

## Plural verb morphology in Vagla

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### 1. Introduction: plural verbs

Gur languages retain in various stages of completeness many features now ascribed to Niger-Congo as a whole, such as noun-classes marked by affixes, concord and verbal extensions (WILLIAMSON & BLENCH 2000). A subset of verbal extensions whose present distribution is poorly known is the 'plural' or 'pluractional' verb (VOELTZ 1977). Verbs have at least two morphologically distinct forms, one of which is used with subjects, objects or actions to express the idea of plurality. The plural form, usually longer, can be derived from the unmarked form by one or more derivational affixes, except in rare cases of suppletion.

Plural verbs have been recorded in East Benue-Congo languages and neighbouring Chadic and Adamawa languages. For Chadic, NEWMAN (1990) has described the operation of both nominal and verbal plurality. KLEINWILLINGHÖFER (1991:194) describes the highly productive pluralising infix -Vŋ- in Waja and similar phenomena also occur in Tula. In East Benue-Congo, plural verbs occur principally from Plateau and Cross River families. The first account of plural verbs may be BOUQUIAUX' (1970) account of Berom (Plateau). BENDOR-SAMUEL, SKITCH & CRESSMAN (1973) describe plural verbs in Duka (tHun) a Kainji language, while Izere has been the subject of at least two partial analyses (WOLFF & MEYER-BAHLBURG 1979; GERHARDT 1984), MCKINNEY (1979) characterised Jju plural verbs and more recently AARON (1996/7) has described plural verbs in Obolo, a Cross River language, as well as providing

some references to extra-African literature. This relatively weak documentation derives from the fact that plural forms are often poorly known by younger or urban speakers; indeed Aaron concluded they may be dying out.

The exact definition of plural verbs is more than a little confusing, in part because the systems they represent are almost always fragmentary and because the contexts of their use vary from language to language. AARON (1996/7) contrasts 'distributive' (where the subject or object can be plural) with 'iterative' (where an action is performed many times). Plurals are applied in the following situations;

1. Where the action is repeated many times
2. Describing an action with multiple subjects
3. Describing an action with multiple objects
4. Where the action takes place over a long period
5. Any combination of these

The iterative usage of the plural forms has led some researchers to associate these forms with an imperfect; if an action is undertaken many times it is presumably incomplete and thus contrastive with a completive form. However, in most languages where the verbal system has been described, aspect and plurality are distinct. Another link is with transitivity; the singular form has a transitive meaning but the 'plural' is intransitive. For example, a singular might mean 'extract, pull out' and the plural 'come out, fall out'. This latter opposition is nowhere systematic, suggesting that it is a secondary development.

Table 1

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Alveolar	Alveo-palatal	Palatal	Velar	Labial-velar	Glottal
Plosive	p b		t d		c j	k g	kp gb	
Nasal	m		n		ɲ	ŋ	ŋm	
Trill			r					
Fricative		f v	s z					h
Approximant					y		w	
Lateral Approximant			l					

This paper<sup>1</sup> describes the morphology of plural verbs in Vagla, a Grusi language spoken in western Ghana by some 7000 speakers. The main source of data is the Vagla dictionary (CROUCH & HERBERT 1982) and related publications (Crouch & Smiles 1966, CROUCH 1985, CROUCH & NADEN 1998<sup>2</sup>). The example sentences from the Vagla dictionary were all rechecked in the field and in some cases either the transcription or the translation has been corrected<sup>3</sup>. The phonology of Vagla is summarised below together with the system used in this paper. An appendix lists all the singular/plural pairs I have been able to find for Vagla<sup>4</sup>.

## 2. Vagla phonology

There are 24 consonant phonemes, 10 vowel phonemes and 2 tones (tonemes) in Vagla. Vagla consonants are as shown in table 1 above.

Vagla permits tone-bearing nasals, /n/, /ŋ/ and the lateral /l/ where they close a syllable.

Vagla has either nine or ten vowels and a fairly systematic vowel-harmony system. CROUCH & NADEN (1998) give an -ATR counterpart of /a/ which they transcribe as /ʌ/. If this tenth central vowel is phonemic, it is extremely elusive and no lexical items in this paper include it in the transcription. All vowels can occur long or short, but sequences of two similar vowels are not treated as long vowels as a wide variety of tone-patterns are found on similar VV<sup>5</sup> sequences. The present analysis re-transcribes these in an IPA-like format. The vowels are as follows:

	Front	Central	Back
Close	i		u
Close-Mid	ɪ		ʊ
Mid	e		o
Open-Mid	ɛ	(ʌ)	ɔ
Open		a	

Most published material only marks seven vowels in accordance with a perception of Ghanaian

<sup>1</sup> Thanks to Mary-Esther Kropp Dakubu and Ulrich Kleinewillinghöfer who commented on the first draft and saved me from a number of errors. Final revisions were made in July 2003.

<sup>2</sup> This source also gives bibliographic references to secondary analyses of Vagla data.

<sup>3</sup> A slightly risky statement, but based on the views of three senior members of the Vagla literacy committee (see following footnote).

<sup>4</sup> I would like to thank Jebuni Kiipo, George Jamani and James Jobadi who took time to discuss the examples with me in Tuna in March 2002.

