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Ijo

(Kolokuma dialect, Ijoid)

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13.1 General

Between one and two million people speak varieties of Ijoid in southeast Nigeria's Niger Delta. There are probably fewer than 30,000 Kolokuma speakers.

Ijo's nine vowels divide into two +/- ATR sets, with /a/ belonging to both sets: +ATR /i, e, a, o, u/, -ATR /ɪ, ɛ, a, ɔ, ʊ/. Vowel harmony works from left to right across morphemes, and in a few cases across words, that is, vowels in morphemes usually all belong to one set or the other. Williamson treats long vowels as sequences, not contrastive units. Sequences of two vowels are common, sequences of three are less common. Vowel nasalization is predictable, occurring before juncture, continuants, and nasal consonants. Most syllables are CV or V.

There are two tonemes, high (acute accent) and low (unmarked). Tones are marked in relation to tone phrases: tone patterns extend over tone phrases, tone phrases are built from tone groups, which are built from morphemes ("units"), which in turn consist of consonant and vowels. Unmarked syllables following a marked one bear the same tone as the marked one, until the next marked tone is reached¹. Within a tone phrase initial unmarked syllables are low. Morphemes also fall into different tone classes, which behave variably, depending on the context. Various processes often result in surface and underlying tones being different.

Our main sources are Williamson (1965 and 1991) and Jenewari (1989). Williamson 1965 is a grammar carefully written in an early generative framework, while her 1991 piece is a short chapter specifically on tense and aspect.

13.2 Word order

Canonical order is S Other O V, as in examples (1) and (2). With auxiliaries, the order changes to S Other O V AUX, as exemplified in (3).

- (1) a **wóni mú-ni ɔwɔ́ɔ ɔ-la-mí**
 1p go-linker road-LOC 3sm-reach-FAC
 'We went and met him on the road.'
- b **ɔminí keni óbori tɔbɔɔ ɛri-mi**
 3p one goat child see-FAC
 'They saw a young goat.'

This order may be changed by fronting, for focusing:

¹ We differ from W (1965) in the marking of tones. She has high, low, and unmarked. We mark only high and low.

- (2) **kɛni óbori tɔbɔɔ ɔ mɔ ɛri-mi**
 one goat child 3p replacive see-FAC
 ‘(It was) a young goat that they saw.’

Williamson distinguishes carefully items which occur at “Suffix₁” (see §13.3) from auxiliaries. Auxiliaries are very small set, themselves regularly followed by a TA marker. Included in these auxiliaries are at least two ‘be’ verbs, the most common of which we have identified in glosses as be₁ and be₂. These are discussed more fully in §13.7. Some examples and their meanings include: **tími-mi** (be₂ + FAC) ‘was verbing, used to verb’ (FAC IPFV), **wé ri-mi** (stative₂+FAC) ‘had verbed’ (“Far Past”), **tími-ɣɪmi** (be₂ + Future) ‘will be verbing’ (Future IPFV), **tími-dɔɔ** (be₂ + Perfect) ‘have been verbing’ (PFT IPFV).

- (3) **wóni déin-ɔ bɔnɔ timi²-dɔɔ-aba**
 1p night-at sleep be₂-PFT-when
 ‘When we are asleep at night...’

There are also serial verbs, in which aspect marking for aspect, tense, and negation, is restricted, often occurring only on the last verb.

- (4) a **erí amá duo yɔɔ bo-mí**
 3sm town go.through paddle come-FAC
 ‘He came paddling through town.’
- b **erí okí mu tɔru beĩ-mi**
 3sm swim go river cross-FAC
 ‘He went and swam across the river.’
- c **erí kóro-ni okí-mi**
 3sm begin-linker swim-FAC
 ‘He began to swim.’

13.3 Verb structure

A provisional template for the verb is as follows, where the hyphen seems to represent a morpheme boundary between affixed constituents:

OP - root - EXT - Suffix₁ – Suffix₂

Williamson uses the terms “enclitic” and “final” for our Suffix₁ and Suffix₂, respectively. We renamed them because one would expect enclitics to follow finals, rather than vice versa. “Enclitics” and “finals” are defined tonally, finals only occurring finally in a tone group, medials occurring medially or finally in a tone group. Little is said of meaning or function in this definition. She has a long list of enclitics and finals, and many

² In this example, **tími** (be₂) is functioning as a Progressive.

combinations are possible. However, since only a few combinations are exemplified, we cannot be quite sure of the membership of the two classes nor of how many or which may co-occur. An example of the basic template, less extension, is:

- (5) ..ɔ-tɛ-mí-eé
 3p(OP)-beg-FAC-EMPH
 ‘..begged them!’

