

# SOUTHERN SAMO LANGUAGE CONTACT

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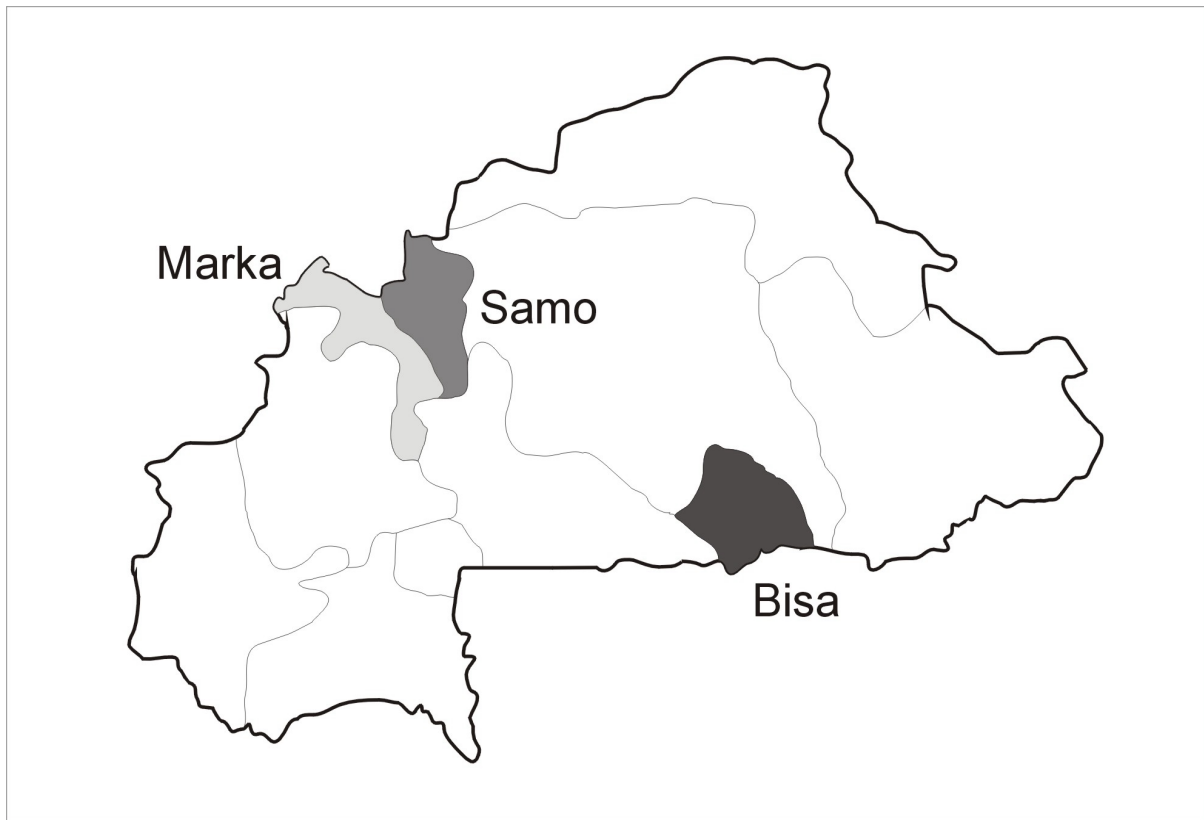
## ABSTRACT

Samo, an Eastern Mande language, is insularly enclosed predominantly by Gur languages. Considering the fact that Samo has close contact with several dominant languages intense language borrowing should be likely. However, a comparison of lexical data from the respective languages (the lingua franca Moore, Lele, the lingua franca Jula, Marka, Southern and Northern Samo) revealed no strong contact phenomena between Samo and any of the contact languages. Therefore, the position of Samo as a *language island* is confirmed and newly classified within Keuthmann, Schreiber & Vossen's (in press) framework as an *island language*. However, the question of the position of Marka, Samo's related neighbour to the west, within a language island or island language concept remains to be solved. Marka, does not exhibit sufficient lexical agreement with Samo to be classified as part of one larger language island but is, nevertheless, clearly related to Samo. A new subcategory of island language, a *twin-island language*, is, therefore, proposed.

*Keywords: Southern Samo, Mande, language island, language contact, lexical comparison*

## 1. THE SITUATION

Samo, an Eastern Mande language, is insularly enclosed predominantly by Gur languages. Such an insular position is one of several criteria for defining language islands (Vossen 1999). In Burkina Faso, especially Mande languages are marked by such a position within an otherwise linguistically mainly homogeneous surrounding. An internal structuring of these languages is likely and has already been established for the Mande language Bisa (Vossen 1998, Vossen 1999, Vossen & Keuthmann ms., Keuthmann, Schreiber & Vossen in press). Samo exhibits this internal structuring, too. It can be subdivided into Northern and Southern Samo. According to Platiel (1984), these languages are comprised each of several different varieties. Paré (1999) recognises two Southern Samo varieties, but, while Southern and Northern Samo can be clearly set apart, an unambiguous division of Southern Samo could not be established on the basis of our own data (Hoeth 2002).



**Map 1.** Mande language islands in Burkina Faso.

Southern Samo was chosen for a socio-linguistic survey conducted in 1999<sup>1</sup>. This survey investigated linguistic behaviour and revealed that 77% of all questioned Southern Samo speakers spoke more than one language. Considering the fact that Southern Samo has close contact with several other and in part certainly dominant languages intense language borrowing or even language shift should be likely. But, all interviewees claimed to speak Southern Samo as a first as well as a primary language. Therefore, despite the high degree of multilingualism amongst Southern Samo speakers, persistence of Samo as a language island community is expected (Hoeth 2001).

Southern Samo (Eastern Mande) is spoken mainly in Nayala province (cf. map 2) and borders, except for Northern Samo (Eastern Mande) to the North, MEEka-kan/Marka<sup>2</sup> (Western Mande) to the West and Lele, a Gur language, to the East. In addition, Southern Samo speakers have contact with the *linguae francae* Jula, Moore, and the official language French. According to results from the 1999 socio-linguistic survey, contact phenomena are most likely from Jula, but also from Moore and French (Hoeth 2001).

