



Fante Handbook for Beginners

by Catherine Flaatten, ProGhana Volunteer 2009-2010

Lesson 6: Continuous Tense

Continuous tense is an easy way to graduate from present tense. It indicates the subject as being in the process of performing the verb; *I am going* (continuous) instead of *I go* (present). To transform a verb into continuous tense from present, we will simply add another syllable between the pronoun and the verb: *re*, *ro*, *ri*, and *ru* as appropriate. For selection of the proper addition, we look to the first person singular pronoun. *Me* takes *re*, *mo* takes *ro*, and so on. Let us take the example of *da* (*to sleep*) from the previous lesson. First, we conjugate in present tense:

- meda (*I sleep*)
- eda (*you sleep*)
- ɔda (*he sleeps*)
- yɛda (*we sleep*)
- hom da (*you [all] sleep*)
- wɔda (*they sleep*)

Look at the first person singular pronoun: *me*. Therefore, we know the extra syllable required for continuous tense conjugation will be *re*:

- mereda (*I am sleeping*)
- ereda (*you are sleeping*)
- ɔreda (*he is sleeping*)
- yɛreda (*we are sleeping*)
- hom reda (*you [all] are sleeping*)
- wɔreda (*they are sleeping*)

As this example shows, *re* never changes with the personal pronouns. Also note that *hom* is still completely separate. Now try *ƙɔ* (*to go*), first in the present tense:

- mokɔ (*I go*)
- ekɔ (*you go*)
- ɔkɔ (*he goes*)
- yɛkɔ (*we go*)
- hom kɔ (*you [all] go*)
- wɔkɔ (*they go*)

In this case, we will add *ro* to make the verb continuous:

- morokɔ (*I am going*)
- erokɔ (*you are going*)
- ɔrokɔ (*he is going*)
- yɛrokɔ (*we are going*)
- hom rokɔ (*you [all] are going*)
- wɔrokɔ (*they are going*)



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Conjugate dzi (*to eat*) and su (*to cry*) on your own, following this pattern.

Because this tense is particularly straightforward, we will at this time add a number of verbs in their infinitive forms to your vocabulary. Try to pick out the irregular ones:

English	Fante	English	Fante
to take	<i>fa</i>	to pull	<i>twe</i>
to come	<i>bra</i>	to splash	<i>hwew</i>
to sweep	<i>pra</i>	to look	<i>hwε</i>
to gnaw	<i>kaw</i>	to paddle	<i>kwan</i>
to wear	<i>hyε</i>	to pound	<i>wɔw / siw</i>
to give	<i>kyε</i>	to stop	<i>gyina</i>
to tie	<i>tsew</i>	to know	<i>nyim</i>
to live/stay	<i>tse</i>	to weigh	<i>ker</i>
to snatch	<i>hwim</i>	to turn off	<i>dum</i>

Note:

