ERGATIVITY AND THE ACTIVE-STATIVE TYPOLOGY IN LOMA

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Ergativity would seem to be non-existant or at least quite
rare in Africa. This lack, however, may be related to an-
other continent-wide areal phenomenon: there is a paucity
of morphological NP case marking according to either erga-
tive or accusative typologies. It is thus possible that
other more subtle attributes of the ergative organization
of syntax are what should be sought in Africa. For exam-
ple, in the Mande languages, as also in Celtic, phonologi-
cal decay has produced a series of word initial consonant
alternations. In Celtic these have come to function as
part of a nominative-accusative case marking strategy.
The situation is quite similar in Mande, but as this paper
details for Loma, the noun case system is ergative-absol-
ute. And, accordingly, the pronoun system has active-
stative characteristics.

0. Introduction

The Mande languages are famous for indigenous syllabaries and peculiar

consonant mutations (see Welmers [1971b]). Loma,[1] the language of this in-

vestigation, has both a syllabary and consonant mutation. Loma's consonant

mutation has received repeated mention in the literature, e.g. Eberl-Elber

[1937], Hintze [1948], Manessy [1964], Meeussen [1965], Welmers [1971b], Bird

[1971], Hyman [1973], Dwyer [1974]. There is also a grammar by Sadler [1951]

and a brief description of the language by Heydorn [1971]. Although the lin-

guistic features that are dealt with in this paper have been documented else-

where, no one as yet, to my knowledge, has couched his description in the ter-

minology of ergative and active-stative typologies.[2]

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[1]The data for this paper was gathered in the autumn of 1976. It was kind-
ly provided by Sewalla Guseh, then a student at the University of Oregon. Mr.
Guseh was a native speaker of Loma from Zenalomai, Liberia.

[2]Heine and Reh [1982] note that "although the 1000-odd African languages
display a remarkable extent of structural variation, there are certain struc-

1. Ergativity

1.1. <u>Consonant Mutation</u>. There is a phonological alternation in Loma that happens only word initially and only in well defined syntactic environments. The alternations are as follows (β and ɣ appear before unrounded vowels, w before rounded vowels):

p, b	→	β	w		f	→	v
t, d	→	l			s	→	z
k, g	→	ɣ	w		z	→	y
kp	→	ɓ					

1.2. <u>Syntactic environment for consonant mutation</u>.

1.2.1. <u>The noun phrase</u>. Word initial consonant mutation never occurs initially in a noun phrase. In the following examples, the citation forms of nouns in (a) occur without consonant mutation, while consonant mutation is illustrated in (b) where a morpheme precedes.[3]

(1) a.	pɛlɛi	'the house'	b.	ga βɛlɛi	'our house'
(2) a.	buli	'the goat'	b.	ga wuli	'our goat'
(3) a.	ti	'the work'	b.	ga li	'our work'
(4) a.	dɔi	'the wine'	b.	ga lɔi	'our wine'
(5) a.	ki	'the key'	b.	ga ɣi	'our key'

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tures that do not seem to occur in Africa. Thus, to our knowledge, an ergative case or a numeral classifier system has not been discovered so far." For the ergative typology see Comrie [1978] and Dixon [1979]; for the active-stative typology see Klimov [1974].

[3]The mutated b is described by Sadler [1951] as a labio-dental stop, as opposed to v which also occurs in the language. When I collected this data seven years ago, my impression was of a voiced bilabial fricative. But whatever the sound, it is in this paper represented by β . Tones are not indicated in this paper unless relevant to the argument being made. Most Loma words have high tone inherent in the first syllable. There is no tone contrast, for example, between βa and ba as in zunui βa 'for the man' and bá 'for him', even though the high tone in bá contrasts with the low tone in bà 'for me'. For common segmentally identical morphemes like é 'he/ she/it' and è 'you', only the morpheme with low tone will be marked in this paper. The data from other Mande languages was gleaned from various sources in which tones are not distinguished in a consistent manner.

(6) a. guli   'the tree'   b. ga wuli   'our tree'

(7) a. kpugi   'the door'   b. ga ɓugi   'our door'

(8) a. foli   'the sun'   b. ga voli   'our sun'

(9) a. siɣi   'the cloth'   b. ga ziɣi   'our cloth'

(10) a. ziɣi   'the hole'   b. ga yiɣi   'our hole'

In (11), consonant mutation has occurred word initially everywhere, but not phrase initially.

