Compte rendu

Paul SOLOMIAC. Phonologie et morphosyntaxe du Dzùùngoo de Samogohiri. (Mande Languages and Linguistics 10). Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, 2014, 314 p. ISBN 978-3-89645-079-1.

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1. Introduction

1 Solomiac's book is a welcome and much needed addition to the literature on Northwestern Mande languages and languages of the Samogo group in particular. This group, consisting of around six small languages spoken in Mali and Burkina Faso (Dzùùngoo, Duungooma, Bankagooma, Jowulu, Seenku, and Kpeengo), has until now received only scant attention in the literature. Published sources include only a description of the phonology of Jowulu published in the same series (Djilla, Eenkhonrn, and Eenkhorn-Pilon 2004), a grammatical sketch of the same language (Carlson 1993), a grammatical sketch of northern Seenku (Prost 1971), and a survey of and chapter on qualification in Duungooma (Hochstetler 1996, Tröbs 2008, respectively). *Phonologie et morphosyntaxe du Dzùùngoo de Samogohiri* thus represents the first comprehensive grammar of any of these languages and greatly contributes to our understanding of the structure of Samogo languages. As someone working on a reference grammar of Seenku and interested in morphophonology more broadly, I read the work with great interest and gained many valuable insights.

2 The volume is based on Solomiac's (2007) dissertation of the same name, completed at Université Lumière Lyon 2 under the direction of Denis Creissels. I was surprised to find that the published version was in fact shortened compared to the dissertation, a point I will return to later in the review. The description is based on over twenty years' work on the language, with a resulting lexical database of around 2500 entries and over 100 texts. There is thus a good deal of maturity and certainty to the analysis that inspires confidence in the reader. Nearly all of the examples are drawn from the texts and naturalistic; this is laudable and consistent with current best practices in descriptive and documentary linguistics, but I wished at times (particularly in the early chapters)

for some simpler examples. By the end, the examples were easy to understand, which speaks well for breadth of description in the book, but most users will not be reading the book from end to end, and in its usability as a reference I have some reservations that I will address at the end of this review.

3 In the following, I will first summarize each chapter, pulling out what I found to be the most interesting points. After this, I will evaluate the volume in terms of content, organization, and usability.

2. Chapter summaries

4 Chapter 1 provides a thorough introduction to the language, its genetic affiliation, its history, and its environment. There are some nice color maps of Mande language areas and Samogo language areas. The discussion of ethnography, dialects, and vitality are well thought out. Solomiac notes that nearly all Dzùùngoo speakers are bilingual in the lingua franca Jula, and that though intergenerational transmission in Dzùùngoo is intact, the usage of Jula even in village settings is increasing, partially due to the large number of non-Dzùùngoo people moving into the area. I found the discussion of the loss of the old numeral system particularly interesting, though it would be good here to have a cross-reference to the chapter that deals with numerals (Chapter 8), since no specific data were given in this chapter. In §1.7, he lays out his theoretical assumptions behind the grammar, which helps contextualize the discussions that follow. For phonology, he reportedly follows a Government Phonology framework, more in vogue among European readers than North American ones, though in practice I found his phonological descriptions in later chapters to be quite theory-neutral. For morphosyntax, his treatments are "resolutely typological and functional", along the lines of Payne (1997).

5 Chapter 2 is a short chapter on the shape of the phonological word, first in terms of the number of syllables then in terms of syllabic structure. 88% of the vocabulary is mono- and disyllabic. I thought the information in this chapter would be better integrated into later chapters (e.g. Chapter 4 "The syllable" or Chapter 5 "The phonological word"), since there was actually no data given here in the discussion. This chapter, like several others, also lays out definitions that are probably well known to most linguists, like sonority sequencing and other basic terminology (onset, rime, coda, obstruent, etc.). I have mixed feelings about this. On the one hand, it is good to make assumptions and definitions explicit, and this may allow non-linguists or community members to more effectively use the grammar. On the other hand, given the large amount of technical vocabulary and glossing conventions involved in a reference grammar, I wonder if any non-linguists ever would try, even with the definitions. In that case, it seems the space would be better used for more examples than for definitions.

6 Chapter 3 gets into the meat of the language with a discussion of the segmental phonemes. Dzùùngoo has seven oral vowels and five nasal vowels (neutralizing the distinction between e/ε and $o/\mathfrak{z}$ in favor of the lower mid variants, as is common in many West African languages). It also has a length distinction in vowels, though Solomiac seems to treat these as complex syllable nuclei rather than phonemes in their own right. In terms of consonants, the language has a fairly large inventory (*p, t, c, k, kp, b, d, ɟ, g, gb, ts, dz, f, s, ʃ, x, v, ʒ, m, n, ɲ, ŋ, ŋm, w, l, j*), or five places of articulation and multiple affricates and fricatives. Of course, many of these phonemes are subject to

phonotactic restrictions, which Solomiac points out with tables throughout the chapter on their appearance in different positions/syntactic categories. These tables are useful, but it would also be helpful to actively highlight differences between nouns and verbs in the text, such as the fact that /m/ is found intervocalically in nouns but /ŋm/ takes its place in verbs. Nouns likewise show intervocalic /t/ and /kp/, both absent in verbs. There are no voiced fricatives intervocalically in either category, which is a somewhat surprising distribution. One interesting phonological phenomenon discussed in this section, also found in other Samogo languages, is the floating nasal, discussed in §3.3.1. In roots with non-high vowels, we find two classes, one that nasalizes following sonorants (e.g. of the plural suffix) and one that does not; this nasalization does not depend on the nasalization of the root vowel, as there are nasal vowels that do not nasalize a following sonorant and oral vowels that do. In roots with high vowels, nasalizing behavior is predictable based on the nasalization of the root vowel. Solomiac analyzes these exceptional nasalizers as roots with a floating N and outlines N's docking behavior. Chapter 3 ends by running through contrasts for each of the vowel and consonant phonemes, but no example words are provided. Instead, Solomiac refers readers to his dissertation. I imagine he was under space limitations, and thus these examples were something that had to be cut, but it would be much more useful to have the examples in the book itself.

7   Chapter 4 returns to syllable types, also including phonotactic information about which consonants and vowels can occur in which positions. We find an interesting correlation between syllable complexity and word complexity here: Syllables with complex onsets are found in 10% of the vocabulary, most of which is monosyllabic, then a lesser number in disyllabic words, and never in words of three syllables or more. All complex onsets involve a liquid or semivowel in C2 position. When the rime contains a short vowel, only labial consonants are found with /l/; only the alveolar affricates are found with /w/; the distribution of /j/ covers both of these categories (excluding labiovelar). When the rime contains a long vowel, the distribution is different and more varied, despite being overall a rarer combination, which is interesting. On page 51, Solomiac gives an underlying representation (albeit ideophonic) with /z/, despite the fact that this is not a phoneme. While this is most likely a "marginal phoneme", appearing in some ideophonic vocabulary, there should be mention of it in Chapter 3. (/dz/ does have an allophone [z] before /a/, but that would not explain the form here.)

8   Chapter 5 discusses the structure of the phonological word. In order, this includes what syllable types can combine, reduplication, word length, and vowel harmony. The table in the introduction to this chapter is good, showing what kinds of syllables appear in words of different lengths, though I wish the table included statistics rather than simple attested/unattested. In terms of word length, we see that almost a third of disyllabic nouns and verbs have a medial [r] (the intervocalic allophone of /d/). In trisyllabic words (almost three quarters of which are CV.CV.CV), medial [r] and [n] are still most frequent, but they cannot occur in adjacent syllables (i.e. *CV.rV.rV, *CV.nV.nV, *CV.rV.nV,*CV.nV.rV). Finally, vowel combinations can be summarized as follows:

9   1) Low vowels in the first syllable can be followed by any vowel.

10   2) The open mid vowels are more common in initial position than the close mid vowels.

11   3) Front mid vowels are not followed by back mid vowels with one exception.

12 4) If both syllables are back mid vowels, they must have the same degree of height (open or close).

13 In this table of vowel combinations as well, I would have loved to see counts instead of a binary attested/unattested. Solomiac goes on to describe two phenomena that look like ATR harmony, common in Africa but less common in Mande: the perfective suffix is either [-ro] or [-rɔ] depending on the vowel of the *preceding* verb stem, and the conjunction 'and' can be either [ko] or [kɔ] depending on the ATR value of the *following* noun. This latter point is quite interesting and it would have been nice to see some other examples of this construction, e.g. of the quality of the first word not making a difference (the only example given has the pronoun *á* 'you' preceding the conjunction).

