

This particle is very common with NPs (including pronouns) and adverbials. Usually it signals a change or switch in discourse topic or setting. The particle often does not merit translation by a marked topicalization construction in English.

- (xx1) a. $\tilde{n}\tilde{u} : -\tilde{n}\tilde{u} : -d\check{o}y^n$ $b\grave{e}$ $g\hat{a} :$ $k\grave{u}^n$,
 millet.L-millet.L-hip 3PlS.L say.Impf Def,
 [kò k\acute{e}] $\acute{i}r\acute{e}\equiv k\grave{o} \Rightarrow$,
 [Nonh **Topic** ripen.Impf \equiv be.Nonh,
 [kó tìg\`e-gó-Ø] $y\grave{u}w\acute{o}\equiv k\grave{o}$,
 [NonhO wait.for-impf.Neg-3SgS] spill.Impf \equiv Nonh,
 [kó yúwú-wò l\`e], [l\`á : -l\`á : k\acute{e}]
 [NonhP shed-Caus in], [first-first **Topic**
 ñě-m y\`a : g\`o :ⁿ j\`i :ⁿ
 woman-Pl go take.away.Impf Past
 ‘What they call “ $\tilde{n}\tilde{u} : -\tilde{n}\tilde{u} : -d\check{o}y^n$ ” (an early-ripening cultivar) of millet), that (type) ripens (and) it doesn’t wait for them (=other cultivars), it sheds (grains). Before it shedded, in the old days, the women would go and remove it.’ **2004.3.6**

- b. [kò màb\`il b\`er\`e k\acute{e}]
 [Dem vehicle in **Topic**
 [kó ná : ∴ fú : \Rightarrow] $n\hat{e}y^n \equiv \hat{y}^n$
 [NonhP entirety all] blood \equiv it.is
 ‘As for inside the vehicle [topic], the whole thing was blood(y).’
2004.5.1

In (xx1.a), a discourse referent (a cultivar of millet) is introduced, then in [kò k\acute{e}] a pronominal form denoting the same referent is made into an overt topic of what follows (‘ripens’, etc.). A second case of k\acute{e} occurs when the time frame shifts from the present to the past. The alternative to [l\`á : -l\`á : k\acute{e}] ‘as for (in) the past’ would be a more laborious conditional antecedent of the type [l\`á : -l\`á : $\equiv \hat{y}$ d\`e] ‘if it is/was (in) the past’.

It is not unusual for two [X k\acute{e}] topical phrases to co-occur (xxx).

- (xx2) $n\hat{i}m$ $m\grave{a} : s\hat{o} : ^n$ $g\grave{o}r^n \acute{o} - \grave{w}^n$ $t\grave{a}n\grave{a} :$ $d\`e\grave{y}$,
 now builder be.able.Impf-2SgS happen if,
 [ù k\acute{e}] [kò k\acute{e}] [$m\grave{a} : s\hat{o} : ^n - b\acute{i}r\acute{e}$ $k\grave{u}^n$]
 [2Sg.L **Topic**] [Nonh.L **Topic**] [builder.L-work Def]
 èj\`i :ⁿ y\`e - l\`e èj\`u $\equiv k\grave{o}$
 very there good \equiv be.Nonh
 ‘Now if you are capable of working as a builder, (for) you-Sg [topic], it (=work) [topic], that construction work, it is very good (=profitable) there.’
2004.5.3

Common combinations include $n\hat{i}\eta$ ké (variant $n\hat{i}m$ ké) ‘now’ and $n\acute{e}y^n$ ké ‘now’.

19.1.2 ‘Now’ ($n\grave{e}$)

The default form is $n\grave{e}$, which can be used with a wide variety of preceding elements (NPs, adverbials). However, we get $n\grave{e}$ and $n\grave{o}$ by assimilation certain high-frequency combinations, including those with pronouns (3Sg $w\acute{o}$ $n\grave{o}$, Nonh $k\acute{o}$ $n\grave{o}$ (variant $k\acute{o}$ $n\grave{e}$), and 2Sg \acute{u} $n\grave{o}$ with o , 3Pl $b\acute{e}$ $n\grave{e}$, 2Pl \acute{e} $n\grave{e}$, and 1Sg $m\acute{i}$ $n\grave{e}$ with e , but 1Pl $\acute{e}m\acute{e}$ $n\grave{e}$). We get $n\grave{e}$ in the common phrase \acute{i} $j\acute{e}$ $n\grave{e}$ ‘today; up to now; again’.