<sup>5</sup> Abbreviations:

C any consonant

I Intransitive

N any nasal

O object

S subject

T transitive

V any vowel

\* hypothesised form not existing synchronically

government policy that languages should have an orthography similar to Twi<sup>6</sup>. The seven vowels are the five cardinal vowels plus /ɛ/ and /ɔ/, but the orthography uses 'i' to represent both /i/ and /ɪ/ and 'u' to represent /u/ and /ʊ/. The dictionary adopts a non-orthographic convention of underlining the close vowels. All vowels in Vagla can be nasalised, and this is represented in the orthography by a following 'h'. For example:

*see* - 'to agree' contrasts with *seeh* - to carve

In the present document, nasalisation is transferred to the vowels. Thus *seeh* is written *sēē*.

Vagla has two level tones, rising, falling and downstep. The description of tone to date makes it unclear whether glide tones occur on a single syllable or whether apparent glides are the result of VV sequences with differing tones. The following example shows the possible contrasts on a CVV lexeme:

<i>hūū</i>	n.	bee
<i>hūū</i>	v.	to blow (horn)
<i>hūū</i>	n.	grasshopper
<i>hūū</i>	n.	defect

Following Vagla orthographic practice, tones are generally only transcribed in the present paper where they indicate crucial lexical contrasts. This is not entirely satisfactory, but in the absence of a convincing description of Vagla tone, it represents a practical compromise. Nasals and laterals can also bear tones. /l/, /n/, /m/ and /ŋ/ can bear tones in final position and syllabic /n/ can also be a tone-bearing single lexeme.

### 3. Plural verbs in use in Vagla

#### 3.1 Determinants of plurality

Vagla has a complex system of plurality, with nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs and ideophones all exhibiting morphologically marked plurals (CROUCH & NADEN 1998: 136-137). Many categories of plural have empty sets. There is clearly substantial 'crossover' between morphological markers, reflecting perhaps a former more complex concord system now in decay. The *-zi* suffix, the most common plural affix on nouns, is also found on verbs and adjectives.

#### 3.2 How are plurals used?

The main use of plural verb forms in Vagla is with plural subjects or objects. Thus;

*Zala cogzi u ŋmer u ra lii cal.* Chickens pecked at his sore and it is bleeding.

*A koori bigzi dozizi la.* The chief spilled the bowls of soup.

*U lau u nyuhuna ter cuuri.* He pulled out his hair[s].

These forms can also imply the plurality of an indirect object.

*I fugzi nirri la haa?* Did you pour the water away? (implied: from many buckets)

The intransitive verb *leg* means to make a spot, so the plural means to make spotted, or to be spotted.

*Ba ee tagzii leg u hile.* They took medicine and made a spot on his forehead

*H55ri naabuū legzi n bora gunla.* This stranger has put spots on my body like that.

Also common is marking repeated action or iterative;

*A ra dunzimbūū.* They are biting me.

This can also generate a stative meaning;

*I daa naa ra hērgi saja belle.* Your house (floor) is sometimes slippery.

where the singular, *hēri*, means to slip over.

<sup>6</sup> There is no evidence such a policy existed and orthographies designed in more recent times represent vowels that correspond to the phonemic analysis (see CASALI 1995).

A passive/antipassive opposition can also develop;

<i>marɪ</i>	to be stuck to	<i>A kabɪla marɪ n nonii.</i> The fufu is stuck to my hand.
<i>marɪ</i>	to stick onto	<i>Kpa footozi marɪ konlii nɪ.</i> Stick the photos on the wall.

or;

<i>seb</i>	to be tasteless	<i>I dɔzi naa seppɔ werge.</i> This soup of yours is very tasteless
<i>sebzi</i>	to make tasteless	<i>I sebzi a dɔzi.</i> You have made the soup tasteless

The following example shows how the concept of plurality and the active/passive opposition can be combined;

<i>lom</i>	to be knotted	<i>U lommo.</i> It is knotted.
<i>lonzi</i>	to make knots	<i>Ereɛ ɪ lonzi ηmɛη la gunneɪ?</i> Why did you make knots in the rope like that?

There is no morphological marking that determines the semantics of the plurality used with individual verbs. Some verbs can attract multiple plural categories, although not simultaneously.

#### 4. Classification of plural strategies in Vagla verb forms

##### 4.1 Verb morphology

###### 4.1.1 Canonical structures

The canonical structures of plural verbs are as follows;

VCCV	<i>ɔrgɪ</i>
CVCV	<i>cɔgɪ</i>
CVVCV	<i>cɔɔgɪ</i>
CVNNV	<i>ciŋŋi</i>
CVCCV	<i>bɪrgɪ</i>
CVNCV	<i>banzi</i>

Of these, CVCCV and CVNCV are by far the most common. The Appendix Table lists all the

cases of Vagla verbal plurals so far identified with sentence examples.

#### 4.2 Processes at work

##### 4.2.1 Productive suffixes

Vagla has three synchronic underlying plural suffixes, *-gl*, *-rɪ* (with allomorphs *-li* / *-nɪ*), and *-zi* where *I* is a close or close-mid front vowel showing harmony with the stem vowel. Each suffix has a set of consistent operations to generate plurals according to the form of the singular. I have tried to suggest possible paths for the evolution of these pairings, using a process of erosion and re-analysis. I assume that the original pairing was *-ø/+suffix* and that the present patterns result from re-interpretations, re-affixing and interconsonantal vowel-loss. Unique cases are also discussed below while the Appendix Table provides a dataset of these verb pairs which is as complete as possible.

