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Author: Bobuafor, Mercy
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8 SENTENCE TYPES: DECLARATIVES, INTERRO-GATIVES 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 tédɪ̣kpó y'áaŋa bal'íabhā
    e-kusí   te-dɪ̣kpó   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 ádzíkī y'oklebhɔ́ ní 'íbúí.
    á-kányááká   á-dzíkī   yí   o-klebhɔ́   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' épídzyáń étsí.
    Kofí   e-pidzya   ní   é-tsí
    Kofi   CM-goat   DEF   SM-die
    'Kofi's goat has died.'

4. lmɔ sukúeyíń g'ezúrú 'éplúkpáń.
    ɪ-mɔ   sukúeyí   ní   gɪ   e-zúrú   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 ɔ́tíshī̄.

mí	á-kā	e-nú	a-sí	ɔ́-tí-shī̄
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

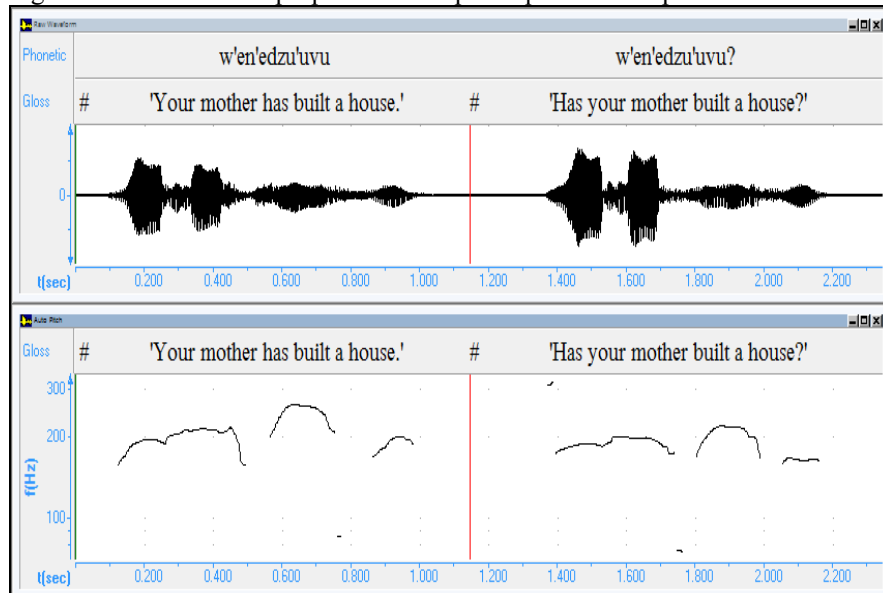## 8.2.1   Propositional or polar questions

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 'úvū.

wɔ́	é-nī	e-dzú	bú-vū
2SG.IND	CM-mother	SM-build	CM-house

'Your mother has built a house.'

8.   W'en' edzú 'úvū?
      wɔ́   é-nī   e-dzú   bú-vū
      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**, **xãã**/ **hãã**, **lo(o)**, and **a**. The intensifying or emotive particles **xãã** and **hãã** are used interchangeably and probably adapted from Ewe **hâ̂** '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.   Ɔ́mɔ m'eyíń dza/hãã?
      ɔ́-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)'

10.   Ányín ááshī̃ xãã/ hãã?
       á-nyí   ní   á-á-shī̃   xãã/ hãã
       CM-man DEF SM-PRSPROG-leave UFP
       'Is the man leaving?'

11.   Báákā ní tsyɩámī alí lo?
       báá-kā   ní   tsyɩámī   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, ímɔ 'alí.
       xee   í-mɔ   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 **sέ** and a 'COMP' **sέ** (Saah 1988).

