

## A sketch of Mandinka

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### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1. The Mandinka language and its speakers

Mandinka is spoken by approximately 1.5 million speakers in The Gambia, Senegal, and Guinea Bissau. Speakers of Mandinka call themselves **Màndiŋkôolú** (singular: **Màndiŋkôo**) and designate their language as **Màndiŋkàkàŋò**. **Màndiŋkôo** is an inflected form of the noun stem **Màndiŋká** resulting from the addition of the derivational suffix **-ŋká** ‘people from ...’ to the geographical term **Màndiŋ**, which primarily refers to the region that constituted the starting point of the Manding expansion (see 1.3 and 1.4). **Màndiŋkàkàŋò** is literally ‘language of the people from Manding’.

#### 1.2. Genetic affiliation

Mandinka is the westernmost member of the Manding dialect cluster included in the Western branch of the Mande language family:

Mandinka  $\subset$  Manding  $\subset$  West Mande  $\subset$  Mande

The Mande language family was included by Greenberg in the Niger-Congo phylum, but the evidence for a Niger-Congo affiliation of Mande is rather slim, and for example Dimmendaal (2011) argues that Mande is best treated as an independent language family.

It is commonly admitted that the time distance between the most ancient branches of the Mande language family exceeds 5 millenia, whereas the time depth of the Manding dialect cluster does not exceed 8 centuries. On the classification of Mande languages, see Vydrin (2009).

Within the Manding dialect cluster, Mandinka is particularly close to the Maninka varieties of Eastern Senegal and Western Mali, but is nevertheless sufficiently different to be considered a distinct language.

### 1.3. A note on terminology

Etymologically, Mande, Manden, Manding, and Mali, are variants of a toponym designating the upper valley of the Niger River and a state located in this region, whose capital was Kangaba. In the 13th century the Manding prince Sunjata Keita founded an empire, known as the Manding, Mande(n) or Mali empire, that extended over a large area and flourished until the 16th century.

A risk of confusion may arise from the fact that, in the terminology of linguistics, Mande and Manding are conventionally used with meanings that must be carefully distinguished: Manding refers to a set of closely related languages/dialects resulting from the evolution of the language that was spoken in Manding before the expansion of Sunjata's empire, whereas Mande refers to a language family including languages that have only a remote relationship with Manding and are spoken by communities that historically had nothing to do with the Manding empire.

### 1.4. The historical context

The area where Mandinka is spoken largely coincides with the area of influence of the pre-colonial state of Kaabu, which according to oral traditions originated as a province of the Manding empire conquered by a general of Sunjata Keita called Tiramakhan Traore, and after the decline of the Manding empire became an independent kingdom. Mandinka hegemony in the region lasted until 1867, when the Kaabu capital (Kansala) was taken by the armies of the Fula kingdom of Fuuta Jallon.

### 1.5. Language contact

Since the foundation of the Kaabu kingdom, Mandinka has been relatively isolated from the other Manding varieties, and this may explain why it does not share some grammatical phenomena commonly found across Manding varieties (for example, a system of preverbs such as Bambara *lá-*, *mă-*). By contrast, as a result of the dominant position of Mandinka, many speakers of Ñun and other Atlantic languages in contact with Mandinka have assimilated to Mandinka, and the influence of this substratum, although relatively limited, is nevertheless discernible in the lexicon and in some aspects of syntax. Even for some basic notions such as 'work' or 'village', the usual Mandinka word (*dòo(kúu)* 'work', *sàatée* 'village') is not cognate with the words used in other Manding varieties and can be identified with certainty as an Atlantic borrowing (cf. Ñun Guñaamolo *dɔhɔ* 'work', Seereer *saate* 'village'). In morphosyntax, one may mention the development of a centripetal marker (*nǎŋ*), which has no equivalent in other Manding varieties, and the development of the use of *sòtó* 'get' as a transitive verb of possession ('have').

A Soninke influence, attributable to the prominent role played by Soninke preachers in the Islamization of the former Kaabu kingdom, is also obvious in Mandinka. Many Soninke borrowings found in Mandinka (for example *wùtú* 'take') are not found in other Manding varieties, and in syntax, some details of the relativization strategy of Mandinka might well be a calque of Soninke. The presence of geminate stops in some Mandinka varieties is also probably due to Soninke influence.

As regards the influence of European languages (or their Creole varieties), Portuguese and French borrowings are found throughout the Mandinka territory, whereas English borrowings are rare in the Mandinka varieties of Senegal and Guinea Bissau.

## 1.6. Bibliographic information

The literature on Mandinka is relatively small, but includes a recently published comprehensive reference grammar (Creissels & Sambou 2013) to which the reader is referred for additional references and a detailed discussion of the questions briefly presented in this sketch.

## 1.7. The data

Like Creissels and Sambou (2013), this sketch describes Mandinka as spoken in Middle-Casamance (administrative region of Sédhiou). Creissels and Sambou (2013) was based on investigation conducted in Sédhiou, and my opinion now is that we underestimated the fact that the relative heterogeneity of idiolects in an urban center like Sédhiou could affect some aspects of the description.<sup>1</sup> In general, variation in Mandinka is relatively limited and easy to identify, with however the exception of the tonal system, whose description is made difficult by a complex system of sandhi rules. I must confess that I am not satisfied now with the way some aspects of the tonal system were analyzed in Creissels and Sambou (2013), and by some of the decisions we took about tonal notation. This is why I decided to check all the data quoted in this chapter with a consultant whose speech is representative of a rural variety of Middle-Casamance Mandinka (Yaya Dramé, from Dassilamé Pakao). The tonal notation, which does not always coincide with that found in Creissels and Sambou (2013), reflects the speech of this consultant.

## 2. Phonology

### 2.1. Consonants

The consonant phonemes of Mandinka are summarized in the following chart, using the standard orthography of languages of Senegal, with the corresponding IPA symbols in square brackets:

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<sup>1</sup> The point is that the population of Sédhiou includes a significant proportion, not only of ethnic Mandinka who originate from other Mandinka-speaking areas (Kaabu, Woyi, etc.) and may maintain at least some particularities of their original dialects, but also of ethnic Ñun, Balant, Mandjaku, Mankanya, etc. whose families shifted to Mandinka not earlier than two or three generations ago.

Table 1: Consonant inventory of Mandinka

	labial	dental	palatal	velar	laryngeal
voiceless plosives	p	t	c [tɕ]	k	
voiced plosives	b	d	j [dʒ]		
fricatives	f	s			h
nasals	m	n	ɲ [ɲ]	ŋ	
lateral approximant		l			
vibrant		r			
glides	w		y [j]		

## 2.2. Vowels

Mandinka has 5 distinctive vowel qualities, summarized in table 2 below:

Table 2: Vowel inventory of Mandinka

	front	back
close	i	u
mid	e	o
open	a	

As evidenced by minimal pairs such as **sàrá** ‘water-melon’ vs. **sàarà** ‘first-born’, vowel length is distinctive. Long vowels are written by doubling the letters representing short vowels: **ii**, **ee**, **aa**, **oo**, **uu**.

## 2.3. Syllable structure

Three types of syllables regularly occur in Mandinka words: **CV** (consonant + short vowel), **CVV** (consonant + long vowel), and **CVŋ** (consonant + short vowel + nasal coda). In some varieties (but not all), closed syllables with long vowels are possible in words formed by means of certain derivational affixes, such as **báantánj** ‘motherless’ < **báa** ‘mother’.

Null onsets are mainly found in Arabic borrowings beginning with **a**. Complex onsets are exceptional. Syllables with consonants other than nasals in coda position are regularly found in ideophones, but are exceptional in other contexts.

In coda position, the place of articulation of nasals is not distinctive: if the nasal coda is immediately followed (word internally, or at word junction) by a consonant other than **w**, **y**, or **h**, its place of articulation copies that of the following consonant, otherwise (in particular, before pause) it is realized velar (ŋ). ‘Nasal coda + l’ is realized as a geminate l with more or less perceptible nasalization. In the transcription used here, word-internal nasals are transcribed as they are pronounced (for example, **bàmbá** ‘crocodile’, **kàndí** ‘be hot’, **súñjù** ‘breast’, **dìŋká** ‘hole’), whereas nasals in word final position, whose realization varies depending on the context, are systematically written ŋ (which constitutes their default realization before a pause).

Syllabic nasals are found in two words: **ɲ** ‘I’ and **ɲ** ‘we’. With respect to their place of articulation and interaction with l, they behave exactly like nasal codas.

## 2.4. Tone

As evidenced by minimal pairs such as  $\text{ɛ́}$  'I' vs.  $\text{ɛ̀}$  'we' and  $\text{í}$  'you (sg)' vs.  $\text{ì}$  'they', Mandinka has two contrasting tones, high and low. Contour tones (rising, falling and rising-falling) are analyzable as sequences of level tones (LH, HL and LHL) associated to single syllables. The downstep that may affect H tones in some positions is analyzable as the trace of a L element underlyingly belonging to the syllable preceding the downstepped H tone. Tones on long vowels are written as follows:  $\check{V}V$  (high),  $\grave{V}V$  (low),  $\check{V}V$  (rising),  $\hat{V}V$  (falling), and  $\check{V}\hat{V}$  (rising-falling). Note that the falling tones indicated in the transcription are not necessarily realized as such, since their L element may manifest itself as a downstep.

The tonal system of Mandinka, like that of the other Manding languages, is characterized by strong restrictions on the possible tone sequences within the limits of various types of units (roots, complex lexemes, words) and by a complex system of tone sandhi. The general tendency is that the non-final tones of non-monosyllabic words tend to remain stable, whereas the tone of monosyllabic words and of the final syllable of non-monosyllabic words undergoes contextual variations whose precise description would require much more space than is available here.

The division of lexemes into tone classes is quite stable across Mandinka varieties. By contrast, the dialectal variation in tonal realizations is much more important than in any other area of phonology or morphosyntax, and even geographically close varieties that in all other respects are virtually identical may be very different in some aspects of tonology. As indicated above, in this chapter, Mandinka words and sentences are transcribed with the tones I have observed in the speech of a consultant from Dassilamé Pakao.

## 3. Canonical predication and major lexical categories

### 3.1. Verbal predication

The most striking characteristic of clause structure in Mande languages is the extreme rigidity of the typologically unusual SOVX constituent order in verbal predication, and Mandinka is no exception. No operation such as focalization or questioning triggers a change in constituent order, and with the exception of some types of adjuncts, noun phrases or adposition phrases cannot occur in topic position (on the left edge of the clause) without being resumed by a pronoun occupying the position they would occupy if they were not topicalized.

In the basic transitive construction, the NP's representing the agent (A) and the patient (P) obligatorily precede the verb, and A obligatorily precedes P. Assertive and interrogative transitive clauses always include an auxiliary-like element, called *predicative marker* in the Mandeist tradition, inserted between A and P. Predicative markers are portemanteau morphemes encoding aspectual and modal distinctions and expressing polarity. Obliques follow the verb. A and P bear no mark of their syntactic role and are not indexed on the verb. Pronouns occupy the same positions as canonical NP's and show no variation related to their syntactic role.

- (1a) **Jàt-óo yè dán-óo bàràamá.**  
 lion-D CPL hunter-D hurt  
 ‘The lion hurt the hunter.’
- (1b) **Dán-òo yè jàt-óo bàràamá.**  
 hunter-D CPL lion-D hurt  
 ‘The hunter hurt the lion.’
- (1c) **Ì yè bànk-òo-lú táláa kàbíil-òo-lú lè téemà.**  
 3PL CPL land-D-PL divide clan-D-PL FOC between  
 ‘They divided the lands between clans.’
- (1d) **Wùl-óo yè dín-dín-ò tàn-kándí òòmbáa má.**  
 dog-D CPL child-D save fire.D POSTP  
 ‘The dog saved the child from the fire.’
- (1e) **Kàmbàan-òo mánj bèr-òo fáyí pàlàntéer-òo tó.**  
 boy-D CPL.NEG stone-D-PL throw window-D LOC  
 ‘The boy did not throw the stone into the window.’
- (1f) **Kèw-óo kà à téerímáa máakóyì kó-d-òo tó.**  
 man-D INCPL 3SG friend help money-D LOC  
 ‘The man helps his friend financially.’

Obliques are standardly encoded as postpositional phrases. Two of them are particularly common in the function of oblique argument marker: **lá** and **má**. **Lá** is also fully productive in the encoding of non-spatial location (as in **dòokúwòo lá** ‘at work’) and instrumental adjuncts (**mùróo lá** ‘with a knife’), and cause or purpose adjuncts marked by the postposition **lá** are common too.

The other specialized postpositions are **tí** (productively used in equative, functive, transformative, and comparative functions, also marginally found in comitative function), **tó** (a spatial postposition which does not refer to any particular type of spatial configuration), **yé** (benefactive), **kànj** ‘on’, **fèe** ‘as regards, with respect to’, **kàlámà** (mainly used in combination with the locational copula to express ‘be aware of’), and **kámà** ‘for the purpose of, against’.

Postpositions cognate with nominal lexemes include among others **kótò** ‘under’ (cf. **kótò** ‘meaning’), **bálà** ‘in contact with, against’ (cf. **bálà** ‘body’), **búlù** ‘in the sphere of, under the responsibility of’ (cf. **búlù** ‘hand’). Mandinka also has a number of compound postpositions, for example **dáalà** ‘beside’ < **dáa** ‘side’ + **lá** (specialized postposition).

There are also a few prepositions, mainly used in combination with postpositions, as for example **díinà ... tí** ‘more than, rather than’.

In intransitive predication, the NP representing the unique core argument precedes the verb. It bears no mark of its syntactic role and is not indexed on the verb. Obliques behave exactly in the same way in transitive and intransitive clauses. With the exception of the completive positive (encoded by the predicative marker **yé** in transitive

predication, and by the verbal suffix **-tá** in intransitive predication), aspect, modality and polarity are encoded by the same predicative markers as in transitive predication.

(2a) **Yír-óo bòi-tà síl-òo kâŋ.**  
 tree-D fall-CPL road-D on  
 ‘The tree fell down on the road.’

(2b) **Nèw-óo kà kómôŋ jíy-òo kónò.**  
 iron-D INCPL rust water-D in  
 ‘Iron rusts in water.’

(2c) **Kèw-òo mâŋ kúmá mùs-òo yé.**  
 man-D CPL.NEG talk woman-D BEN  
 ‘The man did not talk to the woman.’

A notion of subject conflating the agent of transitive predication and the unique core argument of intransitive predication is not problematic in the description of Mandinka, although the only coding property they share is their position preceding the predicative markers, contrasting with the position of P between the predicative markers and the verb. Using the notions of subject (S) and object (O), verbal predication can therefore be schematized as follows:

S PM (O) V (X) (X') ...

This formula makes apparent that, contrary to languages in which the most obvious contrast is between the subject NP and all other NP's, and the distinction between object and oblique NP's may be problematic, the most clear-cut contrast in Mandinka morphosyntax is between core NP's (subject and object) and non-core (or oblique) NP's: core NP's invariably precede the verb, and oblique NP's invariably follow it.

In this respect, it must be emphasized that not all semantically bivalent verbs are syntactically assimilated to prototypical action verbs. As illustrated in (3), some bivalent verbs that do not refer to prototypical actions (for example, ‘want’), occur in an *extended intransitive* construction in which one of the two arguments is an *oblique argument* encoded as a postpositional phrase that nothing distinguishes from postpositional phrases in adjunct function.<sup>2</sup>

(3) **Kèw-óo làfí-tà kód-òo lá.**  
 man-D want-CPL money-D POSTP  
 S V X  
 ‘The man wants money.’

<sup>2</sup> The existence of relatively important classes of bivalent verbs with an extended intransitive construction is one of the typological features that distinguish the Mande language family from most other West African language families.

It must also be emphasized that Mandinka clauses cannot include more than two core NP's.<sup>3</sup> One of the three arguments of trivalent verbs such as 'give' must necessarily be an oblique argument encoded as a postpositional phrase in post-verbal position. For example, Mandinka has two possible equivalents of English 'give': with **dfi** (which implies nothing more than transfer), the gift is represented by the object NP, whereas with **só** (which implies a change of possession) the object NP represents the recipient.

(4a) **Kèw-óo yè kó-d-òo dfi mùs-òo lá.**  
 man-D CPL money-D give woman-D POSTP  
 S PM O V X  
 'The man gave money to the woman.'

(4b) **Kèw-óo yè mùs-òo só kó-d-òo lá.**  
 man-D CPL woman-D give money-D POSTP  
 S PM O V X  
 'The man gave money to the woman.'

### 3.2. Nouns and verbs

Nominal lexemes are characterized by their ability to function without any restriction as heads of NP's occupying the S or O slots in the verbal predication. Verbal lexemes can be found in the V slot of the verbal predication, but with the only exception of **săa** 'die' (which nominalizes as **sàayáa** 'death'), they can also be used as event-denoting nouns without any specific morphological marking, with genitival modifiers representing their core arguments (see 5.10).

In addition to this fully predictable morphologically unmarked use of verbal lexemes as event-denoting nouns, some lexemes have the ability to be used verbally and nominally with other types of semantic relationships between their verbal and nominal uses (for example **búsà** 'hit' is used nominally with the meaning 'whip'), but this constitutes an unpredictable property of individual lexemes.

## 4. Constructional morphology

### 4.1. The formation of nominal lexemes

#### 4.1.1. Compound nouns

Noun compounding is very productive in Mandinka. In the commonest type of compound nouns, two nominal lexemes are juxtaposed with a modification of their tonal contour known as 'tonal compacity': the tone of the first syllable of the first component spreads up to the boundary between the two components, and the second component takes a H or HL contour (all-H if the last syllable is heavy, H with a L tone on the last syllable if the last syllable is light), irrespective of its lexical tone. Semantically, the first

<sup>3</sup> The absence of so-called 'multiple object constructions' is one of the features that distinguish the Mande languages from most language families included by Greenberg in the Niger-Congo phylum.





(6a) **À yè mòô-lú jàní kó tìy-ôo.**  
 3SG CPL person.D-PL roast like peanut-D  
 ‘He roasted people like peanuts.’

(6b) **À yè mòô-lú tìyà-jàni.**  
 3SG CPL person.D-PL peanut-roast  
 same meaning as (a)  
 lit. ‘He peanut-roasted people.’

The productivity of incorporation is, however, limited. In particular, intransitive verbs resulting from object incorporation, particularly common in languages in which incorporation is very productive, are not common in Mandinka. As illustrated in (7), in Mandinka, object incorporation creating new transitive verbs is less rare.

(7a) **À yè jíy-óo bõŋ.**  
 3SG CPL water-D pour  
 ‘He poured the water.’

(7b) **À yè sàláat-òo jíi-bóŋ.**  
 3SG CPL lettuce-D water-pour  
 ‘He watered the lettuce.’,  
 lit. ‘He water-poured the lettuce.’

#### 4.2.2. Affixal derivation of verbs

Causative verbs can be derived by means of the suffixes **-ndí** and **-rí-ndí**. The suffix **-ndí** is fully productive with intransitive verbs, as in **bòyìndí** ‘make fall’ < **bòyí** ‘fall’, but is also used with some transitive verbs, as in **mìndí** ‘make drink’ < **mĩŋ** ‘drink’. The suffix **-rí-ndí** is exclusively used to causativize transitive verbs, as in **jéeríndì** ‘make see’ < **jé** ‘see’. Interestingly, a causative suffix **-ndi** is also found in Soninke and Songhay, but not in most other Manding languages.

Verbs can be derived from nouns by means of the abstraction suffix **-yáa** ‘acquire/possess the quality of’. The use of **-yáa** to derive abstract nouns is also quite common, but this can be viewed as a mere consequence of the general ability of Mandinka verbs to be used as event-denoting nouns. For example, **téerì** ‘friend’ > **téeríyáa** ‘become friends’ (V) or ‘friendship’ (N).

#### 4.3. The antipassive marker

Mandinka has a suffix **-rí** (with the allomorph **-dírí** in combination with stems ending with a nasal) that operates on valency in such a way that it can be analyzed as an antipassive marker, although it does not straightforwardly convert transitive verbs into intransitive ones, as could be expected from a canonical antipassive marker. The precise status of this suffix in the Mandinka system of word formation is not easy to define, and this is why a special section is devoted to it.

The identification of **-rí** as an antipassive marker follows from the fact that it is found exclusively in combination with transitive verbal lexemes in constructions in which the P argument is left unexpressed, cannot be identified to the referent of a noun phrase included in the same construction, and is interpreted as non-specific. However, **dómò** ‘eat’ is the only verb whose antipassive form **dómórì** can be used as the verbal predicate of finite clauses. With other transitive verbs, the antipassive form can only be used as an antipassive event-denoting noun, as in (8c), or as a stem to which the following suffixes can be attached: the suffix **-tôo** of non-finite verb forms expressing simultaneity, as in (9b), the agent nominalization suffix **-lâa ~ -náa**, as in (10b), the instrument nominalization suffix **-ráŋ ~ -láŋ ~ -dâŋ**, as in (11b), or the causative suffix **-ndí** (see 7.3.3).

- (8a) **Mùs-ôo bé màanì-túw-òo lá.**  
 woman-D LOCCOP rice-pound-D POSTP  
 lit. ‘The woman is at the rice-pound(ing).’  
 → ‘The woman is pounding rice.’

(**màanì** ‘rice’ saturates the P valency of **túu** ‘pound’, and the subject of the copula is identified to the A argument)

- (8b) **Màan-ôo bé tùw-ôo lá.**  
 rice-D LOCCOP pound-D POSTP  
 lit. ‘The rice is at the pound(ing).’  
 → ‘The rice is being pounded.’

(if P is not expressed as a modifier of **túu** ‘pound’, in the absence of the antipassive suffix, the subject of the copula is identified to the P argument)

- (8c) **Mùs-ôo bé tùu-r-ôo lá.**  
 woman-D LOCCOP pound-ANTIP-D POSTP  
 lit. ‘The woman is at the pound(ing).ANTIP.’  
 → ‘The woman is pounding.’

(the antipassive suffix saturates the P valency of **túu** ‘pound’, and the subject of the copula is identified to the A argument)

- (9a) **Ná mùs-óo màanì-tùu-tôo jé.**  
 1SG.CPL woman-D rice-pound-GER see  
 ‘I saw the woman pounding rice.’

- (9b) **Ná mùs-óo tùu-rì-tôo jé.**  
 1SG.CPL woman-D pound-ANTIP-GER see  
 ‘I saw the woman pounding.’

- (10a) **màanì-tùu-lâa**  
 rice-pound-AGNM

‘person who pounds rice’

- (10b) **tùu-rì-láa**  
pound-ANTIP-AGNM  
‘person who pounds’

- (11a) **màani-tùu-ráŋ**  
rice-pound-INSNM  
‘rice-pestle’

- (11b) **tùu-rì-láŋ**  
pound-ANTIP-INSNM  
‘pestle’

## 5. The nominal system

### 5.1. NP structure

The structure of Mandinka noun phrases can be schematized as follows, with two possible positions for determiners:<sup>6</sup>

(GEN) (DET<sub>1</sub>) N (ATTR) (NUM) (DET<sub>2</sub>)

Mandinka has no agreement mechanism between head nouns and their dependents, and more generally, head-dependent relationships within NP’s are not morphologically marked, with the only exception of indirect possession (see 5.5).

### 5.2. Noun classification

Mandinka has nothing similar to the phenomena described cross-linguistically as classifiers, noun classes, or grammatical genders.<sup>7</sup>

### 5.3. Nominal inflection

Strictly speaking, Mandinka nouns do not have inflectional morphology in the sense of morphological variations specific to nominal lexemes heading NP’s. The default determiner **-ò** (see 5.4) and the plural marker **-lú** are written as if they were suffixes, but they are enclitics occupying the DET<sub>2</sub> position in the template put forward in 5.1, which means that their host is not necessarily the head noun. For example, **díndíŋ** ‘child’

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<sup>6</sup> On relative clauses, see 8.1.

<sup>7</sup> Most scholars of Mande languages agree that the total lack of grammaticalized noun classification systems (either in full-fledged or vestigial form) is one of the features that distinguish the Mande languages from most language families included by Greenberg in the Niger-Congo phylum. A different opinion on this issue is however expressed by Vydrin (2006).

combines with the default determiner as **díndín-ò**, but in **díndín màlùbál-òo** ‘the/a shameless child’, the default determiner attaches to the attributive adjective **màlùbálí**.

#### 5.4. The default determiner

Mandinka has an enclitic determiner **-ò** sometimes labeled *definite marker*, but better characterized as a *default determiner*. It originates from the grammaticalization of the demonstrative **wǒo**, and at some stage in the history of Manding, it probably had functions similar to those of the determiners commonly designated as definite articles, but synchronically, in most contexts it carries no particular semantic specification, and must simply be present if the speaker does not consider useful to select a determiner with a more specific meaning. The combination of nouns with the default determiner tends to behave as the default form of nouns, whereas the absence of the default determiner must be licensed by grammatical features of the noun phrase or of the clause in which it is included. In particular, Mandinka speakers invariably use the **ò**-form of nouns for citation.

In plain positive assertive clauses, NP’s normally include the default determiner, unless another determiner licenses its absence. Negative clauses, interrogative clauses, and NP’s including a numeral, constitute the main contexts in which the default determiner still contrasts with its absence and has a clear impact on the meaning of the construction – (12).

(12a) **Ná m̀̀s-òo jé.**  
 1SG.CPL woman-D see  
 ‘I saw the/a woman.’

(12b) \***Ná m̀̀sú jè.**  
 1SG.CPL woman see

(12c) **Ń máŋ m̀̀s-òo jé.**  
 1SG CPL.NEG woman-D see  
 ‘I did not see the woman.’

(12d) **Ń máŋ m̀̀sú jè.**  
 1SG CPL.NEG woman see  
 ‘I did not see any woman.’

The default determiner is an enclitic, but it interacts with its host in a way more typical for affixes than for clitics. Tonally, it adds a final L tone to the tonal melody of its host, unless a final L tone is already present.

Table 3: Interaction of the default determiner with the ending of its host<sup>8</sup>

<b>ŋ</b>	+ o → <b>ŋo</b> or <b>ŋoo</b>	<b>kúlúnj</b> ‘boat’	+ -ò → <b>kúlúnjò</b>
		<b>sũŋ</b> ‘thief’	+ -ò → <b>sũŋò</b>
<b>a</b>	+ o → <b>oo</b>	<b>básà</b> ‘lizard’	+ -ò → <b>bàsò</b>
<b>e</b>	+ o → <b>oo</b>	<b>kèlé</b> ‘war’	+ -ò → <b>kèlò</b>
<b>i</b>	+ o → <b>oo</b>	<b>jàlí</b> ‘griot’	+ -ò → <b>jàlò</b>
<b>o</b>	+ o → <b>oo</b>	<b>bòotó</b> ‘bag’	+ -ò → <b>bòotò</b>
<b>u</b>	+ o → <b>oo</b>	<b>kúlù</b> ‘bone’	+ -ò → <b>kúlò</b>
<b>aa</b>	+ o → <b>aa</b>	<b>kùcáa</b> ‘sorrel’	+ -ò → <b>kùcáa</b>
<b>ee</b>	+ o → <b>ee</b> ~ <b>ewoo</b>	<b>sàatée</b> ‘village’	+ -ò → <b>sàatée</b> ~ <b>sàatéwò</b>
<b>ii</b>	+ o → <b>iyoo</b>	<b>jíi</b> ‘water’	+ -ò → <b>jíyò</b>
<b>oo</b>	+ o → <b>oo</b>	<b>móo</b> ‘person’	+ -ò → <b>mòò</b>
<b>uu</b>	+ o → <b>uwoo</b>	<b>súu</b> ‘house’	+ -ò → <b>súwò</b>

The default determiner has an optional variant -`ŋ originating from the demonstrative **ñĩŋ** and used exclusively in combination with the demonstrative **ñĩŋ**, as in **ñĩŋ mùs-òo** ~ **ñĩŋ mùsû-ŋ** ‘this woman’.

### 5.5. Number

Mandinka has a plural marker **-lú**, which however tends to be omitted if plurality is implied by the context, and an associative plural marker **-ñòlú** (as in **Sũñjátáñòlú** ‘Sundiata and his companions’).

### 5.6. The distributive form of nouns

Mandinka nouns have a distributive form, in which the noun in its bare form is reduplicated, and **wòo** ‘each, every, any, (in negative context) no’ is inserted between the two occurrences of the reduplicated noun, as in **lúnj wòo lúnj** ‘every day’. Interestingly, the same construction with a formally similar marker is found in many West African languages belonging to various families (it is found for example in Mende, a Mande language spoken in Sierra-Leone).