An internal lexical and phonetic-phonological comparison of the linguistic data revealed no clear subdivision of Southern Samo. Nevertheless, the analysis points to a dialect continuum with an East-West and North-South division where

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<sup>1</sup> Ideally, data from Northern Samo should have been included in all investigations, too, but due to time restraints only Southern Samo was chosen because of its better state of documentation.

<sup>2</sup> Referred to as Marka below.

only individual speakers exhibit a significant lexical distinctiveness (Hoeth 2002). Possibly, this special position of individual speakers is a result of language contact. In addition, the question remains whether there are general contact phenomena because of the specific situation of Samo as a language island or whether there is a tendency towards persistence of Southern Samo, as the results of the 1999 survey indicated. Also, the position of Marka as part of either one larger Mande language island together with Samo or rather as a linguistic region on its own has to be solved.

## 2. THE DATA

Southern Samo linguistic data was gathered at seven<sup>3</sup> villages or towns throughout the Southern Samo area: Toma (I), Yaba (II), Biba (IV), Sapala (V), Koungny (VI), Kalabo (VII), and Gassan (VIII). The data was elicited and recorded with one male speaker at each village. It consists of a 200 Swadesh word list of basic vocabulary<sup>4</sup> and a list reduced to 264 words of cultural vocabulary<sup>5</sup> originally compiled by K. Keuthmann for Bisa. In addition to these seven Southern Samo word lists, the same lists were also gathered for Northern Samo (in Tougan), Jula (in Toma), MEEka-kan/Marka (in Gassan), Moore (in Toma) and Lele (in Sapala).<sup>6</sup> H. Schreiber kindly provided data from Busa, Boko, and Illo-Busa. These are Mande language island communities, too, situated in the eastern part of the Mande area. Even though they have no direct contact with Samo they are included here for comparative reasons to further substantiate the interpretation of the data gathered.

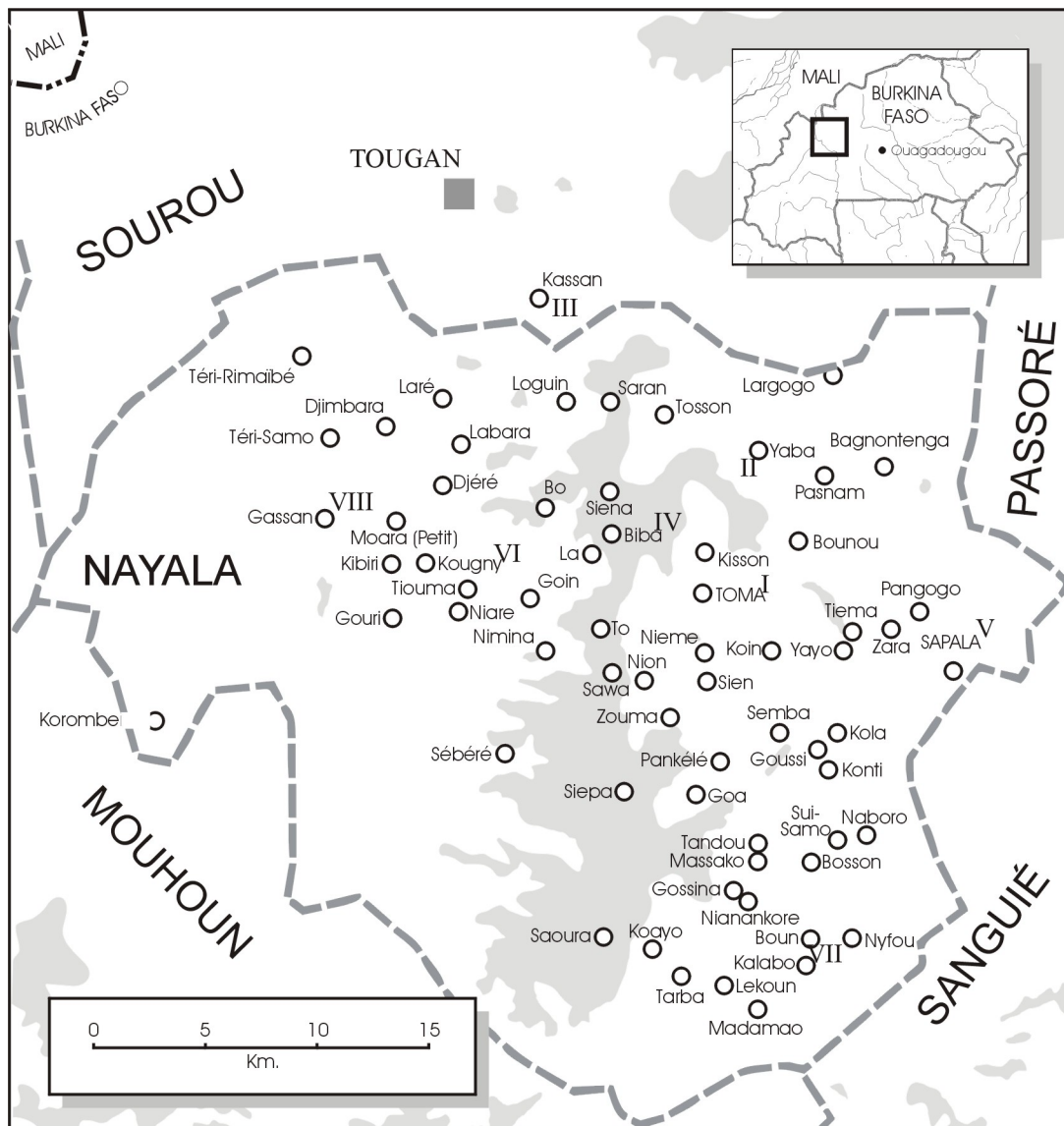
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<sup>3</sup> In fact, data was gathered at eight villages. Wordlist III has not been transcribed as yet because of the poor quality of the recording.

<sup>4</sup> With entries like 1. 'all/tout(e), tous', 3. 'animal', 6. 'back/dos', 12. 'bird/oiseau', 37. 'eat/manger'.

<sup>5</sup> Or rather 229 since 35 words are identical with entries from the Swadesh list. Examples of entries are 11. 'king /roi', 23. 'trap/piège', 27. 'quiver/carquois', 78. 'kola nut/kola', 115. 'build/batir, construire', 153. 'mortar/mortier', 180. 'rainy season/saison sèche', 223. 'gold/or', 259 'clay/argile'.

