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Ibibio Grammar

By

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I B I B I O   G R A M M A R

Elaine Marlowe Kaufman

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## General Introduction

The Ibibio language is spoken by between one and two million people in eastern Nigeria and a bit of western Cameroun. It is classified by Greenberg<sup>1</sup> as a Cross-River language in the Benue-Congo branch of Niger-Congo. The name Ibibio, or Ibibio-Efik (as it is referred to by Greenberg), is applied to a group of for the most part mutually intelligible dialects including Ibibio, Efik, Anang, Eket, Ibeno, Andoni, and Oron<sup>2</sup>. The best known dialect is Efik, spoken natively in Calabar and the surrounding area by about 25,000 people. Because the Efiks are traders, and because Calabar was a contact point for Europeans engaged in slave trading and in missionizing, the Efik dialect became known over a wide area. It is the accepted standard dialect today; it is taught in schools and used in church services. It is also spoken as a trade dialect throughout the Ibibio area and beyond. For these reasons Efik has received more attention from linguists than the other Ibibio dialects, some of which are spoken natively by large numbers of people. The most important works on Efik are: the Reverend Hugh Goldie, Principles of Efik Grammar 1857, and his Dictionary of the Efik Language 1862; Ida C. Ward, The Phonetic and Tonal Structure of Efik 1933; William E. Welmers, a teaching grammar, Efik 1967.

Linguistic studies of other Ibibio dialects are few (see Selected Bibliography below) and only one serious work has appeared dealing with the most important (from the point of view of numbers of native speakers) dialect, namely, Ibibio proper. This is an article by Donald C. Simmons, "Ibibio Verb Morphology," 1957. It is with Ibibio proper that this grammar will deal.

Three varieties of the Ibibio dialect are reflected in this grammar. These varieties are spoken in three clans whose villages lie within 25 miles of each other. These villages cluster around the provincial capital of Uyo in southeastern Nigeria. The three clans, namely, Itak (dialect A), Nsit (dialect B) and Ibesikpo (dialect C) are technically Ibibio proper<sup>3</sup>, yet only the latter two may be said to be typically Ibibio. Itak, which lies two miles from the border with the Anang dialect, shows many Anang features. The bulk of the data I collected is from Itak. Nsit data is considerable but is perhaps only a fourth of that from Itak. Ibesikpo data were used only in a supplementary way. Therefore, this grammar is not a grammar of the purest Ibibio, but rather of a speech strongly tinged with Anang.

It is useful to consider the differences between Efik, Ibibio and Anang. The dialects may be viewed as

lying on a line running from northwest (Anang) to southeast (Efik) with Ibibio in the middle. The dialect boundaries are not sharp due to the dense population of the area and constant intermingling, although Efik is more clearly separated because of its status of Standard dialect. Lexical differences are the most important, with grammatical differences next, and phonological differences being least important. Ibibio and Anang are considerably more complex grammatically than Efik and probably more conservative in all ways. Although it is generally possible to distinguish Efik features from Ibibio ones (or Anang ones), this task is made difficult by a considerable amount of dialect mixture. Most speakers I observed, and all I worked with intensively have a familiarity with Efik that more or less affects their own dialect.

I have frequently designated certain forms and constructions as being characteristic of one village area or the other, or of Efik rather than Ibibio. No one speaker necessarily conforms to all the characteristics of dialect A or B or C, but forms labeled such may be considered the norm.

The data on which this description is based were collected over a 3 year period. The largest body of data was obtained from work with Mr. Eno James Usoro

of Ikot Akpa Odung, Itak from January through December of 1965 at the University of California, Berkeley. Further data from Itak were obtained from Mr. James Udo Usoro when I lived in Ikot Akpa Odung from June through September of 1966. The data from Nsit were obtained from work with Mrs. Atim Etuk Orok of Ikot Obio Etan from January to May 1966 at the University of California, Davis. Finally, I worked on and off throughout 1967 with Mr. Emmanuel David Akpan of Afaga Etuk, Ibesikpo, at San Mateo, California.

Some supplementary data were obtained from various other Ibibio speakers in the United States and in Nigeria. I wish to mention especially Miss Mfon Davis Umoh whose constant companionship in Itak was responsible more than anything else for my obtaining a certain working knowledge of Ibibio.

I want to express my thanks to the people who have contributed to the writing of this grammar.

The dissertation was directed by Professor Wallace L. Chafe and read by Professors William F. Shipley and William E. Welmers. Both Professors Chafe and Shipley were my teachers in linguistics and offered moral support and encouragement throughout my linguistic training as well as on the Ibibio grammar. Professor Welmers was

in Nigeria during part of my stay there and provided stimulation and a morale boost when my energy was flagging.

My thanks go to all my informants, most of whom took time out of very busy schedules to help me gather data because of their belief in the worthiness of the project.

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Finally and most important my deepest gratitude is to the two people whose concern with getting this grammar written was second only to my own: Mr. Eno James Usoro without whose help and concern the grammar and the trip to Nigeria probably never would have materialized, and my husband, Terrence S. Kaufman, who never tired of giving me the support and encouragement I needed.

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## Introduction to the Grammar

## Introduction to the Grammar

This study is regarded by the writer as a first description and is far from being a complete or definitive grammar. It is based on direct observation in the form of systematic eliciting of grammatical materials, of recording, transcribing and translating texts, and of listening to and trying to speak the language during four months in Nigeria. I am aware that there remains much to be done in the analysis of the material here. In fact, this grammar is marked by one large inconsistency, that of depth of analysis. In some sections the material has been analyzed to my satisfaction and I feel that the analysis accounts for the synchronic facts in an internally consistent, plausible way and often reflects what I believe to be true about the historical facts that bear on the problem. In other areas I have not been able to see that deeply at this stage. In these cases I have purposely left the data underanalyzed rather than impose on it an ad hoc analysis which will no doubt have to be changed after further study of Ibibio has added deeper insights. This leads me to an apology for the lack of a consistent theoretical model. I am interested in describing the

facts of the language in as simple, straightforward and revealing a manner as possible, and I have used whatever methods were at hand to this purpose. The fact that I know there are gaps in my insight, problems and relationships I have not fathomed made me avoid setting the description into a rigid model where a major concern must be with the form of rules. I feel that it is unrealistic to try to write rules, particularly of a generative type, when the language is not more deeply understood for fear that these rules might obscure relationships and alternative analyses that might suggest themselves as I pursue my study of Ibibio. So my procedure has been as follows. I have used a discursive style, using old-fashioned terminology chosen wherever possible not to be flavored by one school or another of linguistic theory. Where I felt sure of the depth and accuracy of my analysis I have formulated rules as well.

In spite of the above qualificative remarks, I believe that the major patterns of the language have been observed and described in this grammar in a way that may leave room for <sup>the discovery of deeper patterns</sup> but also in a way which does not distort the data nor pull together things that should be kept apart.

There is a notable dearth of the use of the terms phoneme, morphophoneme, and morpheme, and of the use of the brackets normally associated with these concepts. The reasons for this are readability and to emphasize the fact that the language is not being viewed as consisting of discrete levels. In the case of the phoneme, the concept is unnecessary and even misleading for Ibibio segmentals and impossible for Ibibio tones. Forms are written in a basic morphophonemic shape and described in terms of their phonetic realizations. Thus, every phonological entity which appears in the grammar is either a morphophoneme or else a phone. If it is a morphophoneme it is written without any brackets; if it is a phone it is written in square brackets. These brackets mean two things. In the phonology, they mean that what is enclosed is in a narrow phonetic transcription. This transcription is accompanied by horizontal lines over the segmentals to indicate in detail the relative pitches involved. Elsewhere in the grammar, square brackets enclose a broad phonetic transcription. This latter transcription indicates all the segmental phonological contrasts plus important positional variants. For example, kp, p, and b are all distinguished even though all three may represent

a morphophoneme p. This broad phonetic transcription is provided as an aid to the reader so that he does not have to keep in mind the operation of the various morphophonemic rules and how each morphophonemic entity is to be realized. In the syntax the morphophonemic transcription given presupposes the operation of all rules involved in deriving stems. In other words, all rules pertaining to the combination of roots plus derivational affixes have already operated. For example, the verb root *tèm* 'put a pot on the fire' may combine with the reversive suffix *·ké* to form a reversive stem written in the derivation *tèm·ké*. However, when this stem appears in the syntax it has the form *tèmmé* which is the result of the operation of certain morphophonemic rules. All inflectional affixes are given in their basic morphophonemic shapes and the reader is referred to the broad phonetic transcription that follows for their phonetic realization and to the rules in the phonology for information about the operation of the rules involved.

Where it is not specifically mentioned, the concept of morpheme is implicit. In the derivation the structure of stems is discussed in terms of morphemes. Each root and each affix constitutes a

morpheme. Where more than one form is listed under a particular derivational affix, the implication is that they are allomorphs. Any item presented in the syntax which is not clearly identified as a stem (discussed in the derivation) may be assumed to be monomorphemic.

It has been mentioned that a separate section is devoted to derivation as distinct from syntax. The line between the two is at times difficult to draw. Whether an affix is inflectional or derivational, whether a productive construction should be discussed in the syntax or in the derivation has at times required an arbitrary decision. In general only the formation of stems is discussed in the derivation. However, where a syntactic construction is highly productive in producing, for example, phrases consisting of substantive plus verb plus substantive which, in spite of their complex structure, function like a simple substantive, these have been discussed in the derivation even though inflectional affixes may be involved in forming these phrases.

## Abbreviations and Conventions

lit. = literally

If a stem is quoted in canonical form and no subscript numbers are given, it means that whether the vowels of consonants are homophonous or heterophonous is not relevant. Example: CVV. means  $CV_1V_1$  or  $CV_1V_2$

Numbers 1 through 6 are used to refer to the following persons in a verb construction: 1 1st person singular, 2 2nd person singular, 3 3rd person singular, 4 1st person plural, 5 2nd person plural, 6 3rd person plural.

Whenever the word "sentence" is used without further clarification, it means simple sentence.

Reduplicated adjectives are written as one word.

High toned adjectives have ' on the second part.

Since ' occurs infrequently across word boundaries, these adjectives are written as one word.

Examples:

úsópúsóp [usobusop] 'quickly'

úsûkúsûk [usugusuk] 'slowly'

̀Ndípé̀Ndípé [ndibendibe] 'secretly'

Bound sequentials are written as one word for the reason given above and also because they function as a unit similar to a verb with a construction marker.

Examples:

Nyávdép [nyaʒdep] 'I'm about to buy.'

NbôNdêp [mbondep] 'I'm about to buy.'



P a r t I

P h o n o l o g y

## Introduction

Ibibio has the following kinds of phonological elements: tones, vowels, consonants, junctures, and registers. They are presented below.

### Tones

ˊ  
ˋ  
˙

### Vowels

i	u
e	o
a	ɔ

V harmonic oral vowel

N harmonic nasal vowel

### Consonants

p	t	k	
b	d		
f	s		
m	n	ñ	ŋ
	y	w	

M replacive nasal

Nj additive nasal

R reduplicator

• lengthener

### Junctures

- # word boundary
- hyphen juncture

### Registers

- . normal
- ? interrogative
- : emphatic

Certain of the tones, vowels, and consonants occur predominantly or entirely in affixes. In the former category is ' , in the latter all the elements written with special symbols, i.e. V, N, M, Ń, R, • . The remaining tones, vowels, and consonants occur in roots and in affixes, or in roots alone. The special symbols stand for specialized, possibly secondary, morphophonemes whose phonetic realizations have a wide range and which are not necessarily suggested by the symbol. Among the primary elements, there are some which also have a wide range of phonetic realization, namely k, e. The others for the most part have a narrow range of phonetic realization, often a one-to-one correspondence whose quality is suggested by the symbol chosen.

Each type of phonological element is discussed

in turn below and rules are given for predicting their phonetics. Some of these rules are grammatically conditioned. Most operate regardless of grammatical environment. A few rules are ordered, that is, one rule must apply before another. Where that is the case, it is always stated, and the rules are numbered. Otherwise, rules apply in any order.

## 1.1 Syllable Structure

### 1.11 The Tone Syllable

The tone syllable is a phonetic entity. It has no grammatical significance. It is that phonetic stretch which carries a tone. Its minimal structure is a vowel plus a tone. If the vowel is one of the six root vowels [see 1.5 ] an initial and/or final consonant may occur as well. Every vowel in Ibibio bears a tone. Every vowel plus its tone constitutes a syllabic peak. Sequences of these tone-bearing vowels constitute the peaks of separate tone syllables.

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{V} \\ \text{Canon (C) V (C)} \end{array}$$

Examples of tone-syllabification:

kóí Nmóóŋ

[kó/i m̄/má/ŋ]

'Draw water!'

Nnò mièn Vbòdóm

[n̄/nā/mi/Ēn 3̄/bō/dóm]

'Give me (the) drum!'

kàá ké tiè

[kā/ā/ke/ti/ē]

'Go and sit!'

Ndísí

[ndi/ŋ/i]

'very bad'

### 1.12 The Structural Syllable

The structural syllable is an entity which has both phonetic and grammatical significance. It is defined as a stretch of speech bounded by hyphen junctures [see 1.21].

The function of the structural syllable is to predict the phonetic values of consonants and vowels. It also happens that certain grammatical classes are partially correlated with the number and type of structural syllables of which their members are constructed.

Certain Ibibio consonants have extremely restricted distributions. These restrictions can be most conveniently stated in terms of hyphen juncture. The phonetic values of Ibibio vowels depend on the occurrences of these vowels in open versus closed structural syllables. While it is often possible to predict from the phonotactics where a structural syllable boundary occurs and hence whether a given syllable is open (i.e. ends in a vowel) or closed (i.e. ends in a consonant), there are ambiguous cases. In these cases, hyphen juncture must be written.

The minimal structure of the structural syllable is a vowel plus a tone. It may be more complex however. The possibilities are symbolized below. The

more complex structures involve only the six root vowels. The other vowels, namely V- and N-, occur only in the minimal structure described above.

#### Canon

$$V$$

$$CV_1(V_{1/2})(C)$$

$$CV_1(V_2)(V_{1/2})'$$

The structural syllable often, but by no means invariably, coincides with the tone syllable. It more often coincides with the morpheme. Nearly every morpheme boundary coincides with a hyphen juncture, although the converse is less often true.

#### Examples of structural-syllabification:

Morpheme and tone syllable boundaries given for comparison are marked by + and /, respectively. Structural syllables are separated by -, the hyphen juncture.

ˈN-sí-mèn-·ké

ˈN+sí+mèn+·ké

[n̄/si/mèn̄/ne]

'I usually don't swallow'

ˈN-mé-sím-é N-dì-sím-é

ˈN+mé+simé N+dì+simé

[m̄/me/sím̄/e n̄/dì/sím̄/e]

'I am foolish'

V-sìm-é-kà

V-sìmékà

[3/sīm/e/kā]

'a tuberous food,' probably a loan from  
English 'Jamaica,' the place of origin  
of the tuber

V-sùk-kó

V+sùk+·ké [see 2.1 ]

[3/sūk/ɲ]

'He fainted'

V-sú-kà

V+súkà

[3/su/kā]

'sugar,' loan from English or Portuguese

N-mé-di'í

N+mé+di'ók+í [see 2.1 ]

[m/me/di/ɔ/i]

'I am very bad'



## 1.2 Junctures

### 1.21 Hyphen Juncture -

Everything that occurs between hyphen junctures is one structural syllable. Hyphen juncture itself is phonetically zero but its presence signals the phonetic value of certain vowels and consonants [see 1.4/5]. Where hyphen juncture coincides with word juncture [see below], it is not marked; where its presence is predictable from the phonotactics [see 1.9 ], it is also not marked. Whenever the above conditions are not met, it is written with a hyphen - . The hyphen indicates the beginning of a structural syllable. The juncture at the end of a structural syllable is always predictable.

### 1.22 Word Juncture #

The word is defined morphologically. It is a stem plus its inflectional affixes. Words are separated by word juncture which is marked by a space ordinarily. It may be marked # to call attention to its presence. Word juncture itself is phonetically zero. However, it has two phonological effects. First, in very deliberate speech, word boundary may signal the suspension of certain automatic phonological rules. Second, certain tone rules must be stated with reference to word juncture.

### 1.3 Tones

Ibibio tones are of two types. The first type involves a basic pitch: high ' or low ` . The second type involves the lowering of a basic high pitch. It is the drop tone ' . Basic high and low tones may occur alone, but drop tone always cooccurs with high tone.

Morphemes are composed of segmentals plus tones, or of tones alone. Every segmental morpheme carries a basic tone (or pattern of tones). This tone or tones makes up its inherent tone (pattern). An inherent tone (pattern) may be high, low, a sequence of highs and/or lows, or (rarely, and secondary historically) certain of these combined with drop on one or more high tones. Some constructions in Ibibio are composed solely of morphemes bearing their inherent tone (patterns). Other constructions include one or more tonal morphemes. These tonal morphemes may cancel out the inherent tones of some or all of the constituent morphemes and replace them with an overriding tone (pattern). Others may merely modify some or all of the inherent tone patterns. These tonal morphemes which characterize certain constructions are called construction tones. Construction tones may consist of high tones, low tones, sequences of highs and lows,

combinations of high plus drop, or drop alone.

Construction tones may be added, overriding, or replacive. They are symbolized as follows:

added

applies only to ' .

<sup>1</sup>CV written C<sup>1</sup>V throughout this grammar

overriding

applies to ' , ` , ^

<sup>1</sup>CV <sup>2</sup>CV <sup>3</sup>CV

read as C<sup>1</sup>V C<sup>2</sup>V C<sup>3</sup>V

replacive

applies to ' , `

'C<sup>1</sup>V `C<sup>1</sup>V

read as C<sup>1</sup>V C<sup>1</sup>V.

Added means that the drop tone is added to a high tone and modifies it. Overriding means that the tone pattern overrides all inherent tones throughout an entire stem. Replacive means that the next tone is cancelled out and replaced by the replacive tone.

High tone represents a pitch relatively higher than any adjacent non-high tone in an utterance. Low tone represents a pitch relatively lower than any adjacent non-low tone. Each new occurrence of a high

tone where no low tone has intervened and where no drop tone cooccurs is at the same pitch as the preceding high tone irrespective of junctures.

Examples:

dí mí [dī mī] 'Come here!'

Nníímé·ké íkán [nniimeke íkán]

'I didn't extinguish the fire'

Likewise, each new occurrence of a low tone where no high tone has intervened and where no drop tone cooccurs is at the same pitch as the preceding low tone irrespective of junctures, with the exception of an utterance final low tone occurring at the end of a word composed only of low tones. This last tone begins at the pitch level of the preceding low tone and falls slightly.

Examples:

Vwàwà [āwāwā] 'green'

ùfàn Nmì [ūfān m̄mì] 'my friend'

Because of this fall in pitch, utterances composed solely of low tones are easily distinguished from utterances composed solely of high tones, since the pitch level of the latter remains level throughout. In utterances consisting only of a monosyllable, the identification of tone is even more strikingly clear.

In such cases, the low tone is represented by a sharp fall in pitch from high to low, the high tone is represented by a high level pitch.

Examples:

ǂpátá [akpara] 'a framework for weaving'

ǂpàtà [ākparā] 'a loose woman'

má [ma] 'Love!'

mà [mà] 'Finish!'

Where one or more low tones intervene in a sequence of high tones, or one or more high tones intervene in a sequence of low tones, each new occurrence of high tone is slightly lower in pitch than the preceding high tone, and each new occurrence of low tone is slightly lower in pitch than the preceding low tone. Thus, the pitch level of the utterance gradually descends. A high tone near the end of an utterance may be in absolute terms lower in pitch than a low tone near the beginning of the utterance. However, every high tone is relatively higher than the immediately surrounding low tones.

Example:

ìdáká kèé ké ǂké dàkká ǂdá?

[ìdáyá kée ke ǂkedāka ādā]

'When did you get up?'

For more information on high and low tones in specific environments, see tone rules below.

Drop tone involves no basic pitch but rather a modification of high tone. It has a lowering function. The high tone in question is dropped to a level lower than the preceding high tone. (High tone or high tone plus drop are the only possible preceding environments for drop.) This level is not as low as that of low tone, but is just a slight drop in pitch producing, especially when more than one drop-high combination occurs in an utterance, an effect of step-wise motion downwards. This effect has led to the name terraced-level being applied to languages which have this type of tonal feature.<sup>2</sup> Note that since high tone or high tone plus drop are the only possible preceding environments for the drop-high combination, drop-high cannot occur initially in an utterance. High tone after a drop-high combination is at the same pitch level as the preceding lowered high tone [see tone rule 3]. All these statements apply irrespective of junctures. Drop tone is written over the phonetic syllable on which it occurs. Although the high tone with which it occurs is not written, its presence is implied by the presence of drop tone.

## Examples:

Nnam̄ [nnam̄] 'I did, I do'

Vbóón̄ [ʒbón̄] 'chief'

Nya'Vkóóm̄ Vbóón̄ Vmì [nyaʒkóm̄ ʒbón̄ ʒmì].

'I shall greet this chief'

It was mentioned above that drop tone is secondary historically. It seems clear that roots and affixes are basically high or low toned. There are a few nouns which appear to have drop tone as part of the root structure, but an examination of morphophonemic alternations of tones leads to the conclusion that none of these are basic. There are, however, cases of drop in verb constructions which as yet admit of no clear explanation. With further study of various dialects of Ibibio, it is hoped that an explanation can be found. There is reason to believe that all cases of drop tone may be the result of loss of a low tone from a high low high sequence, leaving two high tones, one slightly lower than the other due to the normal phonetic lowering process, but not enough is known as yet to reconstruct this situation.

A sequence of high tone followed by low tone is very common. Sometimes this sequence falls on a single

vowel. It is written as  $\hat{\cdot}$ . A sequence of low tone followed by high occurs, but never on a single vowel.

### 1.31 Tone Rules

One set of rules is grammatically restricted. All others apply regardless of grammatical status of the items involved.

#### Conventions:

- # word boundary
- () optional
- not pertinent to operation of rule
- P.E. preceding environment
- F.E. following environment

If position in utterance is not mentioned,  
it is not pertinent.



## 1.311 General Rules

Tone	P.E.	F.E.	Phonetics
	everywhere		a level pitch
1.	utterance initial	-	a high pitch [ ̄
2.	'	-	begins higher than preceding pitch [ _ ̄
3.	elsewhere		begins on same level as final level of preceding pitch
4.	utterance initial	utterance non-final	a low level pitch [ _
5.	#	utterance final	a sharp fall from high to low pitch [ \
6.	'	utterance non-final	a level pitch which begins at the same level as the preced- ing pitch [ _ _
7.	# plus one or more	utterance final	a slight fall in pitch which begins at the same level as preceding pitch [ _ _ ~

Tone	P.E.	F.E.	Phonetics
8.		elsewhere	a level pitch lower than the final level of the preceding pitch [ˉ_ , [ˉ \ _
9.	'	-	a level pitch slightly lower than the preceding pitch [ˉ -

Note that ' may occur on a high tone that is part of a fall. See fall below.

#### Tone Sequences - Fall

Fall occurs only over a stem. That is, all other sequences of high low are excluded from the following rules. Fall is symbolized ^.

- ^
- |     |  |      |  |
|-----|--|------|--|
| 10. | -  | #, \ | sharp fall from high to low [ \              |
| 11. | -  | '    | fall does not descend all the way to low [ \ |
| 12. | Fall over V is ^   |      |  |
|     | over VV is ^ ~ ^ (variation in substantives and imperative verbs only) |      |  |
|     | over VVV is ^ ^  |      |  |

13. Rule 5 applies to V, VV or VVV

Restrictions on Tone Sequences:

No immediate sequences of the following type occur

^^.

Examples of General Rules:

- Tone Rule 1.  $\acute{V}f\acute{a}t\acute{a}$  [afara] 'shoulder'  
 $\acute{u}k\acute{o}t$  [ukot] 'leg'
2.  $\grave{u}b\acute{o}m$  [ubom] 'canoe'  
 $t\grave{e}m \acute{N}m\acute{o}o\grave{o}n$  [tem mmooon] 'boil water!'
3.  $k\acute{o}i \acute{N}m\acute{o}o\grave{o}n$  [koi mmooon] 'draw water!'  
 $\acute{N}k\acute{o}i \acute{N}m\acute{o}o\grave{o}n$  [nkoi mmooon] 'I drew water'  
 $\acute{N}p\acute{e} k\acute{o}i \acute{N}m\acute{o}o\grave{o}n$  [mkpe koi mmooon] 'If I draw  
 water'
4.  $\grave{n}\grave{a}m \grave{i}w\acute{a}$  [nam iwa] 'sell cassava!'  
 $\acute{V}k\grave{e}p\acute{e}$  [3kepe] 'box'
5.  $\grave{n}\grave{a}m$  [nam] 'sell!'  
 $k\grave{a}\acute{a} k\acute{e} d\acute{o}k$  [kaa ke dok] 'go and dig!'
- 6 & 7.  $\grave{u}f\grave{a}n \acute{N}m\grave{i}$  [ufan mmi] 'my friend'  
 $\acute{V}w\grave{a}w\grave{a}$  [awawa] 'green'
8.  $\acute{V}d\acute{o} \acute{V}w\grave{a}w\grave{a}$  [3do awawa] 'It's green'  
 $\acute{V}m\grave{i}$  [3mi] 'this'
9.  $\acute{N}d\acute{e}p \grave{i}w\acute{a}$  [ndeb iwa] 'I bought cassava'  
 $\acute{N}d\grave{i}y\acute{a}$  [ndiya] 'a kind of fruit'

10. Vdêp [ʒdɛp] 'You should buy'
11. Vdêp ádân [ʒdɛb ádân] 'You should buy oil'
12. úkôt [ukòt] 'palm wine'  
 ídíàŋ ~ ídíâŋ [idíàŋ ~ idíâŋ] 'cricket'  
 Ndíóì [ndiòì] 'I should be very bad'
13. bùk [bùk] 'tell a story!'  
 bùùk [buùk] 'bury!'  
 dìdì [dìdì] 'place!'

#### Further Tonal Statements

The sequence ' and ^' is practically indistinguishable phonetically. They are realized as [ˉˉ] and [˘ˉ] respectively.

#### Examples:

Ýyá Vbá [áyá ábá] 'It will be'

Ýyâ Vbá [áyâ ábâ] 'The broom is...'

Verbs of the shape CVV → CVV before all suffixes.

#### Example:

Ntié.ké [ntiēye] 'I don't stay'

### 1.312 Grammatically Restricted Rules Involving Replacive Tones

Substantives in a head-modifier [see 3.6 ] relationship undergo tone changes. There are two construction tones which signify a head-modifier relationship, ` and ´ . They are written directly before the substantive which undergoes tone change. ´ and ` are variant forms of the same tonal morpheme, the occurrence of one or the other is conditioned partly by phonological and partly by grammatical

In a head-modifier relationship the tone of a substantive is influenced by the tone of the immediately preceding substantive and in some cases the grammatical class. The first substantive in a noun phrase is thus influential but is not itself influenced. The influence exerted by the tone of a substantive on the following substantive is symbolized by the occurrence of either ´ or ` .

` occurs in the following circumstances:

1. if the preceding substantive has the tone pattern `´ . (This fall may occur on one or two syllables. Examples: Vṅâ or Vśápò.)
2. If the preceding substantive has the tone pattern high low (´´ or ´´´) and is an adjective.

3. If the preceding substantive has the basic tone pattern of all high tones which have become falling or low as a result of being preceded by either construction tone 'or ` 3 [see below].

' occurs in all other environments.

Note that in the rules given below only monosyllabic stems are given - polysyllabic stems follow suit with the following qualifications - the replacive tone acts on not only the first tone, but all succeeding tones up to but not including the final one.

Rule A, special case of high-toned substantives:

One or more ' preceded by ' construction tone or ` construction tone plus another ' → `.

General Rules:

The construction tone rules operate as follows.

When a substantive is preceded by a construction tone, its first tone drops and is replaced by the construction tone. In a string of substantives, the rules do not work simultaneously, but rather from left to right.

The first construction tone changes the tone of the substantive which follows, then the shape of the next construction tone is determined by the preceding substantive which has undergone tone change. Actually, only substantives with all high tones will determine a

differently shaped construction tone before and after they themselves undergo change.

#### Construction tone

1. ' replaces the first tone of following substantive by '
  - a. ' ^ → ^
  - b. ' ^ → ^
  - c. ' ^ → ^

#### Examples:

- a. ' ^ → ^
- b. ' ^ → ^
- c. ' ^ → ^

loss of low tone causes lowering of following high tone by normal down-drift rules, i.e. ^ ^ [^-] → [^-]

- d. ' ^ → ^

2. ` replaces the first tone of following substantive by `
  - a. ` ^ → ^
  - b. ` ^ → ^
  - c. ` ^ → ^
  - d. ` ^ → ^ → ^

#### Examples:

- a. ` ^ → ^
- b. ` ^ → ^
- c. ` ^ → ^
- d. ` ^ → ^ → ^

note that ' cannot operate after low tone.

Note that the tone patterns given constitute all possibilities for the first two tones of a substantive.

Substantives with a high pattern are given a special rule [see above, Rule A]. It is not known why they operate differently. Note that it is only high toned substantives that determine the high construction tone normally but the low construction tone after they have undergone the influence of either construction tone.

Examples using actual substantives:

Rule A:

úfá ' étó → úfá étò 'new tree'

étî ` étó → étî ètò 'good tree'

One or more ' preceded by ' or ` plus another ' becomes `.

tó preceded by > plus é becomes tò:

construction tone ' replaces é → é

construction tone ` replaces è → è.

Further example:

ìsìm ' éwúá → ìsìm éwùà. 'tail of dog'

Other rules:

1. a. V̀kòm ' úfòk → V̀kòm úfòk 'roof of house'
- b. ètòk ' V̀fòṅ → ètòk V̀fòṅ 'small cloth'
- c. úfá ' ùbòm → úfá ùbòm 'new canoe'
- d. V̀yín ' V̀bòóṅ → V̀yín V̀bòóṅ 'child of chief'



2. a.  $\acute{e}t\grave{i} \ ` \acute{u}f\grave{o}k \rightarrow \acute{e}t\grave{i} \grave{u}f\grave{o}k$  'good house'  
 b.  $\acute{a}k\grave{a}\grave{a}n \ ` \acute{v}f\grave{o}\eta \rightarrow \acute{a}k\grave{a}\grave{a}n \acute{v}f\grave{o}\eta$  'old cloth'  
 c.  $\acute{e}t\grave{i} \ ` \grave{u}b\acute{o}m \rightarrow \acute{e}t\grave{i} \grave{u}b\acute{o}m$  'good canoe'  
 d.  $\acute{v}\eta\grave{a} \ ` \acute{v}b\acute{o}\acute{o}\eta \rightarrow \acute{v}\eta\grave{a} \acute{v}b\acute{o}\acute{o}\eta$  'cat of chief'

Examples with substantives having tone ` `:

These behave like those of tone ` ` because only the first two tones are pertinent.

$\acute{N}y\grave{i}n \ ` \acute{v}s\acute{a}b\grave{o} \rightarrow \acute{N}y\grave{i}n \acute{v}s\acute{a}b\grave{o}$  'young of python'  
 $\acute{e}t\grave{i} \acute{v}\eta\grave{a} \rightarrow \acute{e}t\grave{i} \acute{v}\eta\grave{a}$  'good cat'

Examples illustrating changed high toned substantives determining ` .

$\grave{u}y\grave{a}i$ 'beautiful'	$\acute{v}y\grave{i}n$ 'child'	$\acute{v}b\acute{o}\acute{o}\eta$ 'chief'
$\grave{u}y\grave{a}i \acute{v}y\grave{i}n \rightarrow \grave{u}y\grave{a}i \acute{v}y\grave{i}n$ 'beautiful child'		
$\grave{u}y\grave{a}i \acute{v}y\grave{i}n \ ` \acute{v}b\acute{o}\acute{o}\eta \rightarrow \grave{u}y\grave{a}i \acute{v}y\grave{i}n \acute{v}b\acute{o}\acute{o}\eta$ 'beautiful child of chief'		

Compare:

$\acute{v}y\grave{i}n \acute{v}b\acute{o}\acute{o}\eta \rightarrow \acute{v}y\grave{i}n \acute{v}b\acute{o}\acute{o}\eta$  'child of chief'  
 $\grave{u}y\grave{a}i \acute{v}b\acute{o}\acute{o}\eta \rightarrow \grave{u}y\grave{a}i \acute{v}b\acute{o}\acute{o}\eta$  'beautiful chief'  
 $\grave{u}y\grave{a}i \acute{v}b\acute{o}\acute{o}\eta \acute{v}y\grave{i}n \rightarrow \grave{u}y\grave{a}i \acute{v}b\acute{o}\acute{o}\eta \acute{v}y\grave{i}n$  'beautiful chief of the child'

$\acute{e}t\grave{i}$ 'good'	$\acute{e}w\acute{u}\acute{a}$ 'dog'	$\acute{v}b\acute{o}\acute{o}\eta$ 'chief'
$\acute{e}t\grave{i} \acute{e}w\acute{u}\acute{a} \rightarrow \acute{e}t\grave{i} \grave{e}w\grave{u}\grave{a}$ 'good dog'		
$\acute{e}t\grave{i} \grave{e}w\grave{u}\grave{a} \ ` \acute{v}b\acute{o}\acute{o}\eta \rightarrow \acute{e}t\grave{i} \grave{e}w\grave{u}\grave{a} \acute{v}b\acute{o}\acute{o}\eta$ 'good dog of the chief'		

Compare:

éwúá ' Vbóón → éwúá Vbóón 'dog of the chief'

N.B.: The tone pattern  $\overset{\sim}$  freely varies with  $\overset{\sim}$  in isolation in most substantives. It is clear from derivational patterns that  $\overset{\sim}$  is basically  $\overset{\sim}$ . The fall is a variant peculiar to certain Ibibio areas. The tone rules operate on the basic  $\overset{\sim}$ . However, because  $\overset{\sim}$  is the common pronunciation, substantives are written in that way throughout the grammar. The  $\overset{\sim}$  is used to illustrate tone rules.

Note that the variation occurs only when a substantive has its inherent tone, not when it contains a replacive tone. Thus, Vdân ' Vyôp [ādān ȳyôp ~ adān ȳyôp] but never \*[ādān ȳyôp].

An individual speaker may in citing forms in isolation occasionally make a contrast between high fall and high low patterns to avoid ambiguity in potentially homophonous forms. However, this is not consistent from speaker to speaker. One speaker may make the contrast for a certain set of forms while another will assert they are homophonous.

Examples:

Vbôñ [ȳbāñ] 'pimples'

Vbòñ [ȳbāñ] 'cane (used for making chairs)'

or  $\acute{V}b\hat{o}ŋ \sim \acute{V}b\grave{o}ŋ$  [ $\bar{3}b\hat{o}ŋ \sim \bar{3}b\grave{o}ŋ$ ] 'pimples or cane'

Demonstratives, a class of substantives, do not have this variation. Their pattern is always high low. There are a few other substantives which have only high low. Thus, a substantive written high fall elsewhere in this grammar may vary, but one written high low may not.

Verbs with the tone pattern high low which is the result of an overriding low construction tone on the stem also have a high fall tone pattern as a variant. However, if the high low pattern involves an inherently low stem there is no variation. For example  $\acute{N}n\grave{a}m$  'I do (following contrastive present)' varies freely with  $\acute{N}n\hat{a}m$ . But  $\acute{N}d\grave{o}k$  'I dig (neutral present)' is invariable. In the verbs the variant high low is written rather than high fall to avoid distorting the pattern of the verb system.

Particles written high low generally do not vary.

#### 1.3121 . Special statements relating to loan words

Loan words occur in head-modifier constructions. Loans which begin with a consonant and have a high low tone pattern (the most common type) behave tonally as though they had a low tone prefix. Indeed, most of them have a free variant with such a prefix. This prefix may or may not be used in the head-modifier construction.

## Examples:

béni ~ Vbéni 'penny' (probably from Pidgin  
English)

úfá 'béni → úfá bení ~ úfá Vbení 'new penny'

só-kòtò ~ Vsó-kòtò 'orange' (possibly from the  
Portuguese açúcar 'sugar')

NbòtóNbòtó ' só-kòtò → NbòtóNbòtó só-kòtò ~

NbòtóNbòtó Vso-kòtò 'round orange'

étí ' Vsó-kòtò → étí Vsó-kòtò 'good orange'

## 1.313 Tone Rules Restricted to Derivation

There are three derivational patterns which use the ´, ` construction tones discussed above.

The derivational prefix N̄ (also ì) is prefixed to verb roots. The result is a substantive which occurs only with another substantive following (a complement, as it were, to the verb from which the substantive is derived). The complement substantive undergoes tone change characterized by construction tone ´ with one difference. Here substantives having all high tones do not need a special rule. They fit into the ordinary pattern, i.e. ´ replaces the first tone. Rules will be given below for derivational patterns using construction tone `.

Here too high toned substantives take no special rule:

$$\acute{ } + \acute{ } \rightarrow \acute{ }$$

$$\grave{ } + \acute{ } \rightarrow \grave{ }$$

## Examples:

$$\grave{ } \text{Ntát} \ \grave{ } \text{ísó} \rightarrow \grave{ } \text{Ntátìsó}$$

$$\grave{ } \text{Nkàn} \ \grave{ } \text{úbók} \rightarrow \grave{ } \text{Nkànùbók}$$

$$\grave{ } \text{Nták} \ \grave{ } \text{ùdùà} \rightarrow \grave{ } \text{Ntákùdùà}$$

$$\grave{ } \text{Ntìtè} \ \grave{ } \text{útón} \rightarrow \grave{ } \text{Ntìtèùtón}$$

$$\grave{ } \text{Ndùò} \ \grave{ } \text{ésìt} \rightarrow \grave{ } \text{Ndùòèsìt}$$

$$\grave{ } \text{ìbètè} \ \grave{ } \text{èdèm} \rightarrow \grave{ } \text{ìbètèèdèm}$$

The verbal noun prefix  $\acute{u}$  ( $\sim\grave{u}$ ) requires complements often just as substantives derived with  $\grave{N}$ . High toned verbs determine  $\acute{\prime}$ , all others determine  $\grave{\prime}$ .

Examples:

$\acute{u}k\acute{a}t\acute{a} \acute{\prime} \acute{i}d\acute{e}m \rightarrow \acute{u}k\acute{a}t\acute{a}i\acute{d}e\acute{m}$   
 $\acute{u}s\acute{e} \acute{\prime} \acute{u}t\acute{o}m \rightarrow \acute{u}s\acute{e}u\acute{t}o\acute{m}$   
 $\acute{u}t\acute{o} \acute{\prime} \grave{i}\grave{n}\grave{a}\grave{n} \rightarrow \acute{u}t\acute{o}i\grave{n}\grave{a}\grave{n}$   
 $\acute{u}t\acute{e}m \grave{\prime} \acute{i}k\acute{o}t \rightarrow \acute{u}t\acute{e}m\grave{i}k\grave{o}t$   
 $\acute{u}s\grave{a}\grave{n}\acute{a} \grave{\prime} \acute{i}s\grave{a}\grave{n} \rightarrow \acute{u}s\grave{a}\grave{n}\grave{a}i\grave{s}\grave{a}\grave{n}$   
 $\acute{u}k\grave{u}\grave{o}k\acute{k}\acute{o} \grave{\prime} \acute{V}\acute{f}\acute{o}\grave{n} \rightarrow \acute{u}k\grave{u}\grave{o}k\acute{k}\acute{o}\acute{V}\acute{f}\acute{o}\grave{n}$

In a similar derivational pattern, the agentive, the first noun always determines the  $\acute{\prime}$  construction tone. Here the rules are the same as in the ordinary head-modifier relationship, i.e. high toned substantives require a special rule.

Examples:

$\grave{V}s\grave{i}n \acute{\prime} \acute{N}t\acute{i}m\acute{e} \rightarrow \grave{V}s\grave{i}n\acute{N}t\acute{i}m\acute{e}$   
 $\grave{V}t\acute{o}p \acute{\prime} \acute{V}y\acute{o}p \rightarrow \grave{V}t\acute{o}p\acute{V}y\acute{o}p$   
 $\grave{V}d\grave{o}k \acute{\prime} \grave{u}b\grave{e} \rightarrow \grave{V}d\grave{o}k\acute{u}b\grave{e}$   
 $\grave{V}b\grave{a}k \acute{\prime} \acute{u}n\grave{a}m \rightarrow \grave{V}b\grave{a}k\acute{u}n\grave{a}m$   
 $\grave{V}b\grave{i}\grave{o}t\acute{o} \acute{\prime} \acute{i}p\acute{e} \rightarrow \grave{V}b\grave{i}\grave{o}t\acute{o}i\acute{p}\acute{e}$   
 $\grave{V}s\grave{a}\grave{n}\acute{a} \acute{\prime} \acute{i}s\grave{a}\grave{n} \rightarrow \grave{V}s\grave{a}\grave{n}\acute{a}i\grave{s}\grave{a}\grave{n}$

#### 1.4 Consonants

Consonants may be divided into two groups according to their distribution in the structural syllable:

1. all consonants occur initially, i.e. after pause or juncture

2. only p t k

m n ŋ occur elsewhere, i.e. singly in final position, singly or geminated medially.

p after a pause or juncture is a coarticulated bilabial velar stop, voiceless, unaspirated<sub>4</sub> [kp] intervocalically it is a bilabial spirant or very lenis stop, voiced [β], [b]

before a pause it is a bilabial stop, unaspirated or in careful speech weakly aspirated, voiceless and in this position like t, k often unreleased [p̚]

geminated it has same articulation as p before pause. It is generally no longer than a single p intervocalically. However, it may be held a longer time before release if the speaker is aware of a morpheme boundary between the two p's in the negative construction. However, for no speaker I observed was there a contrast between a single and double bilabial voiceless stop.

## Examples:

ípá [íkᵑᵗ̄ áː] 'whip'

̀̀pà-pà [ãːkpãː kpãː] 'corn'

̀̀sópó [̀̀sɔ̄ɸ̄ ɔ̄] 'crab'

fípé [fɪ̀βé̄] 'hold in the lips!'

dép [dEp̄] 'buy!'

dáppá [dãᵑᵗ̄ p̄ áː] 'dream!'

