A Reference Grammar of Ọ̀kọ

Der Fakultät für Geschichte, Kunst- und
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DISSERTATION

zur Erlangung des akademischen Grades
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To

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for all the love, sacrifices and companionship

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Joseph Dele Atoyebi
Leipzig

Abbreviations of glosses

Advanced tongue root	ATR
Adverb	ADV
Allative	ALL
Attributive	ATTR
Agentive	AGT
Benefactive	BENF
Comitative	COMIT
Complimentizer	COMP
Concessive	CONCESS
Conditional	COND
Conjunction	CONJ
Continuative	CONT
Copula	COP
Definite article singular	DEF.SG
Definite article plural	DEF.PL
Demonstrative singular	DEM.SG
Demonstrative plural	DEM.PL
Diminutive	DIM
Distributive	DISTR
Existential copula	EXIST.COP
Focus	FOC
Future	FUT
First person plural independent	1PL.I
First person plural object	1PL.O
First person plural possessive	1PL.POSS
First person plural subject	1PL.S
First person singular independent	1SG.I
First person singular object	1SG.O
First person singular possessive	1SG.POSS
First person singular subject	1SG.S
Emphasis	EMPH

Habilitative	HABIL
Habitual	HAB
Ideophone	IDEO
Inceptive	INCEP
Indefinite article plural	INDEF.PL
Indefinite article singular	INDEF.SG
Infinitive	INF
Intensifier	INT
Interrogative High Tone	IHT
Locative	LOC
Locative copula	LOC.COP
Manner clause paticle	MCP
Negative	NEG
Nominalizer	NOM
Non-specific	NSP
Obligative	OBLI
Partitive	PRTV
Past habitual	HAB.PST
Perfect	PERF
Possessive	POSS
Prefix	PREF
Prepostion	PREP
Present habitual	HAB.PRT
Preverb	PREV
Progressive	PROG
Procedural pre-clausal segment	PPCS
Question marker	QM
Question particle	QPTCL
Reciprocal	REC
Reduplicative	REDUP
Relativizer	REL
Relative clause particle	RCP
Repetitive	REPT

Rhetorical question marker	RQM
Second person plural Independent	2PL.I
Second person plural object	2PL.O
Second person plural possessive	2PL.POSS
Second person plural subject	2PL.S
Second person singular Independent	2PL.I
Second person singular object	2SG.O
Second person singular possessive	2SG.POSS
Second person singular subject	2SG.S
Self-directed-question-marker	SDQM
Specific	SP
Suffix	SUFF
Subordinate clause final particle	SCFP
Symmetrical verbs	SYMV
Third person plural Independent	3PL.I
Third person plural object	3PL.O
Third person plural possessive	3PL.POSS
Third person plural subject	3PL.S
Third person singular Independent	3PL.I
Third person singular object	3SG.O
Third person singular possessive	3SG.POSS
Third person singular subject	3SG.S
Third person singular theme	3SG.T

Abbreviations of sources of example sentences

	Text title	Code	
1.	How the dog came to live with man	DM	385
2.	Marriage in Ogori	MO	391
3.	The young man and his mysterious bride	MB	394
4.	The boy and the cocoyam	CCY	399
5.	The north-wind and the sun 1	NW/S1	402
6.	The north-wind and the sun 2	NW/S2	404
7.	How the rabbit got its long ears	RLE	406
8.	The tortoise and the princes 1	TP1	410
9.	The tortoise and the princes 2	TP2	415
10.	The poor warrior and the man-eating elephant	WE	424
11.	Yam farming in Ogori 1	YF1	428
12.	Yam farming in Ogori 2	YF2	431

Figure: Language classification tree of Ọ̀kọ

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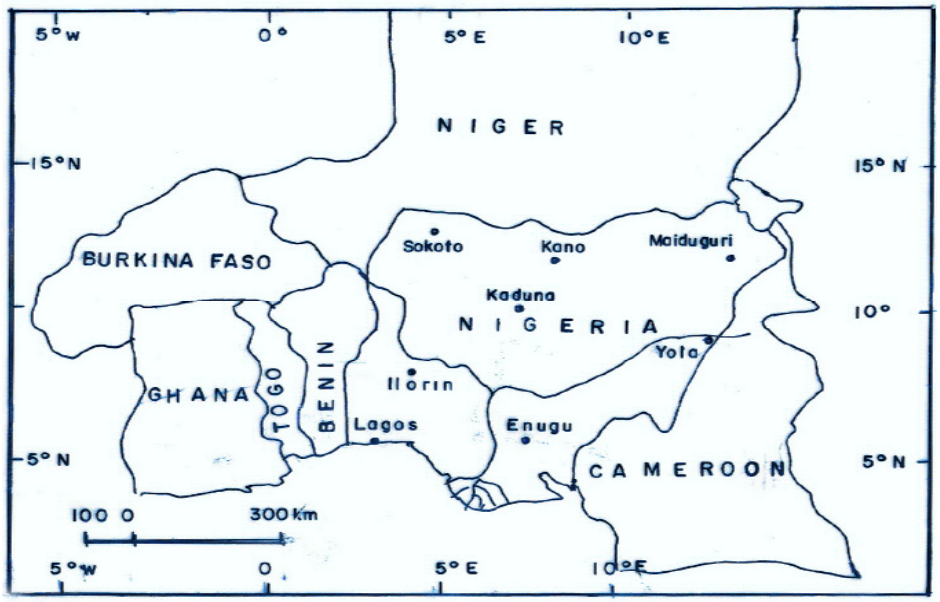
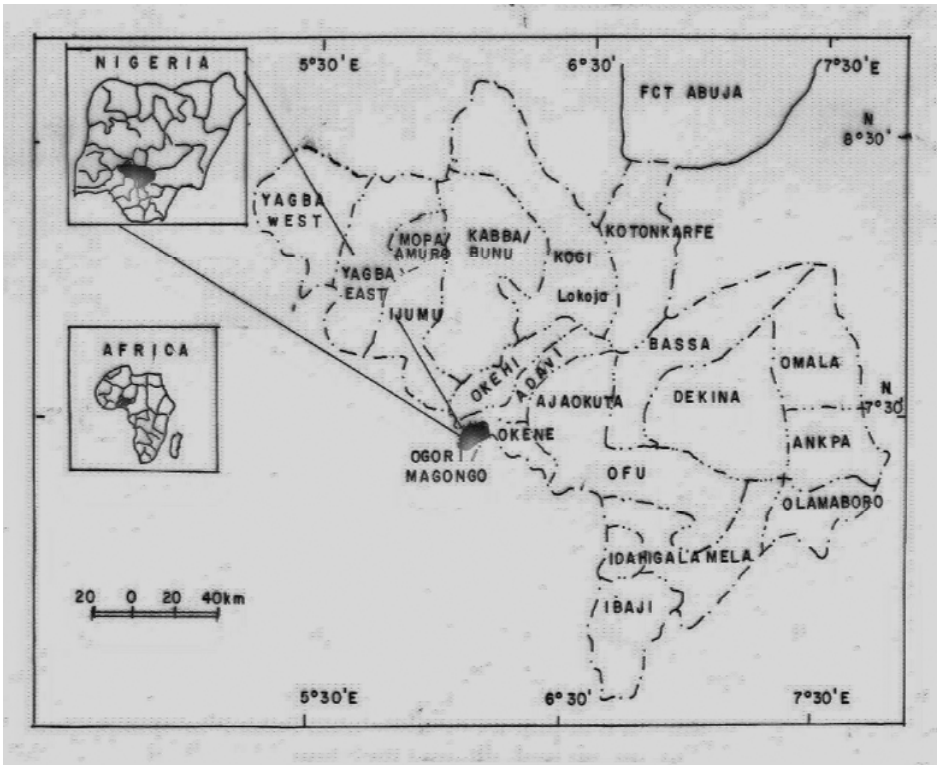
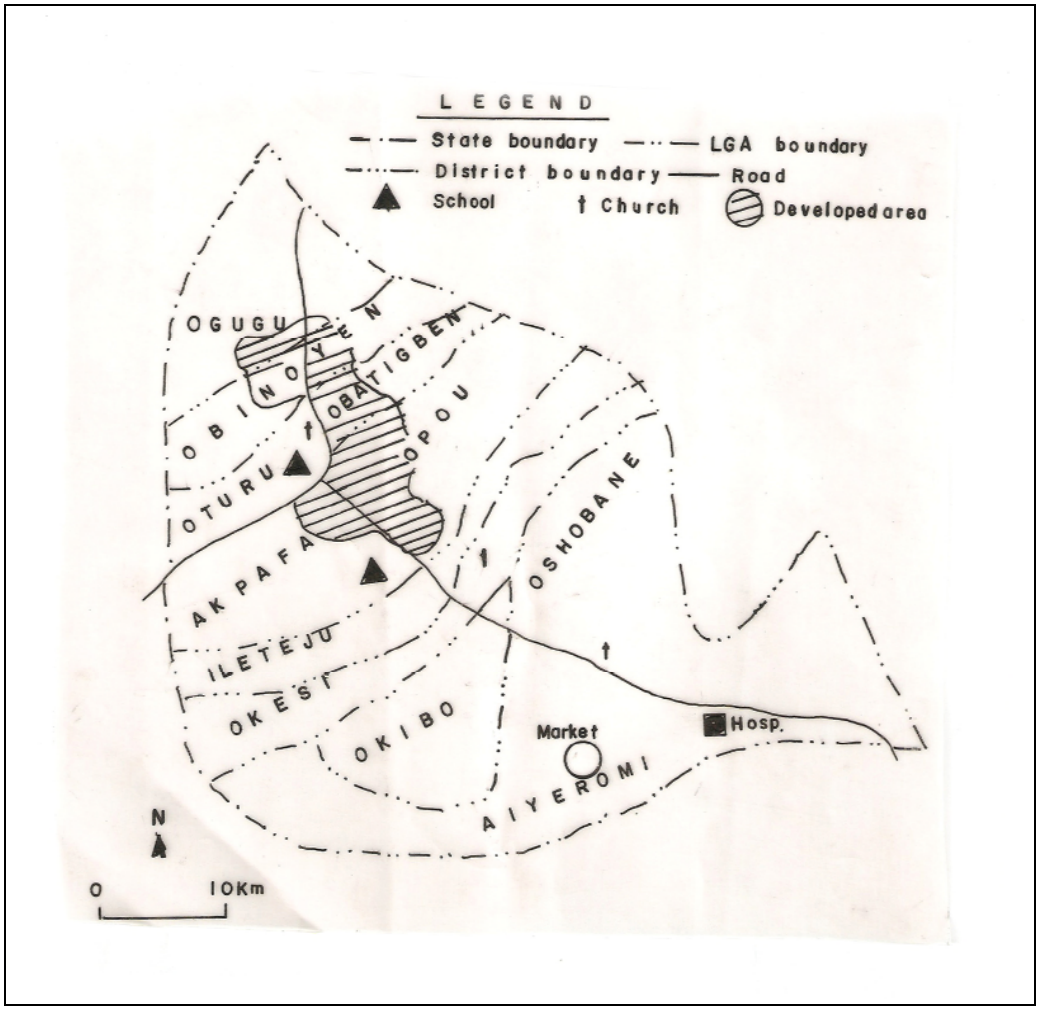


Map of West Africa showing Nigeria and Sub-regions



Map of Kogi State showing Ogori/Magongo local government area



Administrative map of Ogori/Magongo local government area: Map shows both towns being connected by the stretch of land known as Akpafa, where the local government admistrative offices are sited.

All maps: courtesy of Mr. Moses A. Bajeh, (Cartographer), Department of Geography, University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1 Socio-linguistic background of the Ọ̀kọ́ speaking communities

1.1.1 The language name, Ọ̀kọ́

Native speakers refer to the language in their tongue as Ọ̀kọ́. But to non-natives and to bureaucrats the name of the language is Ogori (Chumbow 1982a, b), or Ogori/Magongo (Wald 1994). The same language is also referred to in two different ways by the two communities of Ogori and Magongo, where it is spoken. In Ogori, where a more prestige variant is spoken, the language is referred to as Ọ̀kọ́, but in Magongo, it is Ọ́sányẹ̀n. Some scholars, including Akeem (2006) have referred to the language by the combined name of Ọ̀kọ́-Ọ́sányẹ̀n.

1.1.2 The geographical location of Ọ̀kọ́ speakers

The present day speakers of the language known as Ọ̀kọ́ are found in the twin communities of Ogori and Magongo. Both communities make up what is today referred to as Ogori/Magongo local government area, of Kogi State, North-Central Nigeria. The headquarters of the Ogori/Magongo local government area is located in an area known as Akpafa. This area is a small piece of land lying between both communities, serving as a buffer zone. Even though Akpafa is a 'no-man's land', it is geographically closer to Ogori than Magongo. In fact, most Ogori would claim that Akpafa belongs to Ogori. They do not subscribe to the 'no-man's land' label.

With respect to geographical coordinates, Ogori town is situated approximately on the intersection point of longitude 6^0 13" E and Latitude 7^0 27" N on the map of Nigeria and C.R. Niven's 1925 map of Kabba Province, Northern Nigeria (source: Oshiedu, B.A 1980). This description can also by approximation include Mangogo, since both communities are only separated by a gap of about 3 kilometres.

Furthermore, the Ọ̀kọ speaking communities of Ogori and Magongo are surrounded by several other communities which belong to different larger linguistic groups. To the North is Okene, where Ebira, a Nupoid language is spoken. Their eastern neighbours, especially, those that are geographically closest to Ogori are Edoid communities including Ekpedo, Ọsọsọ, Uneme, Makeke etc. To the South-west are also Edoid communities, these are: Bekuma, Lampese and Ibilo.

1.1.3 Estimated number of speakers

A breakdown of the number of speakers of Ọ̀kọ according to the 1991 census conducted by the Federal Government of Nigeria is as follows: Ogori, male: 11,258, Female: 12,319, total: 23,577. Magongo, Male: 4,241, Female: 4,912, total: 9,153. The grand total of both communities combined is 32,730 (source: Olagboye 2002:12). The most recent head-count which was conducted in 2005 puts the total figure of both communities (Ogori and Magongo) at 39, 252. This shows a 13 percent growth rate in 14 years, that is, from the period of the first count to the second. I have no official document yet that shows the breakdown of the population distribution of the 2005 census.

1.1.4 The Ọ̀kọ language and its dialects

With respect to the number of dialects of Ọ̀kọ, Williamson (1989) and Ethnologue (Gordon 2005) claim that there are three dialects of Ọ̀kọ, namely, Ọ̀kọ, Ọ́sányẹ̀n and Eni. However, based on purely linguistic evidence, the three-dialect claim is unfounded. There are only two dialects, these are: Ọ̀kọ proper, the variety that is spoken in Ogori, and Ọ́sányẹ̀n, the variety spoken in Magongo. According to Adegbija (1993:154), who until his death in 2004 was both a linguist and an indigene of Ogori, Ọ̀kọ and Ọ́sányẹ̀n are the same language with a few phonological differences; both are (in his own words) “perfectly mutually intelligible.” Note that, Adegbija, in all his publications on Ọ̀kọ (for example, 1993; 1994; 2001) did not cite Eni as a dialect of Ọ̀kọ.

The few phonological differences between Ọ̀kọ (Ogori) and Ọ́sányẹ̀n (Magongo) are found in a few sound correspondences. First, there are the non-expanded or [–ATR] [ɪ] and [ʊ] (see §3.4) which are attested in Ọ́sányẹ̀n (Magongo) but not in Ọ̀kọ (Ogori). [ɪ] in Ọ́sányẹ̀n (Magongo) corresponds to [ɛ] in Ọ̀kọ (Ogori), while [ʊ] in Ọ́sányẹ̀n (Magongo) corresponds to [ɔ] in Ọ̀kọ (Ogori) in a strictly monomorphemic [–ATR] vowel harmony relationship. See example (1). Similarly, the voiced labio-dental fricative [v] is only attested in Ọ̀kọ (Ogori), but not in Ọ́sányẹ̀n. In the environment where [v] is used in Ọ̀kọ (Ogori), it is realized as the labial-velar approximant [w] in Ọ́sányẹ̀n. See examples in (2).

(1)	Ọ̀kọ (Ogori)	Ọ́sányẹ̀n (Magongo)	Gloss
	ɔ́tɔ̋	*ɔ́tʊ̋*	‘ear’
	ámɔ̋	*ámʊ̋*	‘oil’
	ɛbɛbɛ̃	*ɛbɪbɪ̃*	‘joy’
	ɔ́nɛ́	*ɔ́ní*	‘meat’
	ɔ́rɛ́	*ɔ́rí*	‘friend’
	ɛdɛda	*ɛdɪda*	‘father’

(2)	Ọ̀kọ (Ogori)	Ọ́sányẹ̀n (Magongo)	Gloss
	ívi	*íwí*	‘intestine’
	óvia	*ówia*	‘maiden (initiate)’
	vá	*wá*	‘give’
	vé-ʧà!	*wé-ʧà!*	‘come out!’
	ɔvɛ̆	*ɔwɛ̆*	‘slave’

However, with regards to Eni, it is one of the six political wards into which the Ogori town is divided. Linguistically, there is not the slightest variation in the Ọ̀kọ that is spoken by the rest of Ogori and that which is spoken in the Eni ward.

1.1.5 Culture, religion and tradition of the Ọ̀kọ people

The Ọ̀kọ speaking people of Ogori and Magongo are renowned for their unique cultural practices; prominent among these is the annual *Óvia-ọ̀sẹ́sẹ́* (Ogori) or *Ówia-ọ̀sẹ́sẹ́* (Magongo) festival. The festival which literally translates as 'wife catching' is the initiation rites for young maidens into womanhood. It is celebrated by both communities on different dates around the Easter period. Parents who have young girls that have attained the age requirement for the festival make it a point of duty to enroll their daughter(s) for the initiation. The major high point of the festival is to carry on the age-long tradition of the people by granting the rite of passage to maidens who are getting close to marriageable age. The girls are schooled in the culture and tradition of their people and in the art of playing the expected roles of both wife and mother by the time they are married. It is also expected that all maidens participating in the initiation rites are virgins. Violators of the virginity requirement according to the belief of the communities will face the consequential judgment by the gods of the land. Moreover, such maiden are said to have tarnished the good names of their families. The fear of this inspires the desire for chastity within the community.

Even though the people of Ogori and Magongo are predominantly Christians (less than 5 percent are Muslims), they did not discard the *Óvia-ọ̀sẹ́sẹ́* or *Ówia-ọ̀sẹ́sẹ́* tradition for their new-found faith. They see the festival as an extension of some of the teachings on moral rectitude as entrenched in the Christian or Islamic faith. In fact, after the grand finale of the festival which is usually held on a Saturday, the celebrating families and their initiated daughters go to their respective churches for the thanksgiving on the following Sunday. The church itself has also benefited immensely from the festival especially from the extra funds which it receives in the form of thanks offering. The perfect blend between culture and religion in both communities has kept the festival running through the years.

1.1.6 The sociolinguistic situation of the Ọ̀kọ speaking areas

The Ọ̀kọ speaking communities of Ogori and Magongo are multilingual. The main languages that are spoken in both communities are: Ọ̀kọ, English (by extension includes Nigerian Pidgin), and Yorùbá. It is also observed that Ebira and some neighbouring Edoid languages are also spoken by a few members of the communities due to marriage and economic reasons. Ọ̀kọ is the everyday language used at home and for socio-economic interactions. English on the other hand, being the official language of Nigeria is used in the formal sectors of the communities, that is, by civil servants when conducting business at the local government area office, and in schools as the medium of instruction. Yorùbá is also widely used. Most members of the communities can communicate in Yorùbá. Interestingly also, most of them have Yorùbá names as first name and/or family names. Yorùbá is used in some homes and it is usually the church language. This is a result of the activities of the early missionaries to Ogori and Magongo who were mostly Yorùbá speaking and were also educationists. Their activities were further complemented by the availability of evangelical and literacy materials in Yorùbá. These include: Yorùbá Bibles, hymnals and primers (Adegbija 1994; 2001). The influence of the Yorùbá missionaries most likely explains the prevalence of the Yorùbá language in the Ọ̀kọ communities even though the closest Yorùbá community is about 200 kilometers away.

Furthermore, there is the issue of ethnicity. Even though both communities of Ogori and Magongo have the same language, each has its own individual ethnic identity. They do not see themselves as belonging to the same ethnic group.

1.1.7 Historical origin of Ọ̀kọ speakers

The historical origin of Ọ̀kọ speakers is only known from traditional knowledge. It is based on oral accounts handed down from generation to generation.

In the case of Ogori, there are three divergent views within the community about the origin of the Ogori people. The first view is what is

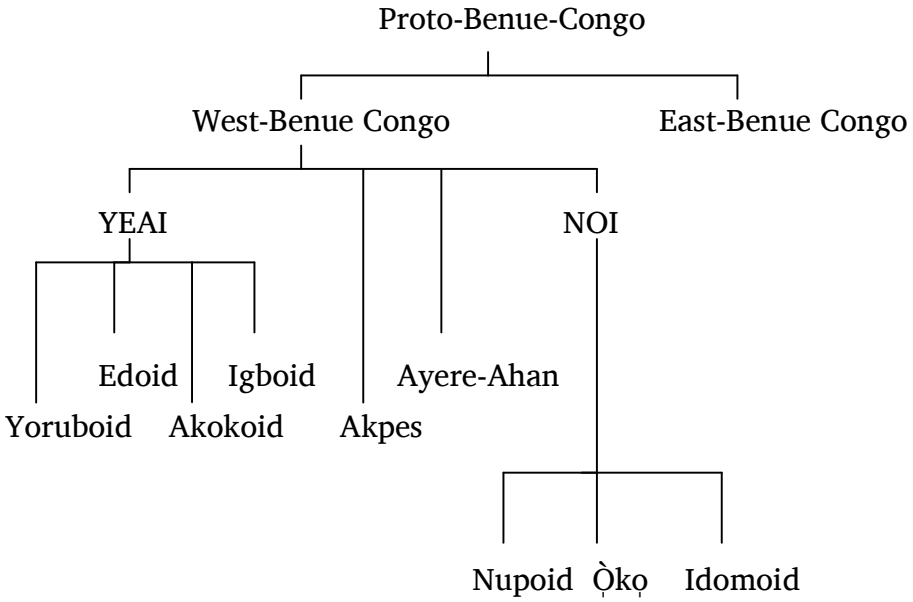
known as the Ile-Ife tradition. This view is popular within the community, especially among members of two of the three major clans in Ogori, namely, Okesi and Ocobane. The Okesi clan further consists of the Adubane and Okibo sub-clans. The Ile-Ife tradition claims that the progenitors of the Ogoris migrated from Ile-Ife, a town known as the cradle of the Yorùbá people (Olagboye, 2002; Osheidu, 1980). The second view is the Edo origin tradition. This is the claim that the Ogori people migrated from the land of the Edo people. This view is highly contested in the community by many who see the Edo tradition as popularized by the people of the Eni clan (the third major clan) of Ogori. Although the Eni themselves claim to have migrated from Edo, other prominent Ogori historians such as Osheidu (1980) fault this claim. They believe that Eni (also known as Eni-Dede) was a break-away group from the main stock during the migration from Ile-Ife, which later reappeared and reunited with the main group in the present-day location. The final account is the Akoko Gbangiri tradition (Adegbija, 1994; Akerejola, 1971). Proponents of this tradition believe that the Ogori people together with their Magongo counterparts migrated from Akoko Gbangiri, a border community in the present day Ondo state, South-Western Nigeria.

Unlike Ogori with its complex historical account, the Magongo seem to agree that they came from Ile-Ife, together with the Ogori, before the separation (Oshiedu 1980:28).

1.2 Linguistic classification of the Ọ̀kọ̀ language

The most recent classification of Ọ̀kọ̀ is by Williamson and Blench (2000:31). They classify Ọ̀kọ̀ as belonging to the West-Benue Congo sub-family, corresponding to Greenberg's (1963a) Eastern-Kwa. The West-Benue Congo branch of Proto-Benue-Congo splits up into four main sub-branches, namely, YEAI (Yoruboid, Edoid, Akokoid and Igboid), Akpes, Ayere-Ahan and NOI (Nupoid, Ọ̀kọ̀ and Idomoid). This is shown as in figure 1, taken from Williamson and Blench (2000:31).

Figure 1



The figure 1 shows that Ọ̀kọ is distantly related to languages such as: Yorùbá, Edo, Idoma, Ebira (Nupoid) etc. The exact basis of the classification by Williamson and Blench is unclear; further historical work is urgently needed. At this point, at least impressionistically, the structure of Ọ̀kọ is somewhat more similar to that of Yorùbá, than to a language like Igbo.

1.3 Previous works on the structure of Ọ̀kọ

Without listing any of the publications of this author, there are a few other previous publications on some structural aspects of the language. The first ever published work on the language was a wordlist, based on an extended Swadesh 100-word-list by the German linguist Herrmann Jungraithmayr: “Eine Wortliste des Ọ̀kọ, der Sprache von Ogori”, (1973b), after a field trip to Ogori and Magongo in October 1970. This was followed by Ben Elugbe: “Ogori”, (1980), and two works by Beban Chumbow: “Ogori Vowel Harmony, an Autosegmental Perspective”, (1982a), and “Contraction and Tone Polarization in Ogori”, (1982b). The remaining works by other scholars include one unpublished doctoral thesis “Àfiwé Ìtúpalẹ̀ Síńtáàsì Èdè Yorùbá àti Ọ̀kọ-Ọ́sànyẹ̀n (A

Comparative Analysis of the Syntax of Yorùbá and Ọ̀kọ-Ọ́sànyẹ̀n)", by Salawu, A.S (2006), one M.A dissertation "A Contrastive Analysis of English and Ọ̀kọ Tense and Aspect Systems and its Teaching Implications", by Solomon Aje (1979), and a couple of unpublished B.A dissertations: Aroran, O.O (1979) and Popoola, R.O (1980).

1.4 This grammar

1.4.1 Motivation for the project and length of fieldwork

My first contact with the language was in January of 2003. I was in both communities for a preliminary field trip which lasted for one week. Due to my background in phonology, I only went to elicit data to do a phonological description of the sound patterns of the language. In August and November of the same year, I was back in the communities for more data. The total time spent in the field in 2003 was 5 weeks. Subsequently, in April and November of 2004, and with funding from the Max Planck Institute in Leipzig, courtesy of my then supervisor, Professor Ben Elugbe, I was able to stay longer on the field and the scope of my research was further broadened. I earnestly began the preparation for a complete grammatical description of the language. The total time spent this time was 8 weeks. More trips followed, twice again in 2005 (4 weeks), twice in 2006 (6 weeks) and twice in 2007 (6 weeks). The total length of time sums up to a little over 7 months.

1.4.2 Language consultants

My language consultants cut across both communities. They also cut across age and gender lines. Two of them, Mrs. Deborah Enikanojaye (75) and Mr. Zaccheus Olori (87) do not have any level of formal education. Others with formal education are the late Mr. Steven Ogunleye (84), who passed away in 2006. He was at one time the Head teacher of the St. Peter's primary school, Ogori. Coincidentally, he was one of Herrmann Jungraithmayr's consultants in 1970. One of his sons, Peter Okunola (36) turned out to be one of my most reliable consultants. Others are: Mrs. Helen Aimola (62) a female hunter, Mr. Noah Omoshole Alabi (40), Mr.

Joseph Tunde (43), Mr. Thompson Ayoola (49), and Mr. Daniel Anuoluwa Lawani (43). Both Messrs Peter Okunola and Daniel Anuoluwa Lawani are Bachelor degree holders. All of my consultants have resided in Ogori and Magongo all their lives, and are people of good standing in their communities.

1.4.3 Data collection, storage and representation

The data used in this grammatical description are in field notes as well as in electronic corpus. At the outset of this research, I utilized the Ibadan 400 basic wordlist. Later on, I made use of the Composite French-English Research Guide to Vocabulary Elicitation in Africa, with 1,069 items for elicitation. I also made use of The Lingua Descriptive Studies Questionnaire (Comrie & Norval Smith 1977). At a later stage, I started recording narratives which include folktales, praise chants and some procedural discourses in the language. Some phrases, clauses and even full sentences in this grammar have been lifted from the narrative texts. Each example is assigned a code which is made up of the first letters of the keywords of the title of each narrative text plus a number, which is the number of the sentence in the full text. This can be found in the appendix of this grammar. For example, TP1:2 is from the story, 'Tortoise and the princes 1 (there are two versions of this story), while 2 means that it is the second sentence in the story (see illustration for a full list of narrative texts and the designated codes).

In chapter two and three, the phonology chapters, I represent the data using the IPA symbols. But in the rest of the chapters, that is, from chapter 4 to 19, I make use of the standard orthography for showing the examples. See section 2.7 for explanation of the orthography.

All examples in this work are based on the Ọ̀kọ (Ogori) dialect. It has far more speakers than its other variant, Ọ́sányẹ̀n, and it is also regarded as the prestige lect. Also, since the difference between both variants is purely phonological, the fear of losing any important syntactic information does not arise. A follow up dictionary to this grammar will be required to show all the lexical variations in both dialects.

Chapter 2
Sound Segments

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the sound segments of Ọ̀kọ. I examine consonant and vowel phonemes in the language. The discussion distinguishes between sound segments that are phonemic and those that are allophones. Also included in this chapter is the discussion of nasals and nasalization in Ọ̀kọ (§2.6). I examine in detail the nature of nasalized vowels, the status of the N-coda and how the nasalization process determines spelling rules in the language. Based on the findings on the treatment of the sound segments of Ọ̀kọ, I conclude the discussion by proposing a working orthography for the language (§2.7).

I have employed the following conventions in the presentation of data in this chapter. First, I make use of the IPA symbols for showing examples throughout this chapter (except in the section on spelling rules and orthography, where both phonetic and orthographic symbols are used, also, an archiphoneme N is used to indicate the syllable-final N). Secondly, with respect to tone marks, the acute accent **[́]** on a tone-bearing segment, usually a vowel (syllabic consonants do not usually occur in the language except in loanwords, see also §3.2), represents a high tone, all instances where any particular vowel is not tone marked represents the mid tone, and the grave accent **[̀]** on any tone-bearing segment represents a low tone. Items that are enclosed within slanting lines / / represent phonemic transcription, while those enclosed within square brackets **[ ]** represent phonetic transcription.

2.2 Consonant phonemes

There are twenty consonant phonemes in Ọ̀kọ. Table 1 below gives the inventory of consonant phonemes in the language.

Table 1: **Consonant phonemes of Ọ̀kọ**

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Alveolar	Palato-alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Labial-velar	Glottal
Nasals	m		n					
Plosives	p b		t d			k g	k͡p g͡b	
Fricatives		f v	s					h
Affricates				ʧ ʤ				
Trill			r					
Approximants			l		j		w	

Minimal and near-minimal pairs of some words showing various contrasts between consonant phonemes are presented below.

(1)

(a)	/m/	*mā́*	'to sit/dwell'	(b)	/p/	*pá*	'to peel'
	/n/	*ná*	'to collect/obtain'		/b/	*bá*	'to give birth'
(c)	/t/	*tó*	'to meet'	(d)	/kp/	*ókpé*	'male'
	/d/	*dó*	'to connect'		/gb/	*ógbḗ*	'child'
(e)	/b/	*bá*	'to ripen/shine'	(f)	/p/	*párɛ́*	'to tie'
	/gb/	*gbá*	'to see'		/kp/	*kpárɛ́*	'to pluck'
(g)	/f/	*fá*	'to cook/boil'	(h)	/s/	*sérɛ́*	'to split'
	/v/	*vá*	'to give'		/ʧ/	*ʧérɛ́*	'to put on the fire'

(i)	/ʧ/	*atʃɛtʃɛ̃*	'feather'	(j)	/r/	*bìre*	'to plant'
	/ʤ/	*áʤɛ́rɛ̀*	'rabbit'		/l/	*bìle*	'to mix'

(k)	/j/	*jɔ̀rɛ*	'to stretch'
	/w/	*wɔ̀rɛ*	'to cause'

2.3 Vowel phonemes

There are seven phonemic oral vowels in Ọ̀kọ.

2.3.1 Oral vowels:/i u e ɛ ɔ o a/

Each of the oral vowels has a nasalized allophonic variant.

2.3.2 Nasalized vowels: /ĩ ũ ẽ ɛ̃ ɔ̃ õ ã/

The oral vowels can occur in any position of a word, while the nasalized vowels occur in the environment before a syllable-final N. There is no case of a nasalized vowels occurring in word-initial position. Instances of nasalized vowels in Ọ̀kọ are only oral vowels becoming nasalized before a syllable-final N (cf. 2). A syllable-final N is defined as a syllable with an N coda. Note that the syllable-final N is only represented in phonemic transcription; in phonetic transcription, the oral vowel plus the following N are jointly represented by the nasal vowel which reflects the auditive impression.

(2)

/ɔ̀ɲɑ̀̀Nɲɑ̀̀N/	*[ɔ̀ɲɑ̀̀ɲɑ̀̀]*	'red'
/òríNriN/	*[òrɪ́̃rĩ]*	'black'
/érúN/	*[érɯ́̃]*	'farm'
/ógbéN/	*[ógbɛ́̃]*	'child'

This must not be confused with examples such as in (3), where the nasal stops are onset rather than coda. There is therefore no case of nasalized vowels in the examples.

(3)

/múné/	*[mune]*	'to run'
/mumuse/	*[mumuse]*	'to crush (of dry leaves)'
/emumu/	*[emumu]*	'book'
/ɔ́mɔ́dɔ́rɛ̀/	*[ɔ́mɔ́dɔ́rɛ̀]*	'nose'

Further discussion on nasalized vowels and their environment of occurrence can be found in (§2.6).

An inventory of the oral and the nasalized vowels of Ọ̀kọ is presented in the table below; the nasalized vowels are placed to the right of their oral counterparts.

Table 2: Oral and the nasalized vowels of Ọ̀kọ

	Front/Unrounded	Central/Unrounded	Back/Rounded
Closed	i ĩ		u ũ
Close-mid	e ẽ		o õ
Open-mid	ɛ ɛ̃		ɔ ɔ̃
Open		a ã	

The following parameters are used in distinguishing vowels in Ọ̀kọ: the tongue height, the part of the tongue that is raised, whether front or back, the shape of the lips, whether rounded or spread, and the position of the velum, whether raised for the production of oral vowels or lowered for the production of nasalized vowel. Also, a fifth parameter which is highly important in the description of vowels in Ọ̀kọ is the Advanced Tongue Root feature. This feature is necessary because it determines

vowel harmony processes in the language. Vowel harmony is pervasive in the grammar of Ọ̀kọ. A detailed discussion of this is found in section 3.4.

I present some minimal and near-minimal pairs of words showing contrast between pairs of phonemic oral vowels of Ọ̀kọ.

(4)

(a)	/i/	*írí*	fly	(b)	/e/	*édí*	'guinea fowl'
	/u/	*úrí*	sweat		/i/	*ídí*	'beans'
(c)	/u/	*úkú*	'forest'	(d)	/o/	*ódé*	'female'
	/o/	*ókű*	'firewood'		/ɔ/	*ɔ́dɔ́*	'rat'
(c)	/e/	*fílé*	'to wear/put on'	(d)	/ɛ/	*fɛ́*	'to skin'
	/ɛ/	*fílɛ́*	'to rest'		/o/	*fó*	'to die'
(e)	/ɔ/	*ɔ̀kɔ*	'Ọ̀ko language'	(f).	/a/	*wá*	'to drink'
	/ɛ/	*ɛ̀kɔ*	'here'		/ɔ/	*wɔ́*	'to hear'
(g)	/u/	*rúwá*	'to grow (of plant)'				
	/ɔ/	*rɔ̀wa*	'to swallow'				

2.4 **Detailed description of Ọ̀kọ consonants**

In this section, I present a detailed description of all attested consonant phonemes and their respective allophones in Ọ̀kọ. It is also important to add that from this point onward, I represent the syllable-final N-coda within phonemic transcription with an N. The reason is because the N-coda may be realized as /n/ or /m/ on the surface. In section 2.6.3, I give a detailed discussion on the identity of the N-coda.

2.4.1 **Nasal stops**

In the production of nasal consonants, the velum is lowered to allow air to escape through the nasal cavity and subsequently through the nose. However, there is also an oral closure at the lips or at the alveolar ridge.

Sounds produced through this gesture are referred to as nasal sounds. This gesture is in contrast with what obtains in the production of oral sounds which involves the raising of the velum, forcing air to escape only through the oral cavity. All nasal consonants are voiced in Ọ̀kọ.
The phonemic nasal stops in Ọ̀kọ are **/m n** /.

(5) **/m/**, a bilabial nasal with one allophone, [m]

/mune/	*[mune]*	'to run'
/mán/	*[mã́]*	'to sit/dwell'
/emumu/	*[emumu]*	'leaf/book'
/ámɔ́N/	*[ámɔ̃́]*	'palm oil

(6) **/n/**, an alveolar nasal with one allophone, [n]

/ná/	*[ná]*	'to take/collect'
/né/	*[né]*	'to throw'
/ɔ̀nɔ̀mà/	*[ɔ̀nɔ̀mà]*	'pig'
/énɔ́N/	*[énɔ̃́]*	'urine'

2.4.2 Plosives

In the production of plosives, the velum is raised and there is a complete closure at some points in the vocal tract. This closure is momentary because the articulators separate abruptly. The state of the glottis, whether vibrating or not, determines whether the consonant is voiced or voiceless.

The following phonemic plosives are attested in Ọ̀kọ: **/p b t d k g kp gb/**

(7) **/p/**, a voiceless bilabial plosive with one allophone, [p]

/pìlà/	*[pìlà]*	'to turn back'
/pírí/	*[pírí]*	'to fly'

/épáN/	*[épã́]*	'head'
/épɛ́N/	*[épɛ̃́]*	'hair'

(8) **/b/**, a voiced bilabial plosive with one allophone, [b]

/bɛ́/	*[bɛ́]*	'to beat'
/bàlɛ/	*[bàlɛ]*	'to look at'
/ɛ́bá/	*[ɛ́bá]*	'breast'
/òbú/	*[òbú]*	'salt'

(9) **/t/**, a voiceless alveolar plosive with one allophone, [t]

/táN/	*[tã́]*	'to chew'
/tébí/	*[tébí]*	'to smell'
/ótí/	*[ótí]*	'tree/stick'
/ɔ̀tɛlɛ/	*[ɔ̀tɛlɛ]*	'pot'

(10) **/d/**, a voiced alveolar plosive with one allophone, [d]

/dɔ́N/	*[dɔ̃́]*	'be old'
/dɛ́/	*[dɛ́]*	'to touch'
/ɔ́dɔ́/	*[ɔ́dɔ́]*	'rat'
/údúdò/	*[údúdò]*	'sheep'

(11) **/k/** a voiceless velar plosive with one allophone, [k]

/ká/	*[ká]*	'to hang'
/ɛ́kɔ́N/	*[ɛ́kɔ̃́]*	'war'
/íkíbà/	*[íkíbà]*	'money'

(12) **/g/** a voiced velar plosive with one allophone, [g]

/gáN/	*[gã́]*	'to greet/read/count'
/égíN/	*[égĩ́]*	'guinea corn'
/égá/	*[égá]*	'word'

(13) **/kp/** a voiceless labial-velar plosive with one allophone, [kp]

/kpìjà/	*[kpìjà]*	'to learn'
/kpɔ́/	*[kpɔ́]*	'to mount/climb'
/èkúrákpà/	*[èkúrákpà]*	'maize'
/ɛ́kpɔkpɔ/	*[ɛ́kpɔkpɔ]*	'pepper'

(14) **/gb/** a voiced labial-velar plosive with one allophone, [gb]

/gbodi/	*[gbodi]*	'be big/fat'
/gbá/	*[gbá]*	'to see'
/ɛgbǎN/	*[ɛgbǎ̃]*	'chest'
/ɔ̀gbɔ̀dɔ̀/	*[ɔ̀gbɔ̀dɔ̀]*	'spear'

2.4.3 Fricatives

In the production of fricatives, the articulators are brought together, leaving only a narrow channel through which air squeezes on its way out, producing turbulence in the process. The following phonemic fricative consonants are attested in Ọ̀kọ: **/f v s h /.**

(15) **/f /** a voiceless labio-dental fricative with one allophone, [f]

/fó/	*[fó]*	'to die'
/fɔ́rɛ́/	*[fɔ́rɛ́]*	'to conquer'
/ófú/	*[ófú]*	'bone'
/ofòro/	*[ofòro]*	'man'

(16) **/v/** a voiced labio-dental fricative with one allophone, [v]

/vá/	*[vá]*	'to give'
/véjɔ̀/	*[véjɔ̀]*	'go away!/go out!'
/óvia/	*[óvia]*	'maiden'
/ívǐ/	*[ívǐ]*	'intestine'

(17) **/s/** a voiceless alveolar fricative with one allophone, [s]

/sɛ́/	*[sɛ́]*	'to catch/grab'
/sú/	*[sú]*	'to marry/have'
/ésúrúkù/	*[ésúrúkù]*	'charcoal'
/ɛ̀sa/	*[ɛ̀sa]*	'cloth'

(18) **/ h /**, a voiceless glottal fricative with one allophone, [h]

/háN/	*[hã́]*	'to shave'
/húhúnúN/	*[húhúnṹ]*	'to grumble'
/hárá/	*[hárá]*	'to hoe'
/íhúrù/	*[íhúrù]*	'name'

2.4.4 **Affricates**

Affricates are produced when the articulators come together to cut off the flow of air, just as in stops; then they separate gradually as in fricative. There are to phonemic affricate consonant in Ọ̀kọ, /ʧ ʤ/.

(19) **/ʧ/**, a voiceless palato-alveolar affricate with two allophones, [ʧ] and [ʃ], both are used as free variants.

/ʧá/	*[ʧá]*	*[ʃá]*	'to come'
/ɔ́ʧɛ́N/	*[ɔ́ʧɛ́̃]*	*[ɔ́ʃɛ́̃]*	'leg/moon/month'
/ʧĩ́n/	*[ʧĩ́]*	*[ʃĩ́]*	'to ask'
/otʃũN/	*[otʃṹ]*	*[oʃṹ]*	'tail'

(20) **/ʤ/**, a voiced palato-alveolar affricate with one allophone, [ʤ]

/ʤé/	*[ʤé]*	'to eat'
/ʤójà/	*[ʤójà]*	'to suffer'
/éʤí/	*[éʤí]*	'egg'
/íʤéN/	*[íʤɛ́̃]*	'food'

2.4.5 **Trills**

In the production of trills, the tip of the tongue strikes against the upper alveolar ridge many times in the course of speech.

There is only one phonemic trill consonant in Ọ̀kọ, namely, **/r/**

(21) **/r/**, a voiced alveolar trill with one allophone, [r]

/róró/	*[róró]*	'to think'
/rúwá/	*[rúwá]*	'to grow (of plant)'
/érúN/	*[érṹ]*	'farm'
/ɛ́rá/	*[ɛ́rá]*	'fire'

2.4.6 **Lateral approximant**

In the production of lateral consonants the front of the tongue is raised to make contact with the alveolar ridge, and air still escapes from one or both sides of the tongue.

There is only one phonemic lateral consonant in Ọ̀kọ, namely, **/l/**.

(22) **/l/**, a voiced lateral approximant with one allophone, [l]:

/luaŋɛN/	*[luaŋɛ̃]*	'to forget'
/lɔ́ré/	*[lɔ́ré]*	'be long'
/àlàkíta/	*[àlàkíta]*	'cassava'
/ʧile/	*[ʧile]*	'be strong'

2.4.7 **Central approximant**

In the production of approximants, the articulators are brought closer to each other, but large enough gaps is left between them for air to escape without causing turbulence.

There are two phonemic central approximants in Ọ̀kọ, **/j w/**

23. **/ j /**, a voiced palatal central approximant with two allophones,

(a) [ɲ], a palatal nasal which occurs only in front of a nasalized vowel:

/jíN/	*[ɲḯ]*	‘to buy’
/jéN/	*[ɲḗ]*	‘to remember/smell/show’
/éjóN/	*[éɲṓ]*	‘palmwine’

(b) [j], an oral palatal which occurs elsewhere:

/jé/	*[jé]*	‘to call/ summon’
/jèrɛ/	*[jèrɛ]*	‘to follow’
/ójí/	*[ójí]*	‘rope’
/éjí/	*[éjí]*	‘sun’

24. / **w** /, a voiced labial-velar central approximant with two allophones,

(a) [ŋ^{w}], a labialized velar nasal which occurs only in front of a nasalized vowel:

/wā́/	*[ŋ^{w}ā́]*	‘to kill’
/ɛ́wɔ̃́/	*[ɛ́ŋ^{w}ɔ̃́]*	‘thorn’
/ɛ́wɔ̃Ntɔ̃N/	*[ɛ́ŋ^{w}ɔ̃tɔ̃]*	‘bee’

(b) [w], an oral labial-velar which occurs elsewhere:

/wá/	*[wá]*	‘to drink’
/wɔ́/	*[wɔ́]*	‘to hear’
/íwú/	*[íwú]*	‘body’
/ewùrúN/	*[ewùrṹ]*	‘ashes’

2.5 Detailed description of Ọ̀kọ vowels

A detailed description of vowels in Ọ̀kọ is presented in this section. The focus is on the distribution of each of the seven oral vowels and their respective allophones.

(25) **/i/**, a closed front oral vowel with three allophones,

(a) [j], a palatal glide which occurs whenever [i] is immediately followed by another vowel, usually a non-back vowel:

/tíégúrù/	*[tjégúrù]*	'to sing'
/síáré/	*[sjáré]*	'to play'

(b) [ĩ], a nasalized allophone which occurs in the environment before a syllable-final N:

/díN/	*[dĩ́]*	'to know'
/ríN/	*[rĩ́]*	'fibre'
/otʃĭN/	*[otʃĭ̃]*	'tail'

(c) [i], an oral allophone which occurs in every other environment:

/ìgìlà/	*[ìgìlà]*	'yam'
/ébí/	*[ébí]*	'water'
/ótí/	*[ótí]*	'stick'

(26) **/e/**, a close-mid oral vowel with two allophones,

(a) [ẽ], a nasalized allophone which occurs in the environment before a syllable-final N:

/gbéN/	*[gbḗ]*	'to resemble'
/íkéN/	*[íkḗ]*	'country/town'
/ógbéN/	*[ógbḗ]*	'child'
/ìgbèN/	*[ìgbȅ̃]*	'buttocks'

(b) [e], an oral allophone which occurs in every other environment:

/épúrúN/	*[épúrṹ]*	'belly'
/ókpé/	*[ókpé]*	'male'
/ódé/	*[ódé]*	'female'

(27) **/ɛ/**, an open-mid oral vowel with two allophones,

(a) [ɛ̃], a nasalized allophone which occurs in the environment before a syllable-final N:

/rɛ́N/	*[rɛ́̃]*	‘to slaughter’
/fénɛ́N/	*[fénɛ́̃]*	‘to tear’
/ɔ́tʃɛ́N/	*[ɔ́tʃɛ́̃]*	‘leg/moon/month’
/ɛ́pɛ́N/	*[ɛ́pɛ́̃]*	‘hair’

(b) [ɛ], an oral allophone which occurs in every other environment:

/ɛ́gɛ́ré/	*[ɛ́gɛ́ré]*	‘neck’
/èdagba/	*[èdagba]*	‘elephant’
/ɔ̀rɛsɛ/	*[ɔ̀rɛsɛ]*	‘needle’
/ɔ́garéga/	*[ɔ́garéga]*	‘story/news’

(28) **/a/**, an open central oral vowel with two allophones,

(a) [ã], a nasalized allophone which occurs in the environment before a syllable-final N:

/táN/	*[tã́]*	‘to chew’
/àgbèràN/	*[àgbèrã̀]*	‘jaw’
/ɔ̀ɲàNɲaN/	*[ɔ̀ɲã̀ɲã̀]*	‘red’
/aàráN/	*[aàrã́]*	‘smoke’

(b) [a], an oral allophone which occurs in every other environment:

/bá/	*[bá]*	‘to give birth’
/ná/	*[ná]*	‘to obtain/collect/seize’
/àtábá/	*[àtábá]*	‘tobacco’
/ábárɛ̀/	*[ábárɛ̀]*	‘back’

(29) **/ɔ/**, an open-mid back oral vowel with two allophones,

(a) [ɔ̃], a nasalized allophone which occurs in the environment before a syllable-final N:

/fɔ́N/	*[fɔ̃́]*	‘to enter’
/ɛ́gbɔ́N/	*[ɛ́gbɔ̃́]*	‘faeces’

/ɛ́nyɔ́N/	*[ɛ́ɲɔ̃́]*	‘blood’
/ɛ́nɔ́N/	*[ɛ́nɔ̃́]*	‘urine’

(b) [ɔ], an oral allophone which occurs in every other environment:

/rɔ̀wa/	*[rɔ̀wa]*	‘to swallow’
/ɔtɔpã/	*[ɔtɔpã]*	‘thigh’
/ɛ́dɛ́lɛkɔ̀/	*[ɛ́dɛ́lɛkɔ̀]*	‘testicles’
/ɔ́gbɔlɔ/	*[ɔ́gbɔlɔ]*	‘twenty’

(30) **/o/**, a close-mid back oral vowel with two allophones,

(a) [õ], a nasalized allophone which occurs in the environment before a syllable-final N:

/fóN/	*[fő]*	‘be far/to pound’
/ényóN/	*[éɲő]*	‘palm wine’

(b) [o], an oral allophone which occurs in every other environment:

/òbú/	*[òbú]*	‘salt’
/ógógò/	*[ógógò]*	‘spider’
/ójí/	*[ójí/*	‘rope’
/òdiòbo/	*[òdiòbo]*	‘name of one of the four hills surrounding Ogori’

(31) **/u/**, a closed back vowel with three allophones,

(a) [w], a labial-velar glide which occurs whenever /u/ is immediately followed by another vowel, usually a non-back vowel:

/éfúá/	*[éfwá]*	‘saliva’
/bue/	*[bwe]*	‘to sleep’
/íbúé/	*[íbwé]*	‘cola nut’

(b) /ũ/, a nasalized allophone which occurs in the environment before a syllable-final N:

/úmúN/	*[úmű]*	‘nanny goat’
/írúN/	*[írű]*	‘tooth’

/érúN/	*[érű]*	'farm'
/òguN/	*[ògũ]*	'elbow'

(c) /u/, an oral allophone which occurs in every other environment:

/úbá/	*[úbá]*	'arm'
/íhúrù/	*[íhúrù]*	'name'
/úgbíjà/	*[úgbíjà]*	'leopard'
/ètu/	*[ètu]*	'powder'

2.6 Nasals and nasalization in Ọ̀kọ

I devote this section to the discussion of nasals and nasalization in Ọ̀kọ because of its importance in the study of the sound system of the language. This discussion will examine in detail the nature of nasalized vowels, the status of the N-coda and its implication in the determination of spelling rules and in the choice of a practical orthography for Ọ̀kọ.

2.6.1 Nasalized vowels and their phonemic status

In section 2.3.2 I posit that nasalized vowels in Ọ̀kọ are merely allophonic variants of their oral counterparts, and that instantiations of nasalized vowels in Ọ̀kọ are only oral vowels which become nasalized in the environment where they occur before a syllable-final N. I also defined a syllable-final N as a syllable with an N coda.

2.6.2 Investigating the source of nasalized vowels

The main view about the source of [+ nasal] vowels across languages is the one put forward by Greenberg (1966), that such vowels derive from earlier states of oral vowels in proximity with nasal consonants. According to Greenberg, the typical sequence of event from one point in the evolution of nasalized vowels to the final stage can be represented as: VN > ṼN > Ṽ. It then implies that an oral vowel assimilates the nasal feature of a syllable final N and the latter (i.e. the N-coda) is deleted. This view adequately captures the situation in Ọ̀kọ. The only area where Ọ̀kọ differs is that the final N has not been completely deleted. It is still part of

the sound system of the language. Ọ̀kọ́ is still in the second stage of Greenberg's evolution schema, that is, VN > ṼN. The following discussions and examples will shed more light on this claim.

2.6.3 **Identifying the N-coda**

When a word is pronounced in isolation, the syllable-final N is not articulated. But when words or morphemes occur in connected speech, for example, in compounds and in phrases, the syllable-final N gets a surface form. The N-coda creates a liaison effect between both morphemes. This is shown in example (32a-d). It is also important to state, at this juncture that all nouns in Ọ̀kọ́ are vowel-initial, just like all verbs are consonant-initial.

(32)

(a) *[ìgbɛ̃̀]* + *[ɔ́dɔ́rɛ̀]* → *[ìgbɛ̀**n**ɔ́dɔ́rɛ̀]*
buttocks hole 'anus'

(b) *[óbɪ̃́]* + *[utù]* → *[óbɪ́**n**utù]*
king abode 'palace'

(c) *[útʊ̃́]* # *[àyɛ]* → *[útʊ́**m** áyɛ]*
work DEF.SG 'the job'

(d) *[fṍ]* # *[ìgùlà]* → *[fṍ**m** ígùlà]*
to pound yam 'to pound yam'

From the examples in (32a-d), the syllable-final N is pronounced as [n] and [m] across morpheme and word boundaries under the following conditions:

i. the first word or morpheme ends with a nasalized vowel
ii. the second word or morpheme starts with an oral vowel
iii. Both the nasalized and the following oral vowel occur in the same phonological phrase.

Constructions which involve conjoined NPs are not included in the definition of 'same phonological phrase'. For instance, the syllable-final N is never pronounced across the boundary that exists between the first NP *'óbín'* and the conjunction '*akà'*. Example (33a) is not an acceptable utterance, while (33b) is well formed.

(33a) *[óbĭ́] # [akà] # [àmɛ]* → **[óbĭ́**n**akà àmɛ]*
king and 1SG.I 'The king and I'

(33b) *[óbĭ́] # [akà] # [àmɛ]* → *[óbĭ́ akà àmɛ]*
king and 1SG.I 'The king and I'

Furthermore, in the case where the contiguous vowels that occur across morpheme boundary are both oral vowels, the first of the two vowels is either deleted (cf. 34a, b) or assimilated (cf. 35a, b). This shows that the intruding [n] and [m] in example (32) above are only realized in a nasalized environment, as they are not morphemes by themselves.

(34a) *[ábárɛ̀]* + *[ófú]* → *[ábárɔ̀fú]*
back bone 'spine'

(34b) *[íwú]* + *[ogbigbɛ̃]* → *[íwógbigbɛ̃]*
body strength 'health'

(35a) *[ɛ́dá]* + *[úbó]* → *[ɛ́dúùbó]*
termite house 'termitarium'

(35b) *[wo] # [èsa]* → *[wɛ èsa]*
weave cloth 'weave a cloth'

The distribution of the variants of the syllable-final N is phonologically conditioned. For instance, the realization of [n] across a

morpheme boundary is mainly triggered by [– back] nasalized vowels [ĩ ẽ ɛ̃] (cf. 36a-e) (for other cases see §2.6.4).

(36)

(a)	*[óbí̋]*	*+ [utù]*	→	*[óbí̋**n**utù]*
	king	abode		‘palace’
(b)	*[ɖʒí̋]*	*# [úɖʒú̋]*	→	*[ɖʒí̋**n** úɖʒú̋]*
	open	door		‘open a door’
(c)	*[ógbé̋]*	*+ [ofòro]*	→	*[ógbé̋**n**ofòro]*
	child	man		‘boy’
(d)	*[ógbé̋]*	*# [ɔ̀ɔ́rɛ]*	→	*[ógbé̋**n** ɔ́ɔ̀rɛ̀]*
	child	one		‘one child’
(e)	*[ɛ́mɛ̋́]*	*# [íbé]*	→	*[ɛ́mɛ̋́**n** íbé]*
	bush	interior		‘inside a bush’

On the other hand, the realization of [m] is mainly triggered by [+back] nasalized vowels /ũ õ ɔ̃/ (cf. 37a-d) (for other cases see §2.6.4).

(37)

(a)	*[útű́]*	*# [àjɛ]*	→	*[útű́**m** áyɛ]*
	work	DEF.SG		‘the job’
(b)	*[útű́]*	*+ [ɛ̀fà]*	→	*[útű́**m**ɛfà]*
	work	place		‘workplace/office’
(c)	*[fő́]*	*# [ìgìlà]*	→	*[fồ**m** ígìlà]*
	to pound	yam		‘to pound yam’

(d) *[fɔ́] # [ikerese]* → *[fɔ́**m** ikerese]*
enter vehicle ‘board a vehicle’

2.6.4 The bilabial onset

The phonological rules that determine the surface form of the underlying N, namely, [+back]/[– back], are not as straightforward as they appear. In some environments, [n] is triggered by [+back] vowels. This is shown in example (38a-c).

(38)

(a) *[úmű] # [ɛ̀bɛ̀]* → *[úmű**n** ɛ́bɛ̀]*
goat INDF.PL ‘some goats’

(b) *[òmű] # [àbɛ]* → *[òmű**n** ábɛ]*
cap DEF.PL ‘the caps’

(c) *[ámɔ́] # [àjɛ]* → *[ámɔ́**n** ájɛ]*
oil DEF.SG ‘the oil’

The examples in (38a-c) show that back nasalized vowels [ũ ɔ̃] trigger [n] rather than [m]. This contradiction can only be explained by looking beyond the nasalized nucleus to the onset. We note from the examples that the onset consonants in (38) are bilabial.

Similarly, when the nasalized vowel [ã] occurs across morpheme boundaries, it can trigger [n] or [m]. The choice of any of the variants is also determined by the place of articulation of the onset consonant. For instance, [ã] triggers [n] if the onset is bilabial. In example (39a-d), [ã] occurs after the following bilabial consonants /p w m/.

(39)

(a) *[épã́] + [ɔ̀sésɛrɛ]* → *[épã́**n**ɔ́sɛ̀sɛrɛ]*
head breaking ‘headache’

(b) *[épấ] + [ófú]* → *[épấ**n**ófu]*
head bone ‘skull’

(c) *[ŋwấ] # [úwó]* → *[ŋwấ**n** úwó]*
kill dog ‘kill a dog’

(d) *[mấ] # [érɛ̀]* → *[mấ**n** érɛ̀]*
sit front ‘sit in front’

On the other hand, where the onset consonant is non-bilabial, the surface form of the syllable-final N is always [m] after the nasalized [ã]. Interestingly, the bilabial constraint is so strong to the extent that consonant sounds that have labial coloring such as labio-dental /f/ and labial-velar /kp, gb/, are treated the same way as other consonants which have no labial feature; for instance, /t d k g r/, as seen in the list in (40a-l).

(40)

(a) *[tấ] # [íkúsájé]* → *[tầ**m** íkúsájé]*
chew groundnut ‘chew grounduts

(b) *[tấ] # [ɔ́sá]* → *[tầ**m** ɔ́sá]*
chew chewing stick ‘chew a chewing stick’

(c) *[àdã] # [àjɛ]* → *[àdã**m** **á**jɛ]*
chair DEF.SG ‘the chair’

(d) *[ádấ] # [ɔ̀bɛ̃]* → *[ádấ**m** **ɔ́bɛ̀**]*
curse INDEF.SG ‘a curse’

(e) *[fấ] # [ógbé]* → *[fấ**m** ógbé]*
save child ‘save a child’

(f) *[àkã̀] # [épɛ́]* → *[àkã̀**m** ɛ̀pɛ́]*
jaw hair ‘beard’

(g) *[gɑ́] # [óbĩ́]* → *[gɑ̀**m** óbĩ]*
greet king ‘greet the king’

(h) *[gɑ́] # [ìwe]* → *[gɑ̀**m** íwe]*
read book ‘read a book’

(i) *[kpɑ̀] # [útʃé]* → *[kpɑ̀**m** útʃé]*
to lift burden ‘lift a burden’

(i) *[kpɑ́] # [íwú]* → *[kpɑ́**m** íwú]*
scratch body ‘scratch one’s body’

(j) *[égbɑ́] + [òtʃìʃã]* → *[égbɑ́**m** ótʃìtʃã]*
chest broadness ‘broad chest’

(l) *[àrɑ́] # [àjɛ]* → *[àrɑ́**m** ájɛ]*
smoke DEF.SG ‘the smoke’

It is clear that the distribution of the syllable-final N across morpheme boundaries in Ọ̀kọ is predictable. This can be summarized as follows: N is realized as [n] after [– back] nasalized vowels [ĩ ẽ ɛ̃] (cf. 36a-e). Also, N can be realized as [n] after the nasalized [ã]; however, the onset consonant of the syllable must be bilabial (cf. 39a-d). Furthermore, N is realized as [n] after [+back] vowels, but the onset consonant of the syllable must be bilabial (cf. 38a-c). On the other hand, N is realized as [m] after [+ back] nasalized vowels, with the condition that the onset consonant must be non-bilabial (cf. 37a-d). Finally, N is realized as [m] after [ã], provided that the onset consonant of the syllable is non-bilabial (cf. 40a-l).

It is also clear that the language prohibits the occurrence of the bilabial variant of the syllable-final N (i.e., [m]) in the same syllable that contains a bilabial onset consonant. Some unacceptable forms are shown in (41a-d), closely followed by the acceptable forms.

(41)

(a)	*[úmű] # [èbɛ̀]*	→	**[úmű**m** ébɛ̀]* →	*[úmű**n** ébɛ̀]*
	goat INDF.PL		'some goats'	
(b)	*[ámő] # [àjɛ]*	→	**[ámő**m** ájɛ]* →	*[ámő**n** ájɛ]*
	oil DEF.SG		'the oil'	
(c)	*[épấ] + [ófú]*	→	**[épấ**m**ófú]* →	*[épấ**n**ófú]*
	head bone		'skull'	
(d)	*[ŋwấ] # [úwó]*	→	**[ŋwấ**m** úwó]* →	*[ŋwấ**n** úwó]*
	kill dog		'kill a dog'	

2.6.5 Nasalization and spelling rules in Ọ̀kọ

Since words are used more in connected speech than in isolation, for consistency, I propose that the form of a word that occurs in connected speech should be adopted as the accepted spelling. This implies that words which have the [m] variant of the syllable-final N should be spelt with an */m/* whether in isolation or in connected speech. The same rule also applies to words with the [n] variant. This is exemplified in (42).

(42)

n-final words	**gloss**	**m-final words**	**gloss**
ányẹ́n	'eye'	*útúm*	'work'
òrínrin	'black'	*árọ́m*	'wealth'
ọ̀nyànyàn	'red'	*ọ́tọ́m*	'ear'
úmún	'goat'	*úrórum*	'morning'
nwán	'to kill'	*tám*	'to chew'

cín	'to ask'	*fóm*	'to pound'
mán	'to sit'	*fọ́m*	'to enter/board'
íkén	'town'	*kpám*	'to lift'

By this proposal, native speakers whose goal it is to be literate in the language and others intending to study or use the language will only need to have in mind that certain words are written with /n/ final, while some others are written with /m/ final.

2.7 Orthography

From chapter four of this work to the end, I make use of my proposed orthography for Ọ̀kọ to show examples in the language. Ọ̀kọ is a language without a working orthography. Although some educated members of the Ọ̀kọ speaking communities have at one time or the other proposed an orthography for the language, for example, Akerejola (1971) and Adegbija (1993), none of their proposals have been duly given much recognition due to several factors out of which I will mention two.

i. Lack of literacy in the language, Ọ̀kọ is not been taught in schools and it is not even a language of instruction.

ii. The language has not been fully documented; hence, there has not been a proper avenue through which the proposed orthographies can be experimented.

In my quest for a practical orthography for Ọ̀kọ, especially one that I can work with in my documentation efforts, I have considered a couple of factors before arriving at an orthography that is practicable.

i. Native speakers' preference: A good orthography should represent all and only the significant sounds in the language (Bamgbose 1976:1). However true this statement may be, sometimes, the linguist may be forced to bend backwards in order to accommodate native speakers' opinion in the choice of an acceptable orthography. I have included *nw* and *ny* in the orthography of Ọ̀kọ even though they are merely allophones of their corresponding oral consonants /w/ and /j/ respectively (see discussion under §2.4.7). This decision is based on my interactions with

some members of the communities. For instance, native speakers prefer the forms in B to those in A in (43).

43.

Phonetic form	Orthography A	Orthography B	Gloss
[áɲɛ́]	*áyẹ́n*	*ányẹ́n*	‘eye’
[ɔ̀ɲã̀ɲà]	*ọ̀yànyàn*	*ọ̀nyànyàn*	‘red’
[ŋʷá́]	*wán*	*nwán*	‘to kill’
[ɔŋʷɛ̌]	*ọwěn*	*ọnwẹ̌n*	‘bow’

ii. Familiarity: The orthography which I propose for Ọ̀kọ is one which is closest to the one which native speakers are familiar with, especially, the orthography of the Yorùbá language. Yorùbá is the second language in the Ọ̀kọ speaking communities. And As long as Ọ̀kọ speakers can remember, they have been reading and writing Yorùbá due to their Christian orientation which is as a result of the influence of early Yorùbá Christian missionaries. The major points in the carry-over from the Yorùbá orthography are: First, the use of sub-dots to differentiate between letters that are similar, for example, to differentiate between [o] o and [ɔ] ọ, and between [e] e and [ɛ] ẹ. Secondly, there is the adoption of the Yorùbá tone marking convention for Ọ̀kọ. Ọ̀kọ, like Yorùbá has three level tones: High, Low and Mid. The High tone is marked with an acute accent [́] on a tone-bearing segment, the Low tone is marked with a grave accent [̀], while the mid tone is unmarked [ ].

iii. Consistency: This is a very important principle which I considered in the choice of an orthography for Ọ̀kọ. In section 2.6.5, I discussed the role of nasalization in the determination of spelling rules in Ọ̀kọ. I posit that how a word is spelt in connected speech or in discourse should be the same way it should be spelt in isolation.

Furthermore on consistency, there is the case of the affricate sound /ʧ/, and its allophone variant, the fricative [ʃ]. Both sounds as I have mentioned earlier in section 2.4.4 are used in free variation, and have

been included in the alphabet of the language, where /ʧ/ corresponds to *c* and [ʃ] corresponds to ṣ. The [ʃ] sound is a Yorùbá influence on Ọ̀kọ. Yorùbá lacks the affricate /ʧ/.

[ʃ] in Ọ̀kọ is found in some borrowed words from Yorùbá (cf. 44). The variations in the form of each word are shown in the examples. The tone distribution in Ọ̀kọ *cẹ̀lẹ̀/ṣẹ̀lẹ̀* (cf. 44a) differentiates it from Yorùbá *ṣẹlẹ̀* 'to happen', while the tone distribution in *ṣẹ̀ṣè* 'just (recentness)' in Ọ̀kọ (44b) is the same as in Yorùbá.

(44)

	Phonetic form	Orthography	Orthography	Gloss
(a)	*[ʧɛlɛ]/ [ʃɛlɛ]*	*cẹ̀lẹ̀*	*ṣẹ̀lẹ̀*	'to happen'
(b)	*[ʧɛ̀ʧɛ̀]/ [ʃɛ̀ʃɛ̀]*	*cẹ̀cẹ̀*	*ṣẹ̀ṣè*	'just/recent'

However, for consistency sake, in all the examples in this grammar, I have represented all instantiations of both sounds (i.e, [ʧ] and [ʃ]) as /ʧ/ or *c*, regardless of whether the native speaker produced [ʧ] or [ʃ] during an interview session.

2.7.1 **Converting phonetic symbols to orthographic symbols**

2.7.1.A **Consonant sounds with non-special symbols**

m n p b t d k g kp gb f v s h r l w

2.7.1.B **Vowel sound with non-special symbols**

i e a o u

2.7.1.C **Consonant sounds with special symbols**

IPA	Orthography
[ʧ]	c
[ʃ]	ṣ
[ɲ]	ny
[ŋ^{w}]	nw
[ʤ]	j

[j]	y

2.7.1.D **Vowel sounds with special symbols**

IPA	Orthography
[ɛ]	ẹ
[ɔ]	ọ

2.7.2 **An alphabet for Ọ̀kọ**

A B C D E Ẹ F G Gb H I J K L M N Nw Ny O Ọ P Kp R S Ṣ T U V W Y

a b c d e ẹ f g gb h i j k l m n nw ny o ọ p kp r s ṣ t u v w y

Chapter 3
Phonotactics and phonological processes

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, which is a sequel to the previous one, I examine the most important properties of sound patterns in Ọ̀kọ. I describe the phonotactics and some phonological processes in the language. This chapter also includes a detailed discussion of vowel harmony and an examination of the tone system of Ọ̀kọ.

Like in the previous chapter, I make use of IPA symbols in the presentation of language examples in this chapter, the only exception is the use of the archiphoneme N to indicate the syllable-final N. Items which are enclosed within slanting lines / / represent a phonemic transcription, while items within square brackets [ ] indicate a phonetic transcription.

3.2 Phonotactics

At the surface level, Ọ̀kọ has two syllable types: V and CV. However, at the underlying level, Ọ̀kọ has three syllable types: V, CV, CVN. The following examples show their distribution.

(1)

V – structure

[ɛ́.pā́]	V.CV	‘head’
[à.kā̀]	V.CV	‘chin’
[ɛ́.bá]	V.CV	‘breast’
[é.ɲṍ]	V.CV	‘palm wine’
[ú.bó]	V.CV	‘house’
[ò.mu]	V.CV	‘hat/cap’
[ɔ́.sɔ́]	V.CV	‘light’
[í.dí]	V.CV	‘beans’

(2)

CV – structure

[fó]	CV	‘to die’
[wá]	CV	‘to drink’
[ʤé]	CV	‘to eat’
[ʧá]	CV	‘to come’
[sɛ́]	CV	‘to catch’
[wú]	CV	‘to close’
[rí]	CV	‘to cover’

(3)

CVN – structure

/táN/	CVN	‘to chew’
/kpáN/	CVN	‘to lift’
/ŋ^{w}áN/	CVN	‘to kill’
/ó.gbéN/	V.CVN	‘child’
/ɛ́.páN	V.CVN	‘head’
/ó.bíN/	V.CVN	‘king’
/ú.túN.ɛ.fà/	V.CVN.V.CV	‘workplace’
/ú.fɔ́N.bɔ̀.rɛ̀/	V.CVN.CV.CV	‘seven’
/ò.ké.kɛ́N.gbèN/	V.CV.CVN.CV	‘scorpion’

The following statements can be made on the nature of the syllable in Ọ̀kọ:

i. Phonologically, there are no consonant clusters in Ọ̀kọ syllables. That is, /CC/ structures are not permitted. However, [CC] may be permitted where the second [C] is a glide, namely, [j] or [w]. Hence, [Cj] or [Cw] (cf. 4).

(4)

/síárɛ̀/	*[sjárɛ̀]*	‘to play’
/éfúá/	*[éfwá]*	‘saliva’

ii. All syllables must end in V, except for syllables with vN sequence.

iii. Syllabic nasals are almost not attested in Ọ̀kọ. The only one found in the language is the syllabic velar nasal [ŋ], attested only in two separate loanwords *[ɛ̀kã̀ŋ̀ga]*, from Yoruba *[kɔ̃̀ŋ̀ga]* 'well' and *[ɔ̀kã̀ŋ̀ga],* from Ebira *[ì̀kã̀ŋ̀ga]* 'drum'.

3.3 Syllable structure processes

Syllable structure processes affect the relative distribution of consonants and vowels within the syllable. Consonants and vowels may be deleted or inserted, and two segments may coalesce into a segment. Furthermore, it is also possible for a segment to change its features, such as a vowel becoming a glide. Any of these processes are capable of causing an alternation in the underlying syllable structure of a language.

The following syllable structure processes have been identified in Ọ̀kọ.

3.3.1 Vowel elision

Vowel elision in Ọ̀kọ involves the deletion of the first of two contiguous oral vowels separated either by a morpheme or a word boundary. This process is highly predictable in the language because it is always the first of two oral vowels in such environment that is elided.

A typical example is found in the interaction between a transitive verb stem and its full-NP complement. The verbs + objects in (5) are not compounds because they do not have a non-compositional meaning.

(5)

	Verb root	**Noun**		
(a)	*/jé/*	*/íwó/*	→	*[jíwo]*
	to call	lamentation		'to cry'
(b)	*/ʤé/*	*/iʤẽ/*	→	*[ʤíʤẽ]*
	to eat	food		'to eat'
(c)	*/fɔ̀ra/*	*/ébí/*	→	*[fɔ̀rébí]*
	to wash	water		'to bathe'

(d)	*/jé/*	*/ɔ́gà/*	→	*[jɔ́gà]*
	to call	noise		‘to shout’
(e)	*/tíé/*	*/égúrù/*	→	*[tjégúrù]*
	to take	song		‘to sing’
(f)	*/jɔ́/*	*/ájɔ́/*	→	*[jájɔ́]*
	to dance	dance		‘to dance’

Similarly, vowel elision processes also occur in the formation of nominal compounds. And as it is always the case, it is the first of two contiguous oral vowels at word boundary that is elided (cf. 6).

(6)

	Noun root	**Noun root**		**Compound**
(a)	*/ábárɛ̀/*	*/ófú/*	→	*[ábárɔ̀fu]*
	back	bone		‘spine’
(b)	*/ɔ̀file/*	*/ɔ́tʃɛ́̃/*	→	*[ɔ̀fĩlɔ́tʃɛ̃]*
	AGT.wear	leg		footwear
(c)	*/íwú/*	*/ogbigbẽ/*	→	*[íwógbigbẽ]*
	body	strength		health

The examples above reveal that whenever $\mathbf{V_1 + V_2}$ occur at morpheme boundary, $\mathbf{V_1}$ is elided; this results in a reduction in the number of syllables.

Furthermore, vowel elision also occurs with the question marker *í-* (7a), the locative marker *í-* (7b), and the negative marker *è-* (7c). In these cases, only the tone remains, thus giving rise to the appearance of a grammatical tone distinction (see §3.5.2.2 for a detailed discussion).

(7)

(a)	*/í-àde uùwó fó kè/*		→	*[áde uùwó fó kè ?]*
	QM-Ade POSS.dog die PERF			'Has Ade's dog died?'
(b)	*/í-ùgbègbẽ/*		→	*[úgbègbɛ̃̀]*
	LOC-mirror			'in the mirror'
(c)	*/è-è-éke-bue/*		→	*[e-èke-bwe]*
	'3SG.S-NEG-FUT-sleep.'			'He will not sleep.'

3.3.2 **Insertion**

Segment insertion in Ọ̀kọ mainly involves vowels. However, consonant insertion is also attested in a few words, especially numerals. This is discussed in 3.3.2.B.

3.3.2.A **Vowel insertion**

Vowel insertion processes in Ọ̀kọ are mainly used in the phonological adaptation of loanwords in the language. The insertion process may be prothetic. That is, due to a syllable structure constraint on nouns, which prevents consonant-initial nouns in the language, a word-initial vowel is always introduced in order to prevent a CV(CV)*(N) structure. Such is the case when loanwords are borrowed from a neighbouring language such as Yorùbá, in which consonant-initial nouns are permitted.

(8)

(a)	**Yoruba**	**Ọ̀kọ**	**Gloss**
	[músù]	*[ímúsú]*	'cat'
	[sísì]	*[ísísí]*	'penny'
	[kpósí]	*[íkpósí]*	'coffin'
	[ʤésù]	*[íʤésú]*	'Jesus'
	[tòlótòló]	*[ìtòlótòló]*	'turkey'

(b)

[bɔ̀kɔ̀tɔ́ɔ̀]	*[ɛ̀bɔ̀kɔ̀tɔ́ɔ̀]*	‘kind of meat (cows’ legs)
[kɔ̃̀ŋga]	*[ɛ̀kã̀ŋga]*	‘well’
[kpɛ́kpéjɛ]	*[ɛ̀kpɛ́kpéjɛ]*	‘duck’

Furthermore, vowel insertion in Ọ̀kọ may also be epenthetic; where an extraneous vowel is introduced to prevent consonant clusters or paragogic, where a vowel is introduced in order to prevent a consonant-final noun. All three types of vowel insertion, namely, prothetic, epenthetic and paragogic are attested in some loanwords from English that have been adapted into Ọ̀kọ.

(9)

a.	**English**	**Ọ̀kọ**	**Gloss**
	[bʌkɪt]	*[ìbókítì]*	‘bucket’
	[frɪʤ]	*[ìfíríʤì]*	‘refrigerator’
	[baɪbl]	*[ìbíbélì]*	‘bible’
	[tiːʧə]	*[ítítʧá]*	‘teacher’
b.	*[taʊəl]*	***[ɛ̀-tɔ́wɛ́lì]***	‘towel’
	[fæn]	***[ɛ́-fánù]***	‘fan’
	[ʃɒp]	***[ɛ́-ʃɔ́bù]***	‘shop’
	[draɪvə]	***[ɛ̀-dɛ́ráívà]***	‘driver’

In (8) and (9), it is clear that the prothetic vowel alternates between *i-* and *ɛ-*. The choice between them is based on vowel harmony rules. The prothetic *i-* is prefixed to noun stems that have a [+ATR] vowel in the adjacent syllable, while the prothetic *ɛ-* is bound to noun stems that have a [– ATR] vowel in the adjacent syllable.

One notes however that the vowel harmony alternation is between [+ATR] /i/ and [– ATR] /ɛ/, and not between [+ATR] /e/ and [– ATR] /ɛ/, even though both are perceived as closer to each other on the vowel scale than /i/ is to /ɛ/. This gives the impression that both /i/ and /ɛ/,

are related by vowel harmony, where /ɛ/ is the [– ATR] variant of /i/ (see also §3.4).

The consequence of the insertion process as a syllable structure process in Ọ̀kọ is that it increases the number of syllables in a word. This is because additional nuclei are introduced through vowel insertion processes.

3.3.2.B **Consonant insertion**

Consonant insertion in Ọ̀kọ has been attested in two numerals, namely, the numerals *ɔ̀pɔ́nɔ̀ɔ́rɛ* '6' and *úfɔ̃́mbɔ̀rɛ̀* 'seven'. The formation of *ɔ̀pɔ́nɔ̀ɔ́rɛ* '6' involves a combination of the roots *ùpi* 'five' and *ɔ̀ɔ́rɛ* 'one', and a couple of phonological modifications such as the leftward spread of vowel quality of */ɔ/*, and an *-n-* insertion. Similarly, the formation of the numeral *úfɔ̃́mbɔ̀rɛ̀* '7' involves the combination of *ùpi* 'five' and *ẹbọ̀rẹ̀* 'two'. There is a spirantization process where /p/ becomes fricativized by becoming /f/, and an insertion of *-m-* (see also chapter 12).

3.3.3 **Glide formation**

A glide is a sound produced as a vowel but with the distributional properties of a consonant. Glides are also referred to as 'semi-vowels'. In the production of the glides /j/ and /w/ the vocal tract is slightly narrower than for the vowels /i/ and /u/ respectively.

Glide formation in Ọ̀kọ is usually triggered by either the high front unrounded vowel /i/ or by its high back rounded counterpart /u/ when either of them is followed by a non-high vowel. There is a quick movement from a high vowel position to a lower vowel. Like in the standard tradition, glide sounds in Ọ̀kọ are the palatal glide [j] (cf. 10), and the labial-velar glide [w] (cf. 11).

Example

	/i/	→	**[j]**
(10)			
	/tíégúrù/	→	*[tjégúrù]*	‘to sing’
	/síárɛ̀/	→	*[sjárɛ̀]*	‘to play’
	/tíé/	→	*[tjé]*	‘to choose/take’
	/síútűN/	→	*[sjútű]*	‘to work’
	/u/	→	**[w]**
(11)			
	/éfúá/	→	*[éfwá]*	‘saliva’
	/búé/	→	*[bwé]*	‘to sleep’
	/gúé/	→	*[gwɛ́]*	‘to grow’
	/kúé/	→	*[kwɛ́]*	‘to finish’

The glide segments [j] and [w] are allophonic variants of their respective high vowels /i/, /u/. Apart from been contextual variants, there is also a restriction on the type of consonant with which they can cooccur. They can only occur after an obstruent; for example, after the following plosives [t k b g] and after the fricatives [s f]. The glide [j] occurs only after coronal consonants, [t s], while [w] occurs only after noncoronal consonants, [f k b g].

Glide formation processes reduce the number of syllables contained in a word. This is because when a vowel segment is desyllabified by becoming a glide, it automatically becomes a non-syllabic segment.

By comparison, for other monomorphemic words which also have the VV-sequence, the difference between them and the glide-forming VV is that, in the case of the former, both Vs are always identical vowels, and they can occur in both word-initial and word-final positions. Whenever they occur at word-final position, the second V is always nasalized. Also, both vowels are the nucleus of their respective syllables. Finally, unlike in the case of the glide-forming VV, where the tone on the first V always

spreads to the following V, in the case of the identical VV, both Vs always have contrasting tones (cf. 12).