<sup>6</sup> Ideally, more data should have been investigated but, currently, a more intense analysis is not possible. Nevertheless, at least first insights can be gained from the present comparison and it is hoped that the analysis of four different linguistic fields may compensate for some of the restrictions due to the limited data.



**Map 2.** Distribution of Southern Samo villages.

### 3. THE COMPARISON

Each entry of every word list was compared lexically with all entries of every other recorded word list. Not only Southern Samo, but all languages in this comparison have been put into contrast with each other to facilitate the evaluation of closeness for example, between Southern and Northern Samo in comparison to Jula and Marka, or Boko. Boko was chosen to represent Boko, Busa, and Illo-Busa since all three show a large amount of lexical correspondences between them and because direct contact phenomena with Southern Samo are unlikely due to their geographic distance.

#### 3.1 BASIC VOCABULARY

Southern Samo in total displays the same amount of lexical agreement of basic vocabulary with Jula and with Marka (cf. Table 1). This, however, does not

always affect the same lexical entries. Instead, Jula and Marka show in part different correspondences with Southern Samo while displaying joint lexical agreement in other fields. Differences in the amount of lexical agreement exist between individual Southern Samo speakers. Agreements of Southern Samo with Moore are only slightly less than with Jula or Marka. Lele shows the lowest amount of lexical agreement with Southern Samo of all African languages compared. In addition, there are only few borrowings of basic vocabulary from French. Northern Samo which is closely related to Southern Samo and is assumed to form a language island together with Southern Samo exhibits the highest amount of lexical correspondence with its neighbour. It is followed by Boko, which belongs to the same language group as Southern and Northern Samo.

Within Southern Samo, SII and SVII show the lowest amount of lexical agreement of basic vocabulary with Boko (SVII with Northern Samo, too). At the same time, these two speakers are in a particularly exceptional position within the internal Southern Samo spectrum in that SII exhibits, especially lexically, exceptionally few deviations while SVII shows remarkably many deviations from all other Southern Samo word lists (Hoeth 2002). SVII may possibly be influenced through Lele, even though there is no indication of this in the comparison of basic vocabulary (but, cf. cultural vocabulary), while SII, despite its low amount of lexical disagreement with other Southern Samo word lists, shows a stronger Moore influence (compared to influence from Jula or Marka). If the total amount of lexical correspondences of individual Southern Samo word lists with any other language investigated is compared, SVII followed by SII displays the lowest figure. Thus, SVII and SII basic vocabulary reveals the least influence by any of the compared contact languages of all Southern Samo word lists. Generally, Northern Samo shows similar basic vocabulary results to Southern Samo, with the exception of a slightly higher amount of lexical agreement with Jula and a slightly lower amount of lexical correspondences with Boko. All abbreviations used are listed at the end of this text.

Jula exhibits more lexical agreement of basic vocabulary with Marka than individual Southern Samo speakers with Northern Samo. Consequently, Jula and Marka are most likely closer related than Northern and Southern Samo. Alternatively, but less likely, the high amount of agreement between Jula and Marka is explainable through a stronger influence of the lingua franca Jula on Marka than on Samo. Despite the fact that Marka is a Mande language like Southern Samo and in direct neighbourhood to the latter, it is, due to its close relatedness to Jula, best not classified as part of one larger language island together with Southern and Northern Samo, but possibly a language island on its own, even though the island position is not a completely one (cf. discussion below).

SW <sup>7</sup>	Jula	Marka	Moore	Lele	NS	Boko	French	Total <sup>8</sup>
SI	34	35	29	<b>14</b>	119	72	<b>2</b>	305
SII	30	29	31	<i>12</i>	122	69	1	294
SIV	31	31	29	13	124	73	1	302
SV	34	33	<b>33</b>	<b>14</b>	122	71	1	308
SVI	<b>37</b>	<b>36</b>	31	<b>14</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>74</b>	1	<b>319</b>
SVII	30	30	28	<i>12</i>	<i>111</i>	69	1	<i>281</i>
SVIII	32	34	31	13	121	72	1	304
SI-VIII	228	228	212	92	845	500	8	2113
NS	41	33	30	15	–	63	0	
Jula	–	144	25	25	(41)	25	1	
Marka	(144)	–	25	25	(33)	21	1	
Moore	(25)	(25)	–	20	(30)	22	1	
Lele	(25)	(25)	(20)	–	(15)	10	0	
Boko	(25)	(21)	(22)	(10)	(63)	–	1	
Busa	24	19	21	11	63	169	1	
IB	22	15	20	10	58	122	0	
Total	534	510	375	208	1148	932	13	

**Table 1.** Lexical agreement of basic vocabulary.

Jula shows more agreement with Lele than Southern Samo with Lele, too. This indicates a stronger influence of Jula than of Southern Samo on Lele. That Moore exhibits more influence on Southern Samo than on Jula is likely because Jula and Moore show considerably less lexical agreement with one another than Moore and Southern Samo.

Relatedness seems to be a much stronger indicator of lexical agreement than the widespreadness of a language: Moore and Boko, compared to Southern Samo and Boko, display significantly less lexical correspondences.

Jula and Marka reveal the same amount of agreement with Moore and with Lele, though this does not necessarily concern the same entries. In contrast to results from the lingua franca Moore, a potentially stronger influence of the lingua franca Jula than of Marka might be deduced from the fact that Marka shows less correspondence with Northern Samo (and with Boko) than Jula.

<sup>7</sup> Within each column the highest results of comparison of Southern Samo with contact languages are marked in bold; lowest results are given in italics.

<sup>8</sup> Southern Samo results are not included in the figures from other languages investigated below. Therefore, figures are not comparable with Southern Samo results and are not listed.

Even though Moore and Lele are both classified as Central Gur languages they exhibit only little lexical agreement between them. As expected, the lingua franca Moore shows more lexical agreement with Northern Samo and Boko than Lele (cf. Jula and Marka which exhibit similar comparative results with a stronger influence of the lingua franca Jula).

