

A grammar of Kuteb

A Jukunoid language of

East-Central Nigeria

Robert Koops

African Language monographs I

KAY WILLIAMSON EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

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KAY WILLIAMSON EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION (KWEF)

Preface

The Kay Williamson Educational Foundation exists to continue the work of the late Professor Kay Williamson, formerly professor of Nigerian Heritage at the University of Port Harcourt. The Trust, managed by friends and colleagues of Kay, has two main goals;

- a) To prepare for publication various manuscripts and studies which were left after the death of Professor Williamson
- b) To encourage new research and publication on Nigerian languages

In view of the numbers of manuscripts in limbo for lack of financial support, the Foundation has initiated a publication series in conjunction with the publisher Rüdiger Köppe of Köln. Books of international interest will be printed in Europe in sufficient numbers to be both made available to scholars worldwide and to be sold at a subsidised price within West Africa, in particular to make available these texts to the communities whose language is described.

The trustees are pleased to support this, the first publication in the series, a grammar of Kuteb, by Robert Koops. Kuteb, and indeed the whole Jukunoid family remains a poorly-known group of languages and this makes a substantial contribution to expanding our understanding of them. A dictionary of the Kuteb language is also in preparation. This should be the first stage in an extended project of publication, encompassing existing materials and those prepared with Foundation funding.

Roger Blench
(For the trustees)
December 2007

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The steady encouragement and patience of my wife Esther was a crucial component in this project from the beginning to the very end. To her, and to our children Alexander, Ruthie, and Jed, who perhaps paid the greatest price of us all, in the form of lost time with Dad, I dedicate this work, with the hope that they may never lose their curiosity about the wonders of God's creation, including the miracle we call language. But I would not be properly African if I did not also include in this dedication my mother, Jean Koops, who would often ask me at the close of the day 'And what have you done for mankind today?' and my father, Bernard Koops, who taught me Latin in a way that hooked me on language. And while the list of laudable African contributors to this book is long, I want to honor in this dedication two special Kuteb friends who have gone on before us: Mr. Seth Shamaki of Sabon Gida Askaen, and Pastor Daniel Andenyantso. (whose name means 'people are good together'). Pastor Daniel shared his house, his family, and many a cup of tea in the early days when I was struggling to learn the language. Seth ('Seti'), though he could not speak, brightened every encounter with an unforgettable smile.¹

Robert Koops

[place]

[date]

¹ He is the drummer pictured in Figure 2 above.

Table of Abbreviations

1p	first person plural pronoun	JW	Jukun of Wukari
1s	first person singular pronoun	POSS	possessor/possessive
2p	second person plural pronoun	PN	pronoun
2s	second person singular pronoun	PREP	preposition
3	third person general pronoun	MIR	mirative
3p	third person plural pronoun	N	noun
3s	third person singular pronoun	NEC	necessative
Adj	adjective	NEG	negative
Assoc	associative	NP	noun phrase
BEN	benefactive	NUM	number/numeral
C	consonant	OBL	obligative (=HO)
CFC	counterfactual condition	PRF	perfective
COMP	complementizer	Q	question marker
DEM	demonstrative	REC	reciprocal action
DET	determiner	REF	referential
DUP	duplicated	REIT	reiterative
EXT	extensive (or maximal)	REL	relator
FUT	future	S	sentence
HO	hortative	SEQ	sequential
IMP	imperfective	SPEC	specifier
IS	indirect speech	SVC	serial verb construction
INSTR	instrumental	V	Verb, Vowel
JT	Jukun of Takum		

CHAPTER ONE. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The need for basic data on African languages continues unabated as we enter the 21st Century. Heine and Nurse (2000:5) bemoan the poor documentation for African languages and the paucity of scholars who work on them. Blench (2006) continues the lament. This book is intended to make a contribution towards closing the breach by presenting a sketch of basic phonological, morphological, and syntactic patterns in Kuteb, one of the 150 or so languages of the Central Nigerian group within the (East) Benue-Congo family. As background, an assortment of topics is included in this chapter: the geographical and social context, linguistic classification, dialects, theoretical approach, history of research, orthography, sources of data, and acknowledgments.

1.2 Language, geography, and culture

The emergence of sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and folk taxonomy as independent disciplines in the past few decades has highlighted a fact that scholars have known for centuries, but which is sometimes in danger of being ignored, that human languages have contexts. An utterance, whether a word or sentence or paragraph, has no meaning outside its context. This is not a superficial matter of labeling objects and events with nouns and verbs. It often enters into the very fabric of the grammar of the language. Take an example of this context-relatedness from Kuteb. The rules of social behavior in Kuteb society encourage gregariousness and cooperation. Idiosyncratic, nonconformist behavior is potentially dangerous. This behavioral norm has its reflection in the grammar of the language: just as the ownership of objects is indicated by a suffixed possessive pronoun indicating an exclusive association between the person and the possessed object, verbs also sometimes affix the possessive pronoun, indicating actions that the subject may be doing in a unilateral and/or surprising way.

To give the broadest context possible in the brief scope of this book, I include here a description of the geographical and social background of the Kuteb people. My intention is not to make some new or profound statement about language and culture, or to promote (or challenge) the Whorfian Hypothesis about how language dictates our thought, but to provide a general picture of the context for the reader as he or she peruses the data in the following chapters. In this regard also, the reader is encouraged to note the sample text in the appendix that illustrates one of the sorts of things that Kuteb people do with their language. A section on orthography reflects the monumental but potentially uncelebrated fact that on the threshold of

the 21st Century Kuteb is becoming a written language, with all that that potentially entails.²

1.2.1 Geographical, Social, and Historical Background

The people known as Kuteb (or ‘Kutep,’ or ‘Kutev’ in the literature) number more than 100,000³ and live mainly in what is now Takum Local Government Area of Taraba State, Nigeria. There are two or three hamlets of Kuteb speakers in Cameroun.⁴ Their area covers a rough triangle with its apex at Takum, the major commercial center (10° E, 7° N on Map 1). The Gamana River cuts through the southern part of the area, and the Donga runs north and south across the east side.

Bordering the Cameroun mountains, the Kuteb area is typical savannah (lots of grass and small trees) dotted with hills, which, incidentally, have provided protection in recent history during inter-ethnic warfare. The nickname *ande ti rikwen* (‘mountain people’) perhaps developed during this period. The rivers and their tributaries, plus numerous springs, provide a continuous water supply, even through most of the dry season, which lasts from around October to March.

Roughly speaking, the neighbors of the Kuteb are the Jukun on the North, the Tiv to the West, the Yukuben (Oohum), Bete, and Lufu immediately to the South, and, to the East, the Icen, Ndoro, and an assortment of ethnic groups called ‘Tigong’ (or ‘Tigum’). While this is the general picture, there is in fact a lot of intermingling in the area, and, in addition to the above groups, there is a sprinkling of Chamba, Fulani, and Kpan communities here and there.

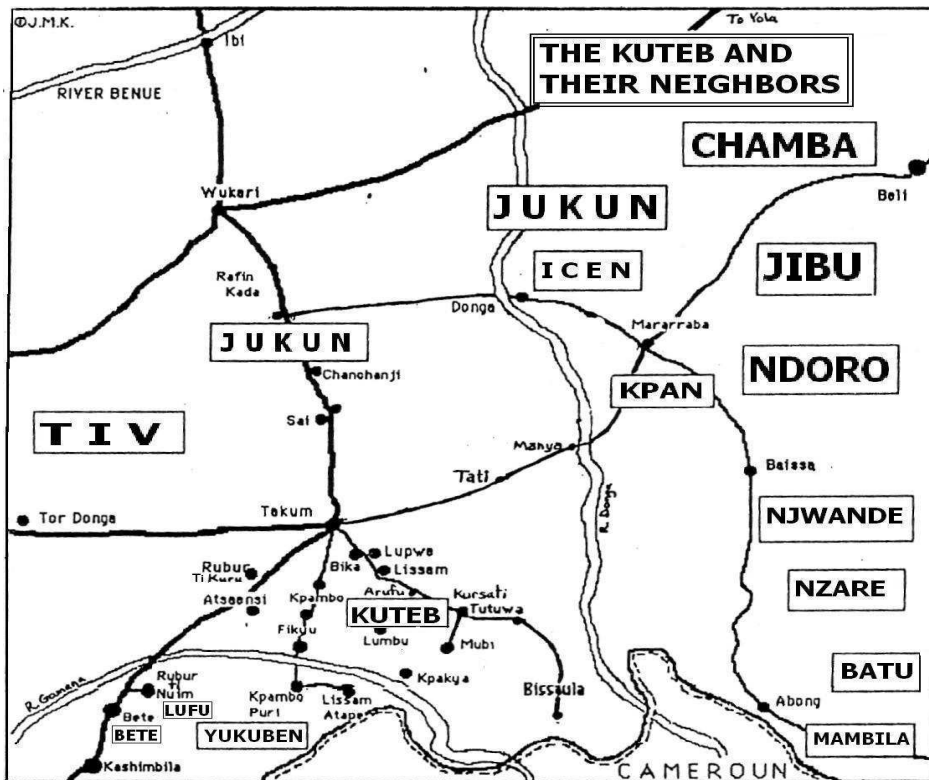
² See Ong (1982).

³ Extrapolated from the Nigerian Government Census of 1952, district government records and U.N. birth-rate statistics. Subsequent Census figures are suspect. The figure of 30-50,000 in Nigeria (1992) in *Ethnologue* (15th Edition 2005) is surely too low and should be updated.

⁴ *Atlas Linguistique du Cameroun* and Case Van Wyke, personal correspondence. See also the map and comments in Shimizu 1980.

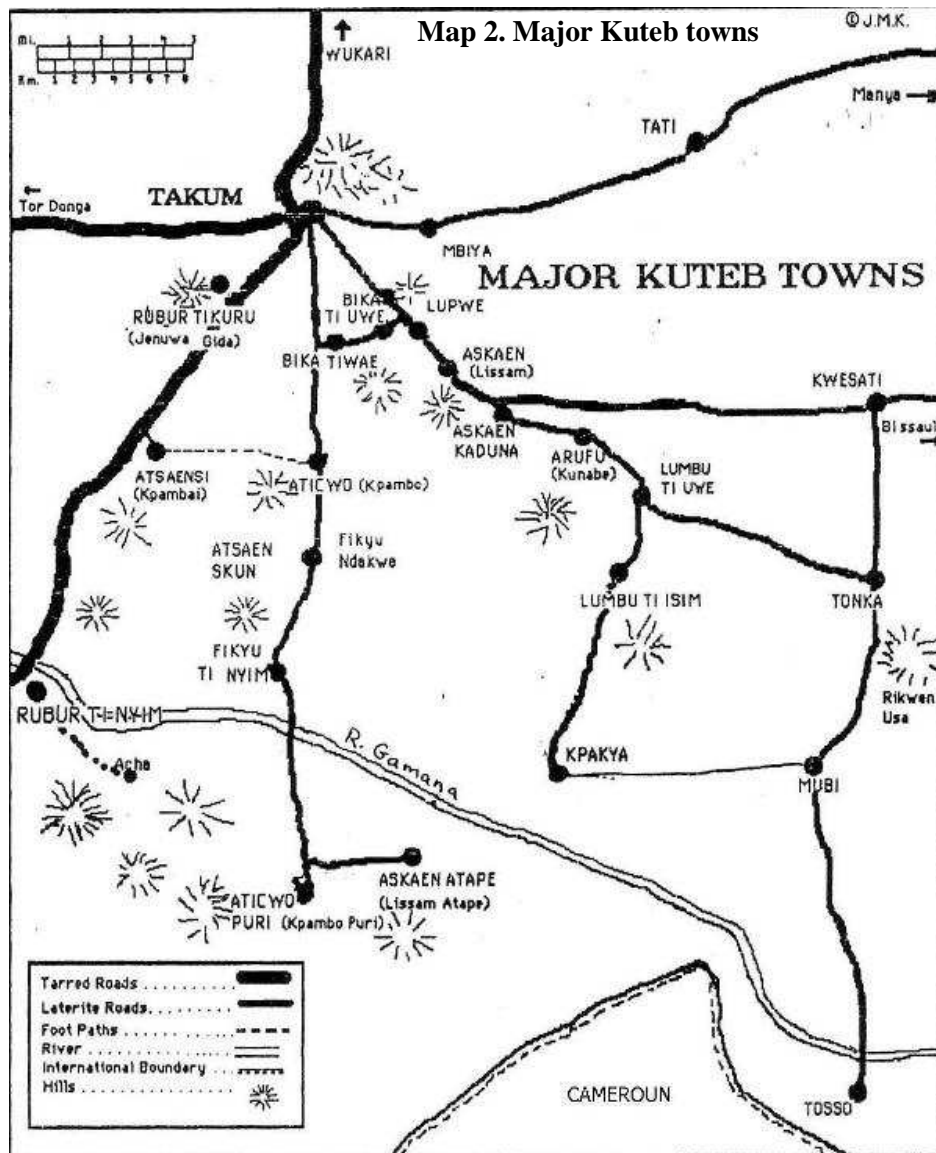
Until recent political violence wrought havoc in the area, Takum was a cosmopolitan place. It sprang up in early colonial days as a meeting place of many ethnic groups including the British colonialists. Takum was normally ruled by a Kuteb chief and a council made up of representatives of Kuteb clans, with a Jukun

Map 1. The Kuteb and their neighbours



Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba traders did a brisk business, particularly in Takum town,

and there are others, too numerous to mention by name, from both inside and outside Nigeria, who made a living for themselves in the area. observer. Local chiefs in the surrounding villages reported to the chief of Takum.



Inter-ethnic contact has had its effect on the language and culture of the Kuteb people, as it does anywhere else. In addition to the indigenous cults currently used

by practitioners of the traditional religion there are others imported from the Jukun and from Cameroun. Politically and religiously, the Jukun, Chamba, and Kuteb have had a long history of interaction and mutual influence, through, for example, Jukun control of certain cults (**ákwā**, **akuma**, and **acha-nyande**, for example), the distribution of salt, and the propagation of the Christian and Muslim faiths. This influence is evident in heavy borrowing from the Jukun language in colloquial speech. Likewise, there are extensive borrowings from Hausa, some introduced by early missionaries and converts, who found it easier to introduce Hausa words rather than to find equivalents in local languages. Other loanwords (often Arabic or English in origin) came via Hausa traders and Hausa-speaking district officials.

The Kuteb people were traditionally farmers, hunters, and fishermen, the area being rich in the resources peculiar to these trades: guinea corn, maize, millet, cassava, sweet potato, cocoyam, groundnut, bambara nut, and a wide variety of wild game and fish. Before the oil boom in the 1970s, a number of cash crops were raised including sesame seed, tobacco, and rice, while shea nuts were harvested for export from the forests. Yams are increasingly farmed, perhaps due to influence from the Tiv to the west. The oil palm has a revered position in the culture of the Kuteb, providing oil (both red oil from the outside of the kernel and white from the inside), wine, brooms (from the leaves), a salt substitute (from the ashes), and wood for building.

As for Kuteb history, local tradition says that the people scattered to their present villages from Usa Mountain on the east side of the area. The yearly Kuciceb Festival commemorates this event. Previous to the descent from Usa, the history is uncertain, and for various speculations the reader is referred to Mr. Saddi Mgbe's book, *Know the Story of Kutebs*, and Shimizu's *Comparative Jukunoid*. Mgbe advances the once-popular idea that the Kuteb migrated from Egypt (implying a large group of them), but at the same time recounts the tradition that a single man named Kuteb married two Camerounian women, who gave birth to the heads of the present-day clans.⁵ His book also gives details of the clan divisions, which number ten or eleven, depending on how certain subdivisions are made. Shimizu's study, based purely on linguistic evidence, does not contradict the local tradition, but does suggest that Mr. Kuteb and his cousin Mr. Yukuben were the western-most descendants of a group of people that included also the Kpan and Icen to the east of them (between the Donga and Suntai rivers), and the Jukun, Mbembe, and Wurbo

⁵ Variations on both theories are possible, of course. Mr. Kuteb and his brothers (or their great grandparents) could have come from Egypt. The linguistic evidence, however, does not support this.

ancestors still further east, across the Suntai (Bantaji) River. Shimizu very tentatively hypothesizes that, wherever the latter group came from before, after settling, they experienced several expansions. First, they went north all the way across the Benue to Kona, then east across the Taraba. Following that, some went west almost as far as the present-day Abinsi, while those who were north of the Benue expanded eastward and northward. Finally, others of the ‘north-siders’ expanded to the west. All this was long before the establishment of the Kororofa Kingdom, and is highly speculative.

The linguistic evidence for the unity of all these groups is based on the similarity between words in the different present day languages. The table shows some lexical items in five of the approximately ten ‘Jukunoid’ (Jukun-like) languages (tones unmarked):

	Yukuben	Kuteb	Kpan	Icen	Jukun (T)
‘two’	aapan	ifaen	ifa/ifan	fa/mfa	apina
‘moon’	oofan/ uuvan	ushaen	ufyan	ifka/fkan	sona
‘slave’	uupyi	upyi	ufyi/uswi	afi/fi	fo
‘come’	ba	ba	bo	bwa	bi
‘arm’	kuubu	kujwo	abgu	bu	avo
‘ripe’	min	ben/bin	byen	bge	byin
‘meat’	kiibi/kibe	ibye/izwe	ibi/iwe	uwe	awi

On a list of 100 common items, Kuteb comes out with about 40-45 that are similar to Jukun words, and about 75 that are similar to Yukuben words. Kpan, Icen, and Jukun are more likely to have 75 similar words among them.

Despite this unity, there is also an important difference among the above languages. Kuteb and Yukuben have retained prefixes on the nouns (ku-, uu-, kii-etc.) whereas all the other languages have lost these prefixes, and some have added suffixes (for example the –a on Jukun **kuna** (chicken) and **sona** (moon); compare **mba-kun** ‘chicken’ and **ishaen** ‘moon’ in Kuteb). This suggests to language historians that Kuteb and Yukuben have stayed in one place whereas the other languages have spread out. All this, however, is highly speculative, and needs to be correlated with evidence from archeology, comparative folklore and religion, as well as oral tradition.

1.2.2 Culture and Religion

The following notes derive from interviews with a Kúkwén from Lissam and many others over a period of a decade or more. Particular credit is due to C. A. Iyabah and the late Apwende O. Muri as well to Mr. Saddi Mgbe, for his book *Know the Story of Kutebs*.

The major day-to-day religious activity involved various ‘cults’ (**apkín**) which required sacrifices and rituals of various kinds. Through these acts, people, domestic animals, and farms were believed to be productive, and protected from natural disaster and human interference (**kisī**). But the highest religious authority was the Kúkwén Rikwen, as shown by the fact when these other rituals fail, the Kúkwén is consulted to find out what went wrong.

A few remarks about the Kúkwén Rikwen are in order. Long ago, each clan had its own mountain (**rikwen**), and each mountain has a priest, called ‘**kúkwén rikwen**’ with a shrine on the mountain. The kúkwén rikwen was the major authority on religious ritual. He made special sacrifices twice a year on the mountaintop, once for the planting of crops and again for the harvest. Men, women and children attended these ceremonies, and no one was allowed even to clear the ground for farming until this important ceremony was performed. The Kúkwén also leads special ceremonies when there is a plague or a drought. He was also involved in the installation of a chief.

Being a holy person, the **kúkwén rikwen** was subject to a long list of taboos (Mgbe cites 30), such as not eating out of a manufactured dish or a multi-colored container, not eating uncooked food, not finishing the food or drink he is served, not drinking plain water, never saying he is hungry, and never staying overnight in a large town like Takum. He rarely bathes, will not touch a stranger, will not cross a river by boat unless it is absolutely necessary, and then he will face the back of the boat. He will have only a small farm as people are supposed to bring farm produce to him.

The **kúkwén rikwen** is striking in appearance. He always wears a dark indigo blue robe and baggy blue hat, and a string of blue beads around his neck. In the case of drought, he spreads his blue robe out on his roof to induce the rain to come. Although most Kúkwén are married, he is seen as the ‘wife’ of the mountain (**rikwen**).

The death of a **kúkwén** is a major event. When it happens, junior **kúkwéns** called **acwo** or **ayijwo** come and bury him, as his body is holy, and dire consequences will follow if ordinary people desecrate the body by touching it. In fact, if possible, they are kept from knowing it by being told the **kúkwén** has a headache. The body

is wrapped in a mat and taken through a hole broken into the wall, rather than through the door. Kúkwéns from other clans come to conduct burial rites, accompanied by plenty of meat from sheep, goats and dogs, and lubricated generously with guinea corn beer. When the Kúkwén's wife finally announces, with a death wail, that her husband is dead, the whole village goes into mourning, and any animal wild or domestic, that approaches the gravesite will be killed.

After the institution of the **Kúkwén rikwen**, the next important religious functionary is the masquerade (**ikyí**, or **ici**, in Lissam and Lumbu). Each year in each village, well-to-do persons sponsor the coming-out of a masquerade feast. The **ikyí** festivities are associated with ancestor veneration. Around March or April, one or more masquerades known as **ikyí amūnn** (**ikyí** of the heaps) come out to ensure the productivity of the fields. Each masquerade is decorated with a skirt of fresh yellow palm leaves and head-gear of various types (sack-cloth is prominent, as well as a variety of beautifully carved masks). Pieces of metal are attached to the legs to make noise. The elders of each town dress up the masquerades in secret places well away from the community ('at the farm'—**ufáng**), and create songs to sing when they appear. These songs are generally songs of praise or abuse to prominent people in the community.

Although the identity of the masquerades is supposed to be a secret, most are identifiable by their voices and /or their bare feet. The name '**Ikyisinde**' (**Ikyí** is person) conveys the fact that people really know who the masquerade. Woe betide any woman or child who comes too close, however, especially when the masquerade is on the way from the **ufáng** ('farm') where he is dressed up. The masquerades and their escorts carry whips that are readily put to use; others beat bells (**ikyongkóng**) and drums to warn villagers of their coming. The **ikyí** typically dance for six days and on the seventh day everyone except adult women feasts on the meat of as many goats as the sponsor is able to provide. Women who accidentally break the rules must pay with a white cock and a roll of tobacco. If they try to keep their knowledge secret, when sickness comes around, a seer will eventually trace the cause to one of these trespasses involving **ikyí**. Masquerades also come out in November and December to pray with the elders for the old farms to be revitalized for the next season.

Farm productivity in traditional society depends not only on the prayers of the **ikyí**, but also on a variety of 'cults', some local and some imported. Two of these are **Andakwe** and **Rikam**. They involve preparing bundles containing various potent objects and substances, which are then tied to trees on the perimeter of the farm. These are believed to cause trespassers swollen limbs, ulcerated sores, and headaches. Payment of a fine to the owner of the farm usually causes the malady to go away, if the 'fetish' was well-prepared.

Three types of marriage were practiced in earlier times. The first was ‘sister exchange’ (**kufen**). If a man wanted to marry into another family, he would offer one of his sisters to that family in exchange. In the other marriage arrangement (**mba awen**) usually involves a man seeking a second wife. He arranges with a family that he will marry the next female child they have. When the baby girl is born, the man brings palm oil, beads, and wine as gifts, and continues to help the family until the girl grows up, at which time he pays seven goats. Then, on a certain evening, the man and his friends officiously ‘kidnap’ the girl, while the parents and others shout ‘she’s too young’ (Ū **kō-wū bē**.) and they kidnappers respond, ‘She’s mature (Ū **kō pú-wū**). At the groom’s house a celebration is then held for three or four days.

In the third type of marriage, a man arranges for his son to marry the daughter of one of his friends, when their children grew up. This used to be a normal practice, and it often worked well, but apparently allowed for the possibility that either of the young people had the right to break the engagement if they didn’t like the intended spouse. These practices have been largely superceded, of course, by various practices imported from the West. In particular, a young man selects his own prospective bride, and then asks his father or an uncle to approach the girl’s parents for approval. Gifts are presented, and eventually a bride-price is settled on.

In the ‘levirate,’ when a man dies, his brother marries the widow, and all the children belong to him. While this was supposed to ensure the welfare of the widow and her children, it was easily abused when the deceased was wealthier than his brothers, and could bring suffering to the widow and her children. According to Mgbe, however (1973:35) a widow can refuse to marry her late husband’s brother and live instead in her husband’s compound together with her children.

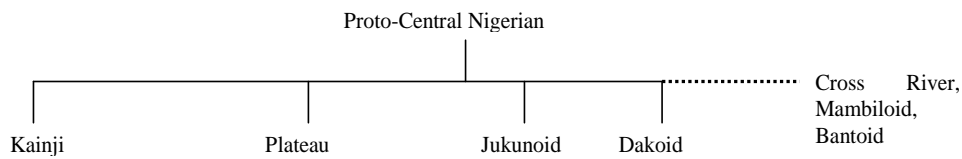
1.3 Linguistic Classification

Kuteb is classified as part of Niger-Congo, a phylum that embraces possibly 360 million speakers (Williamson & Blench 2000). Within that, it is a member of the East Benue-Congo group of languages, which includes languages stretching all the way from Kainji in western Nigeria through the Jos Plateau and Taraba areas, plus most of the Cross-River languages and Bantu, which stretches right across to East and Southern Africa. That very large group itself comprises seven groups, one of which has been called ‘Jukunoid’ and has somewhere around 20 members. According to Shimizu (1980b), who has done most of the work on this up to the present, Kuteb is closest in its vocabulary to Yukuben (‘Oohum’), and both form a branch parallel to ‘Central Jukunoid’ comprising Icen (Itxwyen), Kpan, and six

other languages, including Jukun proper. The confirmation and refinement of these early proposals remains an opportunity for continuing research.

Figure 1 shows the groups comprising the Central Nigerian languages and their broader relation to other East Benue-Congo languages.

Figure 1. Central Nigerian languages: proposed classification



Source: Blench (in press)

1.4 Dialects and Orthography

Dialects in Kuteb correspond roughly to the ten clans, rather than to geographical areas. This reflects an initial period of mutual isolation (Mgbe notes that each clan was assigned to a hill) during which various geographical dialects developed, followed more recently by a time in which people moved around, either due to Chamba attacks (so Mgbe) or in their quest for more farmland, sometimes to places adjacent to other transplanted groups (e.g. ‘Lissam Sambo/Atape,’ ‘Kpambo Puri,’ and ‘Jenuwa Kogi’ just south of the Gamana River). A thorough dialect study needs yet to be done incorporating phonological, morphological, and syntactic variation. It may also be observed that the Likam and Akente clans, resident in Takum town, are not accounted for here. At this point, on the basis of prominent consonantal variations and lexical items the following rough dialect clustering may be observed:⁶

- Bika-Kpambai (locally, ‘Abyika, Atsaenskun’)
- Lissam-Lumbu (locally, ‘Askaen, Arumbu’)
- Jenuwa-Fikyu-Kpambo (locally, ‘Arubur, Atsaensi, Aticwo’)
- Rufun (Local name displacing the old ‘Kunabe’)

⁶ I use the ‘foreign’ names for the Kuteb clans and villages here, as they are more likely to be on maps.

The most prominent consonantal variations are as follows:

	Std. Orthog.	Bika	Kpa- mbai	Lis- sam	Lu- mbu	Ru- fun	Jen- uwa	Fi- kyu	Kpa- mbo
1	jw/zhw			d ^v				□ ^v	
2	j/zh			d				□	
3	pk			px		fk		pk/px	
4	tk			tx		sk		tk/tx	
5	ky		ky	t				ky	
6	b/w	w			b				w
7	nz/njw	nd	n ^v	nz			n ^v		
8	bz/by/vy	b ^y	b	b ^y /v ^y *			z ^w /dz ^w		v
9	py/tsw	p ^y	p	p ^y				ts ^w	

Examples:

1.	kujwó / kuzhwó	‘arm’	jwūnn / zhwūnn	‘throw’
2.	ují / uzhí	‘rope’	jāen	‘shine’
3.	apxín / afkín	‘cults’	ipxam / ifkam	‘mud’
4.	txí / skí	‘different’	txir / skir	‘mock’
5.	kyang / cang	‘walk’	ikying / icing	‘housefly’
6.	ubur / uwur	‘hat’	ubunn / uwunn	‘drum,’ ‘pool’
7.	unzu / unju / nzhwu	‘mouth’	kínzō / únjō / ínchwō	‘one’
8.	ibyē / ivyē / izwē	‘animal’	byag / vyag / zwag	‘hot’
9.	upyí / utswí	‘slave’	pyír / tswír	‘refuse’

The most noticeable difference in conversation, apart from varying degrees of noun-prefix loss, is that in the Arubur-Atswaen (Jenuwa-Kpambai-Fikyu) area (generally speaking, the Southwest) /zw, dzw/ corresponds to the /vy/by/ of Lissam, Lumbu and Bika. E.g., Lissam ibyē, ‘meat,’ byāg, ‘hot’ (in some subsections of Lissam pronounced as ivyē and vyāg) are in the southwestern dialects have izwē, or idzwē, and zwāg, or dzwāg. The voiceless counterpart of these follows a similar pattern, as in the words upyí ‘slave,’ pyír ‘refuse,’ which come out utswí and tswír in Arubur-Atswaen. Also, in some words Lissam tends to

use /c/ [tʃ] where all the other dialects have /ky/.⁷ In terms of grammar, Lissam/Lumbu seems to be more conservative than the others, as seen in the preservation of full prefixes on the nouns and the limited elision of the future marker. There are lexical variations. A typical example is the use of *urwán* for ‘friend’ in Lissam-Lumbu area and *sákī* elsewhere. Lissam and Lumbu use *ahán* for ‘thus’; others use *mên* or *nuŋ mên*. Kpambai uses *abi* for the second person singular pronoun.

As this work is describing specifically Lissam-Lumbu speech, the orthography used in this work differs slightly from the standard orthography used for the recently published New Testament. First, for simplicity, I use /ŋ/ for the phonetic [ŋ] in all positions, whereas in the standard orthography it is written as ‘ng’ in word-final position, as ‘ngh’ at the beginning of syllables and ‘n’ in the cluster /ŋ^w/ (‘nw’).

This orthography	Standard	Example	
c [tʃ]	ky	ice / ikye	‘border’
ŋ [ŋ]	ng	acáng/ akyáng	‘songs’
ng [ŋg]	ngg	ingog/ inggog	‘pig’

Because of the inelegance of writing both tone and nasalization over vowels, I am adopting the convention of the standard orthography by representing nasalized vowels as vowel plus ‘n.’ This, however, necessitates writing the final alveolar nasal /n/ as ‘nn’ here, as will be further elaborated in the next chapter.

Mention should be made here of C.A. Iyabah’s proposed orthography in the 1950s which differed from the above by using ‘ea’ instead of ‘ae’ for the low front vowel and using final –p and –k rather than –b and –g. Printed material occasionally appears with these alternatives, which are so similar to the standard as to be insignificant for readers.

Regarding dialects, it is worth noting that Mgbe considers Yukuben/Oohum (‘Ayigiben’) as one of the clans of Kuteb, subdividing it into two groups: Achillo with its hamlets and the Bete-Fete-Lufu-Kapya group. It is clear that Yukuben is closely related to Kuteb, but due to lack of data the affinity of these various groups to Kuteb and to each other is far from clear. It is hoped that current research into Yukuben will shed light on these languages/dialects.

1.5 Theoretical Approach

The descriptive apparatus used in this work has deliberately been kept to a minimum in an effort to make the data accessible to scholars from a variety of theoretical traditions. Whatever theory may be evident in the chapters that follow is

⁷ Note, however, that all dialects use /c/ in words like *cī* ‘eat’ and *acikunn* ‘beans.’

eclectic. As a translator I am confronted daily with evidence of some sort of 'universal grammar' and though I assume the general framework of a 'deep structure' which is somehow close to this universal grammar and a 'surface structure' which represents the phonetics of speech, the derivation of surface forms from underlying ones, useful as it may be, does not occupy a prominent place here.

This work will deal with two kinds of meaning: lexical meaning (the meanings of individual words) and structural, or grammatical, meaning. That is, the syntactic patterns in which words are arranged themselves encode certain meanings (sometimes more than one, yielding ambiguity). Along with this, or perhaps part and parcel with it, is the idea that syntactic structures are used for discourse and pragmatic purposes.⁸

Thus, in the polarization between formal and functional linguistics, I lean towards the functional side. While formal systems which propose highly abstract forms may in fact 'explain' the data, producing the desired surface structure, I feel they have a tendency to leave behind the realities of cognitive processing—the anchor of the psychologically real. Thus, the reader will find frequent reference to 'function' in this book, not just to 'structure' in and of itself. Grammar, in my opinion, is not autonomous from semantics. One may, for example, derive a serial verb construction from two or three underlying sentences. But why should a language conjoin sentences in that way? What is the function of such conjunctions in discourse? There always seem to be further questions to ask. Granted, a linguistic theory should predict what can be said in a language, but explanation in terms of pragmatics, discourse, and/or diachronic processes is as important to the full description of language structures as the characterization of the relationship between any purported deep structure and the surface.

Functionalism has many dimensions. Not only do I see pieces and configurations of linguistic material as having a function in larger pieces or configurations or levels of language and discourse, I also see language itself as a functional system in society. In this regard, the writings of Dik, Van Valin, Givón, Bybee, Langacker,

⁸ Garcia (1979) would go so far as to state that syntax per se does not even exist. I prefer Givón's more modest position, that there is a 'structural' level called syntax, but in order to explain it 'one must make reference...to a number of SUBSTANTIVE explanatory parameters of language. Thus, syntax is 'a DEPENDENT, functionally motivated entity whose properties reflect...the properties of the explanatory parameters that motivate its rise' (Givón, 1979:82).

Lakoff, Johnson, and others who have reacted to the excessive formalism of Chomskyan linguistics have shaped my thinking considerably.⁹

One final and crucial aspect of my view is that the categories and constructions that one proposes for a language must be based on distinctions that come from the language itself rather than being imposed on the language from outside, on the basis of some other language.

1.6 History of Research and Writing in Kuteb

The first record of Kuteb is found in Koelle's *Polyglotta Africana* (1854), which contains a 200-item wordlist apparently from the Atsaen or Rubur dialect.

Dr. William Welmers may be credited with doing the first serious (though very brief) analysis of the phonology and morphology of Kuteb in 1948 during a short visit. Following that, some important practical work was done by Mr. Christopher Akintse Iyaba and Mr. Othniel Apwende Muri, who, with the help of Miss Margaret Dykstra of the Sudan United Mission, wrote down indigenous Christian songs which were printed in a Jukun-Kuteb songbook *Litafi a Soo Zo* around 1960. These two gentlemen also worked with Dr. Peter Ladefoged around that time, the results of the research appearing in *A Phonetic Study of West African Languages* (1964). Dr. Joseph Greenberg took a Kuteb wordlist in the language around that time for his own comparative studies and of course Kuteb is included in his monumental study *Languages of Africa* in 1966. The *Atlas Linguistic du Cameroun* documents the speech of a few farm settlements of Kuteb across the border in Cameroun.

Mr. K. Shimizu arrived in the late 1960s; his dissertation (*Comparative Jukunoid*), appearing first in mimeographed form in 1971 and then in published form in 1980, contains many references to Kuteb that I will comment on in the course of the present work. Comparisons will also be made with his *Grammar of Jukun*.

My own study began in 1966 and has continued off and on to the present. My wife and I learned to speak the language and helped the local church produce reading primers, collections of folk tales, a songbook (*Akyang Unju Kuteb*), and a translation of the New Testament (*Irá Tínyang*). Key people in the research and writing, besides those mentioned above, were Mr. Alexander Solomon, Mr. Naboth Jatau, Mrs. Abigail Shamaki, Mr. Ayuba Akawu, Rev. Yakubu Danbeki, Mr. Obadiah Abomci, Rev. Zachariah Andepam, Rev. Daniel Shaenpam, and Mr. Ikun Habu Andenyang, to mention just a few to whom I am most grateful.

⁹ See Givón (1979) Ch. 2-4 for an exposition of grammar as a by-product of deeper communicative principles.

1.7 Sources of Data

In the body of the book, the Kuteb sentences are, in most cases, taken from tape-recorded texts produced by the people just mentioned. In a number of cases, the tape-recorded examples were used to elicit other sentences that I recorded in notebooks. In some cases I have constructed other sentences modeled on the above. Mr. Obadiah Abomci has been very helpful in checking the naturalness of all the sentences in this work. A few examples have been culled from the primer series (Apurá), the stories of which were created by Mrs. Abigail Shamaki and others.

Mention must also be made of the usefulness of a concordance of my first database produced through the Linguistic Information Retrieval Project of the Summer Institute of Linguistics and the University of Oklahoma Research Institute. A second database, compiled recently, was used to produce a word-list, which has proved useful in finding examples. Finally, a rough dictionary, prepared by Mr. Ayuba Akawu and myself with input from Ikun Andenyang, has provided some illustrative material. Mr. Andenyang's own privately circulated writings on Kuteb have been a useful source of examples.

Images of the Kuteb area in the 1970s**Photo 1. Tipping a roof in Askaen****Photo 2. New roof in Askaen****Photo 3. Apura literacy class**



Photo 4. Carrying a grindstone



Photo 5. Harvesting rice



Photo 6. Flute-players



CHAPTER TWO. PHONOLOGY PART I: SEGMENTS**2.1 Introduction: vowels, consonants, tones**

The 26 simple consonant and 13 vowel phonemes in Kuteb¹⁰ may be seen at a glance in the following diagrams arranged by point and manner of articulation (for consonants) and by tongue position (for vowels):

Consonants:

p	t	ts	c	k
mb	nd	nz	nj	ŋg
b	d*		j	g

f	s	sh	h
v*	z*		

m	n	ny	ŋ
	r	l*	
w		y	

Vowels:¹¹

i	ĩ	i	u	ũ
e	ẽ		o	õ
æ	æ□		a	ã

Tones¹²

low // (unmarked)

mid / ˘ / (macron)

high / ◻ / (acute)

falling / ˆ /

rising / ˇ /

The segments above are taken to be single sounds even when represented by digraphs (e.g. mb, sh). The starred forms are found in common loan-words and names, or, in the case of /v/ and /z/, subdialectal variations. If some consonant clusters were to be taken as units, the inventory would be much bigger at this level (see diagram at 3.0 below).

The above inventory of sounds is typical of Niger-Congo Languages in general (see Heine and Nurse 2000:31-33, 36-38) and of Central Nigerian languages in particular (see Bendor-Samuel et al 1989:366-369). The only thing unusual may be the salience of the prenasalized voiced stops (mb, nd, nj, ŋg). These stops are found throughout Taraban languages, although in several languages their occurrence is restricted to preceding oral vowels, with the simple nasal stops /m, n, ñ, ŋ/ occurring

¹⁰ The phonology here represents the Lissam-Lumbu dialect, although other dialects are discussed.

¹¹ From here on nasal vowels will be written as V + n; /æ/ will be written as /æ/.

¹² Tones are described in detail in Chapter 3.

Three

before nasalized vowels. In Kuteb the prenasalized variety are more prevalent than the simple voiced stops (b, d, g). Closely related Kapyra has both the simple voiced stops and the prenasalized ones in contrast, as does Oohum ('Yukuben'). I do not record double stops (kp, gb, mgb) for Lissam dialect, although Shimizu does (kp). Most of the Taraba languages have the double stops, including Kapyra and Oohum, although in Oohum, Shimizu (1980a: 66) analyzes them as labialized velars (kw, gw, ngw).

This analysis substantially follows Welmers (1948). Departures from his work and that of Shimizu (1980) are noted in passing and discussed in the section on analytical problems. Words marked <H, <J, and <E are borrowings from Hausa, Jukun, and English.

2.2 Vowels

The vowels contrast as to the height of the tongue (high, mid, low) and as to its position forward or back in the mouth (front, central, back). They are further divided into oral and nasal vowels on the basis of the position of the velic. I deal first with the oral vowels and then the nasal vowels.

2.2.1 Oral Vowels

	front	central	back
high	i	ɨ	u
mid	e		o
low	ae		a

Examples of oral vowels in words:

uī	'spear'	kitɨb	'cotton'	kitú	'dish'
tē	'dismiss'			tō	'cook'
tae	'lead'			tā	'shoot'

The vowels /i, a, u/ are found initially in words; their nasal counterparts and the vowels /e/, /ae/, and /o/ are not found initially except perhaps in ideophones, interjections, and some borrowed names. The central vowel /ɨ/ is found only word-medially, and its phonemic status is uncertain (see discussion below).

/i/ [i] is a close high front unrounded vowel. /si/ ‘to be’ /uti/ ‘spear’ It varies to [ɨ] (mid front lax vowel) in closed syllables. /isim/ ‘back’ and before prenasalized stops /indo/ ‘vulture’

/e/ [e] is a mid front unrounded vowel which varies to [ɨ] in closed syllables. /ceb/ ‘step on’ /ise/ ‘dance’

/æ/ [æ] is a close low front unrounded vowel. /tae/ ‘to lead,’ /pae/ ‘to pay,’ /kicáeb/ ‘sickness’

/a/ [a] is an open low central vowel which ranges to [ɨ] or [ɨ] in closed syllables. /atā/ ‘weapons,’ /utab/ ‘open space’

/o/ [o] is a mid back rounded vowel which varies to [ɨ] in closed syllables. /ukó/ ‘duiker,’ /tō/ ‘cook’ /utōb/ ‘heart’

/u/ [u] is a high back rounded vowel which laxes to [ɨ] in closed syllables and before prenasalized stops. /urú/ ‘game’ /kūb/ ‘bite’ /unde/ ‘person’ /umbae/ ‘child’

/ɨ/ [ɨ] is a high central unrounded vowel appearing in certain words, especially where there is neutralization of /u/ and /i/ and as a result of reduplication (to be discussed below). /kutāb/ ‘cotton’ /ipɨŋ/ ‘gun’ /irɨm/ ‘grass’

The major problem in the analysis of oral vowels is the phonemic status of the central vowel /ɨ/. It occurs in closed syllables, in some noun prefixes, and with verbal reduplication. These contexts will be discussed in turn.

2.2.1.1 The Phonemic Status of [ɨ]

The limited distribution of /ɨ/ (word-medial only) makes it impossible to find clear cases of contrast between /ɨ/ and other vowels. Even the cases we have of contrast in closed syllables are not very convincing. Not all speakers have a contrast, for example, between /kisim/ ‘knife’ and /isim/ ‘back.’ Some alternate freely between /kisim/ and /kisim/ while others alternate between /kisim/ and /kisim/. The word for ‘grass,’ similarly, exhibits variation in some speakers between /irim/ and /irim/ or between /irim/ and /irum/. It would seem likely that /ɨ/ could be taken as a conditioned variant of /u/ and/or /i/ in closed syllables. It is impossible to determine, however, whether /ɨ/ in most words has come from /u/ or from /i/. I have therefore posited the phoneme /ɨ/ for those cases. Further research is needed. Comparative studies may well yield some useful evidence. Most of the other Jukunoid languages have a central non-low vowel (Shimizu 1980a:66-83). In the official orthography, words with /ɨ/ are written with either /u/ or /i/.

2.2.1.2 The vowel /i/ in noun prefixes

What has been said about stems above could also be said for some noun prefixes. The prefixes **ku-**, **ki-**, and **ri-** exist. On the basis of symmetry one might expect to find **ru-** as well. It occurs phonetically, as in the following:

ruwén ~ riwén	‘nose’	rubwen ~ ribwen	‘open’
rukwen ~ rikwen	‘mountain’	ruwáe ~ riwáe	‘tallness’

Shimizu (1980a:138) rightly observes that the [ru] and [rɪ] varieties are conditioned variants of /ri-/ before [+lab] consonants.¹³ This distribution hypothesis was reinforced by some unexpected evidence in the form of the local version of ‘spoonerizing.’ Speakers transposed the syllables of [rɪwén] and [rɪkwen] to become: [wenrɪ] and [kwenrɪ].¹⁴

2.2.1.3 The central vowel /i/ in reduplicated syllables

Verbs are often reduplicated to emphasize ongoing action (see Chapter 9). If the verb vowel is back, or the initial consonant labialized, the vowel of the copied form will be a form of /u/, as in these examples, given with the root form in parentheses:

kūkōb	(<kōb)	‘sewing’	kúkwáb	(<kwáb)	‘trying’
būbōm	(<bōm)	‘be strong’	pupwen	(<pwen)	‘counting’
tūtō	(<tō)	‘cooking’	cwúcwé	(<cwé)	‘agreeing’

If the verb vowel is front, the vowel of the copied element will normally be a form of /i/, as in:

fīfēr (<fēr)	‘close by’	bībyāg (<byāg)	‘be hot’
pipinn (<pinn)	‘fly’	cícáeb (<cáeb)	‘be sick’

One may note from **kúkwén** ‘priest’ and **bībyāg** ‘be hot’ that in the formation of the reduplication the labialization and palatalization takes precedence over the stem vowel.

¹³ He also observes, in the same place, that /ki-/ is similarly influenced /kindop/ is pronounced /kundop/ by some speakers. Note in this case that the conditioning element is not the following consonant but the following back vowel (/o/).

¹⁴ A surprise in this research was the word [rɪwáe] ‘tallness,’ which came out [waerú]. This may be a demonstration of how language change takes place. Shimizu (1980:132-176) has demonstrated that historically only the ri- prefix existed. But in the mind of the spoonerizer, the vowel is associated with /u/.

When the verb vowel is low (or, one could argue, central, as [a] appears to be phonetically more central than back), the vowel in the copy element is raised and centralized to [ɨ]. Examples:

kākāb (>kāb)	‘think’	kika (>ka)	‘go’
sisa (>sa)	‘take’	fɪfab (>fab)	‘sour’
cicang (>cang)	‘walk’	tɨtam (>tam)	‘hide’

Since one can predict the quality of the vowels in the reduplicated portion of these words, it would seem reasonable to interpret them as allophones of the stem vowel in each case. However, if we have already posited a phoneme /ɨ/ to account for the indeterminacy of the vowels in certain nouns, why should the segments in question above not be considered cases of /ɨ/? Once again, it is impossible to choose in a non-arbitrary way whether a given instance of [ɨ] is a member of the phoneme /ɨ/ or of the phoneme /a/.

Finally, one may note the phrases **kika bē** ‘not yet’ and **kāŋ kɨŋ** ‘very necessary’ that obligatorily use the central vowel. They possibly originate from reduplicated forms, although the high-low tone pattern of **kika** argues against that in the case of **kika bē**.

2.2.2 Nasal Vowels

Like their oral counterparts, the nasal vowels contrast in terms of tongue height and position forward or backward in the mouth. One may note from the following chart that the oral vowel /ɨ/ has no nasal counterpart. (Phonetically, of course, a centralized vowel, like other vowels, adjacent to a nasal consonant may become nasalized, as in /ɨpɨŋ/ ‘gun,’ /ayɨ si kāŋkɨŋ/ ‘It is very necessary’). We write the nasalized vowels as vowel plus ‘n.’

	front	back
high	in [ɨ]	un [ũ]
mid	en [ɛ]	on [õ]
low	aen [æ̃]	an [ã]

2.2.2.1 Contrasts between oral and nasal vowels:

Front vowels: i/in, e/en, ae/aen

kupī	‘point’	pīn	(ideophone)
uwé	‘face’	wēn	‘kill’
bāe	‘stick to’	bāen	‘marry’

Back vowels: u/un, o/on, a/an

ukú	‘mushroom’	kutúkūn	‘tree’
ukó	‘red duiker’	kákon	‘stalk’
ka	‘go’	kan	‘divide’

2.2.2.2 Contrasts among nasal vowels:

íkīn	‘some’	kún	‘creep’
ikén	‘thing’	kákon	‘stalk’
rikaen	‘poison’	kan	‘divide’

2.2.2.3 Description of the Nasal Vowels:

/in/ [ĩ] is the nasalized counterpart of /i/. /**pīn**/ (ideophone) /**fīn**/ ‘clean’

/en/ [ẽ] is the nasalized counterpart of /e/. /**ikén**/ ‘thing,’ /**shēn**/ ‘spread out to dry’

/aen/ [æ̃] is the nasalized counterpart of /ae/ and quite common. /**ifáen**/ ‘antelope,’ /**ukwáen**/ ‘cough’

/an/ [ã] is the nasalized counterpart of /a/. /**kan**/ ‘divide,’ /**kúkān**/ ‘land crab’

/on/ [õ] is the nasalized counterpart of /o/ and quite rare. /**kákon**/ ‘stalk,’ /**Sózon**/ a name

/un/ [ũ] is the nasalized counterpart of /u/, occurring in a few words. /**arun**/ ‘robe,’ /**rikun**/ ‘group farming’

2.2.2.4 Discussion of Nasal Vowels

The nasal vowels are less frequent than the oral vowels. Among the nasal vowels, the vowels /in/, /un/, and /aen/ are fairly common and /on/ very rare. Lissam speakers tend to use /in/ in words where others use /en/ (**ishin** ‘horn,’ **kitsin** ‘bracelet’). Also, some Lissam speakers use /oŋ/ where others use /on/ ([õ]).

Nasal vowels occur only in CV syllables. Thus there is no contrast between CVC and CVnC.

Oral vowels in syllables ending with nasal consonants are inevitably influenced by the nasality of the final consonant, and in some cases it is difficult to tell if a word

ends in a nasal vowel or in a vowel plus a nasal consonant (e.g., **rubūn** [rubū] or **rubūŋ** ‘spring’). This suggests that the final nasals are a probable source for the nasal vowels in the language, and that assimilation and final -n loss are still going on. Shimizu (1980a:59) attributes the large number of nasal vowels in Jukun to the reduction of final nasal consonants (see also Gerhardt 1989:368) in Proto-Jukunoid.

2.2.3 Vowel Length

A few words in the language raise the question of whether vowel length is contrastive. They are **iyéé** ‘no,’ **kadée**, part of riddle introduction formula, **ahóó** ‘What do I care?!’ The vowel of the last example is usually pronounced with a glottal stop at the end [**ahóó**◌], making it even more unusual. I take these words to be ideophonic (like **skuuuu** ‘slowly’) and not part of the normal contrastive feature system of the phonology. Ideophones will be discussed Chapter Four (Word Classes).

2.2.4 Vowel Assimilation and Elision

In Kuteb, as in many other languages,¹⁵ vowel elision is very complex, resisting any neat and simple description. What follows is a rough account. A great deal of careful research, preferably with instruments, is still needed.

Vowel elision may occur whenever the vowels of two words come together. When that happens, one of the vowels assimilates (partially or completely) to the other. Then at a faster rate, the sequence is shortened. In some cases, the one vowel, in effect, replaces the other. In other cases the surface vowel has features of both of the component vowels. After a statement about crucial factors in elision, we consider vowel elision in various environments.

2.2.4.1 Factors in Vowel Elision

Three general factors determine the final quality of the resulting vowel:

1. Whether elision occurs at all depends on the speed of utterance. The faster the speech, the more likelihood of elision occurring.
2. The matter of elision is related to the deterioration of the noun prefix system in Kuteb. Whether this deterioration causes changes in the elision patterns or is the result of elision patterns is an open question. It is common for the prefixes *u-* and *i-* to be dropped or weakened medially in sentences. The result is that the initial vowel of a noun will often change to match that of the previous vowel, and/or be

¹⁵ See Bamgbose (1989); Sonaiya (1989); Akinlabi, Akiubiyi, and Oyebade (1987); Badejo (1988?), Adiva (1989:45) for a few discussions of vowel assimilation and elision.

lost completely. In verb-object sequences this pattern contrasts with that of some Kwa languages, where the vowel of the verb is typically displaced by the vowel of the following noun.

3. Some vowels are stronger than others. The vowel /a/, for example, tends to dominate others, whether it occurs first or second in the sequence. The vowel /i/, on the other hand, is weaker than others and is often dominated. The vowels /u/ and /i/ often become approximants (w/y) if initial in a VV sequence.

4. The tones of both vowels are retained in moderate speech. In faster speech the two tones are realized on a single syllable. At higher speeds the tones get levelled out (the higher of the two tones typically taking precedence over the lower) and influenced by the tones of adjacent syllables.

In the following I give a rough approximation of what happens as the pace of speech moves from slow (on the left) to fast (on the right). It will be seen that in addition to the vowel assimilation the subject pronouns lose their vowel prefixes in fast speech, and in the case of first person singular the pronoun is reduced from **ame** to **m**.

2.2.4.2 Elision in verb-object sequences

1) Awū tā ukúr [awūtāakú^t] [ūtākú^t]
3s shoot crocodile
He shot a crocodile.

2) Ame kú tō icír [mkútōici^t] [mkútōoci^t] [mkútōci^t]
1s CONT cook yams
I am cooking yams.

3) Atī tu aser. [tītwise^t] no change in faster speech
1p find money
We found money.

2.2.4.3 Elision in the Associative Construction

uwá Alí [uwáalí] [uwâlí]	‘Ali s wife’
uwá Iliya [uwáílíya] [uwálíya]	‘Iliya s wife’
uwá ukwe [uwáūkwe] [uwáākwe] [uwákwe]	‘chief’s wife’
atú Alí [atwáalí] [atwâlí]	‘Ali’s dishes’
atú Iliya [atwílíya] [atúlíya]	‘Iliya’s dishes’

atú ukwe [atúukwe] [atúūkwe] [atúkwe]	‘chief’s dishes’
utī Alí [utyāalí] [utyâlí] [utâlí]	‘Ali’s spear’
utī Iliya [utīlíya] [utílíya]	‘Iliya’s spear’
utī ukwe [utyûkwe] [utûkwe] [utúkwe]	‘chief’s spear’
keké Alí [kekyáalí] [kekyâlí] [kekâlí]	‘Ali’s bicycle’
keké Iliya [kekélíya] [kikélíya]	‘Iliya’s bicycle’
keké ukwe [kekyéukwe] [kekyûkwe]	‘chief’s bicycle’
ukó Alí [ukóalí] [ukwâlí]	‘Ali’s duiker’
ukó Iliya [ukwílíya]	‘Iliya’s duiker’
ukó ukwe [ukóukwe] [ukókwe]	‘chief’s duiker’
rikae Alí [rikalí] ¹⁶	‘Ali’s axe’
rikae Iliya [rikálíya]	‘Iliya’s axe’
rikae ukwe [rikáakwe]	‘chief’s axe’

2.2.4.4 Other Environments for Elision

Other environments in which vowels are elided involve the conditional and future markers, verb-focus pronouns¹⁷ before and after object pronouns, and relative markers. Examples of each are shown below.

Pronoun with conditional:

In conditional sentences, the vowel of the pronoun is lost to the vowel of the conditional particle /a/. Note also that the prefix of the pronoun is also dropped in rapid speech.

4) **Ame a bá, m ú nda fu kóbo. [mabá...]**

1s if come 1s FUT give 2s kobo

If I come, I’ll give you a kobo.

5) **Afu a bá... [faabá] ~[fabá]**

2s if come

If you come ...

