ELEMENTARY GAMBIAWOLOF GRAMMAR

By

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Brisbane, California.
August 1991
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INTRODUCTION

In 1958 following a period of anthropological field work in The Gambia, I prepared a 21 page publication — Elementary Wolof Grammar, which was mimeographed and distributed by the Research Department of the Colonial Office, most of the copies being sent back to The Gambia for local use by officials. It was intended to be used with a Wolof informant or teacher, rather than stand on its own as a definitive work. Later, as my knowledge of Wolof continued to grow, it was found to have a number of typing errors and mistranslations. It was, however, reprinted in Gabriel Manessy and Serge Sauvageot's collection: Wolof et Sérèr: Études de phonétique et de grammaire descriptive, Dakar, 1963, without any errors being pointed out or corrected by these experts.

In 1974 Linda Salmon, who used the Grammar when she was carrying out research in The Gambia, made a few corrections. In 1980 Lisa Barlow, who had been in the Peace Corps in Senegal, and spoke Wolof fluently, went through the Grammar and made further corrections (though some later proved to be differences between Gambian and Senegalese speech rather than errors on my part), and drew attention to the fact that I had not fully realized the significance of the incompleted action indicators ( -y, di).

Though an excellent study of Gambian Wolof was made by Codu Mbassy Njie (1982) this is in French, and is very difficult to obtain. Similarly the materials produced by C.L.A.D. in Dakar on Wolof are hard to find. Accordingly I decided to prepare a new version of the 1958 Grammar, using modern spelling, keeping close to the style of materials published by the Non Formal Educational Services in Banjul (though I have made certain separations, e.g. of i (of), and ..am (his, her) for the benefit of learners), and incorporating new material recorded in both Saalum (1977) and the Banjul area (1986) during brief visits to The Gambia. Lisa Barlow helped with the transcription of the 1979 material in 1980. In Part II, a variety of Wolof texts has been provided. These include a series of conversations prepared by Linda Salmon.

David P. Gamble
Brisbane, California, 1991.
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<td>pénca</td>
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<td>nk</td>
<td>Nk</td>
<td>tanka</td>
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<td>image</td>
<td>nx</td>
<td>Nx</td>
<td>banxaas</td>
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**ORTHOGRAHY**

**Consonants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>as in English</td>
<td>ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>church</td>
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<td>d</td>
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<td>ñ</td>
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<td>Kenya</td>
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<td>ñ</td>
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<td>sing</td>
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<td>&quot;</td>
<td>pin</td>
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<td>r</td>
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<td>right</td>
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<td>s</td>
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<td>send</td>
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<td>&quot;</td>
<td>ten</td>
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<tr>
<td>w</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>wish</td>
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<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>as in Spanish. Scottish: 'loch'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>yearn</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- mb
- nd
- nj
- nc
- ng
- nk
- nx

With the exception of f, s, and r, all consonants have long and short counterparts. Long consonants are indicated by double consonants.

- e.g. dalla shoe matta firewood

When pronounced slowly one hears:

- dal-la
- mat-ta
p/b
To an outsider a terminal b, and a terminal p are often very similar. The sound that is heard depends on the word following. Thus one may hear tubaap! on its own, but tubaab bi, the European.

C/j
Terminal c and j are also close.

xac dog; xaj bi the dog

Following Williams "Gambian Wolof has eight distinct vowel qualities. Apart from the distinct central vowel (ı) each vowel has short and long counterparts." Length is shown by doubling the vowel.

nit person (cf. English sit) niit to shine a light on (cf. English seat)

muñ to persevere muun to smile

i u
ê ê o'

ë e o

a

ê has the sound as in French le.

Senegalese Wolof distinguish two forms of the letter a; Gambians consider this unnecessary.
Vowel length is often significant for meaning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Senegalese</th>
<th>Gambian</th>
<th>Phonetic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lal</td>
<td>béd</td>
<td>to lie down</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laal</td>
<td>to touch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>lax</td>
<td>to be withered</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>laax</td>
<td>porridge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daw</td>
<td>run</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daaw</td>
<td>last year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ren</td>
<td>this year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reen</td>
<td>root</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nit</td>
<td>person</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>niit</td>
<td>shine a light</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rot</td>
<td>to fall</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>root</td>
<td>to draw water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muñ</td>
<td>to be patient</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muuñ</td>
<td>to smile</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A long ë is found only with a few borrowed words e.g. bëër from the French beurre (butter).

In reading material written in various languages there are different systems for dealing with the ë sounds

The ë sound may vary between ë and ə depending on the following word, the word for five may be pronounced juróom, but become juroom when followed by benna. There seem to be very few words in which a lexical distinction is made between ë and ə, but my personal research is limited.
A few basic words and phrases

waaw yes
déét no
déédéét no indeed
am ! here ! take it !
kaay come (The word is used only in the imperative form)
kaay fii come here
kaay leen come (plural imperative)
may... give (as a present)
(Also written mey by some authors) jox = give (hand over)
naam ! reply given when one's name is called
may ( ma benna give ( me one
( nú ndox water
guru kola
xaalis money
garab medicine
ko it

ak / ag
Samba ak Kumba
goor ak jigéén
añ ak reer
ndey ak baay
ndey ak dōōm
bey ak xar
dennu ak melax
man ak yow

and (used with nouns and pronouns)
Samba (a male name) and Kumba (female name)
man and woman
lunch and dinner
mother and father
mother and child
goat and sheep
thunder and lightning
I and you (cf. English, where 'you' comes first - 'you and me'.)
inside and outside
sky and earth
sugar and salt

* often used as the characters in folk tales.
te and (used between sentences and phrases)

deglul bu baax, te wax listen well, and say...

li yoti Yalla, What tries to reach God,
te du ko jot? and does not reach him? (A riddle)

(Ans.) kuur a pestle (which is raised with each stroke in pounding)

yoti go to reach
du does not
ko him, it

No word for and is used with kaay (come), demal (go), etc.

kaay aŋ come (and) have lunch
demal indi... go (and) bring........

mbaa or

baay am mbaa yaay am his father or his mother
(...am his, her)

walla or

Angale walla Faranse English or French
The initial consonant of various forms
reflects:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>article</th>
<th>demonstrative</th>
<th>interrogative</th>
<th>relative</th>
<th>referential</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a person</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>ki</td>
<td>kii</td>
<td>kan</td>
<td>ku</td>
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<tr>
<td>thing</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>li</td>
<td>lii</td>
<td>lan</td>
<td>lu</td>
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<tr>
<td>place</td>
<td>f</td>
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<td>n</td>
<td>ni</td>
<td>nii</td>
<td>nan</td>
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</table>

It is..... .....la They are ..... la ŋu

It is not.. du.....

lan la ? what is it ?
lii lan la ? what is this (here)?
paaka la it is a knife

ki kan la ? who is this ? who is it ?
man la it is I (For pronouns see p. 20 )
moom la ? is it him ?

kii lan la ? what is this person here ?
kii olof la this (person) is a Wolof

fan la ? where is it ?
fii fan la ? what is this place ? (lit. where is this place ?
nan nga def ? ) how are you doing?

Asan ak Husenu see x lan ŋu Asan and Husenu are twins
du moom  

it is not him

du dëggə ?  
is it not the truth ?

du dara  
it is not anything = it is nothing

du noonu  
it is not thus = that's not the way

buur du mbokka  
a king is not a relative

jękkër ak far du benna  
a husband and lover are not the same

Indicators of past completed action - oon used after a consonant  
- woon " " " vowel

can be added as required.

buur suma xarit la-woon  
The king had been my friend

du-woon yow  
it was not you

benna janxa la-woon...  
there was once a girl ....

---------

am na =  

there is

am-oon na... there was (once) ..an introduction to tales etc.

am na  benna muus  

there is one cat

(There is a cat up the tree)

am na  ci kow garab gi

is also the general word to have

am naa  "haar i muus  

I have two cats

am na  xaalis  

he has money

am nga jabar ?  

have you a wife ?
Nouns are constant in form, plurals being indicated by a change in the 'definite article' which is placed after the noun.

néég bi  the house
néég yi  the houses

The article varies in form:

bunta bi  the door
ganaar gi  the fowl
jigëën ji  the women
nit ki  the person
ndaa li  the water jar
muus mi  the cat
suuf si  the earth
ween wi  the breast

The plural of all of these with the exception of ki is yi. The plural of ki is ñi.

nit ñi  the people
dalla yi  the shoes
rongooñ yi  the tears
yoo yi  the mosquitoes
bunta yi  the doors
ganaar yi  the fowl (pl.)

A number of languages (Fula, Serer, etc.) in this part of Africa have a series of noun classes in which different qualities are indicated by the noun ending and its article – person vs. non-personal, liquids, long objects, diminutives, augmentatives, small quantity of, etc. Something of this appears to have contributed to Wolof, but harmonic associations, borrowings from other languages, and rules regarding the derivation of nouns from verbal roots, are also involved. The appropriate 'definite article' should be learnt along with the noun.
bi is found with nearly all nouns beginning with b, except for tree names.

Most nouns relating to persons (except nit ki, and terms of relationship) use bi.

Most words borrowed from French, English, and Mandinka, etc. take bi.

The names of fruit use bi, the name of the tree taking gi.

Many parts of the body take bi.

e.g. seef bi (Fr.) the chief
      janxa bi the girl
      tubaab bi the European
      footkat bi the washerwoman
      baayo bi the orphan

      perong bi (Fr.) the veranda
      pot bi (E.) the tin can
      taabul bi (E.) (Fr.) the table
      aseet bi (Fr.) the plate
      tenteng bi (Mand.) the winowing basket

      banaana bi the banana
      soraans bi the orange

      loxo bi the hand
      tanka bi the foot
      boppa bi the head
      biir bi the belly

Where a verb and a noun have the same form, the article is most commonly bi

      liggééy to work liggééy bi the work
      a fn to lunch a fn bi the lunch
      daaj to nail daaj bi the nail
      nandal to purge nandal bi the purge
      nen to lay an egg nen bi the egg

A sample of over 1000 nouns provided the following percentages for the various forms of the article:

b g j k l m s w

50 18 10  3  9  2  7 Total 99%
(i) used with many words beginning with g and k.

(ii) used with the names of trees (If a noun ends in gi there is a tendency to follow it with basang gi)

- garab gi: the tree
- guy gi: the baobab tree
- limong gi: the lime tree
- iir gi: the acacia tree
- kokko gi: the coconut tree
- guné gi: the youth
- gan gi: the stranger
- ganaar gi: the fowl
- gaal gi: the canoe
- gaynde gi: the lion
- kattan gi: force
- kuur gi: the oestle
- kër gi: the compound
- kuhéér gi: the cover

(iii) Belts and cords generally have gi

- buum gi: cord
- fer gi: string of waist beads
- goxo gi: belt
- ndombo gi: belt containing charms for protection
- xiir gi: fishing line
- señoor gi: woven belt

ji is used with

(i) many words beginning with j.

- jaan ji: the snake
- jaasi ji: the cutlass
- jigéén ji: the woman
- jimbi ji: the tress
- jombos ji: the pumpkin

(ii) many words borrowed from Arabic.

- allarba ji: the Wednesday
- allawa ji: the writing board
- aijduma ji: the Friday
- daara ji: the Koranic school
- jumaa ji: the mosque

(iii) many words involving kinship.

- jabar ji: the wife
- ndey ji: the mother
- nijaay ji: the mother's brother
- dööm ji: the child
- yumpaaā ji: the wife of mother's brother

ki is limited in use.

- nit ki: the person
qi (i) used with many words beginning with \( g \) and \( k \).

(ii) used with the names of trees (If a noun ends in \( g \) there is a tendency to follow it with \( basaŋ gi \)).

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- njaaqy ji: the mother's brother
- dōom ji: the child
- yumpaaŋ ji: the wife of mother's brother

ki is limited in use.

- nit ki: the person
found with only a few words beginning with l.

lifin li  the thing

Occurs with some words beginning with nd, ng, and c.

ndaa li  the water pot
ndaw li  the envoy
ndap li /ndab li  the container

ngelaw li  the wind
ngentë li  the naming ceremony
nguri li  the mason wasp

cin li  the (clay) pot
cakku li  the parrot
cat li  the end, tip

found with some words beginning with m, and some beginning with p.

muus mi  the cat
maalo mi  the rice
moroom mi  likeness

but especially when the initial consonant is nasalised.

mbowka mi  the relative
mboxxa mi  the maize
mbuuru mi  the bread
mbuus mi  the leather bag
mbinda mi  the writing

A number of liquids (but by no means all) have the article mi.

ndox mi  the water
meen mi  the breast milk, sap
meew mi  the fresh milk
soow mi  the sour milk

pax mi  the hole
picca mi  the bird
penca mi  the village square

(In old Wolof these nouns were probably nasalized, mpax, mpicca, etc.)
si
Fewer words have the s- form than one might expect.

There seems to be an indication of 'powdery substances'

* e.g. suuf si  the earth
       sunguf si  the flour
       sukur si  the sugar
       sanxal si  the granulated millet

Si is also a diminutive form - usually the initial consonant of the noun involved is nasalised, nd, ng, or begins with c.

* ndaw si  the girl friend
       cere si  the small amount of chere
       ndoom si  the little child (doom)
       cuuc si  the chicken
       ngarab si  the shrub (garab gi = the tree)

wi
This is found with words beginning with a vowel, y, w, and x, sometimes f.

