Sabar is a drum language used in Senegal. Senegalese drummers play rhythms in correlation to the spoken Wolof language. Wolof is not a tonal language and sabar rhythms do not mimic the pitch of word sounds, unlike other African drum languages.

Our aim: establish the regularities between Wolof syllables and sabar rhythms in the data.

Our material
Research is based on 396 Wolof songs with corresponding rhythm, collected in live sessions with the drummers, in the years 2018-2019 in Campement Nguekhokh, Senegal. All recordings were made with the griots of the same family. Materials include bâkks (classical sabar phrases, not improvised on the spot) and sabar improvisations. We think that Sabar is productive.

Our hypothesis
Syllable-level hypothesis: syllables in Wolof have specific drum strokes associated to them, where the nature of the correspondence depends on the phonological properties of the vowel in a syllable: length, openness and front/central/back property of a vowel.

Our methods
Wolof words were syllabified. The texts were divided into pairs: a Wolof syllable and the corresponding stroke with its properties. We looked at how often each of the properties corresponds to each stroke and analysed the data using SPSS ($\chi^2$).

Results
The analysis has shown the regularities between the following properties and syllables:

**Position**
- front - ce / tac
- back - gin
- central - pax / rwan / tan

**Openness**
- middle - ce / rwe / tac
- closed - gin
- open - pax / rwan / tan

This was the first attempt to uncover regularities between the drum language and atonal language.