14 Chapter 6 on the tone system is a wonderfully detailed chapter. Dzùùngoo is a three-tone language (L, M, H) with automatic downstep (also known as downdrift) reducing H tone to M (phonetically and phonologically) after L. Solomiac analyzes the tone system in register tier theory (Snider 1990, 1999) and does a nice job laying out the assumptions in his tonal model: The TBU is the mora. Tones are made up of tonal and register tiers. Of course, the features from these two tiers provide four tonal configurations, despite the fact that Dzùùngoo is said to be a three-tone language. Solomiac provides a cross-reference to one verbal inflection that uses the fourth tone, a raised L, but says it does not characterize any lexical items. Section 6.3 details a large class of L- and M-toned morphemes that carry a floating H that docks to the right. Docking the floating H can create contours if the following morpheme has a long vowel or it can displace an L or M and leave it floating. Counterintuitively, floating L does not trigger downstep but actually triggers upstep, since the following H tone's h register feature is interpreted as an instruction to go up from the floating L's l register. Interestingly, there is an absence of floating H after H-toned vocabulary, and any morpheme that becomes H through H-tone docking loses its own floating H afterward (or rather, that floating H has no effect). Floating H can also dock across phrase boundaries, with some restrictions. For instance, H tone of verbal particles (p) can spread onto intransitive verbs but not onto the object of transitive verbs (pV but not pOV). Floating H on the object can dock on the verb. Solomiac then runs through lexical tone patterns in §6.4 for nouns and verbs with statistics. Tone patterns are varied but HLH (and similar sequences) are overall avoided. Generalizations about nouns include: M nouns are much more frequent with a floating H and L nouns are more frequent without one. Association progresses from right-to-left instead of left-to-right (with the exception of the floating H). Unsurprisingly from a typological angle, verbs have a more restricted set of tonal melodies. Finally, in §6.5, he describes the interaction between H tone docking and downdrift, namely that the former applies before the latter. There is good attention to detail in working through a complicated example. The chapter ends with a summary of the main points from the preceding chapters and a discussion of the principles behind the orthographic transcription.

15 Chapter 7 transitions to morphology. Solomiac states that there is no explicit grammatical tone. Instead, all tonal changes follow from phonological rules on tone association when tones combine under affixation or compounding. He then discusses where Dzùùngoo falls on the synthesis scale and the segmentability scale. It is placed in the middle of the former scale, as there are many derivational and inflectional processes but there are also many particles. On the latter scale, Dzùùngoo is mostly agglutinating, though vocalic suffixes on stems with a branching nucleus have to fuse.

The language is mostly suffixing, as most Mande languages are, and compounding is quite common in nouns and verbs.

16 Chapter 8 is a long chapter defining and exemplifying different morphosyntactic categories. The main lexical categories are nouns, verbs, and adjectives, which are distinguished from one another through a combination of semantics, morphosyntax, and predicate structures. Minor categories include adverbs, numerals, pronouns, quantifiers, conjunctions, particles and interjections. This chapter is so long because it does double or triple duty, distinguishing categories, giving examples of phrase structure (including complex phrases like conditionals), and describing morphological derivation and inflection. Most of this information comes up again in subsequent chapters. I think this chapter would be better split into multiple chapters, as it is over 100 pages long, or a third of the book. For instance, there could be a chapter on nominal derivation and inflection, a chapter on verbal derivation and inflection (including the extensive list of predicative particles, a property of many Mande languages), possibly even a chapter on adjectival derivation and inflection, though perhaps this would fit better into Chapter 9 on the noun phrase, and same for conjunctions. All postpositions and postpositional phrases are also discussed here, which could also naturally be its own chapter. Given the length and complexity of this chapter, I will summarize a few interesting points here.

17 The section on adjectives (§8.3) is well developed and interesting. Some can only be used predicatively, others only qualificatively, and others more flexibly in either position, with or without the copula. Like some other Mande languages (Seenku, McPherson 2017, and South Mande languages, Vydrine 2004), Dzùùngoo reduplicates adjectives in the plural, but with full rather than partial reduplication. However, there may be semantic restrictions on reduplication, limited to physical property adjectives. Unlike Seenku, adjectives can appear in headless NPs.

