

ELEMENTARY GAMBIAN WOLOF GRAMMAR

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August 1991

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### II

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(For details see page 77.)

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 Sérër: Etudes 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 incompleteness 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 (197 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

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	a	A	anda		o	O	os
	b	B	béy		ó	Ó	óom
	c	C	caabi		p	P	paaka
	d	D	dalla		r	R	reen
	e	E	et		s	S	sax
	é	É	éen		t	T	tama
	ë	Ë	ëkka		u	U	uppukaay
	f	F	fas		w	W	we
	g	G	golo		x	X	xaj
	i	I	indé		y	Y	yax
	j	J	jën		mb	Mb	mbotta
	k	K	kuur		nd	Nd	ndaa
	l	L	lal		nj	Nj	njomboor
	m	M	muus		ng	Ng	ngemba
	n	N	nag		nc	Nc	pénca
	ñ	Ñ	ñey		nk	Nk	tanka
	ŋ	ŋ	ŋoosŋoos		nx	Nx	banxaas

ii  
ORTHOGRAPHY  
Consonants

b	as in English	<u>ball</u>	
c	"	<u>church</u>	( <u>ti</u> in French script)
d	"	<u>dear</u>	
f	"	<u>far</u>	
g	"	<u>gas</u>	
j	"	<u>joy</u>	( <u>dy</u> in French script)
k	"	<u>kind</u>	
l	"	<u>like</u>	
m	"	<u>mouse</u>	
n	"	<u>now</u>	
ñ	"	<u>Kenya</u>	
ñ ɲ	"	<u>sing</u>	
p	"	<u>pin</u>	
r	"	<u>right</u>	
s	"	<u>send</u>	
t	"	<u>ten</u>	
w	"	<u>wish</u>	
x		as in Spanish. Scottish: <u>loch</u>	
y	"	<u>yearn</u>	

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 (e) each vowel has short and long counterparts." Length is shown by doubling the vowel.

nit	person (cf. English <u>sit</u> )	niit	to shine a light on (cf. English <u>seat</u> )
muñ	to persevere	muuñ	to smile

i \_\_\_\_\_ u

é      ë      ó

---

e \_\_\_\_\_ o

\_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_

ë 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.

lal	bed ; to lie down
laal	to touch
lax	to be withered
laax	porridge
daw	run
daaw	last year
ren	this year
reen	root
nit	person
niit	shine a light
rot	to fall
root	to draw water
muñ	to be patient
muuñ	to smile

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 e sounds

<u>French</u>	<u>Senegalese</u>	<u>Gambian</u>	<u>Phonetic</u>
été (summer)	é	é	e
sève (sap)	e	e	ɛ
le (the)	ë	ë	ə
	Fr.	Eng.	
o has the sound of	pomme	not	ɔ
ô	beau	so	o

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

# A few basic words and phrases

waaw	yes
děēt	no
děéděēt	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 <u>mey</u> by some authors)	jox = give (hand over)
naam !	reply given when one's name is called
may	( ma benna give ( me one
( fu ndox ( us water	
guru kola	
xaalis money	
garab medicine	
ko it	

---

<u>ak / ag</u>	and (used with nouns and pronouns)
Samba <u>ak</u> Kumba goor <u>ak</u> jigěēn	Samba (a male name) and Kumba (female name) man and woman
añ ak reer	lunch and dinner
ndey ak baay	mother and father
ndey ak dōom	mother and child
běy ak xar	goat and sheep
dennu ak melax	thunder and lightning
man ak yow	I and you (cf. English, where 'you' comes first - 'you and me'. )
ci biir ak si biti	inside and outside
asamaan ak suuf	sky and earth
sukar ak xorom	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,  
te du ko jot ?

What tries to reach God,  
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 añ

come (and) have lunch

demal indi...

go (and) bring.....

mbaa

or

baay am mbaa yaay am  
(....am his, her)

his father or his mother

walla

or

Angale walla Faranse

English or French

The initial consonant of various forms reflects:						
		article	demonstrative	interrogative	relative	referential
a person	k	<u>k</u> i	<u>k</u> ii	<u>k</u> an	<u>k</u> u	<u>k</u> ooku
thing	l	li	lii	lan	lu	loolu
place	f	fi	fii	fan	fu	foofu
manner	n	ni	nii	nan	nu	noonu

It is.....      .....la      They are ..... la ñu

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?  
naka nga def ? )

Asan ak Husenu seex lañu      Asan and Husenu are twins



## NOUNS AND ARTICLES

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
jigéén 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
rongoon 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

liggéeý	to work	liggéeý bi	the work
añ	to lunch	añ 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%

gi (i) used with many words beginning with g and k.

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

gunē gi	the youth	(iii) Belts and cords
gan gi	the stranger	generally have gi

ganaar gi	the fowl	
gaal gi	the canoe	buum g cord
gaynde gi	the lion	fer g string of
		waist beads
kattan gi	force	geño g. belt
kuur gi	the pestle	ndombo g belt contain
kër gi	the compound	charms for
kubēēr gi	the cover	protection

ji is used with

xiir g	fishing line
sejoor g	woven belt

(i) many words beginning with j.

jaan ji	the snake
jaasi ji	the cutlass
jigēēn ji	the woman
jimbi ji	the tress
jombos ji	the pumpkin

(ii) many words borrowed from Arabic.

allarba ji	the Wednesday
alluwa ji	the writing board
ajjuma 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
dōom ji	the child
yumpaañ ji	the wife of mother's brother

ki is limited in use.

nit ki	the person
--------	------------

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

## 1i

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
ngentē li	the naming ceremony
nguri li	the mason wasp
cin li	the (clay) pot
cakku li	the parrot
cat li	the end, tip

## mi

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.

mbokka 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
weñ wi	the fly
teeñ 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:

e.g.	banaana bi	the banana (fruit)
	banaana gi	the banana tree
	ndaw li	the envoy
	ndaw si	the girl friend
	fas wi	the horse
	fas gi	the knot
	weñ wi	the fly
	weñ gi	the iron
	doom ji	the child
	doom hi	the fruit

-----

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 Ø-ee in Banjul speech)

