcome a visitor from another village or town. The responses to the expressions in (3a) and (3c) are given in (3d) and (3e) respectively.

- 3a. W5 wulaa!  
**w5 wulaa**  
 2SG.IND hail  
 ‘Hail!’
- 3b. Atúu!  
**atúu**  
 ‘I embrace you.’<sup>65</sup>
- 3c. W’óga (ée)!  
**w5 ó-ga (ée)**  
 2SG.IND SM-walk UFP  
 ‘You are welcome.’ (Lit. ‘you walked.’)
- 3d. ookpéh.  
**ookpéh**  
 response  
 ‘Response’
- 3e. Yoo.  
**yoo**  
 okay  
 ‘Okay’

**Wulaa** ‘hail’ is used when both the visitor and the host have not seen each other for a long time. Thus, just as the host sees the visitor coming s/he says **wulaa** ‘hail’ prefaced by the 2SG/PL independent pronoun. According to one of my consultants, ‘it’s like the host is acknowledging that s/he has seen the visitor coming and s/he is happy to see him/her coming’ and that ‘it’s like embracing verbally’. Moreover, a visitor can be welcomed by just mentioning his/her personal name as in (4a) or by using an address term as in (4b) accompanied by the vocative particle **oo** ‘UFP’.

- 4a. Ámā oo!  
**Ámā oo**  
 Ámā UFP  
 ‘Ama!’
- 4b. Ákúdyá oo!  
**á-kúdyá oo**  
 CM-uncle UFP  
 ‘Uncle!’

### 11.1.3 Offer of seat

Usually, the visitor is offered a seat immediately s/he enters the compound. The host offers the visitor a seat by using any of the following verbal routines in (5). When the encounter is formal or ceremonial such as marriages, funerals etc., sitting down is an important aspect of it.

- 5a. Kegbu ’alí!  
**ke-gbu ka-lí**  
 CM-chair SM-be.at  
 ‘There is a chair/seat.’
- 5b. Ziesí!  
**za ke.sí**  
 sit down  
 ‘Sit down!’

---

<sup>65</sup> Following Ameka (1991), I gloss **atúu** as ‘I embrace you’ since it is said by both the host and the arriving person and it is said while both people are embracing.

### 11.1.4 Offer of water

Like it is done by the Ewes, after the visitor is seated, if s/he is from another town or village, s/he is offered water. If the visitor is someone who believes in libation, then s/he will pour some of the water on the ground before drinking it. At times, the person may sip some of the water before pouring the rest on the ground. Pouring some water on the ground is a sign of goodwill. Thus, the visitor by so doing is praying for blessings, peace, long life, good luck among others for the host. After the visitor has been offered water, then either s/he or the host initiates the greeting exchange.

### 11.1.5 Greeting sequences

For details about the importance of greetings and the different types of greetings see § 11.2.

#### 11.1.5.1 Pre-greetings

The greeting exchange may begin with pre-greetings. A pre-greeting initiated by the visitor is meant to seek permission to greet the host and it goes like this:

- 6a. (Ídḗ kúkú) íbasíní wó é lo.  
**Í-dḗ kúkú í-ba-síní wó é lo**  
 1SG-take.off hat 1SG-FUT-greet 2SG UFP UFP  
 ‘(Please), may I greet you.’

The host may give any of the responses in (7) indicating his or her readiness to receive the greetings.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>7a. Vṭ ’lṭabhā!<br/> <b>vṭ kṭlṭ kábhā</b><br/>         go 3SG top<br/>         ‘(You) go on!’</p>          | <p>7b. Sínḵ fāā!<br/> <b>sínḵ fāā</b><br/>         greet freely<br/>         ‘You are free to greet.’</p> |
| <p>7c. Kḵ ’elṭbā!<br/> <b>kḵ kṭlṭ bá</b><br/>         let 3SG come<br/>         ‘Let it = greeting come!’</p> |   |

If the host is not ready, s/he will indicate that to the visitor with any of the following expressions:

- 8a. Džrǝ ʼebóé/ gbo!  
**džrǝ kǝbóé/ gbo**  
 stop little/ a.while  
 ‘Wait a little/a while!’
- 8b. Dzu ahɔ ʼɪtabhɛ ʼebóé!  
**dzu a-hɔ kɪlɪ kábhā kǝbóé**  
 put.down CM-hand 3SG.IND top little  
 ‘Hold on a little!’

Depending on the occasion, both the visitor and the host may communicate with each other through a **tsyámí** ‘spokesperson’. The spokesperson usually relays the speaker’s message by paraphrasing it.

#### 11.1.5.2 The greeting exchange

When the pre-greeting sequence is done with, then the greeting exchanges begin. As it is in Ewe, the greeting exchange is made up of greetings and the ‘how are you?’ sequence which could be very simple or elaborate (see Ameka 1991). During the greeting sequence, if the host is not sure of where exactly the visitor is coming from and s/he wants to know s/he may ask:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>8a. Fá lóbabíŋ?<br/> <b>fá ló-ba-bíŋ</b><br/>         where 1PL.DEF-FUT-ask<br/>         ‘Where should we ask of?’</p> | <p>8b. Ní fákó lóbabíŋ?<br/> <b>ní fákó ló-ba-bíŋ</b><br/>         LOC where 1PL.DEF-FUT-ask<br/>         ‘Where should we ask of?’</p> |
|---|---|

The visitor answers the question by mentioning the name of the town or village where s/he is arriving from. The host may then ask about the people staying there as in (9) or if s/he knows any particular people s/he will mention their names and ask of them.

- 9a. Wɔ Kádjébi ókó áyí?  
**wɔ Kádjébi ɔ.kó a-yí**  
 2SG.IND Kadjebi place AM-POSSD  
 ‘How are the people at (your) Kadjebi?’

The host may then ask the visitor about the health of the visitor and his/her people as in (9b) and (9c).

- 9b. Nɔlí mǎmǎ?  
**nɔ-lí mǎ-mǎ**  
 2PL-be.at RED-well  
 ‘How are you (pl).’ (Lit.: ‘Are you well?’)

- 9c. Ee, nɔtsyɔ́'líá?  
**ee**    **ẁŋn̄ɔ́**    **tsyí**    **nɔ-lí**    **a**  
 yes    2PL.IND    too    SM-be.at    UFP  
 'Yes, how are you too?'

### 11.1.6 Inquiry about the purpose of visit

After the exchange of greetings, the host initiates the inquiry about the purpose of visit. This act is referred to as **amanié bubo** 'recounting of one's mission'. The term **amanié** like the Ewe and Ga **amanié** is borrowed from Akan. The host may enquire about the purpose of visit from the visitor directly as exemplified in (10) or through a **tsyámí** 'spokesperson' as in (11). In (11c), X represents visitor(s).

- 10a. Blɔ́ 'kín ɔ́yɔ́ /bububui /bɔ́kɔ́.  
**blɔ́**    **ɔ-kí**    **ní**    **ɔ́-yɔ́ /bu-buibui /bɔ́kɔ́**  
 1PL.IND    CM-here    DEF    SM-be.cold/RED-cool/cool  
 'Our place is cool.'
- 10b. Blɔ́ 'kí ní kizizi kányááká 'mā (obón)ʔ.  
**blɔ́**    **ɔ-kí**    **ní**    **ki-zi-zi**    **kányááká mā**  
 1PL.IND    CM-here    DEF    CM-RED-bad    any    be.at:NEG  
**o-bón**  
 CM-today  
 'There is no bad news here (today).'
- 11a. A: Tsyámí alí 'klí?  
**tsyámí**    **a-lí**    **ɪ-klí**  
 spokesperson    SM-be.at    CM-there  
 'Is the spokesperson there?'
- 11b. B: Alí  
**a-lí**  
 3SG-be.at  
 'He is.'
- 11c. A: Nú 'gben̄ tɪ anán̄ X sí balága.  
**nú**    **i-gbe**    **ní**    **tɪ**    **a-nán̄**    **X sí**  
 hear    CM.PL-message    DEF    COMP    3SG.DEP-reach    X    COMP  
**balí**    **bá-ga**  
 3PL.IND    SM-walk  
 'Hear it and let it reach X that they are welcome.'

- 11d. A: Blǎ 'kĩń óyó.

**blǎ      ɔ-kĩ      ní      ó-yó**  
 1PL.IND CM-here DEF SM-be.cold  
 'Our place is cool.'

- 11e. A: Bal'idzoum amanié/ bal'óturíábhā amanié

**balí      ki-dzo      kumu      a-manié**  
 3PL.IND CM-road inside CM-mission

OR

**balí      ó-tsúrí      kábhā      a-manié**  
 3PL.IND CM-leg top CM-mission  
 'What is the purpose of their visit?'

- 11f. B: Yoo, ayí, makalímǎ, nonú 'gbe ní á?

**yoo      ayí      mí      a-ka-alí      mǎ no-nú**  
 Okay ?? 1SG.IND CM-father-PL ADD 2SG-hear  
**i-gbe      ní      á**  
 CM.PL-message DEF UFP  
 'Okay, my fathers, have you heard the message?'

If there is bad news, for instance, the death of somebody or a funeral, the host would state that there is bad news at their end as illustrated in (12).

- 12a. Blǎ 'kĩ ní kíkúkúpíníábhā lotsirí.

**blǎ      ɔ-kĩ      ní      ki-kúkúpí      ní      kábhā      lo-tsirí**  
 1PL.IND CM-here DEF CM-hot DEF top 1PL.DEF-be.on  
 'Our place is hot.'

- 12b. Blǎ 'kĩ ní vu 'ifú.

**blǎ      ɪ-kĩ<sup>66</sup>      ní      i-vu      ki-fú**  
 1PL.IND CM-here DEF SM-catch CM-fire  
 'Our place is on fire.'

- 12c. Blǎ xún ní kúnúníábhā lótsirí.

**blǎ      xún      ní      kúnú      ní      kábhā      ló-tsirí**  
 1PL.DEF as.for TOP funeral DEF top 1PL.DEF-be.on  
 'As for us, we are performing the funeral rites.'

---

<sup>66</sup> **okĩ** and **ukĩ** 'here' are used interchangeably.



- 12d. Kɪɣɪ nonú kɪlɪbɛhā lótsirí.  
**kɪ-gɪ**      **no-nú**      **kɪlɪ**      **kabhā ló-tsirí**  
 3SG-REL    2PL-hear 3SG.IND top    1PL.DEP-be.on  
 ‘What you heard, that’s what we are on.’

Like in Ewe, Tafi also has a ‘stereotyped phrase used as a pre-question or disclaimer in the inquiry turn’ (Ameka 1991:392) which is ‘**bényí tsyí bébisi/bekeebísi**’ ‘even if one knows one (still) asks’. This phrase is used even when the host already knows the reason for the visitor being there or when the mission of the visitor is obvious. On such occasions, the meetings have been pre-arranged.

Any of these statements, in (12), from the host informs the visitor or addressee about the state of affairs in which the host finds him/herself. By so doing, the host expects the visitor to recount the purpose of his/her visit. The visitor then starts stating his/her mission/purpose of visit as shown by the examples in (13). In (13a), this is done through a spokesperson.

- 13a. Wɔ tsyí óbonú tɪ anán’ alí sí blɔ tsyí divunɔ kizizi kányááká dí kɪɣɪ lí kɪ ní?  
**wɔ**      **tsyí**      **ó-bo-nú**      **tɪ**      **a-nánɔ**      **balí**  
 2SG.IND too    SM-FUT-hear    COMP    3SG.DEP-reach 3PL  
**sí**      **blɔ**      **tsyí**      **di-vunɔ**      **ki-zizi**      **kányááká**  
 COMP    1PL.IND too    NEG2-hold    CM-RED-bad    any  
**dí**      **kɪ-gɪ**      **lí**      **ɪ-kɪ**      **ní**  
 surpass    3SG-REL be.at    CM-here    DEF  
 ‘You too you will hear and let it reach them that we too are not on any bad mission other than that which is here.’

- 13b. Blɔ tsyí kɪɣɪ kɪlɪ bá ní kɪ ní kɪlɪ blɔ tsyí ní kɪlɪ idzo lótsɛnɪ.  
**blɔ**      **tsyí**      **kɪ-gɪ**      **kɪlɪ**      **bá**      **ní**      **ɪ-kɪ**      **ní**  
 1PL.IND too    3SG-REL 3SG.IND come    LOC    CM-here    DEF  
**kɪlɪ**      **blɔ**      **tsyí**      **ní**      **kɪlɪ**      **ki-dzo**      **lɔ-tsɛnɪ**  
 3SG.IND 1PL.IND too    TOP    3SG.IND CM-way    1PL.DEP-follow  
 ‘We too, what happened here that is what has brought us here’. (Lit. ‘we too, what happened here, it’s its way we are following’.)

- 13c. Blɔ tsyí divunɔ kizizi kányááká, blɔ ’kɔ tsyí’óyɔ?  
**blɔ**      **tsyí**      **di-vunɔ**      **ki-zi-zi**      **kányááká**  
 1PL.IND too    NEG2-hold    CM-RED-bad    any  
**blɔ**      **ɔ.kɔ**      **tsyí**      **ɔ-yɔ**  
 1PL.IND place too    SM-be.cool  
 ‘We too are not on any bad mission, our place too is cool.’

After the visitor states his/her mission, the host again welcomes him/her. If the visitor is from another village/town, the host may then give an account of things going on, about to happen or that have happened including deaths etc.

## 11.1.7 Leave-taking

At the end of the meeting/ceremony, the visitor then seeks permission to leave by using the expression **bísi (k)idzo** ‘ask permission’ (lit.: ‘ask way’) as shown in (14). The host may grant or deny the request. Thus the visitor can only leave after the permission has been granted by the host. The granting of the permission may involve several turns depending on whether the encounter is a ceremony or an ordinary visit. When the permission to leave is granted by the host, s/he then adds a leave-taking expression and both parties may part with a handshake. The leave-taking expression added by the host after granting the visitor the permission to leave is meant to extend good wishes to the visitor and the visitor also responds to it.

- 14a. A: Tsyámī alí lo?

**tsyámī a-lí lo**  
 spokesperson SM-be.at ADD  
 ‘Is the spokesperson there?’

- 14b. B: Ee, tsyámī alí.

**ee tsyámī a-lí**  
 yes spokesperson SM-be.at  
 Yes, the spokesperson is (here).

- 14c. A: Óbonú kibanání bákān sí kígí kulí ní so lóbán, búḍo ’elí békē. Ónúgí kibuínyéebúí vāmā búúbisí ’ídzó oo.

**Ó-bo-nú kí-ba-nání bá-kā ní sí**  
 2SG-FUT-hear 3SG-FUT-reach CM.PL-father DEF COMP  
**kí-gí kulí ní so ló-bá ní bú-ḍo kulí**  
 3SG-REL 3SG.IND TOP so 1PL.DEF-come TOP 1PL-say 3SG  
**békē ónúgí kí-buí-nyáá-kí-buí va<sup>67</sup>-mā**  
 COMPL if CM-matter-DISTR-CM-matter again-be.at:NEG  
**bú-ú-bisí kí-dzo oo**  
 1PL-PRSPROG-ask CM-way UFP

‘You will hear and let it reach the elders that what we have come to do we’ve accomplished it so in the absence of any other matter we are asking permission to return to our place.’

- 14d. B: Yoo, makalí nonú gbe ní á? Basí éébisí ’ídzó oo.

**yoo mí á-kā-alí no-nú i-gbe ní**  
 okay 1SG.IND CM-father-PL 2PL-hear CM.PL-message DEF

<sup>67</sup> This form could have resulted from a simplification of the consonant cluster of the preverb marker **vla** ‘again’.

a

UFP

**ba-sí**      **bé-é-bisí**      **kí-dzó**      **oo**

3PL-say    SM-PRSPROG-ask    CM-way    UFP

‘Okay, my elders, have you heard the message? They said they are asking for permission (to leave).’

- 14e. C: Bókó ’ál’ídzó oo.

**Bú-kó**      **balí**      **ki-dzo**      **oo**

1PL-give    3PL    CM-way    UFP

‘We have granted the permission.’

- 14f. B: Bákāń así kidzó lɪ so wũńḑ bhitííbúí óbón ní oo.

**bá-kā**      **ní**      **ba-sí**      **ki-dzo**      **lɪ**      **so**

CM.PL-father    DEF    3PL-say    CM-road    be.at    so

**wũńḑ**      **bhutí**      **ki-búí**      **ó-bón**      **ní**      **oo**

2PL    do    CM-matter    CM-today DEF    UFP

‘The elders say that permission is granted, thanks for today.’

If the encounter is just a flying visit and not a planned visit, when parting the visitor may use any of the expressions in (15) and the host may see the visitor off. The host may also use any of the expressions in (16).

- 15a. Íbaba srá nó dí.

**í-ba-ba**      **srá**      **wũńḑ**      **dí**

1SG-VENT-come    visit    2PL    EXP

‘I have come to visit you (pl).’

- 15b. Íbaba mɔ nó dí.

**í-ba-ba**      **mɔ**      **wũńḑ**      **dí**

1SG-VENT-come    see    2PL    EXP

‘I have come to see you (pl).’

- 15c. Íbaba sínɪ nó dí.

**í-ba-ba**      **sínɔ**      **wũńḑ**      **dí**

1SG-VENT-come    greet    2PL    EXP

‘I have come to greet you (pl).’

- 15d. Íbaba kpí áǵhũ dí nó.

**í-ba-ba**      **kpí**      **á-wǵhũ**      **dí**      **wũńḑ**

1SG-VENT-come    put.in    CM-eye    look    2PL

‘I have come to see you (pl)/ how you (pl) are doing.’

- 16a. Óvɪ úsín' alí.  
       **ɔ-vɪ**        **í-í-sín**                      **balí**  
       2SG-go    1SG-PRSPROG-greet    3PL  
       'if you go I greet them.'
- 16b. óvɪ úsín 'panímí oo.  
       **ɔ-vɪ**        **í-í-sín**                      **bu-pá**        **ní**        **kímí**    **oo**  
       2SG-go    1SG-PRSPROG-greet    CM-house    DEF    inside    UFP  
       'If you go I greet those in the house.' (lit.: you go I greet the household.)
- 16c. Kpáyā ágbám wó é lō.  
       **Kpáyā á-gbám**    **wó**        **e**        **lō**  
       God    SM-lead    2SG    UFP    ADD  
       'May God lead you.'

## 11.2 Greetings

The act of greetings is a very important gesture in Tafi as it is in all other African communities in general and Ghana in particular. There are several social encounters that require greetings. Every speech community or social group has its own set of greetings that is appropriate in the speech event. Thus, exchange of greetings may vary in terms of their purpose, level of formality, length of time and content.

In Tafi, greetings are required even among people living in the same house or compound when they wake up in the morning; among neighbours; people in the market; traders and customers; people whose paths cross as they go about their daily or individual activities like going to the riverside to fetch water, to the farm or market. Greetings are also exchanged between strangers. When people regularly greet each other it is a sign of showing concern and familiarity toward one another. Even though greetings are important, there are instances where people are prohibited from greeting. It is prohibited to greet when going to the toilet or the refuse dump. Greeting someone during such occasions is deemed as a sign of disrespect or an insult. This is also reported for Logba, Ewe and Ga (see Dorvlo 2008, Ameka 1991 and Dakubu 1981).

Greeting exchanges in Tafi are accompanied by certain non-verbal gestures. For instance, when someone is in a hat and wants to exchange greetings with elders, he has to take off the hat to show respect. It is culturally unacceptable to keep the hat on. Also, if one is in cloth, the cloth has to be lowered and held with the left arm. If the person in cloth is a linguist, he is expected to bring the cloth to waist level. This is referred to as 'étsú 'upot'íashĩ' meaning 'he wraps a cloth around the waist' or 'he lowers the cloth to waist level'. Also, when greeting an elderly person, the greeting is accompanied by slightly bending the upper part of one's body when

standing or slightly raising one's body and bending it when one is seated. The greeting may be accompanied by a handshake.

In Tafi, like in Nyagbo and Logba, the day has been divided into two parts with respect to greetings. The first part is made up of the morning and the second part spans from the afternoon to the evening.

### 11.2.1 Morning greetings

The following greetings questions and their response pairs are used only in the morning. The greetings in (17) and (19) are formal whereas those in (21) and (23) are informal. (17) and (21) are used for a single addressee whereas (19) and (23) are used when there is more than one addressee.

17. A: Óyi oo?

**Ó-yi**                      **oo**  
2SG-get.up    UFP  
'Have you woken up?'

18. B: Óshíí/ yawee

**óshíí/ yawee**  
response  
'Response'

19. A: Óyi mɔ oo?

**ó-yi**                      **mɔ**      **oo**  
2SG-get.up    ADD    UFP  
'Have you (pl) woken up?'

20. B: Óshíí/ yawee

**óshíí/ yawee**  
response  
'Response'

21. A: Ótíyi á e?

**ó-tí-yi**                      **á**      **e**  
2SG-PERF-get.up    UFP    UFP  
'Have you already woken up?'

22. B: Ee, wɔ tsy'óyi á?

**ee**      **wɔ**                      **tsyí**      **ó-yi**                      **á**  
yes    2SG.IND too    SM-get.up    UFP  
'Yes, have you too woken up?'

23. A: Notíyi á e?

**no-tí-yi**                      **á**            **e**  
 2PL-PERF-get.up    UFP    UFP  
 ‘Have you (pl) already woken up?’

As shown in the examples, any of the following particles **á**, **oo**, **e** can be used as illustrated in (21) and (23), or more than one can be used.

These greeting questions and response pair may be accompanied by either a ‘how-are-you’ question, e.g. (26) or a ‘topic-only’ greeting question as in (24) or both in different turns of the greeting exchange as illustrated below.

24. A: Bupáními e?

**bu-pá**                      **ní**            **kumi**    **e**  
 CM-house    DEF    inside    UFP  
 ‘How is the home?’

25. B: Kpasí.

**kpasí**    **oo**  
 be.in    UFP  
 ‘Fine’            (Lit.: ‘It is in.’)

26. A: Nólí á?

**nó-lí**                      **á**  
 2PL-be.at    UFP  
 ‘How are you?’ (Lit.: ‘Are you there?’)

27. B: Ee, nó tsy’ ólí á?

**ee**    **w̃ñ**                      **tsyí**    **nó-lí**                      **á**  
 yes    2PL.IND    too    SM-be.at    UFP  
 ‘Yes, how are you too?’ (Lit.: ‘Are you too there?’)

28. A: Banóṽn alí m̃?

**ba-nóṽ**                      **ní**            **ba-lí**                      **m̃**  
 CM.PL-child DEF    SM-be.at    well  
 ‘Are the children fine?’

29. B: Balí oo! Básiw̃ w̃s/w̃ñ.

**ba-lí**                      **oo**            **bá-síw̃**                      **w̃s/w̃ñ**  
 3PL-be.at    UFP    3PL-greet    2SG/PL  
 ‘They are there. They greet you.’

W’ayán tsyí álī loo?

**w̃s**                      **a-yí**                      **a-ní**                      **tsyí**                      **ba-lí**                      **loo**  
 2SG.IND    AM-POSSD    AM-PROX    too    SM-be.at    ADD

‘Are yours too fine?’ (Lit.: ‘Are yours too there?’)

30. A: Ee, w’óbhutí ’íbúí.

**ee w’ó ó-bhutí ki-buí**  
yes 2SG.IND SM-do CM-matter  
‘Yes, thank you.’

31. B: Nò tsy’ óbhutí ’íbúí oo.

**ñũń tsy’ nò-bhutí ki-buí oo**  
2PL.IND too SM-do CM-matter UFP  
‘Thank you (pl) too.’

Nod’ anóíábhā oo.

**no-dí a-nñ kábhā oo**  
2PL-look CM-person top UFP  
‘You (pl) are taking care of them.’

32. A: Yoo, wò tsyí oo.

**yoo w’ó tsyí oo**  
okay 2SG.IND too UFP  
‘Okay, you too.’

33. B: Yoo

**yoo**  
‘Okay’

During greetings if the visitor is from another town, after the visitor responds to the greetings the host will ask the ‘how-are-you’ question in (34a) instead of the one in (24).

34a. W’epí ní e?

**w’ó ke-pí ní e**  
2SG.IND CM-home DEF UFP  
‘How is your hometown?’

The ‘how-are-you’ questions and the topic-only questions can be asked during any part of the day.

The following expressions in (34b) – (34d) can be used by a sick person as responses to ‘how-are-you’ questions.

34b. Ábhítu akóm ’íbóé.

**á-bhítu a-kó mí kúbóé**  
3SG-do SM-give 1SG little  
‘I am getting better.’

- 34c. Ábó.  
**á-bó**  
 3SG-be.good  
 ‘I am/feel well.’ (Lit.: ‘it is good.’)
- 34d. Ídzí ’íbóé.  
**í-dzí kíbóé**  
 1SG-become little  
 ‘It is getting better.’

### 11.2.2 Midday to evening greetings

The greeting and response pairs that are appropriate from midday to the evening are given below in (35), (36) and (37). They are usually followed by the ‘how-are you?’ and topic-only questions as illustrated in (38) and (39). (35) illustrates the greeting involving one addressee while (37) is used when there is more than one addressee. The responses to the greeting, topic-only and ‘how-are-you?’ questions in (36) and (37) are the same when greeting more than one addressee as in (38). The only difference is that the 2SG pronoun is replaced by the 2PL pronoun.

35. A: Ayī oo  
**ayī oo**  
 greeting UFP  
 ‘Greetings’
36. B: Yawēē, w’ókó ní e?  
**yawēē w’ókó ní e**  
 response 2SG.IND place DEF UFP  
 ‘Response, how is your place?’
37. A: Kpasí oo! Nólíá?  
**kpasí oo nɔ-lí á**  
 be.in UFP 2PL-be.at UFP  
 ‘Fine, are you there?’
38. A: Ayī mǎ oo  
**ayī mǎ oo**  
 greeting ADD UFP  
 ‘Greetings’

When the people to be greeted are engaged in a discussion or conversation, one has to politely seek permission from them with the expression in (39) in order to greet them. The responses are given in (40).



39. A: *Wǔnǔ káfra, idibhui 'ibúi kpí wǔnǔ 'unú?*

**wǔnǔ káfra i-di-bhui ki-búi kpí wǔnǔ**  
2PL.IND excuse 1SG-NEG2-cut CM-matter put.in 2PL.IND

**bu.nú**  
mouth

‘Excuse me, I don’t mean to interrupt you.’ (Lit.: ‘I did not cut a matter into your mouth.’)

The permission may be granted with the expression in (40) or the person may be asked to defer the greeting if they are not yet ready, as shown in (41) and (42).

40. *Kɔ 'élí bá oo!*

**kɔ kɛlí bá oo**  
let 3SG come UFP  
‘Let it come!’

41. *Dzyrɔ gbo / 'ébóé!*

**dzyrɔ gbo / kɛbóé**  
stop a.while / a.little  
‘Wait a while/ a little!’

42. *Dí 'óló ámú 'ibóé!*

**dí buló á-mú kɛbóé**  
look 1PL.IND CM-face a.little  
‘Wait a while/ a little!’ (Lit.: ‘look into our face a little’).

### 11.2.3 Greeting people when they are eating

In Tafi, usually, when you go and meet people eating, they consider you a well-wisher. However, if you arrive when they had just finished eating, it is considered that you don’t wish them well and that is why the gods did not bring you there while they were eating.

When a visitor meets someone having a meal, s/he would have to salute him/her using the expression in (43) and by so doing s/he admits the fact that s/he has seen the person eating. The one eating responds to the salutation as is shown in (44a) and (44b) and in turn invites the visitor to join in the meal with any of the expressions illustrated in (45a) – (45d).

43. *Kp'áhɔ odí oo!*

**kpí a-hɔ o-dí oo**  
put.in CM-hand SM-look UFP  
‘Bon apétit!’ or ‘enjoy your meal!’ (Lit.: ‘Put your hand in and see.’)

- 44a. Yoo, ɔga mǎ.  
**yoo ɔ-ga mǎ**  
 okay 2SG-walk well  
 ‘Okay, you have walked well.’ Or ‘You have come at a good time.’
- 44b. Yoo, ɔnā ’aga.  
**yoo ɔ-nā bu-ga**  
 okay 2SG-be.able CM-walk  
 ‘Okay, you know how to walk.’ Or ‘You have come at a good time.’
- 45a. Bɔkp’ahɔt odí ee.  
**bá ɔ-kpí a-hɔt o-dí ee**  
 come 2SG-put CM-hand 2SG-look UFP  
 ‘Come and join us.’ (Lit.: ‘Come and put your hand in and see.’)
- 45b. Bodí ’óló!  
**bá o-dí buló**  
 come 2SG-look 1PL  
 ‘Come and join us!’ (Lit.: ‘Come and look at us.’)
- 45c. Ga ba oo!  
**ga ba oo**  
 walk come UFP  
 ‘Come and join us!’ (Lit.: ‘Walk and come.’)
- 45d. Bá tɪ lɔŋɛ ’édɔ oo!  
**bá tɪ lɔ-ŋa kí-dɔ oo**  
 come COMP 1PL.DEF-eat CM-thing UFP  
 ‘Come and let’s eat the meal!’

According to one of my consultants, the expression in (45d) is used to invite people who are close by and not necessarily those passing by. (45a) – (45c) are used among friends and people who know each other very well.

Any of the responses such as those in (46a) – (46f) may be used to respond to any of the expressions in (45).

- 46a. Abó.  
**a-bó**  
 3SG-be.good  
 ‘It is okay.’
- 46b. Yoo, w’ɔbhtí ’íbúi.  
**yoo wɔ ɔ-bhtí ki-búi**  
 okay 2SG.IND SM-do CM-matter

‘Okay, thank you.’

- 46c. Oo, laa mɪ tsyí ítkp’áhɔɪ.

**oo laa mɪ tsyí í-tí-kpí a-hɔɪ**  
 INTJ just.now 1SG.IND too SM-PERF-put.in CM-hand  
 ‘Oh, I have just eaten.’ (Lit.: I have just put my hand in.)

- 46d. Oo, kɔ y’átsɔ̃.

**Oo kɔ yí á-tsɔ̃**  
 INTJ let 3SG SM-be.quick  
 ‘Oh, go ahead.’ (Lit.: ‘Let it go quickly.’)

- 46e. Kɔ ’ɛɪ vɪ mǎmǎ.

**kɔ kɪ́ vɪ mǎ-mǎ**  
 let 3SG go RED-well  
 ‘Enjoy your meal.’ (Lit.: ‘Let it go very well’)

- 46f. M’áhɔɪ akpasí (’ísúgbém aplónɔ nɔ).

**mɪ a-hɔɪ a-kpasí kí-súgbá kumɪ a-plónɔ w̃nɔ́**  
 1SG.IND CM-hand SM-be.in CM-pot inside SM-add 2PL  
 ‘My hand is in (the bowl together with yours).’

When the person invited decides to join in the meal and after sometime the host notices that s/he is not eating enough of the meat or fish, the host draws his/her attention to the meat/fish by saying:

47. Oo, d’óníním ló

**oo dí o-ní ní kumɪ ló**  
 INTJ look CM-soup DEF inside ADD  
 ‘Feel free to take some of the meat/fish.’ (Lit.: ‘Look inside the soup.’)

### 11.3 Gratitude expressions

In Tafi, as in all other communities in Ghana, expressing or showing gratitude for something good someone has done for you is very important. Thus, if someone does something for another person it is expected that the beneficiary or recipient and at times his/her family show appreciation for that good deed. Gratitude is expressed by means of the expressions in (48a) - (48e). (48a) and (48b) are expressions addressed to someone who has done something good for the speaker. (48c) and (48d) are expressions used to express thanks to God for something good that has happened to an addressee. Depending on the number of speakers expressing their appreciation or the number of addressees being thanked the appropriate pronouns are used. Also, depending on the individual’s spiritual or cultural inclination, s/he may express gratitude to God as exemplified in (48c) and

(48d). For instance, (48d) was used in a context where a sick person responded to a question about his health that he was feeling better and then the visitor says ‘we thank God’. The responses to the gratitude expressions in (48a) and (48b) are given in (49a) and (49b) respectively. The gratitude expression in (48a) and (48c) can be modified by the ideophonic intensifier **popoopó/pópópó** to demonstrate the intensity of gratitude being expressed by the speaker.

- 48a. W’óbhtí ’íbúí (popoopó).  
**wó      ó-bhtí      ki-búí      popoopó**  
 2SG.IND SM-do CM-matter IDEO.very.much  
 ‘Thank you (very much).’ (Lit.: You have worked.)
- 48b. Íhú w’áhɔɪ.  
**í-hú      wó      a-hɔɪ**  
 1SG-hit 2SG CM-hand  
 ‘I thank you.’ (‘I hit you hand.’)
- 48c. Máwú<sup>68</sup>/ Kpáyā y’ábhtííbúí lo! (popoopó)  
**Máwú/ Kpáyā      yí      á-bhtí      ki-búí      lo / popoopó**  
 God 3SG.IND SM-do CM-matter ADD IDEO.very.much  
 ‘God has worked (so much).’ i.e. ‘we thank God.’
- 48d. Buhú Máwú/ Kpáyā ahɔɪ ló!  
**bu-hú      Máwú/ Kpáyā      a-hɔɪ      ló**  
 1PL-hit God CM-hand ADD  
 ‘We thank God.’
- 49a. Wɔ tsyí oo.  
**wó      tsyí      oo**  
 2SG.IND too UFP  
 ‘(I thank) you too.’
- 49b. Yoo.  
**yoo**  
 ‘Okay.’

Moreover, depending on the individual’s spiritual or cultural inclination, the interaction may include a turn or two which conveys a speaker’s well-wishes for the addressee by praying for God’s blessing upon the addressee for what s/he has done for him/her as illustrated in (50).

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<sup>68</sup> **Máwú** ‘God’ is a borrowing from Ewe.

50. Ebúin pétéeé g'òbhutí w'òbhutí 'íbúí. Εε, Kpáyān élú alí ózakó kó wó oo.  
**e-búí ní pétéeé gí ó-bhútí ní wó ó-bhútí**  
 CM-matter DEF all REL 2SG-do TOP 2SG.IND SM-do  
**ki-búí**  
 CM-matter  
**εε Kpáyā ní é-lú alí ó-zakó kó wó oo**  
 INTJ God DEF SM-put 3PL CM-place DAT 2PL UFP  
 'Thank you very much for all what you have done. May God bless you in return.'

#### 11.4 Expressing congratulations

When good things (such as marriage, child birth, passing of exams or any successful events) happen to people, they are praised or congratulated. In Tafi, some of the expressions used on such occasions are not different from those used for expressing gratitude. With expressions for congratulations, apart from humans being regarded as having worked hard, it is also believed that God or other supernatural beings are responsible for making good things happen, as illustrated in (51a) - (51e). Traditionally, it is believed that everybody has **budòkpábí** as used in (51b) which are little little beings around him/her which are his/her spiritual guardians. They do things to support, defend and protect him/her. So when they do a good job then something good happens to the person and then when people come to the person they congratulate him/her on their success. The expression in (51e), for instance, can be said to someone who has passed an exam and the same expression can also be used without the ITIVE preverb marker to congratulate someone who has built a house. All the other expressions in (51a) – (51d) can be used to congratulate people on any happy occasion.

- 51a. Wó Máwú/ Kpáyā y'ábhutí 'íbúí lo!  
**wó Máwú/ Kpáyā yí á-bhútí ki-búí lo**  
 2SG.IND God 3SG.IND SM-do CM-matter ADD  
 'YOUR GOD has worked.'
- 51b. Wó 'òdòkpábí bhutí 'íbúí oo.  
**wó bu-dòkpábí bhutí ki-búí oo**  
 2SG.IND CM.PL-spirit.being do CM-matter UFP  
 'Your personal spirit beings have worked.'
- 51c. W'éabhē 'édō bhutí 'íbúí oo.  
**wó kábhā kí-dō bhutí ki-búí oo**  
 2SG.IND top CM-thing do CM-matter UFP  
 'Your personal spirit beings have worked.' (Lit.: Your thing above has worked.)

- 51d. W'éábhē 'édō yī kó wó.  
**wó kábhā kí-dō yī kó wó**  
 2SG.IND top CM-thing show.up DAT 2SG  
 'Your personal spirit beings have showed up for you.'
- 51e. W'ódòbhtí 'íbúí oo.  
**wó ó-dò-bhtí kí-búí oo**  
 2SG.IND SM-ITIVE-do CM-matter UFP  
 'Congratulations' (Lit.: You have gone to work.)

The responses to all these expressions are:

- 52a. Yoo, wǔnǒ yóla (kó mí) oo.  
**yoo wǔnǒ nò-yóla kó mí oo**  
 okay 2PL.IND SM-bless DAT 1SG UFP  
 'Okay, you gave your blessing (to me).'
- 52b. Yoo, wǔnǒ dó gbe dǎ.<sup>69</sup>  
**yoo wǔnǒ nò-dó gbe dǎ**  
 okay 2PL.IND SM-send voice up  
 'Okay, YOU have prayed.'

### 11.5 Expressions addressed to someone at work

To salute people who are engaged in some kind of work, be it physical or mental, the following expressions in (53a) and (53b) are used. Depending on the number of people involved, the 2SG or 2PL pronoun is used. The reply to these expressions is given in (53c).

- 53a. W'ótsirí 'ííábhā oo.  
**wó o-tsirí kílí kábhā oo**  
 2SG.IND SM-be.on 3SG.IND top UFP  
 'You are on its top.' (i.e. 'You are on it.')
- 53b. D'áhò oo.  
**dí a-hò oo**  
 look CM-hand UFP  
 'Watch your hand.'
- 53c. Yoo.  
**yoo**

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<sup>69</sup> **dó gbe dǎ** 'pray' is borrowed from Ewe.

‘Okay.’

The expression in (53a) is addressed to someone who is engaged in any type of work be it physical or mental while (53b) is used for someone who is engaged in a physical or manual work like farming, fishing, carpentry etc. Another expression used is **áyíkóó** and its response is **yaaye**. This expression is used for someone who is engaged in a physical or manual work. A similar expression **ayikóó** (with a different tone) with its response also used in Ewe, Nyagbo and Logba appear to have been borrowed from Ga. In Tafi, **áyíkóó** when used is preceded by the 2SG/PL independent pronoun with their (final) vowel elided as in **w’áyíkóó** and **wūn’áyíkóó** ‘ayikoo to you (sg/pl)’. These expressions, when used, indicate to the addressee that the work they are doing is being appreciated.

Also, if someone meets another person already at work, e.g. on his/her farm or office, the interaction goes like this:

- 54a. A: W’ótúgba ní e?  
**wó o-túgba ní e**  
 2SG.IND CM-front DEF UFP  
 ‘How is the front?’ (i.e., ‘What things have happened before I arrived?’)
- 54b. B: Kpasí, kide<sup>70</sup> ní e?  
**kpasí ki-de ní e**  
 be.in CM-back DEF UFP  
 ‘Fine, how’s the back?’ (i.e. how are things behind?)
- 54c. A: Kpasí oo! W’ótsirí ’ílábhā oo.  
**kpasí oo wó o-tsirí kulí kábhā oo**  
 be.in UFP 2SG.IND SM-be.on 3SG.IND top UFP  
 ‘Fine, you are on it.’ (Lit.: ‘you are on its top’)
- 54d. B: Yoo, otsí w’óóbbā?  
**yoo otsí wó ó-ó-bā**  
 okay now 2SG.IND SM-PRSPROG-come  
 ‘Okay, are you now coming?’
- 54e. A: Ee  
**ee**  
 ‘Yes’

In the above interaction, person A meets person B at work and enquires about the things that happened at the workplace before the time that they are meeting.

<sup>70</sup> It appears **kide** is derived from **kede** ‘back’.

Similar expressions are used in exchanges that occur when people are welcomed from their workplace. These are described in the next section.

### 11.5.1 Welcoming people from work

Greetings are also exchanged to indicate the order in which the speaker and addressee arrived at home from work etc. Usually, the interactants ask about things that have happened in their absence. The following is an illustration of a greeting exchange between two interactants, one of whom arrived home before the other.

55a. A: W'ódi oo!

**wó      ó-di      oo**  
2SG.IND SM-go UFP  
'Welcome!' (Lit.: 'You have been somewhere and back.')

55b. B: Yoo, w'ótúgba ní e?

**yoo   wó      o-túgba   ní      e**  
okay 2SG.IND CM-front DEF UFP  
'Okay, how is the front?' (i.e., 'What things have happened before I arrived?')

55c. A: Kpasí, w'ede ní<sup>71</sup> e?

**kpasí   wó      ke-de   ní      e**  
be.in 2SG.IND CM-back DEF UFP  
'Fine, how's the back?' (i.e. how are things behind?)

55d. B: Kpasí.

**kpasí**  
be.in  
'Fine.'

The turns may continue with the interactants enquiring about the places of work or where B is returning from, i.e. farm, office, market etc. For instance, if the person just returned from his/her farm, the speaker can ask the question in (55e). The response to this question is the same as (55d).

55e. Wó 'óyaními oo?

**wó      bu-ya   ní      kɪmɪ      oo**  
2SG.IND CM-farm DEF inside UFP  
'How is your farm?'

---

<sup>71</sup> One could also use the expression **kide ní e?** 'How's the back' as in (54b).



When a person is back from the farm, etc., the people in the house who stayed behind may use the same expressions stated above to welcome him/her except the one in (55b) as shown in the turns below.

56a. A: W'odi oo!

**wó**      **o-di**      **oo**  
2SG.IND SM-go UFP  
'Welcome!' (Lit.: 'You have been somewhere and back.')

56b. B: Yoo, w'ede ní e?

**yoo**   **wó**      **ke-de**   **ní**      **e**  
be.in 2SG.IND CM-back DEF UFP  
'Fine, how's the back?' (i.e. how are things behind?)

56c. A: Kpasí, wó 'óyanímu oo?

**kpasí** **wó**   **bu-ya**   **ní**      **kumi**      **oo**  
be.in 2SG CM-farm DEF inside UFP  
'Fine, how is your farm?'

The response to (56c) is the same as the one in (55d).

## 11.6 Expressing sympathy

When tragedy such as an accident or death befalls someone or when someone falls sick, the person's friends, family or members of the community visit him/her to console or sympathise with him/her. One of the expressions used to express sympathy in Tafi is **babaa** which is borrowed from Ewe. Just as it is used in Ewe, **babaa** is used in Tafi to sympathise with or to apologise to the addressee for any problem or inconvenience caused. For instance, if someone lifts a chair and it hits another person, s/he has to say **babaa** to that person to express regret. However, in Tafi, **babaa** can be prefixed with either the 2SG/PL independent pronoun depending on the number of addressees involved as shown in (57a). Another expression used is **káfra** which is borrowed from Ewe as in (57b).

57a. Wó babaa (oo)!

**wó**      **babaa**      **oo**  
2SG.IND sorry UFP  
'Sorry to you (sg)!'

57b. Ô, káfra!

**Ô**      **káfra**  
INTJ excuse  
'Oh, sorry!'

The expression **babaa** ‘sorry’ is also used to express sympathy when someone is bereaved. Other expressions used on such an occasion are:

58a. W’ótsyánī ’ibúí oo.

<b>wó</b>	<b>ó-tsyánī</b>	<b>ki-búí</b>	<b>oo</b>
2SG.IND	SM-meet	CM-matter	UFP
‘You have suffered it.’ (Lit.: ‘You have met it.’)			

58b. W’ónú ’ibúí zizi oo.

<b>wó</b>	<b>ó-nú</b>	<b>ki-búí</b>	<b>zi-zi</b>	<b>oo</b>
2SG.IND	SM-hear	CM-matter	RED-bad	UFP
‘You have heard bad news.’				

If the death occurred as a result of the person being sick for some time and all attempts to cure him/her proved futile, then the expression in (58c) may be said to the bereaved family.

58c. W’ótsyí ’ubhtí oo.

<b>wó</b>	<b>ó-tsyí</b>	<b>bu-bhtí</b>	<b>oo</b>
2SG.IND	SM-do.in.vain	CM-do	UFP
‘You have tried or worked in vain.’			

When one pays a visit to a sick person, the following expressions in (59) could be used to express sympathy. (59d) and (59e) are used for those who are bedridden and could not move about.

59a. W’óómo zhǎ́ oo.

<b>wó</b>	<b>ó-ó-mo</b>	<b>zhǎ́</b>	<b>oo</b>
2SG.IND	SM-PRSPROG-see	problem	UFP
‘You are having problems.’			

59b. W’óódi wó shúábhā oo.

<b>wó</b>	<b>ó-ó-di</b>	<b>wó</b>	<b>shú</b>	<b>kábhā</b>	<b>oo</b>
2SG.IND	SM-PRSPROG-look	2SG.IND	REFL	top	UFP
‘You are looking after yourself.’					

59c. W’óónyína wó shú oo.

<b>wó</b>	<b>ó-ó-nyína</b>	<b>wó</b>	<b>shú</b>	<b>oo</b>
2SG.IND	SM-PRSPROG-hold	2SG.IND	REFL	UFP
‘You are taking care of yourself.’ (Lit.: ‘You are holding yourself.’)				

59d. W’ólí okó tódúkpo oo.

<b>wó</b>	<b>ó-lí</b>	<b>o-kó</b>	<b>to-dukpo</b>	<b>oo</b>
2SG.IND	SM-be.positioned	CM-place	AM-one	UFP
‘You are at one place.’				

- 59e. W'ódzǐ ákó tódúkǐpó  
**wó ó-dzǐ ɔ-kó to-ɖukpó**  
 2SG.IND SM-be.located.on.base CM-place AM-one  
 'You are at one place.'

The response to all the expressions used when sympathising with a sick or a bereaved person is **yoo** 'okay'. The formulae in (59f) – (59h) can be used to wish a sick person speedy recovery.

- 59f. Ábakáǎme ákó wó oo.  
**á-ba-káǎme a-kó wó oo**  
 3SG-FUT-improve SM-give 2SG UFP  
 'It will be better.' Or 'Your condition will improve.'
- 59g. Ábabhíú kó wó oo.  
**á-ba-bhíú kó wó oo**  
 3SG-FUT-do DAT 2SG UFP  
 'It will be better.' Or 'Your condition will improve.'
- 59h. Óbɔhayá oo.  
**ɔ-bo-hayá oo**  
 2SG-FUT-recover UFP  
 'You will recover.'

When the visitor asks for permission to depart, the host expresses his/her appreciation by using any of the expressions below. (60a) can also be said anytime to anybody who pays someone a visit.

- 60a. W'ósrá áńó odí oo.  
**wó ɔ-srá a-nɔ o-dí oo**  
 2SG.IND SM-visit CM-person 2SG-look UFP  
 'You came and visited a person.'
- 60b. W'ɔbáka áńó 'ébúí.  
**wó ɔ-báka a-nɔ ki-búí**  
 2SG.IND SM-remember CM-person CM-matter  
 'You remembered a person's case.'
- 60c. W'óvé áńó 'únú oo.  
**wó o-ve a-nɔ bu.nú oo**  
 2SG.IND SM-V CM-person mouth UFP  
 'You have been gracious.'
- 60d. W'óbí ɔplúnɔ áńó oo.

**wó**      **ó-bí**      **ó-plónó**    **a-nó**      **oo**  
 2SG.IND SM-weep SM-help CM-person UFP  
 ‘You have wept with a person.’

### 11.7 Disclaimers

**Agoo** as stated earlier in § 11.1.1 is used to get the attention of others when one is entering a building. It is also used to capture the attention of people and get them to be silent and attentive when someone wants to take the floor to say something and when someone wants the right of way to pass through, for instance, a crowded place. In the last instance, the response to **agoo**, which is **amee**, may not be given. The people or person may just move out of the speaker’s way for him to pass.

**Káfra**, **tafrátsyí** and **sébio** ‘excuse me, I beg your pardon’ as used in other Ghanaian languages are used to excuse oneself and show respect to one’s addressee(s) especially when what one is about to do or say is indecent or not pleasant. By so doing, these expressions are used to forestall any form of anger on the part of the addressee(s). For instance, when one wants to talk about the departed or any taboo word such as sex, a speaker has to preface it with any of these words.

**Tafrátsyí** and **káfra** could also be used to preface apologies as illustrated in (61a) and (61b). The expression in (61a) for instance, can be used if one steps on another person and (61b) could be used when one has said something unpleasant.

- 61a. Wó káfra lo, ɛdutsɔ wó ’omɔʔ.  
**wó**      **káfra**      **lo**      **ɛ-di-tso**      **wó**      **bu-mo**  
 2SG.IND excuse ADD 1SG-NEG2-do.early 2SG CM-see  
 ‘Sorry (to you), I did not see you early.’
- 61b. Ô káfra, ɛdnāɔʔ.  
**ô**      **káfra**      **ɛ-di-nā-ɔʔ**  
 INTJ excuse 1SG-NEG2-be.able-say  
 ‘Oh sorry, I did not say it well’ (i.e., I am sorry for saying the wrong thing).

The use of the left hand when communicating with someone is culturally unacceptable. This is because the use of the left hand is considered more insulting than using insulting words and it is deemed a dishonourable act. However, if it should become necessary to use the left hand one must excuse one’s self by using the expression in (62a). Its response is given in (62b).

- 62a. Káfra, kɪbutkpě lo.  
**káfra**      **kɪ-butkpě**      **lo**  
 excuse me CM-left.hand ADD  
 ‘Excuse me, (it is) the left hand.’

- 62b. (Kɪlɪ tsyí) ɔhɔ.  
**kɪlɪ tsyí ɔ-hɔ**  
 3SG too CM-arm  
 ‘It is also a hand.’

To show politeness or courtesy when communicating with an addressee who is older or who has a higher social status or when requesting for something, a speaker ought to preface his/her speech or request with the expression **íde kúkú** ‘I beg’, literally, ‘I take off (my) hat’. This expression is also used to apologise for any rude behavior. The verb phrase **de kúkú** ‘beg’ is a borrowing from Ewe and as stated in § 8.3.1, it is also used to mitigate the effect of the violation of any social norm or “the illocutionary force of [any] act that may inconvenience the addressee” (Ameka 1991:619).

## 11.8 Expressing farewell

Farewell expressions are used when people are parting from each other after a ceremony or visit or when someone is going on a journey either for a long time or a short time. Some of the expressions are (i) used to convey blessings and good wishes for the addressee; (ii) requests to the addressee to convey the speaker’s greetings to people where the addressee is going; and (iii) used to convey the speaker’s desire to see the addressee again (see also § 11.1.7). The following is a recording in which a nephew is parting from a paternal aunt after a visit.

63. A: Ɛɛ, m’akúdá, m’íkɪ tɪbɪbá ní, kɪwʊ́m dɔ́ so íbashĩ, íptí sí tɪ ɪbakrá wɔ́.  
**ɛɛ mí á-kúdá mí ɪ-kɪ tí-bí-bá ní**  
 INTJ 1SG.IND CM-aunt 1SG.IND CM-here CM-RED-come TOP  
**kɪwʊ́m dɔ́ so í-ba-shĩ**  
 ?? land so 1SG-FUT-leave  
**í-ptí sí tɪ í-ba-krá wɔ́**  
 1SG-want COMP COMP 1SG.DEP-VENT-notify 2SG  
 ‘My aunt, it’s quite sometime now since I came so I would like to leave and I have come to bid you farewell.’

64. B: Ao, ɔgblɔ́bɔ́shĩ tsyí á?  
**ao ɔ-gblɔ́-bɔ́-shĩ tsyí á**  
 INTJ 2SG-EXC-FUT-leave too UFP  
 ‘Oh! Are you leaving us so soon?’

65. A: Ee, eyíyín aná kóm sí tɪ ushĩ.  
**ee e-yíyín ní a-ná kó mí sí tɪ**  
 Yes CM-time DEF SM-reach DAT 1SG COMP COMP  
**í-shĩ**  
 1SG.DEP-leave  
 ‘Yes, it is time for me to leave.’

66. B: Yoo, ʒvɪ ísɪn 'alí oo.

**yoo ʒ-vɪ í-í-sɪnɔ balí oo**  
 okay 2SG-go 1SG-PRSPROG-greet 3PL UFP  
 'Okay, when you go, I greet them.'

67. A: Yoo, w'ʒbʒbɪtí 'íbúí popoopó.

**Yoo wʒ ʒ-bʒ-bɪtí ki-búí popoopó**  
 Okay 2SG.IND SM-VENT-do CM-matter IDEO.very.much  
 'Okay, thank you very much.'

68. B: ʒzazaa t'ʒflʒbʒsră l'ódí oo.

**ʒ-za zaa tɪ ʒ-flʒ-bʒ-sră blʒ ó-dí**  
 2SG-stay short.time COMP 2SG.DEP-again-FUT-visit 1PL 2SG-look  
**oo**  
 UFP  
 'After a short time come and visit us again.'

69. A: Yoo.

**yoo**  
 okay  
 'Okay.'

70. B: Ákan agbáɪ wʒ t'odokú ní ishɪ yúyʒémí oo.

**á-kā ní a-gbáɪ wʒ tɪ o-do-kú**  
 CM-father DEF SM-lead 2SG PURP 2SG.DEP-ITIVE-reach  
**ní i-shú yú-yʒ kum oo**  
 LOC CM-body RED-be.cold inside UFP  
 'May God lead you to get there in peace.' (i.e. 'safe journey')

71. A: Yoo, wʒnʒ tsyí wʒn'ód'ánʒíábɪ oo.

**yoo wʒnʒ tsyí wʒnʒ no-dí a-nʒ kábɪ oo**  
 okay 2PL.IND too 2PL.IND SM-look CM-person top UFP  
 'Okay. You too, you have been hospitable.'

72. B: Yoo.

**yoo**  
 okay  
 'Okay.'

73. A: Ebúɪn pétéé gɪ nɔbɪtɪn wʒnʒ 'bɪtɪfɪbúí.

**e-búí ní pétéé gɪ nɔ-bɪtɪ ní wʒnʒ nɔ-bɪtɪ**  
 CM-matter DEF all REL 2PL.DEP-do TOP 2PL.IND SM-do  
**ki-búí**  
 CM-matter  
 'Thank you very much for all what you have done.'

74. Εε, Kpáyā n'élú álí ózakó kó nó oo.  
**εε Kpáyā ní é-lú alí ɔ-zakó kó w̃ñń oo**  
 INTJ God DEF SM-put 3PL CM-place DAT 2PL UFP  
 'May God bless you in return.'

75. B: Yoo.  
**yoo**  
 okay  
 'Okay.'

In (63), the speaker notifies his aunt about his desire to leave after paying her a visit for sometime. In (66), his aunt requests the addressee to extend her greetings to the people where he is going while in (68), the speaker expresses desire for the addressee to visit again. (70) and (74) are expressions for blessing and good wishes to the addressee. (70) expresses the wish of the speaker that the addressee gets to his destination safely. The response to all the farewell expressions is **yoo** 'okay'. Other farewell expressions include:

- 76a. (Nɔ) ga m̃ oo!  
**nɔ ga m̃ oo**  
 2PL walk well UFP  
 'Travel well/ safe journey!'
- 76b. (Nɔ)dɔtsɔ 'okú!  
**nɔ-dɔ-tsɔ bu-kú**  
 2PL-ITIVE-do.early CM-reach  
 'May you reach early.'
- 76c. Mávú ágamí 'ídzó kó w̃s/'ñń.  
**Mávú á-gamí ki-dzo kó w̃s/w̃ñń**  
 God SM-clear CM-way DAT 2SG/2PL  
 'May God clear the path for you (sg/pl).'
- 76d. Ákan agbáń w̃s/w̃ñń ɔɔɔɔɔɔ.  
**á-kā ní á-gbáń w̃s/ w̃ñń ɔɔɔɔɔɔ**  
 CM-father DEF SM-lead 2SG/2PL slowly  
 'May God lead you calmly.'

The expressions in (77) are used in situations where the person is going to a place nearby and will be back after a short time. Thus, they could be said to someone going to the farm, market, school, riverside etc.

- 77a. ɔvɪ t'ɔtsɔ 'óbá oo!  
**ɔ-vɪ tɪ ɔ-tsɔ bu-bá oo**  
 2SG-go COMP 2SG.DEF-do.early CM-come UFP

‘If you go, come (back) early!’

- 77b. Tso ’obá oo!  
**tsɔ**            **bu-bá**            **oo**  
 do.early      CM-come      UFP  
 ‘Come (back) early!’

### 11.9 Goodnight expressions

At night when people are retiring to bed or are parting, they wish that each other will sleep well. Some of the expressions used are given in (78). The responses are given in (79). The expression in (78b) can also be used as a response.

- 78a. (Wɔ) káagǝ oo!  
**wɔ**            **káagǝ**            **oo**  
 2SG.IND good.night      UFP  
 ‘Good night (to you)!’
- 78b. Kaza ti lotsyá oo.  
**ka-za**    **ti**            **lɔ-tsyá**            **oo**  
 3SG-V    COMP    1PL.DEP-meet      UFP  
 ‘Let’s meet when day breaks.’
- 79a. Yoo, t’ónáwús oo.  
**yoo**    **ti**            **ɔ-ná-wús**            **oo**  
 okay    COMP    2SG.DEP-be.able-sleep      UFP  
 ‘Okay, may you sleep well.’ (Lit.: ‘May you be able to sleep.’)
- 79b. Yoo, t’ɔza mǝ oo.  
**yoo**    **ti**            **ɔ-za**                            **mǝ**    **oo**  
 okay    COMP    2SG.DEP-spend.the.night    well    UFP  
 ‘May you spend the night well.’
- 79c. Yoo, ákan/ Máwú álɔ ní ’úlɔ.  
**yoo**    **á-kā**            **ní**    /    **Máwú**    **á-lɔ**            **ni**    **bulɔ**  
 okay    CM-father    DEF    /    God            SM-get.up    COM    1PL  
 ‘Okay, may the Lord/ God wake us up.’

### 11.10 Other salutations

The Tafi people have salutations for different occasions. These include the expressions in (80) and (81). (80b) is a response to the salutation in (80a) and the responses in (82) are used for the formulae in (81). The expression in (80) is used



to express one's wish for another person to have a nice day while those in (81) are used at the beginning of a new year to express one's best wishes for others.

- 80a. Kíwíníĩ, (kí)pĩ kɔ wɔ́/ w̃ũńɔ́ oo.  
**kí-wĩ ní kũĩ (kí-)pĩ kɔ wɔ́/ w̃ũńɔ́ oo**  
 CM-day DEF inside 3SG-be.good DAT 2SG/ 2PL UFP  
 'Have a nice day.' (Lit.: 'The day inside be good for you (sg/pl).')
- 80b. Yoo, kɔ wɔ́/w̃ũńɔ́ tsyí oo.  
**yoo kɔ wɔ́/w̃ũńɔ́ tsyí oo**  
 ok DAT 2SG/2PL too UFP  
 'You (sg/pl) too'
- 81a. Kígɔ vuvɔ kɔ wɔ́/ w̃ũńɔ́ oo.  
**kí-gɔ vuvɔ kɔ wɔ́/w̃ũńɔ́ oo**  
 CM-year new DAT 2SG/ 2PL UFP  
 'Happy new year' (Lit.: 'A new year to you.')
- 81b. Wɔ́/ w̃ũńɔ́ 'égɔ vuvɔ oo.  
**wɔ́/ w̃ũńɔ́ kí-gɔ vuvɔ oo**  
 2SG.IND/ 2PL.IND CM-year new UFP  
 'Happy new year' (Lit.: 'Your new year')
- 82a. Yoo, (tɪ) kívlabatónɔ́ lɔ́ oo.  
**yoo (tɪ) kí-vla-ba-tónɔ́ blɔ́ oo**  
 ok COMP 3SG-again-VENT-catch.up.with 1PL UFP  
 'Okay, may it come to meet us again.'
- 82b. Yoo, kɔ wɔ́/w̃ũńɔ́ tsyí oo  
**yoo kɔ wɔ́/w̃ũńɔ́ tsyí oo**  
 ok DAT 2SG/2PL too UFP  
 'You (sg/pl) too'
- 82c. Yoo, (tɪ) kívlábhui<sup>72</sup> lɔkpí  
**yoo (tɪ) kí-vlá-bhui lɔ-kpí**  
 ok COMP 3SG-again-cut 1PL.DEP put.in  
 'Okay, may it come to meet us again.'

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<sup>72</sup> There is disharmony in the vowels in the verb phrase. One would have expected the vowels to be +ATR because of the ATR value of the vowel in the verb. This might be due to the routinised nature of the expression.

## 12 IDEOPHONES, INTERJECTIONS AND PARTICLES

This chapter is concerned with three types of words that are commonly used in everyday discourse: ideophones, interjections and particles. These word types share some properties. They are all expressive in nature. They are used to express a speaker's perception, mental state and attitudes. Nevertheless, there are differences between them. Ideophones and particles cannot be used by themselves non-elliptically while interjections can be used by themselves as non-elliptical utterances.

### 12.1 Ideophones

Ideophones are widespread crosslinguistically (Voeltz and Kilian-Hatz 2001). Westermann described them for several West African languages and observed that they are “picture words” (Westermann 1930: 107). They have also been defined after Doke (1935) as words that are “a vivid representation of an idea in sound” (see also Welmers 1973). Following Dingemanse (2011:25), we assume that ideophones are “marked words that depict sensory imagery”. That is, they stand out formally, phonologically, morphologically and syntactically. They are depictions rather than descriptions that invite the audience to perceive with their senses what they represent in sound and they represent images perceived by the speaker.

In Tafi, ideophones are phonologically marked in a number of ways:

Some ideophones have a CVV syllable structure which is not found in other parts of the language except in some loanwords. Examples of such ideophones include:

- |              |                                 |
|--------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>gũí</b>   | ‘IDEO.sound.of swallowing.food’ |
| <b>táwéé</b> | ‘IDEO.completely’               |
| <b>gbáá</b>  | ‘IDEO.vanished’                 |
| <b>vĩĩ</b>   | ‘IDEO.disappear’                |

Some ideophones also defy phonotactic constraints. For instance, in a CGV syllable where the initial C is a [-coronal] sound, the G that follows should be the liquid. However in some ideophones we find the trill in such a context as shown in (2).

- |             |             |               |               |                |             |                 |       |     |          |         |
|-------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------|-------|-----|----------|---------|
| Kulí        | y’ayıkɔ     | y’áhúdzɔ      | ní            | kesukpón       | kulí        | y’áákó          | átsya | odi | gridjɔdɔ | aflán̄. |
| <b>kulí</b> | <b>yí</b>   | <b>á-yíkɔ</b> | <b>yí</b>     | <b>á-húdzɔ</b> | <b>ní</b>   | <b>ke-sukpó</b> |       |     |          |         |
| CONJ        | 3SG.IND     | SM-take       | 3SG.IND       | CM-horsetail   | LOC         | CM-handle       |       |     |          |         |
| <b>ní</b>   | <b>kulí</b> | <b>yí</b>     | <b>á-yíkɔ</b> | <b>á-tsyá</b>  | <b>o-di</b> | <b>gridjɔdɔ</b> |       |     |          |         |
| DEF         | CONJ        | 3SG.IND       | SM-take       | SM-draw        | CM-line     | IDEO            |       |     |          |         |

**a-flá-n̄**

SM-pass-COM

‘Then he took the handle of his horsetail and drew a circle.’ (Kásālā)

Morphologically too, ideophones stand out in a number of ways. First, as the ideophone in example (2) shows, several ideophones have an inherently repetitive structure. Some have a basic reduplicative structure, i.e. two repetitions, e.g. **kpāwukpāwu** ‘IDEO.plenty’, **gidigidi** ‘IDEO.tumult’, **hoyhoy** ‘IDEO.fat’. Several also have an inherent triplicative structure like the ideophones illustrated in (3a) and (3b).

- 3a. Ákān edí pópópó sí, ókě, **eee** ényí ídōnōn gɪ ábabhítí.  
**á-kā**      **ní**      **é-dí**      **pópópó**      **sí**      **ókě**  
 CM-father DEF SM-look IDEO.very.much COMP okay  
**eee**      **é-nyí**      **kí-d̄**      **n̄**      **ní**      **gɪ**      **á-ba-bhítí**  
 INTJ SM-know CM-thing wh.ever DEF REL SM-FUT-do  
 ‘The father considered (the situation) for a long time and said okay, he knows what to do.’ (Kásālā)
- 3b. Mí za ’klí tútútú kúlí gbaxálí ábáyík̄ y’iapamí.  
**mí**      **ɪ-za**      **ɪ-klí**      **tútútú**      **kúlí**      **gbaxálí**  
 1SG.IND 1SG-be.PST CM-there IDEO.exactly CONJ striped.mouse  
**á-bá-yík̄**      **yí**      **ká-pamí**  
 SM-VENT-take 3SG CM-cutlass  
 ‘In fact, I was there when striped mouse came and took his cutlass.’  
 (Gbaxálí)

Other ideophones have a basic quadruplicate structure as the one in (2) above and as the one in (4).

4. Gigigigigi, anóían̄ abáyík̄ y’oklebh̄.  
**gigigigigi**      **a-n̄-nyáá-a-n̄**      **á-bá-yík̄**      **yí**  
 IDEO CM-person-DISTR-CM-person SM-VENT-take 3SG.IND  
**o-klebh̄**  
 CM-bundle.of.thatch  
 ‘Hustling and bustling, everybody came and took his bundle of thatch.’ OR  
 ‘In confusion, everybody came for his bundle of thatch.’ (Kásālā)

For some ideophones with an inherent structure the number of repetitions does not seem to be limited. The ideophone in example (5) is one such example.

5. Bétúkú ámón̄ pétée ámínā bakpí n’owúlēnīm, owúlē ní tótótótót.  
**bé-túkú**      **a-m̄**      **ní**      **pétée**      **bá-mínā**      **ba-kpí**      **ní**  
 3PL-carry CM-rice DEF all SM-bring SM-put.in LOC

**o-wúlě ní kím̩ o-wúlě ní tótótótót**  
 CM-storage.bin DEF inside CM-storage.bin DEF IDEO  
 ‘They carried all the rice and they put it in the storage bin, it was filled to the brim.’ (Kásālā)

In addition, most ideophones stand out in discourse as they are repeated several times to give them prominence or to express intensity. In (6a), the ideophone **gura** is repeated two times to iconically depict the sound of boiling water. In (6b), the mode of the swarming of the men around the girl is imagistically reflected in the repetition of the ideophone that describes the manner three times. Similarly, in (6c) and (6d), the ideophones are repeated four times each to signal a high degree of the ideas expressed: the full degree of completeness in (6c) and the high degree of speed with which the thing was hidden in (6d).

- 6a. Buní ní yábā gura gura búshúí dzú.  
**bu-ní ní yábā gura gura bú-shúí dzú**  
 CM-water DEF boil IDEO IDEO 1PL-fetch put.down  
 ‘When the water boils we fetch (some) and put down.’ (Kímokó)
- 6b. Báányí ní pétée áasée bodo bodo bodo.  
**báa-nyí ní pétée bá-a-sá yí bodo bodo**  
 CM.PL-man DEF all SM-PSTPROG-swarm 3SG IDEO IDEO  
**bodo**  
 IDEO  
 ‘All the men were swarming around her like flies.’ (Kásālā)
- 6c. Banōn eyúkū ’klí kpén kpén kpén kpén.  
**ba-nō ní bé-yúkū ɪ-klí kpén kpén kpén kpén**  
 CM.PL-person DEF SM-be.full CM-there IDEO IDEO IDEO IDEO  
 ‘The people filled there completely.’ (Kásālā)
- 6d. Ékpú ’íd̩ ní zia zia zia zia.  
**é-kpu kí-d̩ ní zia zia**  
 3SG-hide CM-thing DEF IDEO.quickly IDEO.quickly  
**zia zia**  
 IDEO.quickly IDEO.quickly  
 ‘He quickly hid the things.’ (Kásālā)

It was noted above that some ideophones with inherent repetitive structure do not seem to have any limit on the number of repetitions. Similarly, the number of iterations of ideophones does not seem to be constrained. The repetitions are dependent on the speaker’s meaning and on the oratorical skills of the performer. In (7), the speaker repeats the ideophone **gidigidj** ‘IDEO.tumult’ six times to create the image of a lot of commotion taking place.

- (7) Banɔn enú ní ho! gidɔgidɔ gidɔgidɔ gidɔgidɔ gidɔgidɔ gidɔgidɔ gidɔgidɔ.  
**ba-nɔ**                **ní**        **bé-nú**        **ní**        **ho**        **gidɔgidɔ**  
 CM.PL-person DEF SM-hear TOP INTJ IDEO.hustle.and.bustle  
**gidɔgidɔ**                **gidɔgidɔ**                **gidɔgidɔ**  
 IDEO.hustle.and.bustle IDEO.hustle.and.bustle IDEO.hustle.and.bustle  
**gidɔgidɔ**                **gidɔgidɔ**  
 IDEO.hustle.and.bustle IDEO.hustle.and.bustle  
 ‘When people heard it, oh, there was commotion.’ (Kásālā)

In examples (8a) and (8b), the ideophone is repeated several times, but the number of iterations is different. What is significant is that the sentences are produced by the same narrator in the same story. This confirms the point that the number of iterations is dependent on meaning and the speaker. Compare (8a) and (8b).

- 8a. Kápanín ’ál’ɔŋa shíshíshíshí  
**ká-pamí**        **ní**        **ka-lí**        **ɔ-ŋa**                **shíshíshíshí**  
 CM-cutlass DEF SM-be.at SM-sharpness IDEO  
 ‘The cutlass is extremely sharp.’ (Gbaxálí)
- 8b. Ákányááká áyɔ y’iapamí shíshíshíshíshíshíshí.  
**á-kányááká**    **á-yɔ**        **yí**                **ká-pamí**        **shíshíshíshíshíshíshí**  
 CM-every SM-whet 3SG.IND CM-cutlass IDEO.sharp  
 ‘Each one (of them) whetted his cutlass very sharp.’ (Gbaxálí)

Another aspect of the expressive morphology of ideophones which is used to draw attention to them and to express intensity or degree is that part of the ideophonic root is repeated. It can be argued that it is the last syllable of the root that gets extended. In example (9a), the ideophone **ridɔdɔdɔ** ‘IDEO.continuously’ is used in its basic form with an inherent repetitive structure. In (9b), however, the last syllable of the ideophone is repeated several times to iconically depict the length of time and the continuous nature of the dancing. A similar process is at play in (9c).

- 9a. Íyu ridɔdɔdɔ ítɔ.  
**í-yu**                **ridɔdɔdɔ**        **í-tɔ**  
 1SG-dance IDEO 1SG-be.tired  
 ‘I danced continuously for a long time till I was tired.’ (Kásālā)
- 9b. Ótɔ́mɔ g’ílíyu ridɔdɔdɔdɔdɔdɔdɔ?  
**ót-tɔ́-mɔ**                **gí**        **í**                **lí-í-yu**  
 2SG-NEG.PRSPROG REL 1SG.DEP 3SG.DEP-PRSPROG-dance  
**ridɔdɔdɔdɔdɔdɔdɔ**  
 IDEO  
 ‘Can you not see how I have been dancing continuously for a very loooooooooong time?’ (Kásālā)

- 9c. Flôgo ti kiwi békóéyī ní bátíwe 'edo 'elú gblálálálálálálálá.  
**flôgo ti ki-wí békóéyī ní bá-tí-wa**  
 before COMP CM-sun VENT-exit TOP 3PL-PERF-do  
**kí-do be-lú gblálálálálálálálá**  
 CM-thing SM-place IDEO  
 'Before the sun appeared they had cleared a huuuuuuge portion of the land.'  
 (Gbaxáǎĩ)

Syntactically too, ideophones display some characteristics. We saw in Chapter 4 that several ideophones have an adjectival function where they are used to represent properties of a head noun in a noun phrase. Similarly, in (10) the noun 'woman' is qualified by the ideophone glossed as 'fat'.

10. Adzɪ hɔyɪhɔyɪ am'ágbánɔ̃  
**a-dzɪ hɔyɪhɔyɪ a-má á-gbánɔ̃**  
 CM-woman IDEO.fat SM-be.at:NEG SM-marry  
 'A fat woman cannot be married.'

Several ideophones function as adverbs. In this function they may characterise degree as in (6d) and (8a) above or they may express the manner in which a state of affairs unfolds, as in (11).

11. Pɪ latsí 'itsikpɪ ní p'ɪal'ááhwā hlohlohlo pɪ kitsikpɪn ɪwólɪn... agboyaa.  
**pɪ la-tsí ki-tsikpɪ ní pɪ kalí**  
 CONN 3PL.DEP-take.off CM-pot DEF CONN 3SG.IND  
**ka-á-hwā hlohlohlo pɪ ki-tsikpɪ ní kɪ-wólɪ**  
 SM-PRSPROG-move IDEO CONN CM-pot DEF SM-fall  
**ní agboyaa**  
 TOP IDEO.sound  
 'When they took the pot from the fire with him moving in it (then) the pot fell... (with a loud noise).' (Kásālā)

Some ideophones are also used as depictive secondary predicates where they denote the condition or state of one of the arguments of the clause. This is the case with the use of **gbadzaa** 'IDEO.wide' in example (12). The second ideophone in this example is used adverbially.

12. Bábhítu 'ɪlɪ gbadzaa, kɪnɪ bhledu  
**bá-bhítu kɪlɪ gbadzaa kɪ-nɪ bhledu**  
 3PL-make 3SG IDEO.wide 3SG-be.wide IDEO  
 'They made it wide, it is extensively broad.' (Gbaxáǎĩ)

Some ideophones are used as the main predicate in clauses. In such clauses they function as verbs. In example (13), the two ideophones **gbáá** 'IDEO' and **vĩ** 'IDEO' are used as the main predicates in the clauses in which they occur. These

ideophones are not too well integrated into the grammatical system as they do not take any verbal markers like the subject cross-reference markers.

13. Bápí fufuo pétée fufuo gbáá. Béd' ókónyókókó, fufuo vīī.  
**bá-pí**            **fufuo** **pétée** **fufuo** **gbáá**  
 3PL-look.for fufu all fufu IDEO  
**bé-dí**    **ókó-nyáá-ókó**                            **fufuo** **vīī**  
 3PL-look CM-place-DISTR-CM-place fufu IDEO  
 'They looked for fufu everywhere, fufu was nowhere to be found. They looked everywhere, fufu had vanished.' (Gbaxáǎĩ)

Similarly, in (14) the ideophone **kikikiki** is used as the main predicate in the first clause and the second clause as it were paraphrases the predicative meaning that it expresses.

14. Ákányááká kikikiki, akanyááká ésí áv'upém.  
**á-kányááká** **kikikiki** **a-kanyááká** **é-sí**    **á-vi**    **bu-pá**  
 CM-every IDEO CM-every SM-run SM-go CM-house  
**kumi**  
 inside  
 'Every one of them ran home kikikiki.' (Kásālā)

Unlike the ideophones in (13) and (14), some ideophones that function as verbs are quite well integrated into the grammatical system, e.g., they can take verbal markers. As illustrated in (15), the ideophone **gbáá** can take subject pronouns.

15. Kánā lagbáá, bagbáá, lagbáá, bagbáá  
**ká-nā**            **la-gbáá**            **ba-gbáá**            **la-gbáá**            **ba-gbáá**  
 CM-manner 3PL.DEP-IDEO 3PL-IDEO 3PL.DEP-IDEO 3PL-IDEO  
 'So they went on and on and on.' (Gbaxáǎĩ)

Some ideophones are multi-categorical. The ideophone **bubuibuī** 'IDEO.cold' functions as an adverbial in (16a) whereas in (16b), it functions as the main predicate, i.e. as a verb. It is however not marked for subject cross-reference, hence it is not very well integrated into the system.

- 16a. Buní ní yó bubuibuī.  
**bu-ní**            **ní**    **yó**            **bubuibuī**  
 CM-water DEF be.cold IDEO.cold  
 'The water is very cold.'

- 16b. Bló 'kī ní bubuibuī.  
**bló**            **í-kī**            **ní**            **bubuibuī**  
 1PL.IND CM-here DEF IDEO.cold

‘Our place is cool, i.e. peaceful.’

Ideophones are also marked in the sense that they can be performatively foregrounded in discourse. In Tafi the main strategy applied to achieve this is to use the ideophones in sequence. Further modulations may be applied to the ideophone sequences. For instance in (17), the ideophones in sequence are each repeated to emphasise the degree of strength exerted in the weeding.

- (17) Otsígo kój, kulí y’aza gbla ní kíd̥sús̥ ní shú, ahumá ahumá ahumá ahumá  
 azhúá azhúá atsyírékékéj atsyírékékéj.  
 Otsígo kój kulí yí a-za gbla ní kí-d̥s̥  
 now INT CONJ 3SG.IND SM-be.PST IDEO LOC CM-thing  
 s̥ú-s̥ ní shú ahumá ahumá ahumá ahumá  
 RED-weed DEF surface IDEO IDEO IDEO IDEO  
 azhúá azhúá atsyírékékéj atsyírékékéj  
 IDEO IDEO IDEO IDEO  
 ‘It was now that he applied a new zeal to his weeding.’ (Gbaxáĩĩ)

In some cases the sequence of ideophones appears to be alliterated as the example in (18) illustrates.

- (18) Kásālā tsyí évu aló hulu kpúlú, hulu kpúlú.<sup>73</sup>  
 ká-sālā tsyí é-vu a-ló hulu kpúlú  
 tortoise too SM-catch SM-get.up IDEO.manner.of.walking  
 hulu kpúlú  
 IDEO.manner.of.walking  
 ‘Tortoise too got himself up (with some zeal) walking clumsily.’ (Kásālā)

The ideophones in sequence may represent subcomponents of the same event. In (19), for instance, the first ideophone and the second in sequence talk about different parts of putting food in the mouth and swallowing it. The third ideophone in the sequence provides a temporal structure for the event segments. The sequencing of these words foregrounds the event segment in the narration.

