

"I di an samba, huh?"

A Maninka Study Guide
for
Guinea

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Introduction

First of all, we want to say that not everything in this study guide is perfect. We hold no illusions that this is the definitive guide but is simply a brain spillage of two guys who had nothing better to do with their time than to try to catalog the entire maninka language.

Seriously, we do hope that this provides an insight to the language from an english speaker's perspective. This study guide is intended to supplement training, and not be a stand-alone study guide. It will also serve as a useful reference at site. We don't want you to have to learn all this stuff the hard way, as we had to do in our villages.

We redefined a few maninka rules of spelling (for those few that exist), just because it's often difficult for an english speaker to hear or pronounce certain sounds. In maninka, there are two "o" sounds and two "e" sounds, all which can be expressed in written french but not in english. The "o" sounds are written as "o" and "ö." The two "e" sounds are written as "é" and "è." In this guide, we have taken liberty to reduce the writing to "o" and "e." We have assumed that in training, you have learned pronunciation.

We have also used several abbreviations to represent parts of speech. These are: S for "subject"; V for "verb"; VR for "verb radical" (note that a verb radical is the verb minus the "ka"); INF for "verb infinitive"; DO for "direct object"; and IO for "indirect object."

Remember that maninka is a language, and there is a lot of vocabulary, most of which is not in this guide, and most of which changes depending on region. It is not easy to learn, but is far from impossible. With some patience, and time (which you will have plenty of), you too can become conversant in maninka. Elders and petites will become very important to you in the learning process.

Also, when learning maninka, let people close to you know that you want to learn and need to be corrected. Choose one or two "mentors" to whom you direct the majority of your questions; villagers are not used to answering the types of questions you will be asking. Mentors, however, will pick up on how you learn and your thought process, and in this way, will better help you.

We want to thank the communities of Tiro, Faranah and Gberedou-Banarama, Kankan for supporting us throughout our 2 years in Guinea. Without their help, kindness to strangers, and their dealing with our endless series of stupid questions, this book would not have been possible. They will serve as reminders to us on how to act when we meet strangers who are trying to learn english.

Finally, we want to wish you good luck in your quest to become maninka speakers. It is not an easy thing to do but the learning process can be rewarding as well as frustrating. Remember, as somebody once said, "a language must be murdered before it can be

mastered." Don't lose heart, even when the maninkas laugh at you (they aren't laughing at you, they're laughing with you); and before too long you'll be able to silence the laughter with a few choice words.

Aaron Sharghi & Tony Gemignani

Greetings & Simple Phrases

Hello Baby! Greetings

Greetings are extremely important in the maninka culture. It is considered impolite not to greet a person. This is why it is essential to know the greetings well. Here is a list of most maninka greeting phrases.

You will notice that the lists below are divided into sections on when to use them. Some phrases are used only in the morning, others only in the afternoon and evening, and some can be used at all times of the day.

Morning (Sunrise - Noon)

Opening Greeting

I ni sooma - Good morning
(pronounced ii sooma)

Questions

Tana ma si? - Did you sleep without evil?

Here sira? - Did you sleep in peace?

I kende sira? - Did you sleep in health?

I sen nani sira? - Did you sleep with four legs?

General Responses

(See "General Responses" in "Anytime" section below)

Day and Evening (Not morning)

Note: These opening greetings are used seldomly, or not at all in (as in some regions, like Faranah). Usually people use "I ni ke" for all times of day, especially day and evening.

Opening Greetings

I ni tele - Good afternoon (noon - 4PM)

I ni wura - Good evening (4PM - 10PM)

I ni su - Good night (after 10 PM)

Questions

Tana ma tele? - Is there no evil in your day?

Here tele na? - Did you pass the day in peace?

General Responses

(See "General Responses" in "Anytime" section below)

Anytime

Opening Greetings

I ni ke / I ni wale - What up?

I ni se / I ni sene - Welcome (after long absence)

Questions

Ta na te? - Is there no evil?

Ta na te ____? - Is there no evil ____?

...ye? - ...there?

...yan? - ...here?

...Kankan? - ...Kankan?

...lu ma? - ...at home?

...i bada? - ...at your place?

...denbaya la? - ...in the family?

Note: "Ta na te ye/yan?" uses the pronunciation "ti" for "te."

General Responses

These responses work as a response to any greeting.

Tana si te / Tana si te la - There's no evil / There's no evil there

Alla tando - Thank God (Praise God)

Alhamdulilaay - Thanks to God!

Uh-huh-uh - Nope, absolutely no evil

Anytime Questions and Responses

Note: See "General Responses" in the previous section for other possible responses in addition to those listed below.

Question: ____ ye yen? - ____ is there? (How is ____?)

I na... - ...your mother

I fa... - ...your father

I la moo... - ...your people, companions

(Moo)... - ...(person)

Responses: a ye/ a ye yen - He/she is there. (They are well)

a ko ka i fo - He/she said to greet you.

ko n ye i fo - He/she said to greet you.

Question: i ka kende? - are you healthy? are you well?

Responses: N ka kende - I am healthy.

N ma kende - I am not healthy.

Greeting Interjections

Note: Around Faranah, these are not used much except for men saying "Mba."

Man's Interjections

mba
m bara ha ba
arabusedi

Woman's Interjections

n see
n ma soron
n ne jon
see di

Example Dialogues

Morning

Ansoumane I ni sooma.
:
Seyfollaye: I ni sooma. Tana ma si?
Ansoumane Uh-huh-uh. Tana ma si?
:
Seyfollaye: Tana si te.
Ansoumane Here sira?
:
Seyfollaye: Alla tando!
Ansoumane Mba.
:

Afternoon or Evening

Ansoumane: I ni ke.
Seyfollaye: I ni ke. Tana te?
Ansoumane: Tana si te.
Seyfollaye: Tana te i bada?
Ansoumane: Tana si te la.
Seyfollaye: I ka kande?
Ansoumane: Alla tando. Tana ma tele?
Seyfollaye: Tana si te.
Ansoumane: I na ye yen?
Seyfollaye: Tana si te la.
Ansoumane: I fa ye yen?
Seyfollaye: Alla tando.

Saying Goodbye

So you want to say goodbye. Happy Trails. Ciao. There are 50 ways to leave your lover, and there are just a few more ways than that to say goodbye in maninka. Here's just a few:

I ni samanu - See you later

I ni sefalo - See you later

OO-OO-OO!! - Goodbye! (Informal)

An be ____ - See you ____

...kofe/ kola - ...later

...sinin - ...tomorrow

...sooma - ...tomorrow (can refer to any indefinite time)

...telero - ...in the afternoon

...wurala - ...in the evening

...sisen - ...soon

...wo tuma - ...that time

...waati gbera - ...another hour

...lon gbera - ...another day

...juma lon - ...Friday

Benedictions

Like greetings, benedictions are a crucial element of day-to-day maninka conversation. They are often strung together into a long series which people will spout out in rapid succession.

Benedictions are usually recognizable from the "Alla" with which most of them begin. When you hear Alla, simply be on your toes to respond with the maninka response to a benediction "Amina," which means "Amen." In practical usage:

May God grant you with a good understanding of this section...

"AMINA!"

Benedictions in everyday conversation

ka tele kayira - may you pass the day well

Alla i kende ya - may God make you healthy

Alla i here ye fulen - may God release happiness to you

Alla kayeran di i ma - may God give you luck

Alla ye duba i ye - may God bless you

Alla si jan di i ma - may God give you a long life

Alla ye i so ____ la/na - May God grant you ____

Alla ____ di i ma - May God give you ____

...wodi ba - ...lots of money

...sinoon nyuman - ...good sleep

...kende - ...health

...hankili - ...intelligence

...lodiya / ...loyoro - ...responsibility

...kera kuntiiba - ...an important responsibility

...fanka - ...strength

...here - ...happiness, peace

...sila diya - ...a good road

Benedictions used at baptisms

Alla ma den balora - may God nourish the child

Alla ma den sora si la - may God give the child long life

Alla ma den nakandara - may God protect the child

Alla ma den na fadi dokendeyara - may God give good health to the mother

Benedictions used at funerals

Ka a nye kayira - May the peace go with her.

Ka a ko kayira - May he leave peace behind him.

Ka banku suma a koro - May the soil be cool.

Alla ma alla hinera a la - May God have pity on her.

Alla ma jafira furenin ma - May God forgive the deceased.

Benedictions used before a trip

Ka taama diya - May your travels be good.

Alla i la kanda - May God protect you.

Benedictions used before going to sleep

Ka su kayira - May you pass the night well

Alla ma an bora suro - May God give us a good night

Alla ma an kelen kelen wulira - May God wake us up one by one.

Benedictions used under other circumstances

Alla suman i kono - May God cool your stomach (after eating)

Alla ma fudu sabatira - May God make the marriage a success (weddings)

Alla ma tunye lakenema yara - May God show us the clear truth (meetings)

Alla a noya ke - May God make you better (illness)

Note: A response to "Alla a noya ke" can be "Amina," but also "Alla an be noya," or "May God make us all better."

Simple Phrases

We've all been stuck in that situation where we knew exactly what we wanted to say, but didn't know how to say it. So, we've put together a list of just some common (and not so common) phrases you may want to use in the village. We couldn't fit everything, so we were unable to include even important things like "Kono bara bo ke n kun do," or "A bird shat on my head." Sorry...

My name is...

I too di? - What is your name?

N too le ... (name) - My name is ... (name)

I jamun duman? / I si? - What is your last name?

N ... (last name) - I am a (last name)

Do you speak maninka?

I ye maninka kan fola? - Do you speak maninka?

I ye maninka kan men na? - Do you understand maninka?

I ku san maninkakan fola? - Are you able to speak maninka?

N ye maninka kan fola donin - I speak maninka a little

N ye a fola donin - I speak it a little.

I ku san maninka kan fola? - Are you able to speak maninka?

N ku san maninka kan fola donin - I am able to speak maninka a little.

Your work

I la baara ye mun di? - What (work) do you do?

I ye mun baara ke la? - What (work) do you do?

Lekolikaramoo le n di - I am a teacher

Dootoro le n di - I am a doctor

Coming and going

I bonin min? / I ye bola min? - Where are you (coming) from?

N bonin ameriki - I am from America

I wato min? - Where are you going?

Marriage

I bara fudu (ke)? - Are you married?

N bara fudu (ke) - I am married

N ma fudu (ke) folo - I am not married yet

Note: Men use the term "fudu ke" and women use the term "fudu."

Bring me something

Before the trip...

I di n samba (huh)? - Will you bring me a gift?

N di i samba nyinin - I'll look for a gift for you

Awa - OK

After the trip...

I ka n samba? - Did you bring me a gift?

I ka n samba mun na? - What gift did you bring me?

I ka nyasii? - Did you keep something for me?

N ka i samba - I brought you a gift

N ka i samba n yere le la - I brought you myself. (as a gift)

N ma i samba soron - I didn't bring you a gift

N ma fen soron - I didn't get you anything

N ma i soron - I didn't get you anything

Taama ma diya - I brought nothing (the trip wasn't good)

N ka i samba, koni a bara fa sila kan - I got you a gift, but it died on the road

Returning from a trip

I ni tunun / I bara tunun - You've been lost. (I haven't seen you)

I tun bara men yen / I bara men - You've been (there) a long time

I fana ni tunun - You have also been lost

N tun/tere te yan - I haven't been here

N ma men kosebe - I haven't been gone very long

True and false

Tunya/tunye - True

Wuya - False

Tunya le - That's right. (correct)

Wuya le - That's wrong. (false)

Sebero - Really

Ni Alla - I swear to God

Pardon

Haketo - Excuse me.

Hake t'i ma - You're excused.

I jo - pardon (often accompanied with

Jafa - pleading)

pardon (often accompanied with

pleading)

Expressing gratitude

Saying thanks

I ni ke (huh?) - Thank you

Ko baaraka - Thank you (when someone gives you food)

Enigba - Thank you (when someone makes something for you)

Saying you're welcome

Wo te fosi di - It's nothing

Wo ma n ke bo - It's less than I should do

Baaraka lai - Thank God (as a response to "ko baaraka")

Responding to beggars

Alla kelen pe di i so - Only God will provide for you.

Wodi te yan - There's no money here.

Fosi te yan - There's nothing here.

Managing petites

I bo yen! - Get out! Scram!

I to yen! - Leave it!

I to ten! - Leave it!

A bila! - Leave it!

Note: The "Words you might not want to know" section has appropriate terms for managing petites. For example, it may be extremely appropriate to tell a boy that if he doesn't shut up, you'll cut his, well, you know what, off.

In meetings

I makun - Be quiet! (1 person)

Alu ye alu makun - Be quiet! (people)

I sabari - Be silent! (1 person)

Alu ye sabari - Be silent! (people)

I da la tun - Close your mouth

Alla sawo, i sawo - You have the honor (after God)

Namu - (an all purpose response)

OK

Tomado / Puteteri - Maybe

Awa - Okay

A le le ye wo di - Okay / That's it. (C'est ça.)

N'Alla sonda - God willing

Aaron Sharghi
Tony Gemignani
June, 2000

✻ OBJECT PRONOUNS ✻

Object Pronoun Summary

Standard Object Pronouns

Whether it be subject, indirect object, direct object, or reflexive, the following are used in maninka:

1 Sing (I)	N	1 Plur (We)	An
2 Sing (you)	I	2 Plur (You)	Alu
3 Sing (He/She/It)	A	3 Plur (They)	Alu

Notes on 2nd and 3rd person plurals:

- They look like the same thing.
- Maninka scholars will tell you that these are differentiated by their tones. The meaning, however, can most often be detected by context, or a hand motion toward the person you're talking to (you) or away from the two of you (they).
- The 3rd person plural is not used as often as you might think. Many people often use "a" even when they speak in the plural.

Disjunctive Emphatic Pronouns

1 Sing (I)	N ne (or N de)	1 Plur (We)	An ne (or An de)
2 Sing (you)	I le	2 Plur (You)	Alu le
3 Sing (He/She/It)	A le	3 Plur (They)	Alu le

Other 3rd Person Pronouns

Men/Nyin - This, he, she (person or thing)

Wo - That, he, she (person or thing)

Direct Objects (DO)

These are the objects of transitive verbs. They are directly affected by the action.

DO nouns are always found before the verb. DO pronouns replace the noun, thus are also placed before the verb.

Pronoun DO

N di *a* damun.

I will eat it.

A bara *n* fo.

He greeted me.

I ka *wo* lon?

Do you know that?

Noun DO

N ye *leter*i sebe la.

I am writing a letter.

Da la tun!

Close the door!

N di *laf*en gbangban.

I will nail the bed.

Note: There are some verbs that require getting used to because they have DO's that wouldn't be direct in English. For example:

ka so - to give, share, provide

Namasa ye i bolo! I di *n* so!

You have bananas! Share with me!

ka samba - to bring something

I ka *n* samba?

Did you bring something for me?

Indirect Objects (IO)

These are objects of transitive or intransitive verbs, expressed with a preposition.

The IO is found before the preposition. An IO pronoun simply replaces the noun, thus it is also found before the preposition.

N na di telefoni *a* ma.
My mother will telephone him.

N ka photo dun *dandan* na.
I hung the photo on the wall.

I kodomuso bara wa *a* di.
Your big sister went away with it.

N wato *lu ma*..
I'm going home.

Wodi yira *n* na!
Show me the money!

Den bara fen bila a *da* ro.
The kid put something in his mouth.

Prepositions

Note the word preposition, seems to indicate that this part of speech comes in the "pre" position, or before the object. However, most prepositions come after their object:

koro - under

tema - between

kan - on

dafe, tofe, torofe - near

kono - in

nyafe - in front of

di - with (accompanying)

kofe - behind, after

ma - at (action toward something)

fanfe - toward

la/na - in, with

ko - behind, following

do/ro - in, into

ye - to

The following prepositions come before their object:

foo/han - until

kabi - since

iko - like

fo - except

Selected Uses of Prepositions

di - with

Na a di

Come with it.

la/na - in

wurala - in the evening

somadala - in the morning

bonna - in the house

ko - behind, following

N bara bila mobili ko.

I followed the car.

A bara wa Fanta ko.

He followed Fanta.

ro/do - in

giro - in the water

baro - in the river

waro - in the bush

telero - in the afternoon

suro - in the night

daro - in the mouth

haan - until

N wara haan Gueckadou.

I went all the way to Gueckadou.

aro - in it

senero - in the fields

lofero - in the market

Maninka kan do - in Maninka language

ATTENTION!

Proper use of prepositions requires some knowledge of the prepositions, but also knowing which of these prepositions to use with which verbs. For example, the preposition "la" means, usually "in" or "with". "Ma" means "at". They both have many uses. For example, used with the verb "ka ke" - to do:

Using ma... "N di torosi ke i ma" means literally "I am going to do the flashlight at you," or "I'm going to shine the flashlight at you."

Using la... "N di torosi ke i la" means literally "I'm going to do the flashlight in you," or "I'm going to shove this flashlight up your ass."

One of these is proper, the other an insult. Any questions?

Disjunctive or Emphatic Pronouns

These words are disjoined from the verb - they stand alone for emphasis. Try saying "me?" in maninka. "N?" It doesn't do much for emphasis, does it? Sort of like using the pronoun "me" in French; "moi" is considered the emphatic pronoun.

Three uses of emphatic pronouns

- 1) Used to emphasize the subject.

Jon le? *N de*.

Who is it? It is me.

N de? N te wa la.

Me? I'm not going.

I le? I ka n na diriki sunya? I komo!

You? You stole my shirt? You're an idiot!

- 2) Used to say "Me too." or "And you?"

Lekolkarimoo le i di? *N de* fana.

You're a teacher? I am too.

Mamadi Camara di wa Ameriki. *I le* don?

Mamadi Camara is going to America. And you?