*-gi*

s.	pl.	Meaning	Operation
<i>bɪr</i>	<i>bɪrgɪ</i>	to change	+ suffix
<i>cɔg</i>	<i>cɔgɪ</i>	to spoil, to be spoiled	+ suffix, assimilation of -g
<i>ferɪ</i>	<i>fergɪ</i>	to step on	+ suffix, assimilation of -i
<i>su</i>	<i>suugi</i>	to be full, to fill	+ suffix, lengthening of V <sub>1</sub>

An unusual case is *kug/kurgi* 'to rub back and forth'/'scrub, to scrape'. Its evolution may be as follows;

s.	<i>*ku</i>	→	<i>kugi</i>	→	<i>kug</i>
pl.	<i>*kuri</i>	→	<i>kurigi</i>	→	<i>kurgi</i>

*-ri*

Occurrences of *-ri* plural suffixes are quite restricted and diverse. Unproductive *-ri* suffixes are also quite common in singulars suggesting re-analysis of plurals.

s.	pl.	Meaning	Operation	s.	pl. I	pl. II	Meaning	Operation
<i>da</i>	<i>daari</i>	to skim off the top	+ suffix, lengthening of V <sub>1</sub>	<i>baŋ</i>	<i>baŋzi</i>	—	to set upright in ground (posts)	+suffix
<i>cur</i>	<i>cúúrì</i>	to come off (seeds)	+ suffix, assimilation of -r, lengthening of V <sub>1</sub>	—	<i>bɪzi</i>	<i>biɟzi</i>	to pour, to spill	+suffix, deletion of V <sub>2</sub>
<i>dàù</i>	<i>dàùrì</i>	to put down	+ suffix	<i>hum</i>	<i>hunzi</i>	—	to send someone	+suffix, assimilation of -m to -n
<i>laa</i>	<i>laari</i>	to take s.t. out of liquid	+ suffix	<i>kpu</i>	<i>kpuuzi</i>	—	to die	+suffix, lengthening of V <sub>1</sub>
				<i>lùg</i>	—	<i>lùgzi</i>	to be lumpy	simple plural not recorded
				—	<i>lɪzi</i>	<i>liɟzi</i>	to go out, take away	see below
				—	<i>pozi</i>	<i>pogzi</i>	to shout but pl. to burst	+suffix, deletion of V <sub>2</sub>
				<i>taŋ</i>	—	<i>taŋzi</i>	to be hard of hearing	simple plural not recorded

A unique case is the alternation *zagɪ/zagɪ* ('to shake down fruit from a tree'). Probably in this case a form \**za* existed previously and formed a plural with *-gi*. When \**za* was lost, the plural became singular and was resuffixed. Thus;

s. *za* → *zagɪ*  
pl. *zagɪ* → *zagɪlɪ* → *zagɪ*

Two examples of a *-ni* suffix are recorded, *cigni/cigzi* 'to put down' and *ɣmèŋ/ɣmenni* 'to cut, to chop'. It is assumed here these are allomorphs of *-ri* but their patterning is quite unique. If so, the *ɣmèŋ/ɣmenni* alternation is simply nasal assimilation;

s. *ɣmèŋ* → *ɣmèŋ*  
pl. *ɣmèŋrɪ* → *ɣmenni*

and *cigni/cigzi*;

s. *cig* → *cigni*  
pl. *cigni* → *cigzi*

*-zi*

In the case of *-zi* suffixes, the examples below suggests that the concept of multiple plurality existed in Vagla, as it does systematically in Obolo and sporadically in Tarok. To account for this, it may be necessary to hypothesize a former paradigm with two plurals, which also accounts for some of the other pairings and can include some defective verbs that appear to be morphologically plural;

This may account for another case that is otherwise difficult to model. Two examples of *-zi/-gzi* have been recorded; *bɪzi* 'to pour' and *pozi* 'to shout'. Their probable evolution is as follows;

	*I	II	III
s.	<i>bɪ</i>	→ <i>bɪ</i>	→ —
pl. I	<i>bɪzɪ</i>	→ <i>bɪzɪ</i>	→ <i>bɪzɪ</i>
pl. II	<i>bɪɟɪ</i>	→ <i>bɪɟzɪ</i>	→ <i>bɪɟzɪ</i>

with the original singular being deleted altogether. Defective verbs lacking singular forms exist, as shown in the table. More puzzling are cases of *-l/-gli* alternations, such as *lilligli* 'to swallow'. These either result from resuffixing a plural form with a *-gi* suffix or the infixing of *-gi-*. Although infixing is rare it does occur in Adamawa languages for plural extensions. Thus;

\**ligi* → *ligili* → *ligli*

or;

\**lili* → *ligili* → *ligli*

#### 4.2.2 Defective verbs

It is useful to assume that the morphology of some verbs can be explained as the result of defective paradigms. The most significant are verbs with apparently plural morphology that have no corresponding singular, for example;

*cuglɪ*        to be crazy  
*lùgzì*        to take out of mouth

There can be two explanations for this, either the singular has simply disappeared and the plural form has taken on a singular meaning, or else the semantic link between singular and plural is so opaque it cannot be recognised. Verbs *cug* ('to take down a load') and *lug* ('to grind') both exist but cannot safely be treated as singulars of those cited above.