### 5.7. Determiners

In addition to the default determiner, the plural marker and the distributive marker, the grammaticalized expression of the relationship between the lexical meaning of nouns and the reference of the NP’s they head involves the following determiners:

<sup>8</sup> The possibility of a long **o** in the realization of the default determiner with stems ending with **ŋ**, **ee**, **ii**, or **uu**, is not mentioned in the descriptions of Mandinka published so far (including Creissels and Sambou (2013)), but this realization is systematic in the speech of the consultant with whom I checked the examples quoted in this sketch, and I have found the same phenomenon in the speech of some other consultants with whom I had the opportunity to work recently. With stems ending with **ŋ**, the rule in the speech of the consultant is that **o** is long with monosyllabic Cŷŋ stems, short in all other cases.

- **fénjófèn** ‘each, every, any’ and **dóowóddò** ‘no’ (**wôo**-phrases that have grammaticalized as emphatic variants of the distributive marker **wôo** – cf. **fénj** ‘thing’, **dóo** ‘some’)
- **bêe** ‘all’
- **mínjómìnj** (**wôo**-phrase grammaticalized as an emphatic variant of **bêe** ‘all’ – synchronically, **mínj** is exclusively used as a relativizer, but there is comparative evidence that it was originally a demonstrative)
- the demonstratives **ññj** and **wǒ(o)**<sup>9</sup>
- **dóo** ‘some’
- **kótè ~ kóténj** ‘other’
- **jùmâa** ‘which?’
- **mũnj** ‘which kind of?’

Note that **jùmâa** and **mũnj** used pronominally mean ‘who?’ and ‘what?’ respectively.

### 5.8. Personal pronouns

The emphatic vs. non-emphatic contrast distinguishes personal pronouns from all other nominals.

1sg	<b>ńj</b>	emph. <b>ń-tè</b>
2sg	<b>í</b>	emph. <b>í-tè</b>
3sg	<b>à</b>	emph. <b>à-té</b>
1pl	<b>ñj</b>	emph. <b>ñ-tè-lú ~ ñ-tò-lú</b>
2pl	<b>álí ~ álú</b>	emph. <b>álí-tè-lú ~ álú-tò-lú</b>
3pl	<b>ì</b>	emph. <b>ì-tè-lú ~ ì-tò-lú</b>

The 2nd person plural pronoun has two dialectal variants differing in tone : the variant **álí ~ álú** mentioned in the chart above is that found in the speech of the informant with whom I checked the data for this sketch, whereas the variant **àlí ~ àlú** is found in particular in the Sédhiou variety.

As illustrated in (13), the 3rd person pronouns encode no gender or animacy distinction.

(13a) **Kèw-óo yè kó-d-òo díi mùs-òo lá.**  
 man-D CPL money-D give woman-D POSTP  
 ‘The man gave the money to the woman.’

(13b) **À yè à díi à lá.**  
 3SG CPL 3SG give 3SG POSTP  
 ‘He/she gave it/him/her to him/her.’

<sup>9</sup> The possibility of a long **o** in the realization of this demonstrative is not mentioned in the descriptions of Mandinka published so far (including Creissels and Sambou (2013)). In the speech of the consultant, the short form **wǒ** occurs in combination with the plural suffix **-lú** and the focus marker **lè**, and the long form **wǒo** in all other contexts.

As also illustrated in (13), personal pronouns share with other nominals the absence of any morphological encoding of their syntactic role, and do not occupy special positions either. The only differences between emphatic and non-emphatic forms are that non-emphatic forms (a) cannot be focalized, and (b) are proclitics, which prevents them from accessing positions in which they would necessarily be immediately followed by a pause (in particular, they cannot feature as left-dislocated topics, nor can they be used in vocative function).

### 5.9. Attributive adjectives

Attributive adjectives can be defined as noun modifiers that follow their head and cannot be separated from it by any morphological material (which means in particular that, when an attributive adjective is present, the default determiner **-ò** and the plural marker **-lú** follow the adjective). An important property of attributive adjectives (which distinguishes them from numerals and determiners) is that their presence has no incidence on the use of the default determiner. However, in other respects, the lexemes that can be used as attributive adjectives do not constitute a homogeneous set. They differ in their tonal interaction with their head, in their ability to license the elision of their head, in their relationship with nouns and verbs expressing related meanings, and in the way the property they encode can be expressed predicatively.

Some of the forms used as attributive modifiers are synchronically unanalyzable roots (**kóyì** in **nìnsì-kóy-ò** ‘white cow’, **kàndí** in **jíi-kánd-ò** ‘hot water’, etc.), others are derived from verbs (in **tìyá m̀ò-ríŋ-ò** ‘ripe peanut’, **m̀ò-ríŋ** is the resultative form of the verb **m̀ò** ‘ripen’) or compounds (**túlú-ján** ‘long ear’ can also be used as a compound adjective ‘long-eared’, as in **ẁl̀ù túlú-ján-ò** ‘long-eared dog’). A limited number of verbs such as **kóyì** ‘be/become white’ or **kàndí** ‘be/become hot’ are used in predicate function exactly in the same way as the other verbs but also have the ability to modify nouns in their underived form.<sup>10</sup> The other underived attributive adjectives are basically nominal lexemes, but some of them are also productively used as nouns, whereas others are found mainly in attributive function and can be used as nouns in anaphoric contexts only.

Attributive adjectives can take the selective suffix **-máa** indicating that, within the limits of the situation referred to, the referent of the noun is, either the only entity possessing the property expressed by the adjective, or the entity that possesses it at the highest level.

### 5.10. Numerals

In NP’s including a numeral, plural marking is optional in the presence of the default determiner, but impossible in its absence – (14).

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<sup>10</sup> In this respect, Mandinka behaves differently from most other Manding languages, which have special predicative markers used with quality-denoting verbs only. In Mandinka, verbs such as **kóyì** or **kàndí** do not combine with special predicative markers; their combination with completive markers allows for a stative reading, but this property is not restricted to quality-denoting verbs.



(14a) **Díndín fùlá bè túlún-ò lá dándán-ò kónò.**  
 child two LOCCOP play-D POSTP garden-D in  
 ‘Two children are playing in the garden.’

(14b) **Díndín fùl-ôo(-lú) bè túlún-ò lá dándánò kónò.**  
 child two-D(-PL) LOCCOP play-D POSTP garden-D in  
 ‘The two children are playing in the garden.’

Mandinka numeration is decimal. The simplex numerals are **kílin** ‘one’, **fùlá** ‘two’, **sàbá** ‘three’, **náani** ‘four’, **lúulù** ‘five’, **wóorò** ‘six’, **wórowùlá** ‘seven’, **sáyì** ‘eight’, **kònonótò** ‘nine’, **tân** ‘ten’, **mùwân** ‘twenty’, **kémé** ‘hundred’, **wúlì ~ wílì** ‘thousand’ and **mílíyón** ‘million’.

Multiples of ten from 30 to 90 are formed by combining **tân** ‘ten’ with numbers from 3 to 9: **tân sàbá** ‘thirty’, **tân náani** ‘forty’, etc. Multiples of 100 and 1000 are formed in the same way: **kémé fùlá** ‘two hundred’, **wúlì sàbá** ‘three thousand’, etc. The other numerals are decomposed as illustrated below, with **nîŋ** ‘and, with’ marking addition:

13 : **tân níŋ sàbá** (10+3)

28 : **mùwân nîŋ sáyì** (20+8)

46 : **tân náani nîŋ wóorò** (10x4+6)

257 : **kémé fùlá nîŋ tân lúulù nîŋ wórowùlá** (100x2+10x5+7)

Other adnominals referring to quantity include **jámâa ~ jâmâa** ‘much, many’ (cognate with the noun **jámâa** ‘crowd’), **dántân** ‘several’, **jèlú** ‘how much?, how many?’. **Mùŋ ñón** ‘which amount?’ can be decomposed as ‘the equivalent (**ñón**) of what (**mũŋ**)?’. Note also that the diminutive and augmentative suffixes (**-ndín**, **-báa**) may express quantity rather than size, as in **kódí-ndín** ‘a little money’ or **kódí-báa** ‘much money’.

Ordinals are syntactically adjectives. With the exception of **fólóo** ‘first’ (cognate with the verb **fólóo** ‘begin’), they are formed by adding the suffix **-ñján** to cardinal numbers.

### 5.11. The genitive

NP’s in genitive function precede their head. Mandinka has a distinction between direct genitives, simply juxtaposed to their head, and indirect genitives, followed by the postposition **lá** serving as genitival linker. The direct construction is used in particular when the head noun refers to a body part or blood relative of the referent of the genitive (15a-b), whereas the indirect genitival construction is used in particular when the head noun refers to a concrete object that the referent of the genitive has at his/her disposal (15c).

(15a) **kèw-óo kùŋ-ôo**  
 man-D head-D  
 ‘the man’s head’

(15b) **díndín-ó mààmús-òo**  
 child-D grandmother-D  
 ‘the child’s grandmother’

(15c) **kèw-ôo lá kóð-òo**  
 man-D GEN money-D  
 ‘the man’s money’

In comparison with many other languages having two variants of the genitival construction with a similar distribution, it must be noted that, in Mandinka, the direct (or ‘inalienable’) construction is not limited to a small class of relational nouns. Both variants of the genitival construction are productive. The main regularities are that:

- The direct construction is the default construction with inanimate genitives (unless if the genitival relationship is the transposition of a subject-verb relationship); it is obligatory if the genitival relationship is the transposition of an object-verb relationship (regardless of the semantic nature of the object), and is also found with animate genitives if the head noun refers to body parts or kinship relationships.
- The indirect construction is the default construction with animate genitives (unless if the head noun refers to body parts or kinship relationships, or if the genitival relationship is the transposition of an object-verb relationship); it is obligatory if the genitival relationship is the transposition of a subject-verb relationship (regardless of the semantic nature of the subject).