OP: Pronouns come in different types – independent, possessive, subject and object, both of which differ according to whether a consonant or vowel follows. We list here only the object pronouns: where there are two shapes, the first occurs before consonants, the second before vowels. 1s **ɪ**, **ine**; 2s **ɪ**, **iné**; 3sm **ɔ**, **wo**; 3sf **a**, **ará**; 1p **wó**; 2p **ɔ**, **ɔrɔ́**; 3p **ɔ**, **ɔrɔ**.

EXT: There are only two clear EXTs, a causative **-mɔ-** and a transitiviser **-í**. We ignore a second homophonous **-mɔ-**, added to a transitive verb, because “its meaning is not clear”, and a passive because it is expressed by change of word order and of tone pattern. Williamson and Blench (2000:23) characterize these EXTs as “few, mostly new formations”.

Suffix₁: These express a range of categories, including number, gender, definiteness, “all”, agent, negation (**-a-**), tense, and aspect. Williamson lists twenty-three in total. Those expressing tense and aspect are: **-mɪ** (FAC), **-yémi** (Imperfective), **-dɔɔ** (Perfect), which corresponds to the independent verb ‘know’: **nimí/ wónimí** (stative₁) **wé rɪ-** (stative₂) (discussed below), **-ɲí (mɪ)** (Future), **-ɲí-dɔɔ** (Future + Perfect) ‘be about to’.

Suffix₂: Williamson lists twenty-one morphemes at Suffix₂. We deal summarily with these because they are not central to our concerns. Not surprisingly, as befits morphemes occurring at the right hand edge of the verb, these correspond largely to independent conjunctions, emphatics, and particles in other languages, translating notions such as ‘and, with, when, if, as, when, after, as soon as, while, because, interrogation, relative, various kinds of emphasis’.

13.4 (Tense), aspect

§13.4.1 lists the simplexes that make up the tense-aspect system. Where our terms and Williamson’s differ, we use ours, followed by hers in brackets. §13.4.2 shows combinations of these basic morphemes. §13.4.3 discusses the interpretation of the system and §13.4.4, the morphology.

13.4.1 Basic forms

The **Factative** (“Simple or Neutral Past”), suffixal **-mɪ**, refers to a past event for active verbs, or to the current state resulting from a past event for “process” verbs (Williamson 1991:148) (but compare (8) below):

- (6) a **i bo-mí**
 1s come-FAC
 ‘I came.’
- b **kírŋ-mí**
 become.right-FAC
 ‘It’s right.’ (lit. ‘it became right’)
- c **akó-mí**
 become.bitter-FAC
 ‘It is bitter.’
- d **(bó ní) akó-mí**
 (come linker) become.bitter-FAC
 ‘It became bitter.’

Imperfective (“Continuous”) aspect is rendered in two ways. The first method uses the be_2 auxiliary **tími**, (always in combination with another morpheme), and refers to non-present events (see §13.4.2, following); the other, **-yémi**, refers only to present situations and does not occur with other tense-aspect markers. It is probably linked to be_1 -verb **émi** discussed in §13.7. Examples of **yémi**:

- (7) a **í bó-yemi kírŋ-yemi**
 2s come-IPFV right-IPFV
 ‘Are you coming?’ ‘It’s getting right.’
- b **a tóo-yemí ifie-bi erí pá-doo**
 3sf cook-IPFV time-DEF 3sm exit-PFT
 ‘While she was cooking, he went out.’
 (lit. ‘While she cooking he has gone out’)

Perfect (“Immediate Past”) has perfect function with active verbs and refers to the resultant state with stative verbs:

- (8) **i bo-doo kírŋ-doo i na-doo**
 1s come-PFT be.right-PFT 1s hear-PFT
 ‘I have come.’ ‘It has become right.’/ ‘I understand.’
 ‘It is right now.’

The **Future**, **-ŋí(mí)**, refers to future situations:

- (9) **i mu-ŋími kírŋ-ŋími**
 1s go-FUT be.right-FUT
 ‘I’ll go.’ ‘It’ll be right.’