- 3) Used in double subjects

N de ni *i le*, an di wa so kono.

Me and you, let's go to town.

A le ani a fa bara mankoro kadi telero.

He and his father picked mangoes in the afternoon.

Pronouns using "yere" (Expressing Self)

Adding "yere" to a pronoun means "self."

N yere ka wo ke.

I myself did that.

A yere nada kunun.

He himself came yesterday.

Possession and Possessive Adjectives

There are 2 ways to express possession in Maninka. The general rule places every noun into one of the two following groups:

- 1) family members and body parts (inalienable)
- 2) everything else (alienable)

Inalienable

This group includes those things that will always be a part of your possessions. Toward the Faranah region, some nouns (i.e. ke-husband, muso- wife, den-child) fall into the second group while toward Kankan, they fall in this group.

The possessor is placed just before the possession. If a pronoun is used, simply replace the noun with its appropriate pronoun:

1 Sing (My)	N	1 Plur (Our)	An
2 Sing (Your)	I	2 Plur (Your)	Alu
3 Sing (His/Her/Its)	A	3 Plur (Their)	Alu

Pronoun Possessor

N bolo bara funu.

My hand has swollen.

Amerikika le *a* na di.

His mother is from America.

Noun Possessor

Tubabu kungsi ka nyin.

Tubabu's hair is good.

Mamadi domuso ye a ko la.

Mamadi's little sister is bathing.

Alienable

This group includes those possessions that can be lost or sold - things you acquired during your life. This group requires an additional syllable between the possessor and possession. Put *la* (na for 1st person nasals) between the possessor and possession.

1 Sing (My)	N na	1 Plur (Our)	An na
--------------------	------	---------------------	-------

2 Sing (Your)	I la	2 Plur (Your)	Alu la
3 Sing (His/Her/Its)	A la	3 Plur (Their)	Alu la

Pronoun Possessor

An di wa *n na* bonna.
Let's go in my house.

N na fanin bara no.
My clothes are dirty.

Noun Possessor

Ousmane la mobili bara tinya.
Ousmane's car is broke down.

Assane la fula bara be kolonda.
Assane's hat fell in the well.

Compound Possession

To say... "My big brother's dog"... *N kodoke la* wulu

To say... "It is the principal's mother's house" - *Principali na la* bon le wo di.

or

Principali na, a la bon le wo di.

Possessive Pronouns

The possessive pronoun is formed by adding "ta" to the subject pronoun.

1 Sing (Mine)	N ta	1 Plur (Ours)	An ta
2 Sing (Yours)	I ta	2 Plur (Yours)	Alu ta
3 Sing (His/Hers/Its)	A ta	3 Plur (Theirs)	Alu ta

Possessive pronouns are used in maninka as in English:

Jon ta le? *N ta* le.

Who's is it? It's mine.

Or with comparisons:

N ta ka bon *i ta* di!

Mine is bigger than yours!

The Verb "To Be" (Ye)

Conjugation of "To be"

Note first that there is no conjugation of this verb. All tenses remain the same no matter what the subject.

	Present	Past	Future
Affirmative	ye	tere / tun	(see note)
Negative	te	tere te / tun te	te

Note: The future tense does not exist. When a present tense uses "ye," the future tense will require a different verb, such as "ka soron," "ka mina," "ka tere," or "ka ke." These verbs are described below.

Simple Use of "To be"

In using the verb "ye" alone, there is really only one use, which is to express the location of something with or without a preposition.

N ye yan. - I am here.

N dinyoon tere Ameriki. - My friend was in America.

N tere te yan kununsinin. - I wasn't here the day before yesterday.

A ye tabali kan. - It's on the table.

Soferi ke ye so kono. - The chauffeur is in town.

Notes

- To describe a noun with another noun (e.g. I am an American) , see later in this section the use of "le."
- It is used to form many verb tenses. See the section on verb tenses for its usage.
- Unlike the english language, this verb is not used to express states of being with adjectives such as "I am angry," "We are tired," "The cat is dead," or "He is tall." Formation of these types of phrases is found in the adjective section.

Future Tense

To express future tense of "to be," one can use the verbs "ka tere" or "ka soron", both meaning "to find (someone)." These may be used interchangeably. Also, one could use "ka ke" meaning "to do."

I di n tere yan.

You will find me here.

Sinin, n di i soron i bada?

Tomorrow, will I find you at your house?

Lokun kunyo, n di Labe ke.

Next week, I will do (be in) Labe.

San nato, n di Ameriki ke fanaan.

Next year, I will do (be in) America again.

To Express Physical or Mental States

The maninka use a special structure to express physical conditions or mental attitudes. This structure is also used to indicate a lack or desire for something.

Basic Structure

Structure: ____ + ye/te + (NOUN) + la/na

Note: To form past tense, one can change the "ye" to "tere."

Examples:*Konko ye n na.*

I am hungry.

Nene ye dotoro la.

The doctor is cold.

Tara te Ousmane na.

Ousmane is not hot.

Sinoo ye n denyoon na.

My friend is sleepy.

Sasa ye n na la.

My mother is congested (a cold).

Ji loo te nyari la.

The cat is not thirsty.

Jankaro ye sous-prefet la.

The sous-prefet is sick.

Expressing Lack or Desire (Loo)**Structure:** _____ + loo + ye/te + (NOUN) + la

This structure is used to convey lack or want of something, like the French expression "avoir envie."

Examples:*Cigireti loo te n na.*

I don't want a cigarette.

Suna ke loo ye n na.

I want to urinate.

N denbaya loo ye n na.

I miss my family.

Burger King loo ye n na.

I miss Burger King.

Future Tense

To form future tense, the maninka use the verb "ka mina" translated as "to take." One could also form an alternative present tense with "ka mina" by changing "di" to "bara." (e.g. "Konko bara n mina." or "Hunger has taken me")

Examples

Ni n te domunin ke la, konko di n mina.
If I don't eat, I will be hungry. (Hunger will take me.)

N ba wa Ameriki, alu loo di n mina.
When I go to America, I will miss you.

Use of "le"

The word "le can be translated as "It is." It has, at least, three different uses.

- 1) To say that "something" (a noun) is "something" (another noun)
- 2) To express "It is"
- 3) Translated as "who," as in "It is (someone) who did (something)"

Describing nouns with nouns (...le/te...di)

Structure: (NOUN) + le/te + (NOUN) + di

This is the structure used anytime one noun is described as another noun. Note the placement of the subject.

Examples

Lekolkaramoo le n kodoke di.

My big brother is a teacher.

N muso te Fanta di.

Fanta is not my wife.

Luke, i fa le n di.

Luke, I am your father.

Luke, i muso te n di.

Luke, I am not your wife.

Future Tense

The manika use the verb "ka ke" (to do) to express "to become." One could also form an alternative present tense with "ka ke" by changing "di" to "bara." (e.g. "N bara ke maninka di" or "I have become maninka")

Examples

A di ke kun tii ba di.

He will become a big boss.

N dinyoon di ke dootoro di.

My friend will become a doctor

"It is"

The use of "**le**" expresses "it is."

Mamadi le. - It is Mamadi.

I na le? - Is that your mother?

The use of "**te**" expresses "it is not."

N na te. - That is not my mother.

Optional: Add "**ten**" or "**wo di**" (that).

N ta le wo di - That's mine.

Wulu le ten - That's a dog.

Nyari te - That's not a cat.

Past tense is formed with "**le tere**"

Wulu le tere - It was a dog.

N na bon le tere - It was my hut.

And, if Ed McMahon were maninka, he might say one of three things:

Johnny le!

Johnny le ten! ----->

Johnny le wo di!

Here's Johnny!

Translated as "who"

Structure: S + le + V

Examples:

N na kun tii *le* ye kuma la.

It is my boss who is speaking.

N de *le* ka tiya san.

It is me who bought the peanuts.

Sory *le* tere n na kalasi kono.

It's Sory who was in my class.

I *le* di nyani jahanama la.

It is you who will burn in hell.

Expressing "To Want"

The structure of "I want" changes depending on whether it is used with a simple direct object, with an infinitive, or with an entire sentence.

1) To want (something) (with Direct Object)

Structure: S + ye + DO + fe

Examples (with direct object)

N ye keme loolu fe.	N te jii fe.
I want 500 (worth of something).	I don't want water.

2) To want (to do something) (with Infinitive)

Structure: S + ye + a + fe + INF

Examples (with infinitive)

N ye a fe ka buru san.	A tere te a fe ka ninsi bidi.
I want to buy bread.	He didn't want to milk the cow.

3) To want (someone to do something) (with sentence)

Structure: S + ye + a + fe + sentence

Examples (with sentence)

N ye a fe i ye wo ke.	a te a fe n di sun don.
I want that you do that.	She doesn't want that I fast.

Note: "I want" can also express sexual desire or desire for marriage. For example:

Sekouba: N ye i fe. I ye n fe?

Dousou: N ye i fe.

Sekouba: Awa, an taa bonna.

Or, in walking down the street, you see a woman with a child and she says to you: "I ye a fe," referring to the child. She then continues her parole, asking you to take the child to America, telling you that even though the child is small today, assures you that the child will grow up.

Expressing "To Have"

There are three primary ways to express "to have"

- 1) Use of ...ye/te...bolo
- 2) Use of A ye yen/yan
- 3) Use of "Tii" - owner

...ye/te...bolo

Structure: (NOUN) + ye/te + (NOUN) + bolo

"Bolo" means hand. Thus, to say "I have a house," you really say "House is my hand." Note the placement of the subject in this structure.

Examples

A ye n bolo.

I have it.

Fen te n bolo.

I have nothing.

N na biki ye Assana bolo.

Assana has my bic (pen).

Mun ye i bolo?

What do you have?

Note: "bolo" can be replaced by "kun" (literally meaning "head") in some regions. As in: muru ye i kun? (Do you have a knife?)

Future tense

To express any of these in future tense, the maninka use the verb "ka soron" translated as "to receive."

Examples:

N di monbili soron.

I will have a car.

N ba wodi ba soron, n di wa ameriki.

When I have a lot of money, I will go to America.

A ye yen/yan

Yen means there. Yan means here. They are opposites in Maninka, like night and day, sun and moon, and the Chinese ying and yang (but don't get them confused.)

Structures:

S + ye yan - (Something) is here.

S + ye yen - (Something) is there.

These are most commonly used in the rice bar or boutique:

Situation 1 - Rice bar

Moussa: Kinin ye yen?

Muso: Huh, Kinin ye yan.

Moussa: Awa, n ye pileti kelen fe.

Situation 2 - Boutique

Fatim: Coca sumanin ye yen?

Jula ke: Huh, a ye yan.

Fatim: Awa, n ye coca fila fe.

Tii - owner

The word "tii" expresses possession or ownership and follows the item possessed, like a suffix. It is absolutely unrelated to the verb "to be," yet didn't fit well into any other section of this book.

Examples

fen tii - thing owner (a wealthy person)

hake tii - sin owner (sinner)

kun tii - boss (chef)

bon tii - landlord

basi tii - witch doctor

pumpi tii - head of the water pump

so tii, du tii - chief of the village

jamana tii - chief of the region

N na kun tii nato sinin - My boss (Regional rep. or APCD) is coming tomorrow.

Expressing "To Think"

There is a verb "to think" that is "ka miri," however this usually indicates that someone is being pensive. There is another meaning of "to think" in English that expresses some doubt or opinion. In maninka, this idea is expressed:

A ye n kono - I think (It is in me)

Examples

A ye n kono a nato araba lon.

I think he's coming Wednesday.

A ye n kono sanji te na la.

I think it's not going to rain.

✱ Verb Tenses ✱

For a list of all tenses and their constructions, see appendix A.

Present Progressive

This tense is the same as the english "I am ____ing."

Positive Structure: S + ye + VR + la/na

Examples

N ye bon mafiran na.

I am sweeping the house.

Sory ye lemunun maka la.

Sory is peeling an orange

Bakary fa ye sinoo la.

Bakary's father is sleeping.

N ye tolon na.

I'm playing (joking).

Negative Structure: S + te + VR + la/na

Examples

A den te kasi la.

Her child is not crying.

Men te wa la.

This is not going.

N te fosi san na.

I'm not buying anything.

N kun te dimin na bi.

My head is not hurting today.

Present Habitative

This tense expresses repeated action in the present or a general statement of fact.

Notes:

- "be" is used interchangeably with "di" around Kankan but used rarely around Faranah.
- This form is exactly the same as the future tense. English uses the future tense as well to express general statement of fact (e.g. "Cows will eat grass.")

Positive Structure: S + di/be + VR

Moo di wo ke.

People will do that.

Su-su, n di liburu karan.

Every night, I read.

Negative Structure: S + te + VR

N te cigaretti min.

I don't smoke.

An te too damun ameriki la.

We don't eat *too* in America.

Simple Past

This tense describes a finished action that occurred well in the past. (ou bien relatively long ago. This is ambiguous - we know.)

Positive Structure 1: S + ka + VR

Positive Structure 2: S + VR + ra/da/na (without DO only)

Note:

- After a nasalized vowel, ra becomes na or da.
- Structure 2 can only be used with an intransitive verb (verbs without direct objects).

Structure 1 Examples:

Lokun tamanin, n na ka telefoni n ma.

Last week, my mother called me.

Kunun, moo ka saa fa n na bonna.

Yesterday, people killed a snake in my hut.

Structure 2 Examples:

I fara?

Muso wara loofero.

Are you full?

The woman went to the market.

N'allah sonda!

N soronna Ameriki.

If God accepts! (God willing)

I was born in America.

Negative Structure: S + ma + VR

Examples:

N ma i la boro sinka.

N ma wa.

I didn't borrow your bag.

I didn't go.

Recent Past Perfect

This tense describes a recent past action, or implies continuation.

Note: This tense can also have the meaning of having become. For an explanation of this see the Adjectives section, Form 3 of the Adjective.

Positive Structure: S + bara + VR

As a recent past action - Examples:

I bara na?

Mamadi na bara den soron.

You have come?

Mamadi's mother had a baby.

As an implication of continuation - Examples:

I bara nyaye?

Did you understand? (and do you still?)

Mobili bara tinya.

The car has broke down. (and hasn't been repaired yet)

Negative Structure: S + ma + VR

As a recent past action - Examples:

A ma wa.

A ma a kunun haan telero.

She didn't go.

He didn't wake up until the afternoon.

As an implication of continuation - Examples:

N ma lon.

A ma na folo.

I didn't know. (and still don't)

She hasn't come yet.

Pluperfect

This tense is like a past tense in the past tense. It consists of the recent past tense adding tere or tun.

Note: Verbs that are normally expressed in recent past tense with an implication of continuing action require the pluperfect tense in order to express past action. For example, "n ma wo lon" (I don't know that) is already in past tense construction (but expressing present state). In the pluperfect tense this would become, "Kunun, n tere ma wo lon" (Yesterday, I didn't know that) and thus expressing a state in the past.

Positive Structure: S + tere/tun + bara + VR.

Examples:

I tun bara men!

You had taken a long time!

N sera ye tuma men, n koro ke tun bara wa.

I arrived there when my older brother had (already) gone.

Negative Structure: S + tere/tun + ma + VR

Examples:

A tere ma sali.

N tere yen, koni a tere ma na folo.

He had not prayed.

I was there, but he had not come yet.

Past Progressive/Past Habitative

Past Progressive expresses continued action in the past as in "I was _____-ing".

Past Habitative expresses repeated action in the past, what one "used to" do or "would" do, but does no longer. It has no negation.

Past Progressive

Positive Structure: S + tere/tun + VR + la

Examples:

N tere wo ke la.

I was doing that.

An tere baara la.

We were working.

A tere na la tuma men a jankarora.

He was coming when he got sick.

Negative Structure: S + tere te/tun te + VR + la

Examples:

Torosi tere te taama la.

The flashlight wasn't working.

N tun te sinoo la.

I wasn't sleeping.

Past Habitative

Positive Structure: S + tere/tun + VR + la

Examples:

Sooma-sooma n tere wa la lekoli.

Every morning, I used to go to school.

Kelen-kelen, n ka 1000 saran ka mankoron san Ameriki la.

Occasionally I would spend 1000 (francs) to buy a mango in America.

Future

This tense describes something that hasn't happened yet, but will (God willing, of course!)

Note: "be" is used interchangeably with "di" around Kankan but rarely around Faranah.

Positive Structure: S + di/be + VR

Examples:

N di wa Tiro almisa kunyo.

Lon don, an be di sise damun.

I'm going to Tiro next Thursday.

One day, we will all eat chicken.

Negative Structure: S + te + VR

Examples:

N te son wo ma.

Bintou te jankaro, n'allah sonna.

I won't accept that.

Bintou will not get sick, God willing.

Future Indicative

This tense expresses an action which will happen in the future before another action. It sounds fancy, but you'll use it a lot. To form this tense, the maninka use the helper "ba," which can be translated as "when."

There are two clauses in a sentence using this tense. The dependent clause uses "ba" while the independent clause uses the future tense with "di." There is no negation of this verb tense.

Structure: S + ba + VR, S + di + VR

Examples:

N ba wa Conakry, n di i samba.

When I go to Conakry, I will bring you something.

A ba ban, Aboubacar di ko ke mafen na.

When that's done, Aboubacar will do (put) salt in the sauce.

I ba na, an fila di wa sous-prefet bada.

When you comes, the two of us will go to the sous-prefet's house.

Conditional

This tense describes an action that would happen if not for other circumstances. It is used with an "if" clause in simple past tense almost always (if not always).

Positive Structure: Ni..., S + di/be + VR.

Examples:

Ni maninka ke le tere n di, n di si Kankan.

If I were a Malinke man, I would live in Kankan.

Ni n ka wodi soron, n di djimbe san.

If I received money, I would buy a djimbe.

Negative Structure: Ni..., S + te + VR.

