

Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation

Grammar Sketch of the Sari Language: Noun Classes

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Language: Sari, spoken in the Misaje Subdivision, Donga-Mantung Division,
in the North West Region of Cameroon
ISO 639-3 language code: asj

Map by Colin Davis

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Contents

<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	<i>iii</i>
<i>List of Diacritics</i>	<i>iii</i>
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>iv</i>
1 Introduction	1
1.1 <i>Name of the language</i>	<i>1</i>
1.2 <i>Genetic affiliation</i>	<i>1</i>
1.3 <i>Sociolinguistic situation</i>	<i>1</i>
1.3.1 <i>Demography</i>	<i>1</i>
1.3.2 <i>Language viability</i>	<i>1</i>
1.3.3 <i>Language attitudes</i>	<i>1</i>
1.3.4 <i>Multilingualism</i>	<i>1</i>
1.4 <i>Previous research in the language</i>	<i>2</i>
1.5 <i>Corpus and nature of the research</i>	<i>3</i>
2 Phonology - Orthography	4
2.1 <i>Phonemes</i>	<i>4</i>
2.2 <i>Orthography rules regarding sounds</i>	<i>7</i>
2.3 <i>Writing words with grammatical tone</i>	<i>8</i>
2.3.1 <i>Distinction between singular and plural</i>	<i>8</i>
2.3.2 <i>The use of n'y and η'w</i>	<i>8</i>
3 The noun class system	10
3.1 <i>Introduction</i>	<i>10</i>
3.2 <i>Noun Classes and Concord</i>	<i>11</i>
3.3 <i>The Sari Noun classes and Genders</i>	<i>15</i>
3.3.1 <i>Noun classes 1 (wu) and 2 (be)</i>	<i>16</i>
3.3.2 <i>Noun classes 3 (wu) and 4 (yi)</i>	<i>17</i>
3.3.3 <i>Noun classes 5 (chi) and 6 (yi)</i>	<i>18</i>
3.3.4 <i>Noun class 6a (me)</i>	<i>20</i>
3.3.5 <i>Noun classes 7 (ki) and 8 (bi)</i>	<i>21</i>
3.3.5.1 <i>Augmentative</i>	<i>22</i>
3.3.6 <i>Noun class 9 (yi) and 10 (yi)</i>	<i>23</i>
3.3.7 <i>Single class gender 4, 6 or 10?</i>	<i>24</i>
3.3.8 <i>Noun classes 14 (bu) and 25 (me)</i>	<i>24</i>
3.3.9 <i>Noun classes 19 (fi) and 18a (mu)</i>	<i>25</i>
3.3.9.1 <i>Diminutive</i>	<i>26</i>
3.3.10 <i>Gender 19 (fi)/8 (bi)</i>	<i>27</i>
3.3.11 <i>Locative genders 16 (fe), 17 (lu), 18 (le) and 23 (ye)</i>	<i>28</i>
3.3.11.1 <i>Use of locative nouns</i>	<i>30</i>
3.3.11.2 <i>Gender 16 (fe)</i>	<i>31</i>
3.3.11.3 <i>Gender 17 (lu)</i>	<i>32</i>
3.3.11.4 <i>Gender 18 (le)</i>	<i>32</i>
3.3.11.5 <i>Gender 23 (ye)</i>	<i>33</i>

3.3.12 Overview Sari noun classes	33
4 Conclusion	36
References.....	37
<i>Appendix 1 Wordlist of nouns in gender 3/4.....</i>	<i>39</i>
<i>Appendix 2 Wordlist of nouns in gender 5/6.....</i>	<i>41</i>
<i>Appendix 3 Wordlist of nouns in gender 7/8.....</i>	<i>42</i>
<i>Appendix 4 Wordlist of nouns with stems occurring in two genders, one of them being gender 19/18a</i>	<i>49</i>

List of Abbreviations

Ø-	Zero prefix	V	Vowel
#σ	Word initial syllable	H	High tone
???	Unanalyzed form	L	Low tone (falling)
1s	First person singular	L°	Non-falling Low tone
2s	Second person singular	LX	Falling Low tone
3s	Third person singular	M	Mid tone
1p	First person plural	L M	two syllables, L and M
2p	Second person plural	LM	one syllable, LM rise
3p	Third person plural	^H	Floating High tone
AGR	Agreement marker	^L	Floating Low tone
AM	Associative marker	(L)	Optional Low boundary tone
AC	Adjectival Concord		
ACP	Associative Completer ¹		
c1	Class 1		
c2	Class 2		
c3	Class 3		
	etc.		
C	Consonant		
Cw	Labialized consonant		
CL	Class		
GR	Gerund		
Inf	Infinitive marker		
Loc	Locative		
N-	Nasal prefix		
Nom	Nominalizer		
PCP	Prepositional Completer		
Pos	Possessive pronoun		
SP	Locative Specifier		

List of Diacritics

Ṽ or ṽ	Nasalized vowel
˘	Downstep
ṽ	Low tone
ṽ´	Non falling Low tone
ṽ	Mid tone
ṽ	High tone
ṽ	Low-High rising tone
ṽ	Low-Mid rising tone
ṽ	Mid-High rising tone
ṽ	High-Low falling tone
ṽ	Mid-Low falling tone
ṽ	High-Mid falling tone
ṽṽ or ṽṽ̀	Low-High-Low rising-falling tone
-	morpheme break
#	boundary
~	free variation
[]	phonetic transcription

¹ Second part of associative marker

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1 Introduction

This sketch describes the noun classes of the Sari language. In the first chapter the language, its speakers, and the method of research are described. Chapter 2 describes the writing system of the Sari language, and the way in which Sari words in this paper are written.

In chapter 3 the extensive noun class system is described. These noun classes include four locative classes, locative classes being one of the distinctive features of Beboid languages. The final chapter, chapter 4, is the conclusion of the paper.

1.1 Name of the language

Sari is a language spoken in the Misaje-Subdivision, Donga-Mantung Division, North West Region of Cameroon, West Africa. Dieu and Renaud (1983) in the Atlas Linguistique du Cameroun (ALCAM) list the language as: Nsari [874]. The Ethnologue (Lewis et al. 2015) has Sari as language name, and lists the following as alternate language names: Akweto, Nsari, Pesaa, Saari, Sali (ISO 639-3 language code: asj).

1.2 Genetic affiliation

Sari has the following genetic affiliation: Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-Congo, Benue-Congo, Wide Bantu, Southern, Beboid, Eastern (Lewis et al. 2015).

1.3 Sociolinguistic situation

1.3.1 Demography

The language is spoken by the Besaa people, who live predominately in Akweto, Kamine, and Mbissa. There are approximately 7,600 (Lewis et al. 2015) speakers of the language, although the exact number is unknown as there are reportedly sizeable clusters of people living outside the area, particularly in the Southwest Region.

1.3.2 Language viability

Sari is spoken by young people as well as old people and is the language of choice in Sari homes. It is also frequently used in local churches and during community events.

1.3.3 Language attitudes

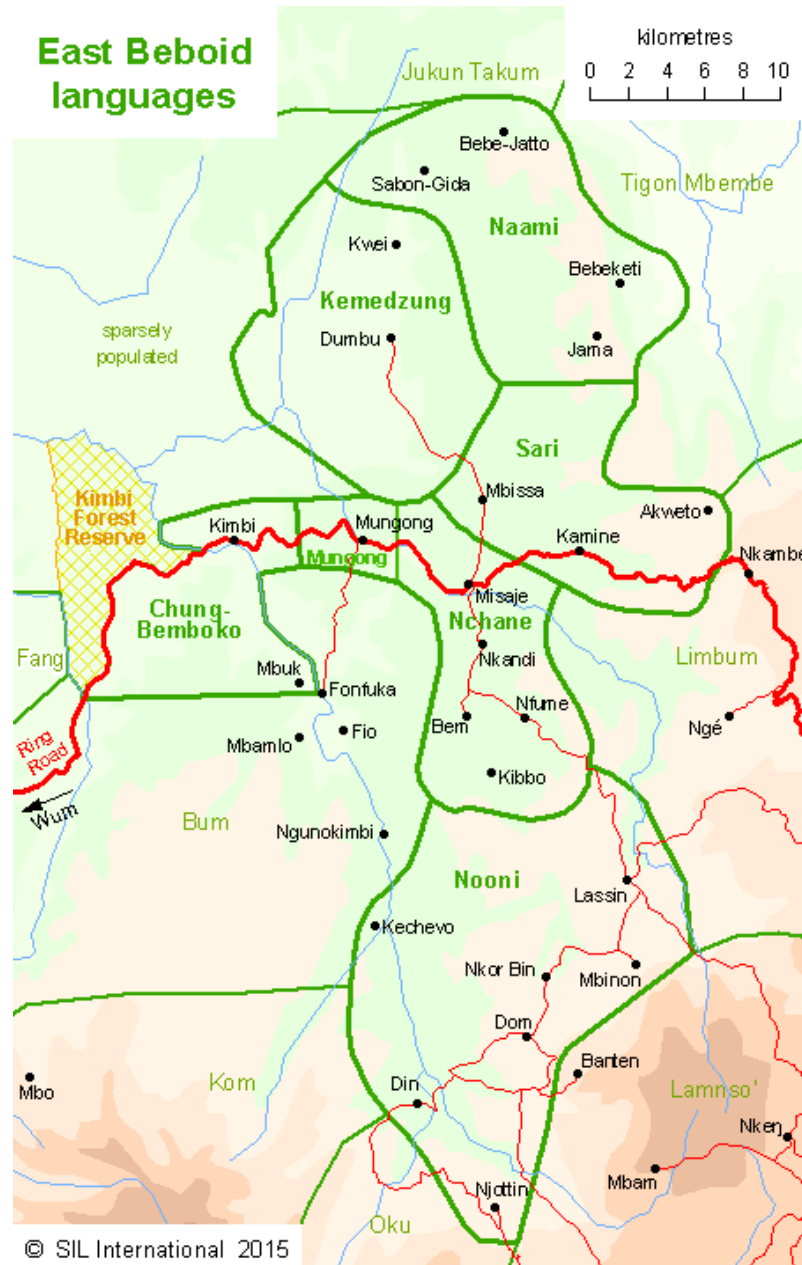
The Sari people are positively disposed toward their language, the language is used daily in all domains of life.

1.3.4 Multilingualism

The language of wider communication is Pidgin English, and is used to communicate with people from other languages for certain aspects of daily life. The youth and also some older

people tend to mix Sari with Pidgin English. Most people from Kamine and Mbissa have learned to understand Nchane, spoken in Misaje.

The neighbouring languages are Nchane, Bebe, and Kemezung within the East Beboid linguistic sub-family, and Limbum of the Nkambe linguistic sub-family (see language map below).



(map by Colin Davis. SIL 2015) Thick lines show language boundaries, and the Ring Road. Large names in bold print are other Eastern Beboid languages, large names in regular print are languages from different language families.

1.4 Previous research in the language

Other research into the grammar of the Sari language has been done by Jean-Marie Hombert, who studied the noun classes of the Beboid languages (including Sari) Hombert

(1980). Other research into the Sari language comprises a phonology (Eyoh 2007) an orthography guide (Eyoh and Hedinger 2006, revised in 2011 by Boutwell), and a tone paper on the Sari noun phrase (Langhout 2012). The orthography guide is being updated by the author. Parallel to this research Ms. Mengnjo has written a paper on spatial relations in Sari (Mengnjo 2015).

1.5 Corpus and nature of the research

The current paper is an effort to describe the noun classes in Sari. Data for the research comes primarily from a number of Sari texts of various genres, as well as from elicited sentences and words collected over a period of four years, from 2011 to 2015, while the author was living in Misaje. The texts and other language data were collected with the help of several language consultants, most notably NFORMI Wilson, Pa NDONGO Joseph, NGARIWA Lawrence, and translators NKENDA Boniface, NKIMI Innocent, MBORO Victor and NDUBI Divine. The translators collected most of the texts, and NFORMI Wilson Tatch and the translators transcribed them using the Sari orthography, and translated them into English. During a grammar workshop in November 2012 the first part of the data was collected, and NFORMI Wilson has completed paradigms to include all the noun classes.

