# 15
Kabiye
(Gur, Grusi)

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15.1   General

Kabiye is a Gur language spoken by some 800,000 people (Roberts 2002) primarily in Northern Togo, where it is a national language, but with small pockets in Benin and Ghana (Grimes 2002). Because of political events in recent years, many Kabiye speakers have relocated to the capital city Lome, a predominately Ewe-speaking community. Much intermarriage (between Kabiye men and Ewe women) has led to children of such couples being more fluent in Ewe; consequently, Kabiye is considered under threat. Sources for this chapter include Lébikaza (1999), Roberts (2002), Essizewa (2007) and Collins & Essizewa (2007).
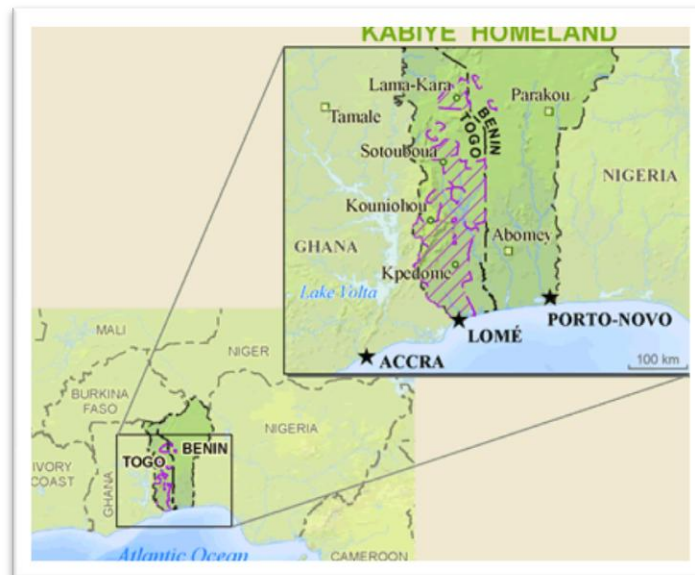
Map source: Anonymous. Joshua project website

Kabiye has nine contrastive vowels (/i, ɪ, e, ɛ, a, ɔ, o, ʊ, u/), vowel harmony which moves from left to right, and two tones: high (marked with an acute accent) and low (unmarked). There are six noun classes, marked at final, with agreement marked on (following) adjectives:

(1)   a   **kelimi-yɛ́**   **kɪsɛmɪ-yɛ**
           hen-Class3 (singular)   red-Class3 (singular)
           'a red hen'

       b   **kelɛ́m-ɛ́**   **kɪsɛmɪ-ɛ**
           hen-Class3 (plural)   red-Class3 (plural)
           'red hens'

15.2 Word Order

The basic word order is S AUX V O X:

(2) **e-kélesi-ɣ**   **ɖeési**
3s-rinse-IPFV   pots
'He is rinsing cooking pots.' (Lébikaza 1999:332).

(3) **hal-áa**   **ɖɔŋ**[1]   **lú-u**   **lím**
woman-p   PRG   draw-INF   water
'The women are drawing water.' (Lébikaza 1999:297)

(4) a   **ñɛ́-héŋ**   **ká-ɣ**   **léb-úu**   **lakʊ́ taá**
2s-sheep   FUT-IPFV   lose.self-INF   bush   in
'Your sheep will get lost in the bush.' (Lébikaza 1999:336)

    b   **Somiyé yákɪ**   **cɛɛcɛ́ɛ́**   **kɪ́falɪw̋**
Somiyé buy.IPFV   bike   new
'Somiyé is buying a new bike.' (Lébikaza 1999:356)

15.3 Verb Structure

15.3.1   *Simple verb*[2]

The structure of a simple verb is as follows:

(5)   (SM)-root-(TAM/EXT)-TAM/FV[3]

SM: A subject marker is obligatory only with a pronominal subject (as in (2), above), but not necessarily with a nominal subject (as in (3) and (4)). Pronominal subjects include 1s **ma-**, 2s **ŋ-**, 3s **e-**, 1p **ɖi-/é-**, 2p **í-**, 3p **pa-**.