This particle can be glossed as ‘now’, but in the discourse sense (‘turning now to X’). ‘Now’ in the strictly temporal sense is often expressed as $n\hat{i}\eta$ (variant $n\hat{i}m$), or by $n\acute{e}y^n$, both of which are usually followed by Topic morpheme ké ($n\hat{i}\eta$ ké, $n\acute{e}y^n$ ké). However, $n\grave{e}$ is sometimes used after $n\hat{i}\eta$ or $n\acute{e}y^n$, and it is regular in the combination \acute{i} $j\acute{e}$ $n\grave{e}$ ‘up to now’ or ‘again’.

A good example of the discourse function of $n\grave{e}$ is (xx1). This is spoken by the interviewer, changing the subject from boys’ circumcision to the equivalent (i.e. excision) for girls. Both male circumcision and female excision are referred to as “giving porridge to drink”).

- (xx1) [$n\grave{e} : -r^n -\grave{u}m$ mà àrà- $n\acute{o} : -w^n -\emptyset$ $n\grave{e}$],
 [female-child-Pl Poss porridge.L-drink-Caus-VblN **now**],
 [$k\acute{o}$ $n\grave{o}$] $y\acute{o} : -j\hat{i}n\equiv\hat{i} :$
 [Nonh **now**] what?-like=it.is
 ‘Now female circumcision (=excision) [topic], (as for) it now [topic], what is it like?’ **2004.3.18**

19.1.3 ‘Also, even’ ($k\hat{a} : ^n$, $k\acute{a}r^n\grave{a}$)

The morpheme meaning ‘also, too’ (see below for ‘even’) is usually heard as $k\hat{a} : ^n$, which can easily be confused with the quantifier $k\hat{a} : ^n$ ‘each, any’. However, the particle meaning ‘also’ has a variant $k\acute{a}r^n\grave{a}$ that is not shared with the quantifier. In addition, the ‘each, any’ quantifier occurs in a more limited set of morphosyntactic combinations, e.g. with a preceding unmodified noun or a preceding relative clause, and it induces tone-dropping in the preceding word in many cases (§6.xxx), whereas the ‘also, even’ particle has no such tonal effect.

$k\hat{a} : ^n$ and $k\acute{a}r^n\grave{a}$ variants are interchangeable. However, $k\acute{a}r^n\grave{a}$ seems to occur chiefly after a pronoun or other NP. $k\hat{a} : ^n$ is more common in all positions, but seems especially dominant in clause-final position (with broad scope), and in the high-frequency combination $k\hat{a} : ^n$ $n\grave{e}$ with $n\grave{e}$ ‘now’. The variant $k\acute{a}r^n\grave{a}$ should be distinguished from the common verb $k\acute{a}r^n\acute{a}$ ‘do’, which can appear in the form

kárⁿà-∅ in relative clauses: unmarked Perfective with H(H...)L tone overlaid, Participial -∅ marking Nonhuman head noun.

The constituent that the ‘also’ particle has scope over is not always topical, but it can be (xx1).

(xx1) a. [ñě:-rⁿ-ùm kárⁿà], àrá nò:-wⁿó-n déy, ...
 [female-child-Pl **also**], porridge drink-Caus-Ppl.Sg if, ...
 ‘Girls too, when they (=elders) are going to give them porridge to drink
 (=have them undergo excision), ...’ **2004.3.18**

b. A: òⁿhóⁿ ú dèné-m̀ⁿ
 un-huh 2SgO want.Impf-1SgS
 B: gó:ngà [mí kárⁿà] ú dèné-m̀ⁿ
 yes [1Sg **also**] 2SgS want.Impf-1SgS
 (He:) ‘Uh-huh! I love you-Sg!’ (She:) ‘Yes, me too, I love you!’
2004.3.20

The mí kárⁿà ‘me too’ in (xx1.b) was repeated in a parallel passage later in the same text as mí kâ:ⁿ.

The sense ‘even’ is an extension of ‘also’; the distinction between the two senses is blurry in cases like ‘even today’ (= ‘today too’) following a discussion of past practices (xx2.a). The sense ‘even’ may be reinforced by hâl ‘until, to the point that’ (xx2.b).

