

Arabic Loans in West African Languages A Study in Semantics¹

Sergio BALDI

In the last two decades most of my researches were devoted to collecting Arabic loans in West African languages in a large data base² and to produce articles on how the Arabic phonemes of such loans were rendered in each of those single African languages.³ At that time I did not pay attention to the semantic of the loans.⁴ This Workshop gives me the opportunity to start some considerations on how these loans were modified in those languages, if they did, their meaning and to give a general overview to such shift in their semantic modifications.

Before starting the analysis and giving examples of major modifications in this shift, I would like to have some general reflections on this topics. In Arabic the word Arab is synonymous of Bedouin, the two roots (*'arab* and *bdw*) having the same meaning. In this regard it could be interesting to reflect on the word *samak* 'fish' we find in Arabic under the root *sammaka* II 'to make thick, thicken' (Wehr 431a): the meaning of the word does not have any relation with the root meaning and we could easily suppose that it is itself a loan in Arabic, being connected to this root, for the presence of the same radicals in it. Obviously this conclusion is the consequence of what I said previously: originally the Arabic peoples were not sailors, they came into contact with the sea culture in the Persian Gulf through people from Mesopotamia, before the spread to West. This word is not present

¹ In this paper, I presented at "Workshop on Language Contact and Change in West Africa: The Question of Areality and Genealogy" (Gumpoldskirchen/Austria, November 11-14, 2004), I am heavily relying for the African languages on the dictionaries quoted: i.e. for Fulfulde, a language spoken in a vast area comprised from Senegambia up to Cameroun and divided in many dialects, the data quoted from Taylor's dictionary and regarding Adamawa region could be not true for Fulfulde spoken in other parts of Africa.

² Baldi (2008, forthcoming).

³ See my articles in References.

⁴ Except, maybe, Baldi (1989: 285-301).

among loans in any West African language, where the local words are still in existence (cf. Fulfulde *līngu*, Hausa *kāfī*, Kanuri *būnyi*, *bānyi*, Songhay (Dendi) *ísà há̀m̀*), but we find it, *samaki*, in Swahili, where it took over the Bantu old word for fish, *nswi*. So the language is reflecting an environment typical of the desert and so, in a certain way, different from the places where Islam spread: i.e. *sūr* ‘wall; fence’ (see Table 18) became Fulfulde *sōrowol* ‘rectangular, flat-roofed house’; Hausa *sōrō* ‘entrance room of compound’ (via Kanuri); Kanuri *shóró/sóró* ‘rectangular room’; Mbay *sōrō* ‘top (spinning) made from snail shell’; Songhay *sooroo* ‘étage (supérieur); pont supérieur (de bateau)’ (? via Hausa), but Swahili *sera* ‘fort, castle’, a good example in another geographical and cultural contest.

A second factor to observe is related to the reason that Arabic was considered a language of prestige, being written, so in many cases words were borrowed even if there was not at all a real necessity (i.e. words connected to the Islamic religion or to the new different civilisation). That is the case of Arabic *ḍakar* ‘penis’ (see Table 16) which became *azakārī* in Hausa and was used by educated men as for *bū#ā* ‘cock’, as marked by Robinson (1925: 23b) in his dictionary. But if we go deeply in research on this topic, we can easily find that in many languages the word was borrowed and took over the previously existing one, which automatically got the status, from that time on, of a vulgar meaning: Fulfulde *mbasu*, Kanuri *ngáli*, Mandinka *fóto*, Wolof *kooy*. Other examples are Arabic *dubr* ‘buttocks’ (see Table 9) whose loan put aside the previous equivalent word in Fulfulde (*gugu*), Kanuri (*ndôr*).

Some other examples of this “puritan” spirit of the Muslim religion, which modified the more liberal customs of West African peoples, could be found in words related to parts of the human body which are avoided in speaking according to the sexual phobia of the Muslim religion.

Arabic *farj* ‘pudendum of the female, vulva’ took the place of Fulfulde *kuttu*, Hausa *dūrī*, but it seemed not to have had any effect on Kanuri words, such as *kamurám* or *kashiganarám*, still marked in the dictionary *polite*, and I am wondering, on the contrary, if *fárgi* has a bad connotation: in this case it could have been a good example of the contrary of what has been said up to now.

Arabic *haiḍ* ‘menstruation’ (Table 7), with its euphemism, took over Fulfulde *lotgol*, *tuundi*, Kanuri *bû*.