EXT: There are several possible extensions (a maximum of three may appear), some of which are illustrated below.

(6)   Causative: **-zɪ-/-sɪ-**

Lébikaza (1999:281) notes that this derivational extension has no underlying tone. It assimilates in feature [+/-ATR] to the root vowel but dissimilates in tone: surface tones are the opposite tone of the radical or the base:

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[1] The progressive auxiliary (from verb **ɖɔm** 'to go, walk') is discussed in §15.6.

[2] Here "simple" indicates a one-word predication containing a single verb—by definition, the main verb. This type of verbal construction is what Welmers referred to as a "primary construction" (1973:344).

[3] Except in the case of **na**, which behaves anomalously, showing a great deal of "functional polysemy" (Lébikaza 1999:284, 288, nt. 23).

a   **e-pílin-zi-ɣ   pírɛ**
        3s-roll-CAU-IPFV   stone
        'He rolls/is rolling a stone' (Lébikaza 1999:281)

b   **ání   pɔ́-tɔ́lí-sɪ-a**
        who 3p-fall-CAU-PFV
        'Whom did they knock over?' (Lébikaza 1999:281)

Diminutive: -**ɗɪ́**- (indicates lessening of intensity of action or state expressed by the verb).

(7)   **kʊm** 'cut' > **kʊ́ - ɗʊ-ʊ** [kʊ́rʊʊ] 'to cut easily'

Intensive: -**yɪ́**-/-**tɪ́**- (may express intensive, iterative, or abstract meaning. The example illustrates only the first meaning):

(8)   **ma** 'dance' >   **ma-yɪ́-ʊ** 'to dance with joy, rejoice'

Iterative: -**lɪ**-/-**kɪ**- (added to verbs expressing punctual acts this suffix renders a durative meaning):

(9)   **ta** 'seize' > **tá-ki- ́ `ʊ >** [tákʊʊ] 'to feel' (Lébikaza 1999:284)

Lébikaza lists the Iterative as an extension, but given its form and function, it could certainly be analysed as a TAM marker, indicating either Iterative or Durative, both subsets of Imperfective aspect.

Instrumental/Comitative/Transitivizer/Dative: -**na** (function varies with position):

(10)   Transitiviser: **pisí-ʊ**   **pisí-na-ʊ**
                              return-INF   return-EXT-INF
                              'to return' (intransitive)   'to bring/lead back' (transitive)

(11)   Instrumental: **sidí-ʊ**   **sidí-na-ʊ**
                              mix-INF   mix-EXT-INF
                              'to mix'   'to mix with'

(12)   Dative: **e-wó-ki-ná   háɗá-áa   lím**
                              3s-go-ITR-EXT farmer-p   water
                              'He is bringing/brings water to the farmers'.

Note that when the extension -**na** is used in dative function, as in (12) it follows the Iterative marker to appear at final (Lébikaza 1999:285). In the following example, it appears between aspect markers:

(13) **e-wó-ki-na-aɣ   háɗá-áa lím   'lɛ́   ma-na-í   wokínaɣ**
3s-go-ITR-EXT-IPFV   farmer-p water   when 1s-see-PFV   carrying
'I saw him while he was carrying water to the farmers.' (Lébikaza 1999:286)

TAM: The PFV/IPFV aspectual split in Kabiyé is marked both morphologically and by tone patterns associated with each of these two aspects (discussed at greater length below. Here are mentioned only the main morphological markers which appear at final).

Tense and aspect markers are generally appended to the verbal stem and follow any extensions (except in the case of **na**, above). These binary aspectual markers are exemplified in the following table:

(14)   Aspect marked at final: PFV   IPFV
                                   -á   -kɪ/-ɣ

There is a third aspect, which Lébikaza calls "aorist" which is unmarked for either of the two major aspects (perfective or imperfective). It is discussed and exemplified below.

