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A grammar of Gã

by

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation constitutes a description of the grammar - mainly the morphology and syntax - of Gã, a Kwa language spoken in Accra, Ghana by about 700,000 people. The aim is to present a comprehensive, usage-based account of Gã as it is spoken currently, while incorporating diachronic evidence where available to further understand and account for the synchronic data.

In the first chapter, background information is given on the Gã people, their history and culture. There is also a brief description of basic phonetics and phonology.

Chapter 2 looks at the concept of the word, word classes and their associated morphology. Gã has all the major word classes: nouns, verbs and adjectives. It has bound subject pronominal clitics and free object pronominals. Property concepts are expressed mainly by verbs and nouns. Ideophones are very common and belong to the adverb, adjective and noun classes. Chapter 3 is dedicated to verbs. Verbal categories are conveyed primarily by affixation. Gã is an aspectual language with a recently established future time
prefix that is becoming more tense-like. Gã is nominative-accusative with highly transitive clauses and an indispensable subject. Chapter 4 discusses serial verb constructions. These were found to be pervasive and an important means of achieving valency changes and carrying out aspectual functions. As a result, morphological operations to alter valency are few. Major voice categories are manifested mainly through periphrastic means (Chapter 5). Chapter 6 looks at nominalizations generally. In Gã, grammatical nominalizations have functions ranging from relativization to complementation and adverbial modification. Topic and focus constructions are examined in the final chapter. Focus constructions are utilized for contrast and emphasis. Topic constructions are made up almost entirely of left-dislocated constructions. They may also mark contrast, and are used discursively to highlight background information.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.0 Overview, scope and aims of the study
The aim of this dissertation is to provide a thorough description and analysis of a wide range of morphological and syntactic phenomena in the Gã language. Gã is a language of the Niger-Congo family, the largest language phylum in the world with 1,436 languages (Williamson and Blench 2000:11). It belongs to the Kwa sub-branch, which is the predominant branch in West Africa. Gã is spoken primarily in Accra, the capital city of Ghana. Native speakers are also referred to as Gã (people) or Gãs.

The target audience for this dissertation is primarily linguists, especially Africanists and specialists of Kwa languages. But this work would be invaluable for morphologists, syntacticians and grammarians of any language family, because its broad, in-depth description of the Gã language could inform them of innovations in aspects of grammar that have been attested in only a limited number of languages. Typologists, especially, will find that this grammar tackle a great majority of the grammatical topics that constitute fertile ground for cross-linguistic comparison and research, and they will find that such topics are analysed in
considerable syntactic and semantic detail. For this same reason, theoretically-oriented linguists
will find this work a good resource in their investigations.

In certain regards, this grammar bucks the prevailing grammatical theories in linguistics
today, and shows that grammar descriptions need not simply consume and propagate the
theoretical trends already established, but can be critical of theoretical achievements in the field
and correct errors, and in so-doing advance theoretical studies. This is in the spirit of Robert
Dixon’s and his students’s many descriptive studies.

A much smaller target audience of this grammar is the body of scholars and teachers of
Gã in Ghana. These comprise teachers of Gã at all levels of the education system as well as Gã
experts responsible for policies on pedagogy such as setting criteria for instructional materials,
creating curricula etc. It is my hope that this grammar will provide them with new insights into
familiar pedagogical topics of the grammar as well as open them up to hitherto backgrounded
aspects of the grammar, and that this spurs them to modify their teaching materials and
approaches in order to more effectively impart onto their pupils and students the state of the
grammar of present-day Gã.

All in all, this grammar is symbolically valuable to native speakers of Gã because it
shows that Gã, like other more prestigious languages e.g. English, is amenable to scientific
studies and is at par with English and other European languages in having a documented
grammar which can make important theoretical contributions to the field of linguistics.

This first, introductory chapter will give background information on the Gã language
and people (§1.1), their history (§1.1.2) and culture (§1.4), and the current sociolinguistic
situation (§1.3). §1.5 will discuss previous work on Gã, while §1.6 and §1.7 will focus on the
theoretical framework and data collection methods employed in this work. §1.8 will give a
short overview of Gã phonetics and phonology.

1.1 The Gã people
The Gã are a relatively small group of people who inhabit the south-eastern coastal region of
Ghana from the Densu river valley in the west to Kpone in the east, and to the borders of the
Akyem and Akwapim regions to the north and north-west (Dakubu 1988:102). Gãs can be
found as far north as Oyibi (north-east) and Ajenkotu (north-west), as far west as Nleshie
Amanfrom and as far east as Kpone. This area is known as the Accra Plains. The traditional
homeland of the Gãs and the area with the highest population of Gãs is the city of Accra, which
since 1877 has also been the capital city of Ghana.

According to Reindorf (1966:24), the name Gã is derived from gaga, which is the name
of a type of big, black ant with a severe bite. He writes that the natives call themselves
Loeiabii. Loei is the name of another type of ferocious ant. This name must have fallen out of
use as it is hard to find any Gã person who refers to themselves by that. The Akan name for
loei is nkrang and this also became the name used by Akan-speakers to refer to Gãs. This name
also lent itself to the capital city and home of the Gãs, Accra. As with folk etymologies, one
cannot be too sure of their veracity. However, it seems the Gãs admired aggressive ants and
likened themselves to them, thereby referring to themselves using names of various species of
ants.

The number of Gã speakers cannot be accurately ascertained because census
information asks about ethnic affiliation and not languages spoken, and there are members of
the Gã ethnic group who may not speak Gã, as well as several non-Gã peoples who speak Gã
with native or near-native proficiency. Also, studies and statistics of Gã tend to be lumped up
with those of its closest relative, Dangme. This tight relationship is reflected in the hyphenated
term Gã-Dangme that is used to refer to the group. The 2010 national census puts the
population of Ga-Dangmes at 1,824,753 representing 7.4% of the population of the country,
which stood at 24,658,823 (Ghana Statistical Services 2013:62). Of these, a little over a third
are estimated to be Gãs (about 700,000), and a majority of these reside in the Greater Accra
Region. It is safe to assume that a very sizeable majority of these also speak Gã natively. The
census also puts the percentage of Ga-Dangmes in the Greater-Accra Region at 27%, with the
vast majority of the population of the region comprising different non-Gã ethnic groups.
Several thousands of these non-Gâs are fluent in Gâ, especially those of the older generation who settled in Accra at a time when Gâs were the majority ethnic group.

The traditional occupation of the Gâs is farming and sea-fishing. Men fish and women smoke or salt fish for sale in the market. The modern city of Accra is big and cosmopolitan, billed by the government as “the gateway to Africa”. It is the seat of government and also the financial capital of the country, with many banks and other financial institutions. There are also many schools at the primary and secondary level and a healthy number of universities. As a result of this urbanization, many Gâs are formally educated and have jobs as tradesmen, civil servants or in other white-collar jobs.

The Dangmes neighbour Gâs to the east and north-east. The two peoples have a history that is inextricably-linked and they speak languages that are very similar in every aspect. Dakubu (1988) provides evidence to show that both languages descended from an ancient ancestor – Proto-Gâ-Dangme. However, they are not mutually intelligible. The two languages have carved separate paths of development, mainly due to migration and contact with other languages. Dangme was greatly influenced by Ewe while Gâ was influenced early on by Guan, and later by Akan (Dakubu 2005). Dangme is the more conservative of the two. Below is a
map taken from Bibiebome (2011:6), showing the Gã-speaking area.¹ Below that is a language map of Ghana, with the Gã-Dangme-speaking area in the south-east coastal region of the country being represented by short horizontal dashes.

![Map of Gã-speaking area showing some major towns](image)

*Figure 1: Gã-speaking area showing some major towns*

¹ According to Dakubu (1988:102) Nungua, Tema and Kpone used to be Dangme-speaking areas till about 150 years ago.
1.1.2 History of the Gã people

Like most African people, the Gã-Dangme have no written record of their history, so what is known of their early origin is gleaned from oral traditions. Most historians agree that the Ga-Dangme came from an area east of the Volta River. Reindorf (1966:21) writes that oral history
has is that the Ga-Dangme originated from Same, between the rivers Efa and Kpola near Oyo in Nigeria. The exact location of this town however is disputed. It is believed that from Same the Gã-Dangme travelled through Benin, to Tetetutu in Togo, then finally crossed the Volta River, a small stream at the time, to their present settlement in the Accra Plains. Other people, especially Ga traditionalists, believe that their origins can be traced much further than Nigeria. They believe that the Gã-Dangme are descended from Jews, who migrated from Israel, through Egypt and Sudan and finally settled in an area bordering the River Niger, west of Lake Chad. From this region they migrated through Nigeria, to Benin, Togo and finally to the Accra Plains. Reindorf (1966:35) supports this Jewish origin story with a few examples of Hebraism in Gã culture. He notes that Gãs perform an important naming ceremony on the eight day after a child’s birth, while Jews perform male circumcisions on the eighth day after birth. Before this day, the child is not considered a proper human. Gãs also have males circumcised but not necessarily on the eight day after birth. Also, during the annual festival, Homowo, door posts of each home are painted with red clay, just as was done by the Israelites for Passover.

Unfortunately, none of this can be easily verified. What is certain is that the Gã-Dangmes emigrated to their present day settlement from somewhere in the east. It is not certain when and where the two groups separated. C. Painter’s Lexicostatistical Analysis (1966) mentioned in Dakubu (1988) puts the time of this separation at a little over 1000 years ago.
is probable that the two languages became dialectally diverse before they crossed into the Accra Plains (Henderson-Quartey 2001:42). Without a doubt, the early Gãs and their language and culture were heavily influenced by the Guan people whom they met at Kpeshi and lived amongst for a period before crossing into the Accra Plains. Some morphological features, for example, which are not found in Dangme, can be traced to Guan influence. Later influence on Gã language (mainly vocabulary) and culture came from the Akans further west. According to Dakubu (1981:63), words borrowed into Gã from Akan include words related to the state and military (ôtsàá!mɛ̃́ ‘linguist’, âsàfò ‘company’), religion (m̀pá!i ‘prayer’, òkòm̀fó ‘priest’), food (ôklàklà ‘light soup’, àm̀pɛ̀shí ‘plain boiled food’) and music (òdònó, àtùmpáŋ́ ‘types of drums’).

1.2 Genetic classification

Gã is classified as Niger-Congo, Kwa. The Kwa family comprises about 30 languages spoken “along the Atlantic coast of West Africa from the south-eastern quadrant of Cote d’Ivoire to the extreme southwestern corner of Nigeria” (Williamson and Blench 2000:27). Though the grouping of other Kwa languages has presented some challenges to linguists, Gã and Dangme have always uncontroversially been grouped together, which is indicative of their very close genetic relationship (See: Greenberg 1963; 1983, Stewart 1989 and Williamson and Blench 2000). Gã displays typical Kwa characteristics such as having mainly monosyllabic verbs,
severely reduced noun class system or no noun class system (in the case of Gã, no traces whatsoever remain of the noun class system associated with Proto Niger-Congo), and an isolating and analytic syntactic structure in which there are few verbal affixes. Arguments are indicated by adpositions or serial verbs (serial verbs in the case of Gã), rather than by valency-changing affixes. As a result, the verb stem is phonologically reduced and small in size as compare to the agglutinating morphology of many other Niger-Congo families, most famously the Bantu family. Gã-Dangme has no further sub-classification within Kwa which suggests that genetically, Gã and Dangme are as closely related to any one Kwa language as they are to another e.g. Gã is just as closely (or distantly) related to Abidji, spoken in neighbouring Cote d’Ivoire, as it is to Akan or Ewe which are spoken only a few hundred kilometres away from Accra. Typologically, however, this is not the case, as proximity and resulting contact between languages can lead to borrowing of vocabulary and syntactic structure. This is the case with Akan and to a lesser extent, Ewe – the two languages that are geographically closest to Gã (apart from Dangme). Agyei-Owusu (2007:8) notes that about 8% of the words in Dakubu’s (1998) Gã-English dictionary are of Akan origin. This massive borrowing is not surprising because the Gã have since ancient times come into contact with various Akan groups. They have simultaneously and alternately traded with them, lived with them, fought them, married them, ruled over them and been ruled by them (Reindorf 1966). This cultural and linguistic
contact is bound to continue for years, as Accra is currently the most developed city in the country and therefore the prime destination for migration of other ethnic groups in search of jobs and a better life. Figure 3 below shows the classification of Kwa languages by Williamson and Blench (2000:29).
1.3 Sociolinguistic situation

The following sections explore some of the social dynamics that affect the use and development of the language.
1.3.1 Dialects
Gã is relatively homogeneous. Dakubu (1988:105) reports that for Gã there is not much regional variation. In addition Allotey (2004) notes some minor lexical, phonological and syntactic differences between the Gã spoken in central Accra to that spoken on the periphery of the Gã-speaking area (in towns such as Asuom, Gbetseli and Kpone). However, he concludes that these are not significant enough to establish distinct dialect areas. It is interesting that even at the boundaries of Gã land where one might expect some dialect differentiation due to relative isolation and distance from the majority of the Gã populace, this is not the case. Allotey (2004:77) surmises that this may be because the Gã community is more cohesive since it occupies a very limited area as compared to other communities like the Akan and Guan which are much more widely distributed.

1.3.2 Language attitudes, language shift and language maintenance
Gãs are famously multilingual. As mentioned earlier, Gãs have always been in contact with various Akan groups. The result is that many native Gã speakers also speak Akan or at least one other language. Indeed Dakubu (1996b:12) states that “it is very probable that no time in its history has Accra been a linguistically homogeneous community in which everybody spoke only Ga.” It is thus a credit to the Gã people that although they have been bilingual throughout much of history they have maintained the use of their language. As Sasse (1992:14) observes,
bilingualism or multilingualism may result in situations that cause one group to give up their language for another. Gã speakers however have managed to cultivate a state of stable bilingualism which has as yet not led to a shift. In a recent study by Bibiebome (2011) on language shift and maintenance among Gãs, all the Gã respondents (200 to be exact) in the survey reported varied degrees of fluency in another language. For many of them this language was Twi (a dialect of Akan). No one was monolingual. He also found that Gã was increasingly becoming restricted to use in the home domain, with almost half of respondents reporting that rather than their native language Gã, they would use Twi in the market, at church and when talking to a stranger, the reason being that Accra is a very multi-ethnic city and Twi has become a defacto lingua franca because of the large population of Akan migrants to the city. Indeed, Akans make up 39.7% of the population of the Greater Accra Region while Gã-Dangmes make up 27.4% of that population, according to the 2010 census (Ghana Statistical Service 2013:62). This is not surprising as Akan groups make up a little less than half of the population of the entire country. In the face of these social dynamics, there is the sad possibility that in the future Gã speakers may be unable to sustain this bilingualism.

Presently, however, this situation seems unlikely, as the factors that lead communities to abandon their language simply do not exist in the Gã situation. One of these factors, as set forth in the Gaelic-Arvanitika model of language death, is that the recessive group comes under
intense social and economic pressure to give up their language (Sasse 1992:14). Bibebome (2011) reports no such social or economic pressure. Rather, Gã speakers’ use of Twi is for utilitarian purposes rather than any wish to use a perceived more prestigious or economically advantageous language. Positive attitudes towards Gã abound, with all native speakers reporting a desire to see the language flourish. Most crucially, the language is still being actively transmitted to children and so the threat of a shift to Twi is still far off. (Bibebome 2011:57).

Perhaps, a bigger threat is posed by English, which as the language of prestige, education and social advancement is viewed as the most important language in one’s repertoire. English is the national and official language of Ghana and the sole medium of instruction in school at all levels. The extent of codeswitching in some of the recorded data gives one an idea of how common and pervasive the English language is, even when people are speaking their native languages. I have also casually observed that young middle-class parents (mostly in their 20’s, 30’s and 40’s) often speak to their children in English rather than in their native language, with the result that these children grow up understanding but not communicating in their native language. This observation is in opposition to Bibebome’s findings that the language is being passed on to children. If this trend continues then these languages, and Gã is amongst them, are at some point going to become endangered as the economy develops and as more people
become educated and adopt the ideology that giving your children a head-start in the English language will aid their future success.

Dakubu (2005:52) also reports that there continues to be a contraction in once important registers such as hunting, traditional religion, fishing and traditional weaving. This has been caused by the urbanization and Christianization of the Ga-speaking area. Many animals have lost their habitat due to human expansion and along with their disappearance comes the loss of vocabulary related to them. International fishing by big fishing companies means traditional fishing is no longer as lucrative, and going to church for many means praying and worshipping in English. The urbanization of Accra means that many Gâs have white-collar jobs, all of which are conducted almost entirely in English. Therefore, while Gâ is not in any immediate danger, there is certainly reason to worry about the distant future and whether it will still be a viable language then. Dakubu (2005:54) goes as far as to predict that the survival of Gâ into the 23rd century is not completely assured. This state of affairs makes works such as this one even more important, as a way of preserving the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gâ people.

1.4 Cultural background
This section gives a brief description of the social structure of Gâ towns as well as a description of three of their most important cultural rites - the annual *Homowo* festival and its accompanying twin festival, and the naming ceremony (*kpɔjièmɔ*) held for newborn babies.
Every Gã person comes from one of six Gã towns, all found along the coast. These are Ga Mashi, Osu, La, Teshie, Nungua, Tema and Kpone. Even Gãs who have lived for generations inland, in Gã villages as far north as the foot of the Akwapim Hills, will identify one of these coastal towns as their hometown. The Ga Mashi are believed to be the first group of Gãs to have settled on the coast and hence are seen as the original settlers. When Gã natives speak of Gã (the place), they mean Ga Mashi. Similarly, when some people speak of Accra, they are referring to Ga Mashi and its immediate environs and not necessarily to the entire metropolitan area of Accra. Within each town, there are various “quarters” to which several families belong.

Unlike the neighbouring Akans and Ewes, traditionally, Gã society is not headed by a chief or king but rather by a high priest, the chief/head wúlɔ̀mɔ̃̀. According to Field (1961), the wúlɔ̀mɔ̃̀ is the caretaker or guardian of the gods of the people. Each god has its wúlɔ̀mɔ̃̀ and the head wúłɔmɔ̃̀ or high priest is the priest to the most important god. Gã government, therefore was an absolute theocracy, according to Field. The wúlɔmɛ̃̀ĩ̀ ‘priests’ were tasked with keeping the peace, resolving disputes, as well as feeding the gods, praying to them and performing the necessary rites and rituals. Field (1961:3) writes that due to the need to form military alliances to fend off attackers and negotiate with foreigners, the high priest had to relinquish some of his less-spiritual duties to the lesser priests. These lesser priests thus were empowered with
important matters of governance in a parallel role to the chiefs of the Akan tribes. They were given the title mãŋtsè (lit: father of the town) and were referred to by other tribes as ‘chiefs’.

Many of the royal symbols of chieftaincy associated with the Akans (such as royal stools, umbrellas, riding in palanquins etc.) were adopted for them.

Owing to this history, chieftaincy among the Gã is not as strong and respected an institution as among other tribes, and there are constant disputes whenever one chief dies, over who to succeed him. The high priest or chief wúlɔmɔ̀ is still viewed as a sort of “keeper of the soul” of the people and is accorded the utmost respect. At national ceremonies held in Accra, such as independence day celebrations, it was the wúlɔmɔ̀ who represented the Gã people and offered prayers.

1.4.1 Some important cultural observances

Three important rites observed by the Gãs will be discussed in this section. The first two are linked in that they occur within a day of each other. These are the twin festival - hàãjìäyèlèyèlè (twins’ yam-eating) and Homowo, the annual festival that marks the harvest and the beginning of the new year. The third is kpòjièmɔ́, the naming ceremony performed for babies eight days after birth.

The Gãs believe that twins are a blessing from God and are also supernatural creatures with magical powers. Therefore, every year, a day before Homowo, a ritual celebration is held
in their honour. On the day of the twin festival, a special preparation of herbs is made together
with goat and chicken blood, yam peels, schnapps, eggs and sea water. This mixture is left in
the compound of the twins’ home. It is believed that anyone who puts money into the pot
containing the herbal preparation and washes their face and rinses their mouth with it will have
their desires fulfilled by the twins. It is believed that the spirit of the twins resides in the herbal
preparation. On the day of the twin festival, many people come and make supplications through
the herbs. In the evening, women carry the pots containing the herbs from the home of the
twins to the seaside, in a large procession involving singing and dancing. The women who
carry the pots become possessed and act wildly but do not endanger themselves or anyone else.

The twins are bathed and dressed in all-white clothes and their faces are painted with white
clay. They follow the procession to the seaside, where the herbal preparation is thrown away.

The procession itself is a joyous and raucous affair with huge crowds pouring into the narrow
old streets of Gã Mashi, as I witnessed a couple of years ago. People who do not join the
procession nevertheless celebrate in their homes or line the streets to watch the procession. The
day is a boon for restaurant and bar owners as people go all out to partake in the merry-
making. After the procession, the people all go to their various homes and enjoy meals
specially requested by the twins.
The following morning is the day for celebrating Homowo, a festival to remember a time in the past when there was a great famine, which eventually ended amidst abundance of food. A few weeks before Homowo, the ńmã̀ã̀dṹ!mɔ̃́ ceremony takes place, where the priests and people sow the first seeds of corn. After this ceremony and before Homowo, there is a ban on all drumming and other forms of noise-making, so as not to disturb the gods at this critical time. The ban is lifted on the day of Homowo. Homowo celebrations generally involve cooking of a special corn meal called kpèkplè, together with palm nut soup. Some of the food is sprinkled on the ground as a way of feeding the ancestors. The people also ask for blessings from the gods and the ancestors and generally engage in eating and merry-making. Homowo takes place at different times for the different Gã towns but they generally occur in the months of July and August for most towns.

The third important cultural practice to be discussed is kpòjiémɔ́. The following account is largely taken from Field (1961:171). According to her, when a Gã child is born, he is kept indoors for seven days, and during these seven days he is not considered a proper, living person. A baby who dies within these seven days is treated the same as one who was born dead. Very early in the morning on the eighth day, when the moon is still visible, the child, if he is still alive, is finally “out-doored” and taken from his mother’s house (where he was born) to his father’s house, where family and friends gather to welcome him. Before this day, the
child has no name, since no one is sure whether he is there to stay or not. During the out-
dooring ceremony, an elder in the family whose character the parents wish the child would
emulate, blesses the baby by raising him high three times and reciting some formulaic prayers.
He also pours libation. He then places the child naked on the ground and pours a calabash of
water on the roof three times so that some of the water trickles onto the baby. This, according
to Field (1961:173) is to introduce the child to the rain and to the earth. More blessings and
prayers are offered, followed by eating and drinking of corn beer. Some describe this ceremony
as “introducing the child to the moon.”

These and other ceremonies and rituals have been observed by the Gã people for
centuries, but in modern times their popularity has fallen, owing mainly to the surge in Gãs
leaving orthodox churches such as the Anglican, Catholic and Methodist churches (which
appeared more tolerant of these indigenous practices, or at the very least refused to condemn
them) to Pentecostal or charismatic churches, whose leaders are virulently opposed to
participation in some of these rituals because they see them as unbiblical and as forms of
heathen-worship. Even some leaders of the orthodox churches are now expressing opposition to
these rituals, perhaps in order to be seen by their flock as more spiritually-minded, so as to
stem the departure of their members to the Pentecostal churches, which are often viewed as
more actively and openly spiritual and more attuned to the teachings of the Bible. Even if
people do observe some of these rites, in many cases it is a watered down version that barely resembles the traditional thing. I got a first-hand experience of this when I attended one *kpòjié!*mɔ́. In keeping with the parents’ religious beliefs as Christians, the ceremony was conducted by an Anglican priest from their parish, rather than an elder in the family. What made this even more incongruous was that the priest was not a Gã speaker, so he conducted the ceremony in English and Twi. There were no exhortations and blessings in the archaic Gã that is characteristic of traditional worship, neither was there any libation to the gods nor feeding of the ancestors. Instead, passages were read from the Bible (in English) and Christian prayers were offered. In a part of the ceremony that requires the celebrant to put a couple of drops of whiskey or schnapps on the baby’s tongue, the schnapps was replaced with Sprite, presumably because alcohol consumption is viewed as sinful or inappropriate within a religious gathering.

The decline in enthusiasm for traditional rites cannot be blamed on Christianization alone. People’s attitudes and views on various issues have changed over time as a result of formal education and a shift towards being more open-minded. Very few modern parents believe that their babies are not real human beings in the first seven days after birth. Baby names are picked even before the babies are born. And since most women give birth in hospitals or health centres and leave to go home after a couple of days, it is impossible to keep a baby indoors for seven days. With regard to the twin festival, many young, modern parents of
twins do not believe that their twins possess magical powers and the ability to grant wishes, therefore a big annual ceremony to honour them might not seem justified. Neither do young, educated Gãs believe that dead ancestors need to be fed with physical food or prayed to. There have also been tensions between traditionalist Gãs and the non-Gãs who live among them over the observance of the pre-Homowo noise ban, with some non-Gãs refusing to adhere to the ban.

The result is that, for many Gãs, especially those who reside outside the six main Gã towns, Homowo is simply a time to enjoy kpékplè and palm-nut soup; baby “out-doorings” (kpɔjé!mɔ́) can take place as long as six months after the baby is born, and twin festivals are unknown to them. While some may view this as cultural degradation, others see it as a natural turn of events as a society becomes more urbanized and educated.

1.5 Previous work on Gã

Early work on Gã was carried out by missionaries, some of whom were associated with the European colonizers. The most famous of these is the dictionary and grammatical sketch by the German missionary, Zimmerman (1858). Zimmerman’s dictionary is quite comprehensive and accurate for a non-native speaker and has the added advantage of having been written in English. It contains an almost 400 page vocabulary, descriptions of pronunciation, morphology and syntax, as well as proverbs, histories, speeches, two songs, two traditional stories and
transcribed texts of a meeting (carried out in Gã) between Gã leaders and the British colonial
leaders, over the refusal of the Gãs to pay a tax. In short, it is a wealth of linguistic information
decently presented.

Another important early writer of Gã, earlier than Zimmerman, was Christian Protten,
the son of a Gã woman and a Danish soldier and a native speaker himself. His 1764
‘Introduction to the Fante and Gã language’ is written in Danish and translated into English by
Truteneau (1971). His work consisted of a word list, a short grammar and a catechism and is
especially impressive for its accurate phonological description.

Other works of this early period were less rigorous and consisted of word lists and texts
e.g. Bowdich (1819). Others are inaccessible to me because they are written in Danish and kept
in libraries in Denmark or Germany that do not lend out. Examples are Rask (1828) and
Oldendorp (1777). The Danish influence on the development of Gã was particularly strong due
to the belief of the Moravian Brethren missionaries (many of whom were Danes) that the
Christian gospel should be preached in the ordinary language of the people and that religious
texts should be in the vernacular (Dakubu p.c).

Written in relatively modern times, Wilkie (1930) is a notable publication in English
comprising a modern traditional grammar-based description of basic Gã syntax. Berry (1951) is
an accurate but short account of Gã phonology. Independence in 1957 and the establishment
thereafter of the University of Ghana and its linguistics department, as well as the establishment of the Bureau of Ghana Languages (BGL), encouraged the proliferation of works on Gâ. Many of these works were pedantic and prescriptive in nature and were aimed at teaching Gâ to non-native speakers or to pupils in schools who had to study Gâ as part of the requirements of the curriculum. Most were written in English but a few were written in Gâ. Examples are Ablorh-Odjija (1961, 1968), Amartey (1970), Bannerman (1948) and Berry and Kotei (1969). Ankrah (1966) is a collection of proverbs. Anteh (1953) gives a brief description of greetings in Gâ.

Linguistic work on Gâ in very recent times has undoubtedly been dominated by Mary Esther Kropp Dakubu. Her work has focused mainly on the verb complex e.g. Kropp (1968), Dakubu (1970, 2004a, 2004b, 2008a), and phonology (especially tone) e.g. Dakubu (2002). Her Ga-English dictionary, most recently edited and reprinted in 2008 has over 7,000 entries and is an invaluable resource for anyone working on the language. She has also published extensively on anthropological and cultural issues related to the Gâ-Dangme people.

Other works on Gâ, comprising mainly of BA long essays, master’s theses and a couple of Ph.D. theses on specific linguistic topics have been produced by students of linguistics at universities in Ghana.
Although there have been quite a number of publications on Gã, there are significant
gaps in these studies. Important aspects of syntax such as grammatical relations, voice, valency
and grammatical nominalizations have received very little to no attention in the literature. In
addition, there are some morpho-syntactic phenomena that have been unsatisfactorily
addressed. An important difference between this grammar and many previous works on Gã is
that the analyses are going to be empirically-based. Data will be that obtained from current
native speakers interacting with each other as they would in everyday life. This minimizes the
chances of using data from people’s reports about their own use of the language, a practice that
often results in inaccuracies. It also minimizes considerably the problem of speakers reporting
to field linguists what they think should be the “correct” usage, rather than what they and
others actually say.

Another reason why this grammar is valuable is that it relies on an approach to
language analysis that is couched in the communicative purpose that language serves. This
approach is known as functionalism, and it contrasts with more formal approaches to language
study, which have dominated the field of linguistics, and consequently the analyses of Gã
syntax by other authors. This theoretical framework will be discussed in detail in the following
section.
1.6 Theoretical Framework
This grammar will be based on the functionalist approach to language advocated by Givón (2001), Kuno (1975), various works by Shibatani, Sandra Thompson and her co-authors and other notable functionalists. Functionalist approaches to language stress the need to look outside of language structure to account for data. They emphasise the need to look at communicative function, human experience and discourse-pragmatic factors in explaining language. Nichols (1984:97) writes that “functionalists maintain that the communicative situation motivates, constrains, or otherwise determines grammatical structure...” Therefore, advocates of this approach emphasise the importance of studying actual discourse rather than relying on intuition. They also seek, wherever possible, to explain grammatical structure, and this explanation must necessarily derive from the communicative situation. In this way, functionalist approaches to language attempt to bridge the gap between linguistics and anthropological linguistics (Nichols 1984:98).

This approach is in contrast to formal theories of language, which construct models of language, without any reference to communicative or cultural factors. The model often becomes the main focus of study. This stems from the belief among formalists, specifically those of the generative tradition, that all languages have the same underlying structure, a “universal grammar”, which is pre-wired in the brain. Formalist linguists therefore try to show
by means of transformation rules how each language, in production, deviates from universal
grammar. Formal theories lead advocates to focus on certain aspects of grammar such as syntax
that are considered more important, to the exclusion of others e.g. pragmatics. A lot of the
previous work on Gã has leant toward formalist linguistics with its disregard for “non-core”
aspects of grammar. This work is the first to look at Gã from the functionalist perspective, and
wherever possible its tenets will be adhered to.

1.7 Data collection
The data used in this work comes from three main sources. First, audio recordings were made
of natural interactions between Gã speakers. These were transcribed and translated. The
recordings included face-to-face conversations, a phone call, a traditional prayer, a church
sermon and two procedural narratives. See Appendix B for details on metadata. These
recordings were made in Accra in 2013 and 2014. The second source of data comes from a
collection of oral narrations of Mercer Mayer’s (1969) picture book, “Frog, where are you?”
by both adults and children, numbering 14 in all. These recordings were made in 2011 and
2012 in Accra and were also transcribed and translated. In total, there were about 3 hours of
naturally-occurring speech to inform my analyses and draw examples from. A majority of the
examples in this thesis are taken from this small corpus of Gã language use. The third source
was my native speaker’s knowledge and intuition buttressed by consultations with other native
speakers. Such constructed examples were used sparingly, but were found to be useful, especially when trying to demonstrate a paradigm and how a change in just one morpheme affects the interpretation of an utterance.

As a native speaker of Gā and a resident of Accra, access to other native speakers was relatively easy. Consultants included relatives, neighbours, friends, acquaintances and friends of friends. The problem that plagued my attempts at data collection was that some people who were otherwise willing to help did not like being recorded, and would back out once they discovered recording was involved. Nevertheless, a few did agree to go along with it. All consultants were told about the recordings prior to the start of the recordings. They were also made aware of the purpose of the recordings.

The examples in this work consist of three lines. The first line contains the Gā example with morpheme breaks. Affixes are marked with ‘-’ and clitics with ‘=’. The sole exception is the indefinite article, ko, a clitic which conventionally is written as a separate word. The convention will be obeyed in this work. In some of the natural data, speakers use English or Twi words or phrases. These are written as they would be in English or Twi orthography in *italics*. Other words are borrowings from English or another European language that were added to Gā vocabulary decades or even centuries ago. These have been nativised to conform to Gā phonetics and phonology and will be spelt with Gā orthography. An asterisk (*) against
an example indicates an ungrammatical sentence or phrase. A question mark (?) indicates that the example borders on ungrammatical but some speakers may not reject it wholly. Basically, its grammaticality cannot be confidently adjudged. The purpose of *bolding and italicizing* certain words or phrases in the Gã examples is to focus the reader’s attention on the parts of the sentence that are pertinent to the topic under discussion. The second line of the examples gives the corresponding English glosses of the Gã morphemes. For code-switching involving English words, no gloss is provided, since this will merely constitute repetition. The third line gives an English translation. As much as possible effort is made to give an English translation that matches the Gã syntax as much as possible. If that will result in an English sentence that sounds too awkward, a free translation is given without any regard to matching the two syntaxes. This free translation is then followed by a literal translation (marked ‘Lit’) which much more closely resembles the Gã syntax. With some conversational data, there are instances where the speech of two or more speakers overlap i.e. they are produced at the same time. As per the transcription conventions of Dubois et al (1993), overlapping talk will be indicated by square brackets [] around the stretch of speech of each speaker.

**1.8 Phonetics and Phonology**

This section will provide a brief overview of basic phonetic and phonological knowledge needed to understand the syntax of Gã.
1.8.1 Vowels

Gã has seven oral vowels and five nasal vowels. It makes a phonemic contrast between nasal vowels and oral vowels. This brings to 12 the total number of phonemic vowels in Gã. Figure 4 below from Dakubu (2002:50) shows the vowel chart of Gã vowels. The mid-high vowels /e/ and /o/ do not have nasal counterparts. Front vowels are unrounded while back vowels are rounded. The low central vowel /a/ is unrounded.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Front Spread</th>
<th>Central Spread</th>
<th>Back Spread</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Close ĭ</td>
<td>ü</td>
<td>i</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i</td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half-close</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half-open</td>
<td>ê</td>
<td>ɔ</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ɛ</td>
<td>ɔ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>ā</td>
<td>a</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4: Gã vowel chart

1.8.2 Consonants

Below is a chart showing the Gã consonant phonemes. Consonants containing the superscript */w/* are labialised.
Table 1: Ga consonant inventory

<table>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plosive</td>
<td>p b</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>d</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>k g</td>
<td>k'w g'w</td>
<td>k p</td>
<td>gb</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nasal</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>j n</td>
<td>j' n'</td>
<td>j' m</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricative</td>
<td>f v</td>
<td>s z</td>
<td>j f w</td>
<td>j' w</td>
<td>h w</td>
<td>h</td>
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<tr>
<td>Affricate</td>
<td>ḥ ḫ ḫ'</td>
<td>ḫ' w ḫ' w</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>h w</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approx</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>j</td>
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<td>j</td>
<td>w</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lateral approx.</td>
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The alveolar approximant, /ɹ/ and the lateral approximant /ɬ/ sometimes occur in free variation. For example, kwáráá [kʷráá] ‘at all’ can be produced [kʷˈláá] and shàrá [ʃrə] can be produced [ʃlə] ‘stinky’. No consonant except /ŋ/ may occur in word-final position. /ŋw/ and /ɲ/ can only occur in onset position, never coda. Gà has homorganic nasal assimilation in words like ñtêŋ ‘stubbornness’, Ḭkďəŋ ‘snore (n.)’, ṭmłáɓí ‘love child’ and péŋpéó ‘medium-sized’.

The question of whether to analyse these as consonant clusters as suggested by Downing (2005) or as prenasalized stops as suggested by Maddieson and Ladefoged (1993) and Clements (1986) is an important one in African linguistics. Dakubu (2002) is of the view that they are not single pre-nasalised stops. Indeed she puts the nasal and following stop into two different syllables, with the nasal comprising the nucleus (and sole segment) in its syllable. The nasal, therefore, is able to carry tone.
1.8.3 Syllable Structure
Gã has only open syllables with V and CV shapes. The nucleus may consist of a vowel or syllabic consonant (nasal, alveolar lateral or alveolar approximant). If the nucleus of a syllable consists of a nasal then there can be no onset or coda (Dakubu 2002:47).

1.8.4 Tone
Tone plays a very important role in Gã. The language has both lexical and grammatical tone. It has two phonemic tones: High (H) and Low (L). Below are some minimal pairs which differ only in tone:

(1) bɔ̀ ‘create’  bɔ́ ‘dew’ 
bù ‘respect’  bú ‘trench’ 
bò ‘shout’  bó ‘become smooth (of food)’ 
bɛ̀ ‘pinch (crab)’  bɛ́ ‘QUESTION PARTICLE (QP)’

Phonetically, there are three tone distinctions: High, Low and Downstepped High (!H). A downstepped High tone is a tone that is realised at a slightly lower pitch than a preceding H tone. This may be caused by the presence of a L before the !H. The L causes the following H to be realised at a lower pitch, in which case we have automatic downstep. When there is no L tone that conditions the downstep, we have non-automatic downstep.

The presence of automatic downstep makes Gã a terrace-level tone language. This downstepping is iterative, with each successive H lower in pitch than a preceding H if they are
both preceded by a L (Dakubu 2002:10). Dakubu notes that a H tone at the end of a long utterance may therefore end up being lower than a L tone at the beginning of the utterance. A low tone is also slightly more raised in pitch when followed by a H than when followed by a L, a phenomenon that has been named upstep. This lowering of H and raising of L proceeds iteratively throughout the intonation unit, after which the pitch is reset for the start of a new intonation unit. Wentum (1996:65) observes that there is no audible distinction between a downstepped H tone and an upstepped L tone (U). However, she claims that words that have L or U behave differently from those that have H or D.

Gã also has floating tones. These are tones which lack a syllable and in speech may end up docking on a preceding sound segment. An example of a floating tone is the floating low tone that precedes the copular `jí. When the syllable preceding the copula has a high tone, the floating low tone on the copula docks on the preceding syllable, combining with its high tone to obtain a falling tone. Example:

kòfí ‘PROPER NAME’ \(\rightarrow\) kòfí jí \(\hat{1}=\text{nyɛmì}\)  
Kofi COP 1SG = sibling  
It is Kofi who is my sibling

When the syllable preceding the copula bears a low tone, there is no change in tone.

shɔ̀mɛ̃̀ ‘PROPER NAME’ \(\rightarrow\) shɔ̀mɛ̃̀ jí \(\hat{1}=\text{nyɛmì}\)  
Shome COP 1SG = sibling  
“Shome is my sibling.”
Floating tones come about when a syllable is deleted but its tone remains, or when two
syllables coalesce into one. In §3.5.1.1, I postulate that the floating tone of the copula is a result
of the deletion of a preceding focus marker, *ni₃*.

1.9 Orthographic issues
The digraphs used here are those agreed on by the Bureau of Ghana Languages (1996) for the
writing of Gã. The following table shows only those orthographic representations that differ
from the IPA representations and their corresponding IPA symbols.

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Vowels are represented with the usual IPA symbols, and nasal vowels are indicated with a tilde
(¨) above the vowel. High vowels are represented with an acute accent over the vowel (´),
low vowels with a grave accent (´) and downstepped high tones with an exclamation mark (!) before the syllable bearing the downstepped tone. Upstep is signalled by an upward-pointing arrow (↑) superscripted before the syllable with the upstepped tone.
Chapter 2: Words and word classes

2.0 Introduction
This chapter examines the concept of the word in Gã. It categorises these words into various
functional categories known as word classes and examines any accompanying morphology.

§2.1 will focus on wordhood and the delineation of phonological and grammatical words. §2.2
will give an overview of some of the difficulties encountered in divying up the lexicon of a
language into syntactic/semantic categories such that they can be relevant to discussions of
typology and linguistic theory. The following word classes will then be discussed in detail:
nouns in §2.3, property concepts in §2.4 and adverbs in §2.5. Ideophones, which do not
constitute a separate word class, will be looked at in §2.6, and finally, interjections will be the
subject of §2.7. The entirety of chapter 3 will be devoted to verbs.

2.1 Wordhood
The concept of a word is one that linguists as well as non-linguists alike take for granted. It is
assumed to be self-evident and easily identifiable, especially when examining a language in its
written form. However, as many writers such as Matthews (1991) and Dixon and Aikhenvald
(2002) have noted, several linguists have tried unsuccessfully to define “word” in a way that is
applicable to all languages. One of the reasons why it has been difficult to reach a consensus is
that each writer utilizes different sets of criteria in arriving at their conclusion, with many appealing to both phonological and grammatical attributes in identifying a word. This, according to Dixon and Aikhenvald (2002:10) leads to ambiguities and conflicts when these criteria do not coincide. Some writers even appeal to orthographic conventions when delineating the word. For example, Pike’s (1947:89) definition of the word as the smallest unit of meaning capable of being written in between spaces. This approach also runs into problems because different orthographic conventions may be used for the same language or closely related languages. Dixon and Aikhenvald (2002) advocate an approach that keeps grammatical and phonological criteria separate and attempts to define the word in terms of each of these phenomena. In what follows I try to do that and subsequently compare the results from the utilization of these two rubrics to see whether and how they coincide.

2.1.2 The phonological word
Dixon and Aikhenvald (2002:13) define a phonological word as “a phonological unit larger than a syllable (in some languages it may minimally be one syllable) which has at least one (and generally more than one) phonologically defining property.” These defining properties belong to three broad phonological categories, namely: segmental features, prosodic features and phonological rules. Below, I discuss the phonological features that define the phonological word in Gã. These features are few and I have identified just two from two areas: segmental
features and prosodic features. Note that none of these features individually constitute both a
necessary and sufficient condition for phonological word. However, the aggregate of these
provide good evidence for it.

2.1.2.1 Segmental features
Segmental features comprise phonological features related to internal syllabic and segmental
structure and related phonetic features, word boundary phenomena and pause phenomena
(Dixon and Aikhenvald 2002:13). In Gã, there are certain vowel sequences that cannot occur
within a phonological word. However some of these sequences are permitted across word
boundaries. Therefore the occurrence of such vowel sequences suggests the presence of a
phonological word boundary. These vowel sequences are /ɛe, ɔe, ɛa, oe, ɔa/ and /ae/. For example,
in (1), the sequence of the phonemes /ɛ/ in kɛ́ ‘when’ and /a/ in àwò ‘they prepare’ can only
occur across word boundaries as it is prohibited word-internally. Therefore it is a good marker
of the existence of a phonological word boundary.

(1) hèwɔ̀ kɛ́ à = wò
sake when 3PL.IMPERS=prepare leaf=DEF 3PL.IMPERS=put
shǐ
down
“So when the herbal infusion has been prepared and put down…” [YM:86]

In (2) the sequence /oe/, which cannot occur within word boundaries marks final and initial
phonological word boundaries of ànúkò and ëhè respectively.
Although syllable structure is useful in delineating phonological word boundaries in other languages, this is not the case in Gã because there is no syllable type that is unique to the beginning or ending of a word. Both V and CV syllables may be found in any position.

Restrictions imposed on positions of sound segments may offer some negative evidence e.g. the following segments may not occur in initial position in a lexical stem or phonological word: r, u, e, o. Also, the only consonant that may occur word-finally is η.

2.1.2.2 Prosodic features - nasal spreading
In Gã, a nasalized vowel causes all successive vowels to be nasalized as long as there is no intervening consonant. However, this rightward spread of nasality is halted by a phonological word boundary. For example, in (3), nasality spreads from the nucleus of dũ ‘plant (v.)’ to the habitual suffix -ɔ̀; but the first vowel of the second word áfï ‘year’ is not nasalized. àdũ/ɔ́ ‘it is planted’ is one phonological word.

(3)  à = dũ-ɔ́  áfï  áfï
     3PL.IMPERS = plant-HAB  year  year
     “It is planted yearly.”
Similary, *shĩ̀ã̀ĩ̀* ‘house (PL.)’ in (4) is also a phonological word in which nasality in the final vowel of *shĩ̀!ã́* ‘house’ spreads to the plural marker -i but not to the first vowel of *àgbòì* ‘big (PL.)’.

(4) shĩ̀ã̀-ĩ̀  àgbò-ì  
  house-PL  big-PL  
  ‘big houses’

These two features discussed are sufficient but not necessary to identify a phonological word since neither nasalization nor the specific vowel sequences described are found in all words.

In many languages, especially Indo-European languages, stress is a reliable marker of phonological words. This is because the placement of stress in such languages is predictable, always falling on a syllable in a particular position. As is the case in many tone languages of West Africa, stress does not play a significant role at the word level and is therefore unhelpful in determining phonological words. For instance, Dakubu (1981:235) finds that in Gã, as in Yoruba, the domain of semantically based syllable stress is not the word but the pause group (i.e. the intonation unit).

### 2.1.3 The grammatical word

A grammatical word is described by Dixon and Aikhenvald (2002:19) as consisting “of a number of grammatical elements which a) always occur together rather than scattered throughout the clause (the criterion of cohesiveness), b) occur in a fixed order and c) have a
conventionalized coherence and meaning.” These are considered to be the essential properties that every grammatical word in every language should possess. Other, less universally-applicable characteristics exist that could be used as supporting evidence. These are that there will be only one inflectional affix in a word (in languages which have a single inflectional system on each word class), there will be pauses between words, words may constitute an utterance all by themselves (isolatability) and finally, morphological processes which apply to a word will not apply recursively.

Some writers such as Haspelmath (2011) decry linguists’ obsession with finding a cross-linguistic definition of the word, specifically the morphosyntactic (i.e. grammatical) word. He believes that such a concept has no validity across languages and consequently that the division between morphology and syntax is spurious. Defining the word for specific languages is a much easier enterprise, but even so different writers give different weight to different properties with the result that each writer simply chooses whichever word criteria that his language of study exhibits as proof of wordhood (Haspelmath 2011:59). He advocates an approach that recognizes the concept of a fuzzy word or prototypical word, where grammatical units occupy a continuum from tightly bound entity to independent word (i.e. from affix through clitic to independent word). The same view is taken by Aikhenvald (2002:43) and others.
In Gã it is relatively easy for the most part to identify a grammatical word. It is the
distinction between affix and clitic that can be particularly tricky, as these form adjacent points
on the continuum. Any root together with its inflectional and/or derivational morphemes
constitutes a grammatical word. The words in (5) are all grammatical words. Their meanings
are readily available to native speakers. The elements that make up these words always occur in
a fixed order e.g. in (a) the pronominal clitic must precede the verb, which also precedes the
future negative.

(5)  a)  è=nyé̃́-ŋ́
     3SG=be.able-NEG.FUT
     ‘S/he will not be able (to do it)’

   b)  ònúkpá-í
     elder-PL
     ‘elders’

   c)  jù-lɔ̀-ì
     steal-AG-PL
     ‘thieves’

   d)  gbèé  ‘dog’

The grammatical words listed above are also phonological words and in addition they constitute
utterances by themselves. Dixon and Aikhenvald (2002:25) observe that the condition of
isolatability applies to words which are both phonological words and grammatical words.
Words such as (5a) which also constitute sentences give credence to Haspelmath’s (2011) proposal to shirk the notion of a strict demarcation between morphology and syntax.

If a grammatical word is a noun with plural number, then the final boundary may be identified by the plural morphemes -i, -ji, -bi and -mê since these always occur finally. For verbs, the verb head itself or the post-verbal affixes such as the habitual -ɔ, and negative perfect kò will mark the final boundary of the grammatical word. The initial boundary is marked by the bound pronouns if the subject is a pronominal. If the subject of the verb is a full NP then the initial boundary of the verb complex is marked either by the verb itself or the perfect prefix ê.

2.1.4 Clitics

It is important to recognize a small class of elements in Ga which correspond to what have been described in other languages as clitics. Matthews (1991:218) writes that clitics “are units which are word-like in their grammar, but phonologically must lean for support…on another word adjacent to them.” Clitics therefore share characteristics with both words and affixes and are considered by many (e.g. Haspelmath 2011; Dixon and Aikhenvald 2002) to be grammatical words. Whereas a particular affix must occur with words of a particular syntactic category and in a particular order, clitics have no such restriction. They may attach to different classes of words and have variable word order. In Ga, there are two classes of clitics: subject
pronominals and articles. The former are proclitics while the latter are enclitics. These will be discussed in detail in §2.3.2.1 on subject pronominal clitics (bound pronouns) and §2.3.1.2 on articles. For now, a brief discussion with examples will suffice.

**Articles:** The definite and indefinite articles *le* and *ko* are clitics. They occur after the noun phrases they modify and form a phonological word with their host noun phrases. The definite article, in spoken Gã, is hardly realized as *le*. It has the allomorphs -ɛ, -a, or -ɔ, the realization of which is dependent on the final phoneme of the noun phrase. Like true clitics, they exhibit low selectivity of hosts and so they attach to the last word of the noun phrase, regardless of its syntactic category. It is attached to a noun in (6a) and (6c), a nominalization marker in (6b) and an adjective in (6d). In chapter 7, it will be shown that the definite article also functions as a marker of topicality.

(6) a. wɔ̀-shĩ́ã̀=á
   1PL-house=DEF
   ‘our house’ [DF:33]

   b. Ellen nɔ̀=!ɔ̀
      Ellen  NM = DEF
      ‘Ellen’s’ [DF:98]

   c. óbláyòò  kò
      young.lady  INDEF
      ‘a certain young woman’ [DF:119]

   d. Ṡlè  yé́=!è
46

car dirTY = DEF
‘the white car’

Bound pronouns:– These are clitics and they will be discussed in detail in §2.3.2. Bound pronouns in Gã are only found in subject position. They are always the first morpheme in the verb complex, if there is no full NP subject.

2.1.5 Affixes
Affixes are morphemes which cannot occur in isolation and which convey grammatical or semantic information about the stem to which they attach. They are neither phonological words nor grammatical words. They do not belong to any syntactic category and are restricted as to where they occur and in what order; a particular affix attaches only to words of a particular syntactic category e.g. aspect markers can only attach to verbs. Verbs generally exhibit more affixation than other word classes. Specific affixes and the functions they carry out will be examined as part of the discussion on the word class they occur with.

2.1.6 Grammatical words consisting of phonological words
Compound words are an example of grammatical words that are made up of more than one phonological word. They are considered one grammatical word because they take only one inflectional affix e.g. only one plural suffix. Examples are:

(7) a. shīā wū́ʃ → shīā wū́ʃ- leaderboard
    ‘local chicken’       ‘local chickens’
2.1.7 Phonological words consisting of grammatical words

A clitic and its host are an example of two grammatical words that make up a phonological word e.g. a pronominal subject clitic and the verb complex it attaches to, as in (8).

(8) è=bàá-gbó
    3SG=FUT-die
    “S/he will die.”

Also, a possessive NP consisting of a pronominal clitic possessor and its NP host, the possessed entity (e.g. è=mã̀mĩ́ ‘3SG=mother’, ‘his mother’). And finally, an NP host and the definite or indefinite article clitic that follows it also constitute one phonological word comprising two grammatical words (example 6).

2.1.8 Grammatical words that coincide with phonological words

There are many words in Gã which constitute a single grammatical word as well as a single phonological word. According to Dixon and Aikhenvald (2002:24), these are words that can stand in isolation as an utterance. In Gã, the grammatical word and the phonological word coincide frequently; as long as they are made up of only one word component. That is, all
single phonological words are also grammatical words and all single grammatical words are also phonological words. So, for instance *tsù-ɔ̀* (be.red-HAB) ‘be light-skinned’ is both a grammatical and phonological word but *è=nĩ̀nè* (3SG=hand) ‘his hand’ is a phonological word made up of two grammatical words; *è* ‘3SG’ and *nĩ̀nè* ‘hand’. One must also bear in mind that *nĩ̀nè* ‘hand’ is at the same time a phonological word. So, the only time a phonological word is not a grammatical word is when it consists of more than one word. Likewise, the only time a grammatical word is not one phonological word as well is when it consists of more than one word, as in the case of compounds (example 7).

Perhaps, the most intriguing aspect of the discussion of wordhood in Gã is the observation that whole sentences such as the verb complex in (8) above must also be considered phonological words. A strict line between Gã morphology and Gã syntax can then only be feasibly drawn by separating the study of grammatical words (as opposed to phonological words) from the study of how these grammatical words combine to form sentences. Making such a distinction does not seem worthwhile considering that verb complexes like those in (8) make up the core of most utterances in Gã. Following from this, there will not be a significant attempt in this dissertation to separate morphological phenomena from syntactic phenomena. The two are inextricably linked; each can be better understood in terms of the other and so ultimately it is best that they are examined inter-dependently.
2.2 Word Classes

In order to identify word classes in Gã, I will be relying mostly on distributional evidence, with support from morphological and semantic criteria. Utilizing the distributional method is unproblematic from a language-particular point of view. However, in order to define word classes universally (and by this is meant only the major classes of nouns, verbs and adjectives), other criteria need to be looked at, since the morphosyntax of one language differs from the next. Some linguists are of the view that there are languages which lack one or more of these word classes. For instance, some Austronesian, Salishan and Iroquian languages are said to lack verbs (Havelmath (2012:118). However, some linguists, such as Croft (2000) and Havelmath (2012) maintain that all languages possess these three word classes or parts of speech.

Croft (2000:90) argues that this position is only tenable when one looks at canonical or prototypical instantiations of the members of each category. He posits that there are pairings between each lexical semantic class and a particular pragmatic function and because these associations are fundamental in language, they are unmarked. So, nouns have the pragmatic function of referring to an object, verbs predicate an action and adjectives denote modification by a property. All other correspondences are marked and may have special morphosyntactic material indicating so. For example, a noun used for modification may be marked for genitive or ‘adjectivalized’ in some way, and a verb used for reference may occur as a gerund or
infinitive. They may also be zero-marked. It is also possible for marked members to have the
same inflectional possibilities as unmarked members but impossible for marked members to
have more inflectional properties than unmarked ones (Croft 2000:90). This means that a verb
that is used for modification may lack certain TAM features or indeed take full TAM marking
as a predicate-indicating verb would. However, the verb in modification use cannot have more
inflectional features than the verb in predicative use.

In studying individual languages, the linguist is to determine the word class of a lexical
item based on the particular construction in which the word appears, especially its distribution
in comparison to the distribution of such unmarked members as are described by Croft. This
task will be carried out for Gã below. Each word class together with its associated morphology
will be examined.

Gã has three major word classes; major, in the sense that these classes contain a
relatively large number of members which can be added on to. These are the noun class, the
verb class and the adjective class. They are also known as open classes. The noun class is more
open than the verb or adjective classes, in that new members are more easily and frequently
added. There are other minor word classes which have relatively fewer members and which are
largely closed off to new members. These are adverbs, determiners, conjunctions, prepositions
and interjections.
2.3 Nouns

Nouns in Gã may be identified by their position and function in a construction. Nouns function as subjects and objects of verbs. In Gã the verb is immediately preceded by the noun phrase subject, with the noun functioning as the head of this NP. So in (9), *gbélkěnũ̀ṹ* ‘boy’ and *gbèé* ‘dog’ are nouns. These are the subject and object respectively. The noun subject in (10) is *gbé!lé* ‘death’.

(9) *gbélkě-nũ̀ṹ* = ɛ̃̀ b à — m ɔ̃́ gbèé = ɛ̀ m i ̃̀ŋ̀
child-male = DEF VENT-catch dog = DEF inside
“The boy held the dog.” [DEB:28]

(10) nĩ̀ gbé!lé é-bà-ŋõ̀ lɛ̀ n ɛ ̃́!ɛ̃́
and death PERF-VENT-take 3SG.OBJ this
“and death has come to take him.” [DF:13]

Other morpho-syntactic characteristics of nouns are as follows. Nouns function as the object of the locational verb *ye*. In (11) the noun *shǐtá* ‘house’ is the object of *ye*.

(11) à = bàá-bù àkšîntàá yè shǐtá = iá
3PL.IMPERS = FUT-calculate accounts be.located house = DEF
“They are going to do the accounts at the house.” [DF:15]

Nouns may be marked by the articles =lɛ and =ko, but since these are clitics they may attach to other constituents of the noun phrase and not necessarily to the noun. Both nouns in (9) are modified by the definite article. The object of *ye* ‘be located’ - *shǐtá* ‘house’ in (11) is also
modified by the definite article. In (12), the indefinite article, kò modifies the noun, àyìgbényò

‘Ewe person’.

(12) àyìgbé-nyò kò è=ké-bà jé!jú = !é
Ewe-person INDEF 3SG = take-come there = DEF
“lt is an Ewe person that s/he has brought there.” [MM:145]

Nouns may be modified by other determiners such as the distal deictic demonstrative, nàkà̀̀ and the proximal deictic demonstratives nèkè and nèlè (13).

(13) dáá lèé!bí=!é è=tá-à nèkè kòkòdèl!né nèè
everyday morning = TOP 3SG = sit-HAB this frog this
hè
body
“Every day, he sits by this frog.” [NAR:5]

Nouns may also be marked for plural number by the suffixes -i, -jĩ and -bí!í among others (see §2.3.1.1). Examples are given in (14).

(14) òsòfó ‘priest’ òsòfó-!í [priest-PL] ‘priests’
shîlá ‘house’ shîlá-í [house-PL] ‘houses’
Ètatsú ‘ant’ tsàtsú-bí!í [ant-PL] ‘ants’

Nouns may be modified by adjectives, other nouns, numerals and other quantifiers. In (15) to (18), the modifiers are in bold.

Modification by adjective:

(15) àtàá kpákpá [father good] ‘good father’
 gmà-lè kòòjíjú [write-NOM holy] ‘holy book’
Modification by another noun:

(16) *shìk̡pàŋ̡ tsò̌ľà* [earth medicine] ‘herbal medicine’
    *àbèlé tsɔ̌nlè* [corn machine] ‘corn mill machine’

Modification by a numeral:

(17) *bì kɔ̀mè* [child one] ‘one child’ [CH:37]
    *ŋwèŋ̡ tsù ënyɔ̀* [up house two] ‘two storey-buildings’ [MM:80]

Modification by a quantifier:

(18) *gbè!kè-bì!í=!ɛ́ èkɔ̀mè*  
    child-PL=DEF some  
    ‘some of the children’ [OYO:89]

    *ǐ=jè mè̌ =!è fè̌*  
    1SG=insult people=DEF all  
    “I insulted all the people.” [MM:154]

Nouns may be possessed. Possession is indicated by simple juxtaposition of possessor and possessum. Example:

(19) *tsò̌ľà-tsè* wè  
    medicine-NOM house  
    ‘a medicine man’s house’. [CH:89]

---

2 A medicine man is a traditional healer, a person who practices traditional medicine.
2.3.1 Grammatical Categories associated with nouns

2.3.1.1 Number

This is a grammatical category associated with nouns as well as adjectives (see §2.4.2.1 for a discussion on number in adjectives). For count nouns, Gã differentiates between singular and plural number i.e. between one and more than one. There are two main plural morphemes in Gã: the suffixes -i and -jĩ [ʤĩ̠]. The most commonly-occurring of the two is -i. Below are some singular nouns and their plural forms.

Nouns that take plural suffix -i:

(20) shĩ́nã̀ã̀ ‘door’ → shĩ́nã̀ĩ̀ ‘doors’
    té ‘stone’ → té!í ‘stones’
    àwàlé ‘spoon’ → àwàlé!í ‘spoons’
    gbèé ‘dog’ → gbèé!í ‘dogs’
    ônũfũ ‘snake’ → ônũfũ!í ‘snakes’
    àtàlé ‘dress’ → àtàlé!í ‘dresses’
    tsòfã̀ ‘medicine’ → tsòfã̀ĩ̀ ‘medicines’
    nã̀ã̀bú ‘mouth’ → nã̀ã̀bú!í ‘mouths’

Nouns that take plural suffix -jĩ:

(21) nĩ̀nè ‘hand’ → nĩjĩ ‘hands’
    nànè ‘leg’ → nàjĩ ‘legs’
    sã̀nè ‘matter, problem’ → sàjĩ ‘matters, problems’
    wòlò ‘paper, book’ → wòjĩ ‘papers, books’
    tsèlè ‘feather’ → tsèjĩ ‘feathers’
    wɔ̀lɔ̀ ‘egg’ → wɔ̀jĩ ‘eggs’
With a few exceptions, the plural suffix -\(i\) is simply attached to the host noun without any modification of the root. The suffix -\(j\), on the other hand, supplants the final syllable of the singular noun. So -\(j\) replaces the final syllable of \(nĩ̀nè\) ‘hand’ to give plural \(nĩ̀jĩ̀\). It replaces the final syllable of \(àdṹŋ̀\) ‘monkey’ to give plural \(àdṹjĩ̀\), and \(wòlò\) ‘paper, book’ in the singular becomes \(wòjĩ̀\) in the plural. As noted by Dakubu (1996a:154) the choice of either morpheme does not appear to be strictly dependent on the phonological shape of the noun. There are however, phonological tendencies displayed by those nouns that take -\(j\) in the plural. These are noun roots that have a final syllable consisting of the velar nasal, /ŋ̀/ with low tone (e.g. \(àdṹŋ̀\) ‘monkey’, \(mã̀ŋ̀\) ‘town’); those that end in final syllable, \(nè\) (e.g. \(sã̀nè\) ‘matter’, \(nĩ̀nè\) ‘hand’); and those whose last two syllables have the shape CVLV, where the two vowels are identical and the final syllable has non-high tone (e.g. \(wòlò\) ‘paper, book’, \(étsùlù\) ‘red one’). Since in some Gã words there is free variation between [l] and [ɹ], the consonant of the final syllable may be [ɹ], orthographically represented as r. It is important that the final syllables in these nouns have non-high tone in order to trigger -\(j\) pluralization. For instance, even though the nouns in (22)
have the requisite segmental composition for -jĩ̀ pluralization, they have high tones on their final syllables, so they are pluralized with -i.

(22)  kâné ‘light’   →   kâné!í ‘lights’   NOT   kâjì
sûné ‘pillow’   →   sûné!í ‘pillows’   NOT   sûjì
lálá ‘song’   →   lálàì ‘songs’   NOT   lájì

There are some exceptions. For example, the plural of tsènè ‘calabash’ is tsènèì although it qualifies for -jĩ̀ pluralization. There are also a few words which seem to allow either suffix in the plural. Current speakers disagree on the “correct” way to pluralize these nouns and some speakers happily accept either suffix while others insist on only one as being grammatical for a particular noun. Older speakers tend to be of the view that younger speakers are using -jĩ̀ indiscriminately. That is, that younger speakers are forming plurals with -jĩ̀ when they should be using -i. Examples of words whose plural formation with either -jĩ̀ or -i finds acceptance in some section of the Gã-speaking populace are:

(23)  sɛ̀ĩ́ ‘chair’   →   sɛ̀ĩ́!í, sɛ̀ĩ́jĩ̀   ‘chairs’
tsù ‘building, room’   →   tsùì, tsùjì   ‘buildings, rooms’
ôkpló ‘table’   →   ôkpló!í, ôkplójì   ‘tables’
daà ‘drink’   →   daì, daìjì   ‘drinks’
sàà ‘bed’   →   sàì, sàjì   ‘mats’
bàà ‘leaf’   →   bàì, bàjì   ‘leaves’
lòófɔ́lɔ́ ‘bird’   →   lòófɔ́lɔ́ì, lòófɔ́lɔ́jĩ̀   ‘birds’
sàmffɛ́lɛ́ ‘window’   →   sàmffɛ́lɛ́ì, sàmffɛ́lɛ́jĩ̀, sàmffɛ́lɛ́jì   ‘windows’
tsènè ‘machine, car’   →   tsènèì, tsèjì   ‘machines, cars’
In many of these examples, -jì is simply added on to the singular root rather than replacing the final syllable. Examples are tsùjì ‘buildings, rooms’, òkplòjì ‘tables’ and gbèjì ‘roads’.

Interestingly, even lòófɔ̀lɔ̀ ‘bird’ and sã́mèfèlè ‘window’ which have CVLV structure for their final two syllables are able to form plurals by addition of -jì as well as replacement of the final syllable with -jì.

It is unsurprising that there is sometimes a lack of consensus as to the appropriate use of these plural suffixes. According to Dakubu (1996a), this indeterminacy has existed for as long as records have been available, which goes as far back as Protten’s (1764) Grammar, Catechism and Wordlist. The table below, created with data from Dakubu (1996a) gives evidence of the variation in plural formation at different times in the course of history as well as synchronic variation at different points in history.

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3 From Dakubu (1996a:173), appendix: “Slashes through letters represent various typographical devices Rask used to distinguish special sounds from the “plain letters”. He used a comma to represent nasality in the following vowel, where Prottten used the letter “n” before the entire syllable, and an apostrophe to represent absence of nasality in the preceding vowel.” Prottten’s g, Rask’s g and Zimmerman’s dš are equivalent to modern Gà [ʤ], orthographically represented as j.
Table 3: Historical comparison of plurals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Protten (1764)</th>
<th>Rask (1828)</th>
<th>Zimmerman (1858)</th>
<th>Current Gã</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nânè ‘leg’</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Nannei, N.agi</td>
<td>nãdši</td>
<td>nàjì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nînè ‘arm’</td>
<td>nigi</td>
<td>Ninnei, N.igi</td>
<td>nîdši</td>
<td>nîjì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bàà ‘leaf’</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>bai</td>
<td>bàì, bàøjì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dàà ‘drink’</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>dàï</td>
<td>dàjà, dàjì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lòófɔ́lɔ́ ‘bird’</td>
<td>lòfinći, lòfigi</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>lòfôdši</td>
<td>lòófɔ́jì, lòófɔ́lɔ́jì, lòófɔ́lɔ́jì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(é)tsùlù ‘red’</td>
<td>Ekjurui, Ekjugi</td>
<td>ecugi</td>
<td>tšudši</td>
<td>(é)tsùjì</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using the tools of historical linguistic analysis, Dakubu (1996a:160) shows that the original Proto Ga-Dangme suffix was -i, (from Proto-Ga-Dangme *-hi). The suffix -jì developed as a result of affrication of a voiced alveolar stop, d, in the syllable immediately preceding the plural suffix, -hi. The weak vowel of the final syllable of the noun root was deleted, resulting in two consonants, d and h occurring consecutively, eventually leading to affrication. This is illustrated for lèlè ‘boat’ (pl. lèjì ) below.

(24)  *ledi-hì → *ledi-hì → *led-hì → *led-hì → leďì → leďì-ī (Dakubu 1996a:161)

Over time this sound change was reanalyzed as a separate affix and was applied to noun roots as a plural marker.

Some plural forms trigger vowel alteration in the root noun. This change is one of partial assimilation of the root vowel to the plural marker. Phonetically, it involves a change
from a back, round vowel to a front, unrounded vowel of corresponding height. The root vowel then matches the plural marker in frontness and rounding. Therefore /o/ becomes /ɛ/ and /ɔ/ becomes /ɛ/. Example:

\[(25) \quad \text{tsò} \quad \text{‘tree’} \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{tsèì} \quad \text{‘trees’} \]
\[(25) \quad \text{yòò} \quad \text{‘woman’} \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{yèì} \quad \text{‘women’} \]
\[(25) \quad \text{mɔ̃̀} \quad \text{‘person’} \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{mɛ̀ì} \quad \text{‘people’} \]

There is one instance of suppletion in plural formation:

\[(26) \quad \text{nũ̀ũ̀} \quad \text{‘man’} \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{hĩ̀ĩ̀} \quad \text{‘men’} \]

Apart from the suffixes -i and -jì, there are other suffixes which mark the plurals of semantically defined classes of nouns. They are as follows:

- **-bìlì**: This suffix is derived from the lexical item bìlì ‘offspring (pl.)’, itself made up of bì ‘offspring (sg.)’ plus the plural suffix –i. It is used to form the plural of just a few nouns whose referents are animate and relatively small in size.

\[(27) \quad \text{gbé!kɛ̃́} \quad \text{‘child’} \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{gbé!kɛ̃́bì!í} \quad \text{‘children’} \]
\[(27) \quad \text{tsàtsú} \quad \text{‘ant’} \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{tsàtsùbì!í} \quad \text{‘ants’} \]
\[(27) \quad \text{kwàkwé} \quad \text{‘mouse’} \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{kwàkwébì!í} \quad \text{‘mice’} \]

It is also used to form the plural of some compound nouns in which the second component is nyò ‘person, especially relating to origins’.

\[(28) \quad \text{màŋ}-\text{nyò} \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{màŋ}-\text{bìlì} \]
\[\text{country-person} \quad \text{country-PL} \]
\[\text{‘countryman’} \quad \text{‘countrymen’} \]
While bí!í in (27) functions as an inflectional affix, specifically a plural suffix, bí!í in the examples in (28) appears to be the second nominal component of a compound nominal.

One may also analyse the plural forms in (28) as possessive NPs containing the inalienable noun bí!í ‘children’. Generally, it is quite difficult to distinguish between possession and compounding in Gâ since both involve simple juxtaposition of two nominals that bear some kind of semantic relationship to each other. This relationship could be possession or ownership or a variety of other relationship types. What is certain is that bí!í in (28) is being modified by the preceding noun and the semantic relation between the two nouns is one of origin, be it geographic or ethnic. This same relation is what holds between the singular form nyò ‘person’ and its noun modifier.

mɛ́ĩ: This morpheme is semantically and functionally identical to bí!í. It is the plural of mɔ̀ ‘person’. It is also utilized to pluralize compounds with nyo ‘person’ as the second component.

(29)  
  
  gânyò  ‘Ga person’  →  gâmɛ́ĩ  ‘Ga people’

  blɔ̀fônɔ̀yɔ̀  ‘white person’  →  blɔ̀fõmɛ́ĩ  ‘white people’
àshã̀ntényò  ‘Ashanti person’  →  àshã̀ntémẽ̀ĩ  ‘Ashanti people’

The suffix -mẽ̀ĩ also functions as an associative plural marker or group plural marker.

According to Daniel and Moravscik (2013), “associative plural constructions consist of a noun X (typically of human reference, usually a proper name or kin term) and some other material, most often an affix, clitic or word. The meaning of the construction is “X and other people associated with X.” In Gã the associative plural marker can only be affixed to proper names (30) (31) and kin terms (32). In (30) Elma-mẽ̀ĩ refers to Elma and some others associated with her, in this case her siblings. In (31) Oyo-mẽ̀ĩ refers to Oyo and some others associated to her who also died.

(30)  \[ \text{Elma}-mẽ̀ĩ \]  à-pãpã = !á
Elma-ASSOC.PL PERT-father = DEF
“Elma and company’s father…”  [DF:166]

(31)  \[ \text{kéké} = !ɛ \quad \text{m}ĩ \quad \text{h}ú \quad \text{έ} = !\text{h}á \quad \text{í} = \text{káło} \quad \text{bẽ} \]
then = TOP 1SG too 3SG.PERF = give 1SG.PERF = remember time
\[ \text{nǐ} \quad \text{óyóó}-mẽ̀ĩ \quad \text{gbó} = !ɛ \]
NMLZ Oyo-ASSOC.PL die = DEF
“Then me too, it reminds me of when Oyo and company died.”  [FH:172]

In (32) ètsɛ̀mẽ̀ĩ refers to ‘his father’s family’.

(32)  \[ \text{bé} \quad \text{è} = \text{tsè}-mẽ̀ĩ \quad \text{à-wɛ̀} \quad \text{jí} \quad \text{wɔ = shí!ã = â} \]
IJ 3SG = father-PL PERTENSIVE-family.house be 1PL = house = DEF
“His father’s family house is our house.”  [DF:33]
This suffix is interesting because it is composed of a borrowed agentive suffix -fo (from Akan) and the regular Gã plural suffix -i. It is the preferred pluralizing suffix for borrowed words that refer to occupations. Example:

(33)  
dɔ́kìtà  ‘doctor’  \[\rightarrow\]  dɔ́kìtàfó!í  ‘doctors’
títsɛ̀  ‘teacher’  \[\rightarrow\]  títsɛ̀fó!í  ‘teachers’
dràívà  ‘driver’  \[\rightarrow\]  dràívàfó!í  ‘drivers’

2.3.1.2 Articles
Gã has two articles, le and ko, whose semantics differ in terms of definiteness and specificity.

le also functions as a topic marker (see Chapter 7). They both occur post-nominally. ko is indefinite but could be specific or non-specific depending on context. le is definite and specific. They both cliticize to the last element in the noun phrase. The definite article, le, becomes phonologically contracted to -ɛ when the final vowel in the NP is /i/, /e/, /ɛ/, /u/ or /o/:

(34)  
síklí = !ɛ  [sugar = DEF]  ‘the sugar’
kàné = !ɛ  [light = DEF]  ‘the light’
ŋmé = !ɛ  [palm kernel = DEF]  ‘the palm kernel’
nùú = !ɛ  [man = DEF]  ‘the man’
tsó = !ɛ  [tree = DEF]  ‘the tree’

It is contracted to -ɔ when the final vowel in the NP is /ɔ/. Example:

(35)  
tɔ́ = !ɔ́  [bottle = DEF]  ‘the bottle’

And it is contracted to -a when the final vowel is /a/.
When the final phoneme in the NP is the nasal, /ŋ/, the form the definite article takes depends on the vowel immediately preceding the nasal. The article takes the form that it would take if the penultimate vowel in such an NP were the final vowel. Example:

(37)  ēdīŋ = !ē [black.one = DEF] ‘the black one’
    dādēsēŋ = ē [pot = DEF] ‘the pot’
    tēŋ = !ē [middle = DEF] ‘the middle’
    àdāŋ = !ē [monkey = DEF] ‘the monkey’
    wɔŋ = !ɔ [idol = DEF] ‘the idol’
    māŋ = !ā [town = DEF] ‘the town’

Their pragmatic functions will be examined below.

i) le - When this determiner is used, the speaker assumes that the referent of its host is uniquely identifiable to the addressee. By uniquely identifiable is meant that the addressee can identify the speaker’s referent based on the nominal alone or based on the nominal together with other descriptive content in the noun phrase (Gundel et al 1993:277). The speaker arrives at this assumption because the referent has been mentioned previously in the discourse or is evident in the extra-linguistic environment or is a stereotypical assumption (Prince 1981:242) based on shared cultural knowledge and experience. In (38), kɔkɔdèle ‘frog’ is introduced into the story with the indefinite article ko. So when it is mentioned again in line 2, it is marked by le, which
indicates that the speaker expects the addressee to pick out the referent of ƙɔ̀ƙɔ̀de!né = ɛ́ ‘the frog’ as identical with the just-mentioned ƙɔ̀ƙɔ̀de!né !kó ‘a frog’.

(38) 1 è=yɛ̀ mìn̄̀ gbɛ!kɛ̀-nùù nɛ́!ɛ́
3SG = be.located inside constantly and child-male this
ỳà-nà ƙɔ̀ƙɔ̀de!né bì !kó
ITIV-see frog child INDEF
“After a while, this boy found a baby frog.”

2 nò hèwɔ́ = !ɔ́ dáá gbì ké âmɛ̀=tɛ̀ shǐ́ = !ɛ́
that sake = TOP every day when 3PL = rise down = DEF
âmɛ̀ = kɛ̀ ƙɔ̀ƙɔ̀de!né = ɛ̀ shwɛ̀-ò
3PL = take frog = DEF play-HAB
“So every morning when they wake up they play with the frog.” [PAT:3]

In (39), the speaker is relaying how a Gã queenmother had allowed the lands in her town to be sold by Fantes (members of the Fante tribe). jɛ̀mɛ̀ shĩ̀kpɔ̀ŋ!ɔ̀ ‘the land over there’ is definite, although it is new information that is being introduced into the discourse. In spite of that, the speaker is relying on the addressee’s cultural knowledge that towns contain land (which can be sold). Therefore, although there had been no previous mention of Koboman⁴ land and the conversation was not taking place in or near Koboman, the speaker could employ definite reference because of the stereotypical assumptions that can be made about lands and which the speaker assumes are available to the addressee.

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⁴ The name of this town has been changed. There is no town I know of called Koboman.
(39) àà = tsɔ̀ màŋnyɛ̀ kò  
3PL.IMPERS.PROG = show queenmother INDEF  
“This is about a certain queenmother.”

nàà màŋnyɛ̀ = !è  
PRSTV.PRED.PRT queenmother = DEF  
“So here was the queenmother.”

kóbòmâŋ màŋnyɛ̀  
Koboman queenmother  
“The queenmother of Koboman.”

nì faître-mè hù̀ jémè shikpòŋ = !è  
and Fante-people sell there land = DEF  
“And Fantes sold the land over there.” [MM:156]

The definite article may be used to modify a noun even if its referent is discourse-new and completely unknown to the addressee, as long as there is enough information in the NP to enable the addressee to form a mental representation of the referent. In (40) below, the head noun, yòò ‘woman’ is modified by the definite article because there is substantial additional information contained in the modifying argument nominalization (relative clause) to enable the addressee to form a mental representation of the referent of the head noun.

(40) 1  ñmè!nè = !è  ì = !hóóó  ñìlí  
today = TOP 1SG = cook.NEG thing  
“Today, I didn’t cook.”

2  yòò = !è  ní bà-wá-à mí = !è  bàáá  
woman = DEF NMLZ VENT-help-HAB 1SG.OBJ = DEF come.NEG  
“The woman who helps me did not come.”
ii) **ko** – In using the indefinite article, the speaker assumes that the referent of its NP host is not uniquely identifiable to the addressee. There are two possible interpretations of NPs modified by *ko*. In one, *ko* is specific, which means that its referent is uniquely identifiable to the speaker but not the addressee. In the other interpretation *ko* is non-specific and the speaker has no particular referent in mind when uttering that NP. (41) and (42) are examples of the non-specific usage of *ko*. In (41), the speaker, a preacher, is asking his congregation to imagine they were a woman whose child is very ill. In this hypothetical event, the woman gets a visit from a friend.

(41) \[ \text{And one day a friend of yours came (to see you). She said “Oh oh, my sister…” [CH:86]} \]

Two NPs, *gbì ‘day’* and *ónáànyò ‘your friend’* are modified by *ko*. In neither case does the speaker have a particular day or friend in mind. Again, in (42) the speaker wants a child, any child, to send on an errand. He does not have a specific child in mind.

(42) \[ \text{“I’m looking for a child to send on an errand.”} \]
The next two examples show the use of *ko* in a specific sense. In (43), the speaker knows the referent of the host NP of *ko* and goes on to identify it by its name, *Bordiebebor*. Similarly, in (44) it is clear that the speaker knows the exact street of which she speaks because in the following line she goes on to give more information about it.

(43) *àklòwá*  !kó   à = tsé-ð  lè  Bòòdéébèbò
g village  INDEF  3PL.IMPERS = call-HAB  3SG.OBJ  Bordiebebor
“A village…it’s called Bordiebebor.” [CH:84]

(44) nì  stììì  kò  ká  bì!é
and street INDEF lie here

lè = !è  è = lead-ð  to  kòòlè = è  nàà
3SG.OBJ = TOP  3SG = -HAB  Korlé = DEF mouth
“And there’s a street here. As for it, it leads to the mouth of the Korle Lagoon” [FH:59]

NPs modified by *ko* have referents that constitute new topics about which further information is given. It is the presence of this additional characterization that reveals whether or not the speaker has a specific referent in mind.

Interestingly, both *ko* and *lè* can modify the same NP, with *ko* occurring first and immediately followed by *lè*. Such an NP is usually modified by a grammatical nominalization (relative clause). This is seen in (45), which is based on (40) above.

(45) 1  nìmè!né = !è  í = !hóóó  nì!í
 today = TOP  1SG = cook.NEG thing
 “Today, I didn’t cook.”
It may seem contradictory to employ two articles with seemingly divergent functions to modify the same nominal. When this device is used however, the individual functions of each article are nullified and the “article complex” carries its own unique function. That function is to mark the referent of the head noun as one which is familiar to the addressee. That is, the speaker presupposes that the addressee knows of the referent and can conjure up a mental representation of the referent. This mental representation, however, is stored in the addressee’s long-term rather than short-term memory because the article complex cannot be deployed if the referent was just recently mentioned in the discourse. It is reserved for introducing new nominal topics that the addressee is familiar with.

To illustrate, imagine a speaker uttering (46) below, after which she and the addressee go on to have several lines of conversation. It will be infelicitous for the speaker to utter line 10a in which the nominal is modified by the article complex. The reason being that the referent in question has enjoyed a recent mention. Here, modification by just the definite article will be more appropriate, as in line 10b.
(46) 1 èòò  kò  bá-wá-à  mì  dáá
woman  INDEF  VENT-help-HAB  1SG.OBJ  everyday
kè  ní-hòó-!mò
come.NEG
with  thing-cook-NOM
“A woman comes and helps me everyday to cook.”

[SEVERAL LINES OF CONVERSATION OMITTED]

9  ñmè!në = !ë  ñ = !hóóó  ní!í
today = TOP  1SG = cook.NEG  thing
“Today, I didn’t cook.”

10a  *èòò  kó = !ë  ní  bá-wá-à  mì = !ë
woman  INDEF = DEF NMLZ VENT-help-HAB  1SG.OBJ = DEF
bááâ  come.NEG
“That woman who comes to help me did not come.”

10b  èòò = !ë  ní  bá-wá-à  mì = !ë  bááâ
woman = DEF NMLZ VENT-help-HAB  1SG.OBJ = DEF  come.NEG
“The woman who comes to help me did not come.”

Nouns may also be used bare, with no articles or other modifiers. Such nouns code
referents which are indefinite as well as non-specific; the speaker speaks of the referent only in
a general sense and has no particular referent in mind. Such a referent is what Gundel et al
(1993) describe as type identifiable. It is a member of a class of entities denoted by the noun.
The speaker here only expects the hearer to have a mental representation of the type of entity
referred to by the noun phrase. In (47), tsòfâtsè wè ‘shrine’ (lit: medicine man’s house) has no
determiners. By this, the speaker means any place that can be classified as a shrine and not
necessarily a particular shrine of which he or the addressee knows or can identify.

(47) à = kɛ̀ɛ́ ò = kɛ̀ɛ́ lɛ̀ á-yà tsòfã̀-tsɛ̀
3PLIMPERS = say 2SG = take him SBJV-go medicine-father
wè
house

“They say you should take him to a medicine man’s house (shrine).” [CH:96]

2.3.1.3 Demonstratives
Demonstratives are forms that provide spatial deictic information about a noun referent, action
or location. They may also serve an anaphoric or cataphoric function in discourse. Some
demonstratives perform certain discourse-pragmatic roles. In Gã the deictic centre tends to be
the speaker, and for each type of demonstrative there are often two opposing deictic forms that
indicate a thing or action relatively close to the speaker and a thing or action relatively distant
from the speaker. Dixon (2010:225) recognises three main kinds of demonstratives: nominal
demonstratives, locational adverbial demonstratives and verbal demonstratives. Gã does not
have verbal demonstratives, but in addition to nominal and locational adverbial demonstratives,
it also has manner adverbial demonstratives. They will be discussed in turn.

2.3.1.3.1 Nominal demonstratives
There are two kinds of nominal demonstratives: those that occur with a noun in a noun phrase
and those that constitute complete nouns by themselves. Gã has quite a few nominal
demonstratives. These are énɛ̃́ ‘this’, nò ‘that’, nɛ́lɛ́ ‘this’, nɛkɛ́ ‘this’ and nãkã́ ‘that’. The first two, énɛ̃́ and nò, make up complete noun phrases while the rest must occur with a noun in a noun phrase.

As just mentioned, énɛ̃́ ‘this’ and nò ‘that’ are nominal demonstratives that constitute complete noun phrases. They are pluralized with the suffix -mɛ̃̀ĩ̀, yielding énɛ̃̂mɛ̃̀ĩ̀ ‘these’ and nòmɛ̃̀ĩ̀ ‘those’, respectively and are used for reference to inanimate entities only. Such nominal demonstratives are also known as demonstrative pronouns because of their ability to stand in place of complete noun phrases. They cannot occur with a noun in a noun phrase. For example, one cannot say *nũ̀ũ̀ énɛ̃́ ‘this man’. Their function and syntax will be examined below.

(i) énɛ̃́: - This is a proximal demonstrative pronoun and is used for referring to NPs that are relatively spatially close to the speaker. It can be loosely translated into English as this. Morphologically, it is made up of the lexical nominalizer é- and the proximal predicative particle, nɛ́. In (53), after I pose a question about how to make a particular herbal mixture that is sitting in a pan in front of us, Oyoo tries to verify what exactly I’m referring to by pointing to the pan and asking “éŋ̀é?” “This?”. Here, éŋ̀é refers to the herbal mixture.

(53) Akua: ófáínlè èé měnì nỳ̀=kè-fé-ò nɛkɛ̀ bàà nî
please IJ what 2PL=take-do-HAB this leaf thing nɛ́lɛ́
this
“Please, errm…what do you use to make this herbal mixture?”
éné may also be used even when there hasn’t been explicit mention of its referent. For example, if two people walk into a dress shop, one of them may hold up a dress and make the comment in (54).

(54) éné yè féò ě
this have beautiful IJ
“This (one) is beautiful!”

éné is also used anaphorically to refer back to previous discourse. It may be used cataphorically as well, but this use is rare. Most of the anaphors and cataphors involving éné are textual, meaning the demonstrative refers to a chunk of discourse. There are fewer instances of substitution anaphora, where the demonstrative refers to a previously mentioned NP. In (55), the narrator of the story had just told of how the protagonist had found his lost pet frog and taken him away. She utters the coda in (55), where éné refers to the concluding actions of the story she had just narrated i.e. the boy picking up the frog and taking him away.

(55) nì gbé!kè-nùù = ě wó kàkòdé!né = !è ékòmé nì ě = kè
and child-male = DEF carry frog = DEF one and 3SG = take
lè tèè nì éné bà-fèè nààgbèè yè
3SG.OBJ go.PST and this VENT-do end be.located
“And the boy picked up his frog and went away with him. And this is how the story ended.”  [MAV:105]

In (56), the speaker together with two others has just finished describing the rituals involved in the twin yam festival. énê in her comment refers to all these rituals previously described, which she had been saying were cheap and simple.

(56) mɔ̃̀=kɔ  mɔ̃̀=kɔ  bɛ̀  ní
person=INDEF person=INDEF exist.NEG NMLZ
2SG.PERF=birth

ó=!fɔ̀   hā́jũ̀   ní   ó = nyêêêê   ó = !fêê
2SG.PERF=birth twins NMLZ 2SG=able.NEG 2SG.SBJV=do

énê
this
“There’s nobody who has given birth to twins who cannot do this.”
(Lit: “Nobody exists who has given birth to twins who cannot do this.”)  [OYO:292]

As mentioned above, cataphoric use of énê i.e. to refer to an upcoming chunk of text is rare.

There were zero instances of this function in the spoken Gã data. Example (57) showing this use was adapted from the Gã Bible.

(57) mòkò  bé  sùmò  ní  dà  fè  énê
somebody have.NEG love NMLZ be.big surpass this

á!kè  mò  kè  è = wàlà  àá-ηmê  shî  á = hà
NMLZ person take 3SG=life FUT-lay down 3PL.IMPERS.SBJV=give
è = shiẹntsẹ-mẹ̀̀
3SG = close.friend-PL
“No one has greater love than this, that he lays down his life for his close friends”
[BSG:145]

(ii) nò:- This is the only other demonstrative noun that can be used as a complete NP. It is used for both substitution and textual anaphora. It is NOT the distal counterpart of énɛ́, at least not synchronically; it cannot be used to refer to objects located relatively far away from the speaker. To show this I borrow an illustration from Dixon (2010:235) and place it in the Gã context. Imagine a man and woman seated at opposite ends of a table with two objects, A and B on the table. Object A is closer to the man while B is further away from him but is the closer object to the woman. In English the man may point to each object in turn and ask “Do you want this or this?”. If the woman does not want B (which is closer to her) and she’ll prefer A she may say “I don’t want this (one), I want that (one).” For Gã speakers the man may pose the question in (58a) but the woman’s response in (58b), where nò is referring to the distally located object, would be ungrammatical. Instead, she would have to use ékòmëtsɛ́ɛ́ ‘the other one’ or some other descriptor that specifically picks out the object located a distance away.

(58) a. ò=sùmɔ́-ɔ́ énɛ́ ålọ́ énɛ́
2SG=like-HAB this or this
“No you like this one or this one?”
Although *nò* does not indicate spatial deixis, it makes sense to translate it into English as *that* because *that* is more often used anaphorically than *this*. The following two examples show substitution anaphora using *nò*. In (59), the referent of *nò* is *Kweikor Fire Service*.

(59)  
\[
\text{mɛ̀ĩ́ pì ì́ t s ɛ́-ɔ̀  m i ̃̀ kwèíkɔ́ Fire Service nò jí}
\]
\[
\text{people many call-HAB 1SG.OBJ Kweikor Fire Service that COP}
\]
\[
\text{nò ní ké ò = kè-tsé  mī = !é́ à = bàá-!nã́}
\]
\[
\text{NM NMLZ if 2SG = take-call 1SG = DEF 3PL.IMPERS = FUT-see}
\]
\[
\text{“Many people call me Kweikor Fire Service. That’s what if you call me by, everyone will know (that you’re referring to me).”} \quad [YM:19]
\]

In (60), *kpékple!ɛ́* ‘the corn-based meal’ is topicalized at the start of the sentence and is then referred to by *nò*.

(60)  
\[
\text{nò kpékple = ! ĕ́ nò hú wò = bàá-wò mī́ mùtsùlù}
\]
\[
\text{and kpékple = DEF that too 1PL = FUT-put inside palm.oil}
\]
\[
\text{“And the kpékple, that one too we will put palm oil in it.”} \quad [OYO:49]
\]

In (61) *nò* is being used for textual anaphora. The speaker is about to explain why the yam festival is celebrated after another speaker has explained the rituals involved. In uttering (61) he
quotes the previous speaker, and here nò refers to the customs and traditions that have been celebrated since time immemorial.

(61) è=kèè blàmà bìlì=!é bò̀nì àmè=bà-níñà lè
3SG=say olden.days people=DEF how 3PL=VENT-meet 3SG.OBJ
jí  nò
be  that
“She said that is what people of old inherited.”
(Lit: “She said the people of old, how they met it is that.”) [OYO:69]

nò also combines with a number of relational nouns to form possessive NPs which function as idiomatic expressions, especially expressions of time. Examples are nò sèè (that back) ‘afterwards, after that’; nò mìì (that inside) ‘at that time’; nò hèwɔ̀ (that sake) ‘because, so’. The demonstrative in these expressions all refer to actions or situations made explicit in the preceding discourse.

(62)  nò  sèè =!é wɔ=nà á!kèè shī kòkòdè!né=!é ní  bòtè
that back =DEF 1PL = see NMLZ NMLZ frog = DEF NMLZ enter

tò = ɔè mìì=!é è = fèè tàmò nò ní èè =  jè
bottle = DEF inside = DEF 3SG = do like NM NMLZ 3SG.PROG = exit

kpò
compound
“After that we saw that the frog that had entered the bottle, he’s acting like he’s coming out.” [FLO:12]

(63)  nò mìì fèè  àyèlòòbò=kɔ̞=!s nyìì è = sèè
that inside all owl = DEF walk 3SG = back
“That whole time the owl was following him.” [BOR:44]
(64)  shí  Ellen  nô = !ą  pàpá têí  nô = !ą  lê = !ê
but  Ellen  NM = DEF  Papa Tei  NM = DEF  3SG.OBJ = TOP

ิ = nỳééé  má = !yá  nô  hèwô = !â  ิ = há
1SG = able.NEG  1SG.FUT = go  that  sake = DEF  1SG = give

gbê!kê-bí!î = ê  têè
cchild-PL = DEF  go.PST

“But as for Ellen’s and Papa Tei’s (funerals) I couldn’t attend them. So I made the children go.” (Lit: “For the sake of that, I made the children go.”)  [DF:98]

Although, the use of nô in (62) and (64) is more standard, it is possible to use énê ‘this’ in its place with no change in meaning. It is not possible to do this in (63), perhaps because speakers do not think of nô and mìŋ as separate words but rather have reanalysed them as a single word.

One major difference between the uses of énê and nô lies in the assumed cognitive status of the addressee. nô requires that its referent be “activated”, to use a term coined by Gundel et. al (1993). This means that the referent is represented in the addressee’s current short-term memory because it has been mentioned in the previous linguistic context or is apparent in the extra-linguistic context. énê, on the other hand, can be used even when the addressee is not familiar with the referent in question. This is possible because of the spatial deictic “pointing” function of énê (exemplified in 54) which nô lacks. This function allows énê to be used to refer to new topics in discourse, as long as they are relatively spatially close to the speaker, as in (54).
That these demonstratives are nouns is seen in the fact that they may be possessed (62), (63), (64); they may be pluralised with the suffix -mɛ̃̀ĩ̀ and may also be modified by a quantifier (65), a numeral (66) and an adjective (67).

(65) nò hèwɔ́ !lé kàsé-lɔ́-í = !é ní ảmɛ̀ = nù énɛ̃̀ɛ̃̀-mɛ̃̀ĩ̀
that sake TOP learn-AG-PL = DEF NMLZ 3PL = hear this-PL
fêmé = !é
all = DEF
“So the disciples, when they heard all this…” [CH:325]

(66) há́ !m̀í nò éjwè́
give 1SG this four
“Give me four of those.”

(67) énè́ fêfêfó nè!è́ ɔ̀ = súmɔ̀ɔ̀sùsù
this beautiful this 2SG = like.NEG
“This beautiful thing, you don’t like it?”

A few problems remain unresolved about the distribution of these two demonstratives.

Although they can both be used anaphorically, there are certain contexts in which only nò may be used and others in which énè́ is preferred. For example, in (68) nò refers back to yèlè hɛtɔ̀ ɛ̀ kɛ̀ tɔ̀ò fɔ̀ ‘yam peels and sheep fat’. If énè́ is substituted for nò the resulting sentence will not be felicitous.

(68) mí̀ = !ná yèlè hɛtɔ̀-í kɛ̀ tɔ̀ò fɔ̀
1SG.PROG = see yam skin-PL and sheep fat
nò ḭu?
that too
“I’m seeing yam peels and sheep fat. What’s that for?” [OYO:271]

énɛ̃́ ḭu?
this too
What’s this for?”

The same somewhat ungrammatical result is obtained when énɛ̃́ replaces nò in (69b) below.

(69) nì kpékplé = !ɛ nò/énɛ̃́ ḭu wò = bàá-wò mìŋ mtušùlù
and kpekple-DEF that/this too 1PL = FUT-put inside palm.oil
“And the kpekple, that/this one too we will put palm oil in it.” [OYO:49]

It seems at first glance that perhaps the anaphoric function of énɛ̃́ is restricted to textual
anaphora and not substitution anaphora and that only nò can be used for substitution anaphora.

However, in a few instances of substitution anaphora both nò and énɛ̃́ are acceptable. Example
(59) above is fine when rendered with énɛ̃́ instead of nò, as seen in (70); although, there is a
slight preference for nò.

(70) mẽt̂i pì̀ tšé-ọ̀ mì kwèíkɔ́ Fire Service nò/énɛ̃́
people many call-HAB 1SG.OBJ Kweikor Fire Service that/this.FOC

jí nò ní ké ṭ̀ = kè-tšé mì = !é
COP NM NMLZ if 2S = take-call 1SG = DEF

à = bàá-ná
3PL.IMPERS = FUT-see
“Many people call me Kweikor Fire Service. That/This is what if you call me by,
everyone will know (that you’re referring to me).” [YM:19]
The general trend however, seems to be that for anaphoric function, *nò ‘that’* can be used where *énɛ̀ ‘this’* is used but the reverse does not always hold. The answer to this puzzle seems to be that *énɛ̀ ‘this’,* if it has a spatial deictic component, cannot be employed for referents which are discourse-old. *énɛ̀ ‘this’* in such a context can only refer to new referents. In (68) and (69) the noun referents in question are physically located in the environment where the speakers are. Once they have been mentioned, they are no longer new, and referring to them with *énɛ̀ ‘this’* suggests that they are new, hence its inappropriateness. This hypothesis requires further investigation with more discourse data.

(iii) *nèkè* and *néfèː*- These are proximal demonstrative determiners, used to modify nouns in terms of their relative physical nearness to the speaker or temporal nearness to the present time of speaking. They may also be used for substitution anaphora. *néfèː* is likely a fusion of the proximal predicative particle, *né* and the definite article, *le*. *nèkè* and *néfèː* cannot occur alone as NPs but must be accompanied by a noun. They tend to occur together in the same NP, with *nèkè* occurring before the head noun and *néfèː* occurring after the head noun and its modifiers. Example:

(71)  
\[
\begin{array}{llll}
  nèkè & kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né & bíbìóó & nèfèː \\
  \text{this frog} & \text{small} & \text{this} \\
  \text{‘this small frog.’} & [\text{NAR:5}] 
\end{array}
\]
nɛkɛ rarely occurs in an NP without nɛlɛ, but nɛlɛ frequently occurs without nɛkɛ. In (72)-(74)
nɛlɛ is used (without nɛkɛ) to indicate proximity of the referent of the noun head to the
speaker.

(72) òwúlà nɛlɛ mò ní yàá = á lè jí
young.man this NM NMLZ go = DEF 3SG.OBJ COP
*first born*
“This young man, the one going (over there), he is the first born” [OYO:378]

(73) nà̀nã̀ = á lé è = yè màŋ mè nɛlɛ mìŋ
Nanaa = DEF TOP 3SG = be.locatedcountry this inside
“As for Nanaa, she is in this country.” [DF:149]

(74) mò ní à = kɛ-bà nɛlɛ è = tsúí è = fà
NM NMLZ 3PL.IMPER = take.PERF-come this 3SG = heart PERF = uproot
“This person who has been brought (here), he is afraid.” [FH:129]

In (75), it is temporal proximity of the NP that is expressed by nɛlɛ.

(75) òblâ-yòò kò tsé mì yè òsú gòdò mìŋ
life-woman INDEF call 1SG.OBJ be.located Osu cemetery inside
hò ní hò nɛlɛ
Saturday NMLZ pass this
“A young woman called out to me in the Osu cemetery this past Saturday.” [DF:119]

(76) ò = bàá-Iná fèè gbèkè nɛlɛ
2SG = FUT-see all evening this
“You will see (it) all this evening.” [OYO:426]

In the following example, nɛlɛ is used anaphorically. The narrator initially describes how the
boy came upon a big stone or rock. He then changes topic and focuses on the owl’s actions
When he pivots back to the topic of the boy and the stone, he modifies them both with *né!é* to indicate that their referents are the same as those of the boy and stone mentioned earlier.

*The young man got up and he saw a big stone that looked like a rock, or maybe a snowball and he started to climb it.*

*And this boy climbed this stone.*

When *né!é* is used in conjunction with *néké*, it appears to be for the purposes of reinforcement, wherein the speaker stresses that the head noun is activated within the discourse i.e. it has recently been a topic. It is therefore used mainly for anaphoric purposes, as in (78).
Some time ago, there lived a little young man. This young man had a small dog.

When *nēkē* occurs without *nēlē* in a noun phrase it performs two functions. The first is to mark new information, as in (79).

(79) nĩ́ əmẽ̀ = yà-nà  nēkē  kòòlòì  bíbì!í  bíbì!í  ní  tsẽ-ɔ̃̀  mɔ̀
    and  3PL=ITIV-see  this  animal  small  small  NMLZ  sting-HAB  person
    “And they went and saw these small small animals that sting.”  [MAV:46]

The second function is type identification, where it identifies the head noun as an instantiation, member or example of a larger category. For instance, *nēkē* ‘this’ in (80) marks *nũ̀ũ̀ ‘man’ as a member or exemplifier of the category of “men one should marry”. Similarly, in (81), *nēkē* ‘this’ marks *gbɔ̀mɔ̀ ‘person’ as an instantiation of the class of “people one should not quarrel with.”

(80)  nēkē  nũ̀ũ̀  è=sà  ní  ò=kê  hĩ̀  shĩ̀
    this  man  3SG=fit  NMLZ  2SG=take  live  down
    “This is the type of man you should marry.”

(81)  nēkē  gbɔ̀mɔ̀ =!ɔ̃̀  à=kê  lè  bêéè
    this  person =DEF  3PL.IMPERS=take  3SG.OBJ  quarrel.NEG
    “Such a person, you don’t quarrel with them.”

When *nēlē* modifies the noun *nī́ ‘thing’, it results in a lexical collocation which functions discursively as a placeholder for an entity whose name the speaker momentarily does
not remember. In (82), the participants are trying to list the herbs used in making a particular ritual herbal mixture. After naming one in the first intonation unit, Oyo is having trouble remembering any more and so she says ɛ̃̀ɛ̃̀ nĩ́!ĩ́ nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́ ‘errm, this thing.’

(69) Oyo: nyànyárá
herb.name
“Nyanyara (herb)”

Kwei: [má=ká!í]
1SG.FUT = remember
“I will remember.”

Oyo: ɛ̀ɛ̀ [nĩ́ nɛ̀lɛ̀]
IJ thing this
“errm, this thing…”

KK: nààbúnààbú yè mĩŋ
herb.name be.located inside
“There’s naabunaabu (herb) in it.”

nĩ́ nɛ̀lɛ̀ ‘this thing’ can also be used to signal self-repair as shown in (83), where the speaker utters the wrong word (tsò ‘tree’) and then immediately self-repairs with the correct word (kòòlòó!ɛ́ ‘the animal’) which is preceded by nĩ́!ĩ́ nɛ́lɛ̀ ‘this thing’.

(83) nì è=bà-kò stò è̀ɛ̀ nĩ́!ĩ́ nɛ̀lɛ̀ kòòlòó = !ɛ
and 3SG = VENT-climb tree IJ thing this animal = DEF
“And he climbed a tree – errm, this thing – the animal.” [FL:85]

(iv) nàkà rè- This is the distal demonstrative determiner, used to reference NPs that are relatively distant from the speaker. It contrasts with nèkè. It is also used anaphorically. Whereas nèkè is
often used in conjunction with nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́, nã̀kã̀ĩ̀ occurs with the definite article lɛ̀. It occurs before the head noun while the definite article occurs at the end of the noun phrase.

In (84), nã̀kã̀ĩ̀ indicates that the head noun it modifies, lɔ́lè ‘car’ is spatially distant from the speaker. It could be accompanied by a pointing gesture.

(85) nã̀kã̀ĩ̀ lɔ́lè tsùlú=!ɛ̃́ námò nɔ̀
that car red=DEF who NM
“That red car, whose is it?”

In the following two examples, nã̀kã̀ĩ̀ is used anaphorically to refer back to something in the prior talk. (86) shows substitution anaphora while (87) shows textual anaphora. In (87) nã̀kã̀ĩ̀ refers to the act of chasing ‘him’ and rescuing the sibling.

(86) ò=yɛ̀ bí!kó bí kɔmɛ̀ pé ní
2SG=have child INDEF child one only NMLZ
ò=yɔ̀ɔ̀ è=tɔ̀ bɔ̀ dànɔ̀ ò=nyɛ́ ò=fɔ̀
2SG=have.HAB 3SG=toil you before 2SG=able 2SG=give.birth

nã̀kã̀ĩ̀ gbé!kɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́
that child=DEF
“If you have a child, just one child. You toiled before you were able to have that child.”
[CH:38]

(87) té wɔ̀=bàá-fɛ̀ tɛ́ɛ́ wɔ́=!nyíɛ́ è=sɛ̀ɛ̀ ní
how 1PL=FUT-do how 1PL.SBJV=walk 3SG=back NMLZ
wɔ́=hɛ́ wɔ̀=nyɛ̃́mĩ́=ɛ̀ yɛ̀ è=dɛ̀ŋ
1PL.SBJV=get 1PL=sibling=DEF be.located 3SG=hand
“How will we chase him and take our sibling from him? We don’t have the strength to do that.” [DEB:187]

Note that while nã̀kã̀ĩ̀ can be used anaphorically both as a complete NP (87) or as a determiner in an NP (86), nëlé cannot function anaphorically unless accompanied by nëlé in the NP.

2.3.1.3.3 Manner adverbial demonstratives
The nominal demonstratives nëlé and nã̀kã̀ĩ̀ are also recruited as manner adverbial demonstratives where they point to some physical action which is intended to demonstrate how an action was carried out. They occur as modifiers to the predicate. Here, perhaps nëlé and nã̀kã̀ĩ̀ will be more accurately glossed as ‘like.this’ and ‘like.that’ respectively. For example, in (88) the speaker rests his chin in his palm as he makes this statement. It is this action that is represented by nëlé.

(88) ɪ = tá ǃshi ɪ = fèé nëlé
1SG = sit down 1SG.PERF = do like.this
“I’m sitting down and I’ve done like this.” [MM:227]

(89) nĩ é = fèé è = nìnè nëlé èè = bó-ǃlɔ̀
and 3SG.PERF = do 3SG = hand like.this 3SG.PROG = shout-ITER
“And he’s made his hands like this (puts hands to mouth in shouting gesture) and he’s shouting.” [FLO:76]
nɛ̃̀kɛ̃́ is used when the speaker is the one demonstrating the action (even if they are reporting another person’s actions), as in (89) while nã̀kã̀ĩ̀ is used to point to an action carried out by an addressee. Consequently, nã̀kã̀ĩ̀ is not accompanied by any physical demonstration on the part of the speaker, (90).

(90) fò-lò-mò̀ lè nã̀kã̀ĩ̀ nɔ̃́ŋ́ŋ́
cut-ITER-IMP 3SG.OBJ like.that just
“Keep cutting it up just like that.” [said to someone cutting up onions, for example]

Using these manner adverbials does not always require an accompanying physical action. They are sometimes used anaphorically to refer not necessarily to a preceding event but to refer the addressee to previous characterizations that the speaker has made concerning the manner in which something is done (91) and (92). Prior to the statement in (91), the speaker had given a long narrative about the procedures and rituals involved in the celebration of Yeyeye, the twin festival. It is this description that is being referred to by nɛ̃̀kɛ̃́ ‘like.this’.

(91) hèwɔ́ =!ɔ́ kɛ̀ à=yè yèyèye nɛ̃̀kɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́
sake=TOP when 3PL.IMPERS=eat Yeyeye like.this=DEF

è=nɔ̀ jè-tsérè-mò̀ hòdò =!ɔ́ à=bàá-wɔ̀
3SG=top world-rise-NOM Saturday=TOP 3PL.IMPERS=FUT-jeer

hɔ̀mò̀ yì
hunger head
“So after we celebrate Yeyeye (AS I’VE JUST DESCRIBED), the following day, Saturday, we will jeer at hunger”   [YM:239]
In (92) the prior conversation had been about a woman whose son had died and was
inconsolable. The speaker had also lost two children and is saying how seeing that mother had
reminded her of when her own children died. By using nàká̀, the speaker is likening her own
experience to that of the mother they had just been discussing.

(92) kèkè è=hà m̀ hú ì=ká!í î = times è=!è
then 3SG = give 1SG too 1SG = remember 1SG = -DEF-DEF

bè ní è=bà lè nàká̀=lè
time NMLZ 3SG = come 3SG.OBJ like.that = DEF

“Then, me too, it makes me remember my time, when it happened like that”
[FH:193]

Some discourse-pragmatic work is also done by adverbial nèkè ‘like.this’. When it is
followed by nônjî ‘immediately, just’, it conveys a sense of unexpectedness or surprise at the
following action. In narratives, it is an effective method of introducing a complicating action by
creating anticipation in the listener or reader.

(93) è=hèè ɓú=è mǹk kwé=!mò nèkè nônjî shì
3SG = hold hole = DEF inside look-NOM like.this immediately instance

kômè tôó=!è nàà pàtú é=jè kpò
one only = TOP PRSTV.PRED.PRT owl 3SG = exit compound

pùéj IDEO

“He kept on looking inside the hole when suddenly an owl flew out.” [PAT:106]
(Lit: “He kept on looking inside the hole like this when suddenly, here is an owl exiting
(the hole)”)
Just as he went and got closer to the tree his leg ended up in a hole (lit: his leg went and saw a hole) in the ground.” [PAT:77]

*nèkè* and *nàkàř* may also function as degree adverbs. *nàkàř* may replace *nèkè* in (95) but not in (96) or (97).

“I say, Ga people…why are you so foolish?” [MM:155]

“Of, such a fine girl!” [DF:123]

“She was so happy!”

Another function of adverbial *nèkè* is what I term exemplification. Here *nèkè* occurs outside of the noun phrase as an adverbial and presents the preceding noun as an example.

---

5 This word does not exist outside this idiomatic expression. Based on the format of similar expressions, it likely refers to a body part.
nèkè may also be reduplicated a number of times (usually three times) in colloquial speech to represent speech that the speaker deems irrelevant or unnecessarily long-winded. A good English equivalent is the colloquial *bla bla bla* or the more formal *et cetera et cetera and and so on and so forth.*
(101) \( \text{bìlè jí àfiē!ná} \)
here be Afiena
“This (place) is Afiena” [FH:55]

(102) \( \text{èè bìlè nèlè àkúŋmàjè} \)
yes here this Akumaje
Yes, this (place) is Akumaje. [FH:90]

(103) \( \text{kè wò=ŋ-yá=!á mā=hā wò=tsō jē!ŋ} \)
when 1PL=PROG-go=DEF 1SG.FUT=give 1PL.SBJV=pass there
“When we are going, I’ll let us pass by there.” [FH:10]

These locational demonstratives are nouns and they display the following nominal features:

They can be possessed:

(104) \( \text{nò hèwọ=!ọ wò=bìlè nèlè hàājī sọŋj} \)
that sake=TOP 1PL=here this twins only.FOC

yọ!ọ bìlè
be.located.HAB here
“So here (at our house), only twins can be found here.” [FH:385]

They can be modified by the quantifier, \( \text{fèè} \) ‘all’

(105) \( \text{bìlè fèè àfiēnà jí bìlè} \)
here all Afiena COP here
“This whole area is Afiena.” [FH:63]

They can function as subjects and objects of sentences. In (101) \( \text{bìlè} \) ‘here’ is the subject of the sentence and in (103), \( \text{jē!ŋ} \) ‘there’ is the object.
They may be modified by adjectives but such a noun phrase is syntactically constrained because it cannot occur in subject or object position. Instead it must be modified by nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́ and then topicalized, followed by a comment on the topic.

