

MOTION EXPRESSION IN GA NARRATIVES

Akua A. Campbell

Rice University

Houston, U.S.A

aaa8@rice.edu

This paper examines motion events in Gã narratives in light of Talmy's binary typology of satellite-framed and verb-framed languages, and Slobin's application of this to the investigation of narrative style. Using evidence from twenty-five narrations of the picture book "Frog, where are you?" (Mayer 1969), I investigate how the components of motion such as path and manner are encoded in Gã and consequently, where in Talmy's typology it may be placed. I also investigate whether and how the typological classification of motion in Gã and its morphosyntactic characteristics affect how speakers conceptualise the motion event and what components are foregrounded or backgrounded. This draws from Slobin's hypothesis of "thinking for speaking" which states that speakers will be directed by the lexicalisation pattern and structure of their language to attend to differing components of the motion event to different degrees. I show that Gã does not belong to either the satellite-framed or verb-framed types of languages but to a third type known as equipollently-framed languages. I also show that lexicalisation pattern and morphosyntactic factors play equal roles in engendering a typical Gã narrative style, which consists primarily of elaborate path descriptions and spatial deictic specification.

Cet article rend compte des événements de mouvement dans les récits de la langue ga à la lumière de la typologie binaire des langues en cadres satellitaires et celles de cadres verbaux de Talmy, et l'application de Slobin par rapport à l'investigation du style narratif. Se servant des données de vingt-cinq récits du livre d'images « Grenouille, où es-tu ? » (Mayer 1969), l'objet de l'investigation est de voir comment les composantes du mouvement tels que le sentier et la manière sont codés dans le Ga, et par conséquent où on peut les placer dans la typologie de Talmy. L'article élargit son champ d'investigation sur la manière dont la classification typologique des événements de mouvement et quels sont les composantes qui sont mis en avant-plan ou en arrière plan. Ceci s'inspire de l'hypothèse de Slobin de « penser pour parler » qui affirme que les locuteurs seront dirigés par le modèle de lexicalisation et la structure de leurs langues pour s'occuper des différentes composantes de l'événement de mouvement à différents degrés. Cet article démontre que le ga n'appartient ni aux types de langues à cadre satellitaire ou celles à cadre verbal mais plutôt à un troisième type connu comme langues à cadre équipollent. L'article montre également que le modèle de lexicalisation et celui des facteurs morphosyntaxiques jouent des rôles égaux dans la production d'un style narratif typique du ga, qui consiste avant tout en des descriptions élaborées des sentiers et la spécification spatiale déictique.

0. INTRODUCTION

The question of whether the structure of a person's native language has any influence on how they categorize experience is one that has been of great interest to both linguists and non-linguists for decades. Whorf (1956) is famed for championing the notion that people's "habitual thoughts" are shaped by the form of their languages. This meant that different language groups could conceive the same experiences differently because the structure of their languages was different. For him, this influence extended to the behaviour and culture of the language group. Whorf (1956:221) named this notion the linguistic relativity principle.

Slobin (1996, 2000) has toned down Whorf's ideas and made a convincing case for the influence of a language's structure on the conceptualization and verbalization of events, that is, he believes that one cannot describe an event unless one looks at it from a particular perspective, and the perspective that one takes is to a large extent dictated by the form of one's language. So while Whorf believed in the strong influence of language on worldview, Slobin takes a more muted stand – that language influences a person's on-line thought processes while he or she is speaking. He dubbed this idea "thinking for speaking" and has shown it to be especially evident in

the verbalization of motion events in different languages. Here, a kind of “typological determinism” (Slobin 2000:109) has arisen, where the lexicalization pattern and hence typological characteristics exhibited by a language in the expression of motion events directs speakers while they are verbalizing experience to pay attention to certain components of the motion event and not others, resulting in a distinct, stylised pattern of discourse. The current generally accepted typology of motion (but see Beavers et. al 2010 for dissenting views) on which Slobin’s work is largely based is that introduced by Talmy (1985; 2000), which classifies the languages of the world into verb-framed and satellite-framed languages. These will be explained further in Section 1.

The aim of this paper therefore is to examine the lexicalization patterns of motion events in Gã¹ in the light of Talmy’s typology in order to see where it fits, or if it fits at all. Secondly, I attempt to answer the question: What are the implications of the formal encoding of motion for Gã speakers in terms of their conceptualization and verbal rendering of motion in narratives? That is, how does the characteristic expression of motion information point Gã speakers towards certain components of the motion event that will otherwise not be foregrounded in the discourse of speakers of typologically dissimilar languages? In short, how do Gã speakers think for speaking and what distinct rhetorical style emerges as a result of this perspective? It will be shown that Gã belongs to neither the verb-framed nor satellite-framed language categories but to a third type. It will also be shown that the unique morphosyntactic features of Gã predispose it to foregrounding path of motion at the expense of manner of motion and this plays a major role in shaping its rhetorical style.

The rest of the paper will be organised as follows: Section 1 will examine the previous literature on the Talmyan typology and Slobin’s “thinking for speaking” hypothesis. Section 2 will give a brief morphosyntactic sketch of Gã. Section 3 will discuss data collection and methodology. In section 4, I describe the various lexical and syntactic means used in motion event expression and apply Slobin’s diagnostic tests to Gã. In section 5, I discuss the function of the pre-verb deictic auxiliaries in narrative. Section 6 presents the discussion and conclusion.

1. PREVIOUS WORK

Talmy’s (1985, 2000) typology of motion rests on how the “core schema” of path is formally expressed in a language. Path refers to the trajectory taken by the figure (the object which moves). If path is typically encoded in the verb then the language is termed a verb-framed language (V-language). If path is encoded in a satellite to the verb, then the language is termed a satellite-framed language (S-language). A satellite is “the grammatical category of any constituent other than a noun-phrase or prepositional-phrase complement that is in a sister relation to the verb root” (Talmy 2000:102).

Talmy is well aware that in each language there may be different constructions for expressing the same motion event and these constructions may exemplify different lexicalization patterns. However, he stresses that in each language there is a characteristic means of expressing motion, where characteristic means that the expression is “1) ...*colloquial* in style, rather than stilted and so on; 2) it is *frequent* in occurrence in speech rather than only occasional; 3) it is *pervasive*, rather than limited – that is, a wide range of semantic notions are expressed in this type” (Talmy 2000 vol.2:27). It is these characteristic expressions in each language that determine where

¹ Gã is a Niger-Congo language of the sub-family Kwa. It is spoken in Ghana, in and around the capital city, Accra, by a population of about one million.

in Talmy's typology the language will fit. Consequently, Romance, Semitic, Japanese, Tamil and Bantu languages are categorised as V-languages while S-languages are exemplified by non-Romance Indo-European, Finno-Ugric, Chinese, Warlpiri and Ojibwa. The contrast between the surface realisations of path is seen by comparing the following sentences from English (1) and Spanish (2), taken from Talmy (2000:223). The form expressing path is underlined:

(1) The bottle floated out of the cave.

(2) **La botella salió flotando.**

"The bottle exited floating."

In the S-language English, as shown in (1), path is encoded in the satellite **out** while in the V-language Spanish, as shown in (2), it is encoded by the verb **salió** 'exit'. A corollary to this pattern is that for V-languages, the manner of motion is expressed by a satellite in the form of a gerund, participle or adverbial, as exemplified by the gerund **flotando** 'floating' in (2). In S-languages on the other hand, the verb slot is free to convey manner.

While this typology generally holds up cross-linguistically, there are a significant number of languages which cannot easily be classified into either group. The languages of the Hokan and Penutian families are a prime example. According to Delancey (1996) cited in Slobin (2004:247), these languages have bipartite verbs, consisting of two morphemes, where one morpheme codes path and the other codes manner. Therefore, even though path is expressed in the verb, it will be disingenuous to ignore the fact that manner is encoded in the verb as well, rather than in a satellite. A similar phenomenon is described by Huang and Tanangkingsing (2005) for Tsou, an Austronesian language of Taiwan which has, in addition to path verbs, a high number of lexicalised compound motion verbs which have both path and manner components, rendering an absolute S- or V-language classification impossible. Brown (2004) reports that Tzeltal, a Mayan language, has a core set of motion verbs encoding motion and path, but also, a set of adverbial directionals which directly follow the verb. So in Tzeltal path is encoded both by the verb and by satellites.

More pertinent to the present study is the problem encountered when trying to categorise motion in languages with serial verb constructions (SVCs). SVCs are a series of two or more verbs which act as one predicate and encode a single event. Gã and many other Niger-Congo languages, as well as south-east Asian languages, have SVCs. As Zlatev and Yangklang (2004:188) note in their paper on motion in Thai (a serialising language), the reason why serialising languages pose a problem for the binary typology is that the typology imposes a constraint whereby there is only one main verb slot for the encoding of the semantic components of motion. Serialising languages, however, have relaxed that constraint and do not need to choose whether to encode manner or path in the verb. Because they have multiple verbs in a clause they can encode *both* manner and path in different verbs of the same clause. Some linguists (e.g. Schaefer and Gaines (1997)), adhere strictly to the dictates of Talmy's typology and conclude that serialising languages such as Emai are verb-framed because path is encoded in the verb. Slobin and Hoiting (1994:492) suggest that languages with multiple verbs per clause such as spoken serialising languages as well as American Sign Language (ASL) and Sign Language of the Netherlands (SLN) be classified as complex verb-framed languages as opposed to the simplex verb-framed languages of Talmy's typology. Ameka and Essegbey (2013) disagree with this view and show that Akan and Ewe, both serialising languages, belong to neither the verb-framed nor satellite-framed category. They suggest that serial verb languages should be assigned

to a third typological group. Zlatev and Yangklang (2004) come to the same conclusion for Thai. Slobin (2004:249) proposed a third language type termed “equipollently-framed languages” (or E-language) which encapsulates serial verb languages, languages with bipartite verbs and languages in which the verb has affixes denoting both manner and path, as in the Jaminjung languages.

As mentioned in the introduction, Slobin has applied Talmy’s typology in research which proposes a subtle form of linguistic relativity in the expression of motion i.e. *thinking for speaking*. Slobin’s work has focused on the effect of the different typological patterns on narrative style. His claim that “each type of lexicalization pattern engenders a type of style” (Slobin 1997:443) is supported with evidence from comparisons of oral narrations in different languages of the picture storybook, “Frog, where are you?” by Mercer Mayer (1969). Other sources used are translations of novels in different languages as well as natural conversation. One of the main components of motion that seem particularly sensitive to lexicalization pattern is manner. Slobin (2006) has found that the degree of manner salience i.e. the amount of attention that a language pays to manner depends on its place in the ternary typology. S- and E-languages tend to express manner of motion far more frequently than V-languages. This, Slobin (2006:10) suggests, may be due to considerations of codability (i.e. of processing load and accessibility). According to Slobin (2006:10) it is presumably easier to process and access finite forms than it is to access non-finite forms. Therefore in S- and E- languages where the verb slot is the main means of manner expression, manner features prominently. V-languages, on the other hand, have the verb slot reserved for path expression and have to resort to lower-frequency, non-finite forms such as gerunds and participles to express manner, making it more convenient to do without manner expression. S- and E- languages, on the other hand, do not require non-finite verbs in order to express manner in motion events.