Boko and Busa share the highest amount of lexical agreement, higher even than Northern Samo and Southern Samo or Jula and Marka. This reveals the close relationship of Boko and Busa. Illo-Busa lacks many entries. Therefore, the actual number of agreements with Boko can be assumed to be higher than given<sup>9</sup>. In any case, Illo-Busa is closely related to Boko and Busa. All three varieties exhibit less lexical agreement with Jula (except for Boko), Marka, Moore, and Lele than all other African languages compared. In contrast to Jula, Marka, Moore, and Lele, Boko, Busa, and Illo-Busa show more lexical correspondences especially with Southern but also with Northern Samo. Due to the geographic distance of Boko, Busa, and Illo-Busa from Samo and Samo's insignificant status in Burkina Faso the large amount of lexical correspondences between Samo and Boko can only be explained through their relatedness.

Most correspondences of Lele with Boko, Busa, and Illo-Busa can be put into question or explained through contact with related languages or areal agreement. Since there is no direct contact with Lele, and as Lele is not used as a lingua franca, no high degree of correspondence was expected. Shared agreements of Busa, Boko, and Illo-Busa with Marka are probably explainable through Marka's relatedness to Jula and Boko, Busa, and Illo-Busa's contact to Jula as a lingua franca.

### 3.2 CULTURAL VOCABULARY

Some individual Southern Samo speakers show more or less the same amount of lexical agreement of cultural vocabulary with Jula and with Marka (cf. Table 2). There are, however, two exceptions: SIV and SVIII which show significantly more correspondences of cultural vocabulary with Marka than with Jula, and to a lesser extent SVI, SV, and even SVII with the difference of only one lexical correspondence. The result is a larger amount of total lexical agreement of cultural vocabulary between Southern Samo and Marka than between Southern Samo and Jula. Speakers SIV, SVIII, and SVI are in geographical neighbourhood to Marka. The larger amount of lexical agreement between these Southern Samo speakers and Marka can most likely be explained by borrowing from Marka<sup>10</sup>. In contrast, Boko (number of shared words: 21), Busa (19), Illo-

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<sup>9</sup> The large amount of correspondences between Busa, Boko, and Illo-Busa in comparison to other closely related languages, are possibly the result of an oral elicitation with a direct transcription while all other languages were tape-recorded and transcribed later.

<sup>10</sup> If, instead, Marka had borrowed from Samo, all Southern Samo lists were to be expected to exhibit the same lexical form.

Busa (15), and other languages compared, yield less lexical agreement with Marka than with Jula (Boko: 25, Busa: 24, Illo-Busa: 22), evidence of Jula's influence as a lingua franca while Marka appears to have mainly local impact.

Marka together with Jula, Moore, and Northern Samo shows generally more lexical agreement of basic vocabulary than of cultural vocabulary with Southern Samo. Especially Moore but also Northern Samo displays considerable differences. In contrast, some individual Southern Samo speakers have been pointed out to exhibit more lexical agreement of cultural vocabulary than of basic vocabulary with Marka. Lele and French with Southern Samo display similar agreement patterns. But here, Lele and French speakers show a higher degree of lexical correspondence of cultural vocabulary than of basic vocabulary with *all* Southern Samo speakers (instead of individual speakers as in the case of Southern Samo and Marka). It is particularly striking that, while, except for French, Lele displays usually the lowest amount of correspondences with other languages, it shows a higher amount of agreement of cultural vocabulary with Southern Samo and with Marka than with Moore. The influence of Lele, which is in geographic neighbourhood to Southern Samo and to Marka, appears to be stronger than the influence of the lingua franca Moore. Generally, a higher amount of lexical agreement of cultural vocabulary than of basic vocabulary is expected. The Swadesh list of basic vocabulary was designed to contain those words that are the least susceptible to borrowing while cultural vocabulary is usually less resistant to borrowing. These contrasting results can probably be explained in part on the basis that many cultural vocabulary entries were unknown to the interviewees and thus yielded singular results. Furthermore, cultural vocabulary consists frequently of compound words. Compound words are problematic to compare since it is often unclear which part of the compound has to be put into contrast. Nevertheless, it remains unclear, why Lele, French, and in part Marka show different (expected) results to Jula, Moore, Northern Samo, and the other part of Marka. Marka and Lele are in geographical neighbourhood to Southern Samo, but then, Northern Samo shows this geographical neighbourhood, too. Jula and Moore are *linguae francae*, but the official language French which shows contrasting results is sometimes used as lingua franca, too.

When looking at the amount of lexical correspondences of Southern Samo with other languages, these three (Marka, Lele and French) show the largest amount of differences between *individual* speakers from basic vocabulary to cultural vocabulary, too. Jula, Moore and Northern Samo and individual Southern Samo speakers do not vary that much with regard to the amount of differences of results as to basic vocabulary and cultural vocabulary. Instead, especially Moore but also Northern Samo with Southern Samo as a whole show considerable differences comparing basic and cultural vocabulary.

Southern Samo word list VII exhibits the highest amount of lexical agreement with Lele. Therefore, the exceptional position of SVII within Southern Samo can probably be explained as a result of borrowing from Lele. Word list SIV shows the highest amount of lexical agreement of cultural



vocabulary with Northern Samo. For these individual cases and the striking agreement of SIV, SVIII, and SVI with Marka mentioned above the direction of borrowing can be assumed to be directed from neighbouring language into Southern Samo because all other Southern Samo speakers exhibit less lexical correspondence with the contact language.

Again, Northern Samo displays overall similar results to Southern Samo, except for French with no apparent loan word in Northern Samo. But then, the Northern Samo speaker interviewed was very much aware of loan words in general and tried to avoid them.

KWL <sup>11</sup>	Jula	Marka	Moore	Lele	NS	French	Total
SI	23	23	15	17	86	<b>11</b>	175
SII	24	24	15	15	90	6	174
SIV	<b>29</b>	38 !	<b>16</b>	21	<b>103</b>	1	<b>208</b>
SV	28	32	14	16	98	3	191
SVI	25	32 !	<b>16</b>	17	97	4	191
SVII	25	26	<b>16</b>	<b>22!</b>	86	5	180
SVIII	28	<b>39 !</b>	<b>16</b>	18	97	7	205
SI-VIII	182	214 !	108	126 !	657	37	1324
NS	22	28	15	15	–	0	
Jula	–	93	17	15	(22)	3	
Marka	(93)	–	16	28	(28)	4	
Moore	(17)	(16)	–	10	(15)	8	
Lele	(15)	(28)	(10)	–	(15)	2	
Total	329	379	166	194	737	54	

**Table 2.** Lexical agreement of cultural vocabulary.

When looking at all other languages but Southern Samo, Jula and Marka exhibit the largest amount, Lele and Moore the smallest amount of lexical agreement of cultural vocabulary. Marka and Lele show more lexical correspondences than Marka and Moore, Jula and Moore, or Lele and Moore mentioned earlier.