The **Stative** has two shapes: the main being **-nimí**³, which Williamson refers to as the “Neutral present (state)”, but we gloss as *stative*₁. The past form is **-wérí** ‘be, leave, let stay, keep’, which we gloss as *stative*₂. It is dealt with in §4.2, as it always combines with a suffix where its meaning is “Far Past”.

- (10) **ebi-nimi**
 be.good- *stative*₁
 ‘It is good.’

13.4.2 Combined forms

Auxiliary element **timi** ‘be₂’ combines with other aspects and tense, with the Factative (11a), the Future (11b), the Perfect (11c), and with both Future and Past (11d). For these reasons, we interpret this auxiliary as Factative ‘be’. The Imperfective sense arises from the syntactic structure of main verb + auxiliary element:

- (11) a **erí okí timi-mi** **kírú timi-mi**
 3sm swim be₂-FAC be.right be₂-FAC
 ‘He was swimming.’ ‘It used to be right.’
- b **erí tɛ́ timi-ɲɪmɪ**
 3sm stand be₂-FUT
 ‘He’ll be standing.’
- c **wóni déin-ɔ́ bónɔ́ timi-dɔɔ-aba**
 1p night-at sleep be₂-PFT-when
 ‘When we are asleep at night...’
- d **akó-a timi-aba arí bóu-ɲi timi-mi**
 be.bitter-NEG be₂-when 1s drink-FUT be₂-FAC
 ‘If it had not been bitter I would have drunk it.’

Future combines with Perfect (“Immediate Future”):

- (12) **arí mú-ɲi-dɔɔ** **kírú-ɲi-dɔɔ**
 1s go-FUT-PFT be.right-FUT-PFT
 ‘I’m just about to go.’ ‘It’s on the point of being right.’

Quite widely in Niger-Congo, perfect or near past can be interpreted as ‘decision to verb made, action about to happen’, as in “I’m gone, I’m out of here”. That interpretation combines here with the Future to give the meaning indicated.

The past allomorph of the Stative, **-wérí** (*stative*₂), combines with Factative marker **-mɪ** to give what Williamson calls the “Remote Past/Past State”, our “Far Past”. Her only examples are:

³ There is a second shape **-wónimí**, discussed below in §13.4.4.

- (13) a **erí bó-wérí-mí**
 3sm come-Far Past
 ‘He had come.’
- b **kírí-wérí-mí**
 be.right-Far Past
 ‘It used to be right.’
- c **arí ebi wérí-mí**
 1s become.good Far Past
 ‘I used to be good.’

Finally, **Habitual** action can be expressed by reduplicating the root. It is said that several combinations are possible but only one is exemplified, involving the IPFV:

- (14) **déin biri la-dɔɔ-aba kímí tɛmɛ doruo dorou-yemi**
 night mid reach-PFT-when men ghosts shout shout-IPFV
 ‘Whenever it comes to midnight, ghosts of men cry aloud.’

13.4.3 Discussion

We interpret most Niger-Congo languages in terms of aspect because they make no tense distinctions. The two exceptions seen so far are the Grassfields language Aghem and the Bantu languages, which have both aspect and tense. How to interpret Ijo, especially in view of Williamson seeing it as having past(s), present, and future?

All languages, whether they have tense or not, will have some basic and familiar aspects. So Ijo has Imperfective (“Continuous”) and Perfect (“Immediate Past”), described as having an effect on the present. In the same vein, the iconic use of reduplication to represent an iterative and habitual situation is common and justifies the term Habitual.

We have no quibble with Williamson’s Future. In some languages some functions or translations of forms with future reference suggest a clear modal or even aspectual component. Nothing about Williamson’s examples suggests anything but a Future (tense). However, as we have seen often enough already, a future does not necessarily imply other tenses, since there are languages which we interpret in terms of aspect and which show no signs of general tense marking but nevertheless have a lone future.

This brings us to the interpretation of the -mi form, which Williamson calls variously the “Simple” or “Neutral” Past, and which occurs often in her data. Is it a (past) tense or a (factative) aspect? With active verbs, which are numerous, it has past reference, while with stative verbs, less numerous, it refers to the present state resulting from a past event. This situation occurs often across West African Niger-Congo and leads us to interpret it, as elsewhere, as a Factative, even though it lacks the other classic characteristic of Factatives, zero marking.

What then of the form that she calls "Remote Past" or "Past State"? In languages with a binary past tense distinction, one represents near or general past time, while the other represents more distant time. But we have reinterpreted Williamson's Simple/Neutral Past tense as a Factative aspect, removing the possibility of such a binary past distinction. We are not sure how to deal with this form, partly because she has very few examples (see example (13)), partly because she shows no examples of its compatibility with time adverbials. Thus we leave it with her label, Far Past, but are not completely sure of its function.

We are also unsure of the status of what is called the "Neutral Present (State)", above. The examples are few, the total list being:

- (15) a **ebi-nimi**
 be.good- stative₁
 ‘It is good.’
- b **indi kí subo-nimí**
 fish FOC carry- stative₁
 ‘It is fish I am carrying/carry (have on head)’
- c **erí bó-nimi**
 3sm come- stative₁
 ‘He is here’ (lit: ‘He is come’)
- d **ɔ paá-nimí**
 3sm exit- stative₁
 ‘He is out.’
- e **ɔ paá-wónimí**
 3sm exit-wonimi
 ‘He must have gone out.’
- f **akó-nimi**
 be.bitter- stative₁
 ‘It is bitter.’
- g **arí nimi-wónimí...**
 1s know-wonimi
 ‘I know (that...)⁴
- h **ɪ tɔn-wónimí....**
 1s think-wonimi
 ‘I think (that...)

⁴The first **nimi** in this example is the independent verb ‘know’. Suffixal **-nimi** is quite likely a grammaticalized version of this verb. The same process may have operated with suffix **-yemi**. Williamson suggests that this is the case, the **y-** a remnant of an earlier progressive marker (1991:158).

- i **I-daṣ** **amaran** **mɛ** **ebi** **na-wónimí-ni....**
my-father Amaran do good hear-wonimi-linker
‘Having heard the good deeds of my father Amaran....’

Our uncertainty here centres on two issues: i) is this **nimí** linked to the “Remote Past (State)” exemplified in (13), and ii) how are **-nimí** and **-wónimí** to be interpreted? Williamson wavers in her interpretation of how **nimí** and **wónimí** differ – do they represent present versus past, or does **nimí** represent “present state with intransitive verbs” and **wónimí** “present state with transitives”? The only examples which support a past interpretation of **wónimí** are (15e) and the incomplete sentence (15i). (15e) contrasts with (15d) and might be termed an inferential (epistemic) on the basis of the translation, which is not a good basis for judgements of tense. About (15i) she says “the context is clearly past” (1965:113). However, the translation could just as well be ‘Hearing the good deeds..’ and the past context given in the uncited main clause following, not in the part cited in (15h). No other examples associate **wónimí** with past reference, so we find the past interpretation for **wónimí** doubtful. We also find the association with transitive (**wónimí**)/intransitive (**nimí**) doubtful: in (15d, 15e), both occur with the same (intransitive) verb, and the verb in (15b) is transitive.

If we consider examples (15d) and (15e) as a minimal pair, the difference between the two is modal, with **wónimí** adding an inferential sense that **nimí** alone does not have. Generally, **wónimí** seems to occur in subordinate contexts, whereas **nimí** occurs in the main clause.

In sum, our conclusion is that Ijo is basically another aspect language. Similarly, but not identically to Williamson’s treatment, we view Ijo as having: Factative, Imperfective, Perfect, and Habitual. There is apparently a Future, and we are not sure of the status of the “Far Past” and the “Present State.”

13.4.4 *Comments on morphology*

Many of the other languages examined in this book have what we refer to as an unmarked or zero form. It is always useful in interpretation to have such a form, because it gives a clue to the analysis. In synthetic languages, it means a form with zero marking for tense/aspect before the stem, so that only the suffixes are meaningful. In analytic languages it would mean a form without a suffix carrying tense or aspect, or a form which has a suffix, which for one reason or other can be interpreted as simpler or more basic than the others. As Ijo is, outside its core stem with affixes, an analytic language, we would have expected it to have an unmarked suffix, but it does not have such a form. All the suffixes, or auxiliaries, have considerable substance and none can be interpreted as an unmarked form. Most of the suffixes and auxiliaries can be related to independent verbs and can be assumed to be grammaticalised shapes of these independent verbs.

Short grammaticalised affixes or clitics with shapes such as C, V, or VC, or CV can safely be assumed to be older, as they have had enough time to reduce to the canonical CV shape. whereas longer, unreduced, shapes are more recent. The suffixes in Ijo are longer and unreduced, and several can still be linked to independent verbs, which suggests that the current morphology developed fairly recently in Ijo.