14.   Aa! sí nɔɔ́mɔ ɔlishí tɩbhañ?
       aa   sí   nɔ-ɔ́-mɔ   ɔlí   kishí   tɩ-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 nɔɔ́mɔ ekle ní g'etsirí kɩtʊkpĕ níábhā?
       sí   nɔ-ɔ́-mɔ   e-kle   ní   gɩ   e-tsirí
       QP   2PL-PRSPROG-see CM-thatch   DEF REL   3SG.DEP-be.on
       kɩ-tʊkpĕ   ní   kábhā
       CM-hillock   DEF top
       'You see the thatch that is on the hillock, don't you?'   (Kásālā)

16.   Sí buní ní békē̃?
       sí   bu-ní   ní   békē̃
       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 **púnɔ̃ɔ̃/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.   Ɔ́ɔ́vɪ Ɔgɔmɪ púnɔ̃ɔ̃ Atoem?
      ɔ́-ɔ́-vɪ   **Ɔgɔmɪ**   **púnɔ̃ɔ̃ Atoem**
      2SG-PRSPROG-go Agorme   DISJ Atome
      'Are you going to Agorme or to Atome?'

18.   Anúvɔ̃ń ábatã ásí púnɔ̃ɔ̃ 'ukupɪ̃?
      a-núvɔ̃   **ní**   **á-ba-tã**   **á-sí**   **púnɔ̃ɔ̃ bu-kupɪ̃**
      CM-child DEF SM-FUT-chew CM-rice   DISJ CM.PL-yam.slice
      'Will the child eat rice or yam slices?'

19.   Ɔ́bɔtɔ 'ɛdɔ̃ń lóó ɔ́bɔvɪ ti shui 'uní?
      ɔ́-bɔ-tɔ́   **kí-dɔ̃**   **ní**   **lóó**   **ɔ́-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.   Adzɪ̄ń ábato ekūń alóó ábad'alɪ́?
      a-dzɪ̀   **ní**   **á-ba-tɔ́**   **é-kū**   **ní**   **alóó**
      CM-woman DEF SM-FUT-cook CM.PL-yam DEF DISJ
      á-ba-dɪ   **alɪ́**
      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). **Púnɔ̃ɔ̃** 'or' can also be used as a disjunctive tag without offering an alternative as illustrated in (23). We have already seen the use of **púnɔ̃ɔ̃** 'or' in alternative questions (§ 8.2.2).

21.   Kakʊdzɔgĕń énémi wɔ́, s'ɔ̂mɔ?
        ka-kʊdzɔgĕ   ní   ké-némi   wɔ́   sí   ɔ-mɔ
        CM-dog   DEF   SM-bite   2SG   QP   2SG-see
        'The dog bit you, you see?'

22.   Buní ní békē, anι 'ana?
        bu-ní   ní   békē   aní   ká-nā
        CM-water DEF   finish   NEGCL   CM-manner
        'The water is finished, is it not so?'

23.   Áába pʊ́nɔ̄ɔ̄?
        á-á-ba   pʊ́nɔ̄ɔ̄
        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 **hɔ̃(ɔ̃)**. 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.   Tsyιámī ní hɔ̃ɔ̃?
        tsyιámī   ní   hɔ̃ɔ̃
        spokesperson   DEF   UFP
        'Where is the spokesperson (= "linguist")?'

24b.   Oni ní hɔ̃?
        o-ni   ní   hɔ̃
        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.   **-nῑ**   'who/whom/whose'
        kídē   'what'
        fákɔ́   'where'
        kιlí   'how'
        kídēso   'why'
        ɖúwē   'which'

kibeɖúwē(be)   'when', and
-shī̃   '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 **ɖúwē** 'which' and **-shī̃** 'how many/much' are interrogative modifiers so they occur after the head noun. Among the content question forms, only **-shī̃** 'how many/much' and **-nī̃** 'who' show concord with the head noun. **-shī̃** 'how many/much' has corresponding forms for the various classes of nouns it modifies. Thus, it behaves like other quantifiers. The question form **-nī̃** '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 **a¹-/ba(a)-** classes which are typically made up of animate nouns. **ɖúwē** '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 **-shī̃** 'how many/much?' and **ɖúwē** 'which?'). When the content question forms, **-nī̃** 'who', **kídē** 'what' and **kídēso** 'why' are in focus, they occur with **gɩ/pɩ** 'REL'/'CONN' in a kind of cleft construction. All the content question forms except **ɖúwē** 'which' can be used in elliptical questions. For **ɖúwē** '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 wɔ́ɔhɔ?
       kídē   wɔ́   ɔ́-ɔ́-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 kídḕ?
       bá-á-hɔ   **kídḕ**
       3PL-PRSPROG-grind   what
       'They are grinding what?'