* urus/wurus wi  the gold
       yappa wi  the meat
       ween wi  the breast
       fas wi  the horse
       waxande wi  the box
       yaram wi  the body

Most insects take the wi form:

* fel wi  the flea
       wanxa wi  an insect which destroys millet
       weŋ wi  the fly
       teeŋ wi  the louse

* xob wi  the leaf
       weer wi  the rock
       xiin wi  the cloud
       xur wi  the valley
The meaning of the noun sometimes depends on the article used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>banaana bi</td>
<td>the banana (fruit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>banaana gi</td>
<td>the banana tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ndaw li</td>
<td>the envoy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ndaw si</td>
<td>the girlfriend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fas wi</td>
<td>the horse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fas gi</td>
<td>the knot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weŋ wi</td>
<td>the fly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weŋ gi</td>
<td>the iron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doom ji</td>
<td>the child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doom hi</td>
<td>the fruit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the object referred to is near, the article has the form:

bi, gi, ji, etc.

If it is far off, then ba, ga, ja, etc. (Sometimes ŋ-ɛe in Banjul speech)

When unspecified or used as a relative form, it becomes bu, gu, ju, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ca alla ba</td>
<td>(away) in the bush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nit ku ñuul</td>
<td>the person who is black, black person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>malaan mu weex</td>
<td>a white cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>malaan mu weex mi</td>
<td>the white cloth (near)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>malaan mu weex ma</td>
<td>the white cloth (distant)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A demonstrative form can be formed by adding -le:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bile</td>
<td>this one here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bale</td>
<td>that one over there (In Banjul speech: bële)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yile</td>
<td>these here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yale</td>
<td>those there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>over there</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lengthening the form bi, gi, ji, etc to bii, gii, jii, etc. means "this one here"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nit kii</td>
<td>this person here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jiggën jii</td>
<td>this woman here</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE INDEFINITE ARTICLE

Generally there is no indefinite article corresponding to 'a', 'an' in English.

am nga jëkkër ?
may ma sigaret
abal ma paaka
bukki lawoon ak lëg
or
bukki ak lëg la-woon
oloñ nga ?

have you a husband ?
give me a cigarette
lend me a knife
there was (once) a hyena and a hare
are you a Wolof ?

But sometimes the word benna (one) is used.

dem naa ci benna kër

I went to a (certain) compound

doom u goor gi
benna doom u goor gi

the man's son
a (certain) son of the man

An indefinite form (= a certain, some) is formed by a followed by the definite article type marker, which is placed before the noun.

sëriñ bi
yi

the marabout
the marabouts

ab sëriñ ćiow na

a certain marabout came

nit ki
yi

tase naa ay nit ci
yoon wi

the person
the people
I met some people on
the road

gaal gi
yi

ay gaal

the canoe
the canoes

some canoes

fas wi
yi

aw fas
ay fas

a horse
some horses

some questions
Though sex is implied in certain words, e.g.

- baay: father
- yaay: mother
- jabar: wife
- jëkër: husband
- janxa: girl
- waxambaane: young man

In most cases it has to be shown by the addition of:

- ......goor: male
- ......jigëên: female

- doom ju goor: son
- doom ju jigëên: daughter

As regards animal names, the general term includes females, but there is also a specific form for males.

- ganar: fowl
- nag: cattle
- xar: sheep
- bey: goat
- fowl: hen
- cattle: cow
- sheep: ewe
- goat: female goat
- sirxa: cock
- yëkka: bull
- kuuy: ram
- sikket: billy-goat

The general word for horse is fas. A mare is wajan.
### Noun Endings

#### 1. Suffix - **kat** = English -er, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Bëy</th>
<th>Nappa</th>
<th>Foot</th>
<th>Faj</th>
<th>Ñaw</th>
<th>Tëux</th>
<th>Wat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to sell</td>
<td>to farm</td>
<td>to fish</td>
<td>to wash</td>
<td>to treat</td>
<td>to sew</td>
<td>to smoke</td>
<td>to shave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jaaykat bi</td>
<td>bëykat bi</td>
<td>nappakat bi</td>
<td>footkat bi</td>
<td>fajkat bi</td>
<td>Ñawkat bi</td>
<td>tëuxkat bi</td>
<td>watkat bi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the seller</td>
<td>the farmer</td>
<td>the fisherman</td>
<td>the washerwoman</td>
<td>traditional healer</td>
<td>the tailor</td>
<td>the smoker</td>
<td>the barber</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 2. **-aay** abstract nouns, qualities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Bëy</th>
<th>Nappa</th>
<th>Foot</th>
<th>Faj</th>
<th>Ñaw</th>
<th>Tëux</th>
<th>Wat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to be beautiful</td>
<td>to be hot</td>
<td>to be cold</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rafet</td>
<td>tanga</td>
<td>sedda</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rafetaay</td>
<td>tangaay</td>
<td>seddaay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beauty</td>
<td>heat</td>
<td>coldness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 3. **-in** - manner, means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Bëy</th>
<th>Nappa</th>
<th>Foot</th>
<th>Faj</th>
<th>Ñaw</th>
<th>Tëux</th>
<th>Wat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to walk</td>
<td>to eat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dox</td>
<td>lekka</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doxin</td>
<td>lekkin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manner of walking</td>
<td>manner of eating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 4. **-it** - piece of, remainder of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Bëy</th>
<th>Nappa</th>
<th>Foot</th>
<th>Faj</th>
<th>Ñaw</th>
<th>Tëux</th>
<th>Wat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to remain</td>
<td>to peel</td>
<td>to cut</td>
<td>to wash</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>des</td>
<td>xolli</td>
<td>dog</td>
<td>foot</td>
<td>bale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ndesit</td>
<td>xollit</td>
<td>n)dogit</td>
<td>potit</td>
<td>mhalit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>remains</td>
<td>skin, peelings, husks</td>
<td>piece cut off</td>
<td>dirty water left after washing</td>
<td>sweepings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* consonant change plus shortening of the vowel.

#### 5. **-eel** - abstract nouns, feelings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Bëy</th>
<th>Nappa</th>
<th>Foot</th>
<th>Faj</th>
<th>Ñaw</th>
<th>Tëux</th>
<th>Wat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to love</td>
<td>to admire</td>
<td>to want</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nob</td>
<td>soppa</td>
<td>bëggga</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nobeel</td>
<td>ncofel</td>
<td>bëggel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>love</td>
<td>admiration</td>
<td>want, desire</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6 -ukaay  -(1) place          (2) instrument          (Article usually bi)

(1)  wol   to pound           wolukaay  pounding area
     sangu to bathe             sangukaay washing place
     julli to pray              jullikaay praying place
     lekka to eat               lekkukaay restaurant

(2)  binda to write           bindukaay writing instrument
     uppa to fan               uppukaay fan
     aj   to hang              ajukaay hanger (for clothes)

7  -ande  -          moral quality

    reew  to be impolite       reew-ande impoliteness
    yërêm to pity             yërmande pity

8  -oor  often refers to periods of time

    bekkoor  period of drought
    tangoor  hot spell
    njooloor middle of the day
In many cases nouns have the same form as the verbal root.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>liggëy</td>
<td>to work</td>
<td>liggëy bi the work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taw</td>
<td>to rain</td>
<td>taw bi the rain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fas</td>
<td>to knot</td>
<td>fas gi a charm made with knots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nar</td>
<td>to divide</td>
<td>nar bi share (also mpas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fiir</td>
<td>to trap fish</td>
<td>fiir gi fish trap</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In nouns derived from verbs beginning with

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial Vowel</th>
<th>Replaced with</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a vowel) Ø " " " " k

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fo</td>
<td>to play</td>
<td>po play (n)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suub</td>
<td>to dye</td>
<td>cuub dyed material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amaan</td>
<td>to be jealous</td>
<td>kanaan jealousy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nouns derived from verbs beginning with b, d, g are nasalized, e.g.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bokka</td>
<td>to be related</td>
<td>mbokka mi the relative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* boot</td>
<td>to carry on the back</td>
<td>mbotu mi the cloth used to tie a child on the back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daxxa</td>
<td>to drive off</td>
<td>ndaxxa mi driving away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gelaw</td>
<td>to blow (of wind)</td>
<td>ngelaw li the wind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* goob</td>
<td>to harvest</td>
<td>ngobaan li the harvesting knife</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In derived nouns the vowel is also shortened.
Some nouns are formed by doubling the root:

xam to know xam-xam knowledge
am to have am-am possessions
Jolof a region Jolof-Jolof inhabitant of Jolof
Saalum a region Saalum-Saalum inhabitant of Saalum

Double forms are common in plant and animal names.

lëpa-lëpa butterfly
lupa-lupa

neb-neb name of an acacia
kereŋ-kereŋ a shrub with edible leaves
wor-wor-aan centipede, caterpillar
kaco-kaco weaver bird

Compound nouns can be formed from two nouns.

mbaam-alla mi the bush pig (mbaam donkey/pig)
alla bush)

gaynde- gëëj gi shark (Lit. lion of the sea)
boroom- kër gi owner of the compound
diw-tiir palm oil (diw oil
tiir palm tree)
POSSESSIVE CASE

of - indicated by i, u

There is a difference between Gambian and Senegalese Wolof.

Textbooks which describe Senegalese Wolof make a clear distinction between u of (singular) and i of (plural)

- xarit u Mariyaama: Mariama's friend
- xarit i Mariyaama: Mariama's friends
- doom u goor gi: the man's child
- doom i goor gi: the man's children
- fas u buur bi: the king's horse
- fas i buur bi: the king's horses
- ci digg' u gaal gi: in the middle of the canoe
- ci digg' u gaal yi: in the midst of the canoes
- ci digg'i gaal yi: in the middle of each of the canoes

On the other hand, Emmanuel Williams in Defined Orthography of Gambian Wolof writes that Gambian Wolof does not have the 'u' (p. 46).

One hears:
- yonnent i Yalla: a messenger of God
- jigëen i olof: a Wolof woman
- tag i picca: a bird's nest
- ci bunt'i néég bi: at the door of the house
- néég i ñaax: a grass hut
- néég i ban: a mud hut

Yet an occasional u can be heard:
- doom u jitle: step son
- per u bot (bët): pupil of the eye
In Saalum Wolof, an \( \_ \) is frequently heard in singular cases.

doow i buur bi Siin \hspace{1cm} \text{the son of the King of Siin}
and' i cuuraay \hspace{1cm} \text{an incense pot}

as well as plural cases.

gis tank'i qelêm yi \hspace{1cm} \text{he) saw the foot(marks) of the camels}

But \( \_ \) seems to occur more frequently than in Banjul Wolof

ci bunt' u néeeg bi \hspace{1cm} \text{at the door of the house}
ici bunt' u ker gi. \hspace{1cm} \text{at the gate of the compound}
bes u axémis \hspace{1cm} \text{the day of Thursday}
baay u dof bi \hspace{1cm} \text{the father of the madman}

ci ron u daxaar gi \hspace{1cm} \text{at the foot of the tamarind tree}
\text{or}
ci ron i daxaar gi

\hspace{1cm} \text{In Banjul speech, ron is used without a \( \_ \) or \( \_ \).}

--------
i \hspace{1cm} \text{is used after numerals}
fanweer i at \hspace{1cm} \text{thirty years}
\text{"haar i reen i \text{hambi yi} \hspace{1cm} \text{the two roots of cassava}

--------
genn' i tuuxu \hspace{1cm} \text{a pipe (for smoking)}
genn i wolu \hspace{1cm} \text{a mortar (for pounding)}
pas i recceental \hspace{1cm} \text{a running knot}
cox i dugub \hspace{1cm} \text{millet chaff}
wax i mag \hspace{1cm} \text{the advice of an elder}
ay lam i xaalis \hspace{1cm} \text{some bracelets of silver}
diw i dax \hspace{1cm} \text{oil (of butter)}

am nga weccit i \hspace{1cm} \text{have you change for}
fukk i dalasi ? \hspace{1cm} \text{ten dalasis ?}
With the word **boroom**, owner, no word for of is added.

- **boroom fas wi**  owner of the horse - horse owner
- **boroom nag wi**  owner of the cow - cow owner
- **boroom dëkka bi**  owner of the town - head of the town
- **boroom tol bi**  owner of the farm - farm owner
- **boroom taabul bi**  owner of the table = street trader

No **i/u** is used with **kilo** (the weight), **kuddu** (spoonful), or **buteel** (bottle).