#### 5. Conclusions

Vagla has a complex set of singular/plural verb pairings which are barely recognised in the existing documentation. The morphology suggests that at least three verbal extensions can be reconstructed. Probably these originally had distinct meanings but they now all mark plurality, although plurality is interpreted in different ways for each individual verb and can not be predicted from the morphology. The paper proposes some possible routes to explain the evolution of the synchronic forms, but evidence from related languages such as Deg, and further materials on Vagla itself should help decide the credibility of these speculative morphological histories.

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### Appendix: data table

The letters in column M, encode different meanings as far as the English translation goes, and are marked by letters a, b, c etc. but generally reflect a single semantic set. Sometimes the meanings of singular/plural pairs appear to be identical; in this case they are enclosed in a single box. However, where there is a variation in meaning, the two forms

are given in separate boxes with the meanings in corresponding boxes. All verbs in Vagla have perfective forms, including those with extensions. The system of derivation has not been described and is highly complex and so is not treated here. Some of the verbs in the examples are cited in these forms.

Table 1. Data on Vagla plural verbs

No.	s./pl.	M	Gloss	Example
1.	baŋ baŋzi	a	to set upright in ground (posts)	U baŋ daa. He set up a post. Ba baŋzi daazi la. They set the sticks upright.
		b	to push up earth (growing straight as maize)	Sɔgmia la jaa baŋzuu. The maize-stalks have now germinated and pushed up the earth.
		c	to aim (gun)	U baŋ marfa ú lɔ nau. He aimed a gun to shoot a cow. Ba banzi marfazi they are aiming their guns
		d	to become hot (sun)	Wuɔzi baŋŋɔ. The sun has become hot (i.e. noon)
2.	bir	a	to change, to turn over, to translate	U bir u sɔŋ. He changed his name. N bir a teebur. I turned over the table. U bir boroni di du Vɔglaa biini. He has translated English into Vagla.
			to change (many), to turn into, to become	I birgi Vɔglii. You have become a Vagla.
		b	to turn back, to return	U bir har. He turned back. N la Sɔgla ka bir ba. I went to Sawla and then returned.
3.	bizi		to pour, to spill cf. fug	Bizi dɔzi la tɛŋ. Pour the soup for me. Dɔsuma la n maa n daalɛ la biziɔ tuŋ. The good soup my mother prepared, spilled.
			bigzi	A koori bigzi dɔzizi la. The chief spilled the bowls of soup.
4.	cã		to break a rope	U cã a ŋmɛŋ. He broke the rope.
			cãzi	to pluck fruit with a stick
5.	cɪŋŋi or cɪŋŋi		to set down, to put down (as of a gourd or pot)	Kuari vii la cɪŋŋi. Put the pot down. Kpa vii la ga cɪŋŋi dia. Go and put the pot down in the house.
			cɪgzɪ	
6.	cig cigzi	a	To turn down, to be upside down	Bir a koppu cig turn the cup upside down. u cikko. It is upside down. Billi viini la cig zi. Roll over the pots and turn them upside down.
			b	to wear (on head)

No.	s./pl.	M	Gloss	Example
		c	to set up main structure (house-poles and cross beams)	<b>Yaa ra cigzi dia naabuu.</b> We are setting up the forked poles and cross beams of this house.
	(no pl.)	d	to trap under	<b>U kpa tassa cig dangboŋa.</b> He trapped the mouse under the dish.
7.	<b>cɔg</b>		to spoil, to be spoiled	<b>Cɔg bukku la</b> spoil the book. <b>U baasike cɔkkɔ.</b> His bicycle is spoiled. <b>N biini cɔkkɔ.</b> My inside is spoiled [I am sad]
	<b>cɔgɪ</b>			<b>Doonɔ ɔɔ ra cɔgɪ yaa humaa.</b> Rain is always spoiling our work. <b>Ba biine cɔgɔɔ.</b> Their insides are spoiled. [They are unhappy]
8.	<b>cɔg</b>	a	to pound	<b>U cɔg gban̄ko.</b> She pounded cassava.
	<b>cɔgzi</b>		to pound (many)	<b>Ba cɔgzi gban̄ko.</b> They pounded many cassava tubers.
		b	to light (lamp)	<b>Wa cɔŋɪ fintina tɛŋ.</b> Come light my lamp for me.
9.	<b>cɔɔ</b> <b>cɔɔgɪ</b>	a	to be situated, to be in a place	<b>Lee ɪ koo la cɔɔɛ?</b> Where is your farm?
		b	to lie down, to sleep	<b>N maa cɔɔ dia.</b> My mother is lying in the house. (with <b>dɔɔ</b> ) <b>U ra cɔɔ dɔɔɛ.</b> She is sleeping. <b>Ba ra cɔɔgɪ dɔɔɪ.</b> They are sleeping.
10.	<b>cog</b> <b>cogzi</b>		to peck	<b>Zal cog u naa.</b> A chicken pecked his leg. <b>Zala cogzi u ŋmɛr u ra lii cal.</b> Chickens pecked at his sore and it is bleeding.
11.	<b>cug</b> <b>cugzi</b>		to pierce, to punch, to stab	<b>Maree labuu u cug kpu la.</b> He has stabbed and killed the rat. <b>I cugzi n naa la n ɔtɛ labuu.</b> You pierced my swollen leg.
12.	<b>cughɪ</b>		to be crazy, to go crazy (no sg.)	<b>U ra cugluu.</b> He is going crazy.
13.	<b>cur</b>		to come off (as guinea corn, millet, etc.)	<b>A jaagu cuttoo.</b> The seeds have come off the guinea corn. <b>Mia la ra curuu.</b> The seeds are falling from the heads
The following is probably related, but indirectly				
	<b>cúúrì</b>		to pull out many objects (with force)	<b>U lau u nyuhuna tɛr cúúrì.</b> He pulled out his hair.
14.	<b>da</b>		to skim off the top	<b>Kiipo, la ga da siŋ la nyuu.</b> Kiipo, go and skim the top off the beer.
	<b>daarɪ</b>		to take off the top (many)	<b>Ba ra daarɪ nɪrɛ.</b> They are taking water off the top.
15.	<b>dàŋ</b> <b>dan̄zi</b>		to taste, to lick	<b>Dàŋ dɔzi!</b> Taste the soup! <b>Amiina maa daali dɔzi ka waa dan̄ŋɛ.</b> Amina's mother cooked soup but did not taste it. <b>Ba ra dan̄zi ba diweere.</b> They are tasting different types of food.
			to take care of (no sg.)	<b>I dan̄zi u huma nɪ ka gɪ ɪ hor.</b> You take care of his work and leave your own.