¹⁶ An associative high tone link between these nouns influences the tonal pattern in various ways that are not discussed here. See Chapter Three, Section 5.1.3 and Chapter Six (Section 4).

¹⁷ Verb-focus pronouns are discussed in Chapter Nine Section 3.3.7.

6) **Anī a bá...** [nāabá] ~ [nâbá] ~ [nabá]
2p if come...
If you (pl) come...

7) **Atī a bá...** [tāabá] ~ [tâbá]¹⁸ [tabá]
1p if come
If we come...

8) **Awū a bá...** [wāabá] ~ [awâbá] [wabá]
3s if come
If he/she comes...

Pronoun with future

The future marker /ú/ often, but not always, loses its vowel quality to the vowel of the preceding noun or pronoun.

9) **Atī ú bá.** [tí bá] ~ [tú bá]
1p FUT come
We will come.

10) **Ā ú bá.** [āá bá] [á bá]
3p FUT come.
They will come.

11) **Awū ú bá.** [awūúbá] ~ [wúbá]
3s fut come
He/she will come.

¹⁸ The falling tone mark here represents a mid-to-low glide. For more on tone, see Chapter Three.

12) **Ukwe ú bá. [ukweúbá] ~[ukwébá]**

chief fut come

Chief will come.

Note in 9) that /i/ and /u/ are of equal strength, resulting in free variation between [atí] and [atú]. In 10) /a/ displaces /u/; [ú bá] is unacceptable.

Verb-focus pronoun followed by object pronoun:¹⁹

As in the case of the conditionals, the final vowel of the verb-focus pronoun is always lost when it precedes an object pronoun. This may be due to the inherent strength of the vowel /a/ in the object pronoun.

13) **Afu tu-fu ame bē. [afutǔfamebē]**

2s find-2s 1s NEG

You (sg) did not find me.

14) **Ame tu pú-m abā. [ametupúmabā]²⁰**

1s find PRF-1s 3p

I have found them.

15) **Atī tu pú-tī anī. [atītupútani]**

1p find PRF-1p 2p

We have found you (pl).

Relativizer plus pronoun subject.

16) **Ā kú shā tī ā bá iké. [ākúshātāābáiké]**

3p IMP want REL 3p come here

They want to come here.

Compare:

¹⁹ The object pronoun here is actually the independent form. See Chapter Four 3.3 for discussion.

²⁰ Alternatively one could posit two variants of the pronouns: me and m, fu and f, wu and w, etc. However, it is intuitively more satisfying to keep the underlying morphemes the same and account for the variation with phonological or morphological rules.

- 17) **Ande tī ā kú bá...** [andetaākúbá]
 people REL 3p CONT come
 ‘the people who are coming’

The long vowel [āā] formed from /tīā/ gets shortened in fast speech. This occurs so regularly in Lissam speech that for many speakers /tā/ has replaced /tī/ as the relative marker, not only for the plural but also for the singular. The following, for example, has been recorded:

- 18) **unde tā kú bá**
 person REL IMP come
 ‘the person who is coming’

Conjunction tí ‘and’ plus Noun

Again, the prefix /a-/ in a noun following the conjunction /tí/ dominates the vowel of the noun.

- aróm tí andá** [arómtândá] ‘men and women’
andá tí anyīsu [andátânyīsū] ‘women and children’

Reciprocal Construction

The reciprocal marker /átsō/ occurs after verbs but can occur also with the verbal extension /té/. In fact the combination is taken as one word /tétsō/ by many speakers. This appears to be one case where the vowel /a/ has given way to another vowel.

- 19) **Atī rū té átsō ~ atī rū tétsō**
 1p go with RECIP
 We went together.

Compare:

- 20) **Abā ndeya átsō wánde.**
 3p help RECIP work
 They helped each other work.

2.3 Consonants

The simple consonants are described minimally here in groups, with words showing the basic feature contrasts. Discussion follows each group in turn.

2.3.1 Simple Stops

The stops contrast primarily as to voicing, prenasalization, and point of articulation.

	labial	alveolar	velar
voiceless	p	t	k
voiced prenasal	mb	nd	ŋg
voiced	b	d*	g*

The phoneme /g/ occurs only word finally, where it could be equally taken as a variant of /k/, and in clusters after /b/ and /nd/, where it could be taken as a variant of /k/ (or /x/ as in Welmers's analysis). Taking this with the absence of /d/ in indigenous words, one could conclude that the regular set of voiced stops is prenasalized and that the non-prenasalized voiced stop /b/ is an anomaly in the native Kuteb inventory. However as /d/ is found in many loan-words, it seems best to consider the stops as consisting of the three sets in three positions. The double stops (kp, gb) found in many Central Nigerian languages are not found in Lissam dialect, but they are in other dialects. The following words illustrate the regular contrasts in intervocalic position:

	labial		alveolar		velar
upae	'penalty'	kutón	'ear'	ukab	'stream'
umbae	'child'	indo	'vulture'	ingog	'pig'
ibae	'sack'	ludó	a game	girib	(ideophone)

/p/ is a voiceless bilabial stop, slightly aspirated. /pū/ 'take' /upwen/ 'rain'

/b/ is a voiced bilabial stop. In final position and before a pause it is usually unreleased and sometimes slightly voiced. In word-final position before another word beginning with a vowel, /b/ is a voiced fricative [β]. /kukūb/ bone²¹ /ribú/ 'arrow' /báe/ 'write'

/mb/ is a voiced prenasalized bilabial stop. /mbé/ 'receive' /mbāg/ 'pierce'

/t/ is a voiceless alveolar stop, slightly aspirated. /kutón/ 'ear' /kitú/ 'calabash'

/d/ is a voiced alveolar stop typically found in loan words and names. /adá/ 'cutlass' (<H) /ádan/ 'slowly' (<J) /dúbú/ 'thousand' (<H) /Addi/ a person's name

/nd/ is a voiced alveolar prenasalized stop. /nde/ 'do' /undá/ 'woman'

²¹ The labial consonant occurring finally is taken to be a variety of /b/ although the voiced/voicing distinction is neutralized finally. See discussion below. The velar stop (k/g) is interpreted similarly.

Three

/k/ is a voiceless velar stop, slightly aspirated. In clusters after stops /k/ is [x].
/ukab/ ‘stream’ /apkín/ ‘spirits’

/g/ is a voiced velar stop. In word-final position before pause /g/ is unreleased [k̚].
In clusters after /mb/ and /nd/ it is a fricative [ɣ] and before other words beginning
with a vowel it is usually voiced, with the closure reduced to a fricative ([ɣ]).
/pégi/ ‘plot of land’ /gugá/ ‘pail’ /ndgob/ ‘weave’ /kumbgáb/ ‘whip’

/ng/ is a prenasalized voiced velar stop. /ingar/ ‘grinding of teeth’ /Tonga/ a town
/ingog/ ‘pig’ /fangó/ ‘road’

It is appropriate to ask whether the prenasalized stops really constitute single units or might not rather be treated as clusters. I treat them as units for two reasons. First, when they occur across syllable boundaries, the nasal component stays with the stop. This is evident from the large number of single syllable verbs beginning with prenasalized stops, such as **nde** ‘do’ and **mbé** ‘receive.’ It also comes out clearly in the local version of ‘spoonerizing’ in which **rimbwē** ‘sore’ is inverted to become **mbweri** and **rinda** ‘gift’ comes out **ndari**. Furthermore, these stops may be labialized and palatalized, in which case treating them as CC would entail creating three-member clusters, which otherwise do not occur in the language. Further evidence for the unitary interpretation of /mb nd ng/ comes from hummed versions of the above verbs, which invariably have one pulse and a single tone. A double pulse or different tone would indicate syllabic nasals, which do occur in Kuteb, but contrast with the prenasalized stops.

Although labio-velar double stops occur in other dialects, I do not have non-suspect examples in my own data from Lissam. Shimizu (1980a:70) cites /kp/ as a ‘cluster’ in Lissam speech, but no example is given, and I have not recorded this.²² The neighboring Bika and Aticwo dialects use /kp/ in words such as /kpāg/ ‘hard’ (=Lissam /bōm/) and /gb/ as in /gbākyā/ (**kpākyā**?), a town, and /gbem/ ‘gun’ (/kpēm/? Lissam /ipīŋ/)²³. Note also the prenasalized double stop in Bika dialect: /mgbā/ ‘maize’ (/mbapwa/ in Lissam).

A glottal stop occurs in the word **m’m** ‘no’ but is not listed here in the inventory of sounds as it is not considered part of the contrastive feature system. It seems to be a modified loan word from Hausa **a’a**.

Returning to the regular elements of the system, one may note considerable variation in the surface form of /b/ and /g/ in final position. According to Shimizu

²² It is quite possible that the labiovelars are spoken in a subdialect that I am unaware of. They definitely need to be considered part of the broader Kuteb phonological inventory.

²³ It is difficult to hear the difference between /kp/ and /gb/ in these forms, which perhaps supports my earlier hypothesis that the voiceless and prenasalized stops form the major opposition in the stop series.

(1980a:65), in all of the Jukunoid languages but Jiru, the distinction between voiced and voiceless stops in final position is lost. In Kuteb, before pause and homorganic consonants, the stops are usually unreleased. Before another word beginning with a vowel they are weakened and/or voiced, depending on the point of articulation: [b]~[β], [ř], and [g]~[ŋ]. This explains the variety of spellings of the name ‘Kuteb’ as ‘Kutep’ or ‘Kutev’ found in the literature.

The final bilabial could be considered a variety of either /p/ or /b/. On the grounds of consistency with the alveolar and velar stops (see below), I take the final labial stop as an allophone of /b/. Incidentally, this also conforms to the current ‘standard’ spelling.

The final alveolar stop could be assigned to /t /or to /r/, but since it surfaces as a flap before a following vowel, it is assigned to /r/. Historical evidence suggests that at least some final alveolar consonants were at one time /t/: cf. PBC *ukúť ‘crocodile’ (Kuteb: **ukúr**).

In the case of the final velar stop, I have taken it to be an allophone of /g/ rather than /k/. The choice between k/g in final position (as with p/b and t/r) seems to me arbitrary. One either has to write a rule devoicing the final stops before pause (or before a following voiceless consonant), or write a rule voicing them when a vowel follows in another word.

	Before pause or utterance-final	Before vowel in next word
ritú^k	Ayī si ritúg a? it be market ?	[ayīsiritúŋâ] Is it a market?
rikū^p	Ayī si rikūb a? it be bone ?	? [ayīsirikūβâ] Is it a bone?
ukú^t	Ayī si ukúr a ? it be crocodile?	? [ayīsiukúřâ] Is it a crocodile?

2.3.2 Affricated Stops

The affricates, in Welmers (1948), include only the palatal series. I have added a dental-alveolar series /ts/ and /nz/ ([ndz]~[nz]) for reasons to be discussed below. Note the absence of /dz/ here. That, together with *d and *g, reinforces the hypothesis that the voiceless and prenasalized stops are the ‘normal’ native series.

	dental/alveolar	palatal
voiceless	ts	c [tʃ]
voiced prenasal	nz [ndz]~[nz]	nj [ndʃ]~[nʃ]
voiced		j [dʃ] ~ [ʃ]

/ts/ [ts] is a voiceless alveolar affricated stop with the tongue tip placed close to the lower teeth. /**kítsinn**/ ‘jealousy’ /**tsēn**/ ‘white’

/nz/ [ndz]~[nz] is a voiced prenasalized counterpart of /ts/ above, with very light stop action. /**kínzō**/ ‘one’ /**unzu**/ ‘mouth’ /**nzáa**/ ‘Is it so?’

Welmers treats the sequence /ts/ as two units in order to avoid setting up a series of alveolar affricates on the basis of one case (ts). However, he concedes (1948:5 and endnote p. 22) that the word /**tswa**/ ‘(rain) fall’ argues against his analysis. I therefore take /**tswa**/ to be an argument in favor of /ts/ as a unit.²⁴ Welmers apparently considered /ndz~nz/ a subphonemic variant of /nj/ (though ndz/nz and nj contrast in my data). I take /nz/ ([ndz]) as a unit for symmetry with /ts/ and because a cluster /n+/z/ (or /nd/ + /z/) would require setting up a native phoneme /z/ which I have recorded only in loan words. Shimizu (1980:68) lists /dz/ but not /ts/, which may be an accidental omission, as he does have an example of /ts/ (/tsi/ to stand). I have not seen an example of /dz/ in his data. In any case, we have here evidence of a voiceless and voiced prenasalized set (**ts** and **ndz**) as being the basic contrast.²⁵ /**unzu**/ ‘mouth,’ /**nzáa**/ a question

/c/ [tʃ] is a voiceless palato-alveolar affricated stop. /**acīm**/ ‘medicine’ /**tīcī**/ ‘old’ /**acíkunn**/ ‘beans’

/nj/ [ndʃ]~[nʃ] is a voiced prenasalized palato-alveolar affricated stop with very slight stop action. /nji/ ‘bury’ /**ínjā**/ ‘brother’

As in the case of the non-nasalized form /j/ [dʃ]~[ʃ], the stop is so light as to suggest that /nj/ could as well be considered part of a fricative series with **sh** (i.e. /**sh zh nzh**/).

/j/ [dʃ]~[ʃ] is a voiced palato-alveolar affricate or fricative. The stop, if any, is extremely light, and both varieties are acceptable in medial position. In the speech of some speakers, there is complementary distribution, the affricate form appearing only word-initially, the fricative alternating with the affricate within a word, i.e., /**ují**/ [udʃí]~[uʃí] ‘rope,’ /**jaŋ**/ [dʃaŋ] ‘deep,’ **jīm**[dʃīm] ‘cool,’ **ajīb** [adʃīb]~[aʃīb] ‘dirt’

²⁴ Another analysis again would be to open the canon of syllable types to three-member sequences. This is will be discussed below in Section 3.

²⁵ One could shift /z/ [z]~[dz] out of the affricate set into the fricatives by making [z]~[dz] and [nz]~[ndz] a part of the series /s – z – nz/, but nothing would be gained by doing so.

Examples:

alveolar		palatal	
itsē	‘father’	ice	‘boundary’
unzu	‘mouth’	ínjā	‘sprout’
		jāeb	‘buy’

Shimizu (1980:69) takes the palatal series (my c, j, nj, sh) as /ty/, /dy/, /ndy/, /sy/.²⁶ Welmers (1948) considered this possibility but avoided it, as we shall see below, and instead created the palatal series /c, j, nj, sh/. Further discussion follows in section 3.0.

Another point regarding the prenasals, raised both by Welmers and Shimizu with respect to Jukunoid languages, is the complementary distribution of nasal and prenasal stops. In the other Jukunoid languages, the nasal stops (m, n, ŋ) occur only before nasal vowels and mb, nd, ŋg before oral vowels. In Kuteb, although it is true that the prenasals do not occur with nasalized vowels, the nasals occur before both oral and nasal vowels. Examples:

umbae	‘child’	maerikōm	‘twenty’
undá	‘woman’	rináe	‘anger’
fangó	‘road’	úŋā	‘jaw’

2.3.3 Fricatives

The fricatives contrast by point of articulation as shown in the diagram below. (Starred items are (sub-) dialectal and/or borrowed).

	labial	alveolar	palatal	glottal
voiceless	f	s	sh	h
voiced		v*	z*	

Examples of fricatives in some common words:

labial		alveolar		palatal		glottal
ufu	‘door’	ise	‘outside’	ishi	‘broom’	ahán ‘thus’
vóno	‘mattress’	Izé	(a name)	shā	‘want’	

/f/ is a voiceless labiodental fricative. /ifaen/ ‘two’ /fob/ ‘reach’ /fkēn/ ‘flay’

²⁶ He also includes /zy/. It would be good to know if he has evidence for a contrast between /zy/ [□] and /dy/ [d□]. I have not seen any.

Three

/v/ is a voiced labiodental fricative, found in loan words and names. /**vim**/ ‘cleaning powder’ The phoneme /v/ does occur in one subdialect of Lissam speech (used by Welmers) as a variant of /b/ but only with palatalization: /vy/. (See Section 3.0 on consonant clusters.)

/s/ is a voiceless alveolar fricative. /**sa**/ ‘take’ /**usú**/ ‘load’

/z/ is a voiced alveolar fricative found in loan words and names. /**Izé**/ a name /**zóbe**/ ‘ring’ (<H) In a subdialect of Lissam /z/ alternates with /j/ [ɟ] in **uzāen** ~ **ujāen** ‘tongue.’ Shimizu lists /z/ as a phoneme and I take this to be the Ambukom subdialect. In any case, in his analysis the sound [ɟ] is interpreted as /zy/ so /z/ is required on theoretical grounds.

/sh/ [ʃ] is a voiceless palato-alveolar fricative. /**shā**/ ‘seek,’ /**ishab**/ ‘fat, lard’ Shimizu (1980a:69) takes /sh/ as a cluster of /s/ and /y/, which possibly reflects the historical facts (see discussion below) but has not caught on as a way of writing this sound. In clusters with /w/ (phonetically a labiodental ^f) the phoneme /sh/ is pronounced with the tongue-tip down [ʃ]. (See discussion on clusters, below.)

/h/ is a voiceless glottal fricative occurring in a few words: /**ahán**/ ‘thus,’ /**ahóo**/ ‘what do I care?’ /**hén**/ (exclamation) and numerous loan words from Hausa and English. The phoneme /h/ is sometimes substituted for /s/ in the word /**sa**/ ‘take’ or ‘put,’ apparently for stylistic reasons. The other dialects do not have /h/ at all apart from loan words.

On the phonetic level, velar fricatives occur, the voiceless [x] as an allophone of /k/ and the voiced [ɣ] as an allophone of /g/. /**tkí**/ [txí] ‘different’ /**ndgōb**/ [ndɣōb] ‘weave’. Welmers, because he did not admit /g/, decided to posit /x/ for both of these sounds, with two phonetic variants [x] and [ɣ]. It could be asked here why /nz/ in **unzu** (mouth) is not included in a set with /s/ and /z/. The answer is that there is variation of /nz/ between [ndz] and [nz], and we have taken the stopped variant as primary, making it a voiced counterpart of /ts/.

2.3.4 Resonants

The nasals contrast according to point of articulation. As a set they contrast with the prenasalized stops discussed above:

	labial	alveolar	palatal	velar
nasal	m	n	ny [ɲ]	ŋ ²⁷
prenasal	mb	nd	nj	ng [ŋg]

Examples:

²⁷ In the standard orthography /ŋ/ is written as ‘ngh’ initially and ‘ng’ finally.

labial		alveolar		palatal		velar	
myae	‘measure’	náe	‘lie down’	rinyī	‘name’	ribāŋ	‘wound’
mūnn	‘fill’	nam	‘be soft’	nyaŋ	‘good’	ŋāe irá	‘shout’

/m/ is a voiced bilabial nasal. /**mūm**/ ‘dig,’ /**mae ifaen**/ ‘forty,’ /**kimú**/ ‘potto’

/n/ is a voiced alveolar nasal. /**núŋ**/ ‘see’ /**num**/ ‘be tired’/ **kūnn**²⁸ ‘call’

/ny/ [ŋ] is a voiced alveopalatal nasal (see discussion on clusters below). /**nyam**/ ‘suck,’ /**rinyí**/ ‘name’

/ŋ/ is a voiced velar nasal occurring initially and finally in syllables. /**ŋáŋ**/ ‘tightly’ /**Kiŋám**/ (a name) /**asaŋ**/ ‘years’

2.3.5 Flap and Lateral

The only native phoneme here is /r/ [ř], a voiced alveolar flap. In final position before pause it is often unreleased, raising the prospect of considering it a variant of /t/. However, we have decided to include it with /r/ as in most cases it is realized as [ř]. /rū/ ‘go’ /irá/ ‘word’ /ukúr/ [ukúř] ‘crocodile’ The voiced lateral /l/ occurs in many borrowings, as in:

léma	‘umbrella’	lemó	‘citrus’
Larabá	‘a name’	Balá	a name
ludó	a game	Alí	a name

2.3.6 Approximants

/w/ is a voiced bilabial approximant. /**uwé**/ ‘face’ /**wōm**/ ‘dry’

In clusters following labial and velar consonants /w/ is a quick bilabial release of the consonant. In clusters with the palatal consonants (/c, j, sh, nj/) /w/ represents a voiced or voiceless labiodental release (cf. Section 3.0).

/y/ is a voiced palatal approximant. After labial stops (in clusters) it is often slightly sibilant. /**uyí**/ ‘needle,’ /**upyí**/ [upyí]~[up□í] ‘slave’ /**ibyē**/ [ibyē]~[ib□ē] ‘meat/animal’

2.3.7 Distribution of Consonants

The consonants are distributed as follows:

Initial in CV: p t s t c k b (d) (g) mb nd nj ŋg f s sh h v z nz m n ŋ r l

Final in C(C)VC: b r g m n* ŋ*²⁹

²⁸ Double /nn/ represents the consonant /n/ in contrast to the single /n/ which represents nasalization.

Three

In CC clusters:

Cw	pw		cw	kw	Cy	py
	mbw		njw	ngw		mby
	bw		jw			
	fw	?sw	shw			
	mw			ɲw		
Ck	pk	tk				
	fk	sk				
Cg	mbg	ndg				

The above consonant clusters represent those occurring within single syllables. When syllables come together in words, many more combinations occur. As the definition of ‘word’ has yet to be worked out for Kuteb, it is impossible to make a definitive list of the consonant combinations that can occur across syllable boundaries. Theoretically, any combination of a syllable-final consonant (**m, n, ɲ, b, r, g**) followed by syllable-initial consonant (all of them) is possible. It is likely, however, that some reduction may occur, as in **ushitong** ‘soup-stirrer’ (from **shir** + **utoŋ**) in which the /r/ has been dropped out. Again, when final /nn/ [n]stems precede stems beginning with /n/, the double /nn+/n/ is reduced, as in **munaē** (munn-náē) ‘be abundant,’ **munji** (munn-nji) ‘forget.’

The following are a sample:

ms	rikamsínn	‘spider’	mpk	rikampkú	‘bat’
rf	rikwerfe	‘corner’	rb	riturbyínn	‘beetle’
nnt	rifunntā	‘total’	gt	iwágtíye	‘fishing’
nnts	rikunntsig	‘catfish’	mr	Amamrá	(a name)

2.4 Consonant Clusters³⁰

Sorting out the complex obstruents in Kuteb has been a serious challenge to those who have attempted it. Ladefoged (1964:31) has recorded the phonetics of this series; it is left for us to sort out the phonemics. It may be useful to present the full range of complex consonantal sounds in rough phonetic terms first, before presenting our analysis.

²⁹ Final /n/ and /ɲ/ are written ‘nn’ and ‘ng’ in the standard orthography.

³⁰ General discussions of consonant clusters in African languages are given in Welmers 1973:53-67 and in Heine and Nurse 2000:144-152.

Labial			Dental	Alveolar	Palatal	Post-Pal. ³¹	Velar
pw	py	px	ts	tx	t□	t□f	kw
mbw	mby	mb□	ndz	nd□	nd□	nd□v	ŋgw
bw	by	b□			d□	d□v	(gw)
fw	fy	fx		sk		□f	
m ^w	my	(m□)			nay		ŋw

Note that the labial series has three kinds of modification, the alveolar series only has velarization, and the velar series only has labialization. It would be possible to take the dental series as showing a fourth type of modification if [ts] and [ndz] were seen as /t/ and /nd/ with alveolarization. The scheme above has gaps for three kinds of modification in the alveopalatal area (e.g. tw, ty, and tx), and at least two modifications in the velar area (e.g. kw, ky), so it is appropriate to ask if there could be an underlying system that would be more regular. Variations in other dialects may offer clues. For example, note that where other dialects have palatalized velar (ky), Lissam has [t□].

Let us examine how the alveolars and palatals have been approached by Welmers, Shimizu, and myself before going into more detail on each of the series.

Welmers (1948:3) considered taking the palatals (t□, nd□, d□, □) as /ty/, /ndy/, /dy/, /sy/³² but rejected the idea because it complicated the analysis of the postpalatal series. In his scheme the labials have three modifications: labial, palatal, and velar. The alveolar consonants have only velarization, the palatals have labialization, and the velars have only labialization, as follows:

2.4.1 Welmers (1948): Complex Obstruents

dental	alveolar	palatal	post-pal.	velar
ts	tx	c[t□]	cw[t□f]	kw
z [dz]		j [d□]~[□]	jw [d□v]~[□v]	
nz [ndz]	ndx [ndy]	nj [nd□]~[n□]	njw [nd□v]	ŋgw
			shw [□f]	

Looking again at the rough phonetics, we see that the stops may be labialized, palatalized, labio-dentalized, and velarized.

³¹ In addition to being post-palatal, these sounds are made with the tongue tip down.

³² As he did in analyzing Jukun (Welmers 1968:6).

Three

Labial			Dental	Alveolar	Palatal	Post-Palatal	Velar
pw	py	px	ts	tx	t□	t□f	kw
mbw	mby	mb□	ndz	nd	nd□	nd□v	ŋgw
bw	by	b□			b□	d□v	(gw)

Shimizu (1980a:69) observed that the neat triple modification pattern of the labials could nicely be repeated in the alveopalatals by rearranging our alveolar, palatal, and post-palatal columns. The palatal series (t□, nd□, d□, □, □) he analyzed as /ty dy sy zy/ just as he initially did with Jukun (1980b:9) following Welmers (1968:6). The postpalatals he then took as /tw ndw dw sw/. The result is a neat set that exactly parallels the labials as follows:

2.4.2 Complex alveopalatal consonants as per Shimizu (1980)

with labialization	with palatalization	with velarization
tw [t□f]	ty [t□]	tk [tx]
ndw [nd□v]	ndy [nd□]	ndg [nd□]
dw [d□v]	dy [d□]	
sw [□f]	sy [□]	sk

The simplicity and symmetry of this pattern make it attractive. It eliminates the need for the phonemes *c*, *j*, and *nj* in the language. One might add that palatalization in the labial series is often sibilant (*py* = [p□] for example), so that writing [t□] as /ty/ is not implausible. An argument against it is that it requires setting up /d/ in the language, which otherwise does not occur as a native consonant. Since he posits /dz/ as a separate phoneme, he could have avoided setting up /d/ by considering [d□] as /dzy/ and [d□v] as /dzw/. Indeed, the phones [d□] and [d□v] are so weakly stopped that one could reasonably take them as representing /zh/ and /nzh/ in the fricative series with /sh/.

Practically speaking, a major drawback of Shimizu's analysis is the fact that the labiodentalized clusters are, as Ladefoged observes, pronounced with the tongue tip down, making it difficult for native speakers to accept them as related to /t, nd s/, etc. It is worth noting that in analyzing the Jukun palatals, Shimizu (1980b:9), abandoned the analysis of [t□] [d□] [□] as /ty/, /dy/, /sy/ on the grounds that it does not really improve the efficiency of the system and that it is impractical for writers. He uses /c/, /j/, /sh/ instead, following Welmers.

2.4.3 An alternative analysis of complex consonants

Neat as it is, Shimizu's system is not as regular as it could be. The velar series only has one modification (labialization) and the dental series /ts, ndz/ is anomalous.

One further possibility for regularizing the system is to consider the [t□] [d□] [nd□] set as underlying palatalized velars. This is suggested by the fact that in many words where Lissam has /c/ [t□], other dialects have /ky/ [t□], e.g. **kyaŋ** [t□aŋ] ‘walk’ **ikyɪŋ**/ [it□iŋ] ‘housefly.’ Then, if we reanalyze the dental series (ts, ndz), we could have the following:

alveopalatal/coronal			velar	
ty [ts]	tw [t□f]	tk [tx]	ky [t□]	kw
ndy [ndz]	ndw [nd□v]	ndg [nd□]	ngy [nd□]	ngw
dy [dz]	dw [d□v]	(dg) [d□]	gy [d□]	(gw)

This would reduce the points of articulation to three (labial, coronal, velar) and give the labial series and the coronal series three modifications each, and the velar series two.

This may well represent the historical development of some of the sounds, but is not ‘phonetic’ enough for the contemporary reader. The people I worked with refused to accept the palatals as ‘ty ndy dy sy.’³³ This may have been due to the adoption of Welmers’ analysis by those he worked with, or more probably because of the influence of Hausa and English, which have the phonemes /c/, /j/ and /sh/. In any case, Welmers’ analysis was accepted early on for a practical alphabet, and it continues to be the standard, with slight modification, to the present.

I have added /nz/ [nz]~[ndz] (in the fricative series) from the word **unzu** ‘mouth’ Shimizu notes /dz/ but not /ts/ (1980:68); Welmers has [ts] but not [dz].

A minor departure from Welmers may be noted in my analysis of the velar in clusters: Welmers created a phoneme /x/ with voiced and voiceless allophones, whereas I, having given /g/ phonemic status, assign the velarization [x] to /k/ and [□] to /g/. E.g. /**ndgob**/ [nd□o^p] ‘weave’ (Welmers: ndxop), /**kutkom**/ [kutxom] ‘stone.’

2.4.4 Modified Consonants and Syllable Structure

The basic issue to be addressed at this point is how the components of these sounds are related to each other in the structure of the syllable, which is formulated in terms of consonants and vowels.

In considering cases like [p^we], [p^ye], etc., three possibilities exist: The sounds represent either:

1. CVV E.g. /pue, pie/,

³³ Bika’s **nju** (ndyu?) for ‘mouth’ and **njo** (ndyo?) ‘one’ may shed light on the protoforms of these sounds.

2. CCV E. g. /pwe, pye/, or
3. C^wV or C^yV E.g. p^we or p^ye (where C^w and C^y represent unit phonemes).

Setting aside cases of /C^k/ and /C^g/ for the moment, I consider arguments for each possibility in turn, using /kwa/ as a case in point.

2.4.4.1 C + approximant as a vowel sequence (CVV)

Against this position is the fact that within words there is no pattern of VV sequences such as /eo/, /oe/, /ei/, or /ea/ on which to base our case. Borrowings from Hausa such as **kai!** (expression of surprise) cannot be the basis for deciding syllable patterns.³⁴

2.4.4.2 C + approximant as a modified Single Consonant (C^w, C^y)

While interpreting all cases of C^w and C^y as single units has the advantage of reducing the variety of syllable structures to CV and V, it has other problems. First, it multiplies the number of consonants in the language. Secondly, one then needs to explain, for example, why the newly created complex consonants (e.g. ky, py) only occur initially in syllables and never finally, as do their simpler counterparts /k/ and /p/.

Shimizu (1980:8-9), analyzing Jukun, which also has a large number of modified consonants, first took them as clusters on the grounds that it reduces the number of consonants (26 versus 48). However, it seems that he later abandoned this approach in favor of simplifying the syllable structure to CV. The same could be done for Kuteb, but at our present stage of analysis, I see no disadvantage in positing the syllable structures as CV and CCV, etc., rather than trying to maintain a CV pattern as Shimizu does. It seems to be a matter of trading off complexity at one level of structure for complexity at another.

An exception to this is the alveo-palatal series ([tʃ] [tʃ] [dʃ] [ndʃ]) where both the internal unity of the sounds and external (distribution) factors favor a unit analysis: /sh c j nj / rather than a cluster analysis (sy, ty, dy, ndy) as we argued above.

2.4.4.3 C + Semivowel as Consonant Cluster (CC)

One may observe, first of all, that the phonemes /w/ and /y/ occur independently of clusters, as in /iwág/ 'fish' and /ayēb/ 'millet.' Furthermore, when a word with a

³⁴ In most cases where words with /ai/ are borrowed from Hausa, the /ai/ is interpreted as /e/ as in /kose/ 'beancakes' (>H: **kosai**). Indeed, such reinterpretation is even happening within Hausa itself.

final consonant precedes a word beginning with semivowel, the two adjoining consonants form a cluster identical to those we observe at the beginnings of words:

- 21) **Ukwab ye wū. [ukwabyewū]**
 monkey catch 3s
 Monkey caught him/it.

Compare:

- 22) **Akwā byīr yī. [akwābyīryī]**
 Akwa gather it/them
 Akwa gathered it/them.

- 23) **Ukwab wēn wū. [ukwabwēwū]**
 monkey killed 3s
 Monkey killed him/it.

Compare:

- 24) **Akwa bwe. [ákwābwe]**
 Akwa keep silent
 Akwa kept silent.

Taking the above observations together with the fact that there is in the language (according to the present analysis) a pattern of two-member clusters set by the sequences /pk/, /tk/, /mbg/, /ndg/, /sk/, and /fk/, one may conclude that there are some grounds for taking /kwa/, /pya/, etc. as CCV.

Let us now review the modified consonants in order by point of articulation, with examples.

2.4.5 Modified Labials

Aside from the question of the prenasalized stops discussed earlier (Section 2.1.1), the modified bilabials constitute no analytical problem, and I illustrate them here before moving on to the alveolars and velars.

Cy	py	upyí	‘slave’	pyē	‘slash’
	mby	mbye	‘build’	ámbyī	‘water’
	by	ibyē	‘meat’	byāg	‘be hot’
	my	myae	‘measure’	umyím	‘cliff’
Cw	pw	upwen	‘rain’	pwan	‘worn’
	bw	bwe tág	‘be quiet’	bwe	‘still, keeping on’
	mbw	rimbwe	‘swelling’		
	mw	mwa	‘how many’		
	fw	fwēr	‘to shake’	ifwen	‘chaff’
Ck	pk	mbapkú	‘dog’	apkín	‘spirits’
	mby	kumbgáb	‘whip’	umbga	‘sheath’

One point of interest here is how the dialects vary with regard to the palatalized stops. The labial stop + /y/ in Lissam is equivalent to a dental stop + /w/ in Fikyu and Jenuwa. That is:

Lissam	Fikyu, Jenuwa		
py	tsw	pyí /tswí	‘refuse’
by	dzw	byīr/dzwīr	‘black’
mby	ndzw	imbyí/indzwí	‘bottom’

For purposes of historical reconstruction it may be useful also to know that some subgroups of Lissam use /vy/ instead of /by/ in words like **byīr** (‘black’) and that the Fikyu forms vary freely between stop and fricative articulation (i.e. between *dzw* and *zw*). If we take the phonetic form of some of these cases, e.g. [v□īr] and [zwīr], it will be seen that a kind of double metathesis of manner and point of articulation takes place. A similar alternation occurs between /tx/ of Lissam and /sk/ of Arufun in words like **txī** versus **skī** ‘dip’ and **txūn asú** versus **skūn asú** ‘insult.’

2.4.6 Modified Alveolars:

Having interpreted [ts] and [ndz] as single (though complex) dental-alveolar consonants rather than as sequences, we are left with a velarized set:³⁵

³⁵ Welmers cites **uswam** (baboon) as an example containing /sw/. I record this word as **usom**. It is quite possible that other dialects have labialized alveopalatals (e.g. **twēr** ‘pierce’ in Fikyu, Kpambai).

kutkom	‘stone’	kutxín	‘penis’
ndgob	‘weave’	undga	‘euphorbia’
txí	‘be different’	txír	‘mock’

2.4.7 Modified Velars

We have already observed that Lissam and Lumbu are the only Kuteb dialects that do not have palatalized velars. Where all other dialects use /ky/ Lissam speakers use /c/ [tʃ]. This leaves us with labialization as the only modification in the velar series:

kwáb	‘try’	rikwen	‘mountain’	ákwām	‘bananas’
ukwe	‘chief’	kwār	‘strike’	kwāen	‘cough’
ngwā	‘drink’ ³⁶	gwámna	‘governor’	riñwāen	‘salt’

2.4.8 The possibility of CCC Clusters

A couple of words have raised the issue of whether there may be three-member clusters in Kuteb. One of these is (upwen) **tswa** ‘(rain) fell.’ As we have considered /ts/ a single unit, /tsw/ is then a CC cluster. In an analysis which takes /ts/ as two consonants, one would have to create a CCCV syllable structure to accommodate /tswa/.

Another case is /**afkyáng**/ ‘ruhn palm.’ As some speakers alternate between /afkáng/ and /**afkyáng**/ we have chosen to consider it either a case of CC or an anomaly. More research is needed.

2.5 The Standard Orthography

The standard Kuteb orthography, as used in the literacy primer series **Apurá** and the **New Testament (Irá Tɪnyang)**, differs from the above in the following ways:

1. Word-final consonant /ŋ/ is written as ‘ng,’ e.g., **asung** ‘hair.’
2. Word-initial /ŋ/ with labialization is written ‘nw’ as in **nwúnn** [ŋwún] ‘get up,’ **nwáŋrū** [ŋwáŋrū] ‘to save.’
3. Syllable-initial /ŋ/ without modification (rare) is written ‘ngh,’ e.g., **ngháe irá** ‘shout’ e.g., **Anghamrá** (a name), **Kinghám** (a name).

³⁶ In addition to /ky/ for /c/ in a number of words, Bika speakers use /ngy/ for /ŋj/ in the word /íngyā/ ‘brother’ (Lissam: ínjā). Add to that the pronunciation of /inji/ as /indgi/ in Atsaen (Kpambai); and you have an intriguing historical puzzle. However, there do seem to be some ordinary /ŋj/ words in Atsaen as well.

4. Syllable-initial /ŋg/ without modification (rare) is written ‘ngg,’ e.g. **fanggó** ‘road.’ (Note also Bika **yíngga** ‘today’ (=Lissam **yáka**, Fikyu **nyíka**).

CHAPTER THREE. PHONOLOGY PART II: PROSODY

3.1 Introduction³⁷

Sound organization above the level of consonants and vowels ('segments') is called 'prosody' or 'supra-segmental phonology.' In this chapter I deal with syllables, tone and some phonological processes involving changes in tone. As is the case in most (if not all) languages (Lyons 1981:97), the syllable plays an important role in Kuteb phonology as a structure in which sequential constraints on consonants can be formulated. Furthermore, although I only touch on it here, syllables constitute the components of larger phonological units. Tonal change rules ('sandhi'), presumably operating within the domains of these larger units, are most effectively formulated in terms of syllables rather than segments.

3.2 Tone Patterns

Although in terms of the world's tone languages, Kuteb is a 'register tone' language, as opposed to 'contour tone' languages, it will be seen that the limited tonal patterns on words make it a little like a contour tone language. Since tone is a major component in the definition of 'syllable' in Kuteb, let us deal with that first.

3.2.1 Tone Levels

Welmers (1973:105) observes that there are four tones in Kuteb, but that only three actually contrast in lexical items. No four-way contrast can be found among nouns or verbs in isolation. The 'fourth tone,' we shall see, is the result of an 'upstep' rule. We mark the tones here as: low (unmarked), mid (marked with a macron), and high (marked with an acute accent). The relative intervals between these tones are indicated in the following diagram.

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low	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
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Kuteb is ‘lexical,’ that is, it is used to distinguish one word from another. Thus we speak of the word **risū** as having a low and mid tone, and **urú** as having a low and high tone, etc.

It will be seen that each word has its ‘basic’ tone pattern. Tone-sequence rules will operate on these words to create glides, either within words or within phrases. The introduction of non-native vocabulary has introduced new tone patterns, to be described below.

Some examples of minimal or near-minimal contrasts in nouns, where the initial low tone in the prefix provides a frame for comparing the tone of the stems:

low tone versus mid tone

upwen	‘rain’	upwēn	‘bushfowl’
ricwo	‘grindstone’	icwō	‘palm kernels’
ukwab	‘monkey’	ukwāb	‘feast’
rikaen	‘poison’	rikāen	‘trouble’

mid tone versus high tone

iwōg	‘bees’	iwág	‘fish’
kutūnn	‘share’	utúnn	‘intermediary’
acīn	‘medicine’	ucín	‘tail’

low tone versus high tone

ifaen	‘two’	ifáen	‘antelope’
ishaen	‘argument’	isháen	‘month’
rikwen	‘mountain’	rikwén	‘judgment’
iku	‘leprosy’	ikú	‘mushrooms’

Verbs: low tone mid tone high tone

mam	‘create’	mām	‘finish’		
sha	‘braid’	shā	‘want’		
yen	‘cross’	yēn	‘transplant’		
nyaŋ	‘be good’	nyāŋ	‘draw out’	nyáŋ	‘only’
tso	‘plant’	tsō	‘ascend’	tsó	‘show’
bae	‘ignite’	bāe	‘stick to’	báe	‘write’
tur	‘knead’	tūr	‘cut down’	túr	‘push’
caen	‘be full’			cáen	‘be old’
kwen	‘be hard’			kwén	‘learn’
		cwū	‘die’	cwú	‘lie down’
		tōm	‘send’	tóm	‘farm’
		kōb	‘sew’	kób	‘be tall’

In addition to the level tones given above, a few rare cases make it necessary to posit a falling tone and a rising tone:

Falling		Rising	
kínûŋ	‘bird’	kurúkūm	‘toad’
kíkôg	‘chest’	kícě	‘bowl’
imbô	‘chimpanzee’	gbămsa	‘sickle’ (<J)
ipâm	‘pound (money)’	aměnjā	‘brothers’

In these words the duration of the glide is the same as the duration of the level tones in the words given earlier. If not we would suspect that the falling and rising tones are sequences of high-plus-low and low-plus-high tones. More will be said about the falling tone (or ‘down-glides’) later.

There is a high-low-high-falling sequence in a formula introducing riddles (ícàâŋ), but this word may be considered outside the normal inventory of the language, particularly as it also has a double vowel. The sequence runs:

A: ícàŋ!

B: kadée!

A: (Riddle)

3.2.2 Tone Sequences

A word on the distribution of tones in words may be useful later as we study syllable combinations and phonological words. Low tone is the most frequent tone; hence the decision to leave it unmarked in the practical orthography, even though

comparison with related languages might have suggested leaving mid-tone unmarked, as is done in Wukari Jukun. The fact that nouns typically begin with a low-tone prefix accounts for a large number of these low tones. Low tone can be followed by low tone, mid tone, high tone, or falling tone, as in:

ukwe ‘chief’ **risū** ‘head’ **riwén** ‘nose’ **imbô** ‘chimpanzee’

Only a couple of nouns begin on mid tone; they are followed only by mid tone:

yākā ‘daughter’ **tsōwēn** ‘day after tomorrow’

A number of nouns begin with high tone. They can be followed by high tone, mid tone, or low tone, as in:

kákúm ‘horse’ **ákwām** ‘banana’ **máto** ‘car’

The high-low sequence seems to be typical of loan words from Hausa and English (compare **tíca** ‘teacher’ **pégi** ‘plot of land’ **cóci** ‘church’). Rarely, one can find high followed by a high-low glide: **kinûŋ** ‘bird.’

In summary, then, we have the following:

LOW – LOW; LOW-MID; LOW-HIGH; LOW-HIGH-FALLING
 *MID-LOW; (MID-MID); *MID-HIGH; *MID-HIGH-FALLING
 HIGH – LOW; HIGH – MID; HIGH-HIGH; HIGH-FALLING.

3.3 Defining the syllable

I attempt here to characterize what I take to be syllables in Kuteb as fully as I can with my present data, pointing out the various features by which, presumably, people perceive syllables in speech, and the variety of types they display.

3.3.1 The Role of Tone in defining the Syllable

It might be supposed from the examples above that the syllable could be defined solely in terms of tone placement. The word **ikú** ‘mushrooms,’ for example, uses two pitch levels, low and high. **Kúrāŋ** ‘crow’ uses high and mid. On the basis of tone, these words obviously have two syllables each. But where are the syllable boundaries? Is the word for mushrooms **ik-ú** (CV-V) or **i-kú** (V-CV)? And if the tone does not change, as in **kákúm** ‘horse’ one could only conclude that it was one syllable. Clearly, more is needed than just tones. For example, note the tone pattern roughly portrayed in the following string:

1) [atīkutēpkúcáenpwêntíkufkencín]

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 --- --- - --- ---
 a tī ku tēp kú cáen pwên tí ku fxen tī cén
 ‘We Kutebs use stumbling as a means of divination.’

Using tone breaks we can identify at least ten units in this utterance, as shown in the table below. The x’s in the lower line represent possible units.

a tī ku tēp kúcáenpwên tí kufxen tī cén
 x x x x ?????????? x xx? x x

There is an ambiguous stretch (**kúcáenpwên**) marked by ?????? because a single tone covers most of the stretch, sliding to low at the very end, and theoretically we do not know how to break it. In order to parse the ambiguous stretch, one needs to follow canonical segment-sequences to be given below.

If we think in terms of how a person hears phonological units, it is likely that he or she uses a number of features simultaneously: pitch, segment sequences, sonority, and possibly rhythm. I now discuss these in turn, showing how each contributes to a possible definition of syllable for Kuteb.

3.3.2 Rhythmic Patterns and the syllable

While there is some evidence for rhythmic patterns in Kuteb, they do not seem to be distinctive enough to base any rules or categories on. They seem rather to be a corollary of pitch patterns and morphological structure. This is an area that needs further inquiry, particularly with instruments.

3.3.3 Grammatical Structure and Syllable Structure

Morphological and syntactic information also enter into the perception and segmentation of syllables.³⁸ In the case above [kúcáen] can be divided if we know that **kú** is a morpheme meaning ‘incomplete action’ (imperfect aspect). And if we know that **kufken** has a plural **afken**, then we can deduce that there may be a break

³⁸ As early as 1964 K. Pike recognized the role of grammatical structure in perceiving phonological structure, demonstrating that ‘grammar’ is not an autonomous system, as some claimed at a later date. See ‘Grammatical Prerequisites to Phonemic Analysis,’ (Pike, 1964); and Lyons (1981:97).

between /ku/ and /fken/. The sentence above, divided according to grammatical and phonological criteria together, is written:

- 25) **Aṭī Kutēb kú cáen ipwen tí kufxen tī cén.**
 1p Kuteb IMP do divination PREP foot REL stumble

We Kutebs use stumbling as a means of divination.

It is useful to note in passing, however, that the division of a string of sounds into syllables does not necessarily coincide with division by grammatical category (noun, verb, particle, etc.). For example, in the five-syllable sentence

m.núŋ.ma.fu.bē

the third syllable contains the word **m** ‘I’ (a verb-focus pronoun here) and part of the pronoun **afu**. The sentence, divided with grammatical classes in mind, is:

- 26) **m núŋ-m afu bē.**
 I see-I you NEG
 I did not see you.

The first /m/ acts as a syllable in itself (see below); the second /m/ acts as the first segment of a consonant-vowel sequence. This partially accounts for the incongruence between grammatical class and syllable. Another example:

utum [utum] ‘rat’

u tu m [utum] ‘You found me.’

The above are the same syllabically but the first is one morpheme and the second, three. The word for ‘rat’ has a final consonant /m/. The pronoun /m/ which sometimes is syllabic (as in **m kú bá** ‘I am coming’) is resyllabified here as a final consonant.

We now examine the segments and observe how they interact with tone to define more precisely the peaks and boundaries of syllables.

3.3.4 Recurring Consonant-Vowel Sequences

Here I describe the internal structure of Kuteb syllables, and present the restricted set of segment sequences that comprise the canon of syllable shapes in Kuteb.

3.3.4.1 The Syllable Nucleus

As sentence 25) above illustrates, vowels and consonants, in general, alternate rhythmically in the speech string. It may also be observed that in Kuteb there is often a strong (but not 100%) correlation between the number of tone changes and

the number of vowels in a string of speech. This leads us to surmise (following a long tradition in African linguistics) that **vowels** form the nuclei of syllables and are the main carriers of tone. But vowels are not the only carriers of tone. It has long been observed in many languages that nasal consonants may also carry tone and act as syllable nuclei. Thus, in the sentence

- 27) **M kú bá.**
 1s IMP come
 I am coming.

the first phoneme, /m/, carries its own (low) tone and therefore may constitute a syllable, as may **kú** and **bá**, each having a vowel. We have yet to say anything about syllable boundaries.

3.3.4.2 Syllable Boundaries and Canonical Shapes

To determine boundaries we look at units spoken in isolation and analyse their beginnings and ends. For example, one finds that all consonants may occur initially in utterances, and most of them may be followed by /w, k, g, y/ to form utterance-initial clusters. At the end of utterances one finds /m, n, ŋ, b, r, g/. These then must be syllable-final segments. Combinations of this set of final C's plus any consonants but /w, k, g, y/ cannot be within a syllable. They must be across syllable boundaries.

A few problematical sequences (like mb, ŋg, bw, and by) will be dealt with after we present the recurring segment sequences arising from the unambiguous examples:

N (syllabic nasal), V, CV, CVC, CCV, CCVC.

VC sequences like *at* or *ek* or *op* are not found in Kuteb. The other sequences are illustrated below, with a dot marking the syllable boundary.

1. N (syllabic nasal)
 □.m. 'no,' m.kú.rū. 'I'm going'
2. V (Vowel)
 u.fu 'door,' i.ciŋ 'flies,' á.kwām 'bananas'
3. CV
 bá 'come,' u.tī 'spear,' rī 'speak'
4. CVC
 mūm 'dig,' ri.túg 'market,' tēr 'run,' kunn 'call'
5. CCV

u.kwe ‘chief,’ **pyír** ‘refuse,’ **tkí** ‘draw (water)’

6. CCVC

kwáb ‘try,’ **ku.tkom** ‘stone,’ **byír** ‘black’

It may be observed that each of the above has either a vowel or a syllabic nasal as a ‘nucleus’ or ‘peak.’ One or two consonants preceding the nucleus we call the ‘onset’ while the optional final consonant is often called the ‘coda.’

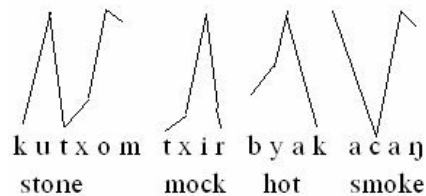
3.3.5 Sonority and Syllabicity

It has been pointed out (Jespersen 1922) that syllable structure generally follows a pattern such that segments of greatest sonority are closest to the nucleus. Vowels are more sonorant than consonants. Fricative consonants are more sonorant than stops. Using a scale adapted from Ladefoged (1982:222), some common Kuteb words are shown below with their sonority contours.

If a peak in sonority marks a syllable nucleus, one may discern from the above diagrams that there are two syllables in **kutkom** and one in **tkir**. However, as in the case of tone, sonority has not proven to an adequate ground for a rigorous definition of ‘syllable’ in most languages.

3.3.6 Ambiguities in syllable Division

The above features (rhythm, sonority, tone, canonical shape) enable a hearer to identify syllable peaks in a large percentage of speech. However, ambiguities may still arise as to boundaries. Three cases where such ambiguities arise involve the prenasalized stops, final nasals, and semivowels. The following pairs illustrate the sort of ambiguities that may occur:



Prenasalized Stops and Final Nasals

Compare the following two sentences:

28) **ū mbae pú-wū.** [ūmbaepúwū]

3s delivered PRF-3s

She had a baby.

29) **Utum bae urwā.** [utumbaerwā]

rat lit fire

The rat lit a fire.

Phonologically, there is no difference between final /-um/ plus /b-/ and final u- plus a following /mb-/). The same observation holds in the following pairs:

Alveolar Nasal (ny) and final Nasals

30) Atápu nyīŋ. [Atápunyīŋ]

Atapu is thin.

31) Apwākunn yīr ibae. [apwākunyīribâe]

Apwakunn tied the sack.

Final stops and following semivowel

In the case of final stops followed by a semivowel in the next word, the stops become voiced and are structurally ambiguous with an initial labialized or palatalized voiced stop:

32) Ukwab wēn wū. [ukwabwēnwū]

Monkey kill 3s

The monkey killed him.

33) Akwā bwetág. [ákwābweták]

Akwa silent

Akwa was silent.

34) Ashwág wēn wū. [ashwágwēnwū]

Snails kill 3s

Snails killed him.

35) A sa Gwámna. [asagwámna]

3s take Gwamna

They took Gwamna.

Phonologically, there is no way of knowing whether the final segment in the morphemes above go with what precedes or what follows. Only lexical information can tell us. It will be seen, then, that phonological, semantic, morphological, and syntactic information all work together to decode strings of speech sound.

3.4 Tonal Sandhi (Tone-sequence rules)

In this section I describe some instances of the more obvious of the tonal changes occurring in Kuteb, namely tone-spreading and tonal up-drift.

3.4.1 Tone Spreading

This phenomenon occurs in three grammatical environments: 1) where a noun object follows a verb, 2) where a verb follows a future marker, and 3) in the genitive construction.

3.4.2 Noun Objects after High- and Mid-tone Verbs

In Section 2.1 I described verbs as either high, mid, or low in tone. The majority of nouns have a low-tone prefix and a stem bearing high, mid, or low tone. The low-tone nouns are subject to a sandhi rule as follows: following a verb of mid or high tone, the prefix pitch assimilates to the pitch of the verb, and the basic tone of the noun stem glides down from the pitch of the verb to low.³⁹ The tone of the verb spreads, so to speak, onto the noun stem. For example:

umbae (low-tone noun) ‘child’; **núŋ** (high-tone verb) ‘see’

36) **Ame núŋ umbae.** [amenúŋmbâe]
 1s see child
 I see a child.

aser (low-tone noun) ‘money;’ **shā** (mid-tone verb) ‘seek’

37) **Abā kú shā aser.** [abákúshâsêr]
 3p IMP want money
 They want money.

kufxen (low-tone noun) ‘foot’; **cén** (high-tone verb) ‘stub’

38) **Awū cén kufxen.** [awūcénkúfxên]
 3s stub foot
 He stubbed his toe.

What is theoretically interesting here is the domain of the sandhi rule. The high tone of the verb **cén** acts not only on the immediately adjacent syllable, converting it to high; it carries right across the noun prefix (**ku-**) and acts on the noun stem, converting it to a high-low glide. This is evidence that the noun prefixes are weakening. Even though they may be manifest by consonants and vowels, they are passed over by the tone-spreading rule.

A related issue here is the behaviour of some common nouns which appear to follow the same sandhi rule: **kúnûŋ** ‘bird’ and **kíkwâb** ‘hoe’ have stems which glide from high to low. It appears that, in contrast to the low tone prefixes discussed in the previous paragraph, the high-tone prefixes in these words are triggering the sandhi rule, just as if they were a future marker followed by a verb (see next section). To represent these words accurately in the lexicon, it would seem adequate to mark only the prefix tone, as the glide is predictable. However, a growing number of high-low loan words like **máto** ‘car,’ **tíca** ‘teacher’ and **táya**

³⁹ In the case of nouns with a single vowel prefix (E.g. u- or I-) the vowel is often dropped.

‘tire’ do not follow the tone-change rule. In a fully adequate lexicon, either the glide must be written, or a rule must be formulated which excludes words of foreign origin from the tone-change rule.

3.4.3 Verbs after Future Marker

Future is marked in Kuteb by an underlying segment /ú/ which, in the surface structure, is often elided with the vowel of the previous noun or pronoun (see Chapter 2 Section 2.3). The high tone of the future marker, however, is always retained. Furthermore, low-tone verbs after the future marker typically change to high-falling. For example:

- 39) **Abā** **ú** **som** **iké.** **[abāásômiké]~[abásômké]**
 3s FUT sit here
 They’ll sit here.