2 Phonology - Orthography

In order to make this paper accessible for the Besaa people I will use the Sari orthography with minor changes. The orthography has not yet been completely standardized, some words can be spoken (and written) with either a long or a short vowel. In this paper both forms are written, with a ~ in between.

Sari speaking people who are familiar with the orthography can skip this chapter and continue with chapter 3.

2.1 Phonemes

The phonology is described in Julius A. Eyoh (2007). Below a summary is given:

Sari has the following phonemes.

Consonants:

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Labio-velar	Glottal
VI Stops	p		t		k	kp	
Vd Stops	b		d		g	gb	
VI Affricates			ts	tʃ			
Vd Affricates			dz	dʒ			
VI Fricatives		f	s	ʃ			h
Nasals	m		n	ɲ	ŋ		
Lateral			l				
Approximants				j		w	

Contrary to what is presented in the phonology, I found that [r] is an allophone of [l], with personal variation between the intervocalic [l] and [r]. It will still be written as r. /h/ occurs mainly in exclamations and loanwords.

Phoneme	Allophone	Grapheme	Initial Position	Medial position	Final position
/p/	[p]	P p	p ampa oil tin	pe p aa pa p er	—
/b/	[b]	B b	b ige teeth	b abi ba b	—
/t/	[t]	T t	t a stones	kik oti ulcer	—
/d/	[d]	D d	d u mortar	kido o caterpillar	—

Phoneme	Allophone	Grapheme	Initial Position	Medial position	Final position
/k/	[k]	K k	ke <i>bowl</i>	leke <i>beg</i>	—
/g/	[g]	G g	gaŋ <i>okra</i>	bugoo <i>marriage</i>	—
/kp/	[kp]	Kp kp	kpe <i>trouble</i>	fokpɔŋ <i>harmattan</i>	—
/gb/	[gb]	Gb gb	gbofi <i>bark (dog)</i>	—	—
/ts/	[ts]	Ts ts	tse <i>kernel</i>	dzatse <i>leave</i>	—
/dz/	[dz]	Dz dz	dze <i>path</i>	kidzɔ <i>grasshopper</i>	—
/tʃ/	[tʃ]	Ch ch	chikuu <i>squirrel</i>	biche <i>look</i>	—
/dʒ/	[dʒ]	J j	jobe <i>sun</i>	bujɔŋ <i>good</i>	—
/f/	[f]	F f	finiŋ <i>bird</i>	tafi <i>ladle, spoon</i>	—
/s/	[s]	S s	seri <i>deep</i>	tasa <i>dish</i>	—
/ʃ/	[ʃ]	Sh sh	shen <i>liver</i>	tɔʃshe <i>spread out to dry</i>	—
/h/	[h]	H h	hebee! <i>exclamation</i>	wohoo <i>no</i>	—
/l/	[l] [r]	L l R r	la <i>compound</i>	filɔŋ² <i>story</i> nduru³ <i>corn</i>	—
/w/	[w]	W w	wi <i>person</i>	kiwaa <i>mouth</i>	—
/j/	[j]~[ʒ]	Y y	yɔ <i>snake</i>	kiyɔ <i>elephant</i>	—

² Stem-initial, stressed, giving [l] between vowels

³ Not stem-initial, not stressed, giving [r] between vowels

Phoneme	Allophone	Grapheme	Initial Position	Medial position	Final position
/m/	[m]	M m	mɛɛŋ <i>oil</i>	fimuu <i>cat</i>	—
/n/	[n]	N n	nime <i>work</i>	tene <i>clay pot</i>	—
/ɲ/	[ɲ]	Ny ny	nyaŋ <i>animal, meat</i>	binyi <i>buttocks</i>	—
/ŋ/	[ŋ]	Ŋ ŋ	ŋɔɾɛ <i>take greedily</i>	gɛŋɛ <i>razor</i>	chigɔŋ <i>disease</i>

Prenasalization: All consonants except for the h and the r can be prenasalized.

Consonants can be palatalized or labialized, sometimes in combination with prenasalization.

Vowels

There are 7 long and 7 short vowels.

	Front	Central	Back
High	i, ii		u, uu
Mid high	e, ee		o, oo
Mid low	ɛ, ɛɛ		ɔ, ɔɔ
Low		a, aa	

Phoneme	Allophone	Grapheme	Initial Position	Medial Position	Final Position
/i/	[i]	I i	—	bine <i>dance</i>	jumi <i>song</i>
/e/	[e]	E e	—	beŋ <i>accept, agree</i>	leembe <i>orange</i>
/ɛ/	[ɛ]	ɛ ɛ	ɛ <i>it is</i>	yeŋ <i>my</i>	kene <i>proverb</i>
/a/	[a]	A a	ayi <i>no</i>	ŋgafu <i>insult</i>	fika <i>cup</i>
/u/	[u]	U u	—	munteŋ <i>small</i>	kiku <i>beehive</i>
/o/	[o]	O o	—	mbose <i>resemblance</i>	ŋgo <i>canoe</i>

Phoneme	Allophone	Grapheme	Initial Position	Medial Position	Final Position
/ɔ:/	[ɔ]	Ɔ ɔ	ɔ <i>you</i>	gɔŋɛ <i>spear</i>	bukɔ <i>ladder</i>

Phoneme	Allophone	Grapheme	Initial Position	Medial Position	Final Position
/i:/	[i:]	II ii	iiŋ <i>yes</i>	dziin <i>pig</i>	bii <i>ask</i>
/e:/	[e:]	EE ee	—	sheen <i>splinter</i>	shee <i>fowl</i>
/ɛ:/	[ɛ:]	EE ɛɛ	—	yɛɛŋ <i>same</i>	tɛɛ <i>three</i>
/a:/	[a:]	AA aa	—	waan <i>gecko</i>	gaa <i>red</i>
/u:/	[u:]	UU uu	—	ntuun <i>cave</i>	tuu <i>reply</i>
/o:/	[o:]	OO oo	—	ntoon <i>cane rat</i>	kikoo <i>head</i>
/ɔ:/	[ɔ:]	ƆƆ ɔɔ	—	ndɔɔŋ <i>throat</i>	kɔɔ <i>anus</i>

2.2 Orthography rules regarding sounds

The orthographic symbols which are different from the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) have the following equivalents:

IPA: Transcription:

[ŋm̩k̩p̩] ŋkp

[ŋm̩gb̩] ŋgb

There is no syllabic nasal in Sari. Prenasalised consonants are written as a sequence of the nasal and the consonant, for instance:

[ⁿt] nt

Nasalization on vowels is predictable and therefore not written at all. When a syllable ends in a nasal, the vowel is nasalized.

Palatalization is written as /i/ :

bio [bʲo] ‘raffia’

Labialization is written as /w/ :

bwe [bʷɛ] ‘birth celebration’

2.3 Writing words with grammatical tone

In the Sari orthography tone is not written. In order to distinguish between certain grammatical forms that only differ in tone melody, there are at the moment three distinctions that are worth noting: the difference between singular and plural for nouns of noun gender 9/10, and the difference between a verb form in 1st person singular and 3rd person singular.

2.3.1 Distinction between singular and plural

The singular and plural forms from nouns in gender 9/10 differ only in tone. For instance

(1) [nsò] ‘leather drum’, class 9
 [ns̄] ‘leather drums’, class 10

In the Sari orthography tone is not written, but the plural form gets a diacritic, for instance:

(2) nsò ‘leather drum’, class 9
 nsó ‘leather drums’, class 10

In this paper we will write grammatical tone as in example (2). Extra tonal information is written with letters H=High, M=Mid, L=Low and LX is Low falling (see abbreviations for more information). When writing tones with a space between the two tones (eg. H L), it means that the tones are realized on two different syllables, and tones written together means they are realized on one syllable. So MH means one syllable, tone rises from Mid to High, while M H means two syllables, one Mid and one High toned. In some occasions the Sari expression will be given as in example (1), bracketed with [and] to show that this is not orthographically written, but phonetically.

2.3.2 The use of *n’y* and *ŋ’w*

There are some spelling rules concerning glides that are nasalized. This concerns the prefix of the infinitive or gerund.

A nasalization prefix before a /y/ gives the sound [j̃]. This is written as /n’y/ to distinguish it from /ny/ [ɲ]

yɔŋgi [j̃ɔŋgí] ‘praise!’
n’yɔŋje [j̃ɔŋdʒɛ] ‘praising, praise (noun)’

nyimise	[ɲim̄isè]	‘to extinguish’
n'yimise	[ʃim̄isè]	‘to revive’

[w̃] is written as /ɲ'w/ to distinguish it from /ɲw/

wo	[wō]	‘kill! ’
ɲ'wo	[w̃ò]	‘to kill, killing’
ɲwaaɲ	[ɲwāaɲ]	‘bamboo’
ɲ'waaɲu	[w̃āaɲū]	‘to search’

3 The noun class system

3.1 Introduction

Nouns are words that refer to persons, animals, things, and ideas, either concrete or abstract. Examples of Sari nouns are *nyuŋ* 'man', *bi* 'goat', *ŋwaŋwa* 'sugar cane', *bembeche* 'thoughts', *bugoo* 'wedding, marriage'.

Sari nouns have a **stem**, giving the basic meaning of the word, and they can have a noun class **affix** that has a grammatical function like 'singular', 'plural', 'uncountable', 'diminutive', 'location'. For instance the word *finsɔɔ* 'smallest drum' has an affix *fi-* at the beginning of the word, also called a **prefix**. This prefix *fi-* shows that the word is singular -there is only one drum- and that it is small. The stem, which gives the main meaning of the word, is *nsɔ* 'drum'. This word *finsɔɔ* also has a **suffix**, that is an affix at the end of the word, *-ɔ*. This suffix goes together with the prefix. In this case the stem *nsɔ* is a word in itself, but often the stem can not go without a prefix. In the word *finiŋ* 'bird' the prefix is *fi-* and the stem is *niŋ*.

Nouns can be grouped into **noun classes** according to the affix and the agreement (see below) that they take. In linguistic literature each noun class is given a number. The noun class with words starting with *fi-* for instance has number 19. Examples of words in this noun class are *finiŋ* 'bird', *fɪŋkpaki* 'saucer' and *finsɔɔ* 'smallest drum'.

Words modifying nouns (like 'this', 'my', 'new') take a prefix or concord according to the class of the noun. This is called **agreement**: the form of the modifier agrees with the noun class of the modified noun. For instance for words in noun class 1, like *naŋ* 'cow', the prefix is \emptyset -, meaning that there is no prefix. The way to say 'this cow' is shown in example (3) and 'our cow' in example (4).

(3) *naŋ* *wuni*
 c1.cow c1.this
 'this cow'

(4) *naŋ* *wuseŋ*
 c1.cow c1.our
 'our cow'

In linguistic papers the part that is agreeing is often written with a hyphen, to show which part is the concord and which part is the stem of the modifier. For example (4) this would look as follows:

(5) \emptyset -*naŋ* *wu-seŋ*
 c1-cow c1-our
 'our cow'

The noun class numbering in this work is informed by Hombert (1980:83-98), which closely follows the Bantu numbering established by bantuists (Welmers 1973:165). One notable exception is class 25, which appears to be a creation of Hombert. Hombert’s noun class 26 has been renamed to 18a, showing that the concord follows proto Bantu class 18, but it is not a locative class like noun class 18. For the four locative classes (16, 17, 18 and 23) the numbering as used by Welmers (1973:167) is followed.

In section 3.2 an overview is given of the different noun classes and their concord or agreement. In section 3.3 the noun classes with their affixes and noun class pairings (genders) will be described. Of special interest are locative noun classes (3.3.11).

3.2 Noun Classes and Concord

Sari has nineteen noun classes, divided into seven singular and seven plural classes, one mass noun class, and four locative classes.

In table 1 an example of each noun class is given. In the final three columns of the table the Sari words for ‘this’, ‘our’ and ‘three’ are given, in the form that fits the class of the noun to the left. Looking at the first row of the table, it shows that in class 1, the prefix is \emptyset -, meaning that there is no prefix, *naŋ* ‘cow’ is a word in this noun class, the corresponding word for ‘this’ is *wuni*, and the corresponding word for ‘our’ is *wuseŋ*. *Cw-* means that the first consonant is labialized, which is written as a *w* following the first consonant.