(15)   Examples of perfective aspect marked at final[4]:

   a **pe-kelém-á   leb-á**
     3p-chickens-3p get.lost-PFV
     'Their chickens are lost (have got themselves lost).' (Lébikaza 1999: 272)

   b **Kofi wób-á   sukúli**
     Kofi go-PFV   school
     'Kofi went to school.' (Essizewa 2007:31)

(16)   Examples of imperfective aspect marked at final:

   a **píya   lééyi-ɣ**
     children play-IPFV
     'The children are playing.'

   b **á   lá-kɪ   tʊmíyɛ**
     who   work-IPFV work
     'Who is working?'

   c **sɪ́-sɪ-kɪ**
     3p-die-IPFV
     'They are dying.' (Lébikaza 1999:271)

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[4] These examples could certainly fall under the designation of "factative", as the same marker (final vowel **á**) is interpreted two different ways, depending on whether the verb is stative (example a) or active (example b). There are complications with this interpretation, however.

With verbs of state, Lébikaza (1999:290) indicates that a perfective is understood to be "atemporelle" (17a) and is generally rendered as a present, whereas an imperfective has future reference (17b):

(17) a **e-piyi-a**
         3s-black-PFV
         'He is black.'

      b **e-píyí-ɣ**
         3s-become black-IPFV
         'He will become black.'

There are two other items which occur at final which are identical in shape, but differ in tone. These are the infinitive marker -**ʊ** with tone pattern HL, and the "descriptive" -**ʊ** with high tone in the IPFV aspect, and HL in the PFV (1999: 226, 227).

FV: -**ʊ** /HL/ Infinitive marker.

The Infinitive marker interacts with the tonal qualities of the respective root (18a). In the case of roots that end with –**m**, only tone indicates the infinitive form (18b):

(18) a **se** /H/ + -**ʊ** /HL/> **sé-ʊ** 'to run'

      b **ɖɔm** /L/ 'walk' > **ɖɔ́m** 'to walk'

The infinitive form plays an important role in the formation of Focus constructions, discussed below.

FV: -**ʊ** /H/ The Descriptive (DES). Unlike Delord (1976:125) who considered the descriptive to be an aspect, Lebikaza considers it rather a mood (1999:341) which may appear in several aspects (IPFV, PFV, HAB). The descriptive marker (with associated tone pattern) is added to a stem already characterized for aspect (Lébikaza 1999:341ff).

(19) Verbs **lab** /L/ 'do'   **sidi** /LH/ 'mix'

      a   Descriptive (Imperfective) (marked with **ʊ** with tone pattern H)

Root	IPFV base	Addition of Descriptive Marker	Surface
lab	**lab-kɪ** > **lakɪ**	**lakɪ-ʊ́**	**lakʊʊ́**
sidí	**sidí-ɣ**	**sidí-ɣ-ʊ**	**sidíɣʊ́**

b   Descriptive (Perfective) (marked **ʊ** with tone pattern HL)

Root	PFV base	Addition of Descriptive Marker	Surface
lab	**láb-**	**lab-ʊ̋**	**labʊ̋**
sidí	**sidí-**	**sidi-u**	**sidúu**

15.3.2.   *Complex verbs*[5]

The structure of a complex verb is as follows:

(20)   a   SM-AUX-ASP   V (INF)
    or b   SM   AUX-ASP   V (INF)
    or c   SM-AUX-V-TAM

Because such complex predicates include "auxiliary" or "semi-auxiliary" verbs, they are discussed at length in the section dealing with Auxiliaries (§15.6), where examples of each of these structures may be seen.

15.4   Aspect

Lébikaza describes a three way aspectual split, with the major differentiation between perfective (*accompli*) and imperfective (*inaccompli*) marked morphologically at final, and by associated tone patterns, with the aorist unmarked for either of these aspects. Subsets of imperfective (HAB, ITR, PRG) may be marked at extension or by the use of auxiliaries.

15.4.1   *Perfective aspect*

Perfective is marked by a high toned suffix -**a** which appears at final[6]. It indicates that an action is in some sense complete, but does not specify time frame and may be interpreted either as a past (examples in (15)) or as a gnomic present:

(21)   **akpadɪy-áa   sɔɔl-á   píya**
        old folk-p   love-PFV   children
        'Old folks love children.'