(xx2) a. [íjé kâ:ⁿ] [kó kùⁿ ké] héddé-sà-∅
 [today **even**] [Nonh Def Topic] persist-Reslt-3SgS
 ‘Even today [topic], that (practice) [topic], it persists.’ **2004.3.20**

b. ìnè [wò cé] ñáká-sà-n
 person.L [3SgP.L possession] be.incomplete-Reslt-Ppl.Sg
 hâl [kó túrú kâ:ⁿ] kò:-r^ó
 until [NonhP one **even**] be.Nonh-Neg
 ‘There was nobody whose possession (=equipment) was missing even
 one (item).’ **2004.3.24**

19.1.4 Subtopics (dèy)

In complex discourse, often a pair or set of entities or situations are mentioned at the beginning, then each is treated in turn. The usual way to open a subtopic is with ðèy ‘if it is’ plus an NP or adverbial, or with dèy ‘if’ plus a main clause. For example, in (xx1), the speaker was asked about name-giving rituals, and begins by making a distinction between former and current practices, which he will describe in succession.

(xx1) [yá: ∴ íjé ∴] kǎw=kò, yá:≡ŷ dèy, ...
 [yesterday today] separate≡be.Nonh, yesterday≡it.is if, ...
 ‘Yesterday (=the old days) and today are different (=things have changed). If it is (=as for) yesterday, ...’ **2004.3.19**

19.2 Presentential discourse markers

19.2.1 ‘Well, ...’ (háýè)

háýè is a common presentential particle, borrowed from Fulfulde. It is used like English ‘well, ...’. That is, it often suggests a mildly adversarial element in a conversation. However, it is often used (with no adversarial sense) at the beginning of a quotation. It often seems to be included to signal that a quotation is at hand, there being no other indicator at the beginning of a quotation.

(xx1) ... jàṅá-bà, háýè yǎ: yéré gá-bà
 ... request.Impf-3PIS, well go come.Imprt say.Impf-3PIS
 ‘... they will request (the bride). “Well, go and come back-Sg!” they (=bride’s kin) will say.’ **2004.3.20**

19.1.2 ‘Well, in that case...’ (wálâ:)

Pronounced wálâ:, French *voilà* ‘there it is’ occurs in texts in situations similar to those of háýè. Since wálâ:, more than háýè, is a response to something just said, I find a free translation ‘well, in that case ...’ appropriate, as in (xx1).

(xx1) wálâ: bíré běj-jè-w
 well work(noun) get-RecPf-2SgS
 ‘Well, in that case you-Sg have got some work to do.’ (bèr-é-) **2004.3.20**

19.1.3 ‘But ...’ (kà:, ká:, gà:)

Clause-initial kà: (most common variant), gà:, or ká: has the adversative sense ‘but’. This is a regional form, occurring with slight phonological variations in the languages of the zone, including Fulfulde and Songhay. I am unable to confidently establish a lexical tone. In isolation, my assistant pronounces ká:, but most textual occurrences have L-toned kà: or variant gà:.

(xx1) a. [kó dógúru ké] [bìrè gàrá] kò:-ró,
 [Nonh time.HL Topic] [work.L big] be.Nonh-Neg,

kà: èjù-yéy jó:≡kò
but field-go much≡be.Nonh
 ‘At that time there is no major work (in the fields), but going to the fields is common (anyway).’ **2004.3.6**

b. [cín≡kò jî:ⁿ]
 [thus≡be.Nonh Past]
 kà: íjé [kó kùⁿ] kó kò:-ró
but today [Nonh Def] Nonh be.Nonh-Neg
 ‘It was like that in the past, but today, that [topic], there is none of that.’
2004.3.21

c. [kó ná: ∴ fú: ⇒] nêyⁿ≡yⁿ,
 [NonhP entirety all] blood≡it.is,
 gà: [kò mòbîl mà jíré lé] ...
but [Dem vehicle Poss front in]
 ‘the whole (interior of vehicle) was bloody, but in the front of that vehicle ...’ **2004.5.1**

French *mais* (often heard with low tone) is increasingly used among young people, as in all languages of this area.

19.1.4 ‘So, ...’ (bèy, hónò)

Another clause-initial discourse particle is bèy. It can best be translated as sentence-initial ‘So now, ...’. It occurs in the middle of conversations as a presentential particle, set off with an intonation break. It is used, for example, when the speaker is ready to ask a follow-up question of the interlocutor, developing the preceding discourse. The particle does not mean ‘so’ in the causal sense.