(12)	*/oòro/*	→	*[oòro]*	'wife'
	/ɔ̀ɔ́na/	→	*[ɔ̀ɔ́na]*	'which'
	/ɔ̀ɔ́rɛ/	→	*[ɔ̀ɔ́rɛ]*	'one'
	/eèkpóró/	→	*[eèkpóró]*	'corpse'
	/aàrā́N/	→	*[aàrā́*]	'smoke'
	/ɔŋwèɛ́N/	→	*[ɔŋwèɛ́]*	'bow'
	/ɛgbàā́N/	→	*[ɛgbàā́]*	'chest'
	[otʃṵ̌N]	→	*[otʃṵ̌]*	'tail'

3.3.4 **Vowel coalescence**

Coalescence is the merging of linguistic units which were originally distinguishable. Coalescence in Ọ̀kọ always involves vowels and never consonants. Vowel coalescence in Ọ̀kọ is also a syllable structure process. The process is not wide spread in the language (as there are very few examples of vowel sounds that undergo this process). It is also unproductive, compared with the other syllable structure processes that have earlier been discussed.

Vowel coalescence in Ọ̀kọ occurs only at morpheme boundary, and it involves two contiguous oral vowels fusing into a different vowel to which none of the original two are directly related in terms of vowel quality. For instance, V_1 and V_2 coalesce into V_3.

i. /a/ + /o/ → /u/

(13)	*[ɔ́na]*	+ *[ókpé]*	→	*[ɔ́nukpe]*
	cow	male		'bull'

ii. /ɔ/ + /o/ → /u/

(14)	*[ɔ̀kɔ]*	+ *[óró]*	→	*[ɔ̀kúró]*
	language	person		'an Ogori indigene'

iii. /ɛ/ + /ɛ/ → /ɔ/

(15) *[karɛ]* + *[ɛ̀fɔ]* → *karɔ̀fɔ*
surpass ten 'to surpass by ten'
(e.g. *ɔ́gbɔlɔkakarɔ̀fɔ* twenty surpassed by ten 'thirty')

Because of the scarcity of data that exemplify the coalescence process in Ọ̀kọ, I cannot give a specific statement on the environment that yields a particular coalescing pattern. However, from the available data, it appears that the product of a coalescing process is usually a back rounded vowel, even in an environment where two [– round] [– back] vowels occur, for instance in (15) above.

3.3.5 **Assimilation**

Assimilation is the modification of a sound in order to make it more similar to another sound in its neighbourhood. Basically, there are two types of assimilation across languages. In progressive assimilation (also known as perseverative), a sound is modified so that it becomes like the sound that precedes it, and in regressive (or anticipatory) assimilation, a sound becomes more like the sound that follows it.

Assimilation in Ọ̀kọ is always regressive. There are both consonant and vowel assimilation in Ọ̀kọ.

3.3.5.A **Vowel assimilation**

Vowel assimilation in Ọ̀kọ involves two oral vowels occurring in a contiguous relationship at word or morpheme boundaries. The first of two vowels completely takes on the features of the following vowel. Schematically, this can be explained as below:

$V_1 \rightarrow V_2$ /---- V_2

(16) */ɛ́dá/ # / úbó/* → *[ɛ́dúùbó]*
termite house termitarium

The process of vowel assimilation in Ọ̀kọ is not wide spread in word or compound structures; rather, it occurs more in verb phrases, which involves a verb and a following noun object.

(17)

(a)	*/mɛ́/ # /úbó/*		→	*[mú úbó]*
	to build	house		'build a house'
(b)	*/wó/ # /èsa/*		→	*[wɛ́ èsa]*
	to weave	cloth		'weave a cloth'
(c)	*/wɔ́rɛ́/ # /ìwe/*		→	*[wɔ̀rí ìwe]*
	to write	book		'writer a book'

Vowel assimilation is also attested in constructions where the 3rd person singular object pronoun *-ɛ* (see also §7.2.4) occurs contiguously with the non-round vowel /a/ or /e/ of the verb root (cf. 18a, b).

(18)

(a)	*[ɛ̀-gbɛ́-ɛ́]*	(b)	*[ì-bìlɛ-ɛ]*
	1SG.S-see-3SG.O		1SG-mix-3SG.O
	'I saw him/her/ it.'		'I mixed it.'

Examples (18a, b) are exact representations of normal utterances in Ọ̀kọ. The point to be noted from the examples is that the citation forms of the verbs, 'to see' *gbá* and 'to mix' *bìle* do not surface. This is always the case when the 3rd person singular object pronoun occurs as the object of a verb. Vowel assimilation rule at word boundary is applied and the vowel of the verb root is always the victim of the process. However, the underlying form of the verbs can be identified when the object of the verb is a consonant-initial pronoun. For example, (19a, b)

(19)

(a)	*[è-gbá-wɔ́]*	(b)	*[ì-bìle-ba]*
	1SG.S-see-2SG.O		1SG.S-mix-3PL.O
	'I saw you.'		'I mixed them.'

From examples (19a, b), it is clear that where the object of a verb has a CV structure, the initial consonant is capable of blocking vowel assimilation.

3.3.5.B **Consonant assimilation**

Consonant assimilation in Ọ̀kọ is mainly homorganic. It involves a syllable-final N at morpheme boundary and a following plosive.

(20)

/úfɔ̃́Nbɔ̀rɛ̀]	→	*[úfɔ̃́mbɔ̀rɛ̀]*	'seven'
/ɔ̀kékɛ́́Ngbɛ̀/	→	*[ɔ̀kékɛ́́ŋgbɛ̀]*	'scorpion'
/ɛ̀kɑ̃̀Nga/	→	*[ɛ̀kɑ̃̀ŋga]*	'well'
/ɔ̀kɑ̃̀Nga/	→	*[ɔ̀kɑ̃̀ŋga]*	'drum'

The N-coda assimilates the place feature of the following consonant. /N/ becomes [m] before the labial plosive /b/, while before the velar plosives /gb/ and /g/, it is realized as [ŋ].

3.4 **Vowel harmony**

The term vowel harmony is used to describe a restriction on a set of vowels possible within a given phonological domain, typically the word. The operation of vowel harmony in Ọ̀kọ covers a larger domain than merely the lexical word. The extent of its operation is defined as a phonological domain which includes the lexical word and its bound affixes and clitics. Bound elements comprise bound pronouns and verbal affixes. The form of these elements in a given construction is determined by the harmonic relationship which holds between them and the root to which they are bound.

Greenberg (1963) and Ladefoged (1964) categorize vowel harmony systems in West African languages into two, namely, 'complete' and 'incomplete' vowel harmony systems. The complete systems are generally those of languages of a phonetic inventory of nine or ten vowels, divided into two more or less parallel mutually exclusive sets, distinguished by a phonetic feature.

Table 3: Example of a complete harmony set:

| | | |

relationship in the language is the feature [ATR] (Advanced Tongue Root). The dividing line is between vowels that are produced with the advanced tongue root and those produced with the retracted tongue root.

Vowel harmony patterns in Ọ̀kọ are basically of two types. The first is morpheme-internal harmony, while the second is vowel harmony alternations.

3.4.1 Morpheme-internal harmony

There is a restriction on vowel cooccurrence within a morpheme, based on ATR harmony. Within a morpheme, the [+ATR] mid vowels /e o /, including their nasalized variant [ẽ õ] can cooccur with each other in adjacent syllables to the exclusion of the [–ATR] /ɛ ɔ / and [ɛ̃ ɔ̃], and vice-versa. A violation of harmony rules leads to impossible morphemes. In the set of examples (21), (22), the correct forms are listed to the left, and the asterisked forms which are listed to the right are not possible in the language. The reason is the disharmony among the mid vowels in the morpheme.

(21)

/e o/		
[ókpé]	'male'	**[ókpɛ́]*
[ógbẽ́]	'child'	**[ógbɛ̃́]*
[ówokpe]	'lip'	**[ówokpɛ]*
[bógbẽ]	'to give birth'	**[bɔ́gbẽ]*

(22)

/ɛ ɔ/		
[ɛ́kpɔkpɔ]	'pepper'	**[ékpɔkpɔ]*
[ɛ́ŋwɔ̃tɔ̃]	'bee'	**[eŋwɔ̃tɔ̃]*
[fɔ́rɛ́]	'to surpass'	**[fɔ́rɛ́]*
[tɔ̀mɛ]	'to stoop'	**[tɔ̀mɛ]*

On the other hand, the high vowels /i u/ and the low vowel /a/ are neutral when they occur within a morpheme (23). That is, under morpheme-internal vowel harmony, the neutral vowels are capable of cooccurring with the mid vowels and with each other.

(23)

/i u a/

[íhúrù]	'name'	*[àbùnénɛ]*	'armpit'
[íkíbà]	'money'	*[èkúrákpà]*	'maize'
[òsìbìna]	'God'	*[òtìrìbà]*	'baobab'
[úgbíjà]	'leopard'	*[ìwùnùgbɛ̀]*	'wasp'
[íkúsájé]	'groundnut'	*[úrémá]*	'dawn'

3.4.2 **Vowel harmony alternations**

ATR vowel harmony in Ọ̀kọ also involves alternations between vowels with respect to their harmony class. This process is highly pervasive in the language as it cuts across the morphological domain, in word derivation and in word inflection.

3.4.2.A **Singular/plural distinction**

The singular/plural distinction in Ọ̀kọ is only realized on human nouns, two body part nouns ('hand' and 'leg'), and on only two nouns referring to animals ('animal' and 'monkey'). Each of the nouns with this distinction has either the [+ATR] *o-* singular prefix for noun roots which have a [+ATR] vowel in the adjacent syllable, or the [– ATR] *ɔ-* singular prefix for noun roots which have a [– ATR] vowel in the adjacent syllable. The plural prefix for [+ATR] roots has two alternants *e*~*i* which are arbitrarily fixed, as there are no clear-cut phonological or semantic groupings that separate nouns under the /e-/ group from nouns under the *i-* group. On the other hand, the plural prefix for [– ATR] roots is the invariable [– ATR] *ɛ-*.

+ATR

o / i Group

(24)

Singular		**Plural**
[o-fòro]	'man'	*[i-fòro]*
[o-òró]	'wife'	*[i-òró]*
[o-jègbẽ]	'damsel'	*[i-jègbẽ]*
[ó-via]	'bride'	*[í-via]*
[ó-bĩ́]	'king'	*[í-bĩ́]*

o / e Group

(25)

[ó-gbḗ]	'child'	*[é-gbḗ]*
[ò-ròkòrò]	'human being'	*[è-ròkòrò]*
[ó-ró]	'person'	*[é-ró]*
[ó-jírì]	'thief'	*[é-jírì]*
[ó-gbḗnofòro]	'boy'	*[é-gbḗnofòro]*

– ATR

ɔ / ɛ Group

(26)

Singular		**Plural**
[ɔ́-rɛ́]	'friend'	*[ɛ́-rɛ́]*
[ɔ́-gá]	'visitor'	*[ɛ́-gá]*
[ɔ-ja]	'lesser chief'	*[ɛ-ja]*
[ɔ-kɛ̀kárɔ́]	'higher chief'	*[ɛ-kɛ̀kárɔ́]*

Nominal adjectives in Ọ̀kọ are a subset of human nouns. They, like human nouns, show a distinction between singular and plural forms. They also take the **o-** singular prefix for roots which have a [+ATR] vowel in the adjacent syllable, and the **ɔ-** singular prefix for roots which have a [–ATR] vowel in the adjacent syllable. However, the difference is that unlike in human nouns where the [+ATR] plural prefix has two variants,

namely, *e~i*, the plural prefix for [+ATR] nominal adjectives is an invariable *i-;* while the [– ATR] plural prefix remains constant as ***ɛ-***.

+ATR

o → i Prefix

(27)

Singular		**Plural**
[ò-bòrò]	'good one'	*[ì-bòrò]*
[o-susu]	'old one'	*[i-susu]*
[ò-keke]	'small one'	*[ì-keke]*
[ó-búbá]	'remaining one'	*[í-búbá]*
[ó-bóbó]	'different one'	*[í-bóbó]*

[– ATR]

ɔ → ɛ Prefix

(28)

Singular		**Plural**
[ɔ-kɛ̀ka]	'great one'	*[ɛ-kɛ̀ka]*
[ɔ̀-jɛ́rɛ́]	'immediate junior'	*[ɛ̀-jɛ́rɛ́]*
[ɔ́-dá]	'younger one'	*[ɛ́-dá]*
[ɔ̀-bɛ̃̀]	'that one'	*[ɛ̀-bɛ̃̀]*

The few non-human nouns that also take singular/plural prefixes in Ọ̀kọ are two body part nouns:

(29)

singular		**plural**
[ɔ́-ʧɛ́̃]	'leg'	*[ɛ́-ʧɛ́̃]*
[ú-bá]	'hand'	*[ɛ́-bá]*

And two nouns referring to animals,

(30)

singular		**plural**
[ɔ́-nɛ́]	'animal'	*[ɛ́-nɛ́]*
[ɔ́-kɔ́rɛ́]	'monkey'	*[ɛ́-kɔ́rɛ́]*

Most of the nouns in this category (i.e. non-human nouns have the [–ATR] pre-root vowels *ɔ∼ɛ* in their singular and plural forms respectively. The only exception is *úbá* 'hand', which has a [+ATR] vowel *u-* pre-root in its singular form, while its plural pre-root is the [– ATR] *ɛ-*. The only possible explanation for this is to posit that historically, Ọ̀kọ had a nine vowel system. Evidence to support this claim is found in the Ọ́sáyẹ̀n dialect of Ọ̀kọ, where the non-expanded or [– ATR] high vowels /ɪ ʊ/, add to the seven in the standard variety. The *u-* singular pre-root in *ú-bá*, could historically be the non-expanded variant /ʊ/ since it alternates with the [–ATR] plural prefix *ɛ-*.

3.4.2.C P**erson forms**

The vowel harmony alternations determine the form which personal pronouns take in sentences. The vowels of verb roots determine the form of both subject and object pronouns. A verb root with [+ATR] vowel(s) takes subject and object pronouns that have [+ATR] vowel(s), and a verb root with [– ATR] vowel(s) select pronouns with [– ATR] vowel(s).

	+ATR Form		– ATR **Form**
(31)			
(a)	*[ì-té-wú]*	(b)	*[ɛ̀-gá-wɔ́]*
	1SG.S-teach-2SG.O		1SG.S-tell-2SG.O
	'I taught you.'		'I told you.'
(32)			
(a)	*[ù-dɪ́-tú]*	(b)	*[ɔ̀-gbá-tɔ́]*
	2SG.S-know-1PL.O		2PL.S-see-1PL.O
	'You know us.'		'You saw us.'

(33)

(a)	***[è-sú-mú]***	(b)	*[à-gbá-mɔ́]*
	3SG.S-marry-1SG.O		3SG.S-see-1SG.O
	‘S/He married me.’		‘S/He saw me.’

(34)

(a)	*[bì-ré-wú]*	(b)	*[bɛ̀-jɛ̀rɛ-wɔ]*
	3PL.S-hurt-2SG.O		3PL.S-follow-2SG.O
	‘They hurt you.’		‘They followed you.’

The following deductions can be made from the examples above. First, with respect to subject pronouns, each person has two alternating forms. The form of the 1st person singular alternates between *-i∼-ɛ*, the 2nd person singular form alternates between *-u∼-ɔ*, and the 3rd person singular, *-e∼-a*. Secondly, with respect to object pronouns, both the 1st and 2nd person object pronouns also have two alternants. The 1st person singular object alternates between *-mu∼-mɔ*, while the 2nd person has *-wu∼-wɔ* alternation. The choice of each of the alternating forms is determined by the ATR class of the vowel of the root. A root with a [+ATR] vowel selects a [+ATR] subject and object pronoun, while a root with [– ATR] vowel selects [– ATR] subject and object.

The only deviant to vowel harmony alternation in this respect is the 3rd person singular and plural object pronouns which do not participate in the process even though their subject counterparts do.
This is shown in (35) below:

(35)

(a)	*[è-ɗʒú-já]*	(b)	*[à-bɛ̀-ja]*
	3SG.S-close-3SG.O		3SG.S-beat-3SG.O
	‘S/He closed it.’		‘S/He beat him/her/it.’

(36)

(a)	[*è-lò-ɛ]*	(b)	*[à-jɛ̀rɛ-ja]*
	3SG.S-spend-3SG.O		3SG.S-follow-3SG.O
	‘S/He spent it.’		‘S/He followed him/her/it.’

(37)

(a)	*[è-ʧɪ́-já]*	(b)	*[à-gɑ́-já]*
	3SG.S-ask-3SG.O		3SG.S read 3SG.O
	‘S/He asked him/her.’		‘S/He read it.’

(38)

(a)	*[è-ré-bá]*	(b)	*[è-sú-bá]*
	3SG.S-hurt-3PL.O		3SG.S-marry-3PL.O
	‘it hurt them.’		‘S/He married them.’

The 3rd person singular object pronoun has two forms, *-ja*∼*-ɛ*; while the 3rd person plural object has an invariable form *-ba*, in all environments of its occurrence. Although the 3rd person singular object pronoun has two forms, none is arbitrarily fixed; rather, the choice of any is determined by the phonological environment in which it occurs. For instance, the *-ja* object occurs in the following environments:

i. After high vowels

(39)

(a)	*[è-ní-já]*	(b)	*[è-sú-já]*
	3SG.S-want-3SG.O		3SG.S-marry-3SG.O
	‘S/He wants it.’		‘S/He marry him/her.’

ii. After nasalized vowels

(40)

(a) *[ì-ʧǐ́-já]*
1SG.S-ask-3SG.O
'I asked him/her/it.'

(b) *[ɔ̀-gǎ́-já]*
2SG.S-read-3SG.O
'You read it.'

(c) *[ù-fǔ́-já]*
2SG.S-hit-3SG.O
'You hit him/her.'

(d) *[ɛ̀-rɛ̌́-já]*
1SG.S-slaughter-3SG.O
'I slaughtered it.'

(e) *[à-fɔ̌́-já]*
3SG.S-enter-3SG.O
'S/He entered it.'

(f) *[è-gbɛ̌́-já]*
3SG-resemble-3SG.O
'S/He resembles her/him.'

iii. And after the open-mid front vowel **/ɛ/**

(41)

(a) *[à-bɛ̀-ja]*
3SG.S-beat-3SG.O
'S/He beat it.'

(b) *[ɛ̀-jɛ̀rɛ-ja]*
1SG.S-follow-3SG.O
'I followed him/her.'

(c) *[ɛ̀-sɛ́-jà]*
1SG.S-catch-3SG.O
'I caught him/her/it.'

(d) *[àmɛ à-nɛ́-jà]*
1SG.I 3SG.S-give-3SG.O
'I was the one who gave him.'

On the other hand, the **-ɛ** form of the 3rd person object pronoun occurs elsewhere.

(42)

(a) *[ɔ̀-gbá-ɛ]*
2SG.S-see-3SG.O
'You saw her/him/it.'

(b) *[ì-lò-ɛ]*
1SG.S-spend-3SG.O
'I spent it.'

(c) *[è-jìre-ɛ]*
3SG.S-steal-3SG.O
'S/He stole it.'

(d) *[bɛ̀-fɔ̀-ɛ jɔ]*
3PL.S-carry-3SG.O go
'They carried him/her/it away.'

(e) *[à-dɔ́-ɛ́ édʒi]*
3SG.S-price-3SG.O LOC.market
'S/He priced it at the market.'

The 3rd person plural object pronoun has an invariable form, ***-ba***, which occurs in all environment.

(43)

(a) *[è-dɪ́-bá]*
3SG.S-know-3PL.O
'S/He/It knows them.'

(b) *[ɛ̀-gɑ́-bá]*
1SG.S-greet-3PL.O
'I greeted them.'

(c) *[à-jɛ̀rɛ-ba]*
3SG.S-follow-3PL.O
'S/He/It followed them.'

(d) *[ɔ̀-gbá-bá]*
2SG.S-see-3PL.O
'You saw them.'

(e) *[è-ré-bá]*
3SG.S-hurt-3PL.O
'S/He/It hurt them.'

(f) *[è-sú-bá]*
3SG.S-marry-3PL.O
'S/He married them.'

Further discussion on bound person forms in Ọ̀kọ can be found in sections (7.2.3) and (7.2.4).

3.4.2.D **Vowel harmony and tense aspect markers**

The future tense marker in Ọ̀kọ has two alternating forms, *éke* ~ *áka*. The choice of any of both in a given construction is dependent upon the phonological shape of the vowel of the verb root in its vicinity. The future tense marker, *éke-*, harmonizes with the [+ATR] vowel of the verb root to which it is bound (cf. 44a, b), while the [– ATR] future tense marker,

áka- harmonizes with the [– ATR] vowel of the verb root to which it is bound (cf. 44c, d).

(44)

(a) *[ɛ́kɔ́lá éke-ʤiʤɛ̃n ájɛ]*
Kola FUT-eat DEF.SG
'Kola will eat the food.'

(b) *[tì-íjá éke-wura amɔnɛ̀]*
1PL.POSS-mother FUT-arrive today
'Our mother will arrive today.'

(c) *[ìtolú áka-jɔ̀ úbó]*
tolu FUT-go house
'Tolu will go home.'

(d) *[tɛ̀-ɛdɛda áka-gā́m óbī́n úsíé]*
1PL.POSS-father FUT-greet king tomorrow
'Our father will greet the king tomorrow.'

The habitual aspect marker in Ọ̀kọ alternates between *dèkì* ~ *dàkɛ̀*. The *dèkì-* form is bound to a verb root which has a [+ATR] vowel in the adjacent syllable, while the *dàkɛ̀-* variant is bound to a verb root which has a [– ATR] vowel in the adjacent syllable (cf. 45a, b).

(45)

(a) *[ti-dèkì-lṵ̃m óhṹ ɔgbà fɛjã]*
1PL.S-HAB-cook soup time all
'We always cook soup.'

(d) *[àlùfá dàkɛ̀-wàásṵ̃n ísìsḯ]*
Pastor HAB-preach often
'The pastor preaches often.'

Also, in negation which involves negating declarative verbal main clauses, the form of the negative marker alternates between the [+ATR] *mè*, and the [– ATR] *mà*, both have a low tone (see §5.3.5.F; §16.2.1). The negative *mè*, which has a [+ATR] vowel harmonizes with a verb root with [+ATR] vowel(s), while the negative *mà*, harmonizes with a verb root with [– ATR] vowel(s).

In the examples that follow (46-49), pairs of sentences are presented; the first of each pair is affirmative, while the second is the negative counterpart.

(46)

(a) *[è-jìre íkíbà àjɛ]*
3SG.S-steal money DEF.SG
'S/He stole the money.'

(b) *[e-mè-jìre íkíbà àjɛ]*
3SG.S-NEG-steal money DEF.SG
'S/He did not steal the money.'

(47)

(a) *[ade sie útṹm ájɛ]*
Ade do work DEF.SG
'Ade did the job.'

(b) *[ade e-mè-sie útṹm ájɛ]*
Ade 3SG.S-NEG-do work DEF.SG
'Ade did not do the job.'

(48)

(a) *[èbɔ́lá wá ádɛ̀]*
Bola drink beer
'Bola drank beer.'

(b) *[ɛbɔla a-mà-wá ádɛ̀]*
Bola 3SG-NEG-drink beer
'Bola did not drink beer.'

(49)

(a) *[tè-ɲɪ́-jà tɛ-dà-tɑ́-jà]*
1PL.S-buy-3SG.O 1PL.S-REPT-eat-3SG.O
'We bought it and we ate it.'

(b) *[tè-ɲɪ́-jà àmá tɛ-mà-tɑ́-jà]*
1PL.S-buy-3SG.O but 1PL.S-NEG-eat-3SG.O
'We bought it but we did not eat it.'

Furthermore, in constructions in which qualitative verbs are used to describe noun phrases, such expressions can be negated by the use of the negative markers, *mè~mà*. However, like in the previous cases in which harmony relationship holds, the choice of any of the negative markers depends on the ATR status of the vowels of the adjacent following syllable of the qualitative verb (cf. 50-53).

(50)

(a) *[ídʒé jeji]*
ground dry
'The soil is dry.'

(b) *[ídʒé e-mè-jeji]*
ground 3SG.S-NEG-dry
'The soil in not dry.'

(51)

(a) *[è-ʧílé]*
3SG.S-strong
'It is strong.'

(b) *[e-mè-ʧílé]*
3SG-NEG-strong
'It is not strong.'

(52)

(a)	*[à-rɔ́múro]*	(b)	*[a-mà-rɔ́múro]*
	3SG.S-good		3SG.S-NEG-good
	‘It is good.’		‘It is not good.’

(53)

(a)	*[à-bɛrɛ]*	(b)	*[a-mà-bɛrɛ]*
	3SG.S-soft/easy		3SG.S NEG soft/easy
	‘It is soft/easy.’		‘It is not soft/easy.’

3.4.3 **Vowel harmony and opaque affixes**

Even though the process of vowel harmony is highly pervasive in the phonology of Ọ̀kọ, there are a few opaque affixes which do not participate in vowel harmony. In section 3.4.2.C, I show that the third person plural object pronoun does not participate in the rightward spread of vowel harmony. In this section I will also show that the agentive suffix *rò* is opaque to vowel harmony (cf. 54, 55).

(54)

/ébé-rò/	→	*[ébérò]*
opposition-AGT		‘An enemy/opponent’
/íkɛ́N-rò/	→	*[íkénrò]*
town-AGT		‘An urbanite’
/árédé-rò/	→	*[árédérò]*
marriage-AGT		‘A married couple’
/írómú-rò/	→	*[ìrómùrò]*
rome-AGT		‘A Catholic’
/érɯ́N-rò/	→	*[érɯ́rò]*
bush-AGT		‘An uncivilized person’

(55)

/ɔ́lɔ̃́N-rò/	→	*[ɔ́lɔ̃́rò]*
patience-AGT		'A patient or quiet person'
/étʃɛ̃́N-rò/	→	*[étʃɛ̃́rò]*
entertainment-AGT		'An entertainer (musician)'
/úbá-rò/	→	*[úbárò]*
debt-AGT		'A debtor'
/ɔrɔrɛ̀-rò/	→	*[ɔrɔrɛ̀rò]*
fear-AGT		'A fearful person'
[ádɛ̀-rò]	→	*[ádɛ́rò]*
beer-AGT		'A brewer/beer seller'

3.4.4 Vowel harmony alternations and abstract representation

Vowel harmony alternations in Ọ̀kọ may be succinctly summarized using the following abstract representation in the table below.

Table 5: Abstract representation of vowel harmony phonemes

Abstract phoneme		+ATR	–ATR
/ I /	→	[i]	[ɛ]
/ U /	→	[u]	[ɔ]
/ A /	→	[e]	[a]
/ O /	→	[o]	[ɔ]
/ E /	→	[e]	[ɛ]

3.5 Ọ̀kọ tone system

Tones are capable of performing lexical as well as grammatical functions in Ọ̀kọ. They carry a lexical load as they are used to contrast the meaning of a pair or a set of words that show the same segmental structure (see §3.5.2.1). On the other hand, clear cut grammatical tones do not exist in

the language. There are only grammatical tone-bearing segments which due to some phonological constraints on two contiguous oral vowels at morpheme boundary are deleted at some point in derivation. However, the deleted segment passes on its tone specification to the following tone-bearing segment, while the tone continues to perform the grammatical function of the deleted segment (see §3.5.2.2).

3.5.1 **Tone distribution and tone patterns**

There are three phonemic register tones in Ọ̀kọ: High, marked with the acute accent [ˊ]; Mid, which is unspecified throughout this work, hence [ ]; and Low, represented by the grave accent [ˋ]. Of the three level tones, the high tone is the least restricted in its realization. For instance, most verb roots in Ọ̀kọ are monosyllabic high tone verbs.

(56)

[gá]	'to say'	*[ɲɛ́]*	'to grind'	*[ní]*	'to want/like'
[rí]	'to cover'	*[ré]*	'to bury'	*[fí]*	'to roast'
[fṍ]	'to pound'	*[bá]*	'to beat'	*[bɛ́]*	'to beat
[hā́]	'to shave'	*[sú]*	'to have/marry	*[dɔ́]*	'to hunt'

Secondly, most bisyllabic nouns also have high tones. Below I give the distribution of tones and tone patterns across bisyllabic words.

3.5.1.A **The high tone**

The high tone is realized as a high tone in any position of a word, and can occur with another high tone. It can also be followed by either the low tone or the mid tone.

(57)

HH Pattern		**HL Pattern**		**HM Pattern**	
[ɛ́pā́]	'head'	*[jɔ́gà]*	'to shout'	*[bógbẽ]*	'to give birth'
[égī́]	'guinea corn'	*[ʤójà]*	'to suffer'	*[ɔ́na]*	'cow'
[ébí]	'water'	*[ádɛ̀]*	'beer'	*[jíwo]*	'to cry'

3.5.1.B **The low tone**

The low tone is realized as a low tone in any position in a word, and can occur with another low tone. It can also be followed by the high tone or the mid tone.

(58)

LL pattern		**LH pattern**		**LM pattern**	
[ìgbɛ̀]	'buttocks'	*[òbú]*	'salt'	*[ɛ̀ta]*	'three'
[ɔ̀rɛ̀]	'melon'	*[ɛ̀rɑ́]*	'yesterday'	*[àdã]*	'chair'
[ùgì]	'basket'	*[ɛ̀ná]*	'four'	*[jɛ̀rɛ]*	'to follow'

3.5.1.C **The mid tone**

The mid tone has some restrictions in its co-occurrence. In bisyllabic words, the mid tone can only be followed by another mid tone or by a low tone (cf. 59), but never by a high.

(59)

MM pattern

[ija]	'mother'	*[atɔ̃]*	'sand'	*[gbodi]*	'be big/fat'
[fura]	'do.away'	*[bɛbɛ]*	'to hide'	*[ʧile]*	'be strong'
[ɠese]	'to gather'	*[bɛrɛ]*	'be soft'	*[tɔrɛ]*	'taste (fetch using the tongue)[1]

(60)

ML pattern

[ɔgbà] 'time' *[akà]* 'and'

[onù] 'a collective name for the rest of the clans of Ogori, excluding Eni'

[1] This contrasts with when tasting is done by fetching the item with a finger, [pɛ̀rɛ]

3.5.1.D **Tone pattern on polysyllabic words**

There is no restriction on the type of tone that can occur in the first syllable of trisyllabic or polysyllabic words. The following patterns are present: HHH(H), LLL(L), MMM(M).

(61)

(a) **HHH(H)**

[ɔ́kpɔ́rá]	'cough'
[ésírí]	'darkness'
[íbúrú]	'cam wood'
[íkúsájé]	'groundnut'
[ífúrúfɔ́]	'800'
[ɛ̀kététɛ́]	'donkey'
[ɔ́tʃɛ́nɔ́bɛ́bɛ̀rɛ]	'toe'
[úkúbírù]	'family name'
[ókótórò]	'servant'
[ílékúkù]	'pigeon'

(b) LLL(L)

[àgbɛ̀rɛ̃̀]	'jaw'
[ɛ̀gɔ̀dɔ̀]	'throat'
[ìgòlòkò]	'uproar'
[òkùkùrù]	'white'
[òkùrùkpà]	'raw/unripe'
[òròkòrò]	'human'
[ɛ̀fɔ̀rɔ̀fɔ̀rɔ̀]	'lungs'
[àgʊ̃̀màbɔ̀]	'shoulder'

(c) **MMM(M)**

[emumu]	'leaf/book'
[ɛdɛdosuda]	'old man'
[ɛfwɛ̃fwɛ̃]	'spirit'
[ɔrikpokpo]	'road'
[fɛŋãfɛŋã]	'all-all'
[aligbegbe]	'pocket'
[ìlukutu]	'kidney'
[ɔ̀tʃɛnɛmɛ]	'herbalist'

With respect to tone combination across polysyllabic words, the mid tone is restricted. The mid tone can only be immediately followed by the low tone in polysyllabic words and never by the high tone (cf. 62). The high tone can only be realized after a preceding low tone (cf. 63).

(62)

MLM pattern		**MLH pattern**	
[ofòro]	‘man’	*[ewùrű]*	‘ashes’
[ɛpɛ̀pã]	‘rubbish heap’	*[ugùrű]*	‘monitor lizard’
[iwòma]	‘mosquito’	*[ajàjá]*	‘porcupine’
[egbìle]	‘okra’	*[ɔsɔ̀ná]*	‘cricket’
[eèdi]	‘a camp of people’	*[ìùmú]*	‘thunder’

(63)

MLHL		**MLHM**	
[ɔkɛ̀kárò]	‘high chief’	*[ekùréte]*	‘a bigger specie of a dove’

3.5.1.E **Tone patterns on loanwords**

When a borrowed noun becomes trisyllabic by vowel prothesis, the prothetic vowel takes a low tone, which is followed by two high tones in the following syllable (cf. 64).

(64)

Trisyllabic

[músù]	*[ì-músú]*	‘cat’
[sísì]	*[ì-sísí]*	‘penny’
[kpósí]	*[ì-kpósí]*	‘coffin’
[ʤésù]	*[ì-ʤésú]*	‘Jesus’
[tiːtʃə]	*[ì-tíʃá]*	‘teacher’

On the other hand, when the borrowed noun has four syllables, the prothetic vowel takes a low tone, which is also followed by a high tone (cf. 65). The only known exception are the four-syllable words *[ɛ̀-kã̀ŋga]* ‘drum’ and *[ɔ̀kã̀ŋga]*, in which the low-tone prothetic vowel is followed by low tones.

Quadro-syllabic

(65)

[kpɛ́kpɛ́jɛ]	*[è-kpɛ́kpɛ́jɛ]*	'duck'
[bʌkɪt]	*[ì-bókítì]*	'bucket'
[frɪʤ]	*[ì-fíríʤì]*	'refrigerator'
[baɪbl]	*[ì-bíbélì]*	'bible'
[taʊəl]	*[è-tɔ́wɛ́lì]*	'towel'
[fæn]	*[è-fáánù]*	'fan'
[ʃɒp]	*[è-ʃɔ́ɔ́bù]*	'shop'

With borrowed nouns which have five or more syllables, the low-tone prothetic vowel is always followed by another low tone (66).

Polysyllabic

(66)

[tòlótòló]	*[ìtòlótòló]*	'turkey'
[bɔ̀kɔ̀tɔ́ɔ̀]	*[èbɔ̀kɔ̀tɔ́ɔ̀]*	'kind of meat (cows' legs)

3.5.2 Functions of tones in Ọ̀kọ

In this section, I discuss the functions of tones in Ọ̀kọ. I examine tone contrasts distinguishing lexical morphemes and tone contrast with apparent grammatical contrasts.

3.5.2.1 Lexical tone contrasts

Tones in Ọ̀kọ are capable of performing a lexical function by contrasting meanings between words which have identical segments. A few examples are found in the following pairs of words in (67).

(67)

(a)	H H	*[tɔ́mɛ́]*	'to begin/start'
	L M	*[tɔ̀mɛ]*	'to stoop'

(b) H H *[jɛ́ré]* ‘to increase’
L H *[jɛ̀ré]* ‘to follow/accompany’

(c) L L *[ɔ̀rɛ̀]* ‘melon’
H H *[ɔ́ré]* ‘mountain/friend’

Also in (68) we see a triple of words with identical segments that are distinguished only by tone.

(68)
H H *[ɛ́bá]* ‘breast/hands
L L [*ɛ̀bà]*[2] ‘solid food made from cassava’
L H *[ɛ̀bá]* ‘the game of *Ayò*’[3]

3.5.2.2 **Apparent grammatical tone contrasts**

Are there grammatical tones in Ọ̀kọ? Not in the true sense of grammatical tones, namely, distinctive pitch levels which mark contrasts in grammatical categories or constructions, without any traces of segmental marking. In Ọ̀kọ for instance, vowel elision (see §3.3.1) affects markers which consist of only a single vowel. This therefore gives rise to the appearance of grammatical tone contrasts. Such markers are either specified for a high or a low tone; *í-* or *è-*. The grammatical markers are only pronounced when they occur before a consonant-initial item. This occurs in the following situations: sentence negation, interrogative construction, locative phrases and in procedural discourse. Each of these is described in the following subsections.

3.5.2.2.A **Future tense negative marker**

The type of negation described in 3.4.2.D in which the negative marker alternate between *mè~mà* is that in which the negative marker is directly

[2] Probably borrowed from Yorùbá
[3] Also known as Awale or wari in some cultures, a game played with small balls moved in holes in a board (Cassidy and Le Page 2002).

prefixed to a verb. However, in constructions in which the future form of the verb is negated, the negative marker is expressed as a low tone on the first vowel of the future tense marker *éke~áka → èke~àka*. Compare the affirmative construction in (69a) with the negative construction in (69b).

(69a) *[è-éke-tjégúrù né óbǐ̋n usje]*
3SG.S-FUT-sing BENF king tomorrow
'S/he will sing for the king tomorrow.'

(69b) *[e-èke-tjégúrù né óbǐ̋n usje]*
3SG-NEG.FUT-sing BENF king tomorrow
'S/he will not sing for the king tomorrow.'

Also, in order that the negative low tone is clearly distinct, the low tone on the pronominal element changes to a mid tone. Should the subject pronoun in (69a, b) be substituted with a full NP subject, as in (70a, b), a bound subject pronoun which is identical with the third person singular is introduced in the negative sentence (70b) (see also 16.3). The pronoun takes a mid tone, and it is followed by the negative low tone on the future tense marker. It should be noted that this pronoun is always singular even when the full NP which it follows is plural (70c).

(70a) *[ɛ́bɔ́lá éke-tjégúrù né óbǐ̋ usje]*
Bola FUT-sing PREP king tomorrow
'Bola will sing for the king tomorrow.'

(70b) *[ɛ́bɔ́lá e-èké-tjégúrù né óbǐ̋ usje]*
Bola 3SG.S-NEG-FUT-sing PREP king tomorrow
'Bola will sing for the king tomorrow.'

(70c) *[éró fɛŋãfɛŋã e-èké-tjégúrù né óbǐ̋ usje]*
people all 3SG.S-NEG.FUT-sing PREP king tomorrow
'All the people will not sing for the king tomorrow.'

More discussion of the various aspectual environments which determine the form of the negative marker can be found in sections 5.3.5.F; and 16.2.

3.5.2.2.B **Question marker**

In the construction of polar questions in Ọ̀kọ, the question marker is *í-*, a closed front vowel with a high tone. This is complemented by the question element *hɔ́* ~ *hɔ̌* (see also §18.2.1 for more examples). (71a) is a declarative sentence while (71b) is an interrogative sentence.

(71a) *[wɛ̀-ɛdɛda wúrá]*
2SG.POSS-father arrive
'Your father has arrived.'

(71b) *[í-wɛ̀-ɛdɛda wúrá hɔ̌?]*
QM-2SG.POSS-father arrive QPTCL
'Has your father arrived?'

On the other hand, in polar questions in which the subject is vowel-initial, the tone-bearing segment of the question marker is deleted; but the high tone which it bears performs the role of the interrogative marker (72b), (73b).

(72a) *[ù-wó ɛ̀kɔ]*
2SG.S-LOC here
'You are here.'

(72b) *[ú-wo ɛ̀kɔ hɔ́?]*
QM.2SG.S-LOC.COP here QPTCL
'Are you here?'

(73a) *[àde uùwó fó kè]*
Ade POSS.dog die PERF
'Ade's dog has died.'

(73b) *[áde uùwó fó kè?]*
QM.Ade POSS.dog die PERF
'Has Ade's dog died?'

3.5.2.2.C **Locative marker**

Apart from the locative copula *wó* (see §11.3.2), Ọ̀kọ also makes use of the locative marker *í-* to indicate spatial relationship. This marker appears as a single segment prefix when its complement NP is consonant-initial; that is, when it begins with a possessive prefix (cf. 74a, b).

(74a) *[érűrò àjɛ sè ajɛrɛʤɛkà èbɛ̃̀ í-jè-érű]*
Farmer DEF.SG pick mushroom INDF.PL LOC-3SG.POSS-farm
'The farmer picked some mushrooms on his farm.'

(74b) *[tɛ̀-sɛ́ ájɛ́rɛ́ í-tà-àgɛ̀]*
1PL.S-catch fish LOC-1PL.POSS-net
'We caught some fish in our net.'

On the other hand, in constructions in which the complement of the locative marker is vowel-initial (this is frequent because all nouns in Ọ̀kọ are vowel-initial), the locative segment is always deleted before the contiguous vowel of the complement. However, the high tone which it bears always replaces the tone of the first syllable of the complement (cf. 75-78). In the case where the complement already has a high tone on the first syllable, the locative high tone merges with the high tone (cf. 78). This may be followed by a mid tone or a low tone (see table 6 below for possible tone patterns).

(75a) *[ùgbègbɛ̀̃]* ‘mirror’

(75b) *[ɛ̀- gbá mì-íwú úgbègbɛ̀̃]*
1SG.S-see 1SG.POSS-body LOC.mirror
‘I saw myself in the mirror.’

(76a) *[Òsìbìna uùbo]*
God POSS.house ‘church’

(76b) *[àde a-karɛ-tɔ Ósìbìn’ uùbo]*
Ade PROG-wait-1PL.O LOC.God POSS.house
‘Ade is waiting for us in the church.’

(77a) *[emumu uùbo]*
leaf/book POSS.house ‘school’

(77b) *[àde wó émumu uùbo]*
Ade LOC.COP LOC.book POSS.house
‘Ade is in the school.’

(78a) *[ɛ́mɛ̃́]* ‘bush’

(78b) *[ɔ̀kpàkɔkɔ jɔ́hɔ̃ karɛ óbɪ̃́ eègbɛ̃*
tortoise stand wait king POSS.children
ɛ́mɛ̃ ɔtɔ̃]
LOC.bush ear
‘Tortoise waited for the king’s children at the edge of the bush.’

The following tone patterns in table (6) show the distinction between locative-marked nouns and non-locative marked nouns.

Table 6: Tone pattern of locative vs. non-locative marked nouns

Non-locative				locative		
H H	*érúm*	'farm'	→	H M	*érum*	'in the farm'
L L	*ùgì*	'basket'	→	H L	*úgì*	'in the basket'
M M	*ọtarẹ*	'rock'	→	H M	*ọ́tarẹ*	'in the rock'
H M	*íwukpe*	'flesh'	→	H M	*íwukpe*	'in the flesh'
H L	*úrùm*	'behind'	→	H L	*úrùm*	'in the back'
M L	*ọgbà*	'time'	→	H L	*ógbà*	'in the time'
L M	*ọ̀palẹ*	'fence'	→	H M	*ọ́palẹ*	'in the fence'

3.5.2.2.D **Procedural pre-clausal segment marker**

The structure of the procedural discourse in Ọ̀kọ is different from the structure of other types of discourses, for instance, the narrative discourse because of the use of what I call the 'Procedural Pre-clausal Segment' (PPCS) *í-*. This segment is used to introduce clauses when one is explaining the procedure of an event, for example, marriage, yam farming etc, in the Ọ̀kọ speaking cultures (cf. 79a, b).

(79a) *[tà-á-gbá ábɛ̃̀ ègã́ í-tà-fɔ̀-ɛ*
1PL.S-COND-see each other so PPCS-1PL.S-carry-3SG.O
ʧa ɲɛ̃̀ nɔ ɛdɛda akà íjá] (MO:5)
come show BENF father and mother
'When we see each other, we then take her to show to our parents.'

(79b) *[í-bè-mĩ-e-te ísúbù nɛnɛ ba-áka-jɔ̀ né*
PPCS-3PL.S-INCEP-PROG-choose day [REL 3PL.S-FUT-go PREP
ɔ̀bɛ́bɛlɛ nà] (MO:7)
begging RCP]
'They will then begin to choose a day in which they will go to ask (for wife).'

However, in cases where the PPCS is bound to a following V-element, its vowel segment is elided, but the high tone which it bears shifts onto the following vowel segment. This is shown in the categories in bold fonts in (80); their underlying forms are shown in (81).

(80) *[í-wà-áka-táɛ̀-jɔ̀ érű* ***ú-mḿ-kpà*** *ìgìlà,*
PPCS-2SG.S-FUT-early-go farm PPCS.2SG.S-INCEP-uproot yam
ú-mḿ-kɔ́-ba *ʧá úbó*
PPCS.2SG.S-INCEP-pack-3SG.O come house
ú-mḿ-fá-ɛ́]
PPCS.2SG.S-INCEP-boil-3SG.O
'You will first go to the farm, you will then uproot some yams, you will bring them home, you will then cook them.'

(81) */í-wà-áka-táɛ̀-jɔ̀ érű* ***í-ù-mḿN-kpà*** *ìgìlà,*
PPCS-2SG.S-FUT-early-go farm PPCS.2SG.S-INCEP-uproot yam
í-ù-mḿN-kɔ́-ba *ʧá úbó*
PPCS.2SG.S-INCEP-pack-3SG.O come house
í-ù-mḿN-fá-ɛ́/
PPCS.2SG.S-INCEP-boil-3SG.O
'You will first go to the farm, you will then uproot some yams, you will bring them home, you will then cook them.'

Chapter 4
Nominal morphology and morphological processes

4.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a description of the nominal morphology of Ọ̀kọ. I examine the four morphological processes of compounding (§4.2), prefixation (§4.3) suffixation (4.4) and reduplication (§4.5). The nominal morphology of Ọ̀kọ include the process of marking singular/plural distinction on nouns of a particular semantic domain, namely, human nouns, nominal adjectives, two body part nouns ('hand' and 'leg'), and only two animal nouns ('animal' and 'monkey'). The implication therefore is that historically, Ọ̀kọ probably had a noun class system, similar to the vestigial noun class system of languages of the Edoid group (Elugbe 1983b), or Akan (Osam 1994). However, synchronically, Ọ̀kọ lacks the defining properties of a real noun class system such as the system found in the Bantoid languages. Ọ̀kọ rather has an inflection class system which does not show agreement in noun class. Number marking is shown on some human nouns and on following modifying articles (cf. 1).

(1)

a.	*ógbén*	*áyẹ*	b.	*égbén*	*ábẹ*
	child	DEF.SG		children	DEF.PL
	'the child'			'the children'	

Furthermore, a general morpheme structure constraint on nouns in the language is that all nouns are vowel-initial. This constraint is absolute in the language as it does not spare borrowed nouns (see §3.3.2.A).

4.2 **Compounding**

The first of the morphological processes which I consider is compounding. Compounding is responsible for the formation of some nouns in Ọ̀kọ. Compounds in Ọ̀kọ are mainly endocentric, that is, those which the semantic head is contained within the compound itself. Two free morphemes are used to form such compounds. The order is Modifier-Head (cf. 2, 3), and Head-Modifier (4).

(2)

	Noun	Noun	Compound noun
(a)	*óbín*	*útù*	*óbínutù*
	king	abode	palace
(b)	*útúm*	*ẹ̀fà*	*útúmẹ̀fà*
	work	place	office/work place
(c)	*ẹ́pán*	*ófú*	*ẹ́pánófu*
	head	bone	skull
(d)	*ábárẹ̀*	*ófú*	*ábáròfu*
	back	bone	spine
(e)	*újúm*	*ówó*	*újúmowo*
	door	mouth	doorway
(f)	*ìgbèn*	*ọ́dọ́rẹ̀*	*ìgbènọ́dọ́rẹ̀*
	buttocks	hole	anus
(g)	*íyá*	*ódinà*	*íyódinà*
	woman	leader	‘women leader’
(h)	*íwú*	*ogbigben*	*íwógbigben*
	body	strength	‘health’

(i)	*épán*	*íkíbà*	*épáníkìba*
	head	money	'brideprice/tax'

Also included in the group of modifier-Head compounds are synthetic compounds whose head is derived from verbs denoting activities.

(3)

	Noun	Verb	Gerundive	Nominal compound
(a)	*úbó*	*mẹ́*	*ọ̀mẹ́mẹ*	*úbó-ọ̀mẹ́mẹ*
	house	build	building	'house-building'
(b)	*ìgìlà*	*nyín*	*ònyínyin*	*ìgìlà-ònyínyin*
	yam	to buy	buying	'yam-buying'
(c)	*útúm*	*síé*	*òsísie*	*útúm-òsísie*
	work	to do	doing	'working'
(d)	*ẹ́fá*	*fá*	*ọ̀fẹ́fa*	*ẹ́fá-ọ̀fẹ́fa*
	fight	to fight	fighting	'fight-fighting'
(e)	*oòro*	*sú*	*òsúsu*	*oòro-òsúsu*
	wife	to marry	marrying	'wife-marrying'
(f)	*ẹ́pán*	*sẹrẹ*	*ọ̀sẹ̀sẹrẹ*	*ẹ́pán-ọ̀sẹ̀sẹrẹ*
	head	to break	aching	'head-aching'
(g)	*égúrù*	*tíé*	*òtítie*	*égúrù-òtítie*
	song	sing	singing	'song-singing'

On the other hand are a few compounds which have a different order from the ones listed above. This class of compounds consists of a head noun followed by a modifying element (cf. 4). The modifiers are mainly words which belong to the class of qualitative nouns (see also §10.2).

(4)

(a)	*ógbén*	*ofòro*	*ógbénofòro*
	child	male (+ human)	'boy'
(b)	*ógbén*	*iyaro*	*ógbéniyaro*
	child	female (+ human)	'girl'
(c)	*ọ́ná*	*ókpé*	*ọ́nukpe*
	cow	male (+/– human)	'bull'
(d)	*ọ̀gẹ̀dẹ̀*	*ọkẹ̀ka*	*ọ̀gẹ̀dọkẹ̀ka*
	banana	great	'plantain'
(f)	*ámọ́n*	*ọ̀nyànyàn*	*ámọ́nọ́nyànyàn*
	oil	red	'palm oil'
(g)	*ẹ́pẹ́n*	*òdùdù*	*ẹ́pẹ́nódùdù*
	thing	evil	'snake'

Although the type of compounds in (4) may look like phrases, they are not. In the following section, I make a distinction between compounds and phrases in Ọ̀kọ.

4.2.1 Distinguishing compounds from phrases

In this section, I explore some morpho-syntactic criteria to distinguish between compounds and phrases in Ọ̀kọ.

4.2.1.A **Compounds vs. Possessive nouns**

Nouns such as *óbínutù* 'palace', *ábáròfu* 'spine', are lexical rather than phrasal. The word for palace *óbínutù* is formed by combining the morphemes *óbín* 'king' and *útù* 'abode', while the word for spine, *ábáròfu* is formed by combining *ábárẹ̀* 'back' and *ófú* 'bone'. I compare these with adnominal possessive NPs in the language. In a possessive noun phrase, the possessed is inflected by attaching a possessive vowel. This vowel is always identical with the first vowel of the possessed (cf. 5a-c). Also, there is always a mid-low tone melody on the possessive prefix and the first vowel of the possessed.

(5)

(a) *óbín u~ùbo*
king POSS~house
'the king's house'

(b) *àkàm ẹ~èpẹn*
jaw POSS~hair
(Lit. hair of jaw)
'beard'

(c) *úwó ọ~ọ̀mọ́dọ́rẹ̀*
dog POSS~nose
'the dog's nose'

4.2.1.B **Distinction based on minimal pair**

Minimal pairs of structures showing contrasts in the distribution of forms can also be used to distinguish between compounds and phrases in Ọ̀kọ. For instance, the distinction between the human compounds *ógbénofòro* 'boy' and *ógbéniyaro* 'girl', and their phrasal counterparts in (6), (7).

(6)

Compound

(a)	*ógbén*	*ofòro*	→	*ógbénofòro*
	child	male		‘boy’

Phrase

b.	*ofòro*	*o~ògbén*
	man	POSS~child
	‘the man’s child’	

7

Compound

a.	*ógbén*	*iyaro*	→	*ógbéniyaro*
	child	female		‘girl’

Phrase

b.	*iyaro*	*o~ògbén*
	woman	POSS~child
	‘the woman’s child’	

The word *ofòro* is primarily ‘male’ and can be extended to mean ‘man’, so also *iyaro* ‘female’, which can also be extended to mean ‘woman’. Also, the word *ẹdẹda* which has ‘father’ as its primary meaning can also be extended to mean ‘man’, while *íyá* which has ‘mother’ as its primary meaning can by extension mean ‘woman’. The ‘male’ variant of *ofòro* when used to modify the noun *ógbén*, results in a compound meaning ‘a child who is male’. Same goes for the ‘female’ variant *iyaro*, when it modifies *ógbén* yields a compound meaning ‘a child who is female’. On the other hand, the noun variant of *ofòro* and *iyaro* are used in the possessive noun phrases.

It may be required but not obligatory that the possessor be modified by an article in the noun phrase (cf. 8). However, for nominal compounds, a modifier article may or may not be required (cf. 9-11).

(8) *iyaro àyẹ o~ògbén*
woman DEF.SG POSS~child
'the woman's child'

(9) *ógbénofòro àyẹ gbá ìkókó érum*
boy DEF.SG see coco-yam LOC.farm
'The boy found some coco-yams on the farm.'

(10) *ẹ́bọ́lá bá ógbéniyaro*
Bola born girl
'Bola gave birth to a baby girl.'

(11) *ógbénofòro àyẹ óbin o~òró bá*
boy FOC king POSS~wife born
(Lit. It was indeed a boy that the king's wife gave birth to)
'The king's wife gave birth to a male child.'

Because nouns in Ọ̀kọ are never marked for gender, the expression, 'the child of the man or woman who is male or female', is shown in (12). This further strengthens the claim that *ógbénofòro* and *ógbéniyaro* are lexical units.

(12) *ofòro àyẹ o~ògbénofòro mẹ́ úbó nẹ́-yà*
Man DEF.SG POSS~boy build house PREP-3SG.O
(Lit. The son of the man built a house for him)
'The man's son built him a house.'

Further evidence in the compound vs. phrase distinction is the distinction between 'the palace' and 'the king's residence' in (13a), (13b).

(13a) Compound

óbín	*útù*	→	*óbínutù*
king	abode		palace

(13b) Phrase

óbín	*áyẹ*	*u~ùtù*
king	DEF.SG	POSS~abode

(Lit. the palace of the king)

'the king's palace'

When a noun is modified by a word of quality, if the result is a compound, the meaning range is more restricted than when it is a phrase; see (14), (15).

Compound

(14a)	*ẹ́pẹ́n*	*òdùdù*	→	*ẹ́pẹ́nódùdù*
	thing	evil		'snake'

Phrase

(14b)	*ẹ́pẹ́n*	*òdùdù*	→	*ẹ́pẹ́n òdùdù*
	thing	evil		'an evil thing'

Compound

(15a)	*ámọ́n*	*ọ̀nyànyàn*	→	*ámọ́nọ́nyànyàn*
	oil	red/yellow		'palmoil'

Phrase

(15b)	*ámọ́n*	*ọ̀nyànyàn*	→	*ámọ́n ọ̀nyànyàn*
	oil	red/yellow		'a red oil'

The meaning range of the phrases in (14b), (15b) is broader when compared with the much narrow sense of the compounds (14a), (15a). For instance, the phrase *ẹ́pẹ́n òdùdù* translates to 'a thing which is evil,' or

an unnamed ‘evil thing’ which X does to Y’. Same explanation goes for the phrase *ámọ́n ọ̀nyànyàn*, which refers to a type of oil which is red or yellow.

Based on the examples which have been presented so far, to state the possible tone rules for compounds may not be a straight forward affair. However, one notes that in compounds, where the first word ends with the syllable-final N, the first syllable of the following word takes a high tone (cf. 14, 15). This phenomenon is absent in the phrases. The problem with this analysis is that it fails to include compounds like *ógbénofòro* and *ógbéniyaro*. One may wish to revisit this in the future.

More evidence is the distinction between synthetic compounds and their phrasal counterparts. In synthetic compounds, the head follows the modifier. But when the order is inverted, it yields a phrase (cf. 16-18).

Compound

(16a)	*ìgìlà*	*nyín*	*ònyínyin*	*ìgìlà-ònyínyin*
	yam	to buy	buying	‘yam-buying’

Phrase

(16b) *ònyínyin ìgìlà*
buying yam
‘the buying of yams’

Compound

(17a)	*égúrù*	*tíé*	*òtítie*	*égúrù-òtítie*
	song	to sing	singing	‘song-singing’

Phrase

(17b) *òtítie égúrù*
singing song
‘the singing of song’

Compound

(18a)	*íkíbà*	*sú*	*òsúsu*	*íkíbà-òsúsu*
	money	to have	having	'money-having'

Phrase

(18b)	*òsúsu*	*íkíbà*
	having	money
	'the having of money'	

4.2.2 **Numeral compounds**

The numeral *ọ̀pọ́nọ̀ọ́rẹ* '6' is formed by combining the roots *ùpi* 'five' and *ọ̀ọ́rẹ* 'one'. This has however undergone some phonological modifications such as the leftward spread of the vowel quality of ọ, and an -n- insertion. Also, the numeral *úfọ́mbọ̀rẹ̀* '7' is formed by combining the morphemes *úfọ́m* 'five', a modification of *ùpi* 'five', due to a spirantization process where /p/ becomes fricativized as /f/, with the morpheme *ẹbọ̀rẹ̀* 'two'. An -m- insertion also takes place, whereby /N/ becomes [m], as it assimilates the place feature of the following bilabial consonant.

Numerals of the multiples of twenty, (i.e. forty, sixty, eighty and one hundred) are formed by combining the element *i-*, which equates to the morpheme for 'twenty' to a relevant numeral root. For instance, numerals such as *íbọ̀rẹ̀* 'forty', *íta* 'sixty' and *ípì* 'one hundred' are formed by combining *i-* to *ẹbọ̀rẹ̀* 'two', *ẹ̀ta* 'three' and *ùpi* 'five' respectively, see (19) below.

(19)

ẹbọ̀rẹ̀	'2'	*í-bọ̀rẹ̀*	'40'
ẹ̀ta	'3'	*í-ta*	'60'
ùpi	'5'	*í-pì*	'100'

However, in the formation *ìgbófú* 'eighty', *i-* combines with the suppletive morpheme *-gbófú,* which is not morphologically related to *ẹ̀na* 'four'.

4.3 **Prefixation**

4.3.1 **Number marking**

There are two ways in which languages indicate plurality. The first is by changing the morphological form of the noun, while the second involves indicating plurality by means of a morpheme that occurs somewhere else in the noun phrase (Dryer 2005:138). Ọ̀kọ̀ makes use of both processes. Since we are only concerned with the morphological forms of nominal elements at this point, I restrict the discussion to focus only on the morphological changes in nouns that indicated plurality.

4.3.1.A **Nominal number marking**

Human nouns, nominal adjectives, two body part nouns ('hand' and 'leg'), and two nouns referring to animals ('animal' and 'monkey') can take singular and plural prefixes. The process involves attaching a vocalic prefix to a noun root. The morphological form of both the singular and plural prefix vowels is determined by vowel harmony alternations (see §3.4.2). The pre-root vowels must harmonize with the vowel of the adjacent syllable of the noun. The vowel may either be positively or negatively specified for ATR. In Ọ̀kọ̀, most human nouns, with the exception of nouns used for expressing 'parenthood' (e.g. *ẹ̀dẹ̀da* 'father' and *íyá* 'mother') start with either the [+ATR] singular prefix *o-* or the [– ATR] singular prefix *ọ-*. A noun root which has a [+ATR] vowel in the adjacent syllable starts with the [+ ATR] pre-root vowel *o-*, while a noun root which has a [– ATR] vowel in the adjacent syllable starts with the [– ATR] pre-root vowel, *ọ-*. This is so because the direction of vowel harmony spread in Ọ̀kọ̀ is mostly regressive[4] in a phonological domain which includes a root and its affixes. Therefore, the plural prefix in [+ATR] roots is *i-* (20) or *e-* (21), while the [– ATR] plural prefix does not vary. It is *ẹ-* in all cases (22).

[4] Progressive spread of ATR harmony is only attested in 1st and 2nd persons object pronouns where the harmony feature spreads from verb roots (see §3.4.2.C).

[+ATR] Nominal prefix

(20) o-/i-

singular		plural
o-òró	'wife'	*i-òró*
o-fòro	'man'	*i-fòro*
o-yègben	'damsel'	*i-yègben*
ó-dinà	'one in charge	*í-dinà*
í-yódìnà	'woman leader'	*í-yídìnà*
ó-bín	'king'	*í-bín*
ó-via	'bride'	*í-via*
ó-súdá	'elder'	*í-súdá*
o-co	'witch'	*i-co*

o-/e-

(21)

ó-gbén	'child'	*é-gbén*
ò-ròkòrò	'human being'	*è-ròkòrò*
ó-ró	'person'	*é-ró*
ó-yírì	'thief'	*é-yírì*

Considering the environment in which the alternating [+ATR] prefix vowels, *i-* and *e-* occur in (20, 21) above, there are no phonological motivations for the choice of any of the [+ATR] prefix vowels. Semantically also, there are no clear-cut groupings that separate nouns in the *i-* group from those in the *e-* group.

[–ATR] nominal prefix

ọ-/ẹ-

(22)

singular		plural
ọ́-rẹ́	'friend'	*ẹ́-rẹ́*
ọ́-gá	'visitor'	*ẹ́-gá*

ọ-ya	'lesser chief'	*ẹ-ya*
ọ-kẹ̀kárò	'chief/noble'	*ẹ-kẹ̀kárò*

The two human nouns, *ẹdẹda* 'father' and *íyá* 'mother', whose morphological forms do not change for plural-marking, require a separate morpheme to indicate their plurality (cf. 23, 24).

(23)

(a)	*ẹdẹda*	*àyẹ*	(b)	*ẹdẹda* *àbẹ*
	father	DEF.SG		father DEF.PL
	'the father/man'			'the fathers/men'

(24)

(a)	*íyá*	*àyẹ*	(b)	*íyá* *àbẹ*
	mother	DEF.SG		mother DEF.PL
	'the mother/woman'			'the mothers/women'

The few non-human nouns that can also be plural-marked in Ọ̀kọ are two body part nouns and two nouns referring to animals (cf. 25).

(25)

singular		plural
ọ́-cẹ́n	'leg'	*ẹ́-cẹ́n*
ú-bá[5]	'hand'	*ẹ́-bá*
ọ́-nẹ́	'animal'	*ẹ́-nẹ́*
ọ́-kọ́rẹ́	'monkey'	*ẹ́-kọ́rẹ́*

4.3.1.B **Number marking on nominal adjectives**

Nominal adjectives in Ọ̀kọ are treated in the same way as human nouns, in the sense that they also take singular and plural prefixes. The only difference is that, unlike in human nouns, where the [+ATR] plural

[5] See discussion under §3.4.2.A, example (30), on why ú- alternates with [–ATR] ẹ́.

prefix has two variants (*i-* and *e-*), in the case of nominal adjectives, the [+ATR] plural prefix vowel has only one invariable form *i-*; while the [–ATR] plural prefix retains its form *ẹ-* as in human nouns.

[+ATR] nominal prefix

o-/i-

(26)

singular		plural
ò-bòrò	'good one'	*ì-bòrò*
o-susun	'old one'	*i-susun*
ò-keke	'small one'	*ì-keke*
ó-búbá	'remaining one'	*í-búbá*
ó-bóbó	'different one'	*í-bóbó*
ò-dùdù	'evil one'	*ì-dùdù*

[–ATR] nominal prefix

ọ-/ẹ-

(27)

singular		plural
ọ-kẹ̀ka	'bigger one'	*ẹ-kẹ̀ka*
ọ̀-yẹ́rẹ́	'immediate younger one'	*ẹ̀-yẹ́rẹ́*
ọ́-dá	'younger one'	*ẹ́-dá*
ọ̀-bẹ̀n	'that one'	*ẹ̀-bẹ̀n*

4.3.2 **The nominalizer prefix**

Several nouns in Ọ̀kọ are derived by prefixing a vocalic morpheme, that is, the nominalizer to a verb stem. The nominalizer prefix is productively attached to verb phrases, that is, a verb plus its complement. This process is used to derive both human and non-human nouns which lack a dedicated word, and in the expression of fractions. The form of the nominalizer prefix for human and non-human nouns alternates between [+ ATR] *ò-*, which is bound to a stem which has a [+ ATR] vowel in the

adjacent syllable as in (28), and [– ATR] *ọ̀-*, which is bound to a stem with a [– ATR] vowel in the adjacent syllable as in (29).

(28)

Transitive Verb	Object	Verb stem	Nominal
síé	*útúm*	*síútúm*	*ò-síútúm*
to do	work	to work	‘a worker’
bìre	*ẹ́pẹ́n*	*bìrẹ́pẹ́n*	*ò-bìrẹ́pẹ́n*
to plant	thing	to plant a thing	‘a sower’
tíé	*égúrù*	*tíégúrù*	*ò-tíégúrù*
to take	song	to sing	‘a singer’
cé	*ówó*	*cówó*	*ò-cówó*
to block	mouth	to shut mouth	‘a dumb person’
cé	*ọ́tọ́m*	*cọ́tọ́m*	*ò-cọ́tọ́m*
to block	ear	to shut ear	‘a deaf person’

(29)

Transitive Verb	Object	Verb stem	Nominal
má	*ọ̀tẹ̀lẹ*	*mọ́tẹ̀lẹ*	*ọ̀-mọ́tẹ̀lẹ*
to make	pot	to make a pot	‘a potter’
yọ́	*áyọ́*	*yáyọ́*	*ọ̀-yáyọ́*
to dance	dance	to dance	‘a dancer’
wọ̀rẹ	*ìwe*	*wọ̀ríwe*	*ọ̀-wọ̀ríwe*
to write	book	to write	‘a writer’

pẹ́n	*ányẹ́n*	*pẹ́nányẹ́n*	*ọ̀-pẹ́nányẹ́n*
to break	eye	to be blind	‘a blind person’
nwán	*óró*	*nwánóró*	*ọ̀-nwánóró*
kill	person	to kill a person	‘an executioner’
bàlẹ	*íjé*	*bàlíjé*	*ọ̀-bàlíjé*
to watch	ground	to spy	‘a spy’

Even though this is a productive process in the language, it mainly involves transitive verbs and their objects. Transitive verbs in this context include a verb like *yáyọ́* ‘to dance’, which is a combination of *yọ́* ‘to dance’ and *áyọ́* ‘dance’, which in some languages is intransitive. Verbs which are purely defined as intransitive in Ọ̀kọ, such as *mune* ‘to run’ *bue* ‘to sleep’ etc, cannot be nominalized to derive forms such as, **òmímune* ‘runner’ **òbíbue* ‘sleeper’. Such intransitive verbs already have nominal forms; for instance, *ésó* ‘race’, *úbá* ‘sleep’, which take the agentive suffix *-rò* (see §4.4.1), used to derive agentives such as *ésó-rò* ‘runner’, *úbá-rò* ‘sleeper (one who sleeps too much)’. Furthermore, even though most human nouns normally change their morphological forms to indicate plurality (see §4.3.1), human nouns which are derived through the process which involves the nominalizer prefix do not indicate plurality by changing their morphological forms. Plurality can only be indicated by a separate morpheme in the noun phrase; for example (30).

(30a) *ò-cọ́tọ́m àbẹ*
deaf DEF.PL ‘the deaf(PL)’

(30b) *ò-tíégúrù àbẹ*
singer DEF.PL ‘the singers’

(30c) *ọ̀-yáyọ́* *ẹ̀bẹ̀n*
dancers INDEF.PL ‘some dancers’

(30d) *ọ̀-wọ̀ríwe* *ẹ̀bẹ̀n*
writers INDEF.PL ‘some scholars’

The following are some non-human nouns that are also derived by means of the nominalizer prefix (cf. 31, 32).

(31)

Transitive Verb	Object	Verb stem	Noun
file	*ọ́cẹ́n*	*fìlọ́cẹ́n*	*ò-fìlọ́cẹ́n*
to put on	leg	to wear on foot	‘a footwear’
file	*úbá*	*fìlúbá*	*ò-fìlúbá*
to put on	hand	to wear on hand	‘a ring/bracelet’
file	*ọ́tọ́m*	*fìlọ́tọ́m*	*ò-fìlọ́tọ́m*
to put on	ear	to wear on ear	‘an earring’

(32)

Transitive Verb	Object	Verb stem	Noun
kọ̀kẹ	*óhúm*	*kọ̀kóhúm*	*ọ̀-kọ̀kóhúm*
to scoop	soup	to scoop some soup	‘a spoon’
kpárẹ́	*ìkòkó*	*kpáríkòkó*	*ọ̀-kpáríkòkó*
to pluck	cocoa	to harvest cocoa	‘a sickle’

Furthermore, the productive nominalizer prefix is used in the expression of fractions, especially those ones in which the numerator is ‘1’, while the denominator is any number from ‘2’ upwards. The only

fraction form that can be expressed in two ways is 'half'. It has the dedicated word *úgbúm* 'half' (½) and the derived form *ọ̀-cẹ́nẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀*. The *úgbúm* form of 'half' can only be used for inanimate referents (cf. 33a, b), and never for animates (cf. 34a, b).

(33a) *à-fọ́ ẹ́bẹ́dì úgbúm nẹ́-mọ̀*
3SG.S-give bread half BENF-1SG.O
'He gave me half a loaf of bread.'

(33b) *agogo ẹbọ̀rẹ̀ kù úgbúm sie*
clock two remain half do
'It is half past one o'clock.'

(34a) **akpẹ́ úgbúm wà íyáró*
congregation half COP woman
'Half of the congregation is women.'

(34b) **ẹ́nẹ́ àbẹ́ úgbúm jén a-gam úgbíyà*
animal DEF.PL half go INF-greet leopard
'Half of the animals went to greet the leopard.'

However, the *ọ̀-cẹ́nẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀* (the breaking of two) form can be used for both animate (cf. 35a, b) and inanimate referents (cf. 36a, b)

(35a) *akpẹ́ ọ̀-cẹ́nẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀ wà íyáró*
congregation NOM-half COP woman
'Half of the congregation is women.'

(35b) *ẹ́nẹ́ àbẹ́ ọ̀-cẹ́nẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀ jén a-gam úgbíyà*
animal DEF.PL NOM-half go INF-greet leopard
'Half of the animals went to greet the leopard.'

(36a) *ọ̀-cẹ́nẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀ ẹ́bẹ́dì àyẹ à-vá-mọ́*
NOM-half bread FOC 3SG.S-give-1SG.O
'S/he gave me half a loaf of bread.'

(36b) *àde gá nẹ́-mọ́ ọgàrẹ́ga àyẹ ọ̀-cẹ́nẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀*
Ade tell PREP-1SG.S story DEF.SG NOM-half
'Ade told me half of the story.'

Ọ̀-cẹ́nẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀ 'half' is derived by attaching the nominalizer to the verb stem which consists of the verb root *cẹ́n* 'to break' and the numeral *ẹbọ̀rẹ̀* 'two'. The same process is used for other fraction forms in which the numerator is '1' and the denominator is any other number; for example, *ọ̀-cẹ́nẹ́ta* 'the breaking of three (⅓)', *ọ̀-cẹ́nẹ́na* 'the breaking of four (¼)', *ọ̀-cẹ́núpi* 'the breaking of five (⅕)', *ọ̀-cẹ́nọ́pọnọ̀ọ́rẹ* 'the breaking of six (⅙)' etc.

The general tone pattern in the derivational process involving the nominalizer is that, the norminalizer prefix has a regular low tone which is immediately followed by either a high tone in the case where the adjacent syllable of the verb stem has a high tone, or by another low tone which it copies from a verb stem which has a low tone in the adjacent syllable.

4.3.3 **Possessive inflection**

Possessive inflections in Ọ̀kọ include nominal possession and pronominal possession. In nominal possession, the possessive marker (a vowel), assimilates the contiguous vowel of the possessed noun. It also has a mid tone which is followed by a low tone on the following vowel of the possessed noun (cf. 37a-c) (we will recall that all nouns in Ọ̀kọ are V-initial).

(37a) *àde u~ùbó*
Ade POSS~house
'Ade's house'

(37b) *úwó ọ~ọ̀mọ́dọ́rẹ̀*
dog POSS~nose
'the dog's nose'

(37c) *unini o~ògbén*
Unini POSS~child
'Unini's child'

However, there is an irregularity in nouns which express 'parents' (*ẹdẹda* or *ẹda* 'father' and *iya* 'mother') whether for human or non-human nouns. The possessive marker is *w-* attached to the possessed (cf. 38a-d).

(38a) *àdé w~ẹda*
Ade POSS~father
'Ade's father'

(38b) *unini w~iya*
Unini POSS~mother
'Unini's mother'

(38c) *úwó àyẹ w~ẹda*
dog DEF.SG POSS~father
'the dog's father'

(38d) *úmú àyẹ w~iya*
goat DEF.SG POSS~mother
'the goat's mother'

Possessive inflections that involve possessive pronouns consist of a possessive prefix which has the form CV attached to the possessed. C depends on 'person' while V is always identical with the contiguous vowel of the possessed. In this type of possessive inflection, there is no difference between 'parent' nouns and others (cf. 39a-f) (see also §7.2.5).

(39a) *mẹ̀-ẹ́pán*
1SG.POSS-head
'my head'

(39b) *wù-úbó*
2SG.POSS-house
'your house'

(39c) *yẹ̀-ẹ́dẹ́dá*
3SG.POSS-father
'his father'

(39d) *tì-íyá*
1PL.POSS-mother
'our mother'

(39e) *nò-ógbén*
2PL.POSS-child
'your child'

(39f) *bà-ányẹ́n*
3PL.POSS-eye
'their eyes'

4.4 Suffixation

4.4.1 Agentive nouns

The suffixal morpheme *-rò*, which is the reduced form of the word *óró* 'person', is used in the derivation of human agentive nouns in Ọ̀kọ. The

process involves attaching the suffixal morpheme to a noun root. With regards to tone, when attached to a noun, the tone-bearing segment of the suffix takes a low tone (cf. 40). However, this is not the case when its homophonous counterpart is used in the derivation of ordinal numerals (see§4.4.2); the tone on the suffix in ordinal numerals varies between low and mid (see 41).

(40)

Noun Root		Nominal (Agentives)	
awọrẹ	'deceit'	*awọrẹ-rò*	'a deceitful person'
ádẹ̀	'liquor'	*ádẹ́-rò*	'a brewer/liquor seller'
útúgbúm	'charm/drug'	*útúgbúm-rò*	'herbalist/pharmacist'
úbá	'debt'	*úbá-rò*	'a debtor'
ẹ́cẹ́n	'entertainment'	*ẹ́cẹ́n-rò*	'an entertainer (musician)'
ọ̀kọ	'Ọ̀kọ'	*ọ̀kú-rò*	'one who is Ọ̀kọ'
érúm	'farm'	*érúm-rò*	'a farmer'
írómù	'Rome'	*ìrómù-rò*	'a Roman Catholic'
ẹ́sẹ́mẹsì	'CMS'[6]	*ẹ́sẹ́mẹsì-rò*	'an Anglican'
áyọ́	'dance'	*áyọ́-rò*	'a dancer'
ésó	'race'	*ésó-rò*	'a runner'

Also, unlike the nominalizer prefix which must harmonize with the vowel in the adjacent syllable of its host (see §4.3.2), in the case of the suffix *-rò*, vowel harmony relationship is not required. In other words, the suffixal morpheme *-rò* does no participate in vowel harmony processes.

4.4.2 **Ordinal numerals**

Ordinal numerals are derived from cardinal ones by attaching the suffix *-ro* to cardinal numerals. Here, one of the four forms of the number '1' in Ọ̀kọ is identified, *òcoò-ro*. Ọ̀kọ can be categorized under languages in which 'first' is suppletive, derivationally independent of '1' (see Stolz and

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Veselinova 2005:218). Other ordinal numerals from '2' upwards are derived by attaching the suffix *-ro* to a given cardinal numeral.

(41)

Cardinal number		Ordinal number	
ọ̀yẹ́rẹ́/ọ̀ẹ́rẹ́	'1'	*òcoò-ro*	'1st'
ẹ̀bọ̀rẹ̀	'2'	*ọ̀ọ́bọ̀rẹ̀-rò*	'2nd'
ẹ̀ta	'3'	*ẹ̀tẹ̀ta-ro*	'3rd'
ẹ̀na	'4'	*ọ̀nẹ́nà-rò*	'4th'
ùpi	'5'	*ùpi-ro*	'5th'
ọ̀pọ́nọ̀ọ́rẹ̀	'6'	*ọ̀pọ́nọ̀ọ́rẹ̀-ro*	'6th'
úfọ́mbọ̀rẹ̀	'7'	*úfọ́mbọ̀rẹ̀-rò*	'7th'
ọ̀nọ́kọ́nọkọ́nọ	'8'	*ọ̀nọ́kọ́nọkọ́nọ-ro*	'8th'
ùbọ́ọ̀rẹ̀	'9'	*ùbọ́ọ̀rẹ̀-rò*	'9th'
ẹ̀fọ	'10'	*ẹ̀fọ-ro*	'10th'
ẹ̀fọkọ̀ẹ́rẹ̀	'11'	*ẹ̀fọkọ̀ẹ́rẹ̀-ro*	'11th'
ẹ̀fọ́kẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀	'12'	*ẹ̀fọ́kẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀-rò*	'12th'
ẹ̀fọkẹ̀ta	'13'	*ẹ̀fọkẹ̀ta-ro*	'13th'
ẹ̀fọkẹ̀ná	'14'	*ẹ̀fọkẹ̀ná-ró*	'14th'
ẹ̀fọkùpi	'15'	*ẹ̀fọkùpi-ro*	'15th'
ẹ̀fọkọ̀pọ́nọ̀ọ́rẹ̀	'16'	*ẹ̀fọkọ̀pọ́nọ̀ọ́rẹ̀-ro*	'16th'
ẹ̀fọkùfọ́mbọ̀rẹ̀	'17'	*ẹ̀fọkùfọ́mbọ̀rẹ̀-rò*	'17th'
ẹ̀fọkọ̀nọ́kọ́nọkọ́nọ	'18'	*ẹ̀fọkọ̀nọ́kọ́nọkọ́nọ-ro*	'18th'
ẹ̀fọkùbọ́ọ̀rẹ̀	'19'	*ẹ̀fọkùbọ́ọ̀rẹ̀-rò*	'19th'
ọ́gbọlọ	'20'	*ọ́gbọlọ-ro*	'20th'

A tonal pattern can be established for the ordinal numbers in (41). One notes that there is a spread of identical tonal feature from a penultimate syllable to the final syllable which has the *-ro* suffix. For instance, where the penultimate syllable is specified for a low tone, the final syllable automatically takes a low tone, as *-rò*. Same goes for both the mid and high tones. The only irregular case is *òcoò-ro* '1st'.

4.5 **Reduplication**

Reduplication as a morphological process in Ọ̀kọ can either be total or partial. It is total when a root is completely copied in order to form a new word. On the other hand, reduplication is partial when after the copying of the specified root, some segment(s) of the copied element are deleted. In this section, I examine reduplication in the derivation of gerundive nouns, distributive numerals, nouns of time and nouns derived by means of the formative -k-. I also give a brief statement on ideophones in Ọ̀kọ.

4.5.1 **Gerundives**

Gerundives in Ọ̀kọ are of two types. The first group consists of gerundives which are derived from action verbs, while the second group consists of gerundives which are derived from stative verbs. Though both groups share some similarities in the derivational processes that yield their forms, there is a slight morphological difference which necessitates their being treated separately.

Both groups of gerundives are derived either by a total or partial copying of their respective verb roots. The strategies of their derivation involve two processes. The first is a partial copying of a verb root, and the second is the attachment of a nominalizer prefix vowel to the derived stem. The form of the vowel of the reduplicated syllable and the nominalizer is determined by ATR vowel harmony. A verb root which has a [+ ATR] vowel in the adjacent syllable takes a reduplicated CV syllable, where V is the [+ ATR] /i/, or sometimes the [+ ATR] /u/. The [+ ATR] nominalizer prefix *o-* is attached to the derived stem. On the other hand, a verb root which has a [– ATR] vowel in its first syllable takes a reduplicated CV syllable, where V is the [– ATR] /ẹ/. The [– ATR] prefix vowel *ọ-* is then attached to the derived stem.

4.5.1.A **Gerundives from action verbs**

This type of gerundives is derived from action verbs by the partial copying of the verb root. The shape of the reduplicant CV in the [+ ATR] group is *Ci-/Cu-* (cf. 42). Normally, the V is /i/; however, it changes to

/u/ when the root vowel is /u/ after /f/. On the other hand, the shape of the reduplicant CV in the [– ATR] group is *Cẹ-*. The V of the reduplicated syllable is the invariable /ẹ/ (cf. 43).