15.4.2   *Imperfective aspect*

The "fundamental characteristic" of a verb in the imperfective aspect is a floating high tone which precedes the root in combination with the (low-toned) suffix /kɪ~ɣ/ (where the latter is a semi-vowel/glottal glide (1999:330) and thus may bear tone) (1999:221). Examples:

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[5] All these constructions contain an auxiliary verb (Welmers' "auxiliary constructions" (1973:344). In c., a single word contains both the AUX and the main verb. In a. and b. an infinitival form of the main verb appears as a separate word.

[6] See Lébikaza (1999:215,217) for factors that may affect surface tones, including the presence of a following complement or the operation of various dissimilation rules.

(22)   Imperfective form of verb **lib** ('to swallow', with underlying L tone)

       ´   **lib**   **-kí**   **>**   **líkì**   (compare PFV form   **lìb -á**   **>**   **lìbá**)
       H   L   L   HL   L H   LH

Imperfective form of verb **hòlósì** ('to sip', with underlying LHL tone)

       ´   **hòlósì -ỳ**   **>**   **hólósìỳ**
       H   LHL L   HHLL

The two suffixes (-**kɪ** and -**ɣ**) which mark IPFV are allomorphs: suffix -**kɪ** (with underlying low tone) appears with root shapes CV**b**-, CV**m**, CV**ɣ**-, suffix **-ɣ** (with an underlying low tone) appears after roots ending in a vowel[7].

      Some monosyllabic verbs that end in –**m** are problematic and must be interpreted aspectually on a case-by-case basis and with care. For instance, the verb **sam** (with underlying low tone) 'praise' is subject to certain alterations after the addition of the IPFV suffix - **kɪ:**

(23)   [**sam-kɪ**]   >   [**sáŋgɪ**]   >   [**sáŋɪ**]   >   [**sáŋ**]

The final form **sáŋ** is thus marked for imperfective aspect, albeit subtly. The same may presumably apply to the progressive auxiliary verb **ɖɔŋ** (from verb **ɖɔm** 'go, walk'), as in example (31), and future auxiliary **kɔ́ŋ** (from verb **kɔ́m** 'come') as in example (33).

      The time frame in imperfective is non-past (present or future). In the absence of any specific auxiliaries, adverbs or other lexical specificiers (as in example (4) where the future AUX **ká**sets the time frame), an imperfective is understood as a present, as in example (2).

      Lébikaza (1999:226,338ff) discusses a tense form based on a stem characterized for imperfective aspect which he terms *l'imparfait* which is rendered as an imperfective past as in the following:

(24)   **mɛn-ɖɛɣ́**   **nɛ́**   **ń-tálɪ-ɣ**   **ḿbɪ́yɔ́**
       1s-leave-IPFV(Past)   and   2s-arrive-IPFV   so
       'I was leaving, and behold, you arrive!' (1999:341)

The simple form of this tense involves the addition of the suffix -**aɣ** with tone pattern (LH) to an "Imperfective base" (that is, a root already marked for Imperfective aspect). Several examples appear below (underlying tones given in following brackets):

(25)   Root shape: Imperfective base: Imperfect: Surface:

       CV **ma** /L/ 'jump'   >**maɣ-**   >   **maɣ-aɣ́**   >   **mawaɣ́**

       CV**b- leb** /L/ 'lose self' >**leki-**   >   **leki-aɣ́**   >   **lekaɣ́**

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[7] According to Delord (1976:451) these are diachronically related.

CVV **caɣ** /LL/ 'stay'	> **cakɪ**	>	**cakɪ-áɣ**	>	**cakáɣ**	

CVCV/CVCVCV **sidi** /LH/ 'mix'   >   **sidi-áɣ**   >   **sidáaɣ**

Imperfective aspect is also rendered using various auxiliary verbs, discussed below in §15.6.