Other consequences of the typology on motion narration include the level of path elaboration displayed, the number of grounds that tend to be mentioned per verb and whether attention is paid to static descriptions of scenes. Ground refers to a stationary point, location or landmark pertinent to the motion of the figure and which serves as a reference point to which the motion is described. For example, in *John climbed the tree*, *tree* is the ground. It is important to note that the correspondence between the typology and rhetorical style is not absolute. Other factors outside of the typology such as language-specific morpho-syntactic factors, cultural and modality factors, all interact with lexicalization patterns to give each language their unique narrative style (Slobin 2004). For example, as we will see later V-languages tend not to give elaborate descriptions of path nor mention several grounds per verb. However, Ibarra-Antunano (2004) shows that Basque, a V-language, is an exception due to the presence of a rich system of locative case markers and postpositions that allow several grounds to be encoded.

2. MORPHO-SYNTACTIC SKETCH OF GÄ

Before I delve into the Gã data, it is important to familiarise the reader with general grammatical features of Gã as well as three morpho-syntactic characteristics that feature prominently in motion expression. These are inherent complement verbs (ICVs), SVCs and deictic pre-verb auxiliaries.

Basic word order in Gã is SVO. The clause may be simplex or complex, transitive or intransitive. Gã is mainly an aspectual language. Future is the only tense distinction grammatically marked. There is no grammatical distinction between past and present, except in a few words most notably *yà* ‘go’, whose past is the

suppletive **tèè**. Most tense, aspect, mood and polarity (TAMP) categories are indicated by affixes (mainly prefixes) but the subjunctive and imperative moods, as well as the perfect may be marked in some constructions by tone alone. The aorist is the most pervasive TAMP category in Gã. It is basically the bare form of the verb and depending on the verb and context it may have a past, habitual or progressive interpretation (Dakubu 2008:97).

2.1 INHERENT COMPLEMENT VERBS

Essegbey (2010:186) has described inherent complement verbs (ICVs) as “verbs whose citation form is followed by a meaning-specifying complement.” The complement is usually a noun but may also be a postposition. He notes that most ICVs and their complements express concepts which in English are expressed by single lexical items. ICVs feature significantly in motion expression. A few motion and non-motion ICVs are listed below:

(1)	tá !shǐ	sit + down	‘sit down’
	gbèé !shǐ	fall + down	‘fall down’
	yí !shǐ	land + down	‘descend/drop off’
	kũ sèè	break + back	‘return’
	nyìé sèè	walk + back	‘follow/chase’
	jò fòì	dance + race	‘run’
	jè kpò	exit + compound	‘exit’
	tè shǐ	rise + down	‘get up’
	dékè shǐ	creep + down	‘walk stealthily’
	dà shǐ	thank + down	‘thank’
	wò gbéyèì	put + fright	‘frighten’
	bò tòi	shout + ear	‘listen’
	wú nù	immerse + water	‘swim’
	shílà	hit + fire	‘tease’

Korsah (2011:106) notes that the meanings of some ICVs are compositional while others are more metaphorical. The complement may be a noun or a postpositional noun. In some ICVs the verb has no meaning outside of the ICV and cannot occur without its complement in a clause. Examples are **tè** in **tè shǐ** ‘get up’ and **dékè** in **dékè shǐ** ‘walk stealthily’. An ICV by definition cannot be intransitive. Its complement functions syntactically like an object (See Korsah 2011 for evidence for this). As a result, while (2a) and (2b) are grammatical, (2c) is not.

- (2) a. **è-gbèé !shǐ**
 3SG-fall down
 ‘S/he fell down.’
- b. **è-gbèé nù mǐlì²**
 3SG-fall water inside
 ‘S/he fell in water.’

² In Gã the rhotics [ɾ] and [ɽ], represented orthographically as [ɾ] and [ɽ], are syllabic consonants (and therefore capable of bearing tone) when they are preceded by another consonant. This results from elision of the vowel immediately preceding the rhotic. The tone on the elided vowel is then carried by the rhotic.

- c. ***è-gbèé**
 3SG-fall
 ‘S/he fell.’

2.2 PRE-VERB DEICTIC AUXILIARIES **ba-** AND **ya-**

Gã has two dependent deictic auxiliary verbs, **ba-** and **ya-**, which always occur immediately before the verb. They are homophonous with the independent deictic verbs, **bà** ‘come’ and **yà** ‘go’. According to Dakubu (2008:118), the only difference between the two sets is that tone on the pre-verb deictic auxiliaries is unspecified. They are believed to indicate spatial and temporal deixis. **Ba-** is ventive and indicates movement towards the deictic centre and **ya-** is itive and indicates movement away from the deictic centre (Dakubu 2008:118). As will be shown later, they also have discourse and aspectual functions. Example 3 below shows the use of the ventive auxiliary, **ba-**.

- (3) ³ **è-bà-gbèé** **shĩ** **kè-jè** **tsó-è** **yìtéṅ**
 3SG-VENT-fall down take-come.from tree-DEF top
 ‘He fell down from the top of the tree.’

2.3 SERIAL VERB CONSTRUCTIONS

The oft-cited definition of serial verb constructions by Aikhenvald (2006:1) says that “a serial verb construction (SVC) is a sequence of verbs which act together as a single predicate, without any overt marker of coordination, subordination or syntactic dependency of any sort.” In addition, she characterises SVCs as monoclausal, with a single tense, aspect and polarity value. The crucial syntactic feature of SVCs in Gã is that all the verbs in the series share the same subject. Semantically, the verbs together encode what native speakers conceptualise as a single event. Tense, aspect, mood and polarity marking have scope over all verbs in the series. When negation, progressive aspect and aorist tense are expressed in an SVC, each verb in the series must be individually marked (or not marked in the case of the aorist). In (4) below both verbs, **jè** ‘exit’ and **kwê** ‘look’ are in the aorist or bare form and here they both have a simple past interpretation.

- (4) **àmè-jè** **kpò** **àmè-kwé** **sámfélé-è** **nǎǎ**
 3PL-exit compound 3PL-look window-DEF mouth
 ‘They got out and looked out of the window.’

In (5a) both verbs are marked for the habitual aspect and in (5b) both verbs are marked with the negative suffix, which consists of a lengthening of the final vowel.

- (5) a. **è-tsí-ḁ** **mḁ** **è-gbé-ḁ** **shĩ**
 3SG-push-HAB person 3SG-fall-HAB down
 ‘It pushes people down.’
- b. **è-tsííí** **mḁ** **é-!gbééé** **!shĩ**
 3SG-push.NEG person 3SG-fall.NEG down
 ‘It doesn’t push people down.’ (constructed)

³ All examples, except those marked ‘constructed’ and those whose sources are stated, are taken from the Gã frog story narratives compiled by the author. See the appendix for a sample frog story narrative by an adult.

(6) *àmě-jè kpò àmē-kwéé sámfèlè-è nǎǎ
 3PL-exit compound 3PL-look.NEG window-DEF mouth
 ‘They got out and didn’t look out of the window.’

(7) **Ákú bàá-hé àtálé é-kè mĩ**
 Aku FUT-buy dress 3SG.SBJV-give.as.gift me
 ‘Aku will buy a dress to give to me as a gift.’

(8) **Ákú** **bàá-hé** **àtálé** **ké-kè** **mĩ**
 Aku FUT-buy dress take-give.as.gift me
 ‘Aku will buy a dress to give to me as a gift.’ (constructed)

⁴ **ke** also functions as a preposition, as in: è-tsù lè kè kàklá
3SG-stab him with knife
'He stabbed him with a knife.'

It also functions as a coordinator for NPs e.g. **Ákú** **kè** **è-mámí**
 Aku and 3SG-mother
 'Aku and her mother'

- (9) **julɔ deke shi kɛ-ba-ho**
 thief creep down take-VENT-pass
 ‘The thief walked stealthily past.’ (Dakubu 2004a:123)

Sometimes **kɛ** occurs as the initial verb in the SVC. In such cases, it may serve to introduce an instrumental NP, as in (10) or a comitative NP, as in (11).

- (10) **Ákú kɛ è-nìnè gbè tóhítóhító**
 Aku take 3SG-hand kill mosquito
 ‘Aku killed a mosquito with her hand.’ (constructed)
- (11) **è-kɛ lè nyìè**
 3SG-take him walk
 ‘He walked with him’ (constructed)

SVCs cross-linguistically may be grouped into asymmetrical and symmetrical SVCs (Aikhenvald 2006:21). Gã has both types. Asymmetrical SVCs contain one verb from a semantically and grammatically restricted or closed class and the remaining verbs from a relatively large semantically and grammatically unrestricted or open class. The verb from the closed class usually provides a grammatical modification such as tense/aspect information or introduction of arguments. The verb from the open class is considered the major verb and the semantic and syntactic head of the SVC since it provides the main semantic content of the construction. Examples are (10) and (11) where **kɛ** ‘take’ is semantically bleached and heavily grammaticalised. Symmetrical SVCs contain only verbs from large, semantically and grammatically unrestricted or open classes. All the verbs in symmetrical SVCs have equal semantic and syntactic status. Examples are (4), (5), (7) and (9). Symmetrical SVCs in Gã allow two motion verbs to be expressed in the same clause, making it possible to have both a manner and a path verb in the same clause. This is an important fact which Talmy’s typology does not consider.

Many of the SVCs that express motion in the frog stories are symmetrical SVCs. However, the type of asymmetrical SVC exemplified in (10) and (11), where **kɛ** ‘take’ is the initial verb, is relevant to motion expression. In this type of SVC, **kɛ** functions to introduce a nominalised manner of motion verb. This will be seen later in section 4.4.3.

3. DATA COLLECTION

The data used for this study was in the form of narrations of the picture storybook “Frog, where are you?” (Mayer 1969). This is a wordless, picture-book which tells the story of a boy whose pet frog goes missing. He goes out with his dog in search of the frog and encounters many mishaps and misadventures. The story provides rich material for motion expression and has been used in studies of motion in several other languages. Using the same story therefore allows comparisons between different languages. Twenty-five native speakers of Gã of four age groups were involved in the study. The age groups were 5-7 years, 8-10 years, 11-13 years and 18+ years i.e. adults. There were ten adult narrators and five narrators each from the other age groups. The children were all school-going children and all adults were educated and literate in English to at least junior secondary level. Different age groups were used in order to determine how early speakers developed the narrative style characteristic of the language. This approach to data collection is based on Berman and Slobin (1994:22). These specific age breakdowns were chosen to match as closely

as possible work that has been done on motion in other languages which also used frog story data, in order to facilitate accurate comparison.

