



EWE Pronunciation



Pronunciation

Consonants

<u>Spelling</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Examples</u>
b, g v f m, n	For all practical purposes, these consonants are pronounced the same as the corresponding sounds in English.	bíá 'to ask' gà 'money' vò 'to finish' fè 'debt' mámá 'grandmother' nò 'mother'
d	Similar to the corresponding consonant in English, but pronounced with the tip of the tongue against the back of the teeth and not against the ridge behind the teeth.	dó 'to send' dù 'town'
ɖ	Made with the tip of the tongue against the front of the hard palate. Technically: a voiced retroflex stop.	dó 'to fill' ɖù 'gun powder'
p, t, k	Similar to the corresponding English consonants but with less aspiration (puff of breath). /t/, like /d/, is pronounced with the tip of the tongue against the back of the teeth.	pápá 'papa' pě 'chisel' tè 'yam' tó 'father' kó 'to be tall' kú 'to die'

gb, kp

Pronounced with simultaneous closure at the lips (as for /b/ or /p/) and at the soft palate (as for /g/ or /k/). Released simultaneously and without aspiration.

gbè 'voice'
gbó 'side, vicinity'
kpè 'to be heavy'
kpó 'to see'

Technically: labiovelar stops, voiced and voiceless respectively.

dz, ts

Usually similar to the final consonant clusters in English cads and cats respectively, but pronounced with the tongue against the back of the teeth.

Before /i/, and sometimes before other vowels, similar to the consonants in English Joe and chew respectively.

dzè 'to lodge'
dzà 'to fall (of rain)'
tsò 'yesterday'
tsó 'to come from'
dzèsí 'to know'
dzi 'to give birth to'
tsí 'water'

w, f

In producing /w/ and /f/, the air passes through a narrow opening left between the lips (rather than between the lower lip and the upper teeth as in /v/ and /f/).

Technically: bilabial fricatives, voiced and voiceless respectively.

wò 'door'
wú 'vehicle'
fè 'year'
ò 'to beat'

z, s

Similar to the corresponding sounds in English but slightly palatalized (i.e. somewhat closer to the medial consonant sounds in English pleasure and pressure respectively) before /i/.

zã	'in abundance'
ãzi	'peanut'
srũ	'wife, husband'
ási	'hand'

ʒ, x

In producing /ʒ/ and /x/, the air passes through a narrow passage formed by raising the back of the tongue towards the soft palate.

ʒe	'sun'
ʒãã	'flowing'
xõ	'friend'
xò	'house'

Technically: velar fricatives, voiced and voiceless respectively.

h

Similar to /ʒ/, but produced somewhat further back in the mouth.

hè	'to educate'
hãã	'broad'

Technically: a voiced pharyngeal fricative.

ny

Similar to French gn as in Boulogne.

nyè	'I, me'
nyó	'to be good'

Technically: a palatal nasal.

ŋ

Similar to English ng as in sing.

ŋé	'to break'
ŋkó	'name'

Technically: a velar nasal.

l

Similar to the first l in English little. The tongue is raised and flat, not retracted as in the second l in little.

lì	'to be there'
blí	'corn'

r In producing /r/, the air passes through a narrow passage formed by raising the tip of the tongue towards the ridge behind the teeth. Technically: a voiced alveolar fricative.

dzrǎ 'to buy'
srǒ 'wife, husband;

w, y Similar to the corresponding sounds in English, but often weakened to the point of disappearing completely between vowels.

wǒ 'to do'
ewó 'ten'
yǐ 'to go'
yòc 'O.K.'

Vowels

<u>Spelling</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Examples</u>
i	Similar to the vowel in English <u>beat</u> but unglided. Technically: a high front unrounded vowel.	dzi 'to give birth to' li 'to be there'
e	Between the vowel in English <u>bet</u> and the final vowel in English <u>sofa</u> . Technically: a centralized mid front unrounded vowel.	dè 'to marry' òvè 'two'
ɛ	Between the vowel in English <u>bet</u> and that of English <u>bat</u> , but much closer to the former. Technically: a lower mid front unrounded vowel.	dè 'cook it' pè 'chisel'

a Similar to the vowel in gà 'money
 American English pot. àsí 'hand'
 Technically: a low central unrounded vowel.

o Similar to the vowel in dǒ 'to send'
 English bought but unglided. mǒ 'street'
 Technically: a lower mid back rounded vowel.

o Similar to the vowel in ɸò 'to beat'
 English boat but unglided tó 'ear'
 Technically: a higher mid back rounded vowel.

u Similar to the vowel in ɸù 'sea'
 English boot but unglided. tú 'gun'
 Technically: a high back rounded vowel.

ĩ,	ũ	All of the above vowels have	fĩ	'to blow the
				nose'
ẽ,	õ	a nasalized counterpart.	gbĩẽ	'to spoil'
ẽ,	õ		gbẽ	'break it'
ã			hã	'also'
			fõ	'to get up'
			lõ	'to take from
				the stove'
			lũ	'to shave'

Tones

Ewe has three distinctive tones -

high: tú 'to draw'
 tó 'ear'

mid: tā 'head'
 tō 'mortar'

low: tà 'to wear (of native dress)'

/b/ vs. /gb/

Students should listen carefully to each of the following pairs of words as said by the instructor.

bè	'to hide'	gbè	'voice'
bé	'to say'	gbé	'to refuse'
bà	'mud'	gbà	'to break'
bò	'to gather'	gbò	'to come back'
bò'	'magic'	gbò	'unripe'

Are the following pairs of words same or different ?

gbè	(voice)	bè	(to hide)	D
gbè	(voice)	bè	(to hide)	D
bè	(to hide)	gbè	(voice)	D
bè	(to hide).	bè	(to hide)	S
gbè	(voice)	gbè	(voice)	S

gbé	(to refuse)	gbé	(to refuse)	S
gbé	(to refuse)	gbé	(to refuse)	S
gbú	(to refuse)	bé	(to say)	D
gbé	(to refuse)	gbé	(to refuse)	S
bé	(to say)	gbé	(to refuse)	D

bà	(mud)	gbà	(to break)	D
bà	(mud)	bà	(mud)	S
gbà	(to break)	bà	(mud)	D
gbà	(to break)	bà	(mud)	D
bà	(mud)	gbà	(to break)	D
gbò	(to come back)	bò	(to gather)	D
bò	(to gather)	bò	(to gather)	S
gbò	(to come back)	gbò	(to come back)	S
bò	(to gather)	bò	(to gather)	S
gbò	(to come back)	gbò	(to come back)	S
bò'	(magic)	bò'	(magic)	S
gbò'	(unripe)	bò'	(magic)	D
bò'	(magic)	bò'	(magic)	S
gbò'	(unripe)	bò'	(magic)	D
gbò'	(unripe)	gbò'	(unripe)	S

Do the following words contain /b/ or /gb/ ?

bè	(to hide)	b
bè	(to hide)	b
gbè	(voice)	gb
bè	(to hide)	b
gbè	(voice)	gb

gbé	(to refuse)	gb
bé	(to say)	b
gbé	(to refuse)	gb
gbé	(to refuse)	gb
gbé	(to refuse)	gb
gbà	(to break)	gb
bà	(mud)	b
bà	(mud)	b
bà	(mud)	b
bà	(mud)	b
bò	(to gather)	b
gbò	(to come back)	gb
bò	(to gather)	b
gbò	(to come back)	gb
bò	(to gather)	b
gbò'	(unripe)	gb
gbò'	(unripe)	gb
gbò'	(unripe)	gb
bò'	(magic)	b
bò'	(magic)	b
gbò	(to come back)	gb
bà	(mud)	b
bé	(to say)	b
gbà	(to break)	gb
bò'	(magic)	b
gbò	(to come back)	gb
gbè	(voice)	gb
gbé	(to refuse)	gb
bè	(to hide)	b
gbà	(to break)	gb

Identify by giving the English gloss.

The words for this exercise are /bè/ 'to hide' and /gbè/ 'voice'.

bè	(to hide)	'to hide'
gbè	(voice)	'voice'
gbè	(voice)	'voice'
gbè	(voice)	'voice'
bè	(to hide)	'to hide'

The words for this exercise are /bé/ 'to say' and /gbé/ 'to refuse'.

gbé	(to refuse)	'to refuse'
bé	(to say)	'to say'
gbé	(to refuse)	'to refuse'
gbé	(to refuse)	'to refuse'
gbé	(to refuse)	'to refuse'

The words for this exercise are: /bà/ 'mud' and /gba/ 'to break'.

gbà	(to break)	'to break'
bà	(mud)	'mud'
bà	(mud)	'mud'
gbà	(to break)	'to break'
gbà	(to break)	'to break'

The words for this exercise are : /b̀̀/ 'to gather' and /gb̀̀/ 'to come back'.

gb̀̀	(to come back)	'to come back'
gb̀̀	(to come back)	'to come back'
b̀̀	(to gather)	'to gather'
b̀̀	(to gather)	'to gather'

gbò (to come back)

' to come back'

The words for this exercise are: /bò'/ 'magic' and
/gbò'/ 'unripe'.

bò' (magic)

'magic'

gbò' (unripe)

'unripe'

gbò' (unripe)

'unripe'

bò' (magic)

'magic'

gbò' (unripe)

'unripe'

/kp/ vs. /gb/

Students should listen carefully to each of the following pairs of words as said by the instructor.

kpè	'to be heavy'	gbè	'voice'
kpé	'to invite'	gbé	'to refuse'
kpá	'to fade'	gbá	'to roof'
kpò	'to be cheap'	gbò	'to come back'
kpó	'to see'	gbó	'near'

Are the following pairs of words same or different ?

kpè (to be heavy)	kpè (to be heavy)	S
kpè (to be heavy)	gbè (voice)	D
kpè (to be heavy)	kpè (to be heavy)	S
gbè (voice)	gbè (voice)	S
gbè (voice)	kpè (to be heavy)	D
gbé (to refuse)	kpé (to invite)	D
kpé (to invite)	kpé (to invite)	S
gbé (to refuse)	gbé (to refuse)	S
kpé (to invite)	kpé (to invite)	S
kpé (to invite)	gbé (to refuse)	D
gbá (to roof)	gbá (to roof)	S
kpá (to fade)	kpá (to fade)	S
gbá (to roof)	gbá (to roof)	S
gbá (to roof)	kpá (to fade)	D
kpá (to fade)	gbá (to roof)	D
kpò (to be cheap)	kpò (to be cheap)	S
kpò (to be cheap)	gbò (to come back)	D
gbò (to come back)	gbò (to come back)	S
kpò (to be cheap)	kpò (to be cheap)	S
kpò (to be cheap)	gbò (to come back)	D

Ewe

gbɔ̃	(near)	kpɔ̃	(to see)	D
kpɔ̃	(to see)	kpɔ̃	(to see)	S
kpɔ̃	(to see)	kpɔ̃	(to see)	S
gbɔ̃	(near)	kpɔ̃	(to see)	D
kpɔ̃	(to see)	gbɔ̃	(near)	D

Do the following words contain /kp/ or /gb/ ?

kpɛ̃	(to be heavy)	kp
gbɛ̃	(voice)	gb
kpɛ̃	(to be heavy)	kp
kpɛ̃	(to be heavy)	kp
gbɛ̃	(voice)	gb

gbɛ̃	(to refuse)	gb
kpɛ̃	(to invite)	kp
kpɛ̃	(to invite)	kp
kpɛ̃	(to invite)	kp
gbɛ̃	(to refuse)	gb

kpá	(to fade)	kp
kpá	(to fade)	kp
kpá	(to fade)	kp
gbá	(to roof)	gb
gbá	(to roof)	gb

kpɔ̃	(to be cheap)	kp
gbɔ̃	(to come back)	gb
kpɔ̃	(to be cheap)	kp
kpɔ̃	(to be cheap)	kp
gbɔ̃	(to come back)	gb

gbɔ̃	(near)	gb
kpɔ̃	(to see)	kp
kpɔ̃	(to see)	kp

gbó	(near)	gb
gbó	(near)	gb
kpè	(to be heavy)	kp
gbè	(to refuse)	gb
kpá	(to fade)	kp
gbò	(to come back)	gb
gbó	(near)	gb
kpé	(to invite)	kp
kpò	(to be cheap)	kp
gbó	(near)	gb
kpò	(to be cheap) i.	kp
gbó	(near)	gb
kpó	(to see)	kp
kpá	(to fade)	kp

Identify by giving the English gloss.

The words for this exercise are : /kpè/ 'to be heavy' and /gbè/ 'voice'.

gbè	(voice)	'voice'
gbè	(voice)	'voice'
kpè	(to be heavy)	'to be heavy'
gbè	(voice)	'voice'
kpè	(to be heavy)	'to be heavy'

The words for this exercise are : /kpé/ 'to invite' and /gbé/ 'to refuse'.

kpé	(to invite)	'to invite'
gbé	(to refuse)	'to refuse'
gbé	(to refuse)	'to refuse'
kpé	(to invite)	'to invite'
gbé	(to refuse)	'to refuse'

The words for this exercise are /kpá/ 'to fade' and /gbá/ 'to roof'.

kpá	(to fade)	'to fade'
kpá	(to fade)	'to fade'
gbá	(to roof)	'to roof'
kpá	(to fade)	'to fade'
kpá	(to fade)	'to fade'

The words for this exercise are: /kpɔ̃/ 'to be cheap' and /gbɔ̃/ 'to come back'.

gbɔ̃	(to come back)	'to come back'
kpɔ̃	(to be cheap)	'to be cheap'
gbɔ̃	(to come back)	'to come back'
gbɔ̃	(to come back)	'to come back'
kpɔ̃	(to be cheap)	'to be cheap'

The words for this exercise are: /kpɔ̃/ 'to see' and /gbɔ̃/ 'near'.

gbɔ̃	(near)	'near'
kpɔ̃	(to see)	'to see'
kpɔ̃	(to see)	'to see'
gbɔ̃	(near)	'near'
kpɔ̃	(to see)	'to see'

/b/, /gb/, /kp/

Do the following words contain /b/, /gb/, or /kp/ ?

kpé	(to invite)	kp
gbè	(voice)	gb
gbè	(voice)	gb
gbé	(to refuse)	gb
kpò	(to be cheap)	kp
bò	(to gather)	b
bé	(to say)	b
kpò	(to be cheap)	kp
gbò	(to come back)	gb
bè	(to hide)	b

bilabial /ɓ/ vs. labio-dental /ɸ/

Students should listen carefully to each of the following pairs of words as said by the instructor.