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

ca alla ba	(away) in the bush
nit ku ñuul	the person who is black, black person
malaan mu weex	a white cloth
malaan mu weex mi	the white cloth (near)
malaan mu weex ma	the white cloth (distant)

A demonstrative form can be formed by adding -le :

bile	this one here			
bale	that one over there	(In Banjul speech : bële)		
yile	these here			
yale	those there	"	"	" yële
	over there	"	"	" fële

Lengthening the form bi, gi, ji, etc to bii, gii, jii, etc. means

"this one here"

nit kii	this person here
jigëén jii	this woman here

# THE INDEFINITE ARTICLE

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

	am nga jëkkër ?	have you a husband ?
	may ma sigaret	give me a cigarette
	abal ma paaka	lend me a knife
	bukki lawoon ak lëg	there was (once) a hyena and a hare
<u>or</u>	bukki ak lëg la-woon	
	olof nga ?	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	the man's son
benna doom u goor gi	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.

sériñ bi	the marabout
yi	the marabouts
<u>ab</u> sériñ ñow na	a certain marabout came
nit ki	the person
yi	the people
tase naa <u>ay</u> nit ci	I met some people on
yoon wi	the road
gaal gi	the canoe
yi	the canoes
<u>ay</u> gaal	some canoes
fas wi	the horse
yi	the horses
<u>aw</u> fas	a horse
<u>ay</u> fas	some horses
ay laajte	some questions

GENDER

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
.....jigéén	female

doom ju goor	son
doom ju jigéén	daughter

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

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

The general word for horse is fas. A mare is wajan.

NOUN ENDINGS

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

jaay	to sell	jaaykat bi	the seller
bēy	to farm	bēykat bi	the farmer
nappa	to fish	nappakat bi	the fisherman
foot	to wash	footkat bi	the washerwoman
faj	to treat	fajkat bi	traditional healer
ñaw	to sew	ñawkat bi	the tailor
tux	to smoke	tuxkat bi	the smoker
wat	to shave	watkat bi	the barber

- 2    -aay                    abstract nouns,                    qualities

rafet	to be beautiful	rafetaay	beauty
tanga	to be hot	tangaay	heat
sedda	to be cold	seddaay	coldness

- 3    -in                    - manner, means

dox	to walk	doxin	manner of walking
lekka	to eat	lekkin	manner of eating

- 4    -it                    -piece of, remainder of

des	to remain	ndesit	remains
xolli	to peel	xollit	skin, peelings, husks
dog	to cut	n)dogit	piece cut off
*foot	to wash	potit	dirty water left after washing
bale	to sweep	mhalit	sweepings

\* consonant change plus shortening of the vowel.

- 5    -eel                    - abstract nouns,                    feelings

nob	to love	nobeel	love
soppa	to admire	ncofel	admiration
bēgga	to want	bēggel	want, desire

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
yërēm	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.

liggēēy	to work	liggēēy bi	the work
taw	to rain	taw bi	the rain
fas	to knot	fas gi	a charm made with knots
nar	to divide	nar bi	share (also <u>mpas</u> )
fiir	to trap fish	fiir gi	fish trap

In nouns derived from verbs beginning with

f	the initial vowel changes to p				
s	"	"	"	"	c
(a vowel) Ø	"	"	"	"	k

<u>f</u> o	to play	<u>p</u> o	play (n)
<u>s</u> uub	to dye	<u>c</u> uub	dyed material
añaan	to be jealous	<u>k</u> anaan	jealousy

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

bokka	to be related	mbokka mi	the relative
* boot	to carry on the back	mbotu mi	the cloth used to tie a child on the back
daxxa	to drive off	ndaxxa mi	driving away
gelaw	to blow (of wind)	ngelaw li	the wind
* goob	to harvest	ngobaan li	the harvesting knife

\*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-neh	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- gëéj 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
jigéen i olof	a Wolof woman
tag i picca	a bird's nest
ci bunt' i néesg bi	at the door of the house
néesg i ñaax	a grass hut
néesg 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 i is frequently heard in singular cases.

doom i buur bi Siin	the son of the King of Siin
and' i cuuraay	an incense pot

as well as plural cases.

gis tank'i gelëm yi	he) saw the foot(marks) of the camels
---------------------	---------------------------------------

But u seems to occur more frequently than in Banjul Wolof

ci bunt' u nēég bi	at the door of the house
ci bunt' u ker gi.	at the gate of the compound
bes u alxemis	the day of Thursday
baay u dof bi	the father of the madman
ci ron u daxaar gi	at the foot of the tamarind tree
or ci ron i daxaar gi	" " " " " " " "

*In Banjul speech ron is used without a u or i.*

*i* is used after numerals

fanweer i at	thirty years
ñaar i reen i ñambi yi	the two roots of cassava

---

genn' i tuxu	a pipe (for smoking)
genn i wolu	a mortar (for pounding)
pas i reccental	a running knot
cox i dugub	millet chaff
wax i mag	the advice of an elder
ay lam i xalis	some bracelets of silver
diw i dax	oil (of butter)

am nga weccit i	have you change for
fukk i dalasi ?	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 dēkka 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 <sup>~</sup> 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
<sup>~</sup> naar i pot i (diwilin (diwlin	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.