In Africa, where almost all languages were unwritten, Arabic appeared to be the expression of a superior civilisation for its tradition of

being a written language, whose prominent prestige was represented by the Holy Koran. The Koranic teaching admitted the writing on a wooden board with ink manufactured on the spot, generally there making to deep some nails or pieces of iron in a decoction of tannin. So in most languages were introduced some words related to writing, sometimes with a shift of meaning (see Table 13). It is the case of *dawāh* ‘inkwell’, that in most languages got the meaning of ‘ink’ for the probably Tamasheq intermediary *teddeouat*, as shown by the initial *t-* and where it has both meanings of ‘inkwell’ and ‘ink’, but it arrived into Hausa, and later, through it, it past in Dagbani, Yoruba and maybe in Nupe, with the only meaning of ‘ink’.

An example of changing the meaning, in this case from the person performing the action to the instrument, is the word *hajjām* ‘cupper’, which also became in West African languages a synonym of ‘barber’, because the person was doing both actions, and later we find *gbàjámò* ‘razor’ in Yoruba (Table 6), where it is the only occurrence of such a shift. On the other side we have Arabic *adān* ‘call to prayer’ (Table 1), which becomes ‘muezzin’ in almost all the languages, probably for Songhay/Kanuri intermediary.

In Bargery’s Hausa dictionary we find *bahàrā* ‘a notorious prostitute’, which I believe is an interesting semantic specialization coming from Arabic *baḥr* ‘sea; large river’ (Table 3). An analogous example is found in Kotoko *’alkámā* and in Mbay *gámē / gémē*, where the meaning is ‘spaghetti’ coming from Arabic *qamḥ* ‘wheat’ (Table 27). In Kanuri we observe that *boksūr* ‘tumor’, connected to Arabic *bāsūr* ‘haemorrhoids’ (Table 4), but I do not know if it is an evolution of the language, because in Lukas’ grammar we find it as meaning ‘piles’.

All that has been said up to now is more or less comprehensible, analysing each item, except in one case (Table 17), where for Bore *misiri*, Prost (1983: 13) gives ‘mosquée; bar’. If the meaning given by Prost is right, we could imagine that Bore speaking people were not at all Muslim and the only mosque there was near a bar: that reminds me what happened in Swahili where *gereza* ‘prison’ comes from Portuguese *igreja* ‘church’ and the explanation is found in Sacleux’ Swahili dictionary (1939: 249a): “nom qui avait prévalu à Mobasa pour désigner la citadelle portugaise à cause de la chapelle qui en faisait partie”.

At last, I hope, with these few examples, to have given some ideas of work which could be done analysing my corpus, that is to appear

next year, based on 3020 Arabic etymons present in some 120 West African languages, plus Swahili and some other languages like Berber (Tamasheq) and liNgala, when they were intermediaries in transmitting Arabic loans.

REFERENCES

- Abraham, Roy Clive. 1958. *Dictionary of Modern Yoruba*. London. University of London Press, xli-776 p. [abbreviated A]
- . 1962. *Dictionary of the Hausa language*. London. Hodder and Stoughton, xxvii-992 p. [abbreviated A]
- Alio, Khalil et Herrmann Jungraithmayr. 1989. *Lexique bidiya. Une langue centre-africaine (République du Tchad), avec une introduction grammaticale* (Frankfurter wissenschaftliche Beiträge: Kulturwissenschaftliche Reihe; Bd. 16). Frankfurt am Main. Vittorio Klostermann, 164 p. [abbreviated A&J]
- Ardant Du Picq, [Charles Pierre]. 1933. *La langue songhay. Dialecte dyerma*. Paris. Larose, 170 p. [abbreviated DUP]
- Bailleul, Charles. 1996. *Dictionnaire bambara-français*. Bamako. Éditions Donniya, 470 p. [abbreviated Bai]
- Baldi, Sergio. 1988. *A first ethnolinguistic comparison of Arabic loanwords common to Hausa and Swahili*, Supplement n° 57 to *AION*, XXXVIII (4), 83 p.
- . 1989. "On semantics of Arabic loan words in Hausa": 285-301, in Zygmunt Frajzyngier (ed.), *Current Progress in Chadic Linguistics* (Current Issues in Linguistic Theory, 62). Amsterdam/Philadelphia, 311 p.
- . 1996. "On Arabic Loans in Fulfulde." *AION*, LVI (3): 388-406
- . 1997. "Arabic Loans in Dagbani": 265-289, in *Afroasiatica Neapolitana. Contributi presentati all'8° Incontro di Linguistica Afroasiatica (Camito-Semita), Napoli, 25-26 gennaio 1996* (Studi Africanistici, Serie Etiopica 6), a cura di Alessandro Bausi e Mauro Tosco. Napoli. Istituto Universitario Orientale, Dipartimento di Studi e Ricerche su Africa e Paesi Arabi, xii-315 p. [abbreviated B]
- . 1999. "Arabic Loans in Bambara": 145-174, in *Afroasiatica Tergestina. Papers from the 9th Italian Meeting of Afro-Asiatic (Hamito-Semitic) Linguistics, Trieste, April 23-24 1998*, edited by Marcello Lamberti and Livia Tonelli. Trieste: Unipress, 450 p.
- . 2001. "On Arabic Loans in Yoruba": 45-65, in *Von Ägypten zum Tschadsee. Eine linguistische Reise durch Afrika*. Festschriften für Herrmann Jungraithmayr zum 65. Geburtstag. Herausgegeben von Dymitr Ibriszimow, Rudolf Leger und Uwe Seibert (Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, Band LIII, 3). Würzburg. Ergon-Verlag, 542 p.
- . 2002. "On Arabic Loans in Kanuri." *Studi Magrebini*, XXV: 45-57