(16) illustrates the particular case of genitival constructions whose head is a verb used nominally: irrespective of the *transitive* vs. *intransitive* distinction, subjects are transposed into indirect genitives, whereas objects are transposed into direct genitive.

(16a) **Ñĩŋ kèw-óo yè díndíŋ-ò-lú dóoyâa kúnùŋ.**  
 DEM man-D CPL child-D-PL scold yesterday  
 ‘This man scolded the children yesterday.’

(16b) **Ñĩŋ kèw-ôo lá díndíŋ-ò-lú dóoyàa mân díyáa ń yè.**  
 DEM man-D GEN child-D-PL scold.D CPL.NEG be\_pleasant 1SG BEN  
 lit. ‘This man’s scold(ing) of children is not pleasant for me.’  
 → ‘I don’t like the way this man scolds children.’

Mandinka does not have specialized possessives, and uses personal pronouns in genitive function exactly in the same way as ordinary NP’s.

### 5.12. Noun phrase co-ordination and the associative construction

The Mandinka **N<sub>1</sub> nĩŋ N<sub>2</sub>** construction (‘associative construction’) occurs in contexts in which the two NP’s linked by **nĩŋ** are interpreted as sharing the same semantic role – Ex (18a). However, contrary to the English construction in which two NP’s are linked by **and**, **N<sub>1</sub> nĩŋ N<sub>2</sub>** is also found in contexts excluding semantic role sharing – (17b-d).

(17a) **Jàl-ôo nĩŋ à lá mùs-óo nǎa-tà.**

griot-D with 3SG GEN woman-D come-CPL  
 ‘The griot and his wife came.’

(17b) **Kèw-óo nîŋ kó-d-óo nǎa-tà.**  
 man-D with money-D come-CPL  
 ‘The man brought money.’

(17c) **Kàmbàan-óo nîŋ bòr-óo nǎa-tà.**  
 boy-D with running-D come-CPL  
 ‘The boy came running.’

(18d) **Súnkút-òo nîŋ kùmbóo nǎa-tà.**  
 girl-D with crying-D come-CPL  
 ‘The girl came crying.’

Consequently, in spite of the fact that **nîŋ N** occurs exclusively in immediate post-nominal position, i.e., in a position where no other type of adposition phrase can occur, **nîŋ** is better analyzed as a comitative preposition assigning the role of ‘companion’ (taken in a very broad sense).

The fact that this construction has only a superficial resemblance with NP coordination as found in European languages is confirmed by the autonomy of its two terms in operations such as focalization – (18), and by its interpretation in negative contexts: in (19), the only term of the construction under the scope of negation is the second one.

(18a) **Í-tè lè nîŋ Àwáa bé kúw-òo táamándì-lá.**  
 2SG-EMPH FOC with Awa LOCCOP matter-D settle-INF  
 ‘YOU will settle the matter with Awa’.

(18b) **Í nîŋ Àwáa lè bé kúw-òo táamándì-lá.**  
 2SG with Awa FOC LOCCOP matter-D settle-INF  
 ‘You will settle the matter WITH AWA.’

(19) **Mòò nîŋ Álà té kèlé nǎo-là.**  
 person-D with God LOCCOP.NEG struggle be\_able-INF  
 ‘Men cannot struggle with God.’

The asymmetric nature of the associative construction is also apparent in the possibility of moving the second term to clause-final position, preceded by a pronoun resuming the first term, which for its part cannot move from the position in which it is assigned a semantic role by the verb – (20).

(20a) **Àlikáal-óo<sub>i</sub> nǎa-tà, à<sub>i</sub> nîŋ à lá mùs-óo.**  
 chief-D come-CPL 3SG with 3SG GEN woman-D  
 ‘The chief came with his wife.’

- (20b) **Súnkút-óo<sub>i</sub> nǎa-tà, à<sub>i</sub> níŋ kùmbôo.**  
 girl-D come-CPL 3SG with crying.D  
 ‘The girl came crying.’

## 6. The verbal system

### 6.1. Verb inflection

In the absence of a predicative marker, the bare verbal lexeme can only be used in imperative positive function – see 6.2.8, or as a kind of infinitive – see 8.2.2. The predicative use of the bare verbal lexeme in combination with predicative markers has already been amply illustrated, and the inventory of the predicative markers with which the bare verbal lexeme can combine will be given in 6.2.

The other forms that constitute verb inflection in the strictest sense of this term are **V-tá** (completive positive in intransitive predication, already illustrated in (2a) and many other examples above) and the following non-finite forms:

- **V-lá** (lá-infinitive, used in combination with the locational copula in predicative marker function – see 6.2 – and in non-finite complementation – see 8.2.2),
- **V-ríŋ** (resultative participle),
- **V-tôo** (a non-finite form expressing simultaneity, designated here as gerundive).

The resultative participle and the gerundive differ in some aspects of their distribution, but both are found in secondary predicate function – (21) and (22).

- (21) **Ì yè kèw-óo tàrá bàrà-mà-ríŋ làaràŋ-ò kâŋ.**  
 3PL CPL man-D find wound-RESULT bed-D on  
 ‘They found the man wounded on the bed.’

- (22) **Súnkút-óo kùmbòo-tóo nǎa-tà.**  
 girl-D cry-GER come-CPL  
 ‘The girl came crying.’

Some Mandinka varieties also have a non-finite form **V-kâŋ** expressing progressive aspect, found exclusively in combination with the locational copula.<sup>11</sup>

Mandinka also has an infinitive marker **kà** (see 8.2.2), but for the same reason as predicative markers (the position of object NP’s between it and the verb), it cannot be analyzed as an inflectional affix.

### 6.2. Predicative markers and verb inflection in independent clauses

In independent assertive or interrogative clauses, with the only exception of the completive positive in intransitive predication (marked by a suffix), a predicative

<sup>11</sup> In the Mandinka varieties that do not have this progressive form, the progressive aspect can only be expressed by means of the periphrasis presented in 7.2.

marker must be present in post-subjectal position. With the exception of **bé/té**, also used in non-verbal predication as a locational copula (see 7.2), the predicative markers are grammatical words specialized in this function. Specialized predicative markers combine with the bare form of the verb, whereas the locational copula in predicative marker function requires suffixed forms of the verb.

### 6.2.1. *The completive*

- positive: S **yé**<sup>12</sup> O V (X) (transitive) / S V-**tá** (X) (intransitive)
- negative: S **mân**<sup>13</sup> (O) V (X)

In general, the predicative markers labeled ‘completive’ and the suffix **-tá** have the same perfect or narrative readings as French ‘passé composé’ or Latin ‘perfect’, but Mandinka has a relatively important class of verbs with which the completive markers may have a stative reading. This class includes among others **lón** ‘know’, **sòtó** ‘get/have’, and quality-denoting verbs such as **kàndí** ‘be hot’, **bétéyáa** ‘be good’, etc. With some of these verbs, the stative reading is the only possible reading of completive markers, whereas with some others, the completive markers are ambiguous between a stative reading and a narrative/perfect reading.

### 6.2.2. *The subjunctive*

- positive: S **yè**<sup>14</sup> (O) V (X)
- negative: S **kánà** (O) V (X)

The subjunctive occurs in independent clauses with a jussive function.

### 6.2.3. *The potential*

- positive: S **sì** ~ **sè** (O) V (X)

The potential has no negative counterpart. **Sì** and **sè** are dialectal variants.

### 6.2.4. *The incompletive*

- positive: S **kà** (O) V (X)
- negative : S **búkà** (O) V (X)

The predicative markers labeled ‘incompletive’ are mainly used in habitual contexts. **Kà** has the dialectal variants **kàrí** and **kàlí**, and **búkà** is also found as **múkà** or **bíkà** in some Mandinka varieties.

<sup>12</sup> **Ŋ** (1SG) + **yè** (CPL) and **ŋ** (1PL) + **yè** (CPL) are realized **ŋá** and **ŋà** respectively.

<sup>13</sup> In normal or rapid speech, **mân** CPL.NEG immediately followed by a personal pronoun or by the demonstrative **wóo** loses its final **ŋ**. This alternation is most of the time not indicated in written texts, and the transcription used here follows this convention.

<sup>14</sup> **yé** SUBJ fuses with 1st person pronouns exactly like **yé** CPL.

### 6.2.5. *The resultative*

- positive: S **bé** V-**ríŋ** (X)
- negative: S **té** V-**ríŋ** (X)

The verb form labeled ‘resultative’ can only be used intransitively; with transitive verbs, it is interpreted as patient-oriented.

### 6.2.6. *The future*

- positive: S **bé** (O) V-**lá** (X)
- negative: S **té** (O) V-**lá** (X)

### 6.2.7. *The progressive*

- positive: S **bé** (O) V-**kâŋ** (X)
- negative: S **té** (O) V-**kâŋ** (X)

As already mentioned, this progressive form exists in some Mandinka varieties only.

### 6.2.8. *The imperative*

As illustrated in (23), the imperative shares the negative predicative marker **kánà** with the subjunctive, but no predicative marker occurs in the imperative positive. The other particularity of the imperative is the zero coding of 2nd person singular.

(23a) **Díndíŋ-ò yè táa kàràmbúŋ-ò tó!**  
 child-D SUBJ go school-D LOC  
 ‘Let the child go to school!’

(23b) **Táa kàràmbúŋ-ò tó!**  
 go school-D LOC  
 ‘Go (sg.) to school!’