- 40) **Atī** **ú** **tu.** **[atītūtū] ~ [atītū]**
 1p FUT find
 We will find (it).

- 41) **Apurá** **ú** **nde.** **[Apuráándê] ~ [Apurándê]**
 Apura FUT do
 Apura will do it.

3.4.4 Associative-possessive Marker⁴⁰

A possessive pronoun is linked to the head noun by a ‘floating’ high tone, which merges with a previous tone to form an up-glide. For example:

- ukwe** + / □ / + **m** **[ukwě `m]**
 chief ASSOC 1s ‘my chief’

With nouns, however, when used in the same construction, the floating tone is often shifted to the prefix of the second noun, where it displaces the inherent low tone. Examples:

⁴⁰ The Associative marker is treated more fully in Chapter 6 (Section 4.0) and in Chapter 10 (Section 3.1).

unde	/ □ /	ice	[unděce]	
person	of	boundary		‘neighbor’
kujwó	/ □ /	ricī	[kujwóricī]	
arm	of	right		‘right arm’

3.5 High Tone ‘Up-step’

We pointed out earlier (Section 2.1) the fact that verbs and nouns have different pitch patterns, monosyllabic verbs having phonetic tones 1-3, and bisyllabic nouns having typically 1-1, 1-2, 1-4, and 4-3 patterns. Welmers insisted that to mark this unambiguously, four tonemes were required. His example, which I have re-written with numbers for tone: (1=low, 2=mid, 3=high, 4=very high):

nún see + **kusóg** house
 m¹ nuŋ³ ku²soŋ⁴ ‘I saw a house.’

A simpler way of dealing with this problem is to consider nouns with the apparent 1-4 tone as being low-high, and the nouns with tone 4-3 as high-mid, and then positing an up-step rule, as follows. When a high-tone noun stem follows a high tone verb, the noun steps up.

42) Awū kú tó m ritóm.
 3s IMP farm farm tó m
 kú tó m
 wū ri
 ‘He’s farming.’ a

Another case is where a quantifying noun (numeral) follows a high-tone noun:

andá itsóŋ
 women five tsóŋ
 ndá
 i
 ‘five women’ a

The same happens in phrases having two high nouns joined by the conjunction **tī**:

undá tī kucáen **cáen**
 woman REL oldness ndá
 tī ku
 ‘an old woman’ u

3.6 Larger Phonological Units

3.6.1 Phonological Words

This chapter has dealt with syllables and phenomena that occur within the domain of the syllable. It is clear that syllables are partially defined by tone. But the tone on a particular syllable may be changed. The rules that govern such changes are best described as operating within phonological units larger than the syllable. I now present some evidence for postulating the phonological word as a unit of tone-pattern placement.

1) In a local word game (see Chapter 2, Section 3.2.2 above), a word like **riwén** ‘nose’ becomes **wenrí**, retaining the low-high pattern. **Kúrāŋ** become **ráŋkū**. If this turns out to be a general pattern, it is strong evidence that there is a phonological tier independent of the segmental string, in which tone patterns are formulated. In other words, although, as we saw above, vowels tend to be the locus of tone placement, tones as such are not necessarily associated with specific vowels.

2) The number of tonal sequences in words is limited. Not all combinations of pitches are allowed. In two-syllable words, for example, out of a possible 27 combinations of low, mid, and high, only seven occur, including the words with glides: LL, LM, LH, HH, HM, HL, HF. This suggests a canonical set of phonological word shapes based on tone.

3) The tonal contours of words do not follow a fixed set of pitches ‘low,’ ‘mid,’ and ‘high,’ but are set in terms of the pitch of the previous syllable in the word. For example, the mid tone in **acīm** ‘medicine’ is a step up from low; the ‘mid’ tone in **kúrāŋ** ‘crow’ is a step down from high. The two ‘mid’ tones are not identical.

What is the relationship, then, between syllable tone and word tone? Tone is a defining feature of the syllable; hence we speak of ‘low-tone syllable, mid-tone syllable, high-tone syllable, falling-tone syllable, etc. In terms of word building, the sequence of tones and number of syllables seems to be a more prominent feature than the CV-shape or sonority.⁴¹ So we can speak of a ‘high-high’ word, meaning a word consisting of two high-tone syllables such as **kákúm**. More will be said on this in the next chapter.

3.6.2 Phonological Phrases

In section five above we described certain tone-sequence rules in terms of grammatical categories. Further research would hopefully enable us to posit a

⁴¹ This is perhaps shown by the fact that messages can be conveyed using flutes and ‘talking drums’ which depend completely on the tonal patterns of words and sentences.

phonological phrase within which these rules operate. This is an area that is open for further exploration.

CHAPTER FOUR. WORD CLASSES

4.1 Introduction

Word classes, ‘form classes,’ or ‘parts of speech,’ have been defined in many ways.⁴² In traditional grammar, a noun is usually defined as a word that names ‘a person, place, or thing.’ Generative grammar essentially defines the major lexical categories in terms of syntax: a noun is the head of a NP, verb the head of VP and an adjective the head of Adjective Phrase. Thompson and Hopper (1984) define word classes in terms of discourse structure. Nouns not only name things and act as the subjects of sentences; primarily they serve to manipulate participants in a discourse. Thompson and Hopper set out all the discourse functions of nouns and verbs and arrange them in degrees of ‘prototypicality,’ the most typical (and universal) function of nouns being to introduce a participant for the first time.⁴³

The system I adopt here is based on Frajzyngier (1987), who finds the basis for the categories noun, verb, and adjective in their function as encodings of propositional elements. In this view, a noun ‘denotes an object without any implications about the relationship between it and any other object in the universe.’ An adjective ‘describes a state or a quality of some object in the universe.’ A verb ‘indicates a state or an action.’ An important component of this view is that the categories ‘Adjective’ and ‘Verb’ carry implications, namely: ‘Adjective’ implies that there are objects that possess the state or quality, and ‘Verb’ implies the existence of objects that are involved in the state or action.

My main aim in this chapter is to establish the basic elements with which the house of Kuteb grammar is built. One cannot talk of grammar without reference to lexical categories, since, in my approach, syntactic structures are defined partly by reference to the lexical categories that occur in them.

This chapter gives minimal criteria and illustrations for distinguishing various lexical classes. Following chapters will go into the nature and role of nouns (Chapter Five) and verbs (Chapter Seven) in more detail.

4.2 Major Word Classes: Nouns and Verbs

Not only do nouns and verbs together comprise the vast majority of Kuteb words, but they are essentially open classes. That is to say, new items are constantly being

⁴² See Lyons (1977:424ff), Givon (1984:47ff), and Schachter, ‘Parts-of-Speech Systems’ in Shopen (1985) for introductions to the topic.

⁴³ Categorization based on prototypicality was pioneered by Eleanor Rosch (1976).

added to them. That is why they are considered ‘major’ in contrast to other classes that have fewer members, and are more ‘closed.’

4.2.1 Nouns

4.2.1.1 Identifying features of Nouns (Noun Morphology)

The vast majority of nouns are readily identified in Kuteb by their structure, which consists of a stem and a prefix (a-, ku-, ki-, ri-, etc.) as in the following (some exceptions will be treated in Chapter Five):

ande	‘people’	kutúkū	‘tree’	kiciŋ	‘fly’	kákúm	‘horse’
risū	‘head’	riwén	‘nose’	ukwe	‘chief’	indag	‘cow’

The full set of prefixes⁴⁴ is:

kú	kí	ká	rí	ú	í	á
ku	ki		ri	u	i	a

These prefixes are remnants of a more complex system of noun prefixes in the original Proto-Niger-Congo parent language. In that system, nouns of a particular semantic category, e.g. animals, had one prefix. Body parts had a different prefix. Further, each category might have a different prefix to mark the plural. Over the centuries, the system has broken down, to the point where many languages have no prefixes at all, some, like Kuteb, have a few; still others have developed suffixes. The remarkable thing about the Taraba area languages is that examples of both extremes exist right next to each other, as Kuteb has retained many prefixes whereas Wapan prefixes are reduced to /a-/ and Diyin has suffixes and no prefixes. (See Storch, ‘Where have all the Prefixes Gone?’) Indeed, the dialects of Kuteb itself show both extremes, from preservation of many prefixes in Lumbu and Lissam, to the loss of almost all in Bika.⁴⁵ Oohum (Yikuben), the nearest neighbor to Kuteb, after losing quite a few prefixes, has apparently gone on to multiply them again in a different form. (Shimizu 1980a:Vol.1, 171ff).

Note also that the nouns above have at least two syllables. Three- and even four-syllable nouns are found, whereas verbs are typically monosyllabic, with a few two-syllable exceptions which, historically at least, are morphologically complex.

⁴⁴ At one time I stated that there are nouns with prefixes **ru** and **rú**. I now believe those to be conditioned variants of **ri** and **rí**. A new cross-dialectal study of the prefixes is urgently needed.

⁴⁵ See Shimizu (1980a: Vol.1 p. 132-176) for a comparison of noun class prefixes in Kuteb, Oohum (Yikuben), and Jukun. For a general treatment of noun prefixes in Niger-Congo see de Wolf (1971). See also Williamson’s chapter ‘Niger-Congo Overview,’ esp. pp. 31-40 in Bendor-Samuel (1989).

Nouns typically occupy a position before the verb in a simple sentence, i.e. in the frame [---- verb]: as in **Upwen bá** (The rain came). Sometimes a sentence will have two nouns, in which case the second noun will occur after the verb.

N1		N2	
Apurá	ye	mbawén	
Apurá	catch	goat	
Apurá caught a goat.			

4.2.1.2 Functional Classes of Nouns

Chapter Five will treat Nouns at length. Here I will only make a broad categorization into three groups on the basis of function:

4.2.1.2.1 Participant-designating Nouns

Nouns such as **unde** ‘person’, **kákúm** ‘horse’ or **kutúkū** ‘tree,’ often function to introduce and track participants in narrative text. They typically occupy subject or object positions in a sentence, and are often referred to in subsequent discourse by pronouns.⁴⁶ For example:

43) Ame núŋ injā-fu íré. Awū tá uwae ritúg.
 I see brother-2s yesterday 3s be in market
 I saw your **brother** yesterday. **He** was in the market.

4.2.1.2.2 Adverbial Nouns

Some nouns are used adverbially to designate the **time**, **place**, and **manner** of an action. Examples of ‘adverbial nouns’:

⁴⁶ In some languages one could add that nouns can be ‘possessed’ (i.e. they may be modified by a possessive pronoun), but in Kuteb this is not a distinctive feature because verbs can also take possessive pronouns (See Chapter 7 ‘Verb-focus Pronouns’).

íré	‘yesterday’	iké	‘here’
akwēn	‘there’	ítsū	‘day before yesterday’
akā	‘where?’	ise	‘outside’
uwae	‘inside’	kutē	‘long ago’
isim	‘behind’	ísīnn	‘when?’
rípátēn	‘in a prone position face up’		
ribur	‘in a prone position face down’		
ritsen	‘in an upright position’		
akoŋ	‘with a foul smell’ (see 2.1.2.3 below for more examples)		

The following adverbial nouns, which function in exactly the same way as the above, are structurally anomalous, as they do not have the typical nominal prefix.

yáka	‘today’
tsōwēn	‘day after tomorrow’
tsōkutáj	‘three days hence’
yākūyā	‘four days hence’

A few examples that illustrate how adverbial nouns typically function:⁴⁷

44) Awū rū bá íré.
 3s move come yesterday
 He came yesterday.

45) Afu tá akā?
 2s be where?
 Where are you?

46) Abā náe rípátēn.
 3p lie sprawled-out
 They lay sprawled out.

⁴⁷ This description does not rule out these words functioning as subjects, objects, or complements of sentences. One can say, for example, **Yáka sí usir tī tínyang** ‘Today is a good day.’

- 47) **Awū tsi tāpípe.**
 3s stand crooked
 He stood crooked.

- 48) **Ti nwúnn ritsen!**
 1p arise standing
 Let us arise!

The pro-nominal forms **ahán** ‘thus’ and **atáj** ‘there’ are included here:

- 49) **Awū nde ahán.**
 3s do thus
He did thus.

- 50) **Awū ka atáj.**
 3s go there
 He went there.

4.2.1.2.3 Olfactory Terms

Included in ‘adverbial nouns’ are an unusual set of nouns indicating types of smell. Although they may be more appropriately described in a dictionary, I include them here because they represent a feature of the language that seems to be unusual. Blench (1993) describes a similar phenomenon in Tarok. In fact, the verb in Tarok preceding these smell terms is virtually identical to the Kuteb word **nuŋ**. The smell terms typically occur after the verb **nuŋ** but can theoretically occur as the subject of a sentence. The words collected so far are given with local speakers' reactions or examples of items that produce the smell:

a. nuŋ akoŋ	‘to produce a bad smell’ (generally)
b. ... ashwáe	‘smell of fermented cassava, guinea corn sprouts’
c. ... aság	‘smell of fresh fish, raw dog meat’
d. ... ará/arwá	‘smell of rotten eggs’
e. ... kushiŋ	‘smell of soap or a dirty cloth’
f. ... kusīnn	‘smell of a cobra or musk shrew’
g. ... aŋham/kuŋham	‘smell of sour beer’
h. ... kuyaŋ/kupí	‘smell of smoked meat, perfume’
i. ... rika	‘smell of frying palm kernels’
j. ... aruwub	‘smell of rotting mushrooms’
k. ... icwu/kucwu	‘smell of day-old porridge or of a dead body’
l. ... rikpankwer	‘smell that causes discomfort’
m. ... kubyinkunn	‘smell of concentrated palm wine’
n. ... nyinyiŋ	‘a sharp, acidic smell’

It will be important to confirm these impressionistic ‘definitions’ with a wide variety of speakers to see how much overlap there is in the examples given. This is another case where the idea of ‘prototypicality’ may be useful.

4.2.1.2.4 Dummy Object Nouns

Anticipating the discussion of argument structure in Chapter Seven, I here propose a category of nouns here which often act as an "object" of the verb but the resulting combination is not semantically transitive. For example:

51) **Awū tēr inyae.**
 3s run running
 He ran.

52) **Awū jwúb irá.**
 3s cry word
 He cried.

53) **Abā shaen ishaen.**
 3p argue argument
 They argued.

While these nouns are not limited to this syntactic environment, they function in this way typically. I cite them here because they form a sub-class of nouns we will

wish to refer to in later discussion. These nouns are typically abstract, inanimate, and non-referential (that is, they do not track a participant in a narrative). A number are cognate with the verbs they follow as in **shaen ishaen** ‘argue’ above. Many allow for a real object along with the dummy object, as in the following:

- 54) **Ame tōm wū atóm.**
 1s send 3s errand
 I sent him on an errand.

This phenomenon is widespread in West Africa and rampant in the Taraba languages. Storch (2000:48) states that in Jiba, Hone, and Wapan, ‘...every verb has to be followed by a nominal or deverbal complement.’ Dictionaries and grammars of other languages often give examples of "complex verbs" or "idioms" that are usually comprised of a verb plus a nominal. Tiv, for example, has many like the following.

suur ... ishima (lit. press... heart) ‘to comfort’
 wa ... ikav (lit. put... judgment) ‘to judge’

4.2.1.2.5 Numerals

Numerals will be treated in depth in Chapter Five Section 2.2.13. They are mentioned here to highlight the fact that they are structured as nouns. In function however, they are usually used in counting and as attributives after nouns. For example:

unde kīnzō ‘one person’
ande itsón ‘five people’
indag rijwēr ‘ten cows’
asóg rikōm ‘twenty houses’

4.2.1.2.6 Verbal Nouns

Verbs may be converted to nouns by prefixing **itī-** or **ití-** which themselves are presumably built from a prefix **i-** and the relativizer **tī/tí** (Mid tone **tī** occurs before high stems and high tone **tí** before non-high stems). Examples:

it̄bá	‘coming’	it̄tsēn	‘being white’ ⁴⁸
it̄rū	‘going’	it̄kób	‘being tall’
it̄pwen	‘counting’	it̄shaen	‘disagreeing’
it̄mbye	‘building’	it̄som	‘sitting’

Such words would be used in sentences like **It̄bá-fu nyaj t̄mambē** ‘Your coming is very good’ and **It̄rū-wū ndembéb t̄i ut̄ób** ‘His going disturbed us.’

4.2.2 Verbs

4.2.2.1 Identifying Features

Morphologically, Kuteb verbs differ from nouns in having no prefixes. They are typically monosyllabic, although some multisyllabic verbs occur, probably compounded originally from simpler verbs.⁴⁹ Examples of verbs:

nde	‘do’	bá	‘come’	fur	‘fold’
jáj	‘lick’	jāeb	‘buy’	kāen	‘roll’
kafe	‘turn’	cāefā	‘deceive’	munnāe	‘be plenty’

Syntactically, verbs characteristically occupy a position after the subject NP or pronoun and before object nouns and pronouns, as in the following:

55) Ame nún̄ fu.

1s see 2s

I see/saw you.

56) Afu jāeb mbakúnn a?

2s buy chicken Q

Did you buy a chicken?

Finally, verbs are unique in being able to affix verbal suffixes⁵⁰ and to reduplicate, as in the following examples (extensions are glossed here as **SUF**; reduplications, as **DUP**).

Verbs with Verbal Suffixes:

⁴⁸ Some stative verbs form an alternative nominal with the prefix *ri-*, e.g. *rikób* ‘tallness,’ *ritsen* ‘whiteness.’

⁴⁹ Some of these correspond to Shimizu’s ‘complex verbs’ in Jukun (Shimizu 1984:150).

⁵⁰ Verb suffixes are morphemes that are not found independently of the main verb. It is debatable whether they should be treated as suffixes or auxiliaries. For further discussion see section 2.2.4 in this chapter and also chapter 9 under serial verb constructions.

57) **Awū báecī irá íkī.**
 3s write-SUF word another
 He wrote something else/again.

58) **Awū báefob irá.**
 3s write-SUF word
 He is able to write.

59) **Awū báefé irá yī.**
 3s write-SUF word REF
 He finished writing it.

Verbs with Reduplication :

60) **Awū kú bíbáe irá ajwó.**
 3s IMP DUP-write word arms
 He is writing right now.

61) **Awū kú jwújwóm ajwó.**
 3s IMP DUP-beg arms
 He is begging right now.

62) **Awū kú pípínn.**
 3s IMP DUP-fly
 He is flying.

The function and distribution of reduplication remains to be investigated.

4.2.2.2 Problems in verb analysis

In terms of form, it is not always clear whether to categorize some items as compound verbs (e.g. **munnáe**) or as verb-plus-suffix or as a sequence of verbs ('Serial Verb Construction' See Chapter 8). Our rule of thumb is that if one or both of the constituent stems does not occur elsewhere as an independent word, the verb

is complex. When both constituents occur elsewhere independently, the combination will be called a ‘compound’ verb.

A second problem is that of defining ‘transitive.’ Most verbs can have multiple senses, one of which may be transitive, another stative, and another intransitive. Examples follow:

nde (tr)	‘to do’	Awū <i>nde</i> wánde.	He did work.
nde (intr)	‘to happen’	Kíkīn <i>nde</i> .	Something happened.
tsēn (st.)	‘to be white’	Kitub <i>tsēn</i> .	Cotton is white.
tsēn (tr)	‘to whiten’	Awū <i>tsēn</i> m utōb.	He made me happy.

The issue is whether ‘transitivity’ is inherent in particular verbs or is (as I advocate for Kuteb) more appropriately taken as a feature of the sentence. It is almost impossible to find verbs that cannot be followed by a nominal. That is to say, they almost all appear to be grammatically ‘transitive’ even though the actions they refer to are often not the type traditionally associated with ‘transitive’ verbs. More examples will be given in Chapter Seven where transitive and intransitive sentences are discussed.⁵¹

4.2.2.3 Functional Classes of verbs

I distinguish five categories of verbs, although I make no claim here that there are only five. Further research is expected both to extend and to subcategorize the brief taxonomy I present here. The five are Transitive, Equative, Locative-motion-position, Stative, and Speech. Each is discussed and illustrated below.

4.2.2.3.1 ‘Transitive’ Verbs

These verbs typically take an animate subject and a nominal or pronominal object.

63) Anī ye unde tī riyīb wū a?
2p catch man REL theft REF Q

Did you catch the thief?

64) Eēn, atī ye wū.
Yes 1p find 3s

Yes, we caught him.

⁵¹ Shimizu (1980a:200).

Sometimes the object of the sentence is left implicit, as in the second sentence below:

- 65) **Anī tu ámbýī a?**
 2p find money Q
 Did you find water?

- 66) **Eēn, atī tu.**
 Yes, 1p find
 Yes, we found some.

The second noun in a ‘transitive’ sentence may be abstract, as in:

- 67) **Awū tēr inyae.**
 3s run run
 He ran.

- 68) **Awū kāb irá.**
 3s think word
 He thought (about something).

A distinctive trait of ‘transitive’ sentences that they typically form gerundive phrases as follows:

- 69) **Awū mbye kusóg. → kusóg tī mbye**
 3s build house house REL build
 He built a house. house-building (gerundive phrase)
- 70) **Awū ye iwág. → iwág tī ye**
 3s catch fish fish REL catch
 He caught a fish. fish-catching (gerundive phrase)
- 71) **Awū tēr inyae. → inyae tī tēr**
 3s run running → running REL run
 He ran. running (gerundive phrase)

The gerundive phrases are used as subjects or objects of sentences, as in:

- 72) **Wánde-wū si iwág tī ye. < Awū ye iwág.**
 Work-3s be fish catching
 His work is catching fish.

- 73) **Inyae tī tēr si urú anyīsū tīnyīŋ.**
 running is game children small

Running is a game of small children.

- 74) **Irá tī kāb-wū kō pāŋ-yī.**
 Thinking-his be much too-3s

He thinks too much.

It would be possible to set up subcategories of ‘transitive’ verbs based on the semantics of the verbs and the ‘objects’ with which they occur. For example, the following may occur without an object at all, or may have an abstract object or an adverbial noun. Perhaps they should be called ‘pseudo-transitive.’

- 75) **Awū cwū.**
 3s die.

She died.

Compare:

- 76) **Awū cwū ricwú.**
 3s die death

She died.

- 77) **Atī num pú tī.**
 1p tire PRF 1p

We are tired.

Compare:

- 78) **Atī num ijwē.**
 1p tire body

We are tired.

- 79) **Wánde-wū mam pú-yī.**
 His work finish PRF-3

His work is finished.

Compare:

- 80) **Awū mam wánde-wū.**
 3s finish his work

He finished his work.

These verbs could then be called ‘intransitive’ in comparison to the more obviously transitive words like carry, catch, kill, eat, etc. However, in this work we will take ‘transitive’ in a purely grammatical sense: a verb that can take a noun or noun phrase directly after it is ‘transitive.’

4.2.2.3.2 Equative

There is only one verb in this category, the copula **si**, illustrated in the following:

81) Apurá si urwán-m.
 Apurá be friend-my
 Apurá is my friend.

82) Ikén ne si kutkom.
 thing this be stone
 This thing is a stone.

The equative verb must have a second noun or noun phrase following it.⁵² It cannot form the gerundive construction as in the case of ‘transitive’ verbs, nor can it co-occur with the IMPERFECT marker **kú**. Examples:

83) Awū si urwán-m. *urwán-m tī si
 3s be friend-1s friend-1s REL is
 He is my friend. *my friend- being

Compare with:

84) Awū mbye kusóg. → kusóg tī mbye
 3s build house house REL build
 He built a house. house-building (gerundive phrase)

Non-occurrence with IMPERFECT marker **kú**:

***Awū kú si ukwe.**
 3s IMP be chief.
 *He is being chief (?)

4.2.2.3.3 Locative/Motion/Position

These verbs are like those above in resisting the gerundive construction, but unlike those above, they do not require a predicate nominal. Further, they often take locative complements. Examples:

⁵² Section 3.2 below discusses the rare occurrence of adjectives after the equative verb.

85) **Amamrá tsō yī ritúg Arúfū.**
 Amamra go-up PREP market Arufu
 Amamra went up to Arufu market.

86) **Awū rū kutúr tí íré.**
 3s go bush since yesterday
 He went to the bush yesterday already.

87) **Awū rū.**
 3s go
 He went.

88) **Atī tá uwae kutúr.**
 1p be located in wilderness
 We are in the wilderness.

89) **Abā náe ribén.**
 3p lie ground
 They lay down.

Other verbs in this category are **bá** ‘come,’ **nwúnn** ‘rise up,’ **sī** ‘descend,’ **tsō** ‘ascend,’ and **ka** ‘reach.’ They are often used together in serial verb constructions (Chapter 8).

4.2.2.3.4 Stative Verbs

This group of verbs typically expresses qualities such as color, size, amount, physical dimensions. Like the equative and motion verbs, stative verbs do form nominal verbal noun phrases (but see ‘Verbal Nouns’ in Section 2.1.2.6. Finally, statives often occur with expressions of quantity (**tímambē**, ‘much,’ **kō-yī bē**, ‘not much’) and with ideophones⁵³ such as **nwámime** and **póríí**.

90) **Ande kō tímambē.**
 people aabe many plenty
 There are plenty of people.

⁵³ Ideophones are words of unusual phonological pattern that describe the action of the verb. See Adverbs, below.

91) **Wúci nyaŋ-yī bē.**
 food good-3s neg.

The food was not very good.

92) **Awāen tumátur-fu byāen nwámime.**
 fruit tomato-2s red very-red

Your tomatoes are very, very red.

93) **Atúpwá-wū tsēn póríri.**
 cloth-1s white very white

His cloth was very very white.

Note that many stative verbs like **tsēn** and **byāen** have specific ideophones that cannot go with other verbs:

***Awū rū nwámime.**
 2s move very red

*He went redly.

***Awū tsēn nwámime.**
 3s white very-red

*He was redly white.

Ideophones are discussed again under Section 3.1 below.

Some other common stative verbs are:⁵⁴

tsēn	'white'	byāg	'hot'
byīr	'black'	pyir	'short'
nyaŋ	'good'	byāen	'red'
nyīŋ	'thin'	rab	'rare'

4.2.2.3.5 Speech Verbs

In this category I include a few verbs that are typically followed by a speech complementizer and an embedded clause, as in the following:

⁵⁴ More examples of stative verbs are given in Chapter 7, Section 2.1.

- 94) **Awū rī bāa, awū nā kú bá.**
 3s say COMP 3s IS IMP come

He said he was coming.

The embedded clause often, but not always, has the reported speech marker (RS) **nā** before the verb. Other examples:

- 95) **Atī táŋ bāa, ā nā ú ndeya tī.**
 1p think COMP 3p IS FUT help 1s

We thought they would help us.

- 96) **Á kú yāŋ akyáŋ bāa, ā nā wēn icwu.**
 3p IMP sing songs COMP 3p IS kill leopard

They're singing that they killed a leopard.

Other speech verbs are **kāb** 'think,' **pyí** 'refuse,' **cwé** 'agree' and **myae** 'plan.'

4.2.2.4 Does Kuteb have Verbal Extensions?

According to Erhard Voeltz (1977), Proto-Niger-Congo had a set of verbal suffixes that have come to be called 'verbal extensions.' They modified the verb in general ways. For example, there were suffixes indicating causation, benefaction, reciprocity, reversal, repetition, direction towards a goal, etc. Voeltz (1977:24) shows that while there are remnants of these suffixes in the Atlantic and Adamawa Eastern families and in Bantu, 'There are no traces of verb extensions in the Jukunoid subgroup.' This is of course a challenge to any one studying a language of the Taraba area.

In hunting for evidence of the original affixes, we will be helped by three important observations from Voeltz: First (1977:10), the affixes developed a range of meanings within the descendant languages and even, sometimes, within a single language, depending on the verbs to which they were attached and the objects which followed them. Secondly, following Givón (1975), Voeltz says that it is highly likely that these affixes developed from full verbs in an earlier stage of the language. Thirdly, Voeltz suggests (1977:72ff) that when the suffixes disappeared in many languages, these languages re-expressed the meanings using different words (often involving serial verb constructions). He hypothesizes a cycle in which a full verb gets reduced as it becomes 'grammaticalized' from two syllables to one, and finally to a single consonant or vowel, at which point it may be replaced by a new 'paraphrastic' form. What we see in the domain of Kuteb verb/modal expressions may be some remnants of the original system and some other items that may have already replaced the Proto NC forms completely.

It will be seen in Chapter Eight that in Kuteb, as in many African languages, sets of two or three verbs often occur in sequence. Often in such sets of verbs, one evolves into a modal or adverb-like word, losing its usage as a full verb. In time the adverb-like word becomes shortened and may even be found attached to the verb as an affix. We list some morphemes here that could be taken as verbal suffixes in the sense that no other morpheme comes between them and the verb. We recognize that some of these items (e.g. **tu** ‘to find,’ **fob** ‘to reach’) could as well be taken as a kind of adverb or ‘auxiliary verb’ and written separately, or even taken as verbs with limited distribution.⁵⁵ Further discussion on some of these words will be found in Chapter Eight Section 3.3 and in Chapter Nine (Tense, Aspect, and Modality) Section 3.3.

fob	extensive, abilitative	mbéb	resulting in damage
tu	abilitative	yé	extensive
fé	extensive	ra	quickly, forcefully (?)
té	committative	cī	repetitive
cī	resulting in closure	kób	habitual
tā	resulting in separation	ya	assistive
na	benefactive		

Examples (the suffix is in italic face):

⁵⁵ Some morphemes may have two senses, one of which is used when the morpheme is a suffix and another, when it occurs independently.

Ndecī.	‘Do (it) again.’
Awū yera m	‘He took me forcefully.’
Abā rūfé yi Kano.	‘They went all the way to Kano.’
Atī ndetu wánde yīne.	‘We can do this work.’
Awū báefob irá.	‘He is able to write.’
Anī kú bákób iké.	‘You (pl) are always coming here.’
Ame cwunnē ufu.	‘I closed the door.’
Atī burcī kutútoŋ.	‘We covered the pot.’
Awū táentā ukum wū.	‘He split the stick.’
Ā kantā wúcī.	‘They divided the food.’
Ame kūrya wū kirāen.	‘I helped her cook food.’
Ā ndeya m!⁵⁶	‘They helped me! (Lit. 3p do-help me)’
Ā ndena m wánde.	‘They did work for me.’
Atī tōna fu utoŋ.	‘We cooked soup for you.’
M kūnǰí wū irá.	‘I greeted him.’ (Lit. 1s call ǰí 3s word)
Tsǰí m iké.	‘Wait for me here.’ (Lit. stand ǰí 1s here)
Utī-m ndembēb pú-yī.	‘My spear spoiled.’ (Lit. spear-my do spoil PRF-1s)
Ndembēb-fu utōb bē.	‘Don’t be upset.’ (Lit. do-spoil-2s heart NEG)
Awū ka yé atáŋ.	‘He reached there.’

In speech, of course, it is impossible to distinguish spaces between words, and it is often difficult if not impossible to distinguish what constitutes a word. Our criterion here is that when a morpheme does not occur independently of the verb, it is a suffix.

Some of these suffixes have wider applicability than others. **Cī** meaning ‘do again,’ can occur with virtually any action that can be repeated. Likewise **-na** ‘do for’ and **-ya** ‘help’ are very productive. The **cī** meaning ‘resulting in closure’ occurs with a limited selection of words, for example: **cwunnē** ‘close,’ **nǰicī** ‘bury-cover,’ **burcī** ‘close by covering,’ **yīrcī** ‘close by tying’. A ‘causative’ variation of **cī** is found in the expression **ǰāebcī** ‘to sell,’ extended from **ǰāeb** ‘to buy,’ but it is important to

⁵⁶ The suffix is **yaē** in some other dialects, which may reflect the loss of a final consonant (compare **itā/itār/itāē** ‘three’).

note that **jāebcī** is only used in an explicitly causative grammatical construction ‘take ... sell’:

97) **Ame sa keké-m jāebcī.**
 1s take bicycle sell

I sold my bicycle.

Now, as to whether any of these represent vestiges of the original system, it is highly possible that **cī** (**kyī** in non-Lissam dialects) is related to the proposed reconstruction (***ti**/***si**) for Proto Niger-Congo ‘iterative.’ The **cī** in **jāebcī** ‘to sell’ may be a remnant of one of the Causative extensions (***CI** and ***TI**) Voeltz reconstructs.

I also suspect the suffix **ra** to be a vestige of a Proto NC extension, possibly the ‘CONTACTIVE’ ***TA**. Likewise, the **tā** found in words like **kantā**, ‘divide,’ **nyāntā**, ‘break,’ **yātā** ‘leave,’ **sāentā** ‘free’ may be related to an earlier CAUSATIVE suffix, although perhaps a closer source could be the morpheme **tā** ‘shoot, hit’ (but also used of a hen laying eggs). The case of **-tā** is unusual in that in some contexts a noun can separate the supposed ‘suffix’ from its verb, as in:

98) **Á sáen wū tā.**
 3s release 3s ?

They released him

Finally, the **na** of **ndena** and **tōna** is possibly related to the ***DE** ‘APPLIED’ extension proposed for Proto Niger-Congo. Note related meanings ‘benefactive’ and ‘directive’ and the phonological variants **la**, **ni**, and **nde** in some languages (Voeltz p. 46). The Proto-Niger-Congo ***NA** ‘RECIPROCAL’ appears tempting, but the meanings are quite different from ‘benefactive,’ and it is significant to note that the reciprocal itself takes a quite different form (**átsō**) in current Kuteb.

Mention must be made of the morpheme **jí**, homophonous with **jí** in the words for ‘wait’ (**somjí**) and ‘greet’ (**kūnnjí**) above. Used with other words, it means ‘to have ever done’ as in:

99) **Ame wēn jí pú-m usom.**
 1s kill-ever IMP-1s babboon.

I once killed a babboon.

- 100) Awū ka jí-wū atáŋ usir íkī bē.
 3s go-never-3s there day SPEC NEG
 He has never gone there.

4.3 Minor Word Classes

Besides **pronouns**, to be discussed under Noun Phrases in Chapter Five, the minor classes comprise **adverbs** and **adjectives**, which I describe below, and **prepositions, conjunctions, demonstratives, interjections. Particles**, which are bits and pieces of language used to mark things like negation, tense, aspect, reported speech, etc. will be discussed in relevant places in the following chapters.

4.3.1 Adverbs

Here we include a small group of words that typically occur as part of a verb phrase, and normally after an object NP or the goal of a motion sentence, as in:

- 101) Awū bá iké cwúcwō.
 3s come here again
 He came here again.

- 102) M tu-m awū k□□ka bē.
 1s find-1s 3s yet NEG
 I haven't found him yet.

These adverbs appear to be built by reduplication from the stems **ka** 'to reach' and **cwō** (no known meaning).

- 103) Awū saŋ uwae kusóg tírī.
 3s enter inside house then
 Then they went into the house.

Ideophones, characterized by unusual phonology such as an extra-high tone, optional reduplication or elongation, may be included here as a kind of adverb:

- 104) Awū caŋ skuuu.
 He walked slowly.
- 105) Awū caŋ kūkūbēn.
 He walked fast.
- 106) Awū cwāg nyīm.
 He slept soundly.
- 107) Kútúpwá-wū tsēn pórírírí.
 His cloth was very white.

108) Awū cī wúci-wū pitaŋ pitaŋ pitaŋ.

3s eat food-3s pick pick pick

He ate his food bit by bit.

A few adverbial constructions are made up from a high-tone **tí** plus a nominal or verbal root:

tímambē	‘very’	(cf. mam ‘finish,’ bē ‘NEG’)
títawé	‘first’	(cf. uwé ‘front, face’)
tíkife	‘quickly’	(cf. fe ‘exchange’)
tínine	‘now’	(cf. ne ‘this’)

Examples:

109) Afu bá-fu tíkife bē.

2s come-2s quickly NEG

You did not come quickly.

110) Wúci ne nyaŋ tímambē.

food DEM good very

This food is really good.

111) Nde wánde-fu títawé.

do work-2s first

Do your work first.

112) Nde yī tínine.

do 3 now

Do it now!

113) Awū kú byīnn utaŋ ajwó.

3s IMP beat drum right-now

He is beating the drum right now.

4.3.2 Adjectives--an emerging category?

In Section 2.3.5 above one may note that many quality ideas such as color, size, and physical dimension--expressed by adjectives in many languages--are expressed by stative verbs in Kuteb. Some quality ideas are not expressed by stative verbs,

however, and I will present them here. I will try to show that they constitute a separate form class. Secondly, I will show that even those quality concepts that are expressed by stative verbs have alternative representations, derived by analogy, that may be part of the proposed Adjective Class.

4.3.2.1 Formal Features of the Proposed Adjectival Category

The proposed ‘adjectives’ typically have two syllables, the first of which (**tī** or **tí**) is almost certainly derived from the relativizer ‘**tī**’ which will be discussed under nouns in the next chapter and later on under sentence structure. The rest of the word is ‘bound’; it does not occur by itself, although it is likely that at one time there were stative verbs with these forms. No words ever intervene between **tī/tí** and the stem. These words can be subdivided into two groups according to pitch pattern.⁵⁷ One set begins with a high tone, the other with mid tone, as follows:

tí cí	‘old’	*cí
tī shé	‘new’	*shé
tí nyīŋ	‘young’	*nyīŋ ⁵⁸
tí bī	‘bad’	*bī
tí sīb	‘fresh/moist’	*sīb

The bound stems (**cí**, **shé**, **nyīŋ**, etc.) only occur with **tī**. One can say:

114) Iwág ne nyaŋ tímambe
fish DEM good very

This fish is very good.

but the following is not acceptable:

***Iwág ne sīb.**
fish DEM fresh

This fish is fresh

Analogous to the proposed adjectives above are those that are based on existing stative verb stems:

Adjective	Verb
-----------	------

⁵⁷ The tone rule here is that mid tone (tī) occurs before high stems and high tone (tí) before non-high stems in noun phrases.

⁵⁸ A homophone of this word occurs with a more specific meaning: ‘thin.’ **Unde ne nyīng** ‘This person is thin.’

tīwám	‘dry’	wám	‘be dry’
tífab	‘sour’	fab	‘be sour’
tītsēn ⁵⁹	‘white’	tsēn	‘be white’
tínyañ	‘good’	nyañ	‘be good’

4.3.2.2 Distribution of the Proposed Adjectives

According to a typological study of adjectives by Bhat (1994), the most prototypical function of adjectives, in languages that have them unequivocally, is as nominal modifiers. Secondly they serve in predicates. The following will present how the proposed adjectives fulfill these functions in Kuteb.

4.3.2.2.1 Adjectives after Nouns

The ‘adjectives’ with bound stems are uncontroversial:

irá tīshé	‘new matter/word’
írím tīsīb	‘fresh grass’
anyīsū tínyīñ	‘young children’

The non-bound stems (those based on independently occurring stems like **sāen** ‘be clean’) present a problem. In the case of high-tone stems, a structural ambiguity arises between sequences of N + **tī** + Stative Verb and N + Adjective:

ibyē	tī	wám	ibyē tīwám
meat	REL	dry (V)	meat dry (Adj)
‘meat that is dry’			‘dry meat’

One might think that these must mean exactly the same thing. But a semantic distinction could arise even if the phonetic output is exactly the same. For example, I suggest that there is already a difference between the following:

unde tībyāen	‘red person’ (= a European)
unde tī byāen	‘(any) person who is red’

In the case of low-tone verb stems, the polar tone rule appears to signal a difference between the adjective and the relative clause. I have recorded the following:

irá tínyañ	word good	‘good news’ (N + Adjective)
irá tī nyañ tīmambē	word REL good very	‘news that is very good’ (N + Rel. Clause)

⁵⁹ Note that this word does not follow the tonal pattern of **tīsīb** and **tínyīñ**.

irá tī nyaṅ skeb mēmē

word REL good pass all ‘news that is the best’ (N + Rel. Clause)

Compare:

irá	tī	m	fxēn
word	REL	1s	hear

‘the news that I heard’ (N + Relative Clause)

These phrases show that when the stem is used as a verb, the relater (**tī**) keeps its basic mid tone. In the adjective form, however, it follows the noun phrase tone rule that raises **tī** to **tī́**. I take this as supporting evidence that **tīnyaṅ** is an independent word. The rule does not apply to a word like **tīwám** ‘dry’ but it may also be considered an adjective by analogy, even though there is a verbal expression **tī wám** that means ‘which is dry.’

4.3.2.2.2 Adjectives after COPULA

The sentence

115) Ubur-fu si tīshé a
hat-2s is new ?

Is your hat new?

illustrates the second most typical context of adjectives across languages, namely, as predications (with or without a copula). In Kuteb, the copula is necessary. More examples:

116) Ayī si tīsīb.
3 be fresh

It is fresh.

117) Keké-m si tīshé.
Cycle-1s be new

My cycle is new.

118) Ayī si tībyāg.
3 be hot

It is hot.

The case of **tībyāg** raises a question: since **byāg** can occur independently as a stative verb, what is the difference between a predicate with a stative verb and one with COP + ADJ? That is, between columns A and B:

A

B

119) **Ayī si tībyāen.** **Ayī byāen.**
It is red. It is red.

120) **Ayī si tīnyaᅇ.** **Ayī nyaᅇ.**
It is good. It is good.

The two forms are both used, though the ones in column B are more common. I am confident that further analysis of discourse function will answer the question and perhaps shed light on the formation of adjectives in West African languages.⁶⁰

4.3.2.2.3. Adjectives after tī (REL)

In what appears to be a secondary development, the proposed adjectives may occur with a preceding **tī**.

tī tīcí	‘old’	from	tīcí
tī tīshe	‘new’	from	tīshé
tī tīnyīᅇ	‘young’	from	tīnyīᅇ
tī tīsīb	‘fresh/moist’	from	tīsīb

Examples in phrases:

N REL adjective

unde tī tīnyaᅇ	‘good person’
wúcí tī tībyāᅇ	‘hot food’
ámbyī tī tījīm	‘cool water’
ikén tī tīshé	‘new thing’
irá tī tīkōᅇ	‘false matter’

There seems to be no difference in meaning between the adjectives with and without the additional **tī**. Every adjective so far discovered may be used with **tī**. There is, however, dialect variation on the issue.⁶¹ One adjective (**tībī** ‘bad’) seems to require the double **tī**. unde **tītībī** ‘bad person.’

⁶⁰ Bhat’s valuable study (Bhat 1994) is unfortunately lacking in data on the languages of Africa, where quality ideas are predominantly expressed by stative verbs and the emergence of adjectives is a controversial topic.

⁶¹ Informants from Bika, for example, preferred **irá tīnyang** to the Lissam form **irá tī tīnyang**.

What seems to be happening here is that the emerging **adjective** class is being lumped with nominal forms like **riyāen** "wideness," **riwáe** "tallness," which form phrases like:

kutúkū	tī	riwáe	
tree	REL	tallness	'tall tree'
faṅgó	tī	riyāen	
road	REL	wideness	'wide road'
umbae	tī	kitínyīṅ	
child	REL	smallness	'small child'
ibyē	tī	kutúr	
animal	REL	bush	'wild animal'
irá	tī	kubēntīn	
word	REL	truth	'true word'

The N+**tī**+Adj. construction, then (e.g. **unde tī tínyañ**, 'person of good'), may be built on these N+**tī**+N phrases by analogy:

kutúkū tī riwáe	'tall tree'
faṅgó tī riyāen	'long road'
unde tī tínyañ	'good person'
wúci tī tībyāg	'hot food'

Comparison with Wapan (Shimizu 1980:158) suggests that the forms **tībī**, **tínyīṅ**, **tīsīb** may be related to an original high-tone prefix of some kind.⁶²

It is hoped that further research, especially on the discourse functions of these variations, will lead to an answer to the question 'What is the difference between the forms with one **tī** and those with **tītī**? Such research would need to include the fact that the gerundive phrase discussed in the next chapter can also occur with the double '**tī**.'

4.3.2.3 Conclusion of 'adjective' discussion

The identity of **tījīm** 'cool', **tínyañ** 'good,' and others like them as adjectives hangs mostly on the legitimacy of a separate category of words like **tīcī** 'old', **tīshé** 'new' that have bound stems.

It will be interesting typologically to explore the various ways qualities are expressed in Kuteb. We have observed above a few qualities which can only be expressed as an adjective: **tīcī**, **tīsīb**, etc. Others can be expressed either as adjectives or as stative verbs: **tīwám** / **wám**, **tínyañ**/**nyañ**, **tībyāg** / **byāg**, etc. Still

⁶² Shimizu posits a set of 16 adjectives for Wapan, eight of them beginning with the prefix **ri-** which he takes to be cognate with the Bantu noun class 5 prefix *LI.

others are normally expressed with a verb or with the relators /**tí**/ plus a noun: **wáe** /**tí riwáe** ‘tall,’ **pyír/tí kipyír** ‘short,’ **yāen/ tí riyāen** ‘wide,’ **kīm / tí rikīm** ‘fat.’

Further research could explore why and how such forms have arisen, and whether the complex constructions should be considered as words or as phrases.

4.3.3 Pronouns

Pronouns are words that, in discourse, stand in the place of nouns in referring to participants in the narrative. In its simplest form the set of pronouns is as follows.

ame	‘I’	atī	‘we’
afu	‘you’ (sg)	anī	‘you’ (pl)
awū	‘he/she/it’	abā	‘they’
		ayī	‘it/they’

Modifications and functions of these basic forms are given in Chapter Five Section 3.0 and again in Chapter Ten Section 3.1.

4.3.4 Interjections

These words do not form part of a sentence. They stand alone in conversational discourse, usually indicating emotional states of the speaker.

Examples:

ahóo	‘what do I care?’
ēēn	‘yes’
iyéē	‘no’
ée	‘emphatic no’
ágbó	(surprise)

4.3.5 Particles: TAM markers and Determiners

Here we include markers of tense, aspect, and mood; and determiners, which are little words that modify nouns and verbs.

4.3.5.1 Tense-Aspect-Mood Markers.

kú (imperfect action)	pú (perfective action or state)
a (conditional action or state)	ú (future action or state)
ā (hortative action)	

These are described in detail in Chapter 9 under "Tense, aspect, mood."

4.3.5.2 Determiners

These words occur as components of noun phrases and are described further in Chapter Six:

specifier:	íkī	‘another one, a certain one’
referentials:	wū, bā, yī	‘the one(s) referred to’
demonstratives:	ne, né,	‘this, that, these, those’

4.3.6 Prepositions

There are two kinds of prepositions: those that are derived from nouns (mostly referring to body parts), and those that are not.

Examples of noun-derived prepositions:

- 121) **Kitú tá risū tébur.**
 calabash is head table
 The calabash is on the table.

- 122) **Awū tam isim kurug.**
 3s hide back granary
 He hid behind the granary.

Others in this group are **imbyí** ‘bottom of,’ **ijwē** ‘against,’ **uwae** ‘inside,’ **uwé** ‘in front of,’ and **uwōg** ‘at the place of.’ More examples are given in Chapter Six Section Six.

The other prepositions are: **yī** (‘to’), which occurs optionally with locations,⁶³ **té** (‘with’) expressing accompaniment, and **tí** (‘with’) expressing instrumentality.

Examples:

- 123) **Awū ru yi kutúr**
 3s go to bush
 He went to the bush.

- 124) **Ā som té m atáŋ.**
 3p sit with 1s there
 They sat with me there.

⁶³ As with **kí** in Jukun (Shimizu 1980b:243).

125) **Atī byīnn wū tí ukum.**
 1p beat 3s with stick

We beat him with a stick.

It is possible that all of these prepositions are derived from verbs. Possible cognates with **yī** in Wapan are **yē** ('to go') and **kí** ('to').

4.3.7 Conjunctions

In Chapter Eleven more will be said about complex sentences. Here it may be useful to know that there are words and phrases that join clauses together, such as:

ámá	'then'	icāen imí	'because'
asití	'if'	icāen tī	'so that'
títī	'since'	rē, ré	'or'

4.4 Conclusion

We have tried in this chapter to set out a system of word classes for Kuteb on the basis of how they are shaped phonologically, how they are used in sentences and texts, and to a more limited extent, on meaning. We have distinguished two broad categories: Major (including **Verbs** and **Nouns**) and **Minor**, including **Adjectives**, **Adverbs**, **Prepositions**, **Particles**, and **Conjunctions**. Such a categorization is inevitably rough but hopefully a useful tool to help those who want to talk about the grammar of Kuteb. Words can find themselves in different categories, as in the case of **íré** ('yesterday'), which is a **noun** in form but an **adverb** in function (hence, an 'adverbial noun'). Likewise, **uwae** ('inside') and **risū** ('head') are nouns in form but can be **prepositions** in function.

The important thing is not to force Kuteb words into English or Latin categories that may be inappropriate.⁶⁴ We have tried to avoid doing that, but as our discussion of 'transitivity' indicates, we have not succeeded completely in avoiding traditional terminology. One of the challenges for the future is to revise the above taxonomy, carefully distinguishing the kinds of criteria that are being used, whether **structural** (like the obligatory presence of an **object** word) or **semantic** (like indicating transfer of energy to an object). With regard to the category VERB, one proposal for such reorganization would be to say that 'transitive verbs' require an object noun or pronoun, whereas 'intransitive' verbs may or may not have an object. Thus **ye** 'catch, hold' would be transitive as it always takes an object (explicitly or implicitly) whereas **cwū** 'to die' would be intransitive, as it may

⁶⁴ Recognizing at the same time that there are universals with regard to word categories.

occur without an object or it may take **ricwú** as its object, the object being a 'dummy' Noun. Perhaps a better name for 'intransitive' then would be 'Multi-valent,' that is they can take more than one associated Noun Phrase, in contrast to the 'Transitive' verbs, which REQUIRE two Noun Phrases, a 'subject' and an 'object.'

CHAPTER FIVE. THE NOUN PHRASE (1)

5.1 Introduction

This chapter and the next deal with Kuteb nouns, expansions of nouns, and noun substitutes. Chapter Five treats simple and derived nouns, pronouns, numerals, and nominalizations, all of which, in some sense, are ‘words.’ Chapter Six covers several kinds of noun ‘phrases’ in the traditional sense of that word. It will be seen that in Kuteb, as in many languages of the world, the distinction between ‘word’ and ‘phrase’ is not easily defined. In some cases, word-division decisions are somewhat arbitrary.

Following recent linguistic conventions we include here simple nouns and pronouns as ‘noun phrases,’ as in:

126) Ande ifaen rū ka byīnn wū tí riwén.
 People two move go strike 3s PREP nose

Two people went and hit him on the nose.

where *ande ifaen* ‘two people’, *wū* ‘he’, and *riwén* ‘nose’ are all ‘noun phrases’ (NPs from here on) even though they are not all syntactically complex.

5.2 Simple Nominals

Structurally, nominals in Kuteb are of two kinds:

- 1) simple nouns, having the noun-class prefixes, and
- 2) derived nouns, which have been created by various morphological processes.

5.2.1 Simple Nouns

As mentioned above (Chapter 4), nouns are identifiable by their structure, which consists typically of a single-syllable stem and a V- or CV- prefix. The stem tones are, with rare exceptions, single syllables with high, mid, or low tone; the prefixes are mostly low, with a limited number of high ones. Examples:

unde	‘person’	ande	‘people’
kutúkū	‘tree’	itúkū	‘trees’
kúrāŋ	‘crow’	árāŋ	‘crows’
kúkwām	‘banana’	ákwām	‘bananas’
ubāen	‘husband’	abāen	‘husbands’
kiciŋ	‘fly’	iciŋ	‘flies’
kínûŋ	‘bird’	ánûŋ	‘birds’
kákúm	‘horse(s)’	urwā	‘fire’
indag	‘cow(s)’	kitsínn	‘jealousy’
risū	‘head’	asū	‘heads’
rífēn	‘lie’	atsam	‘sweat’
ífúnn	‘foam’	íbyāen	‘termites’

5.2.1.1 The Noun Class System⁶⁵

Kuteb nouns clearly show the remnants of the noun class system of Proto-Niger-Congo. In that system, nouns were categorized according to their meanings and marked by particular singular and plural prefixes. For example, nouns having to do with people (E.g., person, chief, child, woman, etc.) were marked by /u-/ in the singular and /ba-/ in the plural). Like many of the other Niger-Congo languages, Kuteb has lost some of the prefixes and the categorizations they represent. Within the Taraba group of languages, however, it is evident that Kuteb and Oohum (Yukuben)⁶⁶ have retained more of the old system than the others. (According to Shimizu (1980a:105), Oohum simplified the system, and then elaborated it again using vowel harmony and vowel length). Within Kuteb itself, some dialects have lost more than others. E.g., the Lissam and Lumbu dialects seem to have retained the most prefixes; Bika has lost most of the prefixes.

⁶⁵ See Kay Williamson, ‘Niger Congo Overview’ in Bendor-Samuel 1989:31-40) for a clear exposition of the Proto-Niger-Congo noun-class system and what has happened to it. An older treatment is Welmers 1973:184-210. A proposal for the Proto-Benue-Congo noun system can be found in deWolf (1971) which specifically deals with Kuteb on pp. 110-115. More recently Shimizu (1980) and Storch (2000) give brief descriptions of the noun-class system particularly in the Taraba languages.

⁶⁶ Oohum is the people’s own name for the language called ‘Yukuben’ or ‘Yikuben’ by outsiders.