15.4.3   Aorist

There is a third type of aspect which Lébikaza refers to by the difficult term "aorist". By this he means a verbal form which is marked for neither of the other two types of aspect--perfective (an action which has been in some sense completed) and imperfective (an action which is ongoing). The unmarked aorist refers to the action itself. It appears in several negative forms (see §15.8), in subordinate clauses (examples in (27)), and perhaps in the imperative. Here are some illustrations of the formal differences between the three:

(26)   Verb **lub** /L/ 'forge'   verb **cósi** /HB/ 'answer'

PFV	**lub-á**	**cósi-a > cósaa**
IPFV	**lú-ki**	**cósi-ɣ**
AOR	**lú**	**cósi**

The following examples show the use of the aorist in subordinate clauses. In (27b and c) it functions as a subjunctive:

(27) a **píya   ká-kɔɔ   lɛ́   po-ɖoo fɛm-á**
         children   FUT-come.AOR   when   3p-mother wake.self-PFV
         '*When the children (will) come*, their mother will be awake.' (Lébikaza 1999:329)

      b **ɖi-sé-ɣ   se   ɖé-píya   ɪɪ-ká-kɔɔ**
         1p-believe-IPFV   that   1p-children   NEG-FUT-come.AOR
         'We believe *that our children won't come*.' (Lébikaza 1999:329)

      c **man-tíí-wo-kí   nɛ́ ŋ́-kɔ́ɔ**
         1s-expectative-go-IPFV   and 2s-go.AOR
         'I left hoping *that you might come*.' Lébikaza 1999:334)

15.6 Auxiliaries

15.6.1   Grammaticalized auxiliaries

Several (grammaticalized) auxiliaries and (independent) "semi-auxiliaries" may combine with a main verb to form what Lébikaza calls "complex" predicates. It is these elements which carry tense, aspect, and mood marking and the SM. The main verb follows in the infinitive form:

(28)   Future auxiliary **ká**   **pa-ká-ɣ   léb-u**
                                        3p-FUT-IPFV lose.self-INF
                                        'They will get lost.'

(29)   Near future auxiliary **wízi   pa-wízi   fém**
                                        3p-NFUT   get.up.INF
                                        'They will soon get up.'

(30)   Progressive aspect auxiliary **ɖaýna** + Main verb (Infinitive)

        a   **píya   ɖaýna   lú-u   lím**
            children   PRG   draw-INF water
            'The children are drawing water.' (1999:296)

        b   **pa-ɖaýna hiz-úu   nándʊ**
            3p-PRG   cut.up-INF   meat
            'They are cutting up the meat.' (1999:337)

(31)   Progressive aspect auxiliary **ɖɔŋ** 'go/walk' + main verb (Infinitive)

        pa-ɖɔŋ   hiz-úu   nándʊ
        3p-PRG   cut.up-INF   meat
        'They are cutting up the meat.' (1999:337)

(32)   Habitual aspect **tíí** (tone pattern HH) + imperfective main verb

        a   **man-tíí -wó-ki   me-egbéna   kujuká   wíye**
            1s-HAB-go-IPFV 1s-house.maternal.uncle   Sunday   day
            'I usually go to find my maternal uncles on Sunday.' (1999:337)

        b   **man-tíí-lákɪ   tʊmíyɛ mɔŋ-kudúyíẃ tɛɛ**
            1s-HAB-do.IPFV work   1s-room   under
            'I habitually work/am usually working in my room.' (1999:232)

15.6.2. Semi-auxiliaries

Semi-auxiliaries are full verbs (with such meanings as 'begin', 'end', 'finish', etc) which are employed as auxiliaries. As such, their meanings are somewhat bleached: for instance, full verb **tɛm** means 'finish'; when it is employed as an auxiliary element, it means 'already'. They are usually self-standing elements. They carry the TA information and are followed by the main verb in the infinitive. The example below shows the auxiliary **kɔm** 'come' which functions as a future (see above for the explanation of the aspectual marking on the AUX):

(33) **kóláa   kɔ́ŋ   lúb-úu   agbá**
      smiths   come.IPFV   forge-INF lances
      'The blacksmiths will make lances.' (1999:297)

15.6.3 'be' verbs

Perhaps the most common ('default'?) copula is **wɛ** 'be' (34a). The negative of this is the invariable copula **fɛ́ yí** 'be.not' (34b). (Collocational) copula **kɛ** 'be' appears in complementary distribution with **wɛ** 'be' and in combination with a noun or an adjective to express identity (as in 'My friend is a doctor' (35) or a state (36):