(42)

Verb Root		Redup Stem	Derived form	
sie	'to do'	*sí~sie*	*ò-sí~sie*	'(the) doing'
roro	'to think'	*rí~roro*	*ò-rí~roro*	'(the) thinking'
sú	'to marry'	*sí~su*	*ò-sí~su*	'(the) marry'
jín	'to open'	*jí~jin*	*ò-jí~jin*	'(the) opening'
fùru	'to jump'	*fú~furu*	*ò-fù~furu*	'(the) jumping'

(43)

Verb Root		Redup Stem	Derived form	
gbá	'to see'	*gbẹ́~gba*	*ọ̀-gbẹ́~gba*	'(the) seeing'
ná	'to collect'	*nẹ́~na*	*ọ̀-nẹ́~na*	'(the) receiving
gá	'to sew'	*gẹ́~ga*	*ọ̀-gẹ́~ga*	'(the) sewing'
sẹ́	'to catch'	*sẹ́~sẹ*	*ọ̀-sẹ́~sẹ*	'(the) catching'
nyẹ́n	'to remember'	*nyẹ́~nyẹn*	*ọ̀-nyẹ́~nyẹn*	'(the) remembering

4.5.1.B **Gerundives from qualitative verbs**

Some gerundives are derived from qualitative verbs, words used in the expression of a state, quality, size etc (see also §10.3). The reduplication process in the derivation of this type of gerundives is very similar, only with a slight difference from what obtains in gerundives that are derived from action verbs. The shape of the reduplicant CV in the [+ ATR] group is *Ci-/Cu-* (cf. 44), while the shape of the reduplicant CV in the [– ATR] group is *Cẹ-/Cọ-* (cf. 45).

(44)

Verb Root		Redup Stem	Derived form	
cile	'be strong'	*cí~cile*	*ò-cí~cile*	'being strong'
gbodi	'be big/fat'	*gbí~gbodi*	*ò-gbí~gbodi*	'being big/fat'
fí	'be hot'	*fí~fi*	*ò-fí~fi*	'being hot'
fún	'be wet/cold'	*fú~fun*	*ò-fú~fun*	'being wet/cold'
gínyán	'be sour'	*gí~ginyan*	*ò-gí~ginyan*	'being sour'

(45)

Verb Root		Redup Stem	Derived form	
fọ́	'be tall'	*fọ̀~fọ*	*ọ̀-fọ́~fọ*	'being tall'
bẹrẹ	'be soft'	*bẹ~bẹrẹ*	*ọ̀-bẹ́~bẹrẹ*	'being soft'
lọrẹ	'be long'	*lọ~lọrẹ*	*ọ̀-lọ́~lọrẹ*	'being long'
bọra	'be flat'	*bọ~bọra*	*ọ̀-bọ́~bọra*	'being flat'
rọ̀na	'be ripe'	*rọ̀~rọna*	*ọ̀-rọ̀~rọna*	'being ripen'

With respect to tone pattern, the nominalizer prefix vowel always takes a regular low tone. The low tone is sometimes followed by a high tone in the adjacent syllable or by another low tone. The nature of the following tone is dependent upon the tone of the verb root. A verb root with a high tone in the first syllable retains the high tone after the nominalizer is attached to the stem. Also, the mid tone on the first syllable of a verb root becomes high after the nominalizer prefix. The low tone on a verb root is also retained on the syllable adjacent to that of the nominalizer. Hence, there are only two tone patterns in all: L H M (M) and L L M (M).

Generally, the process of forming gerundives as described above is highly productive in the language. It can apply to all verbs. For example, the following verbs: *bọ́* 'to borrow and *ní* 'to like/want', shown in (46), (47).

(46) *ọ̀-bọ́~bọ* *àyẹ* *à-bọ́* *ìgbègbèn* *àyẹ*
NOM-REDUP~borrowing FOC 3SG.S-borrow knife DEF.SG
(Lit. it was borrowing that he borrowed the knife)
'What he did was to borrow the knife.'

(47) *ò-ní~ni* *nẹnẹ* *tì-ní* *érúm* *uùtum* *na,*
NOM-REDUP~like REL 1PL.S-like farm POSS.work RCP
è-sie *kpàtàkì*
3SG.S-do important
'Our love for farming is important.'

4.5.2 **Distributive numerals**

Distributive numerals are formed by copying the corresponding cardinal numerals. In cardinal numerals from 1-10, the numeral *ọ̀yẹ́rẹ/ọ̀ọ́rẹ* 'one' can only be partially reduplicated as *ọ̀ọ́rọ́ọ̀rẹ̀* in order to derive its distributive form. While others (e.g., 2-10) have their cardinal forms completely reduplicated in order to form their distributive forms (cf. 48).

(48)

Base stem	Partial	Total	Gloss
ọ̀yẹ́rẹ/ọ̀ẹ́rẹ	*ọ̀ọ́rọ́ọ̀rẹ̀*	-	'one by one'
ẹbọ̀rẹ̀	-	*ẹbọ̀rẹ̀-ẹbọ̀rẹ̀*	'two by two'
ẹ̀ta	-	*ẹ̀ta-ẹ̀ta*	'three by three'
ẹ̀ná	-	*ẹ̀ná-ẹ̀ná*	'four by four'
ùpi	-	*ùpi-ùpi*	'five by five'
ọ̀pọ́nọ̀ọ́rẹ	-	*ọ̀pọ́nọ̀ọ́rẹ-ọ̀pọ́nọ̀ọ́rẹ*	'six by six'
úfọ́mbọ̀rẹ̀	-	*úfọ́mbọ̀rẹ̀-úfọ́mbọ̀rẹ̀*	'seven by seven'
ọ̀nọ́kọ́nọkọ́nọ	-	*ọ̀nọ́kọ́nọkọ́nọ-ọ̀nọ́kọ́nọkọ́nọ*	'eight by eight'
ùbọ́ọ̀rẹ̀	-	*ùbọ́ọ̀rẹ̀-ùbọ́ọ̀rẹ̀*	'nine by nine'
ẹ̀fọ	-	*ẹ̀fọ-ẹ̀fọ*	'ten by ten'

The numerals *ẹ̀ta* ‘three’ and *ẹ̀na* ‘four’ have alternative forms as *ẹ̀tẹ̀ta*, and *ẹ̀nẹ̀na*, where the reduced forms are due to the elision of the first of two contiguous oral vowels at word boundary (cf. 49a, b).

(49a) *égbén ábẹ̀ fọ̀ ótí àbẹ ẹ̀tẹ̀ta*
children DEF.PL carry stick DEF.PL DISTR-three
‘The children carried the sticks three by three.’

(49b) *ẹ̀nẹ̀na àyẹ è-ròwá-bá nḛ́-tọ̀*
DISTR-four FOC 3SG.S-divide-3PL.O BENF-1PL.O
‘It was four by four that he divided them among us.’

4.5.3 **Nouns of time**

Nouns which are used to refer to time units such as days, weeks, months and years, are completely reduplicated when used distributively (cf. 50a-d); (51).

(50a) *ísúbù-ísúbù*
day-day ‘every day’

(50b) *ódísì- ódísì*
week-week ‘every week’

(50c) *ọ́cḛ́n-ọ́cḛ́n*
month-month ‘every month’

(50d) *ḛ́nyḛ́n- ḛ́nyḛ́n*
year-year ‘every year’

(51) *òsì áka-ca ọ́cḛ́n-ọ́cḛ́n ḛ́nyḛ́n ọ́nẹ*
rain FUT-come month-month year DEM.SG
‘It will rain every month this year.’

4.5.4 **The formative -k-**

Total reduplication in Ọ̀kọ̀ also involves the use of the formative -k- element in between two reduplicated nouns. The tone pattern is predictable for bisyllabic nouns, that is, HH-MM (cf. 51a-c). However with trisyllabic nouns, there are several possible tone patterns, such as HHH-LMM (cf. 52d; 54a), LLL-HLL (cf. 54c; 54d), HHL-HHL (cf. 55b; 56b) and MMM-HMM (cf. 56a).

The resulting nouns of the reduplication process can mean 'any kind of X' and may also have a derogatory connotation (cf. 52).

(52a) *ógbén-k-ogben*
child-k-child
'any child/any useless child'

(52b) *ẹ́pán-k-ẹpan*
head-k-head
'any head/any useless head'

(52c) *úbó-k-ubo*
house-k-house
'any house/any useless house'

(52d) *íkíbá-k-ìkiba*
money-k-money
'any money/any useless money'

On the number of meanings which the reduplicated noun can have, concrete nouns, such as the ones in (52) can have more than one meaning, namely, 'any kind of X' and 'a useless X' (cf. 53a, b).

(53a) *ógbén-k-ogben nẹnẹ cana ca na, àyẹ mà-áka-fọ̀*
child-k-child [REL do.early come RCP] FOC 1SG.S-FUT-carry
íkíbà àyẹ nọ́
money DEF.SG give
'I will give the money to any child who arrived first.'

(53b) *ógbén-k-ogben àyẹ à-bá*
child-k-child FOC 3SG.S-born
'S/He gave birth to a useless child/S/He has a useless child.'

Also, the class of abstract nouns such as, *ẹ́gá* 'word' *égúrù* 'song', *ẹ̀dànyẹ̀n* 'wisdom', *ìròrò* 'thought', these also have the meanings 'any X', or the derogatory 'a useless X' (cf. 54a-d).

(54a) *égúrú-k-èguru*
song-k-song
'any song/a useless song'

(54b) *ẹ́gá-k-ẹga*
word-k-word
'any word/a useless word'

(54c) *ìròrò-k-íròrò*
though-k-thought
'any thought/a useless thought'

(54d) *ẹ̀dànyẹ̀n-k-ẹ́dànyẹ̀n*
wisdom-k-wisdom
'any wisdom/a useless wisdom'

On the other hand, are abstract nouns which have only one reading. Nouns of time for example, *ọgbà* 'time', *ísúbù* 'day' *ẹ́nyẹ́n* 'year', etc, can only have the meaning 'any X' (cf. 55a-c).

(55a) *ọ́gbá-k-ọgba*
time-k-time
'any time'

(55b) *ísúbù-k-ísúbù*
day-k-day
'any day'

(55c) *ẹ́nyẹ́n-k-ẹnyẹn*
year-k-year
'any year'

At the other extreme are abstract nouns such as, *ẹbẹbẹn* 'joy', *unini* 'love', *úrórò* 'beauty', *òsísie* 'act' etc, which can only have the derogatory meaning 'a useless X' (cf. 56a-c).

(56a) *ẹbẹbẹn-k-ẹ́bẹbẹn*
joy-k-joy
'a useless joy'

(56b) *úrórò-k-úrórò*
beauty-k-beauty
'a useless beauty'

(56c) *òsísie-k-ósisie*
act-k-act
'a useless act'

4.6.4 **Ideophones**

Ideophones and ideophone-like words are not wide spread in Ọ̀kọ. There are a few of them that are identified in two main word classes, namely, verbs (cf. 57) and adverbs (cf. 58).

i. Verbs

(57)

múmúsé	‘to squeeze (of dry item, e.g., leaves)’
fúfúsé	‘to squeeze (of wet item, e.g., leaves, clothes etc.)
húhúnú	‘to grumble’
bẹ̀lẹ̀kẹ̀sẹ̀	‘to tie round’

ii. Adverbs

(58)

cẹ̀cẹ̀cẹ̀	‘entirely/completely’
gbọ̀gba-gbọ̀gba	‘commonly/shoddily’
fẹ̀nyan-fẹ̀nyan	‘all (intensified)’

They are derived by reduplicating relevant stems. The adverbial ones are true ideophones and are used to describe a manner or for intensification. The verbal ones on the other hand are only ideophone-like because they appear like reduplicated roots and are longer than other verbs in the language (see §5.2.1).

Ọ̀kọ̀ speakers sometimes make use ideophones from a language like Yorùbá, which is richly endowed with ideophones. It is therefore not uncommon in some normal conversations in the communities to hear some ideophones such as *róbótó* (pertaining to circular shape), *játi-jàti* (pertaining to worthlessness/recklessness), *rẹ̀pẹ̀tẹ̀* (pertaining to abundance) (cf. 59a-c).

(59a) *è-sie* *yò-ówó* *róbótó*
3SG.S-do 3SG.POSS-mouth IDEO
‘He shaped his lips round.’

(59b) *tẹ̀-bẹ́* *ẹ̀brazil* *àbẹ̀* *játi-jàti*
1PL.S-beat brazil DEF.PL IDEO
‘We beat/defeated the Brazilians recklessly.’

(59c) *íkíbà rẹpẹtẹ àyẹ mè-e-ní ẹ́nyẹ́n ọ́nẹ*
money IDEO FOC 1SG.S-PROG-want year DEM.SG
(Lit. I am looking for a lot of money this year.)
'I want a lot of money this year.'

Chapter 5
Verbal morphology

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the verbal morphology of Ọ̀kọ. I start by examining the basic shape of the bare verb. I also examine the formation of a complex verb type known as bipartite verbs (§5.2.2). The discussion further leads to an examination of verbal inflection in the language. In the course of the discussion, I also examine how ATR vowel harmony determines the surface form of verbal markers as controlled by the verb stem. In fact, vowel harmony provides a proof of boundedness between the verb stem and its affixes. In the concluding section of the chapter, I show the extent of combinability of the verbal affixes (§5.4).

All verbs in Ọ̀kọ are consonant-initial. This statement is absolute just like the claim that all nouns are vowel-initial (see §4.1). No exceptions are known.

5.2 The bare verb

The bare or unmarked verb in Ọ̀kọ is the form of a verb without any morphological marking. The bare verb can either be a simple verb root or a complex verb stem. The complex verbs are lexicalized verb combinations otherwise referred to as bipartite verbs.

5.2.1 The simple verb root

Simple verb roots in Ọ̀kọ have the shapes: monosyllabic CV/CVN, CVV/CVVN, bisyllabic CVCV, and polysyllabic CVCVCV(CV)*. However, the polysyllabic monomorphemic verbs are very few in the language. They could be of ideophonic origin.

(i) Monosyllabic verbs with CV/CVN shapes:

(1)

jé	'to eat'	*tám*	'to chew'
yọ́	'to go'	*fóm*	'to pound'
cá	'to come'	*fọ́m*	'to enter'
kpọ́	'to climb'	*nyẹ́n*	'to smell/stink'
wá	'to drink'	*cúm*	'to passby'
gbá	'to see'	*kpám*	'to scratch'
wọ́	'to hear'	*hám*	'to shave'
dẹ́	'to touch'	*nwán*	'to kill'
wú	'to rub'	*jín*	'to open'
sẹ́	'to catch	*gám*	'to greet/count/read'
fẹ́	'to skin'	*cín*	'to ask/request'
ní	'to want/like'	*mán*	'to sit/live/dwell'
fó	'to die'	*dín*	'to know'
yé	'to understand'	*nyín*	'to buy'

Verbs with the CV/CVN shapes constitute the majority of verbs in Ọ̀kọ. They always take the high tone when they are pronounced in isolation and when they are used in imperative constructions. However, within discourse, the tone pattern can change. An example is *sú* 'to marry', which has a high tone in the imperative construction in (2a), but a mid tone in (2b).

(2)

(a) *sú-yá*!
marry-3SG.O
'Marry him/her!'

(b) *à-ka* *àyẹ* *éke-su-ya.* (MB:22)
3SG.S-say 3SG.I FUT-marry-3SG.O
'He said he would marry her.'

Tone rules may not be easily predictable because apart from tone melody patterns, for instance, where the tone on a segment changes because of its environment, pragmatic effects, especially in discourse may also affect tone pattern.

(ii) Monosyllabic verb roots with CVV/CVVN shapes:

(3)

bue	'to sleep'	*búín*	'to pierce'
tíé	'to take/to sing'	*fúẹ́n*	'to breathe'
kúé	'to finish'	*múẹ́n*	'to laugh'
púá	'to wash'		
cùà	'to leap'		
síé	'to do'		

The common characteristic of verbs with CVV/CVVN shape is that they have a sequence of a closed vowel immediately followed by another vowel which may be closed or non-closed. The first of the two Vs is realized as a glide (see also §3.3.3). The tone on the first of the two vowels always spreads to the second vowel. This may be low, mid or high.

(iii) Bisyllabic verbs with CVCV shape

(4)

rọ̀wa	'to swallow'	*yérí*	'to yawn'
pọ́rá	'to sweep'	*wúrá*	'to arrive'
wùru	'to uproot'	*bẹ̀lẹ*	'to beg'
fura	'to do.away'	*yẹ̀rẹ*	'to accompany'
mune	'to run'	*bálẹ́*	'to examine/look'
tọrẹ	'to taste'	*pẹ̀rẹ*	'to feel (with the fingers)
fálẹ́	'to drop'	*file*	'to send/wear'
cẹlẹ	'to guard'	*fọ́rẹ́*	'to conquer'
bùre	'to stab'	*wúlé*	'to drip'
pírí	'to fly'	*yìre*	'to steal'

yọ̀rẹ	‘to stretch’	*kpérí*	‘to tremble’
hárá	‘to hoe’	*roro*	‘to think’

The possible tone patterns on bisyllabic monomorphemic verbs are, HH, MM, LM and HM. There is no restriction in the distribution of vowels across the syllables that make up each word. However, in terms of frequency, back vowels such as */u o ọ/* are less frequent in word-final position. The list in (4) is fairly exhaustive of CVCV monomorphemic verbs in Ọ̀kọ. Bisyllabic simple verb roots with CVCVN shape are rare in the language. The only known ones are *jọ́họn* ‘to wait’ and *jéjèn* ‘to walk’.

(iv) Polysyllabic verbs

There are very few verb roots with CVCVCV or CVCVCVCV shape in Ọ̀kọ. The few roots identified in (5) below are ideophone-like (see §4.5.5 for a discussion on ideophones in Ọ̀kọ). All syllables that make up each polysyllabic verb have the same tone.

(5)

múmúsé	‘to squeeze (of dry item, e.g., leaves)’
fúfúsé	‘to squeeze (of wet item, e.g., leaves, clothes etc.)
húhúnú	‘to grumble’
bẹ̀lẹ̀kẹ̀sẹ̀	‘to tie round’

5.2.2 **Complex verb (bipartite verbs)**

Bipartite verbs[7] are lexicalized serial verbs. They are bimorphemic and are always of the forms CV + CV or CV + CVCV. A list of the ones that I have so far encountered in the language is provided in (6).

[7] Awobuluyi (1979), Chumbow (1982a) refer to this class of verbs as splitting verbs.

(6)

(a) *ná* + *wọ́* → *náwọ́*
accept hear ‘to believe’

(b) *ná* + *fán* → *náfán*
accept escape ‘to save’

(c) *má* + *bàlẹ* → *mábalẹ*
test look ‘to tempt/test’

(d) *bé* + *fúwà* → *béfúwà*
spoil away ‘to destroy (especially of one’s character)’

Each of the two parts of a bipartite verb can be used alone in a simplex construction; for example, *ná* ‘accept/collect’ and *wọ́* ‘to hear’ in (7a), (7b). However, when both are used to form a bipartite verb, the result is a non-compositional meaning, for example, *náwọ́* ‘to believe’ in (8).

(7a) *à-ná-ẹ* *í-mù-úbá*
3SG.S-accept-3SG.O LOC-1SG.POSS-hand
‘S/He accepted it from me.’

(7b) *unini* *wọ́* *ẹ́gá* *áyẹ* *dáadáa*
Unini hear word DEF.SG well
‘Unini heard the word/matter well.’

(8) *unini* *náwọ́*
Unini believe
‘Unini believed.’

Furthermore, a different class of bipartite verbs in Ọ̀kọ is that in which the first verb is modified by *yọ́* 'go'. Like in the first set of bipartite verbs discussed above, both *yọ́* and the verb which it modifies also have a non-compositional meaning. The semantics is irregular, compared with when any of both verbs are used in a simplex construction. For instance, *bue yọ̀* 'sleep off', made up of the verbs *bue* 'to sleep' and *yọ́* 'to go', see examples (9a), (9b), and (10).

(9a) *ìjónà bue*
Jonah sleep
'Jonah slept.'

(9b) *ìjónà yọ ẹ̀táṣíṣì*
Jonah go Tarshish
'Jonah went to Tarshish.'

(10) *ìjónà bue yọ̀*
Jonah sleep go
'Jonah slept off (completely).'

A list of this class of bipartite verbs is provided in (11). Note that, I have written this class of bipartite verbs separately (i.e, with a space in between them) because I perceive that the second half *yọ́* is close to a particle, based on its syntactic function, as a modifier.

(11)
(a) *bue* + *yọ́* → *bue yọ̀*
sleep go 'to sleep off (completely)'

(b) *né* + *yọ́* → *né yọ̀*
wander go 'to wander off'

(c) *mune* + *yọ́* → *múné yọ́*
run off 'to run off'

(d) *jé* + *yọ́* → *jé yọ̀*
eat go 'to go gallivanting'

(e) *pìrì* + *yọ́* → *pìrì yọ*
fly go 'to fly off'

(f) *jéjèn* + *yọ́* → *jéjèn yọ́*
walk go 'to walk off/to get lost'

It will be wrong to interpret the set of verbs listed in (11) above as goal directed serial verbs, where the direction is away from speaker. If this were to be the case, then non-motion verbs like *bue* 'to sleep' and *jé* 'to eat' will not make the list. However, goal directed interpretation can also be realized especially with the motion verbs if goal is definite. In examples (12a, b), (13a, b), I show minimal pairs of constructions showing both the non-directional and the directional senses respectively.

(12a) *àde* *jéjen* *yọ̀*
Ade walk go
'Ade walked off/Ade got lost.'

(12b) *àde* *jéjen* *yọ̀* *érúm*
Ade walk go farm
'Ade walked to the farm.'

(13a) *yo-òro* *múné* *yọ̀*
3SG.POSS-wife run go
'His wife left him.'

(13b) *yo-òro* *múné* *yọ̀* *yẹ̀-éfà*
3SG.POSS-wife run go 3SG.POSS-place/side
'His wife ran to him.'

5.3 Verbal Inflection

5.3.1 Bound person forms

5.3.1.A Pronominal prefix (subject)

Verb stems in Ọ̀kọ can also be inflected for person by pronominal prefixes (cf. 14a – d). The surface form of the pronominal prefix is determined by the phonological shape of the contiguous vowel of the verb host. This is based on ATR vowel harmony. Each person and number has two alternating forms (see §7.2.2 for a detailed discussion on bound person forms).

(14)

(a) *tì-wura* *amọnẹ̀*
1PL.S-arrived today
'We arrived today.'

(b) *tẹ̀-gám* *obin*
1PL.S-greet king
'We greeted the king.'

(c) *è-dín* *ọrikpokpo* *àyẹ*
3SG.S-know road DEF.SG
'S/He knows the way.'

(d) *à-tàm* *íkúsáyé* *ọyọyọ*
3SG.S-chew groundnut plenty
'S/he ate a lot of groundnuts.'

5.3.1.B Pronominal suffix (object)

Pronominal suffixes can only be attached to monomorphemic verb roots, as shown in (15a), (15b). On the other hand, pronominal suffixes cannot be attached to bipartite verbs (cf. 16).

(15a) *è-tíé-ẹ*
3SG.S-sing-3SG.O
'S/He sang it'

(15b) *ẹ̀-ná-ẹ́* *wọ́*
1SG.G-accept-3SG.O hear
'I believed him/her/it.'

(16) **ẹ̀-náwọ́-ẹ́*
1SG.G-believe-3SG.O
'I believed him/her/it.'

The surface form of the pronominal suffix also depends on the phonological shape of the verb root to which it is bound. The relationship is based on different phonological conditions. For instance, while the form of both the first and second person object pronouns are determined by ATR vowel harmony alternation, the third person object pronoun does not participate in ATR harmony. Its form is determined by some other phonological environment (see also §3.4.2.C). A few examples are given in (17), (18) (see also §7.2.2.C for a detailed discussion and more examples).

(17a) *è-ré-mú*
3SG.S-hurt-1SG.O
'S/He/It hurt me.'

(17b) *à-yẹ̀rẹ́-mọ́*
3SG.S-follow-1SG.O
'S/He/It followed me.'

(18a) *bì-tíé-ẹ́*
3PL.S-take-3SG.O
'They toke it.'

(18b) *nẹ̀-nwán-yà*
2PL.S-kill-3SG.O
'You killed it.'

5.3.2 **Verbs with spatial path prefix**

Two verbs, the motion verbs *cá* 'to come', and *yọ́* 'to go' can take the spatial path prefix *vé-*, interpreted as 'out'. This process gives the verbs an imperative reading[8], especially in a situation where the subject is not indicated, usually the second person singular (cf. 19a, b).

[8] I have also observed that it is not in all instances that *vé-* gives an imperative reading

(19a) *vé* + *cá* → *vé-cà*!
PREF come 'out-come!'

(19b) *vé* + *yọ́* → *vé-yọ̀*!
PREF go 'out-go!'

The spatial path prefix *vé-* is only a prefix, and it is functionally different from the spatial noun *ọ́nyẹ́n* 'outside', as used in (20).

(20) *è-wó* *ọ́nyẹn*
3SG.S-LOC.COP LOC.outside
'S/He/It is outside.'

5.3.3 Verbs with the *kì~kẹ̀* prefix

The prefix *kì~kẹ̀* when attached to a verb also gives the verb an imperative reading, as seen in (21a-e). Unlike the spatial path prefix *vé-*, *kì~kẹ̀* is not restricted to motion verbs alone.

(21)

(a) *kẹ̀-ca*!
PREF-come
'Come!'

(b) *kì-jijen*!
PREF-eat
'Eat!'

(c) *nẹ-kẹ̀-yọ*!
2PL.S-PREF-go
'Go!'

(d) *ti-kì-bue*!
1PL.S-PREF-sleep
'Let us sleep!'

ẹnẹ̀m *íbúbá* *mín* *ve-ca*
animals remaining INCEP out-come
'The rest of the animals then came out.'

(e) *à-ka* *bí-kí* *kẹ̀-bálẹ́* *áyẹ* (DM:21)
3SG.S-say 3PL.S-continue PREF-look 3SG.I
'He said they should continue to observe him'

The prefix *kì~kẹ̀* is not always used as an imperative element. It can be attached to any verb, and is often used to impose a progressive reading on a verb, especially in the event where the progressive marker *e~a* is not permitted to combine with a particular verbal marker (see §5.4) (cf. 22, 23).

(22) *tì-dí* *min* *e-kì-wùrú* *ásám*. (YF2:15)
1PL.S-can INCEP PROG-PREF-uproot mulch
'We can start uprooting the mulch.'

(23) *à-áka-kẹ̀-ca* *ísúbù-ísúbù*
3SG.S-FUT-PREF-come day-day
'S/He will keep coming everyday.'

5.3.4 **The go-infinitive verb**

The go-verb in Ọ̀kọ consists of two types, namely, *yọ́* (which we saw earlier in §5.3.2 and §5.3.3, occurring with both the spatial path prefix and the imperative prefix respectively), and *jén* (which never occurs with any of the two prefixes). The *jén* variant of 'go' is used to introduce an infinitive clause. The verb which occurs in the infinitive clause introduced by *jén* is always inflected with the infinitive prefix *e~a* depending on the ATR status of the vowel in the adjacent following syllable of the host verb (cf. 24a, b).

(24a) *ofòro* *àyẹ* *e-ni* *ka* *àyẹ* *jén* ***e-ni*** *oòró*
man DEF.SG PROG-want COMP 3SG.I go INF-search wife
'The man wants to go and look for a wife.'

(24b) *tè-éke-jén* ***a-gbà-ẹ́***
1PL.S-FUT-go INF-see-3SG.O
'We will go to see him.'

The infinitive clauses in (24a), (24b) above are also purpose clauses (i.e. the infinitive purpose clause). This is in contrast with the non-infinitive purpose clause which can be expressed with the non-infinitive go-verb *yọ́*. This is shown in examples (25a), (25b) (see §19.4.4 on the purpose clause).

(25a) *tà-áka-yọ̀* *gbá-ẹ́*
1PL.S-FUT-go see-3SG.O
'We will go and see him.'

(25b) *ofòro àyẹ e-ni ka àyẹ yọ̀ bue*
man DEF.SG PROG-want COMP 3SG.I go sleep
(Lit. 'The man wants that he go and sleep.')
'The man wants to go and sleep.'

Furthermore, both go-verbs can occur in the same sentence, where *jén* is used to introduce the infinitive purpose clause. A typical example is (26) below. The sentence gives the moral lessons to be learned from the story of the "Mysterious bride".

(26) *iyaro nẹnẹ yọ̀ éjí jén* ***e-nì*** *ógbénofòro na,*
woman [REL go market go INF-want wife RCP]
ẹ̀kákálẹ̀ka àyẹ à-fọ́ fóm ubo. (MB:30)
soldier ants FOC 3SG.S-take enter house
(Lit. A man who goes to take a wife from the market place, has brought home soldier ants.)
'A man who takes a wife from the market place is courting trouble.'

5.3.5 **Tense and Aspect forms**

5.3.5.A **The future form**

The future form of a verb in Ọ̀kọ is marked by the future tense marker, which has two alternating forms *éke~áka*. The choice between them is determined by ATR vowel harmony (see §3.4). Two examples are given in (27a), (27b). The use of the future tense is discussed further in section 15.2.1.

(27a) *mè-éke-nyín ẹ́sá àyẹ*
1SG.S-FUT-buy cloth DEF.SG
'I will buy the cloth'

(27b) *mà-áka-gàm óbin usie*
1SG.S-FUT-greet king tomorrow
'I will greet the king tomorrow'

5.3.5.B **The non-future form**

The non-future form of a verb in Ọ̀kọ is unmarked. A dynamic verb in its bare form always has the past time reference as in (28), while a stative verb in its bare form is always interpreted as either past or present (cf. 29).

(28) *unini nyín ẹ́sá owowo*
unini buy cloth new
'Unini bought a new dress.'

(29) *unini dín ọ́gá àyẹ*
unini know stranger DEF.SG
'Unini knew/knows the stranger.'

5.3.5.C **The progressive marker**

The progressive marker in Ọ̀kọ has two alternating forms *e*~*a*. When bound to a verb, it gives a progressive reading. The choice between both alternants is determined by ATR vowel harmony (see §3.4). Two examples are given in (30a), (30b). The use of the progressive aspect is discussed further in section 15.3.1.

(30a) *mè-é-bue*
1SG.S-PROG-sleep
'I am sleeping.'

(30b) *mà-a-yẹ̀rẹ́-bá* *yọ̀* *érúm*
1SG.S-PROG-follow-3PL.O go farm
'I am accompanying them to the farm.'

5.3.5.D **The repetitive (aspect) marker**

The repetitive marker in Ọ̀kọ alternates between *dé*~*dá*, see (31a), (31b). The choice between the forms of the repetitive marker is determined by ATR vowel harmony (see §3.4). The use of the repetitive aspect is discussed further in section 15.3.2.

(31a) *à-dá-gám* *éró* *àbẹ*
3SG.S-REPT-greet people DEF.PL
'S/He greeted the people again.'

(31b) *è-dé-e-síḗmẹsẹ* *nḗ* *Òsìbìna*
3SG.S-REPT-PROG-pray BENF God
(Lit. S/He prayed to God again and again…)
'S/He repeatedly prayed to God.'

5.3.5.E **The habitual (aspect) marker**

The present habitual marker in Ọ̀kọ has the alternants, *dèkì~dàkẹ̀* (cf. 32a), (32b). The choice between the alternants is also determined by ATR vowel harmony (see §3.4). The use of the habitual aspect is discussed further in section 15.3.3.

(32a) *u-dèkì-ré* *èfẹ̀nẹ́bẹ́*
2SG.S-HAB-reach place.distant
'You always go there/You always visit the place.'

(32b) *ọ-dàkẹ̀-pọ̀ra* *ije* *ísúbù* *fẹ̀yan*
2SG.S-HAB-sweep ground day all
'You sweep the floor everyday.'

It could be claimed that the habitual marker in Ọ̀kọ is formed by combining the repetitive *dé~dá* (see §5.3.5.D) with the verbal prefix *kì~kẹ̀*, which has a progressive reading (see §5.3.3). The temporal auxiliary verb *táyẹ̀* 'do.before/early' (see also §6.5.2), can be introduced between the two elements that make up the habitual marker in order to express the past habitual (cf. 33a, b).

(33a) *unini* *dà-táyẹ̀* *kì-ní* *óhún* *nẹnẹ* *sẹ́* *nà*
unini REPT-do.before PREF-like soup REL spicy RCP
'Unini used to like spicy soup.'

(33b) *a-dà-táyẹ̀* *kẹ̀-yẹ̀rẹ́-mọ́* *yọ* *òsìbìna*
3SG.S-REPT-do.before PREF-follow-1SG.O go God
uùbó
POSS.house
'S/He used to accompany me to the church.'

5.3.5.F **The negative marker**

The negative marker alternates between *mè~mà*, when it is prefixed to the bare verb (cf. 34a, b), and to the following verbal elements: the repetitive (cf. 35), the habitual (cf. 36), the habilitative (cf. 37), and the obligative (cf. 38). Both forms of the negative prefix must harmonize in terms of ATR with the adjacent vowel of it host.

(34a) *i-mè-tíé íkíbà àyẹ*
1SG.S-NEG-take money DEF.SG
'I did not take the money'

(34b) *a-mà-náwọ́*
3SG.S-NEG-believe
'S/He does not believe/S/He is not a believer.'

(35) *a-mà-dà-gám éró àbẹ*
3SG.S-REPT-greet people DEF.PL
'S/He did not greet the people again.'

(36) *u-mè-dèkì-ré ẹ̀fẹ̀nẹ́bẹ́*
2SG.S-HAB-reach place.distant
'You do not always visit the place.'

(37) *unini e-mè-dí sie-ẹ*
Unini 3SG.S-NEG-can do-3SG.O
'Unini cannot do it.'

(38) *unini a-mà-gbádọ̀ sie-ẹ*
Unini 3SG.S-NEG-must do-3SG.O
'Unini must not do it.'

On the other hand, the negative marker alternates between *mé~má* when it is prefixed to verb in an imperative clause (cf. 39) (see also §16.2.2; §16.4.2), and when it combines with the conditional marker in a conditional clause (cf. 40) (see also §5.3.6.G; §16.2.2; §19.4.2).

(39) *ú-mé-yě-bá*!
2SG.S-NEG-call-3PL.O
'Do not call them!'

(40) *unini à-á-má-gam-tọ*
Unini 3SG.S-COND-NEG-greet-1PL.O
'If Unini did not greeting us'

Furthermore, the negative marker alternates between *è~à* when it is prefixed to the continuative (cf. 41), and the inceptive (cf. 42) aspects (see also §6.4.1; §6.4.2).

(41) *e-è-kí a-yẹ̀rẹ́-yá*
3SG.S-NEG-CONT PROG-follow-3SG.O
'S/He did not continue to follow her/him.'

(42) *ógbén áyẹ e-è-min e-jéjèn*
child DEF.SG 3SG.S-NEG-INCEP PROG-walk
'The child has not started walking.'

Furthermore, the *è~à* form of the negative marker also occurs before both the future tense marker *éke~áka*, and the progressive marker *e~a*. However, due to vowel elision rules in the language, which always affects the first of two contiguous oral vowels at word boundary (see §3.3.1), the vowel segment of the negative marker is always deleted. The low tone which it bears replaces the original tone on the surviving vowel. Compare the affirmative forms of the verb in (43a, 44a), with the negative forms in (43b, 44b).

(43a) *mà-áka-yẹ̀rẹ́-ya* *yọ̀* *óbínutù*
1SG.S-FUT-follow-3SG.O go palace
'I will accompany him to the palace.'

(43b) *ma-àka-yẹ̀rẹ́-ya* *yọ̀* *óbínutù*
1SG.S-NEG.FUT-follow-3SG.O go palace
'I will not accompany him to the palace.'

(44a) *mà-á-yọ́* *ẹ̀fọ̀nẹ́bẹ́*
1SG.S-PROG-go there
'I am going there.'

(44b) *ma-à-yọ́* *ẹ̀fọ̀nẹ́bẹ́*
1SG.S-NEG.PROG-go there
'I am not going there.'

The low tone of the negative marker *è~à* replaces the high tone on the contiguous syllable of the host. The underlying representation for (43b) and (44b) are presented as (45), (46).

(45) */ma-à-áka-yẹ̀rẹ́-ya* *yọ̀* *óbínutù/*
1SG.S-NEG.FUT-follow-3SG.O go palace
'I will not accompany him to the palace.'

(46) */ma-à-á-yọ́* *ẹ̀fọ̀nẹ́bẹ́/*
1SG.S-NEG.PROG-go there
'I am not going there.'

See chapter 16 for more about negation in Ọ̀kọ.

5.3.6.G **The conditional marker**

The conditional marker as expressed in the verb alternates between *é~á*. It is always prefixed to a verbal host. The high tone on the conditional marker differentiates it from both the progressive marker *e~a* and from one of the variants of the negative marker *è~à*, with which it is segmentally identical. The choice of any of the variants of the conditional marker is determined by [ATR] vowel harmony (cf. 47a, b).

(47a) *àde* *é-té-ẹ* *è-éke-dín-yà*
Ade COND-teach-3SG.O 3SG.S-FUT-know-3SG.O
'If Ade teaches him, he will know it.'

(47b) *wà-á-gám-yà* *e-èké-gúnówó*
2SG.S-COND-greet-3SG.O 3SG.S-NEG.FUT-answer
'If you greet her/him, she/he will not respond.'

Whenever the conditional marker is expressed in the verb, it always occurs as the first element prefixed to the verb stem, after a full NP subject (48a). But where a bound pronoun occurs as the subject NP, the conditional marker always occurs as the second element only after the pro-NP (48b).

(48a) *unini* *á-dá-kẹ̀-gám-tọ́*
Unini COND-REPT-PREF-greet-1PL.O
'If Unini continues to greet us'

(48b) *bè-é-mé-dèkì-té-tú*
3PL.S-COND-NEG-HAB-teach-1PL.O
'If they do not always teach us'

It should also be noted in examples (47), (48) that the high tone of the conditional marker always spreads to the following element. For instance, the regular low tone of the negative marker assimilates to high after the conditional marker (cf. 48b). The only other condition that results in a high tone for the negative marker is in the imperative construction, as earlier mentioned in section 5.3.5.F (see also §16.2.2).

5.4 Verbal markers and their combinability

Having examined the form of the verb in Ọ̀kọ and its markers, in this section I examine the combinability of the verbal markers. The goal is to examine the extent and the limit to which the verbal markers can be combined.

Verb forms in Ọ̀kọ are classified under future and non-future. The future tense marker *éke~áka* can combine with the repetitive marker *dè~dà*, having the future expectation that a situation will be repeated; as seen in (49), and also with the imperative *kì~kẹ̀* prefix, this gives the verb a future continuative sense (cf. 50).

(49) *è-éke-dè-dín-yà*
3SG.S-FUT-REPT-know-3SG.O
'S/He will know it again.'

(50) *à-áka-kẹ̀-ca* *ísúbù-ísúbù*
3SG.S-FUT-PREF-come day-day
'S/He will be coming everyday.'

The future marker never combines with the progressive *e~a* (cf. 51) or with the habitual markers *dèkì~dàkẹ̀* (cf. 52).

(51) **è-éke-e-dín ka érúmrò á-wà*
3SG.S-FUT-PROG-know COMP farmer 3SG.S-COP
mẹ̀-ẹdẹda
1SG.POSS-father
'S/He will know that my father is a farmer.'

(52) **à-áka-dàkè-gám-tọ́*
3SG.S-FUT-HAB-greet-1PL.O
'S/He will always greet us.'

The only way of expressing the future habitual like in (52) above, is by use of the future*/kì~kẹ̀* combination as shown in (53) below.

(53) *à-áka-kẹ̀-gám-tọ́*
3SG.S-FUT-PREF-greet-1PL.O
'S/He will always greet us.'

Apart from the future tense marker with which it cannot combine, the habitual marker never combines with any other marker except with the negative prefix *mè~mà* (cf. 54); for instance, it never combines with the progressive (55), nor with the repetitive (56).

(54) *a-mà-dàkẹ̀-gám-tọ́*
3SG.S-NEG-HAB-greet-1PL.O
'S/He does not always greet us.'

(55) **ọ-dàkẹ̀-a-pọ̀ra ije ísúbù fẹ̀yan*
2SG.S-HAB-PROG-sweep ground day all
'You sweep the floor everyday.'

(56) **u-dèkì-dè-ré èfọ̀nẹ́bẹ́*
2SG.S-HAB-REPT-reach there
'You always keep going there.'

The progressive *e~a* can combine with the repetitive *dè~dà* to express the repetition of an action more than once. However, the repetitive maker always precedes the progressive when they cooccur. Compare the singular repetition in (57a) with the multiple repetitions in (57b).

(57a) *è-dé-síẹ́mẹsẹ* *nẹ́* *Òsìbìna*
3SG.S-REPT-pray BENF God
'S/He prayed to God again.'

(57b) *è-dé-e-síẹ́mẹsẹ* *nẹ́* *Òsìbìna*
3SG.S-REPT-PROG-pray BENF God
(Lit. S/He prayed to God again and again…)
'S/He repeatedly prayed to God.'

The only other marker apart from the repetitive marker with which the progressive marker can combine is the negative *è~à*. Both the progressive and the negative markers look alike (at least segmentally), and are only differentiated by the low tone on the negative marker which contrasts with the mid tone of progressive marker. See examples (58a), (58b).

(58a) *a-à-a-na* *ka* *bà-fọ́* *òyà*
3SG.S-NEG-PROG-accept COMP 3PL.S-take suffering
jé-mú
eat-1SG.O
'S/He never allows them to punish me.'

(58b) *e-è-e-ni* *ka* *òsì* *a-ca* *úrórumẹkà*
3SG.S-NEG-PROG-want COMP rain 3SG.S-come morning
'S/He does not like it when it rains in the morning.'

The conditional marker combines with the negative, the repetitive or habitual (cf. 59a, b) markers, but never with the progressive marker. A progressive reading can only be achieved with the *kì~kẹ̀* prefix (cf. 59a).

(59a) *bà-á-má-da-kẹ̀-gám-tọ́*
3PL.S-COND-NEG-REPT-PREF-greet-1PL.O
'If they are no longer greeting us'

(59b) *bà-á-má-dàkẹ̀-gám-tọ́*
3PL.S-COND-NEG-HAB-greet-1PL.O
'If they do not always greet us'

In summary, the combinability of the verbal prefixes in Ọ̀kọ as they occur with the host verb is illustrated in table 7 below.

Table 7: Combinability of the verbal prefixes

	Pro-subject	Condition	NEG	REPT	Non-future Future Progressive Habitual	PREF	STEM	OBJ
1	*à*	*á*	*má*	-	-	-	*gam*	*tọ*
2	*a*	-	*mà*	-	-	-	*gám*	*tọ́*
3	*a*	-	-	-	*àka(+ NEG)*	*kẹ̀*	*gám*	*tọ́*
4	*à*	*á*	*má*	*dà*	-	*kẹ̀*	*gám*	*tọ́*
5	*à*	*á*	*má*	-	*dàkẹ̀*	-	*gám*	*tọ́*

1. If s/he does not greet us.
2. S/He did not greet us.
3. S/He will not be greeting us.
4. If s/he is no longer greeting us.
5. If s/he does not always greet us.

Chapter 6
Auxiliary verbs

6.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses auxiliary verbs in Ọ̀kọ. The auxiliary verbs are elements which give further semantic or syntactic information about the main verb. I have adopted the term "auxiliary" as a broad category to cover all types of verbal categories which do not qualify as main verbs in the language. This include modal auxiliaries *dí* 'can' and *gbádọ̀* 'must' (§6.3), aspectual auxiliaries *kí* 'continue', *mín/wé* 'begin' (§6.4), temporal auxiliaries *cẹ̀cẹ̀*[9] 'just', *táyẹ̀* 'do.before/do.early' *cáná* 'do.quick' (§6.5) and other auxiliary verbs which do not fall into any of these classes: *má* 'do.with/help', *pìlà* 'do.again' and *bile* 'do.together' (§6.6). Although some of the Ọ̀kọ auxiliary verbs may be translated as adverbs in some languages, especially the temporal auxiliaries, I consider them as verbal rather than adverbial based on morphological and syntactic evidence. The temporal auxiliary verbs like their other counterparts can be inflected for person and other grammatical markers like main verbs.

Auxiliary verbs in Ọ̀kọ always occur before the verb which they modify (preverbal). The only exception is *pìlà*, which can be used in both pre- and post-verbal positions.

6.2 Differentiating between auxiliary verbs and main verbs in Ọ̀kọ

The following general points should be noted about auxiliary verbs in Ọ̀kọ: We know that the auxiliary verbs do not form part of the verb word as prefixes because the vowel(s) of the auxiliary verb do not harmonize with the vowel of the adjacent syllable of the main verb. The auxiliary verb is therefore a different unit on its own with its own prefixes. Its function is to modify the meaning of the main verb. The following examples in (1) - (4) show this.

[9] Most likely borrowed from Yorùbá, but pronounced as *ṣẹ̀ṣẹ̀* (see some explanation under §2.7).

(1) *à-gá* *nẹ́-bà* *ka* *è-dí* *a-nwán* *ẹ́dagba*
3SG.S-Say BENF-3PL.O COMP 3SG.S-can INF-kill elephant
àyẹ
DEF.SG
'He assured them that he can kill the elephant.'

(2) *è-dí* *è-je-ẹ*
3SG.S-can INF-eat-3SG.O
'S/He can eat it.'

(3) *ọ̀-gbádọ̀* *yẹ̀rẹ́-mọ́* *fọ́m* *ebi*
2SG.S-must follow-1SG.O enter water
'You must accompany me into the river.'

(4) *àde* *áka-gbádọ̀* *sú-yá*
Ade FUT-must marry-3SG.O
'Ade must marry her.'

We note in the examples above that the final vowels of the auxiliary verbs do not harmonize in terms of ATR vowel harmony with the adjacent vowel of the main verb. This is a proof of non-boundness.

Secondly, in a construction whereby a main verb is modified by an auxiliary verb, the auxiliary verb takes the grammatical prefixes. This condition is expected because the auxiliary verb is usually the first verb in a clause that includes a main verb. We note that in serial verb constructions (see §14.4.1), it is always the first verb in the clause that is inflected with the grammatical markers. The form of the prefixes is also determined by ATR vowel harmony. The prefixes may include subject clitics (cf. 5), future tense marker (cf. 6), negative marker (cf. 7a, b) etc.

(5) *bì-dí dè-te ísúbù nẹnẹ bè-e-cé*
3PL.S-can again-choose day [REL 3PL.S-PROG-carry
oòro uùce nà (MO:10)
wife POSS.load RCP]
'They can again choose a day in which they will organize the bride's property.'

(6) *àde áka-gbádọ́ sú-yá*
Ade FUT-must marry-3SG.O
'Ade must marry her.'

(7a) *ì-yé-ẹ àmá a-mà-cáná gúnówó*
1SG.S-call-3SG.O but 3SG.S-NEG-do.quick answer
'I called him but he did not respond in time.'

(7b) *a-àka-má-mọ yẹrọ*
3SG.S-FUT-do.with-1SG.O fight
'S/He will not fight me.'

The only verbal prefix which is never attached to an auxiliary verb in Ọ̀kọ is the verbal prefix *kì~kẹ̀* (see §5.3.3). The prefix is always bound to the main verb even when an auxiliary verb is also present in the construction. We note the grammatical construction in (8) and the ungrammatical one in (9).

(8) *à-ka bí-kí kẹ̀-bálẹ́ áyẹ* (DM:21)
3SG.S-say 3PL.S-continue PREF-look 3SG.I
'He said they should continue to observe him.'

(9) **à-ka bí-kẹ̀-kí bálẹ́ áyẹ*
3SG.S-say 2PL.S-PREF-continue look 3SG.I
'He said they should continue to observe him.'

Secondly, the auxiliary verbs are different from main verbs in that, the auxiliary verbs cannot stand alone in a simplex construction (cf. 10a, b); they must therefore combine with a main verb. For instance, the auxiliary verbs *dí* and *má* combine with a main verb *gbá* in (11).

(10a) **è-dí-yà*
3SG.S-can-3SG.O
'*S/He can it.'

(10b) **ẹ̀-gbádọ̀-ẹ́*
1SG.S-must-3SG.O
'*I must it.'

(11) *óró nẹnẹ̀ è-dí a-má áyẹ gba-ẹ na,*
person [REL 3SG.S-can INF-do.help 3SG.I see-3SG.O RCP]
àyẹ éke-sú yò-ógbéniyaro ọ́gbọ́gbọ́ àyẹ
3SG.I FUT-marry 3SG.POSS-daugther single DEF.SG
nẹ́. (TP1:11)
PREP
(Lit. Anyone who helped him to find it, he will marry his only daughter to.')
'Anyone who helped him to find it, he will give him his only daughter to marry.'

In most cases, auxiliary verbs are followed by the verb which they modify. The only exception is *pìlà* (see §6.6.3), which does not have a fixed position in a clause.

Auxiliary verbs generally combine with the plain form of the verb, however, the habilitative *dí* sometimes combine with the infinitive form (cf. 12) (see also §6.3)

(12) *è-dí* *è-je-ẹ*
3SG.S-can INF-eat-3SG.O
'S/He can eat it.'

6.3 Modal auxiliaries

The modal auxiliary verbs in Ọ̀kọ are the habilitative *dí* 'can', which is used to express an ability, and the obligative *gbádọ̀* 'must', which is used to express a duty or an obligation. Both modal auxiliaries always occur before the verb which they modify (cf. 13a, b).

(13a) *à-gá* *nẹ́-bà* *ka* *è-**dí*** *a-nwán* *ẹ́dagba*
3SG-Say BENF-3PL.O COMP 3SG.S-can INF-kill elephant
àyẹ
DEF.SG
'He assured them that he can kill the elephant.'

(13b) *ọ̀-**gbádọ̀*** *yẹ̀rẹ́-mọ́* *fọ́m* *ebi*
2SG.S-must follow-1SG.O enter water
'You must accompany me into the river.'

The habilitative *dí* sometimes introduces an infinitive clause, like the go-verb *jén* (see 5.3.4). The conditions under which this occurs is determined by the type of construction in which *dí* is used. *Dí* can only combine with the infinitive form of the main verb if the clause is non-future or non-negative (cf. 14a, b).

(14a) *tì-**dí*** *a-kẹnẹ-ya*. (YF2:6)
1PL.S-can INF-burn-3SG.O
'We can burn it.'

(14b) *àyẹ́ óroro mín* ***dí*** *a-kẹ̀-kọ́ ìgìlà kẹ̀-cá*
FOC everyone INCEP can INF-PREF-pack yam PREF-come
úbó. (YF2:29)
house
'Then everyone can start to bring the yams home.'

But with other types of constructions, *dí* only combines with the main verb (cf. 15a-e).

(15a) *àyẹ́ éke-**dí** sú-wú*. (MB:10)
3SG.I 3SG.S-FUT-can marry-2SG.0
'He will marry you.'

(15b) *àyẹ́ éke-**dí** gù ẹ̀dágbá àyẹ́ fura iken*. (WE:5)
3SG.I FUT-can chase elephant DEF.SG do.away town
'He is able to chase away the elephant from the community.'

(15c) *k' éyí é-mé-**di** sie ágọ́ ábẹ̀*
that sun 3SG.S-NEG-can do yam seedling DEF.PL
nwán íjè. (YF2:18)
kill LOC.ground
'So that the sun does not kill the yam seedlings in the ground'

(15d) *é-mé-**di** sie-ẹ́ íyọnu, é-mé-dí fọ̀ ẹ́pán*
3SG.S-NEG-can do-3SG.O trouble 3SG.S-NEG-can take head
dẹ̀ íjè. (YF1:10)
touch ground
'So that it will not be troubled (by the sun), so that it does not put its head (the tender head of the yam plant) on the ground.'

(15e) *bì-**dí*** *dè-te* *ísúbù* *nẹnẹ* *bè-e-cé*
3PL.S-can again-choose day [REL 3PL.S-PROG-carry
oòro *uùce* *nà*. (MO:10)
wife POSS.load RCP]
'They can again choose a day in which they will organize the bride's property.'

6.4 Aspectual auxiliaries

The aspectual auxiliary verbs in Ọ̀kọ are the following: *kí, min* and *wé*. Each of these is treated as follows:

6.4.1 *Kí*

The auxiliary verb *kí* is used to express the continuity of the situation which the main verb denotes (cf. 16a, b). We note again that the lone vowel of *kí* remains the same irrespective of the ATR class of the vowel in the adjacent syllable of the main verb. This therefore shows that the continuative auxiliary does not form part of the verb word; rather, it is an independent unit capable of having its own prefixes.

(16a) *è-**kí*** *a-yẹ̀rẹ́-yá* *fọ́m* *ẹ́mẹn* *ibè*
3SG.S-continue PROG-follow-3SG.O enter LOC.bush interior
'S/He continued to follow him/her into the bush.'

(16b) *tì-íkérese* ***kí*** *e-síútúm*
1PL.POSS-car continue PROG-work
'Our car continues to work / Our car is still working'

A very important point which must be noted about the continuative marker is that it must always combine with the progressive form of the main verb. Hence, a construction such as (17) below is not possible.

(17a) **è-kí yẹ̀rẹ́-yá fọ́m ẹ́mẹn ibè*
3SG.S-continue PROG-follow-3SG.O enter LOC.bush interior
'S/He continued to follow him/her into the bush.'

6.4.2 ***Min/Wé***

The auxiliary verbs *min* and *wé* have the same meaning. They both have an inceptive reading when they combine with the progressive form of the verb which they modify. However, both occur in complementary environments. For instance, while *min* is used in simple clauses (cf. 18a, b), *wé* on the other hand occurs in complex clauses (19).

(18a) *ógbén áyẹ* ***min*** *e-jéjèn*
child DEF.SG INCEP PROG-walk
'The child has started to walk.'

(18b) *yọ̀-ọ́tọ́m* ***min*** *a-lọrẹ*
3SG.POSS-ears INCEP PROG-long
'Its ears are beginning to grow longer.'

(19) *è-fóm nẹnẹ ì-**wé** a-wọ́ ẹ́gá áyẹ nà*
3SG.S-far [REL 1SG.S-INCEP PROG-hear word DEF.SG RCP]
'It has been long since I started hearing of the matter.'

Min/wé can also be used to modify the meaning of a main verb by expressing an event which finally took place sometime after it was expected (cf. 20a – c).

(20a) *è-**mín** yọ̀ ke*
3SG.S-INCEP go PERF
'S/He has finally gone.'

(20b) *í-bè-**min*** *te* *ísúbù* *nẹ̀nẹ̀* *bà-áka-yọ̀* *né*
PPCS-3PL.S-INCEP choose day [REL 3PL.S-FUT-go PREP
ọ̀bẹ́bẹlẹ̀ *nà.* (MO:7)
begging RCP]
'They will now choose a day in which they will go to ask (for wife).'

(20c) *é-è-ten* *ìgìlà* *àyẹ̀* *é-**wé*** *kẹ̀-ca*
PPCS-3SG.S-fold yam DEF.SG 3SG.S-INCEP PREF-come
á-kọ́-ya *a-kẹ̀-bẹlẹ̀kẹsẹ̀-ya,* *éyí*
3SG.S-pack-3SG.O 3SG.S-PREF-tie.round-3SG.O sun
e-me-di *sie-ẹ* *íyọnu.* (YF1:9)
3SG.S-NEG-can do-3SG.O trouble
'He folds the yam plant, and now ties it round (a stake) so that it will not be scourged by the sun.'

6.5 Temporal auxiliaries

Temporal auxiliary verbs in Ọ̀kọ are the following: *cẹ̀cẹ̀*, *táyẹ̀* and *cáná*. These auxiliary verbs are used to express time information in relation to the verbs which they modify.

6.5.1 *Cẹ̀cẹ̀*

Cẹ̀cẹ̀ is used to express the closeness of the event that is denoted by the verb. The event may be in the recent past (cf. 21a), the present (i.e, exactly at the moment of speech) (cf. 21b) or the immediate future (cf. 21c).

(21a) *ẹ-**cẹ̀cẹ̀*** *wura*
1SG.S-just arrive
'I recently arrived.'

(21b) *ẹ-**cẹ̀cẹ̀*** *e-wura*
1SG.S-just PROG-arrive
'I am just arriving.'

(21c) *mà-áka-**cẹ̀cẹ̀*** *wura*
1SG.S-FUT-just arrive
'I will soon arrive.'

We note in examples (21a-c), that the bound subject pronouns and other grammatical markers (e.g the future marker) harmonize as [–ATR] with the vowels of the auxiliaries which are always specified for [–ATR].

Historically, *cẹ̀cẹ̀* (sometimes pronounced *ṣẹ̀ṣẹ̀*, see also §2.7) was borrowed from Yorùbá, and it functions the same way in Yorùbá as in Ọ̀kọ. Aje (1979:98-99) also notes the use of *ṣẹ̀ṣẹ̀* in Ọ̀kọ, but he refers to it only as the recent past marker, and he writes it like in the Yorùbá way.

6.5.2 *Táyẹ̀*

The temporal auxiliary verb *táyẹ̀* (sometimes pronounced *táẹ̀*) denotes a prior event ('earlier/before'). We note also that the prefixes harmonize with the vowels of the auxiliary and not with the main verb (cf. 22a, b).

(22a) *bẹ̀-**táyẹ̀*** *dín-mú*
3PL.S-do.before know-3SG.O
'They once knew me.'

(22b) *à-**táyẹ̀*** *gbá-mọ́*
3SG.S-do.early see-1SG.O
'S/He saw me earlier.'

Táyẹ̀ can also be used to break up the two parts of the habitual aspect marker *dèkì~dàkẹ̀*, in order to express the past habitual (cf. 23a, b). We will recall that in §5.3.5.E, I claimed that the habitual marker is derived by combining the repetitive *dè~dà* (see §5.3.5.D) and the

imperative *kì~kẹ̀* verbal prefix (see §5.3.3). The claim is further strengthened by the possibility of introducing *táyẹ̀* between the two elements that make up the habitual marker. The [–ATR] variant of the repetitive marker is prefixed to the auxiliary verb *táyẹ̀*, while the verbal prefix *kì~kẹ̀* is prefixed to the main verb. The choice of the vowel of the verbal prefix is determined by the phonological shape of the vowel of the adjacent syllable of the main verb, whether [+ ATR] or [–ATR].

(23a) *unini dà-táyẹ̀ kì-ní óhún nẹ́nẹ́ sẹ́ nà*
unini REPT-do.early PREF-like soup [REL spicy RCP]
'Unini used to like spicy soup.'

(23b) *a-dà-táyẹ̀ kẹ̀-yẹ̀rẹ́-mọ́ yọ òsìbìna uùbó*
3SG.S-REPT-early PREF-follow-1SG.O go God POSS.house
'S/He used to accompany me to the church.'

6.5.3 ***Cáná***

The temporal auxiliary verb *cáná d*enotes the quickness or the haste of an event, or a situation that occurs early in time ('quick/early/before'). We note also that the prefixes harmonize with the vowels of the auxiliary and not with the main verb (cf. 24a-c).

(24a) *ì-yé-ẹ àmá a-mà-**cáná** gúnówó*
1SG.S-call-3SG.O but 3SG.S-NEG-do.quick answer
'I called him but he was slow to respond.'

(24b) *unini dàkẹ̀-**cáná** cá emumu uùbo*
unini HAB-do.quick come book POSS.house
'Unini always comes early to school.'

(24c) *à-áka-**cáná** jín újúm nẹ́-bà*
3SG.S-FUT-do.quick open door BENF-3PL.O
'S/He will quickly open the door to them.'

6.6 Other auxiliary verbs

There are a few other auxiliary verbs which do not belong to an easily definable class. They are the following: *má* 'do.with/help', *pìlà* 'do.again' and *bile* 'do.together'.

6.6.1 *Bile*

The auxiliary verb *bile* expresses a joint action; this also implies that the referent must be plural. The plural referent is any number more than 'one'. In the examples below (25a-c), I gloss *bile* as 'do.together', based on its semantic sense.

(25a) *tì-**bile*** *sú* *oòró* *ọ́gbà* *ọ̀ọ́rẹ*
1PL.S-do.together marry wife time one
'We (together) married at the same time.'

(25b) *ifòro* *àbẹ* ***bile*** *yọ̀* *èkó*
men DEF.PL do.together go Lagos
'The men (together) went to Lagos.'

(25c) *bè-éke-**bile*** *yọ̀* *èkó*
3PL.S-FUT-do.together go Lagos
'They will (together) go to Lagos.'

Interestingly also, *bile* is not related to the agent referent alone. It can also relate to the patient as seen in (26a), (26b). Here it simply translates as 'together'.

(27a) *ì-tó* *áde* *akà* *unini* ***bile***
1SG.S-meet Ade and Unini together
'I met Ade and Unini together.'

(27b) *bà-vá-tọ́* ***bile***
3PL.S-give-1PL.O together
'They gave us together.'

6.6.2 *Má*

Má means 'do.with' or 'help', and the participant who is helped or with whom the agent carries out the action is its object. In (27a), *má* translates as 'do.with', while in (27b) it translates as 'assist'. One characteristic that sets *má* apart from the other auxiliaries is that it is always followed by an object NP. That is, it does not stand in contiguity with the main verb.

(27a) *à-**má**-mọ* *yẹ́rọ́*
3SG.S-do.with-1SG.O fight
'S/He fought (with) me.'

(27b) *unini* ***má**-mọ* *jén* *e-yè* *ógbén* *áyẹ* *cá*
Unini assist-1SG.O go INF-call child DEF.SG come
'Unini assisted me to go and call the child.'

Even though *má* always takes an object like a main verb, it is still an auxiliary verb based on the fact that it cannot occur on its own but must combine with another verb (cf. 28).

(28) **à-**má**-mọ*
3SG.S-do.with-1SG.O

Secondly, *má* is not the one half of a bipartite verb as one may also be tempted to think. Perhaps, as **máyẹ́rọ́*, where an object is inserted between both halves as is always the case with bipartite verbs (see §5.2.2 and §14.4.2). Compare the bipartite *náwọ́* 'believe' in (29) with the hypothetical **máyẹ́rọ́* 'fight' in (30).

(29) *ẹ̀-náwọ́*
1SG.S-accept.hear
'I believe.'

(30) **ẹ̀-máyẹ́rọ́*
3SG.S-join.fight
'I fought.'

6.6.3 ***Pìlà***

Pìlà expresses the meaning 'do.again'. Its meaning is reflected in the following examples (31a, b).

(31a) *mẹ̀-ẹ́dẹ́dá* ***pìlà*** *cá* *kè*
1SG.POSS-father do.again come PERF
(Lit. My father has come back.')
'My father has returned.'

(31b) *è-**pìlà*** *jén* *e-bue*
3SG.S-do.again go INF-sleep
'S/He went back to sleep.'

Pìlà is different from the other auxiliary verbs that have been discussed so far, because it can change its position within a clause without any change in meaning. *Pìlà* can occur in any position of the clause except the pre-clausal position. It can occur in contiguity with a following main verb (cf. 32a, b), it can follow the first verb plus its object (i.e, a full or a pro-NP) (cf. 33a, b), and finally, it can also occur in the clause-final position (cf. 34a, b).

(32a) *è-**pìlà*** *kpárẹ́-mọ*
3SG.S-do.again abuse-1SG.O
'S/He abused me again.'

(32b) *è-**pìlà*** *nă-ẹ* *í-mù-úbá*
3SG.S-do.again accept-3SG.O LOC-1SG.POSS-hand
'S/He accepted it again from me.'

(33a) *à-ná* *yè-émumu* ***pìlà*** *í-mù-úbá*
3SG.S-accept 3SG.POSS-book do.again LOC-1SG.POSS-hand
'S/He accepted his book again from me.'

(33b) *à-ná-ẹ* ***pìlà*** *í-mù-úbá*
3SG.S-take-3SG.O do.again LOC-1SG.POSS-hand
'S/He took it again from me.'

(34a) *à-kpárẹ́-mọ* ***pìlà***
3SG.S- abuse-1SG.O again
'S/He abused me again.'

(34b) *à-ná* *yè-émumu* *í-mù-úbá* ***pìlà***
3SG.S-accept 3SG.POSS-book LOC-1SG.POSS-hand do.again
'S/He took the book from me again.'

6.7 The auxiliary verbs and serial verb constructions

On a final note, the constructions in which the aforementioned auxiliary verbs are used must not be mistaken for serial verb constructions. The reason is that, serial verb constructions involve verbs which can also stand alone in simplex constructions. For instance, the verbs *nyín* 'buy' and *jé* 'eat' in (35a, b), both occur in simplex constructions and together in a serial construction (cf. 36).

(35a) *unini* *nyín* *ikusaye*
Unini buy groundnut
'Unini bought some groundnuts.'

(35b) *unini tàm ikusaye*
Unini chew groundnut
'Unini ate some groundnuts.'

(36) *unini nyín ikusaye tam*
Unini buy groundnuts chew
'Unini bought and ate some groundnuts.'

I have shown that the auxiliary verbs cannot occur in simplex constructions. The clause in which they occur with another verb (the main verb) should therefore not be regarded as a serial clause, but rather as an S-Aux-V-(O) clause (37a, b).

(37a) *àde áka-gbádọ̀ sú-yá*
Ade FUT-must marry-3SG.O
'Ade must marry her.'

(37b) *ì-pìlà ca*
1SG.S-again come
'I came back.'

This does not imply that an auxiliary verb cannot occur in a serial construction. It can. However, it always modifies a following verb; for instance, the examples in (38a), (38b) (see also §14.4.1 for more discussion of serial verb constructions in Ọ̀kọ).

(38a) *unini pìlà nyín ikusaye tam*
Unini again buy groundnuts chew
'Unini bought and ate some groundnuts again.'

(38b) *à-áka-gbádọ̀ yẹ̀rẹ́-ya fọ́m ebi*
3SG.S-FUT-must follow-3SG.O enter water
'S/He must accompany her into the river.'

Chapter 7
Pronouns

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I examine various forms that are normally called "pronouns": personal pronouns (independent and bound) (§7.2.), reflexive pronoun (§7.3), the intensifier (§7.4), reciprocal pronoun (§7.5), interrogative pronouns (§7.6), demonstrative pronouns (§7.7), indefinite pronouns (§7.8) and logophoric pronouns (§7.9).

7.2 Personal pronouns

7.2.1 Overview

Personal pronouns in Ọ̀kọ are divided into independent forms and bound forms. The independent forms are so named because they are not phonologically or morphosyntactically dependent on any other element in a sentence. On the other hand, the bound forms are so classified because they are attached to verbal tense-aspect elements, preposition-like markers and noun roots. Secondly, their surface form is partly determined by the phonological shape of the vowel of their host.

Table 8 provides a full list of personal pronouns in Ọ̀kọ. The list includes possessive pronouns as they are also bound, although not to a verb host, rather to a possessed noun. The shape of the V of the bound possessive pronouns is always identical with the contiguous vowel of the possessed (see §7.2.5). We recall also that all nouns in Ọ̀kọ are vowel-initial.

Table 8: Full list of personal pronouns in Ọ̀kọ

Person/Number	Independent Pronoun	Bound Pronoun			
		Subject Pronoun		Object Pronoun	Possessive Pronoun
		SET A	SET B		
1SG	*àmẹ*	*ì-/ẹ̀-*	*mè-/mà-*	*-mu/-mọ*	*mV-*
2SG	*àwọ*	*ù-/ọ̀-*	*wè-/wà-*	*-wu/-wọ*	*wV-*
3SG	*àyẹ*	*è-/à-*	*è-/à-*	*-ya/-ẹ*	*yV-*
1PL	*àtọ*	*tì-/tẹ̀-*	*tè-/tà-*	*-tu/-tọ*	*tV-*
2PL	*àn̄ọ*	*nì-/nẹ̀-*	*nè-/nà-*	*-nu/-n̄ọ*	*nV-*
3PL	*àbẹ*	*bì-/bẹ̀-*	*bè-/bà-*	*-ba*	*bV-*

7.2.2 **The Independent personal pronouns**

The independent pronouns are person forms that are morphologically and prosodically independent and sometimes syntactically independent (Siewierska 2004). By prosodic independence, I mean that the form of the independent pronouns in different syntactic environments is not determined by any phonological interference from any other element of a sentence. Syntactic independence means that the independent pronoun is capable of constituting a whole utterance by itself. For instance, in Ọ̀kọ, the question statement in (1) can elicit an answer using the independent pronoun (2). A bound pronoun would be impossible here.

(1) Question: *ẹ̀rá a-fọ́ ógbén áyẹ cá a?*
who 3SG.S-carry child DEF.SG come QM
'Who brought the child?'

(2) Answer: *àmẹ*
1SG.I 'I'

In terms of form, the independent personal pronouns in Ọ̀kọ are bisyllabic (V-CV). All persons have different consonants. They all begin with /à/; however, the first person singular and the third person singular and plural end with /ẹ/, while the first person plural and the second person singular and plural end with /ọ/.

Table 9: Independent personal pronouns

	singular	plural
1st person	*àmẹ*	*àtọ*
2nd person	*àwọ*	*ànọ*
3rd person	*àyẹ*	*àbẹ*

I assume that historically, the form of each of the independent personal pronouns served as the base form from which the corresponding bound pronouns were derived. This assumption is based on the fact that the consonant of the bound forms is always identical with the consonant of the independent forms.

With respect to function, the independent pronouns in Ọ̀kọ are used for emphasis especially in a focus environment. When a pronoun is focused, it is the independent form that is used (cf. 3-5).

(3) ***àmẹ*** *àyẹ à-nẹ́-yà*
1SG.I FOC 3SG.S-give-3SG.O
'I (was the one who) gave it to him.'

(4) ***àyẹ*** *àrẹ* *è-sie* *útúm* *áyẹ̀*
3SG.I FOC 3SG.S-do work DEF.SG
'Only he did the job.'

(5) *k'*[10] ***átọ̀*** *gbá* *ọ́cẹ́n* *owowo* *àyẹ*
FOC 1PL.I see moon new DEF.SG
'We too saw the new moon'

Similarly, when the intensifier particle or a quantifier occurs with a pronoun within a noun phrase, it is the independent pronoun that is used (cf. 6, 7).

(6) ***àyẹ*** *ẹ́bẹ́bà* *gá* *nẹ́-tọ̀* *ka* *bẹ̀-jọ* *tì-íjé*
3SG.I INT tell PREP-1PL.O COMP 3PL.S-sell 1PL.POSS-land
'He himself informed us that our land has been sold.'

(7) *ẹ́cẹ́nrò* *àyẹ* *éke-tíégúrù* *nẹ* ***ànọ*** *fẹyan-fẹyan*
entertainer DEF.SG FUT-sing BENF 2PL.I all-all
'The musician will entertain all of you.'

Also, with the conjunction *akà* 'and', it is only the independent pronoun that can be conjoined with a noun phrase (cf. 8) or with another independent pronoun (cf. 9).

(8) ***àwọ*** *akà* *óbín* *bile* *ta* *ẹ̀bá* *óbinutù*
2SG.I and king do.together play *ayo*[11] palace
'You and the king played *ayo* at the palace.'

[10] The inclusive focus element in Ọ̀kọ is *ká* before a C-initial element, especially, the possessive pronoun, *ká tẹ̀-ẹ́dẹ́dá gbá ọ́cẹ́n owowo àyẹ* 'our father too saw the new moon.' However, before a V-initial element, the *á* is elided (I show the elision with the apostrophe in 5), but the high tone which it bears is reassociated with the following vowel.

[11] Also known as *Awale* in some cultures; an ancient game for two players which can be played by casting and capturing seeds in shallow smooth holes dug inside a board.

(9) ***àtọ*** *akà* ***àwọ*** *fọ́ ámọ́n né ọ̀bẹ̀lẹpẹn*
1PL.I and 2SG.I take oil give begger
'We and you gave the beggar some oil.'

7.2.3 Bound subject pronouns

Bound pronouns in Ọ̀kọ include subject, object and possessive pronouns. They are so named because they are always bound to a host which determines their surface form. In the case of bound subject and object pronouns, their surface form is determined by the vowel of their host. The main phonological process which determines the shape of bound pronominal elements in Ọ̀kọ is vowel harmony. The phonological shape of the vowel of the verbal host determines the form of the pronominal subject in ATR vowel harmony (see §3.4.2.C). There is a vowel harmony agreement between the vowel of the host and bound pronominal elements.

Furthermore, bound subject pronouns in Ọ̀kọ are divided into two sets, namely, set A and set B. The choice of a pronominal element from any of both sets is also based on the phonological property of the host to which it is prefixed. These include verbs, tense and aspectual markers. For instance, bound subject pronouns in set A are only bound to verbal hosts that are consonant-initial. On the other hand, bound subject pronouns in set B are only bound to hosts which are vowel-initial.

Table 10: Bound subject pronouns (set A)

	singular	plural
1st person	*ì / ẹ̀*	*tì / tẹ̀*
2nd person	*ù / ọ̀*	*nì / nẹ̀*
3rd person	*è / à*	*bì / bẹ̀*

Table 11: Bound subject pronouns (set B)

	singular	plural
1st person	*mè / mà*	*tè / tà*
2nd person	*wè / wà*	*nè / nà*
3rd person	*è / à*	*bè / bà*

The third person singular subject pronoun is identical in both sets. Table (12) provides an inventory of the tense-aspect-mood environments in which the two sets of subject pronouns occur. This is followed by some examples (10) - (22). TAM markers in Ọ̀kọ are always preverbal (see also §5.3.5 and chapter 15 for more discussion).

Table 12: Verbal tense/aspect/mood

	set A	**set B**
Bare verb	+	–
Progressive	–	+
Future	–	+
Habitual	+	–
Continuative	+	–
Inceptive	+	–
Repetitive	+	–
Imperative	+	–
Negative 1	+	–
Negative 2	–	+
Habilitative	+	–
Obligative	+	–
Conditional	–	+

Bare verb: set A

(10)

(a) ***ì****-sú-yá*
1SG.S-marry-3SG.O
'I married him/her.'

(b) ***ẹ̀****-gbá-wọ́*
1SG.S-see-2SG.O
'I saw you.'

(c) ***ù****-dín-tú*
2SG.S-know-1PL.O
'You know us.'

(d) ***ọ̀****-gám-bá*
2SG.S-greet-3PL.O
'You greeted them.'

(e) ***è****-ré-wú*
3SG.S-hurt-2SG.O
'S/He/It hurt you.'

(f) ***à****-yẹ̀rẹ-wọ*
3SG.S-follow-2SG.O
'S/He/It followed you.'

(g) ***tì****-jé-ẹ́*
1PL.S-eat-3SG.O
'We ate it.'

(h) ***tẹ̀****-fọ̀-ẹ*
1PL.S-carry-3SG.O
'We carried it.'

(i) ***nì****-cín-mú*
2PL.S-ask-1SG.O
'You enquired of me.'

(j) ***nẹ̀****-nwán-yà*
2PL.S-kill-3SG.O
'You killed it.'

(k) ***bì****-tíé-ẹ́*
3PL.S-take-3SG.O
'They toke it.'

(l) ***bẹ̀****-bẹ́-mọ́*
3PL.S-beat-1SG.O
'They beat me.'

Progressive: set B

(11a) ***mà-a****-yẹ̀rẹ́-bá* *yọ̀* *érúm*
1SG.S-PROG-follow-3PL.O go farm
'I am accompanying them to the farm.'

(11b) ***mè-é****-bue*
1SG.S-PROG-sleep
'I am sleeping.'

Future: set B

(12a) ***Mà-áka****-gám* *óbín* *úsíé*
1SG.S-FUT-greet king tomorrow
'I will greet the king tomorrow.'

(12b) ***mè-éke****-nyín* *ẹ́sá* *àyẹ*
1SG.S-FUT-buy cloth DEF.SG
'I will buy the cloth.'

Habitual: set A

(13a) ***u-dèkì****-ré* *ẹ̀fọ̀nẹ́bẹ́*
2SG.S-HAB-reach place.distant
'You always go there/you always visit the place.'

(13b) ***ọ-dàkẹ̀****-pọ̀ra* *ije* *ísúbù* *fẹyan*
2SG.S-HAB-sweep ground day all
'You sweep the floor everyday.'

Continuative: set A

(14) ***ù-kí*** *a-bẹ̀* *ógbén* *áyẹ̀*
2SG.S-continue PROG-beat child DEF.SG
'You continued to beat the child.'

Inceptive: set A

(15) *kàba ọgbọ̀na* ***ù-wé*** *è-sie-ẹ* *na*
from [time.which 2SG.S-INCEP PROG-do-3SG.O RCP]
a-mà-fọ̀ *ẹ́pẹ́n* *óbòrò* *ve-ca*
3SG.S-NEG-carry thing good out-come
'Since you have being doing it, nothing good has come out of it.'

(16a) **ì-*mín*** *cá* *kè*
1SG.S-INCEP come PERF
'I have come.'

(16b) *è-min* *a-lọrẹ*
3SG.S-INCEP PROG-long
'It is becoming long.'

Repetitive: set A

(17a) ***ẹ-dà****-fọ̀* *ógbén* *áyẹ̀* *cá*
1SG.S-REPT-carry child DEF.SG come
'I brought the child again.'

(17b) ***i-dè****-bue* *úrórum* *ọ̀nẹ*
1SG.S-REPT-sleep morning DEM.SG
'I slept again this morning.'

Imperative: set A

(18a) ***ni****-kì-jijen!*
2PL.S-PREF-eat
(Lit. You(PL) eat)
'Start eating!'

(18b) ***nẹ****-kẹ̀-ca!*
2PL.S-PREF-come
'Start coming!'

Negative 1: set A

(19a) *à-ka* ***"i-mè****-dín* *èfọ̀nafọ̀na* *wà-á-mán*
3SG.S-say 1SG.S-NEG-know any place 2SG.S-PROG-live
nà." (MB:14)
RCP
'He said, "I do not know where you are living."'

(19b) *ẹ́bọ́lá* ***e-mè****-dè-pìlà* *cá* *gám-bá*
Bola 3SG.S-NEG-REPT-do.again come greet-3PL.O
'Bola did not come back (again) to visit them.'

Negative 2: set B

(20a) ***me-è****-kí* *a-yẹ̀rẹ́-yá*
1SG.S-NEG-continue PROG-follow-3SG.O
'I am not still following her/him.'

(20b) *á-gá* *nẹ́-yà* *ka* ***we-è****ke-dí* *sú*
3SG.S_i-say PREP-3SG.O COMP 2SG.S-NEG.FUT-can marry
ayẹ *go!* (MB:7)
3SG.I_i PTCLé
'She$_i$ said to him that you cannot marry her$_i$!'

Habilitative: set A

(21) ***ù-dí*** *è-sú-yá*
2SG.S-can INF-marry-3SG.O
'You can marry her/him.'

Obligative: set A

(22) ***ẹ̀-gbádọ̀*** *sú-yá*
1SG.S-must marry-3SG.O
'I must marry her.'

Conditional: set B

(23a) ***mè-é****-yě-bá* *bà-áka-ca*
1SG.S-COND-call-3PL.O 3SG.S-FUT-come
'If I invite them, they will come.'

(23b) ***wà-á****-tẹ̌-mọ* *ekuin,* *mà-áka-yà* *ka*
2SG.S-COND-beg-1SG.O plea 1SG.S-FUT-accept COMP
mè-égbén *yọ̀*
1SG.POSS-child go
'If you plead with me, I will permit my children to go.'

7.2.4 Bound object pronouns

Object pronouns in Ọ̀kọ are also bound to a verb and preposition host like their subject counterparts. The form for all persons and numbers has a monosyllabic CV shape. The only exception is the third person singular which has a CV and a V form, *-ya/-ẹ*. Also, the vowels in both forms of the third person singular object are [– ATR] vowels.

Furthermore, while other persons and numbers have a pair of alternating forms, as shown in (table 13), the 3rd person plural has one invariable form, *-ba*. Also, the object pronouns in the table (13) below are not assigned tones because their tone patterns are sometimes not predictable. I regard them as toneless until they are used in a construction.

Table 13: Bound object pronouns

	singular	plural
1st person	*mu/mọ*	*tu/tọ*
2nd person	*wu/wọ*	*nu/nọ*
3rd person	*ya/ẹ*	*ba*

Both the first and second person singular and plural object pronouns have + and – ATR variants. The [+ATR] variant has the [+ ATR] vowel /u/, while the [– ATR] variant has the [– ATR] vowel /ọ/ (cf. 24).

(24)

	+ ATR		**– ATR**
(a)	*è-sú-**mú***	(b)	*à-gbá-**mọ́***
	3SG.S-marry-1SG.O		3SG.S-see-1SG.O
	‘S/He married me.’		‘S/He saw me.’
(c)	*è-ré-**wú***	(d)	*bẹ̀-yẹ̀rẹ́-**wọ́***
	3SG.S-hurt-2SG.O		3PL.S-follow-2SG.O
	‘It hurt you.’		‘They followed you.’

(e) *à-fọ́ yẹ-ẹ̀sa nẹ́-**mọ̀***
3SG.S-carry 3SG.POSS PREP-1SG.O
‘S/He gave his shirt to me.’

The third person singular and plural object pronouns behave differently from first and second persons and from each other (i.e. singular and plural also differ). Although the third person singular object pronoun *–ya/-ẹ* does not participate in ATR harmony, its surface forms are still determined by the phonological shape of the vowel of the verb host: the *-ya* form occurs after high vowels (cf. 25), after nasalized vowels (cf. 26), and after the open-mid front vowel /ẹ/ (cf. 27).