Low tone of prefixes are raised to Mid before a stem with a melody that starts with a Mid or High tone, there are some exceptions in noun class 2.

Class	Prefix + tone	Example	Gloss	‘this’	‘our’	‘three’
1	\emptyset - Cw-	<i>naŋ</i> <i>kwεεŋ</i>	cow woman	<i>wuni</i> ⁴	<i>wuseŋ</i>	
2	<i>bε-</i> [L] <i>bu-</i> [L]	<i>benaj</i> <i>bukεεŋ</i>	cows women	<i>bani</i>	<i>bεseŋ</i>	<i>betεetu</i>
3	Cw-	<i>gwε</i>	chin	<i>wuni</i> ⁵	<i>wuseŋ</i>	
4	\emptyset -	<i>gε</i>	chins	<i>yini</i>	<i>yiseŋ</i>	<i>tεε</i>

⁴ Low toned

⁵ High toned

Class	Prefix + tone	Example	Gloss	'this'	'our'	'three'
5	∅- chi- [L]	nunu chita	knee fishbone	chini	chiseŋ	
6	∅- (final Vowel deletion)	nuŋ	knees	yini	yiseŋ	taa
6a	(mɛ)N- [L]	mfwe mɛŋkaŋ	sand peace plant	mani	meseŋ	
7	ki- [L] ki- -ɛ ⁶ [L]	kifɔ kiŋkɛɛ kimfime	hat cripple lip, beak	kini	kiseŋ	⁷
8	bi- [L] bi- -u ⁸ [L]	bifɔ biŋkɛɛ bimfimu	hats cripples lips, beaks	bini	biseŋ	biteetu
9	[L]	dze	road	yini ⁹	yiseŋ	
10	[H]	dzé	roads	yini	yiseŋ	shɛɛ
14	bu- [L]	bushi	face	buni	buseŋ	
16	fɛ- [L]	fɛkeŋ	wrist	fɛni	feseŋ	feteetu ¹⁰
17	lu- ~ li- [L]	luŋgooŋ ~ liŋgooŋ	shore	luni ~ lini	luseŋ ~ liseŋ	luteetu ~ liteetu
18	le- [L]	leŋgwiŋ	shin	lani	leseŋ	leteetu
18a	mu(N)- [L] mu(N)- -u ¹¹ [L]	mulaŋ mumfimu	cooking pots small he-goats	muni	museŋ	munteetu ¹²

⁶ Class 7b has a suffix -ɛ, which is deleted if a multisyllabic stem is ending in a vowel. See also the footnote for class 8b.

⁷ Noun class 7 is not a plural. However, counting without reference to a specific noun would give number 'three' as *kitɛɛɛ*.

⁸ Plurals with disyllabic roots in class 8b have the last vowel from their singular changed to u. For instance *kigɔɔɛ* / *bigɔɔnu* 'hut', *kikoma* / *bikommu* 'silk-cotton tree'. Class 8b contains almost all nouns from class 7 ending in -ɛ, two nouns ending in -a, and one ending in -ɔ. For all pairs of gender 7/8 see appendix 1.

⁹ This concord prefix is low toned for class 9, and High toned for classes 4, 6 and 10.

¹⁰ Some speakers allow counting for nouns in classes 16, 17, and 18, for other speakers these words are uncountable.

¹¹ See footnote 8 for noun class 8 above.

Class	Prefix + tone	Example	Gloss	'this'	'our'	'three'
19	fi(N)- [L]	filaŋ	cooking pot	fini	fiɛɛŋ	
	fi(N)- -u ¹³ [L]	fimfimu	small he-goat			
23	∅-	kwiŋ	floor, down	yani	yɛɛŋ	
25	mɛN- [L]	menshi	faces	mani	mɛɛŋ	mɛntɛtu

Table 1. Sari noun class prefixes¹⁴, suffixes and concord

Nouns are typically marked by a prefix to indicate the number of the noun (ie, singular vs. plural). Notable exceptions in Sari are classes 1 and 5a (which have a “zero prefix”), 3 and 4 (which are marked by the presence and absence of labialization respectively), 6 (which has a subtracting suffix), and 9 and 10 where we speak of a floating tone prefix.

The table above shows that noun classes 6a and 25 are in fact similar, except that noun class 25 has the prefix mɛN- but not N-. Because noun class 6a consists of mass nouns, we will keep these two noun classes separate.

Below a table with more concords is given, corresponding with the table for Nooni in Hyman (1981:33). The words are written with tone, showing the different prefixes. ^w means labialization of the first consonant (normally written Cw, so ^w-fɛŋ is in Sari orthography fwɛŋ), ^y means palatalization of the first consonant (normally written Ci, so ^y-fɛŋ is in Sari orthography fiɛŋ).

Cl.	Noun prefix	Pro-noun	Associative marker	'his'	'this'	'another'	'new'	'one'/'four'
1	∅- Cw-	wù	wù	wè	wù-nî	wú-mù	wú ^w -fɛŋ	∅ - mù ⁴ kpāŋ
2	bè- bù-	bè	bē- -lé` ¹⁵	bêe ¹⁶	bá-nî	bá-mū ~ bé-mū	bé fɛŋ	bē-nɛɛ

¹² Note the mun- prefix instead of mu-.

¹³ Like in noun class 8 there are nouns in gender 19/18a that have their last vowel changed to an -u. Only for stems that also can take other noun class prefixes is clear whether the final /u/ is part of the stem or not. For instance: ki-mfimɛ 'he-goat', bi-mfimu 'he-goats', fi-mfimu 'small he-goat', mu-mfimu 'small he-goats'.

¹⁴ Low tone of prefixes are raised to Mid before a stem with a melody that starts with a Mid or High tone, there are some exceptions in noun class 2.

Cl.	Noun prefix	Pro-noun	Associative marker	‘his’	‘this’	‘another’	‘new’	‘one’/’four’
3	Cw-	wù	wū	wêe	wú-nî	wú-mū	wú ^w -fēŋ	wū-mū ⁺ ŋkpāŋ
4	Ø-	yì	yī-	yêe	yí-nî	yí-mī	yí ^y -fēŋ	Ø -nêe
5	Ø- chì-	chì	chī- -lé`	chêe	chí-nî	chí-mū	chí fēŋ	chī-mū ⁺ ŋkpāŋ
6	Ø- (final Vowel deletion)	yì	yī-	yêe	yí-nî	yí-mī	yí ^y -fēŋ	Ø -nâa ¹⁷
6a	(mè)N-	mè	mē- -lé`	mêe	má-nî	má-mū ~ mé-mū	mé fēŋ	
7	kì- kì- -e ¹⁸	kì	kī- -lé`	kêe	kí-nî	kí-mū ~ kú-mū	kí fēŋ	kī-mū ⁺ ŋkpāŋ
8	bì- bì- -u ¹⁹	bì	bī- -lé`	biêe	bí-nî	bí-mū	bí fēŋ	bī-nêe
9	`	yì	yì-	yè	yì-nî	yí-mì	yí ^y -fēŋ	Ø - mù ⁺ ŋkpāŋ
10	´	yì	yī-	yêe	yí-nî	yí-mī	yí ^y -fēŋ	^y -nêe
14	bù-	bū	bū- -lé`	bwêe	bú-nî	bú-mū	bú fēŋ	bū-mū ⁺ ŋkpāŋ
16	fê-	fê	fē- -lé`	fêe	fé-nî	fé-mū	fé fēŋ	fē-nêe
17	lù- ~ lì- ²⁰	lù~ lī	lī- -lé` ~ lū--lé`	lêe	lú-nî ~ lí-nî	lú-mū ~ lí-mū	lú fēŋ ~ lí fēŋ	lī-nêe ~ lū-nêe

¹⁵ -le is a clitic, attaching at the end of the noun phrase. There are different allomorphs depending on the last syllable of the word it attaches to.

¹⁶ The [HL] surface tone for ‘his’ is underlyingly probably [MH], see Langhout (2012).

¹⁷ maybe *nεε-a*, but *ε* becoming *a* also happens when *tεε* ‘c5.small stone’, loses its (final) vowel and becomes *ta* ‘c6.small stones’.

¹⁸ See footnote previous table.

¹⁹ See footnote previous table.

Cl.	Noun prefix	Pro-noun	Associative marker	'his'	'this'	'another'	'new'	'one'/'four'
18	lè-	lè	lē- -lé`	lêe	lá-nî	lá-mū ~ lé-mū	lé fɛŋ	lē-nɛɛ
18a	mù(N)- mù(N)- -u ²¹	mù	mū- -lé`	mwêe	mú-nî	mú-mū	mú fɛŋ	mū-nɛɛ
19	fì(N)- fì(N)- -u ²²	fì	fì- -lé`	fîe	fí-nî	fí-mū	fí fɛŋ	fì- mū'ŋkpāŋ
23	∅-	yè	yē- -lé`	yêe	yá-nî	yá-mū ~ yé-mū	yé fɛŋ	yē-nɛɛ??
25	mènN-	mè	mē- -lé`	mêe	má-nî	má-mū ~ mé-mū	mé fɛŋ	mē-nɛɛ

Table 2. Sari noun class prefixes and concord, extended table

This table shows that the only difference in concord between noun class 4, 6 and 10 is in the numbers two to five. And this distinction seems to become less, since many younger people will use the concord of noun class 10 in case of uncertainty. Class 10 is the largest class, with nouns that are commonly counted. It looks like classes 4, 6 and 10 are collapsing into one class, noun class 10.

3.3 The Sari Noun classes and Genders

Most Sari nouns belong to seven distinct noun class pairings or **genders**. 'Noun class' refers to a system of classification in which all nouns are grouped, with the nouns of each group or class receiving an affix and concord elements distinct to its class. For instance all nouns of noun class 7 start with the prefix *ki-*, like *kifɔ* 'hat', and all nouns of noun class 8 start with the prefix *bi-*, like *bifɔ* 'hats'. 'Noun gender' refers to noun class pairings, consisting of singular and plural forms of the same noun. Gender 7/8 is the pairing of singular class 7 with plural class 8. There are nouns that are perceived as not countable, and therefore don't occur as singular and plural. They only belong to one noun class. This happens for instance with mass nouns like *shaan* 'corn beer', or abstract nouns like *cheɛŋ* 'truth'. These genders

²⁰ *Li* and *lu* are interchangeable for any speaker, in one sentence you only use one of the two. However, one can't start a sentence with one and end with another.

²¹ See footnote previous table.

²² See footnote previous table.

are called **single class genders**, as opposed to **double class genders** with a singular and a plural class.

Genders 1/2, 7/8, 9/10 and 19/18a are double class genders with the most words, while gender 14/25 is the smallest. Genders 6a and 14 are the largest single class genders.

Since not all noun classes are evident just by their prefix, for each noun class in the next sections the corresponding pronoun is given in the heading.

3.3.1 Noun classes 1 (*wu*) and 2 (*be*)

Nouns in class 1 have a zero prefix, nouns in class 2 have a prefix *bε-*.

The double class gender 1/2 pairs a singular in class 1 with a plural in class 2. There is a single class gender 1, but not a single class gender 2.

Many of the nouns in gender 1/2 refer to people. Most verbal nouns (mainly the gerund form or infinitive) are in gender 1, and borrowed words are in gender 1/2 or gender 1 if uncountable.

Table 3 shows nouns in the single class gender 1, and table 4 shows words in the double class gender 1/2.

