

Portland State University

PDXScholar

Mani, a Disappearing Language of Sierra Leone
and Guinea

Endangered Languages of Sierra Leone and
Guinea

4-20-2005

A Man and His Four Wives (Part 4)

George Tucker Childs

Portland State University, childst@pdx.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/mani>



Part of the [Linguistics Commons](#)

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Citation Details

Childs, George Tucker, "A Man and His Four Wives (Part 4)" (2005). *Mani, a Disappearing Language of Sierra Leone and Guinea*. 4.

<https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/mani/4>

This Interview is brought to you for free and open access. It has been accepted for inclusion in Mani, a Disappearing Language of Sierra Leone and Guinea by an authorized administrator of PDXScholar. Please contact us if we can make this document more accessible: pdxscholar@pdx.edu.

29.0 Mani-English (l/l, partially done as of 19 Aug 06)

əten nɔpokan pum nun alakana wɔ (“The story of a man and his wives”)

nya pɛ hun yom tɛn bul ki.

nya pɛ hun yom tɛn bul ki.
2pl also come agree story one here

I am also coming to tell one story.

yan mahawa kɔntɛ ko nkarankɔnɛ.

I, M’Mahawa Conteh at Karankone.

tɛn bul ka pɛ hun yom ki. nla hun ki.

I am coming to tell one story again. That’s why I came.

awa. nɔpokan pum wɔ ka bi alakan hiɔl.

Okay. There was a man who had four wives.

kɔnɔ alakan a-cɛ. ŋanay bul wɔ tɛrɛ.

kɔnɔ a-lakan a-cɛ. ŋana-i bul wɔ tɛrɛ.
but ncm-wife ncm-deg dem-i one 3sg dislike?

But there was one wife he didn’t love.

əcen hin koko wɔ ncent [nearer]. apum a-cɛ tun la hin.

ù-cè-én hin koko wɔ ncent [nearer]. apum a-cɛ tun la hin.

He wasn’t lying down next to her. It was the others he would seek to lie down with.

awa. əyɔk wɔ ko anya wɔ. əŋalɛ,

awa. u yɔk wɔ ko a-nya a-wɔ. u
nyalɛ,

okay 3sg take 3sg to ncm-people ncm-3sg, 3sg say

Okay. She took him to her parents and said,

wɔnɔ ki, əŋɔa cala koko bulen əcen hin koko mi.

wɔnɔ ki, u-ŋɔa cala koko bulen u
cè-én hin koko mi.

dem here, ncm-marriage sit.down place all 3sg aux-neg
lie.down place 1sg

“Since I married him, he has never slept with me.”

əŋalɛ, ŋa fɔm wɔ la. fɔ ətila nyant wɔ. bɔlɔ a hine koko wɔ.

u nyalɛ, nya fɔm wɔ la. fɔ ətila nyant wɔ.

3sg say 2pl tell 3sg pro must 3sg sell child 3sg

He (her husband) said, “Tell her this. She must sell her child,

bɔlɔ a hine koko wɔ.

bɔlɔ a hine koko wɔ.

and 1sg lie.down

and then I will lie down to her place.”

əḡale, e - nyant mi. awa yire ya wə tila.

u nyale, e yant mi. awa yire ya
wə tila.
3sg say eh child 1sg okay okay? 1sg 3sg
sell

She said, "Eh! my child. Okay, no problem. I will sell her."

wən kə fəm nəkə wə. wənə pɛrɛ kɔmɛn.

She went to tell her friend. That one also hadn't given birth to any children.

wən kɔe nyant ɛ wənə wən ka wə.

She took this child and gave it to her. [??]

Where did "the child" come from, if the woman had not given birth? Was she caretaking a child?

buk ɛ wənə wən kɔyɛ nka wənəy.

buk ɛ wənə wə n kɔe-yɛ n
ka wənə-y
child? def dem 3sg 2sg take-stat? 2sg give dem-i
"Is this only child the one you took and gave to her?"

kənə yant ɛ wə kul.

But the child was still nursing.

wənə biyɛn nɔw. əḡale,

That one (the fourth wife) doesn't have the breast (milk). She said,

e - wotan, yan ḡa nyaa. palɛ ha,

"Oh dear, what am I going to do?" They said,

nyant ɛ wənə fə mbi wə.

yant ɛ wənə fə n bi wə.
child def dem must 2sg have 3sg,
"This child you must have it

ala ḡbo aken sətə bate di ɛ.

ala ḡbo ake n sətə bate di-ɛ.
so.that just alone? 2sg get treasured ncm-def
so that you alone are the beloved one."

lɔxə lan ḡə nyant ɛ fokə pokan ɛ hali wə.

lókó lan ḡə yant ɛ fokə pokan ɛ
hali wə
day pro pro child def come.out man def for
3sg

It was on that day that the child came to the man for him.

kɛrɛ nyant ɛ pɛrɛ ḡbendi kə tɔrə ḡane.

kɛrɛ yant ɛ pɛrɛ ḡben-di kə tɔrə ḡane.
but child def also finish-cmp pro suffer dem

But the child really disturbed them.