No.	s./pl.	M	Gloss	Example
			to depend on, to rely on	U nneε n daŋzi. I depended on him.
16.	dàù		to put down (yam, stick, hoe, etc.)	Kpa hɪ la dàù! Put the yam down! U dàù u sɔŋ. He gave him a name. Gunne Kɔraawiizi dàwùù. That is what God planned for him. U dawɪŋ nenne paa. He took good care of me. Waa wette dàù kiizi la. He couldn't follow the taboos.
	dàùrì		to put down in piles	U dàùrì yazi. He put the salt down in heaps. Ba dàùrì ba sɔna they gave them their names
17.	dòm		to bite	Dòm a hɪ! Bite into the yam! Nuahɪŋ dòmùù buu. A dog bit him.
	dònzi		to bite (many, or many times)	A ra dònzi mbuu. They are biting me.
18.	far		to squeeze into, to be stuck	Bukku naa bee far dɔŋa gã. This book's pages are well stuck together.
	fargɪ		to plug (many)	Yaa fargɪ a bɔɔnɪ la maa. We plugged up all the holes.
19.	fɛrɪ		to step on	Nuahɪŋ fɛrɪ u biere. The dog stepped on her puppy.
	fɛrgɪ			A nuahɪŋ ra fɛrgɪ u biizii. The dog is stepping on her puppies.
20.	fɔŋ fɔŋzi		to remove kernels	N na fɔŋ sɔgmɪa rɛ. I am removing the kernels from the maize cobs.
21.	fug		to pour	Aliizaa fug nɪ la ha. Aliizaa poured the water away.
	fugzi			I fugzi nɪrɪ la haa? Did you pour the water away? (from many buckets)
22.	fuŋ		to pull out (as tooth or horn)	Fuŋ a nyigaa. Pull out the horn.
	fuŋzi		to pull out, to come out (as teeth or nails)	N nyina aŋhɪna faa fuŋzoore. Some of my teeth came out.
23.	haa		to open wide	U haa u nua. He opened his mouth wide.
	haagɪ			Ereε ii haagɪ ii nuuzi guŋ dɪ ra bɪnɪnɪnɛr? Why did you open your mouths and look at me like that? Ba ra haagɪ ɪ nua. They are provoking you so that you keep on retorting.
24.	hɛrɪ		to slip	Un hɛrɛε la, u col u naa ku. When he slipped, he fell and broke his leg.
	hɛrgɪ		to be slippery	I daa naa ra hɛrgɪ saŋa belle. Your house (floor) is sometimes slippery.
25.	hum	a	to send someone	Hum muu! Send him! Ba humɪ mbuu n kalii. They sent me to tell you.
	hunzi			Ba hunzi biizi ba ga yirgi ba maawaa. They have sent children to call their mothers.
		b	to work (no pl.)	Yaa hummɔ zinaa paa! We have worked hard today!