- **benna kilo pataas**  one kilo (of) sweet potatoes
- **benna kuddu sukur**  one spoonful (of) sugar
- **buteel laskolon bi**  the bottle (of) perfume

However **i/u** is used with **paket** (packet), and **pot** (pot, cup, cigarette tin)

- **benna paket i sigaret**  a packet of cigarettes
- **naar i pot i (diwilin (diwilin**  two cups of groundnut oil
PRONOUNS

Pronouns form a complicated part of Wolof speech, having numerous forms and combining with subsidiary words to form a variety of verbal tenses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emphatic form</th>
<th>Objective form</th>
<th>Possessive singular plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>man</td>
<td>me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>yow</td>
<td>you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/she/it</td>
<td>moom</td>
<td>him/her/it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we</td>
<td>ŋun</td>
<td>us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you (pl.)</td>
<td>yeen</td>
<td>you (pl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they</td>
<td>ŋoom</td>
<td>them</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) Emphatic forms.

moom la ?
du moom
toogal fii, yow
xaaral, yow
ŋoom ŋaar
yeen yepp

I, Matar
I only (only me)
is it him ?
it is not him
you, sit here
you, wait
them both, the two of them
you all
(b) **Objective forms.** The indirect object precedes the direct object.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct Object</th>
<th>English Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>w)oo ko</td>
<td>call him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>isi ko</td>
<td>bring it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jappa ko</td>
<td>catch him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jox ma ko</td>
<td>give it to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jox ko ko</td>
<td>give it to him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jox ko loxo</td>
<td>shake hands with him (lit. give him a hand)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>won ma</td>
<td>show me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>von na ko</td>
<td>show it to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wax ko ko</td>
<td>tell him it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>may ñu guru</td>
<td>give us kola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jox na leen ko</td>
<td>he gave it to you (pl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jox leen guru</td>
<td>give them kola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nu nuyu leen</td>
<td>he greeted them</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(c) **Possessive forms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>suma doom</td>
<td>my child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suma gaal</td>
<td>my canoe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suma tool</td>
<td>my farm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suma santa</td>
<td>my surname</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suma gan</td>
<td>my stranger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sa doom</td>
<td>your child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sa gan</td>
<td>your stranger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sa jabar</td>
<td>your wife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sa yaay</td>
<td>your mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>géwel am</td>
<td>his griot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jabar am</td>
<td>his wife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doom am</td>
<td>his child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yaay am</td>
<td>his mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>néeég am **</td>
<td>his house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suñ kër</td>
<td>our compound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seen gan</td>
<td>your stranger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seen baay</td>
<td>their father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sumay simis</td>
<td>my shirts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sumay néeég</td>
<td>my houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sumay xarit</td>
<td>my friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>say loxo</td>
<td>your hands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>say bët</td>
<td>your eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i géwel am</td>
<td>his griots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i néeég am</td>
<td>his houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suñuy gaal</td>
<td>our canoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seeni nag</td>
<td>your cows</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The possessive comes between the noun and the article –

```
maal am gi       the canoe of his
```

**Where the noun ends in a vowel there is a contraction, e.g.

```
caabi + am       produces caab-eem
loxo + am         " lox-oom
```
(d)  Mine, my own, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>suma/sama bos</td>
<td>suma yos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sa bos</td>
<td>say bos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bos am</td>
<td>yos am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suñu bos</td>
<td>suñuy bos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seen bos</td>
<td>seen yos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seen bos</td>
<td>their</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_____________

paaka bi, sa bos la ? the knife, is it yours ?

déédéét, bos u Samba la no, it is Samba's

waaw, suma bos la yes, it is mine

du suma bos it is not mine

(e) An alternative way of indicating possession is with the word

moom - to own

ku moom...... ? who owns ....?  
maa ko moom it is I who own it  
yaa ko moom it is you who own it  
moo ko moom it is he who owns it
### INDEFINITE PRONOUNS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| dara   | anything (generally used with a negative verb) | deggu ma dara, I did not hear anything  
du dara, it is nothing (lit. it is not anything)  
buggu ma dara, I don't want anything  
gisu ma dara, I did not see anything  
fajut dara, it is not of any use |
| ken    | anyone (used with a negative verb to mean 'no one') | man gisu ma ken, as for me, I did not see anyone  
ken nekku fa, there is no one there  
ken du la won dugup, no one will show you millet |
| benen  | another                          | jendal benen, buy another  
benen u xarit am, another friend of his |
Forms that are used to refer to someone/something previously mentioned are:

kooku            that person
    kooku !       that one!  him!
loolu            that thing
    loolu doy na  that's enough
    bul def loolu don't do that
    bugga nga def loolu?  do you want to do that?

boobu            that (relating to things or people)
    doom ju goor boobu  that son (previously mentioned)
    ma seet boobu      let me see that one

googu
    guddi googu nak    that night however

yooyu            (plural)
    nyen fukki at yooyu  those forty years

moomu m          is the indicator used with personal names

    Faatumata moomu nak,  as for that Fatumata,
    ku refet la           she was a beautiful person

noonu            thus, that way
    du noonu             that's not the way (it is not thus)
Wolof has no adjectives as in English. Instead it uses relative pronouns with verbs.

e.g. baax na it is good
    tubaab bu baax a good European (A European who is good)
    tubaab bu baax bi the good European
    nit ku ñuul a black person
    nit ku ñuul ki the black person
    ñëég bu réy a big house
    ñëég bu réy bi the big house
    fas wu ñuul a black horse
    fas wu ñuul wi the black horse
    ñuus mu ñuul mi the black cat
    moto bu mag bi the large truck
    nataal bu rafet a fine photograph
    robb'am bu ees her new dress
    tool bu réy a large farm
    bukk bi xiîf a hungry hyena
    rayyo bu xonxi bi the red flag
    piis bu weex bi the white piece (of cloth)
    jaan ju mag a large snake
    alel ju bari much wealth
    janxa bu refet a beautiful girl
    xeet i ndimo yu bari many sorts of textiles
ADVERBS

There are few words corresponding to adverbs in English.

ndanka softly, quietly
defal ndanka do it carefully
ndanka ndanka jappa golo softly, softly, catchee monkey
gaaw to hurry
gaawal hurry (imperative)
demal gaaw hurry up (lit. go hurry)
gaaw nga dikka de! you've come back in a hurry

Most adverbs are formed by using bu plus a verbal root.

bu baax well
bu vagga long ago

Reduplication intensifies the meaning:

bu baax a baax very good, very well
THE VERB—IMPERATIVE FORMS

The imperative singular of intransitive verbs is formed by adding -al to the root, if it ends in a consonant, -l, if it ends in a vowel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dem-áal</td>
<td>go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xáar-ál</td>
<td>wait</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toog-ál</td>
<td>sit down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñów-ál</td>
<td>come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daw-ál</td>
<td>run</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dikka-l</td>
<td>come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dugga-l</td>
<td>enter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>noppí-l</td>
<td>be quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oyu-l</td>
<td>answer (a call)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taal-ál</td>
<td>light the lamp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tējal palanteer bi</td>
<td>lock the window</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ubbíl bunta bi</td>
<td>open the door</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tējal bunta bi</td>
<td>lock the door</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demal fale, waay</td>
<td>go away, please</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The plural is formed by adding -leen to the root.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>dem leen</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ñów leen</td>
<td>come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toog leen</td>
<td>sit down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dellu leen</td>
<td>return</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When a pronoun object (direct or indirect) follows the verb, no -l is added.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>isi ko</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sol ko</td>
<td>put it on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xáar ma</td>
<td>wait for me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>won ma ko</td>
<td>show me it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jaay ma almet</td>
<td>sell me matches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>waññí ko, waay</td>
<td>lessen it (the price), please</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note, however, that there is a suffix -al, which implies 'on behalf of'.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lēébal ma</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>woyal ma</td>
<td>sing a song for me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>niítal ma</td>
<td>shine a light for me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>togga</td>
<td>to cook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tiggal</td>
<td>cook (imperative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toog-ál-al ma</td>
<td>cook for me</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A polite way of asking uses the form 'won't you....'

doo ma toogal ceeb-u-jën tey?  won't you cook rice and fish for me today?
doo ma laajal Musa?    won't you ask Musa for me?
doo ma jendal guru? won't you buy kola for me

---------

No word for 'and' is added between imperatives.

kaay reer    come (and) have supper
kaay aã    come (and) have lunch
kaay tooq fi    come (and) sit here
kaay leen tooq    come (and) sit down (pl.)
gaawal dellusi    hurry (and) come back
toogal waxtaan    sit (and) chat
demal indi...    go(and)bring ...

No  -al  is added to the second verb.

---------

The negative singular is formed by adding bul.
The negative plural is formed by adding buleen.
before the verb.

bul jooy    don't cry
bul dem    don't go
bul daw    don't run
bul baã    don't refuse
bul yaggα    don't be long
bul ragal    don't be afraid
bul fatte    don't forget
bu leen dem    don't go (plural)
bu leen fa dem    don't go there
PRESENT TENSE (CONTINUOUS)

I am ......ing

.....ngi/nge/nga

maa ngi fi I am here
yaa ngi fi you are here
mu ngi fi he is here mu nga fa he is over there
ũu ngi fi we are here
yena ngi fi you (pl.) are here
ũu ngi fi they are here ũu nga fa they are over there

i indicates nearness to the speaker
a distance from the speaker

Often one hears an ending in e

maa nge dem I am going
yaa nge dem you are going, are you going ?
mu nge dem he is going
ũu nge dem we are going
yena nge dem you (pl.) are going
ũu nge dem they are going

Banjul Wolof make a distinction between

maa ngi toog I am seated
and maa nge toog I am (in the act of) sitting down

maa nge ũibbi I am returning home
maa nge ũow ۀ议案 I am coming now
maa nge tane I am feeling better

yaa nge ũibbi ? you are returning ?
yaa nge taxaw ? you are standing ?
munige lopitaan he is (at) hospital
Jayna munge Ńoro Jayna is at Nyoro
munige Bakaw he is (at) Bakau
mungī nii he is right here
ũunge reer we are eating supper
ũunge Basse they are (at) Basse
Where there is no pronoun angi etc. is used.

Samba b'angi nii Samba is right here
bool angi ci sa kër? is there a basin in your compound?
siis b'angi here's a chair
meew m'angi here's milk
guy g'angi nii here's the baobab tree

For habitual and incompleted action y or di are added as appropriate
(See pages 38-39).

mungi koy lekka he is eating it
mungi leen di lekka he is eating them

y being added to a word ending in a vowel,
di after a consonant.
EXPLANATORY TENSE

da........ This is used to describe temporary states, in comments, and giving explanations.

da-ma feebar I am sick
da-nga feebar you are sick
daafa feebar he is sick
da-ñu feebar we are sick
da-ñeen feebar you (pl.) are sick
da-ñu feebar they are sick

The present or continuous tense (Page 29) is used when the action is the main element, e.g. in reply to the question "what is she doing?" the reply might be "She is sewing - munge ñaw" describing the activity. But a person might comment "da-ma ñaw mbuuba" - I am sewing a gown, when she is not actually sewing at the moment of speaking, but is nevertheless making a new gown.

da nga fenn you are lying!
naka la mel? what is he like?
daafa njool he is tall

dafa mer he is angry
daafa sob he is disobedient, troublesome

daafa am kattan he has strength, energy
daafa am gacce he has shame

nan nga def? how are you doing?
dama sonna I am tired.

The negative form can be either:

dama sonnul I am not tired
or sonnu ma

tey dafa tangul today is not hot

---
dama tayyi I am tired
bën am dafay metti my tooth is aching (For y see page 39
suma boppa bi dafay my head is aching metti

The tense is commonly used in explaining people's absence.

sa yaay dafay sangu your mother is washing herself
Maama dafa dem Banjul Maama has gone to Banjul
daafa gëëna he/she has gone out
The suffix **-oon, woon** - indicating that the action or circumstances are now over and done with, can be added.

-da nga am-oon gan ? did you have a stranger ? (he is now gone)
-dafa néwi-oon it had been swollen (but has now gone down)
-dafa taxaw-oon it had stopped (of clock) (but is now working)
-da ma tukki-woon I had gone away (but I'm now back)
-ci bëcèg naaj dafa in the daytime the sun was hot (but it's cooler now)
-tang'oon

The **woon** may be separated from the verb by pronouns, etc.
e.g. waxu ma ko woon he had not told me it

**-oon** is also used to form a past participle.

e.g. lekkoon having eaten

footoon having done the washing
THE AORIST TENSE

Used for - completed action
- 'adjectival verbs'
- verbs of knowing, perception, wanting, etc.
The pronoun follows the verb.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dem naa</td>
<td>dem-u ma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I went</td>
<td>I did not go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dem nga</td>
<td>dem-u lo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you went</td>
<td>you did not go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dem na</td>
<td>dem-ul/dem-ut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he went</td>
<td>he did not go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dem nafo</td>
<td>dem-u ŋu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we went</td>
<td>we did not go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dem ngeen</td>
<td>dem-u leen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you (pl.) went</td>
<td>you (pl.) did not go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dem nafo</td>
<td>dem-u ŋu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they went</td>
<td>they did not go</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

jox naa ko ko         | I gave it to him  |
jox naa la ko         | I gave it to you  |
tuur naa ko           | I poured it out   |
wax nga dëggga !       | you've spoken the truth ! |
binda nga ko ?         | did you write it ? |

Fatou gëna na         | Fatu went out     |
Omar dikka na         | Omar has come     |
Fatou tukki na        | Fatu has gone away|
suma doom dikka na    | my child has come |
Kumba ŋëbbi na ?      | has Kumba gone home ?|
matta na ma           | it has bitten me |

sa ndaw si sëy na     | your girl friend got married|
suma maam dee na      | my grandfather has died |
'Adjectival verbs' take the same form.

doy na it is enough
neex na it is sweet
baax na it is good
Yalla baax na God is good
naaj wi tanga na the sun is hot
sur naa I am full
sa réew mi réy na your country is large

Verbs of knowing, perception, wanting, etc. generally use this form.

xam nga ko ? do you know it?
xam nga ko I know it
gis nga ko ? do (did) you see it ?
xam nga ko ! he knows it !
xam nga jabar am ? do you know his wife ?
nob nga ma ? do you love me ?
bëgga nga ganaar ? do you want a fowl ?
dëgga nga olof ? do you hear (understand) Wolof ?
ñun xam nañ ko we know it
xam nga foon ko you (pl.) know it
ñoom xam nañ'ko they know it

- The suffix -oon is added to indicate that the action is over and done with. This generally corresponds to the English 'did', and is often used in questions and answers.

dem-oon nga démbe ? did you go yesterday ?
foo dem-oon démbe ? where did you go yesterday  (foo = fu nga)
foo nekk-oon ? where were you ?
gis-oon nga suma niñaay ? did you see my uncle ?
wax-oon naa leen I had told them
dem-oon na ci suma he had gone to my
nëég house

gis-oon naa la démbe I saw you yesterday
gis-oon naa la fa, I saw you there,
démbe ci guddi last night
Negative forms:

gisu ma dara  
gisula dara )  
gisulo dara )  
gisul dara  
gisu leen dara ?  
gisu ŋu dara  
(nyoom) gisu ŋu dara  

I did not see anything  
did you not see anything ?  
he did not see anything  
did you (pl.) not see anything ?  
we did not see anything  
they did not see anything  

In case of ambiguity between the 1st and 3rd person plurals, an emphatic pronoun is added.

déggu ma soose  
gisu ma ko  
amulo dara ?  
Mariyaama baaxul  

I do not understand Mandinka  
I did not see it  
you have nothing ?  
Mariyaama is not good  

(In Saalum the third person singular ends in t instead of l)

tojut  
it is not broken  

In the third person singular negative, the final -l is dropped, when followed by a pronoun object, or a locative.