CL 1	Gloss	remark
chɛɛŋ	truth, awe	
fokpɔŋ	harmattan	
ŋgumfu	respect, bending down	(verbal noun)

Table 3. Sari gender 1 nouns

CL 1	Gloss	CL 2	gloss	remark
ŋkooko ~ ŋkoko	grandparent	bɛŋkooko ~ bɛŋkoko	grandparents	
ŋkuŋ	chief	bɛŋkuŋ	chiefs	
naŋ	ox	bɛnaŋ	oxen	
babi	bag	bɛbabi	bags	
ŋgwaba ~ ŋgwaaba	guava	bɛŋgwaba ~ bɛŋgwaaba	guavas	(borrowed word)
pepaa ~ pepa	paper	bɛpepaa ~ bɛpepa	papers	(borrowed word)
ŋkaache	promise	bɛŋkaache	promises	(verbal noun)

Table 4. Sari gender 1/2 nouns

Like in Nooni (Hyman, 1981:8) some of the nouns referring to people have an irregular plural. The first consonant changes, and in some cases the prefix of the plural is *bu-* instead of *bɛ-*. In one case the plural has an *-u* suffix.

CL 1	Gloss	CL 2	Gloss
kwɛɛŋ	woman	bukɛɛŋ	women
nyuŋ	man	buniŋ	men
ŋwaŋ	child, baby	bɔɔŋ	children, babies
mwɛsɛ	someone's female in-law	bɛmwɛsu	female in-laws
wi	person	bɛniŋ	people
wiyɔŋ ~ wiyonŋ	person	bɛwɔŋ ~ bɛwonŋ	people
mfwa	slave	bɛmfɔ	slaves
kwi	sorcerer, witch	bɛtsi	sorcerers, witches
gwɛɛ	someone's male in-law	bɛgɛɛŋ	male in-laws
kwɛɛ	someone's fellow-wife	bɛkɛaŋ	fellow-wives

Table 5. Sari gender 1/2 irregular nouns referring to people

Like in noun class 3 the singular forms of these words start with a consonant with a 'w' quality, Cw.

3.3.2 Noun classes 3 (*wu*) and 4 (*yi*)

Nouns in class 3 start with a consonant that has a 'w' quality, which historically comes from a prefix. Nouns in class 4 do not have that quality, and have a zero prefix.

The double class gender 3/4 pairs a singular in class 3 with a plural in class 4. There is a single class gender 3, but not a single class gender 4. There are uncountable words that could be part of a single class gender 4, and section 3.3.7 deals with that issue.

Most words in these noun classes refer to something long or pointy.

Only one gender 3 noun is found in the data, shown in table 6.

CL 3	Gloss
kwa	money

Table 6. Sari gender 3 noun

The ‘w’ like quality shows itself because the first consonant or consonant cluster will be followed by a w, in technical terms: it is labialized. In table 7a below examples are given. If a word is reduplicated (twice the same word) both parts will receive the w.

The melody of words in gender 3/4 is the same for singular and plural, and is mainly High or Mid, with some words having a melody falling to Low tone.

CL 3	Gloss	CL 4	Gloss
kwiŋ	firewood	kiŋ	firewood (pl)
gwɛ	chin	gɛ ~ dɛ	chins
ŋgwɔŋwa ~ ŋgwɔŋwaa	comb (of rooster)	ŋgɔŋga ~ ŋgɔŋgaa	combs (of roosters)
fweeŋ	doorway	feeŋ	doorways
fwii	turning stick for fufu	fii	turning sticks for fufu
mbwiiŋ	green grasshopper	mbiiŋ	green grasshoppers
ntweentwe ~ ntweentwee	indian bamboo	nteente ~ nteentee	indian bamboos
mwa	civet cat	miaa	civet cats

Table 7a. Sari gender 3/4 nouns

If the first consonant of a word in class 4 is d, t, ts, n or y the place of articulation becomes velar, they become g, k, k, ŋ and w. In the next table for each of those consonants an example is given.

	CL 4	Gloss	CL 3	Gloss
d becomes g	dɛɛ	granaries	gwɛɛ	granary
t becomes k	tɛɛŋ	areas	kwɛɛŋ	area
ts becomes k	tsaŋ	fingers	kwaŋ	finger
n becomes ŋ	naaŋ	bamboos	ŋwaaŋ	bamboo
y becomes w	yaŋ	markets	waŋ	market

Table 7b. Sari gender 3/4 nouns where the first consonant changes

3.3.3 Noun classes 5 (*chi*) and 6 (*yi*)

Nouns in class 5 can be split into two groups: group one with a zero prefix, for instance *tɛnɛ* ‘water pot’, and group two with a prefix *chi-*, for instance *chigɔŋ* ‘disease’.

Nouns in class 6 have a zero prefix and a subtractive suffix, where the final vowel is deleted, for instance *tɛnɛ* ‘water pot’ (class 5) becomes *tɛŋ* ‘water pots’ in noun class 6. Sari does have a class 6, contrary to what Hombert says (Hyman, 1980:89).

All words from class 5 group two belong to the single class gender 5. There is a single class gender 5, but not a single class gender 6 (see also section 3.3.7).

CL 5 Group 1	Gloss
bwɛ	birth celebration
CL 5 Group 2	Gloss
chigɔŋ	disease
chigwinti	chaff
chiba	excema
chikuu	squirrel

Table 8. Sari gender 5 nouns

In the data there are several nouns of single class gender 5. These nouns are uncountable, for instance *chigwinti* ‘chaff’. Even the word *chikuu* ‘squirrel’ is uncountable. If one wants to specify between singular and plural the word is put in gender 19/18a, *fichikuu/muchikuu* ‘squirrel/squirrels’.

The double class gender 5/6 pairs a singular from group one of class 5 with a plural in class 6. Many words in this gender 5/6 refer to something round.

Gender 5/6 is made up of nouns that have a shorter word for the plural than for the singular. If the singular has two syllables, the plural has only one. In the closely related language Naami the final vowel always gets deleted in the plural (Tabah, 2015), in another closely related language Nchane in 55% of the words there is an alteration between the singular and the plural, and often the final vowel is deleted in the plural (Boutwell, 2010).

In Sari the final vowel is deleted, and the vowel of the first syllable may be lengthened.²³ Sari words always end in a vowel or in a *ŋ*, there is no other consonant at the end of words. If deletion of the final vowel leads to a word ending in a different consonant than *ŋ*, that consonant is either deleted (for instance *libɛ* ‘lake’ becomes *li* ‘lakes’) or is changed into an *ŋ*

²³ There seems to be no clear rule, when the vowel needs to be lengthened. The subtractive suffix may be historical, and the form of some plurals may have changed over time, changing vowel length.

(*kene* ‘proverb’ becomes *keŋ* ‘proverbs’). The consonants that are changed into an *ŋ* are *m*, *n* and *ny*.

In the table below examples are given of words of all existing tone melodies in gender 5/6. A larger list of words in this gender can be found in Appendix 2.

CL 5 Group 1	tone	Gloss	CL 6	tone	Gloss
giki	H M	egg	gii	H	eggs
tsɔŋɔ	H H	feast	tsɔŋŋ	H	feasts
libɛ	M ML	lake	li	M	lakes
mbembe	M ML	breast	mbeŋ	ML	breasts
tene	M M	pot (for water)	tɛŋ	M	pots (for water)
tetɛ	M M	small stone	ta	M	small stones
kene	M H ²⁴	proverb	keŋ	H	proverbs
tebi	M M	flute	te	M	flutes
tee	HM	abdomen (external)	te	H	abdomens (external)

Table 9. Sari gender 5/6 nouns

Since nouns in both groups of noun class 5 have the same concord marker, we will refer to them as being from noun class 5.

3.3.4 Noun class 6a (*me*)

Noun class 6a is the mass noun class with non-countable nouns. It has as prefix *mɛN-* or *N-*, in which the nasal consonant *N* will have the same place of articulation as the first consonant of the stem. Examples of words in gender 6a are given in the table below.

CL 6a	Gloss
musu	sawdust, flour
musu ²⁵	tears
mfwe	sand

²⁴ /M H/ surfaces as free variation between [M H] and [M HL]

²⁵ Same melody as for *musu* ‘sawdust, flour’.

ngwe	dew
meŋkaŋ	peace plant
menjaŋ ~ menjaan	castor oil

Table 10. Sari gender 6a nouns

3.3.5 Noun classes 7 (*ki*) and 8 (*bi*)

Nouns in class 7 have a prefix *ki-*, and nouns in class 8 have a prefix *bi-*.

The double class gender 7/8 pairs a singular from class 7 with a plural in class 8. There is a single class gender 7 and a single class gender 8.

Class 7	Gloss
kifoo	poverty
kiboo	sky
Class 8	Gloss
bintsangu	mud
bishere	inheritance

Table 11. Sari gender 7 and gender 8 nouns

There are two groups of nouns in gender 7/8. Group one consists of nouns without a suffix, and group two consists of nouns with a suffix *-ε* in the singular and *-u* in the plural. We will refer to both groups as gender 7/8 nouns because they have the same concord marker.

Most words in group two have a singular that ends in an *-ε*.²⁶ The suffix *-ε* will not replace the stemvowel, but *-u* does. The final vowel in the plural of group two always is *u*.

²⁶ The stem of these words may end in a consonant or in an *ε*.

For instance *kibeŋε* ‘calabash’ may be *ki-beŋ-ε* or *ki-beŋε-ε* where the suffix *-ε* gets deleted.

For words in group two which end in another vowel than *ε*, that vowel is part of the stem.

For instance *kindemi* ‘poison grass’ is *ki-ndemi-ε* where the suffix *-ε* gets deleted.

Examples of these group of nouns are as follows:

Group One				Group Two			
CL 7 ki-	Gloss	CL 8 bi-	Gloss	CL 7 ki- -ε	Gloss	CL 8 bi- -u	Gloss
kifɔ	hat	bifɔ	hats				
kiŋkere	cripple (n)	biŋkere	cripples (n)	kibeŋe	calabash	bibeŋu	calabashes
kintasi	trap	bintasi	traps	kindemi	poison grass	bindemu	poison grasses
kiwara	weaverbird	biwara	weaverbirds	kitata	wailing	bitatu	wailings
kikɔkɔbɔ	eyebrow	bikɔkɔbɔ	eyebrows	kichɔchɔ	waste, garbage	bichɔchu	waste (pl.)

Table 12. Sari gender 7/8 nouns

Group two contains almost all nouns from class 7 ending in -ε.

See appendix 1 for more words of gender 7/8.

3.3.5.1 Augmentative

Words in gender 7/8 often refer to large things. Some words that belong to a different gender can take the ki- or bi- prefix instead of the normal prefix, to denote an augmentative, making it large. Such a word has a negative connotation, it is not just large but also bad or too large²⁷.

For instance a house, *yi*, can be too large for the owner, and one can say *kiyii* 'large house'. The long /i/ stems from the suffix -ε after the final /i/.

The suffixes -ε and -u at the end of a short word (stem of one syllable) that ends in a vowel, will lengthen the final vowel.

- (6) *kiyii* 'large house'
 ki-yi-i
 c7-house-c7
- (7) *biyii* 'large houses'
 bi-yi-i
 c8-house-c8

²⁷ Pidgin English: overlarge.

Examples of words with a variant in gender 7/8:

Class	Word	Gloss	Class 7	Gloss
9	nyɔ	‘cutlass’	kinyɔɔ (ki-nyɔ-ɔ)	‘big and bad knife or cutlass’
9	yi	‘house’	kiyii (ki-yi-i)	‘a house that is too large for the owner’
1	maŋgoro	‘mango’	kimangoro	‘a too large, bad mango’

Table 13. Sari nouns with augmentative variant in gender 7/8

3.3.6 Noun class 9 (yi) and 10 (yi)

The distinction between noun class 9 and 10 is made solely by tone, both of the noun and of the agreement marker. The words in noun class 9 have a relative lower tone and the words in noun class 10 a relative higher tone. These tone changes on the root come from floating H and/or L tone prefixes spreading on to the roots.

The double class gender 9/10 pairs a singular from class 9 with a plural in class 10. There is a single class gender 9 and a single class gender 10. Examples of words in these single class genders are given in table 14. Words in class 9 will start with a Low tone, in class 10 with a Mid or High tone. And the concord (for instance the pronoun) for class 10 has a higher tone than for class 9. Words in single class gender 10 are not orthographically marked for plural, like the plurals in gender 9/10. This is because they are not plural but uncountable.