Whereas affirmative main verbs in main clauses always have a tense or aspect marker at Suffix₁ or as Auxiliary after the main verb, other verb forms sometimes lack such marking. In negatives (see examples in (21) and (20a), below), with one exception, the negative marker is the only morpheme to occur on the main verb, either replacing tense-aspect marking or displacing it on to the Auxiliary. Similarly in relativised verbs, the same tendency is visible (see (19)). Similarly in verbs with morphemes at Suffix₂ translating as ‘when, if, after, while, because, etc’, tense and aspect marking is sometimes absent, as in:

- (16) a **...u-kulé-mɔ**
 3sm-greet-when
 ‘When...greeted him..’
- b **ɔmIní wó-kamɔɔ-mɪ wó wari la-mɔ**
 3p 1p-entertain-FAC 1p house reach-when⁵
 ‘They entertained us as soon as we reached the house.’

13.5 Other categories

13.5.1 Mood

Williamson recognizes Optative and Hortative, and therefore, by default, Indicative (unmarked). The Optative uses an independent subject pronoun and the emphasiser **-eé** (17). The Hortative (1 plural) consists of the Optative preceded by **bó-da** ‘come and’ (18).

- (17) a **erí mú-eé**
 3sm go-EMPH
 ‘Let him go/ he should go.’
- b **wó fín-eé**
 1p fly-EMPH
 ‘We should fly.’
- (18) **bó-da wó fín-eé**
 come-and we fly-EMPH
 ‘Let’s fly!’

13.5.2 Focus

Williamson distinguishes focus and emphasis. Focus, of a sentence constituent such as object or adverbial, involves fronting and is exemplified in (2), above. Fronting can apparently be supplemented by the use of a particle **ki**, as in (19a, 19b). In emphasis, either the verb or a function (vocative, interrogative) is highlighted. There are different

⁵ This cannot be a case of tense being only represented once in a string because in such cases it is the final verb that keeps the marking.

kinds of emphasis (“polite emphasizer of verb, stronger emphasizer of verb, strong and friendly emphasizer of verb”, etc). All involve morphemes at Suffix₂, underlined below.

- (19) a **te** **yé** **ki** **tɔɔ-ɲɪ** **aáa**
 what thing FOC cook-FUT Q
 ‘What are you going to cook?’⁶
- b **fóí** **ɔɔ** **ki** **tɔɔ-nɪ**
 soup FOC cook-FUT
 ‘I’m going to cook soup.’
- c **erí** **mú-ɲɪmɪ-eé**
 3sm go-FUT-EMPH
 ‘Let him go/ He will go!’
- d **ɔ** **koró-naá** **yɔɔ-mí**
 3p begin-EMPH paddle-FAC
 ‘They began to paddle.’

13.5.3 Imperative

The imperative singular is an unmarked form: **tun** ‘sing’, **dúma tun** ‘sing a song’, **a-pírɪ** ‘give her..’, **ɔ-pírɪ** ‘give him..’. The imperative plural has a subject pronoun and suffixal **-eé**, one of the verb emphasizers, that is, it is the same as the “Optative”.

13.5.4 Relativisation

Two different strategies are involved in relativisation. One, which applies to relativised subjects and objects, changes word order and may add **-nɪ** to the head noun or pronoun. This suffix is identical formally and tonally to the linker **-nɪ** seen in (1), above:

- (20) **béi** **tɔɔɔ-nɪ** **gbá** **ye** **poi-a** **tɔɔɔ-bɪ**
 this child-REL say thing listen-NEG child-DEF
 ‘This is the child who did not listen to what was said.’

A second strategy involves a change of word order, and probably of tone, but since the details are not described, we simply exemplify it:

- (21) a **na-a** **kíɲɪ**
 hear-NEG man
 ‘...man who did not hear’ (V S, normal order would be S V)

⁶ Morphemes such as the Future and the Present look as if they might consist of two morphemes, the second being **-mi** ‘Factative’. Williamson (1991:157, 159) says that any second morpheme is more likely to have been **emi** ‘IPFV’. **-mi** and **emi** are “not related”.

- b **Ƴ̀ɔɔ-dɛɪ** **bíde**
wash-PFT cloth
‘...cloth that has been washed’ (**dɛɪ** is an allomorph of **dɔɔ**)
- c **buru-bí** **sou** **kɪmɪ-bɪ**
yam-DEF dig man-DEF
‘The man who dug up the yam.’