(106) bíɛ̀ àgbò nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́ mò kòmé pɛ̂ hì-ɔ̀ bí!é
    here big this person one only.FOC live-HAB here
    “This big place, only one person lives here.”

(107) jɛ̃́mɛ̃̀ fɛ̀ɛ́fɛ́ó nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́ ò = súmọ̀ɔ̀sɔ̀
    there beautiful this 2SG=like.NEG
    “That beautiful place, you don’t like it?”

Below is a table summarizing the demonstratives in Gã and their functions. Functions such as the identificational and surprise-marking function of nɛké and the exemplification function of both nɛké and nàkàñ are grouped under “discourse”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demonstrative</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nɛké</td>
<td>Identificational and surprise-marking function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nàkàñ</td>
<td>Exemplification function</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4: Ga demonstratives - forms and functions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forms</th>
<th>Functions</th>
<th>Spatial deixis</th>
<th>Anaphora</th>
<th>Cataphora</th>
<th>Discourse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominal demonstrative</td>
<td>NP (demonstrative pronoun)</td>
<td>énè ‘this’</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nò ‘that’</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determiner</td>
<td></td>
<td>nêlé ‘this’</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nèkè ‘this’</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nàkà ‘that’</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominal locative</td>
<td></td>
<td>bìlé ‘here’</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demonstrative</td>
<td></td>
<td>jèltè ‘there’</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manner adverbial</td>
<td></td>
<td>nèkè ‘like.this’</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demonstrative</td>
<td></td>
<td>nàkà ‘like.that’</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3.2 Personal Pronouns

Dixon (2010:189) defines pronouns as “a small closed class of grammatical words which vary for person.” Gã has bound pronouns, which are obligatory, as well as free or independent pronouns. Subject pronouns are bound, while object pronouns are free. The tone on a personal pronoun is dependent on surrounding tones. Table 5 shows all personal pronouns in Gã.
Table 5: Personal pronouns in Ga

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject pronominal proclitic</th>
<th>Object pronoun</th>
<th>Free Pronoun/Disjunctive Pronoun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st person ĩ/mĩ</td>
<td>mĩ</td>
<td>mĩ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd person o</td>
<td>bo/Ø</td>
<td>bo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd person animate e</td>
<td>le</td>
<td>le</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd person inanimate e</td>
<td>le/Ø</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd person impersonal a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st person wɔ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd person nyɛ̃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd person animate àmɛ̃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd person inanimate àmɛ̃/Ø</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An interesting observation made from table 5 is that in the plural there is no form distinction among the various grammatical relations. That is, for each plural “person”, the subject, object and independent pronouns all have the same form. However, singular subject pronominals differ from their object and free pronoun counterparts, except for the first person clitic, which has two forms, one of which is identical to and the other different from the object and free forms. Because object pronouns and free pronouns have the same form, it is safe to say that object pronouns in Gà serve an additional role as disjunctive or free pronouns.

---

6 The second person object pronoun, o= is used in very formal contexts or by older speakers.
Free pronouns in Gã have similar syntactic function to what are traditionally known as “disjunctive pronouns”; they occur in “dislocated” positions such as in topicalized NPs. They occur in elliptical constructions e.g. as the sole answer to an interrogative. They also occur as conjuncts in coordinated NPs and also as focused NPs. According to Dixon (2010:190), in languages that have obligatory bound pronouns, free pronouns are used for contrast, emphasis or in copular complement or verbless clause complement function. Free pronouns in Gã are able to carry out all these functions. These functions will be exemplified in §2.3.2.3. Bound pronouns, on the other hand, cannot carry out any of these functions.

2.3.2.1 Subject pronominal proclitics
Bound subject pronouns in Gã are clitics, specifically proclitics. They constitute grammatical words that lack phonological independence and hence must attach to a host. They attach to the verb complex and occur as the very first element in the main clause. Absolutely nothing can intervene between a subject pronominal clitic and its host verb. Below are some sentences containing the subject pronominal clitics.

(108) nĩ́ ñ̊=hã́ shiká = !á nĩ́ ñ̊=stîlî
when 1SG = get money = DEF and 1SG-seize
“When I collected the money, I seized it.” [MM:71]

(109) d̊=bã́-lmã́ ñ̊=fẹ̊ gbẹ̀kè n̊̆=l̊े
2SG = FUT-see all evening this
“You will see (it) all this evening.” [OYO:426]
The first person singular clitic, ī= can be considered a simple clitic, following Zwicky (1985:295). This is a clitic that has a corresponding fuller form which occurs in the same syntactic position. The fuller form is mĩ. mĩ is also the older form and is the only form found in archaic texts. It sounds very formal and stiff when used in ordinary conversation. It is not known when ī= supplanted mĩ because writing convention still dictates that the first singular subject clitic be written mĩ, even though people hardly pronounce it that way. In modern Gã, mĩ is used only when the verb is in the progressive (111) or future (112) and then it forms a portmanteau morpheme with these grammatical markers. The reduced form, ī= is used for all other aspects.

(110)  ámbɛ̃̀=ŋ̀-jè nyɛ̃̀ dɛ̃̀ŋ̀
3PL = PROG-exit 2PL palm
“They are becoming badly-behaved.” (Lit: “They are getting out of your palms”) [OYO:139]

(111) kɛ̀ɛ́-mɔ̃́  !l ɛ́ á !kɛ́  mĩ́ĩ́=!yá
tell-IMP 3SG.OBJ that 1SG.PROG=go
“Tell him that I am going.” [MM:97]

(112) bɛ̀ mã́=kwɛ́ ó=hĩ̀ɛ̃̀ Sunday
then 1SG.FUT=look 2SG=face
“Then I’ll be expecting you on Sunday.” [FH:205]

As mentioned, though the first singular subject pronoun mĩ= is almost never heard in spoken Gã (except in the two instances just described), it is the only first singular subject
pronoun used in written Gã. ì= never appears in any written work that I have encountered. The following examples are taken from the Gã Bible and a primary school reading textbook.

(113) mĩ̀ = tèè zú!ú !lɛ́
1SG = go.PST zoo DEF
“I went to the zoo.” (BGL 3A 1999:3; tone marks and glosses mine)

(114) mĩ̀ = bò m ɨ̀ = tsɛ̀ yèhówà
1SG = shout 1SG = father Jehovah
“I called on my father, Jehovah.” (BSG:671; tone marks and glosses mine)

The subject pronominal clitics may also attach to a noun phrase to form a possessive construction (115).

(115) ĩ́ = mã̀mĩ́ [1SG = mother] ‘my mother’
è = gbèé [3SG = dog] ‘his dog’
wɔ̀ = shĩ́!ã́ [1PL = house] ‘our house’
ó = shiká [2SG = money] ‘your money’

Unlike affixes, these clitic pronominals are not restricted to a particular syntactic category; they cliticize to both verbs and nouns. As Zwicky (1985:299) puts it, they have a low degree of selectivity with respect to their hosts. Whereas affixes do not belong to any word class, these pronominals belong to a subset of the class of nouns i.e. pronouns. Therefore, they are word-like in character. But unlike lexical words they cannot occur in isolation. The first, second and third person singular subject pronominal clitics, for example, cannot be uttered alone as an answer to a content question. Instead it is the free forms that must be used (116).
(116) Q: námɔ́ jwà plɛ́!tɛ́ = !ɛ́
who break plate = DEF
“Who broke the plate?”

A: mĩ́/bɔ́/lɛ́
1SG/2SG.OBJ/3SG.OBJ
“Me/you/him, her.”

But NOT:
A: *ĩ́/*ɔ́/*ɛ́
1SG.SUBJ/2SG.SUBJ/3SG.SUBJ

Since the plural pronominals are completely neutralized for subject, object and free form, they cannot be distinguished formally when they occur in isolation e.g. in answer to a content question, as in (117). The answers in A are presumably the free forms (based on the fact that only free forms occur independently), but the same forms are used for the subject proclitics as well as object pronouns.

(117) Q: náµmèì bàá-hóó kpékplɛ́ = !ɛ́
who.PL FUT-cook food.type = DEF
“Who will cook the kpekple?”

A: wɔ̀/nyɛ̃̀/ã́mɛ̃̀
1PL/2PL/3PL
We/You (pl.)/They

An important point to note about the pronominal subject clitics is that they are in complementary distribution with the full noun phrases they refer to. That is, a pronominal clitic
and its NP referent cannot both occur in the same clause. Example (118) is ungrammatical if *Okọ and the pronoun e= refer to the same person.

(118a)  *Okọ  e=tsá-à  hèlà
        Okọ  3SG=heal-HAB  disease
        “Okọ heals diseases.”

In order for both the full NP and the pronominal clitic to occur together there must be an intonational break between the full NP and the rest of the sentence - a kind of topicalization by fronting (see §7.3). In (119) the pause is signalled by a comma. Alternatively, the full NP can be topicalized using the topic marker le (120).

(119)  òkó,  e=tsá-à  hèlà
        Okọ  3SG=heal-HAB  disease
        “Okọ, he heals diseases.”

(120)  òkó=!ɛ́  e=tsá-à  hèlà
        Okọ=TOP  3SG=heal-HAB  disease
        “As for Okọ, he heals diseases.”

Another difference between the subject pronominal clitics on one hand and object and free pronouns on the other is that whereas free pronouns and object pronouns may be modified by the additive adverb hũ ‘too’ and the quantifier, fẹẹ ‘all’, the subject pronominals cannot. So (121) is grammatical because it is the object pronoun that is modified by fẹẹ ‘all’, but (122), where the subject proclitic takes the modifier is not grammatical. In order for a subject pronominal to take on such qualifiers, free pronouns must be employed. These can be modified
and left-dislocated and then can be followed by the subject pronominal clitic, as in (123). The inability of the subject clitics to be modified shows that they are not quite like ordinary words.

(121) wò-bíì = ɛ̀ jè kpò yè tsó = ɛ̀ nò
honey-people = DEF exit compound be.located tree = DEF top

kè-bòlè ḍ̀mè fèè
take-surround 3PL all

“The bees exited the tree and surrounded them completely.” [PAT:63]

(122) *d̀mè fèè ṣè jè nyè = dèŋ’
3PL all PROG-exit 2PL = palm

“They are all becoming badly-behaved.” (Lit: “They are all getting out of your palm.”)

(123) ḍ̀mè fèè ṣèjè nyè = dèŋ’
3PL all 3PL = PROG-exit 2PL = palm

“They are all becoming badly-behaved.”

The impersonal pronoun a = is used only in subject position. It is used to indicate referents that are unknown to the speaker or whose role the speaker wishes to downplay, or referents that are unspecifiable, as is the case in (124). Constructions with the impersonal pronoun are the closest thing semantically to passives in other languages.

(124) a = sòélé bò òò a = sòlé-kò
3PL.IMPERS.PERF = baptise2SG.OBJ IJ 3PL.IMPERS = baptise-PERF.NEG

bò òò dáá áfì = !è a = bòlé-fèè
2SG.OBJ IJ everyday year = TOP 3PL.IMPERS = FUT-do
“Whether you’ve been baptized or not, every year it (customary rites for twins) will be done for you.” [OYO:152]

### 2.3.2.2 Object pronouns

These are not considered clitics mainly due to their ability to occur as independent pronouns.

Object pronouns occur immediately after the verb complex.

(125) à=tse-ɔ̀  mĩ̀  n a ̃̀ã́ kwèíkɔ́  
3PL.IMPERS=call-HAB 1SG.OBJ Naa Kweikor
“My name is Naa Kweikor.” (Lit: “They call me Naa Kweikor”) [YM:16]

(126) mĩ́=kèé  bò  h ɔ̀mɔ̃̀ yééé  nyè  kòkòkò  
1SG.PROG=say 2SG.OBJ hunger eat.NEG 2PL never
“I’m telling you, you’ll never go hungry.” (Lit: “…hunger will never eat you.”) [OYO:180]

(127) nĩ̀ è=mɔ̀  lè  
and 3SG=catch 3SG.OBJ
“And he caught him.” [PAT:206]

The second singular object pronoun is bò, but in some formal, written literature o has been found in object position. This use is attested but not common in the spoken language. The example below is from the Gã Bible.

(128) nĩ̀ mĩ̀ hũ  mĩ́=kèé  ló  áḷké  
and 1SG too 1SG=tell 2SG.OBJ NMLZ
“And I am also telling you that…” [BSG:NT16]
The third singular object pronoun for inanimate entities is null. In the third intonation unit in (129), Sally corrects Dina by saying that the accounts are going to be done at the house, but there is no mention of the NP, àkõntàá ‘accounts’ or of an overt pronoun because it is pronominalized with a null pronoun.

(128) Dina: hèwɔ́=!ɔ́ à = bàá-bù àkõntàá = à yè sake = TOP 3PL.IMPERS = FUT-calculate accounts = DEF be.located

[ji!mɛ]
there
“So the accounts will be calculated there.”

Sally: [àkõntàá] pé accounts only “Only the accounts.”

 múhmúm à = bàá-bù Ø yè no 3PL.IMPERS = FUT-calculate 3SG.OBJ.INAN be.located

shí!á = !á house = DEF “No, it will be calculated at the house.”

Using lè for animates will be ungrammatical.

(129) *múhmúm à = bàá-bù lè yè shí!á = !á IJ 3PL.IMPERS = FUT-calculate 3SG.OBJ be.located house = DEF

“No, it will be calculated at the house.”

All inanimate object nouns must be pronominalized with a zero unless the noun is capable of being the subject of a middle verb or labile verb. These are verbs that are capable of
occurring in both transitive and intransitive clauses. Specifically, this relates to labile verbs where the S (single argument) of the intransitive clause corresponds to the P (patient) of the transitive clause. So for instance, while the inanimate object of *bù* ‘calculate’ in (128) can be pronominalized with a zero morpheme, the inanimate object of *wó!só* ‘shake’ in (130) cannot because it is a labile verb. The overt 3SG object pronoun, *lè*, must be used.

(130) nò hèwọ́ = ọ́ ̀amè́ = hɛ́ !lè́ táò-mò́ ̀àhû́ nì́
that sake = TOP 3PL = hold 3SG.OBJ seek-NOM continuously and

gbèé !lè́ tèè ́ bee = !é́ ̀amè́ = tsù́ kókróó !kó
dog DEF go.PST = DEF 3PL = house spherical INDEF

NMLZ 3PL.PERF = do be.located tree top. sake=TOP

è=tèè nì́ èè = wósò ́ lè́
3SG = go.PST and 3SG.PROG = shake 3SG.OBJ.

“So they kept looking for him. And the dog went to…the bees, their small house that they had made on a tree (i.e. beehive). So he went and he is shaking it.” [MAV:50-53]

The reason for allowing inanimate objects of only labile verbs to be pronominalized with the overt object pronoun is to avoid potential misinterpretation of such clauses. Labile verbs may or may not have objects. The presence or absence of an object determines whether the subject is the agent or patient. A clause with a labile verb and no overt object will be interpreted as one in which the subject is the undergoer or patient of the action predicated by the verb. If that is not the meaning that the speaker wishes to convey, then it makes sense for an overt object to be
present for such verbs in all instances, regardless of the animacy of the object referent. For example, if the last sentence of (130) occurs with a null object as in (131), the sentence would mean that the beehive was shaking all by itself, perhaps due to the wind. Introducing the overt 3SG pronoun eliminates this interpretation.

(131) èè=wó!só
3SG.PROG=shake
“It is shaking.”

Just like subject pronominals, object pronominals cannot co-occur with the noun phrase co-referential with it (132). Again, (132) will be grammatical only if there is an intonational pause between the object pronoun and the NP it refers to. Such a construction would constitute a right-dislocated construction, a kind of topic construction (§7.4).

(132) *nìè = mò lè gbèè = !è
and 3SG=catch 3SG.OBJ dog-DEF
“And he caught him, the dog.”

Such a construction without the pause may be employed for stylistic effect. A noun co-referential with the object pronoun may co-occur with it as long as the noun is a proper name.

A speaker may employ this tactic for dramatic emphasis. Example:

(133) mìí=bí bò èshámi
1SG.PROG=ask 2SG.OBJ Ashami
“I’m asking you, Ashami.”
2.3.2.3 Free pronouns

In Gã, object pronouns (except for null 3SG pronouns) are used as free pronouns. As mentioned earlier, these pronouns perform many of the functions that bound pronouns cannot. These functions are discussed below.

Free pronouns are the only pronouns that can occur as the sole answer to a question (116). Free pronouns are used to show contrastive emphasis; the subject pronominal clitic (together with the verb complex) is preceded by the corresponding free pronoun (same number and person) without any intervening intonational pause. For example, in (134) the use of the free pronoun bo in addition to the subject pronominal clitic ò puts emphasis on the the second person (you).

(134) nɔ̃́ nĩ́ bɔ̃́ ò=bàá-tsɔ̃́ɔ̃́=!ɔ́ nĩ́
NM NMLZ 2SG 2SG=FUT-show=DEF FOC
à=bàá-fèè
3PL.IMPERS=FUT-do
“What you will choose is what will be done.” [OYO:13]

Free pronouns are the only pronouns that can be focused. Focus is marked by placing the focus particle, nĩ́ after the focused noun. For pragmatic reasons, utilizing a focused pronoun is sometimes obligatory. For example, instead of answering an interrogative with just a pronoun as in answer A in (135), one may respond with a complete sentential answer.
However, such an answer must include a focused pronoun, which is then followed by a clause containing the corresponding subject pronominal clitic (B).

(135) Q: námɔ̃̀ jwà  plɛ́!tɛ́ = !ɛ́
   who break plate = DEF
   “Who broke the plate?”

A: mǐ

B: mǐ (nì) ₁ = jwà  plɛ́!tɛ́ = !ɛ́
   1SG FOC 1SG = break plate = DEF
   “I broke the plate.”
   “I am the one who broke the plate.”

C. ₁ = jwà  plɛ́!tɛ́ = !ɛ́  → grammatical but not felicitious
   1SG = break plate = DEF
   “I broke the plate.”

Although answer C is grammatical, it is pragmatically aberrant because it does not meet the information structure demands of the question. Because the question presupposes that someone out of a pool of many people broke the plate, Gã requires that the answer reflect this by putting contrastive emphasis or focus on the answer.

The free pronouns could be optionally followed by the focus particle ni. Indeed, when the answer to such a question is a full NP, that NP is obligatorily marked by the focus morpheme. This state of affairs is not unique to Gã. In English, answer B will correspond to a sentence in which the first singular pronoun is phonologically stressed (I broke the plate) and
answer C to one in which it is not stressed (I broke the plate). The sentence in which the first
person pronoun is stressed would be the more pragmatically appropriate one. The same
explanation can be given for why (136a) is acceptable but (136b) is not.

(136a) *stamp nê!ê mĩ̀ ĩ̄yà-fèê ló
       this 1SG 1SG=ITIV-do QP
     “This stamp, did I go and make it?”

(136b) stamp nê!ê ĩ̄yà-fèê ló
       this 1SG=ITIV-do QP
     “This stamp, am I the one who went and made it?”

Since the free and bound forms of the plural pronouns are identical, an answer with a
plural pronoun appears to have two copies of the pronoun. However, it is the free pronoun that
constitutes the first element of the sentence, followed by the subject clitic:

D: wɔ̀ wɔ̀=jwà plê!té=!ê
   1 PL 1PL=break plate=DEF
   “We broke the plate.”
   “We were the ones who broke the plate.”

Free pronouns are the only pronouns that can occur as subjects (137) or complements
(138) in copula clauses. The copula verb is jí. Example:

(137) Elma=!ã́ lɛ̀ jí àmɔ́n=!ê
       Elma=TOP 3SG.OBJ COP Amorkor
     “Elma, she is Amorkor.”

Generally, subject proclitics cannot function in these roles:

(139) *Elma=!aèjíàmɔ́kɔ́
Elma=TOP 3SG=COP Amorkor
“Elma, she is Amorkor.”

(140) ?kɛ́nùùjíó=ɛ́
if man be 2SG.OBJ=DEF
“If you are a man…”

An exception is made for the subject of a copular verb whose complement refers not to a concrete entity but to an abstract concept, idea or event. Such a subject must be the third singular subject clitic, e = (141a). It cannot be the free form equivalent lɛ̀ (141b), since the referent of lɛ̀ when it is subject of a copula must be animate, perhaps even human.

(141a) è=jídró!mòkèhà!wɔ́à!kè
3SG=COP blessing take give 1PL NMLZ
“It is a blessing for us that…” [CH:6]

(141b) *lèjífródó!mòkèhà!wɔ́à!kè
3SG COP blessing take give 1PL NMLZ
“It is a blessing for us that…”

Free pronouns function as subjects of verbless clauses, something which subject pronouns cannot do.
Free pronouns can be modified by nominal property words (144), whereas subject proclitics cannot (145).

(144)  bó  bibiôó  nélë  ò = nyë-!ŋ̩  ó = yì  tété
2SG  small  this  2SG = be.able-NEG.FUT  2SG = beat  Tete
“A small person like you cannot beat Tete.” (Lit: “You, this small person…you cannot beat Tete.”)

(145)  *ó  bibiôó  nélë  ò = nyë-!ŋ̩  ó = yì  tété
2SG  small  this  2SG = be.able-NEG.FUT  2SG = beat  Tete
“A small person like you cannot beat Tete.” (Lit: “You, this small person…you cannot beat Tete.”)

### 2.3.3 Possessive pronouns

There are no possessive pronouns in Gã per se. Since possession is indicated by simple juxtaposition of possessor and possessum (with the possessor in initial position), the subject pronominal clitics function in place of full nouns and stand in juxtaposition to the possessum.

Example:

(146)  ñ=wo!ŋ̩  gbëi  jí  yöómó àsâgmì
1SG = deity  name  be  Yoomo Ashami
“My deity name is Yoomo Ashami.” [YM:17]
Independent pronouns cannot occur as possessors in possessive NPs. One exception is the first singular independent pronoun. In written Gã, the first singular pronoun mĩ=, rather than ḣ= is used as possessor. The following example is from the Gã Bible. Tone marks and glosses are mine.

(149) yèhówà jí mĩ=té-sàà kè mĩ=mɔ̃́ɔ̃̀ ní wà
  Jehovah COP 1SG=stone-bed and 1SG=prison NMLZ be.hard
  “Jehovah is my rock and my strong fortress.”  [BSG:671]

2.3.4 Possession
As mentioned earlier, possession in Gã is coded by apposition of the possessor noun and the possessed noun. The possessor comes first and is immediately followed by the possessum. Although the notion of possession evokes the semantic relation of ownership, many writers (Dixon 2010:263 ; Nikolaeva and Spencer 2013:225) have noted that this is not the only relation that may exist between the two noun phrases in a so-called possessive noun phrase. According to them, some other semantic relationships that may hold between a possessed noun and its possessor are kinship relationship, whole-part relationship, orientation or location or
some sort of association that must be pragmatically determined. Some examples are given below:

**Kinship:**

(150) *Elma bì jí lè*

Elma child COP 3SG.OBJ

“She’s Elma’s child.” [DF:143]

(151) *nã̀nã̀ n̄fí=óó nyɛ̃̀mĩ́ n̄ũ̀ṹ=!ɛ̃́ n̄ĩ́ ḡɔ̃́=ɔ̃́ n̄ɔ̃́=!ɔ̃́*

grandmother little sibling male=DEF NMLZ live hill=DEF top=DEF

“little grandma’s brother who lived at the top of the hill.” [DF:107]

(152) *wɔ̀=nã̀-mɛ̃́ĩ́ ḳè wɔ̀=n̄n̄n̄ḳán̄sóá-ì-mɛ̃́ĩ́*

1PL=grandmother-people and 1PL= great.grandmother-PL-people

bèbèbèbè à=bɔ̃́ĩ́ hā̄jājāyélę́lę́lę́lę́

past.time 3PL.IMPERS=start twin.festival

“It was during the time of our grandparents and great grandparents that the twin festival was started.” [OYO:16]

**Whole-part relationship:**

In (153) below, there are three possessive NPs which all exhibit whole-part semantics. Body part nouns almost always occur in such NPs, as in *ɛŷsọ́ ‘his head’. The two nouns *ṃĩ́j* ‘inside’ and *n̄ã̀bù́ ‘mouth’ denote different parts of the bottle, ɔ. They are locative or spatial nouns and are primarily derived from body part terms. They will be looked at in more detail in §2.3.4.3.
but rather 3SG=head ITIV-be.stuck be.located bottle=DEF inside

because bottle=DEF mouth have small

“But rather, his head went and got stuck inside the bottle because the mouth of the bottle was small.” [PAT:40]

It is possible for several possessive NPs to be stacked one on top of the other. (154) is a possessive NP which contains three possessive NPs. In the first, otsuê ‘your room’, the possessor is ó ‘2SG’ and the possessum is tsuê ‘the room’. In the second possessive NP, otsuê ‘your room’ is the possessor and mîŋ ‘inside’ is the possessum; and in the third and superordinate NP, otsuê mîŋ ‘your room’ is the possessor and sâmélêlê ‘the window’ is the possessum.

(154) ŋã́ [[[ó=tsû=ê]PossP1 mîŋ]PossP2 sâmélêlê=!é]PossP3
close 2SG=house=DEF inside window=DEF

“Close the window in your room.” (Lit: “Close your room’s window.”)

Orientation/location:

Possessive NPs which code this semantic relationship are especially important in Gã because they are the primary means of expressing location. Locational reference in Gã is intrinsic, meaning that the location of an entity is described in relation to another entity. In a possessive NP denoting location, the possessor is the reference object and the possessum is a noun (usually a body part) which denotes a region related to the reference object. Example, in (155)
sèè ‘back’ in nàkãĩ téè sèè ‘behind that stone’ denotes the area contiguous to the posterior region of the stone. See §2.3.4.3 for a discussion of locative nouns.

(155) nì gbèè=!è hũ tèè è=yà-tèé yè
and dog=DEF too go.PST 3SG=ITIV-hide be.located

nàkãĩ té =è sèè
that stone=DEF back
“And the dog too went and hid behind that stone.” [MA:64]

Pragmatically-determined association:

Here, the relationship between possessor and possessum can only be deduced from the contextual situation. ‘Ownership’ (temporary or permanent) could be one of several possible relationships between the two nouns. Some instances of this type of possession are indistinguishable from lexicalized noun-noun compounds. Example (156) is a jocular expression often addressed to a child who is being disrespectful to an adult. The possessive NP ònúkpá fòtò ‘adult’s photo’ does not refer to a photo owned by an adult but to a photo depicting an adult. In the second possessive NP, óshílá ‘your house’, again if the addressee is a child then the house in question does not refer to a property owned by the child but to the house where the child lives.

(156) ònúkpá fòtò bè ò=shílá
adult photo be.located.NEG 2SG=house
“There’s no photo of an adult in your house.”
In (157), it is ‘ownership’ that links the possessor and possessum in the possessive NPs, èshùù ‘his shoes’ and ètàlé ‘his clothes’.

(157) ni ̃̀ è=jìé è=shùù kè è=tàlé fèè è=shwié !shí
and 3SG=remove 3SG=shoes and 3SG=dress all 3SG=pour down
“And he removed his shoes and his clothes and put them down.” [AKU:7]

In (158), the noun in possessor position is inanimate and so is incapable of ownership. To some extent, however, síklì ‘sugar’ is personified and can now be said to have wèbí!í ‘followers, associates’. The entire NP refers to the ants that are commonly found around sugar.

(158) síklì wèbí!í
sugar followers
‘sugar ants’

In (159), tsòfã̀tsɛ̀ wè ‘shrine’, refers not necessarily to a house owned by the medicine man or even to where he lives but where he practices his craft.

(159) tsòfã̀-tsɛ̀ wè
medicine-NOM house
‘shrine’ [CH:91]

Examples (158) and (159) can also be analysed as lexicalized noun-noun compounds. Other examples of possessive NPs which are also lexicalized compounds are tsù ñyè (house mother)

‘wall gecko’, gbónyò àdékà (dead.body box) ‘coffin’,

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‘wall gecko’, gbónyò àdékà (dead.body box) ‘coffin’,
2.3.4.1 *Alienable and inalienable possession*

In many languages there is a grammatical distinction between alienably possessed nouns and inalienably possessed nouns. The parameters for membership in one category or the other is determined uniquely for each language. Generally, inalienably possessed nouns are those which entail the existence of a possessor noun i.e. they exist in relation to some other noun (Nikolaeva and Spencer 2013:207-208). In many languages with this distinction, nouns denoting kinship relations and body parts are considered inalienable and there is special morphology to mark them as such. Nouns like tree, clothes and chair are alienable; they are not inherently linked or associated with another noun.

Gâ makes no grammatical distinction between alienable and inalienable nouns. Kinship terms and relational nouns (body parts) tend to occur in possessive NPs. In pragmatically marked situations, however, they can occur without possessors, often for dramatic effect, as in (160).

(160) è=nyééé goal é=!wó nàné = lé é=!kpá àfà
3SG=able.NEG 3SG.SBJV = score leg = DEF PERF = turn side

“He can’t score a goal. The leg is crooked.”

Body parts may also occur without possessors when one wants to predicate an action or attribute of a body part in a general sense, without referring to any particular individual, as in the proverb in (161).
There is one noun that must always appear in a possessive noun phrase, with no exceptions.

This is the noun ŋɔ̃̀ɔ̃̀ which refers to a person’s immediate vicinity or home or a person’s possession (162), (163).

(162) ̀=bí !lɛ́ á ! kɛ́ è = bà-hĩ Auntie àmɛ́!lé ŋɔ́ ló
1SG=ask her that 3SG=VENT-live Auntie Amerley place QP
“I asked her whether she came and lived with Auntie Amerley.”  [DF:126]

(163) gbé!kê = !é é-yááá mɔ̀=kò mɔ̀=kò ŋɔ́ child=DEF PERF-go.NEG person=INDEF person=INDEF place
“The child won’t go to anyone.”

2.3.4.2 Plural possessors
In Gã, if the possessor is a plural noun, the possessum takes a prefix, a-, to indicate plurality of the possessor. Dixon (2010:268) refers to the marker on the possessum that functions to specify the person or number of the possessor as a pronominal pertensive [PERT] affix. Examples are given in (164) and (165).

(164) Elma-mɛ́í ã-pàpá = !á Elma-people PERT-father = DEF
“Elma and company’s father…”  [DF:166]
2.3.4.3 Locative nouns

As mentioned earlier, possessive NPs are the main means of expressing location. The possessor is the reference object and the possessum is a noun denoting a region of the possessor or a region contiguous with the area denoted by the possessum. Such a possessum is called a locative noun, relator noun or relational noun. Many are derived from body part terms.

According to Imbert (2005:5) “syntactically speaking, relator nouns are complex adpositions built around a noun stem”. Svorou (1994) refers to relational nouns as “spatial grams”.

Svorou’s (1994) term is more inclusive and is intended to capture relator nouns i.e. adpositions, as well as other grammatical forms which express spatial relations such as affixes, case inflections and spatial adverbs. Relational nouns often lack some of the morphosyntactic features of regular nouns such as articles and pluralisation.

In an extensive cross-linguistic exposition on the evolution of body-part terms to spatial grams, Svorou (1994) discovers that body-part terms most often develop into expressions of spatial relations that arise out of the divisions that individual languages make of the exterior regions of entities. She makes the following observation about spatial grams and the body parts that give rise to them.
FRONT-REGION: eye, face, forehead, mouth, head and breast or chest.

BACK REGION: back, buttocks, loins and anus

SIDE-REGION: flank, ribs, abdomen, heart and ear.

TOP-REGION: head and back.

Ga has a definite number of body-part relational/locative nouns which have generally been referred to in the literature as postpositions. These are shown in table 6.

Table 6: Ga body part terms and their corresponding locational denotations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ga body part</th>
<th>English gloss</th>
<th>Locative denotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hĩ́ɛ̃̀</td>
<td>face</td>
<td>front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sɛ̀ɛ̀</td>
<td>back</td>
<td>back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dṹnã̀ã̀</td>
<td>buttocks/anus</td>
<td>tail end/rear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nã̀ã̀bú/nã̀ã̀</td>
<td>mouth</td>
<td>edge, entrance/opening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tôí</td>
<td>ear</td>
<td>edge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yìtéŋ̀</td>
<td>top of head</td>
<td>top</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hè</td>
<td>body</td>
<td>surface, immediate surroundings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some examples of sentences containing these body part relational nouns are:

(166) nì ̀ è = ŋmẽ́è gbé!ké-ñùù fí!óó = è hè è = bà-tswà shì
and 3SG = let.go child-male little = DEF body 3SG = VENT-hit down

kẽ-jẽ  cliff=é= !é  yìtéŋ̀
take-come.from = DEF = DEF top.of.head

“And he let go of the little boy and he came and fell down from the top of the cliff.”

[DEB:125]
**The orange is lying at the edge of the gutter.**

“In front of Teshie house and around here…”

“The little gentleman swam to the water’s edge.”

“He saw sticks and bushes around the stone.”

The word for head in Ga is *yitso*, but this is not used as a spatial gram. What is used instead is *yitéŋ̀*, which refers to the part of the head normally covered by hair and including the hair itself and is morphologically made up of *yi* ‘head’ and *téŋ̀* ‘middle’. Consequently *yitéŋ̀* specifies not just any top region but the topmost region of an entity, just as the top of the head is the uppermost region of the human body. It is also reserved for use with entities that have a higher vertical elevation than the average human being or entities whose height is greater than eye-level. Therefore it would be used to indicate the location of an entity on the top of e.g. a building, a tall cupboard or a cliff, as in example (166). *nɔ̀* ‘top’, which is not a body part term,
is not as restricted. It indicates location on the upper surface of an object, regardless of height (171).

(171) ę = yà-sò  
    3SG.PERF = ITIV-perch  
    tsò = lé  
    tree = DEF  
    nò  
    somewhere  
    è = kwë  
    top  
    lè  
    3SG.OBJ  

“He has gone and perched on some part of the tree and is watching him” [DEB:73]

Other locative relational nouns that are not derived from body part terms are shiši ‘under’, mòsi ‘side’ (173), kò ‘side’ mì ‘inside’ (172) and tò ‘middle/centre’.

(172) kòkòdé!né = !è  
    frog = DEF  
    jè  
    exit  
    kpò  
    compound  
    yè  
    be.located  
    tò = ò  
    bottle = DEF  
    mì  
    inside  

“The frog got out of the jar.” (Lit: “The frog exited the inside of the bottle.”) [MA:15]

(173) nò  
    that  
    hèwò = !ò  
    sake = TOP  
    èmè = nà  
    3PL = see  
    tsò  
    stick  
    kò  
    INDEF  
    ká  
    lie  
    nù = è  
    water = DEF  
    màsi  
    side  

“So they saw a stick lying beside the water.” [BOR:53]

2.3.4.3.1 Syntactic properties of locative relational nouns

Locative nouns are categorized as nouns because they can function as possessums in possessive noun phrases. Just like non-relational nouns which function as possessums, locative nouns take the pertensive prefix a- when the possessor is plural.

(174) ò = kè-bàá-tsò  
    2SG = take-FUT-pass  
    gbé!kè-bù = è  
    child-PL = DEF  
    à-nò  
    PERT-top  

“You will pass (it = your request) through the children.” [YM:88]
Some locative nouns are capable of functioning alone as arguments in a clause. In such cases, although there is no explicit mention of the locus that normally occurs as possessor, the prior text or situational context often supplies this information. For instance, in (175) the addressee will be able to infer from the situational context precisely what object he is being instructed to stand behind.

(175) yàá dàmɔ́ sèè
go.IMP stand back
“Go and stand behind (it).”

As nouns, some can take the definite article (but not the indefinite article) as in (176), the post-nominal demonstrative, nèlè ‘this’ (177) and can also be modified by property words (178), where téj ‘middle’ is modified by the property noun tsàkàtsàkà ‘nasty’. The locative nouns that can take these modifiers are hié ‘face/front’, sèè ‘back’, shíshí ‘under’ and téj ‘middle’.

(176) shíshí=è nòò
under=DEF be.sweet
“The bottom part (of e.g. boiled rice) is sweet.”

(177) hié nèlè é-wò mú!jí ómó
face this PERF-put dirt already
“This front part (of e.g. the compound) is already dirty”

(178) kòjó há mì téj tsàkàtsàkà = à = là
Kojo give me middle nasty = DEF = DEF
“Kojo gave me the nasty middle part.”
mâséì ‘beside’, mĩŋ ‘inside’, kóŋ ‘edge’ and nɔ̃ ‘on’ cannot take these noun categories. It appears those locative nouns that are derived from body parts are more noun-like in their ability to take typical nominal modifiers while those that are not body parts are less noun-like in that although they may occur as possessums in possessive phrases, they cannot take nominal modifiers.

As has been shown, many of the Ga body-part terms are not prototypical nouns, and this in Svorou’s (1994) view makes them excellent candidates for grammaticalization. She tracks the evolutionary path of body-part nouns through four stages. In the first stage the nouns are used to indicate object parts, as in (179).

(179) kɛ́-pɛ̀tɛ̀  shĩ́nã̀ã́=ã̀ s ɛ̀ɛ̀
    take-paste  door=DEF    back
    “Paste it behind the door.”

The second stage is marked by “the use of the relational object-part term to specify the location of an entity contiguous or adjacent to the referred relational object part.” (Svorou 1994:96).

This is seen in (180), where the dog is not located on the stone itself but in the area next to the back of the stone.

(180) nɔ̃̂ gbèé=!ɛ́ hũ teè  è=yà-teè  yè
    and dog=DEF too go.PST 3SG=ITIV-hide be.located
”And the dog too went and hid behind that stone.” [MA:64]

All the Gã body-part nouns with the exception of dúnáà ‘buttocks/anus’ are at this second stage. In the last stage the noun is used to specify the location of an entity that is not adjacent to the relational object part. No locative relational noun in Gã has as yet reached this last stage.

### 2.3.5 Noun phrase constituency

Noun phrases denote entities and therefore function as arguments in clauses. Every Gã noun phrase (NP) must minimally contain one noun. The noun may be a full lexical noun (e.g. yòò ‘woman’), a pronoun (e.g. bò ‘2SG’), or a demonstrative noun (e.g. éně́ ‘this’). Depending on the type of noun, it may have pre-modifiers and post-modifiers. There are two pre-head slots. The first may be filled by the pre-nominal proximal and distal demonstrative determiners nɛ̃̀kɛ̀ ‘this’ and nã̀kã̀ĩ̀ ‘that’. The second pre-head slot may be taken up by a nominal modifier. Only full lexical nouns may be modified by these pre-head modifiers. The immediate post-nominal slot may be taken up by a property word. Up to three property words can modify one noun. The property word is followed by a quantifier (numeral or quantificational adjective such as piì ‘many’), then a post-nominal-demonstrative or an article. An article is always the last element in a noun phrase unless the first element in the noun phrase is nɛ̀kɛ̀ ‘this’. In this case, then the
final slot must be taken up by *nɛ̃́ɛ́ ‘this’. A schematic is given below (brackets indicate
optional elements), followed by two examples with all possible slots filled. The difference
between them is that (181) has pre-head *nàkã̀ ‘that’ and therefore must have an article in NP-
final position while (182) has *nɛ̃́kɛ̃́ ‘this’ in pre-head position and so must have *nɛ̃́ɛ́ ‘this’ in
NP-final position.

DEM.DET - (NOUN.MOD.) - NOUN.HEAD - (ADJ1) - (ADJ2) - (ADJ3) - (QUANT) - (DEM.DET/ART)

(181) nàkã̀ gànã yè-ì àgbò-ì kpìtí-bì fɛ̀ɛ́fɛ̀-jĩ́ é!tɛ́-lɛ́
that Ghana woman-PL big-PL short-PL beautiful-PL three-DEF
“those three, big, short, beautiful Ghanaian women.”

(182) nɛ̃́kɛ̃́ gànã yè-ì àgbò-ì kpìtí-bì fɛ̀ɛ́fɛ̀-jĩ́ é!tɛ́ nɛ̃́ɛ́
that Ghana woman-PL big-PL short-PL beautiful-PL three this
“these three, big, short, beautiful Ghanaian women.”

Although in theory it is possible for a noun to be modified by three property words, in practice
it is very rare, most likely due to relative difficulty in production and processing.

It is also possible for the noun phrase to be further modified by a verb-based
grammatical nominalization (relative clause), as in (183) below, where the grammatical
nominalization modifies the head noun *kùsùm̀ ‘custom’. This nominalization will thus be the
very last element in the noun phrase. See Chapter 6 for more on grammatical nominalizations.

(183) *kùsùm̀ [nì yè kɛ̀-jɛ̀ bìɛ̀mà]
custom NMLZ exist take-come.from olden.days
“A custom that has existed since olden days; an ancient custom.” [OYO:131]
When the head noun is a pronoun or demonstrative noun, no modifiers are allowed before the head and the final element cannot be an article but should be the post-nominal proximal demonstrative nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́ ‘this’.

2.3.6 Noun phrase linkers
These are the coordinator and comitative conjunction, kɛ̀ ‘and’ and the disjunctive coordinator àlóó ‘or’. kɛ̀ is used to conjoin two or more noun phrases of equal rank, as in (186) and (187).

The NPs linked by the coordinator form a constituent.

(186) ŋ̀shɔ̀ kɛ̀ tòò lá kɛ̀ wùọ́ lá
sea and sheep blood and chicken blood
“sea water and sheep’s blood and chicken’s blood” [OYO:302]

(187) è=fɔ́  àkôs kè  àrãkú kè  doctor=!á
3SG=give.birth Akos and Araku and =DEF
“She gave birth to Akos and Araku and the doctor.” [DF:206]

kɛ̀ is also used to mark a comitative noun phrase. It conjoins two (and just two) NPs. As Stassen (2000:18) explains, the NPs that are conjoined using the comitative strategy are of unequal rank. For instance, unlike the NPs in a coordinate NP, those that are conjoined using
the comitative strategy do not form a constituent and “while one of the NPs can take any case role, the other NP is invariably encoded as the head of an oblique NP.” Stassen (2000:18). In Gã the NP marked by *kè* is an oblique NP while the other NP is the subject of the sentence. In (188), *ènyèmì̅*i̅̅ ‘his sibling’ is marked by the comitative conjunction, *kè* and it is in a comitative relationship with the subject Oko.

(188) òkó bà bíè *kè* è=nyêmì̅=!è
    Oko come here with 3SG=brother=DEF
    “Oko came here with his sibling.”

Stassen (2000:18) notes that it is atypical among the world’s languages for a coordinate marker and a comitative marker to share the same form, which is the case in Gã.

The marker of disjunction, *àlóó* ‘or’ is used to present NPs and other constituents (as well as clauses) that are considered alternatives to one another. If there are more than two alternatives it is more common for *àlóó* ‘or’ to be used after each alternative than just once before the last alternative.

(189) ò=bàá-lyê  òmò *àlóó* yèlè *àlóó* fufuí
    2SG=FUT-eat rice or yam or fufu
    “Will you eat rice or yam or fufu?”

(190) nò hèwɔ́=!ɔ́ à=fè-ɔ̀ lè shì kòmè
    that sake=TOP 3PL.IMPERS=do-HAB 3SG.OBJ time one
    *àlóó* dáá áfì=!è à=fè-ɔ̀
    or everyday year=TOP 3PL.IMPERS=do-HAB
2.4 Property concepts
These are words that ascribe some property or attribute to a noun. They may occur as complements of verbs or as intransitive predicates, where they make a statement that the subject exhibits a particular property. They may also occur as modifiers to heads in NPs, where they delimit the pool of referents of the NP head and make it more easily identifiable (Dixon 2010:70-71). Gã has three main syntactic types of property concepts:

Type A: property concepts which function as the head of an intransitive predicate. These are essentially verbs and they take most of the inflectional and syntactic properties associated with verbs.

Type B: property concepts that function only as modifiers in an NP. These correspond to what are prototypically termed adjectives (especially in Indo-European languages).

Type C: property concepts that function as complements of yɛ̀ ‘have’ and can occur as arguments in clauses. These are nouns.

2.4.1 Type A: Property concepts that are verbs (Property verbs)
These form a small closed class of about 30 words which does not accept new members.

Members of this class code properties which belong to the following semantic classes, set out in Dixon (2010:71): DIMENSION, PHYSICAL PROPERTY, VALUE, HUMAN PROPENSITY, DIFFICULTY and POSITION. An example from each semantic class is given below.
As for Gãs, you are very foolish!" (HUMAN PROPENSITY) [MM:148]

“It is far.” (POSITION) [PAT:54]

“Then you will be told that God, he is big (i.e. powerful).” (DIMENSION) [CH:70]

“The sad thing is that many of us, our faith is weak.” (PHYSICAL, CORPOREAL PROPERTY) [CH:223]

“Gosh! It is most certainly hard to be a Christian!” (DIFFICULTY) [CH:320]

“Oh, it is good that you came at this time.” (VALUE) [FH:105]

All property verbs are stative verbs. They are of two major types which I will call “temporary” and “permanent”. They are characterized by opposing semantic and morpho-syntactic features.
2.4.1.1 “Temporary” property verbs

A temporary property verb predicates a state which comes about as a result of some process. Such states are viewed as temporary or not inherently characteristic of the noun referent. There is a sense that these qualities are easily susceptible to change. Examples are ɗò ‘be hot’, ìò ‘be wet’, gbì ‘be dry’, shù ‘be fat’, gbé!dé ‘be weak, tired’, lù ‘be foolish’, pà!í ‘be angry’, tɔ̃̀tɔ̃́ ‘be tangled’. Such property verbs are always marked for perfect if they are to indicate a characteristic or attribute of the referent of the subject, as in (191) and (194) above and (197) and (198) below. Therefore, temporary property verbs are distinguished not only by their semantics but also by perfect morphology.

(197) tséńșĩ̄ = !é é-ɗò
      pan = DEF PERF-be.hot
      “The pan is hot.”

(198) kpàà = !á é-tɔ̃̀tɔ̃́
      thread = DEF PERF-be.entangled
      “The thread is entangled, knotted.”

The verbs take on a dynamic meaning when they are unmarked (199), or are marked for some other tense or aspect category (200). Here, the verbs predicate an action or event involving the referent of the noun, rather than predicating a property or state associated with the referent.

(199) mí = nà-jḭ tɔ̃̀tɔ̃́
      1SG = leg-PL be.entangled
      “I missed my step.” (Lit: “My legs became entangled”) (Dakubu 2008a:207)
(200) màmA = à gbì nì i = yà-kpá
cloth = DEF dry and 1SG = ITIV-remove
“The cloth dried and I went and removed it (off the clothes line).”

When conveying dynamic meaning, some verbs of this sub-class are best accompanied by the ventive pre-verb auxiliary ba-.

(201a) ?tsénsí = !é dɔ̀
pan = DEF be.hot
“The pan became hot.”

(201b) tsénsí = !é bà- dɔ̀
pan = DEF VENT-be.hot
“The pan became hot.”

When it comes to property verbs, sometimes the semantic difference between the perfect tense and say, the progressive tense, is stark. For example, while lú in the perfect tense means ‘be foolish, stupid’, in the progressive it means ‘to joke around, act silly’. Compare (191) with (202).

(202) gbé!ké-bù = è j̄-lù yè jé!mè
child-PL = DEF PROG-be.foolish be.located there
“The children are joking around over there.”

### 2.4.1.2 “Permanent” property verbs

These verbs code qualities that are construed as permanent, or otherwise inherently characteristic of the noun referent in question. They must occur in the bare, unmarked form to indicate a property or characteristic of the referent of the subject. Examples of such verbs are
"kè ‘be tall’, wà ‘be hard’, kwà ‘be deep’, hĩ ‘be good’, dà ‘be big’, ŋɔ̀ɔ́ ‘be sweet’, lɛ̀ ‘be broad’. When they occur unmarked they are temporally unbounded, in that there is an assumption that the property remains unchanged at all times. Examples (193) and (196) above are repeated here for convenience as (203) and (204).

(203) kèkè = !ê  à = bàá-kèè  !bó  á!ké  nyɔ̃̄ŋmɔ̃̄ = !ɔ̃̄
then = TOP 3PLIMPERS = FUT-say 2SG.OBJ NMLZ God = TOP
è = dà
3SG = be.big
“Then you will be told that as for God, he is big (i.e. powerful).” [CH:70]

(204) ô  è = hĩ  á!ké  nyē = bà  2PL = come
IJ 3SG = be.good NMLZ 2PL = come
“Oh, it is good that you came at this time.” [FH:105]

(205) blòdó = è  wà  wàà
bread = DEF be.hard very.much
“The bread is very hard.”

When these verbs are used with perfect tense they reflect a change of state and display inchoative aspect. Example:

(206) blòdó = è  è-wà
bread = DEF PERF-be.hard
“The bread has become hard.”

(207) ô = bí  !lê = !ê  è = dà  è
2SG = child DEF = DEF PERF = be.big IJ
“Wow, your child has grown big!”
Semantic differentiation may arise as a result of the aspect marking on such property verbs. An example is *dà* ‘be big’, which in the perfect tense means ‘be grown up/be an adult’ (208) below, in addition to ‘become bigger, grow older’ (207). In (208), *dà* ‘be.big’ deviates from the expected syntactic behavior of a permanent property verb. When permanent property verbs have perfect tense, they lose their stativity and rather indicate a change of state or take on inchoative meaning. *dà* ‘be.big’ in the perfect has two senses; one which conforms to this expectation (207) and another which doesn’t (208). In (208) it remains a stative verb indicating a permanent property.

(208) jééé gbé!kê !nî ē=dà
    NEG child PRED.PRT 3SG.PERF = be.big
    “She’s not a child. She’s (a) grown (woman).”

Property verbs cannot directly modify a noun. For that to happen, the property verb must be nominalized by the grammatical nominalizer *nî*. This results in a grammatical nominalization which may then modify the noun referent. This grammatical nominalization is more commonly analysed as a relative clause, but see Chapter 6 for an argument against this analysis.

(209) ì=súm°°° bòdò nî wà
    1SG = like.NEG bread NMLZ be.hard
    “I don’t like bread that is hard.”
To sum up, property verbs that code temporary qualities are marked by the perfect. When they occur unmarked they take on dynamic semantics and are no longer property verbs.

On the other hand, property verbs that code permanent properties must occur unmarked. When they are marked for perfect they indicate a change of state and also lose their status as property verbs.

Notably missing among the semantic classes which can be coded by verbs is COLOUR. Although it is possible for the colour terms, red, white and black, to be coded as verbs (tsù ‘be red, ripen’, yɛ́ ‘be white’, dĩ́ ‘be black’), there is a semantic shift such that the terms describe not mere colour but skin colour or complexion. They are typically used with habitual aspect, because skin tone is a property that one perpetually maintains (normally). As (211) shows, these verbs cannot be predicated of non-humans. In order to modify a non-human entity with a colour term, the colour term must occur as a modifier in an NP (212), where it is categorised as an adjective.

(210)  è=ŋã́=ã̀  tsù-ɔ̀/yɛ́-ɔ̀/dĩ́-ɔ̃̀
3SG=wife=DEF redden-HAB/whiten-HAB/blacken-HAB
“His wife is light-skinned/very light-skinned or pale/dark-skinned.”

(211)  *màmà=ã  tsù-ɔ̀/yɛ́-ɔ̀/dĩ́-ɔ̃̀
cloth=DEF redden-HAB/whiten-HAB/blacken-HAB
“The cloth is red/white/black.”
(212) màná ṭsùlù/yêlù/dîlù
cloth red/white/black
“red/white/black cloth”

2.4.1.3 Verbal properties exhibited by property verbs
As verbs, these property terms can take most aspect, mood and polarity markers, with a few exceptions. For example, most property verbs can be marked for future, as in (213), habitual (214) and perfect (197) and (198).

(213) nî-bîlì nî wà nî kè âmè = kwèèè
thing-PL NMLZ be.hard NMLZ if 3PL = look.NEG

lè = nò yè-lí bàá-lwà
DEF 3SG = top eat-NOM FUT-be.hard
“things that are difficult…that if they are not vigilant will be difficult to abide by.” [CH:299]

(214) à=nyê-ɔ̀ à = mà-à jê!mê
3PL.IMPERS = able-HAB 3PL.IMPERS = be.situated-HAB there

nì dò = fê-ɔ̀ yè jê!mê nì è = bì-ɔ̀
and 2SG = do-HAB be.located there and 3SG = be.good-HAB
“It is possible to do it (the twin ceremony) there (mother’s family house) and it works out fine i.e. it is good/acceptable.” [OYO:341]

Property verbs may also occur with progressive aspect, in which case they indicate a change in progress and are viewed as dynamic events.

(215) òò = shwì
2SG.PROG = be.fat
“You are becoming fat.”
They may also occur in the subjunctive:

(217) mĩ́ı=tá!ó ní kòjó á-kè tàmò è=nyëmí = !ê
     1SG.PROG=want NMLZ Kojo **SBJV-be.tall** be.like 3SG=sibling=DEF
     “I want Kojo to be tall like his sibling.”

In terms of sentence mood, sentences with property verb predicates may be declarative (as all
the above examples show) or interrogative (218).

(218) ófáìnë gbɛ̀=è lëë ló
     please road=DEF be.wide QP
     “Please, is the road wide?”

Property verbs may be negated in the same way as non-property verbs. For example, the
negative and future negative may be marked on the property verbs, hí ‘be.good’ and kè ‘be.tall’
respectively:

(219) é=!híí
     3SG=be.good.NEG
     “It is not good.”

(220) tsó=!ë á-kè-!ŋj
     tree=DEF PERF-be.tall-NEG.FUT
     “The tree will not grow tall.”
Like prototypical verbs, property verbs may be modified by an array of adverbial types. They
may be modified by intensifiers such as wàà ‘very’, pìì ‘indeed’, tsɔ̃́ ‘too much’, kpákpá ‘really,
very’.

(221) kɛ̀ ò=sà  ó=nàna  ó=bàá-nà  á!ké  ò=ŋɔ̀ɔ̀
when 2SG=touch 2SG=mouth 2SG=FUT-see NMLZ 3SG=be.sweet
kpákpá/wàà/pì/tsɔ̃́
very much/very much/indeed/too much
“When you taste it, you will see that it is very sweet/sweet indeed/too sweet.”

2.4.1.4 Verbal properties not exhibited by property verbs
Unlike typical verbs, property verbs in Gã may not occur in the imperative.

(222) *kè-é
be.tall-IMP
“Be tall!”

(223) *fɔ̀-ɔ̀
be.wet-IMP
“Be wet!”

There are a number of suffixes that are used to indicate iterative action of a verb (see
§3.2.2.5). Depending on the phonological shape of the verb root, the iterative suffix may be -lɔ,
-lɛ, -ra or -mɔ̃. These suffixes give the meaning, “do repeatedly” or “do many times”.

Example:

(224) kɛ̀  à=fɔ̀-lɔ́  é!ŋmɔ̀mí=!é  fɛ́ɛ=!é  nì
when 3PL.IMPERS=cut-ITER okro=DEF all=DEF and
à=bàá-hòò
3PL.IMPERS=FUT-cook
“After all the okro is cut then it is cooked.” [YM:264]

(225) è=tsé-lè wòló=è mìŋ
3SG=tear-ITER paper=DEF inside
“She tore up the piece of paper (into several pieces).”

The iterative suffix can be attached to property verbs but only those with a plural subject.

When it is used with property verbs, however, it no longer maintains the iterative meaning but
imparts a distributive meaning instead, indicating that each member of the plural set of noun
referents displays the quality described by the property verb.

(226) yè-í=è kó-Ilé
woman-PL=DEF be.tall-ITER
“The women are tall.”

(227) bù-í=è à-mìŋ kwó-Iló
ditch-PL=DEF PERT-inside be.deep-ITER
“The ditches are deep.”

2.4.1.5 Nominalization of property verbs
Non-property verbs and property verbs differ in terms of how certain lexical nominalizations
are done. Single syllable, low-toned non-property verbs form action nominals by lengthening
the final vowel (228). Single syllable, low toned property verbs, on the other hand, are
nominalized using the suffix -le (229), which cannot be used for non-property verbs. This
includes non-property stative verbs, which cannot even be nominalized.
Action nominalization of non-property verbs (monosyllabic, low-toned):

(228) jù ‘steal’ \(\rightarrow\) jùù ‘act of stealing’
wɔ̀ ‘sleep’ \(\rightarrow\) wɔ̀ɔ̀ ‘sleep (n.)’
jò ‘dance’ \(\rightarrow\) jòò ‘dance (n.)’

Action nominalization of property verbs (monosyllabic, low-toned):

(229) dà ‘be big’ \(\rightarrow\) dàlɛ̀ ‘size’ *dàà
kè ‘be tall’ \(\rightarrow\) kèlɛ̀ ‘height’ *kèè
dɔ̀ ‘be hot’ \(\rightarrow\) dɔ̀lɛ̀ ‘temperature’ *dɔ̀ɔ̀
shwì ‘gain weight \(\rightarrow\) shwìlɛ̀ ‘being fat, obesity’ *shwìì
bɔ̀ ‘be muscular’ \(\rightarrow\) bɔ̀lɛ̀ ‘being muscular’ *bɔ̀ɔ̀

Multi-syllabic verbs and high-toned monosyllabic verbs of all types (both property and non-property verbs) take the nominalizing suffix -mɔ̃, so in this respect there is no difference between property verbs and non-property verbs:

Action nominalization of non-property verbs (multisyllabic or high-toned, monosyllabic):

(230) wó ‘lift’ \(\rightarrow\) wó!mɔ̃́ ‘act of lifting’
bɛ̀ɛ̂ ‘sweep’ \(\rightarrow\) bɛ̀ɛ́!mɔ̃́ ‘act of sweeping’
tsá!ké ‘change’ \(\rightarrow\) tsàkèmɔ̃̀ ‘change (n.)’

Action nominalization of non-property verbs (multisyllabic or high-toned, monosyllabic):

(231) lú ‘be foolish’ \(\rightarrow\) lú!mɔ̃́ ‘foolishness’
ŋɔ̃̀ɔ̃́ ‘be sweet’ \(\rightarrow\) ŋɔ̃̀ɔ̃́!mɔ̃́ ‘sweetness’
tɔ̃̀tɔ̃́ ‘be entangled’ \(\rightarrow\) tɔ̃̀tɔ̃́!mɔ̃́ ‘act of being entangled’
Agent nominalization of non-property verbs is by use of the suffix -lɔ (232). However, property verbs cannot take this suffix (233). Instead, such verbs will have to undergo a grammatical nominalization and be marked for NP use by mɔ́ (234) and (235).

(232) jù ‘steal’ → jùlɔ̀ ‘thief’
    gbà ‘prophesy’ → gbàlɔ̀ ‘prophet’
    tsɔ̀ɔ̀ ‘teach’ → tsɔ̀ɔ̀!lɔ́ ‘teacher’
    sùmɔ̀ ‘love’ → sùmɔ̀!lɔ̀ ‘lover’

(233) shwì ‘be fat’ → *shwìlɔ̀ ‘one who is fat’
    kɛ̀ ‘be tall’ → *kɛ̀lɔ̀ ‘one who is tall’
    dà ‘be big’ → *dàlɔ̀ ‘one who is big’

(234) mɔ́ ní é-shwì
          NM NMLZ PERF-be.fat
        “one who is fat”

(235) mɔ́ ní kɛ̀
          NM NMLZ be.tall
        “one who is tall”

2.4.1.6 Transitivity

Property verbs occur in intransitive clauses, while non-property verbs are capable of occurring in both transitive and intransitive clauses. There is however, one property verb that occurs transitively. This is the verb tɔ̀ ‘be tired’. What is unique about this property verb, though, is that the grammatical relations of its arguments do not match up with their expected semantic roles. Whereas with other property verbs which occur intransitively it is the subject which is being qualified and is therefore the experiencer, in clauses with predicate tɔ̀ ‘be tired’, it is the
object that is the experiencer. The subject is always è ‘it’ and is non-referential; it is a dummy
or expletive pronoun. Therefore, in (236) the experiencer, the one who is tired, is the object
àmè ‘3PL’. Further proof that tɔ̀ ‘tire’ is a property verb comes from the fact that it is
nominalized like other property verbs i.e. with the suffix -lɛ (tɔ̀lɛ̀ ‘tiredness’, ‘strife’), rather
than vowel lengthening (*tɔ̀ɔ̀) as will be the case for monosyllabic, low-toned non-property
verbs.

(236) á!gbénè = !è  òsófô-!í = !è  pó  è=tɔ̀  àmè
    now = TOP priest-PL = DEF even 3SG.PERF = tire 3PL
    “Now, even the priests are tired, fed up.” [CH:68]

2.4.2 Type B: Property concepts that occur only as modifiers in an NP
(Adjectives)
This class contains only a few members, about 20 in all. These property words align
syntactically with what are classed as adjectives, in that they may modify a noun in a noun
phrase i.e. attributive modification, and thereby aid in the identification of the noun referent.

Words belonging to this class can be found in three of the four core semantic classes of
property concepts i.e. AGE, VALUE, COLOUR as well as several more. Property concepts from
the core class of DIMENSION are not among those coded as adjectives. Examples of adjectives
are yɛ́ŋ́ ‘white’, hèè ‘new’, fɛ̀ɛ́fɛ́ó ‘beautiful’, fọ́lọ̀ ‘naked’, sànjò ‘many’, ọmọ́ṣ́ṣ́ ‘raw’ and
ŋmìnìkì ‘unripe’. Some example sentences are as follows.
(237) àtàlé yɛ́ŋ́
dress white
“a white dress” (COLOUR) [OYO:86]

(238) dúkù hèè
headscarf new
“a new headscarf.” (AGE)

(239) nì àmè=táò tɔ̀ fɛ́efɛ́ó !kó
and 3PL=find bottle beautiful INDEF
“And they found a beautiful bottle.” (VALUE) [MAV:4]

(240) jééé nù fóld
NEG water naked
“It’s not just ordinary water.” [OYO:297]

(241) nì fàá=!á tsè-i sáàŋŋ mà-mò fàá=à mìn
and river=DEF tree-PL many be.situated-ITER river=DEF inside
“And the river, there are many trees in the river.” (QUANTIFICATION) [SAM:96]

In addition to full nouns, adjectives may modify demonstrative nouns (243), as long as the noun is also modified by the demonstrative determiner nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́ ‘this’ and the entire noun phrase is topicalized and place in initial position in the construction. Example:

(243) énɛ̃́ fɛ́efɛ́ó nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́ mɛ̃́nĩ̀ hèwɔ̀ ɔ̀=súmɔ́ɔ́ɔ́
this beautiful this what sake 2SG=like.NEG
“This beautiful thing, why don’t you like it?”

The demonstrative pronoun can be modified by virtually any adjective that is suitable for qualifying inanimate entities.
2.4.2.1 Number marking on adjectives

Adjectives must agree in number with the nouns they modify. Plurals are formed by the regular noun plural suffixes –i, –jì and –bí!í. The choice of plural suffix is based on the same rules that govern plural formation in non-property denoting nouns (See §2.3.1.1). In the following examples the nouns are marked for plural and so are the modifying adjectives.

(244) ̀ámɛ̀ fé-!ɔ̀ níbíì fɔ̀-jì̀
3PL do-HAB things bad-PL
“They do bad things.” SG → fɔ̀ɔ̃́!ŋ́

(245) è=hé-ɔ̀ lɔ́lè-ì di-ì jì̀ sɔ́ŋ́ŋ́
3SG=buy-HAB car-PL black-PL only
“He only buys black cars.” SG → dĩ́!ŋ́

2.4.2.2 Nominalization of adjectives

Certain adjectives may be nominalized by prefixing the nominalizer e- to the adjective (table 7). They can then be used as noun heads or constitute NPs on their own and can be pluralized accordingly. Their referents must be inanimate. This strategy is restricted to a very small group of adjectives from the semantic classes of COLOUR, AGE, VALUE and PHYSICAL PROPERTY.

Example sentences are given in (246) and (247).
Table 7: Nouns morphologically derived from adjectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semantic class</th>
<th>English gloss</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Singular noun</th>
<th>Plural noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COLOUR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red</td>
<td>tsùlù</td>
<td>étsùlù</td>
<td>étsùjì</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>white</td>
<td>yé!ŋ́</td>
<td>éyé!ŋ́</td>
<td>éyéjì</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>black</td>
<td>dĩ́!ŋ́</td>
<td>édfi!ŋ́</td>
<td>édfi jì</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHYSICAL PROPERTY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raw, fresh</td>
<td>ŋmɔ̃́!ŋ́</td>
<td>é ŋm ɔ̃́!ŋ́</td>
<td>é ŋm ɔ̃́jì</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unripe</td>
<td>ŋmílikítí</td>
<td>éŋmílikítí</td>
<td>éŋmílikítí!í</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>old</td>
<td>mómó</td>
<td>émómó</td>
<td>éméméjì</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>new</td>
<td>hèè</td>
<td>éhèè</td>
<td>éhèì</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VALUE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good</td>
<td>kpákpá</td>
<td>ékpákpá</td>
<td>ékpákpá!í</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bad</td>
<td>fɔ̃̌!ŋ́</td>
<td>éfɔ̃̌!ŋ́</td>
<td>éfɔ̃̌ jì</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(246) ó-ŋmílikítí-ì     pè yó!δ tsó = è nò
NOM-unripe-PL only.FOC be.located.HAB tree = DEF top
“There are only unripe ones on the tree.”

(247) ó-dĩ́ŋ́=è nì ı = sùmõ-δ
NOM-black = DEF FOC 1SG = like-HAB
“It is the black one that I like.”

These derived nouns may then be modified by other property words:

(248) ó-dĩ́ŋ́ àgbó =è nì ı = sùmõ-δ
NOM-black big = DEF FOC 1SG = like-HAB
“It is the big black one that I like.”

(249) ó-mémé-jì̂  ꜠!6ó !kò pè è = shwè
NOM-old-PL few INDEF only.FOC 3SG = remain
“There are only a few old ones remaining.”

(246) ó-ŋmílikítí-ì     pè yó!δ tsó = è nò
NOM-unripe-PL only.FOC be.located.HAB tree = DEF top
“There are only unripe ones on the tree.”

(247) ó-dĩ́ŋ́=è nì ı = sùmõ-δ
NOM-black = DEF FOC 1SG = like-HAB
“It is the black one that I like.”

These derived nouns may then be modified by other property words:

(248) ó-dĩ́ŋ́ àgbó =è nì ı = sùmõ-δ
NOM-black big = DEF FOC 1SG = like-HAB
“It is the big black one that I like.”

(249) ó-mémé-jì̂  ꜠!6ó !kò pè è = shwè
NOM-old-PL few INDEF only.FOC 3SG = remain
“There are only a few old ones remaining.”
It is also possible to use the derived nouns as modifiers of other nouns. In (250), the derived nominal étsùlù ‘red one’ modifies òtş ‘type of food’ in line 1. In the second token of étsùlù ‘red one’ in line 2, it functions as an object complement indicating the result of the causative verb fèê ‘make’.

(250) 1 tàmɔ̀ bɔnĩ́ wɔ=feê òtş é-tsùlù-!ɛ́
like how 1PL=do food.type NOM-red-DEF
“Like how we’ve made the red òtş…”

2 wɔ̀=bàá-féê kpékplé-!ɛ́ hṹ é-tsùlù
1PL=FUT-do food.type-DEF too NOM-red
“we’ll make the kpékplè too red.” [OYO:50]

While the adjective tsùlù ‘red’ can replace the noun étsùlù in line 1, it cannot replace it in line 2 (251). The implication of this is that an object complement denoting result must be a noun.

(251) *wɔ̀=bàá-féê kpékplé-!ɛ́ hṹ tsùlù
1PL=FUT-do kpekple-DEF too red
“We’ll make the kpékplè too red.”

2.4.2.3 Derivation of adjectives from verbs
Adjectives may be derived from verbs by the following derivational processes.

i) Suffixation

This is not a very productive means of adjectivization. Two basic colour adjective terms are derived from verbs by the suffixation of -ŋ. These are dĩũy ‘black’ from dĩ ‘to become black’
and ye!j ‘white’ from ye ‘to become white’. It is limited to these two words. Another suffix, -ru/-lu derives the adjective tsùrù/tsùlù from tsù ‘become red’.

ii) Reduplication

Another means of deriving adjectives is by reduplicating certain verbs. The verbs must be ambitransitive/labile verbs and must belong to the “temporary” property verb class (discussed in §2.4.1.1). This method is fairly limited in productivity. In (252) and (253), the property verb is found in the (a) examples while the adjective is in the (b) examples:

(252) mɔ̃́nyɔ̃́ ‘smash, mangle’ → mɔ̃́nyɔ̃́mɔ̃́nyɔ̃́ ‘tattered’

(a) lɔ́lè glá!sé=!ɛ́ é-mɔ̃́nyɔ̃́
car glass=DEF PERF-mangle
“The window of the car is mangled’

(b) àtàlé mɔ̃́nyɔ̃́mɔ̃́nyɔ̃́
dress tattered
“a tattered dress”

(253) tsɛ́lɛ́ ‘tear (ITER)’ → tsɛ́lɛ́tsɛ́lɛ́ ‘torn, tattered’

(a) ó=tàlé=!ɛ́ é-tsɛ́-llé
2SG=dress=DEF PERF-tear-ITER
“Your dress is torn.”

(b) àtàlé tsɛ́lɛ́tsɛ́lɛ́
dress tattered
“a tattered dress”
2.4.3 Type C: Property concepts that function as arguments in clauses (Property nouns)

Certain descriptive words may occur as subjects or objects of verbs. Most are able to occur as objects of the verbs yɛ̀ ‘have’ and fèê ‘do’. Hengeveld (1992:34) calls such linking words ‘semi-copulas’. Such descriptive words are classed as property nouns because they occur in a syntactic position reserved for nouns (254). In (254a), the objects of yɛ̀ ‘have’ are regular nouns; in (254b) the object of yɛ̀ ‘have’ is a property noun.

(254a) ákú yɛ̀ shiká/nyɛ̀mĩ́/hèwàlɛ̀/jwɛ̀ŋ̀-mɔ̀
Aku have money/sibling/strength/think-NOM
“Aku has money/a sibling/strength/sense”

(254b) yòó=ɛ̀ yɛ̀ légélégé
woman=DEF have skinny
“The woman is skinny.”

Property nouns constitute a large class with dozens of members from all semantic classes. They often describe a stable or permanent attribute. In Gã, the normal copula jí ‘be’ cannot have a property noun as complement (255).

(255) *dĩ́ŋ́ŋ̀ jí Kòjó
quiet COP Kojo
“Kojo is quiet.”

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7 The verb yɛ̀ is polysemous and may also mean ‘be located’.
Examples of property nouns that can be complements of yɛ̀ are yr̀òyr̀ò ‘soft (of tubers), dííŋŋ ‘quiet’, yròdòó ‘watery’, gidigàndàŋŋ ‘bulky’, flémi ‘fussy’, wrómí ‘sluggish’, tsrôtsrô ‘slippery’, bíbióó ‘small’, nyálînyâfî ‘fretful, bad-tempered’. Some property nouns that occur as complements of yɛ̀ are also capable of occurring as direct modifiers of nouns in NPs e.g. bíbióó ‘small’ in (256b) and dííŋŋ ‘quiet’ in (257b). But some are not as versatile, as the remaining (b) examples show.

(256) a. …éljáá!ké tòò nààbù yè bíbióó
because bottle mouth have small
“…because the mouth of the bottle was small.” [PAT:41]

b. gbèé bíbióó
dog small
“a small dog”

(257) a. è=łamí yè dííŋŋ
3SG =mother have quiet
“Her mother is quiet.”

b. gbömò dííŋŋ
person quiet
“a quiet person”

(258) a. ó=lnààá á!ké ì=hiè yè fèò
2SG =see.NEG NMLZ 1SG =face have beauty
“Don’t you see that I have a beautiful face?” [MM:52]

b. *yòò fèò
woman beauty
“a beautiful woman”
When feê ‘do’ is the predicate, it frequently indicates a change of state; the inchoative. As such, all property nouns can be complements of feê ‘do’. An alternative gloss for feê is ‘become’.

(259) a. nò-fèê-ǹò yè ìjògbàǹg gà nhì ǹò nò thing-all-thing have well “Everything is well.” [PAT:9]

b. *nìbìì ìjògbàǹg gà nhì things well “well things”

(260) a. àkpókplòǹtò yè blèòò turtle have slow “A turtle is slow.”

b. *àkpókplòǹtò blèòò turtle slow “a slow turtle”

(261) è=kèè è=gbèè=!è á!kèè è=!fèè NMLZ 3SG.SBJV=do quiet
3SG=say 3SG=dog=DEF “He told his dog that he should be quiet.” [BOR:58]

(262) nì è=fèè NMLZ blèòò nì è=jè kpò yè 3SG=do slow and 3SG=exit compound be.located
and tò=ǹò mìǹ bottle=DEF inside “And he slowly got out of the bottle.” (Lit: And he did slow and he got out of the bottle.”) [PAT:15]
àgbò ‘big’ and kàkàdáŋŋ́ ‘tall’ are two property nouns that can occur as complements of fëē ‘do’ (b. sentences) but not of yè ‘have’ (a. sentences). They can also occur as nominal modifiers of other nouns (c. sentences). I still maintain that they are nouns because the object of fëē ‘do’ is nominal and also because they can occur as arguments in clauses and be modified by noun modifiers.

(263a) *è = yè  kàkàdáŋŋ́
3SG = have   long/tall
    “S/he/It is long/tall.”

(263b) é = fèé  kàkàdáŋŋ́  yè  ì = hiê
3SG = do   long   be.located  1SG = face
    “It is looking long to me.”

(263c) tso  kàkàdáŋŋ́  !nì
stick   long   PRED.PRT
    ‘It is a long stick’

(264a) *shìà = à  yè  àgbò
house =DEF have   big
    “The house is big.”

(264b) mènì  nì  ó = fèé  àgbò  nèkè
what   FOC 2SG.PERF = do   big   like.this
    “Why have you become so big?”

(264c) nàà  tsò  àgbò  kò  mà  shì
PRST.PRED.PRT   tree   big   INDEF   be.situated   down
    “Here stood a big tree.” (DIMENSION) [PAT:69]
2.4.3.1 Nominal properties exhibited by property nouns

Property nouns, like regular nouns, may function as arguments in clauses, and as such are capable of being marked by articles. Referents of such property nouns are limited to inanimates (265), (266), (267), (268). They can also be used as object complements in contexts similar to example (250), line 2.

(265) è=kè bibi=ôô=nô é-!há =!mí
3SG=take small=DEF PERF=give 1SG.OBJ
“She’s given me the small one.”

(266) kàkàdáj=à lèé fè kpìtíô=ôô
long=DEF be.broad surpass short=DEF
“The long one is broader than the short one.”

(267) pìí=ôô ní i=wié=ôô ò=nṹṹu
plenty=DEF NMLZ 1SG=speak=DEF 2SG=hear.NEG
“All that I said, you didn’t hear (it)?”

(268) hâ !mí sôôô ôô
give 1SG.OBJ little INDEF
“Give me a little bit.”

Property nouns can also be modified by numerals (269), adjectives (270) and the post-nominal proximal demonstrative determiner, nêê ‘this’ (271).

(269) wɔ̀=ŋ-táò àgbò-ì ényô
1PL=PROG-want big-PL two
“We want two big (ones).”

(270) kpìtí-bôô pìi yè
short-PL many exist
“There are many short (ones).  SG ➔ kpitàóó ‘short’

(271)  kakadáŋŋí nêɛ o = tsɔ̀
  long  this  2SG = show
  “Do you mean this long one?”

Property nouns may also be modified by intensifying adjectives, such as wàà ‘very, a lot’ in

(272)  yòò àgbò wàà
  woman  big  very
  “a very big woman”

(273)  è=yɛ̀ bàsàbàbàsà tsɔ̀
  3SG=have untidy  too.much
  “S/he is too untidy.”

A noun marked by the definite article alone, with no other descriptors, cannot be complement of yè ‘have’. This applies to both regular nouns and property nouns. For example, (274a) is ungrammatical. If one wants to state that they have some dress that is identifiable to the listener, then (274b) is the grammatical way to express this.

(274a) *tà=yè àtàlé=!ɛ́
  1SG=have dress=DEF
  “I have the dress.”

(274b) àtàlé = è yè !dè/ì = òŋò
dress = DEF be.located  1SG = hand/1SG = possession
  “The dress is with me.”
A definite noun is acceptable only when it is also modified by ékò ‘some’. This changes the semantics of the sentence considerably because in (275) the speaker is no longer referring to one particular dress which the addressee can identify but rather to a different dress which is nonetheless identical to the dress that is identifiable to the addressee.

(275) ṯ = yè àtālé = !ë ékò
1SG = have dress = DEF some
“I have a dress identical to that dress.”

The same patterns of syntactic acceptability is seen with property nouns. They cannot occur in definite form as complements of yè ‘have’.

(276a) *ṯ = yè bíbìóó = !ë
1SG = have small = DEF
“I have the small one.”

(276b) bíbìóó = è yè :checked = !dé/ŋ = ṣè
small = DEF be.located 1SG = hand/1SG = possession
“The small one is with me.”

(276c) ṯ = yè bíbìóó = !ë ékò yè shíl á
1SG = have dress = DEF some be.located house
“I have one identical to the small one at home.”

3.4.3.2 Nominal properties not exhibited by property nouns
Modification by the pre-nominal distal demonstrative determiner, nákà̀ ‘that’, and its proximal counterpart, nêkè ‘this’ are unacceptable (277), (278). This marks an important difference
between regular nouns and property nouns, since regular nouns can occur freely with all

demonstratives.

(277) *nèkè kàkàdáŋŋ nèə ò = tɔɔ̃̀
  this  long  this  2SG = show
  “Do you mean this long one?”

(278) *nàkàĩ̊̃ kàkàdáŋŋ=à ò = tɔɔ̃̀
  that  long = DEF  2SG = show
  “Do you mean that long one?”

Unlike regular nouns, property nouns cannot be possessed (279), (280).

(279) *ó=bíbióó=!ɛ́
  2SG = small = DEF
  “Your small one”

(280) *kòjó  ê-tsùlú=!ɛ́
  Kojo  NOM-red = DEF
  “Kojo’s red one”

**2.4.3.3 Number marking on property nouns**

Property nouns that occur in NPs are usually marked for plural if the NP head is plural. The
plural property word may be reduplicated for emphasis, as in (281) and (282), but this
pragmatic strategy appears to be utilized more commonly for the two DIMENSION nouns in
these examples than for other nouns. The stem may be reduplicated more than once for even
more emphasis, usually twice. Any more than three reduplicated property nouns is unwieldy.
Property nouns that function as complements of *yè* in constructions with a plural subject may or may not take plural marking. Many HUMAN PROPENSITY property nouns do not take any plural marking in this construction (283), but DIMENSION and some PHYSICAL PROPERTY words can be marked for plural (284), (285) respectively. Reduplication of the plural property noun in the *yè*-construction is common (285).

(283a) *yè-i=è* yè légélégé
woman-PL=DEF have skinny
“The women are skinny.”

(283b) *yè-i=è* yè légélégé-!í
woman-PL=DEF have skinny-PL
“The women are skinny.”
2.4.3.4 Nominalized verb phrases as complements of yɛ̀

The complement of yɛ̀ ‘have’ may also be an abstract noun derived by nominalization of a verb phrase. The verb phrases from which these abstract nouns are derived are often idiomatic. For example, mĩ́ĩ̀shɛ̀ɛ̀ ‘happiness’ in (286a) is a nominalization of the verb phrase in (286b) and nã̀ãkpɛ̀ɛ̀ in (287a) is a nominalization of the verb phrase in (287b).

(285) hĩ̃̀ĩ́ = ɛ̃̀ yɛ̀ kpìtíbí!í kpìtíbí!í
     man.PL = DEF have short short
     “The men are short.”

(286a) kòjó hè yɛ̀ mĩ́ĩ̀shɛ̀ɛ̀
       Kojo body have happiness
     “Kojo is amusing.”

(286b) kòjó mĩ́!ĩ́ é - s hɛ̀ è = hè
       Kojo ? PERF-reach 3SG = body
     “Kojo is happy.”

(287a) sã̀né=ɛ̀ yɛ̀ nããkpɛ̀ɛ̀
       matter=DEF have wonder
     “The matter is amazing, unbelievable.”

(287b) ákú nã̀ã kpɛ̀ è = hè
       Aku mouth sew 3SG = body
     “Aku was dumbfounded.”

These nominals may also function as attributive modifiers within noun phrases. The difference between them and other nominal modifiers (of the ékpákpá ‘good one’, étsùlù ‘red
one’ variety) is that while these occur before the head noun (288), all other property nouns occur after the head noun (289). Modifiers are in bold.

(288)  
\[ \begin{array}{lll}
\text{noun} & \text{modifier} & \text{meaning} \\
\text{nã̀ã̀kpɛ̀ɛ̀ nĩ́} & \text{wonder thing} & \text{‘an unbelievable, amazing thing’} \\
\text{mĩ́shẽ̀ sã̀né} & \text{happiness matter} & \text{‘happy news’} \\
\text{tõ̀fĩjõ̀lɛ̀ mã́ã} & \text{peace town} & \text{‘peaceful town’} \\
\end{array} \]

(289)  
\[ \begin{array}{lll}
\text{noun} & \text{modifier} & \text{meaning} \\
\text{àtàlé hèè} & \text{dress new} & \text{‘new dress’} \\
\text{mã́má éỹ̃́lṹ} & \text{cloth white} & \text{‘white cloth’} \\
\text{mṹsṹ àgbɔ́} & \text{stomach big} & \text{‘big stomach’} \\
\end{array} \]

(290)  
\[ \begin{array}{lll}
\text{noun} & \text{modifier} & \text{meaning} \\
\text{* nĩ́ nã̀ã̀kpẽ̀} & \text{thing wonder} & \text{‘an unbelievable, amazing thing’} \\
\text{* sã̀né mĩ́shẽ̀} & \text{matter happiness} & \text{‘happy news’} \\
\text{*mã́ã tõ̀fĩjõ̀lɛ̀} & \text{town peace} & \text{‘peaceful town’} \\
\end{array} \]

The order of derived nominal modifiers and their noun heads is consonant with the order of non-descriptive nominal modifiers and their noun heads, which in many instances form compound words; the modifier precedes the head. Examples are:

(291)  
\[ \begin{array}{lll}
\text{noun} & \text{modifier} & \text{meaning} \\
\text{gbό́nyṍ ã́dɛ́kã́} & \text{dead.person box} & \text{‘coffin’} \\
\text{dàdé kòtsá} & \text{metal spong} & \text{‘steel sponge’} \\
\text{té́-sàà} & \text{stone bed} & \text{‘rock, boulder’} \\
\end{array} \]

2.4.3.5 Derivation of property nouns from regular nouns

Property nouns may be derived from regular nouns by total reduplication of the noun once. These property nouns have the meaning ‘full of N’ or ‘similar to N’. This is not a productive strategy. The ideal nouns for this type of property noun formation are those whose referents are inanimate, relatively small in size, tend to occur in multiple instantiations and are naturally-
occurring as opposed to man-made. Another semantic class that avails itself to this type of
derivation is liquids. These property nouns may occur as modifiers in a noun phrase or as
complements of *yè* ‘have’. Examples are:

(292) mvolución ‘dirt’  \(\rightarrow\) mvoluciónmvolución ‘dirty’

bólú ‘holes (in roads)’  \(\rightarrow\) bólúbólú ‘pot-holed’

*ŋmè̀* ‘thorns’  \(\rightarrow\) *ŋmè̀*ŋmè̀ ‘thorny’

*shí̀* ‘sand’  \(\rightarrow\) *shí̀*shí̀ ‘gritty’

*kpó- bí́* lump-PL ‘lumps’  \(\rightarrow\) kpóbííkpóbíí ‘lumpy’

*ŋmò́tò* ‘mud’  \(\rightarrow\) *ŋmò́tò*ŋmò́tò ‘muddy’

(293) gbɛ́ ɛ̀ yɛ̀ ŋmɔ̀tɔ̀ŋmɔ̀tɔ̀
road=DEF have muddy
“The road is muddy”

(294) è=wò àtàlé múnjĩ̀ kò
3SG=wear dress dirty INDEF
“S/he was wearing a dirty dress.”

### 2.4.3.6 Agent nominalization of property nouns

Agent nominalizations with animate referents may be obtained with the suffix -tsè, itself a
lexical item meaning ‘father’. This is possible mostly for DIMENSION and COLOUR nouns.

(295) àgbò ‘big’  \(\rightarrow\) agbòtsè ‘big one’

bibióó ‘small’  \(\rightarrow\) bibióótsè ‘small one’

kàkàdáńgí ‘tall’  \(\rightarrow\) kàkàdáńgítsè ‘tall one’

édí́tjí ‘black (n.)’  \(\rightarrow\) édí́tjítsè ‘dark-skinned one’

étsú́lù ‘red (n.)’  \(\rightarrow\) étsú́lùtsè ‘light-skinned one’
When mújìmújì ‘dirty’ undergoes agent nominalization however, the product is mújì-à-tsè [dirt-PERT-NOM] ‘dirty person’, where the morpheme a- appears to be the pertensive marker, suggesting a possessive NP. This strategy is not at all productive and can only be observed with this particular noun.

2.4.3.7 Adjectives and the possessive construction

Adjectives cannot be complements of yè. It is their inability to occur in this syntactic slot or as arguments in clauses that disqualifies them as nouns. They can only occur as modifiers in NPs. For example yè!lj ‘white’ and kpákpá ‘good’ can be modifiers in an NP (b. examples) but cannot be complements of yè (a. examples). Even their derived nominals, ékpákpá ‘good (n.)’ and éyè!lj ‘white (n.)’ cannot be complements of yè ‘have’.

(296a) *àtàlé=ɛ̀ yè (é)-yè!lj
    dress=DEF have (NOM)-white
    “The dress is white.”

(296b) àtàlé yè!lj
    dress white
    “a white dress” [OYO:86]

(297a) è=yè (é)-kpákpá
    3SG=have NOM-good
    “S/he is good.”

(297b) gbɔ́mɔ̀ kpákpá !nì
    person good PRED.PRT
    “S/he is a good person.”
One reason why certain property words cannot occur as complements of *yè* ‘have’ is that they have semantic correlates that can be expressed verbally. For instance the verbal forms of *àgbò* ‘big’ *kàkàdáŋŋ* ‘tall’, *(e)yé!ŋ* ‘white’ and *(e)kpákpá* are *dà* ‘be.big’, *kè* ‘be.tall’, *yè* ‘be.white’ and *hǐ* ‘be.good’. It seems then that where there is a choice between expression of a concept as a verb and expression of the same concept as a complement of *yè* ‘have’, the former is favoured over the latter. A look at table 7 reveals that all the adjectives there can only occur attributively or as intransitive predicates (only the colour terms can occur as intransitive predicates). The properties expressed by these adjectives belong to core semantic classes such as COLOUR, AGE and VALUE. The two PHYSICAL PROPERTY adjectives *éŋmɔ̃́!ŋ* ‘raw, fresh’ and *éŋmĩ́líkítí* ‘unripe’, according to Dixon (2010:76), are the most frequently-occurring adjectives from that semantic class across languages. This suggests that these adjectives are relatively primitive within the language, and it implies that intransitive predication and attributive modification are more established, older means of property concept expression than predication with *yè*.

Other authors have noted that the adjective class (or more broadly, the class of words that occur as modifiers of nouns in NPs) in many West African languages is an innovation (Ameka 1991b). Schaefer and Egbokhare (1993:74) note that in Emai, the relatively new adjective class is an addition to a system where property concepts were primarily and perhaps
singly coded by verbs. In Gã, it is not possible to determine whether the older form of property expression is property verbs or attributive adjectives and nouns. What does seem clear, though, is that complementation of yê ‘have’ with property nouns is a more recent innovation, judging from the fact that most of the basic property concepts cannot occur in this construction.

2.4.3.8 The relationship between possession and property-denotation

The use of possessive syntax to introduce property concepts is common in the world’s languages. Francez and Koontz-Garboden (2013:536) observe that property concept lexemes which occur in possessive predicate constructions are those that denote abstract “substances” such as English ‘strength’ and ‘beauty’. These are essentially abstract nouns. Those that occur in canonical predicate constructions (e.g. copula constructions) tend to be adjectives in English. Their thesis is that substance-denoting property concepts require possessive semantics in order to meet the truth conditions of property concept constructions, while adjectivally-denoting property concepts have no such requirement.

In Gã, possessive predicate constructions are used for both substance-denoting property concepts as well as non substance-denoting ones. So as predicted by Francez and Koontz-Garboden (2013), noun modifiers like those described earlier in this section (e.g. mîshêê ‘happiness’) all occur in predicate possessive constructions. However, many non substance-
denoting property concepts such as bíbióó ‘small’, díŋŋ́ ‘quiet’ and kpìtíóó ‘short’ can also appear in possessive predicate constructions. Also significantly, no property concept may occur in a canonical predicate construction (with copula jì). That option simply does not exist for Gã.

The semantics of possessive predication would require that the complement of yè ‘have’ be a noun. Only concrete ‘things’ can be possessed. An extension to allow property-denoting words to fill this slot is not unexpected. If a thing or person exhibits some quality, then that quality can be thought of as being a part of the thing’s or person’s constitution - a part of their ‘body’ (to use the term loosely), which they then have control over (just as humans have control over their bodies) and can be said to have ownership over.

### 2.4.3.9 Adverbial use of property nouns

Property nouns can themselves be used for the adverbial modification of property verbs which have identical semantic component (298), (299). This is possible only in the affirmative, as the (b) examples show. The function of the property noun appears to be emphasis; it reinforces the property expressed by the property verb.

(298a) àbìfáó = !é  é-shwì  àgbò
baby = DEF  PERF-be.fat  big
“The baby is very fat.”

(298b) ?àbìfáó= !é é-shwì-kò àgbò
baby = DEF  PERF-be.fat  big
“The baby is not very fat.”
2.4.4 Comparison and Gradability

One of the most common features of property words across languages is that they can occur as a parameter of comparison in comparative constructions. In Gã, only property verbs and property nouns can occur in comparative constructions. The comparative construction is a serial verb construction in which the property word constitutes the first VP or is a complement of the first VP and the comparative verb, ﹼfè ‘surpass’ constitutes the second VP. The object of 季后 ‘surpass’ is the object of comparison. Since the comparative construction only has positions for nouns (objects of xAC ‘have’ or 讞fè ‘surpass’) and verbs (V1 slot), adjectives cannot occur in this construction since they cannot be objects of xAC ‘have’. However, since many adjectives in Gã have verbal counterparts, this does not represent a handicap for concepts expressed by adjectives; their verbal semantic counterparts can occur in comparative constructions. Example (300) contains a property verb as parameter of comparison while (301) and (302) have property nouns. (303a) is a comparative sentence where the property at issue is an adjective, tsùlu ‘red’.
It is ungrammatical, but (303b) with the equivalent verbal property word, *tsù* ‘be red’ is grammatical.

(300) kòjó kɛ̀ fè  ákú
Kojo be.tall surpass Aku
“Kojo is taller than Aku.”

(301) kɔ́ɔ̀pòó nɛ́ yɛ̀ bíbìóó fè   é n ɛ́ ̃́
cup this have small surpass this
“This cup is smaller than this one.”

(302) è=sànɛ̀=è  yè  àwèrèhòó fè   ó =nɔ̀-!ɔ́
3SG=matter=DEF have sadness surpass 2SG=NM-DEF
“His problem is sadder than yours.”

(303a) *è=mã̀mĩ́  yɛ̀ tsùlù fè   ì=mã̀mĩ́
3SG=mother have red surpass 1SG=mother
“Her/His mother is lighter in complexion than my mother.”

(303b) è=mã̀mĩ́ tsù-ɔ̀ fè   ì=mã̀mĩ́
3SG=mother be.red-HAB surpass 1SG=mother
“Her/His mother is lighter in complexion than my mother.”

Property words that can function as parameters of comparison are termed gradable.

Such property words can also be modified by adverbs which convey the extent or degree of the attribute expressed by the property concept. There are property concepts which cannot function as a parameter of comparison, neither can they be modified by degree adverbs. These are termed non-gradable. So far, we have encountered mainly gradable property words. Non-gradable property words in Gã belong to the adjective class. Many of these adjectives have a
fixed, collocational relationship with the noun they modify and do not occur with any other
nouns. They cannot occur as complements of yë ‘have’. Examples are:

\[(304) \text{ yòò hɔ́-lɔ́ } [\text{woman pregnancy-AG}] \quad \text{‘pregnant woman’} \]
\[\text{ shìkátsɛ̀ kpã̀nã̀ } [\text{rich.person extremely}] \quad \text{‘filthy rich person’} \]
\[\text{ éyĕ́fùū } [\text{white pure}] \quad \text{‘pure white’} \]
\[\text{ shwã̀né fĩ́ńtĩ́ŋ́ŋ́ } [\text{afternoon bright}] \quad \text{‘bright afternoon’} \]
\[\text{ lèé!bí má́ŋ́kpá } [\text{morning early}] \quad \text{‘early morning’} \]

Other non-gradable adjectives which are not in a collocational relationship with their noun
heads are fólò ‘empty, naked, alone’. Example: òmɔ̃́ fólò ‘only rice’ i.e. rice with no stew.

2.5 Adverbs
Adverbs are infamously difficult to define because they span a wide semantic range and are
realized by an equally wide array of morphosyntactic devices as well as lexical and periphrastic
means. Payne (1998:69) describes it as a “catch-all category” which accepts as members any
word with semantic content that is not a noun, verb or adjective. Adverbs tend to modify verbs
and adjectives but also whole clauses and propositions. They are usually distinguished into
various sub-classes based on their semantics. Each semantic adverbial classs relevant to Gã will
be examined below.

2.5.1 Manner adverbs
These modify verbs by stating the manner in which the action expressed by the verb is carried
out. It is useful to think of manner adverbs as property concepts which modify verbs. Examples
are *kpi* ‘suddenly’, *kpéŋŋ* ‘firmly’, *hènĩàñà* ‘luckily’ and *fítsófítsó* ‘clearly, lucidly’. Example sentences follow:

(305) *kèkè nì́ áfíkəŋkəmè = è wá kpi*
then and reindeer = DEF stop suddenly
“And then the reindeer stopped suddenly.” [MA:78]

(306) *shì jàtá hêè è = nìné mìí kpéŋŋ dìèŋtsè*
but lion hold 3SG = hand inside firmly indeed
“But lion held onto his hand firmly indeed.” [BGL 1976 3B:47; my glosses, tones]

(307) *hènĩàñà = lá ìsòmàáŋjì shè-gbèè-máá = ǹ móŋ hì há*
luckily = TOP unknowing down-fall-NOM = DEF rather be.good give
gbèè = lé

dog = DEF
“Luckily and unbeknownst (to us), falling down rather was good for the dog.” [PAT:52]

The above examples belong to the adverb word class alone. However there are many manner adverbs which also function as adjectives and property nouns. This is not unexpected since they are all property concepts. Some adjectives and property nouns are used as adverbs without any overt derivational morphology. Others have to be reduplicated in order to be used as adverbs.

In (308) to (311), the (a) examples contain property concepts modifying nouns while the corresponding (b) examples contain those same property concepts but modifying verbs (manner adverbs).

(308a) *àkpókplóntò yè blèdd*
turtle have slow
“The turtle is slow.”
(308b) nĩ gbè!ké-nũú = ẽ bà-tè shĩ bëddô
and child-male = DEF VENT-rise down slowly
“And the boy got up slowly.” [PAT:122]

(309a) òdákɛ́!lɛ́o sõ!mɔ́ yòómó !lé áffi-ì bàbàọ̀ó dàñĩ
lizard serve old.woman DEF year-PL many before
yòómó lɛ́ ŋ mɛ̀ɛ̃ɛ̀ è hɛ̀
old.woman DEF release 3SG = body
“Lizard served the old woman for many years before the old woman let him go.”
[BGL 1976 3B:63; my glosses, tones]

(309b) nò mlĩ́ !l ɛ́ nũ mĩ-hò bàbàọ̀ó
that inside TOP water PROG-flow many
“At that time, water was flowing with great force.” [BGL 1976 3B:63; my glosses,
tones]

(310a) nõ-łęe-nõ yè òjògbàŋ ng̊̄
thing-all-thing have well
“Everything is well.” [PAT:9]

(310b) âmè = tåáa tsò = è nõ òjògbàŋ ng̊̄
3PL = sit.NEG tree = DEF top well
“They didn’t sit on the tree properly, well.” [BOR:65]

(311a) nànnàâ fõlôó
grandmother little
“little grandmother” [DF:110]

(311b) màà òfàünê ní ó = wó ó = gbèè ǹ
mother please NMLZ 2SG.SBJV = lift 2SG = voice top
ó = hà wó fõlôó
2SG.SBJV = give 1PL little
“Mother, can you please raise your voice a little for us?” [OYO:19]
New adverbial meanings may be obtained by reduplication of adverbs and adjectives or property nouns. For instance fìlóó ‘little’ may be reduplicated to obtain the adverb fìòfìló ‘gradually, little by little’.

(312) tsò̃̂ mù-tsùlú = !é ó = !wó tsénsí = è mìŋ fìòfìló
pour oil-red = DEF 2SG.SBJV = put pan = DEF inside little.RED
“Pour the palm oil (red oil) into the pan little by little.”

In other cases, there is little semantic difference between an adverbial root and its reduplicated form. For instance, both òyá and òyáìòyáì mean ‘quickly’. òyá could also be a time adverb meaning ‘early’.

Some adverbs may occur immediately after the verb phrase they modify (308b), (309b); sentence-finally (312) or sentence-initially (313).

(313) tr̀ùkàà òkó bà-jìé è = hiे kpò
suddenly Oko VENT-remove 3SG = face compound
“Suddenly, Oko appeared.”

2.5.2 Degree adverbs
A subset of manner adverbs are degree adverbs. These qualify the degree or extent of an action or property. Therefore, they modify both verbs and adjectives. Examples are wàà ‘very’, tsò ‘too.much, excessively’, dièńtsè ‘very’ and kwráá ‘at all’.

(314) nì ãmè = sùmù-š nèkè kɔkɔdè!né nèè sànè wàà
and 3PL = like-HAB this frog this matter very.much
“And they liked this frog very much.”  [MAV:3]
This did not bother him at all.” [PAT:95]

diéjetsè ‘indeed, really’ may modify adjectives as well as other adverbs, such as wàà ‘very much’ in (316) and kpéjjy ‘firmly’ in (306).

(316) nì àmè=sùmò-dìèŋ̀tsè nèkè kàkòdé!né nèkè sànè wàà díèŋ̀tsè
and 3PL=like-HAB this frog this matter very.much indeed
“And they liked this frog very much indeed.”

2.5.3 Time adverbs

As the name suggests, these are words that express the time at which an action occurs.

Examples are bíànè ‘now’, wɔ́ ‘tomorrow’, nyè ‘yesterday’, jú ‘Monday’, ágbènè ‘so.now’, furthermore’. They may occur following the verb phrase or topicalized in sentence-initial position.

(317) kè-bà-shí bíànè
take-VENT-hit now
…up until now. [MM:7]

(318) bíànè=lè lè mòjì é=mà tsù
now=TOP 3SG.OBJ rather 3SG.PERF=build house
“Now, he rather has built a house.” [MM:78]

(319) wɔ́ bé ní ò=báá-!bá=!=á wɔ́=jwélè !nɔ́
tomorrow time NMLZ 2SG-FUT =come =DEF 1PL=lie top
The adverb ágbènè ‘so now’ highlights the fact that the action it modifies is a result or sequential product of some preceding action. Also, unlike bíànè ‘now’ it does not refer to the present time of speaking but to the most current time in the event, be it past, present or future.

(320) ágbènè = lè  ke ò = tá  gbékè = !è  hé = !è  bè
so.now = TOP  when  2SG = sit  child = DEF  body = DEF  then

òò = yé  àwèrèhóó 2SG.PROG = eat  sorrow

“So now when you sit by your child, you become sorrowful.”  [CH:78]

(321) nì mò-ìé-ì  ì-nà  á!kè  ágbènè = lè  gbékè = !è
and  person-all-person  PROG-see  that  now = TOP  child = DEF

èè = jè  ó = !dèjì 3SG.PROG = exit  2SG = palm

And everyone can see that now (at this point) the child is dying.  [CH:49]

When ágbènè is followed by hù ‘also, too’, it means ‘furthermore’.

Time adverbials may also occur periphrastically, as in the case of bíànè tồ nè!è ‘right now, right this minute’, literally (and paradoxically) ‘now far.away this’. In actual speech the final vowel of bíànè is ellipsed to obtain bí!áńtồ nè!è, which is now felt by speakers to be one word.
And right now, it got to a point… the world is enlightened.” [OYO:154]

Another example of a temporal adverbial phrase is *nò mĩ̀ŋ́* (lit: ‘that inside’) which translates as ‘at that time, by then’.

“By that time, all the food would have been eaten up.” [YM:147]

Many time adverbs are multi-categorial because they can function as nouns too. In (324), *biànɛ̃́* functions as a noun; it is marked by the focus particle *nì́*.

“Oko left just now.”

Time adverbs may also express aspectual meanings, especially those related to the frequency of an action. Examples are *é!kóŋ́ŋ́* ‘again’, *ààhũ̂* ‘continuously’, *kɔ̀kɔ̀ɔ̀kɔ̀* ‘never’, *dã́ŋ̀* ‘before’, *dáá* ‘everyday’ and adverbial phrases such as *shĩ̀ kòmé* (lit: instance one) ‘once’.

“They were going to give birth again… (they ended up with) two (babies)” [OYO:193]
(326) hèwɔ́ = !á wɔ́ = bà-dàmò sh̀̀ àábhù
sake = TOP 1PL = VENT-stand down continuously
“So, we stood there for a long time.” [MM:47]

(327) mĩ́ĩ́ = !kɛ́ɛ́ bò hɔ̀mɔ̀ yééé nýɛ̀ kɔ̀kɔ̀ɔ̀kɔ̀
1SG.PROG = say 2SG.OBJ hunger eat.NEG 2PL ever
“I’m telling you, you’ll never go hungry.” [OYO:162]

(328) í = !ná-kò dollar dáŋ̀
1SG.PERF = see-NEG before
“I have not seen dollars before.” [MM:64]

(329) á = tèè sòmɔ̀ sh̀̀ kɔ̀mè ɔ̀mò
3PL.IMPERS.PERF = go.PST church time one already
“They’ve been to church once already.”

(330) ólólóóló = !lé nò mùy = !é àmè = ṣ-táò kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né = !é
still = TOP that inside = TOP 3PL = PROG-search frog = DEF
“At that time they were still looking for the frog.” [SAMP:16]

2.5.4 Epistemic adverbs
These express the speaker’s commitment to the truth of the proposition. While other languages may use affixes or modal auxiliaries to code these notions, Gã uses adverbs and adverbial phrases. Givón (2001a:92) notes that the semantic scope of epistemic adverbs can range over the whole clause or proposition. There are three such adverbs: bèkɛ́ ‘maybe’ (331) and é!kólɛ́!ɛ́ ‘maybe’ (332) indicate the speaker’s uncertainty while kɛ̀ ‘certainly, definitely’ indicates certainty (333). é!kólɛ́ ‘maybe’ may actually be an adverbial phrase comprising é!kó ‘some (n.)’ and the definite article lɛ.
“So, he thought that maybe the frog was in the hole.” [DEB:71]

“Maybe next year, it will fall on the fifteenth.” [OYO:62]

“And they fell into something like a river. In water, definitely.” [DEB:132]

There is another epistemic adverb, àsòmòáŋ ‘unknowingly’ which is used before the subject to indicate that the speaker now has knowledge of the propositional content of the statement that follows, when previously she didn’t.

“Luckily and unbeknownst (to us), falling down rather was good for the dog.” [PAT:52]

8 This speaker, a 17-year old girl, forms the plural of tsò ‘tree/stick’ with two plural markers -i and -jĩ to make tsèjĩ ‘trees’ instead of the more prevalent ‘tsè’. If this is not a slip of tongue, then it appears that in this speaker’s repertoire the domain of -jĩ has been expanded to include nouns for which -i is the traditional pluralizer. The
“He saw sticks behind the stone. Not knowing, it was a sheep. These wild sheep with their long horns. One was there.” [MAV:77]

### 2.5.5 Emphatic adverbs

This group contains a hodge podge of uninflected words which are not verbs, nouns or adjectives and which serve a function related to emphasis. Their roles as emphasizers may be more obvious in some cases than others, for it is sometimes difficult in some cases to pinpoint their exact meaning, making them more akin to discourse markers. What differentiates them from the adverbs discussed above is that they are capable of modifying nouns. However, unlike adjectives they do not attribute any property to these nouns. They are *ńźįŋ* ‘just’, *kwřáá* ‘actually, at.all’, *(tětě)* pó ‘even’, *mőj* ‘rather’, *diěřtsě* ‘even’, *pôtežz* ‘exactly’ and *hũ* ‘too’. A few illustrative examples are given for these adverbs. Examples (336) and (337) demonstrate the syntactic flexibility of these adverbs because in (336) pó modifies the noun *ősófóöfö* ‘the priests’ while in (337) it modifies the proposition contained in the conditional clause.

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Speaker also has reanalyzed *tsěř* as singular. This is not very common but not surprising either. Among younger speakers -ji is being used for words that were once the domain of -i e.g. *sěřjǐ* instead of *sěřjí* for the plural of ‘chair’. 
“Now, even the priests are tired, fed up.” [CH:68]

“But even if he doesn’t heal him, I won’t take him (to the medicine man).” [CH:103]

“(South) America is actually where cocoa comes from.” [BGL 1976 3B:23]

“What at all is inside this thing?!” [FLO:49]

“So you’ll see that even the tiny little children (babies) are being carried over shoulders.” [OYO:424]
“So, please, the herbal infusion that you’ve made over there, what exactly is it made from?” [YM:158]

“So these rather are the important points.” [OYO:287]

“The cow was also chasing him.” [TIN:59]

2.6 Ideophones
These do not constitute a word class or syntactic category of their own. Rather most of them belong to the property noun, adjective and manner adverb classes and a few belong to the noun and verb classes. Blench (2010) states that they are “expressives, characterizing sounds, sensations, textures and feelings, usually but not always through morphological patterning”.

Essentially they are property concepts whose phonological shape is rooted in the perceived correlation that speakers make between the property in question and certain phonological features. This correlation may not necessarily be iconic. That is, ideophones need not be onomatopoeic. This notion is best explained by Dingemanse (2012:655) who defines ideophones as “marked words which depict sensory imagery”. He writes that the use of ideophones to depict sensory images is more about framing than likeness. Depictions differ in
the degree to which they capture the real-life entity, just as different paintings of similar objects reflect differences in the artist’s perceived resemblance to reality. Therefore, ideophones primarily should be viewed in this way and only secondarily as iconic representations (Dingemanse 2012:658).

With this in mind, one can set up two broad types of ideophones for Gã. In one class are *onomatopoeic ideophones*, which to varying degrees, depending on the word, have some sound semblance to the property (or event) that they depict. The other class of ideophones, *non-onomatopoeic ideophones*, constitute a vast majority of the ideophones in the language. The main hallmark of this sub-class is that they contain a fair number of reduplicated forms. All ideophones, especially *onomatopoeic ideophones* are often characterized by marked intonation, which serves to make the depiction more expressive and vivid. This may be realized as an increase or decrease in the pitch register relative to the pitch of the rest of the clause. The two types of ideophones will now be discussed.

### 2.6.1 Onomatopoeic Ideophones

These onomatopoeic words often function as adverbs, modifying a verb by depicting the sound that accompanies the action coded by the verb. In other cases, the ideophone itself depicts the entire action, such that the clause may be missing a verbal predicate. They are especially common in narratives; the only examples of such ideophones in my corpus were from
narratives. *púéj* in (344) depicts the owl’s unexpected exit from his hole in a tree and *zèzè* in (345) conjures up an image of a person making a soft landing. A synonym to this ideophone is *zèzè*. Both ideophones are functioning as adverbs here. In (346), *yìkɔ́yìkɔ́* describes the sound of a person sobbing and heaving uncontrollably. It is derived from the verb *yíkọ́* ‘sob’, also an ideophone.

(344) nàà pàtú é = jè kpò *púéj*  
PRSTV.PRED.PRT owl 3SG.PERF=exit compound IDEO  
“And here an owl has exited suddenly.” [PAT:107]

(345) nì̀ àmé = bà-yí shìkɔ̃̀ kpàá *zèzè*  
and 3PL=VENT-land ground IDEO  
“And they landed smoothly on the ground.” [TIN:62]

(346) gbé!kɛ̃́ = è ṣ fò *yìkɔ́yìkɔ́*  
child=DEF PROG-cry IDEO  
“The child is sobbing uncontrollably.”

In (347), *kpàá* indicates a hard landing. In (348), *hùù* conveys the smooth and quick movement of an object through air and *kłóbọ́tọ́j* is a comical means of indicating a fall in water. In both examples it is ideophones that predicate the action of the subject after the source of its motion is predicated. The ideophones in these examples therefore co-lexicalize the action of falling (and landing) as well as the manner of falling of the subject. In the case of (348) *hùù* was lengthened significantly by the narrator, perhaps to indicate that it was a long fall.
The ideophones in (347) and (348) do not fit neatly into any word class and thus demonstrate one feature of ideophones that was previously thought to be cross-linguistically valid i.e. that ideophones form a syntactic category of their own (Doke 1935). It is more instructive, however, as suggested by Ameka (2001:26), to view them as a phonosemantic class which does not have to have uniform word class membership within a language or across languages. In so doing one does not miss any functional and syntactic similarities they may have with members of well-established classes such as adverbs, property nouns and adjectives.