The range of words in each group is illustrated below. Generally speaking, it may be said that singular nouns beginning with ku-, kú- ri-, or u- will have a- in their plurals. Those that have ki- or i- will have i- in the plural. In Welmers' data (apparently from Lissam) nouns with u- and i- always take i- in the plural whereas ku-, ki-, and ri- take a-.

ku- words

kubunn	'drum'
kubwa	'ambush'
kucwúr	'lump'
kucīn	'medicine'
kuci	'egg'
kunyā	'armpit'
kusaŋ	'year'
kuúkūn	'tree'

kú- words

kúrāŋ	'crow'
kúbyī	'cloud'
kúkwām	'banana'
kúbúbōŋ	'bell'
Kúcícēb	(a festival)
kúkwén	'priest'
kúfōb	'husk'
kúshwōŋ	'forest'

ki- words

kicáeb	'sickness'
kicwág	'sleep'
kikwār	'gourd'
kiser	'metal'
kiskínn	'morning'
kitsīnn	'jealousy'
kirāen	'fufu'
kinaŋ	'scorpion'
kiyíku	'this year'

kí- words

kícíka	'basket'
kíkog	'chest'
kíkwāe	'dove'
kínzō	'one'
kípyir	'shortness'
kísēn	'tiny bird'
kíticwáe	'bowl'
kíyib	'smallness'
kítsig	(a game)

ri- words		rí- words	
ribam	‘nakedness’	rífēn	‘lie’
ribōm	‘strength’	rímāŋ	‘how?’
rijwen	‘coldness’	ríyāe	‘opportunity’
rikāen	‘trouble’	rípye	‘part’
rinwāen	‘salt’	rínyanwae	‘gift’
risāen	‘farm’	rícwinncī	‘end’
risū	‘head’	ríkōŋ	‘false’
ritúg	‘market’	rībāe	‘spot’
u- words		ú- words	
ubāen	‘husband’	úcín	‘tale’
ufam	‘rainy season’	únde	‘work’
ufáŋ	‘farm’	úŋwu	‘mosquito’
ucin	‘guinea fowl’	úfúnn	‘foam’
ufunn	‘wind’	útug	‘taste’
ují	‘rope’	úŋā	‘jaw/temple’
i- words		í- words	
ibae	‘sack’	ísá	‘sand’
ice	‘boundary’	íte	‘father’
ibyē	‘meat, animal’	ínjā	‘brother’
icwu	‘leopard’	íré	‘yesterday’
ifaen	‘two’	ítsū	‘2 days ago’
ifēb	‘swordgrass’	ímunn	‘swimming’
inji	‘elephant’	ípúg	‘cudgel’
iyāg	‘bushcow’	ísóm	‘lice’
irá	‘word’	ínwūnn	‘bedbugs’

a- words		á- words	
anyīŋ	‘blood’	ákwām	‘bananas’
ashinn	‘urine’	ámbyī	‘water’
afunn	‘pus’	ákoŋ	‘stalks’
ajwó	‘arms’	ámúmun	‘leftovers’
abyíŋ	‘faeces’	ásáŋ	‘laterite’
afxen	‘legs’	ábyī	‘clouds’
ajwūg	‘blossoms’	átōm	‘messenger’
akoŋ	‘odor’	árāŋ	‘crows’

A number of words like the following appear to have prefixes ru- and rú-, but in fact they are variants of the ri- and rí- sets conditioned by the presence of high back vowels and/or velar consonants in the stem. It is possible that some speakers will have reanalyzed these words as beginning with ru- even though the vowel is predictable. More research is needed.

ribūŋ	‘waterhole’	ríwē	‘tsetse fly’
rikūb	‘roof’	ríkōŋ	‘untruth’
rikōm	‘corpse’	ríkwāe	‘shame’
rikwen	‘mountain’	rísū	‘locust bean’
riwén	‘nose’	rípwē	‘squirrel’

In addition to the above, a small group of nouns beginning with mba- may be found:⁶⁷

mbakúnn	‘chicken’	(pl. ikúnn)
mbapxú	‘dog’	(pl. ipxú)
mbapwa	‘maize’	(cf. pwa ‘to grind’)
mbawén	‘goat’	(pl. iwén)

Another small set of words begins with ká- :

⁶⁷ The stop feature in /mb/ here is so light as to be almost indistinguishable from /m/. Hence some have written these words as **makúnn**, **mapxú**, etc. It is possible that the **mba-** in these words is derived from the noun **umbae** ‘child’ rather than from a Niger-Congo prefix.

kákúm	‘horse(s)’	kákon	‘stalk’
kácwīn	‘locust’ ⁶⁸	kácēm	‘Patas monkey’
kámtēn	‘Colobus monkey’	káfára	‘sword’ (<H)

Two words are recorded with a low-tone ka- prefix:

kayā	‘sister’ ⁶⁹
kawa(?)	‘a lizard’

Odd nouns that do not fit any of these categories are:

Native Words

tsōwēn	‘two days hence’	cánsīn	‘hornbill’
tsōkutáj	‘three days hence’	kētíbbī	‘snake’
yáka ⁷⁰	‘today’	kōkutā	‘hunting bow’
fángó ⁷¹	‘road’	wánde	‘work’ ⁷²
tātu ⁷³	‘hunter, hunting’	wúccī	‘food’
yākā	‘female child’	shiboŋ	‘soup leaves’
wúrā	‘roselle plant’	sapáj	‘pepper’
sánkwēn	‘wild yam’		

Borrowed Words⁷⁴

dúkū	‘cassava’	gbamísa	‘sickle’
góro	‘kolanut’	keké	‘bicycle’
mākārāntā	‘school’	táya	‘tire’
adúwa	‘prayers’	tíca	‘teacher’
lókacī	‘time’	fotó	‘picture’

Some three-syllable words that were possibly built from other words are:

⁶⁸ One local speaker says this should be **kikácwēn**. So is another prefix being added on to what appears to be the original prefix, or was the **ki-** prefix original?

⁶⁹ **mbiyá** in Bika.

⁷⁰ Bika: **yínga**, Rubur: **nyíka**.

⁷¹ **fankó**, **fenkú** in other dialects.

⁷² This alternates with **únde**, from **nde** ‘do.’

⁷³ This comes from **tā** ‘shoot’ and **tu** ‘be able.’

⁷⁴ These are a few of the scores of words of foreign origin that litter the lexical landscape in everyday Kuteb speech. In some cases local equivalents are available but the adopted words are more popular.

abítsē	‘fathers’	arībén	‘earth’
átúpwá	‘clothes’	itúkū	‘trees’
ásúwá	‘beads’	kurúkūm	‘toad’
kusúru	‘wall’	kutápāen	‘cheek’
kiyíku	‘this year’	itumūm	‘lion’
kutúkūn	‘tree’	átítaen	‘stars’
kumbúkūnn	‘hill’	kutúpúg	‘pestle’
kurítén	‘python’	kútúkōg	‘kapok’
kútukūm	‘fool’	kurúfāe	‘a trap’
anyīsū	‘children’	kumbúru	‘a flute’
itsuku	‘a grass’	kičíka	‘basket’
kutútoŋ	‘pot’	ícinnsú	‘donkey’

The original Niger-Congo grammar had patterns of agreement such that numerals and other modifiers had markers that matched to the noun class. Some languages such as Tiv and Ndoro retain such patterns of agreement between nouns and numerals or between nouns and demonstratives or possessives, but the only trace of agreement left in Kuteb is in the pronouns (see below), in certain referentials (see Chapter Six), and in the prefixes of certain derived nouns (see Section 2.2.6). In view of the variation in prefixes among the dialects of Kuteb, it appears that the simplification of the system is still in process.

DeWolf (1971:115) observed a general simplification in the Proto-Benue-Congo prefix system. The PBC prefixes, he suggests, evolved as follows:

PBC prefixes *u- and *bu- merged to u- in Kuteb⁷⁵

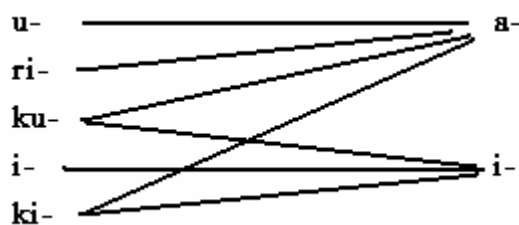
PBC prefixes *a-, *ba-, and *ma- merged to a-

PBC prefix *li- may have become ri-

PBC prefixes *í and *ì have merged to i-

PBC prefixes *ki-, *ka, and *ku, have been retained

The prefix-pairing that DeWolf proposes is as follows:



Singular classes marked by u- and ri- form plurals beginning with a-. Singular nouns with i- and ki- form plurals with i-.

Some nouns beginning with ku- may take a- in the plural, and others, i-.

In 1980 (1980a:132-176) Shimizu, on the basis of his own wordlists from two dialects plus others from Welmers, Armstrong, and myself, set out to reconstruct the proto-forms for Kuteb and Oohum (Yukuben) and how they evolved from the Proto-Benue-Congo forms to the present. The most striking fact arising from this analysis is the variation among the wordlists, three of which (Shimizu, Koops, and Welmers) are from the Lissam dialect. The Bika list is quite unhelpful historically as it represents an advanced stage of prefix loss. Armstrong's list from Jenuwa is useful as it suggests that many of Jenuwa's i-/a- prefix pairs came from ki-/a- by loss of the initial consonant.

Shimizu's proposal, dealing as it does essentially with three dialects (Lissam, Bika, Jenuwa), needs to be followed up by a study of all the dialects, in which a consensus of three people from each dialect is used to establish the most likely form from that dialect. At the same time, a dictionary of Kuteb will be essential as it will establish singular-plural pairs for a large number of nouns in at least one dialect.

5.2.1.2 Grammatical Classes of Nouns

As mentioned above, the original Niger-Congo concord system required markings on adjectives, numerals, etc. that matched the class of the head noun. While Kuteb nouns are not marked in that way, a set of referentials awū, ayī, abā (translated 'the one just referred to')⁷⁶ require a person to know into which of three groups a noun will fit (see Chapter Nine). This may be a vestige of the original system. Further study is needed to sort out precisely what the relevant qualities are (if any) for membership in each group. For the present we suggest the following:

awū, wū 'singular'

abā, bā 'plural, human'

ayī, yī 'mass, plural, abstract, inanimate, non-human'

The bā- class nouns invariably refer to (plural) humans, almost certainly a direct link to the plural prefix/concord marker bā- reconstructed for proto-Niger-Congo (See Williamson 1989:38). We present only the wū- and yī- class nouns. First those referred to by wū /awū:

⁷⁶ These may appear to be identical with the third-person pronouns, but their distribution is different.

unde	‘person’	umbae	‘child’
inji	‘elephant’	ibyē	‘animal’
kitú	‘calabash’	uwōg	‘place’
kicáeb	‘sickness’	kusóg	‘house’
usāŋ	‘python’	uwáe	‘hole’
iyāg	‘bushcow’	rikaen	‘poison’
ribén	‘ground’	ríbyāen	‘locust’

Nouns referred to by yī/ayī :

asóg	‘huts’	awúm	‘corn’
kicáeb	‘sickness’	anyī	‘teeth’
ayéb	‘millet’	ijwē	‘body’
ayāen	‘kernels’	mbapwa	‘maize’
upae	‘penalty’	itúkū	‘trees’
irím	‘grass’	ákwa	‘a cult’
akūb	‘bones’	kirāen	‘food’
kuce	‘net’	apwā	‘skin’
arībén	‘lay’	kiskínn	‘morning’
ajwūg	‘flowers’	icwo	‘palmnuts’
use	‘dance’	ivyē	‘animals’
ivyē	‘meat’	urú	‘game’
iyāg	‘buffaloes’	icír	‘yam(s)’
itsab	‘acumen’	ikén	‘things’
ibēn	‘marriage’	ukōb	‘flute’
abāen	‘branches’	kindob	‘oil’
táriko (<H)	‘trap’	iwōg	‘honey’
acīn	‘medicine’	únde	‘work’
rikaen	‘poison’	anyīŋ	‘blood’
dúkū (<H)	‘cassava’	kupwā	‘skin’
irá	‘word’	karatū (<H)	‘reading’

It may be seen that the range of antecedents for ayī is wide, ranging from plurals to uncountable objects to singulars. Note, however, that most of those that are formally singular (having ku-, ki-, u-, ri- prefixes) are non-individuated nouns.

Furthermore, the categories of nouns that may be co-referential with *awū* and *ayī* overlap slightly. Our texts include *kicáeb* ‘sickness,’ *ámbyī* ‘water,’ *apxín* ‘spirit/s,’ *aser* ‘money,’ and *anyīŋ* ‘blood’ with both *awū* and *ayī* as referential/anaphoric markers. In general, however, it may be seen that the bulk of the nouns evoking *ayī* are plurals, mass nouns, or abstracts. It is possible also that these examples, derived from oral texts, may be challenged by some people after further consideration.

5.2.2 Derived Nouns

5.2.2.1 Proper Names:

Many proper nouns encode a complete proposition, such as:

Āpwende < **ā pwen ande**
 3p count people
 (a name given during a census)

Ācīriká < **ā cī riká**
 3p eat war
 (a name given during a conflict)

Āndeyatsō < **ā ndeya átsō**
 3p help each other

Āpūnarimam < **ā pū na Rimam**
 3p take give God

Some names do not have the initial *a-*, a feature that may be dialectal: *Fxētírímam*, *Sapúru*, *Somtínde*, *Ndeyatī*, *Pūnarimam*, are examples.

Some names begin with other nouns:

Awúmsikwe	<	awúm	si	ukwe
		guineacorn	is	chief
Ikyisinde	<	ikiyi	si	unde
		masquerade	is	person
Rimamndeyatī	<	Rimam	ndeya	tī
		God	help	us
Kurūtsi	<	kurū	tsi	
		home	stand	(i.e. the lineage is established)
Ukwesatī	<	ukwe	si	atī
		chief	is	us (i.e. the chieftaincy is in our

hands)

5.2.2.2 Nouns formed from Verb + Object Noun

A number of processes have been used for nominalization but are not currently productive. For example, a small set of nouns is derived from the prefix *rí-* plus a verb plus a noun stem or verb extension. The following words illustrate the process:

ríturbyín *rí-* + *túr* ‘push’ + (a)byín ‘dung’ ‘dung beetle’
rínyanwae *rí-*+ *nyan* ‘good’ + (u)wae ‘inside’ ‘gift’

The tone on these nouns needs further study. Sometimes they sound like they begin with a mid-tone, but it could be a lowered high. On the other hand they may have an inherent mid tone that is raised by the polar tone rule. In the following examples, not all the formative constituents can be identified:

rípocwú ‘biting fly’ (*ricwú* = ‘death,’ ‘ghost’)
rípobyáen ‘nightjar’ (*abyáen* = ‘breasts,’ ‘milk’)
ríkwérfé ‘corner’ (*kwēr* = ‘strike,’ ‘join’)
ríkamsínn ‘spider’ (*kam* = ‘squeeze’)
rífunnṯā ‘total’ (*funn* = ‘gather’)
ríkunnṯīg ‘catfish’ (*kunn* = ‘shock’)
rícwēnbyín ‘hyena’ (*abyín* = ‘dung’)
ríkantā ‘portion’ (*kantā* = ‘divide’)

Just one noun in my data has the above structure but a different prefix:

ushitoŋ ‘stirrer’ (< *shir* = ‘pull’ *utoŋ* = ‘soup’)

5.2.2.3 Nouns of N + V structure:

I have only one case in this category so far (although there are some names with this structure; see 2.1):

kujwóján ‘reward’ (*kujwó* ‘arm’ + *ján* ‘lick’)

5.2.2.4 Nouns formed by reduplication

Some nominals of three syllables are derived via reduplication:

ábúbúnn	‘shells’	kúbúbōŋ	‘a bell’
mbútsutsu	‘coucal’	árírag	‘gum’
kucwucwub	‘owl’	kísísaen	(kind of ant)
ásískir	‘tiny fish’	kúcíciŋ	‘finger’
Kúcícēb	(a festival)	apúpwen	‘sky’
kikukwe	‘a snake’	kútútūn	‘fig tree’
ámímyím	‘scars’	kiririm	‘worm’
ámúmun	‘fragments’	caŋkonkón	‘instrument’

5.2.2.5 Nouns formed from the Associative Construction⁷⁷

Some compounds are formed by the joining of two nouns (in which case the prefix of the second is lost), or a noun plus a verb. In a number of cases, one or both of the two nouns no longer occurs as a separate lexical item.

kupenjwín	‘windpipe’	(kupen= ?; ujwín = ‘voice’)
kutácwōŋ	‘a trap’	(kutá = ‘bow’; ucwōŋ = ?)
ísábūn	‘sand’	(ísá = ‘sand’; ribūn = ‘spring’)
akāenjag	‘area behind compound’	
iwéntām	‘sheep’	(iwén = ‘sheep/goats’)
iwéntēn	‘goat’	
kwerúbūn	‘dragonfly’	(ukwe= ‘chief’; ribūn = ‘spring’)
kikúnyaŋ	‘ring’	
atútoŋ	‘pots’	(atú = ‘gourds’; utoŋ = ‘soup’)
kutsīnkén	‘paper’	(kutsīŋ = ‘leaf’; ikén = ‘thing’)

5.2.2.6 Nominalizations with Prefix + tī

A number of compounds are formed by nominalizing an attributive phrase beginning with the relativizer tī. Insofar as I have been able to analyze it, the prefixes are:⁷⁸

- u- for singular
- a- for (human) plural

⁷⁷ See Chapter Six (section 4.0) for a description of the syntax of the associative construction.

⁷⁸ Once again, the prefix tones here need careful examination. The initial tone sometimes sounds like mid. It is possible that the underlying low tone is being raised in anticipation of the following mid.

i- for abstracts/non-human plural

I introduce five different structures here before illustrating them one by one:

Prefix + tī + Verb

Prefix + tī + Adj

Prefix + tī + Noun

Prefix + tī + Verb + Noun

Prefix + tī + Sentence

Prefix + tī + Verb

itibá	‘coming’	itimbúbsī	‘destruction’
itīsī	‘descending’	itípwen	‘counting’
itirū	‘going’	itikábye	‘thought’
itirūyé	‘exit’ (N)	itindeya	‘help’ (N)
itikafe	‘turn’ (N)	itīnwáṅrū	‘salvation’

Note that the prefix in every case here is i- and that these nouns will take the pronoun yī/ayī. Whether there is a historical link here or not is a topic for further investigation. It may also be observed that in place of the prefix i- some speakers double the ti-. For example:

tīti	‘eating’
tītīṅwā	‘drinking’
tītibá	‘coming’

Some examples of abstract nouns in context:

- 127) **Itibá-fu pāṅ atáṅ.**
 coming-2s be enough there.
 Your coming is appropriate.

- 128) **Ā mūm kukwae tī itítsikunn-yī tá-yī bē.**
 3p dig hole REL stand-end-3s be-3s NEG
 They dug a bottomless hole.

- 129) **Iti** **tí** **itīṅwā** **tá-yī** **bē.**

eating and drinking be-3s NEG

There was no eating and drinking.

Prefix + Adjective

In contrast to the abstracts above, these nouns refer to individual objects or people bearing certain qualities. Examples:

utībyāen	‘the red one’	itībyāen	‘the red ones’ ⁷⁹
utīnyañ	‘the good one’	itīnyañ	‘the good ones’
atīshé	‘the new ones’	atīcí	‘the old ones’

Some concrete singular nouns also take a double-ti. Presumably they are based on the double -ti adjectives that are described in Chapter Four. Examples:

Short form		Long form
utībyāen	‘the red one’	utītībyāen
utīnyīñ	‘the younger one’	utītīnyīñ
utīshír	‘the male one’	utītīshír
itīyáe	‘the female ones’	utītīyáe

The word **utītībī** ‘the bad one’ only occurs in the long form.

Another variety of derived noun uses the reduplicated form of the stative verb:

itīfīfab	‘the sour ones’	utījījīm	‘the cool one’
utīrūrōb	‘the heavy one’	utītsītsēn	‘the white one’
utītútóm	‘the light one’	itībībyāg	‘the hot ones’

⁷⁹There is potential ambiguity between the inanimate plural concrete nouns and abstracts, as both categories begin with **i-**. For example, **itībyāen** can mean ‘the red/ones’ or ‘redness’ as in **Itībyāen tumátor-wū si-yī tī tīrī bē**. ‘The redness of his tomatoes is indescribable.’

Prefix + *tī* + Noun

utīriwáe	‘the tall one’	riwáe	‘tallness’
atīrikīm	‘the fat ones’	rikīm	‘fatness’
utíkípyir	‘the short one’	kípyir	‘shortness’
itīndá	‘the female ones’	undá	‘woman’
itīribōm	‘the strong one(s)’	ribōm	‘strength’
atīrikwen	‘the ones of the mountain’	rikwen	‘mountain’
utīrúmtísib	‘the green one’	irúmtísib	‘fresh grass’
utīkundebúkān	‘the yellow one’	kundebúkān	‘yellowness’
utīkucaŋ	‘the original one’	kucaŋ	‘beginning’
utíkíyib	‘the small one’	kíyib	‘smallness’

5.2.2.7 Nominalized clauses (prefix + *tā*+ S)

Short relative clauses are sometimes nominalized by prefixing the noun prefix plus the nominalizer/relativizer *tī*. Although we write these constructions as separate words, the prefixal element (*atī*, *utī*, *itī*) is bound to what follows. Examples:

- 130) **Atī kú bá ne si aná-m.**
REL IMP come DEM be POSS-1s

The ones (children) coming are mine.

Some speakers use *atā* /*utā* /*itā* as variants of *atī* /*utī* /*itī* (as they do also in normal relative clauses). Probably this represents an elision of *tī* plus *ā* (third person human plural pronoun) that has generalized to cover singular and plural cases.⁸⁰

- 131) **Utā mbér kufxen ú caŋ fob-wū bē.**
REL break leg FUT walk reach-3s NEG

The one with the broken leg will not be able to walk.

- 132) **Atā tsō kákúm ŋwáŋrū.**
REL mount horse escape

Those who rode horses escaped.

⁸⁰ The use of *tā* for *tī* seems to be limited to the Lissam dialect.

133) **Itā wāmtág pú-yī, pū yī rū ka tēn urwā.**
 REL dry-all PERF-3 take 3 move go burn fire

Take the completely dry ones and burn them.

5.2.2.8 Nominalizations with Incorporated Object

Verb-Object sequences can be nominalized by reversing their order and inserting the relator *tī* or *tí*, as follows:⁸¹

Awū ye iwág. → iwág tí ye
 3s catch fish fish REL catch
 He caught a fish. 'fishing'

Other common nominalizations:

irím tí sub
 grass REL pull 'grass-pulling'

rikúb tī shwú
 roof REL thatch 'thatching roofs'

mbakúnn tí shi
 chicken REL tend 'tending chickens'

ibyē tí fe
 animal REL scare 'animal scaring (from crops)'

Verbal noun phrases of this sort tend to express routine activities as is illustrated in the title of a text on house-building:

únde ná kusóg tí mbye
 work of house REL build
 'the work of house-building'

The text includes the following sentence:

134) **Andá ú rū uwōg ákoṅ tī shā,**
 women FUT go place stalks REL seek

aróm má ú rū uwōg ifēb tí sīb.
 men also FUT go place grass REL pull

The women will go to look for (corn) stalks, and the men will go to pull swordgrass.

Other examples:

⁸¹ High tone *tí* precedes low tone verbs. Mid tone *tī* is found elsewhere.

135	At	kú	fwā-	umba	kusen	tí	asú	tī	txún	bē.
)	ī		tī	e						
	1p	IM	warn	child	warnin	RE	insul	RE	insul	NE
		P	-1p		g	L	t	L	t	G

We don't scold a child with insults.

Compare:

136	Atī	txún	bā	asú.
	1p	abuse	3p	insult

We insulted them.

137)	Afu	mbakúnn	skeb	pú-fu	ame	tí	ikén	tī	cī.
	2s	chicken	pass	PRF-2s	1s	with	thing	REL	eat

You, chicken, surpass me at eating.

5.2.2.9 Nominalized Possessive Pronouns

Although the pronouns proper are introduced in Chapter Four and further expanded in Chapter Nine, I introduce one form of them here in their capacity as independent nominals. These pronouns consist of a nominalizing prefix *a-*, the possessive marker *ná*, and a shortened form of the pronoun:

aná-m	'mine'	aná-tī	'ours'
aná-fu	'yours'	aná-nī	'yours'
aná-wū	'his'	aná-bā	'theirs'
aná-yī	'its/theirs'		

Examples in Sentences:

138)	Aná-m	kú	bá	tīnine	ahán.
	mine	IMP	come	now	thus

Mine (children) are just coming now.

- 139) **Anáfu kób skeb anáwu.**
yours tall pass his

Yours is/are taller than his.

5.2.2.10 Nominalized Possessive Nouns

The nominalized possessive construction also works with nouns (and noun phrases), as in the examples below. As in the case of nominals beginning with *ati*, *uti*, *iti*, the *aná* here is bound, even though we write it separately from what follows.

- 140) **Anáfu tá iké; aná Títí tá akā?**
yours be here that-of Titi be where?

Here is yours; where is Titi's?

- 141) **Aser acikunn skeb pú-yī aná mbapwa.**
money beans pass PRF-3s that-of maize

The cost of beans is more than that of maize.

5.2.2.11 Nominalized Specifiers

The specifier *íkīn* in Kuteb is something like an article in English. It is usually translated as 'a certain...' or as 'another.'⁸² Three constructions are included here: 1) The unmarked nominalized specifier, 2) specifiers with *u*, *i*, *a*, and 3) the words for 'something, and 'someplace.'

The Unmarked Nominalized specifier: *íkīn*

The specifier *íkīn* (*íkī* in other dialects) can stand alone as an independent nominal, as in the following:

- 142) **Awū tu kíkwb kínzō uwae kununn, ú rū ka**
3s find hoe one in home SEQ move go

jāeb íkīn uwae ritúg.
buy another in market

He found one hoe at home, and went and bought another one in the market.

⁸² The specifier is nasalized [*íkī*] in Lissam but not elsewhere [*íkī*]. The Lissam version, being more conservative, hints that the specifier may have grammaticalized from the word *ikén* / *ikín* 'thing.'

- 143) **Ibyē tī nī wēn atáŋ si kó awū ámām,**
 animal REL 2p kill there be only 3s alone

rē, ré tī nī wēn cī íkīn fā cī?
 or REL 2p kill again another together again
 Was it only this one that you killed, or did you kill others?

- 144) **Afu a bá fob wakúnunn afu ú sa**
 2s COND come reach home 2s FUT take

íkīn nwūnn sī kīkwēr, ú nwūnn íkīn sī kitēn.
 some pour down gourd, SEQ pour some down pot

When you reach home, you pour some into a gourd, and some into a pot.

- 145) **Íkīn tá atáŋ, si Yakubu; íkīn tá atáŋ, si Bushi.**
 one be there be Yakubu another be there be Bushi
 One of them was Yakubu, another was Bushi.

- 146) **Ikīn tá atáŋ, ā kú kūnn rinyí-wū sī kutá.**
 another be there, 3p IMP call name-3s COMP kutá
 There is another (type of trap) they call 'kuta.'

Specifiers with u, i, a

A related set of nominals consists of a prefix, the sound /r/, and the specifier-root íkīn :

uríkīn 'someone' / 'another person'
 aríkīn 'some people' / 'other people'
 iríkīn 'some thing(s)' / 'other things'

Examples:

- 147) **Aríkīn kú jāeb ikén tī tīshé tīnine.**
 some people IMP buy thing/s new now
 Some people are buying new things now.

- 148) **Ī nyaṅ skeb tī fu shā iríkīn tī tīnyaṅ.**
 3 good pass REL 2s seek another of good
 It would be better for you to look for another one that is good.

- 149) **Uríkīn rī té m bāa, ...**
 a person say with 1s COMP
 Someone told me that ...

Other Independent Specifiers

Another set of words consists of certain very common nouns with the specifier frozen onto them:

wúkīn	‘a certain place’	< uwōg íkīn
kíkīn	‘something’	< ikén íkīn

It is typical for specifiers (or articles) to lose their specifying function and become part of the noun like this. Williamson (following Greenberg) describes the process as a possible source of noun prefixes in Pre-Niger-Congo (Bendor-Samuel 1989 p. 32). In fact, Kuteb illustrates the process perfectly by the numerous cases in the data where the live specifier is added to the fossilized forms:

- 150) Awū rū ka fob wúkīn íkīn.
 3s move go reach certain place SPEC
 He went along and reached a certain place.

- 151) Kíkin íkīn nde-yī ame bē.
 something SPEC do-3 1s NEG
 Nothing happened to me.

One even hears the phrase

wání	kíkīn	íkīn,
SPEC	something	SPEC a certain something

This begins with the specifier wani from Hausa (in its usual prenominal position for Hausa) and ends with both the fossilized and ‘live’ specifiers following the noun.

5.2.2.12 Nominalized Demonstrative⁸³

In this construction the prefix *a-* occurs with the descriptive demonstratives *wūne*, *yīne*, *bāne* to form a nominal.

- 152) **Awūne si aná ayē?**
 DEM be that-of who?

Whose is this one?

- 153) **Atī tu ayīne uwae kusóg.**
 1p find DEM inside house

We found these (objects) in the house.

- 154) **Ame som té abāne.**
 1s stay with DEM

I stayed with these (people).

The following example of the distal demonstrative standing alone is unusual:

- 155) **Né si uwé-fu a ?**
 DEM be face-2s Q

Is that really you?

The process by which compound words form from phrases is gradual, and, of course, subject to fluctuation, as is the case of words in many languages, E.g., ‘fencepost’ or ‘bloodtest’ in English, which can be debated as to whether they are single words or not.

5.2.2.13 Numerals

The numbers, although formally comprised of single nouns and noun phrases, are described here because together they form a single semantic field.

⁸³ Demonstratives are discussed at greater length in Chapter Ten.

kínzō	‘one’	rijwē asūkínzō	‘eleven’
ifaen	‘two’	rijwē asūfaen	‘twelve’
itā	‘three’	rijwē asūtā	‘thirteen’
inje	‘four’	rijwē asūnje	‘fouteen’
itsónj	‘five’	rijwē asūtsónj	‘fifteen’
itsónjnzō	‘six’	rijwē asūtsónjnzō	‘sixteen’
itsónjfaen	‘seven’	rijwē asūtsónjfaen	‘seventeen’
itsónjtā	‘eight’	riwē asūtsónjtā	‘eighteen’
itsónjnje	‘nine’	riwē asūtsónjnje	‘ninteen’
rijwē	‘ten’	mae rikōm	‘twenty’

rikōm asūkínzō	‘twenty-one’
rikōm asūfaen	‘twenty-two’
etc,	
rikōm mbé rijwē	
or rijwētā (10 x 3)	‘thirty’
rijwētā asūkínzō	‘thirty-one’
rijwētā asūfaen	‘thirty-two’
etc.	
mae ifaen / andefaen	‘forty’
ande faen asūkínzō	‘forty-one’
ande faen asūfaen	‘forty-two’
ande faen mbé rijwē	‘fifty’
ande faen mbé rijwē asūkínzō	‘fifty-one’
ande faen mbé rijwē asūfaen	‘fifty-two’
ande itā	‘sixty’
ande itā asūkínzō	‘sixty-one’
ande itā asūfaen	‘sixty-two’
ande itā mbé rijwē	‘seventy’
ande itā mbé rijwe asū kínzō	‘seventy-one’
ande inje	‘eighty’
ande inje asūkínzō	‘eighty-one’
ande inje mbé rijwē	‘ninety’
ande inje mbé rijwē asūkínzō	‘ninety-one’
ande itsónj	‘one hundred’

Note that the numbering system is based on five, with separate words for ‘ten’ and ‘twenty.’ The element asū in rijwē asūkínzō is written together with what follows because it does not otherwise stand on its own as a word. There are inconsistencies in the way the numerals are divided, and this is not the only way to write them. A standard has not yet been set.

Some observations on the numerals.

The numbers 6-9 are obviously compounded from 5+1, 5+2, 5+3, 5+4. We write them as single words because, like other compounded nouns, the second member has lost its prefix and the stem is pronounced as two syllables. The third syllable of

itsóngfaen (seven) sometimes glides from high to low, which is also a common phenomenon in compounds in which a low tone root follows as high one.

As is the case with other nouns that modify a head noun in a phrase, non-initial numbers will often drop the prefix, e.g. *ande ifaen* [andefaen] ‘two people,’ *ande itā* > [ande tā] ‘three people,’ *andá inje* [andánje] ‘four women.’ However in many cases, depending on the speed of utterance, the tone of the number’s prefix will influence the tone of the previous stem, particularly if that stem ends with a vowel. E.g., *andá itsónj* [andâtsónj] ‘five women.’ Here, as in the standard writing, the full forms are written.

In the numbers from 11 to 19 the prefixes /a-/ and /k-/ of /asū/ and /kínzō/ are dropped in rapid speech, yielding [rijwēsūínzō], [rijwēsūfaen], etc. Sometimes the initial /ri-/ is dropped as well. The *su* of *asū* may also be influenced by the vowel of *ifaen*, *ita*, *inje*, *itsónj* to become *asī/sī* (that is, *rijwēsīfaen*, *rijwēsītā*, etc.)

The word *rikōm* ‘twenty’ appears to be related to the word for ‘corpse.’⁸⁴ The word *asū* in numerals above ten is presumably related to *risū* ‘head.’

In some of the other dialects, the numerals 40, 60, 80, and 100 are *mae ifaen* ‘40’ *mae itā* ‘60’ *mae inje* ‘80’ and *mae itsónj* ‘100.’

Koelle (1854) records the word ‘three’ as *itār*, which indicates that the final consonant has been lost by most speakers in the present generation. It is possible that the stem vowel (ae) found in the *Tsaensi*, *Tsaenskun*, and *Ticwo* dialects is a remnant of the final consonant loss. Likewise, the number ten is sometimes heard with a final *r* (*rijwēr*) probably indicating an earlier form of the word.

5.3 Pronouns

Although the function and form of pronouns will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Nine, I introduce them here as exponents of the Noun Phrase. Three semantic components are involved: the traditional ‘person,’ and ‘number,’ plus the factor ‘human/non-human,’ the exact role of which I do not completely understand. I set them out as parameters in the following diagram:

⁸⁴ Note the similar use of **adi** ‘body’ in *Jukun* (Shimizu 1980:139).

	singular	plural	non-human
1 st p	ame/me/m 'I,' 'me'	atī/tī 'we,' 'us'	
2 nd p	afu/fu/u 'you' (sg)	anī/nī 'you' (pl)	
3 rd p	awū/wū/ū, 'he,' 'she,' 'him,' 'her'	abā/bā/ā 'they,' 'them'	ayī/yī/ī 'it,' 'they,' 'them'

The distribution of the various forms is spelled out in Chapter Nine, Section 3.1.1.

5.4 Conclusion

We have examined here a number of the kinds of things that can encode an argument in a proposition, that is to say roughly, words and phrases that can act as a subject or predicate of a sentence. Nouns, Pronouns, Noun Phrases, Demonstratives, Nominalized Possessives, and Nominalized Specifiers and Pronouns are among them.

Further research is needed in the matter of noun prefixes, due to the fluctuation that seems to prevail across dialects and even among speakers of a single dialect. A large number of nouns need to be elicited from several different speakers to determine a consensus. This will be useful not only in terms of standardizing the language but also as a historical tool to help us know what went before.

CHAPTER SIX. THE NOUN PHRASE (2)

6.1 Introduction

Having treated simple nominals and other words and constructions that behave like nouns, I now turn to expansions of nouns into noun phrases. These phrases exhibit a variety of structures, described under the following headings:

1. NP's with determiners and qualifiers:

specifier:	íkīn	'a certain X, another X'
referentials:	wū, bā, yī	'the X referred to'
demonstratives:	ne; né	'this X, that X.'
quantifiers:	mēmē, kínzō, ifaen	'all Xs, one X, two Xs'
adjectives	tīyāṅ, tībyāen	'the big X, the red X.'

2. NP's with relater **tī** / Adjectives:

N tī Num	'the 2nd X'
N tī N	'the ... X'
N + Adj	'the good X'
N tī S (relative clause)	'the X that...'

3. NP's with genitive **ná** and /' (high tone):

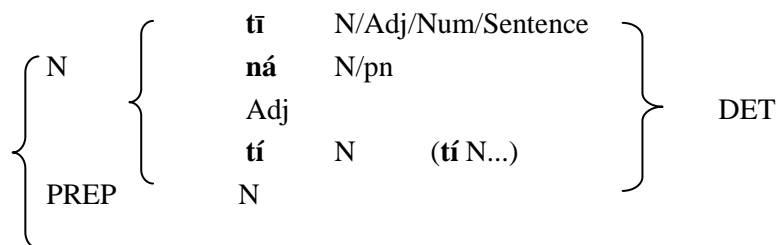
N ' pn	'my X'	N ná pn	'my X'
N ' N	'John's X'	N ná N	'John's X'

4. Co-ordinate Phrases:

N tí N (tí N)	'X and Y (and Z)'
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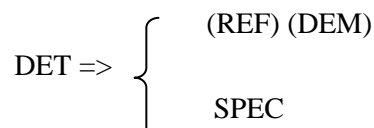
5. Appositives: N, N

The variety of structures instantiated by these phrases can be roughly diagrammed as follows:



6.2 NP's with determiners

I consider here three types of words that we shall call 'determiners,' namely, referentials (like 'the one'), demonstratives ('this, that'), and specifiers ('a certain'). Their subdivision and ordering can be diagrammed as follows:



When present in a Noun Phrase, they always come last, as in:

ande	ifaen	íkīn			
people	two	SPEC			'a certain two people'
ande	tī	uwé	ne		
people	REL	front	DEM		'these leaders'
kusóg acīn	wū				
hospital	REF				'the hospital referred to'
ande	tī	ricen	bā	ne	
people	REL	stranger	REF	DEM	'these strangers'

The determiners are:

- the specifier **íkīn**⁸⁵
- the referentials **wū, bā, yī**
- the demonstrative **ne**

The words **mēmē**, and/or **pátág** 'all' may follow the demonstrative (**ne**):

ande	tī	askáb	bā	ne	mēmē (pátág)
people	of	foolishness	REF	DEM	all (all)

(absolutely) all of these foolish people

6.2.1 The specifier **íkīn**⁸⁶

Translated 'a certain,' 'some,' 'another,' 'other' in English, this word is typically used in text with three functions:

Function 1. Introducing a new character in a narrative or a new topic in a conversation:

⁸⁵ The word **íkīn** is **íkī** in most of the other dialects. It is possibly developed from the word for 'thing,' **ikín** / **ikén**, although note the tone difference. Note also the word for 'one' **kīnzō**, possibly a compound of **kín** and ***nzo**.

⁸⁶ The specifier can also stand alone as a nominal (see Chapter 5, Section 2.2.7 for details).

- 156) **Úcín** kisung-m cangcicang rū ka ye ukwe íkī.
 tale hare-1s walk move go catch chief SPEC
 My story is about a certain chief.

Without the specifier, this sentence would be construed as referring to the local chief.

- 157) Ande íkī bá kú shā rifab-fu tīnene.
 people some come IMP seek trail-2s now
 Some people were looking for you just now.

- 158) Íré ame núng unde íkī uwae ritúg.
 yesterday 1s see person SPEC in market
 Yesterday I saw a (specific but unnamed) person in the market.

Compare the following:

- 159) ? Íré ame núng unde uwae ritúg.
 yesterday 1s see person in market
 *Yesterday I saw person in the market.

Sentence 4) is peculiar because one expects to see people in the market. It would have been acceptable in the case of a more unusual object, as in:

- 160) Íré ame núng itumūm uwae ritúg.
 yesterday 1s see lion in market
 Yesterday I saw a lion in the market.

To add the specifier to **itumūm** in 5) would be to individuate the referent, giving the impression that another lion had been previously discussed or that the speaker is now going to elaborate on this lion:

- 161) Íré ame núng itumūm íkī uwae ritúg.
 yesterday 1s see lion SPEC in market
 Yesterday I saw a (certain) lion in the market.

Function 2. Identifying one of several items

- 162) A kú kūnn imbô íkī bāa, Péta
 3p IMP call chimp one COMP Peter
 They called one of the chimpanzees 'Peter.' (others implied)

- 163) Báyé usir íkī tírī...

come day SPEC then

Then one day...

Function 3. Contrasting a person or object with another focal person or object in the immediate context:

164) Ayéḅ íkī kú nde isháen itā, ayéḅ íkī kú
millet some IMP do month three, millet other IMP

nde ishaen inje, yī kú bēn atáng.
do month four 3 IMP ripen there

Some millet takes three months, other millet takes four months to ripen.

165) Rinyí mbapxú-m íkī rī bāa, Birzémte.
Name dog-1s another say COMP Birzemte
The name of another one of my dogs is Birzemte.

This was spoken after one dog was named in the conversation.

166) Anī náe iké kutē rē, ré abítē-nī nwúnn
2p lie here before or fathers-2p rise

uwōg íkī rū bá náe iké ne?
place another move come lie here DEM

Did you live here long ago, or did your ancestors move here from another place?

In the above sentence, **uwōg íkīn** is contrasted with **iké** 'here.'

Function 4. With negative (*bē*) to mean 'not any'

167) Irá-bā íkī tá-yī atáng bē.
matter-3p SPEC be-3 there NEG
It is none of their business.

168) Afu a mbé-fu undá íkī **kíka** bē, ...
2s COND receive-2s woman SPEC yet NEG
If you have not yet married (any woman)...

Contrast the latter sentence with:

- 169) Afu a mbé-fu undá **kíka** bē,
 2s COND receive-2s woman yet NEG
 If you have not yet gotten married...

6.2.2 Referentials: awū/wū, abā/bā ayī/yī

This set of three words is described in more detail in Chapter Ten on ‘referring words.’ Briefly, these words refer to nominals that have been mentioned previously in the discourse. They belong to the same referential system as the specifier, as may be shown by the fact that the two do not co-occur in a phrase:

*unde	íkī	wū	
man	SPEC	REF	*the a certain man
*unde	wū	íkī	
man	REF	SPEC	*a certain the man

Examples:

- 170) **Unde wū si ínjā-m.**
 person REF be brother-1s
 The man referred to is my brother.

- 171) **Andá bā kúrtu-bā kirāen bē.**
 women REF stir-ABIL-3p food NEG
 The women referred to can’t make food.

- 172) **Irúm yī tācī fangó.**
 grass REF block road
 The grass referred to blocked the road.

The longer form of the referential is used when a possessive pronoun intervenes between it and the head noun:

umbae-m awū	‘my son to whom someone referred’
awá-wū abā	‘his wives to whom someone referred’
indag-tī ayī ⁸⁷	‘our cow/s to whom someone referred’

6.2.3 Demonstratives

The deictics **ne** ‘this’ and **né** ‘that,’ described in greater detail in Chapter Ten on referring words, occur immediately following a simple noun, or after the head of a complex noun phrase.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ The final vowel of the possessive pronoun in this position is always dropped: [awáwabā], [indāktayī]. See Chapter 3 Section 4 for phonological details.

unde ne	‘this person’
anyīsū né	‘those children’
irá ne	‘this matter’
anyīsū tī undá ne	‘these girls’
urwán-fu né	‘that friend of yours’
ande inje ne	‘these four people’
kusóg acīn né	‘that hospital’

When the referential and demonstrative occur together, the referential always comes last.⁸⁹

kusóg wū ne	‘this house’
andá bā né	‘those women’
utong yī ne	‘this soup’

It is common in Lissam to hear the word **ahán** ‘thus’ after the demonstrative: The addition of **ahán** does not appear to make any appreciable difference in meaning.

umbae ne ahán	
child DEM thus	‘this child’

The referential and demonstrative occur together in such frequency that in the standard orthography they are written as one word (**wūne**, **bāne**, **yīne**). This may reflect an intuitive sense that the demonstrative and referential functions are fusing.

6.2.4 NPs with quantifiers

A qualifying numeral in a NP follows the noun directly, before a determiner:

ande ifaen	‘two people’
ande ifaen ne	‘these two people’
ande ifaen bā	‘the two people referred to’
itúkū rijwēr asūtsóngfaen yī ne	‘these 17 trees referred to’

As the latter phrase indicates, the numeral component is itself complex.

The words **mēmē** ‘all’ and **pátág** ‘emphatic all,’ when present, occur at the end:

⁸⁸ Many Niger-Congo languages have a word like **ne** that occurs at the end of a noun phrase (e.g. **nde** in Fula; **ne/le** in Mandinka). See Williamson 1989:33-34.

⁸⁹ The forms **wū ne**, **bā ne**, and **yī ne** have nominal counterparts **awū ne**, **abā ne**, and **ayī ne** which are described in Chapter 5, Section 2.2.9.

ande mēmē	‘all the people’
ande bā mēmē	‘all the people referred to’
ande bā ne mēmē	‘all these people referred to’
ande bā mēmē pátág ⁹⁰	‘absolutely all the people referred to’
ande itsóngfaen bā ne mēmē	‘all seven of these people’

6.2.5 NPs with Adjectives

Adjectives as a word class were introduced in Chapter Four (Section 3.2). Here they are seen as forming attributive phrases modifying a head. Examples of adjective in NPs follow:

mbakúnn tībyīr	
chicken black	‘black chicken’
undag tīshé	
cow new	‘new cow’
iwág tīsīb	
fish fresh	‘fresh fish’

6.3 NPs with relator tī

The expressions in this section are marked by the presence of the relator **tī** (which needs to be carefully distinguished from the very similar conjunction **tī** ‘and’). I distinguish four general types here on the basis of the nature of the attributive component:

- those with a *numeral* as attributive component
- those with a *nominal* attributive component
- those with an *adjectival* attributive component
- those with a *sentence* as attributive component

6.3.1 NPs with numeral attributive component

The following examples correspond to the ‘ordinal numbers’ in English:

⁹⁰ The sentence final position of **pátág** suggests it could perhaps be considered an ideophone rather than a quantifier. On ideophones see Chapter 4 Section 3.1.

unde tī ifaen

person REL two

'the second person'

kusang tī rijwē-sū-tā

year REL thirteen

'the 13th year'

6.3.2 NPs with nominal attributive component

NPs with nominal attributive component are further discussed in 7.0) Many of these phrases are built on a set of what could be called quality nouns, such as

kucáen	'oldness'	riwáe	'tallness'	rikīm	'fatness'
kitínyīng	'smallness'	rikpāg	'hardness'	kuskáb	'foolishness'

Examples:

undá tī kucáen	'old woman'
umbae tī riwáe	'tall child'
mbawén tī rikīm	'fat sheep'
anyīsū tī kitínyīng	'small children'

There are many other nouns, however, which may be used in an attributive function. In the following, the words **uróm** 'male,' **undá** 'female,' **kununn** 'home,' **kutúr** 'bush,' **uwé** 'front, face,' **rikwen** 'mountain,' and **Ikám** 'Ikam town' are used as attributives:

mbakúnn tī uróm	'male chicken'
umbae tī undá	'female child'
mbapxú tī kununn	'house dog'
ibyé tī kutúr	'bush animal/meat'
unde tī uwé	'leader' (person of front)
ande tī rikwen	'mountain people'
kusóg acīn tī Ikám	'Ikam hospital'

The independent (nominalized) possessives (described above in Ch. 5 Section 2.2.9) are sometimes used in this attributive construction as follows:

riwén	tī	anáwū	
nose	REL	his	'his own nose'
iwaen	tī	anábā	
beds	REL	their	'their beds'

icír	tī	aná	Tīb ⁹¹	
yams	REL	of	Tiv	‘Tiv yams’

6.3.3 NPs with Adjectival Component

As explained in Chapter Four (Section 3.2) the relater **tī** sometimes precedes adjectives. Here they are seen as forming attributive phrases modifying a head. Examples of adjectives in NPs follow:

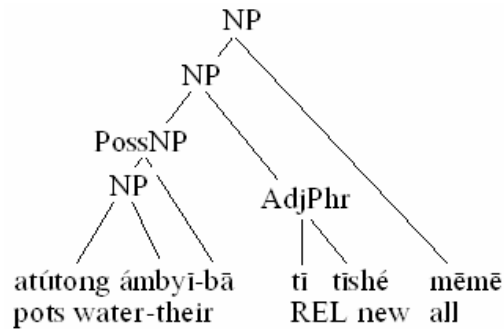
mbakúnn tī tībyīr	
chicken REL black	‘black chicken’
kákúm tī tībyāen	
horse REL red	‘red horse’
ībyē tī tīwám	
meat REL dry	‘dried meat’
irá tī tīnyang	
word REL good	‘good news’

It is important to note that the attributive construction joins NPs, not just nouns. For example, note the structure of the following sentence:

kupwā	kufxen-wū	tī	kujwó	ricī
skin	leg-3s	REL	arm	eating
his right shoe				

The NP **kupwā kufxen-wū** is the head of the larger construction, the attributive being **tī kujwó ricī**. Likewise the phrase **atútong ámbýī-bā tī tīshé mēmē** ‘all their new water pots’ (following) consists of a Possessive Phrase, an Adjectival Phrase, and a quantifier, all forming a larger Noun Phrase:

⁹¹ Although we have this on tape, it is possible that it is something like a hesitation form or a correction in the middle of the phrase.



all their new water pots

As in English, there are of course ambiguities in some phrases. For example:

umbae mbapkú wū ne
 child dog REF DEM

‘this puppy,’ or, ‘the puppy of this dog’

That is, the determiners **wū ne** may refer to **mbapkú** ‘dog’ only or to the whole phrase **umbae mbapkú** ‘child of dog.’

6.3.4 Nominals with Sentence as Attributive Element

Complex sentences (i.e., those with embedded or relative clauses) are treated in Chapter Eleven, but I cite a few examples here just to indicate that the relative clause can in fact serve as a component of the noun phrase. In the following the relative clause is in italics:

173) **Réдио tī awū jāeb iké ndembéb pú-wū.**
 radio REL 3s buy here spoil PRF-3s

The radio he bought here is spoiled.

174) **Unde wū tī afu sa na wū aser re,**
 man REF REL 2s take give 3s money

afu núng rinyí-wū a?
 2s know name-3s Q

The man you gave the money to, do you know his name?

175) **Unde tī kú bá si Apurá.**
 man REL IMP come is Apura

The man who is coming is Apura.

Lissam speakers often use **tā** instead of **tī** in relative clauses. This may be due to the influence of vowel elision before a third person plural pronoun **ā**, as in:

ande tī ā bá [ande tāā bá] > [ande tā bá]
 people REL 3p come
 ‘people who came’

The effect of frequent use of sentences like this is to create the impression that **tā** is an alternative to **tī**. From these plural cases the **tā** form may have spread to the singulars. We now have many clear cases where the relativized noun is singular, e.g., **Rimam tā cāe m** ‘God who made me,’ **Rimam tā núng** ‘God who knows.’

6.4 Nominals with *ná* and / ' / (genitive)

I treat here first the form of the genitive and the semantic relations between the component NPs, particularly as contrastive with N+tī+N. Then we discuss the possible evolution of prepositional phrases from the N ' N construction.

6.4.1 The form and meaning of the genitive

Genitives consist of a Head Noun followed by **ná** or / ' / (‘floating’ high tone)⁹² and an attributive noun or pronoun which limits or qualifies the head noun in some way. The **ná** may be thought of as an emphatic genitive, and the tone-only one being non-emphatic.

Phonologically, the high tone / ' / of the genitive ‘floats’ over to the previous syllable, converting the tone of that syllable to a glide from low or mid to high. If the previous syllable is already high, there is no audible evidence of the connection. (For more examples see Chapter 3, Section 5.1.3).⁹³

In terms of meaning, one may say that while the head noun may refer to a wide set of objects, the attributive noun or pronoun narrows that set to a particular individual. Thus, **kusóg** ‘house’ refers to all houses in the world, **kusóg-m** ‘my house’ refers to one particular house, namely, the speaker’s, and **kusóg Amamrá** refers to the one owned by (or inhabited by) one of several people named Amamra. Likewise, **kusóg kirāen** ‘house of food’ refers to one of a set of houses that is used for preparing food. In the following, the second nominal limits the set of objects

⁹² Tones are called ‘floating’ when they shift from one syllable to another under certain conditions. What happens is that the vowels that normally carry the tone get dropped, but the tone is retained and shifted to another syllable.

⁹³ In the standard orthography (used here) the genitival tone is represented by a hyphen before pronouns and is unmarked between nouns.

referred to by the first nominal. (The particular semantic relationships represented by this construction will be considered later).

ayíb kurúkum	‘eyes of toad’
awāen kupú	‘fruit of kupú tree’
acang urwā	‘smoke of fire’
ufu kusóg	‘door of house’
ikén ufu	‘thing of door’ (= key)
rinyí umbae	‘name of the child’
kicáeb rishwū	‘sickness of stomach’
aser isháen	‘money of month’ (= salary)
ufúg ujwāb-tī-ngwā	‘beer-drinking booth’
wánde unde tī uwé	‘work of person of front’ (=leader)

We can divide the large set of genitival constructions into four subgroups: First, there are nominal and pronominal attributives in the second position. Crosscutting those there are contrastive and non-contrastive genitives, marked by the presence or absence of the contrastive marker **ná**:

	contrastive		non-contrastive	
nominal attribute	kusóg ná Alí	‘ <i>Ali</i> ’s house’	kusóg Alí	‘Ali’s house’
pronominal attribute	kusóg ná wū	‘ <i>his</i> house’	kusóg-wū	‘his house’

In both sets, when the **ná** is absent, a high-tone link joins the two nouns. The high-tone link may possibly have evolved from the particle **ná**. Such a progression is reported in Jukun (i.e., the progressive weakening of **bú** to **ú** to [´]) (Shimizu 1980:54), although the fact that no intermediate form of **ná** such as **á** is found in Kuteb is a counter-argument.

The full set of pronominal attributives (otherwise known as possessive pronouns) is illustrated below with the noun **ukwe** ‘chief.’ As was explained earlier, the high tone possessive link gets realized on the preceding syllable, forming mid-to-high and low-to-high glides. (After high-tone syllables the link is ‘absorbed,’ so to speak.). Following the standard orthography we represent the tone link by a hyphen:

Simple Genitive

Contrastive Genitive

1st person

ukwe-m [ukwě m] ‘my chief,’ ukwe ná m ‘my chief’

ukwe-tī [ukwě tī] ‘our chief,’ ukwe ná tī ‘our chief’

2nd person

ukwe-fu [ukwě fu] ‘your chief,’ ukwe ná fu ‘your chief’

ukwe-ni [ukwě nī] ‘your chief,’ ukwe ná nī ‘your (pl) chief’

3rd person

ukwe-wū [ukwě wū] ‘his chief,’ ukwe ‘his chief’
ná wū

ukwe-bā [ukwě bā] ‘their chief,’ ukwe ná bā ‘their chief’

ukwe-yī [ukwě yī] ‘its/their chief,’ ukwe ná yī ‘its/their chief’

Referentials and demonstratives always follow the attributive noun in the above constructions:

ukwe-m ne	‘this chief of mine’
awá ukwe bā ne	‘these wives of the chief’
anyīsū tī kununn mēmē	‘all of the children of the house’
irúm mbawén yī ne	‘this goat grass referred to’
kufur kisīm-wū ne	‘this knife handle of his’
iwén urwán-fu né	‘those goats of your friend’

In the genitive construction, as in the NP with **tī**, the head is often a phrase rather than a single noun. Thus, complex constructions like the following frequently occur:

uwáfub	íya	mbawándab	wū	ne
co-wife of	mother of	girl	REF	DEM
the girl's mother's co-wife				

aser	ukwe	ná	umbae	Āmamrá
money of	chief	of	child of	Amamra

Amamra's child's tax⁹⁴

ikén tī náe nására íkīn
 thing REL lie of European SPEC
 a certain European bed

umbae Apurá tī ifaen
 child of Apura REL two
 Apura's second child

6.4.2 Development of Prepositional Phrases from N ' N

Like many other African languages, Kuteb uses body part names to describe positional relationships. The process by which body parts and other nouns grammaticalized into spatial relationship markers or 'prepositions' is described as a kind of metaphor by Heine and Reh (1984), who have studied this phenomenon in West Africa for some time. For example, **risū** 'head' serves to specify the position of something on top of something else, as in:

176) **Ámbyī tá risū tébur.**

water be head table

The water is on the table.