Subjects were asked to flip through the book and acquaint themselves with the characters and other objects in the story. During this time, subjects, especially younger ones, would ask questions about names of animals and other objects whose names they did not know. Afterward, they were asked to tell the story to the investigator (and any other onlookers) while again looking through the book. The narrations were audiotaped and transcribed with the clause as the basic unit of analysis. All recordings and transcriptions were done by the author, who is a native speaker of Gã.

4. THE MOTION EVENT

In the analysis of the frog stories presented here, the focus is only on translational motion i.e. motion that results in the figure changing location from one point A in space to another point B. Such motion in English and many other languages is expressed by intransitive verbs. However the option of coding motion by ICVs in Gã means that many instances of self-motion are conveyed by transitive verbs. We shall not in this paper be concerned with caused motion or what Talmy (2000:35) terms self-contained motion, where the figure maintains the same basic or “average” location, as is expressed in *The children jumped up and down on the couch*. Table 1 shows the total number of clauses in the frog stories and the proportion of those that described motion events. About a third of the clauses were dedicated to motion expression.

Table 1: Length of frog stories (indicated by number of clauses) and percentage of motion clauses by age group

Age group	Total clauses	Total motion verb clauses	% motion verb clauses
5-7	247	90	36%
8-10	245	83	34%
11-13	369	127	34%
Adults	1175	363	31%

Gã has four kinds of motion verbs. These are path verbs, deictic path verbs, manner verbs and manner + path (MP) verbs. Path verbs are those that lexicalise both motion and path of motion. A subset of path verbs is deictic path verbs. These indicate the path of motion but with respect to a shifting deictic centre. In Gã this consists of the verbs **bà** ‘come’ and **yà** ‘go’. Manner verbs lexicalise motion and manner. Manner includes properties such as motor rate, motor pattern, affect, posture, rhythm and evaluative factors (Slobin 2004:255). Finally, there is a small set of motion verbs in Gã that conflate both manner and path. These will be referred to as manner + path verbs or MP verbs. The most commonly-occurring one in the frog stories is **kð** ‘climb’. Unlike its English equivalent, **kð** ‘climb’ indicates an upward motion only, in addition to the manner of clambering with hands and feet. Lexicalisation patterns such as that of **kð** ‘climb’ (as well as a similar set in Thai given by Zlatev and Yangklang (2004)) pose a problem for Rappaport Hovav and Levin (2010), Beavers et. al (2010) and others who posit that a verb can only lexicalise either manner or path but not both. Rappaport Hovav and Levin (2010:37) show for instance, that **climb** only incorporates one semantic component, either path or manner, for each context in which it is used.

For Gã, though, it is clear that both manner and path are at play each time **kò** ‘climb’ is used.

Below is a full list of all motion verbs used in the Gã frog story corpus. They are grouped under path verbs, deictic path verbs, manner verbs and manner + path verbs. Taking a page from Rappaport Hovav and Levin’s book, I have listed **nyìé sèè** ‘follow/chase’ under path as well as manner + path. Its exact semantics depends on the context in which it appears. It incorporates both manner and path when it is used to mean ‘chase’ and it incorporates only path when it means ‘follow’. Table 2 below shows the token/type ratio of the various classes of motion verbs.

Path verbs		Manner Verbs	
1. jè kpò	‘exit’	1. nyìé, hìé	‘walk’
2. jè	‘come from’	2. jò fòl, wó fòl, hìé fòl	‘run (neutral)’
3. kpíékè shí	‘descend’	3. gbá fòl, shá fòl	‘run off suddenly’
4. kpó	‘become dislodged’	4. wó là	‘run off (comical)’
5. gbèé (!shí)	‘fall’	5. gbá !shí	‘dart off’
6. hò	‘insert oneself’	6. tù	‘jump’
7. wò	‘put’	7. fí!kí	‘fly’
8. ⁵ gbè shwá	‘disperse’	8. sèlè	‘swim’
9. kù sèè	‘return’	9. dèkè shí	‘walk stealthily’
10. bó!té	‘enter’	Manner + Path (MP) verbs	
11. tsó	‘pass’	1. kò	‘climb’
12. shè	‘arrive’	2. nyìé sèè, hìé sèè	‘chase’
13. bòlè	‘encircle’	3. tsàà shí	‘chase (comical)’
14. bà sèè	‘move back’	4. fà	‘take off suddenly’
15. yí (!shí)	‘land’	5. fà kpò	‘exit suddenly’
16. tswà shí	‘hit ground’	6. shá!né	‘slip’
17. yí gbè	‘leave’	Deictic path verbs	
18. nyìé sèè	‘follow’	1. bà	‘come’
19. béj!ké	‘go closer to’	2. yà	‘go’
20. pú!é	‘appear’		
21. shí	‘leave’		
22. fò	‘cross’		

Table 2: Total number of motion verb tokens, types and mean number of tokens per type in Gã frog stories

Verbs	No. of tokens	No. of types	Token/type ratio
Deictic path verbs	161	2	80.5
Manner + path verbs	134	6	22.3
Path verbs	324	22	14.7
Manner verbs	100	12	8.3

⁵ **gbè shwá** ‘scatter’ is not an ICV. It is a highly lexicalised serial verb, literally translating as ‘spread sprinkle’. It was used by some speakers to describe the motion of the bees as they exited their hive.

4.1 PATH DENOTATION

Path in Gã is encoded mainly by verbs. There is also a duo of pre-verb deictic auxiliaries which have path denotation as one of their functions, but these will be discussed in section 5. Focusing on what the verb incorporates, it is quite clear from the frog stories that the verb encodes path far more than it does manner. Table 3 shows that path verbs make up almost half of all motion verbs for all age groups (and over half for 8-10 year-olds). If we combine path and deictic path verbs into one category (as Talmy does), this umbrella category will constitute a total of 69% of all motion verbs – just over two-thirds, with manner and MP verbs constituting the remaining one-third.

Table 3: Percentage of motion verbs by type of motion verb

Age	Total motion verbs	Path verbs		Deictic Path		Manner Verbs		Manner + Path verbs	
		Tokens	%	Tokens	%	Tokens	%	Tokens	%
5-7	90	40	44%	22	24%	11	12%	17	19%
8-10	83	48	58%	19	12%	11	13%	14	17%
11-13	127	58	46%	35	28%	14	11%	20	16%
Adults	410	178	43%	85	20%	64	16%	83	20%
Total	710	324	46%	161	23%	100	14%	134	19%

This skewing of attention to vector change and conformation rather than manner of motion is learned very early; even 5-7 year-olds use path verbs (both deictic and non-deictic) 68% of the time. To demonstrate the pervasiveness of path verbs in motion description, we look at a scene from the frog story where an owl suddenly flies out of a hole in a tree, and see whether speakers code its exit with a path or manner verb. The results are compared with equivalent data from canonical S- and V-languages, adapted from Slobin (2000:113) with modifications and shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Percentages of speakers who used manner vs. path verbs in “The owl’s exit”

	Manner verb	Path verb	Manner + Path verb
Satellite-framed:			
English	32% (16)	68% (34)	n/a
German	18% (5)	82% (23)	n/a
Dutch	17% (4)	83% (19)	n/a
Russian	100% (18)	-	n/a
Verb-framed:			
French	-	100% (21)	n/a
Spanish	-	100% (64)	n/a
Turkish	-	100% (53)	n/a
Hebrew	3% (1)	98% (78)	n/a
Gã	-	81% (9)	18% (2)

Note that not all speakers explicitly mentioned the owl's exit, hence the reduced number of total speakers. Importantly, 81% of the speakers who did, did so by use of a path verb: either **jè kpò** 'exit' or **jè** 'come from'. Two speakers chose to encode the suddenness of the owl's exit in addition to path, opting for the MP verb **fà kpò** 'exit suddenly'. What is notable about table 4 is that V-languages practically never use a manner verb to code the owl's exit, even though they all have words for 'fly'. Gã, therefore behaves like a V-language in disavouring the use of a manner verb as well. The following examples illustrate how this scene was typically described.

- (12) **àyélòófòlòjè kpò kè-jè tsó-lé bú-è m̀lì**
 owl exit compound take-come.from tree-DEF hole-DEF inside
 'An owl exited from the hole of the tree.' [adult]

- (13) **ǹì owl jè m̀lì**
 and come.from inside
 'And an owl came from inside (it).' [10 year-old]

The preference for path verbs over manner verbs to describe a motion event when both are available in the lexicon, as well as the overall high proportion of path verbs to manner verbs suggests that Gã is a verb-framed language. In the following sections we shall examine other properties of motion which have been shown by Slobin to correlate with a language's lexicalisation pattern in order to determine where Gã falls.

4.2 BOUNDARY-CROSSING CONSTRAINT

Aske (1989), working on Spanish, noted that it is quite common for Spanish speakers to use manner verbs to encode motion and have path be encoded by a satellite, something which its V-framed status forbids. This is because unlike what the typology suggests, Spanish does allow path phrases but only non-telic path phrases i.e. path phrases which only predicate movement at or along a location but do not predicate the end point or completion of the motion. This then leaves the verb to encode manner. Path phrases which predicate an end-of-motion location on the other hand, are not allowed, hence the need to express path in the verb for this type of motion. Slobin and Hoiting (1994) observe a similar phenomenon with American Sign Language (ASL) and subsequently all V-languages known to them. They observe that whenever a figure crosses a boundary (a telic situation), its motion cannot be predicated with a manner verb. They conclude that in V-languages, crossing a spatial boundary constitutes a change of state and every change of state must be coded by a separate independent path verb. This is the reason why V-language speakers predicate the owl's exit with a path verb rather than a manner verb. The following French examples illustrate the boundary-crossing constraint:

- (14) a. **L'homme est entré dans la maison en courant.**
 The man is entered in the house in running
 'The man entered the house running'

But:

- (14) b. **L'homme a couru jusqu' à la maison.**
 The nman has run as.far.as to the house
 'The man ran up.to the house.' Slobin and Hoiting (1994:496)

S-languages do not have this constraint, making the following possible in English: **He ran to the house** and **He ran into the house**.

As with Talmy's typology, the boundary-crossing constraint rests on the presence of a single verb slot for which one must choose to encode either path or manner, depending on the telicity of the situation. This requirement is obviated for Gã because its SVCs can code multiple verbs in one predicate. Also, Gã has no non-verb path phrases coding telicity, as Spanish and English do. Any change of location or expression of telicity is done in a verb. In (15) for example, the boundary-crossing, telic event is predicated by the verb **jè kpò** 'exit', but manner is also coded by a separate verb **gbá fòì** 'run off suddenly'. Several examples occur in the frog stories where both a manner verb and a path verb occur in a clause that describes a boundary-crossing motion. These are given below.

- (15) **nĩ è-kè gbá fòì kè-jè kpò yè**
 and 3SG-take split race take-exit compound be.located
tsú-è mli
 room-DEF inside
 'And he dashed out of the room.' [adult]
- (16) **è-tũ kè-jè sámfèlè nãã è-bà-gbèé !shí**
 3SG-jump take-come.from window mouth 3SG-VENT-fall down
 'He jumped out of the window and fell down.' [9 year-old]
- (17) **kèkèni è-kè-wó fòì kè-tsó sámfèlè mli**
 then and 3SG-take-lift race take-pass window inside
 'And then he ran out through a window.' [adult]

Since Gã can code both manner and path in one SVC, one wonders then why no speaker of Gã chose to code the owl's exit with **fí!kí** 'fly' and **jè kpò** 'exit' or some other verb meaning exit. A sentence such as **èfí!kí kèjèkpò** 'he flew out' is perfectly plausible but was not an option for any speaker. I suggest that the reason why no speaker took that option is that it would unnecessarily foreground the owl's manner of movement which is flying, a fact that is unremarkable in every culture. The SVC option imposes a heavier processing load to enable the coding of a pleonastic component. The combination of this and the language's propensity toward highlighting path but not manner (as seen from its large number of path verbs) make it unlikely that the owl's flying will be mentioned. Indeed, in the entire corpus only two speakers predicated the owl's motion (not exit from the tree) using **fí!kí** 'fly' and each used it only once. It seems then that from an early age Gã speakers form narrative habits that lean heavily toward path elaboration to the detriment of manner, so that even though a construction type is available that makes both path and manner codable, speakers choose not to utilise it.

4.3 GROUND DENOTATION

One consequence of the boundary-crossing constraint in V-languages is that fewer grounds per verb (and thus per clause) are mentioned than in S-languages. The reason is that since each change of state is marked with a verb, mentioning the associated source and/or goal for each clause may result in a narrative that is too heavy (Slobin 2004:244). S-language speakers, on the other hand are able to accumulate several ground elements to one verb because of the availability of path satellites. The following is typical of an S-language, and very rare for a V-language:

- (18) **They decided to walk outside the house down to the back of the garden out into the bit of forest there.** (Slobin 2004:239)

(19) è-jè kpò è-yí sámfèlé-è m̀lì è-tèè
3SG-exit compound 3SG-pass window inside 3SG-go.PST
'He exited through the window and went.'

Age			1 ground		2 grounds	
	Bare verb	Bare clause	Per verb	Per clause	Per verb	Per clause
5-7	62%	61%	38%	39%	0%	0%
8-10	56%	57%	44%	43%	0%	0%
11-13	58%	56%	42%	44%	0%	0%
Adults	56%	51%	43%	47.5%	1%	1.5%

As can be gleaned from the table it is practically impossible in Gã (except for a special case that will be described in section 4.4.1) to accumulate two grounds to one motion verb. This is because sources, goals and mediums, which constitute grounds, are often introduced by a verb. Consider (20) from an adult, where **jè** ‘come.from’ specifies the source, and (21) where **tèè** ‘go.PST’ specifies the goal. See also (19) above, where **yí** ‘pass’ introduces the medium:

- Path verbs therefore perform double-duty in Gã: not only do they indicate change in direction; they also introduce grounds, much like English satellites. This partly accounts for the high frequency of path verbs in Gã frog stories. What was most surprising about the data in table 5 was the very low proportion of clauses that mentioned two grounds, exactly 5 clauses representing 1.5%. The example below is

one of the few where there were two grounds in one clause; in this case, the source is **èklòntó!é** ‘its antlers’ and the goal is **jòò m̀l̀ì** ‘in a valley’.

- (22) **gbé!ké** **kpó** **yè** **è-klòntó-è** **ǹ**
 child become.dislodged be.located 3SG-antlers-DEF top
è-bà-gbèé **jòò** **m̀l̀ì**
 3SG-VEN-fall valley inside
 ‘The child tumbled off its antlers and fell in a valley.’

To help put the Gã data in perspective, table 6 presents a comparison of bare verbs and plus-ground verbs in English, Spanish, Thai and Gã, drawing on data from Slobin (1996:201) and Zlatev and Yangklang (2004:183). For the comparison, I use the proportion of grounds per clause in Gã since an SVC constitutes a single clause.

Table 6: Percentages of plus-ground verbs/clauses in English, Spanish, Thai and Gã

Age ⁶	English	Spanish	Thai	Gã
5	60%	50%	40%	39%
9	62%	61%	37%	43%
11	-	-	51%	44%
Adults	82%	63%	44%	47.5%

Gã omits ground expression even more frequently than Spanish but at a comparable rate to Thai, also a serialising language. For Thai, Zlatev and Yangklang (2004:183) suggest that this may be because the clause is so rich in motion depiction (since it accumulates many path verbs) that nominal ground expression is left to be inferred from context. This may not necessarily be the case for Gã because serial verbs account for only about a quarter of all motion clauses. I suggest that, similar to the reason given for the same effect in V-languages, sentences such as (22) are rare because they present a heavy processing load to speakers. Such sentences will typically have two or three verbs in order to accumulate two grounds. Rather than compact all this information into one clause, speakers choose to leave out the less important details relating to grounds with the hope that context will fill in the gaps.

Another explanation for the low proportion of grounds has to do with the semantics and argument structure of some of the path verbs. One of the highest frequency path verbs was **gbèé!shí** ‘fall down’. This verb was never associated with a ground object unless the protagonist fell to something other than hard earth e.g. water. Like **fí!kí** ‘fly’, narrators do not deem it necessary to explicate the final location of a falling entity; world knowledge has it that such an entity’s final location is usually the ground, unless otherwise specified. The many falling events in the frog story (dog falling, beehive falling, boy falling etc.) ensured that **gbèé!shí** ‘fall’ was used often and was rarely associated with a ground. In fact, all path ICV’s that have the complement **shí** did not take a ground object e.g. **yí!shí** ‘get down’ and **kpélékè shí** ‘descend’. The complement conveys a sense of “belowness”. Note, however, that **shí** does not mean ‘ground/earth’, although there may be an etymological connection to the word for ‘ground/earth’ which is **shìkpó!ń**.

⁶ Five year-old Spanish, English and Thai speakers are comparable to Gã 5-7 year-olds, 9 year-olds Spanish, English and Thai speakers are comparable to Gã 8-10 year-olds, and 11 year olds Thai speakers are comparable to Gã 11-13 year-olds.

4.4 SCENE SETTING

According to Slobin (1996, 1997, 2004), in order to make up for the lack of grounds, V-languages rely on descriptions of scenery so the listener can infer about protagonists' trajectories. Since Gã is even more sparing with its ground mentions than V-languages we will expect Gã narrators also to compensate for this lack somehow. I found this to be true to a reasonable extent. A number of bare (mostly path) verbs were preceded by descriptions of objects in the story. They were quite common in adult and 11-13 year old narratives but are largely absent from those of the younger children. Example (23) below is from an adult.

- (23) **nĩ èè-jò fòl kè-ŋ-yà. nĩ è-yà-nà**
 and 3SG.PROG-dance race take-PROG-go and 3SG-ITIV-see
té kò mà shĩ tàmmò gòŋ. nĩ è-kò
 stone INDEF be.situated down resemble hill and 3SG-climb
 'And he was running away. And he saw a stone which resembled a hill. And he climbed (it).'

Interestingly, this property seems to interact seamlessly with a syntactic property of Gã where inanimate third person object pronouns are not realised. The object of **kò** 'climb' in (23) is therefore the inanimate third person object pronoun which receives a zero realisation. Its antecedent, **té** 'stone', is mentioned in the previous clause where the scene-setting takes place. In the following extended example, **kò** 'climb' once again has a null object pronoun whose antecedent can be retrieved from the previous discourse. The source for a second bare verb, **fà** 'exit suddenly' can also be inferred from the previous discourse as **bú** 'hole'. Static scene description is utilised to make up for lack of grounds and to enable the retrieval of antecedents of null object pronouns.

- (24) **àmè-yà-nà bú !kó kè tsò kò nĩ wòbí!í**
 3PL-ITIV-see hole INDEF and tree INDEF REL bees
à-tsũ tsótsóló hé, kè tsò àgbòkò hú nĩ
 ASSOC-house hang body and tree big INDEF too REL
bú yè mli. kè nĩ gbé!ké!é hú yà-fi!í
 hole be.located inside then and child-DEF too ITIV-peep
bú lè mli. nĩ gbèé!é hú kà nĩ é-!kó
 hole DEF inside and dog-DEF too try PURP 3SG.SBJV-climb
nĩ é-!tú á!ké è-bàá!shé wòbí!í-è
 PURP 3SG.SBJV-jump whether 3SG-FUT-reach bees
à-tsũ-è hè ló. shĩ gbé!ké-è ñ-kwé bú
 ASSOC-house-DEF body QP but child-DEF PROG-look hole
lè mli nĩŋŋ nĩ kwàkwé kò fà
 DEF inside immediately and mouse INDEF exit.suddenly

'They saw a hole and a tree with a beehive hanging from it, and another tree with a hole in it. Then the child went to peep into the hole. And the dog too tried to climb (it-the tree). And he jumped to see if he could reach the beehive. But the child was looking into the hole when a mouse exited suddenly.'

4.5 PATH SEGMENTATION

Slobin (1997:448) proposes that “comparable motion events will be described with fewer path segments in V-languages than in S-languages.” Since V-languages need to code every change of state with a verb, a journey described in this way may take on a staccato rhythm and seem too segmented. Speakers therefore code only the salient parts and leave the rest to be inferred. In analyses of the frog story “cliff scenes” it was found that S-language speakers on average code 3 segments while V-language speakers code 2. Also, a greater percentage of S-language speakers (about 80%) code 3 or more segments as compared to about 30% of Spanish speakers. The following is a schematic for the expected path segments in the cliff scene, from Slobin (1997:448):

1. change of location: deer moves, runs, arrives at cliff
2. negative change of location: deer stops at cliff
3. cause change of location: deer throws boy, makes boy/dog fall
4. change of location: boy/dog fall in water

A look at the Gã adult and 11-13 year-old narratives reveals that speakers on average mention 2.7 segments and 73% mentioned 3 or more segments. The numbers suggest that in this respect Gã patterns more like an S-language. Even though the Gã narratives make use of a lot of independent verbs to code path and introduce grounds, these verbs occur as a “package” in one serial verb clause. Therefore, there is no sense of the narrative being overly segmented. Put differently, Gã accumulates path verbs into a single clause in a similar fashion to English and other S-languages accumulating path satellites to a single clause.