(25)

(a)	*ì-jú-**yá***	(b)	*ù-rí-**yá***
	1SG.S-close-3SG.O		2SG.O-cover-3SG.O
	‘I closed it.’		‘You covered it.’

(c) *è-sú-**yá***
3SG.S-marry-3SG.O
‘S/He married her/him.’

(d) *è-ní-**yà***
3SG.S-want-3SG.O
‘S/He/It wants her/him/it.’

(26)

(a) *ì-cín-**yá***
1SG.S-ask-3SG.O
‘I asked him/her/it.’

(b) *ọ̀-gám-**yá***
2SG.S-read-3SG.O
‘You read it.’

(c) *ù-fúm-**yá***
2SG.S-hit-3SG.O
‘You hit him/her/it.’

(d) *ẹ̀-rẹ́n-**yá***
1SG.S-slaughter-3SG.O
‘I slaughtered it.’

(e) *à-fọ́m-**yá***
3SG.S-enter-3SG.O
‘S/He entered it.’

(f) *è-gbén-**yá***
3SG.S-resemble-3SG.O
‘S/He/It resembles her/him/it.’

(27)

(a) *à-bẹ̀-**ya***
3SG.S-beat-3SG.O
‘S/He beat it.’

(b) *ẹ̀-yẹ̀rẹ́-**yá***
1SG.S-follow-3SG.O
‘I followed him/her/it.’

(c) *ẹ̀-sẹ́-**yá***
1SG.S-catch-3SG.O
‘I caught him/her/it.’

(d) *à-fọ ìgìlà nẹ́-**yà***
3SG.S-take yam PREP-3SG.O
‘S/He gave him some yams.’

The *-ẹ* form of the third person singular object pronoun, by contrast, occurs elsewhere, that is, after a vowel which is neither high nor nasalized, except after /ẹ/ (28).

(28)

(a) *ọ̀-gbá-**ẹ́***
2SG.S-see-3SG.O
‘You saw it.’

(b) *à-rọ̀wá-**ẹ́***
3SG.S-swallow-3SG.O
‘S/He/It swallowed it.’

(c) *è-yìré-**ẹ***
3SG.S-steal-3SG.O
‘S/he stole it.’

(d) *ì-lò-**ẹ***
1SG.S-spend-3SG.O
‘I spent it.’

(e) *bẹ̀-fọ̀-**ẹ** yọ̀*
3PL.S-carry-3SG.O go
‘They carried him/her/it away.’

(f) *à-dọ́-**ẹ** éjí*
3SG.S-price-3SG.O market
‘S/He priced it.’

The third person plural object is *-ba*. It does not have allomorphic variants which alternate for ATR vowel harmony, neither is it phonologically dependent on the shape of the vowel stem to which it is bound (cf. 29).

(29)

(a) *è-dín-**bá***
3SG.S-know-3PL.O
‘S/He/It knows them.’

(b) *ẹ̀-gám-**bá***
1SG.S-greet-3PL.O
‘I greeted them.’

(c) *à-yẹ̀rẹ́-**bá***
3SG.S-follow-3PL.O
‘S/He/It followed them.’

(d) *ọ̀-gbá-**bá***
2SG.S-see-3PL.O
‘You saw them.’

(e) *è-ré-**bá***
3SG.S-hurt-3PL.O
‘S/He/It hurt them.’

(f) *è-sú-**bá***
3SG.S-marry-3PL.O
‘S/He married them.’

7.2.5 **Bound possessive pronouns**

Possessive pronouns in Ọ̀kọ are also bound. They are always prefixed to a possessed noun. The form of the possessive prefix is CV for all persons and numbers. V is identical with the contiguous vowel of the possessed (cf. 30).

(30)

(a) *mẹ̀-ẹ́pán*
1SG.POSS-head
'my head'

(b) *wù-úbó*
2SG.POSS-house
'your house'

(c) *yẹ̀-ẹ́dẹ́dá*
3SG.POSS-father
'his father'

(d) *tì-íyá*
1PL.POSS-mother
'our mother'

(e) *nò-ógbén*
2PL.POSS-child
'your child'

(f) *bà-ányẹ́n*
3PL.POSS-eyes
'their eyes'

With respect to tones, the vowel of the possessive prefix always takes a low tone which is immediately followed by a high tone on the first vowel of the possessed noun (I reiterate that all nouns in Ọ̀kọ are V-initial). Possessive pronouns, like adnominal possessive NPs, do not show any distinction between alienable and inalienable possession. However, unlike in adnominal possessor NPs in which 'parent' nouns are treated differently from other nouns (cf. 31a, b and 32a, b) (see also §4.3.3), in possessive pronouns, 'parent' nouns are not treated differently from other nouns (cf. 33a, b and 34a, b) (see also 4.3.3).

i. Possessor NPs

(31a) *àde w-ẹ̀dẹda*
Ade POSS.father
'Ade's father'

(31b) *unini w-iya*
Unini POSS.mother
'Unini's mother'

(32a) *àde u~ùwó*
Ade POSS~dog
'Ade's dog'

(32b) *úwó áyẹ o~ògbén*
dog DEF.SG POSS~child
'The dog's puppy'

ii. Possessive pronouns

(33a) *úwó áyẹ yì-íyá*
dog DEF.SG 3SG.POSS-mother
'the dog's mother

(33b) *tẹ̀-ẹ́dẹ́dá*
1PL.POSS-father
'our father'

(34a) *úwó áyẹ yù-úbó*
dog DEF.SG 3SG.POSS-house
'the dog's house'

(34b) *àde mọ̀-ọ́dá*
Ade 1SG.POSS-sibling
'Ade my sibling'

7.3 Reflexive pronoun

Reflexive situations in Ọ̀kọ̀ are expressed by means of a reflexive pronoun, which involves a bound possessive pronoun prefixed to the word for 'body' *íwú*. The same processes which apply to possessive pronouns, such as, identicality between the vowel of the possessive prefix and the first vowel of the possessed noun, and tone similarity also apply to reflexive pronouns. The reflexive pronoun takes as its antecedent another noun phrase in the same sentence (cf. 35a, b).

(35a) *ẹ̀-gbá* ***mì-íwú*** *úgbègbèn*
1SG.S-see 1SG.POSS-body LOC.mirror
'I saw myself in the mirror.'

(35b) *àde a-fọ́* ***yì-íwú*** *ma àmẹ osuda*
Ade PROG-take 3SG.POSS-body measure 1SG.I elder
'Ade is comparing himself with me who is his elder.'

7.4 Intensifier

The intensifier in Ọ̀kọ is *ẹ́bẹ́bà*. This means that it is formally different from the reflexive pronoun. Also, unlike the reflexive pronoun, the intensifier does not occupy an argument position; rather, it occurs adnominally and serves to intensify the NP referent which it modifies (cf. 36a, b).

(36a) *àmẹ* ***ẹ́bẹ́bà*** *àyẹ* *à-fọ* *ẹ́gá* *àbẹ*
1SG.I INT FOC 3SG.S-take strangers DEF.PL
jén *a-gàm* *óbín*
go INF-greet king
'I myself took the visitors to see the king.'

(36b) *àde* ***ẹ́bẹ́bà*** *àyẹ* *à-nwán* *ẹ́pẹ́nódùdù* *ọ̀lọ́lọrẹ*
Ade INT FOC 3SG.S-kill snake long
àyẹ
DEF.SG
'Ade himself killed the long snake.'

7.5 Reciprocal pronoun

Reciprocal situations are expressed by the element *ábẹ̀n*. It is the only element used to express the action of two entities on each other or several entities on one another (cf. 37a-d).

(37a) *údúdò* *akà* *ọ̀kpàkọkọ* *kparẹ* ***ábẹ̀n*** *étúm* *óbinutù*
sheep CONJ tortoise pluck REC abuse LOC.palace
'Sheep and Tortoise abused (verbally) each other at the palace.'

(37b) *unini* *akà* *àde* *sú* ***ábẹ̀n*** *uùníní*
Unini CONJ Ade have REC POSS.love
(Lit. Unini and Ade have each other's love.')
'Unini and Ade love each other.'

(37c) *éró àbẹ́ má* ***ábẹ̀n*** *yẹ́rọ́ íjè ẹ́gá*
people DEF.PL do.with REC fight LOC.land word
'The people fought one another over a land matter.'

(37d) *égbén ábẹ́ gó* ***ábẹ̀n*** *úbá*
children DEF.PL render REC hand
ọ́gbọ̀na bè-é-sie ọ̀mábalẹ́
time 3PL.S-PROG-do test
'The children were helping one another during the examination.'

7.6 Interrogative pronouns

Interrogative pronouns in Ọ̀kọ́ are: *ẹ̀rá* 'who', *ẹ̀ná* 'what' and *ọ̀ọ́na* 'which'. They are question words which occur adnominally when they are used to question an NP (cf. 38, 39). The interrogative pronouns must be complement by a sentence-final question segment *a*. This is glossed as QM in the examples (see also §18.3).

(38) ***ẹ̀ná*** *úwó àyẹ́ a-tàm a?*
what dog DEF.SG PROG-chew QM
'What is the dog eating?'

(39) ***ẹ̀rá*** *á-fọ̀ ógbén áyẹ́ cá a?*
who 3SG.S-take child DEF.SG come QM
'Who brought the child?'

The interrogative pronouns qualify as pronouns because they can replace a noun in an interrogative construction (cf. 40b), and when they are used to question an action (cf. 41b) (see also chapter 18 for a detailed discussion).

(40a) *è-tie ọ̀nẹ́ nẹ́nẹ́ wà òkùrù na*
3SG.S-take DEM.SG REL COP white RCP
'He took the white one.'

(40b) *è-tie* ***ọ́ọ́na*** *a?*
3SG.S-take which QM
'He took which one?'

(41a) *àde fọ̀ íkíbà nẹ́ ẹ́cẹ́nrò àyẹ́*
ade give money PREP entertainer DEF.SG
'Ade gave some money to the musician.'

(41b) *àde sie* ***ẹ̀ná*** *a?*
Ade do what QM
'Ade did what?'

7.7 Demonstrative pronouns

There are four demonstrative pronouns in Ọ̀kọ́ (cf. table 14). The demonstrative pronouns require that the speaker indicate the relative position of an entity or entities, mostly by pointing towards the entity or entities. Demonstrative pronouns in Ọ̀kọ́ are broadly categorized into proximal and distal, and with number distinction.

Table 14: Demonstrative pronouns

	Proximal	Distal
Singular	*ọ̀nẹ́*	*ọ̀nẹ́bẹ́*
Plural	*ẹ̀náǹẹ̀*	*ẹ̀nábẹ̀*

The most important characteristic that sets out the demonstrative pronouns as pronouns is their ability to function as noun phrases (cf. 42, 43) (see also §8.3; §13.4.3).

(42) ***ọ̀nẹ́*** *éke-jin ujum áyẹ́ nẹ́-tọ̀*
this FUT-open door DEF.SG PREP-1PL.O
'This (one) will open the door to us.'

(43) *ẹ̀nábẹ̀ min kọ ábẹ̀n jese.* (DM:3)
those INCEP pack themselves gather
'Those (ones) then gathered themselves together.'

7.8 Indefinite pronouns

Indefinite pronouns in Ọ̀kọ may either be specific or non-specific. Both are examined as follows.

7.8.1 Specific indefinite pronoun

The specific indefinite pronoun consists of a generic noun, such as *óró* 'person', *ẹ́pẹ́n* 'thing', *ẹ̀fà* 'place', modified by the indefinite article *ọ̀bẹ̀n*; hence, indefinites are generic-noun-based (Haspelmath 2005). In Ọ̀kọ, the indefinite modifier is different from the numeral *ọ̀ọ́rẹ* 'one'.

(44)

óróbẹ̀n	'somebody/someone'
ẹ́pẹ́nọ́bẹ̀n	'something'
ẹ̀fọ̀bẹ̀n	'somewhere'

Some phonological processes are involved in the morphological forms of the specific indefinite pronouns. First, the first of two contiguous oral vowels at morpheme boundary is deleted. However, the tone which it bears, if a high tone replaces the low tone of the surviving vowel (*óró # ọ̀bẹ̀n → óróbẹ̀n*). If a low, there is a merger of two low tones after the tone-bearing segment has been deleted (*ẹ̀fà # ọ̀bẹ̀n → ẹ̀fọ̀bẹ̀n*). In the case where the first morpheme ends with a syllable-final N, vowel elision does not occur. However, the N-coda triggers a high tone on the following syllable (*ẹ́pẹ́n # ọ̀bẹ̀n → ẹ́pẹ́n-ọ́bẹ̀n*). The distribution of the specific indefinite pronouns are shown in examples (45) – (48).

(45) ***óróbẹ̀n*** *fọ̀ ényóm cá nọ ẹkẹ̀kárò àbẹ*
person.SP take palmwine come give chiefs DEF.PL
'Someone brought some palm-wine to the chiefs.'

(46) *tẹ́-fọ Ọ̀kọ ọrikpokpo nyẹ̀n* ***órọ́bẹ̀n***
1PL.S-carry Ọ̀kọ way show person.SP
'We showed someone the way to Ogori.'

(47) ***ẹ́pẹ́nọ́bẹ̀n*** *fùru fọ́m mà-ányẹ́n*
thing.SP jump enter 1SG.POSS-eye
'Something flew into my eyes.'

(48) *à-ta úbíbe ùlòkò ka àyẹ áka-fọ́*
3SG.S-hit hand-interior chest COMP 3SG.I FUT-carry
águẹn yọ ***ẹ̀fọ̀bẹ̀n***
tortoise go place.SP
'He promised to take Tortoise somewhere.'

The indefinite pronouns in Ọ̀kọ are lexical rather than phrasal. As phrases, neither the vowel elision nor tone sandhi changes take place. *óró ọ̀bẹ̀n* 'a person', *ẹ̀fà ọ̀bẹ̀n* 'a place', *ẹ́pẹ́n ọ̀bẹ̀n* 'a thing'.

7.8.2 Non-specific indefinite pronouns

Non-specific indefinite pronouns in Ọ̀kọ are derived by completely reduplicating a given generic noun and by the insertion of the formative morpheme *-k-*.

(49)

óró-k-óró	→	*órókorò*[12]	'anyone'
ẹ̀fà-k-ẹ̀fà	→	*ẹ̀fàkéfà*	'anywhere'
ẹ́pẹ́n-k-ẹ́pẹ́n	→	*ẹ́pẹ́nkẹpẹ́n*	'anything'

[12] Tone contrast shows the difference between this and òròkòrò 'human being,' which has the plural form èròkòrò.

(50) ***órókorò*** *dí* *à-cá* *gbá-mọ́*
person.NSP can INF-come see-1SG.O
'Anybody may come and see me.'

(51) *à-á-da* *ka* *ọ̀-wọ́* ***épénkẹpẹn,*** *gà* *né-mọ́*
3SG.S-COND-be COMP 2SG.S-hear thing.NSP tell PREP-1SG.O
'If you hear anything, tell me.'

(52) *tà-áka-yọ* ***ẹ̀fàkéfà*** *úsíé*
1PL.S-FUT-go place.NSP tomorrow
'We will go anywhere tomorrow.'

Ọ̀kọ also has a mixed form, whereby the complex form *ẹ̀kẹ̀nakẹ̀na* is used to express 'whatever'. It is complex because its internal structure is complicated. It is more than just the reduplication of the interrogative *ẹ̀na* 'what'.

(53a) *à-áka-fọ* ***ẹ̀kẹ̀nakẹ̀na*** *nẹnẹ* *mè-é-ní*
3SG.S-FUT-take whatever.NSP REL 1SG.S-PROG-want
na, *né-mọ̀*
RCP give-1SG.O
'S/He will give me anything I desire.'

(53b) ***ẹ̀kẹ̀nakẹ̀na*** *nẹnẹ* *è-sie* *na,* *àyẹ* *à-rónmúro*
whatever.NSP REL 3SG.S-do RCP FOC 3SG.S-good
'Whatever he does is good.'

Furthermore, the non-specific indefinite pronouns can also occur within a negative predicate having the reading of negative indefinite pronouns (cf. 54a, b).

(54a) *ẹ-mà-gba* ***órókorò***
1SG.S-NEG-see person.NSP
'I did not see anyone/I did not see anybody/I saw no one.'

(54b) *e-mè-wó* ***ẹ̀fàkẹ́fà***
3SG.S-NEG-LOC place.NSP
'It is not anywhere/It is no where.'

7.9 Logophoric pronouns

Logophoric pronouns are reference-tracking mechanism (Comrie 2004). This means that they are used to indicate overtly some of the relations of coreference holding within a text. This only involves the third person singular and plural independent pronouns. This is shown in table (15).

Table 15: Logophoric pronouns

	non-logophoric	logophoric
singular	*è / à*	*àyẹ*
plural	*bì/bẹ̀*	*àbẹ*

A logophoric pronominal form usually occurs in a complement of a verb of saying, seeing, thinking/hoping. Such verbs in Ọ̀kọ̀ always introduce a complement clause. The logophoric pronoun is embedded within the complement clause and it is coreferential with the subject NP of the matrix clause (cf. 55b, 56b, 57b).

(55a) ***à***$_i$*-gba* *ka* ***è***$_j$*-sú* *íkíbà*
3SG.S$_i$-see COMP 3SG.S$_j$-have money
'He$_i$ discovered that he$_j$ has some money.'

(55b) ***à***$_i$*-gba* *ka* ***àyẹ***$_i$ *sú* *íkíbà*
3SG.S$_i$-see COMP 3SG.I$_i$ have money
'He$_i$ discovered that he$_i$ has some money.'

(56a) *àde$_i$ gá ka **è**$_j$-jijen kue*
Ade$_i$ say COMP 3SG.S$_j$-eat finish
'Ade$_i$ said that he$_j$ has finished eating.'

(56b) *àde$_i$ gá ka **àyẹ**$_i$ jijen kue*
Ade$_i$ say COMP 3SG.I$_i$ eat finish
'Ade$_i$ said that he$_i$ has finished eating.'

(57a) *bì$_i$-roro ka **bà**$_j$-áka-yẹ̀rẹ-mọ yọ̀ érúm*
3PL.S$_i$-think COMP 3PL.S$_j$-FUT-follow-1SG.O go farm
'They$_i$ thought they$_j$ were going to accompany me to the farm.'

(57b) *bì$_i$-roro ka **àbẹ**$_i$ áka-yẹ̀rẹ-mọ yọ̀ érúm*
3PL.S-think COMP 3PL.I FUT-follow-1SG.O go farm
'They$_i$ thought they$_i$ were going to accompany me to the farm.'

In the examples ((55a), (56a), (57a), there is non-coreferentiality between the subject of the matrix clause and the pronominal subject of the complementizer clauses. The absence of a coreferential relationship is indicated by the subscripts (i …j). While in (55b), (56b), (57b), there is a coreferential relationship hence the subscripts (i…i).

Chapter 8
Articles and demonstratives

8.1 Introduction

This chapter describes articles and demonstratives in Ọ̀kọ. I examine their form and function. More discussions of their function can be found in sections 13.2.1, 13.2.2.

8.2 **Articles**

Articles in Ọ̀kọ consist of both definite and indefinite articles. They are optional modifiers which modify the head noun which they follow. Articles also have the additional function of indicating plurality in reference to the noun which they modify, especially, nouns which do not change their morphological form to indicate number (see §4.3.1). There is therefore number distinction between the definite and indefinite articles.

8.2.1 **The definite article**

The definite article in Ọ̀kọ consists of the definite singular *àyẹ* and the definite plural *àbẹ*. Both are used to introduce the definite noun phrase (cf. 1a, b).

(1a) *ógbén áyẹ pẹ̀n ọ́tẹ̀lẹ̀ àyẹ*
child DEF.SG break pot DEF.SG
'The child broke the pot.'

(1b) *égbén ábẹ pẹ̀n ọ́tẹ̀lẹ̀ àbẹ*
children DEF.PL break pot DEF.PL
'The children broke the pots.'

The form of the word for child in (1a, b) changes from the singular *ógbén* to the plural *égbén*. The function of the definite article in both contexts is mainly to ascribe definiteness to the noun phrase. Its

additional role of number marking is redundant. However, with the word for 'pot' *ọ̀tẹlẹ*, in which there is no morphological change in the form of the noun, the definite article is required for number-marking.

Furthermore, it is important to add that the form of the definite article (singular and plural) in Ọ̀kọ is also identical with the third person singular and plural independent pronouns (cf. 3a, b). In addition, the definite article (singular) is identical with the focus marker *àyẹ* (cf. 4).

(3a) ***àyẹ*** *ẹ́bẹ́bà gá nẹ́-tọ̀ ka bẹ̀-jọ tì-íjé*
3SG.I INT tell PREP-1PL.O COMP 3PL.S-sell 1PL.POSS-land
'He himself informed us that our land has been sold.'

(3b) *bè-roro ka* ***àbẹ*** *áka-yẹ̀rẹ-mọ yọ̀ érúm*
3PL.S-think COMP 3PL.I FUT-follow-1SG.O go farm
'They$_i$ thought they$_i$ were going to accompany me to the farm.'

(4) *ọ̀nwẹ́nwan* ***àyẹ*** *à-nwán ẹ́pẹ́nódùdù àyẹ*
killing FOC 3SG.S-kill snake DEF.SG
(Lit. It was killing that he killed the snake)
'What he did was kill the snake.'

8.2.2 The indefinite articles

The indefinite article in Ọ̀kọ consists of the indefinite singular *ọ̀bẹ̀n* and the indefinite plural *ẹ̀bẹ̀n*. Both introduce an indefinite noun phrase. The indefinite singular *ọ̀bẹ̀n*, modifies an indefinite singular 'person', 'thing' or 'place', while the indefinite plural article *ẹ̀bẹ̀n*, modifies an indefinite plural 'person', 'thing' or 'place' (cf. 5a, b).

(5a) *ógbén ọ́bẹ̀n pẹ̀n ọ́tẹlẹ àyẹ*
child INDF.SG break pot DEF.SG
'A child broke the pot.'

(5b) *égbén ẹ́bẹ̀n pẹ̀n ọ́tẹ̀lẹ̀ àyẹ̀*
children INDF.PL break pot DEF.SG
'Some children broke the pot.'

The indefinite elements *ọ̀bẹ̀n* and *ẹ̀bẹ̀n* are also used in the expression of indefinite pronouns in Ọ̀kọ, where they modify *óró/éró* 'person/people' respectively. The question is whether such can indeed be classified as pronouns rather than indefinite noun phrases (see discussion under §7.8).

8.3 Demonstratives

Demonstratives in Ọ̀kọ are divided into proximal and distal demonstratives. They also have singular and plural forms which indicate number marking with respect to the nouns which they modify.

8.3.1 Proximal demonstratives

The proximal demonstratives are *ọ̀nẹ̀* 'this' and *ẹ̀nánẹ̀* 'these'. They are used to situate an object or objects close to the speaker (cf. 6a, b).

(6a) *úbó ọ̀nẹ̀ wa mẹ̀-ẹ́kà*
house DEM.SG COP 1SG.POSS-own
'This house is mine.'

(6b) *égbén ẹ̀nánẹ̀ bi-mè-sú íyá*
children DEM.PL 3PL-NEG-have mother
'These are motherless children.'

8.3.2 **Distal demonstratives**

The distal demonstratives in Ọ̀kọ are *ọ̀nẹ́bẹ́* 'that' and *ẹ̀nábẹ̀* 'those'. They are used to refer to an object or objects far from the speaker (cf. 7a, b).

(7a) *úbó ọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ wa wẹ̀-ẹ́kà*
house DEM.SG COP 2SG.POSS-own
'That house is yours.'

(7b) *ẹ́gá ẹ̀nábẹ̀ a-karẹ obin*
Visitors DEM.PL PROG-wait king
'Those visitors are waiting for the king.'

Although demonstratives mainly modify the noun which they follow, they can also occur by themselves as noun phrase (cf. 8a, b) (see also §13.5.3).

(8a) *ẹ̀kèna águẹn kpótó è-ní na á-wà ọ̀nẹ́bẹ́* (TP1:12)
thing tortoise exactly PROG-want RCP 3SG.S-COP DEM.SG
'That exactly was what Tortoise wanted.'

(8b) *ẹ̀nábẹ̀ min kọ ábẹ̀n jese.* (DM:3)
DEM.PL INCEP pack themselves gather
'Those (ones) then gathered themselves together.'

Chapter 9
Quantifiers

9.1 Introduction

Quantifiers generally have the meaning which expresses the notion of quantity. Quantifiers in Ọ̀kọ always follow the element which they modify (see also §13.3.3). They include the following: numeral quantifier (§9.2), the universal quantifier *fẹnyan* 'all' (sometimes *fẹnyan-fẹnyan* for intensification §9.3), the scalar quantifiers *ọyọyọ* 'plenty/many/much and *keke* 'few/little/small' (§9.4), and partitive phrases (§9.5).

9.2 Numeral quantifier

Cardinal numerals can function as numeral quantifier in Ọ̀kọ. Cardinal numerals may consist of a simple root: *ọ̀yẹ́rẹ* or *ọ̀ọ́rẹ* '1', *ẹbọ̀rẹ̀* '2', *ẹ̀ta* '3', *ẹ̀na* '4', *ùpí* '5' *ọ̀nọ́kọ́nọkọ́nọ* '8', *ẹ̀fọ* '10' or complex forms: *ọ̀pọ́nọ̀ọ́rẹ* '6', *úfọ́mbọ̀rẹ̀* 'seven', and those derived from clausal structure, *ùbọ́ọ̀rẹ̀* 'nine' (see §12.2 for a detailed discussion of the formation of numerals in Ọ̀kọ).

A cardinal numeral quantifier follows the head noun which it modifies in a noun phrase (cf. 1a, b).

(1a) *íyódina* *bá* *égbén* *ẹ́ta*
women-leader give birth children three
'The Iyodina (women-leader) has three children.'

(1b) *úbó* *úfọ́mbọ̀rẹ̀* *àyẹ* *tò-óbín* *mẹ́*
house seven FOC 1PL.POSS-king build
'Our king built seven houses.'

9.3 Universal quantifier

The universal quantifier in Ọ̀kọ is *fẹnyan*, which is sometimes reduplicated as *fẹnyan-fẹnyan* for intensification. This can be translated as 'all' or 'every'. The quantifier *fẹnyan* follows the noun which it modifies

within a noun phrase and can be combined only with plural nouns as "all" and never with singular nouns (cf. 2a, b).

(2a) *iyaro ẹ̀nyan-ẹ̀nyan nẹ̀nẹ̀ wó tò-òsìbìna uùbo*
woman all-all REL LOC 1PL.POSS-God POSS.house
nà à-bá ógben
RCP 3SG-give birth child
'All the women in our church are mothers.'

(2b) *ájẹ́rẹ̀ roro ka éró ẹ̀nyan bue kè*
rabbit think COMP people all sleep PERF
'Rabbit thought that everyone had slept.'

9.4 Scalar quantifiers

The scalar quantifiers are: *ọyọ̀yọ́,* 'plenty' 'many' 'much' *keke* 'few' 'little' 'small'. They follow the noun which they modify. Also, they combine with only plural nouns (3a, b), and with mass nouns (4).

(3a) *éró ọyọ̀yọ́ yẹ̀rẹ́ ọ̀foòró akà yo-òró*
people plenty follow NOM.carry.wife and 3SG.POSS-wife
yọ̀ úbó
go house
'A lot of people accompanied the groom and his bride home.'

(3b) *ẹ́pẹ́n keke àyẹ è-dín*
thing little FOC 3SG.S-know
'He knows a few things.'

(4) *ébí keke fọ́m yà-ányẹ́n*
water little enter 3SG.POSS-eye
'Some water got into his eyes.'

9.5 Partitive expressions

Partitive expressions in Ọ̀kọ are done in several ways, ranging from the use of the partitive modifier *ábẹ̀-íwú,* which comprises of the partitive marker *ábẹ̀* and the word for 'body' *íwú*, to the use of the expression of fractions. This also includes the use of the partitive marker *ábẹ̀*, complemented by a denominator number. Finally, partitive expressions can also involve the use of locative phrases. This consists of the locative high tone on the first syllable of *íbé* 'interior', followed by a low tone as *íbè,* which literally translates as 'inside/among',

Both the Partitive modifier *ábẹ̀-íwú* and the locative phrase *íbè* are used interchangeably without any difference in meaning. For instance, part of a whole expression which involves collective nouns are expressed by means of a cardinal numeral or the quantifier such as *keke* 'few' (cf, 5a,b), (6a, b).

(5a) *ọ̀ọ́rẹ́ égbén ábẹ̀-íwú yọ̀ úbó*
one children PRTV-body go house
'One of the children went home.'

(5b) *keke ọ̀pariṣin ábẹ̀-íwú sú íkíbà dọ́m*
few police PRTV-body have money hold
'Only few among policemen are rich.'

(6a) *ọ̀ọ́rẹ́ égbén ábẹ́ íbè yọ̀ úbó*
one children DEF.PL LOC-interior go house
(Lit. One from inside/among the children went home.)
'One of the children went home.'

(6b) *keke àtọ́ íbè sú íkíbà dọ́m*
few 1PL.I LOC.interior have money hold
(Lit. Only few inside/among us have money)
'Only few of us are rich.'

Furthermore, expressions of part of a whole entity, for example ‘a piece of yam’, ‘a part of the food’ etc., are expressed by both the partitive modifier and the locative phrase.

(7a) *è-kùrù né́-mọ̀ fúrá ìgìlà àyẹ́ íbè*
3SG.S-cut BENF-1SG.O do.away yam DEF.SG LOC.interior
(Lit. ‘S/He gave me from inside the yam.’)
‘S/He gave me a piece of the yam.’

(7b) *áde jé íjén áyẹ́ íbè*
Ade eat food DEF.SG LOC.interior
(Lit. ‘Ade ate from inside the food’)
‘Ade ate a part of the food.’

(8a) *è-kùrù né́-mọ̀ ìgìlà àyẹ́ ábẹ̀-íwú*
3SG.S-cut BENF-1SG.O yam DEF.SG PRTV-body
(Lit. ‘S/He gave me from among the yam.’)
‘S/He gave me a piece of the yam’

(8b) *áde jé íjén áyẹ́ ábẹ̀-íwú*
Ade eat food DEF.SG PRTV-body
(Lit. ‘Ade ate from among the food.’)
‘Ade ate part of the food’

Partitive expressions which involve the expression of part of a number are expressed by the use of the partitive marker *ábẹ̀-*, complemented by a denominator number in stead of *íwú* ‘body’ (9a, b) (see also §12.6.5).

(9a) *égbén úpi ábẹ̀-ẹ̀fọ̀ à-a-nyán*
children five PRTV-ten 3SG.S-PROG-sick
‘Five of the ten children are sick’

(9b) *ẹ̀ta* *ábẹ̀-ùp͡i* *sú* *íbá*
three PRTV-five have fever
(Lit. ‘Three among five have a fever.’)
‘Three fifth has a fever’

Chapter 10
Qualitative words

10.1 Introduction

The term 'qualitative words', is adopted in this chapter to refer to words that denote qualities. Qualitative words here are words which in some languages are classified as adjectives. But because such words can hardly be classified as adjectives in Ọ̀kọ, even though they may be equivalent in meaning with their counterparts in other languages, they cannot be referred to as adjectives based on their characteristics.

Qualitative words in Ọ̀kọ are of two types. The first group, which has fewer members than the second, consists of qualitative nouns. They are nouns based on two attributes which they possess, namely, their morphological form and their syntactic function (see §10.2). On the other hand are qualitative verbs, which are verbs based on their morphological form and their syntactic function (see §10.3).

10.2 Qualitative nouns

In terms of form, qualitative nouns are vowel-initial like regular nouns, and syntactically, they can occur in the same position as nouns after the copula *wà* (cf. 2a, b). This group includes color words and words that express the qualities of 'greatness/bigness', little/small, new/clean and the characters of 'good' and 'evil'. A list is provided in (1) below.

(1)

òkùkùrù	'white'
òrínrín	'black'
ọ̀nyànyàn	'red/yellow'
ọkẹ̀ka	'great/big'
òkéké	'little/small'
òdùdù	'evil (also used for being wicked'
òbòrò	'good/kind'

(2a) *ímúsú àyẹ wà òkùkùrù*
cat DEF.SG COP white
'The cat is black.'

(2b) *òtéró àyẹ wà ádẹ́rò*
teacher DEF.SG COP drunk
'The teacher is a drunk.'

From the morphological shape of qualitative nouns, it would appear like they are reduplicated forms. However, this is not so because these words do not have a simplex form from which a reduplicated form is derived. For example, there is no form such as **kùrù* that yields *òkùkùrù*, or *nyàn* that yields *ọ̀nyànyàn* etc.

Qualitative nouns in Ọ̀kọ have three antonym pairs. These include color terms, in which 'black' is in opposition with 'white', and a pair of words denoting the qualities of 'great or big' and 'little or small', and the characters of being 'kind' or 'wicked'. The opposition is shown in (3).

(3)

òkùkùrù	'white'	vs.	*òrínrín*	'black'
ọkẹ̀ka	'great/big'	vs.	*òkéké*	'little/small'
òbòrò	'good/kind'	vs.	*òdùdù*	'evil/wicked'

Both *òbòrò* and *òdùdù* are interpreted as 'good/kind' and 'bad/evil' respectively. They can occur adnominally to modify a noun: *ẹ́pẹ́n óbòrò* 'a good thing' *ẹ́pẹ́n ódùdù* 'an evil thing'. However, Ọ̀kọ also has qualitative verbs for the expression of the state of being 'good' *rọ́múro*, alternating with *a-mà-rọ́múro* 'it is not good', the state of being 'bad'.

10.3 Qualitative verbs

The qualitative verbs have the following characteristics: i. they are consonant-initial like all verbs in Ọ̀kọ. ii. they can also occur in the same position as other main verbs in the language, hence, they can function independently as predicates without the help of the copula *wà*. The qualitative verbs are stative. I compare the distribution of the qualitative verb in example (5) with the stative verb in (6). A list of the qualitative verbs is shown in (4).

(4)

dọ́m	*lọrẹ*	*gbodi*	*cán*	*rọ́m*
old	long	big	wide	sweet
ginyan	*cile*	*rọ́múro*	*cín*	*fí*
sour	strong	good	dirty	hot
fún	*kere*			
cold	thin/narrow/short			

(5) *yù-úwó* *gbodi*
3SG.POSS-dog big
'His dog is big.'

(6) *yù-úwó* *fó*
3SG.POSS-dog die
'His dog died.'

10.4 **Qualitative words and their usage**

10.4.1 **Attributive usage**

Qualitative words are used attributively when they occur inside a noun phrase and they serve to modify the head noun which they follow. Direct attributive usage is only possible with the qualitative nouns (cf. 7; 8).

(7)

a. *ẹ̀sa òkùkùrù*
cloth white
'a white cloth'

b. *ámọ́n ọ́nyànyàn*
oil red
'a palm-oil'

c. *ìmúsú òrínrín*
cat black
'a black cat'

d. *ógbólò ọkẹ̀ka*
river great
'the sea'

e. *ógbén ókeke*
child small
'an infant'

f. *òfìlócẹ̀n owowo*
shoe new
'new shoe'

g. *ẹ́pẹ́n òdùdù*
thing evil
'an evil thing'

h. *ìwà òdùdù*
character evil
'an evil/bad character'

i. *iya òdùdù*
mother evil
'an evil/wicked woman'

(8a) *bẹ̀-vá-mọ ẹ̀sa òkùkùrù*
3PL.S-give-1SG.O cloth white
'They gave me a white cloth'

(8b) *ì-nyín ámọ́n ọ́nyànyàn éjì*
1SG.S-buy oil red LOC.market
'I bought some palm-oil at the market.'

(8c) *àde gbá ímúsú òrínrín*
Ade see cat black
'Ade found a black cat.'

(8d) *ẹbọla nyín òfìlócẹn owowo*
Bola buy shoe new
'Bola bought a pair of new shoes.'

(8e) *íyá òdùdù àyẹ fọ́m ije*
mother evil DEF.SG enter ground
(Lit. 'The wicked woman entered ground.')
'The wicked woman sank in the mire.'

On the other hand, qualitative verbs cannot be used in the direct attributive usage in a manner similar to qualitative nouns as described in (7), (8). Therefore, the following structures in (9a-e) are impossible in Ọ̀kọ.

(9a) *gbodi* **ofòro gbodi*
fat man fat/big 'a fat man'

(9b) *cile* **íwú cile*
strong body strong 'a strong body'

(9c) *cán* **ẹ́gbám cán*
broad chest broad 'a broad'

(9d) *cín* **èsa cín*
dirty cloth dirty 'a dirty cloth'

(9e) *lọrẹ* **ótí lọrẹ*
long stick long ‘a long stick’

However, qualitative verbs can only be used attributively by adopting two strategies. The first, is by nominalizing the root of a given qualitative verb after the process of reduplication (cf. 10) (see §4.3.2).

	Verb root	derived stem	Noun phrase
(10a)	*gbodi*	*ò-gbí~gbodi*	*ofòro ògbígbodi*
	fat/big	ATTR-ATTR~fat	‘a fat man’
(10b)	*cile*	*ò-cí~cile*	*íwú ògcícile*
	strong	ATTR-ATTR~strong	‘a strong body’
(10c)	*cán*	*ọ̀-cẹ́~can*	*ẹ́gbám ọ́cẹ̀can*
	broad	ATTR-ATTR~broad	‘a broad chest’
(10d)	*lọrẹ*	*ọ̀-lọ́~lọrẹ*	*ótí ọ̀lọ́lọrẹ*
	long	ATTR-ATTR~long	‘a long stick’

The second strategy does not require that the form of the qualitative verb be changed. The only requirement is that such qualitative verb must occur within a relative clause which modifies a head noun (cf. 11a-e).

(11a) *íyá nẹnẹ dǒm na*
woman [REL old RCP]
‘an old woman/a woman who is old’

(11b) *ótí nẹnẹ lọrẹ na*
stick [REL long RCP]
‘a long stick/a stick which is long’

(11c) *úbó nẹnẹ gbodi na*
house [REL big RCP]
'a big house/a house which is big'

(11d) *ógbólò nẹnẹ cǎn na*
river [REL wide RCP]
'a wide river/a river which is wide'

(11e) *ẹ́pẹ́n nẹnẹ rọ́nmúro na*
thing [REL good RCP]
'a good thing/a thing which is good'

It should also be noted that this corresponds to all verbs in the language as used in relative clauses (cf. 12a, b)

(12a) *íyá nẹnẹ fale na*
woman [REL fall RCP]
'The woman who fell'

(12b) *úbó nẹnẹ digina na*
house REL collapse RCP
'The house which collapsed'

Both strategies, that is, the nominalization strategy and the relativization strategy are used interchangeably by native speakers without any difference in meaning. For instance, *ofòro ògbígbodi* 'the fat man' and *ofòro nẹnẹ gbodi* 'the man who is fat', have the same meaning.

10.4.2 **Predicative usage**

Qualitative words are used predicatively when they occur inside a predicate. The qualitative nouns must occur in a predicate headed by the copula *wà* (cf. 13a-d).

(13a) *ẹ̀sa àyẹ wà òkùkùrù*
cloth DEF.SG COP white
'The cloth is white.'

(13b) *mù-úwó wà òrínrín*
1SG.POSS-dog COP black
'My dog is black.'

(13c) *yà-ányẹ́n wà ọ̀nyànyàn*
3SG.POSS-eye COP red
'His eye(s) are red (bloodshot).'

(13d) *íkérese àyẹ wà owowo*
car DEF.SG COP new
'The car is new.'

On the other hand, qualitative verbs do not require the copula *wà*. They can function independently as predicates without the help of the copula verb (cf. 14a-h).

(14)

(a) *ógbén áyẹ gbodi*
child DEF.SG big/fat
'The child is fat.'

(b) *ofòro àyẹ cile*
man DEF.SG strong
'The man is strong.'

(c) *ógbólò àyẹ cán*
river DEF.SG wide
'The river is wide.'

(d) tù-*úrúmù rọ́m*
1PL.POSS-orange sweet
'Our oranges are sweet.'

(e) *ótí àbẹ lọrẹ*
stick DEF.PL long
'The sticks are long.'

(f) *óhúm áyẹ gìnyan*
soup DEF.SG sour
'The soup is sour.'

(g) *égbéniyaro àbẹ fọ́*
girls DEF.PL tall
'The girls are tall.'

(h) *ọrikpokpo àyẹ kọ́kọhẹ́n*
road/path DEF.SG narrow/tight
'The road is narrow.'

10.4.3 Qualitative words with transitive usage

Two qualitative verbs deviate from the larger group in that they can only be used transitively. These are, *dọ̀* 'sick' and *welegede* 'weak or tired'. The constructions in (15a, b) are agentless sentences with a causative reading.

(15)

(a) *à-dọ̀-ẹ*
3SG.S-sick-3SG.O
(Lit. 'It sickened her/him.')
'S/He is sick.'

(b) *éjén áyẹ̀ welegede mì-íwú*
journey DEF.SG weak 1SG.POSS-body
(Lit. 'The journey weakened my body.')
'The journey weakened me.'

The qualitative verbs in the examples (15a, b) behave like two argument verbs. Their subject and object can be full NPs or pro-NPs.

10.4.4 Qualitative words in relative clauses

Qualitative noun and qualitative verbs can occur within a relative clause which modifies the head noun which they follow. However their order of occurrence differs. The qualitative verbs do not require the copula *wà* when they occur within a relative clause (cf. 16a, b).

(16a) *ọ̀pariṣin* *àbẹ* *bẹ̀* *íyá* *nẹnẹ* *dọ̌m* *nà*
police DEF.PL beat mother [REL old RCP]
'The police-men beat the old woman.'

(16b) *à-vá-mọ* *oti* *nẹnẹ* *lọrẹ* *nà*
3SG.S-give-1SG.O stick [REL long RCP]
'He gave me a long stick.'

On the other hand, the qualitative nouns must occur after the copula *wà* when they are used within a relative clause. They occur in the same position as object NPs after the copula *wà* (cf. 17a, b).

(17a) *iyaro* *nẹnẹ* *wà* *ọ̀nyànyàn* *na,* *àyẹ* *è-e-ni*
woman [REL COP red/yellow RCP] FOC 3SG.S-PROG-want
ka *àyẹ* *é-sú*
COMP 3SG.I 3SG.S-marry
'His desire was to marry the fair-skinned woman.'

(17b) *ọ̀kpàkọkọ nyín* *ẹ́sa* *nẹnẹ* *wà* *òkùkùrù* *na* *nẹ́* *ọ̀mọrò*
tortoise buy cloth [REL COP white RCP] BENF herbalist
'Tortoise bought a piece of white cloth for the herbalist.'

10.5 Qualitative words with tense-aspect-mood markers

10.5.1 The inceptive aspect

The qualitative nouns and qualitative verbs behave differently in a sentence which has an inceptive reading. In the case of qualitative verbs, the inceptive auxiliary verb *min*, combines with the progressive *e~a* prefix, which is attached to the qualitative verb to give an inceptive reading (cf. 18a, b). Note that this happens without the interference of the copula *wà*. The qualitative verb therefore functions as the predicator.

(18a) *ẹ́pẹ́nídùdù àyẹ min a-lọrẹ*
snake DEF.SG INCEP PROG-long
'The snake is growing longer.'

(18b) *yù-úbá uùtúm min e-gbodi*
3SG.POSS-hand POSS.work INCEP PROG-big
'His handiwork is expanding.'

On the other hand, the qualitative nouns can only occur after the copula *wà* in a sentence which has an inceptive reading (19a, b).

(19a) *iya àyẹ min a-wà ọ̀nyànyàn*
woman DEF.SG INCEP PROG-COP yellow/red
'The woman is becoming light-skinned.'

(19b) *yà-ányẹ́n min a-wà òkùkùrù*
3SG.POSS-eye INCEP PROG-COP white
'His eye(s) are becoming whiter.'

10.5.2 **The 'become' copula**

Qualitative words can occur in a 'become' predicate after the 'become' copula *cìna*. However, only qualitative nouns can fit into the slot without modifying their form (cf. 20a, b).

(20a) *yà-ányẹ́n min e-cìna òkùkùrù*
3SG.POSS-eye INCEP PROG-become white
'His eye(s) are becoming whiter.'

(20b) *è-cìna ọ̀kẹ̀ka*
3SG.SG-become great
'It has become great.'

On the other hand, qualitative verbs must be nominalized as described in (§10.4.1), in order to be able to function as the object of *cìna* 'become' (cf. 21a, b).

(21a) *ẹ́pẹ́nídùdù àyẹ min e-cìna ọ̀-lọ́~lọrẹ*
snake DEF.SG INCEP PROG-become ATTR-ATTR~long
'The snake is becoming longer.'

(21b) *yọ̀-ọ́tọ́m cìna ò-gbí~gbodi*
3SG.POSS-ear become ATTR-ATTR~fat
'His ears have become bigger.'

10.5.3 Qualitative words in the perfect aspect

The perfect aspect in Ọ̀kọ is marked by the clause-final *kè* (see also 15.3.6). Qualitative verbs function as the predicator in the perfect aspect (cf. 22).

(22a) *ẹ́pẹ́nídùdù àyẹ lọrẹ kè*
snake DEF.SG long PERF
'The snake has grown longer'

(22b) *ẹbola gbodi kè*
Bola fat/big PERF
'Bola has become fat'

On the other hand, qualitative nouns always require the copula *wà* when they occur in the perfect aspect (cf. 23a, b).

(23a) *mẹ̀-ẹ́dẹ́dá ẹẹ̀pẹn wà òkùkùrù ke*
1SG.POSS-father POSS.hair COP white PERF
'My father's hairs have gone gray'

(23b) *tì-íkén* *wà* *ọ̀kẹ̀ka* *ke*
1PL.POSS-town COP great PERF
'Our town has become great'

Chapter 11
Adpositions

11.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I describe adpositional relationships in Ọ̀kọ. I examine prepositional and postpositional phrases in the language. With respect to prepositions in Ọ̀kọ, there are two clear cut prepositional markers, these are, *kàba* 'from' and the locative *í-*, which in some environment is realized only as a high tone. This is discussed in detail in subsection 11.2.2 (see also §3.5.2.2.C). However, there are a few other markers in the language which behave like verbs and sometimes as preposition. These are: *nẹ́~nọ́*, which sometimes mean 'give', and at other times can translate as 'for', 'to', and *wó*, which sometimes functions as the locative verb, but at some other times it translates as 'in', 'from'. It is therefore not clear whether to call them verbs rather than prepositions or perhaps they are both. I discuss them in detail in section 11.3. Postpositions on the other hand have the appearance of postposed nouns, but the meaning of these nouns describes a spatial or temporal relation. This is discussed in detail in section 11.4.

11.2 Prepositions

The clear cut prepositions in Ọ̀kọ are *kàba* and *í*. Both are used to introduce prepositional phrases. One important criterion which sets both *kàba* and *í* apart from other 'so-called' prepositions is that they neither take subject prefixes nor pronominal objects. However, *í-* always interacts with a following noun as a prefix (see §3.5.2.2.C; §11.2.2), while *kàba* on the other hand is never attached to a following object. I discuss both prepositions in the following subsections.

11.2.1 ***Kàba***

The preposition *kàba* 'from', when used to introduce a prepositional phrase expresses the general direction of motion from point X to Y.

(1a) *àde yọ̀ úbó* ***kàba*** *ẹ̀kọ*
Ade go house from here
'Ade went home from here.'

(1b) *à-cá kàba éjí*
3SG.S-came from market
(Lit. 'He come from market.')
'S/He came from the market.'

It is clear that *kàba* is indeed a preposition because it also behaves grammatically in a non-verb-like way, for instance, it can be used to introduce a prepositional phrase in clause-initial positions (cf. 2, 3).

(2) ***kàba*** *ẹ̀kọ àyẹ è-jéjen yọ̀ nẹ*
from here FOC 3SG.S-walk go PTCL
'It is from here that he walked away.'

(3) ***kàba*** *ọgbọ̀na nẹnẹ ù-wé-è-sie-ẹ na*
from [time.which REL 2SG.S-INCEP-PROG-do-3SG.O RCP]
a-mà-fọ̀ ẹ́pẹ́n óbòrò ve-ca
3SG.S-NEG-carry thing good out-come
'From the time that you have been doing it, nothing good has come out of it.'

It should be noted that the expression of the allative (goal of motion) lacks an overt marker in Ọ̀kọ (cf. 4a, b).

(4a) *ẹ̀fẹ̀na é-mé-sù na, í-ta-yọ̀ éjí*
person 3SG.S-NEG-have RCP PPCS-1PL.S-go market
tì-nyín-yà. (YF2:12)
1PL.S-buy-3SG.O
'A person who does not have it will go to the market and buy it.'

(4b) *àyẹ bẹ̀-fọ̀-ẹ yọ obin ẹfà.* (TP1:32)
FOC 3PL.S-take-3SG.O go king place
'So they took him to the king.'

11.2.2 ***Í-***

The prepositional marker *í-* expresses a location. It translates as 'in'. The surface form of the locative *í-* is determined by the morpheme structure of its object, whether a noun or a possessive pronoun. Where the object is vowel-initial, as is the case for all nouns in the language, the vowel segment of the locative marker is always deleted before the following vowel; however, the high tone of the locative marker is always realized on the surviving vowel (cf. 5a). On the other hand, where the object is consonant-initial, as is the case for possessive pronouns, the locative marker has its full form (cf. 5b). See also section 3.5.2.2.C for a detailed discussion of the possible tone patterns.

(5a) *ẹ̀-gbá mì-íwú* ***úgbègbèn***
1SG.S-see 1SG.POSS-body LOC.mirror
'I saw myself in the mirror'

(5b) *érúmrò àyẹ sẹ́ ayẹrẹjẹkà* ***í-yè-érúm***
farmer DEF.SG pick mushroom LOC-3SG.POSS-farm
'The farmer picked some mushrooms on his farm'

The locative *í-*, whether with its segment being present or absent (i.e., when represented by only a high tone), always precedes its object and can occur with its object clause-finally (cf. 6a, b) or clause-initially (cf. 6c).

(6a) *à-ka “óbin ka àyẹ e-ni ka a-gbà*
3SG.S-say king say 3SG.I PROG-want COMP 3SG.S-see
éró ẹ̀nyanfẹ̀nyan ísúbù úfọ́mbòrẹ̀ ámọnẹ̀
people all day seven today
í-yù-úbó.” (TP2:7)
LOC-3SG.POSS-house
‘He said, “the king said that he would like to see everyone at his palace in seven days time.”’

(6b) *è-sú ẹnyẹn ọ̀ọ́rẹ nẹnẹ è-gbe ka údúdò*
3SG.S-have year one [REL 3SG.S-be COMP sheep
yì-íkúsáyé sie dáadáa ***érum.*** (RLE:5)
3SG.POSS-groundnut do well LOC.farm]
‘There was a year in which it happened that Sheep’s groundnut did very well on the farm.’

(6c) ***ípǒ*** *bi-mè-ju ìfèrèse.* (RLE:12)
LOC.courtyard 3PL.S-NEG-close window
‘In the compound, the window was not shut.’

The locative *í-* can occur in the same clause with the locative copula *wó*; the construction is still about location, see example (7a, b) below.

(7a) *àkọ è-sie kọ́-ya fọ́m ubo na, ẹ̀kẹ̀na aguẹn*
[as 3SG.S-do pack-3SG.O enter house RCP] thing [tortoise
sie na á-wà ka a-fọ̀ odolo àyẹ
do RCP] 3SG.S-COP [COMP 3SG.S-take beads DEF.SG
è-sú wó ẹ̀fọ̀bẹ̀n ***í-yù-úbúríbè***. (TP1:21)
[3SG.S-have] PREP place.INDF LOC-3SG.POSS-house.interior]
'As he packed it into the house, what the tortoise did was that he took the beads which he had into a place inside his house.'

(7b) *à-ka, "gàna bì-sie sie, bẹ̀-á-fọ ìwàrò ọ̀nẹ*
3SG.S-say how 3PL.S-do doing 3PL.S-PROG-take poor DEM.SG
ca é-jé ọkẹ̀ka wó ***í-bì-iken***
come INF-eat leader PREP LOC.3PL.POSS-town
ọ̀ne a?" (WE:24)
DEM.SG QM
'He said, "how did it happen that they made a poor man a leader in this (their) town?"'

11.3 Other prepositional markers

As earlier mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, there are two other categories which have no clear-cut definition as prepositions. They appear more like verbs. These are: *nẹ~nọ*, and *wó*. Both, unlike *kàba* and *í*, can take subject pronominal prefixes (cf. 8, 9). However, *wó* cannot take object clitics (10), unlike *nẹ* (cf. 8). It can only take a full NP (cf. 9).

(8) *àde à-á-nẹ́-mọ̀*
Ade 3SG.S-3SG.O[13]-give-1SG.O
'Ade gave it to me.'

[13] Preverbal object (see §14.2.4.B).

(9) *è-wó* *mà-ányẹ́n*
3SG.S-LOC.COP 1SG.POSS-eye
'It is in my eye(s).'

(10) **è-wó-ẹ*
3SG.S-LOC.COP-3SG.O
'It is in it.'

Both *nẹ∼nọ*, and *wó* deserve a mention in this section on preposition because sometimes they also have a prepositional sense.

11.3.1 ***Nẹ∼nọ***

A detailed discussion of *nẹ∼nọ* as 'give' verb can be found in section 14.2.4.F. But sometimes, it translates as 'for', 'to', when it introduces a prepositional phrase. The variation in its form is not predictable; both alternants are used freely[14]. When the object is a full noun phrase, both variants are used freely (cf. 11a, b), but when the object is a pronominal clitic, the *nẹ* variant (cf. 12a, b) is used.

(11a) *á-ga* ***nọ*** ***ẹnẹ̀m*** ***íbuba*** *ka* *ẹfọ̀nẹ́bẹ́* *nẹnẹ*
3SG.S-say to animals remain COMP [place.that REL
è-gbe *ka* *ẹwọtọm* *àbẹ* *táyẹ̀* *mẹ́* *ubo* *wó*
3SG.S-be COMP bee DEF.PL do.early build house in
na *ka* *bì-rĕn-ya* *wó* *ẹ̀fọ̀nẹ́bẹ́* *kárẹ́* *ábẹ.*(DM:33)
RCP] [COMP 3PL.S-set-3SG.O PREP place.that wait 3PL.I]
(Lit. 'He said to the rest of the animals that that place where it was that bees once had a hive at, they should set the trap in that place wait for them.')
'He told the rest of the animals that they should set the trap in the place where bees once had a hive.'

[14] The situation is the same when the meaning is 'give'.

(11b) *í-bè-min-e-te* *ísúbù* *nẹ̀nẹ̀* *ba-aka-yọ̀* ***nẹ̀***
PPCS-3PL.S-INCP-PROG-choose day REL 3PL.S-FUT-go for
ọ̀bẹ́bẹ̀lẹ̀ *nà.* (MO:7)
begging RCP
'They will now choose a day in which the will go for begging.'

(12a) *á-ga* ***nẹ̀-yà,*** *à-ka,* *"è-wó* *ọkọrẹ̀*
3SG.S-say to-3SG.O 3SG.S-say 3SG.S-be monkey
uùbo". (TP1:26)
POSS.house
'He said to him, he said, "it is in the monkey's house."'

(12b) *é-min* *ga* ***nẹ̀-yà*** *ka* *" u-di* *a-gá*
3SG.S-INCEP say to-3SG.O COMP 2SG.S-can INF-say
nẹ́ ***àyẹ̀*** *ẹ̀fọ̀na* *à-man* *a?"* (TP1:25)
to 3SG.I place.where 3SG.S-live QM
'He then said to him that, "can you tell him (me) where it is?"'

11.3.2 ***Wó***

The locative copula *wó* (see §14.2.5.A) can also translate as 'in', 'at', shown in the following examples (13a, b).

(13a) *àyẹ̀* *ùgì* *àyẹ̀* *mín* *sẹ̀-yà* ***wó*** ***ẹ̀fọ̀nẹ́bẹ́*** (DM:40)
FOC trap DEF.SG INCEP catch-3SG.O to that.place
'So the trap caught him in the place.'

(13b) *á-cá* *e-gbe* *ka,* *cáná* *ísúbù* *ọ̀nẹ́bẹ́* *di*
3SG.S-come 3SG.S-be COMP before day DEM.SG can
kì-re, *údúdò* *àbẹ̀* *kpá* *ọ́dọ́rẹ̀* *wó* *íjé* (RLE:19)
PREF-reach sheep DEF.PL dig hole in ground
'It happened that before that day, the sheep had dug a hole in the ground.'

Wó can also be stranded in clause-final position; it still expresses locality (cf. 14a, b). The first *wó* in (14a), and the only *wó* in (14b) both occur in the clause-final positions.

(14a) *á-ga nọ ẹnẹ̀m íbuba ka ẹfọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ nẹnẹ*
3SG.S-say to animals remain COMP [place.that REL
è-gbe ka ẹwọtọm àbẹ táyẹ̀ mẹ́ ubo ***wó***
3SG.S-be] [COMP bee DEF.PL do.early build house PREP
nà ka bì-rĕn-ya wó ẹ̀fọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ káréˊ ábẹ.(DM:33)
RCP] COMP 3PL.S-set-3SG.O PREP place.that wait 3PL.I
(Lit. 'He said to the rest of the animals that that place where it was that bees once had a hive at, they should set the trap in that place wait for them.')
'He told the rest of the animals that they should set the trap in the place where bees once had a hive.'

(14b) *ọgbọ̀na nẹnẹ a-yọ ẹ̀fọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ fọ́m nà, á-yọ̀ ẹ̀fọ̀na*
[when REL 3SG.S-go place enter RCP] 3SG.S-go [place.which
bẹ̀-kọ́ íjén wó nà, e-yìré íjén. (RLE:13)
3PL.S-pack food PREP RCP] 3SG.S-steal food
'When he went in through the place, he went to the place in which they kept the food, he stole some food.'

Wó can sometimes be used to express the meaning 'from', as shown in (15) below. This is an alternative usage for the more regular *kàba*, discussed earlier in section 11.2.1.

(15) *a-ka wìíyá à-má àyẹ fá*
3SG.S-say POSS.mother 3SG.S-do.with $3SG.I_i$ cook
ìkókó àyẹ, àyẹ wó ísku kẹ̀-ca,
cocoyam DEF.SG $3SG.I_i$ from school PREF-come
àyẹ é-dí e-je-ẹ. (CCY:5)
3SG.I 3SG.S-can INF-eat-3SG.O
'He said his mother should help him cook the cocoyam, when he came back from school, he would eat it.'

One other important fact which rules out *nẹ~nọ* and *wó* from being considered as typical prepositions when compared with *kàba* and *í-* is that *nẹ~nọ* and *wó* cannot be used to introduce a prepositional phrase in clause-initial position; for example, compare (16a) with the alternative (16b), in which the prepositional high tone glossed as LOC on the first vowel of the object is used to correct the sentence. A hypothetical example cannot be imagined for *nẹ~nọ* in clause-initial position; it will always turn up as 'give'. They therefore behave grammatically as belonging to verb-like categories.

(16a) ****wó*** *ẹ̀fọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ àyẹ tẹ̀-gbá tò-òtérò*
in place.that FOC 1PL.S-see 1PL.POSS-teacher
'It was there that we found our teacher.'

(16b) *ẹ́fọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ àyẹ tẹ̀-gbá tò-òtérò*
LOC.place.that FOC 1PL.S-see 1PL.POSS-teacher
(Lit. 'In there we found our teacher.')
'It was there that we found our teacher.'

11.4 **Postposition**

Postpositions in Ọ̀kọ̀ọ have the appearance of postposed nouns, but the meaning of these nouns describes a spatial or temporal relation rather than referring to an entity. The postposed noun in Ọ̀kọ̀ọ is sometimes a body part noun, for example, *ìgbèn* 'buttocks', *íbé* 'stomach', *ẹ̀fẹ̀* 'side', *ówó* 'mouth', *ẹ́pán* 'head', *ọ́tọ́m* 'ear', etc., or a noun referring to the sky (*òsì)*, or spatial nouns like *ẹ̀rẹ̀n* 'front', *úrùm* 'behind'. A list of postposed nouns and the nouns which they modify is provided in (17) below.

(17)

a. *ọ̀tẹ̀lẹ̀ ìgbẹ̀n*
pot buttocks
'under the pot'

b. *ákoto íbè*
box stomach
'inside the box'

c. *ẹ́mẹ́n ówó*
bush mouth
'at the edge of the bush'

d. *úbó ẹ̀fẹ̀*
house side
'beside the house'

e. *óbínutù ẹ́rẹ̀n*
palace front
'in front of the palace'

f. *ótí úrùm*
tree behind
'behind the tree'

g. *ìtébùrù òsì*
table sky
'on the table'

h. *ẹ́mẹ́n ọtọm*
bush ear
'beside the bush'

We note from the examples in (17) that constructions with postposed nouns are different from adnominal possessive constructions in the language, such as, *óbin oògben* 'king's child', where the possessed noun is inflected to show possession (see §4.3.3). Thus, postposed nouns can be regarded as real postpositions.

The examples in (18a-b) show the distribution of the postpositional phrases in sentences.

(18a) *kàba ọgbọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ e-è-pìlà e-ni ka àyẹ́*
from that.time 3SG.S-NEG-do.again PROG-want COMP 3SG.I
é-sie ẹ̀gán mán íjè, ***ótí osì*** *àyẹ́ è-pìlà*
3SG.S-do so live LOC.ground tree top FOC 3SG.S-do.again
a-man. (TP1:36)
PROG-live
'From that time, he does not usually like staying on land; he has resorted to staying on trees.'

(18b) *bì-tie ìgìlà àyẹ́ vé-cà* ***ìkù ígbèn***
3PL.S-take yam DEF.SG out.come rubbish buttocks
'They pulled out the yam from under the rubbish heap.'

Sometimes, a postpositional phrase occurs with the locative copula *wó* in the same clause (cf. 19), and also with the locative *í-* (cf. 20). However, the locative *í-* is considered as redundant in the construction. An alternative construction for (20) is presented as (21) below.

(19) *àkọ́ ì-sie á-ga ọ̀nẹ́ na, águẹ́n à-bẹ́bẹ́*
as 1SG.S-do PROG-say DEM.SG RCP tortoise 3SG.S-hid
wó ***ẹ́mẹ́n ọtọ́m*** (TP2:37)
LOC.COP bush ear
'Just as I am saying this, Tortoise hid beside the bush.'

(20) *è-wó* ***í-yo-òmun ósì***
3SG.S-LOC.COP LOC-3SG.POSS-cap sky
'It is on his cap.'

(21) *è-wó* ***yo-òmun ósì***
3SG.S-LOC.COP 3SG.POSS-cap sky
'It is on his cap.'

Chapter 12
Numerals and Arithmetic operations

12.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I give a detailed description of numerals in Ọ̀kọ. This chapter also includes a discussion on fractions and a few other arithmetic operations in the language.

Numerals in Ọ̀kọ can be counted from *ọ̀yẹ́rẹ/ọ̀ọ́rẹ* '1' to *ẹlọrẹẹcẹn* '2000' and more. However, counting ability depends largely on native speakers' proficiency in the language. An average Ọ̀kọ speaker can count up to twenty; and any number beyond this is considered as complex. Regrettably, counting is generally left to older folks in the communities. Other members of the communities would rather conduct counting in the English language; not even in Yorùbá, the second language in the Ọ̀kọ speaking communities. This discovery shows that the numeral aspect of the language is most vulnerable for extinction.

12.2 Cardinal numerals

Cardinal numerals in Ọ̀kọ may have simple forms or complex forms. Numerals with complex forms include numeral compounds, numerals formed by means of the conjunction element *akà*, and those with clausal structures. I examine each of these in the following sections.

12.2.1 Numerals with simple forms

(1)

ọ̀yẹ́rẹ/ọ̀ọ́rẹ	'1'
ẹbọ̀rẹ̀	'2'
ẹ̀ta	'3'
ẹ̀na	'4'
ùpi	'5'
ọ̀nọ́kọ́nọkọ́nọ	'8'
ẹ̀fọ	'10'

ọ́gbọlọ ‘20’

The numeral ‘1’ in Ọ̀kọ has two forms, *ọ̀yẹ́rẹ/ọ̀ọ́rẹ*. However, the *ọ̀ọ́rẹ* form is more frequent in normal speech. There is the dropping of ‘y’, and an assimilation of contiguous oral vowels. On the other hand, the *ọ̀yẹ́rẹ* form is used mostly in guarded utterances and for intensification.

Numerals of the multiples of ‘200’ (i.e, 400, 600 and 800) are all simple roots. Also included is the numeral ‘2000’ (cf. 2).

(2)

ẹparẹ	200
ífupi	400
àkàta	600
ífúrúfọ́	800
ẹlọrẹẹcẹn	2000

12.2.2 **Numerals with complex forms**

12.2.2.A **Numerals formed by compounding**

The numeral *ọ̀pọ́nọ̀ọ́rẹ* ‘6’ is formed by combining the roots *ùpi* ‘five’ and *ọ̀ọ́rẹ* ‘one’. This has however undergone some phonological modifications such as the leftward spread of vowel quality of ọ, and an -n- insertion. Also, the numeral *úfọ́mbọ̀rẹ̀* ‘7’ is formed by combining the morphemes *úfọ́m* ‘five’, a modification of *ùpi* ‘five’, due to a spirantization process where /p/ becomes fricativized as /f/, with the morpheme *ẹbọ̀rẹ̀* ‘two’. An -m- insertion also takes place, whereby /N/ becomes [m], as it assimilates the place feature of the following bilabial consonant.

Numeral junctions of the multiples of ‘20’ (i.e. 40, 60, 80 and 100), are formed by combining the morpheme *í-* which is equated to ‘20’ because it multiplies a given numeral stem by twenty. Numerals such as *íbọ̀rẹ̀* ‘40’ and *íta* ‘60’ and *ípì* ‘100’ are formed by combining *í-* with *ẹbọ̀rẹ̀* ‘2’, *ẹ̀ta* ‘3’ and *ùpí* ‘5’ respectively, see (3).

(3)

ẹbọ̀rẹ̀	'2'	***í-****bọ̀rẹ̀*	'40'
ẹ̀ta	'3'	***í-****ta*	'60'
ùpi	'5'	***í-****pì*	'100'

However, for *ìgbófú* '80', not only is ***í-*** stripped of its usual high tone, it also combines with the suppletive morpheme ***–****gbófú*, which is not morphologically related to *ẹ̀na* '4'.

12.2.2.B **Numerals formed by means of conjunction**

Numerals in this category are formed by aid of the conjunction element *akà* 'and', which is used to combine two numeral roots to form a different numeral. This mainly includes numerals beyond the first ten numbers. The contracted form of the conjunction *akà*, minus the first vowel to realize *-kà*, is used to add relevant numbers to '10', up to '19'. Because vowel elision processes in Ọ̀kọ is always regressive, whereby the first of two vowels at a boundary is always elided, the truncated form of the linker *–kà* loses its only surviving vowel ***/à/***, including the low tone to the first vowel of the conjoined numeral. It should be noted also that all numerals like all nouns in Ọ̀kọ are vowel-initial. See the list in (4).

(4)

Root	Conjunction	Root	Numeral	
ẹ̀fọ	*-k-*	*ọ̀yẹ́rẹ*	*ẹ̀fọkọ̀yẹ́rẹ*	'11'
ẹ̀fọ	*-k-*	*ẹbọ̀rẹ̀*	*ẹ̀fọkẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀*	'12'
ẹ̀fọ	*-k-*	*ẹ̀ta*	*ẹ̀fọkẹ̀ta*	'13'
ẹ̀fọ	*-k-*	*ẹ̀na*	*ẹ̀fọkẹ̀na*	'14'
ẹ̀fọ	*-k-*	*ùpi*	*ẹ̀fọkùpi*	'15'
ẹ̀fọ	*-k-*	*ọ̀pọ́nọ̀ọ́rẹ*	*ẹ̀fọkọ̀pọ́nọ̀ọ́rẹ*	'16'
ẹ̀fọ	*-k-*	*úfọ́mbọ̀rẹ̀*	*ẹ̀fọkùfọ́mbọ̀rẹ̀*	'17'
ẹ̀fọ	*-k-*	*ọ̀nọ́kọ́nọkọ́nọ*	*ẹ̀fọkọ̀nọ́kọ́nọkọ́nọ*	'18'
ẹ̀fọ	*-k-*	*ùbọ́ọ̀rẹ̀*	*ẹ̀fọkùbọ́ọ̀rẹ̀*	'19'

Numerals such as ‘21’, ‘31’, ‘41’, ‘51’, ‘61’, ‘71’, ‘81’ and ‘91’ have a similar formation strategy. The number ‘1’ in Ọ̀kọ has four different forms, depending on its function. For instance, *ọ̀yẹ́rẹ* or *ọ̀ọ́rẹ;* but when conjoined to multiples of ten, example, 20, 30, 40 50 etc, ‘1’ is expressed as *ùtó* (cf. 5).

(5)

Root	Conjunction	Root	Numeral	
ọ́gbọ̀lọ	*-k-*	*ùtó*	*ọ́gbọ̀lọ̀kùtó*	‘21’
ọ́gbọ̀lọ̀kààkọ̀rọ̀fọ	*-k-*	*ùtó*	*ọ́gbọ̀lọ̀kààkọ̀rọ̀fọ̀kùtó*	‘31’
íbọ̀rẹ̀	*-k-*	*ùtó*	*íbọ̀rẹ̀kùtó*	‘41’
íbọ̀rẹ̀kààkọ̀rọ̀fọ	*-k-*	*ùtó*	*íbọ̀rẹ̀kààkọ̀rọ̀fọ̀kùtó*	‘51’
íta	*-k-*	*ùtó*	*ítakùtó*	‘61’
ítakààkọ̀rọ̀fọ	*-k-*	*ùtó*	*ítakààkọ̀rọ̀fọ̀kùtó*	‘71’
ìgbófú	*-k-*	*ùtó*	*ìgbófúkùtó*	‘81’
ìgbófúkààkọ̀rọ̀fọ	*-k-*	*ùtó*	*ìgbófúkààkọ̀rọ̀fọ̀kùtó*	‘91’

Numerals of the multiples of ‘100’ (i.e., ‘300’, ‘500’, ‘700’, and ‘900’) are formed by conjoining the modified form of the root of ‘100’, that is, *ípì → ípi*, to the relevant multiples of ‘200’ with the aid of the conjunction element -kV, where V is identical with the closed front vowel which it precedes (cf. 6).

(6)

ẹparẹ	200	*ẹparẹ-kì-ípi*	300
ífupi	400	*ífupi-kì-ípi*	500
àkàta	600	*àkàta-kì-ípi*	700
ífúrúfọ́	800	*ífúrúfọ́-kì-ípi*	900

The numeral *ífúrúfọ́kẹ̀ẹ̀parẹ* ‘1,000) is derived by combining *ífúrúfọ́* ‘800’ with *ẹparẹ* ‘200’ by aid of the conjunction *–kv* (cf. 7)

(7) *ífúrúfọ́kẹ̀ẹ̀parẹ* ‘1,000’

12.2.2.C **Numerals with clausal structures**

The first of the type of numerals formed from clausal structures is *ùbọ́ọ̀rẹ̀* ‘9’. This consists of the diminutive *úbá* and the numeral *ọ̀ọ́rẹ* ‘1’. *Ùbọ́ọ̀rẹ̀* is the clipped form of the clausal structure in (8).

(8) *úbá-ọ̀ọ́rẹ è-gúlé ẹ̀fọ*
DIM-one 3SG complete ten
(LIT. ‘remaining one to complete ten.’)
‘ten is less than one.’

Other numerals in this category constitute a greater percentage of numerals in Ọ̀kọ. Odd numeral junctions such as, *ọ́gbọ̀lọ́kààkọ̀rọ̀fọ* ‘30’, *íbọ̀rẹ̀kààkọ̀rọ̀fọ* ‘50’, *ítakààkọ̀rọ̀fọ* ‘70’, and *ìgbófúkààkọ̀rọ̀fọ* ‘90’, are formed by combining *ẹ̀fọ* ‘10’ to multiples of twenty using the clausal expression in (9). See more examples in (10a-d).

(9) *kà-à-karẹ ẹ̀fọ*
CONJ-3SG.S-surpass ten
‘and it surpasses by ten.’

(10)

(a) *ọ́gbọ̀lọ kà-à-karẹ ẹ̀fọ*
twenty CONJ-3SG-surpass ten *ọ́gbọ̀lọ́kààkọ̀rọ̀fọ* ‘30’

(b) *íbọ̀rẹ̀ kà-à-karẹ ẹ̀fọ*
forty CONJ-3SG-surpass ten *íbọ̀rẹ̀kàkọ̀rọ̀fọ* ‘50’

(c) *íta kà-à-karẹ ẹ̀fọ*
sixty CONJ-3SG-surpass ten *ítakàkọ̀rọ̀fọ* ‘70’

(d) *ìgbófú kà-à-karẹ ẹ̀fọ*
eight CONJ-3SG-surpass ten *ìgbófúkàkọrọ̀fọ* '90'

One also notes a vowel elision process where one of two contiguous oral vowels (always the first) at word boundaries is elided; *à + à → à*, and *ẹ + ẹ̀ → ẹ̀*. There is also regressive spread of the vowel *ọ* in the final syllable to the vowels in both the penultimate and antepenultimate syllables.

Adding other numerals, from '2' to '9' to relevant numeral stems also involves a clausal expression. For example, the formation of the numerals '22' and '36' (cf. 11, 12), see also (13).

(11a) *ọ́gbọlọ -kà è-tó ẹbọ̀rẹ̀*
twenty CONJ 3SG.S-join two
(Lit. Twenty and it meet two)
'Twenty meets two.'

(11b) *'ọ́gbọlọkètẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀* '22'

(12a) *ọ́gbọlọkààkọrọ̀fọ -kà è- tó ọ̀pọ́nọ̀ọ́rẹ*
thirty CONJ 3SG.S-join six
(Lit. Thirty and it meet six)
'Thirty meets six.'

(12b) *'ọ́gbọlọkààkọrọ̀fọkètọ́pọ́nọ̀ọ́rẹ'* '36'

(13)

ọ́gbọlọkètẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀	'22'	*ọ́gbọlọkètọọ̀pọ́nọ̀ọ́rẹ*	'26'
ọ́gbọlọkètẹẹ̀ta	'23'	*ọ́gbọlọkètúfọ́mbọ̀rẹ̀*	'27'
ọ́gbọlọkètẹẹ̀na	'24'	*ọ́gbọlọkètọọ̀nọ́kọ́nọkọ́nọ*	'28'
ọ́gbọlọkètuùpi	'25'	*ọ́gbọlọkètúbọ́ọ̀rẹ̀*	'29'

Several phonological processes such as vowel elision, vowel assimilation and tone modifications are also involved in the formation of the numerals listed in (13). The contracted form of the conjunction element **-kV-**, links the relevant numeral stem to a verb phrase which is headed by the verb *tó* 'to meet', followed by a numeral object. The vowel of the verb root may assimilate the contiguous vowel of the numeral object or may be elided before the contiguous vowel of the numeral object. There is no clear-cut condition(s) that determine whether assimilation or elision in any case.

12.3 Adnominal numerals

Ọ̀kọ belongs to the group of languages in which cardinal numerals do not change their forms when they modify a noun. The numeral '1' as mentioned earlier has two forms as cardinal numeral *ọ̀yẹ́rẹ/ọ̀ọ́rẹ*. However, when it modifies a noun, only *ọ̀ọ́rẹ* can be used (cf. 14). For other cardinal numerals, the forms remain the same (cf. 15a, b). See the list in (16).

(14a) *ótí ọ̀ọ́rẹ*
stick one
'one stick'

(15a) *éró ẹ̀ta*
people three
'three people'

(15b) *égbén ẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀ ca ẹ̀kọ*
children two come here
'two children came here.'

(16)

Cardinal form	**Adnominal form**	**Gloss**
ọ̀yẹ́rẹ́/ọ̀ọ́rẹ́	*ọ̀ọ́rẹ́*	‘1’
ẹ̀bọ̀rẹ̀	*ẹ̀bọ̀rẹ̀*	‘2’
ẹ̀ta	*ẹ̀ta*	‘3’
ẹ̀na	*ẹ̀na*	‘4’
ùpi	*ùpi*	‘5’
ọ̀pọ́nọ̀ọ́rẹ́	*ọ̀pọ́nọ̀ọ́rẹ́*	‘6’
úfọ́mbọ̀rẹ̀	*úfọ́mbọ̀rẹ̀*	‘7’
ọ̀nọ́kọ́nọkọ́nọ	*ọ̀nọ́kọ́nọkọ́nọ*	‘8’
ùbọ́ọ̀rẹ̀	*ùbọ́ọ̀rẹ̀*	‘9’
ẹ̀fọ	*ẹ̀fọ*	‘10’

12.4 Ordinal Numerals

A detailed discussion of the derivation of ordinal numerals from cardinal numerals can be found in (§4.4.2). The main information about the derivation of ordinal numerals in Ọ̀kọ is that they are derived from cardinal numerals by attaching the suffix *-ro* to the cardinal stem, see list in (17).

(17)

ọ̀yẹ́rẹ́/ọ̀ọ́rẹ́	‘1’	*òcoòro*	‘1st’
ẹ̀bọ̀rẹ̀	‘2’	*ọ̀ọ́bọ̀rẹ̀rò*	‘2nd’
ẹ̀ta	‘3’	*ẹ̀tẹ̀taro*	‘3rd’
ẹ̀na	‘4’	*ọ̀nẹ́nàrò*	‘4th’
ùpi	‘5’	*ùpíro*	‘5th’

One notes also that with 1st – 4th, the stem changes. Ọ̀kọ can be categorized under languages in which ‘1st’ is derivationally independent of ‘1’.

12.5 Distributive Numerals

A detailed discussion on the formation of distributive numerals in Ọ̀kọ is presented in (§4.5.2). The important fact about their formation is that they are derived from cardinal numeral through reduplication (cf. 18).

(18)

Base stem	**Partial**	**Total**	
ọ̀yẹ́rẹ́/ọ̀ọ́rẹ	*ọ̀ọ́rọ́ọ̀rẹ̀*	–	'one-by-one'
ẹbọ̀rẹ̀	–	*ẹbọ̀rẹ̀-ẹbọ̀rẹ̀*	'two-by-two'
ẹ̀ta	–	*ẹ̀ta-ẹ̀ta /ẹ̀tẹ̀ta*	'three-by-three'
ẹ̀na	–	*ẹ̀na-ẹ̀na/ẹ̀nẹ̀na*	'four-by-four'
ùpi	–	*ùpi-ùpi*	'five-by-five'
ọ̀pọ́nọ̀ọ́rẹ	–	*ọ̀pọ́nọ̀ọ́rẹ-ọ̀pọ́nọ̀ọ́rẹ*	'six-by-six'
úfọ́mbọ̀rẹ̀	–	*úfọ́mbọ̀rẹ̀-úfọ́mbọ̀rẹ̀*	'seven-by-seven'
ọ̀nọ́kọ́nọkọ́nọ	–	*ọ̀nọ́kọ́nọkọ́nọ-ọ̀nọ́kọ́nọkọ́nọ*	'eight-by-eight'
ùbọ́ọ̀rẹ̀	–	*ùbọ́ọ̀rẹ̀-ùbọ́ọ̀rẹ̀*	'nine-by-nine'
ẹ̀fọ	–	*ẹ̀fọ-ẹ̀fọ*	'ten-by-ten'

12.6 Arithmetic operations

Several simple arithmetic expressions in Ọ̀kọ are treated in this section, such as, addition, subtraction, division, multiplication and fractions.

12.6.1 Addition

Expressing additions in Ọ̀kọ involves the use of the conjunction *akà* 'and'. The corresponding sum of the addition process is introduced by *cìna* 'become' (cf. 19a, b).

(19)

(a) *ọ̀ọ́rẹ akà ọ̀ọ́rẹ cìna ẹbọ̀rẹ̀* or *cìn'ẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀*
one CONJ one become two

(b) *ẹbọ̀rẹ̀ akà ẹbọ̀rẹ̀ cìna ẹ̀na* or *cìn'ẹ́na*
two CONJ two become four

Two forms of the resultant addition process are provided because native speakers make use of both. The first form is often realized in slow, guarded speech, and so, the usual dropping of the first of two contiguous vowels at word boundary is avoided. On the other hand, the second form which is often realized in normal speech sees the first of two contiguous oral vowels elided. The deletion process results in the realization of a high tone on the first syllable that follows the low tone of */tʃ̀ìn/*.

12.6.2 **Multiplication**

Multiplication in Ọ̀kọ is usually expressed by the use of the locative copula *wó* followed by *ọ́rẹ́* 'way/road'. The /o/ of the locative copula always assimilates the contiguous vowel /ọ/ of *ọ́rẹ́*, this gives the locative phrase *wọ́ ọ́rẹ* 'in way/road'. A multiplication expression such 2 x 2 in Ọ̀kọ literally means 'two in two ways'; see examples in (20a, b).