̀̀ndéppé [̀̀ndÉp̄é̄ ~ ̀̀ndÉppé̄] 'I don't buy'

t after pause or a juncture or before pause is a dental stop, voiceless, unaspirated or lightly aspirated. It may have a slight palatal offglide in non-final position, [t̄], [t̄ʲ] especially before o.

intervocally it is an alveolar flap, or a somewhat retroflexed velar fricative, [ɾ], [ɾ]

geminated its quality is like a single t after pause. Compared with p and k the occurrences of geminate t within a morpheme are very rare.

## Examples:

tá [t̄ á] 'chew!'

dít [dɪ̀t̄] 'leak!'

étó [ē t̄ʲ ō] 'tree'

̀̀fété [̀̀ʒf̄ē r̄ē] ~ [̀̀ʒf̄ē r̄ē] 'soup'

dáátá [dāaᵑᵗ̄ á] ~ [dāaᵑᵗ̄ á] 'rejoice!'

síítté, sítté [sīitē, sīt̄ē] 'remove a plug  
or obstacle'



k after pause or a juncture or before pause is a voiceless, unaspirated or weakly aspirated post-palatal stop [k̟]

intervocally it is a voiced velar or uvular fricative. (This varies from speaker to speaker or within the speech of a single speaker) [χ], [ʁ].

In deliberate speech it is occasionally a stop [g]

geminated it has the same articulation as a single k after pause, but it is sometimes lengthened as are p and t. Between two back vowels or an s, kk is backed to velar or even post-velar position.

Examples:

kò [ǩ̟] 'catch (fish)!'  
 kàámá [ǩ̟áá̌ma] 'stir!'  
 ùtíkà [ùť ɪyā̌] ~ [ùť ɪdā̌] 'bow'  
 sùùkó [sūuχ̌] ~ [sūuʁ̌] 'lower!'  
 Vtíkké [ʒťɪǩ̟e] 'okra'

b is a voiced bilabial stop [b]

Examples:

bán [bǎn] 'sharpen!'  
 ìbà [ìbà̌] 'two'

d is a voiced alveolar stop [d]

Examples:

dáyá [dǎyǎ] 'sleep!'  
 èdù [èdù̌] 'sheep'



w after the syllabic nasal N- is a voiced bilabial semivowel with a velar stop onset [<sup>ɛ</sup>w], elsewhere it is a voiced bilabial semivowel with slight velar friction; paralleling the situation of yiV in the sequence wuV, w has considerable friction and the sequence gives the effect of a long consonant.

Examples:

wà [wà] 'sacrifice!'

ìwá [ìwá] 'cassava'

Íwèt [ɲ<sup>ɛ</sup>wèt] 'I write'

éwúá [é·w<sup>+</sup>úá, éw<sup>+</sup>·á] 'dog'

w is classed as a velar in the chart because the syllabic nasal is [ɲ] before it, as with k and ŋ, rather than [m] as with b and m.

The nasal stops are all voiced. ñ occurs only after pause or a juncture and only singly. m, n, ŋ occur in all positions. In intervocalic position they occur singly or geminated. The geminated nasal is twice as long as the single in the same environment but the articulation is identical.

m a bilabial nasal stop [m] in all positions  
geminated [mm]

Examples:

má [má] 'love!'

ímâm [ima m] 'laughter'

símé [sɪme] 'be silly!'

ñímmé [ñɪmme] 'agree!'

n is an alveolar nasal stop in all positions [n]  
geminated [nn]

Examples:

nò [n ] 'give!'

únân [una n] 'a wound'

síné [sɪne] 'wear!'

kánná [ka nna] 'encircle!'

ŋ after pause or juncture is a labialized velar  
nasal stop [ŋ<sup>w</sup>]

elsewhere it is a velar nasal stop [ŋ]

geminated [ŋŋ].

Note the somewhat parallel initial quality of p

̀Vpá [ãkpá] 'first'

̀Vŋá [ãŋ<sup>w</sup>á] 'outside'

Examples:

ñéék [ŋ<sup>w</sup>éek] 'breathe!'

̀Vŋá [ã:ŋ<sup>w</sup>á:] 'cat'

sàŋá [sã:ŋá:] 'walk!'

níŋŋé [nɪŋŋé] 'be sweet!'

$\tilde{n}$  a palatal nasal stop [ $\tilde{n}$ ]

Examples:

$\tilde{n}\grave{a}m$  [ $\tilde{n}\grave{a}^1m$ ] 'sell!'

$\tilde{N}\tilde{n}\tilde{a}$  [ $\tilde{n}\tilde{n}\tilde{a}$ ] 'a kind of fruit'

$\tilde{i}\tilde{n}\tilde{a}\tilde{a}\tilde{n}$  [ $\tilde{i}\tilde{n}\tilde{a}^1\tilde{a}^1\tilde{n}$ ] 'river'

#### 1.41 Special consonants and rules.

Reduplicator R

$R \text{ --- } CV_1(V_1)(C) \rightarrow CVV \text{ -- } CV$

$\text{--- } CV_1V_2(C) \rightarrow CV_1V_2 \text{ -- } CV$

$\text{--- } CV_1V_2V_1 \rightarrow CV_1V_2 \text{ -- } CV$

The Vs not marked by a subscript number follow these rules:

When the vowel in the first structural syllable is in dialect A:

a	R is	a
o	"	o
u, ɔ	"	u, ɔ
i, e	"	i (rare), e

In dialect B, as above, except R can be ɔ ~ o ~ u when the vowel of the first structural syllable is u.

Generally in dialect A, R has a CVV form and in dialect B, a CV form. Where the vowels of the first structural syllable are in dialect B:

a sequence of unlike vowels one of which is

a	R is	a
o, u	"	o
e	"	e
o	"	o

Note that in dialect A both vowels of the sequence are repeated in R.

The tone of R depends on the verbs' tonal class and also the construction it is in. The general rules are:

before verbs of Class I	R is	˘ ˘ ˘ ˘
" " " " II, III	R is	˘
" " " " IV	R is	˘

[See Verb Phrase for further details.]

R in a negative verb construction represents complete reduplication of the verb stem. The reduplicated part of the verb construction here follows rather than precedes the basic stem.

Example:

íRyém·ké [íyēm̄mēyēm] 'He doesn't want it.'

Likewise, R in a relative construction.



Additive nasal ŋ

ŋ / CV<sub>1</sub>V<sub>2</sub>\_\_ → ŋ  
 - - - → ŋŋ

occurs in derivational suffix -ŋé

Examples:

bá ŋé → báŋŋá

wùs ŋé → wùsŋó

Lengthener .

• CV<sub>1</sub>CCV<sub>1</sub>) — #, ŋ, é → V<sub>1</sub>  
<sub>2</sub>

CV<sub>1</sub>\_\_ k/t → V<sub>1</sub>

CVCV\_\_ k → k

- - - → ∅

#### 1.42 Special Rules involving k and t

k nasal<sub>1</sub>-\_\_ → nasal<sub>1</sub>

C(V)i-\_\_ → y

C(V)ü-\_\_ → w (optional rule)

elsewhere → k

t i, y, ue-\_\_ → y

elsewhere → t.



## 1.5 Vowels

Vowels are defined as those segments which carry a tone. They include the six basic vowels which occur in roots, affixes, and particles:

i      u  
e      o  
a    ɔ,

the harmonic vowel V- which occurs only as a prefix, and the syllabic nasal N- which occurs only as a prefix.

The phonetic realizations of the six basic vowels depend on whether they occur in open or closed structural syllables. The phonetic realizations of V- and N- depend in the former on the vowel or vowels of the root that follows, and in the latter on the immediately following consonant.

The rules follow:

	<u>in open syllables</u>	<u>in closed syllables</u>
i	a high front unrounded vowel [i]	a lower-high strongly centralized front unrounded vowel [ɪ]. After palatals it is somewhat less centralized [I ]

## Examples:

ímín [im̄ɪn] 'pus'

étí [ɛ̄ti] 'good'

yìp [yɪ̄p] 'steal!'

Nn̄ín [n̄n̄ɪ̄n] 'we, us, our'

- e a front unrounded vowel a mean-mid front un-  
slightly lower than rounded vowel [E]  
higher-mid position [ē].

It is always fairly tense;  
after t it is even more  
tense, cf. o after t

## Examples:

èté [ɛ̄t̄ē] 'father'

V̄n̄é [ʒ̄n̄ē] 'he, she, it'

édép [ɛ̄dɛ̄p] 'they bought'

- u a high back rounded a lower-high somewhat  
vowel [u] centralized back  
vowel with very little  
rounding [ʊ]

## Examples:

ùsùṅ [us̄ʊṅ] 'road'

Ṽsùkkó [ʒ̄s̄ʊk̄] 'he fainted'

- o a back vowel somewhat slightly higher than higher than higher-mid the vowel in open position and partially syllables but otherwise unrounded [o<sup>ː</sup>], a rather tense vowel, especially after t

Examples:

étó [e<sup>ː</sup>t o<sup>ː</sup>] 'tree'

ìsópó [i<sup>ː</sup>sɔ<sup>ː</sup>β o<sup>ː</sup>] 'crab'

ṽkôn [ʒk ũ<sup>ː</sup>n] 'night'

- o in both open and closed syllables, a mean-mid back vowel, partially unrounded [ɔ]

Examples:

úfòk [ufɔk] 'house'

íkò [ikɔ] 'word'

- a in both open and closed syllables, an unrounded vowel slightly higher than low position and slightly more front than a central vowel [a<sup>ː</sup>]

Examples:

ṽfátá [a<sup>ː</sup>fa<sup>ː</sup>ra<sup>ː</sup>] 'shoulder'

ùsàn [usa<sup>ː</sup>n] 'bowl'

Table of Principle Vowel Qualities

	Front Unrounded	Central Unrounded	Back Rounded
high	i		u
lower high		ɪ	ʊ
higher mid			o
mean mid	e		ɔ
lower mid		ɜ	
low		a	

N-

The syllabic nasal occurs only between hyphen junctures. It is a fully voiced nasal stop homorganic with the immediately following consonant.

Before

bilabial-velar p [mŋ] a coarticulated bilabial-  
velar

bilabials b, m [m] bilabial

labiodental f [ɱ] labiodental

alveolars d, n [n] alveolar

dentals t, s [n] dental

palatals y, ñ [ɲ] palatal

postpalatals k, w, ŋ [ŋ] postpalatal

## Examples:

N_pé	[m̄kp̄e]	'I paid'
N_bét	[m̄b̄Et]	'disciples'
N_má	[m̄ma]	'address, to married woman'
N_fón	[m̄f̄on]	'goodness'
N_dík	[n̄d̄Ik]	'fear'
N_nim	[nn̄m]	'I put'
N_tíik	[ntiik]	'I praised'
N_sù	[nsù]	'a lie'
N_yín	[ñ̄In]	'young of an animal'
N_nìn	[ñ̄n̄In]	'we, us, our'
N_kóót	[ṅkoot]	'I read'
N_wèt	[ṅ <sup>g</sup> w̄Et]	'book'
N_ṅaná	[ṅṅ <sup>w</sup> ānā]	'I fought'

V-, like N-, occurs only between hyphen junctures. Its quality is determined by the vowel or vowels of the following syllable. This determining vowel can be any one of the six basic vowels, single or a sequence of two like vowels, or a sequence of two or three unlike vowels. This vowel or vowels generally constitutes the vocalic nucleus of a root. V- occurs only as a prefix or part of a prefix.

In dialect A (minimally differentiated) if the root vowel is

i, e, ii, or ee	V is a centralized front unrounded vowel slightly lower than lower-mid position [ɜ]
u, o, ɔ, uu, oo, or ɔɔ	V is more centralized than when the root vowel is i or e [ɜ̣]

Examples:

ˈVfɪm [ɜ̣fɪm] 'wind'

ˈVkò [ɜ̣kò] 'pot'

a or aa	V is an unrounded low central vowel exactly like that described above for a [aː]
---------	--

Example:

ˈVwà [aːwà] 'a tuber'

In dialect B (maximally differentiated) if the root vowel is

i, e, ii,  
or ee            V is [ɜ]

Examples, see dialect A

u or uu            V is [ɔ - oʰ]

Examples:

ᵛbû [ɔ̄bû], occasionally [ɔ̄b̄û]

ᵛbû [ɔ̄b̄û], occasionally [ɔ̄bû]

ᵛbúút [ɔ̄buut] 'shame'

o or oo            V is [oʰ ~ ɜʰ], centralized  
as for dialect A

Example:

ᵛkôn [ɔ̄kŭːn ~ ɜːkvn] 'night'

o or oo            V is [ɔ], occasionally vary-  
ing with [ɜʰ]

Example:

ᵛfòŋ [ɔ̄fɔ̄ŋ ~ ɜːfɔ̄ŋ] 'cloth'

a or aa            V is [aʰ]

If the stem contains a sequence of unlike vowels  
V is as follows: if sequence contains

a                    V is [aʰ] for dialects A and B

o                    V is [ɔ - ɜʰ] for dialect A'

[ɔ] for dialect B

o	V is [ɔ̄] for dialect A [ō] for dialect B
u plus either i or e	V is [ɔ̄] for dialect A [ɔ̄ - ɔ̄] for dialect B
a combination of i and e	V is [ɔ̄] for dialects A and B

### 1.51 Vowel Sequences

All six basic vowels occur doubled. Double vowels take about twice as long as a single vowel but are articulated only once. Double vowels are not very long, but the contrast with single vowels is striking as single vowels in Ibibio are extremely short and abrupt especially in closed syllables. Double vowels occur in both open and closed syllables. However, in open syllables they occur only with high-low, low-high, (and rarely in low-low) tone patterns. In both closed and open syllables the quality of double vowels is generally the same as that of single vowels in open syllables. The sequence uu is somewhat lowered, unrounded and centralized.

Examples:

fíík [fiik] 'press', cf fík [fɪk]  
 kèèt [kè-è-t] 'one', cf kèt [kɛt] 'aim'  
 mààná [mā̀a'ná] 'repeat', cf màná [mā̀na] 'be  
 born'



sùùk [suùk] 'lower!', cf sùk [sùk] 'lower'  
 épúút [ekpuút] 'kidney'  
 ìkóót [ìkóót] 'We called', cf íkót [íkót] 'leg'  
 kóón [kóón] 'hang on wall', cf kón [kón] 'cough'  
 íyíip [íyíip] 'blood', cf V́yíip [V́yíip] 'he steals'  
 V́kèé [V́kèé] 'which one'

Sequences of two or three unlike vowels also occur. A sequence of two unlike vowels takes the same amount of time as a sequence of two like vowels, but each vowel is articulated separately; it is not a sequence of vowel and semiconsonantal glide. A sequence of three unlike vowels involves three separate articulations and takes about three times as long as a single vowel. In closed syllables the first vowel in sequence has open syllable quality, the second has closed syllable quality.

I have recorded the following sequences:

<u>in open syllables</u>	<u>in closed syllables</u>
ie ei ue	ie ue
ia ai ua	ia ua
io oi uo	io uo
iu ui	
	uee
iai	
ioi uoi	

A note on the analysis of vowel sequences:

Because of the identical behavior of sequences of like and unlike vowels, it seems preferable to analyze double vowels as sequences rather than as a single vowel plus length. Also, there is no rising pitch on a single vowel so that if a double vowel on low-high pitch were analyzed as single vowel plus length, a new tone, short rise, would be necessary.

Words with double vowels in open syllables are quite rare in this dialect. However, some other Ibibio dialects have many sequences of like vowels in open syllables. There are Ibibio dialects where there is a regular correspondence of CVV to CV<sup>w</sup><sub>y</sub>V sequence in the dialects I investigated. From facts like these, plus one singular/plural pair in dialects A and B kàá sg. kàyá pl. 'go', it seems likely that all V̇V̇ sequences originally had an intervening consonant, probably w or y.

The decision to consider CV̇V̇ sequences as a single structural syllable is a bit arbitrary since the vowel qualities are not a consideration being in open syllables in either case. A CV̇V̇ sequence takes the same amount of time as a CV̇ĊV̇ sequence which is considered two structural syllables. In certain

constructions, e.g. infinitive, reduplications and others,  $\overset{\cdot}{C}\overset{\cdot}{V}\overset{\cdot}{V}$  and  $\overset{\cdot}{C}\overset{\cdot}{V}\overset{\cdot}{C}\overset{\cdot}{V}$  belong to the same tonal classes, and one is tempted to consider  $\overset{\cdot}{C}\overset{\cdot}{V}\overset{\cdot}{V}$  as two separate syllables. However, in other constructions, e.g. with regard to the addition of suffixes,  $\overset{\cdot}{C}\overset{\cdot}{V}\overset{\cdot}{V}$  behaves like a  $\overset{\cdot}{C}\overset{\cdot}{V}$  or  $\overset{\cdot}{C}\overset{\cdot}{V}$  sequence. Sequences of three vowels in open syllables are arbitrarily considered one structural syllable. Most, if not all, are morphemically complex.

#### 1.52 Special Rules involving e and i

The following rules apply to the e that occurs immediately before word juncture. All other instances of e are invariable. Note however that e in many affixes and particles tends to be dropped or assimilated to the following vowel [see 1.5 ].

harmonic vowel e

- e 1.  $a\_ \rightarrow a$
2.  $u, \text{ } \circ \_ \rightarrow \text{ } \circ$
3.  $\text{ } \circ \_ \rightarrow \text{ } \circ$
4. elsewhere  $\rightarrow e$

replacive vowel i

- k  $\_i \rightarrow \emptyset$
- $V_1V_1 \_i \rightarrow V_1$

## 1.53 Illustration of Rules Pertaining to the Negative

There are two inflectional and two derivational suffixes of the shape *·ké*. The most common, the negative, is presented below to illustrate the rules pertaining to the combination of *·* lengthener, *k* and harmonic *é*.

*·ké* 'negative'

*dí* 'come'

*tùk* 'polish'

*kàá* 'go'

*tèm* 'cook'

*kóí* 'draw water'

*dàkká* 'leave'

*bù* 'rot'

*sàṅá* 'walk'

	<i>·</i> rule	<i>k</i> rule	<i>e</i> rule	
<i>dí·ké</i>	→ <i>dííké</i>	→ <i>dííké</i>	→ <i>dííké</i>	[ <i>díiye</i> ]
<i>kàá·ké</i>	→ <i>kààké</i>	→ <i>kààké</i>	→ <i>kààká</i>	[ <i>kāāyā</i> ]
	(tone rule)			
<i>kóí·ké</i>	→ <i>kóíké</i>	→ <i>kóiyé</i>	→ <i>kóiyó</i>	[ <i>koiyo</i> ]
<i>bù·ké</i>	→ <i>bùùké</i>	→ <i>bùùwé</i>	→ <i>bùùwó</i>	[ <i>būūwō</i> ]
		→ <i>bùùké</i>	→ <i>bùùkó</i>	[ <i>būūyō</i> ]
<i>tùk·ké</i>	→ <i>tùkké</i>	→ <i>tùkké</i>	→ <i>tùkkó</i>	[ <i>tūko</i> ]
<i>tèm·ké</i>	→ <i>tèmké</i>	→ <i>tèmmé</i>	→ <i>tèmmé</i>	[ <i>tēme</i> ]
<i>dàkká·ké</i>	→ <i>dàkkákké</i>	→ <i>dàkkákké</i>	→ <i>dàkkákké</i>	[ <i>dākake</i> ]
<i>sàṅá·ké</i>	→ <i>sàṅákké</i>	→ <i>sàṅákké</i>	→ <i>sàṅákké</i>	[ <i>sāṅake</i> ]

### Variations on negative

In dialect A a variant rule is applied optionally by some speakers, affecting the negative of a few verbs

k after p, k → ∅

#### Examples:

péép 'learn, teach'

— Npéép·ké [mkpēepē ~ mkpēebē] 'I don't learn,  
teach'

dìòk 'place, put'

Ndìòk·ké [ndiòkò ~ ndiòyò] 'I don't put'

In a few high frequency negative constructions involving CV verbs, the vowel is optionally short before the negative suffix [see rule above].

#### Example:

dó 'be'

ídó·ké [idòoyò ~ idoyò] 'It is not'

It is possible that the form with short vowel is an Efik borrowing rather than a variant due to high frequency. In Efik CV verbs there is no rule of vowel lengthening before the negative suffix.

### 1.5<sub>a</sub> Rules restricted to certain high frequency morphemes

Certain morphemes are subject to vowel assimilation, vowel loss and occasionally consonant loss. In some cases these changes are obligatory, in other cases, optional. The morphemes involved are generally affixes or particles.

The majority of these affixes and particles end in e. e is a harmonic vowel in both derivation and inflection as well as an often assimilated or lost vowel. A few of the affixes end in i or o and although these vowels may assimilate or be lost, they are not harmonic vowels.

Of the obligatory changes, the most far-reaching involve the construction markers ké, pé and mé. These assimilate their vowels to the vowels of person markers in the following way. Before the construction marker is inserted into a basic neutral or contrastive verb construction [see 2.3 ], an assimilation takes place with subsequent loss of the vowel of the construction marker.

Example:

ìdép 'first person plural contrastive present  
 ke' + ìdép → ki' + ìdép → ìkídép first person  
 plural contrastive past

This type of assimilation affects all cases where the person marker is i or u.

A similar obligatory assimilation occurs in motional stems; *dí* and *ké* 'come' and 'go', respectively, assimilate to person markers. An example from a negative imperative is:

·*ké* ù *ké* *bén* [kuúkubén] 'Don't go and fetch it!'

The motional stem form *ké* assimilates to the verb *dí* in the following imperative:

*dí* *kébén* [dikibén] 'Come go fetch!' (i.e. come here, then go fetch)

The future contrastive preverb *dî* also assimilates to a person marker, in this case only *u* is applicable.

Example:

ú *dî* ù *dép*·*ké* *ádân* [úduú depé adân] 'You will not buy oil.'

The dependent preverbs *má*, *pê*, *dî* also assimilate to *u*, *i* person markers.

Optional Rules:

·*ké* as negative or relative suffix optionally assimilates the final vowel to a following *i*, *u* prefix. This is only true where ·*ké* is phonetically [ke].

Examples:

únèkké·*ké* *údómó* [unèkèku údómó] 'You didn't really try.'

ísàṅá·*ké* *ísâṅ* [isāṅaki isāṅ] 'He didn't walk.'

The relative particle  $\acute{V}k\grave{e}$  when contracted to  $\acute{V}$  has the following tonal effects. If the tones of the immediately following word would be all high, then they are changed to all low.

Examples:

$\acute{V}w\acute{o} \acute{V} \acute{V}n\acute{a}m \cdot k\acute{e} \acute{u}t\acute{o}m \acute{V}d\grave{o} \dots$  [ $\bar{3}w\bar{o} \bar{a}\bar{a}\bar{n}\bar{a}\bar{m}\bar{m}\bar{a} \bar{u}t\bar{o}m$

$\bar{w}\bar{d}\bar{o} \dots$ ] 'The man who does that work...'

$\acute{V}p\acute{o} \acute{u}n\acute{a}m \acute{V} \acute{e}w\acute{u}\acute{a} \acute{V}t\acute{a} \cdot k\acute{e} \dots$  [ $\bar{3}k\bar{p}\bar{o} \bar{u}n\bar{a}m \bar{e}e\bar{w}\bar{u}\bar{a}$

$\bar{a}t\bar{a}\bar{a}\bar{y}\bar{a} \dots$ ] 'The bone which the dog chewed...'

The interrogative particles and nouns

sòó 'what'

dìé 'how'

Nmòó 'where'

ùké, Nké 'where'

exhibit systematic tonal alternations. After persons 2, 4, 5 of the verb, i.e. a verb with a low tone prefix, they have the tone pattern (high) drop; after person 1, 3, 6 of the verb, i.e. a verb with a high tone prefix they have the tone pattern low high. This is true where the verb stem does not have a falling tone. If it has a falling tone, the particle or noun has the tone pattern low high, regardless of the tone of the verb prefix.



## Examples:

Vnám sóó 'What did you do?'

Vnám sòó 'What did he do?'

Nnâm sòó 'What should I do?'

The interrogative nouns ùké, Nké 'where':

Vkàá úké? 'Where are you going?'

Vkàá ùké? 'Where is he going?'

Nkàá ùké? 'Where should I go?'

$\dot{V}$ , the second singular subject prefix, drops optionally after  $\grave{a}f\grave{o}$ .  $\acute{V}$ , the third singular subject prefix, drops optionally after  $\dot{V}\acute{n}\acute{e}$ ,  $\grave{N}s\acute{e}$ .

In the  $m\acute{e}$  construction in dialect A, in the contraction of  $\dot{V}m\acute{e}$  to  $\dot{V}\dot{V}$ , the first  $\dot{V}$  may be lost.

Example:

$\grave{a}f\grave{o}$   $\dot{V}m\acute{e}$   $d\grave{i}\grave{o}\eta\acute{o}$   $\rightarrow$   $\grave{a}f\grave{o}$   $\dot{V}\dot{V}d\grave{i}\grave{o}\eta\acute{o}$   $\rightarrow$   $\grave{a}f\grave{o}$   $\acute{V}d\grave{i}\grave{o}\eta\acute{o}$   
 [āfō ʒdīōŋō] 'You know'

The third person singular and plural subject markers  $\acute{V}$  and  $\acute{e}$  are optionally dropped when they occur on sequential verbs preceded immediately by another verb and when the final vowel of the preceding verb has any vowel with high tone or  $\acute{e}$ , respectively.

Example:

$\acute{V}f\grave{e}k\acute{e}$   $\acute{V}s\acute{o}p$  [ $\acute{z}f\acute{e}\acute{y}\acute{e}$   $s\acute{o}p$ ] 'He ran away fast.'  
 $\acute{e}f\grave{e}k\acute{e}$   $\acute{e}s\acute{o}p$  [ $\acute{e}f\acute{e}\acute{y}\acute{e}$   $s\acute{o}p$ ] 'They ran away fast.'  
 Compare  $\acute{V}s\acute{o}p$   $\acute{V}f\grave{e}k\acute{e}$  [ $\acute{z}s\acute{o}b$   $\acute{z}f\acute{e}\acute{y}\acute{e}$ ] 'He ran away  
 in time.'

An optional contraction rule used by some speakers is:  $\grave{a}m\grave{i}$  as subject  $\rightarrow$   $\grave{a}$

Example:

$\grave{a}m\grave{i}$   $\acute{N}d\acute{e}p$   $\rightarrow$   $\grave{a}$   $\acute{N}d\acute{e}p$

The è of Ntè 'as, like' often drops before a substantive.

Example:

Ntè éwúá [ntewua] 'like a dog'

Ntè 'as, like' and the demonstrative Vdò 'that' operate together as a special frozen form. The è drops and the d is reinterpreted as t giving Ntótò [ntorò] 'like that.'

Ntè plus the demonstrative Vmì 'this' also has a special form on analogy with Ntótò, namely, Ntôm [ntom] 'like that.'

The demonstrative Vmì 'this' may have the following form:

Vmì after V# → m  
 after VC# → Vm  
 tone, '# + ` → ^

Examples:

ìdáká Vmì [ìdáyá ʒmī ~ ìdáyáamī ~ ìdáyám] 'now'  
 (lit. time this)

Nfín Vmì [mfín ʒmī ~ mfínʒm] 'this very day'  
 (lit. today this)

The particles ké, Nmè before a substantive behave as follows:

é drops optionally before V of same tone; è  
 drops optionally before V regardless of  
 tone

é remains before N, or V of different tone;  
 è remains before N.

If it remains

é/è before i, u → <sup>í</sup> <sup>ú</sup>  
 ì, ù

elsewhere → é/è.

Examples:

ké

ísíp 'palm-kernel'

kéísíp → kísíp [kísíp] ~ kéísíp [kéísíp] ~  
 kíísíp [kiísíp]

ké

ùtô 'impotent man'

kéùtô → kéùtó [kéùtó] ~ kúùtó [kuùtó]

ké

ńfâŋ 'leaf'

kéńfâŋ → kéńfâŋ [kémfâŋ]

Nmè

ísíp 'palm-kernel'

Nmèísíp → Nmísíp [nmísíp] ~ Nmèísíp [nmèísíp]  
 ~ Nmìísíp [nmìísíp]

Nmè

ùtô 'impotent man'

Nmèùtô → Nmùtô [mmùtò] ~ Nmèùtô [mmèùtò]  
 ~ Nmùùtô [mmùùtò]

Nmè

Nfân 'leaf'

Nmè Nfân → Nmè Nfân [mmè nfân]

The commonest forms are

kísíp Nmísíp

kùùtô Nmùtô

Assimilation of é/è to a or loss of it before a is possible but very uncommon.

The interrogative noun Nsé 'what' is a contracted form of Nsòǫké. It behaves as follows: normal tone sandhi operates and optionally é before N → remains, elsewhere → ∅.

Examples:

Nsé 'what'

útó 'type, kind'

Nséútò — Nsútò [n̄sutò]

Nsé

Nwèt 'book'

NséNwèt [n̄seŋwèt]

The demonstratives  $\acute{V}m\grave{i}$ ,  $\acute{V}d\grave{o}$ ,  $\acute{V}k\grave{o}$  and the possessive pronouns  $\acute{V}m\grave{o}$ ,  $\acute{V}Nm\hat{o}$  behave as follows:

$\acute{V}$  which is [ʒ] in dialect A in all the forms above, and may be ʒ, o, ɔ in dialect B, assimilates to the preceding vowel optionally.

$\acute{V}$  after a → a

ɔ → ɔ

elsewhere → harmony rules for  $\acute{V}$  according to the dialect.

Examples:

$\acute{V}f\grave{a}\eta$  'path'

$\acute{V}m\grave{i}$  'this'

$\acute{V}f\grave{a}\eta \acute{V}m\grave{i}$  [ $\bar{a}f\bar{a}\eta \bar{a}m\bar{i}$  ~  $\bar{a}f\bar{a}\eta \bar{z}m\bar{i}$ ]

$\acute{N}p\acute{o}$  'thing'

$\acute{V}d\grave{o}$  'that'

$\acute{N}p\acute{o} \acute{V}d\grave{o}$  [ $\bar{m}\eta k\bar{p}\bar{o} \bar{o}d\bar{o}$  ~ dialect A  $\bar{m}\eta k\bar{p}\bar{o} \bar{z}d\bar{o}$ ]

dialect B  $\bar{m}\eta k\bar{p}\bar{o} \bar{o}d\bar{o}$ ]

$\acute{V}$ , the second singular subject prefix and  $\acute{V}$ , the third singular subject prefix have optional assimilations:

after  $y\grave{a}k$  'let'

$n\grave{a}$  'be necessary'

and occasionally after other verbs with vowel a:

$\acute{V}/\acute{V} \rightarrow \grave{a}/\acute{a}$

## Examples:

yàk Vdít [yāχ̄dít ~ yāχ̄adít] 'Let it leak!'

Vnà Vdì [anā̄ 3̄dì ~ anā̄ adì] 'You must come!'

A verb stem of the shape CV especially when preceded by an object marker or when in the negative imperative, may have the shape CV<sub>1</sub>V<sub>1</sub>. Note that a CV stem in the negative imperative may also be CV [see <sup>Verb phrase</sup>Foot].  
note!

## Examples:

Nbò sók Vkôn [mb̄ō s̄ōχ̄ 3̄kon] ~ [mb̄ōō s̄ōχ̄ 3̄kon]

('Take it from me to Okon!')

•ké ùbén íkúà Vmì ùpí étó [kuūbēn ikuā 3̄mī ūkpī  
étó ~ kuūbēn ikuā 3̄mī ūkpīi étó] 'Don't

use this knife to cut wood!' (lit. don't

take knife this don't cut wood)

Vkéúnò [3̄kunō ~ 3̄kunōō] 'He gave it to you.'

## 1.6 Registers

There are three registers: normal ., interrogative ?, and emphatic!. Interrogative and emphatic may occur together, marked ?!. They are called registers because the voice is at a different pitch through the utterance marked by each of these: normal, high, higher, and highest, respectively. In addition, there are certain tonal modifications associated with these registers.

Normal register is used in all declarative sentences and may be used in questions containing interrogative words. The voice is in its normal neutral range and the tones are not modified in any way.

Examples:

ʋtò' ìwá. [ʒtò'íwá] 'He planted cassava.'

ʋmédi ìdáká ʋkèé [ʒmédi ìdáyá kèé] 'When did  
you come?'

In interrogative register, the utterance begins at a slightly higher than normal pitch and remains at this pitch throughout. Individual tone distinctions are intact. If the final tone of an utterance marked by the interrogative register is low preceded by a high tone, it is raised slightly to the level of a lowered high. Final high tones are unchanged.



Examples:

ʋtò ìwá? [ʒtò̄ īwá̄] 'Did he plant cassava?'

ʋmékít àṅâ? [ʒmekit̄ aṅ<sup>w</sup>ā] 'Do you see the cat?'

Note that the final tones of àṅâ are high low combined on a single vowel. The same rules occur as for a high low sequence on two vowels.

#### Emphatic Register

In the emphatic register the entire pitch of the sentence is raised but all tones remain in tact.

In emphatic interrogative register the same features apply as for interrogative, plus the fact that the voice is raised to a very high pitch from the beginning of the utterance to the end.

### 1.7 Utterance and Tone Phrase

An utterance is a stretch of speech bounded by pause, i.e. silence. The concept of utterance is useful for considering certain tonal and segmental phonetic features. Note that some phonological elements have different phonetic realizations in utterance initial, medial, and final positions.

The tone phrase is defined as that stretch of speech where the initial tone is not influenced, i.e. lowered by the influence of any preceding tones. That is, where a new tone level begins. The downward drift of Ibibio tones is confined to the tone phrase.

The tone phrase frequently coincides with the utterance. However, it does happen that an utterance may consist of two or more tone phrases. New tone phrases may occur when the speaker pauses slightly in hesitation, for dramatic effect, or to give a quote, direct or indirect. When he resumes, it is at a new high tone level. The most common occurrence is that of the quote, especially in the following

$\acute{V}m\acute{a} \acute{N}b\acute{o} \acute{N}t\grave{e} \acute{k}\acute{e}$  [ama mbō ntē kē]

'He told me that...'

The next words are at a new high pitch level.

When an utterance contains two or more tone phrases, a register may apply to the whole utterance or to a tone phrase only. This last case is generally true only for direct quotes.

## 1.8 Stress

Stress in Ibibio is predictable from the tone pattern of the word or in the case of compounds and other head modifier constructions involving special tone patterns, from the tone pattern of the construction. Phonetically it is not strongly marked, being heard as a slight intensification of the phonetic syllable in question. For any tone pattern, this slight stress is optional. Any word may be pronounced with equal stress on any syllable. Whether or not a word receives a stress on one syllable depends on factors such as speed of utterance, emphasis on a particular word in an utterance, and personal style.

Words with a pattern of all high tones are generally pronounced without any stress. If a syllable is stressed, it is the second syllable. (This generally coincides with the first syllable of the root, as all verbal and most substantival prefixes are monosyllabic).

The stressed syllable is marked with a vertical line placed before it.

Examples:

ú-sótó [us<sub>o</sub>r<sub>o</sub> ~ ú,s<sub>o</sub>r<sub>o</sub>]

Ṁ-dép·ké [ndÉpē ~ ṅ,dÉpē ]



## Examples:

ùdíá [ū,díá] 'food; yam'  
 V̀kòpó [ɛkòpó] 'machete'  
 V̀bóón [ɛ,bóón] 'chief'  
 Nmé dép [mme,dép] 'I have bought'

Where more than one change of tone is involved, the stress generally falls on the first syllable with a tone different from the initial tone.

## Examples:

ìtíòñ [ì,tíòñ] 'five'  
 ìtíàbà [ì,tíàbà] 'seven'  
 ìtíàità [ìtí,àità] 'eight'

In words where the first changed tone is low, all syllables are pronounced with equal stress

## Examples:

Ǹnàm [ǹnàm] 'I sold'  
 Ǹkàppá [ǹkàppá] 'I turned it over'

If there is phonetically a falling pitch in a word, the stress falls on it.

## Examples:

V̀nâ [ã,n̂â] 'cat'  
 ímîn [i,m̂în] 'pus'  
 Ǹkúpê [ǹku,bê] 'a sickness'

## 1.9 Phonotactics

Most of the statements about the distribution of phonological elements are made in the various sections on vowels, consonants and so on. The most important of these are summarized here, and a few statements are added.

### Tones

' occurs only with ' and only after ' and '  
no sequences of the following type occur:

''

^^ occurs only before hyphen juncture

### Vowels

V and N occur only before hyphen juncture;  
the following vowel sequences occur:

i plus i, e, a, ɔ, o, u

u plus i, e, a, ɔ, o, u

e plus i, e

a plus i, a

ɔ plus i, ɔ

o plus i, o

iai

ici

uci

uee

Other vowel phonotactic statements are found in harmony rules [see N, V and e].

### Consonants

The following consonants occur after hyphen juncture:

p	t		k
b	d		
f	s		
m	n	ñ	ŋ
		y	w

before hyphen juncture:

p	t	k
m	n	ŋ

The following sequences of consonants occur:

pp	tt	kk
mm	nn	ŋŋ

In CVCV stems:

if  $C_1$  is a nasal, then  $C_2$  is either a nasal  
or a velar

no nasals occur before o; otherwise any  
consonant may occur before any vowel.



### 1.10 Loan Words

The most important sources of loan words are in probable order of importance: Efik, the standard dialect, other Ibibio dialects (for Itak especially Anan), Pidgin and standard English, other Nigerian languages such as Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa. There are probably a few words from Arabic, Hindi, and European languages, especially Spanish and Portuguese.

Many loan words are phonologically marked. Vowels and consonants have different distributions than in native words. In particular, consonants normally restricted to morpheme initial position may occur elsewhere, vowel harmony rules may be violated. Tone patterns may be skewed, reflecting the tones or stresses of the donor language. Some foreign sounds occur. Nouns may occur without a vocalic prefix.

Of course, many loan words are undergoing or have undergone processes of assimilation to the phonological patterns of Ibibio. Variant forms of loan words occur, one more assimilated than the other. Young people with a knowledge of Efik and English learned in school naturally assimilate the loans less than their parents and grandparents. I have very little to indicate that Efik is a prestige dialect. Most speakers will prefer

the Ibibio forms, especially when back in their own villages. Many of them are aware which words they use are Efik. However, words that are partially assimilated may not be recognized. The most obvious Efik features are final i vowel, where the Ibibio form would end in a consonant, permission of i and a in the same stem, low tone, where the Ibibio dialects have fall, and reduction of geminate vowels. Also there are words which conform to Ibibio phonological structure but which are generally recognized to be Efik loans, i.e. everyone knows that there is an Ibibio word that means the same thing.

Examples of loan words:

violation of vowel harmony

átíká [at̄íyá] 'constipation (Efik)'

̀Vsápò [àsáβ̄] 'python' (Efik)

consonants with abnormal distribution

̀Vwàsí [awāsí] 'sneeze (prob. Efik)'

kòfí [kòfí] 'coffee (English or Pidgin

English)

foreign sounds:

ègúsí [ègúsí]. 'Egusi (prob. Yoruba)'

nouns without a prefix:

kòòp [kòòp] 'cup (English or Pidgin English)'

kàtàsín [kārāsín] 'kerosine (English or  
Pidgin English)'

bàñá [bāñá] 'Fernando Po (Spanish?)'

P a r t   I I

D e r i v a t i o n

## Introduction

There are two kinds of morphemes in Ibibio: roots and affixes. Roots are divided into three classes: verbal, substantival, and particle. Affixes are divided into two types: derivational and inflectional.

Roots, or roots plus derivational affixes, make up stems. Derivation then is concerned with the formation of stems. Stems alone or stems plus inflectional affixes make up words. Morpho-syntax is concerned with the formation of words, and with the combination of words into larger structures.

The division of Ibibio roots into classes is made on the basis of their derivational patterns, that is, with what derivational affixes they may combine, and in what ways they may combine with them. There are three classes of stems corresponding to the three classes of roots. A stem which has no derivational affixes belongs to the class corresponding to the root it contains.

Verbal stems are derived only from verbal roots. Substantival stems are derived from substantival roots and also from verbal and particle stems. Particle stems are derived from particle roots and from verbal and substantival stems.

There are some complex substantival and particle constructions which are derived from combinations of verbal, substantival and particle material. These will be treated under derivation and again under morpho-syntax since they are part of both systems.

Derivational affixes may be divided into those which may occur with verbal roots; with verbal stems; with substantival roots and stems and with particle stems. Particle roots characteristically do not combine with any derivational affixes.

## 2.1 Derivation of Verb Stems

Verb stems may consist of a verbal root alone or may be derived from a verbal root by the addition of one or more derivational suffixes. Stems formed in these ways are called simple stems. Complex stems are derived from simple stems by the addition of one or more derivational prefixes or prefixes and suffixes.

Verbal roots have the following canonical shapes:

### Group I

$\acute{C}\acute{V}$ ,  $\acute{C}\acute{V}$

$\acute{C}\acute{V}_1\acute{V}_1$

$\acute{C}\acute{V}_1\acute{V}_2$ ,  $\acute{C}\acute{V}_1\acute{V}_2$

$\acute{C}\acute{V}\acute{C}$ ,  $\acute{C}\acute{V}\acute{C}$

$\acute{C}\acute{V}_1\acute{V}_2\acute{C}$ ,  $\acute{C}\acute{V}_1\acute{V}_2\acute{C}$

### Group II

$\acute{C}\acute{V}_1\acute{V}_1\acute{C}$ ,  $\acute{C}\acute{V}_1\acute{V}_1\acute{C}$

Group I roots are the basic monomorphemic shapes. Group II roots appear, on examining the derivational patterns in Ibibio, to be complex historically but are not analyzable synchronically. In all cases they appear to consist of a root of a shape found in Group I plus one or more derivational affixes, but there is no actual group I shape root attested in the present-day language.

Derivational suffixes are made up from a small number of phonological elements. Some suffixes consist of one of these elements, others of combinations of two or more.