My view is that ideophones such as the ones in (347) and (348) should still be considered adverbs, in so far as their main function is to characterize the manner in which some action is effected. The difference here is that the action is not explicitly stated but clues to the nature of the action are given in the previous discourse and crucially in the ideophone itself, and this enables the hearer to decipher what action is being predicated of the actor.
There are also a few nominal ideophones in the language, which attempt to mimic the typical sounds made by their referents, as perceived by speakers. They are:

(349)  
\begin{align*}
\text{kǐlí} & \quad \text{`cricket (insect)'} \\
\text{dskɔ́dskɔ́} & \quad \text{`duck'} \\
\text{kłàkúj} & \quad \text{`turkey'} \\
\text{kọ́jkọ́} & \quad \text{`empty tin can'} \\
\text{òkété!ké} & \quad \text{`railway train'} \\
\text{tsükútsàkà} & \quad \text{`railway train'} \\
\text{tùtùlú!tú} & \quad \text{`a kind of horn’ (used when addressing children)} \\
\text{hã̌ĩ̀hã̌ĩ̀} & \quad \text{`disdainful treatment’}
\end{align*}

The last example, \text{hã̌ĩ̀hã̌ĩ̀} `mistreatment’ is atypical, firstly because it refers to an abstract concept and secondly because it consists of a reduplication of the root word \text{hã̌ĩ̀}, which is an interjection used to ward off animals. Its English equivalent would be “Shoo!”

(350)  
\begin{align*}
\text{è=fé-ɔ́ lɛ́ hã̌ĩ̀hã̌ĩ̀} & \quad \text{3SG=do-HAB 3SG.OBJ mistreatment} \\
\text{“She treats him with disdain.”} & \quad \text{(Dakubu 2008b:85; glosses and tone marks mine)}
\end{align*}

2.6.2 Non-onomatopoeic ideophones

These bear no resemblance to the sounds of the situations they describe. It is difficult even to conceive of a sound associated with concepts like ‘brightly’, ‘carelessly’ or ‘skinny’. Such ideophones comprise a large number of words belonging mostly to the adverb, property noun and adjective word classes, most of which are reduplications. Although they are reduplications, in many cases one cannot speak of a root word from which the ideophone is derived. For
example, there is no word hábá from which hábáhábá ‘thin’ is derived. This is the case for
many reduplicated ideophones. Exceptions can be found in words like básàà and its
reduplicated form, básábásà which both mean ‘careless, carelessly’. Below are examples of
ideophones that function as property nouns (351), those that function as adverbs (352) and
those which can function as both (353).

(351) **Property noun ideophones**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hábáhábá</td>
<td>‘thin, light (of people)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>légélégé</td>
<td>‘skinny’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yàà</td>
<td>‘confused’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bùgábugá</td>
<td>‘aggressive’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blóbló</td>
<td>‘thin (of a woman)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gòbigòbí</td>
<td>‘loquacious’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gégégégé</td>
<td>‘loud, quarrelsome’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gidígàndàñjì</td>
<td>‘unwieldy, bulky’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hòitréhòtré</td>
<td>‘indecisive’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hòitréshòtró</td>
<td>‘small and weak (used of people)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jìribajìribà</td>
<td>‘restless’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gòjòò, gòjògòjòò</td>
<td>‘very tall and big’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tsàkàà, tsàkàtsàkà</td>
<td>‘nasty, disgusting’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pèsèè, pèsèpèsè</td>
<td>‘soggy and nasty’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bòdòò, bòdòbòdòò</td>
<td>‘soft’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fènyèè, fènyèfènyèè</td>
<td>‘having a serious overbite’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(352) **Adverbial ideophones**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>héýjì</td>
<td>‘brightly’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bàmbàm</td>
<td>‘voraciously, of eating’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gàà</td>
<td>‘intensely, when looking at someone’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some example sentences are given below. In (354), the second ideophone, jàbéjàbé is being used adjectivally.

(353) nàkà́ nñńy wò=kè wò=hè bàá-fò nyè́ŋmò nò kòtsòò
that exactly 1PL=take 1PL=body FUT-put God top lazily
“That is how we will rely wholly on God.”
Lit: “That is how we will lie on God comfortably, lazily.” [CH:198]

(354) ékò-mè́̀ yè ní hé-mò-kè-yélí=!é è=dàmò
some-PL exist NMLZ buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM=DEF 3SG=stand shì ì̀ì down firmly

ékò-mè́̀ yè ní è=yè jàbéjàbé
some-PL exist NMLZ 3SG=have lukewarm
“There are some whose faith stands firm. There are some whose faith is lukewarm, neither here nor there.”

(355) kú!tsò=è mìn jè-jò tìjìkòńy
neighbourhood=DEF inside PERF-cool quietly
“The neighbourhood is dead quiet.”
“Iron spikes stick out along the wall.” (Dakubu 2008b:219; glosses and tone marks mine)

(357) **Property noun/Adverbial ideophones**

*bàsàà, básàbàsà* ‘careless, carelessly’

*gidigidi* ‘boisterous, boisterously’

(358a) àmè = ñ-shwé  

3PL = PROG-play boisterously

“They are playing boisterously.” → adverb

(358b) gbé!ké = è  

child = DEF have boisterous too.much

“The child is too boisterous.” → property noun

### 2.6.3 Phonological features unique to ideophones

i) Marked sound sequences

Generally, Gã ideophones do not seriously violate the phonological rules of the language. However, there are certain sound sequences which occur disproportionately in ideophones compared to non-ideophones. For example hr [hɾ] is a sound sequence that is very rare in Gã. It is found in only five lexical items in Dakubu’s (2008b) dictionary, four of which are ideophones (359). The one non-ideophone in the group, hršnš ‘blister’ is a borrowing from Akan and appears to be the source of the property noun, hršnšhršnš ‘swollen’. Also, the sequence jr [ʤɾ] is only found in the ideophone, jrib járib “restless” and [zɔ] only occurs in
Finally, [uɛ] is not an attested vowel sequence within morpheme boundaries but is found in *púɛ́ŋ́*.

(359)  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hřébí́</td>
<td>‘mild, gentle, of the wind, fire, scent’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hřá́ŋ́</td>
<td>‘profitably’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hřą́ŋ̃má̃á</td>
<td>‘broad and heavy, of people’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hřó́ñ</td>
<td>‘swollen’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hřó́l̃ñ</td>
<td>‘blister’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ii) Extra lengthening of final vowel

If an ideophone terminates in a long vowel, that vowel may be lengthened even more for dramatic effect. This discourse device cannot be employed for non-ideophones, except interjections.

### 2.6.4 Tonosemantics

Ideophones that depict thin, slim or narrow entities tend to have high tone on all syllables while those that depict big, broad, bulky entities tend to have low tones throughout (for singular forms). These ideophones are property nouns. This phenomenon, where oppositions in phonological qualities correlate with oppositions in meaning is termed synesthesia (Bodomo 2006:206). Bodomo describes a similar correlation in Dagaare (Niger-Congo, Gur) where high toned ideophones refer to lighter, thinner and shorter entities and low-toned ones to heavier, longer and fatter entities. In Dangme, the closest relative of Gã, a parallel situation obtains. Dakubu (1998:8) observes that in Dangme, low tone is generally associated with large size,
mass, and weight, both physical and moral, while high tone is associated with the absence of these. She relates this association with the fact that Dangme verbs with low tone in the affirmative acquire high tone in the negative. Therefore, negation, absence, reduction (in size) and loss are all semantic kin and are all associated with high tone. She views this as an iconic representation of the position of the vocal apparatus in producing high tones, during which, according to Dakubu (1998:15), there is constriction of the vocal cords leading to reduction in aperture and amplitude. This explanation may not hold because although there is reduction in sound amplitude, there isn’t necessarily any reduction in the aperture between the vocal cords during the production of high-pitched sounds. The high pitch is due only to the relatively rapid frequency of vibration of the vocal cords. A more direct iconic relationship exploited by speakers who make this association (between small size and high pitch) may be that between the sounds made by small creatures versus big creatures in nature. This idea was put forth by Suzanne Kemmer (p.c). She observed that small children and animals (e.g. mice, guinea pigs, cats) make higher-pitched sounds as compared to adult humans and larger animals (e.g. bears, dogs, lions). It may be this association, rather, that informs the tone pattern seen in ideophones.

*High tones throughout: thin, narrow, light people and objects:*

(360) légélégé ‘slender’

hábáhábá ‘thin, light (of people)’
błóblo  ‘thin, narrow’ (both people and things)
dámdámdá  ‘very slim’
lómilómí  ‘slender (of people)’
kányákányá  ‘skinny’
wédéwédé  ‘unhealthily thin, frail’
léléóó  ‘narrow’
fíńtíííí  ‘narrow’

Low tones throughout (singular) OR low tone on first two syllables, high tones on last two syllables (plural): big, fat, broad, heavy people and objects:

(361) gójòò, gójógójòò (pl.)  ‘big and tall’
kpóyòò, kpóyókpóyòò (pl.)  ‘big’
gbábùù, gbábúgbábùù (pl.)  ‘big and unwieldy’
gbêmeève  ‘big and broad’
gábòò, gábógábòò (pl.)  ‘big and shapeless’
glómòò, glómóglómòò (pl.)  ‘big and tall’
gídígàndànàñ  ‘big and unwieldy’
gbàyàà, gbáyágbàyàà  ‘wide open’
kúbòò, kúbókúbóò  ‘very big’

gbòñgbòñ  ‘fat’
tòtòòò  ‘fat’
tògbòò  ‘fat’
tòrùù  ‘fat’

Exceptions to this pattern are zènj  ‘thin’ and tsóbótsóbó  ‘fat, flabby’. The ideophone gbédémóó meaning ‘huge’ can occur with either all high tones or all low tones (gbédémòò), without a change in meaning. These exceptions are few in number and do not refute the fact that Gà, like
many other languages with ideophones, associate high tones and low tones with opposing values on the size scale.

A quick perusal of the example words above also reveals another phonosemantic feature; the existence of a phonestheme or related phonesthemes in the voiced velar stop /g/ and voiced labio-velar stop /gb/. These phonemes tend to be associated with words depicting entities that are large or heavy. Eight out of the thirteen ideophones in (346) depicting large entities begin with or contain the phonemes /g/ or /gb/.

2.6.5 **Morpho-syntactic features unique to ideophones**

The only morphological processes ideophones undergo is pluralization and this only occurs with ideophones which function as modifiers in NPs. For those with high tones, pluralization is achieved by suffixing the plural suffix -i (362). For those with low tones throughout (usually of the form C₁VC₂VV), the plural is obtained by reduplicating the word, shortening the vowel on the second syllable and replacing the low tones on the first two syllables with high tones, as can be seen in (361) above and (363) below.

(362) a. òbl̀á-yòò légélégé
life-female slender
“a slender young woman”

b. òbl̀á-yè-ì  légélégé-!í
life-female-PL slender-PL
“slender young women”
(363) a. ñùù  göjòò
    man    big.and.tall
    “a big and tall man’

b. hùù  göjógòjòò
    men   big.and.tall.PL
    “big and tall men’

Non-onomatopoeic property noun or adjectival ideophones may be modified by degree
adverbs such as tsɔ̃̀ ‘too much’ and ‘wàà’ ‘very’ (364) but these modifiers cannot be used with
adverbial ideophones, which tend to be onomatopoeic (365).

(364) ákú  é-fèé  wèdèwèdè  wàà
    Aku   PERF-do    thin     very
    “Aku has become very thin.”

(365) *nì  àmë =bà-yí  šìkposé  zìbìrì  wàà
    and  3PL = VENT-land ground IDEO very
    ‘And they landed very smoothly on the ground.’

From the discussion above, it is obvious that ideophones are not a marginal class in Gã.
They constitute a large chunk of the property noun and manner adverb word classes but differ
slightly from non-ideophone members in phonological tendencies, morphology and to a slight
extent, syntax. They are invaluable to speakers for providing an effective, vivid and sometimes
comical means of expressing descriptive properties.
2.7 Interjections

Interjections have not enjoyed universal recognition among linguists as a separate word class.

Ameka (1992) writes that some linguists have subsumed them under particles, others under discourse markers or pragmatic markers, others under adverbs, and yet others have dismissed them as non-words. Ameka notes however, that, they constitute a word class on their own, with distinct syntactic and semantic features. He defines interjections as “relatively conventionalized vocal gestures (or more generally linguistic gestures) which express a speaker’s mental state, action or attitude or reaction to a situation (Ameka 1992:106).” He notes that interjections do not form an integral syntactic part of the constructions with which they occur and they are also capable of occurring as utterances all by themselves. They are marked by unique phonological qualities, such as phonotactics and phonemes that are otherwise disallowed in the language. They ordinarily do not take inflections.

Gã has a number of interjections which are essential to speakers for conveying emotions and attitudes succinctly and vividly. They are usually accompanied by facial expressions and bodily gestures that serve to reinforce the emotions and cognitive states expressed by these interjections. Most interjections occur in sentence initial position, in a separate intonation unit from the following sentence. Some may occur at the end of the sentence, within the same intonational unit. All of them can occur alone as utterances. Gã interjections are marked by
special phonological characteristics. For instance, many of them consist of just one syllable consisting of a vowel, often with falling tone. No other word class has vowel-only monosyllabic words. In a few interjections there is free variation between the vowels /ɛ/ and /ã/, e.g. ɛ̃̀hɛ̃́hã́, ɛ̃̀hɛ̃́ã̀. No such free variation of vowels occurs elsewhere in the lexicon.

The vowel sequence, ue, can be found in the interjection kùè (as well as the ideophone púèŋ), but is otherwise disallowed in the language. Morphologically, interjections in Gã cannot be inflected.

A number of them will be explicated below. This is far from a comprehensive description; there are many interjections, each with several nuances of meaning. Examining them all thoroughly will be a major project. The following represents a cursory survey of the more ubiquitous interjections in the language. They also represent those that were well exemplified in the natural data available. An attempt is made at presenting all the various shades of meaning of each interjection, although this may in some cases fall short.

ê - This can occur in both sentence-initial and sentence-final position. It is one of the commonest interjections in Gã with several different uses, some of which are hard to pin down. Only a few will be explicated here. When it occurs alone as an utterance or in sentence-initial position, it indicates a variety of reactions; surprise, disbelief or doubt, confusion, worry, being impressed.
In (366), it reflects worry or concern on the part of the story-teller that a child who cannot swim has fallen into a river.

(366) \( \text{è} = \text{jè} \etawɛ̀ŋ \etawɛ̀ŋ \text{hùù fàà kò mìŋ klóbótój} \)
\( 3\text{SG} = \text{come.from up up IDEO river INDEF inside IDEO} \)

\( \text{è} \text{ gbé!ké nè!é nì lé fàà-wú-mò nè!é nì} \)
\( \text{IJ child this NMLZ know.NEG river-swim-NOM this FOC} \)

\( \text{è=yà-gbèé fàà mìŋ nèkle nè!é} \)
\( 3\text{SG.PERF = VENT-fall river inside like.this this} \)

“He came from way up and fell into the river with a splash! Ei, this child who cannot swim has fallen into a river!” [PAT:162]

In the following conversation, Kai’s “è” expresses surprise and amusement at Mr. Mensah’s (MM) directness and impoliteness in telling someone his negative feelings about them.

(367) MM: \( \text{ì=kèé lè} \)
\( 1\text{SG} = \text{say 3SG.OBJ} \)

“I said, “Him””

\( \text{è=bé nò=kó nò=kó nì} \)
\( 3\text{SG} = \text{have.NEG thing = INDEF thing = INDEF NMLZ} \)

\( \text{è=bàâ-nyé è=féé è=há !mí} \)
\( 3\text{SG} = \text{FUT-able 3SG.SBJV = do 3SG.SBJV = give 1SG.OBJ} \)

“There’s nothing that he can do for me.”

Kai: \( \text{è} \) [LAUGHTER]

IJ

“Ei!”
é can also be used to mark self-repair, or in the following example, attempted self-repair, where it is uttered immediately before the correction. In (368) Tina is narrating a story and identifies a creature tentatively as a bat. She is not quite sure if this is right and attempts a repair. She utters the interjection é to signify that she may be wrong and asks her listeners to confirm whether it is indeed a bat. Aku corrects her, saying it is an owl.

(368) Tina:  

é = nà  ápùtù--  
3SG = see  ba--  
“He saw a ba--”

é  ápùtùmpátâ  
IJ  bat  
“Ei a bat?”

nì  è = bà-gbèé  !shí  
and  3SG = VENT-fall  down  
“And he fell down.”

Aku:  àyè-lòòfòlɔ̀  
witch-bird  
“And an owl.”

é is also used to mark that the sentence that follows it is something that the speaker just realized or just remembered. In relation to this, it can serve as a sentence opener.

When é occurs at the end of a sentence, it may signal that the speaker believes that the addressee held a belief contrary to the supposition in the sentence. The interjection functions as
an alert or signal of caution, as in (369). This cautionary use is also seen in (381) and (382) below.

(369) nɔ̀ ní ò=nã̀-ã̀ á!kɛ̀--
NM NMLZ 2SG = see-HAB as
“What you are seeing as--"

ò=nã̀-ã̀ lɛ̀ á!kɛ̀ nù lóó nɔ̀=!kó=!ɛ́
2SG = see-HAB 3SG.OBJ as water or thing = INDEF-DEF
“You are seeing as water or something”

jééé nù θ
NEG water IJ
“It’s not water!”

ŋ̀shɔ̀
sea-water
“Sea-water.” [OYO:294]

θ at sentence-final position can also function as an intensifier, in addition to an expression of surprise or counter-expectation.

(370) è=dà θ
3SG = be.big IJ
“It’s really big!”

θ - This is another common interjection in everyday Gã speech, with several functions. It only occurs at sentence-initial position or as a lone utterance. In (371), it has a function similar to θ in (369), in that it marks what follows as contrary to an addressee’s statement or perceived assumption.
(371)  
Kai: è=yè  
3SG = be.located  
Canada  
still  
“Is he still in Canada?”

MM: ô é--  é=yè  
IJ 3SG 3SG = be.located  
America  
“Oh, he’s in America.”

Kai: ãà  
IJ  
“I see.”  [MM:11]

In (372) it functions as a sentence opener or marker of topic change. Sally is talking about how a man has died young, and she goes on to give information about the man’s immediate family. When she mentions one name, Kwei, Dina (who probably believes she knows Kwei), interrupts to ask if Kwei is the one who works at T.D.C. The introduction of this sub-topic is prefaced by ô. ô in Dina’s first turn is an expression of sympathy.

(372)  
Sally: è=nà-kò  
3SG = get-NEG.PERF  
fifty  
po  
“He hasn’t even turned 50.”

Dina: ô  
IJ  
“Aww”

Sally: kpàükò  
3SG.PERF = get  
é=!ná  
fifty-six  
now  
“He just turned 56.”
Dina: [ëëë]
IJ
“Really?”

Sally: [nì]  
and 3SG.PERC = VENT-die this
“And he has died.”

nò hèwɔ́ = !ọ́ è kè á-- ákú bí kwèí
that sake = TOP 3SG and Aku child Kwei
“So he and Aku’s child, Kwei”

Dina: ëhè [Kwèí]
IJ Kwei
“Yes, Kwei.”

Sally: [è=kè] lè yóò tèmá!â
3SG = take him be.located Tema-DEF
“He is with him at Tema.”

é = yè bò--
3SG.PERC = eat
“He’s spent--”

Dina: ð kwèí = !é  T.D.C è = yóò
IJ Kwei = TOP T.D.C 3SG = be.located.HAB
“Oh, is Kwei the one at T.D.C?” [DF:1]

As mentioned above, ð may also express sadness or disappointment in combination with surprise. In (373), it expresses sadness.

(373) ð á = !fééé operation = ë = !ë nì è = gbò
IJ 3PL.IMPERS = do.NEG = DEF = DEF and 3SG = die
“Oh, the operation wasn’t done before he died?” [FH:134]
It may also function as what I term a quotation opener. Here, ô is the first element uttered in a quote. It serves no obvious emotive purpose except to reiterate that what follows is a direct quote.

(374) shũ ṃ̃ =kò  é =bà-kẹ̄̃ !bó á!kē
but person = INDEF 3SG.PERF-VENT-tell 2SG.OBJ NMLZ

ô  nĩlĩ =!̂ ě  c̃ =yē  j̃ !mē
IJ thing = DEF 3SG = be.located there
“But someone has come and told you that, “Oh, the thing, it exists.”” [CH:166]

áò/āà - The equivalent of this interjection in English would be ‘aww’. It relays a speaker’s sympathy at a situation. áà, especially, must be accompanied by a facial expression expressing sorrow, as it may also express disgust or indignation when accompanied by the appropriate facial expressions. In the following excerpt, Sally is sorrowfully reporting the words of a friend who had lost a child and how the child was helpful to his mother. Dina’s áò is uttered with a sad countenance in an expression of sympathy for the tragic story. ô in the first line also expresses sadness.

(375) Sally: è =kẹ̄̃  ô  ī = bí
3SG = say  IJ 1SG = child
“She said, “Oh, my child.””
He is my first-born child.”

Dina: m̀ḿ!ḿ
Yes

Sally: nò hèwɔ́=!ò è=kwé-ɔ̀ lè
that sake=TOP 3SG=look-HAB 3SG.OBJ
“So he looks after her.”

Dina: m̀ḿ!ḿ
“Yes”

Sally: è=kwé-ɔ̀ è=màmí=!é
3SG=look-HAB 3SG=mother=DEF
He looks after his mother.

Dina: àò
Aww [FH:179]

à - This interjection relays confusion or doubt about a situation or comment (376). It is often followed by a question which seeks an answer to clarify the situation. Its use suggests that the speaker has been pondering over the confusing situation. This is seen in (377).

(376) noise kò yè hall=è=!è nò hèwɔ́=ɔ̀ nì
INDEF be.loc = DEF = DEF that sake=TOP and
è=tè shì è=yà-kwé hall=ɛ=ɛ á!ké ì àlóó
3SG=rise down 3SG=ITIV-look = DEF = DEF NMLZ IJ or
armed robbers kɔmɛ̀ ɛ-bà-tò lè gbɔ̀
some PERF-VENT-find 3SG.OBJ guest

“There was a noise in the hall so he got up to go and have a look…perhaps some armed robbers had broken in.” (Lit:…some armed robbers had come to visit him.)  

(377) Aku: à nì à=yè-ɔ̀ bàá=!á hû
IJ and 3PL.IMPERS=eat-HAB herb=DEF too
“And are the herbs too eaten?”

Yoomo: bàá=!á à=yééé
herb=DEF 3PL.IMPERS=eat.NEG
“The herbs are not eaten.”

Aku: ã̀hã́ã̀
IJ
“That’s what I thought/I figured.”  

ã̀hã́ã̀ - This interjection is used exclamatorily to relay a couple of meanings. In (377) above, it indicates that a situation that was unclear has been resolved by the addressee’s previous statement, and this resolution is in line with the speaker’s expectation. A variant of this interjection is ëhëë. It could also signify emphatic agreement or confirmation, as in English, “Precisely!”, “Exactly!”, “You got it”. This is exemplified in (378) below, where Sally had been explaining various intricate family relations.

(378) Dina: nò hèwɔ́=!ɔ́ lè=!ɛ́ ~Dr. Benson jí lè
that sake=TOP 3SG.OBJ=TOP ~Dr. Benson COP 3SG.OBJ
“So as for him, he is called ~Dr. Benson?”
Sally: ɛ̃̀hɛ̃́ɛ̃̀
IJ
“Exactly!”

[DF:210]

It could also be used to indicate that the speaker has finally come upon some information that he or she was searching for in lost memory. Related to this, is its use as a sentence opener.

ã̀ã̀ - This basically expresses acknowledgement and understanding of a statement or explanation given by the addressee. It may be followed by English, “OK”, as we see in KK’s turn in the excerpt below.

(379) Kwei: ò=bàá-!ná fée gbékè nè!è
2SG=FUT-see all evening this
“You will see it all this evening.”

because ı̃̃=nɔ̃́=!ɔ̃́--
1SG=NM=DEF
“Because mine--”

ı̃̃=nɔ̃́=!ɔ̃́  ní  ó=nà-à  àmè=!è
1SG=NM=DEF  NMLZ 2SG=see-HAB 3PL=DEF
they were 8 months nì  wò=bà-fèê
and 1PL=VENT-do
Mine that you see, they were 8 months old when we came to do it.”

Aku: [àà]
IJ
“Ok, I see”
KK: [àà] OK
IJ
“Oh ok”

éhú/éhê - This is a backchannelling device, used to assure the interlocutor that one is following the conversation and to urge them to proceed. An example is given in (380) below, as well as (372) above.

(380) Dina: bíɛ́ jí àfiê!ná
here be Afiena
“This is Afiena.”

Sally: ëhêë bíɛ́ jí àfiê!ná = ūá
IJ here COP Afiena = DEF
“Exactly, this is Afiena.”

Dina: êhê
IJ
“Yes, go on.”

Sally: nì stíì kò ká bí!ë
and street INDEF lie here
“And there’s a street here.”

kùë - This may function as a vocative, similar to “Hey”. It is considered impolite. As such, it is a fitting interjection used by speakers who want to intimidate their addressees. The sentence in (382) is a stereotypical utterance attributed to Gâs by non-Gâs. kùë is not necessarily always accompanied by ê. It may occur alone as an utterance, where it signals that the speaker is impressed with a situation. Here, the final vowel is often lengthened.
Other interjections will only be described briefly. ôhôô expresses disapproval and a sense that an action or situation went overboard. ë indicates that the speaker did not hear what the addressee said and would like for them to repeat it. It is considered impolite. It could also express shocked disapproval accompanied by a mocking attitude. ájéï is roughly equivalent to English, “ouch”, used when one is physically hurt. kpóò means ‘sorry’. êëêë is ‘yes’ with a question intonation and is used to signal a surprised reaction to new information, akin to English, “Really?!”. An example of this was seen in Dina’s second turn in (372). kái signals the speaker’s disgust or disdain.

It is hoped that this snapshot of Gã interjections and the power that they possess in communicating various crucial meanings will encourage more ambitious studies of these little words in this and other languages.

2.8 Summary
This chapter has seen the presentation and discussion of the phonological word (§2.1.2) and the grammatical word (§2.1.3) in Gã. It has been shown that in many instances they are one and
the same (§2.1.8). The various word classes and their accompanying morphology have also
been discussed. Nouns, the grammatical categories associated with them, as well as pronouns
and possession were presented in §2.3. Property concepts were the subject of §2.4. Gã was
shown to have three main grammatical types of property concepts: those that manifest as verbs
(§2.4.1), those that manifest as adjectives (§2.4.2) and those that manifest as nouns (§2.4.3).
Grammatical differences between property verbs and non-property verbs were also noted
(§2.4.1.3 and §2.4.1.4). The same was done with property nouns and regular nouns (§2.4.3.1
and §2.4.3.2). The various semantic types of adverbs pertinent to Gã were discussed in §2.5.
Finally, in §2.6 ideophones were recognized as a phonosemantic class of words with
membership in the property noun and adverb classes. Their unique phonological and morpho-
syntactic characteristics were discussed. Finally, interjections, were covered in §2.7.
Chapter 3: Verbs and simple clauses

3.0 Introduction
Verbs are words which ascribe an action or property to a noun referent. Therefore, the function of a verb is to predicate. Words belonging to other classes may also predicate e.g. adjectives, but the task of predication in many languages is to a large extent performed by verbs.

3.1 Types of verbal predicates
There are three main syntactic types of verbal predicates in Gã. These are simple verbs, serial verbs and inherent complement verbs (ICVs). Simple verbs are singleton verbs which constitute just one phonological as well as one grammatical word and which take only one inflectional marking for each relevant verbal category. Serial verbs, on the other hand, consist of two or more verbs which constitute separate grammatical words. Each verb in the series is overtly marked for a particular verbal category (although the grammatical morphemes on each verb must be semantically compatible). Although they contain multiple verbs, the verbs in a serial verb together express a unitary concept. Inherent complement verbs (ICVs) consist of two grammatical words; the first is a verb and the second is a noun which functions as a complement to the verb. Examples of these three types of verbal predicates are given in (1).
(1a) contains the simple verb, mã̀ ‘build’; (1b) contains the serial verb tsí shwìê ‘throw away (lit: push pour)’ and (1c) has the inherent complement verb, shá fòì [snatch race] ‘run’.

(1) Simple verb:

(a) \[
\begin{align*}
\text{é} & = \text{mà} & \text{tsù} \\
3\text{SG.PERF} & = \text{build} & \text{house}
\end{align*}
\]
“He has built a house.” [MM:16]

Serial verb:

(b) \[
\begin{align*}
\text{à} & = \text{yàá-} \text{tsí} & \text{nyë} = \text{jwé}!í & \text{á} = \text{!shwìê} \\
3\text{SG.IMPERS} & = \text{PROS-push} & 2\text{PL} & = \text{rubbish} & 3\text{PL.IMPERS.SBJV} & = \text{pour}
\end{align*}
\]
“Your rubbish is going to be poured away.” [LIB:20]

Inherent complement verb (ICV):

(c) \[
\begin{align*}
\text{è} & = \text{gbèé} = !\text{è} & \text{hù} & \text{shá} & \text{fòì} \\
3\text{SG} & = \text{dog} = \text{DEF too} & \text{snatch} & \text{race}
\end{align*}
\]
“His dog too ran.” [NAR:57]

The bulk of the discussion and examples in this chapter will focus on simple verbs, although the semantic generalizations with respect to tense, aspect, mood and polarity marking will hold for all the different verb types. ICVs will be dealt with specifically in §3.4 and serial verb constructions will be the topic of the whole of chapter 4.
3.2 Verb Morphology

The Gã verb word is made up of the lexical verb head and a number of clitics and inflectional affixes which encode the pronominal subject and various tense, aspect, mood and polarity values. The only obligatory element in the verb word is the verb head itself. This verb head may be preceded by a pronominal clitic, a future, progressive, subjunctive or perfect prefix, and a deictic auxiliary verb. The elements that may follow the verb head are the negative and habitual suffixes as well as the iterative/distributive suffixes.

The template in table 8 shows verbal morphemes and the order in which they appear in the verb word. There are three pre-head slots and two post-head slots. If a slot can be occupied by more than one TAMP category, then these categories are mutually exclusive for the slot in question. Also, slot 3, containing the negative subjunctive prefix ká- may occur only in the presence of the subjunctive prefix á- in slot 2. There are two deictic pre-verbs: ba- is the ventive (VENT) pre-verb and generally indicates motion towards the deictic centre while ya- is the itive (ITIV) pre-verb and indicates motion away from the deictic centre. However, see §3.2.5 for a discussion of how these auxiliaries in some contexts have lost the semantic component of motion.
Table 8: Verb template for non-imperative verb word

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<th>7</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(SUBJ clitic)</td>
<td>(subjunctive á-)</td>
<td>NEG SBJV (ká-)</td>
<td>(deictic ba-, ya-)</td>
<td>VERB</td>
<td>ITER</td>
<td>(negative -V́V̂ )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(future bàá-)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>(negative future -ŋ)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(perfect ò-)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(negative perfect -kò)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(progressive ŋ-)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(habitual -σ, -σ̂)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(negative é-)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The subject of the verb may be a pronominal proclitic which occurs as the first element in the verb word. This is seen in (2) and (3) below. In (4), the subject is a full NP (gbèéɛ̀ kɛ̀ tò́! ɛ́ ™áél ɛ́ è=yè-ɔ̀  s h ì k á)

"As for that other one, it costs a lot of money." [DT:21]

(2) nàkã̀ n̄ kòmó =!ɛ́ l̄ é ø =yè-ɔ́ shikà
that one=DEF TOP 3SG=eat-HAB money

"As for that other one, it costs a lot of money."

(3) nyè̄ gbè!kè =!ɛ́ wò =yè-tsú́ n̄ n̄ yè
yesterday evening=TOP 1PL=ITIV-work thing be.located

ŋshò =ø nàà
sea=DEF mouth

"Yesterday evening, we went to do some work at the seaside." [YH:43,20]
Each of the TAMP categories and their formal markers will now be examined in detail.

**3.2.1 Tense**

Comrie (1976:1) states that “tense relates the time of the situation referred to, to some other
time, usually the moment of speaking.” When the time of a situation is described in relation to
the time of speaking it is known as absolute tense, and when it is described in relation to some
other time it is known as relative tense (Comrie 1976:2). It is important to note that a language
can only be said to have a particular tense if it is morphologically (overtly) marked. This leads
to the categorization of languages with no morphological means of time reference as tenseless
languages. Strangely, this restriction is not imposed on aspect, and it is normal and common to
speak of periphrastic and adverbial means of realizing aspect.

Many languages of West Africa have little morphology and are classed as tenseless
languages. Dakubu (2008a:97) comes to much the same conclusion for Gã, noting that tense is
at best only marginally marked in Gã. This is true to a limited extent; although Gã indeed
makes no morphological distinction between past and present, as Dakubu (2008a:97) rightly
notes, there is such a distinction between future and non-future. Therefore Gã grammaticalizes
time reference of a situation that is slated to take place after the time of speaking but does not
do so for a situation that occurs before the time of speaking. Because of the presence of future
time marking, it cannot be designated a tenseless language. The future will be discussed in
§3.2.1.2 after a discussion on bare verbs, which are often interpreted as referring to past events.

3.2.1.1 The temporal and aspectual reference of bare verbs
As previously mentioned, a verb in Gã may occur without any affixes, but it must have a full
NP subject or a clitic subject. In the absence of temporal adverbials, most bare verbs are given
a past interpretation, but some may also have a habitual or progressive interpretation. In terms
of the TAMP interpretation of Gã bare verbs, three groups of verbs can be recognized:

Group A: Verbs that always receive a past interpretation in their bare forms.

Group B: Verbs that receive either a past or progressive interpretation depending on context

Group C: Verbs that always receive a habitual aspectual interpretation

Each group will be looked at in detail below:

Group A

Verbs in this group are assigned only past time reference when they occur in their bare forms.

This group consists of all dynamic verbs, be they durative (Vendler’s (1957) Activity and
Accomplishment verbs), or punctual/instantaneous (Achievement verbs). Examples are  \( \text{ye} \) ‘eat’,
nà ‘see’, yì ‘beat’, kwé ‘look’, ñmɔ́ ‘laugh’. In sentences (5)-(8), the past interpretation of the bare verbs is evident in the English translation.

(5) ̀shí nyè màà = à mì ñ̀ áfì-I ̀tè
1SG=leave 2PL country = DEF inside year-PL three
“I left your country three years ago.” [DT:15;42]

(6) gbé!kɛ̃́-nũ̀ṹ=ɛ̃̀ fùá lè
child-male=DEF hug 3SG.OBJ
“The boy hugged him.” [BOR:17]

(7) nò hèwɔ́ = !ɔ́ ní ñ̀ me = nà bɔ́nĩ́ è = fè-ɔ̀
that sake=TOP when 3PL=see how 3SG=do-HAB
lè = !è nòŋŋ̃̃
3SG.OBJ=DEF immediately
“So immediately they saw how it was affecting him…” [FH:121]

(8) è=yóó lmi̊
3SG=recognise me
“She recognised me” [DF:140]

Group B

These verbs may be interpreted as past or progressive depending on context. They comprise two main semantic types of verbs: stative verbs which are durative, and grooming verbs.

Examples of such durative, stative verbs are stance verbs such as dã̀mɔ́ ‘stand’, ká ‘lie’, tá (̀shí) ‘sit (down)’ and jwélé ‘be.located (of several relatively small items)’. Examples of
grooming verbs are *wò* ‘wear (clothes, shoes, jewelry)’, *bú* ‘wear (hat, glasses or cloth)’ and *ŋmɔ̀* ‘wear (watch)’.

In bare form, group B verbs indicate either a situation that unfolded in the past (past time reference) or is ongoing in the past or present (progressive aspect). Examples (9a) and (9b) provide a good contrast for this phenomenon. In (9a), the presence of the adverbial *bǐānɛ̃́* ‘now’ is proof that the posture verb, *kã́* ‘lie’ refers to an event that is ongoing at the moment of speaking. In (9b) the same verb refers to a past event as is evidenced from the fact that it is the second of a chain of three successive events, the other two of which also have past time reference. Indeed, the first event is coded by *tèɛ̀*, the past of *yà* ‘go’ and this suppletive verb is the only overt indicator of past time in Gã. No other verb has overt past tense marking.

(9a)  hèwɔ́ = !ɔ́ bíànnɛ́ = !ɛ̃́ ɔ̀blà-nùù = !ɛ̃́ kã́ shɔ̃kɔ̀!ŋ́  
“So now the young man is lying on the ground.”  

(9b)  ní  âmɛ̀ = tèɛ̀ ní  âmɛ̀ = kã́ !shì ní  âmɛ̀ = wɔ́ !lɛ́  
“When they went and lay down and slept...”  

In (10), another posture verb is unmarked but is interpreted as past. One clue to this interpretation is that it occurs as the second verb in a serial construction where the first verb is interpreted as past; in serial verb constructions the verbs must have the same temporal value.
Recall also that all dynamic verbs have past time interpretation in their unmarked forms.

Therefore the first verb, wó ‘carry’ must be predicating a past event.

(10) nì è = wó gbèé = è è = tā è = k̄ŋ̀ nò
and 3SG = carry dog = DEF 3SG = sit 3SG = shoulder top
“And he carried the dog and sat him on his shoulder.” [MA:81]

A similar scenario is seen in (11) where wó ‘wear’ is the predicate in the second of two conjoined clauses. Since the verb in the first clause has past meaning, it is strong indication that wó ‘wear’ has the same time reference.

(11) è=bà-tè shì nì è = wó è = shúú = !ɛ
3SG = VENT-rise down and 3SG = wear 3SG = shoes = DEF
“He got up and wore his shoes.” [TIN:12]

In theory, these unmarked stance and adornment verbs should be ambiguous when it comes to time reference, but as the examples show, in actual talk there is hardly any confusion because the prior and successive talk, time adverbials and the discourse situation always guide the addressee to the speaker’s intended meaning.

Group C

These verbs are always given a default habitual interpretation in their bare forms. This group contains just two verbs, lè ‘know’ and sùmɔ̃̀ ‘love, like’

(12) jééé fɛ̃́ɛ̃́ wò = lè gbèí = !ɛ
NEG all 1PL = know name = DEF
“It is not all of them whose names we know.” [OYO:245]
The tendency for certain verbs to be given particular temporal meanings in their bare form results from the lexical semantics and lexical aspect of those verbs and the interaction of this with the language’s available resources for temporal expression. For instance, Gã generally codes present time by means of the progressive prefix ŋ-. Without the presence of time adverbials coding a time other than the moment of speaking, the progressive prefix will impart present time meaning. This prefix may be attached to dynamic verbs which are durative i.e. Activities (jò ‘dance’, yè ‘eat’, ŋmã̀ ‘write’) and Accomplishments (mà (tsũ̀) ‘build (house)’).

The difference between Activities and Accomplishments is that the former is atelic while the latter is telic (Smith 1999:481). Below are some sentences with dynamic, durative verbs marked for the progressive.

(13) gbé!ké-bí!í=!é  čkô-mê!í=!é  âmê=sùmɔ̃̀  ní  âmê=yà
child-PL = DEF some-PL = DEF 3PL = like NMLZ 3PL.SBJV = go

âtê=yà-ná
3PL.SBJV=ITIV-see
“Some of the children, they like to go and see it.” [OYO:89]

(14) wɔ̀=ŋ̀-yà
1PL=PROG-go
“We are going.” [FH:159]
(15) ámë=ŋ-kwë nò ni yà-à nò yè
3PL=PROG-watch NM NMLZ go-HAB top be.located
ŋwèŋ = !è
up = DEF

“They are watching what is going on up there.” [FL:43]

Because there is an overt means of expressing present time for these types of verbs, when they occur in bare form, the only interpretation left to be assigned is past (recall that future is also marked morphologically).

Achievement verbs are dynamic and telic but unlike Activity and Accomplishment verbs, they are punctual/instantaneous, e.g. jwà (plëtë) ‘break (glass)’, shè ‘reach, arrive’, yóó ‘recognise’. Use of a progressive with these verbs is semantically odd since the actions coded by them take up so little time that one cannot speak of them as ongoing or in progress. As a result they cannot occur with the progressive morpheme, hence cannot be assigned present time reference. This leaves past time as the only viable temporal interpretation for such verbs in their bare form.

Stative verbs are durative, but their co-occurrence with the progressive marker does not impart present time meaning as it does with dynamic verbs. Rather it gives an inchoative meaning; a change into the state in question and therefore the creation of a brief period of dynamic-ness. As Smith (1999:482) notes, the beginnings and endings of states are dynamic because they involve changes of state. Examples are given in (16) and (17).
Sentences like (16) and (17) are uncommon in the spoken language but nonetheless are an option in those special cases when a speaker may want to emphasize that a subject is about to assume a particular state. Their existence however, means that for stative verbs, the progressive marker is not a candidate for imparting present time semantics. Therefore, the unmarked form may take on a present or past meaning depending on context.

Verbs that take on habitual meaning in their bare form, e.g. lè ‘know’, sùmɔ̃̀ ‘like, love’ are also stative verbs but the difference between them and the stance and adornment/grooming statives discussed above is that while the latter class of verbs can in certain circumstances have clearly demarcated beginning and end points and therefore become dynamic, the former cannot. So while use of the progressive with stance and adornment verbs is acceptable and yields inchoative semantics, this is not possible with lè ‘know’ and sùmɔ̃̀ ‘love’. These two verbs are truly static and so there is no change of state to be grammaticalized. Sentences such as (18) below with the progressive are ungrammatical:

(16) èè = ká!shí
3SG.PROG = lie down
“She is in the process of lying down/She is about to lie down.”

(17) nùúmó = è útil fáí
old.man = DEF PROG-wear hat
“The old man is putting on a hat/The old man is about to put on a hat.”
In addition, if a state of affairs pertains unbounded by time, then it takes on a generic sense and can be interpreted as habitual.

3.2.1.2 Future bàá-

In analyzing the morpheme bàá- as future time marker, I differ from Dakubu (2008a:108), who names the future marker as àá- and notes that it is primarily a modal rather than a tense category. She writes that when unqualified by the spatial deictic markers ba- ‘ventive’ and ya- ‘itive’, the future marker, àá- is not interpreted as a simple future but as a conditional or subjunctive. Translations of the following examples from Dakubu (2008a:108) exemplifying the use of àá- suggest that a future meaning is one of several possibilities. Glosses are mine.

(19) a. gbekɛbii lɛ àá-bí
   children DEF FUT-ask
   “The children might/would/will ask”

   b. èé = bí
   3SG.FUT = ask
   “S/he will ask (of his/her own free will)”

Dakubu (2008a:118) acknowledges that most speakers translate verbs marked by bàá- as having future temporal deixis but notes that this form is simply a combination of the deictic (ventive) marker ba- with the future prefix àá-. Another future marker formed this way is yàá- which
combines the deictic (itive) marker *ya-* with *àá-. Dakubu refers to *bàá- and yàá- as deictic futures. The auxiliaries generally indicate movement towards (*ba-*) or away from (*ya-*) the deictic centre. They are homophonous with the verbs *bà* ‘come’ and *yà* ‘go’. Examples (20) - (22) show future use of the prefix *bàá-. In these examples, it marks the action coded by the verb as slated to occur subsequent to the moment of speech. As such it represents a prediction of a particular state of affairs by the speaker.

(20) shì ké è=lé kwráá bé è=bàá-ìkásé
but if 3SG=know.NEG even QP 3SG=FUT-learn
“But even if she doesn’t know she will learn, won’t she.” [DT: 4;20]

(21) bè kò bàá-!shé ké ní è=sèè bàá-!fó
time INDEF FUT-reach surely NMLZ 3SG=back FUT-cut
nì núj!tsɔ̀=ò bàá-wò è=hīë nyā́m
and lord=DEF FUT-put 3SG=face glory
“There will surely come a time when it will end and the Lord will show his glory.” [CH:428]

(22) è=bàá-!mé
3SG=FUT-wait
“She will wait.” [YM:204]

(23) ké wò=ŋ-yá=ǃá má=bá wɔ̀=tsɔ́ jé!jí
when 1PL=PROG-go=DEF 1SG.FUT=give 1PL.SBJV=pass there
“When we are going, I will let us pass by there” [FH:10]

Dakubu’s account of the etymology of *bàá- is most likely accurate. It is evidenced in the first singular future proclitic, which is *má*, presumably *m̀é+àá*, with the deletion of all
vowels but the last one. This is seen in (23). But one wonders why àá- should be recognized as the future marker when by itself it does not mark future and can only do so when accompanied by spatial deictic pre-verb auxiliaries, especially ventive ba-. It is simpler to analyse bàá- as one indivisible morpheme. One reason for this approach is that the morphological components and accompanying semantics of bàá- are not transparent to speakers. Although bàá- contains the ventive pre-verb auxiliary, ba-, it does not express ventive spatial deixis or any kind of motion, physical or metaphorical. In (20) for example, the use of bàá- does not imply any motion in association with the subject’s learning. The same can be said for (22) and especially (21), where the first two subjects, bè kò ‘a time’ and èsèè ‘it’s back’ are inanimate and incapable of motion. Further proof that the deictic morpheme in bàá- does not contribute to the meaning of the morpheme comes from the fact that bàá- can co-occur with ya-, the itive prefix. Since these two prefixes ba- and ya- have opposite meanings, it should not be possible to have one verb qualified by both. But this is a regular occurrence in the language. (24a) provides one such example. (24b) shows that bàá- can also co-occur with the full, independent verb yà ‘go’.

(24a) à=bàá-lyá-mìì mìì
3PL.IMPERS=FUT-ITIV-squeeze 1SG.OBJ
“I will be groped” (Lit: “They will go and squeeze me”) [LIB: 1,57]

(24b) à=kè nyè fèè bàá-lyá
3PL.IMPERS=take 2PL all FUT-go
“All of you will be taken away.” [OYO:88]
Another reason why I maintain bàá- as the future marker and not àá- is for the simple reason that àá- appears to have fallen out of use. In my entire corpus, there were just four tokens of àá-; three were uttered by the same speaker. In three instances it co-occurred with the epistemic adverb, àléénɔ́ ‘perhaps (lit: ‘one does not know thing’)’ to indicate uncertainty over whether the event coded by the verb will come to fruition. Two of those sentences are given in (25) and (26). When àá- is preceded by the third singular pronoun, the pronoun is lengthened, the segments of àá- are deleted and only its tones remain and are borne by the lengthened pronominal vowel, as in (25).

(25) ǹ̀ è = yà-kòò tsò klóò!klóò à!ké àléénɔ́
and 3SG = ITIV-climb tree another NMLZ perhaps

cé = ǹ̀  kòkòdè!né = è ye tsò = è nó ló
3SG.FUT = see frog = DEF be.located tree = DEF top QP
“And he climbed another tree so that perhaps he would see the frog on the tree.” [NAR:53]

(26) ǹ̀ è = kèè gbèè = !è à!ké gbèè = !è á!fèè diòò
and 3SG = tell dog = DEF NMLZ dog = DEF SBJV-do quiet

à!ké àléénɔ́ kòkòdè!né = è àá-!hè jèmè ló
NMLZ perhaps frog = DEF FUT-be.located there QP
“And he told the dog that the dog should be quiet, that perhaps the frog would be there.” [NAR:78]

It is also very rare for àá- to be used in everyday speech, even in formal contexts such as sermons. Its only niche remains the Gã Bible, where it marks future time (27a) on par with
modern Gã bàá-. It was also used once in my corpus, by a preacher giving a sermon (27b).

Based on all this evidence, bàá- should be viewed as one morpheme.

(27a) yêhôwà  ámb-íbú  ó=!hë  kë-ljë  éfëŋ  féë  mëì
    Jehovah   FUT-protect  2SG=body  take-come.from  evil  all  inside

    ëëë = !bú
    3SG.FUT-protect  2SG=life  body  well

    “Jehovah will protect you from all evil. He will preserve your life.”
    [BSG:762; glosses and tones mine]

(27b) shì  nyëmò  jí  mò  ñì  këë  !wò  álìkë
    but  God  COP  NM  NMLZ  tell  1PL  NMLZ

    nyë = bí-à
    2PL.SBJV  ask-IMP.PL

    ñì  ámb = há
    3PL.IMPERS.FUT  give  2PL

    “But God is the one who said that you should ask and you will be given.”  [CH:286]

3.2.1.3 Modal uses of bàá-

I have so far refrained from referring to bàá- as a future tense marker, although all the examples given above would suggest that it is precisely that. This is because bàá- can be used in some very limited past time situations where it indexes epistemic modality. This occurs when the discourse setting is a hypothetical one. Such hypothetical worlds are often indicated by grammatical event nominalizations marked by álê (a.k.a complement clauses) and lò, the question particle (QP). It may also be indexed by conditional adverbials with past time reference. As such, it is possible for bàá- to occur in discourses that are set in the past as long as the action modified by bàá- is a hypothetical or unrealized one. The use of bàá- in these
contexts does not imply speaker prediction nor does it mark future time in relation to speech time. Rather, it indicates that the situation is only a potential one and as potential situations go, the speaker cannot be definite that it will be actualized. It is the existence of this modal component of bàá- that allows it to be used in hypothetical past contexts. We see this in (28), where the sentence occurs with past time reference and yet one of its verbs is marked by bàá-. It is inconsequential that the verb marked by bàá- is in fact an English verb that is produced as a result of codeswitching, a common phenomenon among many educated Gã speakers. The significance of this marking is that a true future tense morpheme would not be able to occur with past time reference. Therefore bàá- in (28) must be performing some other function and not future tense. I propose that it functions modally to index uncertainty about the realization of the action coded by the verb it modifies. This uncertainty is further evidenced by the lexical epistemicity of the conative verb, bɔ̀ mɔ̃́dẽ́ŋ́ ‘try’ as well as the nominalizer á!kɛ́, which may be translated, depending on the discourse context, as ‘that’ or ‘whether’. In (29), it is best translated as ‘whether’ because of the presence of the question particle, ló which imparts a modal sense of uncertainty.
(28) nì  è = yè  four days  kè  nìlì  nì  àà = bò  
and  3SG = eat  and  thing  NMLZ  3PL.PROG = create

mǒdéŋ  á!ké  à = bàá - revive  ìè  
strength  NMLZ  3PL.IMPERS = FUT - revive  3SG.OBJ

“And he spent four days etc. during which they were trying to revive him.” [FH:139]

(29) nò  mìŋ = !è  è  ìè = fî!lí  sárnfèlè = è  mìŋ  sìŋŋì  
that  inside = TOP  3SG.PROG = peep  window = DEF  inside  constantly

á!ké  mò = kò  bàá - pûè  ló  
NMLZ  person = INDEF  FUT - emerge  QP

“At that time, she was constantly peeping out of the window, (to see) whether anybody would appear or not.”

Another context which licenses the use of bàá - in past time is conditionals and counterfactuals

(30). This is consonant with the use of bàá - in hypothetical situations.

(30) è = yì  mì  kúlè  ì = pàpá  hú  bàá - yì  lè  
3SG = beat  1SG.OBJ  CTF  1SG = father too  FUT - beat  3SG.OBJ

“If he had beaten me, my father would also have beaten him.”

Example (31) demonstrates that bàá - cannot be used in non-hypothetical past contexts. The last sentence in (31) is odd-sounding. This is because neither the future nor modal sense of bàá - can be ascribed to the proposition. It cannot be interpreted as future because the discourse is temporally located in the past and it cannot be interpreted as an epistemic modal because the discourse context is an actual one, rather than a hypothetical one.
(31)  wɔ = shii  óyá  éljáá!ké  nò  mǐŋ = !é  wɔ = ṣ-ì-mè
1PL = leave.NEG  early  because  that  inside = TOP 1PL = PROG-wait
màà  mum

?kpàákóò  nò  mǐŋ = !é  è = bàá-lyé  ní!í
now  that  inside = TOP 3SG = FUT-eat  thing
“We did not leave early because we were waiting for mum. She was just then going to
eat.”

The second line in (31) is best rendered with the prospective “future” marker, yàá- (§3.2.2.1):

(32)  kpàákóò  nò  mǐŋ = !é  è = yàá-lyé  ní!í
now  that  inside = TOP 3SG = PROS-eat  thing
“She was just then going to eat.”

Alternatively, it could be expressed with a nominalized purpose construction which functions as
the object of bà ‘come’. This construction is often utilized to express prospective actions.

(33)  kpàákóò  nò  mǐŋ = !é  èè = bà  ní
now  that  inside = TOP 3SG.PROG = come  NMLZ
è = bàá-lyé  ní!í
3SG.SBJV = VENT.SBJV-eat  thing
“She was just then about to eat.” (Lit: “She was just then coming to come and eat.”)

Clear-cut cases of modal-only use of bàá- are restricted to past time discourses
involving conditionals and nominalizations marked by ál/ké. In many of these instances there
are additional markers of epistemicity. This suggests that the modal meaning of bàá- is
secondary to the future referential function, which is possible in all other construction types. It
appears then, that bàá- is more tense-like than modal-like in semantics. Its functions of future
time reference and uncertain modality have in common the semantics of irrealis situations, where the speaker imagines a possible situation and makes a claim about it. The question of whether a particular marker encodes future tense or modality or both has proven to be a contentious one. Some, like Palmer (1974), argue that the English future will is a modal category and that the time reference function is a result of the hypothetical nature of the modal, while Wekker (1976) argues for the reverse; that the uncertainty of future situations is what conditions the modal sense of will. Comrie (1985:44) notes that “it is possible to have future time reference which is not necessarily modal”. In Gã, it is relatively clear that future reference is the primary function of bàá-, its modal use being confined to specific constructions and discourse times. It appears, then, to be on its way to becoming a fully-fledged future tense morpheme.

3.2.1.4 Future and modal àá-
The archaic future marker àá- is on rare occasions used in current speech where it always indexes an epistemic meaning of uncertainty. One crucial difference between the modal functions of bàá- and àá- lies in the speaker’s degree of confidence in the actualization of the situation. While àá- indicates a lower degree of certainty about the realization of the event, bàá- reflects a much higher degree of certainty on the part of the speaker that the event will indeed come to fruition. Although, I maintain that àá- is not a future marker, it does have some
connotation of future time which results from its irrealis semantics; the same way that the English modal auxiliary, *might* connotes a future event. However, in present-day Gà, it is *bàá-* which does the job of indexing future time.

Givón (2001a:308) observes that epistemic senses rise diachronically out of deontic ones. Therefore, a form that expresses intention will over time begin to express uncertainty. This may be the case with *àá-*. It originally may have marked future time and intention and through semantic bleaching lost the temporal deictic and intent component to become the epistemic marker that it is today. Even so, it is rarely used in an epistemic function, with speakers preferring to use adverbials instead, together with *bàá-*. An example of this is given in (34).

(34) àlóó hà ní wó=kwé nó ní yóó tsó
    or give NMLZ 1PL.SBJV=look NM NMLZ be.located.HAB tree
    nêê sèè ál'ké álèéenó wó=bàá-nâ wā-mɔ̃́ kɔ
    this back NMLZ perhaps 1PL=FUT-receive help-NOM INDEF
    kè-jè jéŋ̃́ lɔ̃̃
    take-come.from there QP
    “Or let’s see what is behind this tree. Perhaps we will receive some help from there.”
    [PAT: 183]

It must be stressed that *bàá-* is not a recently-adopted marker of future time. It appears to have co-existed with *àá-* for some time, before supplanting it. There are a few instances of
its use as a future marker in Zimmerman (1858:185, 190, 195, 199). Indeed it appears more
frequently there than àá- and Zimmerman (1858:2) considered àá- to be the contracted form of
bàá-. By the time the Bible was being translated into Gã in 1971, scholars on that project
translated future tense with àá- and the same was done with the latest edition in 2006.
Interestingly, in the foreword to the 2006 edition, bàá- is the future marker of choice.
According to Dakubu (n.d), one of the earliest writings on Gã, Protten (1764) had only àá- as
future. Protten translated ‘you will come’ into Gã as o-va ba where orthographic v represented
[w].

Without more historical sources, it is mere guesswork to attempt to trace the
development of these two prefixes through time. It is fair to conclude however, that in Gã as
presently spoken, the future marker is bàá-. àá- as a future marker has been fossilized in old
written works such as the Gã Bible. It may also be used by people in formal speech situations.
Few vestiges of its future sense remain in casually spoken Gã, where it is used epistemically to
index speaker uncertainty about a proposition.

3.2.2 Aspect
Comrie’s (1976:3) well-known definition of aspect is that aspect refers to the “different ways
of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation.” The main distinction between
aspectual categories is that between perfective aspect and imperfective aspect. According to
Dahl (1985:78) “a perfective verb will typically denote a single event, viewed as an unanalysed whole, with a well-defined result or end-state, located in the past.” An imperfective verb, on the other hand, will pay attention to the internal temporal phases of the situation. One important divide between the traditional, historical treatment of tense and aspect is that while a language can only be said to have a particular tense if it is morphologically marked, no such restriction is in place for aspect. Therefore, even if a particular aspectual category is not grammaticalised in a language, one can speak of the language exhibiting that aspectual “meaning”.

With that being said, there is no special marker for perfective and therefore no perfective grammatical category in Gã. Perfective meaning is inherent in bare verbs that have past time reference. Perfectivity is therefore not an especially relevant category in the grammar of Gã and so merits no further discussion.

The imperfective aspect in Gã, on the other hand, finds representation in the progressive and habitual aspects. These will be discussed below. But first, let us examine the prospective aspect, because it is very closely related to the future marker bàá- discussed in the previous section.

3.2.2.1 Prospective yàá-
This prefix is capable of functioning in a similar fashion to the future marker bàá-, by marking an action as scheduled to take place after the moment of speaking. This has led some (e.g.
Dakubu 2008a) to label it a deictic future marker. However, its reference time is not restricted
to the moment of speech; it is capable of occurring in past situations as well. Its main function
is to mark that the relevant situation is imminent. One could thus say that yàá- expresses
prospective meaning, which is the term Comrie (1976:64) uses for forms that express
“imminent futurity”. As such, the prospective links a present state with a future action. The
future interpretation is a side-effect of this focus on an impending action i.e. something which
has not happened yet.

yàá- is grammaticalized from the verb ya ‘go’, so in many contexts, it implies
movement on the part of the subject, away from some deictic centre i.e. itive motion. Some
examples are given in (35)-(37).

(35) è=kèé  !mí  á!ké é=fèé è=yìŋ  á!ké
3SG=say 1SG.OBJ NMLZ 3SG.PERF=do 3SG=mind NMLZ
è=yàá-hé wò-jī=è yè è=dèŋ
3SG=PROS-get paper-PL=DEF be.located 3SG=hand
“She told me that she’s made up her mind that she’s going to take the papers from
him.” [DT:21;50]

(36) gbé!ké-nùù fi!óó yè piá=à mıŋ nì jèŋ ć-nà
child-male little be.located forest=DEF inside and world PERF-see
è=yàá-ká !shī  śī  é=!wọ
3SG=PROS-lie down and 3SG.SBJV = sleep
“The little boy is in the forest and it’s dark. He is going to lie down and sleep.”
[AKU:1]
(37)  ké ́ à=yàá-tsí   á = shwíé = !é    m̀
when 3PL.IMPERS = PROS-push 3PL.IMPERS.SBJV = pour = DEF person

ní ́ télé=!ó   è = yí-ó   è = ǹ
NMLZ carry.on.head-HAB 3SG = pass-HAB 3SG = top
“When they are going to throw it away the one who carries (it) becomes possessed (by a spirit).” [YM:192]

The question of where the deictic centre is is a tricky one. It appears to be a conceptual space or environment in which both the speaker and the subject or agent of the clause are situated. This space need not coincide with the actual physical space that the speaker and agent occupy since they may be in two totally different locations (as the case may be if they are talking on the phone). For example, when the speakers utter the sentences in (35) to (37), they indicate that the respective subjects/agents will move away from their current locations in order to carry out their respective actions. My reason for postulating that the speaker and the agent share the same conceptual space is that yàá- cannot be used when the speaker is predicating an action that will affect the speaker or addressee (the first person or second person). In other words, yàá- may not qualify a verb when it is the speaker (38c) or addressee (38a), (38b) that is the object or patient of the verb. This is true whether the agent is a third person (38a), or the speaker himself i.e. first person (38b). These sentences are not acceptable because in such
pragmatic contexts, the speaker and addressee share the same physical space\(^9\) and so it is ungrammatical for the speaker to use a deictic morpheme which indexes movement away from that space if indeed the endpoint of the action (the patient) is confined to that same location. If the deictic centre was just the agent alone or speaker alone, it would be very difficult to explain the ungrammaticality of (38). In these instances, the future marker \(baá\)- is preferred (39a), (39b). These examples show that in addition to its future time semantics, \(yaá\)- still has traces of its original motional sense and is not merely a future marker.

(38a) *òkó \(yaá-í\) bö
oko PROS-beat 2SG.OBJ
“Oko is going to beat you.”

(38b) .startTime \(yá-í\) bö
1SG=PROS-beat 2SG.OBJ
“I’m going to beat you.”

(38c) *òkó \(yaá-í\) mì
Oko PROS-beat 1SG.OBJ
“Oko is going to beat me.”

(39a) òkó \(baá-í\) bö
oko FUT-beat 2SG.OBJ
“Oko will beat you.”

\(^9\) Barring special discourse contexts such as phone conversations and letters, an exchange in which the subject is first person and the object is second person takes place in one and the same location.

\(^{10}\) When the prospective marker occurs with the first singular pronoun, the first vowel of the prospective marker is elided.
There are also contexts in which the use of yàá- expresses no sense of physical motion on the part of the subject. This is especially obvious when the subject is inanimate, as in (40a). But even with animate subjects, in some contexts a motional interpretation is unsuitable (40b).

(40a) plë!tè=è yàá-gbéé !shí
plate=DEF PROS-fall down
“The plate is going to fall down.”

(40b) ë=ŋà ní è=ná ní è=kè lè
3SG=wife NMLZ 3SG=get NMLZ 3SG=take 3SG.OBJ
yàá-fɔ́ è=first born three
PROS-give.birth 3SG=
“His wife whom he had gotten whom he was going to have his first born (child) with, (they had) triplets.” [OYO:162]

3.2.2.1 Differences between future báá- and prospective yàá-
One major difference between báá- and yàá- is that events marked by yàá- are sensed to be more immediate than those marked by báá-. In the examples seen so far, the use of yàá- gives a sense of immediacy to the action that is missing when báá- is used. The determination of temporal proximity of the event marked by yàá- is relative. The event need not happen immediately. The speaker may employ this marker as long as she wishes to communicate that the action is imminent. For instance, in (35), it will be a couple of weeks before the person...
referred to gets the opportunity to reclaim her documents. In (36), replacing \( yàá \) with \( bàá \) will result in an odd proposition when considered in light of the previous propositions. The speaker is narrating a story by first setting the scene. After describing the scene she predicates the first action about to be taken by the protagonist. \( bàá \) is less appropriate for this predication because it is vague as to when in the future the action will take place, whereas \( yàá \) is more specific as to the immediacy of the action. The use of \( yàá \) is more consonant with the sequentiality of events characteristic of narratives, because \( yàá \) specifically tells the addressee that the action is temporally proximal to the preceding action in the sense that there is no intervening action.

Consider (41a) and (41b), where the first conjunct consists of a proposition involving a future action. The second conjunct then asserts that there is yet another future time action that will precede that predicated in the first conjunct. The sentence with \( bàá \) in the first conjunct (41a) is appropriate, but not so much the sentence with \( yàá \) in the first conjunct (41b). Because \( bàá \) refers simply to any future time, its modification of \( yè \) ‘eat’ implies that Kojo’s eating may occur in the near or distant future and so it is possible to have other events preceding the eating. This is the case for (41a). However, since \( yàá \) connotes an impending or more immediate event it is odd to assert a proposition qualified by \( yàá \) and then assert that another event will precede it, as (41b) and to some extent, (41c) do.
(41a) kòjó bàá-lyé ní!í shì ë = bàá-jù è = hè dáŋ
kojo FUT-eat thing but 3SG = FUT-bathe 3SG = body before
“Kojo will eat but he’ll take a bath before that.”

(41b) ?kòjó yàá-lyé ní!í shì ë = bàá-jù è = hè dáŋ
kojo FUT-eat thing but 3SG = FUT-bathe 3SG = body before
“Kojo is going to eat but he’ll take a bath before that.”

(41c) ?kòjó yàá-lyé ní!í shì ë = yàá-jù è = hè dáŋ
kojo FUT-eat thing but 3SG = FUT-bathe 3SG = body before
“Kojo is going to eat but he’s going to take a bath before that.”

(41d) is acceptable since the event marked by yàá- is preceded by that marked by bàá-.

(41d) kòjó bàá-lyé ní!í shì ë = yàá-jù è = hè dáŋ
kojo FUT-eat thing but 3SG = FUT-bathe 3SG = body before
“Kojo will eat but he’s going to take a bath before that.”

Related to this sense of immediacy associated with yàá- is that of present relevance.

This is a component of the function of future markers in other languages that have been grammaticalized from the word for ‘go’ and is described at length for the English be going to future in Haegeman (1989). The prospective future marker yàá-, unlike bàá-, marks an event that is in some way relevant to the current situation or context. For example, if I live with my sister (Aku), and Aku’s friend (Oko) comes by to visit her I could utter (42a) after the necessary greetings, to explain Aku’s whereabouts. I would not utter (42b) because it is pragmatically inappropriate. (42a) is appropriate because yàá- indicates that the action or event it qualifies is relevant to the present circumstances; that the event will take place within a time
frame that is pertinent to the prevailing circumstances. (42a) is relevant to Oko because it signals that there will be a delay before the visit can commence. (42b), on the other hand, only notes that Aku will take a bath sometime in the future. It may be in a few minutes or the following day. This proposition is not relevant to the present circumstances because its time reference is too vague to be relevant to Oko and his visit; it does not give him enough information about the time of Aku’s bath to decide whether and how it will affect his visit.

(42a) ákú ṣàá-ję è = hè
Aku FUT-bathe 3SG = body
“Aku is going to take a bath.”

(42b) ákú bàá-ję è = hè
Aku FUT-bathe 3SG = body
“Aku will take a bath.”

Yet another difference between bàá- and yàá- is that only the latter can be used when talking about situations that are set in the past; what is sometimes called “the future in the past”. This makes it the preferred future marker for narratives, for instance. Examples are given in (43)-(45).

(43) nì gbì kò gbékè ní à = yàá-ká
and day INDEF evening NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS = PROS-lie
!shí = !é
down = DEF
“And one evening, when they were going to sleep…” [PAT:6]
“His son…he too he was going to have some (=a baby)…he too had three (babies i.e. triplets).” [OYO:197]

“And they started walking in order to search for the frog” [DEB:30]  
(Lit: “They started walking in order that they were going to search for the frog.”)

\( yàá \)- cannot occur with the independent verbs \( yà \) ‘go’ or \( bà \) ‘come’ (46). Only \( bàá \)- can be used with these verbs for future reference (47).

\begin{align*}
\text{(46a)} & \quad ë=yàá-\text{-lyá} \\
& \quad 3\text{SG}=\text{FUT-go} \\
& \quad \text{“He is going to go.”}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
\text{(46b)} & \quad ë=yàá-\text{-lbá} \\
& \quad 3\text{SG}=\text{FUT-come} \\
& \quad \text{“He is going to come.”}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
\text{(47a)} & \quad ë=\text{bàá-lyá} \\
& \quad 3\text{SG}=\text{FUT-go} \\
& \quad \text{“He will go.”}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
\text{(47b)} & \quad ë=\text{bàá-lbá} \\
& \quad 3\text{SG}=\text{FUT-come} \\
& \quad \text{“He will come.”}
\end{align*}

This indicates that \( yàá \)- has not proceeded as far down the grammaticalization cline as \( bàá \)-, which can co-occur with both deictic verbs. \( yàá \)- retains enough of its spatial semantic meaning...
to render co-occurrence with ̀yá ‘go’ unnecessary and co-occurrence with bà ‘come’ a
contradiction, hence their ungrammaticality.

Also, while bàá- can occur with any kind of verb, yàá- cannot occur with stative verbs
and achievement verbs. (48a) and (49a) show that use of yàá- with stative verbs is
ungrammatical, unlike (48b) and (49b) where the same verbs can occur with bàá-.

(48a) *tátálé=ɛ ̀ yàá-ŋɔ̃́ɔ̃́  t s ɔ ̃́
food.type= DEF PROS-be.sweet too.much
“The tatale is going to be too sweet.”

(48b) tátálé=ɛ ̀ bàá-ŋɔ̃́ɔ̃́  t s ɔ ̃́
food.type= DEF FUT-be.sweet too.much
“The tatale will be too sweet.” (If for example, you put too much sugar in it.)

(49a) *gbé!kɛ̃́=ɛ̃̀ yàá-!kɛ́
child=DEF PROS-be.tall
“The child is going to be tall.”

(49b) gbé!kɛ̃́=ɛ̃̀ bàá-!kɛ́
child=DEF FUT-be.tall
“The child will become tall.”

The same pattern of acceptability obtains for achievement verbs in (50) and (51). The verbs shè
‘reach’ and yóó ‘recognize’ cannot occur with yàá- but can occur with bàá-.

(50a) *è=yàá-!shè̃̀
3SG=PROS-reach house soon
“She’s going to reach home soon.”
This may be because while the main purpose of bàá- is to make a prediction about a future state of affairs (which could involve any type of situation, be it state or event) without any focus on a particular phase of the situation, yàá- focuses the addressee’s attention on an impending situation and thus puts emphasis on the beginning phase of the situation. This situation must then have a beginning or starting point. This occupation with the inception of a situation means that only dynamic events can be qualified by yàá-, because such events consist of different heterogenous stages. For example, cooking might involve first cutting up vegetables, heating up oil in a pan and then pouring in the vegetables. States on the other hand, have no internal stages, no beginning or end points. Smith (1997:32) notes that states “consist of an undifferentiated period without internal structure” and that a state holds uniformly for an indefinite period of time unless an external force acts to bring about a change. Thus, the prospective marker is inappropriate for qualifying stative verbs.
Along the same lines, Achievement verbs although they are dynamic, are instantaneous and also impossible to differentiate internally i.e. there is no palpable beginning and end stage and therefore the prospective marker is incompatible with these verbs.

A corollary of the stative-non stative syntactic restriction on yàá- is that it cannot be used with ambitransitive or labile verbs in which the subject of the verb is the semantic patient or undergoer of the action. This is because in such constructions these otherwise dynamic verbs take a stative interpretation. In (52a) bó!dá ‘be mangled’ has a stative interpretation when it occurs intransitively with a patient subject and is marked by the perfect. Therefore, it cannot be marked for prospective aspect (52b), only future (52c).

(52a)  lɔ!lé=!ɛ́ é-bó!dá
car=DEF PERF-be.mangled
“The car is mangled.”

(52b) *lɔ!lé=!ɛ́ yàá-bó!dá
car=DEF PROS-be.mangled
“The car is going to be mangled.”

(52c)  lɔ!lé=!ɛ́ bàá-bó!dá
car=DEF FUT-be.mangled
“The car will be mangled.”

As the sentences in (53) below demonstrate, the inability of yàá- to occur intransitively with labile verbs has nothing to do with the animacy of the subject; even with animate subjects, such constructions are ungrammatical (53b).
(53a) ákú  é-pilá  
Aku  PERF-get.hurt  
“Aku is hurt.”

(53b) *ákú  yàá-pílá  
Aku  PROS-get.hurt  
“Aku is going to get hurt.”

(53a) ákú  bàá-pílá  
Aku  FUT-get.hurt  
“Aku will get hurt.”

3.2.2.2 Progressive ŋ̀-
The progressive prefix, ŋ̀- is attached to a verb to indicate that the action is ongoing. The
progressive aspect is not concerned with beginning and end points nor is it concerned with the
time of the event, only that the event is unfolding at a particular point in time. This prefix is
actually a homorganic nasal but will be represented orthographically as ŋ̀-. When the prefix is
attached to the second singular (o=) and third singular (e=) pronominal clitics, the pronoun is
lengthened, the nasal segment is deleted and its low tone remains and is borne by the second
vowel of the lengthened pronoun. E.g. òò=bà ‘you are coming’; èè=bà ‘s/he is coming’.
When the first singular pronoun is in the progressive, it is realized orthographically as mĩ́́=.

Below are some sentences which exhibit progressive aspect.

(54) nǐ  èè=tálo  ní  é=mà  tsù  é!kóŋŋ́  
and  3SG.PROG=want  NMLZ  3SG.SBJV-build  house  again  
“And he wants to build another house.”  [MM:17]
(55) ófāìnɛ ẹ̀dè = bà fi!óó
please 3SG.PROG = come little
“Excuse him, please.” i.e. “Make way” (Lit: “Please, he’s coming a little.”) [OYO:26]

(56) wɔ̀=ŋ̀-yè hɔ́mwɔ́
1PL = PROG-eat Homowo
“We are celebrating Homowo (festival).” [YM:243]

In many cases, as in (54)-(56), the progressive aspect is given a present time interpretation. It is often used to index actions or events that take place concurrent with the time of speaking. But since the progressive is neutral with regard to time, it can be used for events that take place in the past as well as the future, where it indicates that the event was or will be in progress at that particular time. The reference time may be stated by means of a time adverbial, as in (57); or it could be gleaned from the time reference of other verbs in the clause or immediate discourse.

(57) lèé!bí nɛ́!ɛ̀ mĩ́ĩ́=!gbá
morning this 1SGP.ROG=narrate people=DEF story INDEF
“This morning, I was narrating a story to the people at the first service.” [CH:1]

Also, the presence of the adverbial, nò mṹ ‘at that time’, signals that the time of the event is some other time and not the present. nò, in this adverbial, is a discourse deictic demonstrative noun (§2.3.1.3) which refers to an event just described. In (58), it refers to a time in the past.

(58) nò mṹ = !è ní mĩ́ĩ́ = !gbá = !á ẹ̀dè = bf
that inside = TOP NMLZ 1SG.PROG = come = DEF 3SG.PROG = ask
“When I was coming, she was asking me that “Where is Sualaba?”” [FH:44]

In the following sentences, a future action is marked as ongoing by the presence of the progressive prefix.

(59) wó bé ní ò = bàá-!bá = !á wò = jwélé !nó ní
tomorrow time NMLZ 2SG = FUT-come = DEF 1PL = lie top NMLZ

wò = ñ-hôó ní!í
1PL = PROG-cook thing

“By the time you come tomorrow, we’ll be busily cooking.” [YM:292]

(60) è = bàá-tô nyè àahû bè gbé!ké-bf!i = !é
3SG = FUT-toil 2PL continuously then child-PL = DEF

àmè = ñ-jè nyè déŋ
3PL = PROG-exit 2PL hand

“You’ll toil continuously, and then the children will be getting out of control.”
[OYO:137]

A verb marked for the progressive may also be given a future interpretation without the presence of any future time adverbials. With most verbs, this is a prospective or immediate future. The action in (60) could be interpreted as co-temporaneous with the moment of speech (present) or subsequent to the moment of speech (future), depending on the context i.e. whether the speaker is in the shower or not. Progressive marking of the verbs bà ‘come’ and yà ‘come’ more often results in a future interpretation than a present interpretation (61) (62).
“I’m taking a bath.” OR “I’m about to take a bath”

“His child who came is going, leaving.” i.e. He’s going to go, leave. [DF:20]

“I’m coming (in a short while)”

In the temporal noun, August, confirms that the action marked by the progressive takes place in the future.

“So in August, we’re doing (it).” [OYO:162]

3.2.2.3 Habitual -ɔ/-a

These habitual suffixes are used to mark actions that occur regularly. The typical habitual sentence expresses an action which has occurred at least more than once anterior to the moment of speaking and is reasonably expected to continue posterior to the moment of speaking. The

11 It is not entirely unusual for the definite article to modify a noun twice. The most notable example is the inalienable noun bi’child’ which is always marked twice:

ó-bí le-!é
2SG-child DEF-DEF
“Your child”

In many such cases, the first article marks definiteness and the second marks topicalization. See Chapter 7 for more on this.
habitual suffix is realized as -a when the immediately preceding phoneme is /a/. It is realized as
-ɔ in all other phonetic environments. All types of verbs, including stative verbs (67), are
capable of occurring with habitual aspect. In (64), tsɛ́ ‘call’ is marked habitual to indicate that
Mr. Addo is addressed by that name all the time. In (65), the habitual suffix marks the verb tsṹ
‘work’ as something that Saakor does habitually, probably everyday. Similarly, in (66) the
speaker is inquiring about the boys’ returning from school, which is an event that occurs on
most days. The verb for ‘return’, jè bà (lit: ‘come.from come) is a serial verb, so each verb in
the series is marked with the habitual suffix. The examples in (64)-(66) all indicate habits.

(64) à=tsɛ́-ɔ̀ lè Mr. Addo
3PL.IMPERS=call-HAB 3SG.OBJ Mr. Addo
“He is called Mr. Addo” (Lit: They call him Mr. Addo) [DF:87]

(65) héwɔ̀ wɔ̀=nyɛ̃̄mĩ́ Sààkɔ́ lè hú jɛ́ŋ́ nɔ́ŋ́ŋ́
sake 1PL=sibling Saakor 3SG.OBJ too there exactly
è=tsṹ-ɔ̃̀ n ĩ́!ĩ́ yè
3SG=work-HAB thing be.located
“So our sister Saakor, she too, that’s where she works.” [DF:11]

(66) shí óblá-hũ̀ =!è mé!é time àmě̀=jɛ̀-ɔ̀
but life-male.PL =DEF what 3PL =come.from-HAB

ní-kàsé-mɔ̃̀=ɔ̃̀ àmě̀=bà-à
thing-learn-NOM =DEF 3PL =come-HAB
“But the young men, what time do they come back from learning (school).” [DT:13;52]
The habitual suffix also marks generics which, according to Dahl (1985:99), are sentences which describe the typical properties of a species or individual, as in (67).

(67) àbónúá  jó-ɔ̀
    lime    be.bitter-HAB
    “Limes are bitter.”

There are other generic-like meanings with varying semantic nuances that are expressed by the habitual. One of these is the expression of a general or culturally-sanctioned truth or fact (68), (69).

(68) jù-ù  kè  fő  jwà-à  màŋ
    steal-NOM and fraud break-HAB country
    “Corruption destroys a country.”

(69) sàbólàí  hâ-lá  níyènlí́  ðá-ɔ̀
    onion    give-HAB food    be.sweet-HAB
    “Onions make food sweet.”

The expression of a permanent or semi-permanent state or condition (70), (71).

(70) tɛ́!shĩ́  house = è = è
    àkòtó làǹté  màŋ
    Teshie = DEF = DEF 3SG = enter-HAB Akoto Lante inside
    Teshie House, it forms part of Akoto Lante (Lit: It enters Akoto Lante). [FH:68]

(71) kɔ́lè = è  yà-à  ðšñḥ = ðí  màŋ
    Korle = DEF go-HAB sea = DEF inside
    “The Korle (lagoon) goes into the sea.”

The expression of attitudes, qualities or properties of individuals or entities (72)-(77).
The difference between the predicates in (64)-(66) on one hand, and those in (70)-(77) on the other hand, is that those in the former group represent events that are episodic, that are repeated at certain intervals throughout a specific span of time while those in the latter group denote properties or states that hold at all times within a specific time frame. This latter group is often represented by stative verbs but could also include dynamic verbs (e.g. ṣọ jọ-ọ wàà [3SG = dance-HAB very.much] ‘She dances well’).
It is not possible to express grammatically, a future habitual event in Gã. Habitual actions which are wholly confined to past time (translated into English with “used to”) may be expressed with the habitual suffix in combination with the general time adverbial, nò mĩ̀ŋ̀ ‘at that time’. In many cases, though, there is no overt adverbial indicating past time; the addressee must depend on the time reference of the surrounding discourse in order to deduce that the habitual action is restricted to the past. Two examples from conversation are given below. In (78), Sally is narrating the ordeal of a sick relative at the hospital prior to his death. Like most narratives it has past time reference. In line 2, kɔ̃̀ɔ̃̀ ‘bites (i.e. hurts)’ occurs with habitual aspect. Since the entire story is being told with past time reference the event marked by the habitual is also understood as occurring in the past; during the same period as the rest of the events in the story. In this particular example, the time reference couldn’t be more unequivocal because the subject or protagonist is dead. Lines 4 and 6 also contain habitual verbs which have past time reference.

(78) 1 Sally: à=kɛ̀ɛ́ nɔ́=!kó ɛ̀ɛ̀ ɛ̀ɛ̀ ɛ̀ɛ̀ lɔ̃̀ mɔ̃̀
3PL.IMPERS = say thing = INDEF IJ navel

2 è=mĩ̀ŋ̀ kɔ̃̀ɔ̃̀ lɛ̀ è=mĩ̀ŋ̀ kɔ̃̀ɔ̃̀
3SG = inside bite-HAB 3SG = inside bite-HAB
lɛ̀ 3SG.OBJ 3SG.OBJ

“They said something…errm…(his) navel. It used to hurt him all the time.”
When he complained and he went to the Cathedral Clinic, that’s where he used to go.

“...and immediately they referred him to Korle-Bu (hospital).”

Habitual markers in rare cases may double as present time markers. At least one verb, káli ‘remember’, exhibits this characteristic. In (79), Dina is reporting to Sally what she had previously said to another person she had run into. She reports that she told the person that she remembers her (line 4). káli ‘remember’ here is marked as habitual but in fact has present time reference.
(79) 1 Dina: ̀i=bì ̀lë ̀làkè̀ ̀è=bà-hè̀ 1SG=ask 3SG.OBJ NMLZ 3SG=VENT-live Auntie àmèè!lè ǹò lò Auntie Amerley place QP “I asked her whether she came and lived with Auntie Amerley.”

2 Sally: ̀ěè!è “Yes”

3 Dina: ̀è=kèè ěè!è 3SG=say yes “She said yes”

4 ̀i=kèè ̀f=ka=n-dè lè yè 1SG=say 1SG=remember-HAB 3SG.OBJ be.located jè!èì there “I said I remember her from there.” [DF:130]

The habitual marker can also impart present time meaning in a very specific construction and under specific discourse conditions. This occurs in focus constructions and only when the speaker refers to a specific event. Specificity of an event is signaled by the presence of the definite article clitic on the final element of the clause (80a) and (80b).

(80a) kòjó nì ̀jò-dè yè jè!mè = !è kojo FOC dance-HAB be.located there = DEF “It is Kojo who is dancing over there.”

*“It is Kojo who dances over there.”
(80b)  kòjó  nì  fò-ɔ̀=ɔ́=!ɔ́  
kojo  FOC  cry-HAB=DEF=DEF  
“It is Kojo who is crying.”
*“It is Kojo who cries.”

Without the final definite article, the clause has a default habitual interpretation, as in (81). This sentence may be uttered in a scenario where for example, there is disagreement over who performs on a street corner.

(81)  kòjó  nì  jò-ɔ̀  yè  jè!mè  
kojo  FOC  dance-HAB  be.located  there  
“It is Kojo who dances over there.”
*“It is Kojo who is dancing over there.”

Similarly, (82) could be in response to the question of which baby cries a lot.

(82)  kòjó  nì  fò-ɔ̀  
kojo  FOC  cry-HAB  
“It is Kojo who cries.”
*“It is Kojo who is crying.”

This means that it is possible for the habitual to impart present time meaning in all WH-questions/question-word questions. This is because in Gã, interrogative words always occur as focused NPs, unless they are in situ (§3.6). Although, a habitual reading is still possible in such interrogatives, there are usually enough cues in the linguistic and extra-linguistic context to dispel ambiguity. In both sentences below, only a present time reading is possible for the verbs marked by the habitual.
A focused clause marked with the habitual can have habitual meaning only if it contains some time adverbial with habitual semantics, as in (85), which contains the temporal adverbial clause, *ké ṇe fḕ̀ e* ‘sometimes, once in a while (lit: when it does)’.

(85) n’amò̀ ̀ hè̀ nì ̀ ké ṇe =fḕ̀ e = ̀ ̀ ̀ ̀ e nyè̀ =wïé-ô = ̀ = ̀ = ̀ = ̀ lò́
who body FOC when 3SG-do =DEF 2PL-talk-HAB =DEF =DEF
“Who do you talk about from time to time?”

Indeed, the habitual morpheme is the only means of expressing present time in focus clauses and questions, because use of the progressive (which is the normal means of present time expression) in this context is ungrammatical (86).

(86a) *n’amò̀ ̀ hè̀ ̀ òò-wïè
who body 2SG.PROG-talk
“Who are you talking about?”

(86b) *òkò nì̀ ̀ ̀ bò-llò́
Oko FOC PROG-shout-ITER
“It is Oko who is shouting.”
The progressive is acceptable in a question as long as the question-word is in situ (87).

(87) ̀òò=wìé nàmɔ̀ hè  
2SG=talk who body  
“You are talking about who?”

When the interrogative word is in situ, there is no focus marker (overt or covert) and use of a habitual marker in such sentences results in a habitual rather than a present interpretation (88).

(88) ̀ò=wìé-ɔ nàmɔ̀ hè  
2SG=talk-HAB who body  
“You talk about who (on a regular basis)?”  
*“You are talking about who (right now)?”

It is as yet unclear to me why the habitual and progressive will interact with focus constructions in such a seemingly idiosyncratic manner.

Another construction which conditions a present interpretation for habitual verbs is the grammatical nominalization marked by nĩ́ (with high tone, as opposed to the low tone of the focus marker). Such nominalizations may be interpreted as habitual or present depending on context. In the following example, it clearly has a present time meaning.

(90) ówúlà nɛ́!ɛ̀ mò ní ̀yà-á=!á lè jí  
gentleman this NM NMLZ go-HAB=DEF 3SG.OBJ be  
ĺ= first born  
1SG =  
“This gentleman, the one who is going, he is my first born.” [OYO:379]
Just as with the focus constructions, the progressive marker is not possible in a grammatical nominalization marked by \( n̄i \).

(91) *òwùlà nɛ́!ɛ́ mɔ̀ ní ̃́ ṭ-yà = !á

gentleman this person NMLZ PROG-go = DEF

“This gentleman, the one who is going…”

For both the focus particle, \( n̄i \) and the nominalization particle, \( n̄i \) to trigger a present tense reading of verbs marked by the habitual aspect indicates that these two markers have a relationship that goes beyond simple isomorphism. In §6.8, I theorize about what this relationship could be.

The habitual is also the aspectual marker of choice for verbs in grammatical event nominalizations which function as complements of the verb \( yè hè gbè \) ‘have the right (lit: have body way)’. No other verb requires its complement to have a habitual verb.

(89) hèwɔ́ = !ɔ́ ò = bɛ́ hè gbè ní ò = jù-ɔ̀

sake=TOP 2SG=have.NEG body way NMLZ 2SG=steal-HAB

mɔ́kɔ̀ káplè

sombody pesewa\(^{12}\)

“So you don’t have the right to steal someone’s money.” [DT:20;32]

\(^{12}\) A pesewa is the smallest unit of Ghanaian currency and is used metonymically to mean “a small amount of money”.

3.2.2.4 Perfect é-

The perfect is a verbal category that relates a present state to a past situation. In Gã it is encoded morphologically by the prefix é- when the subject of the sentence is a full NP, as in (90)-(92).

(90) shí ńũũ = !é le é = fã gbè
   but male = DEF TOP 3SG.PERC = take.off way
   “But as for the man, he has travelled.” [DF:147]

(91) bɔ̀tė hũ ké ké = kè le é-wię hèwɔ = !ɔ
   Bortey too say 2SG = take 3SG.OBJ PERFP-speak sake = TOP
   è = lè time ní ø = bā-bā = à
   3SG = know NMLZ 2SG = FUT-come = DEF
   “Bortey too said he has spoken with you so does he know what time you’re coming?.” [DT:6;03]

(92) ë = ké ë mò ní ø = kē-bà nē!ë
   3SG = say IJ NM NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS = take.PERF-come this
   è = tsùí é-fã
   3SG = heart PERFP-take.off
   “He said errm, this person who has been brought here, he is frightened. (Lit: His heart has taken off).” [FH:129]

When the subject is a pronoun, the perfect is realized as a high tone on the final pronominal vowel (93). When the verb is immediately preceded by the auxiliary verb kɛ, the perfect is realized as a high tone on the auxiliary (92).
Although Comrie (1976) classifies it as an aspect, it is not a prototypical aspectual category because it does not reveal anything about the internal temporal workings of a situation. It rather highlights the present result of a completed activity. It is this semantic feature of “present or current relevance” that is considered to be the hallmark of the perfect aspect and that differentiates it from the past tense. Langacker (1991:211) illustrates this with the two sentences, *I have broken my leg* and *I broke my leg*. He notes that while the former implies that my leg is still broken, the latter does not. Therefore use of the perfect implies that the event is not done with totally because its effects remain in the present time. The same is true for the Gã perfect. For instance, the question in (93) implies that the agents, *àmè=yè* ‘they’ are still in residence at the said location, whereas if the verb were unmarked and therefore had past interpretation, as in (94), it would imply that the guests were no longer there.

Comrie (1976) identifies four types of meanings conveyed by the perfect: the perfect of result, otherwise known as the stative perfect, the perfect of persistent situation, the experiential perfect and the perfect of recent past. The experiential perfect is not found in Gã. There is
instead another function of the perfect that is not mentioned by Comrie. I term this the narrative perfect. Each of these will be discussed below.

3.2.2.4.1 The perfect of result
This is the most common interpretation ascribed to perfect clauses in Gâ and other languages. It is precisely what is illustrated in Langacker’s “broken leg” example. The focus on present result carries with it the implication that this resultant state did not obtain in the past i.e. there has been a change of state. Thus, in Gâ, the perfect is used to express change of state or resultatives. This is especially evident with property verbs, which when unmarked, denote a state (95a), (96a), but when marked by the perfect denote a change of state (95b), (96b). The (b) sentences suggest that the subject did not exhibit that property in the past but has recently acquired the property and is currently exhibiting it.

(95a) kòjó ké
kojo be.tall
“Kojo is tall.”

(95b) kòjó 6-kè
kojo PERF-be.tall
“Kojo has become tall.”

(96a) blòdó = è wà
bread = DEF be.hard
“The bread is hard.”
When used with dynamic verbs, the perfect indicates a present state and is equivalent to the English present stative.

(97) àtàlé = !é  è-ltsé-llé
dress = DEF  PERF-tear-ITER
“The dress is torn.”

(98) shìkpɔ̣ŋ̣ = !é  è-fó
floor  PERF-make.wet
“The floor is wet.”

(99) wò!nú = !é  è-lísìtì
soup = DEF  PERF-spoil
“The soup is spoiled i.e. has gone off”

(100) jé !lè = è  mìŋ̣  è-lgbélé
world  DEF = DEF  inside  3SG.PERF-open
“The world is open-minded now, has advanced intellectually now”  [OYO:155]

What the examples in (95)-(100) have in common is that the perfect verbs denote stative properties or characteristics of entities that are physically visible or apparent to the interlocutors. In most uses of the perfect, however, the resultant state or consequence is not tangible. Regardless of that, the use of the perfect is still warranted as long as the state denoted by the perfect verb still persists in the present, as in (90) above, repeated here as (101) where
the perfect implies that the man is still out of town, or (102), where Dotty must still be in the regional office at the time of the utterance.

(101) shi nũũ = lè gbè
    but male = TOP 3SG.PERF = take.off road
    “But as for the man, he has travelled.” [DF:147]

(102) Dina: ò = kë Dotty hũ bẽ jé!ŋ̄ ḍǒŋ̄ŋ
    2SG = say Dotty too be.located.NEG there anymore
    “You said Dotty too is not there anymore.”

Mensah: ẹ́ɛ́! ā = kẽ lè ẹ́-tèè region
    yes 3PL.IMPERS = take 3SG.OBJ PERF-go.PST
    “Yes, she has been taken to the regional office.” [MM:141]

3.2.2.4.2 Perfect of recent past
In other contexts the present relevance of a perfect clause is even more difficult to decipher.

Comrie (1976:60) observes that sometimes the present relevance of a perfect situation may simply be that of temporal closeness i.e. that the past situation is relatively recent. As Comrie notes, recency is relative and as long as the addressee is hearing the information for the first time, the speaker - by using the perfect - is presenting it as recent news. It is for this reason that the perfect of recent past is sometimes known as “hot news perfect”.

Sometimes the current relevance in a perfect construction could be both its temporal proximity to the present as well as some other reason which may be explicited in the succeeding discourse. This is seen in (91) which is repeated here for convenience as (103).
Here, the speaker (Tess) states that Bortey has told her that he has spoken to the addressee (Dina). She uses the perfect form of the verb, \textit{wìê} ‘speak’. Then Tess goes on to explicate why this comment is significant for the current conversation: if indeed Bortey has spoken to Dina, then Tess is wondering whether he knows what time Dina (who is due to visit soon) is arriving. Tess explicitly states the reason for her initial statement and further introduces it with the discourse marker \textit{hèwɔ̀} ‘so/sake’.

\begin{verbatim}
(103) bɔ̀ɔté hũ kɛ̀ ọ́=kè lè ě-wìê hèwɔ̀=!ɔ̀
Bortey too say 2SG=take 3SG.OBJ PERF-speak sake=TOP
ě = lè time ní ọ́=bàá-bá=à
3SG=know NMLZ 2SG=FUT-come =DEF
“Bortey too said he has spoken with you, so does he know what time you’re coming?”
[DT:6;03]
\end{verbatim}

Similarly, in (104) the speaker (a preacher) states, using the perfect, that he and his colleagues have just recently come back to Accra from postings to Twi-speaking areas. He goes on to tell the congregation the significance of this; that while in those areas, he often code-mixed Gã and Twi, and so this might happen while he is preaching.

\begin{verbatim}
(104) wò=ỳà-fò shì yè Twi area =à
1PL.PERF=ITIV-cut down be.located Twi area =DEF
hèwɔ̀=!ɔ̀ jẹ́!mẹ́=!ẹ́ wié-mọ́=!ọ́ wò = fûtù-ọ́ lè
so=TOP there=DEF speak-NOM=DEF 1PL=mix-HAB 3SG.OBJ
“We have gone and roamed around in the Twi-speaking areas so, over there we mix up the languages.” [CH:25]
\end{verbatim}
This discourse-pragmatic use of the recent perfect has been described for English by Nishiyama and Koenig (2006) and is termed by them as “commonsense entailment”.

### 3.2.2.4.3 Perfect of persistent situation
In this use the perfect denotes situations that start in the past and still persist into the present (Comrie 1976:60). This is seen in (105) and (106), for example.

(105) yòómó = !é ̄́ ̄́fó ̄́āăhūū
old.woman = DEF PERF-cry continuously
“The old woman has cried continuously.” [FH:170]

(106) ̄́fó níñí ̄́yè ̄́jè!mè ̄́tsè
3SG.PERF = work thing be.located there 3SG.PERF-last.long
“She has worked there for a long time.”

### 3.2.2.4.4 Narrative perfect
In Gã, there is a special use of the perfect optionally employed for the narration of a sequential set of events. This set of events comprises a temporally ordered series of activities that are presented as formulaic, fixed and methodical. Discourse genres where this perfect is abundant include procedural narratives, where a speaker describes the methods or steps involved in accomplishing some activity. Descriptions of everyday routines also make good candidates for perfect marking, as well as any set of events that is felt to be sequentially-ordered.

The temporal frame for such discourses could be past or future. Although the verbs in these discourses are marked for the perfect, they may invite a habitual interpretation when the
actions are presented as regularly-occurring. The clauses marked for perfect are usually introduced by adverbs such as \(\text{k\~ek\~e} \) ‘(and) then’ or \(\text{b\~e} \) ‘(and) then’ which signal the sequential nature of the events.

A few examples from discourse will shed further light on this phenomenon. In the following examples, each clause will be translated literally where tense/aspect is concerned, then a free translation into standard English will be given at the end of the example. In (107), the speaker is describing how a herbal concoction is made. The time frame is given by the temporal adverbial marked with \(\text{k\~e} \) ‘when’ in the first line. Each subsequent event is then relayed as an ordered series using perfect aspect.

(107) \(\text{n\~o he\~w\~o k\~e a=f\~o w\~u\~o = !\~o ni} \)
that sake when 3PL.IMPERS = cut chicken = DEF and
\(\text{a=k\~e l\~a = !\~a wo n\~u = \~e mu\~n = !\~e} \)
3PL.IMPERS = take blood = DEF put water = DEF inside = DEF
“So when the chicken is cut and the blood is put in the water,”

\(\text{k\~ek\~e = !\~e to\~o = !\~e hu\~ \text{a=k\~e-\text{kp\~al\~a}}} \)
then = TOP sheep = DEF too 3PL.IMPERS = take.PERF-smear 3PL = body
“then the sheep too has been smeared on their body.”

\(\text{k\~ek\~e = !\~e n\~o hu\~ a=f\~o} \)
then = TOP that too 3PL.IMPERS.PERF = cut
“Then that one too has been cut.”
“So when the chicken is cut and the blood is put in the water, then the sheep too is smeared on their body. Then that one too is cut. The blood is then put into the water.”

In the next example, the speaker is talking about her routine at the end of the day and ends with the utterance in (108). Again, after setting the time as “when I come (home)”, the subsequent activity is described with perfect aspect. The use of the perfect here is especially odd, since the activity is clearly presented as a habit; a regularly occurring event.

(108) kɛ́ Ḗ-bà nɔ̀ŋŋ̀ kɛ̀kɛ́=!ɛ́ ĩ́=bà-fèé
when 1SG-come immediately then=TOP 1SG.PERF = VENT-make
ĩ́-smoothie
1SG-
“When I come, then immediately I have come and made my smoothie.”

kɛ́ ĩ=nù nɔ̀ŋŋ̀ mì́ ĩ=ya-à=á=!á
when 1SG = drink immediately 1SG.OBJ 1SG = go-HAB = DEF = DEF
“Immediately after I drink it, I’m off.”

“When I come (home) then I immediately make my smoothie. Immediately after I drink it, I’m off.” [DT:13;10]

In the following exchange about some of the activities that form part of the twin festival, the predicate in Aku’s question is habitual. In subsequent descriptions, it is the perfect rather than
the habitual that marks the predicates. The clauses containing the perfect predicates are also
introduced by *bɛ̀* ‘then’.

(109) Aku: ǹ̀ ̃̀ ã̀mɛ̃̀=fè-ɔ̀  yè ̄̀mɛ̃̀=díɛ̃̀ŋ̀tsɛ̀ ā̀mɛ̃̀=shĩ́ã̀
and 3PL = do-HAB be.located 3PL = EMPH 3PL = house
“And they do it in their own house?”

Kwei: yeah

Oyo: hɛ̀ɛ̃́! ̃̀mɛ̃̀=díɛ̃̀ŋ̀tsɛ̀ ɔ̀mɛ̃̀=shĩ́ã̀ m̀η̄
yes 3PL = EMPH 3PL = house inside
“Yes, in their own house.”

Aku: kɛ̀kɛ́=!ɛ́ ̄̀mɛ̃̀=tsɛ́ wèkú- mɛ̀=!ɛ́
then = TOP 3PL.PERF = call family- PL = DEF
“They have invited the relatives.”

Oyo: wèkú-mɛ́=!ɛ́ éhɛ̀
family- PL = DEF IJ
“The relatives…exactly.”

kɛ̀kɛ́=!ɛ́ ̄̀=bà ̄̀=bà-yè
then = DEF 3PL. IMPERS.PERF = come 3PL. IMPERS.PERF = VENT - eat
hè ̂òdá!sé
body witness
“They have come to witness it.”

Aku: And they do it in their own house?
Kwei: Yeah
Oyo: Yes, in their own house
Aku: Then they invite the relatives
Oyo: The relatives…exactly
Then they come and bear witness.
The perfect in the above examples connote habituality. In the case of procedural narratives (107), (109), this habituality is implied in the fact that one can describe how something is done only if it has been done before and is expected to be repeated in future. In the following example, the events marked by the perfect reflect a series of events that have actually occurred but for which there is no implication that they will recur. That is, the events have a habitual past interpretation. This is evidenced by the past time interpretation of the first verb, fō ‘cry’ as well as the adverbial nyê sêê [yesterday back] ‘some time ago’. The events in (110) are construed as one unique set of events restricted to the past. Many of the perfect clauses are introduced by the adverb bè ‘then’. The narrative is about a toddler who cried whenever he saw a picture of his parents.

(110) nyê sêê = !ê lé è = fô àåhúù
yesterday back = DEF TOP 3SG = cry continuously
“Some time ago, he cried continuously.”

bè 6 = yâ-dâmɔ̃̀
then 3SG.PERF = ITTV-stand
fridge = è = !ê  hiê
“Then he has gone and stood in front of the fridge.”

ákú kè òkó mfônîrî pêtè jêlmê
Aku and Oko picture stick there
“There’s a picture of Aku and Oko there.”

bè 6 = lwô
then 3SG.PERF = lift
è = yîtsò nɔ
3SG = head top
“Then he has lifted his head up.”
“Some time ago, he cried continuously. Then he would go and stand in front of the fridge. There’s a picture of Aku and Oko there. Then he would lift his head up. Then he was looking at them. Then I was looking at him, (thinking), “Goodness! What is it? Is he crying for his mother or is he crying for his father?” Then he would go and stand there. Then he would cry continuously. Then he would come to me.”
The use of the perfect to index habitual situations that occur in temporal succession is uncommon across languages, and it is hard to decipher the connection between perfect and habitual meaning. Further research with more data should provide some robust answers.

3.2.2.4.5 The perfect in the past and future

It is possible to express a perfect situation whose reference time is some time other than the moment of speech. This is done via adverbials which specify the reference time to give a ‘past perfect’ or ‘future perfect’ interpretation. The go-to general time adverbial nò mĩ̀ŋ́ ‘then, at that time’, is often deployed in such circumstances. Example (111) has a past perfect interpretation, while (112) gives a future perfect interpretation.

(111) bee=ɛ̀ tsàà gbèé=ɛ̀ shì ààhũ̀=ɛ̀ =DEF chase dog=DEF down continuously

“The bees chased the dog for a long time.”

nò mĩ̀ŋ́=!ɛ́ gbé!kɛ̃́-nũ̀ṹ=ɛ̀ l ɛ̀ hṹ òkpò kò that inside=TOP child-male=DEF 3SG.OBJ too pigeon INDEF

é- Imó lè
PERF-catch 3SG.OBJ

“At that time, the boy too, a pigeon had caught him.” [MAV:69]

(112) bè ní̃ ód=báá-!shé bí!ɛ̀=!ɛ̀ nỳènìí= ɛ̀ time NMLZ 2SG=FUT-reach here=DEF food=DEF

é-bè
PERF-be.cooked

“By the time you get here, the food will be cooked.”
3.2.2.5 Iterative and distributive aspects

These two aspectual categories will be treated together because they have a common core semantic character and shared morphological manifestation. Iterative aspect indicates that the event predicated by the verb occurs multiple times in relatively quick succession, while distributive aspect indicates that the event is being executed or experienced/affected by multiple participants. It is important to note that iterativity is different from habituality. Bybee et al (1994) highlight this difference. They write (p. 160) that iterative “signals that an action is repeated on a single occasion and differs from the habitual and frequentative, which both signal the repetition occurred on different occasions”. Some authors treat the distributive as a type of iterative aspect. Due to the similar semantic function and identical formal marking of iterativity and distribution in Gā, morphemes that signal either aspect will be glossed ‘ITER’, even if the primary aspectual sense is that of distribution.

In Gā, iterative and distributive aspects are signalled by suffixation or reduplication. Suffixation is restricted to monosyllabic verbs while reduplication is used for poly-syllabic verbs. There are two major suffixes that convey both iteration and distribution in monosyllabic verbs. There is also one minor suffix which occurs with very few words. In any one predicate marked with these suffixes, however, only one of these aspectual meanings is possible. The form of the suffix depends on the final vowel of the verb. The first iterative/distributive suffix,
-mɔ̃ occurs with certain monosyllabic verbs ending in a high vowel or a nasalised vowel. The second suffix, -lV́ or rV́ (/l/ and /r/ are in free variation in some words) has three allomorphs: it is realised as -le/-re if the final vowel of the verb is a mid front vowel, as -lɔ/-rɔ if the final vowel is a mid back vowel, and as -la/-ra if the final vowel is the low back vowel, /a/. The third iterative suffix, -i is reminiscent of the plural marker and can be viewed as being in a polysemous relationship with it. It occurs with very few words. Examples of verbs and their iterative/distributive forms are given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb root</th>
<th>Iterative/Distributive</th>
<th>English gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suffix -mɔ̃</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fĩ̀</td>
<td>fĩ̀mɔ̃</td>
<td>‘tie’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bú</td>
<td>bú!mɔ̀</td>
<td>‘lie upside down’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tsĩ̀</td>
<td>tsĩ̀mɔ̃</td>
<td>‘block’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kũ̀</td>
<td>kũ̀mɔ̃</td>
<td>‘break’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dú</td>
<td>dú!mɔ̀</td>
<td>‘plant’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tsṓ</td>
<td>tsṓmɔ̀</td>
<td>‘pass through, turn, pour’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fṍ</td>
<td>fṍmɔ̀</td>
<td>‘throw’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kã́</td>
<td>kã́mɔ̀</td>
<td>‘lie down’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suffix -lɛ/-rɛ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kɛ̀</td>
<td>kɛ́!lɛ́</td>
<td>‘be tall’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tsɛ́</td>
<td>tsɛ́!lɛ́</td>
<td>‘tear’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Whether an iterative or distributive reading is obtained with these suffixes depends on
the number of the subject and object. Generally, if the subject referent is singular and the verb
is intransitive, the predicate is interpreted as iterative i.e. the subject referent carried out the
activity several times. For example, in (113) the verb *bò* ‘shout’ has iterative marking and just
one participant in the subject role: the second singular pronoun. In addition, it is intransitive so
has no object referent. This leaves iterative aspect as the only interpretation of the suffix `-lɔ.
The verb describes a situation in which the agent shouted multiple times.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>tɛ́</th>
<th>tɛ́lɛ́</th>
<th>`trip’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>suffix -lɔ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bò</td>
<td>bó!lɔ́</td>
<td>‘shout’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fɔ́</td>
<td>fɔ̀lɔ́</td>
<td>‘cut’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kɔ́</td>
<td>kɔ́lɔ́</td>
<td>‘pick up’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| suffix -la/-ra |
| ká | ká!lá | ‘knock’ |
| ŋmã̀ | ŋmá!lã́ | ‘mark, write’ |
| tá | tálrá | ‘sit’ |
| dà | dà!rã́ | ‘be big’ |
| suffix -i |
| gbó | gbó!fü | ‘die’ |
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(113) nì  ḗɛ̀ = bọ̀-lɔ̀  kɛ̀-ŋ̀-wò  bú  !kó
and  3SG.PROG = shout-ITER take-PROG-put hole INDEF
“And he’s shouting into a hole.”  [BOR: 33]

The same interpretation applies to the intransitive verb ṭà ‘jump’ in (114a). Here, the child is
jumping up and down over and over again, and this is conveyed by the iterative suffix, -mɔ̃. If
the subject referent is plural, as in (114b) a distributive reading would be triggered because
here several children are carrying out the activity concurrently.

(114a) gbé!kɛ́ = ɛ́ ḗ-tú-!mɔ́  yè  jé!mè
child=DEF PROG-jump-ITER be.located there
“The child is jumping over there.”

(114b) gbé!kɛ́-bí!í = ɛ́ ḗ-tú-!mɔ́  yè  jé!mè
child-PL=DEF PROG-jump-ITER be.located there
“The children are jumping over there.”

In (115), the suffix -í imparts distributive aspectual meaning. The distributive use of this
morpheme is extremely limited. To the best of my knowledge, it may only be used with the
verb, gbó ‘die’.

(115) énɛ́ = !ɛ́  bɔ̀nĩ--  bɛ́  ní  í = bí-ì = è  gbó-!í
this = DEF how-- time NMLZ 1SG = child-PL = DEF die-ITER

“NMLZ 3SG = come 3SG = VENT-look 1SG = back.of.head = DEF
This one, how-- when my children died and he came and supported me…”  [FH:111]
A distributive reading is also obtained where the object referent of a verb marked by the iterative/distributive suffix has plural number. In such a scenario, the agent executes the action multiple times in succession but each time on a different patient, such that there are multiple patients. This is seen in (116)-(118)

(116) ákú ṉ̃-mɔ̃̀ kòtòkú-ì=ɛ̀ à-nââ kpɔ̀
    Aku tie-ITER sack-PL = DEF PERT-mouth knot
    “Aku tied up the sacks into knots.”

(117) òkó b|m̩-mɔ̃̀ tsù-ì pì
    Oko PERF-build-ITER house-PL many
    “Oko has built many houses.”

(118) kápɛ́ńtà-fó-nyǒ=ɛ̀ ká-!lá p ĺɛ̀gò-ì=!ɛ̀ è = wò
    carpenter-AG-AG = DEF knock-ITER nail-PL = DEF 3SG = put
    shínaâ = à mìнная
    door = DEF inside
    “The carpenter nailed the nails into the door.”