In the following subsections, the content question words are discussed in turn.

8.2.4.1   -nī̄ '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.   Ánī̄ y'ábáyíkɔ̄ anúvɔ̄ɲ 'ufuōɲ́ áŋa?
       á-nī̄   **yí**   **á-bá-yíkɔ̄**   **a-núvɔ̄**   **ní**   **fufuō**   **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?' (Gbaxálĩ̄)

30.   Báánī̄ És' édzí bawin ákɔ̂?
       báá-nī̄   **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.   Ánī̄ gɪ atsyánɔ Ésí ní kedzinī́m̄?
       á-nī̄   **gɪ**   **a-tsyánɔ**   **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'ónū̄ án̄ɪ̀?
       wɔ́   **ó-nū̄**   **á-n̄ɪ̀**
       2SG.IND   SM-COP   AM-who
       'Who are you?' (lit. 'You are who?')

-nī̄ 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 átɛ̃ ɛ́kūñ?
      á-nī   e-pidzya   á-tã   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 obóñ?
      kídē   wɔ   o-yí   o-bóń
      what   2SG.IND SM-kill   CM-today
      'What did you kill today?'

35.   Kídē gɪ bhítɪ Ésî?
      kídē   gɪ   bhítɪ   Ésí
      what   REL   do   Esi
      'What happened to Esi?'

36.   Kídē Kofî ámɔ?
      kídē   Kofî   á-mɔ
      what   Kofi   SM-see
      'What did Kofi see?'

37.   Kídē kɪlí tá Kofî?
      kídē   kɪlí   tá   Kofî
      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 **gɪ** '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 **gɪ** '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   Fákɔ́ 'where'

Fákɔ́ '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 **fákɔ́** 'where' is a compound made up of two constituents **fá**, the meaning of which is not quite clear and the noun root **-kɔ́** 'place'. At times, instead of the full form **fákɔ́**, 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 **fákɔ́** 'where' question word in clause-initial position as in (40). However, the occurrence of the locative preposition is obligatory when **fákɔ́** 'where' occurs in situ as in (41) (cf. Harley 2005 on Tuwuli).

38.   Fákɔ́ adzʊ́ń áávʊ?
       fákɔ́   a-dzʊ̀   ní   a-á-vʊ
       where CM-woman   DEF   SM-PRPSPROG-go
       'Where is the woman going?'

39.   Fá w'odê?
       fá   wɔ́   o-dé
       where 2SG.IND SM-come.from
       'Where are you from?'

40.   (Ní) fákɔ́ adzʊ́ń áávʊ?
       (ní)   fákɔ́   a-dzʊ̀   ní   a-á-vʊ
       (LOC) where CM-woman   DEF   SM-PRSPROG-go
       'Where is the woman going?'

41.   Ámā átsán' ányíń ní fákɔ̂?
       Ámā   á-tsánɔ̄   á-nyí   ní   ní   fákɔ́
       Ama   SM-meet   CM-man DEF   LOC where
       'Ama met the man where?' OR 'Where did Ama meet the man?'

8.2.4.4   Kʊ́lɪ́ '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 **kʊ́lɪ́** 'how'. The following examples in (42) - (44) exemplify the use of **kʊlɪ̂** 'how'. The examples in (40) and (41) are questions which are normally addressed to a sick person.