Faatu nobul Samba  
Faatu nobu ko  
nekku fi  

Faatu does not love Samba  
Faatu does not love him  
he is not here  

No longer is indicated by -atul  
ganaaw bu ŋu dundatul sax  
even after they are no longer living..  

Not yet is indicated by -agul  
dem+agul  
ñoowagul  

he has not yet gone  
he has not yet come  

If the verb ends in i) it becomes -eegul  

u) it becomes -oogul  
0)  

To already have is shown by -gum  
dugg-gum  

already have entered
di (a) indicator of future
(b) indicator of habitual action
di/-y (c) indicator of incompleted action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FUTURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>affirmative</td>
<td>negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>di naa dem</td>
<td>I will go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>di nga dem?</td>
<td>will you go?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>di na dem</td>
<td>he will go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>di naŋ dem</td>
<td>we will go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>di ngeen dem?</td>
<td>will you (pl.) go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>di naŋ dem</td>
<td>they will go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>di naa la rey</td>
<td>I will kill you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>di naŋko dōör</td>
<td>I will beat him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>di naa ko def</td>
<td>I will do it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>di nga ŋow ?</td>
<td>will you come ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>di na ŋow ci ngoon</td>
<td>he will come in the evening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>di na doy</td>
<td>it will be sufficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>di na em</td>
<td>it will be long enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>du ma daanu</td>
<td>I will not fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>du ma ko toj</td>
<td>I will not break it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>du ma nelaw lēēgi</td>
<td>I will not sleep now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doo ma xaar ?</td>
<td>won't you wait for me?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doo ma ko abal ?</td>
<td>won't you lend it to me?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doo ŋu nataal ?</td>
<td>won't you photograph us?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doo waxtaan ?</td>
<td>won't you chat?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
di nga dem?
will you go?

di nga fa dem?
will you go there?

di nga ko def?
will you do it?
kañ ngeen di dem?  when will you (pl.) go?
kañ la Asan di dem?  when is it that Asan will go?
doo toog?  won't you sit down?
doo reer?  won't you have supper?
doo añ?  won't you have lunch?
doo jenda ganaar?  won't you buy a fowl?
du ma-woon  it was not me
du doy?  will it not be enough?
du la def dara  he/it will not do anything to you

Ru ne ko 'bul nibbi'  they said to him "Don't go."
mu ne ko 'man de, di naa nibbi.'  he told them "As for me, I must go."

*In pidgin English 'must' is often used for the future.  "Is the driver coming?"  "He must come."

(b)  HABITUAL ACTION

di nga tux?  do you smoke?
di naa tux  I smoke
di ngay tux?  are you in the habit of smoking?
dumay lekka sippa-sippa  I don't eat shrimp
du may tædda ci suuf  (I don't lie on the ground
( I won't lie on the ground
jigéen di na dem ci penca ba?  does a woman go to the
bantaba?  (village meeting place)

lu tax nga di ko def?  why do you do it?

Continuous past action.. daan

daana am  once upon a time  (in stories etc.)
INCOMPLETE ACTION...ACTION IN PROGRESS

Used especially in questions and answers.
y is added to pronoun after a vowel
di is added (written separately) after a consonant

lan nga-y def ?  what are you doing ?
lan la-y def ?  what is he doing ?
kii dafa-y woy  this one is singing
kañ ngeen di dem ?  when will you go (pl.)
lan ngeen di def ?  what are you doing (pl.)
loo-y def ci kør gi ?  what are you doing in the compound ?
dama-y xaar suma xarit  I am waiting for my friend
kañ nga ma-y yöbbu ?  when will you take me ?
kañ la ñuy dem ?  when will they go ?
lan la-y lekka ?  what is it he/she is eating ?
lan la Faatu di lekka ?  what is it that Fatu is eating ?
ana mu ?  where is he ?
  mu ngi-y toog  here he is seated
  mu ngi nii, di dikka  here he is, coming
  mu nga-y tødda ca lal ba  there he is lying down on the bed
loo-y def ?  what are you doing ?
bunta bi laa-y ubbi  it is the door I am opening
lan nga-y xool ?  what are you looking at ?
muus mi laa-y xool  it is the cat I am looking at
fooj dem ?  where are you going ?
damay aji Makka  I am going on the pilgrimage (to) Mecca
fii laa-y wacca  it is here I am getting down
ban liggëey ngay def ?  what work do you do ?
jangalekat laa  I am a teacher
cf. lëëgi laa ñow  I have just come
& lëëgi laay ñow  I am coming now !
mu nge tive sagar vu baarë, he was holding many rags. (and)
di ko yev was chewing it (them)

ňu dem, di lekka ndowal gi they went off, eating the meat

mu dem be fekka nit di he went on until he met a person
samm' i bey herding goats

mu dem be fekka yaay am, he went until he found her mother,
mu ngiy ni, di aň she was there, eating lunch

waa ji fekka Kumba ci teen bi, the person found Kumba at the well,
di root drawing water

fekkà ţu têddi, di nelaw he) found they had gone to lie down,
and were sleeping

-----

lu muy def ? what is he doing ?

lu ngeen di def ? what are you (pl.) doing ?

- da ţuy doxantu - we are walking around

-----

In conditional clauses etc. (See page 60)

di + ee becomes ɗee

su ma ɗee buur.... if I were king.....

su ɗee dem... if he were to go.....

Doonte = if it were

doonte man:.... if it were me....

Doon = past continuous

lu mu doon def ? what was he doing ? what had he been doing ?

loolu laňu doon lekka that was what they used to eat

Dootu = di + oot + u = no longer

doottu ma tux I no longer smoke
EMPHATIC SUBJECT FORM

sing. 1 maa..... I
2 yaa..... you
3 moo..... he

(plural 1 ūoo..... we
2 yenna... you (pl.)
3 ūoo..... they

maa bañ ! I won't, I refuse
yaa bon ! you are bad !
moo bon he is bad
(ǹun) ūoo bon we are bad
yeena bon you (pl.) are bad
(ǹoom) ūoo bon they are bad

For first person plural and third person plural, if the context does not make it clear which it is, a 'strong pronoun' is added for clarification. (See page 20 ).

man, maa ko def It was I who did it
moo ko def it was he who did it
yaa ko wax it was you who said it
yaa ko ko wax it was you who told it to him
cokeer, maa la gën a bushfowl, I am cleverer than you
muus

Personal names can also be changed e.g.

Faatoo dem it was Faatu who went
(Faatu + a)
EMPHATIC OBJECT FORM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sing.</td>
<td>...laa</td>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...nga</td>
<td>you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...la</td>
<td>he</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plural</td>
<td>...lañu</td>
<td>we</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...ngeen</td>
<td>you (pl.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...lañu</td>
<td>they</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

yow laa wax  )  it is you I am talking to
yow laay wax  )

man olof laa  I am a Wolof

olof nga bögga dë́ggga ?  is it Wolof you want to hear ?

you la w)oo  it is you he is calling

soose rekk la dë́ggga  it is only Mandinka he understands (hears)

Caalí la nob  it is Chali he loves

ñun olof lañu  it is Wolof we are

yow lañuy xaar  it is you we are waiting for

moom laa gis  it is him that I saw


OBLIGATIVE

Pronoun followed by verbal root.

sing.  1 ma ... I
       2 nga you
       3 mu he/she/it

plural  1 ñu we
        2 ngeen you
        3 ñu they

ma door liggéy bi tey ? shall I begin the work today ?
ma wax suma tur ? shall I say my name ?
ma ñow ? shall I come, am I to come ?
ma ñow ak yow ? shall I come with you ?
ma won ko ko ? shall I show it to him ?
ma jox la benna ? shall I give you one ?
ma seet let me see
jox ma, ma seet give me (so that) I may see
xaaral, ma ñow wait for me to come
demal indi ndox, ma sangu go and bring water for me to wash
may ma ndox ma naan give me water to drink

wax ko mu gasw tell him to hurry
wax leen ñu tooğ tell them to sit down
dama bëgga nga... I want you to....
mu ne ma ma raxasal ko she told me I should wash it for her
   ci geej gi in the sea
mu ne nga ñow he said you should come
kaay, ma yobbu la fa come, let me take you there
kaay, ñu dem come, let's go
OPTATIVE

e.g. let (pronoun) (verb)

sing. 1 naa
2 na nga
3 na -

plural 1 na ŋū
2 na ngeen
3 na ŋū

naa dem let me go
na nga tog ? would you (like to) sit down ?
na nga ubbi bunta bi ? would you (be good enough to) open the door
(The above two items are more formal requests than the normal imperative form.)

na dem let him go
na suma xarit dem let my friend go

na ŋū dem let us go (The 1st.person plural is the most commonly heard form of this tense)
na ŋū rey bey bi let us kill the goat
na ŋū xool let us look
alxames, këpp ku bëgga Thursday, all who want
Faatumata, na ŋū ñow Fatumata, should come

However, a common method of expressing let him etc. is by means of the word bayyi to leave

baayi ko mu dem let him go

A wish may be expressed by yal
ku la bañ, yal na dee! whoever hates you, may he die!
VERBAL SUFFIXES

Wolof has many verbal suffixes of which the commonest are:

1 -adi  - lacking  -slightly
xam  to know      xamadi  to be ignorant
lekka to eat       lekkadi to eat only a little
dof  to be mad     dofadi to be slightly mad

2 -al  - on behalf of
woy  to sing       woyal  to sing for
lēēb to tell a story       lēēbal  to tell a story for
togga to cook       tooggal  to cook for

3 -al  - used to turn intransitive verbs into transitive forms
jeex to be finished      jeexal  to finish off
dega to lean, slope        degal  to make lean
randu to go aside         randal  to change the place of

4 -aale (a) indicates 'somewhat', with colors '....ish'.
sore to be far           sorey-aale  somewhat far
dof  to be mad           dof-aale  to be somewhat mad
weex to be white         weex-aale  to be whitish

(b) indicates 'with' ...simultaneous action
yobbu to take           yobbu-waale  to take with one
indi to bring           indi-waale  to bring with one

5 -aan  profession, habit, frequent action
woy  to sing           woyaan  to beg by singing
nawet to be the rainy season
     season
seet to look at         seetaan  to be a spectator
wax  to talk           waxtaan  to chat

(cf. bu ay am-aan  when there used to be quarrels)
6 **-ante** indicates reciprocity, rivalry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>raw</th>
<th>to surpass</th>
<th>rawante</th>
<th>to race, compete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nob</td>
<td>to love</td>
<td>nobante</td>
<td>to love each other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Nu nuuyuwan te rekk** let us just greet one another.

7 **-antu** to pass time at (not serious)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>fo</th>
<th>to play</th>
<th>fo-antu</th>
<th>to amuse oneself at</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dox</td>
<td>to walk</td>
<td>doxantu</td>
<td>to walk around</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>togga</td>
<td>to cook</td>
<td>togg-antu</td>
<td>to play at cooking (suma doom dafa toggantu)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**My child is playing at cooking**

8 **-at** intensive

| dog   | to cut         | dogat  | to cut into pieces |

9 **-ati** again

| di naa dem-ati | I will go again |
| dem-ati-1 ci dëkka bi | go again to the town |
| bul def-ati loolu | don't do that again |
| ñow-ati-1 ñillëg | come again tomorrow |
| du am-ati | he will not get (it) again |
| amati nga.... | = do you still have... |
| amatu ma xaalis | I don't have money any longer |

10 **-aatu** frequent repeated actions

| lamba | to feel        | lambaatu | to grope around (search in darkness) |

11 **-e** to make intransitive verbs active

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>wacca</th>
<th>to come down</th>
<th>wacce</th>
<th>to take down</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>geëna</td>
<td>to go out</td>
<td>geëne</td>
<td>to put out, expel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12 **-ee** indicates an instrumental use

| paaka la ko gañee | it is with a knife he wounded him |

| cf. gañ na ko ak paaka | he wounded him with a knife |
banta la ma xale bi dooree it is a stick that the boy struck me with
mu feesee xar jaasi he skinned the sheep with a cutlass
lan la baaxee ? what is it good for ?

-i, -ji, -yi -si implies going to do /coming to do

-i after a consonant

maa ngi jendi jen I am going to buy fish

-ji after polysyllables

maa nge sangu-ji I am going to bathe

-yi after a vowel, monosyllabic

maa ngi foyi I am going to play

-si to come to do.

ma ǹow jel-si ko ? shall I come to get it ?

lu tax aǹ-si-wu loo ? why did you not come for lunch ?

yow yaa fii jel-si-woon was it you who came here to take
sa jabar ? your wife ?

maa ngay dem rooti I am going to draw water

dafa julli-ji he has gone to pray

sol-u-ji go to dress one's self

14 -i un- (inversive)

weer to spread to dry weeri * to collect up again
ub to close ubbi to open

 pérd to lock ubbiji to go to open
têj to lock téjji to unlock

There is normally a doubling of the consonant before the -i.

* R , however, is apparently not found in a double form, rr .
except terminally in certain emphatic words.