(11) ta   yunu βai   βa   'for their good man'
      their man   good-the for

The following two examples restore the non-mutated forms of zunu 'man' and ba 'for'. The non-mutated form for 'good' is pa . The 3rd person singular pronoun in (13) is merely the high tone.

(12) zunu βai   βa   'for the good man'
      man   good-the for

(13) bá   'for him/her/it'

1.2.2. The verb phrase.

1.2.2.1. Intransitive. Consonant mutation occurs in the initial consonant of an intransitive verb when its subject precedes. Compare the following. The toneme in (15) permits the verb to be phrase initial and thus preserve the non-mutated form of its initial consonant.

(14) zunui   βala βε   'the man is big'
      man-the big ASP

(15) bála βε   'he/she/it is big'
      big ASP

The intransitive verbs di 'go', tε 'climb', and sili 'arrive' occur in the following examples. A preceding subject in every case is sufficient to bring about consonant mutation. In (19) the verb is preceded by an auxiliary ending in a nasal consonant and still the initial consonant of the verb mutates.

(16) zunui   li zu   'the man is going'
      man-the go ASP

(17) buli   lε   ne   'the goat climbed'
      goat-the climb ASP

(18) see   βalaì zili ni   'the large elephant arrived'
      elephant big-the arrive ASP

(19) zunuì   γεη βala ne   'the man used to be big'
      man-the ASP big ASP

     If the predicate is not a verb, but instead is initiated by a NP, it
should be noted that no mutation occurs between the subject and predicate.
The postposition in (21) is initial in the predicate due to the pronominal to-
neme. Compare the non-mutated pεlεì in (20) with βεlεì in (1b) above.
In (22) neither the copula gà undergoes consonant mutation nor the predicate
noun zunu .

(20) zunuì   pεlεì   wu   'the man is in the house'
      man-the house-the in

(21) zunuì   bú   'the man is in it'
      man-the in

(22) ta   gà zunu   'they are men'
      they be man

1.2.2.2. Transitive. Mutation affects the initial consonant of a transitive
verb only when a direct object precedes, as in (23) and (24) below. The tran-
sitive verb tε 'lift, raise' is the same morpheme as the intransitive
'climb' in (17) above. The verb is made transitive by the presence of both S
and O , as can be seen by comparing (23) with (17) above. Note that the ini-
tial consonant of the direct object does not mutate even though the subject
precedes. Compare the non-mutated kɔti 'stone' in (23) with ga wɔti 'our
stone'.

(23) zunuì   kɔti   lε ne   'the man lifted the stone'
      man-the stone-the lift ASP

(24) zunuì   buli   βaa ne   'the man killed the goat'
      man-the goat-the kill ASP

     When the direct object is realized as only a tone then the subject direct-
ly precedes a transitive verb. Unlike the subject preceding an intransitive
verb, no mutation ever occurs when an agentive subject immediately precedes a
transitive verb. The transitive verb in (25) is distinguished from the in-
transitive one in (17) above solely by not having undergone consonant muta-
tion. Although both verbs below have inherent high tone, the preservation of

the high tone in (25) and (26) indicates an anaphoric 3rd person singular direct object.

(25) zunui té   ne   'the man lifted it'
     man-the lift ASP

(26) zunui páa ne   'the man killed it'
     man-the kill ASP

Thus Loma clearly evidences ergativity. The environment for mutation of the initial consonant of the verb is an immediately preceding absolutive NP. And this Loma absolutive case includes, in the classic sense, both direct objects of transitive verbs and subjects of intransitive verbs. When an anaphoric direct object is realized as zero, the verb is immediately preceded by an ergative NP. And in this environment the initial consonant of the verb never mutates.

1.3. Historical development of consonant alternations.

1.3.1. Phonology. The historical phonology of the Southwestern Mande languages has been discussed by Hyman [1973] and by Dwyer [1974]. Historically, consonant mutation was blocked in Loma by a preceding nasal consonant. This nasal was later completely lost in Loma. But in Mende it still survives before voiced consonants, as seen in the following:[4]

	Loma	Mende	
(27)	daba	ndamba	'crocodile'
(28)	kpadɛ	kpandɛ	'gun'
(29)	gà	nga	'I'

Before voiceless consonants the nasal was lost in both Mende and Loma. But it does survive in Kpelle, although the consonant that it shielded from weakening in Loma and Mende is in Kpelle lost completely. All clusters N+C are simplified to N in Kpelle, as can be seen below. The correspondence set in (31) suggests the reconstruction *kontu with the cluster nt , this on analogy with correspondence set (30).