- . 2008. *Dictionnaire des emprunts arabes dans les langues de l'Afrique de l'Ouest et en Swahili* (to appear)
- Banfield, A.W. 1914. *Dictionary of the Nupe Language*. Vol. 1 (Nupe-English). Shonga. The Niger Press, xviii-514 p. [Réimprimé en 1969 par Gregg International Publishers, Farnborough, Hants] [abbreviated Ban]
- Bargery, George Percy. 1934. *A Hausa-English Dictionary*. London. O.U.P., liv-1226 p. [abbreviated Ba]
- Barreteau, Daniel. 1988. *Description du mofu-gudur. Langue de la famille Tchadique parlée au Cameroun* (Livre II, Lexique). Paris. ORSTOM, 480 p. [abbreviated Br]
- Bouquiaux, Luc et alii. 1978. *Dictionnaire sango-français et lexique français-sango* (Langues et Civilisations à Tradition Orale, 29). Paris. SELAF, 663 p. [abbreviated Bo]
- Calame-Griaule, Geneviève. 1968. *Dictionnaire dogon (dialecte t̄r̄ɔ̄): Langue et civilisation* (Langues et Littératures de l'Afrique Noire, IV). Paris. Librairie C. Klincksieck, xlii-332-viii Planches [abbreviated CG]
- Cappelletti, Pier Giorgio. 1996. *Dictionnaire tupuri-français*. Guidiguis. Mission Catholique B.P. 07, iv-220 p., multigraphié [abbreviated Cp]
- Chéron, Georges. 1925. *Le dialecte sénoufo du minianka (grammaire, textes et lexiques)*. Paris. Paul Geuthner, 167 p. [abbreviated Ché]
- Childs, G. Tucker. 2000. *A Dictionary of the Kisi Language with an English-Kisi Index* (Westafrikanische Studien. Frankfurter Beiträge zur Sprach- und Kulturgeschichte, Band 22). Köln. Rüdiger Köppe, xxiv-522 p. [abbreviated Ch]
- Creissels, Denis, Sidia Jatta et Kalifa Jobarteh. 1982. "Lexique mandinka-français", in *Mandenkan (Bulletin semestriel, d'études, n° 3* (Automne 1982), xxix-207 p. [abbreviated CJ&J]
- Cyffer, Norbert and Hutchison, John P. (eds). 1990. *Dictionary of the Kanuri Language*. Dordrecht. Foris Publications, xx-200 p. [abbreviated C&H]
- Delafosse, Maurice. 1955. *La Langue mandingue et ses dialectes (malinké, bambara, dioula)*, 2^e volume *Dictionnaire mandingue-français*. Bibliothèque de l'École Nationale des Langues Orientales Vivantes. Paris. Paul Geuthner, xix-857 p. [abbreviated Dlf]
- Diouf, Jean-Léopold. 2003. *Dictionnaire wolof-français suivi d'un dictionnaire français-wolof*. Paris. Karthala, 598 p. [abbreviated Di]
- Ducroz, Jean-Marie et Charles, Marie-Claire. 1978. *Lexique soŋey (songay)-français, parler kaado du Gorouol*. Paris. L'Harmattan, 285 p. [abbreviated D&C]
- Dupuis, A. Yakouba. 1917. *Essai de méthode pratique pour l'étude de la langue songoï ou songaï, langue commerciale et politique de Tombouctou et du Moyen-Niger, suivie d'une légende en songoï avec traduction et d'un dictionnaire songoï-français*. Paris. Ernest Leroux, viii-210 p. [abbreviated Dp]