42.   Kʊ́lɪ́ w'odzí oo?
       kʊ́lɪ́   wɔ́   o-dzí   oo
       how   2SG.IND SM-be   UFP
       'How are you?'

43.   Kɪlí ishúním̄ ííbhítɪ wɔ̂?
       kɪlí   i-shú   ní   kɪmɪ   í-í-bhítɪ   wɔ́
       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.   Kɪlí lábhɪtí 'ʊdzɔ?
       kɪlí   lá-bhɪtí   bʊ-dzɔ
       how   3PL.DEP-make   CM-palm.oil
       'How is palm oil prepared?'

Kɪlí '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.   Kɪlí leklǔ anóvɔ̄ñ?
       kɪlí   le-klǔ   a-nóvɔ̄   ní
       how   3PL.DEP-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 **gɪ**
'REL' or the connector **pɪ** when it occurs clause-initially.[59]

46.   Kídēso pɪ óboyú 'ívú nɪ bekus'edziniñ?
       kídēso   pɪ   ó-bo-yú   ki-vu   nɪ
       why   CONN   2SG.DEP-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?' (Sáhwī̄)

47.   Ɔdɪbá sukū obóń, kídēso?
       ɔ-dɪ-bá   suku   o-bóń   kídēso
       2SG-NEG2-come   school CM-today   why
       'You did not come to school today, why?'

_____

[59] The **gɪ** 'REL' and **pɪ** 'CONN' alternate in a number of environments e.g. **onu.gɪ** and **onu.pɪ**
'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   -shī̄ 'how many/much'

The question word which is used to seek information with regard to quantity or amount in Tafi is -**shī̄** 'how many/much'. -**shī̄** '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 -**shī̄** '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 **ehoí** 'cowries' is used modified by the question word **tááshī̄** 'how many' as in (51). **Ehoí** '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 **ágɔ̄** 'years' is used and it is modified by **tááshī̄** 'how many' as illustrated in (52).

49.   Isí tííshī̄ ányíń étê?
       I-sí   tíí-shī̄   á-nyí   ní   é-tế
       CM.PL-tree AM-how.many CM-man DEF SM-slash
       'How many trees did the man cut?'

50.   Tɩwúlɔ̄ tááshī̄ Kofí áyáɫ̃?
       tɩ-wúlɔ̄   táá-shī̄   Kofí   á-yálɩ̄
       CM-rubbish AM-how.many Kofí SM-collect
       'How much rubbish did Kofi collect?'

51.   Ehoí tááshī̄ Ám' edzí akanañ?
       e-hoí   táá-shī̄   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.   Ágɔ̄ tááshī̃ Kɔ́ku áyíkɪ̀?
      á-gɔ̄   táá-shī̃   Kɔ́ku á-yíkɪ̀
      CM.PL-year   AM-how.many   Kɔ́ku SM-get
      'How old is Kɔku?' (lit. 'how many years has Kɔ́ku got?')

8.2.4.7   **ɖúweɖú/ ɖúwē** 'which'

ɖúwē 'which', like -**shī̃** '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 **ɖúweɖú**, however, most often, speakers drop the final syllable.

53.   Adzī̄ ɖúwe(ɖú) Ésí ámɔ?
      a-dzī̄   ɖúwe(ɖú) Ésí   á-mɔ
      CM-woman   which   Ésí   SM-see
      'Which woman did Esi see?'

54.   Kɪpɔtí ɖúwe(ɖú) Kof' ébhui?
      kɪ-pɔtí   ɖúwe(ɖú) Kofí   é-bhui
      CM-cloth   which   Kofí   SM-cut
      'Which cloth did Kofi buy?'

55.   Búnya ɖúwe(ɖú) bʊlí téŋú yí yí kpata 'anā dza?
      bú-nya   ɖúwe(ɖú) bʊlí   téŋú   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, **ɖúwe(ɖú)** '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 **ɖúwe(ɖú)** in (53) – (55) above.

56.   Eɖúwe(ɖú) Ésí ámɔ?
      e-ɖúwe(ɖú)   Ésí   ámɔ
      CM-which   Ésí   SM-see
      'Which one did Esi see?'

57.   Kiɖúwe(ɖú) Kof' ébhui?
      ki-ɖúwe(ɖú)   Kofí   é-bhui
      CM-which   Kofí   SM-cut

'Which one did Kofi buy?'

