

# **KAGORO SOCIOLINGUISTIC SURVEY**

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## 1. Goals of the Survey

The overall goals of this initial survey were to:

1. Locate and map Kagoro villages in Mali.
2. Determine the language use, attitudes and vitality in the Kagoro community.
3. Assess the level of inherent intelligibility between Kagoro and related Mandé languages.
4. Assess the level of bilingualism with Bambara, Soninké, and any other local dominant languages.
5. Collect data from which a phonological and grammatical description of the Kagoro language could be written.

## 2. Background Information on Kagoro

There is very little published information on the Kagoro ethnic group and their language. What little we could find we used as the basis for our initial plan of how to go about locating the Kagoro villages in Mali. These resources are:

Bird, Ch. (ed.). 1982. *The Dialects of Mandekan*. Indiana University, 423 pp.

Creissels, D. 1986. "Le système prédictif du kagoro." *Mandenkan*. No. 11. Paris, pp. 1–16.

D.N.A.F.L.A. 1983. *Dialectes Manding du Mali*. Agence de coopération culturelle et technique, Paris, 409 pp.

## 3. The Survey

The survey was conducted from March 16 through March 25, 1998. The survey team consisted of Brad and Susan Smeltzer, members of SIL International in Mali, Dr. Valentin Vydrine, professor of Linguistics with the European University of St. Petersburg, and Dmitry Idiatov, a student of Dr. Vydrine.

Our plan was to do a sociolinguistic questionnaire (see appendix A) and short word list in each village we visited. The questionnaires were filled in using responses from a large group of elders. The short word list was collected in two smaller groups with at least 2 Kagoro speakers participating in each group, in order to get a consensus.

After the initial mapping survey we determined that the village of Sebekoro would be a good place to do more in-depth data gathering. Valentin Vydrine returned there on March 27, 1998, and stayed for one week, collecting a large word list, some texts and administering a Recorded Text Test for Khassonké and Malinké of Kita.

## 4. Survey Questions and Assessment Methods

### 4.1. Geographic Extent of Kagoro Ethnic Group

We visited villages that we hoped were representative of the Kagoro villages in the surrounding area. In these sample villages we interviewed the elders, using our sociolinguistic questionnaire as a guide for the interview. Armed with a map of the area, questions 2, 3 were intended to help us get at the mapping information we were after.

Besides the information gathered from the questionnaire and maps, we also asked people in the villages we passed through and those along the roadside as to the ethnicity of the various villages in the area. Considering all this information we established a distribution map and modified our travels as we went along.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>These maps are on file and can be seen at the SIL office in Bamako. They are too detailed for reproduction here.

## **4.2. Language Attitudes, Vitality and Use**

Assuming that a positive attitude towards one's language is a factor in favor of eventual development of that language, questions 7, 8, 9 and 12 from the questionnaire (see appendix A) are intended to reveal the attitude of the interviewee to his or her language.

Another assumption we hold is that the vitality of a language is an important factor to consider when trying to predict the eventual success or failure of a language development effort. Questions 10, 13, 14 and 15 are intended to indicate language vitality, focusing on the language skills of the children (#10) and the language usage patterns of the various social strata in a given domain (#13). Questions 14 and 15 are intended to reveal language competence by posing a complex hypothetical situation and asking how the speaker would resolve the situation. These questions also give an initial indication as to the level of bilingualism with the dominant local languages.

## **4.3. Inherent Intelligibility**

For this survey, an important question is how “close” Kagoro is to other Mandé languages. More specifically, is it possible for Kagoro speakers to use literature written in closely related languages. If so, there may be no need, from a purely linguistic point of view, to develop materials in Kagoro. The languages in question are Bambara, Khassonké and Malinké of Kita.

### **4.3.1 With Bambara**

The initial hypotheses, proposed by Valentin Vydrine, a Mandé specialist, is that Bambara and Kagoro are too linguistically “distant” for Kagoro speakers to use Bambara materials. Where Bambara is used by those whose first language is Kagoro, they have learned Bambara as a different language; their abilities are not the result of the genetic relationship between the two languages. To assess this hypothesis we depended on informal interviews and our personal observations.

### **4.3.2 With Malinké of Kita**

Inherent intelligibility between Malinké of Kita and Kagoro was assessed by using a 300 word list for calculating lexical similarity, a Recorded Text Test and our personal observations. After the initial mapping survey, Sebekoro was chosen as the village where the word list would be collected and the Recorded Text Test performed due to the prominence of Kagoro usage by all social strata and its geographical remoteness.

#### **4.3.2.1 300 Word List**

The word list is the standard list used by the SIL Mali survey department. It includes the SIL Africa Area 200 Word list and the Swadesh 200 Word list. The list was collected by Valentin Vydrine, who has a good knowledge of Bambara and Maninka, which are closely related to Kagoro. His source of information was Siriman Jara, a 35 year-old male, together with 3 witnesses, whose job it was to confirm or correct Mr. Siriman's responses.

#### **4.3.2.2 Recorded Text Test (RTT)**

The test used for Malinké of Kita was previously prepared for a Malinké survey.<sup>2</sup> The test was administered to 3 people in the village of Sebekoro by Dr. Vydrine.

### **4.3.3 With Khassonké**

The Recorded Text Test in Khassonké<sup>3</sup> that was developed for a previous survey<sup>3</sup> was used to test for inherent intelligibility. The same 3 subjects were tested for both the Malinké-Kita RTT and the Khassonké RTT.

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<sup>2</sup>See “Report of a Linguistic Survey on the Malinké of Western Mali and Senegal, with Special Regard to the Malinké of Kita” pre-publication draft, version 1.1, on file with SIL Bamako.

#### **4.4 Phonological and Grammatical Description**

A specially selected word list and set of sentences designed by Dr. Vydrine to reveal the phonological and grammatical characteristics of Kagoro were also elicited in each village. These data form the basis for a forthcoming grammatical description of the Kagoro language, to be published by Dr. Vydrine.

#### **4.5 Initial Plan for Choosing Test Villages**

From the published literature and various interviews we determined that there were 4 major groups of Kagoro villages:

- By far the largest is the “homeland” in the area known as “Kaarta”, which includes the administrative area of Sefeto in the circle of Kita, region of Kayes, and the administrative areas of Diema and Dioumera in the circle of Nioro, region of Kayes.
- In the administrative area of Kolokani, circle of Kolokani, region of Bamako, west of the town of Kolokani.
- In the administrative area of Boro, circle of Banamba, region of Bamako.
- In the administrative areas of Farako and Tamani, circle of Segou, region of Segou and the administrative area of Niamina, circle of Koulikoro, region of Bamako.

### **5. Results**

#### **5.1 Geographic Extent of Kagoro Ethnic Group**

A general picture of the Kagoro distribution in Mali can be seen in appendix B. The actual working maps with each individual village coded are too detailed for reproduction here but are on file and can be seen in Bamako at the SIL office.

#### **5.2 Language Attitudes, Vitality and Use**

Appendix C is a summary of the responses to the questionnaire and our subjective observations noted in each sample village.

##### **5.2.1. General Impressions**

In general, we did not get an impression of a homogenous community as far as their attitudes towards their language and the vitality of the language itself is concerned. Also, bilingualism with the dominant languages was not uniform across the Kagoro community.

Kagoro identity does not seem to be tied directly with language use, but rather ethnicity. This was evident especially when we visited the village of Debo-Kagoro. Bambara is the preferred spoken and written language there, and yet this village is considered the “heart” of the Kagoro world, as demonstrated by the recent pan-Kagoro meeting that took place there. With representatives from 70 different villages, a system of arbitration was decided on and a meeting building was inaugurated which will serve as the Kagoro “high court”.<sup>4</sup> This is certainly a strategic village in the Kagoro society, and yet Bambara is the dominant local language. Even at that meeting, Bambara was the language used, with translation into Kagoro.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>The Khassonké test was prepared in Oussoubidiagna, Mali, on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1995 by surveyors Tim Tillinghast, Matthias Liebracht and Jean-Marie Kanouté.

<sup>4</sup>For example, this is where final decisions will be made on issues important to the Kagoro. Conflicts that can't be resolved at the local level will be brought here to be heard by the elders.

<sup>5</sup>From an interview with the elders of Debo-Kagoro, one week after the pan-Kagoro meeting took place.

### **5.2.2. From the Questionnaires**

Of the 8 test villages, 3 give indications that Kagoro is truly viable, that is, likely to be spoken by the next generation at least (Sebekoro, Dyoumera, Sefeto). Of these, Sefeto prefers literacy in Bambara to Kagoro, stating that it is more useful in the larger world. For Sebekoro and Dyoumera, Bambara was their second choice for literacy after Kagoro, with both villages claiming a high level of bilingualism in Bambara for the entire population.

For the other 5 villages, vitality is certainly in question given the language use patterns of the <30 year olds. In Nabougou and Debo-Kagoro, there is no question about the preference for Bambara over Kagoro in both spoken and written use. In Mogola and Kamiko, despite a stated preference for Kagoro literacy, Bambara seems to be replacing Kagoro in all domains for the younger people. Guissembinne, in which Kagoro still enjoys usage in almost all domains, shares the pragmatic point of view with Sefeto, which prefers Bambara literacy to Kagoro, due to its perceived wider usefulness.

### **5.2.3. Kagoro and Baage (and Malinké of Kita)**

In the administrative area of Sefeto we passed through many Baage villages. These people are ethnically similar to the Malinké of Kita. "Baage" means something like "river people". There was general consensus that the Kagoro and the Baage could understand each other perfectly well, but they claimed that there were still some linguistic differences between the two speech forms. Our suspicion is that the differences are more based on ethnic diversity rather than genuine linguistic diversity. This hypothesis gains some support from the lexical comparison done between Malinké of Kita and Kagoro of Sebekoro, which, by the way, has no Malinké influence (see table 1: Malinké Kita RTT Results).

## **5.3. *Inherent Intelligibility*<sup>6</sup>**

### **5.3.1. With Bambara**

Based on our observations and interviews there seems to be a less than adequate level of inherent intelligibility between Kagoro and Bambara. We talked with a number of Bambara speakers who had come to settle among the Kagoro and asked them how well they understood Kagoro. They all agreed that they could not communicate with monolingual Kagoro speakers in Bambara. A Bambara-speaking woman in Sebekoro who married a Kagoro has taken 5 years to learn to communicate using Kagoro, which she learned from her children. She remarks that her children don't often understand her when she speaks to them in Bambara.

### **5.3.2. With Malinké of Kita**

#### **5.3.2.1 300 Word list**

The Kagoro 300 word list taken in Sebekoro by Dr. Vydrine was compared with the Malinké list taken from the Malinké report (Tillinghast and Liebrecht 1996). Due to various problems with these word lists the actual number of words compared is 284, of which 245 were considered to be cognates, giving an 86% figure for cognicity. This is within the range where inherent intelligibility is possible.

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<sup>6</sup>Inherent intelligibility is that which results from two languages being linguistically similar. This is opposed to acquired intelligibility (bilingualism), that which results from an individual's personal contact with another language. In theory the level of inherent intelligibility with a certain language should be similar for all members of a given language group, whereas the level of acquired intelligibility will vary widely depending on the level of exposure of a particular individual with the language in question.

### 5.3.2.2. Recorded Text Test

Dr. Vydrine in Sebekoro administered a Recorded Text Test to three people. Ideally the test should be given to 10 people in order to get an adequate sample. The scores carry the following meanings:

0 = no comprehension

1 = partial comprehension (have a general idea about the content, but there are errors in important details.)

2 = good comprehension

**Table 1: Malinké-Kita RTT Results**

Testee	Sex	Age	Question Numbers										Score:	w/o #7
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
1	m	35	2	1	0	2	2	2	0	2	1	2	70%	78%
2	f	60	1	1	2	2	2	2	0	1	2	2	75%	83%
3	f	70	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	2	1	1	80%	89%
												<b>Avg. score</b>	75%	83%
												<b>Std. Deviation</b>	5%	6%

Dr. Vydrine noted a few concerns with the Malinké-Kita test:

- The text is heavily influenced by Bambara.
- The test consists of two stories that run together in the tape with no indication that a new story is beginning. Dr. Vydrine attributes the failure of his 3 informants to answer question 7 correctly to this fact.<sup>7</sup> For this reason I have computed the results a second time omitting question 7 from the calculations. The average results increase by 8% to 83%.
- The antecedent for a particular pronoun at the end of the text is ambiguous. If the wrong antecedent is assumed then the answer to question 9 could be answered incorrectly.<sup>8</sup>

What these scores indicate is that there is a possibility of adequate inherent intelligibility between Malinké of Kita and Kagoro. What this means is that Kagoro speakers may be able to use materials produced in the Malinké of Kita speech form. **Further testing with more subjects is needed to confirm this hypothesis.**

### 5.3.3. With Khassonké

Inherent intelligibility between Khassonké and Kagoro was assessed using a Recorded Text Test. This too was a test prepared from the previous Malinké survey.<sup>2</sup> Following are the results of the Recorded Text Test.

<sup>7</sup>It is interesting to note that in the original hometown test, 2 of 33 subjects also scored 0 on question 7.

<sup>8</sup>However, all the subjects scored 2 on the hometown test.

**Table 2: Khassonké RTT Results**

Testee	Sex	Age	Question Numbers										Score:
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
1	m	35	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	2	0	35%
2	f	60	0	0	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	0	50%
3	f	70	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	0	25%
<b>Avg. score</b>												37%	
<b>Std. Deviation</b>												13%	

Dr. Vydrine commented that questions 7 and 9 both concern figures: the numeral system being virtually the same in most Manding languages, these questions are easy to answer.

These scores indicate that inherent intelligibility between Khassonké and Kagoro is very unlikely. **Further testing with more subjects is needed to confirm this hypothesis.**

#### **5.4. forthcoming Report from Vydrine**

Dr. Vydrine is planning to publish his research on Kagoro phonology and grammar in the near future.

## **6. Observations and Recommendations**

As stated earlier in this report, the linguistic situation among the Kagoro people is not homogenous. Attitudes, vitality, language use and levels of bilingualism vary from place to place. So, although the Kagoro language picture is still not fully understood, there are some observations and recommendations we can make based on this survey data so far collected.

### **6.1 Observations**

- There are pockets where Kagoro is definitely a viable language, at least into the next generation. (The villages around Sebekoro, Sefeto, and probably the villages around Kamiko).
- There are Kagoro villages where Kagoro language development would be welcome (Mogola, Kamiko, Sebekoro, Dyoumera), but others where it would not (Sefeto, Debo-Kagoro, Guissimbinne, Nabougou). Interestingly, some of the villages that welcome Kagoro language development do not show signs of the language being very vital in the long run. And conversely, not all those villages where the vitality seems adequate, are interested in seeing the Kagoro language developed.
- Bambara is taking over more and more domains of language use. There does not seem to be a strong sense of regret on the part of the Kagoro who see their language in decline. In fact, many hold a pragmatic view of the situation and welcome Bambara language development efforts in their areas, seeing it as more useful than Kagoro in the wider world. As noted elsewhere in this report (0 5.2.1. General Impressions), Kagoro identity seems most strongly founded on ethnicity rather than language use.
- From the RTT and lexical comparison work, there is a distinct possibility that the level of inherent intelligibility between Kagoro and Malinké of Kita is high enough that materials in the Malinké of Kita speech form will be accessible to the Kagoro speakers. **This needs further research.**
- On the other hand, Khassonké, Bambara and Soninké are all too linguistically distant from Kagoro for an adequate level of inherent intelligibility.