Examples:

Ni n ma wa looro, damunin fen te n bolo.

If I didn't go to the market, I wouldn't have food.

Ni i ma i la sobo damun, i te *pudding* do soron.

If you didn't eat your meat, you wouldn't get any pudding.

(How can you have any pudding, if you don't eat your meat?)

Past Conditional

This tense describes an action that would have happened if it were not for other circumstances. It is often used with an "if" clause in simple past tense.

Note: There are no structures for these - examples are all we can give you. Note that the positive "would have" translates as "tun di" or "tere di." The words "would not have" translates as "tere te" or "tun te."

Positive

Examples

A tere di na, koni a bara jankaro.

He would have come, but he became sick.

Ni i ma *huit* bila, n tere di ganye.

If you hadn't played the eight, I would have won.

Negative

Examples

A tun te to ye, koni sanji nara.

He wouldn't have stayed there, but it rained.

Imperative

There are three forms of imperatives depending on the verb and presence of a direct object:

- 1) Non-reflexive verbs
- 2) Non-reflexive verbs with direct object

3) Reflexive verbs

Let's look first at the formation of the 2nd person singular ("you") since this is the most commonly used, then the 1st and 2nd person plurals.

"You" singular imperative

Positive Structure 1: VR

Positive Structure 2: DO + VR

Positive Structure 3: "I" + VR

1) Non-reflexive verbs

Examples:

Na yan!	Wa luma!	Wa sinoo.	Na damunin ke.
Come here!	Go home!	Go to sleep.	Come eat.

2) Non-reflexive verbs with direct object

Examples:

Biki ta.	A bila mobeli kofe.
Take the bic (pen).	Put it in the back of the car.

3) Reflexive verbs

Examples:

I sii.	I lo.	I wuli.
Sit down.	Stop.	Get up.
I tolo malo.	I bo yen!	I don.
Listen.	Go away!	Enter.

Negative Structure 1: I + kana + VR

Negative Structure 2: I + kana + DO + VR

Negative Structure 3: I + kana + i + VR

General structure: I + kana + (Positive imperative structure)

1) Non-reflexive verbsExamples:

I kana kuma.

I kana yele n ma.

Don't speak.

Don't laugh at me.

2) Non-reflexive verbs with direct objectExamples:

I kana wo fo.

I kana a bila i kun kan.

Don't say that.

Don't put that on your head.

3) Reflexive verbsExamples:

I kana i miri wo ma.

I kana i mataamataama.

Don't think about that.

Don't walk around.

"We" and "You" plural imperative

The 1st and 2nd person plural imperatives require the subject "An" or "Alu." Use "ye" or "di" between the subject and verb.

Structure 1: An/Alu + ye/di + VR

Structure 2: An/Alu + ye/di + DO + VR

Structure 3: An/Alu + ye/di + an/alu + VR

Note: To negate any of these structures, replace "ye" or "di" with "kana."

Examples:

An di wa!

An ye an sii.

Let's go!

Let's sit down.

Alu ye dabo ke.

An di musolu nyini so kono.

(You) eat breakfast.

Let's go look for women in town.

Alu ka na alu la.

An ka na wa.

(You) don't lay down.

Let's not go.

A more polite imperative in 2nd person singular

There are two ways to form a more polite imperative.

- 1) Addition of "I ye" or "I di" before the verb.
- 2) Addition of "ba" at the end of the imperative.

Examples:

I ye wa.

I di na, yo?

Go.

Come here, huh?

Na yan ba!

Jouer ba.

Come here!

Play.

Verbs

For a list of english verbs translated to maninka, see Appendix B.

For a list of maninka verbs translated to english, see Appendix C.

Special Verbs

"-to" Verbs

Three verbs fall primarily in this category:

- ka na - to come
- ka wa – to go
- ka bo – to go out, to leave

Normal Construction

The present progressive tense of these verbs can be formed like other verbs using the ye ... la construction.

Examples:

Sanji ye na la.

Rain is coming.

An ye wa la Conakry.

We are going to Conakry.

"-to" Construction

These verbs are most commonly used in their "-to" form. Ka bo is also found in its "-nin" form, depending upon region.

Examples:

A nato sinin.

He's coming tomorrow.

Fanta wato Ameriki.

Fanta went to America.

I boto min? / I bonin min?

Where are you coming from?

I wato min?

Where are you going?

"To like" or "To love"

The verb "to like" is expressed in maninka with the adjective "di," which means "sweet." The "-man" form of this adjective is "duman."

This verb is often used with food, though it might be used to describe good music, a good film, or a pet. Used with people, it is the closest thing to "to love."

Used alone with a noun, "duman" means that the thing is delicious, good, or sweet, generally speaking. A noun and the preposition "ye" can be added to specify who likes it (i.e. "n ye" means "to me").

The positive and negative forms are irregular.

Positive Structure: (noun) + duman + (noun) + ye

Examples

M. Jackson, a donkili duman!	Tubabu na duman a ye.
M. Jackson, his singing is good!	The tubabu's mom is sweet to him. (The tubabu loves his mom.)
Mankoron men, a duman ba le!	Tiya duman Maimouna ye.
This mango, it's sweet bigtime!	Peanuts are sweet to Maimouna. (Maimouna likes peanuts.)

Negative Structure: (noun) + ma duman + (noun) + ye

Examples:

Spam ma duman farafin ye.	Ka du damun, wo ma duman.
Spam is not sweet to black people. (Black people don't like spam.)	To eat dirt, that is not sweet.

Use of "ka di"

So, you got all that? Well, there is yet another construction, though used less often. The adjective "ka di" means "to be sweet." In present tense, "ka di" acts the same as "duman" and "ma duman." The adjective section describes how to form future and past tenses using the Form 3 of the adjective.

Positive structure: (noun) + ka di + (noun) + ye

Negative structure: (noun) + ma di + (noun) + ye

Examples

Fromasi ka di n ye.

Jaro ma di Seyfollaye ye.

Cheese is sweet to me.

African eggplant is not sweet to Seyfollaye.

(I like cheese.)

(Seyfollaye doesn't like African eggplant.)

"To Be Able"

This is also known as "can." This word can (is able to) have two separate meanings. Note the special constructions of both of these verbs, ka kusan and ka se.

Note: Other verb tenses can be constructed normally using the verb bases. For example, "N tere ka kusan Soso kan fo la" (I knew how to speak Susu.)

1st meaning - "ka kusan"

This is "to know how to do something." The Guinean French equivalent is "Je connais" plus infinitive. (In real French that would be "Je sais" plus infinitive.)

Positive structure 1: S + kusan + VR + la/na.

Positive structure 2: S + kusan + INF.

Negative structure 1: S + ma kusan + VR + la/na.

Negative structure 2: S + ma kusan + INF.

Examples:

N kusan ka mobili labori.

I kusan maninka kan fola.

I can (know how to) drive a car.

You know how to speak maninka.

Fode ma kusan ka don.

N ma kusan wo ke la.

Fode can't (doesn't know how) dance.

I can't (don't know how) do that.

2nd meaning - "ka se"

This is "to be able to do something." In French you would use the verb "pouvoir". The verb "ka se" means "to reach or attain".

Positive structure 1: S + di se + VR + la/na

Negative structure 1: S + te se + VR + la/na

Positive structure 2: S + di se + INF

Negative structure 2: S + te se + INF

Examples:

N di se wa la san nato.

I can go next year.

N te se sebeli ke la banin n bolo ye dimin

na.

I can't write because my hand hurts.

Aminata di se ka malo san loofe lon. Moo te se ka ye dibi kono.

Aminata can buy rice on market day. People can't see in the dark.

Still confused?

Phrase 1 "I can't see the hut because it's dark."

Which meaning of "can" applies here?

That's easy - it's the 2nd meaning because I know how to see it, I just can't, it's too freakin' dark.

Phrase 2 "I can't do that."

Which meaning of "can" applies here?

This would depend upon why you can't do it.

- In the first meaning you don't know how.
- In the second meaning, you can't do it because there is a little monkey playing an accordion, jumping on your bed yodelling Yankee Doodle Dandee, and flipping you the bird because you haven't gotten any mail.

Got it?

"To need"

This verb is not used as often in Maninka as in English, and is limited to the need of an object, as in "I need a bike" but not "I need to go out."

Note: To say that you need to do something, there is no good way to say this. The maninka often just say "I want" to do something. For example, "I need to go to the bathroom" would be translated "N ye a fe ka wa kabin na."

Positive Structure: S + mako + ye + (object) + la/na

Examples

N mako ye daba kura la.

I need a new hoe.

A mako ye kobokobo la.

I need eggplant.

Negative Structure: S + mako + te + (object) + la/na

Examples

N mako te a la!

I don't need it!

Laguineeka mako te fen siyaman na.

Guineans don't need lots of things.

Passive Voice

Every maninka transitive verb has an active meaning if a direct object is expressed. When no object is expressed, the verb becomes passive.

Passive Voice

In future or recent past

Compare active and passive voice in the following examples:

Active voice (DO)

I di a gbe.

You will make it white.

Passive voice (No DO)

I di gbe.

You will become white.

A bara a tunuun.

He has lost it.

A bara tunuun.

It is lost.

A bara a gbasi.

He beat her.

A bara gbasi.

He was beaten.

I di a toro.

You will trouble him.

I di toro.

You will be troubled.

In simple past

There are two ways to form passive voice in simple past.

Use of tere

Structure: S + tere + (Nin form of verb)

Notes:

- Using tere implies a condition contrary to the past.
- The "nin" form of the verb is explained in the adjectives section, Form 2 of the adj.

Examples

N na biki tere tununin.

My bic was lost.

I la tibon tere nonin.

Your hut was dirty.

N kun tere te nyaminin dit!

My head was not mixed up!

N na tere sewanin.

My mother was happy.

Use of (-ra/-na/-da) suffix

Structure: S + VR + -ra/-na/-da

Examples

N na biki tununda.

My bic was lost.

I la tibon nora.

My hut was dirty.

Use of "-li" suffix

Adding the "-li" suffix to some verbs changes them to nouns, and then they are used with the verb "ka ke" (to do). When these verbs are used with a direct object (transitively), the "-li" suffix is dropped.

Following are some examples of verbs that use the "-li" suffix. (Note that in the examples "moo" means someone; "fen" means something)

Verb meaning	Intransitive Use	Transitive Use
To eat	ka damuni ke	ka (fen) damun
To cook	ka tibili ke	ka (fen) tibilin
to write	ka sebeli ke	ka (fen) sebe
To greet	ka foli ke	ka (moo) fo
To ask	ka manyinikali ke	ka (moo) manyinika
To respond, answer	ka jabili ke	ka (moo) jabi
To hit, beat	ka gbasili ke	ka (moo) gbasi
To call	ka kilili ka	ka (moo) kili
To steal	ka sunyali ke	ka (fen) sunya
To insult	ka nanili ke	ka (moo) nani
To pound (pilet)	ka susuli ke	ka (fen) susu
To bring gifts	ka sambali ke	ka (moo) samba

Why do we need the "-li" suffix with these verbs? Look at the following examples. Note the need for the use of the "li" suffix, for if it isn't used, the verb is translated in passive voice.

Intransitive	Transitive	Passive
--------------	------------	---------

A bara tibili ke. He has done cooking. (He has cooked.)	A bara a tibilin. He has cooking it.	A bara tibilin. It is cooked.
A ye susuli ke. He is doing pounding. (He is pounding.)	A ye a susu ke la. He pounds it.	A ye susu la. It is pounded.

La and Ma Prefixes

The prefix "la-"

The prefix "la-" is used in causative construction (or "na-" after a nasal). It changes the meaning of the verb, adding the idea "to make to" or "to cause to."

Notes:

- The verb "ka la meni" (to turn on) does not have a counterpart "ka meni"
- The verb "ka fa" is used to mean "to kill or murder." (You might have thought to use "ka lafa" or "ka lasa," but that doesn't work.)

Look at the following verbs, and the causative constructions:

ka fulen - to become untied

ka sa - to die

ka lafulen - to untie

ka lasa - to make die, extinguish

ka bo - to go out

ka bonya - to get bigger

ka labo - to make come out, take
out

ka labonya - to make bigger,
enlarge

ka wa - to go

ka na - to come

ka lawa - to make go, send

ka lana - to make come, bring

ka be - to fall

ka ma - to touch

ka labe - to make fall, push

ka lama - to stir

ka gi - to lower

ka sewa - to be happy

ka lagi - to make lower

ka lasewa - to make happy

ka gele - to laugh

ka bori - to run

ka lagele - to make laugh

ka labori - to make run, operate

ka no - to be dirty

ka tun - to become closed

ka lano - to make dirty

ka latun - to close

Examples

A bara kinin nabo.

N ka leteri lawa Ameriki.

He brought out the rice

I sent a letter to America.

Radio la sa.

Lekolden bara drapeau laji.

Turn off the radio.

The student lowered the flag.

The prefix "ma-"

The prefix "ma-" is still a puzzling piece of the maninka language.. It too can have a causative effect, but not always. It is as common, if not more so, than the the prefix "la-."

Examples: ka mataama; ka maben; ka mayira; ka mako; ka mate; ka madon; ka mase; ka mafiran; ka makaran; ka manyininka; ka masusa; ka mayele; ka maji; ka mafo; ka makasi.

Reflexives & Reciprocals

In high-tech english talk, a reflexive verb can also be referred to as a "pronomial verb."
There are two types of pronomial verbs in Maninka:

- Reflexive
- Reciprocal

Their usages are the same as the reflexive and reciprocal verbs in French. In case you haven't yet become a French master, here's a revision.

Reflexive Verbs

These are verbs that reflect the action back onto the subject itself. As in French, a reflexive verb doesn't necessarily have to always be used in its reflexive form (though sometimes the reflexive form might change the meaning.) The reflexive pronoun (the pronomial) can be translated as himself, herself, itself, ourselves, etc.

Following are some examples of reflexive verbs expressed in the 2nd person singular (you). Don't forget to change the pronomial to match the subject, just like French (e.g. I bara i si; N bara n si; An bara an sii).

Verb	Meaning	Actual Translation
ka i sii	to sit	to seat yourself
ka i la	to lie down	to lie yourself
ka i ko	to bathe	to bathe yourself
ka i miri	to think	to think yourself
ka i lo	to stop, stand up	to construct yourself
ka i wuli	to be ready, arise	to raise yourself

Use of "Yere" (Self)

To make clear that a verb is reflexive, especially with verbs not normally used reflexively, you can use "yere" with the pronomial. "Yere" is translated as "self."

Examples

A bara a yere gbasi.

He hit himself.

Mamadi di a yere toro.

Mamadi will trouble himself.

Reciprocal Verbs

These are verbs whose subjects do not do something to themselves, as with reflexives, but rather to each other (Get your mind out of the gutter.) It can be translated as "each other."

To form a reciprocal, the maninka use a helper "nyoon" with the pronomial.

Examples

An bara an nyoon ye so kono.

We saw each other in town.

Alu di alu nyoon gbasi.

They are going to hit each other.

An duman an nyoon ye.

We love each other.

Noun-Verb Twins

There are several verbs that are also used as nouns. This is useful in that you can learn two words for the price of one. Be careful - a matching noun and verb don't always have the same meaning, such as "ka gbangban" (to nail, fasten) and "gbangban" (dust).

Noun	Meaning	VERB	Meaning
baara	work	ka baara	to work
kele	fight	ka kele	to fight
sara	price	ka sara	to pay
bagi	vomit	ka bagi	to vomit
donkili	song, music	ka donkili	to sing
karan	learning	ka karan	to learn, study
kuma	speech, parole	ka kuma	to speak
sali	prayer	ka sali	to pray
sino	sleep	ka sino	to sleep
wuya	lie	ka wuya	to spill, lie
toro	trouble	ka toro	to trouble

Yet, Already, Still, Almost, and Just

Use of "folo"

Folo is a word that can mean "first" or "before." It also means "yet" or "still."

Note: Folo means yet, still, and first. In real French, "d'abord" means first. Note that in Guinean French "d'abord" means yet, still, and first. Coincidence? On est la d'abord.

Yet

Put at the end of a sentence in negative simple past tense, "folo" means **yet**.

Structure: S + (Negative simple past tense verb) + folo

Examples

N ma fudu ke folo.

I am not married yet.

N ma n na photo ko folo.

I haven't washed my photos yet.

A ma na folo.

He hasn't come yet.

Den ma bonya folo.

The child hasn't gotten big yet.

Already

Put at the end of a sentence in positive simple past tense, "folo" means **already**.

Structure: S + (Positive Simple Past Tense Verb) + folo

Examples

A bara wa folo.

A bara wo ke folo.

He already went.

He already did that.

Still

Put at the end of a sentence in positive present tense, "folo" means **still**.

Structure: S + (Positive Present Tense Verb) + folo

Examples

N bolo ye wunya la folo.

A ka bon folo.

My hand still itches.

It is big still.

Almost using "donin"

To express that something "almost" happened (but didn't), one can use the negative past tense and "Donin" (A little).

Structure: Donin + S + ma + VR

Examples

Donin, a ma na.

Donin, n ma a gbasi.

He almost came (but didn't).

I almost hit her (but didn't)

(A little, he didn't come)

(A little, I didn't hit her.)

Just

To express that something "just" happened, one can use "A na san..." The "na" stems from the verb "ka na" (to come), thus is similar to the French language which uses "venir" to express this same idea, "just."

There are two ways to express "just." One uses the infinitive, and the other a noun. It can also be used alone to mean "just arrived."

With Infinitive**Structure:** S + na san + INFExamples:

N na san ka wodi soron.

I just received money.

Terna na san ka n kunun.

Terna just woke me up.

With Noun**Structure:** S + na san + (place)

To express that someone "just" arrived from somewhere, one can use "A na san..." with a place.