19. Ébhui fufuón, at̥ gũí ridjíd̥j̥ áṅa ’fuón pétéé táwéé ní kísígbé nīm.  
 é-bhui fufuó ní at̥  
 3SG-cut fufu DEF IDEO.sound.of.putting.food.in.the.mouth  
 gũí ridjíd̥j̥ á-ṅa fufuó ní  
 IDEO.sound.of.swallowing.food continuously 3SG-eat fufu DEF  
 pétéé táwéé ní kí-sígbé ní kumí  
 all IDEO.completely LOC CM-bowl DEF inside

<sup>73</sup> In narratives, animals are personified so the subject-verb agreement is most often that of the a’/ba(a)- class.



‘He cuts the fufu, he drops it into his mouth, he swallows it till he ate all the fufu to the last little bit from the bowl.’ (Gbaxáǎĩ)

In (20), the first ideophone in the sequence is iterated to indicate the temporal duration of the subevent of whetting the cutlass and to provide the temporal backdrop for the occurrence of the subcomponents of the event represented by the other ideophones in the sequence.

20. Gbaxáǎĩ álǎ ko kulí ayíkǎ fufuón kulí y’étsobúno kiyón, kplaxlá kplaxlá  
 kplaxlá, atǎ gǎĩ.  
 gbaxáǎĩ      álǎ      ko      kulí      a-yíkǎ      fufuó      ní      kulí  
 striped.mouse    SM-get.up    just    CONJ    3SG-take    fufu    DEF    CONJ  
 yí      é-tsobúno      ki-yó      ní  
 3SG.IND    SM-draw.near    CM-whetstone    DEF  
 kplaxlá      kplaxlá  
 IDEO.sound.of.whetting.cutlass    IDEO.sound.of.whetting.cutlass  
 kplaxlá      atǎ  
 IDEO.sound.of.whetting.cutlass    IDEO.sound.of.putting.food.in.the.mouth  
 gǎĩ  
 IDEO.sound.of.swallowing.food  
 ‘Striped mouse just got up and took the fufu then he went near the  
 whetstone. While he was whetting his cutlass, he cuts the fufu, he drops it  
 into his mouth and swallows it.’

Ideophones are marked words. In Tafi, they are marked phonologically, morphologically, syntactically and stylistically. They are an important ingredient of the rhetorical style of the language. However, as the glosses and translations show, they are very difficult, though not impossible, to characterise semantically. Future research should apply the methods deployed by Dingemanse (2011) for the study of Siwu ideophones to Tafi ideophones to get a richer picture.

## 12.2 Interjections

Interjections are defined as words which conventionally constitute non-elliptical utterances by themselves and express a speaker’s current mental state or reaction towards an element in the linguistic or extralinguistic context (Ameka 1992). Interjections are tied to particular situations hence their meanings relate to the situational, discourse and social context in which they are produced. Interjections have an intimate relationship with gestures and may be accompanied by them or a gesture can be used in place of some of them.

Interjections, like ideophones, may also be marked phonologically, morphologically and syntactically. In Tafi, some interjections have syllable structures that are extra systematic such as a VV syllable where it can be a long vowel as in **ee**

‘yes’, **ãã** ‘something bad has happened, one cannot do anything about it’; or a diphthong as in **áo** ‘I feel pain’. Some interjections also have a CVV syllable structure, like ideophones, for example **xee** ‘yes’ and **wuú** ‘shame’. In addition, some interjections in Tafi are made up of only consonants, for instance, **shhh** ‘silence’ and **rm̩m̩** ‘disapproval’ and **rm̩hm̩** ‘I feel pain’. Some interjections also use sounds that are otherwise extra systematic. For example the bilabial click, as an interjection, is used as a call to fowls. Moreover, interjections like ideophones, can have extra lengthening as in **shhhhhhhhh** ‘sileeeence!’ or **eeeeeeeeee** ‘yeeessss’.

Interjections also manifest expressive morphological features: some have an inherent repetitive structure such as **kl̩kl̩kl̩kl̩kl̩** ‘a call to fowls’. The repetitive structure can also be partial, as in **dzyalélé** ‘I am shocked’. Some interjections can also be iterated for expressivity. Thus the bilabial click interjection for calling fowls can be repeated several times.

Syntactically, interjections in Tafi can occur as free standing non-elliptical utterances. For instance, a speaker on seeing a child cross the road without paying attention to traffic exclaims **ei!** ‘I am shocked!’. In such a context the interjection stands for a whole proposition or turn in conversation. Interjections are also used as co-text where they are part of a turn with other propositions in discourse. When they occur as co-text they constitute prosodic units and fall within the utterance intonation.

In Tafi when interjections occur as co-text they occur either utterance initially or utterance medially and can occur with different utterance types. Thus in (21a) the interjection **ô** ‘I feel sympathy’ occurs utterance initially and as co-text of a routine expression. In (21b), the interjection **oo** ‘well’ occurs as a co-text to an imperative, and in (21c) the interjection **ehẽ** ‘INTJ’ occurs utterance initially and as co-text to a question.

- 21a. **Ô**, káfra!  
**ô**      **káfra**  
 INTJ   excuse  
 ‘Oh, sorry!’
- 21b. Oo, kɔ y’átsɔ̃.  
**oo**    **kɔ yí**    **á-tsɔ̃**  
 INTJ   let 3SG   SM-be.quick  
 ‘Oh, go ahead.’ (Lit.: ‘Let it go quickly.’)
- 21c. Ehẽ, kásãlã wɔ tsyí óbɔgbano adzaní dza?

**ehē ká-sālā wó tsyí ɔ-bo-gbano a-dzi**  
 INTJ CM-tortoise 2SG.IND too 2SG-FUT-marry CM-woman  
**a-ní dza**  
 AM-PROX UFP  
 ‘So, tortoise do you also want to marry this woman?’ (Kásālā)

Interjections also occur intra-sententially. In my corpus there are two positions where they occur within the sentence. One position is after a topic constituent as in (22a) and (22b). The other position is after the verb or complementiser **sí** as illustrated in (23).

- 22a. Tɪ kásālā abáló ní áo wó gɪ ɔtɔ́ga tsyí, bátishĩ álóé.  
**ti ká-sālā a-bá-ló ní áo wó gɪ**  
 COMP CM-tortoise SM-VENT-get.up TOP INTJ 2SG.IND REL  
**ɔ-tɔ́-ga tsyí bá-tí-shĩ bá-lo**  
 2SG.DEP-NEG:PRSPROG-walk too 3PL-PERF-leave 3PL-??  
**yí**  
 3SG.IND  
 ‘By the time he woke up, oh, you who cannot even walk, they had already left him behind.’ (Kásālā)
- 22b. Yɪ tsyí ekusi edzeyí ní ní ɛɛ ekusi eyiadz' ebitén, kééku yɪ tsyí 'úlí sí tɪ agbano.  
**yí tsyí e-kusi e-dzeyí ní ní ɛɛ e-kusi**  
 3SG.IND too CM-king CM-daughter DEF TOP INTJ CM-king  
**e-yiadzi ke-bité ní ké-é-ku<sup>74</sup> yí**  
 CM-daughter CM-young.woman DEF SM-PRSPROG-V 3SG.IND  
**tsyí bu-lí sí ti a-gbano**  
 too CM-N COMP COMP 3SG-marry  
 ‘Er, he too is desirous of marrying the princess.’ (Kásālā)
- 23a. kulí y'abaká 'sí ahā kídɔ tili lɪ y'áhɔ.  
**kulí yí a-baká a-sí ahā kí-dɔ**  
 CONJ 3SG.IND SM-remember SM-COMP INTJ CM-thing  
**ti-lí lí yí a-hɔ**  
 AM-INDEF be.at 3SG.IND CM-hand  
 ‘and he remembered that, ah, he had got something.’ (Kásālā)
- 23b. Así óo kivuní láádɔ lo?  
**a-sí óo ki-vu ní lá-á-dɔ lo**  
 3SG-say INTJ CM-drum DEF 3PL.DEP-PRSPROG-say ADD  
 ‘He said, oh, were they talking of the drumming?’ (Kásālā)

<sup>74</sup> The phrase **kú X bulí** means ‘to lust, feel, or have appetite (for something)’.

From a semantic and pragmatic point of view, interjections can be classified along various dimensions. One of these is in terms of the functions they serve in discourse (see Ameka 1992). From this perspective there are expressive interjections which signal the current mental state of a speaker. They are of two kinds: emotive interjections express the feelings of a speaker, for example, **áo** 'I feel pain', **ei** 'I am shocked'; and cognitive interjections which express the thoughts of the speaker, for example, **ehě** 'now I know' **ahă** 'I remember'. Another functional type is conative interjections. They are directed at an interlocutor to get them to do something. In Tafi, such interjections include **shhh** 'I want you to be silent!', **he** 'hey' and **kái** 'I want you (goat) to move from here'. Phatic interjections are those used for interactional purposes and for maintaining contact, for example **ago** 'I want you to say I can do what I want to do', **thě** 'I am paying attention'.

Another dimension for the classification of interjections proposed by Ameka and Wilkins (2006) relates to whether the interjection is directed at an interlocutor or whether it requires a response. In the rest of this section, Tafi interjections are classified according to these parameters.

First, there are the interjections that are not directed at any interlocutor or require any response from an interlocutor. Expressive interjections that signal the speaker's current mental state and actions belong to this category. Interjections of this type in Tafi include those listed in (24).

- |     |                 |   |
|-----|-----------------|---|
| 24. | <b>éi</b>       | 'I am pleasantly surprised'                       |
|     | <b>dzyalélé</b> | 'I am shocked'                                    |
|     | <b>mhm</b>      | 'I feel a lot of pain'                            |
|     | <b>ái</b>       | 'I feel pain'                                     |
|     | <b>ádyéi</b>    | 'I feel pain'                                     |
|     | <b>áo</b>       | 'I feel pain'                                     |
|     | <b>ó</b>        | 'I am surprised'                                  |
|     | <b>ô</b>        | 'I feel something bad because of what I now know' |
|     | <b>kô</b>       | 'I am surprised'                                  |
|     | <b>â</b>        | 'I remember something bad'                        |
|     | <b>thě</b>      | 'I now remember'                                  |

Second, there are interjections directed at an interlocutor requiring a behavioural response. These are largely conative interjections. Some of the Tafi interjections that belong to this group are listed in (25).

- |     |              |   |
|-----|--------------|---|
| 25. | <b>wuú</b>   | 'shame on you'  |
|     | <b>hê/hê</b> | impolite way of calling people<br>(e.g. <b>hê bá!</b> 'hey come!'; <b>hê dí mǎ</b> 'hey, be careful') |
|     | <b>shhh</b>  | 'I want you to be quiet!'   |
|     | <b>súi</b>   | 'I want you (fowl) to go away from here'  |

<b>kái</b>	‘I want you (goat) to go away from here’
<b>pûús</b>	‘I want you (cat) to come here’
⊙ (bilabial click)	‘I want you (fowl) to come here’
<b>klükklükklük</b>	‘I want you (fowl) to come here’

The third group of interjections is those that are used by a speaker in an addressee role to signal that they are paying attention and to ask for clarification. Some examples are given in (26).

26. **ehê/thê** ‘I agree and I want you to say more’  
**ahã** appreciation or approval  
**mhrń** ‘I am paying attention’

A fourth class of interjections is those that are standardly used by an addressee to respond to something an interactional participant has said. Tafi response signals listed in (27) belong to this category. In (28) a conversational fragment is given to illustrate the use of one of these response words.

27. **ee** ‘yes, I agree’  
**xee** ‘yes, I agree’  
**ńmń** ‘no’  
**óo** ‘no’  
**hówō** ‘no’

28. A: Tsytámĩ alí lo?  
**tsytámĩ** **a-lí** **lo**  
 spokesperson SM-be.at ADD  
 ‘Is the spokesperson there?’

- B. Ee, tsytámĩ alí.  
**ee** **tsytámĩ** **a-lí**  
 yes spokesperson SM-be.at  
 ‘Yes, the spokesperson is (here).’

Another class of interjections is those that belong to a ritual pair from which speakers may select. This class comprises one word conversational routines such as those given in (29).

29. **atúu** ‘I embrace you.’  
**agoo!** ‘call for attention’

Some of the interjections discussed for Tafi are also used in Ewe and other surrounding languages. These include:

30. **atúu** ‘I embrace you.’

<b>agoo!</b>	‘call for attention’
<b>ee</b>	‘yes, I agree’
<b>ńm</b>	‘no’
<b>óo</b>	‘no’
<b>wuú</b>	‘shame on you’
<b>hê</b>	impolite way of calling people
<b>shhh</b>	‘I want you to be quiet!’
<b>súi</b>	‘I want you (fowl) to go away from here’
<b>kái</b>	‘I want you (goat) to go away from here’
<b>pûús</b>	‘I want you (cat) to come here’
<b>éi</b>	‘I am pleasantly surprised’
<b>dzyalélée</b>	‘I am shocked’
<b>ńhm</b>	‘I feel a lot of pain’
<b>át</b>	‘I feel pain’
<b>ádyéi</b>	‘I feel pain’
<b>áo</b>	‘I feel pain’

This shows that interjections spread across language boundaries and can also be borrowed. Some of these interjections can be thought of as areal interjections.

### 12.3 Particles

Particles are little words used in everyday talk to achieve different discourse goals. They cannot stand on their own as utterances without being elliptical. This is one feature in which they differ from interjections. They also differ from interjections in being more integrated in the syntax of the clause. The Tafi particles mainly occur on the right edge of clauses and sentences and are of two functional types: (i) those that are used in discourse information structuring and which occur at the end of phrases or clauses (see (31a)), and (ii) those that are used to modify illocutionary forces of utterances and which occur utterance finally (utterance final particles, see (31b)).

- 31a. **ńí** ‘topic marker’  
**e** ‘clause final marker’  
**a** ‘clause final marker’  
**élē** ‘clause final marker, reinforces topic marker on complementiser’
- 31b. **oo** ‘I want you to pay attention’  
**mɔ** ‘addressive particle’  
**lo** ‘I advise you’  
**dza** ‘insistive utterance final particle’  
**xãã** ‘insistive utterance final particle’  
**a** ‘reinforcer of propositional questions’  
**e** ‘illocutionary force modifier’

These particles are expressive in nature. Thus they can be lengthened, as illustrated in (32) for the topic marker and in (33) for the utterance final particle **oo**.

32. Madam ní ímɔ yí 'ishuin  
**Madam ní í-mɔ yí kishūi ní**  
 Madam TOP 1SG-see 3SG.IND Friday DEF  
 'Speaking of Madam, I saw her on Friday.'
33. "kibúí tilí 'h m'áhɔ", kibúí tilí 'h y'áhɔ t'etsiré 'únǝ ɔɔɔɔɔɔ.  
**ki-búí ti-li kɪ-lɪ mɪ a-hɔ ki-búí**  
 CM-word AM-INDEF SM-be.at 1SG.IND CM-hand CM-word  
**ti-lí kɪ-lɪ yí a-hɔ tɪ e-tsiré wǝnǝ**  
 AM-INDEF SM-be.at 3SG.IND CM-hand COMP 3SG-tell 2PL  
**ɔɔɔɔɔɔ**  
 UFP  
 "I have something", he has something to tell you ɔɔɔɔ.'

Another expressive feature, especially of the utterance final particles, is that they do not seem to have a constant tone. Rather their tones vary depending on the emotional and attitudinal meaning the speaker wants to convey. The tones marked on them, in this work, are tied to the tone produced in the particular context. One can thus find the particle **lo** 'ADD' represented as **ló**, **lō** and **lo**.

Additionally, the particles can be stacked as illustrated in (34).

- 34a. ɔdzɪdzɪ mɔ ɔɔ  
**ɔ-dzɪdzɪ mɔ ɔɔ**  
 CM-story ADD UFP  
 'Story story' or 'A tale to you'
- 34b. ... kulí así ní a ...  
**kulí a-sí ní a**  
 CONJ 3SG-say TOP CFM  
 '...and he spoke as follows: ...'

### 12.3.1 Clause final particles

As noted above the clause final particles occur at the end of phrases or clauses and contribute to the information packaging in the clause. The clause final particles, repeated from 31a above, occur sentence internally.

35. **ní** 'topic marker'  
**e** 'clause final marker'  
**a** 'clause final marker'

**éle** ‘clause final marker, reinforces topic marker on complementiser’

The uses of the topic marker have been discussed in §6.7.1 and its use in complex sentences has also been described in Chapter 9. As demonstrated immediately above, the topic marker can be lengthened, and it can co-occur with another clause final marker (see (34b)).

The clause final particles **e** and **a** are used to mark clause boundaries as is the case in (34b) above for **a**. The particle **a** tends to occur in narratives at the end of topic constituents marked by the topic marker as if to reinforce the topic marker and marking a break. Examples (36a) and (36b) contain several instances of the clause final marker **a**.

- 36a. ányínyáányí gí anyáápí ekus’edzeyín ekus’edzeyín ásí tì agbanò ko ní a...

**á-nyí-nyáá-á-nyí** **gí** **a-nyá-á-pí**  
 CM-man-DISTR-CM-man REL 3SG.DEP-CERT-PRSPROG-want  
**e-kusí e-dzeyí ní a-sí tì**  
 CM-king CM-female.child DEF 3SG-COMP COMP  
**a-gbánò ko ní a**  
 3SG.DEP-marry just TOP CFM  
 ‘whichever man desires the princess to marry...’ (Kásālā)

- 36b. Ádò sí ní a ɔtsɔ́ ní ébeklú ’ál’enyí klíso ní a ónúgí ázakp’ ódzíníésí ní a  
 baɔp sí ní ní a ...

**á-ɔp sí ní a ɔtsɔ́ ní é-be-klú balí**  
 3SG-say COMP TOP CFM now TOP 3SG-FUT-call 3PL  
**e-nyí klíso ní a ónú.gí á-za-kpí**  
 CM.PL-name so TOP CFM COND 3SG.DEP-REP-put.in  
**ɔ-dzi ní ke.sí ní a ba-ɔp sí ní ní**  
 CM-song DEF under TOP CFM 3PL-say COMP TOP TOP  
**a**  
 CFM

‘He said that from now he will be calling the names, therefore whenever he starts the song again, they should say...’ (Sáhwi)

The particle **e** is used to optionally mark the end of sequential clauses introduced by **ká**. The examples in (37) are repeated from §9.1.3.9.

- 37a. Ónúg’ óféké kitukún štrò kíkúísí ní ká ɔp’uyíko é.

**ónú.gí ó-féké ki-tukú ní ɔ-trò kí-kuísí ní**  
 COND 2SG.DEP-lift CM-load DEF SM-put.on CM-knee DEF  
**[ká ɔ-pí bu-yíko é]**  
 then 2SG.DEP-be.good CM-take CFM

‘When you lift the load onto your knee it becomes easier to help you put it on your head.’ (Proverb #30)



- 37b. Óny' ósíbubíko ká ɔtsí'ólí é.

<b>ó-nyí</b>	<b>ó-sí</b>	<b>bu-bí</b>	<b>ko</b>
2SG-know	SM-COMP	3SG-cooked	just
<b>[ká</b>	<b>ɔ-tsí</b>	<b>bulí</b>	<b>é]</b>
then	2SG.DEP-take.off	3SG	CFM

'You get to know that it is well-cooked and then you take it off (the fire).'

(Palm oil)

The clause final particle **élē** is used to reinforce a topic marked phrase or clause as illustrated in (38a) - (38c). In (38a) and (38b), it is used to reinforce a topic marked complementiser. It looks like this particle is a combination of two particles, an **é** 'CFM' and another particle **lē**, but my database does not contain any instance of such a particle.

- 38a. Ítsire wó sí ní élē kídō ní gɛ edzi nɛ w'áhɔ ní adɔ́ ababɔ́a.

<b>i-tsiré</b>	<b>wó</b>	<b>sí</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>élē</b>	<b>kí-dō</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>gɛ</b>
1SG-tell	2SG	COMP	TOP	CFM	CM-thing	DEF	REL
<b>é-é-dzi</b>			<b>ní</b>	<b>wó</b>	<b>a-hɔ</b>	<b>ní</b>	
3SG.DEP-PRSPROG-buy			LOC	2SG.IND	CM-hand	TOP	
<b>a-dɛ-sí</b>		<b>á-ba-bɔ́a</b>					
3SG-NEG2-say		3SG.DEP-FUT-pay					

'I told you that the thing that he is buying from you he will not pay.'

- 38b. Alasí ní élē otroeleté ovutó ní ní bétítsú ɔ́lí 'ífú bupɔ́i lápɔ́i ɔ́lí?

<b>alasí</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>élē</b>	<b>o-tro.eleté</b>	<b>o-vutó</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>ní</b>
because	TOP	CFM	CM-lie.owner	CM-roof	DEF	TOP
<b>bé-tí-tsú</b>	<b>ɔ́lí</b>	<b>kí-fú</b>	<b>bu-pɔ́i</b>	<b>lá-pɔ́i</b>	<b>ɔ́lí</b>	
3PL-NEG1-set	3SG	CM-fire	CM-scatter	3PL.DEP-scatter	3SG	

'The reason is that the roof of a dishonest man's hut is never burnt, it is dismantled piece by piece.' (Gbaxáíí)

- 38c. Isí, wó sáhwí ní élē, odikó lénú ní élē g'ínú...

<b>i-sí</b>	<b>wó</b>	<b>sáhwí</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>élē</b>
1SG-say	2SG.IND	spider	TOP	CFM
<b>ɔ-dɛ-kó</b>	<b>lé-nú</b>	<b>ní</b>	<b>élē</b>	<b>gí</b>
2SG-NEG2-let	3PL.DEP-hear	TOP	CFM	REL
				<b>í-nú</b>
				1SG.DEP-hear

'I say YOU spider, if you do not shut up over there and I hear you...'

### 12.3.2 Utterance final particles

In this section, the use and significance of the particles used at the end of utterances to modify the illocutionary force they have. The particles discussed are those listed in (31b) above, repeated in (39).

39. **oo** 'I want you to pay attention'  
**mɔ** 'addressive particle'  
**lo(o)** 'I advise you'  
**dza** 'intensifying utterance final particle'  
**xãã** 'intensifying utterance final particle'

### 12.3.2.1 The particle **oo**

One common context for the occurrence of this particle is at the end of routine expressions addressed to an interlocutor inviting them to respond, as in (40a) and (40b). The example in (40b) shows that these particles are not obligatory elements. In (34b) above, the particle is used at the end of a formula that is used to introduce stories during story telling performances. It is used to draw attention to what one is saying.

- 40a. W'ótsirí 'ílábhā oo.  
**wɔ**        **o-tsirí**    **kɪ́**        **kábhā oo**  
 2SG.IND SM-be.on 3SG.IND top UFP  
 'You are on its top.' (i.e. 'You are on it.')
- 40b. Wɔ babaa (oo)!  
**wɔ**        **babaa**    **(oo)**  
 2SG.IND sorry UFP  
 'Sorry to you (sg)!'

It also occurs at the end of address terms and names like a vocative particle.

41. Ámā oo!  
**Ámā oo**  
 Ámā UFP  
 'Ama!'

The particle can also occur in a propositional question as in (42).

42. Óyi mɔ oo?  
**ó-yi**        **mɔ oo**  
 2SG-show.up ADD UFP  
 'Have you (pl) woken up?'

This example also shows that the particle **oo** can co-occur with other particles. It was already noted above that the particle **oo** can have extra lengthening for expressive purposes. An utterance final **o** particle is rather widespread in West African languages but the functions and significance vary from language to language (see Singler 1988 for an overview).

### 12.3.2.2 The particle **lo(o)**

The particle **lo** is an addressive particle in the sense that it is addressed to an interlocutor and occurs at the end of utterances. Its significance seems to be similar to that of the Ewe particle **lo(o)** ‘ADD’ which Ameka (1998) characterises as an advisory particle. The particle occurs at the end of routine expressions as in (43a) and (43b).

- 43a. Wɔ́ káfra lo, ɪdutsɔ́ wɔ́ ʔomɔ́?  
**wɔ́ káfra lo ɪ-di-tso wɔ́ bu-mɔ**  
 2SG.IND excuse ADD 1SG-NEG2-do.early 2SG CM-see  
 ‘Sorry (to you), I did not see you early.’
- 43b. Agoo ((mɔ) lɔ́)!  
**agoo (mɔ) (lɔ́)**  
 agoo ADD ADD  
 ‘Attention, please!’

The particle also occurs on statements as in (44a) and in propositional questions, as shown in (44b).

- 44a. Así ɔ́o kivuń lááɖɔ lo?  
**a-sí ɔ́o ki-vu ní lá-á-ɖɔ lo**  
 3SG-say INTJ CM-drum DEF 3PL.DEF-PRSPROG-say ADD  
 ‘He said, oh, were they talking of the drumming?’
- 44b. Tsytámī alí lo?  
**tsytámī a-lí lo**  
 spokesperson SM-be.at ADD  
 ‘Is the spokesperson there?’

As illustrated in (43b), the particle **lo** can co-occur with another addressive particle **mɔ** which is talked about in the next section.

### 12.3.2.3 The particle **mɔ**

In examples (42) and (43b) above, repeated as (45a) and (45b) respectively below, the particle **mɔ** ‘ADD’ occurs with other utterance final particles. The unique thing about the particle **mɔ** ‘ADD’ is that it is only used for plural addressees.

- 45a. Óyi mɔ oo?  
**ó-yi mɔ oo**  
 2SG-get.up ADD UFP  
 ‘Have you (pl) woken up?’

- 45b. Agoo ((mɔ) lɔ)!  
**agoo mɔ lɔ**  
 agoo ADD ADD  
 ‘Attention, please!’

When the particle occurs with other particles it is the one that occurs as the inner particle as is evident from the examples given.

#### 12.3.2.4 The particles **dza** and **xãã**

The particles **dza** and **xãã** are alternants as shown in (46a). As pointed out in Chapter 8 the particle **xãã** is probably borrowed from Ewe **hã**. Because of this the particle is also sometimes realised as **hãã** as shown in (46b).

- 46a. Ómɔ m'eyín dza/hãã?  
**ɔ-mɔ mí e-yí ní dza / hãã**  
 2SG-see 1SG.IND CM-child DEF UFP  
 ‘Did you see my child? (I want to know now)’
- 46b. Ányín ááshĩ xãã/ hãã?  
**á-nyí ní á-á-shĩ xãã/ hãã**  
 CM-man DEF SM-PRSPROG-leave UFP  
 ‘Is the man leaving?’
- 46c. Ô! kibúí qúwē n'în dza?  
**ô ki-búí qúwē nú uní dza**  
 INTJ CM-matter which COP AM-PROX UFP  
 ‘Oh! What is this?’

As the examples show, the particles are intensifying particles. They are used in propositional (46a, b) as well as content questions (46c) to signal the urgency and importance the speaker attaches to the question. They convey a kind of insistence on a response from the addressee.

#### 12.3.2.5 The utterance final particle **a**

This particle is used in propositional questions to reinforce its illocutionary force. In §8.2.1, it was noted that propositional questions end on a lower pitch than their counterpart statements. It was also stated that some particles are used to reinforce the illocutionary force of questions. One of these particles is **a** ‘UFP’. This particle seems to be added to disambiguate between a statement and a question. Some contexts in which the particle occurs are illustrated in (47) and (48).

- 47a. ... kliso nonú a?  
**kliso no-nú a**  
 so 2PL-hear CFM  
 ‘... therefore, do you hear?’
- 47b. Ee, natsy’ólíá?  
**ee w̃ñ́ tsyí no-lí á**  
 yes 2PL.IND too 2SG-be.at UFP  
 ‘Yes, how are you too?’
- 48a. Yoo, makalí nonú gbe ní á? Basí éébisi’ídzo oo.  
**yoo mí á-kā-álí no-nú i-gbe ní**  
 okay 1SG.IND CM-father-PL 2PL-hear CM.PL-message DEF  
**á**  
 UFP  
**ba-sí bé-é-bisi ki-dzó oo**  
 3PL-say SM-PRSPROG-ask CM-way UFP  
 ‘Okay, my elders, have you heard the message? They said they are asking for permission (to leave).’
- 48b. B: Ee, wɔ tsy’óyi á?  
**ee wɔ́ tsyí ó-yi á**  
 yes 2SG.IND too SM-get.up PTCL  
 ‘Yes, have you too woken up?’

### 12.3.2.6 The utterance final particle **e(e)**

The particle **e(e)** is used to, as it were, strengthen the illocutionary force of an utterance in which it occurs. It occurs on invitations as in (49). It also occurs on questions which ask about specific entities as in the examples in (50). In this usage, its function is similar to the topic only question particle **h̃́(3)** (see § 8.2.4).

49. Bɔkp’ahɔ́ odí ee.  
**bá ɔ-kpí a-hɔ́ o-dí ee**  
 come 2SG-put CM-hand 2SG-look UFP  
 ‘Come and join us.’ (Lit.: ‘Come and put your hand in and see.’)
- 50a. W’epí ní e?  
**wɔ́ ke-pí ní e**  
 2SG.IND CM-home DEF UFP  
 ‘How is your hometown?’

- 50b. ... w'ókó ní e?  
**w'ókó ní e**  
 2SG.IND place DEF UFP  
 '... how is your place?'

In the following adjacency pair of exchange of salutations between two people one who comes to meet another at home, the particle is used in the questions.

- 51a. A: W'ótúgba ní e?  
**w'ótúgba ní e**  
 2SG.IND CM-front DEF UFP  
 'How is the front?' (i.e., 'What things have happened before I arrived?')
- 51b. B: Kpasí, kide<sup>75</sup> ní e?  
**kpasí ki-de ní e**  
 be.in CM-back DEF UFP  
 'Fine, how's the back?' (i.e. how are things behind?)

This particle **e** co-occurs with other utterance final particles . For instance it co-occurs with the particle **a** as in (52a) and with the addressive particle **lō** as in (52b)

- 52a. A: Ótíyí á e?  
**ótí-yí á e**  
 2SG-PERF-get.up PTCL UFP  
 'Have you already woken up?'
- 52b. Kpáyā ágbáń wó é lō.  
**Kpáyā á-gbáń wó e lō**  
 God SM-lead 2SG UFP ADD  
 'May God lead you.'

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<sup>75</sup> It appears **kide** is derived from **kede** 'back'.



## 13 TAFI TEXTS

This chapter contains a selection of texts collected during my field trips to Tafi. They include a story, proverbs, riddles and procedural discourses. The texts are presented as follows: each segment consists of four lines. The first line is the transcription, the second presents the underlying forms of the surface forms in line one, line three provides the interlinear gloss of each of the underlying forms in line two and line four gives the free translation in English.

### 13.1 Kásālā agbaní ekusí ní y'eyiadzî 'Tortoise marries the king's daughter'

Nelson Agbley (Age 66), a native of Tafi Mador told this story on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January, 2008 at Tafi Mador.

There was a king who had a very beautiful daughter. She wouldn't agree to marry anybody although swarms of suitors came after her hand in marriage. Finally, the king decides that all the suitors should go up the hill on an appointed day at dawn at a given signal. The first to arrive with a bundle of thatch will be the winner of the princess' hand. So by a very clever strategy, tortoise managed to win the princess' hand. They got married and lived happily until tortoise became too greedy and wanted to play another trick which landed him in trouble. The trick he played was that, first of all, he thought he was not getting enough food from his wife's kitchen so he lied to his wife that he had a lot of guests to entertain with food. The woman prepared a lot of food for the next morning. In the night, when they were all asleep tortoise got up stealthily and crept into the kitchen. He climbed the pot and started eating the food and as he was eating he fell into the pot. He ate and ate and all attempts he made to get out of the pot proved futile. So, he couldn't get out of the pot. The next morning, when the woman woke up and the guests arrived, she tried to dish out some of the food but the ladle was not going into the food. Any time she puts in a ladle, it gets broken. It was then suggested that the pot should be put on fire, so people helped the woman to put it on fire. Tortoise was so filled with food that he was fast asleep in the pot so when the bottom of the pot was becoming hot he did not know it. He shouted when the heat started reaching him. He started moving in the pot so when they were taking the pot quickly off the fire it fell and broke. There tortoise was, disgraced. His trick was discovered so when you look at tortoise's back, you will see patches where the ladle hit. That was how he came by those marks on his shell.

01. ɔdzɔdzɔ mɔ oo  
ɔ-dzɔdzɔ mɔ oo  
CM-story ADD UFP  
'Story story' (Lit.: 'A tale to you.')



02. Odzidzí pá  
**o-dzidzí** **pá**  
 CM-story good  
 ‘Truly so’ (Lit.: ‘A good tale’)
03. Mí ză e,  
**mí** **za** **e**  
 1SG.IND be.at:NPRES UFP  
 ‘I was (there)’
04. kulí kásālā abāza  
**kulí** **ká-sālā** **a-bá-za**  
 CONJ CM-tortoise SM-VENT-be.at:NPRES  
 ‘and then tortoise happened to be there.’
05. AUDIENCE:  
 mh̃m̃  
**mh̃m̃**  
 INTJ  
 ‘mhm’
06. бага ni pétée bábāza,  
**ba-ga** **ní** **pétée** **bá-bá-za**  
 CM.PL-animal DEF all SM-VENT-be.at:NPRES  
 ‘All the animals were (there).’
07. AUDIENCE:  
 Mh̃m̃  
**Mh̃m̃**  
 INTJ  
 ‘mhm’
08. Banódzyrāmī pétée bábāza.  
**ba-nódzyrāmī** **pétée** **bá-bá-za**  
 CM.PL-human.being all SM-VENT-be.at:NPRES  
 ‘All the people were (there).’
09. AUDIENCE:  
 mh̃m̃<sup>76</sup>,  
**mh̃m̃**  
 INTJ  
 ‘mhm’
- 

<sup>76</sup> Henceforth audience response of **mh̃m̃** will no longer be glossed.

10. Balı pétée báza ɔma toɖukpoím.  
**balí pétée bá-za ɔ-ma to-ɖukpó kumu**  
 3PL.IND all SM-be.at:NPRES CM-town AM-one inside  
 ‘They all lived in the same town.’
11. Baganyáága,  
**ba-ga-nyáá-ba-ga**  
 CM.PL-animal-DISTR-CM.PL-animal  
 ‘All animals,’
12. banódzýráámīnyáánódzýráámī,  
**ba-nódzýráámī-nyáá-ba-nódzýráámī**  
 CM.PL-human.being-DISTR-CM.PL-human.being  
 ‘all human beings,’
13. AUDIENCE: **mhm**
14. kílē,  
**kí-lē**  
 CM-wind  
 ‘wind,’
15. AUDIENCE: **mhm**
16. kifú,  
**ki-fú**  
 CM-fire  
 ‘fire’,
17. AUDIENCE: **mhm**
18. kídiéndɔ́, balı pétée ɔma toɖukpoím láza  
**kí-dɔ́-nyáá-kí-dɔ́ balí pétée ɔ-ma to-ɖukpó kumu**  
 CM-thing-DISTR-CM-thing 3PL.IND all CM-town AM-one inside  
**lá-za**  
 3PL.DEP-be.at:NPRES  
 ‘everything, all of them lived in the same town.’
19. Ekusí téɖíkpo y’áaŋa balabhā.  
**e-kusí te-ɖíkpo yí á-a-ŋa balí kábhā**  
 CM-chief AM-one 3SG.IND SM-PSTPROG-eat 3PL.IND top  
 ‘One king was ruling over all of them.’
20. AUDIENCE: **mhm**

21. Ó! Ekusí aní eyiadzĩ yuyunõ telí áza y'áhɔɪ.  
**ó e-kusí a-ní e-yiadzĩ yu-yunõ**  
 INTJ CM-chief AM-PROX CM-daughter RED-be.beautiful  
**te-lí á-za yí a-hɔɪ**  
 AM-INDEF SM-be.at:NPRES 3SG.IND CM-hand  
 'O! This king had a beautiful daughter.'
22. AUDIENCE: **mhm**
23. Adzinóvõēn éyi'únõ kpā tsitsitsitsitsitsi [laughter]  
**a-dzinóvõē ní é-yi bú-nõ kpā tsitsitsitsitsitsi**  
 CM-girl DEF SM-resemble CM-beauty IDEO IDEO  
 'The girl was beautiful to such an unusual degree.'
24. Bányí ní pétée áasée bodo bodo bodo  
**bá-nyí ní pétée á-a-sá**  
 CM.PL-man DEF all SM-PSTPROG-swarm  
**yí bodo bodo bodo**  
 3SG IDEO IDEO IDEO  
 'All the men were swarming around her like flies.'
25. Y'ál'así ábagbantú, y'ál'así ábagbantú, y'al'así ábagbantú.  
**yí á-lílíní a-sí á-ba-gbaní yí**  
 3SG.IND AM-DIST SM-say SM-FUT-marry 3SG  
**yí á-lílíní a-sí á-ba-gbaní yí**  
 3SG.IND AM-DIST SM-say SM-FUT-marry 3SG  
**yí á-lílíní a-sí á-ba-gbaní yí**  
 3SG.IND AM-DIST SM-say SM-FUT-marry 3SG  
 'That one said he will marry her, this one said he will marry her, that one said he will marry her.'
26. Adzinóvõē nɪ tsy'égbe, étéédĩ ákányááká āmĩ, tɪ aɖɔ sí ní ní  
**a-dzinóvõē ní tsyí é-gbé é-tée-dĩ**  
 CM-girl DEF too SM-refuse 3SG-NEG:PRSPROG-look  
**á-kányááká ā-mĩ tɪ a-ɖɔ sí ní ní**  
 CM-any CM-face PURP 3SG.DEP-say COMP TOP TOP  
 'The girl too refused, she is not looking at any in the face that'
27. y'âní yí y'ádumí akó sí y'ábazano.  
**yí a-ní yí yí á-dumí a-kó sí**  
 3SG.IND AM-PROX 3SG.IND 3SG.IND SM-agree SM-give COMP  
**yí á-ba-zano**  
 3SG.IND SM-FUT-marry  
 'it is this one (or that one) she wishes to marry.'