With some words e.g. teer (to anchor) the inversive form
becomes dd (to loosen a canoe).
f becomes pp saf (to have taste) ...sappi (be insipid)
s becomes cc fas (to tie knot) ...fecci (undo knot)
vowel - ϕ kk dee (to die) ...dekki (to revive)
15 -loo indicates benefit to the subject, but the action is done by someone else
reyllo naa xar suma jam am I had a sheep killed by my slave
sampa-loo to have built for

16 -lu to have something done for oneself
raagal to treat raglu to have oneself treated
fééx to be cool fééxlu to take fresh air

17 -lu indicates pretense
nelaw to sleep nelawlu to pretend to be asleep
tanxamu to turn a deaf ear to

Sometimes the root is doubled.
foot to wash foot-foot-lu to pretend to wash
rafet to be beautiful rafet-rafet-lu to pretend to be beautiful

18 -oo used to make intransitive verbs transitive
dellu to go back delloo to restore, give back

19 -si to come to do (See #13)
jel to take jelsi to come to take

20 -te repetition
laaj to ask lajte to question

21 -tu reflexive - formed from an intransitive verb
gaaw to hurry gaawtu to hurry oneself
22  

-\text{u}  

(1) passive  
(2) to do to oneself  

sanga  
to wash  
sangu  
to wash oneself  

suux  
to pour water  
\text{suuxu}  
to pour water over oneself  

-  

jaaru  
to dry oneself at a fire  

wat  
to shave  
watu  
to shave oneself  

gaaN  
to wound  
gaaN\text{u}  
to be wounded  

weer  
to spread out  
weeru  
to be spread out  

23  

-\text{l}e  

(i) indicates simultaneous action, reciprocity, helping in, etc.  

may  
to give  
mayle  
to contribute to a gift made by someone  

ligg\text{ey}  
to work  
ligg\text{eyle}  
to help in working  

(ii) indicates that the person speaking experiences something happening to the object  

reer  
to be lost  
reerle na paaka  
he has a lost knife, i.e. he has lost a knife
AUXILIARY VERBS

A number of auxiliary verbs which are followed by an infinitive in English able to, about to, etc. are followed by an a in Wolof.

bañ a refuse to
mu ngi bañ a wax he refuses to speak

gén a better than
Ture, moo gen a baax Siise Ture is better than Sise
mën a, mun a be able to
munul a dem fenn he is not able to go anywhere

soog a be about to, have just
maa ngiy soog a aksi I have just arrived

jéém a try to
lu muy jéém a def ? what is he trying to do ?

xaw a to be somewhat
dama xaw a feebar I am somewhat sick

waaj a preparing to, ready to
fekka muy waaj a dee he) found he was preparing to die

fexe a to try to

war. a ought to

bëgg a want to

If a pronoun follows the a may be absorbed into it, e.g.

nar naa fey I intend to pay
mun naa féey I am able to swim

cf bugga ngeen a lekka ? do you want to eat ?
mus a to have done/been
mus na a ñow fii he has come here

Generally used with negative verb to mean never
musu maa ñow fii I have never come here
musu maa ko gis I have never seen it
COMPARISONS

bile baax na  this one is good
bile genn a baax  this is the best

ban a) ci genn a rey ?  which is the largest ?
    bu  )

ban a) ci genn a gudda ?  which is the longest ?
    bu  )

ban a) ci genn a gatta ?  which is the shortest ?
    bu  )

ban a) ci genn a ñaaw ?  which is the ugliest ?
    bu  )

ci = of them, from them

maa la genn a muus  I am cleverer than you
yaa ma genna a muus  you are cleverer than me

ñaile ñett i nit,
kan moo ci gèn a gore ?  of these three people,
who was the most honest ?
ne is used (a) as a verb to say
(b) as equivalent to that
(c) with emphatic words (See page 76.)

(a) ma ne I say (announcing that one is going to speak further)
ma ne ko 'waaw' I told him 'yes'
nga ne lan? what did you say?
mu ne 'waaw' he says 'yes'
ũu ne we say
ngeen ne lan? what do you (pl.) say?
ũu ne.... they say.....

For the past tense we have:
ne nas.... I said
ne na... he said ũu naan they used to say.....
    etc. (ne + aan)

(b) xam nga ne....? do you know that....?
dega nga ne....? did you hear that ....?
gis nga ne....,? did you see that.....
defe naa ne nar na taw I think that it is about to rain

Pidgin English has the phrase 'tell him say'
QUESTIONS

Questions can be indicated by intonation.

dem na  
he went

dem na ?  
did he go ?

gis nga ko ?  
did you see him ?

Or by the use of an introductory word:

\textbf{ndax}  
is it that ?

\textbf{ndax nga bëgga dem lëggi ?}  
is it that you want to go now ?
do you want to go now ?

\textbf{ndax dara jottu la ?}  
(I hope) something did not happen to you?
to him

\textbf{ne ko: ndax ndaw si fii la fanaa}  
he said/: Did the girl happen to spend
the night here ?

\textbf{xanaa}  
is it that ? (The speaker, based on his own knowledge, hopes for agreement)

\textbf{xanaa vow ak ku fii ñow-oon mbokku leen ?}  
are you, and the one who came here before, not related ?

\textbf{mbaa}  = or  
often used with a negative verb.

\textbf{mbaa feebarul ?}  
(I hope) he is not sick ?
he isn't sick, is he ?

\textbf{mbaa kenn feebarul?}  
(I hope) no one is sick ?

The reply to such queries is \textbf{alhamdulilaa}  Thanks be to God.
-an with the appropriate initial determinant is used in most questions

lan what? kan who? fan where?

ban, wan etc? which

ci ban dëkka? in what town?
fäs wan? which horse?
gan guy? which baobab tree?

The second person singular becomes loo, foo, etc.

loo bëgga? what do you want?
foo-y dem? where are you going?

ana? where? (when one is asking about people or things, and the (how) interest is in the person or thing, rather than the actual place)

ana mu? where is he?
ana Jayna? where/how is Jayna?
ana sa yaay? where/how is your mother?
ana sa doom? where/how is your child?
ana waa Banjul? where/how are the people of Banjul?
ana dalla yi? where are the shoes?
ana bale bi? where is the broom?

(It can also be used with 'fu' etc.)

ana fu mu dem? where did he go?
fan, fu  ?     where?  (when the focus is on the place)

fan la dem ?  where is it he has gone ?
fan la marse bi nekka ? where is the market located ?
fan nga jogé ?  where do you come from ?
fan nga dëkka ?  where do you live ?

a ana Fafa ?  where is Fafa ?
b dem na  he has gone out
a fan ?  where ?
b ci alla ba  to the bush

fu mu dem ?  where is it he went ?

fu mu nekka ?  where is he staying ?

The second person singular becomes  foo

foo-y jem ?  where are you headed for ?
foo-y dem ?  where are you going ?
foo dem-oon ?  where did you go ?
foo bëgg a dem ?  where do you want to go ?
foo-y dem ellegg ?  where are you going tomorrow ?

kan, ku ?     who ?

kii kan la ?  who is this ?
jabar i kan ?  whose wife ?
doom i kan ?  whose child ?

ku ko def ?  who is it that did it ?
ku ko wax ?  who is it that said it ?
kañ ?
when ?

kañ nga dikku ? when did you come ?
kañ nga jogë Banjul ? when did you come from Banjul ?
kañ nga dem ? when did you go ?
kañ nga ñow ? when did you come ?

kañ la Faatu di ñow ? when will Faatu be coming ?
kañ la-ñuy dem ? when are they going ?
kañ nga-y dem ? when are you going ?

(di -y incompleted action)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Koura</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **naka** | ? | how? 
(sometimes used in the sense of 'since') |
| naka waa kër gi | ? | how are the people of the compound? |
| naka waa Leeba | ? | how are the people of Leeba? |
| naka sa jabar | ? | how is your wife? |
| naka sa loxo bi | ? | how is your hand? |
| naka nga tuuda | ? | how are you named? what is your name? |
| naka nga santa | ? | how are you surnamed? what is your surname |
| naka nga def | ? | how are you doing? |
| naka la mel | ? | what is it like? |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Koura</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ãaata</strong></td>
<td>?</td>
<td>how much? how many?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ãaata nga bëgga</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>how much do you want?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ãaata la jar loolu</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>how much is that worth?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>piis bi nỳaata</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>how much (is) the piece (of cloth)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ãaata doom nga am</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>how many children have you?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Koura</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>......nak</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>what about? how about?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>li nak</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>what about this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moom nak</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>what about him/her?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Koura</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>lu tax</strong></td>
<td>?</td>
<td>why? (lit. what has caused...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lu tax nga def sa tool bi ci yoon wi</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>why did you make your farm on the path?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lu tax loolu</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>what is the reason for that? why that?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lu tax ngay dem</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>why are you going?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Koura</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>moo tax</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>that is why</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
lan , lu ?
what ?

nga ne lan ? what did you say ?
lii lan la ? what is this ?
lan la ? what is it ?
lan nga-y def ? what are you doing ?
yii lan lañu ? what are these ?
lan la-y def ? what is he doing ?
lan ngeen di def ? what are you (pl.) doing ?

lu ma-y def ? what am I doing ?
lu ma-y wax ? what(sort of thing) shall I say ?
lu la jot ? what has happened to you ?
lu ko dal ? what has happened to him ?
lu mu doon ? what is the matter ?

lool - second person singular.

lool buoga ? what do you want ?
lool wax ? what is it you said ?
lool binda ? what did you write ?
lool taxaw ? what is it your standing (there for) ?
lool-y xool ? what is it you are staring at ?
lool-y def ? what is it you are doing ?
As a form of politeness kinship terms are often used in addressing people.

suma jigeen, naka nga tudda?  
my sister, what is your name?

fu jëm, dom, guddi na ë de!  
where are you heading for, child, night has fallen?

jere jëf, suma ndey  
thank you, my mother

salaam aleekum, pappa  
Peace be unto you, papa, (child to old man).
CONDITIONAL, HYPOTHETICAL, AND TEMPORAL CLAUSES

When........ Bu........ ee (added to end of verb)
If.......... Su.......... ee

verb ending a plus ee becomes aa
o/u ee oo

su maa.......ee if I ...........
soo..........ee if you.........
su...........ee if he.........

su ñu........ee if we.......... su ngeen.......ee if you (pl.)...
su ñu........ee if they.........

su tawee.... if it rains....
soo demee Banjul, doo if you go to Banjul, won't
fanaan foofu ? you spend the night there ?

soo demee marse bi, if you go to the market,
jendal ma banaana buy me a banana

soo añee be pare, if you have finished lunch,
di nga ñow ? will you come ?

soo gisee suma baay.... if you see my father ..... bu neexee Yalla, di naa if it pleases God, I will
fa dem go there

When Bi, ba, bu

ba indicates action over and done with
bi when
bu hypothetical, future

ba mu demee..... when he had left.......
bi mu sang-oo.... when he had bathed.....
(u plus ee = oo)

ba meaning until does not take ......ee
xaaral ba mu ñow wait until he comes

Nor is -ee added if there is a negative suffix.

su tawul....... if it does not rain.....
bu maa wax-ul..... if I don't speak......

For incompletely accomplished action etc. -y is added.
bi muy dem, xarit am agsi when he was leaving, his friend arrived
buy liggeéyee.... if he is working......
buy dul liggeéy.... if he is not working...

di + ul results in dul

su ma ko dul jox ... if he does not give it to me
su dul dem.... if he does not go....

lu dul = anything but, except for (used generally with a negative verb)

buggu ma dara, lu dul xaalis I don't want anything, except for money
RELATIVE CLAUSES

ki
ki tœdda fii, mooy suma baay wax ma  ki nga gis
Mbaari, ki doon samma bey yi, dem na ci jinne ji
the one who is lying here, is my father
tell me who you saw
Mbaari, who had been herding the goats, went to the Spirit.

li
li ma dal, di naa la ko wax li may wax, moom ngay wax
li nga wax, dœgga na wax ma li nga def
deggal li ma la wax
what happened to me, I will tell you
what I say, you are to say (repeat) it.
what you say is the truth
tell me what you did
listen to what I told you

fi
laajal ko fi mu ko tega won ma fi nga dœkkka
won ma fi nga ko fekka
ask him where he put it
show me where you live
show me where you found it

xamu ma ) fu mu dem I don't know where he went
xau ma )
" " ku ko def " " who did it
" " kañ lay ściow " " when he will come
" " ban waxande la " " which box it is

ku muñ, di na muuñ
he who is patient, smiles (in the end)
xam nää li ma def
I know what I (shall) do
xaw ma lu ma def
I do not know what I (am to) do
walla or

jafe na walla yomba na? is it dear or is it cheap?
ñetta walla ñenent i weer three or four months

daldi, dal di as soon as = immediately

mu daldi wacca ci fas wi, as soon as he got down from his horse
    nuyyú baay am.. (he) greeted his father..

mu daldi ubbi, mu dugga as soon as he opened (the door), he
    went in

ñu daldi tayyi nak, teddi nañu as soon as they were tired, however,
    they went and lay down

mu daldi eewu..... as soon as he woke up.....

ñi fab ko, daldi ko def ci they took it, and immediately
    maafe gi put it in the sauce

kon then

woo ko, kon mu ñow (they) called him, then he came

bu ñow-oon, kon ma wax la ko if he had come, then I would have
    told you about it
WORDS INDICATING REASONS

Ngir for the sake of

di naa ko def, ngir sa baay
saraax, ngir Yalla

I will do it for the sake of your father's alms, for the sake of God

Ndax because of

ñow na ndax yow

he came because of you

Koon

koon du ma dem

then, if that is the case
then, I will not go

Kon nak

however, in that case

Ndegem

ndegem demu ma...

since, because
since I did not go...

Ndem

ndem tawul, di naa ñow

if it
does not rain, I will come

Ndig

for

ndig buur bi suma xarit la-woon..

for the king had been my friend...