### 3.3 BASIC AND CULTURAL VOCABULARY

Northern Samo shows the highest degree of total lexical correspondence with Southern Samo (cf. Table 3), which is closely related to Northern Samo. Marka, closely followed by Jula, shows much less correspondences but, nevertheless, the second largest number of shared words. It has been assumed in the past

<sup>11</sup> No Boko, Busa, or Illo-Busa cultural vocabulary data was available.

(Hoeth 2002a and 2002b) that Marka, together with Southern and Northern Samo, is part of one larger language island. However, in accordance with the large difference of shared words with Southern Samo between Marka and Northern Samo, Marka should be given a different position further apart from Southern and Northern Samo. Nevertheless, Marka and Northern Samo border Southern Samo and share both a high amount of agreement with their neighbour, probably not only because of their relatedness but also due to influence through direct language contact (cf. discussion below).

Southern Samo speaker SI displays the highest amount of agreement with French. At the same time he<sup>12</sup> reveals the lowest amount of total correspondences with Moore, keeping in mind that results amongst individual Southern Samo speakers with Moore hardly vary. Moore is mostly spoken by elderly people or people with only little education in the Southern Samo-speaking area. Data from speaker SI was recorded in Toma, the provincial capital. He received more education than most other speakers interviewed and was then 30 year old<sup>13</sup>.

Results for speaker SII are remarkable for their low degree of lexical correspondence with other languages in general, and with Jula, Marka, and Lele in particular. SII exhibits the least influence of the investigated contact languages.

SIV shows the largest amount of lexical correspondences with other investigated languages in general, but in particular with Lele (together with SVII) and with Northern Samo. While SIV is geographically adjacent to Northern Samo, other speakers are in closer proximity to Lele. Out of all Southern Samo speakers SIV displays the lowest amount of loanwords from French.

SV and SVI both show the highest amount of agreement with the *linguae francae* Jula and Moore. While SV and SVI show similar results in general, too, they do not share their age or professional background (SV is 16 years old and still attends school while SVI is a farmer and 28 years old).

While SVII is geographically close to Lele and displays the largest amount of correspondences with the latter (together with SIV), SVII shows the lowest amount of agreement with Northern Samo and is geographically the most distant from the Northern Samo area. Compared to all other Southern Samo speakers, SVII also shows the lowest amount of lexical agreement in general and with Moore in particular.

SVIII which is in geographical neighbourhood to Marka, exhibits the highest amount of shared words with Marka, but also with Moore (together with V and VI).

Northern Samo shows similar results to Southern Samo.

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<sup>12</sup> All speakers interviewed are male.

<sup>13</sup> All ages given are ages at time of recording.

TOTAL	Jula	Marka	Moore	Lele	NS	French	Total
SI	57	58	44	31	205	<b>13</b>	408
SII	54	53	46	27	212	7	399
SIV	60	69	45	<b>34</b>	<b>227</b>	2	<b>437</b>
SV	<b>62</b>	65	<b>47</b>	30	220	4	428
SVI	<b>62</b>	68	<b>47</b>	31	223	5	436
SVII	55	56	44	<b>34</b>	197	6	392
SVIII	60	<b>73</b>	<b>47</b>	31	218	8	<b>437</b>
SI-VIII	410	442	320	218	1502	45	2937
NS	63	61	45	30	–	0	
Jula	–	237	42	40	(63)	4	
Marka	(237)	–	41	53	(61)	5	
Moore	(42)	(41)	–	30	(45)	9	
Lele	(40)	(53)	(30)	–	(30)	2	
Total	792	834	478	371	1701	65	

**Table 3.** Lexical agreement of basic and cultural vocabulary.

Just like Southern and Northern Samo, Jula and Marka show a high amount of lexical agreement. With the exception of French, Lele generally displays the lowest number of correspondences with other languages compared, but particularly with Northern Samo and with Moore. There is less agreement between Northern Samo and the contact languages Jula and Marka than between Northern Samo and the closely related languages Boko, Busa, and Illo-Busa which are not in direct contact. Even though Moore is a lingua franca in Burkina Faso, no high amount of lexical agreement between Moore and any other investigated language can be found. According to the 1999 socio-linguistic survey, only 3% of Southern Samo speakers interviewed claimed to use Moore as a primary language<sup>14</sup> (compared to 13% Jula or French!), and only 23% (compared to Jula 52%) stated to use Moore other than as a primary language. Therefore, a lower amount of data showing contact phenomena from Moore than from Jula was expected. Nevertheless, Moore is the largest language community in Burkina Faso, spoken by 5.5 million people. A similar survey conducted in the Bisa area revealed that 9.8% of Bisa speakers interviewed said that they used Moore as a primary language in contrast to 1.6% using Jula (Haust 1998). Even more striking is the fact that 48.2% of Bisa speakers have Moore as an additional language and only 17.2% Jula. Jula is spoken as a mother tongue by ca. 290,000 speakers in Burkina Faso but its influence on Samo as a lingua franca should not be neglected. Especially surprising is the small amount of contact phenomena from French since, after all, 13% of all Southern Samo

<sup>14</sup> In the survey more than one language could be named as a primary language.

speakers interviewed claimed to employ French as a primary language, and even 30% of all speakers use French as “other language”.

#### 4. SUMMARY OF COMPARISON WITH FORMER RESULTS

Jula, Moore and French share a high social status amongst Southern Samo speakers (Hoeth 2001). Jula is the preferred national language by 52%, Moore by 46% of all Southern Samo speakers interviewed. As a result, borrowings from these languages are possible despite the large number of Southern Samo speakers who stated to speak Southern Samo as a first and as a primary language. Surprisingly, all Southern Samo speakers exhibit only few borrowings from French. Moore is especially used by Southern Samo speakers with only a few years of formal education and by elderly people. Southern Samo exhibits less lexical agreement with Moore than with Jula. The highest amount of agreement of Southern Samo speakers with a lingua franca is shared with Jula.