əhun wən bil yant ɛ. əɲalɛ,
He (She?) held the child and said,

e - puwa ɲɔa jun nyaa. palɛ

e poa ɲɔ ya hun nya ya
eh father how 1sg come do q,
“Eh, Father, what am I coming to do?”

pa lɛ e n kul-i yant ɛ.
pro say eh 2sg drink-cs child def
Someone said, “Eh, make the child drink!”

əɲalɛ, e - abiyɛn (?) nmɔ. ɲɔa nyaa.

u nyalɛ, e a bi-ɛn n-mɔ.
ɲɔ a nya ya.
3sg say eh 1sg have-neg ncm-milk how 1sg do
q

She replied, “I do not have (breast) milk. What am I to do?”

(She started singing to herself,)

a gben wɔ ka rɔnka ɛ,
a gben wɔ ka nmɔ nɛɛ,
puwɔ wɔ nyalɛ, cen kulii.
Her father said she won't drink.

yan ɲa-ye mɔ nɔ mi. anun ɲɔaa. ?
a gben wɔ ka rɔnka ɛ,
a gben wɔ ka nmɔ nɛɛ,
puwɔ wɔ nyalɛ, cen kulii.
Her father said she won't drink.

yan ɲa ye mɔ nɔ mi, anun ɲɔaa. ?
a gben wɔ ka rɔnka ɛ,
a gben wɔ ka nmɔ nɛɛ,
puwɔ wɔ nyalɛ, cen kulii.
Her father said she won't drink.

yan nya ye mɔn ɔ mi. anun ɲɔ
a ya
1sg-emph do ? breast ncm? 1sg with, how 1sg q
What do I do with my breasts? How will I manage?

lɔxɔ lan ɲɔ wanca ɛ sɔtɔ ndɛn wɔ.

lɔkɔ lan ɲɔ wàncà ɛ sɔtɔ ndɛn wɔ.
day pro pro.foc womandef get time? 3sg

It was on that day that the woman got her opportunity to sleep with her husband.

əkoe nyant ɛ əboya wɔy.

u koe yant ɛ u boya wɔ-i.
3sg take child def 3sg give 3sg-i

He (She?) took the child and made a gift of her to another person.

kənɔy nɔɔ boya nyant cɛ n-wɔ can, n-wɔ sɔnkɔ ki.
 kənɔ-i nɔɔ boya yant cɛ n-wɔ can, n-wɔ
 sɔnkɔ ki.
 but-i here emph-how give child def emph-3sg cry, emph-3sg scream

But when she made the gift, the child began crying. She was screaming.

nyant cɛ wɔ sɔnkɔ. ɲɔa hun naa.
 yant cɛ wɔ sɔnkɔ. ɲɔ ya hun naa.
 child def 3sg scream how 1sg come
 The child is always screaming. "What am I going to do?"

paɛ koni fɔ ndinyɛ. fɔ nɔɔraa,
 pa lɛ koni fɔ n din yɛ. fɔ n
 traya yɛ,
 pro say ? must 2sg ? prt must 2sg try?
 prt
 They said, "You must be patient. You must try."

(she again sang,)

a gben wɔ ka nmɔ nɛɛ,	I have given her the breast,
a gben wɔ ka rɔnka cɛ,	I have given her the medicine,
puwɔ wɔ nyalɛ, cen kulii.	Her father said she was not nursing.
yan ɲa-ye mɔ nɔ mi. anun ɲɔaa.	?
a gben wɔ ka rɔnka cɛ,	I have given her the medicine.
a gben ka nmɔ cɛ	I have given her the
breast.	
puwɔ wɔ nyalɛ, cen yemay.	Her father said he doesn't want her.
anun ɲɔa ye mɔnɔ mi anun ɲɔaa.	?

a nɔɔ mɔ ɲaa. nɔɔ mɔ nyaa. nɔɔ nya nyant cɛ ya.
 a n-ɲɔ mɔ nya ya. nɔɔ mɔ nyaa. nɔɔ nya yant cɛ ya.
 that emph-how 2sg do q
 "What am I going to do? What am I going to do? What will I do with this child?"

(she resumes)

a gben wɔ ka nmɔ cɛ.	I have given her the
breast.	
a gben wɔ ka rɔnka nɛɛ.	I have given her the
medicine.	
a gben wɔ ka nmɔ nɛɛ,	I have given her the
breast.	
puwɔ wɔ nyalɛ, a cen yemay.	Her father said he doesn't want her.
anun ɲɔa ye mɔnɔ mi anun ɲɔaa.	

awa. nda ɔcɛ kol han nyant cɛ sɔtɔ, nyant cɛ sɔtɔ di we.

awa. ɲa əce kol háán yant cɛ sɔtɔ, yant cɛ
 sɔtɔ diwè.
 okay 3pl? stay? there until child def get, child def get health
 Okay. She stayed there until the child became healthy.

an - əsimi cɛ kɔyɛ. nda cɔpɛ kol han pokan cɛ, əsɔtɔ pokan cɛ.
 an ù-simi cɛ kɔ yɛ.
 yes ncm-spoil def pro prt
 Yes, that was the spoiling.

nda cɔpɛ kol han pokan cɛ, əsɔtɔ pokan cɛ.
 ɲà cɔp-ɛ kól háán pokan cɛ, ù sɔtɔ pokan
 cɛ.
 3pl begin-stat there until man def 3pl get man def
 There they (she and the man) continued until the man, she got [won over] the man.

alakana dɔkɔa cɛ bulen ɲa gben kɔn.
 a-lakan a-dɔkɔ a-cɛ bulen ɲa
 gben kɔ-n.
 ncm-wife ncm-remaining ncm-def all 3pl finish
 go-mid
 All of the other wives had left.

wɔn dok po wɔ.
 wɔ-n dok po wɔ.
 3sg-emph stay? husband 3sg
 She remained with her husband.

kɔnɔ əgbendi hun koe wanca cɛ aka wɔ langban cɛ.
 kɔnɔ u gben-di hun koe wanca cɛ u
 ka wɔ langban cɛ
 but 3sg finish-cmp come take girl def 3sg give 3sg man
 def
 But she had already taken the girl [child] and had given her to the man.

əka wɔ ɲɔ lakan cɛ wɔnɛ. wɔn kɔmɛn.
 u ka wɔ ɲɔ lakan cɛ wɔnɛ. wɔ-n
 kom-ɛn.
 3sg give 3sg pro womandef dem. 3sg-emph bear-neg
 He gave her to him [pronoun antecedents?]. That woman is barren.

kɔnɔ nyant cɛ loxo loxo wɔ can. wɔɔ cɔnɔk.
 But every day the child cried. She (the woman) sang for her (the child).

loxo loxo wɔ peni. loxo wɔ peni.
 day-dist-day
 Every day the child wailed. She was screaming every day.

e - wotan, ɲɔa nyaa. lakan cɛ biyen pɛ lom.

“Oh my. What am I ever to do?” The woman had even lost her voice.

wɔ po əwək nmən wɔ.

wɔ u po u wək n-mɔ
n-wɔ.

3sg 3sg arise 3sg press ncm-breast ncm-3sg
Every time she woke up, she would squeeze her breasts.

wanca cɛ wɔ kɔ pɛni kol. əbiyɛ lan.

The child shouting over there she doesn't care.

alako əsɔtɔ powɔ.

So that, she can keep her husband.

əkoyɛ yant cɛ ətila wan cɛm.

ù kòè-yé yant cɛ u tila wan
cɛm.

3sg take-stat child def 3sg sell daughter ? time?
She took the child and sold her daughter? for someone's sake.

dikələ nnyɛ. a dikatəl puwa.

dikələ, nnyɛ. a dikatəl puwa.
difficult? not.so

For man's sake. Yes, for man's sake.

əcɛn sɔtɔ ndɛn wɔ. əkoɛ nyant cɛ ətila wɔ pɛ. ali nopokan cɛ.

She had not been getting her sleeping days (with her husband). She took the child and sold her, for the man[’s sake].

?? Seems like the child was disturbing the man, so she sold him, the child was not hers because she was barren – the child cried because she had no milk

sɛka mən ŋɔn ke nɔya

sɛka mɔ-n ŋɔ n ke ŋɔ
ya

Sheka 2sg-emph how 2sg see pro q
Sheka, how do you see it?

(Why does he call the old lady “Sheka”?)

a yom wanca cɛ

I would [?] avoid the girl.

ətila wɔ ali hant.

u tila wɔ ali yant
3sg sell 3sg for child

She sold her for [the] child. ?

wɔ wɔn bil, gbanta yant cɛ,

She was holding her, beating the child.

ገጋጋ ጠጋ ነሃ ሃ

“What am I going to do with you?”

ወጋ ወጋሃ ብል ጭታንታ ወጋ ጭላይ, ነዲንሃይ.

ወጋ ወጋ-ገ ብል ሀ ጭታንታ ወጋ ሀ ጭላይ, ነዲንሃይ.
3sg 3sg-i hold 3sg beat 3sg 3sg say patience?

She was holding her and beating her. She said, “You wait,

ገ ጭን ወጋ ካ ጠንካ ርይ,

I gave her the medicine.

ገ ጭን ወጋ ካ ነጠጋ ነርይ,

I gave her the breast.

ሀወጋ ወጋ ነሃይ, ርን ካሊገገ.

Her father said she was not nursing.

ገን ገጋ ሃይ ጠጠጋ ገገ ገጋጋ. ?

ገ ጭን ወጋ ካ ጠንካ ርይ,

I gave her the medicine.

ገ ጭን ወጋ ካ ነጠጋ ነርይ,

I gave her the breast.

ሀወጋ ወጋ ነሃይ, ርን ሃይማ,

Her father said he doesn't want her.

ገን ገጋ ሃይ ጠጠጋ ገገ ገጋጋ. ?

ገገገ. ገገ ርጭ ገ ጠንክንዲ.

ገገገ. ገገ ርጭ ገ ጠንክን-ዲ.

okay pro begin-stat 1sg stop-cmp

Okay. I started and now I have to stop.