The words **uwé** 'face,' **uwae** 'inside,' **isim** 'back,' **ijwē** 'body,' are used similarly, with the following positional meanings:

uwé	'in front of'	isim	'in back of'
uwae	'inside of'	ijwē	'into, against,' 'about'
imbyí	'at bottom of'	unzu	'at edge of'

Another locational expression, not a body part, but operating like one as an independent noun in other contexts, is **uwōg** 'place.' Example:

177) **Ā pū m rū yī uwōg polis.**

3p take 1s go PREP place police

They took me to the police.

While the semantic shift from noun to preposition ('head' to 'on') may be obvious from the use of phrases like:

⁹⁴ Here the **ná** serves to separate three genitives by splitting into pairs four nouns that, without the **ná**, would be difficult to process.

risū tébur	‘on the table’
risū irá yī ne	‘about this matter,’ or even
risū kufxen-m	‘about my foot,’

One may ask if the prepositional construction **risū tébur** is not perhaps structurally different from a typical Noun + Noun construction like **kusóg ukwe** ‘house of chief,’ or **utī Míka** ‘Mika’s spear.’

One place to look for possible structural change accompanying the ‘delexicalization’ of these words would be in the genitival tone linkage between the two words and in the prefix. Perhaps the ‘floating’ tone link disappears, leaving the unmarked lexical item in its narrower prepositional sense. In the case of four of the prepositions (**risū** ‘on,’ **uwōg** ‘at,’ **ijwē**, ‘against,’ and **imbyí**, ‘at the bottom of’) it is difficult, if not impossible, to detect any loss of the tonal link because the mid and high tone of the stems is so close to the high tone of the genitive link.

In the case of the low tone words **isim** ‘behind’ and **uwae** ‘inside,’ there may be some evidence.

The tone link is more obvious in cases of paired low-tone nouns such as **itu ukwe** [itúkwe] ‘palms of chief’ or **indag unde** [indagúnde] ‘a person’s cow.’ (Note that the high tone here shifts to the prefix of the second noun). The prepositions **isim** ‘behind’ and **uwae** ‘into’ are structurally similar to **itu** and **indag**. It appears that in phrases with the preposition **isim**, e.g., **isim kusóg** ‘behind the house,’ the tonal link has disappeared. In fact, one can contrast the following:

isīm kusóg	‘the back (part) of the house’
isim kusóg	‘behind the house’

In the case of **uwae** ‘inside,’ similarly, the tone link has been eroded: the syllable **wae** in **uwae kutúr** ‘in the bush,’ in normal speech, does not have a rising tone. Furthermore, an additional phonological change is taking place. It is frequently observed that in sequences of two low-tone nouns, the high tone of the genitive link sometimes gets shifted to the prefix of the second noun.⁹⁵ Thus:

uwae’ kununn > uwae kúnunn ‘in the home’

In some dialects, the quality of the stem vowel in **uwae** is changed from /ae/ to /a/ and shortened in duration and the prefix on one or both of the nouns may be lost, yielding a kind of **wa-** clitic or prefix on several words, which we have recorded as:

⁹⁵ This is especially true if the tone on the second noun stem is low.

wakúnunn/wǎnunn	‘home’	wakutúr / watúr	‘bush’
wakusóg /wasóg	‘house’	warisāen/wasāen	‘farm’
warúkōng /wǎkōng	‘farm’		

Semantically, these forms appear to be identical to their non- **wa-** counterparts.⁹⁶

178) Awū tá kununn. /Awū tá wakúnunn.

3s be at home

He is at home.

179) Awū rū kutúr. /Awū rū watúr.

3s go forest

He went to the forest.

One is tempted to treat as another mark of grammaticalization the tendency to drop the prefix **u-** from the words **uwōg** and **uwae**, that is, to say that they are losing their distinctively nominal form. However, as prefix erosion is a phenomenon happening to all nouns (especially those with a vowel prefix only), it cannot be considered evidence for the shift of **uwae** (N) to **wae** (prep).⁹⁷ Whether or not the proposed ‘prepositions’ develop a distinctive phonological shape, it is clear that semantically their use is extended beyond its original body-part function to many other analogous situations, and we will consider the preposition as qualifying for entrance into the gallery of Kuteb word classes.

Examples of prepositions from text are:

6.4.2.1. Risū ‘on, over’ (from risū ‘head’)

180) Wū a putsāen risū ámbyī ne ahán ...

3s if follow head water DEM thus

If it goes along on top of the water like this ...

⁹⁶ Storch (1999:87) describes the innovation of ‘pseudo classes’ in Hone and Wapan that have been formed from the word for ‘place’ in a parallel fashion to **wa-** here.

⁹⁷ Our focus here is on the development of prepositions, but one may note the closely related development of locative adverbs like **uwae** and **isim** as in **Awū tá uwae**. ‘He is inside’ and **Awū tá isim** ‘He is behind.’

181) Uwá-wū tá risū kutam apúpwen.

wife-his be head kutam sky

His wife was up in a kutam tree.

182) Awū núng tī wū pwen rikwén risū ande-wū.

3s know REL 3s count judgment head people-his

He knows he has to make judgments over his people.

6.4.2.2 Uwae ‘in, into’ (from uwae ‘inside’)**183) Kurúkum jwunn sī uwae ámbýī.**

toad fall down inside water

The toad fell into the water.

184) Icen pū átsō sáng uwae ibae.

g.fowl take recip enter inside sack

The guinea fowl went together into the sack.

185) Íya-me cwū uwae ná dūbū dāyā da darī tārā ...

mother-my die inside 1000 one and 100 nine

My mother died in 19...

186) Ā sa rū ka jāebcī uwae Ikám.

3p take go go sell inside Ikam

They sell them in Ikam.

6.4.2.3 Uwé ‘in front of’ (from uwé ‘face’)**187) Atī tsi uwé ukwe atáng áwa ifaen.**

1p stand front chief there hour two

We stood there in front of the chief for two hours.

188) Ame som uwé kusóg-wū ú kú jí wū jí.

1s sit front house-his SEQ IMP wait 3s wait

I sat in front of his house and waited for him.

189) **M ú nde rímāng sa rikwén uwé ná ukwe bārā?**
 1s FUT do how take case front of chief Q

Why should I take the case to the chief?

190) **Ikén tī ukwe tātu sa tsi uwé wū mēmē ...**
 thing REL chief hunt take stand front 3s all

The thing the hunt-leader considers best of all...

6.4.2.4 Isim 'behind' (from isim 'back')

191) **Mbakúnn tēr rū ka tam isim kurug.**
 chicken run go go hide back granery

The hen ran and hid behind the granary.

192) **Isim asang itā ame kāfē rū bá iké.**
 back years three 1s return go come here

After three years I came back here.

193) **Isim ná Gidion, m bá tucī umbae cwúcwó.**
 back of Gideon, 1s come find-again child again

After Gideon, I had another child.

Note the adverbial use of **isim** in adverbial clauses such as:

194) **Isim tī abā pū kirāen bá...**
 back REL 3p take fufu come

After they brought the fufu...

195) **Isim-yī tī Irá Rimam ka bá uwōg ná m...**
 back-its REL matter God go come place of 1s

After Christianity came to me...

6.4.2.5 Uwōg ‘at’ (from uwōg ‘place’)⁹⁸

- 196) **Ā pū wū rū uwōg apxín yī.**
 3p take 3s go place spirits REF

They took him to the spirits.

- 197) **Tī ka uwōg itúkū m tí Larabā.**
 1p go place wood 1s and Laraba

We got to the wood-place, me and Laraba.

- 198) **Ā kú fxēn uwōg kúkwén rikwen.**
 3p IMP hear place priest rikwen

They hear it from the mountain priest.

The grammaticalization of words like *uwōg* is still in progress, as shown by a sentence like the following, in which the possessive **ná** is inserted, indicating that **uwōg** is still being used in its more literal form:

- 199) **Ā pū wū bá uwōg ná ukwe.**
 3p take him come place of chief

They took him to the chief (or ‘to the chief’s place’).

6.4.2.6 Ijwē ‘into, in, at’ (from ijwē ‘body’)

The meaning of **ijwē** as a preposition is considerably more difficult to define than that of other prepositions. Consider the following examples:

- 200) **Aróm sú yī ijwē icíka.**
 men carry it in baskets

The men carry it (guinea corn) in baskets.

- 201) **Awū tūb atsáng ijwē ámbyī wū.**
 3s spit spit into water REF

He spat into the water.

- 202) **Ā kú sa kisīm shēn ijwē anyīng wū.**
 3s IMP take knife wipe with blood REF

They smear the knife in/with the blood.

⁹⁸ Some speakers drop the final velar in the word **uwōg**.

- 203) **Awū kú cī wū ikén ijwē anyī- wū bē.**
 3s IMP eat 3s thing with teeth-3s NEG

It (elephant) doesn't eat with its teeth.

- 204) **Ā txí ámbýī bá,**
 3p dip water come,

ú bá kú sī ijwē arībén yī ne.
 SEQ come IMP put into adobe REF DEM

They dip water and come and pour it into the adobe.

- 205) **Ā sa nwūnn sī ijwē gārwā.**
 3p take pour go-down into tin

They pour it (liquid) into a tin.

- 206) **Ā ... sa sī kimú ijwē ibae.**
 3p take give potto inside sack

They ... gave it to Potto in a sack.

- 207) **Awū sa rikaen fxēb tág pú-wū ijwē ibú wū ne.**
 3s take poison wipe all prf-3s body arrow REF DEM

He took poison and wiped it all over these arrow (tips).

Note that in the one case the knife is smeared **ijwē** blood, and in the other, the poison is smeared **ijwē** the arrowhead.

6.4.2.7 Unzu 'edge of' (from unzu 'mouth')

- 208) **Icwu somcī unzu kumūm wū.**
 leopard sit-guard mouth termite-mound REF

Leopard sat guarding the mouth of the termite mound.

- 209) **Ande tī kú ye skeb iwág si ande**
 people REL IMP catch pass fish be people

The people who catch fish the most are those

tī kú náe unzu uyínn.
 REL IMP lie mouth river
 who live along the river.

6.4.2.8 Kutánpwā ‘between’

The etymological origin of this preposition is uncertain. It looks like it could possibly come from **kutáen** (or **kitáen**) ‘top’ and **kupwā** ‘skin.’ It is also unusual in that it sometimes functions as a temporal expression meaning ‘at the time’ and even as a locative meaning ‘at the place.’ As a preposition it requires two nouns separated by the word **tí** ‘and/with.’ For example:

210 Asítí uré a tá kutánpwā-fu tí uwá-fu, ...
 If love COND be between-2s and wife-2s
 If there is love between you and your wife, ...

211 Ame tsi kutánpwā-wū tí mbapxú-wū.
 1s stand between-3s and dog-3s
 I stood between him and his dog.

6.4.2.9 Yī ‘To’

This is perhaps the only ‘proper’ preposition in that all the other ones are clearly derived from body parts and could in a sense be considered nouns rather than prepositions.⁹⁹ **Yī** is not derivable from any other word as far as we know. It optionally occurs after motion verbs, introducing the goal of the motion.

Awū rū yī kutúr.
 3s go to bush
 He went to the bush.

6.5 Co-ordinate Noun Phrases

Coordinate conjunction of nouns is accomplished by the conjunction **tí** between the nouns. The normal pattern seems to require **tí** between each of the nouns in a series, in contrast to English, which requires a conjunction only between the last two, the rest being linked by intonation patterns. Examples:

aróm tí andá ‘men and women’
andá tí anyīsū ‘women and children’
afxen tí ajwó ‘legs and arms’

⁹⁹ Quite likely, the preposition **yī** is derived from a verb or verbal suffix.

aróm tí anyīsū tí andá mēmē
 men and children and women all
 everybody--men and children and women

amenjā-wū tí ande tī tá ribén atáng
 brothers-3s and men REL be ground there
 his brothers and the men who are present

mbúkū tí icwu tí isá tí itumū
 hyena and leopard and jackal and lion

6.6. Appositives

There are two constructions in which two nominals stand together without the benefit of the possessive link or the relator **tī**. In one, the full pronoun precedes a simple or complex NP. Examples:

anī andá	
2p women	‘you women’
abā anyīsū ukwe	
3p children chief	‘they the children of the chief’
atī Kutēb	
1p Kuteb	‘we Kutebs’
ame Inji tī tá ne	
1s elephant REL be DEM	‘I, Elephant here’

Note the following unusual case of an appositive in genitival position:¹⁰⁰

utēn-tī Kutēb	
land-1p Kuteb	‘the country of us Kutebs’

In the second appositive construction, a proper noun follows another nominal:

uyēb-m Burma	
in-law-1s Burma	‘my in-law Burma’
unde tī uwé-tī Apurá	
person front-1p Apura	‘our leader Apura’

¹⁰⁰ It is possible that this was misheard and was actually supposed to be *uten tī Kuteb* ‘land of Kuteb.’

A title like **Ukwe Ali** ‘Chief Ali’ may belong to this category but is perhaps better considered a different class consisting of titles.

6.7 Discussion of the Noun Phrase

The Kuteb data raise some unanswered synchronic and diachronic issues regarding Noun Phrases, such as:

1. What is the relationship between the third person pronouns (**awū**, **abā**, **ayī**) and the ‘referentials’ (**wū**, **bā**, **yī**)?
2. What is the historical relationship between the conjunction **tí**, the relator **tī**, the noun prefix **itī/ítí**, and the preposition **té** ‘with’?
3. What is the difference between phrases with **tī** and phrases with **ná**?

While each of these topics could be discussed at some length, I want to focus particularly on the last one, regarding the distribution of the two patterns **N tī N** and **N (ná) N**. How does a person know which set of nouns takes which pattern? For example, why do you say A but not B in the following sets?

A. aci (ná) mbakúnn ‘egg of chicken’

B. *aci tī mbakúnn

A. ínjā Amamra ‘Amamra's brother’

B. * ínjā tī Amamra

A. kufxen indag ‘cow's foot’

B. *kufxen tī indag

A. ubur ukwe ‘chief's hat’

B. *ubur tī ukwe

Likewise, phrases that typically take **tī** are unacceptable with **ná**.

A. **unde tī kubēntī** ‘truthful person’

B. *unde ná kubēntī

A. **umbae tī ruwáe** ‘tall child’

B. *umbae ná ruwáe

A. **unde tī kununn** ‘householder’

B. *unde ná kununn

Semantic analysis of these constructions reveals that there are distinctive relationships between the nouns in each set. The ‘genitives’ (with **ná** or //) typically encode the following relationships:

1. N2 possesses or owns N1 (however that may be defined in the society):

kusóg Andeyabā ‘Andeyabā’s house’

kíkwab-fu ‘your hoe’

2. N2 is socially or biologically related to N1:

umbae Fxēntí ‘Fxēntí’s child’

uwá Apurá ‘Apura’s wife’

abāen-nī ‘your husbands’

uyēb Tukúra ‘Tukura’s in-law’

3. N2 is part of N1:

kufur kisīm ‘handle of knife’

ucwō kufxen ‘ankle (of leg)’

ipāb kutúkū ‘root of tree’

ufu kusóg ‘door of house’

kukūb indag ‘bone of cow’

4. N1 is located in N2:

uwáe rikwen ‘cave in mountain’

kicáeb rishwū ‘stomach pain’

5. N1 is made from N2:

kirāen mbapwa ‘maize food’

kákúm aser ‘horse of iron’ (=bicycle)

The phrases with **tī**, on the other hand, are of a more general nature. One may note that **tī** is used not only with stative noun attributives but also with verbs (forming adjectives) and sentences.

unde tī riwáe
man REL tallness ‘the tall man’

unde tī ifaen
man REL two ‘second man’

unde tī uwé
man REL front ‘leader’

unde tī bá iké
man REL come here ‘the man who came here’

unde tī tībī
man REL bad ‘bad man’

So the noun phrases with **tī** are seen to be of a general attributive nature.

It is possible that the genitive construction, given its statistically prominent use in expressing ownership and social relationship, may have started with these particular relationships and grown by metaphorical extension to include other, less easily definable relationships, so that we now have expressions such as:

unzu Fulani	‘Fulani language’ (via ‘mouth’)
rinyí kutúkū	‘name of the tree’
usú utong	‘stuff for soup’
kusóg kirāen	‘house of food’ (kitchen)
aten ayíb	‘tears of eyes’
icāen imí	‘cause of what?’
ripye ande	‘half of the people’
ibae ayéb	‘bag of millet’
urāe Tíb	‘Tiv man’
ufūg hotêr	‘restaurant’ (‘booth of hotel’)

If both of these constructions are expanding their functions to include more and more semantic relationships, it stands to reason that sooner or later their functions will overlap at some point. That seems to be the case with the following:

anyīsū andá	
children women	‘girls’
anyīsū tī andá	
children REL women	‘girls’

The recent influence of other languages (Jukun and Hausa, in particular), should not be discounted as a factor in the expansion of functions of the genitive. I have the following in my otherwise Kuteb texts:

lókacī Krísmas (H)	‘Christmas time’
rumbú hátsí (H)	‘guinea corn granary’

6.8 Conclusion

This concludes our discussion of **Noun Phrases** in Kuteb. In this chapter and the previous one we have covered the various forms of nouns (simple, compound, and derived) and expansions of them using determiners, qualifiers, qualifying phrases. We have also covered genitive (or possessive) noun phrases and coordinate phrases and appositives. There may well be more structures that we have not included. If so, we would like to hear about them.

CHAPTER SEVEN. SIMPLE SENTENCE STRUCTURE

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter and the next I describe how verbs and nouns, noun phrases and noun substitutes are assembled into the configurations we normally call sentences. The terms "subject" and "object" will be discussed and illustrated.

We recognize a category of non-verbal sentences such as:

Ēēn.	‘Yes.’
Ahóō!	‘What do I care?’
Iyéē.	‘No.’
Rífēn-fu!	‘Liar!’
Súko-fu!	‘Greetings!’

As these are structurally simple (though statistically abundant in everyday speech), I do not elaborate on them further in this work, focussing instead on sentences defined in the more traditional sense as grammatical units containing one or more verbs.

In delineating the broad outline of sentence structure, I follow Z. Frajzyngier in his **Grammar of Mupun** (Frajzyngier 1993), which divides sentences into those that express a simple proposition and those that express a complex proposition. The latter will be dealt with briefly in Chapter Eleven. Simple sentences can be divided into those having one verb and those having more than one verb but lacking coordinating or subordinating devices (serial verb sentences; see Chapter 8).

Here I deal with the single-verb sentences, which can be subdivided according to the number of arguments (basically Noun Phrases without prepositions) associated with them. There are no zero-argument sentences in Kuteb equivalent to ‘It is raining’ as in some other languages. Imperatives like **Bá!** ‘Come!’ are not considered zero-argument sentences but rather cases in which the subject is deleted in the surface structure.

7.1.1 Criteria for Categorization

The categorization of simple sentence types in any language is more problematical than the non-linguist would imagine. As for Kuteb, anyone coming to it from a traditional English or Latin grammar background will encounter three serious problems. First, the language itself—its categories and rules—is built differently from English and other European languages. Secondly, traditional grammarians and linguists of various camps are divided with regard to the key issues of transitivity and the definition of "subject" and "object," even in European

languages. Thirdly, verbs, like other words in all languages, typically have more than one sense. A verb may have a "transitive" sense and an "intransitive" sense. For example, in many African languages the word for 'to do' has another sense 'happen,' the first transitive, the second intransitive. Is it then one verb or two verbs? To add to the confusion, 'transitive' sentences often leave an object unexpressed, giving the appearance of intransitivity.

In traditional English grammar a mixture of syntactic and semantic features are used to define "transitive." It is said, for example, that a transitive verb requires an object (a syntactic criterion). It is also said that a transitive verb affects the object in some way. In the sentence "John kicked the ball" there is "transfer" of energy from John to the ball. This is a semantic criterion. As the distinction between 'transitive' and 'intransitive' does not fit well for Kuteb, our major divisions are completely syntactic: one-argument, two-argument, three-argument, and four-argument.¹⁰¹ Within that framework we use semantic terms like 'equative' and 'stative.'

Our purpose here is to set out criteria for positing different basic sentence types. The type of syntactic differences which I use for criteria are, first of all, obligatory occurrence or non-occurrence of certain constituents; secondly, potential for transformation; and thirdly, classes of words which may or may not occur in particular syntactic positions. Kuteb does not have case suffixes to mark subject, object, indirect object, etc. as European languages do.

What we propose here is but a rough sketch that needs extensive testing and expansion. It is hoped, however, that it will be a reasonable platform on which others may stand to probe further into the rich mine of Kuteb grammar.

7.1.2 Kinds of Propositions and Semantic Roles

Languages typically express at least three broad categories of human experience: states, events, and actions. Within these categories, which in language may be represented by "propositions," linguists recognize "cases" or "situational roles" such as "agent," "patient," "dative," "locative," and "instrument." We will find it helpful to make use of some or all of these concepts in this chapter.

7.1.3 Grammatical Roles: "Subject," and "Object"

The term "subject" has been defined in various ways. In transformational grammar, it is the NP not dominated by VP. Comrie (1981) sees it as the coming together of topic (a pragmatic or discourse term) and agent (a semantic term). Traditional

¹⁰¹ We use the word 'argument' here rather than 'noun phrase' because there are often noun phrases in sentences that do not represent situational roles like actor, recipient of action, etc. Adverbial elements and prepositional phrases, for example, are often expressed as noun phrases but are not crucially tied to the action represented by the verb.

grammar defines it as the term about which something is said. In Functional/Cognitive linguistics 'subject' and 'object' have to do with discourse-level systems that involve the presentation of new versus old information, relative salience of participants in narrative, issues of foreground versus background, and the viewer's perspective on the situation. All of these are beyond the scope of this study.

For our present purposes, the traditional view of "subject" as a grammatical unit at clause level will suffice. We will take 'subject' simply as that NP in a simple sentence that immediately precedes the verb (or verbs, in the case of serial constructions). In terms of semantic (situational) roles, whatever the role of the first NP in any sentence type (whether agent or patient), that role is represented in the surface structure by the subject NP.

As for "object," there are three ordered NP positions in Kuteb sentences (aside from positions filled by prepositional phrases). Each of these positions signals a grammatical role or "slot" that I will illustrate in this chapter. In terms of the sentence as representing a logical proposition, we call the elements that fill these positions 'arguments' and their relationship is called "argument structure." The verb and its arguments form the central core of a sentence. Other elements expressing time, place, and manner form the periphery.

7.1.4 Prepositional Phrases

Word order is not the only way of indicating grammatical and/or semantic roles in Kuteb. Another way is through the use of prepositions. Kuteb, like many other languages, typically uses prepositional phrases to encode locative, temporal, instrument, and other adjuncts to sentences. See Chapter 6, Section 2 for examples of prepositional phrases.

7.1.5 Overview

1. One-NP Sentences: (Subject only)
 - Stative
 - Non-stative ("Intransitive")
2. Two-NP Sentences
 - Equative (Subject, Complement)
 - Locative/existential (Subject, Goal/Location)
 - Transitive (Subject, 'Object')
3. Three-NP Sentences (Subject, Object1, Instrument/Object2)
4. Four-NP Sentences (Subject, Object1, Instrument, Object2)

7.2 Sentences with one Argument¹⁰²

The following sentences are characterized by having verbs that allow only one NP which we will call the "subject" and which always precedes the verb. There are two categories, "stative" and "intransitive non-stative."

7.2.1 Stative

Stative sentences express qualities and are equivalent to sentences like "He is tall" in English. The verbs in these sentences do not co-occur with arguments other than the subject, or with prepositional phrases. The subject, in terms of situational roles, is always an experiencer or 'patient.' Some problematic cases of stative verbs being followed by nominal modifiers will be treated later.

In addition to the non-occurrence of object, stative sentences exhibit other features that set them apart from locative, equative, and speech sentences (to be discussed below) as follows:

7.2.1.1 Statives and Imperfect

Statives rarely, if ever, occur with the progressive marker; locatives often do.

- 211) **Ame kú rū yī Bíká. (locative sentence).**
 1s IMP go to Bika
 I'm going to Bika.

- 212) **Afu wáe.**
 2s tall
 You are tall.

Ungrammatical:

- 213) ***Afu kú wáe.**
 2s IMP tall
 *You are talling.

¹⁰² Sometimes verbs that typically take a noun object leave that object unexpressed. Sentences with such verbs are categorized as 'two-NP sentences.'

214) Ame kú rū yī Bíká. (locative sentence).

1s IMP go to Bika

I'm going to Bika.

One may think of the progressive (imperfect) marker as being a kind of "stativizing" device for verbs expressing actions and events. Since **wáe** and verbs like it are already stative, they do not take the imperfect marker.

It may be observed, however, that the imperfect marker may occur with the reduplicated form of a stative verb. Examples:

215) Kútúpwá ne byāen.

cloth DEM red

This cloth is red.

216) Ayī kú bībyāen.

3 IMP red

It is getting red.

The significance and distribution of the reduplicated forms needs further research.

Note also that statives can occur with the perfective, indicating the completion of a process:

217) Ayī byāen pú-yī.

3 red PRF-3

It has become red.

7.2.1.2 Statives and Locative Expressions

Locative verbs typically take locative NPs; statives do not:

218) Awū tá uwae ritúg. (Locative/existential verb)

3s be in market

He is in the market.

Ungrammatical:

219) *Awu byāen uwae ritúg.

3s red in market

He is red in the market.

7.2.1.3 Statives and Expressions of Degree

Statives are prone to taking the adverbial phrase **tímambē** ‘very much’ and other constructions indicating degree, whereas other sentences typically use adverbs or extensions that express frequency of occurrence of action.

220) **Umbae ne wáe tímambē.**
 child DEM tall very

This child is very tall.

Unacceptable:

220b) ***Awū rū yī Bíká tímambē.**
 3s go to Bika much for

*He goes to Bika much.

The normal way of saying the above is:

221) **Awū kú rū kób yī Bíká.**
 3s IMP go HAB to Bika

He always goes to Bika.

One could also say

222) **Awū kú rū yī Bíká kó kiyé tītīnī.**
 3s IMP go to Bika even time every

He goes to Bika all the time.

223) **Lemó-nī fab pāng-yī.**
 citrus-2p sour too-much-3

Your oranges are too sour.

One might add that statives frequently occur in a serial construction involving the word **skeb** ‘surpass.’ For example:

224) **Lemó-nī fab skeb pú-yī anátī.**
 citrus-2p sour pass PRF-2p ours

Your oranges are more sour than ours.

However, **skeb** can also occur with other kinds of verbs, so it is not a clear-cut criterion for marking statives.

7.2.1.4 Statives and Ideophones

In many cases, stative verbs are modified by special words (ideophones); other verbs are not.

- 225) **Kupwā rimēnn-bā byāen nwámeme.**
 skin body-3p red very (red).

Their skin was bright red.

Unacceptable:

- 225b) ***Awū rū yī Bíká nwámeme.**
 3s go to Bika very red .

He went to Bika bright red.

- 226) **Awū nyīng shaerrr!**
 3s thin very thin

He's very thin.

- 227) **Kútúpwá-wū tsēn pórírírí.**
 cloth-his white very white`

His cloth is very white.

- 228) **Ámbyī ú byāg kwāaaan tawé.**
 water FUT hot very hot first

The water will first get very hot.

- 229) **Ikén wū jāen wurwur.**
 thing REF shine very shiny

The thing was very shiny.

7.2.1.5 Statives and Reflexives

Stative verbs cannot take a reflexive NP, which sets them apart from transitives:

- 230) **Awū ten ijwē-wu ifú. (reflexive)**
 3s do body-3s injury

He injured himself.

Unacceptable:

230b) *Awū bōm ijwē-wū.

3s strong body-3s

*He stronged himself.

Typical stative verbs are:

byāen	‘be red’	byīr	‘be black’
tsēn	‘be white’	nyīng	‘be thin’
kō	‘be much’	pāng	‘be enough’
pyir	‘be short’	nam	‘be soft’
wáe	‘be tall’	bir	‘be fast’
kim	‘be fat’	wur	‘be flat’
jang	‘be deep’	rwēn	‘be distant’
nyang	‘be good’	kób	‘be tall’
béb	‘be bad’	byāg	‘be hot’
jīm	‘be cool’	tom	‘be light’
jwom	‘be dark’	bōm	‘be strong’
jāen	‘be shiny’	gar	‘be round’
cāen	‘be old’	rab	‘be rare’
kyaen	‘be full’	jwom	‘be dark’
mun	‘be full’	kum	‘be cut off’
fab	‘be sour’	kwār	‘be crooked’
kpág	‘be hard’	yāen	‘be wide’

There are a few verbs that may be considered "borderline stative." For example: **mbwe** ‘to be swollen or to swell up,’ **ndub** ‘to puff up or be puffed up.’ Perhaps one could argue that these words have both a stative and a non-stative sense.

Stative verbs may be nominalized by prefixing **tī** or **itī**, although the construction is rare:

231) Itībyāen ná kútúpwá ne nyang uwae-m.

redness of cloth DEM good inside-1s

The redness of this cloth pleases me.

Stative sentences are negated (like all other Kuteb sentences) by putting a possessive pronoun (co-referent with subject) after the verb and adding the particle **bē** at the end (see more on negatives in Chapter Nine Section 6):

235b) Kíkīn nde. (intransitive)

Something do

Something happened.

Other transitive/intransitive sentence pairs are:

26a) Ā kú kāen gār wā petról.

3p IMP roll drum petrol

They're rolling petrol drums.

236b) Kíkīn kāen kú bá pāngmá bwel.¹⁰⁴

s.thing roll IMP come like ball

Something came rolling like a ball.

237a) Ā kú cī ritúg.

3p IMP eat market

They're having market.

237b) Ritúg kú cī atáng yáka.

market IMP eat there today

They're having a market there today.

238a) Ā cwé irá-m.

3p agree word-1s

They agreed with me.

238b) Urwā kú cwé ubāen rikwen.

fire IMP agree side mountain

A fire is burning on the mountainside.

239a) Awū ngwā ujwāb.

3s drink beer

He drank beer.

¹⁰⁴ The intransitive verb **kāen** in this case is part of a serial verb construction.

239b) Ujwāb ngwā iké yáka
 beer drink here today
 Beer is being drunk here today.

240a) Ame mām pú-m wánde-m.
 1s finish PRF1s work-1s
 I finished my work.

240b) Wánde mām pú-yī.
 Work finish PRF-3s
 The work is finished.

241a) Awū sī kútúpwá-wū.
 3s put-on cloth-3s
 He put on his cloth.

241b) Awū sī yī ritúg.
 3s go-down PREP market
 He went to market.

Even stative verbs can have "transitive" counterparts as the following show:

242a) Ibur-bā byāen.
 hats-3p red
 Their hats are red.

242b) Irá ne byāen ayíb.
 matter DEM red eye
 This matter is difficult.

243a) Awū jīm urwā.
 3s cool fire
 He put out the fire.

243b) Urwā jīm pú- yī.
 fire cool PRF-3

The fire went out..

243c) Awū bōm utōb.
 3s strong heart

He took courage.

Intransitive sentences differ from statives in that they can freely take the imperfect marker **kú** as in the following:

244) Awū kú sī yī ritúg.
 3s IMP go-down PREP market

He is going to market.

"Meteorological" Sentences

It is common in languages for experiences having to do with atmospheric conditions to be encoded as intransitives. It may be observed, however, that in almost every case the verb has a "transitive" counterpart. Examples:

245a) Upwen tsa yáka.
 rain rained today

It rained today.

245b) Upwen tsa m tí fangó.
 rain rain 1s PREP road

I got rained on on the way.

246a) Usēn fam pú-wū.
 dry-season arrive PRF-3s

Dry season has come.

246b) Íré atī cang cicang,
 yest 1p walk walk

ucwē	fam	tī	tí	fangó
tomorrow/dawn	arrive	1p	PREP	road

Yesterday we walked and walked, right through the night (tomorrow met us on the road).

The following are sentences with intransitive verbs that do not have transitive counterparts that I know of. Either no argument follows the verb, or, if it does, it must be introduced by a preposition:

247) **Atī fxāefā.**

1p thank

We're thankful.

248) **Atī fxāefā té Rimam.**

1p thank PREP God

We thank God.

249) **Ame tángsom tīnine.**

1s remember now

I remember now.

250) **Atī tángsom té fu.**

1p remember PREP 2s

We remember you.

Without the preposition these verbs are not accepted.¹⁰⁵

251)	* Atī	fxāefā	Rimam
	1p	thank	God

¹⁰⁵ The restriction here may be explained by the fact that the word **tángsom** is derived from **táng** 'think' and **som** 'sit.' **Som** is a locative/motion verb that normally takes only locative phrases after it. It is possible that **fā** has a similar restriction. We don't know its etymology.

251b)	*Atī	tángsom	fu.
	1p	remember	2s

7.3 Sentences with Two Arguments

This section includes sentences that have two NP's or at least have the potential for encoding two arguments.¹⁰⁶ When both are present in a sentence, one occurs before the verb (as in the one-argument sentences); the other occurs after the verb, in the frame.

NP VERB NP

We distinguish equative and locative sentences from transitive ones. Transitives form a gerundive phrase by inverting the verb and the object and inserting the relativizer **tī**. Equative, locative, and motion sentences cannot be so inverted:

42)	Awū	ye	iwág.	=>	iwág	tī	ye
	3s	catch	fish		fish	REL	catch
	He caught a fish.				fish-catching		

253)	Awū	tēr	inyae.	=>	inyae	tī	tēr
	3s	run	run		running	REL	
	He ran.				running		

Compare the non-inversion of equative sentences,

254)	Awū	si	ukwe.	*ukwe	tī	si
	3s	be	chief.	chief	REL	be
	He is chief			His being chief		

motion sentences,

255)	Awū	rū	ritúg.	=>	*ritúg	tī	rū
	3s	go	market		market	REL	go
	He went to market.			market-going			

and locative sentences:

256)	Awū	tá	kutúr	=>	*kutúr	tī	tá
	3s	be	bush		bush	REL	be at
	He is in the bush.			bush-being-at			

Equatives and Locative sentences are presented here with additional features that contrast them with other sentence types and with each other.

¹⁰⁶ There are situations when the object is left implicit, usually when it has been mentioned in the previous sentence.

7.3.1 Equative Sentences

The sentences in this group consist of a nominal, the verb **si** ‘to be’ followed by another nominal, an adjective, or a possessive phrase.

257) **Awū si kayā-m.**
3s be sister-1s

She is my sister.

The equative verb (or ‘copula’) **si** cannot be nominalized.

***itīsi-wū ukwe.**
being-3s chief his being chief.

Compare **itībá-wū** ‘his coming.’

The equative verb cannot stand alone without a following noun.¹⁰⁷ The complement is obligatory, a feature that sets the equative apart from the statives described earlier.

***Awū si.**
3s be He is.

Compare:

Awū rū.
3s go He went.
Awū byāen.
3s be-red He is red.

The equative verb does not reduplicate as many other verbs do, nor does it take verbal extensions.¹⁰⁸

Examples of modifying expressions occurring in the complement position are:

258) **Mbapkú-m si tībyāen.** (=Mbapkú-m byāen.)
dog-1s is red
My dog is red.

¹⁰⁷ But see the possessive construction below.

¹⁰⁸ In the sentence **Awū si sí ukwe** ‘He really is chief’ the apparent double verb is not reduplication. Note the tone difference. Verbal extensions are discussed in Chapter 8 Section 3.

259) **Unde ne si tíkípyir.** (= **Unde ne pyir.**)

man DEM is short

This man is short.

The equative verb is used with a prepositional phrase **té** to indicate possession.¹⁰⁹

260) **Awū si té itsab.**

3s be with cleverness

He is clever.

Equative sentences encode a variety of semantic notions that I have yet to explore fully. Some of the patterns appearing so far are:

Person Plus Position/Title

261) **Injā-wū si ukwe Bíká.**

brother-3s is chief Bika

His brother is chief of Bika.

262) **Apurá si unde tī uwé-tī.**

Apura is person REL front-1s

Apura is our leader.

Position/Title Plus Person

263) **Ukwe Ikám tīnine si Ali.**

Chief Ikam now is Ali

The chief of Ikam now is Ali.

Object Plus Attributive

264) **Kindob-fu si tī kujāeb a?**

oil-2s is REL for-sale Q

Is your oil for sale?

265) **Anáfu si tīshé.**

¹⁰⁹ Some other dialects express possession by using the existential verb **tá** with the prepositional phrase. E.g. **Awū tá té aser** 'He has money.' In both cases there is a question as to whether the verb plus **té** should be considered a single word, a verb plus a preposition, or perhaps a serial verb construction. See Chapter 8 Section 3.8 for discussion.

yours is new
Yours is new.

266) **Aná kayā-m si tī rikīm.**

That-of sister-1s is REL fat
My sister's is fat.

267) **Tása áwo si mwa mwa?**

dish measure is how-much each
How much for a measureful?

268) **Aser táya kiyé wū si pam pam.**

money tire time REF is pound each
Tires cost a pound each then.

Object Plus Owner

269) **Rikun tī yáka si aná áyē?**

com-labor REL today is that of who?
Whose turn is it for communal labor today?

270) **Inyi ne ahán si aná injā-m.**

locust DEM thus is that of brother-1s
This locust bean tree is my brother's.

Demonstrative Plus Object/Person/Possessive

271) **Awūne si ítē-fu a?**

DEM is father-2s Q
Is this your father?

272) **Né si uwé-fu a?**

DEM is face-2s Q
Is that your face? (Is it really you?)

273) **Unde tī wēn wū si awūne.**

person REL kill 3s is DEM

The person who killed him was this one.

Object Plus Generic Class

274) **Utxong si ibyē tī kūkō.**

Oryx is animal REL large

An oryx is a large animal.

The equative verb is also used in cleft sentences such as:

275) **Ī si awū tī nde ikén ne.**

3 be 3s REL do thing DEM

It is he who did this thing.

Any of the above can be made negative by placing a possessive pronoun after the verb and adding **bē** at the end:

276) **Awū si-wū ukwe Bíká bē.**

3s is-3s chief Bika NEG

He is not the chief of Bika.

277) **Aná-m si-yī tībyāen bē.**

mine-1s is-3 red NEG

Mine is not red.

278) **Ame si-m Rimam bē.**

1s is-1s God NEG

I'm not God.

279) **Ā si-bā ande tī iké bē.**

3p is-3p people REL here NEG

They aren't local people.

280) **Atī si-tī té aser bē.¹¹⁰**

1p be-1p with money NEG

⁷ Some people keep the **si** and **té** together. See discussion in Chapter Eight Section 3.8 ('Committed SVC')

We don't have money.

7.3.2 Sentences with Locative Verbs

Like the stative and equative sentences discussed above, these sentences do not form the gerundive phrase, as do active sentences. Further, they are distinctive in that they contain a set of verbs that are typically followed by a locative noun, noun phrase, or prepositional phrase.

Note the failure of the gerundive transformation:

281) **Awu rū Bíká.** => ***Bíká tī rū**
 3s go Bika => 'Bika-going'

Compare:

282) **Awū ye iwág.** => **iwág tī ye**
 3s catch fish 'fish-catching'

Instead, motion verbs nominalize by prefixing **itī-**, as in:

itīrū-fu	Bíká.	
going-2s	Bika	'your going to Bika'
itīnwúnn-tī iké.		
leaving-1p	here	'our leaving here'

I include three kinds of verbs under "motion verbs:"

The basic locative (or "existential") verb:

tá 'to be at/in'

Motion Verbs:

rū 'move,' **tsō** 'go up,' **sī** 'go down,' **bá** 'come,' **ka** 'go/reach'

Postural verbs:

som 'sit,' **tši** 'stand,' **náe** 'lie'

7.3.2.1 The basic locative verb (tá)

The basic locative **tá** has certain restrictions make it possible to differentiate the basic locative verb from the motion verbs:

Locative and Obligatory Locative NP

The basic locative cannot occur without a locative or adverbial word of some sort (except in the negative):

***Awū tá.**¹¹¹ ‘He is’

Compare:

Awū rū ‘He went.’ **Awū som.** ‘He sat/stayed.’

Negative:

283) **Ámbyī tá-yī bē.**

water is-3 NEG

There’s no water.

Locative and Animacy

Motion sentences typically require animate subjects; simple locative sentences may take either animate or inanimate subjects:

284) **Aser yī tá akā?**

money REF be where?

Where is the money?

285) **Apurá tá-wū iké bē.**

Apura be-3s here NEG

Apura is not here.

Locative and Nominalization

Finally, the basic locative does not nominalize, as do the other locative verbs:

Acceptable:

itīrū-fu Bíká.

going-2s Bika ‘your going to Bika’

Unacceptable:

***itītá-fu iké.**

being-2s here ‘your being here’

Examples of the simple locative verb from texts:

286) **Kíkīn tá uwae kurug-fu.**

something be inside granary-2s

There’s something in your granary.

¹¹¹ To express the idea ‘he exists,’ the adverbial nominal is added: **Awū tá atáng** (‘He is there’).

287) Unde tī kununn tá-wū iké bē a?
 person REL house be-3s here NEG Q
 Isn't the man of the house here?

288) Irá ikīn tá-yī bē.
 Matter some be-3s NEG
 There's no problem.

289) Súle tá re.
 10k coin is DEM
 Here's 10 kobo.

290) M tá-m tīrū.
 1s be-1s going
 I'm leaving.

7.3.2.2 Sentences with Motion Verbs

As noted above, these sentences are distinguished from other sentences in their contrastive nominalization patterns, and, within the category of locatives, they are distinct from the simple locative by being nominalizable and by the possibility of occurring without a locative argument. Further, motion verbs may optionally be followed by the preposition *yī*.

Examples:¹¹²

291) Afu ka (yī) ufáng yáka a?
 2s go (to) farm today Q
 Did you go to/reach the farm today?

291b) Eēn, ame ka.
 yes 1s go
 Yes, I went.

¹¹² For more on the use of *yī* see discussion on prepositions below.

292) Awū rū (yī) ritúg.
3s go (to) market

He went to the market.

293) Awū kú tsō (yī) kitáen rikwen.
3s IMP ascend top mountain

He goes up the mountain.

294) Atī ka-tī bē.
1p go-1p NEG
We did not go.

295) Ā sī pú-bā (yī) Ukān
3p go-down PRF-3p (to) Wukari

They have gone to Wukari.

Another verb in this category might be **nwúnn** ‘leave’ as in

296) Atī nwúnn Gbóko uwae isháen usīn.
1p leave Gboko in season dry

We left Gboko in dry season.

7.3.2.3 Sentences with verbs of Posture/Position

Sentences with Verbs expressing posture and position may be distinguished from verbs of motion on the basis of their ability to co-occur with certain adverbial nouns that qualify the position, as in the following:

297) Awū tsi ritsen.
3s stand upright

He stood/was standing.

298) Awū náe rípátēn.
3s lie on back

He lay on his back.

Unacceptable:

299) *Awū rū ritsen.
3s go upright

He went upright.

300) *Awū rū rípātēn.

3s go on back

He went on his back.

Given the durative component of the meaning of postural verbs, one may ask how they differ from statives. The following features of statives, mentioned earlier, are relevant: statives resist the stativizing marker **kú** and expressions of location; they attract ideophones and expressions of degree. Positional verbs have none of these characteristics. They freely allow **kú** and are often found with locatives.

The positional verbs plus adverbial nominal formally resemble a transitive verb-object sequence. They are different, however, in that they cannot take the nominalization transformation:

301) Awu náe rípātēn.

3s lie on back

He lay on his back.

Unacceptable: ***rípātēn tī náe** ‘back-lying?’

Examples of positional verbs:

302) Atī som ribén.

1p sit ground

We sat down.

303) Awū kú náe ribén.

3s IMP lie ground

He is lying down.

304) M tsi imbyí kutúkū.

1s stand bottom tree

I stood at the base of a tree.

305) Awū som atáng ládi ifaen.

3s sit there week two

He stayed there 2 weeks.

306) Awū náe kusóg acīn.
 3s lie house medicine
 He's in hospital.

307) Awū bāb uuae ayéb akwēn.
 3s crouch in millet there
 He's crouching in the millet over there.

308) Atī kú ribén uwé sója.
 3s kneel ground front soldier
 We knelt in front of the soldier.

This verb seems to have another sense that may be something like that of the basic locative:

309) Sáe kusóg tīyāng tī kú akwēn.¹¹³
 look house big REL ? there
 Look at that big house over there.

Other qualifying nominals (adverbial nominals) may occasionally be found in the predicates of positional sentences. Examples:

3100) Ufu tsi ribwen.
 door stand open
 The door stood open.

101) Awū náe kicáeb.
 3s lie sickness
 He is ill.

Another possible positional verb, which occurs only with inanimate subjects is **cwú** 'to lie down.' Examples:

312) Ákōng cwú ribén atáng.
 stalks lay ground there
 There were stalks lying on the ground.

¹¹³ This verb may have something to do with the development of the imperfect aspect marker **kú**.

313) **Ā pū yī cwú uwé ukwe.**
 3p take 3 lie front chief

They laid it in front of the chief.

7.3.3 Transitive sentences: introduction

Coming to the notion of transitivity now, we encounter two major differences from what obtains in some other languages:

First, verbs do not require an explicit object. In English, the verb ‘drink’ in its usual sense requires an object in sentences like the following, the object of sentence two being ‘it’:

I gave him some water. He drank **it**.

In Kuteb, and many other African languages, it is natural to leave the object implicit in this context:

314) **Ame sa na wū ámbyī. Awū ngwā.**
 1s take give 3s water 3s drink

I gave him water. He drank it.

The object in the second sentence can be said to be "suppressed."

Secondly, almost all verbs can take a grammatical "object." However, in terms of situational dynamics, the referent of the "object" is often not in any sense affected by the action of the verb. In fact, many of these "objects" have no referent in the real world. Storch (2000:48) makes a similar observation about verbs in Jibə. Examples in Kuteb:

315) **Awū cang icin.**
 3s walk walk

He walked.

316) **Awū kwáen ukwáen.**
 3s cough cough

He coughed.

Other examples of verbs in Kuteb which occur with grammatical ‘objects’ are:

317) **Anī pu unyāng a?**
 2s take breath Q

Did you rest?

- 318) **Ati se ise.**
 1p dance dance
 We danced.

In all of these cases, the verb and "object" can be transformed into a nominalization such as **unyāng tī pu** 'resting,' **ukwáen tī kwáen** 'coughing,' **icin tí cang** 'walking, journey,' **ise tí se** 'dancing.'

Thompson and Hopper (1980) have stated that transitivity is best thought of as a semantic property which involves not simply verbs, but the whole relationship between a verb and the arguments with which it occurs.

In this view, no strict division can be expected to exist between 'transitive' and 'intransitive' verbs or even sentences. Rather there is a scale of transitivity such that a formally transitive sentence such as 'Jim loves potatoes' may have fewer transitive features than a formally intransitive sentence such as 'Susan left.'¹¹⁴

In the present work, we will use the term 'transitive' for those sentences that have an immediately post-verbal noun phrase that is not a location or a complement.¹¹⁵ Any sentence in which the verb and its following NP can be nominalized will be included. Many of our so-called "objects" in Kuteb are what Thompson and Hopper call "non-individuated." That is, they are abstract, non-referential and inanimate.

The 'objects' following typical English 'transitive' verbs are usually quite many in number. For example, the sentence beginning 'I saw...' can have an unlimited range of objects. By contrast, many Kuteb verbs have only one noun object. For example **cwū** 'to die' can only take **ricwú** 'death'; **yāng** 'sing' can only take **acáng** 'song.' Such verbs and sentences at the low end of the transitivity scale we may well call "pseudo-transitive." The "objects" in some cases may be thought of as "dummies" like the dummy subject in sentences like 'It is raining.'

We may theorize that once a syntactic role like 'object' is set up, speakers apply it to new situations that resemble the prototype in some way, even though in other ways the new situation is quite different from the old.

The following sub-categories are not rigid, but serve to provide a way of discussing the syntactic and semantic properties of sentences with invertable objects.

Prototypical transitive sentences:

¹¹⁴ In this case the potatoes have more effect on Jim than the other way around, and Susan is more active in her situation than Jim is in his. Indeed, in many languages such as Tiv and Mandinka, 'Jim loves potatoes' would be translated with 'potatoes' as subject and 'Jim' as object.

¹¹⁵ The word 'complement' refers to the final NP in sentences like **Apurá si urwán-m** 'Apura is my friend.'

319) Awū tā ukó.
 3s shoot duiker
 He shot a duiker.

320) Awū jwó keké-m.
 3s wash bike-1s.
 He washed my bicycle.

In the above sentences, the object is concrete, singular, countable, and referential. 'Referential' means that one could, for example, follow sentence 109 with **amá ayī tēr rū** 'but it ran away.'

One could add that these objects also are unrestricted in that dozens of nouns could be substituted for **ukó** or **keké**. Other examples:

321) Atī pwa ayéb.
 1p grind millet
 We ground millet.

322) Ā ā ye mbakúnn tawé.
 3p OBL catch chicken first
 They must catch a chicken first.

323) Izé tu mbapxú wū akā?
 Ize find dog REF where
 Where did Ize find the dog?

324) Ande kú ye iwág usháen isīn.
 people IMP catch fish season dry
 People catch fish in the dry season.

By contrast, compare the following:

7.3.3.1 Restricted- object Transitive Sentences

We could also call these "dummy-object sentences," or "pseudo-transitive" sentences.

- 325) **Awu tēr inyae.**
 3s run running
 He ran.
- 326) **Awū yāng acáng.**
 3s sing songs
 He sang.
- 327) **Awū jwúb kijáen.**
 3s cry madness
 He is mad.
- 328) **Awū cang icin.**
 3s walk walk
 He walked.
- 329) **Awū tsō isíg.**
 3s go-up burp
 He burped.
- 330) **Awū kwāen ukwáen.**
 3s cough cough
 He coughed.
- 331) **Awū kú tōm ritóm.**
 3s IMP farm farming
 He is farming.

Note that in these sentences the objects are, first of all, unaffected by the action. Furthermore, they are abstract. No particular act of running or walking is described but rather the general notion. They are also *inanimate*. Usually they are *non-referential*. One cannot follow the sentence **Awū tēr inyae** (Lit. ‘he run running’) with **ayī bir tímambē** ‘it was very fast.’ Finally, one may note the *restricted* nature of these objects. The verb **tsō** in sentence 119) can take only **isíg** and two other

objects.¹¹⁶ Apart from **icin** ‘walking,’ the verb **cang** may occur only with the following:

332) Awū cang tātu.

3s walk hunting

He went hunting.

333) Anī cang rikun yáka ne a?

2p walk com-labor today DEM Q

Did you go do communal labor today?

334) Awū si unde tī kú cang kutúr.

3s COP person REL IMP walk bush

He’s a hunter.

335) Atī kú cang yáwo ámām.

1p IMP walk wandering only

We’re just out walking. (**yáwo** < Hausa **yawo** ‘walk, stroll’)

336) Ā cang waázi.

3p walk preaching

They went out preaching.

Note the following examples of **náe** (‘to lie down’):

337) Awū náe ribén. (náe = verb of position)

3s lie ground

He lay down.

338) Awū náe iyag. (náe = "transitive" verb)

3s lie adultery

He committed adultery.

¹¹⁶ One can say **Awū tsō ukúnn** ‘He shouted’ (raised an alarm) and **Awū tsō apwāfxen** (‘He put on shoes’).

- 339) **Ribāng náe m kufken.** (nāe = "transitive" verb)
 sore lies me leg

I have a sore on my leg.

One must always be ready for surprises, however. The verb **kwáen** 'cough' usually takes **ukwáen**, but I have also heard **kwáen anyīng** 'to cough blood.' Compare with **shinn ashinn** 'to urinate' and **shinn anyīng** 'to urinate blood' and **nja abyīng** 'to defecate' and **nja anyīng** 'to pass stool with blood in it.'

7.3.3.2 Cognate-object Sentences

The phrase, **kwáen ukwáen** 'cough a cough' above is representative of a large number of verbs with cognate nouns based on verbs that allow few, if any other NPs to follow them.

- 340) **Awū se ise.**
 3s dance dance

He danced.

- 341) **Awū cwū ricwú.**
 3s die death

He died.

- 342) **Awū som usom.**
 3s sit sitting

He sat/lived.

- 343) **Awū bōm ribōm.**
 3s be-strong strength

He is strong.

- 344) **Awū sēr risēr.**
 3s grow growth

He grew.

- 345) **Awū cwág kicwág.**
 3s sleep sleep

He slept.

346) Awū bun kubun.
 3s groan groan
 He groaned.

347) Awū bur ubur.
 3s cover cover
 He's wearing a hat.

348) Awū yáe kuyáe.
 3s sneeze sneeze.
 He sneezed.

In the above cases the noun after the verb is a dummy, a position-holder. In other cases it may be useful to think of the 'object' as modifying the verb, limiting its meaning in particular ways. Looking at these sentences in this light they are not so different from the sentences we described above which consisted of positional verbs and adverbial nouns, for example:

349) Awū tsi ritsen.
 He stood upright
 He stood upright.

Again, the objects in the following define the meaning of the verb **mbye** 'to build':

350) Ā mbye kusóg.
 3p build house
 They built a house.

351) Andá kú mbye atútonḡ.
 women IMP build pots
 Women make pots.

Consider how the object limits the verb **tēr** in the following:

352) Awū kú tēr inyae.
 3s IMP run run
 He is running.

353) **Ā kú tēr mbapxú tī kijáen.**
 3p IMP run dog REL mad

They are fleeing a mad dog.

354) **Awū tēr fu icāen ice-fu.**
 3s run 2s cause beard-2s

He ran away from you because of your beard.

The words **inyae** ‘activity of running’ and **mbapxú tī kijáen** ‘mad dog’ define the possible interpretations of the verb **tēr**.

7.3.3.3 Defining Characteristics of Two-Argument Sentences

To summarize, while ‘transitive’ and locative verbs both occur with a predicate NP, they interact with the predicate NP in different ways. A ‘transitive’ verb nominalizes with its object as follows:

355) **Awū mbye kusóg. → kusóg tī mbye**
 3s build house house REL build

He built a house. house-building

356) **Atī pu unyāng. → unyāng tí pu**
 1p take breath breath REL take

He rested. rest/holiday

357) **Awū yāng acáng. → acáng tī yāng**
 3s sing songs songs REL sing

He sang (songs). song-singing

Nominalizations of this kind are used in sentences like:

358) **Wānde-wū si kusóg tí mbye.**
 work-3s is house-building

His work is building houses.

359) **Awū núng irá iwág tī ye tímambē**
 3s know matter fish-catching much

He knows fishing very well.

Other verbs with predicate NPs cannot do this:

360) **Awū ka Bíká.**

3s go Bika

He went to Bika.