Posture verbs and property verbs tend to give a distributive reading when marked by an iterative suffix. In the presence of the iterative suffix, such verbs can only occur with plural subject referents. This default distributive reading stems from the semantics of these verbs. The iterative meaning is impossible with posture verbs because one cannot assume a posture several different times on one occasion without changing from that posture. For instance, if one is lying down, then one remains in that position unless one changes one’s posture (to sitting up or
standing, for example). Therefore, one cannot “lie down several times”. However, multiple people can assume a lying down position concomitantly, and it is this distributive sense that is conveyed by the iterative suffix when it occurs on posture verbs.

(119) ò=báá-!ná á!ké âmê=bú-mɔ̃̀ kɔ̃̀ɔ̃́ŋ̀ nɔ̀  
2SG=FUT-see NMLZ 3PL=lie.face.down-ITER shoulder top  
“You will see that they (babies) are being carried on shoulders.” (Lit: they are lying face-down on shoulders)  [OYO: 440]

(120) âmê=tá-rà shì  
3PL=sit-ITER down  
“They are sitting down/They sat down.”

It is not possible to have a distributive posture verb occurring with a singular subject referent.

(121) *ò=báá-!ná á!ké è=bú-mɔ̃̀ kɔ̃̀ɔ̃́ŋ̀ nɔ̀  
2SG=FUT-see NMLZ 3SG=lie.face.down-ITER shoulder top  
“You will see that he is being carried on the shoulder.”

(122) *è=tá-rà shì  
3SG=sit-ITER down  
“He is sitting down/He sat down.”

It has been observed that when it comes to posture verbs, especially the verb tá ‘sit’, Gã speakers are lax about the use of the iterative suffix when the subject is plural. As a result, sentences such as (123) and (124), where the plural subjects do not trigger iterative morphology on the verbs (as one would expect), are relatively common in the everyday repertoire of many Gã speakers. They are not considered ungrammatical or odd.
(123) ̀m̀hú ̀m̀=tá !shí díŋý
3PL too 3PL=sit down quiet
“They are also sitting down quietly.” [DEB:117]

(124) ̀m̀ŋ̀ké b è n í ̀m̀=kã̀ shì ààhù=!è
middle.of.night time NMLZ 3PL=lie down continuously = DEF
“In the middle of the night, while they were still lying down...” [PAT:13]

Distributive aspect may also be coded by complete reduplication of the verb followed
by lengthening of the final vowel of the reduplicated verb and suffixation by the plural suffix -
i. Reduplication is the primary means of expressing distributive aspect among poly-syllabic
words as well as mono-syllabic words which do not take the iterative suffix. Knowing which
words take the iterative suffix and which must be reduplicated is a matter of the speaker’s
competence. There is apparently no phonological, morphological or semantic rule which
determines the choice of formal marking of iterativity on a particular verb. Examples (125)-

(125) á = !tsákè tsákè-=!í níbí pìì
3PL.IMPERS.PERF=change change-PL things many
“A lot of things have been changed.” (Lit: “They have changed changed a lot of
things.”)

(126) mààbà nyê = gbéle gbéle-=!í shínnà-î = !è nyê = !fɔ̃ = !ɔ̃
why 2PL.PERF=open open-PL door-PL=DEF 2PL = throw = DEF
“Why have you (pl.) left the doors wide open?”
It is also possible for a verb to be doubly marked, first by suffixation with the iterative suffix and then by complete reduplication of the verb stem, as in (128). This construction exists alongside those where there is only suffixation and no reduplication, as in (129).

Some speakers see no semantic or pragmatic difference between the pair in (128) and (129) and between similar pairs containing different verbs. Others note that the sentence with the reduplicated verb (128) connotes a sense of haphazardness or lack of planning associated with the building of the houses i.e. several houses were built all over the place in a disorderly fashion, while (129) without the reduplicated verb has no such connotation.

The language does not require every event involving repetition and/or multiple participants to be predicated with an iterative verb. That is, iterativity is not always signalled formally. Certain verbs require formal marking while others do not. Others, such as the posture verbs may or may not be formally marked.
3.2.3 Mood

This verbal category is often discussed in relation to modality, and the two are sometimes viewed as indistinguishable. However, Palmer (2001:4) assumes an overarching category of modality which is manifested in individual languages by mood systems or modal systems or both. Palmer observes that while tense and aspect are concerned with features of the event itself, modality is only concerned with the status of the proposition (Palmer 2001:1). This relates to whether the proposition is presented as factual/non-factual or actualized/non-actualized as well as the degree of the speaker’s confidence in his assessment of that modal status.

Mood systems are prototypically binary and consist of either realis or irrealis clauses. In European linguistics this distinction is equivalent to that between the indicative and the subjunctive. Typically, realis and indicative clauses predicate situations that have actually been realized while irrealis and subjunctive clauses predicate situations and events that are hypothetical or yet to be realized. As a result, in many languages that have the realis/irrealis distinction, the future is marked as irrealis. This may or may not occur in combination with other tense markers. Palmer writes that studies of various European languages have revealed that the distinction between the indicative and subjunctive is better captured as one between assertion and non-assertion. This is because the subjunctive, in addition to marking unrealized
events, is also found in propositions that express doubts about a statement’s truth as well as those propositions that are merely presupposed and not asserted (Palmer 2001:3).

Modal systems may also distinguish between realis and irrealis situations, but here there are finer-grained distinctions relating to the speaker’s evaluation of the factual status of the proposition. The major division here is that between epistemic modality and deontic modality. Givón (2001a:300) notes that these types of modalities code attitude towards a proposition and they represent a judgment about the propositional content of the clause. This judgment could be about truth, probability, certainty, belief, evidence (all epistemic modalities) or desirability, preference, intent, ability, obligation and manipulation (all deontic modalities).

The facts of Gã show that it has a relatively simple modality system consisting of just two irrealis moods, the subjunctive and imperative. The subjunctive is marked by the verbal prefix á-. Together with various lexical verbs that possess inherent modal semantics, the subjunctive is able to convey an array of modal meanings, all of which are deontic. This will be the subject of the next section.

### 3.2.3.1 The subjunctive á-

The subjunctive prefix is realized as á- when the subject of the verb is a full NP (130).

(130) hàjòlḥ á-há nyènè
  peace SBJV-give 2PL
  “Peace be unto you.” [CH:1]
When the subject is a pronoun, the segment /a/ of the subjunctive is deleted and its high tone remains and docks on the final pronominal vowel (131).

(131) nɔ̃́-fɛ̃́-nɔ̃́ n̥i sə̀ bə̀ kɛ̃́-mɔ̃́-!ɔ̃́
thing-all-thing NMLZ fit you tell-NOM-DEF

é=lkéé bə̀
3SG.SBJV=tell 2SG.OBJ

“Everything that he needs to tell you, he should tell you.” [CH:136]

If the verb stem is preceded by the auxiliary verb, ke ‘take’, the subjunctive is realized as a high tone on ke (132).

(132) hé-mɔ̃́ n̥i ṏ = up and down=é=!ɛ̃́ bè
get-IMP NMLZ 2SG= =DEF=DEF then

d=ke-lwó lɔìè
2SG=take.SBJV-carry car

“Take this so that when you are running your errands, you can use it to pay for transportation.” [FH:157]

The subjunctive is found in a number of syntactic environments but in all its occurrences it conveys an imaginary, prospective or hypothetical event. Hence, it is irrealis.

There are two main syntactic environments which harbor the subjunctive: main clauses and grammatical event nominalizations. In what follows, I outline the major modal meanings conveyed by the subjunctive marker in each syntactic milieu.
A. Main clauses

i) Wishes, desires

Occasionally, the subjunctive is found in main clauses where it signals the speaker’s wishes and desires, as in (133) and (134).

(133) hèjòlè ɓ-há  nyè
peace SBJV-give 2PL
“Peace be unto you.” OR “I wish you peace.” [CH:1]

(134) wɔ̀=tsɛ̀ ní  yóò  ɲwèìí  ó=gbèì  hè  ɓ-tsé
1PL=father NMLZ be.HAB up 2SG=name body SBJV-be.pure
ó= màŋtsè-yè-li  ɓ-ìbá
2SG=king-eat-NOM SBJV-come
“Our father, who is in heaven, may your name be sanctified. May your kingdom come.” [From “The Lord’s Prayer”]

ii) Weak obligation, suggestion, recommendation

The subjunctive may also express a suggestion, recommendation or weak obligation.

(135) è=tsùí  é-fâ  hèwó=!ò  ɓ =!mé  dãí
3SG=heart PERF-take.off sake=TOP 3PL.IMPERS.SBJV=wait before
“He is afraid, so they should wait (before the surgery is done).” [FH:130]

iii) Jussive

The subjunctive also plays a prominent role in imperative constructions; it is used to index jussive mood, which is simply the equivalent of the first person (136) and third person (137) imperative.
(136) \( \text{tā} \equiv \text{nyè} \quad \text{àlóó} \quad \text{tā} \equiv \text{nyè} \)
\(1\text{SG.SBJV} = \text{narrate} \quad 2\text{PL} \quad \text{or} \quad 1\text{SG.SBJV} = \text{NEG.SBJV-narrate} \quad 2\text{PL} \)

“Should I tell you (a story) or should I not tell you (a story)?”

(137) mɔ́fiñɔ́
\(\text{everyone} \quad \text{SBJV-do} \quad \text{quiet} \)

“Everyone should be quiet.”

B. Event nominalizations

So far, the examples have illustrated marking of the subjunctive on main clause predicates.

However, the vast majority of subjunctive predicates are found in event nominalizations marked by the nominalizer, \(n\)́(See chapter 6 for a thorough discussion on grammatical nominalizations). In traditional terminology these are known as subordinate clauses and \(n\)́ is termed a complementizer. Other nominalization markers are \(k\)óni and \(á\)lki. Most of these event nominalizations are complements of verbs with inherent deontic semantics such as \(tá\)́lo ‘want’, \(sùm\)́ ‘like’ and \(b\)ò \(mó\)déj ‘try’. These verbs thus select event nominalizations that denote hypothetical situations. The nominalizers may be overt, as in \(á\)lki in (138a) or they may be absent (138b).

(138a) \(\text{tē} = \text{kē} \quad \text{álki} \quad \text{tē} = \text{lba} \)
\(3\text{SG} = \text{say} \quad \text{NMLZ} \quad 3\text{SG.SBJV} = \text{come} \)

“He said that s/he should come.”

\(^{13}\) This is a formulaic opener used in storytelling.
Below are the functions that they carry out.

i) Wishes, desires

The nominalizations may function as complements of verbs with inherently (deontic) modal senses such as tåló ‘want’ and sùmɔ̀ ‘like’ in (139) and (140) respectively. These express the speaker’s wishes or desires.

(139) nĩ̀ èè=tá!ó ni ̃́ é=mã̀ tsũ̀ é!kóŋ́́
and 3SG.PROG=want NMLZ 3SG.SBJV=build house again
“And he wants to build another house.” (Lit: “He wants that he should build another house.”) [MM:17]

(140) hèwɔ́ =!ɔ́ m a ̃́ =sùmɔ̀ kóni ̃́ wɔ́ =!ɔ́ ó=!bá
sake=TOP 1SG.FUT=like NMLZ tomorrow=TOP 2SG.SBJV=come
“So I would like for you to come tomorrow.” (Lit: “I would like that tomorrow, you should come.”) [YM:291]

ii) Ability, possibility, permission

A deontic meaning of ability (141), possibility (142) or permission (143) is obtained when the event nominalization is the complement of nyɛ̀ ‘be able to’ and nyɛ̀ is in the future tense.

(141) è=bɛ nɔ̀ =!kó nɔ̀ =!kó nĩ́
3SG=have.NEG thing = INDEF thing = INDEF NMLZ
iii) Purpose complements

Event nominalizations that function as purpose complements must always have their predicates marked for the subjunctive. *nī* is the most widespread marker in such purpose complements but *álkë* is also used. In (144), the event nominalization marked for subjunctive expresses purpose and therefore intention.

(144) \( wò = bà \) \( nì \) \( wò = bá-já \) \( lè \) \( kònì \)
1PL.PERF-come NMLZ 1PL.SBJV = VENT-worship 3SG.OBJ NMLZ

\( wò = bá-wò \) \( wò = hé-mò \) \( kè \) \( yé-lí \) \( mìì̃́ \)
1PL.SBJV = VENT.SBJV-put 1PL = get-NOM and eat-NOM inside

hèwàlë
strength
“We have come to worship him so that we will strengthen our faith.” [CH:9]

In (145), the subjunctive in the event nominalization gives the deontic meaning of supplication.
In (146) it conveys a suggestion or weak obligation.

(146) fòsú bèèbí=!é ké ̃̃́=bá=!a ní
Fosu baby=DEF when 1SG=come=DEF NMLZ

wò=yá-slá lè
1PL.SBJV = ITIV.SBJV-go 3SG.OBJ
“We Fosu’s baby, when I come, we should go and visit him.” [DT:6;45]

iv) Strong obligation

When the event nominalization containing the subjunctive is a complement of the verb sà ‘fit’, the clause expresses a strong obligation, (147), (148).

(147) à=kêè ̃̃́=sà ní ̃̃̀=lè ̃̃́=lêè
3PL.IMPERS=say  IJ 3SG=fit NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS.SBJV = do

lè operation
3SG.OBJ
“They said oh, they had to perform an operation.” [FH:125]

14 àtàá is a respectful form of address for older men. nàá is a title commonly attached to most female Gâ names. The two forms of address only occur together as a form of address for God.
In (148), there are two event nominalizations marked by ńĩ́. The first is a complement of sà ‘fit’ and expresses strong obligation while the second is a purpose complement.

\[(148)\] mɛ̀ĩ́ ní à = fèé nifiantè = è = sà ní
transl. people NMLZ 3PL = do thing = DEF 3SG = fit NMLZ

àmɛ̀ = dàmɔ̀ sh̀ ní á = yè ìkpá!í
3PL.SBJV = stand down NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS.SBJV = eat prayer

“Those who did the thing, they have to stand up so that prayers can be offered.”  
[LIB:20]

v) Polite requests

In conjunction with the interjection, ófāinè ‘please’, the ńĩ́-marked nominalization provides a polite and more formal means of making requests, as exemplified in (149).

\[(149)\] máà ófāinè ní ó = wó ó = gbèè nò
mother please NMLZ 2SG.SBJV = lift 2SG = voice top

ó = ḥá !wó fî!óó
2SG.SBJV = give 1PL little

“Mother, can you please raise your voice a little for us?”  
[OYO:19]

### 3.2.3.2 Imperative mood

The imperative mood is also an irrealis category because it encodes actions that have yet to be carried out; it encodes commands made of second persons. The form of the imperative depends on the form of the verb in question. If it is a H-tone monosyllabic verb, its imperative form remains unchanged, as we see with tṣ̀ ‘pour’ and shì́ ‘leave’ in (150) and (151) respectively.
(150)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{281} & \quad \text{tsó} \quad \text{tsó} \quad \text{nǐ} \quad \text{ó} = !\text{tó} \\
pour & \quad pour & \text{NMLZ} & \quad 2\text{SG.SBJV} = \text{be.drunk} \\
\text{“Go on, pour it! So you can get drunk.”} & \quad \text{[LIB:2,10]} 
\end{align*}
\]

(151)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{shí} & \quad \text{lè} \\
\text{leave} & \quad 3\text{SG.OBJ} \\
\text{“Leave her alone.”} & 
\end{align*}
\]

If the verb has monosyllabic L-tone, the imperative is realized as a H-tone copy of the final vowel. We see this with \text{yà} ‘go’ (152) and \text{mè} ‘wait’ (153).

(152)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{yàá-hé} & \quad \text{yè} \quad \text{è} = \text{dé} \\
go.\text{IMP-take} & \quad \text{be.located} & \quad 3\text{SG} = \text{hand} \\
\text{“Go and take it from her.”} & \quad \text{[MM:138]} 
\end{align*}
\]

(153)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mèé} & \quad \text{mí} = !\text{bá} \\
\text{wait.IMP} & \quad 1\text{SG.PROG} = \text{come} \\
\text{“Wait, I’m coming.”} & \quad \text{[OYO:338]} 
\end{align*}
\]

If the verb is disyllabic, or is monosyllabic with a contour tone, the imperative is formed by the suffixation of the morpheme \text{-mò}. This is how the imperatives of \text{kèè ‘tell’}, \text{hè ‘get’} and \text{sòlè ‘pray’} are formed in (154)-(156).

(154)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{kèè-mò} & \quad !\text{lé} \quad \text{á!ké} \quad \text{mí} = !\text{yá} \\
tell-\text{IMP} & \quad 3\text{SG.OBJ} & \text{NMLZ} & \quad 1\text{PROG} = \text{go} \\
\text{“Tell her that I am going.”} & \quad \text{[MM:97]} 
\end{align*}
\]

(155)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{hè-mò} & \quad \text{nǐ} \quad \text{ó} = \text{up and down} = \text{è} = !\text{é} \quad \text{bè} \\
\text{get-\text{IMP}} & \quad \text{NMLZ 2\text{SG} = } \quad \text{DEF} = \text{DEF} \quad \text{then} 
\end{align*}
\]
“Take this so that when you are running your errands, you can use it to pay for transportation.” [FH:157]

(156) sölé-mɔ̀ ó = hâ ó = !hé
pray-IMP 2SG.SBJV = give 2SG = body
“Pray for yourself.” [CH:132]

A command issued to more than one addressee is formed with a high tone on the final pronominal vowel and a suffix -à, as in (157). The high tone on the final vowel of the pronoun is reminiscent of the subjunctive marker. Subjunctive marking on imperative constructions will not be unusual, considering they both express irrealis mood.

(157) nyɛ̃̀ = mɔ̀-ã̀ lè nàkã̀í ó = ñù
2PL.SBJV = hold-IMP.PL it like.that 2SG = hear
“Take it as it is, ok?” [CH:29]

When the imperative verb is hà ‘give’ and its complement is an event nominalization with a first plural subject, an hortative meaning results. The verb in the event nominalization must be marked for the subjunctive. In (158) the command is issued to one individual, while in (159) it is issued to more than one individual.

(158) hà ní wó- tà tsò nèê nò
give.IMP NMLZ 1PL.SBJV-sit log this top
“Let us sit on this log.” [PAT:182]
It has been shown that the subjunctive marker ` and its (tonal) allomorphs encode various modal meanings, all of them deontic. The expression of deontic modal meaning by the subjunctive often goes hand in hand with the use of modal verbs such as tá!ó `want`, sùmò `like` and nyé `be able to`. Equally important is the role played by event nominalizations (a.k.a subordinate clauses) marked by á!kè, kóni and especially, ni. The presence of a complement introduced by ni all but guarantees subjunctive marking in the complement. Frajzyngier (1995) makes a case for recognizing complementizers as modality markers. He writes that “complementizers are lexically separate modality markers that happen to occur in a specific syntactic position.” (Frajzyngier 1995:475). According to him, they are just one means of coding modality. I would not go as far as to make the same claim for ni and its cohorts because they occur in other syntactic environments where there is no modal expression and where there are realis rather than irrealis propositions. For instance, ni is the marker of verb-based argument nominalizations in modification use (a.k.a relative clauses). What all these various constructions marked by ni have in common appears to be that they are not asserted. This is the
case for Spanish and other European languages that have indicative/subjunctive mood marking; the subjunctive occurs in propositions that are not asserted (Palmer 2001:3).

The subjunctive does not convey any epistemic meanings. This function is left to epistemic adverbials such as é!kôlé!lé ‘maybe’ and bèkê ‘maybe’. See §2.5.4 for more examples of epistemic adverbials.

3.2.4 Negation
There are fewer aspectual distinctions among negative sentences in Gã than affirmative ones.

This is a fact that has been recorded for neighbouring Akan by Osam (1994:87) and is also attested to cross-linguistically by Givón (1979:121).

3.2.4.1 Negative imperfectives and negative bare verbs
Dakubu (2008a:112) sets up two classes of verbs, based on their lexical tone, which differ according to how they form the negative of bare verbs, imperfective verbs and future verbs.

She refers to the groups as verb tone classes. Her characterization of these tone classes is accurate and worth reproducing here. She notes that verbs in class 1 have their initial syllable lexically specified as low, while those in class 2 do not i.e. they have high tone or they are underspecified. Dakubu (2008a:113) notes that verbs with underspecified tone such as ye ‘eat’ and nu ‘hear’ have cognates in Dangme that have mid tone. The underspecificity of tone in
these verbs hearkens to a time historically when Gâ had mid tones as well, that have since been
lost. It is these former mid tone verbs that are presently underspecified.

Class 1 verbs - first syllable low e.g. yì ‘beat’, fɔ̃̀ ‘throw’, kɔ̃̀ ‘bite’, gbèé ‘fall’, shwìê ‘sack’
Class 2 verbs - first syllable high e.g. yí ‘pass’, kɔ́ ‘take’, tsá!ké ‘change’, ñîtê ‘spoil’
          OR  first syllable underspecified e.g. ba ‘come’, ye ‘eat’, nũ ‘hear’
          OR  disyllabic low-low e.g. shã̀tã̀ ‘tear off (esp. meat)’, sèlè ‘swim’, dã̀mɔ̃̀ ‘stand’

Class 2 verbs are negated by assigning a high tone to the final vowel of the verb and
lengthening it. In pre-pausal position the high pitch of the vowel falls during its final phase.

When not followed by a pause it has high tone throughout. Class 1 verbs are negated with the
prefix é- in addition to final vowel lengthening. In the following examples, the (a) sentences are
in the affirmative while the (b) sentences have the corresponding negative forms.

Bare verb - class 1

Affirmative

(160a)  ákú  yì  álɔ̀ńté=!é
    aku  beat  cat = DEF
    “Aku beat the cat.”

Negative

(160b)  ákú  b-lyííí  álɔ̀ńté=!é
    aku  NEG-beat.NEG  cat = DEF
    “Aku did not beat the cat.”

(160c)  *ákú  yííí  álɔ̀ńté=!é
    aku  beat.NEG  cat = DEF
    “Aku did not beat the cat.”
Bare verb - class 2

Affirmative
(161a) ákú yí t s ṹ = ɛ̃̀   s ɛ̀ɛ̀
aku pass building = DEF back
“Aku passed (went via) the back of the building.”

Negative
(161a) ákú yííí t s ṹ = ɛ ̃̀   s ɛ̀ɛ̀
aku pass.NEG building = DEF back
“Aku did not pass (go via) the back of the building.”

(161c) *ákú é-yííí t s ṹ = ɛ ̃̀   s ɛ̀ɛ̀
aku NEG-pass.NEG building = DEF back
“Aku did not pass (go via) the back of the building.”

Habitual aspect - class 1

Affirmative
(162a) ònṹfṹ kɔ̃̀-ɔ̃̀ m ɔ́̃̀
snake bite-HAB person
“Snakes bite.”

(162b) ònṹfṹ é-!kɔ̃́ɔ̃́ɔ̃́ m ɔ́̃̀
snake NEG-bite.NEG person
“Snakes do not bite.”

Habitual aspect - class 2

Affirmative
(163a) nànná!ā kɔ̃-ɔ̃̄ tsòfâ dáá lèé!bí
nana take-HAB medicine everyday morning
“Nanaa takes medicine every morning.”
Negative
(163b) nã̀nã́!á \( kɔ́ɔ́ɔ́ \) tsɔfã́ dáá lèé!bí
nana take.NEG medicine everyday morning
“Nanaa does not take medicine every morning.”

Progressive aspect - class 1 verb
Affirmative
(164a) òkó \( ī̄-s̄hwĩé \) wùş-!í=é
Oko PROG-sack chicken-PL = DEF
“Oko is sacking the chickens (i.e. shooing them away)”

Negative
(164b) òkó \( ē̄-s̄hwĩééé \) wùş-!í=é
Oko NEG-sack.NEG chicken-PL = DEF
“Oko is not sacking the chickens”

Progressive aspect - class 2 verbs
Affirmative
(165a) òkó \( ī̄-s̄elè \)
Oko PROG-swim
“Oko is swimming.”

(165b) òkó \( s̄elèéé \)
Oko swim.NEG
“Oko is not swimming.”

When the subject of a class 1 verb is a pronoun, the negative prefix segment is deleted and its high tone is carried by the final syllable of the pronoun. The tone of the first syllable of the verb stem is downstepped. The pronoun subject of a class 2 verb has low tones on all
sylables and there is no downstepping in the verb stem. Compare (166a) with the class 1 verb and (166b) with the class 2 verb.

(166a) òmè = ëjëfì
      3PL = beat.NEG
cat = DEF
“They did not beat the cat.”

(166b) ñìnì = ëjëfì
tsu = ë
sèè
3PL = pass.NEG
building = DEF
back
“They did not pass (go via) the back of the building.”

3.2.4.2 Negative future

3.2.4.2 Negative future

For class 2 verbs, the future is negated by the suffix -ñ. For class 1 verbs, the negative prefix è- is employed in addition to the negative future -ñ. Only examples with full noun phrase subjects will be given, but the tonal changes with regards to pronominal subjects that were illustrated for bare and imperfective negatives are applicable here as well.

Class 1 - affirmative

(167a) kòjó bàá-sù
       Kojo FUT-turn.on
kànè = ë
       light = DEF
“Kojo will switch on the light.”

Negative

(167b) kòjó è-sù-ñ
       Kojo NEG-turn.on-NEG.FUT
kànè = ë
       light = DEF
“Kojo will not switch on the light.”
Class 2 - affirmative

(168a) è = ná báá-ʃhí lè
3SG = wife FUT-leave 3SG.OBJ
“His wife will leave him.”

Negative

(168b) è = ná shí-ŋ̀ lè
3SG = wife leave-NEG.FUT 3SG.OBJ
“His wife will not leave him.”

A negative future proposition can also be expressed by means of final vowel lengthening, a strategy that, as has been shown, is ordinarily reserved for imperfectives and bare verbs. It can convey future negation as long as it has been established in the discourse context or extra-linguistic context that a future event is being referred to. For example, in (169) when A asks B if she will attend a funeral (in future), B’s negative response is not marked with the negative future suffix -ŋ, but rather with the imperfective/bare verb negation strategy of vowel lengthening.

(169) A: ò = báá-yà yàlá = à
2SG = FUT-go funeral = DEF
“Will you go to the funeral?”

B: i̥ = lyááá
1SG = go.NEG
“I won’t go.”
3.2.4.3 Negative perfect

The negative perfect marker is the suffix, -ko. Class 1 verb stems take the additional negator é-.

This is manifested as a high tone on a pronominal subject and a downstepped high on the initial stem syllable, as in (171) and (172) with the class 1 verbs nà ‘see’ and tsè ‘be.long (duration)’.

Example (173) has the class 2 verb, sɔ̀lè ‘pray (baptize)’

(171) è=bà  ɪ̃=ŋɔ̃̀   nì  ɪ̃=kɛ̀ɛ́  ĩ́=!ná-kò
3SG=come 1SG=presence and 1SG =say 1SG.NEG= see-NEG.PERF

dollar  dáŋ̀
before
“He came to see me and I said I have not seen dollar currency before.” [MM:64]

(172) ɪ̃=bà  ē=!tsɛ́-kò    k ŕ á á  ê
1SG=come 3SG.NEG=be.long-NEG.PERF at.all IJ
“I came not very long ago.” (Lit: “I came, it has not been long at all”) [FH:106]

(173) á=sɔ̀l è      b ò   ò ò
3PL.IMPERS.PERF=baptise 2SG.OBJ IJ

à=sɔ́lé-kò    bò  òò
3PL.IMPERS=baptise-NEG.PERF 2SG.OBJ IJ

dáá  áfi =!é    à =bàá-féé    á-hά
everyday year =TOP 3PL.IMPERS = FUT-do 3PL.IMPERS.SBJV-give
bò
2SG.OBJ
“Whether you’ve been baptized or you haven’t been baptized, every year it will be done for you.” [OYO:152]
3.2.4.4 Negative subjunctive

This is marked by the prefix ká-. It is the only negative prefix that co-occurs with its affirmative counterpart i.e. it co-occurs with, and immediately follows, the subjunctive prefix á-. This is seen clearly in (174).

(174) nì è=télé è=gbèé=!ɛ́ kóní gbèé=!ɛ́
and 3SG = carry.on head 3SG = dog = DEF NMLZ dog = DEF

nù=!ɛ́  á-ká-fɔ̀ lè tsò
water = DEF SBJV-NEG.SBJV-get.wet 3SG.OBJ too.much

“And he carried his dog on his head so that the dog would not get too wet.”
[DEB:143]

In (175), the subjunctive is marked as a high tone on the pronoun subjects.

(175) T: ĩ́=kɛ̀ɛ̀ !lè á!kè́ nyɔ̃̀ŋmɔ́ kɛ̀ɛ́
1SG.PERF=say 3SG.OBJ NMLZ God say

ẽ́ = !tsá lè hèwɔ́ = !ɔ́ é=ká-lyá
3SG.PERF=heal 3SG.OBJ sake=TOP 3SG.SBJV = NEG.SBJV-go

“I’ve told her that God says He has healed her so she should not go.”

D: hɛ̃̀ɛ̃́!ɛ́ é=ká-ya môj
yes 3SG.SBJV = NEG.SBJV-go indeed

“Yes. Indeed, she should not go.” [DT: 17;20]

3.2.4.5 Negative imperative

An imperative (issued to a single addressee) is negated by employing the subjunctive marker á- in combination with the negative subjunctive prefix, ka-. The difference is that ka- in these negative imperatives occurs before the subjunctive marker. In negative subjunctives, the
negator occurs after the subjunctive marker. It is more useful, then, to think of the morpheme, 

\( ká- \) as a negative irrealis marker since it functions to negate irrealis propositions generally.

Examples (176) and (177) contain negative imperative propositions.

(176)  
\[
\begin{array}{llllll}
\text{NEG.SBJV-SBJV-cry} & \text{NMLZ} & \text{2SG = head} & \text{VENT-split} & \text{2SG.OBJ} \\
\end{array}
\]

\( kà-á-fó \)  
\( ní \)  
\( ó = yîtsô \)  
\( bà-gbá \)  
\( bò \)

“Don’t cry and give yourself a headache.”  [FH:178]

(177)  
\[
\begin{array}{lcc}
\text{oh} & \text{Mr. Mensah} & \text{NEG.SBJV-SBJV-pour} \\
\end{array}
\]

\( kà-á-lshwìè \)  
\( î = hîê \)

à-shî 
PERT-down 

“Oh, Mr. Mensah, don’t embarass me.” (Lit: “…don’t pour my face down.”)  
[MM:49]

An imperative given to more than one addressee is negated by the negative irrealis prefix \( ká- \) occurring immediately after the plural pronoun. The subjunctive is marked on the plural pronoun by a high tone.

(178)  
\[
\begin{array}{lll}
\text{2PL.SBJV = NEG.SBJV-split-IMP.PL} & \text{1SG = mouth} \\
\end{array}
\]

\( nyë = ká-gbá-á \)  
\( î = nàà \)

“Don’t bother me.”
The following table summarizes the negative morphemes in Gã:

Table 10: Negative marking in Ga

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Class 1</th>
<th>Class 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bare verb</td>
<td>é-STEM-ğıv</td>
<td>STEM-ğıv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>é-STEM-ğı, é-STEM-ğıv</td>
<td>STEM-ğı, é-STEM-ğıv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfect</td>
<td>é-STEM-kò</td>
<td>STEM-kò</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjunctive</td>
<td>á-ká-STEM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperative (2\textsuperscript{nd} singular)</td>
<td>kà-á-STEM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperative (2\textsuperscript{nd} plural)</td>
<td>ká-STEM-à</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.5 Deictic auxiliaries ba- and ya-

These auxiliary verbs are attached to the verb root in the immediate pre-verb position. They are homophonous with the independent verbs bà ‘come’ and yà ‘go’, except for tone; the deictic auxiliaries are toneless and receive their tone from adjacent syllables. They are not considered affixes because in many contexts they are optional and they have content meaning - they indicate motion towards (ventive ba-) or away from (itive ya-) some deictic centre. There are other contexts in which the ascription of a motional interpretation is not optimal, and here the deictic verbs perform functions ranging from time reference to change in Aktionsart. These grammatical functions are performed primarily by ba-.
The data shows that Gà speakers are particularly attuned to explicating the paths of travel of subject referents in accomplishing actions or carrying out events. This is done by indicating motion toward the deictic centre with *ba*, and motion away from the deictic centre with *ya*. The deictic centre may be the speaker or some third person, or in narratives it could be the narrator’s imagined location in the scene. In (179), the speaker is reporting a directive given by one Auntie Kai in which Auntie Kai asks her to come and pick something up. Here, Auntie Kai is the deictic centre and the speaker is to move to her location, hence the use of the ventive auxiliary, *ba-*.

(179) Auntie Kai kɛ̀ɛ̃́ ĩ́=bá-kɔ́ nĩ́=!ɛ̃́
Auntie Kai say 1SG.SBJV = VENT-take thing = DEF
“Auntie Kai says I should come and take the thing.” [MM:123]

In (180), the deictic centre is the speaker, a traditional priestess who makes a herbal preparation through which people make supplications during the twin festival. The ventive marker indicates motion towards the location of the herbal preparation, which is also the home of the priestess. The location of the herbs is therefore the deictic centre in this situation.

(180) nɔ̀ nĩ́ bò ɔ́=bà-bí=!ɛ́ hãâjíi=!ɛ̃́
NM NMLZ 2SG.OBJ 2SG.PERF = VENT-ask = DEF twins = DEF
ànme = feé ànmẹ́ = !há bò
3PL.PERF = do 3PL.PERF = give 2SG.OBJ
“What you have come and asked for…the twins, they have done it for you.” [YM:103]
In (181), the itive auxiliary, *ya*, conveys motion away from the deictic centre, which is the speaker.

\[(181) \quad \text{ð}=\text{sùmɔ̃̀} \quad \text{nǐ} \quad mā=\text{lyā-hé} \quad \text{shiká}=!\text{á} \quad yɛ \quad ɛ=ðɛ} \]

\[2SG=\text{want} \quad \text{NMLZ} \quad \text{1SG.FUT} = \text{ITIV-take money} = \text{DEF be.located} \quad 3SG=\text{hand} \]

“Do you want me to go and take the money from her?” [MM:136]

A deictic auxiliary verb may be optional or obligatory, and the decision to use one is based on how much information about the event the speaker wishes to communicate. For example, (181) without itive *ya-* will communicate the core of the message that the speaker is sending i.e. whether the addressee will like him to retrieve the money from the third person. Crucially, it will remain ambivalent on the third party’s location because without *ya-* the third party could be in the same location as the participants of the conversation and could even be privy to the exchange. However, use of *ya-* makes it unequivocal that the third party is not in the same location and that the speaker will need to move to the third party’s location in order to claim the money. Similarly, (180) without *ba-* will be devoid of information on the location of the asking. Example (179) is parallel to (181) with regard to the semantic effect of the deictic auxiliary. Without it, the more natural interpretation is one where “the thing” is in fact *not* in Auntie Kai’s possession. Therefore, although not obligatory, in certain pragmatic contexts, non-use of a deictic auxiliary may lead to flouting of Grice’s maxim of manner, due to the ambiguity or vagueness that results.
There are other contexts in which the use of a deictic auxiliary is crucial to an adequate understanding of the message because it gives temporal information that maintains text coherence. This is often the case when the deictic auxiliary occurs with a bare verb which has a default present tense interpretation. The use of a deictic auxiliary with such a verb gives a past interpretation. In the last line of (182), for instance, the verb ṅàmò̀ is marked by the ventive auxiliary, ba- which expresses the movement of the boy and dog to the window. Hoewever, ba- plays an indispensable role in signifying that the event occurred in the past. Without it the sentence would be given a present tense interpretation (“They are standing by the window”), which would be temporally incongruous with the prior and successive texts, all of which have past time reference.

(182) kòkòdé!né = !é bé è = tọ̀ = ò mìŋ
frog = DEF be.located.NEG 3SG = bottle = DEF inside
é = làájé nò hèwọ̀ nì̀ àmẹ̀ = bọ́!í tsú̀ = !è mìŋ
3SG.PERF-go.missing that sake FOC 3PL = start room = DEF inside
tàò-mọ̀ àmẹ̀ = wósò àtàlè-!í òọ́ots ñ́ !jí àspáàtré
look.for-NOM 3PL = shake dress-PL which COP shoe
àgbọ̀-i ní ká!-mọ̀ jé!mẹ̀ gbẹ̀ẹ̀ = è kè è = ýítsò
big-PL NMLZ lie-ITER there dog = DEF take 3SG = head
hò jar mìŋ fẹ́ẹ̀ àmẹ̀ = !náááà lè òmẹ̀ = òà-dàmò̀
put inside all 3PL = see.NEG 3SG.OBJ 3PL = VENT-stand
The frog was not in his bottle. He was missing. So they started to look for him. They shook the clothes, boots, which are the big shoes lying over there. The dog even put his head into the jar but they still couldn’t find him. They came and stood by the window.’  

[DEB:7]

In the same vein, while \( kå \) ‘lie’ in (183a) may have a past or present time interpretation, \( yå-kå \) in (183b) can only have a past interpretation.

\[
\text{(183a) \ gbèé=è \ kå \ sàà-tsó=è \ nò} \\
\text{dog=DEF lie bed-wood=DEF top} \\
\text{“The dog is lying on the bed/The dog lay on the bed.”}
\]

\[
\text{(183b) \ gbèé=è \ yå-kå \ sàà-tsó=è \ nò} \\
\text{dog=DEF ITIV-lie bed-wood=DEF top} \\
\text{“The dog went and lay on the bed”}
\]

Sometimes the deictic auxiliaries occur with verbs without any accompanying sense of motion. Such non-motional senses typically occur with telic and punctual verbs i.e. Accomplishment verbs. In (184), although the verb \( gbó \) ‘die’ is marked by ventive \( ba- \), it is not being suggested that the subject referent moved from one location to the speaker before giving up the ghost.

\[
\text{(184) \ kpàákóò \ é=!ná \ fifty-six \ nì \ è=ba-gbó} \\
\text{just \ 3SG.PERF=get and \ 3SG.PERF=VENT-die} \\
\text{nélè} \\
\text{this} \\
\text{“He has just turned fifty-six, and he has died (lit: “he has come and died”).”}  \quad \text{[DF:3]}
\]
The agent of the verb with ventive marking, óyītsō ‘your head’, in (185) is inanimate and therefore incapable of motion, so ba- is not indicating spatial deixis, which prompts the question of what work it must be doing.

(185) kà-á-fó ní ò=ŷītsō bà-gbá bó
NEG.SBJV-SBJV-cry NMLZ 2SG=head VENT-split 2SG.OBJ
“Don’t cry and give yourself a headache.” (Lit: “Don’t cry or else your head will come and ache you) [FH:178]

The same question can be posed of the function of ba- in (186), where its subject referent, twí!éé!kó ‘some Twi’, clearly lacks any capacity for motion. To provide some context, (186) is a continuance of the utterance in (104).

(186) hèwó=!ɔ́ ké àléénɔ́ twí=!ɛ́ ékò bà-fútù
so=TOP if perhaps Twi=DEF some VENT-mix
mù=!ɛ́ nyé=mō-ã́ lè nàkàì
inside=DEF 2PL.SBJV=hold-IMP.PL 3SG.OBJ like.that
ó=nù
2SG=hear
“So, if perhaps some Twi gets mixed in (with my speech), take it as it is, ok?” (Lit: “If perhaps some Twi comes and mixes (with my speech)...”) [CH:28]

I propose that the function of the deictic auxiliary in situations where there is obviously no spatial meaning is to indicate the occurrence of a change of state by highlighting the beginning point of the state change. It therefore has an ingressive aspectual function, where emphasis is placed on the entering into of a new state. So when a verb is marked by a deictic
auxiliary and imparts motional semantics, the verb is viewed perfectively. However, when the
deictic auxiliary conveys no sense of motion, then the focus is on one stage of the event rather
than the whole. It is often the ventive auxiliary, \( ba- \) which performs this aspectual function.

This semantic difference is reflected in the incompatibility of \( ba- \)-marked verbs (without
motional semantics) with the temporal adverbial clause, \( ëtsè \) ‘long time ago’.

\[
\begin{align*}
(187a) \quad & è=gbó \quad é=tsè \\
& 3SG=die \quad 3SG.PERF=be.long \\
& “He died a long time ago” (Lit: “He died, it has been a long time”) \\
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
(187b) \quad & *è= bà-gbó \quad é=tsè \\
& 3SG=VENT-die \quad 3SG.PERF=be.long.time \\
& “He died a long time ago” (Lit: He came and died, it has been a long time)
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
(188a) \quad & è=tsákè \quad è=jwěŋ-mɔ \quad é=tsè \\
& 3SG=change \quad 3SG=think-NOM \quad 3SG=be.long.time \\
& “He changed his mind a long time ago.”
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
(188a) \quad & *è= bà-tsákè \quad è=jwěŋ-mɔ \quad é=tsè \\
& 3SG=VENT-change \quad 3SG=think-NOM \quad 3SG=be.long.time \\
& “He came and changed his mind a long time ago.”
\end{align*}
\]

As mentioned above, deictic auxiliaries which lack a motion dimension tend to be telic, and in
narratives this association is effectively exploited as a means of ensuring discourse cohesion
(Campbell 2014:92).

The deictic auxiliaries can co-occur with all TAM markers except the progressive (189).
They also cannot occur with the generic habitual i.e. habituals which indicate the typical properties of an entity (190).

(190) *àbónúá bà-jó-ɔ̀
lime VENT-bitter-HAB
“Lime comes to be bitter.”

This incompatibility of the deictic auxiliaries with these two imperfective categories is the result of the strong association of the auxiliaries with past time reference. Since the progressive and generic habitual have present time reference in many contexts, a contradiction results when they are combined with the deictic auxiliaries. Dynamic habituals, on the other hand, do not have a present time interpretation and so are free to occur with the deictic auxiliaries, as (191) shows.

(191) ònkópá-yà-à  ǹì à-yà-tsé-ɔ̀    kɛ̀-bà-à
adult-PL go-HAB 3PL.IMPERS = ITIV-pluck-HAB take-come-HAB

“Adults go and pluck them (herbs) and bring them and sell them.” [OYO:230]

If the verb is explicitly marked for the future, the past semantics of the deictic auxiliaries is overridden, and the two categories can coexist:
It must be stressed that the deictic auxiliaries are not tense markers. As discussed in §3.2.1.2 the combination of the deictic auxiliaries and the archaic future/modal marker àá- gave rise to the modern future marker bàá- and the prospective marker yàá-. They also function as ventive and itive imperative markers, as in (193) and (194).

(193) bàá-lyé ní!í

come.IMP-eat thing

“Come and eat.”

(194) yàá-kó

go.IMP-take

“Go and take (it)” [MM:125]

3.3 Transitivity and grammatical relations

The verbal clause in Gã comprises a verb and at the minimum, one argument. This single argument corresponds to the subject and Dixon (2010) refers to this argument as being in S function. Such a clause is thus an intransitive clause. In (195) the single argument and subject of the clause is yòómó!ɛ́ ‘the old woman’. In (196) it is má, a portmanteau comprising the first singular pronoun and the future marker. In (197) it is the third singular pronoun è= and in (198) it is nũ̀ṹ=!ɛ̃́.
(195) \textit{yodómọ} = ɪ́'ɛ́ ɛ́-!fó aáhṹũ
old.woman = DEF PERF-cry continuously
“The old woman has cried continuously.” [FH:170]

(196) ɛ́ɛ́ɛ́ ŭ́má = !mē
yes 1SG.FUT = wait
“Yes, I will wait.” [YM:201]

(197) ū tā
3SG = be.finished
“It’s finished.” [MM:219]

(198) nṹṹ = ɛ̃́ s h ã́!né
man = DEF slip
“The man slipped.”

The argument in S function may be an agent (195), (196), or patient (197), (198). All S arguments of verbal property words bear the semantic role of patient, e.g. (199) and (200).

(199) ūkó yítsó-ŋ̀ wà
Oko head-inside be.hard
“Oko is wicked.”

(200) ū=kwɔ̀
3SG = be.tall
“She is tall.”

A verb may also have two arguments, resulting in a transitive clause. In most cases, one argument is the actor, agent or initiator of the action coded by the verb and the other is the entity that is affected by the action. But this is not always the case and in this regard, Dixon (2010:128) provides a definition that encapsulates the various roles of what he terms the A
function. He writes: “That role which is most likely to be related to the success of the activity
is placed in A function.” Here, A refers to the transitive subject argument. The A function may
therefore be occupied by an agent or even a patient. On the other hand, “that role whose
referent is most likely to be significantly affected will be placed in O function” (Dixon
2010:130). This is the transitive object argument and is often taken up by the semantic role of
patient. It is more widely referred to as the most patient-like argument (therefore P) and it will
be referred to as such in the remainder of this work. For Gâ, the object argument is also
frequently taken up by locations and goals; places where subject arguments move to or from.

Gâ is strictly verb-medial: the subject always precedes the verb and the object always
follows the verb. In (201) and (202), the subjects, é = ‘3SG’ and gbéké-nũụ !lɛ́ ‘the boy’
respectively, bear the roles of agent while the objects, gbéké!ɛ̃́ gú!gɔ́ ‘the child’s nose’ and tsò
àgbọ̀ kọ̀ ‘a big tree’ are both patients.

(201)  ë=bà-kɔ̃̀  gbé!ké=!ɛ̃́ gú!gɔ ̃́
3SG=VENT-bite child=DEF nose
“He came and bit the child’s nose.” [PAT:91]

(202) gbé!ké-nũụ !lɛ́ hũ nà tsò àgbọ̀ kọ̀
child-male DEF too see tree big INDEF
“The boy also saw a big tree.” [MAN:62]

In (203) and (204) the objects are locations - mânsèè ‘abroad’ and ódêŋ ‘your palm’
respectively.
(203) èè = yà  mãŋ-sèè  
3SG.PROG = go  country-back  
“He’s going abroad.” [DF:21]

(204) èè = jè  ó = dɛ̃ŋ̀  
3SG.PROG = exit  2SG = palm  
“He’s dying.” [CH:76]

3.3.1 Evidence for subjecthood and objecthood

From the above discussion and example sentences given so far, it is clear that word order in Gã is strictly SVO, but so far the terms ‘subject’ and ‘object’ have been used without any real justification. In order to determine whether Gã has the grammatical relations of subject and object, there needs to be determined whether there are any syntactic phenomena that apply equally to the arguments that have been labelled as subjects and which do not apply to those arguments labelled as objects. In other words, are A and S arguments treated alike while P arguments are treated differently in Gã? If the answer to this is affirmative, then Gã grammatical relations are functionally similar to those in languages like English where A and S undergo various syntactic phenomena from which P is excluded. A and S are then subjects and P is object, giving a nominative-accusative case system.

The syntactic behaviours in Gã that establish A and S as one grammatical relation distinct from P are word order, pronominalization, raising and indispensability of A and S. These will be examined in turn.
i) Word order

A and S arguments always occur before the verb while P occurs after the verb in the immediate post-verbal position. As hinted at earlier, the A or S argument need not necessarily be an agent. It may be a patient, instrument, recipient, location or benefactor. The P argument, on the other hand, cannot be an agent. It is usually a patient, location or recipient. Switching the order of the A and P arguments results in a different meaning. Example:

(205a) tsàtsú !tsɛ̃́ òkó
       ant sting Oko
       “An ant stung Oko.”

(205b) òkó !tsɛ̃́ tsàtsú
       Oko sting ant
       “Oko stung an ant.”
       *“An ant stung Oko.”

In a few verbs, the patient occurs in object position but the subject is not an agent. Rather it is a dummy subject, the third singular pronoun, è=. One such example is the verb for ‘be tired’ which is meaningful only when it occurs with the dummy subject and the patient object. The subject, è = is non-referential.

(206) è=tɔ̀ mì
       3SG.PERF=tire 1SG.OBJ
       “I am tired.”
Since A and S occur pre-verbally and P occurs post-verbally, this is taken as indication of the similarity of A and S, and since they can both code agents and P cannot, they are deemed subjects.

i) Pronominalization

When singular A and S arguments are pronominalized, they take the same form (indicated in the second column of table 11), while singular pronominal P forms are different (third column).

In very formal registers of Gã, the form of the first singular subject pronoun is the same as the object but in conversational Gã they are different, as indicated in the table. The second singular object could also be identical in form with its subject counterpart, o, but this use is very rare. 

$bɔ$ is the more commonly-used objective form.

Table 11: Singular pronominal forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Subject (A &amp; S)</th>
<th>Object (P)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st person</td>
<td>$ɨ=\bar{m}_ɨ=$</td>
<td>$m_ɨ$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd person</td>
<td>$o=$</td>
<td>$b_0/o$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd person</td>
<td>$e=$</td>
<td>$lɛ/Ø$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following examples illustrate this difference. In the intransitive clause (207a) and the transitive clause (207b), the argument in S and A function respectively is the second singular
pronoun, o=. However, in the transitive clause in (207c), the second singular pronoun occurs in P function, and is realized as bo.

(207a) bɛ̀ ò=bàá=mɛ̀ QP 2SG=FUT-wait
“You will wait, won’t you?” [YM:200]

(207b) ò=bàá=!yá-hé dàà tò kòmé 2SG=FUT-ITIV-buy alcohol bottle one
“You will go and buy one bottle of alcohol.” [YM:89]

(207c) ê è=yóó bò ê IJ 3SG=recognize 2SG.OBJ IJ
Wow, she recognized you! [DF:139]

Similarly, with the third person singular pronoun, S and A arguments are realized by e=

(208a), (208b), while P arguments are realized by lɛ if they are animate, and zero if they are inanimate.

(208a) ð=ë=hĩ́ĩ́ 3SG=be.good.NEG
“It didn’t get better” [CH:43]

(208b) ð=ya-gbèè fàà mị́ŋ
3SG=ITIV-fall river inside
“He went and fell into a river.” [SAM:95]

(208c) Janet yà-kwé-ơ lè fiòfḯlô Janet ITIV-look-HAB 3SG.OBJ small.RED
“Janet goes and cares for her every now and then.” [DT:9;28]
There is also a third plural impersonal pronoun for A and S arguments, \( a = \), but it has no P argument counterpart. The use of this pronoun is a means of downgrading the importance of the argument in A or S function, leading to a reading not unlike a passive in languages with passive constructions. There is no equivalent pronoun whose function it is to downgrade the importance of an argument in P function. In (209a), \( a = \) is in S function and in (209b) it is in A function.

(209a) \( a = sɔ̀lè \)

3PL.IMPERS.PERF = pray

“Prayers have been said.”  [CH:64]

(209b) mɛ̃̀nĩ́ \( a = tsɛ́-!ɔ́ \) jɛ̃́!mɛ̃́

what 3PL.IMPERS = call-HAB there

“What is that place called?”  [FH:51]

Within the singular pronominal system therefore, A and S have the same form while P is different. Plural forms are isomorphic between A, S and P and so do not serve to distinguish subject from object.

ii) Raising

S and A arguments in a grammatical event nominalization in complement function (a.ka. complement clause) are capable of being raised from their A or S function in the nominalization to P function in the main clause. In other words, the subject of the grammatical event nominalization (a.k.a the lower clause) is raised to become the object of the higher
clause. This happens when the event nominalization is a complement of a perception verb such as nà ‘see’. P arguments cannot undergo this type of raising. In (210a), Aku is the S argument in the nominalization but is raised to become the P argument in the main clause in (210b).

Further evidence that it is in P function is given in (210c), where it is pronominalized with le, the third person object pronoun.

(210a) ṭókó nà ní ákú ṣ-fó
Oko saw NMLZ Aku PROG-cry
“Oko saw that Aku was crying.”

(210b) ṭókó nà ákú ní èè = fó
Oko saw Aku NMLZ PROG = cry
“Oko saw Aku crying.”

(210c) ṭókó nà le ní èè = fó
Oko saw Aku NMLZ PROG = cry
“Oko saw her crying.”

Example (211a) contains an event nominalization which has both an A argument (Ama) and a P argument (tsó!é ‘the tree’). Although the A argument can be raised (211b), the P argument cannot (211c).

(211a) wɔ̀=nã̀ ní á!mã́ ṣ-kɔ̀ t só = !é
1PL=see NMLZ Ama PROG-climb tree = DEF
“We saw Ama climbing the tree.”

(211b) wɔ̀=nã̀ á!mã́ n ĩ̀ èè=kɔ̀ t só = !é
1PL=see Ama NMLZ 3SG.PROG = climb tree = DEF
“We saw Ama climbing the tree.”
The syntactic phenomenon of subject raising therefore treats A and S alike in permitting them to be raised and treats P differently in barring it from being raised.

iii) Indispensability of A and S

Each and every predicate in Gã must have a subject i.e. an A or S argument. A clause without a subject is ungrammatical. However, a clause without an object argument is permissible, even when the verb is capable of having an object. For example (208a) and (208b) above, repeated below as (212a) and (213a) without their S and A arguments respectively will result in the ungrammatical sentences in (212b) and (213b) below.

(212a) é=!hĩ́ĩ́ĩ̂
3SG=be.good.NEG
“It didn’t get better” [CH:43]

(212b) *hĩ́ĩ́ĩ̂
be.good.NEG
“It didn’t get better”

(213a) è=yà-gbèé fàà mĩ̀ŋ̀
3SG=ITIV-fall river inside
“He went and fell into a river.” [SAM:95]

(213b) *yà-gbèé fàà mĩ̀ŋ̀
ITIV-fall river inside
“He went and fell into the river.”
However, the following well-formed sentences have no object.

(214) yè-ì = è ̀   ŋ ̀-lá
   woman-PL = DEF  PROG-sing
   “The women are singing.”

(215) ã̀mɛ̀ = bé-ɔ̀  t s ɔ ̃́
   3PL = quarrel-HAB  too.much
   “They quarrel too much”

The syntactic phenomena discussed above shows that Gã treats A and S arguments the
same and O arguments differently. This is equivalent to what pertains in languages like English
that have established subject and object grammatical relations. Therefore, one can posit that the
arguments that occur in A and S function in Gã are subjects, while those that occur in P
function are objects.

3.3.2 Ditransitive clauses

In the preceding sections, we have seen examples of clauses which have no object (intransitive
clauses) and those which have one object (monotransitive clauses). Certain verbs are capable of
occurring with two objects, resulting in ditransitive clauses/constructions. Examples of such
verbs are hã́ ‘give’, kè ‘gift (v.)’, wò ‘wear, apply’, mã̀ ‘lend’, fà ‘borrow’, ƞmà ‘write (a
letter)’. Some example sentences are given below, with the two objects in bold:

(216) òkó kè m̀  kùɛ̀-nĩ́!ĩ́
   Oko gift 1SG.OBJ neck-thing
   “Oko gifted me a necklace.”
Many ditransitive clauses are a means of expressing acts of transfer of some entity (usually inanimate or non-human) to another entity (usually animate). The transfer need not be physical, as in the case of the verbs tsɔ̀ɔ ‘teach/show’, kɛ̀ɛ̂ ‘tell’, tã́ ‘narrate.a.folktale’ and gbà ‘narrate’, where the thing being passed on is abstract or at the very least, intangible. The verb bí ‘ask’ is atypical in that although it takes two objects, there is no transfer involved. In terms of semantic roles, the argument in A function is the agent, the argument that is transferred is the theme (T) and the argument to which the transfer is made is the recipient/benefactive (R). The recipient occurs in the immediate post-verbal position, followed by the theme. Since arguments in Gã are morphologically unmarked, the ditransitive construction shows neutral alignment in terms of encoding across constructions i.e. the P of a monotransitive construction does not have similar coding to either the R or T of a ditransitive construction; no argument has any coding. This type of ditransitive construction is known as a double object construction.
3.3.2.1 Identifying the direct and indirect object in a ditransitive clause

A decades-old problem in syntax is that of ascertaining which object in a ditransitive construction is the direct object i.e. which object exhibits the same syntactic behavior as the single object in a transitive clause. The other object, by virtue of not exhibiting these characteristics nor characteristics of the subject, is then ascribed the status of indirect object. In order to answer this question with respect to Gã, one must recognize that various objects will display various syntactic properties depending on the verb they occur with. Therefore, not all direct objects in ditransitive clauses are the same. Some exhibit more typical direct object features than others.

The syntactic tests that will be used to determine which of the two objects aligns more with the direct object of a monotransitive construction are word order, pronominalization, equi-NP reference in complementation and to some extent, focalization. The first two phenomena are considered coding patterns while the rest are behavioural patterns (Malchukov et. al 2010:10).

i) Word order

Since in a monotransitive clause the argument in immediate post-verbal position is the direct object, we may posit then that in a ditransitive clause the argument in this position is also the direct object. This by itself is not conclusive evidence as there are other languages like English
where the reverse obtains i.e. the argument immediately following the verb is the indirect object and the one furthest from the verb is the direct object. Therefore, more supporting evidence is needed.

ii) Pronominalization

When this test is applied, we see that only the post-verbal object most proximal to the verb, the R, is capable of being pronominalized. This argument takes the pronominal form that a direct object in a monotransitive clause would take. For example, in (219b), the immediate post-verbal object (R) - *Oko* - is pronominalized with *lɛ̀*. The second object (T) in the ditransitive clause, *shiká* ‘money’, by contrast, cannot be pronominalized (219c).

(219a) ákú !hà òkó shiká
Aku give Oko money
“Aku gave Oko money”

Pronominalization of recipient

(219b) ákú !hã̀ lɛ̀ shiká
Aku give 3SG.OBJ money
“Aku gave him money”

Pronominalization of theme

(219c) *ákú !hã̀ òkó Ø
Aku give Oko 3SG.OBJ.INAN
“Aku gave it to Oko”
Even if the T were a third person that was high on the animacy hierarchy and therefore capable of being pronominalized overtly, as in the animate theme *gbèè* ‘dog’ in (220a), it still would not be possible (220b):

(220a) ákú kè òkó *gbèè*
    Aku gift Oko dog
    “Aku gifted Oko a dog.”

(220b) *ákú kè òkó lè*
    Aku gift Oko 3SG.OBJ
    “Aku gifted him to Oko”

iii) Equi-NP reference in purpose complementation

This is the strongest evidence that the argument immediately posterior to the verb is the direct object. An event nominalization may function as an NP expressing purpose (221a). When the main verb is a modal verb such as *tá!ó* ‘want’, the object of the verb in the purpose nominalization may be raised to become the object of the main verb (221b).

(221a) òkó ŋ *tá!ó* ní é=kpé 1òò
    Oko PROG-want NMLZ 3SG.SBJV=chew meat
    “Oko wants to chew meat.”

(221b) òkó ŋ *tá!ó* 1òò, ní é=kpé Øì
    Oko PROG-want meat NMLZ 3SG.SBJV=chew 3SG.OBJ
    “Oko wants meat to chew.”
If the verb in the purpose nominalization has two objects, as in (221c), only the object closest to the verb i.e. the recipient, can be raised to become the object of the main verb (221d). The theme cannot (221e). This shows that it is the recipient that is the direct object.

(221c) òkó ŋ̀-tá!ó  ni ̃́  é=!ké ákú kùɛ̀-nĩ́!ĩ́
Oko PROG-want NMLZ 3SG.SBJV = gift aku neck-thing
“Oko wants to gift Aku a necklace.”

(221d) òkó ŋ̀-tá!ó  ákúi n i ̃́  é=!ké lɛ̀i kùɛ̀-nĩ́!ĩ́
Oko PROG-want Aku NMLZ 3SG=gift 3SG.OBJ neck-thing
“Oko is looking for Aku to gift her a necklace/Oko wants Aku in order to gift her a necklace.”

(221e) *òkó ŋ̀-tá!ó  kùɛ̀-nĩ́!ĩ́i n i ̃́  é=!ké ákú
Oko PROG-want neck-thing NMLZ 3SG.SBJV = gift Aku Øi
3SG.OBJ
“Oko is looking for a necklace to gift to Aku/Oko wants a necklace to gift to Aku.”

iv) Focalization and constituent questioning

These two are discussed together because they essentially comprise the same syntactic strategy.

An argument is focused by placing it in sentence-initial position followed by the focus marker, ni. The focus marker may be omitted, although its tone remains and docks on the preceding syllable (See chapter 7 for a fuller discussion). A content question is obtained by placing the
question word in initial position followed by the focus marker, *nĩ̄*. Here also, the focus marker may be deleted.

In (222), the patient/object in a monotransitive clause is focused and in (223) it is questioned.

(222)  gbé!kɛ̃́ = lɛ̃́ nĩ̀ ōkó yi (lɛ)
child = DEF NMLZ Oko beat (3SG.OBJ)
“It is the child that Oko beat.”

(223)  námɔ̃̀ nĩ̀ ōkó yi (lɛ)
who NMLZ Oko beat (3SG.OBJ)
“Who did Oko beat?”

The focalization and question-formation tests yield some mixed results. Since a direct object in a monotransitive clause is capable of being focused and questioned, one would expect that a direct object in a ditransitive clause will also be amenable to these processes. For most speakers, both the theme and recipient arguments of all ditransitive verbs do qualify in this regard. The example in (224a) contains the verb, *mâjé* ‘send.from.abroad’.

(224a)  yòó = è mâjé mĩ̀ àtáté
woman = DEF send.from.abroad 1SG.OBJ dress
“It is the woman who sent me a dress from abroad.”

Theme - focus

(224b)  àtáté nĩ̀ yòó = è mâjé !mĩ̀
dress FOC woman = DEF send.from.abroad 1SG.OBJ
“It was a dress that the woman sent me.”
Recipient - focus

(224c) mĩ̀ nĩ̀ yòó = è màjé (mĩ) àtàlé
1SG FOC woman = DEF send.from.abroad 1SG.OBJ dress
“It was to me that the woman sent a dress from abroad.”

Theme - constituent question

(225a) mɛ̃̀nĩ̀ nĩ̀ yòó = è màjé !mĩ̀
what FOC woman = DEF send.from.abroad 1SG.OBJ
“What did the woman send me from abroad?”

Recipient - constituent question

(225b) nã́mɔ̃̀ nĩ̀ yòó = è màjé lɛ̀ àtàlé
who FOC woman = DEF send.from.abroad 3SG.OBJ dress
“Who did the woman send a dress to from abroad?”

However, for the verb hà́ ‘give’, there is a lack of consensus over whether the theme can be
focused (226a) or questioned (226b).

(226a) ?gbèé nĩ̀ òkó !hà ákú
dog FOC Oko give Aku
“It was a dog that Oko gave to Aku.”

(226b) ?mɛ̃̀nĩ̀ nĩ̀ òkó !hà ákú
what FOC Oko give Aku
“What did Oko give to Aku?”

No such controversy exists for the recipient (227a), (227b).

(227a) ákú nĩ̀ òkó !há lɛ̀ gbèé
Aku FOC Oko give 3SG.OBJ dog
It is Aku that Oko gave a dog to.”
One cannot conclude a great deal from this patterning, except to note that since the recipient object enjoys universal acceptance in focus position, it is more direct-object-like than the theme, which in focus position with the verb, *hâ* ‘give’ is considered ungrammatical by some speakers.

Other diagnostic tests such as the ability to be modified by a verb-based grammatical argument nominalization (relativizability) are not useful for distinguishing the arguments in monotransitive and ditransitive constructions because all arguments ‘pass’ the tests. This is exemplified below. (228)-(230) show that all arguments can be modified by a verb-based argument nominalization.

**Patient NP - modification by verb-based argument nominalization**

(228a) gbé!kê = lê nî òkó yí = è ŋ-fó

child = DEF NMLZ Oko beat = DEF PROG-cry

“The child whom Oko beat is crying.”

(228b) gbé!kê = lê nî òkó yî lê = !ê ŋ-fó

child = DEF NMLZ Oko beat 3SG.OBJ = DEF PROG-cry

“The child whom Oko beat is crying.”
Theme NP - modification by verb-based argument nominalization

(229) àdèšá = !á  ní  ò-tá  gbé!ké = è  njêê
story = DEF  child = DEF  be.sweet
“The story that you told the child was good.”

Recipient NP - modification by verb-based argument nominalization

(230) gbé!ké = !é  ní  ò-tá  lè  àdésá = !á  è-wò
child = DEF  2SG-narrate  3SG.OBJ  story = DEF  PERF-sleep
“The child whom you narrated the story to is asleep.”

Taken together, the above syntactic tests show that for Gã ditransitive constructions, it is the argument in the recipient role or the argument in the immediate post-verbal position that is the direct object.

3.3.2.2 Definiteness, topicality and direct objecthood

It has been observed for Gã (e.g. Dakubu 2004a) and related languages such as Akan (e.g. Osam 1994) that a definite theme NP cannot occur in a ditransitive construction. It must be indefinite. This is exemplified in the following sentences, where (231a) with an indefinite T is grammatical but (231b) with the definite T is not.

(231a) òkó há mì  shiká
Oko give 1SG.OBJ money
“Oto gave me money.”

(231b) *òkó há mì  shiká = !á
Oko give 1SG.OBJ money = DEF
“Oto gave me the money.”
In order to express the intended meaning in (231b), a serial verb construction must be used. In this construction, the first verb is kɛ ‘take’ and its object is the definite theme NP, while the second verb is hã́ ‘give’ and its object is the recipient. This is seen in (232) below.

(232) òkó kɛ ̀ shìká=à h a ̃́ !mí
Oko take money=DEF give 1SG.OBJ
“Oko gave me the money.”

It is clear then that speakers view definite NPs as ill-fitted for the indirect object slot. The preference for the definite theme NP in a transfer event to be expressed as the direct object of kɛ in an SVC, rather than as an indirect object in a ditransitive construction, suggests that there are properties or communicative functions served by definite NPs that make them unsuitable to appear as indirect objects. Indefinite NPs lack these properties and so are capable of occurring as indirect objects. I contend that this property is the increase in topicality that results from definiteness. Cross-linguistically, the T in a ditransitive construction tends to be inanimate and indefinite and therefore less topical than the R, which is usually animate (even human) and definite (Malchukov et al 2007:12). In Gã, the indirect object slot is reserved for low-topicality arguments. The definite T therefore merits a position in the clause that reflects its higher topicality. The assignment of the definite NP to direct object position in an SVC therefore reflects its higher topicality and gives it more discourse prominence than it would have as the indirect object in a ditransitive clause.
In example (218), repeated here as (233) however, we see a clear violation of this syntactic requirement; a definite NP, *tsòfàjì-ê* ‘the medicines’ is able to occur as the theme in a ditransitive construction.

(233)  \[ \text{nmlz} \text{ when } 2\text{sg} = \text{go.pst} \text{ home} = \text{def} \text{ nmlz} 2\text{sg} \text{ sbjv} = \text{itiv-give} \]

\begin{align*}
\text{lè} & \quad \text{tsòfà-ji} = \text{lé} \\
\text{2sg.obj} & \quad \text{medicine-pl} = \text{def}
\end{align*}

“So that when you go home you will go and give him the medicines.” [CH:54]

As a native speaker, I must say that I find nothing wrong with this sentence. The expected construction for a three-place predicate such as *hà* ‘give’ with a definite theme is the *ke*-SVC below:

(234)  \[ \text{nmlz} \text{ when } 2\text{sg} = \text{go.pst} \text{ home} = \text{def} \text{ nmlz} 2\text{sg} = \text{take} \text{ medicine-pl} = \text{def} \]

\begin{align*}
\text{à-yà-hà} & \quad \text{lè} \\
\text{sbjv-itiv-give} & \quad \text{3sg.obj}
\end{align*}

“So that when you go home you give the medicines to him.”

The reason why (233) is acceptable lies in the semantics of *hà* ‘give’ when it appears in the two construction types. The ditransitive construction *hà lè tsòfàjì-ê* ‘give him the medicine’ connotes that the agent is administering the medicine, as a parent would to a child, by directly putting it in their mouth or other orifice. In the *ke*-serialization in (234) on the other hand, the implication is that the agent simply handed the medicines to the patient but did not directly
administer them. Since the patient being referred to in (233) was a sick child to whom the medicine had to be directly administered, the ditransitive construction provides the best syntactic means of coding this semantic information. Consequently, it should be borne in mind that although the ke-serialization provides an alternative means of coding 3-place predicates involving transfer, and is additionally the preferred construction when the theme is definite, nuances of meaning may differ (depending on the verb) between this SVC and the ditransitive construction. It is for this same reason that other ditransitive verbs such as tsɔ̃̀ɔ̃̂ ‘teach, show’ and gbà ‘narrate’ allow definite themes in sentences like (235a) and (236a) respectively.

(235a) kòfì tsɔ̃̀ɔ̃́ mĩ̀  shĩ́ã́=ã́
Kofi show 1SG.OBJ house=DEF
“Kofi showed me the house.”

(236a) è=gbà  lɛ̀  s ̃̀né=!ɛ́ f ̃́ɛ̃́
3SG=narrate 3SG.OBJ matter=DEF all
“He narrated the whole story to her.”

If these verbs and their arguments were to occur in a ke-serialization, their meanings would be quite different. (235b) could mean that Kofi literally picked up the house and showed it to me. (236b) is not even plausible because an abstract entity such as a matter or story cannot be handled physically. Although, as would be seen in the next chapter, ke is a defective verb with little semantic content, examples like these show some vestiges of its former lexical verb-hood (meaning ‘take’) and provides further justification for its gloss.
The restriction on indefinite themes in ditransitive clauses is therefore not a blanket one. It depends largely on whether the speaker’s message will be preserved in an equivalent ke-serialization. If it will, then the ke-serialization is preferred in order to index topicality of the definite theme. If not, then the definite theme may occur in the ditransitive clause. The choice of ditransitive construction or ke-serialization for the expression of a definite theme NP is determined by topicality as well as the accuracy of the communicative message.

There are also ditransitive clauses in which the immediate post-verbal position is taken up by a patient argument and is then followed by an instrument. In the following three examples, kpì́ŋ́ ‘deer’, mì́ ‘1SG.OBJ’ and lè ‘3SG.OBJ’ are patients while tṹ ‘gun’, àbṹ ‘needle’ and kàkā́ ‘knife’ are instruments.
(238) à = gbtù m̀ ̀bù̀ĩ į\[325\]3PL.IMPERS = pierce 1SG.OBJ needle
“I was given an injection.”

(239) òkó tsù lɛ̀ ̀kàklà į\[325\]Oko pierce 3SG.OBJ knife
“Oko stabbed him.”

3.3.3 Transitivity classes of verbs
As is obvious from the above discussion, Gã has intransitive, monotransitive and ditransitive
verbs. The vast majority of verbs in the language are transitive. There are a good number of
strictly intransitive verbs; strictly ditransitive verbs are fewer. Dixon (2010:142) notes that
strictly intransitive verbs are rare cross-linguistically.

3.3.3.4 Intransitive verbs
Many verbs are capable of occurring with or without an object. Even verbs that in many
languages are strictly intransitive such as ‘laugh’, ‘cry’ and ‘sneeze’, may have objects in Gã.
For ŋmɔ̃̀ ‘laugh’, the object is the person being laughed at, for fó ‘cry’ it is the person one is
longing for and for tsĩ́!né ‘sneeze’, it is the person one happens to sneeze on. In (240) for
instance, fó ‘cry’ is transitive in the first sentence but intransitive in the second sentence.

(240) èè = fó è = m̀mímì lóó èè = fó è = pàpà į\[325\]
3SG.PROG = cry 3SG = mother or 3SG = cry 3SG = father
“Is he crying for his mother or is he crying for his father?”
“He has gone and stood there, then he has cried continuously.” [DT 1:26]

In (241a), tsĩ́!né is intransitive and in (241b) it is transitive.

(241a) ĩ̀=tsĩ́!né
1SG=sneeze
“I sneezed.”

(241b) kàá-tsĩ̀nè mǐ
NEG.IMP-sneeze 1SG.OBJ
“Don’t sneeze on me.” [Dakubu 2008:212]

Strictly intransitive verbs fall into five main semantic types:

i) **bodily functions** - gɔ́!í ‘burp’, shã́ ‘fart’, kɛ̃̀ ‘push (as in childbirth)’, há!kú ‘yawn’

ii) **motion** - dɔ̃́ŋ́!kɔ́ ‘walk with swagger’, dĩ́ŋ́dã́ŋ́ ‘walk unsteadily (as if drunk)’, flí́!kí ‘fly’,
    shã́!né ‘slip’, tsú!tsɔ́ ‘limp’, wá!mɔ̃́ ‘crawl’

iii) **inherently reciprocal verbs** - bé ‘quarrel’, nɔ̃̀ ‘fight’

iv) **property verbs** - kɛ̀ ‘be tall’, wà ‘be hard’, kwɔ̀ ‘be deep’, hĩ̀ ‘be good’, dà ‘be big’, lɛ̀ɛ̂ ‘be
    broad’, dǐ́ ‘be black’, yɛ́ ‘be white’, tsù ‘be red, ripen’

v) **weather verbs** - nɛ̃̀ ‘rain’, tsò ‘shine (of the sun)’, shí ‘thunder (v.)’

**3.3.3.5 Transitive verbs**

There are some strictly transitive verbs in Gã. These verbs encode actions which require a

patient in order for its successful completion. This patient needs to be spelt out overtly for the
sentence to be grammatical. Examples of such verbs are báń’sá ‘hold on to’, ká!nyá ‘encourage’, káḿ!fó ‘praise’, kpè ‘carry baby at back’, já ‘worship’.

3.3.3.6 Ambitransitive verbs

Also known as labile verbs, these are verbs which may be used with or without an object.

There are two types, those in which the S of the intransitive is a patient and those in which the S of the intransitive is an agent. They are further explicated below.

a) Ambitransitive of type S=P - Examples of such verbs are fíté ‘spoil’, jwà ‘break’, bó!dá ‘mangle’, mɒ́!nɔ́ ‘bend out of shape’, pìlá ‘hurt’. In the following examples the (a) sentences are intransitive and the (b) sentences are transitive.

(242a) gbèé = è pìlá gbé!kɛ = !ɛ̃́
dog = DEF hurt child = DEF
“The dog hurt the child.”

(242b) gbé!kɛ = !ɛ̃́ pìlá
child = DEF hurt
“The child got hurt.”

(243a) ò = jwà  giá!sé = !ɛ
2SG = break glass = DEF
“You broke the glass.”

(243b) giá!sé = è jwà
glass = DEF break
“The glass broke.”

(244b) ã̀mɛ̃̀=ŋ̀-shwê
3PL=PROG-play
“They are playing.”

(244b) ã̀mɛ̃̀=ŋ̀-shwê  àwàlè
3PL=PROG-play      awale
“They are playing awale.”

(245a) ã̀mɛ̃̀=wiê
3PL=speak
“They spoke.”

(245a) ã̀mɛ̃̀=wiê  ó=!he
3PL=speak  2SG=body
“They spoke about you.”

3.3.3.7 Ditransitive verbs
There are as yet no strictly ditransitive verbs known to me in Gã. The usual transfer verbs that prototypically take two objects, Theme and Recipient, are all capable of occurring with only the theme. Such constructions are used when the identity of the recipient is considered irrelevant.

Examples are given in (246) and (247).

(246) è=hã́  shiká
3SG=give    money
“He gave money.”
(247) \( \text{à = } kẽ \quad \text{nîfi} \) piì  
3PL.IMPERS = gift things many  
“Lots of gifts were given/There were lots of freebies”

Prototypically ditransitive verbs also occur with just one object, the recipient, in SVCs. The theme is the object of \( kɛ̀ \) ‘take’. In the following example, the theme is a null pronominal.

(248) \( \text{nì } \quad \text{à } = \text{kɛ̀-Ø-báá-bá} \quad \text{àmè } \quad \text{nì } \quad \text{àmè } = \text{báá-lyé} \)  
and 3PL.IMPERS = take-3SG.OBJ-FUT-give them and 3PL = FUT-eat  
“And it will be given to them and they will eat.” [YM:178]

The verb, \( bò \) ‘shout’ is one verb that can occur in an intransitive clause (249a), a transitive clause (249b) and a ditransitive clause (249c).

(249a) ákú bò  
Aku shout  
“Aku shouted.”

(249b) ákú bò mì  
Aku shout 1SG.OBJ  
“Aku shouted for me.”

(249c) \( \text{à = báá-bò } \quad \text{bò } \quad \text{jùlɔ̀ } \)  
3PL.IMPERS = FUT-shout 2SG.OBJ thief  
“They will alert everyone that you are a thief, by shouting “Thief! Thief!”

3.4 Inherent complement verbs

In Gã, Akan, Ewe, Igbo and several other Kwa and Benue-Kwa languages, there are certain predications, certain actions and processes that cannot be encoded by verbs alone. Instead, these actions must be coded by a verb and an obligatory noun or postpositional complement,
hence their name, inherent complement verbs (ICV). In Gã, Akan and Ewe, for instance, the verb precedes the complement e.g. hà gbè [give way] ‘go on break from school’. One of the first to recognize and analyse this phenomenon, Nwachukwu (1987:40) wrote regarding the ICV that “the root and its nominal complement form a semantic unit, and any dictionary entry without the complement lacks meaning because the complement is the meaning-specifying unit.” It will be shown later that this statement is not applicable to all ICVs, but it does capture the unique essence of most ICVs: that without their inherent complement, their semantic interpretation is difficult to arrive at. Essegbey (1999) refers to them as obligatory complement verbs (OCV). They are also found in Mandarin, where Badan (2013) terms them verb object constructions (VOCs). Korsah (2014) likens them to English so-called light verbs such as ‘take a rest’ and ‘make a decision’.

In Gã, the complement in the ICV, known as the inherent complement (IC) is always a noun. There are two main types of nouns that the verb may occur with: a non-relational noun or a locative, relational noun. Examples of ICVs with non-relational nominal complements are:

(250) jò fòì [dance race] ‘run’
bí gbè [ask way] ‘ask permission’
kpá fàí [remove hat] ‘beg’
yè ṭkpá!í [eat prayer] ‘pour libation, pray (traditionally)’
yè bëñj [eat innocence] ‘be innocent’
yè fò [eat guilt] ‘be guilty’
The ICV may have an additional argument, which always occurs between the verb and the inherent complement. In (251), the ICV is kpá fâì [remove hat] ‘beg, plead with’. The additional argument, lè ‘3SG’ occurs post-verb and pre-complement.

(251) á = kpá lè fâì
3PL.IMPERS.PERF = remove 3SG.OBJ hat
“People have pleaded with her.” [FH:176]
A subset of ICVs with non-relational nominal complements includes those ICVs which take the
generic noun complements nĩ́!ĩ́ ‘thing’ and mɔ̃̀ ‘person’. In the last example in (252) hã́ ‘give’
has two inherent complements, mɔ̃̀ ‘person’ and nɔ̃́ ‘thing’.

\[(252)\]
\[
\begin{align*}
yè nĩ́!ĩ́ & \quad [\text{eat thing}] \quad \text{‘eat’} \\
tsũ nĩ́!ĩ́ & \quad [\text{work thing}] \quad \text{‘work’} \\
tsɔ̀ɔ̃́ nĩ́!ĩ́ & \quad [\text{teach thing}] \quad \text{‘teach’} \\
lè nĩ́!ĩ́ & \quad [\text{know thing}] \quad \text{‘be clever’} \\
hòò nĩ́!ĩ́ & \quad [\text{cook thing}] \quad \text{‘cook’} \\
nà nĩ́!ĩ́ & \quad [\text{see thing}] \quad \text{‘see’} \\
nũ̀ nĩ́!ĩ́ & \quad [\text{hear thing}] \quad \text{‘hear’} \\
bù mɔ̃̀ & \quad [\text{respect person}] \quad \text{‘be respectful’} \\
hã́ mɔ̃̀ nɔ̃́ & \quad [\text{give person thing}] \quad \text{‘be generous’} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Examples of ICVs with locative, relational noun complements are listed in (253).

\[(253)\]
\[
\begin{align*}
dàmɔ̃̀ shĩ̀ & \quad [\text{stand down}] \quad \text{‘stand’} \\
tá !shĩ́ & \quad [\text{sit down}] \quad \text{‘sit’} \\
tè shĩ̀ & \quad [\text{rise down}] \quad \text{‘get up’} \\
yí !shĩ́ & \quad [\text{pass down}] \quad \text{‘descend’} \\
gbèé !shĩ́ & \quad [\text{fall down}] \quad \text{‘fall’} \\
hĩ̀ shĩ̀ & \quad [\text{live down}] \quad \text{‘live’} \\
jù shĩ̀ & \quad [\text{steal down}] \quad \text{‘do sth surreptitiously’} \\
dà shĩ̀ & \quad [\text{ICV down}] \quad \text{‘thank’} \\
wò shĩ̀ & \quad [\text{put down}] \quad \text{‘promise’} \\
kũ̀ sɛ̀ɛ̀ & \quad [\text{break back}] \quad \text{‘return’} \\
nyě sɛ̀ɛ̀ & \quad [\text{walk back}] \quad \text{‘follow’} \\
sl̀á sɛ̀ɛ̀ & \quad [\text{visit back}] \quad \text{‘prepare in anticipation of someone’s visit’} \\
kwé hĩ́ɛ̀ & \quad [\text{look (sb.) face}] \quad \text{‘expect’} \\
\end{align*}
\]
These ICVs also allow an additional argument which occurs in between the two components.

For example, in (254) the ICV is \textit{wò shǐ} [put down] ‘make a promise’ and \textit{wð} ‘1PL’, the recipient - the people that the promises are made to - occurs between the verb and its inherent complement.

\begin{multicols}{2}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \text{nyọŋmɔ̃̀ \textit{é-wò wð shǐ pìi}}
\item \text{God PERF-put 1PL down many}
\item \text{“God has made us many promises.” [CH:179]}
\end{enumerate}
\end{multicols}

Some ICVs with a relational noun complement require the complement to be composed of a possessive NP where the relational noun is the possessum. This is seen in (255) below, where
in the ICV \( t\hat{o} /n\hat{o} \) [err top] ‘offend’, the inherent complement, \( n\hat{o} \) top is the possessum in a possessive NP, where \( \hat{o} = \text{‘2SG’} \) is the possessor.

\[(255) \quad \text{kë \( \hat{o} = \text{nyëmì} \) shë kpàwò gbì kòmé \( \hat{ë} = \text{bà} \) nì}
\]
\[\text{if 2SG = sibling instance seven day one 3SG = come and}
\]
\[\hat{ë} = t\hat{o} \quad \hat{o} = l\hat{n}\hat{o}
\]
\[3SG = \text{err} \quad 2SG = \text{top}
\]

“If your sibling offends you seven times in one day….” [CH:300]

The reader may notice straightaway that some ICVs have their verbs glossed as ‘ICV’ and wonder why. The reason for resorting to this essentially meaningless gloss is that these words simply do not mean anything to the native speaker. While all other verbs in an ICV are capable of occurring outside of the ICV with multiple different arguments, these verbs: \( shë, dà, \) and \( w\hat{o} \) cannot. So there is no way of knowing what they mean outside of the ICV, and although a diachronic analysis may be illuminating, lack of historical records leaves the question largely unanswered.

The meanings of the verbs contained in ICVs is one point of contention among analysts of languages that have ICVs. Nwachukwu (1987) contends that the verbs in an ICV are semantically vapid and that the complement provides the bulk of the meaning of the verb. Essegbey (1999) and Korsah (2011), on the other hand believe that the verbs themselves have specific semantics. The semantics of ICVs will be looked at in §3.4.4. The other major point
of contention concerns whether the inherent complement is an argument of the verb (its object),
making the ICV naturally monotransitive, or whether it forms a part of the lexical verb word,
making the ICV intransitive. This will be examined in §3.4.2. In the following section, the
morphology and syntax of ICVs will be examined more closely.

### 3.4.1 Morphology and syntax of ICVs

The verb in an ICV may be inflected for most of the verbal categories associated with non-ICV verbs. It may be marked for tense, aspect, mood and polarity. The noun complement, on the other hand cannot be inflected. This is evidence that the function of the ICV is a strictly verbal one, i.e. it predicates. In (256), for example, the verb in the ICV, \( wɔ́ yì \) [ICV head] ‘jeer’ takes the future morpheme \( bàá- \).

\[
\begin{align*}
(256) \quad &è=nɔ̀ \quad jè-tsérè-mò \quad hɔ̀=!s \\
&3SG=top \quad \text{world-rise-NOM} \quad \text{Saturday=TOP} \quad 3PL.\text{IMPERS=FUT-jeer}
\end{align*}
\]

\( hɔmɔ̀ yì \)
hunger head

“The following day, Saturday, we will jeer at hunger.” [YM:40]

In (257), the verb is marked for progressive in the ICV, \( yè \ àwèrèhòó \) [eat sorrow] ‘be sorrowful’

\[
\begin{align*}
(257) \quad &ágbènè=!è \quad kè \quad ò=tá \quad gbèkè=ë \quad hè=!é \quad bè \\
&\text{now=TOP} \quad \text{when} \quad 2SG=\text{sit} \quad \text{child=DEF} \quad \text{body=DEF} \quad \text{then}
\end{align*}
\]
An ICV may also occur in imperative mood (258).

(258) kɛ̀ àà = yá = !á nyíɛ́-mɔ̃́ sèè
when 3PL.IMPERS.PROG = go = DEF walk-IMP back
“When they are going, follow them.” [YM:206]

And in (259), the ICV gbá nàà [split mouth] ‘bother’ has negative polarity.

(259) énɛ́ gbáaa ë = nàà kwráá
this split.NEG 3SG = mouth at.all
“This didn’t bother him at all.” [PAT:95]

However, not all verbs in an ICV can be marked by the iterative suffixes -la/-ra, -le/-re and -mɔ́. So while (260) and (261) with the iterative suffixes are fine, (262) with the equivalent suffix is not.

(260) skùl-bfù = ë tárà shì
school-people = DEF sit-ITER down
“The school children sat down”

(261) ã̀mɛ̀ = ya-ká-mɔ́ shì nì ãmɛ = wò
3PL = ITIV-lie-ITER down and 3PL = sleep
“They went and lay down and slept.”

(262) *skùl-bfù = è kù-mɔ́ ãmɛ = sèè
school-people = DEF break-ITER 3PL = back
“The school children returned.”
It appears that posture ICVs, e.g. tá !shĩ́ [sit down] ‘sit’, can take the distributive suffixes while other ICVs cannot. This may be because posture ICVs are more literal and less metaphorical than other ICVs and hence more akin to canonical verbs. This allows them to take all canonical verb morphology. More metaphorical ICVs such as kũ̀ sɛ̀ɛ̀ [break back] ‘return’ are viewed idiomatically, hence the inability to express all verbal categories.

The reduplication strategy for distributive expression is also largely prohibited in ICVs. So for example, shí ‘hit’ in shí là [hit fire] ‘tease’ cannot be reduplicated (263).

(263) *òkó shíshífì àmɛ̀ là
Oko hit.DISTRIB 3PL fire
“Oko teased them.”

The nominal complements cannot be inflected for number. For instance, gbɛ̀ ‘way’ in fã̀ gbɛ̀ [uproot way] ‘travel’ cannot be pluralized (to indicate that the agent travels to multiple places, for example), as (264) shows.

(264) *òkó fà gbè-l piì
Oko uproot way-PL many
“Oko travelled to many places.”

However, the pertensive morpheme, a-, which is found on the possessum in a possessive noun phrase, can be marked on the relational noun complement in an ICV, provided the complement occurs in a possessive NP. For example, in (265), ságí̆ ảmĩ́ŋ̀ ‘the inside of the issues’ forms a
possessive NP, and since the possessor is plural, the plurality is marked on the possessum with the pertensive prefix \textit{a-}.

\begin{verbatim}
(265) è=gbálà sà-jĭ=è à-mĭj è=tsɔ̃ɔ̃ !mí
3SG=split matter-PL=DEF PERT-inside 3SG=show 1SG.OBJ
“He explained the issues to me.”
\end{verbatim}

Here, there is only one postverbal argument - the possessive phrase, \textit{sàjĭè àmĭj} ‘the inside of the issues’.

In (266a), the ICV \textit{nù shìshi} [hear under] ‘understand’ has two separate post-verbal arguments, \textit{nùú!è} ‘the man’ and \textit{shìshì} ‘under’. \textit{nùú!è} \textit{shìshì} does not constitute a possessive phrase, and this is evidenced by the fact that \textit{nùú!è} ‘the man’ can be pronominalized with the object pronoun \textit{lè} (266b). If it were a possessor it would have been pronominalized by the subject pronoun \textit{è =}, but (266c) shows that this is ungrammatical.

\begin{verbatim}
(266a) í=nùúú nùú=è shìshì
1SG=hear.NEG man=DEF under
“I don’t understand the man.”
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
(266b) í=nùúú lè shìshì
1SG=hear 3SG.OBJ under
“I don’t understand the man.”
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
(266c) *í=nùúú è=shìshì
1SG=hear 3SG=under
“I don’t understand the man.”
\end{verbatim}
Further proof that the complement and its preceding argument do not form a possessive NP is seen in (267), where when the first argument is plural the complement cannot take the pertensive prefix.

(267a) *è = núúú

hẽ̀=è
à-shǐshǐ

3SG = hear.NEG men = DEF PERT-under

“He doesn’t understand the men.”

(267b) è = núúú

hẽ̀=è
shǐshǐ

3SG = hear.NEG men = DEF under

“He doesn’t understand the men.”

The same phenomenon is seen with dà shǐ [ICV down] ‘thank’. The immediate post-verbal argument and the complement do not constitute a possessive NP; the argument is pronominalized with the object second singular pronoun bò and not the pronoun used for possessors - ó=.

(268a) òkó dà bò shǐ

Oko ICV 2SG under

“Oko thanked you.”

(268b) *òkó dà ó=!shǐ

Oko ICV 2SG=under

“Oko thanked you.”

In addition, if the immediate post-verbal argument is plural the two arguments are not treated as one possessive NP and the inherent complement cannot take the pertensive prefix (269a).
(269a) *òkó dà pòlìsì-fòì=è à-shì
donk IRG police-PL=DEF PERT-down
“Oko thanked the policemen.”

(269b) òkó dà pòlìsì-fòì=è shì
donk IRG police-PL=DEF down
“Oko thanked the policemen.”

3.4.2 The ICV and transitivity

One of the main areas of focus in studies of ICVs is whether the complement of the verb is its direct object or whether it forms part of the predicate itself. In other words, is a clause such as

(270) ni ̃̀ è=jò  fòì ̀ è = kɔ̀  tsò nɛ̀!ɛ́
and 3SG=dance race 3SG=climb tree this
“And he ran and climbed this tree.” [FLO:74]

While Nwachukwu (1987) maintains that the complement is not an object of the verb, Essegbey (1999) and Korsah (2011, 2014) contend that it is. The evidence for Gã situates it in the latter camp i.e. the complement is a direct object of the verb. Korsah (2011) gives a detailed account of the syntactic tests that prove this position. The tests prove that the complement of the inherent complement verb undergoes many of the syntactic processes that direct objects typically undergo. The tests will be reproduced here for further elaboration. They are
nominalization, focalization and modification by a grammatical argument nominalization
(relativization).

i) Nominalization

A verb and its direct object may be nominalized by fronting the object and following it
immediately with a nominalized version of the verb. (271b) shows the nominalization of the
verb and object in (271a).

(271a) òkó shélé-ɔ̀  tàwá
    Oko smoke-HAB tobacco
    “Oko smokes tobacco.”

(271b) tàwá  shélé-!mɔ̃́ é-hĩĩ̂
    tobacco smoke-NOM PERF-be.good.NEG
    “Tobacco smoking is not good.”

In an ICV too, the verb and complement may be nominalized in the same manner, as is done in
(272b) for the ICV, gbèé !shí [fall down] ‘fall’:

(272a) shǐ  kòmè tóó gbèé=ɛ̀ kè  tó =!ɔ́  fɛ̃̀ɛ̃̀ bà-gbèé
        instance one only dog=DEF and bottle=DEF all VENT-fall

!shí
  down
  “Out of nowhere, the dog, together with the bottle came and fell down.” [PAT:47]

(272b) shǐ  hèǹǎnáá = !Â  àsòmò̱!ọ̀  shí-gbèé-!mɔ̃̂ = ɔ̀  mó́y
        but  luckily = TOP unbeknownst down-fall-NOM = DEF rather
“But luckily, and unbeknownst (to us) falling down rather was good for him.”

In the following sentence the ICV *shé gbéyèì* [ICV fear] ‘be afraid’ is the first verb in the sentence. It is later nominalized and occurs as subject of *bòtè̀* ‘enters’.

(273) …é!jáá!kɛ́ òò=shé gbéyèì ó=hìɛ̀ kpá-!á
because 2SG.PROG = ICV fear 2SG = face remove-HAB

ó=nyòŋmɔ́ lè nɔ̀ nì gbéyèì-shé-mɔ́ bòtè̀-ɔ̀ ó = mÌ̀
2SG = god DEF top and fear-ICV-NOM enter-HAB 2SG = inside

“…because you are afraid. You forget about your God and fear enters you.”

ii) Focalization

The complement in the ICV can be focused just like a direct object can. There is one major difference, however. As noted by Aboh and Essegbey (2010:59), when the complement in an ICV is focused, the semantic interpretation is one of event focus, not argument focus as expected. Compare the meaning of (274a) where the complement in an ICV (*fà gbè* ‘travel’) is focused, to (274b) where the object of an ordinary verb (*shélé* ‘smoke’) is focused.

(274a) gbè nì ̃̃ i=fà nì ̃̃ i=kè-yà-táò shiká
way FOC 1SG = uproot and 1SG = take-ITIV-look money

“It was travelling that I did (as opposed to, say, illegal drugs) in order to make money.”

*“It was the way/road that I uprooted in order to make money.”*
It is also not possible to focus the verb in the ICV. Verb-focusing is done by first nominalizing the verb and then fronting it.

The fact that the second translation in (274a) is not possible speaks to the semantic unity of the verb and its inherent complement. As one semantic unit, its meaning is not restricted to the meaning of just one of its parts. It predicates an event and thus, like any verb, it is the event that is being emphasized and contrasted even when only the nominal part of the ICV is in focus position.

iii) Modification by a verb-based grammatical argument nominalization

Like a canonical direct object, the complement in an ICV can be modified by a verb-based grammatical argument nominalization. In (276), the ICV is \( fó \) *sh̀* [cut down] ‘wander’.

(276) \( \text{sh̀ ní } \hat{=}=yà-fó= !é \) \( \text{hèwò } \hat{=}=mìŋ \) \( \hat{=}=!fù= !é \)
down NMLZ 1SG = ITIV-cut = DEF sake 3SG = inside PERF-swell = DEF

“The wandering (about town) that I did is what has angered her.”
Again, a literal reading is not possible in such constructions. In (302), even though syntactically, it is *shĩ́* ‘down’ that is being modified, semantically it is the entire predication coded by the ICV, *fò shĩ́* [cut down] ‘wander about town’ that is being qualified. Aboh (2005) calls constructions such as (276) factive constructions and suggests that a less literal but better translation is “The fact that I wandered (about town) is what has angered her.” The crucial point is that the complement functions like an object in allowing modification by a verb-based grammatical argument nominalization.

Most ICVs are therefore monotransitive because they consist of a verb with one inherent complement which is also its direct object. A few ICVs are ditransitive, in that they have two inherent complements. Examples are given in (277) and an example sentence is given in (278)

(277)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>wò hĩ́ɛ̃̀ nyã́ŋ́</em></td>
<td>[put face glory]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>wò mĩ̀ŋ̀ là</em></td>
<td>[put inside fire]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(278)  

- **God**  
- **PERF-put**  
- **3SG = face glory**

“God has glorified him.”  

[CH:254]
3.4.3 Verbal syntax not exhibited by ICVs

Korsah (2011) observes that complements in ICVs cannot be questioned, unlike canonical direct objects. The following examples are taken from Korsah (2011:139-140). (279b) exemplifies non-ICV direct object questioning in situ. (280b) shows that this is not possible with the complement in an ICV.

(279a) dèdè yè-ɔ̀  ò m ɔ́mó
Dede eat-HAB rice
“Dede eats rice.”

(279b) dèdè yè-ɔ̀  m ɛ́nĩ̀
Dede eat-HAB what
“Dede eats what?”

(280a) dèdè jò-ɔ̀  f ɔ́ì
Dede dance-HAB race
“Dede runs”

(280b) *dèdè jò-ɔ̀  m ɛ́nĩ̀
Dede dance-HAB what
“Dede dances what?”

Also, pronominalization of an ICV complement is not possible. Since all ICV complements are inanimate, they would hypothetically be pronominalized with the null pronoun. However, this results in ungrammaticality (281b).

---

15 Tone marking has been modified. Also, I have glossed the verb jò in the ICV as ‘dance’, whereas Korsah (2011:140) glosses it as ‘ICV’
ICVs are syntactically unique. They contain an obligatory complement which functions as the direct object to the verb. The complement exhibits a number of syntactic properties that are typical of objects, but at the same it lacks certain canonical features of direct objecthood such as pronominalization. The inability to display these features largely stems from the unique semantics of ICVs, where both components must be overtly present in order for the ICV to carry out its predicating function. The whole cannot function without a part and that is why sentences like (280b) sound awkward. In the following section, the semantics of ICVs will be discussed in greater detail.

### 3.4.4 Semantics of ICVs

In an ICV, the verb alone cannot code the state, event or activity that is coded by the ICV as a whole. In (282a) bí gbè [ask way] codes the act of asking permission for something, in this case, permission to leave.
Omitting the complement, as in (282b) or replacing it with different arguments in (282c) results in different meanings, none of them involving permission. Since bí ‘ask’ is a transitive verb, when it occurs without an overt object, one may assume that its object is the null third singular inanimate pronoun. So, in (282b) what is being asked is presumably known from previous discourse. The point of relevance here is that, it does not code the act of asking permission.

We see that it is only when bí‘ask’ is used with the complement gbè ‘way’ that it predicates the act of seeking permission. This obligatoriness of a specific complement in order to yield a specific meaning is what makes ICVs unique. The same phenomenon is illustrated in (283), this time with an ICV that has a relational noun complement - kũ̀ sɛ̀ɛ̀ [break back] ‘return’. Its proper use is shown in (283a). In (283b) it is ungrammatical because it is missing its

16 “wɔ̀=bàá-bí gbè” is usually said at the end of a visit to indicate that the visit has ended and one is about to leave.
complement and because *kù* ‘break’ is an ambitransitive verb, the (animate) subject is interpreted as the patient of *kù* ‘break’, a situation that is absurd. Finally, in (283c), the meaning of the predicate changes because the complement of *kù* ‘break’ changes.

(283a) ămè̊̀ = ŋ̄-kù  āmè̊̀ = sè̀è
3PL = PROG-break  3PL = back
“They are returning.” [DEB:174]

(283b) *ămè̊̀ = ŋ̄-kù
3PL = PROG-break
“They are breaking.”

(283c) *ămè̊̀ = ŋ̄-kù  tsè-ì̊ = lè
3PL = PROG-break  stick-PL = DEF
“They are breaking the sticks.”

ICVs with generic noun complements differ from other ICVs semantically, in that the meaning of the entire ICV is concentrated in the verb; the complements nì̀̀fì́ ‘thing’ and mɔ̀ ‘person’ give little information about any participants or actors in the event, nor do they convey any metaphorical meaning. Such ICVs are thus used when the object of the verb has low salience and it is the event itself that is of importance. These ICVs show that Nwachukwu’s comment about the complement being the meaning-specifying unit in ICVs is not wholly accurate. Examples are:

(284) ̀̊́i = kè  lè  tsè̊̀ɔ̀  nù̀  yè̊̀  Ebenezer
  1SG = take  3SG.OBJ  teach  thing  be.located  Ebenezer
  “I taught with her at Ebenezer (Secondary School).” [DF:49]
(285) \( wó \quad bè \quad ní \quad ò = bàá-!bá = !á \quad wò = jwélélé \quad !nó \quad ní \quad wò = \) ng-

tomorrow \ time \ NMLZ \ 2SG = FUT-come = DEF \ 1PL = lie \ top

ní \ wò = ŋ-\(bòó \) \ nílî

NMLZ \ 1PL = PROG-cook \ thing

“By the time you come tomorrow, we’ll be busily cooking.” \ [YM:292]

(286) \( ëë!ë \quad jéŋ \quad ë = tsú \quad ní \quad yë \quad ëë!ë \quad jéŋ \quad ë = tsú \quad ní \quad yë \quad ëë!ë \quad jéŋ \quad ë = tsú \quad yë \quad ëë!ë \quad jéŋ \quad ë = tsú \ yë \)

yes \ there \ 3SG = work \ thing \ be.located

“Yes, it was there that he worked.” \ [DF:9]

(287) \( ëë!ë \quad jéŋ \quad ë = tsú \quad ní \quad yë \quad ëë!ë \quad jéŋ \quad ë = tsú \quad ní \quad yë \)

3SG.PERF = respect.NEG \ person

“She is disrespectful.”

Note that all the sentences in (284)-(287) would be unacceptable (for the translations provided)

without the generic noun complements of the verb.

(288) \*ëë!ë \ jéŋ \ ë = tsú \ yë \*ëë!ë \ jéŋ \ ë = tsú \ yë \*ëë!ë \ jéŋ \ ë = tsú \ yë \*ëë!ë \ jéŋ \ ë = tsú \ yë \*ëë!ë \ jéŋ \ ë = tsú \ yë \*ëë!ë \ jéŋ \ ë = tsú \ yë

yes \ there \ 3SG = work \ be.located

“Yes, it was there that he worked.”

(289) \*wó \ bè \ ní \ ò = bàá-!bá = !á \ wò = jwélélé \ !nó \ ní \ wò = \)

tomorrow \ time \ NMLZ \ 2SG = FUT-come = DEF \ 1PL = lie \ top \ NMLZ

wò = ŋ-\(bòó \)

1PL = PROG-cook

“By the time you come tomorrow, we’ll be busily cooking.”

(290) \*ë =!búúú

3SG = respect.NEG

“She is disrespectful.”
3.4.4.1 ICV meaning clusters

Certain verbs recur in a number of different ICVs with different complements. Uchechukwu (2004) mentioned in Korsah (2011) refers to these as ICV clusters. More specifically, they are ICV meaning clusters, and I would like to extend the term to groups of ICVs with the same complements. It is to be expected that in all these ICVs that share a common verb or inherent complement, there would be some element of meaning that is common to them. We therefore find groups of verbs related by polysemy and metaphor. Some ICVs are semantically transparent, in that one can arrive at or at least make sense of its meaning by examining the meanings of its components. Others do not lend themselves to such simple analysis. A couple of such meaning clusters will be examined in detail to show that ICVs are not just arbitrary combinations of verbs and noun complements.

i) jè cluster (MOVE IN RELATION TO X, where X is a GROUND object)

Synonyms: exit from, end up at, arrive at, emerge from, emit

(291) jè kpò [exit compound] ‘exit’
    jè ñmá [exit sweet.scent] ‘smell good’
    jè ù [exit bad.smell] ‘smell bad’
    jè dêŋ [exit hand] ‘die/get out of control (of a child)’
    jè gbè [exit way] ‘do intentionally’
    jè tsèŋ [exit beard] ‘grow a beard’
    jè fùfɔ [exit breast] ‘develop breasts’
    jè ñwànè [exit argument] ‘argue’
    jè nɔ [exit top] ‘grow up, develop’
I propose that the primitive conceptual semantic content of ICVs containing \( jè \) is motion in relation to a ground object. I use ‘ground’ in the sense of Talmy (1985, 2000) to denote a stationary landmark or point which serves as a reference point to which the motion of the figure (the thing that is moving) can be described. To determine how this conclusion was reached for \( jè \), it is instructive to first look at its semantics outside ICVs. The following are typical uses of \( jè \) with non-inherent complements.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{(292)} & \quad \text{nì tô=à} \quad jè \quad ë=kùè \\
& \quad \text{and bottle = DEF exit 3SG = neck} \\
& \quad \text{“And the bottle came off from his neck.” [PAT:58]} \\
\text{(293)} & \quad \text{nì ãmè=kò tsó=!ê} \quad \text{nì ãmè=kè-jè} \quad \text{fàà=à} \quad \text{mùñ} \\
& \quad \text{and 3PL = climb tree = DEF and 3PL = take-exit river = DEF inside} \\
& \quad \text{“And they climbed the tree and in so-doing got out of the river. [SAM:104]} \\
\text{(294)} & \quad \text{nì ãmè=kwò tsó=!ê} \quad \text{nì ë=kè} \quad \text{gbèè=!ê} \\
& \quad \text{and 3PL = climb tree = DEF and 3SG = and dog = DEF} \\
& \quad \text{âmè=yà-jè} \quad \text{tsó=ê} \quad \text{sèè} \\
& \quad \text{3PL = ITIV-exit tree = DEF back} \\
& \quad \text{“And they climbed the log, and he and the dog, they ended up behind the log” [BOR:61]} 
\end{align*}
\]
As the gloss, ‘exit’ intimates, jè encodes motion away from or out of the referent of its object, as in (292) and (293) where tsì ‘the bottle’ and àmè ‘they’ are involved in motion away from the objects, èkùè ‘his neck’ and fààà míì ‘in the river’ respectively. The object referents must be some kind of location, receptacle, or container, capable of holding the agent or theme. A second related sense of jè appears contradictory to the first in that in this sense, it is the object of jè that is the goal of the motion. jè here is usually accompanied by the deictic auxiliaries ba- or ya-. This sense of jè may be translated as ‘end up’, ‘emerge’, ‘appear’, ‘exit’. It is this sense that is seen in (294) and (295). The two senses are perfectly compatible and serve as an example of lexical economy in the language. The difference between them lies in which ground the speaker chooses to focus on in the motion event. In the first sense of jè, it is the source, the location or entity from which the agent moves. In the second sense, it is the goal - the location or entity the figure arrives at after movement from or through some other point.

The meanings of most ICVs with jè can be traced to its first sense. In jè kpò [exit compound] ‘exit’, kpò ‘compound’ is the source - the location that the subject reference moves away from. This ICV literally reflects the experience of exiting one’s room onto a compound...
(shared by others) and then having to exit that compound to get out of the house or living quarters. This experience has become lexicalized in an ICV which by itself simply means ‘to go out’. Example òkó é-jè kpò [Oko PERF-exit compound] “Oko has gone out”, meaning he has gone to town and not necessarily just out of the compound of his home. This meaning has been extended to situations where an entity simply exits from a particular location; the source of the motion is often given as the complement of yè ‘be located’, as in (296) where the source is tsòlé ‘the tree’.

(296) wòbù = è jè kpò yè tsò = è nò kè-bòlè
bee-PL = DEF exit compound be.located tree = DEF top take-encircle

ùmè = ëè
3PL = all
“The bees came out of the tree and surrounded them.” [PAT:63]

In jè ñmá [exit sweet.scent] ‘smell good’ and jè fû [exit bad.smell] ‘smell bad’, the complement is the thing that is moving i.e. the scent. The receptacle from which it is exiting is the subject referent. Therefore, jè in this sense could be glossed as ‘emit’.

(297) nìyènìlí = è ë-jè ñmá
food = DEF PROG-exit scent
“The food smells good” (Lit: “The food is emitting a good scent.”)

17 In the traditional Ga living arrangement, a number of families live in separate rooms or houses which share one compound. Coming out of one’s room means coming onto the compound, which may or may not be enclosed.
An extension of this sense is found in the ICVs, jè fùfɔ́ ‘develop breasts’ and jè tsɛ̃̀ŋ̀ ‘grow a beard’. The body parts, fùfɔ́ ‘breasts’ and tsɛ̃̀ŋ̀ ‘beard’ can be conceptualized as exiting or coming out of the subject referent’s bodies, or their bodies could be ‘emitting’ these new parts (298).

(298) ̣́ = bí ̣’lɛ́ = ̣’ɛ́ ̣-jè ̣ fùfɔ́/tsɛ̃̀ŋ̀
1SG = child DEF = DEF PERF-exit breasts/beard
“My child has developed breasts/grown a beard.”

jè dɛ́ŋ̀ [exit hand] ‘get out of control (of a child)’: This metaphor is self-explanatory: if there is something in your hands, you have more control over it than when it is not in your hands.

jè mĩ̀ŋ̀ [exit inside] ‘die’: Here, the covert possessor of mĩ̀ŋ̃̀ ‘inside’ is the null pronoun coreferential with wàlà ‘life’. Life is conceptualized as a container, and when you come out of it you enter death.

jè gbɛ̀ [exit way] ‘do intentionally’: This example is a bit more metaphorical. If one is on a path, no thought or planning is required to keep going on the same path. However, to exit that path and take a different path requires extra thought, planning and effort. It is this conscious action of exiting one path for another that is evoked metaphorically to express deliberate, premeditated actions.

jè ŋwã́nè [exit argument] ‘argue’: Example òkó kɛ̀ mĩ jè ŋwã́nè [Oko take me exit argument] “Oko argued with me”. This ICV is very opaque, especially so because the word ŋwã́nè does
not exist outside this ICV. Dakubu (2008:164) glosses it as ‘argument’ or ‘doubt’. It is very
difficult to see how jè contributes to its final semantics, except in the ‘develop’ sense seen in jè
*tsè*ŋ ‘grow a beard’. A person could be said to develop doubt about a position which could lead
to an argument.

*jè nɔ̃ [exit top] ‘grow up, mature (of a person): This is another example of an ICV whose
meaning cannot easily be gleaned from the meanings of its component words. It is difficult to
conceive of what the possessor of nɔ̃ ‘top’ would be. One concept that comes to mind is
gbèkèbû ṛshint ‘childhood’ but any proposal will be nothing but an educated guess and so this
example will be left to future analyses.

ii) *shï* cluster

Many ICVs have the complement *shï*, a locative relational noun referring to the ground/earth or
any region beneath the reference object. It is therefore no surprise that it is found in ICVs that
code posture as well as motion. Examples are dàmɔ̀*shï*[stand down] ‘stand’, tá !shï [sit down]
!shï [lie down] ‘lie down’, ṛshint *shï*[live down] ‘live’. Most of these verbs involve a change of
position from a higher elevation to a lower elevation (e.g. tá !shï ‘sit down’, kã !shï ‘lie down’
and gbèè !shï ‘fall down’) and so the use of the complement *shï* ‘ground’ seems logical.
However, a few verbs predicate a change in position from a lower point to a higher point e.g. *tà shì‘stand up, rise up, wake up’ and *dàmɔ́shì‘stand up’. It appears then, that shì in posture and motion ICVs serves simply to indicate a change in bodily position with respect to the ground, be it motion that results in greater or lesser proximity of the subject referent to the ground.