(xx1) a. bèy, yà:jí: payá-tù:-Ø
so, marriage tie-Perf-2SgS
 ñě-n dôm [á úrò] táǵá yèl-lí-Ø
 woman-Sg for.now [2SgP house.Loc.HL] transfer come-Perf.Neg-3SgS
 ‘So, (now) you’ve contracted the marriage, but the woman hasn’t (yet) come and moved into your (=bridegroom’s) house.’ **2004.3.20**

b. [é nè] bèy [tùmó dójù] dà:ⁿ-bé
 [2Pl now] **so** [stone under] sit.Perf.L-2PlS
 ‘So you-Pl are sitting (=living) at the bottom of the hills.’ **2004.4.5**

Another particle is hónò. This is a Fulfulde borrowing, used occasionally in Jamsay. It can be glossed ‘so’ in a more literally causal sense.

- (xx2) [á òrú] bě-r dùjù-lá-Ø péy,
 [2SgP matter] 3Pl-Dat heavy-Neg-3SgS at.all,
 hónò gùnó-n jín≡î: ú yàṅá-bà =>
 so slave-Sg like≡Foc 2SgO look.at.Impf-3PlS
 ‘Your-Sg situation (=behavior) is not at all important to them, so it’s like a slave [focus] that they look on you.’

19.1.5 ‘Indeed’ (hà:sín)

This particle is clause-initial. I gloss it ‘indeed’ or ‘in fact’. In (xxx), the village elders announce their findings in a hypothetical case where a cow damaged a farmer’s field.

- (xx1) a. mâ:n, hà:sín [á nàṅá kùⁿ],
 so-and-so, **indeed** [2SgS cow Def]
 [wó èjú] ñùnù-ṅó-sà-Ø
 [3SgP field] be.ruined-Caus-Reslt-3SgS
 ‘So-and-so (vocative), indeed your cow did damage his field.’ **2004.3.10**
- b. hà:sín [kó bèrè-àrⁿá :.], [kó bèrè-sèmi: :.],
indeed [NonhP stick-male], [NonhP stick-?]
 [lá:-lá: ké] sěw kúnó-bà jî:ⁿ
 [first-first Topic] small.branch put.Impf-3PlS Past
 ‘(After gathering wood,) indeed (there were) large roof beams, and mid-sized poles (to be laid across the beams); in the old days [topic], they used to put little branches (in a roof).’ **2004.3.25**
- c. ú:rⁿó íjé wò gá: kân
 get.up stand 3SgS.L say after
 hà:sín yă: bèrè-gó-Ø
 indeed go can-Implf.Neg-3SgS
 ‘When it (=mouse, drunk with millet beer) stood up, it was indeed unable to go (=walk steadily).’ **2004.4.1**

19.1.6 ‘Lo, ...’ (jàká:, jákà-jákà)

Presentential marker jàká: or iterated jákà-jákà, borrowed from Fulfulde jaka, occurs before clauses in narrative that contain a surprise or other strongly highlighted material. In my texts, it occurs only in lively tales and anecdotes.

- (xx1) a. [wó yí-dî:ⁿ nâ: má] wá,
 [3Sg here spend.night.Impf Q] say,
 òⁿhóⁿ wá, jàká: [kó kò-ý] kó dà:rà-Ø
 un-huh! say, **lo!** [NonhP eat.meat-VblN] Nonh dare.Perf.L-3SgS

‘(Camel) said, “so you-Sg will spend the night here?” (Hyena) said: “un-huh!” But lo!, *it* (=Hyena) [focus] had an urge to eat it (=Camel).’
2004.4.3

- b. *jákà-jákà* [wàrù-wárá-n kέ]
lo! [farm(noun).L-farm.H-Ppl.Sg Topic]
 [cè: wó já:sé-sà ∴ fú:] kò:-ró
 [thing.L 3SgO be.shiftless-Reslt all] be.Nonh-Neg
 ‘Lo!, a farmer [topic], there is nothing more shiftless than him.’ **2004.4.4**

19.3 Pragmatic adverbials or equivalents

19.3.1 ‘For one thing’ (tí:) and ‘to conclude’ (dùmnó)

tí:, related irregularly to numeral túrú ‘one’, can be used clause-initially in the sense ‘for one thing’ or ‘to begin with’, suggesting that there is more to come.