(20a) *ẹbọ̀rẹ̀ wọ́ ọ́rẹ́ ẹbọ̀rẹ̀ cìna ẹ̀ná*
two LOC.COP way two become four
'2 in 2 ways make 4.'

(20b) *ẹbọ̀rẹ̀ wọ́ ọ́rẹ ùpi cìna ẹ̀fọ*
two LOC.COP way five become ten
'2 in 5 ways make 10.'

12.6.3 **Subtraction**

Expressing subtractions in Ọ̀kọ involves the inclusion of the verb *tie* 'take/remove', which heads the phrase. However, the expression of the result of the process can be done in two ways, either by the use of the 'become' word *cìna*, or by the use of the expression *è-ku…* 'it remains…' (cf. 21a, b).

(21a) *tie ẹbọ̀rẹ̀ fura ẹ̀ná cìna ẹbọ̀rẹ̀*
take two do.away four become two
'Subtract 2 from 4 equals 2.'

(21b) *tie ùpi fura ẹ̀fọ è-ku ùpi*
take five do.away ten 3SG.S-remain five
'Subtract 5 from 10 equals 5.'

12.6.4 **Division**

Expressing the process of division in Ọ̀kọ involves the use of the verb *cẹ́n* 'to break'. A given number is broken into a number of 'ways'. For instance, to divide 4 by 2 means to break 4 in 2 ways (cf. 22).

(22) *cẹ́n ẹ́na wọ́ ọ́rẹ́ ẹbọ̀rẹ̀ cìna ẹbọ̀rẹ̀*
break four LOC.COP way two become two
(Lit. 'Break 4 in 2 places become 2.')
'4 divided by 2 is 2.'

12.6.5 **Fractions**

Fractions in Ọ̀kọ are expressed in several ways depending on the semantic property of the noun referent expressed in the fraction operation. For instance, there are two ways of expressing a 'half' in Ọ̀kọ. One of the ways is by the use of the word *úgbúm*, while the other is by the use of the nominalized *ọ̀cẹ́nẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀*, which is formed by attaching the nominalizer prefix *ọ̀-* to the transitive verb *cẹ́n* 'to break' and its denominator object which may vary from *ẹbọ̀rẹ̀* 'two' to infinity (see also §4.3.2).

It is worth mentioning that in the expression of 'half' in Ọ̀kọ, the form *úgbúm* is mainly used for inanimate referents; see examples (23a-c).

(23a) *à-fọ ẹ́bẹ́dì úgbúm nẹ́-mọ̀*
3SG.S-give bread half BENF-1SG.O
'He gave me half a loaf of bread.'

(23b) *àde gá né̩-mò̩ o̩gàré̩ga àye̩ úgbúm*
Ade tell BENF-1SG.S story DEF.SG half
'Ade told me half of the story.'

(23c) *agogo e̩bò̩re̩ kù úgbúm sie*
clock two remain half do
'It is half past one o'clock.'

Úgbúm cannot be used for animate referents (cf. 24a, b),

(24a) **akpe̩ úgbúm wà íyáró*
congregation half COP woman
'Half of the congregation is women.'

(24b) **é̩né̩ àbe̩ úgbúm jén a-gam úgbíyà*
animal DEF.PL half go 3SG.S-greet leopard
'Half of the animals went to greet the leopard.'

In cases where the referent is animate, *ò̩cé̩né̩bò̩re̩* is used to express 'half'. The grammatical counterparts of (24a, b) are given in (25a, b).

(25a) *akpe̩ ò̩-cé̩né̩bò̩re̩ wà íyáró*
congregation NOM-half COP woman
'Half of the congregation is women.'

(25b) *é̩né̩ àbe̩ ò̩-cé̩né̩bò̩re̩ jén a-gam úgbíyà*
animal DEF.PL NOM-half go INF-greet leopard
'Half of the animals went to greet the leopard.'

However, *ò̩cé̩né̩bò̩re̩* 'half' is not restricted to animates alone. It can also be used for inanimate referents (cf. 26a, b).

(26a) *ẹ́bẹ́dì ọ̀-cẹ́nẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀ àyẹ à-vá-mọ́*
bread NOM-half FOC 3SG.S-give-1SG.O
'S/He gave me half loaf of bread.'

(26b) *àde gá nẹ́-mọ̀ ọgàrẹ́ga àyẹ ọ̀-cẹ́nẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀*
Ade tell BENF-1SG.O story DEF.SG NOM-half
'Ade told me half of the story.'

Other fraction forms in which the numerator is '1' and the denominator is any other number apart from '2' do not have more than one form. For example, *ọ̀cẹ́nẹ́ta* 'breaking of three (⅓)' *ọ̀cẹ́nẹ́na* 'breaking of four (¼)' *ọ̀cẹ́núpi* 'breaking of five (⅕)' *ọ̀cẹ́nọ́pọnọ̀ọ́rẹ* 'breaking of six (⅙)' etc. They are also formed by nominalizing the transitive verb *cẹ́n* combined with a denominator object. See the following examples in (27a, b).

(27a) *ọ̀-cẹ́nẹ́ta égbén ábẹ̀ cá emumu-ùbo*
NOM-break.three children DEF.PL come book-house
'One third of the children came to school.'

(27b) *ẹ̀-fọ íkíbà ọ̀-cẹnẹ́fọ nẹ́-yà*
1SG.S-take money NOM-break.ten BENF-3SG.O
'I gave him the tenth part of the money'

Expression of fractions in Ọ̀kọ may also involve partitive phrases; namely, the use of the Partitive morpheme *ábẹ̀* followed by a denominator (see also §9.5). Both the numerator and the denominator can be any number from '1' to upwards, for instance, ⅓, ⅔ ¾ ⅘ ⅚ ⅞ etc. This has the reading of a specified numerator being part of a specified denominator (cf. 28a-d).

(28a) *ọ́ọ́rẹ́ ábẹ̀-ẹ́bọ́rẹ́ àyẹ́ àde tíé*
one PRTV-two FOC ade take
'It was one of two that Ade took.'

(28b) *égbén úpi ábẹ̀-ẹ̀fọ́ à-a-nyán*
children five PRTV-ten 3SG.S-PROG-sick
'Five of the ten children are sick'

(28c) *ẹ̀ta ábẹ̀-úpi sú íbá*
three PRTV-five have fever
(Lit. Three among five have a fever)
'Three fifth has a fever'

(28d) *ìgìlà ẹ̀na ábẹ̀-ẹ̀fọ́ a-mà-rọ́múro*
yam four PRTV-ten 3SG.S-NEG-good
'Four tenth of the yams is bad'

Chapter 13
The noun phrase: general properties

13.1 Introduction

A noun phrase (NP) in Ọ̀kọ may consist of a pronoun (more precisely, a pro-NP) (cf. 1), a noun head without any modifiers; such nouns may include proper nouns, including names of animals used in folktales (cf. 2, 3), a noun used in the generic sense (cf. 4) and mass nouns (cf. 5).

(1) *à-yẹ̀rẹ-ya yọ̀ úbó*
3SG.S-follow-3SG.O go house
'S/He accompanied him home.'

(2) *àde fọ̀ ógbén áyẹ̀ cá gám obin*
Ade carry child DEF.SG come greet king
'Ade brought the child to greet the king.'

(3) *águẹn ní yò-ógbén ọ́nẹ ẹgà, àmá*
tortoise want 3SG.POSS-child DEM.SG word but
e-mè-dín ẹ̀kẹ̀na è-éke-sie nà. (TP1:4)
3SG.S-NEG-know thing 3SG.S-FUT-so RCP
'Tortoise loved (this) his child but he did not know what to do.'

(4) *èròkòrò dín ẹ̀kẹ̀na nẹnẹ rọ́múro nà*
humans know thing [REL good RCP]
'Humans know what is good.'

(5) *ébí yọ fọ̀rẹ̀ acẹcẹn*
water plenty surpass sand
(Lit. Water is more than sand)
'Water surpasses sand.'

This chapter therefore examines the structure of the noun phrase in Ọ̀kọ, looking at its general properties, the head and its modifiers. I examine the order of constituents within a noun phrase, and the cooccurrence of the modifiers. Finally, I also consider special noun phrases in the language (§13.4).

13.2 **Adnominal modifiers**

Adnominal modifiers in Ọ̀kọ are words or phrases which modify a noun within a noun phrase. They are all optional. While most of them such as articles (13.2.1), demonstratives (13.2.2), quantifiers (13.2.3), qualitative words (13.2.4), appositive modifiers (13.2.6) and relative clauses (13.2.7) follow the noun which they modify, only adnominal possessors (13.2.5) occur before the noun. All of these adnominal elements (except appositive modifiers) have already been described in detail in several chapters of this work. However in this chapter, I only discuss them with reference to their function within the noun phrase.

13.2.1 **Articles**

Articles in Ọ̀kọ are broadly divided into definite *àyẹ/ àbẹ* and indefinite *ọ̀bẹ̀n/ẹ̀bẹ̀n* (see §8.1). Even though articles are not obligatory, they are often required within a noun phrase especially when non-pronominal NPs, non-proper nouns, non-generic nouns etc. (as described in 13.1) are involved (cf. 6a, b). Without a modifying article, a noun may be interpreted as a proper noun or as a generic noun (cf. 7a, b).

(6b) *ógbén áyẹ e-yíwo*
child DEF.SG PROG-cry
'The child is crying.'

(6a) *írí óbẹ̀n pírí fọ́m mà-ádẹ́*
fly INDEF.SG fly enter 1SG.POSS-beer
'A fly flew into my beer.'

(7b) *ógbén e-yíwo*
child PROG-cry
'Child is crying.'

(7b) *írí pírí fọ́m mà-ádẹ́*
fly fly enter 1SG.POSS-beer
'Fly flew into my beer.'

Secondly, as earlier mentioned in section 8.2, articles have the additional function of indicating number marking with regards to the noun which they modify (cf. 8a-d).

(8a) *ógbén áyẹ pẹ̀n ọ́tẹ̀lẹ́ áyẹ*
child DEF.SG break pot DEF.SG
'The child broke the pot.'

(8b) *égbén ábẹ pẹ̀n ọ́tẹ̀lẹ́ ábẹ*
children DEF.PL break pot DEF.PL
'The children broke the pots'

(8c) *ógbén ọ́bẹ̀n pẹ̀n ọ́tẹ̀lẹ́ ọ́bẹ̀n*
child INDF.SG break pot INDEF.SG
'A child broke a pot.'

(8d) *égbén ẹ́bẹ̀n pẹ̀n ọ́tẹ̀lẹ́ ẹ́bẹ̀n*
children INDF.PL break pot INDF.PL
'Some children broke some pots.'

In terms of order, both the definite and indefinite articles always follow the noun which they modify (see also §13.3).

13.2.2 **Demonstratives**

Demonstrative modifiers, which are syntactically differentiated from demonstrative pronouns which occur by themselves as NPs (see §13.4.3), are also optional modifiers which follow the noun which they modify. The two types of demonstratives are proximal (cf. 9a, b) and distal (cf. 10a, b) demonstratives (see also §8.3). Demonstratives, like articles also have singular and plural forms which are used to indicate number with respect to their noun referents.

(9a) *úbó ọ̀nẹ wa mẹ̀-ẹ́kà*
house DEM.SG COP 1SG.POSS-own
'This house is mine.'

(9b) *úbó ọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ wa wẹ̀-ẹ́kà*
house DEM.SG COP 2SG.POSS-own
'That house is yours.'

(10a) *égbén ẹ́naǹẹ̀ bi-mè-sú íyá*
children DEM.PL 3PL-NEG-have mother
'These children are motherless.'

(10b) *ẹ́gá ẹ̀nábẹ̀ a-karẹ obin*
visitors DEM.PL PROG-wait king
'Those visitors are waiting for the king.'

13.2.3 **Quantifiers**

Quantifiers in Ọ̀kọ are discussed in detail in chapter 9. The point to note here is that they are optional modifiers which occur after the noun which they modify. Quantifiers include numerals, cardinal and ordinal (see chapter 12 for a detailed discussion of the derivation and formation of numerals in Ọ̀kọ). Cardinal and ordinal numerals do not differ in their syntax in Ọ̀kọ; that is, both follow the noun which they modify (cf. 10, 11).

(10) *íyódina bá égbén ẹ́ta*
women-leader give.birth children three
'The Iyodina (women-leader) has three children.'

(11) *úbó ẹ̀tẹ́taro nẹnẹ ade mẹ́ na àyẹ è-wó ẹ́rẹ̀n*
House three.SUFF REL ade build RCP FOC 3.SG.S-LOC front
'The third house which Ade built is right ahead.'

Also, with cardinal numerals, the nouns which they modify may be singular, for non-human nouns (cf. 12a, b), or plural for human nouns (cf. 13a, b) (see also §4.3.1.A).

(12a) *águẹn fọ̀ **úmún ọ̀ọ́rẹ** nọ̀ ọ̀cẹ́nẹ́mẹ́ áyẹ*
tortoise take goat one give herbalist DEF.SG
'Tortoise gave a goat to the herbalist.'

(12b) *águẹn fọ̀ **úmún ẹ̀fọ** nọ̀ ọ̀cẹ́nẹ́mẹ́ áyẹ*
tortoise take goat ten give herbalist DEF.SG
'Tortoise gave ten goats to the herbalist.'

(13a) *unini e-ni **ofòro ọ̀ọ́rẹ***
Unini PROG-want man one
'Unini is looking for one man.'

(13b) *unini e-ni **ifòro ẹ̀fọ***
Unini PROG-want men ten
'Unini is looking for ten man.'

Other quantifiers include the universal quantifier *fẹnyan* 'all' (also *fẹnyan-fẹnyan* for intensification) (cf. 14a, b), the scalar quantifiers *ọyọyọ* 'plenty/many/much (15) and *keke* 'few/little/small' (cf. 16), and partitive phrases (cf. 17). Also, the nouns which they modify may be singular (non-human nouns) or plural (human nouns).

(14a) *ájẹ́rẹ́ roro ka éró fẹnyan bue kè*
rabbit think COMP people all sleep PERF
'Rabbit thought that every one had slept.'

(14b) *iyaro fẹnyan-fẹnyan nẹnẹ wó tò-òsìbìna*
women all REL LOC.COP 1PL.POSS-God
uùbo na bógbén kè
POSS.house RCP give.birth PERF
(Lit. All the women in our church have given birth.)
'All the women in our church are mothers.'

(15) *éró ọyọyọ yẹ̀rẹ ọ̀foòró akà yo-òró yọ̀ úbó*
people plenty follow groom and 3SG.POSS-wife go house
'A lot of people accompanied the bride and the groom home.'

(16) *ẹ́pẹ́n keke àyẹ è-dín*
thing little FOC 3SG.S-know
'He knows a few things.'

(17) *ọ̀ọ́rẹ égbén ábẹ̀-íwú yọ̀ úbó*
one children PRTV-body go house
'One of the children went home.'

13.2.4 **Qualitative words**

Qualitative modifiers in Ọ̀kọ always occur after the head noun. They include qualitative nouns and qualitative verbs (see chapter 10 for a detailed discussion). The interesting thing to note about their distribution is that, while qualitative nouns can function as attributive modifiers of a noun in their basic form (cf. 18a, b), qualitative verbs on the other hand can only occur attributively when the verb is nominalized. For example, *fọ́* 'to be tall', *ọ̀fọ̀fọ́* 'tallness', (cf. 19a); *rọ́m* 'to be sharp', *ọ̀rọ̀rọ́m* 'sharpness', (cf. 19b):

(18a) *bẹ̀-vá-mọ́ ẹ̀sa òkùkùrù*
3PL.S-give-1SG.O cloth white
'They gave me a white cloth.'

(18b) *iya òdùdù àyẹ fọ̀m íjé*
mother evil DEF.SG enter ground
(LIT. the wicked woman entered ground)
'The wicked woman sank in the mire.'

(19a) *ofòro ọ̀fọ́fọ àyẹ ní yẹ̀-égá*
man tall DEF.SG want 3SG.POSS-word
'The tall man loves her.'

(19b) *ìgbègbèn ọ̀rọ̀rọ́m kùrú mù-úba*
knife sharp cut 1SG.POSS-hand
'A sharp knife cut my hand.'

The second strategy is for the non-modified form of the qualitative verb to occur within a relative clause which modifies the noun (cf. 20a, b).

(20a) *ọ̀pariṣin àbẹ bẹ̀ íyá nẹ̀nẹ dǒm nà*
police DEF.PL beat mother [REL old RCP]
'The policemen beat the old woman.'

(20b) *à-vá-mọ oti nẹ̀nẹ lọ̀rẹ nà*
3SG.S-give-1SG.O stick [REL long RCP]
'He gave me a long stick.'

The nominalization and the relativization strategies can be used interchangeably. The meaning is still the same. There is no restriction on which should be used in a given construction. For instance, (19a) and (20b) can also be rendered as (21) and (22), respectively.

(21) *ofòro nẹnẹ fǒ na ní yẹ̀-ẹ́gá*
Man REL tall RCP want 3SG.POSS-word
'The tall man loves her.'

(22) *ótí ọ̀lọ́lọrẹ àyẹ à-vá-mọ́*
stick long FOC 3SG.S-give-1SG.O
'He gave me a long stick.'

13.2.5 **Adnominal possessors**

Adnominal possessors in Ọ̀kọ have a different order than other modifiers with respect to the noun head: Adnominal possessive modifiers precede rather than follow the noun. The possessed NP always takes the possessive marker. The form of the possessive marker is normally a vowel which is identical with the first vowel of the possessed (cf. 23a-c) (all nouns are vowel-initial in Ọ̀kọ, see also §3.3.5.A on vowel assimilation); or the irregular forms in which the bilabial approximant /w/, is used to mark possession on only 'parent' nouns (cf. 24a-c) (see also §4.3.3).

(23a) *àde uùbó*
Ade POSS.house
'ade's house'

(23b) *úwó ọ̀ọ̀mọ́dọ́rẹ̀*
dog POSS.nose
'the dog's nose'

(23c) *unini oògbén*
Unini POSS.child
'Unini's child'

(24a) *àdé* *w-ẹda*
Ade POSS-father
'Ade's father'

(24b) *unini* *w-iya*
Unini POSS-mother
'Unini's mother'

(24c) *úwó* *àyẹ* *w-ẹda*
dog DEF.SG POSS-father
'the dog's father'

13.2.6 **Appositive modifiers**

Appositive modifiers are noun phrases which have the same referent as the noun they modify. The noun which the appositive modifier modifies in Ọ̀kọ is always a proper noun, such as the name of a person or the name of a place. The appositive modifier may be a noun (cf. 25), a possessed NP (either a possessive pronoun or a possessive noun) (cf. 26a, b) or a nominal compound (cf. 27).

(25) ***óbín*** ***ẹ̀dávídì*** *wà* *Òsìbìna* *ọ̀ọ́rẹ*
king David COP God POSS.friend
'King David was God's friend.'

(26a) *á-cá* *e-cun* *ka* *è-sú* *ẹnyẹn* *ọ̀ọ́rẹ* *nẹnẹ*
3SG.S-come 3SG.S-pass COMP 3SG.S-have year one REL
è-gbe *ka* ***údúdò*** ***yì-íkúsáyé*** *sie* *dáadáa*
3SG.S-be COMP sheep 3SG.POSS-groundnut do well
érum *nà.* (RLE:5)
LOC.farm RCP
'It came to pass that there was a particular year in which Sheep's groundnuts did well on the farm.'

(26b) ***òg̀òrì, íwógbigbenro iìken,*** *àyẹ́ ẹ́pẹ́n wé-e-sie*
Ogori strong.AGT POSS.town FOC thing INCP-PROG-do
'Ogori, the town of the strong, is where things are happening.'

(27) ***àde, ọ̀kọ́jese-àlùfáà,*** *nyín ikerese ke*
Ade congregation-priest buy car PERF
'Ade, the priest of the church, has bought a car.'

In an appositive construction in Ọ̀kọ, it is possible to drop the head noun without having a significant meaning loss. For instance, *óbín, údúdò ade* and ***òg̀òrì*** in the examples can be dropped without resulting in any significant meaning loss (cf. 28a-d).

(28a) ***ẹ̀dávídì*** *wà Òsìbìna ọ̀ọ́rẹ́*
David COP God POSS.friend
'David was God's friend.'

(28b) *á-cá e-cum ka è-sú ẹnyẹn ọ̀ọ́rẹ́ nẹnẹ́*
3SG.S-come 3SG.S-pass COMP 3SG.S-have year one REL
è-gbe ka ***yì-íkúsáyé*** *sie dáadáa*
3SG.S-be COMP 3SG.POSS-groundnut do well
érum na.
LOC.farm RCP
'It came to pass that there was a particular year in which his groundnuts did well on the farm.'

(28c) ***ọ̀kọ́jese-àlùfáà*** *nyin ikeresè ke*
congregation-priest buy car PERF
'The priest of the church has bought a car'

(28d) ***íwógbigbenro iìken*** *àyẹ́ ẹ́pẹ́n wé-è-sie*
strong.AGT POSS.town FOC thing INCEP-PROG-do
'The town of the strong is where things are happening'

13.2.7 **Relative clauses**

The structure of the relative clause in Ọ̀kọ requires that the relative clause marker *nẹ̀nẹ̀* must be obligatorily complemented by the relative clause-final particle *na~nà: nẹ̀nẹ̀…na* (see §19.2 for a detailed discussion of relative clauses). The relative clause in Ọ̀kọ modifies both a definite NP (29) and an indefinite NP (30).

(29) *àde e-ni ógbéniyaro nẹ̀nẹ̀ ẹ̀-gá yẹ̀-égá*
ade 3SG.S-search girl [REL 1SG.S-say 3SG.POSS-word
né̩́-ọ̀ nà
give-2SG.O RCP]
'Ade is looking for the lady whom I told you about.'

(30) *órókoro nẹ̀nẹ̀ yọ̀ éjí jén e-ni oòro na,*
person [REL go market go 3SG.S-want wife RCP]
ẹ̀kákálẹ̀ka àyẹ̀ à-fọ́ fọ́m ubo
giant.soldier.ants FOC 3SG-carry enter house
'Anyone who finds a wife in the market place is courting trouble.'

13.3 **Word order in the noun phrase**

Noun phrases in Ọ̀kọ can be described as mostly head-first, with the only exception being adnominal possessors in which modifiers precede their head nouns (see §13.2.5). All other constructions have the modifiers following the head: articles (§13.2.1), demonstratives (§13.2.2), quantifiers (§13.2.3), qualitative words (§13.2.4), appositive modifiers (§13.2.6) and relative clauses (§13.2.7). In this section, I summarize word order among constituents of the noun phrase, and discuss the cooccurrence of two or more modifiers and the restrictions on the cooccurrence of NP modifiers.

13.3.1 **Articles and Demonstratives**

Articles and demonstrative modifiers: Both occupy a “determiner” slot that can only be filled by one element. Therefore, both cannot be combined (cf. 31a-d).

(31a) **ógbén áyẹ ònẹ*
child DEF.SG DEM.SG
‘*the this children’

(31b) **ógbén ọ́nẹ àyẹ*
child DEM.SG DEF.SG
‘*this the children’

(31c) **égbén ẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀ àbẹ ẹ̀nánẹ̀*
children two DEF.PL DEM.PL
‘*the these two children’

(31d) **égbén ẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀ ẹ̀nánẹ̀ àbẹ*
children two DEM.PL DEF.PL
‘*these the two children’

13.3.2 **Qualitative words**

Qualitative words which are used attributively always follow the noun directly before other modifiers; for instance, before an article or demonstrative (32), before quantifiers (33a, b) and before a relative clause (34).

(32) *úwó ògbígbodi àyẹ/ọ̀nẹ*
dog big DEF.SG/DEM.SG
‘the/this big dog’

(33a) *úwó ògbígbodi ẹbọ̀rẹ̀*
dog big two
'two big dogs'

(33b) *égbéniyaro ọ̀nyànyàn ẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀ àbẹ*
girls red two DEF.PL
'the two fair ladies'

(34) *úwó ògbígbodi nẹnẹ wà ọ̀nyànyàn na*
dog big REL COP red RCP
'the big red dog'

Where a string of qualitative words are used to describe a noun, only one is permitted to modify the noun directly, while others must occur within one relative clause at a time. This can lead to the stacking of relative clauses to modify an NP. Compare (35) and (36).

(35) **úwó ògbígbodi ọ̀nyànyàn ọ̀fọ̀fọ àyẹ*
dog big red tall DEF.SG
'the big red tall dog'

(36) *úwó ògbígbodi nẹnẹ wà ọ̀nyànyàn, nẹnẹ fǫ̀ na*
dog big REL COP red REL tall RCP
'the big red tall dog'

13.3.3 **Quantifiers**

All quantifiers, with the exception of the universal quantifier *fẹnyan* or *fẹnyan-fẹnyan* 'all' occur before an article or demonstrative within a noun phrase (cf. 37a-d).

(37a) *úwó ẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀ àbẹ*
dog two DEF.PL
'the two dogs'

(37b) *úwó òcoòro àyẹ*
dog first DEF.SG
'the first dog'

(37c) *úwó ọyọọyọ àbẹ*
dog plenty/many DEF.PL
'the plenty/many dogs'

(37d) *úwó keke ẹ̀bẹ̀n*
dog few/small INDEF.PL
'a few dogs'

With respect to the order of numerals and qualitative words, a numeral always follows an attributive word of quality (cf. 38a, b).

(38a) *ímúsú òkùkùrù ẹbọ̀rẹ̀ àyẹ bì-nyín*
cat white two FOC 3PL.S-buy
'They bought two white cats.'

(38b) *ọ̀tatĭ ọ̀lọ́lọrẹ ẹ̀ta wó yà-ákpóló*
arrow long three LOC.COP 3SG.S-quiver
'Three long arrows are in his quiver.'

With numerals and the relative clause, the order is always that the numeral occurs before the relative clause as in (39a), (39b).

(39a) *úrúmu ùpi nẹnẹ gbodi na àyẹ à-vá-tọ́*
orange five [REL big RCP] FOC 3SG.S-give-1PL.O
'S/He gave us five big oranges.'

(39b) *égbéniyaro ẹbọ̀rẹ̀ nẹnẹ wà ọ̀nyànyàn na cá gàm óbín*
girls two [REL COP red RCP] come greet king
'Two ladies who are fair-skinned came to see the king.'

Similarly, the universal quantifier occurs after every other modifier (cf. 40), only before a relative clause modifier (41).

(40) *úwó òrírin àbẹ fẹnyan-fẹnyan*
dog black DEF.PL all
'all the black dogs'

(41) *úwó àbẹ fẹnyan-fẹnyan nẹnẹ tì-nyín na, sú ọ́mọ́dọ́rẹ̀ òrírin*
dog DEF.PL all [REL 1PL.S-buy RCP] have nose black
'All the dogs which we bought have a black nose.'

13.3.4 **Adnominal possessors**

As earlier mentioned in (13.1), only adnominal possessors have the order in which modifiers precede the head (cf. 42a, b).

(42a) *úwó áyẹ oògbén*
dog DEF.SG POSS.child
'the dog's child/the child of the dog'

(42b) *ímúsú ọ̀nẹ́ w-ẹda*
cat DEM.SG POSS-father
'this kitten's father'

When an adnominal possession occurs with other modifiers, the possessor maintains it position before the head, while the other modifiers occur after the head in their proper order (cf. 43).

(43) *úwó oògbén òrírin áyẹ*
dog POSS.child black DEF.SG
'the dog's black child/the black puppy'

A construction such as 'the black dog's puppy,' requires that the possessor be immediately followed by the modifiers (44).

(44) *úwó òrírin àyẹ oògbén*
dog black DEF.SG POSS.child
'the black dog's puppy'

The word order of the noun phrase in Ọ̀kọ can be summarized as below:

GEN N QUAL QUANT (ART / DEM) REL

(45) *àde eègben ọ́fọ̀fọ ẹbọ̀rẹ̀ àbẹ nẹ́nẹ́ ca ẹ́kọ na*
Ade POSS.children tall two DEF.PL [REL come here RCP]
'The two tall children of Ade that came here'

13.4 **Special noun phrases**

Although the noun phrase in Ọ̀kọ normally contains a noun or pronoun (pro-NP), possibly accompanied by optional modifiers, there are some NPs which consist only of the so-called NP modifiers.

13.4.1 **Qualitative nouns**

Qualitative nouns in Ọ̀kọ belong to a special class. They, like most human nouns can take number marking (see also §4.3.1.B). Even though they are NP modifiers (cf. 46a, b), they are also capable of functioning as noun phrases (cf. 47a, b). (47b) is a popular expression in Ọ̀kọ used for greeting.

(46a) *ẹ́pẹ́n óbòrò*
thing good
'a good thing'

(46b) *ógbén ókeke*
child small
'a small child'

(47a) *òkeke àyẹ á-wà mẹ̀-ẹ́ka,*
little FOC 3SG.S-COP 1SG.POSS-own
ọkẹ̀ka àyẹ á-wà yẹ̀-ẹ́ka
big FOC 3SG.S-COP 3SG.POSS-own
(Lit. The small is my own while the big is his own.'
'The small one is mine while the bigger one is his.'

(47b) *òbòrò áka-da*
good FUT-BE
(Lit. Good it will be.)
'It will be well.'

13.5.2 **Numerals**

Furthermore, cardinal and ordinal numerals which have also been described as NP modifiers (see §13.2.3), can also function alone as a noun phrase (cf. 48a, b).

(48a) *ẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀ wó mà-áligbegben*
two LOC.COP 1SG.POSS-pocket
(Lit. Two is in my pocket.')
'There are two in my pocket.'

(48b) *ọ́ọ́bòrò fọ̀ ógbén yọ̀ emumu-ùbo*
second carry child go book-house
(Lit. Second took the child to the school')
'The second one took the child to the school'

13.5.3 **Demonstratives**

Demonstratives in Ọ̀kọ are of two types, those that modify a noun within an NP, already described in §13.2.2, and those that occur by themselves as NPs, namely, demonstrative pronouns. Although the demonstrative modifiers differ in syntactic function from the demonstrative pronouns, they have the same form. They also have the same distinctions as distal vs. proximal and singular vs. plural (cf. 49a, b).

(49a) *ọ̀nẹ́ min wọrẹ ka e-sula ẹnẹ̀m*
DEM.SG INCEP cause [COMP 3SG.S-tire animal
íbúbá àbẹ (DM:12)
rest DEF.PL]
'This made the rest of the animals to be fed up.'

(49b) *àyẹ ọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ gá nẹ́-yà ka àyẹ áka-gba ẹ̀kẹ̀na*
FOC DEM.SG say PREP-3SG.O [COMP 3SG.I FUT-see thing
àyẹ éke-sie nà (DM:26).
3SG.I FUT-do RCP]
(Lit. 'So That told him that he will see what he can do.')
'So the other told him that he will see what he can do.'

13.5.4 **Indefinite articles**

The indefinite articles *ọ̀bẹ̀n* (singular) and *ẹ̀bẹ̀n* (plural) can also occur by themselves as NPs in a construction (cf. 50a, b). The definite ones on the other hand (i.e, *àyẹ/àbẹ*) cannot occur as NPs.

(50a) *ọ̀bẹ̀n gá nẹ̀-bà, à-ka be-èke-di sìé-ẹ*
one say PREP-3PL.O 3SG.S-say 3PL.S-NEG.FUT-can do-3SG.O
'One said to them that they will not be able to do it.'

(50b) *ẹ̀bẹ̀n roro ka úwó áyẹ fo kè*
some think [COMP dog DEF.SG die PERF]
'Some thought that the dog had died.'

Chapter 14
Verbs and argument marking

14. Verbs and argument marking

14.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I examine the valency classes of verbs in Ọ̀kọ. I give a description of verbs based on their syntactic types, that is, impersonal verbs (§14.2.1), intransitive verbs (§14.2.2), transitive verbs (§14.2.3), ditransitive verbs (§14.2.4), and copula verbs (§14.2.5). I also examine other special kinds of verbs in the language, such as serial verbs (§14.4.1), bipartite verbs (§14.4.2) and symmetrical verbs (§14.4.3). This chapter also includes the discussion of the marking of verbal arguments in Ọ̀kọ (§14.3), describing the relation which holds between a verb and noun phrases within its argument domain. Such relationships can be grammatical (i.e, subject and object), or relationships in terms of semantic roles (i.e, agent, patient, instrumental etc.).

14.2 Valency classes

This section includes discussion of impersonal verb constructions, that is, verbs which take a dummy subject, and are otherwise known as avalent verbs; intransitive verbs, transitive verbs, ditransitive verbs and copula verbs.

14.2.1 Impersonal verbs

Impersonal verbs in Ọ̀kọ always take a dummy subject pronoun prefix. The dummy subject, which is identical to the third person singular pronominal prefix, acts as a place holder, while the real subject is the complement clause introduced by the complementizer *ka*. The impersonal verb does not denote an action, an occurrence, or the state-of-being of any specific person, place, or thing but usually expresses an evaluation of the situation in the complement clause. Impersonal verbs in Ọ̀kọ include

the following: *bọ̀* ‘to be fitting/suppose/ought’, *kú* ‘to remain’, *bàrẹ́* ‘to please/appeal to’, *rọ́m* ‘to be good’. Some examples are provided in (1a-e).

(1a) *à-bọ̀ ka óbín a-yọ̀ ọ̀kọ*
3SG.S-suppose [COMP king 3SG.S-go Ogori]
‘The king ought to go to Ogori.’

(1b) *à-bọ̀ ka òsì a-ca amọnẹ̀*
3SG.S-suppose [COMP rain 3SG.S-come today]
‘It is supposed to rain today.’

(1c) *è-kú ka ìtolú é-jíjen*
3SG.S-remain [COMP Tolu 3SG.S-eat]
‘It is left for Tolu to eat.’

(1d) *à-rọ́m ka tì-sie cáná-cá*
3SG.S-good [COMP 1PL.S-do do.early-come]
‘It is good that we arrived early.’

(1e) *à-bàrẹ́-mọ́ kà í-sú íkíbà wó*
3SG.S-please-1SG.O [COMP 1SG.S-have money LOC.COP
úba
LOC.hand]
(Lit. It pleases me to have money in hand.)
‘I would like to be rich.’

14.2.2 **Intransitive verbs**

Intransitive verbs have only one argument, that is, the subject. They are verbs with the valency of one (cf. 2a, b). They include the following: *mune* ‘to run’ *pírí* ‘fly’ *bòrí* ‘swim’ *fó* ‘to die’, *bue* ‘to sleep’ *tén* ‘to sprout’ etc.

(2a) *mẹ̀-ẹ́dẹ́dá* *bue*
1SG.POSS-father sleeep
'My father slept.'

(2b) *ìgìlà àyẹ min e-tén*
yam DEF.SG INCEP PROG-sprout
'The yam has begun to sprout.'

Also included are qualitative verbs. These are all intransitive in the language. A list of them is provided in (3) below (see also §10.3). They can also be inflected with aspectual markers and person forms which function as the subject (cf. 4a-c).

(3)

lọrẹ	'long'	*rọ̀na*	'ripe'
dọ́m	'old'	*rọ́m*	'sweet'
gbodi	'big'	*cile*	'strong'
bẹ́rẹ́	'soft'	*gìnyán*	'sour'
fọ́	'tall'	*bọ̀ra*	'flat'
rúm	'thick'	*kere*	'be small/thin'
fún	'cold'	*bue*	'be bad/spoilt'

(4a) *à-lọrẹ*
3SG.S-long
'It is long.'

(4b) *unini gbodi*
unini big/fat
'Unini is fat.'

(4c) *óhúm àyẹ gìnyán*
soup DEF.SG sour
'The soup is sour.'

Furthermore, there are intransitive serial constructions which feature two or more intransitive verbs occurring in a construction having only one argument, that is, the subject (cf. 5a-c). The verbs in this construction are always verbs denoting action. More discussion of this type of serial constructions is presented in section §14.4.1.A.

(5a) *àde múné cá*
Ade run come
'Ade ran here.'

(5b) *tù-úmún ábẹ nè yọ́ pìlà ca*
1PL.POSS-goat DEF.PL wander go return come
'Our goats went to graze and came back.'

14.2.3 **Transitive verbs**

Transitive verbs are bivalent verbs which take two arguments; that is, the subject and the object. In Ọ̀kọ, the subject of the transitive verb always occurs in the preverbal position, while the object mainly[15] occurs in the postverbal position (see §14.3 for discussion of the definition of subject and object). Transitive verbs in Ọ̀kọ include the following: *nwán* 'to kill', *pẹ́n* 'to break', *gbá* 'to see', *gám* 'to greet/count', etc (cf. 6a, b).

(6a) *àde nwán-yà*
Ade kill-3SG.S
'Ade killed it.'

(6b) *unini pẹ̀n ọ́tẹ̀lẹ̀ àyẹ*
Unini brake pot DEF.SG
'Unini broke the pot.'

[15] In very few cases (apart from ditransitive verbs, see §14.2.4.B), preverbal objects with transitive verbs, involving only the 3rd person singular pronoun have been recorded. See examples (68a, b) of section 14.3.2.

Some transitive verbs appear like compound verbs. They include verbs like: *tíégúrù* 'to sing', *dẹ́nọ̀* 'to urinate', *jijen* 'to eat', *yáyọ́* 'to dance', etc, but in actual sense they are only verb/object combinations. Their meaning is compositional. There is a vowel elision process at word boundary, where the first of two contiguous oral verbs is always deleted (see 3.3.1). Even though these verbs may be written as one word, this is only a matter of convention, especially when such verb is pronounced in isolation. However, across syntactic constructions, these verbs are never realized as a one word bimorphemic verb. For instance, the object NP can be modified by an adjective (cf. 7a), the object can be focused (cf. 7b), the verb can occur alone within a relative clause (cf. 7c), the object can be replaced with another full NP (cf. 7d) or by a pro-NP (cf. 7e).

(7a) *è-tí'* *égúrù* *owowo*
3SG.S-sing song new
'S/He sang a new song.'

(7b) *égúrú* *àyẹ* *è-tíé*
song FOC 3SG.S-sing
'What s/he did was sing.'

(7c) *unini* *e-èke-tíégúrù* *nẹnẹ* *ì-tíé* *nà*
Unini 3SG.S-NEG.FUT-sing.song [REL 1SG.S-sing RCP]
'Unini will not sing the song which I sang.'

(7d) *è-tí'* *ẹ́rẹ̀gbà*
3SG.S-sing *Ẹ̀rẹ̀gbà*[16]
'S/He sang *Ẹ̀rẹ̀gbà'*

[16] A very important music genre in the Ọ̀kọ speaking communities

(7e) *è-tíé-ẹ*
3SG.S-sing-3SG.O
'S/He sang it.'

14.2.4 **Ditransitive verbs**

Ditransitive verbs are three-argument verbs. Such verbs take a subject and two objects. The subject is always the agent, while the objects are theme and recipient. Typical ditransitive verbs in Ọ̀kọ are: *nẹ́/vá* 'give', *jọ́* 'sell', *gá* 'tell/say/speak', *té* 'teach', *nyẹ́n* 'show' and *rú* 'feed (for one who cannot feed unaided, e.g. a baby)'.

Ditransitive constructions in Ọ̀kọ are the following: the double object construction (§14.2.4.A), the preverbal theme construction (§14.2.4.B), the theme-marking construction with *fọ* (§14.2.4.C), the recipient-marking construction with *nẹ* (§14.2.4.D) and the recipient-marking construction with *wó* (§14.2.4.E). The choice of the ditransitive construction is sometimes based on the verb. For instance, the verb *vá* 'give' can only occur in the double object construction, while the verb *nẹ́* 'give' is used in the preverbal theme construction and sometimes in the theme-marking serial verb construction with *fọ*. At other times, the difference is determined by whether any of the objects is a full NP or a pro-NP. Each of these constructions is described in the following subsections.

14.2.4.A **The double object construction**

The double object construction occurs with the four ditransitive verbs, *vá* 'give', *té* 'teach', *rú* 'feed', and *file* 'to dress'. The order of the objects is recipient before theme. The recipient can be a full NP or a clitic pronoun. This is shown in examples (8) – (11).

(8a) *à-vá* *ógbén* *áyẹ* *emumu*
3SG.S-give child DEF.SG book
'S/He gave the child a book.'

(8b) *à-vá-mọ́* *emumu*
3SG.S-give-1SG.O book
'S/He gave me a book.'

(9a) *è-té* *égbén* *ábẹ* *égúrù*
3SG.S-teach children DEF.PL song
'S/He taught the children a song.'

(9b) *è-té-tú* *égúrù*
3SG.S-teach-1PL.O song
'S/He taught us a song.'

(10a) *è-rù* *ógbén* *áyẹ* *ijèn*
3SG.S-feed child DEF.SG food
'S/He fed the child with food.'

(10b) *è-rù-ya* *ijèn*
3SG.S-feed-3SG.O food
'S/He fed him/her/it with food.'

(11a) *è-file* *ógbén* *áyẹ* *alẹgbẹ*
3SG.S-wear child DEF.SG cloth
'S/He dressed the child (with clothes).'

(11b) *è-file-ya* *alẹgbẹ*
3SG.S-wear-3SG.O cloth
'S/He dressed her/him (with clothes).'

On the other hand, the theme can only be a full NP. A pronominal theme cannot occur in the double object construction with any of the verbs. See the ungrammatical (12a), (12b).

(12a) **à-vá-mọ́ ẹ*
3SG.S-give-1SG.O 3SG.O
'S/He gave it to me.'

(12b) **è-té-tú ya*
3SG.S-teach-1PL.O 3SG.O
'S/He taught it to us.'

To express such situations as we have in examples (12a), (12b), the 'give' construction has two alternatives, either the preverbal theme construction (cf. 13a) or the theme-marking serial verb construction with *fọ* (cf. 13b). On the other hand, the 'teach' construction has only one alternative, that is, the theme-marking serial verb construction with *fọ* (cf.14).

(13a) *à-á-nẹ́-mọ̀*
3SG.S-3SG.T-give-1SG.O
'S/He gave it to me.'

(13b) *à-fọ̀-ẹ́ nẹ́-mọ̀*
3SG.S-take-3SG.O BENF-3SG.O
'S/He gave it to me.'

(14) *à-fọ̀-ẹ́ té-tú*
3SG.S-take-3SG.O teach-1PL.O
'S/He taught it to us.'

14.2.4.B **The preverbal theme construction**

In the preverbal theme construction, a third person singular pronoun occurs in preverbal position as the theme, following the subject pronoun (agent), as seen in (15a), (15b), (15c). This phenomenon is rare in the language. It only occurs with the third person singular bound pronoun, and it is restricted to only three verbs. The following ditransitive verbs

permit the preverbal theme constructions: *nẹ́* ‘give’ (which alternates with *vá* ‘give’ see §14.2.4.F for a note on the ‘give’ verbs in Ọ̀kọ), *nyẹ́n* ‘show’, and *rú* ‘feed’.

(15a) *bì-a-nyẹ̌n-bá*
3PL.S-3SG.T-show-3PL.O
‘They showed it to them.’

(15b) *ì-é-rù-ẹ́*
1SG.S-3SG.T-feed-3SG.O
‘I fed it to her/him/it.’

(15c) *àde à-á-nẹ́-mọ̀*
Ade 3SG.S-3SG.T-give-1SG.O
‘Ade gave it to me.’

On the other hand, other pronominal themes occur in the post-verbal position as object of the theme-marking serial verb *fọ,* glossed as ‘take’, see examples (16a), (16b) below, see also section 14.2.4.C for more examples.

(16a) *à-fọ́-ba nẹ́-mọ̀*
3SG.S-take-3PL.O give-1SG.O
‘S/He gave them to me.’

(16b) *bẹ̀-fọ́-tọ nyẹ̀n-nọ*
3SG.S-take-1PL.O show-2PL.O
‘They introduced us to you (pl.)

14.2.4.C **The theme-marking serial verb construction with *fọ***

The theme-marking construction with the serial verb *fọ*, involves the marking of the theme with the theme marker *fọ* ‘take’, combining with a ditransitive verb in a serial construction. The following ditransitive verbs

occur with *fọ*: *nẹ́* ‘give’, *nyẹ́n* ‘show’, *té* ‘teach’, *rú* or *fìyé* ‘feed’, and *file* ‘dress’. Examples (17), (18) show the distribution of some of these verbs.

(17a) *àde fọ̀ yì-íwú nyẹ̀n ófòro àyẹ*
Ade take 3SG.POSS-body show man DEF.SG
‘Ade showed himself to the man.’

(17b) *àgúá-agua fọ̀ wù-úbó nyẹ̀n-mọ̀*
please take 2SG.POSS-house show-1SG.O
‘Please show me your house.’

(17c) *ofòro àyẹ fọ̀-tọ́ nyẹ̀n ẹga àbẹ*
man DEF.SG take-1PL.O show visitors DEF.PL
‘The man showed us to the guests.’

(18a) *unini fọ̀ íjén fìyé-bá*
Unini take food feed-3PL.O
‘Unini fed food to them.’

(18b) *à-fọ yẹ̀-ẹ́gá fìyé-tú*
3SG.S-take 3SG.POSS-word feed-1PL.O
‘S/He fed his word to us.’

Verbs like the *nẹ́* variant of ‘give’, which usually occurs in the preverbal theme construction and *file* ‘dress’, which usually occurs in double-object constructions, also have alternative constructions using the theme-marking construction with the serial verb *fọ*. In such constructions, *fọ* has the semantic sense of ‘carry’. The sentences are also interpreted as “carry X give/wear Y” in examples (19), (20). I show pairs of alternating constructions.

(19a) *à-vá-mọ́* *íkíba* *àkpolo* *ẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀*
3SG.S-give-1SG.O money bag two
'S/He gave me two bags of money.'

(19b) *à-fọ́* *íkíba* *àkpolo* *ẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀* *né-mọ́*
3SG.S-carry money bag two give-1SG.O
'S/He carried two bags of money and gave me.'

(20a) *ẹ́sọ́lù* *óbín* *file* *ẹ̀dáfídì* *yà-alẹ́gbẹ́*
Saul king wear David 3SG.POSS-cloth
'King Saul put his cloth on David.'

(20b) *ẹ́sọ́lù* *óbín* *fọ́* *yà-alẹ́gbẹ́* *file* *ẹ̀dáfídì*
Saul king carry 3SG.POSS-cloth wear David
'King Saul carried his cloth and wore David.'

14.2.4.D **The recipient-marking constructions with *nẹ́***

The recipient-marking construction with *nẹ́* is widely spread in the language because several verbs are involved. *Nẹ́* is used as the benefactive marker. It is used to indicate the goal of a transfer and is usually translated as 'for', 'to'. The following ditransitive verbs are used in this construction: *jọ́* 'sell', *gá* 'tell/say/speak', *nyín* 'buy', *mẹ́* 'build', *duna* 'pay', *rùwa* 'share', *kùrù* 'scoop' and *lò* 'spend' *tá* 'donate' (for animate recipient), *filé* 'send', *yọ̀rẹ́* 'stretch/pass (smth to)', *nẹ́m* 'throw/hit/strike'.

In recipient-marking constructions, *nẹ́* only marks recipient which can either be a full NP or a pro-NP. It is never used to introduce the theme. The *nẹ́* phrase always follows the theme phrase. The theme may also be full NP or pro-NP. This is shown in the following examples (21) – (31).

Sell:

(21a) *tẹ̀-jọ́* *aogo* *àyẹ* *né* *iyaro* *àyẹ*
1PL.S-sell watch DEF.SG BENF woman DEF.SG
'We sold the watch to the woman.'

(21b) *à-jọ̀-ẹ́* *nẹ̀-mọ̀*
3SG.S-sell-3SG.O BENF-1SG.O
S/He sold it to me.'

Tell/Say/Speak:

(22a) *bẹ̀-tá* *ọ́garẹ́ga* *àyẹ* *né-tọ̀*
3PL.S-tell story DEF.SG BENF-1PL.O
'They told us the story.'

(22b) *à-gá-ẹ* *nẹ* *àdé*
3SG.S-say-3SG.O BENF Ade
'He told it to Ade.'

Buy:

(23a) *è-nyín* *òfílọ́cẹn* *né-mọ̀*
3SG.S-buy shoe BENF-1SG.O
'S/He bought me a pair of shoes.'

(23b) *àde* *nyín-yá* *né-mọ̀*
Ade buy-3SG.O BENF-1SG.O
'Ade bought it for me.'

Build:

(24a) *ẹ̀-mẹ́* *úbó* *né-yà*
1SG.S-build-3SG.O house BENF-3SG.O
'I built a house for him.'

(24b) *ẹ̀-mẹ́-ya* *nẹ́-yà*
1SG.S-build-3SG.O BENF-3SG.O
'I built it for him.'

Pay:

(25a) *ì-duna* *íkíbà* *àyẹ* *nẹ́-yà*
1SG.S-pay money DEF.SG BENF-3SG.O
'I paid her/him the money/ I paid the money to her/him.'

(25b) *è-duna-ẹ* *nẹ̀-mọ̀*
3SG.S-pay-3SG.O BENF-1SG.O
'S/He paid it to me.'

Share:

(26a) *è-ròwa* *íkíba* *àyẹ* *nẹ́-tọ̀*
3SG.S-share-3SG.O money DEF.SG BENF-1PL.O
'He shared out the money to us.'

(26b) *è-ròwa-ẹ* *nẹ̀-tọ̀*
3SG.S-share-3SG.O BENF-1PL.O
'He shared it to us.'

Scoop:

(27a) *àde* *kùrù* *óhúm* *nẹ̀-tọ̀*
Ade scoop soup BENF-1PL.O
Ade scooped out the soup to us.'

(27b) *è-kùrù-ẹ́* *nẹ̀-tọ̀*
3SG.S-scoop-3SG.O BENF-1PL.O
'S/He scooped it out to us.'

Donate:

(28a) *à-tá* *íkíbà* *àyẹ* *nẹ́-tọ̀*
3SG.S-donate money DEF.SG BENF-1PL.O
'S/He donated the money to us.'

(28b) *à-tá-ẹ* *nẹ́-tọ̀*
3SG.S-donate.3SG.O BENF-1PL.O
'S/He donated the money to us.'

Send:

(29a) *è-fílé* *ógbén* *áyẹ* *nẹ́-mọ̀*
3SG.S-send child DEF.SG BENF-1SG.O
'S/He sent the child to me.'

(29b) *è-fílé-ẹ́* *nẹ̀-mọ̀*
3SG.S-send-3SG.O BENF -1SG.O
'S/He sent it to me.'

Stretch:

(30a) *à-yọ̀rẹ́* *úbá* *nẹ̀-mọ̀*
3SG.S-stretch hand BENF -1SG.O
'S/He stretched a hand to me.'

(30b) *à-yọ̀rẹ́-yá* *nẹ̀-mọ̀*
3SG.S-stretch-3SG.O BENF -1SG.O
'S/He stretched/passed it to me.'

Throw/Hit/Strike:

(31a) *à-nẹ́m* *ígìlà* *àyẹ* *nẹ́-mọ̀*
3SG.S-threw yam DEF.SG BENF -1SG.O
'S/He threw the yam at me.'

(31b) *à-nẹ́m-ya* *nẹ́-mọ̀*
3SG.S-hit/throw/strike-3SG.O BENF -1SG.O
'S/He threw it at me./ S/He hit it to me.'

14.2.4.E **The recipient-marking construction with *wó***

The recipient-marking construction with *wó* involves the verbs *kọ́* 'load/pack', as seen (32a), (32b), and *tá* 'donate' (for inanimate recipient) (33a), (33b). The recipient is marked in a preposition-like fashion with *wó*.

Load/Pack:

(32a) *àde* *kọ* *ibue* *àyẹ* *wó* *mù-ugì*
Ade load colanut DEF.SG PREP 1SG.POSS-basket
'Ade loaded my basket with colanut.'

(32b) *à-kọ́-ẹ* *wó* *mà-ákpóló*
3SG.S-pack-3SG.O PREP 1SG.POSS-bag
'S/He loaded it into my bag.'

Donate:

(33a) *à-tá* *íkíbà* *àyẹ* *wó* *Ósìbìna* *uùbo*
3SG.S-donate money DEF.SG PREP LOC.God POSS.house
'S/He donated the money to the church.'

(33b) *à-tá-ẹ́* *wó* *Òsìbìna* *uùbo*
3SG.S-donate-3SG.O PREP God POSS.house
'S/He donated it to the church.'

However, *wó* cannot be used to introduce a pronominal recipient. With *kọ́* and *tá*, it can only combine with the indefinite *àmọ* (see 34, 35).

(34a) **à-kọ́-ẹ́ w' ẹ́*
3SG.S-pack-3SG.O LOC.COP 3SG.O
'S/He loaded it into it.'

(34b) *à-kọ́-ẹ́ w' àmo*
3SG.S-pack-3SG.O LOC.COP there
(Lit. 'S/He loaded it to there.')
'S/He loaded it there.'

(35a) **à-tá-ẹ́ w' ẹ́*
3SG.S-donate-3SG.O LOC.COP 3SG.O
'S/He donated it into it.'

(35b) *à-tá-ẹ́ w' àmo*
3SG.S-donate-3SG.O LOC.COP there
(Lit. 'S/He donated it to there.')
'S/He donated it there.'

Alternatively, when the recipient is pronominal and animate, *kọ́* and *tá* occur with the benefactive *nẹ́*. This is shown in examples (36), (37).

(36) *à-kọ́-ẹ́*[17] *nẹ́-tọ̀*
3SG.S-pack-3SG.O BENF-1PL.O
(Lit. 'S/He pack it give us.')
'S/He loaded it to us.'

(37) *à-tá ílkíbà àyẹ́ nẹ́-tọ̀*
3SG.S-donate money DEF.SG BENF-1PL.O
'S/He donated the money to us.'

[17] Note that both the singular and plural object *ba-* are acceptable.

14.2.4.F **A note on the GIVE verb**

The difference between the 'give' verbs, *nẹ́* and *vá* is as follows: both verbs differ in the type of constructions in which they can occur (see also table 16 below). For instance, *nẹ́* 'give' occurs in the preverbal theme constructions (cf. 38a). *Vá* on the other hand cannot occur in the same type of construction (cf. 38b).

(38a) *à-á-nẹ́-mọ̀*
3SG.S-3SG.T-give-1SG.O
'S/He gave it to me.'

(38b) **à-á-vá-mọ̀*
3SG.S-3SG.T-give-1SG.O
'S/He gave it to me.'

On the other hand, *vá* occurs in the double object construction (cf. 39a), but *nẹ́* does not (cf. 39b).

(39a) *à-vá ógbén áyẹ emumu*
3SG.S-give child DEF.SG book
'S/He gave the child a book.'

(39b) **à-nẹ́ ógbén áyẹ emumu*
3SG.S-give child DEF.SG book
'S/He gave the child a book.'

In constructions such as one in which the theme is not mentioned, which is perceived as already understood, and in imperative constructions, for example (40a), (40b), only *vá* can be used.

(40a) *ẹ̀-vá-ẹ*
1SG.S-give-3SG.O
'I gave him/her (smth)/I gave it to him/her.'

(40b) *vă-mọ*!
give-1SG.O
'Give me (smth)!/Give it to me!'

However, when 'give' is used in the alternative theme-marking serial construction with *fọ*, where *fọ́* has the meaning 'carry', it is the *nẹ́* variant of 'give' that is used (cf. 41).

(41) *à-fọ̀ àkpalaba ádẹ ọ̀ọ́rẹ nẹ́-tọ̀*
3SG.S-carry bottle beer one BENF-1PL.O
(Lit. S/He carried one bottle of beer give us.)
'S/He carried a bottle of beer and gave us.'

It is repeated here that the alternative construction to (41) is the usual double object construction which involves *vá* 'give' (cf 42).

(42) *à-vá-tọ́ àkpalaba ádẹ ọ̀ọ́rẹ*
3SG.S-give-1PL.O bottle beer one
'S/He gave us a bottle of beer.'

The general summary with respect to the ordering of objects in ditransitive constructions in Ọ̀kọ is as follows: In the double object construction, the recipient always precedes the theme. In the preverbal theme construction, the theme (i.e., the third person singular pronoun) precedes the verb, while the recipient immediately follows the verb. However, in the remaining types of ditransitive constructions such as: the theme-marking serial verb constructions with *fọ,* the recipient-marking with *nẹ* and the recipient-marking construction with *wó*, the theme always precedes the recipient.

The distribution of ditransitive verbs in ditransitive constructions in Ọ̀kọ is summarized in table 16 below

Table 16: Distribution of ditransitive verbs in Ọ̀kọ

	Preverbal Theme	Double Object	T-Marking with fọ	R-marking with nẹ	R-marking with wó
nẹ́ 'give'	+	–	+	–	–
Vá 'give'	–	+	–	–	–
nyẹ́n 'show'	+	–	+	–	–
té 'teach'	–	+	+	–	–
Rù 'feed'	+	+	+	–	–
fìyé 'feed'	–	–	+	–	–
nyín 'buy'	–	–	–	+	–
jọ́ 'sell'	–	–	–	+	–
Gá 'say/tell'	–	–	–	+	–
file 'dress'	–	+	+	–	–
fílé 'send'	–	–	–	+	–
mẹ́ 'build'	–	–	–	+	–
yọ̀rẹ́ 'stretch/pass'	–	–	–	+	–
nẹ́m 'throw/hit	–	–	+	+	–
duna 'pay'	–	–	–	+	–
rùwa 'share'	–	–	–	+	–
kùrù 'scoop'	–	–	–	+	–
ná 'take from'	–	–	–	–	–
kọ́ 'load/pack'	–	–	–	+	+
tá 'donate'	–	–	–	+	+

14.2.5 **Copula verbs**

Copula verbs are verbs which link the subject with the complement of a sentence. In Ọ̀kọ, copulative constructions involving a copula verb include the following: the locative copula (14.2.5.A), the existential copula (14.2.5.B), the identity/class-inclusion copula (14.2.5.C), and the 'become' copula (14.2.5.D). Each of these is examined in the following subsections.

14.2.5.A **The locative copula**

The locative copula in Ọ̀kọ is *wó*. It is used to express a predication of location (cf. 43a-c).

(43a) *"ẹ̀rá è-wó ẹ̀fọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ a?"* (DM:35)
who 3SG.S-LOC.COP place.that QM
'"Who is there?"'

(43b) *ọ̀sankata nẹnẹ wó árẹ̀wa èkpèrì akà éyí*
argument [REL LOC.COP north wind and sun
eètin nà (NW/S1:1)
POSS.middle RCP]
'The argument between the sun and the north wind'

(43c) "*è-wó ọkọrẹ uùbó*." (TP1:26)
3SG.S-LOC.COP monkey POSS.house
'It is in the monkey's house.'

When the subject is indefinite, such sentences are translated by 'there is' (cf. 44).

(44) *ìgìlà ọyọyọ wó í-tè-érúm*
yam plenty LOC.COP LOC-1PL.POSS-farm
'There are lots of yams on our farm.'

We note also that the locative copula *wó* sometimes functions in a preposition-like manner (cf. 45a, b) (see also §11.3.2).

(45a) *á-kọ́-ẹ́ wó yọ̀-ọ́pọ́n.* (DM:10)
3SG.S-pack-3SG.O PREP 3SG.POSS-barn
'He packed it into his barn.'

(45b) *àyẹ ùgì àyẹ mín sẹ-yà wó ẹ̀fọ̀nẹ́bẹ́* (DM:40)
FOC trap DEF.SG INCEP catch-3SG.O PREP that.place
'So the trap caught him in the place.'

14.2.5.B **The existential copula**

The existential copulative construction asserts the pure existence or non-existence of an entity regardless of location. The existential copula in Ọ̀kọ has the surface form *wàmọ́*. There is a reason to speculate that *wàmọ́* is formed by combining the locative copula *wó* with the non-specific object *àmọ́*, which can be translated as 'there/among'. Due to a vowel elision rule which always affects the first of two contiguous oral vowels at morpheme boundary, the *ó* of *wó* is deleted (see §3.3.1). We know that *wó* is involved in the formation of the existential copula because, even though its vowel which is [+ATR] has been deleted, bound elements (eg. pronominal markers) which are attached to it harmonize in terms of [+ATR] and not [–ATR]. This shows that the elided [+ATR] vowel is still recognized at the underlying level. See examples (46a), (46b).

(46a) *ébí w' àmọ́*
water EXIST.COP
'There is water.'

(46b) *ébí e-mè-w'àmọ́*
water 3SG.S-NEG-EXIST.COP
(Lit. 'Water is not there.')
'There is no water.'

14.2.5.C **The identity/class-inclusion copula**

The copula *wà* is used in the identification of an entity (cf. 47a) and for the expression of class-inclusion (cf. 47b).

(47a) *mọ̀-ọ́rẹ́* *wà* *òtéró* *owowo* *àyẹ*
1SG.POSS-friend COP teacher new DEF.SG
'My friend is the new teacher.'

(47b) *tì-íyá* *wà* *érúmrò*
1PL.POSS-mother COP farmer
'Our mother is a farmer.'

Qualitative words, especially the qualitative nouns (see §10.2) are also used with the copula *wà* (cf. 48a, b). On the other hand, qualitative verbs (see §10.3) cannot (cf. 49). They can only be used with the 'become' copula after they have been nominalized (see §14.2.5.D below).

(48a) *ímúsú* *àyẹ* *wà* *òkùkùrù*
cat DEF.SG COP white
'The cat is black'

(48b) *íkérese* *àyẹ* *wà* *owowo*
car DEF.SG COP new
'The car is new.'

(49) **tì-íyá* *wà* *cile*
1PL.POSS-mother COP strong
'Our mother is strong.'

14.2.5.D **The 'become' copula**

Copula constructions in Ọ̀kọ also include the use of the 'become' copula *cìna*. This expresses the transformative state of a referent. See examples (50a), (50b).

(50a) *è-cìna* *óró*
3SG.S-become person
(Lit. 'S/He has become a person.')
'S/He has become renowned.'

(50b) *àde* *cìna* *óbín*
Ade become king
'Ade has become a king.'

Cìna can also be used with qualitative words. With qualitative nouns, the construction is straightforward; the form of the qualitative noun is not modified (cf. 51a, b). On the other hand, with qualitative verbs, the word must first be nominalized (cf. 52a, b) (see §10.5.2).

(51a) *ade* *cìna* *óró* *nẹ̀nẹ̀* *gbodi* *nà*
Ade become person REL big RCP
'Ade has become a fat person.'

(51b) *tì-íkén* *cìna* *ọ̀kẹ̀ka* *ke*
1PL.POSS-town COP great PERF
'Our town has become great'

(52a) *ẹ́pẹ́nídùdù* *àyẹ* *cìna* *ọ̀-lọ́lọrẹ*
snake DEF.SG become NOM-long
'The snake has become longer.'

(52b) *yọ̀-ọ́tọ́n* *cìna* *ò-gbígbodi*
3SG.POSS-ear become NOM-fat
'His ears have become bigger.'

14.3 **Argument marking**

There is no case-marking of core arguments (subject/object) in Ọ̀kọ. However, oblique arguments may take case marking, for instance, a noun may be marked with the locative case (cf. 53) (see §3.5.2.2.C). The two overt coding devices for establishing grammatical relations in Ọ̀kọ are word order and pronominalisation.

(53) *érúrò* *àyẹ* *sẹ̀* *ayẹrẹjẹkà* *ẹ̀bẹ̀n* *í-yè-érúm*
Farmer DEF.SG pick mushroom INDF.PL LOC-3SG.POSS-farm
'The farmer picked some mushrooms on his farm'

14.3.1 **Word order**

Word order is a very important coding device for distinguishing subject and object in Ọ̀kọ. The basic word order is SVO. Using semantic role labeling, in the following transitive clauses in (54a), (54b), the NPs in the preverbal position are agents, while the NPs in the postverbal position are patients. In intransitive clauses in (55a), (55b), NP agents also occur in preverbal position.

(54a) *áfọ́rẹ́rò* *àyẹ* *nwán* *ẹ́dagba* *òdùdù* *àyẹ*
warrior DEF.SG kill elephant evil DEF.SG
'The warrior killed the evil elephant.'

(54b) *ájẹ́rẹ̀* *yìre* *údúdò* *ìigìlà*
rabbit steal sheep POSS.yam
'The rabbit stole the sheep's yam.'

(55a) *údúdò é-yíwo*
sheep PROG-crying
'The sheep is crying.'

(55b) *ẹ́bọ́lá mune*
Bola run
'Bola ran.'

However, in some intransitive clauses, the patient also occurs in preverbal position. This is shown in the following examples (56), (57):

(56) *unini a-sọmọrọrẹ*
Unini PROG-fear
'Unini is afraid.'

(57) *óhúm áyẹ min e-gìyan*
soup DEF.SG INCEP PROG-sour
'The soup is becoming sour.'

One can then state that in transitive clauses, NPs that have the semantic role of agent are assigned the grammatical relation of subject, while NPs that have the semantic role of patient are assigned the grammatical relation of object. On the other hand, in intransitive clauses where there is only one argument, the single argument is the subject, irrespective of its semantic role, and therefore occurs preverbally.

Furthermore, it should be noted that in transitive constructions, reversing the position of agent and patient will inevitably lead to a change in meaning. That is, passive-like constructions in which the patient is promoted to preverbal position and the agent is demoted to an oblique role or totally suppressed are not possible in Ọ̀kọ. Any reversal of the position also translates to role reversal. The agent becomes the patient and vise versa. I show this contrast in (58a), (58b).

(58a) *áfọ́rẹ́rò àyẹ nwán ẹ́dagba òdùdù àyẹ*
warrior DEF.SG kill elephant evil DEF.SG
'The warrior killed the evil elephant.'

(58b) *ẹ̀dagba òdùdù àyẹ nwán áfọ́rẹ́rò àyẹ*
elephant evil DEF.SG kill warrior DEF.SG
'The evil elephant killed the warrior.'

This means that as far as transitive constructions are concerned, the immediate preverbal position is exclusively reserved for the agent, while the post-verbal position is reserved for the patient.

However, patient-initial clauses are not totally impossible in Ọ̀kọ. A typical example is found in focus constructions in the language. In a focus construction, the object may be fronted to the pre-subject position. This affects the basic word order; compare the non-focused (59a) with the focused (59b).

(59a) *áfọ́rẹ́rò àyẹ nwán ẹ́dagba òdùdù àyẹ*
warrior DEF.SG kill elephant evil DEF.SG
'The warrior killed the evil elephant.'

(59b) *ẹ̀dagba òdùdù àyẹ áfọ́rẹ́rò àyẹ nwán*
elephant evil FOC warrior DEF.SG kill
'It was indeed an evil elephant that the warrior killed.'

14.3.2 **Pronominalization**

Subject and object relations in this language, are also relevant for the syntactic distributions of pronominal forms. The pronominal forms which I refer to in this section are the ones which I call bound pronouns (see §7.2.3, 7.2.4). They are clearly different from the independent pronouns because the latter are free in all positions and there is no variation in their forms (see 60a, b). Hence, when I refer to subject and object pronouns here, I only refer to the bound pronouns.

(60a) *àyẹ̀ àrẹ̀ è-sie útúm áyẹ̀*
3SG.I FOC 3SG.S-do work DEF.SG
'Only s/he did the job.'

(60b) *ẹ́cẹ́nrò àyẹ̀ éke-tíégúrù nẹ̀ ànọ̀ fẹ̀yan-fẹ̀yan*
entertainer DEF.SG FUT-sing BENF 2PL.I all
'The musician will entertain all of you.'

Here is a recap of some of the facts about bound pronouns in Ọ̀kọ̀ as earlier discussed in §7.2: They form part of the verb word as affixes; their surface form is determined by the phonological process of ATR vowel harmony; only the third person (singular/plural) object is not affected by vowel harmony (see §3.4.2.C). The following examples in (61a), (61b), and (62a), (62b) illustrate this (see §7.2.3 for a detailed table).

i. **_ì-_ vs. _ẹ̀-_ for the first person singular bound subject pronoun (Set A)**

(61a) *ì-sú-yá*
1SG.S-marry-3SG.O
'I married him/her.'

(61b) *ẹ̀-gbá-wọ́*
1SG.S-see-2SG.O
'I saw you.'

ii. ***mà-* vs. *mè-* for the first person singular bound subject pronoun (Set B)**

(62a) *mà-a-yẹ̀rẹ́-bá yọ̀ érúm*
1SG.S-PROG-follow-3PL.O go farm
'I am accompanying them to the farm.'

(62b) *mè-e-bue*
1SG.S-PROG-sleep
'I am sleeping.'

Ọ̀kọ distinguishes between the subject and the object forms of bound pronouns. In a transitive clause, when the NPs are replaced by pronouns, there are two different forms, subject and object forms. The preverbal pronominal prefix expresses the subject relation, while the post-verbal pronominal suffix expresses the object relation. This is shown in the following examples (63a), (63b).

(63a) *unini yẹ̀rẹ́ ógbén áyẹ yọ̀ emumu uùbo*
unini follow child DEF.SG go book POSS.house
'Unini accompanied the child to school.'

(63b) *à-yẹ̀rẹ́-yá yọ̀ emumu uùbo*
3SG.S-follow-3SG.O go book POSS.house
'He accompanied her/him to school.'

Furthermore, the preverbal pronominal prefix which is used in transitive clauses is the same as that used in the subject position of an intransitive clause in a nominative pattern (cf. 64a, b).

(64a) *unini éke-bue*
Unini FUT-sleep
'Unini will sleep.'

(64b) *è-éke-bue*
3SG.S-FUT-sleep
'She will sleep.'

Normally, subject and object pronouns in Ọ̀kọ are defined in their forms and in their syntactic distribution, whereby the subject pronouns occurs in preverbal positions (cf. 65), while object pronouns occur in postverbal position (cf. 66a, b).

(65) *mè-éke-nyín ẹ́sá àyẹ*
1SG.S-FUT-buy cloth DEF.SG
'I will buy the cloth'

(66a) *à-vá-mọ yẹ-ẹ̀sa*
3SG.S-give-1SG.O 3SG.POSS-cloth
'S/He gave me her/his cloth.'

(66b) *à-fọ̀ yẹ-ẹ̀sa nẹ́-mọ̀*
3SG.S-take 3SG.POSS-cloth BENF-1SG.O
'S/He gave her/his cloth to me.'

However, in some rare cases which only involve the third person singular pronoun, preverbal objects may occur, thereby placing a limitation on the use of pronominalisation in the establishment of grammatical relations in the language. For instance, in ditransitive constructions, as earlier mentioned in section 14.2.4.B, the third person singular theme occurs in preverbal position with the verbs *nyẹ́n* 'show', *nẹ́* 'give' and *rù* 'feed' (cf. 67a-c).

(67a) *bì-a-nyẹ̌n-bá*
3PL.S-3SG.T-show-3PL.O
'They showed it to them.'

(67b) *ì-é-rù-ẹ́*
1SG.S-3SG.T-feed-3SG.O
'I fed it to her/him/it.'

(67c) *àde à-á-nẹ́-mọ̀*
Ade 3SG.S-3SG.T-give-1SG.O
'Ade gave it to me.'

Also, this phenomenon has been attested in a couple of non-ditransitive constructions (cf. 68a, b).

(68a) *àkọ e-sìé yìré-ẹ́ na, a-fọ̀-ẹ́ yọ̀ úbó,*
[as 3SG.S-do steal-3SG.O MCP] 3SG.S-take-3SG.O go house
e-è-sú (TP1:9)
3SG.S-3SG.O-keep
(Lit. 'As he stole it, he took it home and he **it** hide.')
'As he stole it, he took it home and hid it.'

(68b) *à-wẹ̀-ya, á-yọ́ a-sẹ̀ ìgìlà ẹ́pẹ́n ákọ*
3SG.S-cultivate-3SG.O 3SG.S-go 3SG.S-select yam thing like
éwúsú, ọ̀gọ̀njọ, ọ̀wànà, àjíbókúnu, ìpépe, kẹ̀-sẹ̀-ba,
? ? ? ? ?[18] PREF-select-3PL.O
é-è-bire[19]*.* (YF1:3)
PPCS.3SG.S-3SG.O-plant
(Lit. He cultivates it, he goes, he selects yams such as: *éwúsú, ọ̀gọ̀njọ, ọ̀wànà, àjíbókúnu, ìpépe*, selecting them, he **it** plant.')
'He cultivates it, and goes to select yams such as: *éwúsú, ọ̀gọ̀njọ, ọ̀wànà, àjíbókúnu, ìpépe*, he selects them, and then plants it (them).'

14.4 Special kinds of verbs

14.4.1 Serial verbs

In terms of their structure, serial verb constructions have a single grammatical subject, no connective markings, and are understood as having the same grammatical categories such as tense-aspect-mood markers. For instance, in a negative serial verb construction, the negative marker is inflected only on the first verb (cf. 69)

[18] Varieties of yams

[19] The procedural-preclausal-segment (PPCS) is marked on the 3SG.S as a high tone (see §3.5.2.2.D).

(69) *tù-úmún ábẹ e-mè-né yọ́ pìlà ca*
1PL.POSS-goat DEF.PL 3SG.S-NEG-wander go do.again come
'Our goats did not go to graze and come back.'

There are two serial verb construction types in Ọ̀kọ (SVC types): The coordinate SVC (cf. 70a, b) and the complex SVC (cf. 71a, b). The so-called complex SVC is what I call bipartite verbs in sections 5.2.2 and 14.4.2. I see bipartite verbs as lexicalized serial verbs, and they can be seen as a subset of serial verb constructions.

(70a) *àde nyín ikusaye àyẹ tám*
Ade buy groundnut DEF.SG chew
'Ade bought and ate the groundnut.'

(70b) *ógbén áye cá gba ìkókó ọ̀bẹ̀n*
child DEF.SG come see cocoyam INDEF.SG
'The child came and found a cocoyam.'

(71a) *unini bue yọ̀*
Unini sleep go
'Unini fell asleep.'

(71b) *unini na ógbén áyẹ wọ́*
Unini accept child DEF.SG hear
'Unini believed the child.'

In the coordinate SVC type, each of the verbs has the same meaning as it would have had in a simplex sentence (cf. 72a, b).

(72a) *àde nyín ikusaye àyẹ*
Ade buy groundnut DEF.SG
'Ade bought the groundnut.'

(72b) *àde tàm ikusaye àyẹ*
Ade chew groundnut DEF.SG
'Ade ate the groundnut.'

(73) *àde nyín ikusaye àyẹ tám*
Ade buy groundnut DEF.SG chew
'Ade bought and ate the groundnut.'

On the other hand in the complex SVC, the semantics is irregular between when any of the verbs is used in a simplex construction and when they are used in a serial construction. For instance, *ná* 'accept/retrieve' and *fán* 'escape', in the simplex structure in (74a), (74b) respectively, both have a non-compositional meaning when they occur together in a serial construction as in (75).

(74a) *à-ná-mọ*
3SG.S-accept-1SG.O
'S/He accepted me.'

(74b) *ẹ̀-fán (ke)*
1SG.S-escape PERF
'I (have) escaped.'

(75) *à-ná-mọ fan*
3SG.S-accept-1SG.O escape
'S/He saved/rescued me.'

14.4.1.A **Verb types and their combinability**

Serial verb constructions can also be categorized based on verb transitivity. One can look at possible combinations according to the transitivity of the verbs that occur in a construction. For instance in Ọ̀kọ, the following combinations are possible: Transitive-Transitive, Intransitive-Transitive, Transitive-Intransitive and Intransitive-Intransitive.

i. *Transitive-Transitive*

(76a) *àde nyín ikusaye àyẹ tám*
Ade buy groundnut DEF.SG chew
'Ade bought and ate the groundnut.'

(76b) *unini gba iwòma àyẹ nwán*
Unini see mosquito DEF.SG kill
'Unini succeeded in killing the mosquito.'

ii. *Intransitive-Transitive*

(77a) *ógbén áye cá gba ìkókó ọ̀bẹ̀n*
child DEF.SG come see cocoyam INDEF.SG
'The child found a cocoyam.'

(77b) *è-fúrú kparẹ ùlukutum áyẹ*
1SG.S-jump pluck fruit DEF.SG
'S/He jumped and plucked the fruit.'

iii. *Transitive-Intransitive*

(78a) *unini fọ̀ ógbén áyẹ bue*
Unini carry child DEF.SG sleep
'Unini laid the child to sleep.'

(78b) *àde tă-mọ ẹba falẹ*
Ade push-1SG.O hand fall
'Ade pushed me down.'

iv. *Intransitive-Intransitive*

(79a) *unini e-mè-mune ca*
Unini 3SG.S-NEG-run come
'Unini did not run and come.'

(79b) *à-cá fó wó tù-ubo-ùcin*
3SG.S-come die PREP 1PL.POSS-house-back
'It came and died at our backyard.'

14.4.1.B **SVC and argument sharing**

Argument sharing is also an important parameter for classifying serial verb constructions in Ọ̀kọ. This parameter shows the nature of the relationship that holds between the nominal arguments and the serial verbs with which they are associated. SVC Argument sharing in serial verb constructions in Ọ̀kọ can be same-subject sharing, combined-subject sharing and same-object.

i. **Same-subject sharing**

All the verbs in the serial construction share the same subject. This is about the most common of all the argument sharing types in serial verb construction in Ọ̀kọ. This is shown in (80a), (80b).

(80a) *óbín oògben cá fọ̀ ògóbí àyẹ nyẹ́n nọ̀*
king POSSchild come take *ògóbí* DEF.SG show PREP
yọ̀-ọ́rẹ́. (TP2:31)
3SG.POSS-friend
'The princess showed the *ògóbí* to her friend.'

(80b) *à-bẹ̀ ẹ̀kpàkpàlà nwán umu áyẹ̀*
3SG.S-shoot gun kill goat DEF.SG
'S/He fired the gun and killed the goat.'

ii. **Combined-subject sharing**

In this type of argument sharing, both the subject and the direct object of the first verb are both subject of the second verb. This type of constructions usually involves the auxiliary verb *má*, which has the semantic sense, 'join' or 'accompany' or 'assist', simply glossed as 'do.with' (cf. 81a, b) (see also §6.5.B). Although *má* always takes an object, however, it can never function as the main verb in a simplex construction.

(81a) *unini má àde pá úrúmù àyẹ̀*
Unini do.with Ade peel orange DEF.SG
'Unini assisted Ade to peel the orange.'

(81b) *ẹ̀-má ógbén áyẹ̀ yọ̀ emumu ùbo*
1SG.S-do.with child DEF.SG go book house
'I accompanied the child to school.'

iii. **Same-object sharing**

This type of serial verb construction involves only transitive verbs. The transitive verbs both share a single object in the construction (cf. 82a-c).

(82a) *unini bẹ́ ọ́dọ́ àyẹ̀ nwán*
Unini beat rat DEF.SG kill
'Unini beat the rat to death.'

(82b) *àde nyín ikusaye àyẹ̀ tám*
Ade buy groundnut DEF.SG chew
'Ade bought and ate the groundnut.'

(82c) *à-gbá-ẹ* *fọ̀*
3SG.S-see-3SG.O carry
'S/He succeeded in carrying it.'

We note however, that same object sharing serial verb construction is only possible when the shared object has the semantic role of patient. If the object has a different role, for example instrumental, each transitive verb must have its own assigned object. This is shown in the examples (83a), (83b) below.

(83a) **à-bẹ* *ẹ̀kpàkpàlà* *nwán*
3SG.S-shoot gun kill
'*S/He fired the gun and killed'

(83b) *à-bẹ* *ẹ̀kpàkpàlà* *nwán* *umu* *áyẹ*
3SG.S-shoot gun kill goat DEF.SG
'S/He fired the gun and killed the goat.'

14.4.2 **Bipartite verbs**

Bipartite verbs in Ọ̀kọ are complex verb stems with two parts (see also §5.2.2). The Bipartite verbs appear like lexicalized serial verbs, that is, two different roots coming together to form a single verb which has a different, non-compositional meaning; see example (84) below.

(84)

(a) *ná* + *wọ́* → *náwọ́*
accept hear 'to believe'

(b) *ná* + *fán* → *náfán*
accept escape 'to save'

(c) *má* + *bàlẹ* → *mábalẹ*
test look 'to tempt'

(d) *bé* + *fúwà* → *béfúwà*
spoil away 'to destroy (especially of one's character)'

This type of verbs has also been called splitting verbs (Awobuluyi 1979,Chumbow 1982a). Their structure is such that their objects directly follow the first half of the verb, while the second half occurs in the position following the object. The object may be an NP modified by a clause (85), a phrase (86), a full NP (87) or a pro-NP (88).

(*bé* + *fúwà* 'to destroy/defame')

(85) *è-bé óró nẹ̀nẹ̀ ní yẹ̀-ẹ́gá fúwà nà*
3SG.S-spoil person [REL want 3SG.POSS-word away RCP
'S/He defamed the character of one who loves her/him.'

(*ná* + *wọ́* 'believe in')

(86) *ẹ̀-ná Òsìbìn' ẹẹ̀ga wọ*
1SG.S-accept God POSS.word hear
'I believe in God's word.'

(*má* + *bàlẹ* 'tempt')

(87) *à-má íjóbù balẹ*
3SG.S-test Job look
'He tempted Job.'