(23c) **Álí táa kàràmbúŋ-ò tó!**  
 2PL go school-D LOC  
 ‘Go (pl.) to school!’

(23d) **Kánà táa kàràmbúŋ-ò tó!**  
 SUBJ.NEG go school-D LOC  
 ‘Don’t go (sg.) to school!’

- (23a) **Álí kánà táa kàràmbúŋ-ò tó!**  
 2PL SUBJ.NEG go school-D LOC  
 ‘Don’t go (pl.) to school!’

### 6.2.9. Present vs. past

Predicative markers are not sensitive to the *present* vs. *past* distinction. A past marker **nũŋ** (cognate with the adverb **núntò** ‘formerly’) may be found in post-verbal or clause-final position – (24a), but it is normally omitted if the context implies past reference, as in (24b).

- (24a) **Kód-òo bé sàarêe-ríŋ nũŋ bàŋk-òo kónò lè.**  
 money-D LOCCOP bury-RESULT PST ground-D in FOC  
 ‘The money was buried in the ground.’

- (24b) **Wõo tùm-òo, ñ kà ñòò fíyì báaké.**  
 DEM time-D 1PL INCL millet.D sow much  
 ‘Formerly, we sowed millet very much.’

## 6.3. Auxiliarization

In some biverbal constructions, the higher verb does not contribute to the representation of an event involving participants, and serves as an auxiliary expressing the temporal, aspectual, or modal specification of the dependent verb. For example, in (25), **bòyí** ‘fall’ functions as an inchoative auxiliary.

- (25) **Ì bòyí-tá dòokúw-òo ké-là.**  
 3PL fall-CPL work-D do-INF  
 ‘They started working.’

## 7. The clause

### 7.1. Verbal predication

On verbal predication, see 3.1 and 6.2.

### 7.2. Non-verbal predication

Morphologically unmarked predication is quite marginal in Mandinka. As illustrated in (26), Mandinka has two copulas, **bé** (locational) and **mú** (equative), which differ from verbs in that copular clauses do not include the predicative markers that are obligatory elements of independent verbal clauses. The structure of copular clauses can be schematized as S COP X, since the term that precedes the copula and the term that follows it behave in all respects like subjects and obliques in verbal predication.

(26a) **Díndíŋ-ò bé búŋ-ò kónò.**

child-D LOCCOP house-D in  
S COP X

‘The child is in the house.’

(26b) **À-té lè mú màns-ôo tí.**

3SG-EMPH FOC EQCOP king-D POSTP  
S COP X

‘He is the king.’

The locative copula **bé** (negative: **té**)<sup>15</sup> is typically followed by postpositional phrases, in clauses expressing location, as in (26a) above. It is also found in a progressive periphrasis in combination with an NP headed by a verb used as an event noun – (27), and can be used to express possessive predication, if its complement is marked by the postposition **búlù** ‘in the personal sphere of’, ‘under the responsibility of’. As illustrated in (28), this expression of predicative possession is in competition with the transitive verb **sòtó** ‘get/have’.

(27a) **Mùs-ôo-lú bé kèl-ôo lá.**

woman-D-PL LOCCOP struggle-D POSTP  
‘The women are struggling.’

(27b) **Mùs-ôo bé tábí-r-òo lá.**

woman-D LOCCOP cook-ANTIP-D POSTP  
‘The woman is doing the cooking.’

(27c) **Mùs-ôo bé sùbù-táb-òo lá.**

woman-D LOCCOP meat-cook-D POSTP  
‘The woman is cooking the meat.’

(28a) **Wòt-ôo bé ń búlù.**

car-D LOCCOP 1SG PSPH  
‘I have a car.’

(28b) **Ŋá wòt-óo sòtó.**

1SG.CPL car-D get/have  
‘I have a car.’ or ‘I got a car.’

The construction headed by the equative copula **mú** (negative: **té** or **ńtèn**) can be schematized as follows:<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Variants **bí** and **tí** can be found in contact with the following words: **ǰǰ** ‘here’, **ǰe** ‘there’, **táa** ‘go’, or **nǎa** ‘come’.

<sup>16</sup> **Tí** is a postposition whose uses include the expression of functive and transformative meanings (act *as an N*, transform something *into N*). The use of adpositions in identificational predication, rather uncommon in the languages of the world, is common among Mande languages.



N<sub>1</sub> **mú** (N<sub>2</sub> **tí**)

Assertive positive clauses headed by **mú** must obligatorily include the focus marker **lè**. The variant with a single core NP in N<sub>1</sub> position expresses the identification of an entity suggested by the context. In the construction with two core NP's, N<sub>2</sub> is the unmarked position for the term expressing the identification, but in assertive positive clauses, the term expressing the identification can also occupy the N<sub>1</sub> position, the obligatory use of the focus marker preventing ambiguity.

(29a) **À-té** **lè** **mú**.  
3SG-EMPH FOC EQCOP  
 'It is him.'

(29b) **Màns-óo** **lè** **mú**.  
king-D FOC EQCOP  
 'He is the/a king.'

(29c) **À-té** **lè** **mú** **màns-óo** **tí**.  
3SG-EMPH FOC EQCOP king-D POSTP  
 'HE is the king.'

= **Màns-óo** **mú** **à-té** **lè** **tí**.  
king-D EQCOP 3SG-EMPH FOC POSTP

(29d) **À** **mú** **màns-óo** **lè** **tí**.  
3SG EQCOP king-D FOC POSTP  
 'He is THE KING.'

= **Màns-óo** **lè** **mú** **à** **tí**.  
king-D FOC EQCOP 3SG POSTP

When in contact, **lè** and **mú** may fuse into **lǒŋ**.

### 7.3. Verbal valency

#### 7.3.1. Uncoded valency alternations

In independent assertive or interrogative clauses, the subject position can never be left empty. By contrast, it is always possible to find transitive verbs in constructions including no object, but such constructions are overtly marked as intransitive (since the completive positive marker is not **yè**, but **-tá**). In other words, Mandinka does not have strictly transitive verbs. However, the semantic implications of the intransitive use of verbs also found in transitive constructions are not identical for all verbs.

There are about 30 A-labile verbs that can be used transitively or intransitively without any change in the semantic role assigned to their subject, as in (30).

(30a) **Sùl-óo sèlé-tà yír-òo sántò.**  
 monkey-D climb-CPL tree-D on\_top  
 ‘The monkey climbed up the tree.’

(30b) **Ì búkà yír-óo sèlé à jàmb-òo lá.**  
 3PL INCPL.NEG tree-D climb 3SG leave-D POSTP  
 ‘One does not climb a tree by the leaves.’

Apart from this restricted set of A-labile verbs, the verbs found in transitive constructions cannot be used intransitively with a subject fulfilling the same semantic role as the subject of the transitive construction. The strategy most commonly used to circumvent this impossibility is the antipassive periphrasis illustrated in (8c), reproduced here as (31).

(31) **Mùs-òo bé tùu-r-òo lá.**  
 woman-D LOCCOP pound-ANTIP-D POSTP  
 lit. ‘The woman is at the pound(ing).ANTIP.’  
 → ‘The woman is pounding.’

The general rule is that the verbs that can be found in transitive constructions can also be found in intransitive constructions in which the subject is assigned a semantic role similar to that assigned to the object in the transitive use of the same verb (P-lability). Two cases must be distinguished.

(32) illustrates the *causative / anticausative alternation*: the referent of the subject of the intransitive construction is presented as undergoing the same process as the object of the transitive construction, but without any hint at a possible external cause.

(32a) **Máŋk-óo jòlôn-tá bàŋk-òo tó.**  
 mango-D fall/drop-CPL ground-D LOC  
 ‘The mango fell to the ground.’

(32b) **Kèw-óo yè mùr-óo jòlónj bàŋk-òo tó.**  
 man-D CPL knife-D fall/drop ground-D LOC  
 ‘The man dropped the knife to the ground.’

The productivity of this alternation is limited not only by the possibility to conceive events as more or less spontaneous processes affecting a single participant, but also by the existence of a causative derivation encoding the same semantic relationship between intransitive and transitive constructions.

In the *active / passive alternation*, illustrated in (33), the intransitive construction is interpreted as implying the same participants as the transitive construction, but the subject encodes the same participant as the object of the transitive construction, whereas the participant encoded as the subject of the transitive construction is left unexpressed.

(33a) **Kèw-óo yè wòt-ôo dádâa.**  
 man-D CPL car-D repair  
 ‘The man has repaired the car.’

(33b) **Wòt-ôo dádâa-tá.**  
 car-D repair-CPL  
 ‘The car has been repaired.’

This alternation is fully productive, and the passive reading of intransitive clauses involved in this alternation is not bound to any particular condition on aspect, mood, or referentiality. However, in Mandinka, in contrast to other Manding varieties, the passive construction of transitive verbs cannot include an oblique representing the participant encoded as the subject of the transitive construction (agent phrase).

As illustrated in (34), some trivalent verbs have two alternative constructions differing in the selection of the participants encoded as object or oblique.

(34a) **Kèw-óo yè bàtáay-òo sáfée à díŋ-ò yé.**  
 man-D CPL letter-D write 3SG son-D BEN  
 ‘The man wrote a letter to his son.’

(34b) **Kèw-óo yè à díŋ-ò sáfée bàtáay-òo lá.**  
 man-D CPL 3SG son-D write letter-D POSTP  
 same meaning as (a)

**Tú** ‘remain’ is the only Mandinka verb that can be found in a construction (illustrated in (35b)) in which the argument canonically encoded as the subject is encoded as an oblique (optionally marked by the postposition **lá**), and the subject slot is occupied by an expletive third person singular pronoun.

(35a) **Díndíŋ-ò-lú tú-tà súw-òo kónò.**  
 child-D-PL remain-CPL house-D in  
 ‘The children remained at home.’