Note: "na san" is sometimes replaced with "na san de." It's unclear when to use "na san de," and they might be interchangeable. It seems as though the "de" might actually stem from the French "de" (from).

Examples:

A na san de lekoli la.

He is just coming from school.

A na san Faranah.

He is just coming from Faranah.

Sometimes, "na" is replace with "bo" to give the same meaning.

Examples:

N fa bo san de lekoli la.

My father just left the school.

N kodo muso bo san.

My big sister just left.

Negations

Negations of individual verb tenses can be found in the section on verb tenses. This section is reserved for a few key words.

Fosi, Foi - (Nothing)

These two words are interchangeable, though "fosi" is more common. They are used as pronouns. Remember when using this that the verb must be in negative construction. In english, we call this a double negative. It seems odd at first, and later on, it will still be odd.

Examples

I ma fosi lon!

Fosi te ye.

You don't know nothing!

There is nothing there.

I ye mun ke la? Fosi!

N te fosi ke la bi.

What are you doing? Nothing!

I am not doing anything today.

Butuun, Oko - (No longer, Anymore)

These two words are interchangeable, though "butuun" is more common. Like english, the verb tense is in the negative construction.

Examples

N te wo ke la butuun.

A ma jan butuun.

I don't do that anymore.

It's not far anymore.

I te na la butuun?

Ka na wa ba la butuun.

You won't come anymore?

Don't go to the river anymore.

Si - (None, Not one)

"Si" can be used as a pronoun or adjective. Note how it's used for "nobody" (Moo si).

Examples

Moo si te yan.

Si te yan.

There is nobody here.

Not one is here.

Habadan (Forever, Never)

Used with a positive verb, "habadan" means "forever."

Used with a negative verb, "habadan" means "never."

Examples

N di sewa habadan.

I will be happy forever.

N te koju ke la habadan.

I will never do bad.

Use of Diya

Maninka people often express action with a noun in lieu of a verb. The word "diya" (meaning "place") becomes a helper and is placed after the noun.

Note: "fan" and "yoro" also mean place, but they are not used as often in this usage.

"bada" (meaning "home") can also mean place (i.e. "i bada" means "your house" but can also mean "the place where you are.")

Cultural Note: In Maninka culture, when someone comes to visit who is a colleague or other fonctionnaire, it is polite and expected that you walk with that person at least a short distance, when they leave. It is so much a part of the culture, there is a way to express that "place" where you are going when you walk say, the principal, a little ways. "N wato principal bila sila diya," or "I am going to the leaving the principal at the road place."

Maninka phrase (N wato ...)	Litteral Translation	Actual Translation (I am going ...")
Buru san diya	Bread buying place	To buy bread
Je fa diya	Fish dying place	To fish
Ko ke diya	Wash doing place	To bathe
Fanin ko diya	Clothes washing place	To wash clothes
Karan diya	Study place	To study
Baara diya	Work place	To work
Sali diya	Prayer place	To pray
Damun diya	Eating place	To eat
Tolon diya	Play place	To "play" at the fete
Sobo fa diya	Meat dying place	To hunt
Mafen san diya	Sauce buying place	To buy sauce
Don diya	Dancing place	To dance
Taama diya	Walking place	To take a walk
Sila bila Diya	Road leaving place	(See cultural note.)

Adjectives

For a list of common adjectives, see Appendix D.

Adjective Introduction

This is perhaps the most difficult section to define a set of rules for, and the most difficult to organize! The exceptions are numerous, the structures are many. Also, the adjectives are treated the same as verbs. However, there are some rules for the most frequently used adjectives. To understand these rules, let's look at two ways to classify adjectives in the english language. These will define vocabulary for later.

Alone vs. Modifying

Alone

Examples

Rudolph's nose is *shiny*.

The people are *happy*.

The bunny is *hopping*.

The team is *losing*.

If you're good at math, follow this formula: Subject = Adjective

The adjective is alone in the predicate. This adjective is describing the subject. In between the subject and adjective is the verb "to be." (Reminder that maninka doesn't use "to be" for adjectives, but we'll see more of that later.)

Note the limitations here. You can't say much about what the subject is doing, only what it is. It's just a description of somebody or something.

Modifying

Examples

Rudolph had a very *shiny* nose.

The shiny *happy* people hold hands.

The *hopping* bunny hops down the bunny trail.

The *losing* team sucks.

In this case, we can give action to the subjects. Not only can we describe the noun, but it can do something too.

Note that these adjectives precede the noun that they modify. In maninka, modifying adjectives follow the noun that they modify.

Simple vs. Verbal Adjectives

Simple

These are adjectives in their natural state, and their root is defined as the adjective.

Examples

He is tall.

They are crazy.

She is small.

George is funny.

Verbal

In English, we can change most verbs to an adjective by adding "-ing."

Examples

He is loving.

They are smiling.

She is standing.

George is breathing.

Form 1 - Use with "Ka/Ma" (root form)

In maninka, some of the most common adjectives occur with "ka" (or the negation "ma"). Not all adjectives necessarily can be used with the form. The common adjectives (all simple adjectives) that are regularly used in this form are:

A ka bon

A ka nyin

A ka jan

A ka sudu

A ka kende

A ka siya

A ka gbele

A ka gbili

A ka fisa

Note: This form is useful only for adjectives standing alone, not for modifying adjectives. "The wolf is bad," but not, "The bad wolf ate the little girl."

Root Form and Present Tense

When learning a new simple adjective, learn its root form. The root form of a verb is the verb radical.

To describe things as they are presently, one uses the simple present verb tense.

Positive Structure: S + ka + root

Negative Structure: S + ma + root

Examples

A ma jan.

A ka sewa.

It's not far.

He is not happy.

Past Tense

To form past tense of this adjective form, use the pluperfect tense structure.

Positive Structure 1: S + tere + ka + root

Positive Structure 2: S + ka + root + tere

Negative Structure 1: S + tere + ma + root

Negative Structure 2: S + ma + root + tere

Examples

A tere ka bon.

A ma sila tere.

It was big.

She was not afraid.

Form 2 - Modifying Adjectives (-man and -nin forms)

To form a modifying adjective, you need to know if it is a simple or verbal adjective, then add the appropriate suffix (-man or -nin, respectively.) The two forms are then used exactly the same grammatically: as modifying adjectives. They can be used alone with the noun, or they can modify an adjective in a sentence.

Simple Adjective (root + -man)

Most simple adjectives are changed to a modifying adjective by adding the "-man" suffix. Note in the examples below how the modifying adjective can be used alone or modifying.

<u>Root</u>	<u>Alone</u>	<u>Modifying</u>
gbele	Probleme, a <i>gbeleman</i> . The problem is difficult	Probleme <i>gbeleman</i> ye i bolo. You have a difficult problem.
fe	Boro <i>feman</i> . The bag is light.	Boro <i>feman</i> ye tabali kan. A light bag is on the table.

Verbal Adjective (root + -nin)

Almost any verb can be changed to an adjective by adding the "-nin" suffix to the root form (verb radical). (Just as we would add "-ing" to a verb in English, e.g., "a monkey that frolics" is "a frolicking monkey.") Note in the examples below how the modifying adjective can be used alone or modifying.

<u>Root</u>	<u>Alone</u>	<u>Modifying</u>
sii	Muso siinin. The woman is sitting.	N ka kobokobo di muso siinin ma. I gave the eggplant to the sitting woman.
sewa	Moo sewanin. The person is happy.	Moo sewanin nara kunun. A happy person came yesterday.

Negative form (Alone only)

To make the modifying adjective negative, use the following format:

Structure 1: S + Mod. Adj. + te

Structure 2: S + te + Mod. Adj.

Note: This works for alone adjectives only, and not for adjectives located in the middle of a sentence (a modifying adjective). This is no different than English, as you would not say "I ate a not huge mango," unless you are a complete moron.

Examples

N na lafen nonin te = N na lafen te nonin	A doman te = A te doman
My bed is not dirty.	It is not small.

Past Tense (Alone only)

To form past tense, we use the helper "tere." Note that "tere" suggests that it was, but is no longer.

Positive Structure 1: S + tere + Mod. Adj.

Positive Structure 2: S + Mod. Adj. + tere

Examples

Kinin tere duman.	Coca tere sumanin.
The rice was good.	The Coke was cold.

Negative Structure 1: S + tere te + Mod. Adj.

Negative Structure 2: S + Mod. Adj. + tere te

Examples

Muso tere te siyaman.	N na soloda tere te tunuunin.
There were not a lot of women.	My teapot was not lost.

Form 3 - Use with "bara/di" (root and -ya forms)

When we wish to express a present state or future state with an adjective, we can give the meaning of having become or will become. Verbal adjectives use the "root" form while simple adjectives use "root + ya" form. These are then used the same grammatically.

Use with "bara"

This usage is related to the recent past perfect verb tense. The word "bara" has a sense of continuation to it, thus it is connected to the present and can express the present state. Something has become, and it still is; thus it is used as present tense rather than the present progressive. It can be translated as "to have become."

Examples

A bara suduya.

It became short (and still is.)

A bara kejuya.

He became ugly (and still is.)

A bara no.

It became dirty (and still is.)

A bara sewa.

He became happy (and still is.)

Use with "di"

This usage is related to the future verb tense, thus one can use "di" or "be." It can be translated as "will become."

An english speaker might say "It will get heavy," or "it will become heavy." In maninka, one says "A di gbiliya."

Examples

A di sila.

He will become scared.

A di kendeaya, n'Allah sonda.

He will get healthy, God willing.

Formation of Form 3

Simple Adjective (root + -ya)

Add the suffix "-ya" to the root form of the simple adjective.

Examples

A bara doya.

It has gotten small (and still is.)

A di bonya.

It will become big.

Verbal Adjective (root)

Use the root form, or the verb radical, simply.

Examples

A bara gbe.

It became white (and still is.)

A di jankaro.

He will become sick.

Negative Form

Negations are formed just as they would be formed in recent past tense or future tense.

- "Bara" becomes "Ma"
- "Di/Be" becomes "Te"

Examples

A ma keenya.

It has not become beautiful.

A te koroya.

It won't become old.

Summary of the 3 forms and the "yanin" ending

Thus, we have three forms of the adjective: simple, verbal, and "yanin," which we introduce here. A summary of some common adjectives and their three forms can be found in Appendix D.

The following table shows the basic constructions for the three adjective types.

	Form 1 "Ka/Ma"	Form 2 Modifying	Form 3 "bara/di"
Simple	root	root + "-man"	root + "-ya"
Verbal	root	root + "-nin"	root
"Yanin"	root + "-ya"	root + "yanin"	root + "-ya"

We have not really been able to classify the adjectives ending in "-yanin." There are however several adjectives falling into this category. They rarely use form 1. Following are some examples of some "-yanin" adjectives.

Examples

I kolobaliyanin

A bara saliya.

You're impolite.

He's become lazy.

A mayanin.

A bara bo te; A te maliya.

It is soft.

She farted; she's not ashamed.

Verbs of States of Being

Maninka has a lot of verbs that describe a state of being rather than a state of action. These tend to be simple adjectives in English, but in maninka they are verbs. As verbs, they take the "-nin" suffix for form 2.

Also, they are the most likely verbs to be used with form 3 and the sense of "having become." To express present tense, one would not use the present progressive with these verbs. For example, I am not being happy because I am staring at a computer screen listening to DMB, I simply am happy. In maninka, I have become happy (assuming that sometime before, I wasn't happy.) "N bara sewa." (not "N ye sewa la")

Following is a list of verbs that describe a state of being:

ka sewa - to be happy	ka jusu fin - to be sad
ka no - to be dirty	ka fin - to be black
ka jankaro - to be sick	ka gbe - to be white
ka kala - to be hot	ka wulen - to be red
ka suma - to be cold	ka saliya - to be lazy
ka sila - to be afraid	ka fa - to be full
ka mo - to be ripe	ka see - to be tired
ka ja - to be dry	ka dun - to be deep

Exceptions

- Some simple adjectives do not use ka/ma, nor do they use the modifying forms. Look at the following:

A keen - He's good looking.

A keju - He's ugly

A kura - It's new

A koro - It's old

A ye fato - He's crazy

A konoma - She's pregnant.

- The verbs "ka ban," "ka di," "ka nyin," and "ma nyin" all have irregular modifying and bara/di forms.
- The colors "ka fin," "ka gbe," and "ka wulen" can all be verbs or adjectives, though mostly they are used as verbs.

Comparisons

Don't touch this section until you've read at least a little about adjectives. Now that you've read that, we'll use it as a base for comparing things. To make comparisons, one can use "di," or one can use the verb "ka tamin," meaning to pass.

Use of "di"

"Di" is commonly used to form comparisons, and it is very easy to use! Recall the three forms of adjectives described earlier and their constructions. By adding to a noun and the preposition "di," a comparison is formed.

General Structure: (Normal Adjective Construction) + (noun) + "di"

Notes:

- The normal adjective construction is found in the previous sections. It depends on tense (present, past, or future), negation, and form (1, 2, or 3).
- "Di" can be replaced by "ko" and have the same meaning. "A doman men di" or "A doman men ko."

Normal Adjective Construction

Mali ka sudu.
Mali is not far.

Sekou gbenin.
Sekou is white.

A ma jan tere.
He wasn't tall.

Nyin duman.
This is good.

A tere te ju.
It wasn't bad.

Sinin di fisaya.
Tomorrow will be better.

I la den bara kolobaliya.
Your child has become impolite.

Comparison

Mali ka sudu Senegal di.
Mali is not as far as Senegal.

Sekou gbenin i di.
Sekou is whiter than you.

A ma jan tere a fa di.
He wasn't taller than his father.

Nyin duman kinin di.
This is better than rice.

A tere te ju too di.
It wasn't as bad as too.

Sinin di fisaya bi di.
Tomorrow will be better than today.

I la den bara kolobaliya n ta di.
Your child has become more impolite than mine.

Use of the verb "ka tamin"

The verb "ka tamin" (sometimes pronounced "ka tamb'i") means "to pass or surpass." Recall the three forms of adjective construction, then add "ka tamin," the noun, and "di."

General Structure: (Normal Adjective Construction) + ka tamin + (noun) + "di"

Notes:

- Some literature says that you can use "kan," "la," or "ko" in place of "di."

- In the first two examples the ka tamin is optional because they are comparing the subjects; in the third example it is obligatory because the comparison is made against an indirect object.

Examples

Kankan ka nyin (ka tamin) Conakry di.
Kankan is better than Conakry.

N na neso tere keen (ka tamin) i ta di.
My bike was prettier than yours.

Mankoron duman i ye ka tamin n di.
Mangoes are sweeter to you than me.

Superlatives

Use of "be" (all)

To form the superlative, one can use "__ be" (all of __), "alu be" (all), or "a be" (all) in the comparison.

Note: "be" can also be replaced with "__ tolu" (the rest of __), "alu to," (the rest), or "a to" (the rest).

Examples

Conakry ka nyin laguinee so be di.
Conakry is better than all other Guinea cities.

Mike Tyson fankaman a be di.
Mike Tyson is stronger than everyone.

Lemunun men duman alu be di.
This orange is sweeter than all those.

Use of "ka dan na tamin"

This phrase means literally "to pass it's limit." Added to an adjective construction, it can have a superlative sense, and is translated as a lot or very.

Examples

Kankira wo ka gbili ka dan na tamin.
That box is heavy past its limit. (It's very heavy!)

N ka kinin damun ka dan na tamin!
I ate rice past my limit! (I ate a ton of rice!)

Muso wo keju ka dan na tamin!
That woman is butt-ugly!

Equality

There are three expressions for expressing equality. Translated, they mean "They are the same" (Positive) or "They are not the same" (Negative). The first is the most common.

Positive

A be kelen

A ka kan

A kanyaman

Negative

A te kelen di

A ma kan

A kanyaman te

Examples

N na liburu ani i la liburu, a be kelen.
My book and your book, they are the same.

Ameriki la damunin fen ani laguinee la domunin fen, a te kelen di.
America's food and Guinea's food are not the same.

N na ani n donin, a be kelen.
My mother and my younger, they are the same (resemble each other).

Use of iko**Simple Preposition**

"Iko" is a preposition meaning "like" or "as."

Example

N fanka ye iko i ta.
My strength is like yours.

Use with expression "A kenin iko..."

This expression means "It's similar to..." It uses the "-nin" form of the verb "ka ke" meaning "to do." So literal translation: "It does like..."

Examples

A kenin iko lemunun.

It is like an orange.

Men kenin iko wo.

This is like that.

Daddi Cool donkili kenin iko Ameriki donkili.

Daddi Cool's music is like American music.

✻ Interrogatives ✻

There are three ways to form a question. These are:

- 1.) Use of a trailing question
- 2.) Use of inflection
- 3.) Use of the interrogative (e.g.: who, what, why, etc.)

Use of a Trailing Question

You can form a question by adding the trailing question:

ka?
nye?

These phrases are usually used when one is expecting a positive response and are used in exactly the same way as the Guineen french phrase "ou bien?" or a French "n'est-ce pas." It can be translated as "is it not?"; "isn't she?"; "aren't you?"; "haven't we?"; etc.

Note: Also, you could add "do" or "ko" to the end of a sentence, meaning "and?" "Jeli le ten? Men ko?" (How much is this? And this?) or "Kinin ye yan? Sobo do?" (Is there rice here? What about meat?)

Examples:

I tere Kankan, ka?

You were in Kankan, weren't you?

I le ka n kili, nye?

It was you that called me, wasn't it?

Inflection

There is a tonal difference in phrasing a question, but it isn't necessarily a rising intonation. You just need to listen carefully.

Examples

I te i sii?

I ma a ye?

Won't you sit down?

Don't you see it?

The Interrogatives

What are the interrogatives? Well, that's a good question...

Who? - Jon?

What? - Mun?

Which? - Nyuman?