ɓɛ	'year'	fɛ	'debt'
ɓli	'buy it'	fli	'cut it up'
ɓɔ	'to beat'	fɔ	'to be light'
ɓu	'sea'	fɹ	'misery'
ɓu	'bone'	fɹ	'feather'

Are the following pairs of words same or different ?

fɛ	(debt)	ɓɛ	(year)	D
fɛ	(debt)	ɓɛ	(year)	D
ɓɛ	(year)	fɛ	(debt)	D
fɛ	(debt)	fɛ	(debt)	S
ɓɛ	(year)	ɓɛ	(year)	S

ɓli	(buy it)	fli	(cut it up)	D
fli	(cut it up)	fli	(cut it up)	S
ɓli	(buy it)	ɓli	(buy it)	S
fli	(cut it up)	fli	(cut it up)	S
ɓli	(buy it)	fli	(cut it up)	D

fò	(to be light)	ḥò	(to beat)	D
ḥò	(to beat)	fò	(to be light)	D
ḥò	(to beat)	ḥò	(to beat)	S
ḥò	(to beat)	fò	(to be light)	D
ḥò	(to beat)	ḥò	(to beat)	S
ḥù	(sea)	ḥù	(sea)	S
fù	(misery)	ḥù	(sea)	D
fù	(misery)	ḥù	(sea)	D
ḥù	(sea)	ḥù	(sea)	S
fù	(misery)	ḥù	(sea)	D
fú	(feather)	fú	(feather)	S
ḥú	(bone)	fú	(feather)	D
ḥú	(bone)	ḥú	(bone)	S
fú	(feather)	ḥú	(bone)	D
fú	(feather)	ḥú	(bone)	D

Do the following words contain bilabial /ɸ/ or labio-dental /ɸ/ ?

fè	(debt)	labio-dental
fè	(debt)	labio-dental
fè	(debt)	labio-dental
ḥè	(year)	bilabial
ḥè	(year)	bilabial

ɕlɪ	(buy it)	bilabial
flɪ	(cut it up)	labio-dental
ɕlɪ	(buy it)	bilabial
flɪ	(cut it up)	labio-dental
flɪ	(cut it up)	labio-dental
fɔ	(to be light)	labio-dental
fɔ	(to be light)	labio-dental
ɕɔ	(to beat)	bilabial
fɔ	(to be light)	labio-dental
ɕɔ	(to beat)	bilabial
ɕu	(sea)	bilabial
fɪ	(misery)	labio-dental
fɪ	(misery)	labio-dental
ɕu	(sea)	bilabial
fɪ	(misery)	labio-dental
ɕu	(bone)	bilabial
fɪ	(feather)	labio-dental
ɕu	(bone)	bilabial
fɪ	(feather)	labio-dental
fɪ	(feather)	labio-dental
ɕɛ	(year)	bilabial
ɕu	(sea)	bilabial
ɕu	(bone)	bilabial
fɛ	(debt)	labio-dental
fɔ	(to be light)	labio-dental
fɛ	(debt)	labio-dental
fɪ	(feather)	labio-dental
fɪ	(misery)	labio-dental
ɕɔ	(to beat)	bilabial
flɪ	(cut it up)	labio-dental

Ewe

Identify by giving the English gloss.

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The words for this exercise are /fè/ 'year' and /fè/ 'debt'.

fè	(year)	'year'
fè	(debt)	'debt'
fè	(year)	'year'
fè	(year)	'year'
fè	(year)	'year'

The words for this exercise are /fli/ 'buy it' and /fli/ 'cut it up'.

fli	(cut it up)	'cut it up'
fli	(buy it)	'buy it'
fli	(buy it)	'buy it'
fli	(buy it)	'buy it'
fli	(cut it up)	'cut it up'

The words for this exercise are /fò/ 'to beat' and /fò/ 'to be light'.

fò	(to beat)	'to beat'
fò	(to beat)	'to beat'
fò	(to beat)	'to beat'
fò	(to be light)	'to be light'
fò	(to be light)	'to be light'

The words for this exercise are /fù/ 'sea' and /fù/ 'misery'.

fù	(misery)	'misery'
fù	(misery)	'misery'
fù	(sea)	'sea'
fù	(misery)	'misery'
fù	(sea)	'sea'

Ewe

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The words for this exercise are /ɸú/ 'bone'
and /fú/ 'feather'.

ɸú	(bone)	'bone'
ɸú	(bone)	'bone'
ɸú	(bone)	'bone'
fú	(feather)	'feather'
ɸú	(bone)	'bone'

bilabial /ɸ/ vs. labio-dental /v/.

Students should listen carefully to each of the following pairs of words as said by the instructor.

àvâ	'war'	àvâ	'granary'
ɸɸ	'door'	vɸ	'to finish'
ɸù	'blood'	vù	'a fight'
ɸú	'vehicle'	vú	'to tear'
ɸúvú	'to shake'	vúvú	'torn'

Are the following pairs of words same or different?

àvâ	(war)	àvâ	(war)	S
àvâ	(granary)	àvâ	(war)	D
àvâ	(war)	àvâ	(granary)	D
àvâ	(war)	àvâ	(granary)	D
àvâ	(war)	àvâ	(granary)	D
vɸ	(to finish)	vɸ	(to finish)	S
ɸɸ	(door)	vɸ	(to finish)	D
ɸɸ	(door)	ɸɸ	(door)	S
vɸ	(to finish)	vɸ	(to finish)	S
ɸɸ	(door)	vɸ	(to finish)	D
ɸù	(blood)	ɸù	(blood)	S
vù	(a fight)	vù	(a fight)	S
ɸù	(blood)	vù	(a fight)	D
vù	(a fight)	vù	(a fight)	S
ɸù	(blood)	vù	(a fight)	D
ɸú	(vehicle)	ɸú	(vehicle)	S
ɸú	(vehicle)	vú	(to tear)	D
vú	(to tear)	ɸú	(vehicle)	D
ɸú	(vehicle)	vú	(to tear)	D
ɸú	(vehicle)	vú	(to tear)	D

Ewe			
vúvú	(torn)	ᵛúᵛú	(to shake) D
ᵛúᵛú	(to shake)	ᵛúᵛú	(to shake) S
vúvú	(torn)	ᵛúᵛú	(to shake) D
ᵛúᵛú	(to shake)	ᵛú ᵛ	(to shake) S
ᵛúᵛú	(to shake)	vúvú	(torn) D

Do the following words contain bilabial /ᵛ/ or labio-dental /v/?

àvà	(granary)	labio-dental
àvà	(granary)	labio-dental
àvà	(war)	bilabial
àvà	(granary)	labio-dental
àvà	(war)	bilabial

vᵛ	(to finish)	labio-dental
ᵛᵛ	(door)	bilabial
vᵛ	(to finish)	labio-dental
vᵛ	(to finish)	labio-dental
ᵛᵛ	(door)	bilabial

vù	(a fight)	labio-dental
ᵛù	(blood)	bilabial
ᵛù	(blood)	bilabial
ᵛù	(blood)	bilabial
ᵛù	(blood)	bilabial

vú	(to tear)	labio-dental
ᵛú	(vehicle)	bilabial
vú	(to tear)	labio-dental
vú	(to tear)	labio-dental
ᵛú	(vehicle)	bilabial

ᵛúᵛú	(to shake)	bilabial
vúvú	(torn)	labio-dental
ᵛúᵛú	(to shake)	bilabial
vúvú	(torn)	labio-dental
ᵛúᵛú	(to shake)	bilabial

Ewe

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vúvú	(torn)	labio-dental
vú	(to tear)	labio-dental
uù	(blood)	bilabial
à·à	(war)	bilabial
vù	(a fight)	labio_dental
à·à	(war)	bilabial
uù	(door)	bilabial
ʷúʷú	(to shake)	bilabial
vù	(to finish)	labio-dental
uù	(blood)	bilabial

Identify by giving the English gloss.

The words for this exercise are : /à·à/ 'war' and /à·à/ 'granary'.

à·à	(granary)	'granary'
à·à	(war)	'war'
à·à	(granary)	'granary'
à·à	(war)	'war'
à·à	(war)	'war'

The words for this exercise are : /uù/ 'door' and /vù/ 'to finish'.

vù	(to finish)	'to finish'
uù	(door)	'door'
uù	(door)	'door'
uù	(door)	'door'
uù	(door)	'door'

The words for this exercise are /uù/ 'blood' and /vù/ 'a fight'.

uù	(blood)	'blood'
vù	(a fight)	'a fight'
uù	(blood)	'blood'
uù	(blood)	'blood'
uù	(a fight)	'a fight'

Ewe

The words for this exercise are: /ʒú/ 'vehicle' and /vú/ 'to tear'. 9

ʒú	(vehicle)	'vehicle'
vú	(to tear)	'to tear'
vú	(to tear)	'to tear'
ʒú	(vehicle)	'vehicle'
ʒú	(vehicle)	'vehicle'

The words for this exercise are : /ʒúú/ 'to shake' and /vúvú/ 'torn'.

ʒúú	(to shake)	'to shake'
ʒúú	(to shake)	'to shake'
ʒúú	(to shake)	'to shake'
vúvú	(torn)	'torn'
vúvú	(torn)	'torn'

Students should listen carefully to each of the following pairs of words as said by the instructor.

dìdì	'to be long'	ɖìɖì	'going down'
àdè'	'saliva'	àɖè'	'tongue'
dà	'to throw'	ɖà	'to cook'
dò	'hunger'	ɖò	'net'
dó	'to send'	ɖó	'to fill'
dó	'to plant'	ɖó	'to arrive'
dù	'town'	ɖù	'gun powder'

Are the following pairs of words same or different?

ɖìɖì	(going down)	ɖìɖì	(going down)	S
ɖìɖì	(going down)	dìdì	(to be long)	D
dìdì	(to be long)	dìdì	(to be long)	S
ɖìɖì	(going down)	dìdì	(to be long)	D
ɖìɖì	(going down)	ɖìɖì	(going down)	S

àdè'	(saliva)	àdè'	(saliva)	S
àdè'	(saliva)	àɖè'	(tongue)	D
àdè'	(saliva)	àdè'	(saliva)	S
àɖè'	(tongue)	àɖè'	(tongue)	S
àɖè'	(tongue)	àɖè'	(tongue)	S

dà	(to throw)	dà	(to throw)	S
ɖà	(to cook)	dà	(to throw)	D
dà	(to throw)	ɖà	(to cook)	D
ɖà	(to cook)	ɖà	(to cook)	S
dà	(to throw)	ɖà	(to cook)	D

ɖò	(net)	dò	(hunger)	D
ɖò	(net)	dò	(hunger)	D
	(hunger)	dò	(hunger)	S
	(hunger)	ɖò	(net)	D
	(net)	ɖò	(net)	S

Ewe

dɔ	(to fill)	dɔ	(to send)	D
dɔ	(to fill)	dɔ	(to send)	D
dɔ	(to fill)	dɔ	(to fill)	S
dɔ	(to fill)	dɔ	(to send)	D
dɔ	(to fill)	dɔ	(to fill)	S
dɔ	(to plant)	dɔ	(to arrive)	D
dɔ	(to plant)	dɔ	(to arrive)	D
dɔ	(to plant)	dɔ	(to plant)	S
dɔ	(to arrive)	dɔ	(to arrive)	S
dɔ	(to plant)	dɔ	(to arrive)	D
dù	(town)	dù	(gun powder)	D
dù	(gun powder)	dù	(town)	D
dù	(town)	dù	(town)	S
dù	(town)	dù	(gun powder)	D
dù	(gun powder)	dù	(gun powder)	S

Do the following words contain dental /d/ or retroflex /ɖ/?

dɔ	(going down)	retroflex
dɔ	(going down)	retroflex
dɔ	(to be long)	dental
dɔ	(going down)	retroflex
dɔ	(to be long)	dental

àdè	(saliva)	dental
àdè	(tongue)	retroflex
àdè	(saliva)	dental
àdè	(saliva)	dental
àdè	(saliva)	dental

dà	(to cook)	retroflex
dà	(to throw)	dental
dà	(to cook)	retroflex
dà	(to cook)	retroflex
dà	(to throw)	dental

Eve

12

də	(net)	retroflex
də	(net)	retroflex
də	(hunger)	dental
də	(hunger)	dental
də	(net)	retroflex
də	(to send)	dental
də	(to fill)	retroflex
də	(to send)	dental
də	(to fill)	retroflex
də	(to send)	dental
də	(to plant)	dental
də	(to arrive)	retroflex
də	(to plant)	dental
də	(to arrive)	retroflex
də	(to arrive)	retroflex
dù	(town)	dental
dù	(town)	dental
dù	(gun powder)	retroflex
dù	(gun powder)	retroflex
dù	(gun powder)	retroflex
dà	(to cook)	retroflex
dù	(gun powder)	retroflex
dldi	(to be long)	dental
də	(to send)	dental
də	(net)	retroflex
də	(to fill)	retroflex
dldi	(going down)	retroflex
də	(to plant)	dental
də	(hunger)	dental
dldi	(to be long)	dental

Identify by giving the English gloss.

Ewe

dìdì	(to be long)	'to be lond'
ㄉㄉ	(going down)	'going down'
ㄉㄉ	(going down)	'going down'
ㄉㄉ	(going down)	'going down'
ㄉㄉ	(going down)	'going down'

13

The words for this exercise are: /àdè/ 'saliva' and /à/è/ 'tongue'.