Paski from French parce que = because
waaye but, however
waaye nak however, unfortunately
waaye kenn demul however no one went

wande but (See proverbs on pages 87-88.)

gannaaw (lit. back) after; except for

gannaaw loolu after that
gannaaw yow except for you

ak and, with

waxal ak moom speak with him
fees na ak doj it is full of stones

na like

solal na goer dress like a man

be tey (lit. until today) still, however
be tey, di naa ko jenda still, I will buy it
WORDS INDICATING PLACE

Ci = at, to, in, on, etc.

ci biir
mu nqi ci biir
inside

he is inside

inside the house

in Kau-ur market

ci biir neeg bi

ci biir marse Kau-ur

ci biiti
outside

near

it is near the hospital

between

ci boor i/u

mu nqi ci boor i lopiaan

in the middle of

ci digg i/u

behind, at the back of

get back, please

he went behind the house

ci ganaaw

dellul ganaaw, waay

in front of, facing

do you see the town you are facing,

in front of you here?

dem na ci ganaaw neeg bi

ci kanam

gis nga dekka bi nge jublu,

in front of, facing

ci sa kanam fii?


ci kow

ci kow garab gi

up

up the tree

ci pegg u

at the edge of

at the side of the road

he went to the edge of the wrestlin (area)

ci pegg u yoon wi

dem be ci pegg u lamba

ci ron

under, at the foot of

at the foot of the tamarind tree

under the bed

put it under the bed

under the armpit

ci ron daxaar gi

ci ron laal bi

def ko ci ron laal bi

ci ron poxotaan

ci ron

ci suuf

ci taat

ci wet i/u

Many of the terms are parts of the body – biir belly; kanam face, ganaaw back; wet side; taat backside.
ci bunta bi
   ci bunt'u jakka ji
   at the door
   at the door of the mosque

ci lal bi
   ci ron lal bi
   on the bed
   under the bed

ci yoon wi
   ci pegg u yoon wi
   on the road
   at the side of the road

ci kër am
   ci kër baay am
   in his compound
   in his father's compound

ci réew mi
   in the country

ci dëkkka bi
   bul dem ci dëkkka bi
   in the town, in the village
   don't go to the town

ci néeª bi
   mu ngt ci néeª bi
   in the house
   he is in the house

---

toogal ci siis bi
   sit on the chair

munge ci biir mbooloo mi
   he is in the middle of the crowd

ci is not used with place names

dem na Kau-ur
   he went to Kau-ur

suma mag dem na Angalteer
   my elder brother has gone to England

ci is also omitted in such phrases as

munge lopitaan
   he is (at the) hospital

dem na skuul
   he has gone (to) school

munge néeª am
   he is at home

dem néeª
   to go home

yobbu néeª am
   he) took..home

**ci is used in such phrases as**

ci jamma
   in peace
fii, file  here
faa, fale  there, over there
foofu  there (place previously mentioned)

kaay toog fii  come and sit here
nyaw ko fii  sew it here
toogal fii  sit here
nua nga fa  they are there
def ko fale  put it over there
demal fale  go away!
yagga na foofu  he is a long time there
munge foofu  he is there

fu nekka  everywhere - sometimes shortened to fu ne.

be  as far as, to
dem na be angalteer  he has gone to England
nua dem be Panchang  they went to Panchang
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Wolof</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ndey has gone to Banjul today</td>
<td>Ndey dem na Banjul tey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>today I will not lunch here</td>
<td>tey du ma aŋ fi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>today is Friday</td>
<td>tey ajjuma la</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tonight</td>
<td>tey ci guddi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>where are you going tomorrow?</td>
<td>foy dem elleg ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>where did you go yesterday?</td>
<td>foo dem-oon dēmba ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>last night</td>
<td>demba ci guddi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two years ago (the year before last)</td>
<td>daaw jek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>last year</td>
<td>daaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this year</td>
<td>ren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>next year</td>
<td>déwën</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at dawn I wake up</td>
<td>ci fajär laay ewwu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>early in the morning</td>
<td>subba teel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to be soon</td>
<td>teel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it is very early</td>
<td>teel na torop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>until morning, until tomorrow morning</td>
<td>ba subba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the morning he will go to Basse</td>
<td>subba di na dem Basse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the evening</td>
<td>ci ngoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yesterday evening (at twilight)</td>
<td>dēmba ci timis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at night</td>
<td>ci guddi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they sat (stayed) until the middle of the night</td>
<td>ṅu toog ba digg'i guddi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that time, the other day</td>
<td>keroog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mid-morning</td>
<td>voor-yoor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Days of the week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>French</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>altiné</td>
<td>Monday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>talaata</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>allarba</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alxames</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ajjuma</td>
<td>Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aseer</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dibéér</td>
<td>dimaas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Times of prayer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>French</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fajar</td>
<td>dawn prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tisbaar</td>
<td>early afternoon prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>takkusaan</td>
<td>late afternoon prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>timis</td>
<td>evening prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gee</td>
<td>late evening prayer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Periods of time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>French</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fan</td>
<td>day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bés</td>
<td>month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weer</td>
<td>year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ayubés</td>
<td>week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ay-yu bés</td>
<td>(lit. when the turn of the day comes round)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

bés bu nekka every day

Ian ngay def bés bu nekka ? what do you do every day ?

bala bés buy dellusi lit. before the day had returned i.e. within a week

ñäata at nga am ? how many years have you ?
how old are you ?
lēēgi
now

lēēgi ma ňow  I am coming now
ma nge ňow lēēgi  I am coming now
lēēgi lēēgi la dem  just now he has gone

tuuti  a little
xaaral tuuti  wait a little

booba/boobu  at that moment
boobu be(n) tey  since that time until today
booba ak lēēgi yagga na  (between) that time and now, is a long time

saa  (Arabic) moment, instant

 ci saa yile  at that moment
saa yu la neexee  whenever you like
saa yu mu demee gēēj, nappa jēn  every time he goes to sea, (he) catches fish

be, ba  until

ñu toog ba dīgg'u guddi  they stayed until the middle of the night
mu raxas lekket bi, be mu set  she rubbed the clabash until it was clean
mu duye, duye, duye, be paan bi fees  she drew water and drew water, until the pan was full

be parē, ba parē  until (it,they,he etc.) was finished

At the end of a clause implies that the event will be over when the next event follows.

soo añee be parē, di nga ňow ?  when you have finished lunch, will you come ?
bu ma waxee ba parēe, ñu dem  when I have finished speaking, they should go.

ba beneen yoon  until another time
The phrases

bu ꝝu ko defe  
lit. when they had done that

bu mu ko defe  
when he had done that

are equivalent to  after that, then

balaa  before

balaa ngay dem...  before you go......
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numeral</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Numeral</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>benna, bena</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>fukk'ak benna ak - and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ŋaar</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>&quot; &quot; ŋaar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ŋetta</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>&quot; &quot; ŋetta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>ŋenent</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>&quot; &quot; ŋenent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>juroom</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>&quot; &quot; juroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>juroom benna</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>&quot; &quot; juroom benna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>juroom ŋaar</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>&quot; &quot; &quot; ŋaar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>juroom ŋetta</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>&quot; &quot; &quot; ŋetta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>juroom ŋenent(t)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>&quot; &quot; &quot; ŋenent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>fukka</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>ŋaar i fukka</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30     fan-wer (lit. days of the month)

or

40 ŋenent i fukka

50 juroom i fukka

etc.

100 žeemêër

200 Ŧaar i žeemêër

300 ŋett i "

400 ŋenent i "

500 juroom i "

600 juroom ben i Ŧeemêër

700 juroom Ŧaar i Ŧeemêër

800 juroom ŋett i Ŧeemêër

900 juroom ŋenent i Ŧeemêër

1000 junne / junni

201 Ŧaar i Ŧeemêër ak benna
As a number bëna is invariable, the initial consonant does not change to genna, jenna etc.

bëna bës
bëna nëeg
bëna kër
bëna doom u goor gi
ay doom i goor gi
damay seeti suma bëna xarit
bëna bëna
ñaar i ganaar
ñaar i nag
ñaar i yoon
ñaar i fan
ñaar i nag yu réy
ñaar nii
ñaar nile
ñaar yile
ñaar la nù
ñaar i reen i ñambi yi
Pël bi am na ñett i nag
bukki yappa ñett i nag
juroom been i nit
fan-weer i fan
fukki faro ak ñaar
fukki fas ak juroom bëna
am fa fukk i at
am naa ñaar i fukki at
xanaa loolu fan-weeri at?

one day
one house
one compound
(a son of the man)
some of the man's sons
I am going to look for one of my friends
one by one
two fowls
two cows
two times, twice
two days
two big cows
these two
two here (people)
two here (things)
they are two
the two roots of cassava
the Fula has three cows
hyena devoured three cows
six persons
thirty days
twelve rice fields
sixteen horses (ten horses and six)
(he was) there ten years
I have twenty years (I am 20 years old)
is that (the total) thirty years?

can be used to indicate out of, of the
nen ci fukk'i xale yi
two of the ten children
kan moo ci gen a göre?
which (of them) was the most honorable?
Words for second, third, fourth, etc. are formed by adding -eel to the cardinal number.

ñëareel second
ñëetteel third
juroom beneel sixth
fukkeel tenth
fukkeel ak benna eleventh
ñaar i fukkeel twentieth

ci ñëetteel i bës on the third day
ñaareel i xaaj bi the second part

The word for first is generally indicated by the verb jëkka, to be the first, to do first.

waa ji jëkka ñow the first person to come
da ŋuy jëkka lekka ? shall we eat first ?

To be the last is mujja, the last mujient-eel.

Coinage

The unit of currency is the dalasi - derem in Wolof, divided into 100 bututs. Terms for the old currency - penny, sixpence, shilling, two shillings etc. changed their meaning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Formerly</th>
<th>Old Value</th>
<th>New Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tanka</td>
<td>6d.</td>
<td>12 bututs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taransu</td>
<td>1/-</td>
<td>25 &quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tulalibar</td>
<td>2/-</td>
<td>50 &quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>genawalla</td>
<td>2/-</td>
<td>50 &quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(lit. half)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>derem</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 dalasi.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nyeti taransu</td>
<td>3/-</td>
<td>75 bututs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>butut</td>
<td></td>
<td>(small one)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>burey</td>
<td></td>
<td>(big one )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A large number of exclamations are derived from Arabic.
alxamdulilla(y) praise be to God
amiin amen, so be it
astafurlaa may God forgive us
barke Yalla God's blessing
billaay by God
bisimilaay in the name of God
(in) sallaaw very well
lailla an exclamation of astonishment
laaylaaylaaylaa " " " "

wallaay by God
xalaas a pity

Wolof phrases include:
Yalla tere God forbid

acca used to urge people on
cam an exclamation of disgust
xai an exclamation of surprise
ndeysaan an exclamation of sympathy
kaar, kaar an exclamation to avert misfortune
mas sorry (when one has bumped into someone, or when they have hurt themselves in one's presence)
naam reply when one's name is called
waay is used as a persuasive word
jox ma waay give me, do
am waay ! here! do take it!
xaar ma waay ! wait for me please
demal fale, waay ! go away, please

torop from French trop, very much, too much
tanga na torop it is very hot
guru baax na torop kola is very good
kontaan nnaa torop I am very pleased

lool very much
neex na lool it is very sweet
baaay bi tiit lool the father was very much afraid
dama sonna lool I am completely exhausted
jafeh na lool it is very dear
neex na ma lool it is very pleasing to me

kat may be used at the end of a sentence as an emphatic word
ndaw si ne ko "suma the young woman said to him "My
nijaay now na kat." uncle (i.e. husband) has come back!"
Hasan kat goor la ! Hassan is a real man!

daal completely
fatte nna ko daal I have completely forgotten it

mukk not at all
du dëggal yaay am muk he doesn't pay attention to his mother at all
Numerous verbs have specific intensifiers associated with them.

(This feature is also found in Serer, Fula, and Mandinka.)

ñuul kukkan very black
xonxa cuyy ) very red
" cur )
weex tall ) very white
" furr )
woor komj very dry
fees dell completely full (of container)
suur këll completely full (after eating)
forox toll very bitter, sour
jexx takk completely finished
set wec very clean
seddu gowy very cold

lëndëm taruus very dark
nor xomm very well cooked

Many words are used with the intensifier né

né patt be silent
né cell be silent
né tarëet to tear oneself
né bëret to get up suddenly
né cëp to get down, come down
PART II
WOLOF TEXTS

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For many proverbs I am indebted to Alhaji Hassan Njie.

The conversations were prepared by Linda Salmon.
WOLOF GREETINGS

The exchange of greetings is an art and a social skill which is difficult to demonstrate easily in written form. Greetings differ according to the time of day, the place, whether within the family, on a major social occasion, or in a passing situation, and on the relative age and rank of the participants, as well as the length of time since they have seen one another. Forms that are acceptable between young people may seem insulting to an elder.

On entering a compound one says "Salaam aleekum," the Arabic for "Peace be on you," to which the reply is "Maleekum salaam," "On you be peace."

Going to a particular house one may say "Kong, kong," to indicate the formality of knocking on a door which is open. One will receive a reply : "Kan la?" "Who is it?" or "Aksil." [Approach], or "Dugal" [Come in]. One will then be offered a seat. "Doo tog?" [Won't you sit down].

One greeting a person in the morning one says "Jamma nga am?" [Are you at peace?], and "Jamma nga fanaan?" [Did you spend the in peace?]. The plural form is "Jamma ngeen fanaan?" The reply to these is "Jamma rekk" [Peace only], to which may be added "Alhamdulila", or "Alhamdulilayi". [Arabic for "Thanks be to God".]

The reply "Jamma rekk," is always given even if everything is not well. A person seriously ill will use the same words, and one has to judge the real situation from the tone of voice.

Surnames are often exchanged in greetings, so it is correct to ask both the name and surname of a person if one does not know them.

"Naka nga tudda?" "What is your name?"

"Naka nga sante?" "What is your surname?"

a Juuf, jamma nga am? b "Jamma rek, Njaay."

One can also ask where a person has come from, so that one can ask about the people there too.

a "Fan nga joge?" "Where have you come from?"

b "Banjul laa joge. " "I have come from Banjul."

a "Naka waa Banjul?" "How are the people of Banjul?"

b "Nyunge fa rekk. " "They are there only."
One asks after the people of the compound:
   a  "Naka waak ker gi ?"  "How are the people of the compound ?"
   b  " Nyunge fi/ fa. "  "They are here/there."

and after specific individuals or relatives:
   a  "Ana Faatu ?
       Naka Faatu ?
       "Where is Faatu ?"
       "How is Faatu ?"
   b  "Munge fi."
       "She is here."
   a  "Naka sa yaay ?
       "How is your mother ?"
   b  "Munge fa."
       "She is there."