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[4]Mende examples are from Innes [1967,1969], Kpelle from Welmers [1962, 1969]. See Manessy [1964] for a description of the blocking of consonant lenition by word final *ŋ .

	Loma	Mende	Kpelle	
(30)	kpadɛ	kpandɛ	kpana	'gun'
(31)	kɔtu	kɔtu	konu	'stone'

The only permissible word final consonant in Proto-Southwestern Mande was
ŋ . This consonant was lost in Loma but survived in Kpelle, as is illustrat-
ed below.

	Loma	Kpelle	
(32)	tɔ	tɔŋ	'law'
(33)	kpala	kpalaŋ	'farm'

Word final ŋ , however, does have a reflex in Loma. When a vowel is suffixed
to such a word, the *ŋ surfaces as g . The following examples contrast
nouns with and without this final nasal. The Loma nouns pɛlɛ 'house' and
zala 'lion' did not end in a nasal in the proto-language. The word for
'house' in Kpelle, for example, is pɛrɛ , not *pɛrɛŋ . The nouns kpala
'farm' and daba 'crocodile' have cognates in other Mande languages with fi-
nal nasal, and in examples (36) and (37) this nasal surfaces in Loma when a
vowel is suffixed, as in (36b) and (37b).

(34)	a.	pɛlɛi	'house'	b.	pɛlɛi	'the house'
(35)	a.	zala	'lion'	b.	zalai	'the lion'
(36)	a.	kpala	'farm'	b.	kpalagi	'the farm'
(37)	a.	daba	'crocodile'	b.	dabagi	'the crocodile'

The point of all this, as the following examples show, is that this nasal
blocks the otherwise expected lenition in the initial consonant of a follow-
ing word. In example (39), lenition of the initial consonant was blocked, as
is evident from example (36), by an immediately preceding nasal consonant.

(38)	pɛlɛ βai	'the good house'
(39)	kpala pai	'the good farm'

Lenition of the first consonant of a verb is also blocked when a direct
object that once ended in a nasal precedes, as the following examples show.
The initial consonant of paa 'kill' does not weaken after daba 'crocodile',
because that noun ended in a nasal in the parent language, as example (37)

above indicates.

(40) zala βaa   'kill a lion!'

(41) daba paa   'kill a crocodile!'

This phenomenon also affects the aspectual morpheme su which normally mutates to zu after verbs, but not after all verbs. The same verbs that block the lenition of su also regularly occur with final g when the aspect marker a is suffixed. Examples (42) and (43) below show verb stems that do not block lenition, while the verb stems in (44) and (45) do.

(42) a. gà li zu   'I am going'   b. gè li a   'I have gone'
         I go ASP   I go ASP

(43) a. gà kɛ zu   'I am doing it'   b. gè kɛ a   'I have done it'
         I do ASP   I do ASP

(44) a. gà ɓale su   'I am sweeping'   b. gè ɓaleg a   'I have swept'
         I sweep ASP   I sweep

(45) a. gà ɓɔ su   'I am helping'   b. gè ɓɔg a   'I have helped'
         I help ASP   I help ASP

Kpelle, which preserves word final *ŋ , preserves the final ŋ in those verbs that block lenition in Loma. The Kpelle cognates of Loma li 'go' and kɛ 'do' are li 'go' and kɛ 'do', both without final ŋ . But Kpelle has kpɔŋ 'help' where Loma has kpɔ 'help'. The verb for 'sweep' in Loma also occurs as a noun, viz. kpale/kpalegi 'broom/the broom'. And so as a noun the reflex of *ŋ , the g , also surfaces before a vowel suffix.

1.3.2. Morphology. The two major syntactic environments that block consonant lenition in Loma are (1) the initial position in a NP and (2) the initial position in a transitive verb when no direct object NP precedes. There is ample comparative evidence that historically both environments were marked by a nasal prefix that blocked consonant lenition.