## 6.2 Recommendations

- The meeting in Debo-Kagoro was a very important one and we are sorry to have missed it by one week. It is important that we contact those leaders and get their reactions to the idea of Kagoro language development.
- We need a longer look at this diverse sociolinguistic situation. A short-term assignment may be in order to further assess the viability of the language, the level of inherent intelligibility with Malinké of Kita, and the level of Bambara competence (as either a first or second language).
- There are language development efforts planned for the Malinké of Kita by other organizations (Mission Protestant Norvegienne, l'Eglise Catholique). As materials become available they should be tested among the Kagoro.
- Try and identify Kagoro speakers who can carry out the above research, or can be trained to do so.
- There are other organizations interested in working among the Kagoro. We can ask them to keep us informed of those Kagoro communities that continue to show an interest in Kagoro language development.

## 7. Historical Footnote

- Historical Note: It seems there was a migration from the Kagoro heartland in the region of Kaarta about 100 years ago. Those villages, which are the descendants of the migrants, have adopted whatever the local dominant language is (Bambara, Khassonké, Soninké), and Kagoro is only used by the older people in restricted domains. (I speculate that the cause of this migration was to flee the *Jihads* of the followers of El Hajj Oumar Tall.)

## Appendix A: Questionnaire Sociolinguistique

Enquêteur: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: j \_\_\_ m \_\_\_ 19 \_\_\_

Village: \_\_\_\_\_ Arrond: \_\_\_\_\_ Cercle: \_\_\_\_\_

Chef du village: \_\_\_\_\_ Son ethnie: \_\_\_\_\_

Nom du porte-parole: \_\_\_\_\_ Nombre des témoins \_\_\_\_\_

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1a. Vous êtes de quelle ethnie? *Axa ni kan xabila yi?*

1b. Comment est-ce que vous appelez votre langue dans votre façon de parler? *Axa na axa xanne xilli kan moxo, axa xannen āa?*

1c. Dans votre langue comment appelez-vous les gens qui parlent comme vous? *Axa xannen āa, sere be ga sefene axa moxon āa, i na xilli kan moxo?*

2. Quels villages parlent comme vous? *Kan debu wa sefene axa moxon āa?*

3. Est-ce que les villages suivants parlent comme vous? *Yala debu be ga konni falle, i wa sefene axa moxo ba?*

4. D'après vous, où est-ce que l'on parle le mieux de votre façon? *Axa xanne sefen moxo sire ga konno noqu be, a na minna?*

5a. Lequel est le meilleur village dans lequel apprendre votre langue? *Kan debe nan sira i su yi, na axa xannen xara?*

5b. Deuxième choix? *Fillandi ni kan debe?*

6. D'où sont venus les fondateurs de ce village? *Ke debe taaxundaano giri minna?*

7. Quelles langues sont parlées par les gens de ce village? *Yerenko na kan xannun konno?*  
(a) \_\_\_\_\_ (b) \_\_\_\_\_ (c) \_\_\_\_\_ (d) \_\_\_\_\_

8. Parmi ces langues, laquelle préférez-vous (les gens du village) parler? (A) *Ku xannu su naxa, kan xanne lião xa danãa na a ko?* \_\_\_\_\_

9a. En quelle langue préférez-vous apprendre à lire et écrire? (A) *Axa wa a mulla na safande do xaranãe xara kan xanne ya?* \_\_\_\_\_

9b. Est-ce qu'il vous plairait si vos enfants apprenaient à lire et à écrire en (1a)\_\_\_\_ (1b)\_\_\_\_ (1c)\_\_\_\_ (1d)\_\_\_\_ (A)? *Yala a lião axa danãa, selli axa renmua ga xaranãe do safande ãaana (1a)\_\_\_\_ (1b)\_\_\_\_ (1c)\_\_\_\_ (1d)\_\_\_\_ na?*

10. Est-ce que les jeunes ici parlent votre langue (le Kagoro) bien, comme elle doit être parlée? (V) *Lenminu beenu ga saarena yere, i ku wa axa xannen konno moxo sire, xo a gan xawa moxo be?*  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. S'il n'était pas possible d'être alphabétisé dans votre propre parler, vous préféreriez apprendre à lire et à écrire dans quel autre langue? (A) *Selli ballikunxaranãe ra nta ãaana axa xannen ãa, axa wa duãene na a ãa kan xanne ya?* \_\_\_\_\_