361) ***Bíká tī ka.**

Bika REL go 'Bika – going'

Other common transitive nominalizations:

inyae tī tēr
running REL run 'running'

icin tī cang
walking REL walk 'walking'

irā tī núng
word REL know 'knowledge'

ikén tī kwén
thing REL learn 'learning'

mbapwa tī tso
maize REL plant 'planting maize'

ritóm tī tóm
farming REL farm 'farming'

rikwén tī pwen
judgment REL count 'judgment/trial'

Reflexive sentences

The two-NP sentence is the normal template for expressing the notion of 'reflexive.' In these sentences the 'object' is the word **ijwē** 'body' plus a possessive pronoun co-referential with the subject:

362) **Awū sáe ijwē-wū uwae síníma.**

3s look body-3s in cinema

He saw himself in the cinema.

Examples from texts:

363) Awū wēn ijwē-wū.

3s kill body-3s

He killed himself.

364) Ā kú kyāe ijwē-bā tsi kú jí ukwāb tūyāng.

3p IMP fix body-3p stand IMP wait feast big

They were preparing themselves for the big feast.

365) Maléka sī bá tsó ijwē-wū uwōg-m.

Angel descend come show body-3s place-1s

An angel came down and revealed himself to me.

366) Ā pū ítóng mbúb ijwē-bā.

3p take ashes dump body-3p

They dump ashes on themselves.

Verbs with Body-Part NP's.

A number of 'transitive' sentences include a body-part 'object.' Some are stative; others are non-stative intransitives. Examples:

367a) Awū tsēn utōb.

3s white heart

He is happy.

368a) Awū ndub ijwē.

3s swell-up body

He was proud.

369a) Awū fwēr ijwē.

3s shake body

He shook.

370) Awū ndembéb utōb.

3s spoil heart

He got unhappy.

These sentences are related to ones like the following that have exactly the same meaning:¹¹⁷

157b) Utōb-wū tsēn.
heart-3s white
His heart is white.

158b) Ijwē-wū ndub.
body-3s swell-up
His body swelled.

159b) Ijwē-wū fwēr.
body-3s shake
His body shook.

370b) Uwae-wū ndembéb.
inside-3s spoil
His inside spoiled.

Semantically, it appears that a metonymical transfer has been made. In **Awū tsēn utōb** (Lit. 'he white heart'), for example, the whiteness of the heart is transferred to the person himself, and the word for heart is relegated to a lower position, from subject to object. It would be possible to analyse the first set of sentences as statives or intransitives followed by an adverbial noun, along the lines of sentences like

371) Awū náe rípátēn.
3s lie on-back
He lay on his back.

However, since they pass the transformation test, we have no syntactic grounds for excluding them from the category "transitive." Note:

372) Awū tā ibyē => ibyē tī tā
3s shoot animal animal REL shoot 'hunting'

¹¹⁷ Presumably they have different functions on the level of discourse pragmatics.

- 373) Awū ndub risū => risū tī ndub
 body REL swell head REL swell 'being proud'

Other nominalizations:

utōb tī tsēn.
 heart REL white 'being happy'¹¹⁸

ijwē tī fwēr.
 body REL shake 'shivering'

utōb tī ndebéb.
 heart REL spoil 'being dismayed'

Other body-part 'objects' in sentences:

- 374) Awū bēn ayīb.
 3s ripen eyes (ayīb tī bēn = 'cleverness')
 He got clever.

- 375) Awū cén kufxen.
 3s stub? foot (kufxen tī cén = 'stumbling')
 He stumbled.

- 376) Awū caen rishwū.
 3s fill stomach (rishwū tī caen = 'pregnancy')
 She is pregnant.

- 377) Irá ne fur ayīb.
 word DEM bend eyes (ayīb tī fur – 'amazement')
 This matter is amazing.

- 378) Awū munn rishwū.

¹¹⁸ It may be observed that phrases like **utōb tī tsēn** can also be interpreted as a noun plus an adjective formed from the stative verb **tsēn**. That is to say, the distinction between **tsēn** (stative) and **tsēn** (transitive) is neutralized in the nominalization.

3s swell stomach (rishwū tī munn = ‘stomach-swelling’)

His stomach swelled up.

As in the case of the earlier examples, it is reasonable to think of these predicates as qualifying the verb by giving the domain in which the verb applies. Thus sentence 374 could be interpreted something like ‘He is ripe with respect to eyes.’ Similarly,

379) Awū fwēr ijwē.

3s shake body

He shakes with respect to body.

380) Awū ndub ijwē.

3s swell body

He 's swollen in the body (He is proud).

These verbs not only nominalize like transitives but also occasionally pattern like transitives in relativization, as may be seen in the following:

381a) Afu ye iwág.

2s catch fish

You caught a fish.

381b) Iwāg tī afu ye ne kim.

fish REL 2s catch DEM fat

This fish you caught is fat.

382a) Afu bōm risū.

2s. strong head

You are stubborn.

382b) Risū tī afu kú bōm ne ndebéb m utōb.

head REL 2s IMP strong DEM spoil 1s heart

This stubbornness of yours bothers me.

383a) Awū caen rishwū.

she full belly
She is pregnant.

- 383b) Rishwū tī awū caen ne ú sa na fu rikāen.
belly REL 3s fill DEM FUT take give 2s trouble
This pregnancy of hers will cause you trouble.

We have stated that the "objects" above express a kind of location or domain where the quality is found. Some other cases can be thought of in the same way:

- 384) Awū nyang undá.
3a good woman
She's an ideal woman.

- 385) Awū bōm unde.
3s strong person
He's a strong man.

- 386) Ayī nyang útug.
3 good taste
It's tasty.

Other Qualifying-Object NP's

Perhaps by extension from the body-part structure, some other nouns in object position pattern in a similar verb-qualifying paradigm. I have not had a chance to determine if all of these nominalize like transitives:

In the following, the noun **irá** marks the verbs as being in the domain of speech.

- 387) Awū jwúb irá.
3s cry word **irá tī jwúb** = 'crying,' 'cry' (N)
He cried.

- 388) Awū rang irá.
3a ask word **irá tī rang** = 'asking,' 'question'(N)
He asked a question.

- 389) Awū rī irá.

3a speak word. **irá tī rī** = ‘speaking,’ ‘speech’
He talked.

390) Awū tāen irá.
3s shout word **irá tī taen** = ‘shouting’ ‘shout’(N)
He shouted.

391) Awū bím irá.
3s tangle word **irá tī bím** = ‘mixing/-ed up speech’
He speaks confusingly.

392) Awū bēn-wū irá unzu bē.
3s ripen-his word mouth NEG
He’s awkward in speaking.

The expression **irá unzu** (literally ‘word mouth’) is a noun phrase meaning ‘speech,’ and the sentence states in what respect the subject is not ‘ripe’ (seasoned, mature).

7.3.3.4 Conclusion on Transitivity

I do not (yet) have formal syntactic criteria for distinguishing between the structures involved in the wide range of sentences we are calling "transitive," e.g. between the following:

393) Awū tā **ibyē**.
3s shoot animal
He shot an animal.

394) Awū bōm risū.
3s strong head
He is stubborn.

It is possible that further analysis of the verbs involved may yield a syntactic correlate to some of the semantic categories we have set out above. One such difference might be found in referentiality. In a normal discourse, the referent of **ibyē** in the first sentence could become the subject of the next sentence:

- 395) Awū tā ibyē. Ayī byāen.**
 3s shoot animal 3 red

He shot an animal; it was red.

This does not work for the qualifying NP's:

- 396) *Awū ndub risū. Ayī kim.**
 3s swell head 3 fat

*He head-swelled. It was fat.

Another approach here would be to organize sentences in terms of situational role: Agent, Experiencer, Patient, Theme, Instrument, etc. It is hoped that studying discourse patterns will also shed some light on the distribution of these types of sentences.

7.4 Sentences with Three Arguments

These include the classical 'ditransitive' verbs with a 'direct object' and an 'indirect object' and others that include dummy objects. The order of the two post-verbal arguments with respect to each other is important. For example, the reversal of the order of the two post-verbal NP's in the following is ungrammatical:

- 397a) Awu nda umbae-m kisim.**
 he gave child-1s knife

He gave my child a knife.

Unacceptable:

- 397b) *Awu nda kisim umbae-m.**
 3s give knife child-1s child-1s

- 398a) Ame rang wū irá.**
 1s ask 3s word

I asked him a question.

Unacceptable:

- 398b) Ame rang irá wū.¹¹⁹**
 1s ask word 3s

¹¹⁹ Note, however, the following sentence using the phonetically similar possessive pronoun -wū:

Ame rang irá-wū (lit: I asked his word) 'I asked about him.'

399a) Atī fā bā rinyí.
 1p name 3p name

We named them.

Questionable:

399b) ?Atī fā rinyí bā.
 1p name name 3p

The position immediately following the verb typically hosts a noun or pronoun that encodes the ‘beneficiary’ or party affected by the action of the verb. The similarity to ‘indirect object of the verb’ in English will readily be seen in the following examples. Although noun objects appear in this position occasionally, pronouns are more common. This correlates with a linguistic universal that Givón has observed, namely, that if a sentence has two objects, one human and the other non-human, the human one will normally come first.

The second post-verbal NP is typically an object in the traditional sense ("goal" in some grammars) or an instrument. Thompson has noted (1980:29) that, in the light of the fact that ‘indirect objects’ are often ‘prototypical’ objects, being definite and animate, they should in fact be considered "direct objects" rather than what might be called "accusative objects.’ I call them ‘benefactive’ here. Examples:

7.4.1 Subject + Benefactive +Goal

400) Ā nda Ize rinyanwae.
 3p give Ize present

They gave Ize a present.

401) Ā ú nda wū ríkwāe tī wāe.
 3p FUT give him shame REL feel

They’ll make him ashamed.

402) Awū kú pūtsán tī ipâm itā.
 3s IMP follow 1p pound three

We owe him three pounds (six naira).¹²⁰

¹²⁰ This sentence indicates the strength of the naira in the late 1960s.

403) **Ame ú pae nī náira ifaen.**

1s FUT pay 2p naira two

I'll pay you two naira.

404) **M kú byīb Atápu ripāb náira ifaen.**

1s IMP demand Atapu loan naira two

Atapu owes me two naira.

405) **Ame tōm wū atóm.**

1s sent 3s errand

I sent him on an errand.

7.4.2 Subject + Benefactive + Instrument

In the following sentences the three-argument structure encodes an instrument in the final position. Note that English instrumental expressions, by contrast, require a preposition 'with' before the instrumental noun.¹²¹

406) **Ā byīnn wū kumbáb.**

3p beat 3s whip

They whipped him.

407) **Ā jwunn wū atxom.**

3p throw 3s stones

They threw stones at him.

408) **Mbawén ca wū ishen.**

goat butt 3s horns

The goat butted him.

It may be that originally Kuteb required a preposition also, as is suggested by the fact that alternatives using the preposition **tí** are also heard:

409) **Ā byīnn wū tí kumbáb.**

3p beat 3s with whip

They whipped him.

¹²¹ Except in cases like 'they caned him,' 'they whipped him,' and 'they clubbed him,' in which the instrumental idea has been incorporated into the verb itself.

410) Ā jwunn wū tí atxom.
3p threw 3s with stones

They threw stones at him.

It is likely that the difference between the two constructions is that the one with the preposition involves conscious focus on the instrument, whereas in the one without the preposition the speaker is thinking of the activity as a whole, particularly as a routine use of the instrument in question.

In support of this hypothesis note that non-routine objects can be inserted more easily in the prepositional structure than in the other one.

Expected collocations:

411) Ā byīnn wū (tí) kimbáb.
3p beat 3s with whip

They whipped him.

Unexpected collocation:

412a) Ā byīnn wū kújerā.
3p beat 3s chair ?

They chaired him.

Tolerable:

412b) Ā byīnn wū tí kújerā.
3p beat 3s with chair

They beat him with a chair.

Expected collocations:

413) Atī tēr bā (tí) uyī.
1p stap 3p with needle

We gave them injections.

Unexpected collocations:

414a) ?Atī tēr bā kúsa.
1p stab 3p nail

We nailed them? (We stabbed them with nails.)

414b) Atī tēr bā tí kúsa.
1p stab 3p with nail

We jabbed them with nails.

Expected collocations:

415) Anī jwunn me (tí) atxom.
2p throw 1s with stones

You threw stones at me.

Unexpected collocations:

416a) ?Anī jwunn me tása.
2p throw 1s dish

?You dished me. (You threw dishes at me.)

416b) Anī jwunn me tí tása.
2p throw 1s with dish

You threw a dish at me.

7.4.3 Subject + Benefactive + Body Part

417) Irá ne byāen m ayíb.
word DEM red 1s eyes

This matter troubles me.

418) Irá ne fur bā ayíb.
word DEM fold 3p eyes

This matter amazes them.

419) Awū tsi m utōb.
3s stand 1s heart

I'm always thinking of him.

210) Ijwú rū wū risū.
Gray-hair go 3s head

He's got grey hair.

211) Awū rū ijwú risū.
He go gray-hair head

He's got grey hair.

Like the instrumentals above, these sentences have alternatives using the preposition **tí**.

421b) Awū tsi m tí utōb.

3s stand 1s with heart

I'm always thinking of him.

422) Awū byīnn me (tí) rishwū.

3s strike 1s with stomach.

He hit me in the stomach.

423) Awū pye m (tí) risū.

3s cut 1s with head

He cut me in the head.

424) Ribāng náe m (tí) kufken.

Sore lie 1s leg

I have a sore on my leg.

Given the fact that the second post-verbal NP encodes either instrument or body part, one might predict ambiguity in the case of a body part that could be used as an instrument, such as an arm or a leg. Such is indeed the case, as in the following:

425) Ame byīnn wū (tí) kufken.

1s beat 3s with foot

I hit him on the foot. / I kicked him.

426) Awū rug me (tí) kujwó.

3s punch 1s with arm

He hit me on the arm. / He hit me with his arm.

One could explain this ambiguity by saying that two separate sentences underlie the surface structure. In the first the possessor of the object is "promoted" to the first post-verbal slot, the 'benefactive' position:

Ame byīnn kufken -wū.

1s beat foot -his

1 2 3 4

1 2 3 4 => 1243 (Possessor Promotion Rule)

Ame byīnn wū kufken.

In the second, the instrumental phrase is shortened by dropping the preposition:

Ame	byīnn	wū	tí	kufken.
1s	beat	3s	with	foot
1	2	3		4

1234 => 124 (Preposition Deletion Rule)

Ame byīnn wū kufken.

7.4.4 Other Three-argument Sentences

In these sentences the second argument is always a benefactive and the final NP represents a variety of functions that have yet to be categorized. For lack of specific term I call it a "dummy object" (see discussion on 'transitivity' in Section 3.3). The meaning of the object in these cases is often impossible to separate from the meaning of the verb.

427) Ukwe fā wū kusen tímambē.

Chief ? 3s order much

The chief seriously ordered him.

428) Ame fan wū kibyāg.

1s scold? 3s heat

I reprimanded him.

429) Atī fā wū rinyí.

1p name 3s name

We named him.

430) Ā tēn wū ifú.

3p injury 3s injury

They injured him.

431) Ā txūn wū asú.

3p insult 3s insult

They insulted him.

432) Ā pwen tī rikwén.

3p count 1p judgment

They judged us.

433) Atī byīb bā akú.
 1p demand 3p revenge
 We took revenge on them.

434) Atī byīb bā irá.
 1p demand 3p word
 We interrogated them.

435) Awū byangcī anyīsū fangó.
 3s block children road
 He blocked the children's way.

436) Ā nde wū forō.
 3p do 3s punishment
 They punished him.

437) A ceb wī kunyī.
 3s broke 3s tooth
 They broke his tooth.

Many of the cognate-object constructions also allow an additional argument to be inserted, as in the following:

438) Ā fxīr wū afxīr.
 3p ? 3s ?
 They berated him (?).

439) Ā skaen wū icāen.
 3p laugh 3s laugh
 They laughed at him.

Many reflexive sentences fall into this category, since reflexive activities often involve a second predicate argument. Examples:

440) Awū kú nda ijwē-wū rikāen.
 3s IMP give body-3s trouble
 He is giving himself trouble.

- 441) **Ā nda ijwē-bā rinyanwae.**
3p give body-3p gift

They gave themselves gifts.

- 442) **Afu kú tēn ijwē-fu ifú.**
2s IMP injure body-2p injury

You're injuring yourself.

- 443) **Istí rang ijwē-wū irá bāa, ...**
Isti ask body-3s word saying

Isti asked himself, ...

As in the case of two-argument sentences, the reciprocal marker **átsō**, which is nominal in form and co-referential with the subject, stands in the benefactive position, and one of the other three types of argument can follow: instrument, body part, or dummy object.

- 444) **Ā kú byīnn átsō kimbáb.**
3p IMP beat RECIP whip

They are whipping each other. (BEN+INSTR)

- 445) **Ā fan átsō kibyāg.**
3p scold RECIP heat

They reprimanded each other. (BEN + DUMMY)

- 446) **Ā kú ceb átsō kufxen.**
3p IMP tread RECIP leg

They're stepping on each other. (BEN + BP)

- 447) **Ā cāeb átsō anyī.**
3p destroy RECIP tooth

They knocked out each other's teeth. (BEN + BP)

448) Atī tēr átsō uyī.
1p stab RECIP needle

We gave each other injections. (BEN + INSTR)

Not all transitives can automatically insert an additional argument. In the following, an additional argument must be preceded by the word **na** which may be analysed as a serial verb or as a preposition (see Chapter 8).

449a) Ā yāng acáng.
3p sing songs

They sang songs.

449b) Ā yāng na tī acáng.
3p sing BEN 1p songs

They sang songs for us.

449c) *Ā yāng tī acáng.
3p sing 1p songs

They sang us songs.

7.5 Sentences with Four Arguments

Three arguments may follow the verb, although this is fairly rare, it being more usual to introduce the final NP with the preposition **tí**. When three arguments follow the verb, the order is:

BENEFACTIVE – INSTRUMENT - BODY PART

as in the following:

240a) Awū byīnn me kujwó risū.
3s hit 1s arm head

He hit me on the head with his hand.

As in the case of "possessor raising" above, the sentence may be thought of as a double transform from:

240b) Awū byīnn risū -m tí kujwó-wū.
3s hit head -1s PREP arm-3s

He hit my head with his hand.

The possessor (-m) is shifted to post-verbal slot 2:

240c) Awū byīnn me risū tí kujwó-wū.
 3s beat 1s head PREP hand-3s

He me on the head with his hand.

Then the instrument, minus its preposition, goes to post-verbal slot 3:

240d) Awū byīnn me risū (tí) kujwó.
 3s beat 1s head with hand

He beat me on the head with his hand.

Another example with optional preposition before the instrument:

241) Awū pye m adá (tí) risū.
 3s cut 1s machete (on) head

He cut me on the head with a cutlass.

The following idiomatic expression does not seem to allow for the inclusion of the preposition **tí**.

242) A kú céb wū ricinn uwae.
 3p IMP break 3s ? inside

They're waiting (hopefully) for him to die.

More natural examples of this construction are needed before conclusions can be drawn about its inclusion as a valid type of argument structure. In particular, in view of the alternation of body part NPs with the prepositional phrase using **tí**, we need to study how such constructions contrast with locatives such as the following:

243) Awū pye m adá uwae risāen.
 3s cut 1s machete in the farm

He cut me with a machete at the farm.

7.6 Conclusion

In this chapter we have presented the basic types of simple sentence that are found in Kuteb, using a categorization based on the number of arguments in the sentences rather than on the traditional categories transitive and intransitive, because the traditional idea of transitivity does not fit Kuteb well as a structural category. Even so, we cannot claim that this is the best way of doing things. An organization of sentences in terms of semantic (situational) roles such as Agent, Patient, Theme, Experiencer, etc. may prove to be more useful to the average student of Kuteb.

CHAPTER EIGHT. SERIAL VERB CONSTRUCTIONS

8.1 Introduction

Chapter Seven introduced simple sentences--those that express a single proposition--and the subcategory of them that contain a single verb. In this chapter we deal with sentences which express a single proposition but which contain multiple verbs. Known commonly as ‘serial verb constructions,’ these sentences have been described over the past few decades¹²² in a substantial body of literature covering languages in West Africa, Oceania, and Southeast Asia.¹²³

The serial verb construction (SVC from here) consists, in most languages, of two or more verbs in sequence without any coordinating or subordinating word. Givón (1991:137) gives a simplified, cross-linguistic definition as follows: ‘An event/state that one language codes as a simple clause with a single verb, is coded in another language as a complex clause with two or more verbs.’ The following are examples from Kalam (Givón 1988:15), Yatye (Stahlke, 1970), Lahu (Matisoff 1988:70) and Yoruba (Stahlke 1970):

244) Bi-nak ak spet ominal dand sand-ip.
 man-your DEF spade two carry leave-PRF

The man is carrying away two spades.

245) Amì awá òkìtì adyú òtsi.
 I took machete cut tree

I cut the tree with a machete.

246) Na-hi ga qo' chi to' pi ve.
 we had-to repeat lift out for them

We had to lift it out for them again.

¹²² As early as 1966, Pike analyzed SVCs in Kasem, Vagala, and Igede as a special level of syntactic organization, the ‘clause cluster,’ which is formally neither a clause nor a sentence but something else. The emphasis in the present work is on the fact that the SVC constitutes a single proposition that can be negated (see next section), just like one-verb propositions.

¹²³ See Lefebvre 1991 for a useful introduction to serial verb constructions.

247) **Mo mú gbogbo àwon omodé lo Ekó.**
 I take all PL children go Lagos

I took all the children to Lagos.

I begin the description of Kuteb SVCs with diagnostic and supplementary features, and then show how particular sets of verbs have apparently clustered to form recurring lexical groupings. My intent throughout the chapter is to demonstrate the unity of the SVC as a syntactic unit that encodes a single semantic proposition.

8.2 Identification of Serial Verbs in Kuteb

As mentioned above, a serial verb construction consists of two or more verbs in sequence without any coordinating or subordinating particle. Examples:

248) **Rū ka sa ují bá!**
 move go take rope come
 Go and fetch a rope!

249) **Awū txí ámbiyī munncī kutútong.**
 3s dip water fill pot
 She filled the pot with water.

250) **Abā rū ka som atáng ishaen ifaen.**
 3p move go sit there month two
 They went and stayed there two months.

251) **Atī rū ka jwunn wēn ukú wū.**
 1p move go throw kill crocodile REF
 We took spears and killed the crocodile.

While absence of coordinating and subordinating markers is our primary diagnostic for the SVC, other characteristics also hold true:

1. Negation sharing
2. Argument sharing
3. Sharing of auxiliaries

Let us examine each of these in turn.

8.2.1 Negation Sharing

A piece of evidence used routinely (Givón 1988) to show the unity of the SVC as a grammatical construction is its behaviour under negation. It will be seen from the

examples below that the negative marker (possessive pronoun and particle *bē*) covers the entire sequence of verbs. It is impossible (indeed, nonsensical) to negate one of the verbs without the others. Examples:

252) Awū rū bá-wū bē.
 3s move come-3s NEG
 She did not come.

253) *Awū rū-wū bē bá.
 3s move-3s NEG come
 ?She came but didn't move.

254) Awū tēr ka wakúnunn.
 3s run go home
 She ran home.

255) Awū tēr ka-wū wakúnunn bē.
 3s run go-3s Home NEG
 She did not run home.

Why is this example not numbered and indented? If it is ungrammatical, what about 10?

255b) *Awū tēr-wū bē ka wakúnunn.
 3s run-3s NEG go Home
 ?She went home and did not run.

256) Ame yēr wēn-me mbapxú-fu bē.
 1s cut kill-1s dog-2s NEG
 I did not butcher your dog.

256b) *Ame yēr-me bē wēn mbapxú-fu.
 1s cut-1s NEG kill dog-2s
 I did not cut your dog and killed it.

257) Awū sa keké-m rū-wū yī ritúg bē.
 3s take cycle-1s go-3s to market NEG

He did not take my bicycle to market.

257b *Awū sa-wū keké-m bē rū yī ritúg.
 3s take-3s cycle-1s NEG go to market

He did not take my bicycle and went to the market.

8.2.2 Argument Sharing

In this section I show that the subject of verbs in SVCs must be shared but not necessarily the objects.

8.2.2.1 Object Sharing

We have seen above how SVCs must share the subject argument. The object argument is sometimes shared, sometimes not.

SVCs with Shared Object

261) Itumū sa ukwab kūb tírī.
 Lion take Monkey eat then
 Then Lion ate Monkey.

262) Awū yēr wēn mbakúnn.
 3s cut kill chicken
 He butchered a chicken.

The following is a case in which the object has been shifted into a topic position at the front of the sentence. The normal object position would be between the two verbs, as in example 18.

263) Góro, afu pū kan na bā.
 Kola, 2s take divide to 3p
 You shared kola nuts among them.

SVCs with Separate Objects

However, often the object is not shared, as in the following, where two separate objects are expressed:

264) Awū sa adá pyē ukob wū.
 3s take machete cut cobra REF

He slashed the cobra with a machete. (He took a machete and slashed the cobra.)

- 265) Awū sa biríki mbye kusóg.
3s take brick build house

He built the house with bricks. (He took bricks and built a house.)

8.2.2.2 Subject Sharing

The negative criterion discussed above dovetails with the shared-subject requirement in that negation is marked not only by the morpheme *bē* but also by a possessive pronoun coreferent with the subject:

- 258) Awū bá-wū bē.
3s come-3s NEG

He did not come.

In an SVC there can only be one verb-focus pronoun (VFP) and it always occurs after the last verb:

- 259) Awū sa mbawén bá-wū bē.
3s take goat come-3s NEG

He did not bring the goat.

Since there can only be one VFP, and it must be co-referent with the subject of both verbs, it follows that it is impossible for a second verb to have a different subject, even if it made any sense:

- 259b *Awū núng abā nwúnn-wū bē.
3s see 3p leave-3s NEG

for: 'He did not see them leave.'

- 259c *Awū núng abā nwúnn-bā bē.
3s see 3p leave-3p NEG

for: '?He saw them not leave.'

It is the shared subject requirement that allows us to reject certain sentences in our data from consideration as SVCs. The following, for example, was recorded as marginally acceptable:

- 260) ?Atī tu Ali kú náe uwae kusóg.
1p find Ali IMP lie in house

We found Ali lying in the house.

Using the negative construction, we discover that it is impossible to have separate subjects for the two verbs:

260b *Atī tu Ali kú náe-tī uwaē kusóg bē.
 1p find A. IMP lie-1p in house NEG
 ?We did not find Ali lying in the house.

260c *Atī tu Ali kú náe-wū uwaē kusóg bē.
 1p find A. IMP lie-3s in house NEG
 ?We found Ali not lying in the house.

Since the suspect sentences do not negate like normal SVCs, we conclude that, if they are grammatical at all, they are not SVCs. In fact, they are sentences in which the clause *Ali kú náe uwaē kusóg* is acting as an object of the main verb *tu*.¹²⁴ In true SVCs, the single VFP can only be co-referent with one NP. Hence the subject of the two verbs must be shared.

8.2.3 Sharing of Auxiliaries

The prototypical SVC shares a single set of tense, aspect, and modal words. This further supports the idea that the sequence of actions is seen as a unit. While this is a complex issue in that the interaction of particular verbs and auxiliaries is itself complex, I present here some general patterns.

8.2.3.1 SVCs with Shared FUTURE Marker

The future marker (*ú*) precedes the first verb in a series, as follows:

266) Awū ú rū bá.
 3s FUT move come
 He will come

Unacceptable: *Awū rū ú bá. *Awū ú rū ú bá.

267) Anī ú yēr wēn mbakúnn tīne a?
 2p FUT cut kill chicken now Q
 Are you going to butcher the chicken now?

¹²⁴ A more expected sentence would be *Atī tu Ali awū kú náe uwaē kusóg*, the grammar of which we do not cover in this work.

- 268) **Ame ú sa mbakúnn ne rū ka jaēbcī.**
 1s FUT take hen DEM move go sell
 I'm going to sell this hen.

8.2.3.2 SVCs with shared imperfective marker

The imperfective marker **kú** preferably precedes the final verb in a string:

- 269) **Awū rū kú bá.**
 3s move IMP come
 He is coming.

Compare: *Awū kú rū bá.

- 270) **Abā nwúnn kú rū.**
 3p arise IMP move
 They were getting up and going.

Compare: *Abā kú nwúnn rū.

- 271) **Awū txí ámbyī kú munncī kutútong¹²⁵**
 3s dip water IMP fill pot
 She's filling the waterpot.

- 272) **Abā tómm ritómm kú rū.**
 3p farm farm IMP move.
 They went along farming.

- 270) **Awū yēr kú wēn mbakúnn.**
 3s cut IMP kill chicken
 They are slaughtering a chicken.

It is acceptable (though less usual) to mark the imperfective on both verbs, but never on the first verb only:

- 271) **Abā kú tómm ritómm kú rū.**
 3p IMP farm farm IMP move
 They went along farming.

¹²⁵ **Awū txí ámbyī munn kú kyī kutútong** is also possible, depending on whether the clitic **cī** has frozen onto the verb or not. Speakers vary on this expression.

272) **Awū kú yen itúku kú kyang.**
 3s IMP plant trees IMP walk

He walked along planting trees.

Preferred:

272b **Awū yen itúkūn kú kyang.**
 3s plant trees IMP walk

He walked along planting trees.

273) **Atī sī kutúkū kú bá.**
 1p descend tree IMP come

We were coming down from the tree.

8.2.3.3 SVCs with Shared PERFECTIVE Marker

An action seen as completed is marked by a perfective marker (**pú**) after the last verb:

274) **Awū rū bá pú-wū.**
 3s move come PRF-3s

He has come.

Unacceptable:

274b ***Awū rū pú-wū bá.**
 3s move PRF-3s come

274c ***Awū rū pú-wū bá pú-wū.**
 3s move PRF-3s come PRF-3s

275) **Ame sa kíkwb bá pú-m.**
 1s take hoe come

I have brought the hoe.

Note that the perfective aspect marker reinforces the same-subject requirement for SVCs since the VFP that follows the marker must be co-referent with the subject of the first verb. This rules out:

275b ***Awū jāe ánûng nwúnn pú-wū.**
 3s drive birds arise PRF-3s

?He has driven the birds and they left.

275c *Awū jāe ánûng nwúnn pú-yī.
3s drive birds arise PRF-3

?He drove the birds and they have left.

There seems to be no limit to the number of verbs that can occur within the domain of the perfective marker pú:¹²⁶

276) Ame ka sa kíkwb bá pú-m.
1s go take hoe come PRF-1s

I went and brought a hoe.

277) Ame rū ka sa kíkwb bá pú-m.
1s go go take hoe come PRF-1s

I went and brought a hoe.

278) Ame tēr rū ka sa kíkwb bá pú-m.
1s run go go take hoe come PRF-1s

I ran and brought a hoe.

279) Ame tēr kāfē rū ka sa kíkwb bá pú-m.
1s run return go go take hoe come PRF-1s

I ran back and brought a hoe.

280) Ame sa kíkwb bá tóm tág pú-m ritóm.
1s take hoe come farm MAX PRF-s farming

I brought a hoe and have finished the farming.

8.2.3.5 SVCs with Shared INDIRECT SPEECH Marker

The indirect speech particle in an SVC typically precedes the first verb (or tense/aspect marker if any), although cases of repeated reported speech markers are occasionally found.

¹²⁶ The sentences that follow are only intended to illustrate the extent of the domain of pú. I do not discuss fused SVCs in the present work.

281a) **Awū rī bāa, awū nā ú rū bá.**
 3s say COMP 3s RS FUT move come

He said he would come.

281b) **?Awū rī bāa, awū nā ú rū nā ú bá.**
 3s say COMP 3s RS FUT move RS FUT come

He said he would come. (Recorded but somewhat dubious).

282a) **Awū rī bāa, awū nā yēr kú wēn mbakúnn.**
 3s say COMP 3s RS cut IMP kill chicken

He said he was slaughtering a chicken.

282b) **?Awū rī bāa, awū nā yēr nā kú wēn mbakunn.**
 3s say COMP 3s RS cut RS IMP kill chicken

He said he was slaughtering a chicken. (Accepted reluctantly.)

282c) **Aw ri bāa, aw nā kú yē nā kú wē mbakúnn**
) **u ū r n .**
 3s sa COM 3s R IM cut R IM kill chicken
 y P S P S P

He said he was slaughtering a chicken. (Accepted reluctantly.)

8.2.3.5 SVCs with Shared conditional Marker

In conditional sentences, the conditional marker precedes the first verb of the string:

283) **Afu a rū ka sáng atáng, ā ú ye fu.**
 2s IF move go enter there, 3p FUT catch 2s

If you go enter there, you will be caught.

284) **Abā a sa ámbyī bá, ame ú nde simínti**
 3p IF take water come, 1s FUT make cement

If they bring water, I will make cement.

285) **Abā a yēr kú wēn mbapxú-m, ame cwé-m bē.**
 3p IF cut IMP kill dog-1s 1s agree-1s NEG

If they are slaughtering my dog, I don't agree.

- 286) Anī a sa ámbyī bá pú nī, nī rī té m.**
 2p IF take water come PRF 2p 2p tell with 1s
 If/when you have brought the water, tell me.

8.3 Some Serial Verb Constructions

In this section we consider some prototypical SVCs that can be posited as contrastive structural units in Kuteb. These are chosen on the basis of statistical prominence. More could be added. They are roughly categorized below on the basis of the types and positions of the verbs that occur in them, and by their function in discourse.

1. Motion
2. Motion-Action
3. Co-lexicalizing
4. Instrumental
5. Patientizing
6. Comparative

Givón (in Lefebvre 1991:138-139) gives a useful categorization in terms of function that is slightly different from mine. He posits five categories:

- a) Case-role marking
- b) Verb co-lexicalization
- c) Deictic-directional marking
- d) Tense-aspect marking
- e) Evidentiality and epistemic marking

I shall refer to Givón's categories as I go along, taking them in a slightly different order.

8.3.1 Motion SVC

This and the next one (motion-action) would fall under the deictic-directional marking CVCs in Givón's system. Four parameters define the expression of motion in Kuteb:

1. verticality,
2. direction towards or away from the speaker (or other defined reference point),

3. manner of motion, and
4. goal or completion of the action.

A simple motion is expressed either by *rū* ‘move levelly,’ *tsō* ‘move up, ascend, climb,’ or *sī* ‘move down, descend.’ Examples:

287) Awū tsō yī wakúnunn.

3s ascend to home

He went (up) home.

288) Awū sī yī ufáng.

3s descend to farm

He went (down) to the farm.

289) Awū rū yī kutúr.

3s move to bush

He went to the wilderness.

Combinations like **rū sī*, **tsō rū*, and **sī rū* are unacceptable.

If a speaker is focussing on the direction of motion vis-à-vis himself, he may choose to say

290) Awū bá (iké).

3s come (here)

He came (here).

or

291) Awū ka kutúr.

3s go bush

He went to the bush.

The two sets of verbs are frequently joined in SVCs as follows:

tsō bá ‘ascend come’

rū bá ‘move come’

sī ka ‘descend go’

Examples:

292) Atī rū bá iké íré.

1p move come here yesterday

We came here yesterday.

293) **Ame tsō ka yī Múbi.**
 1s ascend go to Mubi

I went up to Mubi.

Compare the following unacceptable combinations:

***Awū bá tsō.**
 3s come ascend

***Awū ka tsō.**
 3s go ascend

Unacceptable:

***Awū bá rū.**
 3s come move

A locative noun may stand between the two verbs:¹²⁷

294) **Awū sī rikwen bá.**
 3s descend mountain come

He came down from the mountain.

295) **Abā tsō uyínn bá.**
 3p ascend sea come

He came up from the sea.

296) **Afu rū akā bá?**
 2s move where come

Where did you come from?

Verbs expressing a third parameter, manner of motion, necessarily precede the other two sets.¹²⁸ Some verbs of this set are:

¹²⁷ Alternatively, these could be considered SVCs of the action-motion type (Section 3.2, below), which includes sentences like: **Awū tā ibyē bá** 'He-shot-animal-come,' **Awū mbúb kusóg sī** 'He-break-house-come down.'

¹²⁸ It may be observed that the verbs of motion cited here do not include the notions of movement and direction, as do many English verbs of motion. E.g., English 'He ran home' cannot normally be expressed as ***Awū tēr wakúnunn**. The additional verb **rū** must be included.

tēr	run	kyang	walk
mbyáe	jump	kún	crawl
nwúnn	get up	penn	fly

Examples of combinations:

297) Awū tēr rū bá.
 3s run move come
 He came on the run.

298) Awū mbyae sī bá.
 3s jumped descend come
 He jumped down (towards speaker).

299) Awu nwúnn rū ka yī Gboko.
 3s arise move go to Gboko
 He got up and went to Gboko.

Other orders are not acceptable:

*Awū rū tēr bá.
 3s move run come

*Awu sī mbyae ka.
 3s descend jump go

Verbs from any set may be omitted, but the relative order is always maintained:

300) Awū tēr rū yī wakúnunn.
 3s run move to home
 He ran home.

301) Awū kyang bá pú-wū.
 3s walk come PRF-3s
 He has come (walking).

302) Awū kún kú ka yī uwōg íyā-wū.
 3s crawl IMP move to place mother-3
 He's crawling towards his mother.

Finally a verb indicating the completion of the motion (fob 'reach, arrive') may be added at the end of the sequence:

- 303) Awū tēr rū ka fob uwōg ínjā-wū.**
 3s run move go reach place brother-3s
 He ran to his brother's place.

- 304) Awū kún sī kumbúkunn bá fob wakúnunn.**
 3s crawl descend hill come reach home
 He crawled down from the hill and home.

The motion verb *kāfē* 'return' manifests more than one possible ordering in respect to the general motion verbs. In an analysis of 66 cases of *kāfē*, 27 occurred in series. Of these, 24 occurred first in the motion SVC. The sequences **rū kāfē bá*, **sī kāfē ka*, etc. are inadmissible.

Two patterns obtain with regard to *kāfē* and specific motion verbs *tēr* 'run,' *kyang* 'walk,' etc.:

- 305) Awū tēr kāfē rū bá.**
 3s run turn move come
 He came back running.

- 306) Awū kāfē tēr rū bá.**
 3s turn run move come
 He came back running.

Although there may be a slight difference between these two, it has not been possible to determine what it is. The first of the above set seems slightly preferable. We thus have four sets of motion verbs whose ordering is strictly controlled by syntactic rules illustrated in the following:

- 307) Awū tēr kāfē rū bá.**
 3s run turn move come
 He came running back.

- 308) Awū kyang kāfē sī ka.**
 3s walk turn desc. go
 He went walking back down.

- 309)** Awū mbyae kāfē tsō ka.
3s jump turn asc. go

He went jumping back up.

Examples of motion SVCs with aspect markers and negative:

- 310)** Awū si rikwen bá pú-wū.
3s descend mountain come PRF-3s

He has come down from the mountain.

- 311)** Awū mbyae sī kú bá.
3s jump descend IMP come

He is jumping down.

- 312)** Awū ú kún tsō bá uwae kununn.
3s FUT crawl ascend come inside home

He will crawl back (up) home.

- 313)** Awū tēr rū bá-wū bē.¹²⁹
3s run move come-3s NEG

He did not come running.

8.3.2 Motion-Action SVC

Like those above, these would be considered ‘Deictic-directional Marking’ in Givón’s system. It is important to note that in Kuteb actions are reported in strict chronological order. Thus

- 314)** Awū kūr kirāen bá.
she stir fufu come.

She prepared and brought fufu.

means that the person first prepared the fufu, then came with it toward the speaker. The following, in contrast, indicates that the person first moved toward the speaker, then prepared the fufu:

- 315)** Awū bá kūr kirāen.¹³⁰
3s come stir fufu

¹²⁹ It is unusual for a sentence with many verbs to be negated, even if it is a single proposition. Negation usually operates on single verbs or at most a two-verb SVC.

She came and made fufu.

Note that this sentence and the previous one can be negated as single propositions:

315a) Awū kūr kiraēn bá-wū bē.
 3s stir fufu come-3s NEG
 She did not prepare food and bring it.

315b) Awū bá kūr-wū kiraēn bē.
 3s come stir-3s fufu NEG.
 She did not come and prepare food.

The SVCs involving a directional component are further elaborated below in the order:

1. Direction-Action
2. Action-Direction.

8.3.2.1 Direction-Action SVC

These SVCs consist of a motion verb plus another verb (typically non-equative, non-stative, and non-locative). Functionally speaking, the motion verb(s) in these constructions contribute a deictic or directional element to the action involved. In terms of text structure, the motion verbs function as scene-changers, shifting the locus of activity to a new site with respect to the speaker and/or the site of previous activity.

Examples:

316) Awū ka wēn icwu.
 3s go kill leopard
 He went and killed a leopard.

317) Atī bá ngwā ámbiyī.
 1p come drink water
 We came and drank water.

Such sequences are frequently but not necessarily preceded by the general motion verb *rū* 'move':

318) **Abā rū ka som Ikám.**

3p move go sit Ikam

They went and stayed in Ikam.

319) **Anī rū bá tu m iké.**

2p move come find 1s here

You came and found me here.

Examples involving aspect/negative markers:

80) **Atī bá kú txí ámbiyī ámām.**

1p come IMP dip water only

We're only coming to dip water.

321) **Anī ka būnn pú-nī awúm a?**

2p go cut PRF-2p guinea corn Q

Have you gone and cut your guinea corn?

322) **Abā ú bá funn Bíká iké.**

3p FUT come meet Bika here

They will come and meet here in Bika.

8.3.2.2 Action-Direction SVC

Like the preceding SVC, this construction involves a directional component consisting of *rū* 'move,' *bá* 'come' or *ka* 'go.' Examples:

323) **Awū yen itúkū kú rū.**

3s plant trees IMP go

He went along planting trees.

324) **Kūr kirāen bá tí kife, íya!**

stir fufu come quickly mother

Make and bring the food quickly, Mother!

325) **Abā tā ibyē bá.**

3p shoot animal come

They shot and brought an animal.

A subset of action-direction SVCs consists of those that have a 'prehensive' verb (referring to holding things) in the first position:

- 326) **Awū sa ámbyī bá.**
 3s take water come
 He brought water.

- 327) **Awū pū umbae-wū ka.**
 3s take child-3s go
 He took his child. (= He went with his child.)

- 328) **Awū ye rikae bá.**
 3s take axe come.
 He brought an axe.

Note that the verbs cannot be reversed with the same meaning:

- 329) **Awū bá sa ámbyī.**
 3s come take water
 He came and took water.

- 330) **Awū ka pū umbae-wū.**
 3s go take child-his
 He went and took his child.

Examples with aspect markers and negative:

- 331) **Awū tōm atóm kú rū.**
 3s farm farming IMP go
 He went along farming.

- 332) **Ame skam kuter bá pú-m.**
 1s carve mortar come PRF-1s
 I have carved and brought a mortar.

- 333) **Irá-fu ne ú shir kāng rikāen bá risū-fu.**
 word-2s FUT pull NEC trouble come head-2s
 What you've done will surely bring you trouble.

- 334) **Atī sa kutsīnkén-fu rū-tī yī itifunn bē.**
 1p take book-2s go-1p to meeting NEG
 We did not take your book to the meeting.

8.3.3 Case-role Marking SVC8.

8.3.3.1 Patientizing SVC

In Kuteb, prehensive verbs mark the following noun as the patient of the following verb. Examples:

- 335) **Ā sa íya Atabibir kūb tírī.**
 3p take mother Atabibir eat then
 Then they ate Atabibir's mother.

- 336) **Abā ye m byīnn.**
 3p take 1s beat
 They beat me.

8.3.3.2 Instrumental SVC

Another construction based on the prehensive verbs is used to describe situations involving an instrument. Like the 'patientizing' SVC above, this would be included in Givón's 'case-role marking' SVCs.

- 337) **Awū sa utī jwunn ukó.**
 3s take spear throw duiker
 He speared the duiker.

- 338) **Awū sa kisīm yēr ibyē.**
 3s take knife cut meat
 He cut the meat with a knife.

Note that these can be paraphrased using an instrumental preposition tí:

- 339) **Awū jwunn ukó tí utī.**
 3s throw duiker spear
 He threw a spear at the duiker.

- 340) **Awū yēr ibyē tí kisīm.**
 3s cut meat knife
 He cut the meat with a knife.

Examples of instrumental SVC with aspect or negative markers:

341) Awū ú sa kisīm wēn mbakúnn.
3s FUT take knife kill chicken

He will kill the chicken with a knife.

342) Awū sa kisīm kú wēn mbakúnn.
3s take knife IMP kill chicken

He is killing the chicken with a knife.

343) Awū sa kisīm wēn pú-wū mbakúnn.
3s take knife kill PRF-3s chicken

He has killed the chicken with a knife.

8.3.3.3 Benefactive SVC

Benefactive action is expressed in Kuteb by a serial verb construction employing the verb *na* ‘give’ before the benefactee. The status of the quasi-verb *na* is debatable as will be seen in the discussion below.

344) Ame sa na wū kóbo.
1s take give 3s kobo

I gave him a kobo.

345) Awū jwó na m keké.
3s wash give 1s bike

He washed the bicycle for me.

Note that *na* cannot stand alone as an independent verb.¹³¹

***Awū na m kóbo.**

3s give 1s kobo for: ‘He gave me a kobo.’

This limitation in distribution might incline us to interpret *na* as a preposition or a benefactive-marking particle, or perhaps a verbal suffix indicating action directed towards a beneficiary. However, from another perspective, *na* acts just like other verbs in series. For example, the perfective marker *pú* always follows *na*, just as it would another verb in series. Likewise, in the negative, the VFP follows *na*. If *na*

¹³¹ The verb **na** may be related historically to the verb **nda** ‘to give.’ Both verbs have the same tone.

were taken as a preposition, the word *pú* and the VFP would separate the would-be preposition from its object.

346) Ame sa na pú-m awū kóbo.
1s take PRF-1s 3s kobo

I have given him a kobo.

347) Ame sa na-m awū kóbo bē.
1s take -1s 3s kobo NEG

I did not give him a kobo.

Perhaps *na* is a verbal suffix then? Such an analysis is ruled out by the following paraphrases, in which *na* is separated from the verb *sa* by the noun object:

348) Ame sa kóbo na wū.
1s take kobo 3s

I gave him a kobo.

Finally, it may be recalled that the imperfective marker always occurs before the last verb in a series. So it patterns with the verb *na*:

349) Ame sa kóbo kú na wū.
1s take kobo IMP 3s

I am giving him a kobo.

Or

350) Ame sa kú na wū kóbo.
1s take IMP 3s kobo

Likewise, in negative and perfective sentences *na* operates like any other verb, taking the relevant markers, including the verb-focus pronoun:

351) Ame sa kóbo na-m awū bē.
1s take kobo 1s 3s NEG

I did not give him a kobo.

352) Ame sa kóbo na pú-m awū.
1s take kobo PRF 1s 3s

I have already given him a kobo.

The aspect markers show that *na* must be treated as a verb. Though it cannot occur by itself as a verb, it does function as a normal verb in the SVC. I therefore call it a 'restricted' verb.

This is not to say, however, that *na* will remain a verb forever. Grammaticalization may push *na* in one direction or another until no verbal function is left. If, for

example, alternative A below should become favored over B, na would move toward reinterpretation as a verbal suffix:

A. Ame sa na pú-m awū X.
 1s take PRF-1s 3s X
 I gave him/her X.

B. Ame sa X na pú-m awū.
 1s take X PRF-1s 3s
 I gave him/her X.

At the present time, both seem to be perfectly well accepted.

In the case of imperfective aspect, however, there does appear to be a shift. In the following pattern, older people are inclined to use either A or B, while younger people will accept C, a version which will give support to a prepositional status for na:

A. Ame sa kú na wū kóbo.
 1s take IMP 3s kobo
 I am giving him a kobo.

B. Ame sa kóbo kú na wū.
 1s take kobo IMP 3s

C. Ame kú sa kóbo na wū.
 1s IMP take kobo 3s

Before discussing na further, I present another construction which offers the same analytical problems⁸.

8.3.3.4 The Commitative SVC

This construction contains the verb té ‘to be with, accompany’ and operates exactly like the benefactive verb na above.¹³²

Example:

¹³² Like na, the verb té does not occur independently in a single-verb sentence. It may be related historically to the verb tē ‘to dismiss’ and/or to the conjunction tí.

353) Awū rī irá té tī.
3s say word 1p

He spoke with us.

An alternative order for this sentence (Awū té tī rī irá) reinforces its SVC status.

As in the case of na, the aspect markers and negative (Verb Focus Pronoun) separate té from its object, ruling out an interpretation of té as preposition:

354) Ame rī té pú-m awū.
1s say PRF-1s 3s

I have already told him.

355) Ame ú rī té-m awū irá yīne bē.
1s FUT say -1s 3s word DEM NEG

I will not tell him about this matter.

Likewise, the imperfective marker kú separates té from the verb, just as it did with ná:

356) Ame rī kú té wū tīnene.
1s say IMP 3s now

I am telling him just now.

Aside from its non-occurrence as an independent verb, there is some evidence that té is evolving from verbal status to a more restricted function as a preposition. It is my impression that younger people are favoring version (c) of the following set:

357a) Awū té tī rī irá yī.
3s 1p say word REF

He told us about it.

357b) Awū rī té tī irá yī.
3s say 1p word REF

He told us about it.

357c) Awū rī irá yī té tī.
3s say word REF 1p

He told us about it.

Likewise, version (b) of the following set may be gaining favor:

358a) Ame rī kú té wū irá-fu.
 1s say IMP 3s word-2s

I am telling him your message.

358b) Ame kú rī té wū irá-fu.
 1s IMP say 3s word-2s

I am telling him your message.

359a) Ame té wū nde mákántá tétsō.¹³³
 1s 3s do school together

I went to school with him.

359b) Ame nde mákántá té wū.
 1s do school 3s

I went to school with him.

In the case of the perfective, two competing structures are both acceptable, but version b) is more frequent in texts:

360a) Ame som té pú-m awū.
 1s stay PRF-1s 3s

I have already stayed with him.

360b) Ame som pú-m té wū.
 1s stay PRF-1s 3s

I have already stayed with him.

Finally, in the case of negative, which involves the VFP after the last verb, though the older SVC construction (a) is still in frequent use, a prepositional structure (b) is gaining prominence:

361a) Ame som té-m awū bē.
 1s stay 1s 3s NEG

I did not stay with him.

¹³³ The word **tétsō** is apparently derived from the verb **té** plus the adverbial nominal **átsō** ‘reciprocally.’

361b) Ame som-me té wū bē.
 1s stay 1s 3s NEG
 I did not stay with him.

362a) Atī rī té-tī awū irá bē.
 1p say -3s 3s word NEG
 We did not speak to him.

362b) Atī rī-tī irá té wū bē.
 1p say-1s word 3s NEG
 We did not speak to him.

If my observations about frequency are correct, *té* plus its object may grammaticalize into a prepositional phrase one day. The same could happen to *na* ‘give’ also888.

8.3.4 Comparative SVC

In these constructions a verb (usually but not exclusively stative) is followed by the verb *skeb* ‘exceed.’ The construction is equivalent to the comparative form of adjectives in English. Givón does not include this type in his 1991 study. Examples:

363) Afu wáe skeb pú-fu ame.
 2s tall pass PRF-2s 1s
 You are taller than I am.

364) Umūn utīb tsēn skeb abyáen indag.
 boll cotton white pass milk cow
 Cotton bolls are whiter than cow’s milk.

365) Umbae Apurá tēr inyae skeb Ibí.
 child Apura run run pass Ibi
 Apura’s child ran faster than Ibi.

366) Ame tōm mbapwa kú skeb wū.
 1s farm maize IMP pass 3s
 I am farming maize more than he is.

The first sentence above includes the perfective (pú), which carries with it the pronoun referring back to the subject shared by both verbs. The negative is formed, as usual, with the VFP and the negative marker bē:

367) Awū tēr inyae skeb-wū Ibí bē.
 3s run run pass-3s Ibi NEG
 He did not outrun Ibi.

368) Afu ú kīm skeb-fu ame bē.
 2s FUT fat pass-2s 1s NEG
 You will not be fatter than I am.

8.3.5 Colexicalizations

Kuteb has dozens of verb pairs in which one with a specific meaning is followed by another with a general meaning. Some common pairs are:

yēr wēn	cut kill	slaughter
kūm wēn	beat kill	beat to death
súr wēn	press kill	squash to death
cín wēn	squeeze kill	strangle
txáe wēn	trap kill	kill by trapping
byīnn wēn	hit kill	kill by hitting

Examples in sentences:

369) Amamrá tā yēr wēn mbakúnn wū.
 Amamra FOC cut kill chicken REF
 It was Amamra who slaughtered the chicken.

370) Típa súr wēn agwagwá-m.
 truck press kill duck-1s
 A truck ran over my duck.

The structure may be summarized as ‘to do V2 by means of V1’. In some cases the resulting construction may be transitive, as in the above, or non-transitive, as in the following:

- 371) **Kitútong- pog mbúb.**
wū
 pot-3s burst spoil
 Her pot burst open (and was ruined).
- 372) **Pū ámbýī ne yāen mbúb.**
 take water DEM pour spoil
 Dump out this water.
- 373) **Kusóg-m tēn mbúb.**
 house-1s burn spoil
 My house burned up.
- 374) **Ibyē ne rwan mbúb.**
 meat DEM rot spoil
 This meat is completely rotten.
- 375) **Ā sa agōgō-m byīnn mbúb.**
 3p take watch-1s hit spoil.
 They wrecked my watch by hitting it.

There are scores of such combinations in Kuteb, not all of them fitting into neat specific-general paradigms like those above. A few other combinations are:

som jí sit wait kūnn jí call wait ‘greet’
 tsi jí stand wait táng som think sit ‘remember’

A few involve stative verbs in the second position:

kyāe nyang fix be-good ‘repair’
 jwó sāen wash be-clean ‘wash clean’
 fén sāen sweep be-clean ‘sweep clean’

Examples with aspect markers and negative:

- 376) **Abā kūm wēn-bā wū bē.**
 3p beat kill-3p 3s NEG
 They did not beat him to death.

377) **Ámbyī yāen mbúb pū-yī.**
 Water pour spoil PRF-3

The water has spilled.

This brings us to the end of the SVC types discussed in this study. We do not give examples of Givón's 'Tense-aspect marking' SVCs. However, in Chapter Nine (Tense, Aspect, and Modality), we discuss the possibility that the imperfective marker *kú* and the perfective marker *pú* may have been derived from verbs in sequence. Likewise, Givón's 'Evidentiality and epistemic marking' may well have a cognate in Kuteb, where the word *nā* 'reported speech' could possibly be treated as a restricted verb (see Chapter Nine).