Lele borders Southern Samo to the East. In the 1999 survey Lele was only mentioned as “additional language” spoken but played no role otherwise. Except for French, out of all languages compared Lele displays the lowest amount of total lexical agreement with Southern Samo. Nevertheless, it exhibits a certain amount of lexical agreement with Southern Samo which indicates an influence between the two, which should not be neglected. Especially Lele’s influence on Southern Samo speaker SVII is remarkable. Lele’s number of shared words of cultural vocabulary is even higher than Moore’s amount of agreement of cultural vocabulary with Southern Samo. This difference in number and category of vocabulary indicates a different kind of contact between Lele and Moore with Southern Samo.

Southern Samo shows, apart from Northern Samo<sup>15</sup>, the highest amount of total lexical agreement with Marka. Northern Samo and Marka play no role (in the case of Northern Samo) or only a minor role (in the case of Marka) in the 1999 survey: Marka is mentioned as one of several languages spoken by some Southern Samo speakers. Marka is, like Northern Samo and Lele, a neighbouring language of Southern Samo, and it has been suggested (Hoeth 2001) that it might be classified, together with Northern Samo and Southern Samo, as part of one larger language island. Compared to results from Southern and Northern Samo, the present data, however, reveal no outstanding lexical closeness between Marka and Southern or Northern Samo that would confirm this position within a language island. Instead, Marka shares the highest amount of correspondences with Jula. Possibly, Samo and Marka can be regarded as two adjacent islands. Individual Southern Samo word lists which were recorded next to the Marka-speaking area share lexical agreement with Marka especially

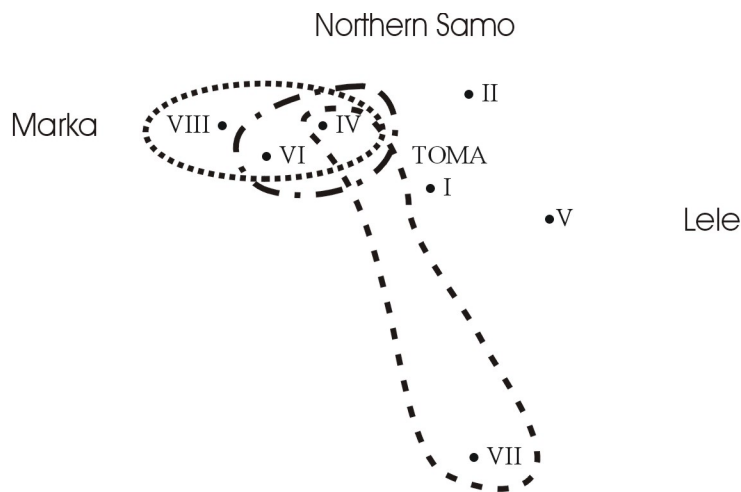
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<sup>15</sup> Boko, Busa, and Illo-Busa are not included here. As mentioned earlier, cultural vocabulary was not available. Therefore, no comparable totals can be evaluated.

within the field of cultural vocabulary. This points to a lexical influence of Marka on Southern Samo through direct contact.

The highest amount of lexical agreement of Southern Samo can be found with Northern Samo. This can probably be explained mainly due to their relatedness and only partially because of their contact situation. This is undermined by the fact that Southern Samo shares a high amount of lexical agreement with the related but distant language Boko, too.

In contrast, results from the socio-linguistic survey where neighbouring languages yielded insignificant results, suggest that not only social status<sup>16</sup> but also geographical and linguistic closeness play a role in contact phenomena in Southern Samo. The related languages Northern Samo and Marka exhibit a high number of lexical agreements. Whether relatedness facilitates borrowing or is the cause of lexical agreement is, however, hard to decide.



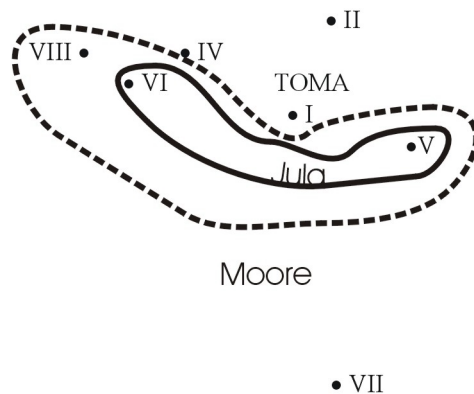
**Figure 1.** Highest amount of lexical agreement of Southern Samo with Marka (dots: IV, VI, VIII), Northern Samo (dots and lines: IV, VI), and Lele (lines: IV, VII).

Southern Samo SIV, SVI, and SVIII (as a group, together with II, VIII and VI or VI and IV only) can be found frequently showing lexical agreement in contrast to other Southern Samo word lists. Thus, the internal structure of Southern Samo varieties seems to be, at least partially, explainable through contact with other languages. Especially SVIII and SVI but also SVIII, SVI, and SIV (sometimes together with SII) are confirmed as a Southern Samo subgroup through phonetic-phonological comparison. However, IV and VII as a subgroup can be neither confirmed through phonetical-phonological nor through internal lexical results (Hoeth 2002).

While Northern Samo, Marka, and Jula exhibit the largest amount of lexical correspondences with their respective Southern Samo neighbours, the *linguae francae* Jula and Moore both show a high amount of lexical agreement with Southern Samo SVI and SV. In addition, SVIII displays a high amount of lexical agreement with Jula. SI and SII show similar results in that they never exhibit

<sup>16</sup> Results from French even seem to contradict the possible influence of social status. Or, instead, the status of French is much lower than has been assumed previously.

the highest amount of lexical agreement with other African languages. Instead, Southern Samo SI shows the highest amount of borrowings from French. SII tends to exhibit the lowest amount of correspondences with any other language.



**Figure 2.** Highest amount of lexical agreement of Southern Samo with Jula (line: V, VI) and with Moore (dots: V, VI, VIII).

While contact with neighbouring languages appears to be reflected in a West-East division of Southern Samo, contact with the *linguae francae* Jula and Moore points towards a North-South separation into three parts. Signs of not the same but a similar East-West, North-South partition have already been found in the lexical and phonetic-phonological analyses (Hoeth 2002).