18 One of the most interesting sections of Chapter 8 is §8.4.1 on Dzùùngoo's numeral system. Numerals 1-29 are simple enough. There are distinct digits 1-10, then 11-19 are formed by adding the digit to a 10 base, which Solomiac proposes is derived from a historical "ten and" form; this accounts for its final velar nasal coda (derived from the velar onset of *kó* 'and', whose H tone translates into a floating H). There is a distinct word for '20' (the same word for 'person', bringing to mind the 20 digits of a human being), then 21-29 are formed like the teens. From here on up, the numerals become more complicated. First, complex numerals begin to use an overt *kó* 'and' to build up the digits within each decimal. Like 20, 40, 60, and 80 have unique bases, with 30, 50, 70, and 90 built off these bases + 10. 80 then forms the basis of the next few complex numerals: 100 = 80.20 (a compound formed off the two numerals), 110 = 80.20 + 10, 120 = 80.40, 130 = 80.40 + 10. 140 and up are based on multiples of 80. 140 = 80.2 - 20, 180 = 80.2 + 20, and so on. 400 is 80.5. In other words, it is essentially a base-20 system with a special place for the numeral 80 to build up higher numbers. At 1200, the counting system begins to reference cowrie shells ('three lines of cowries'), but Solomiac reports that no one remembers the transactions on which these numbers are based. Given how complicated the numeral system is, it is unsurprising that many people use Jula instead, which lends itself better to commerce and the monetary system.

19 Section 8.4.2 discusses the inventory of pronouns. Dzùùngoo makes a distinction between 1pl inclusive and exclusive. All 1st and 2nd person pronouns have the form CV, and all 3rd person pronouns are V; as stand-alone responses to questions, the

demonstrative *nèē* is used instead. When in subject position, the 3rd person pronouns cliticize to the following word. In object position, they amalgamate with the subject pronouns when they are in the singular (*à*) and take a CV form (*yè*) when in the plural. The emphatic form of the 3rd person pronoun (*wò*) is also used as a logophoric pronoun.

20   Derived nouns (§8.6.4) display a form of "tonal compactness" (*compacité tonale*) frequently found in Mande languages, which creates four overarching tone patterns: MH, M(H), LM(H), and LH. Nouns can be derived through a series of suffixes or compounding. There are over ten different types of compound nouns in Dzùùngoo. Most are right-headed (85%). Of these, most are genitive-like compounds (77%), but they follow tonal compactness rather than concatenation associated with true genitives. There are some particularly common heads: "child", "plant", "owner", "affair". There are also right-headed compounds whose left modifier is a verb. One particularly interesting point is that the resulting tonal forms of V N compounds with a "thing" head can depend on the semantic role of the head: L for agent, H for patient, M(H) for instrument.

21   Chapter 9 discusses nominal operations, including noun inflection and some NP structures like possession, modification, and coordination. The latter have already been discussed elsewhere, so their presence in this chapter starts to feel repetitive, but possession is entirely contained in these pages. The definite has the underlying form -*rà* (same as the imperfective) but rarely surfaces as such. It undergoes a series of phonologically conditioned alternations, sometimes losing its onset, sometimes assimilating to a medial C of a CVCV root that has lost its final vowel. These phonological forms are nicely summarized in a table on page 211. As in many Mande languages, Dzùùngoo has two genitive constructions, an unmarked and a marked, which roughly correspond to inalienable and alienable. However, the semantics of which constructions are treated as alienable and inalienable are rather interesting and Solomiac gives a very careful and detailed treatment of the semantics. For instance, we might associate inalienable constructions more with human possessors; however 'human's shadow' or 'human's words' are alienable while 'tree's shadow' or 'history's words' are inalienable. Similarly, inalienable constructions are used when a place name is a possessor, whereas alienable possession is used when the place name is possessed. High-status people are inalienably possessed (professors, masters, chiefs) while low-status people are alienably possessed (children, slaves, students). There are, in fact, two words for children, one that is inalienably possessed, indicating the kinship relation, and one that is alienably possessed, reflecting a low status in the community. Interesting kinship relations are encoded in possessive marking, such as the difference between a maternal uncle (inalienable, joined by maternal bloodline) and a sister's son (alienable, part of a different paternal lineage).