Emphatic form		Objective form		Possessive		
					singular	plural
<i>I</i>	man	<i>me</i>	ma	<i>my</i>	(suma (sama	sumay
<i>you</i>	yow	<i>you</i>	la	<i>your</i>	sa	say
<i>he/she/it</i>	moom	<i>him/her/it</i>	ko	<i>his/her/ its</i>	...am	i.... ay....
<i>we</i>	ñun	<i>us</i>	ñu	<i>our</i>	suñu	suñuy
<i>you (pl.)</i>	yeen	<i>you (pl.)</i>	leen	<i>your</i>	seen	seeni
<i>they</i>	ñoom	<i>them</i>	leen	<i>their</i>	seen	seeni

## (a) Emphatic forms.

man Mataar  
man rekk

I, Mataar  
I only (only me)

moom la ?  
du moom

is it him ?  
it is not him

toogal fii, yow  
xaaral, yow

you, sit here  
you, wait

ñoom ñaar

them both, the two of them

yeen yepp

you all

- (b) Objective forms. The indirect object precedes the direct object.

w)oo ko	call him
isi ko	bring it
jappa ko	catch him
jox ma ko	give it to me
jox ko ko	give it to him
jox ko loxo	shake hands with him (lit. give him a hand)
won ma	show me
won ma ko	show it to me
wax ko ko	tell him it
may ñu guru	give us kola
jox na leen ko	he gave it to you (pl.)
jox leen guru	give them kola
mu nuyyu leen	he greeted them

(c) Possessive forms

plural

suma doom	my child	sumay simis	my shirts
suma gaal	my canoe	sumay nēēg	my houses
suma tool	my farm	sumay xarit	my friends
suma santa	my surname		
suma gan	my stranger		
sa doom	your child	say loxo	your hands
sa gan	your stranger	say bēt	your eyes
sa jabar	your wife		
sa yaay	your mother		
gēwel am	his griot	i gēwel am	his griots
jabar am	his wife		
doom am	his child		
yaay am	his mother		
nēēg am **	his house	i nēēg am	his houses
suñ kër	our compound	suñuy gaal	our canoes
seen gan	your stranger	seeni nag	your cows
seen baay	their father		

The possessive comes between the noun and the article -

gaal 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.

	singular	plural
suma/sama bos	mine, my own	suma yos
sa bos	your	say bos
bos am	his own	yos am
suñu bos	our	suñuy bos
seen bos	your	seen yos
seen bos	their	

---

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

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, bennen      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 dov 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

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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	
	něég bu réy	a big house	
	něég bu réy bi	the big house	
	fas wu ñuul	a black horse	(ñuul na = it is black )
	fas wu ñuul wi	the black horse	
	muus 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	
	bukki bu xiif	a hungry hyena	
	rayyo bu xonxa 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 yagga	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.

singular	dem-al	go
	xaar-al	wait
	toog-al	sit down
	ñow-al	come
	daw-al	run
	dikka-l	come
	dugga-l	enter
	noppi-l	be quiet
	oyu-l	answer (a call)
	taal-al lampa bi	light the lamp
	téjal palanteer bi	lock the window
	ubbil bunta bi	open the door
	téjal bunta bi	lock the door
	demal fale, waay	go away, please

The plural is formed by adding leen to the root.

dem leen	go (plural)
ñow leen	come
toog leen	sit down
dellu leen	return

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

isi ko	bring it (sing.)
sol ko	put it on
xaar ma	wait for me
won ma ko	show me it
jaay ma almet	sell me matches
waññi ko, waay	lessen it (the price), please

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

léēbal ma	tell a tale for me
woyal ma	sing a song for me
niital ma	shine a light for me
togga	to cook
toggal	cook (imperative)
toog-al-al ma	cook for me

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 añ	come (and) have lunch
kaay toog fi	come (and) sit here
kaay leen toog	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 bu leen.  
before the verb.

bul jooy	don't cry
bul dem	don't go
bul daw	don't run
bul bañ	don't refuse
bul yagga	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
ñu ngi fi	we are here		
yena ngi fi	you (pl.) are here		
ñu ngi fi	they are here	ñu 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
ñu nge dem	we are going
yena nge dem	you (pl.) are going
ñu nge dem	they are going

Banjul Wolof make a distinction between

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

maa nge ñibbi	I am returning home
maa nge ñow léégi	I am coming now
maa nge tane	I am feeling better

yaa nge ñibbi ?	you are returning ?
yaa nge taxaw ?	you are standing ?

munge lopitaan	he is (at the) hospital
Jayna munge Ñoro	Jayna is at Nyoro
munge Bakaw	he is (at) Bakau

mungi nii	he is right here
-----------	------------------

ñunge reer	we are eating supper
------------	----------------------

ñunge 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 <u>le</u> lekka	he is eating it
mungi leen <u>di</u> 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
dafa feebar	he is sick
da-ñu feebar	we are sick
da-ngeen 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 ?
dafa njool .	he is tall
dafa mer	he is angry
dafa sob	he is disobedient, troublesome
dafa am kattan	he has strength, energy
dafa 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
<u>or</u> 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 metti	my head is aching

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
dafa géeena	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 nēwi-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 bëccëg naaj dafa tang'oon	in the daytime the sun was hot (but it's cooler now)

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.

---

Affirmative		Negative	
dem naa	I went	dem-u ma	I did not go
dem nga	you went	dem-u lo	you did not go
dem na	he went	dem-ul/dem-ut	he did not go
dem nañu	we went	dem-u ñu	we did not go
dem ngeen	you (pl.) went	dem-u leen	you (pl.) did not go
dem nañu	they went	dem-u ñu	they did not go

---

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 dëgga !	you've spoken the truth !
binda nga ko ?	did you write it ?

Faatu géeena na	Fatu went out
Omar dikka na	Omar has come
Faatu tukki na	Fatu has gone away
suma doom dikka na	my child has come
Kumba ñibbi na ?	has Kumba gone home ?
matta na ma	it has bitten me

sa ndaw si séy 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 naa ko	I know it
gis nga ko ?	do (did) you see it ?
xam na 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 ngeen 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 dëmba ?	did you go yesterday ?
foo dem-oon dëmba ?	where did you go yesterday (foo = fu nga)
foo nekk-oon ?	where were you ?
gis-oon nga suma nijaay ?	did you see my uncle ?
wax-oon naa leen	I had told them
dem-oon na ci suma	he had gone to my
néég	house
gis-oon naa la demba	I saw you yesterday
gis-oon naa la fa,	I saw you there,
demba ci guddi	last night

## Negative forms:

gisu ma dara	I did not see anything
gisula dara )	
gisulo dara ) ?	did you not see anything ?
gisul dara	he did not see anything
gisu leen dara ?	did you (pl.) not see anything ?
gisu ñu dara	we did not see anything
(nyoom) gisu ñu dara	they did not see anything

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

dēggu ma soose	I do not understand Mandinka
gisu ma ko	I did not see it
amulo dara ?	you have nothing ?
Mariyaama baaxul	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 <u>Samba</u>	Faatu does not love Samba
Faatu nobu <u>ko</u>	Faatu does not love him
nekku <u>fi</u>	he is not here

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

Not yet is indicated by -agul

dem+agul	he has not yet gone
ñowagul	he has not yet come

If the verb ends in e)  
i) it becomes -eegul

u) it becomes -oogul  
o)

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 incompleting action

(a)

FUTURE

affirmative		negative	
di naa dem	I will go	du ma dem	I will not go
di nga dem?	will you go?	doo dem?	will you not go?
di na dem	he will go	du dem	he will not go
di nañ dem	we will go	du ñu dem	we will not go
di ngeen dem?	will you (pl.)	du ngeen dem	will you not go ?
di nañ dem	go they will go	du ñu dem	they will not go
di naa la rey		I will kill you	
di naako dōor		I will beat him	
di naa ko def		I will do it	
di nga ñow ?		will you come ?	
di na ñow ci ngoon		he will come in the evening	
di na doy		it will be sufficient	
di na em		it will be long enough	
du ma daanu		I will not fall	
du ma ko toj		I will not break it	
du ma nelaw léégi		I will not sleep now	
doo ma xaar ?		won't you wait for me ?	
doo ma ko abal ?		won't you lend it to me ?	
doo ñu nataal ?		won't you photograph us ?	
doo waxtaan ?		won't you chat ?	

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
ñu ne ko 'bul ñibbi'	they said to him "Don't go."
mu ne ko 'man de, di naa ñibbi.'	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 tēdda ci suuf	( I don't lie on the ground ( I won't lie on the ground
jigēen 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.)
----------	------------------------------------

(c)

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 kër gi ?	what are you doing in the compound ?
dama-y xaar suma xarit	I am waiting for my friend
kañ nga ma-y yōbbu ?	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 tēdda 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
fooy 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 liggēy ngay def ?	what work do you do ?
janqalekat laa	I am a teacher
cf. lēēgi laa ñow	I have just come
& lēēgi laay ñow	I am coming now !

mu nge tiye sagar yu baaré, di ko yey	he was holding many rags.(and) was chewing it (them)
ñu dem, di lekka ndowal gi	they went off, eating the meat
mu dem be fekka nit di samm' i bey	he went on until he met a person herding goats
mu dem be fekka yaay am, mu ngiy ni, di añ	he went until he found her mother, she was there, eating lunch
waa ji fekka Kumba ci teen bi, di root	the person found Kumba at the well, drawing water
fekka ñu tēddi, 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 ñuy doxantu		- we are walking around

In conditional clauses etc. (See page 60 )

di + ee	becomes	<u>dee</u>
su ma dee buur....		if I were king.....
su dee 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 lañu doon lekka	that was what they used to eat

Dootu di + oot + u = no longer

dootu ma tux	I no longer smoke
--------------	-------------------





EMPHATIC OBJECT FORM

object followed by

sing. 1	...laa	I
2	...nga	you
3	...la	he
plural 1	...lañu	we
2	...ngeen	you (pl.)
3	...lañu	they

yow laa wax )  
 yow laay wax )

it is you I am talking to

man olof laa

I am a Wolof

olof nga bëgga dëgga ?

is it Wolof you want to hear ?

you la w)oo

it is you he is calling

soose rekk la dëgga

it is only Mandinka he understands  
(hears)

Caali 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 liggeēy 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 gaaw	tell him to hurry
wax leen ñu toog	tell them to sit down
dama bëgga nga...	I want you to....
mu ne ma ma raxasal ko ci geej gi	she told me I should wash it for her 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

e.g. let (pronoun) (verb)

sing.	1	naa
	2	na nga
	3	na -
plural	1	na ñu
	2	na ngeen
	3	na ñu

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 ñu dem	let us go	(The 1st. person plural is
na ñu rey bey bi	let us kill the goat	the most commonly heard
na ñu xool	let us look	form of this tense)

alxames, këpp ku bëgga	Thursday, all who want
Faatumata, na ñu 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
lééb	to tell a story	léébal	to tell a story for
togga	to cook	toggal	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 ,	nawetaan	to go as a 'strange farmer' for the rainy 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)



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 ?

13      -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      I am going to play

-si      to come to do.

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

lu tax añ-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      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

ub      to close

těj      to lock

weeri \*

to collect up again

ubbi      to open

ubbiji      to go to open

tějji      to unlock

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

*ubi = go to close, ubbi to open*

\* 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      teddi (to loosen a canoe).*

*f becomes pp      saf (to have taste)      ...sappi (be insipid)*

*s      cc      fas (to tie knot)      ...fecci (undo knot)*

vowel -       $\emptyset$       kk      dee (to die)      ...dekki (to revive)

- 15    -loo       indicates benefit to the subject, but the action is  
done by someone else
- reyloo 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 onself
- raagal       to treat       raglu    to have oneself treated  
fěěx       to be cool       fěěxlu    to take fresh air
- 17    -lu       indicates pretence
- nelaw       to sleep       nelawlu    to pretend to be asleep  
tanxamlu    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      -u      (1) passive  
                          (2) to do to oneself

sanga	to wash	sangu	to wash oneself
suux	to pour water	suuxu	to pour water over oneself
-		jaaru	to dry oneself at a fire
wat	to shave	watu	to shave oneself
gaañ	to wound	gaañu	to be wounded
weer	to spread out	weeru	to be spread out

- 23      -le

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

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

liggéeý	to work
liggéeýle	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
gën 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
jéëm a	try to	
lu muy jéëm 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 féëy	I am able to swim
cf bugga ngeen a lekka ?	do you want to eat ? (pl.)

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 réy ?

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

ñile ñett i nit,  
kan moo ci gën 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'
	ñu ne	we say
	ngeen ne lan ?	what do you (pl.) say ?
	ñu ne....	they say.....