Southern Samo SVI and SV as well as SVIII, SVI, and SV are usually found only as part of a larger subgroup within the internal lexical or phonetic-phonological comparison. In fact, SVI and SV occur frequently in opposing subgroups of Southern Samo with different lexical entries or phonetic-phonological features. Different results from the comparison of Southern Samo with contact languages and internal lexical and phonetic-phonological comparisons can be explained since contact with another language is not reflected by each informant in the same part of the lexicon. For example, SVI and SV show a high number of agreements with Jula, but each in different lexical fields, i.e. they do not show lexical agreement with each other and, therefore, do not appear as one subgroup within the internal structuring. In general, a (not easily recognisable) internal structuring of Southern Samo can be confirmed. Speakers SIV, SVI and SVIII only give clear evidence as a subgroup within an internal lexical or phonetic-phonological comparison and through the analysis of lexical contact phenomena with other languages.

## 5. PHONETIC-PHONOLOGICAL CONTACT PHENOMENA

No regular sound correspondences can be found between any contact language *plus* individual Southern Samo speaker *and* other Southern Samo speakers. Instead, some regular sound correspondences between individual contact languages and Southern Samo in general occur. According to results from the 1999 survey, Southern Samo was assumed to be stable while displaying some

contact phenomena. Therefore, no major influence other than lexical was expected. If phonological subgroups of Southern Samo agree with subgroups established due to contact phenomena, these groups do not necessarily need to agree (and in fact, they do not) with phonological features of the respective contact language.

## 6. LEXICAL AGREEMENT OF SEVERAL LANGUAGES

To find out whether there are combinations of languages in the comparison which show lexical correspondence particularly often, those entries were counted that show lexical agreement with exactly one (or several specific) other language(s) only. E.g., all Southern Samo word lists and Jula but *no* other language exhibit only twice lexical agreement of specific forms.

Agreement	basic	cultural	total
S <sup>17</sup> , Jula	0	2	2
S, Marka	0	0	0
S, Lele	0	1	1
S, Moore	3	1	4
<b>S, NS</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>63</b>
S, Boko	0	—	18
S, B-B-IB	6	—	—

**Table 4.** Lexical agreement between Southern Samo and one other language.

All Southern Samo word lists show lexical correspondence with only one language mainly with the closely related Northern Samo. Even if it is taken into consideration that figures are low because only those entries have been counted where *each of all seven* Southern Samo lists showed lexical correspondence, the total number of agreement of all Southern Samo word lists with one other language appears to be low.

Results from agreements between other languages but Southern Samo are, with the exception of Jula and Marka (both Mande West) and possibly even Moore and Lele (both Gur), low, too.

Agreement <sup>19</sup>	basic	cultural	total
Moore, B-B-IB	4	—	—
Jula, B-B-IB	1	—	—
Marka, B-B-	—	—	—

<sup>17</sup> “S” stands for all seven Southern Samo wordlists which exhibit the same lexical entry.

<sup>18</sup> No totals are given because cultural data from Boko (Busa and Illo-Busa) is not available.

<sup>19</sup> For spatial reasons lists of possible language contact are not given completely.

IB			
Lele, B-B-IB	2	–	2
NS, B-B-IB	1	–	–
NS, Jula	1	–	1
NS, Marka	1	1	2
NS, Moore	3	3	6
NS, Lele	1	2	3
<b>Jula, Marka</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>138</b>
Moore, Jula	3	4	7
Moore, Marka	1	3	4
<b>Moore, Lele</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>

**Table 5.** Lexical agreement between other languages than Southern Samo.

But, even figures of agreement of Southern Samo with several selected contact or related languages do not reveal specific correspondence patterns with the restriction of a high number of agreement between the related languages Southern Samo, Northern Samo, Busa, Boko, and Illo-Busa. Even the combination of (only) Southern Samo, Northern Samo, Jula, Marka (and Boko, Busa, and Illo-Busa) did not yield the expected significant result of lexical agreements.

Agreement	basic	cultural	total
S, NS, Jula	0	0	0
S, NS, Marka	1	2	3
S, NS, Lele	1	1	2
S, NS, Moore	3	0	3
S, NS, Boko	0	0	0
<b>S, NS, B-B-IB</b>	<b>28</b>	–	–
S, Jula, B-B-IB	–	–	–
S, Marka, B-B-IB	–	–	–
S, Moore, B-B-IB	2	–	–
S, Lele, B-B-IB	–	–	–
S, Jula, Marka	0	0	0
NS, Jula, Marka	4	4	8
S, NS, Jula, Boko	0	–	–
S, NS, Jula, B-B-IB	2	–	–
S, NS, Marka, B-B-IB	–	–	–
S, NS, Moore, B-B-IB	3	–	–
S, NS, Lele, B-B-IB	–	–	–
<b>S, NS, Jula, Marka</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>
S, NS, Jula, Lele	0	0	0
S, NS, Marka, Lele	0	0	0
S, NS, Moore, Lele	0	2	2



S, NS, Boko, Jula, Marka	1	–	–
<b>S, NS, B-B-IB, Jula, Marka</b>	<b>3</b>	–	–
S, NS, B-B-IB, Jula, Lele	–	–	–
S, NS, B-B-IB, Lele, Moore	–	–	–
S, NS, Jula, Marka, Lele	1	1	2

**Table 6.** Lexical agreement between more than two languages.

A few lexemes (“nez”, “chemin”, “chèvre”, “kola”, and “or”) can be assumed to be regional. Probably other lexemes like “argent” could be added, but since entries from some languages or individual Southern Samo speakers are missing or ambiguous, these lexemes are not included.

Agreement	basic	cultural	total
S, NS, Jula, Marka, Moore, Lele	1 <sup>20</sup>	2	3
S, NS, B-B-IB, Jula, Marka, Lele	–	–	–
S, NS, Jula, Marka, B-B-IB, Moore, Lele	2	–	–

**Table 7.** Regionally occurring lexemes.

A high number of agreements can be found between closely related languages only<sup>21</sup>. Of these, Southern Samo and Northern Samo exhibit the lowest amount. This, however, is explainable since seven Southern Samo word lists are compared, while all other languages are represented by only one informant.