- (xx1) a. *jémè-m mà nèwⁿé* [dòyò úrò]
 blacksmith-Pl Poss value [Dogon house.Loc.HL]
dògò-gó-∅ àbádá:, tí: jémè-n némné-n≡î:
 finish-Impf.Neg-3SgS never, **first** blacksmith-Sg griot-Sg=it.is
 ‘There is no end to the usefulness of the blacksmiths (caste) among the Dogon. For starters, a blacksmith is a griot (=bard).’ **2004.3.12**
- b. *dòyò-î-n wó năn-tù-bà dèy*
 Dogon-child-Sg 3Sg bear-Perf-3PIS if
 [wó bè nárⁿà] tí: yàṅá mèyⁿ,
 [3SgO 3PIS.L bear.Perf.HL-Ppl.Nonh] **first** take and,
 hâl yă: méy [[wó é:rú] dògò-∅], ...
 until go and [[3SgP life] finish.Perf.L-3SgS, ...
 ‘A Dogon child [topic], when they have borne him (=when he is born), starting from when they have first borne him, continuing until his life has ended, ...’ **2004.3.12**

An alternative expression meaning ‘for one thing’ is *dôm ké*, a topicalized form of *dôm* ‘(up to) now’.

‘To conclude’ can be expressed by *kó dùmnó*, literally ‘its ending’.

19.1.2 ‘(Not) again’, ‘on the other hand’ (làyá)

làyá, also a simple adjective meaning ‘other’, can be used adverbially in a range of functions. It is fairly common in negative sentences in the sense ‘(not) again’, ‘(not) any more’ (xx1).

- (xx1) a. kó cè:ⁿ-bà,
 NonhO slaughter.Perf.L-3PIS,
 ù:rⁿò-lí-∅ làyá t àṅà-∅
 get.up-Perf.Neg-3SgS **other** happen.Perf.L-3SgS
 ‘They cut its (=lion’s) throat. It didn’t get up again, so it happened
 (=luckily).’ **2004.3.4**
- b. làyá p ànt è-ý
other repeat-Imprt.Neg
 ‘Don’t do it again!’ **2004.3.10**

kó làyá ‘other than it’ or kó kù:ⁿ làyá ‘other than on it’ is occasionally used in the sense ‘in addition’. This sense is more often expressed in texts by phrases with a verb like g àr á- ‘pass, go past’ (§8.xxx, below).

làyá can also be used to mark a major shift in topics (‘elsewhere, ...’ or ‘meanwhile, ...’). In (xx2), it marks an interruption in a narrative sequence, where the narrator moves back in time. The speaker has been describing how he and a companion had traveled from Dogon country to Gao (in northern Mali).

- (xx2) [coxeur bé] kò-rú jó: lóg-â:, háyè
 [middleman PI] Nonh-Dat be.many overflow-Perf, well
 [émé kú:ⁿ lè] làyá èmè yâ:-∅ kùⁿ,
 [1PIP head with] **other** 1PIS.L go.Perf.HL-Ppl.Nonh Def,
 [[úrò èmè gô:-∅] lè] bă:,
 [[house.Loc.HL 1PIS.L go.out.Perf.HL] in] since,
 [a... mà bón] èmĕ-n ó:-sà-bà jî:ⁿ
 [A Poss name] 1PI-Dat give-Reslt-3PIS Past
 ‘... there were plenty of coxeurs (=transportation middlemen) there (=in Gao). Well, as for us [topic], separately, (back) when we left, back at the time when we left home, they had given us the name of A (=as a reliable coxeur).’
2004.5.5 (émé kú:ⁿ lè emended)

19.1.3 ‘And so forth’ (t ímé-, céy-céy)

‘... And so forth’ can be expressed in the form of a list ending in a phrase meaning ‘what resembles it/them’. There are several variations on the syntactic form, but the verb is t ímé- ‘resemble’. In (xx1), we have a conjunction structure with PI bé after both conjuncts (§7.xxx).

- (xx1) [kó bé ⇒], [kó tímé-sà-∅ bé ⇒]
 [Nonh Pl], [NonhO resemble-Perf-Ppl.Nonh Pl]
 ‘that (just described) and what resembles it’

An alternative is an iteration of cín ‘thus’: cín-cín-cín-cín ‘and so forth’.

19.1.4 ‘In addition’ (gàrá-, dógó-, pílíwé)

More expressions meaning ‘in addition to that’ are literally ‘if it goes beyond that’

(xx1.a) with verb ná: -, ‘if it has passed that’ (xx1.b) with verb gàrá-, or ‘if that is finished’ (xx1.b) with verb dógó-.