For the past tense we have:

ne naa....	I said		
ne na...	he said	ñu naan	they used to say....
etc.		(ne + aan)	

(b) xam nga ne.... ? do you know that....?  
degga 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:

ndax is it that ?

ndax nga bëgga dem léēgi ?	is it that you want to go now ? do you want to go now ?
ndax dara jotu la ?	(I hope) something did not happen to you? to him
ne ko: ndax ndaw si fii la fanaan ?	he said/: Did the girl happen to spend the night here ?

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

xanaa yow ak ku fii ñow-oon mbokku leen ?	are you, and the one who came here before, not related ?
--	---

mbaa = or often used with a negative verb.

mbaa feebarul ?	(I hope) he is not sick ? he isn't sick, is he ?
mbaa kenn feebarul ?	(I hope) no one is sick ?

The reply to such queries is alhamdulilaa Thanks be to God.

-an with the appropriate initial determinant is used in most questions

<u>lan</u>	what ?	<u>kan</u>	who ?	<u>fan</u>	where ?
<u>ban</u> , <u>wan</u>	etc ?	which			

ci ban dëkka ?	in what town ?
fas 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 elleg ?	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 dikka ?

when did you come ?

kañ nga jogé 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)

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 ?

ñaata ?                      how much ?                      how many ?

ñaata nga bëgga ?	how much do you want ?
ñaata la jar loolu ?	how much is that worth ?
piis bi nyaata ?	how much (is) the piece (of cloth) ?
ñaata doom nga am ?	how many children have you ?

.....nak ?                      what about ?                      how about ?

li nak ?	what about this ?
moom nak ?	what about him/her ?

lu tax ?                      why ?                      (lit.                      what has caused...)

lu tax nga def sa tool bi ci yoon wi ?	why did you make your farm on the path ?
lu tax loolu ?	what is the reason for that ? why that?
lu tax ngay dem ?	why are you going ?

moo tax                      that is why

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 ?

loo - second person singular.

loo bëgga ?

what do you want ?

loo wax ?

what is it you said ?

loo binda ?

what did you write ?

loo taxaw ?

what is it your standing (there for) ?

loo-y xool ?

what is it you are staring at ?

loo-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 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 fanaan foofu ?	if you go to Banjul, won't you spend the night there ?
soo demee marse bi, jendal ma banaana	if you go to the market, buy me a banana
soo añee be paré, di nga ñow ?	if you have finished lunch, will you come ?
soo gisee suma baay....	if you see my father .....
bu neexee Yalla, di naa fa dem	if it pleases God, I will 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.... (u plus ee - oo)	when he had bathed.....

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 incompleted action etc.

-y is added.

bi muy dem, xarit am agsi

when he was leaving, his friend arrived

buy liggéeyee....

if he is working.....

buy dul liggéey....

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 xaaalis

I don't want anything, except for money

RELATIVE CLAUSESki

ki tēdda 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, dēgga 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 dēkka  
 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 )  
 xau ma )

fu mu dem

I don't know where he went

" "

ku ko def

" " " who did it

" "

kañ lay ñow

" " " when he will come

" "

ban waxande la

" " " which box it is

ku muñ, di na muñ

he who is patient, smiles (in the end)

xam naa 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,  
nuyyu baay am..as soon as he got down from his horse  
(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.....

ñu fab ko, daldi ko def ci  
maafe githey took it, and immediately  
put it in the saucekon

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

<u>Ngir</u>	for the sake of	
di naa ko def, ngir sa baay		I will do it for the sake of your father
sarax, ngir Yalla		alms, for the sake of God
<u>Ndax</u>	because of	
ñow na ndax yow		he came because of you
<u>Koon</u>		then, if that is the case
koon du ma dem		then, I will not go
<u>Kon nak</u>		however, in that case
<u>Ndegem</u>		since, because
ndegem demu ma...		since I did not go...
<u>Ndem</u>		if it
ndem tawul, di naa ñow		if it does not rain, I will come
<u>Ndig</u>		for
ndig buur bi suma xarit la-woon..		for the king had been my friend...
<u>Paski</u>	from French <u>parce que</u>	= because

MISCELLANEOUS WORDSwaaye

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 goor

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	inside
mu nge ci biir	he is inside
ci biir nēég bi	inside the house
ci biir marse Kau-ur	in Kau-ur market
ci biti	outside
ci boor i/u	near
mu ngi ci boor i lopitaan	it is near the hospital
ci diggante	between
ci digg i/u	in the middle of
ci ganaaw	behind, at the back of
dellul ganaaw, waay	get back, please
dem na ci ganaaw nēég bi	he went behind the house
ci kanam	in front of, facing
gis nga dekka bi nge jublu,	do you see the town you are facing,
ci sa kanam fii ?	in front of you here ?
ci kow	up
ci kow garab gi	up the tree
ci pegg u	at the edge of
ci pegg u yoon wi	at the side of the road
dem be ci pegg u lamba	he went to the edge of the wrestling (area)
ci ron	under, at the foot of
ci ron daxaar gi	at the foot of the tamarind tree
ci ron lal bi	under the bed
def ko ci ron lal bi	put it under the bed
ci ron poxotaan	under the armpit
ci suuf	on the ground, down
ci taat	at the base of
ci wet i/u	at the side of, beside

Many of the terms are parts of the body - biir belly ; kanam face, ganaaw back ; wet side; taat backside.

ci bunta bi	at the door
ci bunt'u jakka ji	at the door of the mosque

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

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

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

ci réew mi	in the country
------------	----------------

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

ci néég bi	in the house
mu ngi ci néég bi	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 néég am	he is at home
dem néég	to go home
yobbu néég 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
ñu 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.