After about ten in the morning the general greeting becomes
"Jamma nga endu ? "  "Have you spent the day in peace ?"

Among young people certain phrases may well be translations from
other languages  "Naka nga def ?", shortened at times to "nanga def ?" may well come from English "How are you doing ?" The reply is
generally "Mangi fi rekk."  "Naka suba si ?"  "How's the morning ?"
is a close parallel to a Creole greeting.

On leaving one says:  "Mange dem. "  [I am going], which brings
the response  "Yange dem ?"  [You are going ?] or  "Doo waxtaan ?"
[Won't you stay and chat ?]

Greetings are sent through you to other people:

"Nuuyul ma sa yaay."
   " waak ker."
   "Greet your mother for me."
   "Greet the people of your compound for me."
the reply being:

"Di na ko degga."
"Di nanyu ko degga."
   "She will hear it."
   "They will hear it."
A final wish may be "Ci jamma", "In peace," the response being
"Jama ak jamma," or at night "Fanaanal ak jamm." "Spend the night
in peace."

The exchange of greetings enables people to interact without
dealing with specific matters, and one can find out a great deal about
a person's mood and attitude in the process. The words are spoken in
a rhythmical fashion which differs from straightforward conversational
speech.
In greetings, the person who arrives initiates the greetings, the one who reaches a compound, enters a house, or joins a group. Secondly the person of lower rank greets the person of higher rank. Younger people pay their respects to elders, a woman to her husband, people of lower rank to those in superior positions, heads of households, religious teachers, village heads, chiefs, politicians, etc. A foreigner has to show that he/she speaks the language and is capable of normal social interaction.

Between people of about equal status a game may be played out as each tries to take the initiative, i.e. when the two meet walking down the street, and both may continue speaking at the same time.

When one's name is called one answers: "Naam." On hearing bad news the response is "Ndeysaan!" ['What a pity, How sad]. "Thank you," used less frequently than the English or French forms, is "Jërajef." "Maas" is an apology for bumping into a person, or an expression of sympathy when one sees someone have an accident such as tripping, or stubbing their toe.

To call a person the last vowel of the name may be lengthened or oo is added:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Vowel</th>
<th>Lengthened Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awa</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>Awaa !</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>i/e</td>
<td>Amee !</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faatu</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>Faatoo !</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asan</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Asan-oo !</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COMMENTS ON THE WEATHER

naj bi tanga na tey the sun was hot today
ngalaw na tey lool lit. it blew today very much
the wind was very strong today
defe naa ne nar na taw I think that it is about to rain
bes bu nekka asamaan si every day the sky is
daфа xiин cloudy
LAKKA / KALLA

Wolof children have a secret language like "Pig Latin", in which syllables are transposed, or additional sounds added, to hide the meaning, so that one can talk about someone behind their back.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ma ne</th>
<th>I say</th>
<th>becomes</th>
<th>ana me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Gamble</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>evide ambulga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>torop</td>
<td>too much</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>oropto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>naka la?</td>
<td>how is it</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>aka la nan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~naata la am?</td>
<td>how much has he?</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>atla na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fatte nga ko?</td>
<td>did you forget it?</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>ate nge ko fat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TONGUE-TWISTERS

Small children may be told tongue-twisters to say.

Often these are very difficult to transcribe!

A simple example is:

fukk i bukki guddi, fukk i bukki bèccëg

ten hyenas at night, ten hyenas in the day
LULLABIES

One of the commonest lullabies, with infinite variations, begins with *aayoo, neene tuuti*, the child being asked what it is crying about. Then there developed a "chain rhyme", in which the last word of one line is used as the first word in the next line. Each family, and each singer, usually a small girl looking after the baby, have their own versions.

Aayoo, neene tuuti, \hspace{1cm} Hush, little baby,  
neene, lu mo jooy ? \hspace{1cm} baby, what is it crying about ?  
xanaa reew la jooy, \hspace{1cm} perhaps badness made it cry.  
reew muutut a jooy, \hspace{1cm} badness is not worth crying about  
dunda muut a jooy, \hspace{1cm} life is worth crying about,  
soo dunde am sa muur \hspace{1cm} if you live you will have good fortune,  
am sa muur i yaay, \hspace{1cm} your mother’s good fortune,  
am sa muur i baay, \hspace{1cm} your father’s good fortune,  
Baay Moodu Lamin.... \hspace{1cm} Father Moodu Lamin....

Yaay am dem na Saalum, \hspace{1cm} His mother has gone to Saalum  
Saalum nett i neeg la, \hspace{1cm} In Saalum there are three houses,  
̚nanteel ba di waäh̚ wa, \hspace{1cm} the fourth is the kitchen,  
waaäh̚ wa, di waäh̚ i buur la \hspace{1cm} the kitchen is the king’s kitchen,  
buur bi di buur i Saalum, \hspace{1cm} the king is the king of Saalum,  
aayoo, neene. \hspace{1cm} hush, baby.
They said he had three tufts (of hair).
The three tufts were secret to him,
he would not agree to tell anyone,
except for his wife.
that one was called 'a king is not a relative.'
that one 'love your wife, but do not trust her (with your secrets)'
that one, 'an old man is good in the country.'
Then, however,
The king heard about it, and asked around, until he called the wife,
and said, 'I want you to tell me the tufts of Kocce what are their names.
the wife told him,
this one, 'a king is not a relative',
this one, 'love your wife, but do not trust her
this one, 'an old man is good in the country.'
So, the king at once assembled all the people of the kingdom
When they came, he called Kocce and said:
"Now I know (the meaning of) his tufts,
and will kill you now (for being disrespectful),
mag i dëkkba bi yepp ñow nanũ ñanal ko.

c. all the elders of the town came
to intercede for him.

mu ne, waaw, dama bugga ngeen wax

He (Kocce) said, yes, I want to
tell you,

buur, li ma wax ndax du dëggga ?

king, what I said, was it not the
truth ?

Ndig buur bi suma xarit la-woon,

to the king had been my friend,
te tey xam na suma sékéré rek,

but today, as soon as he knows
my secrets,

ñow bugga ma ñey.

he wants to kill me.

suma jabar ji, so gisee ma wax

my wife, if you see I told her it,
ko ko, du ma ko oolu-woon,

I should not have trusted her,
waay gis nga munge dem wax ko ko,

but you see she went and told him it,
iléégi ñow mag bi ñow na sukka

now the elder came and knelt down
ñanal ma,

to intercede for me,
lu tax mu bayyi ma.

that is why he let me go.

(In other versions there is a fourth tuft, du doom u jité du doom,
's a step son is not a (real) son.' Here, when Kocce is about to be
executed, the step son asks him to remove his gown so that it should
not be stained by blood, instead of intervening to try to save Kocce.
Some accounts tell how the king gave Kocce's wife presents to induce
her to betray him.)
PRAISE NAMES

In praises, speeches by griots (gewel), certain attributes are added to surnames.

Sise and Ture are given the term Mori (learned men) or Manding Mori (learned men of Manding), an indication that early members of the clans were Muslims.

In Saalum Ngaardi, the Fula name for 'bull', is used.

Sise Ngaardi.

Njaaay bears the attribute Gaynde (Lion) indicating the royal origins of the Njaaays.

Job (Diop) is associated with the crowned crane (Jamba), and formerly, at any rate, children in Job families, left a small tuft of hair on the front of their heads, when the hair was cut, or shaved.

The Nduur are associated with Hyena, who is spoken of as having the surname Nduur, Bukki Nduur.
PROVERBS

There are a very large number of Wolof proverbs. Like proverbs elsewhere they are short, pithy statements, relatively fixed in form, though there may be minor variations.

Some are constructed with a fourfold balance, with contrasting elements:

(1) **picca** / **anga** / **ca kow,**  
    The bird / **is** / **up high**

    **waaye xel am** / **angi** / **ci suuf**
    **ci dugub.**  
    but its mind / **is** / on the ground on the millet.

(2) Frequently a negative statement is contrasted with a positive one.

    **buur du aay,**  
    The king is not evil,

    **dag yaa aay,**  
    it is the courtiers that are evil.

(3) A statement may be given, then it is modified by the word **but.**

    **mbotta gen a bugga ndox,**  
    The toad likes water,

    **wande mu tanga boku ca,**  
    but not boiling water.

(4) A number use the form "**X is better than Y**" or "It is better to.... than...."

    **jikko gen a taar,**  
    Good manners are better than beauty.

(5) In some statements, there may be a play on sounds:

    **ku muun**, **muun**
    **di na muun.**  
    He who is patient, smiles will smile (in the en
Frequent examples are drawn from the world of animals and nature, as a means of referring indirectly to humans.

(6) **ndanka** **ndanka jappa golo**  
     **ci náay.**  
     Softly, softly, catchee monkey, in an open area.

(7) **geen u golo gudda na,**  
     **waaye lu ca laal,**  
     **boroom yeg ko.**  
     However long a monkey's tail, if you touch it, it will know.  
     *(If you do something to a person, the rest of his kin will immediately know of it.)*

(8) **banta, lu mu yagga-yagga**  
     **ci dex bi,**  
     **du soppaliku jasig.**  
     However long a log is in the river, it will not become a crocodile.  
     *(A stranger cannot become a native. May be used of a foreigner trying to learn Wolof! Also to indicate that a person cannot change his/her nature.)*

(9) **mbaam du juur ci kanam nit.**  
     A donkey does not give birth in front of people.  
     *(Used when one is prepared to give someone something, but not in the middle of a crowd of people.)*

(10) **ganaar deegat na doom am,**  
     **waaye bahu ko.**  
     A fowl treads on its chicken, but does not hate it.  
     *(A parent punishes a child, but still loves it.)*

(11) **ney wu núb xajul ci ron lal.**  
     An elephant that is hiding will not fit under a bed.  
     *(Some things are too big to be easily concealed.)*
A large proportion of Wolof proverbs affirm the status quo of Wolof society, by stressing the wisdom of elders, the training of children, the duties of kinsfolk, the need to select one's friends and associates carefully, the position of strangers, the power of chiefs, etc.

(12) xale taxau gisut,  
    mag tog gis.  
    What a child standing up does not see,  
    an old man sitting down sees.

(13) boppa bu am ñjerin,  
    noppi moo ca sax.  
    The head that will have prosperity,  
    will have ears growing on it.

(A person who listens to advice will prosper.)

(14) cakante doom,  
    moo di yar.  
    To make your child prosperous,  
    train him well.

(i.e. spare the rod and spoil the child.)

(15) won ma sa xarit,  
    ma wax la sa jikko.  
    Show me your friend,  
    and I will tell you your character.

(16) gan du yewwiy bey.  
    A stranger does not let out the goats.

(A stranger has no business becoming involved in family affairs.)

(17) nit, nit ay garab am.  
    The best medicine for a person is  
    (another) person.

(18) buur du mbokka.  
    A king is not a relative.

(From the legend of Kocce Barma.)

(19) lu xalel wax,  
    ca ker am la ko degge.  
    What the child says,  
    it has heard at home.

(20) bala nga uti jabar,  
    utal goro.  
    Before seeking a wife,  
    look for good in-laws.

(Marriage involves not only the husband and wife, but their kinsfolk as well.)
RIDDLES

From Upper Saalum.

Here a riddling session is started by saying *xall mbalagaan*, to which
the reply is *xaleet*.

1. Q. li yotu Yalla te du ko jot? What stretches out to reach God,
   but does not reach (him)?
   A. kuut (kuur). a pestle (which is raised up in the
   air in pounding, but brought down again
   with each stroke).

2. Q. a. lu fireku ne Maam Yalla
   leta ma? What has its hair loose, and says to God
   'plait me'? b. lu sériñ ne Yalla maabal ma? What learned man says: 'God, do my hair'?
   A. sibi the rhun palm (which has a disorderly
   bunch of leaves at the top).

3. Q. corok condong? (no meaning = sound of something falling)
   A. pursa daanu ci teen. a needle fell in the well.

4. Q. tagga ci kow, nen ci suuf nest above, eggs in the ground
   A. ñambi cassava (leaves and stem above ground,
   roots in the ground)

5. Q. sin ci kow, sin ci suuf teeth above, teeth below
   A. kirintiq bamboo fencing.

6. Q. suma ndey am na ñett i yef, my mother has three things,
   su benna manke, ñaari du jel. if one is missing, the two are of no use.
   A. os the three stones which support a pot on
   the fire.

7. Q. suma fas i baay.... my father's horse
   te kenn ñemeul koy war. but no one dares mount (ride) him.
   A. jiit a scorpion.

(Most of these are found equally among the Mandinka.)
CONVERSATIONS

(A) AT THE MARKET

(Based on Linda Salmon's notes...but the prices have undoubtedly increased since she was there !)

Trader      Suma xarit, jamma nga am ?        My friend, are you at peace ?
Linda       Jamma rekk, kay.               Peace only, indeed.
Tr           Doo jenda tamaate ?              Won't you buy (some) tomatoes ?
L            Sa tamaate ji, ñaata la ?        Your tomatoes, how much are they ?
Tr           Am na ser taransu, am na        There is a heap for 25 bututs,       
tulalibar. Ban nga bugga ?          there is (a heap ) for 50 bututs.     
                                         Which do you want ?
L            Jaay ma ñaar i ser ci bii.       Sell me two of these here.
Tr.          Jerejëf, kay ; ma buñë la.       Thank you. Let me give you a 'dash'
L            Jerejëf way. Endul ak jamma.      Thank you. Spend the day in peace.    
             Di naa la gisati.                I will see you again.
Tr           Jam' ak jama.                   Peace, peace.
             Nuyul ma waa ker ga.             Greet the people of the compound
L            Di nañ' ko degga.               for me.