- (xx1) a. [núṅò mà kù: ⁿ] ná: -yⁿè-∅ dèy
 [Dem Poss on] **go.beyond**-Perf-3SgS if
 ‘furthermore, ...’
- b. kò gǎy-yè-∅ dèy
 Nonh pass-Perf-3SgS if
 ‘in addition to that, ...’ **2004.3.6**
- c. [kó kùⁿ fú:] dóg-â:-∅ dèy
 [Nonh Def all] be.finished-Perf-3SgS if
 ‘in addition to all that, ...’ **2004.3.9**

In (xx1.b), the L-tone on kò shows that it is not a regular object pronominal. Perhaps it is a L-toned preverbal subject pronominal, or an unusual case of demonstrative kò ‘that’ not modifying a following noun.

pílíwé- is a common verb meaning ‘return, go back’. As a nonfinal verb in a chain, pílíwé can usually be glossed ‘again’. However, it can be stretched into a distinct adverbial sense close to ‘furthermore’. In (xx2), I render it with the English verb ‘proceed to’, suggesting a sequence of actions.

- (xx2) [kò nà:m-pìrⁿé kùⁿ], pílíwé kó há:sé-bà,
 [Dem deseeded.cotton Def], **return** NonhO card.Impf-3PlS,
 há:sé-sà-bà dèy, pílíwé kó mìrⁿé-bà
 card-Reslt-3PlS if, **return** NonhO spin.Impf-3PlS
 ‘(After the seeds are removed), that de-seeded cotton [topic], they proceed to card it; when they have carded it, they proceed to spin it.’ **2004.3.14**

19.1.5 ‘Frankly’ (tòyⁿó)

Something like ‘frankly, ...’, mitigating an unpleasant affirmation, can be expressed as a topicalized ‘if it’s the truth, ...’ (xx1).

- (xx1) [tòyⁿó≡yⁿ dé ké] ñǎ: dènè-gó-m
[truth≡it.is if Top] meal want-Impr.Neg-1SgS
‘To tell the truth, I don’t like the meal.’

19.4 ‘Only’ particles

19.4.1 ‘Only’ (sǎy)

The regular ‘only’ particle is sǎy, following the relevant constituent. The R-tone is not always clearly audible in texts.

- (xx1) a. [í:rⁿé lè sǎy] kó bìrê:-Ø
[iron Instr **only** NonhO work.Impr-3SgS
‘He (=blacksmith) works strictly with iron (=metal).’ 2004.3.12
- b. [wò ké] [dù-dùgú-n≡î: sǎy] wò-Ø
[3Sg.L Topic] [Rdp-sorcerer-Sg≡Foc **only**] be.Hum-3SgS
‘Him [topic], he is only a sorcerer (not also a healer).’ 2004.3.27

When added to a conjoined NP, sǎy can be repeated, appearing with left and right conjuncts, and it can carry the special prosodic lengthening and F-tone associated with conjunction (xx2).

- (xx2) [bé sǎy :.], [bé ñà:-bà:ñá sǎy :.]
[3Pl **only**], [3Pl food-bowl **only**]
‘Just them and their eating bowls.’

sǎy ‘only’ is not very common in texts, since it gets stiff competition from an explicitly or implicitly double-negative construction including ≡yⁿ là: dèy (§11.xxx, §16.xxx). This means literally ‘if it is not X’, but can extend to ‘unless it is X’ (i.e., ‘except X’, ‘other than X’), and with implied by unexpressed double-negative ‘(nothing) unless it is X’, which is equivalent to ‘only (=exclusively) X’.

19.1.2 ‘A mere ...’ (lók)

An interjection-like emphatic particle lók can be used after a numeral or other quantified expression. It is a colorful alternative to sǎy ‘only’, cf. English *a mere* or *a*

paltry. In (xx1), *kó túrú* ‘one of them’ is repeated later in the stronger form *kó túl lók*.