How much? How many? - Jeli?

When? - Tuma nyuman?, Lere nyuman?, Waati
nyuman?, Lon nyuman?

Where? - Min?

How? - Di?

Why? - Mun na?

Jon? (Who?)

Interrogative Pronoun - "**Jon**" means "**Who**" and can be used in several different parts of speech:

As a noun:

Jon bara radio lasa?

Who turned off the radio?

As a direct object:

Moussa ye jon nyinin na?

Who is Moussa looking for?

Jon de?

Who is it?

I ka wo fo jon ye?

Who did you say that to?

As an indirect object:

I ka n na jiriki yira jon ma?

Who did you show my shirt to?

As a possessive pronoun:

Jon na kurusi le?

Whose pants are these?

Mun? (What?)

Interrogative Pronoun - "**Mun**" means "**What**" and can be used in several different parts of speech:

As a noun:

Mun ye wo di?

What is that?

As a direct object:

I ka mun fo?

What did you say?

Mun de? / Mun kenin?

What is it? / What happened?

I ye a fe ka mun ke?

What do you want to do?

As an indirect object:

I ye miri la mun ma?

What are you thinking about?

Note: Sometimes "mun" is replaced with "mun de" for added emphasis, e.g. "I ka munde fo?" or "I ye miri la munde ma?"

Nyuman? (Which?)

Interrogative Adjective - "**Nyuman**" means "**Which**" and is used with a noun. It asks for a choice among possibilities and can also be translated as "what".

Interrogative Adjective

Mafen nyuman ye yan bi?

Which (What) sauce is here?

I bonin so nyuman?

You come from which town?

Jeli? (How many? / How much?)

Interrogative Pronoun or Adjective or Adverb - "Jeli" means "How much" or "How many."

As a pronoun, the word "Jeli" fills in the gap for the number you are searching. As an adjective, it follows the noun that it modifies. As an adverb, it comes at the end of the question.

As a noun:

Jeli ye i bolo?

How many do you have?

As a direct object:

I bara jeli la tabali kan?

How many did you leave on the table?

As an indirect object:

I ye miri la jeli ma?

How many are you thinking about?

Interrogative Adjective

I bara karo jeli ke Senegali?

How many months did you spend in Senegal?

I bara so jeli ke laguinee kono?

How many towns have you been to in Guinea?

Den jeli ye i bolo?

How many kids do you have?

I san jeli?

You are how many years?

Interrogative Adverb

I ka a san jeli?

How much did you buy that for?

Tuma Nyuman? / Waati Nyuman? (When?)

Interrogative Adverb - Note the use of Nyuman (Which) in all of these:

Tuma Nyuman - Which time? (When?)

Lere Nyuman - Which hour? (When?)

Waati Nyuman - Which hour? (When?)

Lon Nyuman - Which day? (When?)

Interrogative Adverb

I nato tuma nyuman?

Lekoli ye domina la lere nyuman?

When are you coming?

When does school start?

Min? (Where?)

Interrogative Adverb - "**Min**" means "**Where.**" It is usually, if not always, found at the end of the sentence.

Interrogative Adverb

A ye min?

Sobo ye min?

Where is it?

Where's the beef?

Di? (How?)

Interrogative Adverb - "**Di**" means "**How.**" It is usually, if not always, found at the end of the sentence.

Interrogative Adverb

Den too di?

I di a ke di?

What is the child's name?

How are you going to do it?

(What are you going to do with it?)

Mun na? (Why?)

Interrogative Adverb - "**Mun na**" means "**Why.**" It is usually, if not always, found at the end of the sentence.

Interrogative Adverb

I ye n mafene la mun na?

I te a fe mun na?

Why are you looking at me?

Why don't you want it?

I ye n majele la mun na?

A ye den lasila la mun na?

Why are you making fun of me?

Why is he scaring the kids?

✧ Relative Pronouns ✧

Use of "min" (that, who)

Describing a subject

Describing the subject: *Muso min tere yen, a konoma.*

The woman that was here, she is pregnant.

When describing the subject of a sentence, follow it with "min" and a verb to form the dependent clause. The independent clause now uses a 3rd person pronoun (e.g. a, wo) which refers to the object indicated with "min."

Note: In this construction, "min" cannot be followed by a noun!! Because of this, this structure is technically not a relative pronoun (but we included it here anyway.)

Other examples:

Bon min tere lo kunun, a la tii bara tinya.

The house that was built yesterday, it's straw (roof) is damaged.

N na kun ti min ye baara la Conakry, n ka a ye bi.

My boss who works in Conakry, I saw him today.

Describing an object

Describing the direct object: *I ka muso min ye lofero, a konoma.*

You saw that woman in the market, she is pregnant.

(The woman that you saw at the market is pregnant.)

Describing the indirect object: *I ka kuma muso min ye, a konoma.*

You spoke to that woman, she is pregnant.

(The woman that you spoke to is pregnant.)

When describing an object of a sentence, follow it with "min" in the dependent clause. In the independent clause, use a 3rd person pronoun (e.g. a, wo) which will refer to the object indicated with "min."

Other examples:

I di kinin min damun, a ma tibin folo.

The rice that you will eat is not cooked yet.

I ka nyari min ye kunun, a ye yen.
The cat that you saw yesterday is there.

N ka sambara min san kunun, alu ka bon.
The shoes that I bought yesterday are big.

I ka n samba namasa min na, n ka alu be damun.
The bananas that you brought me, I ate them all.

Use of "min" (what)

As the direct object: I ka min ke, wo ma nyin.
You did what, that's bad.
(What you did is bad.)

As the subject: Min taminna, wo ka nyin.
What happened, that's good.

When "min" is used as the direct object or subject, it's meaning becomes "what" (like "ce que" and "ce qui" in French).

Examples:

I ye min fo la, n ma nyaye.
What you said, I don't understand.

A ye min sebe la, a karan kagbele.
What you are writing, It is difficult to read.

Fen min be ka nyin, a keen.
All things that are good, they are beautiful.
(What's good is beautiful.)

Min ye i bolo, a tere n na siifen kan.
What you have, it was on my chair.

Use of "waati nyuman" (when) and "fan min" (where)

Note that these come at the end of the sentence. "Waati nyuman" means "which hour." "Fan min" means "place where." It's possible that one might replace "fan" with yoro or diya, as they both also mean "place."

Examples:

Mosi ma lon a di na waati nyuman!

Nobody knows which hour (when) she will come!

N ma lon a wata fan min!

I don't know where he went.

A ma nyin an tere fan min.

It's bad where we were.

Use of "tuma men" (when)

"Tuma men" (or "waati men") means "time that." It is used in past tense construction.

Example:

N tere lofero tuma men, n ka Mamadi ye.

I was at the market time which (when) I saw Mamadi.

✻ Infinitives ✻

Two or more verbs having the same subject

Successive Action

When the subject does more than one action, apply the proper verb tense to the first verb and then use the infinitive for the second (and third, etc.).

Examples:

I ka wa ka na?

Did you go and come back?

A di loo nyinin, ka ji ta, ka malo susu, ka a tibi.

She will hunt firewood, get water, pound rice, and cook it.

Purpose

This structure is the same as for successive action. It usually contains two verbs, the first which is conjugated and the second which is in infinitive form. In French, the infinitive would be preceded by "pour."

Examples:

N ka i kili, ka fo, "i duman n ya."

A bara wa minsiri ka sali.

I just called (you) to say "I love you."

He went to the mosque to pray.

N bara na ka moo demen, ka laguinee ye, ka kan gbera makaran.

I came to help people, to see Guinea, and to learn another language.

As a Noun

When a noun is an action and expressed with an infinitive, you can begin the sentence with the infinitive. Then, form a sentence containing "wo" or "a" (3rd person pronouns) that represent the infinitive.

Examples:

Ka Skol min, wo ka nyin!

Ka too sun, a kiseman!

To drink Skol, that is good!

To eat manioc mush, that's brave!

Use with "Fo" (Except)

Examples:

I ma fosi ke fo ka n toro.

N ka be ke fo ka lemunun maka.

You do nothing but trouble me.

I did everything but peel the orange.

Demonstratives and Indefinites Pronouns

Demonstratives

Let's talk a little bit about "this" and "that":

This - Nyin, nin, men

That - Wo

These words can be used as a pronoun, or as an adjective. As adjectives, it is preferable (though not always obligatory depending on region) to place the demonstrative after the noun. Note that as a pronoun, they can replace things or people.

Note: For plural forms, add lu/nu to the demonstratives above. Thus, you get nyinnu, mennu, and wolu.

As Pronouns

Examples:

I ka na wo ke!

Wo ma nyin!

Don't do that!

That's not good!

Men ka bon wo di.

Men too di?

This is bigger than that.

What's the name of this?

Nyin, son le a di!

Nyin le tere yan, a wara min?

Him, he's a thief!

That which was here, where did it go?

As Adjectives

Adjective demonstratives normally follow the noun.

Examples:

Wulu men, a ka nyin!

I ye soloda nyin fe?

This dog, it is good!

Do you want this teapot?

Indefinites**As Pronouns and Adjectives**

The following indefinites can be used as adjectives or as pronouns.

Do - Some

Donin - A little

Dogbere - Another, Some other

Si - No, None

Siyaman - Many, a lot

Do (Some)PronounAdjective

Do ye yan.

Moo do di wo ke.

There is some here.

Some people will do that.

I ye do fe?

I ye buru do ta.

Do you want some?

Take some bread.

Dogbere (Another, some other)Pronoun

I la biki bara ban? Dogbere san.
Your pen is finished? Buy another.

Men ma nyin. Dogbere ta.
This is bad. Take another.

Adjective

Skol ye n bolo. Skol dogbere di a ma.
I have a Skol. Give him another Skol.

Montoro dogbere te n bolo.
I don't have another watch.

Donin (A little bit)Pronoun

Donin ye n bolo.
I have a little bit.

Sayon ka donin bila mafen do.
Sayon put a little in the sauce.

Adjective

Kinin donin ye yan.
There is a little rice here.

Nono donin wuyara. (I kana kasi.)
A little milk spilled. (Don't cry.)

Siyaman (Many)Pronoun

Siyaman te yan.
There aren't many here.

N ka siyaman lawa Ameriki la.
I sent a lot to America.

Adjective

Suro, n di dolo siyaman min.
Tonight, I will drink a lot of alcohol.

Tubabu siyaman ye Conakry.
There are a lot of tubabus in Conkary.

Si

(see "Negations" in the Verbs Section)

Pronouns Only

Fosi/Foi (Nothing, None)

(see "Negations" in the Verbs Section)

Adjectives Only

These indefinites can be used only as adjectives:

Be - All

Pe - Only

Doron - Only

Gbere - Another

Be (All)

Some expressions using "be"

Yoro be - Everywhere

A be - All of them (it)

Moo be - Everybody

Waati be - Every time

Examples:

Moo be di "Wang-Chung" tonight.

N bara tiyade be bila mafendo

Everybody "Wang-Chung" tonight.

I put all the peanut butter in the sauce.

Doron (Only)

Examples:

Skol doron ne bara to.

Toro doron ye yan.

There is only Skol left.

There is only trouble here.

Pe (Only)

Note: This is used with numbers to express insufficiency.

Example:

A be bara sinoora, n kelen pe ye yan.

Everyone went to sleep, I am the only one here.

I kelen pe wato Gberedou-Baranama?

Only you are going to Gberedou-Baranama?

Gbere

Example:

A la ke ba wa, a di ke gbere ta.

When her man's away, she will take another man.

Some indefinites to explore.

We have seen these around, but don't know exactly how to use them. Feel free to try these out in the village:

Kelenkelen- An occasional one.

Kelenkelenna - Each

Dando - Several, A few

Gbansan - Only

Filabe - Both

Nyoon - Like, Such

Interrogatives

There are three ways to form a question. These are:

- 1.) Use of a trailing question
- 2.) Use of inflection
- 3.) Use of the interrogative (e.g.: who, what, why, etc.)

Use of a Trailing Question

You can form a question by adding the trailing question:

ka?
nye?

These phrases are usually used when one is expecting a positive response and are used in exactly the same way as the Guineen french phrase "ou bien?" or a French "n'est-ce pas." It can be translated as "is it not?"; "isn't she?"; "aren't you?"; "haven't we?"; etc.

Note: Also, you could add "do" or "ko" to the end of a sentence, meaning "and?" "Jeli le ten? Men ko?" (How much is this? And this?) or "Kinin ye yan? Sobdo do?" (Is there rice here? What about meat?)

Examples:

I tere Kankan, ka?

You were in Kankan, weren't you?

I le ka n kili, nye?

It was you that called me, wasn't it?

Inflection

There is a tonal difference in phrasing a question, but it isn't necessarily a rising intonation. You just need to listen carefully.

Examples

I te i sii?

I ma a ye?

Won't you sit down?

Don't you see it?

The Interrogatives

What are the interrogatives? Well, that's a good question...

Who? - Jon?

What? - Mun?

Which? - Nyuman?

How much? How many? - Jeli?

When? - Tuma nyuman?, Lere nyuman?, Waati
nyuman?, Lon nyuman?

Where? - Min?

How? - Di?

Why? - Mun na?

Jon? (Who?)

Interrogative Pronoun - "**Jon**" means "**Who**" and can be used in several different parts of speech:

As a noun:

Jon bara radio lasa?

Who turned off the radio?

As a direct object:

Moussa ye jon nyinin na?

Who is Moussa looking for?

Jon de?

Who is it?

I ka wo fo jon ye?

Who did you say that to?

As an indirect object:

I ka n na jiriki yira jon ma?

Who did you show my shirt to?

As a possessive pronoun:

Jon na kurusi le?

Whose pants are these?

Mun? (What?)

Interrogative Pronoun - "**Mun**" means "**What**" and can be used in several different parts of speech:

As a noun:

Mun ye wo di?

What is that?

As a direct object:

I ka mun fo?

What did you say?

Mun de? / Mun kenin?

What is it? / What happened?

I ye a fe ka mun ke?

What do you want to do?

As an indirect object:

I ye miri la mun ma?

What are you thinking about?

Note: Sometimes "mun" is replaced with "mun de" for added emphasis, e.g. "I ka munde fo?" or "I ye miri la munde ma?"

Nyuman? (Which?)

Interrogative Adjective - "**Nyuman**" means "**Which**" and is used with a noun. It asks for a choice among possibilities and can also be translated as "what".

Interrogative Adjective

Mafen nyuman ye yan bi?

Which (What) sauce is here?

I bonin so nyuman?

You come from which town?

Jeli? (How many? / How much?)

Interrogative Pronoun or Adjective or Adverb - "Jeli" means "How much" or "How many."

As a pronoun, the word "Jeli" fills in the gap for the number you are searching. As an adjective, it follows the noun that it modifies. As an adverb, it comes at the end of the question.

As a noun:

Jeli ye i bolo?

How many do you have?

As a direct object:

I bara jeli la tabali kan?

How many did you leave on the table?

As an indirect object:

I ye miri la jeli ma?

How many are you thinking about?

Interrogative Adjective

I bara karo jeli ke Senegali?

How many months did you spend in Senegal?

I bara so jeli ke laguinee kono?

How many towns have you been to in Guinea?

Den jeli ye i bolo?

How many kids do you have?

I san jeli?

You are how many years?

Interrogative Adverb

I ka a san jeli?

How much did you buy that for?

Tuma Nyuman? / Waati Nyuman? (When?)

Interrogative Adverb - Note the use of Nyuman (Which) in all of these:

Tuma Nyuman - Which time? (When?)

Lere Nyuman - Which hour? (When?)

Waati Nyuman - Which hour? (When?)

Lon Nyuman - Which day? (When?)

Interrogative Adverb

I nato tuma nyuman?

Lekoli ye domina la lere nyuman?

When are you coming?

When does school start?

Min? (Where?)

Interrogative Adverb - "**Min**" means "**Where.**" It is usually, if not always, found at the end of the sentence.

Interrogative Adverb

A ye min?

Sobo ye min?

Where is it?

Where's the beef?

Di? (How?)

Interrogative Adverb - "**Di**" means "**How.**" It is usually, if not always, found at the end of the sentence.

Interrogative Adverb

Den too di?

I di a ke di?

What is the child's name?

How are you going to do it?

(What are you going to do with it?)

Mun na? (Why?)

Interrogative Adverb - "**Mun na**" means "**Why.**" It is usually, if not always, found at the end of the sentence.

Interrogative Adverb

I ye n mafene la mun na?

I te a fe mun na?

Why are you looking at me?

Why don't you want it?

I ye n majele la mun na?

A ye den lasila la mun na?

Why are you making fun of me?

Why is he scaring the kids?

Relative Pronouns

Use of "min" (that, who)

Describing a subject

Describing the subject: *Muso min tere yen, a konoma.*

The woman that was here, she is pregnant.

When describing the subject of a sentence, follow it with "min" and a verb to form the dependent clause. The independent clause now uses a 3rd person pronoun (e.g. a, wo) which refers to the object indicated with "min."

Note: In this construction, "min" cannot be followed by a noun!! Because of this, this structure is technically not a relative pronoun (but we included it here anyway.)

Other examples:

Bon min tere lo kunun, a la tii bara tinya.

The house that was built yesterday, it's straw (roof) is damaged.

N na kun ti min ye baara la Conakry, n ka a ye bi.

My boss who works in Conakry, I saw him today.

Describing an object

Describing the direct object: *I ka muso min ye lofero, a konoma.*

You saw that woman in the market, she is pregnant.

(The woman that you saw at the market is pregnant.)

Describing the indirect object: *I ka kuma muso min ye, a konoma.*

You spoke to that woman, she is pregnant.

(The woman that you spoke to is pregnant.)

When describing an object of a sentence, follow it with "min" in the dependent clause. In the independent clause, use a 3rd person pronoun (e.g. a, wo) which will refer to the object indicated with "min."