No.	s./pl.	M	Gloss	Example
26.	<b>hùr</b>		to push, to shove	<b>Un hur u togma u col guṅ.</b> When she pushed her namesake, she fell.
	<b>hurgì</b>			<b>Ba hurgì dɔŋaa yawa.</b> They pushed each other at the market.
27.	<b>kori</b>		to catch hold of (s.t. hanging above)	<b>N kori daa bəl.</b> I caught hold of a certain stick.
	<b>korgì</b>			<b>Ba kpa langbal dɪ ra korgì daazi.</b> They took the long stick to catch hold of dead branches.
28.	<b>kug</b>		to rub back and forth	<b>U kug muza la dɪ faa n lia.</b> He rubbed the medicine on a stone and put it on my eye.
	<b>kurgì</b>		to scrub, to scrape	<b>U kurgì tɛbul la u vɔgh.</b> She scrubbed the table and it became smooth.
29.	<b>kur</b>		to count	<b>Fɔgɔ, wa kur hɪa naa dɪ zum a maga.</b> Fɔgɔ, come and count these yams so that you know how many they are.
	<b>kurgì</b>			<b>Ba kurgì a maa gbullɪ.</b> They couldn't count them all.
30.	<b>kpar</b>		to be close together	<b>Yaa haŋ so kpar dɔŋa, maa wer hum.</b> If we sit close together, I cannot work.
	<b>kpargɪ</b>		to join together, be joined together, to put together	<b>Kpargɪ hɪa la maa.</b> Put all the yams together.
31.	<b>kpú</b>	a	to kill	<b>Dɛɛlabuu ba kpú lau bol naa.</b> It was yesterday that they killed an antelope in this village.
	<b>kpúúzi</b>			<b>Ba kpúúzi kunkpila zinaa paa.</b> They killed many things today.
		b	to affect strongly	<b>Lɔzi ra kpumbuu.</b> Hunger is killing me. (I'm very hungry) <b>Hĩzi kpu ubuu paa.</b> Shame really killed him. (He was really ashamed)
		c	to cut original yam from plant and cover plant base	<b>Kpu a nyuum!</b> Cut off the old yams and cover the plants.
32.	<b>laa</b>		to take something out of liquid, to extract	<b>Wilandɔŋ, ɪ laa jaayir la n col kɔlɔŋ laa?</b> Wilandɔŋ, did you extract the tin which fell in the well?
	<b>laari</b>			<b>Ŋmaanɔ, ɪ laari hɪa la vii la biinia?</b> Ŋmaanɔ, did you take out the yams from the pot?
33.	<b>lau</b>	a	to take hold of, to catch	<b>Ba lau ŋmɛɛŋ la.</b> They caught the thief. <b>Lau bɔra.</b> Be patient. <b>Lau ɪ hiŋ.</b> Control yourself. <b>Niŋ na lau.</b> The fire is alight.
	<b>laurɪ</b>			<b>Laurɪ zala dɪ tɛŋ</b> Catch the chickens for me. <b>Waa nyinni laures.</b> He didn't catch any fish.
		b	to catch a disease	<b>Jirgi laurɪ baa buu</b> Many people caught measles.
		c	to be overcome by a feeling (no pl.)	<b>Dɔɔ lawɪmbuu.</b> I'm sleepy. <b>Niinyɔgzi lawɪmbuu.</b> I am thirsty. <b>Biini cɔg lawɪmbuu.</b> I am sad.
34.	<b>lɛg</b>		to put spots on, to be	<b>Ba ɛ tagzɪ lɛg u hile.</b> They took medicine and made

No.	s./pl.	M	Gloss	Example
			spotted	a spot on his forehead.
	legzi			Hõõri naabuu legzi n bõra gunla. This stranger has put spots on my body like that. Amani bõra ɔɔ legzoo cɛrɛcɛrɛ. A leopard's body is always spotted.
35.	lɛŋ		to prop up, to support	U lawuu leŋ. He held on to him and supported him.
	lɛŋzi		to put a calabash on a basin of water to stop it slopping	I leŋzi viini ni nɪri laa? Did you prop up the water pots?
36.	leu	a	to be lost, to lose	N kebee leuwo. My money is lost.
	leuzi			N peeza maa leuzoo. All my sheep are lost.
		b	to make a mistake	N leuwo. I made a mistake.
37.	hɪzi		to take off, to take out	Yaa hɪzi hɪa anɛɛrɛ. We took out two yams.
	hɪgzi		to take out (many)	I ni i maa hɪgzi hɪazi laa? Did you and your mother take out the yams?
38.	lil		to swallow	Jinche maa wetto lil amambii la maa. Jinche's mother was able to swallow all the tablets. Wɪzi lil baagu. There is an eclipse of the moon.
	ligli			Ba ra ligli tagzi la maanni. They are swallowing all the medicine.
39.	lom		to be knotted	U lommoo. It is knotted.
	lonzi		to make knots	Ɛrɛɛ i lonzi ŋmɛŋ la gunnɛi? Why did you make knots in the rope like that?
40.	lùg		to take out of (mouth)	Lug a kabila ha Take the morsel of fufu out of your mouth
	lùgzi			U lùgzi lɔgmɛ la ha. He took the morsels out of his mouth. Wɪzi lùgzi baagu. The moon has come out of eclipse.
41.	màm		to open pod (akee apples)	Húù la mammɔ. The akee apple fruits have opened.
	manzi			Húù la manzɔɔ kpilakpila. Many akee apples have opened.
			to laugh [no pl.]	Daari faa mammɔ werge. Daari was laughing a lot.
42.	marɪ		to be stuck to	A kabila marɪ n nonii. The fufu is stuck to my hand.
	margɪ		to stick onto	Kpa footozi margɪ konlii ni. Stick the photos on the wall.
43.	ŋmèŋ		to cut, to chop	Kpaga maa ŋmèŋ daa. Kpaga's mother chops wood.
	ŋmennɪ			Dɪ i wa la koo, i ŋmennɪ daazi la maa dɪ ra ba. If you go to farm, cut all the sticks and bring them.
44.	ɔr		to swell through infection	N naa ɔttɔ. My leg is swollen
	ɔrgɪ			Sumpua ni Fɔgɔ maa naazi ɔrgɔɔrɛ. Both Sumpua and Fɔgɔ's legs are swollen.
45.	pàà		to gather up	La ga pàà kpaga la. Go and gather up the rubbish.