Class	Word	Gloss
9	tseɛŋ	certain slippery soup
9	tsirɛ	hip
10	nshiiŋ	sadness, pity
10	fɔŋ	fat

Table 14. Sari gender 9 and gender 10 nouns

In gender 9/10 there are amongst others many words referring to animals and to parts of plants. Animals and parts of plants are also found in other genders.

In the next table examples are given of all tone pairs in gender 9/10 marked with the acute accent for plural.

CL 9	tone	Gloss	CL 10	tone	Gloss
tsaŋ	L ^H	headpad	tsáŋ	H	headpads
biaaŋ	L	palm nut	bíaaŋ	H	palm nuts
biɛ	L	shelter	bíɛ	M	shelters
tsɛɛŋ	LM	guinea fowl	tséɛŋ	H	guinea fowls
tsɔɔŋ	LM	snail	tsóɔŋ	M	snails

Table 15. Sari gender 9/10 nouns

3.3.7 Single class gender 4, 6 or 10?

To determine the noun class of a word, we need to look at the prefixes and suffixes of the word, and at the concord. To determine whether a word belongs to noun class 4, 6 or 10 we have to look at the concord, because words in these noun classes don't have prefixes. For noun classes 4, 6 and 10 the concord is the same, except for numbers. So only when we count the nouns is there difference in the concord.

For non-countable nouns in classes 4, 6 or 10 it is therefore not possible to determine to which of the three classes they belong. The author has decided to put all these nouns in class 10, which is the largest of the three noun classes.

3.3.8 Noun classes 14 (*bu*) and 25 (*me*)

Nouns in class 14 have a prefix *bu-*, and nouns in class 25 have a prefix *mɛN-*. The tone of the prefix depends on the first tone of the stem. When the stem is low then the prefix tone is low. When the stem is mid or high then the prefix tone is mid.

The double class gender 14/25 pairs a singular from class 14 with a plural in class 25. There is a single class gender 14. There are only few words in gender 14/25, gender 14 is one of the larger single class genders.

In the table below some examples of words of gender 14 are given. In this gender we find the staple food corn fufu, and words related to time: amongst others the eight days of the week. There are also abstract words that are derived. In the table below there are examples of words in this gender. If the word is derived from another word, or related to another word, the final column gives the related word.

CL 14	Gloss	Remark
bunɛɛŋ	corn fufu	
butuu	night	
bumbiaane	day after bufure	

CL 14	Gloss	Remark
bufii	knowledge, wisdom	fii ‘cunning’
bumfa	slavery, punishment	bɛ-mfa ‘slaves’
bukaɔŋ	elderliness	bɛ-kaɔŋ ‘old people’
bukaɔŋ	two women fighting over their husband	bɛ-kaɔŋ ‘fellow-wives’
bufe	work	fɛ ‘do, act’

Table 16. Sari gender 14 nouns

In the table below the words that were found in gender 14/25 are shown.

CL 14	Gloss	CL 25	Gloss
bushi	face	menshi	faces
budɛɛ	bridge	mendɛɛ	bridges
bukooŋ	name	mɛŋkooŋ	names
bukɔ	ladder	mɛŋkɔ	ladders
budii	saliva, spit	mendii	spittings

Table 17. Sari gender 14/25 nouns

3.3.9 Noun classes 19 (*fi*) and 18a (*mu*)

In previous papers noun class 18a was numbered class 26.

Nouns in class 19 have a prefix *fi-* or *fiN-* and nouns in class 18a have a prefix *mu-* or *muN-*. If there is a nasal consonant N, it will have the same place of articulation as the first consonant of the stem.

The double class gender 19/18a pairs a singular from class 19 with a plural in class 18a. There is a single class gender 19, but only one word was found in this gender.

Words in gender 19/18a refer to small things.

CL 19	Gloss
fintsonɛ	omen

Table 18. Sari gender 19 nouns

There are two groups of nouns in gender 19/18a, just like in gender 7/8. Group 1 consists of nouns without a suffix, group 2 consists of nouns with a suffix -u.

Examples of this gender are given in the table below.

Group 1				Group 2			
CL 19	Gloss	CL 18a	Gloss	CL 19	Gloss	CL18a	Gloss
fiŋkɔ	small forest	muŋkɔ	small forests	finsɔɔ ²⁸	small drum	munsɔɔ	small drums
finyɔ	small god, demigod	munyɔ	small gods, demigods	finyɔɔ	knife	munyɔɔ	knives
fishere	abscess	mushere	abscesses	fintanyu	insect	muntanyu	insects
finyɔɔni	stupid person	munyɔɔni	stupid persons	fiŋgomu	bedbug	muŋgomu	bedbugs

Table 19. Sari gender 19/18a nouns

3.3.9.1 Diminutive

Words in this gender denote small things. Some words that belong to a different gender can take the *fi(N)-* or *mu(N)-* prefix instead of the normal prefix, to denote a diminutive.

For instance *finyamu*, *munyamu* ‘small animal(s)’ is a diminutive for *nyan* ‘animal’. It belongs to group 2, for it has a clear suffix -u. *Nyan* ‘animal’ is a noun in gender 9/10 and has a stem *nyam*. A word final *m* is not allowed in Sari, so in noun class 9 the *m* will change to an *ŋ*. In noun class 19 the *m* is pronounced because it is followed by the -u suffix.

For stems that only have one syllable, and end in a vowel, the -u suffix will lengthen the final vowel of the word. For example *nyɔ* ‘cutlass’ can be made small by putting it into gender 19/18a, giving *finyɔɔ* ‘knife’, where the *ɔ* is lengthened.

Class	Word	Gloss
c.9	nyan	animal
c.19 Group 2	finyamu	small animal
c.9	nyɔ	'cutlass, machete'
c.19 Group 2	finyɔɔ	'knife'
c.9	nyɔ	god
c.19 Group 1	finyɔ	small god, demi god

²⁸ suffix -u lengthens the final vowel of the monosyllabic stem *nsɔ*.

c.7	kikɔ	large forest
c.19 Group 2	fiŋkɔ²⁹	small forest

More examples:

Class	Word	Gloss	Class	Word	Gloss
c.5	tɛtɛ	'small stone'	c.6	ta	'small stones'
c.19	fintɛtu	'gravel'	c.18	muntɛtu ~ muntachu	'gravel stones'
c.1	ncha	'chain'	c.2	bɛncha	chains
c.19	fincha	'necklace'	c.18a	muncha	'necklaces'
c.7	kiti	stick, tree	c.8	biti	sticks, trees
c.19	fintiŋ³⁰	small stick	c.18a	muntiŋ	small sticks
c.7	kimfime	he-goat	c.8	bimfimu	he-goats
c.19	fimfimu³¹	small he-goat	c.18a	mumfimu	small he-goats
c.7	kindzeendzee	big wall cricket	c.8	bindzeendzee	big wall crickets
c.19	findzeendzee	wall cricket	c.18a	mundzeendzee	wall crickets
c.9	bi	goat	c.10	bí	goats
c.19	fibii	small goat	c.18a	mubii	small goats
c.9	nyan	animal	c.10	nyán	animals
c.19	finyamu	small animal	c.18a	munyamu	small animals

Table 20. Sari nouns with diminutive variant in gender 19/18a

More examples of these nouns including their tone can be found in appendix 4.

3.3.10 Gender 19 (*fi*)/8 (*bi*)

A very small number of singular class 19 nouns appear to pair with the plural class 8. In both cases these nouns are rather generic in nature.

²⁹ The prefix here is fiŋ- and for the plural muŋ- instead of fi- and mu-. Four out of five words in gender 19/18a have a stem that starts with a nasal consonant - or a prefix that ends in a nasal.

³⁰ Here the suffix seems to end with an ŋ. This needs further investigation.

³¹ Note the -u, this final vowel change is the same for classes 19 and 18a as for class 8.

CL 19	Gloss	CL 8	Gloss
fije	food	bije	foods
fie	thing	bie	things

Table 21. Sari gender 19/8 nouns

3.3.11 Locative genders 16 (*fe*), 17 (*lu*), 18 (*le*) and 23 (*ye*)

Sari, like other Eastern Beboid languages, has locative noun classes. For the four locative classes the numbering as used by Welmers (1973:167) is followed. Welmers describes locative class 16 as denoting a near or explicit location, often with a reflex of the Proto-Bantu prefix /pa-/, class 17 as denoting a remote or general location, often with a reflex of the Proto-Bantu prefix /ko-/, and class 18 as denoting a location inside, often with the reflex of proto-Bantu prefix /mo-/. Though the prefixes in Sari for class 17 and 18 are not related to the Proto-Bantu prefixes of these classes, the same numbering will be kept based on the meaning of the classes. Noun class 23 Welmer describes as a less common locative. Hyman only reports three locative noun classes in Nooni, and has the numbering for class 17 and 18 inverted.

Class	Sari word	Gloss	Class	Nooni word	Gloss
16	fɛ-keŋ	wrist	16	fɔ-fa	on the head
17	li-tiŋ ~ lu-tiŋ li-fa ~ lu-fa	at the waist on the head	18	cin	around the waist
18	le-ŋkaŋka le-wa	armpit in the mouth	17	ɛ-mu	in the mouth

Table 22. Sari and Nooni class 16, 17, 18

Sari has a fourth locative noun class, which for convenience is numbered 23.

Examples from words in all four classes (tone marks added for further discussion):

- (8) fɛ-keŋ (c16) [fɛkɛŋ́] ‘wrist’
(9) li-buka (c17) [libūkà́] ‘shore, on higher ground’
(10) le-ŋkaŋka (c18) [lɛŋkàŋká] ‘armpit’
(11) bwìŋ (c23) [bwìŋ́] ~ [bwĩŋ] ‘body’, ‘skin’

The locative classes are all small, there are not many words in them.

For noun class 16, 17 and 18 the prefix is written with the same letters as the corresponding preposition. The tone of the preposition however is Mid, as shown in examples (12), (14), and (16), while the tone of the prefix is often a Low tone. The low tone on the prefix is

shown in examples (13), (15), and (17). In examples (12), (14), and (16) the prepositional completer =li attaches itself at the end of the noun phrase following a preposition. Since in examples (13), (15), and (17) the prefixes *fɛ-*, *li-* and *lɛ-* are not prepositions, there is no completer there.

- (12) *fɛ finduuŋ li* [fɛ findùuŋ lí] ‘at the termite hill’
 at termite.hill PCP
- (13) *fɛ-keŋ* [fɛ-kèŋ ´] ‘wrist, at the wrist’
 c16-wrist
- (14) *li kuu li* [lí kùu lí] ‘on a rope’
 on rope PCP
- (15) *li-fa* [li-fà] ‘on the head’
 c17-head
- (16) *lɛ ŋkaa li* [lɛ ŋkàa lí] ‘in a basket’
 in basket PCP
- (17) *lɛ-wa* [lɛ-wà ´] ‘in the mouth’
 c18-mouth

One of the reasons to call the words in these noun classes nouns, is that they behave the same as the other nouns. They can be modified like other nouns, and be a subject in a sentence. See for examples the table below, taken from the table showing agreement for the different noun classes.

Class	Prefix + tone	Example	Gloss	‘this’	‘our’	‘one’
16	fɛ- [L]	fɛkeŋ	wrist	fɛni	fɛsɛŋ	
17	lu- ~ li--[L]	luŋgoon ~ liŋgoon	shore	luni ~ lini	luseŋ ~ liseŋ	
18	lɛ- [L]	lɛŋgwiŋ	shin	lani	lɛsɛŋ	
23	∅-	kwiin	floor/down	yani	yesɛŋ	

Table 23. Agreement for the locative noun classes

Most of the locative nouns do not exist in a non-locative class (with another prefix or without a prefix), but some have a root that can also take a prefix of another noun class.

Examples of nouns that only exist with the locative prefix:

li-fa ‘on the head’³²

fɛ-ŋgɛŋge ‘shoulder’

Examples of nouns that also exist in another noun class:

Class	Word	Gloss	Class	Word	Gloss
16	fɛlii	forehead	6	lii	eyes
16	fɛbɔ	at center of palm of hand	7	kibɔ	palm of hand
17	litɔ ~ lutɔ	in the bush	7	kitɔ	bush, grass

Table 24. Sari nouns with locative variant

3.3.11.1 Use of locative nouns

Locative nouns do not have a plural form, though there may exist a plural form of a related noun (see table above). So the plural of *fɛbɔ* ‘at center of palm of hand’ might be considered to be *bibɔ* ‘palms of hands’, but the locative aspect is gone. These plurals therefore do not pair up with the locative nouns.