8.4 Serial Verbs and the Sequential Conjunction

Although we do not discuss complex sentences (those expressing complex propositions) in this chapter, it is necessary to describe one category of complex sentences very briefly in order to get a more accurate picture of the SVC.

The word *ú*, sometimes reinforced by a preceding pause, may occur between verbs to indicate two separate actions. Compare the following contrasting constructions:

378a) **Awū kāfē, ú bá.**
 3s turn SEQ come
 He turned and came.

378b) **Awū kāfē bá.**
 3s turn come
 He came back.

379a) **Awū bá, ú sáe m.**
 3s come SEQ see 1s
 He came and saw me.

379b) **Awū bá sáe m.**
 3s come see 1s
 He came to see me.

380a) Awū sa adá, ú pyē wū.
3s take cutlass, SEQ slash 3s

He took a cutlass and slashed him.

380b) Awū sa adá pyē wū.
3s take cutlass slash 3p

He slashed him with a cutlass.

381a) Abā sa ashwú kūb.
3s take nuts eat

They ate the nuts.

381b) Abā sa ashwú, ú kūb.
3p take nuts SEQ eat

They took some nuts and ate them.

According to informants, the difference is that the SVC (without *ú*) represents a set of actions that occur together, in a bunch. When they are separated with *ú*, it shows that there is probably a time gap between the two actions. In the case of

382a) Awū sa ámbýī, ú bá.
3s take water, SEQ come

for example, one informant says that the subject first takes the water, then, as a separate action, comes toward the speaker. In the standard SVC sentence,

382b) Awū sa ámbýī bá.
3s take water come

however, 'it is all one action.' In other words, in terms of our categorization of sentences in this chapter and the preceding one, the SVCs represent a single proposition whereas the sentences with the sequential conjunction (*ú*) represent multiple propositions.

In a few cases, SVCs do not convert to sequential constructions easily at all:

383) Awū yēr wēn mbakúnn.
3s cut kill hen

He butchered the hen.

Compare the unacceptable: *Awū yēr, *ú* wēn mbakúnn.

This sentence, if it means anything, would describe a situation in which a person cuts something (not the chicken) and then kills the chicken.

385) Awū byāen skeb ínjā-wū.
3s red pass brother-3s

He is redder than his brother.

Unacceptable: *Awū byāen, ú skeb ínjā-wū.

Here you have the unlikely assertion(s) that someone is red and that, in some unrelated way, he is superior to his brother. In both of these cases the inseparability of the verbs reflects that they are on their way to co-lexicalization.

8.5 Conclusion

The earlier part of this chapter focussed on demonstrating the existence and unity of the SVC as a grammatical construction. The sharing of arguments, aspect markers, and the negative marker were cited as evidence of the unity of the SVC as a distinctive unit. A further piece of evidence in this regard is the contrast with the sequential construction, which has the specific function of separating propositions.

A thorough study of the functions of the serial verb construction is beyond the scope of this work. I hope that the above remarks and examples are enough to show that the SVC is a functional unit in Kuteb, contrasting with one-verb simple sentences on the one hand, and, at a more basic level, with complex sentences, which encode multiple propositions, on the other (for which see Chapter Eleven).

CHAPTER NINE. TENSE, ASPECT, MOOD, NEGATION AND QUESTIONS

9.1 Introduction

Tense, aspect, and mood (TAM from here) constitute a complex part of language in which it is often difficult to isolate exact meaning(s).¹³⁴ Intertwined with these phenomena, particularly with mood, are speech acts¹³⁵ and negation.¹³⁶

In this chapter I present the basics of Kuteb TAM and speech-act phenomena as a starting point for further work. It is good to recognize at the start that at this stage one can at best circumscribe the meaning in various ways and assign rough glosses like ‘future,’ ‘perfect,’ etc., recognizing that markers will often signal combinations of meanings and that the labels I use will probably not match the referents of those labels in other languages. Although examples of negative sentences occur throughout the previous chapters, I bring other examples together here so the reader can see how negative works in a variety of sentence types.

9.2 Kuteb TAM markers

tense(only marked)	one is aspect	mood
future actions or states	perfective actions	conditional actions and states
	imperfective actions	desired actions (hortative)
		reported actions and states
		unexpected (mirative) actions or states

We will also include here a number of time-related morphemes that do not fit into the above categories. They are:

¹³⁴ See Bybee (1986) for a presentation of the inherent non-symmetrical nature of modal and aspectual morphemes. Following Lyons (1977:687), Chung and Timberlake (Shopen 1985 Vol 3:203 ff), and Comrie (1976), I use a narrow definition of ‘tense’ in which the tense marker is characterized as locating an event in time, whereas ‘aspect’ describes the ‘internal temporal structure of the event’ and ‘mood’ refers to the actuality of the event in terms such as possibility, necessity, or desirability (Chung and Timberlake Vol 3:202).

¹³⁵ For an outline of speech act phenomena in typological perspective, see Sadock and Zwicky ‘Speech act distinctions in Syntax’ (Shopen 1985 Vol. 1) and Givón 1990 Vol. 2:779-824 ‘Non-declarative Speech-acts.’

¹³⁶ For a typological study of Negation see J.R. Payne ‘Negation’ in Shopen (1985 Vol. 1:197-241).

repetitive	‘to do X again’	necessative	‘to do X necessarily’
maximal	‘to do X completely’	durative	‘to keep on doing X’
habitual	‘to do X habitually’	semelative	‘to have ever done X’
mirative	‘to do X surprisingly’		

The following diagram illustrates roughly the position of the major TAM markers with respect to the verb (RS=reported speech; IMP=imperfective; PRF=perfective; HO=hortative; FUT=future; VFP=Verb-Focus Pronoun, NEG=negative).

FUT (**ú**)

RS (**nā**) IMP (**kú**) VERB PRF (**pú**) VFP NEG (**bē**)
HORT (**ā**)

Note that the future, hortative and imperfective markers precede the verb, while the perfective marker follows. The CV structure of the imperfective and perfective markers suggests that they have evolved from verbs, and their positions in the clause reflect positional restrictions on what were probably once serial verb constructions. The five non-aspectual markers listed above show evidence of recent evolution from verbal status. Four follow the verb directly; one precedes the verb. Co-occurrences of the above particles will be discussed below.

The verb-focus pronoun (VFP), at least in one of its functions, conveys an attitude of the speaker towards the action, and thus acts semantically as a kind of modal.

Also included here is a brief description of imperative, since, even though it has no overt morpheme to mark it, it involves certain changes in the verb and also follows co-occurrence restrictions with respect to other elements in the verbal complex.

The phenomena of partial and complete verbal reduplication, which have something to do with aspect and/or mood, are not covered here because but it is not clear to me what exactly they convey.

In each case I deal with the formal features of the marker (assimilation, elision, and tone sandhi) and then its meaning and syntactic behavior.

Two important facts stand out concerning the use of tense in Kuteb. First, like many other African languages, and in contrast to some European languages, Kuteb does not obligatorily mark tense (e.g. past, present, future). Many sentences carry a naked verb unspecified as to the time the reported action takes place. Adverbial nominals like **íré** ‘yesterday,’ **ucwē** ‘tomorrow,’ **kuyākwēn** ‘last year,’ **kutē** ‘long ago,’ serve to orient the hearer to the temporal context. Secondly, what we here are calling ‘future tense’ does not mark future time in an absolute sense but rather marks whether the action referred to has not yet happened relative to the focal verb

in the immediate context, i.e., what Lyons calls the ‘zero-point of the deictic context’ (1977:678); cf. ‘tense locus’ (Chung and Timberlake 1985:203). As Comrie (1986:2) notes, the ‘zero point’ is usually the moment of speaking.

9.2.1 Tense: The Future Marker **ú**

Among the TAM markers, **ú** (‘FUT’) stands by itself in both form and function. The perfective and imperfective markers both have a C-V shape and are probably derived historically from verbs. The future marker is a single vowel, often realized only by its tone.¹³⁷ In some of the dialects it is impossible to isolate a segment representing future, the high tone being the only bearer of the future meaning. It is this high tone, and the preverbal position, that mark **ú** as possibly cognate with the Jukun marker of future tense: **á/bá** (TJ, Jibu)/**bí** (Wukari), or related somehow to the imperfective particle **kú**.

The function of **ú** is to signal to the hearer that the action or state encoded by the following verb has not yet happened in relation to a given temporal point in the mind of the speaker. It is thus a deictic category. As there is no other tense marker, **ú** may be taken to stand in contrast with ‘non-future.’ Examples below will show that future occasionally co-occurs with the aspect markers. That is, events marked as perfective and imperfective may take place either in the future (relative to another event) or the non-future.

9.2.1.1 Formal Features of Future

Future is marked with a high tone particle **ú** immediately preceding the verb. In rapid speech this particle may be fused with the final vowel of a previous noun or pronoun (see Chapter 3 for the phonological details). Examples:

386) Tī ú bá. [tīú bá]~ [tíú bá] ~[tūú bá]
 1p FUT come
 We will come.

387) Ā ú rū. [āá rū]
 3p FUT go
 They will go.

¹³⁷This does not rule out the possibility of its being derived from a verb. But if it is, the lack of an initial consonant suggests that it was grammaticalized longer ago than other TAM markers.

388) Titī ú núnḡ fu. [Titī núnḡ fu]
 Titī FUT see 2s

Titi will see you.

Note that in examples two and three the vowel quality of the future marker may be lost, but the tone of the particle displaces the tone on the noun or pronoun. This is in accordance with general phonological rules in the language described in Chapter Three.

A second feature of the future marker is the tone change that it induces in low-tone verbs. After **ú** and before a pause, a low-tone verb will glide from high to low (mid- and high-tone verbs remain unchanged):

389) Afu ú tu. [afú ú tû]
 2s FUT find

You will find it.

When another word follows, the verb simply stays high, and the glide may be realized on the stem of the noun:

390) Afu ú tu aser. [afúú tú ásêr]
 2s FUT find money

You will find money.

391) Afu ú tu Audu. [afú ú tú áúdu]
 2s FUT find Audu

You will find Audu.

9.2.1.2 Functions of **ú** (FUT)

The precise meaning of **ú** requires further study. That it indicates future (or at least non-past) action is suggested by the fact that it cannot co-occur with the word **íré** 'yesterday' in a simple sentence:

392) *Awū ú bá íré.
 3s FUT come yesterday

*You will come yesterday.

Note that the word **ú** does not indicate absolute future but rather future in relation to something else. This is shown by the following (RS = Reported Speech):

393) Ítsū awū rī té m bāa
 2 days ago 3s say with 1s COMP

awū nā ú bá íré.
3s RS FUT come yesterday

The day before yesterday he told me that he would come yesterday.

394) Íré awū rī té m bāa,
Yesterday 3s say with 1s COMP

awū nā ú bá yáka.
3s RS FUT come today

Yesterday he told me that he would come today.

Other examples:

395) Unde wū ú som fob-wū uwōg ne bē.
person REF FUT live able-3s place DEM NEG

The man will not be able to live in this place.

396) Tí kutē undufū íkī rī bāa, ande íkī nā ú
long ago elder SPEC say COMP people SPEC RS FUT

rū bá tī kupwā rimēnn-bā byāen nwámem ahán.
move come REL skin body-3p red very thus

Long ago an old man said that some people would come who had bright red skin.

397) Ucwē afu ú si ukwe.
tomorrow 2S FUT be chief

Tomorrow you will be chief.

398) Kutsáb tī kú bá ame ú tá utēn nasará.
week REL IMP come 1S FUT LOC land European

Next week I will be in Europe.

9.2.2 Aspect

As in the case of ‘future,’ it is important to remember that sentences do not obligatorily mark aspect and that the completion or non-completion of an activity or state is usually relative to some point specified in the context. There are two

aspectual markers in Kuteb: **pú** ‘perfective’ and **kú** ‘imperfective’ or ‘imperfect,’ and I describe them in that order.

9.2.2.1 Perfective Action Marker **pú** (‘PRF’)

In Kuteb unmarked verbs (apart from statives) in most cases can be taken as referring to completed action, as is also the case in many African languages. However, an action or state that is completed at the time of the speech, or, in some cases, is to be completed at the time represented by some other verb in the context, is marked by the word **pú** and followed by a verb-focus pronoun (identical to the possessive pronoun) which agrees with the subject of the clause. See Section 3.3.6 below for more on the role of the possessive pronoun with verbs. The Jukun equivalent of **pú** is mid-tone **rā** (Welmers 1968:51; Shimizu 1980b:263) but, in contrast to Kuteb, it occurs after the object. Kona (Storch 2000:155) has low-tone **zə**, which is probably cognate with the Jukun. Jibu has a perfective marker, **hn/hm** (mid tone) that occurs, as in Kuteb, after the verb and before the direct object. Another perfective marker in Jibu, **sigh** (low tone) can occur after the verb. It is probably a newly grammaticalized verb. What Shimizu calls ‘perfect’ in Jukun (1980b:256) is preverbal and appears to be semantically somewhat different from what I am calling ‘perfective.’

Formal Features of ‘Perfective’

In requiring a verb-focus pronoun, **pú** acts like a verb, and this provides evidence for the idea that **pú** is historically derived from a verb. There is no verb homophonous with the perfective particle, but there are two that are close: **pū** meaning ‘take’ and **pu** (low tone) meaning ‘fall.’ Semantically, there seems to be more sense in the possibility of the word **pū** ‘take’ evolving into a perfective marker than ‘fall’ (witness the grammatical use of ‘have’ in European languages). This conclusion is strengthened by the fact that the verb-focus pronoun changes a mid-tone verb to a mid-high glide. In fast speech the glide becomes a high tone.

The Function of **pú**

I considered using the more self-evident term ‘completive’ rather than ‘perfective’ for **pú**. However, as Comrie notes (1976:16), they are not the same thing. ‘Completive’ tends to focus on the end of the action, whereas ‘perfective’ looks at the whole action as a ‘blob.’ My feeling is that the latter characterizes **pú** more closely. It carries the force of ‘already’ in English.

One clue to the meaning of **pú** comes from the fact that it cannot co-occur with the imperfective in a simple sentence:

399) *Awū kú bá pú-wū.

3s IMP come PRF-3s

?He is coming already.

If **kú** indicates ongoing action, then **pú**, by default, indicates something other than ongoing action. (But see examples 31 and 32 below.)

Of course it cannot occur with the negative, since something that has not happened cannot logically be complete:

400) *Awū bá pú-wū bē.

3s come PRF-3s NEG

*He has not already come.

The co-occurrence of **pú** and the auxiliary **kób** ‘to do repeatedly’ is not found in my data, and it is also doubtful to local speakers:

401) *Awū nde kób pú-wū ahán.

3s do REP PRF-3s thus

He has already done that repeatedly.

This also strengthens the argument that **pú** indicates perfective, since repeated action is, in a sense, ‘imperfective.’

Finally, **pú** cannot occur with the reduplicated form of the verb, which (insofar as I can determine at this point) indicates on-going activity.

402) *Awū bábá pú-wū.

3s coming PRF-3s

*??He has been coming.

Examples of the perfective, given with the unmarked (non-aspectual) equivalents on the right, follow:

403) **Atī bá pú-tī. Atī bá.**
 1p come PRF-1p 1p come
 We have come. We came.

404) **Andá kūr pú-bā kirāen. Andá kūr kirāen.**
 women make PRF-3p food women make food
 The women have made food. The women made food.

405) **Kútúpwá tsēn pú-wū. Kútúpwá tsēn.**
 cloth white PRF-3s cloth white
 The cloth has become white. The cloth is white.

406) **Tí tī ame sáŋ-me mákántá kika bē,**
 since 1s enter-1s school yet NEG

íyā-m cwū pú-wū.
 mother-1s die PRF-3s
 Before I entered school, my mother had died.

The meaning of the above sentence would not be substantially different if it had ended:

... **íyā-m cwū.**
 ... mother-1s die

The meaning of **pú** here seems to be a matter of emphasizing the relationship between the events, as in English when one might say, ‘My mother had already died.’ Another example:

407) **Abítsē-tī sī rukwen bá pú-bā ítawé**
 fathers-1p descend mountain come PRF-3p before

Ukwe Alí rū bá náe ukwe.

Chief Ali move come lie chief

Our ancestors had already come down from the mountain before Chief Ali became chief.

Example of perfective action in future:

408) Ame ú nde tág pú-m wánde ne
 1s FUT do complete PRF-1s work DEM

títawé afu ú kafe bá.
 before 2s FUT return come

I will finish this work before you come back.

In the following, note that the future marker occurs in the ‘before’ clause, and not in the main clause:

409) M a kwáb-m kwáb bē,
 1s COND try-1s try NEG,

tí tī ame ú ndetág-m mākāntā
 before REL 1s FUT do-finish-1s school

afu si pú-fu unde tīyāŋ.
 2s be PRF-2s person big

If I don’t hurry, even before I finish secondary school you will have become an important man.

9.2.2.2 Ongoing Action: Imperfective (‘IMP’)

In form the imperfect marker **kú** has the C-V form of a verb and is likely to have evolved from a verb, possibly the rare verb **kú**, which now means something like ‘be located.’ As an aspect marker, **kú** indicates an action or process that is still going on at the time of the speech (or at the time of another action in the context). Comrie (1987) takes ‘imperfective’ as inclusive of ‘progressive’ and ‘habitual,’ and it is for this reason that I have chosen ‘imperfective’ as a gloss for **kú** in Kuteb.

The Jukun/Jibu equivalent **rī/dī** (Welmers 1948:50; Shimizu 1980b:253 ‘potential/habitual’) likewise occurs just before the verb, but is not likely to be cognate. Wukari Jukun has another pre-verbal particle **nā** that Shimizu (1980b:252) calls ‘continuous’ and observes that **nā** and **rī** overlap somewhat in meaning. Neither seems to be cognate with **kú**.¹³⁸

Here are some examples, given along with unmarked equivalents on the right:

- 410) **Ame kú bá.** **Ame bá.**
 1s IMP come 1s come
 I am coming. I came.
- 411) **Amamrá kú rī irá.** **Amamrá rī irá.**
 Amamra IMP say word Amamra say word
 Amamra is speaking. Amamra spoke.

Continued action relative to main clause verb:

- 412) **Kiyé tī ame ka atáng, andá kú kūr kirāen.**
 time REL 1s go there women IMP make food
 When I got there, the women were making food.
- 413) **Anyīsū kú nde urú ámām, mbapxú-fu bá kūb**
 children IMP do play only, dog-2s come bite
- umbae ne tí kufxen.**
 child DEM PREP leg
 The children were just playing, and your dog came and bit this child on the leg.

Examples of **kú** as habitual:

¹³⁸ The Jukun **nā** from the verb **nā** ‘to lie down’ is cognate with Kuteb **nāe** with the same meaning.

- 414) **Atī kú kūb-tī ashwág bē.**
 1p IMP eat-1p snails NEG

We do not eat snails.

- 415) **Ikén tī atī kú tóm skeb iké si awúm.**
 thing REL 1p IMP farm pass here is guinea corn.

What we farm mostly here is guinea corn.

- 416) **Tī kutē abítsē-tī kú tsō-bā apwā afoxen bē;**
 before fathers-1p IMP wear-3p skin leg NEG

ā kú kyaŋ afoxen ukáen ábín.
 3p IMP walk legs bare only

Long ago our ancestors did not wear shoes; they just walked barefoot.

As was mentioned in the case of the perfective **pú**, the imperfective marker may also be used along with the future marker, although this is rare in my texts, and is extracted only with difficulty from my informant. Examples:

- 417) **Ucwē tī abā ú kú tóm ritóm,¹³⁹**
 tomorrow REL 1p FUT IMP farm farm

nī rū ka ri irá té bā.
 2p move go say matter with 3p

Tomorrow when they are farming, go and talk to them.

- 418) **Ucwē anī ú kú kūr kirāen asēn urwā,**
 tomorrow 2p FUT IMP make food place fire

¹³⁹ One local speaker preferred the particle **a** in place of the future marker in this sentence, and a low tone **a** (conditional) in the next one (30). Both were accepted, which may reflect more the tolerance of the speakers than the nature of Kuteb grammar. Note that **á** is the future marker in Jukun.

atī ú bá ndeya nī.
 1p FUT come help 2p

Tomorrow you will be making food over the fire; we will come and help you.

Co-occurrence of Perfective and Imperfective Aspects?

A structure that has yet to be explained is the following, where **pú** (retaining its verbal heritage, perhaps), enters into a serial verb construction encoding the notion of ‘to be about to’:

419) Awū kú bá kú pú-wū.
 3s IMP come IMP PRF-3s

He is about to arrive. (He is already arriving?)

420) Ayī kú mbyir kú pú-yī umūŋ-fu.
 3 IMP eat IMP PRF 3 flour-2s

It’s about to eat your flour. (It’s already eating your flour?)

9.2.2.3 Other Time-related Markers

It may be observed that the aspect markers above involve very general parameters with respect to the temporal nature of events. Some other markers involve more specific or more finely differentiated temporal components of events. As I will suggest below, these markers may be historically related to certain verbs. It is also significant that, while the major aspect markers discussed above are mutually exclusive, it is common for one of them to co-occur with one of the aspect markers presented below. As discussed in Chapter Four (Section 2.2.4), the categorization of these morphemes awaits a more vigorous study of word classes. They could be taken as verbal suffixes, as verbal auxiliaries, as restricted verbs in Serial Verb Constructions (Chapter Eight Section 3.3) or even as adverbs. In this chapter we focus on the function and/or meaning. The equivalent of these forms in Jukun is discussed under ‘Auxiliary Verbs’ (Shimizu 1980b:218-229). Shimizu distinguishes post-verbal and pre-verbal auxiliaries. It appears that while Kuteb does have an example of a preverbal ‘auxiliary’ (**tsikunn** ‘to keep on doing X’) the bulk of time-related markers in Kuteb are immediately post-verbal. I will not attempt to draw parallels between the Kuteb and Jukun forms. Suffice it to say that there is considerable overlap in the grammatical concepts in both languages (as there is throughout the entire Niger-Congo family), but that specific cognates are

rare. A number of aspectual morphemes that are post-verbal in Kuteb have equivalents in Jukun that are preverbal.

To Have Ever/Never Done X (EVER)

This aspect marker, which could be called ‘semelative’ may possibly be related to the verb **jí** ‘to wait.’

421) Ame ka jí-m atáŋ bē.

1s go EVER-1s there NEG

I have never gone there.

422) Atī nde jí pú-tī wánde ne tókucan akwēn.

1p do EVER PRF-1p work DEM long-ago there

We had once done this work long before.

Note that **jí** cannot co-occur with the imperfective:

423 *Ame ka kú jí atáŋ.

1s go IMP EVER there

*I am once going there.

To Keep on Doing X (REIT)

The verb **tsikunn** ‘to last, stay’ has grammaticalized to encode the idea of ‘keeping on doing’ an activity. It is always used together with the imperfective (**kú**):

423) Afu tsikunn kú nde tī irá.

2s REIT IMP do 1p matter

You keep on causing us trouble.

424) Abā tsikunn kú byīnn me kimbáb.

3p REIT IMP beat 1s whip

They kept on whipping me.

A variation on this has the relativizer **tī** preceding the verb phrase:

425 Abā tsikunn tī kú byīnn me kimbáb.
 3p REIT REL IMP beat 1s whip
 They keep on whipping me.

Repetitive (REP)

The idea of one-time repetition of an action is signaled by the marker **cī** (**kyī** in Standard Kuteb) after the verb. The adverb **cwúcwó** often co-occurs with **cī** but not necessarily:

426) Ame ye cī icwūŋ íkī cwúcwó.
 1s catch REP rat SPEC again
 I caught another rat.

427) Atī bá cī uwōg-fu.
 1p come REP place-2s
 We came to you again.

428) Utsōg jwúb cī pú-wū irá cwúcwó.
 hedgehog cry REP PRF-3s word again
 The hedgehog has cried out again.

To Do X Completely (MAX)

The word **tág** (labelled 'MAX' in my glosses) immediately following the verb indicates that the action is done to the fullest extent possible:

429) Abā ngwā tág ámbyī.
 3p drink MAX water
 They drank all the water.

430) Awū kwan tág pú-wū.
 3s dirty MAX PRF-3s
 He is completely dirty.

Another auxiliary (**fé**) seems to have almost the same function. It is quite possible that the difference is something like that between ‘They finished drinking the water’ and ‘They drank all the water.’ This would reflect the distinction Comrie (1987) draws between ‘completive’ (which focuses on the end point of the action) and ‘perfective’ (which looks at the whole action as a blob). Examples:

431) Abā ngwā fé ámbýī.

3p drink ? water

They finished drinking the water. (?)

432) Atī rū fé yī ukūnn inyīm akwēn.

1p go MAX to edge river there

We went right to the edge of the river.

Another word in the same range of meaning is the word **mām** ‘to complete.’ For example;

433) Atī nde mām pú-tī wánde.

1p do finish PRF-1s work

We finished working.

It might appear that **mām** could be treated as another verbal extension. But as **mām** can occur as the main verb of a sentence, we treat it as a full verb, and the sentence above is considered as having a serial verb construction **nde mām** ‘do finish.’

To Do X Repeatedly or habitually (HAB)

Reiterative action is expressed by the word **kób** immediately following the verb. It often, but not necessarily, co-occurs with the imperfective marker **kú**:

434) Awū kú bá kób iké.

3s IMP come HAB here

He always comes here.

To Do X Necessarily (NEC)

The epistemic mode is expressed by the word **kāŋ**, and in the words of Chung and Timberlake (Shopen Vol. 3:242), apparently covers both necessity (the event belongs to all alternative worlds) and possibility (the event belongs to at least one possible world), although this needs to be explored further. Examples:

435) Awū nde kāŋ ahán.

3s do NEC thus

He had to do that.

436) Andá ú kūr kāŋ kirāen

Women FUT make NEC food.

The women will have to make food.

To Do X Unilaterally or Surprisingly ('Mirative')

The aspect-marking morphemes shown above are all similar in being verb-like, occurring after the main verb of the sentence. Kuteb has another quite different construction that in my opinion expresses the notion of 'to act in a surprising or unilateral way.' Whether this should be taken as a verbal aspect, or rather as a pragmatic device indicating surprise or disapproval on the part of speaker is a subject for further debate. Similar constructions are used in Jukun (Shimizu 1980b:330-232; W. Evenhouse p.c.) and Migili (Stoffberg 1975). The concept of unilateral or surprising action marked by a postverbal pronoun is widespread in Africa but in my opinion has received little attention. Philip Noss (1995:326) studies the concept in Biblical Hebrew, where it occurs with the preposition *l**-, but cites examples from Gbaya and Sango (Ubangian), Chadic, and Swahili. What I see as prevalent in West Africa is that the concept involves *possession*, and in particular a *possessive* form of the pronoun co-referent with the subject. This is not noted in the grammars of Welmers and Shimizu who call it the 'recapitulating' and 'repeating' pronoun, respectively, even though, as Shimizu points out, the tonal pattern of the 'possessive' and 'repeating' pronouns is identical. In both Kuteb and Jukun possession is represented by a high tone, which may 'float' before the pronoun or cause the pronoun itself to shift to high tone. In Kuteb the 'floating tone' influences the pitch of the preceding noun or verb stem. It is represented here and in the standard orthography by a hyphen.

A further remarkable feature of the 'possessed verb' phenomenon in Kuteb is that it has become obligatorily associated with *completive aspect* (see Section 3.1 above) and with *negative* (see Section 6.0 below). In Jukun it occurs obligatorily only with the verb for 'refuse.' In Migili (Stoffberg p. 169ff) it occurs obligatorily with some negatives and optionally with the completive marker.

A couple of examples of non-negative, non-perfective Verb-Focus Pronouns are included here to give a rough idea of what is involved. Further examples are available in Koops and Bendor-Samuel (1971).

437) Abā shaen-bā.

3p refuse-3p

They refused.

438) Afu nde rímāŋ ngwā-fu jwūmbae ná umbae wūne?

2s do how drink-2s kunu poss child DEM

Why did you drink this child's kunu?

439) Ame tā unzu ipiṅ kínzō, amá ipiṅ ndebéb-wū.
 1s shot mouth gun one, but gun spoil-3s
 I got off one shot, but the gun jammed on me.

440) **Kurūtsi tā, ú tēr rū ka núṅ,**
 Kurutsi shoot SEQ run move go see,

ashé, ī si-yī indag.

surprise 3 be-3 cow

Kurutsi shot once and ran to see, and, lo and behold, it was a cow!

Some languages use a filler noun meaning ‘thing’ to carry the possessive pronoun. For example, in Hausa:

Ya tafi abinsa.

He went thing-his

He went off. /He left abruptly. /He went his way.

This construction is also used in Kuteb, but the verb is still ‘possessed’ by the subject of the sentence. Example:

441 Awū rū-wū ikén-wū.

3s go-3s thing-3s

He went off. /He left abruptly. /He went his way.

Whether this represents a semantic borrowing from Hausa, or whether it is perhaps a longer form of the Verb + Possessive Pronoun, and/or an inherited Niger-Congo-wide idiom is a subject for further investigation.

Other Post-verbal Particles

Kuteb has a few other verbal suffixes or post-verbal particles having to do with aspect. In the standard orthography these particles are written together with the verb, on the grounds that nothing ever comes between the verb and the particle. On

the other hand, since the particles occur with many different verbs they act like a separate word, and could be taken as a restricted verb, an adverb, or a particle.¹⁴⁰

I list them here as fodder for further study:

tā ‘resulting in separation’ **cī** ‘resulting in closure’

Examples:

yá tā ‘leave’

kan tā ‘divide’

sáen tā ‘release’

táen tā ‘split’

Examples:

njicī ‘bury’

burcī ‘cover’

cwunncī ‘close’

furcī ‘to be bent’

ra ‘do by force’?¹⁴¹

Examples:

shwēr ra ‘break off’

tūr ra ‘push’

shir ra ‘pull’

ye ra ‘grab’

ya/yaē ‘assist in X’

Examples:

kūr ya ‘help prepare’

nde ya ‘help do’

ngwā ya ‘help drink’

sú ya ‘help carry’

mbúb ‘resulting in waste’

Examples:

yāen mbúb ‘pour out’

byīnn mbúb ‘break’

pog mbúb ‘smash’

tēn mbúb ‘burn up’

mbéb ‘resulting in spoilage’

Examples:

nde mbéb ‘ruin’

shir mbéb ‘ruin by pulling’

kwan mbéb ‘ruin by soiling’

rī mbéb ‘ruin by speaking’

How do we categorize these morphemes? One possibility is to consider them as restricted verbs following the pattern of the verbs **na** ‘give’ and **té** ‘accompany’ (see Sections 3.3.3 Benefactive and 3.3.4 Comitative in Chapter Eight). For example **tā** could be a restricted verb meaning ‘to separate,’ and **cī** could be considered a restricted verb meaning ‘cover.’ It is interesting to note that **tā** acts a little like the Hausa stativizer **-tā** with exactly the same tone, and like the Mandinka perfective marker **-tā**, both suffixed to intransitive verbs. Whether the restricted use of **tā** is

¹⁴⁰ Ansre (1963) proposes yet another term, ‘verbid,’ for some of these morphemes.

¹⁴¹ The morpheme **ra** may be cognate with Jukun **re** ‘do to all; intensive.’ See Shimizu 1980a: 226.

related in some way to the full verb **tā** ‘to shoot’ or with **aci** ‘to lay eggs’ is a question for further study. Arrows and eggs both separate from the creatures that launch them.

9.2.3 Mood

In this section we explore the rudiments of some of the Kuteb expressions which ‘characterize the actuality of an event by comparing the event world(s) to a reference world’ (Chung and Timberlake, 1985:III:241). We discuss Imperative, Hortative, Reported Speech, and Conditional sentences.

9.2.3.1 Imperative

In the case of the singular, the imperative consists of dropping the subject pronoun:

442) Bá! ‘Come!’ Rū! ‘Go!’

In the case of second person plural, the signal of imperative is the dropping of the **a-** prefix on the pronoun **anī**, and, in the case of low-tone verbs, a tone shift from low to mid:

443) Nī bá!
You (pl) come!

444) Nī rū!
You (pl) go!

445) Nī som iké! [nī sôm iké]¹⁴²
You (pl) sit here!

It may be seen that in the case of mid- and high-tone verbs an ambiguity is created between indicative in medium-fast speech and the imperative, as the **a-**prefix is dropped from both forms. Consider the sentence:

446) Nī bá.
2p come

This could mean either ‘you (pl) came’ or ‘you (pl) come!’

¹⁴² The falling tone on [sôm] ‘sit’ here represents falling from mid (the pitch of the pronoun) to low.

The tone on **nī bá** is the same in all of the following:

447) Nī bá íré.
You came yesterday.

448) Nī bá ucwē!
Come tomorrow!

449) Nī bá yáka.
You came today.

450) Nī bá yáka!
Come today!

It may be, however, that the imperative has a rhythm correlate such that the speed of uttering the imperative **Nī bá!** is faster than that of the declarative form. In clarifying these, a local speaker slowed the non-imperative forms down and used the full form of the pronoun: **anī**.

9.2.3.2 Hortative ('HO')

The hortative particle **ā** is used only with third-person subjects and conveys the notion 'let X do ...' For example:

451) Awū ā bá.
3s HO come
Let him come.

452) Anyīsū ā som uwé akwēn.
children HO sit front there.
Let the children sit over there.

Compare the following unacceptable combinations:

***ame ā bá.** Let me come.

***atī ā bá.** Let us come.

As in the case of the conditional marker, there is elision with the final vowel of noun and pronoun subjects, creating sets of pronoun-hortative combinations according to the following pattern:

Slow	Medium	Fast	
[awū ā bá]	[wūā bá]	[wā bá]	'Let him come!'
[abā ā bá]	[bāā bá]	[āā bá]	'Let them come!'
[ayī ā bá]	[yīā bá]	[yā bá]	'Let it come!'

The third person plural fast speech set ([āā bá]) is irregular in not having the C-V pattern of the other pronouns. This is because the pronoun itself normally shortens in fast speech from **abā** to **ā**. The conditional and future also follow this elision pattern.

The hortative particle does not co-occur with future or perfective markers, a fact that would seem to follow from the observation that if the action is being urged, it must necessarily be in the future and cannot logically be already completed. I.e., the following do not occur:

- 453** *Awū ā ú bá.
 3s HO FUT come
 *Let him will come.

- 454** *Awū ā bá pú-wū.
 3s HO come PRF-3s
 *Let him has come.

Elicited combinations of hortative plus imperfective may or may not be fully natural. No co-occurrences of hortative and imperfective were found in 150 pages of unelicited text. However, Kuteb students speaking English sometimes use combinations like 'Let him be sitting,' suggesting that this may be possible in Kuteb. The following sentences were tolerated by one person and rejected by another.

- 455)** ?Awū ā kú bá.
 3s HO IMP come
 Let him be coming!
- 456)** ?Awū ā kú tsō keké.
 3s HO IMP mount cycle
 Let him be riding the cycle!

457) ?Abā ā kú ngwā.
3s HO IMP drink

Let them be drinking!

458) ?Aróm ā kú tóm ritóm.
men HO IMP farm farming

Let the men be farming!

459) ?Anyīsū ā kú nde urú.
children HO IMP do game

Let the children be playing!

A periphrastic alternative to the hortative construction is **yátā tī ...** ('Let ...') as in

460) Yátā tī abā rī.
let REL 3p speak

Let them talk!

Sometimes both constructions are used together, and it does not seem to make any difference in meaning. Examples:

461) Yátā tī awū ā bá!
leave REL 3s HO come

Let him come.

Other examples of the hortative:

46 2) Ande tī ricen ā sáŋ ufu ne!
people guest HO enter door DEM

Let the guests enter this door!

463) Andá tí anyīsū ā ka-bā atáŋ bē!
women and children HO go-3p there NEG

Don't let the women and children go there!

464) Awū ā si unde tīnyaŋ!
3s HO be person good

Let him be a good person!

465) Ayī ā si tī rikīm!
 3 HO be fat
 Let it be fat!

466) Ayī ā byāg!
 3 HO hot
 Let it be hot!

9.2.3.3 Reported Speech Sentences

The reported speech marker is introduced here before conditionals because it will be seen that one type of conditional sentence makes use of the reported speech marker. The particle **nā** ‘reported speech’ occurs as part of the verb complex in the quotation clause of quotation sentences. For example:

467) Fxētirimam rī bāa, awū nā ú kūr kirāen yāka.
 Fxentirimam say comp 3s RS FUT prepare food today.
 Fxentirimam said she is going to cook today.

Note, however, occasional sentences that imply a frame with a speech verb, such as:

468) Awū nā kú bá.
 3s RS IMP come
 (Someone said) he is coming.

469) Abā nā ú rū-bā bē.
 3p RS FUT go-3p NEG
 (Someone said) they will not go.

9.2.3.4 Conditional Sentences

Two types of conditional sentences are often found in languages: an ordinary conditional and a counterfactual conditional. Both occur in Kuteb.

Ordinary Conditional Sentences

Conditional sentences typically have two clauses, a Main Clause and an ‘if’ (conditional) clause. In these sentences the action referred to in the main clause is dependent on the conditions specified in the ‘if’ clause. The full range of use of this construction needs to be explored. The simplest examples will be given here. The

crucial particle here is a low tone /a/ meaning ‘if.’ The equivalent in Jukun is **mā** in the same position (Shimizu 1980b:258). Example:

- 470) Afu a bá, ame ú ndeya fu.
 2s COND come 1s FUT help 2s
 If you come I will help you.

Sometimes a longer form occurs, beginning with **asítí**, which may have derived from **si** ‘to be’ and the conjunction /tí/. The particle /a/ still occurs before the verb. For example:

- 471) Asítí me a bá, ame ú tu fu a?
 IF 1s COND come, 1s FUT find 2s Q
 If I come, will I find you?

The conditional marker may co-occur with the imperfective **kú** and with the completive **pú**, but co-occurrences with future are rare.

Counterfactual Conditional Sentences

In these sentences a situation in the past or present is proposed that doesn’t actually exist, and the speaker wants to say that if it had existed, such and such would have happened. For example:

- 472) Á bāa, afu nā rī té m, ame ú ndeya fu.
 CFC 2s RS say with 1s 1s FUT help 2s
 If you had told me, I would have helped you.

Note that the quotation complementizer **bāa** introduces the conditional clause, and that the indirect/reported speech marker precedes the verb. Note also that in the main clause, the normal future marker is used.

9.3 Negative sentences

Many examples of negative sentences have been given above, but I present a set of them here to show how the various types of sentence are negated. Basically, negative is shown by the particle **bē** at the end of the sentence. It will be seen, however, that the negative construction has incorporated the verb-focus pronoun (see Section 3.3.7 ‘Unexpected or Unilateral Action’) to such an extent that it has become an obligatory part of the construction. It would appear that negative action is seen as inherently unexpected or unilateral. Jukun negatives (marked by final **mbá**) also require the verb-focus pronoun (Welmers 1968:56; Shimizu 1980b:276); in Migili only certain types of negative sentences require it. Examples of the negative in stative, intransitive, equative, locative, motion, transitive, and ditransitive sentences follow: Lufu marks negative with final **tsú** but apparently no VFP.

- 473) **Kútúpwá ne tsēn-yī bē.**
 cloth DEM white-VFP NEG

This cloth is not white.

- 474) **Atī cwū-tī bē**
 1p die-1s NEG

We did not die.

- 475) **Awū si-wū ukwe bē.**
 3s is-3s chief NEG

He is not a/the chief.

- 476) **Anī tá-nī uwae kusóg bē.**
 2p loc-2p inside house NEG

You are/were not in the house.

- 477) **M bá-m iké bē.**
 1s come-1s here NEG

I didn't come here.

- 478) **Ā wēn-bā icwu bē.**
 3p kill-3p leopard NEG

They did not kill a leopard.

- 479) **M nda-m awū wúci bē.**
 1s give-1s 3s food NEG

I did not give him food.

- 480) **Á jwunn-ba anī kutxom bē**
 3p throw-3p 2p stone NEG

They did not throw stones at you.

9.4 Questions

We very briefly introduce questions here, recognizing that they could well comprise a chapter of their own. Kuteb has yes-no questions, content questions, and other question forms that are less easy to characterize.

9.4.1 Yes-No Questions

This type of question is marked by a low-tone /a/ at the end of the sentence. For example:

- 481) **Afu kú bá a?**
 2s IMP come Q
 Are you coming?

- 482) **Abā kōb kutúpwá-m a?**
 3p sew cloth-1s Q
 Did they sew my cloth?

- 483) **Awū ka kutúr a?**
 3s reach bush Q
 Did he go to the bush?

As explained in the section on phonology (Chapter Two, Section 2.1), when a final stop precedes the question marker, it becomes a fricative.

- 484) **Anī wēn indag a?**
 2p kill cow Q
 Did you (pl) kill a/the cow?

- 485) **Awūne si kukūb a?**
 this be bone Q
 Is this a bone?

In negative yes/no questions the question morpheme tends to merge with the vowel of the negative marker **bē** to form a low front vowel [æ]:

- 486) **Afu ú rū-fu bē a? [afuúrūúfubæ] [æ]**
 2s FUT go-2s NEG Q
 Won't you go?

9.4.2 Content Questions

The indicators of content questions are the interrogative pronouns **áyē/ayē** ('who?'), **ímī/imī** 'what?' and the adverbial nouns **ísinn** 'when?,' **akā** 'where?,'

rímāŋ ‘how?.’ Note that there are two forms for ‘who’ and ‘what’ depending on where they occur in a sentence. The low-mid/high form generally occurs at the end of a clause. For example:

487) **Afu si ayē?**
 2s be who?
 Who are you?

488) **Awūne si imí**
 this is what?
 What is this?

The other form occurs when the interrogative word begins the sentence:

489) **Áyē tī bá?**
 who REL come
 Who came?

490) **Ímī tī afu kú shā?**
 When REL 2s IMP want
 What do you want?

The form **ísīnn** ‘when?’ seems to retain its high-mid pattern in both fronted and non-fronted position:

491) **Ísīnn tī afu bá?**
 When REL 2s come
 When did you come?

492) **Afu bá ísīnn?**
 2s come when?
 When did you come?

The form **rímāŋ** is not recorded in initial position, only following the verb:

493) **Anī núŋye wū rímāŋ?**
 2p recognize 3s how
 How did you recognize him?

The word **rímāŋ** is also used in a phrasal interrogative meaning ‘why?’ that has a negative implication to it:

- 494) **Awū nde rímāḡ pū atsīḡkén-m yāen-mbúb ahán?**
 3s do how take books-1s dump out thus

Why did he dump out my books like this?

Another way of saying the above is to use another phrasal interrogative, **imi tī nde** at the beginning of the sentence. For example:

- 495) **Ímī tī nde afu cī-fu kirāen bē?**
 What REL do 2s eat-2s food NEG

Why didn't you eat?

Finally, there is the equivalent of a WHY Question that also makes use of **imí** and the word for 'because':

- 496) **Abā kum tī icāen imí?**
 3p beat 1p because what

Why did they beat us?

Example 102 can be reordered along the lines of 101 as follows:

- 497) **Icāen imí tī abā kum tī?**
 because what REL 3p beat 1p

Why did they beat us?

9.4.3 Other Question Words

When a question is asked and the addressee does not respond, the questioner repeats the question, adding **úbā** at the end.

- 498) **Dawuda tá iké úbā?**
 Dawuda be here Q

I asked if Dawuda is here.

Sometimes **úbā** is used all by itself with the meaning 'I asked a question and you didn't respond.'

The word **úbā** is also used when a person doesn't understand the speaker and the speaker wants to repeat or make a clarification. He/she will say: **M nā úbā** and the addressee will say **mm** and then the speaker will repeat the statement. Another sentence particle in this set is **áné**, which indicates that the speaker questions the truth of the other person's statement. Example:

- Person A. **Āḡamrá yīb adá-fu.**
 Anghamra steal cutlass-2s

Anghamra stole your cutlass.

Person B. **Āṅamrá yīb adá-m áné?**
 Anghamra steal cutlass-1s

Did Anghamra really steal my cutlass?

As with **úbā**, **áné** can occur by itself with the meaning ‘Is that true?’

Another question word is **bírā**, which is used when a question is misunderstood and a third party repeats the question:

A. Afu jāeb iwág yī a?
 2s buy fish REF Q

Did you buy the fish?

B. (No response or confused response)

C. Afu jāeb iwág yī bírā?
 2s buy fish REF Q

(He said) did you buy the fish?

Three other sentence-final particles need to be mentioned. One, **án**, seems to indicate something like ‘indeed.’ As it needs to be studied in the context of conversational exchanges, we will leave its investigation for others. The second one is **roo**, which in my texts seems to be used when a speaker is addressing a lot of people and wanting them to do something. E.g.

499) Nī bá iké roo!
 2p come here ?

You all come!

Finally, we have **árō**, the meaning of which I have not been able to define, and gladly leave it to others to do so.

9.5 Conclusion

I have presented here the rudiments of the tense/aspect/modal system of Kuteb, as well as some particles with pragmatic functions. In conclusion, I can only reiterate that what I have set down here is but the nose of the hippopotamus. It is hoped that further research by myself and others in years to come will correct and expand these initial impressions. In particular, I look forward to some answers to several questions in this area:

1. What is the range of function of the particle **nā** which we have glossed as ‘reported speech’?

2. Are there any situations in which **pú** (perfective) can be used without the verb-focus pronoun?

3. What are the functions of verbal reduplication and verbal reiteration, as in:

500) Awū pípyí.

3s refuse

He refused.

501) Ā wēn wū wēn.

3p kill 3s kill

They killed him.

4. What is the interaction between the habitual use of **kú** and the reiterative auxiliary **kób**?

5. What is the meaning of the preverbal particle **áa** (falling tone), which I occasionally hear (and which seems to involve future and/or conditional). E.g.:

502) Awū áa bá [awáà bá] ...

3s ? come

If he comes ...

CHAPTER TEN. DEICTICS, PRONOUNS, AND ANAPHORA**10.1 Introduction**

Pronouns and demonstratives were introduced briefly as lexical categories in Chapter Four. In this chapter we will examine these words and other referring expressions in Kuteb, briefly sketching the form and functions of deictics (pronouns, spatial and temporal referring expressions, and demonstratives) and text reference expressions, i.e., those that refer to other elements in a text.

The first division one needs to make in the Kuteb referential system is between deictic reference, which involves reference to something in the real world, and reference to elements of a text, which has traditionally been called anaphora. Anaphora is explained in Section 3.0.

10.2 Deixis: Pronouns and Demonstratives

Deixis, according to Lyons (1977), refers to ‘the location and identification of persons, objects, events, processes and activities being talked about, or referred to, in relation to the spatio-temporal context...’ of the utterance. Pronouns, tense markers, and demonstratives are typically the major grammatical categories that express deixis. I present here the basic pronominal system of Kuteb, not only because it is a critical component of the deictic reference system of Kuteb but also because it is the source for several apparent grammaticalizations, which will form the major part of the discussion to follow.

10.2.1 Pronouns

One of the common features of the pronouns in the Taraba languages is the tonal pattern in the pronoun stems. First and second person tend to have low tone; all the rest have mid tone.¹⁴³ Storch (2000:41) states that the common pattern for subject pronouns in Taraba and Plateau languages is mid tone in all the pronouns. A careful study of all the languages in the area is needed to sort out which of the two proposed patterns is indeed more common and how they are distributed.

10.2.1.1 Form of the pronouns

It is useful (and traditional) to present several sets of pronouns based on grammatical function. So we present here Independent, Subject, Object, and Possessive pronouns, recognizing that subject, object, and possessive forms are

¹⁴³ See a comparative chart in Section 2.1.7 below.

phonological variants of the independent forms. What we have earlier called ‘verb-focus pronouns’ are identical in form to the possessive pronouns.

10.2.1.2 Independent pronouns

In isolation the following set of full forms is used, as in a conversation like:

Áyē? ‘Who is it?’

Ame ‘It’s me.’

The complete set of full (independent) pronouns is as follows:

	Singular	Plural	Unspecified
1 st person	ame	atī	
2 nd person	afu	anī	
3rd person	awū	abā	ayī

In slow speech the full forms can occur in almost any position. However, normally, phonological constraints work to create the subject, object, and possessive sets presented below. It is worth noting that the Kpambai dialect uses **abi** for 2nd person singular.

10.2.1.3 Subject pronouns

Before a verb in normal speech, the following set of shortened (subject) forms are used:¹⁴⁴

	Singular	Plural	Unspecified
1st p.	m	tī	
2nd p.	u	nī	
3rd p.	wū, ū	ā	yī, ī

Examples of subject pronouns:

503) M kú bá.
1s IMPF come
I’m coming.

504) U bá iké a?
2s come here ?
So you’ve come here!

¹⁴⁴ In the standard orthography, the full forms of pronouns are used in subject position, following the pattern of slow speech.

505) **Wū/Ū nwúnn íré.**
 3s leave yesterday

He left yesterday.

506) **Tī fxāefā.**
 1p thank

We're grateful.

507) **Nī sáe iké.**
 2p look here

You (pl) look here!

508) **Ā kú shā imí?**
 3s IMPF want what

What do they want?

509) **Ī nyaṅ pú-yī.**
 3 good PRF-3

It's/they're good!

10.2.1.4 Object Pronouns

After transitive verbs, the prefix **a-** is dropped, leaving the set: **me/m, fu, wū, tī, nī, bā, yī**. See Section 2.1.5 below for cases of the full form being used systematically in object position.

Examples:

Ā tu me/m.	[ā tu me/m]	‘They found me.’
Ā tu fu.	[ā tu fu]	‘They found you (sg).’
Ā tu wū.	[ā tu wū]	‘They found him/her/it.’
Ā tu tī.	[ā tu tī]	‘They found us.’
Ā tu nī.	[ā tu nī]	‘They found you (pl).’
Ā tu bā	[ā tu bā]	‘They found them.’
Ā tu yī	[ā tu yī]	‘They found it/them.’

10.2.1.5 Possessive and Verb Focus Pronouns

After nouns (i.e., in genitive constructions) and verbs (see below), a high tone possessive or associative marker precedes the pronoun.¹⁴⁵ This non-segmental morpheme is typically joined to the tone on the previous syllable, as follows:

Noun + [´] + Pronoun

ubur + ´ + **fu** → [ubǔrfu] ‘your hat’

utī + ´ + **fu** → [utī́ifu] ‘your spear’

kujwó + ´ + **fu** → [kujwóófu] ‘your arm’

The two high tones in the last example merge, so that the associative link as such is not heard. This is true of all high-tone nouns followed by the pronoun. The possessive link is represented in the official orthography by a hyphen. Note that the form of the possessive pronoun in this analysis is virtually identical with the object pronoun. It appears to me that in some other languages the tonal possessive link is manifest in the form of a tonal change on the pronoun itself, making it necessary to have a different set of pronouns.

The possessive pronouns with the associative marker also occur after verbs, where they are called ‘verb-focus pronouns,’ or, more recently, ‘serial pronouns’ (See Chapter Nine Section 3.1, 3.3.7 and 6.0). The following examples give the morphemic, phonetic, and standard representations of the data:

¹⁴⁵ An exception to this rule is the word **unda**, ‘daughter,’ which does not take the associative link before a pronoun: /**unda-fu**/ is [undafu] rather than the expected [undǎfu].

morphemic**phonetic****orthographic**

afu som ' fu	[afusǒmfu]	Afu som-fu.	'You just sat.'
afu rū ' fu	[afurūúfu]	Afu rū-fu.	'You went off.'
afu kwáb ' fu	[afukwápfu]	Afu kwáb-fu.	'You really tried.'

Thus, three similar but grammatically contrasting sequences obtain, represented as follows (VFP=Verb-Focus Pronoun):

N ' possessive pn:	kuter-wū	'his mortar'
V ' VFP:	Awū tā-wū.	'He (unilaterally) shot (something).'
V object pn:	Awū tā wū.	'He shot it/him/her.'

A shortened form of the pronoun consisting of the consonant occurs (m, f, w, t, n, b), but can be considered a phonologically conditioned variant. See the next section.

10.2.1.6 Verb-Focus Pronouns and Object Pronouns in Sequence

When a possessive or verb-focus pronoun precedes a direct object pronoun (e.g. in negative and perfective sentences with direct objects), the final vowel of the first pronoun is dropped, leaving a single consonant while the second takes the full form. More examples are given in Chapter 2 Section 2.3.

510) Anī tu-nī abā bē. [anītūnabā bē]

2p find-2p 3p NEG

You (pl) did not find them.

511) Anī tu pú-nī abā. [anītupúnabā]

2p find PRF-2p 3s

You (pl) have found them.

512) Ame tu-m awū bē. [ametūmawūbē]

1s find-1s 3s NEG

I did not find him.

513) Ame tu pú-m awū. [ametupúmawū]

1s find PRF-1s

I have found him.

- 514) **Awū tu-wū afu bē.** [awūtŭwafubē]
 3s find-3s 2s NEG

He did not find you.

- 515) **Awū tu pú-wū afu.** [awūtupúwafu]
 3s find PRF-3s 2s

He has found you.

- 516) **Ayī tu-yī ame bē.** [ayītŭyamebē]
 3 find-3 1s NEG

It/They did not find me.

- 517) **Ayi tu pú-yī ame** [ayītupúyame]
 3 find PRF-3 1s

It/They have found me.

An example of a possessive pronoun in this context would be:

ande-wū itsón [anděwitsón]

people-3s five

his five people

in which the vowel of **wū** is displaced by the first vowel /i/ of **itsón**.

10.2.1.7 A Comparison of pronouns in Southern Taraba

Although the data in the following chart is rough, it shows the general tendency for first and second singular pronouns in Taraba languages to have low tone, and the remainder to have mid tone.

Kuteb	Kapya	Oohum	Jukun	Icen	Bete	Jibu	Bibi	Lufu
m/ame	ami	m	m/âm	âmē	mba	m	mba	m/mma
u/afu*	avi	ndu	áu	ābō	owu	wu	owo	u/āu
ū/awū	awū	ngī	ákū	āgē	ozū	kú	ozū	kū/ákū
tī/	atsī	dī	ái	ājē	dēdē	í	ī	ī/ái
nī	anī	bī	ánī	ányē	lēlē	níŋ	le?	nī/ánī
bā	abē	bē	ábē	ábé	b±bē	dē	bā	ábā

Note again that the Kpambai dialect of Kuteb uses **abi** for second person singular.