àdè	(saliva)	'saliva'
àdè	(saliva)	'saliva'
à/è	(tongue)	'tongue'
àdè	(saliva)	'saliva'
à/è	(tongue)	'tongue'

The words for this exercise are: /dà/ 'to throw' and /dà/ 'to cook'.

dà	(to cook)	'to còok'
dà	(to cook)	'to cook'
dà	(to throw)	'to throw'
dà	(to cook)	'to cook'
dà	(to throw)	'to throw'

The words for this exercise are: /dò/ 'hunger' and /dò/ 'net'.

dò	(hunger)	'hunger'
dò	(net)	'net'
dò	(hunger)	'hunger'
dò	(hunger)	'hunger'
dò	(net)	'net'

Ewe

The words for this exercise are: /dô/ 'to send' and
/ɔ̃/ 'to fill'.

ɔ̃	(to fill)	'to fill'
dô	(to send)	'to send'
dô	(to send)	'to send'
ɔ̃	(to fill)	'to fill'
ɔ̃	(to fill)	'to fill'

The words for this exercise are: /dó/ 'to plant'
and /ɔ̃/ 'to arrive'.

dó	(to plant)	'to plant'
dó	(to plant)	'to plant'
ɔ̃	(to arrive)	'to arrive'
ɔ̃	(to arrive)	'to arrive'
ɔ̃	(to arrive)	'to arrive'

The words for this exercise are: /dù/ 'town' and
/ɔ̃/ 'gun powder'.

dù	(town)	'town'
ɔ̃	(gun powder)	'gun powder'
dù	(town)	'town'
ɔ̃	(gun powder)	'gun powder'
ɔ̃	(gun powder)	'gun powder'

velar /ɣ/ vs. pharyngeal /h/.

Students should listen carefully to the following pairs of words as said by the instructor.

ɣɛ 'sun'

hɛ 'to educate'

ɣàà 'flowing'

hàà 'broad'

Are the following pairs of words same or different?

ɣɛ (sun)	ɣɛ (sun)	S
ɣɛ (sun)	hɛ (to educate)	D
ɣɛ (sun)	ɣɛ (sun)	S
hɛ (to educate)	ɣɛ (sun)	D
hɛ (to educate)	ɣɛ (sun)	D
ɣɛ (sun)	vɛ (sun)	S
hɛ (to educate)	hɛ (to educate)	S
ɣɛ (sun)	hɛ (to educate)	D
vɛ (sun)	hɛ (to educate)	D
hɛ (to educate)	hɛ (to educate)	S
hàà (broad)	ɣàà (flowing)	D
hàà (broad)	hàà (broad)	S
ɣàà (flowing)	hàà (broad)	D
hàà (broad)	hàà (broad)	S
ɣàà (flowing)	ɣàà (flowing)	S
hàà (broad)	ɣàà (flowing)	D
ɣàà (flowing)	ɣàà (flowing)	S
hàà (broad)	ɣàà (flowing)	D
ɣàà (flowing)	hàà (broad)	D
ɣàà (flowing)	hàà (broad)	D

Ewe

Do the following words contain velar / / or pharyngeal /h/?

16

ɣè	(sun)	velar
hè	(to educate)	pharyngeal
ɣè	(sun)	velar
hè	(to educate)	pharyngeal
hè	(to educate)	pharyngeal
ɣè	(sun)	velar
hè	(to educate)	pharyngeal
ɣè	(sun)	velar
ɣè	(sun)	velar
ɣè	(sun)	velar

ɣàà	(flowing)	velar
hàà	(broad)	pharyngeal
hàà	(broad)	pharyngeal
ɣàà	(flowing)	velar
ɣàà	(flowing)	velar
hàà	(broad)	pharyngeal
hàà	(broad)	pharyngeal
ɣàà	(flowing)	velar
hàà	(broad)	pharyngeal
ɣàà	(flowing)	velar

ɣè	(sun)	velar
ɣè	(sun)	velar
hè	(to educate)	pharyngeal
ɣè	(sun)	velar
hàà	(broad)	pharyngeal
ɣàà	(flowing)	velar
hè	(to educate)	pharyngeal
hàà	(broad)	pharyngeal
hàà	(broad)	pharyngeal
ɣè	(sun)	velar

Ewe

17

Identify by giving the English gloss.

The words for this exercise are: /xè/ 'sun' and /hè/ 'to educate'.

hè	(to educate)	'to educate'
hè	(to educate)	'to educate'
hè	(to educate)	'to educate'
xè	(sun)	'sun'
hè	(to educate)	'to educate'
xè	(sun)	'sun'
xè	(sun)	'sun'
hè	(to educate)	'to educate'
xè	(sun)	'sun'
hè	(to educate)	'to educate'

The words for this exercise are: /sàà/ 'flowing' and /hàà/ 'broad'.

sàà	(flowing)	'flowing'
hàà	(broad)	'broad'
sàà	(flowing)	'flowing'
hàà	(broad)	'broad'
hàà	(broad)	'broad'
sàà	(flowing)	'flowing'
sàà	(flowing)	'flowing'
hàà	(broad)	'broad'
hàà	(broad)	'broad'
sàà	(flowing)	'flowing'

Unit I - Greetings

A. In the City¹

1. General Greetings

	fɔ́,	to get up
	ɔ́fɔ́	you got up
	ɔ́fɔ́	did you get up? ²
Komla:	Efɔ́a	How are you? ³

	ɛ	yes
	mɛfɔ́	I got up.
Akuwa:	ɛ, mɛfɔ́	I'm fine thanks.

	dɛviáwɔ	the children
	hã	also/ even
Komla:	Dɛviáwɔ hã fɔ́a?	How are the children?

	wɔ́fɔ́	they got up
Akuwa:	ɛ, wɔ́fɔ́	They're fine.

Notes:

¹ A relatively short exchange of greetings is more common in the city. In the country, where people are in less of a hurry, longer greetings are more usual.

² / ɛfɔ́/ 'You got up.'
/ ɛfɔ́à/ ' Did you get up?'

/ ɖɛvíáwó hǎ fɔ́ / "The children got up too."

/ ɖɛvíáwó hǎ fɔ́à / ' Did the children get up too?

/ -à/ at the end of a sentence marks a yes-no question.

³ Literally, the above conversation means:

Éfɔ́à?

Did you get up (in good health)?

È, mɛfɔ́.

Yes, I got up.

ɖɛvíáwó hǎ fɔ́à?

Did the children get up too?

È, wófɔ́.

Yes, they got up.

According to Ewe tradition, sickness and misfortune are most likely to befall one at night - therefore, the above usage of the verb /fɔ́/ 'to get up' and the similar usage of /dɔ́/ 'to sleep' (See Unit I-B2).

2. Morning !

Komla: Mònì. ¹

Morning!

àféámè

home

dé

how about? ²

Kofi: Mònì, àféámè dé?

Morning, how's everyone at home?

lì

to be there

Komla: Wólì.

They're fine. ³

mìéfǔ

you(pl.) got up ⁴

nyúíé

well

Kofi: Mìéfǔ nyúíéà?

You're all well?

míéfǔ

we got up

Komla: È, míéfǔ.

Yes, we're all fine.

Notes:

¹ From English: morning.

² /ɛ́ɛámè/ 'home'

/ɛ́ɛámè ɛ́/ 'How's (everyone at) home?'

/ɛ́vɪáwó/ 'the children'

/ɛ́vɪáwó ɛ́/ 'How are the children? Where are the children?'

/íkówò/ 'your name'

/íkówò ɛ́/ 'What's your name?'

/ɛ́/ at the end of a noun phrase may be translated 'how is?' 'where is?' or 'what is?' depending on the context.

³ Literally: 'They are there.' / lɪ/ 'to be there' is here used synonymously with / fɔ́/ (See Unit I - A1,2) and / dɔ́ / (See Unit I - B-2).

⁴ /ɛ́fɔ́/ 'You (sg.) got up.'

/mɪɛ́fɔ́/ 'You (pl.) got up.'

Ewe makes a distinction between the second person singular and plural.

B. In the Country

22

1. Good Morning!

Abla: ñdí!

(Good) morning!

Ama: ñdí, àfẹ́ámè? ¹

Good morning, how's everyone at home?

éfṣ--

he/ she/ it got up ²

Abla: Éfṣ

Fine.

Ama: Dèvíáwó?

How about the children?

Abla: Wólì

They're fine.

Ama: Wófṣ nyúíéà?

They're all well?

Abla: E, dèvíáwó?

Yes, and your children?

Ama: Wólì.

They're fine.

Abla: Wófṣ nyúíéà?

They're all well?

Abla: E.

Yes.

Notes:

¹ / à'jáámè / } 'How's everyone at home?'

/ à'jáámè/ }

/ q'evíáwó / } 'How are the children?'

/ q'evíáwó/ }

If the context is clear, / .é/ may be omitted in questions like the above.

² Ewe makes no gender distinction in the third person singular pronoun.

Subject Pronouns:

/ m'èf' / 'I got up' / m'íé' / 'We got up.'

/ èf' / 'You (sg.) got up.'

/ m'èf' / 'You (pl) got up.'

/ éf' / 'He, she, it got up.'

/ w'óf' / 'They got up.'

	singular	plural
1 st person	m'è-	m'íé-
2 nd person	è-	m'è-
3 rd person	é-	w'ó-

2. Good Afternoon!

Kosi: Ɔdó!

(Good) afternoon!

gòbò

respect form¹

Abla: Ɔdó, gòbò, ɔ́fɛámè ɛ́?

Good afternoon, how's everyone
at home?

dó

to sleep

Kosi: Ɔdó

Fine.²

Abla: Ɖèviáwó ɛ́?

How about the children?

Kosi: Wódó, Ɖèviáwó?

They're fine, and your children?

Abla: Wófɔ́, nyúíé.

They're fine.

Notes:

¹ / gòbò/ is a respect form used by a woman to a man, a commoner to a chief, or in any situation where one wishes to show respect.

² Literally, 'It (i.e. the household) slept well.'

(See Unit I -A1, Note 3.)

3. Good Evening!

Kosi: Fíě (Good) evening!

Kodzo: Fíě gbò, à-éámè ? Good evening, how's everyone at home?

Kosi: Édó. Fine.

Kodzo: Dèviáwó? How about the children?

Kosi: Wólì. They're fine.

Kodzo: Wódó nyúíéà? They're all well.

Kosi: E, srõwòà ^{srõwòà} your wife/ husband
 E, srõwòà dé? Yes, how's your wife?

Kodzo: Éí. She's fine.

Kosi: Dèviáwó? How about the children?

Kodzo: Wólì nyúíé. They're fine.

Supplementary Vocabulary

tɔwò	'your father'
nɔwò	'your mother'
/ tɔgbuí	'grandfather/ father (if elderly)'
mámá	'grandmother/ mother (if elderly)'
nɔvíwòwó	'your brothers/ sisters/ cousins'

Grammatical Drill

Patterned Response Drill:

1. Respond with the appropriate pronoun + / fɔ̃ /.

Examples. Srɔ̃woa de?	Éfɔ̃.
Deviawo de?	Wofɔ̃.
Afeame de?	Éfɔ̃. / Wofɔ̃.
Noviwowo de?	Wofɔ̃.
Mama de?	Éfɔ̃.
Nowo de?	Éfɔ̃.
Deviawo de?	Wofɔ̃.
Togbui de?	Éfɔ̃.

2. Respond with the appropriate pronoun + / li /.

Srowoa de?	Éli.
Noviwowo de?	Woli.
Towo de?	Éli.
Nowo de?	Éli.
Mama de?	Éli.

3. Respond with the appropriate pronoun + /dó/.

Mama de?	Édo.
Deviawo de?	Wodo.
Towo de?	Édo.
Srõwoa de?	Édo.
Afeame de?	Édo./ Wodo.

4. Respond with the appropriate pronoun + / fõ nyúíé/.

Togbui de?	Éfõ nyuie.
Nowo de?	Éfõ nyuie.
Srõwoa de?	Éfõ nyuie.
Noviwowo de?	Wofõ nyuie.
Deviawo de?	Wofõ nyuie.

5. Respond with the appropriate pronoun + / lĩ nyúíé/.

Afeame de?	Éli nyuie/ woli nyuie.
Nowo de?	Éli nyuie.
Togbui de?	Éli nyuie.
Mama de?	Éli nyuie.
Deviawo de?	Woli nyuie.

6. Respond with the appropriate pronoun + / dɔ nyúíé/.

Noviwowo ɔe?

Wodo nyuie.

Nowo ɔe?

Édo nyuie.

Srɔwòɔ ɔe?

Édo nyuie.

A'eame ɔe?

Édo nyuie./ Wodo nyuie.

Togbui ɔe?

Édo nyuie.

7. Respond with / ẽ / + the appropriate pronoun + /fɔ̃/.

Examples:

Éfɔ̃a?

Ẽ, éfɔ̃.

Éfɔ̃a?

Ẽ, mefɔ̃.

Éfɔ̃ nyuiea?

Ẽ, mefɔ̃.

Éfɔ̃a?

Ẽ, mefɔ̃.

Wofɔ̃a?

Ẽ, wofɔ̃.

Wofɔ̃ nyuiea?

Ẽ, wofɔ̃.

Éfɔ̃a?

Ẽ, éfɔ̃.

Miefɔ̃ nyuiea?

Ẽ, miefɔ̃.

8. Respond with /ẽ/ + the appropriate pronoun + /li/.

Wolia?	ẽ, woli.
Elia?	ẽ, meli.
Mielia?	ẽ, mieli.
Woli nyuiea?	ẽ, woli.
Elia?	ẽ, eli.

9. Respond with /ẽ/ + the appropriate pronoun + / dó/.

Miedoa?	ẽ, miedó.
Wodo nyuiea?	ẽ, wodo.
Edoa?	ẽ, medó.
Wodoa?	ẽ, wodo.

10. Respond with /ẽ/ + the appropriate pronoun + the verb used in the question.

Examples:

Ef3a?	ẽ, ef3.
Ef3a?	ẽ, mef3.
Ef3 nyuiea?	ẽ, mef3.
Edo nyuiea?	ẽ, medo.
Deviawo hã do nyuiea?	ẽ, wodo.

Edoa?	ẽ, medo.
Sr3woa f3a?	ẽ, ef3.
Edo nyuiea?	ẽ, edo.
Deviawo hã lia?	ẽ, woli.
Wof3 nyuiea?	ẽ, wof3.
Miedo nyuiea?	ẽ, miedo.