22   Genitival nominalizations of verbs and their arguments are also quite interesting. Solomiac notes that the internal argument (typically the patient) is treated as an inalienable possessor and is not marked while the external argument (the subject) is treated as an alienable possessor and is marked. However, for certain kinds of deverbal nouns, there is more of an ergative/absolutive alignment in possession, with the subject of intransitive verbs and the object of transitive verbs being unmarked or inalienable possessors. This is perhaps surprising in an otherwise nominative/ accusative language. Deadjectival nouns are possessed either alienably or inalienably, depending upon their innateness (innate qualities are inalienable possessed, acquired

qualities are alienably possessed). Headless genitive constructions are also attested, in which the possessed noun is replaced by a so-called associative pronoun -*ráà*, surely related to the definite though not explicitly stated as such. This clitic can replace the regular genitive clitic even when the possessed noun is present to emphasize the possessive relationship.

23 In Chapter 10, Solomiac turns to verbal operations: verbal inflection and the VP. He first discusses TAM markers, which can be either typically Mande predicative particles in post-subject position, auxiliaries, or verbal inflections. There are six verbal inflectional suffixes, four for finite verbs and two for non-finite verbs. These are:

24 1) -*rà* imperfective, whose phonological realization is exactly the same as the definite; an interesting confluence of tonal association principles can derive contour tones on light syllables when V2 of CVCV roots is deleted and a floating H is associated with the root (pg. 232).

25 2) -*ūŋ/-ōŋ* perfective, which is often realized as simply a M-toned vowel, unless the verb already has a long vowel, in which case its only effect is tonal. Interestingly, perfective verbs are unmarked in the negative.

26 3) -*ɔ* retrospective, the only M_2 morpheme in the language, whose effect is to reverse the direction of floating H tone association, such that L-toned roots with a floating H can take their own floating H.

27 4) -*nà* incompletive. This suffix often combines with the perfective and yields a sense that the perfective action has no pertinence to the present. The semantics of this suffix are difficult, Solomiac says, and do not correspond well to any given morphological category.

28 5) -*má* participial, which typically attaches to perfective verbs, but can also attach to imperfective or retrospective. Participial forms can act as modifiers or as nominals.

29 6) -*kɔ̄ɔ̄n´* participial, which has all the same uses as -*má*, but with different frequencies for each use.

30 Uninflected verbs, in contrast, are characteristic of future, inchoative, injunctive, and any forms with the auxiliaries 'go' and 'come'. I found this quite similar to what I analyze as an irrealis verb form in Seenku (McPherson in press). Dzùùngoo's six verbal particles were introduced in Chapter 8. There are also three auxiliaries that can appear in the same position as particles, but they differ in that they can be inflected. Derived from 'go', 'come', and 'become', the auxiliaries are introduced in §10.1 but their semantic contributions aren't discussed until §10.2. It would have been good to cross-reference the appropriate subsections of §10.2 in §10.1, since I was wondering while reading §10.1 what meaning the auxiliaries contribute.

31 Chapter 11 discusses non-verbal predicates. Nominal predicates can involve direct juxtaposition of the subject NP and predicate NP with no copula (though negation and auxiliaries like the future can occupy the predicate particle slot between them). Adjectival predicates can also have a null copula or can take the overt copula *nī*, obligatory with existential and locative predicates. Possession and volition follow a locative-like predicate structure. In a possessive predicate "Moussa has X", the form is "X COP Moussa at", but in a volitional predicate "Moussa wants X", then the form is "Moussa COP X at". The presentative phrase "Here is X" uses a special predicate particle *yɛ̄* and has no negative form.

32   Chapter 12 returns to verbal phrases. Here again I question the organization, as Chapter 10 dealt with verbal operations including some discussion of verb phrases. This chapter focuses specifically on valence and adjuncts, but it seems to me that these could have been integrated into Chapter 10. The most interesting point arising from this chapter is passivization. Passives take no special marking; the patient or other argument is simply promoted to subject with a decrease in valence of the verb. With ditransitive verbs, either the patient is promoted to subject or the oblique argument is promoted, in which case the patient is demoted to a postpositional oblique argument. In other words, passivized verbs appear unable to have a direct object.