10.2.1.8 Pronouns: meaning

The pronouns of Kuteb encode ‘person’ and to some extent ‘number.’ In the third person there is also a distinction between human and non-human, but this distinction is not straightforward and will be the subject of a special discussion below. The pronouns are presented here again for ease of reference:

	1st person	2nd person	3rd person
singular	ame ‘I, me’	afu ‘you’	awū ‘he, she, it’
plural	atī ‘we, us’	anī ‘you’	abā ‘they, them’
sing./plur.			ayī ‘it, they’

Note that ‘third person’ is a mixed bag: **awū** may have human or non-human antecedents; **abā** may only have human antecedents; **ayī** may only have non-human antecedents, and is not restricted as to singular or plural. Most antecedents of **ayī** are inanimate, it is possible that originally the category included only inanimate noun classes but has expanded to include nouns that have the /i/ prefix. Chapter Five gave an extensive list of nouns to which **yī** has been found to refer. I repeat just a few here to show the variety:

Clear Plurals referred to by pronoun **yī**:

asóg	‘huts’	anyī	‘teeth’
ayāen	‘kernels’	itúkū	‘trees’
akūb	‘bones’	abubunn	‘cowries’

Singular/Plural referred to by pronoun **yī**:

iyāg	bushcow(s)	iwōg	honey/bees
iwág	fish	icwo	palmtree(s)
icír	yam(s)	ifáen	gazelle(s)

Other nouns referred to by pronoun **yī**:

ibyē	‘meat’	urú	‘game’
itsab	‘cleverness’	ikén	‘thing(s)’
ibēn	‘marriage’	tárko	‘trap’
kindob	‘oil’	rinyí	‘name’
acīn	‘medicine’	ijwē	‘body’
rikaen	‘poison’	anyīŋ	‘blood’
rógō	‘cassava’	irá	‘word’
karatū	‘reading’	únde	‘work’
kujīmshwur	‘peace’	use	‘dance’
awúm	‘guinea corn’	ayéb	‘millet’
mbapwa	‘maize’	irám	‘grass’
kirāen	‘food’	kucē	‘net’
upae	‘penalty’	ákwā	‘a cult’

It was shown in Chapter Five that the class of antecedents for **ayī** ranges from plurals to uncountable objects, to singulars, and even overlaps slightly with nouns in the **awū** group. **Ayī** is known to occur in situations where there is no specific antecedent at all; thus it acts much like the dummy subject ‘it’ in English. For example:

- 518) **Ayī a si ahán ame ú kāfē-m yī uwōg itsē-m.**
 it is thus 1s FUT return-1s to place father-1s
 if

If it is like that, I’ll just go back to my father.

- 519) **Abā táŋ bāa, ayī nā si itsē-bā tā kú bá.**
 3p think COMP it RS is father REL IMP come
 3p

They thought that it was their father who was coming.

10.2.2 Demonstratives, Spatial and Temporal Deictics

In addition to the person deictics sketched above, which distinguish the speaker, the addressee, and third parties, and incorporate number of referents (singular or plural) and humanness, Kuteb has spatial and temporal deictics and demonstratives. As Anderson and Keenan point out (Shopen 1985:297), it is very common in the world’s languages for the system of spatial demonstratives to be imported by analogy into the temporal domain without any particular modification. In Kuteb, this is also the case, as can be shown by the fact that **ne** is part of the word **tīnine** ‘now.’ We will concentrate here on the spatial set.

10.2.2.1 Spatial Deictics and Demonstratives

The basic spatial deictics are the adverbial nouns **iké** ‘here’ and **akwēn** ‘there,’ which can stand alone as adjuncts in sentences. For example:

520) **Rū bá iké!**
 move come here
 Come here!

521) **Tsi uwé akwēn!**
 stand front there
 Stand there!

The proximal deictic/demonstrative **ne** is used in attributive position, as in:

unde ne kusóg ne uwōg ne
 person DEM house DEM place DEM

The expression **iké** ‘here’ is equivalent to **uwōg ne** ‘this place.’ The latter is used both as a deictic and an anaphor in text, whereas **iké** and **akwēn** refer strictly to the physical world: **iké** is ‘a place close to speaker’ and **akwēn** is ‘a place distant from speaker.’ Both are frequently modified by adverbial nominals such as **uwae** ‘inside,’ **isim** ‘behind,’ **isi** ‘downward,’ **uwé** ‘in front,’ most of which are derived from the terms for body parts. **Uwé akwēn** ‘there in front’ is a frequent combination.

Examples:

522) **Anyīsū som iké, ande ndufū som uwé akwēn.**
 children sit here, people adult sit front there
 The children sat here, and the adults sat over there.

523) **Ye ibae awúm ne ka tsi isim kurug akwēn.**
 Take sack corn DEM go stand behind granary there
 Put this sack of corn behind the granary.

524) **Iké nyaṅ skeb pú-yī Lágos.**
 here good pass PRF-3 Lagos
 This place is better than Lagos.

While **iké** and **akwēn** behave syntactically and morphologically as nouns, the deictics **ne** and **né** are particles that modify nouns referring to items close to or distant from the speaker. Examples:

- 525) **Unde ne txūn m asú.**
 person DEM insult 1s insult

This person insulted me.

- 526) **Utoŋ né nyaŋ uwae-m.**
 soup DEM good inside-1s

I love that soup.

- 527) **Wēn mbakúnn ne tíritsen.**
 Kill chicken DEM right away

Kill this hen right away.

The words **ne** and **né** discussed above co-occur frequently with the referentials **wū**, **bā**, **yī** ('the one/ones referred to'). For example:

unde wū ne this man referred to
 itúkūn yī ne these trees referred to
 andá bā ne these people referred to

This happens so frequently that in the standard orthography they are written together as though they are a sort of longer demonstrative:

Independent form	Post-noun form
awūne 'this one'	wūne 'this'
awūné 'that one'	wūné 'that'
abāne 'these (people)'	bāne 'these' (people)
abāné 'those (people)'	bāné 'those (people)'
ayīne 'this/these'	yīne 'this/these' (nonhuman)
ayīné 'that/those'	yīné 'that/those' (nonhuman)

This seems to represent a coalescence of the referential and demonstrative functions. The referentials, presumably, indicate objects that are in the immediate consciousness of the speaker and hearer, whether through previous reference or because of their physical proximity. Whether they should be written separately or together is not easy to decide. No other morpheme ever comes between the two, so they could be joined. But **ne** and **né** are used with a wider range of words than just the referentials. In speech, of course, they are always together. In this book they are written separately.

Examples of demonstratives:

528) **Aser wū ne skeb pú-yī aná ayī né.**
 money REF DEM pass PRF-3 that of REF DEM

The price of this one is more than that of those.

529) **Umbae wū ne kwáb tímambē.**
 child REF DEM try much

This child tried hard.

530) **Ayī ne si irá tī skeb risū ukwe.**
 REF DEM is matter REL pass head chief

This is a matter that is too much for the chief.

531) **Irá yī né ndebéb m utōb.**
 matter REF DEM spoil 1s heart

That matter upsets me.

532) **Rī té abā ne tī ā nā kāfē bá ucwē.**
 speak with REF DEM that they RS return come tomorrow

Tell these (people) to come back tomorrow.

533) **Ande bā ne kú shā imí?**
 People REF DEM IMP want what?

What do these people want?

534) **Awū né si anáfu.**
 REF DEM is yours

That one is yours.

535) **Ayī né ndebéb pú-yī.**
 That/those spoil PRF-3

Those are spoiled.

- 536) **Abā né bá tí íré.**
 REF DEM come since yesterday.
 Those (people) came already yesterday.

10.2.2.2 Temporal Deictics

As mentioned earlier, words used to fix the time of an utterance with respect to the moment of speech are based on spatial reference. Thus **tīnīne** ‘now’ may be derived from the relator **tī** + a reduplicated form of **ne** ‘this.’ Other temporal words are:

yáka ¹⁴⁶	‘today’
íré	‘yesterday’
ítsū	‘day before yesterday’
ucwē	‘tomorrow’
tsōwēn	‘day after tomorrow’
tsōkatáŋ	‘three days hence’.
yákúyā	‘four days hence’
yíwūkan	‘five days hence’
yíwútén	‘six days hence’
ísīnn	‘when?’

10.3 Anaphora: the use of awū, abā, ayī in text

While the difference between deictic and anaphoric expressions is useful for some words in Kuteb, it does not apply, at least synchronically, to the third person pronouns and what we have called demonstratives. The set **awū**, **abā**, **ayī** as well as **ne** and **né**, and combinations thereof, occur both as deictics and as intratextual referring expressions. In this regard Kuteb resembles English and many other languages (cf. Anderson and Keenan 1985:261).

Participants (including key objects) are introduced into Kuteb discourse in a variety of ways, the discussion of which is beyond the scope of this study. Once introduced, such participants are referred to by the appropriate pronoun (**awū**, **abā**, or **ayī**), the referential (**wū**, **bā**, **yī**), the demonstrative (**ne/né**), or by a combination (**wū ne**, **bā ne**, **yī ne**), or are ‘understood’ (zero anaphora). The choice of referring device is governed primarily by factors having to do with prominence and newness of information, a topic that we will not explore further here but simply illustrate with some examples.

¹⁴⁶ (Yínga, nyíka in other dialects).

A Kuteb discourse typically introduces participants with a generic name such as **unde** ‘person’ or **ibyē** ‘animal’ and/or a specifier **íkī** ‘a certain.’ Examples:

- 537) **Úcín kisuᅇ- caᅇ cicaᅇ rū ka ye ukwe íkī.**
m
 tale hare- walk walk go go catch chief SPEC
 1s

My story is about a certain chief.

- 538) **Unde íkī tá atáᅇ, rinyí-wū si Ápwende.**
 person SPEC be there name-3s is Apwende
 There was a certain person by the name of Apwende.

- 539) **Tī ame kú kyaᅇ uwae kutúr ame tu ufúᅇ íkī.**
 as 1s IMP walk in forest 1s meet hut SPEC
 As I was walking along in the forest I found a hut.

Subsequent references to the named participant are often in the form of a pronoun or the noun plus **(a)wū**, **(a)bā**, **(a)yī**.

- 540) **Íré ame fxēn kucáᅇ-fu tī afu yāᅇ;**
 Yesterday 1s hear song-2s REL 2s sing

ayī nyaᅇ tímambē.
 3 good very

Yesterday I heard the song that you were singing; it was very nice.

- 541) **Ame tu-me fangó tī m bá fxēn**
 1s find-1s road REL 1s come hear

acáᅇ- tī fu yāᅇ bē.
fu
 songs REL 2s sing NEG
 2s

I have not had a way to come and hear those songs of yours (again).

- 542) **Afu a cwé irá, mamrācī kucáŋ-fu ayī cwúcwó.**
 2s COND agree word makeREP song-2s REF again

Please, sing that song of yours again.

- 543) **Kukúnn tī uróm rī té kisuŋ bāsī,**
 chicken REL male tell with hare COMP

abā nā rū ka tūnn iwōg.
 3p RS move go dip honey

The cock told the hare they ought to go dip honey.

- 544) **Abā rū ka kwēr imbyí kutúkū uwōg**
 3p move go reach bottom tree place

tī ā kú tūnn iwōg atáŋ.
 REL 3p IMP dip honey there

They went to the bottom of the tree where people get honey.

- 545) **Abā rū ka yé, iwōg yī tá apupwen.**
 3p move reach honey REF be up

When they arrived, the honey was up there.

- 546) **Kimú som uwae kumūm kúm awū kínzō.**
 potto sit in mound only 3s one

Potto sat all by himself inside the (afore-mentioned) termite mound.

- 547) **Icwu tí kisuŋ tsi ise.**
 leopard and hare stand outside

Leopard and Hare were on the outside.

- 548) **Kisuŋ tēr inyae rū yáe pú-wū;**
 Hare run run go far PRF-3s

Icwu som cī unzu kumūm awū.
 leopard sit-cover mouth mound REF

(Then) Hare ran away, and Leopard sat guarding the opening of the mound.

549) **Awū cēb ákoŋ iká.**
 3s cut stalks grass
 He cuts the grass stalks.

550) **Wū a cēbfé ákoŋ iká ne ahán rū bá yé,**
 3s if cut stalks grass DEM thus go come end

ū kú bá yīr tág yī.
 3s IMP come tie MAX 3

When he has cut all these grass stalks completely, he comes and ties them.

551) **Wū a yīr tág pú-wū ayī,**
 3s if tie-MAX PRF-3s 3

ítawé wū mm bá kwēr urwā sī,
 before 3s SEQ come strike fire down

ú sa ákoŋ yīne bae ye ijwē urwā yīne,
 SEQ take stalks DEM light catch body fire DEM

ú sa sa kú unzu uwáe wū,
 SEQ take take crouch mouth hole REF

kókwā unzu kuyínn wū.
 or mouth hive REF

When he has tied them all up, he comes and makes a fire, and lights stalks in the fire, and takes them to the mouth of the hole, or the opening of the hive.

10.3.1 Spatial, Temporal, and Instrumental Anaphora

A previously mentioned location is referred to by the word **atáŋ**, ‘there,’ as in:

552) **Ame rū yī ritúg. Tī m fob atáŋ ...**
 1s go to market REL 1s reach there

I went to market. When I got there...

The same word is used as an anaphor for temporal and instrumental expressions:

- 553) **Ayéb íkī kú nde isháen itá, ayī kú bēn atáŋ.**
 millet SPEC IMP do month three 3 IMP ripen therein

Some millet ripens in three months.

- 554) **Ikén ne, imí tī anī kú nde atáŋ?**
 thing DEM what REL 2p IMP do therewith

This thing, what do you do with it?

10.3.2 Discussion of Text Referring Expressions

In the above sentences, **wū/yī**, which we have included as ‘specifiers’ because they narrow the list of possible antecedents, function much like the definite article in English. While we do not have the space to discuss the exact conditions on the occurrence of **wū** and **yī** here, we may point out that sometimes they may be useful in clarifying antecedents in text. Examples:

- 555) **Ame núŋ unde íkī uwae ritúg kiskínn ne.**
 1s see person SPEC in market morning DEM

I saw somebody in the market this morning.

- 556) **Ame tí ínjā-m som kú ngwā ujwāb atáŋ.**
 1s and brother-1s sat IMP drink beer there

My brother and I were there drinking beer.

- 557) **Ámá umbae ínjā-m rī té tī bāsī,**
 Then child brother-1s tell ACC 1p COMP

- 557b **unde wū nā si sója.**
 person REF RS be soldier

My brother’s child came and told us that the man was a soldier.

- 558 **Atī raŋ wū bāa,**
 1p ask 3s COMP

awū nde rímāŋ ítawé mm núŋ bāa,
 3s do how before SEQ know COMP,

unde wū nā si sója bárā.
 person REF RS be soldier Q

We asked him how he knew that the man was a soldier.

Here, a subject pronoun **wū** in Sentence 557b could have been taken as a reference to the child. To avoid the ambiguity, the speaker uses the noun **unde wū**. To use the noun alone, however, would be ungrammatical. Note the acceptable and unacceptable patterns:

559) Ame núŋ ibyē íkī uwae kutúr. Awū kób tímambē.
 1s see animal SPEC in bush 3s tall very

I saw an animal in the bush. It was very tall.

The second sentence could have been:

Ibyē wū kób tímambē.
 animal REF tall very

but not (in this context):

*Ibyē kób tímambē.
 animal tall very

The last sentence would make no sense, or perhaps would suggest a new participant or signal that a general reference to animals is being made. Another way of looking at it is to think of **wū** as tying the two instances of **ibyē** together.

10.3.3 Link between PN, DEM, and SPEC

The identity in form between the personal pronouns and the specifiers **awū**, **ayī**, **abā** clearly indicates a common source for these three grammatical functions. In this regard, Kuteb is similar to the Indo-European languages, in the sense that in the latter languages words that are now distinguished terminologically as the definite article, the demonstrative pronouns, and the third-person pronouns are all diachronically related (Lyons, 1977:646).

10.4 Reflexive Pronouns

The reflexive construction in Kuteb uses the word **ijwē** ‘body’ plus a possessive pronoun co-referential with the subject:

560) Awū raŋ ijwē-wū irá bāa,
 3s ask body-3s word COMP

He asked himself ...

561) **Afu kú ten ijwē-fu ifú.**
 3s IMP injure body-2s injury

You are injuring yourself.

562) **Anī kú nde na ijwē-nī rikāen ámām.**
 2p Imp do give body-2p trouble only

You are just making trouble for yourselves.

10.5 Independent Possessive Pronouns

Another derived pronoun series consists of the possessive set preceded by the morpheme **aná**, as follows:

aná-m	'mine'	anáī	'ours'
anáfu	'yours'	anáñī	'yours'
anáwū	'his'	anábā	'theirs'
anáī	'its/theirs'		

These pronouns can stand alone as elements in a noun phrase, as in, for example:

563) **Anyīsū-m tá iké, anáfu tá akā?**
 children-1s be here, yours be where?

My children are here; where are yours?

10.6 Conclusion

We have looked at the basic deictic and anaphoric words in Kuteb. It is hoped that this brief survey will be useful to anyone wishing to make a deeper and wider exploration of this area of the grammar, as well as those who want to compare the Kuteb system with those of other languages.

CHAPTER ELEVEN. COMPLEX SENTENCES

11.1 Introduction

Chapters Seven and Eight introduced sentences expressing single propositions. In this chapter we present a very brief overview of sentences containing multiple propositions. They consist of clauses joined by coordinating or subordinating conjunctions. The list is not exhaustive; no argumentation is offered, and no attempt is made to explore the variations and limitations of the structures given. It is hoped that further research will refine and expand these traditional categories. Included here are:

1. Relativized sentences
2. Sentences expressing speech and thought
3. Purpose sentences
4. Reason sentences
5. Conditional sentences
6. Counterfactual conditional sentences
7. Adversative sentences
8. Sequential sentences
9. Sentences with adverbial clauses
10. Sentences with nominal clauses

11.2 Sentence Types in Kuteb

11.2.1 Sentences with Relative Clauses

In traditional grammar these are called ‘complex’ sentences. They have a *main clause* and a *dependent* or *relative* clause. The relative clause modifies one or another noun phrase in the main clause. For example, in

564) Unde tī bá si ínjā-m.
 person REL come be brother-1s

The person who came is my brother.

the main clause is

unde ... si ínjā-m ‘the man ... is my brother’

The relative clause *tī bá* ‘who came’ tells us something about the man. In this case the subject Noun Phrase has the relative clause attached to it. In other cases it may

be the direct object NP or the Complement NP or a NP in an adverbial phrase telling where or when the action of the verb took place. Note that in the relative clause the subject is suppressed. Further examples:

Subject Relativized

- 565) Umbae tī ndebéb kisīm-fu nwúnn pú-wū.
 child REL spoil knife-2s arise PRF-3s
 The child who spoiled your knife has gone.

- 566) Irá tī anī rī íré txí.
 word REL 2p speak yesterday different
 What you said yesterday was different.

Object Relativized

- 567) Ā tsáb-bā ande tī kú shi ikén bē.
 3p choose-3p people REL IMP herd thing NEG
 They did not choose shepherds.

- 568) Anī cī pú-nī kirāen tī ame kūr na nī a?
 2p eat PRF-2p food REL 1s make PREP 2p Q
 Did you eat the food I made for you?

- 569) Awū núŋ-wū uwōg tī awū kú rū yī atáŋ bē.
 3s know-3s place REL 3s IMP go PREP there NEG
 He did not know where he was going.

Complement Relativized

- 570) Awūne si unde tī afu núŋ wū íré a?
 DEM be person REL 2s see 3s yesterday Q
 Is this the person you saw yesterday?

- 571) Amerika si uwōg tī ande tī rifúnn kú som atáŋ.
 America is REL people rich wealth IMP live there
 place

America is a place where rich people live.

Object of Preposition Relativized

- 572) Awū kú náe uwae kusóg tī tá uwé akwēn.
 3s IMP lie inside house REL be front there
 He sleeps in that house (that is) over there.

- 573) Isig sī bá risū kutúkū tī kíkṵāe cāe ufug-wū atáŋ.
 eagle descend on tree REL dove made nest-3s there
 The eagle came down on the tree in which the dove had made its nest.

Topic Relativized

- 574) Indag tī nī wēn ne, anī nde imí tí ucín-wū?
 cow REL 2p kill DEM, 2p do what PREP tail-3s
 This cow you killed, what did you do with its tail?

Others (adverbial Noun Phrases relativized)

- 575) Kiyé tī afu bá, ame tá-m iké bē.
 time REL 2s come 1s be-1s here NEG
 When you came I was not here.

- 576) Atī tu bā uwōg tī afu rī té tī.
 1p find 3p place REL 2s say PREP 1p
 We found them where you told us.

11.2.2 Sentences expressing speech and thought (*Verba Dicendi*)

In these sentences the quotation (including mental speech) is introduced by the complementizer *bāa* or *bāsī*. Both direct and indirect speech are used, the latter being marked by *nā* before the verb. Some dialects use *nāa* as a complementizer.

- 577) Awū rī bāa, awū ná ú wēn inji itsón.
 3s say COMP 3s IS FUT kill elephant five
 He said he would kill five elephants.

578) **Atī táŋ bāsī, afu nā nwúnn pú-fu.**
 1p think COMP 2s IS arise PRF-2s
 We thought you had already left.

579) **Mbúkū raŋ Kisuŋ bāa, afu tá tí iké a?**
 hyena ask Hare COMP 2s be still here ?
 Hyena asked Hare, ‘Are you still here?’

11.2.3 Purpose Sentences

These sentences are marked by the relativizer *tī* or *ikyāen tī* at the beginning of the purpose clause:

580) **Awū bá tī wū jāeb ikén ritúg.**
 3s come REL 3s buy thing market
 He came to buy something in the market.

581) **Ā kú tēb wū ikyāen tī ā tu aser ámām.**
 3p IMP praise 3s PURP REL 3p find money only
 They’re just praising him for the money.

582) **Ikén tī nde ame rī ahán si**
 thing REL do 1s speak thus be

ikyāen tī awū nā ye uré té bā.
 REAS REL 3s RS catch love PREP 3p

The reason I said that was to make him like them.

11.2.4 Reason Sentences

The marker of reason clauses is *ikyāen imí* ‘because of what?’ as in the following:

583) **Awū tsō rináe ikyāen imí ame txūn wū asú.**
 3s mount anger REASON what 1s insult 3s insult
 He got angry because I insulted him.

Compare the question form:

584) **Ikyāen imí tī afu byīnn wū kimbáb?**
 REASON what REL 2s beat 3s whip

Why did you whip him?

The expression *ikyāen imí* ‘why?’ follows the pattern of *ísīnn* ‘when,’ *imí* ‘what’ and *akā* ‘where,’ which have an alternative pattern of initial high tone when they

are used at the beginning of a sentence. The above sentence can alternatively begin with *íkyaen imí*, which adds some kind of rhetorical force to the question.

11.2.5 Conditional Sentences

These sentences are marked by the particle /a/ before the verb. The longer form *asitī* may precede the subject optionally:

585) (Asitī) awū a bá, ame ú rī té fu.
COND 3s COND come 1s FUT speak PREP 2s

If he comes, I'll tell you.

586) (Asitī) icwūŋ a sáŋ atáŋ, ikén ne ú ye wū.
COND mouse if enter there thing DEM FUT catch 3s

If a mouse enters it, this thing will catch him.

587) (Asitī) afu a kú shā, ā ú yá yī tā.
COND 2s COND IMP want, 3p FUT leave 3 VX

If you wish, they will let it/them go.

11.2.6 Counterfactual Conditions

These sentences are marked by the word *ábāa*, which may possibly be derived from *ā* 'they' + high tone (future?)+ *bāa*, the speech complementizer. It seems sometimes that these sentences also involve an underlying high tone between the pronoun and the verb that is realized as a tone change on the pronoun:

588) Ábāa awū nā cī, awū (awú?) tu kujwójáŋ íkī.
CCOND 3s RS come 3s find reward some

Had he won, he would have gotten a prize.

589) Ábāa ame nā núŋ ahán, ame (amé?) jāeb-m bē.
CCOND 1s RS know thus 1s buy-1s NEG

Had I known that, I wouldn't have bought (it).

11.2.7 Adversative

These sentences have *amá* or *amâ* 'but' (from Hausa *ammá*) between the two clauses. Apparently, before the influence of Hausa, contrastive clauses were originally simply juxtaposed, as in the second example.

590) **Ā bá, amáa m núŋ-m abā bē.**
 3p come but 1s see-1s 3p NEG
 They came but I did not see them.

591) **Ā bá, m núŋ-m abā bē.**
 3p come 1s see-1s 3p NEG
 They came but I didn't see them.

Note that there is another conjunction *ámá* with a meaning like 'then' or 'next' but it operates on the paragraph level.

11.2.8 Sequential

In contrast to serial verb constructions where a series of verbs is seen as a single action, there are other cases where there are several actions with a single subject (See more examples in Chapter 8, Section 4.0). In such cases the verbs may be introduced with the particle *ú*.¹⁴⁷ The following example is about a game called 'Banza' from a text on children's games.

592) **Bánzá si ují íkīn tī ā kú jwó wū siriri ahán**
 Banza is rope DET REL 3p IMPF braid 3s thin thus

ú ca wū ca, ú kwāe ísábūŋ tsi,
 SEQ strike 3s strike, SEQ scoop sand stand

ú céb itúkūn ú rae yī rae fā átsō kujwó
 SE brea stick, SE pee 3 pee togethe RECI hand
 Q k Q l s l r P

ú sa ují wū ne ahán tam uwae ísá atáŋ.
 SEQ take rope REF DEM thus hide in sand there.

Banza is a rope that they braid very thin, strike it, scoop up some sand, break a stick, peel it together [with the rope?] and take the rope and hide it in the sand.

Note that the verb phrases end with a pause before the next sequence marker. Although the sequence is identical in form with the future marker, and both occur immediately before a verb, it is distinct from the future marker in distribution, as it always comes after a pause, whereas sentences with the future marker have no break between the subject and the future.

¹⁴⁷ Sometimes the sequential /ú/ comes out as a bilabial nasal **mm** falling from high to low.

11.2.9 Adverbial Clauses

These clauses typically modify verb phrases by giving the time or place or manner in which the action of the main clause takes place.

- 593) **Kiyé tī m kú rū yī Ukān, iyém saŋ risāen-m.**
 time REL 1s IMPF go to Wukari, hippo enter farm-1s
 When I was going to Wukari, a hippopotamus entered my farm.

- 594) **Ā pū rū yī uwōg tī ukwe som atáŋ.**
 3p take 1s go to place REL chief sit there.
 They took us to the place where the chief was sitting/living.

- 595) **Isim tī itsē-m cwū, m ngwā rikāen si- tītūrī bē.**
 after REL father- die, 1s drink trouble be- speaking NEG
 1s 3si
 After my father died, I had unspeakable trouble.

11.2.10 Nominal Clauses

In the following sentences the relative clause acts as a complement in the main clause.

- 596) **Ame kú shā tī afu rū tīnine ahán.**
 1s IMPF want REL 2s go now thus
 I want you to go right now.

- 597) **Tī ā rū tí rináe ahán nyaŋ-yī uwae-m bē.**
 REL 3p go with anger thus good-3si inside-1s NEG
 That they went angrily like that did not please me.

11.3 Conclusion

In this chapter we have presented a very brief overview of sentences containing multiple propositions. Lest the naïve reader think that we have ‘covered the territory’ of sentence structure, I hasten to add that many narrative texts have far more complicated sentences consisting of several clauses, fragments,

borrowings, and structures yet to be identified. The short text that follows is an example.

- 598) **Kutē ame si unde tī caᅇ tātu.**
 long-ago 1s be person REL walk hunting
 Long ago I was a hunter.

- 599) **Bawé¹⁴⁸ m kú tã-m anáme kutē**
 not-that* 1s IMPF shoot-1s mine before

tī kú yesú-m ibú kú tã
 REL IMPF hold-1s arrows IMPF shoot

pãᅇmá tī ā kú pū ibú
 like REL 3p IMPF take arrows

ú cãe rikaen fã atãᅇ kú tã bē.
 SEQ make poison with there IMPF shoot NEG

It was not that I was doing my hunting then by taking arrows and shooting, like (when) they take arrows and prepare and put poison on them.

- 600) **Tātu name tī kucaᅇ tī ame kú caᅇ kutē,**
 hunting mine REL first REL 1s IMPF walk before

ī si itárikú¹⁴⁹ tī m kú txáe itárikú.
 3 be trap REL 1s IMPF trap trap

My hunting at the beginning that I was doing then, the tarko-trap was what I was trapping with.

- 601) **M a txáe itárikú txáe txáe,**
 1s COND trap trap trap trap,

m kú wēn ibyē sosé,
 1s IMPF kill animal much

¹⁴⁸ **Bawé** (from Hausa **ba wai ... ba**)

¹⁴⁹ **itárikú** (from Hausa **tarko**) refers here to a steel spring trap with jaws that snap shut when the animal steps on the trigger.

si itáriku tī m kú txáe.
be trap REL 1s IMPF trap

If I trapped for a while, I would kill a lot of animals, it was the tarko-trap that I was trapping with.

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Appendix 1. A Kuteb story: The Boy Who Refused to Marry

by Naboth Jatau, Sabon Gida Lissam

1. **Úcín kisung m cang ci-cang rū ka ye umbae íkīn.**
 tale hare-1s walk walk go go catch child SPEC

My story is about a certain boy.

2. **Umbae wū nyang tímambē.**
 child REF good very

The boy was very good-looking.

3. **Awu rī bāa awū nā ú mbé-wū undá bē.**
 3s say COMP 3S IS FUT take-3s woman NEG

He said he would not marry.

4. **Íyā-wū tī ite-wū rī bāsī,**
 mother-3s and father-3s say COMP

His mother and his father said that

5. **awū nā mbé kāng undá, awū shaen-wū.**
 3s IS take necessary woman 3s refuse-3s

he had to marry, but he refused.

6. **Ā rī bāa, awū a mbé-wū undá bē,**
 3p say COMP 3s COND take-3s woman NEG

They said that if he does not marry,

7. **ayī nā nyang-yī bē.**
 3 IS good-3 NEG

it is not good.

8. **Ā rī rī, rī, ayī skeb-yī risū tírī.**
 3p say say say 3 surpass-3 head then

They talked and talked, and it was finally too much.

9. **Umbae wū cwé bāsī, awū nā ú mbé undá tírī,**
 child REF agree COMP 3S IS FUT take woman then

Then boy said he would marry,

10. **amá awū nā ú mbé-wu undá ahán ámén bē,**
 but 3s IS FUT take-3s woman thus only NEG

but he would not marry just anybody,

11. **sé dé mbawándab tā a kūnn pú-wū rinyí-wū tí tawé.**
 unless girl REL if call PRF- 3s name-3s first

only a girl who first calls his name.

12. **Awū nwúnn utēn atáng bāsī,**
 3s arise land there COMP

He left that country saying

13. **awū nā ú ka náe uwōg íkīn.**
 3s Is FUT go lie place SPEC

he would go stay in another place.

14. **Uwōg wū tī wū ú ka náe atáng ne ahán,**
 place REF REL 3s FUT go lie there DEM thus

The place he went to,

15. **awū tsikunn tī kú rī bāa,**
 3s REIT REL IMP say comp

he kept on saying,

16. **mbawándab tā núng pú-wū rinyí-wū ú kūnn,**
 girl REL know PRF-3s name-3s SEQ call

the girl who knows his name and says it,

17. **nā si mbawandab tī awū nā ú mbé**
 IS be girl REL 3s IS FUT marry

(she) is the girl he will marry.

18. **Awū rū ahán ú ka sa kununn,**
 3s go thus SEQ go take home

So he went and made a home

19. **ú sa mbye uwōg íkin, kusóg kwáno tī apupwen.**
 SEQ take build place SPEC house metal REL above

in another place—a metal-roofed two-story building.

- 20 **Kusóg wū nyang tímambē.**
 house REF good very

The house was beautiful.

21. **Umbae wū kú náe kununn wū.**
 child REF IMP lie home REF

The boy was living in the house.

22. **Usir ikīn tírī, anyīsū andá inje,**
 day SPEC then children woman four

One day, four girls

23. **nde wúci tā ā nā pū rū kaá na wū atang.**
 make food REL 3p Is take go go give 3s there

made food to take to him there.

24. **Abíya-bā pū na bā shinkāfā tī acikunn,**
 mother-3p take give 3p rice and beans

Their mothers gave them rice and beans,

25. **ú ye mbakúnn wēn na bā.**
 SEQ catch hen kill give 3p

and caught and killed hens for them.

26. **Ā tō tág yī nyang ahán.**
 3p cook all 3 well thus

They cooked it all up very nicely.

27. **Wúci nyang, si-yī títírī bē.**
 food good is-3 speaking NEG

The food was unspeakably good.

28. **Ā pū átúpwá cāe tág anyīsū bā.**
 3p take clothes fix all children REF

They took clothes and fixed up the girls.

29. **Anyīsū ándab nyang pyás!**
 children girl good very

The girls were gorgeous.

30. **Tírī, ā rī bāa ā nā rū-bā tírī.**
 Then 3p say COMP 3p is go-3p then

Then, they say they were leaving.

31. **Ā ye icin rū aháán ka fob atáng,**
 3p catch journey go thus go reach there

They started their journey and went on and on, and reached the place,

32. **ú ka kwēr kujwó ufu kusóg.**
 SEQ go strike hand door house

and knocked on the door.

33. **Umbae wū tá uwae kusóg, ú cwé irá.**
 child REF is in house SEQ answer word

They boy was at home, and answered.

34. **Awū rī bāa, áyē bārā.**
 3s say COMP who? Q

He said, 'Who is it?'

35. **Ā rī bāa, nā si abā.**
 3p said COMP is be 3p

They said it was they.

36. **Awū rī bāa ā nā sáng bá.**
 3s say COMP 3p is enter come

He said they should come in.

37. **Ámá ā sáng ka yé uwae kusóg wū,**
 then 3p enter go altogether in house REF

Then they entered the house,

38. **ú ka pū wúcī ne na umbae wū.**
 SEQ go take food DEM give child REF

and gave the food to the boy.

39. **Umbae wū ci, ú cī mām wúcī,**
 child REF eat SEQ eat finish food

The boy ate, and finished eating the food,

40. **ú bá tu bā.**
 SEQ come find 3p

and came and found them.

41. **Ā som kú nde urú kú tsag akāen-bā.**
 3p sit IMP make game IMP tell troubles-3p

They sat and played and chatted.

42. **Ā nde ikén ne ndende tírī,**
 3p do thing DEM do then

They were doing these things,

43. **usir tē kú pú-wū.**
day sat IMP PRF-3s

the sun was about to go down.

44. **Anyīsū andá bā rī té umbae wū bāsī,**
children woman REF say with boy REF COMP

The girls said to the boy,

45. **‘Atī kāfe rū-tī tírī bē**
1p return go-1p then. NEG

‘We’re going back now, lest

46. **aī a ka-tī kununn fife bē,**
1p COND. go-1p home quickly NEG

if we don’t get home soon,

47. **abíya-tī ú fwān irá.’**
mother-1p FUT scold word

our mothers will scold us.’

48 **Umbae wū rī bāa, ‘To, nī tsira**
child REF say COMP okay 2p stand

The boy said, ‘Okay, wait

49. **tī m shā kíkīn na nī**
PURP is seek thing give 2p

so I can find something for you

50. **tī nī sa rū ka na abíyā-nī bārābē.’**
REL 2p take go go give mothers-2p or-not

to take to your mothers, or else.’

51. **Awū rū ka kwāen awāen itúkū títínyang,**
3s go go pluck fruits tree good

He went and plucked some very nice fruit,

52. **ú pū bá sī bā ijwē kíce-bā.**
SEQ take come drop 3p in dish-3p

and come and put them in their dishes for them.

53. **Anyīsū ándab bā tē wū bāsī,**
children girl REF dismiss 3s COMP

The girls bade farewell saying

54. **ā nā rū-bā tírī.**
3p IS go-3p then

they were going.

55. **Awū rī bá ā nā ka-bā nyanyang.**
3s say comp 3p IS go-3p well-well

He said they should go well.

56. **Abā cacang rū ka fob fangó.**
3p walk-walk go go reach road

They walked along to the main road.

57. **Ā sa awāen ikén ne ahán kú rū fangó.**
3p take fruit thing DEM thus IMP go road

They took the fruit and were going along.

58. **Ámá awāen itúkū mbawándab kínzō náe ise.**
but fruit tree girl one lie outside

The fruit of one girl lay exposed.

59. **Awū burcī nyang-wū ayī bē.**
3s cover well-3s 3 NEG

she hadn't covered it well.

60. **Abā itā tī tsí tsí ne ahán bēn ayíb**
3p three REL remain DEM thus ripen eyes

skeb pú-bā wū.
pass PRF-3p 2s

The other three girls were more clever than she.

61. **Ā nungye awāen itúkū yī, ú rī basī, 'Kayā,**
3p see fruit tree REF SEQ say COMP sister

They saw the fruit and said, 'Sister,

62. **afu pū ikén ne ahán kaaaa nde imí?**
2s take thing DEM thus go do what

What are you going to do with these things?

63. **Pū yī bá tī tī cī,**
take 3 come PURP 1p eat

Bring them so we can eat,

64. **tī atī a cī mām pú-tī né,**
PURP 1p COND eat finish PRF-1p DEM

and when we finish eating,

65. **atī ú pū anátī bá tī tī cī yī áamá.**
1p FUT take ours come PURP 1p eat 3 also

we'll bring ours to eat too.'

66. **Mbawádab wū núng-wū bē,**
girl REF know-3s NEG

The girl did not know,

67. **ú year anáwū na bā tírī.**
SEQ take hers give 3p then

and gave her (fruit) to them.

68. **Ā pū ikén yī pū cī mām fé.**
3p take thing 3 take eat finish completely

They took (the fruit)and consumed them all.

69. **Awū rī bāsī, 'Kayā-m,**
3s say COMP sister-is

She said, 'My sisters,

70. **nī pū anánī bá tī tī Cī-tī tírī áró**
2p take of-2p come PURP 1p eat-1p then ?

now bring yours so we can eat.'

71. **Ā rī bāsī, awū kú mam-wū irá-wū rímāng bārā?**
3p say COMP 3s IMP create-3s word-3s how? Q

They asked, why is she creating a story?

72. **Wū pū bá-wū bē, awū ú som-wū bē bārā?**
3s take come-3s NEG 3s FUT sit-3s NEG Q

She did not bring any (fruit), so she should just sit there.

73. **Ā nā ú pū anábā nā bá-bā bē.**
3p IS FUT take theirs IS come-3p NEG

They said they would not give her any of theirs.

74. **Mbawándab wū bwētág, ú tā aten ayíb bxab**
girl REF be still, SEQ cry tears eye plenty

The girl kept quiet and started crying.

75. **Ámá ā fxēn-bā irá tīfīrū yī kununn.**
Then 3p hear-3s word going to home

Then they started off for home.

76. **Ā sisa rū ka fob kununn.**
3p walk-walk go go reach home

They went along and reached home.

77. **Anyīsū andá bā pū awáen itúkū nábā**
children woman DEM take fruit tree their

The other girls took their fruit

78. **rū ka na abíya-bā.**
go go give mother-3p

to their mothers.

79. **Abā kū ci kū shwam tétsō.**
3p IMP eat IMP enjoy together

eating and enjoying themselves together.

80. **Awūne má shānum ikén**
This also lack thing

As for this one, there was nothing

81. **tī wū nā ú sa na íya-wū.**
REL 3s IS FUT take give mother-3s

for her to take to her mother.

82. **Ucwōfam-yī tírī, ā rī bāa ā nā ú rū cī**
next day-3 then 3p say COMP 3p IS FUT go REP

The next day, they said they would go back

83. **tí uwōg umbae wū cwúwo.**
back place child REF again

to the boy's place again.

84. **Abíya anyīsū andá bā itā ne**
mothers children women REF there DEM

The three girls' mothers

85. **cāe wúci nyang skeb tī kucang**
fix food good pass the first

prepared food even better than the first time,

86. ú pū átúpwá tā nyang skeb tī kucang,
and take clothes REL good pass the first

and took clothes that were better than the first,

87. ú pū na anyisū.
SEQ take give children

and gave them to the girls.

88. Mbawándab ne rī té íya-wū bāsī,
girl DEM say with mother-3s COMP

This girl said to her mother,

89. íya-wū nā pū na wū átúpwá tī wū nā rū,
mother-3s IS take give 3s clothes REL 3s IS go

her mother should give her clothes so she could go,

90. tí wúcī áamá.
and food also

and food too.

91. Íya-wū rī bāsī,
mother-3s say COMP

Her mother said,

92. Afu tí mbawándab tī ukáen ra.
2s ? girl REL uselessness ?

‘You worthless girl!’

93. Íré afu cāefā m.
yesterday 2s deceive 1s

Yesterday you deceived me,

94. M byīr ikén na fu,
1s collect thing give 2s

I gathered things for you,

95. afu pū rū ka tenji,
2s take go go destroy

you went off and destroyed them,

96. ú sa kíkīn íkīn bá na-fu ame bē.
2s take thing SPEC come give-2s 1s NEG

and brought me nothing.

97. Yáka ne ahán cwúwo afu cāefā m bāsī,
 today DEM thus again 2s deceive 1s COMP

Now today again you're deceiving me saying

98. wé ame nā byīr ikén na fu
 1s IS collect thing give 2s

I'm supposed to collect things for you

99. tī fu nā sú rū cī cwúwo
 PURP 2s IS carry go REP again

so you can carry them again

100. tī fu pū ikén-m rū kaá tenji.
 PURP 2s take things-1s go go-and destroy

and go off and destroy my things.

101. Ame ú pū kíkīn íkīn na-m afu bē.
 1s FUT take thing SPEC give-1s 2s NEG

I will not give you anything.

102. Wándab wū tā aten ayīb bxab,
 girl REF throw tear eyes plenty

The girl started crying

103. ú cīnum,
 SEQ eat-tire

gave up trying,

104. ú rū ka kwāen awāen utongcāeb ubāen kupwe
 SEQ go go pluck fruits okra side wall

went back and plucked some okra behind the house,

105. ú bá jwag yī tō urwā.
 SEQ come heat 3 cook fire

and cooked it on the fire.

106. Isim-yī tī utong yī bēn pú-yī,
 after-3 REL soup REL ripen PRF-3

After the soup was hot,

107 awū sa kindob tí rinwāen tí akwen sī atáng
 3s take oil and salt and potash down there

she put oil and salt and potash into it,

108. **ú ye yī tsi ribén, ú sa kutsúkwēr tō.**
 SEQ take 3 stand ground, SEQ take pot cook

and set it aside, and put the big pot on the fire.

109. **Kutsúkwēr céb, awū kūr kirāen**
 pot boiled 3s stir fufu

When the pot boiled, she made fufu

110. **ú pāen sī kíce, ú jwó ijwē-wū,**
 SEQ put down bowl, SEQ wash body-3s

and put it into a bowl, bathed,

111. **ú pū átúpwá-wū tītíci sī,**
 SEQ take clothes-3s old down

put on her old clothes,

112. **ú yesú ú r tī w ka tu anyīsū andá bāne**
 , ū ū á
 SE carr SE g PUR 3s go fin childre wome DE
 Q y Q o P d n n M

took the food and went to find the other girls,

113. **tī ā nā pūtsáen átsō rū.**
 PURP 3p IS follow RECIP go

so they could go together.

114. **Anyīsū andá bā, abā sáe-bā tí fangó tīrwēn,**
 children women REF 3p look-3p PREP road far

The other girls, they looked from a distance,

115. **kú tūb atsáng bāsī,**
 IMP spit saliva COMP

spitting and saying,

116. **Cī! Afu kú bá tī fu ye tī ndebéb úbā?**
 ! 2s IMP come PURP 2s catch 1p spoil Q

'Hey! Are you coming to spoil us, is that it?'

117. **Putsaen-fu afī bē!**
 follow-2s 1p NEG

Don't come with us!

118. **Cang icin-fu kínzō rikāen-fu.**
walk journey-2s one aloneness-2s

Walk by yourself!

119. **Mbawándab wū cīnum, kú cang nāvū tí isim tí isim,**
girl REF tire IMP walk hers back back

The girl gave up and walked behind the rest of them,

120. **abāne kú rū uwé,**
DEM IMP go front

while the others were up ahead.

121. **Ā rū ahááán ka fob uwae uyang wúkīn,**
3p go thus go reach in stream place-SPEC

They went along and reached a certain stream.

122. **undá kucáen kú kú jwó ijwē.**
woman oldness bend down IMP wash body

where an old woman was bending over, bathing herself.

123. **Awū rī té bā bāsī,**
3s say with 3p COMP

She said to them,

124. **‘Anyīsū-m, nī rū bá turra na m isim.’**
children-1s 2p go come scrub-quick give 1s back

‘My children, come give me just a quick back-scrub.’

125. **Ā rī bāsī, ‘Kí! Afu undá kucáen ne,**
3p say COMP ! 2s woman oldness DEM

They said, ‘Hey, you old woman,

126. **afu kú rī-fu irá-fu rímāng?**
2s IMP say-2s word-2s how?

why do you talk like that?

127. **Afu núng-fu uwōg tī atī kú rū yī atáng bē a?**
2s know-2s place REL 1p IMP go to there NEG Q

Don’t you know where we’re going?

128. **Atī ú pū ajwó-tī ndebéb rimenn-fu**
1p FUT put hands 1p spoil body 2s

Would we dirty our hands on your body

129. **títawé mm kú rú yī ūwōg**
 first SEQ IMP go to place

before we go to the place

130. **tī atī kú rú yī atáng úbā?**
 REL 1p IMP go to there Q

to where we're going?

131. **Atī ú nde fob-tī itso ikén yīne bē.**
 1p FUT do reach-1p kind thing DEM NEG

We couldn't do anything like that.'

132. **Ā tub atsáng rú ka sī,**
 3p spit saliva go go go-down

They spit,

133. **ú ye icin-bā, ú yafe undá wū,**
 SEQ take journey-3p SEQ pass woman REF

and resumed their journey passing by the woman

134. **ú fxēn irá tīrū.**
 SEQ hear word of going

and went right on.

135. **Undá wū rī bāa, 'Anyīsū-m, nī ka-nī nyanyang!**
 woman REF say COMP children-1s, 2p go-2p well-well

The woman said, 'My children, go well!

136. **Anī a si-nī riyāen awúm,**
 2p COND be-2p kernel guinea corn

If (you think) you're so beautiful,

137. **nī ka-nī nyanyang án!**
 2p go-2p well-well ?

well, have a good time!'

138. **Umbae tī undá wūne tīrī, kú bá nāwū isim.**
 child REL woman DEM then IMP come poss-3s back

This other girl was coming behind.

139. **Awū rú ahán bá fob uwae uyāng atáng.**
 3s go thus come reach in stream there

She went along and came to the stream.

140. **Undā wū tī kucáen wū kú tí uwae uyāng**
 woman REF REL oldness REF bend still in stream

atáng kú jwó ijwē.
 there IMP wash body

The old woman was still there in the stream, bathing.

141. **Awū rī bāsī, ‘Yākā,**
 3s say COMP daughter

She said, ‘Daughter,

142. **sī bá turra na m isim, bē a?’**
 descend come scrub-quick give 1s back NEG Q

come down and scrub my back a bit, won’t you?’

143. **Mbawándab wū pū kirāen-wū ayīne tsika,**
 girl REF take food-3s DEM stand

The girl set down her food,

144. **ú sī ahááán bá tu undá wū,**
 SEQ descend thus come find woman REF

went right down to the woman,

145. **ú tur tág na undá kucáen wū isim,**
 SEQ scrub all give woman oldness REF back

and scrubbed her whole back

146. **tí ijwē-wū mēmē, ú pāen tág wū risū.**
 with body-3s all SEQ plait all 3s head

and her whole body, and plaited her hair.

147. **Tírī awū tē wū bāa,**
 then 3s dismiss 3s COMP

Then she bade farewell, saying,

148. **‘Íyā, m kú rū-m tírī.’**
 mother 1s IMP go 1s then

‘Mother, I’m going now.’

149. **Undá wū rang wū bāsī,**
 woman REF ask 3s say COMP

The woman asked her,

150. ‘Yākā, afu kú rū yī akā?’
 daughter 2s IMP go to where

‘Daughter, where are you going?’

151. Awū rī bāsī,
 3s say COMP

She said

152. awū nā kú rū yī kununn umbae íkīn
 3s IS IMP go to home child SPEC

she was going to the house of a certain boy

153. tī nā kú akwēn ne
 REL IS be down there DEM

which was over there,

154. tī nā rī bāsī,
 REL IS say COMP

who says,

155. mbawándab tī nā a kunn pú-wū rinyí-wū ítawé
 girl REL IS COND call PRF-3s name-3s before

156. awū nā ú mbé wándab wū.
 3s IS FUT take girl REF

He will only marry the girl who first calls his name.

157. Né m kú rū atáng.’
 DEM 1s IMP go there

That’s where I’m going.’

158. Undá tī kucáen wū rang wū bāsī,
 woman REL oldness REF ask 3s COMP

The old woman asked her,

159. ‘Yākā, fu núng pú-fu rinyí umbae wū a?’
 daughter 2s know PRF-2s name child REF Q

‘Daughter, do you know the name of the boy?’

160. Awū rī bāsī, ‘Iyéé.
 3s say COMP no

She said, ‘No,

161. Ame núng-m rinyí umbae wū bē.'
 1s know 1s name child REF NEG

I do not know the boy's name.'

162. Undá tī kucáen rī bāsī,
 woman REL oldness speak COMP

The old woman said,

163. 'Rinyí umbae wū si Shībang.
 name child REF is Shibang

'The name of the boy is Shibang.

164. Afu a ka pú-fu ne,
 2s COND reach PRF-2s DEM

When you get there,

165. afu a kūnn wū bāa 'Shibang' né,
 2s COND call 3s COMP Shibang DEM

if you call him 'Shibang'

166. si rinyí umbae wū bārābē.'
 is name child REF ?

it is his name.'

167. Mbawándab rī bāsī, 'Íyā, m fxāefā pú-m.'
 girl say COMP mother 1s thank PRF-1s

The girl said, 'Mother, thank you.'

168. Awū tae undá tī kucáen wū tsō uwae uyāng
 3s lead woman REL oldness REF ascend in stream

She led the old woman up out of the stream,

169 tsō bá yī ukāense,
 ascend come to bank

up onto the bank,

170. ú bá ye kirāen-wū ayīne sú,
 SEQ come take fufu-3s DEM carry

come and took her food,

171. ú sa ahán rū ka fob anyīsū andá abā
 SEQ take thus go go reach children woman REF

and went along until she reached the other girls,

172. **tī rū uwé rū ka som, ú té umbae wū som**
REL go front go go sit, SEQ with boy REF sit

who had gone and were sitting with the boy,

173. **kú nde urú-bā kú tsag akāen-bā tírī.**
IMP do game-3p IMP tell troubles-3p then

playing and chatting.

174. **Awū ka kwētsi ufu kusog atáng ú rī bāsī,**
3s go stand door house there SEQ say COMP

She went and stood at the door and said,

175. **‘Gáfára, ubāen-m Shībang! M bá pú-m!’**
excuse husband-1s Shībang 1s come PRF-1s

Excuse me, my husband Shībang! I have come!

176. **Umbae wū tsēn utób!**
child REF white heart

The boy was happy

177. **Wū tēyá abāne tā uwae kusóg atáng**
3s leave DEM in house there

He left these other girls in the room

178. **ú bá wánye mbawándab wū ú rī bāsī,**
SEQ, come embrace girl REF SEQ say COMP

and came and embraced this girl, saying,

179. **‘Súko uwá-m! Súko! Né si uwé-fu a?’**
hello wife-1s hello DEM be face-2s Q

Greetings, wife! Hello! Is that really you?’

180. **Awū rī bāsī, ‘Mm.’**
3s say COMP yes

She said, ‘Yes.’

181. **Tírī umbae wū sáng ka jāe rū yé tág**
then child REF enter go drive go out all

Then the boy went in and drove all these others

abāne mēmē ūwae kusóg atáng, ú rī bāa,
DEM all in house there SEQ say COMP

out of the house and said

182. ā nā rū yī ise
3p IS go to outside

they should go out;

183. tī ā nā yá kusóg nā tā na uwá-wū.
PURP 3p IS leave house IS give wife-3s

they must leave the house for his wife.

184. Anyīsū andá bā cīnum, ú rū yé ise,
children woman REF eat-tire SEQ go out outside

The girls were defeated, went out,

185. ú tenpū ísān-bā kú rū yī kununn.
SEQ collect pots-3p IMP go to home

collected their pots and were going home.

186. Umbae wū sáng ka tu uwá-wū.
child REF enter go meet wife-3s

The boy went in and found his wife.

187. Ā som kú nde urú kú tsag akāen-bā.
3p sit IMP do game IMP tell troubles-3p

They sat and played and chatted.

188. Né tī ā rī bāsī,
DEM REL 3p say COMP

That is why it is said that

189. kó unde a bēb rímāng uwae utēse iké,
even person COND bad how in world here

no matter how bad a person is here in this world,

190. afu nā sáerū-fu awū bē, icāen imí,
2s IS despise-2s 3s NEG because

do not despise him, because

191. afu si-fu Rimam-wū tī nā sa wū súnn ise bē.
2s be-2s God-3s REL IS take 3s appear world NEG

you aren't his God who created him.

192. Anyīsū andá íkīm nā nde ahán
children woman SPEC IS do thus

Some girls did that,

193. **ú shānum títinyang uwōg undá kucáen,**
SEQ lack goodness place woman oldness

and failed to get a blessing from an old woman,

194. **ú shānum má uróm mēme tī ā ú bāen.**
SEQ lack also male all REL 3s FUT marry

and also failed to get husbands to marry.

195. **Mbawándab tī abā kú txí wū txí,**
girl REL 3p IMP despise 3p despise

A girl whom they despised,

196. **tī bá tu itinyang uwōg undá kucáen,**
it-is come find blessing place woman old

she it was who got a blessing from an old woman,

197. **ú bá tu uróm tī awū ú bāen fā tí atáng,**
SEQ come find man REL 3s FUT marry along- there
with

and got a man to marry as well,

198. **icāen imí risū tī náe ribén nāwū té undá kucáen**
because head REL lie ground hers with woman oldness

because it was her obedience to the old woman

199. **tī sa na undá kucáen kūnn rinyí umbae wū tsō.**
REL put give woman oldness call name child REF up

that caused the old woman to reveal the boy's name.

200. **Ám aw r k kūn tímbyey tī umba wū kú shā.**
. **á ū ū a n ī e**
then 3s g go call just like a child RE IM wan
o s F P t

And she went and called it just like the boy wanted.

201. **Uwae umbae wū má nyang.**
inside child REF also good

And the girl was happy.

202. **Awū ka kāfe uwá umbae wū.**
3s go become wife child REF

She become the boy's wife.

203. Umbae wū má ka káfe ubāen-wū tírī.
 child REF also go become husband-3s then

And the boy became her husband

204. Úcín kisung-m tsikunn pú-yī.
 tale hare-1s stand PRF-3

My tale ends