No.	s./pl.	M	Gloss	Example
	<b>pààgr</b>			<b>Ba ra paagr ba kalaŋkuu.</b> They are gathering up their groundnuts.
46.	<b>pam</b>		to take out from (something close-fitting)	<b>Winanuu pam kizee u too biini.</b> Winanuu took his knife out from its sheath.
	<b>panzi</b>			<b>N nyina aŋhina faa panzɔɔre.</b> Some of my teeth came out.
47.	<b>pelr</b>		to stick to, to stand close to	<b>Erɛɛ ɪ pelr koŋlii la nɪ gɔnnɛi?</b> Why are you standing close to the wall like that?
	<b>pégŋt</b>			<b>Kpa a maa péŋt a bɔrazi.</b> Take them all and stick them to their places.
48.	<b>peri</b>		to split up, to crack	<b>Daa labuu ɪ peri naa?</b> Is that the stick you split?
	<b>pergi</b>			<b>Pergi coonzi la di tɛŋ.</b> Split the front legs of the rabbits for me.
49.	<b>piŋ</b>		to be satisfied, to be full	<b>Yaa dɛɛ di kaɓilazi di piŋ.</b> Yesterday we ate fufu and were satisfied.
	<b>piŋzi</b>		to become full (of grain)	<b>A jaa ra piŋzi biizii.</b> They are now full of seeds.
50.	<b>pozi</b> <b>pogzi</b>	a	to shout	<b>U pozoo.</b> He shouted. <b>Maa nyiŋŋi nɛr n na pogzi n nɪ.</b> I don't like a person who shouts at me.
		b	to burst	<b>Gonni ra pozuu filaŋkeŋ.</b> Cotton is bursting out at the moment. <b>Bɔɔlɔɔ la maa pogzoo.</b> All the balls are burst.
51.	<b>pum</b>	a	to trap (on ground with the hands)	<b>Maree la yaa n faa re duŋŋi la, minuu pumuu.</b> I was the one who trapped the rat which we were driving out.
	<b>punzi</b>			<b>Yaa dɛɛ punzi dangbonzi kpɪla.</b> Yesterday we trapped a lot of mice with our hands.
		b	to rape	<b>Nɛr la n na pum waa wer.</b> One who rapes is not a good person.
		c	to push up earth (seedlings or groundnuts)	<b>Siga la yaa n duuwe la jaa punzoo.</b> The beans which we planted have now pushed up the earth.
52.	<b>puri</b>		to break	<b>Ba nuukpaŋ puroo.</b> Their unity is broken.
	<b>purgi</b>		to break in many pieces	<b>Kɔlbaa labuu ɪ purgi naa?</b> Is that the bottle you broke? <b>N nyuu hanna purgimbuu.</b> My head is splitting.
53.	<b>seb</b>		to be boring, to be uninteresting, to be tasteless	<b>I dozi naa seppo werge.</b> This soup of yours is very uninteresting
	<b>sebzi</b>		to make tasteless	<b>I sebzi a dozi.</b> You have made the soup uninteresting.
54.	<b>sɛɛ</b>		to carve, to sharpen	<b>Baal naa ra sɛɛ padaazii.</b> This man carves hoe sticks.
	<b>sɛɛzi</b>		to chip projections from a lumpy wall	<b>Sɛɛzi a kuŋli yiŋ ha.</b> Chip off the lumps on the wall.
55.	<b>seu</b>	a	to prop	<b>Seu gbera la.</b> Prop the door half open.
	<b>seuzi</b>		to take hold of	<b>Ba wɔɔ seuzɛɛ.</b> They didn't hold him.

No.	s./pl.	M	Gloss	Example
		b	to search for	<b>Ba sɛw pir la nyiŋŋi cooma.</b> They searched the bush looking for a hare.
56.	sìdò		to die	<b>U wirwɔ guŋŋ ka sìdò.</b> He was sick for a long time and then died. <b>A ka tama ka baagu sìdò.</b> A few days more and the moon will die. (the month will end). <b>U ra sìdò i sìdòrɛ.</b> She loves you - will do anything for you.
	sìdòzi			<b>Nekpɪla sìdòzɔrɛ.</b> Many people died.
57.	su		to be full	<b>A viini maa suwoore.</b> All the pots are full. <b>U su haanne.</b> She has become a woman. <b>U suwoore.</b> She is a virgin.
	suugi		to fill	<b>Ba suugi viini la maa.</b> They filled all the pots.
58.	suã	a	to hide (intrans.)	<b>Ba dan suã.</b> They will hide.
	suãzi		to hide something	<b>Ba ra suãzi ba kunaa.</b> They are hiding their things.
		b	to weave [no pl.]	<b>Nabɔma naa ra suã wejezi.</b> This elder weaves clothes.
59.	sùù		to put into (something close-fitting)	<b>Kpa i naa suu i gau biini.</b> Put your foot in your shoe.
	suuzi			<b>Kpa i naazi maa di suuzi i gawa biini.</b> Put your feet into your shoes. [Many people]
60.	suu		to suck in (as a means of cooling the mouth or kissing)	<b>Baal la suu a mango maa.</b> The man sucked in all the mango juice.
	suuzi			<b>U jaa ra suuzi u nuarɛ dikuu gɛɛlɔŋ wia.</b> He's now sucking in his mouth because of the pepper.
61.	ta	a	to throw	<b>U ta birɛ.</b> He threw a stone. <b>Ba ra ta sipaa.</b> They are playing cards. <b>Ba ta nɪrɛ.</b> They poured a libation
	taazi			<b>Ba ra taazi bia.</b> They are throwing stones.
		b	to reveal a secret, to report a secret [no sg.]	<b>Kuruure taazaa tɛŋ.</b> Someone reported it to me.
62.	taŋ		to be hard of hearing (one)	<b>U digna taŋ muu.</b> He is hard of hearing.
	taŋzi		to be hard of hearing (many)	<b>Yaa digna taŋzɔrɛ.</b> We are hard of hearing.
63.	t̃ɔ̃		to prick, to pierce	<b>Hɪnuu kpa daa naa di t̃ɔ̃ naa?</b> Are you the one who pricked me with this stick?
	t̃ɔ̃zi			<b>S̃ɔ̃rɪ naa ra t̃ɔ̃zi werge.</b> These thorns are pricking me badly.
64.	tòŋ		to drip	<b>Na gunla hɪŋ ɛɛ nɪ toŋ n nɪ.</b> Look at how you dripped water on me.
	tòŋzi			<b>D̃ɔ̃ la waa balle ka tòŋzi b̃ɛ.</b> It didn't rain but only dripped.
65.	tɔrɪ		to pluck (fruit)	<b>u tɔrɪ mango</b> he plucked a mango
	tɔrgɪ			<b>ba re tɔrgɪ mangozi</b> they plucked mangoes