The ICV, *jù shì*[steal down] ‘do sth surreptitiously’ via the combination of the verb *jù* ‘steal’ and the noun, *shì* ‘down’ is able to connote the quiet stealth and secrecy associated with the movement of thieves, especially the stereotypical image of thieves stooped over (moving their bodies closer to the ground, hence shì) while walking so as not to be detected. An example sentence is (299).

(299) è=jù shì nì è=yà-ḥá !ḷé níyènî!í
3SG=steal down and 3SG=ITIV-give 3SG.OBJ food

yè hèlà-tsá-mɔ̃́-ḥé=!ḷé
be.located sickness-heal-NOM-place=DEF

“She went and gave him food surreptitiously at the hospital (perhaps, because the hospital did not allow outside food.)”

dà shì*[ICV down] ‘thank’ is one of those ICVs whose verb only occurs within the one ICV. There is a property verb *dà* ‘be big’ but its semantics is too distinct from that of *dà shì* ‘thank’ to postulate any relation. Dakubu (2008:56) suggests that it may be a borrowing from Akan which uses a similar ICV, *dà àsè*[lie under] ‘thank’.
iii) wò cluster

The following ICVs contain the verb, wò, which in non-ICVs means ‘wear’, or ‘put in’.

(300) wò hɔ́ [put pregnancy] ‘make pregnant’
   wò gbéyèì [put fear] ‘scare’
   wò bàà [put leaf] ‘make herbal preparation’
   wò jàlà [put wares] ‘put wares up for sale’
   wò mĩ̀ŋ̀ là [put inside fire] ‘annoy’

(301) and (302) show its use in non-ICV contexts.

(301) nì kpékplé = !ɛ nò hũ wɔ̀=bàá-wò mĩ̀ŋ̀ mùtsùlù
   and kpekple = DEF that too 1PL=FUT-put inside palm.oil
   “And the kpekple, that one too, we will put palm oil inside it.” [OYO:49]

(302) è=wò àtàlé yɛ́!ŋ́
   3SG=wear dress white
   “She’s wearing a white dress.”

The following are some sentences with wò ICVs.

(303) bèní à=yàá=!tswá mǎŋkè tambɔ five o’clock=ɛ̀=!ɛ̀
   when 3PL.IMPERS=FUT.ITIV-strike night like DEF=DEF

à = ké-wò jàlà à₂ = hɔ̀
3PL.IMPERS=take.PERF-put market 3PL.IMPERS.PROG = sell
“By five o’clock in the middle of the night, they’ve displayed (them); they’re selling (them)
358

(304)  è = wò-ð gbé!ké-bû = è à-hè gbéyèì
3SG = put-HAB child-PL = DEF PERT-body fear

“He scares the children.”

The primitive conceptual element in the verb wò is CAUSE X TO ATTACH TO Y, where X is the inherent complement (e.g. gbéyèì ‘fear’ in (304)) and Y is the second object (gbé!ké-bû à-hè ‘children’). When there is no other object apart from the complement (as in 303) then wò simply means CAUSE X TO COME INTO BEING. In both senses, an entity or location which previously did not have X now has it. This is an extension of the ‘put’ sense of wò that is found in non-ICVs; when you put on a dress, you cause the dress to move from some other location and become attached to your body. So in (304) gbéyèì ‘fear’ is caused to move to gbé!ké-bû à-hè (children’s bodies) and the cause of this or the entity responsible for this action is the subject referent. In (303), the goods are put up or displayed when previously they were not. This illustrates the “cause to come into being” sense of wò.

A detailed analysis of the semantics of all or most verbs and their inherent complements will constitute a huge undertaking. This modest analysis of a few ICV meaning clusters is meant to demonstrate that in Gã, these lexical items are not random combinations of verbs and nouns. For the most part, they have figurative and metaphorical extensions that can be traced to their meanings in non-ICV contexts. ICVs with the same components will therefore tend to
have some primitive conceptual concept in common, forming a systematic pattern of meaning
expression within an ICV meaning cluster. Some are quite literal (yè mì[m][eat thing] ‘eat’, wò
jàlà [put wares] ‘display wares for sale’) while others are more metaphorical (e.g. jè gbè [exit
Either way, they form a very tight semantic unit. Like all metaphor, the meanings of ICVs are
rooted in human experience, which is culturally determined, and this should be at the forefront
of any endeavor to unpack the semantics of these distinctive verbs.

3.5 Non-prototypical clause types
This sections looks at clause types that do not obey the prototypical SVO word order, as well
as clauses which have non-prototypical predicates.

3.5.1 Copula clauses and verbless clauses
In addition to transitive and intransitive clauses, Gà also has copula clauses and verbless
clauses. Copula clauses are clauses containing a verb, the copula, which lacks rich semantic
content and only serves to relate two NP arguments: the subject and the complement. Dixon
(2010:159) identifies five types of relations that may be predicated by the copula: identity,
attribute, possession, benefaction and location.
3.5.1.1 Copula jí

Gã has one copula verb, jí, which is used to express the relation of identity between the subject and the complement. Such clauses are also called equative clauses or clauses of proper inclusion (Payne 1998:114). Examples of copula clauses are:

(305) è=nyɛ̃̀mĩ jí òò
3SG=sibling COP you
He is your sibling. [MM:106]

(306) Elma=!á là jí àmɔ́!kó
Elma=TOP 3SG.OBJ COP Amorkor
Elma, she is (the same person as) Amorkor. [DF:118]

(307) jɛ̃́mɛ̃̀ jí hɛ̀ ɔ̀ òò
there COP place NMLZ 2SG=buy-NOM-and-eat.NOM
yɔ́ɔ̀
be.located.HAB
“There is where your faith lies.” [CH:123]

(308) nɔ́ n̩í è=jí kêkè jí á!ké
NM NMLZ 3SG=COP just COP NMLZ
ó =!ná-kɔ̀ shì á=kɛ̀ èò
2SG.PERF=see-NEG but 3PL.IMPRS.PERF=tell you
“What it (=faith) is simply is that you have not seen (it) but you have been told.” [CH:160]

(309) hèwɔ́=!á énɛ̃̀mɛ́=!ɛ̀ mɔ̀ jí òtf =!ɛ
sake=TOP this-PL=DEF rather COP salient.point=DEF
“So these rather are the important points.” [OYO:287]
The types of arguments that can occur as subject and complement of a copula are varied. They may be full NPs (305), (306); pronouns (305), (306); demonstratives (307), (309) or larger nominal units such as grammatical nominalizations (307), (308). In (308), the subject is the grammatical nominalization, *nô nî èjî këkë* ‘what it simply is’ and the complement is *álîkë ô!nákò shë ákëè bò* ‘that you haven’t seen it but you have been told’.

The copula cannot be inflected for tense, aspect or mood. It can, however, be negated. A negative copula predication is expressed by placing the negative particle *jééé* in clause-initial position.

(310) jééé è=nyêmî jí bò  
NEG 3SG=Sibling COP you  
He is not your sibling.

(311) jééé jêmë jí hé ní ô=hé-mô-kë-yê-lî  
NEG there COP place NMLZ 2SG=buy-NOM-and-eat.NOM  
yô  
be.located.HAB  
“There is not where your faith lies.”

Since the copula equates two NPs that have the same identity, the subject and complement are often reversible, as this excerpt from a conversation shows (312). The first and third lines contain very similar copula clauses, a major difference being that the subject and complement are reversed.
(312) KK: hàwò = !ó énêê-mêĩ = !ê mòj jì ótí = !ê
sake = TOP this-PL = DEF rather COP salient.point = DEF
“So these rather are the important points.”

Oyo: ótí = !ê èhèë
salient.point = DEF IJ
“The important points. Exactly!”

ótí = !ê jì énê
salient.point = DEF COP this
“The important points are this.”

It is not always possible to reverse the arguments in a copula clause. Example (313a), in which
the proper name is the copula subject and the pronoun is the complement, is ungrammatical.

(313b) where the subject is a common noun is fine.

(313a) *àmɔ̀ɔ́!kɔ̂ jì lè
Amorkor COP 3SG.OBJ
“She is (the same person as) Amorkor.”

(313b) àmálé-lò jì lè
lie-NOM COP 3SG.OBJ
“She is a liar.”

What this means is that in Gã equational clauses involving a pronoun and a proper name, the
proper name must be the complement and the pronoun must be the subject, as in (306). This
structural restriction does not apply to clauses with a pronoun and a common noun argument.

In the next pair of examples, the two arguments of the copula are interchanged. Both
sentences are grammatical but they serve different pragmatic functions. While (314a) is a
straightforward assertion which predicates Oko’s inclusion in the set of entities denoted by jùłò ‘thief’; (314b) places Oko in contrastive focus. The entity it is being contrasted with will be retrievable from the discourse context.

(314a) jùłò jí èkó
    thief COP Oko
    “Oko is a thief.”

(314b) èkó jí jùlò
    Oko COP thief
    “It is Oko who is a thief (and not Atteh).”

The contrastive focus interpretation of (314b) hints at a diachronic relationship between focus constructions and copula constructions, given the evidence that focus markers are historically related to copulas (Heine and Reh 1984:181-182). Indeed, there is one interesting morphophonological commonality between copula clauses and focus constructions and this relates to tone. In focus constructions, the focused argument occurs in clause initial position and is followed by the focus particle, nĩ, as in (315a), where the focused NP is fɛ̀ɛ̀ ‘all’. The focus marker may be omitted, but its low tone remains. If the last syllable of the focused NP is high-toned the low tone of the focus marker combines with it, resulting in a falling tone, as in (315b).

(315a) ìhã̀ìì fɛ̀ɛ̀ nĩ = kɛ̀-fé-ɔ̀
    IJ all FOC 3PL.IMPERS = take-do-HAB
    “Precisely. All of it is what is used to do it.” [OYO:262]
(315b) jééé  fɛ̃́ɛ̃̂  w ɔ ̀=bàá-nyɛ́  wɔ́=tsɔ̃́ɔ̃́  bò
NEG all.FOC 1PL=FUT-able 1PL.SBJV = show 2SG.OBJ
gbɛ̀í=!ɛ́
name = DEF

“It is not all of them that we can tell you their names.”  [OYO:162]

When the focused particle is omitted and the tone on the last syllable of the focused element is low, there is no change in tone in the focused NP.

In copula clauses as well, a copula subject that ends in a high tone in citation form winds up with a falling tone when it is followed by the copula jí. This is seen in (314b). This phenomenon has led Dakubu (2002:22) to propose a floating low tone as part of the morphophonological make-up of the copula. Therefore, the full form of the copula is `jí. But bearing in mind the focus semantics of some copula clauses as well as the cross-linguistically attested relationship between focus and copula syntax, I propose that the floating low tone is the low tone of the focus marker, ǹ. Further evidence for this view comes from the fact that both the copula subject and the focused NP can be pronominalized with the independent pronoun/object pronoun (316), (317). Subjects in ordinary transitive and intransitive clauses, however, must be pronominalized with subject pronouns (318).

(316) mɔ̀ ní è = jwɛ̀ŋ̀ á!ké lè*e jí ̀amè=kkɔ̀dè!né nàànyò
person NMLZ 3SG = think NMLZ 3SG.OBJ COP 3PL = frog friend
The one whom he thought that he was the particular frog friend who went missing.”

[DEB:167]

(317) ɬɛ̀/*e nì ɨ = sùmɔ̀
3SG.OBJ FOC 1SG = love
“It is he that I love.”

(318) ɛ/*lɛ̀=jè kpò yɛ̀ tɔ̀=ɔ̀ mìŋ̀
3SG = exit compound be.located bottle = DEF inside
“He came out of the bottle.” [PAT:16]

3.5.2 Verbless clauses: predicative particles nĩ, nẽ and nãa

The particles, nĩ, nẽ and nãa function as predicates in clauses that lack verbs. As particles, they cannot be inflected. Some have a deictic component. They will be examined in turn below:

nĩ:- This particle has an identificational function and serves to point out that its subject referent is identical to another referent previously mentioned in the discourse, one that can be picked out in the discourse context. It therefore has anaphoric discourse deixis. It is not a copula particle because it does not have a complement, only a subject.

(319) ònṹfṹ ɬnĩ́
snake PRED.PRT
“It is a snake.”

(320) mì mĩ = nɔ̀ ɬnĩ́ nì nỳɛ̀ = bà-mɔ̀
1SG 1SG = NM PRED.PRT and 2PL.PERF = VENT-catch
"It is mine, and you’ve come to catch him." [DEB:171]

"So Teshie House, where is it?" [FH:66]

A clause containing the predicative particle, *nĩ*, may be negated in the same manner as a copular clause, by fronting the negative particle *jééé*.

(322a) *gbèèe nĩ*  
*dog PRED.PRT*

"It is a dog"

(323b) *jééé gbèèe nĩ*  
*NEG dog PRED.PRT*

"It is not a dog"

*né:* This is a predicative particle much like *nĩ*, except that it has deictic semantics and restrictions on its usage imposed by information structure. It is used to call attention to an entity that is spatially proximal to the interlocutors and which is already known to the interlocutors.

(324) *jééé àmè=kàkàdè!né=!è nĩ é-lààjé=!è--*  
*NEG 3PL=frog=DEF NMLZ PERF-be.missing=DEF*

"Isn’t it their frog who has gone missing?"

*jééé nò nè*  
*NEG that this*

"Isn’t this that (frog)?"
(325) è mènì né
IJ what this
“Oh, what is this?!” [PAT:187]

It is also used cataphorically in discourse to signal the introduction of a salient point that will be expounded upon later, and anaphorically, to refer to a chunk of prior discourse. It’s cataphoric use is exemplified in (326), where the speaker first refers to something she witnessed growing up using né and then goes on to state what exactly that is. In the anaphoric use exemplified by (327), né refers to the preceding section of the story, the part that presented the conclusion.

(326) nɔ̃́ ní wò = bà-nínà né á!ké
NM NMLZ 1PL = VENT-meet this NMLZ
mɔ̃̀-fĩ́ã́-mɔ̃̀ ní à = bàá-fɔ́ lè
person-all-person NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS = FUT-give.birth 3SG.OBJ
hã̀ã̂jĩ̀ĩ́=!ɛ̃́ kùsṹŋ̀ kò yɛ̀ á!ké sà ní
twins=DEF custom INDEF exist NMLZ fit NMLZ
á=yá-táò bò
3PL.IMPERS = ITIV-search 2SG
“What we came and met is this: that everybody who is born a twin, there is a certain custom, that they have to go and search for you…” [OYO:5]

(327) àdèsa = kà nààgbèè né
story=DEF end this
“This is the end of the story.” [NAR:85]
A clause containing \( n\) is also negated with the negator, \( jééé \) in clause-initial position, as seen in (328) below.

(328) \( jééé à d è s á = á n à à g b è é n \) \( n \) \( n é \) 

\[ \text{NEG story=DEF end this} \]

“This is not the end of the story.”

When \( n \) is modified by the definite article, \( lɛ \); it also functions as a proximal demonstrative determiner and is used for noun modification (§2.3.1.3.1). It is by convention written as one word, \( né!é \) ‘this’.

(329) \( n á n á = ! á l é è = y è [m á n] n é) m i ŋ \) 

\[ \text{Nanaa=DEF TOP 3SG=be.located country this inside} \]

“As for Nanaa, she is in this country.” [DF:149]

\( n á n á \)-: This is a presentative predicative particle (PRSTV.PRED.PRT) with a spatial deictic component; it is used to call attention to an entity that is spatially proximal to the interlocutors. This entity however, need not be known to interlocutors as is the case with \( né \). Unlike \( ní \) and \( né \), this predicative particle occurs before the nominal.

(330) \( n á n á k á k ó d é ! n é w é k ú ! k ó \) 

\[ \text{PRSTV.PRED.PRT frog family INDEF} \]

“Here is a certain family of frogs.” [PAT:188]

(331) \( n ó h é w ó = ! s n í è = b ã \) \( \text{next time=é !=é} \) 

\[ \text{that sake=TOP NMLZ 3SG=come =DEF=DEF} \]
“So when he came the next time, he said, “Here are documents.”” [MM:74]

3.5.3 Location, existence and possession

These three semantic categories all make use of the form yè. yè, depending on its syntactic position may either be a verb or a preposition. It is one of only a handful of prepositions in Gã, the other ones being ál ké ‘as’ and já ‘unless’ (§6.6.2). When it occurs immediately after the subject NP, it is a verb which predicates the location of the subject. This location is denoted by the object which follows yè. For example, in (332), yè predicates the location of the subject, ékòmé hṹ ‘one of them (i.e. shoes)’. Its location is coded by the object, bí!é ‘here’. In (333), the subject is the third singular pronoun, and its location, the object of yè, is park kò màsèí ‘near a park’.

(332) nì shú!ú=!é ékòmé hṹ yè bí!é
“And the shoes, one of them too is here.” [FLO:27]

(333) è=yè park kò màsèí ó=nà
“It is located near a park, right?” [FH:6]

The locative verb yè cannot be inflected, except when it occurs in a grammatical argument nominalization (a.k.a. relative clause) (334), or in a focus clause (335). In these syntactic environs, it takes a habitual marker -ɔ, although the temporal semantic import is that of present
time. The two vowels in yɛ́-ɔ̀ ‘be.located-HAB’ coalesce and are rendered in speech as yɔ́ɔ̀. It is not apparent to me what it is about these two constructions that engenders such marking. However, it is not surprising that these constructions should behave in an identically idiosyncratic fashion; in §6.8 I argue that the focus construction historically started out as an equational construction equating the focused noun with an argument nominalization referring to the focused noun. Therefore the argument nominalization in modification function (relative clause) and the focus construction are diachronically related.

(334) hèwɔ̀ n̄ó n̄í yɔ́ɔ̀ bò-diɛ̃́ŋ̂tsè ó=tsùí
sake NM NMLZ be.located.HAB 2SG.OBJ-INTENS 2SG = heart
m̄íj =!é n̄í ó=bàá-bà n̄í ó=kè-bàá-!bá-há amè
inside = DEF FOC 2SG = FUT-come and 2SG = take-FUT-VENT-give 3PL
“So whatever your heart desires is what you will come and give them.”
(Lit: “So whatever is in your heart…) [OYO:118]

(335) nò hèwɔ́=!ọ́ wò=bìɛ̀ n̄é!é hà̃jìí sójì yɔ́!ọ́
that sake = TOP 1PL = here this twins only.FOC be.located.HAB bì!é
here
“So here at ours, it is only twins that are here.” [OYO:385]

Verb yɛ̀ is negated with the suppletive verb, bɛ́.

(336) kòkòdé!né=n̄é bɛ́ è=tó=ò m̄íj
frog = DEF be.located.NEG 3SG = bottle = DEF inside
“The frog was not in his bottle.” [DEB:7]
When ye functions as a preposition, it is found after the verbal predicate or the object, if there is one. Its complement indicates the location where the action predicated by the verb was carried out. In (337), ótsëmë̀ àwè ‘your father’s family house’ is where the ‘doing’ takes place.

In (338), there are two tokens of preposition, ye. The complement of the first token codes the location where the subject is lying on his friend, as sàà nɔ̀ ‘the bed’, while the second token codes the location of ‘what is going on’, which is shìkpɔ̀tj ‘ground’.

(337) ò=fé-ɔ̀ ye ó = tsè-më̀ à-wè
2SG=do-HAB be.located 2SG=father-PL PERT-family.house
“You do it in your father’s family house.” [OYO:338]

(338) è=kà è=nɔ̀ ye sàà nɔ̀ nì òmë=ŋ̀-kwè
3SG=lie 3SG=top be.located bed top and 3PL=PROG-watch
nò nì yà-à à nɔ̀ ye shìkpɔ̀tj
NM NMLZ go-HAB top be.located ground
“He is lying on top of him on the bed and they are watching what is going on on the floor.” [FLO:24]

Since this use of ye is prepositional, it cannot be negated (339). It is the verb that can be negated (340).

(339) *ò=fé-ɔ̀ bè ó = tsè-më̀ à-wè
2SG=do-HAB be.located.NEG 2SG=father-PL PERT-family.house
“You do not do it in your father’s family house.”

(340) ó=!fééé ye ó = tsè-më̀ à-wè
2SG=do.NEG be.located 2SG=father-PL PERT-family.house
“You do not do it in your father’s family house.”
The verb \( yɛ̀ \) can also be used to indicate that its subject referent exists. This is the existential use of \( yɛ̀ \). The locative use can be viewed as a semantic extension of the existential use. Examples are found in (341) to (344).

(341) \( mĩĩ = kɛ́ɛ́ \) !lé \( á!kɛ́ \) mĩĩ = hope \( á!kɛ́ \) \( ó = yɛ̀ \)
1SG.PROG = tell her that 1SG.PROG = NMLZ 2SG = exist
“I was telling her that I hope you are in.” [FH:107]

(342) \( è = mɛ̃̀mĩ́ \) \( yɛ̀ \)
3SG = mother exist
“His mother is alive.” [FH:163]

(343) \( wɔ̀-mɛ̃̀ĩ̀ \) \( pìì \) \( yɛ̀ \) \( nĩ \) \( wɔ̀ \) \( mɔ́j \) \( wɔ̀ = tɔ-ɔ \) \( bɛ́ \)
1PL-PL many exist NMLZ 1PL rather 1PL = arrange-HAB time
\( wɔ̀ = hά-ά \) \( wɔ̀ = hɛ̀ \)
1PL = give-HAB 1PL = body
“There are many of us who rather set our own deadlines.” [CH:389]

(344) \( hékò \) \( yɛ̀ \) \( nĩ \) \( ljí-- \) \( à = tsé-!ɔ \) \( jé!jí \)
somewhere exist NMLZ COP 3PL.IMPERS = call-HAB there
\( kąɔ̃ = è \) \( nɔ̀ \)
compound = DEF top
“There is a place which is-- they call there \( kpoɛ̀ nɔ. \)” [OYO:29]

Existential \( yɛ̀ \) also takes no inflection, with the exception of the habitual suffix in grammatical
nominalizations and focus constructions:

(346) \( shîtɔ́ \) \( nĩ \) \( yɔ́ = !ɔ́ \) \( é-fîtɛ́ \)
pepper.sauce NMLZ exist.HAB = DEF PERF-spoil
“The pepper sauce that’s there, it has gone bad.”
"There is no rice, it is yam that is available."

Like the locative, the existential is also negated with the suppletive, bɛ́, as in (347) above and (348) below.

(348) mɔ́=kò mɔ́=kò bɛ́ ní
person=INDEF person=INDEF exist.NEG NMLZ

ó=!fɔ́ hàâjì̂ ní ó=nyéééé ó=!féé
2SG.PERF=give.birth twins NMLZ 2SG=able.NEG 2SG.SBJV=do
éné
this

“There is nobody who has given birth to twins who cannot do this.” [OYO:292]

The final use of yɛ̀ is as a verb which predicates the possession of an entity (the object of yɛ̀) by the subject of yɛ̀.

(349) ì=yɛ̀ shîkpɔ́ŋ̀ kò yè hî!ɛ́=!ɛ́
1SG=have INDEF be.located face=DEF

“I have some land in front (of the hospital).” [MM:224]

Like the locative and existential, this sense of yɛ̀ also can only be inflected in grammatical nominalizations, by marking it with the habitual suffix (347). And like the locative, yɛ̀ is negated by suppletion with bɛ́ (348).

(347) mì=lé nàâgbá ní ó=yɛ̀
1SG=know.NEG trouble NMLZ 2SG=have.HAB

“I do not know the troubles that you have.” [CH:430]
The possessive construction can also be used for attribution, where the complement of 
yɛ̀ is a property that is being attributed to the subject. This was discussed in detail in §2.4.3.4.

§2.4.3.8 delved into detail on the topic of the relationship between possession and property
denotation. An example of the possessive construction being used for property denotation is

(349) è = yɛ̀  díŋŋ
     3SG = have quiet
     “S/he is quiet.”

3.6 Question formation
The three main sentence types found in language are declarative, imperative and interrogative
sentences. Sometimes, these are referred to as moods. Declarative mood is expressed by
declarative sentences or statements. They are the default sentence type in most languages and
are utilized for presenting propositions. Imperative mood is utilized for the speech act of
making commands. In Gã, imperatives are expressed morpho-phonologically by affixes and
tone. Imperatives were examined in §3.2.3.2 as part of the discussion on verb morphology. This
section, therefore, deals solely with interrogative sentences, which are the main vehicle for
asking questions and making requests.
There are two types of questions: polar questions and content questions. Polar questions require the addressee to confirm or dispute the information contained in the question. Content questions contain incomplete information, and their purpose is to seek the missing or unknown information from the addressee. Polar questions will be discussed first, followed by content questions.

### 3.6.1 Polar questions

Polar questions may be formed in several ways. Gã has both sentence-initial and sentence-final question particles which signal polar questions. Either one may occur without the other in a question, or they may both occur in the same question. The sentence-initial question particle is ̀ánì and the sentence-final one is ló. (350) is a polar question containing both particles; (351), (352) and (353) have only the final particle, while (354) and (355) have only the initial particle.

(350) ̀ánì ò=bàá-nyɛ̀ ó = !kɛ́ɛ́ nàkàì ló
QP 2SG=FUT=able 2SG.SBJV = say that QP
“Can you say that?” [CH:106]

(351) Harry kɛ̀ɛ̂ ló
Harry say QP
“Was it Harry who said it?” [MM:26]

(352) ̀àiɛ̀nà ló
Afiena QP
“Is it Afiena?” [FH:53]
In addition to the question particles, there may be pitch changes to the final syllable (not counting the final question particle) of the word in a polar question. If a word normally ends in a high-toned syllable, when it occurs in a polar question, the tone on the final syllable changes to a falling tone i.e. the pitch on the final syllable rises and then falls. Therefore, the verb shí ‘pound’, which in non-interrogatives has high tone, ends up with a falling tone when it occurs as the final syllable in a polar question (353), (354).

When a polar question contains a final question particle, and the syllable preceding the final particle ends in a low tone, there is no change in pitch - the low tone remains, as in (350) and (352). However, if there is no final question particle, the final low tone is raised slightly (355), though not to the level of a high tone. This slight rise is indicated by the superscript (↑) before the affected syllable, and may be described as an upstep.
A sentence that ends in a downstepped high tone, as in (356), must have the pitch of its final syllable lowered to a low tone to indicate a polar question. In (356), shĩ́ã́ ‘house/home’ which normally ends in a downstepped high tone, ends in a low tone in the polar question.

(356) é=tèè shĩ́ã́ I6
3SG.PERF=go.PST home QP
“Has he gone home?”

Polar questions may also be signalled by these tone changes alone, without the presence of any question particles. For example, in (357) and (358), the means for indicating the interrogative nature of the sentences is the slight rise in pitch or upstep of the final low tone.

(357) āmè = jéj = !é āfĩ́ɛ̀nà
3PL = there = DEF Afiena
“Their place, is it in Afiena?” [FH:80]

(358) kɛ̀ ĩ̀=kɛ̀ɛ́ tsòfã̀-tsɛ̀ wé = !é bé
when 1SG = say medicine-master house = DEF QP
nyɛ̀=nù-ɔ̃̀ shĩ́shĩ́
2PL = understand-HAB under
“When I say “medicine man’s house”, you understand it, don’t you?” [CH:92]

In (359), the interrogative is indicated by the falling tone on the final syllable, which in non-interrogatives has high tone.

(359) ó á=!fééé operation=ɛ̄=!é mì ɛ̄ gbọ̀
IJ 3PL.IMPERS = do.NEG = DEF = DEF and 3SG = die
“Oh, the operation wasn’t done before he died?” [FH:134]
The statement in (360) ends in a downstepped high tone. But when it occurs as a polar question, the pitch on the final syllable is lowered to give a low tone. The particle, \textit{bɛ́}, functions similarly to the tag in an English question tag. It marks an expectation on the part of the speaker that the addressee will agree with or confirm the supposition contained in the question. Unlike tags in English and other languages, however, \textit{bɛ́} does not have a separate intonational contour, and is itself followed by a question, not a statement.

\begin{align*}
(360a) \quad & \text{ò=bàá-!mɛ́} \\
& 2\text{SG} = \text{FUT-wait} \\
& \text{“You will wait.”}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
(360b) \quad & \text{bɛ́ ò=bàá-mɛ́} \\
& \text{QP} \quad 2\text{SG} = \text{FUT-wait} \\
& \text{“You will wait, won’t you?”} \quad \text{[YM:200]}
\end{align*}

(361) is another example of a polar question employing the particle, \textit{bɛ́}

\begin{align*}
(361) \quad & \text{bɛ́ ò=fítà ↑hè} \\
& \text{QP} \quad 2\text{SG} = \text{add body} \\
& \text{“You are one of them, aren’t you?”} \quad \text{[MM:150]}
\end{align*}

Another question particle which functions in similar manner as \textit{bɛ́} is \textit{áńtótó} or \textit{tó}. The particle also occurs in initial position and seeks confirmation of the supposition which follows the particle. The difference is that what follows (áń)tótó is a statement not a question (362).

\begin{align*}
(362) \quad & \text{lɛ́=!ɛ́} \quad \text{tó} \quad \text{è=há-à} \quad \text{mɔ́ nɔ́} \\
& 3\text{SG.OBJ} = \text{TOP} \quad \text{QP} \quad 3\text{SG} = \text{give-HAB} \quad \text{person thing} \\
& \text{“As for her, she’s generous, isn’t she.”} \quad \text{[DT:9;50]}
\end{align*}
A particular constituent in a polar question may be focused by fronting it and following it with the focus particle, ǹ. The English construction that best reflects the semantics of this construction would be a cleft construction, as in (363), where the subject, Oko is the referent whose identity is being questioned.

(363) òkó ǹ b̀à-k̀èè 1bò
     Oko FOC VENT-tell 2SG.OBJ
     “Was it Oko who told you?”

In (364), it is the object, bò, that is in focus.

(364) bò  ǹ  òkó bà-kèè
     2SG.OBJ FOC Oko VENT-tell
     “Was it you that Oko came and told?”

The verb or action may also be focused in a polar question, but this results in a rhetorical question expressing disbelief that the subject referent is partaking in the action (365). In order for the verb to be focused it must be nominalized.

(365) fò-mò ǹ  ò=fò-3=ɔ̂
     cry-NOM FOC 2SG-cry-HAB=DEF
     “Are you really crying?” (Lit: “Is it crying that you are crying?”)

The answer to a polar question may be minimally, hëë!ëëëëëë ‘yes’, dààbí ‘no’ or an answer that communicates ignorance. Agreement may also be indicated by a vocative which involves simply vibrating the vocal cords to the tonal pattern of hëëëë ‘yes’, a sound I transcribe as  mù!mù. Disagreement may also be expressed by a vocative, one whose tone
pattern is *not* identical to *dàābrí* ‘no’. It is best transcribed as *ńńhńńń*. An alternative to this is -

*ēēhēē* - which has the same tone pattern but involves oral articulation rather than just voicing

with the vocal cords.

### 3.6.2 Content questions

The means of formation of content questions is similar to the focused polar questions just
discussed. A content question is basically a focus construction which has a question word in

focus. Watters (2000:215) notes that in many African languages question words are always

focused constituents. The focus particle, *ńń* may optionally occur after the question word. In all

the examples in my data, the focus particle was absent. The question words found in Gã are


*méèbè ‘when’, téngténg ‘how’, élennyén ‘how many, how much’, méélé NP ‘which NP’. One

example featuring each question word is given below. A focus particle is included in brackets

in examples where its presence is feasible. The norm, it seems, is to leave it out. There are no

special pitch changes associated with content questions, in the manner that was seen with polar

questions.

(366) ̀mę̀=pą́=á ę́́  mę́́́́́́  wó=tsé-ó́  lę́ = !é

3PL=father=DEF what 1PL=call-HAB 3SG.OBJ=DEF

“Their father, what do we call him?” [DF:163]
(367) hèwɔ́ =!ɔ́ nāmɔ́ (nǐ) à=kẹ-bà
sake=TOP who FOC 3PL.IMPERS =take.PERF-come
“So who has been brought.” [MM:145]

(368) nēgbɛ̀ (nǐ) ó=hē-mɔ̀-kẹ-yे-lí yɔ̀
where FOC 2SG =buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM be.located.HAB
“Where lies your faith?” [CH:265]

(369) tɛ̀ ɔ̀ =fèé ụgị́ nì ɔ̀ = gbélɛ̀
how 2SG =do how and 2SG =open
“How did you open it?”

(370) hèwɔ́ =!ɔ́ ófānɛ́ mɛnɪ̀ hɛwɔ̀ (nǐ) à=yɛ̀-ɔ̀
sake=TOP please what sake FOC 3PL.IMPERS =eat-HAB
hɔmɔ̀wɔ́=!ɔ́
Homowo =DEF
“So please, why is Homowo celebrated?” [OYO:64]

(371) ĩ́=kẹ́ɛ̀ mɛ́bɔ́ (nì) gā-mɛ̀ =!ɛ́ nyɛ̀ =!lù nɛ̀kɛ̀
1SG =say why FOC Ga-people =DEF 2PL =be.foolish like.this
I said, “Why is that Gas, you are so foolish?” [MM:155]

(372) áfì-!í énnyɛ̀ (nì) ảmɛ̀ =yɛ̀-ɔ̀ dànì nyɛ̀ =bài-ɔ̀
year-PL how.many FOC 3PL =eat-HAB before 2PL =start-HAB
kùsùŋ̀ nɛ̀ ɛ̀ mɔ̀
custom this do-NOM
“How many years old are they before you start this custom?” [OYO:408]

mɛ̀ ‘what, which’ always occurs with an NP head:

(373) mɛ̀ shúù (nì) ɔ̀ =sùmɔ̀
which shoe FOC 2SG =like
“Which shoe do you like?”
The NP containing \( mɛ̃́ɛ̃̀ \) ‘which’ may also be used rhetorically to express contempt or dislike for an idea or suggestion. An example is given in (374), where Kai employs the interrogative to express derision at the paltry amount of 50 cedis.

\[
(374) \text{Kai: } ʰ=\text{yá-kó } hɛwɔ=!ɔ \ mɑ=tá!ɔ hundred \\
1SG=ITIV-take sake=TOP 1SG.FUT=find \\
kɔ má=kɛ lɛ INDEF 1SG.FUT-gift 3SG.OBJ \\
“I’m going to take it so I’ll find some one hundred (cedis) to give to her.”
\]

\[
\text{MM: } ô ɛ̃́ɛ̃́!ɛ̃́ ɛ̃́ɛ̃́!ɛ̃́ hɛ !lɛ fifty \\
IJ yes yes give 3SG.OBJ \\
“Oh yes yes, give her fifty (cedis).”
\]

\[
\text{Kai: } ô mɛ̃́!ɛ̃́ fifty hũ \\
IJ what too \\
“Oh, what fifty cedis?” [MM:129]
\]

Another interrogative word, \( tɛ \) ‘which’ only occurs with grammatical nominalizations in NP use (See Chapter 7).

\[
(375a) tɛ mɔ nĩ !jí \\
which NM NMLZ COP \\
“Which one is it?” (referring to a person) [DF:165]
\]

\[
(375b) tɛ nɔ nĩ !jí \\
which NM NMLZ COP \\
“Which one is it?” (referring to a thing)
\]

Question words may also occur in-situ, in the same syntactic position that the answer would be:
There are certain recurring elements in a number of these interrogative words that merit some investigation. The ones that immediately stand out are mɛ́- and mɛ́ɛ́- (in mɛ́nĩ́ ‘what’, mɛ́ɛ́bɔ̀ ‘why’, mɛ́ɛ́bè ‘when’, mɛ́ ‘which, what’) and nɛ́- (in nɛ́gbɛ̀ ‘where’, nàmɔ̀ ‘who’). mɛ́ appears to be an archaic question word meaning ‘what’. Its regular occurrence with the focus particle, nĩ́ led speakers to reanalyse the question word + particle as one question word, thus was born modern day, mɛ́nĩ́ ‘what’. Zimmerman’s (1858:195) dictionary lists mɛ́ as a synonym of mɛ́nĩ́ ‘what’ and remarks that the former is used at the end of sentences while the latter is used at the beginning. This distribution in 19th century Gã matches up with the linguistic facts; if nĩ́ is the focus particle, and focused constituents in Gã occur in sentence-initial position only, it is not surprising that mɛ́nĩ́ was disallowed at final position. Present-day speakers, however, seem to have reanalysed mɛ́nĩ́ in its entirety as a question word and so allow it at both sentence
initial and final positions. In modern Gã, \textit{mḗ} has largely fallen out of use, except in very formal
registers. For instance, it was used in the following example by a priest giving a sermon.

\begin{verbatim}
(379) kɛ́ ̃̀ ahṹ tswà ̃̀  tɔmɔ̀ ̃̀ mḗ  ɔ = nyẽ́-!fj  nĩ́
    if    storm  hit  like  what   2SG = be.able = NEG.FUT   NMLZ
        ɔ = fã    1è
    2SG.SBJV = uproot    3SG.OBJ
   “No matter how strong the storm blows, it cannot be uprooted.” (Lit: “Even if a storm
blows like what, you cannot uproot it.”)  [CH:350]
\end{verbatim}
\textit{mḗ} in \textit{mḗbấ} ‘why’ and \textit{mḗbè́} ‘when’ is probably a variant of \textit{mḗnĩ́}, the result of loss of the
segments of \textit{nĩ́} and compensatory lengthening of the final vowel of \textit{mḗ}, with the extra vowel
hosting the erstwhile low tone of the focus particle. \textit{bã́} in \textit{mḗbấ} ‘why’ is likely ‘come,
happen’. Therefore, \textit{mḗbấ} (\textit{mḗ nĩ́ bã́}) ‘why’ literally means ‘what happened’. \textit{bè́} in \textit{mḗbè́}
‘when’ refers to ‘time’ so that the literal meaning of the question word is ‘what time’.

\textit{nẽ́} is listed and translated in Zimmerman (1858:218) as ‘what’. \textit{nã́mɔ̀} ‘who’ could be
analysed as \textit{nẽ́} ‘what’ + \textit{mɔ́} ‘person’ and \textit{nẽgbè́} ‘where’ as \textit{nẽ́} ‘what’ + \textit{gbè́} ‘road, way’. \textit{nẽ́},
however, is never used alone in present-day Gã and only occurs in these two question words.
Since the plural of \textit{mɔ́} ‘person’ is \textit{mẽ́} ‘people’, \textit{nã́mɔ́} ‘who’ can be pluralized to obtain \textit{nãmẽ́r} ‘who (pl)’. No other question word can be pluralized.
3.7 Summary
In this chapter, the Gã verb, its associated morphology as well as the simple clause and its argument structure were introduced. It was noted that there were three types of verbal predicates in Gã: simple verbs, serial verbs and inherent complement verbs (ICVs) (§3.1). Verbal categories expressed morphologically were examined. It was determined that Gã was mainly an aspectual language. The future is the only category resembling tense in Gã, but it also has modal functions (§3.2.1.2). Most unmarked verbs are given a default past time interpretation, but depending on the semantics of the verb and the effect of time adverbials, present time and habitual aspectual interpretations may also be given for bare verbs. In §3.2.2, the prospective, habitual, progressive, perfect, iterative and distributive aspects were discussed. An examination of mood revealed that Gã has two irrealis categories, the subjunctive and imperative, which both signal hypothetical situations (§3.2.3). The various forms of negation were the subject of §3.2.4. In §3.2.5, the pre-verbal deictic auxiliaries were examined and shown to provide spatial, aspectual as well as temporal information about the event. Transitivity and grammatical relations were looked at in §3.3. Gã has nominative-accusative grammatical relations and evidence was provided in support of the notion of subject. Different transitivity classes of verbs were identified (§3.3.3). In §3.4, inherent complement verbs (ICVs) were investigated and it was proven that the complement in an ICV is also the direct object of
the verb in the ICV (§3.4). The semantics of ICVs were treated by examining a few meaning
clusters in detail (§3.4.3). Non-prototypical clause types were looked at in §3.5. Copula clauses
and verbless clauses were presented in §3.5.1 and §3.5.2, while the use of verb and preposition
yè for location, existential expression and possession was the subject of §3.5.3. Question-
formation was the topic of §3.6. Polar questions are formed by a combination of question
particles and pitch changes on the final syllable of the supposition. Content questions make use
of a focus structure in which the question word is focused. The question word may also be in
situ.
Chapter 4: Serial verb constructions

4.0 Introduction

Serial verb constructions (SVCs) are an important syntactic device in Gã, as they are in many West African languages. They are constructions that consist of two or more verbs which together act as a single clause and in most cases encode a single event. Some SVCs may consist of two or more sub-events that together are expressed by a single clause. Cross-linguistically, SVCs are characterised by certain core syntactic properties, which will be discussed below. It is important to note, however, that there are language-specific properties of SVCs that are dependent on the unique morpho-syntactic properties of the languages in which they are found. The aim of this chapter, therefore, is to describe SVCs as they are uniquely manifested in Gã. The chapter is divided into several sections. §4.1 deals with definitional issues. §4.2 looks at the properties of mono-clausality and single event-hood and how they are formally manifested in AMP marking and subject marking. §4.3 examines symmetrical and asymmetrical SVCs as well as their functions. §4.4 takes a closer look at two semantic types of SVCs: the integrated SVC and the chained SVC. §4.5 takes an in-depth look at one type of SVC involving the defective verb *ke*. The issue of finiteness and how it relates to the verbs in
an SVC is discussed in §4.6. In §4.7, SVCs are compared with similar multi-verb constructions.

§4.8 presents the summary.

4.1 Defining SVCs

SVCs are infamously difficult to define cross-linguistically, and no study is complete without an acknowledgement of the lack of consensus among linguists as to what exactly constitutes an SVC. Below, a few definitions by various authors which I consider to be representative of the generally accepted view of SVCs will be given, after which various critiques of these definitions will be highlighted.

Aikhenvald’s (2006:1) definition is widely regarded as a consensus view, and states:

“A serial verb construction (SVC) is a sequence of verbs which act together as a single predicate, without any overt marker of coordination, subordination, or syntactic dependency of any other sort. Serial verb constructions describe what is conceptualized as a single event. They are monoclausal; their intonational properties are the same as those of a monoverbal clause, and they have just one tense, aspect, and polarity value. SVCs may also share core and other arguments. Each component of an SVC must be able to occur on its own.”

Durie (1997:290) provides a semantic definition:

“The archetypal serial verb construction consists of a sequence of two or more verbs which in various (rather strong senses) together act like a single verb.”
He lends much weight to the issue of culture-specific event construal and notes that events which are most often serialized are those that “speakers habitually treat as complex unmarked events.” (Durie 1997:328).

Stahlke (1965), in his study of serial verbs in Yoruba and Yatye enumerates the following as distinguishing properties of SVCs:

1) They cannot contain a conjunction, 2) they must agree as to tense, 3) they must agree as to auxiliaries, negation, interrogative and mood.

As more and more data from serializing languages has been gathered, these canonical properties of SVCs have been challenged. Shibatani (2009a) for instance, disputes the assumption that an SVC cannot contain an overt marker of coordination. He shows that some Formosan languages such as the Paiwan, Changpin Amis and the Mayrinax dialect of Atayal can contain a linker. Indeed, only in Changpin Amis is the linker optional. Shibatani (2009a:257) is also able to show that SVCs in these languages differ from coordinate and subordinate structures in several different ways. For instance, the second verb of the SVC in these languages cannot be negated or marked for mood, neither can they host a pronominal clitic. These restrictions, meanwhile, do not hold for other multi-verb constructions such as coordination and subordination. Hence, he considers languages such as Japanese, which have
converb constructions containing a linker as serializing languages, citing evidence of their monoclausality.

There may be some exceptions to the no-coordinator requirement. Foley (2010:326) reports that verb stems in Yimas SVCs require a linker that is also employed for verb sequencing, although in SVCs, this linker is desemanticised.

The most basic property of SVCs – that they represent a single event – has also been questioned recently by Baker and Harvey (2010:35). They claim that serial verb constructions, even though they are mono-clausal, are like multi-clause structures in that they express multiple events. The only difference between SVCs and such multi-clausal structures is that “serial verbs are always constrained in terms of some argument coindexation requirement.” Their proposal is couched in Jackendoff’s theory of Lexical Conceptual Structure (LCS), which allows for a construction to have any number of events in its LCS (i.e. it may consist of single or multiple predicates). These events may then be mapped onto any number of clauses in the syntax. SVCs hence are multi-predicational but mono-clausal. A similar view is offered by Foley (2010), backed up by evidence that shows differing syntactic treatment of the various verbs in Watam SVCs.

Baker and Harvey do not attempt to disprove certain crosslinguistic and language specific syntactic properties that show that the verbs in an SVC do indeed function as a single
predicate. For example, Hellwig (2006:93) shows that for Goemai, addressees backchannel after clauses i.e. following each verb phrase in a multi-verb construction, but in SVCs, backchanelling only occurs after the entire SVC. Also, the fact that in many SVCs as opposed to multi-clausal structures, there is no intonational break between the verbs in the series is not addressed by Baker and Harvey. It is also important to note that many linguists working on SVCs acknowledge that SVCs consist of sub-events (See Aikhenvald 2006; Bruce 1988; Osam 2004) but these sub-events are together conceived of as a unitary event because culturally, they form a “recognizable event type”, to borrow an expression from Durie (1997).

The data for Gã bears out Baker and Harvey’s reservations about the mono-predicational nature of all SVCs to some degree. For Gã, it will be shown that there is one sub-type of SVCs for which a mono-predicational characterization does not convincingly capture the semantic facts of the construction. This type of SVC is known as the chained SVC (CSVC) and it will be discussed in §4.4. I maintain that CSVCs are multi-predicational but mono-clausal.

Another characteristic of SVCs – that each component be able to stand on its own – or that each verb should be able to occur as the only verb in a simple clause, is also called into question by Shibatani (2009a). He shows that in an SVC, only one of the verbs is fully formally and functionally finite, while the other verbs are dependent on it. In order for these
non-finite verbs to occur independently they must be morphologically marked as such, and in
this instance they are different from their SVC forms. This means that constructions which
contain converbs can be considered SVCs. Converbs, common in Chinese, can only occur in
the company of another verb and this fact has led Matthews (2006) and others to disqualify
such converbal constructions as SVCs. This point is especially pertinent to Gã, where over a
third of all SVCs contain a converb-like element, ke.

Even within the same language, there may be no unity as to what features the
constructions putatively identified as SVCs possess. Foley (2010:107) says of the Watam SVC
that it is somewhat of a misnomer: “some are paraphrasable in CCCs [clause-chaining
constructions], some are not; some require the scope of negation to include all elements, some
do not; some allow subject pronoun insertion, some do not, etc.” In Gã, we will see that one
type of SVC (CSVC) are paraphraseable as coordinate constructions without a change in
meaning, while another type (ISVCs) are not. “Minor” SVC features do not fare any better, in
terms of being cross-linguistically applicable. For example, Aikhenvald (2006:20) notes that in
many SVCs the different components may not be questioned or focused separately. But
exceptions are found in Ewe. What universal requirements there remain for SVC-hood turn out
to be quite mundane, in that they are also universal requirements for single verbs. One such
requirement is that SVCs cannot contain duplicate roles i.e. they cannot have more than one agent, patient, instrument etc. (Durie 1997:341).

In spite of these inconsistencies, there is no doubt that constructions that have been identified as SVCs share similar syntactic and semantic properties, regardless of their idiosyncratic morphological and syntactic features. These properties are argument sharing, “harmonious” TAMP values, no intonational pause between the various verb phrases, and the intuition of native speakers that the verbs together describe a single event, even if there are sub-events within that overarching event. These properties, together with the similar functions played by SVCs cross-linguistically, satisfactorily designate SVCs as a unique syntactic construction worthy of analysis. In what follows, such an analysis is carried out for Gâ, beginning with the notion of mono-clausality and its morphosyntactic correlates.

4.2 Mono-clausality, mono-predication and single-eventhood

The claim that SVCs are mono-clausal, mono-predicational and depict single events has been tested in several languages. This is often done by comparing SVCs with other multi-verb constructions in the language. In Goemai, Herwig (2006:93) notes that addressees backchannel after the whole SVC and not individual verbs in the SVC, whereas with multi-verb constructions they backchannel after each clause. Intonational breaks or pauses between clauses is another way by which SVCs can be shown to differ from multi-verb sentences. There are
generally few pauses between verbs in an SVC, whereas notable pauses are found between verbs in coordinate structures and of course between independent sentences. This was found by Givón (1991) to be true for Kalam, Tairora and Tok Pisin. A similar conclusion was arrived at by Morrison (2007) for Akan. In Gã too, there is no intonational break between the components of an SVC, especially integrated SVCs. However, pauses (even long ones) were allowed between components of chained SVCs. This, along with a few others, is one of the reasons why chained SVCs are designated as non-prototypical SVCs which make several predications (§4.4).

Further evidence of the single event-hood of SVCs is the fact that the sub-events occupy the same temporal frame. As a result, they cannot be modified by multiple time adverbs or incompatible time adverbs (1c). Only one time adverb is allowed and it may occur after any of the VPs (1a) (1b).

(1a)  \[mä = hé \quad wòló = !é \quad námé!né \quad mä = hà \quad !bó\]

1SG.FUT = buy    book = DEF     today     1SG.FUT = give     2SG.OBJ

“I’ll buy the book for you today.”

(1b)  \[mä = hé \quad wòló = !é \quad mä = hà \quad !bó \quad námé!né\]

1SG.FUT = buy    book = DEF     1SG.FUT = give     2SG.OBJ     today

“I’ll buy the book for you today.”
There is also evidence of mono-clausality in the syntactic manifestation of tense, aspect, mood and polarity. These will be looked at below.

4.2.1 Tense, aspect, mood and polarity (TAMP) marking

For Gã, one major way by which we know the SVC is mono-clausal is by the realization of tense, aspect, mood and polarity (TAMP) categories. The verbs in an SVC cannot contrast as to these categories and in most cases, Gã makes this abundantly clear by requiring concordant marking on each verb. Formally, the verbs may be marked for different TAMP values (as is the case with the future and imperative) but semantically, these values should be compatible. Each TAMP category will now be examined in turn.

4.2.1.1 Tense and aspect

The tense and aspectual value of all the verbs must be semantically compatible. Except for future, whatever aspectual value is expressed in an SVC must be overtly marked on each verb.

(i) Habitual

(2) \( \text{wɔ}=t̥=t̥ \quad \text{ɛkɔ} \quad \text{wɔ}=m̥=ḁ \quad \text{sh̥} \quad \text{wɔ}=h̥=ḁ \quad \text{\̣m̥} \)  
1PL = dish-HAB  some  1PL = put-HAB  down  1PL = give-HAB  3PL  
“We dish some (of the food) and put it down for them.” [YM:299]
(ii) Progressive

(3) \(èè=ðèkè\) shì ëè=kwë è=bì !ë--
\(3SG.PROG=creep\) down \(3SG.PROG=look\) \(3SG=child\) DEF
è=nàanyö =!ë
\(3SG=friend=DEF\)
“He’s creeping and watching his child-- his friend.” [DEB:99]

(iii) Perfect

(4) gbèè =!ë hû ë=kû è=sèè ë=bà
dog=DEF too \(3SG.PERF=break\) \(3SG=back\) \(3SG.PERF=come\)
“The dog too has returned.” [DEB:98]

(v) Future

This is the only aspectual category that is not concordantly marked on all verbs. It is marked
only on the first verb. Subsequent verbs are marked for the subjunctive. This does not violate
the stipulation that all verbs have the same aspectual value since both future and subjunctive
are irrealis categories, marking events that are yet to be realised.

(5) à=bàá-šà-tsí shìkà kè bàá =!á féè
d=SUBJ-ITIV-push money and leaf=DEF all

à=âšwë
3PL.IMPERS.SBJV=pour
“The money and the leaves will all be thrown away.”

4.2.1.2 Mood

Verbs in the SVC must agree as to mood. In an imperative SVC, the first verb is marked with
the appropriate imperative suffix while subsequent verbs are marked for subjunctive. As with
future SVCs, there is no violation of the requirement for shared TAMP values because the imperative and subjunctive are both irrealis.

(6)  
\[
\text{tswà-á fɛ́́ɛ́́ é!kó ő = fɔ́ ó = hî́ɛ́}
\]
\[
\text{hit-IMP all some 2SG.SBJV = wash 2SG = face}
\]

“Scoop (with your hands) any (of the herbal mixtures) and wash your face with it.”

[OYO:102]

In a negative imperative SVC (7), the negator (the negative subjunctive morpheme) occurs clause-initially and all the verbs in the series remain unmarked. The negator has scope over all the verbs in the series.

(7)  
\[
\text{kà-á tũ̀ ò = bò!té nṹ = ɛ́ mì́ŋ̀}
\]
\[
\text{NEG.SBJV-SBJV jump 2SG = enter water = DEF inside}
\]

“Don’t jump into the water.”

In a subjunctive SVC all verbs in the series must take the subjunctive morpheme.

(8)  
\[
\text{wɔ́ = hố è = nɔ́ wɔ́ = lỳ́è yè}
\]
\[
\text{1PL.SBJV = buy 3SG = top 1PL.SBJV = eat be.located}
\]
\[
\text{nɔ́-fĩ́ã́-nɔ́ fɛ́é-mɔ́ mì́}
\]
\[
\text{thing-all-thing do-NOM inside}
\]

“We should trust him in everything that we do.”

[CH:424]

4.2.1.3 Polarity

The verbs in an SVC cannot have opposite polarities i.e. one cannot be negative, while the other is affirmative. This is indicated by overt marking of negation on each verb in the SVC. In
(9a), the serial verb *hé yè* (lit: buy eat) ‘believe, trust, have faith in’ is negated by negating both verbs.

(9a) \( \dot{e} = \text{hééé} \quad \text{sàné} = \dot{e} \quad \dot{e} = \text{yééé} \)

\( 3SG = \text{buy.NEG} \quad \text{matter} = \text{DEF} \quad 3SG = \text{eat.NEG} \)

“S/he did not believe the story.”

In negating a serial verb containing bare verbs, however, some speakers do not negate the second verb, but rather mark it as subjunctive, as in (9b). It is unclear the level of acceptability that sentences such as (9b) enjoy. When asked explicitly, speakers say that negating both verbs is the grammatical means of negation, rather than marking the second verb as subjunctive. All the same, structures such as (9b) are heard from time to time in natural speech.

(9b) \( ?\text{shí} \quad \dot{e} = \text{hééé} \quad \text{wọ-núú!tsó} \quad \text{yésù} \quad \text{kristò nò} \quad \dot{e} = \text{lýé} \)

but \( 2SG = \text{buy.NEG} \quad 1PL = \text{lord Jesus Christ} \quad \text{top} \quad 2SG.SBJV = \text{eat} \)

“…but you don’t trust in our lord Jesus Christ.” [CH:209]

The negative future (10) and negative perfect (11) must be concordantly marked on all verbs in the series.

(10) \( \dot{e} = \text{kwé-ụ} \quad nọ \quad \dot{e} = \text{há-ụ} \)

\( 3SG = \text{look-NEG.FUT} \quad \text{top well} \quad 3SG = \text{give-NEG.FUT} \)

bò

\( 2SG.OBJ \)

“S/he won’t look after it well for you.”

(11) \( \dot{e} = \text{bó-!!ụ-kọ} \quad \dot{e} = \text{wọ-kọ} \)

\( 3SG = \text{shout-ITER-NEG.PERF} \quad 3SG = \text{put-NEG.PERF} \quad 3SG.OBJ \quad \text{before} \)

“S/he has never shouted at her/him before.”
In a negative subjunctive SVC, however, the negative morpheme *ka-* is marked just once on the first verb. All other verbs are unmarked. However, the negative morpheme is understood to have scope over all the verbs in the series.

(12) ôkó á-ká-tũ̀ è=bólté nú =è miŋ̀
     Oko  SBJV-NEG.SBJV-jump 3SG =enter  water =DEF  inside
     “Oko shouldn’t jump into the water.”

As has been shown in this section, the verbs in a serial verb construction form a very tight syntactic unit because they cannot be independently marked for contrasting grammatical categories. Another unique feature of the verbs in SVCs in most languages (Gã being no different) is that they have just one syntactic subject and in some cases, a shared object as well. This is further proof that SVCs comprise just one clause. The following section will describe argument-sharing, generally.

### 4.2.2 Argument-sharing

#### 4.2.2.1 Subject
In all Gã SVCs the syntactic subject of the initial verb is the syntactic subject of subsequent verbs. In some SVCs a pronominal copy of the subject appears on all non-initial verbs (13), (14). Dakubu (2004:16) calls this resumptive serialization.
“All we need to do is simply be attentive to him.” [CH:409]

“The toad ran away.” [MANF:5]

This is opposed to non-resumptive serialization, where there is no pronominal marking of subject on non-initial verbs (15), or where the non-initial verbs are marked by the pre-verb ke-

(18a). For most speakers, omitting a pronominal clitic on a non-initial verb is not felicitous; others find it acceptable (18b).
Non-resumptive SVCs in which the non-initial verb is prefixed with *kɛ* differ from resumptive SVCs in the extent of integration of the sub-events as well as the types of objects that they can take. These will be discussed in 4.5.

In some Gã SVCs, although all the verbs have the same subject on the surface, logically or semantically their subjects differ. In (19), although the subject of both verbs is the first singular (future) pronoun, *má*, it is not the logical subject of *gbéé* ‘fall’. Rather the logical subject of *gbéé* ‘fall’ - the one who actually falls - is *bó* ‘2SG.OBJ’.

(19) $má = \text{tsǐ}$ $!bó$ $má = \text{lgb̥éé}$ $nù = \text{è}$ $mìŋ$  
1SG.FUT = push 2SG.OBJ 1SG.FUT = fall water = DEF inside  
“I will push you into the water.”

In (20) as well, the third plural impersonal pronoun *à* is the syntactic subject of both *wò* ‘prepare’ and *mà* ‘put down’, but it is not the logical subject of the latter verb because it is the herbs (*bàà*) that are put down.
“So when the herbs are prepared and put down.” [YM:86]

Gã has no switch-function SVCs where the object of V1 is the subject of V2. Semantically, it is possible, as (19) and (20) show. However, in the surface syntactic structure the verbs must all have the same subject as V1.

4.2.2.2 Objects
Unlike subjects, objects in Gã SVCs are never shared. In SVCs where the verbs are transitive, each verb has its own object. In (21) the object of fò ‘fetch’ is lá!á ‘the blood’ while the object of wò ‘put’ is nṹɛ̃̀ mĩ̀ŋ̀ ‘inside the water’.

(21) kɛ̀kɛ́=!ɛ́ á=fò nṹ=ɛ̃̀!á á=wò
then=TOP 3PL.IMPERS.PERF=fetch blood=DEF 3PL.IMPERS.PERF=put
miŋ̣  inside
“Then, blood will be fetched and put into the water.” [YM:123]

Argument structure in Gã SVCs is therefore fairly simple. Each SVC has just one syntactic subject and each transitive verb has an object. Ditransitive verbs may also have two objects in an SVC. In almost all SVCs, verbs display the same argument structure within an SVC as they do in simple sentences. One notable exception is the verb hâ ‘give’ as a benefactive marker in V2 position. Although in simple sentences and in SVCs hâ may be
ditransitive (22a), (22b) and (22c), this is never the case when it occurs in V2 position
functioning to introduce benefactive NPs (22d). This is evidence of the grammaticalization of
non-initial hā in an SVC, in that it introduces benefactives and nothing else. When it expresses
its core semantic meaning of “physical transfer”, it allows for double objects, but when it is
carrying out the grammatical function of marking benefactives it does not.

(22a) è=hā mĩ shiká
     3SG=give 1SG money
     “S/he gave me money.”

(22b) í=mãmì hā mĩ shiká kè-tèè skûl
     1SG=mother give 1SG.OBJ money take-go school
     “My mother gave me money to take to school.”

(22c) kòfì kwà hā ā!mã wòlò
     Kofi IMPERF.pretend IMPERF.give Ama book
     “Kofi pretentiously gave Ama a book.” (Adjei 1999:142; glosses modified,
     emphasis mine)

(22d) *è=gbélé shínã=!á è=hā!mì bò
     3SG=open door=DEF 3SG=give 1SG.OBJ 2SG.OBJ
     “S/he opened the door for me you.”

4.3 Composition of SVCs
Based on Aikhenvald (2006:21), SVCs may be classified into two types: asymmetrical SVCs
and symmetrical SVCs. Asymmetrical SVCs contain one or more verbs from a semantically
and grammatically ‘open’, large or unrestricted class as well as one or more verbs from a
semantically and grammatically ‘closed’ or restricted class. The verb from the ‘open’ class expresses the main activity or property predicated by the SVC, while the verb from the ‘closed’ class adds a modificational meaning. Examples of restricted classes of verbs are verbs of motion and direction, verbs that express aspectual meanings such as ‘finish’, and verbs that serve to introduce peripheral participants. The verb from the restricted class is known as the minor verb, while that from the unrestricted class is the major verb. This division corresponds roughly to Sebba’s (1987) ‘fixed’ and ‘free’ verbs respectively. His terms reflect the fact that often the minor or fixed verb always occurs in the same verb slot, usually either the first or last slot, while the major verb or free verb can occur in any position in the SVC.

Symmetrical SVCs, on the other hand, contain only verbs from ‘open’ or ‘unrestricted’ classes. Both asymmetrical and symmetrical SVCs are found in Gã but asymmetrical SVCs far outnumber symmetrical SVCs.

In terms of wordhood, Gã SVCs form separate grammatical and phonological words. In a two-verb SVC, for instance, there may be several elements intervening between V1 and V2 such as the object of V1, the pronominal subject marker on V2 and any aspectual morphemes. The verbs in the SVC may also be formally marked for different aspectual categories.
4.3.1 Asymmetrical SVCs

The data collected revealed that the majority (66%) of SVCs in Gã are asymmetrical. The total number of SVCs in the frog stories was 391, representing 34% of all clauses.

In about half of asymmetrical SVCs, the major verb precedes the minor verb. In (23) below, for instance, V1 is a major verb, \( \ddot{j} \ddot{u} \) ‘bathe’ while V2 and V3, \( \ddot{h} \ddot{a} \) ‘give’ and \( \ddot{t} \ddot{a} \) ‘finish’ are minor verbs, imparting benefactive and completive meanings respectively.

(23) \( \ddot{k} \ddot{e} \ \ddot{a} = \ddot{y} \ddot{a} - \ddot{j} \ddot{u} \) \( \ddot{a} = \ddot{h} \ddot{a} \) \( \ddot{a} = \ddot{t} \ddot{a} - \ddot{t} \ddot{a} \)

when 3PL.IMPERS = ITIV-bathe 3PL.IMPERS = give 3SG

3PL.IMPERS = finish-TOP

“When they’ve finished giving them a bath…” [YM:189]

The other half of asymmetrical SVCs (about 54%) consists entirely of one type of SVC in which V1 is the minor verb, \( \ddot{k} \ddot{e} \) ‘take’ and V2 is a major verb. \( \ddot{k} \ddot{e} \) ‘take’ is a highly defective verb which cannot occur on its own in a clause and cannot be inflected. The glosses ‘take’ and ‘move’ are chosen for two reasons. Firstly, Zimmerman (1866:143) notes that it previously meant ‘take’, although he does not cite any evidence. Secondly, its syntactic distribution and function parallel similar verbs in related languages whose lexical meaning is indeed ‘take’.

Therefore, its categorization as a verb is largely for syntactic reasons, an issue that will be discussed in detail in §4.5. In the following example, V1 is \( \ddot{k} \ddot{e} \) while V2 is \( \ddot{w} \ddot{a} \) ‘put’.
4.3.1.1 Functions of asymmetrical SVCs
Since Gã has no case system and a relatively poor aspectual system, asymmetrical SVCs are a valuable way of indexing relations that in other languages are accomplished by case markers, prepositions and tense-aspect markers. This is made possible by thegrammaticalization of the minor verb. Indeed, Aikhenvald (2006:30) notes that cross-linguistically, there is a tendency for asymmetrical SVCs to grammaticalize while symmetrical SVCs lexicalize. Six main functional types of asymmetrical SVCs can be recognised for Gã. This is based on the meaning imparted by the minor verb to the situation described by the major verb. These functional types are directional function, aspectual function, valency-increasing function, causation function, manner-expression function and comparative function.

a) Directional function

The minor verb in this type of SVC is a deictic verb, bà ‘come’ or yà ‘go’. The major verb can be any verb at all. Here, the minor verb serves to provide a deictic specification of the action encoded by the major verb i.e. whether the action described by the major verb was accompanied or followed by a movement away from (yà ‘go’, example 25) or towards (bà
some deictic centre. In this type of SVC, the deictic verb is often preceded by the verb *kɛ* ‘take’.

(25) $\hat{\text{e}} = \text{télɛ}$ lè *kɛ̃-yà*

$3\text{SG} = \text{carry.on.head} \quad 3\text{SG.OBJ} \quad \text{take-PROG-go}$

“He’s carrying him away on his head.” [DEB:119]

(26) *é = !féeé* !mí á kɛ̀ á=gbàlà mɔ̀ = kò

$3\text{SG} = \text{do.NEG} \quad 1\text{SG} \quad \text{NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS.PERF = pull} \quad \text{person = INDEF}$

$kɛ̀-bà$ bì!ë

take-come here

“I don’t think anyone has been forced to come here.”

(27) ònúkpá-ì yà-à a=yà-tsé-ɔ̀ kɛ̀-bà-à

$\text{adult-PL go-HAB} \quad 3\text{PL.IMPERS=ITIV-tear-HAB} \quad \text{take-come-HAB}$

“Adults go and tear (them = herbs) and bring (them).” [OYO:230]

b) Aspectual function

A few aspectual meanings are conveyed by minor verbs in asymmetrical SVCs.

i) Completive aspect

In order to express completive aspect, the verb *tɔ̀* ‘be finished, be used up’ occurs in the verb-final slot in an SVC (28), (29).

(28) hèwɔ̀ kɛ a=wɔ̀ bàà = !á a = tɔ̀-lɔ̀

$sake \quad \text{when} \quad 3\text{PL.IMPERS = prepare} \quad \text{leaf = DEF} \quad 3\text{PL.IMPERS = finish-TOP}$

“So, after they have finished preparing the herbs…” [YM:120]
ii) Gradual aspect

In a progressive SVC, the minor verb, bà ‘come’, preceded by ke ‘take’ is used to indicate that the action described by the major verb is occurring at a gradual rate. The major verb occurs in V1 slot while the minor verb occurs in V2 slot. In (30), the major verb is gbó ‘die’ and in (31) it is shwì ‘be fat’.

(30) ó=bí !lé =!é ŋ-ŋ-gbó kè-ŋ-bà
2SG=child DEF=DEF PROG-die take-PROG-come
“Your child is gradually dying.” [CH:95]

(31) òò=shwì kè-ŋ-bà
2SG.PROG=be.fat take-PROG-come
“You are gradually becoming fat.”

c) Valency-increasing and argument-specifying function

The most widespread function of asymmetrical SVCs in Gã is that it allows for the addition of non-core participants and semantic roles such as source, goal, benefactive, instrument and comitative.
i) Source

The verb jɛ̀ ‘come from’ occurs in SVCs to introduce source NPs. It can occur in any verb slot. But when it occurs non-initially it is preceded by ke ‘take’, as in (32a) below. In both examples below, jɛ̀ ‘come from’ specifies the window as the source or origin of the dog’s falling journey.

(32a) è=tũ̀ kɛ̀-jɛ̀ sάmʃɛ́lɛ̀ =è nàà è=bà-gbèé
3SG=jump take-come.from window=DEF mouth 3SG = VENT-fall !shí down
“He jumped from the window and came and fell down.” [KOF:10]

(32b) gbèé =è jɛ̀ sάmʃɛ́lɛ̀ =è mìŋ̀ è=bà-gbèé !shí
dog=DEF come.from window=DEF inside 3SG = VENT-fall down
“The dog fell down from the window.” [NAT:29]

ii) Goal

The verb ya ‘go’ in non-initial position in an SVC is used to introduce goal NPs. It may or may not be preceded by ke ‘take’. In (33) below, tèè ‘go.PST’ introduces the goal, Korle-bu (hospital).

(33) á=transfer bò kɛ̀-tèè kɔ̀ʊlɛ̀-bú
3PL.IMPERS.PERF = transfer 2SG.OBJ take.PERF-go.PST Korle-bu
“You’ve been transferred to Korle-bu (hospital).” [CH:44]
Goal NPs may also be introduced by the minor verb, \( wò \) ‘put’, in non-initial position. The object of \( wò \) is the place to which the object of \( V1 \) is transferred. In (34) it is \( fàáà ml̀ĩ̀ \) ‘inside the river’.

\begin{verbatim}
(34) nĩ̀ è=tsf àmène=yì é!nyɔ=!ɔ̃́ fɛ̃́ è=wò fàá=à
d and 3SG = push 3PL = number two = DEF all 3SG = put river = DEF mǜ inside

“And he pushed the two of them into the river.” [MAV:87]
\end{verbatim}

The object of \( wò \) could also be the entity to whom the action carried out by \( V1 \) is directed.

\begin{verbatim}
(35) gbèé=!ɛ́ hṹ ŋ̀-bó!lɔ́ kɛ̀-ŋ̀-wò wò-bí=!ɛ́
dog = DEF too PROG-shout take-PROG-put honey-people = DEF

“The dog too is barking at the bees.” [BOR:29]
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
(36) pàtú=!ɛ́ bà-gbè è=fĩ-jĩ à=mịŋ  è=wò
dog = DEF VENT-spread 3SG = wing-PL PERT = inside 3SG = put

gbè!kɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́

“The owl spread out his wings at the child.” [PAT:108]
\end{verbatim}

\( iii \) Benefactive

The verb \( hā \) ‘give’ in an SVC serves to introduce benefactive participants. It occurs in non-initial position. The use of ‘give’ verbs for this purpose is widespread among languages. Heine and Kuteva (2004:149-151) list over 20 languages in which the verb for ‘give’ has grammaticalized to a benefactive marker.
There are different degrees of grammaticalization of *há*. It may be grammaticalized to the point where the sense of physical transfer normally associated with it is lost. Instead, it is understood that the action of the major verb is simply carried out for the benefit of the object of *há* ‘give’. Example (37a) could be interpreted such that the giver physically hands the slippers etc. to the beneficiary. Or it could be that he mails the items to her or sends someone to deliver them. So here, the giver and the beneficiary need not occupy the same spatio-temporal domain.

(37a) tòkótá nɔ̃́-fĩ́ã́-nɔ́  e=hé-ɔ̀  e=há-ã̀  lɛ̀
slippers thing-all-thing 3SG = buy-HAB 3SG = give-HAB 3SG.OBJ
“Slippers…everything…he buys (them) for her.” [FH:187]

When *há* ‘give’ is immediately preceded by one of the deictic auxiliaries (ventive *bà* or itive *yà*), it indicates that an actual physical transfer occurred in which giver and beneficiary shared a spatio-temporal domain. Therefore, in (37b) below, the presence of the ventive prefix, *bà* indicates that the slippers etc. were physically handed to the beneficiary by the giver.

(37b) tòkótá nɔ̃́-fĩ́ã́-nɔ́  e=hé-ɔ̀  e=bà-há-ã̀
slippers thing-all-thing 3SG = buy-HAB 3SG = VENT-give-HAB
lɛ̀
3SG.OBJ
“Slippers…everything…he buys them and comes to give them to her.

In some benefactive SVCs, there is neither a shared spatial and temporal space nor a transfer of items. Rather, it is the giver’s actions that benefit the beneficiary. For example, in (38), the speaker doesn’t actually purchase land with his own money for the beneficiary. Rather, he acts
as a middle-man and facilitates the process of finding the land and doing the necessary paperwork as a favour to the beneficiary.

(38) ̃̀=lé̃̀ ̃́ kpɔ̃́!ŋ̀ kò ̃̀=hã́ lè
1SG=buy land INDEF 1SG=give 3SG.OBJ
“I bought a piece of land for him.” [MM:15]

In (39) we see further grammaticalization, in that the beneficiary need not be animate. Here, a priest is addressing a congregation and syntactically, ótsílá ‘week’ is the beneficiary. Logically, it is the activities of the members of the congregation in the coming week that are being blessed.

(39) kónĩ́ mã́=bí jɔ̀ɔ́-!mɔ́ mâ=má =hã́ ótsí-lí ní
NMLZ 1SG.FUT=ask bless-NOM 1SG.FUT=give week-PL NMLZ

!kã́ wɔ̀=hĩ́!ɛ̃́=ɛ̃́
lie 1SG=face=DEF
“So that I will ask for blessings for the coming weeks.” [CH:221]

In (40), even the sense of benefit is lost. Lord et. al (2002:237) describes this last function of ‘give’ as a stance or perspective marker, in that the object of ‘give’ is the person from whose perspective the thing or situation is hard.

(40) E-wa e-ha mi
3SG-be.hard 3SG-give me
“It is hard/difficult for me.” Lord et. al (2002:237; emphasis mine)
iv) *Instrument*

The semantic role of instrument may be introduced by the initial verb, *ke* ‘take’, in an SVC.

The NP introduced by *ke* may be a prototypical instrument (41a) or any ‘tool’ in a metaphorical sense (41b) which is used to carry out the action in V2.

(41a) $\hat{e} = \text{*ke*}$ tɛ tsõ̃ò nɛmɛ  
3SG = take stone cut palm-kernel  
“S/he broke the palm-kernel with a stone.”

(41b) ì̃́ = lɛ̄ kɛ́!jí è̉ = nyɛ́ è̉ = kɔ̀ nì è̉ = kɛ̀  
1SG-know.NEG whether 3SG = be.able 3SG = climb and 3SG = take  
è̉ = yìtsò  yà-tsɔ̃-jí  jí  ò  
3SG = head ITIV-push-FOC be IJ  
“I don’t know whether he was able to climb (it), and he pushed (it) with his head or what…” [DEB:63]

In (42), the object of *ke* is a null pronoun, the third person singular, whose antecedent is “Kweikor Fire Service”. Here, it is not immediately obvious that “Kweikor Fire Service” is an instrument. However, it is in a metaphorical sense, in that it is the use of that name that enables her to be recognized by all.

(42) mɛ̀ĩ̃  pì tse-ɔ̀ mi kwɛ́ik̃ɔ Fire Service. nò jí  
people many call-HAB 1SG.OBJ Kweikor Fire Service that COP  
nò nì kɛ̀ ò = kɛ̀-Ø-tsɛ́ mî = !ɛ́  
NM NMLZ if 2SG = take-3SG.OBJ-call 1SG = DEF
Many people call me Kweikor Fire Service. That’s what if you call me by, everyone will know (that you’re referring to me).” [YM:19]

v) Patient

The initial verb *ke* in an SVC may also introduce a patient. In (43) and (44), *ke* introduces the patients, *èyísò* ‘his head’ and *è!ŋmɔ̃́mĩ́* ‘okro’.

(43) è=kè è=yítsò yà-hɔ̀ tɔ̀=!ɔ́ nì kòkòdè!né=è
3SG=take 3SG=head ITIV-insert bottle=DEF NMLZ frog=DEF

yɔ́ɔ̀ mìŋ=mìŋ
be.located.HAB inside=DEF inside

“He put his head into the bottle where the frog was located.” [PA:36]

(44) à=kè è!ŋmɔ̃́mĩ́ bàá-wò mìŋ
3PL.IMPERS=take okro FUT-put inside

“Okro will be put in (it).” [YM:157]

vi) Comitative

Initial verb, *ke*, in an asymmetrical SVC may also introduce comitative NPs. Here, the subject and object of *ke* are co-participants in some activity i.e. they partake in the activity together.

(45) àmè=kè lè ì-fhwe
3PL=take 3SG.OBJ PROG-play

They are playing with him. [DEB:3]
“And he carried the dog on his shoulders and swam with him in the water.” [MA:87]

d) Causation function

Some lexical causatives can only occur in asymmetrical SVCs, where they occur as V2 with \( kɛ \) as V1. Examples are \( kpá\dot{sá} \) ‘lean against’ and \( ká \) ‘lay’.

“Aku leaned the stick (against something).”

There is the possibility of ambiguity between a comitative and a causative reading in such SVCs. This happens only when the patient is animate. The agent is always animate, never inanimate. When the major verb has causative semantics and the patient is animate, the degree of control or dominance that the agent has over the patient determines whether the semantic relationship between them is that of accompaniment (comitative) or causation. Ambiguity results when the agent dominates or is capable of wielding control over the patient. The less dominant entity could be an animal, a child or an adult who is incapacitated in some way; for instance, they are ill or drunk. So in (48), the agent, ‘3SG’ could have carried his dog and laid
him on the bed (causative interpretation A); or he and his dog could both have gone and laid on
the bed of their own volition (comitative interpretation B).

(48) è=kɛ̀ è=gbèé=ɛ̀ kã́ sààtsò nɔ̀
3SG=take 3SG=dog=DEF lie bed top
A: “He lay his dog on the bed.”
B: “He’s lying on the bed with his dog.” or “He and his dog are lying on the bed.”

In (47), the inanimacy of the patient precludes a comitative reading. If the patient were
animate, as in (49) below, then ambiguity between a comitative and a causative meaning will
result.

(49) ákú kɛ̀ nùúmó=ɛ̀ kpásà !shí́ yè jé!më́
Ákú take old.man=DEF lean.aga inst down be.located there
A: “Aku leaned the old man (against something) over there.”
B: “Aku and the old man leaned (against something) over there.”

Lord (1993:56) has suggested that it is this ambiguity that allowed for kɛ to be reanalysed as a
coordinator.

e) Manner-expression function

This function is closely related to the instrumental function. The object of initial verb-kɛ may
be an NP denoting some aspect of the manner in which the action in V2 is carried out. In (50),
$kɛ$ introduces an NP which denotes the emotion accompanying the execution of the action in
V2.
“And the gentleman exited the room anxiously.” [NAR:31]

f) Comparative

The verb *fè* ‘exceed, surpass’ occurs in V2 position to index comparative meaning. The quality that is being compared with a standard is coded by the initial verb. In (51), the quality is *dà* ‘be.big’; the standard is *nɔ̀ ní yɔ̀ɔ̀ jé lɛ́ɛ̀ mlĩ́* ‘what is in the world’ and the thing that is being compared is the subject, *nɔ̀ ní yɔ̀ɔ̀ èmlĩ́ !lé* ‘what is in him’.

(51) é!jáá!ké è = lè á!ké nò ní yɔ̀ 5
  because 3SG = know NMLZ NM NMLZ be.located.HAB

è = mlĩ́ = è dà fè nò ní yɔ̀ 5
  3SG = inside = DEF be.big exceed NM NMLZ be.located.HAB

jé !lé = è mlĩ́
  world DEF = DEF inside

“Because he knows that what is in him is greater than what is in the world.” [CH:260]

g) Secondary concepts

There are certain minor verbs which occur in combination with a major verb to provide a semantic modification of the major verb. Dixon (1991:88) calls verbs such as these secondary
concepts. In Gã they are *kã́* ‘lie down’ and *hã́* ‘give’ and they are used to express the concepts,
‘still doing something’ and ‘showing how something is done’. These are better illustrated in the
following sentences.

(52) \( \text{è=nã̀ã̀nyó=!ɛ́ ŋ̀-kã́ hè ŋ̀-bó-!lɔ́ kɛ̀-ŋ̀-tsɛ́} \)
\( 3\text{SG=friend}=\text{DEF PROG-lie body PROG-shout-ITER take-PROG-call} \)

\( \text{èè kɔkɔdé!né=!ɛ́ nǐ é=làájé=!ɛ́} \)
\( \text{IJ frog=} \text{DEF NMLZ 3SG=be.missing}=\text{DEF} \)

“His friend is still shouting out, calling for…errm…the frog that is missing.”[DEB:100]

(53) \( \text{nì è=kwé-ɔ́ bè nǐ [sic]¹⁸ kɔkɔdé!né=è shwé-ɔ́} \)
\( \text{and 3SG=look-HAB time NMLZ frog=} \text{DEF play-HAB} \)

\( \text{è=hã-ã́} \)
\( \text{3SG=give-HAB} \)

“And he watches how the frog plays.” [NAR:6]

### 4.3.2 Symmetrical SVCs

As mentioned earlier, symmetrical SVCs are far outnumbered by asymmetrical SVCs. Only a
third (34%) of the SVCs in the corpus were symmetrical.

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¹⁸ This word should be *bɔ̀nĩ́* ‘how’. I suspect this was just a slip of tongue.
4.3.2.1 Functions of symmetrical SVCs

a) Sequence of actions

Symmetrical SVCs may consist of verbs which describe a series of actions in temporally iconic order i.e. the initial verb encodes the first action in the series, the second verb encodes the second action etc. Examples are (54), (55) and (56).

(54) nò hèwɔ́ =!ɔ́ nì ę =tɛ́ shì́ ę =yà-kwɛ́ hall =ɛ́=!ɛ́
that sake =TOP and 3SG =rise down 3SG =ITIV-look =DEF =DEF
“So he got up and went to look in the hall. [CH:248]

(55) nì Ʌ=lòó níbíí=ɛ̀ Ʌ=shwìé shìkpɔ́!ŋ́
and 1SG =gather things =DEF 1SG =pour ground
“And I gathered up the things and put them on the ground.” [MM:98]

(56) mã́=tá!ó hundred kò mã́-kè
1SG.FUT =look.for INDEF 1SG.FUT =give.as.gift
lɛ̀ 3SG.OBJ
“I’ll give her a hundred (cedis) as a gift.” [Lit: I’ll look for a hundred (cedis) to give her as a gift]

b) Simultaneous actions and manner

Symmetrical SVCs may describe two co-temporaneous actions i.e. two separate actions which are carried out together. In one type, V1 is a posture verb such as dàmɔ́ ‘stand’ or tá sit’, while V2 is a verb which encodes the action performed while in that posture (57), (58).
In another type, V1 is a motion verb such as jò fòì ‘run’ or dèkè shì ‘creep’ while V2 is a verb denoting the accompanying action. Such SVCs may also be described as manner SVCs since V1 describes the manner of motion which accompanies the action in V2.

In some symmetrical SVCs that express simultaneous actions, V2 is preceded by ke ‘take’ instead of the subject pronominal prefix. It will later be argued (§4.5.3), following Dakubu (2004b) that the use of ke ‘take’ in such SVCs serves to indicate that the actions described are more tightly integrated than constructions in which the pre-verb ke does not occur.
“The dog also helped look for the frog.”  [PAT:34]

“His dog started barking as he walked under the trees.”  [NART:47]

“The bottle is over the dog’s head as he’s standing at the window.”  [PAT:45]

In this type of symmetrical SVC, the final verb encodes the effect or result of the action encoded by the initial verb(s). This ordering is strict; the positions of the verbs may not be interchanged. In (64), the final verb, gbèé ‘fall’ is the result of the animal’s pushing.

“The animal has pushed him with his head and he’s fallen onto his (animal’s) head.”  [DEB:104]
Example (65) below could be viewed as cause-effect serialization, where Kofi’s beating of Ama results in her death. Or it could be viewed as simultaneous/manner serialization, where the manner of the killing was by beating. A similarly ambiguous situation is described by Kilian-Hatz (2006:113) for Khwe.

(65) Kòfì yì Ámā gbè lè
Kofi beat Ama kill 3SG.OBJ
“Kofi beat Ama to death.” (Adjei 1999:142)

d) Lexicon-expanding function

So far, we have only seen examples of symmetrical SVCs in which the meaning of the SVC can be deduced from the meanings of the component verbs. These SVCs describe an event by making its sub-events explicit. There are a number of symmetrical serial verbs whose meaning is not entirely transparent from the meanings of the component verbs. These SVCs are idiomatized or lexicalized and are often translated into English and other non-serialising languages by single words. Although they contain two verbs they express just one concept and this often cannot be inferred from the literal meanings of the component verbs. Sometimes though, there are obvious or subtle metaphorical links between the component verbs and the meaning of the SVC. The word-like characteristic of these SVCs is evident in the fact that they can be listed and glossed, much like other single words in Gâ. This kind of serial verb is not very common in the language. The table below gives some examples and their meanings, as
well as the literal meanings of the component verbs. Example sentences are given in (66) and (67).

Table 12: Idiomatized SVCs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SVC Component meanings</th>
<th>Serial verb meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hé yè</td>
<td>buy eat believe, trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tsí tò</td>
<td>push hide postpone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wìé tsɔ̃̀ɔ̃̂</td>
<td>speak show advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tsɛ́ fɔ̃̀</td>
<td>call throw throw away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yè bú!á¹⁹</td>
<td>eat help help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shá gbɔ̀</td>
<td>snatch grow old grow old quickly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(66) ké nyɛ̃̀=yè nyɛ̃̀=búà mì =!ɛ̃́ wó-sèè
if 2PL = eat 2PL = help.AK 1SG = DEF tomorrow-back

áfi =!ɛ́ má=!bá má=!bá-kè nyɛ̃̀ nɔ̄=!kó
year = DEF 1SG.FUT = come 1SG.FUT = VENT-gift 2PL thing = INDEF
"If you help me, next year I will come and give you something (a gift).” [YM:115]

(67) nyɛ̃̀=hâ-!â wɔ́=hé-à è =nɔ́
2PL.SBJV = give-IMP.PL 1PL.SBJV = buy-IMP.PL 3SG = top

wɔ́=yè-à
1PL.SBJV = eat-IMP.PL
Let us trust in him. [CH:433]

¹⁹ The verb bú!á in the serial verb yè bú!á is borrowed from Akan, where it means ‘help’. However, in Gã it only occurs in combination with yè in this serial verb, never on its own.
A distinction must be drawn between these SVCs, which are lexicalized as well as idiomatized, and those SVCs that are also lexicalized but not idiomatized. This second class is not as semantically opaque as the first class described above. What also sets the SVCs in this class apart is that although they describe a single action, their component verbs describe “micro sub-components” of that unitary event, in that the temporal distance between the two sub-events is very short or even negligible. Osam (1994:204-205) describes the first type seen above as full lexicalization and the second as partial lexicalization. The partial lexicalization type is similar to what Pawley (2009:130) terms compact verbs in Kalam. Examples are given in table 13 and (68) and (69)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SVC</th>
<th>Literal meaning</th>
<th>Actual meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tsi shwiè</td>
<td>push pour</td>
<td>pour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gbè shwà</td>
<td>spread sprinkle</td>
<td>disperse/disseminate widely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tsi bèj!lè</td>
<td>push get.closer</td>
<td>get closer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(68) ké jè tsé!lé = !è kê á = !wó
when world rise = DEF then 3PL.IMPERS.PERF = carry

á = yà-tsi
3PL.IMPERS.PERF = ITIV = push

á = shwiè
3PL.IMPERS.PERF = pour

“When morning comes it is carried and poured away.” [YM:304]
(69) nǐ wò-bífí = í pó ékò-mèí pó ọ-gbè ọ-shwá
and honey-people = DEF even some-PL even PERF-spread PERF-sprinkle
“And even the bees...some of them have even dispersed.” [FLO:56]

Some lexicalized serial verbs are capable of being nominalized in the same way as simple lexical items. Significantly, all lexicalized serial verbs that are capable of being nominalized belong to the first type, corresponding to Osam’s fully lexicalized serial verbs. The nominalization is done by nominalizing each component verb with the appropriate suffix and linking the two verbs with the coordinator kè ‘and’, as exemplified below.

(i) hé yè ‘believe’ → hé-mɔ̀-kè-yé-lí
   buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM
   ‘belief, trust, faith’

(ii) yè búlá ‘help (v.)’ → yé-lí-kè-búà-mɔ̀
    eat-NOM-and-help.AK-NOM
    ‘help (n.)’

(iii) wìé tsɔ́ɔ ‘advise’ → wìé-mɔ̀-kè-tsɔ́ɔ-łmɔ̀
    talk-NOM-and-show-NOM
    ‘advice’

4.4 Degree of semantic and syntactic integration: Integrated serial verb constructions (ISVC) and chained serial verb constructions (CSVC)

Another way by which SVCs in Gã may be classified is by the level of semantic cohesion of the sub-events which comprise the SVC. This has led Osam (1994, 2004) to recognize two kinds of SVCs: integrated serial verb constructions (ISVC) and clause chaining serialization. In
clause chaining serialization the entire construction is made up of “potentially independent events” which can be separated out by means of coordination. This type is therefore less tightly-bound or less integrated. The ISVC represents events that are more tightly integrated and for which we cannot speak of separable constituent events. Rather than comprise individual actions, it is often the case that one verb serves to modify the action expressed by the other verb. I prefer the modified term, chained serial verb construction (CSVC) in lieu of clause chaining serialization in order to avoid potential confusion with the term “clause chain” as used by Longacre (2007) and others to describe a syntactically and semantically distinct construction20.

The sentences in (70) are integrated SVCs while those in (71) are chained SVCs.

(70a)  kè  è = shè  jě!ŋ = !é  ò t ɔ́  ó=hã́  wɔ́ 1PL
when  3SG = reach there = DEF do-IMP food.type 2SG.SBJV = give

“When the time comes make otɔ for us.” [OYO:376]

(70b)  ĝ = !shá  ĝ = gbɔ́
3SG.PERF = snatch 3SG = grow.old

“S/he has grown old too quickly.”

20 In a clause chain it is usually the case that only one verb (final or initial) is fully finite, while the other verbs are non-finite, semi-finite or defective in some way (Longacre 2007:417). The defective verbs may also be marked to show whether the subject of the following clause is the same as or different from the subject of its clause. So they do not necessarily share arguments. They are not mono-clausal and they do not encode a single event.
This distinction is reminiscent of Enfield’s (2002:240) multi-component events and multi-facet events. According to Enfield, multi-component events express unitary conceptual events but are composed of easily discernible and separable sub-events which are temporally ordered. The meanings of these constructions do not change when a linker is inserted between the component events. Multi-facet events also describe a unitary event and also comprise different events but these sub-events cannot be separated from each other. Instead they are intertwined with one another so that no event exhibits temporal precedence over the other. An example of a multi-facet event is one which describes an entity’s posture while performing an action e.g. 

*Jane sat eating a sandwich.* Osam’s chaining SVCs are an example of multi-component events.

A vast majority of Gã integrated SVCs are multi-facet events. An exception must be made for idiomatized SVCs of the *hé yè* ‘believe’ and *wìé tsɔ̃̂ɔ̃̂* ‘advise’ variety, which cannot be said to comprise individual events in the literal sense meant by Enfield.
Asymmetrical SVCs tend to be integrated while symmetrical SVCs tend to be chained, although exceptions can be found. All lexicalized SVCs are also integrated SVCs. Symmetrical SVCs which express simultaneous events tend to lie somewhere in-between integrated and chained SVCs. While there is complete temporal overlap between the component events as is the case with ISVCs, they can still be easily separated into constituent events. This is exemplified by (57), repeated here as (72).

(72) è=dã̀mɔ̃̀ sámfèlè = è nàà è = bòlɔ́ kɔ̀kɔ̀dé!né = è
3SG = stand window = DEF mouth 3SG.PROG = shout frog = DEF
“He’s standing at the window shouting for the frog.” [DEB:19]

Chained SVCs describe one umbrella event consisting of two or more sub-events in chronological order. There is no temporal overlap between the sub-events. This semantic characteristic means that the various components of a chained SVC may be joined by the sentential coordinator nĩ̀ ‘and’ without a change in meaning. So for instance, the verb phrases in (73a) and (73b) may be separated by the coordinator and the meanings will remain unchanged.

(73a) è=bà-na̅̀ ɔ = nànè nɔ nĩ̀ è=kpá hè fàí
3SG=VENT-step 2SG=foot top and 3SG=remove body hat
“He stepped on your foot and apologized.”

(73b) nĩ̀ è=bà-jè kpò nĩ̀ è = nyi̅̀ gbé!ké-nuú = è
and 3SG=VENT-exit compound and 3SG=walk child-male = DEF
“And he exited and followed the boy.”

Many integrated SVCs cannot have their component verb phrases be separated by the coordinator, as in (74a) and (74b).

(74a) *ké è = s hè jé!jé = !è féé-mó øtø mì

when 3SG = reach there = DEF do-IMP food.type and

ó = hà wò

2SG.SBJV = give 1PL

“When the time comes make otɔ for us.”

(74b) *è=!shá nì è=gbò

3SG.PERF = snatch and 3SG = grow.old

“S/he has grown old too quickly.”

The cause-effect type SVC exemplified in (65) above (repeated here as (75a)) cannot have a coordinator (75b). However, if the second verb is marked with the third singular pronominal clitic e- (75c), then a coordinator can be inserted (75d).

(75a) kòfì yì ámá gbè lè

Kofi beat Ama kill 3SG.OBJ

“Kofi beat Ama to death.” (Adjei 1999:142; emphasis mine)

(75b) *kòfì yì á!má nì gbè lè

Kofi beat Ama and kill 3SG.OBJ

“Kofi beat Ama to death.”
(75c)  kòfì  yi  á!má  ë=gbè  lè
Kofi beat Ama 3SG=kill 3SG.OBJ
  “Kofi beat Ama to death.”
  “Kofi beat Ama and killed her.”

(75d)  Kòfì  yì  á!má  nì  ë-gbè  lè
Kofi beat Ama and 3SG-kill 3SG.OBJ
  “Kofi beat Ama and killed her.”

(75c) could mean that Kofi beat Ama but the beating did not result in her death. Rather Kofi killed her by another method. It is this interpretation in which there are two disparate actions at different times that allows the coordinator to conjoin the two verb phrases. Also, because every clause in Gã must have an overt subject, (75b) which is missing a subject in the second clause is ungrammatical.

It seems the willingness of a serial construction to allow coordination among its verb phrases is an indication that it is relatively “loose”, semantically. As one might expect, there are gradations to this semantic cohesiveness that is found among the verb phrases in an SVC. As mentioned above, symmetrical SVCs which code simultaneous events are neither fully integrated nor chained. Although there is temporal overlap between its sub-events, these events can be separated by the coordinator (76).

(76)  ë=ðàmɔ́  sámfèle = ë  nàà  nì  ëè = bó!lɔ́  kɔ̀kɔ̀dè!né = !ë
3SG=stand window=DEF mouth and 3SG.PROG = shout frog=DEF
  “He’s standing at the window and he is shouting for the frog.”
In spite of their ability to retain their meaning when conjoined by ǹ́̀ ‘and’, CSVCs are syntactically distinct from coordinate constructions. Unlike coordinate constructions, they are mono-clausal; they exhibit all the formal properties of mono-clausality such as harmonious TAMP marking. For example, in future CSVCs, the initial verb is marked with the future prefix while subsequent verbs are marked with the subjunctive prefix (77). But in a coordinate construction all the verbs in the conjuncts must be marked with the future prefix (78).

(77) è=bàá-nã́ã́ ó=nànè nò è=kpá hè fái
3SG=FUT-step 2SG=foot top 3SG.SBJV=remove body hat
“He will step on your foot and apologize.”

(78) è=bàá-nã́ã́ ó=nànè nò ǹ́ è=bàá-kpá hè fái
3SG=FUT-step 2SG=foot top and 3SG=FUT-remove body hat
“He will step on your foot and he will apologize.”

Also, while the verbs in a CSVC cannot have opposing polarities (79b), those in a coordinate construction can (80).

(79a) è=nã́ã́ã́ ó=nànè nò è=kpááá hè fái
3SG=step.NEG 2SG=foot top 3SG=remove.NEG body hat
“He did not step on your foot and did not apologize.”

(79b) *é=nàá ó=nànè nò è=kpááá hè fái
3SG-step 2SG-foot top 3SG=remove.NEG body hat
“He stepped on your foot and did not apologize.”
In addition, the sub-events in a CSVC must all occupy the same relative temporal frame (81a).

Therefore, they cannot be modified by contradictory time adverbs (81b). But this is possible with coordinate constructions (82).

(81a) ̀ákú  tô  shì  lèébí  ̀è=bèè  kpó=è  nò
Aku  rise  down  morning  3SG = sweep  compound = DEF  top

è=tèè  fàà
3SG = go. PST  river

“Aku woke up in the morning, swept the compound and went to the river.”

(81b) *ákú  tô  shì  lèébí  ̀è=bèè  kpó=è  nò
Aku  rise  down  morning  3SG = sweep  compound = DEF  top

è=tèè  fàà  shwàné
3SG = go. PST  river  afternoon

“Aku woke up in the morning, swept the compound and went to the river in the afternoon.”

(82) ̀ákú  tô  shì  lèébí  ̀è=bèè  kpó=è  nò  nì
Aku  rise  down  morning  3SG = sweep  compound-def  top  and

è-tèè  fàà  shwàné
3SG = go. PST  river  afternoon

“Aku woke up in the morning, swept the compound and went to the river in the afternoon.”
Finally, coordinated clauses obey Ross’s constraint against extracting one of the conjuncts (83)

but CSVCs do not obey this constraint (84).

(83a) ákú shi-ɔ̀ àmádã́ŋ̈ nĩ̀ è=hɔ̀-ɔ̀
Aku fry-HAB plantain and 3SG=sell-HAB
“Aku fries plantain and sells it.” \rightarrow COORDINATE CONSTRUCTION

(83b) *àmàdã́ŋ̈=!ã́ nĩ́ ákú shi-ɔ̀ nĩ̀ è=hɔ̀-ɔ̀
plantain=DEF NMLZ Aku fry-HAB and 3SG=sell-HAB
ŋɔ̀ɔ̃̀ be.sweet
“The plantain that Aku fries and she sells is sweet.” \rightarrow EXTRACTION NOT ALLOWED

(84a) ákú sɦ̃-ɔ̀ àmádã́ŋ̈ è=hɔ̀-ɔ̀
Aku fry-HAB plantain 3SG=sell-HAB
“Aku fries plantain and sells it.” \rightarrow CSVC

(84b) àmádã́ŋ̈=!á nĩ́ ákú sɦ̃-ɔ̀ è=hɔ̀-ɔ̀
plantain=DEF NMLZ Aku fry-HAB 3SG=sell-HAB
ŋɔ̀ɔ̃̀ be.sweet
“The plantain that Aku fries and sells is sweet.” \rightarrow EXTRACTION ALLOWED

There are other syntactic factors which clue one in on the degree of cohesion within an SVC, such as whether or not there is concordant subject marking on the verbs and whether or not the non-initial verb is marked with the pre-verb kɛ. These two topics will be looked at in detail in sections 4.5. For now, a progression of semantic cohesion can be established with lexicalized SVCs being the most cohesive and sequential SVCs without the preverb kɛ- being least cohesive. The following diagram illustrates this.
4.4.1 Chained SVCs, mono-predication and the notion of cultural appropriateness

As other writers (Durie 1997; Bruce 1988, Enfield 2002) have noted, it is not the case that any set of events may be stringed together to form a serial verb construction. Rather, each language has limitations on the extent to which multiple, temporally distinct events can be expressed as a single clause. These restrictions are based on what speakers of the language construe (based on shared experience and knowledge) to be “formulaic” activities that are relatively routine and predictable or at the very least unmarked. Such macro-events qualify to be serialized, whereas those that are marked, unusual and do not conform to “cultural logic” Pawley (1997) do not qualify for serialization.

Although Gã has chained serial verb constructions, it seems they are not a popular construction choice for speakers. Very few were found in the data collected and none consisted of more than two sub-events. Also, there were no examples in the data of the kind of chained SVC described by Osam (1994) for Akan, and Pawley (2009) for Kalam, where the SVC comprises several verb phrases which give a detailed description of a set of activities which
together form a readily recognizable event in that culture. For Kalam, Pawley terms them narrative SVCs. An example from Akan is given in (85), where buying raw foodstuffs, cooking them and selling them is a very regular occurrence for many people, especially women.

(85) Araba tɔ-ɔ nam kyew-ee Ø tɔne-ee Ø
Araba buy-COMPL fish fry-COMPL 3SG OBJ sell-COMPL 3SG OBJ
Araba bought fish, fried it and sold it. (Osam 1994:194)

The majority of chained SVCs in the data contained at least one motion verb, usually in V1 position. The paucity of chained SVCs in Gã is not unexpected, since symmetrical SVCs generally comprise a mere one-third of all SVCs. In spite of their near-absence from the recorded data, they do exist and native speakers are able to offer up example sentences during elicitation (86), (87).

(86) ɨ=nʊɛɛɛ ɨ=shĩ́ ɨ=bá-yɛɛɛ ɨ=ɨɛɛɛ
1SG = rise.NEG down 1SG = VENT-eat.NEG thing
“I won’t get up and come and eat.”

(87) ákú tè shĩ́ ŋɛ =bɛɛ́ kpó =ɛ nɔ̀ ɛ =tɛɛ̀
Aku rise down 3SG = sweep compound = DEF top 3SG = go.PST
fàà
river
“Aku woke up, swept the compound and went to the river (to fetch water).”

The examples of CSVCs seen so far are acceptable because they meet the requirement of cultural appropriateness. Being told to get out of bed to enjoy a meal is almost universally
relatable and in rural Gã homes the morning routine of waking up, sweeping your surroundings and going out to fetch water for the day’s needs is a common experience. On the other hand, (88) is not acceptable, because the component events are viewed as unrelated, such that there is no culturally-defined umbrella event to speak of. For most Gã speakers, studying is not a normal activity to partake in after waking up. Adding speaking on the phone to the list of activities makes it even less plausible as a routine occurrence.

(88) *ákú tè shì è=kàsè nì́li è=wiè tèlɛfɔŋ
Aku rise down 3SG=study thing 3SG=talk telephone
“Aku woke up, studied and talked on the phone.”

(88) can be remedied by inserting the linker ǹ ‘and’ between each verb phrase.

(89) ákú tè shì nì è=kàsè nì́li nì è=wiè tèlɛfɔŋ
Aku rise down and 3SG=study thing and 3SG=talk telephone
“Aku woke up and studied and talked on the phone.”

It should be mentioned, though, that many speakers insisted on inserting the coordinator between the various verb phrases of the clause chain or at the very least inserting intonational breaks or pauses between the verb phrases. Such speakers found sentences like (87) unnatural, because of the absence of coordinators or pauses between the various components. It seems then, that some speakers’ construal of these activities is that they are entirely separate and distinct from one another, and not just component events under one major event.
These intuitions beg a reassessment of the notion of single predication of the verbs in an SVC. It seems an exception must be made for chained SVCs, because although syntactically, the verbs in CSVCs behave as a single unit and a single clause, requiring compatible and sometimes concordant marking of TAMP categories as well as subject-sharing, the sub-events comprising the whole appear to be predicated separately. Here the verbs have distinct properties, which are ascribed to the subject separately, but these separate predications are asserted only once. In integrated SVCs, the various verbs make a complex yet single predication and the verbal property is ascribed to the subject just once. As Baker and Harvey (2010) show, monoclausality does not necessarily equate with mono-predication. The fact that pauses are allowed between component verb phrases in CSVCs is one piece of evidence in favour of the multi-predicational status of CSVCs. Another indicator is the preference of some speakers for CSVCs to be expressed as coordinate structures. As Foley (2010) has observed, SVCs within the same language may have different properties and Gã appears to be one such language. While integrated SVCs exhibit canonical features of SVC-hood such as mono-predication, mono-clausality and a prohibition on pauses between verb phrases, chained SVCs are mono-clausal but multi-predicational, and they allow pauses.
4.5 The status of *ke*

This morpheme has received a great deal of attention in the Gã literature due to its cross-categorial nature and ability to occur in various syntactic positions. It has no real content meaning and is glossed ‘take’ because of its syntactic and functional parallel to Akan *de*, whose semantic meaning is ‘take’ or ‘hold’ as well as morphemes in other related languages which also mean or once meant ‘take’. For example, according to Lord (1993) the morphemes in the following Benue-Congo languages have a meaning and function similar to *ke* ‘take’: Awutu *ne*, Idoma *bi*, Nupe *la*. In addition, Zimmerman’s (1858:143) dictionary notes that it formerly meant ‘to take’ or ‘to hold’ and gives *ŋɔ̀* ‘take’ as its synonym. *ŋɔ̀* ‘take’ can take all verbal inflections.

The morpheme *ke* occurs in three main syntactic positions:

i) immediately after the subject of the clause

ii) as an adjunct in combination with an NP

iii) in a serial construction as a prefix on a non-initial verb

4.5.1 *ke* occurring immediately after the subject

In this position, *ke* has been analysed as a verb by Adjei (1999) and Dakubu (2004b, 2008).

However, it lacks several defining characteristics of verbs. For example, it cannot occur as the only verb in a clause; it must always occur in a serial construction. It takes no inflectional markers whatsoever and so cannot give any aspect, mood or polarity information. All such
information is carried by the other verb(s) in the SVC. For example, in (90) the subjunctive is marked on the non-initial verb ɔ̀ ‘go’. In (91), which is a continuation from the same discourse, the future is marked on the non-initial verb ɪlˈtɛ ‘join’. In both sentences, ke remains uninflected.

(90) wɔ̀=bàá-sùmɔ̀ mòŋ ní ñà=kɛ̀ gbɛ!kɛ̀ =!ɛ̃̀ ɑ́yá shíʃá
1PL=FUT-like rather NMLZ 2SG=take child=DEF SBJV-go house
“We would rather prefer that you take the child home.” [CH:51]

(91) wɔ̀=kɛ̀ tsɔ̀fá bàá-ɪtɔ̀ ë =hè
1PL=take medicine FUT-join 3SG=body
“We will give him some medicine to take along.” [CH:52]

On the other hand, ke occupies the immediate post-pronominal subject slot, which in Gã is solely reserved for verbs. It is preceded by subject pronouns and followed by object pronouns. Lord (1993:54) notes that in imperative ke-SVCs, the second verb is in the subjunctive (92a), as is the case in normal SVCs (92b).

(92a) kɔ̀nì ña=kɛ̀ ɛl=kó ɑ́fɔ̀ ñà=jìì à-hè
NMLZ 2SG=take some SBJV-wash 2SG=leg-PL PERT-body
“So that you use some (of the herbal mixture) to wash your legs.” [OYO:104]

(92b) ë=ńà ɑ́l=ɪyɛ
buy.IMP 3SG=top 2SG.SBJV=eat
“Trust in him.” [CH:430]
Also, just like regular verbs, when a third person inanimate object of *ke* is pronominalized, it is realised as null (93) and (94).

(93) shiká = !á ní ä-ke-lká !lé = !é
money = DEF NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS-ta ke.PERF-give 3SG.OBJ = DEF
dè = ke-Ø-!bá
3SG = take.SBJV-3SG.OBJ.INAM-come
“The money that she has been given, she should bring (it)” [MM:109]

(94) ké è = fë=á má = !á wò = ke Ø
when 3SG = do corn.dough = DEF 1PL = take 3SG.OBJ.INAM
bàá-hóó kpékplè = !é
FUT-cook food.type = DEF
“When it becomes corn dough, we will use (it) to cook the kpekple.” [OYO:47]

The object of *ke* could be an instrument (95), patient (91), comitative (96), manner (97) or what I would term a derogatory personal descriptor (98).

(95) mì = ke kakla fò brodo
1SG = take knife cut bread
“I cut the bread with a knife.” (Dakubu 2008:122)

(96) ì = ke lè tsàà nìì yè Ebenezer
1SG = take 3SG.OBJ teach thing be.located Ebenezer
“I taught with her at Ebenezer (secondary school).” [DF:63]

(97) óblánnùú = !é ke múșùŋshàà jè kpò yè
young.man = DEF take anxiety exit compound be.located
tsú = è míŋ
house = DEF inside
“The young man anxiously exited the room.” [NAR:31]
Lord (1993) is of the view that $kɛ$ in these sentences has grammaticalized from a verb to a prepositional case marker whose function primarily is to mark instrument NPs, and to a lesser extent, patient NPs. However, I do not think there is enough evidence to categorize $kɛ$ as a case marker. It is undergoing grammaticalization, as can be seen from its lack of typical verb features, but this has not progressed to the point where it would be viewed as a prepositional case marker; it retains enough characteristics to still identify as a verb. Furthermore, as Dakubu (2008:29) points out, analysis as a preposition would mean that $kɛ$ and its object form an adverbial and this adverbial separates the subject from the verb. As mentioned earlier, the pronominal subject and its verb form a very tight and contiguous syntactic unit and absolutely nothing is allowed to intervene, not even adverbs. Another question raised by Lord’s analysis is, “Why, if $kɛ$ is an instrumental case marker, doesn’t it mark all instrument NPs?” For instance, the instrument NP in (99), $tsò$ ‘stick’, is unmarked. If it is a case of differential object marking, then what criteria determines which objects are marked and which are not?

(98)  òkó  $kɛ$  è = yîtsò  âgbó = è  $bà- kpá$  fàí
Oko  take  3SG = head  head = DEF  VENT-remove  hat
“Oko came and apologized, with his big head.”

(99)  è  tswà  gbékè  lè  tsò
he  hit  child  the  stick
“He hit the child with a stick.” (Lord 1993:117)

It is best, therefore, to maintain that $kɛ$ in this environment is a verb, albeit a defective one.
In a *ke*-serialization, when the second verb is either *bà* ‘come’ or *yà* ‘go’ a causative
(‘bring’ or ‘take’) meaning results in addition to the comitative.

(100) è=kê  lè  tôè  shîâ
3SG=take 3SG.OBJ go.PST house
Causative: “S/he took him/her home”
Comitative: “S/he went home with him/her.” [ELL:71]

In certain contexts, *ke* appears to be bi-categorial, in that it may be viewed as a verb or as a
coordinating conjunction. This happens when both the subject and object of *ke* are animate and
the subject is capable of exercising some degree of control over the object. This type of
ambiguity was first encountered in the discussion in §4.3.1.1 on causation. *kê* may be viewed
as a coordinating conjunction only if the arguments are full noun phrases and not pronominals.