(xx1) *dì:n àrⁿá mìl-lí-∅ nè [kó túrú] kó≡y*
 place.L rain rain.fall-Perf.Neg-3SgS now [Nonh one] Nonh≡Foc
tìgè-y jìrⁿé [ìñé lè] cé:nê:-∅,
 wait.for.Perf.L-1PIS wet.season [what? Inst] be.good.Impf-3SgS
e! [kó túl lók] kó≡y tìgè-y là:,
 eh? [Nonh one a.mere] Nonh≡Foc wait.for.Perf.L-1PIS Neg
mìl-lí-∅ tán ké nùm-â:-yⁿ
 rain.fall-Perf.Neg-3SgS only Topic fall-Perf-1PIS
 ‘Where the rains haven’t fallen now, (just) one of them (=one rain), that
 [focus] is what we waited for. The wet season [topic], how could it be good,
 huh? Just one lousy rain, that [focus] is what we waited for, no? If it (=rain)
 didn’t fall, we were in trouble.’ (mìrⁿé-) **2004.4.28**

lók can also be used with other numerals, e.g. *bú:dù tà:n lók* ‘a mere three riyals (=15 francs CFA)’.

lók is very unusual in ending in a stop. This possibility is limited to interjections (and poorly integrated loanwords).

19.4.3 ‘If (only)’ (*tán*)

A particle *tán*, borrowed from a Fulfulde particle meaning ‘only’, is used in Jamsay as a clause-final particle, substituting for *dèy* ‘if’. An instance of *tán* occurs near the end of (xx1) in the preceding section. See §16.xxx for discussion and more examples.

19.5 Phrase-final emphatics

For a pronominal construction of the type ‘you with your head’, meaning ‘you yourself’, see §18.xxx. For adverbs of specificity (‘exactly’, etc.), see §8.xxx.

19.5.1 Phrase-final *já:tì*

The regional (e.g. Fulfulde) word *já:tì* ‘indeed’ is often used to signal agreement with what the interlocutor has just said.

(xx1) *yò≡kò já:tì*
 exist≡be.Nonh **Emph**
 ‘Yes, that exists indeed (just as you said).’ **2004.4.6**

já:tì can also be used in NP-final position.

- (xx2) [cítáŋà kùⁿ já:tì kέ] [kò kέ],
 [drought.of.1914 Def Emph Topic] [Nonh.L Topic],
 ìnná:dìllâ:y àlà mó:nèn
 by.God God.for fend
 ‘The drought of 1914 indeed [topic], as for that [topic], may God preserve us
 (from that).’ **2004.4.28** (ending in Fulfulde phrase)

See also the reduplicated adverbial já:tì-já:tì ‘precisely’ (§8.xxx).

19.5.2 Clause-final kòy

This particle can be added to the end of a sentence as a mild emphatic. Similar forms occur in Fulfulde and some Songhay languages.

- (xx1) a. ñě-m yé dé:-rà-bà kòy
 woman-Pl PIS carry-Habit-3PIS **Emph**
 ‘Women [topic], they certainly take (push-carts).’ **2004.3.6**
- b. [dǒg-∅ kέ] dǒgò-gó-∅ kòy
 [finish-VblN Topic] finish-Impf.Neg-3SgS **Emph**
 ‘They (=grasshoppers) do not completely disappear.’ **2004.3.8**

19.5.3 Clause-final dé

This particle occurs with slight phonological variation in all languages of the zone, and is even used in local French. It seems less common in Jamsay, where it may be a fairly recent borrowing.

In (xx1.a), the speaker responds with a trace of irritation to a vague question about what kinds of song-and-dance festivities there are. In (xx1.b), the negation is emphatic.

- (xx1) a. dǒyò-cèrⁿè^wné mà sî: jì-jô: dé
 Dogon.L-fun Poss kind Rdp-be.many.Perf **Emph**
 ‘Hey, there are lots of kinds of Dogon festivities!’ **2004.3.22**
- b. *non!* ú à:-j-é dé, ú dàyá-bà
 no! 2SgO catch-Perf.Neg-3PIS **Emph**, 2SgO leave.Impf-3PIS
 ‘No! They (=colonial army recruiters) wouldn’t accept you-Sg at all!
 They would reject you.’ **2004.4.22**

19.5.4 Clause-final ‘(not) at all!’ particles (péy, sóy, fés)

Various clause-final emphatic particles, pronounced as interjections, occur in emphatic negatives like (xx1).