No.	s./pl.	M	Gloss	Example
66.	<b>vir</b>		to hit, to kick	U <b>virij</b> n hia he kicked my stomach
	<b>virgi</b>		to hit, kick (many things or times), to prance	U ra <b>virgi</b> baabuu he is kicking them
67.	<b>vir</b> <b>virgi</b>		to shoot a bird with a catapult	U <b>vir</b> zumbee he shot at a bird
68.	<b>voo</b>		to tie	Ii <b>voo</b> nenne! Tie it well.
	<b>voozi</b>		to tie [many things] to plot against	<b>Ba ra voozi</b> ba hiazi. They are tying their yams. <b>N wiare</b> ba ra <b>voozi</b> . They are plotting against me. [lit. I things, they are tying]
69.	<b>wii</b>	a	to cry	U <b>wiiwo</b> . She cried.
	<b>wiigi</b>			<b>Ba ra wiigi</b> . They are crying.
		b	to blame	<b>A baal</b> ra <b>wii</b> u <b>dohinne</b> pee. The man is blaming his neighbour for nothing.
70.	<b>yaa</b>		to spread, to open up, to become wide	<b>Ere</b> i <b>yaa</b> i <b>siwee</b> gunnei? Why have you opened your eyes like that?
	<b>yaaigi</b>			<b>Ba ra yaaigi</b> ba <b>nuuzi</b> ba <b>lae</b> tagzi. They are opening their mouths wide to get medicine.
71.	<b>yag</b>		to punch, to kick	<b>Ere</b> <b>wiare</b> i <b>yag</b> u <b>bampirii</b> gunnei? Why did you punch his chest like that?
	<b>yagzi</b>			<b>ii</b> ra <b>yagzi</b> <b>dohaa</b> gee? Are you punching each other?
72.	<b>yau</b>		to buy	<b>Anmene</b> i <b>yau</b> ol <b>naane</b> ? How much did you buy this meat for?
	<b>yauzi</b>			<b>Ba</b> <b>yauzi</b> <b>hira</b> la <b>maanii</b> . They have bought all the yams.
73.	<b>ye</b>		to throw at, to throw against (from a distance)	<b>Ba</b> <b>yej</b> <b>bia</b> . They threw stones at me.
	<b>yeezi</b>			<b>ii</b> <b>maa</b> <b>gile</b> ra <b>yeezuu</b> . All of you stop throwing at it.
74.	<b>yir</b>		to call	U ra <b>yirimbuu</b> gee? Is he calling me?
	<b>yirgi</b>			<b>Ba</b> ra <b>yirgi</b> <b>yaabuu</b> . They are calling us.
75.	<b>zaa</b>	a	to fly	<b>Buyoo</b> <b>naa</b> <b>daj</b> <b>wer</b> <b>zaa</b> <b>di</b> la <b>cinciij</b> . This duck will be able to fly high.
	<b>zaazi</b>			<b>Zumbizi</b> <b>naa</b> ra <b>zaazi</b> <b>cinciij</b> . These birds are flying high.
		b	to jump	U <b>zaawo</b> . He jumped. (once) <b>Sampussi</b> <b>labuu</b> ra <b>zaazi</b> la. The frogs are jumping.
76.	<b>zagi</b>		to shake (down fruit from a tree) to shake out dust from a cloth	<b>Zagi</b> <b>nona</b> la <b>ha</b> ! Shake down the fruit!
	<b>zagli</b>			<b>Zagli</b> u <b>panhoori</b> la <b>maa</b> <b>ha</b> . Shake down all its leaves.
77.	<b>zeu</b> (also		to make a design, to	<b>N</b> <b>tassaa</b> n <b>zeu</b> . I have decorated my dish.

No.	s./pl.	M	Gloss	Example
	zau)		decorate	
	zeuzi		to make a design (of small marks)	<b>Ba ya la ga zeuzi n dia konlii.</b> Come and let us go and make designs on my wall.
78.	zõõ		to insult, to gossip about	<b>Erẽẽ I zõõ gunnã?</b> Why did you gossip about me like that?
	zõõzi			<b>Ba dẽẽ faa ra zõõzĩmbuu paa.</b> They were really gossiping about me yesterday.