(*ná* + *fán* 'save')

(88) *Ìjésú ná-mọ fan*
Jesus accept-1SG.O escape
'Jesus saved me.'

The only condition under which both halves of the bipartite verbs can cooccur as a single unit without being interrupted by an inserted object is in focus construction, only when the object is focused. This is shown in examples (89a), (89b).

(89a) *Òsìbìna àyẹ ẹ̀-náwọ́*
God FOC 1SG.S-believe
'God is the one whom I believe.'

(89b) *óró nẹnẹ ní-yẹ̀-ẹ́gá na àyẹ è-béfùà*
person [REL want-3SG.POSS-word RCP] FOC 3SG.S-spoil
'It was the person who loves her/him that s/he defamed her/his character.'

On the other hand, when the subject is focused, the structure remains the same, that is, the object occupies its original position between the two parts of the bipartite verbs. Compare the structure of the object focus construction in (90a), with the subject focused construction in (90b).

(90a) *Òsìbìna àyẹ ẹ̀-náwọ́*
God FOC 1SG.S-believe
'God is the one whom I believe.'

(90b) *àmẹ àyẹ à- ná Òsìbìna wọ́*
1SG.I FOC 3SG.S-accept God hear
'I am the one who believes in God.'

14.4.3 **Symmetrical verbs**

Symmetrical verbs are a class of verbs whose subject and object are freely interchangeable without any difference in meaning. Verbs that belong in this class are very few in the language. The following symmetrical verbs have been identified in Ọ̀kọ: *kán, jé, sọ́m, yọ́*. It is difficult to state the

literal meaning of the symmetrical verbs (Awobuluyi 1979). However, some of them are homophonous with some other frequently occurring verbs such as: *jé* 'to eat', *yọ́* 'to go'. In the following examples (91) – (94), the symmetrical verbs are simply glossed as SYMV.

(91a) *íwú kan-mọ ẹ̀rán*
body SYMV-1SG.O yesterday
'I was angry yesterday.'

(91b) *ẹ̀-kán íwú ẹ̀rán*
1SG.S- SYMV body yesterday
'I was angry yesterday.'

(92a) *òyà è-jé ofòro ọ̀nẹ̀*
suffering PROG-SYMV man DEM.SG
'This man is suffering.'

(92b) *ofòro ọ̀nẹ̀ è-jé òyà*
man DEM.SG PROG-SYMV suffering
'This man is suffering.'

(93a) *ọ́rọ́rẹ̀ áka-sọ́m-yá*
fear FUT-SYMV-3SG.O
'S/He will be afraid.'

(93b) *à-áka-sọ́m ọ́rọ́rẹ̀*
1SG.S-FUT-SYMV fear
'S/He will be afraid.'

(94a) *írè a-yọ̀ úwó áyẹ̀*
madness PROG-SYMV dog DEF.SG
'The dog is mad.'

(94b) *úwó áyẹ a-yọ̀ íré*
dog DEF.SG PROG-SYMV madness
'The dog is mad.'

Looking at the distribution of the symmetrical verbs in the constructions above, the verbs appear to be restricted to expressing psychological states. One can therefore translate them as 'affect/be affected by.' One argument is that there is always a noun referring to a psychological state, the other is a person undergoing that state.

Chapter 15
Tense aspect and mood

15.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss tense, aspect and mood in Ọ̀kọ. Earlier on in chapters 5 and 6, I examined the marking of tense, aspect and mood on verbs and auxiliary verbs. In this chapter, I give a detailed description of tense, aspect and mood categories in Ọ̀kọ.

15.2 Time reference in Ọ̀kọ

Time reference in Ọ̀kọ is divided into the future time reference and the non-future time reference. The distinction is based on the presence or the absence of time markers on the verb or the auxiliary verb. For instance, while the future time reference is explicitly marked on the main verb, the non-future form of the verb is never marked (see §5.3.5.A; B).

15.2.1 The future time

The future time reference refers the time of the situation to the future. This is overtly marked on a verb by the future tense marker *éke~áka* (cf. 1a, b). The choice of any of the alternating forms of the marker is determined by ATR vowel harmony.

(1a) *tà-áka-gbá* *ọ́cẹ́n* *owowo*
1PL.S-FUT-see moon new
'We will see the new moon.'

(1b) *mè-éke-nyin* *ẹsa* *àyẹ* *í-yù-úbá*
1SG.S-FUT-buy cloth DEF.SG LOC-3SG.POSS-hand
'I will buy the cloth from him.'

The use of future time adverbs in future time references is not required. This is only necessary when the speaker wishes to explicitly express a specific future time (cf. 2a, b).

(2a) *tà-áka-gbá ọ́cẹ́n owowo ámọ́nẹ̀ újó*
1PL.S-FUT-see moon new today night
'We will see the new moon tonight.'

(2b) *àde áka-fọ̀ oòró ẹ́nyẹn nẹnẹ a-ca nà*
ade FUT-take wife LOC.year [REL 3SG.S-come RCP]
'Ade will get married next year.'

15.2.2 **The non-future time**

The non-future time reference in Ọ̀kọ has no marker and is indifferent to present and past time. Present and past time readings result from other marking devices in the clause, such as time adverbs.

15.2.2.A **The present time**

The present time coincides with the moment of speaking. There is no overt grammatical marker that explicitly expresses the present time. However, reference can be made to a present time by the use of the progressive aspect (see §15.3.1), complemented by the time adverb *àkanà*, which can variously be interpreted as 'at present', 'at hand' and 'right now' (cf. 3a), to reinforce the fact that the event is taking place at the moment of speaking. *Àkanà* is optionally complemented by the temporal verb *cẹ̀cẹ̀* 'just' (cf. 3b) (see also §6.5.1).

(3a) *Unini e-jijen àkanà*
Unini PROG-eat at.present
(Lit. 'Unini is eating now')
'Unini is eating (as we speak).'

(3b) *a-cẹ̀cẹ̀* *é-wúrá* *àkanà*
3SG.S-just PROG-arrive at.present
(Lit. 'S/He is just arriving now')
'S/He is just arriving (as we speak).'

However, only the class of dynamic verbs can be used to express the present time reference in the manner described in (3a), (3b). Stative verbs, on the other hand, in their bare form, have both present and past time references (cf. 4a, b). They cannot be used in the progressive aspect (cf. 5a, b), except in special constructions (see §15.3.1).

(4a) *Unini* *dín*
Unini know
'Unini knows/Unini knew.'

(4b) *è-sú*
3SG.S-have
'S/He has/S/He had.'

(5a) **Unini* *e-dín*
Unini PROG-know
'Unini knows.'

(5b) **è-e-sú*
3SG.S-PROG-have
'S/He has.'

15.2.2.B **The past time**

The past time reference correlates to a situation in the past. In Ọ̀kọ, the past time is never marked on the verb. Dynamic verbs in their bare form always have the past time reference (cf. 6a, b), while stative verbs in their bare form have both present and past time references (cf. 7). Past time

reference can only be explicitly expressed with stative verbs by the use of time adverbs (cf. 8a, b).

(6a) *áde tàm íkusaye àbẹ́*
ade chew groundnut DEF.PL
'Ade ate the groundnuts.'

(6b) *è-jin újúm nẹ́ ọ́gá àyẹ́*
3SG.S-open door BENF stranger DEF.SG
'S/He opened the door to the visitor.'

(7) *ẹ́gá àyẹ́ yé-mú*
word DEF.SG understand-1SG.O
'I understand the matter/I understood the matter.'

(8a) *è-sú ẹ̀rán*
3SG.S-has yesterday
'S/He had yesterday.'

(8b) *ẹ́gá àyẹ́ táyẹ̀ yé-mú àmá àkána*
word DEF do.before understand-1SG.O but now
e-mè-pìlà yé-mú
3SG.S-NEG-do.again understand-1SG.O
'I once understood the matter but at present I do not understand any more.'

Temporal auxiliary verbs can also be used with dynamic and stative verbs to differentiate a recent past from a distant past. The recent past is expressed by the use of the auxiliary verb *cẹ̀cẹ̀*, while the distant past can be expressed by the use of any distant time indicator. The definition of what can be regarded as recent past time is subjective. Whenever *cẹ̀cẹ̀* modifies a verb, the event can only be understood as having occurred in the recent past regardless of the number of years

involved (cf. 9a-c). On the other hand, without *cẹ̀cẹ̀*, the time reference can be understood as recent or distant past (cf. 10a, b).

(9a) *áde cẹ̀cẹ̀ wura*
ade just arrive
'Ade just arrived.'

(9b) *ẹ-cẹ̀cẹ̀ mẹ́ úbó ọ̀bẹ̀n kue nẹ́ tẹ̀-ẹdẹda*
1SG.S-just build house INDEF.SG finish PREP 1PL.POSS-father
'I just finished building a house for our father.'

(9c) *unini cẹ̀cẹ̀ dín égbenawẹ̀ta*
unini just know three.years.ago
'Unini only got to know three years ago.'

(10a) *áde wura ẹ̀rán*
ade arrive yesterday
'Ade arrived yesterday.'

(10b) *bè-sú íyá*
3PL.S-have last.year
'They had last year.'

15.3 **Aspect**

Aspect relates to the internal temporal structure of a situation. In this section, I describe the various aspectual categories that are often expressed in Ọ̀kọ, and the way in which the expression of aspect is bound up with the expression of tense in the language.

15.3.1 **The progressive aspect**

The progressive aspect refers specifically to an action or event which is in progress at the moment of time serving as the reference point for the utterance. The marker which is used to express the progressive aspect in

Ọ̀kọ alternates between *e*~*a*, depending on the ATR property of the host to which it is bound (see 5.3.5.C).

(11a) *àkọ emumu ọ̀ọ̀rẹ nẹnẹ* ***bà-a-yọ*** *ẹ́kọ́tù ẹkà*
as book POSS.way [REL 3PL.S-PROG-go court own
ọnẹ na…(MO:18)
this RCP]
'As in modern times in which people are patronizing the court…'

(11b) ***bà-a-yọ̀*** *nọ́ ọ̀bẹ́bẹlẹ*… (MO:8)
3PL.S-PROG-go PREP begging
(Lit. 'They are going for begging')
'They are going to beg (for a wife).'

Stative verbs are usually not used in the progressive sense. Only the stative *yé* 'to understand' and *dín* 'to know' can be used, and this is only possible in special clauses such as one in which the subject is not an agent (cf. 12a, b).

(12a) *ẹ̀kẹ̀na nẹnẹ à-a-gá na,* ***è-e-yé-mú***
thing [REL 3SG.S-PROG-say RCP] 3SG.S-PROG-understand-1SG.O
'I am getting what s/he is saying.'

(12b) *àkọ tì-sie té-ẹ na, ẹ̀gán è-sie-*
[as 1PL.S-do teach-3SG.O RCP] so 3SG.S-do
e-dín-ya *nẹ*
PROG-know-3SG.O PTCL
(Lit. 'As we are teaching him/her, so s/he is knowing.')
'S/He continues to know as we intensified the teaching.'

Otherwise, the only way of getting a progressive reading with stative verbs is by the use of the inceptive auxiliary (see §15.3.6).

The progressive aspect can also be expressed with past as well as with future time reference.

15.3.1.A ***Progressive with past time reference***

The progressive may refer to a progressive event that took place in the past. The expression requires time adverbs or the relative time adverbial *ọgbọ̀na nẹnẹ* 'time which' (cf. 13b, c). In the constructions involving the relative time adverbial, the first event was still ongoing when the second took place (13b). While in the second (13c), both past events occurred simultaneously.

(13a) *unini a-yẹ̀rẹ́ ẹ́cẹ́nrò àbẹ damina-né ẹ̀rán*
unini PROG-follow musicians DEF.PL go-about yesterday
'Unini kept following the musicians around yesterday.'

(13b) *à-a-fúẹ́n ọgbọ̀na nẹnẹ ẹ̀-sọ̀má-ẹ́ nà*
3SG.S-PROG-snore time [REL 1SG.S-wake-3SG.O RCP]
'S/He was snoring when I woke her/him up.'

(13c) *è-e-tíégúrù úba ọgbọ̀na nẹnẹ tì-é-ré*
3SG.S-PROG-sing LOC.hand when [REL 1PL.S-PROG-reach
ẹ̀fọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ nà
place.that RCP]
(Lit. 'S/He was still singing by the time we were getting to the place.')
'S/He was still singing while we were getting to the place.'

15.3.1.B ***Progressive with future time reference***

The progressive aspect can also be used to refer to a situation in the future time. However, such constructions are interpreted as a substitute for the future tense construction. The progressive future construction is only possible with two motion verbs, namely, *cá* 'to come' and *yọ́/jén* 'to go'. Even then, a future time adverb must be included (cf. 14a-c), without

which the construction only refers to the progressive with present reading (cf. 15).

(14a) *unini a-ca usie*
unini PROG-come tomorrow
'Unini will be coming tomorrow.'

(14b) *mẹ̀-ẹ́dẹ́dá a-yọ̀ Ilorin ódísì nẹ̀nẹ̀ a-ca nà*
1POSS-father PROG-go Ilorin week [REL PROG-come RCP]
(Lit. 'My father is going to Ilorin in the coming week.')
'My father will be going to Ilorin next week.'

(14c) *à-a-yọ̀ gám obin ámọ́nẹ̀ újó*
3SG.S-PROG-go greet king today night
'S/He will be going to visit the king tonight.'

(15) *unini a-ca*
unini PROG-come
'Unini is coming.'

15.3.2 **The repetitive aspect**

The repetitive aspect expresses the recurrence of a situation. This is indicated with the makers *dé~dá* in Ọ̀kọ̀ (see also 5.3.5.D). When an event is repeated once, the repetitive marker occurs only with the verb, whether stative or dynamic (cf. 16a-c).

(16a) *à-dá-gba ka ẹ̀sá-íbè àyẹ̀ è-file*
3SG.S-REPT-see COMP cloth-interior FOC 3SG.S-wear
'S/He again discovered that she was wearing the wrong side of the cloth.'

(16b) *bì-dé-tíé-ẹ́ yọ̀*
3PL.S-REPT-take-3SG.O go
'They went with it again.'

(16c) *tì-dé-sú ẹ́gá ówówó ẹ̀bẹ̀n ámọ́nẹ́*
1PL.S-REPT-have visitor.PL new INDEF.PL today
'We have some new guests today again.'

On the other hand when the situation is repeated more than once, the repetitive aspect combines with the progressive (cf. 17) or together with both the continuative and the progressive (cf. 18a, b).

(17) *è-dé-e-yě-mú*
3SG.S-REPT-PROG-call-1SG.O
'S/He repeatedly called me.'

(18a) *è-dé-kí e-yé-mú*
3SG.S-REPT-continue PROG-call-1SG.O
(Lit. He repeatedly continued to call me)
'S/He continued to call me.'

(18b) *è-dé-kí a-yẹ̀ré íyáró àyẹ fọ́m*
3SG.S-REPT-continue PROG-follow woman DEF.SG enter
ẹ́mẹ́n ibè
LOC.bush interior
(Lit. 'He repeatedly continued to follow the woman into the bush.')
'S/He continued to follow the woman into the bush.'

15.3.3 **The habitual aspect**

The habitual aspect denotes frequency or regularity in the occurrence of an event. The habitual aspect in Ọkọ can have either present or past time reference. The present habitual is distinctively marked on the verb or auxiliary verb by the allomorphs *dèkì~dàkẹ̀* (see §5.3.5.E), while the past habitual is marked by *dà-táyẹ̀*. Habituality can be expressed with dynamic, as well as with stative verbs.

15.3.3.A **Present habitual**

The present habitual aspect is distinctively marked on the verb or auxiliary verb by the allomorphs *dèkì~dàkẹ̀* (cf. 19a, b).

(19a) *unini dàkẹ̀-pọ̀ra ije ísúbù fẹ̀yan*
Unini HAB-sweep ground day all
'Unini sweeps the floor everyday.'

(19b) *unini dàkẹ̀-cáná cá emumu uùbo*
unini HAB-do.early come book POSS.house
'Unini always comes early to school.'

The habitual aspect does not allow the presence of any other aspectual marker; time adverbials are optional (cf. 20b).

(20a) *ájẹ́rẹ̀ dèkì-yìre údúdò iìgìlà*
hare HAB-steal sheep POSS.yam
'Rabbit always steals the sheep's yams.'

(20b) *a-dàkẹ̀-ca í-yọ̀-ọ́pọ́m újujo*
3SG.S-HAB-come LOC-3SG.POSS-barn LOC.night.night
'He always comes every night to his barn.'

15.3.3.B **Past habitual**

The expression of the past habitual requires the introduction of the temporal auxiliary *táyẹ̀* to break up the elements that make up the habitual marker (see §6.5.2). While the first half *dè~dà* is prefixed to the auxiliary verb, the second half *kì~kẹ̀* is prefixed to the main verb. See the following examples in (21a, b).

(21a) *a-dà-táyẹ̀ kẹ̀-yẹ̀rẹ-mọ yọ òsìbìna uùbó*
3SG.S-HAB-before PREF-follow-1SG.O go God POSS.house
'S/He used to accompany me to the church.'

(21b) *ẹ́cẹ́nrò àyẹ dà-táyẹ̀ kì-tíégúrù ímù*
musician DEF.SG HAB-before PREF-sing LOC.festival
fẹnyan-fẹnyan
all
'The musician used to sing at all festivals.'

15.3.4 **The continuative aspect**

The continuative aspect expresses a persistent progressive action. This is expressed by the aspectual auxiliary *kí-* (see §6.4.1), which always combines with the progressive aspect marker which is in turn bound to the main verb. Even though the semantic difference between the progressive and the continuative is not very vivid, yet there is a difference. The progressive aspect mainly expresses an ongoing event (cf. 22), while the continuative reaffirms the persistency of the progressive event (cf. 23a, b).

(22) *iya àyẹ* ***a-fa*** *ífókó nẹnẹ yò-ógbén*
mother DEF.SG PROG-cook cocoyam [REL 3SG.POSS-child
fọ̀ cá ubo na
carry come house RCP]
'The woman is cooking the cocoyam which her son brought home.'

(23a) *iya* *àyẹ* ***kí*** ***a-fa*** *íkókó* *nẹnẹ*
mother DEF.SG continue PROG-cook cocoyam [REL
yò-ógbén *fọ̀* *cá* *ubo* *nà*
3SG.POSS-child take come house RCP]
'The woman continued to cook the cocoyam which her son brought home.'

(23b) *è-**kí*** ***e-kùru*** *je* *àmọ́*
3SG.S-continue PROG-cut eat there
'She continued to eat from it.'

15.3.5 The inceptive aspect

The inceptive aspect in Ọ̀kọ refers to the commencement of an event or situation. There are two auxiliary markers which are used to indicate the inceptive aspect: *min* and *wé* (see also §6.4.2), both must combine with the progressive aspect which is in turn prefixed to the main verb (cf. 24a, b).

(24a) *ógbén* *áyẹ̀* ***min*** ***a-fọ̀m*** *íjè*
child DEF.SG INCEP PROG-enter LOC.ground
'The child is beginning to sink in the earth.'

(24b) *è-fóm* *nẹnẹ* ***ì-wé*** ***à-wọ́*** *ẹ́gá* *áyẹ* *nà*
3SG.S-far [REL 1SG.S-INCEP PROG-hear word DEF.SG RCP]
'It has been long since I have been hearing of the matter.'

15.3.6 The perfect aspect

The perfect aspect in Ọ̀kọ expresses a situation that has been completed. It is marked by the morpheme *kè*, which is always free. It always occurs in post-verbal and clause-final positions (cf. 25a-d), only before time adverbials (see 27b, c).

(25a) *è-jíjen* ***kè***
3SG.S-eat.food PERF
'S/He has eaten.'

(25b) *ẹkẹ̀kárò àbẹ dín ka óbin fó* ***kè***
chiefs DEF.PL know COMP king die PERF
'The chiefs are aware that the king has died.'

(25c) *à-bọ̀ ka àde wura* ***kè***
3SG.S-suppose COMP ade return PERF
'Ade supposed to have arrived.'

(25d) *ì-síé-ẹ kue* ***kè***
1SG.S-do-3SG.O finish PERF
'I have finished it/ I have completed it.'

The perfect aspect marker *kè* can occur as many times as possible in a sentence depending on the number of clauses that express the perfect sense (cf. 26a, b).

(26a) *bì-dín* ***kè*** *ka óbin fó* ***kè***
3PL.S-know PERF COMP king die PERF
'They have realized that the king has died.'

(26b) *àde kọ́-ba wó úbó* ***kè,***
ade gather-3PL.O PREP house PERF
è-mín jú-ba wó úbo ***kè***
3SG.S-INCEP close-3PL.O LOC.COP LOC.house PERF
'Ade has gathered them into the house and has locked them in.'

The perfect aspect can combine with any tense or aspect. For example, the future tense to express the future perfect in the present time, with or without the present time adverb *àkanà* 'now' (cf. 27a, b), or the

future perfect in the future time with the use of a future time adverb (cf. 27c). Also, with the progressive aspect in a conditional sense which is comparable to the progressive perfect (cf. 28).

(27a) *àde éke-wura kè*
ade FUT-return PERF
'Ade will have returned (by now).'

(27b) *àde éke-wura kè àkanà*
ade FUT-return PERF now
'Ade will have returned (by now).'

(27c) *áde éke-wura kè ọgbà ọ̀nẹ̀ usie*
ade FUT-arrive PERF time DEM.SG tomorrow
'Ade will have arrived by this time tomorrow.'

(28) *à-á-da ka ọ̀-yọ̀ọ, ébána, wè-e-wura kè*
3SG.S-COND-be COMP 2SG.S-go CONJ 2SG.S-PROG-return PERF
'If you had gone, you would be arriving now.'

15.4 **Mood**

15.4.1 **The habilitative mood**

The habilitative mood expresses a possibility or ability. This is indicated by the auxiliary verb *dí* (see also §6.3). *Dí* sometimes introduces an infinitive clause (cf. 29b, c).

(29a) *àkọ è-síé gbá ka àyẹ* ***e-mè-dí*** *wọrẹ*
[as 3SG.S-do see COMP 3SG.I 3SG.S-NEG-can cause
ka a-fà-ẹ́ na, á-sẹ́ úbá jọmọ̀.
COMP 3SG.S-pull.off-3SG.O RCP] 3SG.S-hold hand stand
'When it discovered that it could not make him pull it (his cloak) off, it stopped trying.'

(29b) ***ì-dí*** ***è-síé-ẹ***
1SG.S-can INF-do-3SG.O
'I can do it.'

(29c) ***bì-dí*** ***à-yẹ̀rẹ́-tọ́***
3PL.S-can INF-follow-1PL.O
'They can accompany us.'

15.4.2 The obligative mood

The obligative mood expresses a duty or obligation. This is always expressed by the auxiliary verb *gbádọ̀* (see §6.2). The following examples in (30a), (30b) show this:

(29a) *ọ̀-gbádọ̀ yẹ̀rẹ́-mọ́ fọ́m ebi*
2SG.S-must follow-1SG.O enter water
'You must accompany me into the river.'

(29b) *àde gbádò sú oòro ẹ́nyẹ́n ọ́nẹ*
ade must marry wife year DEM.SG
'Ade must get married this year.'

15.4.3 The conditional mood

The conditional mood in Ọ̀kọ expresses an uncertain event that is contingent on another set of circumstances. The conditional mood is marked on the verb by the alternants *é~á*, distinguished by the high tone on the single vowel segment (cf. 30a, b) (see also §5.3.6.G; §19.4.2).

(30a) *àde* *é-té-ẹ* *è-éke-dín-yà*
Ade COND-teach-3SG.O 3SG.S-FUT-know-3SG.O
'If Ade teaches him, he will know it.'

(30b) *wà-á-gám-yà* *e-èke-gúnówó*
2SG.S-COND-greet-3SG.O 3SG.S-NEG.FUT-answer
'If you greet her/him, she/he will not respond.'

Chapter 16
Negation

16.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the general structure of negative constructions in Ọ̀kọ. I start by first giving a recap of the various forms of the negative marker in the language (§16.2). In particular sections of some earlier chapters, (§3.5.2.2.A; §5.3.5.F and §7.2.3), I gave a brief description of how verbal environments determine the form of the negative marker, and how suprasegmental features, in this case tone, are used as negative marker due to vowel elision rules. After the recap in section 16.2, I describe how different syntactic constructions are negated in the language; such as, simple and complex clauses (§16.4.1), imperative constructions (§16.4.2) and noun phrases (§16.4.3).

Negation in Ọ̀kọ is always expressed as a verbal prefix; (1a), (1b) below show the difference between an affirmative and a negative construction.

(1a) *iya* *fọ* *yi-ìkoko* *nẹ́-yà.*
mother take 3SG.POSS-cocoyam give-3SG.O
'Mother gave him his cocoyam.'

(1b) *iya* ***a-mà-fọ*** *yi-ìkoko* *nẹ́-yà.* (CCY:18)
mother 3SG.S-NEG-take 3SG.POSS-cocoyam give-3SG.O
'Mother did not give him his cocoyam.'

16.2 The form of the negative marker: a recap

As was just mentioned, Ọ̀kọ makes use of a negative prefix in the verb in negative constructions. The surface form of the negative marker in a given construction is determined by the verbal environment in which it occurs. Table 17 below shows the distribution of the negative marker in each verbal environment.

Table 17:Distribution of the negative marker in verbal environments

	mè~mà	*mé~má*	*è~à*	Low tone [̀]
Bare verb	+	–	–	–
Imperative	–	+	–	–
Future	–	–	–	+
Progressive	–	–	–	+
Repetitive	+	–	–	–
Habitual	+	–	–	–
Continuative	–	–	+	–
Inceptive	–	–	+	–
Habilitative	+	–	–	–
Obligative	+	–	–	–
Conditional	–	+	–	–

We note from the distribution of the negative marker in table (17) that each verbal environment selects only one form of the negative prefix. There is no case of form overlap. Each of the environments is explained in the following subsections.

16.2.1 **The negative *mè~mà***

The negative marker *mè~mà* is expressed on the bare verb (cf. 2a, b), the repetitive marker (cf. 3), the habitual marker (cf. 4), the habilitative marker (cf. 5), and the obligative marker (cf. 6). The choice of any of the alternants of the negative marker is determined by the [ATR] value of the vowel in the adjacent following syllable of the host.

i. Negative + bare verb

(2a) *a-mà-náwọ́*
3SG.S-NEG-believe
'S/He does not believe.'

(2b) *à-ka* ***"i-mè-dín*** *ẹ̀fọ̀nafọ̀na* *wà-á-mán*
3SG.S-say 1SG.S-NEG-know any place 2SG.S-PROG-live
nà." (MB:14)
RCP
'He said, "I do not know wherever you are living."'

ii. Negative + repetitive

(3) *ẹ́bọ́lá* ***e-mè-dè-pìlà*** *cá* *gám-bá*
Bola 3SG.S-NEG-REPT-do.again come greet-3SG.O
'Bola did not come back (again) to visit them.'

iii. Negative + Habitual

(4) ***bi-mè-dèkì-ré*** *ẹ̀fọ̀nẹ́bẹ́*
3PL.S-NEG-HAB-reach place.that
'They do not always reach there.'

iv. Negative + Habilitative

(5) *è-wùru* *ásám,* *éyí* ***é-mé-di*** *sie* *ágọ́*
3SG.S-uproot mulch sun 3SG.S-NEG-can do plant
áyẹ *íyọnu.* (YF1:5)
DEF.SG trouble
'He uproots some mulch, so that the sun does not scorch the yam plant.'

v. Negative + Obligative

(6) ***a-mà-gbádọ̀*** *yẹ̀rẹ-ya*
3SG.S-NEG-must follow-3SG.O
'He must not follow her/him.'

16.2.2 **The negative *mé~má***

The negative marker is realized as *mé~má* only in negative imperative constructions (cf.7a, b) (see also §16.4.2) and in negative conditional

clauses (cf. 8) (see also §5.3.6.G). The normal low tone of the negative marker assimilates to high, following the high of the preceding subject prefix, which is always high in imperative constructions. Similarly, the negative low tone assimilates to high, following the high tone of the conditional marker.

(7a) ***ú-mé-yě-bá***!
2SG.S-NEG-call-3PL.O
'Do not call them!'

(7b) *à-ka,* ***bí-mé-mune*****!** (WE:16)
3SG.S-say 3PL.S-NEG-run
'He said, "They should not run!"'

(8a) *unini* ***à-á-má-da-kẹ̀-gám-tọ́***
Unini 3SG.S-COND-NEG-REPT-PREF-greet-1PL.O
'If Unini is no longer greeting us'

16.2.3 **The negative *è~à***

The negative marker is realized as ***è~à*** when it is bound to the continuative *kí* and the inceptive *min* (cf. 9a, b) (see also §5.3.5.F and §6.4).

(9a) ***e-è-kí*** *a-yẹ̀rẹ́-yá*
3SG.S-NEG-continue PROG-follow-3SG.O
'S/He is not still following her/him.'

(9b) *ógbén áyẹ* ***e-è-min*** *e-jéjèn*
child DEF.SG 3SG.S-NEG-INCEP PROG-walk
'The child has not started walking.'

16.2.4 The negative low tone [̀]

The negative marker may also be expressed as a low tone on a following verbal element. This happens when the vowel segment of the negative marker *è~à* is followed by a vowel-initial element. Due to the regressive nature of vowel elision rules in the language, the vowel segment of the negative marker is elided before the following oral vowel. However, the low tone which it bears is expressed on the surviving vowel of the verbal marker as the negative marker. The negative low tone replaces any tone that was originally on the verbal marker. This process affects only the future tense marker *éke~áka* → *èke~àka* (cf. 10), and the progressive aspect marker *e~a* → *è~à* (cf. 11).

(10) *á-gá* *nẹ́-yà* *ka* ***we-èke-dí*** *sú*
3SG.S$_i$-say PREP-3SG.O that 2SG.S-NEG.FUT-can marry
ayẹ *go!* (MB:7)
3SG.I$_i$ PTCL
'She$_i$ said to him that you cannot marry her$_i$!'

(11) *kàba* *ọgbọ̀nẹ́bẹ́* ***e-è-pìlà*** *e-ni* *ka*
from that.time 3SG.S-NEG.PROG-do.again PROG-want COMP
àyẹ *é-sie* *ẹ̀gán* *mán* *íjè,* *ótí* *osì* *àyẹ*
3SG.I 3SG.S-do so live LOC.ground tree top FOC
è-pìlà *a-man.* (TP1:36)
3SG.S-do.again PROG-live
'From that time, he does not usually like staying on land; he has resorted to staying on trees.'

16.3 The third person singular bound non-agreement prefix

The structure of the negative verb is one in which the negative marker must combine with the third person singular bound subject prefix *e~a*. There is no agreement in number between the subject NP, which is either a full NP (12a, b) or an independent pronoun of any person or number (13), and the third person singular pronominal prefix. The only condition

under which the negative marker does not combine with the third person singular prefix is when the subject of the construction is a bound subject pronoun (14). This is because there is only one pronominal slot in the verb which must be filled by only one pronominal clitic.

(12a) *ógbén áyẹ* ***a-àka-yẹ̀rẹ-ya*** *yọ.*
child DEF.SG 3SG.S-NEG.FUT-follow-3SG.O go
'The child will not accompany her/him.'

(12b) *égbén ábẹ* ***a-àka-yẹ̀rẹ-ya*** *yọ.*
children DEF.PL 3SG.S-NEG.FUT-follow-3SG.O go
'The children will not accompany her/him.'

(13) *tà-ka* ***àtọ*** ***a-àka-yẹ̀rẹ-ya*** *yọ.*
1PL.S_i-say 1PL.I_i 3SG.S-NEG.FUT-follow-3SG.O go
'We said that we will not accompany her/him.'

(14) ***ta-àka-yẹ̀rẹ-ya*** *yọ.*
1PL.S-NEG.FUT-follow-3SG.O go
'We will not accompany her/him.'

16.4 Negation types

16.4.1 Negative clauses

Simple declarative clauses in Ọ̀kọ include mono-verbal main clauses and serial verb main clauses. As mentioned earlier, the declarative and the negative constructions contrast only by the presence of the negative morpheme. Pairs of contrasting examples are provided below as (15a, b); (16a, b). Also, as described in section 16.2, the shape of the negative marker depends on the verbal environment in which it occurs.

i. Mono-verbal clause

(15a) *yì-íbé* *rǒm.* (DM:23)
3SG.POSS-belly sweet
'He was happy.'

(15b) *yì-íbé* ***a-mà-rǫ́m.***
3SG.POSS-belly 3SG.S-NEG-sweet
'He was not happy.'

ii. Serial verb clause

(16a) *àyẹ* *áka-yẹ̀rẹ-ya* *yọ.* (MB:15)
3SG.I FUT-follow-3SG.O go
'He will accompany her.'

(16b) *àyẹ* ***a-àka-yẹ̀rẹ-ya*** *yọ.*
3SG.I 3SG.S-NEG.FUT-follow-3SG.O go
'He will not accompany her.'

Furthermore, in a simple serial verb clause, the negation marker is always attached to the first verbal element (main or auxiliary verb); and all the following verbs in the clause are in the scope of the single negative marker (cf. 17) (see also §14.4.1).

(17) *unini* ***e-mè-pìlà*** *cá* *gám-mọ́*
Unini 3SG.S-NEG-do.again come greet-1SG.O
'Unini did not repeat her visit to me.'

With complex constructions, such as those involving subordinate clause(s), there is nothing special about how the subordinate clauses are negated. The structure of the negative subordinate clause is the same as in simplex constructions (cf. 18a, b).

(18a) *ájɛ́rɛ̀ a-wà óró nɛ̣nɛ̣ **e-mè-su** érúm nà* (RLE:4)
rabbit 3SG.S-COP person [REL 3SG.S-NEG-have farm RCP]
'The rabbit was one who had no farm.'

(18b) *á-gá né-yà ka **" we-èké-dí***
3SG.S_i-say PREP-3SG.O [COMP 2SG.S-NEG.FUT-can
sú áyɛ̣ go!" (MB:7)
marry 3SG.I_i PTCL]
'She told him that "you cannot marry her"'.

However, unlike in simple serial constructions in which the plus-negative main verb has scope over the following verbs, each clause in a complex sentence is capable of having a negative verb (cf. 19).

(19) ***te-è-mín*** *gba óró nɛ̣nɛ̣ **e-mè-ni** ka*
1PL.S-NEG-INCEP see person [REL 3SG.S-NEG-want] [COMP
àyɛ̣ sú ɛ́pán óbòrò nà
3SG.I have head good RCP]
'We have not seen a person who does not want to be fortunate.'

Also, copula verbs are marked in the same way as other verbs in negative constructions (cf. 20a-c).

(20a) *óbín ìgìdà **a-mà-wà** óbín ọkɛ̀ká*
king Igida 3SG.S-NEG-COP king great
'King Igida is not a great king.'

(20b) ***e-mè-wó*** *yà-ányɛ́n*
3SG.S-NEG-LOC.COP 3SG.POSS-eye
'It is not in her/his eyes.'

(20c) ***e-mè-cìna*** *òkùkùrù*
3SG.S-NEG-become white
'It has not become white.'

Although the structure is still the same with the existential copula *wàmọ́*, the difference is that the negative prefix is always the *mè* variant. It does appear like the [ATR] constraint on adjacent vowels is violated. However, as explained earlier in section 14.2.5.B, the form of the existential copula consists of the locative *wó*, which is specified as [+ATR], and *àmọ́*, [-ATR]. Even though the [+ATR] vowel of *wó* is always deleted before the first vowel of *àmọ́*, the negative marker still harmonizes in terms of [+ATR] with the locative, see examples (21a, b).

(21a) ***e-mè-w'àmọ́***
3SG.S-NEG-EXIST.COP
'There is/are none.'

(21b) *ìgìlà* ***e-mè-w'àmọ́***
yam 3SG.S-NEG-EXIST.COP
'There are no yams.'

16.4.2 **Negative imperatives**

In the affirmative form of the imperative construction, the second person singular bound subject usually lacks an overt realization (cf. 22a). However, when the same construction is negated, the bound subject pronoun is overtly expressed (cf. 22b).

(22a) *yé-bá*!
call-3PL.O
'Call them!'

(22b) ***ú-mé-yě-bá***!
2SG.S-NEG-call-3PL.O
'Do not call them!'

As earlier mentioned in section 16.2.2, that, there is a change in the tone pattern of the negative morpheme in the negative imperative construction (i.e., *mè∼mà → mé∼má*). The usual low tone of the negative marker assimilates to the high tone of the preceding bound subject pronoun, which also gets its unusual high tone or a rise in pitch as a result of illocutionary force (cf. 23a-d).

(23a) ***ú-mé-file*** *àde!*
2SG.S-NEG-send Ade
'Do not send Ade!'

(23b) *à-ka,* ***bí-mé-mune*****!** (WE:16)
3SG.S-say 3PL.S-NEG-run
'He said, "They should not run!"'

(23c) ***bí-mé-pìlà*** *yé-ẹ*!
3PL.S-NEG-do.again call-3SG.O
'They should not call him again!'

(23d) ***nẹ́-má-balẹ-mọ*****!**
2PL.S-NEG-look-1SG.O
'Do not look at me!'

16.4.3 **Negative noun phrase**

The negative noun phrase in Ọ̀kọ involves the use of a negative numeral modifier. The negative numeral is always formed by reduplicating the numeral root *ọ̀ọ́rẹ* 'one', and by the addition of a special prefix *k-* to the negative numeral; this yields *k-ọ́rọ̀ọ́rẹ*, which translates as 'none'.

However, the so-called negative NP must cooccur with the ordinary marker of predicate negation (24a-c).

(24a) *ógbén* ***k-ọ́rọ̀ọ́rẹ*** ***a-mà-cá***
child none 3SG.S-NEG-come
'No child came.'

(24b) *úbó* ***k-ọ́rọ̀ọ́rẹ*** ***e-mè-digina***
house none 3SG.S-NEG-collapse
'No house collapsed.'

(24c) *òtéro* *àyẹ* ***e-mè-té*** *ógbén* ***k-ọ́rọ̀ọ́rẹ***
teacher DEF.SG 3SG.S-NEG-teach child none
'The teacher did not teach any child.'

Similarly, the negative indefinite pronoun 'no one' must cooccur with the ordinary marker of predicate negation. This is expressed in any of two ways, and both constructions have the same meaning. In the first type, the special *k-* prefix is attached to the indefinite pronoun *óró* 'person', modified by *ọ̀ọ́rẹ* 'one' (cf. 25a). The second option is similar to that found in (24) above, that is, where *óró* is modified by *k-ọ́rọ̀ọ́rẹ* (cf. 25b).

(25a) *k-órò* *ọ̀ọ́rẹ* *a-mà-cá*
no.person one 3SG.S-NEG-come
'No one came.'

(25b) *óró* *k-ọ́rọ́ọ̀rẹ* *e-mè-pìlà* *ca*
person no.one 3SG.S-NEG-do.again come
'No one came back again.'

The expression of 'nothing/anything' in Ọ̀kọ́ involves the use of the word *kẹ́nakidè*[20]. This must also cooccur with the ordinary marker of predicate negation in a construction, whether as subject (cf. 26) or object (27a, b).

(26) *kẹ́nakidè* *e-mè-sie-ẹ*
nothing 3SG.S-NEG-do-3SG.O
'Nothing is wrong with him.'

(27a) *a-mà-gá* *kẹ́nakidè* *cáná* *é-dí* *ka*
3SG.S-NEG-say nothing do.before 3SG.S-be COMP
è-fo
3SG.S-die
'S/He did not say anything before s/he died.'
'S/He said nothing before s/he died.'

(27b) *isì* *ọtẹtaro* *nẹnẹ* *à-cá* *na,* *údúdò*
period third REL 3SG.S-come RCP sheep
e-mè-guna-yà *ówó;* ***a-mà-vá-ẹ***
3SG.S-NEG-answer mouth 3SG.S-NEG-give-3SG.O
kẹ́nakídè. (RLE:9)
nothing
'The third time when he came, Sheep did not respond to him; he did not give him anything/he gave him nothing.'

[20] The internal structure is not clear. One can only identify the *k-* prefix and the root *ẹ̀ná* 'what'.

Chapter 17
Coordination

17.1 Introduction

This chapter examines coordination in Ọ̀kọ. I discuss how two or more units within a syntactic construction are combined into a larger unit. The main coordinators in Ọ̀kọ are: the conjunction marker *akà* 'and' (§17.2), the disjunction marker *sà* 'or' (§17.3) and the adversative marker *àmá* 'but' (§17.4).

Coordinate constructions in Ọ̀kọ are normally syndetic, that is, there is usually an overt coordination. However, sometimes, asyndetic-like coordination may occur, especially in a construction which involves the linking of verbs (see discussion under §17.2). In normal constructions, the language has a monosyndetic coordinator (cf. 1a, b). However, it is also possible that bisyndetic coordination occurs when a speaker wishes to emphasize each coordinand (cf. 2a, b); both coordinators in bisyndetic coordination always have the same shape.

(1a) *àde* ***akà*** *unini* *e-ni* *ka* *bì-sú*
Ade and Unini PROG-want COMP 3PL.S-marry
bì-íwú
3PL.POSS-body
'Ade and Unini would like to marry each other.'

(1b) *à-á-da* *ka* *ọ̀kpàkọ́kọ́* *jijen* ***sà*** *à-á-wá,*
3SG.S-COND-be that tortoise eat or 3SG.S-COND-drink
ìdù *e-dí* *a-gbá-ẹ* *nwan*
lion 3SG.S-can INF-see-3SG.O kill
'If the tortoise had either eaten or drunken (anything), the lion would have succeeded in killing him.'

(2a) ***akà*** *àde* ***akà*** *unini e-ni ka bì-sú*
and Ade and Unini PROG-want COMP 3PL.S-marry
bì-íwú
3PL.POSS-body
'Both Ade and Unini would like to marry each other.'

(2b) ***sà*** *á-cá* ***sà*** *a-mà-ca na ǒ*
or 3SG.S-come or 3SG.S-NEG-come PTCL PTCL
mà-áka-jǫ́họn karẹ-ya
1SG.S-FUT-stand wait-3SG.O
'Whether s/he comes or not, I will wait for him.'

The construction in (2b) is a special construction which can best be described as an alternative concessive construction (see §17.3; §19.4.3).

All coordinators in Ọ̀kọ are prepositive, that is, they precede the coordinand. Also, based on phonological evidence from vowel assimilation rules, where the first of two oral vowels at morpheme boundary always takes the features of the following vowel (see §3.3.5.A), it can be claimed that a given coordinator is always closer to the second coordinand than to the first. For example, Ọ̀kọ allows a structure such as (3), but not (4).

(3) *àde….. akà unini* > *àde akùunini*
Ade….and Unini Ade and.unini

(4) *àde akà…… unini* > **àdaakà unini*
Ade and….Unini Ade.and unini

Also, while both the conjunctive coordinator *akà* and the disjunctive coordinator *sà* can occur in multiple times within a construction (cf. 5a, b), the adversative coordinator *àmá* can only be binary. Compare the grammatical (6a) with the ungrammatical (6b).

(5a) *àmẹ* ***akà*** *óbín* ***akà*** *ẹ́gá* *àbẹ* ***akà*** *éró*
1SG.I and king and strangers DEF.PL and people
fẹyanfẹyan *nẹnẹ* *wó* *óbinutù* *na* *ta* *ẹ̀bá*
all [REL LOC palace RCP] play *ayò*
'I and the king and the strangers and every one at the palace played a game of *ayò*.'

(5b) *ẹ́pán* ***sa*** *ẹ́cẹ́n* ***sa*** *ẹ́bá* *àyẹ* *ọ̀kpàkọkọ* *dí* *è-ló*
head or legs or hands FOC tortoise can INF-use
'The tortoise can make use of his head or legs or hands.'

(6a) *è-sú* *oòro* ***àmá*** *e-mè-bógben*
3SG.S-marry wife but 3SG.S-NEG-give.birth
'S/He is married but does not have any children.'

(6b) **è-sú* *oòro* ***àmá*** *e-mè-bógben* ***àmá***
3SG.S-marry wife but 3SG.S-NEG-give.birth but
yì-íbé *kǐ-rọm*
3SG.POSS-belly CONT.sweet
'S/He is married but does not have any children but s/he is still happy.'

17.2 The conjunction marker *akà* 'and'

The most frequently used coordinator in Ọ̀kọ is *akà*, which is used to link units such as phrases (e.g simple noun phrases (7)), complex noun phrases (cf. 9) or subordinate clauses (10).

(7) *àmẹ* *akà* *óbín* *bile* *ta* *ẹ̀bá*
1SG.I CONJ king do.together play *ayò*
'I and the king (together) played a game of *ayò*'

(8) *àde nẹnẹ a-man ẹ́kọ na akà oòro nẹnẹ*
Ade [REL 3SG.S-live here RCP] and wife [REL
a-cẹ̀cẹ̀ sú na bile yọ ìlọrin
3SG.S-recently marry RCP] do.together go Ilorin
'Ade who lives here and his newly married wife both went to Ilorin.'

(9) *údúdò din ka ájẹ́rẹ̀ cá kè, akà ka*
sheep know COMP rabbit come PERF and COMP
e-ni ka è-yìré yi-ìgìlà
3SG.S-want COMP 3SG.S-steal 3SG.POSS-yam
'Sheep was aware that Rabbit was around, and that he wanted to steal his yams.'

Independent clauses and verbs cannot be coordinated by *akà*. The only way of expressing this relationship in the language is through serial verb constructions (cf. 10a, b), (see also §14.4.1).

(10a) *à-cá gbà ájẹ́rẹ̀ àkọ è-e-yìré ìgìlà àbẹ nà*
3SG.S-come see rabbit [as 3SG.S-PROG-steal yam DEF.PL RCP]
'He came and found the rabbit as he was stealing the yams.'

(10b) *è-fúrú kparẹ ùlukutum áyẹ*
1SG.S-jump pluck fruit DEF.SG
'S/He jumped and plucked the fruit.'

Note that, the conjunctive coordinator for NPs (i.e. *akà*) is not formally identical with the comitative verb *bile* 'do.together' (see §6.5.1). Also, the functions of *akà* and *bile* are clearly separate so that one cannot be used as a substitute for the other (cf. 11a-c). *Akà* is conjunctive in function and in meaning, while *bile* is verbal, and always has a comitative meaning.

(11a) *àde* ***akà*** *unini* ***bile*** *yọ èkó*
Ade and Unini do.together go Lagos
'Ade and Unini together went to Lagos.'

(11b) *ifòro àbẹ* ***bile*** *yọ̀ èkó*
men DEF.PL do.together go Lagos
'The men together went to Lagos.'

(11c) *àmẹ* ***akà*** *óbín* ***akà*** *ẹ́gá àbẹ* ***akà*** *éró*
1SG.I and king and strangers DEF.PL and people
fẹyanfẹyan nẹnẹ wó óbinutù na ***bile*** *ta ẹ̀bá*
all REL LOC palace RCP do.together play ayò
'I together with the king and the strangers and every one at the palace played a game of *ayò*.'

17.3 The disjunction marker *sà* 'or'

The disjunctive coordinator in Ọ̀kọ is *sà*. It is used to link units such as phrases (e.g noun phrase (12), (13)) and full sentences (14). This is in contrast to *akà* 'and', which cannot be used to link full sentences (see §17.2).

(12) *unini éke-je ẹ̀bà* ***sà*** *ífó*
Unini FUT-eat *ẹ̀bà* or pounded yam
'Unini will eat *ẹ̀bà* or pounded yam.'

(13) *ẹ̀kẹ̀na nẹnẹ è-sie nà* ***sa*** *ọ̀nẹ́ nẹnẹ e-mè-sie na*
thing [REL 3SG.S-do RCP] or this [REL 3SG.S-NEG-do RCP]
kọ́ọ̀rọ́ọ̀rẹ e-mè-tó-mú
anything 3SG.S-NEG-meet-1SG.O
'I am not bothered by whatever s/he chose to do or not to do.'

(14) *áránrò àyẹ unini sú hǒn **sà** ùyèrìrò*
wealth.AGT FOC Unini marry QPTCL or poverty.AGT
àyẹ à-fò yẹ̀-ẹ́yẹ́ nọ́?
FOC 3SG.S-take 3SG.POSS-liver BENF
'Did Unini marry a rich man or did she give her heart to a wretched man?'

Like the conjunctive marker *akà*, the disjunctive marker *sà* also cannot be used to link contiguous verbs within a construction (cf. 15). The verbs that undergo the disjunction must occur within a clause, where each verb has a subject, that is, a subject prefix (cf. 16).

(15) **à-á-da ka ọ̀-gbá **sà wọ́** ẹ́pẹ́nkẹpẹn*
3SG.S-COND-be COMP 2SG.S-see or hear anything
cá gá nẹ́-mọ̀
come tell BENF-1SG.O
'If you see or hear anything, come and tell me.'

(16) *à-á-da ka ọ̀-gbá **sà ọ̀-wọ́** ẹ́pẹ́nkẹpẹn*
3SG.S-COND-be COMP 2SG.S-see or 2SG.S-hear anything
cá gá nẹ́-mọ̀
come tell give-1SG.O
'If you see or hear anything, come and tell me.'

Similarly, *sà* cannot link a verb-final clause with a negative coordinand which is made of one word. The only way of expressing this is by use of the alternative concessive clause (see §19.4.3). In such construction, the coordinand must be a negative clause (cf. 17a, b).

(17a) *á-cá* ***sà*** ***a-mà-cá*** *na ǒ mà-áka-jǫ́họn*
3SG.S-come or 3SG.S-NEG-come PTCL PTCL 1SG.S-FUT-stand
karẹ-ya
wait-3SG.O
'Whether s/he comes or not, I will wait for her/him.'

(17b) *è-é-nyín* ***sà*** ***e-mè-nyín-yà*** *na ǒ,*
3SG.S-COND-buy or 3SG.S-NEG-buy-3SG.O PTCL PTCL
tè-éke-kí-je ẹkẹrẹ
1PL.S-FUT-IMP-eat profit
'Whether s/he buys it or not we shall still make some profit.'

17.4 The adversative marker *àmá* 'but'

Adversative coordination in Ọ̀kọ is marked by the coordinator *àmá*. Alternatively, speakers may sometimes make use of the concessive clause marker *è-é-sísí da* 'even though…' (see §19.4.3).

Àmá is generally used to express the denial of an expectation (cf. 18a-c).

(18a) *àde sú oòro ke* ***àmá*** *e-è-mín b' ógben*
Ade marry wife PERF but 3SG.S-NEG-INCEP give.birth
'Ade is married but is yet to have any children.'

(18b) *ésírí ta ke* ***àmá*** *bè-éke-kí ca*
darkness cover PERF but 3PL.S-FUT-CONT come
'It is already dark but they will still come.'

(18c) *ọkọrẹ sú ẹ̀kpànẹ̀ ẹbọ̀rẹ̀* ***àmá*** *e-è-dí búín*
snail have horns two but 3SG.S-NEG-can gore
órókorò
anyone
'The snail has two horns but cannot use them to cause bodily wound to anyone.'

The concessive clause marked by *è-é-sísí da* 'even though…' (see §19.4.3), is roughly equivalent to *àmá* coordination. However, the concessive clause conjunction is not a complete substitute for the *àmá* conjunction. The concessive clause and *àmá* may cooccur in a sentence, where à*má* introduces the main clause (cf. 19a, b); but, the presence of *àmá* in the construction is optional. This is shown in the examples by including *àmá* in parenthesis.

(19a) *è-é-sísí da ka àde sú oòro ke* (*àmá*)
3SG.S-COND-even be COMP Ade marry wife PERF but
e-è-mín-bógben
3SG.S-NEG-INCEP-give.birth
'Even though Ade is married, he is yet to have a child.'

(19b) *è-é-sísí da ka ù-cìna íkíbàrò ke*
3SG.S-COND-even be COMP 2SG.S-become rich PERF
(*àmá*) *nyẹ́n óró oògben nẹnẹ ọ̀-wà nà*
but remember person POSS.child REL 2SG.S-COP RCP
(Lit. 'Even though you have become rich, remember the person's child who you are.')
'Even though you have become rich, remember whose child you are.'

Chapter 18
Interrogative constructions

18.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I examine interrogative constructions in Ọ̀kọ. There are two types: Polar questions and Content questions. I also examine several strategies that are used in question formation in the language. These include strategies such as the use of a high tone as question marker, which is necessitated by the deletion of the tone-bearing segment at morpheme boundary, and the use of clause-final question morphemes which complement the question word. For instance, clause-final *họ́n~hǫ̌n* is used in polar questions, while clause-final *a* is used in content questions.

18.2 Polar questions

18.2.1 Simple polar question

The marking of simple polar questions (Yes-No questions) in Ọ̀kọ consists of two elements. The first is the high-tone-bearing question marker *í-*, which always occurs in the clause-initial position, and the required clause-final question particle (QPTCL) *họ́n~hǫ̌n*. The choice of any of the alternants of the question particle is based on the tone pattern of the preceding syllable. Where the preceding syllable has a low tone or a mid tone, the question particle is *họ́n* (cf. 1a, b). On the other hand, where the tone pattern on the preceding syllable is the high tone, the form of the question particle is *hǫ̌n* (cf. 2).

(1a) *í-mà-áka-gba-ọ* *usie* *họ́n*?
QM-1SG.S-FUT-see-2SG.O tomorrow QPTCL
'Will I see you tomorrow?'

(1b) *í-wà-áka-jọ́họn* *karẹ-mọ* *útù* *họ́n*?
QM.2SG.S-FUT-stand wait-1SG.O LOC.palace QPTCL
'Will you wait for me at the palace?'

(2) *í-bè-éke-sú* *bì-íwú* *họ̌n*?
QM-3PL.S-FUT-marry 3PL.POSS-body QPTCL
'Will they marry themselves?'

The question particle *họ́n~họ̌n* in polar questions further complements the question marker especially in such constructions in which the question marker consists only of an interrogative high tone (cf. 3a-d).

The surface form of the high-tone-bearing question marker *í-* is obvious in (1a, b), and in (2), due to the fact that the word which directly follows it is consonant-initial. However, in a situation where the question marker is directly followed by a vowel-initial word, the vowel segment of the question marker is elided, due to a vowel elision rule in the language in which the first of two contiguous oral vowels at morpheme boundary is always deleted (see also §3.3.1). Although the vowel segment is deleted, the high tone which it bears re-surfaces on the next available vowel segment. The surviving high tone therefore performs the function of the question marker, complemented by *họ́n~họ̌n* occurring in its usual clause-final position.

(3a) *é-yìre-ẹ* *fura* *údúdò* *ọ̀ọ̀pọn* *họ́n*?
QM.3SG.S-steal-3SG.O do.away sheep POSS.barn QPTCL
'Did he steal it from the sheep's barn?'

(3b) *íya* *okumokun* *àyẹ* *wó* *àde* *uùbó*
QM.mother elderly DEF.SG LOC.COP Ade POSS.house
họ̌n?
QPTCL
'Is the grandmother in Ade's house?'

(3c) *ógben áyẹ yíwó, hǫ̀n*?
QM.child DEF.SG cry QPTCL
'Did the child cry?'

(3d) *ófòro àyẹ fǫ́ fǫ̀rẹ yo-òro hǫ́n*?
QM.man DEF.SG tall surpass 3SG.POSS-wife QPTCL
'Is the man taller than his wife?'

Examples (4a-d) are declarative constructions, parallel to the interrogative ones in (3a-d). Both sets of examples show contrasts as a result of tone modification.

(4a) *è-yìre-ẹ fura údúdò ọ̀ọ̀pọn*
3SG.S-steal-3SG.O do.away sheep POSS.barn
'He stole it from the sheep's barn.'

(4b) *iya okumokun àyẹ wó àde uùbó*
mother elderly DEF.SG LOC.COP ade POSS.house
'The grandmother is in Ade's house.'

(4c) *ógbén áyẹ yíwó*
child DEF.SG cry
'The child cried.'

(4d) *ofòro àyẹ fǫ́ fǫ̀rẹ yo-òro*
man DEF.SG tall surpass 3SG.POSS-wife
'The man is taller than his wife.'

The interrogative high tone can only be followed by a low tone or a mid tone but never by another high tone (cf. table 18 below). This therefore explains the disparity in the interrogative-marked *ógben* (cf. 3c) and the non-marked *ógbén* (cf. 4c). In the case where the tone pattern n the first two syllables of the noun is HL or HM, the interrogative high

tone merges with the original high tone of the first syllable of the noun, and is followed by either a low tone (cf. 5b), or a mid tone (cf. 6b) . The question particle *họ́n~họ̌n* is always on hand to show that the statement is interrogative.

(5a) *íbọ̀rẹ̀kàkọrọ̀fọ àyẹ à-á-nẹ́-mọ̀*
fifty FOC 3SG.S-3SG.T-give-1SG.O
'It was fifty that he gave me.'

(5b) *íbọ̀rẹ̀kàkọrọ̀fọ àyẹ à-á-nẹ́-mọ̀ họ́n*?
fifty FOC 3SG.S-3SG.T-give-1SG.O QPTCL
'Was it fifty that he gave me?'

(6a) *íwukpe àyẹ rọ́m*
flesh DEF.SG sweet
'The flesh is delicious.'

(6b) *íwukpe àyẹ rọ́m họ̌n*?
flesh DEF.SG sweet QPTCL
'Is the flesh delicious?'

The following tone patterns in table (18) show the distinction between non-interrogative-marked nouns and interrogative-marked nouns.

Table 18: Tone patterns of non-interrogative vs. interrogative marked nouns

Non-interrogative			**Interrogative**		**Gloss**
H H	*ógbén*	→	H M	*ógben*	'child'
H M	*íwukpe*	→	H M	*íwukpe*	'flesh'
H L	*ọ́kọ̀íbekà*	→	H L	*ọ́kọ̀íbekà*	'boat'
M L	*ofòro*	→	H L	*ofòro*	'man'

L L	*ìfònì*	→	H L	*ífònì*	‘brain’
M M	*ẹkẹna*	→	H M	*ẹ́kẹna*	‘crab’
L M	*òpalẹ*	→	H M	*ọ́palẹ*	‘fence’

Furthermore, even though the question particle *họ́n~họ̌n* in polar questions is required, but because there is only one syntactic slot at the clause-final position which can only be filled by one element, the question particle cannot cooccur with another clause-final element in the usual clause-final position. For instance, the perfect particle *kè* (cf. 7) and the adverb *gbá* ‘before’ (cf. 8):

(7) *í-wẹ̀-ẹdẹda wúrá kè*?
QM-2SG.S-father arrive PERF
‘Has your father arrived?’

(8) *í-nù-úwó bá ógben gbá*?
QM-2PL.POSS give.birth child ADV
‘Has your dog ever given birth?’

An attempt to combine *họ́n~họ̌n* with either *kè* or *gbá* will only yield unacceptable sentences as in (9), (10).

(9) **í-wẹ̀-ẹdẹda wúrá* ***kè họ́n*** ?
QM-2SG.S-father arrive PERF QPTCL
‘Has your father arrived?’

(10) **í-nù-úwó bá ógbén* ***gbá họ̌n***?
QM-2PL.POSS give.birth child ADV QPTCL
‘Has your dog ever given birth?’

The only clause-final particle with which the question particle *họ́n~họ̌n* can cooccur in clause-final position is the clause-final *na~nà*.

The order is that the question particle follows *na~nà* (see examples under 18.5.2.B).

18.2.2 **Cleft polar questions**

Cleft polar questions are a special kind of polar questions in which an NP is not only questioned but also fronted. This type of questions qualifies as polar questions because they also elicit the answer Yes-or-No. However, unlike in the simple polar questions, in cleft polar questions, the question marker is not found on the first word of the clause; rather, on the subject pronoun that follows the focused element. The subject pronoun is usually identical with the third person singular bound subject pronoun. On the other hand, the question particle *họ́n~hǒn* is present in its usual clause-final position. The focus marker may or may not be pronounced. See the following examples (11a-c).

(11a) *àyẹ (àyẹ) é-yire wè-ẹkèkẹ họ́n*?
3SG.I FOC QM.3SG.S-steal 2SG.POSS-bicycle QPTCL
'Is he the one who stole your bicycle?'

(11b) *àmẹ (àyẹ) é-dè-ní ẹ́gá hǒn*?
1SG.I FOC QM.3SG.S-REPT-want word QPTCL
'Am I always the one who looks for trouble?'

(11c) *àde (àyẹ) á-fọ-ẹ yọ́ hǒn*?
ade FOC QM-3SG.S-take-3SG.O go QPTCL
'Is Ade the one who took it away?'

Sometimes though, speakers are not sure whether to substitute the third person singular subject pronoun with a resumptive pronoun, that is, a pronoun form which agrees with the focused subject in terms of number (cf. 12a; 13a), or whether to continue to use the third person singular subject pronoun even when the focused element is plural (cf. 12b; 13b). Both strategies are acceptable.

(12a) *àtọ (àyẹ) í-tè-yìre wẹ̀-ẹkẹ̀kẹ họ́n*?
1PL.I FOC QM-1PL.S-steal 2SG.POSS-bicycle QPTCL
'Were we the ones who stole your bicycle?'

(12b) *àtọ (àyẹ) é-yìre wẹ̀-ẹkẹ̀kẹ họ́n*?
1PL.I FOC QM.3SG.S-steal 2SG.POSS-bicycle QPTCL
'Were we the ones who stole your bicycle?'

(13a) *àbẹ (àyẹ) í-bè-yě-bá cá hǫ̀n*?
3PL.I FOC QM-3PL.S-call-3PL.O come QPTCL
'Were they the ones who invited them?'

(13b) *àbẹ (àyẹ) é-yě-bá cá hǫ̀n*?
3PL.I FOC QM.3SG.S-call-3PL.O come QPTCL
'Were they the ones who invited them?'

18.3 **Content questions**

Content questions here refer to questions which have variously been described also as WH-questions or Question-word questions. Content questions are different from Yes-No questions because they elicit a specific answer other than Yes-or-No. In Ọ̀kọ, content questions are introduced by interrogative expressions, some of which I have earlier described in (§7.6) as interrogative pronouns. These include question phrases such as: *ẹ̀rá* 'who', *ẹ̀ná* 'what', *ọ́ọ́na* 'which', *ẹ̀tá*[21] 'where', *gànà* 'how' and *ẹ̀ná-wọrẹ-ka* 'why'. The question phrase in Ọ̀kọ must be complemented by the clause-final question marker *a* (cf. 14-18).

[21] This is the form of the word when pronounced in isolation, for instance, when a speaker only mentions the word outside of a construction to question a location *ẹ̀tá* 'where?' However, when the word is used in a construction, it is marked with the locative high tone which must immediately be followed by a mid tone *ẹ́ta*, having the literal sense 'in where' (see §3.5.2.2.C).

(14) *ẹ̀rá wè-e-yè a*?
who 2SG.S-PROG-call QM
'Who are you calling?'

(15) *ẹ̀ná cẹ̀lẹ́ óbinutù a*?
what happen palace QM
'What happened at the palace?'

(16) *ọ̀ọ́na è-nyin a*?
which 3SG.S-buy QM
'Which one did he buy?'

(17) *ẹ́ta wù-úbó man úbanẹ̀ ọ̀nẹ́ a*?
LOC.where 2SG.POSS-house sit LOC.community DEM.SG QM
(Lit. In where is your house in this community.)
'Where is your house in this community?'

(18) *gànà ẹ́pẹ́n sie wà a*?
how thing do COP QM
'How are things?'

The clause-final question marker *a* used in content questions does not have any restriction in its position, unlike the clause-final question particle *họ́n~hǫ̌n* in polar questions which cannot cooccur with some other categories such as the perfect marker and adverbs (see7, 8). The question marker *a* can cooccur with any other category, and it still maintains its clause-final position (cf. 19a-c).

(19a) *ẹ̀rá é-sie kue kè a*?
who 3SG.S-do finish PERF QM
'Who has finished?'

(19b) *ẹ̀ná* *é-kue* *kè* *úbo* *a*?
what 3SG.S-finish PERF LOC.house QM
'What has finished in the house?'

(19c) *ẹ̀rá* *ọ̀-gbá* *gbà* *a*?
who 2SG.S-see ADV QM
'Who have you seen before?'

Furthermore, the clause-final *a* in content questions can occur more than once in an entire question sentence. That is, it always occurs at the clause-final position of all the clauses that make up a question sentence (cf. 20a, b). This is unlike *họ́n~hǫ̌n* which can only occur once (cf. 21).

(20a) *ẹ̀ná* *é-sie* ***a,*** *ẹ̀ná* *nì-mí-sie* ***a***?
what 3SG.S-do QM what 2PL.S-INCEP-do QM
'What happened and what did you then do?'

(20b) *ẹ́ta* *à-a-yọ̀* ***a,*** *ẹ́ta*
LOC.where 3SG.S-PROG-go QM LOC.where
nì-wé-tò-yá ***a***?
2PL.S-INCEP-meet-3SG.O QM
'Where was s/he going, and where did you now meet her/him?'

(21) *í-wè-éke-ni* *ka* *ọ́-cá* *sà*
QM-2SG.S-FUT-want COMP 2SG.S-come or
í-wà-áka-mán *úbo* *họ́n*
QM-2SG.S-FUT-stay LOC.house QPTCL
'Will you prefer to come or to stay at home?'

18.4 **Position of the question phrase**

The question phrase, which includes the questioned NP and the question word, or only a question word, used in content questions, can occur in any of two positions of a clause: the usual clause-initial position, and the predicate position.

18.4.1 **Clause-initial position**

When the subject of the clause is questioned, a question phrase is used to replace it (cf. 22-24).

(22) *óró ọ́ọ́na a-ca úju a*?
person which 3SG.S-come LOC.night QM
'Which person came at night?'

(23) *íkíbà ọ́ọ́na è-néfùà a*?
money which 3SG.S-lost QM
'Which money got lost?'

(24) *ẹ̀rá fọ́ ógbén áyẹ ca ẹ̀kọ a*?
who carry child DEF.SG come here QM
'Who brought the child here?'

On the other hand, a questioned object can also be fronted to occupy the clause-initial position after it is extracted from its original position (cf. 25, 26).

(25) *ẹ̀ná ù-nyín a*?
what 2SG.S-buy QM
'What did you buy?'

(26) *ẹ̀rá àde yè a*?
who Ade call QM
'Who did Ade invite?'

18.4.2 **Predicate position (In-situ)**

The second position in which the question phrase can occur is the predicate position, In-situ. This involves a questioned object. In examples (27a, b), (28a, b), I show by means of minimal pairs the original position of the question phrases, corresponding to non-interrogative phrases.

(27a) *íkén áyẹ iìhúrù gbé ẹ̀ná a?*
town DEF.SG POSS.town bear what QM
'The name of the town is what?'

(27b) *íkén áyẹ iìhúrù gbé òg̀òrì*
town DEF.SG POSS.town bear ogori
'The name of the town is Ogori.'

(28a) *àde wúrá ọ́gbọ̀ọ́na a?*
Ade return LOC.when QM
'Ade arrived when?'

(28b) *àde wúrá ágogo ẹbọ̀rẹ̀*
Ade return LOC.clock two
'Ade arrived at two o'clock.'

This type of constructions also includes identity and class-inclusion statements, which are always expressed with the copula verb *wá* (cf. 29, 30).

(29a) *mọ̀-ọ́rẹ́ wà òtéró owowo àyẹ*
1SG.POSS-friend COP teacher new DEF.SG
'My friend is the new teacher.'

(29b) *mọ̀-ọ́rẹ́ wà ẹ̀rá a?*
1SG.POSS-friend COP who QM
'My friend is who?'

(29c) *ẹ̀rá wà mọ̀-ọ́rẹ́ a*?
who COP 1SG.POSS-friend QM
'Who is my friend?'

(30a) *tì-íyá wà érúmrò*
1PL.POSS-mother COP farmer
'Our mother is a farmer.'

(30b) *tì-íyá wà ẹ̀rá a*?
1PL.POSS-mother COP who QM
'Our mother is who?'

(30c) *ẹ̀rá wà tì-íyá a*?
who COP 1PL.POSS-mother QM
'Who is our mother?'

18.5 Questioning constituents

In this section, I examine how constituents of a sentence are questioned; for instance the NP, especially questions about possession (§18.5.1), and embedded clauses (§18.5.2).

18.5.1 Questions about possession

Questions about adnominal possession behave like all other subjects (cf. 31a, b), this include questions about possessor in the sense of 'own-subject' (32a, b).

(31a) *ẹ̀rá yì-iya e-fo a*?
who 3SG.POSS-mother 3SG.S-die QM
'Whose mother died?'

(31b) *ẹ̀rá yù-úwó néfùà a*?
who 3SG.POSS-dog lost QM
'Whose dog got lost?'

(32a) *ẹ̀rá é-bì úbó ọ̀nẹ a*?
QW 3SG.S-own house DEM.SG QM
'Who owns this house?'

(32b) *ẹ́nẹ́ ọ̀ọ́na é-bì ìnyín ẹ̀nánẹ̀ a*?
animals which 3SG.S-own footprint DEM.PL QM
'Which animals own these footprints?'

When the questioned NP is the object, it can remain in its position, In-situ or fronted to the clause-initial position. Both structures are possible without any difference in meaning (33a, b).

(33a) *ọ̀-gbá ẹ̀rá ìikérese a*?
2SG.S-see who POSS.car QM
'You saw whose car?'

(33b) *ẹ̀rá ọ̀-gbá yì-íkérese a*?
who 2SG.S-see 3SG.POSS QM
'Whose car did you see?'

18.5.2 Embedded questions

Embedded questions are indirect questions which form a subordinate clause within a larger structure. In Ọ̀kọ, the embedded question clause occurs as argument of a selected class of verbs, such as the following: *dín* 'to know/to have an idea of', *gbé* 'to be sure of', *nyẹ́n* 'to remember', *luanyẹn* 'to forget' and *gá* 'to say'. The embedded question can be found within a statement (§18.5.2.A) or within a main question (§18.5.2.B). Embedded questions in Ọ̀kọ include content and polar questions. One important element which both content and polar embedded questions have in common is the clause-final particle *na~nà*.

18.5.2.A **Embedded questions within a statement**

i. *Content questions*

The clause containing the embedded content question follows the main statement and it can be introduced by any of the following question phrases: *ọgbọ̀na* 'what time/when', *ẹ̀fọ̀na* 'which place/where', *ẹ̀kẹ̀na* 'which thing/what' and *àkọ* 'as/how'. There distribution is shown in (34a-d).

(34a) *i-mè-dín ọgbọ̀na nẹ̀nẹ̀ usie gán nà*
1SG.S-NEG-know [when REL tomorrow break PTCL]
'I do not know when it was dawn.'

(34b) *à-nyẹ́n ẹ̀fọ̀na nẹ̀nẹ̀ úbó àyẹ mán nà*
3SG.S-remember [where REL house DEF.SG sit PTCL]
'S/He remembers where the house is located.'

(34c) *ba-mà-nyẹ́n ẹ̀kẹ̀na nẹ̀nẹ̀ ẹ̀-gá-bá nà*
3PL.S-NEG-remember [what REL 1SG.S-tell-3PL.O PTCL]
'They did not remember what I told them.'

(34d) *ì-dín àkọ emumu àyẹ nẹ́fùà nà*
1SG.S-know [as book DEF.SG lost PTCL]
'I know how the book got lost.'

Question phrases such as *ẹ̀rá* 'who', *ẹ̀ná* 'what', cannot be used to introduce an embedded content question. They are replaced by *ẹ̀fẹ̀na* 'person', *ẹ̀kẹ̀na* 'thing' respectively (cf. 35, 36).

(35a) **i-mè-dín **ẹ̀rá** sie-ẹ*
1SG.S-NEG-know who do-3SG.O
'I don't know who did it.'

(35b) *i-mè-dín* ***èfẹ̀na*** *nẹnẹ* *sie-ẹ* *nà*
1SG.S-NEG-know person REL do-3SG.O RCP
'I don't know who did it.'

(36a) **i-mè-dín* ***ẹ̀ná*** *è-nyín* *nà*
1SG.S-NEG-know what 3SG.S-buy RCP
'I don't know what he bought.'

(36b) *i-mè-dín* ***ẹ̀kẹ̀na*** *nẹnẹ* *è-nyín* *nà*
1SG.S-NEG-know thing REL do-3SG.O RCP
'I don't know what he bought.'

ii. *Polar questions*

Similarly, the clause containing an embedded polar question also follows the main statement; however, the embedded polar question can only be introduced by the coordinator *sà* 'or', which is translated as 'if/whether'. Another major difference which sets the embedded polar question apart is that the clause-final particle na is further complemented by the particle *ǒ*. We note also that the original low tone on *nà* changes to mid (i.e, *nà* > *na*), while *ǒ* has a rising tone. This is shown in (37a, b).

(37a) *àde* *e-mè-dín* ***sà*** *bì-rùwa* *íkíbà* *àyẹ*
Ade 3SG.S-NEG-know whether 3PL.S-divide money DEF.SG
na *ǒ*
SCFP PTCL
'Ade does not know whether the money has been shared.'

(37b) *ì-luanyẹn* ***sà*** *à-áka-ca* *na* *ǒ*
1SG.S-forget whether 3SG.S-FUT-come PTCL PTCL
'I have forgotten whether s/he will come.'

18.5.2.B **Embedded questions within a main question**

i. *Content questions*

A content question may be embedded within a main question. The main question is clearly a polar question, having the formal trappings of such; that is, the question high tone and the clause-final question particle *hǫ́n~hǫ̌n* (cf. 38a-c).

(38a) *ú-din ǫ́gbǫ̀na nẹnẹ à-áka-ca nà hǫ́n*?
QM-2SG.S-know [when REL 3SG.S-FUT-come PTCL QPTCL]
'Do you know when he will come?'

(38b) *í-nè-dí à-fǫ̀ ȅfǫ̀na nẹnẹ úbó àyẹ mán na*
QM.2PL.S-can INF-take [where REL house DEF.SG sit PTCL]
nyẹ́n-mǫ́ hǫ̌n
show-1SG.O QPTCL
'Can you(pl) show me where the house is located?'

(38c) *ú-din àkọ nẹnẹ è-sie sie-ẹ nà hǫ́n*?
QM.2SG.S-know [how REL 3SG.S-do do-3SG.O PTCL QPTCL]
'Do you know how he did it?'

ii. *Polar questions*

Similarly, a polar question may be embedded within another main question which is clearly a polar question (cf. 39a, b).

(39a) *áde din* ***sà*** *bà-áka-cá nà hǫ́n*?
QM.Ade know whether 3PL.S-FUT-come PTCL QPTCL
'Does Ade know whether they will come?'

(39b) *ú-dí à-gá nẹ́-mǫ̀* ***sà*** *àde yǫ́ kè*?
2SG.S-can INF-say BENF-1SG.O whether Ade go PERF
'Can you tell me whether Ade has gone?'

18.6 Special kinds of questions

In this section, I discuss some special kinds of questions in Ọ̀kọ such as Tag questions (§18.6.1), Alternative questions (§18.6.2), Probability questions (§18.6.3), Self-directed questions (§18.6.4) and Selection questions (§18.6.5).

18.6.1 **Tag questions**

Tag questions are questions which immediately follow a statement and which serve to seek confirmation. Tag questions in Ọ̀kọ usually consist of two clauses conjoined by *sà* 'or'. A positive clause is followed by a negative clause. The question element in the construction is always expressed in the negative clause, *a-mà-wa ẹ̀gan*? (Lit. It not be so?) (cf. 40a-c).

(40a) *àde áka-ca* ***sà a-mà-wa ẹ̀gan***?
Ade FUT-come or 3SG.S-NEG-COP so?
(Lit. 'Ade will come, isn't it so?')
'Ade will come, won't he?'

(40b) *ébí kue wó úbó* ***sà a-mà-wa ẹ̀gan***?
water finish LOC.COP house or 3SG.S-NEG-COP so?
(Lit. 'Water is finished in the house, isn't it so?')
'There is no water in the house, isn't there?'

(40c) *yẹ̀-ẹdẹda sú oòro ọ̀bẹ̀n ke*
3SG.POSS-father marry wife another PERF
sà a-mà-wa ẹ̀gan
or 3SG.S-NEG-COP so?
(Lit. 'His father has married another wife, isn't it so?')
'His father has married another wife, hasn't he?'

18.6.2 **Alternative questions**

Alternative questions in Ọ̀kọ consist of at least two phrases or clauses conjoined by *sà* 'or'; for instance, two noun phrases in alternation (cf. 41a, b), or two clauses (cf. 42a, b). Otherwise, the strategy for forming alternative questions is similar to that of polar questions. That is, the use of the high tone question marker and clause-final question particle.

(41a) *ógben áyẹ sà yì-íyá áka-ca gba òtéro*
QM.child DEF.SG or 3SG.POSS FUT-come see teacher
àyẹ họ́n ?
DEF.SG QPTCL
'Will the child or his mother come and see the teacher?'

(41b) *ámẹ sà àwọ àyẹ obin e-ni ka*
QM.1SG.I or 2SG.I FOC king PROG-want COMP
àyẹ-gbá hǫ̌n?
3SG.S-see QPTCL
'Is it me or you that the king wants to see?'

(42a) *í-wè-éke-ni ka ọ́-cá sà*
QM-2SG.S-FUT-want COMP 2SG.S-come or
í-wà-áka-mán úbo họ́n
QM-2SG.S-FUT-stay LOC.house QPTCL
'Will you prefer to come or to stay at home?'

(42b) *ógben ayẹ̀ e-ni ka e-jijen*
QM.child DEF.SG 3SG.S-want COMP 3SG.S-eat
sà é-ni ka e-bue họ́n?
or QM.3SG.S-want COMP 3SG.S-sleep QPTCL
'Does the child want to eat or does s/he want to sleep?'

18.6.3 **Probability questions**

In probability questions, where the same verb occurs in both clauses, the second clause is always negative, and the question particle *họ́n~họ̌n* can only occur at the end of the first clause (43a, b).

(43a) *á-aka-ca* *usie* *họ́n* *sà*
QM.3SG.S-FUT-come tomorrow QPTCL or
a-àka-ca?
3SG.S-NEG.FUT-come
'Will s/he come tomorrow or not?'

(43b) *áde* *éke-jijen* *họ́n* *sà* *e-èke-jijen?*
QM.Ade FUT-eat QPTCL or 3SG.S-NEG.FUT-eat
'Will Ade eat or not?'

18.6.4 **Self-Directed questions**

Self-directed questions in Ọ̀kọ are questions which an addresser directs to himself rather than to an addressee. This type of questions is introduced by the self-directed question marker (SDQM) *ámá* (cf. 44a-c).

(44a) *ámá* *áde* *nyín-yà*?
SDQM Ade buy-3SG.O
'Could it be that Ade bought it?'

(44b) *ámá* *bà-áka-gà* *nẹ́-bá*?
SDQM 3PL.S-FUT-say BENF-3PL.O
'Could it be that they will be informed?'

(44c) *ámá* *áyẹ* *e-yìre* *wẹ̀-ẹkẹ̀kẹ*?
SDQM 3SG.I 3SG.S-steal 2SG.POSS-bicycle
'Could it be that he is the one who stole your bicycle?'

It should also be noted that sometimes, a speaker may decide to direct a question to an addressee using the self-directed question strategy. When this happens, it gives the question a rhetorical sense, in which the addresser does not expect a response.

18.6.5 **Selection questions**

In selection questions, the questioned noun is always followed by the question phrase *ọ́ọ́na* 'which'. There are two types of selection questions: namely, those in which the object is questioned, and those in which the subject is questioned. In the one in which the object is questioned, the question phrase can occur in either the clause-initial position or in-situ, without any difference in meaning. Both positions are shown in the examples below (45a, b), (46a, b).

(45a) *emumu ọ́ọ́na ù-nyin a*?
book which 2SG.S-buy QM
'Which book did you buy?'

(45b) *ù-nyín emumu ọ́ọ́na a*?
2SG.S-buy book which QM
'You bought which book?'

(46a) *íkén ọ́ọ́na àde yọ̀ a*?
town which Ade go QM
'Which town did Ade visit?'

(46b) *àde yọ̀ íkén ọ́ọ́na a*?
Ade go town which QM
'Ade visited which town?'

On the other hand, in selection questions in which the subject is questioned, the question phrase can only occur in the clause-initial position (cf. 47a-c).

(47a) *óró* *ọ́ọ́na* *a-ca* *újo* *a*?
person which 3SG.S-come LOC.night QM
'Which person came at night?'

(47b) *úbó* *ọ́ọ́na* *e-digina* *a*?
house which 3SG.S-collapse QM
'Which house collapsed?'

(47c) *ẹ̀sa* *ọ́ọ́na* *a-kẹnẹ* *a*?
cloth which 3SG.S-burn QM
'Which cloth got burnt?'