58.   Buɖúwe(ɖú) bʊlí téŋú yí yí kpata anā dza?
       buɖúwe(ɖú)   bʊlí   téŋú   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   Kibeɖúweɖúibe/ kibeɖúwebe 'when'

Kibeɖúweɖúibe/ kibeɖúwebe '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'. **Kibeɖúwebe** appears to be a short form of **kibeɖúweɖúibe**. With regard to **kibeɖúweɖúibe**, the initial consonant of the second noun **kibe** 'time' has been elided whereas with **kibeɖúwebe**, the final syllable of the 'which' question word has been elided together with the prefix of **kibe** 'time' Both **kibeɖúweɖúibe/ kibeɖúwebe** 'when' are used interchangeably. Most often in fast speech both are shortened to **kibeɖúwē.** The following sentences in (59) – (61) are examples.

59.   Ábabá kibeɖúwebe?
       á-ba-bá   kibeɖúwebe
       3SG-FUT-come when
       'When will s/he come?'

60.   Kibeɖúwē lámɔ́ɛ́?
       kibeɖúwē lá-mɔ́   yí
       when   3PL.DEP-born   3SG
       'When was she born?'

61.   kibeɖúweɖúibe laɖɛ 'ékū?
       kibeɖúweɖúibe   la-ɖa   kí-kū
       when   3PL.DEP-plant   CM-yam
       'When is yam planted?

Another question word used to ask about time is **kibredzyifã** '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. Kibredzyifã Ákú áshī̄?
     kibredzyifã   Ákú   á-shī̄
     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 gɪ Kof' ááko ákó ánī kibredzyifã?
     kídē   gɪ   Kofí   á-yíko   á-kó   á-nī̄   kibredzyifã
     what   REL   Kofí   SM-take   SM-give   AM-who   when
     'What did Kofi give to whom and when?'

64. Ánī̄ Ákú édzí kídē ákô?
     á-nī̄   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'óbâ?
     í-klú   wó   sí   ó-bá
     1SG-call   2SG   COMP   2SG.DEP-come
     'Did I call you to come?'

66. G'oyī ókóéyī obóń 'iélizızáń ɔ́tímɔ m'amı xãã?

 gı o-yī   ó-kóéyī o-bóń ke-lizızá
 REL 2SG.DEP-show.up 2SG.DEP-exit CM-today CM-daybreak

 ní ɔ́-tí-mɔ mí ã-mı xãã
 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. Kibúí ḍúwē nĩ́ń dza?

 ki-búí ḍúwē nū ı-ní   dza
 CM-case which COP AM-PROX UFP

 'What is this?' OR 'What a scandal or problem is this?' (Sã́hwĩ́)

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'ɔ́kɔ́ níe?

 wɔ́ ɔ-kɔ́ ní e
 2SG.IND CM-place DEF UFP

 'How is your place?'

69. Banúvɔ̄n alí mɔ̌`?

 ba-núvɔ̄ ní ba-lí mɔ̌
 CM.PL-child DEF SM-be.at well

 'Are the kids well?' OR 'How are the kids?'

70. Kılí ishúnı́m̃ ííbhítı wɔ̂?

 kılí i-shú ní kımı í-í-bhítı   wɔ́
 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   72.   Bá
       kóéyī   **ba**
       exit   come
       'Go out!'   '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.   Nɔbá!   74.   Notsú!
       nɔ-bá   **no-tsú**
       2PL-come   2PL-dig
       'Come!' (You plural)   '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 **tɪ**.

75.   Bá tɪ lɔ ŋɛ 'édɔ̄!
       bá   tɪ   lɔ   ŋa kí-dɔ̄
       come   COMP   1PL.DEP eat CM-thing
       'Come and let's eat!' (Lit.: 'Come in order that we eat!')