In the third interpretation for (101a), the construction is no longer analysed as a serial
construction. Instead, it is a simple sentence with a coordinate subject, *Oko kê Ama* ‘Oko and
Ama’.

(101a) òkó  kê  á!mâ  ñ-yà  shî!â
Oko  take  Ama  PROG-go  home
Causative: “Oko is taking Ama home.”
Comitative: “Oko is going home with Ama.”
Coordinate: “Oko and Ama are going home.”

Note that the coordinate NP interpretation will not be possible if either or both arguments were
replaced with pronouns (101b). The reason for this is not clear.
(101b) è=kè  â!má  ŋ̀-yà  shǐ!á
3SG=take Ama PROG-go home
Causative: “S/he is taking Ama home.”
Comitative: “S/he is going home with Ama.”
*Coordinate: “S/he and Ama are going home.”

(101c) è-kè  lè  ŋ̀-yà  shǐ!á
3SG-take 3SG.OBJ PROG-go home
Causative: “S/he is taking her/him home.”
Comitative: “S/he is going home with her/him.”
*Coordinate: “S/he and her/him are going home.”

In order to express the coordinate meaning when at least one of the actors is a pronoun, the coordinate NP must be topicalized by left-dislocation and followed by the third person plural pronoun in subject position.

(102) è=kè  â!má  âmè = ŋ̀-yà  shǐ!á
3SG=take Ama 3PL=PROG-go home
“He and Ama, they are going home.”

In such SVCs which have kɛ as V1 and a motion verb as V2, the semantic relationship between the various interpretations - comitative, causative and coordinative - is quite obvious. Assuming that kɛ did originally mean ‘take’, it is a logical implication that if a person, A takes an object X and moves while still in possession of X, then A is accompanied by X for as long as A is in possession of X, making a comitative interpretation possible. If X is inanimate, or is animate but subject to A’s control and manipulation, then it is A who causes or makes X move, hence the causative sense. When X is animate but is not subject to A’s control or manipulation, X
may on their own volition move in the company of A. The result is that A and X are now both involved in the same activity at the same time and *ke* is reanalysed as a coordinator.

With little historical data on Gã, it is difficult to unequivocally ascertain what the path of grammaticalization is and the order in which these senses (including the instrumental sense) appeared. Based on the semantics of *ke*, it can be assumed that originally, objects of *ke* had to be inanimate entities; things that could be picked up by hand in order to be transferred to another location or to be used to achieve some goal. This original construction will thus have featured instruments and inanimate patients as objects of *ke*. With further grammaticalization, inanimate objects which could not literally be ‘taken’ were permitted to serve as objects of *ke*. For example, *yí!tsó* ‘head’ (103) and *shĩ́ã́* ‘house’ (104) respectively. In (103) we see vestiges of the instrumental role of the object of *ke*, in that *yí!tsó* ‘head’ is the entity that was utilized to bring about the action of pushing the patient, ‘3SG.OBJ’. Stolz et al (2006:42) would term *yí!tsó* ‘head’, a body part instrument.

(103)  kòòlòó = !è    kè  è = yí!tsó  è-bà-tsí  !lé
animal = DEF take  3SG = head PERF-VENT-push  3SG.OBJ

è-yà-gbèé è = yítsò nɔ
PERF-ITIV-fall 3SG = head top
“The animal has pushed him with his head and he’s fallen onto his (animal’s) head.”
[DEB:104]
Manner NPs were also allowed to serve as objects of *kɛ*, as well as personal descriptors which for the most part tend to be derogatory. The semantic range of the object of *kɛ* was also expanded to include animate entities, where a comitative interpretation was formed in sentences like (105) and (106).

(105)  ó=kɛ̀ wɔ̀ bàá-wìê
2SG=take 1PL FUT-speak
“You will speak to us.” [CH:137]

(106)  è=kɛ̀ lɛ̀ fɔ́
3SG=take 3SG.OBJ give.birth
“She had a baby by him.” [DF:71]

It has been demonstrated above that the coordinate interpretation arose from the comitative. An argument for the direction, instrumental > comitative, also makes some semantic sense. A person “A” may “utilize” another, “B” for some activity by simply having the person partake in that activity. The instrumentality lies in the fact that the activity could not have been accomplished without the participation of the other person. So in (105) the conversation cannot take place without the participation of wɔ̀ ‘1PL’, in the same way that the bread could not have been cut without the utilization of the knife and the boy could not have been pushed without the utilization of the head. Another semantic angle is that both the instrument and the entity
that controls it are actors, in so far as they are both responsible for the accomplishment of the action. In this semantic extension, the instrument is personified and both the instrument and its controller become co-participants in the activity, leading to a comitative interpretation which allows for “human instruments”. This construction is therefore favoured for predicating naturally reciprocal actions such as ‘talk’, ‘fight’ and ‘argue’.

\[(107) \quad \hat{e} = k\hat{e} \quad m\hat{i} \quad \hat{y}-b\hat{e} \]
\[3SG = \text{take} \quad 1SG.OBJ \quad \text{PROG-quarrel} \]
\[\text{“She’s quarrelling with me.”} \]

However, this directionality is in opposition to what has been reported for many languages, particularly Indo-European languages (Luraghi 2001; Stolz et al 2006:358; Heine and Kuteva 2004, 2005). Indeed, Heine et al (1991:159) propose a unidirectional cline of grammaticalization in which comitative gives rise to instrumental and never the other way round. All the same, the facts of Gã do appear to present a challenge to this particular cline (not to the validity of unidirectionality in general). Given that the prototypical object of \( k\hat{e} \) ‘take’ is inanimate (a characteristic which is better suited for instruments) and the prototypical comitative object is human, the challenge is reconciling these facts with the generally accepted hypothesis that in cases of syncretism the category that involves an inanimate participant is
more grammaticalized than the category that involves a human participant (Heine et. al. 1991:156).

4.5.2 ke occurring as an adjunct in combination with an NP

In addition to verb ke, there is also preposition ke. It occurs with an NP in post-verbal position. That it is not a verb is evidenced by its inability to allow null pronominal objects (107b), as verbs do. The NP object of preposition ke may be an instrument (107a), a comitative (108), manner (109) or personal descriptor (110). This semantic range of objects is the same as that found for initial verb ke in an SVC.

(107a) mì-fò blòdò kè kàklíá
1SG-cut bread with knife
“I cut bread with a knife.” (Dakubu 2008:122)

(107b) mi-fò blòdò kè Ø
1SG-cut bread with 3SG.OBJ
“I cut bread with it.”

(108) gbé!kè = !è té shì kè gbèè = !è
child = DEF rise down with dog = DEF
“The child got up with the dog.” [ELL:59]

(109) è = nyìè kòòlò = è sè è kè fòì
3SG = walk animal = DEF back with running
“He chased the animal.” (Lit: “He followed the animal, running.”) [PAT:155]

(110) jè-é jè!mè, kè ó = nànè bònlú = !è
exit-IMP there with 2SG = leg ball = DEF
“Clear off, with your legs that look like a ball.”
When the object of preposition $ke$ is a personal descriptor, the prepositional phrase may be set off from the rest of the clause by a short intonational pause, indicated in writing by the comma. Although these are not SVCs, it is appropriate to discuss this construction type here because of its close relation to the canonical $ke$-SVC construction type. Exactly the diachronic relation between them is not clear. Based on Stassen’s (2000) observations in his typology of NP conjunction encoding, one hypothesis as to how these construction types are related is that the preposition $ke$ construction gave rise to the comitative/coordinate construction involving verb $ke$. This position is untenable for Gã. A brief summation of Stassen’s findings is in order. Stassen noted that there are two kinds of languages: AND-languages and WITH-languages. AND-languages have two ways of encoding noun phrase conjunction. They either use a strategy in which the two NPs are of equal syntactic rank (coordinate strategy) or they use a strategy in which the two NPs are of unequal syntactic rank i.e. one is subordinate to the other (comitative strategy). In the coordinate strategy the NPs are often linked by a morpheme - the coordinator, while with the comitative strategy a comitative morpheme is employed. He notes that in WITH-languages the comitative strategy often grammaticalizes to produce a coordinate structure, making such languages more like AND-languages, with the major difference being that their coordinate and comitative markers are identical. The process in SVO languages,
according to Stassen (2000:27), involves the shift of the comitative phrase in sentences like (94a) into pre-verb position, resulting in a comitative/coordinate structure. He notes that many languages of Sub-Saharan Africa and Indonesia have undergone or are undergoing this type of grammaticalization. This path, however, is untenable for Gã, because it is rarely the case that a preposition will give rise to a verb. It is far more likely that the construction with the preposition arose from the SVC by movement of ɛ and its object from before the main verb to after it.

Preposition ɛ cannot be analysed as a verb either, because this will contradict the iconic ordering of first taking an instrument and then utilizing it, moving with it etc. If ɛ in this instance were a verb, then one would cut the bread and then take the knife which is logically and practically unsound.

The phenomenon where the V1 of a serial construction grammaticalizes into a preposition is not unique to Gã. Tetun Dili has two verbs, hodi ‘carry, bring, take’ and lori ‘carry, bring, take’ whose distribution is exactly like ɛ in that they occur as verbs in V1 position and after V1 as prepositions (Hajek 2006:244). The same development is found in Obolo with the verb sè (Durie 1997:335).

4.5.3 ɛ occurring as a pre-verb on a non-initial verb in an SVC

This occurrence of ɛ was very common in the data. A few example sentences are given below:
In the past literature, there have been two main syntactic analyses of *ke* in this construction.

Both agree that the subject of *ke* is the subject of the SVC. The difference lies in what is analysed as the object of *ke*. Adjei (1999:151) believes that the object of *ke* is the object of the first verb which precedes *ke*. In (111) this would be *ékòmé* ‘one’ and in (112) it would be *ótó*.
‘food.type’. When the first verb is intransitive, as in (113) then it is the entire event preceding

\( k\varepsilon \) that is the object of \( k\varepsilon \). Presumably, there is no overt manifestation of the object of \( k\varepsilon \) because inanimate pronouns are realised as zero.

Dakubu (2004b), on the other hand, observes that it is not possible for the object of \( k\varepsilon \) to be identical with the object of the preceding verb. Her evidence is that when the object of the preceding verb is human, one would expect an overt pronoun co-referential with that object to occur after \( k\varepsilon \). However this is not the case, as the following example shows:

(116) e-ya-mɔ̀ ̃́ lɛ̀ kɛ̀-ba
3S1,AOR-EGR.AOR-catch 3S2 move.AOR-come
“He caught him and brought him back.” (Dakubu 2004b:121)

Dakubu takes the fact that there is no overt 3SG (\( lɛ̀ \)) pronoun after \( k\varepsilon \) to be proof that \( k\varepsilon \) and \( mɔ́ \text{ ‘catch’} \) do not share the same object. Instead she believes the function of \( k\varepsilon \) to be to “integrate the VPs into a single event, by bringing the event of the first VP into the semantic domain of the second VP.” (Dakubu 2004b:121). According to her, there are two semantic types. In one, the action of the first VP gives information about the manner in which the action in the second VP was carried out (117).

(117) èè=jò fòì kɛ̀-ŋ̀-yà
3SG.PROG=dance running take-PROG-go
“S/he’s running away.”
“S/he’s going away, running.” [BOR:31]
In the other, the second VP is a logical resultative of the action of the first VP (111), (112) and (113). I would add a third semantic type. In this type, the action in V2 is accompanied by that in V1 i.e. they are performed simultaneously and *kɛ* serves to make that connection e.g. (114) and (115).

Dakubu’s analysis is not only consistent with the syntactic facts of the language but it is also semantically sound and is able to account uniformly for different occurrences of this SVC type. To further buttress her point, it is observed that in SVCs with initial verb *kɛ*, where there is no preceding verb + object constituent to speak of, it makes sense semantically to ascribe the object of *kɛ* to the entire event in the preceding clause. Here, *kɛ* retrospectively links the event in the preceding clause to the current clause. Consider (118) from a narrative:

```
(118) ṃɛ̃mɛ̃=ŋ̀-táò  gbɛ ̀ n i ̃́ a ̃̀mɛ̃̀=bàá-tsɔ̃́   ni ̃́  à m ɛ ̃́=jè
      3PL = PROG = search way NMLZ 3PL = FUT-pass NMLZ 3PL = exit

kpò
compound
“They’re looking for a way to exit.”
```

```
   nì  ṃɛ̃mɛ̃=nà  tsò  kò   ṃɛ̃mɛ̃=mò  mìṇ̣̀
and  3PL = see tree INDEF  3PL = catch inside
“And they saw a log and held on to it.”
```

```
   nì  ṃɛ̃mɛ̃=kò  tsò = !é
and  3PL = climb tree = DEF
“And they climbed the log.”
```
And through that, they exited the river.

The deployment of ke in the final sentence is a way of indicating explicitly the means by which the protagonists were able to come out of the river i.e. log-climbing. Although without ke, this information is still available to the hearer by inference, the use of ke reinforces it. In this sentence it would be illogical to conclude that tsò ‘log’ is the object of ke. It is therefore not unusual for the object of ke to be a whole event rather than an NP. The use of ke in this example can be viewed as a semantic extension of the manner function of initial verb ke. Not all instances of initial verb ke can trace their objects to the event in the preceding clause. Some do trace their objects to an NP in the previous clause. In the following excerpt of a conversation, the object of ke in line 3 is bàá!á ‘the herbs’ in line 1.

(119) 1 Yoomo: bàá = !á à = yééé
erb = DEF 3PL.IMPERS = eat.NEG
“As for the herbs, they are not eaten.”

2 Akua: ãhaã
IJ
“That’s what I thought.”

3 Yoomo: à = kë-fù-ɔ̀ à = há-ã̀
3PL.IMPERS = take-bathe-HAB 3PL.IMPERS = give-HAB
àmẽ̀
3PL
“They are used to bathe them.”
Ascertaining the object of initial verb \( k \varepsilon \) is therefore a matter of closely examining the preceding discourse and determining which NP or event is semantically compatible with V2. Pre-verb \( k \varepsilon \) in a non-initial VP, on the other hand, has grammaticalized to a point where it no longer allows an NP object and its object must be the event coded by the preceding verb.

### 4.6 Finiteness and SVCs

There are many who would question the validity of SVCs which contain \( k \varepsilon \). After all, most writers on SVCs (e.g. Aikhenvald 2006:1, Sebba 1987:39) consider the ability of a component verb to appear independently as one of the basic requirements for SVC-hood. Matthews (2006:72), for instance, rules out Cantonese constructions that contain the object marker \( zoeng \) because although it is a verb, it does not occur as a main verb outside of the SVC. As briefly discussed earlier in this chapter, Shibatani (2009) has debunked this misconception by showing that in many canonical SVCs, one of the component verbs cannot occur as a main verb in simple clauses either, unless some morphological adjustment is made to them. He also notes that only one verb is responsible for indicating formal finiteness; the rest of the verbs are dependent on it.

The issue boils down to an understanding of finiteness and whether the verbs concerned exhibit formal or functional finiteness. Shibatani (2009:264) argues that in SVCs, none of the
verbs separately is functionally finite. Shibatani (2011) defines finiteness features as the “linguistic manifestation of the speech act of contextualizing a proposition, i.e. the anchoring of a proposition to a specific speech event”. Many languages do this by specifying the time of the event with relation to the time of speaking (tense). Some languages also indicate mood, evidentiality etc. But what is crucial is that this anchoring allows the verb to perform its function of predication i.e. to make an assertion, to question, command etc. SVCs by their very nature as mono-clausal, single event-depicting constructions cannot have each individual verb being functionally finite. Rather, it is together, as single predicates that they exhibit functional finiteness. The inability of \( kɛ \) to occur independently should therefore not preclude it from occurring in SVCs.

In the following SVCs, for instance, the second component is incapable of standing on its own.

\[(120a) \, \text{é=mà} \, \text{ŋwêŋ} \, \text{tsù} \, \text{ényɔ} \, \text{é=wò} \, \text{nò} \]

\[3SG.PERF=build \quad \text{up} \quad \text{house} \quad \text{two} \quad 3SG.PERF=put \quad \text{top} \]

“S/he has built two storey buildings on it.” [MM:80]

\[(120b) \, \text{*é=wò} \, \text{nɔ} \]

\[3SG.PERF=put \quad \text{top} \]

\[(121a) \, \text{ni} \, \text{kòòlòó=ɛ} \, \text{télé} \, \text{lè} \, \text{kè-nyĩɛ} \, \text{fɔì} \]

and \quad \text{animal=DEF} \quad \text{carry.on.head} \quad 3SG.OBJ \quad \text{take-walk} \quad \text{race} \]

“And the animal was running with him on his head.” [PAT:151]
Also, when it comes to the formal expression of finite categories in Gā, it is only the first verb that carries this responsibility. This is especially evident for the future, where the future aspectual morpheme is found only on the initial verb, while subsequent verbs are marked for the subjunctive. Even though the non-initial verbs are marked for subjunctive, the entire SVC is viewed as having future aspect. In addition, the second component cannot stand on its own.

(122a) \( a = \text{báá-féé} \quad \text{party} \quad a = \text{há} \quad \text{ámè} \)
\[
\begin{align*}
3\text{PL.IMPERS} &= \text{FUT-do} \\
3\text{PL.IMPERS.SBJV} &= \text{give} \\
3\text{PL} & \quad \text{“A party will be thrown for them.”} \\
\end{align*}
\]

(122b) \( *a = \text{há} \quad \text{ámè} \)
\[
\begin{align*}
3\text{PL.IMPERS.SBJV} &= \text{give} \\
3\text{PL} & \quad \text{“A party will be thrown for them.”} \\
\end{align*}
\]

The stipulation that each verb in the SVC must be finite is therefore invalid. In Gā, for example, only the first verb displays formal finiteness features.

Here, the deviation of chained SVCs from prototypical SVCs is particularly stark.

Chained SVCs make separate predications as can be seen from the temporal independence of the actions involved as well as the preference of some speakers for them to be coordinated with the coordinator \( nǐ \), but syntactically, the various verbs also do not exhibit individual finiteness.

In terms of marking, they are just like integrated SVCs. All SVCs probably started off as such chained structures, with ISVCs emerging as the result of the elimination of coordinators.
coupled with the grammaticalization of some verbs and requirements for harmonious TAMP marking. CSVCs appear to be in some kind of limbo, where they are still composed of chained structures and obey the rules on TAMP marking but on the other hand, allow coordinators. Crucially, the verbs in CSVCs do not easily fall victim to grammaticalization and retain their independence and predicational function. CSVCs are therefore like a cross between coordinated clauses and ISVCs. Their formal manifestation (that of mono-clausality) is that of a typical SVC, but semantically they are more akin to coordinated clauses.

4.7 SVCs and other multi-verbal constructions
SVCs in Gã are superficially similar to other multi-clausal constructions such as causatives and purpose constructions. However, there are major differences between these and SVCs.

In Gã, causation is expressed by the same verb that expresses benefactive i.e. hã́ ‘give’, as in example (123a).

(123a) ĩ̀=hã́ à=yà-kpɔ́ lɛ̀
1SG=give 3PL.IMPERS=ITIV-dislocate 3SG.OBJ
“I made them sack him/her.” [MM:184]

Although, the sentence above comprises a series of two verbs, it is not an SVC primarily because each verb has a different syntactic subject. The subject of hã́ ‘give’ is the first person singular while the subject of kpɔ́ ‘dislocate’ is the third person plural impersonal pronoun. The sentence clearly expresses two different events with two different actors. If it is to be negated,
only hà can take the negative marker, the second verb will be marked for the subjunctive.

Perhaps it is due to a mistaken equivalence between this construction and negative SVCs that results in some speakers negating SVCs by marking the non-initial verb with the subjunctive, as we saw in (9b).

\[(123b) \text{à = yá-kpó} \quad \text{lè} \quad \text{1SG = give.NEG} \quad \text{3PL.IMPERS.SBJV = ITIV-dislocate} \quad \text{3SG.OBJ} \]

“I didn’t make them sack him/her.”

The causative construction actually consists of the main causative verb phrase containing hà ‘give’ and a nominal complement (event nominalization (chapter 6)) which is optionally marked by the nominalizer nĩ. Therefore, another way to render (123a) is (124).

\[(124) \text{à = yá-kpó} \quad \text{lè} \quad \text{1SG = give} \quad \text{NMLZ} \quad \text{3PL.IMPERS = ITIV-dislocate} \quad \text{3SG.OBJ} \]

“I made them sack him/her.”

This nominalizer also optionally occurs in purpose constructions. Such constructions resemble SVCs when the marker nĩ is not present, as in (125).

\[(125) \text{àtstu = !é} \quad \text{PERT-house = DEF} \quad \text{“S/he is jumping to catch the beehive.”} \]
Example (125) is disqualified from being an SVC because in SVCs, the progressive is concordantly marked on all verbs. However, in purposives it is marked just once on the initial verb and the second verb is marked for the subjunctive.

The similarity of constructions that contain the nominalization marker nĩ́ to SVCs may not simply be a synchronic coincidence. It could be that these constructions actually gave rise to SVCs in some contexts. Adjei (1999:166) has postulated that serial verb constructions may have arisen from coordinate constructions, which make use of the clausal coordinator ǹ (with low tone, as opposed to the high tone of the nominalizer found in purposives). It is interesting to note that in purposive constructions, tense is carried only on the main (initial) verb; the rest are marked for subjunctive. This is exactly the case with future SVCs and SVCs with imperative mood. What all these have in common is their irrealis semantics. It is therefore possible that future SVCs evolved from future purposives. Compare the following two sentences: (126) is an SVC with future aspect and (127) is a purposive, also with future aspect. Purposives are marked by nĩ́ which also functions as the coordinator for irrealis clauses. Hence (127) could also be analysed as a coordinate construction. This intricate set of relationships will be explored in §6.6.2.2.

(126) è=bàá-tè s h i ̃̀ é=jù è = h è
3SG=FUT-rise down 3SG.SBJV=bathe 3SG=body
“S/he will wake up and take a bath.”
4.8 Summary

In this chapter, it has been shown that Gã SVCs do form a distinct syntactic construction characterized by mono-clausality, subject sharing, compatible AMP marking on all verbs and construal as a single event. SVCs carry out many grammatical functions that in other languages are performed by case markers and prepositions. This is made possible via the grammaticalization of one of the verbs, usually the final verb. The semantics of the various types of SVCs have been discussed and suggestions about possible pathways of development of the different semantic senses have been put forth. Using SVCs with the initial verb, kɛ as an example, it has been shown that a verb need not be finite nor be capable of appearing independently in simple clauses in order to occur in an SVC (§4.6). Chained SVCs have been shown to be a deviation from prototypical SVCs, making separate predications but presenting as a single clause. Finally, SVCs have been shown to differ from syntactically similar multi-verb constructions, to which they may also be diachronically related (§4.7).
Chapter 5: Voice and Valency

5.0 Introduction
Valency refers to the number of arguments that are required by a verbal predicate. It is
inextricably tied to transitivity, which refers to the number of objects that a verbal predicate
takes. As shown in chapter 3, a verbal predicate may be intransitive, in which case it has only
one argument - the subject - and no object. Such a verb is monovalent. A monotransitive verb
has two arguments - subject and one object - and is termed bivalent, while a ditransitive verb
has three arguments - a subject and two objects - and is termed trivalent.

Each argument in a clause plays a role in the development of the action - a semantic
role - and these roles may be marked morphologically or by word order. Languages differ in
how the marking of semantic roles in a typically transitive clause corresponds to the marking of
a single argument in an intransitive clause. This sets up the well-known binary division
between nominative-accusative languages and ergative-absolutive languages. In nominative-
accusative languages, the agent (A) of the transitive clause is marked the same as the single
argument (S) of an intransitive clause, while the patient (P) of the transitive clause receives
unique marking. In ergative-absolutive languages, it is the P of the transitive clause that is
marked the same as the S of the intransitive clause, with the A of the transitive clause being
uniquely marked.
Whenever there is a realignment of these standard roles and marking patterns in a transitive clause i.e. a particular semantic role is marked non-canonically, or there is a deviation from the norm in terms of the number of arguments a verb takes i.e. arguments are added or removed (changes in valency), a voice contrast results. This is the received, traditional understanding of voice that has guided research for decades and still underpins most investigations of voice in specific languages. It emphasizes the importance of morphological marking in determining voice categories and alignments, and it places primacy on the pragmatic function of valency changes. For example, the English passive voice is said to be a valency-reducing process which promotes a patient to subject position (from object position), and deletes the agent or demotes it to oblique position. So that for the English active i.e. transitive (bivalent) sentence, Jane found the dog, we get the passive form, The dog was found (by Jane), which is intransitive (monovalent). The passive sentence reflects a communicative purpose that is unconcerned with who found the dog; it is only concerned with the fact of it being found. The following are reflective of currently accepted definitions of voice:

“The term voice refers to a system of oppositions involving a change in the semantic role which is associated with the subject relation (Kroeger 2004:54).”

“Every language has operations that adjust the relationship between semantic roles and grammatical relations in clauses. Such devices are sometimes referred to as alternative voices” (Payne 1997:169)
Voice is “an inflectional (and sometimes derivational) feature of verbs that indicates a function-changing operation (categories: active, passive, reflexive, antipassive) (Haspelmath 2002:276).

In recent times, typologically-minded linguists such as Givón (2001b) and Shibatani (2006) have pointed out that the exclusive focus on morphology and pragmatic function in voice studies has led to the exclusion of structures in some languages that perform the same functions as voice constructions in languages that mark voice morphologically or by valency changes. As a result, Givón (2001b:155) advocates an approach in which a voice category is defined functionally, independently of language structure, and then the various constructions in individual languages that carry out these functions are identified. Shibatani (2006:219) goes even further to propose that there are conceptual bases underlying voice phenomena, and the grammarian’s task is to identify the structures that convey these voice oppositions. Shibatani explains that major voice phenomena have their bases rooted in the human conceptualization of actions; where actions originate, how they develop and how they terminate. He terms these stages the evolutionary properties or phases of an action. Voice phenomena are concerned with the development of actions, the participants involved in the actions and the discourse or communicative relevance of those participants. He defines voice as “a system of correspondences between actions or event types and syntactic structures.” (Shibatani 2006:220). In order to determine the existence of a voice parameter in relation to another, one
may pose pertinent questions relating to a specific evolutionary phase of concern. For instance, with the origin phase of an action, one may ask where the action originates, how it is brought about and what the nature of the agent is. Regarding the developmental phase of an action, one may ask whether or not the action extends beyond the agent’s personal sphere and whether or not the action achieves its intended effect on the patient. The termination phase of an action beckons questions of whether the action terminates with a participant in the main event or develops further to affect another entity (Shibatani 2006:222). Regardless of the formal structure of a particular language, these are questions that can be answered by virtue of the fact that the structure or framework of an action varies little from culture to culture. It is the recognition of this intuitive, cross-cultural dissection of the “anatomy of an action” that makes it possible to identify major voice categories without appealing to morphological evidence or realignment of semantic roles with grammatical relations.

In this chapter, I will apply Shibatani’s inclusive methodology to Gâ in order to determine how major voice categories are realized in this language. In §5.1, the well-known active/passive voice opposition will be examined. §5.2 takes a look at the causative voice, §5.3 looks at middles, and §5.4 at antipassives. Benefactives and applicatives have their turn in §5.5 and the chapter is summarized in §5.6.
5.1 Active/Passive voice

This is the most common voice opposition found in language. The active is the default voice category in the discourse of nominative-accusative languages. It involves a transitive situation in which a volitional agent initiates an action which goes beyond the agent’s personal sphere and achieves its intended effect on a patient (Shibatani 200:257). The passive is commonly characterized as a demotion of the A from subject position to oblique or null, and a promotion of P from object to subject position. Dixon and Aikhenvald (2000:8) state that the function of the prototypical passive is to focus attention on the original O, downgrade the importance of the original A and focus on the state the original O is in. They list the following as the characteristics of a passive21:

a) Passive applies to an underlying transitive clause and forms a derived intransitive.
b) The underlying O becomes S of the passive.
c) The underlying A argument goes into a peripheral function, being marked by a non-core case, adposition, etc; this argument can be omitted, although there is always the option of including it.
d) There is some explicit formal marking of a passive construction – generally by a verbal affix or by a periphrastic verbal construction. (Dixon and Aikhenvald 2000:7)

If these requirements were applied to Gã, one would have no choice but to conclude that Gã does not possess passive voice, because the formal markers that Dixon and Aikhenvald (2000) list as indicators of a passive simply do not exist in Gã. However, if we focus on the conceptual

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21 Dixon and Aikhenvald’s (2000) O (object) corresponds to P (patient) as used in this work.
basis of the passive voice in relation to the evolution of the action that it expresses, as Shibatani (2006) does, then we see that Gã does have a construction that performs the same pragmatic functions as the passives identified by Dixon and Aikhenvald. In Shibatani’s (2006:219) work, the parameter controlling the active/passive voice opposition can be formulated in the following question pertaining to the origin phase of the action:

Does the action originate in an agent with extremely low discourse relevance or at least lower than the patient?

Active: No
Passive: Yes

If the agent of the action is somehow conveyed as being of little relevance to the message, in comparison with the patient, then a passive construction results. The agent may be given this treatment because perhaps its identity is unknown or is inconsequential. In Gã this is accomplished by what Givón (2001b) calls a non-promotional impersonal passive. It is non-promotional because there is no realignment of semantic roles and grammatical relations. The patient is not promoted to subject position and the agent is not omitted or demoted to oblique status. Instead a non-referential, impersonal third person plural pronoun occurs as subject, while the patient retains its object position. The impersonal pronoun is à- ‘3PL.IMPERS’ and is probably derived from the third person plural pronoun, ã̀mɛ̃̀ ‘3PL’. Examples of this passive construction are given below in (1)-(3).
“Yes, she’s been taken to the regional office.” [MM:142]

“Our house…that’s where we were all born.” [FH:3]

“IJ errm, my name is Naa Kweikor.” [Lit: “They call me Naa Kweikor/I am called Naa Kweikor] [YM:16]

Unlike promotional passives in languages such as English, the non-promotional property of Gâ passives means that even intransitive sentences can be passivized, as (4) and (5) demonstrate.

“So they should wait a while.” [FH:131]

“Prayers have been said/Praying has been done/They have prayed.” [CH:64]
diachronic relationship with the third plural pronominal, ã̀mɛ̃̀. In Gã, the impersonal pronoun must denote an animate agent, and cannot be used of inanimate objects i.e. activities undergone by inanimate entities cannot be passivized. So (6a) is ungrammatical because the impersonal pronoun, which most probably refers to food, is an inanimate entity. In such a scenario one must use a referential NP, such as a personal pronoun or a full NP, as in (6b).

(6a) * á=bèbèé=!í  
3PL.IMPERS.PERF=be.cooked.DISTRIBUT = PL 
“They (the meals) are cooked i.e. ready.”

(6b) nĩ́!yénĩ́!ĩ́=ɛ̃́ fɛ̃́ɛ̃́ é - b è  
food=DEF all PERF-be.cooked  
“All the meals are cooked i.e. ready.”

That the ungrammaticality of (6a) is due to the inanimateness of the subject and not the fact that it is a patient rather than an agent (i.e. an undergoer rather than a volitional actor) is evidenced by the grammaticality of the following passive sentences which have human patientive subjects.

(7) àà=gbógbòó-!í  
ní  
wò = nũũũ  
sh̀shì̀  
3PL.IMPERS.PROG=die.DISTRIBUT-PL NMLZ 1PL = hear.NEG under  
“People are dying mysteriously.” (Lit: People are dying that we don’t understand)

(8) àà=gbèègbèè-î  
sh̀ sòŋ̀ŋ̀ yè  
nàkà̀ì  
3PL.IMPERS.PROG=fall.DISTRIBUT-PL down numerous be.located that
The text is a continuation of the explanation of causative/non-causative voice in Gã, a language. The text defines causative voice as actions originating with an agent distinct from the agent or patient of the main action, and non-causative voice as actions originating with the agent or patient of the main action. Examples are given for lexical causatives such as gbè ‘kill’, jwà ‘break’, shã̀ ‘burn’, sèlè ‘melt’, bó!dá ‘mangle’, wò X nã̀ã̀ [put X mouth] ‘feed X’, gbèé X shĩ̀ [fall X down] ‘cause X to fail’, tsĩ̀ɛ̃̂ ‘wake’ gbélé ‘open’ and ŋã́ ‘close’. The majority of these are labile or ambitransitive verbs;
verbs which may be transitive or intransitive. In their causative function they must occur as
transitive verbs, as in (9) and (10).

(9) ákú ɲá shínáá=!á
    aku close door=DEF
    “Aku closed the door.”

(10) ó=jwà tɔ́ =!ɔ́
    2SG.PERF=break bottle=DEF
    “You’ve broken the bottle.”

The coding of lexical causatives is iconically related to the semantics of the causative events
they express, according to Shibatani and Pardeshi (2002:89). They note that in lexically-
expressed causative events, the causer acts directly upon the causee to bring about a change in
the causee. In so-doing the causer and causee occupy the same spatio-temporal domain. Lexical
causatives are hence known to equate to direct causation, as opposed to the indirect causation
expressed by morphological and periphrastic causatives. Shibatani (1976) uses the terms
manipulative and directive in lieu of direct and indirect causation respectively. Both pairs of
terms echo essential semantic properties of the causative event they describe. “Direct”
highlights the close spatial proximity of the causer and causee (as well as the fact that there is
no intermediate agent) and the close temporal proximity of the causing event and the caused
event. “Manipulative” indicates that the causee lacks control or volition to some degree. This is
the case for the subjects of most labile verbs that occur in intransitive clauses; they are
inanimate patients and have little independence or control over their states. Shibatani and Pardeshi (2006) call such intransitive clauses “inactive intransitives”. It is easier to bring about a change of state in such inert causees than it is to do so with agentive causees. In (9) and (10) above, for instance, the causees shĩ́nã̀ã̀ ‘door’ and tɔ̀ ‘bottle’ are inanimate and lack volition. Therefore, the more direct, lexical method is ideal for causativizing such labile verbs.

Because of the existence of inherent complement verbs (ICVs) (§3.5) in the lexicon of Gã, a situation pertains where verbs that are normally intransitive in most languages occur as transitive in Gã. These are essentially middle intransitive verbs which take an obligatory NP object argument e.g. gbèé !shĩ́[fall down] ‘fall’ and yí !shĩ́[pass down] ‘drop off’. When such verbs are used causatively they result in ditransitive clauses, in which the first post-verbal NP is the causee and the second is the inherent complement NP. This is the case in (11), where the transitive middle verb is the ICV gbèé !shĩ́[fall down] ‘fall’ and ènĩ́tsṹ!mɔ̃́ ‘his business’ is the causee. In (12), the causee is the third singular object pronoun, lɛ̀.

(11) òkó ̄=gbèé ̄=n ùtsũ!mɔ̃́=ɔ̃̀ ̄ shĩ́
Oko PERF=fall 3SG=work=DEF down
“Oko has caused his business to fail.”

(12) ū=ýf̄ lɛ̀ ̄ shĩ́ ̄ yè ̄ shṹl̄á
1SG=pass 3SG.OBJ down be.located house
“I dropped him/her off at home.”
It will be shown later on that transitive verbs are normally causativized by periphrastic means. Middle transitives such as the ICVs seen above constitute an exception, an unsurprising one nevertheless, considering that the causees in such causative constructions are patientive and lack autonomy and control. ènĩ́tsṹ!mɔ̃́ ‘his business’ is a classic example of such an argument because it is inanimate and even abstract in some sense. In (12), lè ‘3SG.OBJ’ must refer to someone who voluntarily got into the car because they needed a ride. Therefore, although they have control, they have no means to exercise it, neither do they wish to.

Importantly, intransitive labile verbs in which the subject is an agent (what Shibatani and Pardeshi term “active intransitives”) cannot be causativized lexically i.e. they do not have causative meaning when they occur in transitive clauses. Examples of such verbs are shwɛ́ ‘play’, fò ‘cry’, ŋmɔ́ ‘laugh’, wiè ‘speak’, nù́ ‘hear’, bí ‘ask’, bò́ ‘shout’. Example (13a) shows (active) intransitive use of shwɛ́ ‘play’, (13b) shows its transitive use and (13c) is an attempt at making it function as a lexical causative. It is ungrammatical.

(13a) ìmè=ŋ-shwɛ́
3PL=PROG-play
“They are playing.”

(13b) ìmè=ŋ-shwɛ́ lúdù
3PL=PROG-play ludo
“They are playing ludo.”
5.2.2 Periphrastic causatives

The analytic or periphrastic causative mechanism can be used to causativize transitive as well as intransitive verbs. This involves a construction consisting of the verbal predicate, ḥǎ ‘give’, and an object which constitutes a grammatical event nominalization denoting the caused event. This event nominalization denoting the caused event is optionally marked by the ubiquitous nominalizer, n̂i. In most instances, however, n̂i is omitted. The verb, ḥǎ ‘give’ in the causative construction is a full verb and is capable of taking all verbal inflections. Its subject is the causer while the subject of the event nominalization is the causee. In the causative construction in (14), the agent heading the action chain - the causer, is ọ ‘2SG’ and the agent of the main action, the causee, is m̃̃kò ‘somebody’.

(14) ọ = ḥǎ  m̃̃kò  yà-jìé  shìká  àlóó
     2SG = give  person = INDEF  ITIV-remove money  or
     “You had someone go and take money. Or?”  [DT:5:20]

5.2.2.1 Semantics of periphrastic causatives

Causatives formed this way are “indirect causatives” or “directive causatives” because they are less direct than lexical causatives; the causing event and the caused event may be greatly separated in time and space and the causer does not need to have physical contact with the

(13c) *ǎmè = ŋ-shwè  lè
     3PL = PROG-play  3SG.OBJ
     “They are making him play.”
causee. The term, “directive” reflects the fact that oftentimes the causer gives a verbal directive or command to the causee to carry out the desired action. In (14) for example, the causer may have asked someone to take money on one day while the withdrawal would have taken place several days later. In addition, both agents may have been thousands of miles apart. The causee in a periphrastic causative may or may not be animate and therefore may or may not possess any control. It may or may not be a willing agent of the caused event. Similarly, the causer may be animate or inanimate; it may even be an abstract entity. Consequently, the causer role is not restricted only to entities with autonomy and control over their actions. Basically, this causative construction has relatively few restrictions on the semantics of the participants in the causative event. The initiator of the entire chain - the initial agent - if it is human, may bring about the action of the second entity (which could be an agent or patient) by verbally or non-verbally requesting, persuading or ordering the causee, or by removing impediments to the execution of the action or giving explicit permission to an already willing causee to carry out the action.

A permissive reading is therefore very common in Gā causatives and is not uniquely marked. (15) is an example of a causative construction with permissive meaning.
In (16), the causer, ɬ ‘1SG’ brings about the caused event (the removal of the patient, lè ‘3SG.OBJ’) indirectly, perhaps by giving a verbal directive to the causers, who may or may not have been willing. The identity of the causers in this case is considered irrelevant and is therefore passivized.

A similar scenario is found in (17), where the children may have been willing or unwilling to go. In both (16) and (17), the causers have some authority over the causees and it is this authority that induces acquiescence in the causees.
Causers may be inanimate, and such causative constructions are semantically different from those exemplified above, where action on the part of the causer induces compliance on the part of the causee. Rather, often in these causative constructions with inanimate causers, the mere existence of a particular state of affairs triggers a change of state in the causee. The triggering state of affairs is the causer, the affected entity is the causee (in this case a semantic patient), and the resulting state of the causee is the caused event. In the excerpt in (18), the causer or triggering event is the weakness in faith of Christians, as noted in the first line. In the second line, there is a negative causative construction which states that said weakness does not make us strong Christians. This same message is reiterated in the final line, where the speaker uses an affirmative causative. In both causative constructions, the triggering event is the state of being lacking in faith.

(18) á!ké wɔ̀=hé-mɔ̀-kè-yè-lí mɔ́ɔ̃́ɔ́ ̃́ s hì̀ hèwò́ !lè
NMLZ 1PL = buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM hold.NEG down sake TOP
“Because our faith is weak…”

d = hááá
wɔ̀ = křístòfónyò fèé!mɔ́ !lè á-mà
3SG = give.NEG 1PL = christian do-NOM DEF SBJV-be.situated

shì jògbàŋŋà
down well
“…it does not make our Christian life healthy”

d = !há
wɔ́ = !gbèdè yè wɔ̀ = nyò̃ŋmò́ já-mɔ́
3SG.PERF-give 1PL.PERF = be.weak be.located 1PL = God worship-NOM
Inside

“It has made us weak in our fellowship with God.” [CH:266]

In (19), the trigger or causer is a women who has just suffered the loss of a child. The speaker is the causee, '1SG' and the caused event is the remembering of old memories.

(19) yòó = !é ní è=bí é=gbò nè!é ní
woman = DEF NMLZ 3SG = child PERF = die this NMLZ

wà=tèé = !é <INDEC> è= hà 
1PL = go.PST = DEF 3SG = give 1SG = remember

í = bì-!í = !é bè ní àmè = gbò
1SG = child-PL = DEF time NMLZ 3PL = die

“The woman whose child has died who we went to <INDEC>, she reminded me of when my children died.” (Lit: “…she made me remember when my children died”) [FH:161]

Causative constructions such as (18) and (19) above and (20) below are semantically reminiscent of reason/result constructions. The causative construction may be employed to express such meanings. This is done by first stating the reason in an independent clause. This clause is followed up with a causative construction in which the causer or initial agent is an anaphoric noun that is co-referential with the stated reason. The result is conveyed in the caused event. The reason clause may or may not be linked to the causative clause by a conjunction such as hèwɔ̀ ‘sake (of)/so’. In (20), the subject of the causative verb is the
demonstrative, nò ‘that’, which refers to the previous discourse regarding the expensive item.

The causee is the speaker and the caused event is the act of her posing a question.

(20) nàkà̀ ́i ékòmè = !è lè è = yè-ò mò shiká
that one = DEF TOP 3SG = eat-HAB person money

hèwɔ̀ = !5 nò hà = ìbí-ò = ɔ̀ = ɔ̀
sake = DEF that give 1SG = ask-HAB = DEF = DEF

“As for that other one, it is very expensive, so that’s the reason why I’m asking.” (Lit: “…that’s what’s making me ask.”) [DT:53]

In (21), although the causer, Aku, is human, she does not in fact carry out any sort of action at all to bring about the caused event, which is the addressee not visiting or coming around.

Indirectly, however, Aku is the cause of this absence because the addressee can only make one trip each year and she chooses to visit Aku and not the speaker.

(21) ákú mòŋ = !hà mòŋ = ò tɔ́-kò bí!é
Aku rather.FOC 3SG.PERF = give rather 2SG = pass-PERF.NEG here

kẃráá mòŋ neè è
at.all rather this IJ

“It is rather because of Aku that you have not passed by here at all.” i.e. “It is rather Aku who has caused you to not pass here at all.”

As (22) shows, this could be expressed in a non-causative by employing the reason noun, hèwɔ̀ ‘sake’.
It is clear, then, that even among periphrastic causatives there are variations in the extent of directness or involvement of the causer in motivating the caused event. To this end, one may set up two broad semantic types. In the first type, the causer willingly motivates the caused event verbally or non-verbally. In such causatives there is some kind of communicative interaction between the causer and causee and both participants have awareness about the entire causative event. This is seen in (14)-(17). This type will be termed volitional causation. In the second type, the causer does not willingly instigate the causative event. Such a causer may bring about a change in the causee without even being aware of this change. All causative events with inanimate causers necessarily fall into this second type. This second type is known as non-volitional causation. Examples are (18)-(22).

**5.2.2.2 Syntax of periphrastic causatives**

i) Marking of causee

One way in which periphrastic causatives are differentiated typologically is via the manner in which the causee is marked i.e. whether it is marked as the object of the first clause or the
subject of the second clause. This question needs to be re-framed for Gã because in this work I maintain that the causative construction is mono-clausal. The caused event or resulting event is not coded by a clause but a grammatical event nominalization which functions as the complement or object of the causative verb, há ‘give’ (See chapter 6 for a fuller discussion of grammatical event nominalizations). The causee in the grammatical nominalization is marked as a subject. As Gã has no case marking on full nouns, this is evident only in causatives where the causee is expressed as a pronominal. The causee is always expressed as a subject pronoun and never as an object pronoun. In (23a) for example, the causee is the subject pronominal, e-, and not its object counterpart, le, which would be ungrammatical (23b).

(23a)  ép=hã́-lã́  ní  ép=wɔ̀lɔ̀-ɔ̀
   3SG=give-HAB NMLZ  3SG = cough-HAB
   “It makes him cough.”

(23b)  * ép=hã́-lã́  ní  le=wɔ̀lɔ̀-ɔ̀
   3SG=give-HAB NMLZ  3SG.OBJ=cough-HAB
   “It makes him cough.”

ii) Transitivity

In terms of transitivity of the verb, both intransitive and transitive verbs can be causativized. Example (23a) above contains an intransitive verb, wɔ̀lɔ̀ ‘cough’ while (17) exemplifies causativization of a transitive verb, hĩ̀ ‘live’. In (14), we see that it is also possible to causativize a lexical causative verb - kpɔ́ ‘dislodge’.
iii) Tense, aspect, mood and polarity (TAMP)

When the causative verb is realis i.e. bare, perfect, habitual or progressive, the verb coding the
caused event must receive the same realis marking (19), (21), (23a) above and (24) below.

(24) \(òò=há\) \(í=yítsò\) \(ŷ-gbá\) \(!mí\)
    2SG.PROG = give 1SG = head PROG-split 1SG.OBJ
    “You are giving me a headache.”

If the causative verb is marked as irrealis i.e. future or negative, then the main event verb is
marked for the subjunctive.

(25) \(kòjó \ báá-há\) \(nǐ\) \(wọ=fēē\)
    Kojo  FUT-give  NMLZ  1PL.SBJV = do
    “Kojo will make us do (it)”/“Kojo will let us do (it).”

(26) \(kòjó \ hāāā\) \(nǐ\) \(wọ=fēē\)
    Kojo  give.NEG  NMLZ  1PL.SBJV = do
    “Kojo did not let us do (it).”/“Kojo will not let us do it.”

5.2.2.3 Comparison with serial verb constructions

There is a striking similarity between causative constructions which do not have the
nominalizer, \(nǐ\), and serial verb constructions (SVCs). This is because causative constructions,
just like many SVCs, contain two verbs, each with their own overt subject. The resemblance is
stronger when both verbs in the causative have identical pronominal subjects, as is required of
some SVCs. But causative constructions in Gã are not serial constructions, as noted in §4.7. An
SVC contains two or more verbs which act as one clause and code a single event. SVCs are
hence mono-clausal and have certain formal features that reflect this. Causative constructions in this work are also analysed as mono-clausal and mono-predicational, but with the predication being carried out by a single verb (the causative verb), and with a complex nominal argument functioning as object of this verb. All the same, the structural similarity between causatives and SVCs is undeniable. In what follows, I note other, more formal distinctions between these two constructions.

i) The most obvious difference between SVCs and causatives is that causatives have an optional element, the nominalizer, nĩ́, whose presence or absence does not change the meaning of the causative. In other linguistic traditions, nĩ́ would be categorized as a complementizer conjoining two clauses. The crucial point here is that in an SVC, no such particle or linker is inserted between the various verb phrases. (27a) shows an SVC. The same SVC is seen in (27b) but with the nominalizer, nĩ́. The presence of nĩ́ triggers subjunctive marking on the second verb and results in a different meaning - a purposive meaning.

(27a) ákú !hé m̀ì è=yè
Aku buy 1SG.OBJ 3SG = eat
“Aku believed me.”

(27b) ákú !hé !ḿì nĩ́ é=!yé
Aku buy 1SG NMLZ 3SG.SBJV = eat
“Aku bought me so that she could eat.”
ii) With the exception of the future and imperative categories, all SVCs must be concordantly marked for the same tense, aspect, mood and polarity (TAMP) values. However, for causatives, the causative verb and the event verbs may have differing polarities. The causative verb is the only verb that can be negated. The main event verb is marked for the subjunctive. For example, line 2 of (18), repeated below as (28a) has a negative causative verb, hã́ã́ã́ ‘give.NEG’ but an affirmative main verb, mà shĩ̀ [be.situated down] ‘stand firm’.

(28a) è=hã́ã́ã́ wò=křístòfønyò feè-lìmò=ì ʃ-mà
3SG-give.NEG 1PL =christian do-NOM =DEF SBJV-be.situated

shĩ̀ jògbāŋŋ

“Down well

“It has not made our Christian life healthy.” [CH:267]

Indeed, it is ungrammatical for both the causative verb and the event verb to be negated:

(28b) *kòjó hãááá ũ=wɔɔɔ̂
Kojo give.NEG 1SG =sleep.NEG

“Kojo doesn’t make me not sleep.”

The opposite scenario obtains in SVCs. The two verbs in the series must have the same polarity (29a); contradictory polarities result in ungrammaticality (29b).

(29a) ɛ=liόóó fòì ɛ=bòiéeé ũb=ɔ̅ mìŋ
3SG=dance.NEG race 3SG=enter.NEG hole =DEF inside

“He didn’t run and enter the hole.”
The same pattern of grammaticality is seen with the negative future. SVCs require concordant marking of the negative future suffix, -ŋ on all verbs but this is banned in causatives.

SVCs:

(30a) è=hé-ŋ̀   mì   è=yé-!ŋ́
3SG=buy-NEG.FUT 1SG.OBJ 3SG=eat-NEG.FUT
“S/he will not believe me.”

(30b) *è=hé-ŋ̀   mì   è = !yé
3SG=buy-NEG.FUT 1SG.OBJ 3SG.SBJV=eat
“S/he will not believe me.”

Causatives:

(31a) è=hã́-!ŋ́   ó=!yá
3SG=give-NEG.FUT 2SG.SBJV = go
“S/he will not let you go.”

(31b) *è=hã́-!ŋ́   ó = !yá-!ŋ́
3SG=give-NEG.FUT 2SG = go-NEG.FUT
“S/he will not let you go.”

iii) Another area where SVCs and periphrastic causatives differ is adverbial modification. In one type of SVC known as integrated SVCs, a time adverb cannot occur between the first and second verb. It may only occur at the beginning or end of the sentence.

(32a) nyé̃́=!ɛ̃́  ákú  !tsí  mì  è=gbèé  !shi
yesterday=TOP Aku push 1SG.OBJ 3SG = fall ground
“Yesterday, Aku pushed me to the ground.”
iv) The final difference between SVCs and hā-causatives is that in SVCs there is only one syntactic subject and it is marked accordingly on all the verbs in the series. This is irrespective of whether there are actually different semantic subjects. If the subject of the first verb in an SVC is a full NP, then the subjects of subsequent verbs must be pronouns coreferential with the initial NP subject. If the initial subject is a pronoun, then subsequent subjects must be the same.
pronoun. This is not the case with causatives, where the subject of *há́* ‘give’ (the causer) and
the subject of the main event verb (the causee) must have different referents and must be coded
as such in the syntax. So in (34), the causer and causee have two different referents,
represented by two different pronouns, *e*- ‘3SG’ and *ĩ*- ‘1SG’ respectively.

(34)  kèkè = !é  mì  hú  ñ = !há  ñ = !ká!í  bè
then = TOP  1SG  too  3SG.PERF = give  1SG.PERF = remember  time

né  ñyóó = mèì  gbó = !é
NMLZ  Oyo = ASSOC.PL  die = DEF

“Then me too, it reminds me of when Oyo and company died.”  [FH:172]

But in the SVC in (35), the subjects must be the same (i.e. *ĩ*- ‘1SG’) syntactically, even though
the logical subject of *gbèé* ‘fall’ is actually the third singular person.

(35)  ñ = tsí  lè  ñ = gbèé  !shí
1SG = push  3SG.OBJ  1SG = fall  down

“I pushed him to the ground.”

5.3 Active/middle voice
This voice opposition is concerned with the development stage of an action. According to
Shibatani (2006:231), the conceptual basis for the active/middle opposition is whether the
action extends beyond the agent’s personal sphere and affects another entity (active) or whether
the effects of the action are confined to the agent’s personal sphere (middle). Shibatani’s
account allows lexical middles, morphological middles and periphrastic middles. Lexical
middles are essentially intransitive verbs such as *stand, walk, sit, go* which require only one participant - the agent. With these, the agent alone executes the action and it is confined to his own person; it affects no other entity. Shibatani notes that morphological middles tend to be used of actions that one normally applies on oneself but which can also be applied to others. These are usually grooming or body care actions such as *shave, bathe, comb one’s hair*.

Periphrastic middles are used to express actions that one typically directs at others but which one is directing at oneself e.g. *punch, look, hate*. Such middles usually take the form of reflexive pronouns. The prominence of marking corresponds to the “naturalness” of the situation (Shibatani 2006:325). Lexical intransitives are the most natural and so receive no marking. Grooming or body care actions being carried out on others is less natural but not counter-normative so it receives some marking, while the most prominent means - the periphrastic means - is reserved for the least natural actions of hitting oneself, kicking oneself etc.

Like many languages, Gã has lexical middles. These are intransitive verbs such as *yà* ‘go’, *lá* ‘sing’, *wô* ‘sleep’ *jù* ‘bathe’ and *hâ/kü* ‘yawn’. But Gã also has lexical middles which happen to be transitive. These are inherent complement verbs (ICVs) which express single-participant actions e.g. *jò fôì* [dance race] ‘run’, *tá !shĩ́* [sit down] ‘sit’, *yí !shĩ́* [pass down] ‘descend’ and *dâmô sho* [stand down] ‘stand’. These verbs have nominal objects built into them.
These objects, however, are not interpreted as additional event participants to whom the actions are directed to.

Gã has no morphological middles but has a periphrastic form that is used for reflexives and reciprocals. A reflexive construction is a type of middle construction in which the object of a sentence refers back to the subject. Kemmer (1994:207) writes that the use of a reflexive marker signals the unusual situation where the initiator and endpoint of an activity are the same entity. Kemmer’s views on the reflexive differ from Shibatani’s in that she does not consider the reflexive to be a middle category. Rather, the reflexive is related to the middle in so far as one and only one entity carries out and is affected by the action. The semantic phenomenon that separates middles from reflexives is termed by Kemmer (1993:66) as “relative distinguishability of participants”. Reflexives have a higher relative distinguishability of participants than middles do. By this, Kemmer means that although in reflexive events, the initiator and endpoint are coreferential, there is still some maintenance of a distinction between them. That is, in a reflexive event, the initiator and the endpoint are construed as separate entities, even though they are marked as coreferential. This contrasts with middle situations, where the initiator and endpoint are viewed as one, indistinguishable and holistic entity.

The reflexive form in Gã is a possessive NP in which the possessor is a pronoun referring to the subject of the clause and the possessum is the noun, hè ‘body, self’. This
possessive NP as a unit functions as a reflexive pronoun and hence a middle marker. Schladt (2000:112) notes that the word for ‘body’ is a very common source for reflexive marking in African languages. In neighbouring Akan, it is also the word for ‘body’ that has grammaticalized as a reflexive marker. Examples (36)-(39) illustrate the use of reflexive pronouns to index that an action affects its agent.

(36) bɛ ̀ wɔ̀=ŋ̀-bí  wɔ̀=hè  á!ké  námò  nò
    so 1PL=PROG-ask  1PL-body  NMLZ  who  top
    wɔ̀=hé-ð  wɔ̀=yè-ð
    1PL=buy-HAB  1PL=eat-HAB

So we are asking ourselves that, “Who do we trust?” [CH:124]

(37) sɔ́lé-mó  ó = há  ó = !hè
    pray-IMP  2SG.SBJ=give  2SG = body

“Pray for yourself.” [CH:132]

(38) òkó  shá  è = hè  ìmò̤ níí
    Oko  snatch  3SG = body  photo

“When Oko took a picture of himself.”

(39) ní  è = kè  è = hè  yà-wò  mìj = !è  àsòmòá!́j
    when  3SG = take  3SG = body  ITIV-put  inside = DEF  unbeknownst
    àdòwá  antelope

“When he ventured inside it, it turned out to be an antelope.” (Lit: “When he put himself inside it…”) [BOR:47]
The antecedent of the reflexive NP cannot occur outside of the grammatical unit containing the reflexive. In (40), the reflexive cannot refer to Oko because it is outside of the event nominalization containing the reflexive. It can only refer to Ama.

(40) òkó jè ní á!mâ j njé èvíj = hè
Oko know NMLZ Ama PROG-insult 3SG = body

“Oko thought that Ama was insulting herself.”

*“Oko thought that Ama was insulting him.”

The PRON + hè reflexive form is quite pervasive in the lexicon and discourse of the language. It occurs as a complement in several ICVs, where it signals the middle semantics of those verbs. These are considered special uses of the reflexive pronoun, different from those exemplified above because the noun, hè ‘body’ is part of the lexical entry for that word. When it is deployed in discourse it must necessarily have a pronominal possessor. These middles usually express emotion and non-translational motion. Examples are:

(41) tsó !hé [pass body] ‘turn around’
    fò hè [cut body] ‘turn around halfway’
    sù hè [shrink body] ‘draw (oneself) inwards, draw away’
    shá !hé [snatch body] ‘hurry’
    shwá !hé [blame body] ‘regret’
    jɔ́ɔ !hé [rest body] ‘rest’
    gbójò hè [relax body] ‘relax’
    yè hè [eat body] ‘be free’
    nyá !hé [rejoice body] ‘rejoice’
The canonical reflexive middles in (36)-(39) differ from the non-reflexive middles in (41)-(45), in that while the reflexive forms in the former may be replaced by other nouns, those in the

22 It is difficult to ascertain the meaning of this word because it does not occur outside this ICV.
latter cannot. For example, the reflexive pronouns in (38) and (39) above can be replaced by other nouns, resulting in well-formed, meaningful sentences:

(46) sɔ́lé-mó ó=ḥá akú
pray-IMP 2SG.SBJV =give Aku
“Pray for Aku.”

(47) òkó shá lè mfonírí
Oko snatch 3SG.OBJ photo
“Oko took a picture of him.”

But replacing the reflexive form in (43) and (44) with other nouns results in nonsense meanings (48), (49). This is because the reflexive NP is an inherent object of the verb and contributes semantically to the interpretation of the verb.

(48) *hèwɔ́=!ɔ́ tɔ́=ɔ́ jwà hèwɔ́=!ɔ́ è=yè akú
sake=TOP bottle=DEF break sake=TOP 3SG=eat Aku
“So the bottle broke, so he ate Aku.”

(49) *è=tàmò sèří ní wò=gbójà-ɔ̀ lè ní
3SG=be.like chair NMLZ 1PL=relax-HAB 3SG.OBJ NMLZ
wò=tá-à nò
1PL=sit-HAB top
“He is like the chair that we relax him/it and we sit on.”

My claim, following Shibatani is that, conceptually, the two kinds of middles are the same.

They both indicate actions whose effects are confined to the agent. With the reflexive middles, the action could potentially affect another entity but use of the reflexive pronoun indicates that
it only affects the initiator of the action. With the non-reflexive middle, there is no possibility
of another entity to which the action could be directed at. Such actions necessarily involve just
the initiator. Syntactically, both types of middles are identified by the co-referentiality between
the agent or initiator of the action and the pronominal possessor of the hè-NP. Kemmer (1993),
on the other hand, maintains that non-translational motion events and grooming events are
middles, but what she terms ‘direct reflexives’, involving actions that could be carried out on
others but are directed towards oneself, are not middles. They are a separate category known as
reflexives that are characterized by a higher degree of distinguishability of participants.

Apart from the middle situations discussed above, there are certain specific situation
types which also employ a possessive NP with hè ‘body’ as the possessum. These may
resemble middle situations at first glance but one must be careful to ascertain definitively that
the possessor of hè ‘body’ is coreferential with the subject of the clause before ascribing it
middle voice status. The ambiguity only exists when the subject is third person. For example,
in (50) and (51), the third singular pronoun possessor of hè ‘body’ could refer to the subject
Kojo, in which case it would be a reflexive middle, or it could refer to another person, in which
case it would be an ordinary active sentence.
In these constructions, *hè* ‘body’ is not as grammaticalized as it is in reflexive constructions; it retains its semantics of referring to the body (human or animal) or by semantic extension, the outer covering of an object, as the following examples show.

In these constructions, *hè* ‘body’ is not as grammaticalized as it is in reflexive constructions; it retains its semantics of referring to the body (human or animal) or by semantic extension, the outer covering of an object, as the following examples show.

(50)  kòjó  ŋ-sàá  è=hè  
Kojo  PROG-dress  3SG = body  
Middle: “Kojo is getting dressed.”  
Active: “Kojo is getting him/her dressed.”

(51)  kòjó  yàá-jù  è=hè  
Kojo  PROS-bathe  3SG = body  
Middle: “Kojo is going to bathe.”  
Active: “Kojo is going to bathe him/her.”

In these constructions, *hè* ‘body’ is not as grammaticalized as it is in reflexive constructions; it retains its semantics of referring to the body (human or animal) or by semantic extension, the outer covering of an object, as the following examples show.

(52)  mú́ =sáá  lòó=ɛ ̀  hè  
1SG.PROG = dress  fish = DEF  body  
“I’m cleaning the fish.”

(53)  èè = fɔ́  àtàlé-ì=ɛ ̀  à = hè  
3SG.PROG = wash  clothing-PL = DEF  PERT = body  
“S/he is washing the clothes.”

PRON + *hè* in such instances does not function anaphorically to refer to the subject i.e. it is not a reflexive pronoun like English *yourself, himself* etc. As such, it can occur as the subject of a sentence (54), (55).

(54)  è = hè  é-wò  mú!jí  
3SG = body  PERF - put  dirt  
“She/he/It is dirty.”
Reciprocals

Ambiguity between a reflexive and reciprocal reading is possible in middle constructions when the subject is plural. This is a possibility for reflexive middles only; it does not apply to non-reflexive middles. Reciprocals express situations involving two entities each carrying out an action that affects the other entity. Since the effects of the action do not remain in the agents’ personal domains, reciprocals do not count as middles although they utilize the middle form, PRON + hè. Examples of reciprocal constructions are:

(56) \[ \text{yèí}=\text{è} \quad \text{jé} \quad \text{èmè}=\text{hè} \]

women = DEF insult 3PL = body

“The women insulted each other.”

“The women insulted themselves.”

(57) \[ \text{nyè}=\text{bàá-pílá} \quad \text{nyè}=\text{hè} \]

2PL = FUT-hurt 2PL = body

“You will hurt each other.”

“You will hurt yourselves.”

Disambiguation may be achieved by deploying the emphatic noun dièntse to which is prefixed an object pronoun coreferential with the subject (to give midìèntse, lèdìèntse, àmèdìèntse etc.) This emphatic form functions as a modifier to the hè-NP and gives it a reflexive-only interpretation (58).
5.4 Antipassive voice

This voice category, like the middle, relates to the development stage of an action. Particularly, it pertains to whether or not there is a patient which is fully affected by the action. Shibatani (2006:239) poses the inquiry in this fashion:

"Does the action develop to its full extent and achieve its intended effect on the patient?"

Yes: ergative (/active)
No: antipassive

It is important to add that in addition to whether or not the patient is fully affected, the antipassive has as one of its main pragmatic functions, the demotion or suppression of the patient (Givón 2001b:168). Givón notes that it is the non-topicality of the patient that triggers antipassivization. Markers of non-topicality include plurality, indefiniteness, non-referentiality, low-affectedness and habitualness among others (Givón 2001b:169).

Cooreman (1994:51) aims at a unifying statement regarding the various semantic and functional facets of antipassivization. She writes that the general function of antipassives is to indicate a certain degree of difficulty with which the effect of the action of A(gent) on O(bject) is recognized. She also notes that use of the antipassive corresponds to low identifiability of the
patient and indicates a preoccupation more with the activity the agent is engaged in or the state 
in which the agent is, than with the effect of the action on a patient. Cooreman’s definition of 
antipassive constructions, however, is structural and has the expected effect of excluding 
structures that do not meet the formal criteria for antipassives although they carry out the same 
functions. She counts as antipassives only those constructions in ergative languages in which 
the agent of a transitive clause is marked absolutive and the object (if there is one), is marked 
as something else.

Adopting Givón (2001b) and Shibatani’s (2006) functional approaches, one arrives at a 
clause type in Gã that fulfils the functions of antipassivization. These clauses downgrade the 
importance of the patient by not mentioning it uniquely. Instead, the patient object is the 
generic noun nį́fĩ́ ‘things’ (for inanimate patients) or mɔ́ ‘person’ (for human patients).

Examples are:

(59) nò mĩ́ŋ́ = ē̃́  á = yè     nĩ́fĩ́ = ē̃́ f ē̃́
that inside = TOP  3PL.IMPERS.PERF = eat thing = DEF  all
á = tã̀
3PL.IMPERS.PERF = be.finished
“By that time, all the food has been eaten up.”    [YM:147]

(60) wɔ̀  b é  n ĳ́     ɔ = bàá-!bá = !ā     wɔ̀ = jwélè !nɔ̀
tomorrow time NMLZ  2SG = FUT-come = DEF  1PL = lie  top
In these examples, the referents of *nifiant* ‘thing’ and *mɔ̀ ‘person’ are not identifiable. They refer broadly to entities that can be cooked, things that can be taught and read, and whoever can be stung or stared at. The focus of the message is thus on the activity rather than on the person or thing affected by the activity. One reason why these generic noun objects are useful in the
grammar of Gã is that without them i.e. with the object slot empty, the interpretation would be that the object is a third singular inanimate pronoun whose referent is recoverable from the discourse. This is because third singular inanimate pronouns are realized as zero. Such a construction will not be an antipassive but an active sentence, as in (65). (65) has a specific object referent which the speaker assumes is known by the addressee.

(65) mĩĩ=kã!né
    1SG.PROG = read
    “I am reading (it).”

The use of these generic nouns as objects shows that Gã is a highly transitive language that is hostile to valency-decreasing mechanisms.

5.5 Benefactive and applicative voice

The nature of the termination phase of an action brings with it a couple of possibilities, such as whether the action culminates in the patient only or whether it extends beyond the patient and involves other participants. This forms the conceptual basis of the benefactive and applicative (comitative, instrumental, locative) voice categories. The parameter for making this determination is embodied in the following question:

*Does the action develop further than its normal course such that an entity other than the direct event participants becomes a new terminal point registering an effect of the action?*

*No: active/middle*

*Yes: benefactive/malefactive/applicative*  
(Shibatani 2006:240)
What follows is a very brief illustration of the formal means of expressing benefactives and applicatives in Gã. For a more detailed discussion, see §4.3.1.1. There are two kinds of benefactive constructions in Gã. In the first kind, the benefit is direct and tangible, in that the agent transfers some tangible entity from his possession to the possession of the beneficiary. This is expressed by ditransitive constructions, where the beneficiary is the immediate post-verbal object of ḥâ ‘give’ (66).

(66) kòjó ḥâ mì̀ s hìká
Kojo give 1SG.OBJ money
“Kojo gave me money.”

(66) above may also be expressed as an SVC with initial verb, ke, as in (67).

(67) kòjó kɛ̀ shìká=à ḥâ lmì̀
Kojo take money=DEF give 1SG.OBJ
“Kojo gave me the money.”

In the second kind of benefactive construction, there is no transfer but rather an agent carries out an action for the benefit of another. This is coded by an SVC where the benefitting event is coded by the initial verb and the beneficiary is coded as the object of the non-initial verb, ḥâ ‘give’. This is seen in (68), where the speaker implores the addressee to raise her voice or speak louder for their benefit i.e. so they can hear her better.

(68) máâ áfâiné ní ó=wó ó=gbèè nɔ̀
mother please NMLZ 2SG.SBJV =lift 2SG=voice top
ó=hã́   ! w ɔ ́ f í ! ó ó

“Mother, can you please raise your voice a little for us?” [OYO:19]

Comitatives and instrumentals have a very close semantic and syntactic relationship so it is no surprise that they both occur in the same structural type of SVC. In (69), the comitative NP is *Oko* and in (70), the instrumental NP is *tɛ́* ‘stone’.

(69)  í= kè  òkó tèè  sèlè-mò
1SG=take Oko go.PST pray-NOM
“I went to church with Oko.”

(70)  í=kè  tɛ́  tsòò ŋmɛ́
1SG=take stone break palm.kernel
“I broke a palm kernel with a stone.”

They may also be expressed as oblique objects of the preposition, *kɛ*, though this is not always possible with the comitative.

(71)  ?í= tèè  sèlè-mò  kè  kọjọ́
1SG=go.PST pray-NOM with Kojo
“I went to church with Kojo.”

(72)  í= tsòò  ŋmɛ́  kè  tɛ́
1SG=break palm.kernel with stone
“I broke a palm kernel with a stone.”

Locative NPs are expressed in prepositional phrase adjuncts, as complements of the preposition, *yɛ́*. In (73) the locative NP is *òsù gɔ́ɔ mĩ́ŋ́* ‘in the Osu cemetary’.
(73) òblá-yòò kò tsé mì yè òsù gòò
life-female INDEF call me be.located Osu cemetery

mĩŋ
inside

“A woman called out to me in the Osu cemetery.” [DF: 118]

5.6 Summary
This chapter has surveyed the various voice categories found in Gã with the understanding that major voice categories are rooted in the human conceptualization of the evolution of an action. As such, all languages will display these major voice oppositions albeit via different structural means. It has been shown that voice expressions in Gã often do not involve a change in valency or a realignment of grammatical relations. In §5.1 it was shown that Gã employs a non-promotional impersonal passive construction. The semantic and syntactic scope of causatives was discussed in §5.2. Causatives are expressed by a construction involving the causative verb, ḥá ‘give’ and a grammatical event nominalization which functions as its object. The middle voice was the subject of §5.3 and in Gã it is expressed lexically, by intransitive verbs and some transitive verbs (all ICVs), as well as periphrastically by the PRON + he possessive NP. This NP is primarily used to mark reflexive middles and reciprocals but may also be employed for non-reflexive middles. Antipassives were shown in §5.4 to be conveyed by fully transitive clauses with a generic noun (mũf ‘thing’ or mɔ ‘person’) in object position. Benefactives and applicatives were the topic of §5.5.
Chapter 6: Lexical and Grammatical nominalization

6.0 Introduction
This chapter will take an in-depth look at nominalizations in Gã, as well as other larger grammatical units such as adverbials and conditionals. According to Comrie and Thompson (2007:334), nominalization essentially means “turning something into a noun”. This definition, however, is sufficient as a characterization of lexical nominalizations alone. In lexical nominalization, a word belonging to another word class (usually adjective or verb) is used nominally. The adjective or verb may be used nominally without any morphological adjustment to the root i.e. zero derivation (e.g. walk in I went for a walk), but in most instances, there is an overt modification of form via affixation, vowel alternation or some other structural means e.g. walker. Lexical nominalizations of verbs and adjectives in Gã were touched on briefly in §2.4.1.5 and §2.4.2.2, so the discussion here will constitute an expansion on that discussion. It will be shown that Gã accomplishes lexical nominalization mainly by deploying a number of nominalizing prefixes and suffixes. It may also use whole sentences as nouns without any formal nominal marking.

The main focus of this chapter, however, will be grammatical nominalizations. Givón (2001b:24) defines grammatical nominalizations as “the process via which a finite verbal
clause - either a complete clause or a subject-less verb phrase - is converted into a noun phrase.” It will be shown that this definition is too narrow to encompass all the structures in Gā that have a nominalization function. The perspective taken here is radically different from that accepted widely by linguists. It is a view most ardently propounded by Shibatani (2009b) and Shibatani and bin Makhashen (2009). Here, constructions are classified as nominalizations based on what function they carry out in the discourse. Does a particular construction type carry out functions normally associated with nominals, such as denotation, reference and modification, in which case they would be nominalizations? Does it predicate only, making it a clause? Or does it execute an illocutionary function, such as making an assertion or giving a command, in which case it would be a sentence? After establishing that a construction does indeed meet the functional threshold for nominals, structural evidence, if it is available, is then adduced to buttress the analysis. The view of nominalization adopted here is holistic and inclusive and is amenable to cross-linguistic application due to its under-reliance on structural evidence. As we shall see later in the chapter, the approach leads to the conclusion that so-called relative clauses, complement clauses and several adverbial clauses are all actually nominalizations.
6.1 Lexical nominalizations

As quoted above from Comrie and Thompson, lexical nominalization involves turning a non-noun into a noun. Even this definition fails in English where the so-called agentive nominalizer –er applies to nouns, as in villager, New Yorker, 49ers, etc. In G̈a, as well, a noun such as ‘àmâlé’ can be made into an agentive noun, amâlé!lɔ̀ ‘liar’. In any case, the newly-minted noun, like non-derived nouns, is hence capable of denotation of things and thing-like entities. In G̈a, adjectives, verbs (including ICVs and SVCs) and verb phrases containing an object can all be nominalized. This is done by prefixation, suffixation or vowel lengthening, depending on word class and syllable length. In addition, for verbs, the tone on the verb and whether it is a stative (property) verb or active verb also dictate the type of morphological nominalization they can undergo. The nominalization may denote an action or state (action/state nominalization) or it could denote an entity that carries out an action or exhibits a particular property (agent nominalization or argument nominalization). See §2.4.1.5.

6.1.1 Action/state nominalization

Monosyllabic, low-toned active verbs are nominalized by lengthening the final vowel.

Example:

(1)   mú ‘breathe’   →   múũũ ‘breathing’

(2)   yì ‘beat’      →   yìì ‘beating’

(3)   shã̀ ‘burn’     →   shã̀ã̀ ‘burning’

(4)   dɔ̀ ‘bend’      →   dɔ̀ɔ̀ ‘bending’
Monosyllabic, high-toned active verbs as well as multisyllabic active verbs are nominalized using the suffix -mɔ́. Example:

(2)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Nominalization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wó  ‘lift’</td>
<td>wó!mɔ́  ‘lifting’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tsú  ‘send on errand’</td>
<td>tsú!mɔ́  ‘sending sb. on an errand’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tǻ  ‘narrate’</td>
<td>tǻ!mɔ́  ‘narration’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɡá́  ‘close’</td>
<td>ɡá́!mɔ́  ‘closing’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gbélé ‘open’</td>
<td>gbélé!mɔ́  ‘opening’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kɛ̀ɛ̂ ‘tell’</td>
<td>kɛ̀ɛ́!mɔ́  ‘telling’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tsá!ké ‘change’</td>
<td>tsákèmɔ́  ‘changing, change (n.)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sùmɔ́ ‘like, love’</td>
<td>sùɔ́mɔ́23  ‘love (n.)’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The situation with property verbs is slightly different, as first discussed in §2.4.1.5. Monosyllabic, low-toned property verbs are nominalized via suffixation with -lɛ:

(3)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Nominalization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dà  ‘be big’</td>
<td>dàlɛ̀  ‘size’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kế  ‘be tall’</td>
<td>kếlɛ̀  ‘height’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dɔ̀  ‘be hot’</td>
<td>dɔ̀lɛ̀  ‘temperature’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shwi ‘gain weight’</td>
<td>shwilɛ̀  ‘being fat, obesity’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bɔ̀  ‘be muscular’</td>
<td>bɔ̀lɛ̀  ‘being muscular’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

23 In this example, there is deletion of the second consonant of sùmɔ́ ‘like, love’ after it is nominalized. sùmɔ́mɔ́  →  sùɔ́mɔ́
Multisyllabic and high-tone monosyllabic property verbs are nominalized with the suffix -mɔ̃̀, as is the case with active verbs of the same phonological shape. Examples of such nominalizations are:

(4) lú ‘be foolish’ \(\rightarrow\) lú!mɔ̃́ ‘foolishness’
ŋɔ̃̀ɔ̃́ ‘be sweet’ \(\rightarrow\) ŋɔ̃̀ɔ̃́!mɔ̃́ ‘sweetness’
tɔ̃̀tɔ̃́ ‘be entangled’ \(\rightarrow\) tɔ̃̀tɔ̃́!mɔ̃́ ‘being entangled’

There are some exceptions to these rules. For example, the active verbs, nɔ́ ‘fight’ and nṹ ‘drink’ are nominalized as nɔ́mɔ́ ‘fight (n.)’ and nṹmɔ́ respectively, not *nɔ́ɔ̃́ and *nṹũ̃́ as the rules spell out. The nominal of gbó ‘die’ is gbé!lé ‘death’, not *gbó!mɔ́. There are also three nominalizing affixes, -li, -i and a-, that are unproductive in the language. Indeed, they each occur uniquely with one verb; -li occurs with only yè ‘eat’ to form the nominal yé!lí ‘eating’; -i occurs with just bé ‘quarrel (v.)’ to give the noun bé!í ‘quarrel (n.)’ and the nominalizing prefix, a- occurs with mã́lé ‘lie (v.)’ to give the noun, àmã́lé ‘lie (n.)’.

6.1.2 Agentive/argument nominalization

Agentive nominalizations are derived from verbs, adjectives or existing nouns. They denote an entity that carries out the action described by the active verb from which it is derived, or an entity that exhibits an attribute described by the adjective from which it is derived, or an entity that is in some way intimately associated with the action or quality denoted by a noun. -lɔ is the
suffix of choice for the nominalization of active verbs and some nouns. Other nouns are
nominalized by the less productive suffix -fo - a loan from Akan - where it also functions as an
agentive suffix. Nominalization of adjectives and property nouns is achieved by apposition with
*tsè* ‘father/master’. Colour adjectives and a few other basic adjectives can be nominalized with
a prefix *e*-. Examples are given below.

**Agentive nominalization of active verbs (*-lɔ*)**

(5)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Verb</th>
<th>Agentive Nominalization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>shã̀mɔ̀</em> ‘urinate’</td>
<td><em>shã̀mɔ̀lɔ̀</em> ‘one who wets the bed/idiot’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>jù</em> ‘steal’</td>
<td><em>jùlɔ̀</em> ‘thief’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>lú</em> ‘be foolish/act foolishly’</td>
<td><em>lúlɔ̀</em> ‘a fool’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>fɔ́</em> ‘give birth’</td>
<td><em>fɔ́lɔ́</em> ‘parent’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>gbà</em> ‘divine, prophesy’</td>
<td><em>gbàlɔ̀</em> ‘prophet’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>tsɔ́ɔ</em> ‘show, teach’</td>
<td><em>tsɔ́ɔlɔ̀</em> ‘teacher’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>sùmɔ́</em> ‘like, love’</td>
<td><em>sùɔ́lɔ̀</em> ‘lover’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>hàò</em> ‘bother, torment’</td>
<td><em>hàɔlɔ̀</em> ‘tormentor’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Agentive nominalization of adjectives and property nouns (*-tsè*)**

This typically applies to dimension property words and the resulting noun denotes “one who
exhibits the property”:

(6)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Nominalization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>àgbò</em> ‘big’</td>
<td><em>àgbòtsè</em> ‘big one’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>bìbìóó</em> ‘small’</td>
<td><em>bìbìóótsè</em> ‘small one’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>kpìtíóó</em> ‘short’</td>
<td><em>kpìtíóótsè</em> ‘short one’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>kàkàdã́ŋ́</em> ‘tall’</td>
<td><em>kàkàdã́ŋ́tsè</em> ‘tall one’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
-lɔ and tsè may also be attached to nouns to create new nouns with the general semantics of “one who possesses N or one who possesses notable quantities of N”. Example:

(7) ànĩ́háó  ‘laziness’ → ànĩ́háó!lɔ́ ‘lazy person’
bé!í  ‘quarrel(n.)’ → béïlɔ̀  ‘quarrelsome person’
àmálé  ‘lie (n.)’ → àmálé!lɔ́ ‘liar’

Some speakers employ both -lɔ and -fɔ in the last example to give àmáléfɔ!lɔ́ ‘liar’, a usage that is frowned upon by some speakers, who maintain that the version in (7) is the “correct” one.

Examples of nouns that are nominalized by -tsɛ are given below

(8) àfṹ  ‘hump’ → àfṹtsɛ̀  ‘hunchback’
shiká  ‘money’ → shikátsɛ̀  ‘rich person’
nĩ́!ĩ́  ‘thing’ → nĩ́!ĩ́tsɛ̀  ‘rich person’
mṹjĩ́  ‘dirt’ → mṹjĩ́tsɛ̀  ‘filthy person’

The presence of the pertensive marker a- (generally prefixed to a possessed noun if its possessor is plural) in nĩ́!ĩ́tsɛ̀ ‘rich person’ suggests that when tsè ‘father/master’ is juxtaposed to a noun, it is better viewed as a lexical word - the possessum - in a possessive noun phrase, rather than a suffix. The pertensive suffix is also seen in mṹjĩ́!tsɛ̀ ‘filthy person’. tsè may also occur with a modifying noun to denote a person who sells or owns the item denoted by the modifying noun. Example:
Examples of nouns that are nominalized by the suffix \(-fɔ\) are given in (10).

(10) òhĩ̀ã́ ‘poverty’ \(\rightarrow\) òhĩ̀ã́!fɔ ‘poor person’
àbĺó ‘slacking’ \(\rightarrow\) àbĺó!fɔ ‘slacker’
òsátó ‘hypocrisy’ \(\rightarrow\) òsátófɔ ‘hypocrite’

Some adjectives may also be nominalized by prefixation with \(e-\). Table 7 from §2.4.2.2 shows which adjectives are affected. The table is reproduced here for convenience.

Table 14: Nouns morphologically derived from adjectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semantic class</th>
<th>English gloss</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Singular noun</th>
<th>Plural noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COLOUR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red</td>
<td>tsùlù</td>
<td>étsùlù</td>
<td>étsùlù</td>
<td>étsùlù</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>white</td>
<td>yɛ̃́!ŋ́</td>
<td>é y ɛ̃́!ŋ́</td>
<td>é y ɛ́jĩ̀</td>
<td>é y ɛ́jĩ̀</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>black</td>
<td>dĩ́!ŋ́</td>
<td>édĩ́!ŋ́</td>
<td>édĩ́!ŋ́</td>
<td>édĩ́!ŋ́</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHYSICAL PROPERTY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raw, fresh</td>
<td>ṣm̀šòtjí</td>
<td>éṣm̀šòtjí</td>
<td>éṣm̀šòtjí</td>
<td>éṣm̀šòtjí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unripe</td>
<td>ṣm̀šòkítò́yí</td>
<td>éṣm̀šòkítò́yí</td>
<td>éṣm̀šòkítò́yí</td>
<td>éṣm̀šòkítò́yí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>old</td>
<td>mómó</td>
<td>émómó</td>
<td>émómó</td>
<td>émómó</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>new</td>
<td>hèè</td>
<td>éhèè</td>
<td>éhèè</td>
<td>éhèè</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VALUE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good</td>
<td>kpákpá</td>
<td>ékpákpá</td>
<td>ékpákpá</td>
<td>ékpákpáò́fí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bad</td>
<td>tʃìtʃjí</td>
<td>étʃìtʃjí</td>
<td>étʃìtʃjí</td>
<td>étʃìtʃjí</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Agentive nouns with the suffix, -lo and -fo are pluralized with the plural suffix -i.

Example, jùlò ‘thieves’, tsɔ̃̀ɔ̃́lɔ̀ì ‘teachers’, shàmɔ̃̀lɔ̀ì ‘those who urinate/idiots’ and  ámbå!ôlì ‘poor people’. Words nominalized by tsè are pluralized with -mè, which itself is the plural of mò ‘person’. Example: àkùútìsèmè‘orange sellers’, shikátsèmè‘rich people’.

6.1.3 Nominalization of simple verb phrases and inherent complement verbs (ICVs)

In Gã, it is possible to nominalize any simple verb phrase consisting of a verb and its object by switching the order of the verb and object and nominalizing the verb. That is, the object is fronted or preposed and the nominalized verb immediately follows it. This nominalization may then be used as an argument in a clause. Most of such nominalizations result in phrases and not necessarily lexical items. For example, the sentence in (10a) contains the verb phrase këè bò ‘tell you’. It is provided in order to show the contrast between it and the nominalization, bò këè!mò ‘telling you’ in (10b). In (10a) the verb precedes the object; in (10b) it is nominalized and it now follows the object. The entire nominalization in (10b) also functions as an argument - the object of sà ‘fit’.

(10a) è=sà á!kèè è=këè bò
     3SG=fit NMLZ 3SG.SBJV=tell 2SG.OBJ
     “He has to tell you.”

(10b) nòìfèènò ní sà bò kèè-mò=ìò è=!kèè
     everything NMLZ fit 2SG.OBJ tell-NOM=DEF 3SG.SBJV=tell
bò
2SG.OBJ

“Everything that you need to be told, he should tell you.” [CH:136]

The nominalizations in (11) and (12) also give phrases, not nouns. In (11), the nominalization

*nókò fëé!mɔ́ ‘something to do’ is the subject of bɛ́ ‘exist.NEG’ and in (12), the nominalization,

*kùsúŋ neé fëé!mɔ́ ‘doing of this custom’ is the object of bɔ̃́ĩ̀ɔ́ ‘start.HAB’.

(11) kɛ́ à=ỳà-tsí à=shwìé=!ɛ́ nɔ̃́-kò
when 3SG.IMPERS = ITIV-push 3PL.IMPERS = pour = DEF thing-INDEF

fëé-!mɔ́ bɛ́ dɔ́ŋŋ
do-NOM exist.NEG anymore

“After they go and pour it away, there’s nothing left to do anymore” (Lit: “…there isn’t something doing anymore.”) [OYO:40]

(12) áfí-!í é!nyíé àmè=yè-ɔ̀ dānì nyè=bɔ́ï-ɔ̀ kùsúŋ
year-PL how.many 3PL=eat-HAB before 2PL=start-HAB custom

nēé fëé-!mɔ́
this do-NOM

“How old are they before you start doing (performing) this custom” [OYO:409]

There are also several lexical items that can be formed this way. In (13a), the object of the verb

is a possessive noun phrase, nũ̀ a-hè [things PERT-body] ‘body of things’. It is nominalized

and functions as subject in (13b). The nominalization results in a lexical noun, laundry or

‘things to be washed’. The orthographic conventions in Gà are such that when a verb phrase


whose object contains a relator noun possessor (e.g. hè ‘body’, mĩ̀ŋ̀ ‘inside’) is nominalized, the resulting nominalization is written as one word.

(13a) èè=fɔ́   nĩ́ĩ̀ à - h è
3SG.PROG=wash things PERT-body
“She’s washing clothes/She’s doing the laundry.”

(13b) nĩ́-ã̀-hè-fɔ́-mɔ̃̀    pì ì  yɛ̀
things-PERT-body-wash-NOM many exist
“There’s a lot of laundry to do.”

The nominalized verb can also function as the object within another nominalization:

(13c) ò=yɛ́ nĩ́-ã̀-hè-fɔ́-mɔ̃̀    pì ì  fèé -! m ɔ̃́
2SG=have things-PERT-body-wash-NOM many do-NOM
“You have a lot of laundry to do.”

Since the complement of an ICV is the same as its object (§3.4.2), nominalization of ICVs proceeds in the same manner as verb phrases, with a reversal of the verb and object order and a nominalization of the verb. Nominalized ICVs often produce new lexical items (14), (15).

Just as with independent verbs, most active noun derivation utilizes the strategies of suffixation by -mɔ̃́ (14) or final vowel lengthening (15):

(14) kpá fàí  [remove hat] ‘beg’  →  fàíkpá!mɔ̃́ ‘begging, pleading’
bí gbè  [ask way] ‘ask permission’ →  gbèbí!mɔ̃́ ‘asking permission’
tsṹ nĩ́!ĩ́  [work thing] ‘work’ →  nĩ́tsṹ!mɔ̃́ ‘work’
tsɔ̃̀ɔ̃́ nĩ́!ĩ́  [teach thing] ‘teach’ →  nĩ́tsɔ̃̀ɔ̃́!mɔ̃́ ‘teaching’
gbálà mĩ̀ŋ̀  [split inside] ‘explain’ →  mĩ̀ŋgbálàmɔ̃́ ‘explanation’
There are some irregularly derived nominalizations, which are listed below in (16).

(16)  yè nĩ́lí  [eat thing]  ‘eat’  →  nĩ́lýelí  ‘eating’
    nã̀ mɔ́bɔ̀  [see pity]  ‘pity(v.)’  →  mɔ́bɔ̀nã̀lɛ̀  ‘pity (n.)’
    gbá nã̀ã̀  [split mouth]  ‘bother’  →  nã̀ã̀gbá  ‘bother, stress (n.)’
    jò fòì  [dance race]  ‘run’  →  fòìjèè  ‘running’

The second, third and fourth examples are especially curious because the complements, gbá ‘split’, jò ‘dance’ and nã̀ ‘see’ as stand-alone verbs will be nominalized as gbá/mɔ̀ ‘splitting’ (not gbá), jòò ‘dancing, dance (n.)’ (not jèè) and nã̀ ‘seeing’ (not nã̀lɛ̀) respectively. I speculate that jò in jò fòì was originally jè ‘exit, leave’ and over time became rendered as jò to harmonise with the [o] in fòì ‘race’. Speakers felt no need to harmonise the nominal fòìjèè ‘running’ to fòìjòò because despite the orthography, the last sound in fòì is actually [e] i.e. fòì is pronounced [fòè]. This deduction makes sense from a phonological perspective and it also makes semantic sense given the motional semantics of jè and the fact that it occurs in various other motion ICVs e.g. jè kpò [exit compound] ‘exit’, jè dɛ̃̀ŋ̀ [exit palm] ‘die, get out of’
control’ and \textit{jè fũ̀} [exit bad.smell] ‘stink, /smell bad’. As far as the nominalization of \textit{nã̀} ‘see’ is concerned, the use of -\textit{le} as a nominalizer is unsurprising because -\textit{le} is the nominalizer for property verbs, which are also stative verbs and \textit{nã̀} ‘see’ could be viewed as a stative verb.

Agent nominalization of ICVs is made possible by preposing the complement of an ICV, following it with the verb and suffixing -\textit{lɔ̀} to the verb. This type of nominalization is not particularly productive because it favours actions that are considered to be habitually undertaken by the agent to the point of being occupational or at least having a regular, predictable occurrence. In addition, such nominalizations are considered defining characteristics and so serve as an identification marker of sorts. The following are some examples.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{(17)} \textit{bɔ̀ kó} [create \textit{kó}] ‘wander aimlessly’ \rightarrow \textit{kóbɔ̀lɔ̀} ‘one who wanders aimlessly’
\item \textit{tsũ nĩ́lũ} [work thing] ‘work’ \rightarrow \textit{nĩ́tsṹlɔ́} ‘worker’
\item \textit{bɔ̀ tɔ́i} [shout ear] ‘listen’ \rightarrow \textit{tɔ́ibɔ̀lɔ̀-i} ‘listener-PL’ [often used by radio presenters]
\end{itemize}

The ICVs in \textbf{(18)}, on the other hand, are not so receptive to agentive nominalization because they are not conventionally conceived of as actions that are carried out habitually and that denote a group of people.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{(18)} \textit{bí gbè} [ask way] ‘ask permission’ \rightarrow *\textit{gbèbí\textbarllɔ́} ‘person who asks permission
\item \textit{hṹ ñmã́\textbarlũ} [hate millet] ‘fast (v.)’ \rightarrow *\textit{ñmã́hṹlɔ́} ‘person who is fasting’
\item \textit{yẽ nṹlũ} [eat thing] ‘eat’ \rightarrow *\textit{yẽlɔ́} ‘person who eats’
\item \textit{gbá ñã̀} [split mouth]‘bother’ \rightarrow *\textit{ñã̀gã́bá\textbarllɔ́} ‘person who bothers others’
\end{itemize}
6.1.4 Nominalization of SVCs

For the most part, it is lexicalized, idiomatized SVCs that can undergo lexical nominalization, resulting in a unique compounded noun lexeme. Lexicalized SVCs are SVCs which have a non-compositional meaning; it is difficult to deduce the meaning of the SVC from the meanings of the individual verbs in the SVC. Of these, only a few avail themselves to lexical nominalization, which is accomplished by nominalizing the individual verbs and conjoining them with the noun phrase coordinator, kè ‘and’.

(19) 

wìé tsɔ̃́ɔ̃̂ [speak show] ‘advise’ \rightarrow wìémɔ̃̀kɛ̀tsɔ̃̀ɔ̃́!mɔ̃́ ‘advice (n.)’
hé yè [buy eat] ‘believe’ \rightarrow hémɔ̃̀kɛ̀yélí ‘trust, faith’
yè bú!á [eat help] ‘help’ \rightarrow yélíkebúàmɔ̃̀ ‘help (n.)’

In (20), the nominal nature of hémɔ̃̀kɛ̀yélí is evident in its ability to be possessed. The same is seen in (21) with yélíkebúàmɔ̃̀ ‘help (n.)’.

(20) 

bè jà ọ́=hé-mɔ́-kè-yè-lí
dà dánì è=bàá-nyɛ́
then unless 2SG=buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM be.big before 2SG=FUT-be.able

ò=yè nɔ́
2SG.SBJV=eat top

“My faith must be big (strong) in order to abide by it.” (Lit: “Unless your faith is big before you can abide by it.”) [CH:329]
(21) nì ḍ = ye-ɪf-kè-bùà-mɔ̀  mì mạŋtse  lë nyā-ā
and 2SG = eat-NOM-and-help-NOM inside king DEF rejoice-HAB
yè
be.located
“And the king rejoices in your help (deliverance)” [BSG:675; tones and glosses mine]

Other SVCs cannot be so nominalized:

(22) tsì bêŋkè [push draw.near] ‘come closer’  →  *tsìmɔ̀kèbêŋkèmɔ̀ ‘coming closer’
tsé fə [call throw] ‘throw away  →  *tsɛ́mɔ̀kɛ̀fɔ̀ ‘throwing away’
tsì tò [push hide] ‘postpone  →  *tsɛ́mɔ̀kɛ̀tòò ‘postponement’

When the verbs in the SVC have objects, each verb phrase is nominalized and the two nominalized VPs are then conjoined by the NP linker, kè. These produce noun phrases and not lexical nouns. A few examples will serve to further illuminate this process. The nominalization of (22a) is given in (22b). The first VP, bółɔ̀ ‘shout.ITER’ is nominalized to give bółɔ̀mɔ̀ ‘shouting’. The second VP, wò mĩ̀ ‘put me’ is nominalized to produce mĩ̀wòò ‘me putting’ and the two nominalized VPs are linked by kè ‘and’.

(22a) è = bó-lɔ  è = wò  mĩ̀
3SG = shout-ITER 3SG = put 1SG.OBJ
“S/he shouted at me.”

(22b) è = bó!fì  bó-lɔ̀-mɔ̀  kè  mĩ̀-wòò
3SG = start shout-ITER-NOM and 1SG.OBJ-put.NOM
“S/he started shouting at me.” (Lit: “S/he started shouting and me-putting.”)
lòó nĩ́bí!ié ‘gather the things’ in (23a) is nominalized to obtain nĩ́bííɛ̀ lòó!mɔ̀ ‘gathering of the things’ in (23b) while shwié shìkpɔ!ŋ́ ‘pour on the ground’ in (23a) gives shìkpɔ!ŋ́ shwiémɔ̀ ‘pouring on the ground’ in (23b). The two nominalizations are then joined by kɛ̀ ‘and’.

(23a)  è=lòó n i ̃́-bíí=ɛ̀ è=shwié shìkpɔ ̃́!ŋ́
3SG=gather thing-PL =DEF 3SG=pour ground
“She gathered up the things and poured them on the ground.”

(23b) è=bɔ̀ĩ̀ nĩ́-bíí=è lòó-mɔ̀ kɛ̀ shìkpɔ́ŋ́ shwié-!mɔ̀
3SG=start thing-PL =DEF gather-NOM and ground pour-NOM
“S/he started gathering up the things and pouring them on the ground.” (Lit: “S/he started things-gathering and ground-pouring.”)

The following pairs of examples are from Dakubu (2004b:118, 119). Some of the glossing has been modified to conform with the convention in this work.

(24a) è=shí fùfùí è= hà ̃́ !mí
3SG=pound food.type 3SG=give 1SG.OBJ
“S/he made fufu for me.”

(24b) è=bɔ̀ĩ̀ fùfùí shí-mɔ̀ kɛ̀ hà ̃́-!mí
3SG=start food.type pound-NOM and 1SG.OBJ give-NOM
“S/he began to make fufu for me.”

(25a) mĩ̀=kɛ̀ lɛ̀ wìé sãné= è hè
1SG=take 3SG.OBJ speak matter=DEF body
“I discussed the matter with her.”/“I spoke with her about the matter”

(25b) mĩ̀=kà lɛ̀ kɛ̀ sãné= è hè wìé-!mí
1SG=try 3SG.OBJ and matter=DEF body speak-NOM
“I tried discussing the matter with her.”/“I tried speaking to her about the matter.”
One important issue that needs to be resolved is whether in (25b), \( kɛ \) is the verb ‘take’ or the coordinator ‘and’. I propose, contrary to Dakubu (2004b:118), that \( kɛ \) in such nominalizations is the coordinator and not the verb. This means that the verb, \( kɛ \) is totally absent from the nominalization in (25b), a notable deviation from the usual process of serial nominalization, where the verb is nominalized and preceded by its object. But \( ke \) is no ordinary verb. Recall from §4.5 that it takes absolutely no inflections, and our analysis of it as a verb is based mostly on syntactic behavior and historical semantics. It should therefore not be surprising if \( ke \) does not feature at all in serial nominalization; afterall if it did, it would be impossible to display any markers of nominalization. The fact that sentences such as (25b) contain serial nominalizations can be seen from the nominalization of the second verb (V2). The semantic nature of propositions containing verb \( ke \) is also such that it is primarily the second verb that bears the bulk of the semantic weight of the predication. The function of the verb \( ke \) is either to signal co-participation of the arguments in the activity described by V2 (comitative and instrumental sense) or to signal transfer of the object of \( ke \) to the object of V2. \( ke \), therefore does not carry great semantic weight and so there is no major threat to the attainment of the communicative goal when it is omitted from a nominalization. The coordinator \( kɛ \) ‘and’ on the other hand, is a crucial signal that its two conjuncts are nominalizations of a serial verb and so there is an incentive for maintaining its presence over
that of verb *ke*, which cannot be inflected and hence does not give much grammatical
information. It is also possible that historically, both *ke*’s appeared in serial nominalizations
(after all, the definite article *ke* and topicalizer *le*, are capable of occurring successively with the
same NP) and in the modern language have coalesced into just one syllable. Dakubu
(2004b:119) suggests in a footnote that this scenario is also possible.

Agentive/argument nominalization of SVCs is not possible.

6.1.5 *Nouns derived from sentences*

A phenomenon occurs in Gã, whereby an entire sentence complete with subject, verb and if
available, object, is used as a noun to denote a concept. There is no morphological operation of
any kind applied to these sentences; they are taken as stock and used as words. The sentence
usually asserts a quality that is characteristic of the referent of the noun. If the noun refers to an
activity, the proposition could constitute a description of the actions involved in that activity.

Examples are:

(26) ọjèŋmã ‘lavender, perfume’ or ‘a kind of aromatic, hot pepper; habanero pepper’
  ð = jë  ñmá
  2SG = exit  sweet.smell
  “You smell good”

(27) ọshààyòòmbà ‘a plant (*Mimosa pudica*) that is sensitive to touch and folds up its leaves
    when touched. Also known as sensitive plant, shy plant’
ó = shààyòò  ŋ̀-bà
2SG = mother-in-law  PROG-come
“Your mother-in-law is coming”

(28)  òjèònyè̀ ‘a type of fish’
ò = jè    ò = nyè̀
2SG = resemble  2SG = mother
“You resemble your mother”

(29)  àkèèàkèè ‘rumour’
à = kèè    à = kèè
3PL.IMPERS = say  3PL.IMPERS = say
“They said, they said.”

(30)  àwɔ́ɔ́ɔ́shĩ́!ã́ ‘spending the night away from home, usually with a lover’
à = wɔ́ɔ́ɔ́  shì!ã́
3PL = sleep.NEG home
“They don’t sleep at home.”

(31)  òyèfã́òshwìéfã́/òyèfã́òshĩ́fã́ ‘a small, spreading tree, Sarcocephalusrussegeri.
ò = yè   fã́    ò = shwïé   fã́
2SG = eat half  2SG = pour half
“You eat half, you pour half away.”

ò = yè   fã́    ò = shí   fã́
2SG = eat half  2SG = leave half
“You eat half, you leave half.”

As nouns, these are capable of occupying subject (34) and object (32), (33) positions in clauses and taking all noun modifiers such as articles, demonstratives, quantifiers and adjectives. In (32), the sentential noun, òjèònyè̀ ‘type of fish’ is modified by a numeral and adjective and in (33), óshààyòòmbà ‘shy plant’ is modified by a definite article.
(32) ĩ = yà-hé ọjèonyê ọgbô-i ènu
1SG=ITIV-buy fish.type big-PL five
“I went and bought five, big, ojeonye fish.”

(33) gbé!kê-bí=ê kè ọshààyôôjêbá = !á ŋ-shwé
child-PL=DEF take shy.plant=DEF PROG-play
“The children are playing with the shy plant.”

(34) òjèŋmã é-bù
pepper.type PERF-be.plentiful
“There is a glut of òjèŋmã peppers.

(35) mĩ = fêé əwɔɔɔshĩlã
1SG.PROG=do sleep-over
“I’m sleeping over at my lover’s.”

6.2 Grammatical nominalizations
There are two types of grammatical nominalizations: grammatical argument nominalizations and grammatical event nominalizations. Shibatani (2009b:191) defines grammatical argument nominalizations as constructions that denote an entity characterized in terms of its involvement in an activity or its relevance to another entity. Grammatical event nominalizations are constructions which denote a state of affairs by characterizing or spelling out the state of affairs itself. Most grammatical nominalizations on the surface look like clauses and have been so-analysed by many linguists, an analysis that is reflected in the terms relative clause, complement clause, adverbial clause etc. My proposal, following Shibatani and bin Makhassen (2009) and Shibatani (2009b), is that these are all nominalizations and not clauses, because they
do not predicate as is expected of clauses; they rather denote. As nominalizations they may have other functions apart from denotation; for example, they may be used for modification or complementation. In the following paragraphs, I will give the rationale behind this assessment, based on works by Shibatani and his co-writers, by examining in turn the structures that have variously been called relative clauses, complement clauses etc. and showing them to be nominalizations. I will rely initially on data from English, and I will show later that equivalent Gà constructions also favour a nominalization analysis.

6.3 The relationship between relativization and nominalization
The observation that the structures that have been identified as relative clauses in many languages are actually nominalizations is not a recent one. Tibeto-Burman and Austronesian languages, for instance, offer up the clearest examples of nominalization structures used for relativization, due to the formal nominalizing morphology found in such constructions. Delancey (1986:1) observed that in Lhasa Tibetan and Newari, “... relativization is simply one function of nominalization, i.e. “[that] relative clauses are simply dependent or appositive NPs.” The same nominal morphology found in relativization is also found in possessives or the genitive. In the following Newari examples from Delancey (1986:2), the morpheme *gu* is a nominalizer. This obviously makes the construction *jina khunagu* ‘what I cooked’ in (35) a nominalization, and in (36), this nominalization is used to modify *la* ‘meat’.
(35) ji-ŋə khun-a-gu
I-ERG cook-PART-NOM
‘what I cooked’, ‘my cooking’

(36) ji-ŋə khun-a-gu  la
I-ERG cook-PART-NOM  meat
‘the meat which I cooked’

In (37), this same nominalizer is suffixed to the first singular pronoun and the resulting nominal
is used to modify la ‘meat’ to produce a possessive NP.

(37) ji-gu la
I meat
‘my meat’

Similarity in marking as well as other morpho-syntactic similarities between relative clauses
and possessives has been noted by Aristar (1991). He lists about twenty languages that show
this similarity and is able to show for two of them (Agaw and Iranian) that these two
constructions are rooted in the same diachronic source; an anaphoric construction with a
pronominal that is reanalyzed as a modificational structure.

In another language, Chantyal (Tibeto-Burman, Bodish), there is a suffix -wa that
features in several structures with differing functions. Some of these functions are
relativization, verb and noun complementation and purpose clause complementation. For
example, in (38), it is clear that -wa is a nominalizer. It nominalizes the verbs, pərî ‘study’ and
gāra ‘good’ so that they can serve as arguments.
Example (39) shows a -wa nominalization in a purpose construction while (40) shows it in a relative construction. A more literal translation of (39) and (40) would be “Sanglal and some others went honey-gathering” and “the beef-eating person” respectively.

It is not difficult to convince linguists that the constructions above in Newari and Chantyal are nominalizations. After all, they have nominalizing morphology to mark them so. However, showing that so-called relative clauses such as who gave me the book in The man who gave me the book was wearing a white shirt requires more effort. This is because apart from the absence of nominal morphology, there is a fully finite verb, was, and as linguists, we have been trained to associate finiteness with clauses and non-finiteness with nominalizations. Definitions of “relative clauses” such as the following from Andrews (2007:206) make it clear that the construction is clausal: “A relative clause is a subordinate clause which delimits the reference of an NP by specifying the role of the referent of that NP in the situation described
by the RC”. Givón (2001b:25) writes that finiteness is an aggregate grammatical feature of clauses, while non-finiteness is an aggregate grammatical feature of nominals. This belief is echoed in his assessment that in many languages, relative clauses and other dependent clauses such as adverbial clauses and complement clauses are nominalized, so that in those languages, only matrix clauses are finite. So for him, a nominalization cannot be finite. He observes that there are therefore various degrees of finiteness, with a clause becoming more and more nominal as it becomes less and less finite. Typical features that mark some degree of nominalization are genitive case marking of subject or object, nominalizing morphology on verb, reduced TAM marking and the presence of determiners (Givón 2001b: 25). In comparing the following two sentences, for instance, Givón concludes that the italicized portion in (a) has fewer finiteness features and more nominal features (genitive, gerund) than (b) which has no nominal features but lacks a finite verb. (a) is thus more nominal than (b).

a. *Her knowing* math well helped
b. She wanted *to know* math well  

(Givón 2001b:26)

These approaches to relative clauses and nominalizations undervalue the essential defining property of any linguistic category - its function. As previously mentioned, the function of clauses is to predicate - to ascribe a property to a noun. The function of a sentence is to convey illocution and perform a speech act. A declarative sentence will assert, an
interrogative sentence will question, an imperative sentence will issue a command etc. The function of nominalizations is to denote. In the English sentence, *Marry who you love*, the construction, *who you love* has traditionally been analysed as a headless relative clause.

Shibatani counters that it is not. Rather, it is a verb-based grammatical argument nominalization that is being used as an NP. The object of *marry* is *who you love*. *who you love* is making reference to an entity - a person, just as a lexical noun such as *the boy* or *a teacher* would make reference to certain entities. Similarly, *what Jane stole* in *What Jane stole was a watch* is a grammatical argument nominalization denoting an entity. The identity of this entity is then given as *watch*. Verb-based argument nominalizations characterize their referents in terms of some event in which the referent was somehow involved i.e. marrying and Jane’s stealing in the above examples. One difference between lexical nouns and grammatical argument nominalizations is that the denotational boundaries of lexical nouns are well-defined and narrow e.g. the noun *book* refers to a very specific set of entities, but the denotational boundaries of grammatical nominalizations are open. For example, *what Jane stole* could refer to a limitless number of entities. Another major characteristic of grammatical nominalizations that is not shared by lexical nouns is that grammatical nominalizations contain a presupposition. The nominalization *who you love* presupposes that you love somebody and *what Jane stole* presupposes that Jane stole something. They do not assert this information. It is
this presupposed information that enables the identity of the denoted referent to be retrieved.

The addressee may have access to this presupposed information either from the preceding discourse or in the extra-linguistic context.

The verb-based grammatical argument nominalization may contain a gap or some other marker which corresponds to the grammatical relation of the referent. For example, *what Jane stole Ø* has a gap in the object position and can therefore be described as an object argument nominalization, while *what Ø fell on me* is a subject argument nominalization.

Going back to the earlier example, *The man who gave me the book was wearing a white shirt*, my claim, following Shibatani (2009b) and Shibatani and bin Makhashen (2009) is that *who gave me a book* is not a relative clause (or any kind of clause) but an argument nominalization that is functioning as a modifier to the noun, *the man*. The recruitment of argument nominalizations for this task is in line with the general functions of nominals; ordinary nouns are able to function as modifiers to other nouns e.g. *gold* in *gold watch* or *house* in *house party*. Just as *gold* delimits the referent of *watch* to only those that are made of gold, so too *who gave me the book* delimits the referents of man from any man to only the man who gave me the book. This is the modification function of argument nominalizations, and while this function may be referred to as relativization, calling the construction a relative clause is
inaccurate and reflects an over-reliance on form rather than function for the classification of linguistic categories.

The fact that verb-based grammatical argument nominalizations contain fully finite verbs does not make them any less nominal; their denotational function is unaffected by the finiteness of the verbs. Finiteness and other verbal features are structure-internal properties, which do not define the category of the entire structure, which must be based on external properties. It has been shown above in §6.1.5 that even whole sentences with fully finite verbs and arguments may be used as nouns. As Shibatani (2009b:193) writes, finiteness is not a definitional feature of a sentence or clause. Moreover, Evans (2010) shows that in many languages, non-finite clauses are regularly used as independent sentences. Therefore there is no definitional correlation between finiteness and sentences or clauses. Since grammatical nominalizations denote an entity in terms of its involvement in some event, it is natural that the event be grounded temporally via a verb that is fully inflected for tense, aspect or mood (Shibatani and bin Makashen 2009:29). This does not necessarily make the structure a clause or sentence.