Other examples:

I di kinin min damun, a ma tibin folo.

The rice that you will eat is not cooked yet.

I ka nyari min ye kunun, a ye yen.
The cat that you saw yesterday is there.

N ka sambara min san kunun, alu ka bon.
The shoes that I bought yesterday are big.

I ka n samba namasa min na, n ka alu be damun.
The bananas that you brought me, I ate them all.

Use of "min" (what)

As the direct object: I ka min ke, wo ma nyin.
You did what, that's bad.
(What you did is bad.)

As the subject: Min taminna, wo ka nyin.
What happened, that's good.

When "min" is used as the direct object or subject, it's meaning becomes "what" (like "ce que" and "ce qui" in French).

Examples:

I ye min fo la, n ma nyaye.
What you said, I don't understand.

A ye min sebe la, a karan kagbele.
What you are writing, It is difficult to read.

Fen min be ka nyin, a keen.
All things that are good, they are beautiful.
(What's good is beautiful.)

Min ye i bolo, a tere n na siifen kan.
What you have, it was on my chair.

Use of "waati nyuman" (when) and "fan min" (where)

Note that these come at the end of the sentence. "Waati nyuman" means "which hour." "Fan min" means "place where." It's possible that one might replace "fan" with yoro or diya, as they both also mean "place."

Examples:

Mosi ma lon a di na waati nyuman!

Nobody knows which hour (when) she will come!

N ma lon a wata fan min!

I don't know where he went.

A ma nyin an tere fan min.

It's bad where we were.

Use of "tuma men" (when)

"Tuma men" (or "waati men") means "time that." It is used in past tense construction.

Example:

N tere lofero tuma men, n ka Mamadi ye.

I was at the market time which (when) I saw Mamadi.

Infinitives

Two or more verbs having the same subject

Successive Action

When the subject does more than one action, apply the proper verb tense to the first verb and then use the infinitive for the second (and third, etc.).

Examples:

I ka wa ka na?

Did you go and come back?

A di loo nyinin, ka ji ta, ka malo susu, ka a tibi.

She will hunt firewood, get water, pound rice, and cook it.

Purpose

This structure is the same as for successive action. It usually contains two verbs, the first which is conjugated and the second which is in infinitive form. In French, the infinitive would be preceded by "pour."

Examples:

N ka i kili, ka fo, "i duman n ya."

A bara wa minsiri ka sali.

I just called (you) to say "I love you."

He went to the mosque to pray.

N bara na ka moo demen, ka laguinee ye, ka kan gbera makaran.

I came to help people, to see Guinea, and to learn another language.

As a Noun

When a noun is an action and expressed with an infinitive, you can begin the sentence with the infinitive. Then, form a sentence containing "wo" or "a" (3rd person pronouns) that represent the infinitive.

Examples:

Ka Skol min, wo ka nyin!

Ka too sun, a kiseman!

To drink Skol, that is good!

To eat manioc mush, that's brave!

Use with "Fo" (Except)

Examples:

I ma fosi ke fo ka n toro.

N ka be ke fo ka lemunun maka.

You do nothing but trouble me.

I did everything but peel the orange.

Demonstratives and Indefinites Pronouns

Demonstratives

Let's talk a little bit about "this" and "that":

This - Nyin, nin, men

That - Wo

These words can be used as a pronoun, or as an adjective. As adjectives, it is preferable (though not always obligatory depending on region) to place the demonstrative after the noun. Note that as a pronoun, they can replace things or people.

Note: For plural forms, add lu/nu to the demonstratives above. Thus, you get nyinnu, mennu, and wolu.

As Pronouns

Examples:

I ka na wo ke!

Wo ma nyin!

Don't do that!

That's not good!

Men ka bon wo di.

Men too di?

This is bigger than that.

What's the name of this?

Nyin, son le a di!

Nyin le tere yan, a wara min?

Him, he's a thief!

That which was here, where did it go?

As Adjectives

Adjective demonstratives normally follow the noun.

Examples:

Wulu men, a ka nyin!

I ye soloda nyin fe?

This dog, it is good!

Do you want this teapot?

Indefinites**As Pronouns and Adjectives**

The following indefinites can be used as adjectives or as pronouns.

Do - Some

Donin - A little

Dogbere - Another, Some other

Si - No, None

Siyaman - Many, a lot

Do (Some)PronounAdjective

Do ye yan.

Moo do di wo ke.

There is some here.

Some people will do that.

I ye do fe?

I ye buru do ta.

Do you want some?

Take some bread.

Dogbere (Another, some other)Pronoun

I la biki bara ban? Dogbere san.
Your pen is finished? Buy another.

Men ma nyin. Dogbere ta.
This is bad. Take another.

Adjective

Skol ye n bolo. Skol dogbere di a ma.
I have a Skol. Give him another Skol.

Montoro dogbere te n bolo.
I don't have another watch.

Donin (A little bit)Pronoun

Donin ye n bolo.
I have a little bit.

Sayon ka donin bila mafen do.
Sayon put a little in the sauce.

Adjective

Kinin donin ye yan.
There is a little rice here.

Nono donin wuyara. (I kana kasi.)
A little milk spilled. (Don't cry.)

Siyaman (Many)Pronoun

Siyaman te yan.
There aren't many here.

N ka siyaman lawa Ameriki la.
I sent a lot to America.

Adjective

Suro, n di dolo siyaman min.
Tonight, I will drink a lot of alcohol.

Tubabu siyaman ye Conakry.
There are a lot of tubabus in Conkary.

Si

(see "Negations" in the Verbs Section)

Pronouns Only

Fosi/Foi (Nothing, None)

(see "Negations" in the Verbs Section)

Adjectives Only

These indefinites can be used only as adjectives:

Be - All

Pe - Only

Doron - Only

Gbere - Another

Be (All)

Some expressions using "be"

Yoro be - Everywhere

A be - All of them (it)

Moo be - Everybody

Waati be - Every time

Examples:

Moo be di "Wang-Chung" tonight.

N bara tiyade be bila mafendo

Everybody "Wang-Chung" tonight.

I put all the peanut butter in the sauce.

Doron (Only)

Examples:

Skol doron ne bara to.

Toro doron ye yan.

There is only Skol left.

There is only trouble here.

Pe (Only)

Note: This is used with numbers to express insufficiency.

Example:

A be bara sinoora, n kelen pe ye yan.

Everyone went to sleep, I am the only one here.

I kelen pe wato Gberedou-Baranama?

Only you are going to Gberedou-Baranama?

Gbere

Example:

A la ke ba wa, a di ke gbere ta.

When her man's away, she will take another man.

Some indefinites to explore.

We have seen these around, but don't know exactly how to use them. Feel free to try these out in the village:

Kelenkelen- An occasional one.

Kelenkelenna - Each

Dando - Several, A few

Gbansan - Only

Filabe - Both

Nyoon - Like, Such

Overall Language Stuff

Pronunciation

Tonal Language

Maninka is a tonal language which unfortunately cannot be easily expressed using ink on paper. The best way to learn the tones of maninka is to listen to the language itself. You will quickly note that a given word, while it may be written exactly like other unrelated words, is spoken with rising, falling, flat or extended tones. When you first begin hearing maninka you will have to figure out what is being said by the context within which the words are placed. Later, when you have an ear for the language you will find yourself using the correct tones based upon how you have heard the words spoken by others.

Here are three example where intonation is important to the meaning of the word. Ask a maninka to say these sentences and listen closely.

1.) Wodi (over there, money, that)

Tom: Abdoulaye ye min? Jerry: A ye *wodi*. (He is *over there*.)

Wodi di n ma. (Give me *money*.)

A ye *wo di*. (It's *that*.)

2.) Nyin (tooth, this, good)

N *nyin* ye dimin na. (My *tooth* hurts.)

Nyin a ka do. (*This* is small.)

A ka *nyin*. (It is *good*.)

3.) Min (where, drink, this)

Dootoro ye *min*? (*Where* is a doctor?)

I di dolo *min*? (Will you *drink* alcohol?)

Min ye yan, a ka fisa. (That which is here, it's better.)

Extended tones

When pronouncing an extended vowel, the vowel sound should be drawn out. We can sometimes convey this idea in written maninka by writing two of the same vowels next to each other.

Regular Tone Extended Tone

han (an expression of surprise) haan (until)

ba (big) baa (a goat)

sa (a sheep, to die, to kill) saa (a snake)

je (a fish) jee (a squash)

da (a mouth, a door) daa (a cooking pot)

to (name) too (a gelatinous manioc mush)

Second Syllable Accents

There are a lot of words in maninka that have accents on the second syllable. An English-speaker would want to put the accent on the first syllable on the first reading. Following is but a minor smattering of examples:

wulu - dog

ninsi - cow

lolo - star

tiya - peanut

komo - idiot

jusu - heart

fanin - cloth

sise - chicken

Contractions

In this book we have written out maninka sentences in their full form to render them more understandable. Take the sentence "n te a fe ka n ko." (I do not want to bathe.) This form is grammatically correct, yet is not correct spoken maninka. The maninka prefer to streamline their language by using contractions. The phrase above would be spoken "N t'a fe kan ko." Here are a few rules to help you know when to use contractions:

- Contractions are used most often when two vowels come in contact with each other. Since "i" and "a" are commonly used as pronoun objects, they often contracted with vowels that precede them. This also applies to "ni" (if).

This phrase: becomes:

N di a ke. (I will do it.) - N d'a ke.

Ni i ye a fe. (If you want it.) - N'ii y'a fe.

Ni Allah son na. (If God accepts.) - N'Allah son na.

N bara i ko. (I washed you.) - N bar'i ko.

- The maninka also often leave out parts of phrases that they deem inessential. Le, ye and ko get axed in some contracted maninkakan phrases.

This phrase: becomes:

A le le ye wo di. (Okay.) - A le le wo di.

N too le ye ko Ousmane. - N too le Ousmane.

(My name is Ousmane.)

- Words beginning with gb will add the "g"-sound to the end of a preceding vowel.

This phrase: becomes:

A gbasi. (Hit him.) - A'g basi.

I gbeleman. (You are difficult.) - I'g beleman.

Regional Differences

The maninka language is unfortunately far from universal in pronunciation and vocabulary. The mandingo languages spread across West Africa. Maninka is heavily influenced in the north by bambara from Mali. It is also influenced in the south by kouranko from Sierra Leone. And in the forest, there is Jula from Ivory Coast. It is impossible to mention all these differences, but here are a few:

- Some areas prefer "tun" and some prefer "tere" in past tense construction of the verb "to be."
- Some prefer "be" to "di" in future tense construction.
- Pronunciation of "te" is often pronounced "ti" and might be different regionally.
- In the north, bambara influence will change the "k" sound in "I ni ke" to sound a little like "ch," but more like "ty." I ni tye.
- There is a large amount of regional variation in pronunciation of words beginning with the letters "y", "g" and "j".
- Also, in bambara influenced regions, you find syllables buried in words. For example:

Bambara Influence vs. Maninka	Meaning
Moogoo vs. Moo	Person
Dogo vs. Do	Younger, smaller
Saga vs. Saa	Sheep
Dugu vs. Du	Land
Negesoo vs. Neso	Metal Horse (bike)
Sigi vs. Sii	Sit
Sinogo vs. Sinoo	Sleep
Nyogon vs. Noon	Each other
Faga vs. Faa	Die, Kill

Nogo vs. No To be dirty, Dirt

Sege vs. See To be tired

- There is some regional variation in vocabulary. For example, the word for corn in the Kouroussa and Faranah areas is "nyo". If you go to Mandiana and Siguiri "nyo" is the general term for all grains and "kaba" is reserved for corn specifically. Usually if you use the words that you know, the maninkakan will understand what you are saying and correct you if you are not using the right local word.
- The suffix indicating possession differs between regions. Some regions may use "ta" in place of "na" and vice versa when forming possessions and possessive pronouns. For example, "N ta" meaning "mine" in the Faranah region is pronounced "N na" in parts of the Kankan area.

NKo Alphabet

The NKo alphabet is a form of written maninka which is used largely between the Kankan and Siguiri regions. It is written right to left (like arabic), reads phonetically, and is fairly easy to learn. It is useful in that the seven vowels and twenty consonants describe the sounds of the language in a much clearer fashion than those of our alphabet. Nko also uses punctuation that describes the tonal differences found in the spoken language.

For more information on the NKo alphabet, see Appendix E.

The fun stuff

The maninka language is full of small expressions and sounds that are often thrown in to spice up the language. Here is a sampling:

- Fewu - this word is used for emphasis or agreement. It is used primarily in positive phrases. For example "A ka nyin fewu!" (That's damn good!) Also, Ibrahima: "Tara ye bola" (It's hot); Mamadi: "Fewu" (Damn right!)
- Fe fe (fe fe fe fe) - an emphatic like fewu but is used in negative phrases. Example, "A ma nyin fe fe fe fe!" (That sucks!)

- Dit! - used for emphasis or to counter someone's argument. It is somewhat akin to our exclamation point. Example, "Moo ye se la a ma dit!" (People are arriving at that!) or "Wo te dit!" (Not that!)
- Huhn! - a sound used when giving somebody something. You don't need to say anything more, just make the sound and hand it over.
- Ping-ping! - also used for emphasis. Example, "N bara fa ping-ping!" (I'm stuffed!)
- Eh Allah! - a favorite; used as an expression of surprise. It means "Oh my God!"
- La hi lai! / wa ha lai! - other expressions of surprise or shock. Their origins are arabic and come from a full phrase that goes something like: "La hi la wa hi la la Mohamadou rata sutu lai!"
- Fenke - can't think of the word you're, uh, searching for? Just replace it with, whatchamacallit, the word fenke. (It is equivalent to the Guinean french "chose.")

Examples:

N wato fenke bada... Moussa. (I am going to, uh... Moussa's house.)

I bara fenke ye?... n na siifen (Did you see, uh...my chair?)

- Did you hear? - We all know the peuls say "naani" like it's going out of style. In maninka there's no naani except for the number 4. So what do the maninka say? Well, you will hear them say "huh" or "yo," as in "I ni ke, huh?" (The "huh" can help distinguish "Thank you" from a simple "Hello")

During a longer parole, you can insert "I bara men?" (Did you hear?) or "I bara nyaye" (Did you understand?)

Words you might NOT want to know

Maninka, like all languages of the world, has it's own dirty words. Here's a vocabulary list of those words you might come across. To insult someone, just use "I" (You) plus the insult. Be careful with these. Them is fightin' words!!

An anatomy lesson

ass - ju

asshole - juwo

butt crack - ju fara

penis - kaya

testicle - kili

scrotum - ko kili

vagina - kese! / be /
tutu

naked - julakolon

shit - bo

Insults

uncircumcised boy - bilakoro

heathen - kafiri / salibali

slut - janburu / jalon

dirty person - dengba

a bastard child - nyomooden

idiot - komo

"discoboy" - kamaren ba

"disquette" - sunkurun ba

dog - wulu

dog penis - wulu kaya

red monkey - sula wulen

red ears (derogatory for tubabu) - tolo wulen

black person (derogatory) - moo fin

The forbidden fruits

alcohol - dolo

marijuana - jambaju / saraba

to have sex - ka sogodin ke

Maledictions

You've heard of blessings. Well they work both ways. You can also wish ill upon someone.

May God give you ____ Alla ye i so ____

...scabies ...karangba

...fleas ...jatakoli

...lice ...nyimin

...bedbugs ...dabi

...itches ...wanyalu

...biting things ...kinifenu

...rabies ...fatoya

...gonorrhea / the clap ...sopisi / korosila

...the Guinea worm ...segelen

Numbers and Time

Numbers

To form the ordinal form in maninka (e.g. first, second, third), add "na" to the cardinal form (Note the exception of first - "folo")

<u>English</u>	<u>Cardinal Form</u>	<u>Ordinal Form</u>
1	kelen	folo
2	fila	filana
3	saba	sabana
4	naani	naanina
5	loolu	looluna
6	woro	worona
7	woronfila	woronfilana
8	seyin	seyinna
9	konondo	konondona
10	tan	tanna
11	tan ni kelen	tan ni kelenna
12	tan ni fila...	tan ni filana...
20	muwan	muwanna
21	muwan ni kelen	muwan ni kelenna
22	muwan ni fila...	muwan ni filana...
30	bi saba	bi sabana
31	bi saba ni kelen...	bi saba ni kelenna...

40	bi naani	bi naanina
50	bi loolu	bi looluna
60	bi woro	bi worona
70	bi woronfila	bi woronfilana
80	bi seyin	bi seyinna
90	bi konondo	bi konondona
100	keme	kemena
200	keme fila...	keme filana...
1,000	wa kelen	wa kelenna
2,000	wa fila...	wa filana...
1,000,000	milyon kelen...	milyon kelenna...
etc.		

Numbers as adjectives

When you want to use a number (cardinal or ordinal) to modify a noun, place the number after the noun in the sentence construction.

Examples:

Doomuso naani ye n bolo.

I have four little sisters.

N di mobili filana ta.

I will take the second car.

N ye bougie saba fe.

I want three candles.

N too filanan le Seyfollaye.

My second name is Seyfollaye.

Use of "kelen" to mean "same" or "only"

Same

.....

.....

Alu fila kelen.

They are both the same.

Only

Note: "pe" is often used with "kelen" to emphasize "only"

N kelen pe bara wa.

Only I went.

I wato Conakry? I kelen?

You're going to Conakry? Just you?

Use of "fila" to mean "both"

An fila ye wa la so kono.

We're both going into town.

N ye men fila fe.

I want both of these.

How many times?

To express the number of times something is done, use the word "ko" or "sinya" followed by the number.

You did that two times

I ka wo ke ko fila. or I ka wo ke sinya fila.

Example:

N wara Kankan ko saba lokun taminin

I went to Kankan three times last week.