Question and Answer Drill:

Answer the question asked you by the instructor. Then ask another student in the class a question based on the same pattern. Continue in this manner until everyone has had a chance to ask and answer a question at least once.

1. Question with /dẽ/.

Example - Instructor : Afeame de?

Student: Efi .

Deviawo de?

2. Question with /-à/

Example - Instructor : Mielia?

Student: E,mieli.

Deviawo fi nyuiea?

Conversation Drill:

Improvise a conversation on the model of the dialogues in Unit I.

Unit II What's Your Name?

Dialogue A.

Kodzo: Mónì!	Morning!
Komfa: Mónì, èfǎà?	Morning, how are you?
Kodzo: È, mǎfǎ.	I'm fine, thanks.
ṣkó	name
ṣkǎwò	'your (sg.) name
Komfa: Nkǎwò dé?	What's your name?
ṣkǎnyè	my name
nyé	to be
Kodzo: ṣkǎnyè yǎnyé Kǎdzó. ¹	My name is Kodzo.

Notes:

¹The above usage of the pronominal prefix /yé-/ third person singular will be treated later in the grammar and is to be learned as an idiom.

Dialogue B.

dzèsí (ànyu)
àfétó yā (ànyu)
Komla: Ényó, Kofí, èdzèsí
àfétó yāà?

to know
this gentleman
Well, Kofi, do you know
this gentleman?

(àd
mèdzèsí
mèdzèsí
(nyè)mèdzèsí ò
éńkó
Kofi: Ò, nyèmèdzèsí ò. Éńkóqé?

no
I know
I know him
I don't know him.
his name
No I don't know him.
What's his name?

Komla: Éńkó yényé Kòdzó.

His name is Kodzo. (ànyu)

Kofi: Ényó, Kòdzó, èfó nyúíéà?

Well, Kodzo, how are you?

Kodzo: È, mèfó.

I'm fine thanks.

Dialogue C.

34

Komla: Èfɔ́à?

How are you?

Akuwa: È, mèfɔ́.

I'm fine, thanks.

Komla: Dèvɛ́áwó hɛ́ fɔ́à?

How are the children?

Akuwa: È, wɔ́fɔ́.

They're fine.

Komla: Èkɔ́wɔ́ dɛ́?

What's your name?

Akuwa: Ñkɔ́nyɛ yɛnyɛ Àkúwá.

My name is Akuwa. (wɛ́) f.

ã

aha!

dzi

to give birth to

wɔ́dzi

they gave birth to

wɔ́dzlɔ́

but they gave birth to

Kúdágbɛ́

Wednesday you (sg)

Komla: ã, Kúdágbɛ́ wɔ́dzlɔ́dà?

Aha, you were born on
Wednesday?

Akuwa: È.

Yes.

nyó

to be good/nice/OK

ɲ(ú)tó

very

Komla: Ènyó ɲtɔ́.

That's very nice.

Notes:

¹Ewe children are named according to the day of the week they are born on (See Unit II - Supplementary Vocabulary.)

Dialogue D

Kofi: Mónì!

Morning!

Yawa: Mónì sèè.

expression of concurrence
Morning!

Kofi: Mièfǒ nyúíéǎ?

How are you?

Yawa: È, miéfǒ.

We're fine, thanks.

Kofi: Mià ñkó ^{mià ñkó} qé?

your (pl.) name
What are your names?

^{xǒ}
xǒnyè

friend
my friend

Yawa: Ñǒnyè yényé Yáwā.
Xǒnyè há ñkó yényé Yáwā.

My name is Yawa. My friend's
name is Yawa too.

wódzimí
Yáwóǎqǎbè

they gave birth to you
Thursday (sg.)

Kofi: ǎ, Yáwóǎqǎbè wódzimíà?

Aha, you were born on Thursday.

ényó
ményó ò
ményóà

it is nice
it isn't nice
isn't it nice?

Yawa: È, ményóà?

Yes, isn't that nice?

Kofi: È, ényó.

Yes, it's fine.

Dialogue E

èdzèsí
mèdzèsí ò
mèdzèsíà
dètùgbùí yāwó

you (sg.) know
you (sg.) don't know
don't you (sg.) know
these young ladies

Kofi: Ényó, Kòmlá, mèdzèsí
dètùgbùí yāwóà?

Well, Kòmlá, don't you know
these young ladies?

mèdzèsíwó
nyèmédzèsíwó ò
wó ñkó

I know them
I don't know them
their name

Komla: Ò, nyèmédzèsíwó ò.
Wó ñkó qé?
wòàmèvèà kátá
wòàmèvèà kátá ñkó

No, I don't know them. What
are their names?
both
both's name

Kofi: wòàmèvèà kátá ñkó
yénýé Yāwā.

Both of them are named Yawa.

Komla: Á, Yāwóqágbè wóúzi
wòàmèvèà kátáà?

Aha, both of them were born
on Thursday?

Kofi: È.

Yes.

Komla: Ényó ñtós.

Very good.

Notes:

Object Pronouns:

/wódzìṁ	'They gave birth to me.'
/wódzìwò/	'They gave birth to you.'
/wódzìì/	'They gave birth to him,
/wódzìṁì/	'They ^{her} gave ^{it} birth to us.'
/wódzìṁì/	'They gave birth to you (pl).'
/wódzìwó/	'They gave birth to them.'

	singular	plural
1st person	-ṁ	-ṁí
2nd person	-wò	-ṁì
3rd person	-è*	-wó

/qù/ 'to eat'
/wódùì/ 'They ate it'

/nò/ 'to drink'
/wónèì/ 'They drank it.'

/dzì/ 'to give birth to'
/wódzìì/ 'They gave birth to.'

/flè/ 'to buy'
/wóflèì/ 'They bought it.'

/nyà/ 'to pursue'
/wónyè/ 'They pursued him.'

/tá/ 'to draw'
/wóté/ 'They drew it.'

/lũ/ 'to shave'
/wólũĩ/ 'They shaved it.'

/s/ 'to send'
/wódsè/ 'They sent him.'

*The abstract underlying form of the third person singular is generally considered to be /-è/ and is often written this way in the orthography. Note, however, that the actual sound is determined by the sound of the preceding vowel, i.e. /-e-/ ~~becomes~~

1. becomes /-ì/ after /u/, /o/, /i/, or /e/. In the last case, the preceding /c/ also becomes /i/.

2. becomes /-è/ after /o/. 54

3. contracts with a preceding /a/ to form /^xε/, where
- x=low, if /a/ has low tone.
 - x=high low, if /a/ has high tone.
4. is nasalized after a nasal sound.

Possessive Pronouns:

/ŋkónyè/		/míá ŋkó/	'our name'
/nyè' ŋkó/	'my name'		
/ŋkówò/		/míà ŋkó/	'your (pl) name'
/wò' ŋkó/	'your name'		
/éŋkó/	'his her, its name'	/wó ŋkó/	'their name'

	singular	plural
1st person	nye	míá
2nd person	wò	míà
3rd person	é-	wó

Except for the possessive pronouns of the first and second persons singular, the possessive always precedes the possessed noun.

The possessive pronouns of the first and second persons singular normally follow the possessed noun if the latter is

- a kinship term: /tónyè/ 'my father'
/nòwò/ 'your mother'
- /xò / 'a friend': /xónye/ 'my friend'
/xòwò/ 'your friend'

and in a few other cases to be noted later.

Otherwise, the possessive pronouns of the first and second persons singular may either precede or follow the possessed noun. Both have low tone when they follow the possessed noun, but low high tone when they precede it.

Supplementary Vocabulary

Days of the week and associated names:

Days of the week	Male Names	Female Names
Kòsídágbè 'Sunday'	Kòsɪ	Àkòsíwá
Dzódágbè 'Monday'	Kòdzó	Àdzówá
Bládágbè 'Tuesday'	Kòmlá	Àblá
Kúdágbè 'Wednesday'	Kòkú	Àkúwá
Yáwódágbè 'Thursday'	Yàwò	Yáwá
Fídágbè 'Friday'	Kòfí	Àfíwá
Mémliqágbè 'Saturday'	Kòmí	Àmá

Grammatical Drill

Patterned Response Drill:

Respond with the pattern given in the example, substituting for the underlined form(s) and changing the word order where necessary.

1. Substitute the appropriate form of the subject pronoun.

Example: Edzesi afeto yaa?	È, mēdzesii.
Drill: Edzesi afeto yaa?	È, édzesii.
Miedzesi afeto yaa?	È, mīdzesii.
Mīdzesi afeto yaa?	È, mīdzesii.
Tagbui dzesi afeto yaa?	È, édzesii.
Noviwowo dzesi afeto yaa?	È, wodzesii.
Wodzesi afeto yaa?	È, wodzesii.

In the following drills, substitute the appropriate form of the object pronoun.

2. Example: Mēdzesi detugbui yawoa?	O, nyemedzesiwó o.
Drill: Mēdzesi afeto yaa?	O, nyemedzesii o.
Mēdzesima?	O, nyemedzesiwò o.
Mēdzesimía?	O, nyemedzesimì o.

Mèdzesiwóa?

O, nyemedzesiwó o.

Mèdzesi deviawoa?

O, nyemedzesiwó o.

Mèdzesiia?

O, nyemedzesi o.

3. Example: Édzesi srōwoaa?

Ē, édzesi.

Drill: Édzesiia?

Ē, édzesi.

Édzesi noviwowoa?

Ē, édzesiwó.

Édzesimíá?

Ē, édzesimí. /
Ē, édzesimí.

Édzesiwóa?

Ē, édzesiwó

Édzesiwòa?

Ē, édzesim.

Édzesima?

Ē, édzesiwò.

Édzesimíá?

Ē, édzesimí.

Édzesi maaá?

Ē, édzesii.

4. Example: Nkonye yenye Akuwa.

Ā, Kuḍagbe wodziwòa?

Drill: Xōnye nko yenye Akuwa.

Ā, Kuḍagbe wodziia?

Nkonye yenye Akuwa,

Ā, Kuḍagbe wodzimíá

Xōnye hā nko yenye Akuwa.

Nkonye yenye Koku.

Ā, Kuḍagbe wodziwòa?

Enko yenye Koku.

Ā, Kuḍagbe wodziia?

Enko yenye Koku. Exō
hā nko yenye Koku.

Ā, Kuḍagbe wodziwóa?

5. Example: Enko yenye Yawaa?

Ē, wodzii Yawoḍagbe.

Drill: Exō nko yenye Yawaa?

Ē, wodzii Yawoḍagbe.

Woamevea Katā nko
yenye Yawaa?

Ē, wodziwó Yawoḍagbe.

Nkwo yenye Yawaa?

Ē, wodzim Yawoḍagbe.
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Nowo nko yenye Yawaa? 57

Ē, wodzii Yawoḍagbe.

In the following drills, substitute the appropriate form of the possessive pronoun, changing the word order where necessary.

6. Example: Nowo nko de?

Drill: Nkowo de?

Xõwo nko de?

Enko de?

Enko yenye Abia.

Nkonye yenye Abia /
Nye nko yenye Abia.

Enko yenye Abia.

Enko yenye Abia.

7. Example: Exõ nko de?

Drill: Xõwo nko de?

Uó xõ nko de?

Komla xõ nko de?

Mia xõ nko de?

Exõ nko yenye Kofi.

Xõnye nko yenye Kofi.

Wó xõ nko yenye Kofi.

Exõ nko yenye Kofi.

Mia xõ nko yenye Kofi.

8. Example: Èdzesi wó toa?

Drill: Èdzesi tonyea?

Èdzesi mia toa?

Èdzesi deviawo toa?

Èdzesi wó toa?

O, nyemedzesi wó to o.

O, nyemedzesi towo o.

O, nyemedzesi mia to o.

O, nyemedzesi wó to o.

O, nyemedzesi wó to o.

9. Example: Wodzii Memliqagbe.

Drill: Wodzim Memliqagbe.

Wodzimí Memliqagbe.

Wodzi nonye Memliqagbe.

Wodziwó Memliqagbe.

Wodzi woamevea katã

Memliqagbe.

Ã, enko yenye Amaa?

Ã, nkowo yenye Amaa?

Ã, mia nko yenye Amaa?

Ã, enko yenye Amaa?

Ã, wó nko yenye Amaa?

Ã, wó nko yenye Amaa?

10. Substitute the appropriate day of the week.

Example: Nkonye yen e Akuwa.	Ã, <u>Kudagbe</u> wodziwòa?
Drill: Nkonye yenye Abla.	Ã, Bladagbe wodziwòa?
Nkonye yenye Adzowa.	Ã, Dzodagbe wodziwòa?
Nkonye yenye Aaa.	Ã, Memlidagbe wodziwòa?
Nkonye yenye Afiwa.	Ã, Fidagbe wodziwòa?
Nkonye yenye Akosiwa.	Ã, Kosidagbe wodziwòa?
Nkonye yenye Yawa.	Ã, Yawodagbe wodziwòa?

Question and Answer Drill:

Answer the question asked you by the instructor. Then ask another student in the class a question based on the same pattern. Continue in this manner until everyone has had a chance to ask and answer a question at least once.

- Example -- Instructor: Nkwo de?
Student: Nko nye yenye Bob.
Mia nko de?
- Example -- Instructor: Bob, `edzesi detugbui yawoa?
Student: E, medzesiwó.
Miedzesi afeto yaa?

Conversation Drill:

1. Introduce yourself to someone.
2. Introduce two people to each other.

Unit III

Where do you come from?

When did you arrive?

Dialogue A.

- (à)lóké¹ how?
 àlókéé^{1,2} how is it?
 Yawo: Àlókéé, mièfú nyúíéà? Well, how are you? ³
- wò you (sq.) ⁴
 Yawo: È, wò há èfúà? Fine, how are you?
- tsó to come from
 (à)fí place
 kà ² what? / which?
 (à)fíkà ¹ what place? / where?
 Yawo: È, mèfú. Fíkà miètsó? ¹ I'm fine, thanks.
 Where do you come from?
- Yawo: Mìetso Kpalimè. We come from Kpalime.
- vá dó to arrive
 èkàxí ¹ when?
 Yawo: Èkàxí mièvá dó? ¹ When did you arrive?
- égbè today
 Yawo: Mièvá dó égbè. We arrived today.
- Yawo: Ényó ntó. Mìà nkó dé? Very good. What are your names?
- Yawo: Nkónyé yényé Yáwā. My name is Yawa.
 Xsnyè há nkó yényé Yáwā. My friend's name is Yawa too.