(35b) **À tú-tà díndíŋ-ò-lú là.**  
 3SG remain-CPL house-D POSTP  
 ‘There remained the children.’

### 7.3.2. *The middle construction, reflexivization, and reciprocalization*

Mandinka has a variant of the transitive construction, called *middle construction* in Creissels and Sambou (2013), in which the O slot is occupied by a morpheme **ŋ** (with 1st person subjects) or **í** (with 2nd or 3rd person subjects). This morpheme was originally a reflexive pronoun. It is conventionally glossed REFL, but synchronically, the middle construction is available for certain verbs only, and it does not always express reflexivization. The reflexive use of the middle construction is illustrated in (36), but with some verbs the middle construction is functionally an antipassive construction in

which the P argument of the transitive verb is left unexpressed or demoted to oblique – (37).

(36a) **Mùs-óo yè dínđín-ó kúu.**  
 woman-D CPL child-D wash  
 ‘The woman washed the child.’

(36b) **Mùs-óo yè í kúu.**  
 woman-D CPL REFL wash  
 ‘The woman washed (herself).’

(37a) **Wùl-óo yè jíy-óo mĩŋ.**  
 dog-D CPL water-D drink  
 ‘The dog drank the water.’

(37b) **Wùl-óo yè í mĩŋ (jíy-òo lá).**  
 dog-D CPL REFL drink water-D POSTP  
 ‘The dog drank (the water).’

Reflexivization is productively encoded by means of intensive pronouns formed by combining *fãŋ* ~ *fãŋò* ‘self’ with personal pronouns – (38), and reciprocity is expressed by means of the reciprocal pronoun *ńôo* ~ *ńôŋ* – (39).

(38a) **Ŋá dèndik-ôo kára í yè.**  
 1SG.CPL dress-D sew 2SG BEN  
 ‘I sewed a dress for you.’

(38b) **Ŋá dèndik-ôo kára ń fãŋò yé.**  
 1SG.CPL dress-D sew 1SG self BEN  
 ‘I sewed a dress for myself.’

(39a) **Dínđín-ò yè kèebáa kòntónŋ.**  
 child-D CPL old\_man.D greet  
 ‘The child greeted the old man.’

(39b) **Mòô-lú yè ńôo kòntónŋ.**  
 person.D-PL CPL RECIP greet  
 ‘The people greeted each other’

### 7.3.3. Causative derivation

Causative is the only valency-changing operation encoded by derivational affixes. It is particularly productive with intransitive verbs, for which the causative suffix is **-ndí** – (40).

(40a) **Díndíŋ-ò bé sŷi-lá bèr-òo kâŋ.**  
 child-D LOCCOP sit-INF stone-D on  
 ‘The child will sit on a stone.’

(40b) **Kèw-òo bé díndíŋ-ò sŷi-ndí-lá bèr-òo kâŋ.**  
 man-D LOCCOP child-D sit-CAUS-INF stone-D on  
 ‘The man will make the child sit on a stone.’

The causativization of transitive constructions is less productive. A limited number of transitive verbs can be causativized by the same suffix **-ndí** as intransitive verbs – (41), but most transitive verbs are causativized by the complex suffix **-(dí)rŷi-ndí**, whose first part can be analyzed as the antipassive marker – (42). The presence of the antipassive marker is consistent with the fact that the causativization of transitive constructions implies demotion of the initial object (encoded as an oblique).

(41a) **Kàmbàan-òo yè wòt-òo nŷŋ.**  
 boy-D CPL car-D learn  
 ‘The boy learnt driving.’

(41b) **Kèw-òo yè kàmbàan-òo nŷi-ndí wòt-òo lá.**  
 man-D CPL boy-D learn-CAUS car-D POSTP  
 ‘The man taught the boy driving.’

(42a) **Ná kŷitáab-òo jóo.**  
 1SG.CPL book-D pay  
 ‘I paid for the book.’

(42b) **Ì yè ŷ jóo-rŷi-ndí kŷitáab-òo lá.**  
 3PL CPL 1SG pay-ANTIP-CAUS book-D POSTP  
 ‘They made me pay for the book.’

#### 7.4. Focalization

NP’s are focalized by the adjunction of the focus marker **lè** on their right edge, without any other change in the construction – (43b-d). The focus marker may also occur at the end of the verb phrase (either in clause-final position, or followed by right-dislocated constituents in ‘afterthought’ or ‘antitopic’ function), with a meaning of emphatic assertion – (43e).

(43a) **Kèw-òo yè kòd-òo díi mùs-òo lá.**  
 man-D CPL money-D give woman-D POSTP  
 ‘The man gave the money to the woman.’

(43b) **Kèw-óo lè yè kó-d-òo díí mùs-òo lá.**  
 man-D FOC CPL money-D give woman-D POSTP  
 ‘THE MAN gave the money to the woman.’

(43c) **Kèw-óo yè kó-d-òo lè díí mùs-òo lá.**  
 man-D CPL money-D FOC give woman-D POSTP  
 ‘The man gave THE MONEY to the woman.’

(43d) **Kèw-óo yè kó-d-òo díí mùs-óo lè lá.**  
 man-D CPL money-D give woman-D FOC POSTP  
 ‘The man gave the money to THE WOMAN.’

(43e) **Kèw-óo yè kó-d-òo díí mùs-òo lá lè.**  
 man-D CPL money-D give woman-D POSTP FOC  
 ‘The man DID give the money to the woman.’

## 7.5. Questioning

Yes/no-questions do not differ from assertive clauses in their construction. Questioning is signaled either by a rising intonation at the end of the clause, or by the addition of an interrogative particle in clause-initial or clause-final position. The clause-final particle **bǎŋ** illustrated in (44) is particularly frequent.

(44) **Kèw-óo yè kó-d-òo díí mùs-òo lá bǎŋ?**  
 man-D CPL money-D give woman-D POSTP Q  
 ‘Did the man give the money to the woman?’

In wh-questions, interrogative phrases occupy the same position as the corresponding phrases in assertive clauses, and optionally combine with the focus marker – (45).

(45) **Kèw-óo yè kó-d-òo díí jùmáa (lè) lá?**  
 man-D CPL money-D give who FOC POSTP  
 ‘Whom did the man give the money to?’

Mandinka has the following inventory of interrogative words: **jùmáa** ‘who?’ or ‘which one?’, **mǔŋ** ‘what?’ or ‘which kind of?’, **mùmmáa** ‘in the form of what?’, **díí** ‘how?’, **mìntóo** ~ **mùntóo** ‘where?’, **mìntòŋká** ~ **mùntòŋká** ‘person from where?’, **jèlú** ~ **jòlú** ‘how much/many?’, **jèlùñjáj** ~ **jòlùñjáj** ‘at which rank?’.

Note that ‘why?’ can be expressed by combining **mǔŋ** ‘what?’ with a postposition, but is more commonly expressed periphrastically as **Mǔŋ nè yè à tínnà ...**, literally ‘What caused that ...?’

## 8. Complex constructions

### 8.1. Relativization

In the most common relativization strategy, the relative clause is not embedded in the matrix clause. It may precede or follow it, but the order ‘relative clause – matrix clause’ is much more frequent than the order ‘matrix clause – relative clause’. Within the relative clause, the relativizer **mîŋ** (dialectal variants: **mêŋ**, **mûŋ**) occupies the position of the relativized NP, either alone or combined with the noun that constitutes the semantic head of the relative clause – (46).<sup>17</sup>

- (46a) **Mùs-óo yè kèw-ôo lá kó-d-óo tǎa.**  
 woman-D CPL man-D GEN money-D take  
 ‘The woman took the man’s money.’
- (46b) **mùs-ôo mîŋ yè kèw-ôo lá kó-d-óo tǎa.**  
 woman-D REL CPL man-D GEN money-D take  
 ‘the woman who took the man’s money’
- (46c) **mîŋ yè kèw-ôo lá kó-d-óo tǎa.**  
 REL CPL man-D GEN money-D take  
 ‘the one who took the man’s money’
- (46d) **mùs-óo yè kèw-ôo mîŋ ná kó-d-óo tǎa.**  
 woman-D CPL man-D REL GEN money-D take  
 ‘the man whose money was taken by the woman’
- (46e) **mùs-óo yè mîŋ ná kó-d-óo tǎa.**  
 woman-D CPL REL GEN money-D take  
 ‘the one whose money was taken by the woman’
- (46f) **mùs-óo yè kó-d-òo mîŋ tǎa.**  
 woman-D CPL money-D REL take  
 ‘the money that the woman took’
- (46g) **mùs-óo yè mîŋ tǎa.**  
 woman-D CPL REL take  
 ‘the one that the woman took’, ‘what the woman took’

As illustrated in (47), the relativized NP is resumed in the matrix clause by a pronoun.

- (47a) [**Mùs-óo yè kèw-ôo<sub>i</sub> mîŋ ná kó-d-óo tǎa**], **í níŋ wóo<sub>i</sub> bèn-tà.**  
 woman-D CPL man-D REL GEN money-D take 1SG with DEM meet-CPL  
 ‘I met the man whose money was taken by the woman.’  
 lit. something like ‘The woman took which man’s money, I met that one.’

<sup>17</sup> Comparative data show that the relativizer **mîŋ** originates from a demonstrative.

- (47b) [Mùs-ò<sub>i</sub> mîŋ yè kèw-ò<sub>i</sub> lá kòd-ó<sub>i</sub> tǎa], ń níŋ wǒ<sub>i</sub> bèn-tà  
 woman-D REL CPL man-D GEN money-D take 1SG with DEM meet-CPL  
 ‘I met the woman who took the man’s money.’  
 lit. something like ‘Which woman took the man’s money, I met that one.’

Two other relativization strategies are found in Mandinka. In the first type, the relative clause precedes the matrix clause and is resumed by a pronoun, like in canonical relativization, but the head noun is found on the left edge of the relative clause, immediately followed by the relativizer and resumed by a pronoun occupying the position of the relativized NP – (48b), to be compared with the canonical construction in (48a).

- (48a) [Í bè súw-ò<sub>i</sub> mîŋ dâa tó], wǒ<sub>i</sub> lè mú ń yàâ tí  
 2SG LOCCOP house-D REL door.D LOC DEM FOC EQCOP 1SG home.D POSTP  
 ‘The house at whose door you are is my home.’

- (48b) [Súw-ò<sub>i</sub> mîŋ í bè à<sub>i</sub> dâa tó],  
 house-D REL 2SG LOCCOP 3SG door.D LOC

wǒ<sub>i</sub> lè mú ń yàâ tí.  
 DEM FOC EQCOP 1SG home.D POSTP  
 same meaning as (48a)

In the second type of non-canonical relatives, the internal structure of the relative clause is identical to that of canonical relatives, but it occurs as a constituent of the matrix clause. However, this is only possible if the relative clause occupies a peripheral position (either the subject position at the beginning of the clause, as in (49), or an oblique position at the end of the clause).

- (49) [Sââ mîŋ mú súŋkút-ó<sub>i</sub> kèemáa tì] múrù-tá nàŋ.  
 snake.D REL EQCOP girl-D husband POSTP come\_back-CPL CTRP  
 ‘The snake who was the girl’s husband came back.’

## 8.2. Complementation

### 8.2.1. Finite complementation involving the quotative kó

The quotative **kó** is an invariable word used to introduce reported speech in a construction in which it is followed by a quotation and preceded by an NP representing the person to which the quotation is attributed. A postpositional phrase representing the addressee may be inserted between **kó** and the quotation, in which case the quotative is optionally repeated – (50). The quotation may be direct or indirect, and there is no logophoricity marking.

- (50) Kèw-ò<sub>i</sub> kó dídín-ò yé (kò) “ń kòntón!”  
 man-D QUOT child-D BEN QUOT 1SG greet



‘The man told the child to greet him.’

In the construction illustrated in (51), a finite clause is introduced by **kó** in complementizer function. The complement clause is not embedded within the matrix clause. It follows the matrix clause, within which it is represented by a cataphoric pronoun occupying the position that corresponds to its role in the argument structure of the main verb (in this example, the object position between the predicative marker and the verb).

- (51) **Ná à lón [kò à<sub>i</sub> bé dòokúw-óo sòtó-là ń yè]<sub>i</sub>**  
 1SG.CPL 3SG know QUOT 3SG LOCCOP work-D get-INF 1SG BEN  
 ‘I know that he will get work for me.’

### 8.2.2. Other types of finite complementation

As illustrated in (52), no complementizer is involved in the complementation of modal verbs by subjunctive clauses.

- (52) **Ŋ mán sòn í yè táa.**  
 1SG CPL.NEG agree 2SG SUBJ go  
 ‘I don’t agree that you should go.’

With causation verbs, no complementizer is used, but the complement clause is anticipated by a cataphoric pronoun in object position.

- (53) **Músáa lè yè à<sub>i</sub> sáabù [ń mán nǎa. ]<sub>i</sub>**  
 Moussa FOC agree 3SG cause 1SG CPL.NEG come  
 ‘It is because of Moussa that I did not come.’  
 lit. ‘It is Moussa who caused that I did not come.’

As illustrated in (54), indirect yes/no questions are introduced by **fó**, also used as an interrogative particle in independent interrogative clauses.

- (54) **À ñìnìnkáa fó à yè kó-d-óo sòtó.**  
 3SG ask Q 3SG CPL money-D have  
 ‘Ask him whether he has money.’

### 8.2.3. Non-finite complementation

The following three types of non-finite clauses are found in control constructions in which their unexpressed subject is identified to the subject of the higher verb:

- (O) V (X) - (55)
- **kà** (O) V (X) - (56)
- (O) V-**lá** (X) - (57)

Their distribution depends on the higher verb. The first one ('bare infinitive') is licensed by a very limited set of verbs, whereas the other two are very productive (and often interchangeable).

(55) **Ŋ năa-tá [kèebáa kòntón].**

1SG come-CPL oldman.D greet  
'I came to greet the oldman.'

(56) **Ŋ fánkà-tá [kód-óo sèyíndí-là].**

1SG do\_one's\_best-CPL money-D give\_back-INF  
'I did my best to give the money back.'

(57) **Ŋ làfí-tá [kà nŋ súnkút-òo fútúu].**

1SG want-CPL INF DEM girl-D marry  
'I want to marry this girl.'

Note that, in addition to its use in complementation, **kà** (O) V (X) also serves for verb phrase topicalization – (58)

(58) **[Kà fúlá-kán-ó kàrán]<sub>i</sub>, wóo<sub>i</sub> kòlèyáa-tá baa ké lè.**

INF Fula-language-D learn DEM be\_difficult-CPL very FOC  
'Learning Fula is very difficult.'

### 8.3. Adverbial subordination

In addition to cases of adverbial subordination that can be analyzed as deriving from relativization, Mandinka has a large array of conjunctions (either specialized conjunctions or grammatical words having other possible functions) occurring on the left edge of adverbial clauses whose internal structure is identical to that of independent clauses: **(kà)bírín** 'when, since', **nŋ** 'if', **jànnŋ** 'before', etc. – (59) to (61).

(59) **Sùn-òo cáawù-tá lè kàbírín pòlís-òo-lú năa-tà.**

thief-D panic-CPL FOC when policeman-D-PL come-CPL  
'The thief panicked when the policemen came.'

(60) **Jànnŋ kèw-òo bé táa-là, à sì dómó-r-òo ké.**

before man-D LOCCOP leave-INF 3SG POT eat-ANTIP-D do  
'The man should eat before leaving.'  
lit. 'Before the man leaves, he should eat.'

(61) **Nŋ à yè ñ báyíndì, à bé ñ sòtó-là lè.**

if 3SG CPL 1PL chase 3SG LOCCOP 1PL get-INF FOC  
'If he chases us, he will catch us.'

Some other conjunctions occur at the right edge of adverbial clauses, as in (62). Other adverbial subordination strategies found in Mandinka are the use of a special

predicative marker found exclusively in dependent clauses, as in (63), and the use of non-finite verb forms as in (64).

(62) **À fàamáa yè à háyínâŋ dóróŋ, à yè à súutéé.**  
 3SG father CPL 3SG see as\_soon\_as 3SG CPL 3SG recognize  
 ‘As soon as his father saw him, he recognized him.’

(63) **Kèw-ôo námínâŋ táa, à sî dómó-r-ò ké.**  
 man-D before leave 3SG POT eat-ANTIP-D do  
 ‘Before the man leaves, he should eat.’

(64) **Màanêe-lú bôo-ríŋ-ó Kàabú, ì nǎa-tá sǐi jǎŋ.**  
 Maanee.D-PL leave-RESULT-D Kaabu 3PL come-ACP settle here  
 ‘After the Maanees left the Kaabu, they settled here.’

#### 8.4. Clause co-ordination

Mandinka does not have a coordinating conjunction available to join clauses with an additive meaning similar to that expressed by **and** in English. The additive co-ordination of clauses can be expressed by juxtaposition, as in (65a), or by a clause-chaining construction formally identical to (and ambiguous with) adverbial subordination expressing purpose, with the non-initial clauses in the **kà**-infinitive (65b) or in the subjunctive (65c).

(65a) **Díndíŋ-ò cípòn-tá yír-ò sántò à táa-tà.**  
 child-D jump-CPL tree-D top 3SG go-CPL  
 ‘The child jumped from the tree and went away.’  
 lit. ‘The child jumped from the tree he went away.’

(65b) **Díndíŋ-ò cípòn-tá yír-ò sántò kà táa.**  
 child-D jump-CPL tree-D top INF go  
 1. ‘The child jumped from the tree and went away.’  
 2. ‘The child jumped from the tree in order to go away.’  
 lit. ‘The child jumped from the tree to go away.’

(65c) **Díndíŋ-ò cípòn-tá yír-ò sántò à yè táa.**  
 child-D jump-CPL tree-D top 3SG SUBJ go  
 1. ‘The child jumped from the tree and went away.’  
 2. ‘The child jumped from the tree in order to go away.’  
 lit. ‘The child jumped from the tree he go.SUBJ away.’

#### Abbreviations

A: agent, AGNM: agent nominalization, ANTIP: antipassive, ATTR: attributive modifier, BEN: benefactive, C: consonant, CAUS: causative, COP: copula, CPL: completive, D:

default determiner, DEM: demonstrative, DET: determiner, EMPH: emphatic, EQCOP: equative copula, FOC: focalization, GEN: genitive, GER: gerundive, H: high (tone), INCPL: incomplete, INF: infinitive, INSNM; instrument nominalization, L: low (tone), LOC: locative, LOCCOP: locational copula, N: noun, NEG: negative, NP: noun phrase, NUM: numeral, O: object, P: patient, PM: predicative marker, PL: plural, POSTP: postposition,<sup>18</sup> POT: potential, PROG: progressive, PSPH: 'in the personal sphere of', PST: past, Q: interrogative, QUOT: quotative, RECIP: reciprocal, REFL: reflexive, REL: relativizer, RESULT: resultative, S: subject, SG: singular, SUBJ: subjunctive, V: vowel, or verb, X: oblique.

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<sup>18</sup> The generic gloss POSTP is used for multifunction postpositions with a range of uses that cannot be analyzed straightforwardly as extensions of some basic meaning.