28. Ákan edí pópópó sí ókě, ɛɛɛ ényí 'íd5n5n gɪ ábabhutí.  
**á-kā ní e-di pópópó sí ókě**  
 CM-father DEF SM-look IDEO.very.much COMP okay  
**ɛɛɛ é-nyí kí-d5 n5 ní**  
 INTJ 3SG.DEF-know CM-thing wh.ever DEF  
**gɪ á-ba-bhutí**  
 REL 3SG.DEF-FUT-do  
 'The father considered the situation for a long time and said, okay, he knows what to do.'
29. Ɔwólago toɖukpó kō, kulí y'akó lebhó  
**ɔ-wólago to-ɖukpó ko kulí yí a-kó le-bhó**  
 CM-evening AM-one just CONJ 3SG.IND SM-let 3PL.DEF-beat  
 'Then one evening, he let them beat (the gong gong<sup>77</sup>),'
30. bébhó ógá gógóh gógóh gógóh gógóh, eeee ká nonú é lō.  
**bé-bhó ɔ-gá gógóh gógóh gógóh gógóh**  
 3PL-beat CM-gong IDEO.sound IDEO.sound IDEO.sound IDEO.sound  
**eeee ká no-nú é lō**  
 INTJ then 2PL.DEF-hear UFP ADD  
 'they beat a gong, gogong, gogong, gogong, gogong. This is for your information.'
31. Ekusín ásí ítsiré 'úńṣ, w'ányí, w'adzɪ, w'anóvṣ, w'ayísṣ, w'iebité,  
**e-kusí ní á-sí í-tsiré w̃únṣ wó á-nyí**  
 CM-king DEF SM-say 1SG.DEF-tell 2PL 2SG.IND CM-man  
**wó a-dzɪ wó a-nóvṣ wó a-yísṣ**  
 2SG.IND CM-woman 2SG.IND CM-child 2SG.IND CM-young.man  
**wó ke-bité**  
 2SG.IND young.woman  
 'The king said I should tell you that you, a man; you, a woman; you, a child; you, a young man; you, a young woman,'
32. kívū 'ívuṣ, kelí g'ébeyɪ aza ko anónyáánṣ abâ abrónímí ooo,  
**kí-vū kí-vuṣ ke-lí gɪ ké-be-yí**  
 CM-tomorrow CM-morning CM-day REL SM-FUT-show.up  
**ka-za ko a-nṣ-nyáá-a-nṣ a-bá**  
 3SG-be.at:NPRES just CM-person-DISTR-CM-person SM-come  
**a-brṣ ní kɪmɪ ooo**  
 CM-market.square DEF inside UFP  
 'early tomorrow morning, immediately the day breaks everybody should come to the marketsquare,'

<sup>77</sup> A bell that is used by the town crier in making announcements.

33. “kibúí tili ’l m’áhɔi”, kibúí tili lɔ y’áhɔi t’etsiré ’ŋ́ń 000000.  
**ki-búí ti-lí kɪ-lɪ mɪ a-hɔi ki-búí**  
 CM-word AM-INDEF SM-be.at 1SG.IND CM-hand CM-word  
**ti-lí kɪ-lɪ yɪ a-hɔi tɪ e-tsiré**  
 AM-INDEF SM-be.at 3SG.IND CM-hand COMP 3SG.DEF-tell  
**ŵŋ́ń 000000**  
 2PL UFP  
 ‘“I have something”, he has something to tell you 0000.’
34. AUDIENCE: **mhm**
35. gógóǵ gógóǵ  
**gógóǵ gógóǵ**  
 sound.IDEO sound.IDEO  
 ‘gogong, gogong’  
 (End of message)
36. O, ɔmanímɪ otu ozi dɪ  
**o ɔ-ma ní kɪmɪ o-tu o-zi dɪ**  
 INTJ CM-village DEF inside SM-?? CM-uproar EXP  
 ‘Oh! there was a great stir in the town!’
37. Kelín ábázá, kelín ázá ko, banɔn pétée bébéyɪ abróním.  
**ke-lí ní á-bá-zá ke-lí ní**  
 CM-day DEF SM-VENT-be.at:NPRES CM-day DEF  
**á-zá ko ba-nɔ ní pétée**  
 SM-be.at:NPRES just CM.PL-person DEF all  
**bé-bé-yɪ a-bró ní kɪmɪ**  
 3PL-VENT-show.up CM-market.square DEF in  
 ‘The day finally broke. Just as it was day, all the people showed up at the marketplace.’
38. Bébéyɪ kutsáníním.  
**bé-bé-yɪ kɪ-tsánɪ ní kɪmɪ**  
 3PL-VENT-show.up CM-market.square DEF in  
 ‘They showed up at the marketplace.’
39. AUDIENCE: **mhm**
40. Banɔn eyúkū ’klí kpeɲ kpeɲ kpeɲ kpeɲ.  
**ba-nɔ ní be-yúkū ɪ-klí kpeɲ kpeɲ kpeɲ kpeɲ**  
 CM.PL-person DEF SM-be.full CM-there IDEO IDEO IDEO IDEO  
 ‘The people filled there entirely.’

41. Kulí ekusín ábá,  
**ku lí e-kusí ní á-bá**  
 CONJ CM-king DEF SM-come  
 ‘Then the king came.’
42. AUDIENCE: **mhm**
43. yí nt y’eyiadzín, yí nt y’edziniín,  
**yí nt yí e-yiadzĩ**  
 3SG.IND COM 3SG.IND CM-daughter  
**ní yí nt yí e-dzini ní**  
 DEF 3SG.IND COM 3SG.IND CM-wife DEF  
 ‘He and his daughter, he and his wife,’
44. y’eyianyálí, banõn pétée nt ée banõ shishě. Bábáziesí  
**yí e-yianyí-alí ba-nõ ní pétée**  
 3SG.IND CM-son-PL CM.PL-person DEF all  
**nt ée ba-nõ shi-she bá-bá-za ke.sí**  
 COM INTJ CM.PL-person RED-grow 3PL-VENT-sit down  
 ‘his sons, all the people and his elders. They took their seats’
45. kulí ekusín ásí aa tsyámĩ alí klí lo?  
**ku lí e-kusí ní a-sí aa tsyámĩ a-lí**  
 CONJ CM-king DEF SM-say INTJ spokesperson SM-be.at  
**t-klí lo**  
 CM-there ADD  
 ‘and then the king said, ah, is the chief’s spokesman there?’
46. Tsyámĩ alí.  
**tsyámĩ a-lí**  
 spokesperson SM-be.at  
 ‘Yes, the chief’s spokesman is there.’
47. Aa, tsyámĩ’ ebenú kibanánĩ òman pétée sí benú,  
**aa tsyámĩ e-be-nú ki-ba-nánĩ ò-ma ní**  
 INTJ spokesperson SM-FUT-hear 3SG-FUT-reach CM-town DEF  
**pétée sí be-nú**  
 all COMP 3PL-hear  
 ‘The chief’s spokesman will hear and it will reach the entire town that they should hear’
48. TSYIAMÍ: Akó ’élibá  
**a-kó kílí bá**  
 3SG-let 3SG come  
 ‘He should let it come.’

49. s'áa ɛɛ y'eyiadzĩ ní yí so ɢɪ ééklũ álí,  
 sɪ aa ɛɛ yí e-yiadzĩ ní yí so  
 COMP INTJ INTJ 3SG.IND CM-daughter DEF 3SG.IND so  
 ɢɪ é-é-klũ balí  
 REL 3SG-PRSPROG-call 3PL  
 'that er, his daughter, because of whom he is calling them,'
50. Hĩ hĩ hĩ hĩ  
 hĩ hĩ hĩ hĩ  
 INTJ INTJ INTJ INTJ  
 [Murmurs from the crowd]
51. ẽẽ y'eyiadzĩ ní  
 ẽẽ yí e-yiadzĩ ní  
 INTJ 3SG.IND CM-daughter DEF  
 'Oh! His daughter'
52. ahã, ɔtsóľĩ ábakɔ yɪ anyí e ló, ábakɔ yɪ anyí e ló, ábakɔ yɪ anyí e ló.  
 ahã ɔtsóľĩ á-ba-kɔ yí á-nyí e ló  
 INTJ now 3SG-FUT-give 3SG CM-man UFP ADD  
 á-ba-kɔ yí á-nyí e ló  
 3SG-FUT-give 3SG CM-man UFP ADD  
 á-ba-kɔ yí á-nyí e ló  
 3SG-FUT-give 3SG CM-man UFP ADD  
 'Aha, finally, he is about to give her a husband now.'
53. Ányínyáányí édí shú,  
 á-nyí-nyáá-ányí é-dí shú  
 CM-man-DISTR-CM-man SM-look REFL  
 'Every man looked at himself,'
54. Ao Máwú éyĩ tɪ kidzi mí lő,  
 ao Máwú é-yĩ tɪ ki-dzi mí lő  
 INTJ God SM-show.up COMP 3SG-COP.NPRES 1SG ADD  
 'Oh! May it please God that it be me,'
55. Máwú éyĩ tɪ edzi mí lő,  
 Máwú é-yĩ tɪ e-dzi mí lő  
 God SM-show.up COMP 3SG-COP.NPRES 1SG ADD  
 'May it please God that it be me,'
56. Máwú éyĩ tɪ edzi mí lő.  
 Máwú é-yĩ tɪ e-dzi mí lő  
 God SM-show.up COMP 3SG-COP.NPRES 1SG ADD  
 'May it please God that it be me.'

57. Balı pétée bááhwā hlohlohlo, mím.  
**balı** **pétée** **bá-á-hwā** **hlohlohlo** **mím**  
 3PL.IND all SM-PRSPROG-move IDEO INTJ  
 ‘They are all moving within themselves *hlohlohlo*. [Pause filler]’
58. Obo ɔlī, bábakó adzīn anyí oo.  
**o-bo** **ɔlī** **bá-ba-kó** **a-dzī** **ní** **a-nyí** **oo**  
 CM-today 3SG.IND 3PL-FUT-give CM-woman DEF CM-man UFP  
 ‘As for today, this woman will be given a husband.’
59. Bábakó adzīnóvōēn anyí oo.  
**bá-ba-kó** **a-dzīnóvōē** **ní** **a-nyí** **oo**  
 3PL-FUT-give CM-girl DEF CM-man UFP  
 ‘This girl will be given a husband,’
60. Bábakó adz’iebitéan anyí oo.  
**bá-ba-kó** **a-dzī** **ke-bité** **a-ní** **a-nyí**  
 3PL-FUT-give CM-woman CM-young.woman AM-PROX CM-man  
**oo**  
 UFP  
 ‘This woman, young woman will be given a husband.’
61. AUDIENCE: **mhm**
62. Balı pétée báta ató béénū.  
**balı** **pétée** **bá-ta** **ba-tó** **bé-é-nū**  
 3PL.IND all SM-be.fixed CM.PL-ear SM-PRSPROG-hear  
 ‘All of them are listening, they are all ears.’
63. Ehé, ekusín ásí áá, wūnō pétée nōómō m’eyiadzī,  
**ehé** **e-kusí** **ní** **á-sí** **áá** **wūnō** **pétée**  
 INTJ CM-king DEF SM-say INTJ 2PL.IND all  
**nō-ó-mō** **mí** **e-yiadzī**  
 SM-PRSPROG-see 1SG.IND CM-daughter  
 ‘Oh! The chief said “well, you all see my daughter,”
64. anóíánō áábā.  
**a-nō-nyáá-a-nō** **á-á-bā**  
 CM-person-DISTR-CM-person SM-PRSPROG-come  
 ‘everybody has been coming.’
65. Y’ál’áábā, y’ál’áábā, y’ál’áábā  
**yí** **á-lílíní** **á-á-bā**  
 3SG.IND AM-DIST SM-PRSPROG-come



**yí á-líííí á-á-bā**  
 3SG.IND AM-DIST SM-PRSPROG-come  
**yí á-líííí á-á-bā**  
 3SG.IND AM-DIST SM-PRSPROG-come  
 ‘This one is coming, that one is coming, this one is coming’

66. Ítíníyí ǎññ gí íbaákò m’eyiadzīn ííkò kó kliso nonú a?  
**í-tí-nyí ǎ-nǝ ní gí í-ba-yííkò**  
 1SG-NEG1-know CM-wh.ever DEF REL 1SG.DEP-FUT-take  
**mí e-yiadzī ní í-yííkò kó kliso no-nú a**  
 1SG.IND CM-daughter DEF 1SG-take give so 2PL-hear UFP  
 ‘I do not know who I should give my daughter to, therefore, do you hear?’
67. Εε, íbakó nó kídǝ trikpó tɪ nǝbhutí.  
**εε í-ba-kó ǝñǝ kí-dǝ tri-kpó tɪ nǝ-bhutí**  
 INTJ 1SG-FUT-give 2PL CM-thing AM-one COMP 2PL.DEP-do  
 ‘Er, I will give you one assignment to do.’”
68. Kulí y’áyíko y’áhúdzya ní kesukpón kulí y’ákó átsya odi,  
**kulí yí á-yííkò yí a-húdzya ní ke-sukpó**  
 then 3SG.IND SM-take 3SG.IND CM-horsetail DEF CM-handle  
**ní kulí yí á-yííkò á-tsya o-di**  
 DEF CONJ 3SG.IND SM-take SM-draw CM-line  
 ‘Then he took the handle of his horsetail and drew a line,’
69. átsya odi gridjídjídjí aflánǝ,  
**á-tsya o-di gridjídjídjí a-flá-nǝ**  
 3SG-draw CM-line round.IDEO SM-pass-COM  
 ‘he drew a circle,’
70. AUDIENCE: **mhm**
71. kulí así ní a “nǝómo odi ɔní gí útsya gridjídjídjí flánǝ ní dza?”  
**kulí a-sí ní a nǝ-ó-mo o-di**  
 CONJ 3SG-say TOP CFM 2PL.DEP-PRSPROG-see CM-line  
**ɔ-ní gí í-tsya gridjídjídjí flá-nǝ**  
 AM-PROX REL 1SG.DEP-draw round.IDEO pass-COM  
**ní dza**  
 TOP UFP  
 ‘and he spoke as follows: “do you see this circle that I have drawn?”’
72. AUDIENCE: **mhm**
73. Basí “xee”.

**ba-sí xee**  
 3PL-say yes  
 ‘They said they do.’

74. “Aa, sí nɔ́mɔ ɔ́lishí tɪbhan?”  
**aa sí nɔ-ɔ-mɔ ɔlí kishí tɪ-bha ní**  
 INTJ QP 2PL-PRSPROG-see 3SG.IND midst AM-two DEF  
 “‘Ah! Do you see the centre of it?’”
75. Basí “xee”.  
**ba-sí xee**  
 3PL-say yes  
 ‘They said “yes”.’
76. “Nɔ́mɔ kɪtɔkpě ní gɪ líwĩ nĩ ɪkĩ ní dza?”  
**nɔ-ɔ-mɔ kɪ-tɔkpě ní gɪ lí-wĩ**  
 2PL-PRSPROG-see CM-hill DEF REL 3SG.DEP-appear  
**nĩ ɪ-kĩ ní dza**  
 LOC CM-here TOP UFP  
 “‘You see the hill which appears from here, don’t you?’”
77. Basí xee.  
**ba-sí xee**  
 3PL-say yes  
 ‘They said “we do”.’
78. “Ãã, sí nɔ́mɔ ekle ní g’etsirí kɪtɔkpě níábhān?”  
**ãã sí nɔ-ɔ-mɔ e-kle ní**  
 INTJ QP 2PL-PRSPROG-see CM-thatch DEF  
**gɪ e-tsirí kɪ-tɔkpě ní kábhā ní**  
 REL 3SG.DEP-be.on CM-hillock DEF top TOP  
 “‘Ah! You see the thatch that is on the hillock, don’t you?’”
79. Basí “xee”.  
**ba-sí xee**  
 3PL-say yes  
 ‘They said “yes”.’
80. “Aa, kɪvũ ‘ívolɔ olizatɔ mɔ́ɔni, olizatɔ tswyí,  
**aa kí-vũ kí-vulɔ o-lizatɔ mɔ́ɔni<sup>78</sup> olizatɔ tswyí**  
 INTJ CM-tomorrow CM-morning CM-dawn very.early CM-dawn IDEO

<sup>78</sup> The term **mɔ́ɔni** is borrowed from English ‘morning’ but it is used in Tafi to mean ‘very early’.

“Ah! Tomorrow morning at early dawn, very early at dawn,”

81. ányínyáányí gí anyápí ekus’edzeyín ásí tì agbanò ko ní a  
**á-nyí-nyáá-á-nyí** **gí** **a-nyá-pí**  
 CM-man-DISTR-CM-man REL 3SG.DEP-CERT-want  
**e-kusí e-dzeyí ní a-sí tì**  
 CM-king CM-female.child DEF 3SG-COMP COMP  
**a-gbánò ko ní a**  
 3SG.DEP-marry just TOP CFM  
 ‘whichever man desires the princess to marry’
82. aló nì y’apamí tì avì butúnádáním,  
**a-ló nì yí ká-pamí tì a-vì**  
 3SG-get.up COM 3SG.IND CM-cutlass PURP 3SG.DEP-go  
**bu-tú ní a-da ní kumì**  
 CM-mountain DEF top.of.head DEF in  
 ‘should get up with his cutlass and go to the top of the mountain,’
83. AUDIENCE: **mhm**
84. kitokpěńíábhā badakp’ekle.”  
**kí-tukpě ní kábhā ba-da-kpa e-kle**  
 CM-hill DEF top VENT-ITIVE-uproot CM-thatch  
 ‘the hill top to go and cut thatch.’”
85. “Anónyáánò adakp’ekle tì anyá y’óklebó tì babá.”  
**a-nò-nyáá-a-nò a-da-kpa e-kle tì**  
 CM-person-DISTR-CM-person SM-ITIVE-uproot CM-thatch PURP  
**á-nyá yí o-klebhó tì ba-bá**  
 3SG.DEP-tie 3SG.IND CM-bundle.of.thatch PURP 3PL-come  
 ‘Each person should go and cut thatch and tie into a bundle and come.’
86. ǺnǺ ní g’ebedzi anǺ tutǺpu tutǺpu tutǺpu gí abayíko y’óklebhón ébedzú  
**Ǻ-nǺ ní gí e-be-dzi a-nǺ tutǺpu**  
 CM-wh.ever DEF REL 3SG.DEP-FUT-become CM-person first  
**tutǺpu tutǺpu gí a-ba-yíko yí o-klebhó**  
 first first REL 3SG.DEP-FUT-take 3SG.IND CM-bundle.of.thatch  
**ní é-be-dzú**  
 DEF 3SG-FUT-put.down  
 ‘The one who will be the very first person who will deposit his bundle of thatch’
87. odí ní gí atsyá gridǵdǵdǵ flánǺ ní ǵlishí tubha ní a y’ábagbanì adzúnóvǺ ní é  
 oo.  
**o-dí ní gí a-tsyá**

CM-line DEF REL 3SG.DEF-draw  
**gridiqidj flá-nɔ ní ɔlí kishí ti-bha**  
 round.IDEO pass-COM LOC 3SG.IND midst AM-two  
**ní a yí a-ba-gbanu a-dzinúvɔ ní é oo**  
 DEF CFM 3SG.IND SM-FUT-marry CM-girl DEF UFP UFP  
 ‘in the centre of the circle, HE will marry the girl.’

88. Héhehéhe, ozi ɔtɔ.  
**héhehéhe o-zi ɔ-tɔ**  
 IDEO CM-uproar SM-??  
 ‘An uproar ensued.’
89. Banyi pétée, akanyááká kikikiki akanyááká és’ávupém,áv’atuyó ’ítapamí.  
**bá-nyí pétée a-kanyááká kikikiki a-kanyááká é-sí**  
 CM.PL-man all CM-every IDEO.run CM-every SM-run  
**á-vi bu-pá kumu á-vi á-ti-yó ká-pamí**  
 SM-go CM-house in SM-go SM-DESID-sharpen CM-cutlass  
 ‘All the men, every one of them run away home to sharpen each his cutlass.’
90. Kásālā tsyí évu aló,  
**ká-sālā tsyí é-vu a-ló**  
 CM-tortoise too SM-hold SM-get.up  
 ‘Tortoise too got himself up (with some zeal),’
91. hulu kpúlú hulu kpúlú.  
**hulu kpúlú hulu kpúlú**  
 IDEO.manner.of.walking IDEO.manner.of.walking  
 ‘walking clumsily.’
92. Kásālā tsyí édzí ’ígba.  
**ká-sālā tsyí é-dzí kɪ-gbá**  
 CM-tortoise too SM-become CM-bachelor  
 ‘Tortoise too is unmarried.’
93. Yɪ tsyí áápí ádzín ás’agbanɔ.  
**yí tsyí á-á-pí a-dzì ní a-sí**  
 3SG.IND too SM-PRSPROG-want CM-woman DEF SM-COMP  
**a-gbanɔ**  
 3SG.DEF-marry  
 ‘He, too, desires to marry the princess.’
94. Akámɔ adzì.  
**a-ká-mɔ a-dzì**  
 3SG-NEG.PERF-see CM-woman

‘He has not yet gotten a wife.’

95. Y<sub>1</sub> tsyí ekus’edzeyí ní ní ɛɛ ekus’eyiadz’ ’iebitén, kééku y<sub>1</sub> tsyí ’úlí sí t<sub>1</sub> agbanɔ.  
**yí tsyí e-kusí e-dzeyí ní ní ɛɛ e-kusí**  
 3SG.IND too CM-king CM-daughter DEF TOP INTJ CM-king  
**e-yiadzi ke-bité ní ké-é-ku<sup>79</sup> yí**  
 CM-daughter CM-young.woman DEF SM-PRSPROG-V 3SG.IND  
**tsyí bu-lí sí t<sub>1</sub> a-gbano**  
 too CM-N COMP COMP 3SG.DEP-marry  
 ‘He too is desirous of marrying the princess.’

96. Ɛhé, kásālā wɔ tsy’óbogban’ ádz’ání dza?  
**ɛhé ká-sālā wɔ tsyí ó-bo-gbano a-dzi**  
 INTJ CM-tortoise 2SG.IND too 2SG-FUT-marry CM-woman  
**a-ní dza**  
 AM-PROX UFP  
 ‘So, tortoise do you also want to marry this woman?’

97. Hoð, kɔɔ  
**hoð kɔɔ**  
 INTJ INTJ  
 ‘Oh! why not?’

98. Fákɔ wɔ tsy’óóvi?  
**fákɔ wɔ tsyí ó-ó-vi**  
 where 2SG.IND too 2SG-PRSPROG-go  
 ‘Where are you too going?’

99. Kɔɔ, flá n’ukl<sub>1</sub> t<sub>1</sub> banódzyrám<sub>1</sub> abaflá.  
**kɔɔ flá ní ɪ-klí t<sub>1</sub> ba-nódzyrám<sub>1</sub>**  
 INTJ pass LOC CM-there COMP CM.PL-human.being  
**bá-ba-flá**  
 SM-VENT-pass  
 ‘Give way for human beings to pass.’

100. Anónyáánɔ és’áflá, kahlǎ és’áflá, kehuí és’áflá, banódzyrám<sub>1</sub> és’áflá.  
**a-nɔ-nyáá-a-nɔ é-sí á-flá**  
 CM-person-DISTR-CM-person SM-run SM-pass  
**ka-hlǎ é-sí á-flá ke-huí é-sí á-flá**  
 CM-deer SM-run SM-pass CM-bog SM-run SM-pass  
**ba-nódzyrám<sub>1</sub> é-sí á-flá**

<sup>79</sup> The phrase **kú X bulí** means ‘to lust, feel, or have appetite (for something)’.

CM.PL-human.being SM-run SM-pass  
 ‘Everyone ran past, the deer ran past, the bog ran past, human beings ran past.’

101. Ho, kāsālā  
**Ho ká-sālā**  
 INTJ CM-tortoise  
 ‘Oh! Tortoise ...’
102. hulu kpúlú hulu kpúlú hulu kpúlú,  
**hulu kpúlú hulu kpúlú**  
 IDEO.manner.of.walking IDEO.manner.of.walking  
**hulu kpúlú**  
 IDEO.manner.of.walking  
 ‘walking clumsily,’
103. yí tsy’áv’ádásókí y’ásandzyá.  
**yí tsyí áv á-dá-sókí yí a-sandzyá**  
 3SG.IND too SM-go SM-ITIVE-bring.down 3SG.IND CM-matchete  
 ‘he too went and brought down his matchete.’
104. Adáza kɪɔ shú, áyɔ ’ialí shíshíshíshíshí.  
**a-dá-za kɪ-yɔ shú á-yɔ kalí**  
 3SG-ITIVE-sit CM-whetstone surface 3SG-sharpen 3SG  
**shíshíshíshíshíshí**  
 IDEO.sharp  
 ‘He went and sat by a whetstone, he whetted it very sharp.’
105. Áyɔ ’ialí, ’ial’aza’ŋá sí ní élē ónúgɪ kɪzɔ báfla tsyí tsyréŋkéŋ  
**á-yɔ kalí kalí ka-za ɔ-ŋá**  
 3SG-sharpen 3SG 3SG.IND SM-be.at:NPRES CM-sharpness  
**sí ní élē ónú.gɪ kɪ-zɔ bá-flā tsyí**  
 COMP TOP CFM COND CM-housefly VENT-pass too  
**tsyréŋkéŋ**  
 IDEO  
 ‘He whetted it so sharp that if a housefly as much as passed near the cutlass, it is cut into two.’
106. Epúli ábáflā tsyréŋkéŋ, ɔ épī ábáfla tsyí tsyrenken.  
**e-púli á-bá-flā tsyréŋkéŋ**  
 CM-yellow.ant SM-VENT-pass IDEO  
**ɔ é-pī á-bá-flā tsyí tsyréŋkéŋ**  
 INTJ CM-mosquito SM-VENT-pass too IDEO  
 ‘When a yellow ant is walking past, it is cut into two. Oh! When a mosquito is passing by it is cut into two.’

107. Épī ní ame 'elím akpí bupɪ tubha, kumá tilí.  
**é-pī ní ka-má kulí kumí a-kpí**  
 CM-mosquito DEF 3SG-divide 3SG in SM-put.in  
**bupɪ tu-bha ki-má ti-lí**  
 CM.PL-part AM-two CM-divide AM-INDEF  
 'As for the mosquito, it cuts it into two halves at once.'
108. Otsólí, kel' ebélē kásālā adáwŭsŭ 'íesí.  
**otsólí ke-lí ke-bélē<sup>80</sup> ká-sālā a-dá-wŭsŭ ke.sí**  
 now CM-day SM-finish CM-tortoise SM-ITIVE-lie down  
 'Now, night fell, tortoise went to lie down.'
109. Kásālā ááza 'lílá sí ô ás'adákp' ekle ní oo átíko ebédzu íklí.  
**ká-sālā á-á-za bu-lílá a-sí**  
 CM-tortoise SM-PRSPROG-be.at:NPRES CM-dream SM-COMP  
**ô a-sí a-dá-kpa e-ke ní**  
 INTJ SM-COMP 3SG.DEP-ITIVE-uproot CM-thatch DEF  
**oo á-tí-yíko e-bé-dzu í-klí**  
 INTJ 3SG-PERF-take SM-VENT-put.down CM-there  
 'Tortoise is dreaming that, oh, that he has gone to cut the thatch, oh, that he has already deposited his thatch.'
110. Ô! kivu ní gu lííyí,  
**ô ki-vu ní gu lí-í-yí**  
 INTJ CM-drum DEF REL 3SG.DEP-PRSPROG-sound  
 'Oh! The drum that is sounding,'
111. maboo kivu ní gu líí-yí béébho así tɪ kunyím' alí  
**maboo ki-vu ní gu lí-í-yí**  
 unknowingly CM-drum DEF REL 3SG.DEP-PRSPROG-sound  
**bé-é-bho ba-sí tɪ ki-nyímu balí**  
 3PL-PRSPROG-beat SM-COMP COMP 3SG-wake.up 3PL  
 'rather it is the drum that is being beaten to wake them up'
112. tɪ baavi, y'ání, kulí y'éénū.  
**tɪ bá-á-vɪ yí a-ní**  
 PURP 3PL-PRSPROG-go 3SG.IND AM-PROX  
**kulí yí é-é-nū**  
 3SG.IND 3SG.IND SM-PRSPROG-hear  
 'to go there that is the one he is hearing.'

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<sup>80</sup> **bélē** 'finish' is a borrowing from Nyagbo and this is the only context where it is used. The Tafi equivalent is **békē**.

113. Akal'áádō trǎ.  
**a-ka-lí** **á-á-dō** **ti-rá**  
 3SG-PERS-be.at 3SG-PRSPROG-contact CM-sleep  
 'He is still sleeping.'
114. Tǐ kásālǎ abáló ní áo wó gǐ ɔ́tɔ́ga tsyí bátíshǐ álóé.  
**ti** **ká-sālǎ** **a-bá-ló** **ní** **áo** **wó** **gǐ**  
 COMP CM-tortoise SM-VENT-get.up TOP INTJ 2SG.IND REL  
**ɔ́-tɔ́-ga** **tsyí** **bá-tí-shǐ**  
 2SG.DEP-NEG:PRSPROG-walk too 3PL-PERF-leave  
**bá-lo** **yí**  
 3PL-leave.behind 3SG  
 'By the time he woke up, oh, you who cannot even walk, they had already left him behind.'
115. Gaké yǐ tsy' évu aló yǐ tsyí áákó yǐ okotokú  
**gaké** **yí** **tsyí** **é-vu** **a-ló**  
 but 3SG.IND too SM-hold SM-get.up  
**yí** **tsyí** **á-yúkó** **yí** **o-kotokú**  
 3SG.IND too SM-take 3SG.IND CM-sack  
 'But he also got up and took his bag'
116. kulí y'abaká 'sǐ ahǎ kídǒ tili lí y'áhǒ.  
**kulí** **yí** **a-baká** **a-sǐ** **ahǎ** **kí-dǒ**  
 CONJ 3SG.IND SM-remember SM-COMP INTJ CM-thing  
**ti-lí** **lí** **yí** **a-hǒ**  
 AM-INDEF be.at 3SG.IND CM-hand  
 'and he remembered that, ah, he had got something.'
117. Kulí áśókǐ y'ívu, kivukpuí bhulíyǐ  
**kulí** **á-sókǐ** **yí** **ki-vu** **ki-vukpuí** **bhulíyǐ**  
 CONJ 3SG-bring.down 3SG.IND CM-drum CM-drum small  
 'He then brought down his drum, a little drum'
118. kulí y'ásókǐ yǐ kizhuě kulí áákó 'kpí okotokúním, áákó 'kpí ɔ́kpɛtúním  
**kulí** **yí** **á-sókǐ** **yí** **ki-zhuě** **kulí** **á-yíkó**  
 CONJ 3SG.IND SM-bring.down 3SG.IND CM-flute CONJ SM-take  
**á-kpí** **o-kotokú** **ní** **kumu** **á-yíkó** **á-kpí** **ɔ́-kpɛtú**  
 SM-put.in CM-sack DEF inside SM-take SM-put.in CM-bag  
**ní** **kumu**  
 DEF inside  
 'and he also brought down his flute and he put them into the bag'



119. kulí áyíko 'tá ɔwǎ.  
**ku**lí **yí** **á-yíko** **a-tá** **ɔ-wǎ**  
 CONJ 3SG.IND SM-take 3SG-be.fixed CM-side  
 'and he hang it on his side.'
120. Kulí ááko 'tá ɔŋwǎ ko, kulí yí tsyí hulu kpúlú hulu kpúlú hulu kpúlú.  
**ku**lí **yí** **á-yíko** **a-tá** **ɔ-wǎ** **ko**  
 CONJ 3SG.IND SM-take 3SG-be.fixed CM-side just  
**ku**lí **yí** **tsyí** **hulu kpúlú**  
 CONJ 3SG.IND too IDEO.manner.of.walking  
**hulu kpúlú** **hulu kpúlú**  
 IDEO.manner.of.walking IDEO.manner.of.walking  
 'Just as he hung it on his side, he too, then walks off clumsily.'
121. G'enyékú ktokpěniési g'eten' uwu ko  
**gɛ** **e-nyé-kú** **ku-tokpě** **ní** **ke.sí**  
 REL 3SG.DEP-CERT-reach CM-hill DEF under  
**gɛ** **e-ténɔ** **bu-wu** **ko**  
 REL 3SG.DEP-start CM-climb just  
 'Just as he arrived at the foot of the hill and started climbing,'
122. ɔmo bal' ɔkó ání, gɛ bagɛ beputɔ́n!  
**ɔ-mo** **balí** **ɔ.kó** **a-ní** **gɛ** **ba-gɛ** **be-puto** **ní**  
 2SG-see 3PL place CM-people REL 3PL-REL SM-lead TOP  
 'see the people of his village, those who had left earlier!'
123. Oo! bátínyá bal' ikebhó bétízhí áábā.  
**oo** **bá-tí-nyá** **balí** **i-kebhó**  
 INTJ 3PL-PERF-tie 3PL.IND CM.PL-bundle.of.thatch  
**bé-tí-zhí** **bá-á-bā**  
 3PL-PERF-descend SM-PRSPROG-come  
 'Oh! they had already tied their bundles of thatch, they had started descending.'
124. Ô! kibúí dǔwě nɛn dza?  
**ô** **ki-búí** **dǔwě** **nú** **ɛ-ní** **dza**  
 INTJ CM-matter which COP AM-PROX UFP  
 'Oh! What is this?'
125. Éɛ, kásālā y'ahūm áási s'adzā.  
**éɛ** **ká-sālā** **yí** **á-wǔhu** **kum** **á-á-sí**  
 INTJ CM-tortoise 3SG.IND CM.PL-eye in SM-PRSPROG-say  
**sí** **a-dzā**  
 COMP 3PL.DEP-become.red  
 'Tortoise is becoming desperate.'

126. Bábaáflă, betel'ábáfléé, betel'ábáfléé, betel'ábáfléé.

**bá-bá-á-flă**

3PL-VENT-PRSPROG-pass

**be-telí**      **bá-bá-flă**      **yí**  
CM.PL-INDEF SM-VENT-pass 3SG

**be-telí**      **bá-bá-flă**      **yí**  
CM.PL-INDEF SM-VENT-pass 3SG

**be-telí**      **bá-bá-flă**      **yí**  
CM.PL-INDEF SM-VENT-pass 3SG

'They are passing, some passed him, some passed him, some still passed him.'

127. Gɪ ámo sɪ laflă békē, gɪ lánýáávɪ 'ɪbósé ko, kulí edéwu ekú kitrekpú til'iabhā ebú y'íahlǎé, y'ivukpuí.

**gɪ**      **á-mo**      **sɪ**      **la-flă**      **békē**  
REL 3SG.DEP-see COMP 3PL.DEP-pass COMPL

**gɪ**      **lá-nyá-á-vɪ**      **kɪbósé ko**  
REL 3PL.DEP-CERT-PRSPROG-go little just

**kulí**      **e-dé-wu**      **e-kú**      **ki-trekpú**      **ti-lí**      **kábhā**  
CONJ 3SG-ITIVE-climb SM-reach CM-anthill AM-INDEF top

**e-bú**      **yí**      **ká-hlǎé**      **yí**      **ki-vukpuí**  
3SG-remove 3SG.IND CM-little.trumpet 3SG.IND CM-drum

'Just when he saw that they have passed and were a little distance from him, he then went on top of an anthill, took out his flute and his little drum.'

[Song]

128. Oo, kɔ, kɪgɪ kulí m'úɖɔ aní nānsí ɖɔ ní g'úɖɔ ní akányááká átítsí y'oklebhó édzu pupupu.

**oo**      **kɔ**      **kɪ-gɪ**      **kulí**      **mí**      **í-í-ɖɔ**      **aní**  
INTJ INTJ 3SG-REL 3SG.IND 1SG.IND 1SG-PRSPROG-say TOP

**nānsí**      **ɪ-ɖɔ**      **ní**      **gí**      **í-í-ɖɔ**      **aní**  
as CM-time DEF REL 1SG.DEP-PRSPROG-say TOP

**á-kányááká**      **á-tí-tsí**      **yí**      **o-klebhó**  
CM-each SM-PERF-take.off 3SG.IND CM-bundle.of.thatch

**é-dzú**      **pupupu**  
3SG-put.down IDEO.sound

'Oh! What I am saying, in the instant that I am saying it, each and everyone has put his bundle of thatch down.'

129. Ákanyááká átsí y'oklebhó ehú 'iesí.

**á-kanyááká**      **á-tsí**      **yí**      **o-klebhó**

CM-every SM-take.off 3SG.IND CM-bundle.of.thatch

**e-hú ke.sí**  
 3SG-hit down  
 ‘Every one of them dropped his bundle of thatch.’

130. Bétēnī ’ivu ’uyu glibí hóbó hóbó hóbó hóbó hóbó hóbó.  
**bé-tēnī ki-vu bu-yu glibí hóbó hóbó hóbó hóbó hóbó hóbó**  
 3PL-start CM-dance CM-dance IDEO IDEO.rhythmically  
 ‘They started dancing, spellbound.’
131. Báába ’klí gu kásālā éébho ’ivun pu áábo ’ezhwén.  
**bá-á-ba i-klí gu ká-sālā é-é-bho**  
 3PL-PRSPROG-come CM-there REL CM-tortoise SM-PRSPROG-beat  
**ki-vu ní pu á-á-bo ki-zhwé ní**  
 CM-drum DEF CONN 3SG.DEPRSPROG-blow CM-flute DEF  
 ‘They are coming towards where tortoise was drumming and blowing his flute.’
132. Óo, ákányááká ádzíkī y’óklebhóní’ibúí.  
**Óo á-kányááká á-dzíkī yí o-klebhó ní**  
 INTJ CM-every SM-forget 3SG.IND CM-bundle.of.thatch DEF  
**ki-búí**  
 CM-matter  
 ‘Oh! Every one of them forgot all about his bundle of thatch.’
133. Kivu ní ko léeyū; kivun ifék’álí.  
**ki-vu ní ko lé-e-yū**  
 CM-dance DEF just 3PL.DEPRSTPROG-dance  
**ki-vu ní ki-féké balí**  
 CM-drum DEF SM-lift 3PL  
 ‘They were only dancing; the drumming had lifted them up.’
- [Song]
134. Oo, gu lánýáába ko áákó ’édōn ékpu zi dēká,  
**Oo gu lá-nyá-á-ba ko**  
 INTJ REL 3PL.DEPRCERT-PRSPROG-come just  
**á-yíko kí-dō ní é-kpu zi dēká**  
 3SG-take CM-thing DEF SM-hide times one  
 ‘Oh! Just as they approached he hid the things at once.’
135. Ááko ’édōn ékpu kikpu tilí, ékpu ’ídōn zia zia zia zia zia.  
**á-yíko kí-dō ní é-kpu ki-kpu ti-lí**  
 3SG-take CM-thing DEF SM-hide CM-hide AM-INDEF  
**é-kpu kí-dō ní zia zia**  
 3SG-hide CM-thing DEF IDEO.quickly IDEO.quickly

**zia zia zia zia**  
 IDEO.quickly IDEO.quickly IDEO.quickly IDEO.quickly  
 ‘He hid the things one time, he hid the things quickly.’

136. Gɪ labá así “kibroè?”

**gɪ la-bá a-sí ki-búí dǫwē**  
 REL 3PL.DEP-come 3SG-say CM-matter which  
 ‘When they came he said “what’s up?”’

137. Kásālā así fákó láávi?

**ká-sālā a-sí fákó lá-á-vɪ**  
 CM-tortoise SM-say where 3PL.DEP-PRSPROG-go  
 ‘Tortoise said where are they going?’

138. Sí atsán’ alí labáflā, así o fákó kivuñ íyí?

**sí a-tsání balí la-bá-flā**  
 COMP 3SG-meet 3PL 3PL.DEP-VENT-pass  
**ba-sí o fákó ki-vu ní kí-í-yí**  
 3PL-say INTJ where CM-drum DEF SM-PRSPROG-sound  
 ‘Surely, he had already met them passing and they asked where the drumming is coming from?’

139. Así óo ãã kivuñ lááɖo lo?

**a-sí óo ãã ki-vu ní lá-á-ɖo**  
 3SG-say INTJ INTJ CM-drum DEF 3PL.DEP-PRSPROG-say  
**lo**  
 ADD  
 ‘He said, oh, are they talking of the drumming?’