Three derivational categories may be recognized with regard to derivational suffixes: these are plural-intensive, intransitive, and reversive. The derivational categories are represented by more than one derivational suffix. Some of the suffixes are limited to occurrence after particular root shapes, but in other cases there is no such limitation. While a given derivational category may be represented by many suffixes, one suffix predominates in each category. Conversely, a particular derivational suffix may be the representative of more than one derivational category. But here too it is possible to say that for at least some of the suffixes, a certain derivational function predominates.

There are many sets of stems clearly derived from the same root whose derivational relationships do not fall into the three categories mentioned above. There are so many of these sets and the meaning relationships within the sets are so diverse that it is not possible to systematize them semantically. However,



most of them may make use of the same phonological elements in the suffixes, and will be presented according to the shape of the derivational suffixes.

## 2.11 Singular-paucal and plural-intensive stems

Many roots form two stems whose meanings differ quantitatively. One stem, the singular-paucal, may refer to action performed once, a few times, or in some contexts, many times. The other stems, the plural-intensive, refers to action performed many times, intensively, or distributively (or a combination of these).

In general, stems formed from roots alone with no derivational suffix are by nature singular-paucal. The plural-intensive stem is formed by adding one of a number of suffixes. Roots of any shape may take a plural-intensive suffix. There is a correlation between root shape and suffix form, but there is not total predictability.

Some roots do not form a plural-intensive stem. These are idiosyncratic; there is no canonical or semantic restriction involved. Sometimes a root does not form a plural-intensive stem because such a stem would be homophonous with a stem (not plural-intensive in meaning) formed from some other root. Where only one

quantitative-type stem occurs, its meaning range is like a singular-paucal stem, and although it is often used in plural contexts, it is never intensive or distributive.

Roots of the shape CVC generally take the plural-intensive suffix  $\cdot$ . Because of the frequency of this root shape, this form of the suffix accounts for over half the examples of plural-intensive stem formation. (Note that although the suffix  $\cdot$  has other functions, it is most commonly plural-intensive).

Examples:

sát 'be dry'

sát $\cdot$  → sáát 'be dry of many items'

bòm 'break, break open'

bòm $\cdot$  → bòòm 'break open of many items'

Some roots of the shape CVCV also take the  $\cdot$  suffix.

Examples:

sàṅá 'walk'

sàṅá $\cdot$  → sààṅá 'walk around' (distributive)

nímé 'extinguish'

nímé $\cdot$  → níímé 'extinguish many fires'

In a few cases the stems are reversed with the suffix  $\cdot$  indicating a singular-paucal stem, and the

absence of suffix indicating the plural-intensive stem.

Examples:

búŋ 'break, eg. a stick'

búŋ • → búúŋ (plural)

Roots of the shape CVCV, CVCCV, and a few roots of the shape CVC where the second C (or CC) is p, t, k (pp, tt, kk) take a plural-intensive suffix which contains a replacive nasal. There are two such suffixes: •M which occurs after CVCV or CVCCV roots, and -Mé which occurs after CVC roots.

Examples:

fèké 'run, run away'

fèké •M → fèèné 'run, run away (of many people  
or in many directions)'

dép 'buy'

dép •Mé → déémé 'buy (many different kinds  
of things)'

There are cases where there is an alternation of i and u within the root in addition to the addition of a suffix. This alternation occurs in other derivational patterns as well. It may be due to dialect mixture (e.g. Efik sometimes has u where Ibibio has i: Efik kút 'see', Ibibio kít 'see'). The two kinds of plural-intensive derivation discussed so far cooccur with this alternation.

## Examples:

fim 'blow'  
 \*fùm → fùùm '(plural)'  
 bíp 'ask'  
 búp ·Mé → búúmé '(plural)'  
 NB. bíp - bíímé and búp - búúmé, búp - búmé  
 also occur.

Roots of the shape CV, CVV are less apt to form a plural-intensive stem than other root shapes. When they do, the suffix generally has the shape N'é.

## Examples:

pá 'die'  
 pa N'é → páǹǹá (plural)  
 níé 'have'  
 níé N'é → níéné (plural)

The root kàá forms its plural-intensive irregularly.

## Example:

kàá 'go'  
 kàyá (plural, intensive, distributive)

Roots of the shape CVVk take the replacive i as plural-intensive suffix.

## Examples:

díók 'become bad'  
 díók í → díóí (intensive)

wààk 'tear'

wààk i → wàì (intensive)

Infrequent patterns include:

támmá 'jump'

táám 'jump about'

kókó 'swell'

kóók (intensive)

Unique in my data are:

tíyó 'remember'

tóyó (plural)

píké 'slash'

pók 'chop'

with é suffix

ñón 'return'

ñón é → ñónó (plural)

reversed

púkó 'pluck'

púk (plural)

with •ké

kép 'blink'

kép •ké → képpé 'flicker'

## 2.12 Change of complement class

A root may form stems which belong to different complement classes [see 4.4]. Most commonly, a stem formed from a root alone will belong to a class of verbs which take a direct complement. A stem formed with one of a number of suffixes may belong to a class of verbs which do not take a direct complement. This is the case for a majority of verbs, but it is by no means invariably true.

Many roots of the shape CVC take a suffix of the shape -é which may be called an intransitivizer. This term is chosen for convenience only since the terms transitive and intransitive are not otherwise used in this grammar.

### Examples:

tát 'tie'

tát é → tátá 'melt, loosen'

màn 'bear a child'

màn é → màná 'be born'

Some CVC roots take the suffix <sup>~</sup>intransitivizer

•ké

### Examples:

dùòk 'throw away, lose'

dùòk•ké → dùòkk<sup>~</sup> 'spill'

fiák 'turn, twist'

fiák.ké → fiákká 'be twisted'

Reverse sets of the above occur.

Examples:

sópé → sóbó 'be lost'

sóp 'lose'

núák.ké → núákká 'mash, squash'

núák 'be mashed'

A few other suffixes occur randomly with the intransitivizer function.

## 2.13 Reversive

Some roots may take a reversive suffix. The meaning of the stem which results is exactly or close to the reverse or opposite of the root meaning.

The commonest reversive suffix has the shape  $-\cdot k\acute{e}$ . (This is homophonous with the negative and dependent suffixes which are inflectional). This shape accounts for more than half the reversive suffixes in my data.

## Examples:

tèm 'boil water, cook'

tèm  $\cdot k\acute{e}$   $\rightarrow$  tèmmé 'take a pot off of the fire'

díán 'add'

díán  $\cdot k\acute{e}$   $\rightarrow$  díánná 'take away, take out,  
separate out from'

Other reversive suffixes are of the shapes:

fòtó 'put on'

fòtó  $\cdot$   $\rightarrow$  fòtòtó 'peel off'

$\cdot \acute{e}$

dòt 'put, place'

dòt  $\cdot \acute{e}$   $\rightarrow$  dòtòtó 'remove, take off'

$\cdot \mathfrak{M}$

pèk 'urge on'

pèk  $\cdot \mathfrak{M}$   $\rightarrow$  pèkèn 'delay'



-é

síít 'plug, obstruct'

síít é 'remove an obstruction'

Other sets of plain/reversive stems include:

Examples:

kóónη 'hang on hook'

kóónηó 'remove from hook'

fáák 'insert in narrow space'

fákká 'remove from narrow space'

Here it is quite likely that there are underlying forms

\*kóónη

\*fák.

If these forms are posited, then, the suffix has the shape •ké, as in the first examples above.

A few irregular sets occur:

Examples:

sín 'put in'

síó 'take out'

There are other stems which appear reversive but for which no corresponding root occurs in Ibibio.

Example:

démmé 'to wake up'

(This may be related to Efik dé 'sleep'; Ibibio has dáyá 'sleep').

The remarks above account for the more frequent derivational patterns. Below are listed some rare types as well as some unusually large and/or interesting sets.

Examples:

kúó 'sing'

kúótó 'preach'

dè 'be brave'

dèké 'be sharp, fierce, function'

díá 'eat'

dáí 'lick'

pì 'cut, slash'

píkké 'cut through'

sù 'lie'

sùà 'hate'

sùè 'curse'

sùèṅ 'insult'

sùènné 'be disgraced'

sùùṅó 'curse (worse than sùè)'

tó 'plant, sow, drop in a seed'

tók 'urinate'

tóí 'drop liquid drop by drop'

tókkó 'pour'

tòtó 'defecate'

fim 'swing, wave, blow'

fimé 'blow (of wind)'

fimmé 'stagger in drunkenness'

compare

fùùt 'blow with bellows'

fùṅ 'wave'

nèn 'be straight'

nèèn 'straighten'

nèkké 'be straight, be perfect'

nèèṅé 'smooth out'

fèèk 'destroy balance, remove support'

fèkké 'slide, slant from lack of support'

fèké, pl. fèèṅé 'run, run away'

fémé 'move away (oneself)'

fèp 'take a thing away'

fèppé 'take a thing away (?)'

fèèn 'let off, let go, pardon'

fèn 'forgive, overlook'

--

## 2.14 Phonological elements correlated with derivational functions.

The harmonic vowel e

The suffixation of the harmonic vowel accounts for the majority of derivations involving intransitivization.

I have recorded only one case of -e having a reversive function, and none as plural-intensive. There are a few sets of related meanings where the suffix -e appears. But in the overwhelming majority of cases, -e can be said to be intransitivizing.

-e combines with • to form one of the less common reversive suffixes •é

- the pluralizer/intensifier/generalizer

It occurs with these functions in over 30 examples.

Sometimes there is a slight meaning shift.

Examples:

sát 'be dry (sg-paucal)'

sat• 'be dry (pl-intensive)'

sàṅá 'walk'

sàṅá• 'walk around'

fík 'apply a cloth to'

fík• 'press'

Occasionally, the meaning relationships are different.

Examples:

bàk 'harm'

bàk• 'fear'

yàk 'allow, let'

yàk• 'let go'

- ké the reversive suffix in over eight examples

Examples:

tèm 'put water on fire to heat'

tèm •ké 'take off'

díán 'add'

díán •ké 'take away'

•Mé This is generally a plural-intensive suffix.

•N This is a plural-intensive or a reversive suffix.

Né This is a plural-intensive suffix in five examples.

Examples:

pá

páNé

nié

niéNé

## 2.15 Complex Stems

Three complex stems can be derived from the simple stems discussed so far. They are reduplicated, reciprocal, and motional stems.

Reduplicated stems are formed by prefixing the reduplicator R to the simple stem.

Examples:

from wót 'show'

NRwót [ɲwɔɔwɔt] 'Show me (I insist)!'

from má 'like, love'

nám sé VRmá [nam se amaama] 'Do whatever you want!'

[See the Verb Phrase for discussion.]

A reciprocal stem may be formed from any simple stem which may take a direct complement and whose meaning

makes reciprocal action feasible. In addition, a reciprocal may be formed from a few simple stems of a type which do not take direct complements. In these cases the meaning of the reciprocal stem seems to be intensive or generalized; these latter cases are frozen forms, the others are productive.

The formation of the reciprocal stem involves a prefix and a suffix. The prefix is always the same:  $\text{d}\acute{\text{u}}/\text{d}\acute{\text{u}}$  (the first occurs after ' the second after `) varying dialectically with  $\text{d}\acute{\text{i}}/\text{d}\acute{\text{i}}$  (dialect A has  $\text{d}\acute{\text{u}}/\text{d}\acute{\text{u}}$ , B has  $\text{d}\acute{\text{i}}/\text{d}\acute{\text{i}}$ , C has  $\text{d}\acute{\text{u}}/\text{d}\acute{\text{u}}$   $\frac{f}{\sim}$   $\text{d}\acute{\text{i}}/\text{d}\acute{\text{i}}$ ). There are several reciprocal suffixes. The choice of suffix is determined by the shape of the simple stem in that certain suffixes may only occur with certain stem shapes, however this is only partially predictable. In addition, several verbs have unique forms in the reciprocal. All reciprocal stems however, regardless of suffix type, have an overriding low tone pattern which begins with the simple stem (after the  $\text{d}\acute{\text{u}}$  prefix) and continues to the end of the word. This overriding low tone carries over onto the inflectional suffixes  $\cdot\text{k}\acute{\text{e}}$  negative and  $\cdot\text{k}\acute{\text{e}}$  dependent. This is the only place where a derivational suffix has an effect outside the derivational system. These suffixes are best not to be considered inflectional since they have a wide



variety of suppletive forms like the other derivational affixes. This is one of a few places in Ibibio where the line between inflectional and derivational affixes is not clearcut.

The reciprocal suffixes are as follows:

- tè which occurs with CV or CVV stems
- kè which occurs with CVC or CVVC stems and after one CV stem
- Nè which occurs with one CV stem and one CVV stem
- è which occurs with one CVVC stem
- which occurs with all CVCV, CVVCV, CVCCV, and CVVCCV stems.

Two verbs má 'like, love' and dá 'stand' have special allomorphs before the reciprocal suffix, namely, mák and dák. nàá 'lie down' has the form nààm in the reciprocal with no further suffix.

Examples:

from sé 'look at'

édusé·tè [eduseerè] 'They look at each other.'

from wòt 'kill'

éyaédúwòt·tè [eyaeduwòtò] 'They will kill each other.'

from miá 'hit, slap'

èdúmiá·Nè [edumiãñà] 'Hit each other!'

from *dìòṅó* 'know'

*ìmàídudìòṅó* [ìmàídudìòṅó] 'We knew each other.'

from *dá-dák* 'stand'

*úfók Vdudák·kè* [ufog ʒdudákā] 'The house has been standing for a long time.'

Three verbs have been recorded with a *dù* prefix which do not seem to be reciprocals. The tone on *du* is different from that in reciprocal constructions and the meaning of the verb is not reciprocal. All three verbs may take singular subjects. Reciprocals may take only plural ones. However, the tone on the verb stem is low, suggesting a reciprocal origin. The verbs are:

*dúbòì* plural intensive *dúbòyò* 'imitate'

*dúyittè* 'be elastic'

*dùtìn* 'dash about in a hurry'

A motional stem can be derived from any simple stem by prefixing *dí* and/or *ké*. *dí* is from the verb *dí* 'come;'; *ké* is from the verb *kàá* 'go.' The motional stems have the meaning motion toward (with *dí*), motion away (with *ké*), or motion first toward then away (with *díké*). They may be translated 'come and X,' 'go and X,' 'come go and X.'

## Examples:

kébén ífiá [kēbēn ífiá] 'Go and fetch firewood!'

díbén ífiá [dībēn ífiá] 'Come and fetch fire-  
wood!'

díkíbén ífiá [dikībēn ífiá] 'Come go and  
fetch firewood!'

More than one of the three categories discussed above may on occasion be combined in a complex stem. It is fairly rare however. Reduplication and reciprocity generally do not combine. But either of these can combine with motional stems. The reduplication prefix is added to the stem first, then the motional prefix, then the reciprocal affixes. The tone rules applying to the reciprocal override the tones of the entire word regardless of the presence of the other prefixes.

## Examples:

édúkéyìppò [edukēyìppò] 'They went and hit  
each other.'

yàk VkéRnàá [yāg ʒkenāanaā] 'Let him go and  
lie down.'

## 2.16 List of Derivational Affixal Elements

- lengthener
- e harmonic vowel
- k geminator
- N replacive nasal
- i replacive i
- ŋ additive nasal
- R reduplicator
- dú/du ~ dí/di reciprocal prefix
- dí, ké motional prefixes
- t, ` reciprocal suffix elements

## 2.2 Derivation of Substantive Stems

Substantival roots are more varied than verbal roots. While the majority of substantival roots have one or two structural syllables like verbal roots, some are more complex. They may have three, four or more structural syllables. Substantival roots have a larger number of tone patterns than do verbal roots.

Historically, it would seem likely that substantival roots were no more complex than verbal ones. Most substantival roots which have more than two structural syllables suggest analysis into two or more roots, but segmentation is not possible due to loss of one or more segments, tone changes, or semantic improbability. A number of long substantives are clearly reduplicated forms of the root and several types of reduplication must be distinguished.

Nearly all substantival stems contain a prefix. Exceptions are some loan words, and two numerals. The substantival prefixes must be considered derivational and therefore part of the stem. There are two reasons for this. First, the prefixes are, in general, invariable with regard to the root; that is, they are always present and always have the same segmental and tonal shape for a given substantive (tone sandhi,

assimilation, etc., excepted). Second, a substantive cannot usually be identified without its prefix. There are exceptions to both these statements, but they do not destroy the validity of the premise that the prefixes are derivational. There are a few examples of singular-plural prefix sets. These use the same root with a V-, i, e, or u prefix for singular and a N-prefix for plural. Also, there are a few cases where a particular substantival root occurs with more than one prefix, each of which imparts a different meaning to the root, but maintaining a semantic similarity among the forms so that a root meaning can be recognized. These few exceptions point to an earlier stage of the language where it seems probable that a noun class system operated as it does in the Bantu languages, in Tiv, etc., languages with which Ibibio has close genetic affinities. But these are vestiges only, and it cannot be said that a noun class system operates today.

The prefixes are of two types, single and double. The single prefixes are: V-, N-, i-, e-, u-; all may have high or low tone. The common double prefixes have the shape V-, N-, i-, (e- less common) plus di, du, ki, ku. Less common ones have the same first elements, with the second part being ti, tu, bi, bu, da, ka, ta, ba,

with high or low tone on either part. There is some vowel harmony among the first and second parts of a double prefix: i- or e- may precede di, ki, ti, bi, and not forms with u, or a. The forms in bi, bu appear to be loans from Efik and are probably not productive in Ibibio. The usual prefix correspondence is Ibibio di, du.

Examples:

Efik òbùfò Ibibio òdùfò 'you (pl)'

Efik íbíbíák Ibibio ídíbíák 'sweat'.

In the list of double prefixes noted as less common, there are some whose status is uncertain. Because it seems likely that double prefixes may have had multiple origins, there are times when it is unclear how a given CV sequence should be analyzed. One origin of the double prefix may be the infinitive prefix *Vdí* in Ibibio, *Ndí* in Efik, which is prefixed to a verb root. Since infinitives (verbal nouns in Efik) often function as substantives, analogical formations may have been made with substantival roots and verbal roots with non-infinitival meaning. Another possible origin is the reciprocal prefix *du* which yields verb forms beginning with *Ndu*, *Vdu*, *idu* and *edu*. Finally, a very likely origin for double prefixes is reanalysis of

reduplicated substantives. Partial reduplication is very common in substantives yielding forms such as:

Examples:

A. V̀kú́kúó	?
ìbìbìò	'Ibibio'
Ǹkùkù	'insect of grasshopper type'
Ǹpèpèm	'bat (animal)'
Ǹdùdùè	'error'

The partially reduplicated second syllable may have been reinterpreted as a prefix to yield forms such as:

Examples:

B. Ǹkùbè	'type of insect'
Ǹdùpó.	'kite (bird)'

Of course, in the examples given above in A, it is not possible to say definitely whether the forms have a double prefix or are reduplicated (except for Ǹpèpèm which is clearly reduplicated, since -pe- never occurs as a double prefix, i.e. never occurs in this position except before a syllable beginning pe, pi).

There is no difference in meaning between single and double prefixes. Single prefixes are much more common. Sometimes a root will have a single prefix and double prefix form coexisting, with identical meanings.



## Examples:

ùmà	}	'electrical storm'
Vdùmà		
Efik Vbùmà		

The canons of substantival roots are presented below. Their segmental and tonal shapes and occurrences with prefix tone are systematized as much as possible. Roots up to the complexity of CVCVC are discussed. Roots of greater complexity are not regular enough to be systematized since most or possibly all are complex historically and not yet analyzable at present. These are discussed in groups by type. Prefix combinations are given for single prefixes only. The same rules can apply to double prefixes.

It is the second tone of the double prefix that is pertinent, for example, Ìdú and ú operate the same way, likewise Vdì and V, etc.

## Substantive Roots

capable of systematic statement

monosyllabic

high	low	fall	drop	rise
$C\acute{V}_1((\acute{V}_1)C)$	$C\grave{V}_1((\grave{V}_1)C)$	$C\acute{V}_1((\grave{V}_1)C)$	$C\acute{V}_1((\acute{V}_1)C)$	—
2	2	2	2	

limitations of prefix ' occurs before high  
fall or low  
drop

` occurs before high  
low  
fall

anomalous

$C\acute{V}_1\acute{V}_1$	$C\grave{V}_1\acute{V}_1$
---------------------------	---------------------------

' before rise

` before high

disyllabic and  $CV_1V_2$  structures

all occur with all five patterns, not all canonical possibilities occur systematically enough to

chart. The commonest are:

$C\acute{V}_1\acute{V}_2$	$C\grave{V}_1\grave{V}_2$	$C\acute{V}_1\grave{V}_2$	$C\acute{V}_1\acute{V}_2$	$C\grave{V}_1\acute{V}_2$
---------------------------	---------------------------	---------------------------	---------------------------	---------------------------

' occurs before high  
fall or low  
drop

` occurs before high  
low  
fall  
rise



## 2.22 Other more complex substantives

## Reduplicated

1. complete: prefix and root

    NtíàNtíà 'kind of grass'

2. complete: root only

    Vkaǹkaǹ 'sword'

    Vtákták 'grasshopper'

3. partial

CVC root: pattern → pref CVC pref CV

    èkàtíkà 'harmattan'

    Vtik̀òtíkè 'praying mantis'

    Nkáníká 'gong, clock, o'clock'

CVC root: pattern → pref CF pref CVC

    VkòVkòn 'kind of fruit'

CVC root: pattern → pref CV CVC

    Vkókók 'pole made from part of palm-wine tree'

    Npèpèm 'bat (animal)'

    Vpápák 'kind of plantain'

CV<sub>1</sub>V<sub>2</sub> root: pattern → pref CV<sub>1</sub> CV<sub>1</sub>V<sub>2</sub>

    ìbìbìò 'Ibibio'

    Ndùdùè 'error'

    Vkúkúó ?

## Larger Sets

bìté 'be black, ripe'

ùbíť 'black dye'

Ṽbíťé 'a certain black poisonous snake'

Ṽbúbít / Ṽbébít 'black (adjective)'

bìťé 'play'

Ñbíťé 'game, joke'

íbít 'drum'

Ñdùbíťú 'humorous story, joke'

káŋ 'broil, grill'

úkáŋ 'coal'

íkáŋ 'fire'

Ñkáŋ 'charcoal'

úkáŋ 'meat, fish, etc. fried in oil for guests'

tìťé 'stop'

útìťé 'just, only, as in dépkèèt útìťé buy one only'

ùťít 'end'

Ṽpàťíté 'end (noun), last (adjective)'

Ñťítútótŋ 'disobedience'

kùèťé 'finish'

Ñkùkùèťé 'the only, the last'

ùkùèťé 'the only, the last'

bét 'wait for; restrain'

ìbét 'taboo'

Ñbét 'law'

dèp 'drop (of liquid)'

Vdèp 'swamp, marsh'

Ndèdèp 'drops of water from trees at night'

Ndìdèp 'insect secretions'

díá 'eat'

ùdíá / Ndíá 'food (raw), yam'

Ndídíá, 'food (prepared)'

dáppá 'dream'

ídáp 'sleep'

Ndáp 'dream'

dèngé 'be cool and damp'

Ndèdèngé 'cool'

ùdèngé 'cool'

dòk 'dig'

údòk 'hoe'

ídòk 'tuber harvest'

Examples of substantives with complex or uncommon structures (obvious loan words are omitted):

segmentally odd

kèèt 'one'

dùòp 'ten'

ùtùé 'spider'

tonally odd

ˈVwàsí 'sneeze'

ˌVpé-tí 'thing to beat ground flat with'

forms which look analyzable but cannot be analyzed on semantic grounds

ùtùùtépè 'spider'

ètéèbò 'kind of animal, dog-like, climbs trees'

ˈNpáfááfáká 'armpit'

ˌVsàNtìm 'water buffalo (?)'

ˌNdàítíát 'kind of banana'

ˌVòòípà 'nubile girl'

ˌVtú-dúù-dùú [ʒtuduudu] 'hide and seek type game'

ˌVpóNñáñáká 'bamboo with segments'

ˌNtítùùpùùm 'bird which lives near the water'

ˌVkòkkòbíòkkò. [okokbioko] 'kind of mushroom'

only partially analyzable

ˌNtáfíón 'a black, smelly, stinging ant'

ˌVpàtáwà [akparawa] 'young man'

## 2.23 Special remarks on certain classes of substantives

### 2.231 Adjectives

There is a very small number of adjective roots in Ibibio as is the case in most African languages. I have recorded less than a dozen which cannot unambiguously be traced to noun or verb roots. Of the rest, a handful are derived from nouns and compounds of adjectives and nouns. The rest are derived from verbs. In fact, an adjective may productively be derived from almost any verb which is intransitive.

It is in the adjective class that the few remnants of the Niger-Congo noun class system best survive. There are several sets of adjectives which have a vowel prefix in the singular and a nasal prefix in the plural. I have recorded the following:

- tì 'good' adjective root  
sg étí pl Ntí
- tòk 'small' adjective root  
sg ètòk pl Ntòk
- fíá 'be white' verb root  
sg Vfíá pl Nfíá 'white'
- bìté 'be unripe, be black' verb root  
sg Vbébít ~ Vbúbít pl Nbébít ~ Nbúbít 'black'
- díók 'be ugly, bad' verb root  
sg idíók pl Ndíók 'ugly, bad'



## 2.232 Numerals

The numerals have a few unusual phonological features. The numerals for 1 and 10 have no prefix:

kèèt '1'

dùòp '10'

The numerals from 2 to 5 (and 6 to 8 which are based on 5) have an ì- prefix:

ì-bà '2'

ì-tá '3'

ì-nààṅ '4'

ì-tíòn '5'

ì-tíò-kèèt '6'

ì-tiá-bà '7'

ì-tiá-ità '8'

Numerals for 40, 60, 80 are formed from the roots for 2, 3, 4 by prefixing Ṽ-

Ṽ-bà '40'

Ṽ-tá '60'

Ṽ-nààṅ '80'

## 2.233 Kin Terms

A special section is devoted to kin terms because they constitute a closed sub-system of substantives of interest for the traces of old no longer productive derivational patterns. The kin term system is not self-consistent because it has been undergoing a change from one in which certain basic forms were inflected for possession by prefix, to one in which an invariable form is possessed by the usual possessive pronoun. The remnants of the old system are the following. This system is used in part by older speakers.

## Basic elements:

-té	}	'father'
-só		
-né	}	'mother'
-kà		

-bôm, ãm 'grand- (parent)'

-bé, bêt 'husband'

-yákà 'kinsman'

-kòt 'in law'

## Prefixes:

̀N 'my'

ù, ú 'your'

è, V non-possessive prefix

## Examples:

unpossessed	1st person sg	2nd person sg
èté 'father'	Nté 'my father'	--
	Nsó	ùsó 'your father'
èkà 'mother'	Nné 'my mother'	--
	Nkà	ùkà 'your mother'
ètéVbòm 'grandfather'	Nsóbôm 'my grand- father'	ùsóbôm 'your grandfather'
èkâm 'grandmother'	Nkâm 'my grand- mother'	ùkâm 'your grandmother'
èbé 'husband'	--	ùbêt 'your husband'
Vyákà 'kinsman'	--	úyákà 'your kinsman'

úkôt 'in-law' is unpossessed but may once have meant 'your in-law.'

The modern system used by children and younger adults is given below. Note that many younger speakers use a few terms from the old system alongside the new terms; known to most younger Ibibios are: ùsó and ùbêt.

èté	'father'
èkà	'mother'
èbé	'husband'

## Examples:

èté Nmì	'my father'
èté Nfò	'your father'

and so on.

The terms for grandparents are:

èkà\_ékà 'mother of mother'

èkà\_éte' 'mother of father'

ète\_ékà 'father of mother'

Vtété' (from èté\_éte') 'father of father'

Possessive pronouns follow these terms.

Other kin terms Vṅààn 'wife,' V́yín 'child,'  
V́yákà 'kinsman,' úkôt 'in-law' likewise take possessive  
pronouns.

## 2.24 Deverbative Substantives

### General Nouns

The deverbative nouns are grouped into types according to the prefixes and tone patterns by which they are derived.

Type I. This type accounts for the bulk of the forms.

### Prefixes

The verb stem retains inherent tone.

There is high or low tone on prefix.

u-

i-

e-

N-

V- (rare)

For examples see below.

Type II has very few examples.

The verb stem retains its inherent tone.

The prefix is of the double type.

from tá → Ndútá 'chew → chewable thing'

from bèké → Ndùbèké 'concern → business'

## Type III

The prefixes involved are substantives derived from shorter verb stems not used in the present day language.

1. simple type - substantive is derived from a stem minus last V. There is no tone change.

from *tùèpé* → *ʋtùèp* 'be cold → cold'  
*yìlípé* → *íyìlíp* 'be reddish → blood'  
*dòtó* → *ídòt* 'be bitter → bitter'  
*tèmmé* → *ítèm* 'explain → advice'

2. other types - non-predictable

from *sùèŋ* → *Ŋsùè* 'insult → an insult'  
*mòyó* → *ìmô* 'be rich → wealth'  
*síiyé* → *Ŋdìsí* 'be fresh → fresh'  
*sìà* or *wàyá* (or both) → 'sneeze -  
*ʋwàsì* a sneeze'  
*yèké* → *úyè* 'be warm → warmth'

## Type IV

The verb stem is completely or partially reduplicated. The prefixes are like I or II.

from *kép* → *ʋkèpkép* 'blink → lightening'  
*fóp* → *ùfófóp* 'distill → liquor'  
*kèŋ* → *Ŋkèkèŋ* 'shake → crawfish particles after being strained through a basket (?)'

## Type V.

The prefixes are like I or II. The verb stem tone is modified as follows. (Examples 1-4 are unique.)

1. ` → ´  
from nèn → ùnén 'beright → right'
2. `` → ´´  
from tìmé → Ntímé 'storm about → trouble'
3. `` → ´´  
from sùà → ùsùá 'hate → hate'
4. `` → ´´  
from tòtó → ùtótó 'defecate → diarrhea'
5. ´(´) → ´´. This is an Efik pattern.

There are two examples of this

type:

from tíká → ùtíkà 'shoot → bow'

wák → Vdíwàk. Ibibio has

ùwák here. 'be many → many'

## Type VI Random types

from kìné → Nkúné 'tie on cloth → a body cloth'

nàṅṅá → Vdùṅṅà 'yawn → a yawn'

bùkó → ùbùbùkòNmóóṅ 'dive → a diving bird'

dá → Vdàídàkà 'stand → one who stands, e.g.  
a flag-bearer'

dàt → Ndàídàt 'be red → red'

## Examples of Type I:

The choice of prefix is not predictable. There is no tie to meaning except that N may mean plural in a few cases.

## Verb Class 1 [see Verb Phrase 4.1 ]

dáátá → ídáátá 'rejoice → joy'

dáppá → ídáp; Ndáp 'dream → sleep; dream'

díá → ùdíá, pl. Ndíá 'eat → food, yam'

tépé → útépé 'smell → a smell'

ké → Nké 'tell a tale → a tale, tone riddle'

bét → Nbét; íbét 'wait, restrain → law; taboo'

## Verb Class 2

dàn → ìdàn 'spend the night → act of spending  
the night'

dè → ìdè 'be brave → bravery'

dèp → Vdèp 'drop (of liquid), soak → swamp'

bààk → Nbààk 'fear → fear'

tàk → Ntāk 'be worn out → worn out'

màn → úmàn 'bear a child → birth'

wà → úwà 'sacrifice → a sacrifice'

dòp → ídòp 'be silent → silence'

dìòṅ → ídìòṅ 'bless → shrine'

## Verb Class 3

nèmé → Nnèmé 'converse → conversation'

sièté → ùsièté 'dawn → dawn'



sùáná → Nsùáná 'be scattered → messy heap'

tìé → ìtìé 'stay, sit → place'

bìté → Nbìté 'play → game, play'

tòpó → Ntòpó 'place an order → an order'

dùó → ìdùó 'fall down → a fall'

#### Verb Class 4

dèémé → ùdèémé 'share, divide → a share'

dèṅṅé → ùdèṅṅé 'be cool → cool'

dùòkkó → Ndùòkkó 'spill → overflow'

bòòtó → íbòòtó 'answer → an answer'

mòòńó → ùmòòńó 'see clearly → mirror'

## 2.241 Agentives

There are two agentive substantival derivations. One involves prefixing àNdí- or VNdí- to a verb stem. The verb stem has its inherent tone on Verb Types I, IV, fall on II, III [see 4.1 ]. This derivational pattern is probably borrowed from Efik. It is infrequent in Ibibio.

## Examples:

àNdítóp 'one who has shot and killed'

from tó� 'shoot'

àNdíñâm 'one who sells'

from ñâm 'sell'

àNdísaṅà 'one who travels with someone'

from saṅá 'walk'

A more common agentive noun may be derived from a verb stem by prefixing V̄ to the verb stem carrying its inherent tone and following with a noun complement. Since both parts of the construction are nouns, the normal tone sandhi for head modifier constructions operates.

## Examples:

V̄tó ' ñáṅ 'a farmer'

from tó 'plant', ñáṅ 'farm'

Vñàm 'ùdùà 'a trader'

from ñàm 'sell', ùdùà 'market, price'

Vsàṅá/ísâṅ 'a traveler'

from sàṅá 'walk', ísâṅ 'a walk, a journey'

Most verb stems may take a prefix ú-. This forms a verbal noun often interchangeable with the infinitive in its substantival functions. The verb stem has inherent tone in classes I, IV, and fall in II and III. A few verb stems use í- or é- to form the verbal noun.

Examples:

úkúótó 'preaching'

from kúótó 'preach'

únâm 'selling'

from ñàm 'sell'

ídáátá 'rejoicing, joy'

from dáátá 'rejoice'

A productive construction made up of three elements, noun/infinitive or verbal noun and noun, generally can be translated as X for Ying Z. Normal sandhi operates on the last noun and on the verbal noun, not however on the infinitive.

Examples:

Nkèné 'basket'

úyét 'washing' / vdiyét 'to wash'

iwá 'cassava'

a. Nkèné'úyèt'ìwá

b. Nkèné Vdiyèt'ìwá

'a basket for washing cassava'

Nmòn 'people'

úpéép 'teaching / learning'

Nwèt 'book'

Nmòn'úpéép'Nwèt 'people for teaching/  
learning book, i.e. teachers/students'

The name of a profession or occupation is formed from the verbal noun plus a complement appropriate to the verb from which the verbal noun is derived [see 1.3 for special tone statements].

Examples:

sé 'look at'

útóm 'work'

úsé ' útóm 'foremanship, managership'

ñàm 'sell'

údùà 'price, market'

úñâm ' ùdùà 'trading'

In a similar fashion the verbal noun plus a complement may be combined to form the name of a tool.

Examples:

yóók 'saw'

Ínpó 'thing'

úyóók ' Ínpó 'a saw'

kùòkkò 'iron'

Vfòṅ 'cloth'

úkùòkkó ` Vfòṅ 'an iron'

Finally, the verbal noun complement combination may occur with a number of other meanings different enough to allow no generalizations.

Examples:

sákká 'split'

útín 'sun'

úsákká ` útín 'dawn'

kátá 'rule'

ídém 'self, body'

úkátá ídém 'self-rule, independence'

## 2.25 Derivation of Adjective Stems

There are two kinds of adjectives from the point of view of phonological structure, simple and reduplicated. Simple adjectives are derived from substantive roots, and from verb stems. Reduplicated adjectives are generally derived from verb stems and occasionally from substantive stems.

### Substantive Roots

#### Adjectives

Adjective Roots [See also 2.231]

Adjectives are distinguished from nouns syntactically not phonologically. Yet there is a small number of roots from which only adjectives are derived. Ibibio is like most other African languages in having few adjective roots. I have recorded only<sup>a</sup>/few adjectives which cannot be unambiguously derived from nouns or verbs. It is possible that even these are ultimately derivable elsewhere, but I can find no evidence for it thus far.

#### Examples:

-tî

étî 'good'

-tòk

sg ètòk pl Ntòk 'small'

-fá

úfá 'new'

An adjective can be derived from many verb stems. The limitations on what verbs enter into this derivational pattern seem to be only semantic.

The deverbative adjective is usually reduplicated, either partially or completely. Complete reduplication is the more common pattern. The adjective is formed by the addition of one of the single or double (this is rare however) substantival prefixes to the verb stem. Complete reduplication involves both prefix and stem.

For high tone verb stems (Class I) the prefixes may be high or low. If high, there is a drop tone inserted between the two parts of the adjective. If low, only normal downdrift operates.

Examples:

from bát 'be dirty'

NbátNbát [mbadmbat] 'dirty'

from níngé 'be sweet'

NníngéNníngé [nniŋgenniŋge] 'sweet'

from símé 'be silly'

NdisíméNdisímé [ndisɪmendisɪme] 'silly'

For low tone verb stems (Class II), the pattern is that the first prefix is low and the second is high. The verb stem has inherent tone.

Examples:

from mèm 'be soft'

̀NmèmNmèm 'soft'

from nèn 'be straight'

̀NnènNnèn 'straight'

For Class III verb stems, low high tone, there are few examples due to the small membership of the class. I have recorded three examples, each of a different type.

Examples:

from kàá 'go'

̀VkàáVkaá 'going'

from fíté 'forget'

éfitééfítè 'forgetful, forgetting'

from fèké 'run'

̀VfèkéNfèkè 'running'

There is one example in my data for Class IV. The verb stem has inherent low-high tone.

Example:

from dù̀kkó 'to spill'

̀Ndù̀kkóNdù̀kkó 'flabby'



The examples of partial reduplication are all from Class II verb stems. The tone pattern is the same as for the complete reduplication.

Examples:

sìp 'be small'  
 Nsèésìp 'small'  
 nèm 'be sweet, pleasant'  
 Nnèénèm  
 dàt 'be ripe, red'  
 Ndàídàt 'red'

A few adjectives for color are derived from nouns by complete or partial reduplication.

Examples:

Ìwà 'a tuber that yields a green dye'  
 Ìwàwà 'green'  
 Ntón 'ashes'  
 NtónNtón 'grey'

There are a few adverbials derived from verbs in the same way as the reduplicated adjectives.

Examples:

from sòp 'be quick'  
 úsóp'úsóp 'quickly'  
 from dípé 'to hide'  
 NdípéNdípé 'secretly'

### 2.3 Derivation of Particles

The third root class, the particles, is very small. Roots of this class characteristically derive stems without the addition of any derivational affixes. The resultant stems are invariable. The only exceptions to this are a small set of position indicating roots which derive positional particles, from which are derived locative and demonstrative substantives, and a relative particle from whose stem is derived an interrogative substantive.

There follows a list of the particles of the first type described above. See 4.1 for a discussion of these forms.

ké 'at, on, from, in, etc.'

má, ná, mán 'so that'

pót 'only'

sá, síà 'since'

tùtù 'until'

Three particle roots, mí, dó, kó, form a set. The roots have a positional meaning referring to locations near the speaker, near the addressee or anaphoric, and off in the distance, respectively. From these roots are derived particle stems of the same shape meaning, 'here', 'there' or 'there anaphoric', 'way over there'. The

range of position is narrow.

Examples:

dímí 'come here' (e.g. here where I'm standing)

Nfón, Nmò dó? 'Mfon, are you there?' (e.g. in  
the house)

Vwó. VVtié ké kó Vdô ùfàn Nmì 'The man who is  
sitting over there is my friend'

Two sets of locative substantives may be derived from the above stems. The first set is derived by prefixing N to the stem which retains its inherent high tone. This set of substantives has a narrow positional range like the corresponding particles. The second set is derived by prefixing ú to the stem which has ' in addition to its inherent high tone. This set refers to a broad positional range. For example, while mí and Nmí mean 'here in this room, here in this compound,' úmí means 'here in this village, here in this part of the country.' The set is as follows:

Nmí, úmí	'here'
Ndó, údó	'there'
Nkó, úkó	'yonder'

A third set of substantives is derived from the same particle stems by prefixing  $\acute{V}$  to the stem. The inherent high tone of the stem is replaced by a low tone. This set is the demonstratives 'this,' 'that' or 'that anaphoric,' 'that over there.'

Examples:

úfôk  $\acute{V}$ mì 'this house'

úfôk  $\acute{V}$ dò 'that house'

úfôk  $\acute{V}$ kò 'that house yonder'

The particle root  $\acute{ké}$  is derived without any derivational affixes into a stem  $\acute{ké}$  which has a wide range of meanings and functions. It is usually a preposition referring to position, e.g. at, on, in, etc. It also means 'that,' after sensory or experiential verbs and in inverted sentences.

Examples:

Ǹnim  $\cdot\acute{ké}$   $\acute{ké}$  ápáník̀ò 'I don't believe that it is true.'

é̀pê  $\acute{ké}$  Ǹkékit 'It's a leopard that I saw.'

$\acute{V}$ tíé  $\acute{ké}$  úfôk 'He's in the house.'

dí  $\acute{ké}$  Ǹkáníká ìbà 'Come at 2 o'clock.'

[see 6.2 for further examples].

A relative particle  $\acute{V}k\grave{e}$ , contracted often to  $\acute{V}$ , is derived from the root  $k\acute{e}$ . Also related is an interrogative noun  $\acute{V}k\grave{e}\acute{e}$  'which' which may be said to be derived from  $\acute{V}k\grave{e}$ .

Examples:

$\acute{V}k\grave{e}$   $\grave{N}m\grave{i}$   $k\acute{e}$   $\acute{V}d\acute{o}$  'It's mine' (lit. that of me  
that it is)

$\grave{u}d\acute{i}\acute{a}$   $\acute{V}k\grave{e}$   $\acute{N}\acute{n}\acute{a}m$   $\acute{i}f\acute{o}n-k\acute{e}$  'The yam I'm selling  
isn't good.'

$\acute{V}k\grave{e}p\acute{e}$   $\acute{V}k\grave{e}\acute{e}$   $k\acute{e}$   $\acute{V}y\acute{e}m$  'Which box do you want?'

From this stem  $k\acute{e}$  are derived two locative substantives  $\acute{N}k\acute{e}$  and  $\acute{u}k\acute{e}$ . These are parallel to the locative sets  $\acute{N}m\acute{i}$ ,  $\acute{u}m\acute{i}$ , etc. in that they refer to narrow and general positions, respectively. However, these substantives are used only as interrogatives.

Examples:

$\acute{V}b\acute{a}$   $k\acute{e}$   $\acute{u}k\acute{e}$  'Where is he?'

$\acute{V}b\acute{a}$   $k\acute{e}$   $\acute{N}k\acute{e}$  'Where is he?' (e.g. I know he's  
in the market but in which section of it?)

$\acute{V}k\grave{a}\acute{a}$   $\acute{u}k\acute{e}$  'Where are you going?'

The particle root  $s\acute{e}$  forms a particle stem of the same shape which functions as a relative particle.

Example:

Ndìòńó •ké sé Vnám 'I don't know what you  
did.'

From this stem is derived an interrogative sub-  
stantive Nsé.

Example:

Nsé Vnám? 'What did you do?'

### 2.31. Deverbative Particles.

A few particles are derived from uninflected verb stems, single or reduplicated.

Examples:

from k̀t́ 'do/be also'

k̀t́ 'also'

from síó and f̀p 'remove/take away'

síó f̀p 'besides'

from t́ń - t́ń 'begin'

t́ń 'since'

from t́ 'originate, be from'

t́t́ 'since'

One particle appears to be from an inflected verb stem no longer used.

Example:

from \*b̀k

́Nb̀k 'please'

### 2.32 Denominative Particles

There are very few particle stems that are unambiguously denominative.

Examples:

from N**à**àk 'fear'

N**à**àk 'lest, for fear that'

from à**á** - à**á** 'first (adjective)'

à**á** 'ever, before'

V**m**ékít épê à**á**? 'Have you seen a leopard before? / Have you ever seen a leopard?'

### 2.33 Complex Particle Phrases

There are a number of complex items which are grouped with the particles because of their function and their invariability. Some are noun phrases, some verb phrases, some entire sentences. Some are completely analyzable and some only partly so. Some common ones are given below.

Examples:

sáàdòkò - sáàdókó 'because'

probable analysis: sá 'since' V**V**dò·ké

'which it is (relative clause)'

íbókók**ké** 'except, unless'

probable analysis: neg. of bókó 'surpass'

V**k**émá 'after'

probable analysis: from verb phrase meaning

'when he/it finished'



## 2.34 Ideophones

Ibibio has a number of particles which are descriptive in function. They describe the speed or sound involved in the action of the verb, or other emotive shades of meaning. These particles may or may not be onomatopoeic.

## Examples:

ʋmíá ʋñé, mân! [amíá ʒñé mân] 'He hit him,  
mân!'

ʋdùó kím [ʒduó kím 'He fell, kím  
yím yim yim  
pói kpoi] kpoi'

ínúén ʋfùùtó yói [inuen ʒfuuro yoi  
sái sai]

'The bird flew, yoi

sai' (i.e. very fast)

### 2.35 Indeterminate Roots

There are among the particles a number of forms whose root class cannot be determined from the available data. These are generally forms which have a substantival prefix or which have variant shapes, one or more of which has a substantival prefix. However, they cannot be linked to any substantive in use in the dialects studied. Investigation of other Ibibio dialects may reveal the origin of some of them.

The most frequent of these are listed below. They are discussed by function in Section 6.

díón, ñdíón 'yet; before, then'

dáná, náná, ádáná 'when, while'

ìmmè; ìmmê 'and, with, plural; or, whether'

̀ndò 'and, with'

̀mpásóp, ñdòmò 'not even'

̀àbà 'anymore'

̀ńkò, ńde 'also'

̀ńkò

̀ńkóm 'not even'

̀z̀dì, z̀dò 'but'

̀z̀mò 'with (instrumental)'

P a r t   I I I

S y n t a x

## Introduction

It is convenient to talk about syntax in Ibibio in three parts: the structure of words, the structure of the noun and verb phrases, and the structure of sentences.

Words consist of stems alone and of stems plus certain inflectional affixes. Words may be divided into three classes: substantives, verbs, and particles. Substantives are divided into adjectives and nouns. The latter are subdivided into general nouns, pronouns, quantifiers, and demonstratives. Substantives are not subject to any inflection in word formation. They do however take certain inflectional affixes when combined in the noun phrase.

Verbs are composed of stems which may be inflected for categories of person, tense, mode, aspect, negation, and dependency. Verb stems are grouped into tonal classes according to their tonal behavior when inflected for certain affixes, and into structural classes according to how they combine segmentally with certain other affixes.

Particles include among others, adverbial, prepositional, and ideophonic elements. Derivationally particle stems have diverse origins. Inflectionally

they have a common feature, namely, they are uninflected and are invariable segmentally and tonally.

The noun phrase consists of a substantive head optionally expanded by one or more modifiers. The head may be a general noun or a pronoun. The modifier may be any kind of substantive. Modifiers may be numerous and complex up to the level of an entire sentence. Noun phrases may be simple or complex, the latter including compound noun phrases joined by a connective, or noun phrases in apposition.

The verb phrase consists of an inflected verb plus one or more complements. The number and kind of complements depends on the complement class to which the verb stem belongs.

More than one verb phrase can occur in a sentence. The verbs in such cases always have the same inflections, namely, the same subject, tense and so on. The form of all verbs after the first is determined by it.

Particles have a variety of functions and are discussed below in the sections on sentences and particles.

Ibibio sentences are simple and complex. Simple sentences are of two types: major and minor. Major sentences consist of a subject which is optional and a predicate. The subject is a simple noun phrase or a

complex noun phrase, i.e. compound or appositional. The predicate contains one or more verb phrases; it may also contain one or more predicate modifiers which may be adverbials or prepositional phrases.

Minor sentences include calls, some responses, exclamations, and so forth. They have a variety of structures.

Complex sentences involve two major sentences, one of which is subordinated to the other. Subordination is indicated in a variety of ways: by the use of a subordinator particle or phrase at the beginning of the subordinated sentence, by the use of a subordinating suffix on the verb, by subordinating tone patterns, by juxtaposition, and by combinations of these means. Subordinate sentences have various functions. They may modify a substantive head as in the case of the relative sentence; they may fill an adverbial slot of time, manner, cause, place; they may indicate condition in a condition/result sentence. The proliferation of subordinate sentence types constitutes one of the richest aspects of Ibibio structure.

The emphasis which may be placed on a part or all of a sentence is an important feature of Ibibio grammar. Emphasis, or the lack of it, is what determines the

verb construction of many sentences. It may also determine the placement of complements, the use of a simple or a reduplicated verb stem, and what will be the terminal contours of the utterance. There are three types of emphasis, each signalled by a different formal mechanism: 1) subject or complement emphasis, 2) verb emphasis, and 3) sentence emphasis.

When a subject or complement is emphasized, the verb is in a contrastive construction.<sup>1</sup> This means that the verb is inflected for certain affixes and tone patterns used only when the speaker intends to put stress on the subject or complement of the verb. The term contrastive is used to indicate that the item emphasized is being contrasted with an item of similar status in another sentence, actual or implied. Contrastive verb constructions are of two types: those used when the stressed item precedes the verb, and those used when it follows the verb. These two types are called preceding contrastive and following contrastive, respectively. They differ from each other tonally. When the subject of the verb is emphasized, the verb construction is of the preceding contrastive type because the normal order subject-verb never varies. When a complement of the verb is emphasized, there are

two possible orders: first, the normal order, verb-complement; second, inverted order where the complement is shifted to the beginning of the sentence. In the former case, the verb construction is of the following contrastive type; in the latter case, it is of the preceding contrastive type.

If no subject or complement emphasis is intended the verb is in a neutral construction. A neutral construction differs from contrastive ones tonally and may also differ segmentally.

Not all sentences can be classed as neutral or contrastive. That is, in some sentence types the distinction is neutralized.

All sentences may contain verb emphasis. This verb emphasis may operate in addition to subject-complement emphasis. The mechanism for signalling verb emphasis is use of the reduplicated verb stem. This emphasis is contrastive in a way similar to that of subject-complement emphasis in that the verb emphasized is being contrasted to a verb in another sentence, actual or implied. Thus, verb emphasis generally implies that an alternative to the action of the verb has been suggested.



Sentence emphasis may be applied to any sentence whether declarative or interrogative. It emphasizes the sentence as a whole and is signalled by certain intonational phenomena.

## Noun Phrase

### Introduction

A noun phrase consists of a substantive head optionally expanded by one or more substantive modifiers.

Substantives are divided into classes according to their position in the noun phrase. Some classes of substantives tend to be marked phonologically, but this is secondary to their identification on syntactic grounds.

There are two large classes of substantives: adjectives and nominals. Adjectives generally occur only as modifiers. Furthermore, adjective modifiers always precede the head. Nominals occur as heads and as modifiers. Nominal modifiers follow the head.

Adjectives are divided into sub-classes according to the order in which they occur in a series of two or more adjectives. The sub-classes are intensive adjectives, quantity adjectives, and general adjectives.

Nominals are divided into nouns, pronouns, quantifiers, and demonstratives. Nouns, pronouns, and quantifiers are further subdivided.

Substantives take no segmental inflectional affixes. However, the head-modifier relationship is characterized by certain tonal sandhi phenomena. These are symbolized by a tonal affix which has two allomorphs, ' and `.

### 3.1 Adjectives

Adjectives are divided into the following sub-classes: intensive with a single member *Vtáá* 'very'; quantity exemplified by *Vmíán* 'many', *ùsúk* 'some', *Vfít* 'all'; general exemplified by *ètòk* 'small', *Vfiá* 'white', *éti* 'good'. General adjectives may possibly be further divided into size, quality and other categories, but since strings of several adjectives are rare and considered awkward, it is not easy to discover what sequences and orders are permissible.

Adjectives are not phonologically marked to distinguish them from nouns. It is their syntactic distribution that marks them as a separate class. However, although both nouns and adjectives may be completely reduplicated, this is rare in nouns and quite common in adjectives. Thus, a form consisting of a prefix plus root completely reduplicated for both elements is likely to be an adjective. In fact, certain nouns when reduplicated, then function as adjectives.

Example:

*Ntón* 'ashes (noun)'

*NtónNtón* 'grey (adjective)'

[See also Derivation.]

Reduplicated adjectives are used somewhat differently from a corresponding simple adjective. In general the reduplicated form qualifies the notion of the simple adjective.

Examples:

ʋbâ ʋwàwàʋwàwà [aba awawa awawa] 'It looks green.' (lit. it is green green, i.e. greenish)

Compare:

Nyêm ʋwàwà [nyem awawa] 'I want green, I want the green one.'

ʋfiáʋfiòŋ [afia ʒfòŋ] 'white cloth'

ʋfiáʋfiáʋfiòŋ [afia afia ʒfòŋ] 'cloth with a white background'

Only the reduplicated form is used with a demonstrative.

Example:

Nyém ʋwàwàʋwàwà ʋdò [nyem awawa awawa ʒdò] 'I want that green one.'

Reduplicated adjectives undergo tone sandhi like other substantives. They are to be considered as one word. Thus the prefix and the first structural syllable are affected but the remaining tones are unchanged.

Example:

úfáʋfiáʋfiáʋfiòŋ [ufa afiaafia ʒfòŋ] 'new cloth with white background'

### 3.2 Nouns

Nouns have the widest distribution of all substantives. Their general distinguishing features are: they occur freely as head or modifier in the noun phrase, they are unmarked and unrestricted phonologically, they are an open class.

Nouns may be subdivided and some of the subclasses do not fulfill all the characteristics mentioned above. The classes are 1) general nouns, 2) interrogative nouns, 3) infinitives and verbal nouns. General nouns can be further divided and include abstract nouns, agentives and other types but this subdivision reflects no unusual syntactic behavior. Interrogative nouns and infinitives and verbal nouns are syntactically restricted and will be discussed separately. General nouns are not discussed. They may be said to possess on the whole all the features mentioned above.

The interrogative nouns are characterized by restricted distributions; special tonal behavior and by a rising tone pattern. (with one exception).

They are:

\ Vnìé 'who?'  
 / Vkèé 'which?'  
 \ Nsòó 'what?'

Nmòó 'where?'

Vdié 'how?'

ifân 'how many?'

In the first group, only Vnié, Vkéé, Nsòó occur alone in the form given. Nmòó occurs only with the preposition ké preceding, and Vdié is very rare. Its particle counterpart dié is the usual way to express 'how'.

Vnié and Vkéé may occur alone or preceding or following a general noun. There is one restriction to this statement. Vnié may precede only the noun Vwó, but may follow any noun. Vkéé has no such restriction. Neither can be preceded by ' or ` , but both may be followed by ' .

Examples:

Vnié ' Vwó [ɜnie ɜwo] 'who?' (lit. who man,  
who person)

íkót Vnié [ikot ɜnie] 'whose land?' (lit.  
land of whom)

Vkéé ' ébót [ɜkee ebot] 'which goat?'

ébót Vkéé [ebot ɜkee] 'which goat?'

These last two examples have the same meaning.

Nsòó may precede or follow with no change in meaning, but when it precedes, it has the form Nsé.

Examples:

̀Nsé úfík [nsufik] 'what smell?'

úfík ' ̀Nsòó [ufik nsoo] 'what smell?'

ifân only follows. It does not vary tonally.

Example:

ísúà ifân 'how many years?'

The infinitive may function as a noun. It is often used in free variation with the verbal noun. The infinitive most often appears as a complement to certain verbs such as yém 'want', kàn 'be able', nò 'know how to' and so on. It may occur with modifiers or as a modifier, the same as any other noun.

Examples:

̀Vdíkóòt 'to read'

̀Nwèt 'book'

̀Vdíkóòt ' ̀Nwèt [ʒdikood nwet] 'reading book'

úfá ' ̀Vdíkóòt ' ̀Nwèt [ufa ʒdikood nwet]

'new reading book'



### 3.3 Pronouns

There are six pronouns corresponding to the six numbers of the verb [see 4.2 ]. They are first, second, third persons singular and plural. In addition, there is another pronoun used in indirect speech which refers to second or third persons, and has a singular and plural form.

Pronouns may be divided into three sets according to the forms they take in particular environments. These sets are disjunctive occurring as verb subject, verb complement in emphatic position, and complement of a preposition; objective occurring as a direct complement of a verb in the normal position, i.e. immediately following it; possessive. Note that only singular pronouns have variant forms. It will be seen that neutralization of contrasts in the plural occurs elsewhere in Ibibio [see 4,8 ].

#### Disjunctive Pronouns

àmì	[ami]	'I, me'
àfò ~ Vfò	[afo ~ 3fo]	'you'
Vñé	[3ñe]	'he, him, she, her, it'
Nñìn	[nñin]	'we, us (inclusive or exclusive)'
Ndùfò	[ndufo]	'you (plural)'
VNmò	[3mmo]	'they, them'

## Objective Pronouns

mìèn [mien] 'me'  
 fìèn [fien] 'you'  
 Vñé 'him, her, it'  
 Nñìn 'us'  
 Ndùfò 'you (plural)'  
 VNmò 'them'

## Possessive Pronouns

Nmì [mmi] 'my'  
 Nfò [mfo] 'your'  
 Vmò [ʒmò] 'his, her, its'  
 Nñìn 'your (plural)'  
 VNmò 'their'

The indirect speech pronouns have the same form for disjunctive, objective, and possessive.

## Example:

ìmò ~ èmò [imò ~ emò] in singular'  
 Nmèìmò ~ Nmèèmò [mmimò ~ mmemò] in plural

The following basic elements may be isolated as correlating with meaning in regard to pronouns.

mì	'first person singular'	
fì ~ fò	'second person'	
ñé ~ mò	'third person'	
-en	'objective	
N-	'possessive'	applies to first and
à-	'disjunctive'	second person singular

### 3.4 Quantifiers

Quantifiers include the numerals and two nouns which refer to quantity, *Vfèn* 'more, another, some', *ìfân* 'few, a few.' These two nouns differ from quantity adjectives in the position they occupy in the noun phrase. *ìfân* is mutually exclusive with numerals and with *Vfèn*; *Vfèn* may occur with numerals.

There are many variations in the numerals in use in different dialect areas and even within a dialect area. Some speakers use an Ibibioized version of the Efik numerals learned in school. Some older speakers retain some terms from old pre-monetary systems where the medium of exchange was iron rings tied in bundles of twenty, shells or goats. Common to all speakers I observed are basic terms for numbers 1 through 5, a combination of 5 plus 1, 5 plus 2, 5 plus 3 for 6, 7, and 8, a phrase meaning 'one remains' (i.e. before 10) for 9, and a monomorphemic term for 10. Efik has a special word for 15 and some Ibibio speakers use it, but it does not belong in the Ibibio system. All dialects observed have a special word for 20, at least two different ones are in use. From 20 on, there is a kind of vigesimal system in use. A decimal system which one speaker used begins at 30, continues to 100,

and is picked up again at 30,000. This same speaker also used a vigesimal system from 30-100. Since I only recorded the decimal terms (based not on *dùòp*, the ordinary word for 10 but on *Vkúk* which is the word for money these days) in this fragment, from one speaker only, it is hard to draw any conclusions about it. Some speakers use a special word for 100 borrowed from Efik; just as many others have no special term but use 20 times 5. There is however an Ibibio word which means 100 when initial. It is the same as the word for 'goat,' but I did not record it until the number 500. When non-initial it means 50 and does not begin to be used until numbers over 1000. It certainly appears that I have recorded mixtures of various old numerical systems, but the fact is that except for young people who have been to school and use a version of the Efik system, there is no self-consistent numerical system in use anymore.

## Numerals

- 1 kèèt  
 2 ìbà  
 3 ìtá  
 4 ìnààṅ  
 5 ìtíòn  
 6 ìtíòkèèt  
 7 ìtíàbà - ìtìábà  
 8 ìtìáìtá  
 9 ùsúkkèèt - ànánkèèt  
 10 dùòp  
 11 dùòp V̀kèèt      ùdót kèèt      dùòp V̀dót kèèt  
 12 dùòp èbà      ùdót ìbà      dùòp V̀dót ìbà  
 13 dùòp ètá      ùdót ìtá      dùòp V̀dót ìtá  
 14 dùòp ènààṅ      ùdót ìnààṅ      dùòp V̀dót ìnààṅ  
 15 èfít - Vfít

alternatively 15, any of the above patterns,  
 i.e. dùòp ìtíòn, etc.

16-19 any of the above patterns.

- 20 édíp      V̀bêk      V̀bêk kèèt  
 21 édíp  
     V̀bêk      }      Nmè      }      kèèt  
     V̀bêk kèèt }      yè      }

22-29 follow above pattern

- 30 `Vkúk ìtá is added  
 31 `Vkúk ìtá `Nmè }  
                   yè } kèèt

But pattern for 22-29 is also used through 39, i.e. 30 `édíp `Nmè dùòp, etc. Also at every point all of the variants given for 11-19 may be used.

- 40 `édíp }  
       `Vbêk } ìbà       `Vbà       `Vbâ       `Vkúk ìnààṅ
- 41 `édíp }  
       `Vbêk } ìbà }  
       `Vbà       } `Nmè }  
       `Vbâ       } yè } kèèt  
       `Vbâ
- 50 may continue above pattern, i.e. `édíp ìbà  
       `Nmè dùòp, etc. or  
       `Vkúk ìtìòn
- 60 `édíp }  
       `Vbêk } ìtá       `Vtá       `Vkúk ìtìòkèèt
- 70 may continue above pattern or  
       `Vkúk ìtìàbà
- 80 `édíp }  
       `Vbêk } ìnààṅ       `Vnààṅ       `Vkúk ìtìáítá
- 100 íkiè       `Vbêk ìtìòn       `Vkúk dùòp
- 200 íkiè ìbà       `Vbêk dùòp

Beginning at 400 and in addition to a continuation of the pattern directly above, I recorded:

400 ébót ìnààṅ  
 500 ébót ìtìòṅ  
 1000 ébót dùòp

At 1100 another variant pattern occurs:

édíp ébòt ñdó Vbêk ìtìòṅ

ébót appears to mean 100 in the expression ébót ìnààṅ and so on. But in the above, it appears to mean 50:

édíp ébòt ñdó Vbêk ìtìòṅ

20 x 50 and 20 x 5

(20 x 5 = 1000 and 20 x 5 = 100).

This pattern continues until 2000:

1200 édíp ébòt ñdó Vbêk dùòp, etc.

2000 édíp ébòt ìbà

20 x 50 x 2

10,000 édíp ébòt dùòp

20 x 50 x 10

11,000 édíp ébòt dùòp Vdòt kèèt

20 x 50 x 10 plus 1

20,000 édíp ' ébòt édíp

20 x 50 x 20

But at 30,000 another pattern is substituted:

30,000 Vkúk itá. ' édíp ` ébót  
10 x 3 x 20 x 50

100,000 Vkúk dúòp ' édíp ` ébót  
10 x 10 x 20 x 50

This pattern stops at 900,000.



### 3.5 Demonstratives

There are three demonstratives:  $\acute{V}m\grave{i}$ ,  $\acute{V}d\grave{o}$ ,  $\acute{V}k\grave{o}$ . They refer to positions near the speaker, near the person spoken to, and yonder, respectively.  $\acute{V}d\grave{o}$  is also used anaphorically.

Tonally the demonstratives stand out from other substantives. They have low tone after a high-toned prefix. This high low pattern is rare [see 1.3]. Although it is not unusual that a small lexical set of high frequency exhibits unusual phonological structure, there may be a simple explanation for the occurrence of high low where high fall would be expected. Substantives of the tone shape high fall when occurring after the tone affix  $\acute{\phantom{V}}$  in a noun phrase change their tone to high low. Demonstratives occur typically following another substantive so that their most frequent tone pattern would be high low regardless of the fact they were high fall in isolation. It is likely that a reanalysis of their tone resulted.

The V- prefix of demonstratives is susceptible to assimilation to the preceding vowel.  $\acute{V}m\grave{i}$  is frequently contracted to  $\hat{V}m$  or  $\hat{m}$  [see 1.5a].

Examples of demonstratives:

Ńpó'Vmì [ŋkpɔɔmi] 'this thing'

Ńpó'Vdò [ŋkpɔɔdo] 'that thing (near you or) that  
thing (we talked about)'

Ńpó'Vkò [ŋkpɔɔko] 'that thing (over there)'

The demonstratives often occur in combination with Vñé, the third person singular pronoun, and with Vdá, a noun derived from dá 'stand.'

Vñé may combine with Vmì, Vdá with any of the demonstratives to form demonstrative nouns with the meaning 'this one,' 'that one,' 'that one over there.' These combinations may take no further substantival modifiers.

Examples:

Vñé'Vmì [ʒñe ʒmi also ʒñemi] 'this one'

Vdá'Vmì [adaʒmi ~ adami] 'this one'

Vdá'Vdò [adaʒdo] 'that one'

Vdá'Vkò [adaʒko] 'that one yonder'

### 3.6 Noun Phrase Construction

The noun phrase consists of two or more substantives in a head-modifier relationship to each other. The head-modifier relationship is generally signalled by the presence of a tonal affix.

The relationship between any two substantives in a noun phrase may involve associative, possessive or descriptive notions. The differences do not affect the structure of the noun phrase.

Examples:

#### Associative

édí 'pig'

íkót 'bush'

édí'íkót [ediikót] 'bush-pig, wild pig'

úfióp 'heat'

ídém 'body'

úfióp'ídém [ufiobidem] 'fever'

ùbóm 'canoe'

Vñón 'sky'

ùbóm'Vñón [ubom3ñón] 'airplane'

#### Possessive

ìsìm 'tail'

éwúá 'dog'

ìsìm'éwúá [isimewua] 'dog's tail'

ʋyín 'child'

ʋkôn 'proper name'

ʋyín ʋkôn [ʋyinʋkon] 'Okon's child'

úfôk 'house'

̀Nmì 'my'

úfôk ̀Nmì [ufogmmi] 'my house'

#### Descriptive

útó 'yellow'

ʋñèn 'eye'

útó ʋñèn [utoʋñen] 'malaria, lit. yellow-eye'

̀umíán 'many'

ʋwó 'people'

̀umíán ʋwó [umianʋwo] 'many people'

All substantives may occur in a head-modifier relationship, but there are distributional restrictions associated with certain classes.

#### The Head

There is one principle head in a noun phrase. It may be a noun or a disjunctive or objective pronoun. It may also be a sequence of two (or rarely more than two) nouns or occasionally an adjective followed by a noun. The members of these sequences stand in a head-

modifier relationship to each other, but function as a unit in the noun phrase in question. The meaning of these complex heads may or may not be predictable from the meanings of the members.

Examples:

a single noun head

Ṽwó [ʒwo] 'person'

Ṽwó'ìbìbìò [ʒwoibibio] 'Ibibio person'

a pronoun head

̀Ndùfò 'you (plural)'

#### Complex Noun Heads

Heads of this type are very common in Ibibio as the names of many objects, animals, and plants are composed of two or more nouns.

Examples:

̀Ntân'ébêk [ntanebek] 'beard (lit. hair/chin)'

Both words are nouns. ̀Ntân is the head.

The meaning is not idiomatic.

úto'Vñên [utoʒñen] 'malaria (lit. yellow/eye)'

úto is an adjective, Vñên is a noun.

Vñên is the head. The meaning is idiomatic.

Vyôp`Nbàkátá [ʒyobmbakara] 'pineapple (lit.  
oil palm fruit/European)'

Both words are nouns. Vyôp is the head.

The meaning is idiomatic.

#### The Modifiers

There may be more than one modifier in a noun phrase. A head may be modified by one or more adjectives which precede it, and by a possessive pronoun (true only of noun heads), a quantifier, a numeral, and a demonstrative. The head may also be modified by a noun which in turn may be modified by a modifier of any type including another noun. That is, the head may be modified by an entire noun phrase and so on.

#### Constituency

Because a noun head may consist of two or more nouns, or of an adjective plus a noun, the problem of constituency may arise. That is, the problem of whether a given noun or adjective modifier is part of the noun head or is a modifier of it. Ibibio speech does not distinguish these potentially ambiguous cases even though two basically different structures underlie them. As a general rule, it may be stated that if there is the possibility of a noun or adjective being part of the head, a native speaker will choose that interpretation.

There are of course cases where such an interpretation is not possible, as for instance, a string of nouns in a possessive relationship each to the other. Idioms are, however, never subject to an alternative interpretation.

For example:

dép V́yôp Ǹbàkátá V̀dò [dép ʒyob mbakara ʒdo]

'Buy that pineapple!' This is never subject to the interpretation 'the palm fruit of that European.' If such a meaning is intended, the phrase would be worded in another manner, such as:

dép V́yôp V̀kè Ǹbàkátá V̀dò [dép ʒyob ʒke mbakara ʒdo] 'Buy palm fruit, that of that European.'

In the two examples below the first has a structure adjective plus noun head modified by a noun phrase, the second has a structure adjective plus complex noun head.

Examples:

úfá 'new (adjective)'

ìtàm 'hat (general noun)'

V̀bòóŋ 'chief (general noun)'

úbòóŋ 'chiefdom (general noun)'

úfá'ítàm'Vbóón [ufa itam ʒbóón] 'new hat of  
the chief'

úfá'ítàm'úbóón [ufa itam ubóón] 'new chief's  
hat (signifies his office)'



### 3.61 Tone Sandhi

Tone sandhi signals the head-modifier relationship of substantives in the noun-phrase. It operates as follows: the first substantive retains its inherent tone pattern; subsequent substantives undergo tone change determined by the tone pattern and sub-class of the immediately preceding substantive [see 1.5]. The types of substantives that undergo these tone changes are: adjectives, most general nouns, disjunctive and objective pronouns, demonstratives, and quantifier nouns. Substantives that do not undergo these tone changes are: possessive pronouns, most numerals (in most contexts), certain kin and relationship terms, and personal names. However, there are certain circumstances where tone sandhi does not occur among substantives of the first types, and cases where it does occur among substantives of the second types.

#### Statements and Examples Pertaining to Normal Operation of Tone Sandhi

The following are the kin and relationship terms which do not undergo tone sandhi in the head-modifier construction.

èté, Nté 'father, my father'

èkà, Nkà, ùkà. 'mother, my mother, your mother'

Nkâm, ùkâm 'my grandmother, your grandmother'

èbé, ùbêt 'husband, your husband'

Nsó, ùsó 'my father, your father'

Nsóbôm, ùsóbôm 'my grandfather, your grandfather'

kòkó. 'namesake'

ùfàn 'friend'

**Example:**

ídém ùbêt ísón·ké 'Your husband's  
health is not good.'

Personal names do not undergo tone sandhi.

**Examples:**

Nwèt 'book'

Vkôn 'Okon' (a proper name)

Nwèt Vkôn [ɲwéd ʒkɔn] 'Okon's book'

úfôk 'house'

Nfón 'Mfon' (a proper name)

úfôk Nfón [ufog m̄fɔn] 'Mfon's house'

Numerals undergo tone sandhi in some contexts and not in others. Furthermore, there is some variation on this point among speakers. In general, the lower numerals do not undergo tone sandhi. Numerals such as édíp, Vbèk, ébót may for some speakers undergo sandhi and for others not. However, all numerals undergo tone sandhi in the following contexts: 1) after quantity

adjectives, 2) after V̀yókó 'next' used in forming ordinals, 3) after náǵá 'all' (used with numerals only). The numerals k̀èèt 'one,' dùòp 'ten' have a falling tone after substantives which end in a `´ tone pattern.

## Examples:

no tone sandhi

Ṽwó ìtá [ʒwo ìtá] 'three people'

ìno ìbà [ìno ìbà] 'two thieves'

étó kèèt [eto kèèt] 'one tree'

tone sandhi after quantity adjectives

Ṽfít'ítá [ʒfir itá] 'all three'

after Vyókó

Ṽyókó'ítá [ʒyogo itá] 'the third (one)'

after náná

náná'ítá [naná itá] 'all three'

tone sandhi ~ no tone sandhi

ébót(')édíp [ebor edip ~ ebor edīp] 'twenty  
goats'

kèèt, dùòp after a substantive ending in ''

ùbóm kèèt [ùbom kèèt] 'one canoe'

## Pronouns

Subject and object pronouns undergo tone sandhi just as any other noun. Possessive pronouns do not. Compare this suspension of tonal sandhi in possessives to that of personal names and kin terms which when functioning as modifiers are always in a possessive relationship to the noun head.

### Suspension of Tone Sandhi

Tone sandhi may be suspended in the case of a noun which refers to a certain type of person, i.e. thief, wizard. Here it functions like a personal name.

Example:

ùbóm 'canoe'

ìnó 'thief'

ùbóm ìnó [ùbóm ìnó] 'a thief's canoe'

Where these terms do not refer to individuals but rather to a profession, normal tone sandhi operates.

Example:

ùbóm'ìnó [ùbóm ìnó] 'a canoe for thieving'

Examples of this latter type are rare.

Since personal names are often homophonous with names of objects or qualities, the use or suspension of tone sandhi may serve to indicate whether or not a person is involved.



### Special Use of Tone Sandhi

In the sequence *ébót Nn̄ìn ìbà*, there are two noun phrases: *ébót Nn̄ìn* and *ìbà*, meaning 'two of our goats' (lit. goat our two). The structure is Head possessive pronoun (NP) [see below]. In the sequence *ébót Nn̄ìn' ìbà*, there is only one noun phrase, meaning 'our two goats (i.e. we have only two)(lit. goat our two). The structure is Head possessive pronoun numeral. Here tone sandhi occurs between *Nn̄ìn* and *ìbà*. Although numerals do not ordinarily undergo tone sandhi, *ìbà* does here to signal that it is part of a single noun phrase.

Kin terms may undergo tone sandhi in certain complex expressions again signalling a special close relationship of head-modifier in a single noun phrase. Thus, *èkà èkà ìtô* is 'the mother of the mother of Ito' with two noun phrases, but *èkà'èkà ìtô* is 'the grandmother of Ito' with one noun phrase.

Further examples:

*Vyín'èkà Nm̄ì* [*ʒyin ekā m̄m̄i*] 'my sibling'

(lit. child-of-mother my)

*èté'èkà Nm̄ì* [*ete ekā m̄m̄i*] 'my maternal grand-

father' (lit. father-of-mother my)

*Vyín èkà Nm̄ì* [*ʒyin ekā m̄m̄i*] 'the child of  
my mother'

èté èkà Nmì [èté èkà m̄m̄i] 'the father of  
my mother'

In the first two examples the emphasis is on the relationship of Nmì to Vyínèkà [ʒyinekā] and ètéèkà [èteekā]; in the last two, the emphasis is on the relationship of èkà Nmì to Vyín and èté. The focal noun èkà undergoes tone sandhi when it is part of the general relationship construction 'sibling,' 'grandfather,' but not when it refers to an individual 'my mother.'

The possessive pronoun may undergo tone sandhi with an emphatic meaning as a result.

Example:

Vfít N̄n̄in vs. Vfít'N̄n̄in [ʒfid n̄n̄in] vs. [ʒfid  
n̄n̄in]

Both mean 'all of us,' but the latter is more emphatic.



## 3.62 Noun Phrase Rules and Discussion

Noun Head →	noun (noun)(...) adjective general noun disjunctive pronoun àmì Vfò
Pronoun Head →	etc. objective pronoun mièn fièn etc.
Adjective →	(intensifier adjective)(quantity adjective)(general adjective) (...)
Possessive Pronouns →	Nmì Nfò etc.
Quantifier Noun →	Vfèn ifân kèèt
Numeral →	ìbà etc.
Demonstrative →	Vmì Vdò Vkò
Relative Sentence →	[see 8.1 ]

NP → (Adj) Head	NP	(Num)(Q noun)	(Dem)(Rel)
	EP	(Q noun)(Num)	
		(Num)(Q noun)	(PP)(Dem)(Rel)
		(Q noun)(Num)	

**Restrictions:**

If the head is a pronoun, i.e. disjunctive or objective, no EP can modify it.

**Discussion:**

Noun phrases involving pronoun heads have a similar potential structure to those involving noun heads, but the combinations of head and modifier that actually occur are very restricted.

There is a slot for an optional NP with a pronoun head, but it is very rare that one occurs.

**Example:**

àmì'íták`íkót`Vpàdún... [ami itag ikod akpadun]

'I of Itak Ikot Akpadun...' (name of a town)

I have recorded only two or three other examples of a NP modifying a pronoun head.

Very few adjectives may modify a pronoun head. ètòk 'small/little' is the only one that occurs with any frequency.

## Example:

sé ètòk'àmì dó [se etog ami do] 'look at little me.' (lit. look little I there)

The quantity adjectives ùmíán (many', ùsúk 'some', V́fít 'all', etc. frequently occur before plural pronouns but there is some question as to whether they are modifiers of a pronoun head or whether an apposition relationship is involved since no tone sandhi operates. The absence of tone sandhi in this case does not definitively rule out a head-modifier relationship because of the fact that the quantity adjectives are not regular as regards their tonal effect on following substantives.

## Examples:

with sandhi

ètòk'nh̄ìn [ètōg n̄h̄ìn] 'little us'

without sandhi

V́fít nh̄ìn [V́fir n̄h̄ìn] 'all of us' or  
possibly 'all us/we'

ùmíán Ndùfò [ūmiaṅ ndūfō] 'many of you' or  
possibly 'many, you'

A pronoun head modified by a quantifier is not common but does occur. It is more often modified by a numeral than by a quantity noun.

Example:

N̄n̄in ìbà [n̄n̄in ìbà] 'we two'

Because no sandhi normally operates with numerals it is not possible to determine whether the above examples are head-modifier constructions or appositions. Since appositions do not involve a head-modifier relationship, no tone sandhi occurs. However, since pronoun heads take modifiers of other categories, it is assumed that a sequence of pronoun plus numeral may safely be interpreted as head-modifier.

A pronoun head with a demonstrative modifier occurs in one type of expression in my data.

Example:

V̄n̄é V̄mì [ñ̄e ðm̄i] generally contracted to  
[ñ̄em] 'this one'

A relative sentence may modify a pronoun head.

### Adjective

One or more adjectives may precede the noun head. The intensifier adjective àtáá means 'very, quite' preceding another adjective, but 'real, genuine' when functioning as the only adjective modifier.

#### Examples:

àtáá'ùyà'á [ataa uyaya] 'very beautiful'

àtáá'ìpòòṅ [ataa ikpooṅ] 'quite alone, all alone'

àtáá'Vwó Vpénám Vdò? [ataa 3wo 3kpenam 3do]

'Would a real human being do that?'

Only one quantity adjective may occur in a noun phrase. More than one general adjective may occur. There is some freedom in the order in which general adjectives occur. In general adjectives having to do with size precede those referring to qualities such as color, freshness, beauty, and the position of the adjective étí 'good' is freer than others. As strings of general adjectives are considered awkward by most speakers, it was not possible to get enough examples to make strict statements as to order. Also, individuals vary somewhat in the arrangement they find acceptable.

Adjective-noun constructions are limited in Ibibio due to the small number of adjectives in the language. However, a noun-noun construction involving *Vwó* 'person' as the first element fulfills the same function, that of a noun plus attributive. In this latter construction the 2nd noun attributes a quality or description to the first noun. This construction is productive. Normal substantival tone sandhi operates.

Examples:

*Vwó* 'person'

*ídáàt* 'craziness'

*Vwó'ídáàt* [3wo idaat] 'a crazy person'

*Vwó* 'person'

*Ndídíá* 'food'

*Vwó'Ndídíá* [3wo ndidia] 'a glutton'

*Vwó* 'person'

*Nkátá* 'trick'

*Vwó'Nkátá* [3wo nkara] 'a trickster'

*Vwó* 'person'

*Ntíkké* 'tickling'

*Vwó'Ntíkké* [3wo ntike] 'a ticklish person'

The noun head may be deleted leaving one or more modifiers to stand alone.

Examples:

dép Nwèt ìbà Vmì [dep ɲwɛd. iba ʒmi] 'Buy these  
two books!'

déo ìbà Vmì [deb iba ʒmi] 'Buy these two!'

It is always clear from the context of a preceding sentence or from the present sentence what noun has been deleted. Any modifier may stand alone when the noun has been deleted except the possessive pronoun or the noun phrase modifier. These require the relative particle Vkè.

Examples:

ébót Nmì kéVdó [ebod mmi kʒdo] 'It's my goat'  
(lit. my goat that it is)

Vkè Nmì kéVdó [ʒkemmi kʒdo] generally contracted  
to [ʒmmikʒdo] 'It's mine.'

### 3.7 Compound Noun Phrases

Two or more noun phrases may be joined by a connective particle. The resulting compound noun phrase functions exactly like a simple noun phrase. The common connective particles are Ñmè 'and' and Ñmê, ò 'or.' A few others are used infrequently. Among them are Ñdò, yè 'and.'

Examples:

àmì Ñmè Ñkôn ìyà ìkàá [ami mme Ñkon iya ikaa]

'I and Okon will go'



### 3.8 Appositions

Two or more noun phrases may occur in apposition. This means that they occur in sequence without any tonal affix. An apposition generally involves a disjunctive pronoun, a personal or place name, or a title as the head of the first noun phrase. Appositions are written with a comma separating them. The comma represents an optional pause.

Examples:

̀Nn̄in, ́Vwó'ìbìbìò [n̄in ʒwo ibibio] 'We Ibibio  
people'

́Vwó'Vmì, èbé ̀Nmì... [ʒwo ʒmi ebe mmi] 'This  
person, my husband...'

## The Verb Phrase

### Introduction

The verb phrase consists of a verb construction plus verbal complements.

A verb construction is made up of a verb stem plus obligatory and optional affixes and preverbs. One construction, the singular affirmative imperative, may consist of only a verb stem.

Verb stems are formed from verb roots plus derivational affixes [see 2.1]. Verb stems may be simple or complex. If the latter, they may be reciprocal, reduplicated, or motional, or a combination of two or more of these types.

Verbal affixes include subject and object markers, construction markers, construction tones, <sup>the relative,</sup> and the negative.

The subject marker is a prefix obligatory to all constructions except the singular affirmative imperative. The object marker is an optional prefix.

Construction markers are prefixes which function as tense, mode, and aspect indicators. Fulfilling the same function as construction markers are preverbs. Preverbs are not affixes, but rather, distributionally and inflectionally restricted verbs to which a verb

stem also inflectionally restricted is phonologically bound. Verb constructions containing preverbs are similar in structure to verb sequences [see 5.1 ], and are thus called bound sequentials. With one exception preverbs and construction markers are mutually exclusive. In general, preverbs are associated with neutral constructions, construction markers with contrastive ones [see 4.3].

Every verb stem, preverb, and verbal affix possesses a basic tone or tones which may be called its inherent tone pattern. In some verb constructions each element occurs bearing its inherent tone. In other constructions one or more tonal morphemes are affixed to the verb stem in addition to the segmental affixes. These tonal affixes are called construction tones because their presence signals a particular verb construction. A tonal affix may modify somewhat some of the inherent tones of stem and/or affixes or preverbs, or it may completely level out some or all tonal distinctions ordinarily present as a result of tonal classes and inherent affixal tone resulting in an overriding tone pattern for all verbs in a given construction.

The relative is an optional suffix. It is discussed below in 8.1.

The negative is an optional affix which may be prefixed or suffixed to the verb stem according to the type of construction involved.

The Ibibio verb system may be said to contain four major categories, three of tense (present, past, future) and one of mode, the hypothetical. For all these categories there is a three-way formal distinction between neutral, preceding contrastive, and following contrastive constructions [see 4.3]. This formal distinction is made in all affirmative independent sentences. The three-way distinction is reduced to a two-way distinction in the majority of affirmative dependent sentences. There only contrastives occur, both preceding and following. In negative sentences all three distinctions are neutralized. It is most similar in structure to the preceding contrastives but it is not to be interpreted as such as it serves both neutral and contrastive functions.

The scheme outlined above accounts for the majority of Ibibio verb constructions. There are a few other constructions which are not part of the tense/mode scheme. One involves an aspect, the perfective. It is mutually exclusive with tense and mode. It has only one form. It may be considered neutral for two reasons.