Time

Dununya, a suduman. - "Life is Short"

Times of Day

Here are the times of day in maninka:

morning - sooma	in the morning - soomadala
afternoon - tele	in the afternoon - telero
evening - wura	in the evening - wurala
night - su	in the night - suro

The maninka also describe times of day by the muslim prayer times:

6 h - subama	16 h - lansara
10 h - walaha	19 h - fitiri
14 h - salifana	20 h - safo

Days of the week

monday - tenen-lon
tuesday - talata-lon
wednesday - araba-lon
thursday - alamisa-lon
friday - juma-lon
saturday - simedi-lon
sunday - dimasi-lon / lahadi-lon

Note: "lon" (day) is usually used in expressing the day of the week, but not always.

Time Vocabulary

Basic Vocab

hour - waati	month - karo
day - lon	year - san
week - lonkun/semeni	

Every

Doubling a word gives it the meaning of "every."

Every hour - waati-waati	Every day - lon-lon, tele-tele
Every morning - sooma-sooma	Every week - lonkun-lonkun
Every evening - wura-wura	Every month - karo-karo
Every night - su-su	Every year - san-san

Next or Last

To express "next week" or "next year," use "nato" meaning "coming."

To express "last week" or "last year," use "taminin" meaning "past."

Next week - lokun nato	Last week - lokun taminin
Next month - karo nato	Last month - karo taminin
Next year - san nato	Last year - san taminin

Note: There are some fancy names for some of these, such as "sando" (next year), "nyina" (this year), and "saron" (last year).

Before, now, and later

Expressing "now," one must take the cultural difference into account. "Now" means plus or minus about 6 hours, while "Right now" might be within the hour. (This is important information to remember at the gare!)

now - sisen	before - folo
-------------	---------------

right now - sisen-sisen

in the beginning - folo-folo

after - kola / kofe

Yesterday and Tomorrow

3 days ago - kunun sinin ko

Day before yesterday - kunun sinin

Yesterday - kunun

TODAY - bi

tomorrow - sinin

the day after tomorrow - sinin kende

3 days from now - sinin kende ko

Next week using "kunyo"

To express "next week" or "a week from _____," one can use "kunyo" (stress on the second syllable) as in the following examples:

next week - lokun kunyo

a week from Monday - tenen kunyo

a week from tomorrow - sinin kunyo

a week from the fete - feti kunyo

Seasons of the year

rainy season - sanma

dry season - telema

The Date

The maninka use two calendars: farafin karo and tubabou karo. The "farafin karo" is based upon the lunar cycle and is used for calculating the dates of fêtes and other traditional events. The other calendar, "tubabou karo," is the western calendar and is used by the government and westerners (of course).

Tele jeli le bi?

What is the date?

Farafin karo, tele jeli le bi?

What day of the lunar calendar is it today?

A ye farafin karo tele ... (cardinal number) bi.

It is the (number)-th day of the lunar calendar.

A ba ban...

With subject

This structure is the same as that of the future indicative verb tense. In this construction, though, one uses "ban" in the dependent clause meaning "finished." Thus, we have "When ... is finished, ..."

Construction: S + ba ban, (Independent clause in future tense)

Examples:

A ba ban, an di wa

When it is finished, we will go.

Karo fila ba ban, n di wa Conakry.

When two months are finished, I will go to Conakry.

N na baara yan ba ban, n di koseyi Ameriki.

When my work is finished here, I will return to America.

With Verb

Using "ban" again, one now wants to express "When (someone) is finished (doing something) ..."

Construction: S + ba ban + VR + la/na, (Independent clause in future tense)

Examples:

N ba ban domuni ke la, an di wa.

When I am done eating, we will go.

I ba ban baara la, an di wa video la.

When you are done working, we will go to the video.

APPENDIX A - Verb Tense Summary

	Positive Structure	Negative Structure
Present Progressive	S + ye + VR + la/na	S + te + VR + la/na
Present Habituaive	S + di + VR	S + te + VR
Simple Past	S + ka + VR S + VR + -ra/-na/-da (w/o DO)	S + ma + VR
Recent Past Perfect	S + bara + VR	S + ma + VR
Past Progressive and Past Habituaive	S + tere + VR + la/na S + tun + VR + la/na	S + tere te + VR + la/na S + tun te + VR + la/na
Pluperfect	S + tere + bara + VR	S + tere + ma + VR
Future	S + di + VR S + be + VR	S + te + VR
Future Indicative	S + ba + VR, S + di + VR	N/A
Conditional	Ni ____, S + di + VR	N/A
Past Conditional	Ni ____, S + di tere + VR	N/A
Imperative	VR An + ye/di + VR alu + ye/di + VR	I/An/Alu + kana + VR

APPENDIX B - Verbs

English to Maninka

to accept	ka son, ka ben
to accompany	ka malo
to add (to)	ka la a kan, ka kafu
to advise	ka lali
to agree	ka dinye
to ask	ka manyininkali ke
to ask for (beg)	ka tara
to ask someone	ka manyininka
to avoid	ka matanka
to be able to	ka kusan, ka se
to be afraid	ka silan
to be angry	ka mone, ka diminya
to be dirty	ka no
to be happy	ka sewa
to be in agreement	ka la
to be quiet	ka sabari
to be ready	ka wuli (ref.)
to be troubled	ka toro
to begin	ka damina
to believe	ka denkeniya
to bend over	ka fonke, ka bidin
to bite	ka kin
to blacken	ka fin
to bleed	ka jeli bo
to bless	ka duba

to blow ones nose	ka sasa ke
to borrow	ka sinka
to break	ka tinya, ka kadi
to break (into pieces)	ka dote
to break a promise	ka lahidi tinya
to breathe	ka lakili
to bring	ka lana
to bring (a gift)	ka samba
to bring closer	ka madon
to build	ka lon, ka araben
to bump	ka kudu
to burn	ka nyani
to butcher	ka boso
to buy	ka san
to call	ka kili
to care for	ka kanda
to caress	ka masusu
to change	ka yeleman
to change (exchange)	ka falen
to chase away	ka gben
to chat	ka bado
to chew	ka nyimin
to choose	ka nyanatombon
to circumcise	ka laji
to clap hands	ka bolo lafo, ka tera fo
to close	ka la tun
to collect	ka mate
to collect (a debt)	ka makanin
to come	ka na

to complain	ka makasi
to cook	ka tibili ke, ka gba- don
to cook something	ka tibi
to cool	ka suman
to cough	ka soso, ka toto
to counsel	ka kawandi
to create	ka dan
to crouch (squat)	ka bu
to cry	ka kasi
to cultivate	ka sene ke
to curse	ka danka
to cut	ka te, ka rate, ka mate
to cut (harvest)	ka ka
to dance	ka don
to detatch	ka fulen
to die	ka fa, ka sa
to dig	ka dosen
to dip	ka sun
to disagree (with)	ka soso
to discipline	ka kolo
to disobey	ka kuma tinya
to display	ka mayira
to divide	ka dofara
to divide (in half)	ka tala
to do	ka ke
to do like this	ka keti
to dream	ka subo
to drink	ka min
to dry	ka ja, ka laja

to eat	ka damunin ke
to eat breakfast	ka dabo ke
to eat dinner	ka wurala ke
to eat lunch	ka telero ke
to eat something	ka damun
to eat too	ka too sun
to enlarge	ka labonya
to enter	ka don
to erase	ka masusa
to extinguish	ka la sa
to fail	ka kanya
to fall	ka be
to fan	ka mafe, ka mafinfan
to farm	ka sene
to fart	ka bote
to fast	ka sun don
to favor	ka ladiya
to feed	ka balo
to fetch water	ka ji ta
to fight	ka kele
to fill	ka fa
to find	ka tere, ka ye, ka soron
to finish	ka ban, ka laban
to fly	ka gban
to fold	ka kumbe
to forget	ka nyina
to forgive	ka makolo
to fry	ka jilan
to get	ka soron

to get bigger	ka bonya, ka bunya
to get sick	ka jankaro
to get up	ka wuli
to get used to	ka dori
to give	ka di, ka so
to give birth	ka moyi, ka den soron
to give medicine	ka basi
to go	ka wa, ka ta
to go very fast	ka kodo kodo
to greet	ka foli ke, ka kondon
to greet someone	ka fo
to guard	ka tanka
to hang	ka dun
to hate	ka kon
to have a meeting	ka nyoonye ke
to hear (understand)	ka men
to heat (up)	ka kala, ka sofe
to help	ka demen
to hide	ka dokun
to hit (a person)	ka gbasi
to hit (beat)	ka gbasili ke
to hurry	ka dogba
to hurt	ka dimin, ka dogba
to hurt (oneself)	ka madinun (ref.)
to increase	ka bonya
to inflate	ka funun
to insult	ka nanin
to itch	ka wanya

to join (combine)	ka de
to joke	ka tolon
to judge	ka kiti
to jump	ka gban
to keep	ka mina, ka tanka
to keep (a gift)	ka nyasi
to keep a promise	ka lahidi mina
to kick	ka tan
to kick a ball	ka balon te
to kill	ka fa, ka sa
to kiss	ka sumbu
to kneel	ka nyokin
to know	ka lon
to lack	ka dese
to laugh	ka yele
to leak	ka bo
to learn	ka karan, ka makaran
to leave (laisser)	ka to, ka bila
to leave (sortir)	ka bo
to lend	ka sinka
to let go	ka boloka
to lick	ka menemu
to lie	ka wuya fo
to lie (oneself) down	ka la (ref.)
to lie about something	ka wuya
to light	ka la meni, ka lamenen
to listen	ka tolo malo
to listen (to)	ka lamen

to look at	ka mafele, ka fele, ka dogbe
to look for	ka nyinin
to lose	ka tunun
to love	ka kanin
to lower	ka ji, ka laki, ka maji
to make	ka ke, ka dan
to make (manufacture)	ka ladan
to make a mistake	ka fili
to make change	ka sensi
to make fall	ka labe
to make fun of	ka mayele
to make increase	ka labonya
to make laugh	ka layele
to make noise	ka gudaguda
to make tea	ka thé gbasi
to make the pilgrimage	ka hiji
to marry	ka fudu, ka fufu ke
to mature	ka ko
to meet	ka lade ke, ks nyoben
to mess up	ka nyami
to milk (a cow)	ka bidin
to mix	ka basan, ka nabasan
to move away	ka mase
to multiply	ka jidi
to nail (fasten)	ka gbangban

to nurse (upon a mother's breast)	ka sin min
to open	ka laka
to operate (a vehicle)	ka bori, ka labori
to organize	ka doben
to pardon	ka jafa
to pass	ka tamin, ka latamin, ka tambu
to pay for	ka sara
to peel	ka maka
to pick (gather fruits)	ka kadi
to pinch	ka fuden
to pity	ka kini kini
to plant	ka la
to play	ka tolon, ka jouer
to play (an instrument)	ka fo
to play the djimbe	ka djimbe fo
to play the guitar	ka guitari fo
to point	ka lo
to pound (w/ mortar and pestle)	ka susu
to pour	ka bon
to pray	ka sali
to prepare	ka maben
to prepare too	ka too fasa
to protect	ka kanda, ka lakanda, ka sutura
to pull	ka sama
to pursue	ka saran
to push	ka tuntun, ka di
to push over	ka labe

to put	ka bila
to put out	ka la sa
to puzzle (perplex)	ka konodofili
to raise	ka wuli, ka lawuli, ka yele
to reach	ka se
to read	ka karan
to receive	ka soron
to redden	ka wulen
to reduce	ka do bo
to refuse	ka ban
to regret	ka kasa
to remember	ka hankili bila
to remove the husks from rice	ka malo gbasi
to repair	ka araben, ka doben
to resemble	ka bo
to respond	ka jabi, ka jabili ke
to rest	ka si (ref.), ka dofonye (ref.)
to rest oneself (relax)	ka nyonyo (ref.)
to return	ka koseyi
to ripen	ka mo
to roll	ka makudukudu
to roll over	ka kudukudu
to rub (massage)	ka boro, ka mamun
to rub in	ka susa
to ruin	ka tinya
to rumble (thunder)	ka kulu
to run	ka bori

to save	ka kisi
to say	ka fo
to scold	ka jaman
to scratch	ka masa
to search	ka nyinin
to see	ka ye
to sell	ka fere, ka mayira
to send	ka lawa
to separate	ka fara
to sew (make clothes)	ka kara
to shake	ka yereyere
to share	ka so, ka dote, ka rote
to shave	ka li
to shit	ka bo ke
to show	ka yiraka, ka yira
to silence	ka sabari, ka makun
to sin	ka hake ke
to sing	ka donkili
to sit (oneself) down	ka sii (ref.)
to sleep	ka sino, ka sunyoo
to smell	ka sumbu
to smile	ka yele
to smoke (a cigarette)	ka cigareti min
to sneeze	ka tiso
to snore	ka korondo
to sow (plant)	ka foi
to speak	ka kuma
to spend	ka depenser
to spend time doing	ka ke

to spill	ka bon, ka wuya
to spit	ka daji labo
to spread	ka fansa
to spread out	ka fensen
to stand (wait)	ka lo
to start a fire	ka ta bila
to stay	ka si
to steal	ka sunyali ke
to steal something	ka sunya
to stir	ka lama
to stop	ka fara
to stop (oneself)	ka lo (ref.)
to suffer	ka toro
to surpass	ka dan
to swallow	ka kunun
to sweat	ka wasi
to sweep	ka firan, ka mafiran
to swell	ka funun
to take	ka ta, ka mina
to take a long time	ka men
to take a picture	ka photo ta
to take a walk	ka taamataama
to take out	ka labo
to talk about someone	ka mafo
to taste	ka nene
to teach	ka karan
to tear	ka fara
to telephone	ka telefoni
to tell the truth	ka tunya fo

to thank	ka tando
to think	ka miri (ref.)
to throw away	ka fili
to tickle	ka nyolinyoli
to tie, to fasten	ka sidi
to tighten	ka doja
to touch	ka ma
to travel	ka wayasi
to treat (an illness)	ka danda, ka fida ke
to trick (deceive)	ka janfa
to try	ka mafene
to turn	ka firifri (ref.), ka yeleman (ref.)
to turn off (extinguish)	ka la sa
to turn on	ka la meni
to understand	ka nyaye, ka famun
to untie (unwrap)	ka la fulen
to unwrap	ka fulen
to urinate	ka suna ke
to vaccinate	ka bolote
to vomit	ka baji, ka fono
to wait	ka makono
to wake (oneself up)	ka kunun (ref.)
to walk	ka taama, ka mataama
to walk around	ka firifri
to wander (aimlessly)	ka yalayala
to wash (inside of)	ka doko
to wash (oneself)	ka ko (ref.)

to wash (outside of)	ka mako
to waste	ka domun
to whip	ka bunye ke
to whiten	ka gbe
to win (a contest)	ka ganye
to wipe	ka josi
to wonder (marvel)	ka kaba, ka kabakoya
to work	ka baara
to work (function)	ka taama
to worry	ka hamin
to worship	ka bato
to write	ka sebeli ke
to write (something)	ka sebe

APPENDIX C - Verbs

Maninka to English

ka araben	to repair, to build
ka baara	to work
ka bado	to chat
ka baji	to vomit
ka balan te	to kick a ball
ka balo	to feed
ka balo lafo	to clap hands
ka ban	to finish, to refuse
ka basan	to mix
ka basi	to give medicine
ka bato	to worship
ka be	to fall
ka ben	to accept
ka bidin	to bend over, to milk (a cow)
ka bila	to leave, to put
ka bo	to leave, to resemble, to leak
ka bo ke	to shit
ka boloka	to let go
ka bolote	to vaccinate
ka bon	to spill, to pour
ka bonya	to get bigger, to increase
ka bori	to run, to operate (a vehicle)
ka boro	to rub (massage)
ka bosu	to butcher

ka bote	to fart
ka bu	to crouch (squat)
ka cigareti min	to smoke (a cigarette)
ka dabo ke	to eat breakfast
ka daji labo	to spit
ka damina	to begin
ka damun	to eat something
ka damunin ke	to eat
ka dan	to make, to create, to surpass
ka danda	to treat (an illness)
ka danka	to curse
ka dari	to get used to
ka de	to join (combine)
ka demen	to help
ka den soron	to give birth
ka denkeniya	to believe
ka depenser	to spend
ka dese	to lack
ka di	to give, to push
ka dimin	to hurt
ka diminya	to be angry
ka dinye	to agree
ka djimbe fo	to play the djimbe
ka do bo	to reduce
ka doben	to organize, to repair
ka dofara	to divide
ka dofonye (ref.)	to rest
ka dogba	to hurry
ka dogba	to hurt

ka dogbe	to look (at)
ka doja	to tighten
ka doko	to wash (inside of)
ka dokun	to hide
ka domun	to eat, to waste, to bouffer
ka don	to enter, to dance
ka donkili	to sing
ka dori	to get used to
ka dosen	to dig
ka dote	to share, break (into pieces)
ka duba	to bless
ka dun	to hang
ka fa	to die, to kill, to fill
ka falen	to change (exchange)
ka famun	to understand
ka fansa	to spread
ka fara	to stop, to separate, to tear
ka fele	to look (at)
ka fensen	to spread out
ka fere	to sell
ka fida ke	to treat (an illness)
ka fidan	to sweep
ka fli	to make a mistake, to throw away
ka fin	to blacken
ka firan	to sweep
ka firifiri	to turn, to walk around
ka fo	to greet, to say