140. Ô! As’eyu ridjɖɖɖɖɖ as’atō.

**ô a-sí e-yu ridjɖɖɖɖɖ a-sí a-tō**  
 INTJ 3SG-say 3SG.DEP-dance IDEO 3SG-say SM-be.tired  
 ‘Oh! He said he had danced continuously until he was tired.’

141. S’ónū, así banō telí bal’édê Sásámangó pɪ léébho ’ivuñ bábáfl’ézhi Tamlāgu ’ibén?

**sí ó-nū á-sí ba-nō te-lí**  
 QT 2SG-hear 3SG-say CM.PL-person AM-INDEF  
**balí bé-dé Sásámangó**  
 3PL.IND 3PL-come.from Sásámangó  
**pɪ lé-é-bho ki-vu ní**  
 CONN 3PL.DEP-PRSPROG-beat CM-drum DEF  
**bá-bá-flā bé-zhi Tamlāgu ki-bé ní**  
 3PL-VENT-pass SM-descend Tamlāgu CM-side DEF

‘Do you hear? He said some people from Sasamango drumming have passed and descended towards Tamlagu’

142. Oô, banõn kikikikikiki bes'avı Tamlâgu.  
**oo ba-nõ ní kikikikikiki be-si**  
 INTJ CM.PL-person DEF IDEO.sound.of.running SM-run  
**a-vı Tamlâgu**  
 SM-go Tamlâgu  
 ‘Wow, the people run *kikikikikiki* to Tamlago.’
143. Bááv'etiyú 'ívún<sup>81</sup>.  
**bá-á-vı bé-tı-yú ki-vu ní**  
 3PL-PRSPROG-go SM-DESID-dance CM-dance DEF  
 ‘They are going to dance to the drum.’
144. Ası lası Tamlâgu léébebhı 'ıvun oboń, ıklı láábabhı 'ıvú óboń.  
**a-sı la-sı Tamlâgu lé-é-be-bho**  
 3SG-say 3PL.DEF-say Tamlâgu 3PL.DEF-PRSPROG-FUT-beat  
**ki-vu ní o-bón**  
 CM-drum DEF CM-today  
**ı-klı lá-á-ba-bhı ki-vu o-bón**  
 CM-there 3PL.DEF-PRSPROG-FUT-make CM-dance CM-today  
 ‘He said it is being rumoured that it is at Tamlago that they will be beating the drum today, they will be making music.’
145. Bádzıkı 'ıbuinyéébúi.  
**bá-dzıkı ki-búi-nyáá-ki-búi**  
 3PL-forget CM-matter-DISTR-CM-matter  
 ‘They forgot about everything.’
146. Bésı átónı Tamlâgu 'ıdzo, bávı.  
**bé-sı ba-tónı Tamlâgu ki-dzo bá-vı**  
 3PL-run SM-follow Tamlâgu CM-road 3PL-go  
 ‘They ran following the Tamlago road, they went.’
147. Gı lávı ko, kásālā édz'agbagbá<sup>82</sup> ridıdıdıdı oo ákp'ówúsé,  
**gı lá-vı ko ká-sālā é-dze a-gbagbá ridıdıdıdı**  
 REL 3PL.DEF-go just CM-tortoise SM-V CM-N IDEO  
**oo á-kpı o-wúsé**  
 INTJ SM-put.in CM-strength

<sup>81</sup> During the spontaneous production, the performer used the form **béév'etiyú 'ívún** but during the transcription he corrected himself.

<sup>82</sup> **Dze agbagbá** ‘try’ is a Verb + Noun collocation borrowed from Ewe.

‘Just as they went away, Tortoise endeavoured continuously, oh, he put in effort.’

148. Áávi, áávi, áávi ádádó y'ékí, étén'utē<sup>7x</sup>.  
**á-á-vi á-á-vi á-á-vi**  
 3SG-PRSPROG-go 3SG-PRSPROG-go 3SG-PRSPROG-go  
**á-dá-dó yí e-kle é-ténō bu-tē**  
 SM-ITIVE-contact 3SG.IND CM-thatch 3SG-start CM-cut  
 ‘he went and went and took up his thatch-cutting and started cutting, cutting, cutting, cutting, cutting, cutting, and cutting.’
149. Ko oo gi éténō oklebhón 'onyá ko ómō 'alí gi ledé Tamlágu gi láábā  
**ko oo gi é-ténō o-klebhó ní**  
 just INTJ REL 3SG.DEP-start CM-bundle.of.thatch DEF  
**bu-nyá ko ó-mō balí gi le-dé Tamlágu**  
 CM-tie just 2SG-see 3PL REL 3PL.DEP-come.from Tamlágu  
**gi lá-á-bā**  
 REL 3PL.DEP-PRSPROG-come  
 ‘As soon as he started tying the bundle of thatch, there they were returning from Tamlagu.’
150. Gigigigigi, anóíánō ábayíko y'oklebhó.  
**gigigigigi a-nō-nyáá-a-nō á-ba-yíko yí**  
 IDEO CM-person-DISTR-CM-person SM-VENT-take 3SG.IND  
**o-klebhó**  
 CM-bundle.of.thatch  
 ‘Everyone, hustling and bustling, came and took his bundle of thatch.’
151. Así, oo, kulí, badúdámō alí dza?  
**a-sí oo kulí ba-di-dá-mō balí dza?**  
 3SG-say INTJ how 3PL-NEG2-ITIVE-see 3PL UFP  
 ‘He asked didn’t they see them?’
152. Así oo ko gi lédékú anóíánō amá?  
**a-sí oo ko gi lé-dé-kú**  
 3SG-say INTJ INTJ REL 3PL.DEP-ITIVE-reach  
**a-nō-nyáá-a-nō a-má**  
 CM-person-DISTR-CM-person SM-be.at:NEG  
 ‘They said when they reached (there), there was nobody there’
153. oo kulí áyíkí áṅa sí bága kidzo bhlató.  
**Oo kulí bá-yíkí bá-ṅa sí bá-ga ki-dzo bhlató**  
 INTJ CONJ 3SG-receive SM-eat COMP 3PL-walk CM-road other  
 ‘and that, oh! they believed that they had taken another road.’

154. Gɪ lááko iklebhón gɪ láávi ní eketsirí butúníábhā so nɪ nɪ áámɔ al'ásísɪ  
n'òdɪda níɪ.

**gɪ lá-yíko i-klebhó ní**  
REL 3PL.DEP-take CM.PL-bundle.of.thatch DEF  
**gɪ lá-á-vɪ ní e-ke-tsirí**  
REL 3PL.DEP-PRSPROG-go TOP 3SG-PERS-be.on  
**bu-tú ní kábhā so ní ní á-á-mɔ**  
CM-mountain DEF top so TOP TOP 3SG.DEP-PRSPROG-see  
**balí asísɪ ní ɔ-dɪda ní kumɪ**  
3PL at.a.distance LOC CM-valley DEF inside  
'When they took their bundles of thatch and they were going, he was still on  
top of the thatch hill so he is able to see them in the thatch valley.'

155. Gɪ lebekú ɔma ní beditsá ní,

**gɪ le-be-kú ɔ-ma ní be-ditsá ní**  
REL 3PL.DEP-VENT-reach CM-town DEF CM.PL-outskirts DEF  
'Just as they were about to arrive at the outskirts of the town,'

156. y'âní oo lebekú ɔma n'ɔgbótón ko, ezebú yí izhué, ezebú y'ívú.

**yí a-ní oo le-be-kú ɔ-ma ní**  
3SG.IND AM-PROX INTJ 3PL.DEP-VENT-reach CM-town DEF  
**ɔ-gbótó ní ko e-ze-bú yí ki-zhué**  
CM-edge DEF just 3SG-REP-remove 3SG.IND CM-flute  
**e-ze-bú yí ki-vu**  
3SG-REP-remove 3SG.IND CM-drum  
'oh!, just as they reached the edge of the village, he took out his flute, he  
took out his drum again.'

[Song]

157. Ákányááká azatsɪ oklebhó ní hú íésí.

**Á-kányááká a-za-tɪ yí o-klebhó ní**  
CM-each SM-REP-take.off 3SG.IND CM-bundle.of. thatch DEF  
**é-hú ke.sí**  
SM-hit down  
'Each one dropped his bundle of thatch onto the ground again.'

158. Ô! bazebé sí áábā kásālā 'bha.

**ô ba-ze-bé-sí bá-á-bā ká-sālā ɔbha**  
INTJ 3PL-REP-VENT-run SM-PRSPROG-come CM-tortoise side  
'O! they began running again to the side of tortoise.'

159. Gɪ lebekú, así ô ko, así â banɔ aní koŋ pɔ, kídē noósusû?

**gɪ le-bé-kú a-sí ô ko a-sí â**  
REL 3PL.DEP-VENT-reach 3SG-say INTJ INTJ 3SG-say INTJ

**ba-nɔ̃ a-ní kóŋ pɔ kídē no-ó-susú**  
 CM.PL-person AM-PROX INT but what 2PL-PRSPROG-think  
 ‘When they got there, he said oh! these people at all, what are you thinking?’

160. Laa ko banɔ̃aɲ.....

**Laa ko ba-nɔ̃ a-ní**  
 just.then just CM.PL-person AM-PROX  
 ‘Just then these people...’

161. ɔ́tɔ́mɔ̃ g’ílíyú ríqíqíqíqíqíqíqí.

**ɔ́tɔ́mɔ̃ gu i-lí-í-yu**  
 2SG-NEG:PRSPROG-see REL 1SG.DEP-3SG.DEP-PRSPROG-dance  
**ríqíqíqíqíqíqíqí**  
 IDEO  
 ‘Can’t you see how I have been dancing so much.’

162. Iyú ríqíqíqí ɪ́tɔ̃.

**i-yu ríqíqíqí í-tɔ̃**  
 1SG-dance IDEO 1SG-be.tired  
 ‘I danced till I was tired.’

163. Ázafwe pēpēpēpē.

**á-za-fwe pēpēpēpē**  
 3SG-REP-breath IDEO  
 ‘He was breathing like one out of breath.’

164. O! kúh dza?

**o kúf dza**  
 INTJ how UFP  
 ‘Oh! What’s up?’

165. Así laa ledé Tamlâgu, azasí kô

**a-sí laa le-dé Tamlâgu**  
 3SG-say just.now 3PL.DEP-come.from Tamlâgu  
**a-za-sí kô**  
 3SG-REP-say INTJ  
 ‘He said just now they were returning from Tamlagu and he again said what?’

166. Basí gu láávɪ Tamlâgu ní ní a

**ba-sí gu lá-á-vɪ Tamlâgu ní ní a**  
 3PL-say REL 3PL.DEP-PRSPROG-go Tamlâgu TOP TOP CFM  
 ‘They said it was while they were going to the Tamlagu place,’



167. *kulɔ anɔ tel'édétsódzin' alí nu idzoním*  
**kulí a-nɔ te-lí é-dé-tsódzi-no balí**  
 CONJ CM-person AM-INDEF SM-ITIVE-return-COM 3PL  
**ní ki-dzo ní kumu**  
 LOC CM-road DEF in  
 'it was then that somebody on the way turned them back'
168. *así ní nía Asantí Dadzrya uklí bõj laavɔ atgba tíwũlɔ ní obón,*  
**a-sí ní ní a Asantí Dadzrya ɪ-klí bõj**  
 3SG-say TOP TOP CFM Asanti Dadzrya CM-there rather  
**la-a-vɪ ba-ti-gba tí-wũlɔ ní o-bón**  
 3PL.DEP-PSTPROG-go SM-DESID-keep CM-wake DEF CM-today  
 'saying that it was rather Asanti Dadzrya that they were going to keep wake tonight,'
169. *así abrewá shishe tel'etsí n'uklí*  
**a-sí a-brewá shi-she te-lí e-tsí ní**  
 3SG-say CM-old.woman RED-grow AM-INDEF SM-die LOC  
**ɪ-klí**  
 CM-there  
 '(and) that an old woman had died there.'
170. *So ní ní a baavɔ atgba tíwũlɔ ní 'klí obón ridqidjɔ kel'abaze 'evu flôgo pɪ bebetéjɔ ábáflá 'vɪ Tamlâgu ní dzí.*  
**so ní ní a ba-á-vɪ ba-ti-gba tí-wũlɔ**  
 so TOP TOP CFM 3PL-PRSPROG-go SM-DESID-keep CM-wake  
**ní ɪ-klí o-bón ridqidjɔ ke-li ka-ba-za**  
 LOC CM-there CM-today IDEO CM-day SM-VENT-be.at:NPRES  
**kí-vũ flôgo pɪ be-be-téjɔ bá-bá-flá**  
 CM-tomorrow before CONN 3PL-FUT-be.able SM-FUT-pass  
**ba-vɪ Tamlâgu ní dzí**  
 SM-go Tamlâgu DEF COP.NPRES  
 'For that reason, they are going to keep wake until daybreak tomorrow before which they will be able to come and pass to the Tamlagu (already spoken of).'
171. *Ô, kibróenîn?*  
**ô ki-buí djuwě nú ɪ-ní**  
 INTJ CM-matter which COP AM-PROX  
 'Oh! What is this?'
172. *As'ao!*  
**a-sí ao**  
 3SG-say INTJ  
 'He said oh!'

173. ɔtsɔ́tsɔ́ ní ò ɔ́tɔ́vɪ t'òkòm íflá, ɔ́tɔ́vɪ t'òkòm íflá oo.  
 ɔtsɔ́tsɔ́ ní ò ɔ́-tɔ́-vɪ  
 just.now TOP INTJ 2SG-NEG:PRSPROG-go  
 tɪ ɔ-kɔ mí í-flá ɔ́-tɔ́-vɪ  
 COMP 2SG-let 1SG 1SG-pass 2SG-NEG:PRSPROG-go  
 tɪ ɔ-kɔ mí í-flá oo  
 COMP 2SG-let 1SG 1SG-pass UFP  
 ‘Suddenly, (there was a stampede), “if you won’t go let me pass, if you won’t go let me pass, oo!’
174. Balɪ pétée bááflá ridɪɪɪɪɪɪ.  
 balɪ pétée bá-á-flá ridɪɪɪɪɪɪ  
 3PL.IND all 3PL-PRSPROG-pass IDEO  
 ‘All of them passed noisily.’
175. Bávi Asantí Dadzyra.  
 bá-vɪ Asantí Dadzyra  
 3PL-go Asanti Dadzyra  
 ‘To Asanti Dadzyra they went.’
176. Asantí Dadzyra pɔ ní ní ɔ́ɔfl'Óguá  
 Asantí Dadzyra pɔ ní ní ɔ́-bo-flá Oguá  
 Asantí Dadzyra but TOP TOP 2SG-FUT-pass Oguá  
 ‘Whereas to get to Asanti Dadzyra you will pass Oguá,’
177. ɔ́tíflá Tamale flò' p'obokú Asanti Dadzyra beditsyáń, balɪ nɪ [laughs] balɪ nɪ  
 Oguá áń ɔ́gamutsyákó  
 ɔ́-tí-flá Tamale flògo pɪ ɔ́-bo-kú Asanti  
 2SG-PERF-pass Tamale before CONN 2SG-VENT-reach Asanti  
 Dadzyra be-ditsyá ní balɪ nɪ balɪ nɪ  
 Dadzyra CM.PL-outskirts DEF 3PL.IND COM 3PL.IND COM  
 Oguá ba-ní ki dzo ɔ́-gamɪ.tsyá.kó  
 Oguá CM.PL-native CM-path CM-clear.meet.place  
 ‘you would have already passed Tamale before you reach halfway to Asanti Dadzyra.’ (i.e. Tamale is between Asanti Dadzyra and Oguá).
178. An'óbón ní!  
 aní ó-bón ní  
 NEG.CL CM-today TOP  
 ‘It’s not today!’
179. Kátsyáá tɪ bedekú tklí tɪ bebebísí enú tɪ bababhítu kídɔ nɔ́ uní,  
 kátsyáá tɪ be-de-kú t-klí tɪ  
 by.the.time COMP 3PL-ITIVE-reach CM-there PURP

**be-be-bíí be-nú ti ba-ba-bhíí kí-dǝ nǝ**  
 3PL-VENT-ask SM-hear PURP 3PL-FUT-do CM-thing wh-ever  
**t-ní**  
 AM-PROX

‘Before they could get there to make enquiries and accomplish one thing or another,’

180. **kásālǎ átínyá y’oklebhǝ ní pétéé, hulu kpúlú, hulu kpúlú, hulu kpúlú, hulu kpúlú, hulu kpúlú.**  
**ká-sālǎ á-tí-nyá yí o-klebhǝ**  
 CM-tortoise SM-PERF-tie 3SG.IND CM-bundle.of.thatch  
**ní pétéé hulu kpúlú hulu kpúlú**  
 DEF all IDEO.manner.of.walking IDEO.manner.of.walking  
**hulu kpúlú hulu kpúlú**  
 IDEO.manner.of.walking IDEO.manner.of.walking  
**hulu kpúlú**  
 IDEO.manner.of.walking  
 ‘tortoise had already tied all his bundle of thatch and set off clumsily.’

181. **Kátsyáá ti ago ’ebou ’yíyí ti kásālǎ kú ıgbótó ní ní,**  
**kátsyáá ti a-go kǝbǝí é-yíyí ti**  
 by.the.time COMP 3SG-remain little CM-time COMP  
**ká-sālǎ é-kú ı-ıgbótó ní ní**  
 CM-tortoise SM-reach CM.PL-outskirt DEF TOP  
 ‘Suddenly, when it was left with a little time for him to reach the outskirts of the town,’

182. **kásālǎ eféké yí a...**  
**ká-sālǎ é-féké yí**  
 CM-tortoise SM-lift 3SG.IND  
 ‘tortoise lifted (his trumpet).’

183. **Bavı ti ledı oo!**  
**ba-vı ti le-dı oo**  
 3PL-go PURP 3PL.DEP-look UFP  
 ‘Let them go and see!’

184. **Banǝń... Nobodı mǝ oó!**  
**ba-nǝ ní no-bo-dı mǝ oó**  
 CM.PL-person DEF 2PL-VENT-look ADD UFP  
 ‘The people... Come and look!’

185. **Kásālǎ bǝń kal’ ábuso ’obá oo!**  
**ká-sālǎ bǝń kalı ké-buso bu-bá oo!**  
 CM-tortoise rather 3SG.IND SM-do.first CM-come UFP

‘It is rather tortoise who arrived first!’

186. Kásālā bõŋ ébusó áábā oo!  
**ká-sālā** **bõŋ** **é-busó** **á-á-bā** **oo**  
 CM-tortoise rather SM-do.first SM-PRSPROG-come UFP  
 ‘It is rather tortoise who is arriving first!’
187. Kásālā bõŋ ébusó áábā oo!  
**ká-sālā** **bõŋ** **é-busó** **á-á-bā** **oo**  
 CM-tortoise rather SM-do.first SM-PRSPROG-come UFP  
 ‘It is rather tortoise who is arriving first!’
188. Óó! kibroe nîní dza?  
**óó** **ki-buí** **qúwē** **nú** **ɪ-ní** **dza**  
 INTJ CM-matter which COP AM-PROX UFP  
 ‘Oh! What is this?’
189. G’ebú y’ívú,  
**gɪ** **é-bú** **yí** **ki-vu**  
 REL 3SG.DEP-remove 3SG.IND CM-drum  
 ‘When he took out his drum,’
190. g’ebú y’íáhlóé,  
**gɪ** **é-bú** **yí** **ka-hlóé**  
 REL 3SG.DEP-remove 3SG.IND CM-trumpet  
 ‘when he took out his trumpet,’
- [Song]
191. Kátsyáá ní balí ní betidéku Asanti Dadzyra ní ní,  
**kátsyáá** **ní** **balí** **ní** **be-tí-dé-kú** **Asanti**  
 by.the.time TOP 3PL.IND DEF SM-PERF-ITIVE-reach Asanti  
**Dadzyra** **ní** **ní**  
 Dadzyra TOP TOP  
 ‘In the meantime, those ones, having reached Asanti Dadzyra,’
192. oo! bédékú ’klí ní, oo, anóíanō amá ’klí éébho ’ivu.  
**oo** **bé-dé-kú** **ɪ-klí** **ní**  
 INTJ 3PL-VENT-reach CM-there TOP  
**oo** **a-nō-nyáá-anō** **a-má** **ɪ-klí**  
 INTJ CM-person-DISTR-CM-person SM-be.at:NEG CM-there  
**é-é-bho** **ki-vu**  
 SM-PRSPROG-beat CM-drum  
 ‘oh, they arrived there and oh, nobody is making music!’

193.  $\text{\text{Ee}}$ ,  $\text{ba-sí}$   $\text{a-brewá}$   $\text{kányááká}$   $\text{tsyí}$   $\text{e-di-tsí}$   $\text{ní}$   
 INTJ 3PL-say CM-old.lady any too SM-NEG2-die LOC  
 $\text{ɿ-klí}$   
 CM-there  
 ‘Er, even it is said no old lady had died in that place.’
194. Bekeédz’ $\text{esí}$   $\text{gigigigi}$   $\text{gɿ}$   $\text{labá}$   $\text{ní}$   $\text{ní}$ ,  
 $\text{be-ke-é-tsódzi}$   $\text{be-sí}$   $\text{gigigigi}$   
 3PL-PERS-PRSPROG-return SM-run IDEO.sound  
 $\text{gɿ}$   $\text{la-bá}$   $\text{ní}$   $\text{ní}$   
 REL 3PL.DEP-come TOP TOP  
 ‘As they run back *gigigigi* in return,’
195.  $\text{Áo}$ ,  $\text{atíflá}$   $\text{klí}$ .  
 $\text{áo}$   $\text{a-tí-flá}$   $\text{ɿ-klí}$   
 INTJ 3SG-PERF-pass CM-there  
 ‘Oh! It has become late.’ (i.e. The harm has already been done.)
196.  $\text{Kásālā}$   $\text{g’ée}$   $\text{bho}$   $\text{’ivu}$   $\text{ní}$   $\text{ní}$ ...  
 $\text{ká-sālā}$   $\text{gɿ}$   $\text{é-é-bho}$   $\text{ki-vu}$   $\text{ní}$   $\text{ní}$   
 CM-tortoise REL SM-PRSPROG-beat CM-drum TOP TOP  
 ‘Tortoise who is beating the drum...’
197.  $\text{Ákányááká}$   $\text{áyíko}$   $\text{y’ók}$   $\text{lebhó}$ ,  $\text{bétíkeéténú}$   $\text{áflá}$   $\text{kásālā}$ ,  
 $\text{á-kányááká}$   $\text{á-yíko}$   $\text{yí}$   $\text{o-klebhó}$   
 AM-every SM-take 3SG-IND CM-bundle.of.thatch  
 $\text{be-ti-ke-é-ténú}$   $\text{á-flá}$   $\text{ká-sālā}$   
 3PL-NEG1-PERS-PRSPROG-be.able SM-pass CM-tortoise  
 ‘Everybody took his load of thatch, they were unable to bypass tortoise.’
198.  $\text{Balí}$   $\text{pétéé}$   $\text{kānā}$   $\text{babátsa}$   $\text{odi}$   $\text{ní}$   $\text{y’ede}$ .  
 $\text{balí}$   $\text{pétéé}$   $\text{kā-nā}$   $\text{ba-bá-tsa}$   $\text{o-di}$   $\text{ní}$   
 3PL.IND all CM-manner 3PL-VENT-draw CM-line LOC  
 $\text{yí}$   $\text{ke.de}$   
 3SG.IND back  
 ‘All of them, so they formed a single file behind him.’
199.  $\text{Ákányááká}$   $\text{étúkú}$   $\text{yí}$   $\text{oklebhó}$   
 $\text{á-kányááká}$   $\text{é-túkú}$   $\text{yí}$   $\text{o-klebhó}$   
 CM-every SM-carry 3SG.IND CM-bundle.of.thatch  
 ‘Each and every one of them carried his bundle of thatch,’

200. pī bebeéyú 'íwún, pī kásālā 'kpasí álí ótúgbán.  
**pī be-be-é-yú ki-vu ní**  
 CONN 3PL-VENT-PRSPROG-dance CM-dance DEF  
**pī ká-sālā kpasí balí ótúgbá ní**  
 CONN CM-tortoise be.in 3PL.IND CM-front DEF  
 'as they are dancing, tortoise is in the lead before them.'
- [Song]
201. Ridiqidi ko nâní, kulí y'áákò y'oklebhó ko nân, azhoyí,  
**ridiqidi ko ní a-ní kulí yí á-yíko yí**  
 IDEO just TOP AM-PROX CONJ 3SG.IND SM-take 3SG.IND  
**o-klebhó ko ní a-ní**  
 CM-bundle.of.thatch just TOP AM-PROX  
**ázhoyí**  
 IDEO.sound.of.dropping.the.bundle.of.thatch  
 'Until at last, he took his bundle of thatch'
202. kulí y'áákò dzú kídō ní...  
**kulí yí á-yíko é-dzu kí-dō ní**  
 CONJ 3SG.IND SM-take SM-put.down CM-thing DEF  
 'and then he puts it down [in] the thing.'
203. Oo! kásālā y'ágbánī ádzí ní óó.  
**oo ká-sālā yí á-gbānī a-dzī ní óó**  
 INTJ CM-tortoise 3SG.IND SM-marry CM-woman DEF INTJ  
 'Oh! TORTOISE marries the woman oooo.'
204. Kásālā y'ágbánī adzī nī oo! Kásālā y'ágbánī ádzí ní óó!  
**ká-sālā yí á-gbānī a-dzī ní oo**  
 CM-tortoise 3SG.IND SM-marry CM-woman DEF INTJ  
**ká-sālā yí á-gbānī a-dzī ní óó**  
 CM-tortoise 3SG.IND SM-marry CM-woman DEF INTJ  
 'TORTOISE marries the woman oooo, TORTOISE marries the woman oooo.'
205. Ōtsóli, kulí bábhítu bakonú gugóé ákó álí pétéé, bakpí ehúí ní ákó ádzí ní  
 pétéé.  
**otsóli kulí bá-bhítu ba-konú gugóé bá-kó balí pétéé**  
 finally CONJ 3PL-do CM.PL-custom last SM-give 3PL all  
**ba-kpí e-huí ní bá-kó a-dzī ní pétéé**  
 3PL-wear CM.PL-bead DEF SM-give CM-woman DEF all  
 'Finally, they did the rest of the rites for them and they adorned the woman with beads all over.'

206. Bekpé ádzín ákó yí pétée, kásālā agbānō adzīn pī lávī y'ópém.  
**be-kpé a-dzī ní bá-kó yí pétée**  
 3PL-wed CM-woman DEF SM-give 3SG.IND all  
**ká-sālā a-gbānō a-dzī ní pī lá-vi**  
 CM-tortoise SM-lead CM-woman DEF CONN 3PL.DEP-go  
**yí bu-pá kum**  
 3SG.IND CM-home in  
 'They performed all the bridal customs for the woman for him and tortoise took the woman to his home.'
207. Gī lávī y'ópém.  
**gī lá-vi yí bu-pá kum**  
 REL 3PL.DEP-go 3SG.IND CM-home in  
 'And they went to his house.'
208. Kásālā ēē awá amó gbígbā telí.  
**ká-sālā ēē a-wá a-mó gbígbā te-lí**  
 CM-tortoise INTJ SM-cultivate CM-rice.farm big AM-INDEF  
 'Tortoise made a very big rice farm.'
209. Áákp'uká, adzīn áákpě amóním.  
**á-á-kpí bu-ká a-dzī ní**  
 3SG-PRSPROG-put.in CM-fence CM-woman DEF  
**á-á-kpě a-mó ní kum**  
 SM-PRSPROG-pull.out.weeds CM-rice.farm DEF in  
 'While he is making a fence, the woman is pulling out the weeds from the farm.'
210. Áákp'uká, adzīn áákpě amóním.  
**á-á-kpí bu-ká a-dzī ní**  
 3SG-PRSPROG-put.in CM-fence CM-woman DEF  
**á-á-kpě a-mó ní kum**  
 SM-PRSPROG-pull.out.weeds CM-rice.farm DEF in  
 He is making the fence and the woman is pulling out the weeds from the farm.'
211. Gī akp'uká ní békē pétée kulí y'ávī owúlēn obhókó.  
**gī a-kpí bu-ká ní békē pétée kulí yí**  
 REL 3SG-put.in CM-fence DEF COMPL all CONJ 3SG.IND  
**á-vi o-wúlē ní o-bhókó**  
 SM-go CM-storage.bin DEF CM-mould.place  
 When he finished making the fence, he went to mould the (rice) storage bin.'

212. Áábh'owúlēn, adzīn aápóŭ amóní,  
**á-á-bhɔ** **o-wúlē** **ní** **a-dzɪ** **ní**  
 3SG-PRSPROG-mould CM-storage.bin DEF CM-woman DEF  
**á-á-póŭ** **a-mó** **ní**  
 SM-PRSPROG-harvest CM-rice DEF  
 'While he is moulding the (rice) storage bin, the woman is harvesting the rice.'
213. Áábh'owúlēn, adzīn aápóŭ amóní.  
**á-á-bhɔ** **o-wúlē** **ní** **a-dzɪ** **ní**  
 3SG-PRSPROG-mould CM-storage.bin DEF CM-woman DEF  
**á-á-póŭ** **a-mó** **ní**  
 SM-PRSPROG-harvest CM-rice DEF  
 'While he is moulding the (rice) storage bin, the woman is harvesting the rice.'
214. Ridiqidi, ti abapô amó...  
**ridiqidi** **ti** **a-ba-pó** **a-mó**  
 IDEO COMP 3SG.DEP-VENT-snap CM-rice  
 'By the time she could finish harvesting (the) rice...'
215. ô! amóní ébí kó 'álí.  
**ô** **a-mó** **ní** **é-bí** **kó** **balí**  
 INTJ CM-rice DEF SM-do.well DAT 3PL  
 'oh! the harvest was very good for them.'
216. Kígō élín kánā leklú banōn bebéhu amóní ákó álí.  
**kí-gō** **í-líliní** **ká-nā** **le-klú** **ba-nō**  
 CM-year AM-DIST CM-manner 3PL.DEP-call CM.PL-person  
**ní** **be-bé-hú** **a-mó** **ní** **bá-kó** **balí**  
 DEF 3PL-VENT-beat CM-rice DEF SM-give 3PL  
 'That year, so they called the people to come and thresh the rice for them.'
217. G'lehú amó ní kō ipúpú pétée békē n'íépí.  
**gɪ** **le-hú** **á-mó** **ní** **kō** **i-púpú** **pétée** **békē**  
 REL 3PL.DEP-beat CM-rice DEF INTJ CM.PL-door all finish  
**ní** **ke-pí**  
 LOC CM-home  
 'When they threshed the rice, oh! all doors were finished in the village.'<sup>83</sup>
218. Gɪ lehú amó ní békē 'íwí 'lín, hm!  
**gɪ** **le-hú** **a-mó** **ní** **békē** **kí-wí** **í-líliní**

<sup>83</sup> Doors are used as planks against which the rice plant is hit to thresh the rice.



REL 3PL.DEP-beat CM-rice DEF COMPL CM-day AM-DIST  
**hm**  
 INTJ  
 ‘When they finished beating the rice that day, come and see!’

219. Gɪ leéfũ amón,

**gɪ le-é-fũ a-mó ní**  
 REL 3PL.DEP-PRSPROG-winnow CM-rice DEF  
 As they are winnowing the rice, (they are singing)’

[Song]

220. Kíkápákpō bɔŋa, kíbulí bɔŋa<sup>3x</sup>

**kí-kpákpō bá ɔ-ŋa kí-bulí bá ɔ-ŋa**  
 CM-a.kind.of.bird come 2SG-eat CM-a.kind.of.bird come 2SG-eat  
 ‘Bird, come and eat, bird come and eat.’

221. avrugú<sup>4x</sup>

**avrugú**  
 IDEO.sound made by winnowing fans made from palm fronds  
 ‘Sounds from winnowing fans made from palm fronds’

222. Kíkápákpō bɔŋa, kíbulí bɔŋa<sup>2x</sup>

**kí-kpákpō bá ɔ-ŋa kí-bulí bá ɔ-ŋa**  
 CM-a.kind.of.bird come 2SG-eat CM-a.kind.of.bird come 2SG-eat  
 ‘Bird, come and eat, bird come and eat.’

223. Hó! tsyí ní bétééhũ amó ní lééhũ<sup>84</sup> békē.

**hó tsyí ní bē-téé-hũ a-mó ní**  
 INTJ too TOP 3PL-NEG:PRSPROG-beat CM-rice DEF  
**lé-é-hũ békē**  
 3PL.DEP-PRSPROG-beat COMPL  
 ‘Even then, they are not about finishing the threshing of the rice.’

224. Kásālā edéwu ekú osíním, gɪ y’ázha ’dzín

**ká-sālā e-dé-wu e-kú o-sí ní kumɪ**  
 CM-tortoise SM-ITIVE-climb SM-reach CM-tree DEF inside  
**gɪ yí á-zha ɔ-dzi ní**  
 REL 3SG.IND SM-sing CM-song DEF  
 ‘Tortoise went and climbed into a tree.’

[Song]

<sup>84</sup> The narrator used **yí** ‘3SG.IND’ instead of **lé** ‘3PL.DEP’.

225. Amó éé éé, amó ee ee! w'agɪ ɔ́bá w'agɪ ɔ́dɪbá, wɔ́ tsyí ɔ́bohu 'ivu oo.<sup>2x</sup>  
**a-mó éé éé a-mó ee ee**  
 CM-rice INTJ INTJ CM-rice INTJ INTJ  
**wɔ́ a-gɪ ɔ́-bá wɔ́ a-gɪ ɔ́-dɪ-bá**  
 2SG.IND 3SG-REL SM-come 2SG.IND 3SG-REL SM-NEG-come  
**wɔ́ tsyí ɔ́-bo-hu kí-vū oo**  
 '2SG.IND too SM-FUT-beat CM-tomorrow UFP  
 'Rice oo! rice oo! You who come, you who do not come, you too will  
 thresh yours tomorrow.' (i.e. if you don't help me today, tomorrow you will  
 also need help.)
226. Banɔ́n enú ní ho! gidɪgidɪ gidɪgidɪ gidɪgidɪ gidɪgidɪ  
**ba-nɔ́ ní bɛ́-nú ní ho**  
 CM.PL-person DEF SM-hear TOP INTJ  
**gidɪgidɪ gidɪgidɪ gidɪgidɪ**  
 IDEO.hustle.and.bustle IDEO.hustle.and.bustle IDEO.hustle.and.bustle  
**gidɪgidɪ**  
 IDEO.hustle.and.bustle  
 'When people heard it, oh! (they rushed to go).'
227. Betel' eéhū, betel' áápíí, betel' eehusí, betel' abhɪtɪ ídɔ́ ní.  
**be-te-lí be-é-hū be-te-lí**  
 CM-AM-INDEF SM-PRSPROG-beat CM-AM-INDEF  
**bá-á-pí be-te-lí be-husí**  
 SM-PRSPROG-winnow CM-AM-INDEF SM-sift  
**be-te-lí a-bhɪtɪ kí-dɔ́ ní**  
 CM-AM-INDEF SM-do CM-thing DEF  
 'Some are beating, some are winnowing, some are sifting, and some are  
 doing this or that.'
- [All this while they are singing:]
- [Song]
228. Kíkɔ́kpɔ́ bɔ́ŋa, kíbulí bɔ́ŋa.  
**kí-kpɔ́kpɔ́ bá ɔ́-ŋa kí-bulí bá ɔ́-ŋa**  
 CM-a.kind.of.bird come 2SG-eat CM-a.kind.of.bird come 2SG-eat  
 'Bird, come and eat, bird come and eat.'
229. Kíkɔ́kpɔ́ bɔ́ŋa, kíbulí bɔ́ŋa oo.  
**kí-kpɔ́kpɔ́ bá ɔ́-ŋa kí-bulí bá ɔ́-ŋa**  
 CM-a.kind.of.bird come 2SG-eat CM-a.kind.of.bird come 2SG-eat  
**oo**  
 UFP  
 'Bird, come and eat, bird come and eat.'

230. Béhú ámón pétée.  
**bé-hú a-mó ní pétée**  
 3PL-beat CM-rice DEF all  
 ‘They threshed all the rice.’
231. Bétúkú ámón pétée áminā, bakpí n’owúlēnīm.  
**bé-túkú a-món pétée bá-mínā**  
 3PL-carry CM-rice all SM-bring  
**ba-kpí ní o-wúlē ní kumu**  
 SM-put.in LOC CM-storage.bin DEF in  
 ‘They carried all the rice and they put it into the rice storage bin.’
232. Owúlēn tótótótótó.  
**o-wúlē ní tótótótótó**  
 CM-storage.bin DEF IDEO  
 ‘The rice storage bin was filled to the brim.’
233. Bábaṅe ’éwī nī kásālā ’pēm.  
**bá-ba-ṅa kí-wī ní ká-sālā bu-pá kumu**  
 3PL-FUT-eat CM-day LOC CM-tortoise CM-house in  
 ‘There will be a feast in tortoise’s house.’
234. Anokwáré, kulí lasí ní a kásālā evu aló así ní nía  
**anokwáré kulí la-sí ní a**  
 truly CONJ 3PL.DEF-say TOP CFM  
**ká-sālā e-vu a-ló a-sí ní ní a**  
 CM-tortoise SM-catch SM-get.up SM-say TOP TOP CFM  
 Truly, and it was said that tortoise rose up to declare that’
235. ɛɛ kīvū ní a kulí lábaṅa kíwī ní, ébeklu y’ɔbhualín pétée.  
**ɛɛ kí-vū ní a kulí lá-ba-ṅa kí-wī ní**  
 INTJ CM-tomorrow DEF CFM CONJ 3PL-FUT-eat CM-day DEF  
**é-be-klū yí ɔ-bhua-alí ní pétée**  
 3SG-FUT-call 3SG.IND CM-friend-PL DEF all  
 ‘tomorrow will be the day of the feast. He will call all his friends.’
236. Éée, bag’aplónṣé gū bebeli amó ní pétée ní a,  
**éée ba-gū bá-plónṣ yí gū be-be-li a-mó ní**  
 INTJ 3PL-REL SM-help 3SG REL 3PL-VENT-sow CM-rice DEF  
**pétée ní a**  
 all TOP CFM  
 ‘Ee, those who helped him to sow the rice,’

237. bag'adzé 'édṣń,  
**ba-gí ba-dzá kí-dṣ ní**  
 3PL-REL SM-clear CM-thing DEF  
 'those who cleared the bushes,'
238. gɪ ladzé édṣń, gɪ lébeli amó ní pétée ní ní a,  
**gɪ la-dzá kí-dṣ ní gɪ lé-beli a-mó**  
 REL 3PL.DEP-clear CM-thing DEF REL 3PL.DEP-sow CM-rice  
**ní pétée ní ní a**  
 DEF all TOP TOP CFM  
 'those who cleared the bushes and those who sowed all the rice,'
239. ébeklū 'álí, ébekp'álí pétée dínā tɪ labá tɪ laɣe 'edṣ ní y'úpém tɪ lamɔ samɪ.  
**é-be-klū balí é-be-kpé balí pétée dínā tɪ**  
 3SG-FUT-call 3PL SM-FUT-invite 3PL all dinner PURP  
**la-bá tɪ la-ɣa kí-dṣ ní yí**  
 3PL.DEP-come PURP 3PL.DEP-eat CM-thing LOC 3SG.IND  
**bu-pá kɪmɪ tɪ la-mɔ samɪ**  
 CM-house in PURP 3PL.DEP-see happiness  
 'he would call them, he would invite them all to dinner that they should come and eat in his house for them to rejoice.'
240. Kásālā evu yí epidzya degb'aní, kɪpɪdzyaklō aní kulí eyí 'íálí, átó 'édṣ.  
**ká-sālā e-vu yí e-pidzya degbe a-ní**  
 CM-tortoise SM-catch 3SG.IND CM-goat huge AM-PROX  
**kɪ-pɪdzyaklō a-ní kulí e-yí kalí á-tṣ kí-dṣ**  
 CM-he.goat AM-PROX CONJ SM-kill 3SG SM-cook CM-thing  
 'Tortoise caught his very big and fat he-goat, slaughtered it and prepared food.'
241. Évu y'ókúkóny'óní eyí, átó 'édṣ.  
**é-vu yí ɔ-kúkónye ɔ-ní e-yí a-tṣ**  
 3SG-catch 3SG.IND CM-rooster AM-PROX SM-kill SM-cook  
**kí-dṣ**  
 CM-thing  
 'He caught this rooster of his, killed it and prepared food.'
242. Hm! adzín ágbe eqútsū uní.  
**hm a-dzɪ ní á-ɣba i-dútsū ɪ-ní**  
 INTJ CM-woman DEF CM-fry CM.PL-stew AM-PROX  
 'The woman made these stews.'
243. Át'ón'óní kulí y'átó ás'âní kulí áákɔ 'elí pétée áákɔ abal'akpí ketsukpú  
 gbugblā gbugblā gbugblā gbugblā gbugblā tielímí kulí áákɔ édṣń áda.