33   Chapter 13 treats non-declarative structures: interrogatives, imperatives, negatives, and focus/topicalization. Dzùùngoo is a wh- in situ language. 'Where' and 'how' are always in final-position (the typical location for oblique arguments), but 'why' can occur in initial position as well, though this is reportedly more common in older speakers who are less influenced by Jula's phrase-final positioning of 'why'. Negation is marked in the predicate particle position and also in clause-final position. Solomiac does not explicitly point this out, but clause-final negation is an areal feature of West Africa, most likely borrowed into Mande from Gur languages; Idiatov (2015) discusses this evolution in Bobo and Samogo languages, including Dzùùngoo. The final negative position is often but not obligatorily filled; the elements that appear here are largely NPIs but can also be a general negative marker. When this final negative marker is absent, it counter-intuitively emphasizes the negation. Focus is marked with a clitic *-ri*, with the focalized constituent left in situ, while topicalization is achieved with left dislocation.

34   Chapter 14 turns to complex structures: serial verbs, relative clauses, complement clauses, subordination, and coordination. Serial verbs share a single subject and only the final verb is inflected. The most common verbs in serial verb constructions are 'finish', verbs of motion ('go', 'come', 'return', 'go out', etc.), and verbs of transfer 'give' and 'take'. Solomiac begins his discussion of relative clauses with the form of the relative marker, an enclitic ´nìì´, which is unusual in carrying two floating H tones. Only one can dock at a time. If the floating H at the right docks, then the left one is suppressed; the righthand H typically will only dock to following nominal markers (plural and definite, which are typical in relative clauses). If the righthand H tone is unable to dock, then the lefthand H docks onto the first mora of the relative marker. Relative clauses are post-nominal and restrictive. They are typically left-dislocated like topicalized phrases, and a coreferent pronoun follows in the main clause. In §14.3, Solomiac provides a good overview of different kinds of complement clauses followed by a discussion of "circumstantial" subordinate clauses, including conditionals, in §14.4. The last subsection, §14.5, discusses clausal coordination. I found the discussion of narrative structure here particularly interesting. There is a special narrative particle in Dzùùngoo, and its use in adjacent phrases gives the idea of narrative coordination (X, then Y, then Z). If a clause is introduced without a narrative particle, that clause is interpreted as being subordinated (as also discussed in 14.4) even though it has the form of a regular inflected independent clause.

35   Chapter 15 is a short conclusion discussing ramifications of the work for orthography improvement, which is a great addition to the grammar.

3. Evaluation

36   Despite being called *Phonology and morphosyntax of Dzùùngoo*, the volume is really a reference grammar, and a quite thorough one at that in terms of content. It describes and exemplifies everything one might want to know about the language. My biggest issue is organization. As I have indicated at various places in the summary, the division of labor between chapters is sometimes unnatural and many topics are discussed repeatedly (syllable structure, coordination, particles, NP and VP structure, etc.). Of course, it is inevitable that topics will intersect and be relevant in multiple places, but organizational choices could have been made that would have cut down on some of the repetition. Where repetition is unavoidable in a grammar, cross-references are absolutely crucial for usability, and these were often lacking. The index looks very thorough for finding particular topics of interest, but the table of contents is far too simplified, giving only the section of the chapter (e.g. for Chapter 4, we get 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4) while the text itself has in my opinion far too many subheadings (e.g. we find subsections like 8.2.3.3.1.1.1). By reducing the scope of chapters, it would keep the number of sections and subsections down and make the grammar much more usable. After reading the volume cover to cover, I feel like I am left with a great understanding of Dzùùngoo, but I worry that a reader who picks it up as a reference might have difficulty finding all of the places where a topic is discussed.

37   In terms of formatting, I found the text visually hard to parse at times: examples are not indented or numbered as we typically find in linguistics articles and grammars (e.g. (1), (2), etc.), and the line spacing from the body of text is quite small. As such, it can be hard to see where an example ends and discussion begins; Dzùùngoo words given in-line are not italicized, so they also blend in. Finally, many tables are unnumbered, making it difficult to cross-reference them (or even refer to them in the text).

38   Despite these organizational shortcomings, the content of the book and the author's treatment of it are wonderful. This is an invaluable work providing a thorough overview of a little-known Mande language of a little-known group. Solomiac has done a commendable job fitting a large amount of topics into a 300-page book. On the flip side, space limitations mean that each morpheme, construction, or topic may only be illustrated by one or two examples, so the grammar is probably more useful to typologists or Africanists interested in general facts about the language than to theoretical linguists looking for data sets. At a retail price of 50 euros, the book is affordable and makes a great contribution to the literature on Mande and other West African languages.

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