Agreement	basic	cultural	total
S, NS (Eastern Mande)	28	35	63
B, B, IB (Eastern Mande)	118	–	–
Jula, Marka (Western Mande)	77	61	138

**Table 8.** Lexical agreement between closely related languages

Even though there are many contact phenomena between *individual* Southern Samo speakers and other languages, *systematic* lexical agreement appears between closely related languages only. Therefore, despite the position of Southern Samo and Northern Samo, Marka, Busa, Boko, and Illo-Busa as language islands, there are no lexical (nor phonetic-phonological) signs of language shift or change. If, however, only one Southern Samo speaker would have been chosen for comparison, overall results, but especially those figures where agreement between all Mande languages (only) are counted, should have been higher.

<sup>20</sup> Sw058 „chèvre“: B-B-IB is missing.

<sup>21</sup> It has to be kept in mind that here figures refer to lexical agreement between exactly those languages selected for each comparison only.

## 7. SEMANTIC FIELDS OF CONTACT

Since there are no indications for strong lexical contact phenomena between Samo and other investigated languages, it is not surprising that the examination of semantic fields of contact yielded only to some extent significant results. While closely related languages reveal lexical agreement in all semantic fields, almost all of the investigated languages show lexical agreement in the field of agriculture. Agricultural vocabulary appears to have undergone an areal distribution and Lele even exhibits only a slightly increased number of shared words in this particular semantic field with all other languages except Moore. Between Lele and Moore not only agreement of agricultural vocabulary but also a (low) accumulation of correspondences of body part terminology can be found.

It is only in the field of hunting and fishing that Southern Samo shows no obvious agreement with Northern Samo. Instead, here a slightly increased degree of lexical correspondence of fishing and hunting vocabulary is found between Northern Samo and Marka. Hunting and especially fishing do not play a particularly important role in the Southern Samo-speaking area.

French loan words which occur in all investigated languages, except Northern Samo, are mainly restricted to the field of household items or tools. The other investigated *linguae francae* Moore and Jula show no tendencies towards an increase of lexical correspondence within particular semantic fields.

Even though Jula and Marka show lexical agreement in all semantic fields, correspondences between Jula and Southern Samo and Marka and Jula are not necessarily in the same field. Marka and Southern Samo exhibit lexical correspondence especially with regard to cultural vocabulary, and out of this musical instrument in particular. Individual Southern Samo word lists exhibit no striking agreement of lexical fields with Jula compared to other Southern Samo word lists, but SIV shows a tendency to exhibit more agreement of vocabulary in the field of musical instruments with Marka. SVII which shows less agreement with Marka than most other Southern Samo word lists in general, exhibits less agreement of household and agricultural vocabulary.

Generally, Samo's solid position as a language island is confirmed by these results. Contact phenomena in particular semantic fields should not necessarily have contradicted this stability. But, not even specifically unmistakable fields of contact could be ascertained.

## 8. A "TWIN-ISLAND LANGUAGE"

We have seen that Samo (Eastern Mande) is insularly enclosed by other languages and, surprisingly, displays no strong contact phenomena with any of these. The highest amount of lexical agreement between Samo and its contact languages can be found with the *lingua franca* Jula (Western Mande) and the

geographic neighbour Marka (Western Mande). With the non-related surrounding or contact languages Lele, Moore (both Gur), or even French Samo shows only few indications of contact phenomena. Instead, the highest numbers of agreement with any of the investigated languages are found with the closely related, but geographically distant, languages Boko, Busa, Illo-Busa and within Samo (all Eastern Mande).

Even though Moore is the language spoken by the majority (more than 50%) in Burkina Faso, Samo, surprisingly, displays comparatively few contact phenomena with Moore. In contrast, Mande languages are spoken by only ca. 9% of the population (Vossen & Keuthmann ms.). Of these Jula is spoken as a mother tongue by ca. 290,000, Marka by ca. 180,000, and Samo by approximately the same number of speakers as Marka. Despite the low amount of Mande speakers and the high amount of Moore speakers in Burkina Faso, Southern Samo exhibits a significant amount of lexical agreement with Mande languages only. Obviously, these results are for the biggest part explainable through the relatedness of these languages but, nevertheless, the fact that Southern Samo displays a remarkable number of lexical agreements with related languages only, remains noteworthy.

The situation of a minority language Samo amongst a majority language Moore is undoubtedly given. But, Samo is not embedded in the distribution area of a *non-related* majority society (Vossen & Keuthmann ms.). Marka, Samo's neighbouring language to the West, is a Mande language, too. Marka, however, displays a higher amount of lexical agreement with Jula than with Samo, and may therefore not be subcategories as a variety of Samo. Thus, Samo is clearly distinguishable from all neighbouring languages but its insular position is not that obvious as in the case of Bisa.

Language islands are usually seen as a result of past migrations. But not all languages in insular positions are clearly in the situation of an exclave. Therefore, Vossen and Keuthmann (ms. and Keuthmann, Schreiber, Vossen in press) propose diverse degrees of language islands: Firstly, *language islands* with definite origins, secondly, *island languages* without proof of a monogenetic origin, and thirdly *speakers' islands* at the other end of the spectrum as a result of a breakdown of the system with a lack of contiguous spatiality.

Because of the extent of lack of Mande-internal homogeneity a monogenetic affiliation of Samo – just like Bisa – to Mande seems at present impossible. For that reason, as has been suggested by Vossen and Keuthmann (ms.) for Bisa, the classification of Samo as a language island with definite origins, is unsatisfactory. If the position of Samo next to its related neighbour Marka is ignored for the moment, Samo, i.e. Southern and Northern Samo, is best categorised as an island language. If, however, Marka is included in the picture a new category of language island, or rather a new subcategory of island language, has to be established: a “twin-island language” of two adjacent and related minority languages which are insularly enclosed by non-related languages.

## 9. ABBREVIATIONS

B-B-IB	Boko, Busa, Illo-Busa
IB	Illo-Busa
KWL	Cultural vocabulary word list
NS	Northern Samo
S	Southern Samo
SI	Southern Samo speaker from Toma
SII	Southern Samo speaker from Yaba
SIV	Southern Samo speaker from Biba
SV	Southern Samo speaker from Sapala
SVI	Southern Samo speaker from from Koungny
SVII	Southern Samo speaker from Kalabo
SVIII	Southern Samo speaker from Gassan
SW	Swadesh basic vocabulary word list

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