First, it is never used when subject or complement is contrasted; second, it replaces the neutral present in certain kinds of verbs.

Another construction which is apart is the hortative. This construction includes optative, hortative and imperative notions; it excludes notions of tense and of mode as understood in the basic bulk of Ibibio verb constructions. The hortative in both the affirmative and the negative neutralizes the formal distinction between neutral and contrastive, that is, whether or not the subject or complement of the sentence is emphasized, the hortative has the same form.

The affirmative imperative has a single form irrespective of whether complement emphasis is intended. (There is no overt subject in the singular imperative). Negative imperative notions are expressed by the negative hortative.

Finally, two kinds of constructions are formally based on the hortative. They are the potential and the relational time constructions. They occur only in dependent sentences. They make no distinction between neutral and contrastive. They are marked by two construction markers of tense and mode

characteristic of contrastive constructions, and by a preverb similar to the type used in neutral constructions. In the negative they are marked by a proliferation of construction markers and preverbs, some characteristic of contrastive constructions, some of neutral constructions. In both the affirmative and the negative, these construction markers and preverbs can cooccur in a single construction.

Ibibio verbs are classified in several ways. On the level of inflection, the verb stems are divided into two kinds of classes, tonal classes and structural classes. The former affect the tonal behavior of the verb in the various verb constructions. The latter affect the way the stems combine with certain inflectional affixes.

On the level of the verb phrase, verbs are classified according to the types of complements they take. Some verbs belong to more than one complement class.

Finally, verbs are classified on a higher syntactic level, namely, according to the positions they may occupy in verb sequences. Many verbs have multiple membership of this last classificatory type.

#### 4.1 Stems

##### Simple Stems

There are verb roots and verb stems. Verb roots function only in the derivational system. Verb roots plus derivational affixes form verb stems. When no derivational affixes occur, the verb root and verb stem are identical in form. All verb constructions are based on verb stems.

Verb stems are divided into tonal classes and structural classes. Tonal classes are determined by tonal behavior in verb constructions; structural classes are determined by the way the stems combine with inflectional affixes.

There are four tonal classes:

- Class I    high-toned stems
- Class II    low-toned stems
- Class III    low-high toned stems of the shape  
CV́V and CV́CV, CV<sub>1</sub>̀V<sub>2</sub>CV́
- Class IV    all other low-high toned stems.

This class includes all low-high toned stems that contain more than one structural syllable and one or more geminates, either vocalic or consonantal.





second structural syllable in a stem with more than one is always open). A closed syllable stem consists of one closed structural syllable.

Classes 1 and 2 may be further grouped together against class 3 as they contain one structural syllable and class 3 contains two.

With the exception of  $CV_1V_2V_1$  stems and plural stems, stems in classes 1 and 2 contain a single morpheme, i.e. stems of classes 1 and 2 are identical in form with verb roots. Most stems in class 3 contain two or more morphemes - a root plus one or more derivational affixes. The remaining class 3 stems are unanalyzable synchronically. However, historically they probably also consist of a root plus affixes. A more extensive investigation of the Ibibio lexicon may reveal single structural syllable stems morphophonemically related to these remaining class 3 stems, which would allow for their analysis into roots plus affixes.

Below is a list of the attested shapes of verb stems. This list does not coincide with a list of possible shapes. For example, in tonal class II structural class 1, there is no attested stem of the shape  $CV_1V_2V_3$ . Further investigation is likely to reveal

such a stem. Although there is an example of a stem  $CV_1V_1C_1C_1V$  given in tonal class I structural class 3, it is the only one I recorded. I suspect it is a dialect borrowing, that the true Itak form is  $CV_1V_1CV$  or  $CVC_1C_1V$ , both of which are attested, and that there is a canonical restriction against two geminates in one stem. The shape  $CV_1V_2CCV$  containing one heterophonous sequence and one geminate occurs rather freely.

Although classes I and II would seem to be similar in structure, i.e. each contains only level toned stems, class I is much larger than class II. This is because most derivational suffixes have a high tone. When these high tone suffixes combine with high tone roots, the resulting stem is in class I just as the related stem with a suffix would be. But when the high tone suffixes combined with low tone roots, the resulting stem has a low-high pattern and belongs to class III or IV rather than to the low tone class II.

The examples are grouped by tonal classes and subgrouped by structural classes. These classes do not coincide. Note, however, that tonal class IV stems all belong to structural class 3.

## Examples of Attested Verb Stems

## Tonal Class I

## Structural Class 1

CV	tá	'chew'
CV <sub>1</sub> V <sub>2</sub>	kóí	'draw (water)'
CV <sub>1</sub> V <sub>2</sub> V <sub>3</sub>	kúóí	'sharpen'
CV <sub>1</sub> V <sub>2</sub> V <sub>1</sub>	díóí	'be very bad'

## Structural Class 2

CVC	dép	'buy'
CV <sub>1</sub> V <sub>1</sub> C	fáát	'embrace (plural)'
CV <sub>1</sub> V <sub>2</sub> C	dúák	'intend'

## Structural Class 3

CVCV	kíné	'wrap (loin cloth)'
CV <sub>1</sub> V <sub>1</sub> CV	níímé	'extinguish'
CV <sub>1</sub> V <sub>2</sub> CV	dúáká	'swoosh (water) to rinse'
CVCCV	ñímmé	'agree'
CV <sub>1</sub> V <sub>1</sub> C <sub>1</sub> C <sub>1</sub> V	síítté	'unplug, unblock'
CV <sub>1</sub> V <sub>2</sub> C <sub>1</sub> C <sub>1</sub> V	túénné	'illuminate'

## Tonal Class II

## Structural Class 1

CV	kò	'catch (fish)'
CV <sub>1</sub> V <sub>2</sub>	dùè	'err'
CV <sub>1</sub> V <sub>2</sub> V <sub>1</sub>	dìdì	'place, put (on ground)'

## Structural Class 2

CVC	dòk	'dig'
CV <sub>1</sub> V <sub>1</sub> C	sùùk	'lower'
CV <sub>1</sub> V <sub>2</sub> C	tùàk	'tap (palm-wine)'

## Tonal Class III

## Structural Class 1

CV <sub>1</sub> V <sub>1</sub>	kàá	'go'
CV <sub>1</sub> V <sub>2</sub>	dùó	'fall'

## Structural Class 3

CVCV	sàṅá	'walk'
CV <sub>1</sub> V <sub>2</sub> CV	kùèté	'finish'

## Tonal Class IV

## Structural Class 3

CVCCV	kàppá	'turn over (transitive)'
CV <sub>1</sub> V <sub>1</sub> CV	kàámá	'stir'
CV <sub>1</sub> V <sub>2</sub> CCV	dù̀̀kkó	'spill (intransitive)'

### Complex Stems.

The verb stems described above are identical in form with verb roots, or consist of verb roots plus one or more derivational suffixes. They may be called simple verb stems.

There are 3 types of complex verb stems. They are based on simple verb stems. They all consist of a simple verb stem plus one or more derivational affixes.

- 1 reduplicated stems
- 2 motional stems
- 3 reciprocal stems

Any or all of these may combine with each other [but see 2.1 for discussion]. They are listed in the order in which they are added to the simple stem. The simple stem on which they are based determines their tonal behavior and how they combine with inflectional affixes in most instances.

A few special statements will be made about these stems in various places in this section.

## 4.2 Verb Affixes:

### 4.21 Person Markers

#### Subject

The subject of a verb construction is marked by a vowel prefixed to the verb stem. This prefix is the first element in a verb construction. It precedes all other prefixes. This prefix is obligatory regardless of the presence of a noun or pronoun subject [see however 1.5<sub>a</sub> for elision of  $\check{V}, \acute{V}$  ].

There are two sets of prefixes. The basic forms are given here, the variations peculiar to certain constructions are given below.

Set A formally distinguishes a maximum of 6 persons: 3 singular, 3 plural. They are:

1	I	4	we inclusive/exclusive
2	you sg.	5	you pl.
3	he, she, it	6	they.

They will henceforth be referred to by their numbers. Set A is used in most affirmative constructions. The basic forms follow:

1	$\acute{N}$	4	$\grave{i}$
2	$\check{V}/\grave{u}$	5	$\grave{e}$
3	$\acute{V}$	6	$\acute{e}$

Set B formally distinguishes a maximum of 3 persons: 1 and 2 of set A and 3 through 6 of set A. All six persons may be distinguished however by use of pronoun or noun subjects. Set B is used in all first verb negative constructions and in many sequential constructions both affirmative and negative.

The basic forms follow:

1	ń
2	ú
3-6	í

#### Variations

ṽ and ù of set A freely vary in verb constructions [see 2.3] 11, 12, 15.

ń of set A varies with ṽ in verb constructions 13-17 probably as a result of assimilation with 2nd and 3rd person singular forms. ṽ is more common than ń in these constructions.

Set B has variants in several bound sequential constructions:

- ì replaces ń in verb constructions 18, 19 (optional), 20, 21 (obligatory)
- ì replaces ú in verb constructions 20, 21 (obligatory).

These variations also probably have an analogical basis.

The same variations apply to sequentials as to first verbs. Where V ~ u and the u is chosen in a first verb, the sequential generally (but not obligatorily) has an u prefix.

In 11, 12 and 15, a sequential prefix  $\acute{V}$  often varies with  $\acute{i}$  even though the first verb has a  $\acute{V}$  prefix.

There is a 3rd person singular subject prefix  $\acute{i}$  that occurs in two contexts: obligatorily after the interrogative noun  $\acute{N}\acute{s}\acute{e}$  'what' and optionally after the interrogative noun  $\acute{V}\acute{n}\acute{i}\acute{e}$  'who.'

Examples:

$\acute{N}\acute{s}\acute{e}$   $\acute{i}\acute{s}\acute{i}\acute{n}\acute{e}$  [nsisine] 'What does it contain?'

$\acute{V}\acute{n}\acute{i}\acute{e}$   $\acute{V}\acute{n}\acute{i}\acute{e}$  ~  $\acute{V}\acute{n}\acute{i}\acute{e}$   $\acute{i}\acute{n}\acute{i}\acute{e}$  [3nie 3nie ~ 3nie inie]

'Who owns it?'

The indirect speech subject prefix is  $\acute{i}$ . It may refer to singular or plural, 2nd or 3rd person.

Object

The object prefix occurs immediately before the verb stem. All other affixes precede. In the case of complex stems, the object prefix occurs before the simple stem. This is the only instance where derivational prefixes are separated from the rest of the stem. All other prefixes in the verb construction precede the object marker; likewise preverbs. Thus, in a bound



sequential construction, the object appears on the sequential, never on the preverb.

There is only one set of object prefixes:

1	Ḃ ~ Ḃ	4	í ~ ì
2	ú ~ ù	5	í ~ ì
3	∅	6	∅

In the imperative constructions the low toned prefixes are used, elsewhere the high toned prefixes.

When the object is 2, 4, 5, the subject-object combination is a portmanteau. First, the tone of the object assimilates to that of the subject. Then the subject prefix is dropped.

Examples:

ìmíá 'We hit.'

\*ìúmíá — ìùmíá — ùmíá 'We hit you.'

èmíá 'You (plural) hit.'

\*èímíá — èìmíá — ìmíá 'You (plural) hit us.'

The large number of ambiguous constructions that are the result of this are clarified by the use of the independent subject and object pronouns.

Example:

Nñìn ìmíá 'We hit.'

Ndùfò ìmíá Nñìn 'You (plural) hit us.'

When the object is 1 (3 and 6 are zero), both subject and object appear with no changes.

Example:

VNmíá 'You hit me.'

Occasionally a speaker will not drop the subject marker for a 2, 4, 5 object, giving forms such as *éúmiá* 'they hit you,' but this is rare and never occurs with the *N* subject prefix.

When the object prefix has high tone remaining even after assimilating to the subject prefix, and it appears before a stem whose first tone is high, it is followed by drop tone. For example, *yàk Nmiá* 'Let me hit' and *yàk úmiá* 'Let me hit you.' If drop already occurs on the verb stem, there is no change. For example, *Npémiá* 'If I hit,' and *\*Npéúmiá* → *Npúmiá* 'If I hit you.'

### Special Statements on Person Erefixes.

The object prefix for 1, 3 is  $\emptyset$ . But there is one instance in my data, namely, with motional stems, where this zero form carries drop tone before a high tone like the other four object prefixes. Compare the following:

#### Examples:-

VǸb̀ò·kéǸdísé 'He told me I shouldn't come  
and see.'

VǸb̀ò·kéǸdísé 'He told me I shouldn't visit  
him.' (lit. come and see him)

But,

V̀ñé VǸmíá 'He hit me.'

V̀ñé V̀míá V̀ñé 'He hit him.'

Contractions of subject and object prefix do not occur in the negative hortative since in this construction the negative separates the two. For example:

Ǹ·kéùmíá 'I shouldn't hit you.'

Contraction does not occur in the plural affirmative imperative between the prefix è 'you plural' and objects 4, 5 (2 cannot logically occur there). The negative imperative is the same as the 2nd person plural of the negative hortative so the same applies to it.

Examples:

èìmiá. 'Hit us (plural command)'

è·kéìmiá. 'Don't hit us (plural command)'

The indirect speech object prefix is í and is subject to the same rules as the 1st person plural object prefix of the same shape.

#### 4.22 Construction Markers

There are three prefixes which occur in certain verb constructions and which mark these constructions for aspect, mode, or tense. They are:

mé perfective aspect

pé modal

ké past tense.

These prefixes occur after the subject prefixes but before the object prefixes. If no object prefix is present, the construction marker immediately precedes the verb stem. A verb construction containing mé cannot take any other construction marker. pé and ké however may occur together in a construction, and always in that order.

#### 4.23 Negative

The negative affix has the shape •ké. It occurs as a prefix with the hortative construction and as a suffix elsewhere. When it is a prefix it occurs with set A subject prefixes, when it is a suffix it occurs with set B subject prefixes.

Negative verb constructions are fewer than affirmative ones and involve fewer contrasts. The 6 person distinction of the affirmative is reduced to 3, namely 1, 2, and 3-6. The neutral/contrastive distinction is neutralized.

### 4.3 Verb Constructions

Ibibio verb constructions are either neutral or contrastive. Neutral constructions are used when there is no particular emphasis placed on any part of the sentence in which the verb occurs. Contrastive constructions are used in three contexts: first, when either the subject or a complement of the verb is emphasized; second, in questions containing an interrogative word; third, in relative sentences and some other dependent sentence types.

There are two kinds of contrastive constructions. Preceding contrastives are used when the contrasted item precedes the verb. Following contrastives are used when the contrasted item follows the verb. Since the normal word order in Ibibio is subject verb object, a contrasted subject always implies a preceding contrastive verb construction. However, it is not uncommon for the object to be placed contrastively at the beginning of the sentence before the subject and verb. In this position a contrasted object determines a preceding contrastive verb construction. A contrasted object in normal position after the verb determines a following contrastive verb construction.

The preceding/following distinction is neutralized in questions involving an interrogative word; only the preceding contrastive construction occurs, irrespective of the position of the interrogative word.

The distinction is often neutralized in relative sentences [see 8.1] and always in other dependent sentences which take contrastive constructions [see § 8 ].

The constructions outlined below in the neutral contrastive scheme do not constitute the entire Ibibio verb system. The hortative falls outside the scheme. That is, it may be either neutral or contrastive. Likewise, all negatives are excluded. Formally, negatives are derived from the affirmative contrastives, but they are used in both neutral and contrastive contexts.

The verb constructions in the neutral contrastive scheme are as follows:



	Neutral	Contrastive	
		preceding	following
present time	present perfective	present	present
past time	past	past	past
future time	future immediate future	future immediate future	future immediate future
hypothetical	hypothetical past hypothetical	hypothetical past hypothetical	hypothetical past hypothetical



## Preceding Contrastive

'We will buy yam'

Nñin ìdîîdêp ùdíá

[nñin idiideb udia]

## Following Contrastive

'We will buy yam'

ìdîîdêp ùdíá

[idiideb udia]

## Verb Constructions

Three types of affirmative verb constructions occur within a verb phrase.

The simplest type consists of a verb stem with person prefixes and a tone pattern. There are 5 constructions of this type:

- 1 imperative
- 2 neutral present
- 3 preceding contrastive - present
- 4 following contrastive - present
- 5 hortative.

This simple type of construction forms the base from which the more complex types are derived.

The second type of verb construction makes use of one of the 3 construction marker prefixes. These are inserted between the person prefix and the verb stem of the type described above. There are 7 constructions of this second type:

- 6 perfective, marked by mé and derived from 2, the neutral present
- 7 preceding contrastive past, marked by ké and derived from 3, the preceding contrastive present

- 8 preceding contrastive hypothetical, marked by pé and derived from 3
- 9 following contrastive past, marked by ké and derived from 4, the following contrastive present
- 10 following contrastive hypothetical, marked by pé and derived from 4
- 11 contrastive relative past, marked by ké and derived from 5, the hortative
- 12 potential, marked by pé and derived from 5.

The third type of verb construction is the bound sequence. It is discussed below. The constructions of this type are as follows; there are 9:

- 13 neutral past, with preverb má whose construction is derived from the 2 general present or 4 following contrastive present, depending on the dialect. The sequential form is derived from 2
- 14 neutral future, with preverb yá whose construction is derived from 2 or 4, depending on the dialect. The sequential form is derived from 2

- 15 relational time, with preverb *má* derived as is the sequential form from 3, the preceding contrastive present
- 16 immediate future, with preverb *yá* derived as is the sequential from 3
- 17 hypothetical, with preverb *pá*. It may take the same forms as 13 and 14, or 15 and 16
- 18 preceding contrastive future, with preverb *dí* derived as is the sequential from 3
- 19 preceding contrastive immediate future, with preverb *bo* derived as is sequential from 3
- 20 following contrastive future, with preverb *dí* derived as is the sequential from 3
- 21 following contrastive immediate future, with preverb *bo* derived as is sequential from 3

There are also three types of negative verb constructions corresponding to the affirmative types. There is however only one negative construction corresponding to a large number of affirmative ones, since the neutral-contrastive is neutralized in the negative. There are the following types:

- 1 simple, consisting of a verb stem plus the negative suffix, the construction marker type using pé hypothetical and ké past
- 2 the bound sequential type, which occurs only with the future preverb di, and
- 3 the special negative forms of the hortative.

There are some other negative constructions used in dependent sentences. These are discussed below [see 8.8 ].

A bound verb sequence is a unit syntactically. It occupies the same place in a verb phrase as any single verb construction. It may constitute an entire clause or sentence; it may be the first verb in a free verb sequence; <sup>[see 5.1]</sup> it may take verbal modifiers.

Formally, a bound verb sequence consists of a preverb and a sequential. A preverb has the grammatical function of a construction marker, and the sequential the function of the verb stem in a construction. Formally, the preverb is an inflected verb stem with person prefix. Some preverbs are similar in form and meaning to ordinary verb stems, but whereas ordinary verb stems may enter into the full range of verb

constructions, preverbs are restricted to a very few constructions. Furthermore, preverbs do not occur outside the context of bound verb sequences.

There are 5 preverbs: *ma*, *ya*, *pa* enter into neutral constructions, *di* and *bo* into contrastive constructions. *ma* enters into the neutral past construction. It is clearly related to *mà* 'finish.' *ya* enters into the neutral future and neutral immediate future constructions. *pa* enters into the neutral hypothetical construction. *di* enters into the preceding and following contrastive future constructions and the negative future construction. It is related to *dí* 'come.' *bo* enters into the preceding and following immediate future contrastive constructions which exactly parallel the *di* constructions.

In addition, *bo* enters into other constructions which gives it a unique position halfway between preverb and an ordinary verb. *bo* in this latter context is not considered to be a preverb, but rather a specially restricted verb stem [see special verbs below]. Both as a preverb and as a restricted verb stem, *bo* is probably related to the ordinary verb stem *bó* 'say.'

The form of the sequential in a bound verb sequence is almost identical to the form of the



sequential in a free verb sequence. In both cases, the of the sequential is determined by the construction of the first verb in the sequence; in the case of a bound sequence it is determined by the construction of the preverb. In fact, the only formal difference in the two types of sequentials is in the shapes of the person prefixes.

**Examples:**

a single verb construction

Ákédì Ñpón [nkedi m̀kpɔŋ] 'I came yesterday' (following contrastive)

a bound sequence

ÁmáVdi Ñpón [mmaʒdi m̀kpɔŋ] 'I came yesterday' (neutral)

a single verb construction as first verb  
in a free sequence

Ákédàt Ñwèt Ñdi [ŋkedat ŋwet ndi] 'I brought the book' (following contrastive)

a bound sequence as first verb in a free  
sequence

ÁmáVdat Ñwèt Ñdi [mmaadat ŋwet ndi] 'I brought the book' (neutral)

## The Bound Sequence

1. illustrated with ma neutral past. ya neutral future and pa neutral hypothetical are of the same construction.

## Variant a.

Preverb	Bound Seq.	The Free Sequential for these constructions	
Nmà	Vdi - Ndi	1) Ndi	2) Ndi
Vmà	Vdi	Vdi	Vdi
Vma	Vdi	Vdi	Vdi
imà	Vdi	Vdi	Vdi
emà	Vdi	Vdi	Vdi
éma	Vdi	Vdi	Vdi

(Note that 1) is identical to the bound sequential.)

## Variant b.

Nmà  
Vmà  
Vma  
imà  
emà  
éma

Variant b. is identical to the following contrastive present. Variant a. 1, 3, 6 is like the neutral present 2, 4, 5 of the following contrastive present.

2. illustrated with ya neutral future. pa may follow this pattern or l with no difference in meaning. The two constructions vary freely with pa.

Preverb	Bound Seq.	Free Seq.
́Nyá	́Vdí ~ ́Ndí	́Ndí
̀Vyá	́Vdí	́Vdí
́Vyá	́Vdí	́Vdí
̀iyá	́Vdí	́Vdí
̀eyá	́Vdí	́Vdí
́eyá	́Vdí	́Vdí

The tone of the preverb is identical to preceding contrastive present.

The bound and free sequentials are identical here.

3. the preceding future contrastive with di  
a.

Preverb	Bound seq.	Free seq.
́Ndí	̀idí	̀Ndí
́Vdí ~ ̀udí	̀idí ~ ̀udí	̀Vdí ~ ̀udí
́Vdí	̀idí	̀Vdí ~ ̀idí
̀idí	̀idí	̀idí
̀edí	̀idí	̀edí ~ ̀idí
́edí	̀idí	̀edí ~ ̀idí

The tone of the preverb is like that of the hortative. Likewise, both sequentials have identical low tone, whereas the person prefixes in the hortative 1, 3, 6 are high.

the following future contrastive with di

b.

Preverb

´Ndí

`Vdì ~ `udì

´Vdí

ìdì

èdì

édí

The sequentials are the same as for the preceding future contrastive.

The preceding and following immediate future contrastives are like a. and b., respectively, except that the preverb bo may have the following shapes:

dialect A	dialect A'	dialect C
1 bo	bo	bi
2-6 bi	throughout	throughout

## c. the negative future

Preverb	Bound Seq.	Free Seq.
Ndî	îdí·ké	free seq. of
údî	ùdí·ké	either 1
3-6 idî	ìdì·ké	above 2
		3
		according to
		dialect area

## Verb Constructions

Sample verbs are:

Class I	dép	'buy'
Class II	dòk	'dig'
Class III	tìé	'sit, stay'
Class IV	kàppá	'turn over, stir'

### 1. Imperative

The singular affirmative imperative is simply the verb stem with inherent tone.

Examples:

dép	'Buy!'
dòk	'Dig!'
tìé	'Sit!'
kàppá	'Turn over!'

The singular negative imperative consists of the singular affirmative plus two prefixes, the negative •ké and the 2nd person singular, here with low tone.

Examples:

•kéùdép	[kuudep]	'Don't buy!'
•kéùdòk	[kuudòk]	'Don't dig!'
•kéùtìé	[kuutie]	'Don't sit!'
•kéùkàppá	[kuukapa]	'Don't turn over!'

The plural imperatives consist of the 2nd person plural prefix with inherent tone plus the singular

imperative constructions.

Examples:

èdép	'(you plural) buy!'
èdòk	" dig!'
ètìé	" sit!'
èkàppá	" turn over!'

è·kéùdép [ekuudep]	'(you plural) don't buy!'
è·kéùdòk [ekuudòk]	" don't dig!'
è·kéùtìé [ekuutìé]	" don't sit!'
è·kéùkàppá [ekuukapa]	" don't turn over!'

The imperative is used for commands.

## 2. Neutral Present

Dialect A: person prefixes have inherent tone.

Verb Stem Tone

Class I	1, 3, 6 inherent plus drop 2, 4, 5 inherent
Class II	1, 3, 6 inherent 2, 4, 5 falling
Class III	inherent
Class IV	inherent

Dialect B: person prefixes 1, 3, 6 have inherent tone; 2, 4, 5 have a double vowel with low-high tone pattern.

## Verb Stem Tone

Class I	1, 3, 5, 6 inherent plus drop 2, 4 inherent
Class II, III	1, 3, 5, 6 inherent 2, 4 falling
Class IV	inherent

## Examples:

	Dialect A	Dialect B
Class I		
1	Ndép	Ndép
4	ìdép	ìídép
2	Vdép	VVdép
5	èdép	èédép
3	Vdép	Vdép
6	édép	édép
Class II		
	Ndòk	Ndòk
	ìdòk	ìídòk
	Vdòk	VVdòk
	èdòk	èédòk
	Vdòk	Vdòk
	édòk	édòk
Class III		
	Ntìé	Ntìé
	ìtìé	ìítìé
	Vtìé	VVtìé
	ètìé	èétìé
	Vtìé	Vtìé
	étìé	étìé
Class IV		
	Nkàppá	Nkàppá
	ìkàppá	ìíkàppá
	Vkàppá	VVkàppá
	èkàppá	èékàppá
	Vkàppá	Vkàppá
	ékàppá	ékàppá



The neutral present is not restricted to present time alone. It is used to make statements that are 1) true in general at the present time, 2) valid without reference to a particular time either past, present or future, 3) reports or narrations of past events.

Example:

ʋnam útom [anam utom] 'he works for a living, he does work, he worked, he did the work (a report)'

No element in the sentence is emphasized or contrasted. The sentence answers the question: ʋnam útom? [anam utom] 'Is he working, does he work for a living, did he do the work?' but not the question 'Who does the work' or 'What does he do?' These questions require a contrastive construction.

### 3. Preceding-Contrastive Present

An independent pronoun or other noun subject generally is Present. Person prefixes have inherent tone.

#### Verb Stem Tone

Class I	inherent
Class II	1, 3, 6 falling 2, 4, 5 high
Class III	1, 3, 6 falling 2, 4, 5 inherent
Class IV	inherent

## Examples:

## Class I

àmì N'dép	Nn̄ìn ìdép
àfò V'dép	Ndùfò èdép
Vñé V'dép	VNm̄ô édép

## Class II

àmì N'dók	Nn̄ìn ìdók
àfò V'dók	Ndùfò èdók
Vñé V'dók	VNm̄ô édók

## Class III

àmì N'tié	Nn̄ìn ìtié
àfò V'tié	Ndùfò ètié
Vñé V'tié	VNm̄ô étie

## Class IV

àmì Nkàppá	Nn̄ìn ìkàppá
àfò Vkàppá	Ndùfò èkàppá
Vñé Vkàppá	VNm̄ô ékàppá

The preceding contrastive present is restricted to present time. It is used in two contexts, 1) in questions containing an interrogative noun, particle or phrase, 2) in statements or questions where there is an emphasis or contrast on an element preceding the verb construction, either the subject or in inverted sentences, the complement.

Examples of 1):

̀Nsé ̀Vkít? [nse ʒkít] 'What do you see?'

̀Vnié ̀Vbók ̀Vfété? [ʒnie ʒbo efere] 'Who is  
cooking soup?'

Examples of 2):

̀Ǹh̀ùè̀né ké ̀Ǹkít [nnuene kenkít]. 'It's an ant  
that I see.'

̀Ǹf̀ón ̀Vbók ̀Vfété. [mfon ʒbo ʒfere] 'Mfon  
is cooking soup.'

#### 4. Following-Contrastive Present

Person prefixes have inherent tone. Verb stem  
tone for all classes is

1, 3, 6 falling

2, 4, 5 low.

Some speakers use low tone for all persons or low freely  
varying with falling for 1, 3, 6 and low for 2, 4, 5.

It is worth noting that Efik has low tone for all  
persons in this construction; most speakers consider  
the falling tone on 1, 3, 6 to be the correct form.

Examples:

Class I

̀Ndêp	̀idèp	̀Ndèp	̀idèp
̀Vdèp	̀èdèp	̀Vdèp	̀èdèp
̀Vdèp	̀édèp	̀Vdèp	̀édèp

## Class II

Ndòk

Ndòk

Vdòk

Vdòk

etc.

etc.

## Class III

Ntìè

Ntìè

Vtìè

Vtìé

etc.

etc.

## Class IV

Nkàppà

Nkàppà

Vkàppà

Vkàppà

etc.

etc.

The following contrastive present is used in present time to contrast or emphasize an element following the verb construction,

## Examples:

in answer to

Nsé Vtém [nse ʒtem] 'What are you boiling, cooking?'

Ntèm ùdíá [ntem udia] 'I'm boiling, cooking yam.'

in answer to

ìdáká kèé Vdíá ùsùṅ [ida akee adia usun]

'When do you eat foofoo?'

Ñdià ùsùṅ ké Ndúbí [ndia usun ke ndubi]

'I eat foofoo in the evening.'

## 5. Hortative

Hortative constructions express a non-declarative, not realized action or state. Hortatives occur alone, or after certain verbs and particles. The verbs which precede the hortative are generally inflected for any construction but the hortative constructions are limited. There are both affirmative and negative hortatives, but neutral contrastive, present, past, future, and so on, distinctions do not pertain.

It is possible to express hortative meaning in Ibibio in future or past time but this is not done with a hortative verb construction<sup>alone</sup> [see <sup>special verbs</sup>].

Person prefixes have inherent tone. Verb stem has fall in all classes.

Examples:

Class I

Ndêp	ìdêp
Vdêp	èdêp
Vdêp	édêp

## Class II

Nǎôk

Vǎôk

etc.

## Class III

Ntíè

Vtíè

etc.

## Class IV

Nkáppà

Vkáppà

## Uses of the affirmative hortative:

1. When used alone the hortative conveys an idea of obligation or necessity which is best translated into English as 'should.'

## Examples:

Nnám sòó [nnam soo] 'What should I do?'

Vnám útóm Vmì [anam utom 3mi] 'you should do  
this work.'

2. After verbs which express thoughts, desires, wishes, orders, the hortative is used with a meaning similar to the above.

## Examples:

Vyém Nnâm Npó Vmì [ʒyem nnam nɲkpɔ ɔmì]

'He wants me to do this thing' (lit. he  
wants I should do this thing)

Vbó Nnâm sòó [ʒbo nnam soo] 'What do you say

I should do?' 'What do you want me to do?'

Vkètè Vtè Vnâm [ʒkere ete anam] 'Do you

think you should do it?'

3. After the defective verb *nà* [see <sup>special verbs</sup>], the hortative conveys an idea of obligation or necessity which may be more strong and emphatic than when used alone.

## Examples:

Vnà Nnâm [ana nnam] 'I must do it.'

Vkénà Nnâm [ʒkena nnam] 'I should have done  
it; I had to do it.' (a strong reprimand)

Note that the idea of past is carried by *nà* and the hortative verb remains the same.

## Examples:

Vpénà Nnâm [ʒkpena nnam] 'I should do it.'  
(less emphatic than Vnà Nnâm)

Vpékenà Nnâm [ʒkpekena nnam] 'I should have  
done it.'

inà-ké Nnâm [inaa a nnam] 'I mustn't do it.'

As an impersonal prohibition:

Example:

ínà·ké Vwó Vnâm Ntótò [inaa.a. ʒwo anam ntoro]

'People aren't supposed to do like that.'

4. After the verb yàk 'let, allow, permit,' the hortative can have a true exhorting meaning. It can have this function in all persons, but the first person plural is most easily translated into English.

Example:

yàk ìkàà [ya ikaa] 'Let's go!'

Occasionally the yàk is omitted. The voice register is raised and the connotation is one of having been finally convinced.

Example:

ìkàà [ikaa] 'all right then, let's go!'

The hortative after yàk is often used in the first person singular when a person wishes to excuse himself momentarily from a group.

Example:

yàk Nkàà Ndî [ya nkaa ndi] 'Let me go and come (back).'

5. The hortative is used in a causative sense often after the verb nám 'make, do.'



Example:

nám (Nnò) V́sòŋ [nam nno ʒsoŋ] 'Make it strong!'

This usage is very similar to the purposive one illustrated below.

Examples:

tèm únâm (Nnò) V́mêm [tem unam nno ʒmem] 'Cook the meat so that it is tender!'

V́dî ùtân ídêt Nnò V́péénè dié? [ʒduutaŋ idet nno ʒkpeene die] 'How long will it take you to braid the hair?' (lit. you will braid hair so that you are long time how)

[See also Purposives 8.4 ]

## 6. Perfective

This construction is based on the neutral present, but there are several departures to describe. In dialect A, the perfective is formed by inserting mé with high tone into the neutral present directly after the person prefix. This holds for all classes except II. In class II the tone of the verb stem is drop plus fall throughout.

## Examples:

	Neutral Present (given for comparison)
<b>Class I</b>	
1 Nmédep	Ndép
2 Vmédep	Vdép
3 Vmédep	Vdép
4 ìmédep	ídép
5 èmédep	édép
6 émédep	édép
<b>Class IV</b>	
1 Nmékàppá	Nkàppá
2 Vmékàppá	Vkàppá
3 Vmékàppá	Vkàppá
4 ìmékàppá	ìkàppá
5 èmékàppá	èkàppá
6 émékàppá	ékàppá
<b>Class II</b>	
1 Nmedòk	
2 Vmedòk	
3 Vmedòk	
4 ìmedòk	
5 èmedòk	
6 émedòk	

For some speakers of dialect A class III may follow the pattern of class II rather than that of classes I, IV.

Examples:

́Nmétìé	or	́Nmétìé
̀Vmétìé		̀Vmetìé
̀Vmétìé		̀Vmetìé
̀imétìé		̀imetié
̀émétìé		̀emetìé
̀émétìé		̀emetìé

In dialect B the drop tone of the neutral present in 1, 3, 6 of class I is shifted forward, and precedes the construction marker mé rather than the verb stem, but the rest of the construction is like the neutral present including the fact that 5, patterns with 1, 3 and 6 rather than 2, 4. However, the drop tone in 5 occurs directly before the verb not before mé. The prefixes for 2, 4, 5 are single and have inherent tone not double as in the neutral present. The construction for class IV is formed from the neutral present in the same way as for class I. Note then 5 for class IV, like all other numbers, has inherent tone in both the neutral present and the perfective. There is a drop tone before mé on 1, 3, 6.

## Examples:

## Class I

1	́Nmédép	́Ndép
2	̀Vmédép	̀V́dép
3	́Vmédép	́Vdép
4	̀ímédép	̀iidép
5	̀émédép	̀éédép
6	́émédép	́édép

## Class IV

́Nmekáppá	́Nkappá
̀Vmekáppá	̀V́kappá
́Vmekáppá	́Vkappá
̀ímekáppá	̀iikáppá
̀émekáppá	̀éekáppá
́émekáppá	́ékappá

Classes II and III have fall on the verb stem except for 5 which has inherent tone. As for the other classes, there is a drop tone before mé on 1, 3, 6. 2 and 4 of the neutral present are the basis for the class II and III constructions.

## Examples:

## Class II

́́médôk	́́ndòk
̀̀médôk	̀̀v̀̀v̀̀dôk
́̀médôk	́̀vdòk
̀́médôk	̀́íídôk
̀̀émédòk	̀̀éédòk
́̀émédôk	́̀édòk

## Class III

́́météì	́́ntíè
̀̀météì	̀̀v̀̀v̀̀tíè
́̀météì	́̀vtíè
̀́météì	̀́ítíè
̀̀émétéì	̀̀éetíè
́̀émétéì	́̀etíè

This construction for classes II and III is basically the same in dialects A and B, but since the drop <sup>accompanies</sup> the mé in dialect B rather than the stem as in dialect A, the stem tone has fall not drop fall.

In both dialects there is an obligatory contraction in 3, 6 of me

## Example:

́̀médép	→	́̀v̀̀v̀̀dép	[33̀̀dép]
́̀émédép	→	́̀éédép	

The resulting contraction is the same in both dialects, though the basis for 3, 6 in dialect A was stated as

$$\overset{\vee}{\text{m}}\overset{\acute{e}}{\text{d}}\overset{\grave{e}}{\text{p}}$$

$$\overset{\acute{e}}{\text{m}}\overset{\acute{e}}{\text{d}}\overset{\grave{e}}{\text{p}}$$

on analogy with 1 and to preserve the pattern of the basic neutral present construction from which the perfective derives. 3, 6 could alternately be stated as basically

$$\overset{\vee}{\text{m}}\overset{\vee}{\text{d}}\overset{\grave{e}}{\text{p}}$$

$$\overset{\acute{e}}{\text{m}}\overset{\acute{e}}{\text{d}}\overset{\grave{e}}{\text{p}}$$

for both dialects.

In addition to the obligatory contraction of 3, 6, dialect A has optional contractions for 2 and (rarely) 4.

Example:

$$\overset{\vee}{\text{m}}\overset{\acute{e}}{\text{d}}\overset{\grave{e}}{\text{p}} \rightarrow \overset{\vee}{\text{V}}\overset{\acute{e}}{\text{d}}\overset{\grave{e}}{\text{p}}$$

$$\overset{\grave{e}}{\text{m}}\overset{\acute{e}}{\text{d}}\overset{\grave{e}}{\text{p}} \rightarrow \overset{\grave{e}}{\text{i}}\overset{\acute{e}}{\text{d}}\overset{\grave{e}}{\text{p}}$$

These last two contracted forms are identical with the double prefixes of the neutral present used in dialect B and by some speakers of dialect A. This raises the question of whether there has been some crossing or mixing of paradigms.

In 4 in both dialects *me* assimilates to the person prefix *i*.

Example:

ìmédép → ìmídép

The perfective construction indicates action that has been completed. When it occurs with a verbal modifier pertaining to time, this modifier does not generally point to a specific past or present time but rather to a more general time, for instance *dìòn* 'yet', *Vpá* 'before' rather than *Vbém* 'last year.'

Examples:

Ìmé díá Npó dìòn? [Ìmedia m̀̀kpó dìòn] 'Have  
you eaten yet?'  
Ìmé kit <sup>Vdò</sup> Vwo/Vpá? [Ìme kit 3wo 3do akpa]  
'I've seen that man before.'

Where there is no verbal modifier, the perfective usually indicates a recently completed action or, there is emphasis on the fact that the action is completed, and the time is irrelevant.

Example:

Ìmé nam útóm Vmì 1) I've just finished the  
work  
2) I've finished the work.

A large number of intransitive and a few transitive verbs rarely occur in the neutral present when that construction indicates present time. Instead, these verbs are in the perfective construction where other verbs would be in the neutral present. Included in this category are all verbs which have an adjectival meaning, and verbs which refer to activities of the senses and to emotions and physical states.

None of the adjectival verbs have a basic stative meaning, such as 'be big,' 'be beautiful.' Rather they are inchoative or progressive in meaning, 'get big,' 'become beautiful.' However, in the perfective they may be translated as statives. Similarly verbs pertaining to senses, emotions and physical conditions are also inchoative or progressive and may be translated as statives only in the perfective. A few of these verbs occasionally occur as presents in the neutral present, but their meanings are idiomatic or sharply restricted.

Examples:

    'Nmépón [mmekpon] 'I am big' (lit. I have  
    become big)

    'Vméyàyá [aayaya] 'It's beautiful' (lit. it  
    has become beautiful)



ǂméyómó [ʒʒyommo] 'She's pregnant' (lit.  
she has conceived)

ǂmékít épê? [ʒmekit ekpe] 'Do you see the  
leopard?' (lit. have you caught sight of  
the leopard?)

ǂmédìòṅó ǂñé [mmediòṅo ʒñe] 'I know him' (lit.  
I have come to know him)

### 7. Preceding-Contrastive Past

The preceding-contrastive past is based on the preceding-contrastive present. ké plus drop tone is inserted between the person prefix and the verb stem for class I, elsewhere ké alone. [See also <sup>Footnote 1</sup> for tone of class II verbs in this construction.]

#### Examples:

##### Class I

ǂkédép

ǂkédép

ǂkédép

ǂkédép

ǂkédép

ǂkédép

## Class II

Nkédôk

Vkedôk

Vkedôk.

ikédôk.

èkédôk

ékédôk

## Class III.

Nkétîè.

Vketîè.

Vketîè

ikétîé

èkétîé

ékétîè

## Class IV.

Nkékàppá

Vkékàppá

Vkékàppá.

ikékàppá

èkékàppá.

ékékàppá

The preceding contrastive past operates exactly like the preceding contrastive present except that it is in past time.

Examples:

̀Nsé ̀Vkékit? [nse ʒkekɪt] 'What did you see?'

̀Nnié ̀Vkébòk ̀Vfété [ʒnie ʒkebɔg ʒfere] 'Who  
cooked soup?'

̀Nnùéné ké ̀Nkékit [nnuene ke ɲkekɪt] 'It  
was an ant that I saw.'

̀Nfón ̀Vkébòk ̀Vfété [mfɔn ʒkebɔg ʒfere] 'Mfon  
cooked soup.'

#### 8. Preceding-Contrastive Hypothetical

This construction is based on the preceding-contrastive present. pé plus drop tone is inserted between the person prefix and the verb stem for class I, elsewhere pé alone, except that the construction marker is pé instead of ké this construction is identical to the preceding-contrastive past.