- (xx1) bé [gùjú-jémù: dèy],
3Pl [skin-black.HL≡it.is-2sg if],
[á òrú] bě-r dùjù-lá-Ø péy
[2Sg matter] 3Pl-Dat heavy-Neg-3SgS **at.all**
‘They (=Algerians) [topic], if you-Sg are a black-skinned person (=an African), your situation (=behavior) is not at all important to them.’
(gùjú-jém, bè-rú) **2004.5.4**

This is the only occurrence in my texts. Elicitation has brought out two other particles with similar uses, fés and sóy. For sóy, whose basis sense is ‘all, entirely’, see cf. §8.xxx.

fés is unusual in ending in a sibilant, a possibility restricted to interjections (and poorly integrated borrowings). fés itself resembles ‘(not) at all’ particles in some other languages of the region (e.g. Humburi Senni).

19.6 Backchannel and uptake checks

Are you listening? Have you understood so far? These are backchannel and uptake checks, where the speaker tests whether the listener is paying attention, or whether uptake of a difficult passage has occurred.

As in all local languages, expressions of the general type ‘did you (not) understand?’ are frequently used by some speakers. The listener is expected to respond in some way, at least by gesture or grunt. In texts from an older man, such forms as (xx1) were common.

- (xx1) pá:mé-rⁿà-wⁿ l à :
understand-Habit-2SgS Neg
‘Is it not (the case) that you-Sg understand?’

In this pronunciation, pá:mé-rⁿà-wⁿ is a slightly irregular variant of pá:m-á:rⁿà-wⁿ.

Another backchannel checking phrase, used by a different speaker occasionally in a long recording, was (xx2).

- (xx2) g à : -l ú -m
say-Perf.Neg-1SgS
‘I did not say ...’ (=‘Did I not say ...?’)

In (xxx), the preceding discourse is taken retrospectively as a quotative complement. Though there is no overt marker of interrogative status, (xxx) is evidently interrogative in function: ‘did I not say (...)?’.

19.7 Greetings

(xx1) and (xx2) are examples of morning greeting sequences.

- (xx1)
- | | | |
|----|---------------------|------------------------------|
| A. | ná:m | ‘Good morning.’ |
| B. | ná:mây ⁿ | ‘Good morning (to you all).’ |
| A. | jâm | ‘Peace’ |
| B. | àlpê:≡ŷ | |
| A. | àlpê:≡ŷ | |
| B. | tà:ré | ‘Fine.’ |
| A. | jâm | ‘Peace.’ |
| B. | jám≡ì: | ‘It is peace.’ |
| A. | jám≡ì: sày | ‘It is peace only.’ |
| B. | jám≡ì: sày | ‘It is peace only.’ |
| A. | tà:ré | ‘Fine.’ 2004.5.1 |
- (xx2)
- | | | |
|----|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| A. | ná:m | ‘Good morning.’ |
| B. | ná:≡kò | ‘It ’ |
| A. | [inaudible] | — |
| B. | jám nà:-w ⁿ | ‘Did you-Sg sleep in peace?’ |
| A. | jám≡ì: | ‘It is peace.’ |
| B. | káñá nà:-w ⁿ | ‘Did you-Sg sleep in health?’ |
| A. | jám≡ì: sày | ‘It is peace only.’ |
| B. | tà:ré | ‘Fine.’ |
| A. | sé:w nà:-w ⁿ | ‘Did you-Sg sleep in health?’ |
| B. | jâm sày | ‘Peace only.’ |
| A. | [é jèjú] sé:w nà:-∅ | ‘Did your-Pl bodies sleep in health?’ |
| B. | sé:w nà:-y ⁿ | ‘We slept in health.’ |
| A. | tà:ré | ‘Fine.’ 2004.4.7 |

The components of these greetings are partly based on counterparts in Fulfulde, making literal translation difficult. The lexical stems typical of greetings are those in (xx3).

- (xx3) a. verb and related greeting forms
- | | |
|------|--|
| ná:- | ‘spend the night’ (unsuffixed Perfective nà:-) |
| ná:m | ‘good morning’ (in greetings) |

ná :≡kò (reply to ná : m, literally ‘it will spend the night’)
 ná : mâyⁿ (plural-addressee variant of ná : m)

b. nouns or adverbs with identifiable sense but limited to greetings

jâm ‘peace’ (Fulfulde)
 kǎñá ‘in health’ (often iterated in greetings: kǎñá–kǎñá)

c. nouns or adverbs with no clear lexical sense, limited to greetings

sé:w
 àlpê:
 tà:ré (used to close a greeting sequence or sub-sequence)

d. particles and clitics

sǎy ‘only’ (often pronounced with L-tone)
 ≡y, ≡î: ‘it is’ (clitic)

A progression from jâm to jám≡î: to jám≡î: sǎy is typical.

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