- Fal Arame, Rosine Santos et Jean Léonce Doneux. 1990. *Dictionnaire wolof-français, suivi d'un index français-wolof*. Paris. Karthala, 342 p. [abbreviated FSD]
- Fisch, Rudolf. 1912. *Grammatik der Dagomba-Sprache*, "Archiv für das Studium deutscher Kolonialsprachen" 14, Berlin [abbreviated Fi]
- Foucauld, Charles de. 1951-1952. *Dictionnaire touareg-français*. Paris. Imprimerie Nationale de France, 4 vols, 2028 p. [abbreviated Fo]
- Frajzyngier, Zygmunt. 1985. *A Pero-English and English-Pero Vocabulary* (Marburger Studien zur Afrika- und Asienkunde; Serie A: Afrika; Band 38). Berlin. Dietrich Reimer, 93 p. [abbreviated Fr]
- Funke, Emil. 1915. "Die Sprache von Busa am Niger": 52-84, in *Mitteilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin*, III Abteilung [abbreviated Fu]
- Gaden, Henry. 1909. *Essai de grammaire de la langue baguirmienne, suivi de textes et de vocabulaires baguirmien-français et français-baguirmien*. Paris. Ernest Leroux, 147 p. [abbreviated G]
- [GILLBT]. 1980. *Vagla-English Dictionary English-Vagla*. Tamale, Ghana. Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy and Bible Translation, xviii-443 p. [abbreviated GI]
- Gouffé, Claude. 1974. "Contacts de vocabulaire entre le haoussa et le touareg": 357-380, in *Actes du Premier Congrès International de Linguistique Sémitique et Chamito-Sémitique* (Paris, 16-19 juillet 1969, 5ème section), réunis par André Caquot et David Cohen. The Hague-Paris. Mouton
- Gregoire, Cl. 1986. *Le maninka de Kankan. Eléments de description phonologique* (Menswetenschappen – Ann. Vol. 122 – Sciences Humaines). Tervuren. Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale. Agence de Cooperation Culturelle et Technique, 207 p. [abbreviated Gr]
- Heath, Jeffrey. 1998. *Dictionnaire songhay-anglais-français* (Langues d'Afrique). Tome I (Koyra chiini), 264 p., Tome II (Djenné chiini), 202 p., Tome III (Koroboro senni), 344 p. Paris, Montréal. L'Harmattan [abbreviated H]
- Innes, Gordon. 1969. *A Mende-English Dictionary*. Cambridge. C.U.P., x-155 p. [abbreviated I]
- Johnson, Frederick. 1939. *A Standard Swahili-English Dictionary*. London-Oxford. O.U.P., x-548 p. [abbreviated J]
- Jullien de Pommerol, Patrice. 1999. *Dictionnaire arabe tchadien-français suivi d'un index français-arabe et d'un index des racines arabes*. Paris. Karthala, 1640 p. [abbreviated JdP]
- Jungraithmayr, Herrmann, en collaboration avec Djimé N'Gaba Tchéré, Nakouma Touri, Michka Sachnine, et Jean-Pierre Caprile. 1990. *Lexique mokilko: mokilko-français et français-mokilko (Guéra, Tchad)* (Sprache und Oralität in Afrika; Band 6). Berlin. Dietrich Reimer (avec un Sup-