Examples:

Class I

̀Npédèp

̀Vpédèp

̀Vpédèp

̀ipédèp

̀epédèp

̀épédèp

## Class II

Npédôk

Vpédòk

Vpédôk

ìpédòk

èpédòk

épédôk

## Class III

Npétìè

Vpétìé

Vpétìè

ìpétìé

èpétìé

épétìè

## Class IV

Npékàppá

Vpékàppá

Vpékàppá

ìpékàppá

èpékàppá

épékàppá

## 9. Following-Contrastive Past

The following-contrastive past is based on the  
2, 4, 5 of the following-contrastive present. The

contrastive past construction marker ké with high tone is inserted between the person prefix which has inherent tone and the verb stem which has low tone for all classes.

Examples:

Class I

ˈNkédèp

ˌVkédèp

ˈVkédèp

ìkédèp

èkédèp

ékédèp

Class II

ˈNkédòk

ˌVkédòk

etc.

Class III

ˈNkétìè

ˌVkétìè

etc.

Class IV

ˈNkékàppà

ˌVkékàppà

etc.

The following contrastive past operates exactly like the following contrastive present except that it is in past time.

Examples:

in answer to

̀Nsé ̀Vkétem [nse ʒketem] 'What did you cook, boil?'

̀Nkétèm ùdíá [nketem udia] 'I cooked, boiled yam.'

in answer to

̀idáká kèé ké ̀Vkédiá ùsùŋ? [idaɣa kee ke ʒkedia usun] 'When did you eat foofoo?'

̀Nkédìà ùsùŋ ̀Npón [ɲkedia usun mɲkpɔŋ] 'I ate foofoo yesterday.'

#### 10. Following-Contrastive Hypothetical

This construction is based on 2, 4, 5 of the following-contrastive present. The construction marker pé is inserted between the person prefix which has inherent tone and the verb stem which has low tone for all classes. Except that the construction marker is pé not ké, this construction is the same as the following contrastive past.

## Examples:

## Class I

Npédèp

Vpédèp

Vpédèp

ìpédèp

èpédèp

épédèp

## Class II

Npédòk

Vpédòk

etc.

## Class III

Npétìè

Vpétìè

## Class IV

Npékàppà

Vpékàppà

## 11. Relational Past

This construction is derived from the hortative by inserting the construction marker ké plus the drop tone between the person prefix and the verb stem.

Hortative	Ntíè	Vtíè
Contrastive Relative Past	Nkétíè	Vkétíè

Examples:

Class I

Nkédep̄

Vkédep̄

Vkédep̄

ìkédep̄

èkédep̄

ékédep̄

Class II

Nkédòk̄

Vkédòk̄

etc.

Class III

Nkétíè

Vkétíè

etc.

Class IV

Nkékáppà

Vkékáppà

etc.

The relational past refers to a past action as it is relative to a particular time. The focus is not so.



much on when the action occurred but how much time has elapsed between its occurrence and the present or other specified time, or if it occurred after another action. A contrastive relational past construction occurs only in a dependent sentence. The independent sentence that it relates to may in some cases be deleted so that the sentence containing the past construction constitutes the entire utterance, but such an independent sentence is always understood.

The preceding-following distinction does not obtain here. The same form is used in both contexts.

Examples:

ʋpèèné dié ʋkéyòòk ʋfâŋ? [ʒkpeene die ʒkeyɔɔɔ  
afaŋ] 1) 'How long has it been since you  
chopped afaŋ (that you do it so badly)?'  
2) 'How long have you been chopping afaŋ?'

Compare a question in the preceding contrastive past.

ʋpèèné dié ʋkéyóók ʋfâŋ ʋmì? [ʒkpeene die  
ʒkeyɔɔɔ afaŋ ʒmì] 'When did you chop this  
afaŋ (that it's all smelly)?'

Nkédep' ùdíá. 'after I bought yam'  
 (tónó) Nkémanà Nkit·ké épê '(Since) I was  
 born I haven't seen a leopard.' (lit. I've  
 never seen a leopard.)  
 Vkésûk Vpéèp Nwèt 'were you still studying  
 when... '



Class IV:

Npékàppà

Vpékàppà

etc.

[See 8.5 for discussion]

## 13. Neutral Past

The neutral past is a bound sequence construction. The preverb construction varies dialectally and from speaker to speaker. Some use a construction identical to the following contrastive present

Nmà	ìmà
Vmà	èmà
Vmà	émà

However, the low tone on 1, 3, 6 is always level, never falling. The more common construction seems to be derived from the neutral present for 1, 3, 6 and from the following contrastive present for 2, 4, 5:

Nmá	ìmà
Vmà	èmà
Vmá	éma.

Some speakers use either construction in free variation.

The form of the bound sequence is derived from 1, 3, 6 of the neutral present. It is the same no matter which preverb construction precedes. The prefixes are all high toned.

Example:

for a class I verb

Vdép	ídép
Vdép	édép
Vdép	édép.

Constructions 14 and 17, the neutral future and the hypothetical are exactly like the neutral past except that they use the future and hypothetical preverbs, respectively. All of these constructions, the perfective and the neutral present itself from which all the others named are more or less derived use the same free sequential form. This free sequential is the same as the bound sequential shown above.

Examples:

Class I

Nma'Vdep	~	NmàVdep
VmàVdep		VmàVdep
Vma'Vdep		VmàVdep
imàidep		imàidep
emàédep		emàédep
émaédep		émaédep

Class II

Nma'Vdòk	~	NmàVdòk
VmàVdòk		etc.
Vma'Vdòk		
imàidòk		
emàédòk		
émaédòk		

## Class III

NmáVtìé ~ NmàVtìé

VmàVtìé etc.

VmáVtìé

ìmàítìé

èmàétié

émaétié

## Class IV

NmáVkàppá ~ NmàVkàppá

VmàVkàppá etc.

VmáVkàppá

ìmàíkàppá

èmàékàppá

émaékàppá

## 14. Neutral Future

This is formed exactly like the neutral past except the preverb is ya rather than ma.

## Examples:

## Class I

NyáVdép	~	NyàVdép
VyàVdép		VyàVdép
VyaVdép		VyàVdép
ìyàídép		ìyàídép
èyàédép		èyàédép
éyàédép		éyàédép

## Class II

NyáVdòk	~	NyàVdòk
VyàVdòk		etc.
VyaVdòk		
ìyàídòk		
èyàédòk		
éyàédòk		

## Class III

NyáVtié	~	NyàVtié
VyàVtié		etc.
VyaVtié		
ìyàítìé		
èyàétié		
éyàétié		



## Class IV

NyáVkáppá	~	NyàVkáppá
VyàVkáppá		etc.
VyáVkáppá		
iyàíkàppá		
èyàékàppá		
éyáékàppá		

## 15. Relational Time

## Examples:

## Class I

N<sup>´</sup>máV<sup>´</sup>dépV<sup>`</sup>máV<sup>´</sup>dépV<sup>´</sup>máV<sup>´</sup>dépì<sup>´</sup>máidépè<sup>´</sup>máédépé<sup>´</sup>máédép

## Class II

N<sup>´</sup>máV<sup>´</sup>dôkV<sup>`</sup>máV<sup>´</sup>dôkV<sup>´</sup>máV<sup>´</sup>dôkì<sup>´</sup>máidôkè<sup>´</sup>máédôké<sup>´</sup>máédôk

## Class III

N<sup>´</sup>máV<sup>´</sup>tíèV<sup>`</sup>máV<sup>´</sup>tíèV<sup>´</sup>máV<sup>´</sup>tíèì<sup>´</sup>máitíèè<sup>´</sup>máetíèé<sup>´</sup>máetíè

## Class IV

NmáV'kàppá

VmáV'kàppá

VmáV'kàppá

imáikàppá

emáekàppá

émáekàppá

## Variations

NmáV'dép ~ NmáV'dép

VmáV'dép ~ ùmáudép

etc.

See Complex Sentences for a discussion of the use of this construction.

## 16. Immediate Future

## Examples:

## Class I

NyáVdép

VyáVdép

VyáVdép

ìyáidép

èyáédép

éyáédép

## Class II

NyáVdôk

VyáVdôk

VyáVdôk

ìyáidôk

èyáédôk

éyáédôk

## Class III

NyáVtíè

VyáVtíè

VyáVtíè

ìyáitíè

èyáétíè

éyáétíè

## Class IV

NyáV'kàppá

VyáV'kàppá

VyáV'kàppá

ìyáí'kàppá

èyáé'kàppá

éyáé'kàppá

## 17. Hypothetical

## Examples:

## Class I

NpáVdép	or	NpáVdép	~	NpàVdép
VpáVdép		VpàVdép		
VpáVdép		VpáVdép		VpàVdép
ìpáidép				etc.
èpáédép				
épáédép				

## Class II

NpáVdòk	or	NpáVdòk	~	NpàVdòk
VpáVdòk		VpàVdòk		
VpáVdòk		VpáVdòk		VpàVdòk
ìpáidòk				etc.
èpáédòk				
épáédòk				

## Class III

NpáVtíè	or	NpáVtíè	~	NpàVtíè
VpáVtíè		VpàVtíè		
VpáVtíè		VpáVtíè		VpàVtíè
ìpáitíè				etc.
èpáétíè				
épáétíè				



## 18. Preceding-Contrastive Future

## Examples:

## Class I

'Ndíìdêp  
 `Vdíìdêp ~ ùdíùdêp  
 'Vdíìdêp  
 ìdíìdêp  
 `èdíìdêp  
 `édíìdêp

## Class II

'Ndíìdôk  
 `Vdíìdôk ~ ùdíùdôk  
 etc.

## Class III

'Ndíìtíè  
 `Vdíìtíè ~ ùdíùtíè  
 etc.

## Class IV

'Ndíìkáppà  
 `Vdíìkáppà ~ ùdíùkáppà  
 etc.



## 19. Preceding Contrastive Immediate Future

## Examples:

## Class I

NbôNdêp	~	Nbôîdêp	~	Nbîîdêp
Vbôîdêp				Vbîîdêp
Vbôîdêp				Vbîîdêp
ibôîdêp				etc.
èbôîdêp				
ébôîdêp				

## Class II

NbôNdôk	~	Nbôîdôk	~	Nbîîdôk
Vbôîdôk				Vbîîdôk
				etc.

## Class III

NbôNtîè	~	Nbôîtîè	~	Nbîîtîè
Vbôîtîè				Vbîîtîè
				etc.

## Class IV

NbôNkappa	~	Nbôîkappa	~	Nbîîkappa
Vbôîkappa				Vbîîkappa
				etc.

The preceding contrastive immediate future (and the following contrastive immediate future, No. 21) refers to an action about to happen. It is a kind of inceptive and often a desiderative. The preverb *bo* has a status different from other preverbs in that it can be fully inflected. Thus, inceptive or desiderative notions can pertain to any time.

Examples:

̀Nsé ̀Vbô ìdíà ìdáká ' ̀Vmì? [nse ʒbiidia idaga  
mi] 'What do you want to eat? What are  
you about to eat?'

## 20. Following Contrastive Future

## Examples:

## Class I

Ndiidêp

Vdiidêp ~ ùdiùdêp

Vdiidêp

idiidêp

èdiidêp

édiidêp

## Class II

Ndiidôk

Vdiidôk ~ ùdiùdôk

## Class III

Ndiitîè

Vdiitîè ~ ùdiùtîè

etc.

## Class IV

Ndiikáppà

Vdiikáppà ~ ùdiùkáppà

etc.

## 21. Following Contrastive Immediate Future

## Examples:

## Class I

NbôNdêp	~	Nbôidêp	~	Nbîidêp
Vbòidêp				Vbîidêp
Vbôidêp				Vbîidêp
ìbòidêp				etc.
èbòidêp				
ébôidêp				

## Class II

NbôNdôk	~	Nbôidôk	~	Nbîidôk
Vbòidôk				Vbîidôk
				etc.

## Class III

NbôNtíè	~	Nbôitíè	~	Nbîitíè
Vbòitíè				Vbîitíè
				etc.

## Class IV

NbôNkáppà	~	Nbôikáppà	~	Nbîikáppà
Vbòikáppà				Vbîikáppà
				etc.

## Negative Present

## Examples:

## Class I

<sup>´</sup>Ndép·ké      [ndepe]

    údé<sup>´</sup>p·ké      [udepe]

    ídép·ké      [idepe]

## Class II

<sup>´</sup>Ndòk·ké.      [ndòkò]

    ú<sup>´</sup>dòk·ké      [udòkò]

    ídòk·ké      [idòkò]

## Class III

<sup>´</sup>Ntié·ké      [ntie e]

    ú<sup>´</sup>tié·ké      [utie e]

    í<sup>´</sup>tié·ké      [itie e]

## Class IV

<sup>´</sup>Nkàppá·ké      [ŋkapake]

    ú<sup>´</sup>kàppá·ké      [ukapake]

    í<sup>´</sup>kàppá·ké      [ikapake]

## Negative Past

## Examples:

## Class I

    Nkédep·ké      [ɲkidepe]

    úkédép·ké      [ukudepe]

    íkédép·ké      [ikidepe]

## Class II

    Nkédòk·ké      [ɲkidòko]

    úkédòk·ké      [ukudòko]

    íkédòk·ké      [ikidòko]

## Class III

    Nkétìé·ké      [ɲkitieɣe]

    úkétìé·ké      [ukutieɣe]

    íkétìé·ké      [ikitieɣe]

## Class IV

    Nkékàppá·ké      [ɲkikapake]

    úkékàppá·ké      [ukukapake]

    íkékàppá·ké      [ikikapake]

## Negative Hypothetical

## Examples:

## Class I

Npédép·ké	[mɛkpidepe]
úpédép·ké	[ukpudepe]
ípédép·ké	[ikpidepe]

## Class II

Npédòk·ké	[mɛkpidòkò]
úpédòk·ké	[ukpudòkò]
ípédòk·ké	[ikpidòkò]

## Class III

Npétìé·ké	[mɛkpitiege]
úpétìé·ké	[ukputiege]
ípétìé·ké	[ikpitiege]

## Class IV

Npékàppá·ké	[mɛkpikapake]
úpékàppá·ké	[ukpukapake]
ípékàppá·ké	[ikpikapake]

## Negative Future

## Examples:

## Class I.

    Ndiídép·ké [ndiidepe]

    údiúdép·ké [uduudepe]

    ídiídép·ké [idiidepe]

## Class II.

    Ndiídòk·ké [ndiidòkò]

    údiúdòk·ké [uduudòkò]

    ídiídòk·ké [idiidòkò]

## Class III.

    Ndiìtié·ké [ndiitiege]

    údiùtié·ké [uduutiege]

    ídiìtié·ké [idiitiege]

## Class IV.

    Ndiìkàppá·ké [ndiikapake]

    údiùkàppá·ké [uduukapake]

    ídiìkàppá·ké [idiikapake]



### Negative Hortative

There are three negative hortative constructions. Type 3 occurs after the particle Ǹbà̀̀k. Types 1 and 2 occur elsewhere and vary freely. In types 1 and 2 the negative marker ·ké precedes the verb stem, unlike any other construction in the language. The person prefixes have low tone. The verb stem has inherent tone. In the singular, type 1 consists of the negative marker followed by person prefix and verb stem. In the plural, an additional person prefix precedes the negative marker. These additional prefixes are the normal affirmative set for the plural, i, e, e. However, the prefixes that immediately precede the verb stem throughout the paradigm are N, u, V, i, i, i, which appears to be a variation of the normal negative set N, u, i, i, i, i. Type 2 is similar to type 1, but all persons except the 2nd person singular, have an additional prefix before the negative marker. This is the normal affirmative prefix set except that there is no prefix on the 2nd singular N, -, V, i, e, e. However, the prefix that immediately precedes the verb stem is in all persons u.

The 2nd person singular and 2nd person plural of type 2 serve as singular and plural negative imperatives

respectively. The remaining forms appear to be these imperatives inflected for the other persons.

Type 3 is formally a motional stem construction although its meaning does not necessarily have to do with motion toward, as the form *di* generally implies. This type differs sharply from types 1 and 2 in that the negative marker *·ké* does not occur. The construction is clearly negative, however, and hortative. A sequential that follows it has the same form as sequentials following types 1 and 2. And it has low prefixes like the other types.

The verb stem in type 3 does not have inherent tone like types 1 and 2 but a pattern like the affirmative motional stem hortative, namely, inherent in classes I and IV, inherent varying with fall or high for class II, and fall for class III. Some speakers occasionally use fall on disyllabic stems of class I. The prefixes are the normal affirmative set as in type 2 except for the 3rd person singular where *V* varies with *i*. Such a variation is typical of sequentials, and it does appear as though type 3 is a type of sequential in the negative hortative. Compare a clear-cut case of such a motional stem sequential with type 3.

Examples:

·ké Ñsóp Ñdínám [ke nsop ndinam] 'Shouldn't  
I come and do it?'

Ñbààk Ñdínám [mbaak ndinam] 'lest/for fear  
I should do it; so that I don't do it'

If type 3 is a sequential, then the particle Ñbààk must fulfill the function of first verb. In addition to signalling a clause of purpose, Ñbààk embodies a negative idea. (Ñbààk is derived from the verb bààk 'fear'.) True to the sequential pattern, the negative is not repeated then in type 3.

## Negative, Type 1

## Class I

•kéN <sup>˘</sup> dép	[kɛndɛp]
•kéù <sup>˘</sup> dép	[kuudɛp]
•kéV <sup>˘</sup> dép	[keʒdɛp]
ì•kéì <sup>˘</sup> dép	[ikiidɛp]
è•kéì <sup>˘</sup> dép	[ekiidɛp]
è•kéì <sup>˘</sup> dép	[ekiidɛp]

## Class II

•kéN <sup>˘</sup> dòk	[kɛndɔk]
•kéù <sup>˘</sup> dòk	[kuudɔk]

etc.

## Class III

•kéN <sup>˘</sup> tìé	[kɛntiɛ]
•kéù <sup>˘</sup> tìé	[kuutiɛ]

etc.

## Class IV

•kéN <sup>˘</sup> kàppá	[kɛŋkapa]
•kéù <sup>˘</sup> kàppá	[kuukapa]

etc.



## Negative, Type 3

## Class I

`Ndídép

ùdídép

Vdídép

ìdídép

èdídép

èdídép

## Class II

`Ndídòk - `Ndídók - `Ndídòk

ùdíòk - ùdíók - ùdíòk

etc.

## Class III

`Ndítìè

ùdíìè

etc.

## Class IV

`Ndíkààmá

ùdíkààmá

etc.

### Uses of the negative hortative

1. Types 1 and 2 may vary freely in any of these constructions. They convey the idea of negative necessity, obligation, or of prohibition.

#### Examples:

Vñé VNbò mièn Vtè ·kéNwùó kéVkônVyiò

[ʒñe mbo mien ʒte kenwuo keʒkonʒyio]

'He told me not to go out at night / that I shouldn't go out at night.'

dókkó VNmò Vtè Vwó V·kéùdómó íkán ké VkônVyiò

Vmì [doko ʒmmo ʒte ʒwo ʒkuudomo ikan ke

ʒkonʒyio ʒmi] 'Tell them that no one should

light fires tonight / no one is to light

fires tonight.'

The 2nd person singular form (the same in types 1 and 2) may replace any of the other person inflected forms in any negative hortative construction following a verb. Since this form functions as an imperative, its use serves to turn desires, wishes, orders, emotions, thoughts and thus the sentence containing the hortative, into a kind of direct quote.

#### Examples:

Nmépeep ·kéùfèké Ndík údúk'íkót N·kéùfèké  
·kéNfèké

Ndík údúk'íkót

Ndík

[mpeep kuufege ndik udugikot

nkuufege ndik } uduqikot] 'I have learned not  
 kemfege ndik } ]  
 to fear snakes / I shouldn't fear snakes.'

2. Type 3 occurs after Nbaàk 'lest, for fear of, so that not.'

**Examples:**

Vben íkúà Vfèp Nbaàk Vyín Vdípíídem [3ben ikua  
 3fep mbaa 3yin 3dikpiidem] 'He took away  
 the knife for fear that the child should cut  
 himself / lest the child cut himself / so  
 that the child shouldn't cut himself.'

dá ké úsún Nbaàk Vdífútò [da kusun mbaa  
 3difuro] 'Stand in the road so that he may  
 not pass, etc.'



### Infinitive

The infinitive has a unique status. In its construction and in its syntactic behavior, it shares features of both verbs and substantives. It is discussed in the verb section of this grammar because it seems reasonable to consider it as a special verb form with a restricted and unusual distribution.

Its verb-like features are as follows: it is based on any verb stem. It may take a complement and this implies the possibility of an object prefix when the complement is direct and personal. It is subject to an abbreviated structure as a sequential. Finally, it has a negative form (although this is used only in a few infrequent syntactic patterns).

Its substantive-like features include its distribution, namely as the complement of certain classes of verbs and in other contexts where substantives occur. It may be part of certain noun phrases occurring as both head and modifier. Two or more infinitives may compose a compound noun phrase joined by one of the connectives [see 3.7 and 6.1 ].

Two infinitive constructions are in use. One is pure Ibibio and is used exclusively by some speakers. The other is Efik (although the tones are different

from the Efik) and is used in free variation with the Ibibio construction by other speakers.

1. Ibibio: a prefix Vdí plus verb stem
2. Efik-Ibibio a prefix Ndí plus verb stem

#### Tone of the Verb Stem

##### 1. Ibibio

Class I fall

Class II fall

Class III fall, for some speakers fall ~  
inherent

Class IV inherent, for some speakers inherent  
~ fall.

##### 2. Efik-Ibibio

Class I inherent

Class II inherent ~ fall

Class III inherent ~ fall

Class IV inherent

#### Examples:

Class I 1. Vdídêp

2. Ndídép

Class II 1. Vdíôk

2. Ndíôk ~ Ndíôk

- Class III 1. Vdítìè ~ Vdítìé  
 2. Ndítìé ~ Ndítìè
- Class IV 1. Vdikàppá ~ Vdikáppà  
 2. Ndikàppá

The infinitive used as a verbal noun with a complement:

Examples:

Ntòónó ké Vdíñám áðán [ntòónó ke ʒdiñam adan]  
 'I started (my business) by/with selling oil.'

compare:

Ntòónó ké Npó Vmì [ntòónó ke m̀kpó omi]  
 'I started with this thing.'

The verbal noun modified by a possessive and by a disjunctive pronoun which functions in this context as a possessive:

Examples:

Nmá·ké Vdídí Vmò [mmaaga ʒdidi ʒmò] 'I don't like his coming.'

àmì Vdikétè Nbáná Vñé... [ami ʒdikere mbaɲa ʒñe]  
 'My thinking about him...'

#### Negative Infinitive

The negative infinitive is rare and is generally used as a verbal noun. It is formed with the infinitive

prefix  $\dot{V}d\acute{i}$  plus a dependent negative construction [see 8.8]

Example:

$\grave{a}m\grave{i}$   $\dot{V}d\acute{i}d\acute{i}i\acute{n}\acute{a}m\cdot k\acute{e}$   $\acute{N}p\acute{o}\dot{V}d\acute{o}$ ... [ $\acute{a}m\acute{i}$   $\acute{z}d\acute{i}d\acute{i}i\acute{n}a\acute{m}m\acute{a}$   
 $m\acute{k}p\acute{o}o\acute{d}o$ ] 'My not doing that thing...'

## Summary of Formation of Verb Constructions

P = person prefix

Vb = verb stem

pl = plural

() = optional

Roman numbers = classes

Arabic numbers = persons

no tone mark means inherent

no Roman number means all classes

no Arabic number means all persons

1. (pl) Vb
2. P Vb I 2, 4, 5  
II 1, 3, 6  
III IV  
P  $\overset{\cdot}{V}b$  I 1, 3, 6  
P  $\hat{V}b$  II 2, 4, 5
3. P Vb I IV  
P  $\hat{V}b$  II III
4. P  $\overset{\cdot}{V}b$  ~P  $\hat{V}b$  1, 3, 6  
P  $\overset{\cdot}{V}b$  2, 4, 5
5. P  $\hat{V}b$
6. P mé Vb  
[see discussion of 6 above]

7. (based on 3) P ké Vb I.  
P ké Vb II, III 2, 4, 5  
P ké Vb II, III 1, 3, 6
8. pé  
just like 7
9. (based on 4) P ké Vb
10. pé  
just like 9
11. (based on 5) P ké Vb
12. pé  
just like 11
13. P má P Vb I 1, 3, 6  
P mà P Vb I 2, 4, 5  
P má P Vb II, III, IV 1, 3, 6  
P mà P Vb II, III, IV 2, 4, 5
14. yá  
just like 13
15. P má P Vb I.  
P má P Vb II, III  
P má P Vb IV.
16. yá  
just like 15
17. pá.  
just like 13 ~ just like 15

18. P dî P Vb  
 19. bî like 18  
 20. P dî P Vb 1, 3, 6  
 P dî P Vb 2, 4, 5  
 21. bî like 20

### Negatives

Present	P Vb •ké
Past	P ké Vb •ké I P ké Vb •ké II, III, IV
Hypothetical	Like past with pé instead of ké
Future	P dî P Vb •ké
Hortative	•ké P Vb

## Summary of Verb Constructions

Examples given are for the 1st person singular of a Class I verb síó 'remove, take out.' The imperative and infinitive are also given.

Affirmative

	Imperative síó			
	Infinitive Vdísíò			
	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>P-C</u>	<u>F-C</u>	<u>Contingent</u> <sup>3</sup>
Base Form (Present)	Ínsíó	Ínsíó	Ínsìò	(Hortative) Ínsìò
Perfective	Ínmésíó	-	-	-
Past	ÍnmaVsíó	Ínkésíó	Ínkésìò	Ínkésìò
Modal (Hypothetical)	ÍnpaVsíó	Ínpésíó	Ínpésìò	(Potential) Ínpésìò
Past Modal	ÍnpaVkésíó	Ínpékésíó	Ínpékésìò	Ínpékésìò
Future	ÍnyaVsíó	Índíísíó	Índíísìò	-
Immediate Future	ÍnyáVsíó	Ínbíísíó	Ínbíísìò	-

Negative

	<u>Non-Contingent</u>	<u>Contingent</u>
Present	Ínsíó·ké	·kéÍnsíó
Past	Ínkésíó·ké	-
Modal	Ínpéísíó·ké	Ínpésíó·ké
Past Modal	Ínpéíkésíó·ké	Ínpékésíó·ké
Future	Índíísíó·ké	-



## Special Dependent Verb Constructions

Affirmative

NmáV'si'ó

NmáV'kési'ó

NmáV'pési'ó

Negative

Nmá	}	V'si'ó·ké
Ndî		
Nmê		

NmáV'kési'ó·ké

NmáV'pési'ó·ké

(and other combinations  
of má, dî, ké, pé)

Sequentials

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(')	N'si'ó	N'si'ó	N'si'ó	N'si'ò / N'si'ó	N'si'ò	N'si'ò	N'si'ó
(')	V'si'ó	V'si'ó	V'si'ó	V'si'ò / V'si'ó	V'si'ò	V'si'ò	V'si'ó

## Special Verbs

nà

nà is a defective verb. It occurs generally with the 3rd person singular marker which has an impersonal meaning in this context. It occasionally may occur with the 2nd person singular person marker.<sup>2</sup> It is always followed by an affirmative hortative construction. Negation is indicated by affixing ·ké to nà rather than to the following hortative. The meaning of nà is 'be necessary.' nà plus hortative often has the same meaning as the hortative alone, although the construction with nà may imply greater urgency. Note that the hortative when alone is limited to present time but that combined with nà hortative notions can be expressed in past, future and hypothetical categories as well.

Examples:

ǂnà ǂnâm 'I must do it.'

ǂkénà ǂtímmè ǂndí 'I ought to have returned.'

ǂpénà-ké ǂtímmè ǂndí [ǂkpinaaga ntimme ndi]

'I shouldn't return.'

The hypothetical here is less emphatic than a present negative would be. It implies a feeling of obligation, but not necessity.

yàk

The verb yàk is a full verb that enters into any construction. It is discussed separately because of its use in hortative constructions. The verb has several meanings: 1) 'let' in the sense of exhorting or persuading;

Example:

yàk ìkàà [yag ikaa] 'Let's do it!'

2) 'let' in the optative sense;

Example:

yàk Vtíppè [yag atipe] 'May it come to pass!  
'Come what may!'

yàk Vdû Vñâm úwém [yag ʒdu añan uwem] 'May he  
live a long life!'

3) 'let' in the sense of 'permit, allow;'

Example:

yàk Nnâm [yag nnam] 'Let me do it, allow me  
to do it!'

In the sense of permit or allow, the hortative or the general present may follow yàk.

Example:

yàk Vñé Vñáà ~ yàk Vñé Vnàá 'Let him lie  
there, i.e. permit him to lie there if he  
so desires.'

However, *yàk* 'let' in the sense of 'let do, leave be' is not followed by a hortative.

Example:

*yàk* *Vñé Vnàá* [yag ʒñe anaa] 'Let him lie there, i.e. leave him alone, don't touch him.'

*éyàk* *ídúk ésin ké Nmóón* [eyag idug esin ke mmóon] 'They let the rope into the water.'

*Nnò*

*Nnò* is always optional between *yàk* and a hortative construction.

Examples:

*yàk* (*Nnò*) *Nnâm* [yag nno nnam] 'Let me do it!'

*VpàVyàk* (*Nnò*) *Ntítè?* [akpaayag nno ntire]

'Could you allow me to stop?'

*bó*

*bó* has a status part way between a preverb and a full verb. Like a preverb, it requires a bound sequential to follow it. Like a full verb it may be inflected in any construction. It is most often inflected for person only with a falling tone on the stem with the implication of immediate future [see above]. However, its real meaning is desiderative or inceptive as is clear when *bo* is inflected for past, hypothetical or some

other category. There is another verb bó 'say, mean' which does not have the property of requiring a bound sequential. However, the meanings of the two verbs are close enough to suggest that bó 'inceptive, desiderative' ultimately comes from bó 'say, mean.'

Examples:

Nbô Nsáṅà ké úkót 'I want to go on foot.'

Vdò Vdô Vwó V Vpébò ìNwôt VyaVdat ésít 'That is the man who would like to kill me.' (lit. that is person who if he wanted to kill me he will be glad in heart)

énìn Vké bô ìwúò ikàn.ké 'When elephant was about to come out, he could not.'

#### 4.4 Use of Complex Stems

The most frequent use of reduplicated stems is to emphasize the verb. This emphasis involves one of several meanings. Most of them have in common the fact that an action or state alternative to the one expressed in the verb is under consideration, or that the action or state is being or has been performed at a time or in a way contrary to expectations. The emphasis may involve doubt that an action or state is being performed, or insistence, persuasion or other emphasis that it be performed.

##### Examples:

NRsòtó? [nsòsòrò] 'Should I squat down?' (i.e.

Should I squat down rather than sit or some other action?)

•kéùRṅón Ryíé [kuuṅ<sup>w</sup>ṅṅ<sup>w</sup>ṅ yieyie] 'Don't

drink it, rub it on!

NyaVRfòòtó Vsókòtò NdiìRsóí•ké [nyaʒfòfòrò

sokoro ndiisoyosoi] 'I will finger-peel

the oranges, I will not knife-peel them.'

in answer to 'What did you do with the book?'

NkéRbén Nwèt [ŋkebeeben ɲwèt] 'I took it.'

(i.e., I only took it, I didn't harm it in anyway)

̀̀̀péđí ìtìé-úťóm Ñdúbí, Ñya'VRwùó úfôk [ʒkpedi  
 itie utam ndubi nyaʒwuowuo ufok] 'If you  
 come to (my) place of work in the evening,  
 I will already have gone home.'

A few verbs use a reduplicated stem in variation with a completive construction. These are verbs which never occur in the general present and which have a stative meaning in the perfective. The reduplicated stem construction and the perfective for such verbs have nearly identical meanings; the former is a bit more emphatic.

Example:

VRbiák [abiabiak] 'He's sick.'

cf. Vmébiák [aabiak] 'He's sick.'

The reduplicated form of this type of verb has a stative meaning in all constructions.

Reduplicated stems occur in constructions referring to continuing action with the verb sùk, although reduplicated stems are not obligatory; in this instance they are often used after sùk.

Example:

Ñsùk ÑRñâm Vdân [nsuk ññaañam adan] 'I still  
 make my living by selling oil.'

A few verbs, most of them intransitive types, commonly occur reduplicated when they refer to a state rather than to an action.

Example:

VRnàá [anaanaa] 'He is lying down.' 'It (the case) is pending.'

Some others are sàṅá 'walk,' fèké 'run.'

Such verbs are generally not reduplicated when a verbal modifier is present.

Example:

Nwèt Vnàá ké Vpókkòtò [ɲwet anaa ke ʒkpokoro]  
'The book is lying on the table.'

Certain verbs involving actions like standing, sitting and other actions which are often given as commands are reduplicated in the imperative. The meaning is related to examples discussed above where an alternative action is possible - here a change of state occurs.

Examples:

Rtìé. [tietie] 'Sit down!' (which means the same as sùùk tìé [suuk tie] 'Sit down' (lit. lower yourself)

Rdá [daada] 'Stand there!' (i.e. don't move or sit down)



The motional stems are used when the action discussed occurred at a different place from the place of the narration, or if the person hearing the report was not at the place where the action occurred. The ké stem is used when the action involves leaving the place where the speaker is now and going to another place. The dí stem is used when the action involves coming from another place to where the speaker is now. These stems are also used when the place of action is removed from the place where the speaker is, but involves motion to or from a place where the subject of the action was.

#### 4.5 Verb Plurality

Most verb stems occur with 6 person prefixes. The 3 singular prefixes indicate that a singular subject performs the action or is in the state described by the verb, the 3 plural prefixes indicate that a plural, i.e. more than one subject, is involved.

A large number of verbs have a further number distinction, singular-paucal versus plural-intensive in reference to the verb itself over and above the singularity or plurality of the subject. For verbs of action the distinction means that the action is performed once or just a few times versus many times, repeatedly, or intensively.

Most roots form two stems whose meanings differ quantitatively. One stem may be called the singular-paucal. The other the plural-intensive. Singular-paucal stems are used in most contexts. Plural-intensive stems are used when the action occurs many times, intensively or occasionally in a generalized fashion. The choice of the plural-intensive stem may be governed by the plurality of the subject or complement of the verb according to its complement class [see 4.4]. It is usually the case that singular-paucal stems may be used in plural contexts if they are

not involving large numbers or constant repetition. For action verbs, both kinds of stems may usually occur with all 6 person prefixes, i.e. a singular subject may perform an action many times, or a plural subject only once, etc. For intransitive verbs only plural person prefixes occur with plural-intensive stems; all 6 person prefixes occur with singular stems.

#### 4.6 Passive

There is no passive construction in Ibibio. The 3rd person plural verb serves to convey passive meaning.

Examples:

ébo<sup>1</sup>p úfôk 'They built the house / the house  
was built.'

yâk é<sup>3</sup>nâm 'Let it be done / let them do it.'

#### 4.7 Complementation

Verbs are divided into classes according to the type of complements they take. There are five types of complements: direct, indirect, oblique, locative and equational. Verbs may first be divided into two large classes, those verbs that may take a direct complement and those which may not. Each class has a number of subclasses.

Before presenting the verb classes, it is necessary to define the complementation types and subtypes.

A direct complement is the direct recipient of the action of the verb. In many cases it corresponds to the traditional direct object. Direct complements may be unrestricted or restricted, underived or derived, undeletable or deletable. Combinations of these features define subclasses of the first verb class. Unrestricted means that any complement semantically appropriate to the verb in question may occur. Restricted means that a very small number (often only one) of particular complements may cooccur with a particular verb. These restricted complements may or may not be derived from the verb they complement. Finally, some kinds of direct complements are freely

deleted, some rarely, and some (in the case of idiomatic verb complement combinations) never.

An indirect complement corresponds to the traditional indirect object. A direct complement is always implied when an indirect complement occurs, whether it is present or deleted.

Oblique complements occur <sup>mainly</sup> with adjectival verbs. Since these verbs involve states rather than action, their complements are not direct recipients. Thus, they are related to the verb less intimately than are direct complements. They are best translated into English with a prepositional phrase.

Examples:

ʋʋsímé Ǹd̀isímé 'he is silly' (lit. he is  
silly in/as to silliness)

Ǹm̀epón úbôm 'I'm fat' (lit. I'm big as to/  
in fatness)

ʋʋfón ówó 'He is a good person' (lit. he is  
good as a person)

There are at least two meaning relationships involved in oblique complements, and these complements may be derived or underived, deletable or nondeletable as for direct complements. These complements are

however by nature restricted.

Locative complements occur with verbs of both classes but only in the second class do they serve to differentiate subclasses. Locative complements may follow some verbs directly, and may follow other verbs only after the preposition ké.

Locative complements fulfill the same function for certain motion verbs of class 2 as direct complements do for class 1 verbs and are deleted or not under similar conditions. Furthermore, locative complements and direct complements (also indirect which are in fact a subtype of direct) have in common the fact that they may be inverted. Idiomatic verb-complement expressions are excepted. Oblique complements are not invertible [see inversion of complements 7.4 ].

Equational complements occur after one verb only. Subject and complement are equated. The complement is invertible.

Direct, indirect, oblique, and equational complements are noun phrases. Locative complements may be noun phrases preceded by ké, noun phrases alone, or particles.

## Class I

## 1. Complement - direct

unrestricted

deletable but usually present

## Examples:

wòt 'kill,' sé 'look at,' kít 'catch sight  
of,' tá 'chew,' pì 'slash,' bíák 'pain,'  
mùm 'grab,'...

## 2a. Complement - direct

restricted

underived

rarely deleted

## Examples:

bók Vífeté 'cook soup,' tém íkót 'clear  
land,' kói Nmóón 'draw water,'...

## 2b. Like 2a. but with freely deleted complement

## Examples:

túá Vyít 'cry (tears),' sák ímâm 'laugh  
(laughter),' yìp ìnó 'steal (thief),'...

## 3. Complement - direct

restricted

underived

undeletable due to idiomatic

meaning or restriction of verb

to occurrence with a particular

complement.

## Examples:

tán ísó 'frown,' pàṅ ídém 'show off,' pá  
 ídém 'surprise,' pè ísó 'lead,'...

## 4. Complement - direct

restricted

derived

deletable

The use of a complement for this subclass is considered emphatic by some speakers.

## Examples:

wók èwók 'swim (a swim),' nék únék 'dance  
 (a dance),' kúó íkúó 'sing (a song),' pá  
 Npá 'die (death),' nèmé Nnèmé 'converse  
 (a conversation),'...

These are complements, not verbal nouns. For example, 'singing' is úkúó.

## 5. Complement - direct

unrestricted

deletable but usually present

optional indirect usually with

personal reference

## Examples:

nò 'give,' wót 'show,' wèt 'write,'...

wèt has a limited number of direct complements due to narrow semantic range.



## Class II

## 1. Adjectival Verbs

All adjectival verbs may occur with no complement. Some occur with oblique complements of the following types:

## 1a. Complement - derived

no change in meaning of verb, use of complement may be emphatic

## Examples:

símé Ndìsímé 'become silly (in silliness),'  
 bìk Ndùbìk 'become wicked (in wickedness),'  
 m̀òyó ìm̀ô 'become wealthy (in wealth),'  
 f̀ù ìf̀ù 'be lazy (in laziness),'...

## 1b. Complement - underived

presence of complement changes the basic meaning of the verb

## Examples:

m̀èm ùd̀uà 'become cheap (become soft, easy in price),'  
 s̀ón ìd̀ém 'become healthy (lit. become strong in body),'  
 p̀ón úb̀óm 'become fat (lit. become big in fatness),'  
 f̀ón ìd̀ém 'become healthy, strong and/or beautiful in body (lit. become good in body),'  
 wátá ìnúâ 'talk fast (lit. be fast in mouth),'...

## 1c. Complement - underived

relationship between verb and  
complement differs from that  
of 1b.

## Examples:

fón Vwó 'become a good person (lit. become  
good as a person),' pón Vwó 'become adult  
(become big as a person),'...

## 2. General Intransitive Verbs

These verbs generally take no complement. How-  
ever, like adjectival verbs, some occur with oblique  
complements.

## Examples:

dít 'leak,' dípé 'hide oneself,' wùtè  
'collapse,' tépé 'smell,' mòònó 'see  
clearly,'...

Examples with oblique complements - underived,  
presence of complement generally changes  
meaning of verb

yát 'burn (of pepper),' yát ésít 'be  
angry (lit. burn in the heart),' nái  
'shine (of eyes),' nái Vñên 'have shiney  
eyes (lit. shine in the eye),'...

## 3a. Physical State Verbs

Complement - locative particle or noun phrase

preceded by ké

deletable but usually present

Examples:

dún 'live,' síné 'be inside,' tié 'sit,  
stay,' sòtó 'squat,' nàá 'lie,' bá 'exist,  
be,' ...

3b. Some physical state verbs may take an oblique complement.

Examples:

tié ìpòòṅ 'stay alone,' tié ùfàn 'be in the  
relationship of a friend (stay as a friend),'  
bá Vwàwà 'appear to be green (be as green),'  
dù úwém 'be alive (live as to life),' ...

## 4. Motion Verbs

Complement - locative particle or noun phrase

without ké

deletable but usually present

Examples:

kàá 'go,' dí 'come,' dàkká 'leave,' wùó  
'go out,' sàṅá 'walk,' ...

### 5. Equational Verb *dó* 'be'

This verb always has a complement. The subject and complement of the verb are equated. The equational complement is unrestricted.

Examples:

*dó* *ʋbóón* 'be a chief' . . .

### 6. Aspectual Verbs

These verbs take no complements. There are only two, *sé* 'habitual,' and *sùk* 'continuous' [see 5.2]

### 7. Connective Verbs

Connective verbs *ñùn*, *mààná* 'and' also take no complement [see 5.2]. *ñùn* is less typically Ibibio than *mààná* 'repeat, and, also.'

Some verbs belong to more than one complement class. For example, *sàná* 'walk' belongs to  $I_4$ ,  $II_4$ , *wà* 'sacrifice' belongs to  $I_1$  and  $I_4$ , *yìp* 'steal' belongs to  $I_1$  and  $I_{2b}$ , and so on.

### Special Statements on Verb Complementation

Certain verbs may take an infinitive as a complement. Most of these verbs belong to class  $I_1$ , that is, the class that takes unrestricted direct complements.