4.6 MANNER DENOTATION

One major theme that has been running throughout this paper is that Gã speakers do not pay much attention to manner of motion. This can be seen in the low frequency of manner verbs in frog stories by all age groups, as well as the limited number of types of manner verbs, a total of just twelve in all 25 narratives. Furthermore, almost all the manner verbs come from what Slobin (1997:459) calls the first tier of manner verbs. These are neutral, ordinary verbs that all languages have, such as words for ‘run’, ‘walk’ and ‘fly’. Second-tier manner verbs are more elaborated and differentiated e.g. English **tumble**, **scurry** and **plop**. V-languages typically are deficient in second-tier manner verbs while S-languages are typically rich in them.

Slobin (2006:11) notes that serial verb languages and equipollently-framed languages generally, such as Mandarin, have high manner salience because of the ability to code manner in a verb along with a path verb. We have already seen that although Gã possesses the same construction type it does not express manner frequently. In fact, only 6% of manner verbs in adult narratives occurred in a serial construction. Serial verbs that contained both a (non-deictic) path verb and a manner verb were even more infrequent, constituting just 1.4%, a figure that rises to 4.7% when deictic path verbs are included. The presence of a construction type therefore, does not guarantee its utilization for all functions for which it is suited. Here, the typological prediction is not borne out. Speakers of Gã from an early age acquire a narrative style that places a very low emphasis on manner expression. These habits remain although the grammar of the language provides a readily available means of coding manner i.e. a fully inflected finite verb. The manner verb lexicon thus remains

unelaborated and a narrative that focuses heavily on path becomes aesthetically valued.

4.6.1 Other Means of Expressing Manner – Ideophones

Apart from verbs, frog story narrators used other strategies to express manner. These are ideophones, manner adverbs and nominals expressing manner.

Kwa languages are well-known for their use of ideophones. Ideophones were employed by two speakers to add various kinds of manner information to the motion event predicated by a path verb. In (25), **púéǵ** denotes the suddenness of the owl's exit. In (26) **zòzòrò** denotes a smooth landing, perhaps used because the boy and dog fell in water rather on land.

- (25) **nǎǎ** **pàtú é-jè** **kpò** **púéǵ**
 here.is owl 3SG-exit compound IDEO
 'And here an owl exited suddenly.'
- (26) **nǐ** **àmě-bà-yí** **shǐkpóǵ** **zòzòrò**
 and 3PL-VENT-land ground IDEO
 'And they landed smoothly on the ground.'

The following two examples are particularly interesting in that the core of the motion event – the path verbs – are not realised. Listeners are left to infer about path from the source-introducing verb, the grounds and the ideophones themselves. They are the only instances in the corpus where one verb is associated with two grounds. In (27), **kpàá** indicates a hard landing. In (28), **hùù** conveys the quick movement of an object through the air and **kíóbótóǵ** is a comical means of indicating a fall in water. Strictly-speaking, **kíóbótóǵ** provides more information about the goal than the manner of the fall.

- (27) **lè** **hú** **è-jè** **tsó-è** **nǎ** **shǐkpóǵ** **kpàá**
 him too 3SG-come.from tree-DEF top ground IDEO
 'He too came from the top of the tree to the ground (and landed with a loud thud).'
- (28) **è-jè** **ɲwèǵɲwèǵhùù** **fàà kò mǐ** **kíóbótóǵ**
 3SG-come.from up up IDEO river INDEF inside IDEO
 'He came from way up (and fell with a splash) into the river!'

The production of the ideophones was accompanied by a raised prosody, further serving to intensify their meanings.

4.6.2 Adverbs

Some speakers modified path verbs with manner adverbs such as **bìèdò** 'slowly'. This strategy was very uncommon, being employed five times by three speakers.

- (29) **nǐ** **è-féé** **bìèdò** **nǐ** **è-jè** **kpò** **yè**
 and 3SG-do slow and 3SG-exit compound be.located
tó-ò **mǐ**
 bottle-DEF inside
 'And he slowly exited from the jar.'

4.6.3 Instrumental object of **kɛ**

Another means by which manner may be expressed is by using an SVC where a nominalised manner verb or other nominal expressing manner is an instrumental object of the verb or preposition **kɛ**. This option was rare and was used only 3 times by 2 speakers.

- (30) **ɛ̀-nyíɛ kòdòlòó-ɛ sɛ̀ɛ kɛ fòì**

3SG-walk animal-DEF back with race

‘He followed the animal, running.’

- (31) **nĩ òblánùú-ɛ kɛ mùsùṅshàà jè kpò**
and young.man-DEF take anxiety exit compound

yè tsú-ɛ m̀lì
be.located room-DEF inside

‘And the gentleman anxiously exited the room.’

In sum, I would say that the paucity of manner expressions, even with alternative means such as those outlined above, further drives home the point that manner is of minimal importance to Gã speakers in describing motion events. In the following section, I examine the functions of the deictic auxiliaries, which provide additional evidence of the importance speakers place on path elements.

5. DEICTIC AUXILIARIES **ba-** AND **ya-**

Deixis refers to the existence of lexical, grammatical and syntactic forms referring to people, locations, time and things whose interpretation is not stable but must rely on parameters expressed in the text. The deictic centre (DC) constitutes the reference point for the interpretation of deixis. Zubin and Hewitt (1995:131), in their proposal of a theory of deixis in narratives, liken the deictic centre to a conceptual window through which the reader/listener views the story world. Furthermore, the window (deictic centre) moves, thereby changing the perspective from which the reader/listener must view the events of the story. In other words the DC shifts often as a result of the online construction of the story. The narrator therefore controls what is viewed and from whose perspective it is viewed. With spatial deixis, the DC is usually taken to be the protagonist and all movements are described in relation to him/her/it. But as we will see for Gã, sometimes the narrator/author transplants themselves from the real world to the imaginary world of the story and then *they* became the window through which a particular event is told.

Gã speakers seem to pay quite a bit of attention to characters’ actions in relations to their comings and goings i.e. whether they performed such and such an action after leaving or arriving at some DC. This elaboration of motion, I argue, serves not only to situate the action from the point of view of the DC but also to move the story forward, giving the narrative more coherence and constructing a more vivid and dynamic story world for the listener’s/reader’s benefit. In Gã this function is performed mainly by the pre-verb deictic auxiliaries **ba-** and **ya-**. These auxiliaries exemplify what Zubin and Hewitt (1995:141) call DC-devices: “textual devices that are used to signal stability and change in the DC of narrative texts.” Their functions in the frog story narratives (and probably Gã narratives generally) are discussed in section 5.1 below.

But first, let’s take a look at table 6, which shows the frequency of auxiliary **ba-** and **ya-** in the frog story narratives. The first column shows their frequency as a

percentage in motion clauses while the second column shows their frequency in non-motion clauses. Nearly a quarter of all adult motion clauses contain either **ba-** or **ya-** and even among 5-7 year-olds their use is quite frequent at 17%, suggesting that it is not a developmental phenomenon.

Table 6: Proportion of use of pre-verb **ba/ya** in motion and non-motion clauses

Age group	% of all motion clauses containing auxiliary ba- or ya-	% of all non-motion clauses containing auxiliary ba- or ya-
5-7	17%	6%
8-10	23%	9%
11-13	14%	11%
Adults	23%	16%

These deictic auxiliaries have grammaticalised from full verbs to grammatical markers. One piece of evidence of this is that they can each co-occur with their respective lexical counterparts as in (32) and (33a). It is the only construction in which they are obligatory, hence the ungrammaticality of (33b).

- (32) **éì! námm̃ jí ñkò àgbò né!é ñ é-bà**
 DP who be something big this REL 3SG-come
é-bà-m̃ wò-téñ m̃ kómé ñé!é
 3SG-VENT-catch 1PL-middle person one this
 ‘Who is this big thing, who has come and come caught one of us?’

- (33) a. **àsòmòá!ñ àklòntò ñ ñ é-tèè é-yà-tá**
 not.knowing horn top FOC 3SG-go.PST 3SG-ITIV-sit
 ‘Unknown (to him), it was a horn that he had gone to go sit on.’

- b. ***àsòmòá!ñ àklòntò ñ ñ é-tèè é-!tá**
 not.knowing horn top FOC 3SG-go.PST 3SG-sit
 ‘Unknown (to him), it was a horn that he had gone to go sit on.’

Also, as auxiliary prefixes and not full verbs they cannot themselves take inflection. For instance the suppletive past tense for **tèè** ‘go’ cannot be used in place of the auxiliary prefix **ya**, as shown in (32c).

- (32) c. ***àsòmòá!ñ àklòntò ñ ñ é-tèè é-tèè-tá**
 not.knowing horn top FOC 3SG-go.PST 3SG-ITIV-sit
 ‘Unknown (to him), it was a horn that he had gone to go sit on.’

There are four functions of auxiliary **ba-** and **ya-** in the frog story data. They are not mutually exclusive and several may be at work in the same verbal complex. The four functions are:

- marking spatial deixis
- marking associated motion
- marking temporal deixis
- marking telicity

The distribution of each will be outlined below.

5.1 MARKING SPATIAL DEIXIS

The classic function of the pre-verb deictic auxiliaries, **ba** ‘come’ and **ya** ‘go’, is not far removed from the semantics of their lexical sources. **Ba-**, when used with a motion verb indicates that the path of the motion is toward the deictic centre while **ya-** indicates that the movement is away from the deictic centre. In (34), **ba-** serves to indicate that the falling motion was toward the deictic centre, which is the imagined location of the narrator on the ground below.

- (34) **nĩ àmẽ-bà-yí shĩkpóh zòzòrò**
 and 3PL-VENT-land ground IDEO
 ‘And they came landed smoothly on the ground.’

Example (35) is particularly interesting, in that it contains a predicate in the form of a trial-verb SVC where the second verb takes the ventive auxiliary and the third takes the itive. In both cases, though, it is clear that the narrator intends for the DC to be understood to be the boy.

- (35) **kòdòlòó-è kè è-yí!tsó é-bà-tsí !lé é-yà-gbèé**
 animal take 3SG-head PERF-VENT-push him PERF-ITIV-fall
è-yí!tsó
 3SG-head
 ‘The animal has come pushed him (boy) with his head and he has gone
fallen on his head.’

The use of *come* and *go* verbs or their grammatical derivatives to indicate spatial deixis is common in the world’s languages e.g. in Japanese as discussed in Shibatani (2003) and in Mandarin (Ebert 2003).