- plément: *Créations lexicales spontanées*, rédigé par Jean-Pierre Caprile), 330 p. [abbreviated J]
- , in collaboration with Njeno Andirya Galadima and Ulrich Kleinewillinghöfer. 1991. *A Dictionary of the Tangale Language (Kaltungo, Northern Nigeria) with a Grammatical Introduction* (Sprache und Oralität in Afrika; Bd. 12). Berlin. Dietrich Reimer, 218 p. [abbreviated J]
- et Abakar Adams. 1992. *Lexique migama: migama-français et français-migama (Guéra, Tchad); avec une introduction grammaticale* (Sprache und Oralität in Afrika; Bd. 7). Berlin. Dietrich Reimer, 167 p. [abbreviated J&A]
- Kaye, Alan S. 1986. *A Dictionary of Nigerian Arabic* (Bibliotheca Afroasiatica, Volume Two). Malibu. Undena Publications, ix-90 p.
- Keegan, John M. 1996. *Dictionary of Mbay. Mbay-English English-Mbay* (Languages of the World/Dictionaries 03). München. Lincom Europa, xxiv-604 p. [abbreviated Kg]
- Kervan, Marcel. 1982. *Dictionnaire dogon donno sɔ. Région de Bandiagara. Bandiagara, Mali. Paroisse catholique, B.P. 5, 514 p.* [abbreviated Ke]
- Kröger, Franz. 1992. *Buli-English Dictionary. With an introductory grammar and an index English-Buli* (Forschungen zur Sprachen und Kulturen Afrikas, Band 1). Münster, Hamburg. Lit Verlag, xv-572 p. [abbreviated Kr]
- Le Bris, Pierre et Prost, André. 1981. *Dictionnaire bobo-français, précédé d'une introduction grammaticale et suivi d'un lexique français-bobo* (Langues et civilisations à tradition orale 44). Paris. SELAF, 415 p. [abbreviated LB&P]
- Leger, J. 1971. *Dictionnaire dogon. tomo-kan*, 297 p. (multigraphié) [abbreviated Lg]
- Leger, Rudolf. 1994. *Eine Grammatik der Kwami-Sprache (Nordostnigeria)* (Westafrikanische Studien. Frankfurter Beiträge zur Sprach- und Kulturgeschichte, Band 8). Köln. Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, xx-312 p. [abbreviated Le]
- Lukas, Johannes. 1936. *Die Logone-Sprache im Zentralen Sudan mit Beiträgen aus dem Nachlass von Gustav Nachtigal* (Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes XXI, 6). Leipzig. Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft, viii-148 p. [abbreviated L]
- . 1937. *A study of the Kanuri Language*. London. O.U.P., xvii-253 p. [abbreviated L]
- . 1939. *Die Sprache der Buduma im zentralen Sudan* (Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes XXIV). Leipzig. Kommissionsverlag F.A. Brockhaus, xv-147 p. [abbreviated L]
- . 1953. *Die Sprache der Tubu in der zentralen Sahara* (Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin. Institut für Orientforschung, Veröffentlichung nr 14). Berlin. Akademie-Verlag, xiv-206 p. [abbreviated L]

- Mills, Richard. 2003. *Dictionnaire Sénoufo-Français. Sénanri – parler tyébara (Côte d'Ivoire)* (Gur Monographs – Monographies Voltaïques edited/édités par Gudrun Miehe, Brigitte Reineke, Manfred von Roncador, Volume 5). Köln. Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, Tome I: xvi-743 p.; Tome II 744-1502 p. [abbreviated Mi]
- Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale. 1980. *Guide de transcription et lexique bozo. Teyasco sawananbaana yee axarabuye*. République du Mali. Imprimerie D.N.A.F.L.A., 127 p. [abbreviated Mén]
- Nicolas, Francis. 1953. *La Langue berbère de Mauritanie* (Mémoires de l'Institut Français d'Afrique Noire, n° 33). Dakar. IFAN., 475 p.
- Nikiema, Norbert et Kinda, Jules (Sous-commission National du Mooré). 1977. *Dictionnaire orthographique du Moore/Moor gom-biis no-tũur gulsg sebre*. Ouagadougou. Université de Ouagadougou: Département de Linguistique, 1303 p. + Annex Roaglga 112 p. + Cartes (le moore et ses dialectes) 3 p. [abbreviated N&K]
- Noye, D. 1989. *Dictionnaire foulfouldé-français. Dialecte peul du Diamaré Nord-Cameroun*. Garoua, Paris. Paul Geuthner, x-425 p. [abbreviated No]
- Palayer, Pierre. 1992. *Dictionnaire sar-français. Tchad*. Paris. Paul Geuthner, 1041 p. [abbreviated Pa]
- Prost, André. 1983. *Inventaire des mots d'origine arabe passés dans diverses langues de l'Afrique de l'Ouest*. Paris: L'Auteur, 190 p. (multigraphié) [abbreviated P]
- Rapp, Eugen Ludwig. 1966. *Die Gurenne-Sprache in Nordghana* (Lehrbücher für das Studium der Orientalischen und Afrikanischen Sprachen. Band XI). Leipzig. VEB Verlag Enzyklopädie, 240 p. [abbreviated Ra]
- Robinson, Charles Henry. 1925. *Dictionary of the Hausa language, I. Hausa-English*. Cambridge. C.U.P., xvii-475 p.
- Roth-Laly, Arlette. 1969-1971-1972. *Lexique des parlers arabes tchadosoudanais*. Paris. CNRS [Fascicule I (1969), 106 p.; II (1969), p. 107 à 264; III (1971), p. 265 à 402; IV (1972), p. 403 à 545] [abbreviated RL]
- Ruelland, Suzanne. 1988. *Dictionnaire tupuri-français-anglais. Région de Mindaoré, Tchad* (Langues et Cultures Africaines 10. SELAF 213). Paris. Peeters/SELAF, 342 p. [abbreviated Ru]
- Sachnine, Michka. 1982. *Le lamé (Nord-Cameroun). Un parler zimé du Nord-Cameroun (langue tchadique)*. I. *Phonologie – Grammaire*, 250 p.; II. *Dictionnaire lamé-français. Lexique français-lamé*, p. 251 à 557 (Langues et Cultures Africaines, 1). Paris. SELAF [abbreviated Sa]
- Sacleux, Charles. 1939. *Dictionnaire swahili-français*. Paris. Institut d'Ethnologie, 1114 p.
- Schuh, Russell G. 1981. *A Dictionary of Ngizim* (University of California Publications in Linguistics; vol. 99). Berkeley and Los Angeles. University of California Press, xxiv-230 p. [abbreviated Sc]