Examples:

*yém* 'want, seek,' *má* 'like,' *tóónó* 'begin,'  
*péép* 'learn, teach,'...

The verbs that belong to other classes have an interesting feature. They all have multiple class membership with different meanings in each class. The meaning they have in class  $I_1$  is not the one they have before the infinitive. Rather, it is the other class meaning that corresponds.

Examples:

kàn (class  $I_1$ ) 'surpass, triumph over,' (before infinitive) 'be able,'  
náná (class  $I_1$ ) 'fight,'  
(before infinitive) 'try,'...

## Verb Sequences

### 5.1 Form

When two or more verb phrases occur in a sentence, two kinds of inflection may be observed. The first verb (a technical term for the first verb in a sequence) is fully inflected in the manner described in verb constructions. All subsequent verbs, called sequentials, are inflected in an abbreviated way. This means that they do not take preverbs, construction markers, negative suffix, infinitive prefix and so on. This does not mean that the categories which these markers represent are not present. All the verbs in a sequence are in the same construction, but only in the first verb are all pertinent categories present in the actual speech form. There is not a separate sequential for every first verb construction. Several different first verb constructions can be followed by the same sequential form. The form of the sequential is thus determined by the first verb, but various first verb contrasts are phonologically neutralized in the sequential.

Sequentials consist of three parts: a person prefix, a verb stem, and a tone pattern. When they are negative, this is indicated by the negative person

prefixes. Some types of sequentials are formally identical to the first verb construction. Others are in a special sequential form.

The following chart gives the forms of free sequentials. With the exception of the following contrastives where the form of the sequential is different if an object is present than if an object is only implied or is not intended, the sequential forms are the same regardless of object. Whether the sequential is the second, third, fourth verb, and so on, does not affect its form.

#### Preceding Contrastives

- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| I   | $\acute{N}d\acute{i}$ / $\grave{V}d\acute{i}$ <sup>4</sup>  |
| II  | $\acute{N}n\acute{o}$ / $\grave{V}n\acute{o}$   |
| III | $\acute{N}k\acute{a}\acute{a}$ / $\grave{V}k\acute{a}\acute{a}$ ~ $\acute{N}k\acute{a}\acute{a}$ / $\grave{V}k\acute{a}\acute{a}$ |
| IV  | $\acute{N}d\grave{a}k\acute{k}\acute{a}$ / $\grave{V}d\grave{a}k\acute{k}\acute{a}$   |

#### Following Contrastives

without object

- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| I   | $\acute{N}d\grave{i}$ / $\grave{V}d\grave{i}$                                       |
| II  | $\acute{N}n\grave{o}$ / $\grave{V}n\grave{o}$                                       |
| III | $\acute{N}k\grave{a}\grave{a}$ / $\grave{V}k\grave{a}\grave{a}$                     |
| IV  | $\acute{N}d\grave{a}k\grave{k}\grave{a}$ / $\grave{V}d\grave{a}k\grave{k}\grave{a}$ |

## with object

- I      Ndí / Vdí  
 II     Nnò / Vnò  
 III    Nkàá / Vkàá  
 IV     Ndàkká / Vdàkká

## Contingents

- I      Ndî / Vdî  
 II     Nnô / Vnô  
 III    Nkáà / Vkáà  
 IV     Ndákkà / Vdákkà

## Imperative

- I      dí / èdí / ùdí  
 II     nò / ènó / ùnó  
 III    kàá / èkàá / ùkàá  
 IV     dàkká / èdàkká / ùdàkká

## Infinitive / Negative Hortative

- I      Ndí  
 II     Nnó  
 III    Nkàá  
 IV     Ndàkká

## Group A

- I      Ndí / Vdí  
 II     Nnô / Vnô  
 III    Nkàá / Vkàá  
 IV     Ndàkká / Vdàkká



## Group B

- I.    Ndi / Vdi
- II    Nnò / Vnô
- III   Nkàá / Vkáà
- IV    Ndàkká / Vdàkká

## Group C

- I    Ndi / Vdi
- II    Nnô / Vnô
- III   Nkáà / Vkáà
- IV    Ndákkà / Vdákkà

The constructions requiring the various sequential groups are as follows:

Preceding-contrastive sequentials:

all preceding-contrastive constructions except the future ones

Following-contrastive sequentials

all following-contrastive constructions except the future ones

Contingent sequentials

all affirmative contingent constructions

Imperative sequentials

imperatives

Infinitive / Negative hortative sequentials

infinitives and negative hortative

Group A sequentials

neutral past, hypothetical future and immediate future; relational time construction with *má*; all non-contingent negatives

Group B sequentials

all neutral constructions; all non-contingent negatives

Group C sequentials

all contrastive futures; all negative futures

## Variations:

persons 2, 4, 5 of the perfective construction may vary freely between  $\acute{V}di$  (group B) and  $\acute{V}di$  (group A)

persons 2, 4, 5 of the neutral present may vary freely between  $\grave{V}di$  (preceding-contrastive) and  $\acute{V}di$  (group B).

Note that there is some overlap in the use of sequentials. That is, a few constructions may take more than one sequential form.

When a verb construction contains two elements each of which requires a different sequential, the priorities are as follows:

preverb  $m\acute{a}$  or  $p\acute{a}$  combined with  $ke$  relational past  $\rightarrow m\acute{a}$ ,  $p\acute{a}$  determines the sequential.

No matter how the special preverb  $bo$  is inflected, it takes a group C sequential.

## Examples:

## Preceding Contrastive

̀Vńé ̀V̀kòtò ̀Ǹdò ̀V̀kôn ̀V̀kétimmé ̀V̀dí [ʒńe ʒkoro  
ndo ʒkon ʒketimme ʒdi] 'He came back with  
Okon.' (lit. he also with Okon came back)

## Following Contrastive

## Without object

̀V̀késòp ̀V̀dí ̀V̀díǸdòkkò ̀Ǹpó ̀V̀dò [ʒkesob ʒdi  
ʒdindoko mkpo odo] 'You came quickly to  
tell me that thing.'

## With object

̀V̀kédàt ̀ìpón ̀V̀káámá ̀V̀fété [ʒkedad ikpon  
akaama ʒfere] 'You took a spoon and  
stirred the soup.'

## Contingents

̀V̀pénám ̀ǸpóV̀mì ̀V̀Ǹnò ̀Ǹyaúpe ̀V̀kúk [ʒkpenam  
mkpomi ʒno nyaukpe ʒkuk] 'If you do  
this thing for me I will pay you money.'  
yàk ̀ìkàà ̀ìkémùm ̀èkàékà ̀Ǹmè ̀ìmò ̀ìwòt ̀ìtêm  
̀Ǹdídíá ̀ìdíà [yag ikaa ikimum ekaeka  
mmimo iwod item ndidia idia] 'Let us  
go and grab our grandmothers and kill  
(them) and cook food and eat.'

## Imperative

dát V̀kò dí [dad ʒkodi] 'Bring the pot!'

•kéùdát údûŋ Nmì ùtím ùsùŋ [kuudad udun  
mmi utim usun] 'Don't use my mortar to  
pound fofoo!'

## Infinitive

V̀ñé Vyêm V̀dikàá Nkékít èté Nñùŋ Ndát ènò  
Ndí [ʒñe yem ʒdikaa nkekid ete nñun ndad  
eno ndi] 'He wants to go and see (his)  
father and bring (the) gift back.' (lit.  
he wants to go see father and take gift  
come.)

## Group A

V̀yaV̀ben ùdíá ídí [ayaʒben udia idi] 'He  
will bring yam.'

## Group B

V̀sòp V̀dat ùkòt V̀Nsòk [ʒsob ʒdad ukod ʒnsok]  
'He quickly brought palm wine to me.'

## Group C

Nbô Ndítíè ùdíánà [mbo nditie udiana]  
'I want to come sit next to you.'

## 5.2 Relationships within verb sequences

It is difficult to define different types of relationships which obtain among verb phrases in sequence. There are many degrees of interdependence ranging from notionally unconnected verb phrases which could easily be split into separate sentences, to idiomatic sequences whose parts are inseparable without destroying the meaning. Furthermore, there is some latitude as to how the relationship among certain verb phrases is to be interpreted. It is convenient, however, and useful for understanding how Ibibio expresses certain concepts to recognize three types of relationships: 1) those verb phrases which are maximally independent of each other and where reference is made to actions performed by a single subject but otherwise are not necessarily related in any way. 2) Those verb phrases which are interdependent in the intimate connection of their parts. This type involves two or more separate actions which together form a complex action, or a sequence of actions one of which is the result of the other or one of which is necessary for the other. Also this type includes complex motion where *dí* 'come' or *kàá* 'go' precedes or follows another verb indicating that motion to or from a place preceded or followed the main

action. 3) Those most closely connected verb phrases involving a head-modifier relationship, where one or more verbs qualifies the action of the other verb or verbs.

This division of relationships into 3 types is admittedly arbitrary and is done only because it makes it easier to see the kinds of relationships which exist. It must be remembered that from the point of view of inflection, it makes no difference what verbs are involved in the sequence. On the most superficial level, all verb sequences are alike. But clearly, some deeper relationships are involved and these rough typings are a first attempt to get at those deeper relationships which may be semantic as well as functional at a deeper grammatical level.

Two types of verbs may be distinguished when talking about these sequence relationships: general verbs and specifiers. The first two types of relationships involve general verbs and these will be discussed first.

General verbs are further divided into motionals and other verbs. There is no basic difference between these two types (aside from complementation which is irrelevant to position classes), except that motionals

combine very freely and often with each other and with the remaining general verbs. The first relationship discussed above, that of maximum independence, involves motionals less often than does the more inter-dependent type 2 relationship.

Some examples of type 1 relationship follow:

Examples:

Vdóòk Vsóyò Vdóòk Vsóyò

'He climbed up and down up and down.'

ének épì ének épì

'They danced, they cut, they danced, they cut.'

Nsàgá Nkàá ùdùà Ntímmé Nńón úfòk

'I went to market, I returned to house / I

went back and forth from house to market.'

VńéVkuó íkúó Nfón Nfón Vńùñ Vńék únék Nfón Nfón

'He sings well and he dances well.'

Vkáà ísó Vtímmè èdèm

'He walks forward and backward.'



Verb sequences whose actions are interdependent are given below.

Examples:

bén 'take'

kàámá 'stir'

bén ipán kàámá V́fété (V́mò)

'Stir the soup with a spoon.' (lit. take spoon  
stir soup with)

yít 'lock'

sín 'put in'

yít úsún Nsín

'Lock me inside.' (lit. lock door me put in)

dòòtó 'lift up'

nìm 'put (in its proper place), put away'

dòòtó nìm

'Put it away.' (lit. lift it up put it where  
it belongs)

dùs 'fall'

dúk 'enter'

V́dùs V́duk V́dú

'He fell into a hole.' (lit. he fell he entered  
hole)

dút 'pull'

síó 'remove, take out'

dút síó!

'Pull it out!'

sùùk 'lower'

nàá 'lie'

sùùk nàá

'Lie down!'

kàppá 'turn over, change'

nò 'give'

kàppá nò

'Give back!'

kèèné 'follow, accompany'

dá 'stand'

ÿyà Nkèèné Vdá?

'Will you back me up?'

ḡáná 'try'

bénné 'lift up'

ḡáná bénné

'Try and lift it up!'

sín 'put'

nám 'do'

sín ídém nám

'Put in (more) effort!' (lit. put in self/body do)

sòtó 'squat'

díá 'eat'

ʋyēm ʋdí só tò Ndíá

'He wants to squat down to eat.'

pón 'become big'

yà yá 'become beautiful'

sé dǎná Npón Nyà yá

'See how I've grown and become beautiful.'

sàǎná 'walk'

sím 'reach'

ásàǎná ʋtò ùyó ʋsím àbá kúsên ìnààn

'He walked from Uyo to Aba in 4 days.' (lit.

he walked from Uyo he reached Aba)

sàǎná 'walk'

kánná 'encircle'

ʋsàǎná ʋkánná úfòk

'He walked around the house.'

túéké 'spread'

yókó 'fill, be full'

̀Nnám ʋtúéké ʋyókó ídém

'Yaws is all over his body.'

dún 'live'

díáná 'be close, near'

ʋdún ʋdianá

'He lives nearby.'

wùó 'go out'

sàṅá 'walk'

Ṽwùó ke úfòk. Ṽsàṅá

'He walked away from the house.'

símé 'get foolish'

nám 'do'

yàk. Nsímè Nnâm.

'Let me be a fool in doing it.'

nám 'do'

pón 'get big'

Nnâm Npôn

'I must try to get big.'

tán

dúái. 'shout'

tán dúái

'Speak loud; say anything you like without  
thinking; make a speech.'

kàppá. 'change, turn over'

sín 'put'

Ṽñé Ṽkàppá. Ṽsin ké ùsón Ṽñèn

'He twisted it into an insult.'

nàá. 'lie'

dáyá. 'sleep'

ùbèèt. Ṽàfò. Ṽdùùnàá ùdáyá. Ṽdó Ṽmì?

'Is this the room where you will sleep?'

idiomatic:

dàkká 'leave'

nò 'give'

dàkkánò Vñé

'Forgive him!'

sequences with dí, kàá

kèèné 'follow, accompany'

dí 'come'

Nkèèné dí

'Come with me!'

dát 'take'

dí 'come'

dát Vbésìn dí

'Bring a basin!'

dát 'take'

ké ~ kàá 'go'

dùòk 'throw away'

dát ké dùòk

'Throw it away!' (lit. take it go and throw  
it away)

sàṅá 'walk'

kàá 'go'

Vsàṅá Vkàá ùdùà

'He walked to market.' (lit. he walked he  
went market)

tímmé 'not go on any farther'

dí 'come'

Ṽtímmé Ṽdí

'He returned.'

bìòm 'carry'

dí 'come'

Ṽwó ìtá édí ébìòm ìfiá

'Three men came carrying firewood.'

kàá 'go'

dép 'buy'

Ṽkàá Ṽkédép ùdíá

'He went and bought yam.' (i.e. he had to  
travel to get to the place to buy yams)

sàṅá 'walk'

kàá 'go'

Ṽkôn Nmè Nfón ésàṅá kèèt ékàá ùdùà

'Okon and Mfon went to market together.'

(Lit. Okon and Mfon they walked one  
they went market)

### Specifiers

Certain verbs notionally qualify the verb or verbs to which they are adjacent in a sequence. Although the inflectional relationship of first verb and sequential is constant, here one verb is clearly subordinate in function to another in that one qualifies the other adjectivally, adverbially, aspectually, and so on. These qualifying verbs, called specifiers, fall into two position classes: the class which precedes the verb qualified and the class which follows it.

Each verb in an independent sequence may be qualified by one or more members of each specifier class. Interdependent sequences generally function as a unit with respect to specifier verbs in that these verbs do not typically occur between verbs in an interdependent sequence. It is most often the case for both types of sequences that a preceding specifier verb will occur in initial position in a sequence and a following specifier verb will occur in final position.

Complementation of a specifier depends on the complement class to which the verb belongs. In general, preceding specifier verbs are not complemented, and following specifier verbs are.

### Preceding Specifier Verbs

1. sùk continuous  
sě habitual
2. bó inceptive
3. [ nèkké intensive  
tùm intensive
4. kàp intensive
4. [ tó 'be first'  
bèm 'be first'
5. [ bàk 'be early'  
sóp 'be early, quick'  
\* wátá 'be early, quick'  
wámmá 'be early, quick'  
dàk 'yet'
6. [ fiák repetitive  
mààná repetitive
7. wòòp 'be calm, quiet'  
wàná associative  
[ kàn 'be able'  
nò 'be able'  
yém 'want'

Note that [ means mutually exclusive; \* may be following specifiers in certain constructions, e.g. in comparisons.



## Following Specifier Verbs.

1x	báná.	'be about'
2x	kòtó	'also'
3x	mà.	completive
4x	kàn	'exceed', used in comparisons
5x	bókó	'be too/very much'
6x	sók.	benefactive
	nò	benefactive.
	wót	directional
	tó	directional

The specifier verb classes may not be closed but they are limited. Further investigation of Ibibio may reveal additional members, but there is little if any productivity involved whereby neutral verbs can function as specifiers.

More than one member of a specifier verb class may occur in a sequence. Most combinations can occur (excluding, of course, verbs marked with [ which are mutually exclusive) but few are common and more than two is unusual. The order in which they occur is flexible. As a rule the low numbered verbs precede higher numbered verbs. Variation in order may or may not vary the meaning.

Both *sùk* and *sé* may occur in either order. When one or both is present, they always precede any other specifiers.

*kàn<sub>4x</sub>* is fairly free in position relative to the other specifiers. Also, due to the fact that it is used in comparisons, it frequently occurs between two other verbs neutral or specific.

*báná* while often coming immediately after neutral verbs of saying or sense, frequently follows the directional *nò* after saying verbs.

Example:

*tán nò X báná*

'Tell X about...'

Examples:

Preceding Specifiers

1. *édím V'súk V'dêp* 'It's still raining' (lit. rain still falls)

*Npékít ìwá N'mésé N'dép* 'If I see cassava I usually buy it.'

2. *dáná V'kédi·ké úfôk N'mì N'kébò N'Rwúò*

'When he came to my house I was about to go out.'

*V'bô ìkáà úké?* 'Where are you about to go to?'

3. nèkké mé 'Be as patient as you can.'  
 Vnékkè Vyékè? 'Do you want it really  
 hot?' (lit. should it really be hot)  
 tùm náná 'Try hard.'  
 tùm dá 'Stand aside.'  
 Nkàp Ntò Vkôn 'I can even throw Okon  
 (in wrestling).'  
 íkàṅ Vmáikàppá ítá Vfòṅ Nmì 'I wish  
 my clothes wouldn't get burnt in the  
 fire.' (lit. of the fire would only/  
 just not burn my clothes)  
 kàp kàá 'Go (if you must).'  
 kàp sé 'Look (you'll be surprised)!'
4. tó díá Vñêm 'Eat this first (before  
 that).'
5. NmaVbàk. Ndémme 'I awoke early.'  
 Vsòp Vbuúnó 'It breaks easily.'
6. Nbòk fiák tán 'Please, repeat / say it  
 again.'
7. wàná bèn 'Pick it up together!'

Examples:

Following Specifiers.

- 1x. Vbùk Nùk. Vbàṅá íkít Nmè Vtí-kótí-kò  
 'He told a story about tortoise and  
 praying mantis.'

- 2x. VmàVdèp ìwá Vkótò? 'Did you buy cassava  
also?'
- 3x. Vsak Vmà 'It burnt completely.'  
sóp nám mà! 'Finish quickly!'  
VmáVtém ikót Vmà, Vdùòk Vdùdù 'When he  
finished clearing land, he rested.'
- 4x. Nmesóp ìtók úkàn 'I can run faster than  
you.'
- 5x. Vmèwátá ínúâ ikô Vbókó 'You talk too  
fast.'
- 6x. dát Nwèt Vmì sók Vñé 'Take this letter  
to him.'  
VmàVdèp ùdiá VÑnò mièn 'He bought yam  
for me.'  
pé Vkúk nò Vñé 'Pay money to him.'  
VmàVdèp ùdiá VÑtó mièn 'He bought yam  
from me.'  
Nkòp útó fièn 'I heard it from you.'  
tán ikô Nwót 'Tell me something.'

Other positionally restricted verbs:

Connectives

ñùŋ  
mààná 'and also'

Connectives occur between two general verbs. They indicate that the actions of the general verbs are successive or, occasionally, simultaneous. Connectives occasionally occur as initial verbs, but there is clearly a notional linking between the verb of the previous sentence and the immediately following verb.

Examples:

Íkúó íkúó Ñfón Ñfón Vñùŋ Vnek únék Ñfón Ñfón

'He sings well and he dances well.'

Ñmeñùŋ Ñkùòk ísòŋ, íkèm-ké?

'And I swept the floor, isn't it enough?'

mààná can be substituted for ñùŋ in either sentence. It is considered more purely Ibibio than ñùŋ which is used by Efiks, but ñùŋ is nonetheless the more common verb.

bó

tè

In addition to their membership in the class of general verbs, saying, bó and tè form a separate subclass of non-initial specifiers which are restricted to occurrence after saying or sense verbs. One or both may occur in this function, if both the order is bó, tè. Their meaning may be interpreted as 'say, mean' or 'that' [see 5.3 for special tones on tè].

While these verbs generally follow immediately the general verb they qualify, certain other non-initial specifiers may intervene, especially nò.

Examples:

Nyem Vdítan úNòó Ntè ké sé Vnám Vdò ífón·ké

'I want to tell you that what you did is  
not good.'

VnaNbo Vtè ké Vdô Vpáníkò

'He told me that it is true.'

Specifier verbs may be regarded as functioning as adverbial modifiers of time, manner, extent, and so on. Below are sentences illustrating the use of specifiers and adverbial modifiers in similar functions.

Manner

ʋsóp ʋdí [ʒsɔb ʒdi] 'He came quickly.'

ʋdí úsópúsóp [ʒdi usɔbusɔp] 'He came quickly.'

Extent

ʋsák ʋmà [asag ama] 'It burnt completely.'

ʋsák úkéèt [asag ukéet] 'It burnt completely.'

Time

ʋtò ʋnám útóm ʋmì [ʒto anam utom ʒmi] 'He did  
this work first.'

ʋnám útóm ʋmì Nfín [anam utom ʒmi mfin] 'He  
did this work today.'

Although there are some notions that can be expressed by specifiers or by adverbials, in general there

is not much overlap. Specifiers are used more often than adverbials.

#### Multiple Class Membership

Certain verbs belong to more than one position class. They may belong to the class of general verbs and also to one (or in a few cases both) of the specifier classes. The meanings of such verbs may vary according to which position they are occupying in a sequence. Most of the verbs listed in the restricted specifier classes may occur as general verbs as well.

#### Examples:

tó general 'originate, be from'

    Ntó ùyó 'I'm from Uyo.'

    preceding specifier 'precede, be first'

    Ntó Nnam 'I did it first.'

    following specifier 'be from, from'

    Ndìòṅó Ntó dáná Vñé Vtáj íkô 'I know it  
    from how he talks.'

kàn general 'triumph, win, exceed'

    Vmékàn Vwó úbók 'He's beyond help.'

    preceding specifier 'be able'

    VyàVkàn Vnám? 'Will you be able to do it?'

    following specifier 'exceed, surpass' used  
    in comparisons



ʼNmépon úbôm Nkàn Vñé I'm fatter than he  
 is.' (lit. I'm big in fatness I surpass  
 him)

nò general 'give'/following specifier 'bene-  
 factive, directional'

nò Nkámà ùnô 'Let me hold it for you.'  
 (lit. give me hold you for)

bókó general 'surpass, exceed'

bókó sé Nkúwot 'Do more than I showed  
 you.'

following specifier 'be too/very much'

ʼVmépèéné ʼVbókó 'It's very/too late;  
 it's been a very long time.'

#### 5.4 Special Statements Pertinent to Sequentials

A verb that normally takes a complement when it is a general verb may still take one when it is a specifier. Some verbs belong to more than one complement class. These may be general verbs when they belong to one complement class and specifier verbs in another. Outside of the verbs that do this, complement and sequence classes are independent of each other. A complement in a specifier-general verb sequence may occasionally be placed on either verb without a change in meaning. Usually however there is a difference in meaning.

Examples:

nèkké 'straighten, 'intensive verb'

kámá 'hold, treat'

1) nèkké Nkámá [neke nkama]

2) Nnèkké kámá [nneke kama]

'Hold/treat me properly.' (lit. 1) intensive  
me  
me hold; 2)/intensive hold)

Both 1) and 2) mean the same thing, but 2) may also mean 'Hold me straight,' (lit. straighten me hold).

báǵá 'be about, concern'

This verb generally occurs as a specifier after sense and experience verbs, such as diòǵó 'know,' táǵ 'tell, say,' bùk 'tell a story,' kété 'think,' bòtótó 'ask,' kúó 'sing.' It may occur as a general verb however.

Examples:

Ǵmá Ǵbùk Nùk Ǵbáǵá Ǵwó kèèt...

'He told a story about a man.'

Nùk Ǵmì Ǵbáǵá Ǵwó kèèt

'This story is about a man.'

tè 'say'

This verb has the normal sequential forms for a low-tone verb with two exceptions. After the imperatives, both affirmative and negative, the form is Ǵtè (rather than \*tè, \*ùté). After the negative hortative the form is Ntè/Ǵtè (rather than Nté/ùté).

Example:

•ké ùkété ùbó Ǵtè.. [kuukere ubo 3te]

'Don't think that...'

n̄n̄ 'and' has the same tonal behavior

Example:

Ǵyém Ǵdíkúò íkúó N̄n̄n̄ N̄nék únék [3yem 3dikuo

ikuo n̄n̄n̄ nne unek]

'He wants to sing and dance.'

When *kàá* 'go' is the first verb in a sequence of imperatives, there are two alternate constructions in use. One is *kàá* followed by a motional stem verb. The other is the motional stem alone, i.e. the contracted form of *kàá*.

Examples:

*kàá kébén* [kaa keben]

*kébén* [keben]

'Go and fetch.'

*kàá kèwôt únên* [kaa kewod unen]

*kèwôt únên* [kewod unen]

'Go and kill a chicken.'

The same types of constructions exist for *dí* 'come.'

Examples:

*dí dínón úkôt* [di din<sup>w</sup>on ukot]

*dínón úkôt* [din<sup>w</sup>on ukot]

'Come and drink palm-wine.'

Both *kàá* and *dí* may be used.

Examples:

*dí kébén ífiá* [di kiben ifia]

'Go and fetch firewood.'

*dí kékàá kébén ífiá* [di kikaa keben ifia]

meaning as above, but used if a long distance is involved.

Motional stems are generally obligatory after *kàá* and *dí*.

Verb sequences are the salient feature of Ibibio syntax. They are very common. Sequences of specifier verbs and general verbs are more common than are verbs with adverbial modifiers. It is the feeling of most Ibibios interviewed that expressing an adverbial concept by a specifier is more Ibibio, truer, more genuine to their dialect than to use an adverbial. This latter usage is often considered to be Efik (although Efik also has verb sequences). For example, in the two sentences below, the former is considered more Ibibio than the latter. The sentences mean the same.

Examples:

ʼVméyàya ʼVbókó

ʼVméyàya étíétí

'She is very beautiful.'

### 5.3 Comparison of free/bound sequential

The free sequential takes no inflection except that of person. Negative is marked only in that a negative subject prefix is used. Free sequentials may be motional, reduplicated or reciprocal stems but that is a derivational matter.

Bound sequentials however are a bit more varied. With the exception of those which follow *bó*, it is the bound sequential verb, not the preceding preverb, which is marked for negative, dependency (in a few cases where contrastive construction preverbs are involved) and on occasion, are inflected for tense with *ké*, and after the special preverb *má*, for tense and mode with *pé*.

The free sequential, the bound sequential, and the construction marker form a kind of continuum as to phonological dependence, i.e. as to being bound or free. It is very likely that just as the bound sequentials probably developed from free sequentials due to frequent use of certain combinations and resulting assimilations and loss, the construction markers probably developed from bound or free sequentials. Indeed, there is one morpheme which functions in two ways in Ibibio. The verb sé means 'habitual action.' In the affirmative, it is used as a preceding specifier. Thus, habitual action in the affirmative is always a free sequence construction. In the negative, however, sé is a construction marker. (In Efik, the corresponding morpheme sí is a construction marker in both the affirmative and negative.)

Examples:

Nsê Nnâm [nse nnam] 'I usually do it.'

Nsé nám-ké [nsinamma] 'I don't usually do it.'

## 6. Particles and Prepositional Phrases

Particles are invariable. That is, they are uninflected both for segmental and tonal affixes. They fulfill a variety of functions including sentence connectives such as Vdò 'but,' noun phrase connectives such as Nmè 'and,' prepositions such as ké 'at, on, from, etc.' and various adverbial functions. They are also explicatives. They have a variety of shapes and a variety of derivational origins [see 2.3 ].

### Connectives

The particle Nmè [mme] functions as a noun phrase connective, as a preposition 'with,' and as a pluralizer. It is invariable, but subject to loss of final segment and tone [see 1.5a].

### Examples:

an noun phrase connective

àmì Nmè àfò ìyàíkàá [ami mme afo iyaikaa]

'I and you will go.'

as preposition

Nkít·ké Nmè Vñé [ɲkite mmʒñe] 'I don't see  
with him' (lit. I don't agree with him)

Vdi Nmè ùfàn Vmò [ʒdi mmufan ʒmɔ] 'He came  
with his friend.'



as pluralizer

úfòk 'house', Nmè úfòk [mmufòk] 'houses',  
Nwèt 'book,' Nmè Nwèt [mme nwèt] 'books'

Two other particles, Ndò, yè, are occasionally used in dialects A and B in the prepositional and noun phrase connective functions. They appear to be Efik loans, although yè is used regularly in dialect C.

Closely related to Nmè, possibly ultimately of the same origin, is the particle Nmê which means 'or, whether.' It is used as a noun phrase connective.

Examples:

Vmédep ùdíá Nmê gàtí? [ʒmedep udia mme gari]

'Have you bought yam or gari?'

Another particle ò is used like Nmê in the above example. ò is probably a loan from English 'or'.

Related to Nmê is mê, a particle with a variety of related functions and meanings: 1) it may introduce a yes-no question often carrying an emphatic connotation, 2) it may introduce an imperative carrying a persuasive meaning, 3) with the meaning 'whether, if', it may introduce an affirmative dependent sentence, 4) it may mark dependency in a negative dependent sentence.

## Examples:

- 1) mē àmì Nḍô ìnó!?! [me ami ndo ino] 'Do you think I am a thief!?!'
- 2) mē nám Npó Vmì [me nam mkpo ʒmi] 'Do this thing.'
- 3) VmaN̄bip mē NyaV̄di [amambip me nyaʒdi] 'He asked me whether I will come.'  
mē úféké·ké údûùsóp·ké úkésim̄dó [muufe e ke uduusopo ukusimdo] 'If you don't run, you won't arrive on time.'
- 4) Nmédìòṅó Vwó VV̄ñé mē ímá·ké [mmedioṅo ʒwo ʒñe miimaa a] 'I know the person whom he doesn't like.'

## Delimiters

There are several particles which are used in expressions containing numerals or other indications of quantity and delimit or emphasize the quantity expression.

pót means 'only'

## Examples:

díánná kèèt pót dát 'take only one.'

Nyem sókòtò ìbà pót 'I want only 2 oranges.'

Ndòmò 'not even'

Examples:

Ndòmò Vwó kèèt Vdi

'Not even one person came.'

Nyém-ké Ndòmò étòkètòk

'I don't want even a little bit.'

Nkóm 'even if'

Examples:

Nnò Vkúk Nkóm Vsúk Vdô ètòk 'Give me money  
even if it's only a little bit.'

Nkóm Vnàm sé Vnám Ndiítán-ké íkô 'Do whatever  
you want to me, I won't tell.' (lit. even  
if you do what you do, I won't say word)

The particles Vdi and Vdò 'but' connect independent sentences:

Examples:

Nmébiàt inì Vdi Nya'Vsúk Ndí 'I'm late but I'll  
still come.'

The particle *Nmò* means 'exist, be in a place.'  
 [See 7.5 for discussion].

Examples:

*Vbón Nmò úsòtó kéúbók* [ʒbɔŋ mmo usuro kuubok]

'There is a mosquito on your hand.' (lit.  
 mosquito there is squatting on hand)

*Nmò* is related to the interrogative noun *Nmò*  
 'where.' Compare:

*Vkôn Vbá Nmò?* *Nmò ké ìṅáṅ* [ʒkon aba mmo

mmo kiin<sup>w</sup>aŋ] 'Where is Okon? He's at the  
 farm.'

A prepositional phrase consists of a preposition plus a noun phrase. Prepositions are all particles. Some of these particles function as prepositions before noun phrases and as sentence subordinators elsewhere. Particles with this dual function are starred.

\*ke is the commonest preposition. It has a wide range of meaning referring to place, time, cause, manner.

Examples:

ké ìnúùk 'by whistling'  
 ké úkót 'on foot'  
 ké Npá 'at the death'  
 ké Ndòbò 'in loneliness'  
 ké úfók 'at/in/to the house'  
 ké ìtìé ké ìtìé 'from place to place'  
 ké ésí 'inside'  
 ké Nták 'for the reason'  
 ké Nkáníká ìtíòn 'at 5 o'clock'  
 ké Nsí Nsí 'forever'  
 ké ìnì 'at the time'

\*Ntè means 'as, like'

Examples:

Ntè ódò [ntoro] 'like that'  
 Ntè ènò 'as a gift'  
 Ntè Nmóóṅ 'like water'

The preposition *ké* is required before all noun phrase locatives that occur in the following contexts:

- 1) as locative complement of a physical state verb,
- 2) as a predicate adverbial locative complement whether modifying a verb phrase or a whole predicate.

Examples:

Útíé ké úfòk [ʒtie kufòk] 'He sat at home.'

ÌmáVdèp ìwá Vmì ké ùdùà. [mmaʒdeb iwa ʒmi kuudua] 'I bought this cassava at the market.'

Vdèp Ìpó Vbókó ké ùyó [ʒdeb mkpò ʒbògò kuuyò] 'He bought a lot of things at Uyo.' (lit. he bought things a lot at Uyo)

Noun phrase locatives which are complements of motion verbs are not preceded by *ké*.

## Other Prepositions

\*tónó 'from, since'

## Examples:

tónó ké idún kèèt 'from one village'

tónó Vbém 'since last year'

\*tùtù 'until'

## Examples:

tùtù Nfín Vmì 'until today'

Ndò f Nmè 'with'

## Examples:

Nkít·ké Ndò àfò 'I don't see with you'

(lit. I don't agree with you)

ífón·ké Nmè Vñé 'It's not good with/for  
him.'

\*Nbààk 'for fear of'

## Examples:

Nbààk Ntimé 'for fear of trouble'

## Simple Sentences

### Introduction

There are major sentences and minor sentences. Major sentences contain a verb, minor sentences do not. Major sentences are simple or complex. The simple sentence has the following structure: a sentence adverbial, a subject, a predicate, and an intonational contour. The normal order is that given for the first three items, the intonational contour extends over the entire sentence.

intonational contour  
sentence — sentence adverbial    subject    predicate

The sentence adverbial is optional. The subject is generally optional but in a few cases (i.e. where certain verbs are deleted) it is obligatory. The predicate and intonational contour are obligatory.

The subject is realized by one or more noun phrases, i.e. a simple or compound noun phrase or an apposition. The predicate is realized by one or more verb phrases optionally expanded by one or more predicate adverbials. The sentence adverbial is an adjunct to the whole sentence - usually only one occurs. The intonational contour is independent of the tones of



the words in the sentence, although it may influence one or more of them at the end of the sentence. There are four intonational contours: declarative, interrogative, emphatic, emphatic interrogative. They are marked by . ? ! ?! at the end of the sentence.

Simple sentences may be linked together in various ways and may then possess a single intonational contour. When two sentences are linked together, the result is a complex sentence. These are of two types: coordinate and dependent. In the first type, the two sentences have equal status and are joined by a coordinating particle. In the second type, one sentence is dependent or subordinate to the other. In the latter case a number of dependency relationships may occur.

Ibibio sentences may be contrastive or neutral. Contrastive sentences contain an element that is emphasized or contrasted with another element. This element may be the subject or complement of the verb and may be contrasted with the subject or complement of another sentence actual or implied. Neutral sentences contain no such contrasted element. The contrastive or neutral nature of a sentence is marked by the verb construction it contains. The verb construction which occurs is a result of the emphasis or lack of it intended by the

speaker. If emphasis is placed on an element in the sentence which precedes the verb, i.e. the subject or in inverted sentences the complement, a preceding contrastive verb construction occurs. If emphasis is placed on an element which follows the verb, i.e. a complement in its normal position, a following contrastive verb construction occurs.

### 7.1 Predicate Adverbials

Predicate adverbials include location, time, manner, extent, cause, and purpose notions. Any of these may occur in any sentence with two restrictions. First, they must be semantically plausible. Second, their function must not be already filled by one of the verb phrases. To explain this latter restriction: in the discussion of verb sequences, it was pointed out that certain verb phrases have a head-modifier type of relationship. A general verb is qualified adverbially by a specifier verb. For example:

N'nam N'ókó 'I did a lot.'

A predicate made up of the preceding sequence of verb phrases would not have an adverbial of extent.

It could be argued that verb phrases of the specified type are indeed predicate adverbials and nothing more. It seems possible that the revision of



### Time Adverbials

Time adverbials are varied in structure. More than one may occur in a sentence. They include particles, noun phrases and dependent sentences. A very common type is a preposition plus a noun phrase.

#### Examples:

ké Nkáníká ìtíòn	'at 5 o'clock'
ké NsíNsí	'forever'
ìní kèèt	'at once'
Npón	'tomorrow, yesterday'
tónó Vbém	'since last year'
Vkán ìbà	'twice'
Vpá	'ever'
páànàm	'never'
Vbà	'(not) again, (not) any more'

### Manner Adverbials

#### Examples:

Nté Vdò	'like that'
Ntè ènò	'as a gift'
Ntè Nmóón	'like water'
ìpòòn	'alone'
kèètèkèèt	'1 by 1'
VpánVpán	'especially'
úsúkúsúk	'slowly'
NdípéNdípé	'secretly'

## Extent Adverbials

## Examples:

étiétí	'very much'
Ndòmò	'not even'
pót	'only'
úkéèt	'completely'
Nkó	'also'
ètòk Vyâk	'nearly'

## Purpose Adverbials

Purpose is indicated generally by a dependent sentence introduced by má, ná, nò or Nbààk [see §.4. ]. má, ná, nò mean 'so that, in order that' and are used with affirmative verb constructions. Nbààk means 'lest, for fear that' and is used with a negative verb construction. Nbààk (derived from the noun Nbààk 'fear') may be used before a noun phrase meaning 'for fear of' [for examples, see purposives under complex sentences §.4. ].

## Cause Adverbials

Cause adverbials include prepositional phrases and dependent sentences. The core of the cause prepositional phrase is the noun Nták 'reason' which is preceded by the preposition ké and may be expanded by modifiers. The modifiers of ké Nták may be substantives only, or may include a dependent sentence.

Examples:

ké Nták Vñé

'Because of him'

Other dependent sentences can serve this function. They are introduced by kóòò, síà, kóòò síà, sáàdòkò.

There is one adverbial which functions as an instrumental modifier of the predicate. It is the particle Vmò. Its meaning is 'with.' It is generally optional.

Examples:

dát ìpón kààmá Vfété Vmò

'Take a spoon and stir the soup with it.'

ídókó ésé édat Vkúk úfòk íbòk Vmò?

'Don't you have to have money to go to the hospital?' (lit. is it not (that) they usually take money they go hispital with)

#### 7.11 Placement of Predicate Adverbials

Predicate adverbials may occur at any point in the sentence. They may occur before or after any verb phrase and even before the subject. They may not occur within a noun phrase or verb phrase. The commonest place for a predicate adverbial is after the last verb phrase. Predicate adverbials may modify the entire

predicate or one or more verb phrases in it. The placement of the adverbial and the context determines which verb phrase or phrases it is modifying. There may be several adverbials each modifying a particular verb phrase or all modifying the entire predicate. Typically, predicate adverbials do not modify individual verb phrases that are specifiers, but only general verb phrases.

## 7.2 Concord

There are two kinds of concord in the sentence. One is the person and number concord which exists between the subject and the verb. The subject, whether present or deleted determines the subject prefix on the verb and may determine the choice of a singular-paucal or plural-intensive verb stem. Of the same type is the verb complement, which if direct and personal may determine the object prefix on the verb and in certain verb classes may determine the choice of stem as well.

The other type of concord is that which exists among all verbs in a sentence. Thus, all verbs will agree for the following features: neutral or contrastive, tense/mode/aspect, and, in general, affirmative-negative. All these verbs will agree for person and number as well,

Since a given sentence has only one subject and since each verb may take its own complement, there is not object concord among all verbs.

When the subject is a compound noun phrase, the subject prefix is always plural. When it involves two or more pronouns, the concord is as follows:

Subject	Subject Prefix
1. If one of the pronouns is àmi or Nn̄in	ì
2. If one of the pronouns is àfò or Ndùfò	è
3. otherwise	é

Example:

àmi Nmè àfò	ì
Ndùfò Nmè VNmô	è



### 7.3 Minor Sentences

Minor sentences have a variety of structures. They have in common the absence of a verb. They include calls, responses, interjections and special interrogatives. Minor sentences may have distinctive intonational features.

Calls generally involve the name of a person plus the vocative e.

Examples:

òkône' [okono]

Ñfóne' [mfɔnɔ]

Responses include the words for yes and no which are answers to yes and no questions, óó which is a polite response when your name has been called, when someone has said thank you, wished you well, greeted you and commiserated with you, and so on.

## Examples:

íí	'yes'
éé	'yes'
ám	'yes'
ìyó	'no'
ìyóó	'no'
ímám	'no'
óó	'polite response'

Interjections include sounds of surprise, anger, joy and so on, as well as particular words used to express condolence, pardon, and so on.

## Examples:

pê	'sorry, excuse me'
ììí	'my sympathies, etc.'

## Other minor sentences

## interrogative

pán íkò? [kpaníkò] 'Is it true?, Really?'

## interrogative with ê

ídém ùkà ê? [idem uka a] 'How is your mother?'

ípá úkòt Nmì ê? [ikpa ukod mmi e] 'Where are  
my shoes?'

Vkôn ê? [ʒkon o] 'Where is Okon? How is Okon?'

greetings

ídém ê? [idem e] 'How are you?'

ṼNfò ê? [ʒmfo o] 'And you?'

vocative

dà [da] 'Friend'

#### 7.4 Inverted Word Order

The normal order subject verb complement may be altered and the complement placed first for emphasis. Any kind of verb complement may be so inverted. In addition, a predicate complement may be placed contrastively at the beginning of the sentence. The contrasted complement is followed by *ké* and by a preceding contrastive verb construction. Note that a predicate complement that precedes the verb but is not followed by *ké* is not emphatic and does not signal a preceding contrastive verb construction. Inverted sentences are very common. In the two examples starred below, the inverted order is more common than normal word order.