5.2 ASSOCIATED MOTION FUNCTION

The pre-verb deictic auxiliaries are not only prefixed to motion verbs, they may occur with non-motion verbs as well. Fifty-eight percent of the verbs which occurred with **ba-** or **ya-** were non-motion verbs. In these constructions the deictic auxiliaries play an important semantic and discourse role in addition to the deictic one; they enable the narrator to explicitly delineate the trajectory of the movement of the characters in the story. Gã speakers are not satisfied with describing the action that a character is engaging in at the moment. A good deal of the time, they must make explicit that the character moved from some point to another in order to carry out the action. Consider the following examples:

- (36) **bèi kó !lé gbé!ké kò kè è-gbèé. àmẽ-yà-tò**
 time INDEF DEF child INDEF and 3SG-dog 3PL-ITIV-chance.upon
àpòtrò hèwó !lé àmẽ-kè lè wò glàsèjug kò
 toad so DEF 3PL-take him put glass INDEF
mĩ
 inside
 ‘One day, a boy and his dog...they went chanced upon a toad. So they put
 him in a glass jug.’ [11 year-old]

- (37) *nĩ àmẽ-ń-táò lè, fée àmẽ-!nǎǎǎ lè. nĩ gbèé-è*
 and 3PL-PROG-look.for him all 3PL-see.NEG him and dog-DEF
yà-kwé bú kò m̀lì. nĩ kòdòlòò kò jè
 ITIV-look hole INDEF inside and animal INDEF exit
kpò nĩ gbé!ké-è shí jé!ń. nĩ gbèé-!é hú
 compound and child-DEF leave there and dog-DEF too
é-yà-pètè tsò kò nĩ bee tsù yè jé!ń
 PERF-VENT-lean tree INDEF REL house be.located there

‘And they kept looking for him but they couldn’t find him. And the dog went looked into a hole. And an animal exited and the boy left there. And the dog also has gone and leaned against a tree which had a bee house on it.’

In (36) the narrator makes the movement of the boy and his dog prior to finding the frog explicit by the use of the deictic auxiliary *ya-*. Prior to the utterance in (37) the narrator had mentioned that the boy and dog exited the house and were looking for the frog. The use of *ya-* with *kwé* ‘look’ and *pètè* ‘lean against’ serves to spell out that they were still in locomotion prior to their encountering the hole and the tree.

- (38) *kòkòdè!né-!é b́é è-tò-ò m̀lì.*
 frog-DEF be.located.NEG 3SG-bottle-DEF inside
é-làájé. nò hèwó-!ó nĩ àmẽ-bó!í tsù-!é
 3SG.PERF-go.missingthat because-DEF FOC 3PL-start room-DEF
m̀lì táò-m̀. àmẽ-wósò àtálé-!í, boots, nĩ !jí àspáàtré
 inside look.for-NOM 3PL-shake dress-PL REL be shoe
àgbò-ì nĩ ká-!m̀ jé!mé. gbèé-è kè è-yítsò
 big-PL REL lie-DISTRIB there dog-DEF take 3SG-head
hò jar m̀lì fée àmẽ-!nǎǎǎ lè. àmẽ-bà-dàmò
 put inside all 3PL-see.NEG him 3PL-VENT-stand
sámfèlé-è nǎǎ
 window-DEF mouth

‘The frog was not in his bottle. He was missing. So they started to look for him. They shook the clothes, boots, which are the big shoes lying over there. The dog even put his head into the jar but they still couldn’t find him. They came stood by the window.’ [adult]

In (38) the ventive auxiliary *ba-* is explicating (perhaps pleonastically) that the boy and his dog moved from some other place to the window. The use of *ba-* places the deictic centre at or outside the window.

5.3 TEMPORAL DEIXIS

The deictic auxiliaries also make another important contribution to text coherence. Recall that Gã has no past tense, that for some verbs the bare form may be interpreted as having past, progressive or habitual meaning. One such verb is *dàmò* ‘stand’. Using the bare form of this verb in (38) above may lead to conflict of time in a

narrative that has until then been mostly understood to be past. One other function of **ba-** in (38) therefore, is that for stative verbs such as **dàmǝ** ‘stand’ whose bare forms lend themselves to multiple temporal interpretations, it marks the action encoded by the verb as having taken place before the time of speech. Without it the last statement is interpreted as a progressive, in conflict with all the preceding verbs whose natural interpretation is past time. Compare **dàmǝ** ‘stand’ in (38) above to that in (39) below.

- (39) **nǝ gbé!kénùú-!é, lé-!é è-dàmǝ sámfélé-è nǝǎ**
 and boy-DEF him-TOP 3SG-stand window-DEF mouth
èè-bó-!lǝ kòkòdédé!né-!é á!ké è-bàá-bà
 3SGPROG-shout-ITER frog-DEF whether 3SG-FUT-come
ló. gbé!kénùú-è dàmǝ sámfélé-è nǝǎ nǝǝǝ
 QP boy-DEF stand window-DEF mouth right.then
nǝ gbèé-è tǝ kè kòkòdédé!né-è tò-ò-hé-!é nǝ
 REL dog-DEF jump with frog-DEF hide-NOM-place-DEF REL
!jí tǝ-!lǝ
 be bottle-DEF

‘And the boy, as for him, he is standing by the window, shouting to see if the frog will come. The boy was standing by the window when suddenly the dog jumped together with the frog’s keeping place which was the bottle.’

In (39) we know the first instance of **dàmǝ** ‘stand’ has progressive interpretation because it occurs in an SVC where the second verb is marked for the progressive i.e. **èèbó!lǝ** ‘he is shouting’. Recall that verbs in an SVC must agree in tense and aspect. The absence of a deictic auxiliary makes a progressive reading possible, as we see for the second instance of **dàmǝ** ‘stand’ in (39). Note that I am not suggesting that auxiliary **ba-** and **ya-** are past tense markers, merely that when they occur with a small subset of stative verbs in their bare forms, they impart past meaning. Indeed they occur in irrealis constructions such as the subjunctive where they cannot possibly be said to convey past time. An example is given in (40).

- (40) **Ákú bàá-!bá nǝ é-bá-nǝ mì**
 Aku FUT-come PURP 3SG.SBJV-VENT-see me
 ‘Aku will come to see me.’

However, their role in anchoring the motion event in time by disambiguating the time reference expressed in certain verbs is invaluable in maintaining textual cohesion and continuity.

In Zubin and Hewitt’s theory, spatial deixis is essential for constructing path connections in a story. This, they say, “is necessary in order to create the illusion of a spatial universe in which the fictional participants can travel, just as we navigate in the real world.” (Zubin and Hewitt 1995:137). I propose that in Gã this is precisely what the deictic auxiliaries do. By so doing they enable the story to become more cogent and coherent. They are an indispensable discourse structuring device. Note, however, that they are not obligatory and in the majority of cases are actually “voided” because the verb semantics and current context render them superfluous. However, a narrative without deictic auxiliaries or with too few of them (as occurred in the narratives of some of the youngest children) sounds disjointed and unnatural to the native speaker.

5.4 MARKING TELICITY

A characteristic of the deictic auxiliaries is that they almost never occur with manner verbs or MP verbs. In the entire frog story corpus there is only one token of a manner verb occurring with a deictic auxiliary i.e. **flí!kí** ‘fly’. There are also several tokens of the deictic auxiliaries occurring with one MP verb, **kò** ‘climb’. The deictic auxiliaries therefore occurred mainly with path verbs and with non-motion verbs generally. I propose that what these path verbs and non-motion verbs that occurred with the deictic auxiliaries have in common is the aspectual feature of telicity. Smith (1999:480) defines a telic event as one “that has a natural final endpoint that is intrinsic to the notion of the event.” Many of the path verbs have an inherent endpoint or goal or point of completion. They belong to Vendler’s (1957) class of Achievements and Accomplishments, in that they are dynamic and telic. Achievements and Accomplishments differ in duration, with Achievements being instantaneous and Accomplishments being durative. All the verbs that the deictic auxiliaries occur with (except that one instance of **flí!kí** ‘fly’) are Achievement and Accomplishment verbs and therefore telic verbs. Manner verbs, on the other hand are Activity verbs; dynamic, durative but atelic (Smith 1999:481).

The question that arises then is: why is it that telic verbs are associated with the deictic auxiliaries but atelic verbs are normally not? I suggest that the deictic auxiliaries reinforce the notions of completion of the situation described by the verb. Zubin and Hewitt (1995:151) also note that telic verbs maintain the fluidity of the narrative by continuously updating the timeline of the narrative with constant location and state changes. In examples (41) and (42), the underlined deictic auxiliary does not code any physical motion but serves to reinforce telicity and maintain continuity. In both instances the deictic auxiliary occurs with a non-motion verb: **mò** ‘catch/hold’ in (41) and (42) and **fò** ‘throw’ in (41). The use of a deictic verb to mark telicity has been reported for 16th century Latin, where **ire** ‘go’ denoted atelic events and **venire** ‘come’ denoted telic events (Szantyr 1965 and Pinkster 1988) cited in Lewandowski (2007:55).

- (41) **kè nĩ è-kwé kòkòdé!né-!í-!éféé à-téñ nĩ**
 then and 3SG-look frog-PL-DEF all ASSOC-middle and
è-bà-mò ékòmé, mò ní è-jwèñ á!ké lè
 3SG-VENT-catch one person REL 3SG-think COMP him
jí àmè-kòkòdé!népòtèè nàànyó-!é ní làájé-!é.
 be 3PL-frog particular friend-DEF REL go.missing-DEF
nĩ è-bà-fò è-nìnè è-tsòòmèl ní
 and 3SG-VENT-throw 3SG-hand 3SG-show people which
é-!shwé-!é á!ké..
 3SG-remain-DEF COMP

‘And then he looked among all the frogs and he came caught one; the one who he thought was the particular frog friend that went missing. And he came threw his hand (waved) at the remaining frogs, saying...’

- (42) **nĩ kwàkwê jí-ò mole, jè kpò. è-fé-ò**
 and mouse be-DP exit compound 3SG-do-HAB
mì-é!é è-sà è-gú!gǔ !hé. hèwó-!ó è-bà-mò
 me-DEF 3SG-touch 3SG-nose body so-DEF 3SG-VENT-hold

è-gúgǎ mǐlì tàmǎ é-pílá
 3SG-nose inside like 3SG-be.hurt

‘And a mouse, or is it a mole, exited. I think it touched his nose. So he came held his nose as if he was hurt.’

Why, then did one 12 year-old use the deictic auxiliary **ba-** with **fíí!kí** ‘fly’, an atelic Activity verb in (43)?

- (43) nǐ òkpòjè ɣwèɲ nǐ è-bà-fíí!kí yè è-yí!tsó
 and dove come.from up and 3SG-come-fly be.located 3SG-head
 ‘And a dove came from above and came flew around his head.’