<u>be</u>	as far as, to	
dem na be angalteer		he has gone to England
ñu dem be Panchang		they went to Panchang

WORDS INDICATING TIME

Ndey dem na Banjul tey

tey du ma añ fi

tey ajjuma la

tey ci guddi

foy dem elleg ?

foo dem-oon dēmba ?

demba ci guddi

Ndey has gone to Banjul today

today I will not lunch here

today is Friday

tonight

where are you going tomorrow ?

where did you go yesterday ?

last night

daaw jek

daaw

ren

dēwēn

two years ago (the year before last)

last year

this year

next year

ci fajar laay ewwu

subba teel

teel

teel na torop

ba subba

subba di na dem Basse

ci ngoon

dēmba ci timis

ci guddi

ñu toog ba digg'i guddi

keroog

yoor-yoor

at dawn I wake up

early in the morning

to be soon

it is very early

until morning, until tomorrow morning

in the morning he will go to Basse

in the evening

yesterday evening (at twilight)

at night

they sat (stayed) until the middle of the night

that time, the other day

mid-morning

Arabic      French

Days of the week

altiné		Monday
talaata		Tuesday
allarba		Wednesday
alxames		Thursday
ajjuma		Friday
aseer	samdi	Saturday
dibéeër	dimaas	Sunday

Times of prayer

fajar	dawn prayer
tisbaar	early afternoon prayer
takkusaan	late afternoon prayer
timis	evening prayer
gee	late evening prayer

Periods of time

fan )	day
bés )	
weer	month
at	year
ayubés	week (lit. when the turn of the day
ay-yu bés	comes round)

bés bu nekka      every day

lan 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

ñaata at nga am ?      how many years have you ?  
how old are you ?

léégi

now

léégi ma ñow	I am coming <u>now</u>
ma nge ñow léégi	I am coming now
léégi léégi 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 léégi 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 gééj, nappa jën	every time he goes to sea, (he) catches fish

be, ba

until

ñu toog ba digg'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 paré , ba paré	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 ańee <u>be paré</u> , di nga ñow ?	when you have <u>finished</u> lunch, will you come ?
bu ma waxee <u>ba parée</u> , ñu dem	when I have finished speaking, they should go.

ba beneen yoon	until another time
----------------	--------------------



The phrases

bu ñu 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.....

NUMERALS

1	benna, bena	11	fukk'ak benna	ak - and
2	ñaar	12	" " ñaar	
3	ñetta	13	" " ñetta	
4	ñenent	14	" " ñenent	
5	juroom	15	" " juroom	
6	juroom benna	16	" " juroom benna	
7	juroom ñaar	17	" " " ñaar	
8	juroom ñetta	18	" " " ñetta	
9	juroom ñenen(t	19	" " " ñenen	
10	fukka	20	ñaar i fukka	

	30	fan-wer (lit. days of the month)
or		ñett'i fukka
	40	ñenent i fukka
	50	juroom i fukka

etc.

100	tééméér
200	ñaar i tééméér
300	ñett i "
400	ñenent i "
500	juroom i "
600	juroom ben i tééméér
700	juroom ñaar i tééméér
800	juroom ñett i tééméér
900	juroom ñenent i tééméér
1000	junne / junni
201	ñaar i tééméér ak benna

As a number benna is invariable, the initial consonant does not change to genna, jenna etc.

benna bēs	one day
benna nēég	one house
benna kër	one compound (ker g-)
benna doom u goor gi	a son of the man (doom j-)
ay doom i goor gi	some of the man's sons
damay seeti suma benna xarit	I am going to look for one of my friends
benna benna	one by one
ñaar i ganaar	two fowls
ñaar i nag	two cows
ñaar i yoon	two times, twice
ñaar i fan	two days
ñaar i nag yu réy	two big cows
ñaar ñii	these two
ñaar nile	these two here (people)
ñaar yile	these two here (things)
ñaar la ñu	they are two
ñaar i reen i ñambi yi	the two roots of cassava
Pël bi am na ñett i nag	the Fula has three cows
bukki yappa ñett i nag	hyena devoured three cows
juroom been i nit	six persons
fan-weer i fan	thirty days
fukki faro ak ñaar	twelve rice fields
fukki fas ak juroom benna	sixteen horses (ten horses and six)
am fa fukk i at	(he was) there ten years
am naa ñaar i fukki at	I have twenty years (I am 20 years old)
xanaa loolu fan-weeri at ?	is that (the total) thirty years ?

<u>ci</u>	can be used to indicate	<u>out of, of the</u>
ñaar 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.

ñaareel	second
ñetteel	third
juroom beneel	sixth
fukkeel	tenth
fukkeel ak benna	eleventh
ñaar i fukkeel	twentieth

ci ñetteel i bēs                      on the third day

ñaareeli 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 ñuy jëkka lekka ?                      shall we eat first ?

To be the last is mujja,                      the last mujjent-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.

tanka	formerly	6d.	12 bututs
taransu		1/-	25 "
tulalibar		2/-	50 "
genawalla		2/-	50 " (lit. half)
derem			1 dalasi.
nyeti taransu		3/-	75 bututs

butut	formerly meant	a halfpenny	(small one)
burey	" "	a penny	(big one )

EXCLAMATIONS, EMPHATIC WORDS AND PHRASES

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
laaylaaylala	" " " "
wallaay	by God
xalaas	a pity

Wolof phrases include:

Yalla tere	God forbid
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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 naa torop	I am very pleased

lool very much

neex na lool	it is very sweet
baay bi tiit lool	the father was very much afraid
dama sonna lool	I am completely exhausted
jafen 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 nijaay ñow na <u>kat</u> ."	the young woman said to him "My uncle (i.e. husband) has come back !"
Hasan kat goor la !	Hassan is a real man !

daal completely

fatte naa ko daal	I have completely forgotten it
-------------------	--------------------------------

mukk not at all

du déggal yaay am muk	he doesn't pay attention to his mother at all
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Numerous verbs have specific intensifiers associated with them.  
(This feature is also found in Serer, Fula, and Mandinka.)

ñuul kukk	very black
xonxa coyy ) " cur )	very red
weex tall ) " furr )	very white
wow kony	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
sedda guyy	very cold
lëndëm taruus	very dark
ñor xomm	very well cooked

Many words are used with the intensifier né

né patt	be silent
né cell	be silent
né taréët	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 santa ?"                      "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 waa kër 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 ?" "Where is Faatu ?"  
"Naka 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." "Greet your mother for me."  
" " " waa ker." "Grëet the people of your compound for me."  
 the reply being:

- "Di na ko dëgga." "She will hear it."  
"Di nanyu ko degga." "They will hear it."