Locative nouns exist of locations that in the culture are very common, and would be used often in the language. One carries things for instance *lifa* ‘on the head’ or *fɛŋgɛŋge* ‘on the shoulder’. The subject of the action can be singular or plural, the locative stays the same:

(18) Too fɛŋgɛŋge. ‘Carry on shoulder.’
 carry.IMP.sg c16.on.shoulder

(19) Tooye fɛŋgɛŋge. ‘You (plural) carry on shoulder.’
 carry.IMP.pl c16.on.shoulder

Locative nouns can also be used as subject or object in a sentence. For instance in example (20) the locative noun *fɛŋgɛŋge* ‘shoulder’ is taking the same place as in example (21) the noun *kikaa* ‘leg’.

(20) Fɛŋgɛŋge wuu mi ‘My shoulder hurts.’
 c16.shoulder pains me

(21) Kikaa wuu mi ‘My leg hurts.’
 c7.leg pains me

It is not possible to make this last expression a plural.

³² The word for ‘head’ in Sari is *kikoo*, which is clearly not related.

Some people consider it correct to count locative nouns, for instance:

- (22) Fɛŋgɛŋge fɛfɛɛ wuu mi. ‘My two shoulders hurt.’
 c16.shoulder c16.two pains me

Others consider that incorrect, and would use the next expressions:

- (23) Fɛŋgɛŋge wuu mi fɛchu. ‘My shoulders hurt.’
 c16.shoulder pains me c16.all
- (24) Fɛŋgɛŋge wuu mi bimbɛ bichu. ‘Both my shoulders hurt.’
 c16.shoulder pains me c8.sides c8.all

Some of the locative nouns are similar to a locative phrase, but the phrase has a different meaning. For instance the locative noun *liyi* [L L] means ‘in the house’ and ‘into the house’ (see example (25)), while the locative phrase *li yii* [M LHL], where the final vowel of house is lengthened, means ‘in the general vicinity of the house’ (see example (26)).

- (25) ŋgikɔɔ liyi ‘I am putting (it) into the house’
 l.putting c17.in.house
- (26) ŋgikɔɔ li yi-i ‘I am putting (it) against the house’
 l.putting on c9.house-PCP

Below is a description of the four locative noun classes.

3.3.11.2 Gender 16 (*fe*)

Class 16: Prefix *fɛ-*. The preposition *fɛ* roughly means ‘at’/‘on’. As Mengnjo (2015) remarks, words in this locative noun class denote specific things or places, many of them being parts of the body.

CL 16	Tone	Gloss	Related word	Tone	Class	Gloss
fɛmfiaŋ	M H	at the top				
fɛshɔŋ	L L (H)	spine, backbone				
fɛwoo	L L (H)	tailbone				
fɛkeŋ	L L (H)	wrist	keŋ	H	10	arm muscles
fɛlii	L L (H)	forehead	lii	H	6	eyes
fɛka	L L (H)	back of palm of hand				
fɛŋgɛŋge	L M ML	shoulder				
fɛbɔ	L L (H)	at centre of palm of hand	kibɔ, pl. bibɔ	M H	7/8	palm of hand

Table 25. Sari gender 16 nouns

3.3.11.3 Gender 17 (*lu*)

Class 17: Prefix *lu-* ~ *li-* (personal variation). The corresponding preposition *lu* ~ *li* roughly means ‘on’. Only seven words are found in this noun class till now. Words in this noun class denote more general places.

CL 17	Tone	Gloss	Related word	Tone	Class	Gloss
lifa	L L (H)	on the head, in the mind				
libuka	H H M	on higher ground (where there is no forest, just small sticks and grass)				
liṅgooŋ	M ML	shore, outside				
litiŋ	L L (H)	at the waist				
limfwe	L L (H)	the front (of something)				
litɔɔ	L MHL	in the bush	kitɔɔ, pl. bitɔɔ	M M	7/8	bush, grass
liboo	L L (H)	in the sky	kiboo	M M	7	sky

Table 26. Sari gender 17 nouns

3.3.11.4 Gender 18 (*le*)

Class 18: Prefix *le-*. The corresponding preposition *le* means ‘in’, maybe from *le* ‘enter’. Most words in this noun class denote places inside or in between things.

CL 18	Tone	Gloss	Related word	Tone	Class	Gloss
letatawa	L L H H	space between fingers or toes				
leŋwori	M H HL	dawn, sunrise				
leŋkente	M M M	back of knee				
lejiŋ	L L (H)	back of something				
lenti	L L (H)	room				
leŋkaŋka	L L H	armpit	biŋkaŋka	L L H	8	area near armpits
leŋgwiŋ	L L (H)	shin				
lewa	L L (H)	in mouth	kiwa	M H	7/8	mouth

Table 27. Sari gender 18 nouns

3.3.11.5 Gender 23 (ye)

Class 23: This noun class does not have a clear prefix, maybe the prefix is the ‘w’ like quality of the first consonant. Several words have different variants, depending on the speaker.

In the table below the four collected words are given, together with related words.

CL 23	Tone	Gloss	Related word	Tone	Gloss
mfwe	L(H)	front			
mfweej	LHL	place in front of doorway	fweej, pl. feej	H	doorway
bwiij ~ bwiŋ	LHL ~ L(H)	body	bwiŋ	L ~ L(H)	attached at
kwiij ~ kwiŋ	LHL ~ L(H)	floor	kwiŋ	L ~ L(H)	down

Table 28. Sari gender 23 nouns

3.3.12 Overview Sari noun classes

The table will give the common gender pairings in one row. The first row means that a noun with the singular in class 1 takes its plural in class 2. Class 6a consists of mass nouns without a plural.

At this time it seems that class 6a has the same concords as plural class 25. We keep them separate, because class 6a consists of mass nouns while class 25 consists of plurals.

∅- means that there is no prefix for this class, Cw means that the first consonant is labialized. In the table below the tone of the prefix is mentioned, but it is not written on the words. A low toned prefix normally will be raised to mid before a stem starting with a mid or high tone.

Class	Prefix	Example	Gloss	Class	Prefix	Example	Gloss
1	∅- Cw-	naŋ kwɛɛŋ	cow woman	2	bè- bù-	benəŋ bukeɛŋ	cows women

Class	Prefix	Example	Gloss	Class	Prefix	Example	Gloss
3	Cw-	gwe	chin	4	Ø-	ge	chins
5	Ø- chì- ³³	nunu chita	knee rib, fishbone	6	Ø- (final Vowel deletion)	nuj	knees
				6a	(mè)N-	mfwe menjaŋ	sand castor oil
7	kì- kì- -ɛ ³⁴	kifɔ kiŋkɛɛ kimfime	hat cripple lip, beak	8	bì- bì- -u ³⁵	bifɔ biŋkɛɛ bimfimu	hats cripples lips, beaks
9	`	dze	road	10	´	dzé	roads
14	bù-	bushi	face	25	mèn-	menshi	faces
19	fì- fìN- fì- -u ³⁶ fìN- -u	filaŋ fiŋkɔ fitanu fintetu	cooking pot small forest castrated he-goat gravel	18a	mù- mùN- mù- -u ³⁷ mùN- -u	mulaŋ muŋkɔ mutanu muntetu	cooking pots small forests castrated he-goats gravel (pl)
16	fè-	fekɛŋ	wrist				
17	lù- ~ lì-	liŋgoon ~ luŋgoon	shore				
18	lè-	leŋgwiŋ	shin				

³³ Nouns with this prefix are member of single class gender 5.

³⁴ Suffix -ɛ will lengthen the final vowel of a monosyllabic stem. It will be deleted after a final vowel of a disyllabic stem.

³⁵ Plurals with disyllabic roots in class 8 group 2 have the last vowel from their singular changed to u. For instance kīgɔ́nɛ́ / bīgɔ́nɛ́ 'hut', kíkòṁā / bìkòṁū 'silk-cotton tree'. Suffix -u will lengthen the final vowel of a monosyllabic stem, and substitute the final vowel of multisyllabic stems. For all pairs of gender 7/8 see appendix 1.

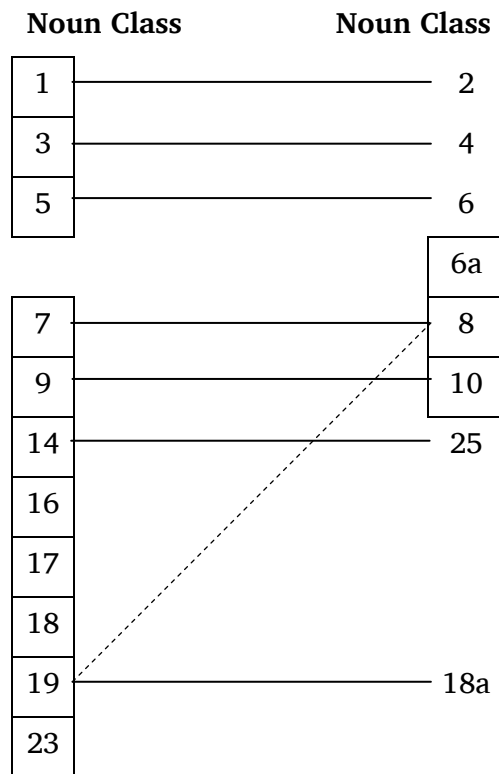
³⁶ Like in noun class 8 there are nouns in gender 19/18a that have their last vowel changed to an -u. Only for stems that also can take other noun class prefixes is clear whether the final /u/ is part of the stem or not. For instance: ki-mfime 'he-goat', bi-mfimu 'he-goats', fi-mfimu 'small he-goat', mu-mfimu 'small he-goats'.

³⁷ See footnote 42 above.

Class	Prefix	Example	Gloss	Class	Prefix	Example	Gloss
23	∅-	bwiŋ ~ bwiŋ	skin, body				

Table 29. Sari noun class prefixes³⁸ and suffixes

The genders that occur in Sari may be seen in the chart below. Squares around a number show that this is also a single class gender. Lines show which singular classes pair up with which plural noun class. Lines that are dashed show that there are only a few words in this gender.



Sari Gender Pairing Chart

³⁸ Low tone of prefixes are raised to Mid before a stem with a melody that starts with a Mid or High tone, there are some exceptions in noun class 2.

4 Conclusion

The noun class system of the Sari language is elaborate. Some of the noun classes have prefixes and there are even some with suffixes. Many classes can only be distinguished by their concord. Noun classes are paired up in seven major double class genders, and one minor double class gender. There are many single class genders, and mass nouns or uncountable nouns are not restricted to specific noun classes. For some of the genders the words in that gender refer to things with some semantic property, for instance its size (small or large), its shape (round or long) or its kind (human, animate). There is one gender with a negative connotation.

There are no V- prefixes as in Nooni. The labialisation in noun class 3 in Sari can change the place of articulation from alveolar or palatal to velar. Like in Nooni noun class 6 has final vowel deletion, but in Sari sometimes the first vowel is lengthened. Genders 7/8 and 19/18a are divided in, 1) a group of nouns that do not take a suffix, and 2) a group that do take a suffix -ε in noun class 7 and -u in class 8, 19 and 18a.

Of interest are the four locative noun classes and locative phrases. Of these class 23 needs further investigation, to see whether there is a prefix or not. At this moment there are too few examples of words in this class to be sure. It is the noun class with the least noun class like features, bordering between noun and adverb.