- [illegible]

**kuí yí a-sí o rúm á-á-vi ti**  
 CONJ 3SG.IND SM-say INTJ INTJ SM-PRSPROG-go PURP  
**a-dá-tā a-sí ní kibóé**  
 3SG.DEP-ITIVE-chew CM-rice DEF little  
**e-de-míni é-dí**  
 3SG-ITIVE-taste SM-look  
 ‘and he said mm, he is going to eat a little of the rice, to go and have a taste.’

249. Gú ávi g’édémín’edí ní mm, tsutsutsutsi.  
**gú á-vi gú é-dé-míni é-dí ní**  
 REL 3SG-go REL SM-ITIVE-taste SM-look TOP  
**rúm tsutsutsutsi**  
 INTJ IDEO  
 ‘When he went and tasted it, mm, no, no, no.’ (i.e. ‘it is so tasty’).
250. Ágblá mítá kó ’ebuí.  
**á-gblá-mítá kó ki-buí**  
 3SG-EXC-be.not.good DAT CM-matter  
 ‘It is overwhelmingly good.’ (So he couldn’t resist the temptation to eat some.)
251. Ô! áts’áhoun akpí, áátā áátā áátā.  
**ô á-tsí a-hou ní á-kpí**  
 INTJ 3SG-take.off CM-hand DEF SM-put.in  
**á-á-tā á-á-tā á-á-tā**  
 SM-PRSPROG-chew SM-PRSPROG-chew SM-PRSPROG-chew  
 ‘He dipped his hand into it, eating, eating, and eating.’
252. Ô! di tasālē ’evu  
**ô dí ká-sālā ki-vu**  
 INTJ look CM-tortoise CM-stomach  
 ‘Oh! Look at tortoise’s stomach.’
253. Akaábubo ti ebu ’idzya tilí ko, kásālā kplō kawólí kú ketsukpúním.  
**a-ka-á-bubo ti e-bú ki-dzya**  
 3SG-PERS-PRSPROG-bend PURP 3SG.DEP-remove CM-meat  
**ti-lí ko ká-sālā kplō**  
 AM-INDEF just CM-tortoise IDEO.sound.of.falling  
**ka-wólí kú ke-tsukpú ní kumí**  
 SM-fall ALL CM-pot DEF inside  
 ‘Just as he bent again to pick another piece of meat, tortoise fell inside the pot.’

254. Ô! kibroe nîñ? Kibroe nîñ?  
**ô ki-búi d́úwě nú ɪ-ní**  
 INTJ CM-matter which COP AM-PROX  
**ki-búi d́úwě nú ɪ-ní**  
 CM-matter which COP AM-PROX  
 ‘Oh! What problem is this? What problem is this?’
255. Kásālā edze agbagbá sí ti ...  
**ká-sālā e-dze.agbagbá sí ti**  
 CM-tortoise SM-try COMP COMP  
 ‘Tortoise tried to ...’
256. Kásālā ’bhítí ’ibuinyéébúi ’ídí sí ti kevlekoéyí ní ketsukpúním pétée  
 ketééténú ékoéyí.  
**ká-sālā a-bhítí ki-búi-nyáá-ki-búi kí-dí sí**  
 CM-tortoise SM-do CM-matter-DISTR-CM-matter CM-type COMP  
**ti ke-vle-kóéyí ní ke-tsukpú ní kumu pétée**  
 COMP 3SG.DEF-again-exit LOC CM-pot DEF inside all  
**ke-tée-ténú ké-kóéyí**  
 3SG-NEG:PRSPROG-be.able SM-exit  
 ‘Tortoise tried every kind of thing in a bid to get out of the pot again (but)  
 he was not able to get out.’
257. Kelín ázé ’évolón, kásālā, bápí ’iásālā pétée badumɔ.  
**ke-lí ní ka-za kí-vuló ní**  
 CM-day DEF SM-be.at:NPRES CM-morning DEF  
**ká-sālā bá-pí ká-sālā pétée ba-dí-mɔ**  
 CM-tortoise 3PL-look.for CM-tortoise all 3PL-NEG2-see  
 ‘Day broke, in the morning, they looked for tortoise all over, they did not  
 find (him).’
258. Banɔ ní, bánón gɪ lekpé, bánón abá pétée.  
**ba-nɔ ní bá-nɔ ní gɪ le-kpé**  
 CM.PL-person DEF CM.PL-person DEF REL 3PL.DEF-invite  
**bá-nɔ ní ba-bá pétée**  
 CM.PL-person DEF SM-come all  
 ‘The people, the invited guests, all the people came.’
259. Bátáámɔ kásālā.  
**bá-táá-mɔ ká-sālā**  
 3PL-NEG:PRSPROG-see CM-tortoise  
 ‘They cannot find tortoise.’

260. “Ā! ee d’omín’id5 nt ɔ́kɔ ’mínā tɪ lodí<sup>85</sup> oo”.  
 ā ee dɪ ɔ́-míní kɪ-d5 ní  
 INTJ INTJ go 2SG-do.as.a.last.resort CM-thing DEF  
 ɔ́-yíko ɔ́-mínā tɪ lo-dí oo  
 SM-take SM-bring COMP 1PL.DEP-look UFP  
 “‘Ah! As it is, bring the food for us to look at!’” (i.e. since the host is no where to be found, there was nothing to do than for the food to be served).
261. Kulí adzɪn aló gɪ avono agbě, avono ’esígbé, avono ’edonyóó sí tɪ aye ’édɔn  
 akpí ákó banɔn.  
 kulí a-dzɪ ní á-ló gɪ á-vunɔ  
 CONJ CM-woman DEF SM-get.up REL 3SG.DEP-take.with  
 a-gbě á-vunɔ kɪ-sígbé á-vunɔ kɪ-dɔ  
 CM-bowl SM-take.with CM-earthen.bowl SM-take.with CM-thing  
 nyóó sí tɪ á-ya kɪ-d5 ní  
 all COMP COMP 3SG.DEP-cut.off CM-thing DEF  
 a-kpí á-kó ba-nɔ ní  
 SM-put.in SM-give CM.PL-person DEF  
 ‘Then the woman got up and she took a pan, she took earthenware bowls, she took other things in order to serve the people.’
262. Gɪ áyíko ’ebhluxɔé, ákpí, ákpí, ákpí.  
 gɪ á-yíko kɪ-bhluxɔé á-kpí á-kpí á-kpí  
 REL 3SG.DEP-take CM-spoon SM-put.in SM-put.in SM-put.in  
 ‘When she took a ladle, she dipped it in, dipped it in, and dipped it in.’
263. Ákpí ’ibhluxɔén, étū, ákpí ’ibhluxɔén, étū.  
 á-kpí kɪ-bhluxɔé ní é-tū  
 SM-put.in CM-spoon DEF SM-hit  
 á-kpí kɪ-bhluxɔé ní é-tū  
 SM-put.in CM-spoon DEF SM-hit  
 ‘She put in the ladle and it hit (something) she put in the ladle and it hit (something).’
264. Ee, ásíń étéékóéyí.  
 ee á-sí ní é-téé-kóéyí  
 INTJ CM-rice DEF SM-NEG:PRSPROG-exit  
 ‘Er, the rice is not coming out.’
265. Ákpí ’ibhluxɔén, étū, ákpí ’ibhluxɔén, étū.  
 á-kpí kɪ-bhluxɔé ní é-tū  
 SM-put.in CM-spoon DEF SM-hit

<sup>85</sup> The form of the dependent pronoun should have been **lo** with a +ATR vowel.



- á-kpí**      **ki-bhluxɔ́ɛ**      **ní**      **é-tū**  
 SM-put.in    CM-spoon    DEF    SM-hit  
 ‘She put in the ladle and it hit (something), she put in the ladle and it hit (something).’
266. Oqútsū otóókóéyī.  
**o-qútsū**    **o-tóó-kóéyī**  
 CM-stew    SM-NEG:PRSPROG-exit  
 ‘No stew is coming out.’
267. O! kibúí qúwē nín dza?  
**o**      **ki-búí**      **qúwē**    **nú**      **ɪ-ní**      **dza**  
 INTJ    CM-matter    which    COP    AM-PROX    UFP  
 ‘Oh! What is this?’
268. Bétu ’kín, bétu ’kín, bétu ’kín, bétu ’kín, â!  
**bé-tu**    **ɪ-kí**      **ní**      **bé-tu**    **ɪ-kí**      **ní**      **bé-tu**    **ɪ-kí**  
 3PL-hit    CM-here    DEF    3PL-hit    CM-here    DEF    3PL-hit    CM-here  
**ní**      **bé-tu**    **ɪ-kí**      **â**  
 DEF    3PL-hit    CM-here    INTJ  
 ‘They hit here, they hit there, they hit here, they hit there, ah!’
269. Kulí lasí ô! kibúí uní, alasí tɪ lefekê kitsikpí tɪ bááko adatrɔ́ ’efú tɪ lahtɪh’alí  
 ’ɪbɔ́ɛ ádupí elishí ní a kulí levu aglɔ́.  
**kulí**    **la-sí**      **ô**      **ki-búí**      **ɪ-ní**  
 CONJ 3PL.DEF-say INTJ    CM-matter    AM-PROX  
**a-lí**      **a-sí**      **tɪ**      **le-féké**      **ki-tsikpí**    **tɪ**  
 3SG-be.at SM-COMP    COMP    3PL.DEF-lift    CM-pot    PURP  
**ba-yíko**    **á-dá-trɔ́**      **ki-fú**      **tɪ**      **la-huha**      **alí**  
 3PL-take    AM-ITIVE-put.on    CM-fire    PURP    3PL.DEF-heat    3PL  
**kubɔ́ɛ**    **ádupí**      **e-lishí**      **ní**      **a**      **kulí**    **le-vu**      **áglɔ́**  
 little    perhaps    CM-night DEF    CFM    CONJ 3PL.DEF-catch    RECIP  
 ‘Then they said as for this, they should carry (the) pot and put it on fire to warm it a bit, perhaps in the night the rice solidified.’
270. Klíso babhtí ’ídɔ́ ní.  
**klíso**    **bá-bhtí**    **kí-dɔ́**      **ní**  
 so      3PL-do    CM-thing DEF  
 ‘Therefore they must do this.’

271. Kulí ledéfékē kídō nī<sup>86</sup> mambo kāsālā avūn' trā.  
**ku**lí **le-de-féké** **kí-dō** **ní**  
 CONJ 3PL.DEP-ITIVE-lift CM-thing DEF  
**ma**mbó **ká-sālā** **á-vi-nó** **ti-rá**  
 not.knowing CM-tortoise SM-go-COM CM-sleep  
 'Then they lifted the thing (i.e. the pot), not knowing, tortoise was asleep.'
272. Gū latrō 'itsikpīn' ifún pī kesín á ...  
**gū** **la-trō** **ki-tsikpī** **ní** **ki-fú** **ní** **pī**  
 REL 3PL.DEP CM-pot DEF CM-fire DEF CONN  
**ke-sí** **ní** **á**  
 CM-bottom DEF CFM  
 'When they put the pot on fire and the down part... (was beginning to heat up),'
273. ô! íkpas'ítsikpínīm, íkpas'ítsikpínīmī oo, íkpas'ítsikpínīmī oo, nōts'ítsikpī  
 ní oo.  
**ô** **í-kpasí** **ki-tsikpī** **ní** **kumí** **oo**  
 INTJ 1SG-be.in CM-pot DEF inside INTJ  
**í-kpasí** **ki-tsikpī** **ní** **kumí** **oo**  
 1SG-be.in CM-pot DEF inside INTJ  
**nó-tsí** **kí-tsikpī** **ní** **oo**  
 2PL-take.off CM-pot DEF INTJ  
 'oh! I am in the pot, I am in the pot, I am in the pot, take the pot off the fire'
274. Pī lats'itsikpī ní p'íál'ááhwa hlohlohlo p'itsikpín íwólí n'ual'ahwa ní...  
 agboyaa.  
**pī** **la-tsí** **ki-tsikpī** **ní**  
 CONN 3PL.DEP-take.off CM-pot DEF  
**pī** **kalí** **ká-á-hwā** **hlohlohlo**  
 CONN 3SG.IND SM-PRSPROG-move IDEO  
**pī** **ki-tsikpī** **ní** **kí-wólí** **ní** **kalí** **ka-hwa** **ní**  
 CONN CM-pot DEF SM-fall COM 3SG.IND SM-move TOP  
**agboyaa**  
 IDEO.sound  
 'When they took the pot from the fire with him moving in it (then) the pot fell... (with a loud noise).'
275. Kitsikpī yě, béédī úsālā.

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<sup>86</sup> The performer said **y'ání** 'this one' which was corrected to **kídō ní** 'the thing' during the transcription.

**ki-tsikpĩ yě bé-é-dĩ ká-sālā**  
 CM-pot break 3PL-PRSPROG-look CM-tortoise  
 ‘The pot breaks, they are looking at tortoise.’

276. Ô! kásālā, w’ɔbhutĩ ’íbúí uníí!  
**ô ká-sālā wó ɔ-bhutĩ ki-búí ɪ-ní**  
 INTJ CM-tortoise 2SG.IND SM-do CM-matter AM-PROX  
 ‘Oh! Tortoise, you did this thing?’

277. Kulí adzinúvōn áló n’íwĩ gĩ etsódz’avĩ y’enĩ nĩ y’akā ’kō.  
**kulí a-dzinúvō ní á-ló nĩ ki-wĩ**  
 CONJ CM-girl DEF SM-get.up COM CM-shame  
**gĩ é-tsódzi a-vĩ yĩ e-nĩ nĩ**  
 REL 3SG.DEP-return SM-go 3SG-IND CM-mother COM  
**yĩ á-kā ɔ.kō**  
 3SG-IND CM-father place  
 ‘And the girl got up with shame and went back to her parents place.’

274. Gĩ banḡaĩ báló átónō kásālā.  
**gĩ ba-nō a-ní bá-ló bá-tónō**  
 REL CM.PL-person AM-PROX SM-get.up SM-follow  
**ká-sālā**  
 CM-tortoise  
 ‘Then these people rose up upon him.’

275. Ô, kibroe nîní, kibroe nîní, kibroe nîní!  
**ô ki-búí qúwē nú ɪ-ní**  
 INTJ CM-matter which COP AM-PROX  
**ô ki-búí qúwē nú ɪ-ní**  
 INTJ CM-matter which COP AM-PROX  
**ô ki-búí qúwē nú ɪ-ní**  
 INTJ CM-matter which COP AM-PROX  
 ‘Oh! what is this?, What is this?, What is this?’

276. Kulí kásālā etú ’kóeyĩ nĩ ɔmaním.  
**kulí ká-sālā e-tú e-kóeyĩ ní ɔ-ma**  
 CONJ CM-tortoise SM-pack.out SM-exit LOC CM-town  
**nĩ kumĩ**  
 DEF in  
 ‘And tortoise packed out of town.’

277. Kulí ómō kásālē ’ēklô obón ní ní,  
**kulí ó-mō ká-sālā kɪ-klô o-bón ní ní**  
 CONJ 2SG-see CM-tortoise CM-shell CM-today DEF TOP  
 ‘Therefore, when you see tortoise’s shell today,’

278. tklí gɪ kɪbluxɔ́é nɪ gɪ betu yɪ pétéé,  
**t-klí gɪ kɪ-bhluxɔ́é nɪ gɪ be-tu yɪ pétéé**  
 CM-there REL CM-ladle DEF REL 3PL-hit 3SG all  
 ‘where the ladle hit,’
279. kɪl’ebi nɪ pétéé al’áfi kásāl’iede ooo.  
**kɪl’ é-bɪ nɪ pétéé alí a-lí ká-sālā**  
 3SG.IND CM.PL-scar DEF all 3SG.IND SM-be.at CM-tortoise  
**ke-de ooo**  
 CM-back UFP  
 ‘all the marks are on his back.’
280. Kulí kó sí nɪ kásāl’iede katsa idi nɪ pétéé oo óbótón’obón.  
**kulí kó sí nɪ ká-sālā ke-de ka-tsa**  
 3SG.IND cause COMP TOP CM-tortoise CM-back SM-draw  
**i-di nɪ pétéé oo ó-bótón’ o-bón**  
 CM.PL-line DEF all CFM 2SG-VENT-follow CM-today  
 ‘That is why the back of tortoise has lines up till today.’
281. Klíso, ót’osí aní kásālā buyíkɔ́ y’aáko kídɔ́ gbɪgblā pɪpɪ, ɛɛ, kídɔ́ gbɪgblā  
 ɲɲa aáko ehú ahɔ́ ’uté nɪ,  
**klíso ó-ti ɔ-sí aní ká-sālā bu-yíkɔ́**  
 so 2SG-know SM-COMP NEGCL CM-tortoise CM-take  
**yɪ a-yíkɔ́ kɪ-dɔ́ gbɪgblā pɪ-pɪ**  
 3SG.IND SM-take CM-thing big RED-want  
**ɛɛ kɪ-dɔ́ gbɪgblā ɲɪ-ɲa á-yíkɔ́ e-hú a-hɔ́**  
 INTJ CM-thing big RED-eat SM-take SM-hit CM-hand  
**kɪ-té nɪ**  
 CM-chest DEF  
 ‘That is why had it not been that tortoise was given in to greed and gluttony,’
282. tsyínā lóó kásālā y’uyísɔ́ ’ha lɔ́dɔ́tsyáí.  
**tsyínā lóó ká-sālā yɪ bu-yísɔ́ ɔ-ha**  
 otherwise ADD CM-tortoise 3SG.IND CM-handsomeness CM-group  
**lɔ́-dɔ́-tsyáí**  
 3SG-ITIVE-be.left.over  
 ‘his good looks would have been hard to beat.’
283. Tsyínā lóó akagbání ekus’edzini, ekus’edzin’eyí, ekus’edzēyí.  
**tsyínā lóó a-ka-gbání e-kusí e-dzini**  
 otherwise ADD 3SG-PERS-marry CM-king CM-wife  
**e-kusí e-dzini e-yí e-kusí e-dzeyí**  
 CM-king CM-wife CM-chlid CM-king CM-daughter

‘Otherwise, he would still have been married to the king’s daughter, the princess.’

284. Tsyínā lóó bakalí obón ní é óó.

**tsyínā lóó ba-ka-lí o-bón ní é óó**  
 otherwise ADD 3PL-PERS-be.at CM-today DEF UFP UFP  
 ‘Otherwise, they would still have been there today.’

285. Kliso ní a, wə anō ólī, kídō nōn gɪ lāsɪ latbɪhɪ ko ní ní tɪbhɪtʰ?

**kliso ní a wə a-nō ó-lī kí-dō nō**  
 so TOP CFM 2SG.IND CM.person SM-be.at CM-thing wh.ever  
**ní gɪ la-sí la-tɪ-bhɪtʰ ko ní ní**  
 DEF REL 3PL.DEP-say 3PL.DEP-NEG1-do just TOP TOP  
**tɪ-bhɪtʰ**  
 NEG1-do  
 ‘Therefore, as a person, if you are there and there is something forbidden,  
 do not do it.’

286. Bási ɔdɪza kɪvū tʰɔbɔŋa ko ní ní gɪ latɪtʰ ʼedōn elú ko

**bá-sí ɔ-dɪ-za kí-vū tɪ**  
 3PL-say 2SG-ITIVE-be.at.NPRES CM-tomorrow COMP  
**ɔ-bɔ-ŋa ko ní ní gɪ la-tɪ-tʰ**  
 2SG-FUT-eat just TOP TOP REL 3PL.DEP-PERF-cook  
**kí-dō ní be-lú ko**  
 CM-thing DEF 3PL-put just  
 As the food has already been prepared if they say wait and eat  
 it tomorrow (just wait).’

287. Kídō nōn gɪ ɔsʰɔbhɪtʰ ko, bhɪtʰ ʼulɪ tɪ lɪ ná óó.

**kí-dō nō ní gɪ ɔ-sí ɔ-bhɪtʰ ko**  
 CM-thing wh.ever DEF REL 2SG-say SM-do just  
**bhɪtʰ kɪlɪ tɪ lɪ-ná óó**  
 do 3SG COMP 3SG.DEP-be.sufficient UFP  
 Whatever you want to do, do it the right way.’

288. Mʰɔdzídziésí, mʰɔdzídziábhā,

**mí ɔ-dzɪdɪ ke.sí mí ɔ-dzɪdɪ kábhā**  
 1SG.IND CM-story under 1SG.IND CM-story top  
 ‘This is the head and tail of my story.’

289. ɔfítɪ klumí, ɔza klumí, okpókpo ʼɔbɔnɔ, ɔbɔnɔ tséj.

**ɔfítɪ klumí ɔza klumí okpókpo bubɔnɔ ɔbɔnɔ tséj**  
 ??? ??? ??? ??? ??? ??? ??? IDEO  
 [A formula for ending a story]

290. Ayígoo.  
**ayígoo**  
 ‘well.done’

291. Yagoo.  
**Yagoo**  
 ‘Response’

### 13.2 Tɔgbœmɪ akpalí telí ‘Some proverbs in Tafi’

Proverbs are wise sayings which are used to give advice or to tell people something about human life and problems in general. The proverbs were provided by Nelson Agbley who is about 66 years old and Beatrice Amodza who is about 78.

01. Ɔtsrí kəkulɔ̃ ɔl'ɔvɔ aput'otiti ɔɖzyudzyɔ ní.  
**ɔ-tsrí kəkulɔ̃ ɔl' ɔ-vɔ a-putɔ**  
 CM-foot crooked 3SG.IND SM-besmeared.with CM.PL-mud  
**o-titi ɔ-dzyudzyɔ ní**  
 SM-smear CM-straight DEF  
 ‘It is the crooked leg that besmears the straight one with mud.’

Interpretation: The misdeeds of a bad relation will have an adverse effect on an innocent one.

02. Ɔtsrɪ tsyí ishú ɔhɔi tsyí ishú.  
**ɔ-tsrí tsyí i-shú ɔ-hɔi tsyí i-shú**  
 CM-leg also CM-body CM-arm also CM-body  
 ‘The leg is a part of the body equally so is the arm.’

Interpretation: Every member of the community deserves due regard.  
 OR All members of the community should be treated equally.

03. Aní nyɔ́é kú nɪ bɔ́é gú.  
**aní nyɔ́é kú nɪ bɔ́é gú**  
 NEGCL nose develop COM tobacco sniff  
 OR  
 aní kánā gɪ lekú 'íyĩntɔ́ nɪ légu asrān.  
**aní ká-nā gɪ le-kú kɪ-yĩntɔ́ nɪ**  
 NEGCL CM-manner REL 3PL.DEP-develop CM-nose COM  
**lé-gu a-srā ní**  
 3PL.DEP-sniff CM-tobacco DEF  
 ‘The size of the nose does not determine the amount of snuff to be sniffed.’

-A normal pinch of snuff is sufficient even if one has a nose of prodigious size.

Interpretation: We must exercise moderation in all things.

04. Agudũ ágiganı tsyí áfĩ ɖɔɖɔ.  
**a-gudũ á-giganı tsyí á-fĩ ɖɔɖɔ**  
 CM-bear SM-be.strong also SM-defecate slowly  
 ‘Even though the bear is a powerful animal it is known to defecate slowly.’

Interpretation: We should not overdo things.

05. Elishĩ até ’ékpá.  
**e-lishĩ a-tá kĩ-kpá**  
 CM-night SM-swell CM-knot  
 ‘The night has a lumpy knot to it.’

Interpretation: We should be careful about saying secret things in the night as the dark may be hiding an eavesdropper.

OR

Walls have ears, so be careful when saying secret things in the night.

06. Anóvĩ ámo tsyí bésĩ éshishe ámo tsyí bésĩ.  
**a-nóvĩ á-mo tsyí bésĩ é-shishe á-mo tsyí bésĩ**  
 CM-child SM-see also 3PL-run CM-RED.old SM-see also  
 3PL-run  
 ‘Even if the one who spotted the approaching danger and alerts others is a child we may all run for our lives.’

Interpretation: We may run for our lives even if the one who spotted the danger is a mere child.

07. ɔkɔ́ tódúkúpó láshĩ ’elú g’lube ’efĩ.  
**ɔ-kɔ́ to-ɖukúpó lá-shĩ be-lú gɪ**  
 CM-place AM-one 3PL.DEP-urinate 3PL-put.down REL  
**lu-bá kɪ-fĩ**  
 3SG.DEP-come CM-lather  
 ‘It is by urinating at one place that lather is formed.’

Interpretation: We get the desired result when we concentrate on one activity.

08. Kepi 'ibúí 'tídi an5 'unú?.

**ke-pí ki-búí kɪ-tí-dɪ a-n5 bu-nú**  
 CM-home CM-matter SM-NEG1-surpass CM-person CM-limit  
 'A home problem does not defy all solutions.'

Interpretation: In the comfort of (the) home, one has the leisure to try many more alternatives or solutions.

09. Ónúgɪ kihuí duya kede líyí.

**ónú.gɪ ki-huí duya ke-de lí-yí**  
 COND CM-trap spring CM-back 3SG.DEP-show.up  
 'If a trap springs, it moves backwards.'

Interpretation: Win or lose, one always comes back home.

10. Itúkpé tɪ́ kasí 'óbobo.

**i-túkpé tɪ́ í-kasí bú-bobo**  
 CM-bullet 3PL.IND SM-show CM-bow  
 'It is the level of the flying bullets that determines how low one must bow.'  
 Interpretation: Every problem provides a suggested solution.

11. Kedzi kal' ádó ákpí 'ítrékpú.

**ke-dzi kalí ká-dó ká-kpí ki-trekpú**  
 CM-rat 3SG.IND SM-cause SM-put.in CM-anthill  
 'It is the rat that gets an anthill involved.'  
 'When a rat makes an anthill its abode, it gets hunters to demolish the anthill.'

Interpretation: A mischief-maker will involve his family or community in reprisal action.

12. Olizat5 ónúgbúim lól5nīm ebúitibúí edekóeyí.

**o-lizat5 o-nugbu kɪmɪ ló.l5 ní kɪmɪ**  
 CM-dawn CM-mouth inside RED.smell DEF inside  
**e-búitibúí e-de-kóeyí**  
 CM.PL-word.of.wisdom SM-ITIVE-exit  
 'Out of the smelly mouth of early dawn good counsel flows.'

Interpretation: Much wisdom is heard in discourses at early dawn.

13. I-shú xúxwé so gɪ liyi 'ínfl5.

**i-shú xú.xwé so gɪ li-yi kɪ-yínfl5**  
 CM-body RED.scratch because REL 3SG.DEP-grow CM-fingernail  
 'It is for scratching the body that one grows fingernails.'  
 Interpretation: Everything we must possess is for a purpose.



14. Ágbahgba átísā adzɪ ohui ákó anɔ̃?  
**á-gbahgba á-tí-sā a-dzɪ o-hui á-kó**  
 CM-bachelor SM-NEG1-tie CM-woman CM-charm SM-give  
**a-nɔ̃**  
 CM-person  
 ‘A bachelor does not make a credible seller of love charms.’  
 Interpretation: One cannot be trusted to give what one does not have.
15. Anóvɔ̃ éyí kázhué gɪ etínyí átísó ’íálí flôgo gɪ áyúkó ákásí y’akā sí eklú  
 kal’inyí kóé?  
**a-nóvɔ̃ é-yí ká-zhué gɪ e-tí-nyí**  
 CM-child SM-kill CM-bird REL 3SG.DEP-NEG1-know  
**á-tí-só kalí flôgo gɪ á-yúkó á-kásí**  
 3SG-NEG1-pluck 3SG before REL 3SG.DEP-take SM-show  
**yí á-kā a-sí e-klú kalí ki-nyí**  
 3SG.IND CM-father SM-COMP 3SG.DEP-call 3SG.IND CM-name  
**kó yí**  
 DAT 3SG  
 ‘When a child shoots an unknown bird he must not pluck it before asking  
 his father to tell him what bird it is.’  
 Interpretation: It is unwise to tamper with a matter when one requires a  
 better informed opinion on it.
16. Áka shishe etítsiré éshúí kelí’fbē ’ibúí pɪ edebísí ákā ’sí kíúgba dza?  
**á-kā shi.she e-tí-tsiré é-shúí kelí.kibē**  
 CM-father RED.old SM-NEG1-tell CM-grandchild CM-older.time  
**ki-búí pɪ e-de-bísí á-kā a-sí**  
 CM-matter CONN 3SG.DEP-ITIVE-ask CM-father SM-COMP  
**kíúgba dza**  
 CM-truth UFP  
 ‘A wise grandchild does not seek to verify from his father what his  
 grandfather has told him about things that happened long ago.’  
 Interpretation: We must have respect for authority when it comes to  
 information.
17. Anɪ ’utsá láytko ’epú ɔwɪsí nɔ̃.  
**anɪ kɪ-tsá lá-yúkó be-pú ɔ-wɪsí**  
 NEGCL CM-needle 3PL.DEP-take SM-punch CM-axe.handle  
**nɔ̃**  
 COM  
 ‘We do not punch a hole into an axe handle with a needle.’

Interpretation: To every operation, (there is) an instrument that is appropriate.

18. Bétíkū 'íkṑṑṑsṑ ṑṑ láyṑkṑ ekṑú kewulútsúkpú?  
**bé-tí-kū** **kí-kṑṑṑsṑ** **ṑṑ** **lá-yṑkṑ**  
 3PL-NEG1-develop CM-inflated.scrotum CONN 3PL.DEF-take  
**be-kṑú** **ke-wulútsúkpú**  
 SM-hide CM-bath.pot  
 'A man cannot hide from the bath tub an inflated scrotum he has developed.'

Interpretation: There is a limit to all secrecy.

19. Onugbu odinú kíkuísí?  
**o-nugbu** **o-di-nú** **kí-kuísí**  
 CM-mouth SM-NEG2-COP CM-knee  
 'The mouth is not a knee.'

Interpretation: People will always say what is on their minds, no matter what.

20. Kitíkplī ní ḡṑ anṑn edzí ní tíḡṑ sí áfṑ otshutshuī ḡṑ laáko 'elí oturo?  
**ki-tíkplī** **ní** **ḡṑ** **a-nṑ** **ní** **e-dzí** **ní** **tí-ḡṑ**  
 CM-stool DEF REL CM-person DEF SM-sit TOP NEG1-say  
**sí** **á-fṑ** **o-tshutshuī** **ḡṑ** **la-yṑko** **kúṑ**  
 COMP 3SG.DEF-exude CM-fart REL 3PL.DEF-take 3SG  
**o-turo**  
 CM-lie  
 'We do not doubt the stool one is seated on when it declares that the person has just farted.'

Interpretation: There is always an authoritative source to every piece of information.

21. Kútṑkpú tíza ákpṑkpá ṑṑ layṑko kikutú ekumú 'íkuísí?  
**ki-tṑkpú** **tí-za** **ákpṑkpá** **ṑṑ** **la-yṑko** **ki-kutú**  
 CM-head NEG1-stay empty CONN 3PL.DEF-take CM-hat  
**be-kumú** **kí-kuísí**  
 SM-cover CM-knee  
 'We do not put the cap on the knee while the bare head lies waiting.'

Interpretation: It is wise to give to everyone his/her due place in society.

22. Tsyǎǎví nɪ y'áyakpá.  
**tsyǎǎví nɪ yí á-yakpá**  
 orphan COM 3SG.IND CM-bush  
 'To the orphan, his bush.'

Interpretation: A person deprived of a provider is always in the field and abroad trying to fend for himself.

23. Osí ní gɪ lɔlí anɔ ahɔú ɔlí layíko 'ehū éblidzya.  
**o-sí ní gɪ lɔ-lí a-nɔ a-hɔú ní**  
 CM-stick DEF REL 3SG.DEF-be.at CM-person CM-hand TOP  
**ɔlí la-yíko be-hū é-blidzya**  
 3SG.IND 3PL.DEF-take SM-hi t CM-snake  
 'It is the stick one has in hand that one uses to hit a snake.'

Interpretation: We work with the means and tools we have at our disposal.

24. Tshǎǎví étíxwí kívoló 'úxwí ko gɪ amɔ samɪ.  
**tshǎǎví é-tí-xwí kí-voló bú-xwí ko**  
 orphan SM-NEG1-be.satisfied CM-morning CM-satisfaction only  
**gɪ a-mɔ samɪ**  
 REL 3SG.DEF-see happiness  
 'The orphaned child does not rejoice over an early morning full belly.'

Interpretation: Uncertain is the condition of a motherless child.

25. Ónúgɪ ɔsí atutanyí ní étíbebí?  
**ónú.gɪ ɔ-sí a-ti-tanyí ní**  
 COND 2SG.DEF-say 3SG-NEG1-burn TOP  
**é-tí-be-bí**  
 3SG-NEG1-FUT-be.well.cooked  
 'If you do not want what you want to roast to burn it will not be done or well-cooked.'

Interpretation: To gain anything, one must be prepared to make some sacrifice.

26. Banɔ tuabhē 'eshí épídzýá étíklěñɔ ɔto 'uza.  
**ba-nɔ tu-bhā ki.shí e-pidzya é-tíklěñɔ**  
 CM.PL-person AM-two midst CM-goat SM-be.proned.to  
**ɔ-to bu-za**  
 CM-outside CM-stay  
 'A goat that is reared between two keepers apart strays very often.'

Interpretation: Anybody's responsibility is nobody's job.

27. Ósí oní ní g'ṣísí ní kùbhloxóéníésí lóṣísí ɔdo 'iesí so ótimíní ɔlí ní ɔg'ɔkpasí kùbhloxóénímí bɔbáḽ lɔbáḽ kú anɔ́ ǎmí?.
- ṣ-sí**    **o-ní**    **ní**    **gɔ**    **ṣ-sísí**    **ní**    **kɪ-bhloxóé**  
 2SG-say   CM-soup   DEF   REL   3SG.DEP-drip   LOC   CM-ladle  
**ní**    **ke.sí**    **lɔ-ti-sísí**    **ɔ-dó**    **ke.sí**    **so**  
 DEF   under   3SG.DEP-NEG1-drip   SM-fall   under   so  
**ó-ti-míní**    **ɔlí**    **ní**    **ɔ-gɔ**    **ɔ-kpasí**    **kɪ-bhloxóé**  
 2SG.DEP-DESID-lick   3SG   TOP   3SG.REL   SM-be.in   CM-ladle  
**ní**    **kɪmɪ**    **bu-báḽ**    **lɔ-báḽ**    **kú**    **a-nɔ́**    **ǎ-mí**  
 DEF   inside   CM-pour   3SG.DEP-pour   ALL   CM-person   CM-face  
 'If you insist that drips of soup under the ladle should not drop and you want to lick it as well, the soup in the ladle will spill into your eyes.'

Interpretation: We should not be greedy.

28. Tikulú w'ení y'enyínē edziní ɔsí w'ení, buni gɔ lasísí ní ekle ovutóésí dũṣṇo kením'uní?.
- ti-klú**    **wó**    **é-ní**    **yí**    **e-nyínē**    **e-dziní**  
 NEG1-call   2SG.IND   CM-mother   3SG.IND   CM-husband   CM-wife  
**ɔ-sí**    **wó**    **é-ní**    **bu-ní**    **gɔ**    **la-sísí**  
 SM-COMP   2SG.IND   CM-mother   CM-water REL   3PL.DEP-harvest  
**ní**    **e-kle**    **o-vutó**    **ke.sí**    **dɪ-sɔ́-nɔ**  
 LOC   CM-thatch   CM-roof   under   NEG2-be.equal-COM  
**ke-ní**    **kɪmɪ**    **bu-ní**  
 CM-river   inside   CM-water  
 'Do not call your mother's co-wife your mother, water collected from the eaves of the thatched hut is not the same as that from a river.'

Interpretation: However good a substitute may be, we may still miss the original or it cannot be compared to the original.

29. ɔtsrĩ kuusū nɪ ɔlí tíyíyékē.
- ɔ-tsɪ**    **kuusū**    **nɪ**    **ɔlí**    **tí-yí-yékē**  
 CM-leg   small   COM   3SG.IND   CM-RED.swell  
 'The small foot too has its swelling.'

Interpretation: To everything, the standard by which people measure it.

30. Ónúg' óféké kitukún ɔtrɔ́ kíkúísí ní ká ɔpuoyíko é.
- ónú.gɔ**    **ó-féké**    **ki-tukú**    **ní**    **ɔ-trɔ́**    **kí-kuísí**    **ní**  
 COND   2SG.DEP-lift   CM-load   DEF   SM-put.on   CM-knee   DEF  
**ká**    **ɔ-pí**    **bu-yíko**    **é**  
 then   2SG.DEP-be.good   CM-take   CFM

‘When you lift the load onto your knee it becomes easier to help you put it on your head.’

Interpretation: When one has the self-help spirit, assistance comes easily.

31. Kíwǝhǝ́n ípu tsyí trǎ kpasí ’ulím.  
**kí-wǝhǝ́n ní ki-pú tsyí ti-rá kpasí kulí kum**  
 CM-eye DEF SM-pierce also CM-sleep be.in 3SG.IND inside  
 ‘A blind eye still has sleep in it.’