1.3.2.1. Lenition blocked in verb. In Loma, all that survives of the 1st and 3rd person singular direct object pronouns is non-lenition of the initial consonant of the verb and a low or high tone on the first syllable of the verb, as shown below:

(46) e buli   lúli ni   'he called the goat'
      he goat-the call ASP

(47) e tùli ni   'he called me'
      he call ASP

(48) e túli ni   'he called him/her/it'
      he call ASP

The prefixed pronouns that blocked lenition in the Loma verb are reconstruct-
ed as *Ǹ- 'me' and *Ń- 'him/her/it'. There has been a reversal of tones
in Loma, for which see Welmers [1971a].[5] As one would predict (see again ex-
amples (27-29), the nasal prefix survives before voiced consonants in Mende,
as can be seen in the following examples. In some of them the transitive ver-
sus intransitive use of the verb illustrates the presence of the direct ob-
ject prefix in (b), in other cases, e.g. (49) and (52), a direct object NP
precedes and thus lenition occurs in (a).

(49) a. ngi waa   'kill him/her'   b. paa   'kill it'
(50) a. lɛ   'climb, rise'   b. tɛ   'lift it, raise it'
(51) a. gutu   'be short'   b. kutu   'shorten it'
(52) a. ndɔ gbɔe   'drink palm wine'   b. kpɔe   'drink it'
(53) a. be   'dry' (intransitive) b. mbe   'dry it'
(54) a. la   'lie down'   b. nda   'lay it down'
(55) a. yei   'descend'   b. njei   'lower it'
(56) a. wua   'enter'   b. ngua   'insert it'

Historically, initial consonant lenition in the verb was blocked by the same
phonetic environment as elsewhere; it was blocked by a preceding nasal conso-
nant. The fact that this consonant was a grammatical morpheme explains the
syntactic behavior of verb initial consonant lenition in modern Loma.

1.3.2.2. <u>Lenition blocked in noun</u>. Greenberg [1977] hypothesizes that the
Niger-Congo noun class markers originated as definite markers, whether prefix
or suffix. The process involves three stages: definite markers > referen-
tiality markers > substantive markers. All three stages of this develop-

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[5]Welmers proposes *à as the phonetic form of the third person object
prefix, but others—Manessy [1964], Meeussen [1965], Hyman [1973], Dwyer
[1974]—argue for *N , which is to be preferred, both in view of what regu-
larly blocks lenition in Loma and from the point of view of a possible cog-
nate in Niger-Congo.

ment are observable in various of the Niger-Congo languages for both prefixal
and suffixal systems. Greenberg [1977:97] observes that "almost every branch
of Niger-Congo, except of course Mande, has some languages which are simultan-
eously prefixing and suffixing." In the West Atlantic languages, Greenberg
notes, the prefixes have advanced to the last stage, and in some languages of
the group they gave been reduced to noun initial consonant alternations. But
suffixed articles have been innovated, and in various of these languages the
different stages of their development are visible. Greenberg also notes how
the Southwestern Mande noun suffix -i is in the first stage in Loma but more
advanced in Mende.

All this provides a very helpful context for viewing the historical devel-
opment of the Loma noun initial consonant alternations. Welmers [1971b] hy-
pothesizes that the 3rd person pronominal now realized in Loma simply by its
blocking consonant lenition in the verb is also responsible for blocking con-
sonant lenition initially in the noun. And thus the Mande languages do in-
deed, along with the other branches of Niger-Congo, evidence both prefixing
and suffixing. Loma dɔ 'palm wine' is made definite by suffixing -i :
dɔi 'the palm wine'. The lenition of the d , which should have become l ,
was blocked by a nasal prefix that has been lost in Loma. This nasal prefix
was an obligatory final stage substantive marker. It has survived in Mende
before nouns with initial voiced consonants, as the following examples indi-
cate.

	Loma	Mende	
(57)	bala	mbala	'sheep'
(58)	dɔ	ndɔ	'palm wine'
(59)	zie	nja	'water'
(60)	gulu	ngulu	'tree'

Nouns are derived from verbs by the nasal prefix. Consider the following ex-
amples from Mende. Remember that in Mende a nasal consonant plus voiceless
obstruent simplifies to just the voiceless obstruent but with lenition being
blocked, as seen in (61b). The nasal survives, though, before voiced conso-
nants, as in (62b) and (63b).

(61) a. wa   'come'   b. pa   'a coming'
(62) a. li   'go'   b. ndi   'a going'
(63) a. yenge   'work' (verb)   b. ŋgenge   'work' (noun)

In Kpelle the prefixed nasal was not generalized to mark all nouns. It
still functions as a definite marker, but redundantly along with the suffix
-i . The presence of the nasal prefix has had the opposite effect in Kpelle
as in Loma and Mende: it has *provided* the environment for consonant lenition.
Its effect was to voice a voiceless consonant and to bring about the total
loss of a voiced one. The nasal itself survives only where it was prefixed to
a voiced consonant. The original low tone of this prefix survives in Kpelle,
where definite nouns begin with a low tone. The suffix -i has been lost af-
ter nouns ending in ŋ , as can be seen in (65), (67), and (74).

(64) a. pɛrɛ   'house'   b. bɛrɛi   'the house'
(65) a. tɔŋ   'law'   b. dɔŋ   'the law'
(66) a. kɔɔ   'log'   b. gɔɔi   'the log'
(67) a. kpalaŋ   'farm'   b. gbalaŋ   'the farm'
(68) a. boa   'knife'   b. moai   'the knife'
(69) a. luu   'fog'   b. nuui   'the fog'
(70) a. ya   'water'   b. nyai   'the water'
(71) a. ɣila   'dog'   b. ŋilai   'the dog'
(72) a. wuru   'tree'   b. ŋurii   'the tree'
(73) a. fena   'mushroom'   b. venai   'the mushroom'
(74) a. sɛŋ   'thing'   b. zɛŋ   'the thing'

In the Mande languages, unlike in the rest of Niger-Congo, there is no ev-
idence for noun classification. However, the Mande substantive marking prefix
may be cognate to a Niger-Congo noun class marker. The Mande prefix was a
homorganic nasal just as was the Bantu class 9 prefix. Further, as Givón
[1971] shows, the Bantu class 9/10 probably originally marked animates, class
1/2 having arisen later to mark the subcategory human. If Mande were to have
generalized one of the Proto-Niger-Congo class markers to all nouns, the ani-
macy marker would obviously have been the best candidate. And, according to
Greenberg [1977], this would also have been a definite marker, as it still is

in Kpelle. The Mande substantival prefix and 3rd person object pronoun are
phonetically identical, and Welmers [1971b] assumes the object pronoun to pre-
serve the original function of the morpheme.[6] But would this not indicate
that the first nouns to be marked definite were objects? To believe so one
would need more Niger-Congo evidence, for to my knowledge no one has yet re-
constructed noun case marking in any of Niger-Congo. According to Welmers
[1971a], morphemes of class 1 and 9 in both Bantu and the closely related Tiv
manifest low tone, while for all other noun classes the tone is high. Signif-
icantly, the Mande nasal prefix is also reconstructed with low tone.

1.3.3. <u>Emergent ergativity</u>. Synchronically, Loma clearly displays an erga-
tive syntax. The subject of an intransitive verb and the direct object to-
gether provide the syntactic motivation for verb initial consonant lenition.
Although no morphemes are involved, the syntactic organization reflected by
the phonology is ergative-absolutive. The ergative NP sits outside the phras-
al unit which comprises the absolutive NP and the verb, as illustrated in
(75). The # shows where consonant lenition is blocked.

(75)   (#ERGATIVE NP) [#(ABSOLUTIVE NP) VERB]

Here is an ergative-absolutive system that has arisen quite by accident.
There was no reanalyzed passive with marked agent, nor nominalization with
genitive agent. The first prerequisite in the development of the Loma system
was the rigid SOV word order with, of course, SV for intransitive clauses.
This allows for a syntactic organization as follows:

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[6]The prefix *N- evidently also served as a kind of resumptive subject
pronoun in Loma. Compare βa 'come' with ba 'come' in the examples below.
Consonant mutation occurs as expected in (a), but not in (b) where the verb is
preceded by a relative clause. The verb koa does not mutate to woa be-
cause it is transitive.

(1) zunui   βa   ne   'the man came'
     man-the come ASP

(2) zunui   gè kóa   ne ba   ne   'the man I know came'
     man-the I him-know ASP come ASP

(76) a. Intransitive   S   V
     b. Transitive   S   O   V
                        ERGATIVE   ABSOLUTIVE   VERB

   The second prerequisite in the development of the Loma system was the fact
that *Ǹ- was both a substantive marker as well as direct object pronoun, as
diagrammed below.

(77) a. Intransitive   Ǹ-S V
     b. Transitive 1) with d. o. noun Ǹ-S Ǹ-O V
                    2) anaphoric d. o. Ǹ-S   Ǹ-V

When the Loma consonant lenition occurred, *Ǹ- provided a syntactic environ-
ment for its non-occurrence. Then, after N+C was everywhere simplified to C,
only the famous consonant alternations were left as syntactic indicators of
transitivity.[7] Another factor in the development of the system is the Mande
characteristic of coding transitivity as NP NP V. With a transitive verb the
NP in the sequence NP V must be interpreted as a patient. Bird and Shopen
[1977] describe this system for Maninka, where it is extremely productive.
Consider, for example, the following Maninka sentences.

(78) an be sogo dumu   'we are eating meat'
      we ASP meat eat

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   [7]It is peculiar that the world's most outstanding examples of grammatical-
ized consonant alternations should hug the western extremities of the Old
World. Celtic, Berber, West Atlantic and Mande are all famous for consonant
alternations tied to syntax/semantics. The same observation cannot be made,
for example, with regard to the eastern extremities of the Eastern Hemisphere.
Northwest Semitic, which includes the Phoenician carried west by sea, is also
famous for its syntactically linked spirantization of consonants. Even in Ro-
mance it is in the West that syntactically linked phonological processes de-
veloped; spirantization in Spanish, liaison in French. Even Germanic, that
other western extension of Indo-European, is famous for spirantization,
though there is no record of it ever having been grammatically linked. The
Hopper [1977] analysis of Proto-Indo-European makes Grimm's Law look exactly
like the Northwest Semitic spirantization. Of course similar phenomena have
arisen spontaneously all over the globe. There may have been more coinci-
dence than Phoenician in the Niger-Congo, Berber, and Indo-European West.
Nevertheless, in no other region of the world has grammatically linked conso-
nant alternation been carried to such extremes over such a large area.

(79) an be dumu   'we are being eaten'
      we ASP eat

In Loma, when a single NP stands before a mutated transitive verb, it also
must be the patient, as the following illustrates.

(80) e kɔti   lɛ   zu   'he is lifting the stone'
      he stone-the rise ASP

(81) e tɛ   zu   'he is lifting it'
      he rise ASP

(82) e lɛ   zu   'he/she/it is rising'
      he rise ASP

2. Active-Stative Typology

2.1. Pronoun system. There are two basic pronoun sets in Loma that I shall
label active and stative. I list them below as pronounced by my informant.
Each set has two pronouns for 1st person plural which, in the order listed,
mark the *exclusion* and *inclusion* of the addressee.

	ACTIVE		STATIVE	
	singular	plural	singular	plural
1st person	gà	gá, dá	ˋ	gé, dé
2nd person	ǰà	wá	è	ù
3rd person	tóa	tá	ˊ	té

2.2. Function of pronoun sets.

2.2.2. Subject and object. One function of the two sets of Loma pronouns is
to mark subject and object. The "active" set marks subject, the "stative" set
object. However, the order of morphemes is rigid and thus these morphological
case distinctions are redundant. The following examples illustrate the case
function of the two sets of Loma pronouns. In (85) and (86) the object pro-
nouns are simply high and low tones in the first syllable of the verb. The
stative set also functions as object of postposition, as (87) shows.

(83) gá té ɣa zu   'we see them'
      we them see ASP

(84) tá gé ɣa zu   'they see us'
      they us see ASP

(85) gà ká   zu   'I see him/her/it'
      I him-see ASP

(86) tóa kà   zu   'he/she sees me'
      he me-see ASP

(87) gà bó   su té ma   'I am telling it to them'
      I it-tell ASP them to

2.2.2. <u>Aspectual split</u>. The case distinction marked by Loma pronouns is not
maintained in the perfective aspect, as illustrated below. Examples (88) and
(89) should be compared with (83) and (84). The pronouns are all from the
stative set.

(88) gé té ɣa ne   'we saw them'
      we them see ASP

(89) té gé ɣa ne   'they saw us'
      they us see ASP

Obviously the two tonemes from the stative set cannot mark both subject and
object on the same verb. In the perfective aspect gè 'I' and é 'he/she/it'
are substituted for subject pronouns, as in the following examples:

(90) gè ká   ne   'I saw him/her/it'
      I it-see ASP

(91) é kà   ne   'he/she saw me'
      he me-see ASP

2.2.3. <u>Alienable and inalienable possession</u>. As illustrated in (92) and (93),
the active set of pronominals functions to show alienable possession, the sta-
tive set to mark inalienable possession.