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Appendix 1 Wordlist of nouns in gender 3/4

Wordlist ordered on place and manner of articulation of first consonant of stem (plural)

gloss	singular	plural	tone sg	tone pl
upper arm	bwεεη	bεεη	H	H
elephant's trunk	bwεη	bεη	H	H
mosquito	bwiη	biη	M	M
pregnancy	fwe	fe	M	M
opening between front teeth	fwεε	fεε	M	M
porcupine's thorny hairs	fwεε	fεε	M	M
doorway, entrance hut	fweenη	feη	H	H
valley	fweenη	feη	M	M
gutter	fweη	feη	M	M
paint	fwεεη	fεη	M	M
lime, whitewash	fweη	fεη	M	M
turning stick for fufu	fwii	fii	H	H
animal security hole (common of moles)	fwii	fii	H	H
chin	gwε	gε	H	H
she-goat, nanny goat: young one	gwε	gε	H	H
tendrils, root	gwεη	gεη	H	H
birdlime (adhesive to catch birds)	gwii	gii	HL	HL
ridge	kweenη	keenη	M	M
moon	kwii	kii	M	M
firewood	kwiη	kiη	M	M
handle of hoe	gwaa	daa	M	M
granary, ceiling	gwεε	dεε	ML	ML
palm wine calabash	gwεεη	dεεη	ML	ML
frontier (of ethnic area)	gwii	dii	ML	ML
latrine, toilet	kwεεη	tεεη	H	H
ethnic area	kwεεη	tεεη	M	M
finger	kwαη	tsαη	ML	ML
bamboo	ηwaaη	naaη	M	M
civet cat	mwaa	miaa	H	H
gecko	waαη	yaαη	H	H
market	wαη	yaη	H	H
bitterleaf	we	ye	M	M
field (farm)	wε	yε	H	H
gun	wii	yii	HL	HL
tail	wuuη	yuuη	H	H
green grasshopper	mbwiη	mbiη	M	M
frog	mfwaaη	mfaaη	ML	ML
garden	mfwemfwe	mfemfe	M M	M M
bamboo (indian bamboo)	ntweentwe	nteente	M M	M M
comb (of rooster)	ηgwangwa	ηganga	M M	M M

gloss	singular	plural	tone sg	tone pl
vein	ngwii	ngii	H	H
elbow	ŋkwenkwe	ŋkenke	M M	M M

Appendix 2 Wordlist of nouns in gender 5/6

This list is ordered on the melody of the singular form, and then in alphabetical order of the singular form.

gloss	singular	plural	tone sg.	tone pl.
breast	mbembe	mberɛ, mbeerɛ	(L)M ML	(L)ML
knee	nunu	nuuŋ	H H	H
feast	tsɔŋɔ	tsɔŋ	H H	H
bean type from a small tree	doki	do	H M	H
kidney	fiki	fi	H M	H
bambara groundnut	foki	fo	H M	H
lance, spear	gɔŋɛ	gɔŋ	H M	H
razor	gɛŋɛ	gɛɛŋ	H M	HM
egg	giki	gii	H M	H
guinea corn	gɪŋgi	gɪŋ	H M	H
corpse	gwini	goon	H M	H
k.o. leaf (of forest)	jɔmi	jɔŋ	H M	H
abdomen (external), belly	tee	te	H M	H
dance	binɛ	biin	M H	H
gas (from anus)	nyinyi	nyiin	M H	H
cooking stone	sosii	so	M H	H
big leaf	gwini	gwiin	M H, M HL	H
lower grinding stone	jeni	jeen	M H, M HL	H
sun, day, watch (n)	jobɛ	jo	M H, M HL	H
song	jumi	juuŋ	M H, M HL	H
proverb	kenɛ	ken	M H, M HL	H
eye	lisi	lii	M H, M HL	H
tongue	nimi	niin	M H, M HL	H
small fish trap	binsi	biŋ	M M	M
bundle (e.g. cola nuts)	bomeɛ	bon	M M	M
bundle (e.g. grass)	bureɛ	biin	M M	M
date palm	donki	doon	M M	M
incest, adultery	kɔnde	kɔŋ	M M	M
huckle berry	kumi	kuuŋ	M M	M
flute	tebi	te	M M	M
pot (for water)	tɛnɛ	tɛŋ	M M	M
small stone	tɛtɛ	ta	M M	M
ditch	fɔŋɛ	fɔŋ	M ML	M
feather	gwini	dzun	M ML	M
lake	libɛ	li	M ML	M
work	nimeɛ	niin	M ML	M

Appendix 3 Wordlist of nouns in gender 7/8

As stated in this paper, gender 7/8 has two groups of words: one group of words that take a suffix, and a group of words that don't take a suffix. The suffix for noun class 7 is *-ε* and for noun class 8 is *-u*.

This list of nouns in gender 7/8 will start with words of two syllables, with monosyllabic stem. Both *-ε* and *-u* will lengthen final vowels in words with monosyllabic stem, but for most words of two syllables with a long vowel it is not clear if the long vowel belongs to the stem or is a short vowel with a suffix.

Then longer words are listed with no vowel change in the plural, and finally words with a final *-u* in the plural. As can be seen, most words with an *-u* in the plural end with an *-ε* in the singular. Probably the stem ends in a consonant or an *ε* in those words. Where the singular ends in another vowel than *-ε*, that vowel is part of the stem. *-ε* will not replace the stemvowel, but *-u* does.

sg	pl	tone	gloss	nc	remark
kibaa	bibaa	M -M	wound, sore	7/8	monosyll. root
kibɔ	bibɔ	M -H	palm (of hand)	7/8	
kibε	bibε	M -ML	blade (of grass), leaf	7/8	
kibε	bibε	M -ML	wing	7/8	
kidε	bidε	M -H	gum of teeth	7/8	
kidε	bidε		trouble	7/8	
kidoo	bidoo	M -ML	caterpillar	7/8	
kidzɔ	bidzɔ	L -L	grasshopper	7/8	
kidzɔŋ	bidzɔŋ	M -ML	river basin	7/8	
kidzɔŋ	bidzɔŋ	M -ML	low area flooded in rainy season	7/8	
kifaa	bifaa	M -HM	mahogany tree	7/8	
kifo	bifo	M -H	hat	7/8	
kifi	bifi		snake type -very poisonous]	7/8	
kifiee	bifiee	M -M	vision (supernatural), dream	7/8	
kifiinj	bifiinj	M -ML	brush	7/8	
kiga	biga	M -H	mat	7/8	
kigɔ	bigɔ	M -M	certain bird of prey	7/8	
kige	bige	M -M	tooth	7/8	
kige	bige	M -M	cowrie shell	7/8	
kigeε	bigeε	M -M	porcupine	7/8	
kigoo	bigoo	M -HL	door, doorway cover	7/8	
kiguunŋ	biguunŋ	M -ML	owl	7/8	
kiji	biji	M -M	foundation of house	7/8	
kijinj	bijinj	M -ML	fly	7/8	
kijinj	bijinj	L -M	yam	7/8	
kika	bika	M -H	charcoal	7/8	
kikaa	bikaa	M -M	leg	7/8	
kikaanŋ	bikaanŋ	H !-ML	old thing/person	7/8	

sg	pl	tone	gloss	nc	remark
kikaŋ	bikaŋ	M -H	swarm	7/8	
kikaŋ	bikaŋ	M -M	beeswax, bee-bread	7/8	
kikɔ	bikɔ	H !-M	mosquito type	7/8	
kikɔ	bikɔ	M -H	forest (big)	7/8	
kikɔɔ	bikɔɔ	M -HL	cough	7/8	
kikiŋ, kikiiŋ	bikiŋ, bikiiŋ	M -ML	corn cob	7/8	
kikoo	bikoo	L -M	cocoyam	7/8	
kikoo	bikoo	M -M	head	7/8	
kikpɔ	bikpɔ	M -M	shoe, sandal	7/8	
kiku	biku	L -L	beehive	7/8	
kikuŋ	bikuŋ	H !-MHL	horse	7/8	
kila	bila	L -LX	type of juju song	7/8	
kila	bila	M -M	rainbow	7/8	
kimbaa	bimbaa	M -HL	umbrella	7/8	
kimbaaŋ	bimbaaŋ	L -LX	walking stick, cane, club, cudgel	7/8	
kimbaaŋ	bimbaaŋ	L -L	molar tooth	7/8	
kimbaŋ	bimbaŋ	M -ML	juju house	7/8	
kimbaŋ	bimbaŋ	L -M	rock (large)	7/8	
kimbe	bimbe	L -LX	side (of something)	7/8	
kimbi	bimbi	L -LX	talking drum	7/8	
kimbuu	bimbuu	L -M	horn (musical instrument)	7/8	
kimɔ	bimɔ	M -H	footprint (human)	7/8	
kimfa	bimfa	L -L	lock	7/8	
kimfiɛ	bimfiɛ	L -L	gossip	7/8	
kimi	bimi	M -M	neck	7/8	
kimu	bimu		some	7/8	
kincho	bincho	L -LX	rattle (musical instrument), digging instrument	7/8	
kinchiŋ	binchiŋ	L -LX	log, stump	7/8	
kinchiŋ	binchiŋ	L -M	stalk of plantain or banana tree	7/8	
kindooŋ	bindooŋ	L -LX	kite	7/8	
kindu	bindu	L -M	tendon	7/8	
kindu	bindu	L -LX	duck	7/8	
kini	bini	L -L	descendant	7/8	
kinjiŋ, kinjiiŋ	binjiŋ, binjiiŋ	L -LX	regime (of bananas)	7/8	
kinsɔ	binsɔ	M -ML	bull	7/8	
kinsɔ	binsɔ	L -LX	steer	7/8	
kinseɛ	binseɛ	L -L	lie (falsehood)	7/8	
kintaa	bintaa	L -LML	bed	7/8	
kintɔŋ	bintɔŋ	L -M	beam, rafter	7/8	
kintee	bintee	M -ML	lizard	7/8	
kintiŋ	bintiŋ		part of an animal	7/8	

sg	pl	tone	gloss	nc	remark
kintooŋ	bintooŋ	M -HL	ear	7/8	
kintsi	bintsi	M -M	odour, smell	7/8	
kintsii	bintsii		place, point, spot	7/8	
kinyi	binyi	L -LX	buttock	7/8	
kiŋɔ	biŋɔ	L -L	bend, crook, curve	7/8	
kiŋɔŋ	biŋɔŋ	L -M	bend, crook, curve	7/8	
kiŋɔwa	biŋɔwa		sickle	7/8	
kiŋkaŋ	biŋkaŋ	H !-MHL	rizone (sweet fruit produced by a grass)	7/8	
kiŋkɔ	biŋkɔ	L -LX	ram	7/8	
kiŋkɔŋ	biŋkɔŋ	M -H	iron	7/8	
kiŋkɛ	biŋkɛ	L -M	piece	7/8	
kiŋkiŋ	biŋkiŋ	L -LX	knot	7/8	
kiŋkoŋ	biŋkoŋ	L -L	robe (man's gown), traditional regalia	7/8	
kiŋkpwiŋ	biŋkpwiŋ		giant	7/8	
kiŋkweenŋ	biŋkweenŋ	L -LML	gossip	7/8	
kisaŋ	bisaŋ	M -H	used by a juju for dancing	7/8	
kisɔ	bisɔ		place where palm nuts are pounded	7/8	
kisɔɔŋ	bisɔɔŋ		fish trap (big), hunting net	7/8	
kisɔŋ	bisɔŋ	M -M	palm tree	7/8	
kisɛɛ	bisɛɛ		half bowl -made of a calabash]	7/8	
kitaŋ	bitaŋ		barren groundnut	7/8	
kitɔ	bitɔ	M -M	bush	7/8	
kitee	bitee	H -L	testicle	7/8	
kiteeŋ	biteeŋ	M -M	tumor	7/8	
kiti	biti	M -M	tree	7/8	
kitoŋ	bitoŋ	M -H	tribe, village	7/8	
kitoo	bitoo	M -HL	pit	7/8	
kitseɛ	bitseɛ	M -ML	thorn (needle) of palm cone, comb	7/8	
kitu	bitu		trap -to catch animals]	7/8	
kitu	bitu	L -L	small of back (lower back)	7/8	
kitu	bitu	M -M	iron	7/8	
kitu	bitu	M -M	cup	7/8	
kiwa	biwa	M -H	mouth	7/8	
kiya	biya	M -M	heat, steam	7/8	
kiya	biya	L -L	year	7/8	
kiyaŋ	biyaŋ		population	7/8	
kiyɔ	biyɔ	L -LX	elephant	7/8	
kiyɛ	biyɛ		bamboo ceiling	7/8	