To answer this, I will invoke Smith’s (1986) speaker-based account of aspect. This view holds that there are abstract representations or idealised situation types which represent the defining properties of different situation types and which may correspond to Vendler’s four situation types. The grammar of the language relates linguistic forms to these idealised situation types. When a speaker encounters an actual situation, he or she classifies it as representative of a particular idealised situation type by using the linguistic forms associated with that type. I propose therefore, that the 12-year old speaker associates the situation of the owl’s flying with an Accomplishment; it was durative, but had an endpoint, similar perhaps to the motion denoted by the English verb ‘swoop’. The deictic auxiliary, being a form that is associated with accomplishments could then be used with **fíí!kí** ‘fly’.

6. CONCLUSION

After thoroughly examining the forms and semantic components involved in the expression of motion in Gã and looking at the language in light of Slobin’s rubric for discourse patterning, we are in a much better position to classify it within the ternary typology. Table 7 provides a summary of the various parameters that have been looked at in Gã and compares it with languages from each of the three types. Recall that Thai, Akan and Ewe have all been classified as E-languages. Data was obtained from Ameka and Essegbey (2013:36) and Zlatev and Yangklang (2004:187).

Table 7: Comparison of structural and discourse parameters among the three language types

	S-language	V-language	Thai	Akan/ Ewe	Gã
Path encoding	satellite	verb	verb	verb	verb
Manner encoding	verb	subordinate	verb	verb	verb
Boundary-crossing constraint	No	Yes	No	No	No
Manner salience	High	Low	High	High	Low
Grounds per clause	Multiple	Max. 2	-	Multiple	Generally 1
Path segmentation	3 or more	Less than 3	More than 3	3 or more	3
Scene setting	No	Yes	Some	Yes	Yes

What stands out is that Thai, Akan, Ewe and Gã have more properties in common than each of them do with either a V- or S- language. Of course, this is due to the similarity of the structure of their verbal predicates which in turn affects other

discourse properties. Although Gã does express path in satellites by way of the deictic auxiliaries, this use is not obligatory and the coding of actual physical motion, which is but one of many other functions, is entirely dependent on context. To the best of my knowledge, Gã is the only serialising language in this group with low manner salience, which makes it more like a V-language. Among the serialising languages, Akan and Ewe pattern together in allowing multiple grounds per clause⁷ while Gã allows only one. It will be naive to believe that even among serialising languages there will be absolute uniformity in structural and discourse properties. Slobin (2006) has shown that among S-languages there are varying degrees of manner salience dictated by morphosyntactic factors. That being said, Gã has far more in common with the E-languages than with either the S- or V-languages and is best classified as an E-language.

One problem with this classification, though, is that unlike other E-languages Gã does not give equal semantic weight to both manner and path. There is no doubt based on the evidence presented in this paper that more attention is paid to the trajectories of the characters' movements than to their rate, speed or other manner feature. The small size of the manner verb inventory, lack of distinctions within this inventory and infrequency of their use attest to this. While Slobin and others assume that the presence of multiple verb slots in serialising languages will lead to both manner and path being coded in the same clause, Gã has proven that this is not necessarily the case. Gã, more frequently than not, dedicates all verbs in a clause to the encoding of path. This in turn is due partly to the fact that source, medium and goal must be introduced by verbs and consequently, a clause with a manner verb, path verb and grounds is heavy in terms of production as well as comprehension.

In addition to the main verb slots, there is also the option of indicating by means of the deictic auxiliaries the direction of a character's movement in relation to the deictic centre. The deictic centre seems to be central to the work of mapping out the path connections of characters in the story. Gã speakers must every so often make a decision about whose perspective some motion or action is going to be described from and must sometimes envision themselves in the narrative and describe events from their in-story perspective. I propose that all these syntactic and morphological factors in addition to the apparent suppression of manner expression make Gã speakers more disposed to path elaboration than would otherwise be expected from an E-language. Experience is filtered through the sieve that is the grammar of the language and for Gã this sieve encourages the retention of information relating to the description of paths of motion from some deictic centre. Paths traversed by characters in relation to the DC have been habitually verbalized and have become a hallmark of motion description in the language such that this schematic is acquired early on by children. The preference for path verbs and the use of the deictic auxiliaries to emphasise the telicity of events speeds up the tempo of the story and moves it forward in time. Interestingly, this focus on path is not a consequence of the lexicalisation pattern of Gã but of its morphosyntactic structure.

Gã does display some characteristics that are engendered by its lexicalisation pattern e.g. there is greater path segmentation and more descriptions of static scenes in the stories. It does not obey the boundary-crossing constraint; the presence of multiple verb slots per predicate means that a manner verb and a path verb may together predicate a boundary-crossing event. However, in the story of Gã motion the

⁷ For this parameter the Thai data given was the percentage of utterances that contained a ground verb rather than the number of grounds each clause typically had.

protagonist is definitely path. In “thinking for speaking” Gã speakers make use of available grammatical devices to verbalise a distinctly path-flavoured narrative. The habitual coding of path and the emphasis on spatial deixis lends to a narrative style which tracks the movements of protagonists and creates a more real and dynamic story world.

ABBREVIATIONS

2	second person	ITIV	itive
3	third person	MP	manner + path verbs
ASSOC	associative	NEG	negative
COMP	complementizer	NOM	nominalizer
DC	deictic centre	PL	plural
DEF	definite	PRED.PRT	predicative particle
DISTRIB	distributive	PROG	progressive
DP	discourse particle	PRS.PRT	presentative particle
HAB	habitual	PST	past
ICV	inherent complement verb	PURP	purposive
FOC	focus	REL	relativizer
FUT	future	SBJV	subjunctive
IDEO	ideophone	SG	singular
IMPERS	impersonal	TAMP	tense, aspect, mood, polarity
INDEF	indefinite	VENT	ventive
ITER	iterative	QP	question particle

Diacritics: [´]-high tone; [`]-low tone; [^]-falling tone; [!]-tone on following syllable is downstepped

APPENDIX

Sample ‘Frog, Where are you?’ narrative (told by an adult)

bè kò	ní	é-!hó-!é,	òblánùù	fí!óókò	hì shì.
time INDEF	REL	3SG-pass-DEF	gentleman	little INDEF	live down
nèkékèòblánùù	fí!óóné-!é,	è-yè	gbèébíbióó	kè kòkòdé!né.	
this gentleman	little this-DEF	3SG-have	dog small	and frog	
nĩ è-kè	lè é-wò	tò	m̀lì.	dáá	
and 3SG-take	him PERF-put	bottle	inside.	everyday	
lèé!bí-!é	è-tá-à	nèkékèkòkòdé!né-!é	hè nĩ		
morning- DEF	3SG-sit-HAB	this frog this-DEF	body and		
è-kwé-ò	bèníkòkòdé!né-è	shwé-ò	è-há-à.	shì	
3SG-watch-HAB	how frog-DEF	play-HAB	3SG-give-HAB	but	
gbì kómé	nĩ è-tèè	tsũ-m̀lì-wò-ó-!ó,			
day one	REL 3SG-go.PST	room-inside-sleep-NOM-DEF			
kòkòdé!né-è	jè	tó-!ó	m̀lì	nĩ è-jè	kpò
frog-DEF	exit	bottle-DEF	inside	and 3SG-exit	compound

ní	òblánùú-!é	é-wò	ní	è-lé	è-hè		
REL	gentleman-DEF	PERF-sleep	REL	3SG-know.NEG	3SG-body		
bè	kwíáá.	shì	béníjè	tsérè-ò	lèé!bí	!lé	
time	at.all	but	when world	dawn-HAB	morning	DEF	
òblánùú-è	fò	è-hè	á!ké	èè-yà	ní		
gentleman-DEF	turn	3SG-body	COMP	3SG.PROG-go	PURP		
é-yá-kwé	kòkòdén!é-è	yè	tó-ò	mì.	shì	béní	
3SG-ITIV-look	frog-DEF	be.located	bottle-DEF	inside	but	when	
è-tèé-!é	é-!nááá	kòkòdé!né-è	yè	tó-ò			
3SG-go.PST-DEF	3SG-see.NEG	frog-DEF	be.located	bottle-DEF			
mì.	nò	hèwó-!ó	è-tsù	fà.	nì	è-bóì	lè
inside that	because-DEF	3SG-heart	take.off	and	3SG-start	him	
táò-mò	kè-nyìé	tsù-è	mì	fěé.	è-bóì	àspáàtré-è	
search-NOM	take-walk	room-DEF	inside all	3SG-start		shoe-DEF	
mì	kwé-!mó,	sààtsò	hshì	kè	tó-!ó	ní	
inside	look-NOM,	bed	under	and	bottle-DEF	REL	
kòkòdé!né-!é	nòmlí-!é	é-yò	mì-!é	tété	pó.		
frog-DEF	then-DEF	3SG-be.located.HAB	inside-DEF	even	even.		
shì	é-!nááá	lè	yè	hé!kóhé!kó.	nò	hèwó-!ó	
but	3SG-see.NEG	him	be.located	anywhere	that	because-DEF	
è-fèé	è-yìh	á!ké	è-bàá-jè	kpò	ké-tsó		
3SG-do	3SG-mind	COMP	3SG-FUT-exit	compound	take-pass		
sámfèlè	mì	ní	é-!bó	á!ké	àléénó		
window	inside	PURP	3SG-shout	COMP	perhaps		
è-bàá-nù	è-hè	ló.	shì	bé	mì	ní	è-bò-ò
3SG-FUT-hear	3SG-body	QP	but	time	inside	REL	3SG-shout-HAB
kòkòdé!né-!é	nóhù,	àsòmòá!h	è-gbèé-!é	hú	kè		
frog-DEF	immediately	not.knowing	3SG-dog-DEF	too	take		
kòkòdé!né-!é	tó-!ó	é-wò	è-yí!tsó.	àmíó-!ó	nóhù		
frog-DEF	bottle-DEF	PERF-put	3SG-head	just.then-DEF	immediately		
gbèé-è	jè	sámfèlé-è	mì	è-bà-gbèé	!shí.		
dog-DEF	come.from	window-DEF	inside	3SG-VENT-fall	down.		
nì	tó-ò	jwá-!lá.	nì	òblánùú-è	kè	mùsùhshàà	
and	bottle-DEF	break-ITER	and	gentleman-DEF	take	anxiety	
jè	kpò	yè	tsù-è	mì.	nì	è-tèè	
exit	compound	be.located	room-DEF	inside and	3SG-go.PST		