Yawo: Ǻ, Yáwóǵǵbè wóǵzímǻǻ? Aha, ycu were born on Thursday?

Yawa: Ǻ. Yes.

Yawo: Ǻnyò nǻtǻ. Wóǵzǻ
nyè hǻ Yáwóǵǵbè. I / me⁴
Very good. I was born on
Thursday too.

Notes:

/ǻkǻǻí /	'when?'
/ǻkǻǻí mǻèǻǻ dó /	'When did you arrive?'
/ǻléké /	'how?'
/ǻléké yé /	'How is it?'
/kǻ /	'what, which?'
/ǻfíkǻ /	'what place?, where?'
/ǻfíkǻ mǻètsó /	'Where do you come from?'

Note that a question containing a question word (e.g. 'which?', 'what?', 'where?', 'when?') always ends with low tone. If the last syllable of the question does not have inherent low tone, a low tone is added.

The base forms of the question words are those found in non-final position (e.g. /ǻkǻǻí .../, /ǻléké .../, / ... kǻ.../). When final (e.g. in isolation), those ending in high tone add the low question tone (See above), but in those ending in mid tone, the mid tone is replaced by the low question tone.

2 /kǻrí yé /
/kǻfíé / } 'It's Kofi.'

/ǻéǻíǻwó yé /
/ǻéǻíǻwóé / } 'It's the children.'

/àlékó yé` /
/àlékéé` /

'How is it?'

The above sentence type consists of a predicate followed by a subject. The predicate consists of a noun phrase or question word; the subject consists of a third person singular pronoun of the form /yé/ (See Unit III - A, Note 4.) or /-é/ (See Unit I - B, Subject Pronouns.)

3 Literally: 'How is it, did you (pl.) get up well?'

4 Independent Pronouns:

/nyè hã ɛ́fɔ́/ 'I got up too' /niáwó hã miéɛ́fɔ́/ 'we got up too'
/wò hã ɛ́fɔ́/ 'you (sg.) got up too' /niáwó hã miéɛ́fɔ́/ 'you (pl.) got up too'
/yé hã fɔ́/ 'he got up too' /wóáwó hã wóɛ́fɔ́/ 'they got up too'

	singular	plural
1st person	nyè	niáwó
2nd person	wò	niáwó
3rd person	yé	wóáwó

The independent pronouns are used when the pronoun is to be emphasized. They may be used as either subject or object. As subject, they do not directly precede the verb, but are separated from it, e.g. by /hã/ in the third person singular and /hã/ + the corresponding subject pronoun in the other persons.

Dialogue B.

Komla: Míédzèsí dètùgbùí
yawóà?

Do you know these young ladies?

míédzèsí
mímédzèsí
tówó
fíka tówó

we know
we don't know
tribesmen / citizens
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citizens of what place?

Kofi: Ò, mímédzèsíwó ò. Fíkē No, we don't know them. What
tṣwó wónyé? country are they from?

Améríkà-tṣwó citizens of America
tsò yesterday/tomorrow
tsò fìě yesterday evening

Komla: Améríkà-tṣwó wónyé. They're Americans.
Wóvā dṣ tsò fìě. They arrived yesterday evening.

Kofi: Enyó nṣtṣ. Alókée, mìèfṣ Very good. Well, how are you?
nyúíéà?

Jane: Ē, mífṣ. Mìàwò há We're fine, thanks. How are you?
mìèfṣà?

Kofi: Ē, mífṣ. We're fine.

Notes:

Negative:

/dèviáwó fṣ/ 'The children got up.'
/dèviáwó mífṣ ò/ 'The children didn't get up.'

/dèviáwó fṣà/ 'Did the children get up?'
/dèviáwó mífṣà/ 'Didn't the children get up?'

The negative is formed by placing /mé-/ after the subject
and before the predicate, and, except in yes - no questions,
/ò/ at the end of the sentence.

→ /nyèméfṣ ò/ 'I didn't get up' /míméfṣ ò/ 'we didn't get up'
/mèfṣ ò/ 'you (sg.) didn't get up' /míméfṣ ò/ 'you (pl.) didn't
up' get up'
/mèfṣ ò/ 'he didn't get up' /wóméfṣ ò/ 'they didn't get up'

Dialogue C.

Bob:	Ŋd ɔ!	Good afternoon!
Kodzo:	Ŋd ɔ, ɛf ɔa?	Good afternoon, how are you?
Bob:	È, mèf ɔ.	I'm fine, thanks.
Kodzo:	Fika tɔwó nɛnyé ^{1,2}	What country are you from?
Bob:	Améríkà tɔwó mɛnyé. ^{1,2}	I'm an American.
Kodzo:	Ényó ŋt ɔ. Yèka, í nèvá dɔ? ²	Very good. When did you arrive?
Bob:	Mèvá dɔ Mémlídagbè.	I arrived Saturday.
Kodzo:	Ŋk ɔwò dɛ?	What's your name?
Bob:	Ŋk ɛnyè yényé Bòb.	My name is Bob.

¹ /tɔwó/ 'tribesmen, citizens' is used in the plural even when it refers to only one person.

² With the exception of sentences with /dɛ/ (See Unit I - A2, Note 2) and the sentence type described in Unit III - B, Note 1, all of the sentences treated so far have had the basic word order subject + predicate, e.g. in /míétsó Kpálímè/ 'We come from Kpalime.' /míé-/ 'we' is the subject and /tsó Kpálímè/ 'come from Kpalime' is the predicate.

An element other than the subject may precede the subject if it is the logical topic of discourse. Three instances of this are found in the following examples:

1. In questions beginning with question words, the latter precede the subject.

/Yèkayí nèvá dɔ/ 'When did you arrive?'
/fíkà tɔwó nɛnyé/ literally: 'What place's citizens are you?'

2. In affirmative yes-no questions with an expression of time or place, the latter precedes the subject if it is the topic of discourse (but not if the verb is /lè/ 'to be' -- see Unit III - E).

/Kúdagbè wódzìwòà/ 64 You were born on Wednesday?

3. In affirmative sentences with /nyé/ 'to be', the predicate noun phrase precedes the subject if it is the topic of discourse:

/Améríkà tśwó mēnyé/ 'I'm an American.'

/èvá dǒ Mémliǎgbè/ 'You (sg.) arrived Saturday.'

/yèkàí nēvá dǒ/ 'When did you (sg.) arrive?'

/étsó Lòmè/ 'He comes from Lome.'

/fíkā wòtsó/ 'Where does he come from?'

When, in the affirmative, an element other than the subject precedes the subject pronouns of the second or third persons singular, /è-/ 'you (sg.)' is replaced by /nè-/ and /é-/ 'he, she, it' is replaced by /wò-/. In some dialects /nè-/ may also be used initially, in which case it is considered somewhat more formal than /è-/. .

Dialogue D.

Kodzo: Àlékéé, Kòmíà, èdzèsí
àfétó yāà?

Kòmíà: Ò, nyémédzèsí ò.
Fíkā wòtsó? ¹

Kodzo: Ètsó Àmériká.

Kòmíà: Yèkàí wòvā dó? ¹

Kodzo: Évā dó Mémííqágbè.

Kòmíà: Ényó ñtó. Èñkó dé?

Kodzo: Bòb.

Kòmíà: Lékéé, Bòb, èfó nyúíèà?

Bob: È, mètó. Wò há èfóà?

Kòmíà: È, mètó nyúíé.

Well, Komla, do you know
this gentleman?

No, I don't know him.

Where does he come from?

He comes from Amerika.

When did he arrive.

He arrived Saturday.

Very good. What's his name?

Bob.

Well, Bob, how are you?

I'm fine thanks. How are you?

I'm fine, thanks

Notes:

¹ See Unit III - C, Note 2.

Dialogue E.

	dèkákpuĩ	young man
Kosi:	Dèkákpuĩ, fíkā nètso'?	Young man, where do you come from?
Komla:	Métso Lòmè.	I come from Lome.
Kosi:	dèkàíí nèvá d'?	When did you arrive?
Komla:	Mèvá d'ó Fídágoè.	I arrived Friday.
∴	dzè	to lodge/to put up
Kosi:	Fíkā nèdzè?	Where have you put up?
	gbède	blacksmith
	gbó	side/vicinity
	gbèdé gbó	at the blacksmith's ¹
Komla:	Mèdzè gbèdé gbó.	I've put up at the blacksmith's
	lè	to be ²
	mógá	main street
	dzí	surface
	mógá dzí	on the main street ¹
Kosi:	Mélè mógá dzíà?	Isn't that on the main street?
Komla:	È.	Yes.

Notes:

¹ /gbèdé gbó/ 'at the blacksmith's'
(literally: 'the blacksmith's vicinity')

/mógá dzí/ 'on the main street'
(literally: 'the main street's surface')

Ewe nouns of place (e.g. /gbó/ 'side, vicinity', /dzí/ 'surface') are often translated into English as prepositions.

² /Ámériká tówó mènýé/ 'I'm an American.'

/Nkónýè yénýé Ákúwā/ 'My name is Akuwa.'

/élè mógá dzí/ 'It's on the main street.'

/élè nyúíé/ 'He's well.'

The verb /nyé/ answers the questions: 'who is?', 'what is?'

The verb /lè/ answers the questions: 'where is?', 'when is?',

'how is?'

Transformation Drill:

Put the following sentences into the negative.

Examples: -Deviawo fɔ̃.

Deviawo fɔ̃a?

Nefɔ̃.

-Deviawo mefɔ̃ o.

Deviawo mefɔ̃a?

Nyemefɔ̃ o.

Nyemetso Lome o.

Detugbui yawo metso Lome o.

Tonye metso Lome o.

Métso Lome o.

Mímetso Lome o.

Wometso Lome o.

1. Metso Lome.

-Datugbui yawo tso Lome.

Tonye tso Lome.

Étso Lome.

Míetso Lome.

Wotso Lome.

2. Medzesii.

Èdzesii.

Édzesii.

Mama dzesii.

Míedzesii.

Wodzesii.

Abla dzesii.

Míedzesii

Nyemedzesii o.

Mèdzesii o.

Médzesii o.

Mama médzesii o.

Mímedzesii o.

Womedzesii o.

Abla médzesii o.

Mímedzesii o.

3. Míedzesi detugbui yawoa?

Srɔ̃woa dzesi detugbui yawoa?

Míedzesi detugbui yawoa?

Èdzesi detugbui yawoa?

Noviwowo dzesi detugbui yawoa?

Édzesi detugbui yawoa?

Mímedzesi detugbui yawoa?

Srɔ̃woa medzesi detugbui yawoa?

Mímedzesi detugbui yawoa?

Medzesi detugbui yawoa?

Noviwowo medzesi detugbui yawoa?

Médzesi detugbui yawoa?

Mèdzesi detugbui yawoa?

Wodzesi detugbui yawoa?

Nyemedzesi detugbui yawoa?

Womedzesi detugbui yawoa?

4. Èfɔ nyuiea?

Deviawo hã fɔ nyuiea?

Wofɔ nyuiea?

Miawo hã miefɔ nyuiea?

Togbui fɔ nyuiea?

Èfɔ nyuiea?

Méfɔ nyuiea?

Deviawo hã mefɔ nyuiea?

Womefɔ nyuiea?

Miawo hã mímefɔ nyuiea?

Tobui méfɔ nyuiea?

Méfɔ nyuiea?

Patterned Response Drill:

Respond with the pattern given in the example, substituting for the underlined form(s).

In the following drills, substitute the appropriate form of the independent pronoun.

1. Example: Wodzim Yawoɖagbe.

ɣɛkaxi wodziwò?

Drill: ɣɛkaxi wodzi nɔviwɔwò?

ɣɛkaxi wodzi nɔwò?

ɣɛkaxi wodzimì?

ɣɛkaxi wodziwò?

2. Example: Nɔnye nko yenve Yawa.

Drill: Nɔnye yenye Yawa.

Xɔnye nko yenye Yawa.

Wodzi nye hã Yawoɖagbe.

Wodzi woawo hã Yawoɖagbe.

Wodzi ye hã Yawoɖagbe.

Wodzi miawo hã Yawoɖagbe

Wodzi nye hã Yawoɖagbe.

A, Yawoɖagbe wódzi ye hãa?

A, Yawoɖagbe wódzi wo hãa?

A, Yawoɖagbe wódzi ye hãa?

Nkɔnye yenye Yawa.

Xɔnye nkɔ yenye Yawa.

Woamevea kata nkɔ yenye
Yawa.

Ä, Yawoɖagbe mɔwɔ
mɔwɔ hãa?

Ä, Yawoɖagbe wɔɖzi
woawo hãa?

In the following drills, substitute the appropriate form of the independent pronoun, and where necessary, the corresponding form of the subject pronoun.

3. Example: Afetɔ ya tso Amerika.
Fika mɛtso?

Mɔwɔ hã mɛtso
Amerika.

Drill: Fika netso?

Nye hã motso Amerika.

Fika xɔwo tso?

Ye hã tso Amerika.

Fika detugbui yawo tso?

Woawo hã wotso Amerika.

Fika mɛtso?

Mɔwɔ hã mɛtso Amerika.

4. Example: Amerika towo wɔnye.

Ä, Amerika woawo hã
wotsoa?

Drill: Amerika towo detugbui
yawo nye

Ä, Amerika woawo hã
wotsoa?

Amerika towo Bob nye.

Ä, Amerika ye hã tsoa?

Amerika towo wɔnye.

Ä, Amerika ye hã tsoa?

Amerika towo mɛnye.

Ä, Amerika mɔwɔ hã
mɛtsoa?

Amerika towo menye.

Ä, Amerika wo hã ne
tsoa?

In the following drills, substitute the appropriate form of the subject pronoun.

5. Example: Fika towo kɔmla nye? Togo towo wɔnye
 Drill: Fika towo afeto"ya nye? Togo towo wɔnye.
 Fika towo nenye? Togo towo menye.
 Fika towo detugbui . Togo towo wɔnye.
 yawo nye
 Fika towo xɔwo nye? Togo towo wɔnye
 Fika towo mɛ nye? Togo towo mɛnye.