12. Si vous pouvez choisir, préférez-vous être alphabétisé en Kagoro, ou une autre langue malienne?(A) \_\_\_\_\_ Laquelle? \_\_\_\_\_ *Selli axa ra ga a sugandini, axa wa a mulla na balikunxaranãe ãa Kagoroxannen ãa, ma xanne taana yi? \_\_\_\_\_ Kan xanne?*  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. Remplir les tableaux suivant en utilisant les lettres (de #7) indiquant les langues parlées dans chacune des situations indiquées:

a.

	maison <i>ka</i>	marché <i>saxan di</i>	travail <i>gollira</i>	autre vill <i>debe tana</i>	Arrond.	mosque <i>sallika</i>	école <i>lekoli</i>
garçon <i>renyugo</i>							
filles <i>renyaxare</i>							
h: 18–30 <i>yugo</i>							
f: 18–30 <i>yaxare</i>							
h: 30–50 <i>yugo</i>							
f: 30–50 <i>yaxare</i>							
h: 50+ <i>yugo</i>							
f: 50+ <i>yaxare</i>							

b.

	imam	étranger	enfant	h/f 18–30	h/f: 30–50	h/f 50+
garçon						
filles						
h: 18–30						
f: 18–30						
h: 30–50						
f: 30–50						
h: 50+						
f: 50+						

14. Si une femme va au dispensaire, est-ce qu'il lui faut un interprète pour bien expliquer sa situation au medcine? \_\_\_\_\_ Sinon, quelle langue utilise-t-elle? \_\_\_\_\_

*Yaxare yogo do watunte ga na daga dokotorokan ãa, yalla a haaju ni yillandaana ya, na a fi famundi dokotoron ãa? \_\_\_\_\_ Ken ga fe, a na kan xanne konno ken bire?*

\_\_\_\_\_

15. Si un voleur est entré chez vous, que vous l'avez vu prendre quelque chose, que vous l'avez attrapé et que vous l'avez emmené jusqu'à l'arrondissement, seriez-vous capable d'expliquer l'affaire en détail au Commandant (en Bambara, Malinké, Soninké) sans interprète? \_\_\_\_\_

*An ga da fayaana be wari, a da fo fayi an kan ãa, an ga da a raga na a deni komondan banãe, an ra wa ken fi su faccarini (Bambaraxanne, Maninkanxanne, Soninkanxanne) ãa, yillandaana ga fe? \_\_\_\_\_*

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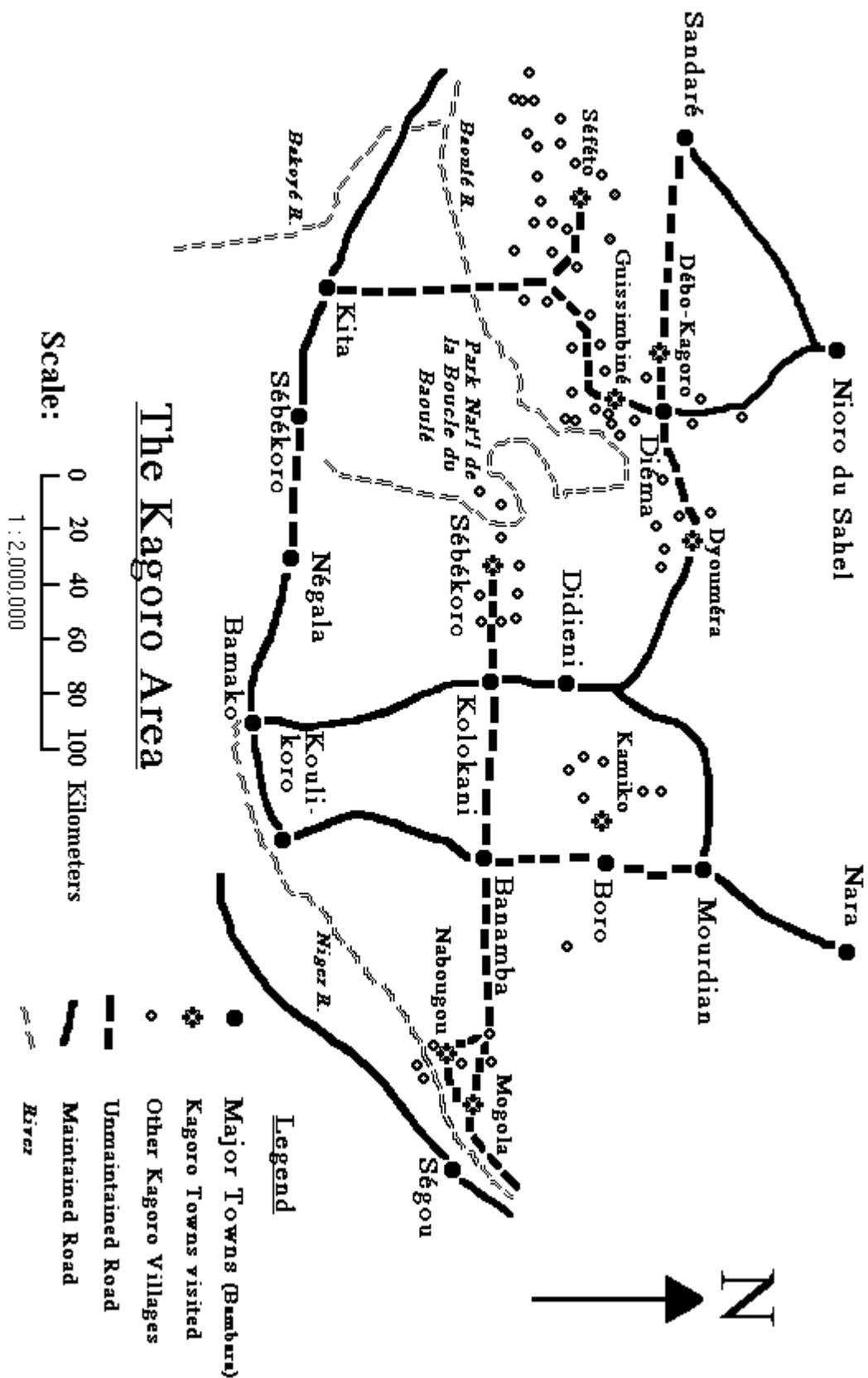
Notes Démographiques:

No. de maisons: \_\_\_\_\_ Ecoles: \_\_\_\_\_

Maternités: \_\_\_\_\_ Dispensaire \_\_\_\_\_

Religion: \_\_\_\_\_ Noms de familles: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B: Geographic Distribution of Kagoro Villages



## Appendix C: Summary of Observations by Sample Village

Key: B = Bambara, Fr = French, H = Hassaniya, K = Kagoro, S = Soninké, P = Peul,  
lg =language

### Mogola - Région: Segou, Cercle: Segou, Arrond: Farako

#### *Demographics*

**Date of visit:** March 17, 1998  
**Interview lg:** B  
**Village chief:** Kulibali - Bambara  
**Prominent names:** Fofana, Camara, Magasa, Kulibali, Jara, Tarawore, Fomba, Sidibe, Saaxo  
**No. of homes:** 100  
**School:** 6ème  
**Clinic/Maternity:** no  
**Pharmacy:** no

#### *lg. viability, attitudes, use*

**Place best spoken:** Mogola, Nabougou  
**Lgs. Spoken:** K, B, P  
**Preferred lg spoken:** K  
**Preferred lg written:** K  
**Preferred lg alpha:** K  
**Ability of Children:** Some families use it in the home.  
**Domains of usage:** In the home, K is used by all ages. Outside the home, Bambara dominates for those up to 50 years. Older than 50, Kagoro dominates. Two Kagoro working together would most likely use Kagoro. Bambara is used with the imam (who is Soninké) as well as with strangers, with the exception of those over 50.  
**Competence:** Competent in Bambara.

#### *Other Observations*

- Kagoro values: Dia Fofana, the oldest Kagoro man, spoke to us about Kagoro values. They speak the truth, seek good relations above all else, are humble and don't seek the first place, value the group over the individual.
- Kagoro origins: (source: Dia Fofana) Fofana - oldest founding Kagoro family, from which comes Camara, Magasa, Waage, Tirira, Danfaga, Kamisogo.
- Mogola origins: Kagoro came from Tamani on the river 107 years ago.
- Other Kagoro villages in the area: Nabougou, Sèguèla, Nassambougou, Maniana, Ntomona, Tomba, Tamani and Deninkoura (both south of the Niger).

### Nabougou - Région: Segou, Cercle: Segou, Arrond: Farako

#### *Demographics*

**Date of visit:** March 17, 1998  
**Interview Lg:** B  
**Village chief:** Buba Kɔnɛ - Bambara  
**Prominent names:** Magasa, Kamɔsɔkɔ, Kɔndɛ, Fofana, Silla  
**No. of homes:**  
**School:**  
**Clinic/Maternity:** no  
**Pharmacy:** no

### ***Ig. viability, attitudes, use***

**Place best spoken:** Kaarta, Nobougou, Mogola  
**Lgs. Spoken:** B, K, S, P  
**Preferred Ig spoken:** B  
**Preferred Ig written:** B  
**Preferred Ig alpha:** B  
**Ability of Children:** poor - they use B  
**Domains of usage:** B is used in every social situation with the exception of men and women 30 and older who use Kagoro in their homes.  
A few people understand Soninké, but not many. Claim was made that the Kagoro and the Bambara understand each other completely. Suspect that any mutual understanding is in B.  
**Competence:** B

### ***Other Observations***

- Village origin: Settled by Coulibaly. Konte come from Gange who came from Denekura south of the Niger river.

## **Kamiko -Région: Bamako, Cercle: Banamba, Arrond: Boro**

### ***Demographics***

**Date of visit:** March 18, 1998  
**Interview Ig:** S  
**Village chief:** Bakoye Magasa - Kagoro (mother Soninké, so he knows it a bit)  
**Prominent names:** Magasa, Kulibali, Jara, Tarawore, Jaariso, Saxano, Kante  
**No. of homes:** 30  
**School:** no - Boro (arrond.)  
**Clinic/Maternity:** no  
**Pharmacy:** no

### ***Ig. viability, attitudes, use***

**Place best spoken:** Kamiko, Naxato, Kuruxara, Ngabakoro (les vieux), Sirado  
**Lgs. Spoken:** K, B, S, Siranxanne(?)  
**Preferred Ig spoken:** K - >30 yrs.; B - < 30 yrs.  
**Preferred Ig written:** K  
**Preferred alpha:** K, B (children's preference)  
**Ability of Children:** understand K, respond in B  
**Domains of usage:** B used in every domain, except in the home where those 18 and older use Kagoro as well.  
  