A final wish may be "Ci jamma", "In peace," the response being "Jamma 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 "Jërējëf." "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:

end

<u>Awa</u>	a	<u>Awaa</u> !
<u>Ami</u>	i/e	<u>Amee</u> !
<u>Faatu</u>	u	<u>Faatoo</u> !
<u>Asan</u>	-	<u>Asan-oo</u> !

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  
dafa xiin

every day the sky is  
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.

<u>ma ne</u>	I say	becomes	<u>ana me</u>
<u>David Gamble</u>		"	<u>evide ambulga</u>
<u>torop</u>	too much	"	<u>oropto</u>
<u>naka la ?</u>	how is it	"	<u>aka la nan</u>
<u>~naata la am ?</u>	how much has he ?	"	<u>ata la na</u>
<u>fatte nga ko ?</u>	did you forget it ?	"	<u>ate nge ko fat</u>

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 bëccëg

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,  
neene, lu mo jooy ?  
xanaa reew la jooy,  
reew muutut a jooy,  
dunda muut a jooy,  
soo dunde am sa muur  
am sa muur i yaay,  
am sa muur i baay,  
Baay Moodu Lamin....

Yaay am dem na Saalum,  
Saalum nett i neeg la,  
ñanenteel ba di waan wa,  
waan wa, di waan i buur la  
buur bi di buur i Saalum,  
aayoo, neene.

Hush, little baby,  
baby, what is it crying about ?  
perhaps badness made it cry.  
badness is not worth crying about  
life is worth crying about,  
if you live you will have good fortune,  
your mother's good fortune  
your father's good fortune,  
Father Moodu Lamin....

His mother has gone to Saalum  
In Saalum there are three houses,  
the fourth is the kitchen,  
the kitchen is the king's kitchen,  
the king is the king of Saalum,  
hush, baby.

~  
Nun ne, dafa am-oon ñett i jubba.

ñett i jubba séké'ré la-woon ci moom.

nanguwu koon wax kenn,

lu mooy jabar am.

bale nge tudde, 'buur du mbokka',

bale, 'soppal sa jabar, te bul ko  
oolu,'

bale, 'mag baax na ci réew mi'

bi mu ko defe nak,

buur bi degga ko, di ko lajte,

di ko lajte, be oo jabar ji,

ne ko, dama bugga nga wax ma

jubb i Kocce yi, naka la tudda

jabar ji ne ko,

bii, 'buur du mbokka',

bii, 'soppal sa jabar, te bul ko

oolu'

bii, 'mag baax na ci réew mi'

noon, bur daldi dajale waa réew

mi yepp.

bi nu ñowe, mu oo Kocce, ne ko :

"Léegi xam naa sa jubba yi,

di naa la réy léegi nak,

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 dëkka bi yepp ñow nañu  
 ñanal ko.

mu ne, waaw, dama bugga ngeen wax

buur, li ma wax ndax du dëgga ?

Ndig buur bi suma xarit la-woon,  
 te tey xam na suma sékérek,

ñow bugga ma réy.

suma jabar ji, so gisee ma wax

ko ko, du ma ko oolu-woon,

waay gis nga munge dem wax ko ko,

léégi ñow mag bi ñow na sukka

ñanal ma,

lu tax mu bayyi ma.

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

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

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

for the king had been my friend,  
 but today, as soon as he knows  
 my secrets,

he wants to kill me.

my wife, if you see I told her it,

I should not have trusted her,

but you see she went and told him it,

now the elder came and knelt down

to intercede for me,

that is why he let me go.

(In other versions there is a fourth tuft, doom u jitle du doom,  
 '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 (gewël), 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 Ngaari, the Fula name for 'bull', is used.

Sise Ngaari.

Njaay bears the attribute Gaynde (Lion) indicating the royal origins of the Njaays.

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.



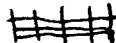




RIDDLES

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      What has its hair loose, and says to God  
leta ma ?      '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. siñ ci kow, siñ ci suuf      teeth above, teeth below  
  
A. kirintiñ      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.)

(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 tulalibar. Ban nga bugga ?	There is a heap for 25 bututs, 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.	Jerejǽf, kay ; ma buña la.	Thank you. Let me give you a 'dash'
L	Jerejǽf way . Endul ak jamma. Di naa la gisati.	Thank you. Spend the day in peace. I will see you again.
Tr	Jam' ak jama. Nuyul ma waa ker ga.	Peace, peace.. Greet the people of the compound for me.
L	Di nañ' ko degga.	They will hear it.
-----		
L	Borom jen, jama nga am ? Sa jen yi ñaata ?	Fish owner (i.e. seller), are you at peace ? How much are your fish ?
Tr	Ban nga bugga ?	Which do you want ?
L	Bii ñaata ?	How much is this one ?
Tr	Yepp ?	The whole (of it) ?
L	Deedeet, digga bi rekk.	No, just the middle .
Tr	Digga bi derem.	The middle one dollar.
L	Doo ko waññi ?	Won't you lessen it ?
Tr	Amul waññi.	There is no reduction.
L	Waññil ma way, suma cammeñ.	Lessen it for me please, my brother
Tr	Baax na, di na la waññil tanka. 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. Defal ma ko ci suma pañe bi	Good, sell it to me. Put it in my basket for me.
	Wecci ma.	Change (this money) for me.
Tr	Auma weccit.  Xaaral tuuti ma wecci ko.	I have no change,  wait a bit (until) I get some change for it.
L	Baax na.	O.K.
Tr.	Am sa weccit.	Here's your change.
L	Jerejëf.	Thank you .

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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 benn'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 jigéén, kay seet. Sister, come and look.  
 Suma jigéén, lō 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 ñaata ? 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 dërëm. 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 Darame \*moo ko suub. Musa Keba Darame was the one who dyed i
- L Xam naa Musukeba. I know Musukeba, (so)  
 Wannil ma lel. Lower the price please .
- Tr Ñaata nga bugga ? How much do you want ?
- L Des na ci njëk li. That depends on the price.  
 bi naa bugga ñenent i malaan If I want four skirts ,  
 doo ko wannee ? won't you lower (the price) ?
- Tr Baax na, ma wannil la O.K. I will lower it for you (by)  
 tulalibar. 50 bututs.
- L Tulalibar rekk ! 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 Nunga 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 Deedeet, 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 nan', 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 naata ? How much altogether.
- Tr Fukk i derem ak juroom netta. 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  
klient. Am. Ma bunya la jaaru. my client. Here. I give you a  
ring as a 'dash'.
- L. Jerejef, way, borom cuup. Thank you, cloth seller.
- Tr. Nuyul ma waa Serrakunda, Greet the people of Serrakunda for me.  
Bul fa gej ! Don't be long there.
- L Baax na. Ci jamma. O.K. In peace .
- Tr Jam' ak jama. Peace.