Argument nominalizations need not display any nominal morphology to function as nominals, in the same way the verbs *walk* and *touch* can be used as nouns without any additional morphology: *I am going for a walk, She had a gentler touch*. Their nominal status is
obvious from the external syntax where walk is the object of the preposition for, and touch is the head of an NP that functions as the object of had. Further evidence of their noun status is seen in their modification by the indefinite article.

Many linguists agree that the head noun and the so-called relative clause or sentence together form one NP (Givón 2001b, Andrews 2007, Lehmann 1986). One problem that Shibatani (2011) has with this view is that if it is maintained that the argument nominalization is actually a clause, it entertains a scenario where a larger, more complex structure (a clause) is embedded within a smaller structure (a noun phrase). This is impossible and it entreats us to search for a more syntactically sound analysis of relative constructions. This, I believe is the nominalization analysis put forward by Shibatani.

6.4 Verb-based argument nominalizations in modification function (Relative clauses)

In Gã, the verb based argument nominalization is marked at the initial boundary by the nominalizer, ní, an invariant particle. It is the most important nominalizer in Gã and is found in various other grammatical nominalizations which carry out a variety of functions, such as complementation and adverbial modification. When the nominalized argument is subject or object, the argument nominalization has a gap in the position where that grammatical relation
would be. Recall that Gã has strict SVO word order and grammatical relations are determined primarily by word order.

In all examples provided, the argument nominalization will be enclosed in square brackets. In (41), the argument nominalization referring to bàá ‘the leaf/herbs’ has a gap in the object position. The argument nominalization is characterizing bàá ‘the leaf/herbs’ in terms of its location and its having been prepared by the addressee.

(41) hèwɔ́ =!ɔ́ ó f á ì n ɛ́ bàá=!á [nĩ́ ó = f è é Ø yè]
sake=TOP please leaf=DEF NMLZ 2SG.PERF = do be.located

jemé] = lɛ́ mɛ́nɛ́ ì-- mɛ́nɛ́ pòtɛ́kkè à = kɛ́-fɛ́-ɛ
there=DEF what -- what exactly 3PL.IMPERS=take-do-HAB
“So, please, the herbal infusion that you’ve made over there, what-- what exactly is it made from?” [YM:158]

In (42), the argument nominalization refers to shiká ‘the money’ by characterizing it in terms of its being transferred to the addressee. It is also an object and is therefore represented in the nominalization by a gap in the object position.

(42) nì =kɛ́ é!lɛ́ álɛ́ shiká =!á [nĩ́ à = kɛ́]
and 1SG=tell 3SG.OBJ NMLZ money=DEF NMLZ 3SG.IMPERS=take

Ø há !lɛ́][=!ɛ́ è = kɛ́-ɛ̃́bá
give 3SG.OBJ=DEF 3SG=take.SBJV-come
“And I told him that, the money that he has been given, he should bring (it).” [MM:109]
In (43) and (44), the nominalized argument is subject. In (43) it refers to nànà à filóó nyëmí nũũ ‘little grandma’s brother’ and it is characterised with regard to the location of the referent’s home.

(43) ɛ̃̀ɛ̃̀ m ɛ̃̀-nɛ̃́ hṹ na ̃̀nã̀ã́ fí!óó nyɛ̃̀mĩ́ nũ̀ṹ=!ɛ̃́
IJ person-this too grandmother little sibling male=DEF NMLZ
Ø  h́i ̃́ gɔ̃̀ɔ̃́=ɔ̃́ nɔ̃́=!ɔ̃́
live hill=DEF top=DEF
“This person too…little grandma’s brother who lived at the top of the hill.”
[DF:107]

In (44), the nominalized argument characterises the unclean state of its referent, àtàlé !kó ‘a certain dress’.

(44) è=yà-wò àtàlé !kó [nĩ́ Ø é-wò mũ[jǐ]
3SG=ITIV-wear dress INDEF NMLZ PERF-put dirt
“This S/he went and wore a dress that was dirty.”

It is also possible for the nominalized subject to be represented within the nominalization by a pronoun rather than a gap (45), although the gap strategy is preferred.

(45) jééé n̄̄=!kó [nĩ́ Ø è=tàm̄̄ w̄̄lī̄ n̄̄]
NEG thing=INDEF NMLZ 3SG=resemble god thing
n̄̄
PRED.PRT
“It is not something that is associated with pagan worship.” [Lit: It is not something which it is like a pagan thing.] [OYO:129]
If the nominalized argument is a possessor or object of comparison, a pronoun occurs in the position of the nominalized noun. In (46), the nominalized argument, *nụ́ụ́ɛ́* ‘the man’ is the object of comparison and is indicated in the nominalization by the third singular object pronoun, *lè*.

(46)  *

(47)  *

In (47), the argument nominalization refers to *gbé!kɛ́ɛ́* ‘the child’. Since it is a possessor, it is marked pronominally in the nominalization by the third singular pronoun, *e*.

A look at the examples given so far reveals that all verb-based grammatical argument nominalizations used as modifiers are bounded finally by a determiner, often the definite article, *-le* or its allomorphs. This is another piece of evidence in favour of analysis of these constructions as nominals. The use of a determiner to mark some type of nominalization of a clause has been observed by Andrews (2007:232). He notes that in Lakhota, the relative clause is marked by a determiner, which is indicative of nominal status. Aboh (2010:29) also reports that the structure where a relative clause occurs between the head noun and a determiner is widespread among Kwa languages. Akan (Saah 2010) and Dangme, two close relatives of Gã,
demonstrate this feature. It is also common in Austronesian languages of Indonesia (Shibatani p.c). The determiner at the end of the argument nominalization in Gã has scope over only the argument nominalization and not the entire NP comprising the modifying argument nominalization and the head noun. The head noun always has its own determiner(s) and it is possible for the argument nominalization to lack one of the determiners that modifies the head noun.

When the head noun is modified by the definite article, its modifying nominalization must also be modified by the definite article (41), (42), (43), (46), (47). The argument nominalization may or may not take a definite article when the head noun is a bare noun. In (48), it takes a determiner, a demonstrative. When the head noun is modified by the indefinite article, *ko*, the modifying nominalization takes no determiner (44), (49).

(48) \[n\acute{i} \ i=k\acute{e} \ gb\acute{e}m\acute{d} [n\acute{i} \ \varnothing \ l\acute{t}a \ shi] \ n\acute{e}l\acute{e}
and 1SG = say person NMLZ sit down this
“And I said, “This person who is sitting here…” [MM:193]

(49) m\acute{a}m\acute{i} !k\acute{o} [n\acute{i} \ y\grave{a} \ \varnothing \ as\acute{a}f\acute{o} = \varnothing \ mi\grave{n}]
mother INDEF NMLZ be.located.HAB group = DEF inside
m\grave{\circ} = k\grave{o} f\grave{e} \l e n\acute{\acute{e}}l\acute{\acute{e}}
person = INDEF do 3SG.OBJ thing
“A woman who was in the group…someone did something to her…” [CH:313]
That it is impossible for the modifying verb-based argument nominalization to be marked as indefinite is perfectly in keeping with its semantic status as the conveyor of given information - information that the speaker assumes is available to the addressee via either previous discourse/interaction or the immediate discourse environment. It is this information that enables the addressee to narrow the scope of referents of the head noun. The indefinite article, which marks new discourse referents is thus incompatible with the modificational argument nominalization.

The head noun in a relative construction is also the only NP that can be modified by both the indefinite and definite articles at the same time. The modifying nominalization however, is modified by only the definite article.

(50) ọ=káì-ọ   nṹumó   kó=!ɛ́   [nĩ́  wɔ̀=yà-sàlá
2SG=remember old.man INDEF=DEF NMLZ 1PL=ITIV-visit

Ø  yɛ̀  ò sú  =ɛ̀   be.located Osu=DEF

“Do you remember that old man we went to visit in Osu?”

There is a slight pragmatic difference between head nouns modified by the definite article only and those modified by both the definite and indefinite article. This was explained in detail in §2.3.1.2.
Internally, the argument nominalizations display some verbal characteristics, notably the ability to display aspectual information. As discussed previously, finiteness features serve to anchor a speech event in time and are not restricted to clauses. A nominalization that expresses an event can convey information about the time of the event without sacrificing its nominal status. In addition, while subject and object nominalizations have a gap corresponding with the nominalized argument, true clauses or sentences cannot have such a gap.

There are a few verb-based argument nominalizations that do not conform to the standard structure described here. The deviations in these nominalizations may be due to the pressures of spontaneous conversation, where the information processed by the speaker is not always produced as planned due to various factors e.g. information from an interlocutor that prompts a diversion from the original discursive trajectory. An example is seen in (51). Here, there are two nominalizations modifying yòóɛ́ ‘the woman’. In the first one, the nominalized argument is a possessor and is represented in the nominalization by the third singular pronoun, e. The second nominalization is unique and important because it reflects how the actual, everyday use of language sometimes flouts the very rules that shape the language, without compromising on successful communication. In the conversation that takes place before this excerpt, the speaker talks about going to a bereaved relative’s house to commiserate with her. Based on this, one can deduce that in the second nominalization, the speaker is referring to
"yòó!ɛ́ ‘the woman’ by characterising that earlier visit. However, she appears to trail off or truncate her talk and then move on to the actual assertion in the sentence - that this woman reminded her of when her own children died. The second nominalization, in one sense seems incomplete; there is no gap or pronoun referring to yòó!ɛ́ ‘the woman’. In another sense, the presence of the definite article marks clearly the final boundary of the nominalization so that one wonders whether it can truly be characterised as a truncation. Fortunately, this aberration is a headache only for a syntactician, because the communicative message is conveyed and received by the addressee with no problem at all.

(51) yòó = !é \[ ní \ é = bÍ \ é- gbó \ ně]\= !ě \ [ní
woman-DEF NMLZ 3SG-child PERF-die this=DEF NMLZ
\[ wò = tèé\] = !é <INDEC> \ é = há \ .idx = ká!í
1PL-go.PST = DEF 3SG = give 1SG = remember
\[ ù = bÍ-!I = !ě \ bè \ ní \ òmè = gbó
1SG = child-PL = DEF time NMLZ 3PL = die
“This woman whose child has died, who we went <INDEC>, she reminded me of when my children died.” [FH:161]

In spite of its deviation from the norm, (51) is nevertheless a nominalization because of the presence of the nominalizer and the modification of the grammatical arguments by the definite article.
A noun may be modified by more than one argument nominalization, as (51) shows. In the second line of (52), the head noun, àtàlé ‘dress, clothes’ is modified by two nominalizations, ní àmèsùmɔ̀ ‘that they like’ and ní àmèdiëtsè àmèbáálwó ‘that they themselves will wear’.

(52) mɛ̀ĩ kì̀-mɛ̀ĩ bàá-tsɔ̀ɔ̀ tòò kè ě = nɔ̀ wùọ́-í ényɔ̀
people INDEF-PL FUT-show sheep and 3SG=top chicken-PL two

“Some people will choose a sheep in addition to two chickens…”

kè mù-tsùlù kè àtàlé [ní àmè= sùmɔ̀] [ní]
and oil-red and dress NMLZ 3PL=like NMLZ

“…and palm-oil and a dress that they like…”

̀mè= diëtsè ̀mè= bàá-!wó]= !é
3PL = INTENS 3PL = FUT-wear = DEF

“…and a dress that they like that they themselves will wear.” [YM:44]

One striking observation made about Gã argument nominalizations used for relativization is that rather than use the larger NP comprising the head noun and argument nominalization as subject of a clause, speakers prefer to front or left-dislocate this NP and follow it with a clause which comments on the head noun. The result is that most verb-based argument nominalizations form part of an NP which functions as a topical argument while the assertion is contained in a comment on the topic. This is the case in examples (41), (42), (49), (51), (53) and the bulk of relative constructions in my corpus that do not function as objects. Example (48), which featured just the head noun and its modifying nominalization, is repeated
below as (53). Here, we see clearly that the head noun together with the relative construction functions as topic. The comment appears three intonation units later, after the speaker has given some background.

(53) nĩ̀ ĩkɛ̀ gbɔ̃mɔ̃ [nĩ̃ Ø !tá shì] nẽ!ẽ
and 1SG = say person NMLZ sit down this

“And I said, “This person who is sitting here…”

wɔ́=solve nã̀kã̀ĩ̃ committee =é
1PL.PERF= that =DEF
“We’ve solved that committee.”

wɔ́=ηmà report wɔ́=!hã́ Mr. tɛ́tɛ̀ ó m ó
1PL.PERF= write 1PL.PERF=give already
“We’ve written a report for Mr. Tetteh already.”

nì́ é = ba é!kό́ŋ̃ŋ̃ nẽ́!ṅ́mɛ̃́!ɛ̃́ è = kɛ̀ mɔ̃̀
and 3SG.PERF= come again today 3SG= take person

kló!ŋ̃kló̃ ŋ̃-bà é = bá-féé thing =DEF different PROG-come 3SG.SBJV = VENT = do nĩ́lĩ́ = lẽ
“And she has come again today to do the thing with somebody else.”  [MM:193]

6.4.1 Extraposed relative constructions

In the standard relative construction, the head noun and its modifying nominalization are contiguous, as in (54).

(54) è=bí !lɛ̀=!ɛ̀ [nĩ̃ !bá]=!á è̃è = yà
3SG=child DEF=DEF NMLZ come = DEF 3SG.PROG = go

“His child who came, he is going/leaving.”  [DF:20]
Sometimes, however, the head noun and argument nominalization are not adjacent to each
other. The head noun occurs first, followed by the main verb, with the argument nominalization
occurring as the final constituent. This is known as an extraposed relative construction. For
English, Givón (2001b:209) notes that extraposed “relative clauses” have a presentative
function, where they introduce new discourse referents. As such, they often modify referential
indefinite nouns and co-occur with main clause verbs which indicate “entry into the scene”
such as ‘live’, ‘enter’, ‘be’ and ‘exist’. This is true for Gã also, where the semantic restriction
appears even more severe; in my corpus there is only one verb that occurred in the main verb
position in an extraposed relative construction. This verb is yɛ̀ ‘exist’, an “entry into the scene”
verb. In (55), for example, the head noun is kùsṹŋ̀ ‘rites’ and the modifying nominalization
occurs after the predicate that carries the assertion, yɛ̀ ‘exist’.

(55) kùsṹŋ̀ yɛ̀ [ní́ ã̃̄] à=fö-ɔ̀ Ø
rites exist NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS=do-HAB

à=hã́-ã̀ nɛ̃́kɛ̃́ hã̃̄ã́jĩ̀ nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́
3PL.IMPERS=give-HAB this twins this
“There are some rites that are performed for these twins.” (Lit: “Some rites exist that
are performed for these twins.”) [YM:29]

The extraposed nominalization in (56) is a little more complex because it contains a time
adverbial, ké àtsí áshwïé!ɛ̀ ‘when it is poured away’, which precedes the actual characterization
of the head noun. This characterization is provided by a different discourse participant so that the entire sentence is co-constructed between two speakers.

(56) Kwei: më̀ĩ yè kwřáá [ñí ké à = tsi]
    people exist precisely NMLZ when 3PL.IMPERS = push

    à = shwié = lè--
    3PL.IMPERS = pour = DEF
    “There are people who when it is poured away--”

    Oyo: åá éké = lè āmè hú āmè = ŋ-hà
    IJ then = TOP 3PL too 3PL = PROG-loot
    “Oh yes! Then they too will be looting (the things).” [OYO:123]

Extraposed modificational nominalizations in Gã differ slightly from regular nominalizations. For one, the head noun is always indefinite and referential, and in many cases this is evidenced by its modification by ko, the indefinite, referential/specific article. Furthermore, the nominalized argument does not necessarily have to be gapped if it is subject or object, it may be pronominalized. In (56), the nominalized argument, a subject, is represented by the third plural pronoun, āmè. Example (57) has two modifying nominalizations. In both, the nominalized argument is represented by the second singular pronoun where one would expect the third singular pronoun, but using the second singular pronoun is not incompatible with the referent of the nominalization, mɔ̃kɔ̃kɔ ‘nobody’, since it is singular and is neutral as to person.
Another difference between extraposed verb-based modificational argument nominalizations and their non-extraposed counterparts is that the former are not modified by the definite article or any article for that matter. Again, this is to be expected because the head noun it makes reference to is indefinite. What both types of relative constructions have in common is that they are both restrictive i.e. they provide information that serves to narrow down the referents of the head noun. Here, Gã diverges from its neighbor, Akan, whose extraposed relative constructions are non-restrictive (Saah 2010:102).

There is another type of verb-based argument nominalization which is not contiguous with its head noun and which may not even be part of the same sentence as the head noun. I term this type a disjointed argument nominalization. In one sub-type, the argument nominalization characterizes the head noun by equating it with another nominal. Such nominalizations resemble equational copula clauses with a missing subject. For example, in (58) the argument nominalization ní jí Pàpá Tèi njá!á uttered by Dina refers to the subject of
the previous sentence uttered by Sally i.e. the third singular pronominal, è. Dina is looking for clarification on whether the referent of this pronominal is the same as Papa Tei’s wife.

(58) Sally: nò hèwɔ́ =!ɔ́ dáá nɛ̃́!ɛ̃́ è = kɛ̀ mì̃̀
that sake=TOP everyday this 3SG=take 1SG.OBJ

yè-kɔ̀ ënɔ̀ kɔ̀mɔ̀
eat-HAB lamentations
“So everyday she would lament to me.”

kèkè nì--
then and
“And then--

Dina: [nì́ Ø jì́ pàpá tɛ́ ŋà =à] = ò=tsɔ̃́ɔ̃̀
NMLZ COP Papa Tei wife=DEF 2SG=show
“You mean Papa Tei’s wife.” (Lit: “Which is Papa Tei’s wife, you mean.”)
[DF:59]

In another sub-type, the argument nominalization may refer not to a noun but to an entire event that has been asserted in prior discourse. For example, the second line in (59) is an argument nominalization. The gap in the nominalization refers to the entire situation of Oko not greeting. This nominalization has another nominalization embedded within it i.e. ál ké èmì́ŋ̀ élì́fu wɔ̀ “that he is angry at us” (ál ké is a nominalizer for event nominalizations) and it functions as a complement of tsɔ́̀s̀ ‘show’.

(59) nì́ òkó bótè mì̃̀=!è́ è = ṇ̀àáá
NMLZ Oko enter inside=DEF 3SG=greet.NEG
“When Oko entered he did not greet (us).”
The first line of (59) is also a nominalization, one which is functioning as a time adverbial.

Time adverbials may also occur in an expanded form where the nominalization modifies the head noun, bè ‘time’. They will be discussed more thoroughly in §6.6.2.4 below.

Disjointed nominalizations, unlike regular nominalizations and extraposed nominalizations do not delimit the pool of referents of the head noun, rather they make some assessment of the head or provide commentary on the head. They are therefore, non-restrictive.

The following section examines non-restrictive verb-based nominalizations in more detail.

6.4.2 Non-restrictive verb-based argument nominalization (Non-restrictive relative clauses)

These are nominalizations that do not delimit the scope of referents of the head noun. They modify the head noun by providing some commentary or information about it, as in (60).

(60) kèkè = !è wò [nĩ lï ò = nɔ̀ ] jè-tsèlè-mɔ̀ ] = !ɔ́
then = TOP tomorrow NMLZ be 3SG = top world-rise-NOM = DEF

wɔ̀ = bàá-hóó hɔ̀mɔ̀wɔ̀ nǐ!í
1PL = FUT-cook Homowo thing

“Then tomorrow, which is the following morning, we will cook Homowo food.”

[OYO:41]
In Gã, the head noun that is modified by a non-restrictive argument nominalization is often a proper name or some other unique referent such as ʋɔ́ ‘tomorrow’ in the example above. The non-restrictiveness of these nominalizations is not inherent in the nominalization itself but rather stems from the fact that the head noun is a proper name and proper names are referentially unique i.e. they are as specific as nouns get. In the following excerpt, in Dina’s turn, she modifies the proper name, Kathy, with a non-restrictive argument nominalization. From prior talk, both interlocutors already know who Kathy is. It is not the case that there are several Kathy’s that must be differentiated. This argument nominalization, thus serves to characterize the individual referred to by the head noun in a way that will aid the recovery of that referent in the addressee’s memory. It presents old or given information in order to identify a referent. This function is different from that of the restrictive relative clauses discussed above, where the head noun potentially has several referents, and the argument nominalization enables the addressee to hone in on just the one referent that the speaker has in mind.

(61) Sally: nì èè kòjó hù=!è lè hù mè́ ényɔ́
    and IJ Kojo too = TOP him too people two
    é-gbó
    PERF-die
    “And errm…also with regards to Kojo, two (of his children) are dead.”
é = shwè Kathy
3SG.PERF = remain Kathy
“It’s left with Kathy.”

Dina: Kathy = !ɛ́ [nĩ́ wɔ́ = lnááá lɛ́] = è́ Kathy = DEF NMLZ 1PL = see.NEG 3SG.OBJ = DEF
“Kathy, whom we can’t find?” [DF:228]

It is not always the case that the information in a non-restrictive argument nominalization is
given or old. It may be new, as in (62) where the addressee need not have had prior knowledge
about Oko’s headache.

(62) òkó [nĩ́ Ø kɛ̀ɛ́ è=yítsò ɔ̄-gbá lɛ́] = è́ nĩ̀ Oko NMLZ say 3SG = head PROG-split 3SG.OBJ = DEF FOC
é = tèè è = tswà-à bò̀blú = !ɛ́ 3SG.PERF = go.PST 3SG = hit-HAB ball = DEF
“Oko who said he has a headache, he has gone to play football.”

Notice that in (61), the head noun, a proper name, is modified by the definite article. There are
two environments in which this can occur: when the proper name is modified by an argument
nominalization, or when it is fronted and topicalized. As a comparision of (61) and (62) shows,
this marking is not obligatory. Note that a head noun that is a proper noun cannot be modified
by the indefinite article, ko, (*Kòjó !kó) but can be modified by nẽ́!ẽ́ ‘this’ and nákã́ĩ́ ‘that’.
6.5 Verb-based argument nominalizations in NP use (Headless relatives)
These are also known as free relatives. In Gã, when the verb-based argument nominalization is
used as an NP i.e. as an argument in a clause, it takes an additional marker to signal its NP use.

This marker occurs immediately before ni̯ and marks the initial boundary for an argument
nominalization in NP use. There are two different markers that may be employed, based on
whether the referent of the nominalization is non-human or human. nɔ̃́, which also means
‘thing’, is used for non-human referents and mɔ̃̀, which means ‘person’ is used for human
referents. I maintain, however, that they are grammatical markers and not noun heads. In (64)-(67),
the argument nominalizations have non-human referents and so are marked by nɔ̃́.

Argument nominalizations with human referents will be discussed later in this section. In (64) and (65),
the argument nominalization is being used as an object argument; in (66) it is a
subject and in (67) it is a possessor.

(64) nĩ́ ̃̀ ām̃̀ ē ̄m̃̀ = bā̄-tsɔ̃́ɔ̃́  [nɔ̃́ ñ́ ī m̃̀ = bā̄-lȳ  Ø]
and 3PL 3PL = FUT-show NM NMLZ 3PL = FUT-eat

“And it is they who will decide what they will eat.” [YM:42]

(65) [nɔ̃́ ñ́ wɔ̀ = bā̄-ñ̀ ̃̀ ñ̀  Ø] ñ̃̄ ̄l̄ ̄k̄ ̄k̄ ̄ē
NM NMLZ 1PL-VENT-meet PROX.PRED.PRT NMLZ

mɔ̃̀-fīā-mɔ̃̀ ñ́  = bā̄-fɔ́́ lɔ́
person-all-person NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS = FUT-give.birth 3SG.OBJ
“What we came and met is this, that everyone who is born a twin…” [OYO:5]

“What is important is that we will be obedient to him…” [CH:409]

The dog too kept shaking the tree; the one the bees were hanging from. [PAT:97]

The alternative analysis for the above constructions is to view \( n\check{\delta} \) as a lexical noun meaning ‘thing’. In that case, it will merely be a head noun of the generic sort and the construction marked by \( n\check{\delta} \) will be the modificational nominalization (or relative clause, depending on your persuasion) that delimits the referent of these very referentially vague nouns. It is my position that such an analysis does not reflect the extensive grammaticalization that \( n\check{\delta} \) has undergone.

\( n\check{\delta} \) in argument nominalizations is very semantically bleached and does not refer to a physical entity. While in (64), \( n\check{\delta} \) can be perceived as referring to food and therefore to a physical entity, this is not the case for many of its uses. In (65) and (66) for instance, \( n\check{\delta} \) refers
not to a tangible entity but to abstract entity concepts such as behaviour (66) and cultural practices (65). In (68) below, it is difficult to fathom what physical entity or thing could be referred to by \( n\ddot{a} \).

(68) \[ \text{è=fèé tāmɔ̀ [n\ddot{a} ñ́ ë̃́ j̃́ kpɔ́]} \]
3SG = do like NM NMLZ 3SG.PROG-exit compound
“He acted as if he was getting out.”

If \( n\ddot{a} \) in these argument nominalizations was a head noun, then one would expect it to allow modification by the definite article. However, this is impossible, as (69) shows.

(69) \[ \text{*nĩ́ ã́mɛ̃́ ã́mɛ̃́=bàá-tsɔ́ɔ́ [n\ddot{a}=!ɔ̃́ ñ́ ã́mɛ̃́=bàá-yé Ø]} \]
3PL 3PL = FUT-show thing=DEF NMLZ 3PL = FUT-eat
“And it is they who will decide the thing that they will eat.”

Interestingly, it may be modified by the indefinite, specific article, \( ko \), but the result is a lexicalized noun \( n\ddot{a}!kó \) ‘something’ which can then function as a head noun and be modified by an argument nominalization, as in (71b). There is a semantic difference between argument nominalizations marked by \( n\ddot{a} \) and constructions in which the head noun, \( n\ddot{a}!kó \) ‘something’ is modified by an argument nominalization. Compare (67) above with (70), which has \( n\ddot{a}!kó \) ‘something’ in place of \( n\ddot{a} \). The argument nominalization marked by \( n\ddot{a} \) carries the implication that there is only one entity being referred to, and based on the sentence that precedes it, the argument nominalization can have only one referent - \( ts\ddot{a}!ɛ́ \) ‘the tree’. When \( n\ddot{a}!kó \) ‘something’ is used, on the other hand, the option that the argument nominalization may characterize other
entities is available, such that tsó’lé ‘the tree’ is only one possibility. This ambiguity is what makes (70) unacceptable, because nɔ̃́!kó ‘something’ does not uniquely refer to tsó’lé ‘the tree’.

The speaker wants to make that unique reference and does so with the structure in (67).

(70) ?gbèé=!ɛ́ lè hù hɛ̀ tsó = !ɛ́ wòsò-mò [nɔ̃́=!kó
dog = DEF 3SGOBJ too carry tree = DEF shake-NOM thing = INDEF

nĩ́ wòbìì=ɛ̀ sɛ̃̀ŋ̀ nɔ ̃́=!ọ̃
NMLZ bees = DEF hang top = DEF
“The dog too kept shaking the tree; something the bees were hanging from.”

A similar disparity exists between the pair of sentences in (71). In uttering (71a) the speaker communicates that laziness is the only thing that she does not like, while (71b) implies that laziness is but one of the things she does not like; there may well be others.

(71a) [nɔ̃́ nĩ́ ĩ́=súmɔ̃́ɔ̃́ɔ̃̀] jí ànĩ́háó
NM NMLZ 1SG = like.NEG COP laziness
“What I don’t like is laziness.”

(71b) nɔ̃́!kó [nĩ́ ĩ́=súmɔ̃́ɔ̃́ɔ̃̀] jí ànĩ́háó
thing = INDEF NMLZ 1SG = like.NEG COP laziness
“One thing I don’t like is laziness.”

What this goes to show is that nɔ̃́, the grammatical marker functions differently from nɔ̃́, the word meaning ‘thing’.

It is not only in such so-called headless relatives that nɔ̃́ displays defective syntax, being unable to take the definite article. nɔ̃́ generally displays syntactic deficiencies that do not afflict
other nouns. It typically does not occur independently in a sentence without being modified by an argument nominalization marked by *n̄i*. Its syntactic spectrum of occurrence is also quite limited. As we have seen, it occurs together with the indefinite article, *ko* to form the lexicalised compound indefinite noun *n̄i/kó* ‘something’. It also occurs with the quantifier *fêê* ‘all’ to form the universal noun *n̄i/fêê*n̄i* ‘everything’; with *kòó*n̄i/kòó* in *n̄i kòó*n̄i/kòó* ‘something else’ and with *kòmè‘one’ in *n̄i kòmè‘one thing’. It also occurs in a small number of idiomatic expressions such as the following:

(72)  
\[ \text{lê} = !\text{ê} \quad \text{tó} \quad  \text{è} = \text{hā-ā} \quad \text{mò} \quad \text{nò} \]
3SG.OBJ = TOP QP 3SG = give-HAB person thing

“As for her, she’s generous, isn’t she.” [DT:9;50]

(73)  
\[ \text{ó} = \text{nà} \quad \text{nò} \]
2SG.PERF = see thing

You are really suffering!

Furthermore, *nò* is unlike regular nouns in that it cannot be modified by any of the syntactic categories that normally modify nouns, with the few exceptions being *ko* ‘INDEF’, *kòmè‘one’ and *fêê‘all’ which result in new lexical items being formed as seen above. It typically cannot be modified by demonstratives or adjectives. The following sound odd and archaic: *nò mèê*lê ‘this thing’, *nò fêêfêô ‘a beautiful thing’. Most speakers prefer to use the
synonymous ś³ńš in place of ń: ś³ńš ś³čś ‘this thing’ and ś³ńš ś³čś ‘a beautiful thing’. ś³ also occurs as a nominalization marker in possessives e.g. ś³ko ś³ ‘Koko’s’. These will be discussed in the next section. Therefore, apart from the limited contexts mentioned above, ś³ is not used without being followed by the nominalizer ś³ or as a nominalization marker in a possessive. The commonly used word for ‘thing’ – ś³ńš has none of these syntactic and semantic defects. It mostly refers to concrete, physical entities. So in (74), ś³ńš ‘thing’ is far less likely to refer to someone’s behaviour than to a physical entity but in (75), the argument nominalization marked by ś³ can refer to a non-concrete entity such as behaviour.

(74) ś³ńš = ś³čś [ś³ńš ś³čś] = ś³ ś³ nè
tything = DEF NMLZ 1SG = like.NEG = DEF PROX.PRED.PRT
“This is the thing I don’t like.”

(75) [ś³ ś³ńš ś³čś] = ś³ ś³ nè
NM NMLZ 1SG = like.NEG = DEF PROX.PRED.PRT
“This is what I don’t like.”

24 The synonym of ś³ – ś³ńš is not syntactically restricted in the ways that ś³ is. However, if it replaces ś³ in (65) and (66), these sentences will be ungrammatical (76) (77), showing that the use of ś³ in these expressions is heavily fossilised. Dakubu (2009:150) as well as Christaller et al (1874) list ś³ńš (in addition to ś³ńšíś) as the plural form of ś³. However, as the following example shows current speakers have reanalyzed ś³ńš as the singular and maintained ś³ńšíś as the plural.

a) ś³-ńá ś³ńš ś³ńšíś ś³ńšíś ś³ńšíś ś³ńšíś ś³ńšíś ś³ńšíś
1SG-give him thing one only and 3SG-give me thing-PL many
‘I gave him only one thing and he gave me many things.’
Replacing the nominalization marker, \( n_\tilde{s} \) with \( n_\tilde{ni} \) ‘thing’ in (65) and (66) above results in ungrammatical or at best marginally acceptable sentences.

(76) \( ?n_\tilde{ni} \ [n_\tilde{s} \ O \ h_\tilde{e} \ h\tilde{a}-\tilde{a}] \ k_\tilde{k}\tilde{e} \ j_\tilde{i} \ w_\tilde{o} = b\tilde{a}-\tilde{f}\tilde{e}\tilde{e} \)
thing NMLZ body be.important-HAB simply COP 1PL = FUT-do
to\-b\-\-\-ô \ w\_ô = h\_ô \ l\ô
ear-shout-NOM 1PL.SBJV = give 3SG.OBJ
“The thing that is important is that we will be obedient to him…”

(77) \( ?n_\tilde{mi} \ [n_\tilde{s} \ w_\tilde{o} = b\tilde{a}-n\tilde{n}_\tilde{m}_\tilde{a} \ O] \ n_\tilde{e} \ a!k_\tilde{e} \ m_\tilde{a}-\tilde{f}\tilde{a}-m\_ô \)
thing NMLZ 1PL = VENT-meet this NMLZ person-all-person
n_\tilde{m} \ a = b\tilde{a}-\tilde{f}_\tilde{o} \ l\_ô \ h\_\tilde{a}\_\tilde{j}_\tilde{u} = !\_ô
NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS = FUT-give.birth 3SG.OBJ twins = DEF
“The thing we came and met is this, that everyone who is born a twin…”

These facts lead to the conclusion that the NP \( n_\tilde{s} \) ‘thing’ is not entirely syntactically independent and should not be classed as a head noun in the same way that regular nouns are.

This situation where a head-like nominal which is semantically defective is found in an argument nominalization, is reminiscent of Epps’ (2012) study of relative clause domain (head) nominals in Hup. This language has nominalized relative constructions where the domain noun may be a syntactically dependent noun, a classifier or even a plural marker. Epps shows that it is impossible to assimilate these nouns into either the ‘headed’ or ‘headless’ relative clause categories. She suggests a gradient approach to the classification of domain nominals that takes into account these in-between types.
Hendery (2012:59) remarks humorously that generic nouns such as words for ‘thing’ that mark headed relativizations just happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time and get kidnapped into the relative clause. While I disagree that these generic nouns are heads of relative clauses, her comment captures the cross-linguistic observation that the word for thing is involved in argument nominalizations in NP use (headless relatives). A similar structure occurs in Akan, where an argument nominalization used as an NP is marked by a morpheme which is made up of a coalescence of the word for ‘thing’ or ‘person’ and the nominalizer (relativizer). Saah (2010:103) calls the constructions “relative clauses without overt complementizers”. I argue that this form should be considered a grammatical marker because of the grammaticalization undergone by the nouns for ‘thing’ and ‘person’. Heine and Kuteva (2007:230-231) also report an identical path of development for free relative clause (headless relative clause) formation in Ewe, where free relatives are marked by an article comprising a generic noun meaning ‘thing’, ‘person’, ‘place’ etc. and the relativizer si.

The argument nominalizations in the following examples refer to humans and so are marked by the nominalization marker, mɔ̃̀.

(78) shí kòfí bî Jí nyɛ́-sɛ̀ɛ̀ [mɔ̃̀ ní gbó]=!ɛ́
but Kofi child COP yesterday-back NM NMLZ die =DEF
“But Kofi’s child is the one who died the other day.” [DF:187]
(79) \[mɔ̃́  nǐ  hễ̀  shikâ]  lá  è = hê-ð  \textit{six crates}\]
NM NMLZ hold money = DEF 3SG = buy-HAB
“The one with a lot of money buys six crates (of eggs).” [YM:172]

(80) nò  hèwɔ́ = !ɔ́  [mɔ̃́  nǐ  bò  ò = !fɔ́  h ã̀ã̂jĩ̀ĩ́]  = !ɛ̃́
that sake = TOP NM NMLZ 2SG.OBJ 2SG.PERF-give.birth twins = DEF
kê  ò = tế = !ễ́  ò = yàá-hê  yè  jè!mè̃́
when 2SG = go.PST = DEF 2SG = FUT.ITIV-buy be.located there
“So you who has given birth to twins, when you go, you’ll go and buy it from there” [OYO:239]

The noun \textit{mɔ̃́} ‘person’, appears not to have undergone the same extent of semantic bleaching as
\textit{nɔ̃́} ‘thing’. In a parallel development with \textit{nɔ̃́} ‘thing’, it occurs in such words as \textit{mɔ̃́kò} ‘someone’, \textit{mɔ̃́fɛ̃́ɛ̃́mɔ̃́} ‘everyone’ but it is not as restricted as \textit{nɔ̃́} ‘thing’ when it comes to
possible modifiers. It can be modified by determiners. However, its modification by adjectives
is a bit odd: \textit{?mɔ̃́ bíbìóó} ‘a small person’; \textit{?mɔ̃́ fɔ̌!ŋ́} ‘evil person’. For adjectival modification,\
\textit{gbɔ́mɔ́} ‘human/person’ is preferred e.g. \textit{gbɔ́mɔ́ bíbìóó} ‘a small person’; \textit{gbɔ́mɔ́ fɔ́!ŋ́} ‘evil
person’. Also, even though \textit{mɔ́} can be modified by determiners, this is not possible if it marks
an argument nominalization. Example (81) is ungrammatical because of the modification of \textit{mɔ́}
by the definite article. This further cements the grammatical marker status of \textit{mɔ́} and \textit{nɔ́} since
specificity and definiteness are categories displayed by nominals but not grammatical markers.
If \textit{mɔ́} and \textit{nɔ́} were nouns it would be possible to indicate their degree of familiarity or
givenness with the use of articles and determiners.
It is also possible, but rare, for the argument nominalization marked by \textit{nɔ́} to be used as a modifier to a head noun. One such example occurred in the data and is presented in (82) where the argument nominalization marked by \textit{nɔ́} is used to modify \textit{hɔ́mɔ́} ‘hunger’. The head noun and the argument nominalization are produced under one intonational contour and the argument nominalization is restrictive. They are not in a paratactic relationship where the argument nominalization would function non-restrictively.

(82) \(\text{?bɛ́ è = bà lè á!kɛ́ hɔ́mɔ́} = !̃ \text{[nɔ́ ní}} \)

\(\text{then 3SG = come 3SG.OBJ NMLZ hunger = DEF NM NMLZ} \)

\(\text{yɛ́-ð \text{ wɔ́} = !̃ \text{ wò = bàá-wɔ́ è = yì} \)}

\(\text{eat-HAB 1PL = DEF 1PL = FUT-jeer 3SG-head} \)

“Then it happened that the hunger that we were experiencing, we will jeer at it.”

[YM:235]

The modification use of an argument nominalization that typically occurs as an NP is a common diachronic process in language which leads to the formation of relative constructions. Givón (2009:105-106) reports on a similar pathway for Hebrew. In this language, an argument nominalization normally used as an NP first occurs in a paratactic relationship with a head noun. In this construction, the argument nominalization is non-restrictive and there is a pause between it and the head noun. Among some speakers of Hebrew, there is no longer a pause
between the two nominals, and the argument nominalization has taken on a restrictive meaning.

This construction, however, is considered non-standard, much like the Gã example in (82). It will require more data to determine whether this construction is used more widely and whether it is for the most part acceptable to speakers.

6.5 Noun-based argument nominalizations (Headless genitives)

The previous sections have been focused on verb-based argument nominalizations, which have been shown to be used for modification and as NPs. There are also argument nominalizations that are based on nouns, and in Gã, these result in what are commonly called “headless genitives” or “headless possessives”. These are only used as NPs and cannot be used as modifiers.

Ordinary “headed” possessives are formed simply by juxtaposition of the possessor and the possessed entity. In a so-called headless genitive, the possessed noun is not made explicit but is retrievable from the discourse. In Gã, these NPs involve the marker, nɔ́, which is also involved in so-called headless relatives. An example is given below.

(83) ̃́ shí [ellen nɔ́]=lɛ́ [pàpá tɛ̀í nɔ́]=lɛ́ lɛ́ = lɛ́
but Ellen NM = DEF Papa Tei NM = DEF 3SG.OBJ = TOP

ī = nyééé   má-lyá
1SG = able.NEG 1SG.FUT-go

“But as for Ellen’s and Papa Tei’s I couldn’t attend them.”  [DF:98]
It is my view, following Shibatani (2009b), that these NPs marked by nɔ̃́ are more accurately described as noun-based argument nominalizations which are being used as NPs. nɔ̃́ in these NPs does not refer to ‘thing’ but is a grammatical marker - a nominalization marker. These nominalizations are derived from existing nominals, but they differ from lexical nominalizations derived from other nouns (of the parent-parenthood type) by not having definite, explicit referents. Their referents are dependent on the discourse. Noun-based argument nominalizations denote entities that have crucial relevance to the referent of the noun marked by the nominalization marker (Shibatani and bin Makhashen 2009:27).

In (83), there are two noun-based argument nominalizations, Ellen nɔ̃́!ɔ̃́ ‘Ellen’s’ and Papa Tei nɔ̃́!ɔ̃́ ‘Papa Tei’s’. Each of these nominalizations indicates an entity that has crucial relevance to the nouns (Ellen and Papa Tei) and whose identity is recoverable from discourse. From the prior conversation, it can be deduced that this entity is ‘funeral’. The speaker had been talking about funerals that she could and could not attend. The nominalizer, nɔ̃́ marks the NP as “something pertaining to Ellen/Papa Tei”. In many cases, this relationship is one of possession but as seen in (83), it is not always so.

Evidence that nɔ̃́ is functioning here as a grammatical marker and not a nominal head comes from the fact that it marks nominalizations which refer to animate entities and humans.
If it were strictly a noun head meaning ‘thing’, one would expect it to be restricted only to inanimate objects. Its use in sentences like (84) and (85), where the referents of the nominalizations are human, show that it has been grammaticalized. ñɔ́ in ìnɔ́ (84) marks that the referent of the nominalization pertains to ì´1SG’. In the discourse, ìnɔ́ ‘mine’ refers to the speaker’s twin babies. In (85), pàpá kwààtɛ̀í nɔ́ ‘Papa Kwatei’s’ refers to Papa Kwatei’s children.

(84) \[\text{ṹ=nɔ́} \]=1\& \ˈnì \ˈò=\breve{nà} \ˈàm\ˈ=1\& \ˈè \ˈ\]
1SG = NM-TOP NMLZ 2SG = see-HAB 3PL = DEF

\text{they were eight months} \ˈnì \ˈwò=\breve{bà-feê} \ˈ\and 1PL = VENT-do

“Mine that you see, they were 8 months old when we came and did (it).” [OYO:428]

(85) \ˈnò \ˈ hèwò=1\& \ˈ[pàpá \ˈ kwààtɛ̀í nɔ́] \ˈ=1\& \ˈèè \ˈ kwààlé \ˈ\]
that sake = DEF Papa Kwatei NM = DEF IJ Kwarley

\ˈè\ˈ!gbó \ˈPERF-die \ˈ\"

“So among Papa Kwatei’s (children), errm…Kwarley is dead.” [DF:165]

Another indication of the grammaticalization of nɔ́ lies in the fact that it cannot be pluralized to agree with plural referents. In both (84) and (85), the referents of the nominalizations are plural (twins and children respectively). If nɔ́ were a noun head, then one would expect its plural forms, níìí or níìbíí to be used instead. But this is not the case because nɔ́ is a grammatical marker.
6.6 Event nominalizations

An event nominalization denotes a state of affairs by characterizing the state of affairs itself.

The difference between an argument nominalization and an event nominalization in Gã is that while the argument nominalization has a gap or pronoun corresponding to the nominalized argument, the event nominalization may have full NPs in all argument positions. Furthermore, while the argument nominalization is bounded finally by a determiner, there is no such requirement for an event nominalization. Event nominalizations have two main functions in the grammar of the language. These are complementation and adverbial modification. The nominalizer, nĩ plays a major role in event nominalization, buttressing the point that it is not just a marker of relativization.

6.6.1 Complementation

The received understanding of complementation holds that so-called complement clauses are clausal or sentential arguments of verbs. An example of a complement clause is italicized in the sentence below, where that is analysed as a complementizer which functions to identify I don’t like chocolate as a sentential argument:

(86) Jane knows that I don’t like chocolate.

Noonan (2007:52) defines complementation as “the syntactic situation that arises when a notional sentence or predication is an argument of a verb.” The qualification of ‘sentence’ and
‘predication’ by the term ‘notional’ implies the existence of a widely-held, semantically-based definition of what constitutes a sentence and a predication. This is assumed, and no further explanation is given. But based on the functional definition of a sentence proposed by Shibatani (2011) and adopted in this work, complement constructions cannot be deemed sentences because they do not constitute a speech act; they do not make assertions, if one counts them as declarative sentences. This property of non-assertion of complement clauses is shared with relative constructions. Unlike relative constructions, however, complement constructions do not necessarily contain presupposed or given information. Often, they contain new, foregrounded information that is given as much prominence as the main predicate which makes the assertion, as reported by Thompson (2002) and Schmidtke-Bode (2009). The functions that these so-called clauses/sentences play is arguably one of denotation; they refer to a state or an event e.g. the state of disliking chocolate. Therefore they are nominalizations. This state or event occurs as an argument of a verb much as a noun would.

It is no surprise, then, that in many languages relative constructions and complement constructions share the same marker (Horie et al 2008, Schidtke-Bode 2009). It is simply a case of one structure being co-opted for multiple functions. Gā is no different, and it will be seen in what follows that the nominalizer nī that is crucial to relativization is also important for complementation. Event nominalizations used for complementation may be marked by one of
two nominalizers: ńĩ́ and á!kɛ́ (ńshĩ́). The polyfunctionality of ńĩ́ hints at a diachronic relationship between the various uses of these nominalizations, a subject that will be taken up later in the chapter. The discussion of complementation will begin with an examination of their morphology and syntax.

6.6.1.1 Morphology and syntax of complementation
As previously mentioned, the complement construction in Gĩ is an event nominalization marked by the particles ńĩ́ and á!kɛ́ (ńshĩ́). The bracketing suggests that á!kɛ́ (ńshĩ́) may occur with or without shĩ́, but in practice it occurs more often without it. shĩ́ cannot occur alone as a nominalizer. á!kɛ́ is hypothesized by Lord (1993:190) to have grammaticalized from the verb kɛ̀ɛ́ ‘say’. The choice of either nominalizer is dependent on the main verb which carries the assertion of the sentence – what Noonan (1997) calls the complement-taking predicate (CTP) – of which there are several semantic types. These will be discussed in §6.6.1.2 below.

Complement constructions in Gã always occur as objects of CTPs, never as subjects. The nominalizer immediately follows the main verb phrase containing the CTP and marks the initial boundary of the object complement. (87)-(92) all contain event nominalizations. Those marked by á!kɛ́ or á!kɛ́ shĩ́ are given in (87)-(89), while those marked by ńĩ́ are given in (90)-(92). In (87), the event nominalization functions as a second object, the first object being wɔ̀ ‘1PL’. In (88), it is the only object.
“We were told she is dead.” [DF:200]

“Then it means that the doctors, there is nothing they can do about it.” [CH:56]

In the following example, the event nominalization (object of n₃ ‘see’) has embedded within it another event nominalization marked by á!kɛ́ shĩ́, which functions as the object of kɛ̀ɛ̂ ‘say’.

“One person realized that the doctor said that the person who is lying there is frightened.” [FH:144]

In (91) and (92), the event nominalizations marked by nǐ function as objects of sááá ‘fit.NEG’ and tãló ‘want’ respectively.

“Yes, so they shouldn’t have touched him.” [FH:146]
(92)  
\[
\text{ké} \quad \text{ó=bí} \quad \text{kò} \quad \text{nĩ́} \quad \text{ò=táò-ð} \quad \text{nĩ́}
\]
\text{if} \quad \text{2SG=child} \quad \text{INDEF} \quad \text{FOC} \quad \text{2SG=want-HAB} \quad \text{NMLZ}

\text{é=fɔ́} \quad \text{hàájíbí=!é} \quad \text{nyömù} \quad \text{bàá-dàmò} \quad \text{mùg̃́}
\text{3SG.SBJV-give.birth} \quad \text{twins=DEF} \quad \text{God} \quad \text{FUT-stand} \quad \text{inside}

\text{é=hã́} \quad \text{bò}
\text{3SG.SBJV=give} \quad \text{2SG.OBJ}

“If you have a child whom you want to give birth to twins, God will intervene for you.”

(93) exemplifies an equational construction in which the event nominalization is a complement
of the copula, \(jí\).

(93)  
\[
\text{nọ́} \quad \text{kômé} \quad \text{nĩ́} \quad \text{mù=hi} \quad \text{wàà} \quad \text{jí} \quad \text{nĩ́}
\]
\text{thing} \quad \text{one} \quad \text{NMLZ} \quad \text{1SG.PROG=hate} \quad \text{very.much} \quad \text{COP} \quad \text{NMLZ}

\text{mù=ko} \quad \text{bàá-lyé} \quad \text{f̃=hè} \quad \text{ŋshékú}
\text{person=INDEF} \quad \text{FUT-eat} \quad \text{1SG=body} \quad \text{gossip}

“One thing I hate very much is somebody gossiping about me.”

The event nominalization must always have a subject and a predicate. Based on the
valency of the predicate in the nominalization, it may also have an object. The requirement for
an overt subject pertains even if the subject of the nominalization is raised to become object of
the CTP. In such a case, the CTP will have two objects, a noun and an event nominalization, as
in (94b) where the objects are \(lè \, ‘3SG.OBJ’\) and the event nominalization marked by \(nĩ́\).

Raising is the traditional term used when a subject or object in a subordinate/lower clause is
moved to occupy the position of object of the main/higher clause. Since it is my position that
the subordinate clause is a nominalization, sentences with complements actually constitute just one clause. I however retain the use of the term ‘raising’ when speaking of cases such as (94b), where the subject of the event nominalization is a pronoun that is co-referential with the initial object of the CTP, which may also be a pronoun. (94a) does not involve raising and is provided for comparison.

(94a) mĩ́=mɛ̃́  nĩ́  é=bá-hóó   wó!nũ=!ɛ́
1SG.PROG=wait  NMLZ 3SG.SBJV=VENT-cook  soup=DEF
“I’m waiting for him/her to come and cook the soup”

(94b) mũ=mẽ́  lɛ̀  nĩ́  é=bá-hóó   wó!nũ=!ɛ́
1SG.PROG=wait  3SG.OBJ NMLZ 3SG.SBJV=VENT-cook  soup=DEF
“I’m waiting for him/her to come and cook the soup”

Note that the nominalizer á!kɛ́ (shĩ́) in place of nĩ́ will render both sentences in (94) ungrammatical. There is a subtle but important meaning difference between (94a) and (94b), in that (94b) is purposive while (94a) is not. The purposive interpretation is engendered by the fact that purpose adverbials, just like verbal complements, are structurally represented by event nominalizations marked by nĩ́ and as conveyers of intent and potential events, they are often marked by irrealis mood in the form of the subjunctive. The semantic content of the CTP and the event described in the nominalization also make a purpose reading possible. Waiting for someone implies that the person’s potential presence or action will be beneficial to you in some way. This reason for waiting may be stated as a purpose construction.
Not all instances of raising will give a purposive reading. Event nominalizations and CTPs which lack the qualifying semantic and modal characteristics will not exude a purposive sense. For example, (95b) in which Aku, the subject of the nominalization, has been raised, does not yield a purposive meaning. Rather the complement denotes an event (of crying) which is simultaneous with that of the event described by the CTP (seeing Aku).

(95a) òkó nà nũá!lké ákú ŋ-fo
Oko saw NMLZ Aku PROG-cry
“Oko saw that Aku was crying.”

(95b) òkó nà ákú nũ/*á!lké èè-fo
Oko saw Aku NMLZ PROG-cry
“Oko saw Aku crying.”

á!lké (shĩ) can replace nĩ in (95a) but not (95b).

Another syntactic phenomenon commonly found in complement constructions is equideletion. According to Noonan (2007:76), this process results in the deletion of a subject in the complement construction if it is co-referential with an argument in the higher clause. Equideletion is not possible in Gã. If the subject or initial object of the sentence is co-referential with the subject of the nominalization, this is indexed in the nominalization by the corresponding subject pronoun. In (96a), the subject gbé!kébi!ié ékòmě́ ‘some of the children’ is topicalized in sentence-initial position and followed by a co-referential subject pronoun and then the CTP. The event nominalization that follows must also have the pronoun in subject
position. Equi-deletion of the subject of the nominalization, as is done in (96b) results in ungrammaticality.

\[(96a)\] gbé!kɛ̃́-bí!í=!ɛ́ ékò=mɛ̃̀ĩ́=!ɛ̃́ ã̀mɛ̃́=sùmɔ̃̀ nĩ́ ã̀mɛ̃́=yà
child-PL = DEF some-PL = DEF 3PL = like NMLZ 3PL.SBJV = go

\[\ddot{am}\ddot{e} = yá-!ná\]
3PL.SBJV = ITIV-see

“Some of the children, they like to go and see (it).” [OYO:89]

\[(96b)\] *gbé!kɛ̃́-bí!í=!ɛ́ čkò=mě̃́=!ɛ̇ āmě̃́=sùmò nĩ́ yà
child-PL = DEF some = PL = DEF 3PL = like NMLZ go

\[\ddot{am}\ddot{e} = yá-!ná\]
3PL.SBJV = ITIV-see

“Some of the children like/want to go and see (it).”

Some complement constructions can occur without a nominalizer. This does not make them any less nominal than their counterparts with overt nominalizers. The most common CTPs that allow null marking are kɛ̂ɛ ‘say’, nyɛ̂ ‘be able’ and hã́ ‘give’. An example sentence each is given below.

\[(97)\] à=kɛ̀ɛ́ Ø āmě̃́=kè āmě̃́=nĩ̀ ě̃̀=bà-wò-ɔ̀ mì̃̀ŋ̀
3PL.IMPERS = say 3PL = take 3PL = hand VENT-put-HAB inside

“It is said that they come and put their hands in it.” [YM:306]

\[(98)\] ò=nyɛ̂-ŋ́ Ø ò = ḻḵèè âlkè kṣ̱̱̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣️
These may alternatively be rendered with the nominalizers á!kɛ́ (shĩ́) (98) and nĩ́ (99), (100) without any change in meaning. (98) and (99) closely resemble serial verb constructions (SVCs). However, the fact that a nominalizer can be inserted between the CTP and the complement without affecting meaning is one indication that they are not. Furthermore, in (98) the CTP and the predicate in the event nominalization have opposite polarities – an occurrence disallowed in SVCs – which require agreeing polarity across all verbs. (99) is an example of a typical periphrastic causative construction in Gã, but since these have been examined extensively in the preceding chapter, no further discussion is warranted here.

nĩ́ is more likely to be omitted as a nominalizer when the CTP involved is nyē ‘be able’ or hâ ‘give’. The reason for this has to do with the degree of semantic integration of the event and its relation to syntactic integration. Givón (2001b:40) observes that stronger event integration corresponds positively to tighter clause union. In the case of hâ ‘give’, this verb has been grammaticalized into a marker of causation; it no longer expresses an event of ‘giving’ separate from the event described by the nominalization. As such, hâ ‘give’ and its complement
are more tightly integrated semantically and hence are more likely to be expressed by syntactic structures that echo this closeness. The presence of a marker or connector between two events indicates a looser degree of integration between them than the absence of such a marker. A similar picture can be painted of nyɛ́ ‘be able’, which is primarily a marker of deontic modality. Most of its occurrences are in complement constructions such as (98). When nyɛ́ ‘be able’ occurs without complementation it means ‘dominate, control, surpass’ and often occurs with negative polarity (100).

(100) kɛ́ è = bà nĩ-hòó-mò = ǂ5 ô = nyɛ́ɛ́ɛ́ !mĩ
when 3SG = come thing-cook-NOM = DEF 2SG = surpass.NEG 1SG.OBJ
“When it comes to cooking, you cannot surpass me.” i.e. I am better than you.

nĩ́ is also more likely to be dispensed with when the CTP is taló ‘want’ and the subject of the clause and the subject of the event nominalization are co-referential (101). When the subjects are different, an overt marker is preferred, as in (92).

(101) yèí = è ñ-táò Ø ɔmɛ́ = bĩ bò sänè
woman.PL = DEF PROG-want 3PL.SBJV = ask 2SG.OBJ matter
“The women want to ask you a question.”

In addition to ‘say’, kɛ́ɛ̂ can also mean ‘tell’ and this secondary use triggers a mandatory nominalizer, which may be ɑ́lɛ́ or nĩ́. When used to mean ‘say’, the nominalizer is optional. The requirement for a nominalizer for kɛ́ɛ̂ ‘tell’ appears not to be related as much to the semantics of the CTP as to the argument structure of the CTP. It is usually the case that
overt nominalizers are mandated by CTPs that have two objects: an initial NP object and a second object which is the event nominalization. In the trio of examples in (102) featuring the CTP, \( \text{këë} \) ‘tell’, the first uses the nominalizer \( \text{â!kë} \), the second uses \( \text{nî} \) and the third has no nominalizer and is therefore ungrammatical.

(102a) \( \text{këë}-mò \quad \text{nû!tsò} \quad \text{â!kë} \quad \text{ð} = \text{kè} \quad \text{bò} \quad \text{â-wîé} \)

\( \text{tell-IMP} \quad \text{lord} \quad \text{NMLZ} \quad 3\text{SG}=\text{take} \quad 2\text{SG.OBJ} \quad \text{SBJV-talk} \)

“Tell the Lord that he should speak to you.” [CH:134]

(102b) \( \text{këë}-mò \quad \text{nû!tsò} \quad \text{nî} \quad \text{ð} = \text{kè} \quad \text{bò} \quad \text{â-wîé} \)

\( \text{tell-IMP} \quad \text{lord} \quad \text{NMLZ} \quad 3\text{SG}=\text{take} \quad 2\text{SG.OBJ} \quad \text{SBJV-talk} \)

“Tell the Lord to speak to you.”

(102c) \( \ast \text{këë}-mò \quad \text{nû!tsò} \quad \emptyset \quad \text{ð} = \text{kè} \quad \text{bò} \quad \text{â-wîé} \)

\( \text{tell-IMP} \quad \text{lord} \quad 3\text{SG}=\text{take} \quad 2\text{SG.OBJ} \quad \text{SBJV-talk} \)

“Tell the Lord that he should speak to you.”

(102c) can be made grammatical by inserting a noticeable pause after the first object, \( \text{nû!tsò} \) ‘lord’.

There are also peculiar effects of polarity and to a lesser extent, aspect, on the obligatory or otherwise of the nominalizer, \( \text{â!kë} \) with complements of \( \text{këë} \) ‘say’. When \( \text{këë} \) ‘say’ is in the affirmative future, \( \text{â!kë} \) is optional (103a). However, when it is in the negative future, then the nominalizer is obligatory (103b). It is not possible to omit it (103c).

(103a) \( \text{kòjó} \quad \text{bàá-këë} \quad (\text{â!kë}) \quad \text{mîî} = \text{má!lè} \)

\( \text{Kojo} \quad \text{FUT-say} \quad (\text{NMLZ}) \quad 1\text{SG.PROG}=\text{lie} \)

“Kojo will say (that) I am lying.”
(103b) kòjó े-kɛ́!ŋ́  álké  mĭ=maxle
Kojo  NEG-say  NMLZ  1SG.PROG=lie
“Kojo will not say that I am lying.”

(103c) *kòjó े-kɛ́!ŋ́  Ṭ  mĭ=maxle
Kojo  NEG-say  1SG.PROG=lie
“Kojo will not say I am lying.”

A similar pattern is seen with the perfect, except here even the affirmative appears to favour an overt nominalizer (104a) (104b). The negative perfect CTP is ungrammatical without one (104d).

(104a) kòjó े-kɛ̀ɛ́  álké  mĭ=maxle
Kojo  PERF-say  NMLZ  1SG.PROG=lie
“Kojo has said I am lying.”

(104b) ?kòjó े-kɛ̀ɛ́  Ṭ  mĭ=maxle
Kojo  PERF-say  1SG.PROG=lie
“Kojo has said I am lying.”

(104c) kòjó े-kɛ́-kò  álké  mĭ=maxle
Kojo  NEG-say-NEG.PERF  NMLZ  1SG.PROG=lie
“Kojo has not said that I am lying.”

(104d) *kòjó े-kɛ́-kò  Ṭ  mĭ=maxle
Kojo  NEG-say-NEG.PERF  1SG.PROG=lie
“Kojo has not said I am lying.”

The same restrictions apply when ḱɛ̀ɛ̂ is perfective – álké is optional in the affirmative (105a) but obligatory in the negative.
(105a) kòjó kèé  (áltkèé) mifié=málé
   Kojo  PERF-say  NMLZ  1SG.PROG=lie
   “Kojo said (that) I am lying.”

(105b) kòjó é-kèéè  áltkèé  mifié=málé
   Kojo  NEG-say.NEG  NMLZ  1SG.PROG=lie
   “Kojo did not say (that) I am lying.

(105c) ?kòjó é-kèéè  Ø  mifié=málé
   Kojo  NEG-say.NEG  1SG.PROG=lie
   “Kojo did not say (that) I am lying.

In another twist, when the CTP is perfective and negative, and the verb in the complement is
subjunctive, omission of the nominalizer is acceptable.

(105d) kòjó é-kèéè  Ø  wɔ=!bá
   Kojo  NEG-say.NEG  1PL.SBJV=come
   “Kojo did not say we should come.”

   The pattern appears to be that when kèé ‘say’ is in the negative, it selects a nominalizer
but when it is in the affirmative, the nominalizer is optional. The reason for this interaction
between polarity and presence or absence of a nominalizer will have to be uncovered by future
studies, as there is no motivation I know of so far for this unique behavior.

   Among CTPs that select the nominalizer, áltkèé, kèé ‘say’ is the only one that permits its
omission in certain environments. This may be a synchronic vestige of the diachronic
development of áltkèé. Historically, kèé ‘say’ probably needed no nominalizer, because its
complement constituted direct or quotative speech. Meanwhile, áltkèé, itself a descendant of kèé,
was recruited for marking quotative and later non-quotative complements of other verbs such as *jwɛ̃̀ŋ̀* ‘think’ and *lè* ‘know’. By analogy it then began to be used to mark non-quotative complements of *kèè*, even as *kèè* had started admitting non-quotative complements without nominalizers.

6.6.1.2 Semantics of complementation

In Gã, the semantics of sentences containing complement constructions may vary based on the type of CTP, the type of nominalizer and the mood of the predicate in the complement. Each property does not operate independently but constrains the manifestation of other properties, the net effect of which engenders meaning variances. The discussion below will therefore touch on multiple properties simultaneously, in so far as one is dependent on another.

(i) Type of complement-taking predicate (CTP)

Givón (2001b: 40) lumps all CTPs into just three classes: CPU (cognition, perception, utterance) predicates e.g. *think, see, say, believe*; modality predicates e.g. *want, begin, finish, try*, and manipulative predicates e.g. *ask, tell, order*. Givón’s grouping appears to be based on the syntactic types of complements that these verbs take in English i.e. infinitival complements or *that*-complements. Noonan (2007) has identified an extensive list of semantic classes of CTPs, many of which are found in Gã. While I find Givón’s categorization too pithy to fully capture the syntactico-semantic correspondences found in Gã, Noonan’s is also too
differentiated and there are several classes that may be collapsed into one. The following

semantic classification of CTPs in Gã is meant to strike a balance between these two extremes.

1. UTTERANCE PREDICATES – kɛ̀ɛ̂ ‘say, tell’, bí ‘ask’, fã́ ‘command’
3. DESIDERATIVE PREDICATES – táló ‘want’, sùmɔ́ ‘like’
4. PERCEPTION PREDICATES – nã̀ ‘see’, nũ̀ ‘hear’, kwɛ́ ‘look’
5. MODAL PREDICATES – sà ‘fit’, nyɛ̀ ‘be able’
6. COMMENTATIVE PREDICATES – hĩ̀ ‘be good’, yɛ́ nã̀ã̀kpɛ̀ɛ̀ ‘be amazing (lit: have wonder), yɛ̀ mĩ̀ŋ̀làà ‘be annoying (lit: have anger)’
7. ASPECTUAL PREDICATES – bɔ̃́!ĩ́ ‘start’, bɔ̀ mɔ̃́dẽ́ŋ́ ‘try’

(ii) Type of nominalizer

Members of a semantic class do not always neatly align with regard to the nominalizer they occur with. **Commentative predicates** may take the nominalizer, á/kɛ́ (106) or nĩ́ (107).

(106) ò è=hĩ á!kɛ́ nyɛ̀=bà this time
IJ 3SG=be.good NMLZ 2PL=come
“Oh, it’s good that you came at this time.” [FH:105]

(107) ò=bɛ́ hè gbè nĩ́ ɔ̀=jù-ɔ̀ mɔ̀=kɔ̀
2SG=have.NEG body way NMLZ 2SG=steal-HAB person=INDEF
káplè
penny
“You have no right to steal someone’s money.” [DT: 20;30]
All **utterance verbs** may occur with *á!ké*. Examples with *kéɛ́* ‘tell’ and *bí* ‘ask’ are provided as follows.

(108)  
\[
\begin{array}{llllll}
3SG.NEG & = & !kéɛ́ & !mí & á!ké & è=nyɛ̃̄mĩ̂ & jí & bò \\
& & 1SG.OBJ & NMLZ & 3SG & = & sibling & COP & 2SG.OB \\
\end{array}
\]

“He didn’t tell me that he is your sibling.” [MM:105]

(109)  
\[
\begin{array}{llllll}
1SG & = & bí & !lɛ́ & á!ké & è=bà-hĭ \ \\
& & 3SG.OBJ & NMLZ & 3SG & = & VENT-live \ \\
\end{array}
\]

“I asked her whether she came and lived with Auntie Amerley.” [DF:126]

For the most part, complements of utterance predicates marked by *á!ké* convey information, as in (108). In (109) the interrogative semantics of the CTP and the question particle at the end of the nominalization indicate uncertainty about the information in the nominalization.

An utterance verb may also take a complement marked by *nĩ́*. Such a complement does not simply convey information but rather it denotes a situation in which the agent of the sentence seeks to manipulate the actions of the subject of the nominalization in order to accomplish some desired goal. Since this desired outcome is a potential, unrealised event, the verb in such a complement is marked by the subjunctive, which is the go-to grammatical vehicle for irrealis expression in Gã. In (110), the verb in the nominalization, *kọ́* ‘take’ is marked with the subjunctive.
(110) ́i = kẹ́ kọ́jọ̀ ní ẹ = ká sámfélẹ̀ = !ẹ̀ kẹ́-!bá
1SG = tell Kojo NMLZ 3SG.SBJV = take key = DEF take-come
“I told Kojo to bring the key./I told Kojo that he should bring the key”

An utterance verb complement marked by á’kẹ́ may also have directive semantics as long as its predicate receives subjunctive marking.

(111) ́i = kẹ́ kọ́jọ̀ á’kẹ́ ẹ = ká sámfélẹ̀ = !ẹ̀ kẹ́-!bá
1SG = say Kojo NMLZ 3SG.SBJV = take key = DEF take-come
“I told Kojo that he should bring the key.”

What differentiates the distribution of the two nominalizers with respect to utterance verbs is that while complements marked by á’kẹ́ are capable of conveying facts and real events (and thereby being marked as indicative) as well as conveying directives (and receiving subjunctive marking), complements marked by ní can only convey directives and so must necessarily receive subjunctive marking. For example, an attempt to render (108), whose nominalization is not marked subjunctive, with ní results in ungrammaticality:

(112) *é = !kééé !mí ní ẹ = nyèmtí jí bò
3SG.NEG = tell.NEG 1SG.OBJ NMLZ 3SG = sibling COP 2SG.OBJ
“He didn’t tell me that he is your sibling.”

The examples seen thus far of utterance verb complements consist of indirect speech or non-quotative speech, where the speaker tweaks the anaphoric and deictic features in the complement to reflect his perspective, rather than that of the subject of the utterance verb. The complement may also be a direct quote, where the speaker reproduces the speech of the subject
directly without any change in anaphoric or deictic elements. In Gã, direct quotes can only be
complements of á!kɛ́, never nĩ́, and the presence of the nominalizer is optional but generally
preferred. The CTPs, kɛ̀ ‘say’ and bí ‘ask’ in (113) and (114) respectively have their direct
speech complements marked by á!kɛ́. In (115) and (116) on the other hand, there is no
nominalizer with the CTPs, kɛ̀ ‘say’ and fã́ ‘command’.

(113) mɔ̀-fɛ̀-mɔ́ bàá-kɛ́ á!kɛ́ ə ɬ̃̃=kɛ̀ ɬ̃̃=bí
person-all-person FUT-say NMLZ IJ 1SG = take 1SG = child

lé = lé ə-yááá
DEF = DEF NEG-go.NEG
“Everyone will say that, “Oh, I will not take my child (there).”” [CH:110]

(114) nɔ̀ hèwɔ́=!ɔ́ ní regional minister=!á bí á!kɛ́ mɛ̀ɛ́bà
that sake=TOP and ə =DEF ask NMLZ why
“So the regional minister asked, “Why?”” [MM:192]

(115) ní ə = wólé ə = hínjméí=ə nɔ́ = !ɔ́ ə = kɛ̀
when 3SG = lift-ITER 3SG = eye =DEF top = DEF 3SG = say

àà křístůfůnyo fɛ̀-mɔ́ wà ə
IJ Christian do-NOM be.hard IJ
“When she lifted up her eyes, she said “Gosh! Being a Christian is really difficult!”
[CH:319]

(116) kɛ̀kɛ́=!ɛ́ ə = command ə = !fã́ kũ̃̃ tsɔ̀
then-TOP 3SG.PERF = 3SG.PERF = command neem tree
nɛ̀lɛ́ fã-á ní ə = yá-bòtè əshɔ́ =ə mĩ́
this uproot.IMP and 2SG.SBJV-ITIV-enter sea=DEF inside
yɛ̀ castle=ɛ̀=ə sɛ̀
be.located = DEF = DEF back
“…then he will command…he will command, “Neem tree, uproot and go and enter the sea behind the castle.” [CH:356]

Desiderative and modal predicates have in common the temporal property of futurity.

The semantics of the verbs in both classes select complements which refer to a state of affairs that is temporally located posterior to the time reference of the CTP. Noonan (2007:102) characterises such complements as having dependent time reference (DTR), because their time reference is relative to the semantics of the CTP. Those complements whose time reference is not dictated by the time reference of the CTP have independent time reference (ITR). In Gã, complements with dependent time reference often have their predicates marked for the subjunctive mood. There is a strong affinity of such complements (those with DTR) for the nominalizer, nĩ but in a few cases, á!kɛ may also be used. Desiderative verbs for the most part must be complemented by nominalizations marked by nĩ whose predicates take subjunctive marking. Examples (96a) and (92) above illustrate this complement type with the CTPs tá!ó ‘search’ and sùmɔ ‘like’ respectively. Both CTPs occur in (117) below.

(117) nibi kɔ-mɛ yɛ = !ɛ ð = sùmɔ ɔ̃ɔ̃ɔ̃ nĩ = !fɛɛ
things INDEF-PL exist = TOP 2SG = want.NEG NMLZ 2SG.SBJV = do
In some situations, you don’t want to act like you want to know anything.” (Lit: “Some things are there, you don’t want to act like you want to know something.”) [DT: 22;08]

In addition to nĩ́, sùmɔ̃̀ ‘want/like/love’ also allows complements marked by á!ke (118) and also, kónĩ́(109), whose main function is marking of purpose adverbials.

(118) shí gbé!kɛ̃̃-nũ̀ṹ=!ɛ̃̃ súmɔ̃̀ á!kɛ́ gbèé=!ɛ́ bàá-bó-!lɔ́
but child-male=DEF want.NEG NMLZ dog=DEF FUT-shout-ITER
“But the boy didn’t want the dog to bark.” [SAM:107]

(119) hèwɔ́=!ɔ́ mà=sùmɔ́ kónĩ́ wɔ́=!ɔ́ ó̄=!bá
sake=TOP 1SG.FUT=like NMLZ tomorrow=TOP 2SG.SBJV = come
“So I’d like for you to come tomorrow.” [YM:291]

The use of a purpose morpheme for marking a complement is attested in several languages (Schmidtke-Bode 2009). In addition, Palmer (1986:174) points out that purpose clauses and desiderative verbs have in common the desire to realise an intention or make a particular situation obtain at some later time. The possible historical relationship between purpose adverbials and complements will be explored in §6.8.

One exception to the requirement for subjunctive marking of nĩ́-marked complements of desiderative verbs is examples like (120) below, where the CTP has negative polarity and the predicate in the nominalization exhibits habitual aspect. For desiderative verbs, this habitual aspect...
marking of the verb in the nominalization is only possible when the desiderative verb is negative.

(120) nò hèwɔ́=!ɔ́ è = s h ɛ̀-ɔ̀  bè kò kŕáá pó ní  
that sake = TOP 3SG = reach-HAB time INDEF even even NMLZ

wɔ̀ = sùmɔ̃́ɔ̃́ɔ̃́  pó ní à = nà-à  wɔ̀ álke
1PL = want.NEG even NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS = see-HAB 1PL as

kristofo-i
Christian-PL
“So there even comes a time when we do not even want to be recognized as Christians.” [CH:279]

Modal CTPs also have determined time reference and generally take complements with subjunctive marking (121), (122), (123). However, when they display negative polarity, their complements may be marked for habitual aspect (124). Both ní and álke may be used with modal predicates.

(121) shí è = sà ní è = yè ànɔ̃̀kwálé
but 3SG = fit NMLZ 3SG.SBJV = eat truth
“But he has to tell the truth.” [DT: 19;44]

(122) è = sà álke f = yá-já f = nyɔ̃̃ŋmɔ̀
3SG = fit NMLZ 1SG.SBJV = ITIV-worship 1SG = God
“I have to go and worship my God.” [CH:218]

(123) è = hè é-hiáá ní ó = mò è = nà-jì
3SG = body NEG-need.NEG NMLZ 2SG.SBJV = hold 3SG = leg-PL
“à-mĩ̀ŋ̀ apart”
PERT-inside
“It is not necessary to hold his legs apart.” [DT:7]

nàkà̀ri
like.that
“It shouldn’t happen that way.” [CH:236]

With the CTP nyé ‘be able’, there are peculiar interactions between its aspect and presence or absence of nĩ. When nyé is in the future, it uncontroversially takes the nominalizer, nĩ, as well as subjunctive marking of the predicate in the complement (125b). It may also occur without the nominalizer (125a).

(125a) nyé = bàá-nyé nyé = lhò jélmé
3PL = FUT-be.able 3PL.SBJV = be.inserted there
“You can stay there.” [CH:259]

(125b) nyé = bàá-nyé nĩ nyé = lhò jélmé
3PL = FUT-be.able NMLZ 3PL.SBJV = be.inserted there
“You can stay there.”

But when nyé ‘be able’ occurs unmarked or with habitual or perfect aspect, it requires the predicate in the complement to be marked (or unmarked as the case may be) with the same aspect as nyé itself. The appearance of nĩ is also strongly disfavoured for the bare and perfect aspects (126b), (127b), but less so for the habitual (128).
This behaviour is reminiscent of SVCs, which require concordant marking of TAM on all verbs with the exception of future verbs in which only the initial verb takes future marking and the rest are accorded subjunctive marking. The verbs in the nyé construction also share a subject,
just as SVCs do. It is for this reason that some such as Noonan (2007:87) consider $nyɛ$ and its complement as constituting a serial construction. This characterization is inaccurate because it does not take into consideration other characteristics of SVCs which the $nyɛ$ construction does not conform to. Chief among them is the acceptability of the nominalizer $nĩ$. As discussed extensively in chapter 5, SVCs in Gã bar a linker of any kind between the different verbs. The hostility of the perfect, habitual and bare verb $nyɛ$ constructions to the hosting of $nĩ$ could signal the beginnings of a transition toward serialization. However, the behaviour of the construction when it is negated is telling: only $nyɛ$ can be negated, the predicate in the nominalization must be marked affirmative subjunctive (129), (130). In SVCs, all the verbs must be negated and there can be no nominalizer.

(129) $wɔ̀=nyɛ̃́ɛ̃́ɛ̃́$ $wɔ́=dã̀mɔ̃̀$ $s h i ̃̀ w ɔ́=hã́$ $a n ɔ́kwálé$
$1PL=be.able.NEG$ $1PL.SBJV=stand$ down $1PL.SBJV=give$ truth

$llɛ́$
DEF
“We cannot stand up for the truth.” [CH:280]

(130) $ò=nyɛ̃́-ŋ́$ $ó=!kɛ́ɛ́$ $á ! kɛ́ k r̀ístòfónyò$ $jí$
$2SG=be.able-NEG.FUT$ $2SG.SBJV=say$ NMLZ christian COP

$bò$
$2SG.OBJ$
“You will not be able to say you are a Christian…” [CH:207]

Synchronically, therefore, $nyɛ$ and its complement should not be analysed as SVCs. There is indication, however, that it may be moving in that direction. This recalibration will be
complete when nyɛ̃́ in all instances disallows the nominalizer and requires concomitant marking of negation on all verbs in the construction.

Most **cognition and emotion predicates** take only á!kɛ́ as markers of their complements.

An example is ká!í ‘remember’ in (131).

(131) ì=káì-ɔ̀  á!kɛ́/*nĩ́  bè  nĩ́  wò=tsé  sukker
1SG=remember-HAB  NMLZ  time  NMLZ  1PL=tear  SUKU

àsàfô  ìlé  màmî  lê  nĩ́  yôô
group  DEF  mother  INDEF  NMLZ  be.located.HAB

àsàfô=è  mì
group=DEF  inside
“I remember that when we started the SUKU fellowship, a certain woman who was in the group…” [CH:312]

The exceptions are jwɛ̃̀ŋ̀ ‘think’ and lè ‘know’ which can take both nĩ́ (132) and á!kɛ́ (133),

(132) gbèé=è  jwɛ̃̀ŋ̀  nĩ́  wò-bì!í  něò=le-fèèè  ìlé
dog=DEF  think  NMLZ.honey-people  this  NEG-do.NEG  3SG.OBJ

ì=ìkô
thing=INDEF
“The dog thought that the bees would not do anything to him.” [PAT:113]

(133) nĩ́  è=lé  á!kɛ́  tso  nĩ́
and  3SG=know.NEG  NMLZ  tree  PRED.PRT

“And he didn’t know that it was a tree.” [MAV:72]
In addition, the complement of læ ‘know’ can be the conditional marker ké(ji) ‘if, whether’ when the complement contains information that the subject referent is unsure of, as in (134).

(134) mí=lé ké ámë=jwë|ŋ ál|ké kɔk|dë!né=ë ho
1SG=know NEG if 3PL=think NMLZ frog=DEF be.inserted

wò-bíì=ë à-tsú=ë mìj ji ò
honey-people=DEF PERT-house=DEF inside be IJ
“I don’t know whether they thought that the frog was in the beehive or what.”

In some discourse situations, læ which normally means ‘know’ is interpreted as ‘think’. This semantic outcome is possible for complements marked by ál|ké but it is more common when læ ‘know’ occurs with a nì-marked nominalization. The nominalization in such a construction is presented not as fact but rather as an opinion or idea, especially one whose veracity is in doubt.

Compare (135) and (136). In (135) with ál|ké, the speaker is confident of the truth of the supposition contained in the nominalization. In (135) with nì he is not.

(135) í=lé ál|ké bò nì ò=kò
1SG=k|now NMLZ 2SG.OBJ FOC 2SG=take
“I know that it was you who took (it).”

(136) í=lé nì bò nì ò=kò
1SG=k|now NMLZ 2SG.OBJ FOC 2SG=take
“I thought that it was you who took (it).”
In (137) where the nominalizer is álké, lè means ‘think’. This interpretation is gleaned from the discourse. Therefore, while lè is always decoded as ‘think’ when in combination with a nĩ-nominalization, it is much more difficult to determine its meaning when its complement is marked by álké. In such situations, discourse context is crucial for resolving the ambiguity.

\[(137) \; \hat{e} = \hat{l}e \quad \text{álké} \quad t\dot{d}o \quad n\dot{i} \]

3SG = know \hspace{1cm} NMLZ \hspace{1cm} PRED.PRT

“He thought it was a tree.”  \hspace{1cm} [MAV:80]

**Immediate perception verbs** such as ñà ‘see’ and ñù ‘hear’ take complements that may be marked either by álké or nĩ. The choice of nominalizer is dependent on the semantics of the event nominalization. álké is the only nominalizer used when the verb in the nominalization is stative (138), (139).

\[(138) \; \hat{d} = \hat{o} = !n\dot{a} \dot{a} \dot{a} \quad \text{álké}^{*n\dot{i}} \quad \hat{r} = \hat{h}i\dot{e} \quad \hat{y} = \hat{e} \quad \text{fè\dot{d}o} \]

IJ \hspace{1cm} 2SG = see.NEG \hspace{1cm} NMLZ \hspace{1cm} 1SG = face \hspace{1cm} have \hspace{1cm} beauty

“Don’t you see that I have a beautiful face?” \hspace{1cm} [MM:52]

\[(139) \; \hat{e} = n\dot{a} \quad \text{álké}^{*n\dot{i}} \quad \hat{k}o\dot{k}d\dot{e} \dot{l}n\dot{e} = \!l\dot{e} \quad \hat{b} = \hat{e} \quad \hat{t} = \hat{\dot{o}} \quad m\dot{u} \dot{\ddot{h}} \]

3SG = see \hspace{1cm} NMLZ \hspace{1cm} frog = DEF \hspace{1cm} exist.NEG \hspace{1cm} bottle = DEF \hspace{1cm} inside

dágff

anymore

“He saw that the frog was not in the bottle anymore.” \hspace{1cm} [TIN:8]

\[(140) \; \hat{t} = n\dot{u} \quad \text{álké}^{*n\dot{i}} \quad n\dot{y} = \text{gbè} \quad n\dot{a} \dot{a} \]

1SG = hear \hspace{1cm} NMLZ \hspace{1cm} 2PL = kill \hspace{1cm} mouth

“I heard that you were done.”
Both á!kê and nĩ may be used when the verb is dynamic (141).

(141) wɔ=ñà á!kê/nĩ mɔ=ñò ñ=ñò t=ñò
1PL=see NMLZ person=INDEF PROG-climb tree=DEF
“We saw that someone was climbing the tree.”

With the CTP, nũ ‘hear’, both nĩ and á!kê are acceptable. The most common aspectual marking for the predicate in this complement is progressive. When the event denoted by the complement is not one that normally produces audible sounds, then nũ is interpreted as ‘hear a rumour’ and á!kê is the only acceptable nominalizer (142). nĩ is not possible as a nominalizer for this meaning.

(141) ǹ=ñû nũ/a!kê è=ñò
1SG=hear NMLZ 3SG.PROG=cry
“I heard him crying.”

(142) ǹ=ñû á!kê/*nĩ è=ñò shìñû=ñò
1SG=hear NMLZ 3SG.PERF=sell house=DEF
“I heard that he had sold the house.”

The event nominalization marked by nĩ may also occur as a second object in a construction where it denotes the actions of the referent of the first object. The main predicate in such a construction is an immediate perception verb, most commonly nã ‘see’. The nominalization depicts the circumstances or activities which the object referent is engaged in at the time of the sighting i.e. the event coded by the main predicate and that coded by the nominalization are simultaneous. (143) provides an illustration.
A nominalization marked by ál'ké cannot be used this way (144).

(144) *wɔ̀=nà ákú ál'ké èè=fó
1PL=see Aku NMLZ 3SG.PROG=cry
“We saw Aku crying.”

The simultaneous event-depicting function of the nĩ-marked nominalization is also
exploited for use with posture verbs. Here, the nominalization denotes an action performed by
the subject referent while in a particular posture or stance.

(145) ì=tá !shi nĩ mì=si̊lè
1SG=sit down NMLZ 1SG.PROG=pray
“I was sitting down, praying.”

In (146), the stance verb jwélé ‘lie down (of several small objects)’ is used idiomatically to
convey the notion of several people busily indulging in an activity. The activity is coded by the
nĩ-nominalization.

(146) wò bè n̩ ò=bàá=!bá=!á wò=jwélé !n̩ n̩
tomorrow time NMLZ 2SG=FUT-come=DEF 1PL=lie top NMLZ
wò=ŋ̀-hòó n̩
1PL=PROG-cook thing
“By the time you come tomorrow, we’ll be busily cooking.” [YM:292]
In one special context, a ní-nominalization occurs as a complement to ófáìnɛ̃́ ‘please’, a word whose lexical category is as difficult to determine as its English counterpart. The construction, exemplified in (147), has the illocutionary force of a statement, although its speech act is that of a request.

(147) mã́ã̀ ó f á ì n ē̃́ nĩ́ ó=wó   ó=gbèè nɔ̀ ó=hã́
mother please NMLZ 2SG.SBJV=lift 2SG=voice top 2SG.SBJV-give

lwɔ́  fil66ó
1PL little

“Mother, can you please raise your voice a little for us?” [OYO:19]

It appears the syntax of this construction is built on an analogy with complement constructions with main verb, kpá fàí ‘beg’, which is semantically and functionally akin to ófáìnɛ̃́ ‘please’ in that both are polite prefaces to requests. While kpá fàí ‘beg’ is a verb which takes ní-complementation (148), ófáìnɛ̃́ ‘please’ usually functions as a modifier to an imperative (149).

(147) thus arises when ófáìnɛ̃́ ‘please’ is semantically reanalyzed not only as a politeness marker for requests but also as an explicit performative in the same vein as kpá fàí ‘beg’ in (148). This then allows it to take the event nominalization complement.

(148) è=kpá mì ̀ fáí nĩ́ ́ ì=fá=ká-yì
3SG=remove 2SG.OBJ hat NMLZ 1SG.SBJV = NEG.SBJV-beat

lè
3SG.OBJ

“S/he begged me not to beat him/her.”
6.6.2 Adverbial modification

Event nominalizations are also utilized for modifying verb phrases or propositions. I will refer to these event nominalizations as adverbials. The common parlance, “adverbial clauses” will be avoided because the claim in this work is that they are nominalizations and not clauses. It should be no surprise then, that the nominalizer, nĩ́ once again figures prominently in adverbial modification. The role of á!kɛ́ here is much more diminished. Adverbials may qualify a proposition in several ways: they may indicate the time of an event in relation to the time of another event (time adverbials), they may indicate the reason for executing a particular action (purpose adverbial). Others stipulate circumstances that must obtain in order for an event to occur (conditionals). All these will be examined in the subsequent sections, beginning with purpose adverbials.

6.6.2.1 Purpose adverbials

A purpose adverbial is an event nominalization which denotes a state of affairs that is posited as the reason or intended result of another action. The main clause predicates the action which constitutes the reason for the potential result coded by the purpose adverbial. In Gã, this clause

(149) màấ ófâíné́ wó ó̃́ ̀ gbèè nɔ̃̀ ó = hã́ !wó̃́ fi!ôó
mother please lift.IMP 2SG=voice top 2SG.SBJV=give 1PL little

“Mother, please speak up a little for us.”
precedes the purpose adverbial. The purpose adverbial is morphologically identified by the presence of the nominalizer (kó)ní at its initial boundary. While ní may stand alone in this function, kó cannot. In (150), the main action (requesting leave) is found in line 1, uttered by Dina. Sally’s agreement in line 2 overlaps with Dina’s turn in line 3, in which Dina expresses the intended result or reason for requesting leave i.e. so Auntie Sally can finish her meal. This reason is coded as a purpose adverbial marked by kóní.

(150) 1 Dina: Auntie Sally wò=bàá-bí gbè mò  
Auntie Sally 1PL=FUT-ask way then  
“Auntie Sally, we’ll ask permission to leave then.”  
2 Sally: [yòò]  
“Alright”  
3 Dina: kóní ó=!gbé ó=ní!yé!ĩ́=ɛ̀ nà  
NMLZ 2SG.SBJV=kill 2SG=food=DEF mouth  
“So that you can finish your food.”

(151) has two purpose adverbials. The first is marked by ní and the second by kóní. The first purpose adverbial, ní wòbájá lè ‘to worship him’ provides the reason for ‘our coming’ while the second purpose adverbial gives the reason or desired consequence of worshipping him, which is strengthening of faith.
(151) wɔ́=bà ní wɔ́=bá-já lè
1PL.PERF=come NMLZ 1PL.SBJV = VENT-worship 3SG.OBJ

kóní wɔ́=bá-wó wɔ̀=hé-mɔ̀-kɛ̀-yé-lí
NMLZ 1PL.SBJV = VENT-lift 1PL = buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM

mì Hitler
inside strength

“We have come to worship him, so that we may strengthen our faith.” [CH:9]

In (152) and (153), the purpose adverbials are marked by ní.

(152) ké wɔ́=ŋ̀-yá=!á má=há wɔ́=tsɔ́ jë!jë
when 1PL = PROG-go=DEF 1SG.FUT = give 1PL.SBJV-pass there

nì é=!lé jë!jë
NMLZ 2SG.SBJ = know there

“When we are going, I’ll let us pass by there so you get to know there.” [FH:10]

(153) bè kò ní é=!hó=!élé wɔ́=tsé !lé nì
time INDEF NMLZ PERF-pass = DEF 1PL = call 3SG.OBJ NMLZ

é=bá-féé crusade yè wɔ́=màj Ghana nèè
3SG.SBJV = VENT-do be.located 1PL = country Ghana this
màj
inside

“Sometime ago [lit: “a time that has passed…], we invited him to come and lead a ‘crusade’ here in our country Ghana.” [CH:239]

As Schmidtke-Bode (2009:19) notes, the main conceptual properties of purpose are intentionality, target directness, future orientation and a hypothetical result state. A person performs an action with the aim of bringing about a particular result. This result must
necessarily take place after the action, hence the future orientation. The intended result may not necessarily come to fruition and is only hypothethetical. Languages, therefore, tend to mark the predicate in the purpose adverbial to reflect these semantic features. In Gã, the predicate in the purposive is marked for the subjunctive, which is one of two morphemes (the other is the future marker) used to signal irrealis situations.

The purpose adverbial must always have a subject. This subject may differ from the subject of the main predicate, as is the case in (150), (152) and (153), but they may also be the same, as in (151). Constructions where the main predicate is one of the basic motion verbs, bà ‘come’ or yà ‘go’ more often than not have co-referential purpose and main verb subject arguments (154), (155), (156).

(154) nò hèwɔ́=!ɔ́ a ̃̀mɛ̃̀=ŋ̀-bà nĩ́ à mɛ̃́=bá-kà le
that sake=TOP 3PL=PROG-come NMLZ 3PL=VENT-tempt 3SG.OBJ
“So they were coming to tempt him.” [CH:255]

(155) nò hèwɔ́=!ɔ́ k ɛ́-jɛ̀ four thirty=!ɛ́ bè ágbènɛ̃́=!ɛ̃́
that sake=TOP take-come.from =DEF then now=DEF
à = bàá-wó-lé tɛ́ɛ́ nĩ́ á = !yá nĩ́
3PL.IMPERS = FUT-lift-ITER all NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS.SBJV = go NMLZ
á = !yá-tsɛ̀
3PL.IMPERS.SBJV = ITIV-push 3PL.IMPERS.SBJV = pour
“So from four-thirty, they will carry them and go and pour them away.” [OYO:39]
Constructions with a basic motion verb as the main predicate are also the only type of purpose construction in which a nominalizer is not obligatory. This is shown in (157a) below. All others must be marked by kónĩ́, nĩ́ or á!kɛ́.

(157a) mã́=!bá  Ø  mã́=!bá-kè  nyɛ́  nɔ́=!kó
1SG.FUT = come  1SG.FUT = VENT-gift  2PL  something
“I will come and gift you something.”  [YM:114]

Despite, the structural resemblance of (157a) to a serial verb construction, its permissiveness of the nominalizer between the two verb phrases in (157b) is proof that it is not.

(157b)má́=!bá  ñí́  mã́=!bá-kè  nyɛ́  nɔ́=!kó
1SG.FUT = come  NMLZ 1SG.FUT = VENT-gift  2PL  something
“I will come and gift you something.”

In addition, it is negated by negating only the first verb (158), rather than all verbs in the sentence as would be required of a serial construction. Doing so results in ungrammaticality (159).

(158)  ṹ=bá-!ŋ́  ṹ=bá-kè  nyɛ́  nɔ́=!kó
1SG=come-NEG.FUT  1SG = VENT-gift  2PL  thing = INDEF
“I will not come and gift you anything.”
Another important morphological feature of bà ‘come’ and yà ‘go’ purpose constructions is that the predicate of the purpose nominalization must be marked with the deictic auxiliary corresponding to the main verb predicate. We see this with bà ‘come’ in (154) and (157a), and with yà ‘go’ in (155) and (156). Even without an overt nominalizer the deictic auxiliaries in conjunction with subjunctive or future marking on the purpose predicate point to the presence of a purpose adverbial. The lack of one or both of these is what disqualifies the following sentences as purpose constructions, although at first glance they both appear to fit the bill. In (160), èbàkwɛ́ ĩ́yìsɛ̀ɛ̀ ‘he came and supported me’ cannot be analysed as a purpose adverbial complement of èbà ‘he came’ because the verb kwɛ́ ‘look’ is a bare verb with past time interpretation. A purpose adverbial would have future or subjunctive marking on kwɛ́ ‘look’.

Note that the first instance of nĩ́ in this example marks the modification function of an argument nominalization (modifying be ‘time); the second instance showcases a time adverbial.

Time adverbials will be discussed later in this chapter.
(161) does not have a purpose adverbial either, despite the presence of nĩ́. nĩ́ here is a coordinator - ‘and’. One clue for this finding is that if the construction marked by nĩ́ were a purpose adverbial, its verb, sɔ̀lɛ̀ ‘pray’ would have the itive prefix yà- to agree with the main predicate, yà ‘go’. In this case it does not. This could be because yà ‘go’ in this example does not code translational motion or a change in location, but rather a change in posture. We shall see in the following section that nĩ́ is poly-functional and may also mark clausal coordination, which I argue is its function in (161).

(161) wɔ̀=bàá-yà  wɔ́=nã̀kútse-i  à-na ̃̀ã̀  nĩ́
1PL=FUT-go  1PL=knee-PL PERT-mouth and wɔ́=sɔ̀lɛ̀
1PL.SBJV=pray
“We will go on our knees and pray.”  [CH:387]

The fact that purpose constructions with main verb bà ‘come’ or yà ‘go’ are the only ones capable of doing away with the nominalizer is no accident. The conceptual link between motion, generally, and purpose is very strong indeed, as reported by Schmidtke-Bode (2009:97). She observes that in many languages, ‘motion-cum-purpose’ clauses, as she calls them, contain less morphological material (e.g. no purpose markers, no purpose clause subjects), suggesting a much tighter semantic bond than in non-motion purpose types. The
reduction in form comes about as a result of high predictability, which is a consequence of the
cognitive link that humans make between movement from one location to another and the
accomplishment of goals. Schmidtke-Bode writes that even from childhood we associate
change of location with a need to get something done at the new location. It is the ubiquity of
this cognitive association that makes purpose markers and purpose subject arguments
redundant; afterall, it is normally the case that the one who moves is the one who has a goal to
achieve by moving. Indeed, there are several languages for which purpose adverbials can only
occur with motion main verbs (Smidtke-Bode 2009:94). In Gã, the ‘motion-cum-purpose’
construction has even grammaticalized to mark prospective aspect. This is limited to the verb,
*bà* ‘come’ when it is in the progressive.

(162) kpá̄a = ã̄ nga be = bá-tsé
    rope = DEF PROG-come 3SG.SBJV = come-break
    “The rope is about to break.”

*Purpose adverbials marked by álké*

Apart from *nì* and *kónì*, purpose nominalizations may also be marked by *álké*. The use of a
quotative marker grammaticalized from the verb ‘say’ as a purpose marker is found in
neighbouring Akan and according to Schmidtke-Bode (2009), is also attested in other unrelated
languages e.g. Kannada and Lezgian. Schmidtke-Bode (2009:192) calls such constructions
verbalized self-suggestions because they probably arose from situations where an actor asserts
an action and verbalizes the intended result as direct speech. The action and result are linked by
the verb ‘say’. Using (163) as an example, this will translate to: “And we will show it to God,
saying “Bless these herbs”.

(163) nĩ̀ wò = kè-bàá-tsɔ̀ɔ̀ àtàá nàá nyɔ̀ŋmɔ̀ álké
and 1PL = take-FUT-show father mother God NMLZ

é=jɔ́ɔ́ bà àà nɛ̀!ɛ̀ nɔ̀
3SG.SBJV=bless leaf this top
“We will show it to God, so that he blesses these herbs.” [YM:78]

Purpose adverbials marked by álké, unlike those marked by nĩ́, do not have to have irrealis
marking on the purpose predicate. In (164), the purpose predicate is marked progressive. The
semantics of álké-purpose adverbials is nevertheless very similar to the nĩ́-purpose adverbials.

It denotes an event which is viewed as the desired result or the reason for the action in the main
clause. For example, in (163), the purpose of showing ‘it’ to God is so that he blesses it and in
(164), the subject turns around in order to go/leave.

(164) òblá-nùù = è fò è = hè álké ìì = yà
life-male = DEF cut 3SG = body NMLZ 3SG.PROG = go
“The young man turned around in order to go.” [NAT:13]

In (165), the first instance of álké marks a complement of the CTP, fèé ‘do’ which in this
case is used idiomatically (together with an object NP) to mean ‘think’. The second token of
álké introduces a purpose adverbial.
I don’t think there is anyone here who has been brought here against his will to attend church.”  [CH:215]

The álke-purpose adverbial is also the structure of choice when the speaker wants to convey that the intended result constitutes a mere attempt on the part of the subject referent to see whether that result is attainable. Such purpose adverbials frequently contain epistemic adverbs such as áléénɔ́ ‘maybe, perhaps’. This semantic nuance is missing from nĩ-purpose adverbials, where there is more confidence in the stated outcome.

“And he jumped to see whether he would reach…errm…the beehive.”  [MA:40]

“They all started shouting so that perhaps the frog would hear their voices.”  [NAR:39]
Negative purposives

Negative purposives, also known as lest or avertive purposives, also denote the result of an action but in this case, the action in the main clause is being prohibited. In other words, the main clause encodes the action that is being prohibited and the purpose adverbial denotes what adverse consequences will happen if the action is carried out. In Gâ, the verb in the negative purposive nominalization is unmarked for aspect. The nominalizer is always ńì.

(168) kà-á-fó ńì ó=yítsò bà-gbá bò
NEG.SBJV-SBJV-cry NMLZ 2SG=head VENT-split 2SG.OBJ
“Don’t cry and give yourself a headache.” [FH:178]

6.6.2.2 (kó)nì as a coordinator

In this chapter, it has been shown how nominalizations marked by ńì are co-opted for various functions, from relativization to verb complementation and purposive adverbial modification. kónì and especially ńì may also function as clausal coordinators for non-real is situations. That is, if one wishes to conjoin a series of clauses depicting events which have not occurred yet, then one would likely use ńì rather than the standard clausal connector ńì, the only difference between the two being tone. kónì may also be used for the conjoining of potential or hypothetical events, although ńì is much more common. In (169), kónì appears twice and in the first instance, at least, it appears to have no purposive function. The first kónì connects the imperatives bí óhá nyèbàà nè!è “ask it of these herbs” and òkè ë!kö áfɔ̀ ónàjì hè “use some to
wash your legs.” As imperatives, the two conjuncts have irrealis semantics since they are situations that are yet to come to pass. Washing one’s feet is not the intended consequence of praying via the ritual herbs so kóní’s function is more connective than purposive. The second token of kóní is ambiguous between a coordinate or purposive relationship. God’s intercession may be viewed as the intended result of performing the rituals of making supplications through the herbs and washing one’s feet. But it could also be viewed as just the third in a list of commands.

(169) nɔ̃́-fĩ́ã́-nɔ̃́ ní ò = táò-ɔ̀-ɔ́-!ɔ́ bí á = hà
thing-all-thing NMLZ 2SG = want-HAB = DEF = DEF ask.IMP SBJV = give

nyè = bàà nê = !é bí
3PL = leaf this = DEF ask

“Anything that you want, ask it of these herbs. Ask.”

kóní ò = kɛ̀ ɛ̀-fɔ́ ð = nà-jî ə-hè
and 2SG = take some SBJV-wash 2SG = leg-PL PERT-body

“*And* use some (of the herbal infusion) to wash your legs.”

kóní ó = kwé kè-jè áfî nê!ɛ
NMLZ 2SG.SBJV = watch take-come.from year this

kè-yà-shí wɔ̀-sèè áfî
take-ITIV-hit tomorrow-back year

“*And* watch, from this year until next year”

ké ó = bì kò nî ò = táò-ð nî
if 2SG = child INDEF FOC 2SG = search-HAB NMLZ
é=fɔ́    hâ-access=DEF twins=DEF God  FUT-stand inside
é=hã́  bò
3SG.SBJV=give  2SG.OBJ
“If you have a child whom you want to give birth to twins, God will intervene for you.”

In the following example, a hypothetical situation is presented consisting of a conditional clause marked initially by kɛ́. The conditional clause is composed of three propositions all conjoined by nĩ́.

è=kɛ́  ké  wɔ́=fèé  é!shá  pó  nĩ́  wɔ́=bà  yè
3SG=say  if  1PL=do  sin  even and  1PL=come  be.located
à nɔ́kwálé  mì́  nĩ́  wɔ́=bà-jàjé  wɔ́=hè  éshà-í
truth  inside and  1PL = VENT-straighten  1PL = body  sin-PL

!lé  è=kɛ́  è=kè  fèé  bàá-kè  wɔ́
TOP  3SG=say  3SG=take  all  FUT-gift  1PL
“He said even if we sin and we come in truth and we confess our sins…he said he will forgive it all.” [CH:378]

It should be noted that when the non-initial conjunct(s) is/are marked for the subjunctive, only nĩ́ or kónĩ́ can be used as a coordinator. So for instance, while nĩ́ can replace nĩ́ in (170), it cannot replace it in (169). In other words, the standard coordinator, nĩ́, may be used for realis as well as irrealis situations (such as conditionals and future propositions), as long as those irrealis situations do not take subjunctive marking. nĩ́, on the other hand, is strictly restricted to
conjoining irrealis situations, be they marked subjunctive or otherwise. The exception to this is if all the conjuncts are marked for future. In that case, \( n' \) must be used.

In the following sentence, \( n' \) is rightfully used to conjoin the subjunctive-marked clauses. \( n' \) would be ungrammatical in this role (171b).

(171a) \( w' = báá-!yé \quad n' \quad w' = !nũ \quad n' \quad w' = !jó \)
1PL = FUT-eat and 1PL.SBJV = eat and 1PL.SBJV = dance
“We will eat and drink and dance.“

(171b) *\( w' = báá-!yé \quad n' \quad w' = !nũ \quad n' \quad w' = !jó \)
1PL = FUT-eat and 1PL.SBJV = eat and 1PL.SBJV = dance
“We will eat and drink and dance.“

\( n' \) may be used if the non-initial conjuncts take future instead of subjunctive marking (172a).

However, \( n' \) may not be used in this same situation (172b).

(172a) \( w' = báá-!yé \quad n' \quad w' = báá-!nũ \quad n' \quad w' = báá-!jó \)
1PL = FUT-eat and 1PL = FUT-eat and 1PL = FUT-dance
“We will eat and drink and dance.“

(172b) *\( w' = báá-!yé \quad n' \quad w' = báá-!nũ \quad n' \quad w' = báá-!jó \)
1PL = FUT-eat and 1PL = FUT-eat and 1PL = FUT-dance
“We will eat and drink and dance.“

In some languages, there is evidence of a coordinate marker developing into a marker of temporal, conditional and causal subordinate clauses (Heine and Kuteva 2007:43). This suggests that there is a pathway for the development of a coordinator to a marker of purpose, as has been suggested, for instance, by Schmidtke-Bode (2009:197). However, postulating the
opposite path of development is the best way to account for the Gã data. I propose that the coordinator used for irrealis events, ní, developed from the purpose marker (kó)ní. Recall that the standard coordinator, nì (capable of conjoining all clauses that are not marked subjunctive) always occurs with low tone. In addition, it never occurs with kó to form kónì. Therefore, it is less likely to have been derived from the purposive marker, (kó)ní which has high tone. Even if one were to explain the tone alteration as a matter of iconicity and the desire for differentiating realis coordination from irrealis coordination (a semantico-syntactic specialization that is not attested cross-linguistically), one would be hard-pressed to explain how kónì (with all high tones), a morpheme otherwise seen only in purposives, is also able to function as a coordinator for realis events. An alternative and simpler hypothesis, then, is that the purpose marker (kó)ní came to be used to conjoin clauses which have the same temporal and modal semantics as those found in purpose nominalizations marked by (kó)ní. The leap from purposive to coordinate semantics is not a huge one. Both constructions have some elements in common. Actions and results always follow one another in a temporally linear fashion: action first, then result, or in the case of the purposive, intended result. Coordinated actions on the other hand, need not be sequential, but often, a pragmatic inference is made and listeners assume that the first action precedes the second. In employing (kó)ní as a connector of clauses with no purposive relation but with irrealis semantics, speakers are focusing solely on the concatenative semantic element
of \((kó)ṇí\)' while remaining faithful to its mood requirements. Another semantic nuance develops
when use of \(kóṇí\) strongly implies that the events will occur in the order stated, while use of \(ṇí\)
carries a weaker implication.

### 6.6.2.3 Reason adverbials

Event nominalizations marked by \(ṇí\) alone or by both \(ṇí\) and \(á!kɛ́\) may also function as reason
adverbials. Here, the event nominalization occurs as the dependent nominal in a possessive NP
whose head is \(hèwɔ́\) ‘sake’. The nominalization gives the reason for the situation coded by the
main clause. The following sentences exemplify this:

(173) \[ \begin{align*}
&\text{á!kɛ́ ṇí ŋòò yɛ̀ ŋ ṃɔ́mĩ́ ṃĩ́ng̣ ḥèwɔ́=!ɔ́} \\
&\text{NMLZ NMLZ salt be.located okro inside sake=TOP} \\
&3\text{PL.IMPERS=take salt put.NEG kpekple=DEF inside anymore} \\
&\text{“Because there is salt in the okro, no additional salt is put in the kpekple.”} \ [YM:267]
\]

(174) \[ \begin{align*}
&\text{á!kɛ́ ṇí nỵɔ̄ṃɔ̄ ḥị̣ ḳạ́ gḅ̣e!ḳ̣e-ḅ̣ụ̃ = ẹ̀ ạ̊-ḅ̣ẹ̃} \\
&\text{NMLZ NMLZ God face lie child-PL=DEF PERT-body} \\
&3\text{SG=hold child=DEF inside 3SG=watch 3SG=top} \\
&\text{“Because God was was looking out for the children, he supported the child and looked} \\
&\text{after him.”} \ [PAT:171]
\]
The reason nominalization occupies the same syntactic slot that a noun would occupy, as we see with Aku in (175):

(175) ákú hèwɔ́ =!ɔ́ í =!yááá nítsúmɔ́ è =bɛ́ hèwɔ́!lè
Aku sake =TOP 1SG.NEG go.NEG work 3SG = have.NEG strength
“Because of Aku, I did not go to work. She is ill.”

6.6.2.4 á!kɛ́ as a comparative preposition
á!kɛ́ can also function as a preposition where its object is equated with or compared with the object of the verbal predicate. For example, in (176), lè, the third singular objective pronoun is being equated with water. In (177), ní!f inversión ‘the thing’ (referring to the performance of a ritual) is equated with the property of goodwill.

(176) nɔ́ ní ò =nà-à lè á!kɛ́ nù
NM NMLZ 2SG = see-HAB 3SG.OBJ as water

lóó nɔ́ =!kó =!lè jééé nù è
or thing = INDEF = DEF NEG water IJ
“What you see as water or something, it’s not water!” [OYO:293]

(177) àmè =nà ní!f inversión á!kɛ́.shí ò mànyé
3PL = see thing = DEF as goodwill
“They saw it as goodwill.” [OYO:71]

The comparative sense of á!kɛ́ is also on display in the following example.

(177) jééé hé-mɔ́-kè-yè-lí fà-lè jí nɔ́ ní
NEG buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM be.plenty-NOM COP NM NMLZ

hè hiá-à tsɔ́ á!kɛ́ hé-mɔ́-kè-yè-lí ní
body need-HAB too.much as buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM NMLZ
“Having a lot of faith is not as important as having firm faith rooted in Christ.”
(Lit: “It is not plenty of faith which is needed so much as a firm faith rooted in Christ.”)  [CH:332]

6.6.2.5 Time adverbials

Time adverbials denote the time at which an event unfolded by relating it to the time of another event. This adverbial may then be used to modify a clause by indicating the time of the event in that clause. The basic time adverbial is marked by nĩ́ when the event is in the past and when the speaker is referring to a specific event. kẽ́ is the marker of choice when the event is in the future or is hypothetical or when it is non-specific and refers to past habitual events. kẽ́ also doubles as a marker of conditionality, resulting in ambiguity in many contexts. Structurally, the Gã time adverbial is a verb-based nominalization, hence its marking by nĩ́. The nominalization could function alone as a time adverbial or it could modify the noun bè ‘time’ thereby constituting a relative construction. But this relative construction differs from typical relative constructions discussed above because it does not denote an argument, but a temporal adverbial. The use of relative constructions with head noun,‘time’ or some other temporal noun is well-attested crosslinguistically and is found in for example, Hausa, Mandarin, Swahili, Korean and Turkish (Thompson et al 2007:247). Time adverbials are usually modified finally by the definite article, lè or its allomorphs. Since the construction is a nominalization, this is
not unexpected. In (178) and (179), the time adverbials consist of nominalizations modifying bè 'time'.

(178) ̀i = kài-̀à á!kè bè ní wò = tsè sùkù
1SG = remember-HAB NMLZ time NMLZ 1PL = tear SUKU

ásàfò = !lè màmí !kó ní yɔ̀
group = DEF mother INDEF NMLZ be.located.HAB

àsàfò = è mì

group = DEF inside

“I remember that when we started the SUKU fellowship, a certain woman who was in the group…” [CH:312]

(179) bè ní ̀i = bè wò dìŋtsè = !è ké
time NMLZ 1SG = have.NEG husband even = DEF when

de = fèè = !è ̀i = kwè-̀à ó = hîè
3SG = do = DEF 1SG = look-HAB 2SG = face

“Even when I didn’t have a husband, every once in a while, I would make a pass at you.” [MM:54]

In (179), ké èfèè!è is an idiomatic phrase meaning “once in a while”.