Chapter 19
Subordination

19.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss subordination in Ọ̀kọ. I examine the three main types of subordinate clauses, relative clauses (§19.2), complement clauses (§19.3) and adverbial clauses (§19.4). I describe the structure of subordinate clauses, the markers that assist in their recognition within constructions and their position in a construction. Relative clauses are introduced by the relativizer *nẹnẹ*, and they terminate with the relative clause final particle *na~nà*. Complement clauses are introduced by the complementizer *ka*. Adverbial clauses are generally introduced by adverbial subordinators, which may combine with the relative marker *nẹnẹ* or the complementizer *ka*.

19.2 The relative clause

A relative clause is a subordinate clause which delimits the reference of an NP by specifying the role of the NP referent in the situation described by the NP (Avery 2007:206). There is no structural difference between the restrictive and the non-restrictive relative clauses in Ọ̀kọ (cf. 1a, b). Non-restrictivness is only indicated in the English translation of example (1b) by the comma; no such marking exists in Ọ̀kọ.

(1a) *àde nẹnẹ táyẹ̀-gbá odolo àyẹ na éke-su*
Ade [REL do.before-see bead DEF.SG RCP] FUT-marry
obin oògben
king POSS.child
'Ade who first found the beads will marry the princess.'

(1b) *àde nẹnẹ táyẹ̀-gbá odolo àyẹ na éke-su*
Ade [REL do.before-see bead DEF.SG RCP] FUT-marry
obin oògben
king POSS.child
'Ade, who first found the beads, will marry the princess.'

As was earlier mentioned (see also §10.4.4; §13.2.7), the relative clause in Ọ̀kọ is formally distinguished as opening with the relativizer *nẹnẹ* and always terminating with the relative clause final particle *na~nà* (cf. 2a-c).

(2a) *ógbén nẹnẹ úwó tàmírúm na é-yíwo*
child [REL dog bite RCP] PROG-cry
'The child who was bitten by a dog is crying.'

(2b) *emumu nẹnẹ wà-a-né-mọ̀ na fẹ́nẹ́n kẹ̀*
book [REL 2SG.S-3SG.T-give-1SG.O RCP] tear PERF
'The book which you gave me is torn.'

(2c) *unini dín ọpa nẹnẹ bà-a-jọ ẹbàtà owowo*
Unini know price [REL 3PL.S-PROG-sell shoe new
éjì nà
LOC.market RCP]
'Unini knows the price at which new shoes are sold in the market.'

The motivation for the *na~nà* alternation and the number of the relative clause final particle which can occur in a construction are discussed in the next section.

19.2.1 **A note on the relative clause final particle *na~nà***

The alternation in the form of the relative clause final particle *na~nà* is determined by the position of the relative clause in a construction (see §19.2.2 for a detail discussion of the position of the relative clause). For

instance, when the relative clause occurs as the final clause in a construction, the *nà* variant is used. In other words, it functions like a pausal marker (cf. 3a, b).

(3a) *ọ́dọ́ í-bì-iken ọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ a-wà ọ́cọ́rò nẹnẹ*
rat LOC-3PL.POSS-town DEM.SG 3SG.S-COP blacksmith [REL
è-gbe ka éró bì-dín nà. (DM:31)
3SG.S-be COMP people 3PL.S-know RCP]
'In that (their) town, Rat was a renowned blacksmith known by all.'

(3b) *àyẹ águẹn mín fura jọ́mọ, à-ka bẹ-và áyẹ́*
FOC tortoise INCEP up stand 3SG.S-say 3PL.S-give 3SG.I
ísúbù ẹ̀ta nẹnẹ àyẹ áka-tọmẹ ẹ̀kẹ̀na àyẹ éke-sie
day three [REL 3SG.I FUT-start thing 3SG.I FUT-do
nà. (DM:17)
RCP]
'So Tortoise stood up and said that they should give him three days in which he will start what he intended to do.'

On the other hand, when the relative clause is followed by one or more clauses in the same construction, the *na* variant is used (cf. 4a, b). It gives the effect that the construction does not terminate with the relative clause.

(4a) *ọkọkọrẹ eèrúm nẹnẹ ẹ́bọ́lá w-ẹda sú na*
snail POSS.farm [REL Bola POSS-father have RCP]
è-gbodi fọ̀rẹ̀ba
3SG.S-big surpass
'The snail farm which Bola's father has is very big.'

(4b) *ofòro nẹnẹ a-man tù-úbó na nẹnẹ ányẹ́n*
man [REL PROG-live 1PL.POSS-house RCP] [REL eye
e-numa na a-yọ̀ ìlọrin
PROG-pain RCP] PROG-go Ilorin
'The man who lives in our house, who has a bad eye, is traveling to Ilorin.'

Furthermore, the relative clause final particle *na~nà* is required in a construction that contains one or more relative clauses. Each relative clause is followed by the relative clause final particle. However, in constructions in which relative clauses are stacked, all but the last of the relative clause particle is optional (cf. 5a, b).

(5a) *úwó ògbígbodi nẹnẹ wà ọ̀nyànyàn (na)*
dog big [REL COP red RCP]
nẹnẹ fọ̌ na
[REL tall RCP]
(Lit. 'the big dog which is red, which is tall')
'the big red tall dog'

(5b) *érúm nẹnẹ ọ̀kpàkọkọ kùrù (na) nẹnẹ wó íkén*
farm [REL tortoise make RCP] [REL LOC.COP town
ọ̀ọ̀palẹ úrùm (na) nẹnẹ ẹ̀nẹ̀m íbuba
POSS.wall behind RCP] [REL animal remaining
e-mè-din na
3SG.S-NEG-know REC]
'the farm which Tortoise cultivated, which is behind the town walls, which other animals do not know about'

On the other hand, in constructions which involve the conjoining of NPs modified by relative clauses by overt coordinators such as *sà* 'or' and *akà* 'and', each realization of the relative clause final particle is

obligatory. Each relative clause is treated as a separate unit: syntactically subordinate, but structurally independent (cf. 6, 7).

(6) *ẹ̀kẹ̀na nẹnẹ̀ è-sie nà sà ọ̀nẹ́ nẹnẹ̀ e-mè-sie*
thing [REL 3SG.S-do RCP] or DEM.SG [REL 3SG.S-NEG-do
nà kọ́rọ̀ọ́rẹ̀ e-mè-tó-mú
RCP] none 3SG.S-NEG-meet-1SG.O
'I am not bothered by whatever s/he chose to do or not to do.'

(7) *úbó nẹnẹ̀ digina nà akà ọ̀nẹ́ nẹnẹ̀ e-mè-digina*
house [REL collapse RCP] and DEM.SG [REL 3SG.S-NEG-collapse
nà àyẹ̀ ìjọ̀ba e-ni ka àyẹ́ ná
RCP] FOC government 3SG.S-want COMP 3SG.I collect
'The government wants to confiscate both the collapsed building and the one which has not collapsed.'

It is important to also add that the Ọ̀kọ̀ relative clause final particle is also identical to the clause-final particle which is used in the following constructions: in embedded interrogative clauses (cf. 8, see also §18.5.2), in adjoined clauses introduced by a coordinator (cf. 9), the clause-final subordinator of manner adverbials (cf. 10, see also §19.4.6), and the meaningless pausal element which is sometimes used in some narrative discourses (cf. 11a, b).

(8) *ì-luanyẹn sà à-áka-ca* ***na*** *ǒ*
1SG.S-forget [whether 3SG.S-FUT-come PTCL PTCL]
'I have forgotten whether s/he will come.'

(9) *è-é-nyín sà e-mè-nyín-yà* ***na*** *ǒ,*
[3SG.S-COND-buy or 3SG.S-NEG-buy-3SG.O PTCL PTCL]
tè-éke-kí-je ẹkẹ̀rẹ̀
1PL.S-FUT-CONT-eat profit
'Whether s/he buys it or not we shall still make some profit.'

(10) *e-tò ẹdẹda ọ̀nẹ àkọ è-sie sie ni*
3SG.S-meet man DEM.SG [as 3SG.S-do doing search
oòro ***nà.*** (MB:4)
wife PTCL]
'It is about this man, as he did in order to get a wife.'

(11a) *á-ka à-áka-fọ́m íjé* ***nà.*** (CCY:16)
3SG.S-say [3SG.S-FUT-enter ground PTCL]
'He said he will enter the ground.'

(11b) *ógbén áyẹ kí e-cin iya* ***na*** (CCY:17)
child DEF.SG continue PROG-ask mother PTCL
'The child continued to ask the mother'

19.2.2. **The position of the relative clause**

The relative clause occurs as the last element of the noun phrase (cf. 12 see also §13.3).

(12) *àyẹ águẹn mín fura jọ́mọ, à-ka bẹ-và áyẹ̀*
FOC tortoise INCEP up stand 3SG.S-say 3PL.S-give 3SG.I
ísúbù ẹ̀ta nẹnẹ àyẹ áka-tọmẹ ẹ̀kẹ̀na àyẹ éke-sie
day three [REL 3SG.I FUT-start thing 3SG.I FUT-do
nà. (DM:17)
RCP]
'So Tortoise stood up and said that they should give him three days in which he would commence what he intended to do.'

The relative clause is always external in Ọ̀ko; the head always occurs outside the relative clause. The order of the NPs *ógbén* 'child' and *emumu* 'book', and the relative clauses is illustrated in (13), (14).

(13) *ógbén nẹnẹ úwó tàmírúm na è-e-yíwo*
child [REL dog bite RCP] 3SG.S-PROG-cry
'The child who was bitten by a dog is crying.'

(14) *emumu nẹnẹ wà-a-nẹ́-mọ̀ na fẹ́nẹ́n kẹ̀*
book [REL 2SG.S-3SG.T-give-1SG.O RCP] tear PERF
'The book which you gave me is torn.'

Relative clauses can also be non-contiguous (extraposed), in a construction. The following examples in (15), (16) show this.

(15) *tì-gúré óró ọ́bẹ̀n érum ọ̀ọ̀rẹ nẹnẹ*
1PL.S-meet person INDF.SG LOC.farm POSS.road [REL
a-wa ìsìga nà
PROG-drink cigarette RCP]
'We met a person on the way to the farm who was smoking.'

(16) *ẹdẹda ọ̀bẹ̀n wo í-tò-ócín nẹnẹ*
father INDEF.SG LOC.COP LOC-1PL.POSS-compound [REL
e-te égbén ábẹ íkéwú nà
PROG-teach children DEF.PL Arabic-script RCP]
'A certain man lives in our compound who teaches children Arabic script.'

19.2.3 **The function of the relativized element in the relative clause**

The function of the relativized element in the relative clause can be subject (cf. 17), object (cf. 18), oblique (cf. 19), secondary object (cf. 20), object of a preposition (cf. 21) and genitive (cf. 22).

(17) *tì-gúré* *óró* *ọ́bẹ̀n* *érum* *ọ̀ọ̀rẹ* *nẹnẹ*
1PL.S-meet person INDF.SG LOC.farm POSS.road [REL
a-wa *ìsìga* *nà*
PROG-drink cigarette RCP]
'We met a person on the way to the farm who was smoking.'

(18) *ógbén* *nẹnẹ* *úwó* *tàmírúm* *na* *è-e-yíwo*
child [REL dog bite RCP] 3SG.S-PROG-cry
(Lit. 'The child whom a dog bit is crying.')
'The child who was bitten by a dog is crying.'

(19) *unini* *dín* *ọpa* *nẹnẹ* *bà-a-jọ* *ẹbàtà* *owowo*
Unini know price [REL 3PL.S-PROG-sell shoe new
éjì *nà*
LOC.market RCP]
'Unini knows the price at which new shoes are sold in the market.'

(20) *emumu* *nẹnẹ* *wọ̀-a-nẹ́-mọ̀* *na* *fẹ́nẹ́n* *kẹ̀*
book [REL 2SG.S-3SG.T-give-1SG.O RCP] tear PERF
'The book which you gave me is torn.'

(21) *ofòro* *nẹnẹ* *mà-a-gá* *ẹ́ga* *nọ́* *na*
Man [REL 1SG.S-PROG-speak word PREP RCP]
'the man whom I was talking to'

(22) *iyaro* *nẹnẹ* *yò-ófòro* *fó* *na* *yì-íbé*
woman REL 3SG.POSS-man die RCP 3SG.POSS-belly
a-mà-rọ́m
3SG.S-NEG-sweet
'The woman whose husband died is not happy.'

As can be seen in the examples (16), where the relativized element is subject, it is directly followed by the relative clause, but the NP slot

immediately after the relative clause marker *nẹnẹ* is always empty. This clearly distinguishes subject from others. For instance, with respect to other functions, the NP slot immediately after the relative clause marker is always filled by an NP (cf. 17-22).

Furthermore, we also see in (22) that it is also possible in Ọ̀kọ to relativize on the possessive. However, this is only possible with possessive pronouns and never with adnominal possession. That is why (23) is ruled out.

(23) **iyaro nẹnẹ oòfòro fó na yì-íbé*
woman REL POSS.man die RCP 3SG.POSS-belly
a-mà-rọ́m
3SG.S-NEG-sweet
'The woman whose husband died is not happy.'

19.3 Complement clauses

19.3.1 Complement-taking predicates

The complement clause in Ọ̀kọ is always introduced by the complementizer *ka*. The complement clauses occur as arguments of complement-taking predicates such as: *ní* 'want', *gbè* 'be', *gá* 'say', *roro* 'think', *wọrẹ* 'cause', *da* 'be', *dín* 'know', *lúányẹ́n* 'forget', *nyẹ́n* 'remember', *sie* 'do/pretend', *sọ́mọrọrẹ* 'fear', *gbá* 'see'. The distribution of some of these verbs is shown in (24) – (29).

(24) *iyaro é-gúé, iyaro é-gúé,* ***e-kì-ni*** ***ka***
girl PROG-grow woman PROG-grow 3SG.S-PREF-want [COMP
àyẹ sú ofòro. (MB:1)
3SG.I marry man]
'A young woman is growing, a young woman is growing, and she will want to get married.'

(25) ***é-gbè*** ***ka*** *éjí* *àyẹ* *é-jén* *e-ni* *oòro.* (MB:5)
3SG.S-be [COMP market FOC 3SG.S-go INF-search wife]
'It happened that it was at the market that he went to look for a wife.'

(26) ***a-dà-ga*** ***ka*** *bẹ̀-fọ̀* *b'-oòró*
3SG.S-REPT-say [COMP 3PL.S-take 3PL.POSS-wife
nẹ́ *áyẹ.* (DM:11)
BENF 3SG.I]
'He said again that they should give their wives to him.'

(27) ***ì-roro*** ***ka*** *àkọ* *tì-sie* *e- sie* *érúm* *uùtum*
1SG.S-think [COMP as 1PL.S-do PROG-do farm POSS.work
ọ́yọ *na* *àyẹ* *á-wà* *ọ̀nẹ.* (YF1:15)
LOC.savannah PTCL] FOC 3SG.S-COP DEM.SG
'I think that this is how we usually conduct yam farming in the savannah.'

(28) *ógbén* *áyẹ* ***nyẹn*** ***ka*** *e-jin* *ujum* *kě*
child DEF.SG remember [COMP 3SG.S-open door PERF]
'The child remembered that he has opened the door.'

(29) ***bẹ́-gba*** ***ka*** *óró* *ọ́bẹ̀n* *a-ca…* (NW/S1:3)
3PL.S-see [COMP person INDEF.SG PROG-come]
'They saw that someone was coming.'

19.3.2 **The 'say' verbs**

There are two verbs of saying in Ọ̀kọ, *gá* and *ka*. The two have different syntactic properties. For instance, *gá* is mainly used in serial verb constructions, while *ka* is the quotative verb. Both *gá* and *ka* can be used to introduce the complement clause in their respective ways.

19.3.2.A The serial *gá*

All the verbs in the fairly exhaustive list in section 19.3.1 above are always directly contiguous with the complement clause without being followed by another verb. The only exception is the 'say' verb *gá. Gá* can be directly followed by the complement clause as seen in (30), and can also cooccur in a serial construction with a following verb, though it is still followed by a complement clause afterward (31).

(30) *bì-min* ***ga*** ***ka*** *àbẹ* *e-mune* *fura*
3PL.S-INCEP say [COMP 3PL.I PROG-run do.away
ẹ̀fà *nẹnẹ* *bì-bile* *a-man* *nà.* (DM:4)
place [REL 3PL.S-do.together PROG-live RCP]]
'They then said that they are running away out of the place where they all have been living together.'

(31) *è-re* *ọgbọ̀na* *à-gbá* *oòro* *ọ̀nẹ* *na,* ***á-gá***
3SG.S-reach [when 3SG.S-see wife DEM.SG RCP] 3SG.S-say
nẹ́-yà ***ka*** *àyẹ* *e-ni* *ka* *àyẹ*
PREP-3SG.O [COMP 3SG.I PROG-want that 3SG.I
é-sú-yá. (MB:6)
3SG.S-marry-3SG.O]
'It got to the time when he found this wife, he said to her that he wanted to marry her.'

19.3.2.B The quotative *ka*

The quotative *ka*, is identical in form with the complementizer. They are only differentiated by their syntactic roles. *Ka* is used as a quotative verb to introduce direct speech as in (32a), it can also be used as the verb of saying, in which case it is followed by a complement clause (32b).

(32a) ***à-ka*** *“ eeh ẹ̀ná é-sie na àyẹ e-èke-dí*
3SG.S$_i$-say ! [what 3SG.S-do RCP] [3SG.I$_i$ 3SG.S.NEG.FUT-can
sú-wú nà?” (MB:9)
marry-2SG-O RCP]
‘He$_i$ said, “what happened that he$_i$ cannot marry you?”

(32b) *è-di e-sie, í-bà* ***ka ka*** *ofòro àyẹ*
3SG.S-can INF-do PPCS-they say [COMP man DEF.SG
e-fúrá úbo, kà oòro àyẹ a-mà-ca
3SG.S-do.away LOC.house] [COMP wife DEF.SG she-NEG-come
tò-ẹ úbo. (MO:14)
meet-him LOC.house]
‘It could happen that they will say that the man should get out of the house so that his wife does not meet him in the house.’

19.4 Adverbial clauses

Adverbial clauses are modifiers of verb phrases or entire clauses. In Ọ̀kọ, adverbial clauses are generally introduced by adverbial subordinators which may combine with the relative clause marker *nẹ́nẹ* or the complementizer *ka*. The following types of adverbial clauses are discussed in this section: the temporal clause (§19.4.1), the conditional clause (§19.4.2), the concessive clause (§19.4.3), the purpose clause (§19.4.4), the reason clause (§19.4.5), and the manner clause (§19.4.6).

19.4.1 The temporal clause

Temporal adverbial subordinators are formed by combining two or more units. The most frequently used is the combination of the word for ‘time’ *ọgbà* and the interrogative *ọ̀ọ́na* ‘which’, realized as *ọgbọ̀na* ‘when’ (vowel elision rules apply, where the first of two contiguous oral vowels at morpheme boundary is always deleted). There is also the use of the formative *-k-* element between two reduplicated time nouns *ọ́gbá-k-ọgba* ‘anytime/whenever/everytime’ (see also §4.5.4). Both *ọgbọ̀na* and *ọ́gbá-k-ọgba* always occur at the beginning of the adverbial subordinate clause

and always combine with the relative *nẹnẹ…na* (cf. 33a, b). Sometimes, *nẹnẹ* is not overtly expressed in the clause (cf. 34a-c); however, the clause must always end with the relative clause final *na~nà*.

(33a) ***ọgbọ̀na*** *nẹnẹ árẹ̀wa-èkpèrì gbá ka àyẹ*
[when REL north-wind see [COMP 3SG.I
e-mè-dí-wọrẹ ka a-fà-ẹ́ na,
3SG.NEG-can-cause [COMP 3SG.S-pull.off-3SG.O RCP]]]
a-sẹ úbá jọ́mọ
3SG.S-hold hand stand
'When North-wind discovered that he could not make him pull-off (i.e. his cloak), he decided to stop trying.'

(33b) ***ọ́gbá-k-ọgba*** *nẹnẹ ì-yé Òsìbìna na, è-e-gúmówó*
[whenever REL 1SG.S-call God RCP] 3SG.S-PROG-answer
'Whenever I call on God, he always answers.'

(34a) *íjésú gba ẹ̀nàtáníẹ́lì* ***ọgbọ̀na*** *à-mán*
Jesus see Nathaniel [when 3SG.S-sit
ótí ìgbèn nà
tree buttocks REL]
'Jesus found Nathaniel when he sat under the tree.'

(34b) ***ọgbọ̀na*** *ísúbù úfọ́mbòrẹ̀ gule na, éró fẹnyanfẹnyan*
[when day seven complete RCP] people all
bi-jese éfọ̀nẹ́bẹ́, k'ẹ́nẹ́, k'ọ́kpàkọkọ,
3PL.S-gather LOC.there FOC'animals FOC'tortoise
k'águẹn. (TP:2:8)
FOC'tortoise[22]
'When it was the seventh day, every one gathered there, including all animals, and the tortoise.'

(34c) ***ọ́gbọ̀na*** *e-fóm na, èfèna nẹnẹ gá kà bẹ́-yọ́,*
[when 3SG.S-linger RCP] person REL say COMP 3PL.S-go
bi-ě-ye ìwàrò ca na…, (WE:22)
3PL.S-PROG-call poor come RCP
'After some time, the person who said that they should go and call the poor man to come…'

Furthermore, temporal clauses may sometimes be introduced by the preposition *kàba* 'from' (see §11.2.1). In such construction, *kàba* is used to express a point in time progressing to another point in time (cf. 35).

[22] *ọ̀kpàkọkọ* and *águẹn* are synonymous, both are used to refer to 'tortoise'. However, sometimes in the community, some people argue that *ọ̀kpàkọkọ* is 'tortoise', the variety which lives on land in arid areas while *águẹn* is 'turtle', the variety which lives in water. Some others also argue that *ọ̀kpàkọkọ* is the female tortoise while *águẹn* is male. I still think that both words refer to only one species (i.e. 'tortoise') without any gender distinction. The Ọ̀kọ area is arid or savannah, without any river around. Therefore, turtles are not expected. Secondly, I suspect that the situation in Ọ̀kọ is similar to Yorùbá in which the word for 'tortoise' have three synonyms, *alábahun*, *ìjàpá* and *ahun*; but in Yorùbá folk tales, it is believed that the tortoise has a wife, whose name is *yánípo*. On a general note, the tortoise occupies a vantage position in folktales across several West African cultures. In every story, it is often considered as crafty, clever, mischievous etc.

(35) ***kàba*** *ọgbọ̀na* *nẹnẹ* *ù-wé-è-sie-ẹ* *na*
from [time.which REL 2SG.S-INCEP-PROG-do-3SG.O RCP]
a-mà-fọ̀ *ẹ́pẹ́n* *óbòrò* *ve-ca*
3SG.S-NEG-carry thing good out-come
'Since you have been doing it, nothing good has come out of it.'

Another temporal adverbial subordinator is *cáná é-dí* 'before it-be'. This is formed by combining the auxiliary element *cáná* 'do.early/do.before/do.quick' (see §6.5.3), with the third person singular bound subject pronoun *é-* and the habilitative *dí*. The segmentation of the subordinator (i.e. *cáná é-dí*) shows that there are boundaries across which phonological processes such as vowel elision and vowel harmony cannot apply. This is more evident between *cáná* + *é*. In the following examples (36a, b), they are written as two words *cáná é-dí*. The adverbial subordinator always combines with the complementizer *ka*.

(36a) *ẹ̀-táyẹ̀-gbá-ẹ* ***cáná*** ***é-dí*** *ka*
1SG.S-do.early-see-3SG.O [before 3SG.S-be COMP
à-gbá-mọ́
3SG.S-see-1SG.O]
'I saw him first before he saw me.'

(36b) ***cáná*** ***é-dí*** *ka* *unini* *na* *ka* *àyẹ*
[before 3SG.S-be COMP unini accept COMP 3SG.I
éke-su-ya, *à-táyẹ̀-ná* *yì-íkíbà*
FUT-marry-3SG.O] 3SG.S-do.early-collect 3SG.POSS-money
'Before Unini accepted to marry him, she first accepted his money.'

One more complex adverbial time clause introducer is *íganígan*, which translates as 'as.soon.as/immediately'. *Íganígan [ígãnígan]* introduces an adverbial clause of time and is always followed by a relative clause (37a, b).

(37a) ***íganígan*** *nẹnẹ ọkpàkọkọ gbá ìnyín ábẹ na,*
[as.soon.as REL tortoise see footprint DEF.PL RCP]
e-mè-ni ka e-pìlà fọ́m ìdù uùbo
3SG.S-NEG-want [COMP 3SG.S-return enter lion POSS.house]
'As soon as Tortoise saw the footprints, he no longer wanted to enter the lion's den.'

(37b) *àde mune ca* ***íganígan*** *nẹnẹ óbín yé-ẹ́ nà*
Ade run come [as.soon.as REL king call-3SG.O RCP]
'Ade hastened to come as soon as the king summoned him.'

19.4.2 The conditional clause

The conditional subordinator in Ọ̀kọ alternates as *é*~*á*, being attached to a verbal host (cf. 38a, b) (see also §5.3.6.G).

(38a) ***bè-é-yé-ẹ*** *à-áka-ca*
[3SG.S-COND-call-3SG.O] 3SG.S-FUT-come
'If they invite her/him, she/he will come.'

(38b) ***à-á-cá*** *ósì í-tè-éke-bìre èkúrákpà*
[3SG.S-COND-come rain] PPCS-1PL.S-FUT-plant corn
'If it rains, we will plant some corn.'

Alternatively, the conditional subordinator *à-á-da* 'if it be' can combine with the complementizer *ka* to express a counterfactual conditional clause. The conditional subordinator is written without the segmentation in the examples that follow (cf. 39a,b)

(39a) ***àáda ka*** *í-bè-yè-ẹ́, è-bánà*
[COND [COMP PPCS-3PL.S-call-3SG.O]] 3SG.S-possible
a-ca
3SG.S-come
'If they had invited him, he could have come.'

(39b) ***àáda*** ***ka*** *ósì* *ca,* *è-bánà*
[COND COMP rain come] 3SG.S-possible
í-tì-bìre *èkúrákpà*
PPCS-1PL.S-plant corn
'If it had rained, we would have planted some corn.'

The conditional subordinator *é~á* is segmentally identical with the progressive aspect marker. In fact, sometimes, speakers rely on the meaning of a construction in order to be able to tell whether they are dealing with the conditional element or with the progressive aspect. It is also possible to distinguish both markers based on tone contrast, for instance, the conditional marker normally has a high tone (cf. 40) (see also §5.3.6.G), while the progressive marker has a mid tone (cf. 41).

(40) *àyẹ* *ógbén* *áyẹ* *ka* *àyẹ* *áka-fọ́m* *ijen*
FOC child DEF.SG say 3SG.I FUT-enter ground
à-á-má-fọ *ìkoko* *nẹ* *àyẹ.* (CCY:14)
[3SG.S-COND-NEG-take cocoyam BENF DEF.I]
'So the child said that he would sink into the earth if she did not give him the cocoyam.'

(41) *àkọ* *igbagbọ* *oọ̀rẹ* *na,* *akọ̀* *emumu* *oòrẹ* *nẹnẹ*
as Christianity POSS.way RCP as book POSS.way [REL
bà-a-yọ̀ *ẹ́kọ́tù* *ẹkà* *ọ̀nẹ* *na…* (MO:18)
3PL.S-PROG-go court own DEM.SG RCP]
'As in the Christian way, as in the civilized way, in which they are patronizing the court'

Unfortunately, this is not a reliable criterion because sometimes also, within discourse, tone patterns may change due to factors such as tonal environment, and pragmatic effects associated with narrative discourses. This is illustrated in examples (42), (43).

(42) ***bè-e-puminyan*** *àyẹ,* *bi-dè-mín* *gẹ̀n*
[3PL.S-COND-sacrifice DEF.SG] 3PL.S-HAB-INCEP harvest
ídú. (YF2:28)
new-yam
'If they did the sacrifice, they will then start harvesting the new-yam.'

(43) *à-ka* *" i-mè-dín* *ẹ̀fọ̀nafọ̀na* ***wà-á-mán***
3SG.S-say 1SG.S-NEG-know any place 2SG.S-PROG-live
nà." (MB:14)
RCP
'He said, "I do not know wherever you are living."'

The position of the main clause and the subordinate clause is not invariant. The conditional clause can either precede or follow the main clause (cf. 44a, b).

(44a) ***àáda*** *ka* *i-mè-dí-bue,* *na*
[COND COMP 1SG.S-NEG-HABIL-INF-sleep PTCL]
mì-íbé *a-àka-rǫ̀m*
1SG.POSS-stomach 3SG.S-NEG.FUT-sweet
'If I had not been able to sleep, I would not have been happy.'

(44b) *ọ̀kpàkọ̀kọ* *e-èke-jén* *e-siutum* ***àáda*** *ka*
tortoise 3SG.S-NEG.FUT-go INF-work [COND COMP
údúdò *e-mè-dúná-ẹ* *íkíbà*
sheep 3SG.S-NEG-pay-3SG.O money]
'Tortoise would not have gone back to work if Sheep had not paid him.'

19.4.3 **The concessive clause**

The concessive adverbial clause in Ọ̀kọ is expressed by the use of the adverbial subordinator *è-é-sísí* 'even if/although' (this means that concessive clause proper (i.e., 'although…'), is also done by means of the concessive conditional clause). The concessive subordinator *è-é-sísí* is formed by combining the adverb *-sísí* 'even' with the affixes *è-é-*, a combination of the third person singular bound subject pronoun *è-* and the conditional marker *é-* (see §19.4.2). We note that the [+ATR] vowel specification of *-sísí* spreads to its prefixes.

The concessive subordinator always combines with a following verb. There are two ways in which the concessive clause can be expressed, the first is one in which the subordinator combines with the copula verb *da*, followed by a complement clause introduced by *ka* (cf. 45a, b). The second is one in which the adverbial subordinator follows the subject. In the latter case, the subordinator combines with any kind of verb, and without necessarily being followed by a complement clause (cf. 46a, b).

The concessive subordinator *è-é-sísí* is written as one word *èésísí*, without segmentation in the examples.

(45a) ***èésísí*** *da ka unini tẹ́-mọ ekuin,*
[CONCESS be [COMP Unini beg-1SG.O plea]]
ma-àka-yà ka mò-ógbén e-pìlà cá
1SG.S.NEG.FUT-allow [COMP 1SG.S-child 3SG.S-do.again come
gám-yà
greet-3SG.O]
'Even if Unini pleaded with me, I will not allow my child to visit her anymore.'

(45b) ***èésísí*** *da ka ébí vé-ca í-wà-ányẹ́n,*
[CONCESS be [COMP water out-come LOC-2SG.POSS-eye]]
ma-àka-vă-wọ alẹgbẹ áyẹ
1SG.S-NEG.FUT-give-2SG.O cloth DEF.SG
'Even if tears come out of your eyes, I will not give you the cloth.'

(46a) *ébí* ***èésísí*** *vé-ca í-wà-ányẹ́n,*
[water CONCESS out-come LOC-2SG.POSS-eye]
ma-àka-vă-wọ alẹgbẹ áyẹ
1SG.S-NEG.FUT-give-2SG.O cloth DEF.SG
'Even if tears come out of your eyes, I will not give you the cloth.'

(46b) *unini* ***èésísí*** *tẹ̌-mọ ekuin ma-àka-yà*
[Unini CONCESS beg-1SG.O plea] 1SG.S-NEG.FUT-allow
ka mò-ógbén e-pìlà cá gám-yà
[COMP 1SG.POSS-child 3SG.S-do.again come greet-3SG.O]
'Even if Unini pleaded with me, I will not allow my child to visit her anymore.'

Apart from the conditional concessive clause shown in examples (45), (46) above, Ọ̀kọ also makes use of the alternative concessive conditional clause. However, this is expressed by the use of the adversative coordination (cf. 47a, b) (see §17.4).

(47a) *á-cá sà* ***a-mà-cá*** *na ǒ mà-áka-jọ́họn*
3SG.S-come or 3SG.S-NEG-come PTCL PTCL 1SG.S-FUT-stand
karẹ-ya
wait-3SG.O
'Whether s/he comes or not, I will wait for her/him.'

(47b) *è-é-nyín-yà* *sà* ***e-mè-nyín-yà*** *na* *ǒ,*
3SG.S-COND-buy-3SG.O or 3SG.S-NEG-buy-3SG.O PTCL PTCL
tè-éke-kí-je *ẹkẹrẹ*
1PL.S-FUT-PREF-eat profit
'Whether s/he buys it or not we shall still make some profit.'

It is usually the case that the concessive clause must precede the main clause. Occasionally, it can follow the main clause, as seen in (48).

(48) *tà-áka-fọrẹ* ***èésísí*** *da* *ka*
1PL.S-FUT-conquer [CONCESS be COMP
tẹ-mà-wà *ọ́yọ́yọ́*
1PL.S-NEG-COP plenty]
'We are going to be victorious, even though we are few.'

19.4.4 **The purpose clause**

The purpose clause in Ọ̀kọ does not have a special marker. It is always expressed in the same way as a complement clause which is introduced by the *ka* complementizer (cf. 49a, b).

(49a) *ọ́gbẹ́n* *ọ́nẹbẹ* *àyẹ* *bi-dà-kọ̀lẹ* *ágọ́* *àbẹ* *nẹ*
stake DEM.SG FOC 3PL.S-REPT-entwine plant DEF.PL PREP
kà *éyí* *é-mé-di* *sie* *ágọ́* *ábẹ̀*
[COMP sun 3SG.S-NEG-can do yam-plant DEF.PL
nwán *íjè.* (YF2:18)
kill LOC.ground]
'It is around that stake that they will entwine the (yam) plant, so that the sun does not scourge the plant on the ground.'

(49b) *tè-e-siutum ka tì-dí sú íkíbà wó*
1PL.S-PROG [COMP 1PL.S-can have money LOC.COP
úba
LOC.hand]
'We are working so that we can be rich.'

Furthermore, the purpose clause normally contains the habilitative element *dí*. In the few examples in which *dí* does not occur, for instance (50), the verbal element which is contained in the clause can be replaced by *dí* in an alternative construction (cf. 51a, b).

(50) *ásám ò-wúwuru ọ̀nḛ́bḛ́, **kà éyí á-má-sḛ̀***
mulch NOM-uproot DEM.SG [COMP sun 3SG.S-NEG-scourge
ágó abḛ̀. (YF2:16)
plant DEF.PL]
'The uprooted mulch is so that the sun does not scourge the (yam) plants.'

(51a) *ásám ò-wúwuru ọ̀nḛ́bḛ́, **kà éyí é-mé-di***
mulch NOM-uproot DEM.SG [COMP sun 3SG.S-NEG-can
sḛ̀ ágó abḛ̀.
scourge plant DEF.PL
'The uprooted mulch is so that the sun will not be able to scourge the (yam) plants.'

(51b) *è-fó ka **é-dí** **va-tọ** ọ̀náfan*
3SG.S-die [COMP 3SG.S-can give-1PL.O salvation]
'He died so that we might be saved.'

Also, the main clause could consist of an imperative construction, while the purpose clause is introduced by the complementizer *ka* (cf. 52).

(52) ***síẹ̀mẹsẹ́, ka*** *wẹ̀-ẹ́gá* *é-dí-cìna* *ẹ́bẹ́bẹ́n*!
pray [COMP 2SG.S.POSS-word 3SG.S-can-become joy]
'Pray, so that you may live joyfully.'

In constructions which involve the complement-taking 'want' verb *ni*, the purpose clause always follows the complement clause which is the argument of *ni* (cf. 53).

(53) *unini* ***ni*** ***ka*** *àyẹ́* *jíjén* *dáadáa* *ka* *é-dí-gbodi*
Unini want [COMP 3SG.I eat well] [COMP 3SG.S-can-fat]
'Unini wants to feed well so that she will be fat.'

Like other subordinate clauses, there are no order restrictions on how the purpose clause can occur with the main clause. There is always the possibility of inverting the order. However, in the case of the purpose clause, when inversion is intended, the preposed purpose clause must be followed by the focus marker *àyẹ́* (cf. 54a, b).

(54a) ***ka*** *tì-dí-sú* *íkíbà* *wó* *úba*
[COMP 1PL.S-can-have money LOC.COP LOC.hand]
àyẹ́ *tè-e-siutum* *na*
FOC 1PL.S-PROG-work PTCL
'For us to be rich, that is why we are working.'

(54b) ***kà*** *á-má-mọ* *yẹ́rọ́* ***àyẹ́*** *àde* *ca*
[COMP 3SG.S-join-1SG.O fight] FOC Ade come]
'For him to fight me, that was why Ade came.'

19.4.5 The reason clause

The adverbial clause of reason in Ọ̀kọ́ is expressed by the subordinator *úba*, marked with the locative high tone on the first syllable of the word for 'hand' *úbá* (see §3.5.2.2.C; §11.2.2). *Úba* literally translates as 'in hand', this is what is used in the expression of 'because'. The adverbial

subordinator always combines with the *ka* complementizer, having the combined meaning ‘because that…’. We see the distribution in (55a), (55b).

(55a) *àde bẹ̀ ógbén áyẹ* ***úba ka*** *è-yina*
Ade beat child DEF.SG [because COMP 3SG.S-stubborn]
‘Ade scolded the child because he was being stubborn.’

(55b) *bẹ̀-yẹ̀rẹ́-ya* ***úba ka*** *è-dín orikpokpo*
3PL.S-follow-3SG.O [because COMP 3SG.S-know road]
‘They followed him because he knew the way.’

An inversion of the order is also possible, that is, where the subordinate clause precedes the main clause. This can be expressed in two ways. The first, which is more common, is that the reason clause is followed by a focused clause which contains the ‘cause’ verb *wọrẹ*. This must be followed by a relative clause which contains the main clause (cf. 56a). The alternative way is where the main clause directly follows the focus element (cf. 56b).

(56a) ***úba ka*** *è-sú íkíbà, àyẹ á-wọrẹ nẹnẹ*
[because COMP 3SG.S-have money] FOC 3SG.S-cause [REL
ẹ́bọ́lá sú-yá nà
Bola marry-3SG.O RCP]
‘Because he is rich, that was why Bola married him.’

(56b) ***úba ka*** *è-sú íkíbà, àyẹ ẹ́bọ́lá sie sú-yá*
[because COMP 3SG.S-have money] FOC Bola do marry-3SG.O
‘Because he is rich, that was why Bola married him.’

19.4.6. **The manner clause**

The manner or 'as' clause opens with *àkọ* 'as' and closes with the manner clause particle *na~nà*. This makes it structurally similar to the relative clause (see §19.2) in the sense that both obligatorily close with the clause-final particle. The *àkọ* clause is used to express a manner, either the eventive manner (cf. 57) or the comparative manner (58).

(57) ***àkọ*** *è-sie* *á-cá* *na,* *àyẹ* *bì-mín-gá* *ka,*
[as 3SG.S-do PROG-come MCP] FOC they-INCEP-say [COMP
óró *nẹnẹ* *í-bì-íwú* *nẹnẹ* *éke-di-wọrẹ*
person REL LOC-3PL.POSS-body] [REL FUT-can-cause]
ka *óró* *áyẹ* *fà* *yà-alẹ́gbẹ* *na…,*
[COMP person DEF.SG 3SG.S-pull.off 3SG.POSS-cloth MCP]]
(NW/S2:3)
'As he was coming, they then agreed among themselves that the one who is able to make him take-off his cloth…'

(58) So, *keke* *nẹnẹ* *ì-dín* ***ákọ*** *bi-dè-sie* *kẹ̀-fọ̀* *oòro*
So little [REL 1SG.S-know] [as 3PL.S-HAB-do PREF-carry wife
Ọ́kọ *na* *á-wà* *ọ̀nẹ*. (MO:19)
LOC.Ọ̀kọ MCP] 3SG.S-COP DEM.SG
'So, this is the little that I know about how marriage is done in Ọ̀kọ.'

The position of the main clause and the subordinate clause is not invariant. The manner clause can either precede (cf. 59) or follow the main clause (cf. 60).

(59) ***àkọ*** *è-sie gba ka àyẹ e-mè-dí-wọrẹ ka*
[as 3SG.S-do see] [COMP 3SG.I 3SG.S-NEG-can-cause] [COMP
a-fà-ẹ́ na, a-sẹ úbá jọmọ. (NW/S1:9)
3SG.S-pull.off-3SG.O MCP] 3SG.S-hold hand stand
'As he saw that he could not make him pull it off, it stopped trying.'

(60) *í-bè-cé-ẹ,* ***àkọ*** *bi-dè-sie* e-*sie-ẹ*
PPCS-they-load-it [as 3PL.S-HAB-do PROG-do-it
ésúbù nà. (MO:12)
olden days MCP]
'They will then load it, like the used to do in those days.'

19.4.6.A **The eventive (manner) adverbial**

The eventive adverbial clause marked by the subordinator *àkọ…na,* expresses the manner of an event that precedes a following event (cf. 61a), or that sets in motion another event in the following clause(s) (cf. 61b), or where the event that occurs in the 'as' clause is simultaneous with the event in the following clause (61c).

(61a) ***àkọ*** *e-sie yìré-ẹ́ na, a-fọ̀-ẹ́ yọ̀ úbó,*
[as 3SG.S-do steal-3SG.O MCP] 3SG.S-take-3SG.O go house
e-è-sú (TP1:9)
3SG.S-3SG.O-keep
'As he stole it, he took it home and hid it.'

(61b) ***àkọ*** *bì-sie* *é-jé-yá* *óyà* *na,* *àyẹ*
[as 3PL.S-do PROG-eat-3SG.O suffer MCP] FOC
e-e-y'ọ́gà, *à-ka,* *" i-mè-dín* *go!"*
3SG.S-PROG-shout 3SG.S-say 1SG.S-NEG-know !
"i-mè-dín *go!"* *"i-mè-dín* *go!"* (TP1:34)
1SG.S-NEG-know ! 1SG.S-NEG-know !
'As they were punishing him, so he was shouting, he said, "I didn't know!" "I didn't know!" "I didn't know!"'

(61c) ***àkọ*** *ì-sie* *á-ga* *ọ̀nẹ* *na,* *águẹn* *a-bẹ́bẹ́*
[as 1SG.S-do PROG-say DEM.SG MCP] tortoise PROG-hide
wó *ẹ́mẹ́n* *ọtọm.* (TP2:37)
LOC bush ear
'As I am saying this, Tortoise was hiding at the edge of the bush.'

The position of the adverbial clause, whether preceding the main clause or following it is irrelevant when trying to determine which event precedes the other. The event expressed in the 'as' clause could either precede (cf. 62) or be simultaneous to the other (cf. 61c), irrespective of the position of the clause.

(62) *àde* *cáná* *yě-mú* ***àkọ*** *è-sie* *gbă-mọ́* *nà*
Ade do.quick call-1SG.O [as 3SG.S-do see-1SG.O MCP]
'Ade quickly called me as he saw me.'

19.4.6.B **The comparative (manner) adverbial**

The comparative manner clause is used to compare the manner in which an action is carried out. The following examples in (63a), (63b) show this.

(63a) ***àkọ*** *ti-dè-sie* *kì-sie* *ìgìlà* *eèrum* *na* (YF2:1)
[as 1PL.S-HAB-do PREF-do yam POSS.farm MCP]
'The manner in which we practice yam farming'

(63b) *è-tó ẹdẹda ọ̀nẹ* ***àkọ*** *è-sie sie ni*
3SG.S-meet man DEM.SG [as 3SG.S-do do search
oòro na. (MB:4)
wife MCP]
'It is about this man, as he did in order to get a wife.'

One also notes that the comparative 'as' can also be used to introduce a list of nominal items in a comparative manner. In such constructions, 'as' is better translated as 'like' (cf. 64a, c).

(64a) *tì-bìre-ẹ ẹ́pẹ́n* ***ákọ*** *egbìlén, èkúrákpà,*
1PL.S-plant-3SG.O thing like okra corn
ísírá, akà ídí. (YF2:9)
melon and beans
'We plant it with things like okra, corn, melon and beans.'

(64b) *ẹ̀kẹ̀na dè-wó-úce àyẹ na, ìgìlà dè-wàmọ́,*
thing HAB-LOC.COP-load DEF.SG RCP yam HAB-EXIST
ámọ́n dè-wàmọ́, òbu dè-wàmọ́, ***ákọ̀*** *ẹ́páníkìba.* (MO:11)
oil HAB-EXIST salt HAB-EXIST like bride price
'The things that are usually found in the dowry are: yams are always there, oil is always there, salt is always there and items like the bride price.'

(64c) *à-wẹ̀-ya, á-yọ́ a-sẹ̀ ìgìlà ẹ́pẹ́n* ***ákọ***
3SG.S-cultivate-3SG.O 3SG.S-go 3SG.S-select yam thing like
éwúsú, ọ̀gọ̀njọ, ọ̀wànà, àjíbókúnu, ìpépe, kẹ̀-sẹ̀-ba,
? ? ? ? ?[23] PREF-select-3PL.O
é-è-bire. (YF1:3)
PPCS.3SG.S-3SG.O-plant
'He cultivates it, and goes to select yams such as: *éwúsú, ọ̀gọ̀njọ, ọ̀wànà, àjíbókúnu, ìpépe*, he selects them, and then plants it (them).'

[23] Varieties of yams

Text 1: How the dog came to live with man.
Narrated by: Peter Ebenrubo Okuola, male, 36

ọ́garẹ́ga páràkàtà!
Story introduction

(1) ígan, ẹnẹ̀m fẹnyanfẹnyan á-màn bile ẹ́fà ọ̀ọ́rẹ (2) àkọ è-sie
once animals all PROG-live together place one as 3SG.S-do
gbe ka ẹ̀na nẹnẹ gbodi fọ̀rẹ́ í-bì-íwú na, bi-e-sie
be COMP animasl REL big pass LOC-3PL.POSS-body RCP 3PL.S-PROG-do
áfọ́rẹ́mọ yẹ̀rẹ èkéke àbẹ ẹ́pán nà. (3) ẹnábẹ̀ min kọ
superior on-top little DEF.PL head RCP those INCEP pack
ábẹ̀n jese. (4) bì-min ga ka àbẹ e-mune fura
themselves gather 3PL.S-INCEP say that 3PL.I PROG-run do.away
èfà nẹnẹ bì-bile a-man nà. (5) àye ẹnẹ̀m fẹ̀nyanfẹ̀nyan
place REL 3PL.S-do.together PROG-live RCP FOC animals all
nẹnẹ kere na, bẹ́-kọ́ ábẹ̀n bí-mune yọ̀ èfà ọ̀bẹ̀n.
REL small RCP 3PL.S-pack themselves 3PL.S-run go place INDEF.SG
(6) k'úwó yẹ̀rẹ́-ba yọ̀ ẹ̀fà ọ̀nẹ́bẹ́. (7) ígan ọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ úwó sù ẹ́bá
also'dog follow-3PL.S go place DEM.SG once DEM.SG dog have hands
nẹnẹ lọrẹ na, akà yì-írúm ábẹ̀ lọrẹ. (8) àkọ bì-sie a-mán
REL long RCP and 3SG.POSS-teeth DEF.SG long as 3PL.S-do PROG-live
na, é-mín tọmẹ, è-e-je obin yẹ̀rẹ́-ba ẹpan, è-e-sie
RCP 3SG.S-INCEP start 3SG.S-PROG-eat king follow-3PL.O head 3SG.S-PROG-do
áfọ́rẹ́mọ nẹ́-bà. (9) áfọ́rẹ́mọ nẹnẹ wọrẹ ka àbẹ fẹnyanfẹnyan
superior PREP-3PL.O superior REL cause COMP 3PL.I all
bí-múne fura ẹfa nẹnẹ bẹ̀-táyẹ̀ a-man nà. (10) éró ábẹ
3PL.S-run do.away place REL 3PL.S-before PROG-live RCP people DEF.PL
bè-e-si-kùrú érum, ẹ̀kẹ̀na-ẹ́kẹ̀na bà-á-gbá àmọ na,
3PL.S-PROG-then-make farm anything 3PL.S-PROG-see there RCP
á-dà-na-ẹ, á-kọ́-ẹ wó yọ̀-ọ́pọ́n. (11) k'éró
3SG.S-REPT-collect-3SG.O 3SG.S-pack-3SG.O PREP 3SG.POSS-barn also'people
nẹnẹ e-kì-ni ka é-sú oòro í-bì-íwú na,
REL 3SG.S-IMP-want COMP 3SG.S-marry wife LOC-3PL.POSS-body RCP

a-dà-ga ka bẹ̀-fò bo-òró nẹ́ áyẹ. (12) ò̩nẹ́ min
3SG.S-REPT-say COMP 3PL.S-take 3PL.POSS-wife BENF 3SG.I DEM.SG INCEP
wọrẹ ka e-sula ẹnèm íbúbá àbẹ (13) bí-min kó̩ àbèn
cause COMP 3SG.S-tire animal remaining DEF.PL 3PL.S-INCEP pack themselves
jésé ka "ẹ̀na a?" (14) àbẹ éke-di sie a, nẹnẹ àbẹ áka-fán
together COMP what QM 3PL.I FUT-can do QM REL 3PL.S FUT-escape
fùrá úwó uùba nà? (15) àyẹ àkọ òro sie a-ga ẹga na,
do.away dog POSS.hand RCP FOC as one do PROG-say word RCP
ka àbẹ sie ò̩nẹ́ àbẹ sie ò̩nẹ́bẹ́. (16) bẹ-gba ka ákọ nẹnẹ bì-sie
that 3PL.S do DEM.SG 3PL.S do DEM.SG 3PL.S-see COMP as REL 3PL.S-do
a-ga-ẹ na, bi-mà-gba ẹ̀kẹ̀na bì-di e-kpótó sie nà.
PROG-say-3SG.O RCP 3PL.S-NEG-see what 3PL.S-can INF-definitely do RCP
(17) àyẹ águẹn mín fura jọ́mọ, à-ka bẹ-và áyẹ̀ ísúbù
FOC turtle INCEP up stand 3SG.S-say 3PL.S-give 3SG.I day
ẹ̀ta nẹnẹ àyẹ áka-tọmẹ ẹ̀kẹ̀na àyẹ éke-sie nà. (18) bi-min ga
three REL 3SG.I FUT-start thing 3SG.I FUT-do RCP 3PL.S-INCEP say
ka ẹ̀na è-éke-sie a? (19) à-ka àyẹ áka-vá-ẹ ẹnwọtọm,
COMP what 3SG.S-FUT-do QM 3SG.S-say 3SG.I FUT-give-3SG.O honey
bì-dín ka úwó è-ní ẹnwọtọm ẹgà. (20) bẹ̀-ka ẹ̀hẹ́ẹ̀n,
3PL.S-know that dog 3SG.S-want honey word 3PL.S-say !
bì-mín gá ka á-và-ẹ, ẹ̀ná éke-sie a? (21) à-ka
3PL.S-INCEP say COMP 3SG.S-give-3SG.O what FUT-do QM 3SG.S-say
bí-kí kẹ̀-bálẹ́ áyẹ. (22) bí-mín ni ẹnwọtọm, bẹ-à-yọ,
3PL.S-continue PREF-look 3SG.I 3PL.S-INCEP search honey 3PL.S-PROG-go
bẹ-à-nẹ́-yá. (23) yì-íbé rŏm. (24) ọgbò̩na à-rẹ̀-yá
3PL.S-3SG.T-give-3SG.O 3SG.POSS-belly sweet when 3SG.S-lick-3SG.O
na, é-kue, e-mín file dè-yé águẹn. (25) à-ka,
RCP 3SG.S-finish 3SG.S-INCEP send REPT-call turtle 3SG.S-say
"dè-kùrù nẹ́ ámẹ!" (26) àyẹ ò̩nẹ́bẹ́ gá nẹ́-yà ka àyẹ áka-gba
REPT-again BENF 1SG.I FOC DEM.SG say BENF-3SG.O COMP 3SG.I FUT-see
ẹ̀kẹ̀na àyẹ éke-sie na, e-dè-ní nẹ́-yà. (27) ọgbò̩na è-re
what 3SG.I FUT-do RCP 3SG.S-REPT-search BENF-3SG.O when 3SG.S-reach
ísúbù ò̩tẹ́taro na, nẹnẹ ò̩nẹ́ nẹnẹ à-táyẹ̀ à-á-nẹ́-yà dè-kue
day three RCP REL DEM.SG REL 3SG.S-before 3SG.S-3SG.T-give-3SG.S REPT-finish
na, àyẹ è-dé-file yè-ẹ́. (28) águẹn mín gá nẹ́-yà ka
RCP FOC 3SG.S-REPT-send call-3SG.O turtle INCEP say PREP-3SG.O COMP

àye dín ẹ̀fẹ̀na nẹnẹ ẹnwọtọm yọ́ wó na, ka è-é-yà
3SG.I know place REL honey plenty PREP RCP that 3SG.S-if-accept
ka àyẹ yẹ̀ré àyẹ yò ẹ̀fẹ̀nẹ́bẹ́, à-áka-gbá ámọ nẹnẹ è-gbé ka
COMP 3SG.I_i follow 3SG.I_j go there 3SG.S-FUT-see there REL 3SG.S-be COMP
e-èke-dí kue-ẹ nà. (29) ígàn é-kì-yà ẹ̀gan bẹ́-yọ́.
3SG.S-NEG.FUT-can finish-3SG.O RCP then 3SG.S-IMP-accept so 3PL.S-go
(30) Àkọ bì-sie e-ni ka bẹ-yò na, cáná é-dí kì-re
as 3PL.S-do PROG-want COMP 3PL.S-go RCP before 3SG.S-can IMP-reach
ọgbòné́bẹ́, águẹn jén e-tò ọ́dọ́. (31) ọ́dọ́ í-bì-iken ò̀né́bẹ́
then turtle go INF-meet rat rat LOC-3PL.POSS-town DEM.SG
à-wá ọ́cọ́rò nẹnẹ è-gbe ka éró bì-dín nà.
3SG.S-COP blacksmith REL 3SG.S-be COMP people 3PL.S-know RCP
(32) á-gá né́-yà ka á-má àyẹ cọ́ ùgì
3SG.S-say PREP-3SG.O COMP 3SG.S-do.with 3SG.I construct trap
nẹnẹ wà ọ́cọ́ ẹkà nà. (33) á-ga nọ ẹnèm íbuba ka
REL COP iron own RCP 3SG.S-say PREP animals remain COMP
ẹfò̀né́bẹ́ nẹnẹ è-gbe ka ẹ̀wọtọm àbẹ táyẹ̀ mẹ́ ubo
that.place REL 3SG.S-be COMP bee DEF.PL do.early build house
wó na, ka bì-rĕn-ya wó ẹ̀fò̀né́bẹ́ káré́ ábẹ. (34) àkọ
PREP RCP COMP 3PL.S-set-3SG.O PREP wait-3PL.O wait 3PL.I as
bì-sie a-yò na, àyẹ aka úwó bi-ă-yọ́, ẹnèm íbúbá
3PL.S-do PROG-go RCP 3SG.I and dog 3PL.S-PROG-go animals remain
bẹ̀-bẹ́bẹ́. (35) àkọ bì-sie re ẹ̀fò̀né́bẹ́ na, àyẹ úwó e-yè,
3PL.S-hide as 3PL.S-do reach that.place RCP FOC dog 3SG.S-call
à-ka “ ẹ̀rá e-wó ẹ̀fò̀né́bẹ́ a?” Ka àyẹ ní ẹ̀wọtọm.
3SG.S-say who 3SG.S-LOC.COP place.that QM COMP 3SG.I want honey
(36) a-mà-wọ kà óró gùna-ya ówó. (37) e-dè-y’ọ́gà,
3SG.S-NEG-hear COMP one answer-3SG.O mouth 3SG.S-REPT-shout
kọ́rò̀ọ́rẹ e-mè-gùna-ya owo. (38) íwu ọ̀ké́kan e-min
anyone 3SG.S-NEG-answer-3SG.O mouth LOC.body anxiety 3SG.S-INCEP
cùà wó ẹ̀fò̀né́bẹ́. (39) e-mè-din ka bì-kí-fọ̀
leap PREP that.place 3SG.S-NEG-know COMP 3PL.S-IMP-take
ẹ̀kẹ̀ná áyẹ, bì-rèn ùgì káré́ áyẹ nẹ. (40) àyẹ ùgì àyẹ
thing DEF.SG 3PL.S-set trap wait 3SG.I PREP FOC trap DEF.SG
mín sẹ-yà wó ẹ̀fò̀né́bẹ́. (41) ẹnèm íbúbá mín vé-cà.
INCEP catch-3SG.O PREP that.place animal remain INCEP out-come

(42) àkọ bi-sie vè-ca na, àyẹ bẹ́-tẹ́ yẹ-ẹba, yì-ígbògbò
as 3PLS-do out-come RCP FOC 3PL.S-trim 3SG.POSS-hand 3SG.POSS-nail
úbá ẹkà. (43) bẹ-tẹ yì-írúm nẹnẹ lọrẹ nà. (44) àkọ bì-sie
hand own 3PL.S-trim 3SG.POSS-teeth REL long RCP as 3PL.S-do
téí-yà ẹpanọ̀kọ́kọ e-mè-yá-ẹ kà á-mán ẹ̀fọ̀nẹ́bẹ́.
leave-3SG.O shame 3SG.O-NEG-allow-3SG.O COMP 3SG.S-live that.place
(45) e-mune fọ́m iken. (46) kàba ọgbọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ ca àyẹ úwó wé
3SG.S-run enter town from then come FOC dog INCEP
a-ma òròkòrò a-man na
PROG-do.with human PROG-live RCP

Translation

1. All animals were once living in one place.
2. It happened that the bigger animals were oppressing the smaller ones
3. The smaller ones then had a meeting.
4. They said that they were going to run away from the place where they all lived.
5. So the little animals assembled themselves and ran to a certain place.
6. Also Dog accompanied them to the (new) place.
7. Dog once had long hands (fingers nails) and long teeth.
8. As they were living together, he (Dog) began to play lord over them (the rest of the smaller animals).
9. He started showing the same superiority that made them to leave the former place.
10. The rest of the people (animals) when they made a farm, he (Dog) would order them to give him whatever produce they got from the farm.
11. Also, when anyone married a wife, he (Dog) would forcefully abduct the wife.
12. The rest of the animals became fed up.
13. They gathered themselves together and asked “what?”’
14. What will they have to do in order to escape from the hands of Dog?
15. So, every one of them started suggesting what could be done.
16. They soon discovered that the more they discussed this, they could not find a definite solution to the problem.

17. Then Tortoise stood up, he asked them to give him three days in which he would come up with a plan.
18. They asked him what exactly did he have in mind.
19. He said that he was going to give him (dog) honey, that they were aware that Dog liked honey a lot.
20. They said *ẹ̀hẹ́ẹ̀n*, supposing he gave him, what will happen?
21. He said that they should continue to observe him.
22. They went to look for honey; they then gave it to him (Dog).
23. He was happy.
24. After he ate it, it ran out, he then sent for Tortoise.
25. He said “give me some more!”
26. He (Tortoise) told him that he would see what he could do about getting him more.
27. When it was three days after, the one he gave him ran out again, he sent for him.
28. So, Tortoise told him that he knew where to find more honey which was inexhaustible, if he would accompany him there.
29. Immediately, he accepted, and they both went there.
30. As they were going, before then, Tortoise had gone to see Rat.
31. In this town of theirs, Rat was a famous blacksmith.
32. He had asked him to help him construct a trap made from metal.
33. He had also asked the rest of the animals to set the trap in a place where bees once had a hive.
34. As he and the dog were going to the place, the rest of the animals concealed themselves.
35. As they arrived at the place, Dog called out, “who is there?” that he wanted some honey.
36. He continued to shout but no one answered him.
37. He was not aware that something has been set in wait for him.
38. So the trap caught him right in the place.
39. The rest of the animal then came out.
40. As they came out, they trimmed his nails.
41. They trimmed his long teeth.

42. By the time he was released, the embarrassment did not permit him to want to live with the rest of the animals anymore.
43. He ran into the city.
44. From that time onwards, Dog started living with humans.

Text 2: Marriage in Ogori

Narrated by: Omoshole Noah Alabi, male, 40

(1) Àkọ bi-dè-sie a-fọ oòró ésúbù nà. (2) Àkọ bi-dè-sie
as 3PL.S-HAB-do PROG-carry wife olden-days RCP as 3PL.S-HAB-do
e-sie ésúbù ca na, bi-dè-ru ẹdẹda akà íyá,
PROG-do olden-days come RCP 3PL.S-HAB-? father and mother
é-dè-ni oòró nọ bò-ógbén. (3) Èfẹ̀na nẹnẹ bẹ̀-bálẹ́ ka,
PROG-HAB-search wife give 3PL.POSS-child place REL 3PL.S-look COMP
úkúbá nẹnẹ bẹ̀-gbá ka àrọ́nmúro nà, í-bè-ni oòró
family REL 3PL.S-see COMP good RCP PPCS-3PL.S-search wife
éfẹ̀nẹ́bẹ́ bi-à-nọ bò-ógbén. (4) Àmá ẹrọ ọnẹ tì-mín wó
that.place 3PL.S-it-give 3PL.S-child but life DEM.SG 1PL.S-INCP LOC.COP
àkana, nẹnẹ óroro min e-sie yẹ̀-ẹkà na, àtọ égbén dè-min
now REL everyone INCP PROG-do 3SG.POSS-own RCP 1PL.I children HAB-INCEP
jén e-ni oòro nọ̀ọ́ íyáró, or ofòro cá úbó. (5) Tà-á-gbá
go INF-search wife give woman or man come house 1PL.S-COND-see
ábẹ̀n ẹ̀gan í-ta-fọ̀-ẹ ca nyẹ̀n nọ ẹdẹda akà íyá.
each other so PPCS-1PL.S-carry-3SG.O come show PREP father and mother
(6) Tà-a-fọ̀-ẹ́ nyẹn-ba, bí-din ukuba nẹnẹ
1PL.S-COND-take-3SG.O show-3PL.O 3PL.S-know family REL
è-é-vè-cà na (7) Í-bè-min-e-te ísúbù nẹnẹ
3SG.S-PROG-out-come RCP PPCS-3PL.S-INCP-PROG-choose day REL
ba-áka-yọ̀ nọ́ ọ̀bẹ́bẹlẹ nà. (8) Bà-á-yọ̀ nọ́ ọ̀bẹ́bẹlẹ, í-bè-tie
3PL.S-FUT-go PREP beging RCP 3PL.S-COND-go PREP begging PPCS-3PL.S.take
úkúbá nẹnẹ oòro àyẹ, úkúbá bí-jén-a-bẹ̀lẹ. (9) Í-bè (wọ̀rọ́ọ̀)
family REL wife DEF.SG family 3PL.S-go-PROG-beg PPCS-3PL.S
gá-nẹ́-bà, ẹ̀kẹ̀na nẹnẹ bè-éke-ce oòro ùce nà.
say-PREP-3PL.O thing REL 3PL.S-FUT-carry wife load RCP
(10) Bì-dí dè-te ísúbù nẹnẹ bèe-cé (ọ) oòro uce. (11) Ẹ̀kẹ̀na
3PL.S-ABL REPT-choose day REL 3PL.S-carry wife load thing
dè-wó-úce àyẹ na, ìgìlà dè-wàmọ́, ámọ́n dè-wàmọ́,
HAB-LOC.COP-load DEF.SG RCP yam HAB-EXIST oil HAB-EXIST

òbu dè-wàmọ́, ákọ̀ ẹ́páníkìba. (12) Í-bè-cé-ẹ, àkọ bi-dè-sie
salt HAB-EXIST like bride price PPCS-they-load-it as they-HAB-do
e-*sie-ẹ ésúbù na. (13) Ápẹ́n e-kǐ-kpám-bẹ̀ fọ̀*
PROG-do-it olden days RCP LOC.situation PROG-IMP-moves-them carry
oòro àyẹ cá ofòro uùbó. (14) È-di e-sie, í-bà ka
wife DEF.SG come man POSS.house 3SG.S-can INF-do PPCS-they say
ka ofòro àyẹ e-fúrá úbo, kà oòro àyẹ a-mà-ca
COMP man DEF.SG 3SG.S-do.away LOC.house COMP wife DEF.SG she-NEG-come
tò-ẹ úbo. (15) É-ki-ni ẹfà e-mògbélí
meet-him LOC. House PPCS.3SG.S-IMP-search place 3SG.S-hide
wó, bà-fọ̀ oòro àyẹ cá. (16) Ọgbọ̀nẹ́ é-mín sie nà,
PREP 3PL.S-carry wife DEF.SG come when 3SG.S-INCEP do RCP
á-cá, é-mín cá e-tò yo-òró. (17) Àkána, nẹnẹ
3SG.S-come 3SG.S-INCEP come 3SG.S-meet 3SG.POSS-wife now REL
bì-min dè-síé nà, bè-é-mín cúce ke,
3PL.S-INCEP HAB-PROG-do RCP 3PL.S-PROG-INCEP carry.load PERF
í-bè-te ísúbù nẹnẹ bi-dè-min ě-ce, bi-dè-min
PPCS-3PL.S-choose day REL 3PL.S-REPT-INCEP PROG-carry 3PL.S-HAB-INCEP
fọ̀ oòro àyẹ nà. (18) Àkọ igbagbọ oọ̀rẹ nà akọ̀ emumu oòrẹ
carry wife DEF.SG RCP like Christianity POSS.way RCP like book POSS.way
nẹnẹ bà-a-yọ̀ ẹ́kọ́tù ẹkà ọ̀nẹ nà. (19) So keke nẹnẹ ì-dín
REL 3PL.S-PROG-go court own this RCP So little REL 1SG.S-know
àkọ bi-dè-sie kẹ̀-fọ̀ oòro Ọ́kọ na á-wà ọ̀nẹ.
like 3PL.S-HAB-do IMP-carry wife LOC.Ọkọ RCP 3SG.S-COP DEM.SG

Translation

1. As they used to do marriage in the olden days.
2. They used to allow Father and Mother to find wife for their child.
3. Whenever they find a good family, they go there to search for a wife for their child.
4. But in this present life in which we are, every one goes to look for a wife by himself.
5. If we find each other, we now bring him/her home to show Father and Mother.

6. When we show him/her to them, we will now know which family he/she come from.
7. They will then choose a day in which they will go and beg (for wife).
8. When they go for begging, they will choose a family where they will go and beg.
9. They will then tell them the items that should be included in the dowry.
10. They will then choose a day in which they will go and present the dowry.
11. The items that are included in the dowry are: yams, oil, salt and the bride price.
12. They will then accept it like they used to do in the olden days.
13. This encourages them to bring the bride to the groom's house.
14. It will then happen that they will ask the groom to leave the house, so that his bride does not meet him at home.
15. He will look for a place to hide, as they bring his bride home.
16. Then he will come in to meet his bride.
17. These days, they will choose a different day to present the dowry and a different day to take the bride home.
18. Like in the Christian way, like in the civilized way, in which they go to the court.
19. So this is the little that I know about how marriage is done in Ọ̀kọ.

Text 3: The young man and his mysterious bride
Narrated by: Helen Aimola, female, 60

(1) Iyaro é-gúé, iyaro é-gúé e-kì-ni ka àyẹ sú
woman PROG-grow woman PROG-grow 3SG.S-IMP-want COMP 3SG.I marry
ofòro. (2) Ógbénofòro nẹnẹ gue è-e-ni ka àyẹ sú
man young man REL grow 3SG.S-PROG-want COMP 3SG.I marry
oòro na, á-yọ́ e-gbè ka éjí àyẹ à-yọ é-jén e-ni
wife RCP 3SG.S-go 3SG.S-be COMP market FOC 3SG.S-go 3SG.S-go INF.search
oòro. (3) Èfẹ̀na jén e-ni oòro éji na, ẹ̀kákálẹ̀ka àyẹ
wife person go INF.search wife LOC.market RCP soldier-ant FOC
à-kpám, ẹ̀kákálẹ̀ka àyẹ à-kpám. (4) Ógaréga kpáràkàtà, e-tò
3SG.S-carry soldier-ant FOC 3SG.S-carry story introduction 3SG.S-meet
ẹdẹda ọ̀nẹ àkọ è-sie é-sie ni oòro na. (5) É-gbè ka
man DEM.SG as 3SG.S-do 3SG.S-do search wife RCP 3SG.S-be COMP
éjí àyẹ é-jén e-ni oòro. (6) È-re ọgbọ̀na à-gbá oòro
market FOC 3SG.S-go INF-search wife 3SG.S-reach when 3SG.S-see wife
ọ̀nẹ nà, á-gá nẹ́-yà ka àyẹ e-ni ka àyẹ
DEM.SG RCP 3SG.S-say PREP-3SG.O COMP 3SG.I PROG-want that 3SG.I
é-sú-yá. (7) Á-gá nẹ́-yà ka we-èke-dí sú
3SG.S-marry-3SG.O 3SG.S_i-say PREP-3SG.O that 2SG.S-NEG.FUT-can marry
ayẹ̀ go! (8) À-ka we-èke-dí sú ayẹ̀ go!
3SG.I_i PTCL 3SG.S_i-say 2SG.S-NEG.FUT-can marry 3SG.I_i PTCL
(9) À-ka “ eeh ẹ̀ná é-sie na àyẹ e-èke-dí sú-wú
3SG.S_i-say ! what 3SG.S-do RCP 3SG.I_i 3SG.S.NEG.FUT-can marry-2SG-O
nà?” (10) “Àyẹ éke-dí sú-wú.” (11) À-ka we-èke-dí
RCP 3SG.I FUT-can marry-2SG.O 3SG.S_i-say 2SG.S-NEG.FUT-can
sú áyẹ go! (12) We-èke-dí sú áyẹ go! (13) Ú-din
marry 3SG.I_i PTCL 2SG.S-NEG.FUT-can marry 3SG.I PTCL QM.2SG.S-know
éfà àyẹ á-mán nà? (14) À-ka i-mè-dín ẹ̀fẹ̀nafẹ̀na
place 3SG.I PROG-live RCP 3SG.S_i-say 1SG.S-NEG-know any place
wà-á-mán nà. (15) Àyẹ áka-yẹ̀rẹ-ya yọ. (16) À-ka ok!
2SG.S-PROG-live RCP 3SG.I FUT-follow-3SG.O go 3SG.say OK!
àwọ cá tẹ́-yọ̀. (17) Iyarò ayẹ dọ́ éjì kue, bí-fura
2SG.I come 1PL.S-go woman DEF.SG spend market finish 3PL.S-up.stand

bà-á-yọ́. (18) Ọgbọ̀na nẹ̀nẹ̀ bà-a-yọ̀ na, e-mè-dín ka,
3PL.S-PROG-go when REL 3PL.S-PROG-go RCP 3SG.S-NEG-know COMP
ógbénofòro àyẹ̀ e-mè̩-din ka iyarò ọ̀nẹ̀ jén a-bẹ̀lẹ̀
Young-man DEF.SG 3SG.S-NEG-know COMP young woman DEM.SG go INF.beg
íwukpe nẹ̀nẹ̀ á-cá éjí nà. (19) Ọgbọ̀na ba-a-yọ̀ na, è-tò
skin REL 3SG.S-come market RCP when 3PL.S-PROG-go RCP 3SG.S-meet
ẹ́dá a-fọ̀ yọ̀-ọ́nyànyàn a-à-nẹ́-yá. (20) Ọgbọ̀na
termitarium 3SG.S-take 3SG.POSS-fairness 3SG.S-3SG.T-give-3SG.O when
è-dé-tò ùrókó nà, a-fọ̀ yọ̀-ọfọ̀fọ́ a-à-nẹ́-yá.
3SG.S-again-meet iroko RCP 3SG.S-take $3SG.POSS_j$-tallness 3SG.S-3SG.T-give-3SG.O
(21) È-tó úkpúkpúm, a-fọ́ úkpúkpúm ẹ́kà a-à-nẹ́-yá.
3SG.S-meet oak 3SG.S-take oak own 3SG.S-3SG.T-give-3SG.O
(22) Ọ́rọ́rẹ̀ min a-sọm ógbénofòro ọ̀nẹ̀ ka ee íyáro ọ̀nẹ̀
fear INCEP PROG-grip young-man DEM.SG COMP ! woman DEM.SG
gá nẹ́ áyẹ̀ ka àyẹ̀ e-èké-di sú áyẹ̀, àyẹ̀ à-ka
say PREP $3SG.I_i$ that $3SG.I_i$ 3SG.S-NEG-can marry $3SG.I_j$ 3SG.I 3SG.S-say
àyẹ̀ éke-su-ya. (23) Gàna àyẹ̀ éke-sie sie àkanà?
$3SG.I_i$ FUT-marry-3SG.O how 3SG.I FUT-do do now
(24) À-ka àyẹ̀ e-ni ka àyẹ̀ e-pìlà. (25) Iyaro àyẹ̀
3SG.S-say 3SG.I 3SG.S-want that 3SG.I 3SG.S-return woman DEF.SG
ka e-mè-pìlà sú ẹ̀kẹ̀na bè-é-yé ẹ̀gan. (26) Á-yẹ̀re
say 3SG.S-NEG-again have what 3PL.S-PROG-call so 3SG.S-follow
áyẹ̀ a-yọ tori è-mín kù ìdìdìlà. (27) Á-yẹ̀rẹ́-yá
3SG.I PROG-go because(Yrb) 3SG.S-INCEP remain stump 3SG.S-follow-3SG.O
rè ógbólò na, iyaro ọ̀nẹ̀ á-fọ́m ógbólò íbè yọ́.
reach river SCFP woman DEM.SG 3SG.S-enter river interior go
(28) Ógbénofòro ọ̀nẹ̀ mín jọ́mọ, àyẹ̀ ógbénofòro ọ̀nẹ̀ min tíégúrù
young-man DEM.SG INCEP wait FOC young-man DEM.SG INCP sing
à-ka sọ
3SG.S-say thus

‘The young man then stood and started singing a song thus:’

Leader: kóyá kóyá kóya nído Nonsensical chants
Audience: koyá koya nído koya
Leader: ẹda ná-wọ ọ̀nyànyàn
Termitarium give-2SG.O redness
Audience: koyá koya nído koya
Leader: iroko ná-wọ ọ̀fọ̀fọ
Iroko give-2SG.O tallness
Audience: koyá koya nído koya
Leader: ukpukpum ná-wọ ugbugbodi
oak give-2SG.O bigness
Audience: koyá koya nído koya
Leader: kóyá kóyá kóya nído
Audience: koyá koya nído koya

The song is repeated over and over again.

Morals to be learned from the story
(29) Mọ́-ọ́garẹ́ga ọ̀nẹ, ẹ̀kẹ̀na è-té-tú nà á-wà ka,
1SG.POSS-story DEM.SG thing 3SG.S-teach-1PL.O RCP 3SG.S-be COMP
a-mà-bọ̀ ka ógbénofòro a-yọ̀ éjí jén e-ni oòro,
3SG.S-NEG-suppose COMP young.man 3SG.S-go market go INF-search wife
ẹ̀kákálẹ̀ka àyẹ à-fọ. (30) Iyaro nẹnẹ yọ̀ éjí jén e-ni
Soldier-ants FOC 3SG.S-carry woman REL go market go INF.search
ógbénofòro na, ẹ̀kákálẹ̀ka àyẹ à-fọ́ fóm ubo. (31) *Àyẹ á-wọ̀rẹ*
young-man RCP soldier-ants FOC 3SG.S-carry enter house FOC 3SG.S-cause
a-mà-bọ̀ ka iyaro e-sie ẹ̀gan kì-sie. (32) Mọ́-ọ́garẹ́ga
3SG.S-NEG-suppose COMP woman 3SG.S-do so IMP-do 1SG.POSS-story
ìì̀gben á-wà ọ̀nẹ.
POSS.bottom 3SG.S-be this

1. A young woman is growing, she will desire to have a husband.
2. As a young man continues to grow, he will desire to have a wife; it happens that it was in a market that he went to look for a wife.
3. Any one who goes to the market place to look for a wife, such is courting trouble.
4. The story begins; it is about a man, what he did in order to get a wife.
5. It happened that he went to the market to look for a wife.
6. It got to the time when he found this wife, he told her that he wanted to marry her.
7. She told him that “you cannot marry her (me)!”
8. She said, “you cannot marry her (me)!”
9. He said “*eeh,* what is wrong that I cannot marry you.”
10. “He (I) can marry you.”
11. She said, “you cannot marry her (me)!”
12. “You cannot marry her (me)!”
13. Do you know where I am living?
14. He said, “I do not know wherever you are living.”
15. He will go with her
16. She said “ok come let us go!”
17. The lady finished selling her wares, they stood up and started going.
18. As they were going, he did not know, the you man did not know that the woman went to borrow the flesh which she put on to come to the market.
19. As they were going, she met Termitarium; she returned its fair complexion back to it.
20. When they got to Iroko, she returned its tall frame back to it.
21. She got to Oak, she returned its big frame back to it.
22. Then they young man began to be afraid; he said “eeh, this lady had earlier warned him that he cannot marry her, he had boasted that he can marry her.
23. “What will he do now?”
24. He said he would go back.
25. The lady said that there is nothing like that (turning back) any more.
26. He must follow her; all that was left of her was a stump.

27. He followed her to the river; the lady disappeared into the river.
28. The young man waited; then he began to sing.
29. What my story teaches us is that it is not right that a young man goes to the market place to look for a wife, he is courting trouble.
30. Any woman who finds a husband in the market place, she is courting trouble.
31. This is why it is not good that a woman behaves in this manner.
32. This is my story.

Text 4: The boy and the cocoyam
Narrated by: Thompson Ayoola, male 49

ọgarẹ́ga páràkàtà!
Story introduction

(1) á-cá e-tò ógbén ọ́nẹ e-tò iya ọ̀nẹ.
3SG.S-come 3SG.S-meet child DEM.SG 3SG.S-meet mother DEM.SG
(2) àkọ à-ca tǒ-bá na, ógbén ọ́nẹ ca a-wà ógbén
as 3SG.S-come meet-3PL.O RCP child DEM.SG come 3SG.S-COP child
nẹnẹ a-jen emumu uùbo nà. (3) ógbén ọ́nẹ jen emumu
REL 3SG.S-go book POSS.house RCP child DEM.SG go book
uùbo, a-cà, è-sú ọgbà nẹnẹ a-dà-ca bi-jijen na,
POSShouse 3SG.S-come 3SG.S-have time REL 3SG.S-HAB-come 3PL.S-eat RCP
ọgbọ̀na ógbén áyẹ è-vé-yọ̀ na, a-yọ̀ érúm émunubẹ, á-cá
when child DEF.SG 3SG.S-out-go RCP 3SG.S-go farm LOC.inside 3SG.S-come
gbà ìkókó. (4) ìkókó nẹnẹ à-gbá na, é-tie-ẹ cà, a-ca
see cocoyam cocoyam REL 3SG.S-see RCP 3SG.S-take-3SG.O come 3SG.S-come
nọ̀ yì-íyá. (5) a-ka wì-íyá à-má àyẹ fá
give 3SG.POSS-mother 3SG.S-say POSS-mother 3SG.S-do.help 3SG.I cook
ìkókó àyẹ, àyẹ wó ísku kẹ̀-ca, àyẹ é-dí e-je-ẹ.
cocoyam DEF.SG 3SG.I from school IMP-come 3SG.I 3SG.S-can INF-eat-3SG.O
(6) ọgbọ̀na iya àyẹ ca fà ìkókó àyẹ, ìkókó àyẹ
when mother DEF.SG come cook cocoyam DEF.SG cocoyam DEF.SG
è-gbén, iya àyẹ á-cá balẹ-ya. (7) àyẹ bálẹ́ ṣe (Yrb)
3SG.S-well-cook mother DEF.SG 3SG.S-come look-3SG.O 3SG.I look whether
è-gbén na, e-kuru òkeke, à-dẹ́ ówó, á-rọ́m
3SG.S-well-cook RCP 3SG.S-cut little 3SG.S-touch mouth 3SG.S-sweet
yò-ówó dáadáa. (8) íyá cá è-kùru ìkókó àyẹ
3SG.POSS-mouth well mother come 3SG.S-cut cocoyam DEF.SG
jé keke. (9) e-de kì-kùru je àmọ́, títítí a-fọ̀
eat small 3SG.S-REPT IMP-cut eat PART until 3SG.S-take
yì-íkókó àyẹ è-jé cẹ́cẹ́cẹ́. (10) ọgbọ̀na ógbén áyẹ̀
3SG.POSS-cocoyam DEF.SG 3SG.S-eat completely. when child DEF.SG

à-ca na, à-ká, íyá áyẹ e-ni ka e-je
3SG.S-come RCP 3SG.S-say mother 3SG.I 3SG.S-want COMP 3SG.S-eat
ìkókó go! (11) àyẹ iya ka ẹhẹ̀n é-jọ́họn kè. (12) "iya, fọ́
cocoyam ! FOC mother say *ẹhẹ̀n* 3SG.S-wait PERF mother take
ìkókó nẹ àyẹ!" (13) iya ka " á-jọ́họn kè!" (14) àyẹ ógbén
cocoyam give 3SG.I mother say 3SG.S-wait PERF FOC child
áyẹ ka àyẹ áka-fọ́m ijen à-á-má-fọ ìkoko nẹ àyẹ.
DEF.SG say 3SG.I FUT-enter ground 3SG.S-COND-NEG-take cocoyam give DEF.I
(15) à-ka è-sie (16) á-ka à-áka-fọ́m íjé nà.
3SG.S-say 3SG.S-do 3SG.S-say 3SG.S-FUT-enter ground RCP
(17) ógbén áyẹ kí e- cin iya na. (18) iya a-mà-fọ
child DEF.SG continue PROG-ask mother RCP mother 3SG.S-NEG-take
yi-ìkoko nẹ-ya. (19) a-fọ ikoko àyẹ je ọgbọ̀na
3SG.POSS-cocoyam give-3SG.O 3SG.S-take cocoyam DEF.SG eat when
ìkókó àyẹ rọ̀m yọ̀-ówó dáadáa na. (20) ógbén áyẹ̀ cá,
cocoyam DEF.SG sweet 3SG.POSS-mouth well RCP child DEF.SG come
é-min ca è-é-tieguru, á-cá a-fọ̀m ije.
3SG.S-INCEP come 3SG.S-PROG-sing.song 3SG.S-come 3SG.S-enter ground

Translation

1. It is about this child and this mother.
2. As this is about them, the child is one who goes to school.
3. The child went to school, and it happened that at lunch break, he went into the farm, and found a cocoyam.
4. The cocoyam which he found, he brought it home to his mother.
5. He said "you mother, help him (me) cook the cocoyam, when he came back from school, he would eat it.
6. When the mother cooked the cocoyam, it became well cooked, and she came to observe it.
7. She came to see whether it was well cooked, she broke a little and tasted it, and it tasted good in her mouth.
8. Mother came again and broke some more and ate.
9. She continued to eat small bits of the cocoyam until she ate it all up.