(C) A CONVERSATION BETWEEN TWO WOMEN.

- L. Lan nga togga añ 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.
- Lan nga leetu ? What sort of style are you going to have ?
- L. 'Jamano Kura' la di leetu. 'The time of Kura' is the plait I want.
- F. 'Jamano Kura' moo xew léégi. 'The time of Kura' is fashionable now.
- L. Naata la feyee ko ? How much does she charge for it ?
- F. Nenenti derem rekk; te du yagga. Four dollars only; and it does not take long.
- L. Dama bugga refet ndax anda ak suma jeker tukki. 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.
- L. Loolu baax na. Jerejɛf. That is good. Thank you.
- Waaye fook naa di nañu dem. But I think we will be going.
- F. Mbaa doo leen yagga. I hope you won't be away long.
- L. Déédéét, du ñu 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 !

(D) AN INVITATION TO EAT

- |     |  |   |
|-----|--|---|
| H.  | Now naa !  | I have come. (I'm here)   |
| L.  | Wacca nga liggééy ?  | Have you come from work ?   |
| H.  | Waaw, wacca naa léégi.<br>?  | I have come just now.   |
| L.  | Naka wa liggeey-kaay ?   | How are your co-workers ?   |
| H.  | Nunga fa.  | They are there.   |
| L.  | Lekka nga ?  | Have you eaten ?  |
| H.  | Waaw, lekk-oon naa ci bëccëg.  | Yes, I ate in the daytime.  |
| L.  | Xiffulo léégi ?  | Aren't you hungry now?  |
| (H. | Deedeet, tuuti rekk.   | No, only a little.)   |
| or  | Aha kan.   | Yes, indeed.  |
| L.  | Kaay lekka ak nun.   | Come (and) eat with us.   |
| H.  | Baax na.   | O.K.  |
| H.  | Loo togga ?  | 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.<br>waaye, dafa saf kaani.<br>Kaani gu bari baaxut.<br>Doy na . | The benacin is good (lit. sweet).<br>but it is hot with peppers.<br>Too much pepper is not good.<br>It is enough. |
| L.  | Lekkal way !   | do eat !  |
| H.  | Jerejëf, suur naa .<br>Benacin bi neex na, bari na.                                | Thank you, I am full.<br>Thebenacin 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.  | Jerejëf. Ndox mi sedda na.   | Thank you, the water is cold. **  |

\*\* A comment of appreciation.

(E) 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. Nunge 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, gèj nga fi. But it's a long time since you were here.
- Mbaa du dara ? I hope ) nothing happened ?
- L. Du dara. Naka jot rekk. Nothing. I just failed to come.
- 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 ?
- Naata nga leetee leeti How much did you charge for plaiting  
Aminata yi ? Aminata's plaits ?
- M. Yooyu leeti diniyanke la. <sup>1</sup> aristocratic )  
Those plaits are high fashion. )
- Soo ko buggee di naa la ko If you wish, I will make them
- defal juroom i dërëm. for five dollars.

1. 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 Tenguela.

- L. Baax na. Sa loxo jar na ko. Fine. Your hand is worth it.  
 Waaye bugga naa bu genn a refet But I want to be finer than  
 bu Aminata. Aminata.  
 Do nga ma beral loxa ? Will you accomodate me ?
- M. Baax na. Xaral ma <sup>~</sup>now. Fine. Wait (a moment) for me  
 to come.
- L. Foo bugga <sup>~</sup>nu toog ? Where do you want us to sit ?
- M. Kaay, ci ron garab gi. Come, under the tree.  
 Indil basang bi. Bring the mat.  
 Lal ko. Toogal. Spread it out. Sit down.
- L. Ndax munge metti ? Is it painful ?
- M. Tuuti rekk. Just a little.  
 Leeta yu dan moo refet, Plaits which are tight are beautiful  
 te moo di gen a yagga. 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 ! Hurry !  
 Xolal, ndax refet na. Look, isn't it fine ?
- L. Refet na lool. Jerejɛf. It is very beautiful. Thank you.
- M. Ayca, <sup>~</sup>nu jekkali. Well then, let's put the last touche  
 to it.
- L. Ndax léégi mu jeex ? Is it finished now ?
- M. Des na tuuti. In a moment.  
 Paré na. Jogal. It is finished. Get up.
- L. Sonna naa ci toogay bi, I am tired of sitting,  
 waaye léégi jeex na. but now it is finished.
- M. Jelal seetu bi nga seetat. Take the mirror and look again.

L            Amut morom !

There is nothing like it !

M. Bul fi gej-ati.

Don't be away so long again.

Bu leeta yi rapee, dafa na  
hare' firi,  
nga dellusi ma firil la ko,

If the plaits become worn,  
if they start to come undone,  
you should return, so that I can  
loosen them for you

defal la bi xew.

and make you something in fashion.

L. Baax na.

Good.

Di naa dellusi ci lu ban a  
yagga.

I will come back without being too long.

Am, ma fey la.

Here, let me pay you.

M. Da nga ma fey rekk ?

Are you just paying me (the price)

Du ma may dara ?

Won't you give me something (extra).

L                    Munal ma be bennen yoon.

Bear with me, until another time.

M. Baax na. Ci jamma.

Alright. In peace.

Nuyyul ma waa kër ga.

Greet the people of the compound  
for me.

Rap ak jamma.

May the braids(wear out)in peace.

L Jamm ak jamma, be bennen yoon.

Peace , until another time.

Taggal ma kër gi.

Say goodbye for me to yōur household.