è-yà-mǎ	gbèé-!é.	nǐ	gbèé-è	lé!mǎ	è-kpàí
3SG-ITIV-catch	dog-DEF	and	dog-DEF	lick	3SG-cheeks
à-hè.	nò	hèwó-!ó	àmè-yí-ŋ	àmè-tèè	bóní
ASSOC-body	that	because-DEF	3PL-pass-inside	3PL-go.PST	how
á!féé	nǐ	àmé-!yá	nǐ	àmé-yá-tá!ó	
3PL.IMPERS-do	PURP 3PL-go		PURP 3PL-ITIV-search		
kòkòdé!né-!é	yè	jwéi à-mǐ.	bé	mǐ	nǐ
frog-DEF	be.located	bush ASSOC-inside	time	inside	REL
àmè-tèè-!é,	òblánùù	fí!óó-è	kè	è-gbèé-!é,	àmè fěé
3PL-go.PST-DEF	gentleman	little-DEF	and	3SG-dog-DEF	3PL all
àmè-bó!í	bó-lò-mò	á!ké	àléénó	kòkòdé!né-è	
3PL-start	shout-ITER-NOM	COMP	perhaps	frog-DEF	
bàá-nù	àmè-gbèè nǐ	héfěéhé	nǐ	è-yó!ó	
FUT-hear	3PL-voice	PURP everywhere	REL	3SG-be.located.HAB	
èé-jè	kpò	é-bà	ló.	òblánùù	fí!óó-è
3SG.FUT-exit	compound	3SG.SBJV-come	QP	gentleman	little-DEF
					enter
jwé!i	à-mǐ	nǐ	è-bòté	kpìŋ	bú
bush	ASSOC-inside	and	3SG-enter	guinea.pig	hole
				mǐ	á!ké
				inside	COMP
àléénó	kòkòdé!né-!é	é-yà-bòté	kpìŋ-è	à-bú	
perhaps	frog-DEF	PERF-ITIV-enter	guinea.pig-DEF	ASSOC-hole	
lé-è	mǐ	ló.	shǐ	è-kwé	jé!mé fěé
DEF-DEF	inside QP	but	3SG-look	there all	3SG-see.NEG
				é-!nááá	
nó!kó.	nàkàì	bè	à-mǐ	nóŋŋ	hú-!é
something	that	time	ASSOC-inside	immediately	too-DEF
è-gbèé-è	bà-bó!í	bó-lò-mò	kè-nyìé	tsè-í-è	
3SG-dog-DEF	VENT-start	shout-ITER-NOM	take-walk	tree-PL-DEF	
à-shìshì	á!ké	àléénó	kòkòdé!né-!é	é-yà-bòté	
ASSOC-under	COMP	perhaps	frog-DEF	PERF-ITIV-enter	
lòófòlò-jì à-tsù-í-è	mǐ	ló.	àmí-!ó		
bird-PL	ASSOC-house-PL-DEF	inside	QP	just.then-DEF	
nóŋŋ	kpìŋ-!é	nǐ	yóò	kpìŋ	bu
immediately	guinea.pig-DEF	REL	be.located.HAB	guinea.pig	hole
lé-è mǐ-!é	jè	kpò	nǐ	è-kò	òblánùù
DEF inside-DEF	exit	compound	and	3SG-bite	gentleman
					little-DEF
gú!gǎ.	òblánùù	fí!óó-è	shǐ	je!mé nǐ	è-yà-kò
nose	gentleman	little-DEF	leave there	and	3SG-ITIV-climb
					tree

kíóḡkíóḡ	á!ké	àléénṣ̃	èé-nà	kòkòdé!	né-è	yè
another	COMP	perhaps	3SG.FUT-see	frog-DEF		be.located
tsó-è	nṣ̃	ló.	shì	nàkàì	àmḡ-!ṣ̃	nṣ̃ḡḡ
tree-DEF	top	QP.	but	that	just.then-DEF	immediately
hú-!é	àsò mò á!ḡ	àkṛò má	yè	tsó-è	mì.	nò
too-DEF	not.knowing	eagle	be.located	tree-DEF	inside	that
hèwó-!ṣ̃	àkṛò má-à bò	nì	òblánùù-è	kè		
because-DEF	eagle-DEF shout	and	gentleman-DEF	take		
gbéyèì-shé-mṣ̃	jè	tsó-è	nṣ̃	è-bà-gbèé	shìkpṣ̃ḡ	
fear-be.afraid-NOM	come.from	tree-DEF	top	3SG-VENT-fall	ground	
kè	mùsùḡshàà.	nì	è-gbèé-!é	hú !shá	fòì	ní
with	heart.wrenching	and	3SG-dog-DEF	too	snatch	race PURP
è-yàá-tá!ó		hé!kó	é-!hó.		shì	jé!mé
3SG-ITIV.FUT-search		somewhere	3SG.SBJV-insert		but	there
nṣ̃ḡḡ	àkṛò má-!áé-!fóóó	è-sèè.	shì	è-nyìé		
immediately	eagle-DEF PERF-cut.NEG	3SG-back	but	3SG-walk		
òblánùù-è	sèè ààhùù	kè-yà-shè	bèní	òblánùù-è		
gentleman-DEF	back continuously	take-ITIV-reach	when	gentleman-DEF		
shè té	kò	hè. bé	mì	ní	òblánùù-è	shè té
reach stone INDEF		body time	inside	REL	gentleman-DEF	reach stone
lè	hé-!é,	è-nà	tsè-ì	kè	jwé!ínì	é-bú!á
DEF	body-DEF	3SG-see	tree-PL	and	bush REL	PERF-gather
té-è	hè. nò	hèwó-!ṣ̃	òblánùù	fí!óó-è	yà-mṣ̃	
stone-DEF	body that	because-DEF	gentleman	little-DEF	ITIV-hold	
tsó-è	gbìnè	kò	mì.	àsò mò á!ḡ,	jééé	tsò
tree-DEF	branch	INDEF	inside	not.knowing	be.NEG	tree
kèkè	nì.	shì	mòḡ	àdòwá	àkìòntò	mì
just	PRED.PRT	but	rather	antelope	horn	inside
é-tèè		é-yà-mṣ̃-!mṣ̃-!ṣ̃.				
3SG.PERF-go.PST		3SG.PERF-ITIV-hold-DISTRIB-DEF				
àdòwá-!á	hú	kè	gbéyèì-shé-mṣ̃	fà	kè	
antelope-DEF	too	take	fear-be.afraid-NOM	take.off	with	
òblánùù-!é.	nì	è-tèè	è-yà-tsé	lè	è-fṣ̃	
gentleman-DEF	and	3SG-go.PST	3SG-ITIV-throw	him	3SG-put.down	

nù kò ní !ká jé!mé-!é mli. òblánùù fí!óó-è
 water INDEF REL lie there-DEF inside gentleman little-DEF
bó!í bó-lò-mò. shì è-nááá mòkò ní bàá-héle
 start shout-ITER-NOM but 3SG-get.NEG someone REL FUT-save
lè. àmfó nǎǎ-!é òblánùù fí!óó-è sèlè kè-tèè
 him just.then immediately-DEF gentleman little-DEF swim take-go.PST
nú-è nǎǎbú nǐ è-yà-shè nù-kpó-ò nǎǎ. béní
 water-DEF mouth and 3SG-ITIV-reach water-knot-DEF mouth when
è-shè jémé-!é è-yà-nà tsòkú !kó ní !ká shì
 3SG-reach there-DEF 3SG-ITIV-see tree.stump INDEF REL lie down
yè nú-è nǎǎ. nǐ è-kèé gbèé-!é á!ké
 be.located water-DEF mouth and 3SG-tell dog-DEF COMP
gbèé-!é á-féé díóó á!ké àléénǎ kòkòdé!né-è àá!hí
 dog-DEF SBJV-do quiet COMP perhaps frog-DEF FUT-be
jémè ló. shì àmfó-!ó nǎǎ-!ó nǎǎ kòkòdé!né-mà mí
 there QP but just.then-DEF immediately-DEF PRS.PRT frog mother
kè kòkòdé!nébí ní àmè-pètè tsó-è àfá. kè kòkòdé!né
 and frog child REL 3PL-lean log-DEF side and frog
bí-lí ní fátà hè. òblánùù-è ná mǐshèè ná!ákpá.
 child-PL REL add body gentleman-DEF get happiness very.much
jé!mé nǎǎ nǐ è-mó kòkòdé!nébí-!lé-!é ékómé
 there immediately and 3SG-catch frog child-DEF-DEF one
hú yè nú-è nǎǎ nǐ è-bóì àmè nìnè-fò-ò
 too be.located water-DEF mouth and 3SG-start 3PL hand-throw-NOM
á!ké è-nìnè é-shè è-kòkòdé!né-ènò. àdèsá-à
 COMP 3SG-hand PERF-reach 3SG-frog-DEF top story-DEF
nǎǎgbèè nǐ.
 end this

‘Once upon a time, there lived a little gentleman. This little gentleman has a small dog and a frog. And he has put him in a bottle. Every morning, he sits by this frog and watches how the frog plays. But one day when he was sleeping in the room, the frog exited the bottle and got out. And the gentleman is asleep and is completely unaware of what is going on around him. At daybreak the gentleman turned around to look at the frog in the bottle, but when he went (to the bottle) he did not see the frog in the bottle. So he panicked and he started searching for him all over the room. He started to look in the shoes, under the bed and even the bottle where the frog was. But he couldn’t find him anywhere. So he made up his mind to go out through the window

and shout so that perhaps he (the frog) will hear him (the little gentleman). But just as he was shouting for the frog, unknown to him, his dog had put the frog's bottle over his head. Just then the dog fell from the window and the bottle broke. And the gentleman anxiously exited the room and went and held his dog. And the dog licked his cheeks.

So off they went to go and look for the frog in the bushes. When they went, the little gentleman and his dog, they both started shouting so that perhaps the frog would hear their voices and wherever he was he would come out. The little gentleman entered the bush and then he entered a guinea pig's hole to see if perhaps the frog has entered the guinea pig's hole. But he looked all over there and didn't find anything. At that very moment his dog started barking as he walked under the trees, in order to see if perhaps the frog had entered the birds' nests. Just then, the guinea pig in the guinea pig hole exited and bit the little gentleman's nose. The little gentleman left that place and went to climb another tree. Perhaps he would see the frog on the tree. But at that same time, unknown to him, there was an eagle in the tree. The eagle screamed and out of fright the gentleman fell from the tree to the ground. It was heart-wrenching. And his dog ran off suddenly to go and find somewhere to hide. But right then, the eagle did not turn around but he chased the gentleman continuously until the gentleman reached a certain stone. When the gentleman reached the stone, he saw trees and bush around the stone. So the little gentleman went and held on to one of the branches of the tree. Unknown to him, it wasn't just a tree but it was the horn of an antelope that he had gone and held. The antelope out of fear took off with the gentleman and he went and threw him into some water. The little gentleman started screaming but he couldn't find anyone to save him. Just then he swam to the edge of the water. When he got there he saw a tree stump lying at the water's edge. And he told the dog that he should be quiet because perhaps the frog might be there. But just then there were a mother frog and a baby frog leaning on one side of the log. And there were some more baby frogs in addition. The gentleman was very happy. Right there he caught one baby frog at the water's edge and he started waving since he had found his frog. This is the end of the story.

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