ka fo	to play (an instrument)
ka foi	to sow (plant)
ka foli ke	to greet
ka fonke	to bend over
ka fono	to vomit
ka fuden	to pinch
ka fudu	to marry
ka fudu ke	to marry
ka fulen	to unwrap, to detatch
ka funun	to swell, to inflate
ka ganye	to win (a contest)
ka gba-don	to cook
ka gban	to jump, to fly
ka gbangban	to nail (fasten)
ka gbasi	to hit (a person)
ka gbasili ke	to hit (beat)
ka gbe	to whiten
ka gben	to chase away
ka gudaguda	to make noise
ka guitari fo	to play the guitar
ka hake ke	to sin
ka hamin	to worry
ka hankili bila	to remember
ka hiji	to make the pilgrimage
ka ja	to dry
ka jabi	to respond (to something)
ka jabili ke	to respond
ka jaman	to scold
ka janfa	to trick (deceive)

ka jankaro	to get sick
ka ji	to lower
ka ji ta	to fetch water
ka jidi	to multiply
ka jilan	to fry
ka josi	to wipe
ka jouer	to play
ka ka	to cut (harvest)
ka kaba	to wonder (marvel)
ka kabakoya	to wonder (marvel)
ka kadi	to pick (gather fruits), to break
ka kafu	to add (to)
ka kala	to heat (up)
ka kanda	to protect, to care for
ka kanin	to love
ka kanya	to fail
ka kara	to sew (make clothes)
ka karan	to read, to teach, to learn
ka kasa	to regret
ka kasi	to cry
ka kawandi	to counsel
ka ke	to do, to make, to spend time doing
ka kele	to fight
ka keti	to do like this
ka kili	to call
ka kin	to bite
ka kini kini	to pity
ka kisi	to save

ka kiti	to judge
ka ko	to mature
ka ko	to mature
ka ko (ref.)	to wash (oneself)
ka kodo kodo	to go very fast
ka kon	to hate
ka kondon	to greet
ka konodofili	to puzzle (perplex)
ka kose	to return
ka koseyi	to return
ka kudu	to bump
ka kudukudu	to roll over
ka kulu	to rumble (thunder)
ka kuma	to speak
ka kuma tinya	to disobey
ka kumbe	to fold
ka kunun	to swallow
ka kunun (ref.)	to wake (oneself up)
ka kusan	to be able to
ka la	to be in agreement, to plant
ka la (ref.)	to lie (oneself) down
ka la a kan	to add (to)
ka la fulen	to untie (unwrap)
ka la meni	to light, to turn on
ka la sa	to extinguish, to put out, to turn off
ka la tun	to close
ka laban	to finish
ka labe	to push, to make fall

ka labo	to take out
ka labonya	to enlarge, to make increase
ka labori	to operate (a vehicle)
ka ladan	to make (manufacture)
ka lade ke	to meet
ka ladiya	to favor
ka lahidi mina	to keep a promise
ka lahidi tinya	to break a promise
ka laja	to dry
ka laji	to lower, to circumcise
ka laka	to open
ka lakanda	to protect
ka lakili	to breathe
ka lali	to advise
ka lama	to stir
ka lamen	to listen (to)
ka lamenen	to light
ka lana	to bring
ka latamin	to pass
ka lawa	to send
ka lawuli	to raise
ka layele	to make laugh
ka li	to shave
ka lo	to stand (wait), to point
ka lo (ref.)	to stop (oneself)
ka lon	to know, to build
ka ma	to touch
ka ma karan	to learn
ka maben	to prepare

ka madon	to bring closer
ka mafe	to fan
ka mafele	to look at
ka mafene	to try
ka mafinfan	to fan
ka mafiran	to sweep
ka mafo	to talk about someone
ka maji	to lower
ka maka	to peel
ka makanin	to collect (a debt)
ka makasi	to complain
ka mako	to wash (outside of)
ka makolo	to forgive
ka makono	to wait
ka makudukudu	to roll
ka makun	to silence
ka malo	to accompany
ka malo gbasi	to remove the husks from rice
ka mamun	to rub (massage)
ka manyininka	to ask
ka manyininkali ke	to ask
ka masa	to scratch
ka mase	to move away
ka masusu	to caress
ka mataama	to walk
ka matanka	to avoid
ka mate	to cut, to collect
ka mayele	to make fun of
ka mayira	to display, to sell

ka men	to hear (understand)
ka men	to take a long time
ka menemu	to lick
ka min	to drink
ka mina	to keep, to take
ka miri (ref.)	to think
ka mo	to ripen
ka mone	to be angry
ka moyi	to give birth
ka na	to come
ka nanin	to insult
ka nene	to taste
ka no	to be dirty
ka nyami	to mess up
ka nyanatombon	to choose
ka nyani	to burn
ka nyasi	to keep (a gift)
ka nyaye	to understand
ka nyimin	to chew
ka nyina	to forget
ka nyinin	to search, to look for
ka nyoben	to meet
ka nyokin	to stoop (upon bended knees)
ka nyolinyoli	to tickle
ka nyonyo (ref.)	to rest oneself (relax)
ka nyoonye ke	to have a meeting
ka photo ta	to take a picture
ka rate	to cut
ka rote	to share

ka sa	to die, to kill
ka sabari	to silence, to be quiet
ka sali	to pray
ka sama	to pull
ka samba	to bring (a gift)
ka san	to buy
ka sara	to pay for
ka saran	to pursue
ka sasa ke	to blow ones nose
ka se	to be able to, to reach
ka sebe	to write (s'thing)
ka sebeli ke	to write
ka sene	to farm
ka sene ke	to cultivate
ka sewa	to be happy
ka si	to rest, to stay
ka si (ref.)	to sit (oneself) down
ka sidi	to tie, to fasten
ka silan	to be afraid
ka sin min	to nurse (upon a mother's breast)
ka sinka	to borrow, to lend
ka sino	to sleep
ka so	to share, to give
ka sofe	to heat (up)
ka son	to accept
ka soron	to receive, to get, to find
ka soso	to cough, to disagree (with)
ka subo	to dream

ka suma	to cool
ka sumbu	to kiss, to smell
ka sun	to dip
ka sun don	to fast
ka suna ke	to urinate
ka sunya	to steal
ka sunyali ke	to steal
ka sunyoo	to sleep
ka susa	to rub (wipe), to rub in
ka susu	to pound (w/ mortar and pestle)
ka suune ke	to urinate
ka ta	to take, to go
ka ta bila	to start a fire
ka taama	to walk, to work (function)
ka taamataama	to take a walk
ka tala	to divide (in half)
ka tambi	to pass
ka tamin	to pass
ka tan, ka ten	to kick
ka tando	to thank
ka tanka	to keep, to guard
ka tara	to ask for (beg)
ka te	to cut
ka telefoni	to telephone
ka tere	to find, to receive
ka thé gbasi	to make tea
ka tibi	to cook
ka tibili ke	to cook
ka tinya	to break, to ruin

ka tiso	to sneeze
ka to	to leave
ka tolo malo	to listen
ka tolon	to play, to joke
ka too fasa	to prepare too
ka too sun	to eat too
ka toro	to suffer, to be troubled
ka toto	to cough
ka tuntun	to push
ka tunun	to lose
ka tunya fo	to tell the truth
ka wa	to go
ka wanya	to itch
ka wasi	to sweat
ka wayasi	to travel
ka wulen	to redden
ka wuli	to get up, to raise
ka wuli (ref.)	to be ready
ka wuya	to lie, to spill
ka wuya fo	to lie
ka yalayala	to wander (aimlessly)
ka ye	to see, to find
ka yele	to laugh, to smile, to raise
ka yeleman	to change
ka yeleman (ref.)	to turn
ka yereyere	to shake
ka yira	to show
ka yiraka	to show

Appendix F: Missionary Dictionary

to accept	ka son, ka ben
to accompany	ka malo
to add (to)	ka la a kan, ka kafu
to advise	ka lali
to agree	ka dinye
to ask	ka manyininkali ke
to ask for (beg)	ka tara
to ask someone	ka manyininka
to avoid	ka matanka
to be able to	ka kusan, ka se
to be afraid	ka silan
to be angry	ka mone, ka diminya
to be dirty	ka no
to be happy	ka sewa
to be in agreement	ka la
to be quiet	ka sabari
to be ready	ka wuli (ref.)
to be troubled	ka toro
to begin	ka damina
to believe	ka denkeniya
to bend over	ka fonke, ka bidin
to bite	ka kin
to blacken	ka fin
to bleed	ka jeli bo

to bless	ka duba
to blow ones nose	ka sasa ke
to borrow	ka sinka
to break	ka tinya, ka kadi
to break (into pieces)	ka dote
to break a promise	ka lahidi tinya
to breathe	ka lakili
to bring	ka lana
to bring (a gift)	ka samba
to bring closer	ka madon
to build	ka lon, ka araben
to bump	ka kudu
to burn	ka nyani
to butcher	ka boso
to buy	ka san
to call	ka kili
to care for	ka kanda
to caress	ka masusu
to change	ka yeleman
to change (exchange)	ka falen
to chase away	ka gben
to chat	ka bado
to chew	ka nyimin
to choose	ka nyanatombon

to	
circumcise	ka laji
to clap	
hands	ka balo lafo, ka tera fo
to close	ka la tun
to collect	ka mate
to collect	
(a debt)	ka makanin
to come	ka na
to	
complain	ka makasi
to cook	ka tibili ke, ka gba-don
to cook	
something	ka tibi
to cool	ka suman
to cough	ka soso, ka toto
to counsel	ka kawandi
to create	ka dan
to crouch	
(squat)	ka bu
to cry	ka kasi
to cultivate	ka sene ke
to curse	ka danka
to cut	ka te, ka rate, ka mate
to cut	
(harvest)	ka ka
to dance	ka don
to detatch	ka fulen
to die	ka fa, ka sa
to dig	ka dosen
to dip	ka sun

to disagree (with)	ka soso
to discipline	ka kolo
to disobey	ka kuma tinya
to display	ka mayira
to divide	ka dofara
to divide (in half)	ka tala
to do	ka ke
to do like this	ka keti
to dream	ka subo
to drink	ka min
to dry	ka ja, ka laja
to eat	ka damunin ke
to eat breakfast	ka dabo ke
to eat dinner	ka wurala ke
to eat lunch	ka telero ke
to eat something	ka damun
to eat too	ka too sun
to enlarge	ka labonya
to enter	ka don
to erase	ka masusa
to extinguish	ka la sa
to fail	ka kanya
to fall	ka be

to fan	ka mafe, ka mafinfan
to farm	ka sene
to fart	ka bote
to fast	ka sun don
to favor	ka ladiya
to feed	ka balo
to fetch water	ka ji ta
to fight	ka kele
to fill	ka fa
to find	ka tere, ka ye, ka soron
to finish	ka ban, ka laban
to fly	ka gban
to fold	ka kumbe
to forget	ka nyina
to forgive	ka makolo
to fry	ka jilan
to get	ka soron
to get bigger	ka bonya, ka bunya
to get sick	ka jankaro
to get up	ka wuli
to get used to	ka dori
to give	ka di, ka so
to give birth	ka moyi, ka den soron
to give medicine	ka basi
to go	ka wa, ka ta

to go very fast	ka kodo kodo
to greet	ka foli ke, ka kondon
to greet someone	ka fo
to guard	ka tanka
to hang	ka dun
to hate	ka kon
to have a meeting	ka nyoonye ke
to hear (understand)	ka men
to heat (up)	ka kala, ka sofe
to help	ka demen
to hide	ka dokun
to hit (a person)	ka gbasi
to hit (beat)	ka gbasili ke
to hurry	ka dogba
to hurt	ka dimin, ka dogba
to hurt (oneself)	ka madinun (ref.)
to increase	ka bonya
to inflate	ka funun
to insult	ka nanin
to itch	ka wanya
to join (combine)	ka de
to joke	ka tolon

to judge	ka kiti
to jump	ka gban
to keep	ka mina, ka tanka
to keep (a gift)	ka nyasi
to keep a promise	ka lahidi mina
to kick	ka tan
to kick a ball	ka balon te
to kill	ka fa, ka sa
to kiss	ka sumbu
to kneel	ka nyokin
to know	ka lon
to lack	ka dese
to laugh	ka yele
to leak	ka bo
to learn	ka karan, ka makaran
to leave (laisser)	ka to, ka bila
to leave (sortir)	ka bo
to lend	ka sinka
to let go	ka boloka
to lick	ka menemu
to lie	ka wuya fo
to lie (oneself) down	ka la (ref.)
to lie about something	ka wuya
to light	ka la meni, ka lamenen

to listen	ka tolo malo
to listen (to)	ka lamen
to look at	ka mafele, ka fele, ka dogbe
to look for	ka nyinin
to lose	ka tunun
to love	ka kanin
to lower	ka ji, ka laki, ka maji
to make	ka ke, ka dan
to make (manufactu re)	ka ladan
to make a mistake	ka fili
to make change	ka sensi
to make fall	ka labe
to make fun of	ka mayele
to make increase	ka labonya
to make laugh	ka layele
to make noise	ka gudaguda
to make tea	ka thé gbasi
to make the pilgrimage	ka hiji
to marry	ka fudu, ka fufu ke
to mature	ka ko

to meet	ka lade ke, ks nyoben
to mess up	ka nyami
to milk (a cow)	ka bidin
to mix	ka basan, ka nabasan
to move away	ka mase
to multiply	ka jidi
to nail (fasten)	ka gbangban
to nurse (upon a mother's breast)	ka sin min
to open	ka laka
to operate (a vehicle)	ka bori, ka labori
to organize	ka doben
to pardon	ka jafa
to pass	ka tamin, ka latamin, ka tambi
to pay for	ka sara
to peel	ka maka
to pick (gather fruits)	ka kadi
to pinch	ka fuden
to pity	ka kini kini
to plant	ka la
to play	ka tolon, ka jouer
to play (an instrument)	ka fo

to play the djimbe	ka djimbe fo
to play the guitar	ka guitari fo
to point	ka lo
to pound (w/ mortar and pestle)	ka susu
to pour	ka bon
to pray	ka sali
to prepare	ka maben
to prepare too	ka too fasa
to protect	ka kanda, ka lakanda, ka sutura
to pull	ka sama
to pursue	ka saran
to push	ka tuntun, ka di
to push over	ka labe
to put	ka bila
to put out	ka la sa
to puzzle (perplex)	ka konodofli
to raise	ka wuli, ka lawuli, ka yele
to reach	ka se
to read	ka karan
to receive	ka soron
to redden	ka wulen
to reduce	ka do bo
to refuse	ka ban
to regret	ka kasa

to remember	ka hankili bila
to remove the husks from rice	ka malo gbasi
to repair	ka araben, ka doben
to resemble	ka bo
to respond	ka jabi, ka jabili ke
to rest	ka si (ref.), ka dofonye (ref.)
to rest oneself (relax)	ka nyonyo (ref.)
to return	ka koseyi
to ripen	ka mo
to roll	ka makudukudu
to roll over	ka kudukudu
to rub (massage)	ka boro, ka mamun
to rub in	ka susa
to ruin	ka tinya
to rumble (thunder)	ka kulu
to run	ka bori
to save	ka kisi
to say	ka fo
to scold	ka jaman
to scratch	ka masa
to search	ka nyinin
to see	ka ye
to sell	ka fere, ka mayira

to send	ka lawa
to separate	ka fara
to sew (make clothes)	ka kara
to shake	ka yereyere
to share	ka so, ka dote, ka rote
to shave	ka li
to shit	ka bo ke
to show	ka yiraka, ka yira
to silence	ka sabari, ka makun
to sin	ka hake ke
to sing	ka donkili
to sit (oneself) down	ka sii (ref.)
to sleep	ka sino, ka sunyoo
to smell	ka sumbu
to smile	ka yele
to smoke (a cigarette)	ka cigareti min
to sneeze	ka tiso
to snore	ka korondo
to sow (plant)	ka foi
to speak	ka kuma
to spend	ka depenser
to spend time doing	ka ke
to spill	ka bon, ka wuya
to spit	ka daji labo

to spread	ka fansa
to spread out	ka fensen
to stand (wait)	ka lo
to start a fire	ka ta bila
to stay	ka si
to steal	ka sunyali ke
to steal something	ka sunya
to stir	ka lama
to stop	ka fara
to stop (oneself)	ka lo (ref.)
to suffer	ka toro
to surpass	ka dan
to swallow	ka kunun
to sweat	ka wasi
to sweep	ka firan, ka mafiran
to swell	ka funun
to take	ka ta, ka mina
to take a long time	ka men
to take a picture	ka photo ta
to take a walk	ka taamataama
to take out	ka labo
to talk about someone	ka mafo

to taste	ka nene
to teach	ka karan
to tear	ka fara
to telephone	ka telefoni
to tell the truth	ka tunya fo
to thank	ka tando
to think	ka miri (ref.)
to throw away	ka fili
to tickle	ka nyolinyoli
to tie, to fasten	ka sidi
to tighten	ka doja
to touch	ka ma
to travel	ka wayasi
to treat (an illness)	ka danda, ka fida ke
to trick (deceive)	ka janfa
to try	ka mafene
to turn	ka firifri (ref.), ka yeleman (ref.)
to turn off (extinguish)	ka la sa
to turn on	ka la meni
to understand	ka nyaye, ka famun
to untie (unwrap)	ka la fulen
to unwrap	ka fulen

to urinate	ka suna ke
to vaccinate	ka bolote
to vomit	ka baji, ka fono
to wait	ka makono
to wake (oneself up)	ka kunun (ref.)
to walk	ka taama, ka mataama
to walk around	ka firifiri
to wander (aimlessly)	ka yalayala
to wash (inside of)	ka doko
to wash (oneself)	ka ko (ref.)
to wash (outside of)	ka mako
to waste	ka domun
to whip	ka bunye ke
to whiten	ka gbe
to win (a contest)	ka ganye
to wipe	ka josi
to wonder (marvel)	ka kaba, ka kabakoya
to work	ka baara
to work (function)	ka taama
to worry	ka hamin
to worship	ka bato

to write ka sebeli ke

to write
(something
) ka sebe