(34) a   **ɛ-háɣ wɛ   kimɛlɛ́ndʊ**
           3s-dog be   stupid
           'His dog is stupid.' (1999:300)

      b   **ɛ-háɣ fɛ́yí kimɛlɛ́ndʊ**
           3s-dog be.not stupid
           'His dog is not stupid.' (1999:301)

(35) **mɛ-ɛgbaadʊ́   kɛ́   ɖɔ́kɔ́tɔ́**
      1s-friend   be   doctor
      'My friend is a doctor.' (1999:301)

(36) **meŋ-kpelaɣ́   kɛ́   kíkpɛdaɣ́**
      1s-chair   be   black
      'My chair is (a) black (one).'(1999:301)

Combined form **wɛná** = 'have' (= 'be with') is exemplified below:

(37) **háɖáa   wɛná súŋ   sakiyé**
      peasants   have guinea. fowl   many
      'The peasants have many guinea fowl.' (1999:295)

15.7 Other Categories

15.7.1   Focus

Verb focus is accomplished by copying the verb in the infinitive form which must appear at the end of the verb phrase:

(38) **ɛsɔ́ yá-kɪ   kɛ́-kɛ́-sɪ   kí   yáb-ʊ**
      Esso buy-IPFV   bean.cakes   FOC   buy-INF
      'Esso is just *buying bean cakes*.' (Collins & Essizewa 2007:192)

(39) **ɛsɔ́ ɛɛ-yɔɔd-ʊ**   **kí**   **yɔɔd-ʊ**
      Esso NEG-speak-DES   FOC   speak-INF
      'Esso is not *speaking*.' (He is laughing) (Collins & Essizewa 2007:198)

Verb focus may appear with the imperative. Clause internal object focus is exemplified in (40a), verb focus in (40b):

(40) a **ya**   **kɛkɛ́sɪ**   **ɗeké**   **na**
         buy   bean.cakes   only   FOC
         'Buy only *bean cakes*!' (Collins & Essizewa 2007:199)

      b **ya**   **kɛkɛ́sɪ**   **kí**   **yáb-ʊ**
         buy   bean.cakes   FOC   buy-INF
         '*Buy* bean cakes.' (as opposed to stealing them)

15.7.2   Mood

Kabiya has an imperative (used only with second person) for direct commands and a jussive (used with first and third persons) for injunctions and wishes. Imperatives may be either perfective (using the aorist form), or imperfective (by adding the IPFV suffix -**kɪ** to the radical):

(41) **Imperative**   (verb **lab-** /L/ 'do')

      Perfective   Imperfective

      la 'Do (it)!'   **la-kɪ** 'Continue doing it!'

(42) **ya**   **kelémá**   **nɛ súŋ**
      buy.IMP   chickens   and guinea fowl
      'Buy chicks and guinea fowl!' (1999:349)

Imperatives seem generally to be built on what Lébikaza calls the verbal radical, which looks suspiciously like the aorist, in that it is minimally marked (except in the case of the imperfective imperative). Note that in CVC verbs in the Imperative, the final –C is deleted (**lab** > **la**), as in example (26)[8].
        Marking of the imperative also varies with the structure of the root. For instance, in monosyllabic verbs with inherent L tone, the Imperative is signalled by vowel lengthening: **paa** 'dance!' from verb **pa** /L/ 'dance'. See Lébikaza 1999:347ff for a full array of possibilities.
        The jussive is marked tonally: a H tone is located before the radical. The H tone which precedes the base form of the verb (PFV or IPFV) is realized either on the subject pronoun (43a) or, if there is none, on an epenthetic vowel (43b):

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[8] This final –C appears to be linked to the perfective aspect as in Lébikaza 1999:343, where the full CVC structure is termed the perfective base to which the descriptive morpheme -**ʊ** may be added (see example (19)).