76.   Klu al' enyí tɪ lonú é!
       klŭ   balɪ́   e-nyí   tɪ   lo-nú   é
       call   3PL   CM.PL-name COMP   1PL.DEP-hear   UFP
       'Mention their names so we hear!' (Sãhwĩ̄)

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   78.   D'owu
       dɪ ɔ-ŋa   dɪ o-wu
       go 2SG-eat   go 2SG-climb
       'Go eat'.   'Go climb'.

79.   Nɔd'ɔz'iésí   80.   Nɔd'oplŭ
       nɔ-dɪ   nɔ-za   kesí   nɔ-dɪ   no-plŭ
       2PL-go   2PL-sit   down   2PL-go   2PL-wash
       'Go sit down (You plural)'.   'Go wash (You plural)'.

81.   Nɔyíkɔ 'ɛbúíń ɔ́kɔ́ adzĩ́ń!
       Nɔ-yíkɔ   ki-búí   ní   nɔ-kɔ́   a-dzĩ̀   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 kukú**[60] '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 **kɪbɔ́ɛ́** 'a little' and even certain address terms may be used as in
(83).

82.   Íɖe kúkú nɔkɔ́ 'ʊlɔ́ 'ɛ́dzó!
       í-ɖe   kúkú   nɔ-kɔ́   bʊlɔ́   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, tsobúnɔ̄ mí 'ɪbɔ́ɛ́!
       mí   ádá   tsí   o-búnɔ̄   mí   kɪbɔ́ɛ́
       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 **tɪ́/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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[60] The phrasal verb **de kúkú** 'beg' or 'please' is borrowed from Ewe and it means 'remove
one's hat'.

84.   Tiklú 'álíʔ!
      ti-klú   balí
      NEG1-call   3PL
      'Don't call them!'

85.   Tɩŋɛ 'édɔ́ńʔ!
      tɩ-ŋa   kí-dɔ̄   ní
      NEG1-eat CM-thing DEF
      'Don't eat the food!'

86.   Nɔtɩtá ótúńʔ!
      nɔ-tɩ-tá   o-tú   ní
      2PL-NEG1-throw   CM-gun   DEF
      'Don't fire the gun!' (You plural)

Another prohibitive construction with the form **tɔ̌** 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.   Tɔ̌ŋé 'ɛdɔ̄ʔ.
      tɔ̌-ŋa   kí-dɔ̄
      PROHIB-eat CM-thing
      'Don't eat again!'

88.   Nɔtɔ̌vī̄ʔ.
      nɔ-tɔ̌-vī̄
      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.   Tɔ̌vlɔ́ŋé 'ɛdɔ̄ʔ.
      tɔ̌-vlɔ́-ŋa   kí-dɔ̄
      PROHIB-again-eat   CM-thing
      'Don't eat anymore!'

90.   Nɔtɔ̌vlɔ́vī̄ʔ.
      nɔ-tɔ̌-vlɔ́-vī̄
      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 **kɔ́** 'give, let, cause, make'. The causative verb **kɔ́** 'give, cause, let, make' is used to introduce the 1st and 3rd person imperatives. The following are examples:

91.   Kɔḿ bá!   92.   Kɔ y'ázhā!
       kɔ́ mí   bá   **kɔ́ yí   á-zhā**
       let 1SG   come   let 3SG   SM-sing
       'Let me come!'   'Let him sing!'

93.   Kɔ lɔ́shɨ̄!   94.   Kɔ lázhā!
       kɔ́ lɔ́-shɨ̄   **kɔ́ lá-zhā**
       let 1PL.DEP-leave   let 3PL.DEP-sing
       'Let us leave!'   'Let them sing!'

Also, when a prayer is said one of the responses is as shown in the sentence in (95).

95.   Kɔ ʊlí béélɨ́m̄!
       kɔ́ kʊlí   bá   kʊlí   kʊmʊ
       let 3SG   come 3SG.IND inside
       'Let/ May it be so' or 'let/ may it come to pass!' (Lit.: 'let/ may it come inside!')