Interpretation: Nature is quick to adopt to conditions.

32. Bétítsū oturoeleté ovutó ’éfú bopui lápui olím?  
**bé-tí-tsū o-turo e-leté o-vutó ki-fú**  
 3PL-NEG1-set CM-lie CM-owner CM-roof CM-fire  
**bu-pui lá-pui olí kum**  
 CM-scatter 3PL.DEF-scatter 3SG.IND inside  
 ‘We do not set fire to a dishonest person’s roof, we tear it apart.’  
 (He must be having some valuables hidden away in the roof.)

Interpretation: When you thoroughly investigate a case involving a dishonest person, you end up discovering more hidden facts.

33. Ónúgí ðeke évu wó ní y’eyíálí botí látí ní anǝ ’evuabhā.  
**ónú.gí ðeke é-vu wó ní yí e-yí-álí**  
 COND crocodile SM-catch 2SG TOP 3SG.IND CM-child-PL  
**bu-tí lá-tí ní a-nǝ ki-vu kabhā**  
 CM-crawl 3PL.DEF-crawl LOC CM-person CM-stomach top  
 ‘When a crocodile has captured you (even) baby crocs will crawl on your belly.’

Interpretation: If you are in someone’s power even the one’s children tend to treat you with scorn.

34. Bátíyíkǝ ǝhǝ kuusuǝ ’adaatsrakǝ ǝgbugblá?  
**bá-tí-yíkǝ ǝ-hǝ kuusu ní bá-dá-á-tsarakǝ**  
 3PL-NEG1-take CM-arm small DEF SM-ITIVE-PRSPROG-exchange  
**ǝgbugblá**  
 SM-big  
 ‘We do not exchange a smaller arm with a bigger one.’

Interpretation: We are advised against attacking one that is clearly more powerful than we are.

35. Kígí anǝ áŋa ní kulí bubó y’élū.

**ki-gi a-n̄ á-ŋa ní kílí bu-b̄ yí**  
 3SG-REL CM-person SM-eat TOP 3SG.IND CM-fat 3SG.IND  
**é-lū**  
 SM-form  
 ‘What you eat, it is that whose fat will form in your body.’

Interpretation: What we put in determines the end result we should expect.

36. Otúgba búgā lí.  
**o-túgba bú-gā lí**  
 CM-front CM-walk be.at  
 ‘The journey lies in the moving forward.’

Interpretation: Progress comes in pressing on.

37. An̄ ní gí átaánā kitukún y’aq̄ así kiga ní kílí ’mítá?  
**a-n̄ ní gí á-táá-nā ki-tukú**  
 CM-person DEF REL 3SG.DEP-NEG:PRSPROG-be.able CM-load  
**ní yí a-d̄ a-sí ki-ga ní kílí**  
 DEF 3SG.IND SM-say SM-COMP CM-head.pad DEF 3SG.IND  
**ki-mítá**  
 SM-be.not.good  
 ‘The one who cannot carry the load says that it is the head-pad that is not good.’

Interpretation: An unskilled artisan usually puts the blame on the tools he has to work with.

OR

A bad workman quarrels with his tools.

38. Onugbu tolí lótízŋe ’éd̄ gí onugbu bhlat̄ p’oz̄kpasā?  
**o-nugbu to-lí ló-tí-z̄-ŋa kí-d̄ gí**  
 CM-mouth AM-INDEF 3SG.DEP-NEG1-REP-eat CM-thing REL  
**o-nugbu bhlat̄ p̄ z̄-z̄-kpasā**  
 CM-mouth other CONN 3SG.DEP-REP-move  
 ‘One mouth should not be eating while another mouth should be seen moving.’

Interpretation: The real beneficiary ought to be identified.

39. Eyí n̄ ní gí así y’ení atud̄ trā elishí yí tsyí agúsí abad̄?  
**e-yí n̄ ní gí a-sí yí é-ní**  
 CM-child wh.ever DEF REL 3SG.DEP-say 3SG.IND CM-mother

**á-tí-dó**      **tí-rá**      **e-lishí**      **yí**      **tsyí**      **a-gí-sí**  
 SM-NEG1-sleep CM-sleep CM-night 3SG.IND too SM-NEG3-say  
**á-ba-dó**  
 SM-FUT-sleep  
 ‘The child who would not let its mother sleep will also not sleep.’

Interpretation: When we do good or bad we are also affected by the result.

40. An<sup>5</sup> ní gí w’ewě kpasí y’ónúgbúimí bátítá y’ ákóé?  
**a-n<sup>5</sup>**      **ní**      **gí**      **wó**      **kí-wě**      **kí-kpasí**      **yí**  
 CM-person DEF REL 2SG.IND CM-finger SM-be.in 3SG.IND  
**o-nugbu**      **kí**      **bá-tí-tá**      **yí**      **á-kóé**  
 CM-mouth inside 3PL-NEG1-throw 3SG CM-fist  
 ‘You do not knock a person on the head when your finger is in his mouth.’

Interpretation: We should always beware of our points of vulnerability.

41. Ómó tábh’eyí bátíwūsó ɔwǎ todukpóíábhā etité láwūsó?  
**ó-mó**      **tia-bha**      **e-yí**      **bá-tí-wūsó**      **ɔ-wǎ**  
 2SG-bear AM-two CM-child 3PL-NEG1-sleep CM-side  
**to-dukpó**      **kábhā**      **e-tité**      **lá-wūsó**  
 AM-one top CM-back 3PL.DEP-sleep  
 ‘When you give birth to twins you must not lie down on one side you must lie on your back.’

Interpretation: We must be fair in matters of divided responsibility.

42. Kásālā ’tímō eyí gí edéyí kíbulí?  
**ká-sālā**      **ka-tí-mō**      **e-yí**      **gí**      **e-dé-yí**  
 CM-tortoise SM-NEG1-bear CM-child REL 3SG.DEP-ITIVE-resemble  
**kí-bulí**  
 CM-snail  
 ‘The offspring of a tortoise will not resemble a snail.’

Interpretation: It is always a thing of pride to maintain one’s identity.

43. Ekus’eyí átínáwǎ akó éfleté ’éplúkpá?  
**e-kusí**      **e-yí**      **á-tí-náwǎ**      **a-kó**      **é-fleté**  
 CM-chief CM-child SM-NEG1-hurry SM-give CM-leopard  
**ke-plukpá**  
 CM-skin  
 ‘The chief’s child should not be in a hurry to see the leopard’s skin.’  
 Interpretation: Man should not hasten in life.

44. An<sup>5</sup> shishe átínyunyā 'mī kúbhūm y'ányunyā?  
**a-n<sup>5</sup>** **shi-she** **á-tí-nyunyā** **ā-mī** **kí-bhūm**  
 CM-person RED-grow SM-NEG1-frown CM-face CM-anus  
**yí** **á-nyunyā**  
 3SG.IND SM-frown  
 'An elder does not frown his face; he contorts his anus.'
- Interpretation: At a certain age, we are no longer expected to show our emotions that openly.
45. An<sup>5</sup> tedikpó átíjā exwī ko gū lādō así ɔman ɔpī?  
**a-n<sup>5</sup>** **te-dikpó** **á-tí-jā** **e-xwī** **ko** **gū**  
 CM-person AM-one SM-NEG1-eat SM-satisfy just REL  
**lā-dō** **a-sí** **ɔ-ma** **ní** **ɔ-pī**  
 3PL.DEF-say SM-COMP CM-town DEF SM-be.good  
 'One man's filled belly is not an indication that there is progress in town.'
- Interpretation: Progress must be seen in the well-being of all.
46. Kutsintōé tíédíkpó ayadī átídā kipluí eyí ní yí 'oyēm?  
**kí-tsintōé** **tíé-díkpó**<sup>87</sup> **a-yadī** **á-tí-dā**  
 CM-row.of.yam.mound AM-one CM-farmer SM-NEG1-plant  
**ki-pluí** **e-yí** **ní** **yí** **bu-ya** **kum**  
 CM-gourd CM.PL-seed LOC 3SG.IND CM-farm inside  
 'A farmer whose plot has only one row of yam mounds should not plant the seed of a calabash.'  
 (If he does the tendrils will creep into neighbouring farms.)
47. Ekpú etíyukū odziré?  
**e-kpú** **e-tí-yúkū** **o-dziré**  
 CM-corpse SM-NEG1-be.full CM-grave  
 'A corpse does not fill its grave.'
- Interpretation: Everything has its limits.
48. Ényínē 'dzíní ní gū ádí an<sup>5</sup> 'unú neenī léklū yí.  
**é-nyínē** **é-dzíní** **ní** **gū** **á-dí** **a-n<sup>5</sup>**  
 CM-husband CM-wife DEF REL 3SG.DEF-surpass CM-person  
**bu-nú** **neenī** **lé-klū** **yí**  
 CM-limit mother 3PL.DEF-call 3SG  
 'A co-wife who is too powerful for you, you address her as your mother.'

<sup>87</sup> The expected form of the numeral 'one' for the **ki**- class is **trikpo** however this was the form produced spontaneously.



Interpretation: Certain constraints do impose on us things we would not do in better circumstances.

49. Anóvō ní gɪ ákányó edí ní y'áqɔ ásí y'eni y'ényí 'ító dí.  
**a-nóvō ní gɪ á-ká-nyó e-dí ní**  
 CM-child DEF REL 3SG.DEP-NEG.PERF-roam SM-look TOP  
**yí á-qɔ á-sí yí é-ní yí**  
 3SG.IND SM-say SM-COMP 3SG.IND CM-mother 3SG.IND  
**é-nyí kɪ-tó dí**  
 SM-know CM-cook surpass  
 'The child who has never travelled says that his mother is the best cook.'

Interpretation: Lack of travel does limit a person's outlook on life.

50. lklí g' ɔmɔ kásālān tklí womúnō 'talí.  
**ɪ-klí gɪ ɔ-mɔ ká-sālā ní ɪ-klí wó**  
 CM-there REL 2SG.DEP-see CM-tortoise DEF CM-there 2SG.IND  
**o-múnō kalí**  
 SM-find 3SG  
 'It is where you saw the tortoise that you can be said to have found it.'  
 Interpretation: It is where an opportunity presents itself that we should avail ourselves of it.

51. Bátíkpi kifú ávovɔ gɪ layíko kíbuli akp'ílímí?  
**bá-tí-kpí ki-fú ávovɔ gɪ la-yíko kí-buli**  
 3PL-NEG1-set CM-fire new REL 3PL.DEP-take CM-snail  
**ba-kpí kílí kumí**  
 SM-put.in 3SG.IND inside  
 'You do not light a new fire and put a snail into it.'  
 (The juice from a roasting snail will quench a newly-lit fire.)

Interpretation: There is a right moment for every operation.

52. Ónúg' ónyí ɔsí ɔ́lǎ ní bátíf'ɔtshutshuí ní ɔhe 'eshí?  
**ónú.gɪ ó-nyí ɔ-sí ɔ-ɔ-lǎ ní**  
 COND 2SG.DEP-know SM-COMP 2SG.DEP-PRSPROG-smell TOP  
**bá-tí-fɔ o-tshutshuí ní ɔ-ha ki.shí**  
 3PL-NEG1-exude CM-fart LOC CM-group midst  
 'If you know that you have bad body odours you do not fart in public.'

Interpretation: We need self-realisation.

53. Enyí así y'ikutú tídu yí?  
**e-nyí a-sí yí ki-tukú tí-du yí**  
 CM-elephant SM-say 3SG.IND CM-load NEG1-surpass 3SG

‘The elephant said its load is not too heavy for it.’

Interpretation: One has to bear every responsibility he is faced with.

54. Bu-bhɪ tɪyɪ anɔ̃ pɪ lákpɪ kíkūgbɛ ’ɛfú?.
- |                 |              |              |           |               |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|---------------|
| <b>bu-bhɪ</b>   | <b>tɪ-yɪ</b> | <b>a-nɔ̃</b> | <b>pɪ</b> | <b>lá-kpɪ</b> |
| CM-hunger       | NEG1-kill    | CM-person    | CONN      | 3PL.DEP-set   |
| <b>kí-kūgba</b> | <b>ki-fú</b> |              |           |               |
| CM-yam.barn     | CM-fire      |              |           |               |
- ‘You don’t set fire to your yam barn because you are hungry.’
55. Súbhe ’ehlɔ̃mɪ ɔ̃ɲɛ ’elín égū ká óshuku é.
- |                |                                |              |             |           |             |           |
|----------------|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| <b>súbha</b>   | <b>kɪ-hlɔ̃mɪ</b> <sup>88</sup> | <b>ɔ̃-ɲa</b> | <b>kúlí</b> | <b>ní</b> | <b>é-gū</b> | <b>ká</b> |
| rain           | CM-plant                       | 2SG-eat      | 3SG         | TOP       | 3SG-thunder | then      |
| <b>ó-shuku</b> | <b>é</b>                       |              |             |           |             |           |
| 2SG.DEP-shiver | CFM                            |              |             |           |             |           |
- ‘When you eat the rain’s cocoyam when it thunders you will shiver.’

Interpretation: A lawless person always has a guilty conscience.

56. Agē ’etukú kulí d’iepí.
- |             |                |             |           |              |
|-------------|----------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| <b>a-gā</b> | <b>ki-tukú</b> | <b>kulí</b> | <b>dɪ</b> | <b>ke-pí</b> |
| CM-fool     | CM-load        | 3SG.IND     | go        | CM-home      |
- ‘A fool’s load reaches home.’

Interpretation: He who is wise in his own eyes never succeeds.

57. Éfū étínyí ’ívɔ̃ɛm?.
- |             |                 |                 |             |
|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|
| <b>é-fū</b> | <b>é-tí-nyí</b> | <b>kɪ-vɔ̃</b>   | <b>kɪmɪ</b> |
| CM-stranger | SM-NEG1-know    | CM-swampy.place | inside      |
- ‘A stranger does not know a swampy area during the dry season.’

Interpretation: A stranger does not know all the secrets of the community he is in so he should not take the lead in making decisions.

58. Éfū átíbo kizhué?.
- |             |                |                |
|-------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>é-fū</b> | <b>á-tí-bo</b> | <b>ki-zhué</b> |
| CM-stranger | SM-NEG1-blow   | CM-whistle     |
- ‘A stranger does not blow a whistle.’

For the interpretation of this proverb, see (57).

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<sup>88</sup> **Súbha kɪhlɔ̃mɪ** is a type of plant like the cocoyam plant.

### 13.3 Adzyo ‘Riddles’

Riddles are verbal puzzles or word games (which are not straightforward) in which statements are put forward in challenge and responses are offered. When one is presented with a riddle, s/he is required to think deep in order to figure out what is being described. Thus, children learn a lot through the telling of riddles even though they are used primarily for entertainment.

In Tafi, during a riddle telling session, the people do not necessarily need to divide themselves into groups. The riddle is given and whoever knows the answer gives it. The expression in (A) illustrates how riddles are started and (B) is the response.

**Adzyo** is a loan word from Ewe.

- A: Adzyo kó ‘úńǎ oo  
**a-dzyo kó wúnǎ oo**  
 CM-riddle DAT 2PL UFP  
 ‘A riddle to you.’

- B: Kɔ y’ábá.  
**kó yí á-bá**  
 let 3SG.IND SM-come  
 ‘Let it come.’

When a correct answer is given, the person who posed the riddle responds with the statement in either (C) or (D). However, when the answer is not correct, the response is as shown in (E). When the person responding to the riddle does the give the correct answer, others are also given the opportunity to respond.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>C. Óvu yí.<br/> <b>ó-vu yí</b><br/>         2SG-catch 3SG<br/>         ‘You’ve got it.’<br/>         (Lit.: ‘You have caught it.’)</p> | <p>D. Óyíkɪ yí.<br/> <b>ó-yíkɪ yí</b><br/>         2SG-get 3SG<br/>         ‘You have got it.’</p> |
|---|--|

- E: Anɪ ’ana.  
**aní ká-nā**  
 NEGCL CM-manner  
 ‘That is not it.’

The following are the riddles collected.

01. Oma tol’ ɔlí, kidzo má ɔlí shú.  
**ɔ-ma to-lí ɔ-lí ki-dzo má ɔlí**  
 CM-town AM-INDEF SM-be.at CM-road be.at:NEG 3SG.IND

**shú**

surface

‘There is a town, there is no road leading to it.’

Answer: **Kídzē**

‘Egg.’

02. Ányí tel’ alí, bákákp’ ohui ní yí shú átítóní ’ídzó.  
**á-nyí** **te-lí** **a-lí** **bá-ká-kpí** **o-hui**  
 CM-man AM-INDEF SM-be.at 3PL-NEG.PERF-put.on CM-rope  
**ní** **yí** **shú** **á-tí-tónó** **ki-dzo**  
 LOC 3SG.IND surface 3SG-NEG1-start CM-road  
 ‘There is a man unless a rope is attached to him he cannot embark on a journey.’

Answer: **Kítsá**

‘Needle’

03. M’akā áfátí ’égbu ákóm, ízeialabhā kō kadzyá.  
**Mí** **á-kā** **á-fátí** **ke-gbu** **á-kó** **mí**  
 1SG.IND CM-father SM-carve CM-stool SM-give 1SG  
**í-za** **kalí** **kábhā** **ko** **ka-dzyá**  
 1SG-sit 3SG.IND top just 3SG-break.off  
 ‘My father made a stool for me when I sit on it then it breaks off.’

Answer: **Ogblódṣ/ Otúhlō**

‘Mushroom’

04. Anṣ tel’ alí, áhū tatá y’éyi pō trikpóimī ko y’ébī yiyo agano.  
**a-nṣ** **te-lí** **a-lí** **á-wṣhū** **ta-tá** **yí**  
 CM-person AM-INDEF SM-be.at CM.PL-eye AM-three 3SG.IND  
**é-yi** **pō** **tri-kpó** **kum** **ko** **yí** **é-bī.yiyo**  
 SM-germinate but AM-one in just 3SG.IND SM-cry  
**a-gano**  
 SM-pass.through  
 ‘There is someone who has three eyes but sheds tears through only one eye.’

Answer: **Kihu**

‘Palm kernel’

05. Ánṣ tel’ alí, ényéwulú ko ká éébī yiyo é.  
**á-nṣ** **te-lí** **a-lí** **é-nyé-wulú** **ko** **ká**  
 CM-person AM-INDEF SM-be.at 3SG-CERT-bath just then

**é-é-bi.yiyo** **é**  
 3SG.DEP-PRSPROG-cry CFM  
 ‘There is someone, whenever s/he takes a bath then s/he is weeping.’

Answer: **Okwěnsá**  
 ‘Bathing sponge’

06. Kídō til’ ulí, óóbū n’ulíshú ká kiíkpe é, óóytko ’plíno ’elí ká kiíféke é.  
**kí-dō** **ti-lí** **ki-lí** **ó-ó-bū** **ní**  
 CM-thing AM-INDEF SM-be.at 2SG-PRSPROG-remove LOC  
**kuí** **shú** **ká** **ki-í-kpe** **é**  
 3SG.IND surface then 3SG.DEP-PRSPROG-become.plenty CFM  
**ó-ó-ytko** **o-plíno** **kuí**  
 2SG-PRSPROG-take SM-add 3SG  
**ká** **ki-í-béke** **é**  
 then 3SG.DEP-PRSPROG-finish CFM  
 ‘There is something, if you take part from it then it enlarges but if you add to it then it diminishes.’

Answer: **Ozi**  
 ‘Hole’

07. Íkp’ánō sí édeklú Tsě ákóm, Tsě ébuso anō ní g’íkpiń ’úbá.  
**í-kpí** **a-nō** **sí** **é-de-klú** **Tsě** **á-ko**  
 1SG-send CM-person COMP 3SG.DEP-ITIVE-call Tsě SM-give  
**mí** **Tsě** **é-buso** **a-nō** **ní** **gu** **í-kpí**  
 1SG Tsě SM-do.first CM-person DEF REL 1SG.DEP-send  
**ní** **bu-bá**  
 TOP CM-come  
 ‘I sent someone to call me Tsě but Tsě arrived before the person.’

Answer: **Ogodi**  
 ‘Coconut’

08. Kení tiel’ alí, kídō bhulí til’ ínáyáwólí kú ’íálím ko ká keyí é.  
**ke-ní** **tie-lí** **ka-lí** **kí-dō** **bhulí** **ti-lí**  
 CM-river AM-INDEF SM-be.at CM-thing small AM-INDEF  
**ki-nyá-wólí** **kú** **kalí** **kumí** **ko** **ká** **ke-yí**  
 SM-CERT-fall ALL 3SG.IND in just then 3SG.DEP-overflow  
**é**  
 CFM  
 ‘There is a river, whenever something small falls into it then it overflows.’

Answer: **Kíwǎhū**  
 ‘Eye’

09. Oma tol' olí, kidzo bhulí trikpó ko kulí l'ólíshú.  
**o-ma to-lí o-lí ki-dzo bhulí tri-kpó ko**  
 CM-town AM-INDEF SM-be.at CM-road small AM-one just  
**kulí l' olí shú**  
 3SG.IND be.at 3SG.IND surface  
 'There is a town, it has only one narrow road leading to it.'
- Answer: **Kipluí aló tumpá**  
 'Gourd or bottle'
10. Adzī tel' alí, átíd'iením pɔ buni za y'íétsúkpúúm 'ibenyéébe.  
**a-dzī te-lí a-lí á-tí-dí ke-ní kum pɔ**  
 CM-woman AM-INDEF SM-be.at 3SG-NEG1-go CM-river in but  
**bu-ní za yí ke-tsukpú kum**  
 CM-water be.at:NPRES 3SG.IND CM-pot in  
**ki-be-nyáá-ki-be**  
 CM-time-DISTR-CM-time  
 'There is a woman, she never goes to fetch water (at the riverside) but she always has water in her pot.'
- Answer: **Ogódí**  
 'Coconut'
11. Adzī tel' alí, átíd'iením pɔ éwulú 'ibenyéébe.  
**a-dzī te-lí a-lí á-tí-dí ke-ní kum pɔ**  
 CM-woman AM-INDEF SM-be.at 3SG-NEG1-go CM-river in but  
**é-wulú ki-be-nyáá-ki-be**  
 3SG-bath CM-time-DISTR-CM-time  
 'There is a woman, she does not go to fetch water (at the riverside) but she always takes her bath.'
- Answer: **Osubha**  
 'Hearth'
12. Ekusí tel' aza, ónúgí etsí ní y'ísígbé wɔ y'ódzir'íábhā kibenyéébe.  
**e-kusí te-lí á-za ónú.gí e-tsí ní**  
 CM-king AM-INDEF SM-be.at:NPRES COND 3SG.DEP-die TOP  
**yí kí-sígbé wɔ yí o-dziré kábhā**  
 3SG.IND CM-ring remain 3SG.IND CM-grave top  
**ki-be-nyáá-ki-be**  
 CM-time-DISTR-CM-time  
 'There was a king, when he died his ring remained on his grave.'
- Answer: **Kíragbugbu**  
 'Millipede'

13. Án5 tel'alí, gɪ lam5é ko ékúmū 'ikutú édzí kegbunabhā.  
**á-n5** **te-lí** **a-lí** **gɪ** **la-m5** **yí**  
 CM-person AM-INDEF SM-be.at REL 3PL.DEF-bear 3SG  
**ko** **é-kúmū** **ki-kutú** **é-dzí** **ke-gbu** **ní** **kábhā**  
 just 3SG-wear CM-hat SM-sit CM-chair DEF top  
 'There is someone who was born with a hat on his head and is sitting on a chair.'

Answer: **Ablendě**  
 'Pineapple'

### 13.4 Budzo tót5 'Preparation of palm oil'

Palm oil plays an important role in the everyday life of the Tafi people. It is produced for both domestic and commercial purposes. Palm nuts are very useful to every family because of its advantages. The juice extracted from the flesh of palm nuts can be used to prepare soup or palm oil. To prepare palm oil, the palm nuts are boiled, allowed to cool, pounded, and mixed with water. The mixture is kneaded gradually until the oil starts rising to the surface of the water. The oil is then removed from the surface of the water into a pot and put on fire until is well cooked. It is then removed from the fire and allowed to cool. Beatrice Amoadza (Age 78) describes how palm oil is prepared. The recording was made in her home on the 13<sup>th</sup> of October, 2009.

01. Kánā gɪ lát5 budzo ní Baagbo  
**ká-nā** **gɪ** **lá-t5** **bu-dzo** **ní** **Baagbo**  
 CM-manner REL 3PL.DEF-cook CM-palm.oil LOC Tafi  
 '(This is) how palm oil is prepared by the Tafis.'
02. 5bɔpɪ elí, buní, unyí, osubha, agbě, kesisí, osísí, ɔs5ě, aló kushɔé,  
 ɔd5ěbhluxɔé, bumɔ, gaze nɪ ɔnyunyɔsí.  
**ɔ-bɔ-pɪ** **e-lí** **bu-ní** **ɪ-nyí**  
 2SG-FUT-look.for CM.PL-palm.nut CM-water CM-firewood  
**o-subha** **a-gbě** **ke-sísí** **o-sísí** **ɔ-s5ě** **aló**  
 CM-hearth CM-bowl CM-mortar CM-pestle CM-strainer DISJ  
**ki-shɔ-é** **ɔ-d5ěbhluxɔé** **bu-mwɪ** **gaze** **nɪ**  
 CM-basket-DIM CM-metal.ladle CM-salt metal.bowl COM  
**ɔ-nyunyɔ.sí**  
 CM-kneading.stick  
 You will look for palm nuts, water, firewood, hearth, a pan, a mortar, pestle, colander or a small basket, metal ladle, salt, metal pot and a kneading stick.'
03. Kɪɪ sɪ t'ɔto elín odzu layɔ pétée flôgo t'otú álí.

**ki-li**      **sí**      **ti**      **ɔ-tɔ**      **e-lí**  
 3SG-be.at    COMP    COMP    2SG.DEP-cook    CM.PL-palm.fruit  
**ní**      **o-dzu**      **la-yɔ**      **pétéé** **flôgo**  
 DEF    SM-put.down    3PL.DEP-cool    all    before  
**ti**      **o-tú**      **alí**  
 COMP    2SG.DEP-pound    3PL  
 ‘You will have to boil the palm fruit, put it down to cool before pounding it.’

04. **Kliso**    **óbotégú**    **ótó**    **élin**    **kívoló**    **ɔwólago**    **ká**    **ótú**    **alí**    **é**  
 so    2SG.DEP-FUT-be.able    SM-cook    CM.PL-palm.fruit    DEF  
**kí-vuló**    **ɔ-wólago**    **ká**    **ótú**    **alí**    **é**  
 CM-morning    CM-evening    then    2SG.DEP-pound    3PL    CFM  
 ‘So you can boil the palm fruit in the morning then you pound it in the evening’
05. **alóó**    **ɔ-bɔ-tɔ**    **e-lí**    **ní**    **ɔ-wólago**  
 DISJ    2SG-FUT-cook    CM.PL-palm.fruit    DEF    CM-evening  
**ɔ-ló**    **o-lizato**    **píníí**    **o-tú**    **alí**  
 SM-get.up    CM-dawn    IDEO    SM-pound    3PL  
 ‘or you will boil the palm fruit in the evening (and) you rise up very early at dawn to pound it.’
06. **Ótú**    **alí**    **békē**    **ko**    **ó-bú**    **alí**    **kpí**    **a-gbē**  
 2SG-pound    3PL    COMPL    just    2SG-remove    3PL    put.in    CM-bowl  
**kumi**  
 inside  
 ‘After pounding it, you pour it into a pan.’
07. **Óshuí**    **bu-ní**    **kubóé**    **ɔ-kpí**    **ká**  
 2SG-fetch    CM-water    little    SM-put.in    then  
**ɔ-yíko**    **ɔ-nyunyɔ-sí**    **ká**    **ɔ-nyunyɔ**    **é**  
 2SG.DEP-take    CM-kneading-stick    then    2SG.DEP-knead    CFM  
 ‘You add a little water then you use a kneading stick to knead it.’
08. **Óbɔɔnyunyɔ**    **ɔbɔnání**    **kibe**    **nô**    **n’íbe**    **g’ɔmɔ**    **’sí**    **élin**    **étén**    **’uló**.  
 2SG-FUT-REP-knead    2SG-FUT-reach    CM-time    wh.ever  
**ní**    **ki-be**    **gɔ**    **ɔ-mɔ**    **ɔ-sí**    **e-lí**  
 DEF    CM-time    REL    2SG.DEP-see    SM-COMP    CM.PL-palm.fruit



**ní é-tén̄s bu-l̄s**

DEF SM-start CM-rise

‘You will knead it again and again until the time that the stuff starts rising.’

09. Ónúgí léétén̄s ’ólón k’óshui ’un’ók’pí ’ál’íábhā.

**ónú.gí lé-é-tén̄s bu-l̄s ní ká**  
COND 3PL.DEF-PRSPROG-start CM-rise TOP then

**ó-shui bu-ní ó-kpí alí kábhā**  
2SG.DEF-fetch CM-water SM-put.in 3PL top

‘When it starts rising you then add water.’

10. Óbóbálí ’un’ók’pí ’ál’íábhā, ɔzɔnyunyo ’ebóé, ’íbóé, ’íbóé, ’íbóé.

**ó-bó-balí bu-ní ó-kpí alí kábhā**  
2SG-FUT-pour CM-water SM-put.in 3PL top

**ɔ-zɔ-nyunyo kíbóé kíbóé kíbóé kíbóé**  
2SG-REP-knead little little little little

‘You will pour water on it and knead (it) gradually again and again.’

11. G’ómɔ ’sí buní ní tsyáká n̄ elín pétéé ko

**gí ɔ-mɔ ɔ-sí bu-ní ní tsyáká**  
REL 2SG.DEF-see SM-COMP CM-water DEF mix

**n̄ e-lí ní pétéé ko**  
COM CM.PL-palm.fruit DEF all just

‘When the water is well mixed with the stuff’

12. ɔmɔ ’sí budzɔ ní l̄s bá bunín̄ ām̄ín̄m̄.

**ɔ-mɔ ɔ-sí bu-dzɔ ní l̄s bá**  
2SG-see SM-COMP CM-palm.oil DEF rise come

**bu-ní ní ām̄í ní kum̄**  
CM-water DEF CM-face DEF inside

‘you see that the oil rises on top of the water.’

13. Ká oténí ’udzɔn̄ ’uyí kpí gazéím̄ é.

**ká o-téní bu-dzɔ ní bu-yí kpí**  
then 2SG.DEF-start CM-palm.oil DEF CM-scrape put.in

**gazé kum̄ é**  
metal.pot inside CFM

‘Then you start removing the oil into a metal pot.’

14. Óbɔyí udzɔn̄ pétéé ókpí gazéím̄ békē ní,

**ó-bɔ-yí bu-dzɔ ní pétéé ó-kpí**  
2SG-FUT-scrape CM-palm.oil DEF all SM-put.in

**gazé kum̄ békē ní**  
metal.pot inside COMPL TOP

‘After removing the oil into a metal pot,’

15. bunínímí óbómó 'sí ehu nɪ tɪnɔ kpasí  
**bu-ní ní kumí ó-bo-mo ɔ-sí**  
 CM-water DEF inside 2SG-FUT-see SM-COMP  
**e-hu nɪ tɪ-nó kpasí**  
 CM.PL-palm.kernel COM CM-chaff be.in  
 'you will see that palm kernel and chaff are in the water.'
16. Óbóká tɪnɔn pétée óbú ní bunínímí  
**ó-bo-ká tɪ-nó ní pétée ó-bú ní**  
 2SG-FUT-squeeze CM-chaff DEF all SM-remove LOC  
**bu-ní ní kumí**  
 CM-water DEF inside  
 'You will squeeze all the chaff out of the water.'
17. Óbobu ehu nɪ tsyí pétée ní bunínímí k'ɔkpí kashóémí  
**ó-bo-bú e-hu ní tsyí pétée ní**  
 2SG-FUT-remove CM.PL-palm.kernel DEF too all LOC  
**bu-ní ní kumí ká ɔ-kpí ka-shó kumí**  
 CM-water DEF inside then 2SG.DEF-put.in CM-basket inside  
 'You will remove all the palm kernels also from the water into a basket.'
18. Otsyíná buní úlílín tsyí.  
**o-tsyíná bu-ní ú-lílíní tsyí**  
 2SG-turn CM-water AM-DIST also  
 'You pour out that water also.'
19. Flôgo g'òbotsyíná 'lí ní óbotsódzì nɪ tɪnɔ élíliní ɔka pétée.  
**flôgo gɪ ó-bo-tsyíná bulí ní ó-bo-tsódzì-nɪ**  
 before REL 2SG.DEF-FUT-turn 3SG TOP 2SG-FUT-return-COM  
**tɪ-nó í-lílíní ɔ-ká pétée**  
 CM-chaff AM-DIST SM-squeeze all  
 'Before you will pour out that water, you will have to re-squeeze that chaff.'
20. Óómó 'sí budzɔ 'ébɔɛ zibá buníní ámínímí.  
**ó-bo-mo ɔ-sí bu-dzɔ kubóé zɪ-bá**  
 2SG-FUT-see SM-COMP CM-palm.oil little REP-come  
**bu-ní ní á-mí ní kumí**  
 CM-water DEF CM-face DEF inside  
 'You will see that there is still some oil on top of the water.'
21. Óyɪ budzɔn tsy' ɔkpí bug'ɔtíyí níábhā,  
**ó-yɪ bu-dzɔ ní tsyí ɔ-kpí**  
 2SG-scrape CM-palm.oil DEF also SM-put.in  
**bu-gɪ ɔ-tí-yí ní kábhā**  
 3SG-REL SM-PERF-scrape DEF top

‘You remove that oil also and add (it) to that which you have removed,’

22. K’otsí otsyínā buní ní é.  
**ká** **otsí** **o-tsyínā** **bu-ní** **ní** **é**  
 then now 2SG.DEF-turn CM-water DEF CFM  
 ‘it’s now that you pour out the water.’
23. Budzo ní gɪ ɔyɪ odzu gazéníṃ ní, otsódzín’ ɔl’ɔkpí agběém  
**bu-dzo** **ní** **gɪ** **ɔ-yɪ** **o-dzu** **gazé**  
 CM-oil DEF REL 2SG.DEF-scrape SM-put.down metal.pot  
**ní** **kumɪ** **ní**  
 DEF inside TOP  
**o-tsódzɪ-nɪ** **bulí** **ɔ-kpí** **a-gbě** **kumɪ**  
 2SG-return-COM 3SG SM-put.in CM-bowl inside  
 ‘The oil that you removed and put in the metal pot, you pour it into a pan again’
24. k’ɔzɔbalt bun’ ɔkpí é.  
**ká** **ɔ-zɔ-balt** **bu-ní** **ɔ-kpí** **é**  
 then 2SG.DEF-REP-pour CM-water SM-put.in CFM  
 ‘then you add water again.’
25. Bun’úlílín wɔ́k’oplú budzoń  
**bu-ní** **ú-lílíní** **wɔ́** **ɔ-yíko** **o-plú** **bu-dzo** **ní**  
 CM-water AM-DIST 2SG.IND SM-take SM-wash CM-palm.oil DEF  
 ‘You will use that water to wash the oil (i.e. clear it of all the dirt)’
26. k’òtsí ɔyɪ ’ɔlɪ pétéé ɔ́k’ ɔkpí gazéím,  
**ká** **otsí** **ɔ-yɪ** **bulí** **pétéé** **ɔ-yíko** **ɔ-kpí**  
 then now 2SG.DEF-scrape 3SG all SM-take SM-put.in  
**gazé** **kumɪ**  
 metal.pot inside  
 ‘you now remove it and pour it back into the metal pot,’
27. ká ɔféké ɔ́trɔ ’efú é  
**ká** **ɔ-féké** **ɔ-trɔ** **ki-fú** **é**  
 then 2SG.DEF-lift SM-put.on CM-fire CFM  
 ‘then you lift (it) and put (it) on fire.’
28. ɔ́trɔ ’ɔlɪ nɪ ’ifúń ɔ́bɔza ’ɔl’ɔbhā.  
**ɔ-trɔ** **bulí** **ní** **ki-fú** **ní** **ɔ-bɔ-za** **bulí** **ɔbha**  
 2SG-put.on 3SG LOC CM-fire TOP 2SG-FUT-stay 3SG side  
 ‘When you put it on fire you’ll have to be by it.’
29. Buúyabe ’ebéé ko ká ɔ́tsyínā ’lí

**bu-ú-yaba**                      **kibóé ko**    **ká**    **ó-tsyínā**                      **bulí**  
 3SG-PRSPROG-boil    little    just    then    2SG.DEP-turn    3SG  
 ‘When it boils a little, you then pour it out’

30. **ká** **ósís** ’ulí ní **kushóémī** **alóó** **osóéém**.  
**ká**    **ó-sísí**                      **bulí**    **ní**    **ki-shóé**                      **kumí**    **alóó**  
 then    2SG.DEP-strain    3SG    LOC    CM-basket    inside    DISJ  
**o-sóé**                      **kumí**  
 CM-strainer    inside  
 ‘Then you will strain it with a small basket or a strainer.’
31. **Óbósí** ’ul’ **odzú** **buóyó** **ká** **ókā** **túnón** **pétéé**.  
**ó-bo-sísí**                      **bulí**    **o-dzú**                      **bu-ú-yó**  
 2SG-FUT-strain    3SG    SM-put.down    3SG-PRSPROG-become.cool  
**ká**    **ó-ká**                      **ti-nó**                      **ní**    **pétéé**  
 then    2SG.DEP-squeeze    CM-chaff    DEF    all  
 ‘You’ll strain it to let it stand for a while, when it is getting cold, then you squeeze all the chaff.’
32. **Budzo** **úlílín** **óko** ’**tsyáká** **ní** **budzo** **g’lo** **kpasí** **gazéním**  
**bu-dzo**                      **ú-lílíní**                      **o-yíko**                      **ó-tyáká**    **ní**    **bu-dzo**                      **ní**  
 CM-palm.oil    AM-DIST    2SG-take    SM-mix    COM    CM-palm.oil    DEF  
**gi**    **lu-kpasí**                      **gazé**                      **ní**    **kumí**  
 REL    3SG.DEP.be.in    metal.pot    DEF    inside  
 ‘You will mix that oil (you get from squeezing the chaff) with that (oil) in the metal pot’
33. **k’otsí** **óféké** **tró** **éfú** **é**.  
**ká**    **otsi**    **ó-féké**                      **tró**    **ki-fú**                      **é**  
 then    now    2SG.DEP-lift    put.on    CM-fire    CFM  
 ‘then now, you lift it and put (it) on fire.’
34. **Gí** **óféké** **úl’** **ótró** **ánā**, **kú** **sí** **tí** **w’áhū** **aza** ’**ulíshú**  
**gi**    **ó-féké**                      **bulí**    **ó-tró**                      **ká-nā**  
 REL    2SG.DEP-lift    3SG    SM-put.on    CM-manner  
**ki-lí**                      **sí**                      **tí**                      **wó**                      **á-wóhū**                      **a-za**  
 3SG-be.at    COMP    COMP    2SG.IND    CM.PL-eye    SM-be.at:NPRES  
**bulí**    **shú**  
 3SG    surface  
 ‘As you put it on fire, you’ve got to be watching it’
35. **onání** **kibe** **nó** ’**ibe** **gi** **bobaziyabá** **g’lú** **babí**.  
**o-nání**                      **ki-be**                      **nó**                      **ki-be**  
 2SG-reach    CM-time    wh.ever    CM-time  
**gi**    **bu-ba-zí-yabá**                      **gi**    **lú-ba-bí**

REL 3SG-FUT-REP-boil REL 3SG.DEF-FUT-be.cooked  
 ‘while it is boiling until it is done.’