In the following examples, the time adverbial comprises only the nominalization marked by ní.

(180) ní ̀i = hè shikà = !à nì ̀i = síìsì
NMLZ 1SG = take money = DEF and 1SG = seize

“When/After I took the money I seized it.” [MM:71]

(181) shì ní è = bà è = bà-shè wò wò = nò = !ò
but NMLZ 3SG = come 3SG = VENT-reach 1PL 1PL = top = DEF
"But when it got to us (our generation), as for us, we give birth to twins." [OYO:404]

(182) \(\delta = \text{nyé} \text{-!}\já\) \(\delta = \text{bé!té}\) \(jé!mé\) \(ní\)
2SG = be.able-NEG.FUT 2SG.SBJV = enter there NMLZ

\(\delta = jú-kð\) \(\delta = !hé\)
2SG = bathe-NEG.PERF 2SG = body

"You cannot enter there when you have not bathed."

As the translation in (180) demonstrates, the construction may be ambiguous between a ‘when’ and an ‘after’ meaning. There is no special adverb or marker for conveying a situation where an event takes place temporally posterior to another. An ‘after’ interpretation is not available when the main event predicate is marked for the perfect (183) or progressive (184). This is because the ‘after’ interpretation requires that the main event should have a beginning point that does not overlap with the adverbial event. That is, the entirety of the main event should occur after the entirety of the adverbial event has been completed. When the main event is marked progressive, however, the interpretation is that the action began prior to the action in the adverbial event and is still ongoing. Similarly, perfect-marked verbs predicate actions that have already taken place.

(183) \(ní\) \(wð = shè\) \(shítá = !\já\) \(é = wð\)
NMLZ 1PL = reach house = DEF 3SG.PERF = sleep

"When/*After we got home, she was asleep."
A time adverbial that denotes an event slated to occur in the future and which contains the future marker bàá- must be expressed by a relative construction with the head noun, bè ‘time’, as in (185). Rather than a ‘when’ interpretation, such sentences have a ‘by the time’ interpretation; the event in the main clause is predicted to occur prior to that in the adverbial.

(185) bè ní ó=bàá-ò shí lèé!bí=!ɛ́ àyé !kó
time NMLZ 2SG=FUT-rise down morning=DEF witch INDEF
c̕é=bà-gbèé sh̃i yè ó=tsũ=è miŋ
3SG.PRF=VENT-fall down be.located 2SG=room=DEF top
yè ó=sàà-tsó=è nũ
top be.located 2SG=bed-wood=DEF top
“By the time you wake up in the morning, a witch would have fallen down into your room, onto your bed.” [CH:264]

(186) wò bè ní ó=bàá-!bá=!á wɔ=ʃwélé !nũ ní
tomorrow time NMLZ 2SG=FUT-come=DEF 1PL=lie top NMLZ
wɔ=ŋ-hoó nĩ!í
1PL=PROG-cook thing
“By the time you come tomorrow, we’ll be busily cooking.” [YM:292]

Expressing the adverbial as an argument nominalization alone without the head bè ‘time’ results in ungrammaticality.
Multiple time adverbials may follow each other in succession. They are usually connected to the main clause by the coordinator, *nī* ‘and/then’. In (188), two adverbials marked by *nī* occur successively, followed by the coordinator, *nī* and then the main assertion.

(188)  

\[
\begin{array}{llllllllll}
nī & à = bá & nī & à = wì̀ ě \\
NMLZ & 3PL.IMPERS = come & NMLZ & 3PL.IMPERS-talk \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{llllllllll}
ààhù = !è & nì & è = tè & shì & nì & è = wì̀ ě \\
continuously = DEF & and & 3SG = rise & down & and & 3SG = talk \\
\end{array}
\]

“When they came and they talked continuously (tried to make their case/reason with them), she got up and spoke.” [MM:185]

To denote a time that is in the future, or one that is hypothetical, or one that refers to a past habitual event, a completely different nominalizer, *kè* is employed. The same construction may also convey conditional meaning. The following are some examples of constructions marked by *kè*. (189) and (190) refer to future events while (191) and (192a) refer to

(187)  

\[
\begin{array}{llllllllll}
* nī & ò = báá-tè & shì & lèé!bì = !è & òyé & !kó \\
NMLZ & 2SG-FUT = rise & down & morning = DEF & witch & INDEF \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{llllllllll}
è = bà-gbèé & shì & yè & ò = tsù = è & mìŋ̀ \\
3SG.PERF = VENT-fall & down & be.located & 2SG = room = DEF & top \\
\end{array}
\]

“By the time you wake up in the morning, a witch would have fallen down into your room, onto your bed.”
hypothetical events. (192b) refers to a past event, but a non-specific one, a sort of past habitual occurrence.

(189) \( \text{ke} \quad \text{aá} = \text{yá} = ! \text{á} \) \( \text{nyě} \)-mő \( \text{sè} \)
when \( 3\text{PL.IMPERS.PROG} = \text{go} = \text{DEF} \) walk-IMP back
“When they are going, follow them.” [YM:206]

(190) \( \text{ke} \quad \text{d} = \text{bá} = ! \text{á} \) \( \text{měn} \) \( \text{d} = \text{bá}-! \text{yé} \)
when \( 2\text{SG} = \text{come} = \text{DEF} \) what \( 2\text{SG} = \text{FUT}-\text{eat} \)
“When you come, what will you eat?” [DT:11:10]

(191) \( \text{bílantéñ} \) \( \text{wó} = ! \text{ná} \) \( \text{sixty years} \) \( \text{ke} \text{ sè} \text{ shì} \) \( \text{ke} \)
now \( 1\text{PL.PERF} = \text{get} \) and back but when

\( \text{nó} = \text{kò} \quad \text{bá} = ! \text{á} \quad \text{wó} = \text{hè} \quad \text{kpókpó-ò} \quad \text{tám} \quad \text{gbè} \)
thing = INDEF come = DEF 1PL = body shiver-HAB like dog

\( \text{ní} \quad \text{é} = \text{dò} \quad \text{è} = \text{lè} \)
NMLZ 3SG.PERF = bend 3SG = tail
“Now we are over sixty years old but when something happens we tremble like a dog which has bent its tail [i.e. a dog in fear].” [CH:272]

(192a) \( \text{é!kolé} = ! \text{é} \) \( \text{ke} \) \( \text{ì} = \text{nà} \) \( \text{d} = \text{mfonfr} = ! \text{é} \) \( \text{má} = ! \text{ná} \)
maybe = TOP if/when \( 1\text{SG} = \text{see} \) \( 3\text{SG} = \text{photo} = \text{DEF} \) \( 1\text{SG.FUT} = \text{see} \)
“Maybe when I see a photo of her I will recognize her.” [DF:48]

(192b) \( \text{nò} \quad \text{mi} = ! \text{é} \) \( \text{ke} \) \( \text{ì} = \text{ŋá} \) \( \text{lè} = ! \text{é} \) \( \text{é} = ! \text{fóóó} \)
that inside = TOP when \( 1\text{SG} = \text{greet} \) \( 3\text{SG.OBJ} = \text{DEF} \) \( 3\text{SG.NEG} = \text{cut.NEG} \)
\( \text{í} = \text{dá} \text{á} \)
1SG = mouth
“At that time, whenever I greeted her/him, s/he would not respond.”
As, Thompson et al (2007:258) note, the difference between ‘if’ and ‘when’ is a matter of degree of expectability. In other words, if one is confident of the occurrence of an event, then a ‘when’ interpretation is warranted. If one is less confident, then ‘if’ is preferred. It is not always possible to gauge accurately a speaker’s confidence in the materialization of an event.

(189) and (190) are glossed ‘when’ because I was privy to background information pertinent to the discourse. For example, that in (189) people were going to go on a procession as part of a yearly ritual and in (190) I was aware that the speaker was looking forward to a visit from the addressee and travel tickets had already been bought. Without this type of information, it may be difficult to gloss ̣kɛ́ with certainty, and it is for this reason that (192a) remains ambiguous.

\[i\) Simultaneous time adverbials\]

A ‘while’ meaning is obtained when the verb in the adverbial is progressive (193), (194).

\[(193)\] nò mì́j = !ɛ́ ní mì́j = !bá-íá èè = bí

that inside = TOP NMLZ 1SG.PROG = come-DEF 3SG.PROG = ask

!mí́ á!ké nègbè jí sùá!lábà
1SG.OBJ NMLZ where COP Sualaba

“While I was coming, she was asking me where Sualaba was.” [FH:44]

\[(194)\] ní ãà = tsú níffe = !É è = tèè

NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS.PROG = work thing = DEF 3SG.PERF = go.PST
é = yà-wò
3SG.PERF = ITIV-sleep

“While work is being done, he has gone to bed.”
When the verb in the adverbial is progressive and the main clause specifies a temporal duration, then the adverbial indicates an activity whose duration spans the duration indicated by the temporal noun in the main clause. That is, the adverbial takes on a ‘during which’ interpretation, as in (195) and (196).

(195) nĩ̀ è = yè four days kè nĩ́ ì nĩ̀ àà-- èè and 3SG-eat and things NMLZ 3PL-- IJ

àà = bɔ̀ mɔ́dɛ̃́ŋ́ á!kɛ́ à=bàá- revive 3PL.PROG=create strength NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS=FUT-
lè 3SG.OBJ

"And he was there for for about four days, during which they were trying to revive him."  [FH:139]

(196) è = nyɛ̀-ɔ̀ è = yè-ɔ̀ áfí-ì òhá-!í ékpàà nĩ́ èè = kwɛ̀ è = fã-jĩ̄ ɣ-bó!té sú = è mĩ̀

3SG=able.to-HAB 3SG=eat-HAB year-PL hundred-PL six NMLZ

3SG=germinate 3SG=root-PL PROG-enter soil=DEF inside

“It can take six hundred years during which it is germinating, its roots are entering the soil.”  [CH:343]

‘Before’ time adverbial

To express that an event occurred anterior to the time of another event, two different nominalizers differing in the tone on the last syllable are used. They are dã́nĩ́ and dã́nĩ̀. There are two factors that determine the choice between them. These are whether or not the adverbial
precedes the main clause and whether it has subjunctive marking. When the time adverbial
precedes the main clause, ḏáńí is used (197). When the adverbial follows the main clause, ḏáńì
is used (198), (199), except when the adverbial predicate is subjunctive, then ḏáńí is used (200).

So ḏáńí is employed when the adverbial precedes the main clause or when it contains a
subjunctive morpheme, regardless of its position, while ḏáńì is used for adverbials that follow
the main clause and do not have a subjunctive morpheme. The resemblance in form between
these markers and the more prevalent ní́ and ní̀ cannot be missed, although their diachronic
relationship remains elusive due to lack of records.

(197) ḏáńí  à=bàá-yè    ḏáńí à=yè-ɔ̀
before 3PL.IMPERS-FUT-eat    3PL.IMPERS = eat-HAB

yèèyé!yé
Yeyeye
“Before Homowo (festival) is celebrated, Yeyeye (festival) is celebrated.”
[YM:35]

(198) è=tɔ̀  bò    ḏáńí  ò=nyɛ́  ò = fɔ́
3SG = toil 2SG.OBJ before 2SG = be.able 2SG = give.birth

nàkà̀ gbé!kê = !è
that child = DEF
“You toiled before you were able to give birth to that child.”   [CH:38]

(199) hèwɔ́ = !ɔ́  òmɛ = bò!té  nû = è  ḏáńí gbé!kê = è  bɔ̀
sake = DEF 3PL = enter water = DEF under before child = DEF create
mɔ̃́dɛ̃́n  nì  ò = jè  kpò
strength  and  3SG = exit  compound
“So they were submerged underwater before/and then the child made some effort and
got out.”  [MA:85]

(200)  shá  ò = dáà  dã́nĩ́  ò = ljú  ò = !hé
scrub  2SG = mouth  before  2SG.SBJV = bathe  2SG = body
“Brush your teeth before you take a bath.”

dã́nĩ́ has another syntactic function as a time adverb when it occurs in sentence-final position. It
is then realised as dã́ŋ̀. An example is given in (201).

(201)  ì = kɛ̀ɛ́  ì = !nã́-kò  dã́ŋ̀
1SG = say  1SG.NEG = see-NEG.PERF before
“I said “I haven’t seen (it) before.””  [MM:67]

Substitutive adverbial

A substitutive adverbial meaning comes about when the subject referents of the adverbial and
the main clause are coreferential and the adverbial predicate is marked for the future or
subjunctive.

(202)  ní  òkó  bàá-tsṹ  nṹ = !é
NMLZ  Oko  FUT-work  thing = DEF  3SG.PROG = sleep
“Instead of Oko working, he is sleeping.”

(203)  ní  ò = bàá-wá  mĩ́ = !é
NMLZ  2SG = FUT-help  1SG.OBJ = DEF  2SG = sit down
òò = kwɛ́  mì  mòŋ́
2SG.PROG = watch  1SG.OBJ  rather
“Instead of helping me, you are rather sitting down watching me.”
6.6.2.5 Conditional adverbials
Conditionals have been introduced briefly above in the discussion of time adverbials because some time adverbials use the same marker, *kɛ́*, as conditionals. A conditional construction presents a condition (the protasis or traditionally, the ‘if’ clause) and the consequence of that condition pertaining (the apodosis or ‘then’ clause). It therefore codes a hypothetical event. It is this semantic commonality with future and hypothetical time adverbials that allows these functions to be accomplished by the same construction. As noted earlier, a ‘when’ interpretation is warranted when the speaker is reasonably sure of the manifestation of the event, while an ‘if’ interpretation is triggered by less confidence in the realization of the event denoted in the protasis (Thompson et al. 2007:258). *kɛ́* is therefore a nominalizer that is specialized mainly for marking the time of a future/hypothetical event (coded in the apodosis) as coinciding with the time of the event characterized in the protasis. When there is doubt about the event in the protasis unfolding, a conditional meaning is born, because such a construction highlights even more greatly the dependence of the manifestation of the event in the apodosis on the manifestation of that in the protasis.

In Gã, the protasis or conditional event is compulsorily marked by *kɛ́* and the apodosis is optionally marked by *bɛ̀* ‘then’. The protasis is often modified finally by the definite article,
just as time adverbials nominalized by *nī* are also modified by the definite article. In (204) and (205), both markers are present. In (206) and (207), the apodosis has no marker.

(204) **ké** wɔ̀ = yè hé-mɔ̀-kɛ̀-yɛ̀-li yè khrı́stɔ̀ mlí !lé
if 1PL = have buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM be.located Christ inside DEF

**bé = lέ** nö̀ nö́ è = wìé !lé wɔ̀ = bàá-hé !nö́
then = TOP NM NMLZ 3SG = say DEF 1PL = FUT-take top

wá = !yé
1PL.SBJV = eat

“If we have faith in Christ, then what he has said, we will trust in it.” [CH:365]

(205) èkɛ̀ = !é **ké** ò = tèè ó = hì̀ fì!óó = !é **bé = lέ**
then = TOP if 2SG = go.PST 2SG = face little = DEF then = TOP

màŋtsɛ̀ àgbónàà
Mantse Agbonaa

“And then if you go straight ahead for a bit, then (you'll be in) *Mantse Agbonaa*.”

[FH:98]

(206) **ké** nyè̀ = yè nyè̀ = bùà mì̀ = !é wɔ̀ sèè
if 2PL = eat 2PL = help 1SG.OBJ = DEF tomorrow back

àfì = !é mà̀ = !bá mà̀ = !bá-kè nyè̀ nö̀ = !kó
year = DEF 1SG.FUT = come 1SG.FUT = VENT-gift 2PL thing = INDEF

“If you help me, next year I will come and gift you something.” [YM:115]

(207) **ké** nùù jì bó̀ = !é ò = fɛ̀-ɛ̀ yè
if male COP 2SG.OBJ = DEF 2SG = do-HAB be.located
ó = tsè-mè̀ t s è̀-mè̀  à -w è̀
2SG = father-PL PERT-family.house
“If you are a man, you do it in your father's family house.” [OYO:336]

Sometimes ké is followed by the copula, jí and together they form a compounded grammatical marker.

(208) kéjí à = wò bàà nè!ë ēè
if 3PL.IMPERS = prepare leaf this IJ

gbé!kè̀-bí!í-ë  ēè  à-sùsùmá  hì-ò  bàà nè!ë  mì̀
child-PL = DEF IJ PERT-spirit live-HAB leaf this inside
“If/when the herbs are prepared, the children’s spirit reside in it.” [OYO:21]

i. Counterfactuals

The examples showing conditional adverbials above involve either habitual or generic situations (204), (205), (207), (208) or a prediction/hypothetical situation (206). Conditionals which denote events that did not or cannot happen are known as counterfactuals and in Gã they receive special marking. The counterfactual is marked initially by àjí and finally by kú!lé (often realized as kú!ë), which is a compound of kú and the definite article. It is possible that àjí is a coalescence of some marker, à which is no longer independent, and the copula jí. This situation would mirror that of kéljí discussed above as well as kú!lé, since kú cannot occur independently either. In the following example, the unattainable condition, the fact of the addressee being ‘here’, is marked by àjí and kú!ë.
(209) nĩ́  àjí   ò = yè   bĩ́-ŋ̀  kṹ!ɛ̃́ mɔ̃̀  nĩ́
and  if  2SG = be.located    here-FOC   CTF  person   NMLZ
bàá-télé = !é
FUT-carry.on.head = DEF   2SG = FUT-see
“And if you were here you would be able to see the one who would carry it.”
[YM:193]

(210) àjí   ó=jù   ó=hè-ŋ̀  kṹ!ɛ̃́ ĩ̀=kɛ̀
if  2SG.PERF = bathe   2SG = body-PRED.PRT   CTF   1SG = take
bò   bàá-!yá
2SG.OBJ   FUT-go
“If you had bathed, I would have taken you with me.”

One striking phonological characteristic of the constructions in (209) and (210) is that
there is always a velar nasal with low tone immediately before kṹ!ɛ̃́. So in (209) and (210) bí!ɛ́
‘here’ and hè ‘body’ are followed by a velar nasal sound. This nasal is probably a phonological
reduction of some morpheme, and based on its phonological shape, tone and the semantics of
the construction, I suggest that this morpheme was the predicative particle, nĩ̀. In modern Gã,
when nĩ̀ occurs as the only predicate in a clause, it always has a nominal subject. The
counterfactual supposition could be a noun (211) and it probably historically was restricted
only to nouns. With time this was expanded to include larger propositional units - event
nominalizations - such as (209) and (210). Comparing (210) and (211), it is clear that the
counterfactual nominalization in (210) occupies the same slot as the noun, \( m\ddot{i} \) ‘1SG.OBJ’, in (211).

(211) \( \ddot{a}\ddot{j}\ddot{i} \quad m\ddot{i} \quad \dddot{k}\dddot{u}\dddot{t}\dddot{e} \quad \dddot{i} = \dddot{k}\dddot{e} \quad \dddot{b}\dddot{o} \)

if 1SG.OBJ-PRED.PRT CTF 1SG = take 2SG.OBJ

bàá-lyá  
FUT-go  
“If it were me, I would go with you.”

\( \dddot{k}\dddot{u}\dddot{t}\dddot{e} \) occurs without \( \ddot{a}\ddot{j}\ddot{i} \), as a counterfactual adverb. When it occurs in this function it indicates that the predicate it modifies describes a situation that could have obtained but did/will not.

(212) \( \dddot{k}\dddot{u}\dddot{t}\dddot{e} \quad w = \dddot{\j}\dddot{b} \quad w\ddot{\j} = \dddot{b} \dddot{a} \quad s\dddot{l} \dddot{a} \quad \dddot{b}\dddot{o} \)

CTF 1PL = PROG-come 1PL.SBJV = come visit 2SG.OBJ  
“We were coming to visit you.” [But are no longer going to.]

(213) \( \ddot{l}\ddot{e} \quad n\ddot{\ddot{i}} \quad \dddot{k}\dddot{u}\dddot{t}\dddot{e} \quad \dddot{\ddot{e}} = \dddot{b} \dddot{\dot{a}} \quad \dddot{\dot{e}} = \dddot{\dot{b}} \dddot{k}\dddot{w}\dddot{e} \)

3SG.OBJ FOC CTF 3SG.PROG = come 3SG.SBJV = VENT-watch  
\( \ddot{g}\ddot{b}\ddot{\ddot{e}}!k\ddot{e} = !\ddot{\ddot{\dot{e}}} \)

cchild = DEF  
“It is s/he who was coming to watch the child.” [But is no longer going to.]

(214) \( \dddot{\dddot{e}}\dddot{\dddot{e}}\dddot{\dddot{e}} \quad h\ddot{e}w\ddot{\j} = !\ddot{\j} \quad \dddot{\dddot{e}} = !\dddot{s}\dddot{\dddot{a}}\dddot{\dddot{a}} \quad n = 1 \quad \dddot{k}\dddot{u}\dddot{t}\dddot{e} \)

yes so = TOP 3SG.PERF = fit.NEG NMLZ CTF  
\( \dddot{\dot{a}} = \dddot{t\dddot{\dddot{\dddot{a}}} \quad \dddot{\dddot{\dddot{e}}} = \dddot{\dddot{h}} \)

3PL.IMPERS = touch-HAB 3SG = body  
“Yes, so they shouldn’t have touched him.” [But they did] [FH:146]
ii. Negative conditionals

This is expressed by the adverb, jà ‘unless’. The conditional may then be linked to the main clause by dànì ‘before’. Oftentimes, jà ‘unless’ is preceded by bè ‘then’ but this is by no means compulsory.

(215) bè jà ó = hé-mɔ̀-kè-yé-lí dà dànì ò=bàá-nyɛ̀
then unless 2SG = buy-NOM-and-eat-NOM be.big before 2SG = FUT-able

ó = yè nɔ̀
2SG.SBJV = eat top

“Your faith must be strong before you can abide by it.”
Lit: “Unless your faith is strong before you can abide by it.” [CH:329]

jà ‘unless’ could also function as a preposition, as in (216), where its object is the NP àfí pɛ́ ‘only one year’.

(216) jà áfí pé dànì à = kè nɛ̀kɛ̀ bàà nɛ̀!ɛ̀
unless year only before 3PL.IMPERS = take this leaf this

bà-à
come-HAB

“They bring these herbs only once a year.”
Lit: “Unless one year (comes) before they bring these herbs.” [OYO:292]

6.7 Causal adverbials

The causal adverbial in Gã is a clause and not a grammatical nominalization. It is marked by é!jàálkè, whose etymology can arguably be traced to the phrase è = jè á!lkè [3SG = come.from NMLZ] ‘it comes from that…’ It is not considered a nominalization because its distribution
within the sentence does not correspond to the distribution of nominals. In addition, it is not
modified by a final article. The causal clause always follows the main clause which expresses
the result. Examples of causal adverbial clauses are:

(217) nǐ = ē dò gbé!ké-nùú = ē ọjáá!ké ē = shwééé
thing = DEF hurt child-male = DEF because 3SG = play.NEG

è = kòkòdè!né = è hè kwáá
3SG = frog = DEF body at.all
“The thing hurt the boy because he loved his frog very much.” (Lit:…because he wasn't
playful at all about his frog i.e. he cherished their relationship) [PAT:26]

(218) bè nǐ shòmè h-yá = ā è = kèè mí á!kè
time NMLZ Shormey PROG-go = DEF 3SG = tell 1SG.OBJ NMLZ
è = báá-fcé lè blèòò ọjáá!ké àmè = wòlò yè
3SG = FUT-do 3SG.OBJ gently because 3PL = paper be.located
è = dè
3SG = hand
“When Shormey was going, she told me that she would handle it gently because their
documents were with him.” [DT:21;44]

6.8 Possible historical relationships between nominalizations marked by ní and
á!ké
In this section, the diachronic development of the various functions of ní- and á!ké-marked
nominalizations will be examined. At this juncture, it is incumbent on me to recite the usual
refrain - that without any historical records, this venture is mostly speculative. But it is
nevertheless worthwhile to do so, using comparative data from languages which have a long-
studied history, as well as knowledge regarding human cognition and communicative function. With these tools, it is possible to draw up a tentative map of relations between the various functions and their hypothetical line of historical development. Before getting to that, it will be useful to list the various functions performed by each type of nominalization.

*nĩ*: nominalization:
relativization, complementation, purpose adverbial modification, time adverbial modification, reason adverbial modification, substitutive adverbial modification, simultaneous adverbial

Other uses of *nĩ*: coordination

*á!kɛ*: nominalization: complementation, purpose adverbial, reason adverbial (co-occurring with *nĩ*)

Other uses of *á!kɛ*: comparative preposition

There is cross-linguistic evidence that relative clause and complement clause markers develop from discourse-deictic markers, especially demonstratives. Hopper and Traugott (2003:191) have shown this to be the case for English ‘that’, which develops from a pronoun into a discourse deictic and then a complementizer. For Gã, one possible source for the nominalizer, *nĩ* is the predicative particle, *nĩ*, first discussed in §3.5.2. This is a discourse deictic predicative particle which points to an entity in the previous discourse or in the discourse environment. Example: *ákú !nĩ* ‘It is Aku’. It is my contention that this particle also
developed into a focus particle and then a marker of relativization. This may have happened via a paratactic construction such as (219). Since the subjects of the two sentences are coreferential, the second subject could easily be eliminated, resulting in (220), which is a typical focus construction.

(219) yòó=ɛ̀   nî.   è=jù   shìká=!á
      woman=DEF   PRED.PRT   3SG=steal   money=DEF
   “It is the woman. She stole the money.”

(220) yòó=ɛ̀   nî   jù   shìká=!á
      woman=DEF   FOC/NMLZ steal   money=DEF
   “It is the woman who stole the money.”

The focus construction is an equational construction, equating the focused NP with an argument nominalization referring to that NP. The focus construction thus illustrates NP use of an argument nominalization. This construction could then be reanalyzed as an NP + modifier construction, which would enable it to be used as a subject or object in a sentence, giving us a relative construction, such as (221). The major difference here is that the tone on nî has gone from low in the predicative particle and focus construction to high in the relative construction.

This could be a strategy for differentiating the two functions.

(221) yòó=ɛ̀   nî   jù   shìká=!á   é=!gbó
      woman=DEF   NMLZ/REL steal   money=DEF 3SG.PERF=die
   "The woman who stole the money is dead."
What allows such argument nominalizations to be used in focus constructions as well as relative constructions is the fact that they contain presuppositions about the involvement of some entity in an activity. The activity is presupposed and so naturally, the identity of the entities partaking in the activity will be sought. The function of focus constructions is to supply this missing information. In (220), it is presupposed in the argument nominalization that some money was stolen and the identity of the thief is supplied by the focused argument. As was shown in §3.6.2, content questions also make use of focus structures and hence grammatical nominalizations. In questions, the identity of the referent which has crucial relevance in the event presupposed in the grammatical nominalization is not known, and is being explicitly sought. This is done by putting a question word in subject position. In relative constructions, the presupposition in the grammatical nominalization is meant to aid the addressee to identify the referent of the head nominal. So again, in (221), there is a presupposition that some money was stolen. This information is given information and it is used to delimit the potential pool of referents of yòó!é ‘the woman’ in order to make it more identifiable to the addressee. This is the modificational function. The new information is contained in the predicate - the fact of the woman having died. So what makes grammatical argument nominalizations a good vehicle for the expression of focus (and by extension content questions) and relativization is the presuppositions contained within them that demand the revelation of any missing actors.
involved in the presupposed event. This connection was first reported by Shibatani and bin Makhashen (2009:23-24).

With *nĩ́* established as a marker of grammatical argument nominalizations, it could then be co-opted for marking event nominalizations which refer to whole events rather than just arguments. Thus was born the complementation function of *nĩ́*. The time adverbial nominalization, as discussed earlier, developed out of the relative construction with *bè* ‘time’ as head noun. The head noun dropped out of use (while being maintained in some syntactico-semantic contexts) and this gave us the modern day time adverbial marked by only *nĩ́*. The use of a *nĩ́*-marked nominalization as a time adverbial i.e. to modify a verb or proposition, paved the way for its extension to other semantic types of adverbial modification. For purpose adverbial modification, an additional marker, *kó* was added (optionally), another attempt perhaps to set purpose modification apart from the other uses. The same motivation may lie behind use of *dánĩ́* as the marker of ‘before’ adverbials. The coordinator function of *(kó)nĩ́*, reserved for future and irrealis clausal conjuncts, arises from the close temporal association between the event predicated in the main clause (which always comes first) and the intended result of the adverbial which always follows it. The implication is that no other event intervenes and so in addition to the purpose function of *(kó)nĩ́*, a coordinate semantic element is
also ascribed to it. (kó)nĩ́ is then able to be used to conjoin events that do not have a purposive semantic element.

á!kɛ́, as previously mentioned, is likely grammaticalized from the verb kɛ̀ɛ̂ ‘say’ and came to be used to mark complements of utterance verbs, a pathway that is well documented in many languages. Its development for purpose adverbial modification probably followed a trajectory similar to what Haspelmath (1993:393) describes for the ‘say’ purpose marker in Kannada, where a subject referent performs an action during which they verbalize the intended consequence of the action. He formulates this as “A does B, saying: May C do D”. This develops into “A does B in order for C to do D”. It is this very template that is seen in Gã in examples such as (163)-(165). á!kɛ́’s use as a marker of comparison or similarity is probably independent of the complementation/purpose route. This path of development is not unique to Gã; it is attested in other languages e.g. Vai and Tamil, that ‘say’ grammaticalized into a preposition introducing a comparative NP (Heine and Kuteva 2007:269).

The proposed historical pathways of grammaticalization of nĩ́ and á!kɛ́ can be summarized by the diagrams below. The crucial stage of development for nĩ́ is when the construction in which it appears is analysed as a nominalization (the focus construction) and it starts being used to denote a variety of situations thus allowing it to occur in NP slots (complementation) and modifier slots (relativization).
6.9 Summary

This chapter has taken an in-depth look at nominalizations in Gã. Lexical nominalizations were examined first in §6.1. Lexical nominalization is the means by which a non-noun is made into a lexical noun. In Gã, this is achieved mainly by affixation and zero-derivation. The nominalization of inherent complement verbs and serial verbs was discussed in §6.1.3 and 6.1.4.
respectively. A phenomenon whereby whole sentences are used as lexical nouns was looked at in §6.1.5. The rest of the chapter was dedicated to grammatical nominalizations, whereby entities are denoted in terms of the events or situation surrounding them or the events relevant to them or the activities in which they are involved. In §6.2 two types of grammatical nominalizations were put forth: grammatical argument nominalizations and grammatical event nominalizations. It was shown (§6.4) that what have previously been described as relative clauses were actually grammatical argument nominalizations being used to modify nouns. In §6.5 evidence was presented for the reanalysis of headless genitives as noun-based argument nominalizations in NP use. Event nominalizations were then examined. They were found to have several functions in the language, most notably complementation (§6.6.1) and adverbial modification (6.6.2). Various types of adverbial functions were discussed. The common morphological elements that threaded many of these nominalizations together were the particles nĩ and álké, so in §6.8 an attempt was made to lay out possible diachronic relationships between the various uses of nominalization in Gã.
7.0 Introduction

This chapter examines the ways in which information is presented by speakers so as to give prominence to certain bits of information or to background them. Two concepts that embody this area of linguistics are focus and topic, and they will be the focus of the chapter.

Unfortunately, as observed by several writers, example Givón (2001b:220); Payne (1998:262) and Gundel (1999:293), these two terms have been used by different writers to mean different things. Payne (1997:262) even notes that in some traditions focus and topic are synonyms while in others they are antonyms.

In this work, the view of focus that will be adopted is the one where focus is an overtly marked pragmatic function of some constituent of the sentence. Not all sentences, therefore, have focus, and sentences that have focus are pragmatically-marked i.e. they deviate from the standard morpho-syntactic formula for the formation of sentences in the language. This conception of focus is known as marked focus (Payne 1997:268). According to Payne, the scope of focus may be either the truth value of the clause or one constituent of the clause. He also outlines several types of constituent focus, but only one type is relevant to Gâ and this is contrastive focus or counter-presuppositional focus. This type of focus is deployed when the
speaker assumes that the hearer holds a belief that is contrary to the speaker’s belief. The speaker thus asserts the “correct” information by bringing it into focus. The focused constituent may be marked phonologically (by intonation or tone) or morpho-syntactically. It will be shown that in Gã, focus is utilized not only for showing contrast but also for emphasis.

Topicality, as alluded to earlier, is also a term that is fraught with controversy and ambiguity. Payne (1997:270) notes that some writers equate topic with left- and right-dislocated clause constituents, with the forms that mark them encoding “topicalization.” He remarks that since topic is basically a pragmatic notion, it is unhelpful to conflate it with formal devices.

The topic of a discourse basically refers to the referent that is the fulcrum of the discourse, whose actions move the discourse forward or around which the discourse develops. It is typically a property of nominals. For Givón (2001b:254), topic is not a clause-level phenomenon but a discourse dependent one which can best be identified when one examines entire paragraphs or narratives and tracks the frequency with which certain discourse participants recur. Topical referents, because they represent a central element of the discourse, are repeated throughout the discourse, and they typically display formal properties associated with topicality such as special intonation, definite marking and dedicated topic marking.

Certain constructions are also recognized as marked topic constructions, because according to Givón (2001b:254), they code referents of relatively low accessibility. The
property of low accessibility is attributed to new referents, referents that are being reintroduced after a gap in mention as well as referents that are being contrasted with other referents. Examples of such constructions are left dislocation, right dislocation and Y-movement. It will be shown that in Gã, left dislocation coupled with morphological marking of the topic is the main vehicle for marked topicalization.

7.1 Syntax of focus constructions
In Gã, the focus construction is marked by a particle, nĩ̀, the focus particle, which follows the focused element. The focused element is often a nominal or noun phrase, but it may also be an adverb. In §6.8 it was argued that the focus construction evolved from a paratactic construction involving the predicative particle, nĩ́. The focus construction was essentially an equational construction equating the focused element with a grammatical nominalization. It is this grammatical nominalization that is used in relativization, with the only difference being a high-toned, nĩ́ marking the relative construction. The grammatical nominalization contains a presupposition about an action, and the involvement of an entity in that action. The focused nominal provides the identity of that entity. In a sign of the nominalization of the presupposition, it may be modified finally by the definite article. Unlike relativization, the definite article is not obligatory. In the examples given below, the focused constituent is bolded and italicized.
In (1), the focused constituent is a conjoined NP, ã̀mɛ̃̀mã̀mĩ́ kɛ̀ ã̀mɛ̃̀pàpámɛ̃̀ĩ̀ ‘their mother [sic] and fathers’. In (2), it is the NP, óbí kò ‘a child of yours’.

(1) nì́ òfāiné hèwó=!5 hàjìí=!é ã̂mè=màmí́ kè
and please sake=TOP twins=DEF 3PL=mother and

ã̂mè=pàpá-mɛ̃̀ĩ̀ nì́ Ø bàá-fée énè ìmè-- ìmè=há ìmè
3PL=father-PL FOC FUT-do this 3PL-- 3PL=give 3PL

“And please, so the twins, it is their mothers and fathers who will do this for them.” [OYO:316]

(2) ké ð=bí kò nì́ ò=táó-ð
if 2SG=child INDEF FOC 2SG=want-HAB NMLZ

é=fõ hàjìí=!é nyọ̀ŋmò bàá-dàmɔ̀ miŋ
3SG.SBJV=give.birth twins=DEF God FUT-stand inside

é=há bó
3SG.SBJV=give 2SG.OBJ

“If it is a child of yours whom you want to give birth to twins, God will intervene for you.” [OYO:106]

In (3), the focused constituent is a grammatical nominalization - a verb-based argument nominalization being used as an NP.

(3) nò nì́ bò ð=bàá-tsɔ́=!5 nì́
NM NMLZ 2SG.OBJ 2SG=FUT-show=DEF FOC

à=bàá-fèe Ø
3PL.IMPERS=FUT-do

“What you will decide is what will be done.” [OYO:13]
The grammatical role of the focused constituent in the presupposition is indicated by a gap if it is subject or object, but this applies to full NP focused constituents only. Focused pronouns behave differently and will be discussed shortly. In (1), the focused constituent is the subject and is indicated by a gap in the pre-verbal subject position. In (2), the focused constituent is neither the subject nor the object of the clause; it is the subject of the complement of táłó ‘want’ and as such it is represented pronominally. In (3), the focused nominalization is the object in the presupposition and is gapped, although it is difficult to be certain with this example because the nominalization refers to an inanimate entity, and inanimates are pronominalized with a null pronoun. In the following example, the item in focus is human and is the object. It is also represented by a gap which proves that indeed gapping is the appropriate strategy for objects. If pronominalization was the intended strategy then one would expect to see the third singular objective pronoun, lè instead of a gap.

(4) ákú nì wɔ̀=nã̀ Ø yɛ̀ ɔɔmɔ́=ɔ̃́
Aku FOC 1PL=see be.located church=DEF
“It is Aku that we saw at church.”

There are some speakers who would accept the pronoun, lè in place of the gap but this is considered non-standard by many. Pronominalization may occur when the focused constituent is a full NP and it has subject role in the presupposition, but this is only marginally acceptable and is outright ungrammatical to some speakers.
If the focused constituent is a pronoun, and the subject in the presupposition is co-referential with the focused pronoun, then the focus particle must be followed by a pronoun which refers back to the focused element (6). Omission of this resumptive pronoun renders the construction ungrammatical (7).

(6) ̀mɛ̀ nì àmɛ̀ =bàá-yà-tsɔ̀ nèkè nǐyêníìì nè!ɛ̀
3PL FOC 3PL =FUT-ITIV-show this food this
“It is they who will go and choose this food.” [OYO:49]

(7) *àmɛ̀ nì bàá-yà-tsɔ̀ nèkè nìyêníìì nè!ɛ̀
3PL FOC FUT-ITIV-show this food this
“It is they who will go and choose this food.”

The focused pronoun in Gã must be in the objective case. This is evident when the focused pronoun is first, second or third singular, since these are the only pronouns (indeed only nouns) that have different forms for their objective cases. An example is provided in (8). Observe that the focused constituent is in the objective case (*le*) but the resumptive pronoun must be a subject pronoun (*è*).

(8) ̀le nì è=jù shìká=!á
3SG.OBJ FOC 3SG =steal money =DEF
“It is s/he who stole the money.”
“It s/he is the one who stole the money.”
When the focused constituent is a pronoun, its position in the presupposition is gapped if it is an object (9), (10).

(9)  
\[ \text{mĩ̀ nì à = kēē} \]  
1SG.OBJ FOC 3PL.IMPERS = tell  
“It was I who was told (of it).”  
“It was the one who was told (of it)”

(10)  
\[ \text{bò nì wò = nà} \]  
2SG.OBJ FOC 1PL = see be.located church = DEF  
“It was you that we saw at church.”

It is possible for the focus construction to occur without an overt focus particle i.e. for \( nì \) to be absent from the construction. Upon closer inspection, however, it is clear that it is only the sound segments that can be gotten rid of; the suprasegmental low tone on the particle persists and combines with the tone of the previous syllable. If the tone of the previous syllable is also low, then there is no phonetic remnant of the focus particle, but if it is high, then it combines with the floating low tone of the focus particle to form a falling tone. This is seen in (11), where \( nì \) is absent but its tone combines with the high tone on \( mòfj \) ‘rather’ to obtain a falling tone (resulting in \( mòfj \)).

(11)  
\[ \text{bò mòfj ò = wíè-ät} \]  
2SG.OBJ rather.FOC 2SG = speak-HAB English be.located  
\[ jè!mè = !è \]  
there = DEF  
“It is rather you who is speaking English over there.”  
[DT:10;55]
In (12), the name òkó is in focus but because the focus particle is deleted, its low tone docks on the last syllable of òkó to realise a final falling tone.

(12a) òkô kɛ̀ɛ̀ ¡mĩ́
Oko.FOC tell 1SG.OBJ
“It was Oko who told me.”

The pragmatically neutral or non-focused version of (12a) would be:

(12b) òkó kɛ̀ɛ̀ mĩ́
Oko tell 1SG.OBJ
“Oko told me.”

In (13), the last syllable of the focused constituent has a low tone, so there is no phonetic trace of the deleted focus particle.

(13) bò ò = wíé-ɔ̀  bòfó yè jé!mê = ¡ế
2SG.OBJ 2SG=speak-HAB English be.located there=DEF
“It is you who is speaking English over there.”
“You are the one who is speaking English over there.”

The omission of the focus particle is not feasible in all syntactic environments. One of these is when the focused constituent ends in a low-tone syllable but the omission of the focus particle will result in a sentence with neutral pragmatic status i.e. the focus meaning will be lost. This commonly occurs when such a focused constituent is a full NP, rather than a pronoun, and the focused NP is also the agent of the clause. The pair of sentences in (14) illustrates this point. (14a) can only be interpreted as a pragmatically-neutral sentence and not a
focused one with an omitted focus marker. Constructions such as (14) where the focused NP ends in a low tone and that NP is also the agent or executor of the action must obligatorily feature the focus marker in order to be considered a focus construction.

(14a) àtɛ̀ jù gbé!kɛ̀=ɛ̃̀ hɛ̃̀
Atɛ bathe child=DEF body
“It was Atteh who bathed the child.”

*“It was Atteh who bathed the child.”

(14b)  àtɛ̀ nì jù gbé!kɛ̀=ɛ̃̀ hɛ̃̀
Atɛ FOC bathe child=DEF body
“It was Atteh who bathed the child.”

No such problem would exist if the focused constituent were not the subject of the presupposition, as in (15). Both (15a) and (15b) are focus constructions with the same focused NP as (14). (15a) has no focus marker.

(15a)  àtɛ̀ wɔ̀=nã̀ yɛ̀ gbɛ̀=ɛ̃̀ hɛ̀=!ɛ̀
Atteh 1PL=see be.located road=DEF body=DEF
“It was Atteh we saw by the roadside.”

(15a)  àtɛ̀ nì wɔ̀=nã̀ yɛ̀ gbɛ̀=ɛ̃̀ hɛ̀=!ɛ̀
Atteh FOC 1PL=see be.located road=DEF body=DEF
“It was Atteh we saw by the roadside.”

When the focused constituent is a pronoun ending with a low tone syllable and the focus particle is omitted, the resumptive subject pronoun that follows the focused constituent is a
secondary feature that clues one to the fact that the construction is a focus construction, as in (13).

Also, when the focused constituent is a grammatical nominalization in NP use (a so-called headless relative clause), the omission of the focus particle is strongly discouraged. For instance, (3) above has a grammatical nominalization in focus as well as an overt focus particle, but when rendered without the focus particle as in (16) below, it is not quite as acceptable to speakers.

(16) ouchers nɔ̃́ nɔ̃́ bɔ̀ d̵ˈ = ɗà-tʃɔ̃̃ɔ̃́ = ɗò
NM NMLZ 2SG.OBJ 2SG = FUT-show = DEF
à = bàá-fèè
3PL.IMPERS = FUT-do
“What you will decide is what will be done.”  [OYO:13]

Similarly, (17a) with a grammatical nominalization in focus and an overt focus marker is acceptable, but (17b) without the focus marker is less acceptable.

(17a) hèwɔ̀ nʊ̃́ ñ́ yɔ́ɔ̀ b̵ˈ = d̵ˈ-d̵ɛ̃̃ŋ̃̃ɛ̀ = ɗò= tɔ́i
sake NM NMLZ be.located.HAB 2SG.OBJ-INTENS 2SG = heart
m̃̃ŋ̃̃̃̃̃ = ɗɛ̃̃ ñ́ ɗ = bàá-bà  ñ́ ɗ = kɛ̃̃-bàá-!bá-há  èmè
inside = DEF FOC 2SG = FUT-come and 2SG = take-FUT-VENT-give 3PL
“So whatever your heart desires is what you will come and give them.”  [OYO:118]

(17b) ?hèwɔ̀ nʊ̃́ ñ́ yɔ́ɔ̀ b̵ˈ = d̵ˈ-d̵ɛ̃̃ŋ̃̃ɛ̀ = ɗò= tɔ́i
sake NM NMLZ be.located.HAB 2SG.OBJ-INTENS 2SG = heart
“mĩ̀ŋ́ = ī́  ö = bàá-bá  nĩ  ö = kě-bàá-lbá-há  āmě̀
inside = DEF  2SG = FUT-come  and  2SG = take-FUT-VENT-give 3PL
“So whatever your heart desires is what you will come and give them.”

Examples (16) and (17b) are not ungrammatical as they are; they are ungrammatical only if they are meant to be focus constructions. As they are, they are perfectly acceptable if one inserts a notable pause between the grammatical nominalizations and the presupposition. The pause coupled with the definite article at the final boundary of the nominalization makes the construction a left-dislocated construction, a subject that will be treated in §7.3 below.

Apart from nominals, adverbs may also occur in focus position. In (18), ĕ́é ‘all’ is focused, while in (19), an adage, fíòfíló ‘gradually’ is focused. One could argue, however, that ĕ́é ‘all’ in (18) is a noun.

(18)  ḣáh̀aá  ĕ́é  nĩ  à = kě-đé-ŋ̀
 IJ  all  FOC  3PL.IMPERSON = take-do-HAB
“Exactly! It is all (of them) that are used.”    [OYO:262]

(19)  fíòfíló  nĩ  àdídìnŋ̀  ĕ́é  nĩ  è = kě-kgpé  gbèé tòí
gradually  FOC  fly  do  and  3SG = take-chew dog ear
“Gradually, the fly chewed the dog’s ear.”
Meaning: It is through patience and determination that one accomplishes a goal.

7.2 Semantics of focus constructions
According to Givón (2001b:223), when speakers make an assertion, they make presumptions about the degree of knowledge that the hearer has about the asserted information. On one
extreme, the hearer is assumed to be totally ignorant of the information; on the other extreme, they are assumed to hold a belief contrary to that stated in the assertion. And in-between those points, theoretically, are various shades of the assumed ignorance of the hearer or the strength of his contrary belief. Contrastive focus constructions are grammatical devices that are meant to capture the one extreme in which the hearer is assumed to hold an opposing belief, hence the need for the speaker to correct him/her. But focus constructions need not always set up an explicit contrast. In Gã, the focus construction may be used contrastively, where the speaker “corrects” the wrong belief, or it may simply be used to introduce information, normally a noun, which the speaker believes is unavailable to the hearer, and which could potentially be confused with a host of other nouns of the same semantic class. This type of focus thus solves the ignorance problem. So here, we find one and the same construction capable of being employed for opposing points of the assumed hearer-knowledge continuum. In cases where the focus construction is not used to make a corrective contrast, the pragmatic difference between such a construction and one with a neutral pragmatic status is that the focus construction provides additional stress or emphasis on the focused nominal and enjoins the addressee to pay particular attention to that chunk of information. In any case, the focused constituent provides new information to the addressee.
The marking of new information by the focus particle is a function so fundamental that
the focus particle often accompanies question words in content questions i.e. the question word
or WH-word (if it is not in situ) is followed by ni. Even if ni does not occur with the question
word, the answer may be accompanied by ni. This can be illustrated with the question words,
námɔ ‘who’ and mɛ̀nɛ̀ hɛwɔ [what sake] ‘why’ since syntactically the answers to these
questions can remain in situ, simply replacing the question words. See §3.6 for more on
questions.

(20a) námɔ (nì) bà bí!é
    who (FOC) come here
    “Who came here?”

(20b) òkó ni bà bí!é
    Oko FOC come here
    “Oko came here.”

Answering (20a) with (20c), without a focus marker, is not felicitous, although the sentence is
perfectly grammatical.

(20c) òkó bà bí!é
    Oko come here
    “Oko came here.”

2525 mɛ̀nɛ̀ ‘what’ in current Gã is a coalescence of old Gã mɛ ‘what’ and the focus particle, ni. In Zimmerman’s
(1859) dictionary, mɛ is given its own entry and translated as ‘what’. It is however, not used at all in modern Gã
without ni.
Questions inherently convey presuppositions. In (20a), the speaker presupposes that the hearer knows that someone came here. This part of the construction constitutes old information. The speaker seeks the new information which is the identity of the visitor, and the use of the focus particle with the answer confirms that it is new information and so demands extra attention. There is also some implicit sense of contrast since inquiring about the identity of a referent suggests that there are multiple possibilities, of which only one is appropriate in the particular situation. In (20c), lack of focus marking indicates that all the information contained therein is new information that the speaker assumes the hearer does not have. Therefore, while (20c) can function as an introductory statement in a discourse, (20b) cannot. This is because the presence of the focus particle implies the existence of previous discourse regarding uncertainty about the identity of the visitor (here the previous discourse is an explicit question).

In sum, focus constructions in Gà are used for contrast and emphasis on new information, but there are various extents to which it can be said that a contrast is being made, and this can be deduced from the prior discourse. In the following excerpt, line 5 is a focus construction where ã̀mɛ̀ ‘3PL’ is focused. There is no “corrective” contrast here because no one in the discourse had suggested that anyone apart from the twins would choose the food. However, the speaker uses the focus construction to make it abundantly clear that it is the twins and only the twins who make the decision about what food to eat. Earlier in the discourse,
Yoomo had explained that the yam festival was a time for eating food specially made for twins, so the activity coded by the predicate is already known to the hearer.

(21) Yoomo: 1 à = bàá-!hé  
yèlè  
3PL.IMPERS = FUT-buy  
yam
“Yam will be bought.”

2 à = bàá-lyá-tsé  
 hàájíʔ = !é  
 ìmè  
sùñmá  
3PL = FUT-ITIV-call  
twin = DEF  
3PL spirit
“The spirit of the twins will be summoned.”

3 spiritually

Akua 4 mĩn  
IJ
“Okay”

Yoomo 5 nĩ  
ámè  
àmè = bàá-tsɔ̀  
nó  
ní  
and  
3PL  
3PL = FUT-show  
NM  
NMLZ  
àmè = bàá-lyé  
3PL = FUT-eat
“And it is they who will decide what they will eat.”

In the following example as well, there is no corrective contrast. The prior discourse has revolved around another speaker detailing the rituals performed for the twins, so it is already established that rites are performed for them. The new information here is who performs those rites and it is this information that is put in focus. The sentence is produced as a statement which is soliciting confirmation or denial.
(22)  nì  ófáníè  hèwò=!ö  hàâjìî=!è  àmè=màmì  kè
    and  please  sake=TOP  twins=DEF  3PL=mother  and

    àmè=pàpá-mèè  nì  bàá-féè  ènè  àmè--  àmè=há  àmè
    3PL=father-PL  FOC  FUT-do  this  3PL--  3PL-give  3PL

    “And please, so the twins, it is their mothers and fathers who will do this for them.”
    [OYO:316]

The following two examples showcase corrective contrastive focus, where the speaker uses the
focus construction to provide new information that is contrary to what is presumed the hearer
believes. In (23), the speaker is narrating a story. At one point in the story he reports that the
protagonist, a boy, has held on to something which looks like a stick, leading listeners to
believe that it was indeed a stick. A few lines later (line 3), he corrects this statement because it
is actually the horns of a reindeer that the boy has held on to, not a stick. In issuing the
correction, a focus construction is employed.

(23)  1  nì  è=kér=!ö  è=nà  nò=kò  yè
    NMLZ 3SG=climb=DEF  3SG=see  thing=INDEF  be.located

    jë!fj  tàmò  tsò  nì  è=mò  mÌ
    there  like  stick  and  3SG=hold  inside

    “When he climbed it, he saw something there like a stick and he held on to it.”

    several  lines  omitted

2  nò  nì  è=yà-mò  mÌÌ=!è  àsòmòâ!fj  kòòlòò
    NM  NMLZ 3SG.PERF=ITIV-hold  inside=DEF  not.knowing  animal
“Apparently, what he had held on to was an animal.”

“It was a reindeer’s horns (=antlers) that he had held on to.” [SAM:81]

In (24), the focus construction conveys not exactly a correction but an observation of a state of affairs that is contrary to what the hearer perceived. At the beginning of the conversation (a phone call), Deborah had told Tess to speak only Gâ since the conversation would be recorded for the purposes of analysis of the Gâ language. Tess agreed. At some point in the conversation, however, Deborah switches to English to quote an English proverb. It is in response to this apparent violation by Deborah of her own rule that prompts Tess to utter the focus construction in order to point out the irony.

(24) Deborah: à = kèé  
3PL.IMPERS = say
“They say, “No news is good news.”

Tess: àààà bò mòjí  
2SG.OBJ rather.FOC 2SG = speak-HAB English

---

26 dáá áfikóŋkómé is a descriptive name for reindeer based on the fact that reindeer antlers are shed and regrown each year. kłóntó is a synonym for kòŋ. Both mean ‘horn’.
There is a type of focus construction in which the focused constituent is a nominalized verb and the main predicate is the verbal counterpart of the focused constituent. When this construction is presented as an interrogative, it gives the semantic effect of mild disbelief or disappointment on the speaker’s part that the agent is involved in the activity described by the predicate.

(25) bèwɔ́=!ɔ́ yà-à (nì) ò=yà-à=á=à
sake=TOP go-NOM (FOC) 2SG=go-HAB=DEF=DEF
“So, are you really going?” (Lit: “So is it going that you are going?”)

(26) wɔ́-ɔ́ (nì) ò=wɔ́-ɔ́=ɔ́=ɔ̀
sleep-NOM (FOC) 2SG=sleep-HAB=DEF=DEF
“Are you really sleeping?” (Lit: “Is it sleeping that you are sleeping?”)

As statements, the semantic nuance in this construction type is more difficult to tease out.

When the verb in question is yà, the construction is simply a flowery turn of phrase for announcing that one is taking leave. The focus particle is often omitted.

(27) yà-à ɪ=yà-à=á=!á
go-NOM 1SG=go-HAB=DEF=DEF
“I’m leaving/going.” (Lit: “It is going that I am going.”)
The focused constituent may be modified by the adjective *kèkè* ‘just’ with the effect that the speaker wishes to emphasize that they only partook in the activity designated by the verb and nothing else.

(28)  
\[
\text{shwé-mò kèkè (nì) i = kè bò shwé-ɔ̀}
\]
\[
\text{play-NOM just FOC 1SG = take 2SG.OBJ play-HAB}
\]
\[\text{“I am only playing/joking with you.” (Lit: “It is only playing that I am playing with you.”)}\]

### 7.3 Topic constructions

Topic is a pragmatic notion which pertains to nouns. The topic of a discourse is what the discourse is about. As mentioned earlier, it is viewed as a phenomenon of an entire discourse, rather than a clause or sentence. The topic of a discourse tends to recur throughout the discourse, as more information or comments are given about it. Topics therefore tend to be definite, since once introduced the speaker assumes it can be identified by the hearer.

In many cases, there is no special syntactic marking to identify topics. However, some languages have what are called marked topic constructions that readily mark a discourse participant as topical. Givón (2001b:254) characterises such topics as being of low accessibility. This is in comparison to pronouns and zero anaphora, which code continuous referents. Topics, on the other hand, are referents that are totally new or that are re-mentioned
after they have been out of the focus of attention for a period of time. They are therefore not as easily accessible as pronouns and zero anaphora since they code discontinuous referents.

The marked topic construction most relevant to Gã is left dislocation, or simply L-dislocation. In this construction type, the topical noun is fronted or left-dislocated and in many cases modified by *le*, which apart from its common function as a definite marker, also functions as a topic marker. The topic is followed by a pause, and then a clause which provides a comment on the topic. Such a clause must include a pronoun in subject or object position which refers anaphorically to the topic. A few examples of L-dislocated constructions are provided below.

(29) è=kɛ̀ɛ́  bl̀èmã̀  bîlì=le  bɔ̀nĩ́  àmè=bà-nĩ́nã̀  lɛ̀  jí nò
3SG=say olden.days people=DEF how 3PL=VENT-meet 3SG.OBJ

“She said that, the old people, that is how they came and met it.” [OYO:69]

(30) shî  Kathy=le  wɔ̃=lè /sic\(^7\)  ké!jí  è=yè
but Kathy=TOP 1PL=know.NEG whether 3SG=be.located

\(^7\) This speaker employed an unusual tone pattern for this verbal complex. The tone on *wɔ́ ‘1PL’ should be low, not high. I have not heard this word produced in this manner before and I cannot tell whether this is simply a slip of tongue, an idiosyncratic pronunciation or something else.
“But as for Kathy, we don’t know whether she is alive or she is not alive.” [DF:229]

(31)  mì  ì = !yááá  hé = !kó
  1SG.OBJ  1SG = go.NEG  place = INDEF
  “Me, I don’t go anywhere.” [FH:213]

(32)  è = shìwò-ʃ  ʃɛ  rëë  wó = !mò  ʃì
  3SG = promise-PL  DEF  all  1PL.PERF = hold  inside
  “All his promises, we have accepted them.” [CH:176]

(33)  ìmè = ʃè  jèèè  ìmè = hè  sànè
  3PL = TOP  NEG  3PL = body  matter
  “As for them, it is not their concern.” i.e. They don’t care.

(34)  òkò  è = súm şi  ì = sànè
  Oko  3SG = like.NEG  1SG = matter
  “Oko, he doesn’t like me.”

As (31) shows, when the dislocated topic is a pronoun, it must be in the objective case. The resumptive pronoun referring to the topic however must be in the subjective case if it is the subject of the sentence.

L-dislocated constructions are very prevalent in the language. The topic in such a construction is often old or given information, having been mentioned previously. This could partially account for why it is normally modified by the definite article, which indicates that the referent is expected to be identifiable by the hearer. It doesn’t explain, however, the occurrence of the definite article with proper names and pronouns, as in (30) and (33) respectively, since
these two types of nouns are inherently definite. This hints at the possibility that there is more
to the function of le than just definiteness marking. It is evident from (31) and (34), that
pronouns and proper nouns may be topicalized without the definite article. Indefinite, generic
nouns may also be topicalized (35) as well as indefinite, specific nouns (36a). Neither of these
topics may be marked by le (36b). If the topic in (35) were modified by le, it would no longer
be a generic NP referring to the class of cats and dogs, but would be referential, pointing to
some identifiable cats and dogs.

(35) álò̀nté-ì kè gbèè-yí ì̃̄=mù̃̄gù̃̄ ə̀mè = sà́nè kwráá
cat-PL and dog-PL 1SG = like.NEG 3PL = matter at.all
“Cats and dogs, I don’t like them at all.”

(36a) nũ̀ṹmó !kó è̅ = kè̅ è̅ = tsè̅-è̅ lè
old.man INDEF 3SG = say 3PL.IMPERS = call-HAB 3SG.OBJ
kwèí è̅ = bá è̅ = bà-táò bò
Kwei 3SG = come 3SG = VENT-search 2SG.OBJ
“A certain old man, he said his name is Kwei. He came looking for you.”

(36b) *nũ̀ũmò !kó = à lè
old.man INDEF = DEF 3SG = say 3PL.IMPERS = call-HAB 3SG.OBJ
kwèí è̅ = bá è̅ = bà-táò bò
Kwei 3SG = come 3SG = VENT-search 2SG.OBJ
“A certain old man, he said his name is Kwei. He came looking for you.”

Indefinite nouns can also be topicalized, without le-modification. (37) has two indefinite NP
topics, tòkòtá ‘slippers’ and náį́́ńńó ‘everything’.
The outstanding question from these observations is why proper names and pronouns allow modification by the definite article when topicalized. The answer is that the definite article also functions as a marker of topicalization, pointing out that a referent has been previously mentioned and indicating that it is going to be the main topic or theme of what follows. It stresses that the topic is old information, whereas without it one cannot be certain, especially with regard to proper nouns. It revives an old topic or promotes an old non-topical noun to topic. In the following excerpt, there are several examples of topicalization of proper nouns. The discourse centres around Sally updating her niece, Dina on family members who have died.

(38) Sally: 1 nò hèwɔ̀=!ɔ́ àrákú é!gbó
that sake=DEF Araku PERF-die
“So Araku is dead.”

2 ní veterinary doctor é!gbó
and PERF-die
“And the veterinary doctor is dead.”
3 "It’s left with Afua."

4 “Afua, she lives with her husband in Dome.”

5 Is that so?

6 Precisely

7 “And errm…also with regards to Kofi, two (of his children) are dead.”

8 “It’s left with Kathy.”

9 but whether
Sally starts off by noting that two of a family of three siblings have died, that is, Araku and the veterinary doctor. The only living sibling is Afua. Afua then briefly becomes the main topic of the discourse, indicated by its topicalization with /ɛ/. The comment is that she lives with her husband in Dome. After several lines of talk, another topic, Kofi, which had been mentioned previously, is resumed. Again, to indicate that it is old information that is now going to be the topic of the following discourse, it is marked by the topicalizer, /ɛ/. Sally notes that two of Kofi’s children have died and only Kathy remains. After Kathy has been introduced, she is now old information and so in the next line Kathy is topicalized and additional comments are made about her whereabouts, or lack of knowledge of her whereabouts.

Topicalizing a noun may also hint at the speaker’s wish to contrast it with some previously mentioned entities, though this element of contrast does not apply in all cases. It is primarily the juxtaposition of the L-dislocated construction with contrasting information in the previous discourse that invites this inference. In (38), the presence of shi ‘but’ in the last line contributes to the contrast being drawn between Kathy and her siblings. In all the examples of topicalization in (38), doing away with the topicalizer will result in non-felicitous sentences, or at the very least pragmatically aberrant sentences.
One difference between pronominal topics and other topics is that, very frequently the pronominal topic and its comment may be produced under one intonational contour, as in (39).

Here, the speaker seeks to contrast her stance and attitude to her homeland with that of her siblings.

(39) ĩ = nyəmĩ-mẽĩ = 1é fẽ ẽ-tẽ ẽ-blõtsirĩ mĩ = 1é Ghana

1SG = sibling-PL = DEF all PERF-go.PST abroad 1SG = TOP Ghana

ŋɔɔ ĩ = nãã hẽwɔ = 1õ ĩ = yə bĩlẽ
be.sweet 1SG = mouth sake = TOP 1SG = be.located here

“All my siblings have gone abroad. As for me, I enjoy Ghana so I am here.”

In (40), the pronominal topic was produced under a different intonational contour.

(40) nĩ stĩti kò kā bĩlẽ
and street INDEF lie here

“And there’s a street here.”

1ẽ = 1ẽ ẽ = lead-õ to kũlẽ = ẽ nãã
3SG.OBJ = TOP 3SG- -HAB Korle = DEF mouth

“As for it, it leads to the mouth of the Korle Lagoon.” [FH:59]

The topic in a left-dislocated construction could also be a more complex nominal than a simple lexical noun. In (41), the topic comprises the noun, mĩ nyəŋmɔŋɔɔĩ ‘my God’ and its modifier, the verb-based grammatical argument nominalization (relative clause) - nĩ mĩjãà lẽlẽ ‘whom I worship’. Since such nominalizations are always modified by the definite article, the
only evidence of L-dislocation are the fronting of the nominal, the resumptive pronoun è ‘3SG’

referring to the topic and the pause between the topic and the comment.

(41) nò hèwɔ́ =!ɔ́ mĩ́ nyɔ́ mɔ́ =!ɔ́ ní́ mĩ́ =já-à
that sake = TOP 1SG God = DEF NMLZ 1SG = worship

lɛ̀ = lɛ̀ è = bàá-nyɛ̀ é = tsá mĩ́ = bí́ !lɛ̀
3SG.OBJ = DEF 3SG = FUT-able 3SG.SBJV = heal 1SG = child DEF
“So the God that I worship, he can heal my child.” [CH:102]

The topic could also be found as part of a nominalization. In (42), it is a constituent within the

nominalized complement of the CTP (complement-taking predicate), nɔ́ ‘see’.

(42) nì́ mɔ́-fɛ́-mɔ́ ɲ́-nà á!kɛ̀ ágbɛ́nɛ̀ =!ɛ̀ gbɛ́!kɛ̀ =!ɛ̀
and person-all-person PROG-see NMLZ now = DEF child = DEF

eè = jè ó = dèjì
t 3SG.PROG = exit 2SG = palm
“And everyone can see that now the child, he is dying.” [CH:49]

7.3.1 Contrastive topicalization

There is another type of L-dislocated construction in which the fronted topic is qualified by not

just one definite article but two. Dakubu’s (1992) analysis of such nominals is that the first lɛ

marks the noun as definite while the second marks it as contrastively contextualized i.e. the

speaker contrasts the topical referent with a set of similar referents. It is this same function that

I term contrastive topicalization. Indeed, Dakubu is of the view that contrast is one function of

all topical nouns marked by lɛ̀ (Dakubu 1992:8). My view differs in that it is not all topics
marked by *le* that involve contrast, while some that do not receive *le*-marking do involve
contrast. For example, (29), (32), line 7 in (38), (41) and (42) all have topics marked by *le* but
do not involve any overt or subtle contrast between these topics and any relevant set of
comparable nouns. In (31) on the other hand, which does not have its topic modified by *le*, it
can be argued, based on the previous discourse, that the speaker seeks to contrast herself with
others. Earlier in the conversation this speaker was told that she was not expected to be home
that day since it was a Thursday and many older people go to funerals on Thursdays. As her
visitors are taking leave, the speaker asks them to come back and visit anytime and this is when
she utters (31). In topicalizing the first singular pronoun, she wishes to emphasize that in
contrast to many others in her social circle, she does not go out. Of course, some topics marked
by *le* do involve a contrast with other entities, such as (39). My contention is that the presence
of *le* does not guarantee the existence of a contrastive semantic element.

The existence of a second *le*, on the other hand, is a more reliable indicator that there is
some contrastive work going on. In the following excerpt from a sermon, the priest utters the
final line in which *nyɔ̃̀ŋmɔ̃̀* ‘God’ is modified by two definite articles. Like Dakubu (1992), I
analyse the first as a marker of definiteness and the second as a marker of contrastive
topicalization (contrastive contextualization in Dakubu’s terms). The contrast is obvious from
the prior discourse. The priest gives an anecdote about how when people go to events they are
given flimsy chairs to sit on. As a result, they do not trust that those chairs will not break and are careful when sitting on them. He says that God can be likened to a strong chair that one sits on comfortably and without worry or hesitation. The relevant line containing the topicalization thus metaphorically contrasts God with the flimsy chairs, noting that he is not like them. He can be trusted.

(43) kɛ̀ò=yà-sr̀á mɔ̀=kò ní à=yàà-há
when 2SG = go-visit person = INDEF and 3PL.IMPERS = PROS-give
bò së́ì
2SG.OBJ chair
“When you go and visit somebody and you are about to be given a chair”

ní à=há bò plastic chairs ní ké
and 3PL.IMPERS = give 2SG.OBJ and if
è=fèé=!ɛ̀ wò=kè-hâ-à gbɔ̀-i yè yâlà
3SG = do = DEF 1PL = take-give-HAB guest-PL be.located funeral
shís̀hís̀ kè hé=!í
under and place-PL
“And you are given the type of plastic chairs that we sometimes give to guests at funerals and other places.”

nì é!kó é-fèé !bó dáŋ=!á
and some PERF-do 2SG.OBJ before = TOP
“And if you have had such an experience before.”

kè à=há bò së́ì=!é ké ò=bàá-tá
when 3PL.IMPERS = give 2SG.OBJ chair = DEF when 2SG = FUT-sit
shí=!é
down = DEF
“When you are given the chair and you are about to sit down.”

ò=bàá-kwé së́ì=!é é!kòŋŋ̀ á!kè ò=bàá-weigh lè
2SG = FUT-look chair = DEF again NMLZ 2SG = FUT- 3SG.OBJ
“You will check out the chair again…you will size it up to see whether it is durable.”

“And many times when you want to sit you will sit gingerly to check if the chair is strong, before you put your whole body, your whole weight on it.”

“Because those plastic chairs, we don’t trust them.”

“So if you say that you are going to depend on God.”

“Then what you are saying is that as for God, he is not like those plastic chairs.”
In the final line of the following example, Té!shĩ́ house ‘Teshie house’, is topicalized and marked twice by le. The first marks definiteness and the second marks contrastive topicalization. In this exchange Dina tells Sally that her daughter was asking her where Sualaba was (line 1). Sally starts to answer but stops because Dina’s speech overlaps with hers (line 4). Here and in the following two lines Dina appears to be asking about another neighbourhood, Teshie House. Sally starts to respond to this apparent inquiry in line 7 with the L-dislocated construction and the doubly marked topic where she tries to describe the location of Teshie House. The use of the contrastive topic is to set Teshie House apart from the other suburbs that had been mentioned, most recently Sualaba, since originally Dina had been asking about where Sualaba was. From line 8 we see that Dina’s inquiry was misunderstood because she was asking for the name of the neighbourhood in front of Teshie House and not the location of Teshie House itself.

(44) 1 Dina: nò mĩŋ̃́ = !é̃́ ní mĩĩ = !bá = !á
that inside = TOP NMLZ 1SG.PROG = come = DEF
cè = bí !mí ál'ké négbè jí súá!lábà
3SG.PROG = ask 1SG.OBJ NMLZ where COP Sualaba
“When I was coming, she was asking me where Sualaba was.”

2 Sally: ɓé!ɓé
Yes
“Yes”
Another interesting observation regarding the definite article is that, when it modifies a non-Gã word, usually an English word, which ends in a consonant sound, it is produced twice. So that when an English word is being marked as contrastively topicalized, it is marked with three definite articles, as we see in line 7 in (44) above. If the English word ends in a vowel (e.g. cherry) or a vowel is added to the word as a way of nativizing it (e.g. báàgí `bag’), then only one definite article is required: cherry = !é [cherry = DEF] ‘the cherry’ and báàgí = !é [bag = DEF] ‘the bag’. It could be that the first iteration of !é (which is mostly realized as one
of the vowel allomorphs) is simply a means of getting these borrowed words to conform to Gã phonotactics i.e. getting rid of a final closed syllable, which is disallowed, and replacing it with an open one. And what better choice for a vowel than one that anticipatorily harmonises with the following definite article.

To sum up so far, it has been shown that topicalization in Gã is achieved mainly by L-dislocated constructions, which involve fronting of the topic followed by a comment on the topic in which a resumptive pronoun refers anaphorically to the topic. Definite NP topics are marked by the definite article, ɛ. Indefinite, non-specific NP topics are unmarked. Indefinite, specific topics are marked by the indefinite article, ko. However, pronouns and proper nouns when topicalized may also be marked by ɛ.

7.3.2 Non-prototypical hosts of ɛ
Throughout this dissertation, the reader may have noticed that the definite article is capable of being attached to just about every constituent imaginable, from adverbials to discourse markers to so-called relative clauses and conditional clauses. Many of these discourse units are often mandatorily bounded finally by the definite article. Since adverbs and clauses, for example, cannot exhibit definiteness, there must be some other work being done by the definite article.

In the next few sections I identify some units of discourse that are not lexical nouns but which may be marked by ɛ and I attempt to pin-point the function of ɛ in these contexts.
a. Verb-based argument nominalizations (headed and headless relative clauses)

Examples are given below. (45) and (46) exemplify the modification function of argument nominalizations (headed relatives). Such nominalizations in the vast majority of cases are modified by the definite article because the heads they modify are also modified by the definite article. As discussed in §6.4, the argument nominalization refers to the head and so if the head is definite the argument nominalization is also definite. Therefore, in the case of the modification used of argument nominalizations, le is maintaining its original function of marking definiteness.

(45) hèwó = !á ófàìní bàá = !á ní ò = feé ye
sake = TOP please leaf=DEF NMLZ 2SG.PERF = do be.located

jé!èmè = !è mènì à- mènì pòtèè à = kè-fé-ò
there = DEF what -- what exactly 3PL.IMPERS = take-do-HAB

“So, please, the herbal infusion that you’ve made over there, what-- what exactly is it made from?” [YM:158]

(46) nì i = kèè !lè ál!kè shiká = !á nì à = kè
and 1SG-tell 3SG.OBJ NMLZ money = DEF NMLZ 3SG.IMPERS = take

hà !lè = !è è = kè-!bá
give 3SG.OBJ = DEF 3SG = take.SBJV-come

“And I told him that, the money that he has been given, he should bring (it).” [MM:109]
When the argument nominalization is used as an NP, _le_ may or may not occur. When the nominalization occurs sentence-initially and is modified by _le_, then the article is displaying its topicalization function.

(47) \[mɔ̃́ nɨ hɛ́ shiká = !á è = hɛ-ð\] six crates
NM NMLZ hold money = DEF 3SG = buy-HAB
“The one with a lot of money, s/he buys six crates (of eggs).” [YM:172]

In (47), it is clear the definite article is a topicalizer rather than a marker of definiteness because _shiká_ ‘money’ in this context is indefinite. There has not been any talk in the prior discourse about money so this referent is not expected to be identifiable to the listener. Also the resumptive pronoun, è which is co-referential with the referent of the nominalization is another indicator that we are dealing with a L-dislocated topic construction. In (48) however, since the nominalization is not fronted, it can safely be assumed that _le_ marks the identifiability of the referent of the nominalization i.e. it marks definiteness.

(47) \[shí kòfí bì jí nyɛ̀-sɛ̀ mɔ̃́ nɨ gbó = !ɛ́\]
but Kofi child COP yesterday-back NM NMLZ die = DEF
“But Kofi’s child is the one who died the other day.” [DF:187]

b. Adverbials

As we saw in chapter 6, many adverbial clauses are in fact event nominalizations. It is no surprise then, that they are modified by _le_. Time adverbials, conditional adverbials and reason adverbials which are marked by _nɨ_, _â!kê_ (shí), _â!kê_ !nɨ and _kê_ are all capable of being marked
finally by the definite article. Again, given our knowledge of the varying functions of this article, one cannot assume that its role in these constructions is that of marking definiteness.

Most time adverbials, whether they occur initially before the main assertion or finally, after the main assertion, must be followed by the definite article, le. When the adverbial occurs sentence-initially, le is required. So while (49a) with a sentence-initial time adverbial followed by the definite article is grammatical, (49b) without the definite article is not.

(49a) shì ní dè=bà dè=bà-shè wɔ wɔ=nɔ=ɬí

but NMLZ 3SG=come 3SG=VENT-reach 1PL 1PL=top=DEF

wɔ=ɬí wɔ=fɔ-ɔ lè ényɔ ényɔ

1PL=TOP 1PL=give.birth-H AB 3SG.OBJ two two

“But when it was our turn (our generation), as for us, we give birth to twins.”

[OYO:404]

(49b) *shì ní dè=bà dè=bà-shè wɔ wɔ=nɔ

but NMLZ 3SG=come 3SG=VENT-reach 1PL 1PL=top

wɔ=ɬí wɔ=fɔ-ɔ lè ényɔ ényɔ

1PL=TOP 1PL=give.birth-H AB 3SG.OBJ two two

“But when it was our turn (our generation), as for us, we give birth to twins.”

If the adverbial occurs after the main assertion i.e. not in initial position, it may or may not be marked by le. Most time adverbials that occur in this position often take the article (50).

(50) ṃè=shì ní nyè=bà=ɬá

3PL=leave NMLZ 2PL=come=DEF

“They left when you came.”
However, time adverbials whose main semantic import is conditional i.e. they express a condition that must be met in order to fulfil an aim, cannot take the definite article. Such clauses are necessarily irrealis, as in (51a). (51b) with the definite article is therefore ungrammatical.

(51a) \( \text{ô = nỳɛ̃́-!ŋ́} \quad \text{ó = bó!té} \quad \text{jɛ́!mɛ́} \quad \text{ní} \)
\( 2\text{SG = be.able-NEG.FUT} \quad 2\text{SG.SBJV = enter} \quad \text{there} \quad \text{NMLZ} \)

\( \text{ô = jú-kò} \quad \text{ó = lhé} \)
\( 2\text{SG = bathe-NEG.PERF} \quad 2\text{SG = body} \)

“You cannot enter there when you have not bathed.”

(51b) *\( \text{ô = nỳɛ̃́-!ŋ́} \quad \text{ó = bó!té} \quad \text{jɛ́!mɛ́} \quad \text{ní} \)
\( 2\text{SG = be.able-NEG.FUT} \quad 2\text{SG.SBJV = enter} \quad \text{there} \quad \text{NMLZ} \)

\( \text{ô = jú-kò} \quad \text{ó = lhé = !é} \)
\( 2\text{SG = bathe-NEG.PERF} \quad 2\text{SG = body = DEF} \)

“You cannot enter there when you have not bathed.”

Conditional adverbials (protasis) that occur initially (before the apodosis) are often marked by \( \text{le} \) (52a), although they may occur without one (52b).

(52a) \( \text{ ké} \quad \text{nyɛ́ = yɛ} \quad \text{nyɛ́ = búà} \quad \text{mí́ = !é} \quad \text{wó} \quad \text{sèè} \)
\( \text{if} \quad 2\text{PL = eat} \quad 2\text{PL = help} \quad 1\text{SG.OBJ = DEF} \quad \text{tomorrow} \quad \text{back} \)

\( \text{àfí́ = !é} \quad \text{má́ = !bá} \quad \text{má́ = !bá-kè} \quad \text{nyɛ́} \)
\( \text{year = DEF} \quad 1\text{SG.FUT = come} \quad 1\text{SG.FUT = VENT-gift} \quad 2\text{SG.OBJ} \)

\( \text{ǹó́ = !kó} \)
\( \text{thing = INDEF} \)

“If you help me, next year I will come and gift you something.” [YM:114]
people some say-HAB NMLZ if 3PL.IMPERS=tell 2SG.OBJ

that immediately then 3SG=show NMLZ

“Some people say if they tell you that, it means “Go home and die.”” [CH:57]

When the protasis occurs after the apodosis, the definite article is not required. Most often,
speakers do not end such conditionals in the article (53a), although its presence is not
ungrammatical (53b).

(53a) jàtá bàá-gbè kpĩ̀ŋ̀ kɛ́ è = mɔ́ lɛ̀
lion FUT-kill deer if 3SG=catch 3SG.OBJ

“Lion will kill Deer if he catches him.”

(53b) jàtá bàá-gbè kpĩ̀ŋ̀ kɛ́ è = mɔ́ lɛ̀ = lɛ̀
lion FUT-kill deer if 3SG=catch 3SG.OBJ=DEF

“Lion will kill Deer if he catches him.”

The modification of time and conditional adverbials by the definite article seems to be a
relic of the parent construction from which these adverbials were spawned, and that is the
construction in which a nominalization marked by ní modifies bè ‘time’. This nominalization is
structurally akin to a relative construction, therefore it takes a final definite article. The
difference is that while the relative construction denotes an argument, the time adverbial
denotes a temporal concept. As hypothesized earlier, a different nominalizer, kɛ́ was used for
future and hypothetical events as well as conditional events. The definite article was maintained
in this new construction.
Although, originally a marker of definiteness in adverbials, *lɛ* appears to have evolved a new role as a marker of topic. This would explain why it occurs more with clause-initial adverbials than clause-final ones. The presence of *lɛ* seems almost arbitrary. If we view the work of *lɛ* in adverbials through the lens of its topicalization function, however, its presence does not appear so random. This has been done by Dakubu (1992) with the conclusion that *lɛ* marks the adverbial (a subordinate clause in her work) as one in a set of contrasting events, much as *lɛ* attached to an NP also functions contrastively. Fronting of the adverbial (without *lɛ* modification) serves to highlight that the clause is background information that is needed for the understanding of the following text. For time adverbials, for example, it gives the listener a time frame within which the action in the main clause can be situated. In Dakubu’s words, “the principal clause makes a comment on the condition or situation stated in the subordinate clause (Dakubu 1992:9).” This is how it relates to the topicalization function.

I agree with Dakubu that the modification of adverbials by *lɛ* bears a functional relation to the topicalization of NPs by *lɛ*. When an NP is topicalized by *lɛ*, the speaker is entreatng the hearer to register the NP as an important subject to which the subsequent information is highly pertinent. So too the marking of adverbials by *lɛ* alerts the hearer that the situation expressed by the adverbial is an important context necessary for the contextualization of the main assertion. My view and Dakubu’s diverge when it comes to the contrastive effect of *lɛ* in
adverbials. The evidence for Dakubu’s assertion that the subordinate clauses marked by *le* are
being contrasted with a set of other possible events is not convincing. A study of the discourse
data does not back up this claim. And this makes sense in light of the fact that even with NP-
topicalization, *le* does not always imply contrast. It is only when there is double *le*-marking that
there is contrastive work being done. The preference of *le*-marking for initial adverbials
(especially with conditionals) is explained by Dakubu (1992:9) in terms of markedness. In Gã,
the default position for adverbials is clause-final. Therefore, when adverbials occur initially
they receive marking whereas clause-final adverbials are unmarked and need no special
marking. The facts are not as neat and tidy in Gã, however. Time adverbials marked by *nĩ́*
receive *le*-marking whether they occur initially or finally. For initial adverbials, this marking is
mandatory, however. There is also an exception for final time adverbials which are essentially
conditional in semantic character. Initial conditional adverbials also receive mandatory *le-
marking while final conditional adverbials receive optional marking. It is possible, then, that
Gã may at some point in the past have had a strict separation between initial and final
adverbials when it came to *le*-marking, but these rules have been relaxed over time to the
current situation.

The phenomenon whereby adverbials and other subordinate clauses are marked by the
definite article is not limited to Gã. Ameka (1991a) describes a situation in Ewe that is almost
exactly parallel to Gã, where the definite particle *la*, occurs after fronted NPs and initial adverbial clauses. Its function, he writes, is to “mark a unit of discourse as the domain of referentiality within which the rest of the utterance should be understood or about which the rest of the utterance provides, or requests information or directs the addressee to act (Ameka 1991a:149).” Thus, he provides a unified account of the modification of both fronted NPs and subordinate clauses by *la*, a particle which also functions as a definite article.

c. Clausal connectors and discourse markers

Another functional similarity between Gã *le* and Ewe *la* is that they both occur with clausal connectors and discourse markers. In Gã, these are connectors such as *bè ‘then’, *kèkè ‘then’, *(nò) hèwɔ̀ [(that) sake] ‘so’ and *mùn ‘rather*. Adverbs such as *nò mĩ̀ŋ̀ ‘at that time, by then’, *ágbènè ‘now’ and *wɔ̀ ‘tomorrow’ also take *le* when they occur clause-initially. Examples are given in (54) and (55) with *kèkè ‘then’ and *bè ‘so then’ respectively.

(54) $\text{ kèkè} = \text{!lɛ} \quad \text{wɔ̀} \quad \text{nǐ́} \quad \!jí \quad \text{è} = \text{nò} \quad \text{jè-tsèlè-mò} = \text{!š}$

\[ \text{then} = \text{TOP} \quad \text{tomorrow} \quad \text{NMLZ} \quad \text{COP} \quad \text{3SG} = \text{top} \quad \text{world-rise-NOM} = \text{DEF} \]

$\text{wɔ̀ = bàá-hóó} \quad \text{hɔ̃́mɔ́wɔ́} \quad \text{nǐ́}$
$\text{1PL = FUT-cook} \quad \text{Homowo} \quad \text{thing}$

“Then, tomorrow which is the following morning, we will cook *Homowo* food.”

[OYO:41]

(55) $\text{ bè} = \text{!lɛ} \quad \text{nò} \quad \text{nǐ́} \quad \text{wɔ̀ = ŋ̃-kè́} \quad \text{wɔ̀ = hè} \quad \text{jí} \quad \text{á!kè́}$

\[ \text{so.then} = \text{TOP NM} \quad \text{NMLZ} \quad \text{1PL = PROG-tell} \quad \text{1PL = body} \quad \text{COP} \quad \text{NMLZ} \]
“So then, what we are telling ourselves is that, everything that God has said about us, everything that he has said, is true.” [CH:200]

In (56), the adverb, *lólóóló* ‘still’ takes the topical marker. In (57), three units of discourse are topicalized in succession: the discourse marker, *hèwɔ́* ‘sake, so’, the time adverb *bànɛ́* ‘now’ and the noun, *hɔ́mɔ́* ‘hunger’.

(56)  \(\text{shi} \ lólóóló= !ɛ́ \ gbékɛ́= !ɛ́ \ èè= yà\)  
\begin{align*}
\text{but} & \quad \text{still} = \text{TOP} \quad \text{child} = \text{DEF} \quad \text{3SG.PROG} = \text{go} \\
\text{“But still, the child, he is dying.” } & \quad \text{[CH:67]}
\end{align*}

(57)  \(\text{hèwɔ́}= !ɛ́ \ \text{bànɛ́}= !ɛ́ \ \text{hɔ́mɔ́}= !ɛ́ \ \text{wɔ́}= \text{ŋ-wá} \ \ è= yì\)  
\begin{align*}
\text{sake} = \text{TOP} \quad \text{now} = \text{TOP} \quad \text{hunger} = \text{DEF} \quad \text{1PL} = \text{PROG-jeer} \quad \text{3SG} = \text{head} \\
\text{“So now, the hunger, we are jeering at it.” } & \quad \text{[YM:283]}
\end{align*}

The function of *le* when it occurs with adverbs and discourse connectors is similar to its occurrence with nominalized adverbials. In the case of time and place adverbs, it signals the addressee to register the adverb as pertinent information for the processing of the following discourse. It provides the spatial and temporal orientation needed to understand the following utterance. It is much more difficult to establish a link between the topical-orientational function of *le* and its use with discourse connectors such as *kèkè* ‘then’ and *hèwɔ́* ‘so’. The discourse connectors themselves link the preceding talk to the following one, either temporally or
causally and as (58) shows, some e.g. *kèkè* ‘then’ can occur without *le*. As adverbs themselves, one can surmise that since these connectors also serve to alert the hearer about something that is important for understanding the following utterance (in this case, the previous utterance rather than a time or place), then they also merit *le*-marking.

(58)  

\[
\text{that inside=TOP 3PL.IMPERS.PERF = eat thing-DEF all}
\]

\[
\text{á=tà}
\]

3PL.IMPERS.PERF = finish

“By that time, they would have finished eating.”

\[
\text{then 3PL.IMPERS.PERF = ITIV-push 3PL.IMPERS = pour}
\]

“Then they’ll go and throw it away.”

[YM:147]

7.4 Right dislocation

Right dislocation (R-dislocation) is another marked topic construction that occurs in Gã. It is however, not very common. In this construction, the topic is coded first as a pronoun, followed by a comment on the pronoun referent. This is then followed by an intonational pause and then a full NP which is co-referential with the pronoun. The only example in my corpus is given below in (59). Here, *máma Angela-mèì* ‘Mama Angela and company’ is right-dislocated and had previously been referred to by the impersonal third plural pronoun, *á*. There is a notable pause immediately preceding *máma Angela-mèì* ‘Mama Angela and company’.
(59) á = fée é!kó ãàhû mamà Angela-mɛ́̀ĩ̀
3PL.IMPERS.PERF = do some constantly Mama Angela-ASSOC.PL

e = !hîñi
3SG.NEG = be.good.NEG

“They have tried to do a lot (to help), Mama Angela and her colleagues. It did not get better” [CH:42]

Because there are so few examples of R-dislocation in the corpus, it cannot be ascertained with certainty what discourse role this construction type plays in the language, apart from the long-held view, according to Givón (2001b:267), that they are an afterthought or repair device. That certainly seems to be the function the construction is playing in (59). In the discourse preceding this utterance, the speaker was narrating a story about a seriously ill child whose disease could not be cured, even though her parents had tried everything. It is with this background that he utters (59), using the impersonal pronoun. He then appears to change his mind and decides to be more specific by revealing the identity of the referent of the pronoun - Mama Angela and her colleagues. Presumably Mama Angela is a doctor or nurse.

7.5 **Summary**
This chapter has looked at the ways in which the information structure of Gã may be manipulated for pragmatic purposes. Focus constructions and topic constructions are the two major syntactic means used to accomplish this. In Gã, the only semantic type of focus construction is the contrastive focus construction (§7.1). This construction features new
information as the focused constituent and attempts to correct an assumed false belief on the part of the addressee. Focus constructions may also be used for emphasis. Topic constructions (§7.3) may take the form of left-dislocated or right-dislocated constructions. Left-dislocated constructions are used to reintroduce an old topic in order to provide new information about them. The definite marker, ɛ, also functions as a topic marker but whether contrast is being expressed can only be determined by examining the discourse as a whole. When the left-dislocated topic is marked by two instantiations of ɛ, however, the construction almost certainly contains a contrast.

8.0 Conclusion
This dissertation has striven to describe as many facets of the morphology and syntax of Gã as time, space and my own linguistic knowledge would permit. Not every topic has been covered, or covered intricately enough to suit every need. Nevertheless, for the first comprehensive grammar of the language since Zimmerman (1858), it is my hope that it serves as a valuable reference for grammarians, especially those interested in African languages, as well as areal and genetic typologists and syntacticians of every theoretical persuasion.

The grammar has built on the good works of previous linguists on Gã, and has uncovered some innovations in the language, in addition to presenting old topics in a new
perspective, in hopes of furthering our understanding of them and placing them in a broader theoretical context. Highlights of notable findings will be summarized here. In the chapter on words and word classes, it was shown that the vast majority of property concepts in Gã are expressed via nouns. Such nominal property words were found to exhibit many, though not all, of the morphological and syntactic properties of ordinary nouns. Many of them were also ideophones. A survey of the class of interjections found them to be a crucial and pervasive resource for attitudinal, cognitive and emotive expression, a fact that is not reflected in the dearth of attention that has been given to this word class.

In the discussion on verbs and verbal morphology in chapter three, it was shown that Gã, a heavily aspectual language, was developing a nascent future tense marker in bàá- and that the old future marker, àá- had become restricted to modal expression as well as future expression in very formal registers. Various meanings of the perfect were also looked at, with the most interesting being the use of the perfect for the narration of sequential, ordered or formulaic events. This was termed the narrative perfect. In chapter four on serial verb constructions, I proposed, following, Osam (1994) that Gã has two types of serial verb constructions: integrated SVCs and chained SVCs. However, I contended that chained SVCs in Gã differed fundamentally from integrated SVCs in being mono-clausal but multi-predicational. Chained SVCs were therefore a non-prototypical type of serial construction, since serial
constructions are generally defined as mono-clausal and mono-predicational. Voice categories in Gã was one area that was fertile for research, as little had been said about it before. It was shown in chapter five that all the major voice categories were manifested in Gã by periphrastic means and that serial verb constructions were a prominent tool for the realization of causative, benefactive and applicative voices.

Chapter 6 showed that nominalizations are an often overlooked construction that are utilized for the execution of a wide range of functions. Grammatical nominalizations were shown to be the main vehicle for relativization, complementation and adverbial expression. It was stressed that grammatical nominalizations and nominals in general be so-identified by their functions and external syntax, rather than concentrating on internal (verbal) features that might lead to a different conclusion. When this is done, even entire sentences, in certain contexts, could function nominally. The final chapter touched on focus and topic constructions. Focus constructions were found to be diachronically related to relative constructions, the common thread being nominalization. Topic constructions consisted almost entirely of left-dislocated constructions modified by the definite article.
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Appendix A: Glossing conventions

1    first person
2    second person
3    third person
AK    Akan
AOR    aorist
ASSOC    associative
BGL    Bureau of Ghana Languages
BSG    Bible Society of Ghana
COMPL    completive
COP    copula
CTF    counterfactual
DEF    definite
EGR    egressive
EMPH    emphatic
FOC    focus
FS    frog story narration
FUT    future
GEN    genitive
HAB    habitual
IDEO    ideophone
IJ    interjection
IMP    imperative
IMPERF    imperfect
IMPERS    impersonal
IMPF    imperfective
INAN    inanimate
INDEC    indecipherable
INDEF    indefinite
ING.FUT    ingressive future
INTENS    intensifier
ITER    iterative
ITIV    itive
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOC</td>
<td>locative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEG</td>
<td>negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NM</td>
<td>nominalization marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NMLZ</td>
<td>nominalizer (grammatical)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>nominalizer (lexical)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td>new testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBJ</td>
<td>object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERF</td>
<td>perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERT</td>
<td>pertensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PossP</td>
<td>Possessive phrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRED.PRT</td>
<td>predicative particle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROG</td>
<td>progressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROS</td>
<td>prospective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROX.PRED.PRT</td>
<td>proximal predicative particle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRSTV.PRED.PRT</td>
<td>presentative predicative particle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QP</td>
<td>question particle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RED</td>
<td>reduplication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBJV</td>
<td>subjunctive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG</td>
<td>singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBJV</td>
<td>subjunctive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOP</td>
<td>topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VENT</td>
<td>ventive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B: Cited texts and speakers

Within this work, examples taken from recorded texts are indicated by initials or some other abbreviation, followed by a colon and the line number from which the example was taken in the transcribed text. In three texts, named DT, YH and LIB, the number that comes after the colon represents the time-stamp within the recording that the sentence was uttered. Time pressure prevented me from transcribing these texts. Below are the texts and a little more information about them. Except for Oyo, the names used are pseudonyms.

DF (Death and Funerals) - A conversation between myself and two other women, Sally in her late seventies and Dina in her early sixties. All three are related. As the name says, it revolves around a discussion of recent family deaths.

FH (Family House) - A conversation involving the same participants as in DF, but this time participants discuss issues concerning the family house.

MM (Mr. Mensah) - A conversation between Mr. Mensah and Dina on miscellaneous matters. Both are in their sixties.

OYO (Oyoo) - A procedural narrative describing the activities and rituals involved in the twins’ festival and Homowo. The main speaker is Oyoo (her real name), a woman in her
seventies, with input from KK (woman in her thirties) and Kwei (Oyo’s grand-nephew, 30-ish).

I also feature on the recording, mainly asking questions.

*YM (Yoomo)* - Another procedural narrative describing the twins’ festival and *Homowo*.

Yoomo is a fetish priestess and a long-time employee of the Ghana Fire Service. Also featuring in a limited capacity are myself and KK.

*YH (Yoomo’s house)* - Casual banter among four or five people at Yoomo’s house.

*DT (Dina and Tess)* - A phone conversation between Dina and Tess (in her late fifties).

*CH (Church)* - A sermon given by a Presbyterian priest.

*LIB (Libation)* - A libation offered by Yoomo as part of the twins’ festival.

There were also 14 frog story narrations by as many speakers. “Frog, where are you?” is a picture book by Mercer Mayer (1969). Speakers were asked to flip through the book and narrate the story based on the actions depicted in the pictures. It is a story about a little boy whose pet frog goes missing. He sets out into the forest to find him and encounters a number of mishaps, culminating in him being reunited with his pet frog. Below is a list of the real names of the narrators, their gender and approximate age.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Naa Borkai (BOR)</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>thirties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nartey (NAR)</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>twenties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sampson (SAMP)</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>twenties</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tina (TIN) female, late fifties
Florence (FLO) female, late seventies
Debbie (DEB) female, early sixties
Aku (AKU) female, thirties
Mavis (MAV) female, 17 years old
Man Lizzie (MAN) female, 12 years old
Mr. Adjetey (MA) male, fifties
Manfred (MANF) male, 11 years old
Kofi (KOF) male, 10 years old
Nathaniel (NAT) male, 8 years old
Elisheba (ELL) female, 6 years old

**Sample text from “YM”**

1. Akua: mĩĩ = tá!ó ní ó = tsṹ ũ wò ě̀ ě̀ 1SG.PROG = search NMLZ 2SG.SBJV = show IPL IJ hã̌ã̀ jĩ̀ àjɛ̀ lɛ̀ yě́ lí = !é twin.festival = DEF “I want you to show us…erm…the twin festival”

2. KK: kũsũm custom “Customs”

3. Akua: ófáíně hě́ ě́ ě́ please yes “Yes, please.”
4. nàà
   mouth
   “about”

5. Yoomo: yòò
   “Ok”

6. Akua: hàâjìàyèlèyèlì = !é--
   twin.festival = DEF
   “The twin festival--”

7. Yoomo: nò ní hèwò ní = yèò
   NM NMLZ sake NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS = eat-HAB
   “Why it is celebrated.”

8. Akua: èhèè nò ní hèwò ní = yèò
   IJ NM NMLZ sake NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS = eat-HAB
   “Exactly. Why it is celebrated.”

9. kè nò ní = fè-ò
    and NM NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS = do-HAB
    “And what is done.”

10. kè how many days = yè-ò
    and 3PL.IMPERS = eat-HAB
    “And how many days it is celebrated.”

11. Yoomo: Ok
12. Akua: mê!é time à = bòi-ò
    what 3PL.IMPERS = start-HAB and things

13. nó-fùà-nò ní kò-ò hè
    thing-all-thing NMLZ take-HAB body
    “Everything about it.”
14. Yoomo: yòò ó=jé!ţi fẽ̀
ok 2SG=there all
“How are you and your family?”

15. Akua: ófáìnɛ wɔ̀=jé!ţi jògba ŋ̀ŋ̀
please 1PL=there well
“Please, everything and everyone is well.”

16. Yoomo: ɛ̀ɛ̀ à = tsé-ɖ mì nàā kwèíkó
IJ 3PL.IMPERS=call-HAB 1SG.OBJ Naa Kweikor
“Errm, my name is ~Naa Kweikor.”

17. ì=wó!ţi gbéè jí yòómó àshámi
1SG=deity name COP Yoomo Ashami
“My deity name is ~Yoomo Ashami.”

18. mɛ̀ĩ̀ pìì tsé-ɖ mì kwèíkó Fire Service
people many call-HAB 1SG.OBJ Kweikor Fire Service
“Many people call me Kweikor Fire Service.”

19. nò jí nò ní ké ò=kè-tsé mì =!è
that COP NM NMLZ if 2SG=take-call 1SG.OBJ=DEF
ní à=bàá=!nà
NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS=FUT-see
“That is what if you call me by, people will know (you are referring to me).”

20. Akua: yòò
“Ok.”

21. Yoomo: mìì
IJ
“Well”

22. bè nò ní hèwò ní à=yè-ɖ
then thing that because REL 3PL.IMPERS=eat-HAB
hàâjị-à-yèlè  jí
twin-PERT-yam COP
“So, the reason the twin festival is celebrated is”

23. àtàá nyọ̀njọ̀ bọ̀ àl’kẹ́ mò-féé-!mọ̀ = !ọ́
father God create NMLZ person-all-person = DEF
ó = fọ̀ ékòmé
2SG.SBJV = give.birth one
“God ordained that everyone will have one child at a time.”

24. Akua: ófàìnɛ̀ ọ̀ báà = nyé́ ó̀ wọ̀ ó̀ gbèè nọ̀
please 2SG = FUT-able 2SG.SBJV = lift 2SG-voice top
fil’óò
little
“Please, can you raise your voice a little?”

25. Yoomo: yòò
Ok

26. bè̀ nọ̀ ní̀ hèwò ní̀ à = yè-ọ̀
IJ NM NMLZ sake NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS = eat.HAB
hàâjị-à-yèlè = !ẹ̀ kékè jí ál’kẹ́
twin-PERT-yam = DEF just COP that
“The reason why the twin festival is celebrated is simply that”

27. àtàá nyọ̀njọ̀ bọ̀ mò-féé-mọ̀ ní̀
father God create person-all-person NMLZ
é = fọ̀ ékòmé
3SG.SBJV = give.birth one
“God created everyone to have one child at a time.”

28. hèwò = !ọ́ kẹ́ ò̀ tèè ékòmé = !ẹ̀ fọ̀-!mọ̀
sake = TOP if 2SG = go.PST one = DEF give.birth-NOM
nì̀ ò̀ ná̀ !lè ény!fọ̀ = !l’ọ́
and 2SG = get 3SG.OBJ two = DEF
“So when you are about to have that one child and you end up with two”

29. kūsuŋ yè ní à = fé-ɗ
custom exist NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS = do-HAB
à = há-à nèkè hâajìi nè!ɗ
3PL.IMPERS = give-HAB this twins this
“There are some rites that are performed for these twins.”

30. Akua: mìm
IJ
“I see”

31. Yoomo: ké ò = yà-fò é!nyò = !ɓ bè
if 2SG = ITIV=give.birth two = DEF then
ó = !fò hâajìi
2SG.PERF = give.birth twins
“If you give birth to two (babies) then you’ve given birth to twins.”

32. Akua: mìm
IJ
“Yes”

33. Yoomo: hèwò = !ɓ âmè = bè ní à = kè-yè-ɗ
sake = TOP 3PL = time NMLZ 3PL.IMPERS = take-eat-HAB
âmè nỳènĭ jí
3PL food COP
“So the time for eating their food (i.e. celebrating, honouring them) is”

34. ké è = shè áffí
when 3SG = reach year
“when the year ends.”

35. dàní à = bàá-yè hàmšwò = !ɓ
before 3PL.IMPERS = FUT-eat Homowo = DEF
à = yè-è
yèèyé!yé
3PL.IMPERS = eat-HAB Yeyeye
“Before Homowo (festival) is celebrated Yeyeye (festival) is celebrated.”

36. yèèyé!yé = è jí èàâjî-à-yèlè = !è
Yeyeye = DEF COP twin-PERT-yam = DEF
“Yeyeye is the twin festival.”

37. Akua: mìm
IJ
“Ok”

38. Yoomo: à = bàá-!hé yèlè
3PL.IMPERS = FUT-buy yam
“Yam will be bought”
à = bàá-!yá-tsè èàâjî = !è àmè = sùsùmá
3PL = FUT-ITIV-call twin = DEF 3PL = spirit
“The spirit of the twins will be summoned.”

39, spiritually

40. Akua: mìm
IJ
“Ok”

41. Yoomo: nì àmè àmè = bàá-tsòò nò ní àmè = bàá-!yé
and 3PL 3PL = FUT-show NM NMLZ 3PL = FUT-eat
“And it is they who will decide what they will eat.”

42. Akua: Ok

43. Yoomo: mèì kòmèì bàá-tsòò tòò
people some FUT-show sheep
“Some people will choose a sheep”
44. kɛ̀ è=nò wù̀ṣ-í ényò
and 3SG=top chicken-PL two
“In addition to two chickens”

45. kɛ̀ mù-tsùlù
and oil-red
“and palm oil”

46. kɛ̀ = àtálé ní ëmè = sùmò ní ëmè = ììè̀tò̀
and dress NMLZ 3PL=like NMLZ 3PL=INTENS
ëmè = bàá=!wò = !è
3PL = FUT-wear = DEF
“And a dress that they like that they themselves will wear.”

47. ëmè = yè sùsùmà = !á ní ëmè = bàá-yà-tsè
3PL = have spirit = DEF NMLZ 3PL = FUT-ITIV-call
“They have spirits that they summon.”

48. ëmè ní ëmè = bàá-yà-tsò̀ nèkè nìyènì́łí nè́ë
3PL FOC 3PL = FUT-ITIV-show this food this
“It is they who will decide on this food.”

49. Akua: m̀m̀
IJ
“Ok”

50. Yoomo: kɛ̀ ëmè = nìnè-shì-ní́lì ní ëmè = bàá=!wò
and 3PL = hand-down-thing NMLZ 3PL = FUT-wear
“And the bracelet that they will wear.”

51. Akua: m̀m̀
IJ
“Ok”
52. à = tsé-à lè àbàklé
3PL_IMPERS = call-HAB 3SG.OBJ abakle
“It is called an “abakle.””

53. Akua: mêm
IJ
“Ok”

53. Yoomo: à = kè fî-à àmè = màmè shî
3PL.IMPERS = take tie-HAB 3PL = hand down
“It is tied to their wrist.”

54. nò hèwò ké--
that sake if
“So if--”

55. bè every year jí bè nì à = kè-fé-à
then COP time NMLZ 3PL = take-do-HAB
“So it is done every year.”

56. è = dàmòggò date kómé
3SG = stand.NEG one
“It doesn’t fall on the same date.”

57. Akua: hêhé!é
“Yes”

58. Yoomo: afi nè!é è = bà-dàmò
date this 3SG.PERF = VENT-stand
“Fourteenth year this”

58. Akua: mêm
IJ
“Ok”
59. Yoomo: é!kólé = !é next year è = báá-lyá-dámɔ́ fifteenth
maybe = TOP 3SG = FUT-ITIV-stand
“Maybe next year it will fall on the fifteenth.”

60. every year = !é ékòmé ká-à nɔ́
 = TOP one lie-HAB top
“Every year it moves forward by one day.”

61. Akua: Ok

62. Yoomo: hèwɔ́ = !ɔ́ bɛ̀ bɔ́nĩ́ à = fɛ̀-ɔ́ lɛ̀ jí
sake = TOP then how 3PL.IMPERS = do-HAB 3SG.OBJ COP
“So how they do it is”

63. à = wɔ̀-ɔ́ bàà
3PL.IMPERS = prepare-HAB leaf
“They prepare leaves/herbs.”

64. ní !jí hââjĩ́ ă-bàà
NMLZ COP twin PERT-leaf
“Which is the twin’s herbal infusion.”

65. Akua: ìm̀n
IJ
“Ok”

66. Yoomo: ămɛ̀ = yè special bàà ní
3PL = have leaf NMLZ
à = kɛ̀-jù-ɔ́ à = há-à ămɛ̀
3PL = take-bathe-HAB 3PL.IMPERS = give-HAB 3PL
“They have a special herbal infusion that they are given a bath with.”

67. Akua: ìm̀n
IJ
“Ok”
68. Yoomo: nɛ̀kɛ̀ hàài jì ì-bàà nɛ̀!ɛ̀
   this twin PERT-leaf this
   “This herbal infusion”

69. nò ékò jí nò ní wò=wò ké-mà
   that some COP NM NMLZ 1PL.PERF=prepare take.PERF-situate
   shì nɛ̀!ɛ̀
   down this
   “It is what we have prepared over here.”

70. mìm
   IJ
   “Ok”

71. Yoomo: bɛ̀ ó=nà
   QP 2SG=see
   “You’ve seen it, haven’t you?”

72. Akua: mìm!mì
   IJ
   “Yes”

73. Yoomo: hèwɔ̀=!ɔ̀ dání wò=báá-wò bàá=!à
   sake=TOP before 1PL=FUT-prepare leaf=DEF
   “So before we prepare the herbal infusion”

74. wò=kè-báá-tsɔ̃́ɔ̃́ ñwɛ̀ rê
   1PL=take-FUT-show up
   “We will show it to heaven”

75. nì wò=kè-báá-tsɔ̃́ɔ̃́ àtàá nàá nyɔ́ŋmɔ̀ á!ké
    and 1PL=take-FUT-show father title.female God NMLZ
é=jɔ́ɔ́ à à nɛ́ nɔ́ 3SG.SBJV=bless leaf this top
“We will show it to God, that he should bless this water.”

76. Akua: m̀m̀
IJ
“Ok”

77. Yoomo: kè-hā gbē!kē-bi!i=!é nī
take-give child=PL NMLZ
à=kē-lijú á=hā ìmè 3PL.IMPERS.take.SBJV-bathe 3PL.IMPERS.SBJV=give 3PL
“For the children so they can be bathed with it.”

78. kè ̃ mè=m̀m̀ kè ̃ mè=pàpà=!á
and 3PL=mother and 3PL=father=DEF
“And their mother and their father.”

79. Akua: m̀m̀
IJ
“Ok”

80. kóñì kè ̃ mè=sèèhó tá!wá ṣ = bá=!á
NMLZ when 3PL=immediate.younger.sibling Tawia PROG=come=DEF
“So that when their immediate younger sibling, Tawia, is coming”

81. nī lè hû é=nà gbè nī
NMLZ 3SG.OBJ too 3SG.SBJV=get way NMLZ
é=!bá 3SG.SBJV=come
“He will come unhindered.”

82. Akua: m̀m̀
IJ
“Ok”
83. Yoomo: hêwɔ̀ ke à = wò bãà = !á à = mà sake when 3PL.IMPERS = prepare leaf-DEF 3PL.IMPERS = shì down
“So when the herbal infusion is prepared and put down”

84. nì ò = yè shîà mìŋ nì òò = tá!ó
and 2SG = be.located house inside and 2SG.PROG = want nò = !kó = !é
thing = INDEF = DEF
“And you are in the house and you want something”

85. ò = kè-báà-tsɔ̀ gbé!kè-bû = è à-nò
2SG = take-FUT-pass child-PL = DEF PERT-top
“You will pass your request through the children.”

86. ò = bàà-yá-hé òò tò kòmé
2SG = FUT-buy alcohol bottle one
“You will go and buy one bottle of alcohol.”

87. nì jí Castlebridge tò kòmé
NMLZ COP Castlebridge bottle one
“Which is one bottle of Castlebridge whiskey.”

88. nì ò = kè ó = shîká nì jè bô-diêŋtsè
and 2SG = take 2SG = money NMLZ come.from 2SG-INTENS
ó = tsùí mìŋ
2SG = heart inside
“And you will give an amount of money that is from the bottom of your heart.”

89. é!kólë = !é ten Ghana àlóó twenty
perhaps = TOP or
“Perhaps, ten Ghana (cedis) or twenty Ghana (cedis).”
90. "You will add it to the one bottle (of Castlebridge whiskey)."

91. Akua: "Ok"

92. Yoomo: “And they will use it to pour libation for you.”

93. Akua: "Ok"

94. Yoomo: “Which means they will pour libation for you.”

95. Akua: “Ok”

96. Yoomo: “So by the time another year comes around”

97. Akua: “Yes”
98. Yoomo: ní !jí next year nó ní
NMLZ COP NM NMLZ
e = bàá-bá-ní!ná = !á
3SG = FUT-come-meet = DEF
"Which is the coming year"

99. Akua: hḗ!é
"Yes"

100. Yoomo: nó ní bò ó = bà-bí = !é
NM NMLZ 2SG.OBJ 2SG.PERF = VENT-ask = DEF
"What you have come and asked for"

101. hàjù́i = !é ̀ àmè́ = fèé ̀ àmè́ = !há bò
twins = DEF 3PL.PERF = do 3PL.SBJV = give 2SG.OBJ
"The twins, they have done it for you."

102. Akua: ììì
IJ
"I see."