Examples:

Ṽkíkò ké Ṽkékít 'It was an ekiko that he  
saw.' (from 'He saw an ekiko.')

\*ébót ké Ṽdó 'A goat that it is.' (from 'It's  
a goat.')

\*V̀m̀m̀i k̀e V̀d̀o 'It's mine'

V̀k̀èe k̀e V̀ỳe\_m 'Which do you want?' (from  
'You want which?')

## 7.5 Equational and Existential Sentences

Two types of simple sentences are singled out for individual discussion because the verbs may be deleted and consequently the subject, ordinarily an optional item, becomes obligatory. These are the equational and existential sentences.

The equational sentence involves the verb *dó* 'be.' *dó* takes an obligatory complement. This complement may be any noun phrase. The form this noun phrase complement may have is an adjective. When the verb *dó* occurs the subject is optional as in other sentences.

Examples:

*Vkôn Vdò Vwó'ìbìbìò* 'Okon is an Ibibio.'

*Vdò Vwó'ìbìbìò* 'He is an Ibibio.'

Unlike other simple sentence types, in the equational sentence *dó* may be deleted. In this case, the subject must remain.

Examples:

*Vkôn Vwó'ìbìbìò* 'Okon is an Ibibio.'

*èkà ìnó* 'His/your mother is a thief.'

Examples with adjective complement:

*Vkò Vdò Vwàwà* 'The pot is green.'

*Vdò Vwàwà* 'It's green.'

*Vkò Vwàwà* 'The pot is green.'

The existential sentence involves a small set of verbs referring to existing or being in a place: bá 'be, exist,' tié 'be, exist, be in relationship to, dwell, stay,' dúṅ 'live,' and perhaps a few others. This class of verbs takes a locative complement which when it is a noun phrase must be preceded by the preposition ké. There is an existential particle Nmò which often occurs with verbs of this class so that the existential sentence structure may be

	1	2	3	4
Sentence —	subject	verb	Nmò	locative complement

The slots in the sentence are numbered for ease in indicating possible deletions. All slots may be filled. If 1 is filled then the predicate may consist of 2, 3, 4; 2, 4 or 3, 4, or 4 alone. If 1 is not filled then the possibility of 4 alone does not exist.

Examples:

1	2	3	4	
	Udó	Vbâ	Nmò	ké úfôk .

1	2	4	
	Udó	Vbâ	ké úfôk .

1 3 4  
 `Udò Nmò ké úfòk

1 4  
 `Udò ké úfòk

2 3 4  
 `Vbâ Nmò ké úfòk

3 4  
 `Nmò ké úfòk

2 4  
 `Vbâ ké úfòk

All these sentences mean 'Udò (or he) is in the house.' [Continued next page]

#### Apposition versus Equational Sentence

Although different in function and meaning, appositions are structurally similar to equational sentences where the verb *dó* has been deleted.

Example:

`Ndùfò `Nbakátá [ndufo mbakara]

1) 'You Europeans, ...'

2) 'You are Europeans.'

Both may occur with a slight pause between the two noun phrases. The apposition is written with a comma between them.

The verb bá 'be, exist' does not take a direct complement. It is generally followed by a locative complement, often a preposition plus a noun phrase. It may have no complement at all. The subject of bá however may occur after the verb instead of before it. The locative complement may be placed immediately before the verb. There is a slight difference in meaning.

Examples:

Ndídíá íbá·ké kéúduà Vmì [ndidia iba a a  
kuudua ʒmi] 'There's no food at this market.'

ùduà Vmì íbá·ké Ndídíá [udua ʒmi ibaa a  
ndidia] 'This market doesn't have food.'

(i.e., no food is sold here, only palm-wine)

Sometimes the meaning may be the same. In the following examples however, different verb constructions are used.

Examples:

Vwàwà Vwàwà Vbá [awawa awawa aba]

Vmébá Vwàwà Vwàwà [aaba awawa awawa]

'Green is available.'

The first sentence answers the question what color is available; the second is a simple statement.



## Complex Sentences:

### Introduction

Complex sentences are formed by combining two or more simple sentences. The relationships among the simple sentences that make up a complex sentence may be coordinate or dependent. Coordinate means that two or more simple sentences occur joined by a connective, neither sentence being dependent on the other. Dependent means that one sentence qualifies another.

Dependent sentences fall into types according to two sets of criteria: first, by what means they are marked as dependent, second, by what function they fulfill. The types crosscut each other. There are three kinds of markings, and three kinds of functions.

The markers of dependency are: 1) relative particles and/or relative suffix, 2) dependent tone patterns, 3) subordinating preverbs, particles, and noun phrases, 4) simple juxtaposition. A dependent sentence is marked in at least one of these ways. It may be marked in more than one way.

The functions of dependent sentences are: A) modifier in a noun phrase, B) a quotation direct or indirect, C) to fill an adverbial slot. This last function is divided into time, location, manner, cause,

purpose and condition functions. A) may formally be marked by 1 and/or 3, B) by 3 or 4, C) by 2 and/or 3.

Dependent sentences will be discussed first by form, then the most common types of functions will be treated, namely, purposives, condition-result, and relational time sentences illustrating function C; and quotative sentences illustrating B. Function A is treated under relative sentences [see 8.1].

## 8.1 Relative Sentences

A relative sentence modifies a noun phrase. Where a noun phrase has other modifiers as well, the relative sentence occupies the last position [see 3.6]. The noun phrase in question may occupy any slot in the sentence that a noun phrase ordinarily occupies, namely, subject, verb complement or predicate adverbial.

The underlying structure of a relative sentence is a verb in a preceding or following contrastive construction with a relative suffix *·ké*. The relative sentence is further marked by a relative particle which stands at the beginning of the relative sentence. Although every relative sentence may be said to have these distinguishing features in its underlying structure, the relative particle and/or the relative suffix may be dropped under certain conditions.

The antecedent of a relative sentence is the head of the noun phrase which the relative sentence modifies. Sometimes the antecedent of a relative sentence is clearly identifiable. But sometimes the noun phrase head has been dropped and/or a contraction has taken place so that there is a considerable difference between the underlying structure and what is actually spoken. Such deletions and contractions occur only

in the cases where the noun phrase functions as a predicate adverbial.

The relative particles and the relative suffix

The relative particle may be one of the following:

- 1     V̀kè
- 2     V̀mè
- 3     V̂     (a contraction of 2 or 3)
- 4     sé
- 5     Ǹtè.

If the antecedent of the relative clause refers to a living being or to an object, 1 through 4 may be used. If it refers to a place, any of them may be used though sé is uncommon in that context. V̀kè and V̀mè appear to be dialectal variants; the latter is rarely used. These particles have a slightly different status from the others. Although a distinction between restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses is generally not made, V̀kè (and probably V̀mè - the data are scanty on this form) does not occur in a clearly non-restrictive context. Furthermore, speakers of dialects B and C (this is unconfirmed for dialect A) use V̀kè to indicate an indefinite relative. Some speakers of these dialects contrast this indefinite relative with a definite form, the demonstrative V̀m̀i,

which occurs in the place of a relative particle. I never recorded this use of  $\acute{V}m\grave{i}$  in Itak and suspect that its use in this context is an Efik borrowing.

With these restrictions in mind, one can state that of the relative particles  $\acute{V}$  is by far the most common regardless of antecedent, that  $\acute{s}\acute{e}$  is much used when the antecedent is a living being or object, and that  $N\grave{t}\acute{e}$  is much used when the antecedent is a place.

The relative suffix  $\cdot k\acute{e}$  may cooccur with any of the relative particles. However, this maximum marking of the relative clause with relative particle as the first element and relative suffix on the verb is less common than various abbreviations of it. If particles 1, 2 or 4 stand at the beginning of the clause  $\cdot k\acute{e}$  is generally dropped. If 5 stands at the beginning  $\cdot k\acute{e}$  is dropped somewhat more than half the time. If  $\acute{V}$  occurs, then  $\cdot k\acute{e}$  is obligatory. Finally, there are cases where both may be dropped [the latter cases are discussed below).

Examples of relative particles:

restrictive/non-restrictive

bén  $\acute{V}b\acute{e}\acute{e}t$   $\acute{V}k\acute{e}$   $\acute{V}b\acute{e}t\acute{e}$   $k\acute{e}$   $N\grave{d}\grave{i}b\grave{e}n\grave{e}$  [ben  $\acute{z}b\acute{e}e$   
 $\acute{z}k\acute{e}$   $\acute{z}b\acute{e}r\acute{e}$  ke ndibene] 'Take the ladder which  
 is leaning against the wall.' (There are

at least two ladders present and one or more leaning against the wall, while some other ladder or ladders is in another position)

bén Vbéét VVbétè·ké ké Ndìbènè [ben ʒbeet ʒʒbereke ke ndibene] 'Take the ladder which is leaning against the wall.' (This could be any ladder, or the situation could be as in the above example.)

definite/indefinite

ídún Vmì Vñé Vdún·ké Vmeñóón [idun ʒmi ʒñe ʒdunʒo ʒʒñooʒ] 'The town where he lives is far.'

ídún Vkè Vñé Vdún Vnà Vniè ùwák'úfàn[idun ʒke ʒñe ʒdun ana ʒnie uwa ufan] 'Wherever he lives he must have many friends.' (lit. whatever town)

Other examples:

Vwó Vkè Vkuétè Vdì Vdíbô Vkúk [ʒwo ʒke ʒkuere ʒdi ʒdibo ʒkuk]

Vwó Vmè Vkuétè Vdì Vdíbô Vkúk [ʒwo ʒme ʒkuere ʒdi ʒdibo ʒkuk]

Vwó VVkuétè·ké Vdì Vdíbô Vkúk [ʒwo ʒʒkuereke ʒdi ʒdibo ʒkuk]

ʋwó sé íkúétè ʋdí ʋdíbô ʋkúk [ʒwo siikuere  
 ʒdi ʒdibo ʒkuk].

All 4 sentences mean 'Anyone who finishes  
 should come (and) receive (his) money.'

ìtìé Ntè ʋñé ʋñâm ádân ʋmeñóŋ  
 ʋñâm·ké.

[itíe nte ʒñe añam adan ʒñóŋ] 'The  
 añamma

place where he sells oil is far.'

There are a number of particles, nouns, and phrases which function as subordinators and are followed by relative sentences. The subordinator plus the relative sentences which follow it is a verb modifier referring to time, manner, cause, and so on. Some of these subordinators are clearly noun phrases and the antecedent-relative sentence relationship is obvious.

Example:

kùà ìdáká ʋʋkúó·ké... [kua ida a ʒʒkua o]  
 'Whenever he sings...' (lit. every time  
 that he sings)

However, others which function like the noun phrase in the example above contain no overt noun phrase. These subordinators may be particles or even verb phrases and there may be no relative particle present.

Compare:

ké ìní V̀Nkôp·ké Npó... [kiini ʒŋkopo mkpo]

dáŋá Nkop·ké Npó... [daŋa ŋkopo mkpo]

'At the time when I heard the cry...'

The meanings are identical.

When the relative particle  $\hat{V}$  which requires the ·ké suffix does not occur, the relative suffix itself may be dropped.

Examples:

Ndìòŋó·ké dáŋá V̀nám Npó V̀mì úsópúsóp Ntè V̀dò

[ndìòŋoke daŋa anam mkpɔɔmi usɔbusɔp ntoro]

'I don't know how you did this thing (so)

fast like that.'

Because of the parallels in the use of the particles and phrases with clear-cut noun phrases, because in all cases the relative suffix may optionally occur on the verb in the relative sentence, and because the relative particle can occur after some of the subordinators, the most logical conclusion is to assume that the underlying structure of these sentences is identical to the clear-cut relative sentence with noun phrase antecedent discussed above. One may assume that a noun phrase and the relative particle which refers back to it has been dropped or that in some



a contraction of noun to particle has been made with the loss of the relative particle that followed it. There are some obvious examples of this latter instance. For example Vdáná, a noun meaning 'time' — dáná, a particle. Both occur as subordinators with the meaning 'when.'

A clear cut case of the former is the use of the verb phrase Nséídó with a relative clause following. Nséídó 'what is it?' Nséídó V́sák·ké [nsido asaka] 'Why do you laugh?' is identical to Nséídó Ntákv́V́sák·ké 'What is the reason you laugh?' and may be considered a short form of it.

When a relative particle occurs after a subordinator, it is nearly always V́ and ·ké obligatorily appears suffixed to the verb.

When no relative particle occurs the subordinator determines whether or not ·ké is present. After some subordinators ·ké tends to occur, after some it always occurs, and after others it generally does not occur. It is not possible to totally predict which will be the case from the meaning or form of the subordinator involved. Statements must be made for each semantic group and in some cases individual subordinators.

The discussion of relative sentences so far has been confined to cases where the noun phrase functions as subject or verb complement. In these cases, the antecedent is always clear and a relative particle and/or the relative suffix is always present. When the noun phrase modified by the relative sentence functions as a predicate adverbial, these two features are not always in evidence. Several conditions may exist. The relative particle may be dropped; the relative suffix may be dropped, or both. The item that precedes the relative sentence may not appear to be a noun phrase. It may look like a particle, or it may be a complete sentence containing a subject and a verb phrase. However, by examining and comparing the various kinds of dependent sentences that function as adverbial predicate modifiers, it seems the most plausible explanation of the facts to interpret them all as relative sentences regardless of the shape of their antecedent or the presence or absence of relative markers. Indeed in enough cases, variants occur with or without relative markers, or with or without an unambiguous noun antecedent to make this interpretation of the data the only compelling one.

## Use of Preceding-Following Contrastives in Relative Sentences

The preceding-following contrastive distinction appears to be neutralized in most environments in the relative clause. Even where the distinction is possible, there may be considerable free variation in the use of the different forms. In addition, there is some dialectal variation in the tone patterns that verbs have in the relative clause, so that the combination of free variation and dialect mixture obscures the clarity of the contrasts involved.

In general the preceding contrastive form is used. (Compare the neutralization of preceding-following contrastives in favor of the preceding form in questions involving interrogative words.)

### Verb Sequences in Relative Sentences

Verb sequences of all types may occur in relative sentences. The same rules apply as in independent sentences.

Where the relative suffix occurs, it is suffixed to the first verb of the sequence. Sequentials than have their normal forms.

### Restrictive versus Non-restrictive Relative Sentence

A distinction between restrictive and non-restrictive relative sentences may be made through the

presence or absence of the relative suffix. A restrictive relative sentence may have any of the possible variations in construction discussed in 6.1 . A non-restrictive relative sentence may not occur with either a relative or a relative suffix. Its position and the context of the sentence mark it as a relative sentence.

Example:

ídó·ké V́yín\_ékàǸm̀ì V̀V̀nám·ké útóm ké ùyó  
 Ǹbò V̀ñé V̀ V̀nám·ké ké V̀bá [ido o 3yin ekammi  
 aanamma utom kuuyo mbo 3ñe aanamma keaba]

'It is not my brother who works at Uyo,  
 it's the one (I mean him) who works at  
 Aba.'

The predicate adverbials which are modified by relative sentences may be conveniently discussed by function - namely time, manner, and cause. Location was discussed under subject, verb complement antecedents above. Location predicate adverbials do exist but take the same structures as do location relative sentence verb complements.

It should be pointed out that some of the predicate adverbials which are modified by relative sentences, occur alone or with other types of modifiers, while others do not occur except with relative sentences.

It is necessary to make a special statement for each time, manner, and cause adverbial (a few can be grouped) as to whether they drop the relative particle and/or relative suffix.

#### Time

The particles, nouns, and phrases referring to time operate similarly. The presence of *·ké* is optional. It tends to be used more often than not. The noun *ìnì* 'time' and the prepositional phrase *ké ìnì* 'at the time' generally occur with a relative particle following. The remainder do not generally occur with a relative particle even if they are nouns. Within the limits of the meanings given below, the items listed

are mutually substitutable. The list is probably incomplete as there is a certain degree of productivity in the formation of phrases having to do with time.

dáǵá.	particles	
náǵá.		
ǵdáǵá		'when'
ìdáká.	nouns	'time'
ìní		
kéìní	prepositional phrase	'at the time'
kùà ǵdáǵá		
kùà ìdáká.	adjective/noun	'whenever'

## Manner

The particles which refer to concepts of manner are listed below. Although the use of *·ké* on the relative verb is optional after this group, it is generally used. A relative particle does not occur after any of these particles.

dáná

ʋdáná (Ntè) 'how, as, the way that, so that'

náná

Ntè 'how, as, the way that, as to, according to' (in this last sense Ntè requires *·ké* in the relative clause)

## Example:

Nwót dáná Ntè étúàk·ké [ɲwót dɔnɔ nte etuak] étúàk úkòt etuaka ukòt]

'Show me how they tap palm-wine.'

Any of the above particles may be used instead of *dáná Ntè*.

## Examples:

Ntè àfò ʋtán·ké [nte afo atanɲa]

'According to what they say...'

íkésòp·ké ídí Ntè Vkêm·ké [íkisòpò idi  
nte ʒkemme]

'He didn't come quickly enough.' (lit. he  
didn't quickly come as it is enough)

Vpédo VmáVdí VdíNkít Ntè àfò Vkétan·ké...  
[ʒkpédo amaʒdi ʒdinkít nte afo ʒketanŋa]

'If you had come to see me as you said...'

NmáVnam útóm Ntè àfò ké Ndon·ké [mmaanam utam  
nte afo ke ndonŋo]

'I did the work as/the way that/according  
to how you asked me to.'

Nmébiót Vñé Vkan Ntè Vñé Vbíót·ké Vñé [mmebiot  
ʒñe akan nte ʒñe ʒbiote ʒñe]

'I resemble her more than she resembles her'

### Cause

The particles *síà*, *kódò* (Efik) and the phrases *kódò síà*, *sáàdòkò* - *sáàdókó* mean 'because.' They are used interchangeably and are followed by relative clauses which optionally take the relative suffix. They generally are not followed by a relative particle.

The noun *Nták* 'reason' and the noun phrase *ké Nták* 'because', literally 'for the reason' function similarly. *Nták* generally occurs with a relative particle following, and *ké Nták* occasionally does. *·ké* is optional



with both of these (excepting where the relative particle  $\hat{V}$  occurs - then it is obligatory).

Examples:

•kéùdí kòdò ídém Vyaúmèṁ 'Don't come because  
you will be tired.' (lit. don't come  
because body will be you weak)

Ṽdò ídó•ké Nták V Nnám•ké Vmì 'That is not why  
I'm doing this.'

There is a small number of verb phrases referring to cause which function as do the particles and particle phrases discussed above. It is clear however that the noun Nták 'reason' has been dropped; that noun can always be added without a change in meaning.

These verb phrases are used in forming interrogatives which may be translated 'why.' They are formed from the verbs dó 'be' and nám 'do' and constitute independent interrogative sentences when they stand alone.

Examples:

Nsé ídó [nsido] 'What is it?' 'What's the matter?' 'Why?'

Nsé ínám [nsinam] This has the same meanings as the above but may often be used as a reproach.

These phrases occur in the past and future contrastive constructions as well as in the present given above.

The phrases may be directly followed by a relative sentence or the noun nták 'reason' and/or the particle Nnò, nò may immediately follow the phrase, the relative sentence coming after these other elements. The relative sentence that follows may or may not begin with a

relative particle. In general after Nták (Nnó) a relative particle is present and elsewhere it is not. Nearly always it has the form V̂ and in such a case the relative suffix •ké is present on the verb. When there is no relative particle present •ké is somewhat more often absent than present.

Examples:

Nsé ídó Nták V̂àfò	{	V̂nám•ké	[nsido ntak aafo
		V̂nám	
anamma]			
{ anam]		'Why do you do it?'	
Nsé ínám	{	V̂sák	[nsinam { asak]
		V̂sák•ké	
			'Why are
			you laughing?'
Nsí kídó	{	ánám•ké	[nsido { anamma]
		ánám	
			'Why did he do it?'

The verb in a relative sentence may be deleted leaving the relative particle  $\acute{V}k\grave{e}$ ,  $\acute{V}m\grave{e}$  or the contracted form  $\acute{V}$  plus the noun phrase.

Example:

$\acute{u}k\hat{o}t \acute{V}m\acute{e}n\grave{e}m \acute{V}k\grave{a}n \acute{V}k\grave{e} Np\acute{o}n$  [ukod. ʒʒnem akan  
ʒke mkpɔŋ] 'The palm-wine is sweeter than  
that of yesterday.'

The underlying form of the relative sentence is  $*\acute{V}k\grave{e} \acute{V}k\acute{e}n\grave{e}m \cdot k\acute{e} Np\acute{o}n$  'than it was sweet yesterday.' This type of construction with loss of the verb probably underlies the following possessive expressions

$\acute{V}d\acute{o} \acute{V} N\grave{m}i$  [ʒdo ʒmmi] 'It's mine'

more commonly inverted.

$\acute{V} N\grave{m}i k\acute{e}\acute{V}d\acute{o}$  [ʒmmi kʒdo] 'It's mine.'

( $\acute{V}k\grave{e}$  is less common than  $\acute{V}$  here, but is also used.  $\acute{V}m\grave{e}$  is rare.)

## 8.2 Dependent Tone Patterns

Falling tone on the verb may be a marker of a dependent sentence. Three types of dependent sentence are marked in this way: 1) relational time sentences, 2) conditional sentences with the modal *pe*, 3) purposive sentences with a hortative verb.

It seems likely that conditional and relational time verb constructions are built up on a hortative base [see 4.3]. Although the hortative may occur in an independent sentence it could be considered to be dependent by nature and that an independent sentence is implied.

### Examples:

Vyém Nnâm? [ʒyem nnam] 'Do you want me to do it?'  
 Nnâm [nnam] 'Should I do it?'

The second sentence might be considered a shortened form of the first. If that is the case, then falling tone is associated only with dependent sentences.

Dependent sentences of type 1 may or may not have a dependency marker in addition to falling tone.

### Example:

Nkéñ'ò ñ ìṅṅ Ndi Ndiá Npó, [ŋkeñ'ò ñ ìṅṅ  
 ndi ndia mkpó] 'After I returned from the  
 farm I ate something.'

Example with a subordinating particle:

tóŋó

tóŋó ʋkétóŋò ʋdínâm ʋmé pèèné dié? [tɔŋɔ  
ʒketɔŋɔ ʒdinam ʒʒkpeene die] 'How long  
have you been doing it?' (lit. since  
you have begun to do it is how long)

Dependent sentences of type 2 take no other  
dependency marker.

Example:

ʋpétuà úmíá [ʒkpetua umia] 'If you cry  
I'll beat you.'

Dependent sentences of type 3 are additionally  
marked by a purposive particle nò ~ Nnò.

Example:

dép Nnò ʋwâk [deb nnɔ awak] 'Buy a lot!'  
(lit. buy so that it is a lot)

### 8.3 Subordinating Preverbs, Particles and Noun Phrases má.

The preverb má marks a variety of dependent sentences. It may occur in a relative sentence. In that case it varies freely with a contrastive verb construction with the relative suffix. A construction marked by má may not take the relative suffix. It is however preceded by a relative particle.

Example:

ídún V Nduṅ·ké Vméñ'óṅ [idun ʒndunṅə ʒʒñ'óṅ]  
 ídún V NmáVduṅ Vméñ'óṅ [idun ʒmmaʒduṅ ʒʒñ'óṅ]

'The town where I live is far away.'

má may mark a conditional sentence which has a result in the future. In this context its construction may vary freely with the potential construction although it can convey an idea of greater probability than can the potential.

The most frequent function of má is to relate the time of the action of the independent sentence to that of the dependent sentence. It may indicate that the action of the dependent sentence is simultaneous with or previous to that of the independent sentence.

Examples:

má in a conditional sentence:

Ṽbiòtó Ṽtè ké ìmáṼkít ùnén ìyàísùk ìkàá ísó.

[ʒbioro ʒte ke imaʒkit unen iyaisug ikaaiso]

'He decided that if he succeeded he would continue.' (lit. he decided that if he sees success (straightness) he will still go forward)

Ṽmá Ṽdép ìwá ṼyáṼpèṼkúk Nnò Ṽwâk [mma ʒdeb

iwa nyaʒkpeʒkuk no awak] 'If I buy

cassava, I will spend a lot of money.'

má in a sentence whose time is simultaneous to that of independent sentence. This construction can also be a kind of habitual conditional sentence indicating that a certain result always occurs.

Ṽmá Ṽdép ìwá Ṽpè Ṽkúk Nnò Ṽwâk [mma ʒdep iwa

mkpe ʒkuk nno awak] 'Whenever I buy

cassava I spent a lot of money.'

má indicating time previous to time of independent sentence

Ṽkédiwúò ké ṼmáṼkémà útóm. [ʒkediwuo ke

mmaʒkema utom] 'He arrived after I finished work.'

má indicating time after time of independent sentence:



ísúá Vdò Vñé Vmàn V́yín V` Vdiídó Vdídè̀m  
 ké VnáVpón [isua ʒdo ʒñe aman ʒyin  
 ʒʒdiido ʒdidem ke amaʒkpon] 'That year  
 she bore a child who would be chief when  
 he grew up.' (lit. year that she bore child  
 who will be chief when he is big)

má as simple dependent marker:

pémé Vmá Vfò Vníímé íkàṅ kéísó Vfò Vkáá  
 [kpeme ama afo níime íkaṅ kiso afo kaa]  
 'Take care (that) you extinguish the  
 fire before you go.'  
 ésít V́Nnèm sé VmáVdí [esir ʒnnem se amaʒdi]  
 'I'm happy that you have come.'

tùtù  
 Nkò } 'until'  
 kéísó }  
 Ǹbèm̀ísó 'before'  
 Ǹdíón ~ Ǹdíén

These two groups of subordinators introduce  
 dependent sentences which may be marked in two ways.

Members of either group may be followed by a verb  
 in an ordinary dependent construction such as relational  
 time, a construction with the preverb má, or a verb in  
 a sequential form. This latter case of a sequential

form when no first verb precedes seems to be confined to use after these few subordinators.

Examples:

bét tùtù àmì N'ámá N'kúétè [bet tutu ami mma  
 ŋkuere] 'Wait until I finish.'

bét tùtù àmì N'kúétè [bet tutu ami ŋkuere]  
 'Wait until I finish.'

#### 8.4 Purposive Sentences

Dependent sentences of purpose fill predicate adverbial functions. They are of two kinds, those which have a hortative verb construction and those which do not. Both kinds are introduced by a subordinator particle. The first kind by *nò* or *Nbààk*, the second by *má* or *ná*. *nò*, *má* and *ná* occur before affirmative verb constructions, *Nbààk* before negative. *nò*, *má*, and *ná* constructions are functionally and notionally <sup>really</sup> identical. They may be translated as 'so that, in order that.' *Nbààk* may be translated as 'lest, for fear that, so that not.'

##### Examples:

*núk má Vwùó* 'Push so that it comes out.'

*tèm Vfété Nnò Ndià* 'Cook soup so I can eat.'

*tèm Vfété má Ndià* 'Cook soup so I can eat.'

The construction with *Nnò* suggests more immediacy than that with *má*.

*Nñááǵá Nbààk Ndi dúò* 'Help me so I don't fall.'

## 8.5 Condition-Result Sentences

In condition-result sentences, the dependent sentence, the condition, modifies the independent sentence, the result, as a whole.

The dependent sentence may contain any of the following verb constructions: potential, past potential, or a construction containing one of the dependent preverbs. The independent sentences may be neutral or contrastive and may contain a variety of verb constructions. There are of course certain cooccurrence restrictions.

If the dependent sentence contains a potential construction, the verb in the independent sentence may be future or hypothetical. If the dependent sentence contains a past-potential construction, the verb in the independent sentence may be hypothetical or past hypothetical.

When the dependent sentence contains the preverb *má* in a conditional sense, the independent sentence may contain a present, future or hypothetical verb construction.

Cooccurrence of verb constructions in condition-result sentences:

Condition		Result
Potential	Ńpénám	Vya'Vyat' ésít Vpa'Vyat' ésít
	'If I do it	he will be angry.' he would be angry.'
Past	Ńpékenám	Vpa'Vyat' ésít Vpa'Vkéyat' ésít
Potential		
	'If I did it	he would be angry.' he would have been angry.'

Only neutral constructions are given in the result column, but the corresponding contrastive constructions may also occur:

	ŃmáVnám	Vya'Vyat' ésít Vpa'Vyat' ésít Vyat' ésít
	'If I do it	he will be angry.' he would be angry.' he is angry.'

There is also a hypothetical if clause which uses a preceding or following contrastive hypothetical construction and which occurs with a hypothetical result.

Example:

Ńpéúdò fièn Ńpédèp Ńkátí 'If I were you,  
I would buy gari.'

A conditional sentence is alternatively formed by use of a contrastive hypothetical construction impersonal in nature with the verb *dó* 'be' followed by another verb which may be in any construction. Thus, *Npén'am* 'If I do it' is alternatively expressed *Vpédò Nnam* 'if I do it,' literally 'if it is (that) I do it.' This construction itself constitutes a complex sentence of another type discussed below [see §.7.]. These impersonal constructions with *dó* may also be in the past, thus, *Npékenam* 'if I did it' is alternatively expressed *Vpékédò Nkénam* 'if I did it,' literally 'if it was that I did it.'

Finally, a conditional sentence may be composed of the particle *ké* followed by a contrastive construction with the relative suffix *·ké* on the verb. This type is uncommon. For example, *Vmekémé ikáà ké Vmá-ké* 'You may go if you want to.'

Dependent sentences containing a potential construction and those containing a construction with the preverb *má* may in some cases be used interchangeably. Both may be translated as 'if' conditions, and take a result which is future or hypothetical. *má* however may also be translated as a 'when' condition and may take a present result as well as future or hypothetical. In this latter case, *má* conveys greater certainty or probability than *pé*.

## 8.6. Relational Time Sentences

Relational time sentences relate the time an event occurs in the dependent sentence to the time of an event in the independent sentence. That is, this type of dependent clause qualifies a main clause by placing its time of occurrence as before, after, or simultaneous with the time of occurrence of some other event.

The contrastive relational past refers to a time simultaneous with that of the main clause.

Example:

̀Nkésà̀nà ké úsún ùfàn Ǹm̀i V̀ẁùó ké úfòk V̀m̀ò

[̀nkesana kusun ufan mmi ʒwuo kufog ʒmo]

'As I was walking along the road, my friend came out of this house.'

The next two examples show a similar relation of the two sentences. Although there are not two actions involved, the time in which the event of the independent sentence occurs is simultaneous to that of the event of the dependent sentence, even though the events may not be of the same duration. This is also true of the example given above. In all cases, the verb of the dependent sentence has an imperfective aspect.

Examples:

tónó Nkémánà Nkít·ké épê [tónó nkemana nkite  
ekpe] 'Since I was born I haven't seen a  
leopard.'

Vmépèèné Vbòkó Nkédûŋ mí [ʒʒkpeene ʒbogo  
nkeduŋ mi] 'It's a very long time 1) since  
I've lived here, 2) that I've lived here.'

This construction may be combined with the preverb  
má to place the action of the dependent sentence before  
that of the independent sentence.

Example:

Nmá Nkétêm íkót Nmà Ndùòk Vdùdù [mma nketem  
ikor mma nduog ʒdudu] 'After I cleared  
the bush, I rested.' (lit. when I cleared  
the bush I finished, I spilled (?) strength)

Another form of relational time sentence similar  
in structure to the above places the action of the  
dependent sentence before that of the independent  
sentence. It is formed on a di motional stem.

Examples:

àmì Ndiwúò Ndiá Npó [ami ndiwuo ndia mkpó]  
'When I arrived, I ate.'

àmì Ndiñááà Vñé Nmà Nñòŋ [ami ndiñaana ʒñe  
mma nñòŋ] 'When I finished helping him, I  
left.' (lit. I when I helped him I finished  
I left)



Apparently this kind of construction cannot be formed with a ke motional stem. The verb stem in this type of construction and in the preceding construction has a falling tone. Note however that the ké is a past construction marker and that the fall is accompanied by a drop whereas in the motional stem type there is no drop.

A relational time construction which places the action of the independent sentence before or simultaneous with that of the dependent sentence is formed with the defective verb tè 'before. tè is inflected for person. Its tone pattern is inherent tone on the prefix, low on the verb. tè functions as a preverb. It only occurs with another verb following. This verb has the prefix set B. The tone on the verb is the falling tone characteristic of relational time verb constructions.

Examples:

Vtè ìpón mí nèkké kété ·kéùfíté Npó [ʒti  
 kpɔŋ mi neke kere kuufire mkpɔ] 'Before you  
 leave here, be sure not to forget anything.'  
 Ǹb̀ò̀k, sín Ǹẁè̀t V̀m̀ì Ǹǹò V̀t̀è̀ìf̀ù̀t̀ò ké Postal  
 Agency [mbòk, sin ŋwed ʒmi nno ʒtifuro ke  
 Postal Agency] 'Please post this letter for  
 me as you pass the Postal Agency.'

kísó or Ǹb̀em̀isó 'before' may optionally precede above constructions of the first type with no change of meaning.

## 8.7 Quotative Sentences

Another type of complex sentence is that which contains a quote, direct or indirect. The quoted sentence is the dependent one. It is in fact a type of direct complement to the verb of the independent sentence. This verb generally involves a sensory or experiential notion. An indirect quote involves a sequential verb and/or a particle which introduces the dependent sentence. A direct quote directly juxtaposes the verb of the independent sentence and the quote. The particles generally used are *ké* 'that' or *mê* 'whether.' The sequential verbs are *bó* 'say' and/or *tè* 'say, mean, intend.' It is common for both verbs and the particle *ké* to occur.

Example:

*Íma Vketé Nbo Ntè ké...* [mma ʒkere mbo nte  
ke...] 'I thought that....'

This may be followed by virtually any sentence simple or complex.

Other common types include:

*Ísé·ké Nté...* [nseege nte...] 'I doubt that....'  
*Índiòṅó·ké mê...* [ndionoke me...] 'I don't know  
whether....'

*Ítíè Nté...* [ʒtie nte...] 'It appears that....'

In indirect quotes involving a report of a person's speech a special independent pronoun ìmò ~ èmò, plural Nmèìmò ~ Nmèèèmò, and person marker ì are used when the speaker and the referent in the indirect speech are the same. This applies to 2nd and 3rd persons, to disjunctive, object, and possessive functions.

Example:

Útàn Vnò Útì-kòtí-kò Útè ké ìmídìòṅó sé ìdîîñâm

'He said to praying mantis that he knew what he will do.'

In another similar type of complex sentence the independent sentence consists solely of the verb dó in a neutral or contrastive construction. The dependent sentence that follows is itself complex and any kind of complex sentence can occur.

Examples:

Úkédò sé Nné Nnám-ké Vñé Vyàt ésíÚt Vkàn sé

Nkénám 'It was what I didn't do that angered him rather than what I said.'

Úpédò dágá Nból-ké Nñîṅ Nyaúdat 'When I'm about to leave I'll fetch you.' (lit. if it is when I am about to leave I will fetch you)

## 8.8 Negative Dependent Sentences

Functionally, there are negative dependent sentences to correspond with each type of affirmative dependent sentence. However, not all of the subordinating elements discussed in the affirmative dependent sentences occur with negative ones. Formally, there are only two types of negative dependent sentences. One is a purposive predicate adverbial introduced by Ǹbà̀à̀k and containing a negative hortative construction. This corresponds to affirmative purposives introduced by má, ná and ǹ. The other type is marked by one or more subordinating preverbs, construction markers, or particles (including relative particles). There is no relative suffix in negative dependent sentences. There is no formal distinction in the negative between relative and conditional dependent sentences.

Every dependent negative verb regardless of whether it is preceded by a relative particle and/or a subordinator is marked by one or more dependent markers. These markers immediately precede the ordinary present past or future negative constructions. There are 4 dependent markers which occur with negative verbs.

1. the modal preverb pé (different from the modal construction marker pé)
2. the preverb má (which is discussed under affirmative dependent sentences)

3. the preverb/particle mē
4. the preverb dī (different from the future preverb dī).

Present constructions are generally marked by only one of these dependent markers. Past and future constructions may have more than one. Conditional sentences are generally marked by pé or má, other types by mē or dī, but there is some variation in the use of the markers.

There is a great deal of variation in the combination and use of more than one marker, less so in the present and future than in the past where more than a dozen combinations and variations occur. But the scheme suggested first is the most common. Most speakers use the simplest construction possible and combinations of two or more dependent markers are infrequent.

Examples:

1. Nmáikété·ké ídém Vya'Vnèm [mmaikereke idem ayaʒnem]
2. Nmáidíikété·ké ídém Vya'Vnèm [mmaidiikereke idem ayaʒnem]
3. NmēNkété·ké ídém Vya'Vnèm [mmenkerereke idem ayaʒnem]
4. Npēikété·ké ídém Vya'Vnèm [mpiikereke idem ayaʒnem]

'If/when I don't think about it, I feel good.'

ʼVyín ʼV̄m̄éitímmé ídí ʼVdô ʼVyínN̄mì [ʼʒyin ʒʒmiitimme  
 idi ʒdo ʒyin mmi]. 'The child who didn't come  
 back is my child.'

ké ʼVfít'ìnì ʼVñé ʼVkédííábá·ké Npó ʼVma'Vsəŋ étiéti  
 N̄dò úfôk ʼVm̄ò ʼVm̄ô [ke ʒfid ini ʒñe ʒkediibaaga  
 mkpə amaʒsəŋ etieteti ndo ufog ʒm̄o ʒm̄o] 'For  
 all the time he wasn't there, things were  
 very hard for his family.'

## 8.9 Order

The dependent sentence may precede or follow the independent sentence. The normal order varies with the type. In condition-result sentences, the dependent sentence normally precedes the independent one. If the dependent sentence is to follow the inverted sentence pattern is used, namely, that *ké* precedes the part that is out of order. No tone changes take place however since contingent constructions are neither neutral nor contrastive.

### Examples:

#### Normal Order

̀Vpéyem íkôn̄ Nyaúnò úbaák. 'If you want snuff,  
I'll give you some.'

#### Inverted Order (note that *úbaák* is not used)

́Nyaúnò íkôn̄ ké ̀Vpéyem 'I'll give you snuff  
if you want it.'

#### Normal Order

̀VmáVnié ìfét dí 'If/when you have time,  
come.'

dí ké ̀VnáVnié ìfét 'Come if/when you have  
time.'

In relational time sentences with *má* either dependent or independent sentence may precede.



The use of the *ké* when the dependent sentence follows is obligatory for *má* sentences. In the other types of relational time sentences, the dependent sentence generally precedes.

In purposive sentences the order is independent sentence followed by dependent sentence.

### 8.10 Coordinate Sentences

Two independent sentences may be linked without one being subordinate to the other. They are linked by means of a coordinating particle. The only common one is Vdò ~ Vdì 'but.'

Example:

Nmébiàt ìnì Vdì Nya'Vsùk Ndí 'I am late but  
I shall still come.'

Footnotes

General Introduction

1. Greenberg, Joseph H., The Languages of Africa, Baltimore, Waverly Press, 1963
2. Forde, Daryll, and Jones, G. I., The Ibo and and Ibibio-speaking Peoples of South-eastern Nigeria, London, Oxford University Press, 1950
3. Ibid.

Phonology

1. There is one example of a structural syllable  
CV<sub>1</sub>V<sub>2</sub>V<sub>2</sub>C: Vkuéété [ʒkueere] 'compound'
2. This term was coined by William E. Welmers in an article in the journal General Linguistics entitled "Tonemics, Morphotonemics and Tonal Morphemes," Vol. IV, 1959, p. 1-9
3. I am grateful for this insight to Professor William E. Welmers
4. Peter Ladefoged in A Phonetic Study of West African Languages, Cambridge University Press, 1964, p. 9 describes the [kp] of Ibibio, Yoruba, and some other languages as follows:

"After the two closures have been made, there is a downward movement of the jaw and a backward movement of the point of contact of the

back of the tongue and the soft palate; these movements cause a lowering of the pressure in the mouth. Thus from the point of view of the release of the closure at the lips, there is an ingressive velaric airstream. But there is still a high pressure behind the velar closure owing to the outgoing air from the lungs (the pulmonic egressive airstream mechanism). Consequently when both closures are released the air flows into the mouth from two directions."

#### Derivation

1. A verbal noun in Efik

#### Syntax - Introduction

1. I am grateful to Professor William E. Welmers for the terms "neutral" and "contrastive."

## Verb Phrase

1. Class II verbs behave as though they had a basic high tone in the following contexts:

in the negative imperative, both as first verb and as sequential, the verb stem is ' f '.

Example:

·kéùwòt Vñé f ·kéùwót Vñé [kuuwod ʒñe ~  
kuuwod ʒñe] 'Don't kill him!'

The high tone form is the more common.

In the preceding contrastive past, hypothetical, and past-hypothetical in persons 2, 4, 5, the verb stem has high tone. In dialect A this is also true in the perfective.

Example:

àfò Vkéwót Vñé [afò ʒkewod ʒñe]  
'You killed him.'

2. I have recorded únà·ké Vnâm [unaaga anam] 'You mustn't do it.' which is probably an example of this, but it is also possible that the ú is an object person marker here. I have not been able to elicit the form in an unambiguous context.

3. The contingent constructions are characterized by falling tone on the verb stem. These constructions occur in dependent sentences only. A sentence containing the contingent base form, the hortative, may constitute an entire utterance, but such a sentence is not to be considered independent. Rather, it is clear that the independent sentence to which it is subordinated has been deleted. All contingent constructions state or imply that their action is contingent on some other action.

Examples:

ʋmáN'ò ké N'dákkà [amambo ke ndaka] 'He said  
I should go.'

N'nâm? [nnam] 'Should I do it?' (implies,  
do you say I should do it?)

4. Only the first and second person singular forms are given in the sequential chart. Since the tones of persons 1, 3, 6 and 2, 4, 5 are alike, there is no need to present all six forms. The choice of prefix is discussed in 4.2.