13.6 Negation

A binary negative contrast exists between the regular negative, occurring in most syntactic contexts, and a secondary negative, in the Optative (and other?) contexts. A pre-verbal morpheme **naá**, translating as ‘yet’ co-occurs in some forms with the regular negative.

Two features characterise the regular negative, which occurs in the suffix₁ (“enclitic”) slot: first, the number of negative contrasts is smaller than that of affirmatives, so some tense/aspect contrasts are neutralized, and second, the negative **-a**⁷ replaces tense/aspect markers at suffix₁ rather than co-occurring with them. Both these features can be seen in these examples:

(22)		AFFIRMATIVE	NEGATIVE
	FAC	a bó-mi 3sf come-FAC ‘She came.’	a bó-a 3sf come-NEG ‘She didn’t come.’
	IPFV	a bó-yemi 3sf come-IPFV ‘She is coming.’	a bó-a 3sf come-NEG (same as preceding) ‘She isn’t coming.’
	FUT	a bó-ɲí mí 3sf come-FUT ‘She will come.’	a bó-a fa-ɲí mí 3sf come-NEG be ⁸ -FUT ‘She won’t come.’
	PFT	a bó-dɔɔ 3sf come-PFT ‘She has come.’	a náa bó-a 3sf yet come-NEG ‘She hasn’t come yet.’
	FUT +PFT	a bó-ɲɪ-dɔɔ 3sf come-FUT-PFT ‘She’s just about to come.’	a bó-a fa-ɲí mí 3sf come-NEG be-FUT ‘She’s not just about to come.’

⁷ **-a** is **-ya** in other dialects.

⁸ **Fa** is a suppletive negative form of **timi/emi** ‘be’.

Present	a bó-nimí	a náa bó-a-nimí
Stative	3sf come-stative ₁ 'She is here.'	3sf yet come-NEG- stative ₁ 'She isn't here yet.'
FAC IPFV	a bó timi-mi	a bó-a timi-mi
	3sf come be ₂ -FAC 'She was coming.'	3sf come-NEG be ₂ -FAC 'She wasn't coming.'

To this Williamson (1965:75) adds: "The remaining aspect markers appear not to occur regularly in the negative, but to be replaced by one of the commoner aspect markers noted above." The secondary negative can be seen in (23), characterised as "Optative" by Williamson.

- (23) **baŋɪ** 'Run! **baŋɪ-kɔmó**
run-NEG
'Don't run!'

13.7 'Be'-verbs, auxiliaries

It is not clear that auxiliaries beside those involved in aspect (see §13.2, above) occur. As (19b) suggests, what would typically be auxiliary constructions in other languages appear as serial verbs in Ijo, with verbal categories marked on the last member.

There are at least two verbs translated by English 'be'. One is **émí**, 'locative-be' ('be, stay, live, exist') which we gloss as 'be₁' and interpret as lexically imperfective. It occurs as an independent verb, and with exclusively present reference (24a). A second is another locative-be, **tímí**, which we gloss as 'be₂' and interpret as lexically factitive. It occurs with non-present reference (24b,c), and may occur as an independent verb (example (24d)).

There are two statives, which occur at suffix₁, **-nimi** (stative₁), and **-wárí** (stative₂), translated variously by 'be, leave, let stay, keep'. In the tense-aspect system, **nimi** (stative₁) appears with present reference, as in examples in (15), whereas **wárí** (stative₂) occurs with past reference and marking (examples in (13)):

- (24) a **áraló Léḡosi kɔɔ emí**
3sf Lagos LOC be₁
'She is (living) in Lagos.'
- b **áraló Léḡosi kɔɔ tímí-mí**
3sf Lagos LOC be₂-FAC
'She was (living) in Lagos.'
- c **erí tísaowei kɔɔ tímí-mí**
3sm teacher LOC be₂-FAC
'He used to be a teacher.'

- d **σ warɪ-bí-ɔ timi ifie-bi**
 3sm house-the-LOC be₂ time-the....
 ‘When he was in the house...’ (The tense comes from the context).
- e **buru-bí wɛrɪ**
 yam-DEF leave
 ‘Leave/keep the yam!’
- f **indi warɪ émí**
 fish house be
 ‘There is fish in the house.’
- g **indi warɪ ghó t́mí-mí**
 fish house LOC be-FAC
 ‘There was fish in the house.’

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