(92) gá βɛlɛi   'our house'
      our house-the

(93) gé ɣɛ   'our father'
      our father

For the 1st and 3rd person singular members of the active set nà 'my' and
ná 'his/her' are substituted as alienable possessors. As seen below, they
block consonant mutation. For this reason Manessy [1964] suggests that they
once ended in nasal consonants.

(94) nà pɛlɛi   'my house'

(95) ná pɛlɛi   'his/her house'

(96) kɛ̀   'my father'

(97) kɛ́   'his/her father'

2.2.4. <u>Active versus stative subject</u>. It is their function as subject of intransitive verbs that provides the justification for calling the Loma pronoun sets active and stative. The following four sentences contrast an active/agentive versus a stative subject, both with intransitive predicates.[8]

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[8]No negative sentences were elicited during the brief period of my field work on Loma. But according to Sadler [1951], no matter what the verbal aspect, the subject pronoun of a negated clause is always from the stative set, but with what appears to be vowel harmony with the negative marker lɛ . Sadler gives two forms for the 3rd person singular pronoun of the active set: tówàa , which occurs with the future, and tɔ́ , which occurs with the progressive. The following examples from Sadler illustrate this contrast. For (b), my informant had the pronoun toa (see example (100) of the text).

(a) tówàa lí   'he/she will go'
    he   go

(b) tɔ́ liizú   'he/she is going'
    he go-ASP

(c) gà li   'I will go'
    I   go

(d) gà liizú   'I am going'
    I   go-ASP

Sadler also has a third set of pronouns for the habitual aspect. Both the habitual and future are marked by the absence of an aspectual suffix. While the future employs pronouns from the active set, the habitual has its own set of pronouns. The following examples have been gleaned from Sadler:

(e) gà li   'I will go'
    I   go

(f) gɔ̀ li   'I go (habitually)'
    I   go

(g) tówàa lí   'he/she will go'
    he   go

(h) ɔ́ li   'he/she goes (habitually)'
    he go

There is much more, to be sure, that can be said about the Loma pronominal system. However, it must suffice for now merely to point out the active-stative typology evident in the system. Sadler is a gold mine of data for anyone interested in pursuing the matter further.

(98)   ACTIVE SUBJECT: gá li zu   'we are going'
                           we go ASP

(99)   STATIVE SUBJECT: gé βala βɛ   'we are big'
                           we big ASP

(100)   ACTIVE SUBJECT: tóa li zu   'he/she is going'
                           he go ASP

(101)   STATIVE SUBJECT: bála   βɛ   'he/she is big'
                           him-big ASP

   The active-stative distinction for intransitive subjects does not hold in
the perfective. There intransitive verbs take the same subject pronouns from
the stative set, including gè 'I' and é 'he/she/it', that function as sub-
jects of transitive verbs in the perfective. Compare (102) with (98) and (99).
Example (103) has the subject pronoun é , the same as the transitive verb in
(91).

(102)   gé li ni   'we went'
        we go ASP

(103)   é li ni   'he/she went'
        he go ASP

The contrast between perfective event and inactive state is illustrated by
comparing the example below with (101).

(104)   é βala ne   'he/she grew'
        he big ASP

Subjects that take pronouns from the stative set are not simply *patient*, as
opposed to *agent*, but more narrowly patient of *state*. The patient of *change*
in the following requires a subject pronoun of the active set.

(105)   é lo   ne   'he fell'
        he fall ASP

(106)   tóa lo   zo   'he is falling'
        he fall ASP

The patient subject of a nominal predicate also selects pronouns from the ac-
tive set.[9] Example (22) from the text above is repeated here, where tá is

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[9]In Ashanti Twi predicate adjectives require no copula ((a) below), loca-
tive predicates require the copula wɔ (b), and nominal predicates the copula

from the active set of pronouns.

(107) tá   gà zunu   'they are men'
       they be man

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yɛ (c). The copula yɛ is also the verb 'do' and 'make' as in (d) and (c).
Could it be that nominal predicates are somehow more "active" than adjectival?

(a) Kofi so   'Kofi is big'
     Kofi big

(b) Kofi wɔ efie no mu   'Kofi is in the house'
     Kofi be house the in

(c) Kofi yɛ ɔsɔfoɔ   'Kofi is a priest'
     Kofi be priest

(d) Kofi yɛ adwuma no   'Kofi does the work'
     Kofi do work   the

(e) Kofi yɛ abodoo   'Kofi makes cornbread'
     Kofi make cornbread

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