6. Example: Metso Kpalime. Feka fi neva do?
 Drill: Afeto ya tso Kpalime. Feka fi wɔva do?
 Metso Kpalime. Feka fi nɔva do?
 Mɛtso Kpalime. Feka fi mɛva do?
 Detugbui yawo tso Feka fi wɔva do?
 Kpalime.
 Xɔnye tso Kpalime. Feka fi wɔva do?

7. Example: Mɛva do egbe. Fika mɛdze?
 Mɛva do egbe. Fika mɛdze?
 Kadzo va do egbe. Fika wɔdze?
 Nɔviwovo va do egbe. Fika wɔdze?
 Mɛva do egbe. Fika nedze?
 Xɔnye va do egbe. Fika wɔdze?

In the following drills, substitute the appropriate form of the subject pronoun + the negative prefix.

8. Example: Èdzesi afeto yaa? O, Nyemdzesii o.
 Drill: Kofi dzesi afeto yaa? O, mēdzesii o.
 Nye hã medzesi afeto O, mēdzesii o.
 yaa?
 Noviwowo dzesi afeto O, womedzesii o.
 yaa?
 Towo dzesi afeto yaa? O, mēdzesii o.
 Èdzesi afeto yaa? O, nyemedzesii o.
 Miedzesi afeto yaa? O, mīmedzesii o.
 Miedzesi afeto yaa? O, mīmēdzesii o. /
 O, mīmedzesii o.
9. Example: Gbede gbo nedzea? O, nyemedze gbede gbo o.
 Drill: Gbede gbo wēdzea? O, wōmedze gbede gbo o.
 Gbede gbo wēdzea? O, mēdze gbede gbo o.
 Gbede gbo nedzea? O, nyemedze gbede gbo o.
 Gbede gbo mīedzea? O, mīmedze gbede gbo o.
 Gbede gbo Kofi dzea? O, mēdze gbede gbo o.
10. Example: Mīmetso Lomea? O, mīmetso Lome o..
 Drill: Srōwoa metso Lomea? O, mētso Lome o.
 Mētso Lomea? O, mētso Lome o.
 Wō hã mētso Lomea? O, nyemetso Lome o.
 Mīmetso Lomea? O, mīmetso Lome o.
 Betugbui yawo metso . O, wometso Lome o.
 Lomea?

11. Example: M̀medzesi detugbui O, m̀medzesiwó o.
yawoa?
- Drill: M̀medzesi detugbui. O m̀medzesiwó o. /
O m̀medzesiwó o.
- Nyemedzesi detugbui O, m̀medzesiwó o.
yawoa?
- Nyemedzesi detugbui O, m̀medzesiwó o.
yawoa?
- Wo hã m̀medzesi detugbui O, nyemedzesiwó o.
yawoa?
- M̀awo hã m̀medzesi O, m̀medzesiwó o.
detugbui yawoa?
- Mama m̀medzesi detugbui O, m̀medzesiwó o.
yawoa?
- Noviwowo medzesi O, womedzesiwó o.
detugbui yawoa?
- M̀medzesi detugbui O, m̀medzesiwó o.
yawoa?

12. Example: Amerika towo wònye A, m̀etso Fransea?
- Drill: Amerika towo menyẽ. A, m̀etso Fransea?
- Amerika towo Bob nye. A, m̀etso Fransea?
- Amerika towo m̀ienye. A, m̀metso Fransea?
- Amerika towo wònye. A, m̀etso Fransea?
- Amerika towo wónye. A, wometso Fransea?

Question and Answer Drill:

Answer the question asked you by the instructor. Then ask another student in the class a question based on the same pattern. Continue in this manner until everyone has had a chance to ask and answer a question at least once.

1. Example-- Instructor: Fika Yawa tso?

Student: Étso Kpalime.
 Fika Komla tso:

2 Example-- Instructor: Yekaɣi neva do?

Student: Meva do Fiqagbe.
 Yekaɣi detugbui yawo va do?

3. Example-- Instructor: Fika towo Bob nye?

Student: Amerika towo wònye
 Fika towo mienye?

Conversation Drill:

1. Introduce yourself to someone. Ask him where he's from and when he arrived.
2. Introduce a Peace Corps Volunteer to an Ewe. Explain that he's from America and that he arrived yesterday.

Unit IV What kind of work do you do?

Dialogue A

- Kosi: Bèkákpūī, fíkā nètso? Young man, where do you
come from?
- Komla: Mètso Lòmè. I came from Lome.
- Kosi: Dèkàγí nèvá dō? When did you arrive?
- Komla: Mèvá dō Fídágbè. I arrived Friday.
- Kosi: Wécéžž Welcome
- Komla: Yòó Thank you.¹
- | | |
|--------------|------------------------------------|
| dō | work |
| dō kà | what (kind of)
work |
| wò | to do/to make |
| dō kà nèvò | what (kind of)
work did you do? |
| dō kà nèvònà | what (kind of)
work do you do? |
- Kosi: Dō kà nèvònà? What kind of work do you do?
- bríklà² mason
- Komla: Bríklà mènýé. I'm a mason.

Notes:

¹/yòó/ is translated as 'O.K.' in most contexts.

²From the English: bricklayer.

Dialogue B

Edward: Mónì, tógbúí.¹

Good morning, chief.

Togbui: Mónì, èfɔ̀à?

Good morning, how are you?

Edward: È, mɛfɔ̀.

I'm fine, thnaks.

Togbui: Fíkā tówó nɛnyɛ?

What country are you from?

Edward: Ámériká tówó mɛnyé.

I'm an American.

Togbui: Dó ká nɛwònà?

What kind of work do you do?

núfíálá

teacher

Edward: Núfíálá mɛnyé.

I'm a teacher.

óò

oh!

Togbui: Óò! Ényó ɣ́tɔ́. Nkówò
qé?Oh! Very good. What's
your name?

Edward: Nkónyè yényé Édward.

My name is Edward.

fíá

to teach

(è)nú²

thing

núkà

what thing?/
what?

núkà nɛfíá,

what did you(sg)
teach?

núkà nɛfíánà

what do you (sg)
teach?

Togbui: Núkà nɛfíánà ?

What do you teach?

mɛfíá

I taught

mɛfíáná

I teach

Nlísìgbè

English

Edward: Mɛfíáná Nlísìgbè.

I teach English.

(à)mè

person/ human
being

wò àmè

to be kind³

híá

to need

Togbui: Ényó ńtós. Èwò àmè
ńtós. Míéhíá nífíálá.

Very good. You're veyy
kind. We need teahers.

vá

to come

mèváà

didn't you(sg)

come?

màváà

won't you(sg)

come?

qù

to eat

míéqù nú

we ate⁴

míáqù nú

we will eat⁴

T. continues:

Ényó. Lékéè, Édward,
màvá gbònyé tsò fíé
míáqù núà?

O.K. Well, Edward, won't
you come to my place
tomorrow evening for
dinner?⁵

fàà

sure/ certainly

mèvá

I came

màvá

I will come

bíá

to ask

(è)ńó²

way/ street/ road

bíá mó

to ask permission

Edward: È, fàà. Màvá. Mèbíá
mó, tógbúí.

Yes, sure. I'll come.
(May) I ask permission
(to go), chief?

dógò

to meet

míédógò

we met

míádógò

we will meet

Togbui: Ényó, míádógò tsò.

O.K., see you tomorrow,⁶

Notes:

¹A chief is addressed with /tógbúí/ (See Unit I--Supplementary Vocabulary) even if he is a young man.

²When spoken in isolation, nouns of one syllable are usually prefixed by /è-/ , e.g., /ènú/ 'thing', /èmó/ 'way, street, road', /ènò/ 'mother', /èxò/ 'friend.

If the root of such a noun begins with high tone (e.g. /nú/, /mó/, /xò/), the low toned /è-/ prefix contrasts with the final vowel(s)--symbolized /V/--of a preceding verb to form /Ṽ/, where x = the original tone of /V/.

/bíá/ 'to ask'

/èmó/ 'way, street, road'

/bíá mó/ 'to ask permission' (literally: 'to ask for the way')

/fíá/ 'to teach'

/ènú/ 'thing'

/fíá nú/ literally: 'to teach a thing' (See Note 4)

/qù/ 'to eat'

/ènú/ 'thing'

/qù nú/ literally: 'to eat a thing' (See Note 4)

By analogy, a high toned verb optionally becomes high low before some nouns beginning in high tone which do not have the /è-/ prefix.

/míétsó Kpálímè/ } 'We come from Kpalime.'
/míétsô Kpálímè/ }

This also occurs sometimes when the noun is preceded by a high toned word which is not a verb, e.g.:

/wódzì nyè há Yáwóqágbè/ } literally: 'They gave birth
/wódzì nyè há Yáwóqágbè/ } to me too on Thursday.'

Except in the above cases, a non-initial /è-/ prefix is simply elided, e.g.:

/ənò/ 'mother'
 /èdzèsí nònyèà/ 'Do you know my mother?'

- 3 /wò àmè/ 'to be kind, to be human'
 (literally: 'to make a human')
 /wò tsì/ 'to be watery'
 (literally: 'to make water')

In expressions like the above, the verb /wò/ 'to do, to make' + a following noun is translated into English as 'to be' + an adjective.

- 4 /míéqù nú/ 'We ate' (literally: 'We will eat a thing.'
 /míéfíà nú/ 'We taught' (literally: 'We will teach a thing.'

Many verbs translated into English as intransitive verbs are actually transitive in Ewe. If they lack a definite object, they take the indefinite object /nú/ 'thing'.

- 5 Literally: 'won't you come to my place tomorrow evening (in order that) we should eat?'

- 6 Literally: 'we will meet tomorrow.'

Dialogue C

Komi: Àlékéè, Kòsì, èdzèsí Well, Kosi, do you know
àfétó yāà? this gentleman?

Kosi: Ò, nyèmédzèsí ò. No, I don't know him.

Komi: Núfíálá wònyé. He's a teacher.

Kosi: Óò! Ényó nùtós. Oh! Very good.

dzídùdùà the government
éfé dzídùdùà his government
dó to send
éfiá he taught
áfiá he will teach

Komi: Éfé dzídùdùà dóè. His government sent him.
Áfiá Nlísìgbè He's going to teach the
qèvíáwó.² children English.

Frànsègbè

French

Kosi: Áfiá Frànsègbè há Is he going to teach them
wòà?² French too?

méfiá ò he didn't teach
máfiá ò he will not teach
kò only
Nlísìgbè kò wòfiá he only taught
English
Nlísìgbè kò wòáfiá he will only
teach English

Komi: Ò, máfiáwó Frànsègbè ò. No, he's not going to
Nlísìgbè kò wòífiáwó. teach them French. He'll
Ámèrikà tówóé. only teach them English.
He's an American.³

éfé ñkó¹

his name

Kosi: Ényó nùtós. Éfé ñkó qé? Very good. What's his
name?

Komi: Édward.

Edward.

Kosi: Àlékéè, Édward, èfɔ́
nyúíéà?

Well, Edward, how are you?

Edward: È, mèfɔ́.

I'm fine, thanks.

lòò

interjection for
calling someone's
attention

mímévàà

didn't you(pl)
come?

mímávàà

won't you(pl)
come?

àfémè

home

míáfé áfémè

our home

égbè fíé

this evening³

Kosi: Wèézɔ́ lòò. Lékéè,
Édward--lékéè, Kòmí,
mímává míáfé áfémè
égbè fíé mìádù núà?

Welcome. Well, Edward--well,
Komi, won't you come to
our house this evening
for dinner?

mìèvá

we came

mìává

we will come

Komi: Fàà, mìává.

Sure, we'll come.

míágàdógò

we will meet again

Kosi: Ényó, míágàdógò.

Good, see you later.

Komi: Yòó.

O.K.

Notes:

¹ /Jóhnsòn fɛ dzídùdùà/	'Johnson's government'
/ɛfɛ dzídùdùà/	'his government'
/mɪáfɛ dzídùdùà/	'our government'
/mɪàfɛ dzídùdùà/	'your(pl) government'
/wófɛ dzídùdùà/	'their government'

but:

/nyɛ dzídùdùà/	'my government'
/ɔ dzídùdùà/	'your(sg) government'

Note that, except for the possessive pronouns of the first and second persons singular, the possessive noun or pronoun always precedes the possessed noun (See Unit II-E, Possessive Pronouns.) and is usually separated from it by the possessive marker /fɛ/.

/fɛ/ is omitted:

1. before nouns of kinship and nationality:

/Kòfí nɔ/	'Kofi's mother'
/wó tó/	'their father'
/Ámɛríkà tówó/	'citizens of America'
/fíkà tówó/	'citizens of what place'

2. before /xɔ̃/ 'friend'

/ɛxɔ̃/	'his friend'
/wó xɔ̃/	'their friend'

3. before nouns of place (See Unit II-B, Note 4):

/gbɛdɛ gbó/	'at the blacksmith's'
	(literally: 'the blacksmith's vicinity)
/mógá dzí/	'on the main street'
	(literally: 'the main street's surface')

4. in a few other cases to be noted later.

/fɛ/ is optional:

1. before /ɲkɔ/ 'name':

/ɛɲkɔ/ } 'his name'
 /ɛfɛ ɲkɔ/ }

2. before /áfémè/ 'home'

/míá fémè/ } 'our home'
 /míáfɛ áfémè/ }

If a noun beginning with /à/ is preceded by a possessive noun or pronoun with or without /fɛ/, /à/ becomes /á/:

/nyɛ áfémè/ 'my home'
 /wò áfémè/ 'your(sg) home'

When directly preceded by /é-/ 'his, her, its', /míá/ 'our', /míà/ 'your(pl)' or a possessive noun, this /á/ is elided in normal speech:

/éfémè/ 'his home'
 /míá fémè/ 'our home'
 /míà fémè/ 'your(pl) home'
 /núfiálá fémè/ 'the teacher's home'

When directly preceded by /wó/ 'their', the /á/ is optionally elided:

/wó áfémè/ } 'their home'
 /wó fémè/ }

If /á/ is directly preceded by /fɛ/, the /é/ of /fɛ/ is optionally elided:

/míáfɛ áfémè/ } 'our home'
 /míáfáfémè/ }

If a noun beginning with /è-/ is preceded by a possessive, the /è-/ is elided (See Unit IV-B, Note 2.):

/.
/éfé dɔ/ 'his work'

²/áfíá Nlísìgbè dèvíáwó/ 'He's going to teach the children English.'