(43)   **Jussive**

    a   **ɖɪ́-sa**   **ɛsɔ́** (verb **sam-** 'praise')
       1p.JUSS-praise God
       '(Let us) praise God!'(1999:347)

    b   **píya**   **í-kɔɔ**   (verb **kɔm**-/L/ 'come')
       children   JUSS.come
       'May the children come!' (1999:306)

The following examples show the formal differences between the imperative and the jussive:

(44)   verb **tib-** /L/ 'descend'

    a   **tii**   **lɔkɔ**   **taá**
       descend.IMP   mine shaft   in
       'Go down into the mineshaft!' (1999:348)

    b   **pé-tii**   **pɔ́ẃ**   **taá**
       3p.JUSS-descend   hole   in
       'Would that they would go down into the hole!'

As above, mood may also be conveyed by the use of auxiliary modal verbs. The following examples show such constructions using the AUX **pɪzɪ** /LL/ 'be able' (45a), indicating possibility, AUX **wɛná** 'must'/'have to' (45b), indicating necessity, and AUX **ca**- /L/ 'want' (45c), indicating wishes or desires:

(45)   a   **sɔ́ɔja-náa**   **pɪ́zɪ-ɣ**   **sé-u**
        soldiers-3p   be able-IPFV   run-INF
        'The soldiers can run.' (1999:293)

    b   **ŋ-wɛná**   **wób-úu**   **péeɖe**
        2s-must.PFV   go-INF   there
        'You have to go there.' (1999:295)

    c   **pa-cá-ɣ**   **hil-úu**   **ɖózi**
        3p-want-IPFV   prepare-INF sauce
        'They want to prepare the sauce.' (1999:294)

15.8 Negatives

The primary negative appears in the perfective aspect (with what Lébikaza calls the "aorist" form of the verb (see above)). It consists of **ta-** (with a low tone) which is located after the SM, if there is one, and before the verbal base:

(46) a   **ɛ-ta-sɛ́**
              3s-NEG-run.AOR
              'He has not run.' (Lébikaza 1999:309)

      b   **pɛl-áa   ta-leeyí**
              girl-p   NEG.play.AOR
              'The girls haven't played.' (Lébikaza 1999:328)

Default prohibitions are expressed by **taa** /LL/ and the use of the aorist form of the verb both in the imperative (47a) and the jussive (47b), both from Lébikaza (1999:354):

(47) a   **taa-kízi**   **kɔ́yɛ**
              PRH-refuse.AOR   medicine
              'Don't refuse the medicine!'

      b   **pá-taa-kízi**   **kɔ́yɛ**
              3p.JUSS-PRH-refuse.AOR   medicine
              'They must not refuse the medicine!'

There is as well a continuative prohibitive:

(48) **taa-la-kɪ   ḿbʊ́**
       PRH-do-IPFV   that
       'Don't do that!' (Lébikaza 1999:355)

Negation in imperfective aspect is marked tonally by two low tones, realized either on the SM (49 a,c), or, if there is none, on an epenthetic vowel /ɪɪ/ (49b) which assimilates in [+/-ATR] to the verb root:

(49) a   **ɖii-sé-ɣ**
              1p.NEG-run-IPFV
              'We aren't running.' (Lébikaza 1999:309)

      b   **hal-áa   ii-sé-ɣ**
              woman-p   NEG.run-IPFV
              'The women aren't running.' (Lébikaza 1999:309)

      c   **maa-wo-ki**   **peéɖe**
              1s.NEG-go-IPFV   there
              'I'm not going there.' (Lébikaza 1999:334)

15.9 Relatives

Dependent relative clauses may be delineated by a clause-initial particle **mbá** (which includes class-based anaphoric reference) and a deictic element **yɔ́** which appears at the end of the clause:

(50) **hal-áa   mbá   ma-na-á   yɔ́   pa-lí-na   Lassa**
woman-p REL   1s-see-PFV   DEIC 3p-leave-EXT   Lassa
'The women *whom I saw* went/have gone to Lassa.' (Lébikaza 1999:276)

Relative (subordinate) clauses may also be signalled by focus, where the main clause is preposed and focussed, and the relative postposed:

(51) **píya   caan-áa kɛ   sukúli   ñɔ́w-tɔ́ nɪ́nɪ-ɣ**
children   father-p FOC school   principal look.for-IPFV
'These are the children's parents *whom the principal is seeking*.' (Lébikaza 1999:279)

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