- Sterk, Jan P. 1994. *Gade-English Dictionary* (Sprache und Oralität in Afrika; Bd. 15). Berlin. Dietrich Reimer, ii-124 p. [abbreviated St]
- Taine-Cheikh, Catherine. 1988-89-90-98. *Dictionnaire ḥassāniyya-français (dialecte arabe de Mauritanie)*. Paris. Paul Geuthner [Fascicule I (1988); II (1989); III (1989); IV (1990); V (1990); VI (1990); VII (1998); VIII (1998)] [abbreviated TC]
- Taylor, F. W. 1932. *A Fulani-English Dictionary*. Oxford. Clarendon Press, vii-242 p. [abbreviated Ta]
- Tourneux, Henry. 1983. "Les emprunts en musgu", 441-477, in Ekkehard Wolff and Hilke Meyer-Bahlburg (eds.), *Studies in Chadic and Afroasiatic Linguistics*. Papers from the International Colloquium on the Chadic Language Family and the Symposium on Chadic within Afroasiatic (University of Hamburg, September 14-18, 1981). Hamburg. Helmut Buske, 479 p. [abbreviated To]
- , avec la collaboration de Hamat Patan. 1991. *Lexique pratique du munjuk des rizières. Dialecte de Pouss* (Études Tchadiques Monographies). Paris. Paul Geuthner – ORSTOM, 130 p. [abbreviated To]
- . 1997. *Emprunts en kotoko d'Afadé* (liste manuscrite) [abbreviated To].
- Wehr, Hans. 1966. *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, edited by J. Milton Cowan. Wiesbaden-London. Otto Harrassowitz, xvii-1110 p.
- Westermann, Dietrich. 1924. *Die Kpelle-Sprache in Liberia. Grammatische Einführung, Texte und Wörterbuch*. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, vii-278 p. [abbreviated W]
- Winkler, Elisabeth Grace (assisted by Clara Jimmy-Samba). 1977. *Kpelle-English Dictionary with English-Kpelle Glossary*. Bong County, Liberia and Bloomington. Indiana University Linguistics Club Publications, xxii-101 p. [abbreviated Win]
- Zima, Petr. 1994. *Lexique dendi (Songhay): (Djougou, Bénin); avec un index français-dendi* (Westafrikanische Studien. Frankfurter Beiträge zur Sprach- und Kulturgeschichte, Band 4). Köln. Rüdiger Köppe, 321 p.
- Zoubko, Galina V. 1995. *Dictionnaire peul-français* (Senzi Ethnological Reports 4). Osaka. National Museum of Ethnology, xiv-552 p. [abbreviated Zou]