Children tend to prefer Bambara, but they understand Kagoro. The prominence of Bambara literacy in the area makes Bambara more attractive.  
  
Understand S, but usually respond in B.  
**Competence:** B

### ***Other Observations***

Village origins: Came from Bululi in Kaarta. Speak like the Kagoro of Diema.

Kamiko part of a pocket of Kagoro villages in the Boro area: These include: Wara, Kouloufara, Sirado, Sourabougou, Fablana, Ngabakoro, Kanika, Soya (to the east), Bambila (south)

## Sebekoro - Région: Bamako, Cercle: Kolokani, Arrond: Kolokani

### *Demographics*

**Date of visit:** March 20, 1998  
**Interview lg:** S  
**Village chief:** Banjugu Fofana - Kagoro  
**Prominent names:** Fofana, Keita, Tarawore, Jara  
**No. of homes:** 40  
**School:** to 9ème  
**Clinic/Maternity:** yes  
**Pharmacy:** yes

### *Ig. viability, attitudes, use*

**Place best spoken:** Kaarta, Sakora  
**Lgs. Spoken:** K, B, F, H  
**Preferred Ig spoken:** K  
**Preferred Ig written:** K  
**Preferred Ig alpha:** K, B  
**Ability of Children:** Good. No influence from B.  
**Domains of usage:** Kagoro used in all domains, with the exception of Bambara in the Arrond. (Kolokani) and French in school.

**Competence:**

### *Other Observations*

After our initial mapping survey, we decided this would be a good representative village of Kagoro speech, due to the low influence of Bambara, and its relatively remote location. Here is where Valentin Vydrine returns for his in-depth work. The 300 word list and the Recorded Text Test was done here. Mr. Vydrine has a forthcoming write up of his work.

Meaning of Kagoro: "Something old" from "ka koto".

Village origins: Kaarta Sakora. Driven here by El Hajj Oumar Tall when he came through Kaarta. Unoccupied before then.

Other Kagoro villages in the area: Wanino, Tiokanbouyou, Sikoro, Konokoulou, Bamakolon, Boila (Boina), Béléko (Bedeko), Missira, Dongo, Sirakoroba (not on map, east of Missira), Samakoulou and Kartani (both in the park).

Old men say Kagoro and Khassonké are much alike.

Closer to Soninkes than Bambaras. Will marry with Soninkes but not with Bambaras.

No teacher here for adult literacy but would like one. Prefer Kagoro literacy. But prefer school in French since it has a greater usefulness.

Claim there is inherent intelligibility between Bambara and Kagoro, but not held up by our observations and discussions with Bambaras. It took one Bambara lady 5 years to learn Kagoro, and she learned it from her kids! Her kids don't speak B and don't even understand her all the time when she speaks it to them.

## Dyomara - Région: Kayes, Cercle: Nioro, Arrond: central

### *Demographics*

**Date of visit:** March 21, 1998  
**Interview Lg:** S  
**Village chief:** Silamaxa Sisoxo - Kagoro  
**Prominent names:** Sisoko, Fofana, Magasa, Tall Keita, Karama, Jara, Tarawore, Si, Jariso, Kulibali, Tuure, Daabo, Jaabi. Griot: Koita, Leatherworker: Sylla, Blacksmith: Kante.  
**No. of homes:** 63  
**School:** yes, 6ème  
**Clinic/Maternity:** yes

Pharmacy: yes

### ***Ig. viability, attitudes, use***

**Place spoken best:** Tominkoro, Kongosanbougou, Sanankoro.

**Lgs. Spoken:** K, B (women and men all understand and speak it), S (understood but not spoken).

**Preferred Ig spoken:** K

**Preferred Ig written:** K

**Preferred Ig alpha:** K, B (already happening), (not S)

**Ability of Children:** good

**Domains of usage:** Kagoro used in every domain with the exception of French in the school.

**Competence:** B - everyone

### ***Other Observations***

Village origins: Came from "Mandé" before the chief was born. Came from Kabuğu in the Kolokani area > 80 years ago. In 1983 had to leave the Boucle de Baoulé.

Other Kagoro villages in the area: Masala, Madiga, Doubabougou, Tominkoro, Sanankoro, Kongosanbougou, Foulabougou, Sébabougou (south-east).

Basically, the claim is all are bilingual in Bambara.

## **Debo-Kagoro - Région: Kayes, Cercle, Nioro, Arrond: Diema**

### ***Demographics***

**Date of visit:** March 21, 1998

**Interview Ig:** B

**Village chief:** Magasa - Kagoro

**Prominent names:** Magasa, Tarawore, Jara, Diawara

**No. of homes:** 40-50

**School:** yes

**Clinic/Maternity:** yes

**Pharmacy:** yes

### ***Ig. viability, attitudes, use***

**Place best spoken:** Guissimbiné, Guemoukouraba, Dionfa, Fulabougou, Bouli-Bani

**Lgs. Spoken:** B, S, K (old people only)

**Preferred Ig spoken:** B

**Preferred Ig written:** B

**Ability of Children:** B only. No competence in K.

**Domains of usage:** Bambara used in all domains except >50 year olds in their home: K. French in school.

**Competence:** B

### ***Other Observations***

Muslim for the past 45 years only.