10. When the boy came back he said “mother, he (I) would like to eat the cocoyam o!”
11. Then the mother said “*ẹhẹ̀n,*” he should wait.
12. “Mother, give him cocoyam!”
13. Mother said “wait!”
14. So the child said he will enter ground, if she did not give him the cocoyam.
15. He said it is enough.
16. He said he will enter ground.
17. The child continued to pester Mother.
18. Mother did not give him the cocoyam.
19. She had eaten it all when it tasted very well in her mouth.
20. Then the child came, he started singing, he came and he entered ground.

Text 5: The north-wind and the sun 1
Narrated by: Peter Okunola, male, 36

(1) Ọ̀sankata nẹnẹ wó árẹ̀wa èkpèrì akà éyí eètin nà
argument REL be North wind and sun POSS.middle RCP
(2) Árẹ̀wa èkpèrì akà éyí sú ọ̀sankata yẹ̀rẹ́ óró nẹnẹ su
North wind and sun have argument on person REL have
íwú-ógbigben fọ̀rẹ́ í-bì-íwú. nà. (3) Àkọ bì-sie a-gá-ẹ́
strength surpass LOC-3PL.POSS-body RCP as 3PL.S-do PROG-say-it
na, àyẹ bẹ́-gba ka óró ọ́bẹ̀n a-ca nẹnẹ file
RCP FOC 3PL.S-see COMP person INDEF.SG PROG-come REL wear
alẹgbẹ nẹnẹ rŭm nà. (4) Àyẹ bẹ̀-na ka óró nẹnẹ
cloth REL thick RCP FOC 3PL.S-accept COMP person REL
í-bì-íwú nẹnẹ áka-táyẹ̀ dí wọrẹ ka óró àyẹ
LOC-3PL.POSS-body REL FUT-do.before can cause COMP person DEF.SG
e-tie alẹgbẹ àyẹ fura na ka àyẹ é-sú íwú-ógbigben
3SG.S-take cloth DEF.SG do.away RCP COMP 3SG.I 3SG.S-have strength
fọ̀rẹ́ nẹ̀. (5) Àyẹ árẹ̀wa èkpèrì tọmẹ è-é-wúré, è-é-wúré.
surpass PTCL FOC North wind start 3SG.S-PROG-blow 3SG.S-PROG-blow
(6) àkọ è-sie-wure tà na, ẹ̀gan òró ayẹ sie sẹ̀
as 3SG.S-do-blow hard RCP so person DEF.SG do hold
yà-alẹgbẹ nẹnẹ rùm ọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ na, á-sẹ́-ya file íwú
3SG.POSS-cloth REL thick DEM.SG RCP 3SG.S-hold-it wear body
bile àmọ́ nẹ. (7) Àkọ è-sie gba kà àyẹ
do.together among PTCL as 3SG.S-do see COMP 3SG.I
e-mè-dí-wọrẹ ka a-fà-ẹ́ na, a-sẹ úbá jọmọ.
3SG.S-NEG-can-cause COMP 3SG.S-pull.off-3SG.O RCP he-hold hand stand
(8) Àyẹ éyí min tọmẹ a-ă-bá. (9) Àkọ è-sie a-bà na,
FOC sun INCEP start 3SG.S-PROG-shine as 3SG.S-do PROG-shine RCP
ígànígàn àyẹ òró ayẹ e-tie yà-álẹ́gbẹ́ nẹnẹ rùm ọ̀nẹ́bẹ́
immediately FOC person DEF 3SG.S-take 3SG.POSS-cloth REL thick DEM.SG
nà a-fà-ẹ fura iwu. (10) Àyẹ árẹ̀wa-èkpèrì min nà
RCP 3SG.S-pull.off-3SG.O do.away body FOC north-wind INCEP accept
ka éyí àyẹ é-sú íwógbigben fọ̀rẹ́ nẹ
COMP sun 3SG.I 3SG.S-have strength surpass PTCL

Translation

1. The argument between North-wind and Sun.
2. North-wind and Sun had an argument about who among them was stronger.
3. As they were saying it, so they saw someone coming who was wearing a thick cloak.
4. So they agreed that anyone among them, who was able to make the man pull off the cloak, was stronger.
5. So North-wind began to blow, he continued to blow.
6. As hard as he blew, so also the man wrapped his thick cloak around his body.
7. As he saw that he couldn't make him pull off his cloak, so he stopped trying.
8. So Sun began to shine.
9. As he continued to shine, immediately, so the man pulled off his cloak.
10. So North-wind then agreed that Sun was stronger.

Text 6: The north-wind and the sun 2
Narrated by: Peter Okunola, male, 36

(1) Árẹ̀wa èkpèrì akà éyí sú ọ̀sankata yẹ́rẹ́ óró nẹnẹ su
north wind and sun have argument on person REL have
íwógbigben fọ̀rẹ́ í-bì-íwú nà. (2) Àkọ bì-sie a-ga-ẹ
strength pass LOC-3PL.POSS-body RCP As 3PL.S-do PROG-say-it
na àyẹ óró ọ́bẹ̀n a-ca, é-file ẹ̀sa nẹnẹ rŭm nà.
RCP FOC person certain PROG-come 3SG.S-wear cloth which thick RCP
(3) Àkọ è-sie á-cá na, àyẹ bì-mín-gá ka, óró nẹnẹ
As 3SG.S-do PROG-come RCP FOC they-INCEP-say that person REL
í-bì-íwú nẹnẹ è-éke-di-wọrẹ ka óró áyẹ a-fà
LOC-3PL.POSS-body REL 3SG.S-FUT-can-cause COMP person DEF.SG 3SG.S-pull.off
alẹ́gbẹ na, àyẹ é-su íwógbigben fọrẹ nẹ.
cloth RCP FOC 3SG.S-have strength pass PTCL
(4) Àyẹ árẹ̀wa èkpèrì á-tọmẹ, e-è-wúré, e-è-wúré
FOC North wind 3SG.S-start 3SG.S-PROG-blow 3SG.S-PROG-blow
ókpé-ókpé ẹ́kà. (5) Àkọ è-sie-wure tà na, e-wure tan na,
male-male own as 3SG.S-do-blow reach RCP 3SG.S-blow reach RCP
ẹ̀gan óró àyẹ sie sẹ́ yà-álẹ́gbẹ́ nẹnẹ rùm ọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ na,
so person DEF do hold 3SG.POSS-cloth REL thick DEM.SG RCP
á-sẹ́-ya è-file íwú bile àmọ. (6) Àkọ è-sie gbá
3SG.S-hold-it 3SG.S -wear body together among as 3SG.S-do see
ka a-mà-fa-ẹ na, é-mín-tébí uba fùrá útúm áyẹ
that 3SG.S-not-pull.off RCP 3SG.S-now-remove hand do.away work DEF
òsísie. (7) Àkọ è-sie tébí úbá na, àyẹ éyí min-tọmẹ,
doing as 3SG.S-do remove hand RCP FOC sun INCEP-start
à-á-bá, íganiàn àyẹ óró àyẹ a-fà alẹgbẹ àyẹ.
3SG.S-PROG-shine immediately FOC person DEF 3SG.S -pull.off cloth DEF
(8) Àyẹ Árẹ̀wa-èkpèrì min nà ka éyí àyẹ é-su íwógbigben
FOC North wind now accept that sun 3SG.I 3SG.S-have strength
fọ̀rẹ́.
pass

Translation

1. North-wind and Sun had an argument about who among them was stronger.
2. As they were arguing, a man came along, wearing a thick cloak.
3. As he was approaching, they agreed that anyone who was able to make him pull off his cloak was the stronger.
4. So North-wind began to blow really hard.
5. The harder he blew, so the man wrapped his cloak around his body.
6. As he discovered that he wasn't pulling it off, he stopped trying.
7. The moment he stopped, so Sun began to shine; and immediately the man pulled off his cloak.
8. So North-wind agreed that Sun was the stronger.

Text 7: How the rabbit got its long ears
Narrated by: Peter Ebenrubo Okunola, male, 36

ọgarẹ́ga páràkàtà!
Story introduction

(1) Íkén ọ́bẹ̀n wàmọ́ nẹnẹ̀ è-gbe ka údúdò àyẹ́
town INDEF.SG exist REL 3SG.S-be COMP sheep DEF.SG
á-wà érúnrò nẹnẹ̀ fọrẹ́ na. (2) È-sú érúm nẹnẹ̀ gbodi nà.
3SG.S-COP farmer REL surpass RCP 3SG.S-have farm REL big RCP
(3) Á-cá e-gbe ka, k'ájẹ́rẹ̀ wó iken àyẹ́.
3SG.S-come 3SG.S-be COMP FOC'rabbit LOC.COP town DEF.SG
(4) Ájẹ́rẹ̀ àyẹ́ wà óró nẹnẹ̀ e-mè-su érúm na,
rabbit DEF.SG COP person REL 3SG.S-NEG-have farm RCP
àyẹ́ á-wà óró nẹnẹ̀ e-gbe ka é-dè-yìré ẹpẹn kì-né.
3SG.I 3SG.S-COP person REL 3SG.S-be COMP 3SG.S-HAB-steal thing IMP-about
(5) Á-cá e-cun ka è-sú ẹnyẹn ọ̀ọ́rẹ́ nẹnẹ̀ è-gbe ka
3SG.S-come 3SG.S-pass COMP 3SG.S-have year one REL 3SG.S-be COMP
údúdò yì-íkúsáyé sie dáadáa érum. (6) Ọgbọ̀na nẹnẹ̀
sheep 3SG.POSS-groundnut do well LOC.farm when REL
bè-e-ni ka bẹ̀-kpárẹ́-yá nà, ọgbọ̀na nẹnẹ̀ bẹ̀-kpárẹ́-yá
3PL.S-PROG-want COMP 3PL.S-pluck-3SG.O RCP when REL 3PL.S-pluck-3SG.O
kue nà, nẹnẹ̀ à-kọ́-ba ṣá úbo, ájẹ́rẹ̀ táyẹ̀ ca,
finish RCP REL 3SG.S-pack-3PL.O come house rabbit do.early come
á-cá cin-ya ka à-và áyẹ́ àmọ́. (7) É-tìe èkeke
3SG.S-come ask-3SG.O COMP 3SG.S-give 3SG.I PART 3SG.S-take little
nẹ́-ya. (8) È-dé-re ísúbù ọ̀bẹ̀n, e-pìlà ca,
give-3SG.O 3SG.S-REPT-reach day INDEF.SG 3SG.S-return come
a-dà-cá cin-ya, à-dà-vẹ̀-yá. (9) Isì ọtẹtaro nẹnẹ̀
3SG.S-REPT-come ask-3SG.O 3SG.S-REPT-give-3SG.O period third REL
à-cá na, údúdò e-mè-guna-yà ówó; a-mà-vá-ẹ́
3SG.S-come RCP sheep 3SG.S-NEG-answer mouth 3SG.S-NEG-give-3SG.O
kẹ́nakídè. (10) Á-cá è-gbe ka újóguẹ̀kà, àyẹ́ ájẹ́rẹ̀ pìlà ca.
nothing 3SG.S-come 3SG.S-be COMP night FOC rabbit return come

(11) Á-ca, á-barẹ cá, éró bue ke. (12) Ípǒ
3SG.S-come 3SG.S-stealthily come people sleep PERF LOC.courtyard
bi-mè-ju ìfèrèse. (13) Ọgbọ̀na nẹnẹ a-yọ èfọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ fọ́m nà,
3PL.S-NEG-close window when REL 3SG.S-go that.place enter RCP
á-yọ̀ èfẹ̀na bẹ̀-kọ́ íjén wó nà, e-yìré íjén.
3SG.S-go place 3PL.S-pack food PREP RCP 3SG.S-steal food
(14) Á-cá è-gbé ka údúdò sọ̀ma, è-e-ni ka
3SG.S-come 3SG.S-be COMP sheep wake 3SG.S-PROG-want COMP
è-jén a-dẹnọ̀. (15) A-wọ̀ ka oro ọ́bẹ̀n wàmọ nẹnẹ ki
3SG.S-go INF-urinate 3SG.S-hear COMP person INDEF.SG exist REL continue
è-jejen. (16) È-e-mósó fọ̀ ọcẹn à-sẹrẹ ije.
PROG-walk 3SG.S-PROG-quietly take leg PROG-tread ground
(17) Ọgbọ̀na à-fọ ọyẹyẹ balẹ na, a-gbà ka óró áyẹ
when 3SG.S-take lamp look RCP 3SG.S-see COMP person DEF.SG
è-é-múné. (18) Ọgbọ̀na ájẹ́rẹ̀ múné fura na, e-é-mune.
3SG.S-PROG-run when rabbit run do.away RCP 3SG.S-PROG-run
(19) Á-cá e-gbe ka, cana ísúbù ọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ di kì-re,
3SG.S-come 3SG.S-be COMP before day DEM.SG can IMP-reach
údúdò àbẹ kpá ọ́dọ́rẹ̀ wó íjé nẹnẹ bè-é-ni ka
sheep DEF.PL dig hole PREP ground REL 3PL.S-PROg-want COMP
bẹ̀-kọ ìgìlà bi-è-ré wo, àyẹ e-mè-dín.
3PL.S-pack yam 3PL.S-PROG-bury PREP 3SG.I 3SG.S-NEG-know
(20) Ọgbọ̀na nẹnẹ e-mune na e-mi falẹ fọ́m-ya
when REL 3SG.S-run RCP 3SG.S-INCEP fall enter-3SG.O
(21) Ọgbọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ àyẹ údúdò fọ̀ ọgà vé ówò éró fẹnyanfẹnyan
that.time FOC sheep take shout out.of mouth people all
sọ̀ma ke. (22) Ọgbọ̀na bì-mí cá na, bẹ-gbà-ẹ àmọ́.
wake PERF when 3PL.S-INCEP come RCP 3PL.S-see-3SG.O there
(23) Bẹ-ca, bi-min fọ̀ óyí bẹ-a-parẹ yọ̀-ọtọm.
3PL.S-come 3PL.S-INCEP take rope 3PL.S-3SG.O-tie 3SG.POSS-ear
(24) Bẹ̀-sẹ-ya kpọ́ òsòsì bẹ̀-párẹ́-ya sẹ oti. (25) Ọgbọ̀na nẹnẹ
3PL.S-catch-3SG.O climb up 3PL.S-tie-3SG.O join tree when REL
usie gán na, nẹnẹ bí-mín gbá-ẹ na, bẹ̀-gbá ka
tomorrow break RCP REL 3PL.S-INCEP see-3SG.O RCP 3PL.S-see COMP
yọ̀-ọ́tọ́m lọrẹ kè. (26) Àkọ è-sìé sie nẹnẹ è-sú ọtọm
3SG.POSS-ear long PERF as 3SG.S-do do REL 3SG.S-have ear

nẹnẹ lọrẹ na. (27) Kàbá ísúbù ọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ yọ̀, ájẹ́rẹ̀, è-é-pìlà
REL long RCP from day DEM.SG go rabbit 3SG.S-COND-do.again
gba óró, e-dè-múné fọ́m ẹmẹn.
see person 3SG.S-HAB-run enter bush

Translation

1. There was this town in which Sheep was the greatest farmer.
2. He had a big farm.
3. It happened that Rabbit also lived in this town.
4. Rabbit had no farm; and he was one who went around stealing things.
5. It happened that there was one year in which Sheep's groundnuts did well on the farm.
6. At the time of harvest, after the groundnuts had been harvested and brought home, Rabbit asked him to give him some.
7. He took some and gave him.
8. It got to a certain day, he came and asked him again for more, he took some and gave him.
9. The third time when he came, Sheep did not respond to him; he did not give him anything/he gave him nothing.
10. It happened that at night, Rabbit came back again.
11. He came; he came stealthily, while every one was asleep.
12. The window in the courtyard was not locked.
13. When he came in through there, he went to where food was stored; he stole some food.
14. It happened that Sheep woke up, he wanted to go and relieve himself.
15. He heard that someone was walking around.
16. He (Sheep) began to tread carefully.
17. When he took the lamp to see, he observed that the person was running away.
18. When Rabbit ran out, he continued to run.
19. It happened that before that day, Sheep had dug a hole in which he planned to keep some yams; he (Rabbit) did not know this.
20. While he was running, he fell into it.

21. At that time, Sheep shouted and everyone woke up.
22. When they now came, they found him (Rabbit) there.
23. They came and took a piece of rope and tie his ears.
24. They tied him on a tree; they tied him to a tree.
25. When it was day break, when they saw him, they observed that his ears were longer.
26. That was how he came about having long ears.
27. From that day onwards, when Rabbits sees anyone, he runs into the bush.

Text 8: The tortoise and the princes 1
Narrated by: Peter Ebenrubo Okunola, male, 36

(1) Iken ọ̀nẹ̀ wàmọ́ nẹ̀nẹ̀ bò-óbín e-gbe ìgìdà. (2) Óbín ọkẹ̀ká
town DEM.SG exist REL 3PL.POSS-king PROG-bear Igida king great
à-wà. (3) È-sú ógbén oyègben ọ̀ọ́rẹ́ ọ́gbọ́gbọ́, è-sú odolo ọ̀bẹ̀n
3SG.S-COP 3SG.S-have child damsel one single 3SG.S-have bead INDEF.SG
nẹ̀nẹ̀ è-gbe ka àyẹ́ e-dè-ló bè-e-kì-je imù nà.
REL 3SG.S-be COMP 3SG.I PROG-HAB-use 3PL.S-PROG-IMP-go festival RCP
(4) Águẹn ní yò-ógbén ọ́nẹ̀ ẹ́gà, àmá e-mè-dín ẹ̀kẹ̀na
turtle want 3SG.POSS-child DEM.SG word but 3SG.S-NEG-know thing
è-éke-sie nà. (5) Íken àyẹ́, ọ́kọ́rẹ́ àyẹ́ éró din ka
3SG.S-FUT-so RCP LOC.town DEF.SG monkey FOC people know COMP
à-wá óró nẹ̀nẹ̀ wà óró ẹ̀kàyẹ̀-ẹ̀kàyẹ̀ na, óró nẹ̀nẹ̀ è-gbe
3SG.S-COP person REL COP person honorable RCP one REL 3SG.S-be
ka bà-á-gá ka bí-ní óró nẹ̀nẹ̀ kpóná na ca,
COMP 3PL.S-if-say COMP 3PL.S-search one REL important RCP come
àyẹ́ bà-áka-yọ̀rẹ́ úbá nọ̀ nẹ̀. (6) Éró din águẹn ka
3SG.I 3PL.S-FUT-point hand PREP PTCL everyone know tortoise COMP
à-wa úrírènrò, ka e-mè-sú ẹ̀kẹ̀na e-dèkì-ni ka
3SG.S-COP lazy.one COMP 3SG.S-NEG-have thing 3SG.S-HAB-want COMP
e-sie nà. (7) Àkọ águẹn e-sie roro ka gàna àyẹ́ éke-sie sie a,
3SG.S-do RCP as tortoise PROG-do think COMP how 3SG.I FUT-do do QM
nẹ̀nẹ̀ àyẹ́ éke-su obin oògben ọ̀nẹ̀ nà a-mà-gbá.
REL 3SG.I FUT-marry king POSS.child DEM.SG RCP 3SG.S-NEG-see
(8) Àyẹ́ ísúbù ọ̀bẹ̀n, á-barẹ́ á-fọ́m obinutù yọ́,
FOC day INDEF.SG 3SG.S- stealthily 3SG.S-enter palace go
e-yìré yò-odolo. (9) Àkọ e-sìé yìré-ẹ́ nà, a-fọ̀-ẹ́
3SG.S-steal 3SG.POSS-beads as 3SG.S-do steal-3SG.O RCP 3SG.S-take-3SG.O
yọ̀ úbó, e-è-sú (10) Á-cá, e-gbè ka óbín min din
go house 3SG.S-3SG.O-keep 3SG.S-come 3SG.S-be COMP king INCEP know
ka bì-yìre àyẹ́ odolo. (11) É-mín ga-ẹ́, à-ka
COMP 3PL.S-steal 3SG.I beads 3SG.S-INCEP say-3SG.O 3SG.S-say
“ah! ódolo ọ̀nẹ̀, óró nẹ̀nẹ̀ è-dí má áyẹ́ gba-ẹ́ nà,
! beads DEM.SG person REL 3SG.S-can do.with 3SG.I see-3SG.O RCP

àyẹ́ éke-sú yò-ógbéniyaro ọ́gbọ́gbọ́ àyẹ́ né́.” (12) Ẹ̀kèna águẹn
3SG.I FUT-marry 3SG.POSS-daughter lone DEF.SG PREP thing turtle
kpótó è-ní nà á-wà ọ̀né́bé́. (13) Àyẹ́ é-sie, è-dín
definitely PROG-want RCP 3SG.S-COP DEM.SG FOC 3SG.S-do 3SG.S-know
ká ọ́kọ́ré́ è-ni ọ̀gẹ̀dẹ̀ é́gà. (14) É-ni ọ̀gẹ̀dẹ̀ dọ́m,
COMP monkey 3SG.S-want banana word 3SG.S-search banana hold
é-ní-ya yọ̀ úbó. (15) Àkọ ọ̀né́bé́ sie kì-jin ujum na,
3SG.S-search-3SG.O go house as DEM.SG do PREF-open door RCP
nẹ́nẹ́ à-gbá-ẹ́ ka à-kọ́ ọ̀gẹ̀dẹ̀ dọm na, é-jin ujum
REL 3SG.S-see-3SG.O COMP 3SG.S-pack banana hold RCP 3SG.S-open door
né́-yá, kà à-fọ́m ubo. (16) E-mín cin-ya kà
PREP-3SG.O COMP 3SG.S-enter house 3SG.S-INCEP ask-3SG.O COMP
“ẹ̀ná ù-kpótó ca sie a?” (17) À-ka “áyẹ́ ní-wu ca
what 2SG.S-definitely come do QM $3SG.S_i$-say $3SG.I_i$ search-2SG.O come
go!” (18) “Áyẹ̀ balẹ́ ka wè-éke-ni ọ̀gẹ̀dẹ̀ ẹ̀nánẹ̀ é́gà, ka àyẹ́
! 3SG.I look COMP 2SG.S-FUT-want banana DEM.PL word COMP FOC
àyẹ́ ní cá né́-wọ̀.” (19) Ọ̀né́bé́ yì-íbé rǒm.
3SG.I want come give-2SG.O DEM.SG 3SG.POSS-stomach sweet
(20) A-nà-ẹ́, á-kọ́-ya fọ́m ubo. (21) Àkọ è-sie
3SG.S-collect-3SG.O 3SG.S-pack-3SG.O enter house as 3SG.S-do
kọ́-ya fọ́m ubo na, ẹ̀kẹ̀na aguen sie na, á-wà ka
pack-3SG.O enter house RCP thing turtle do RCP 3SG.S-COP COMP
a-fọ̀ odolo àyẹ́ è-sú wó ẹ̀fọ̀bẹ̀n í-yù-úbúríbè.
3SG.S-take beads DEF.SG 3SG.S-have PREP a.place LOC-3SG.POSS-house.interior
(22) Àkọ bí-kì-sie ni odolo àyẹ́ na, nẹ́nẹ́ éró má-é́,
as 3PL.S-IMP-do search beads DEF.SG RCP REL people do.with-3SG.O
é-ní-yá àyẹ́ aguẹn mín yọ́ è-tò-é́, à-ka àyẹ́
3SG.S-search-3SG.O FOC turtle INCEP go 3SG.S-meet-3SG.O 3SG.S-say 3SG.I
è-dín ẹ̀fọ̀nẹ́ ódóló ọ̀nẹ́ mán go! (23) À-ka, “ù-dín-yà?”
3SG.S-know this.place beads DEM.SG dwell ! 3SG.S-say 2SG.S-know-3SG.O
(24) À-ka “àyẹ́ è-dín-yà.” (25) É-min ga nẹ́-yà ka
3SG.S-say 3SG.I 3SG.S-know-3SG.O 3SG.S-INCEP say PREP-3SG.O COMP
“u-di a-gá né́ àyẹ́ ẹ̀fọ̀na à-man a?” (26) Á-ga
2SG.S-can INF-say PREP 3SG.I place.where 3SG.S-live QM 3SG.S-say
nẹ́-yà à-ka “è-wó ọ́kọ́rẹ́ uùbo”. (27) “Aaa, è-wó
PREP-3SG.O 3SG.S-say 3SG.S-COP monkey POSS.house ! 3SG.S-LOC.COP

ọkọrẹ uùbo! (28) Ọ́kọ́rẹ́ e-mè-sú ìwà òdùdù go!
monkey POSS.house monkey 3SG.S-NEG-have character evil !
(29) À-ka "è-wó yù-úbó," á-ga né́-yà èfẹ̀na
3SG.S-say 3SG.S-LOC.COP 3SG.POSS-house 3SG.S-say PREP-3SG.O the.place
a-man na àmọ́ nà. (30) Íkua-ikua, àyẹ óbín ìgìdà é-file
3SG.S-live RCP there RCP LOC.truth-truth FOC king Igida 3SG.S-send
yì-íkítàrò àbẹ, bẹ̀-yọ̀ ọkọrẹ uùbo. (31) èfọ̀na águẹn
3SG.POSS-guards DEF.PL 3PL.S-go monkey POSS.house place.where turtle
gá né́-ba ka à-mán nà, èfẹ̀né́bé́ bì-wé gbá-ẹ nẹ.
say PREP-3PL.O COMP 3SG.S-live RCP place.that 3PL.S-INCEP see-3SG.O PTCL
(32) àyẹ bẹ̀-fọ̀-ẹ yọ obin ẹfà. (33) Òyà nẹnẹ bì-jé-ẹ
FOC 3PL.S-take-3SG.O go king place suffering REL 3PL.S-eat-3SG.O
nà, à-yọ́ fọ̀ré́bá, e-mè-sú ọ́gà. (34) Àkọ bì-sie é-jé-yá
RCP 3SG.S-plenty surpass 3SG.S-NEG-have word as 3PL.S-do PROG-eat-3SG.O
óyà na, àyẹ e-e-y'ọ́gà, à-ka, " i-mè-dín go!"
suffer RCP FOC 3SG.S-PROG-shout 3SG.S-say 1SG.S-NEG-know !
"i-mè-dín go!" "i-mè-dín go!" "i-mè-dín go!"
1SG.S-NEG-know ! 1SG.S-NEG-know ! 1SG.S-NEG-know !
èɡan è-sie kí e-y'ógà nẹ. (35) É-mune, á-fọ́m
so 3SG.S-do continue PROG-shout PTCL 3SG.S-run 3SG.S-enter
uku yọ, á-kpọ́ oti. (36) Kàba ọɡbọ̀né́bé́ e-è-pìlà e-ni
forest go 3SG.S-climb tree from that.time 3SG.S-NEG-return 3SG.S-want
ka àyẹ é-sie èɡán mán íjè, ótí osì àyẹ è-pìlà
COMP 3SG.I 3SG.S-do so live LOC.ground tree top FOC 3SG.S-do.again
a-man. (37) Àyẹ obin min và águẹn yò-ógbéniyaro ọ̀ọ́rẹ ọ́ɡbọ́ɡbọ
PROG-live FOC king INCEP give turtle 3SG.POSS-daughter one single
ọ̀né́bé́ ka e-su-ya. (38) Mọ̀-ógaréga á-wà ọ̀nẹ.
DEM.SG COMP 3SG.S-marry 1SG.S-story 3SG.S-COP DEM.SG

Translation

1. There was this town whose king was known as Igida.
2. He was a great king.
3. He had a damsel, who was his only child, and a bead (string) which he used to wear to festivities.

4. Tortoise loved the damsel but he did not know what to do.
5. In this town, Monkey was a honourable person, someone who everyone could vouch for as an important personality.
6. Everyone knew Tortoise as a lazy person, one who was irresponsible.
7. As Tortoise continued to think about what he could do in order to marry the princess, he couldn't come up with a solution.
8. So on one day, he stealthily entered the palace, and he stole the beads.
9. As he stole the beads, he went home and hid it.
10. It then happened that King found out that his beads have been stolen.
11. He then said, "concerning these beads, anyone who found it will marry his (my) only daughter."
12. This was exactly what Tortoise wanted.
13. It happened that he knew that Monkey liked banana a lot.
14. He took some banana and went to visit him at home.
15. The moment he (Monkey) saw that he (Tortoise) had some banana, he quickly opened the door to him.
16. He asked him, "what exactly have you come to do?"
17. He said "he (I) came to pay you a visit."'
18. "He (I) saw that you like these banana, so he (I) has brought some for you."'
19. He (Monkey) was happy.
20. He collected it and took it into the house.
21. As he took it into the house, what Tortoise did was to hide the beads in a place inside his (Monkey's) house.
22. As he (King) was still looking for the beads, also with the help of the people, so Tortoise came and told him he knew where the beads were.
23. He said "you know it?"
24. He said he knew it.
25. He said "can you tell him (me) where it is?"
26. He said to him, he said "it is in Monkey's house."
27. "Aah, it is in Monkey's house?"
28. "But Monkey is not a bad character."
29. He said "it is in his house", and then he told him the place where it was.

30. Indeed, King Igida sent his palace guards to Monkey's house.
31. The same place where Tortoise told them of, that was where they found it.
32. So they took him (Monkey) to the palace.
33. The punishment which he was served was beyond words.
34. As they were punishing him so he kept shouting, "I didn't know!" "I didn't know!" "I didn't know!", so he continued to shout.
35. He ran into the forest and climbed a tree.
36. From that time onwards, he never stays on the ground anymore, he stays in trees.
37. So King gave his only daughter to Tortoise to be his wife.
38. This is my story.

Text 9: Tortoise and the princes 2
Narrated by: Matthew Alabi (alias headboy), male, 48

ọgarẹ́ga páràkàtà!
Story introduction

(1) A-tọ̀ obin akà águẹn. (2) Obin ọnẹ̀ è-sú ógbén oyègben.
3SG.S-meet king and tortoise king DEM.SG 3SG.S-have child damsel
(3) É-ni ka àyẹ à-ná ofòro nọ́, àmá á-cá,
3SG.S-want COMP 3SG.I 3SG.S- collect husband give but 3SG.S-come
e-mè-ni ka à-fọ́ ógbén áyẹ nọ́ íkíbárò.
3SG.S-NEG-want COMP 3SG.S-take child DEF.SG give rich
(4) Obin àyẹ cá a-ka ẹ̀fẹ̀na é-dí kà àyẹ dín ógbén áyẹ
king DEF.SG come 3SG.S-say person 3SG.S-can COMP 3SG.I know child DEF.SG
yì-íwúrù, àyẹ éke-su-ya. (5) Àyẹ è-ni ka ọ̀kpẹ́pẹ̀pan,
3SG.POSS-name 3SG.I FUT-marry-3SG.O 3SG.I PROG-want COMP town-crier
ka àyẹ e-ni ka a-gba éró fẹnyanfẹnyan nẹnẹ wó íken
COMP 3SG.I PROG-want COMP 3SG.S-see people all REL COP town
àye. (6) Ọ̀kpẹ́pẹ̀pan, è-tie ògengen akà ótí, à-kpọ́ épẹ̀pan né.
DEF.SG town-crier 3SG.S-take gong and stick 3SG.S-climb mound PTCL
(7) À-ka "óbín ka àyẹ e-ni ka gba éró fẹnyanfẹnyan ísúbù
3SG.S-say king say 3SG.I PROG-want COMP see people all day
úfọ́mbòrẹ̀ ámọnẹ̀ í-yù-úbó. (8) Ọgbọ̀na ísúbù úfọ́mbòrẹ̀ gule na,
seven today LOC-3SG.POSS-house when day seven complete RCP
éró fẹnyanfẹnyan bi-jese ẹ̀fẹ̀nẹ́bẹ́, k'ẹ́nẹ́, k'ọ́kpàkọkọ,
people all 3PL.S-gather that.place also'animals also'tortoise
k'águẹn. (9) Àyẹ óbín ka, ẹ̀kẹ̀na àyẹ é-ni ka ga ọnẹ̀ na,
also.tortoise FOC king say thing 3SG.I PROG-want COMP ga DEM.SG RCP
áyẹ ni ka ẹ̀fẹ̀na é-di ki-dìn àyẹ ógbén ọ́nẹ̀ oyègben
3SG.I want COMP person 3SG.S-can IMP-know 3SG.I child DEM.SG damsel
yì-íwúrù, àyẹ áka-fọ̀-ẹ́ nọ̀. (10) Àyẹ e-èke-si na ẹ̀kọ́bọ̀,
3SG.POSS-name 3SG.I FUT-take-3SG.S give 3SG.I 3SG.S-NEG.FUT-also collect kobo
àyẹ a-àka-ná-ya kẹ́nakidè. (11) É-mi ga ka éroro
3SG.I 3SG.S-NEG.FUT-collect-3SG.O anything 3SG.S-INCEP say COMP everyone
a-yo è-kì-ni àyẹ ógbén ọ́nẹ̀ iwurù. (12) Àyẹ águẹn ayẹ̀ wọ́.
PROG-go INF-IMP-search 3SG.I child DEM.SG name FOC tortoise DEF.SG hear

(13) Águẹn ga kà gàna àyẹ́ éke-sie sie-e? (14) E-mè-sú èfẹ̀na
tortoise say that how 3SG.I FUT-do do-3SG.O 3SG.S-NEG-have person
é-mé-din águẹn ányẹ́n ògbigbenrò yá nà. (15) È-gbénanyẹ́ daadaa.
3SG.S-NEG-know tortoise eye wise ? RCP 3SG.S-wise well
(16) Á-cá, ógbén ọ́nẹ́ é-dékì-wé ẹ́pẹ́n. (17) Àyẹ́ akà yọ̀-ọ́rẹ́,
3SG.S-come child DEM.SG 3SG.S-HAB-plait hair 3SG.I and 3SG.POSS-friend
obin oògben àyẹ́ á-gbọ́ íwúrà-ọlá. (18) Yọ̀-ọ́rẹ́ àyẹ́
king POSS.child 3SG.I PROG-bear Wuraola 3SG.POSS-friend 3SG.I
á-gbọ̀ ìkíkẹ́lọmọ. (19) Bẹ́-dà-cá kì-wé ẹ́pẹ́n.
3SG.S-bear kikelomo 3PL.S-HAB-come PREF-plait hair
(20) Àyẹ́ a-wa ísúbù ọ̀ọ́rẹ́, obin oògben àyẹ́, oyègben akà
FOC 3SG.S-COP day one king child DEF.SG damsel and
yọ̀-ọ́rẹ́, bẹ́-yọ́, bẹ́-yọ̀ nyín ébí. (21) Águẹn din ka
3SG.POSS-friend 3PL.S-go 3PL.S-go fetch water tortoise know that
ka ọrẹ́ ọ̀nẹ́ bi-dè-rú yọ́ dèkì-nyín ébi nà.
that road DEM.SG 3PL.S-REPT-follow go HAB-fetch water RCP
(22) Águẹn ga ka è-din na àyẹ́ éke-di sẹ́ íwúrà-ọlá na.
tortoise say that 3SG.S-know how 3SG.I FUT-can catch wuraola RCP
(23) Á-cá é-jén e-tò égẹ́nẹ́rò nẹ́nẹ́ dàkẹ̀-ca, à-ka
3SG.S-come 3SG.S-go INF-meet *égẹ́nẹ́rò* RCP HAB-come 3SG.S-say
bẹ́-má áyẹ́ kpọ́ ògóbí ẹbọ̀rẹ̀. (24) Ọgbọ̀nẹ́ águẹn ca bẹ̀-kọ́
3PL.S-do.with 3SG.I cave *ògóbí*[24] two when tortoise come 3PL.S-pack
ògóbí ábẹ́ né-yà. (25) Á-cá ọrikpokpo nẹ́nẹ́ bẹ́-dàkẹ̀-yọ́
ògóbí DEF.PL give-3SG.O 3SG.S-come road REL 3PL.S-HAB-go
jén e-nyín ébí na, á-nẹ́ ọ̀ọ́rẹ́ mọ́sọ́ wó ọ́rikpokpo.
go INF-fetch water RCP 3SG.throw one carefully LOC.COP LOC.road
(26) È-dé kì-jejen ẹ́pẹ́n akọ̀ ìkìlómítà ọ̀cẹ́nẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀, é-dè,
3SG.S-REPT PREF-walk thing like kilometer half 3SG.S-REPT
à-fọ́ ọ̀bẹ̀n wó èfẹ̀nébẹ́. (27) Bẹ́-cá, bẹ́-à-yọ́,
3SG.S-take INDEF.SG LOC.COP place.that 3PL.S-come 3SG.S-PROG-go
obin oògben àyẹ́ è-wó ẹ́rẹ̀n. (28) Ọgbọ̀na bà-a-yọ̀
king POSS.child DEF.SG 3SG.S-LOC.COP front when 3PL.S-PROG-go
na, óbín oògben á-cá gba ògobi àyẹ́ íjè.
RCP king POSS.child 3SG.s-come see *ògóbí* DEF.SG LOC.ground

[24] Instrument used by women to divide a person's hairs into several manageable parts when weaving.

(29) À-ka “eeh kike”, àyẹ à-nyẹ́n ògóbí go!

3SG.S-say *eeh* Kike 3SG.I 3SG.s-find *ògóbí !*

(30) Àyẹ gba ògobi go! (31) À-ka “ègan a?” (32) Tẹ-gbà-ẹ

3SG.I 3SG.s-find *ògóbí !* 3SG.S-say indeed QM 1PL.S-see-3SG.O

na, obin oògben á-cá fọ̀ ògobi àyẹ nyẹn nọ̀ yọ̀-ọrẹ nẹnẹ

? king POSS.child 3SG.S-come take *ògóbí* DEF.SG show give 3SG.POSS-friend REL

wà ìkíkẹ́lọmọ. (33) À-ka “ẹẹhẹn, à-rónmúro wà!”

COP Kikelomo 3SG.S-say *ẹẹhẹn,* 3SG.S-good COP

(34) À-ka be-è-dè-jóyà kìné. (35) Àyẹ íkíkẹ́ a-ka

3SG.S-say 3PL.S-NEG-REPT-suffer wandering FOC Kikelomo 3SG.S-say

“jọ́họn, k’ámẹ cùm ẹ́rẹ̀n, tòri éjén nẹnẹ wè-é-jen na

wait FOC.1SG.I pass LOC.front because walk REL 2SG.S-PROG-walk RCP

ọ̀nẹ è-slôw fọ̀rẹ́bá. (36) Óbin oògben yọ̀-ọ́rẹ́ nẹnẹ wà ìkíkẹ́lọmọ

DEM.SG 3SG.S-slow surpass king child 3SG.POSS-friend REL COP Kikelomo

na k’ áyẹ è-cùm wó ẹ́rẹ̀n, bẹ-à-yọ, bẹ-à-yọ,

RCP FOC’3SG.I 3SG.S-pass LOC.COP LOC.front 3PL.PROG-go 3PL.S-PROG-go

bè-kí-jejen turu, ẹ́pẹ́n akọ̀ half a kilo na, ka íkíkẹ́, k’ áyẹ

3PL.S-PREF-walk do.forward thing like half a kilo RCP that Kike FOC’3SG.I

dà-gba ògobi. (37) Àkọ ì-sie á-ga ọ̀nẹ na, águẹn a-bẹ́bẹ́

REPT-see *ògóbí* as 1SG.S-do PROG-say DEM.SG RCP tortoise PROG-hide

wó ẹ́mẹ́n ọtọm. (38) È-kí e-pi-bà ọ́tọ́m fẹnyan-fẹnyan

LOC.COP bush ear 3SG.S-CONT PROG-listen-3PL.O ear all

bà-a-ga na. (39) Óbin oògben yọ̀-ọ́rẹ́ nẹnẹ wà ìkíkẹ́lọmọ

3PL.S-PROG-say RCP king POSS.child 3SG.POSS-friend REL COP Kikelomo

na, ka àyẹ dà-gba ògobi. (40) Ọgbọ̀na è-kí-gba-ẹ na, à-ka

RCP say 3SG.I REPT-see *ògóbí* when 3SG.S-PREF-see-3SG.O RCP 3SG.S-say

“eeh, ìwúràọlá ẹ̀-gbá ògobi go! (41) Àyẹ águẹn ka, “ẹ̀hẹ̀n, è-kue.”

eeh Wuraola 1SG.S-see *ògóbí !* FOC tortoise say *ẹ̀hẹ̀n* 3SG.S-finish

(42) Águẹn e-din ka ka óbín oògben àyẹ á-gbọ̀ ìwúràọlá.

tortoise 3SG.S-know that COMP king POSS.child DEF.SG 3SG.S-bear Wuraola

(43) Ọgbọ̀na óbin de-yé ọ̀kpẹ́pẹ̀pan, à-ka à-gá nẹ́-bà ka ísúbù

when king REPT-call messanger 3SG.S-say 3SG.S-say PREP-3PL.O that day

min re, éroro a-ca fọ̀ èsì nẹ́ àyẹ. (44) órókorò nẹnẹ

INCEP reach people 3SG.S-come take response give 3SG.I anyone REL

é-kí-din àyẹ oògben ìíwúrù na, àyẹ à-áka-fò-ẹ nò.
3SG.S-PREF-know 3SG.I POSS.child POSS.name RCP 3SG.I 3SG.S-FUT-take-3SG.O give
(45) Íkén fẹnyan-fẹnyan bé-cá bi-jese kè-énẹ́ fẹnyan-fẹnyan,
town all 3PL.S-come 3PL.S-gather and-animals all
kà-águẹ. (46) Águẹn ka àyẹ éke-su ógbén áyẹ ámọnè.
and-tortoise tortoise say 3SG.I FUT-marry child DEF.SG today
(47) Bè-ka "ícómá, àwọ ọnẹ, èrá mé-din-wọ ka óyírì àyẹ
3PL.S-say lie 2SG.I DEM.SG who NEG-know-you COMP thief FOC
ọ-wà, ícómárò àyẹ ọ-wà!" (48) À-ka "àyẹ éke-su ógbén ọnẹ
2SG.S-COP liar FOC 2SG.S-COP 3SG.S-say 3SG.I FUT-marry child DEM.SG
ámọnè sẹ́ (yrb). (49) Bè-e-kí e-su ọsànkata ọgbọ̀na è-min
today indeed 3PL.S-PROG-continue PROG-have argument when 3SG.S-INCEP
kùrúfó na, Óbín àyẹ vé-cà. (50) Óbin àyẹ yù-útúmrò é-jén
stay.awhile RCP king DEF.SG out-come king DEF.SG 3SG.POSS-messanger 3SG.S-go
a-ga nẹ-yà ka éró jese kè ro! (51) à-ka "èhéè!"
INF-say BENF-3SG.O that people gather PERF ! 3SG.S-say *èhéè*
(52) À-ka kà á-gá nẹ́-bà ka à-á-cá. (53) Óbin àyẹ
3SG.S-say that 3SG.S-say BENF-3PL.O that 3SG.S-PROG-come king DEF.SG
min ca, é-vé-cà. (54) Bí-fura bẹ-gám-yà ka "kábíyèsí".
INCEP come 3SG.S-out-come 3PL.S-up.stand 3PL.S-greet-3SG.O that majesty
(55) À-ka bé-mán! (56) À-ka "èkèna nẹnẹ àyẹ gá nẹ́-nò, útúm
3SG.S-say 3PL.S-sit 3SG.S-say thing REL 3SG.I say BENF-2PL.O work
nẹnẹ àyẹ nẹ́-nò ka nì-sie ósè ébòrè wó úrùm na
REL 3SG.I give-2PL.O that 2PL.S-do LOC.week two LOC.COP back RCP
ka bẹ-fò èsì(yrb) àyẹ nẹ́-mọ̀. (57) Àyẹ " è-gá nẹ́-nò ka
that 3PL.S-take response DEF.SG BENF-1SG.O 3SG.I 1SG.S-say BENF-2PL.O that
órókorò é-dí ka e-dìn àyẹ ógbén ìùwúrù, àyẹ
anyone 3SG.S-can that 3SG.S-know 3SG.I child POSS.name 3SG.I
éke-su-ya." (58) Òbèn fura a-ga ka, a-yòrẹ úbá, íwúrù nẹnẹ
FUT-marry-3SG.O one up.stand 3SG.S-say that 3SG.stretch hand name REL
e-yè na a-mà-ná-ẹ́. (59) Bẹ-dà-ka á-mán ẹganẹgan.
3SG.S-call RCP 3SG.S-NEG-get-3SG.O 3PL.S-REPT-say 3SG.S-sit immediately
(60) Éró fẹnyan-fẹnyan kì-sie, águẹn kára móso kì-dusu. (61) Àyẹ á-wa
people all PREF-do tortoise stay gentle PREF-quiet 3SG.I 3SG.S-COP
óró nẹnẹ mán úrùm, nẹnẹ min fura gá'ga nà. (62) Águẹn ka
person REL sit back REL INCEP up.stand say'word RCP tortoise say

“àyẹ à-gám-nọ́ rò!” (63) “Àmẹ àyẹ ọ̀nẹ, i-mè-sú íkíbà ro,
3SG.I 3SG.S-greet-2PL.O ! 1SG.I FOC this 1SG.S-NEG-have money !
ọ̀kọ̀rẹ́kọrẹ àyẹ dè-sú gbá ijen je ísubù, àma Òsìbìna ọ́gbà re.
do.hard 3SG.I HAB-have see food eat LOC.day but God POSS.time reach
(64) Òsìbìna ka ọgbà re nẹnẹ àyẹ éke-min sú íkíbà, àyẹ áka-gba
God say time reach REL 3SG.I FUT-INCEP have money 3SG.I FUT-see
ijen kì-je na, tori(Yrb) obin oògben ọ̀nẹ àyẹ éke-su-ya.
food PREF-eat RCP because king POSS.child DEM.SG 3SG.I FUT-marry-3SG.O
(65) Éró fẹnyan-fẹnyan ka “ícómá”, bẹ̀-ka “ícómá”, bẹ̀-ka “ícómá”.
people all say lie 3SG.S-say lie 3SG.S-say lie
(66) À-ka “ok, ni-dusu, nẹ́-mán.” (67) Águẹn ca, e-cum wo ètín,
3SG.S-say ok 2PL.S-quite 2PL.S-sit tortoise come 3SG.S-pass LOC.COP middle
à-ka “óbin ẹ̀-gám-wọ́, kábíyèsí.” (68) A-gam-ya, ísì ẹ̀ta.
3SG.S-say king 1SG.S-greet-2SG.O majesty 3SG.S-greet-3SG.O period three
(69) Óbin ka “àmá ọ̀-rẹdi.” (70) Óbin min cín-yá ka, gàna yò-ógbén
king say but 2SG.S-ready king INCEP ask-3SG.O that how 3SG.POSS-child
ììwúrù gbé? (71) “Wò-ógbén oyègben ọ̀nẹ àyẹ é-gbe íwúràola”.
POSS.name bear 2PL.POSS-child damsel DEM.SG FOC 3SG.S-bear Wuraola
(72) “Aah!” éró fẹnyan-fenyan bẹ-a-bẹ̀ úbá, k’óbin àyẹ ẹ́bẹ́bà
! people all 3SG.S-PROG-clap hand FOC.king DEF.SG himself
fura, yà-ágbádá(yrb) nẹnẹ è-file na, a-fà-ẹ́, á-nẹ-ya
do.away 3SG.POSS-*ágbádá*[25] REL 3SG.S-wear RCP 3SG.S-pull.off-3SG.O 3SG.S-throw-3SG.O
nẹ yo-òró, á-fọ́m ubo. (73) Aṣe(Yrb) obin àyẹ è-sí-guro
PREP 3SG.POSS-wife 3SG.S-enter house so king DEF.SG 3SG.S-even-prepare
íkíbà fẹ̌ ákoto or ọ̀kara. (74) Óbin cá, a-kpam íkíbà vé-cà.
money full LOC.box king come 3SG.S-load money out-come
(75) A-dà-kẹ̀-fọ̀-ẹ, a-kpàm ọ̀bẹ̀n vé-cà, ọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ ẹ̀sa àyẹ
3SG.S-REP-PREF-take-3SG.O 3SG.S-load another come-come DEM.PL cloth FOC
é-fè-ẹ. (76) E-min a-ka, “ànọ fẹnyan-fẹnyan éró a-fọ̀
3SG.S-full-3SG.O 3SG.S-INCEP PROG-say 2PL.I all people 3SG.S-take
ìgbèn man, águẹn wámọ ọ̀nẹ́ yọ́, àyẹ è-éke-su ayẹ òógbén ro,
buttocks sit tortoise hence this go FOC 3SG.S-FUT-marry 3SG.I POSS.child !
tòrí útúm àye nẹ́-nọ̀ ka ni-sie na, águẹn àyẹ ná-ẹ.”
because work 3SG.I give-2PL.O that 2PL.S-do RCP tortoise 3SG.I get-3SG.O

[25] Large over garment worn mostly by the rich

(77) So ẹ̀fọ̀na nẹnẹ́ águẹn min e-su obin oògben íwúràọlá
so place REL tortoise INCEP 3SG.S-have king POSS.child Wuraola
àyẹ ọnẹ́bẹ́. (78) Kàba isunubẹ, k'águẹn min cìna óro ọkẹ̀ka.
FOC DEM.SG from henceforth FOC.tortoise INCEP become person great
(79) É-min cìna ẹ̀fẹ̀na é-sú íkíbà nà.
3SG.S-INCEP become one 3SG.S-have money RCP

Translation

1. It is about King and Tortoise.
2. The king had a daughter, a damsel.
3. He wanted to give out his daughter in marriage, but he did not want to give her to a rich man.
4. The king then said that anyone one who knew the name of his daughter would be the one to marry her.
5. He wanted the town-crier to announce that he wanted to see everyone in the town.
6. Town-crier took a gong and a stick and climbed a mound.
7. He said that King wanted to see everyone at the palace in seven day's time.
8. When it was seven days, everyone gathered, including animals and Tortoise.
9. Then King said that what he wanted to say was anyone who knew the name of his daughter would be the one to marry her.
10. He would not take even a single penny or anything from him.
11. He now said that everyone should go and search for the name of his daughter.
12. So Tortoise also heard.
13. So Tortoise said that what would he do?
14. There wasn't anyone who did not know that Tortoise was clever.
15. He was very wise.
16. It happened that the child always plaited her hairs.
17. She and her friend, the princess' name was Wuraola.
18. Her friend's name was Kikelomo.

19. They always came to do their hairs.
20. So one day, the king's daughter, the damsel and her friend, they went, they went in search of water.
21. Tortoise knew that that was the road through which the always passed when they went in search of water.
22. Tortoise said that he knew how he was going to get Wuraola's names.
23. It happened that he went and met some *ẹ́gẹ́nẹ́rò* (people from *Ẹ́gẹ́nẹ́*) who always came around, and asked them to help him carve two *ògóbí.*
24. When Tortoise came, they gave him the *ògóbí.*
25. He came to the road through which they always followed when searching for water, and carefully threw one on the road.
26. Again, he walked for about half a kilometer, and again he left one there.
27. It happened that they were going, the princess was in front.
28. When they were going, the princess found the *ògóbí* on the ground.
29. She said "*eeh* Kike", she had found an *ògóbí*!
30. She had found an *ògóbí*!
31. She said "indeed?"
32. Now we see, the princess then showed the *ògóbí* to her friend whose name was Kikelomo
33. She said *"ẹẹhẹn,* it is beautiful!"
34. She said they will not wander about aimlessly.
35. So Kike said, "wait let me move ahead because you are too slow in your walking".
36. The princess' friend whose name was Kikelomo, also moved ahead; as they were going, at about half a kilometer, Kike also found an *ògóbí.*
37. As I am saying, Tortoise was hiding by the edge of the bush.
38. He continued to listen to all that they were saying.
39. The princess's friend who name was Kikelomo said that she also had found an *ògóbí.*
40. When she found it she said "*eeh,* Wuraola, I have found an *ògóbí.*!"
41. So Tortoise said *"ẹ̀hẹ́ẹ̀n,* it is finished!'
42. Tortoise had known that the princess' name was Wuraola.

43. Then King invited messenger that he should tell them that the day had come for everyone to give him a response.
44. Anyone who knew the name of his child, he would give her to him.
45. The whole town assembled, including animals and Tortoise.
46. Tortoise said that he was going to marry the child today.
47. They said “lie, you, who doesn’t know you that you are a thief; you are a liar.”
48. He said that indeed he was going to marry this child today.
49. They continued to have the argument, when not long the king came out.
50. They king’s messenger went to tell him that everyone was gathered.
51. He said *“ẹ̀hẹ́ẹ̀!”*
52. He said he should tell them that he was coming.
53. The king now came, he came out.
54. They stood up; they greeted him “majesty”.
55. He ordered them to sit!
56. He said “what he (I) asked you to tell me, the work which he (I) gave you that you should do two weeks ago,” that they should give him the result.
57. He, “I told you that anyone who knew the name of his (my) daughter, he would marry her.”
58. One stood up and said, he raised his hand; the name which he gave was not the right one.
59. They asked him to sit down immediately.
60. Everyone tried, Tortoise sat quietly.
61. He was the last person to speak.
62. Tortoise said “he (I) greet you (PL)”.
63. “I am one who has no money; hardly do I find something to eat each day, but God’s time has come.”
64. God said that time has come that he would have money, that he would find something to eat, because he would marry this king’s daughter.
65. All the people they said “lie”, they said “lie”, they said “lie”.
66. He said “ok, you be quiet, you sit down.”
67. Tortoise came, he crossed into the middle, and he said “king I greet you, majesty.”

68. He greeted him three times.
69. King said “but are you ready?’
70. King asked him, what was the name of his daughter?
71. Your daughter, the damsel, she is called Wuraola.
72. *“Aah!”* everyone started clapping, the king himself also, he stood up and his *ágbádá* which he wore he pulled it off and threw it to his wife.
73. King has even prepared a full box of money.
74. King came out with a load of money.
75. He came out again with another load, which was filled with clothes.
76. He began to say “everyone sit down, henceforth, Tortoise will marry his (my) child, because the assignment which I gave you to do, only the Tortoise got it.”
77. So, in that same place Tortoise married princess Wuraola.
78. From that moment, Tortoise now became a great person.
79. He now became someone who had money.

Text 10: The poor warrior and the man-eating elephant
Narrated by: Pa Zaccheus Olori, male, 85

(1) È-wó íken ọ̀nẹ, óbin áyẹ bá égbén ẹ̀fọ́kẹ́bọ̀rẹ̀,
3SG.S-LOC.COP town DEM.SG king DEF.SG give.birth children eleven
ọ̀ọ́rẹ ọ́gbọgbọ wà ofòro àmọ́. (2) Ẹ̀dágbá dè-wó ébi íbè,
one alone COP male among elephant HAB-LOC.COP water interior
a-dà-ca kẹ̀-sẹ égbén ọ́nẹ. (3) Ógbén áyẹ é-kí-gue,
3SG.S-HAB-come IMP-catch children DEM.SG child DEF.SG PROG-IMP-grow
ẹ̀dagba dà-ca fọ̀-ẹ́ yọ̀. (4) Óbin ọ̀nẹ ka gàna àyẹ
elephant HAB-come take-3SG.O go king DEM.SG say how 3SG.I
éke-sie sie a? (5) Àyẹ òró ọ́nẹ ìwàrò, á-gá nẹ̀-bà kà bẹ-yọ
FUT-do do QM FOC person DEM.SG poor 3SG.S PREP-3SG.O that 3PL.S-go
bì-e-ye-ẹ cà, àyẹ éke-dí-gù ẹ̀dagba àyẹ fura iken.
3PL.S-PROG-call-3SG.O come 3PL.I FUT-can-chase elephant DEF.SG do.awasy town
(6) Á-mín-a-wọ́ mì-ítàn (Yrb)*? (7) Ẹ́ga ìkua, bí-jén e-yè*
QM.3SG.S-INCEP-PROG-hear 1SG.POSS-story word true 3PL.S-go INF-call
ìwàrò ọ̀nẹ, à-ka kẹ̀-ca gu ẹ̀dagba àyẹ fura. (8) Àyẹ
poor DEM.SG 3SG.S-say IMP-come chase elephant DEF.SG do.away FOC
èmúnubẹ, ẹ̀fẹ̀na nẹnẹ fọ̀ óbín je na, bá-á-man obin uùrúm,
promptly person REL take king eat RCP 3PL.S-PROG-sit king POSS.back
ọ̀bẹ̀n gá nẹ̀-bà, à-ka bè-éke-dí síé-ẹ.
one say PREP-3PL.O 3SG.S-say 3PL.S-NEG-can do-3SG.O
(9) Bẹ-yọ bi-e-yè óró ákọ ca, àyẹ éke-gù ẹ̀dagba àyẹ
3PL.S-go 3PL.S-PROG-call person like come 3SG.I FUT-chase elephant DEF.SG
fúra íken áyẹ. (10) Àkọ óbín a-yọ, a-kpépẹ̀pan, éró
do.away town DEF.SG as king PROG-go 3SG.S-sound.gong people
fẹnyanfẹnyan bi-jese né àyẹ, bí-jese. (11) À-ka bé-yọ́
all 3PL.S-gather PREP 3SG.I 3PL.S-gather 3SG.S-say 3PL.S-go
bi-yè ógbénofòro àyẹ cá. (12) Ógbénofòro àyẹ cá.
3PL.S-call young-man DEF.SG come young-man DEF.SG come
(13) A-ka kẹ̀-ca! (14) Èròkoro bi-dè-túrú, bẹ̀-kẹ̀-yọ̀rẹ
3SG.S-say IMP-come everyone 3PL.S-REPT-move 3PL.S-IMP-stretch
ányẹ́n gbá-ẹ́. (15) Bẹ-bẹ ésó, bi-è-mune. (16) À-ka
eye see-3SG.O 3PL.S-bolt race 3PL.S-PROG-run 3SG.S-say

bí-mé-mune! (17) E-tie òmú épan è-fóm ẹ́dagba,
3PL.S-NEG-run 3SG.S-take cap LOC.head 3SG.S-strike elephant
ẹ̀dagba falẹ fòm íjè, è-fó. (18) "È-fó, ìyẹn nipe ẹ̀dagba fo!"
elephant fall hit ground 3SG.S-die 3SG.S-die that is elephant die
(19) Óbin ka, ìwàrò ọ́nẹ́bẹ́ a-kẹ̀-ca! (20) È-sie-ẹ ẹ̀dáwúdù.
king say poor DEM.SG PROG-IMP-come 3SG.S-do-3SG.O chieftain
(21) Á-cá, è-sie-ẹ ẹ̀dáwúdù íkúá. (22) Ógbọ̀na e-fóm na,
3SG.S-come 3SG.S-do-3SG.O chieftain true when 3SG.S-linger RCP
ẹ̀fèna nẹnẹ gá kà bẹ́-yọ́, bi-ě-ye ìwàrò ca, ẹ̀fèna ka
person REL say COMP 3PL.S-go 3PL.S-PROG-call poor come person say
bẹ-fọ̀ òró ọnẹ cà, àyẹ áka-ma-bá bẹ̀-gu ẹ̀dagba
3PL.S-take person DEM.SG come 3SG.I FUT-do.with-3PL.O 3PL.S-chase elephant
íken, àyẹ dí a-ga-ẹ kà "gàna bì-síé cá, bì-á-fọ̀
LOC.town 3SG.I can INF-say-3SG.O that how 3PL.S-do come 3PL.S-PROG-take
òdùdù ọ̀nẹ, bi-è-je ẹ̀dáwúdù a?" (23) Á-min a-wọ́
evil DEM.SG 3PL.S-PROG-eat chieftain QM QM.3SG.S-INCEP PROG-hear
ìtàn àyẹ dáadáa? (24) À-ka, gàna bì-sie sie, bẹ̀-á-fọ
story DEF.SG well 3SG.S-say how 3PL.S-do do 3PL.S-PROG-take
ìwàrò ọ̀nẹ ca é-jé ọkẹ̀ka wó í-bì-iken ọ̀ne a?
poor DEM.SG come INF-eat leader LOC.COP LOC.3PL.POSS-town DEM.SG QM
(25) Bi-gù-yá gǒ! (26) A-kẹ̀-yọ yẹ̀-ẹ́kà. (27) Bì-gú-yá,
3PL.S-chase-3SG.O PTCL 3SG.S-IMP-go 3SG.POSS-own 3PL.S-chase-3SG.O
(28) À-ka "ẹ̀fẹ̀na a-fọ òmú à-nwán ẹ̀dagba na,
3SG.S-say person PROG-take cap PROG-kill elephant RCP
á-má-bẹ ka á-cá é-fú íken àyẹ?" (29) Bí-mín-gu
3SG.S-NEG-be that 3SG.S-come 3SG.S-distroy town DEF.SG 3PL.S-INCEP-chase
ìwàrò àyẹ, e-pìlà yọ̀ yò-ósĭn. (30) È-pìlà á-yọ́,
poor DEF.SG 3SG.S-return go 3SG.POSS-residence 3SG.S-return 3SG.S-go
a-fọ igbèn mán "usie ka àyẹ kẹ̀-gán." (31) Ẹ̀dagba àyẹ
3SG.S-take buttocks sit tomorrow says 3SG.I IMP-dawn elephant DEF.SG
palẹ ca, a-yǫ̀ ẹ̀fẹ̀na a-man na. (32) óbin eègben fura,
wake come 3SG.S-go place 3SG.S-dwell RCP king POSS.children do.away
bè-e-si'arẹ újógụẹkà. (33) Ẹ̀dagba fọ́m be-ètín, a-fŏ óbin
3PL.S-PROG-play night elephant enter 3PL.POSS-middle 3SG.S-take king
oògben go!
POSS.child PTCL

Translation

1. There was this town, the king had twelve children, and only one was male among them.
2. Elephant used to live in the water, and he always came to snatch the child.
3. When the child is grown, Elephant came to snatch him/her.
4. This king said, what was he going to do?
5. There was this poor man, he asked that they should go and invite him to help them chase the elephant away.
6. Are you listening to my story?
7. Truly, they went and they invited this poor man to come and chase Elephant away.
8. Promptly, those who make kings (kingmakers) that are standing behind the king, one said they will be able to do it.
9. They should go and call a person like that, he will chase the elephant out of town.
10. As King was going, he sounded out the gong, and everyone was gathered.
11. He said they should go and invite the man.
12. The man came.
13. He said “come!”
14. Everyone moved again, they were straining themselves to see him.
15. They ran away.
16. He said “they shouldn’t run!”
17. He took cap from head, and he stroke Elephant, Elephant fell down and died.
18. “It is died, so Elephant is dead!”
19. King said that that poor man should come.
20. He made him a chief.
21. He came and indeed they made him a chief.
22. After some time, the one who said that they should invite him, that he would chase the elephant away, he then said that how come they made such an evil man a chief?
23. Are you listening to the story very well?

24. He said how did they make this poor man a chief in this town?
25. They chased him!
26. He went on his own.
27. They chased him.
28. He said, “a person who killed Elephant with a cap, will he not destroy this town?”
29. They now chased away the poor man, and he returned to his quarters.
30. He returned to his place, “there will surely be the dawning of another day”.
31. Elephant resurrected, and went to his usual place.
32. King’s children got to play in the evening.
33. Elephant entered among them, and snatched King’s child.

Text 11: Yam farming in Ogori 1
Narrated by: Joseph Tunde, male, 43

(1) Bè-e-ki-ni ka bi-sie érúm utum. (2) Ẹ́pẹ́n ákọ
3PL.S-PROG-PREF-want COMP 3PL.S-do farm work thing like
August na, àyẹ bà-áka-kpám-ya, bà-kpám-ya,
August RCP FOC 3PL.S-FUT-PROG-plough-3SG.O 3PL.S-plough-3SG.O
è-sie ọsẹ̀ ẹ̀bọ̀rẹ̀, á-à-bẹrẹ cáná á-yọ́ a-wẹ̀-ya.
3SG.S-do week two PPCS-3SG.S-soft quick 3SG.S-go 3SG.S-cultivate-3SG.O
(3) À-wẹ̀ẹ̀-ya, á-yọ́ a-sẹ̀ ìgìlà ẹ́pẹ́n ákọ éwúsú,
3SG.S-cultivate-3SG.O 3SG.S-go 3SG.S-select yam seedling like ?
ọ̀gọ̀njọ, ọ̀wànà, àjíbókúnu, ìpépe, kẹ̀-sẹ̀-ba, é-è-bire.
? ? ? ? IMP-select-3PL.O PPCS-3SG.S-plant
(4) É-bire-ẹ, ẹ́pẹ́n ákọ December to January na, á-yọ́ e-wùru
3SG.S-soft thing like December to January RCP 3SG.S-go 3SG.S-uproot
ásám. (5) È-wùru ásám, éyí é-mé-di-sie ágọ́ áyẹ íyọnu.
mulch 3SG.S-uproot mulch sun 3SG.S-NEG-ABL-do seedling DEF.SG trouble
(6) Ọgbọ̀na e-wùrù ásám àyẹ fura nà, á-yọ́ a-cẹn ógbẹ́n
when 3SG.S-uproot mulch DEF.SG do.away RCP 3SG.S-go 3SG.S-cut stake
kì-wó íjè, (7) Ógbẹ́n ọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ á-cẹn, ọgbà
IMP-LOC.COP LOC.ground stake DEM.SG 3SG.S-cut time
é-ré à-kọ́-ya cá wó érúm áyẹ.
3SG.S-reach 3SG.S-pack-3SG.O come LOC.COP farm DEF.SG
(8) *Ọgbọ̀na ìgìlà àyẹ éke-rúwá na, á-kọ-ya, é-kì-tèn amọ.*
when yam DEF.SG FUT-grow RCP 3SG.S-pack-3SG.O 3SG.S-IMP-fold PART
(9) É-è-ten ìgìlà àyẹ é-wé kẹ̀-ca á-kọ́-ya,
PPCS.if-3SG.S-fold yam DEF.SG PPCS.3SG.S-INCEP IMP-come 3SG.S-pack-3SG.O
a-kẹ̀-bẹlẹkẹsẹ-ya, éyí é-mé-di sie-ẹ íyọnu. (10) É-mé-di
3SG.S-IMP-tie.round-3SG.O sun 3SG.S-NEG-can do-3SG.S trouble 3SG.S-NEG-can
fọ̀ épán dẹ̀ íjé nẹnẹ eyi áka-nwăn-yá nà. (11) Ọ̀sẹ̀ ọ̀sóòro
take head touch ground REL sun FUT-kill-3SG.O RCP week first
a-ca, nẹnẹ émén ayẹ è-e-tèn na, óró àyẹ
3SG.S-come REL bush DEF.SG 3SG.S-PROG-entwine RCP person DEF.SG
a-tọmẹ a-kẹ̀-hárá-ẹ. (12) Ọ̀hárá kẹ̀-wàmọ́ọ, a-kẹ̀-kọ̀lẹ́-ya
3SG.S-start 3SG.S-IMP-weed-3SG.O weeding IMP-EXIST 3SG.S-PART-fold-3SG.O

agọ̀ titi kǐ-re ẹ́pẹ́n ákọ August ẹ̀nábẹ̀ na, ìgìlà àyẹ
seedling until continue-reach thing like August that RCP yam DEF.SG
é-kì-gben. (13) Ọ̀nẹ a-wà ọ̀là óró sie na.
PPCS.3SG.S-IMP-mature DEM.SG 3SG.S-be kind person do RCP
(14) É-kì-gben ọ́gbọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ yọ, órò e-min a-tọmẹ
PPCS.3SG.S-IMP-mature that.time go person 3SG.S-INCEP PROG-start
a-yọ a-kẹ̀-balẹ ẹ̀nánẹ̀ gbén ámọ na, nẹnẹ è-dí
3SG.S-go 3SG.S-IMP-look these mature PART RCP REL 3SG.S-can
e-kì-jijen nà. (15) Ì-roro ka àkọ tì-sie e- sie érum utum
INF-IMP-eat RCP 1SG.S-think COMP like 1PL.S-do PROG-do farm work
ọ́yọ útúm nà àyẹ á-wà ọ̀nẹ.
LOC.savannah work RCP FOC 3SG.S-COP DEM.SG

Translation

1. How they do farm work.
2. Sometime like August, they will plough it, and after two weeks they will cultivate it.
3. After cultivating it, they will then select yam seedling like: *éwúsú, ọ̀gọ̀njọ, ọ̀wànà, àjíbókúnu, ìpépe* (yam species), they select it and then plant it.
4. After planting, sometime like in December to January, he goes to uproot some mulch.
5. After uprooting the mulch, Sun will not be able to scourge the yam plant.
6. After removing the mulch, he goes to chop down some stake which he erects on the ground.
7. The stakes which he chops, when the time comes, he brings them to the farm.
8. By the time the yams will grow, he folds it around it.
9. If he folds the yam plant, he will now come and gather it, and tie it round so that Sun does not scourge it.
10. It will not put its top part on the ground which will cause Sun to scourge it.
11. The first week comes when the weed will surround it, the person will start weeding.

12. Together with the weeding, he will fold it, the yam plant until sometime around August, the yams will mature.
13. This is the kind which one does.
14. It will mature; from then people will start to go and observe those that are ripe for eating.
15. I think this is how yam farming in Savannah is done.

Text 12: Yam farming in Ogori 2
Narrated by: Omoshole Noah Alabi, male, 40

(1) Àkọ ti-dè-sie kì-sie ìgìlà eèrum na. (2) Ìgìlà tè-é-ni
as 1PL.S-HAB-do IMP-do yam POSS.farm RCP yam 1PL.S-if-want
ka ti-bìre, tí-sie ìgìlà eèrum, í-tẹ̀-dà-kpám ẹ́fà
COMP 1PL.S-plant 1PL.S-do yam POSS.farm PPDS-1PL.S-HAB-clear place
íjé nẹnẹ rónmúro nà. (3) Tà-á-kpám-yá, ẹ́pẹ́n ákọ ọcẹn úfómbọ̀rẹ̀
land REL good RCP 1PL.S-if-clear-3SG.O thing like month seven
ìùwú nà tà-á-kpám-yá, í-tè-téí-yà, ẹ́pẹ́n ákọ
POSS.body RCP 1PL.S-if-clean-3SG.O PPDS-1PL.S-leave-3SG.O thing like
ọ̀sẹ̀ ẹ̀ta nà. (4) Tè-téí-yà, kí e-re ọgbọ̀nábẹ̀ íjé bẹrẹ.
week three RCP 1PL.S-leave-3SG.O continue reach when ground soft
(5) Ẹ́mẹ́n nẹnẹ tẹ̀-kpám nà, k'áyẹ yeyi. (6) Tì-dí a-kẹnẹ-ya,
grass REL 1PL.S-clear RCP also'3SG.I dry 1PL.S-can INF-burn-3SG.O
tẹ̀-kọ́-ẹ. (7) Tè-mín kọ-ẹ, í-ta-wẹ̀ íjé áyẹ.
1PL.S-pack-3SG.O 1PL.S-INCEP pack-3SG.O PPDS-1PL.S-cultivate ground DEF.SG
(8) Tà-wẹ̀-yá kè, í-tè-ni ìbìrè ẹ̀èpẹn
1PL.S-cultivate-3SG.O PERF PPDS-1PL.S-search plant POSS.thing
ti-bire-ẹ wàmọ. (9) Tì-bìre-ẹ ẹ́pẹ́n ákọ egbìlén, èkúrákpà,
1PL.S-plant-3SG.O Exist 1PL.S-plant-3SG.O thing like okra corn
ísírá, akà ídí, è-ré ọ́cẹ́n ẹ̀fọkòọ́rẹ ìùwú, í-tè-min
melon and beans 3SG.S-reach month eleven POSS.body PPDS-1PL.S-INCEP
a-kẹ̀-sẹ̀rẹ agọ̀. (10) Ẹ̀fẹ̀na sú érum nẹnẹ è-sú agọ̀
PROG-IMP-slice yam-seedling person have farm REL 3SG.S-have yam-seedling
wó tẹlẹ nẹnẹ à-táyẹ̀ sú agọ̀ wó nà, í-tà-ṣám
PREP before(Yrb) REL 3SG.S-before have seedling PREP RCP PPDS-1PL.S-chop
ágọ́ áyẹ. (11) Tẹ̀-kpà íje íbè, tẹ̀-sẹ̀rẹ́-yá.
seedling DEF.SG 1PL.S-dig-3SG.O ground interior 1PL.S-slice-3SG.O
(12) Ẹ̀fẹ̀na é-mé-sù na, í-ta-yọ̀ éjí tì-nyín-yà.
person 3SG.S-NEG-have PPDS-1PL.S-go market 1PL.S-buy-3SG.O
(13) Tè-mín nyín-yà ẹ̀gan, í-ta-sẹ̀rẹ́-yà wó gbà
1PL.S-INCEP buy-3SG.O so PPDS-1PL.S-slice-3SG.O PREP see
àkọ́ è-éke-sie fọ́m áwọ́má nà. (14) Yò-óbìbíré ọ́cẹn
as 3SG.S-FUT-do enter heap RCP 3SG.POSS-planting month

ẹ̀fọ́kọ̀ọ́rẹ nẹnẹ ì-kí gá nà, í-tè-min e-bìré-ẹ́.
eleven REL 1SG.S-continue say RCP PPDS-1PL.S-INCEP PROG-plant-3SG.O
(15) Tì-é-bìré-ẹ, è-é-ré ọ́cẹ́n òṣóòro ẹ́nyẹn ówówó
1PL.S-if-plant-3SG.O 3SG.S-if-reach month first year new
tì-dí min e-kì-wùrú ásám. (16) Ásám òwúwuru
1PL.S-can INCEP PROG-IMP-uproot mulch mulch uprooting
ọ̀nẹ́bẹ́, kà éyí a-má-sẹ̀ ágó abẹ̀. (17) È-e-re
DEM.SG that sun 3SG.S-NEG-scourge seedling DEF.PL 3SG.S-if-reach
ọcẹn ọ̀ọ́bọ̀rẹ̀rò, sà ọ̀tétaro ẹ́nyẹn owowo, í-ta-kẹ̀-ṣám ótí
month second or third LOC.year new PPDS-1PL.S-IMP-chop stick
nẹnẹ tè-éke-sie ọ́gbẹ́n nà. (18) Ọ́gbẹ́n ọ́nẹbẹ àyẹ bi-dà-kọ̀lẹ
REL 1PL.S-FUT-do stake RCP stake DEM.SG FOC 3PL.S-REPT-entwine
ágọ́ àbẹ nẹ kà éyí é-mé-di sie ágọ́ ábẹ̀
yam-plant DEF.PL PREP COMP sun 3SG.S-NEG-can do yam-plant DEF.PL
nwán íjè. (19) Tà-kọ̀lẹ́-yá ẹ́gàn nà, ágọ́ áyẹ
die LOC.ground 1PL.S-entwine-3SG.O so PTCL yam-plant DEF.SG
e-kì-rúwá nà. (20) È-é-sú àkọ ẹ́mẹ́n sie ruwa nà, í-tà-tọmẹ
3SG.S-IMP-grow PTCL 3SG.S-if-have like grass do grow PTCL PPDS-1PL.S-start
ọ̀hẹ́hara. (21) Ákọ tì-sie a-háré ọ̀nẹ́bẹ́ na,
weeding as 1SG.S-do PROG-weed DEM.SG RCP
í-tì-dà-kẹ̀-kọ̀lẹ ágọ́ àbẹ. (22) Àkọ ésúbù dè-sie
PPDS-1PL.S-REPT-IMP-entwine yam-plant DEF.PL as olden days HAB-do
wà na, ọ́nyẹn dè-sie wà na, àyẹ ágọ́ áyẹ dà-cana
COP RCP year HAB-do COP PTCL FOC plant DEF.SG HAB-do.quick
kẹ̀-bá, òsì a-ca daadaa. (23) Òsì é-ni àkọ è-sie
IMP-sprout rain PROG-come well rain PROG-want like 3SG.S-do
bọ̀ na, kĭ re ọ́cẹ́n ùpí, ọ́cẹ́n ọ̀pọ́nọ̀ọ́rẹ iìwú,
suppose RCP continue reach month five month six POSS.body
ìgìlà bá, í-tà-tọmẹ tẹ̀-kpá-ẹ. (25) cáná tẹ-kẹ̀-kpá-ẹ,
yam ripe PPDS-1PL.S-start 1PL.S-dig-3SG.O before 1PL.S-IMP-dig-3SG.O
ẹkẹ̀kárọ̀ dẹ̀-sie, bi-dè-puminyan. (28) Bè-é-puminyan àyẹ,
chiefs HAB-do 3PL.S-HAB-sacrifice 3PL.S-if-sacrifice DEF.SG
bi-dè-mín gẹ̀n ídú. (29) Bà-a-gẹ̀n ídú áyẹ,
3PL.S-HAB-INCEP harvest new-yam 3PL.S-if-harvest new-yam DEF.SG
àyẹ óroro mín dí a-kẹ̀-kọ́ ìgìlà kẹ̀-ca úbó
FOC everyone INCEP can PROG-IMP-pack yam IMP-come house

nẹ̀nẹ̀	*ti-dèkì-je*	*nà.*	*(30)*	*fẹ̀nyan-fẹ̀nyan*	*nẹ̀nẹ̀*	*ì-dín*	*nà*	*ígìlà*
REL	1PL.S-HAB-eat	RCP		all	REL	1SG.S-know	RCP	yam
òsísie	*na*	*á-wà*	*ọ̀nẹ̀*					
doing	RCP	3SG.S-be	DEM.SG					

Translation

1. As they usually do yam farm.
2. Yam, if we want to plant, to do a yam farm, we will clear a place, a good land.
3. If we clear it, sometime around the seventh month, if we clear it, we will leave it for something like three weeks.
4. After, we leave it to a time when the ground is softer.
5. The grass which we cleared will also dry up.
6. We can then burn it, we will then clear it.
7. After packing it, we will then cultivate the land.
8. After cultivating it, we will now look for something to plant on it.
9. After planting it, with things like okra, corn, melon and beans, when it reaches around the eleventh month, we will start slicing the yam seedlings.
10. One who has a farm in which there are old yam seedlings, he will chop the seedlings.
11. We dig in the ground and slice it.
12. One who doesn't have will go to the market and buy it.
13. After buying it in this manner, we will slice it to see how it will fit into the heaps.
14. Its planting, that is in the eleventh month that I am talking about, we will now plant it.
15. We plant it, if it reaches the first month of the New Year, we can now begin to uproot mulch.
16. The uprooting of mulch is for Sun not to scourge the seedlings.
17. When it reaches the second month or third of the New Year, we will now chop down stick which will serve as stakes.

18. The stakes around which we will entwine the yam plant is so that Sun does not scourge it on the ground.
19. We entwine it in this manner, the yam plant will grow.
20. If it has grown weed, we will now start weeding.
21. As we are doing the weeding, we will also be folding the yam plant.
22. Like in the olden days, there used to be some sacrifice for sufficient rain fall.
23. If it rains like it should, up to the fifth and sixth month, the yams ripen and we can start harvesting it.
24. Before harvesting it, Elders first do some rituals.
25. If they do the rituals, they will start to harvest the new yams.
26. If they harvest the new yams, everyone can then bring them home for eating.
27. This is all that I know about yam farming.

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Versicherung

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