/áfíá Nlísìgbèwó/ 'He's going to teach them
/áfíáwó Nlísìgbè/ English.'

The direct object precedes the indirect object if the latter is a noun. If the indirect object is a pronoun, it may either precede or follow the direct object.

³Literally: 'It's an American.' See Unit III-A, Note 3.

Future Tense:

/dèvíáwó áfɔ́/ 'The children will get up.'

The future tense is formed by placing /á-/ 'future tense indicator' before the verb stem and after the subject or, in the negative, after the subject + the negative prefix (the various changes in the pronominal prefixes having already been made--see Unit III-B, Negative).

/màfɔ́/	'I will get up'
/àfɔ́/	'you(sg) will get up'
/áfɔ́/	'he will get up'
/míáfɔ́/	'we will get up'
/màáfɔ́/	'you (pl.) will get up'
/wóáfɔ́/	'they will get up'
/ɔ̀kèkɔ́í nàfɔ́/	'When will you(sg) get up?'
/ɔ̀kèkɔ́í wòáfɔ́/	'When will he get up?'

/nyèmáfǔ̀ ò/	'I will not get up.'
/màáfǔ̀ ò/	'you(sg) will not get up.'
/máfǔ̀ ò/	'he will not get up.'
/mímáfǔ̀ ò/	'we will not get up.'
/mìmáfǔ̀ ò/	'you(pl) will not get up.'
/wómáfǔ̀ ò/	'They will not get up.'
/dèviáwó máfǔ̀ ò/	'the children will not get up.'

Note the following changes of the pronominal and/or negative prefixes in the future:

1) In the first and second persons plural affirmative, the /e/ of the pronominal prefix is elided.

2) Otherwise, the future tense indicator /á-/ contracts with a preceding /e/ to form /ǎ^x/, where x = the tone of the preceding /e/. (This applies in the first person singular affirmative, in the second person singular affirmative--in both initial and non-initial forms, in the third person singular affirmative--initial form only and in the entire negative.)

Grammatical Drill

Transformation Drill:

Put the following sentences in the future.

Examples: Nufiala va do tso. Nufiala áva do tso.

Éva do tso.

Áva do tso.

Méva do tso o.

Máva do tso o.

ɔ́ekaɔi wòva do?

ɔ́ekaɔi wòava do?

1. Míedɔ nu egbe fiẽ. Míadɔ nu egbe fiẽ.
 Wóɔɔ nu egbe fiẽ. Wóadɔ nu egbe fiẽ.
 Éɔ nu egbe fiẽ. Áɔ nu egbe fiẽ.
 Mèɔ nu egbe fiẽ. Màɔ nu egbe fiẽ.
 Beviawó ɔ nu egbe fiẽ. Beviawó adɔ nu egbe fiẽ.
2. Mímedɔ nu o. Mímadɔ nu o.
 Koku méɔ nu o. Koku máɔ nu o.
 Wómedɔ nu o. Wómadɔ nu o.
 Nyemedɔ nu o. Nyemadɔ nu o.
 Mèɔ nu o. Máɔ nu o.
3. Éfia Fransegbe hã wóa? Áfia Fransegbe hã wóa?
 Éfia Fransegbe hã wóa? Áfia Fransegbe hã wóa?
 Míafia Fransegbe hã wóa? Míafia Fransegbe hã wóa?
 Nufiala fia Fransegbe Nufiala áfia Fransegbe
 hã wóa? hã wóa?
 Wófia Fransegbe hã Wóafia Fransegbe hã wóa?
 wóa?
4. Mífiawó Fransegbe o. Míafiawó Fransegbe o.
 Mímedífiawó Fransegbe o. Mímadífiawó Fransegbe o.
 Wómedífiawó Fransegbe o. Wómadífiawó Fransegbe o.
 Komla méfiawó Fransegbe o. Komla fiawó Fransegbe o.
 o.
 Nyemefiawó Fransegbe o. Nyemafiawó Fransegbe o.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 5. Nlisisigbe ko wòfiawó.
Nlisisigbe ko mèfiawó.
Nlisisigbe ko míefiawó.
Nlisisigbe ko wófiawó.
Nlisisigbe ko nufiala
fiawó. | Nlisisigbe ko wòafiawó.
Nlisisigbe ko mafiawó.
Nlisisigbe ko míafiawó.
Nlisisigbe ko wóafiawó.
Nlisisigbe ko nufiala
afiawó. |
| 6. ƷekaƷi neva ɔo?
ƷekaƷi wòva ɔo?
ƷekaƷi wóva ɔo?
Ʒek Ʒi togbui va ɔo?
ƷekaƷi mìeva ɔo? | ƷekaƷi nava ɔo?
ƷekaƷi wòava ɔo?
ƷekaƷi wóava ɔo?
ƷekaƷi togbui ava ɔo?
ƷekaƷi mìava ɔo? |
| 7. Srõwoa mevaa?
Mévaa?
Wò hã mèvaa?
Mìmevaa?
Wòmevaa? | Srõwoa mavaa?
Mávaa?
Wò hã màvaa?
Mìmavaa?
Wómavaa? |

Pattern Response Drill:

Respond with the pattern given in the example, substituting for the underlined form(s).

In the following drills, substitute the appropriate form of the subject pronoun + the future tense indicator.

1. Example:

Nufiala áva ɔo egbe fiẽa? O, áva ɔo tso ɲdi.

Drill:

Mìava ɔo egbe fiẽa?	O, míava ɔo tso ɲdi.
Áva ɔo egbe fiẽa?	O, màva ɔo tso ɲdi.
Áva ɔo egbe fiẽa?	O, áva ɔo tso ɲdi.
Wóava ɔo egbe fiẽa?	O, wóava ɔo tso ɲdi.
Noviwòwó ava ɔo egbe fiẽa?	O, wóava ɔo tso ɲdi.
Xõwò ava ɔo egbe fiẽa?	O, áva ɔo tso ɲdi.
Míava ɔo egbe fiẽa?	O, mìava ɔo tso ɲdi./
	O, míava ɔo tso ɲdi.

2. Example:

ƷekaƷi brikla ava do? Áva do tso ndo.

Drill:

ƷekaƷi màva do?	Àva do tso ndo.
ƷekaƷi míava do?	Míavu do tso ndo. /
	'Míava do tso ndo.
ƷekaƷi noviwòwó ava do?	Wóava do tso ndo.
ƷekaƷi tɔ̀wò ava do?	Áva do tso ndo.
ƷekaƷi nava do?	Màva do tso ndo.
ƷekaƷi wóava do?	Wóava do tso ndo.
ƷekaƷi wòava do?	Áva do tso ndo.
ƷekaƷi míava do?	Míava do tso ndo.

3. Example:

Nuka Edward afia Áfiawó Nlisigbe.
 deviawó?

Drill:

Nuka wóafia deviawó?	Wóafiawó Nlisigbe.
Nuka nàfia deviawó?	Màfiawó Nlisigbe.
Nuka mìafia deviawó?	Míafiawó Nlisigbe.
Nuka wòafia deviawó?	Áfiawó Nlisigbe.
Nuka ...íafia deviawó?	Míafiawó Nlisigbe. /
	Míafiawó Nlisigbe.
Nuka nufiala afia	Áfiawó Nlisigbe.
deviawó?	
Nuka detugbui yawó	Wóafiawó Nlisigbe.
afia deviawó?	
Nuka màfia deviawó?	Àfiawó Nlisigbe.

4. Example:

Màva Lome tso fiẽ. ƷekaƷi nava do?

Drill:

Wóava Lome tso fiẽ.	ƷekaƷi wóava do?
Togbui áva Lome tso fiẽ.	ƷekaƷi wòava do?
Deviawó ava Lome tso	ƷekaƷi wóava do?
fiẽ.	

Màva Lome tso fiẽ. 88. ƷekaƷi nava do?

Míava Lome tso fiẽ. ƷekaƷi míava do?

Kodzɔ áva Lome tso fiẽ.
 Áva Lome tso fiẽ.

Ʒekaɣi wɔava ɔo?
 Ʒekaɣi wɔava ɔo?

5. Example:

Nye hã màfiawó
 Nlisigbea?

O, Fransegbe ko nafiawó.

Drill:

Wò hã àfiawó
 Nlisigbea?

O, Fransegbe ko rafiawó.

Ye hã áfiawó
 Nlisigbea?

O, Fransegbe ko wɔafiawó.

Nye hã màfiawó
 Nlisigbea?

O, Fransegbe ko nafiawó.

Afeto ya hã áfiawó
 Nlisigbea?

O, Fransegbe ko wɔafiawó.

Noviwòwó hã áfiawó
 Nlisigbea?

O, Fransegbe ko wóafiawó.

Wóawó hã wóafiawó
 Nlisigbea?

O, Fransegbe ko wóafiawó.

Míawó hã míafiawó
 Nlisigbea?

O, Fransegbe kɛ míafiawó./
 O, Fransegbe ko míafiawó.

In the following drills, substitute the appropriate form of the subject pronoun + the negative prefix + the future tense indicator.

6. Example:

Nye hã màfiawó
 Nlisigbea?

O, mafiawó Nlisigbe o.

Drill:

Mama kɛ áfiawó
 Nlisigbea?

O, máfiawó Nlisigbe o.

Míawó hã míafiawó

O, míafiawó Nlisigbe o./

O, míafiawó Nlisigbe o.

Wò hã àfiawó
 Nlisigbea?

O, nyemafiawó Nlisigbe o.

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Ewe

Nye hã màfiawó

Nlisigbea?

Mìawó hã miàfiawo

Nlisigbea?

Detugbui yawó hã áfiawó

Nlisigbea?

Ye hã áfiawó Nlisigbea?

Wóawó hã wóafiawó

Nlisigbea?

O, màfiawó Nlisigbe o.

O, mímafiawó Nlisigbe o.

O, wómafiawó Nlisigbe o.

O, máfiawó Nlisigbe o.

O, wómafiawó Nlisigbe o.

7. Example:

Mímaḍu nu egbe fiṣa?

O, mímaḍu nu o.

Drill:

Wómaḍu nu egbe fiṣa?

O, wómaḍu nu o.

Wò hã màḍu nu egbe fiṣa?

O, nyɔmaḍu nu o.

Mímaḍu nu egbe fiṣa?

O, mímaḍu nu o.

Gbade máḍu nu egbe fiṣa?

O, máḍu nu o.

Máḍu nu egbe fiṣa?

O, máḍu nu o.

Deviawó maḍu nu egbe fiṣa?

O, wómaḍu nu o.

Question and Answer Drill:

Answer the question asked you by the instructor. Then ask another student in the class a question based on the same pattern. Continue in this manner until everyone has had a chance to ask and answer a question at least once.

Example -- Instructor: Do ka newona?

Student: Nufiala mènnye.

Do ka Komla wona?

Ewe

Conversation Drill:

1. Introduce yourself to someone. Ask him where he's from, when he arrived, what his name is, and what he does for a living.
2. Introduce a Peace Corps Volunteer to an Ewe. Explain that he's from America and that he's going to teach English. Tell his name and when he arrived.

Unit V - Farming

A. Farming in America

àgblèdèlávó

farmers

yèvúwó

white men

dè

native land

Kosi: Àgblèdèlávó lè yèvúwó
dèà?¹Are there farmers in the
land of the white men?

zǎ

in plenty/ in
abundanceEdward: È, àgblèdèlávó lè
yèvúwó dè zǎ.Yes, there are plenty of
farmers in the land of
the white men.

dè

to go to

àgblè

farm

dè àgblè²

to cultivate

a farm³

yèvúwó dè àgblè

white men culti-
vated farmsyèvúwó dè àgblè²white men culti-
vate farms

àgbèlìgblè

manioc farm

Kosi: Yèvúwó dè àgbèlìgblèà?

Do white men cultivate
manioc farms?

àgbèlì

manioc

àsí

hand

Edward: Ò, àgbèlì mélé mía
sí ò.No, we don't have manioc.⁴

míméwò ò

you(pl) didn't
make

míméwò à ò

you(pl) don't
make

gàlì

manioc meal

Kosi: Míméwò à gálíà?

Don't you make manioc meal?

míméwò ò
 míméwònà ò
 tàpíókà
 nú siàwó
 nú siàwó tsó Áfríkà

 nú siàwó tsóná Áfríkà

we didn't make
 we don't make
 tapioca
 these things
 these things came
 from Africa
 these things come
 from Africa

Edward: Ò, míméwònà tàpíókà há ò. No, we don't make tapioca
 Nú siàwó tsóná Áfríkà. either. These things
 come from Africa.

Notes:

¹Note that when /dè/ 'native land' is the possessed noun in a possessive construction, /fé/ 'possessive indicator' is omitted (See Unit IV - C, Note 1).

²If a word ending in /è/ or /à/ is followed by a word beginning with /à/, the final vowel of the first word is elided in fast speech, e.g.:

/dè àgbèlè/ 'to cultivate a farm' becomes /dàgbèlè/.
 /yèwúwó dèná àgbèlè/ 'white men cultivate farms'

becomes /dènágbèlè/.

³Literally: 'to go to the farm'

⁴Literally: 'manioc is not (in) our hand'

/àgbèlì lè yèwúwó sí/

'White men have manioc.'

/àgbèlì lè àsínyè/

'I have manioc.'

/àgbèlì lè àsíwò/

'You(Sg) have manioc.'

/àgbèlì lè ésí/

'He has manioc.'

/àgbèlì lè miá sí/

'We have manioc.'

/àgbèlì lè mià sí/

'You(pl) have manioc.'

/àgbèlì lè wó (á)sí/

'They have manioc.'