--------

L            Borom jen, jama nga am ?       Fish owner (i.e. seller), are       
             Sa jen yi ñaata ?               you at peace ?                     
Tr           Ban nga bugga ?               How much are your fish ?
L            Bii ñaata ?                   Which do you want ?
Tr           Yepp ?                      How much is this one ?
L            Deedeet, digga bi rekk.       The whole (of it) ?
Tr           Digga bi derem.              No, just the middle .
L            Doo ko wanní ?               The middle one dollar.
Tr           Amul wanní.                 Won't you lessen it ?
L            Wanníl ma way, suma cammeñ.     There is no reduction.
Tr           Baax na, di na la wanníl tanka. Lessen it for me please, my brother
             Feyal.                         Well, I will lower the price by 12
                                         bututs.                        
                                         Pay.
L  Dafa seer. Yi ñaata ?   It is dear. How much are these ?
Tr.  Yooyu tulalibar. Those are 50 bututs.
L  Baax na, jay ma.  Good, sell it to me.
    Defal ma ko ci suma pañe bi   Put it in my basket for me.
    Wecci ma.  Change (this money) for me.
Tr  Auma weccit.  I have no change,
    Xaaral tuuti  wait a bit (until)
    ma wecci ko.  I get some change for it.
L  Baax na.  O.K.
Tr.  Am sa weccit.  Here's your change.
L  Jerejëf.  Thank you .

-----------------------------

L  Borom maalo, jaay ma maalo.  Rice owner, sell me rice.
Tr  ñaata pot nga bugga ? How many cups do you want ?
L  Pot ñaata ?  How much a pot ?
Tr  Pot fuk i butuut ak benna.  11 bututs .
L  Natal ma juroom benñ'i pot.  Measure me 6 cups.
Tr  Am nga foo ko def ? Have you a place to put it ?
L  Waaw, def ko fii. Yes, put it here.
Tr  Feyal.  Pay.
L  Jerejëf, endul ak jamma. Thank you, spend the day in peace.
Tr  Jama'k jam  Peace.
Tr. Suma jigeën, kay seet. Sister, come and look.
Suma jigeën, lo bugga ? Sister, what do you want ?
L Buggu ma dara. I don't want anything.
Dama xool rekk. I am just looking.
Tr Kay seet suma cuup yi. Come (and) look at my dyed cloths.
L Bi naata ? How much is this ?
Tr Ban ? Which ?
L Bu bulo bi ci kow. The blue one up above.
Tr Bii ? This one ?
L Deedeet, beneen bi. No, the other one.
Tr Bii ? This ?
L Waaw, boobu. Yes, that one.
Tr Malaan juroom i derem. The skirt (cloth) five dollars.
L Indi ko ma gis. Bring it for me to see.
Tr Satin la, piis bu baax la. It is satin, it is a good piece.
Musu Keba Daramem moo ko suub. Musa Keba Daram was the one who dyed i
L Xam naa Musukeba. I know Musukeba, (so)
Wannil ma lel. Lower the price please.
Tr Naata nga bugga ? How much do you want ?
L Des na ci njek li. That depends on the price.
bi naa bugga neenin i malaan If I want four skirts, 
doo ko wannée ? won't you lower (the price) ?
Tr Baax naa, ma wannil la O.K. I will lower it for you (by) 
tulalibar. 50 bututs.
L Tulalibar rek ! Only 50 bututs.
Tr Waaw, piis bi leegi dafa seer. Yes, cloth is dear now.*

* In advertisements etc. her name appears as Musu Kebba Drammeh.

** Imported textiles were dyed by Musukeba.
L  Xam naa ko !  Betey, jaay ma.  I know it. However, sell (it to) me.

Tr.  Naka nga tudda ?  What is your name ?

L.  Fatu Njaay la tudda.  My name is Fatu Njie

Tr  Foo dekka ?  Where do you live ?

L.  Serrakunda.  Serrakunda.

Tr  Naka waa Serrakunda ?  How are the people of Serrakunda ?

L.  Ñunga fa.  Serrakunda neex na.  They are there. Serrakunda is fine.

Tr  Mbaa Serrakunda bari-wul yoo.  I hope Serrakunda is not full of mosquitoes.

L.  Deebeet, tuuti rekk.  No, only a few.
Banjul la genn a bari yoo.  Banjul has more mosquitoes.

Tr  Bugga nga bennen ?  Do you want another ?

L.  Refet na'~, waay doy na.  They are fine, but it is enough.
Suma xalis jeex na.  My money is finished.

Tr  Tubaab du jexal xalis.  A European does not lack money.

L.  Du tubaab yepp.  Not all Europeans.

Tr.  Am sa piis bi.  Feyal.  Here is your cloth. Pay.

L  Yepp ñaata ?  How much altogether.

Tr  Fukkan ak derem ak juroom ñetta.  Eighteen dollars.

L.  Am.  Wecci ma.  Here. Give me change.

Tr  Xaaral tuuti.  Wait a moment.

Am sa weccit.  Here's your change.

Dama bugga nga nekka suma  I want you to become
kliant.  Am.  Ma bunya la jaaru. my client. Here. I give you a

L.  Jerejëf, way, borom cuup.  ring as a 'dash'.

Tr.  Nuyul ma waa Serrakunda,  Thank you, cloth seller.
Bul fa gej !

L  Baax na. Ci jamma.  Greet the people of Serrakunda for me.

Tr  Jam' ak jama.  Don't be long there.

O.K.  In peace.

Peace.
L. Lan nga togga Ñ tey?  What are you cooking for lunch today?
F. Benacin i yappa.  Benachin with meat.
L. Di na am ranxa?  Will it have sorrel sauce?
F. Waaw, benacin ak ranxa neex na lool.  Yes, benachin with sorrel is very sweet.
L. Yow, bakku dafa damma ci sa loxo. A ladle gets broken in your hands.  (i.e. you are a good cook.)
F. Ma mel noonu.  I am like that.

-------
F. Lan nga def bes bu ay bi di now?  What are you doing next week?
L. Di na bugga leetu.  I want to have my hair done.
F. Kan ay sa lettakat?  Who is your hairdresser?
L. Kom Juuf, xam nga ko?  Kom Juuf, do you know her?
F. Xam naa ko.  I know her.
Ku mun a leeta la.  She knows how to plait you.
L. Lan nga leetu?  What sort of style are you going to have?
F. 'Jamano Kura' la di leetu.  'The time of Kura' is the plait I want.
L. 'Jamano Kura' moo xew lêêqi.  'The time of Kura' is fashionable now.
F. Naata la fëyee ko?  How much does she charge for it?
L. ≃ Nenenti derem rekk; te du yagga. Four dollars only; and it does not take long.
L. Dama bugga refet ndax anda ak suma jeker tuikki.  I want to look good, so that I can go on a journey with my husband.
F. Fan ngeen di dem?  Where are you (pl.) going?
L. Dafa war a dem Dakar ngir soxla.  He has to go to Dakar for business.
Dama bugga mu yobbuwaale ma.
I want him to take me with him.

F.    Sa wujja, moom it di na dem ?
Your co-wife, will she also go?

L.    Suma jeker, kenna rekk la yobbu, 
My husband, only one (person) will he take.

Kenna dafa des ci xale yi.
One will remain with the children.

F.    Soo demul, di naa la seet-si waxtaanal-si.
If you do not go, I will come and see you, to chat with you.

That is good. Thank you.

Waaye fook naa di nanu dem.
But I think we will be going.

F.    Mbaa doo leen yagga.
I hope you won't be away long.

L.    Dëédëêt, du nu yagga.
No, we won't be long.

Loo bugga ma indil la ko ?
What do you want me to bring you?

F.    Indil ma fuddan ak cuuraay.
Bring me some henna and incense.

L.    Di naa ko indi, su neexee Yalla.
I will bring it, if it pleases God.

F.    Ngeen dem ak jamma, fekka fa jamma, nyibsi ci jamma.
Go in peace, meet peace there, come home in peace.

L.    Amiin yarabi.
By God's power.

Baax na, mange dem.
Good, I am going.

F.    Ma gunge la.
( Let me show you out.

( Let me escort you part of the way.

L.    Baax na.
Fine !
H. Now naa!  
I have come. (I'm here)

L. Wacca nga liggééy?  
Have you come from work?

H. Waaw, wacca naa léegi.  
I have come just now.

L. Naka wa liggéey-kaay?  
How are your co-workers?

H. Nunga fa.  
They are there.

L. Lekka nga?  
Have you eaten?

H. Waaw, lekk-oon naa ci bëcòog.  
Yes, I ate in the daytime.

L. Xiffulo léegi?  
Aren't you hungry now?

(H. Deedeet, tuuti rekk.  
No, only a little.)

or Aha kan.  
Yes, indeed.

L. Kaay lekka ak ñun.  
Come (and) eat with us.

H. Baax na.  
O.K.

. H. Loo totega?  
What are you cooking?

L. Benacin i yappa ak ñebbe.  
Benacin with meat and beans.

H. Loolu rekk la bugga.  
That's just what I want.

L. Acca leen!  
Let us begin!

H. Benacin bi neex na.  
The benacin is good (lit. sweet).

waaye, dafa saf kaani,  
but it is hot with peppers.

Kaani gu bari baaxut.  
Too much pepper is not good.

Doy na.  
It is enough.

L. Lekkal way!  
do eat!

H. Jerejèf, suur naa.  
Thank you, I am full.

Benacin bi neex na, bari na.  
The benacin was good, and plentiful.

L. Rees ak jamma, Doo nan ndox?  
Digest in peace. Won't you drink 
(some) water?

H. Aha kan.  
Yes, indeed.

H. Jerejèf.  
Thank you, the water is cold.**

** A comment of appreciation.
AT THE HAIRDRESSERS

L. Jamma nga am, Mariyaama. Are you at peace, Mariama?
M. Jamma rekk, kay. Peace only.
Ana wa kër gi? How are the people of the compound?
L. Ňunge fa, jamma rekk. They are there, peace only.
Sa yaram jamm? Is your body at peace?
M. Jamma rekk. Peace only.

L. Dama leetu-si. I have come to be plaited.
M. Waaye, gej nga fi. But it's a long time since you were here.
Mbaa du dara? I hope nothing happened?
M. Lan nga bugga leetu tey? What do you want to be plaited today?
L. Xamatu ma leeta yi sax, I don't even know the plaits,
ngir dama gej a leetu for it's so long since I've been plaited.
Seetal ma ci yi xew. Show me some in fashion.
M. Gis nga leeti Amininata ya? Did you see the plaits of Aminata?
Maa ko ko leeta. It was I who plaited it for her.
L. Gis naa ko. Refet na lool. I have seen it. It is very beautiful.
Yooyu sax-sax la bugga. Those are the very ones I want.
Mbaa di na ma jappa ni mu Will they suit me like they suited
jappe Aminata? Aminata?
L. Naata nga leetee leeti How much did you charge for plaiting
Aminata yi? Aminata's plaits?

1. Yooyu leeti diniyanke la. Those plaits are high fashion.
M. Those are the very ones I want.
Soo ko bugee di naa la ko If you wish, I will make them
defal juroom i dërêm. for five dollars.

Dr. Tijan Sallah states that diniyanke means "a privileged woman who lives an extravagant lifestyle." It may be derived from "Denianke" - a ruling matrilineal clan in Fuuta Toro, descended from Koli Tenguella.
Baax na. Sa loxo jar na ko. Fine. Your hand is worth it.
Waaye bugga naa bu genn a refet bu Aminata. But I want to be finer than Aminata.
Do nga ma beral loxa ?
M. Baax na. Xaral ma ~
Fine. Wait (a moment) for me to come.

L. Foo bugga ~nu toog ? Where do you want us to sit ?
M. Kaay, ci ron garab gi.
Indil basang bi. Come, under the tree.
L. Lal ko. Toogal.
Spread it out. Sit down.

L. Ndax munge metti ? Is it painful ?
M. Tuuti rekk.
Leeta yu dag moo refet, Just a little.
te moo di gen a yagga.
Plaits which are tight are beautiful and last longer.

L. Jox ma seetu, ma seet. Give me a mirror so that I can see.
M. Faatu, indil ma seetu bi. Fatu, bring me the mirror.
Gawal !

L. Refet na lool. Jerejef. It is very beautiful. Thank you.
M. Ayca, ~nu jekkali. Well then, let's put the last touch to it.

L. Ndax léégi mu jeex ? Is it finished now ?
M. Des na tuuti. In a moment.
Paré na. Jogal.

L. Sonna naa ci toogay bi, It is finished. Get up.
waaye léégi jeex na.
M. Jelal seetu bi nga seetat. I am tired of sitting, but now it is finished.
Take the mirror and look again.
L Amut morom!
M. Bul fi gej-ati.
Bu leeta yi rapee, dafa na
hare firi,
nga dellusi ma firil la ko,
defal la bi xew.
L. Baax na.
Di naa dellusi ci lu ban a
. yagga.
Am, ma fey la.
M. Da nga ma fey rekk?
Du ma may dara?
L Munal ma be bennen yoon.
M. Baax na. Ci jamma.
Nuyul ma waa kër ga.

Rap ak jamma.
L Jamm ak jamma, be bennen yoon.
Taggal ma kër gi.

There is nothing like it!
Don't be away so long again.
If the plaits become worn,
if they start to come undone,
you should return, so that I can
loosen them for you
and make you something in fashion.
Good.
I will come back without being
too long.
Here, let me pay you.
Are you just paying me (the price)
Won't you give me something (extra).
Bear with me, until another time.
Alright. In peace.
Greet the people of the compound
for me.

May the braids(wear out) in peace.
Peace, until another time.
Say goodbye for me to your household.