Traditional home of Kuya Magasa - "the father of all the Kagoro." So Debo-Kagoro is considered to be the central Kagoro village, this despite the fact that the Kagoro Ig is hardly spoken here at all.

A recent gathering of Kagoro from 70 different villages took place here. A system of arbitration was decided on and a meeting building was inaugurated which will serve as the Kagoro "high court". For example this is where final decisions will be made on issues important to the Kagoro. Conflicts which can't be resolved at the local level will be brought here to be heard by the elders. (We saw the building - very impressive, especially the paint job!). This is certainly a strategic village in the Kagoro society.

Land ownership and control: The Magasa moved from Bena in the north to Debo-Kagoro >200 years ago and yet still today they control the usage of the land they left behind. Anything major which affects the land must first get the approval of the Magasa from Debo-Kagoro.

Apparent conflicting information: They say they understand Kagoro but can't speak it. Claim there is no dialectical variation from one Kagoro area to another.

Other Kagoro villages in the area: Madina, Diangouté Kamara, Kamena, Kagola, Dempa, Bouli-Bani

## **Guisseminé -Région: Kayes, Cercle: Kita, Arrond: Sefeto**

### ***Demographics***

**Date of visit:** March 23, 1998  
**Lg of elicitation:** S, B  
**Village chief:** Òama Magasa - Kagoro  
**Prominent names:** Magasa, Sisse, Dukure, Tarawore, Jara, Tunkara, Drame, Kante  
**No. of homes:** 35 (all K)  
**School:** 2 classes - French  
**Clinic/Maternity:** no  
**Pharmacy:** no

### ***Ig. viability, attitudes, use***

**Place best spoken:** Gisseminé, Guemoukouraba, Dionfa  
**Lgs. Spoken:** K, B, S, P  
**Preferred Ig spoken:** K  
**Preferred Ig written:** B (for pragmatic reason - more widely useful)  
**Preferred alpha:** B (not K!)  
**Ability of Children:** corrupted by influence from B.  
**Domains of usage:** Kagoro is used everywhere, but B is taking dominance among those < 30.  
**Competence:** B: young and men.

### ***Other Observations***

Very pragmatic when it comes to literacy. Prefer B because they don't see a lot of use for Kagoro literacy in the long run. This, despite their obvious high regard for the language.

Village origins: 183 years ago came from Bana to Gissimbinné to Sabonne (by the river Boulé).

Other Kagoro villages in the area: Folabougou, Kaouta, Guémoukouraba, Dionfa, Nubougou, Takoutala, Kérouané, Sarabalani, Sarabala, Kourougoué, Muna, Sakoro, Lambadéré, Mounta Kagoro, Dindanko, Bilissibougou, Serouma Soronkoé, Diougoun.

## **Sefeto (Locals call it "Sefe") - Région: Kayes, Cercle: Kita, Arrond. central**

### ***Demographics***

**Date of visit:** March 24, 1998  
**Lg of interview:** B  
**Village chief:** Fofana - Kagoro  
**Prominent names:** Fofana, Tunkara, Kulibali, Keyita, Sis;kj (hooro), Magasa, Kamis;kj, Kante, Jabate (griot), Kanute (griot), Jonbana, Jara, Makalu  
**No. of homes:** >300  
**School:** 8 classes - French  
**Clinic/Maternity:** yes  
**Pharmacy:** yes

### ***Ig. viability, attitudes, use***

**Place best spoken:** Sefe, Jungunte  
**Lgs. Spoken:** K, B, S  
**Preferred Ig spoken:** K  
**Preferred Ig written:** B, K  
**Preferred Ig alpha:** Fr, B, K, S

**Ability of Children:** Good - not mixed with B  
**Domains of usage:** K used in every domain. At the mosque, preaching is done in both K and B.  
**Competence:** all are adequate in B (purported bilingualism with B at all social strata)

### ***Other Observations***

Preferred lg. for literacy: B, because it is perceived as more useful.

Origin of village: Kita-Soransan, 300 years ago.

Relation to "Bagekan": General impression: Bagekan is the label for the Kita-Malinké variety spoken in this area. All agree that there is mutual intelligibility between K and Bagekan. My hypothesis is that there is a very high level of inherent intelligibility, perhaps no real linguistic difference, but rather a perceived difference depending on the ethnicity of the speaker.

Other Kagoro villages in the area: Dougoumerana, Baladougou, Guémokoura, Dimandara, Kotoné, Diougouté, Mansala, Faraba, Maga, Bandiougoubougou, Koni, Boundouro, Balalaba, Sitassaba, Dialamadji, Diamba-Kataka, Seramissé, Nafadji, Tomokorodji, Diougouté.

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