Ewe

Note that in the expression /lè àsí/ 'to have':

1. /fé/ 'possessive indicator' is omitted (See Unit IV - C, Note 1.).

2. the possessive pronouns of the first and second persons singular follow the possessed noun /àsí/ (See Unit II - E, Possessive Pronouns.).

Dialogue 2

àzìgblèwó

peanut farms

Komi: Àzìgblèwó lè Ámèríkàà?

Are there peanut farms in America?

ànyíéhè

south

Edward: È, àzìgblèwó lè ànyíéhè.

Yes, there are peanut farms in the South.

lòlò

to be big

Komi: Wólòlòà?

Are they big?

àgblèdèlá

farmer

àgblèdèlá qèká

one farmer

kà

a measure of about 20 sq. meters

kà àlàfá qèká

one hundred 'ka'

àbó kà àlàfá qèká èné

about 100 'ka'

Edward: Wólòlò òtò. Àgblèdèlá

They're very big. One

qèká dèná àgblè àbè

farmer cultivates a farm

kà àlàfá qèká èné.

of about 100 'ka'.

léké wòwòè

how did he do it?

léké wòwònè

how does he do it?

Komi: Léké wòwònè?

How does he do it?

Edward: Máchíno lè èsí.

He has a machine.

àhã

aha!

Komi: Àhã, ényó òtò.

Aha, very good.

Notes:

Habitual:

/dʒ kã nɛwò/ 'What kind of work have you done?'
 /dʒ kã nɛwònà/ 'What kind of work do you (generally) do?

/mɛfiá ɲlísígɛ/ 'I have taught English.'
 /mɛfiáná ɲlísígɛ/ 'I (generally) teach English.'

The habitual denotes an action which is performed habitually, which is usual or customary. It is formed by suffixing /-na/ 'habitual indicator' to the verb stem. Note that the tone of /-na/ is the same as the last tone of the preceding verb stem.

Grammatical Drill

Transformation:

Put the following sentences into the habitual:

Example: Nuka wófia?

Drill: Dɔ a newɔ?

Nu: nefia?

Mɛtɪa ɲlísígɛ.

Èdɔ galia?

Mímewɔ galí o.

Mímewɔ tapioka hãa?

Nu siawó tso Afrika.

Leke wòwɔɛ?

Nuka wófiana?

Dɔ ka newona?

Nuka nefiana' .

Mɛfiana ɲlísígɛ.

Èduna galia?

Mímewona galí o.

Mímewona tapioka hãa?

Nu siawó tso Afrika.

Leke wòwɔɛ?

B. Harvest

Dialogue 1

bliá

the corn

tsì

to grow

Koku: Pàpá, èbliá tsì

Papa, the corn has grown
(tall).

tò

possessed thing¹

tòwò

yours(sg)

dzò

to be straight/

to be right

tòwò dzò

you're right²

yì

to go

nyàtèfé

really

Komi: È, tòwò dzò. Mèyì

Yes, you're right. I

àgblè tsò; étsì nyàtèfé. went to the farm yester-

day. It has really

grown (tall). /

nè

to break/ to reap

míénfì

we reaped it

míélè énégé

we are going to

reap it

Koku: Yèkàí míélè énégé?

When are we going to

reap it?

Komi: Míélè énégé tsò.

We're going to reap it

tomorrow.

Notes:

¹ /núfíálá t̀ò/ 'the teacher's'

/t̀ònyè/	'mine'	/míá t̀ò/	'ours'
/t̀òwò/	'yours(sg)	/míà t̀ò/	'yours(pl)
/é t̀ò/	'his, hers, its'	/wó t̀ò/	'theirs'

Note that with /t̀ò/ 'possessed thing':

1. /fé/ possessive indicator is omitted (See Unit IV - C, Note 1).

2. the possessive pronouns of the first and second persons singular follow the noun (See Unit II - E, Possessive Pronouns.).

²Literally: 'yours is right'

Dialogue 2

míéyì àgblè

we went to the farm

míélè àgblè yìgé

we are going to go

to the farm

Koku: Míélè àgblè yìgé ègbéà? Are we going to go to
the farm today?

míéyì

we went

míélè yìyìgé

we are going to go

fífílà

immediately

Komi: È, míélè yìyìgé fífílà. Yes, we're going to go
right now.

bliáwó

the corn(pl)

kátá

entirely; all

míéné bliáwó kátá

we reaped all the
corn

míélè bliáwó kátá

we are going to

négé

reap all the corn

Koku: Míélè bliáwó kátá

Are we going to reap all

négéà?

the corn?

Komi: È.

Yes.

kò

then

Koku: Kò núlā míáwòè?

Then what'll we do [with]
it?

dé

to put in

àvà

granary

mè

inside

míédíì àvà mè

we put it in the

granary¹

míélè édégé àvà mè

we are going to

put it in the

granary

Komi: Míélè édégé àvà mè.

We are going to put it in
the granary.

Notes:

¹See III - E, Note 1

Intentional:

/miéyi/	'We went.'
/miélé yiyigé/	'We are going to go.'
/miéva/	'We came.'
/miélé vavagé/	'We are going to come.'

The intentional denotes an intended action or one which is going to be performed in the near future. It is formally composed of the auxiliary verb /lè/ + a verbal noun + /-gé/ 'intentional indicator'. The verbal noun is formed by prefixing the verb stem with a low toned reduplication (i.e. repetition) of itself.

/mèlè fòrúgé/	'I'm going to get up.'
/núkà nèlè fífiágé/	'What are you going to teach?'
/núkà nèlè fèflégé/	'What are you going to buy?'
/núkà nèlè dzadzragé/	'What are you going to sell?'

Note the following changes in the reduplicated prefix:

1. If the verb stem has a nasalized vowel, the nasalization is omitted in the prefix.
2. If the verb stem contains an /i/ followed by another vowel, the second vowel is omitted in the prefix.
3. If the second segment of the verb stem is an /l/ or an /r/, it is omitted in the prefix.

/miéyi agblè/	'We went to the farm.'
/miélé agblè yigé/	'We are going to go to the farm.'

/miédiì àvā mè/	'We put it in the granary.'
/miélé édege àvā mè/	'We are going to put it in the granary.'

In the verb forms previously encountered, a transitive verb* was normally followed by one or more objects. The first object of the verb becomes the possessive modifier of the verbal noun in the intentional, in which case the reduplicated prefix is omitted.

/éle d̀̀yemgé/	'He is going to send me.'
/éle d̀̀wogé/	'He is going to send you (sg).'
/éle édógé/	'He is going to send him.'
/éle miá dógé/	'He is going to send us.'
/éle mià dógé/	'He is going to send you (pl).'
/éle wó dógé/	'He is going to send them.'

Note that:

1. /fé/ 'possessive indicator is omitted (See Unit IV - C, Note 1.).
2. the possessive pronouns of the first and second persons singular always follow the verbal noun (See Unit II - E, Possessive Pronouns.).
3. the possessive pronoun of the first person singular has the form /-yem/.
4. a high toned verb has low tone before the possessive pronouns of the first and second persons singular.

* In Ewe, a verb indicating direction or location followed by a noun phrase indicating place (e.g., /miéyi àgb̀̀lè/ 'We went (to the) farm.') must be considered transitive.

Grammatical Drill

Transformation Drill:

Put the following sentences in the intentional.

Examples:

Míeyi

Míeyi agble.

Míele yiyige.

Míele agble yige.

Drill:

Ɔekaɣi wova?

Eva egbe ɲdi.

Ɔekaɣi woyi?

Woyi fifila.

Ɔekaɣi miɛɛɛ blia?

Miɛɛɛ bliawó katãa?

Miɛɛɛ tso.

Miedii ava me.

Wómewo gali o.

Wómewo tapioka hãa?

Ɔekaɣi wóle vavage?

Éle vavage egbe ɲdi.

Ɔekaɣi wóle yiyige?

Wóle yiyige fifila.

Ɔekaɣi míele blia ɲege?

Míele bliawó katã ɲegea?

Míele eɲege tso.

Míele edege ava me.

Wómele gali woge o.

Wómele tapioka hã

woge?

Ɔekaɣi nefɔ?

Nuka neɖu?

Meɖu gali

Fika nedze?

Medze nufiala gbo.

Ɔekaɣi nele fɔfɔge?

Nuka nele duɖuge?

Mele gali ɖuge.

Fika nele dzedzege?

Mele nufiala gbo dzege.

Nuka Kofi fia ɖeviawó?

Nuka Kofi le ɖeviawó

fiage?

Nuka Kofi fiawó?

Nuka Kofi le wó

fiage?

Nuka Kofi fiawò

Nuka Kofi le fiawòge?

Nuka Kofi fiamí?

Nuka Kofi le mia fiage.

Nuka Kofi fiɛ?

Nuka Kofi le efiage.

Dzidudua dɔɛ.
Dzidudua dɔm.
Dzidudua dɔmí.
Dzidudua dɔwó.

Dzidudua le edɔge.
Dzidudua lé dɔyemge.
Dzidudua le mía dɔge.
Dzidudua le wó dɔge.

C. A Poor Crop

Dialogue 1

Kosi: Ɗɔ́!	Good afternoon.
Komi: Ɗɔ́, àfɛámè dɛ?	Good afternoon, how's everything at home?
Kosi: Édó	Fine.
Komi: Dèviáwó dɛ?	How about the children?
Kosi: Wódó, dèviáwó?	They're fine, and your children?
Komi: Wófɔ́ nyuíé.	They're fine.
àgblèmenúkuáwó	the crops
tse	to grow/ to bear fruit
wótse	they grew
wólè tsetsem	they are growing
Kosi: Àgblèmenúkuáwó lè tsetsem nyuíèa?	Are the crops growing well?
Komi: Ò, wómèlè tsetsem ò.	No, they're not growing.
tsìdzà nòlià	the rainy season
dzìdzì	to be long
ákpá	very much/too much
Kosi: Tsìdzà nòlià dzìdzì ákpá.	The rainy season has been too long.
Komi: Tòwò dzò.	You're right.

Dialogue 2

Komi: Àgbleménúkuáwó lè
tsètsém nyúíeà?

Are the crops growing
well?

kòkò

cocoa

vó

do rot

nyé kòkò vó

my cocoa rotted.

nyé kòkò lè vòvóm

my cocoa is rotting

Kodzò: Ò, nyé kòkò lè vòvóm.

No, my cocoa is rotting.

Komi: Tònyè hã.

Mine too.

dó

to send

èdó dèviáwó

you sent the
children

èlè dèviáwó dóm

you are sending
the children

sùkú gã

high school

dé sùkú gã

to high school

Kodzò: Èlè dèviáwó dóm dé
sùkú gãa?

Are you sending the
children to high school?

kòbà¹

money

Komi: Ò, Kòbà mèlè àsínyè ò.

No, I don't have any
money.

ténú

can/can do

Kodzò: Nyè hã nyèmeténúí ò.

I can't afford it either.

Léke miáwò?

What shall we do?²

dó

to lend

Komi: Dzidùquà adó àsí mí.

The government will
lend us a hand.

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Notes:

¹From English: 'copper'.

²Literally: 'I can't do it (i.e. send the children to school) either. How shall we do?'

Progressive:

/miéle yiyám/	'We are going.'
/miéle vavám/	'We are coming.'
/mèle fɔfɔm/	'We are getting up.'
/núkà nèlè fifiám/	'What are you teaching?'
/núkà nèlè fɛflém/	'What are you buying?'
/núkà nèlè dzadzráám/	'What are you selling?'
/miéle ágble yím/	'We are going to the farm.'
/miéle édém àvā mē/	'We are putting it in the granary.'

The usage of the progressive is similar to that of the English progressive. It is formed like the intentional except that /-m/ 'progressive indicator' is suffixed to the verb stem (instead of /-gé/ 'intentional indicator' --See Unit V - B2, Intentional.).

/élè dɔ̀yém/

'He is sending me.'

Note that the possessive pronoun of the first person singular has the form /-yè/ before /-m/ 'progressive indicator.

/élè Nlísìgbè fiámém/

'He is teaching me English.'

/élè Nlísìgbè fiámíì/

'He is teaching him English.'

If the progressive suffix is followed by an ^{indirect} object pronoun in the first or third person singular, it has the fuller form /-mé/ (But before the third person singular pronoun /e/ becomes /i/ - See Unit II - E, Object Pronouns.)

Before other object pronouns, either /m/ or /mê/ is used, e.g.:

/élè Nlísìgbè fiámímí/

'He is teaching

/élè Nlísìgbè fiámémí/ }

us English.'

Grammatical Drill

Transformation Drill:

Put the following sentences into the progressive:

Examples:

Míeyi

Miele yiyim.

Míeyi agble.

Miele agble yim.

Drill:

Nye koko vo.

Nye koko le vovem.

Agblemenukuawó metse o.

Agblemenukuawó
mele tsetsem o.

Nyemedo deviawó de

Nyemele deviawó dom

suku gã o.

de suku gã o.

Ʒekayi miewa?

Ʒekayi miele vavam?

Miewa egbe ndo.

Miele vavam egbe ndo.

Fika miedze?

Fika miele dzedzam.

Miedze brikla gbo.

Miele brikla gbo dzem.

Dziduqua dawó.

Dziduqua le wó dom.

Dziduqua domí.

Dziduqua le mía dom.

Dziduqua doe.

Dziduqua le edom.

Dziduqua dom.

Dziduqua le dozem.

Nuka Yawa fia deviawó?

Nuka Yawa le deviawó

fiam?

Nuka Yawa fiawó?

Nuka Yawa le fiawom.

Nuka Yawa fiawó?

Nuka Yawa fiamí?

Nuka Yawa fie?

Éfia Nlisigbe deviawó.

Éfia Nlisigbem.

Éfia Nlisigbewó.

Éfia Nlisigbemi.

Éfia Nlisigbii.

Nuka Yawa le wó fiam.

Nuka Yawa le mia fiam.

Nuka Yawa le efiam.

Éle Nlisigbe fiam
deviawó.

Éle Nlisigbe fiamem.

Éle Nlisigbe fiamwó. /

Éle Nlisigbe fiamewó.

Éle Nlisigbe fiammi. /

Éle Nlisigbe fiamemi.

Éle Nlisigbe fiamii.