sg	pl	tone	gloss	nc	remark
kiyε	biyε		top of roof	7/8	
kiyii	biyii	L -M	ghost (visible apparition)	7/8	
kibarakii	bibarakii		camp, encampment	7/8a	4 syll, complex
kidentine	bidentine	M -H M H	foot	7/8a	4 syll, complex
kikɔkɔbɔ	bikɔkɔbɔ	M -M M H	eyebrow	7/8a	4 syll, complex
kikε mine	bikε mine		carterpillar type	7/8a	4 syll, complex
kikemine	bikemine		broken bowl (calabash)	7/8a	4 syll, complex
kiŋgɔŋgine	biŋgɔŋgine	M -H M HL	stem, stalk (of maize, millet, etc.)	7/8a	4 syll, complex
kimbiaambiabɔ	bimbiambiabɔ	L -L H LX	weak, weakling	7/8a	complex
kindzeendzee	bindzeendzee		big wall cricket	7/8a	ideophone, redupl
kinjiinjii	binjiinjii	L -LM HL	shadow	7/8a	ideophone, redupl
kishiishii	bishiishii		grass hopper type - found between pineapple leaves]	7/8a	ideophone, redupl
kiŋwaati	biŋwaati	L -L LX	book	7/8a	loanword
kinchinchii	binchinchii		fool	7/8a	redupl
kintikinti	bintikinti	L -L -LH -L	middle	7/8a	redupl
kibaba	bibaba	L -L M	wild cat	7/8a	redupl?
kileele	bileele	M -M M	dragonfly	7/8a	redupl?
kinana	binana	L -L LH	pineapple	7/8a	redupl?
kitɔtɔ	bitɔtɔ		yellow pepper	7/8a	redupl?
kibere	bibere	L -L LX	senseless person	7/8a	
kibuuta	bibuuta		container	7/8a	
kifɔŋgi	bifɔŋgi	L -L LX	bread	7/8a	
kikɔti	bikɔti	L -L L	ulcer (leg)	7/8a	
kimbete	bimbete		banana type -short]	7/8a	
kinchofi	binchofi	L -M ML	chisel	7/8a	
kinderi	binderi		gift	7/8a	
kindzaandzo	bindzaandzo	L -LM ML	red monkey	7/8a	
kintasi	bintasi	L -L LX	trap	7/8a	
kintɔɔ	bintɔɔ	L-M M	uncircumcised pennis	7/8a	
kiŋkere ³⁹	biŋkere	L -L LX	cripple	7/8a	
kitinti	bitinti	M -H H	waist	7/8a	
kitsubi	bitsubi	L -L L	soup, broth	7/8a	
kiwara	biwara	L -L H	weaver-bird	7/8a	
kiwuru	biwuru		shouts of joy/appraisal	7/8ab	ideophone

³⁹ This is the only word with -ε in singular, and not -u in plural

sg	pl	tone	gloss	nc	remark
kifufu	bifufu	L -L L	lung	7/8ab	redupl
kinchuchu	binchuchu	L -L LX	crest (of bird)	7/8ab	redupl
kindundu	bindundu	L -L LX	pool	7/8ab	redupl
kintutu	bintutu	L -M M	herd (of cattle), heap	7/8ab	redupl
kiŋguŋgu	biŋguŋgu		ostrich	7/8ab	redupl
kiŋkuŋku	biŋkuŋku	L -L LX	storm	7/8ab	redupl?
kikɔɔbetsoo	bikɔɔbutsoo		dung beetle	7/8b	compound word, first part gets -u
kichɔchɔ	bichɔchu	L -L LX	waste, gabbage	7/8b	redupl.!
kindzɛndzɛ ⁴⁰	bindzɛndzu	M -M ML	urine	7/8b	redupl.
kibachɛ	bibachu	M -M HL	piece	7/8b	
kibɛnɛ	bibɛnu	M -M HL	hand, arm, forearm	7/8b	
kibɛŋɛ	bibɛŋu	M -M M	calabash	7/8b	
kibimɛ	bibimu		dove	7/8b	
kibobɛ	bibobu	M -M H	scorpion	7/8b	
kibobɛ	bibobu	M -M HL	tarantula	7/8b	
kibure	biburu		tree type	7/8b	
kichiyɛ	bichiyu	L -L HL	foundation	7/8b	
kidzire	bidziru	M -H LX	mushroom	7/8b	
kifaatɛ	bifaatu	M -M LX	shell (of groundnut)	7/8b	
kifabɛ	bifabu	M -M L	fish-scale	7/8b	
kifasɛ	bifasu	M -H HL	tongs: v-shaped wooden/bamboo instrument for holding (hot) objects; forceps	7/8b	
kifobɛ	bifobu	M -M L	goiter	7/8b	
kifoma	bifomu	M -H M	carpenter bee	7/8b	
kigɔɔnɛ	bigɔɔnu	M -M HL	hut	7/8b	
kigɔŋɛ	bigɔŋu	L -L M	right hand	7/8b	
kigiitɛ	bigiitu		tree rope	7/8b	
kigirɛ	bigiru	M -M ML	bark (of tree)	7/8b	
kigwanyɛ	bigwanyu	M -H HL	boil	7/8b	
kijibɛ	bijibu	M -M HL	traditional rite at burrial of strong man, tying root to him and child	7/8b	
kijinɛ	bijinu	M -M ML	cow disease, bush dog	7/8b	
kijinɛ	bijinu		mat (borrowed Eng)	7/8b	
kikamɛ	bikamu	M -M M	crab	7/8b	
kikase	bikasuu		musical instrument (made of bamboo)	7/8b	

⁴⁰ reduplication but still -u in plural.

sg	pl	tone	gloss	nc	remark
kikase	bikasu	M -M ML	wheel, a round thing	7/8b	
kikɔbe	bikɔbu	H -H L	beetle	7/8b	
kikɔmɛ	bikɔmu	M -M L	shell	7/8b	
kikeene	bikeenu		half block	7/8b	
kikoma	bikomu	L -L M	silk-cotton tree, kapok tree	7/8b	
kikooshe	bikooshu	M -H HL	gravel	7/8b	
kikunɛ	bikunu	M -M ML	rat	7/8b	
kikuuche	bikuuchu	M -M M	midrib of palm-frond	7/8b	
kilaanjɛ	bilanju	M -H HL	cheek	7/8b	
kilame	bilamu	M -M HM	bellows	7/8b	
kilebɛ	bilebu		water around marshy places with raffia	7/8b	
kilebɛ	bilebu	M -H M	ant (big black smelling type)	7/8b	
kilebɛ	bilebu		long black smelling ant	7/8b	
kilemɛ	bilɛmu	M -M HL	bat	7/8b	
kiliibe	biliibu	M -H M	flying ant	7/8b	
kimbɔɔnɛ, kimbɔnɛ	bimbɔɔnu, bimbɔnu	L -L ML	blessing	7/8b	
kimbeene	bimbeenu	M -M M	bell	7/8b	
kimbuune	bimbuunu	L -M M	grass at the tip of thatch roof	7/8b	
kimfendɛ, kimfendɛ	bimfendu, bimfendu	L -L ML	nasal mucus, snot	7/8b	
kimfenjɛ, kimfenjɛ	bimfenju, bimfenju	M -M HL	cockroach	7/8b	
kimfime	bimfimu	M -M M	beak, bill	7/8b	
kimfime	bimfimu	M -H H	he-goat, billy-goat	7/8b	
kimfuume	bimfuumu		fat insect-lives underground mostly at cow places]	7/8b	
kimfuume	bimfuumu		constipation	7/8b	
kimuune	bimuunu	M -H HL	maggot (in rotten meat)	7/8b	
kinandɛ	binandu	L -L LX	hoof	7/8b	
kindɔmɛ	bindɔmu	M -M ML	marsh	7/8b	
kindemi	bindemu	L-L L	poison grass	7/8b	
kinsure	binsuru	L -M ML	crop (of bird)	7/8b	
kintekɛ	binteku	L -M ML	tray	7/8b	
kintɛŋjɛ	bintɛŋju	L -M ML	tumour	7/8b	
kintinte	bintintu	M -M M	stool	7/8b	
kintomɛ	bintomu	M -M ML	heifer	7/8b	
kintsangɛ	bintsangu	M -M M	marsh	7/8b	
kinycɔtɛ	binycɔtu	L -L L	carterpillar type	7/8b	
kingɔbe	bingɔbu	M -M ML	hem	7/8b	

sg	pl	tone	gloss	nc	remark
kingɔɔnɛ	bingɔɔnu		banana type - chocolate skin]	7/8b	
kingɔɔnɛ	bingɔɔnu	M -M M	ant type (common around compounds)	7/8b	
kiŋkerɛ ⁴¹ , kiŋkeerɛ	biŋkeru, biŋkeeru	M -M L	fingernail	7/8b	
kiŋkomfɛ	biŋkomfu	M -M M	bone	7/8b	
kiŋkwɛnɛ, kiŋkwɛnɛ	biŋkwɛnu, biŋkwɛenu	M -HM HL	frog	7/8b	
kisaanchɛ	bisaanchu	M -H HL	pumpkinleaf	7/8b	
kitata ⁴²	bitatu	L -M M	wailing, ululation (at funeral)	7/8b	redupl?
kitobɛ	bitobu		pounded cocoyams	7/8b	
kitunɛ	bitunu	M -M M	knot (in wood)	7/8b	
kitunɛ	bitunu	M -M M	pestle, pounding stick	7/8b	

⁴¹ *kiŋkerɛ*, *biŋkeru* ‘fingernail’ looks very much like *kiŋkerɛ*, *biŋkerɛ* ‘cripple’. Stem-vowels or consonants do not seem to influence the final vowel.

⁴² Reduplication? But still -u!

Appendix 4 Wordlist of nouns with stems occurring in two genders, one of them being gender 19/18a

Sari nouns with diminutive variant in gender 19/18a, including tone. Words occurring in noun classes 7, 8, 19, and 18a will have the same melody throughout. These melodies are not included in this table.

Class	Word	Tone	Gloss	Class	Word	Tone	Gloss
c.5	tetɛ	M M	'small stone'	c.6	ta	M	'small stones'
c.19	fintetu ⁴³	M M M	'gravel'	c.18	muntetu, muntachu	M M M	'gravel stones'
c.1	ncha	LM	'chain'	c.2	bencha	L M	chains
c.19	fincha	L M	'necklace'	c.18a	muncha	L M	'necklaces'
c.7	kimfime		he-goat	c.8	bimfimu		he-goats
c.19	fimfimu ⁴⁴		small he-goat	c.18a	mumfimu		small he-goats
c.7	kindzeendzee		big wall cricket	c.8	bindzeendzee		big wall crickets
c.19	findzeendzee		wall cricket	c.18a	mundzeendzee		wall crickets
c.9	nyɔ	LM	'cutlass '	c.10	nyɔ́	M	'cutlasses'
c.19	finyɔ ⁴⁵	L M, L ML	'knife'	c.18a	munyɔ	L M, L ML	'knives'
c.9	bi	L (H)	goat	c.10	bí	H	goats
c.19	fibii ⁴⁶	M HM	small goat	c.18a	mubii	M HM	small goats
c.9	nyaŋ	LX	animal	c.10	nyáŋ	M	animals
c.19	finyamu		small animal	c.18a	munyamu		small animals
c.9	nyɔ	LX	god	c.10	nyɔ́	M	gods
c.19	finyɔ	L LX	small god, demi god	c.18a	munyɔ	L LX	small gods, demi gods

⁴³ It looks like the prefix here is fin- and mun- instead of fi- and mu-. Four out of five words in gender 19/18a have a stem that starts with a nasal consonant - or a prefix that ends in a nasal.

⁴⁴ Note the -u, this final vowel change is the same for classes 19 and 18a as for class 8.

⁴⁵ Note the long vowel, it is not clear why some vowels are lengthened and others not. The two examples are both with words of which the other gender is 9/10. [RH:You could consider it to be due to the -u suffix.]

⁴⁶ See footnote **Error! Bookmark not defined.**