36. Buúv’ obikó ko buúbí  
**bu-ú-ví o-bikó ko bu-ú-bí**  
 3SG-PRSPROG-go CM-cook.place just SM-PRSPROG-be.cooked  
 ‘If it is about to be well-cooked and it is ready,’
37. k’ómo ’sí budzón, ɔfɔ ní gɪ lótsirí ’ulíabhān ótén ’udzá.  
**ká ɔ-mɔ ɔ-sí bu-dzo ní ɔ-fɔ ní**  
 then 2SG-see SM-COMP CM-palm.oil DEF CM-lather DEF  
**gɪ ló-tsirí bulí kábhā ní ɔ-ténɔ bu-dzá**  
 REL 3SG.DEF-be.on 3SG top TOP SM-start CM-become.red  
 ‘you’ll then see that the foam on the surface of the oil starts to turn red.’
38. Budzo ní tsyí ténɔ ’ulɔ́ huuhu  
**bu-dzo ní tsyí ténɔ bu-lɔ́ huuhu**  
 CM-palm.oil DEF also start CM-smell IDEO  
 ‘The oil also starts giving a pleasant smell.’
39. Óny’ ɔsí bubí ko ká ɔtsí ’úli é.  
**ɔ-nyí ɔ-sí bu-bí ko ká**  
 2SG-know SM-COMP 3SG-be.cooked just then  
**ɔ-tsí bulí é**  
 2SG.DEF-take.off 3SG CFM  
 ‘Then you know that it is ready and it is then that you take it off the fire.’
40. Óts’ ɔl’ ɔdzu p’lɔ́dɔ ní, ká ɔsíɔ́ ’udzo ní é.  
**ɔ-tsí bulí ɔ-dzu pɪ ló-dɔ**  
 2SG-take.off 3SG SM-put.down CONN 3SG.DEF-land  
**ní ká ɔ-síɔ́ bu-dzo ní é**  
 TOP then 2SG.DEF-strain CM-palm.oil DEF CFM  
 ‘As you take it off the fire and put it down and it settles, then you strain the oil.’
41. Budzo ní g’ɔsíɔ́ ɔdzú ní, apotɔ́ alóó kibó ní gɪ lɪlɪ budzɔniesí ní  
**bu-dzo ní gɪ ɔ-síɔ́ ɔ-dzú ní**  
 CM-palm.oil DEF REL 2SG.DEF-strain SM-put.down TOP  
**a-potɔ́ alóó ki-bó ní gɪ lɪ-lí**  
 CM.PL-dregs DISJ CM-sediment DEF REL 3SG.DEF-be.at  
**bu-dzo ní ke.sí ní**  
 CM-palm.oil DEF under TOP  
 ‘The sediment under the oil you pour out,’

42. kulímī óbòkpí bomuì  
**kuí** **kumu** **ó-bò-kpí** **bu-muì**  
 3SG.IND inside 2SG-FUT-put.in CM-salt  
 ‘it is in it that you put salt’
43. k’ ótsódzín’ òtrɔ́ ’ēfú.  
**ká** **ó-tsódzi-nɔ** **ɔ-trɔ́** **ki-fú**  
 then 2SG.DEP-return-COM SM-put.on CM-fire  
 ‘and then you put it on fire again.’
44. Yí léklu así beku.  
**yí** **lé-klú** **ba-sí** **beku**  
 3SG.IND 3PL.DEP-call SM-COMP beku  
 ‘That is what is called **beku**.’
45. Yí tsy’ ébí ko ní, bomuì ní ítsyáká kúúm  
**yí** **tsyí** **é-bí** **ko** **ní** **bu-muì**  
 3SG.IND also SM-be.cooked just TOP CM-salt  
**ní** **í-tsyáká** **kú** **yí** **kumu**  
 DEF PRSPROG-mix ALL 3SG.IND inside  
 ‘If it is also well cooked and mixed with the salt,
46. ká óts’ ódzú é  
**ká** **ó-tsí** **ó-dzú** **é**  
 then 2SG.DEP-take.off SM-put.down CFM  
 ‘then you take it off (the fire) and put (it) down.’
47. Ká y’enū bodzo títútɔ́ ní blɔ́ Baagbo.  
**ká** **yí** **e-nū** **bu-dzo** **tí-tú-tɔ́** **ní** **blɔ́**  
 then 3SG.IND SM-COP CM-palm.oil CM-RED-cook LOC 1PL.IND  
**baagbo**  
 Tafi  
 ‘That is palm oil preparation in our Tafiland.’
48. Yoo, w’óbhítífbúí oo  
**yoo** **wɔ́** **ó-bhítí** **ki-búí** **oo**  
 okay 2SG.IND SM-do CM-matter UFP  
 ‘Okay, thank you.’
49. yoo wɔ́ tsyí w’óbhítífbúí oo  
**yoo** **wɔ́** **tsyí** **wɔ́** **ó-bhítí** **ki-búí** **oo**  
 ok 2SG.IND also 2SG.IND SM-do CM-matter UFP  
 ‘Ok, thank you too.’

### 13.5 Kımukó gige ‘Preparation of red rice porridge’

**Kımukó** ‘red rice porridge’ is a traditional dish of the Tafi people. Formerly, it used to be prepared very often but now it is prepared mainly during ceremonies such as puberty rites and marriages. The preparation of **kımukó** is described by Euphelia Avorklai who is about 50 years old. This was recorded on the 14<sup>th</sup> of October, 2009.

Kımukó is prepared from red rice also known as hilly rice. The red rice is roasted and milled. The texture of the flour will not be very fine. To prepare this dish, water is boiled to the boiling point and then you add the riced flour at different stages. While adding the flour, you stir the mixture with a wooden ladle until you achieve the right consistency and it becomes well cooked. It is then moulded into balls and served. It is served with beans palm nut soup containing fish and vegetables. It has to be eaten right away because when it is cold it becomes very hard.

01. Kımukó gige ní Baagbo kil’ínū  
**kı-mukó**                      **gi-ge**                      **ní**                      **Baagbo**                      **kılí**                      **ki-nū**  
 CM-red.rice.porridge    RED-drive    LOC    Tafi                      3SG.IND    SM-COP  
 ‘Preparation of red rice porridge in Tafi is’
02. s’óopí amó, ómó amó ní,  
**sí**                      **ó-bo-pí**                      **a-mó**  
 COMP                      2SG.DEP-FUT-look.for                      CM-unpolished.red.rice  
**ó-mó**                      **a-mó**                      **ní**  
 2SG-see    CM-unpolished.red.rice                      DEF  
 ‘that you will look for unpolished red rice, if you get the rice,’
03. ká ópí ádoyí, ópí elí  
**ká**                      **ó-pí**                      **á-doyí**  
 then    2SG.DEP- look.for                      CM.PL-bean  
**ó-pí**                      **e-lí**  
 2SG-look.for                      CM.PL-palm.nut  
 ‘then you look for beans and palm nuts.’
04. Plónō ní óbókó akpă óbókó’ ot’óní nō  
**plónō**                      **ní**                      **ó-bo-yíkó**                      **a-kpă**                      **ó-bo-yíkó**  
 add    TOP    2SG-FUT-take    CM.PL-fish    SM-FUT-take  
**ó-tó**                      **o-ní**                      **nō**  
 SM-cook    SM-soup    COM  
 in addition, you will use fish in preparing soup.’
05. Blō ní, bútú ká lōgba é.  
**blō**                      **ní**                      **bú-tú**                      **ká**                      **lō-gba**                      **é**

1PL.IND TOP 1PL-pound then 1PL.DEF-roast CFM  
 ‘As for us, we pound (the rice) and then roast it.’

06. Búagbá n’ogbadzéeĩm ká lɔdɔhɔ é.  
**bú-ba-gbá ní ɔ-gbadza kum**  
 1PL-FUT-roast LOC CM-roasting.pan in  
**ká lɔ-dɔ-hɔ é**  
 then 1PL.DEF-ITIVE-grind CFM  
 ‘We will roast (it) in a roasting pan then we go and grind (it).’
07. Bonán tɪbapé faánɔ̃?  
**bu-ná ní tɪ-ba-pé faánɔ̃**  
 CM-flour DEF NEG1-FUT-be.well.ground too.much  
 ‘The flour will not be very fine.’ (i.e. the rice will not be well-ground)
08. Búhɔ́ ’olí békē ko ká búbát’óní,  
**bú-hɔ́ bulí békē ko ká bú-bá-tɔ́ ó-ní**  
 1PL-grind 3SG COMPL just then 1PL-VENT-cook CM-soup  
**ní**  
 DEF  
 ‘After grinding it, we then prepare the soup.’
09. Bútɔ́ áɔyí’ óni pétée n’elí lo.  
**bú-tɔ́ á-ɔyí ó-ní pétée ni e-lí lo**  
 1PL-cook CM.PL-bean CM-soup all COM CM.PL-palmtree ADD  
 ‘We prepare peas soup using palm nuts.’
10. Bukpí ákpă, kíduéndō ’ídí gɪ lɔbakpí g’lɔbɔzɔdzɪ ko búɔ́ békē.  
**bu-kpí á-kpă kí-dɔ-nyáá-kídɔ́ kí-dí gɪ**  
 1PL-put.in CM.PL-fish CM-thing-DISTR-CM-thing CM-type REL  
**lɔ-ba-kpí gɪ lɔ-bɔ-za ɔ-dzɪ**  
 1PL.DEF-put.in REL 3SG.DEF-FUT-be.at:NPRES CM-sweetness  
**ko bú-tɔ́ békē**  
 just 1PL-cook COMPL  
 ‘We put in fish and whatever thing that we will put in it to make it tasty  
 then we finish preparing it’
11. Ká lɔtr’ okóní.<sup>89</sup>  
**ká lɔ-trɔ́ o-kóní**  
 then 1PL.DEF-put.on CM-water  
 ‘then we put the water for preparing the porridge on fire.’

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<sup>89</sup> **Okóní** is the term used to refer to the water used for cooking the porridge.



12. Butr<sup>5</sup> okónín ní,  
**bu-tr<sup>5</sup> o-kóní ní ní**  
 1PL-put.on CM-water DEF TOP  
 ‘When we put the water on fire,’
13. okónín óyabā goragura búshuí dzú.  
**o-kóní ní ó-yabā guragura bú-shuí dzú**  
 CM-water DEF SM-boil IDEO 1PL-fetch put.down  
 ‘(and) the water boils we fetch some and put down.’
14. Buatsí ’unán kpí okóníní.  
**bu-ba-tsí bu-ná ní kpí o-kóní ní kumí**  
 1PL-FUT-pour CM-flour DEF put.in CM-water DEF in  
 ‘We will pour (some of) the flour into the water.’
15. Okónín butibatsí kpí ko gí lóoge?  
**o-kóní ní bu-ti-ba-tsí kpí ko gí**  
 CM-water DEF 1PL-NEG1-FUT-pour put.in just REL  
**ló-bo-ge**  
 1PL.DEF-FUT-drive  
 ‘We don’t just add the flour to the water and start stirring (it).’
16. Bútsí kpí ní búakó yí yabá mínití lóf<sup>5</sup>.  
**bú-tsí kpí ní bú-ba-kó yí yabá nânsí mínití**  
 1PL-pour put.in TOP 1PL-FUT-let 3SG boil like.say minute  
**lóf<sup>5</sup>**  
 ten  
 ‘When we add the flour we will let it boil for about ten minutes.’
17. Otsúgo lókpí ogige ko loge ’ulí pétée.  
**otsúgo lo-kpí o-gige ko lo-ge**  
 now 1PL.DEF-put.in CM-wooden.ladle just 1PL.DEF-drive  
**bulí pétée**  
 3SG all  
 ‘It is now that we put in the wooden ladle then we stir it.’
18. Kúgígani búkpí ’uní,  
**ki-í-giganí bú-kpí bu-ní**  
 3SG-PRSPROG-be.hard 1PL-put.in CM-water  
 ‘If it is too hard, we add water,’
19. kúibubo faán<sup>5</sup> alasí budí ’lókó sí kípí.  
**ki-í-bubo faán<sup>5</sup> a-lí a-sí bu-dí**  
 3SG-PRSPROG-be.soft too.much 3SG-be.at SM-COMP 1PL-look

**ku-lí**      **o.ko**      **sí**      **ku-pĩ**  
 3SG.IND place      COMP      3SG-be.good  
 ‘if it is too soft, we must see to it that it has the desired texture.’

20. Kibí ko búbú.

**ki-bí**                      **ko**      **bú-bú**  
 3SG-be.cooked      just      1PL-remove  
 ‘When it is ready then we dish it out.’

21. Búbú ko ní ká bútén’ ’uṅa é.<sup>90</sup>

**bú-bú**      **ko**      **ní**      **ká**      **bú-tén**      **bu-ṅa**      **é**  
 1PL-remove      just      TOP      then      1PL-start      CM-eat      CFM  
 ‘When we dish it out then we start eating it right away.’

22. Yénū kumokó gige ní Baagbo.

**yí**      **é-nū**      **ku-ko**      **gi-ge**      **ní**      **Baagbo**  
 3SG.IND SM-COP CM-porridge RED-drive      LOC      Tafi  
 así amo ’ukó n’ílílín.  
**a-sí**      **a-mó**                      **ku-kó**                      **nu**      **í-lílín**  
 SM-COMP      CM-unpolished.rice      CM-porridge      COP      AM-DIST  
 ‘That is porridge (unpolished red rice porridge) preparation in Tafi.’

23. Yoo, w’óbhiti ’íbúi oo.

**yoo**      **wó**      **ó-bhiti**      **ki-búi**      **oo**  
 okay      2SG.IND SM-do      CM-matter      UFP  
 ‘Ok, thank you.’

24. Yoo.

**yoo**  
 Okay  
 ‘Okay’

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<sup>90</sup> The **kumokó** ‘red rice porridge’ has to be eaten immediately after it has been dished out because after sometime it becomes cold and very hard.



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## Summary

This book presents a description of Tafi, one of the fourteen Ghana-Togo Mountain languages spoken in the south-eastern part of Ghana, across into Togo and with an outlier in Benin. The description consists of thirteen chapters and is based on a corpus gathered during two fieldwork periods in Tafi over a period of fifteen months.

Chapter One provides an introduction to the Tafi people, their language, geographical location and sociolinguistic situation, as well as the genetic classification and linguistic typological profile of the language. It also gives background information on previous studies of the language and describes the methodology of the research that was carried out.

Chapter Two examines the phonological system of the language. Tafi has five syllable types comprising a V/N syllable which is a vowel or nasal; a VC and CV syllables, made up of a vowel and a consonant and a consonant and a vowel respectively; a CVV syllable which consists of a consonant and a long vowel and a CCV which is made up of two consonants and a vowel, the second consonant may be a liquid or a glide. Tafi has consonant phonemes made at these places of articulation: bilabial, labio-dental, alveolar, post-alveolar, palatal, velar and glottal. The consonants include /bh/ and /f/. /bh/ is an aspirated voiced labial stop. It has no voiceless counterpart in the language and /f/ is a voiceless labial fricative which has no voiced counterpart. It was introduced into the language as a result of borrowing from Ewe. Tafi has double articulated labial velar stops /kp/ and /gb/ as well as alveolar and palatal affricates /ts/, /dz/ and /tʃ/, /dʒ/ respectively. Tafi has a nine vowel system. All these vowels except /o/ have nasalised counterparts. The vowels participate in ATR vowel harmony. So, they are divided into two sets, [+ATR] and [-ATR]. ATR vowel harmony in Tafi is stem-controlled, thus the vowel of prefixes harmonises with the vowel of the first syllable of the stem. Therefore, depending on the [ATR] value of the initial vowel in the root, a prefix may have varied forms. The /a/ vowel in prefixes occurs with vowels from both sets. Tafi is a tone language with three level tonemes: High, Mid and Low and two gliding tones: Falling and Rising which are phonetically realised on the peak of one syllable. There are three falling tones: High-Mid, High-Low and Mid-Low and two rising tones: Low-Mid and Low-High. The contour tones can be lexical or they can be generated in context.

Chapter Three looks at the noun class system of the language. Nouns in Tafi are classified into ten classes made up of five singular, four plural and one non-count classes on the basis of the prefixes, subject-verb agreement pattern, the pronominal forms of the classes and agreement within the noun phrase. Therefore, it is possible to find a plural noun class which contains the plural forms of nouns belonging to more than one singular class.



The discussion in Chapter Four is devoted to the Noun Phrase. The types and its internal structure are looked at. It became obvious that some modifiers (e.g. quantifiers) show agreement with the head noun while others (e.g. qualifiers), like the adjective, maintain no concord relationship with the head noun. As regards the numerals which consist of both cardinals and ordinals, it became obvious that only the cardinal numerals show concord, and it is numbers one to nine that show agreement with the head noun. The ordinal numerals, on their part, do not show concord with the head noun. Some modifiers can be nominalised through the addition of nominal prefixes and the pronominal forms of the various noun classes. Tafi has, maybe, one non-derived non-ideophonic adjective. However, derived adjectives are formed through reduplication of property verbs. Other strategies for expressing adjectival meanings include relativisation, the use of nominal property words as complements of predicators, and medio-passive constructions. The determiners include the definiteness and indefiniteness markers and the demonstratives. The definiteness marker does not show agreement with the noun head, however, the indefiniteness marker and the demonstratives do. Tafi has a marked kinship possessive grammar. Singular kinship possession is marked with the 3SG independent pronoun **yí** referring to the possessor placed between the possessor and the kinship term. Plural kinship possession is expressed by juxtaposition.

Chapter Five concentrates on adpositions in Tafi. There are two classes of adpositions: prepositions and postpositions. There are two bona fide prepositions, a locative preposition **ní** 'LOC' and a comitative preposition **ni** 'COM'. In addition to these, there are a number of verb forms that are in the process of grammaticalising into prepositions. Tafi has a set of a dozen or so members of the postposition class which are used to denote the parts and regions of objects. Some of these are spatial nominals or body-part nouns which are at different stages in the process of grammaticalisation.

The structure of a simple clause in Tafi, the order of the constituents in the clause and the grammatical relations arguments hold with the predicate are the main focus of Chapter Six. Tafi is a language whose basic constituent order is SV/AVO/AVDO. In double-object (AVDO) constructions, the Goal or Dative precedes the Theme. In locative constructions, the Theme occurs before the Locative. Furthermore, adjuncts may occur after the core arguments in the clause. The subject (S/A) is cross-referenced on the predicate with markers that agree with the class of the subject NP except for the two **bu**- classes. Objects are, however, not cross-referenced on the verb. The subject cross-reference markers are the same as the subject pronominal forms. Two paradigms of subject cross-reference markers can be distinguished. One group is used to cross-reference subjects in independent clauses while the second group which is made up of dependent pronominal forms is used in dependent clauses such as relative, complement and adverbial clauses. The order of constituents in a basic clause can be rearranged for information packaging purposes. In Tafi, this involves preposing elements to the

clause and fronting some clause constituents. The effect of these processes is the creation of three positions in the left periphery of the clause. These positions are filled by constituents that are frame or left dislocated topics, contrastive topics and focalised constituents respectively. This chapter also looks at the structure and function of these constituents. In topic constructions, a fronted noun or postpositional phrase is optionally marked by a form **ní** which is identical in form with the definiteness marker. An out-of-focus part of some focus sentences, are marked by another marker **aní** 'TOP'. This form is the same as the proximal demonstrative. Focus is not marked by a particle but there is a subject vs. non-subject focus asymmetry: a subject argument in focus is referred to by an independent pronoun. The position of a non-subject constituent in focus is marked by a gap. Verbs are focused by nominalising the verb with the class prefix **bu/bu-** of the **bu<sup>1</sup>**- class and then placing them before the subject NP of the clause.

Verbs and verbal modifiers are discussed in Chapter Seven. This chapter looks at the grammar of the argument structure of Tafi verbs in terms of the number of arguments they require semantically, and the argument structure constructions in which they participate. The verbs are classified as one-place, two-place and three-place predicates. Verbs classified as one-place predicates occur in one-place constructions and they take only one argument while two-place predicates occur in two-place constructions and they take two arguments. Three-place predicates are very few. They occur in three-place constructions and they require three arguments. Some verbs can occur in more than one construction thereby participating in various verbal alternations or occur in constructions which add arguments to their frame. In addition, the verbs are classified according to their inherent semantics. Tense, aspect and mood as categories for which verbs can be modified as well as adverbs and adverbial phrases are also examined. Tense, aspect and mood are mainly marked by preverbs in Tafi and there are about a dozen preverbal markers.

Chapter Eight deals with sentence types. Sentences may be classified according to the illocutionary force they are used to express in discourse. The main sentence types discussed are declaratives, interrogatives and imperatives. In Tafi, there is no difference in structure and segmental form between a propositional or polar question and a statement. There is only a difference in pitch. The propositional question ends on a slightly lower pitch than its counterpart statement. There are about eight question words which are used to pose content questions. Two of which are interrogative modifiers (**dúwē** 'which' and **-shī** 'how many/much') so they occur after the head noun. Two of the question words (**-shī** 'how many/much' and **-nī** 'who') show concord with the head noun. When some of the question words are in focus, they are followed by the relative marker **gi** 'REL' or the connector **pi** 'CONN'.

Chapter Nine presents the way in which clauses are combined to form complex sentences. The structure of three main types of subordinate clauses: relative

clauses, complement clauses and adverbial clauses, the markers that assist in identifying them within constructions and their position in a construction are examined. Relative clauses are introduced by the marker **gi** and are optionally marked off by the topic marker **ni** signalling that they convey background information with respect to the head nominal. Complement clauses are introduced by **si** or **ti** or a combination of both. These markers have extended functions which relate to the introduction of adverbial clauses, for example, **ti** is also used to mark purpose clauses. Sometimes, the relation of the adverbial clause to the main clause is not overtly marked and has to be inferred. In dependent clauses in Tafi the subject marker on the verb tends to be a dependent form of the pronoun. The mechanism of combining units (clauses or phrases) of equal rank or coordination is also looked at. Coordination is expressed by overt coordinators and they include **ni** 'COM', the comitative preposition which is used as a conjunction to link NPs, **kilí** 'CONJ' which is another conjunctive marker used to connect clauses, the disjunctive markers **pín33/alo(o)/lo(o)** 'or' and the adversative markers **pɔ́/gake** 'but'. Moreover, the correlative disjunctive marker **o(o)...(o(o))** is used to conjoin clauses that are opposites.

In Chapter Ten, the way in which verbs are integrated in mono-clauses through verb serialization is considered. In Tafi serial verb constructions, two or more verbs occur without any overt marker of coordination or subordination. The verbs share at least one argument and same tense and mood which is marked only once on the first verb. The verbs cannot be independently negated. The verbs can be independently focused or questioned.

The next two chapters are about routine expressions and ideophones, interjections and particles respectively. These topics are aspects of pragmatics and are usually considered marginal to grammar, however, they are essential for communication. Routine expressions as described in Chapter Eleven are expressions used in social interactions and they include greetings, expressions used for congratulating and welcoming people, consoling or sympathising with a bereaved person or a family, inviting people to join in a meal, showing gratitude or appreciation. Furthermore, attention is also drawn to the structure and context within which some of these expressions are used. Chapter Twelve focuses on ideophones, interjections and particles. These word types share some properties. They are all expressive in nature. They are used to express a speaker's perception, mental state and attitudes. Nevertheless, there are differences between them. Ideophones and particles cannot be used by themselves non-elliptically while interjections can be used by themselves as non-elliptical utterances. The final chapter, Chapter Thirteen, comprises transcriptions, interlinear glosses and translations of some recorded texts collected during the fieldwork periods in Tafi from native speakers of the language. The texts include a folktale, proverbs, riddles and procedural descriptions.

## Samenvatting

Dit boek geeft een beschrijving van het Tafi, een van de veertien Ghana-Togo-Mountain-talen, die in het zuidoosten van Ghana gesproken worden, alsmede in Togo en voor een deel ook in Benin. De beschrijving bestaat uit dertien hoofdstukken en is gebaseerd op een corpus dat verzameld is tijdens twee periodes van veldwerk in Tafi van in totaal vijftien maanden.

Hoofdstuk 1 geeft een inleiding op de Tafi, hun taal, geografische locatie en sociolinguïstische situatie, evenals de genetische classificatie en het taalkundige typologische profiel van de taal. Het geeft ook achtergrondinformatie over eerdere studies van de taal en beschrijft de methodologie van het onderzoek dat werd uitgevoerd.

Hoofdstuk twee onderzoekt het fonologische systeem van de taal. Tafi heeft vijf lettergreep typen waaronder een V/N lettergreep die uit een klinker of een nasaal bestaat; VC en CV lettergrepen, samengesteld uit een klinker en een medeklinker en een medeklinker en een klinker respectievelijk; een CVV lettergreep die bestaat uit een medeklinker en een lange klinker en een CCV die is samengesteld uit twee medeklinkers en een klinker, de tweede medeklinker kan een liquida worden of een glijklank. Tafi onderkent fonemische medeklinkers op de volgende plaatsen van articulatie: bilabiaal, labio-dentaal, alveolair, post-alveolair, palataal, velair en glottaal. De medeklinker /bh/ is een geaspireerde, stemhebbende labiale stop. Het heeft geen stemloze tegenhanger in de taal en /f/ is een stemloze, labiale fricatief die geen stemhebbende tegenhanger heeft. Hij werd geïntroduceerd in de taal als gevolg van ontlening uit het Ewe. Het Tafi heeft dubbel gearticuleerde labiaal-velaire stops, /kp/ en /gb/, alsmede alveolaire en palatale affricaten, /ts /, /dz/ en /tʃ/, /dʒ/.

Tafi heeft een systeem met negen klinkers. Deze klinkers hebben genasaliseerde tegenhangers met uitzondering van /o/. De klinkers zijn onderhevig aan ATR klinkerharmonie. Ze zijn verdeeld in twee verzamelingen, [+ATR] en [-ATR]. ATR klinkerharmonie wordt door de stam bepaald in het Tafi, dus de klinker van een voorvoegsel harmoniseert met de klinker van de eerste lettergreep van de stam. Een prefix kan dus afhankelijk van de [ATR] waarde van de eerste klinker in de wortel verschillende vormen hebben. De klinker /a/ in voorvoegsels treedt op met klinkers uit beide verzamelingen.

Tafi is een toontaal met drie toonniveaus: Hoog, Midden en Laag. Bovendien zijn er glijdende tonen die fonetisch worden gerealiseerd op de nucleus van een lettergreep. Er zijn drie vallende tonen: Hoog-Midden, Hoog/Laag- en Midden-Laag en twee stijgende tonen: Laag-Midden en Laag-Hoog. De contourtonen kunnen lexicaal zijn of door de context worden gegenereerd.

Hoofdstuk drie behelst het klassensysteem met betrekking tot het zelfstandig naamwoord van de taal. Nomina worden in het Tafi ingedeeld in tien klassen samengesteld uit vijf enkelvoudklassen, vier meervoudklassen en een niet-telbare klasse op basis van de voorvoegsels, onderwerp-werkwoord agreement patroon, de pronominale vormen van de klassen en agreement binnen de nominale constituent. Een naamwoordklasse voor meervoud kan dus combineren met verschillende enkelvoudklassen.

De discussie in het vierde hoofdstuk is gewijd aan de nominale constituent; de typen en de interne structuur ervan. Sommige modificeerders (bijvoorbeeld kwantoren) vertonen overeenkomst met het hoofdnomen terwijl anderen (bijvoorbeeld die van kwalificatie, zoals het bijvoeglijk naamwoord), geen overeenkomst met het hoofdnomen vertonen. Onder de telwoorden vertonen alleen de hoofdtelwoorden 1-9 overeenkomst met het hoofdnomen. De rangtelwoorden congrueren niet met het hoofdnomen. Sommige modificeerders kunnen worden genominaliseerd door de toevoeging van nominale voorvoegsels. Het Tafi heeft, misschien, één niet-afgeleid, niet-ideofonisch bijvoeglijk naamwoord. Afgeleide bijvoeglijke naamwoorden worden gevormd door reduplicatie van werkwoorden die een eigenschap uitdrukken. Andere strategieën voor het uitdrukken van bijvoegelijke betekenissen omvatten relativering, het gebruik van eigenschapsnomina als complementen van predicatoren, en medio-passieve constructies. De determinatoren omvatten de markeringen voor (on)bepaaldheid en de demonstratieven. De markering van bepaaldheid congrueert niet met het hoofdnomen, de markering voor onbepaaldheid en de demonstratieven doen dit wel. Verwantschapsbezit wordt grammaticaal uitgedrukt in het Tafi. Verwantschapsbezit is in het enkelvoud gemarkeerd met het derde persoon enkelvoud onafhankelijke voornaamwoord **yí**, dat verwijst naar de bezitter en dat wordt geplaatst tussen de bezitter en de verwantschapsterm. Meervoudig verwantschapsbezit wordt uitgedrukt door nevenschikking.

Hoofdstuk vijf concentreert zich op adposities in het Tafi. Er zijn twee klassen van adposities: preposities en postposities. Er zijn twee bonafide preposities, een locatief voorzetsel *ní* en een comitatief voorzetsel *m*. Daarnaast is er een aantal werkwoorden dat zich in de richting van voorzetsels aan het grammaticaliseren is. Het Tafi heeft een tiental voorzetsels die worden gebruikt voor de onderdelen van objecten. Sommige van deze zijn ruimtelijke nomina of woorden voor lichaamsdelen die in verschillende fasen zijn in het proces van grammaticalisatie.

Hoofdstuk zes behandelt de structuur van de eenvoudige zin, de volgorde van de constituenten en grammaticale relatie. De basiswoordvolgorde is subject – werkwoord – object. Als er twee objecten zijn dan in de volgorde meewerkend voorwerp en dan lijdend voorwerp. Locatieve constituenten komen na het lijdend voorwerp. Bijwoorden komen ook na de kernargumenten van het werkwoord. Naar het onderwerp wordt verwezen op het predicaat met markeringen die met de klasse van het hoofdnaamwoord van het onderwerp overeenstemmen, met uitzondering

van de twee *bu*- klassen. Er is geen overeenkomst met het object op het werkwoord.

De markerings voor overeenkomst met het onderwerp zijn hetzelfde als de pronominale vormen van het onderwerp. Hierbinnen kunnen twee paradigma's worden onderscheiden. Eén groep wordt gebruikt overeenkomst met onderwerpen in zelfstandige zinnen, terwijl de tweede groep, die is opgebouwd uit afhankelijke pronominale vormen, in afhankelijke constituenten zoals relatieve, complement en bijwoordelijke zinnen wordt gebruikt.

De volgorde van onderdelen in een eenvoudige zin kan worden herschikt voor het aangeven van informatiestructuur. In het Tafi houdt dit in dat elementen en zinsdelen naar voren schuiven in de zin. Het effect van deze processen is het creëren van drie posities in de linker periferie van de zin. Deze posities worden gevuld door constituenten die respectievelijk topics, contrastieve topics en constituenten in focus zijn.

In topic constructies, wordt een naar voren verplaatst zelfstandig naamwoord of postpositionele frase optioneel gekenmerkt door **ní** dat in vorm identiek is aan de markering voor bepaaldheid. Het niet-gefocuste deel van een zin met focus wordt gemarkeerd door een andere markering; **aní** TOP. Deze vorm is hetzelfde als de demonstratief voor dichtbij.

Focus wordt niet gemarkeerd door een partikel, maar er is een asymmetrie in onderwerp vs. niet-onderwerp focus: een subjectargument in focus wordt aangeduid door een onafhankelijke voornaamwoord. De positie van een niet-subject constituent in focus wordt gekenmerkt door een *gap*. Werkwoorden worden gemarkeerd voor focus door nominalisering van het werkwoord met het klasse voorvoegsel **bu/bu-** van de **bu**<sup>1</sup>- klasse, waarna ze vóór het subject van de zin geplaatst worden.

Werkwoorden en verbale modificeerders worden besproken in Hoofdstuk 7. Dit hoofdstuk behandelt de grammatica van argumentenstructuur van Tafi werkwoorden in termen van het aantal argumenten dat ze semantisch gezien vereisen, en de argumentstructuurconstructies waarin ze participeren. De werkwoorden worden geclassificeerd als één-plaats, twee-plaats of drie-plaats predikaten. Werkwoorden geclassificeerd als één-plaats predikaten komen voor in één-plaats constructies en nemen slechts één argument, terwijl twee-plaats predikaten voorkomen in twee-plaats constructies en zij nemen twee argumenten. Er zijn maar een paar drie-plaats-predikaten.

Sommige werkwoorden kunnen in meer dan één constructie voorkomen, waardoor ze participeren in verschillende werkwoordsalternaties of in constructies die argumenten toevoegen tot hun frame. Daar komt bij dat werkwoorden worden geclassificeerd op basis van hun inherente semantiek. *Tense*, *aspect* en *mood* zijn

categorieën waar werkwoorden zich op kunnen aanpassen, evenals bijwoorden en bijwoordelijk bijzinnen. *Tense*, *aspect* en *mood* worden voornamelijk gemarkeerd door *preverbs* in het Tafi en er is ongeveer een dozijn pre-verbale markeerders.

Hoofdstuk 8 gaat over zinstypen. Zinnen kunnen geclassificeerd worden op basis van de illocutionaire kracht die ze uitdrukken in *discourse*. De belangrijkste zinstypen die besproken worden zijn declaratieven, interrogatieven en imperatieven. In het Tafi is er geen verschil in structuur en segmentele vorm tussen een polaire vraag en een mededelende zin. Er is alleen een verschil in toon. De polaire vraag eindigt op een ietwat lagere toon dan de dezelfde zin als mededeling. Er zijn ongeveer acht vraagwoorden die gebruikt worden om inhoudsvragen te stellen. Twee daarvan zijn modificeerders. (*dúwē* ‘welke’ en *-shĩ* ‘hoeveel’) en komen dus achter het hoofdnomen. Twee van de vraagwoorden (*-shĩ* ‘hoeveel’ en *-nĩ* ‘wie’) concorderen met het hoofdnomen. Sommige vraagwoorden worden in focus gevolgd door de relatieve markeerder *gu* of de connector *pi*.

Hoofdstuk negen laat zien hoe zinnen worden gecombineerd tot complexe zinnen. De structuur van relatieve zinnen, complementzinnen en bijwoordelijke zinnen komen aan bod. Relatieve zinnen worden geïntroduceerd door de markeerder *gu* en worden optioneel gemarkeerd door de topicmarkeerder *nĩ* die aangeeft dat ze achtergrondinformatie bevatten met betrekking tot het hoofdnomen. Complementzinnen worden geïntroduceerd door *si* of *ti* of een combinatie hiervan. Deze markeerders kunnen ook adverbiale zinnen introduceren; *ti* wordt bijvoorbeeld ook gebruikt om doelzinnen aan te geven. Soms is de relatie tussen de adverbiale zin en de hoofdzin niet gemarkeerd en moet zij geïnfereerd worden. In afhankelijke zinnen is de subjectmarkeerder op het werkwoord vaak een gebonden vorm van het pronomen. Het mechanisme om gelijkwaardige eenheden (zinnen of zinsdelen) te combineren wordt eveneens behandeld. Coördinatie wordt uitgedrukt door coördinatoren, waaronder comitatief *ni* die gebruikt wordt als een conjunctie om NPs aan elkaar te verbinden; de conjunctie *kũfĩ*; de disjunctieve markeerder *pĩn33/alo(o)/lo(o)* ‘of’ en de adversatieve markeerder *po/gake* ‘maar’. Bovendien wordt *o(o)...* (*o(o)*) gebruikt om zinnen samen te voegen die tegengesteld zijn.

In hoofdstuk tien wordt de manier besproken waarop werkwoorden geïntegreerd worden in zogenaamde *mono-clauses*. In seriële werkwoordsconstructies komen twee of meer werkwoorden voor zonder een overte markering van coördinatie of subordinatie. De werkwoorden delen minstens een argument, alsmede *tense* en *mood*. Deze worden slechts eenmalig gemarkeerd, en wel op het eerste werkwoord. De werkwoorden kunnen niet afzonderlijk genegeerd worden. Ze kunnen wel onafhankelijk in focus staan of bevraagd worden.

De volgende twee hoofdstukken gaan over routine uitdrukkingen, en ideofonen, interjecties en partikels. Deze onderwerpen behoren tot het domein van de pragmatiek en worden doorgaans beschouwd als marginaal voor de grammatica. Ze zijn echter essentieel voor communicatie. Routineuitdrukkingen, zoals beschreven

in hoofdstuk elf, worden gebruikt in sociale interactie, waaronder begroetingen, uitdrukkingen die gebruikt worden om mensen te feliciteren of te verwelkomen, het troosten of condoleren, het uitnodigen aan de dis, en het tonen van dank of waardering. Verder wordt aandacht geschonken aan de context waarin deze uitdrukkingen worden gebruikt. Hoofdstuk twaalf richt zich op ideofonen, interjecties en partikels. Deze woordtypes hebben een aantal eigenschappen gemeen. Ze zijn alle expressief van aard. Ze worden gebruikt om de perceptie, mentale staat en houding van de spreker weer te geven. Toch zijn er ook verschillen. Ideofonen en partikels kunnen niet op zichzelf staan en niet elliptisch gebruikt worden, terwijl interjecties dat wel kunnen.





## **Curriculum Vitae**

Mercy Bobuafor was born on 15<sup>th</sup> September 1970 in Accra, Ghana. She attended Sogakope Secondary School obtaining her School Certificate/General Certificate of Education (SC/GCE) "Ordinary" level in 1987. She then entered sixth form in La Bone Secondary School, Accra, and obtained her GCE "Advanced" level certificate in 1989. After working as a teacher at the Dansoman Junior High School to fulfil her national service requirements, she entered the University of Ghana in 1990 and graduated in 1994 with a BA combined honours degree in French and Linguistics. She was a year-abroad French student at the University of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, in the 1992-93 academic year. After serving for three years as a Teaching Assistant/Tutor in the Linguistics Department of the University of Ghana, she was admitted to the MPhil Linguistics programme. She was awarded the degree in 2001. Her thesis was on verbal alternations in Ewe, one of her first languages. She was recruited into the Public Service of Ghana in 1998 and has been working with the Electoral Commission of Ghana where she is a Senior Electoral Officer (since 2003). From August 2006 until January 2012 she was on leave without pay from the Electoral Commission. This enabled her to take up a position as a PhD Researcher (August 2006-December 2010) at the Leiden University Centre for Linguistics working on the project "The documentation and description of Tafi, a Ghana-Togo Mountain language". The project was funded under the Endangered Languages Project of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO).