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# A grammar and lexicon of Kam (àɲw`m), a Niger-Congo language of central eastern Nigeria

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### THÈSE

présentée par

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## **A grammar and lexicon of Kam (àṅwòm), a Niger-Congo language of central eastern Nigeria**

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Nyò nyíng wòm yō, là kúmé â à nyò à, rì ná nyó yō ā túb pēh rì nyò à, rì cì nyó yō ā rì dúg nyó rì à, rì yì nyó †ámō.

*Kam people, this book is dedicated to you, your ancestors who came before you, your children who will follow you, and your wonderful country.*



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<sup>1</sup> Translation: I am happy and grateful for your hospitality. I thank you people for what you have taught me and for the wonderful things that I have experienced with you. I want to thank everybody who has helped, in any way, to help me understand the Kam language and the Kam culture/world. The traditional people, the Muslim people and the Christian people. The elders, the children and all of my friends. Everyone in Kam country, from Garin Shingaw to Makafi, from Sarkin Dawa to Mayo Kam. From Fincon to Kamajim, and all villages in between and beyond. I would like to thank the elders, who provided the care and environment for me to work in. I also want to thank everyone who made the village a pleasant place to stay. Finally, I want to thank my main helpers. If not for them, I would not have been able to write this book. I put a picture and a short piece of text about each of the language helpers at the end of this book. Spending the last four years learning about your language and your world has been a great gift to me. I would like to thank you all one final time for this great thing you have given me.

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# Abbreviations and symbols

-	Morpheme boundary
***	Censored (in case of sensitive information in examples)
.	Gloss boundary (but not morpheme boundary)
:	Gloss boundary (morphemes are not segmented)
\	Tonal morphology
~	Partial reduplication
◇	Pause
1	First person
2	Second person
3	Third person
ADJ	Adjectivizer
ADVZ	Adverbializer
APPL	Applicative
C	Consonant
CAUS	Causative
COM	Comitative
COND	Conditional
DIST	Distal
EMPH	Emphasis
EXP	Experiencer
EXPA	Experiential
FOC	Focus
FUT	Future

FV	Final Vowel
H	High tone
ID	Independent
INSTR	Instrumental
INT	Intensive/Intensity
IPFV	Imperfective
IT	Iterative
L	Low tone
LOC	Locative
LOG	Logophoric
M	Mid tone
N	Noun
NEG	Negator
NFUT	Non-future
NMLZ	Nominalizer
O	Object
PFV	Perfective
PL	Plural
POSS	Possessive
PRED	Predicative Adjective
PROX	Proximal
PRSTT	Presentative
PURP	Purposive
Q	Question marker
QUOT	Quotative
REL	Relativizer

S	Subject
SEQ	Sequential marker
SG	Singular
SIM	Similative
STAT	Stative
TEMP	Temporal
UNM	Unmotivated
V	Vowel/Verb
V <sup>HIGH</sup>	High Vowel
σ	Syllable



# I Part one: Introduction



# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 *The language, its relatives and its neighbors*

Before this project started, Kam [ISO 639-3: kdx; Glottocode: kamm1249] had been provisionally classified as an Adamawa language, Adamawa languages being a subgroup of Niger-Congo (Greenberg 1963; Boyd 1989; Güldemann 2018b). This classification was based on about 100 words collected by Charles Meek (1931c) in the early twentieth century. Over the past years, the unity of Adamawa as a language family has been seriously questioned. Some authors argue that the sub-groups previously subsumed under Adamawa – including Kam, which forms a sub-group on its own – may well be high-level isolated language groups within Niger-Congo (Güldemann 2018b). Others argue that some of such languages may in fact be part of the large Benue-Congo family within Niger-Congo (Idiatov & Van de Velde 2019). How Kam fits in these possible alternative pictures is a question for further inquiry.<sup>2</sup>

What is clear from the current picture we have of Kam is that its Niger-Congo membership is uncontroversial, insofar Niger-Congo is an established language family (cf. Güldemann 2018b). The main indications for this come from first person and second person subject pronominals, lower numerals and some wide-spread Niger-Congo reflexes that reappear in Kam (cf. Lesage 2019, under review). What is also clear is that Kam belongs to the linguistic macro-area called the Macro-Sudan belt (cf. Güldemann 2008, 2010, 2018a: 479-488, 494-507), showing typological characteristics such as labial-velar consonants, logophoric pronominals, multi-verb constructions, clause-final negation, STAMP-morphs, a plural word, three tone levels and nasal vowels.<sup>3</sup> Notable features of Macro-Sudan belt languages or sub-areas thereof

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<sup>2</sup> Brief explorations have shown an interesting link between Kam, Mumuye [ISO 639-3: mzm; Glottocode: nucl1240], Nyesam [ISO 639-3: pbn; Glottocode: kpas1242] and Kugama/Wam [ISO 639-3: kow; Glottocode: kuga1239], all of which are spoken closely together and have previously been classified as Adamawa. All of these languages have a near-homonymous noun pair for the meanings *bird* and *eye* (cf. Lesage 2019, under review, Eveling Villa, p.c., Lora Litvinova, p.c.). In Kam, for example, they are translated as respectively *núŋ* and *à.nùŋ*, in Proto-Mumuyic as *\*dʒa.nuŋ* and *\*nuŋ*, where *\*dʒa* is a diminutive {‘child’ if I remember it right} (Shimizu 1979; tones are unclear), and in Nyesam as *bɛ.nuɛ* and *nuɛ* (Eveling Villa, p.c., transcription preliminary and tones uncertain). While this is a very minimal hint, it is nonetheless significant and provides the beginning of a comparative series that demonstrates regular sound correspondences.

<sup>3</sup> Anderson 2011, 2012, 2015, 2016; Clements & Riailand 2008; Dimmendaal 2001: 382-387; Dryer 2009; Güldemann 2003, 2018a: 481, 2019: 11-12; Hajek 2013; Hyman et al. 2015; Idiatov 2010; Idiatov & Van de Velde 2015; Maddieson 2013b,c; Nikitina 2015; Rolle 2015; Segerer 2002-2007, 2015



that are absent in Kam include implosive consonants (Maddieson 2013c) and labial flaps (Olson & Hajek 2004).

While the precise genealogical links between Kam and other languages are uncertain, it is clear that there is and has been contact between Kam and languages spoken around it.

In the past, these languages included Central Jukunoid varieties [Glottocode: cent2241]. The Kam claim to descend from the Jukun ethnic group, and to be affiliated with the (possibly legendary) Jukun kingdom often referred to as Kororofa. Various sources include the Kam speaking area in the extent of this historical Jukun kingdom (e.g. Meek 1931a; Shimizu 1980: 8), and the political centre of the kingdom (and the homeland of the Jukunoid languages) may have been located to the south of the Kam speaking area (Shimizu 1980: 8; Dinslage & Leger 1996), possibly close to Wukari. A quarrel with a Jukun sub-group would have sent the Kam off to the Kamajim mountain. There, they allegedly encountered an unidentified ethnic group which they supplanted. Since then, they have continued to practice a traditional religion related to that of the Jukun, which is apparent from some religious terminology (cf. Meek 1931a, c). The Kam use the name *jí kwân* ‘*kwân* people’ to refer to the Jukun ethnic group and to speakers of Central Jukunoid varieties.

Languages currently spoken around Kam include Hausa [ISO 639-3: hau; Glottocode: haus1257], a variety of Eastern Fula/Fulfulde [Glottocode: fula1265], one or more varieties of Mumuye [Glottocode: mumu1250], Jirim [ISO 639-3: dir; Glottocode: diri1253], and more recently Glavda [ISO 639-3: glw; Glottocode: glav1244]. (Nigerian) English and Nigerian Pidgin [ISO 639-3: pcm; Glottocode: nige1257] are fairly recently introduced contact languages in the area.

Hausa is a Chadic (Afro-Asiatic) language. The Hausa form the largest ethnic group of the northern half of Nigeria, and Hausa is one of the most widely spoken languages in the country and West-Africa in general. It is spoken as a lingua franca in central-eastern Nigeria. Islam is the majority religion among Hausa speakers in Nigeria, and the Kam use one name, *màkpà*, for both ‘Muslim’ and ‘Hausa’. The etymology of this name is uncertain.

Fulfulde is a North Atlantic (Niger-Congo) language that is spread across the length of western and central Africa as a dialect continuum. It is spoken by the Fulani, who call themselves *Fulbe* and their language *Fulfulde*. The Fulani and their language are also known as *Fula*, but *Fulani*, which is a Hausa name, is the name that is most often used in Nigeria. The majority of the Fulani people are cattle rearers, and the name by which they are called in Kam is *ánĩmsĩ*, which is an attributive adjectival form of the verb *nĩmsĩ* ‘feed’, or a variant adjectivization with *nĩmsĩ* such as *nĩmsĩ nág* (‘ADJ:feed cow’), *jí nág nĩmsĩ* (‘person cow ADJ:feed’). The language does not have a specific name in Kam. The specific variety of

Fulfulde that is spoken may be either Hausa States Fulfulde [ISO 639-3: fuv; Glottocode: nige1253] or Adamawa Fulfulde [ISO 639-3: fub; Glottocode: adam1253].

Mumuye is a Central Adamawa language group spoken by the Mumuye people, who are spread across Taraba State as one of the largest ethnic groups of the state. They have two names in Kam, *Kwàntóh* and *àkómlá*. In *kwàntóh* the Kam noun for ‘mountain’, *ntóh*, can be recognized, but its exact etymology is unclear. The etymology of *àkómlá* is also difficult to establish.

The Jirim are called *Dirim* in Hausa and Fulfulde, but they themselves prefer the name *Jirim*. Jirim is a variety of Chamba Daka, a Dakoid (Benue-Congo) language or language group also mainly spoken in Taraba State. The Kam and nearby Jirim share a close cultural and political bond. A Jirim can be invited to celebrate festivals and ceremonies together with the Kam. They have similar religious ceremonies, which are related to Jukun religious traditions (cf. Meek 1931c: 538-550). They are the preferred trade partners. And they traditionally prefer intermarriage among each other over marriage with other ethnic groups. The Jirim are called *Dàw* in Kam. There are also Jirim that live further away from the Kam area, in Gashaka Local Government Area in the south of Taraba State, as stated by my main Jirim informant and in Meek (1931b: 397). This latter group is reportedly not culturally associated with the Kam.

Glavda is a Chadic (Afro-Asiatic) language that is mainly spoken in Gwoza Local Government Area, close to Maiduguri, in Borno State. According to Ethnologue, Glavda had some 31,000 speakers around the year 2000. After the Boko Haram insurgency in Gwoza in 2014, many people fled their homes and sought refuge elsewhere. Some fled to Cameroon, some fled to other places in Nigeria. Some refugees ended up in Taraba State. A number of them, mainly Glavda speakers, were provided a place to live in Kam villages. The Kam call all of these people *Gwoza*, after the place where they fled from, but all refugees I met were speakers of Glavda.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> There are other, not standardly used and less accepted terms that some people use to refer to the Glavda refugees. These terms are considered disrespectful by most of the Kam community and inappropriate in most social situations. My consultants asked me not to include them in my research. The terms are based on mispronounced words in Glavda.

## 1.2 *The language and its speakers*

### 1.2.1 Environment and context

#### 1.2.1.1 Delimitation and population size

Kam is spoken in northeastern Nigeria, in Bali Local Government Area, approximately in the center of Taraba State. It is important to keep two definitions of Kam country separate. First, there is the place where the Kam traditionally lived, and where the Kam language is currently spoken. For now, I will refer to this as the Kam speaking area. Second, there's the place that is under political responsibility of the Kam political king (there are two Kam kings, one "political" and one "traditional", which will be explained further below).<sup>5</sup> I will refer to this political entity as the Kam district of Bali Local Government Area, which is how it is officially called. The Kam district is larger than the Kam speaking area, and its delineation has changed a bit over the last couple of decades. It includes villages and groups of people that are not ethnically Kam and that have nothing to do with the Kam people or language traditionally, including Hausa villages, Fulani villages, Mumuye villages, and possibly others). This section maps out the Kam speaking area, but not the Kam district. Although reference will be made to it when discussing the geographical and political background of the Kam people, a full treatment of the Kam district area falls outside of the scope of this book.

It is difficult to estimate both the general population numbers of this area and the population numbers by ethnic group. Population data for Nigeria generally show high error rates and census results are often disputed (cf. R.S. 2018).<sup>6</sup> The latest projections of population and population density for Bali Local Government Area indicated a population density of 30.83/km<sup>2</sup> in March 2016, based largely on census data from 1991 and 2006 (Brinkhoff 2017). This would yield a 2016 population size of about 11,100 people in the Kam speaking area (about 360 km<sup>2</sup>). The same model indicates a population growth rate of 2.94% each year. Since Kam is the majority ethnic group in the immediate area, we could estimate that there are currently some 8,325 Kam living among people from other ethnic groups; 75% of the local population.

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<sup>5</sup> 'King' and 'chief' can in principle be used interchangeably, but the Kam people generally prefer 'king', which is why I use it here.

<sup>6</sup> Africapolis, an alternative source for population data, has no specific information regarding the Kam speaking area (Moriconi-Ebrard et al. 2008).

In 1919, one source estimated that there were 583 Kam people (Temple 1919: 80). Brinkhoff's growth estimates would expect a population size of 9,690 Kam in 2016.<sup>7</sup> My estimate of Kam population size at 8,325 people indicates a yearly population growth of 2.74% between 1922 and 2016,<sup>8</sup> which is lower than Brinkhoff's 2.94%. Of course, these estimations cannot fully consider confounding factors influencing population size, such as migration and disease. They also do not consider varying distributions between Kam and other ethnic groups, and complex issues related to identity. Changing marriage patterns with neighboring ethnic groups or changing perceptions of different ethnicities could for example lead to more or fewer people identifying as Kam at a given point in time. It needs to be stressed, again, that the error margin for these numbers is probably fairly large. It should also be noted that not everyone who identifies as Kam is necessarily a speaker of the language (cf. § 1.2.4).

### 1.2.1.2 Climate, terrain and life

The Kam speaking area falls within the tropical savannah climate zone. It is relatively close, however, to the warm semi-arid climate zone further to the north. It has a short (three months) but pronounced wet season, usually from July to September, a five month dry season from November to March, and two transition periods, April-June and October, when a moderate amount of rain falls. The dry season is characterized by the Harmattan wind, an airmass blowing from the north-east that brings with it dust and warmth from the Sahara, causing a hot (20°C to 42°C) and dry (0 mm to 2 mm of precipitation) climate in the area. There are often water shortages during the dry season. During the wet season, moist southwestern winds from the South Atlantic Ocean are pulled into the continent by the retreating Harmattan airmass. These winds bring higher precipitation (between 45mm and 66mm) and a narrower, generally cooler range

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<sup>7</sup> Population after a given timeframe can be estimated using a standard formula for population growth (cf. de Boer 2018), where  $r$  is the growth rate,  $N_0$  the starting population,  $N_t$  the population after timeframe  $t$  (current year – base year), and  $e$  a natural constant:

$$N_t = N_0 e^{(rt)}$$

<sup>8</sup> The formula can be rearranged to determine  $r$  (where  $\ln$  stands for the natural logarithm of  $e$ ):

$$r = \frac{\ln\left(\frac{N_t}{N_0}\right)}{t}$$

Adding values, this gives us:

$$r = \frac{\ln\left(\frac{8325}{583}\right)}{(2016 - 1919)} = 2.74\%$$

of temperatures (22°C to 31°C).<sup>9</sup> During the wet season, the area exhibits particularly heavy winds and rainfall with frequent thunderstorms. This heavy weather causes frequent power outages and weather damage in nearby cities such as Jalingo.

The Harmattan's retreat is caused by the sun's northward shift from the southern to the northern hemisphere from February to June, when it also passes straight over the Kam speaking area. The Kam traditional religion views the sun (*àléy*) as an ancestral deity that has to be cared for by means of daily rites. The sun, and by extension its caretakers or earthly mediators (in Kam culture the traditional king) are seen as bringing rainfall and securing harvest (Meek 1931c). The causal link between the behavior of the sun and the progression of seasons is an essential part of many traditional belief systems in the area.

The immediate area where the Kam live is drained by the river Kam (*màrè ñwòm* in Kam, a literal translation of 'river (of) Kam'), a tributary of the Taraba River<sup>10</sup>. The Taraba River feeds into the left side of the Benue River. The Benue, in its turn, is a branch of the Niger River. The Benue River has always been a major transportation route in the area.

The landscape is characterized by plains, with a forested mountain or a hill here and there. There are floodplains and there are various lakes in the vicinity. These mountains, hills and lakes have historical significance to the Kam. Two notable places important to Kam culture and traditions are the Kamajim mountain that hosts a number of Kam villages (Figure 1 on p. 9), including the traditional chief's quarters, and Lake Ku, where the Kam claim to have beaten a host of jihadi invaders in the nineteenth century (see the fragment of oral tradition appended to this book).

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<sup>9</sup> Statistics are from Jalingo, taken from [https://www.meteoblue.com/en/weather/forecast/modelclimate/jalingo\\_nigeria\\_2336589](https://www.meteoblue.com/en/weather/forecast/modelclimate/jalingo_nigeria_2336589). They are representative of the climate of the Kam speaking area as well.

<sup>10</sup> I do not know if the Kam have an indigenous name for the Taraba River.



**Figure 1 - Vegetation during the rainy season (Kamajim mountain, view from Sabongida Kamajim, May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017)**



**Figure 2 - Vegetation in the dry season (picture taken in Sarkin Dawa, January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016)**

The area is part of a savanna ecosystem, with widely spaced woodlands and relatively short grass with some low forests. It is part of the Guinean forest-savanna mosaic. Vegetation is somewhat different in the dry season and in the rainy season, when the landscape is greener and grasses and weeds are more prominent (see p. 9). The Kam do not go out hunting in the rainy season because of the dense growth of plants, especially close to the mountains, which makes walking and exploring too dangerous. They are mostly concerned about the presence of snakes.

It is possible that vegetation today is quite different from what it was a few centuries ago. Some Kam have told me that a traditional way of hunting and clearing land for farming involved burning large packs of forests. Animals would run out as easy prey and the burned woodlands would make for fertile farming lands.<sup>11</sup>

Large animals in the area include leopards, hippopotami and antelopes. These used to be more abundant than they are now and dwindled partly due to uncontrolled hunting and habitat loss to people. There are still reptiles such as tortoises, an abundance of lizards and snakes, crocodiles, different kinds of monkeys, and a large variety of birds. Notably, the Gashaka Gumti National Park to the south-east of the Kam speaking area (where the river Kam also reaches) is reported to have a population of chimpanzees.

### **1.2.1.3 Human subsistence**

Human subsistence in the area revolves around agriculture, both for personal consumption and for trade. The main crops produced in the immediate area are groundnut, maize, rice, sorghum, millet, cassava, yam, beans and sugar cane. Cattle, goats, sheep, pigs and chickens are also kept. Cattle is a common investment for local people. It may be kept in the village or cattle may be reared by herdsman around the area. These herdsman are usually hired Fulani. Domesticated goats, sheep, pigs and chickens roam around the village. The Kam also fish and hunt to supplement farm food. Producing pottery, weaving, dyeing, mat making, carving, embroidery, blacksmithing and carpentry are common traditional and modern occupations.

Geography has played a large role in the history of politics and conflicts in the area. The mountains are important natural strongholds for the minority ethnic groups that have settled there. The plains have been the scene of various conflicts over the centuries. The alleged Jukun kingdom of Kororofa is said to have conquered much of present-day Taraba state a few centuries in the past. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the area

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<sup>11</sup> My consultants sometimes challenged my perceptions of how a healthy landscape looks. When I arrived in Sarkin Dawa in November 2018, I was reading an issue of the Guardian that had a cover picture of a patch of rainforest devastated by wildfires in Brazil. When one of my consultants saw it out of context, he was delighted to see a wonderfully prepared piece of fertile farm land.

was raided in a jihad organized by an alliance of Fulani and Chamba invaders. During this latter conflict, local peoples such as the Kam sought refuge in and around the mountains and at least once, according to Kam oral history, by building a platform on top of a lake. Presently, there are ongoing disagreements in the area between herdsmen and agriculturalists about the borders and rights of grazing land and farming land, which sometimes end in violence.

The main road in the area is the Bali road, which connects the state capital of Jalingo with the Bali Local Government Area capital, Bali town. There are various paths leading to different villages. Traditional transportation happens on foot. Currently, people most frequently travel between villages by motorcycle, and between towns by car. Bikes are rare, horses are rare.



**Figure 3 - Rice farming near the banks of the Kam river (close to Fincon B, May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017)**





**Figure 4 – Women fetching water at the borehole in Sarkin Dawa (December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016)**

### **1.2.1.4 Recent environmental changes**

The Kam themselves do not remember the landscape being significantly different in the past. One change that is mentioned in songs, however, is the ‘breaking’ of the Kamajim mountain in two. In one particular song, this is connected with the sale of land by a former political king to people of other ethnic groups (included in the text collection at the end of this dissertation). It is not clear to me what event this may refer to.

Global warming has caused changing weather patterns including increased temperature, lower humidity levels, less and later rainfall, unpredictable flooding and a generally shorter rainy season. For farmers, this has resulted in a delay of planting, a reduced crop yield and higher costs of commercial crops. Water resources have declined and fuel wood has become scarcer (Oruonye 2014).

In the last twenty years, farmers have begun using herbicides to increase their work’s efficiency. It is not clear to me where these herbicides are produced and whether they are controlled. They may or may not have short- or long-term effects on the soil and environment as well as on the health of those who use them. In any case, they have transformed traditional agriculture. Today, for those who can afford them, spraying herbicides is an integral part of day to day farm work. Before herbicides were introduced, substantially more time and effort were spent preparing the farm for planting and maintaining the land by weeding it. Nowadays, less frequent visits to the farm are necessary after the farm has been prepared and

crops have been planted. This has reduced stress for farmers and freed up leisure time as well as time to pursue other interests such as education and trading activities.

I have heard reports of individuals using poison (possibly herbicides) as a tool for catching fish in lakes. The method would involve throwing poison into an area of the lake, and then gathering the dead fish that come floating up. This practice is met with disapproval by local fishermen, and according to my consultants it is easy to spot a fish that has been caught by means of poison on the market. It will disintegrate soon after it has been taken out of the water. The method has reportedly depleted fish in some lakes.

As of around 2014, there has been a surge of Chinese business interest for rosewood in the area. This has resulted in uncontrolled and illegal exploitation of threatened barwood (*Pterocarpus erinaceus*) – *madrid* in Hausa, *àvánhkàh* in Kam – in the area (Ahmed et al. 2016; EIA 2017). The tree is traditionally used for firewood, medicine (against fever), wood working, textile dying (the red sap of the tree) and retaining fertility of farmland. The business interest has led to quick but unsustainable profit for local farmers, unemployed youths and economically vulnerable groups. For many locals, the opportunity appeared especially attractive in times of economic crisis. When passing through Garba Chede, a town to the north of the Kam speaking area, one can see large piles of cut barwood prepared to be sold, often to Yoruba intermediaries. The trees are found on hilltops. They are cut there and rolled downhill, and then transported with trucks to the road. This logging has recently transformed the landscape, where, in many places, tree stumps are more numerous than actual trees. In Mayo Kam, at one point, over one thousand youths were employed in the logging business (Ahmed et al. 2016: 4). The long-term economic and ecological impact of this type of business is currently unclear. I am not aware of any reforestation initiatives.

### 1.2.2 Names of the language

In their own language, the Kam call themselves *ní ηwòm*. *ní* means ‘person’ or ‘people’ and *ηwòm* is a non-postpausal form of *àηwòm*, a noun that refers to anything associated with the Kam, as in *àlàη ηwòm* ‘a Kam pot’. The Kam call their language variably *àηwòm*, *ηwé ηwòm*, literally ‘the Kam language’, and *ηwé ní ηwòm* ‘the language of the Kam people’. The name Kam is used by surrounding groups, by the government, by the Kam themselves when they are not speaking their language but any other language and has been used in previous research on the language and people. The name probably derives from the river Kam, which is the main river flowing through Kam country. The Kam themselves call this river *màrè ηwòm* ‘the river (of) Kam’. The term *Kam* does not carry any negative connotations to the speakers themselves, and according to oral history accounts, the name was even coined by one of their own (according to Saheedu, p.c. in session\_284). I use the name *Kam* for the language because it is the most widely known name by which the people and their language are known, officially, informally, and in the academic literature. I do

not see a reason to introduce a new English term for the language (such as *àḡwàḡm* or *ḡwàḡm*) if one already exists (cf. Haspelmath 2017).<sup>12</sup>

### 1.2.3 Current geographical and political background

To reach the Kam speaking area from Jalingo, the capital of Taraba State, one drives southwards, following the Bali-Jalingo Road for about 70 kilometers. The nearest well-known town to the north of the Kam speaking area (for people who are not from Bali Local Government Area) is Garba Chede, an important commercial center where many Kam go to sell and buy supplies at the market every Thursday. Garba Chede is a Jirim town, and the current (as of 2020) king of Garba Chede, Maigandi Kaigama, has Jirim and Kam ancestry. He identifies as Jirim ethnically, and he does not speak Kam, but he still regards Kam culture as part of his heritage. At a certain point in recent history, Garba Chede was allegedly also part of the Kam District area, but Kam was never spoken there as a dominant language. To the south of the Kam speaking area, a bit further away than Garba Chede, lies Bali, the capital of Bali Local Government Area, where the Emir of Bali lives, who is Fulani.

The Kam speaking area has two main natural landmarks: the Kamajim mountain, which lies at the eastern side of the area, and the river Kam (*màrè ḡwàḡm*), which runs north from the southeastern part of the mountain for 5 kilometers until it takes a sharp turn to the southwest, where after 13 kilometers it passes through Mayo Kam and then goes northwest again. For the most part, the Kam people live in the space between the river and the mountain. Just a few villages are located on the mountain. The map in Figure 5 shows the Kamajim mountain, the Kam river and all Kam villages. The yellow line in the middle represents the main road that goes from Bali to Jalingo. Some villages that serve as reference points in this thesis are printed in larger font. Other villages are printed in smaller font for reference. All villages are listed with some details in Table 1 on p. 23.

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<sup>12</sup> Currently (April 2020), Wikipedia uses the name *Nyingwom*, a name which it takes from Kleinewillinghöfer (2015). It does this to distinguish Kam from a group of Tai-Kadai languages spoken in China by over 1.5 million people of the Dong ethnic group. This language group is variously called Kam, Gam, lix Gaeml, Dong, or Tung-Chia, and can be found under the Glottocode kami1255.

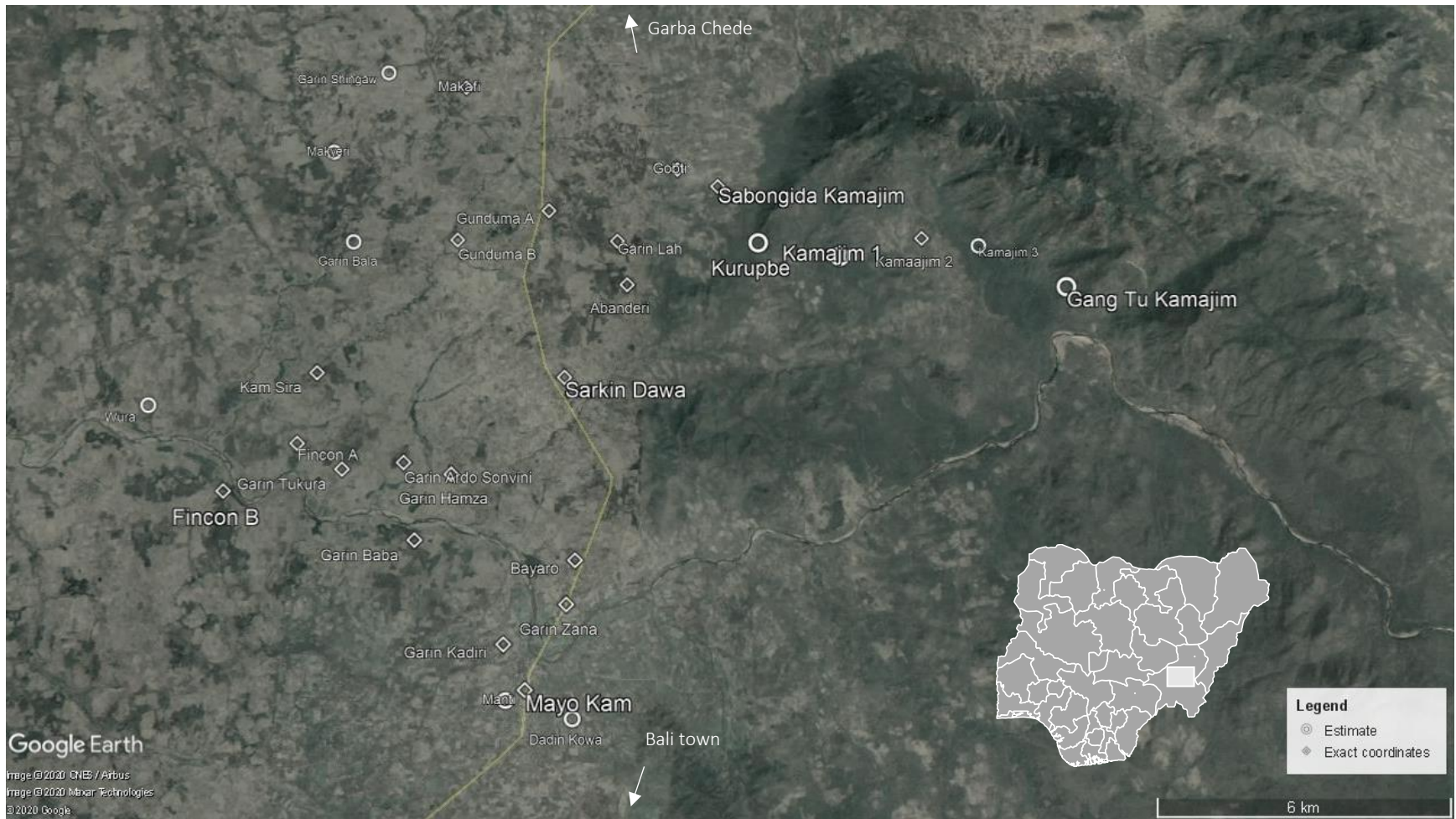


Figure 5 - Map of the Kam speaking area



**Figure 6 - Banks of the Kam river, close to Fincon B (May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017)**



**Figure 7 - The Kam river, close to Fincon B (May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017)**



**Figure 8 - Plains across the Kam river from Kamajim, close to Fincon B (May 5th, 2017)**

There is a rather clear dialectal, religious, and cultural distinction between the people living closer to the mountain (roughly the northeastern part, or the ‘highlands’, called *àwù* in Kam) and those living further away from the mountain (roughly the western part, or the ‘lowlands’, called *àdòŋ* in Kam). The northeastern people speak what will be referred to as highland varieties in this analysis. Most speakers of these highland varieties still practice the traditional Kam religion and have preserved more of the traditional culture, for example in terms of storytelling. The western part speak what will be called lowland varieties. The speakers of lowland varieties are for the most part Christian or Muslim and they do not often practice traditional culture anymore (no mythology is remembered and no folktales are told). The religious and cultural divisions are more easily made than the dialectal division. In the villages intermediate between the mountain and the river, both highland and lowland varieties are spoken, or an intermediate variety. The speech of some speakers from this intermediate area, including such villages as Sarkin Dawa and Mayo Kam, shows a mix of features of the two major dialect groups. The Kam spoken by most people in Mayo Kam, I have been told by my informants, is supposedly more influenced by Hausa and possibly Fulani. One of my main informants, Babangida Audu, was born in Kamajim and was raised in Highland Kam by his parents, although his family moved to Sarkin Dawa soon after he was born. Solomon Ahmadu, another main informant, was born in Sarkin Dawa and has features of both highland and Lowland Kam in his speech. Isa Sarkin Dawa, with whom I worked quite a bit as well, was born and raised in Fincon, and largely speaks

Lowland Kam. Speakers themselves recognize dialect differences, but do not have specific names for the different dialects.

*Kamajim* is the collective name of a number of villages located closest to and on the Kamajim mountain. It is the religious and traditional center of the Kam speaking area. It is in Kamajim where most traditional festivals are held, where religious rituals are carried out in shrines by the traditional king, and where the traditional king resides. The traditional king is considered to be able to control rainfall and is responsible for rituals in which he feeds the ancestors of the Kam (see Meek 1931b). If the ancestors are not fed, nature fails: the sun (which is considered to be one of the ancestors) cannot rise, rain cannot fall, and crops wither. In earlier times, Kamajim was strictly off-limits to outsiders, and nobody who was not Kam could meet the traditional chief. With the arrival of the British in the northern part of Nigeria, or perhaps earlier, with the establishment of the Fulani emirates in the region, the need arose for someone who could represent the chief towards outsiders and towards the ruling administration. Apart from the traditional, spiritual chief, who is responsible for the spiritual affairs of Kam land, a political representative was appointed to prevent strangers from entering strictly Kam territory. His task was to mediate between the Emir of Bali and the traditional king, and to represent the Kam people in official matters. His title is Sarkin Dawa, which is also the name of the village where he resides. *Sarkin Dawa* is a Hausa name and can be translated as ‘king of guinea corn’. According to Isa Sarkin Dawa, this is a reference to the king’s ability to control rainfall.<sup>13</sup> More recently, this representative acquired an official status as the district head and has been appointed as the political king of Kam country by the Emir of Bali. In this role, he is a delegate of the Emir of Bali, under whom and according to whose regulations he rules the Kam district of Bali Local Government Area (i.e. Kam country). When the current Sarkin Dawa dies, a successor is elected by a council of Kam elders, but he is ultimately appointed by the Emir, who turbans him. While Kamajim is the cultural capital of the Kam speaking Area, Sarkin Dawa might be considered its political capital.

Table 1 list all Kam villages I have been able to identify. For some villages I managed to collect geographical coordinates, others I could not visit because of time limits or because I was not allowed to go there for cultural reasons.<sup>14</sup> In some villages, I managed to speak with the village head, from whom I collected the Kam name of the village, their estimated number of Kam speakers, the previous place where

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<sup>13</sup> The traditional chief, in any case, is believed to have power over rainfall. This statement seems to imply that the political king is also associated with special power over rainfall. It is not clear if this is the case.

<sup>14</sup> Some places are only accessible to people who follow the Kam traditional religion because they are associated with sites (such as shrines), artefacts, or people (such as the traditional king) and secrets that ought to be hidden from the non-initiated. Some of my consultants are afraid to go there because they are excluded from the traditional religion.

the people came from that settled in the village, their estimated date of settlement, the religion of the people who live there, whether members of other ethnicities also live in the villages, and which dialect group people in the village identify with. Speaker numbers are meant to give a rough idea of the relative size of villages but are in many cases likely to be exaggerated estimates by the village heads. It is notable that when some villagers were asked for their own estimates, they tended to give a much lower number than village heads did.<sup>15</sup> If all numbers are added up, the total amounts to about 30,000 speakers of Kam, which is an unrealistically high figure given the estimates outlined in § 1.2.1.1. When place names are given in brackets, this means that their pronunciation is uncertain. The consultants with whom I checked the traditional place names were not familiar with all the place names, because the “primary names” (as shown in the first column) are normally used and the Kam names are falling out of use. Question marks indicate uncertainty.

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<sup>15</sup> In some cases the village head’s estimate was three or four times higher than that of some villagers.





**Figure 9 - Traditional artefacts, including *sábirág*, a spear, *díg*, the longer cylindrical drum to the left, *fi díg* (diminutive: child drum), the smaller drum in the middle, *gìngàny*, the round drum to the right, and *ngíí*, the bow at the back. Exhibited before the start of the traditional *nsúròy* dance (January 2<sup>nd</sup> 2017).**





**Figure 12 - Inside the political king's palace in Sarkin Dawa (left to right: Garba Abubakar Bako, the king's secretary; Isa Sarkin Dawa, the king; Muhammad Bose Yuguda, an older relative of the king) (January 4<sup>th</sup> 2017).**

**Table 1 - Kam-speaking villages**

<b>ID</b>	<b>Primary name</b>	<b>Kam name</b>	<b>Speakers<sup>16</sup></b>	<b>Dialect group</b>	<b>Other notes</b>
1	Sarkin Dawa	No Kam name recorded	ca. 4500 (?)	Intermediate	No data collected. The king wants to wait to provide data until he talked with his elder brothers.
2	Mayo Kam	màrè ηwòm 'river Kam'	ca. 6,000	Intermediate	According to oral tradition provided by an elder living in Mayo Kam, Mayo Kam was founded around 1,000 A.D. This contradicts other accounts of oral history that say the Kam came from the south, north of Gashaka Local Government Area, a few centuries ago. Other ethnicities found in Mayo Kam include Wurkun, Mumuye, Yendang, Jukun, Wurbo, Jibu, Fulani, Tiv, Kuteb, Hausa.  Religions practiced: mostly Christianity and Islam, but still about 1,000 people follow traditional Kam religion.

<sup>16</sup> Speaker numbers are meant to give a rough idea of the relative size of villages, but are in many cases likely to be exaggerated estimates by the village heads (compare with § 1.2.1.1).

					Parents do not generally speak Kam to their children anymore in Mayo Kam.
3	Kamajim 1	àḡwí bóg place? <sup>17</sup> foot? <sup>18</sup> 'foot place?'	ca. 150 (?) <sup>19</sup>	Highlands	Not visited yet. Only traditional religion is practiced here.
4	Kamajim 2	àḡwí lí+léb place? middle 'middle place'?	ca. 2,200 (?) <sup>20</sup>	Highlands	The village head could not speak to me. Only traditional religion is practiced here.
5	Kamajim 3	àḡwí fénsòg place? ? '?'	ca. 1,700 (?) <sup>21</sup>	Highlands	Not visited yet. Only traditional religion is practiced here.

<sup>17</sup> àḡwí is never found in isolation. It is only found in the place names mentioned here. Its meaning is not clear.

<sup>18</sup> Leg is àbòg, so with a L tone on bòg, so this etymology may be wrong.

<sup>19</sup> Estimate by my consultant Danladi Baleri.

<sup>20</sup> Estimate by my consultant Danladi Baleri because of absence of the village head

<sup>21</sup> Estimate by my consultant Danladi Baleri.

6	Gangtu Kamajim	gàṅ-tú upside?-hill? <sup>22</sup> '?'	ca. 350 (?) <sup>23</sup>	Highlands	I was unable to come here for cultural reasons. This is the place where the traditional king and his caretakers live. Only traditional religion is practiced here. There are also Jirim living here.
7	Sabongida Kamajim	( <i>amawan</i> )? <sup>24</sup> 'checkpoint?'	ca. 2,500	Highlands	Founded ca. 1800 People came from a place called <i>màn nág</i> 'cow fat', an unidentified place that is now deserted. People mainly practice traditional religion.
8	Abanderi	àbén ndéí talk idiotic 'curse'?	ca. 1,500	Highlands	Founded ca. 1900 People came from Sabongida Kamajim. People mainly practice traditional religion.

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<sup>22</sup> *àgàṅ* = upside, *àtúkúrí* = hill

<sup>23</sup> Estimate by my consultant Danladi Baleri.

<sup>24</sup> Tones are uncertain.

9	Garin Lah	bùntí 'to ride'	ca. 2,000	Highlands	Founded ca. 1850 People came from ( <i>kajiga</i> ) <sup>25</sup> , an unlocated place that is now deserted. People mainly practice traditional religion.
10	Gunduma A	No Kam name	ca. 1,500	Highlands	Founded ca. 1850 People came from Kamajim, but they did not specify which part of Kamajim. Mumuye, originally from Jalingo, also live in the village, as well as Jirim. Jirim is often spoken here. People mainly practice traditional religion.
11	Gobti	gòp-tí <sup>26</sup> unknown meaning	ca. 1,050	Highlands	Founded ca. 1850 People came from Kamajim, but they did not specify which part of Kamajim. People mainly practice traditional religion.

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<sup>25</sup> Tones are uncertain.

<sup>26</sup> This is allegedly a Jirim name.

12	Kam Sira	àṣwóg bíní 'House of Bini'	ca. 100	Lowlands	Founded ca. 1850 People came from ( <i>bareki</i> ) <sup>27</sup> , an unidentified place that is now deserted. People mainly practice traditional religion. There are some Christians.
13	Bayaro	kpágárág 'tilapia fish'	ca. 1,500	Lowlands	Founded ca. 1800 People came from <i>ntóḡ sání</i> , an unidentified place that is now deserted. Christianity and Islam are practiced here.
14	Fincon A	Kam name not recorded	ca. 350 <sup>28</sup>	Lowlands	I did not meet anyone in this village. Kuteb also live here.

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<sup>27</sup> Tones are uncertain.

<sup>28</sup> Estimate by my consultant Blessing Amidu Samuel.



15	Garin Hamza	(àṅwóg Hámzà)? 'House of Hamza'	ca. 2,000	Lowlands	Founded ca. 1800 People came from ( <i>jangran</i> ) <sup>29</sup> , an unlocated place that is now deserted. Other ethnicities found here are Mumuye, Yendang and Glavda. Around 1,500 people are christian. ca. 500 people practice traditional religion.
16	Garin Shingaw	Kam name not recorded	ca. 100 <sup>30</sup>	Lowlands	Not visited yet.
17	Garin Ardo Sonvini	(àṅwóg Ardo Sonvini) 'House of A. S.'	ca. 200	Lowlands	Founded ca. 1850 People came from ( <i>dɔṅgolɔṅ</i> ) <sup>31</sup> , an unlocated place that is now deserted. Glavda refugees also live here. Most inhabitants are Christian, some practice traditional religion.

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<sup>29</sup> Tones uncertain.

<sup>30</sup> Estimate by my consultant Blessing Amidu Samuel.

<sup>31</sup> Tones uncertain.

18	Garin Kadiri	àṅwóg kádìrì 'House of K.'	ca. 200	Lowlands	Founded ca. 1900 People came from ( <i>muruna</i> ) <sup>32</sup> , an unlocated place that is now deserted. Mumuye also live here. Mostly Christian, some traditional religion.
19	Garin Tukura	Kam name not yet attested	?	?	I did not meet anyone at the village.
20	Fincon B	fè ntj̄ḥ ? cocoyam 'coco yam'?	ca. 500	Lowlands	Founded around 1850 People came from Sabongida Kamajim. Most people practice traditional religion. Some are Christian.
21	Garin Zana	àṅwɔ̀nya (?) <sup>33</sup> ?	ca. 500	Intermediate	Founded around 1990 People came from Bayaro. About 1,000 Hausa people live here as well. This village is strictly Muslim. It is sometimes counted as a part of Mayo Kam.

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<sup>32</sup> Tones uncertain.

<sup>33</sup> This name may be incorrect or incorrectly transcribed.

22	Dadin Kowa	Kam name not recorded	?	Intermediate	Not visited yet. It is sometimes counted as a part of Mayo Kam.
23	Manti	Kam name not recorded	?	?	Not visited yet.
24	Garin Baba	(àṅwóg Daba) <sup>34</sup> 'House of Daba'	ca. 200	Lowlands	Founded ca. 1950 People came from Garin Hamza. Most people are Christian, some practice traditional religion.
25	Makyeri	Kam name not yet attested	?	?	Not visited yet.
26	Wura	Kam name not recorded	?	?	Not visited yet. Kam and Jirim live here.
27	Makafi	Kam name not recorded	?	?	Not visited yet. Mumuye, Jirim, and Kam live here.
28	Garin Bala	àṅwí fwa place? fwa 'place of the river fwa'?	?	?	Not visited yet.
29	Gunduma B	àṅwóg góp <sup>†</sup> tí 'house of Gobti'	?	?	Not visited yet.

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<sup>34</sup> Tones uncertain.

#### 1.2.4 Some sociolinguistic facts

At this moment, most people who identify themselves as Kam also speak Kam, usually as their first language. There are some Kam, who live in the villages closer to the road, who do not speak the language well. In commercially important places, like Mayo Kam and Sarkin Dawa, not all parents speak Kam to their children, raising their children in Hausa instead. In the more remote villages, all children still grow up speaking Kam with their parents. Everybody who speaks Kam also speaks Hausa, which is the main trade language in the area. Some Kam also speak Fulani, because they frequently have to deal with Fulani groups. Many also speak Jirim (cf. § 1.1). A minority of Kam speakers speak English. Kam is not taught or used at schools, where Hausa and English are taught and used instead. When Kam people gather, they will usually speak Kam, unless a non-Kam person is around, in which case they will switch to a common language with the non-Kam people present. For official purposes, Kam, Hausa, or English is used. In the past, Kam rulers and elders also spoke Jukun. This may still be true for some old people. There are no Kam radio or television programs but Kam youth occasionally talk in their language on WhatsApp and on Facebook. There is no standard orthography at this time.

There is no obvious variation between the speech of older and younger speakers, and between speakers of different genders.

Reportedly, there is a Kam sign language that is different from Hausa Sign Language (according to Wesam, p.c. in session\_262). I have not been able to investigate how different it is, whether they may be related, or whether the Kam may have an entirely independent sign language. Probably, the language (or languages) in use is a home-based sign system rather than a language that has been passed down for different generations.

### 1.3 *A typological sketch of Kam*<sup>35</sup>

#### 1.3.1 Basic word order

Basic word order in Kam is Subject-Verb for intransitive clauses and Subject-Verb-Object for transitive sentences. Adpositions precede the noun they occur with, and all adnominal modifiers follow the noun they modify in the noun phrase. Relative clauses also follow the noun they modify. Complementizers introducing complement clauses follow verbs.

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<sup>35</sup> I wrote this typological overview with the questions of the Grambank questionnaire in mind (Skirgård et. al. forthcoming).

### 1.3.2 Phonology

Kam has 24 consonants, including two labial-velar stops /kp/ and /gb/ and two rare phonemes, /h/ and /t/ that occur in a very limited set of lexemes. There are eight vowel phonemes, five of which are contrastive in all syllabic and prosodic positions (/i/, /ɛ/, /a/, /ɔ/, /u/). Three vowels, /i/, /e/ and /o/, are contrastive in a more limited set of environments. There are four nasal vowels, /ĩ/, /ẽ/, /õ/ and /ã/. Vowel length is not synchronically contrastive and there is no vowel harmony in Kam.

Kam has three level tones – L, H and M – which can also be combined into contour tones. M tone is less frequent than L and H tones and may historically derive from simplified LH contours. There are also floating <sup>L</sup> tones, and (in only two morphemes) floating <sup>H</sup> tones. Kam has a fair amount of tonal morphology marking case on pronominals, marking tense, aspect and polarity on verbs, and playing an important role in nominalization and verbal derivation.<sup>36</sup> There are a number of phonological tonal rules, the most prominent of which are H-tone spread, L-tone shift and non-automatic downstep due to floating <sup>L</sup> tones.

Kam syllables can occur in prosodically strong positions and prosodically weak positions, equivalent to stressed and unstressed positions in other languages. Kam features stem-initial prominence and stem-final weakening. There are more consonant and vowel contrasts in stem-initial position than in stem-final or stem-medial position, and there are a number of phonological and phonetic rules that distinguish weak from strong positions. Fortis versus lenis variants of stop consonants are an example of this: bilabial stops in prosodically strong positions become approximants in weak positions, velar stops become glottal stops (or velar approximants), and alveolar stops become alveolar taps.

### 1.3.3 Nominal morphosyntax

There is little segmental nominal morphology. Such morphology is restricted to deverbal nominalization and possessive indexes. All other morphology is tonal, marking nominalization, but also case on some pronominals, and arguably tense, aspect and polarity (cf. § 13.2). There are different pronominals for 1SG and 2SG categories for different tense, aspect and polarity values which can be considered STAMP (portmanteau Subject-Tense-Aspect-Mood-Polarity) morphemes from a typological perspective<sup>36</sup>. Many polysyllabic nouns in Kam have an initial prosodic prefix (*à-* or a homorganic nasal *N-*).<sup>37</sup> These prefixes may or may not be traces of an earlier noun class system, but they currently serve no morphosyntactic function. The optional plural marker *jō* that marks the entirety of the noun phrase may from a typological

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<sup>36</sup> One could also argue that tense, aspect and polarity are marked on pronominals by means of tone (cf. § 13.2)

<sup>37</sup> My use of ‘prosodic prefix’ is inspired by Van de Velde’s (2008) description of Eton.

perspective be considered a plural word. There is no other number marking in non-pronominal noun phrases.

There is no distinction between alienable and inalienable possession constructions in Kam.

There are no noun classes nor is there a system of nominal classification in most domains of Kam grammar. Humanness and some other semantic distinctions do play a role in some parts of the grammar of Kam.

- There are human third person pronominals, *àwú* ‘3SG’ and *àjí* ‘3PL’, but no pronominals for non-human third person referents.
- Content interrogatives make a distinction between humans (*bè<sup>H</sup>* ... *bì* ‘who?’), places (*rè* ‘where?’), manners (*sím* ‘how?’) and other non-human entities (*gè<sup>H</sup>* ... *gì* ‘what?’). Quantities are inquired after with the manner interrogative *sím*, without a distinction between count nouns and mass nouns.

Kam has a dedicated logophoric pronominal for third person singular human subjects, objects and possessors. This logophoric pronominal is used in reported discourse to indicate that a participant in the reported discourse is the same entity as the subject of the reporting verb, or in general the entity whose discourse is being reported (e.g. ‘He<sub>i</sub> said that he<sub>i</sub> (himself) would write it.’ as opposed to ‘He<sub>i</sub> said that he<sub>j</sub> (someone else) would write it.’)

There is no inclusive/exclusive distinction in the pronominal system of Kam, nor is there a gender distinction in third person pronominals. The only number distinction is between singular and plural. There are no third person non-human pronominals, only human arguments are regularly expressed pronominally. There is no politeness distinction in the pronominal system.

The deictic demonstrative system has a two-way distinction between near (*à* or *bá* ‘this’) and far (*ò* or *bò* ‘that’). There are three presentative demonstrative markers that have different uses in discourse but that do not distinguish distance. There is an existential quantifier *mí<sup>L</sup>* ‘some, any, a certain’, which can often be translated as a definite or indefinite article into English. Relative clauses are formed with a postnominal marker *á*, segmentally similar to the proximal demonstrative *à* and one of the presentative demonstratives *á*, and an optional relative clause final marker *à*.

Apart from the existential quantifier *mí<sup>L</sup>* ‘some, any, a certain’, which behaves as a modifier in the noun phrase, quantifiers are not generally embedded in noun phrases but behave as ‘floating quantifiers’, occurring in different places in the clause. Syntactically, they are more similar to adverbial modifiers than to attributive adjectives or nouns.

There is a distinction between prepositions proper and prepositional nouns. Prepositions proper take independent pronominals as their complements. Prepositional nouns derive from nouns and behave as regular possessed nouns in a possessor construction. They take possessive pronominals as their complements. Prepositional nouns mostly express spatial meanings (*àlib* ‘on’, *àliléb* ‘in the middle of’, *àlim* ‘in front of’, *àgún* ‘behind’, etc.). Prepositions proper can express instrumental and temporal meanings (*ká* ‘with’, *sé* ‘until’, *hár* ‘until’), comitative (*rà* ‘with’, also a noun phrase coordinator ‘and’), similitive (*àri* ‘like’) and locative (*à* ‘at, in’, *dākā* ‘from’).

When two pronouns are coordinated with the comitative preposition *rà* ‘with/and’, they can form an inclusory construction, where the initial plural pronominal (*àjí* ‘they’ or *jùrù* ‘we’) refers to the group as a whole and the following noun or pronominal (a singular noun or pronominal) picks out one of the two referents (cf. Singer 2001). *jùrù rà nà* ‘we and you’, for example, is used to express the equivalent of ‘me and you’.

The numeral system is decimal (10-based) and vigesimal (20-based), with a possible trace of a quinary (5-based) system in number seven: *džùb jīrāg* can be compared to *džùb* ‘six’ and *jīrāg* ‘two’.

#### 1.3.4 Verbal morphosyntax

Verbal morphology is mostly tonal, marking different polarity, aspect and tense values and also playing an important role in verbal derivation and deverbal nominalization. In addition to tonal morphology, there are different types of verbal reduplication, marking future tense, experiential aspect, and deriving predicative adjectives. There are some preverbal aspectual, temporal, polar and other grammatical markers. These occur following subject indexes and may derive from earlier verbs (e.g. *sì*, marking sequential clauses, *rà<sup>L</sup>* marking negative future tense, and an optional non-future negator *màg*). There is a post-verbal perfective aspect marker *à* that occurs after the object of a transitive clause or after the verb if there is no object.

Kam has multi-verb constructions, a type of construction that may be of interest to researchers of serial verb constructions, auxiliaries, light verbs, complex predicates, verb compounding, coordination, adverbial modification, comparative constructions and valency change. Clauses with multi-verb constructions can be analyzed as consisting of two types of verbal components. The first type, which I call primary verbs, are marked for tense, aspect and polarity. The other type, secondary verbs, may precede a primary verb or follow a primary verb and its object if there is one. Secondary verbs are not inflected. A clause typically has one primary verb and may have one or more secondary verbs. The secondary verbs may express repetition, persistence, spontaneity, resultative or stative aspect, completive aspect, ventive direction, andative direction and experiential aspect. They may also be used to add arguments to a clause in benefactive constructions and comparative constructions.

Verbs may have a toneless final vowel *-i* that does not have a clear function but obligatorily occurs in a variety of constructions including (a) deverbal adnominal adjectives, (b) affirmative future tense constructions, (c) the negative future tense construction, (d) speech and thought reporting clauses. This final vowel element in Kam is reminiscent of the so-called final vowels in Bantu languages (e.g. Grégoire 1979).

There is also a final vowel *i* that occurs optionally in a number of verb stems in Kam but that does not have a morphosyntactic function. The inflectional/derivational final vowel *-i* and the optional final vowel *i* are synchronically different elements but may be historically related.

There are three verb extensions, causative *-tí* and *-sí* and iterative *-rí*. Verbs with these markers are often lexicalized, and the extensions cannot be applied to all verbs. They are only partially productive. They are prosodically strong and may derive from secondary verbs in earlier multi-verb constructions and/or from other reconstructible Niger-Congo verb extensions. There is no passive or antipassive construction and there are no reflexive or reciprocal derivations. Reflexive and reciprocal constructions are expressed periphrastically with the noun *kpò* ‘body’.

There are no conjugation classes in Kam, and there are only a few irregular verbs (see § 14.6.1). There is no suppletion in verbs. There are, however, different affirmative and negative copulas.

Evidentiality is not grammatically encoded in Kam. There are no interrogative verbs for content interrogatives in Kam.

### 1.3.5 Word classes and derivation

Kam only distinguishes nouns and verbs as open word classes. There are some adverbs or adverbial expressions, but these often appear (at least historically) morphologically complex. There is an adjective class that typically functions as nominal attributive modifiers. Predicative adjectives are derived from verbs by means of reduplication. They can also be analyzed as stative or resultative verb forms that are not inflected for tense or aspect. Attributive adjectives syntactically behave like possessor nouns in associative constructions. Most attributive adjectives are derived from verbs, but a few attributive adjectives only show a historical relationship to current verbs, and some attributive adjectives no longer have an equivalent verb stem. Synchronically, underived adjectives constitute only a small lexical set.

Adnominal adjectives are derived from verbs by means of a prefix *á<sup>L</sup>-*, a replacive M-tone on the stem<sup>38</sup> and (only in the case of CVC-stems) the derivational final vowel *-i*.

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<sup>38</sup> This M could be a downstepped H, cf. footnote 69 on p. 174.



There are different strategies of deverbal nominalization, deriving agent, patient and abstract nouns. All such nominalizations include prefixation and tonal marking. Some include a suffix *-ri* as well.

The noun (*à*)*fi* ‘child’ can be used as a diminutive marker. Larger male specimens of animals are often modified with *àná* ‘father’. I have no examples of *àná* as an augmentative marker for inanimate nouns.

Data on ideophones is scarce in the current corpus of Kam. They are not very frequent. Future research will include more data collection focusing on genres where they may be more likely to occur. In addition, I have abstained from analyzing certain lexemes as ideophones that may at first glance seem sound-symbolic. These do not behave differently from other elements in the morphosyntax or phonology of Kam, so the only reason for singling them out as marked sound-symbolic lexemes would be my intuition or the intuition of a handful of consultants. Sound-symbolism and ideophones in Kam are a matter for further research.

### 1.3.6 Clausal morphosyntax

Argument marking is done primarily by means of word order. Nominative arguments (in Kam: subjects) precede the verb. Accusative arguments (in Kam: objects) follow the verb. Pronominals are formally distinguished by means of tone. Nominative pronominals (or subject pronominals) feature L tones. Accusative pronominals (or object pronominals) have H tone. Possessive pronominals feature H<sup>L</sup> tone, where the <sup>L</sup> stands for a right-attached floating <sup>L</sup> tone and could be analyzed as a possessive flag. Some pronominals also have segmentally different stems in different argument functions.

Various sensations and emotions (such as being sick, being angry, being sleepy) are expressed with a construction where the experiencer is coded as the object and the experience as a subject noun phrase (for example, *lù rə déŋ ám* ‘sleep is roasting me’, *féb tágí m à* ‘anger affected me’). Others are encoded with a body part as the subject, the experience as the verb, and the experiencer as either the object of the verb or the possessor of the body part. Yet other sensations are encoded with other idiomatic expressions specific to individual sensations.

In most clauses, there is no distinction between accusative arguments (in Kam: objects) and non-core arguments such as recipients, beneficiaries, etc. Most extended transitive clauses, such as ditransitives, are expressed with multi-verb constructions, where non-core arguments are coded as the object of a second verb (e.g. ‘give him a house’ is *jàg ìngwóg mō* ‘take house give:him’). Pronominal complements of prepositions proper, however, are expressed with independent pronominals and not with indexes.

Various grammatical categories are marked simultaneously in different slots in the clause. Tense, aspect and polarity, for example, are expressed by means of different pronominals (for 1SG and 2SG), tonal

marking on verbs, as well as with segmental markers. One category that is exemplary in this regard is negation. There are different negation constructions for different tense and aspect values.

Like many other languages in the Macro-Sudan belt, Kam features clause-final standard negation (with the phonologically peculiar negator *hñ*).

Interrogation is partly expressed clause-finally as well, with a particle *jī*, or with a M tone at the end of a clause. Of special interest are the human and non-human content interrogatives, which are bipartite (*bè ... bì* ‘who?’ and *gè ... gì* ‘what?’ and enclose the clause within their scope (e.g. *gè sín gì?* ‘what happened?’; *bè í rá džērī bì jī?* ‘who are they looking for?’).

There is a copula, *dá*, for existential and locational predication. Nominal predication features the presentative demonstrative *á* on the non-verbal predicate. There is no copula for adjectival predication, however, which is expressed with a reduplicated verb.

There are two ways of expressing predicative possession in Kam. One involves the copula *dá* followed by a comitative prepositional phrase (*ń dá rá †wó* ‘I am with a dog’). The other involves the have-verb *kàr* ‘to keep, to have’).

Comparative constructions are expressed with a multi-verb construction including the verb *kàr(i)* ‘to surpass’.

There are a number of focus, topic and emphasis constructions in Kam that are not yet currently fully understood. These include nominal topicalization with a post-nominal particle *džé*, discourse-cohesive uses of the prosodically weak presentative demonstrative *bē* and cleft constructions with the postnominal relativizer *ā*. These topics feature in a short chapter (17.6) but have not received much attention in the current dissertation, which focuses on basic phonology, morphology and syntax. They offer promising avenues for future research.

### 1.3.7 Morphology vs. syntax; fusional vs. analytic; bound forms vs. words,

If we adopt the terminology of traditional morphological typology, Kam could be characterized as both a fusional and an analytic language. It has some (phonologically bound) morphology – predominantly tonal – and different grammatical meanings are often combined in a single marker. A low tone first person subject index, for example, marks its argument function (subject), the polarity value of the clause, and (in case it has positive polarity) the aspect value of the clause. At the same time, segmentally invariable markers are also often found, for example marking aspectual values (e.g. *rà* ‘imperfective’), plural number on noun phrases (*jō*) and negation at the end of a clause (*hñ*). Multi-verb constructions are also frequently used, for example to express direction (*pè* ‘to come’, *sáŋ* ‘to go’), and in transitive clauses repetition of the verb after

the object is used to mark future tense. In my view, the difference between ‘phonologically bound’ morphology and ‘phonologically free’ particles or auxiliaries is not particularly meaningful in the morphosyntax of Kam. Some markers that appear syntactically bound behave like prosodically strong stems, (notably the derivational verbal suffixes – some may analyze them as phonologically free particles – *-sí*, *-tí* and *-rí*), and it is not clear what can be gained, for example, from analyzing the syntactically free presentative demonstrative *bē* as a bound morpheme, although it is prosodically weak.

Related to this, there are no clear generally accepted definitions of *word* that work well from a cross-linguistic perspective (see Bickel et al. 2009; Haspelmath 2011; Bickel & Zúñiga 2017; Lesage & Neshcheret 2017). Bloomfield defined *word* as a “minimum free form” (Bloomfield 1933: 160, 178), or, as rephrased by Haspelmath (2011: 39), an “utterance segment that can occur on [its] own”. This definition is still representative of how the concept *word* is conceived by a substantial part of the linguistic community. The opposite of a *word*, for Bloomfield, is a ‘bound form’. Many items that have been analyzed across languages as ‘particles’ cannot occur as separate utterances but are simply phonologically invariable grammatical markers. The term *particle*, like *word*, is currently not uniformly defined in the typological literature. I avoid claiming explicitly that something is a word in this description of Kam, since I do not believe this is necessary or helpful to understand the language. Where it seems useful from a typological perspective to make this distinction, I provide all the information a typologist might need to make their own choice of whether a marker in question adheres to their comparative concept of *word*. Orthographic choices in this grammar do not reflect analyses of wordhood (cf. § 2.6)

## 1.4 Previous work on Kam

### 1.4.1 Before the current project

Before this project started, a limited amount of data and analyses had been published on the Kam language and on its speakers. Table 2 lists all documents produced before 2016 that give some information on Kam and that I have been able to identify. The contents of each document are briefly described, and the documents are classified into types: (1) word lists, (2) Classification, (3) Ethnographic notes and (4) Bibliography. A brief note on the context in which it was produced is also given.

The most notable documents for linguistics are the two basic word lists that have been produced. The first word list was produced by Charles Meeke (1931b) in a survey of ethnic groups in Northern Nigeria. The word list consists of about 100 entries and was for a very long time the only linguistic data published on the language. In 2011, Ulrich Kleinewillinghöfer collected about 200 words from two consultants in Garba Chede.

Other linguistic documents include a number of classifications in which Kam was considered part of the Adamawa language family. These did not add any linguistic data but provided hypotheses on the basis of the data published by Meek. Meek (1931c: 547-550) himself already identified that Kam is not a Jukunoid language, although it has some links to Wapan (his “Wukari Jukun”)<sup>39</sup> in noun structure (specifically the prosodic *a*-prefix, see § 4.2.9). He further says Kam’s vocabulary resembles Bendic<sup>40</sup> (cf. Blench 2001) and Delta Cross<sup>41</sup> (cf. Villa et al. 2015) languages. He also saw lexical links to Tula-Waja<sup>42</sup> (Adamawa) languages and even Chadic languages such as Pero<sup>43</sup> and Kushi<sup>44</sup> (cf. Kraft 1981; Batic 2017).

Most subsequent classifications follow Greenberg’s (1963) proposal where Kam is seen as an isolated group within Adamawa. Exceptionally, Blench (n.d.) groups Kam together with Tula-Waja, without presenting explicit arguments for this change.

Broadly, contexts in which documents were produced are the following.

- Colonial Nigeria. These documents focused on providing basic ethnographic and geographic documentation, providing an overview of who lived in certain part of Nigeria at the time of British rule. Authors worked for the government. Charles Meek, for example was a Government Anthropologist whose main interest was studying the Jukun. His report on Kam in Meek (1931c) remains the most informative material published on Kam ethnography to date.
- Overview of Nigerian ethnic groups and languages. These documents are indexes of ethnic groups or languages in Nigeria, compiled over the years. These documents were compiled after the colonial era by researchers interested in Nigerian languages from an academic perspective. Some are focused on ethnic groups; others are focused on languages.
- Greenberg era linguistic classification. These documents sought to elaborate Greenberg’s proposals concerning Adamawa language classification. They do not provide extra data but are mainly speculation where the classification of Kam is concerned. They are valuable as overviews of the languages they treat and of the state of affairs of language classification at the time when they were published. They also contain useful bibliographical references.

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<sup>39</sup> ISO 639-3: juk; Glottocode: wapa1235

<sup>40</sup> Glottocode: bend1256

<sup>41</sup> Glottocode: delt1251

<sup>42</sup> Glottocode: tula1250

<sup>43</sup> ISO 639-3: pip; Glottocode: pero1241

<sup>44</sup> ISO 639-3: kuh; Glottocode: kush1236

- Local interest. These documents are locally produced collections or manuscripts that give some information about the Kam and their language. The people who produced them are interested in their own language or in the languages of their country or region. None of these have been officially published or distributed in large numbers. One document is a dictionary that was in preparation some years before I arrived. The author is unknown to me, and the existence of the project is only known to me through hearsay. Unfortunately, the project was abandoned after the author reportedly died of a snake bite. The location of the manuscript is unknown. Another document is a fragmentary summary of oral history, along with some administrative notes on the Kam, by a man called Bala Iiyasu, in the 1980s. The original manuscript, of which I took pictures, is in possession of the political king of Kam.
- Global linguistic classification effort. These documents are syntheses of the worldwide linguistic classification literature. They have been compiled as reference websites. Ethnologue (Eberhard et al. 2019) contains information about the context of languages, as well as speaker numbers (which are not always equally reliable), and provides a language classification. For Kam, the classification still follows Greenberg's (1963) proposal. Glottolog (Hammarström et al. 2019) provides a more up to date classification of languages along with a continually updated bibliography for each of the languages it covers.
- Re-examination of Adamawa languages. The documents under this context type are produced in the light of a recent academic effort to describe, document and analyze Adamawa languages.

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Summary of contents</b>	<b>Type of document</b>	<b>Context</b>
Temple (1919: 80-81)	Provides speaker numbers (583) of Kam and a very basic (less than one page) summary of their activities.	Ethnographic notes	Colonial Nigeria
Meek (1931b: 4, 398, 436, 449)	Passing notes comparing Kam culture with other ethnic groups.	Ethnographic notes	Colonial Nigeria
Meek (1931c: 538-550)	Notes on the duties of the traditional chief of Kam, Kam traditional religion, death and election of a new chief, names of officials, social organization and traditional marriage. A vocabulary with 98 entries is included.	Ethnographic notes + Word list	Colonial Nigeria
Meek (1931a: 16, 35, 121, 124)	An ethnographic description of Jukunoid ethnic groups. Kam is mentioned in passing for its links with Jukun culture and for comparison.	Ethnographic notes	Colonial Nigeria
Greenberg (1963)	A classification of Kam as an isolated language ('group 8') within the Adamawa family, based on mass-comparison. Some words are provided, presumably from Meek (1931b).	Classification	Greenberg era linguistic classification
Hansford et al. (1976)	An early non-colonial index of Nigerian languages. I did not consult this work, but its contents are mentioned in Wente-Lukas (1985).	Classification	Overview of Nigerian ethnic groups and languages
Iliyasu (ca. 1985)	A fragmentary summary of oral history of Kam, with some notes on practices and administration.	Ethnographic notes	Local interest

Wente-Lukas (1985)	Index of ethnic groups in Nigeria. Summarizes Temple's (1919), Meek's (1931b,c), Hansford et al.'s (1976) notes on Kam.	Ethnographic notes	Overview of Nigerian ethnic groups and languages
Boyd (1988)	Classification proposal of Adamawa languages. Kam is suggested to be more closely related to Mbumic languages and Kim/Masa than to Chamba Leko, Mumuye, Yendang, and Nimbari. Based on 17 of the words collected by Meek.	Classification	Greenberg era linguistic classification
Boyd (1989)	An overview chapter on Adamawa and Ubangi languages. It restates Greenberg's (1963) classification.	Classification	Greenberg era linguistic classification
Williamson & Blench (2000)	An overview chapter on the classification of Niger-Congo languages, restating Greenberg's (1963) classification for Kam.	Classification	Greenberg era linguistic classification
Blench (n.d.)	A proposal for restructuring Niger-Congo that classifies Kam together with the Tula-Waja languages.	Classification	Greenberg era linguistic classification
Unidentified (n.d.)	An unpublished unfinished dictionary by an unidentified Kam author. Its whereabouts are unclear.	Word list	Local interest

Blench (2012)	Overview of Nigerian languages with alternative names, villages where languages are spoken, estimated speaker numbers, classification, and sources. For Kam, the Greenberg classification is followed. A new version of the Atlas has been published (2019), but the Kam data remains to be updated.	Classification	Overview of Nigerian ethnic groups and languages
Kleinewillinghöfer (2015)	Minimal grammatical and classificatory notes on Kam, along with a 200-item word list.	Word list	Re-examination of Adamawa languages (Grundlagenforschung in den Adamawasprachen, Mainz, Germany)
Eberhard et al. (2019) (pre-2016 editions)	Reference source that restates Greenberg's (1963) classification. Other minimal contextual information (population, location, endangerment status) is also available.	Classification	Global linguistic classification effort
Hammarström et al. (2019) (pre-2016 editions)	Reference source with continually updated classification and bibliography. It classified Kam as an isolated language within the Adamawa family.	Classification + Bibliography	Global linguistic classification and bibliography effort



### 1.4.2 During the current project

Table 3 summarizes the documents that have appeared over the course of this project. Most documents listed here are part of the current project and involve presentations on a specific topic of Kam phonology and morphosyntax. One reference (Idiatov et al. 2017) is concerned with the collection of a preliminary word list and grammatical questionnaire by Tope Olagunju and Bitrus Andrew. The elicitation of these materials was a pilot study to prepare for the current project and was funded by the AdaGram research project. Two sources (Güldemann 2018a, Hammarström 2019) are general references treating the classification of African languages in general, but taking into account recent research on Adamawa languages. I identified two locally produced documents dealing directly with Kam. One is a term paper by a local student addressing language shift from Kam to Hausa in Sarkin Dawa. I could not reach the student in question but heard about his project from others. The other is a summary of ethnographic and linguistic materials earlier published in Meek (1931c), along with some supplemented information the author (Anthony John Ante) gathered from Isa Sarkin Dawa, Garba Abubakar Bako and Muhammad Bose Yuguda.

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Summary of contents</b>	<b>Type of document</b>	<b>Context</b>
Unidentified (n.d.)	Term paper by a local student addressing language shift from Kam to Hausa. I could not reach the student in question.	Specific topic	Local interest
Ante (2016)	Collection of materials on the history of Kam, mostly taken over from Meek (1931c), with some supplementary information gathered from interviews.	Ethnographic notes	Local interest
Idiatov et al. (2017)	Report of a survey of Adamawa languages, including the collection of 638 item word lists and 143 item grammatical questionnaires.	Word list	Re-examination of Adamawa languages (AdaGram project, Paris, France)
Hammarström et al. (2020) (post-2016 editions)	Reference source with continually updated classification and bibliography. The current classification of Kam in Glottolog considers it to be an isolated language in the North Volta-Congo sub-family of Niger-Congo languages.	Classification + Bibliography	Global linguistic classification and bibliography effort
Güldemann (2018a: 202, 204, 212)	An evaluation of the current state of affairs of African language classification. It considers the possibility that ‘Adamawa’ groups may be small high-level Niger-Congo groups, and do not form a genealogical Adamawa unity.	Classification	Re-examination of African language classification
Pozdniakov (2018)	An attempt to reconstruct Proto-Niger-Congo numerals, where the data from Kleinwillinghöfer (2015) is used for Kam.	Specific topic	Re-examination of African language classification

Lesage (2018a)	Overview of negation; the information in the current dissertation supersedes that of the presentation.	Specific topic	Re-examination of Adamawa languages (AdaGram project)
Lesage (2018b)	Overview of tense, aspect and modality; the information in Lesage (2019d) and in the current dissertation supersedes that of the presentation.	Specific topic	Re-examination of Adamawa languages (AdaGram project)
Lesage (2019a)	A preliminary lexicon of Kam, containing 1,701 entries. The information in the current dissertation supersedes that of this preliminary lexicon.	Word list	Re-examination of Adamawa languages (AdaGram project)
Lesage (2019b)	A sample of Kam text and elicitation with audio.	Data sample	Re-examination of Adamawa languages (AdaGram project)
Lesage (2019c)	Some preliminary data on logophoric pronominals in Kam. The information in the current dissertation supersedes that of the preliminary data.	Specific topic	Re-examination of Adamawa languages (AdaGram project)
Lesage (2019d)	Overview of tense, aspect and modality; the information in the current dissertation supersedes that of the presentation.	Specific topic	Re-examination of Adamawa languages (AdaGram project)
Lesage (2019e)	Presentation about the difficulties to classify Kam within Niger-Congo.	Classification	Re-examination of Adamawa languages (AdaGram project)
Lesage (2019f)	Overview of adjectives; the information in the current dissertation supersedes that of the presentation, especially where tones are concerned.	Specific topic	Re-examination of Adamawa languages (AdaGram project)

Lesage & Litvinova (2019)	Presentation on tone in Kam. The information in the current dissertation supersedes that of the presentation.	Specific topic	Re-examination of Adamawa languages (AdaGram project)
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## 1.5 *Materials, field work, and presentation of examples*

### 1.5.1 Practical considerations

This description of Kam is the first analysis and is not comprehensive. The limited timeframe of my PhD project has imposed inevitable constraints on the breadth of the description and on the depth of the analysis. I have pointed out unanswered questions where appropriate, sometimes with an indication of how these questions could be answered in the future. While I have taken care to review all examples and analyses provided, I acknowledge that some inconsistencies may remain intact. As always, I will continue to revise my work beyond the scope of this document.

In the coming years, I am planning to continue my work on a comprehensive description of Kam. That description will be based on a more representative collection of data, collected for a coming two-year post-doctoral documentation project on Kam.

To encourage transparency and collaboration and/or independent projects, I am keeping an in-progress to-do list of incomplete analysis and open questions for every chapter. Upon request, I am happy to provide this list and further analytical considerations, which includes notes on those insightful comments that I was unable to fully process before handing in this document.<sup>45</sup>

### 1.5.2 General literature consulted

When establishing contact with the community, finding my way in the field, collecting data, analyzing those data and writing up the analysis, I consulted a number of field guides as well as questionnaires and textbooks that I would like to mention here.

- The fieldwork textbooks that I relied on most heavily are Bown (2008) and Chelliah & de Reuse (2011).
- Textbooks and basic articles on phonology and tone that I found particularly helpful are Gussenhoven (1998, 2004), Hall (2013), Hayes (2009), Hyman (2014), Johnson (2012), Ladefoged & Johnson (2014); Ladefoged & Maddieson (1996), Odden (2013), Smalley (1968), Snider (2018) and Yip (2002).

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<sup>45</sup> Currently, this list is publicly accessible via Google Drive:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1fUDMB6LS3DZ6OS-17eQAkNtk0hRGSRK5?usp=sharing>

- General reference works and textbooks on morphosyntax that I consulted are Aikhenvald (2015), Creissels (2006), Dixon (2010a,b, 2012), Payne (1997) and Shopen (2007). Cristofaro (2005) was helpful as a general reference on subordination.
- The general analytical questionnaires I used were Comrie & Smith (1977) and the questions at the end of chapters in Dixon (2010a,b, 2012).
- Translation questionnaires used to collect the lexicon are the AdaGram survey (Idiatov et al. 2017), the SIL comparative word list (Snider & Roberts 2006) and the main questionnaire in Bouquiaux & Thomas (1976). Analytical and translation questionnaires I used for data collection on specific grammatical topics are Goddard & Wierzbicka's (2014) 150 canonical sentences, Pepper's (2020) questionnaire on binominal compounds, Dahl's (1985) tense, aspect and modality questionnaire, Kramer's (2017) questionnaire on phasal polarity and Miestamo & Veselinova's (2019) negation questionnaire. I also used Mayer's (1969) *Frog, where are you?* to elicit semi-spontaneous narrative.

Grammatical descriptions that I often consulted for inspiration and that served as models for the current analysis are Elders' (2000) grammar of Mundang, Anonby's (2008) analysis of Mambay, Van de Velde's (2008) grammar of Eton, and Huddleston & Pullum (2002) or Haeseryn (1997) when the only preliminary analysis I could come up with was the translation of a marker into English or Dutch. I was also inspired by Littig's (2017) concise and accessible description of Kolbila. Jaggar (2001) and Newman (2000) were my reference works for Hausa; De Wolf (1995) was my main reference for Fulfulde.

### 1.5.3 Description of field work

The data that form the basis of this analysis were collected in a number of different places in Nigeria under a number of different circumstances which I will briefly describe here.

I made five field trips to Nigeria in total, each trip one to two months in length. All trips were made from 2016 to 2018. I made two visits during the dry season, between October and December. I made three visits during the transition period between the dry season and the rainy season, between April and June. I spent a total of 174 days working with Kam speakers.

Part of the time during those trips was spent living in a Kam speaking community, in the central village Sarkin Dawa. I was there for a total of 85 days. In this village I met my main language consultants and I learned to speak some Kam. The political king of Kam, Isa Sarkin Dawa, is based in Sarkin Dawa and has been one of my main consultants throughout my field work. From Sarkin Dawa, I occasionally visited Sabon Gida Kamajim, a village that is not as close to the road and is less "urbanized". Many people in Sabon Gida Kamajim are followers of the traditional Kam religion, and they have cultural knowledge



Table 4 gives some more details of the field trips that form the basis of the data collection for this grammar, as well as a summary of what happened where and when.





<p>48 days 04-05-2017 to 17-06-2017</p>	<p>Jalingo (CAN secretariat) and Sarkin Dawa (Babangida's house), various Kam villages (small trips)</p>	<p>Field trip 2</p>	<p>Stay in Jalingo for security reasons, with weekly trips to Sarkin Dawa. Mostly elicitation for tonal analysis, paradigm elicitation, and checks of initial analyses; collection of metadata about villages; notable: recording of king's narrative of Kam oral history by Babangida Audu</p>	<p>59 sessions on tonal analysis, paradigms and basic sentences, 14 of which are recorded (8.5 hours); 11 texts and songs (45 minutes)</p>
<p>22 days 06-10-2017 to 28-10-2017</p>	<p>Jalingo (Maigandi Kaigama's house) and Sarkin Dawa (Babangida's house), Sabon Gida Kamajim (on occasion)</p>	<p>Field trip 3</p>	<p>Stay in Jalingo with frequent trips to Sarkin Dawa, eliciting words with a vocabulary game, respeaking and translation of previously collected texts, interviews on traditional life with people in Sabon Gida Kamajim, recording of spontaneous conversation in Sabon Gida Kamajim, recording of texts in Sabon Gida Kamajim</p>	<p>67 interview segments and texts (6 hours); respeaking and translating of earlier collected texts; 29 sessions on elicitation and vocabulary checking, 4 of which were recorded (40 minutes); spontaneous unrecorded checks of dictionary</p>
<p>43 days 26-04-2018 to 07-06-2018</p>	<p>Jalingo (Maigandi Kaigama's house) and Sarkin Dawa (Babangida's house)</p>	<p>Field trip 4</p>	<p>Stay in Jalingo with frequent trips to Sarkin Dawa, invited 6 Kam speakers visiting Jalingo; respeaking, translating, and checking previous data; analyzing texts; elicitation with focus on negation and tense, aspect and modality</p>	<p>Respeaking and translating of earlier recorded texts and conversations; 38 elicitation sessions, including checks, 3 of which were recorded (9 minutes); 1 text (1 minute)</p>

15 days 31-10-2018 to 14-11-2018	Sarkin Dawa (Babangida's house)	Field trip 5, Sarkin Dawa	Filling gaps in the analysis, elicitation on questions, adjectives, numerals, the noun phrase, complex sentences; recording missing words; recording a traditional prayer	Respeaking, translating and analysis of texts; 18 elicitation sessions, 5 of which were recorded (3.5 hours); 1 text (1 minute)
10 days 17-11-2018 to 27-11-2018	Jalingo (Pastoral Center)	Field trip 5, Jalingo	Filling gaps in the analysis, respeaking, translating and analyzing earlier collected texts; elicitation on verb classes; elicitation on negation	Respeaking, translating and analysis of texts; 13 elicitation sessions, 1 of which was recorded (1 hour); 1 text (1 minute)



**Figure 13 - Elicitation session in Sarkin Dawa. From left to right, bottom to top: Audu, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, Awunu Yakubu, the author, Isa Sarkin Dawa in the chair, and five unidentified participants.<sup>46</sup>**

<sup>46</sup> Picture taken by Babangida Audu.

## 1.5.4 Presentation of examples

Examples in this grammar are presented as follows.

- The first line of an example presents the Kam text.
- The second line provides word-for-word translations and/or glosses for grammatical categories. Grammatical glossing and segmentation of morphologically complex lexemes have only been applied where this helps the interpretation of the example in its relevant context in the grammar.
- When appropriate for the analysis, a line is inserted between the first and second line that shows the lexical form of each item (including tone and morphologically analyzed morphemes). This presentation is useful to make transparent tone rules and other phonological or morphological processes that are applied. Grammatical tones and their glosses are indicated here with a backslash \.

(1)      àpì        vān     ā        táb            ó<sup>+</sup>pé   kó        <sup>+</sup>táb     â  
           àpí        ávān    ā        táb\H        àpé    kó        àtábé    à  
           person    male    REL    touch\PFV    hand    INSTR fish    REL,  
           ‘The man who touched the fish’  
           (session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- The following line shows a free translation.
- The final line of an example displays an ID referring to the recording session the example is taken from, mentions the speaker who provided the data or who produced the text, and gives a broad idea of the genre the example is taken from.



## II Part two: Phonology



## 2 Phoneme inventory

The current chapter discusses the phonemes and tones of Kam. In this chapter, phonological rules are only treated when relevant. Chapters 3 to 6 provide a more detailed description of the phonological rules. § 2.1 provides a terminological introduction. § 2.2 treats the consonant phonemes and their distribution in different syllable shapes and prosodic positions. § 2.3 does the same for vowels. 2.4 and § 2.5 provide evidence for the phonological status of the phonemes introduced in § 2.2 and § 2.3. Finally, I discuss some orthography decisions I made for the remainder of this thesis in § 2.6. I describe the tonal system of Kam in Chapter 3.

### 2.1 Introduction: phonemes, allophones, and intermediate relationships

In any language, two sounds are in a phonemic opposition if the choice between them is completely unpredictable on the basis of the phonological environment alone but is encoded in the lexicon. They share an allophonic relationship if the choice between them is completely predictable from a given phonological context. In Kam, in between two low vowels *a* (a context that can be formalized as /*a\_a*), either a voiceless labial-velar stop *kp* could occur, or its voiced counterpart *gb*. Which one occurs in a given environment completely depends on the lexeme that is being pronounced. Therefore, *kp* and *gb* are in a contrastive distribution and their relationship is phonemic. An alveolar stop in prepausal position (/  $\diamond$ ) will always be unreleased in Kam ([ $\bar{t}$ ]). It will never be a released voiced stop *d* or a released voiceless stop *t* that we find in other positions. That is,  $\bar{t}$  is in complementary distribution with both *d* and *t* and is in an allophonic relationship with either of them. If the choice between two sounds is completely unpredictable both from the lexicon and from the phonological environment, they are allophones in free variation. In Kam, this is usually the case for *r*,  $\bar{t}$  and *l* in prepausal position: the verb meaning ‘farm’ can be pronounced either as *bàl*, *bàr*, or as *bà $\bar{t}$* .

Allophonic and phonemic relationships are usually taken as the two basic relationships between the sounds of a language. There are, however, a number of intermediate phonological relationships that should be taken into account when describing a language (cf. Hall 2013). Firstly, *phonological environment* is a broad term: it includes (supra)segmentally defined environments (e.g. intervocalic position, prepausal position), but also positions within the syllable (onset, rhyme, coda), and prosodically defined environments (stressed vs. unstressed syllables). For some sound pairs, one could say that the occurrence of one sound or another is not predictable on the basis of the segmental environment alone, but if the syllable structure or the prosodic structure are taken into account, it becomes predictable. In Kam, for example, velars in prosodically weak positions (*àngwóg* ‘house’) are realized as a voiced velar stop in intervocalic position,



or as a lenited variant of a voiced velar stop, see § 4.2.5. A voiceless velar stop can never occur here. In prosodically strong positions, /k/ and /g/ do contrast (/àná kòm/ ‘father of the place’ vs. /àná gòm hì/ ‘father did not pay’). Such a relationship is intermediate between phonological contrast (the choice is unpredictable if we do not take into account the prosodic structure) and allophony (the choice is predictable in prosodically weak positions). Secondly, the choice between two sounds can be predictable in most parts of the lexicon but not in a specific layer of the lexicon. For example, ideophones and recent borrowings may contain sounds that do not occur elsewhere, or they may be subject to phonological rules that do not apply elsewhere. Such marginal phonological contrasts and rules need to be acknowledged explicitly in the phonological analysis of a language.

In each section of this chapter, a summary is provided of the syllabic and prosodic contexts where each sound is contrastive or more predictable. Phonological properties of different prosodic positions are discussed in chapter 3. Syllable structure is treated in chapter 5. The phonological rules that operate within syllables and prosodic units are also given more treatment in those chapters than in this first overview chapter. In chapter 6, I provide an overview of the phonological changes that may take place when certain segments happen to be adjacent to each other, such as hiatus resolution and nasalization. Chapter 6 also discusses free variation and allowed consonant clusters.

Sounds that only occur in interjections are excluded from this overview, but can be found in the discussion of interjections in Chapter 1.

## 2.2 *Consonants and their distributions*

### 2.2.1 Consonant inventory

For consonants, seven manners of articulation are recognized. All non-sonorant consonants have a voicing contrast, except for the postalveolar fricative *f* and the glottal fricative *h* which do not have voiced counterparts. Eight places of articulation are contrastive, although the glottal *h* has a low functional load in the lexicon. Table 5 presents all consonants found in Kam.

**Table 5 - Consonant phonemes in Kam**

	bi-labial	labio-dental	alveolar	post-alveolar	palatal	velar	labial-velar	glottal
voiceless stop	p		t			k	kp	
voiced stop	b		d			g	gb	
voiceless affricate				tʃ				
voiced affricate				dʒ				
nasal	m		n		ɲ	ŋ		
tap			r					
voiceless fricative		f	s	ʃ				h
voiced fricative		v	z					
approximant			l		j		w	

Kam has 24 consonants that contrast in some phonological environment. The phonemes /r/ and /h/ have a peculiar distribution in the lexicon. In most lexemes, [r] is in complementary distribution with /l/ or /d/ (see § 4.2.6). Where /r/ is not in complementary distribution with /l/ or /d/ it occurs in (mostly)<sup>47</sup> strong prosodic positions in proper names, borrowings, some high-frequency markers, bound morphemes and just a few items from the general lexicon.

<sup>47</sup> r in *nɔ̃r* ‘spear’ and *hár* ‘(not) until’ are exceptions. It is possible that these items have a trill instead of a tap as a final sound, but this needs to be checked again. Note that *hár* is a borrowing, likely from Hausa (*har*) or Adamawa Fulfulde (*har*). I do not know if *nɔ̃r* is a borrowing or what language it may be borrowed from.

- (2) -rí ‘iterative derivation suffix’  
 -rì ‘nominalizing suffix’  
 rì ‘comitative preposition’ and ‘imperfective marker’  
 rì ‘postverbal negative future marker’  
 rí<sup>l</sup> ‘preverbal negative future marker’  
 rìg ‘emphatic marker’ and ‘negative possessive marker’  
 sèrī ‘negative copula’  
 hár ‘(not) until’, a borrowing, likely from Hausa (*har*) or Adamawa Fulfulde (*har*)
- kɛ̀kɛ̀ndzírí ‘person name’  
 wàrkù ‘person name’  
 kùrìkì ‘God’
- àrí ‘type, like’  
 àkprà ‘plate’  
 m̀p̀r̀m̀ ‘okra’  
 múrô ‘maize’  
 jīrāg ‘two’  
 wūrī ‘to answer, to like’

/h/ occurs in only three items in the currently collected lexicon of Kam, which has approximately 1,550 Kam entries (see the lexicon at the end of this grammar).

at the end of this grammatical description):

- (3) h̀h̀ ‘negator’  
 hár ‘(not) until’, a borrowing, likely from Hausa (*har*) or Adamawa Fulfulde (*har*)  
 hwár ‘to think’

Depending on whether such rare phonemes are taken into account and the definition of phoneme used, Kam has an average-sized (minimally 22) to moderately large (maximally 26) consonant inventory as compared to other languages of the world (cf. Maddieson 2013d).

### 2.2.2 Distributions of consonants in syllables and prosodic positions

The positions of each sound in syllables and prosodic positions are summarized in Table 6. The sounds are ordered from least predictable (occurring in many environments without restrictions) to most predictable

(occurring in fewer environments, sometimes in complementary distribution with other sounds). A white cell with a '+' indicates that the sound occurs in that position and thus contrasts with other sounds that occur there. A grey cell with an empty-set symbol '∅' means that the sound in question does not occur in that position and thus does not contrast with any other sound occurring there. In the table, stops with a neutralized voice feature are written with capitals, e.g. as P, T and K.<sup>48</sup>

Most contrasts are only relevant in prosodically strong syllable onsets. Only ten consonants appear in prosodically weak positions:

- bilabial, alveolar and velar stops (without voice distinction, i.e. P, T and K),
- all nasals (*m, n, ŋ*) except for the palatal nasal,
- the approximants *j, w* and *l*, and
- the tap *r*

By way of exception, in partial reduplication constructions, all consonants can occur in the copy, which is considered prosodically weaker than the base in a number of ways (cf. § 4.3.2).

The conclusions one can draw on the basis of this table and the consonant inventory presented in Table 5 are the following.

- All of these sounds are contrastive in Kam when segmental environments alone are considered.
- In prosodically weak positions, all contrasts are neutralized except: (a) places of articulation for bilabial, alveolar and velar stops, nasals and approximants and their contrasts with the palatal approximant *j*; (b) manners of articulation for bilabial, alveolar and velar consonants and approximants.
- Coda position is a kind of weak position in Kam and behaves similarly to onset positions in prosodically weak syllables.

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<sup>48</sup> The capital symbols do not represent archiphonemes or any deep level of abstraction. They merely symbolize that voice distinctions are neutralized in the relevant positions and that choosing to represent each consonant with a voiced or voiceless phoneme would be an arbitrary choice.

**Table 6 - Distributions of consonants**

	Strong syllable onset	Weak positions (including syllable codas)
<b>m</b>	+	+
<b>ŋ</b>	+	+
<b>j</b>	+	+
<b>r</b>	+ (but rare)	+ (but rare)
<b>f</b>	+	∅
<b>s</b>	+	∅
<b>ʃ</b>	+	∅
<b>tʃ</b>	+	∅
<b>kp</b>	+	∅
<b>p</b>	+	∅
<b>t</b>	+	∅
<b>k</b>	+	∅

	Strong syllable onset	Weak positions (including syllable codas)
<b>n</b>	+	+
<b>w</b>	+	+
<b>l</b>	+	+
<b>ɲ</b>	+	∅
<b>v</b>	+	∅
<b>z</b>	+	∅
<b>h</b>	+ (but rare)	∅
<b>ɟʒ</b>	+	∅
<b>gb</b>	+	∅
<b>b</b>	+	∅
<b>d</b>	+	∅
<b>g</b>	+	∅

<b>P (no voice contrast)</b>	∅	+
<b>K (no voice contrast)</b>	∅	+

<b>T (no voice contrast)</b>	∅	+
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## 2.3 Vowels and their distributions

### 2.3.1 Vowel inventory

#### 2.3.1.1 Oral monophthongs

Kam contrasts eight vowel qualities, with four heights and three degrees of backness: /i, e, ε, ɨ, a, u, o, ɔ/. The functional load of some of the oppositions, viz. between *i* and *ɨ*, *e* and *ε*, and *o* and *ɔ*, is very low and we find only a very limited number of (near-)minimal pairs for these oppositions.<sup>49</sup> The choice between *i*

<sup>49</sup> None for *i* vs. *ɨ*; only one minimal pair and two near-minimal pairs for *e* vs. *ε*, and only one near-minimal pair for *o* vs. *ɔ*, see § 742.5 below.

and *i*, *e* and  $\varepsilon$ , and *o* and  $\text{ɔ}$  is often but not always predictable once we take into account syllable structure and prosodic strength (cf. § 2.3.2 below). By and large, the two degrees of backness (front and back) are really important, and for most of the lexicon, only three heights have to be distinguished (low, mid and high). As compared to other languages around the world, Kam has an average (minimally five) to large (maximally eight) vowel inventory (cf. Maddieson 2013a). There is no vowel harmony. As in most languages without a roundedness contrast, front vowels and low back vowels are unrounded, while low-mid and higher back vowels are rounded. The following figure gives an idea of the language's vowel space. It is based on data from just one male speaker, Solomon Ahmadu, who is 26 years old and lives in Sarkin Dawa.<sup>50</sup>

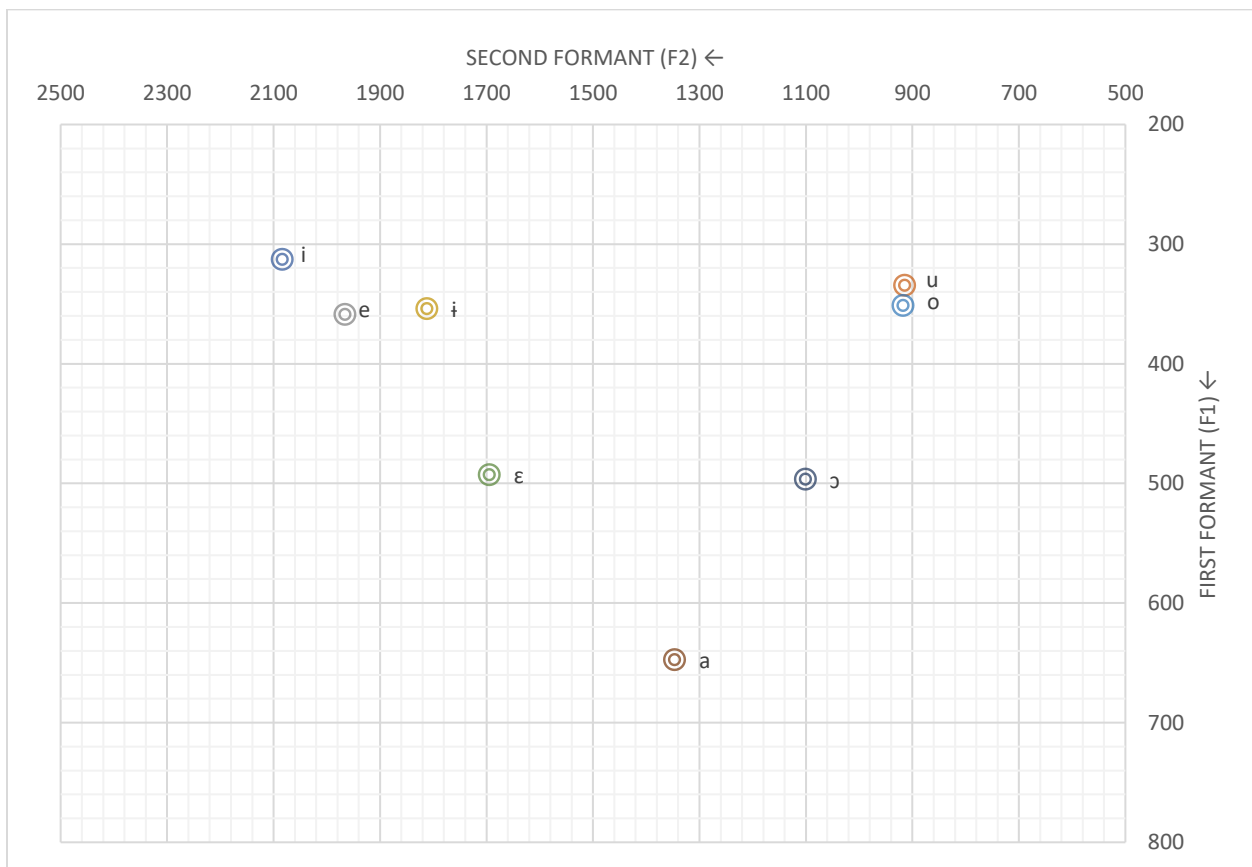


Figure 14 – Preliminary vowel space of Kam

<sup>50</sup> 46 tokens were used in total. 8 for  $\varepsilon$ , 8 for *i*, 7 for *u*, 6 for *o*, 5 for *e*, 4 for *i*, 4 for *a*, 4 for  $\text{ɔ}$

### 2.3.1.2 Nasal monophthongs

There are four phonologically nasal vowels:  $\tilde{i}$ ,  $\tilde{e}$ ,  $\tilde{o}$  and  $\tilde{a}$ . They are rare in the lexicon, as evidenced by the counts in Table 7. Because the nasal vowels can be considered nasal equivalents of both vowels in the  $i-i$ ,  $e-e$ , and  $o-o$  pairs, Table 7 counts the paired vowels together in the relative frequency counts<sup>51</sup>.

**Table 7 – Counts of oral and nasal vowels in stems**

Vowel quality	N of oral attestations	N of nasal attestations	Total
$i$ & $\tilde{i}$	248 (97%)	7 (3%)	255
$e$ & $\tilde{e}$	130 (92%)	12 (8%)	142
$o$ & $\tilde{o}$	137 (95%)	7 (5%)	144
$a$	423 (97%)	14 (3%)	437
Total	938 (96%)	40 (4%)	978

As is cross-linguistically common, the quality of high nasal vowels is often perceived lower and that of low nasal vowels as higher than their non-nasal counterparts (Beddor 1993: 187, 188). As a result of this, the contrast between  $\tilde{i}$  and  $\tilde{e}$  is usually blurred in phonological contexts where the  $\tilde{e}$  is raised because of surrounding consonants (cf. § 6.3.1).  $[\tilde{e}]$  and  $[\tilde{i}]$  appear in free variation in such cases. In my data there is, however, still a minimal pair contrasting  $\tilde{i}$  and  $\tilde{e}$  in such a position:  $[\text{h}\tilde{t}\tilde{e}]$  ‘tendon’ vs.  $[\text{h}\tilde{t}\tilde{i}]$  ‘bow’. This serves as an example of how phonological relationships may exist somewhere in between phonemic and allophonic and how a segment can be marginally distinctive in a language.

<sup>51</sup> After a nasal consonant, all vowels are sometimes nasal. This may be a phonotactic restriction or a phonological rule. I have observed different realizations of such vowels, both nasal(ized) and non-nasal(ized). This has not been a focus of my research and I do not take them into account in the current analysis. I plan to check nasal vowels and possible instances of nasalization in future work on Kam. New observations and their implications for other parts of this grammar will be taken into account in subsequent versions of this grammar.

I do not provide a vowel space for nasal vowels as I have done for oral vowels in Figure 14. Formant values obtained for nasal vowels are not comparable to those for oral vowels due to interactions with other acoustic factors. Instead, Figure 15 gives the approximate position of nasal vowels on a vowel diagram.

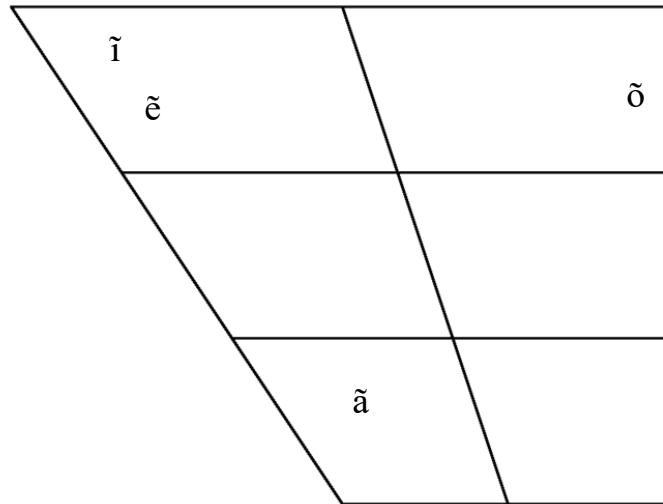


Figure 15 - Nasal vowels

### 2.3.1.3 Vowel length

All native lexical items in Kam derive their vowel length from the combination of two short vowels.

When two same-quality vowels meet, the result is typically one long vowel. Such vowels are, however, in free variation with short vowels. Where the result is a long vowel, this can lead to contrasts and near-minimal pairs.

- (4) àfì ‘child’ + ígbàn ‘female’ → /àfìígbàn/ or /àfìígbàn/ ‘daughter, girl, girlfriend’  
vs. àfì ‘child’ + àgbàn ‘wife’ → /àfìígbàn/ ‘wife’s daughter’
- (5) jì ‘thing’ + ífò ‘hot’ → /jìífò/ ‘living being’  
vs. jìfí ‘snake’
- (6) zá ‘side’ + ágbàn ‘female’ → /záágbàn/ ‘left side’

This is the only regular situation in which vowel length is contrastive. A possible exception, where vowel length is lexically specified, is the long vowel *i*: in *àlàmi:s* ‘Thursday’, a borrowing, likely from Hausa (*Alhamis* – originally from Arabic *yoom al-khamiis* ‘Thursday’).



### 2.3.1.4 Diphthongs

Most diphthongs in Kam result from an optional diphthongization of *e*, *ẽ*, *ĩ*, *ɔ* and *õ* in prosodically strong positions (cf. § 4.2.8, § 6.2.2.1). A few special cases need to be mentioned here, however.

The occurrence of [ĩẽ] is generally predictable as an allophone of /ẽ/ (cf. § 6.2.2.1). In one noun, however, it does not alternate with either [ẽ] or [ĩ]. *àlĩẽ* ‘armband’ is always pronounced [àlĩẽ], and as such forms a minimal pair with the noun *àlẽ* ‘cave’, which can be pronounced either [àlĩẽ] or [àlẽ]. In *àlĩẽ*, /ĩẽ/ may thus be considered a phonological diphthong. It is possible that the /ĩẽ/ sequence here is the result of a recent merger of two CV syllables (i.e. *lĩ* + *jẽ*).

Kam allows three types of Vj-sequences within one syllable: /ɔj/, /ɛj/ and /ãj/.

My decision to analyze these as Vj sequences and not as diphthongs is an analytical decision to keep the phoneme inventory as simple as possible. Alternatively, an analysis where they are regarded as diphthongs is currently also possible. More research is needed to establish whether they can in fact be analyzed as true diphthongs or not, e.g. by testing whether the second vowel can be realized as an approximant.

In the currently collected lexicon of approximately 1,550 entries, there is only one stem with /ɔj/, there are thirteen stems with /ɛj/, and there are six stems with /ãj/ in the data.

- (7)     **sɔ̃j** ‘iron’  
           vs. -sɪ ‘causative suffix’  
           vs. sɛ ‘(not) until’  
           vs. sá ‘monkey’  
           vs. sù ‘section of an ethnic group’  
           vs. tàsɔ̃ ‘dish’

- (8) ʃéj ‘jerboa’  
 vs. àʃí ‘child’  
 vs. ká<sup>+</sup>ʃírí ‘hedgehog’ (alternative pronunciation: /ká<sup>+</sup>ʃírí/)  
 vs. ñʃí ‘bow’  
 vs. ʃè ‘guinea corn’  
 vs. àʃé ‘war’  
 vs. ʃũ ‘maternal uncle’  
 vs. ñʃõ ‘coco yam’  
 vs. ábēʃā ‘blue’  
 vs. ñʃā̄ ‘star’
- ɲí mfó<sup>+</sup> sēj ‘clan, sp.’  
 vs. sé ‘(not) until’  
 vs. àsé ‘tail’  
 vs. láʔásó<sup>L</sup> ‘alligator’
- (9) kǎj ‘falcon’  
 vs. kùríkí ‘God’  
 vs. kí ‘instrumental preposition’  
 vs. kú ‘magic’  
 vs. kɔ<sup>52</sup> ‘to clap’  
 vs. àtāké ‘person name’  
 vs. kô ‘that (far) place’  
 vs. kǎ ‘this (near) place’  
 vs. kà ‘to break (something long)’
- ʃĩntǎj ‘twin’  
 vs. ñmgbètè ‘pouched rat’  
 vs. ñkòntǎró ‘person name’

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<sup>52</sup> Tone is uncertain.

In a similar fashion, Kam allows /aw/ sequences (pronounced as [Λw], cf. § 6.3.4). These can, at this point, in principle be analyzed as diphthongs, but since they are so rare, I did not include them in the phoneme inventory. They are considered VC sequences here.

- (10) /gàw/ ‘ribs’  
 vs. gĕ ‘what?’  
 vs. gó ‘guest’  
 vs. gá ‘trap’

### 2.3.2 Distributions of vowels in syllables and prosodic positions

The following table illustrates the syllabic and prosodic positions in which each vowel phoneme occurs. All vowel phonemes occur in prosodically strong open syllables, where they are maximally contrastive. Only six vowels are contrastive in prosodically weak CV-syllables. Of those, *o* only contrasts with *ɔ* in a specific pair that is illustrated in § 2.5.1.4. In prosodically weak positions the opposition between [ɛ] and [e] is neutralized after some consonants and [i] occurs in free variation with [ĩ], which is not the case in prosodically strong positions (cf. § 4.2.7). These are but two examples of many contrasts that are neutralized in prosodically weak positions. In closed syllables, even in strong position, many contrasts are similarly neutralized, including the distinction between [o] and [ɔ] – only [ɔ] occurs here. Notably, /ã/ occurs as the only nasal vowel in closed syllables, but only before /j/, where it is realized as [ẽ] (cf. example (9) above). /i/, /u/ and /a/ are maximally contrastive and have the highest functional load of all vowel phonemes, occurring in all possible environments, including V-syllables and VN-syllables.

**Table 8 - Syllabic and prosodic positions of vowels**

	Strong CV syllables	Weak CV syllables	CVC syllables	V/VN syllables
<b>u</b>	+	+	+	+
<b>a</b>	+	+	+	+
<b>i</b>	+	+	+(except after <i>l, j, ʃ, dʒ, f, f, v, t, ɲ</i> where <i>i</i> dominates with some free variation with <i>i</i> )	+
<b>ɛ</b>	+	+(except after <i>P, K, m, n, r, l, j</i> where <i>e</i> dominates with some free variation with <i>ɛ</i> )	+	∅
<b>ɔ</b>	+	+	+	∅
<b>o</b>	+	+	∅	∅
<b>ã</b>	+	∅	+	∅
<b>e</b>	+	only following <i>P, K, m, n, r, l, j</i>	∅	∅
<b>i</b>	+	free variation with <i>i</i>	only following <i>l, j, ʃ, dʒ, f, f, v, t, ɲ</i>	free variation with <i>i</i>
<b>iẽ</b>	+	∅	∅	∅
<b>ẽ</b>	+	∅	∅	∅
<b>ĩ</b>	+	∅	∅	∅
<b>õ</b>	+	∅	∅	∅

## 2.4 Evidence for contrasts: consonants

In the following survey of evidence for consonantal contrasts, minimal pairs, near-minimal pairs, and similar contexts are provided to illustrate the phonological status of each phoneme. Near-minimal pairs where the only confounding factor is a different tonal pattern are taken as near-equivalent to minimal pairs. These are provided without any comment. In other cases, where no minimal pairs are available, this is noted.

## 2.4.1 Manner of articulation contrasts

## 2.4.1.1 Voiceless stops and affricates p, kp, k, t, tʃ

Minimal pairs with /kp/ are sometimes difficult to find due to the relative infrequency of this phoneme. For the /p/ vs. /tʃ/ contrast no (near-)minimal pairs were found.

Table 9 - Contrasts: voiceless stops and affricates

	p	kp	k	t
kp	p̄ɛ̄j 'axe' kp̄ɛ̄jm̄i 'twenty'			
k	ápú 'bag' ákú 'cobra'	kpát̄ 'to rain' kát̄ 'to accompany'		
t	pāk̄ 'kitchen' tāk̄ 'to lay'	ákpát̄ 'near' àtáβí 'fish'	àkāt̄ 'ear' àtāt̄ 'stone'	
tʃ	àpà? àbàn 'beer kitchen' àtʃàgbàn 'younger sister'	kpáp̄ 'to mix' tʃáp̄ 'to knead'	kú 'snake, sp.' tʃū 'maternal uncle'	ntón̄ 'mountain' ntʃón̄ 'pig'

## 2.4.1.2 Voiced stops and affricates b, gb, g, d, dʒ

Table 10 - Contrasts: Voiced stops and affricates

	b	gb	g	d
gb	àbák̄ 'knife' àgbák̄ 'stool'			
g	àbák̄ 'knife' àgák̄ 'branch'	àgbák̄ 'stool' àgák̄ 'branch'		
d	àbèt̄ 'egg' àdèt̄ 'belly'	àgbèt̄ 'neck' àdèt̄ 'belly'	àgòm 'forehead' àdóm 'beard'	
dʒ	àbòk̄ 'leg' àdʒòk̄ 'ant, sp.'	gbèrì 'to scratch' dʒèrì 'to look'	gúp̄ 'to chase' dʒùp̄ 'six'	àdóm 'beard' àdʒón̄ 'saliva'

### 2.4.1.3 Nasals *m*, *ŋ*, *ɲ*, *n*

No minimal pairs were found for the contrast between /ŋ/ and /ɲ/.

**Table 11 - Contrasts: Nasals**

	<i>m</i>	<i>ŋ</i>	<i>ɲ</i>
<i>ŋ</i>	ñṭf̣óm 'hoe' ñṭf̣óŋ 'pig'		
<i>ɲ</i>	àmí 'dew' àɲí 'arm'	àŋámí 'yawn' àɲā 'person:REL'	
<i>n</i>	àwám 'evil person' àwàn 'king'	àgbáŋ 'chin' àgbàn 'wife'	àɲā 'person:REL' ànā 'day'

### 2.4.1.4 Voiceless fricatives *f*, *s*, *ʃ*, *h*

No minimal pairs for the opposition between *f* and *h* were found.

**Table 12 - Contrasts: Voiceless fricatives**

	<i>f</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>ʃ</i>
<i>s</i>	f̣èṭ 'to clean' ṣèṭ 'room'		
<i>ʃ</i>	àf̣íp̣ 'calf' àʃ̣íp̣ 'shit'	ṣàḳ 'basket' ʃ̣àḳ 'to laugh'	
<i>h</i>	f̣áṭ 'to wrap' ḥáṛ '(not) until'	ṣáṭ 'to comb' ḥáṛ '(not) until'	ʃ̣àḳ 'laugh, n.' ḥáṛ '(not) until'

### 2.4.1.5 Voiced fricatives *v* and *z*

ṿèl 'to twist' vs. ẓèl 'to take from fire'

### 2.4.1.6 Approximants *w*, *j*, lateral approximant *l*, and tap *r*

No (near-)minimal pairs were found for the opposition between /w/ and /r/ because of the rarity of /r/ (cf. § 2.2.1). No minimal pairs were found for the distinction between /l/ and /r/, but a near-minimal pair was found.

**Table 13 - Contrasts: Approximants and the tap**

	w	j	l
j	àwárí 'noise' àjárí 'width'		
l	wùbìrí 'to pour' lùbìrí 'to remove'	jāk̄ 'to carry' lāk̄ 'to lick'	
r	n/a	jī 'question marker' -rí 'iterative suffix'	àlìb à 'this head' àrí bā 'like this'

#### 2.4.2 Place of articulation and voicing contrasts

##### 2.4.2.1 Labials p, b, kp, gb, m and w

No minimal pairs were found for the opposition between /p/ and /m/ and for the contrast between /kp/ and /m/.

**Table 14 - Contrasts: Labials**

	p	b	kp	gb	m
b	ápú 'bag' àbù 'tree, sp.'				
kp	péj 'axe' kpējīmī 'twenty'	bò 'ten' kpò 'body'			
gb	pòpsí 'to press together' gbòrù 'stream'	àbāk̄ 'branch' àgbāk̄ 'stool'	àkpèp̄ 'shoulder' àgbèt̄ 'neck'		
m	pè 'to come' mènsí 'to scatter'	àbì 'soil' àmí 'dew'	kpètí 'to tire' mènsí 'to scatter'	gbèt̄ 'to remove' mèt̄ 'to swallow'	
w	ápú 'bag' àwù 'seed'	àbù 'tree, sp.' àwù 'seed'	kpò 'body' wò 'dog'	àgbàn 'wife' àwàn 'king'	màrì 'river' wàrì 'to dream'

### 2.4.2.2 Labiodentals f and v

- (11) àfàm ‘meat’  
àvàm ‘clay’

### 2.4.2.3 Palatals ɲ and j

- (12) ɲép̄ ‘go’  
jép̄ ‘fry’

### 2.4.2.4 Alveolars t, d, n, r, s, z, l

Only near-minimal pairs were found for the distinction between /z/ and /r/.

**Table 15 - Contrasts: Alveolars**

	t	d	n	r	s	z
d	tép̄ ‘to press’ dép̄ ‘to buy’					
n	túk̄ ‘mortar’ nùk̄ ‘to have sex’	dúk̄ ‘to follow’ nùk̄ ‘to have sex’				
r	sètí ‘to tear’ dʒērī ‘to look’	đík̄ ‘to hiccough’ rìk̄ ‘emphasis’	mání ‘fish, sp.’ máří ‘river’			
s	ntòk̄ ‘penis’ nsòk̄ ‘salt’	đín ‘to meet’ sín ‘to do’	náp̄ ‘to cut’ sáp̄ ‘to grab’	kàrí ‘to keep’ kàsí ‘to branch’		
z	tùp̄ ‘to press’ zùp̄ ‘to steal’	dúk̄ ‘to follow’ zùk̄ ‘grass’	nùk̄ ‘to have sex’ zùk̄ ‘grass’	múró ‘maize’ zùzó* rí ‘bitter’	sáj ‘to go’ zàj ‘to wrestle’	
l	tèk̄ ‘to run’ lèk̄ ‘to hear’	dók̄ ‘to see’ lòk̄ ‘to deliver’	nìm ‘to eat’ lìm ‘to dive’	àrí bā ‘like this’ àlib â ‘this head’	sá ‘monkey’ là ‘skin’	zàj ‘to wrestle’ láj ‘to cook’



### 2.4.2.5 Postalveolars ʧ, ʤ, ʃ

**Table 16 - Contrasts: Postalveolars**

	ʧ	ʤ
ʧ		
ʤ	ʧɔ̄t̄ 'to throw a spear' ʤɔ̄t̄ 'to descend'	
ʃ	ʧɔ̄k̄ 'earthworm' ʃɔ̄k̄ 'monitor lizard'	ʤɔ̄k̄ 'to whisper' ʃɔ̄k̄ 'laugh, n.'

### 2.4.2.6 Velars k, g, kp, gb, ŋ

No minimal pairs were found for the opposition between /h/ and other consonants, because of its rarity.

**Table 17 - Contrasts: Velars and glottal consonants**

	k	g	kp	gb	ŋ
ɛ	ɛkùròk̄ 'throat' ɛgúròk̄ 'beetle, sp.'				
kp	kát̄ 'have' kpát̄ 'to rain'	gá 'trap, n.' kpá 'grazing ground'			
gb	àkíràk̄ 'fence' àgbìràk̄ 'bird, sp.'	àgák̄ 'branch' àgbák̄ 'stool'	kpá 'wrapper' gbá 'flute, sp.'		
ŋ	àdžíkírí 'armpit' àdžíŋírí 'foolish'	àgùm 'hole' àwù 'seed'	kpá 'wrapper' ŋàtí 'to open'	gbàm 'to sew' ŋàtí 'to open'	
h	kát̄ 'to have' hár '(not) until'	gá 'trap, n.' hár '(not) until'	kpát̄ 'to rain' hár '(not) until'	gbàm 'to sew' hár '(not) until'	ŋàtí 'to open' hár '(not) until'

## 2.5 Evidence for contrasts: vowels

In the following survey of evidence for vowel contrasts, minimal pairs, near-minimal pairs, and similar contexts are provided to illustrate the phonological status of each phoneme. Near-minimal pairs where the only confounding factor is a different tonal pattern are taken as near-equivalent to minimal pairs. These are provided without any comment. In other cases, where no minimal pairs are available, this is noted.

## 2.5.1 Height contrasts

## 2.5.1.1 High (i, i, u) vs. low (a)

Table 18 - Contrasts: High and low vowels

i vs. a	i vs. a	u vs. a
ɖʒì ‘bat’	nìṁ ‘to eat’	būḱ ‘to pinch’
ɖʒá ‘seed’	nám ‘buffalo’	bàḱ ‘to stab’

## 2.5.1.2 High (i, i, u) vs. high-mid (e, o)

Table 19 - Contrasts: High and high-mid vowels

i vs. e	i vs. e	u vs. e
àjì ‘world’	dí rî ‘to be with’	àɖzú ‘yam’
àjè ‘intestines’	dèrî ‘to draw’	àɖzé ‘moon’
i vs. o	i vs. o	u vs. o
ɲì ‘thing’	dí ‘to be’	zúrí ‘to ululate’
ɲò ‘you (plural)’	dó ‘to insult’	zórî ‘fish, sp.’

## 2.5.1.3 High (i, i, u) vs. low-mid (ɛ, ɔ)

Table 20 - Contrasts: High and low-mid vowels

i vs. ɛ	i vs. ɛ	u vs. ɛ
àlíp̄ ‘head’	kpít̄ ‘to brew’	bùntí ‘drive’
àlép̄ ‘evening’	kpɛt̄ <sup>53</sup> ‘to shiver’	bèntí ‘pants’
i vs. ɔ	i vs. ɔ	u vs. ɔ
àʃíb ‘shit’	bít̄ ‘to blow’	àgùm ‘hole’
àʃɔb ‘wind’	bòt̄ ‘to go up’	àgòm ‘forehead’

## 2.5.1.4 High-mid (e, o) vs. low-mid (ɛ, ɔ)

These oppositions are fairly feeble, and only surface in some prosodic and syllabic contexts (cf. § 2.2.2). No minimal pairs are found for the opposition between *o* vs. *ɔ*, *e* vs. *ɔ* and *o* vs. *ɛ*.

<sup>53</sup> The tone of this verb is uncertain.

**Table 21 - Contrasts: High-mid and low-mid vowels**

e vs. ε	e vs. ɔ	o vs. ε	o vs. ɔ
dèrí 'to draw'	ʃèrí 'to chop'	jóru 'flood'	àbòʔò 'night'
dēri 'to snore'	ʃɔ́t̄ 'to throw a spear'	jèrí 'to suffice'	àbòʔ ú 'his leg'

**2.5.1.5 Low (a) vs. high-mid (e, o)****Table 22 - Contrasts: Low and high-mid vowels**

a vs. e	a vs. o
mā 'to give you'	kpá 'wrapper'
mē 'to give them'	kpò 'body'

**2.5.1.6 Low (a) vs. low-mid (ε, ɔ)****Table 23 - Contrasts: Low and low-mid vowels**

a vs. ε	a vs. ɔ
àbák̄ 'knife'	ʃāt̄ 'three'
àbèk̄ 'jealousy'	ʃɔ́t̄ 'to throw a spear'

## 2.5.2 Backness contrasts

## 2.5.2.1 Front (i, e, ε) vs. back (u, o, ɔ, a)

Table 24 - Contrasts: Front and back vowels

<b>i vs. u</b> àbì ‘soil’ àbù ‘mahogany tree’	<b>e vs. u</b> àdzé ‘moon’ àdzú ‘yam’	<b>ε vs. u</b> bèntí ‘pants’ bùntí ‘to drive’
<b>i vs. o</b> ɲì ‘thing’ ɲò ‘2PL’	<b>e vs. o</b> mē ‘to give them’ mō ‘to give him’	<b>ε vs. o</b> jórú ‘flood’ jèrí ‘to suffice’
<b>i vs. ɔ</b> àfɪ̄p̄ ‘shit’ àfɔ̄p̄ ‘wind’	<b>e vs. ɔ</b> ɸ̄ɛ́rí ‘to chop’ ɸ̄ɔ́r ‘to throw a spear’	<b>ε vs. ɔ</b> àɸ̄ɛ́t̄ ‘fear, n.’ àɸ̄ɔ́t̄ ‘bee’
<b>i vs. a</b> àɲí ‘person’ àɲā ‘person:REL’	<b>e vs. a</b> mē ‘to give them’ mā ‘to give you’	<b>ε vs. a</b> àbèk̄ ‘jealousy’ àbák̄ ‘knife’

## 2.5.2.2 Front (i, e, ε) vs. central (ɨ)

The distinction between *i* and *ɨ* is difficult to illustrate. In many cases, they are in free variation (cf. chapters 3, 5 and 6), but in some prosodically strong positions, such as the base of a reduplication, *i* cannot alternate with *ɨ*. In such positions, *i* contrasts with other instances where free variation between *ɨ* and *i* is possible in similar segmental contexts.

Table 25 - Contrasts: Front and central vowels

<b>i vs. ɨ</b> pìpírī ‘astringent’ m̀p̄īrī ‘goat’	<b>e vs. ɨ</b> dèrí ‘to draw’ dí rí ‘to be with’	<b>ε vs. ɨ</b> àdég ‘disease’ àdíg ‘hiccough, n.’
---	--	---

### 2.5.2.3 Back (u, o, ɔ, a) vs. central (ɨ)

Table 26 - Contrasts: Back and central vowels

u vs. ɨ	o vs. ɨ	ɔ vs. ɨ	a vs. ɨ
kú ‘magic, sp.’	dó ‘insult, v.’	bɔ̃t̃ ‘to go up’	nám ‘buffalo’
kí ‘INSTR’	dí ‘be, exist’	bɨt̃ ‘to blow’	nɨm ‘to eat’

### 2.5.3 Diphthong iẽ

The following examples illustrate contrasts with *iẽ*.

- (13) àlĩẽ ‘armband’  
 vs. *i*: àmálĩ ‘flower’  
 vs. *u*: lù ‘to sleep’  
 vs. *e*: àlè ‘fire’  
 vs. *ẽ*: àlẽ ‘cave’  
 vs. *o*: kpòólò ‘bath, noun’  
 vs. *õ*: àlõ ‘sling, noun’  
 vs. *a*: là ‘skin’

Because *iẽ* has only been attested in one noun, contrasts with *ĩ*, *i*, *e*, *ɔ* and *ã* cannot be illustrated.

### 2.5.4 Nasality contrasts

Nasal vowels are very rare in the lexicon (see § 2.3.1.2).

Due to positional constraints with nasal vowels, only minimal pairs with high vowels, high-mid vowels, and the low vowel *a* are fairly easy to come by. For the /*o*/ vs. /*õ*/ contrast, however, only a near-minimal pair was found. For contrasts between nasal vowels and low-central vowels, only near-minimal pairs and similar environments could be found.

Table 27 - Contrasts: Nasal vowels

<b>i vs. ĩ</b> àǰĩ ‘child’ nǰĩ ‘bow’	<b>e vs. ě</b> àǰǎ ‘trousers’ àǰǎ ‘shea tree’	<b>o vs. õ</b> bõ ‘ten’ àbõ ‘day after tomorrow’	<b>a vs. ǎ</b> sá ‘monkey’ sǎ ‘to roof’
<b>i vs. ĩ</b> sébí ‘thorn’ bí ‘one’	<b>ɛ vs. ě</b> ǰǎ ‘FOC’ àǰǎ ‘shea tree’	<b>ɔ vs. õ</b> ŋm̄kpó <sup>+</sup> kíróg ‘tree, sp.’ àkpó kǰéjmī ‘four hundred’	

## 2.6 Orthography decisions

In the remainder of this thesis, I have only distinguished fully contrastive sounds, unless where phonological analyses required more detail, especially in the chapters on phonology. In all cases, I used IPA symbols.

I write alveolar taps /r/ as <r> in the non-phonological parts of this grammar.

I write prepausal and pre-vocalic stops that neutralize the feature voice (previously indicated as *P*, *T* and *K*) as their voiced stop (or tap) counterparts *b*, *r* and *g*. Thus, ‘to count’ pronounced as [tɛ̄p̄] before a pause is written as <tɛ̄b>, ‘the outside of the belly’ pronounced as [àdèt̄] before a pause is written as <àdèr>, and ‘disease’ pronounced as [àdék̄] before a pause is written as <àdég>. When such stops occur before a consonant, their voice value depends on this following consonant. In such cases, I write the stop how it is realized (hence I write *b̄b̄* ‘to come out’, but *b̄psí* ‘to take out’).

Bilabial approximants [β] and glottal stops [ʔ], which are predictable from prosodic information, are written with the symbol of their voiced stop counterparts *b* and *g* respectively. The presentative demonstrative [βɛ̄] is written as <bɛ̄>, [àtáβí] ‘fish’ as <àtábí>, and [kpáʔárák̄] ‘tilapia’ as <kpágárág>.

The labial-velar nasal [ŋ̄m̄] only occurs before labial-velar stops. It can be considered as an allophone of any other nasal. It is represented in the orthography as <m> in the remainder of this grammar (cf. § 6.1.2).

In chapters on phonology, I represent /i/ with its IPA symbol <ɨ>. In other chapters, I replace it with the schwa symbol <ə>.

Where [ɛ̄] and [ĩ] are in free variation, they are represented as <ɛ̄> (or as <e> when the nasality is predictable). Where only [ĩ] occurs, and there is no free variation, it is written as <ĩ>.

I write H tones with an acute accent, as in <á>, L tones with a grave accent <à> and M tones with a macron <ā>. I represent HL tones with a circumflex <â>, LH tones with a caron <ǎ>, HM tones with an acute-macron accent <â̄> and ML tones with a macron-grave accent <ã̄>. Tones are written as realized after the application of the tone rules. Where helpful, I provide the lexical tones on a second tier of examples, as illustrated in § 3.1 below.

Since I do not apply a concept of *word* in this description, the orthography does not reflect any analysis of wordhood of particular elements. Morphemes are usually written as separate orthographic words, even if they are considered morphosyntactically or phonologically bound. Derivational markers that cannot occur by themselves, however, I write together with the stem they attach to, since they are part of the lexeme they help form. When two markers have merged in the course of history, I write them together. The parts of compounds, which can occur as separate utterances, I write as separate orthographic words.

In the future, I have plans to develop a practical orthography that is more accessible to Kam speakers and caters better for their needs and wishes. That orthography will abandon some IPA conventions in favor of Africanist conventions, such as representing [j] as <y> and [ɟ] as <c>. Other decisions, such as the representation of nasal vowels, how to write tones, and which phonological distinctions to preserve in the orthography, and how, will be discussed with speakers of the language.

### 3 Tones and tone rules

#### 3.1 Contrasts: L, M, H, LH, HL and HM

Kam is a tonal language where the tone-bearing unit is the syllable. Each syllable in a stretch of discourse gets assigned a pitch (or a combination of pitches) relative to other syllables. There are three contrastive tone levels in Kam: a low, mid and high referred to as L, M and H respectively in the remainder of this text. These can be combined into different combinations of tones in the same syllable, called contour tones. The four contour tones found in Kam utterances are LH, HL, HM and ML. Of these four, ML is always predictable from the surrounding phonological context as a prepausal L tone affected by M tone spread. Only LH, HL and HM are thus contrastive, in that their occurrence is not wholly predictable from the surrounding tones. In Kam, contour tones can appear on heavy syllables (CVC) as well as light syllables (CV), hence why syllables and not morae are the tone-bearing unit.

- (14) kpǒŋ ‘illiterate person’  
 ʃãg ‘African pike (fish, sp.)’  
 kûb ‘reedfish’  
 ɲĩ<sup>↓</sup>zá ‘nine’  
 kwî ‘walking stick’  
 zâ ‘frog’  
 bā ‘this one, PROX’

In the lexicon, each syllable of a morpheme is specified as carrying a L, M, H, LH, HL or HM tone, except for the final vowel *-i* (cf. § 12.2). *-i* is toneless and always takes the same tone as the preceding syllable. In context, a number of tone rules may apply to these lexical tone patterns, which I describe in § 3.2 below. Furthermore, some constructions have specialized tonal schemes that overwrite the lexical tones of morphemes. I discuss such grammatical tonal marking in the morphosyntax chapters of this grammar. The following example shows the occurrence of each tone in an utterance. The first line represents the surface realization of each morpheme in the utterance. The second line shows the lexical tones and a replacive grammatical tone (indicated with a backslash \). <sup>↓</sup> marks downstep, <sup>L</sup> indicates a floating low tone.



- (15)    *rí*                      <sup>+</sup>*kábírí*                      *rí*                      *h̀̀*  
           *rí<sup>L</sup>*                      *kàbírí\H*                      *rì*                      *h̀̀*  
           NEG.FUT                      break\NEG.FUT                      NEG.FUT                      NEG  
           ‘(Whatever you put in this bag,) (it) will not break.’  
           (session\_290, David Mark, elicitation)

Table 28 provides examples contrasting L, M, H level tones as well as LH and HL contour tones. Since a lexical HM tone is only found in the proximal demonstrative *bá*, it is not included in this table. For level tones, it is possible to provide minimal pairs. For contour tones, this is more difficult. This is due in part to their low frequency. LH contours are attested in only three stems (see example (38)). On the surface, HL contours are widely attested but, similar to HM contours, these are often the cause of prepausal H tone spread over an L-tone carrying syllable (cf. § 3.2.1). To illustrate contrasts, I discarded these cases since they are predictable and thus not contrastive. Where they cannot be explained by means of tone spread, HL contours occur in only nine nouns (see example (39)). That it is difficult to find minimal pairs contrasting contour tones with level tones show that these contrasts have a lower functional load. LH and HL are complex combinations of tones rather than units in themselves (see below).

**Table 28 - Evidence for tonal contrasts**

	L	M	H	LH
M	<i>m̀̀p̀̀m</i> ‘rain, n.’ <i>m̀̀p̄m</i> ‘wing’			
H	<i>ẁ̀</i> ‘blood’ <i>ẃ</i> ‘dog’	<i>àná</i> ‘today’ <i>àná</i> ‘father’		
LH	<i>ɲàŋ</i> ‘crybaby’ <i>kp̄ŋ</i> ‘illiterate person’	<i>kp̄áb</i> ‘to mix’ <i>kp̄ŋ</i> ‘illiterate person’	<i>kp̄áj</i> ‘usually’ <i>kp̄ŋ</i> ‘illiterate person’	
HL	<i>k̀̀b</i> ‘become weak’ <i>k̄b</i> ‘reedfish’	<i>kp̄áb</i> ‘mix’ <i>k̄b</i> ‘reedfish’	<i>f́g</i> ‘farm, n.’ <i>k̄b</i> ‘reedfish’	<i>kp̄ŋ</i> ‘illiterate person’ <i>k̄b</i> ‘reedfish’

Kam also features floating low tones, indicated with a superscript <sup>L</sup> and more rarely a floating high tone, written as <sup>H</sup>. A floating tone is a tone that does not belong to any syllable in the lexicon but that follows a syllable without attaching to it. It is only realized when that syllable is not prepausal, where its effects on syllables following the syllable in question can be observed. In example (15) above a floating <sup>L</sup> tone following the negative future morpheme *ri<sup>L</sup>* causes downstep of following H tones, a process that lowers the register of these tones by one step – H tones are pronounced lower than preceding H tones and M tones are pronounced lower than preceding M tones. Floating <sup>H</sup> tones occur in only two morphemes, the interrogatives *be<sup>H</sup> ... bi* ‘who’ and *ge<sup>H</sup> ... gi* ‘what’.

Cross-linguistically, a floating tone is often the remnant of a lost syllable that carried this tone (cf. Lionnet & Hyman 2018: 615-616, 622, 645). While this syllable has been lost, its tone has remained. In the absence of diachronic evidence, such an explanation is also assumed for floating tones in Kam.

Table 29 provides an overview of the positions in which different kinds of level and contour tones can occur. Level tones are not restricted to certain syllable shapes or to prosodically weak or strong positions. M tones occur fairly infrequently as a whole, and appear to be less frequent in weak syllables.

Lexical HL and HM tones only occur in prosodically strong syllables. Where they occur in prosodically weak positions, they are the result of H tone spread on a L or M tone before a pause. The same can be said for the occurrence of all ML contours, which are always the result of a M tone spreading on a prepausal L tone.

**Table 29 - Distribution of tones**

	Strong syllables	Weak syllables
<b>L</b>	+	+
<b>H</b>	+	+
<b>M</b>	+	+(rare)
<b>LH</b>	+(rare)	∅
<b>HL</b>	+	following H tones (due to H-spread on L)
<b>HM</b>	+(one case)	following H tones (due to H-spread on M)
<b>ML</b>	following M tones (due to M-spread on L)	

### 3.2 Tone rules

#### 3.2.1 H tone spread

A H tone usually spreads onto a following syllable. This happens anywhere, within stems and across all morphemes. H tone spread is in principle optional but occurs almost always. When it occurs, it delinks any following L and M tones, which may cause downstep (§ 3.2.3) or L-tone shift (§ 3.2.4). Occasionally, H tones spread one syllable further.

- (16) sírá      á<sup>+</sup>líb  
 sírá      àlíb  
 hair      head  
 ‘head hair’

- (17) ní      jó      <sup>+</sup>á      bā  
 ní      jō      á      bā  
 people    PL      PRSTT PROX:ID  
 ‘These are people.’

Tone spread is blocked by floating L tones, which occur, for example, on possessive indexes and on the existential quantifier *mí<sup>L</sup>*.

- (18) àŋfi      bú      <sup>+</sup>jō  
 àŋfi      bú<sup>-L</sup>      jō  
 child      3SG-POSS      PL  
 ‘his children’

- (19) nì      mí      sìrí      kā,  
 nì      mí<sup>L</sup>      sìrí      kā  
 thing      some    be.NEG      COND  
 ‘If there is nothing ...’

If H tone spreads onto a syllable before a pause, the result is a HL or HM contour.

- (20) àléŋ      **dág**      â  
 àléŋ      **dág**      à  
 sun      cool:PFV      PFV  
 ‘The sun has cooled down.’

- (21) àkpó bĩ  
 àkpó bĩ  
 twenty one  
 ‘Twenty’

### 3.2.2 M tone spread

M tones also spread over following L tone syllables (but not over H tone syllables). Like H tone spread, M tone spread delinks any following non-final L tones. In (23), the M tone spreads beyond the first following syllable, spreading one syllable further, and, since the final syllable is prepausal, the result is a ML contour tone. I occasionally observed such spreading beyond the following syllable, both of H tones and of M tones.

- (22) ñtǎ̃ ìtâr  
 ñtǎ̃ àtâr  
 star stone  
 ‘star of the stone’

- (23) tǔ ìtâr  
 tǔ àtâr  
 uncle stone  
 ‘uncle of the stone’

### 3.2.3 Downstep due to delinked L and M tones and floating <sup>l</sup> tones

When H tone spread or M tone spread delinks a L or M tone, the latter are typically pushed rightwards and cause downstep.

- (24) lùbrí í<sup>+</sup>ǔjí fō!  
 lùbrí àǔjí á-fō  
 uproot yam ADJ-dry:ADJ  
 ‘Uproot (the) cassava!’

- (25) tǎ̃ǎ̃ á <sup>+</sup>jí  
 tǎ̃ǎ̃ à jí  
 finish:PFV PFV stand  
 ‘It is finished’

Figure 16 shows a downstepped M tone on *jō* that is pronounced lower than a L tone at the beginning of the utterance. M is downstepped because of a delinked L tone (from *nùŋ* ‘eye’) due to H tone spread.

- (26) àmí núŋ <sup>+</sup>jō  
 àmí nùŋ jō  
 dew eye PL  
 ‘teardrops’

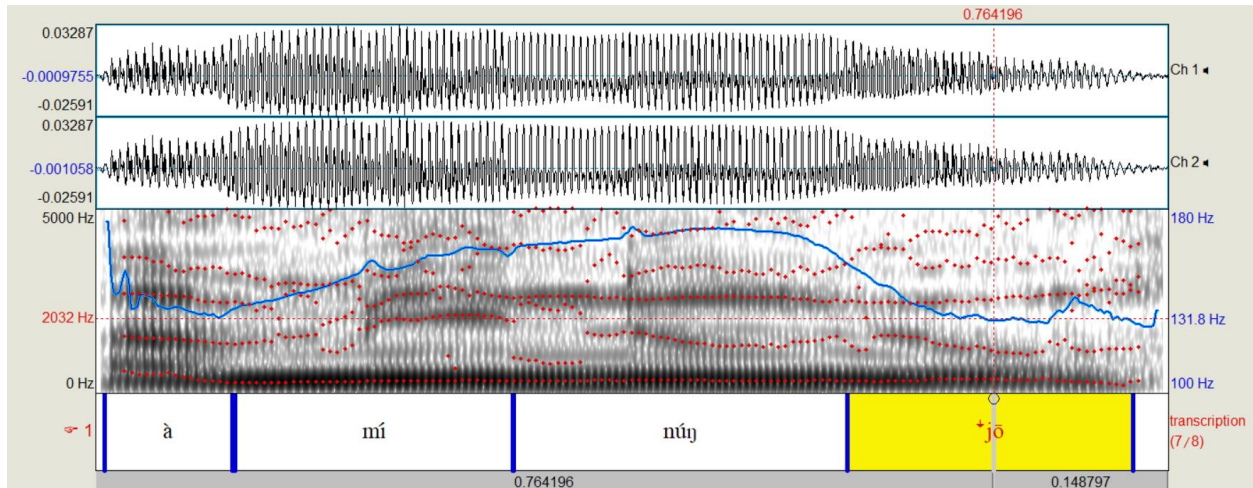


Figure 16 - Downstepped M tone

Floating <sup>L</sup> tones following segmental material (such as possessive pronominals and the existential quantifier *mi<sup>L</sup>*) also cause downstep of following tones.

- (27) àŋwà ŋgwóg ím <sup>+</sup>á  
 àŋwà àŋgwóg m<sup>L</sup> á  
 friend house my COP  
 ‘It is my neighbor.’

- (28) àwàn í <sup>+</sup>dí míŋkìm  
 àwàn í-<sup>L</sup> dí míŋ<sup>L</sup>kìm  
 king 3PL-POSS be different  
 ‘Their king was different.’  
 (session\_021, Yuguda Manti, narrative)

- (29)    *ɲì*        **mí**    <sup>+</sup>**dí**    *bé*    *kā*  
           *ɲì*        **mí<sup>L</sup>**    **dí**    *bē*    *kā*  
           thing    some    be    PRSTT COND  
           ‘If there is anything(, tell us.)’

### 3.2.4 L-tone and M-tone shift due to H tone spread

Sometimes, a delinked L or M tone does not cause downstep but simply shifts to the next syllable.

In (30), for example, a L tone is delinked from the perfective aspect marker *á* because of a H tone spreading from *wúrí* ‘answer’. Because of this delinked L tone, one would expect the following H tone in *ìjì<sup>L</sup>* to be realized as a downstepped <sup>+</sup>H tone. Instead, the L tone shifts fully to the right, and the first syllable of *ìjì<sup>L</sup>* is realized as L (*iji*) instead of a downstepped <sup>+</sup>H (<sup>+</sup>*iji*). It is not clear whether the initial lexical H tone of *ìjì<sup>L</sup>* is deleted.

- (30)    *àní*        *mí*        <sup>+</sup>**wúr**        **á**        **ìjì**  
           *àní*        *mí<sup>L</sup>*        **wúrí**        **à**        **ìjì<sup>L</sup>**  
           person    some    answer:PFV    PFV    QUOT:LOG.SG  
           ‘Someone<sup>i</sup> answered that he<sup>i</sup> (is the one who opened the window).’

In (31), the 2SG.S.PFV STAMP-morph *á* is expected to be realized as a downstepped H tone because of the M tone that is delinked from *bā*. Instead, the M tone fully shifts to *á* and is realized with a M tone as *ā*. Again, it is not clear whether the initial lexical H tone of the STAMP-morph *á* is deleted.

- (31)    *ɖʒá*        **bá**        **ā**                    *sín*    *â*  
           *ɖʒá*        **bā**        **á**                    *sín*    *à*  
           reason    REL    2SG.S.PFV    do:PFV REL  
           ‘The reason why you did it ...’

I have not investigated what dictates the choice between downstep and tone shift. It may, for example, have something to do with the pitch of the utterance, with the number of downsteps that have already occurred in the intonational phrase, or with personal preference.

## 3.2.5 Downdrift after L

H tones after L tones are pronounced on a lower pitch than previous H tones. Example (32) is illustrated in Figure 17.

- (32)    ɲìm      àwàn    jí      ɲwò̃m      á  
           ɲìm      àwàn    jí      àɲwò̃m      á  
           1SG.ID   king    people   Kam           PRSTT  
           ‘I am the king of Kam.’

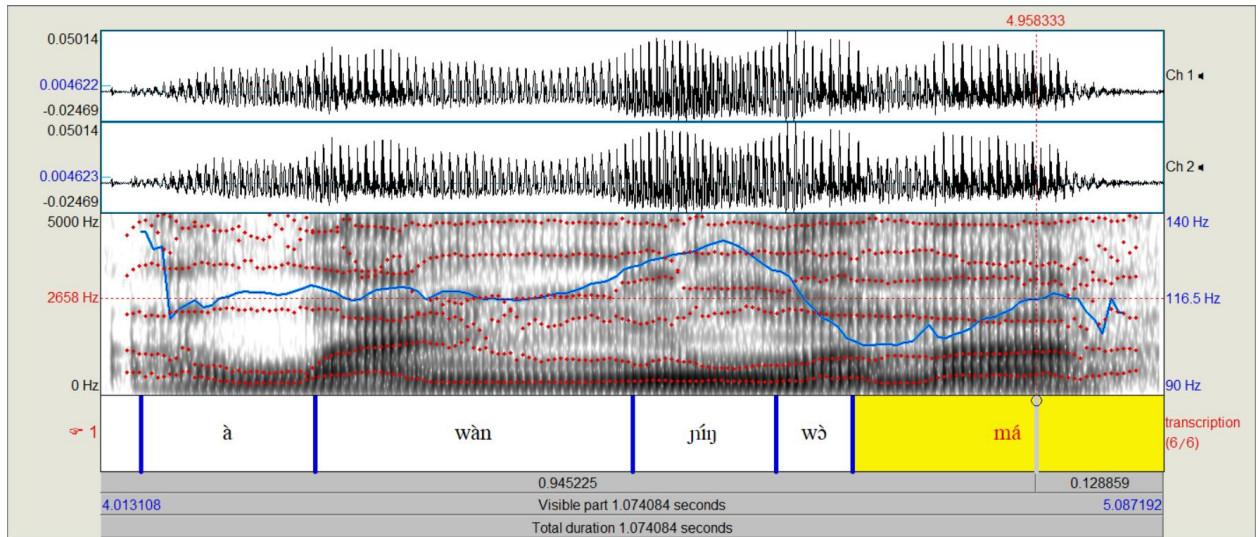


Figure 17 - Downdrift

## 3.2.6 Phonetic lowering after a succession of L-L

After a succession of two or more L tones, a following L can be phonetically lowered. In (33), I indicate such phonetic lowering with extra low symbols ( $\grave{a}$ ). The final example in (33) is illustrated in Figure 18. I only have controlled examples of this where the lowered tone is also prepausal. As such, this lowering may also be an effect of a boundary L tone.

- (33)    [là̃mìkà̃r] ‘earwax’  
           [bè̃r ɪ̃ʃò̃b] ‘haunted tree’  
           [à̃fà̃g ʃù̃rò̃g] ‘horn of elephant’  
           [ànù̃ɲ ɪ̃bò̃g] ‘ankle’

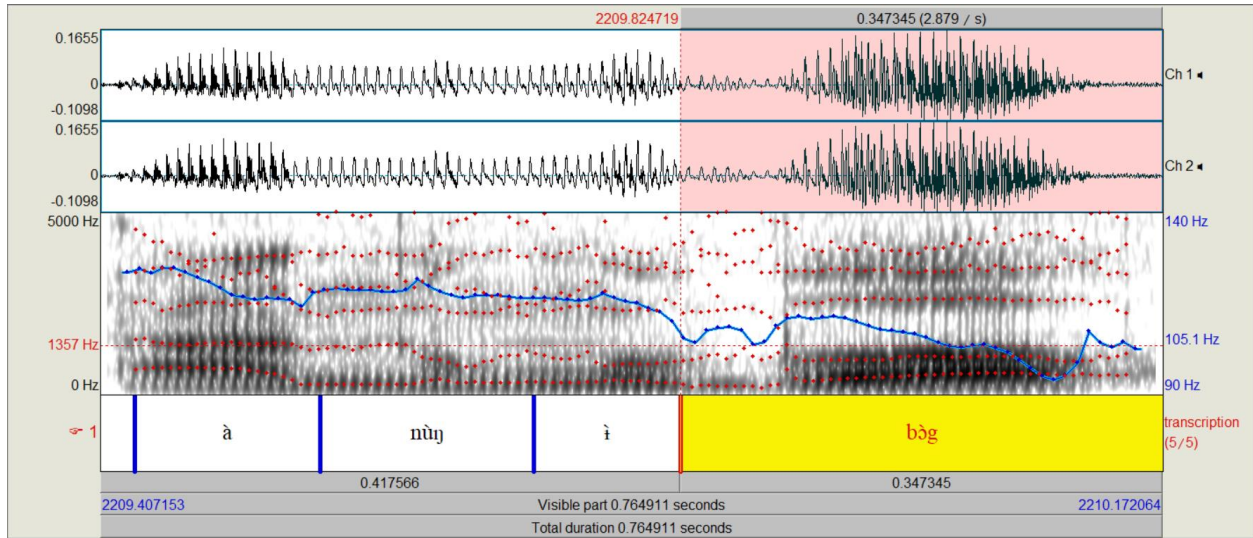


Figure 18 - Phonetic lowering after L-L

### 3.2.7 M → L/M\_#

The following phonological rule is currently unexplained. When two M tones meet before a pause, the second M tone is realized as L. This does not occur everywhere. I have only observed this in two examples from a single elicitation session. Future elicitation should verify this rule and clarify why it operates in some cases and not in others.

- (34) mē      ʃù      (cf. mē ʃù á bá ‘This is the mother of an uncle.’)  
       mē      ʃù  
       mother    uncle  
       ‘mother of the uncle.’

- (35) ʃù      mè  
       ʃù      mē  
       uncle    mother  
       ‘uncle of the mother’



### 3.3 Some internal reconstruction

#### 3.3.1 Two reconstructed tones: L and H

It is useful to take a step back and consider whether one of the three contrasting levels can be historically derived from (combinations of) the other two. And whether contours can be seen as sequences of level tones. Such diachronic hypotheses can help us to understand rules that are seemingly inexplicable on the surface. For Kam, the working assumption is that at an earlier stage of the language, there were only two tones, L and H. M tones as well as contour tones can be derived from just these two tones.

#### 3.3.2 Contour tones as sequences of level tones

Two basic contrastive contour tones are observed: HL and LH.<sup>54</sup> They consist of two tones and are not units in themselves. They are usually explainable as the result of resyllabification where two syllables merge into a single syllable. Note that H + L sequences can also result in the formation of HL contours by means of prepausal tone spread (cf. § 3.2.1). Resyllabification leading to contour tones is illustrated for LH contours in the following examples. No synchronic examples resulting in HL tones have been observed in the data.

- (36) zùg + á<sup>L</sup>-fǎ̃ → [zǔ<sup>+</sup>fǎ̃]  
 grass ADJ-fresh ‘fresh grass’
- (37) jì + á-gbàn → [jìgbàn]  
 person ADJ-female ‘woman’

There are a few contour tones in my data that are not explainable in this way, since it is not possible to find out whether a syllable has been lost. All of these examples could be lexicalized constructions and contour tones may be historically explainable by means of a similar process of historical resyllabification (cf. also § 6.2.2.2).

- (38) **Unexplained LH patterns**  
 kpǒŋ ‘illiterate person’  
 jǐ<sup>+</sup>zá ‘nine’  
 mǎ ‘to know’

---

<sup>54</sup> I do not take into account the sole HM contour tone observed in just one form, the proximal demonstrative/relativizer *bā̃*.

(39) **Unexplained HL patterns**

gbê ‘squirrel, sp.’

kûb ‘reedfish’

kùrìkí ‘God’

kwêj ‘mudfish’

kwî ‘walking stick’

pêj ‘axe’

sêŋsêŋ ‘pointed’

fâg ‘african pike (fish)’

zâ ‘frog’

bô ‘that, DIST’

## 3.3.3 M tones derive from LH sequences

In Kam, there are a few reasons to think that the three-tone L-M-H distinction goes back to a L vs. H distinction, and then specifically that M level tones derive from earlier LH contour tones.

One such indication is that M-tones are overall less frequent than L and H tones and are unevenly distributed across different word classes. Table 30 gives a count for M tones in different word classes in Kam. Note that it is only very late in the analysis of Kam (during my final fieldtrip) that I realized that M tones are distinctive. I did not have the opportunity to recheck all the items in my lexical database for the presence of a M tone. I included those stems that have not yet been checked for a possible M tone in the frequency counts. Some of those stems will turn out to have a M tone, some will turn out to have a H or L tone. Adjectives are not taken into account, since they are always morphologically complex, either synchronically or historically (cf. § 7.5).

**Table 30 – Counts of stems with M tones vs. other tones**

	<b>M</b>	<b>Possible M</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Nominal stems</b>	27 (4%)	25 (4%)	336 (55%)	224 (37%)	612
<b>Verbal stems</b>	4 (3%)	40 (28%)	76 (54%)	21 (15%)	141
<b>Other</b>	15 (9%)	58 (34%)	56 (32%)	44 (25%)	173
<b>Total</b>	<b>46 (5%)</b>	<b>123 (13%)</b>	<b>468 (51%)</b>	<b>289 (31%)</b>	<b>926</b>

M tones seem to appear very rarely in nouns. Possibly (given the ‘possible M’ counts) they occur more in verbs. They occur significantly more in ‘other’ elements, such as grammatical markers and adverbs. A possible explanation for the potentially skewed distribution with verbs is that verbal stems have historically

incorporated suffixes into current verb stems that used to be verb extensions. The original stems, then, would have had a L tone, and the extensions would have featured a H tone (as is usually the case with synchronic suffixes). When the suffixes were incorporated in and merged with the stem, the resulting L-H contour was simplified to a M tone. A similar explanation can be given for the skewed distribution in grammatical markers – which are often the target of shortening in historical processes – and in adverbs, which often appear historically complex, but cannot be synchronically segmented into parts in Kam.

Another reason to believe that LH contours and M tones are historically related is that in the surface realizations there is a big disparity between the frequencies of HL contours, which are fairly frequent, and LH contours, which are very rare. They occur in just three lexemes (38) and elsewhere, where they are the result of hiatus involving a L and a H syllable, they are often simplified (cf. (4)).

Thirdly, some instances of L + H syllables merging into one syllable with an M tone can be observed. The L-tone verb *mà* ‘give’, for example, has forms where different (H-tone) object indexes are phonologically fused to the verb. As the L syllables merge with the H syllables, the merged tones result in a M tone rather than a LH contour.

(40)    *mà*        +        *ń*        →        *mām*  
           give                    1SG.O            give:1SG.O  
           ‘give it to me!’

(41)    *mà*        +        *á*        →        *mā*  
           give                    2SG.O            give:2SG.O  
           ‘give it to you!’

(42)    *mà*        +        *ú*        →        *mō*  
           give                    3SG              give:3SG  
           ‘give it to him!’

(43)    *mà*        +        *í*        →        *mē*  
           give                    3PL              give:3PL  
           ‘give it to them!’

## 4 Prosodic prominence

Syllables in a stretch of discourse in Kam can be prosodically prominent or prosodically weak. Such prominence is comparable to stress in many other languages. It goes together with a number of phonetic and phonological characteristics and understanding the prosodic structure of stems is essential to understanding the segmental phonology of Kam.

In § 4.1, the notions of prosodic prominence and prosodic stems are introduced. § 4.2 describes the phonetic and phonological characteristics of prosodically strong and prosodically weak syllables. A summary of where strong and weak syllables are found in the lexicon is also provided. Partial reduplication is analyzed as a special case of a construction where prominence asymmetries are realized in other ways than elsewhere in the language. In § 4.3.3, I give an overview of lexemes that are comprised of just one morphological stem but more than one prosodic stem.

### 4.1 *Introduction: Prosodic prominence and stem structure in Kam*

#### 4.1.1 Prosodic prominence and ‘stress’

Kam utterances are made up of sequences of syllables pronounced with higher and lower prosodic prominence. Prosodic prominence indicates the amount of energy with which a syllable is pronounced. One could say that syllables with higher vs. lower prosodic prominence in Kam are the equivalent of stressed vs. unstressed syllables in a language such as English. Prosodic prominence in Kam does not indicate exactly the same idea stress does in English, however. Whereas in English, stress may be characterized by a rise in pitch (Ladefoged and Johnson 2014: 250), this is not usually the case for prosodic prominence in Kam, simply because pitch is already controlled by the tonal structure of Kam utterances. Other phonetic and phonological features do correlate with various degrees of prosodic prominence in Kam, however, such as the following. These characteristics and others are discussed and exemplified more elaborately in § 4.2 below.

- a longer duration of (onset) stops, vowels and syllables in general,
- prosodically strong syllables are impressionistically louder than prosodically weak syllables,
- lenis variants of certain consonants only occur in prosodically weak positions; longer or stronger variants of certain vowels only occur in prosodically strong positions (e.g. in the form of optional diphthongization),

- in general, prosodically strong syllables can feature a wider variety of contrasts: some sounds, such as labial-velars and voiceless stops may only occur in prosodically strong syllables,
- when two consonants happen to become adjacent, a consonant in weak position assimilates to a consonant in prosodically strong position,
- free variation between certain sounds in prosodically weak positions that are contrastive in prosodically strong positions,
- underspecification or prespecification of some features in prosodically weaker positions, such as neutralization of the voice feature of stops and height of vowels in the copy part of reduplicated verbs,
- in some cases, prosodically weak syllables can be dropped.

The first two statements are based on impressions and await further measuring. Some are phonetic, such as duration of sounds, loudness, and occurrence of lenis variants of certain consonants. Others are phonological, such as assimilation, free variation of otherwise contrastive sounds and neutralization.

#### 4.1.2 Morphological vs. prosodic stems

The **morphological stem** of a noun, verb, adjective or adverb in Kam is its form stripped of all other synchronically identifiable morphological operations. This also means that a stem features no tonal morphology and comes with its lexical tones. By way of example, the stem of the verb *jisi* ‘to put straight’ is *jī* ‘to stand up’: *jī* is stripped off the replacive L tone and the *-sí* suffix that turned it into a causative verb (see §12.4).

Sometimes, stems cannot occur by themselves as a separate utterance. *fò*, for example, is not a verb in itself, but is the stem of the attributive adjective *áfò* ‘dry’, which carries the prefix *á<sup>L</sup>*- that elsewhere turns verbs into adjectives (§ 7.5).

Morphological structure is not discussed in this chapter, which targets issues related to phonology and does not go deeper into many morphosyntactic issues. Chapters 7 and 12 deal with the morphological makeup of different word classes in their respective sections.

A term related to, but not identical to morphological stem is **prosodic stem**. A prosodic stem consists of a strong syllable and all the prosodically weak syllables that follow it. In other words, a prosodic stem is a unit that runs from the beginning of one prosodically strong syllable to the beginning of the next one. There is a conceptual parallel between prosodic stems and morphological stems in the sense that in both cases the stem is a basic unit to which weaker or dependent items (such as affixes) attach. A prosodic stem typically coincides with the morphological stem of a lexeme, for example in many imperative

utterances, where a verb's morphological stem is typically used. Thus, *núŋ* 'drink!' is both a prosodic stem and a morphological stem. At the same time, there are also many cases where morphological stems do not coincide with prosodic stems. Many nouns, for example, feature an initial *à*-segment that is not morphologically segmentable from its stem. In prosodic terms, however, this *à* should be considered a prefix, for reasons that are outlined in § 4.2.9 below. Another notable example is the presentative demonstrative *bē*, which has a prosodically weak variant of [b], namely [β], as its initial segment, but which can occur in many different slots in a sentence and in that sense is morphologically free (cf. § 18.3). The causative derivational suffix *-tí* is an example of a suffix that always needs a verbal host and is not a morphological stem. In prosodic terms, however, it is a strong syllable, since [t] only occurs in prosodically strong positions in Kam. Since the coincidence of prosodic stems with morphological stems is the canonical situation, we could hypothesize that cases deviating from this pattern such as *-tí* are the result of recent or ongoing language change. In this instance, *tí* was probably historically a separate morphological stem as well as a separate prosodic stem. Causative verbs such as *ʃɔp-tí* 'to make hot, to boil' are probably the result of historical multi-verb constructions with a now defunct verb (or with the current verb *tí* 'to hit').

Prosodic strength is specified in the lexicon for every syllable, in a similar fashion that stress can be specified for every stem in some languages, and in a similar way that tonal patterns are also encoded for stems in Kam.

### 4.1.3 Stem-initial prominence and stem-final weakening

Prosodic prominence is partly predictable from morphological structure. The first syllable with an onset is usually prosodically prominent in morphological stems, and most morphological stems feature just one prosodic stem. So, the prosodic stem of *m̄pīrī* 'goat' is *pīrī*, the prosodic stem of *àlib* 'head' is *lib*, and the prosodic stem of *kár* 'to accompany' is simply *kár*. This system is in accordance with what has been found for many other languages in the Macro-Sudan belt (cf. § 1.1), where stem-initial prominence is identified as a salient areal phenomenon (Idiatov & Van de Velde 2015; Lionnet & Hyman 2018: 652-655). This initial prominence is also apparent in the fact that in all monosyllabic morphological CVC stems, the onset is prosodically stronger than the coda. This is most clearly shown by (a) the neutralization of voicing contrasts for stops in coda position and by (b) the general positional constraints on consonants and vowels in CVC-syllables. (a) and (b) have been treated to some extent in chapter II. They are treated in more detail and exemplified in § 5.2 below.

Prosodic prominence is not always predictable from the morphological structure of the lexeme alone, since there are many exceptions to the rule that (only) the first CV syllable of a morphological stem is prominent. Some exceptions have already been discussed in the previous paragraph, including the

morphosyntactically independent presentative demonstrative  $b\bar{e}$  that only consists of a prosodically weak syllable and is not a prosodic stem in itself. All other exceptions concern one morphological stem consisting of more than one prosodic peak. It is likely that such instances go back to historically complex morphemes, where the morphological-prosodic stem relationship was more regular. These exceptions are treated in § 4.3.3, following a discussion of the specific characteristics of prosodically prominent and prosodically weak syllables in § 4.2.

Finally, it should be mentioned that partial reduplication constructions behave exceptionally where prosodic prominence and stem structure are concerned. Such constructions are treated separately in § 4.3.2.

## *4.2 Characteristics of prosodically strong and weak positions*

### 4.2.1 Overview

Prosodically weak positions are characterized by a number of features that set them apart from prosodically strong positions. Table 31 provides an overview of these characteristics and the following paragraphs further discuss each characteristic individually.

**Table 31 - Characteristics of prosodically weak and strong syllables**

		<b>Prosodically weak positions</b>	<b>Prosodically strong positions</b>
<b>Acoustic</b>	<b>Length (duration)</b>	Shorter (syllables, consonants, vowels)	Longer (syllables, consonants, vowels)
	<b>Loudness (intensity)</b>	Less loud	Louder
<b>Consonants</b>	<b>Direction of assimilation in consonant clusters</b>	Target of assimilation	Trigger of assimilation
	<b>Lenition of stops</b>	Stops are lenited or in free variation with a lenis variant	Stops are not lenited
	<b>Free variation between [l] and [r]</b>	Yes	No
<b>Vowels</b>	<b>Centralization of /i/ and /e/, leading to loss of the contrast between [i], [e] and [ɪ]</b>	Free variation between centralized and non-centralized variants	Usually no centralization. No neutralization.
	<b>Diphthongization</b>	No	Optional
	<b>Dropping or centralization of /a/</b>	Yes	No
<b>Sound inventory</b>	<b>Phoneme inventory</b>	Smaller	Larger
	<b>Complex onsets</b>	No	Yes
	<b>Lexical contour tones</b>	No	Yes

#### 4.2.2 Length (duration)

Prosodically weak syllables are impressionistically shorter. Consonants and vowels in prosodically weak syllables tend to be shorter than those in prosodically strong syllables. Measurements have yet to be provided in future investigations of this property.

Onsetless prosodic prefixes (§ 4.2.9) are a notable exception. When pronounced in isolation in citation speech, these are sometimes lengthened by informants (for example in session\_018).

#### 4.2.3 Loudness (intensity)

Prosodically weak syllables generally have lower intensity than the prosodically strong syllables within the same prosodic domain. This feature likewise requires instrumental confirmation.

#### 4.2.4 Direction of assimilation in consonant clusters

Consonants in prosodically weak positions are usually the target of assimilation. Consonants in prosodically strong positions usually trigger assimilation.



Nasals in prosodic prefixes are always homorganic with the following consonant. The same goes for first person singular subject indexes (See § 8.2). This is not always the case for nasal codas, which are not necessarily homorganic. Only a stem-final *n* assimilates to any following consonant. Before labial-velar stops, similarly, *m* becomes a labial-velar nasal. Other stem-final nasals do not assimilate (see also § 6.1.2 and Table 33 on p. 127).

(44) **Homorganic nasals in prosodic prefixes**

**m̃.pá**ḡí ‘monkey, sp.’

**ñ.tén** ‘spear, sp.’

**ḡ.kó**ḡ ‘louse’

**ḡm̃.gbè**tè ‘pouched rat’

**án.twà**b ‘young’

**àḡ.gwó**ḡ ‘house’

(45) ***n* assimilates to following consonants**

bén ‘say’ + mām ‘give me’ → [bé**mm**ám] ‘tell me’

mín ‘thus’ + kā ‘conditional’ → [mí**ḡ**kā] ‘if (it) is like that ...’

tán ‘stay’ + pè ‘come’ → [tá**mp**è] ‘(they then) stood here’

(46) **Assimilation before labial-velar onsets**

nínnám ‘flesh’ + kpò ‘body’ → [nínná**ḡm**kpò] ‘flesh of the body’

màn ‘fat’ + gbóʔó ‘shin’ → [mà**ḡm**gbóʔó] ‘bone marrow’

(47) **Non-homorganic nasals in nasal codas**

**fám.kò**n ‘sparrow’ (unanalyzable noun)

**fám-lí** ‘to feed someone’ (cf. *àfám* ‘meat’, possibly with a historical causative suffix)

**kòm-sí** ‘to engage’ (kóm ‘to tie’ + -sí ‘causative’ + LH replacive tone)

**ḡkám sù** ‘bladder’ (ḡkám ‘under’ + sù ‘navel’)

**m̃púḡ ɖʒó**ḡ ‘ritual calabash’ (m̃púḡ ‘calabash’ + ɖʒóḡ ‘magic, sp.’)

**ʃòḡ.tí** ‘remove’ (cf. -tí suffix)

## 4.2.5 Lenition of stops

The onset of prosodically weak syllables features lenis variants of bilabial, velar and alveolar stops (see also Table 6 in Chapter 2).

Voicing contrasts are neutralized in this position. The bilabial allophone in this position is the bilabial approximant [β]. The velar stop shows up lenited as the velar approximant [uɣ] or the glottal stop [ʔ]. In the case of the glottal stop, we can speak of debuccalization (cf. Harris 2009). The alveolar stop shows up lenited either as the tap [ɾ] or the lateral approximant [l]. These allophones are generally in free variation, but some speakers prefer [ɾ] in one item and [l] in other items. Different speakers have different preferences. Possibly, there is dialectal variation as well, although this needs to be confirmed.

- (48) séβí ‘thorn, fin’, with alternative pronunciation [sé**b**í]  
 àtáβí ‘fish’, with alternative pronunciation [àtá**b**í]  
 bāʔí ‘to lower your forehead’, with alternative pronunciations [bāuí] and [bā**g**í]  
 tàʔí ‘to happen’, with alternative pronunciations [tàuí] and [tà**g**í]  
 mìràsà ‘python’, with alternative pronunciation [mìlàsà]  
 àǰárí ‘wisdom’, with alternative pronunciation [àǰǎlí]

When [b, g, d] are pronounced instead of the lenis variants, these are also produced with less energy than their prosodically strong counterparts. The following figures give an example of a prosodically strong syllable *bā* in *àrí bā* ‘like this’ and a prosodically weak syllable *bà* in *jí ɲwàb à* ‘all the people’ from the same elicitation session with the same speaker (session\_286, Babangida Audu, elicitation) in very similar environments. The prosodically strong *b* is almost twice the length (100ms) of the prosodically weak *b* (51ms).

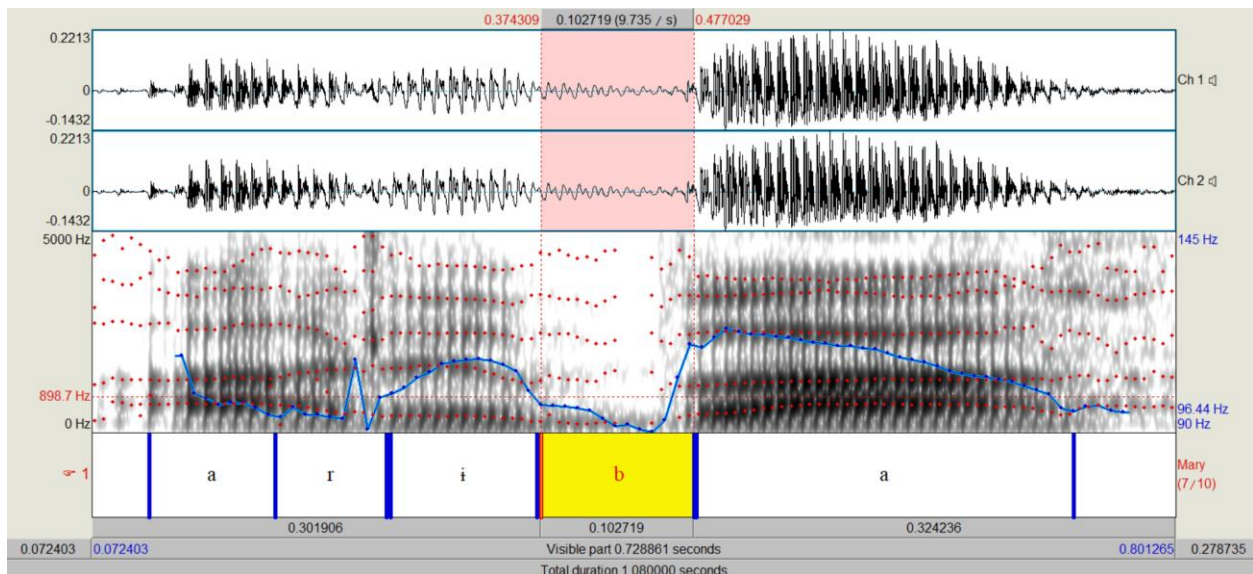


Figure 19 - prosodically strong syllable *bā* - /b/ takes 100 milliseconds

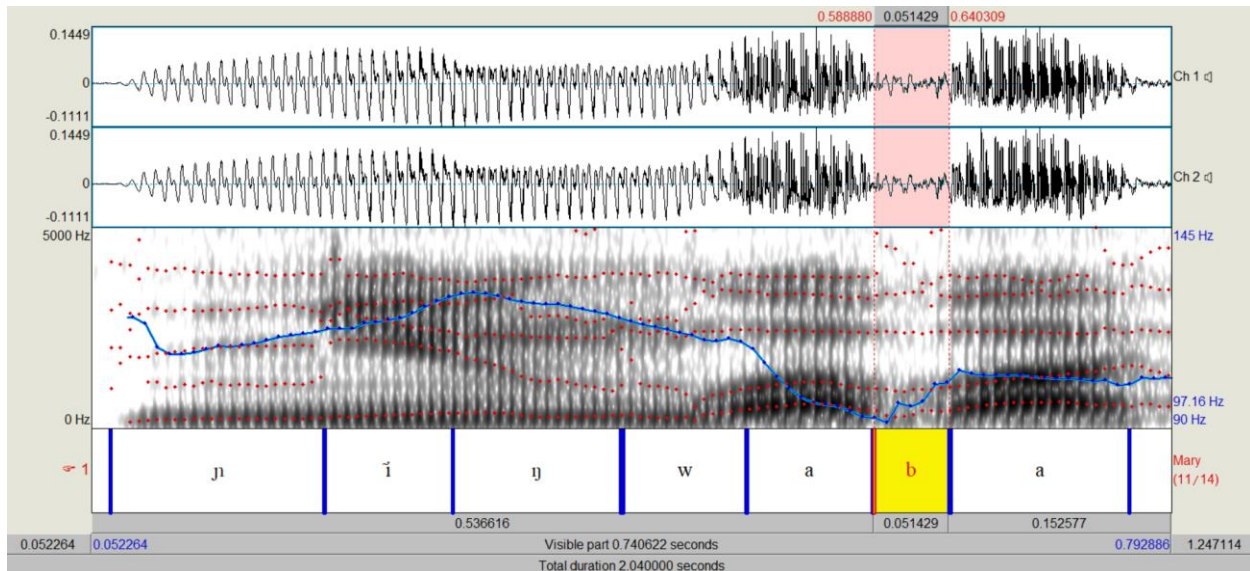


Figure 20 - Prosodically weak syllable bà: /b/ takes 51 milliseconds

#### 4.2.6 Free variation between [r] and [l] in prosodically weak positions

The free variation between [r] and [l] that can be observed in the last two examples of (48) is a characteristic of prosodically weak syllables. It does not occur in prosodically strong positions.

(49) **/r/ and /l/ are not in free variation in prosodically strong positions**

rì ‘imperative marker’ cannot be pronounced [li]

jīrāk̄ ‘two’ cannot be pronounced [jīlāk̄]

ʃè-rí ‘to chop’ cannot be pronounced [ʃèli] (rí is a prosodically strong derivational suffix)

là ‘skin’ cannot be pronounced [rà]

àlíp̄ ‘head’ cannot be pronounced [àríp̄]

àlúlù ‘kneecap’ cannot be pronounced [àlúrù]

In a few lexemes, [r] does not alternate with [l] in prosodically weak positions. In other lexemes, [l] does not alternate with [r]. These exceptions are treated as lexical exceptions. Those cases are listed in § 2.2.1.

#### 4.2.7 Centralization of /i/ and /e/ in prosodically weak positions

The distinctions between /i/ vs. /ɨ/ and /e/ vs. /ɨ/ are lost in prosodically weak syllables. This can be seen as an effect of centralization of /e/ and /i/ in prosodically weak syllables. /ɨ/ is often realized more centrally as [ə] in this position.

- (50) **Prosodically weak syllables with [i]**  
 séβí ‘thorn, fin’ (alternative pronunciations: séβé, séβɨ)  
 àtáβí ‘fish’ (alternative pronunciations: àtáβé, àtáβɨ)  
 bāʔí ‘to lower your head’ (alternative pronunciations: bāʔé, bāʔɨ)  
 tàʔí ‘to happen’ (alternative pronunciations: tàʔé, tàʔɨ)  
 wòʔí ‘to hide’ (alternative pronunciations: wòʔé, wòʔɨ)  
 kùríkí ‘God’ (alternative pronunciations: kùríkí, kùrəkí)

- (51) **Prosodically strong syllables with /i/ and /e/**

àbì ‘song’  
 àbè ‘draw soup, sp.’  
 tí ‘to hit’  
 fé ‘to break (something long)’  
 kùptí ‘to kneel down’  
 ñmgbètè ‘pouched rat’  
 kùríkí ‘God’  
 àdʒíríkí ‘epilepsy’

This effect is somewhat counteracted in certain environments. The alveolar tap *r* can, for example, progressively or regressively centralize /i/ and /e/, an effect observed in the last two examples of (51). [i] also does not occur in CVC syllables (see § 5.2.2 below).

#### 4.2.8 Optional diphthongization in prosodically strong positions

In a number of environments, specified in § 6.2.2.1, vowels are optionally diphthongized. This only happens in prosodically strong positions.

- (52) sísé or [sísɨ́é] ‘adder’  
 àlè or [àlɨ́è] ‘cave’  
 m̀p̀òm or [m̀p̀uòm] ‘rain, n.’  
 gó, or [gɨ́ó] ‘guest, stranger’

## 4.2.9 Elision or centralization of /a/ in prosodically weak positions

In peripheral prosodically weak positions, that is, syllables at the boundary of prosodic stems, an /a/ can be dropped or centralized to [ɨ]. /a/ is never dropped in prosodically strong positions.

This is most apparent in prosodic *a*-prefixes on nouns. These are centralized to *i* or simply dropped when such nouns do not occur utterance-initially. (53)–(57) exemplify this process. The lexical form of each noun with the *a*-prefix is provided written on the second line of each example. In (53), (54) and (55), *a*- is dropped. In the other examples, *a*- is centralized to *i*-. When *a*- has a L tone, this L tone is preserved when *a*- is dropped and causes downstep of the following tones (54) or blocks tone spread if the following tone is L (53).

- (53)      ḿ                    pé                    kàptì  
             ń                    pè\H                àkàptì  
             1SG.S.PFV          come\PFV          morning  
             ‘I came in the morning.’  
             (session\_034, Samuel A. Adams, conversation)

- (54)      sírá          <sup>+</sup>lìb  
             sírá          àlìb  
             hair          head  
             ‘head hair’

- (55)      àṅgwóg  wàn  
             àṅgwóg  àwàn  
             house  king  
             ‘house of the king’

- (56)      ñkùm          ìbòg  
             ñkùm          àbòg  
             back          foot  
             ‘back of the foot’

- (57)      àwàn          jág                    í<sup>+</sup>ṅgwó?          á  
             àwàn          jàg\H                àṅgwóg            à  
             king          carry\PFV          house              PFV

mà	ʃì	bú
mà	àʃì	bú <sup>L</sup>
give	son	3SG-POSS

‘The king has given the house to his son.’

(Tope\_Bitrus\_05, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

#### 4.2.10 Larger phoneme inventory in prosodically strong positions

Prosodically strong positions host a higher diversity of phonemes. Onsets of prosodically strong syllables may feature more different consonant phonemes than those of prosodically weak syllables. Prosodically strong syllables similarly feature more different vowel phonemes than prosodically weak syllables. Many contrasts are neutralized in prosodically weak positions, including prosodically weak onsets, the nucleus of prosodically weak syllables and codas in general, which are always prosodically weak (see § 5.2.1 below).

Table 6 in § 2.2.2 shows all twenty-four different consonants that can occur in the onset of prosodically strong syllables. These are exemplified in (58). Note that there are no examples of /h/ occurring in CV-syllables. This is likely due to the very low frequency of this phoneme (§ 2.2.1)

(58) **Consonants in the onset of prosodically strong CV and CVC syllables**

<b>p</b> è ‘to come’	<b>p</b> én ‘to jump’
<b>b</b> ō ‘ten’	<b>b</b> ēt̄ ‘tree’
<b>t</b> í ‘to hit’	<b>t</b> èk̄ ‘to run’
<b>d</b> ó ‘to insult’	<b>d</b> èp̄ ‘to buy’
<b>k</b> à ‘to harvest maize’	<b>k</b> im̄ ‘to bite’
<b>g</b> ó ‘stranger’	<b>g</b> ìn ‘to drum’
<b>m</b> ē ‘mother’	<b>m</b> èt̄ ‘to swallow’
<b>n</b> ì.gí ‘to stamp’	<b>n</b> àp̄ ‘to cut’
<b>ɲ</b> í ‘person’	<b>ɲ</b> àt̄ ‘to drip’
<b>ɲ</b> à.tí ‘to open (one’s mouth)’	<b>ɲ</b> àn.sí ‘to bend’
<b>r</b> ì ‘comitative preposition’	<b>r</b> ik̄ ‘emphatic particle’
<b>f</b> à ‘to raise chickens’	<b>f</b> àk̄ ‘to close’
<b>v</b> à ‘to mix’	<b>v</b> ék̄ ‘to die’
<b>s</b> à ‘to roof a building’	<b>s</b> át̄ ‘to comb’
<b>z</b> â ‘frog’	<b>z</b> àŋ ‘to wrestle’
<b>à.f</b> ã ‘floodplain’	<b>f</b> ãk̄ ‘to laugh’
/h/: no example	<b>h</b> wát̄ ‘to think’
<b>l</b> à ‘skin’	<b>l</b> àk̄ ‘to lick’
<b>j</b> é ‘to enter’	<b>j</b> ép̄ ‘to fry’
<b>w</b> ó ‘dog’	<b>w</b> àp̄ ‘to tie’
<b>ɸ</b> è ‘guinea corn’	<b>ɸ</b> èm̄ ‘to burn’
<b>àɸ</b> è ‘moon’	<b>ɸ</b> ɸip̄ ‘to fence a place’
<b>k</b> pò ‘body’	<b>k</b> pát̄ ‘to rain’
<b>g</b> bá ‘flute, sp.’	<b>g</b> bèp̄ ‘to beat’

Only nine different consonants are attested in the onset of prosodically weak syllables (cf. in Table 6 in § 2.2.2):

- (59)    ñtí**m**á ‘sheep’  
           dʒā**ŋ**ē ‘to crawl’  
           ʃ**ɲ**inè ‘teeth gums’  
           mìr**r**àsà ‘python’  
           àf**ɲ**íl ú ‘his needle’  
           kà**j** ú ‘his falcon’  
           gà**w** ú ‘his ribs’  
           àt**á**bí [át**á**ʃ**ɲ**] ‘fish’  
           bā**g**ī [bā**ʒ**ī] ‘to lower one’s head’

In prosodically strong open syllables, all eight vowel qualities are attested (cf. Table 8 in § 2.3.2), as well as the four nasal vowels.

- (60)    à.b**ì** ‘song’  
           k**í** ‘instrumental preposition’  
           sí.s**é** ‘adder’  
           p**è** ‘to come’  
           kp**ò** ‘body’  
           gb**ó**.ʔ**ó** ‘shin’  
           ʃ**ū** ‘maternal uncle’  
           kp**à** ‘wrapper’  
           v**ì** ‘pot, sp.’  
           n.ʃ**é** ‘war’  
           dʒ**ò** ‘fly’  
           gb**á** ‘flute, sp.’

The diphthong **ĩè** is also found in (just) one prosodically strong syllable (à.l**ĩè** ‘armband’, see § 2.3.1.4).



In prosodically weak positions, only six contrasting vowels are attested (cf. Table 8 in § 2.3.2).

- (61) séβí ‘thorn, fin’  
 kàj ú ‘his falcon’  
 mìràsà ‘python’  
 àmìrēg ‘nose’  
 m̀pīrōg ‘rat’  
 á<sup>+</sup>bó?órí ‘black’

#### 4.2.11 Complex onsets only occur in prosodically strong positions

Complex onsets are only found in prosodically strong syllables. Examples of this can be found in § 5.5. In § 6.2.2.2, it is argued that wV sequences in syllables with complex onsets could go back to sequences of two vowels that were merged into one syllable. The alternative possibility that wV-syllables should be analyzed as diphthongs is also briefly discussed there. In § 5.5.1, all possible Cw-sequences are given, and in § 6.2.2.2 all possible wV-sequences are given.

#### 4.2.12 Lexical contour tones only occur in prosodically strong positions

Lexical contour tones (i.e. those that are not caused by H tone spread) can only occur in prosodically strong syllables. This is discussed and exemplified in Table 29 in chapter II.

### 4.3 *Prosodically strong and weak syllables in their morphological contexts*

#### 4.3.1 Overview

Table 32 gives an overview of different types of syllables which can be prosodically strong or prosodically weak, and an indication in which morphological contexts they are found. Examples can be found in the sections referenced in the table.

The morphemes including prosodically strong syllables are all made up of at least one prosodic stem. These include:

- nominal and verbal stems, but also
- the verbal derivational suffixes *-rì*, *-sì* and *-tì*,
- all subject indexes except for the first person singular indexes, which are always made up of a homorganic nasal *N*
- prepositions proper such as *kí* ‘INSTR’ and *rì* ‘COM’,
- preverbal tense and aspect markers such as *rì* ‘IPFV’ and *sì* ‘SEQ’
- clause-final markers such as *kā* ‘COND’, *ríg* ‘NEG.POSS’, *h̀̀* ‘NEG’.

It is likely that some of the grammatical markers in this list have recently grammaticalized from nouns (e.g. through grammaticalization of possessive constructions) or verbs (e.g. through grammaticalization of multi-verb constructions) but have retained the prosodically strong status of their lexical precedents.

The morphemes that do not contain prosodically weak syllables mostly occur following a lexical stem when they are used in utterances. They can be morphologically analyzed as suffixes (when they always occur after items of the same word class, e.g. the verbal extensions) or clitics (when they can occur following items of different word classes, e.g. the conditional *kā*, the negative possessive *ríg* and the negator *h̀̀*).

**Table 32 - Types of prosodically strong and weak syllables**

<b>(Morphemes with) prosodically strong syllables</b>	<b>(Morphemes with) prosodically weak syllables</b>
The first syllable with an onset of morphological stems of nouns <sup>55</sup> , verbs, adjectives and adverbs (§ 4.1.3).	Stem-initial vowels, syllabic nasals, and VN-sequences ('prosodic prefixes' on nouns and adjectives, nominal derivation prefixes, subject indexes) (§ 4.2.9)
Non-initial syllables with (obligatory) non-lenited consonants as the onset in (hypothetically) historically complex lexemes, including proper names, compounds and apparent reduplications (§ 4.3.3). Non-initial syllables with an onset, in borrowed lexemes (§ 4.3.3)	Non-initial syllables with (optionally or obligatory) lenited consonants as the onset in many morphological noun, verb, adjective and adverb stems (§ 4.1.3).
Verbal derivational suffixes <i>-rí</i> , <i>-sí</i> and <i>-tí</i> (§ 12.4)	CV-syllables including a vocalic grammatical marker such as <i>à</i> 'PFV' (§ 13.5), the inflectional/derivational final vowel <i>-i</i> (§ 12.3.2), <i>ú<sup>L</sup></i> '3SG:POSS', <i>i<sup>L</sup></i> '3PL:POSS' (§ 8.4), <i>à</i> 'PROX', <i>ò</i> 'DIST' (§ 9.2).
Most subject indexes (§ 8.2)	The first person subject indexes <i>Ḷ</i> and <i>Ḷ̇</i> (§ 8.2)
Prepositions proper such as <i>kí</i> 'instrumental', <i>rí</i> 'comitative' (§ 11.2.2) Preverbal tense and aspect markers such as <i>rí</i> 'imperfective', <i>sí</i> 'sequential' (§ 13.3.1, § 17.4.2) Clause-final particles such as <i>kā</i> 'conditional' (§ 17.4), <i>rīg</i> 'negative possessive' (§ 13.6.2), <i>hñ</i> 'negator' (§ 13.6.2) The nominal topicalizer <i>džē</i> (§ 18.2)	The presentative demonstrative <i>bē</i> (§ 9.2.2, § 18.3), the quotative marker <i>ibi<sup>L</sup>/iji<sup>L</sup></i> (§ 17.6).

#### 4.3.2 Prosodic proclitics: the special case of partial reduplication

Partial reduplication is a productive morphological process in Kam for forming future, experiential perfect and resultative forms of verbs. There are also cases of apparently non-motivated reduplication: some lexemes in the language only exist in a reduplicated form or are found in a reduplicated form most of the time. An overview of the functions of partial reduplication constructions can be found in § 12.5. Partial reduplication is important for this chapter in that it shows a prominence asymmetry between the morphological stem that is used as the base and the copy of that stem. They contrast with other morphemes discussed in this chapter, however, in a few important ways.

<sup>55</sup> Nominal prepositions are included under nouns here.

Partial reduplications are phonologically exceptional in the following ways:

- a) The most prominent syllable is not the initial but the second syllable of the construction.
- b) The prosodically weaker syllable is characterized by a vowel prespecified for height: it is always a high vowel, either /i/ or /u/. Such dramatic neutralization and marking of prosodic weakness are not featured anywhere else in Kam.
- c) The prosodically weaker syllable in reduplications can feature any onset consonant that elsewhere occurs in prosodically strong syllables.
- d) The coda consonant of the copy of the reduplication assimilates more easily to the onset of the base than is generally the case at other morpheme boundaries. The result of such assimilation is usually a geminated consonant.

Resultative forms of verbs show the following additional characteristics that do not occur in other partial reduplication constructions.

- e) The prosodically more prominent syllable is marked by a higher pitch than usual if the base has a L-H tonal pattern. Such raising is local: following H tones go back to the base level. Measurements have yet to be provided. Higher pitch is used nowhere else to mark prosodically strong syllables.
- f) High vowels in the stronger syllable have more peripheral vowel formants. Their height is slightly more exaggerated. Measurements have yet to be provided. This is used nowhere else to mark prosodically strong syllables.

Characteristics a)-f) show that there clearly is a prominence asymmetry. However, this prominence asymmetry cannot be captured simply in terms of an opposition between prominent and weak syllables as elsewhere in the language. Prosodically weaker syllables in partial reduplications are in some ways stronger than generally prosodically weak syllables (they can feature any consonant in onset position), although they are weaker in other senses (they only feature high vowels and their coda is more prone to assimilation). Extending the ‘morphology is phonology’ metaphor that allows us to speak of ‘prosodic stems’ as opposed to ‘morphological stems’, we could say that the reduplicant in partial reduplications are in between ‘independent’ stems and ‘dependent’ affixes, thus qualifying as prosodic proclitics. It is possible that the phonologically exceptional character of such constructions is partly due to the expressiveness or even sound-symbolic potential of such forms (for example in resultative reduplications, which refer to property concepts, which may become the target of sound-symbolism).

The following examples illustrate some of the characteristics mentioned in a)-f) above. In all of these examples, characteristics (a) and (c) are apparent. They also illustrate the prespecification of vowels in the copy. An *e*, *ɛ*, or *a* becomes an *i*, an *o* or *ɔ* becomes an *u*. Already high vowels remain identical. A few of

the examples show coda assimilation patterns that are not found in other morphemes, such as /m/ assimilating to *l*, *d* assimilating to a *b*, a bilabial stop assimilating to a *g*, and *r* assimilating to *z*. Characteristics (e) and (f) have yet to be confirmed instrumentally. The example with *bùbbòd* ‘to be many’ (resultative) shows that some differences between prosodically strong and prosodically weak syllables are also apparent between the reduplicant (which is weaker) and the base (which is stronger): only the base features optional diphthongization of *ɔ*.

(62)	kpèsí ‘to be smooth’	→ kpìkπέ <sup>+</sup> sí ‘to be smooth, resultative’
	bòd ‘to increase’	→ bù <b>bb</b> òd or [bù <b>bw</b> òd] ‘to be many, resultative’
	lèm ‘to be good’	→ lì <b>ll</b> èm ‘to be good, resultative’
	gàb ‘to share’	→ gì <b>gg</b> àb ‘to be cut, resultative’
	kág ‘to crunch’	→ kí <b>kk</b> ág ‘to be crunched, resultative’
	zòrí ‘to be bitter’	→ zù <b>zz</b> órí ‘to be bitter, resultative’
	tùb ‘push’	→ tù <b>tt</b> tùb ‘to have holes, resultative’

The reduced contrasts in copied syllables is a feature that is found in various other West African languages, such as Nupe (Hyman 1970) and Akan (Wilbur 1974, Marantz 1982) (cf. Lionnet & Hyman 2018: 650; see also Ibrahīm 2015).

#### 4.3.3 Lexemes with one morphological stem but multiple prosodic stems

What follows is a list of examples where one morphological stem is made up of different prosodic stems. Only the lists in (63), (64), (65), (70) are exhaustive. Many more examples could be added to the lists in (66), (67), (68), (69).

- Two hypothetically historically complex stems ending in *-kiri*

(63)	àdzíkírí ‘armpit’
	àdíkírí ‘sweat’
	àbén ízūkírí ‘proverb’ (àbén means ‘talk’)

- Three hypothetically historically complex stems ending in *-tiri*.

(64) ñfàtìrì ‘stock’  
 ñkwàtìrì ‘joint’  
 àlítìrì ‘hawk’

- Two hypothetically historically complex stems ending in *-kwàb*.

(65) àvìràkwàb ‘mud’  
 kùrùkwàb ‘bird, sp.’

- Names for fauna and flora and related items, hypothetically historically complex (also in previous examples).

(66) ká<sup>+</sup>tfìrì ‘hedgehog’  
 pákpágìní ‘giant water bug’  
 àbìtjè ‘tree, sp.’  
 dzátfìnùṅ ‘fish, sp.’  
 kàtfìrì ‘weaver ant’  
 dùpsā ‘snake, sp.’  
 sùrùpáj ‘vulture’  
 ñmgbètè ‘pouched rat’  
 là?àtār ‘fish, sp.’  
 àdzìrìki ‘ground beetle, sp.’, also ‘epilepsy’

- Proper names, some historically complex, some borrowed.

(67) **màkpà** ‘muslim’  
**àkpàkánè** ‘person name’  
**àtàké** ‘person name’  
**džúrkàkí** ‘person name’  
**kùrikí** ‘God’ (cf. *kú* ‘magic, sp.’)  
**džùrùkí** ‘place name’  
**kávên** ‘person name’  
**sòvìrí** ‘person name’  
**dùwásām** ‘person name’  
**ʃíwánʃà** ‘person name’ (cf. *àʃí* ‘child’ and diminutive marker)

- Official titles and some kinship terminology, some historically complex, some of which may be borrowed from a Central Jukunoid language (cf. § 1.1).

(68) **ʃáŋwádžè** ‘elder daughter of the traditional king’  
**ʃóŋgádžim** ‘junior daughter of the traditional king’  
**ʃíkú** ‘priest, sp.’ (cf. *kú* ‘magic, sp.’)  
**jàkú** ‘grandparent or grandchild’, ‘ancestor’ (cf. *kú* ‘magic, sp.’, ‘cobra’)  
**ní ʃíríkú** ‘clan responsible for magic’ (cf. *kú* ‘magic, sp.’, ‘cobra’)  
**kùkú** ‘grandparent or grandchild’, ‘ancestor’ (cf. *kú* ‘magic, sp.’, ‘cobra’)  
**m̀fòkú** ‘paternal relative’ (cf. *kú* ‘magic, sp.’ and *m̀fò* ‘forest’, ‘cobra’)  
**àbēnì** ‘traditional king’  
**àlàsírà** ‘white person’ (cf. *là* ‘skin’ and *sírà* ‘hair’ or *sírí* ‘negative existential’)

- Other hypothetically historically complex stems with various different prosodically strong endings.

- (69) àǵǵí**k**írág ‘spoon’ (cf. àǵǵí ‘child’, and diminutive morpheme, see § 7.2.1.2)  
 kú**k**wéǵ ‘stick used for communication across villages’ (cf. kwí ‘walking stick’)  
 tì**d**ǵóǵ ‘magic, sp.’  
 tó**k**pár ‘near, adposition’  
 àb**é**ǵǵí ‘malice’  
 ǵǵíǵí**ǵ**è ‘ice’  
 tē**p**tān ‘to stay’  
 bá**p**ǵóǵ ‘a person that left’  
 kà**p**ìrù ‘flint’  
 kà**p**èǵ ‘cutlass’

- Other borrowings

- (70) tàlátà ‘Tuesday’, from Hausa (*talata*) – originally from Arabic *at-talaata* ‘Tuesday’  
 tàlàtín ‘thirty’, from Hausa (*talatin*) – originally from Arabic *talaatiin* ‘thirty’  
 súkò ‘hello’, from a Jukunoid language (cp. Kuteb *súko*, Koops 2007: 301)  
 tàsò ‘dish’, from local Hausa (*tasò*) – probably originally from Arabic *taasa* ‘bowl’





## 5 Syllable structure

### 5.1 Introduction

Kam has four main syllable shapes. The most basic ones are open syllables (CV) and closed syllables (CVC). Two minor syllable shapes are (a) monosegmental syllables, which may consist of either a syllabic nasal (N) or a vowel (V) as the sole nucleus, and (b) VN-syllables, consisting of only a vowel and a nasal coda. CV syllables and CVC syllables both have a minor subtype with a complex Cw onset (§ 5.5.1). Just a few examples of complex Cr and NC onset are attested in Kam (§ 5.5.2, § 5.5.3).

In chapter II, overviews are given of the positions each segment can occupy in each syllable shape in both prosodically weak and prosodically strong positions. I revisit these positional constraints here. The possibilities are also illustrated in the current section.

Prosodically strong CV-syllables show no significant constraints on segments. The possibilities are illustrated in § 4.2.10 above. The following issues are treated in the remainder of this chapter:

§ 5.2.1 discusses the constraints on consonants in closed syllables as well as neutralization of voicing contrasts. These are viewed as cases of stem-final weakening.

§ 5.2.2 treats neutralization of some vowel contrasts in closed syllables.

§ 5.3 gives an overview of constraints on segments occurring in monosegmental syllables.

§ 5.4 does the same for VN-syllables.

§ 5.5 considers the few types of complex onsets that have been found in Kam.

### 5.2 Constraints on segments in CVC syllables

#### 5.2.1 Possible codas and neutralization of voicing contrasts

Almost all consonants are attested as the onset of CVC-syllables (cf. § 4.2.10). In coda-position, however, the consonant inventory is reduced to ten consonants. These include three nasals – *m*, *n* and *ŋ* –, three approximants – *j*, *l* and *w* –, the tap *r*, and three stops – *P*, *T* and *K*. Voicing contrasts are neutralized for stops occurring in coda-position. The limited inventory in coda position and reduction of voicing contrasts can be seen as instances of stem-final weakening.

- (71) ɸ̀m ‘to burn’  
 b́n ‘to speak’  
 à.léŋ ‘sun’  
 ɸ́j ‘jerboa’  
 àzél ‘granary’  
 g̀w ‘ribs’  
 hár ‘(not) until’  
 àl**í**b ‘head’  
 f̀d ‘to suck’  
 àbèg ‘jealousy’

The voicing value of stops in coda position is completely determined by what comes next. The following possibilities are attested. The different combinations are exemplified in Table 33. They are treated in more detail in § 6.1.3.

- If a pause follows, stops are unreleased.
- When a voiced consonant follows, stops may be voiced or may undergo assimilation, depending on the following consonant.
- If the following consonant is voiceless, the coda stop is also voiceless.
- Before palatal consonants (/j, ɲ/), voicing of velar consonants is optional: [g] and [k] are in free variation.
- The velar stop may debuccalize before /m/ and /n/.
- Alveolar taps [ɾ] are preferred to alveolar stops in most positions, except before /m/, /n/, /j/, /v/, /kp/ and /gb/.

The following are just a few examples of what happens. More can be found in § 6.1.3.

- (72) fóg ‘farm’ + ◊ → [fɔ́k̄] ‘farm’  
 ɲéP ‘to go’ + fóg ‘farm’ → [ɲéffók̄] ‘to go to the farm’  
 t̀P ‘push’ + -sí (applicative) → [t̀psí] ‘to prick, to pierce’

When a lexeme with an initial vowel follows, stops in coda position are resyllabified as the onset of the next syllable. In the same contexts, taps and nasals may be analyzed as ambisyllabic (and are often represented as such by consultants when tapping the rhythm of a lexeme while saying it): they are simultaneously the coda of one syllable and the onset of another. In (73), I indicate ambisyllabic nasals by underlining them.

- (73) à.fàg ‘tooth’ + à.dú ‘angle’ → [à.fà.ʔi.dú] ‘molar’  
 à.fàm ‘animal’ + àŋ.gwóg ‘house’ → [à.fàm̩iŋ.gwók̩]  
 à.fàr ‘lung’ + à.fàm ‘animal’ → [à.fàr̩.fàm]

Exceptionally, in one noun, *s* is found as a coda consonant: *à.là.mî:s* ‘Thursday’. This is a borrowing, likely from Hausa (*‘Alhamis* – originally from Arabic *yoom al-khamiis* ‘Thursday’).

### 5.2.2 Possible vowels in nucleus position

The nucleus of a closed syllable (CVC) can only consist of the vowels /i/, /u/, /a/, /ɛ/ and /ɔ/. /ã/ is the only nasal vowel that occurs in closed syllables (cf. § 2.3.2). Contrasts between /i/ and /ĩ/, /ɛ/ and /ẽ/, and /o/ and /ɔ/ are neutralized.

- (74) rìk̩ ‘emphatic particle’  
 zùp̩ ‘to steal’  
 nàp̩ ‘to cut’  
 tɛk̩ ‘to run’  
 ʃòk̩ ‘earthworm’  
 sùrùpáj ‘vulture’  
 pjáw ‘proper name (village within Sarkin Dawa)’

There are apparent exceptions to the rule that /i/ cannot occur in closed syllables. However, all but one of these cases are captured by independent phonological rules, explained in § 6.3.

The remaining case where [i] occurs in a closed syllable is a borrowing, likely from Hausa: *à.là.mî:s* ‘Thursday’ (*‘Alhamis* originally from Arabic *yoom al-khamiis* ‘Thursday’). Note that /i/ is long here, which is also exceptional in Kam lexemes (cf. § 2.3.1.3).

### 5.3 Constraints on segments in monosegmental syllables: V-prefixes and syllabic nasals

The only vowels that can occur as monosegmental syllables are *a*, *i*, and *u*.

Syllabic nasals are attested in many nouns, but also as the first person singular subject indexes *Ń* and *Ň*. In all cases, the nasals are homorganic with the following consonant. If the following consonant is labial-velar, the nasal is a labial-velar [ŋ̩m]. Nasal syllables are never prosodically strong.

(75) **Homorganic nasals in prosodic prefixes**

**m.p**ájírí ‘monkey, sp.’

**n.t**én ‘spear, sp.’

**ń.k**óŋ ‘louse’

(76) First person singular subject index *N*

ḿ pírá

1SG.S.PFV come.PFV

‘I have come.’

The most common V syllable is one that consists of *a*. Many nouns are found with an *a*- prosodic prefix, and a morpheme *á* is used to derive attributive adjectives from verbs (cf. § 7.5). Some subject indexes are also made up by a simple vowel, e.g. *á* ‘2SG.S.PFV’, *ú* ‘3SG’ (a variant of *àwú*), *ì* ‘1PL’ (a variant of *jùrù*) and *í* ‘3PL’ (a variant of *àjì*) (cf. § 8.2). *a*-prefixes on nouns and adjectives are prosodically weak (cf. § 4.2.9), the (non-first person) subject indexes are prosodically strong.

(77) **a-prefixes in nouns and adjectives**

àt̩fí ‘child’

àd̩z̩é ‘shea tree’

àkp̩èp̩ ‘shoulder’

át̩wàp̩ ‘young’

á<sup>+</sup>bó?órí ‘black’

ámō ‘good’

(78) **Subject indexes *á* ‘2SG.S.PFV’, *ú* ‘3SG’, *ì* ‘1PL’, *í* ‘3PL’**

á d̩z̩ót á j̩

2SG.S.PFV wake.up:PFV PFV Q

‘Did you wake up?’

ú rí <sup>+</sup>féd j̩

3SG IPFV wash thing

‘She was doing her laundry.’

ì j̩éb bínúwè

1PL go:PFV Benue

‘We went to Benue State’

í            gbán            wě      fò      mí<sup>56</sup>  
 3PL      arrive:PFV      mouth forest      some  
 ‘They arrived at the entrance of a certain forest.’  
 (session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

## 5.4 VN syllables

Two adjectives and three nouns in the currently collected lexicon of Kam (1,550 entries) show an initial VN-syllable. In all cases it is made up of an *a* followed by a nasal that is homorganic with the following consonant. These syllables may be the result of a derivational process with an *a*-prefix applied to lexemes starting with syllabic nasals. That they were historically complex is also suggested by the presence of downstep in some of these examples.

- (79)    **án.**<sup>↓</sup>té ‘small’  
          **án.**<sup>↓</sup>dérí ‘idiotic’
- (80)    **án.**<sup>↓</sup>térí ‘truth’  
          **àŋ.gwár** ‘thirst’  
          **àŋ.gwóg** ‘house’

## 5.5 Complex onsets

### 5.5.1 Cw-onsets, CwV and CwVC syllables

Kam features Cw-clusters as the onset of prosodically strong syllables. This arguably motivates the incorporation of two additional syllable structures for Kam. Alternatively, Cw sequences can be considered labialized consonants, or wV-sequences can be considered diphthongs. The first option inflates the number of consonants found in the phoneme inventory of Kam. The second option would require the addition of a number of diphthongs to the vowel inventory. In the current analysis, I choose to analyze them as complex Cw onsets, and I recognize that CwV and CwVC syllables are minor subtypes of typical CV and CVC

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<sup>56</sup> Exceptionally, a nasal prosodic prefix seems to be dropped in *fò*<sup>̂</sup>, the lexical form of which is *m̀fò*<sup>̂</sup>. This may also simply be an alternative rapid pronunciation of *m̀fò*<sup>̂</sup>, since such dropping of nasal prosodic prefixes has not been observed elsewhere so far.

syllables. Cw clusters may go back to a process of hiatus resolution where an /u/ is reduced to a semivowel /w/ to avoid a sequence of two vowels (cf. § 6.2.2.2).

The following Cw onsets are attested:

- ηw

ηwāb ‘all’	ηwám ‘junior in-law’	ηwàntí ‘to straighten’
ηwàrí ‘to be sad’	ηwárí ‘to mix’	ηwàrà ‘you’re welcome’
ηwɛ̀kí ‘person name’	ηwóri ‘to tie a knot’	

- kw

kwî ‘walking stick’	kwêj ‘mudfish’	kwàntí ‘to fold’
kwàntón ‘Mumuye people’	kwàr ‘hip, loins, waist’	kwár ‘to make a rope’
kwàsí ‘to pluck’	ɛ̀kwàtìrì ‘joint’	àkwān ‘bean’
ákwōk̄ ‘big one’	àkwók̄ ‘mushroom’	kùrùkwàp̄ ‘bird, sp.’
kúkwéj ‘stick, sp.’		

- gw

gwéj ‘elsewhere’	gwàj ‘chest’	gwó ‘to be light’
àḡwár ‘thirst’	àḡwók̄ ‘house’	àḡwòp̄ ‘plant, sp.’

- ɸw

ɸwē ‘newborn child’	ɸwé ‘rainy season’
ɸwák̄ ‘striped grass mouse’	ɸwàḡ ‘bird, sp.’

- sw

swàptí ‘to increase’	swàp̄ ‘to sing’
swár ‘to live’	swò ‘baboon’

- pw

m̀pwár ‘duck’	p̀pwàp̄ ‘liver’
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- dʒw

àdʒwàn ‘snake, sp.’	àdʒwã ‘cheek’
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- tw

ántwāp̄ ‘young’

- hw

hwár ‘to think’

- lw

lwàm ‘hippopotamus’

### 5.5.2 Complex onsets due to *i*- or *u*-deletion

*i* or *u* can be dropped in the C\_r(V) environment. In such cases, syllables can appear with complex onsets with an *r* as the second consonant (CrV).

(81) **Syllables with complex onsets because of a deleted *i***

m̄p̄r̄ī or [m̄pr̄ī] ‘goat’

kr̄r̄ē or [kpr̄ē] ‘to cough’

k̄r̄b̄īk̄ or [kr̄b̄īk̄] ‘scorpion’

p̄r̄â or [pr̄â] ‘come.PFV’

m̄r̄ì or [mr̄ì] ‘again’

b̄r̄ì or [br̄ì] ‘day, time’

w̄àtr̄ì or [wàtr̄ì] ‘to dream’

(82) **Syllables with complex onsets due to the deletion of *u***

p̄àt̄úr̄ú or [pàtr̄ú] ‘cat’

s̄ùr̄ùp̄áj or [sr̄ùp̄áj] ‘vulture’

These possibilities are not unexpected. Cross-linguistically, rhotics often behave in special ways in syllables (Ladefoged & Maddieson 1996: 216).

### 5.5.3 Marginal types of complex onsets: NC and Cr clusters

The lexicon of Kam contains two types of consonant clusters that are limited to just a few items. Of these, I first discuss NC-onsets, which feature a non-syllabic nasal followed by a stop. The second type of cluster, Cr-onsets, has been attested in just two lexemes so far.

In two lexemes, NC onsets are optional and freely alternate with the respective nasal as the onset. In another two lexemes, NC onsets are obligatory. I consider these clusters lexical irregularities. *ndzámdí*



‘iron’ is a borrowing from Fulfulde (*njamndi*). The cluster in *ŋmgbàb* ‘to shoot’ may reflect earlier phonotactic possibilities in the language. The cluster may be preserved in this verb because of its sound-symbolic effect.

(83) **Optional NC clusters**

**ndák** or **nák** ‘cow’

**ndák** or **nák** ‘to throw, to give a name, to lay eggs’

(84) **Obligatory NC clusters**

**ndžámdí** ‘iron’ (borrowing from Fulfulde, where ‘iron’ is *njamndi*)

**ŋmgbàp** ‘to shoot’

There are two nouns in the currently collected lexicon where a complex Cr onset is lexicalized and where it is no longer possible to insert a vowel (see the previous section). These nouns are consistently judged as disyllabic by my informants:

(85) **mprîm** ‘okra’

**àkprà** ‘plate’

## 6 Segmental phonological rules

This chapter describes the interaction between segments. It takes stock of the possible consonant sequences (§ 6.1.1) and the possible vowel sequences (§ 6.2.1) in Kam. Rules that determine the realization of such clusters are laid out. § 6.1 focuses on rules and constraints that operate when consonants meet. § 6.2 focuses on vowel clusters. § 6.3 describes the possible interaction between consonants and vowels.

### 6.1 *Consonants*

#### 6.1.1 Consonant clusters and gemination

Consonant clusters occur at different levels of analysis. Some occur as complex onsets within prosodically strong syllables. Other clusters occur at the boundary between prosodically strong syllables, or at the boundary between a prosodic stem and a prosodic affix. Such combinations are more numerous. They also reveal various phonological rules in the language. An overview of such possible clusters is given in § 6.1.1.2. Finally, consonant clusters can occur in partly reduplicated verbs. Geminated consonants are also often found at the juncture between the copy and stem. As addressed in the previous chapter, reduplicated verbs are phonologically unusual in the language in various respects, including the consonant clusters. Some clusters that are possible at stem and affix-boundaries are not possible in reduplicated verbs. Consonant clusters in partial reduplication constructions are discussed separately in § 6.1.1.3.

##### 6.1.1.1 Complex onsets in prosodically strong syllables

Complex onsets are exceptional in Kam. They include Cw-onsets, Cr-onsets and a few instances of NC-clusters. All of these have been discussed and illustrated before in § 5.5.

There are no consonant clusters in the weak portion of a prosodic stem.

##### 6.1.1.2 Consonant clusters at prosodic stem boundaries

Table 33 provides an overview of all possible consonant clusters that can occur at the boundary between prosodic stems and at the boundary between prosodic stem and suffix. The rows list all stem-final consonants. The capitals P, T, K indicate stem-final stops. Capitals are used instead of lower-case letters to indicate that the voice feature is unspecified stem-finally. The columns list all stem- and suffix-initial consonants. When a cell is white and marked with a +, this indicates that the combination is possible without observed restrictions or notable phonological rules. When it is marked with a question mark, I have

not observed the combination because not all necessary examples to verify their absence or presence have been recorded. When it is colored grey, this means that there is an interaction affecting the first of the two consonants. The phonetic realization of that rule is written in square brackets within the relevant cells. Phonological representations are written with slashes. When only one sound is written in a cell, this means that the other sound is elided. Brackets indicate optional realizations.

The following generalizations can be made on the basis of the table:

- Nasals in NC clusters are often homorganic in that their place of articulation assimilates to that of the following sound. As discussed in § 4.2.4, this is particularly true for prosodic prefixes. At other types of boundaries, such assimilation is much less pervasive, especially affecting /n/. Not all consonants trigger this assimilation in stems: only stops and other nasals are concerned. Assimilation to labial-velar stops has no exceptions. Such assimilation is further discussed and exemplified in § 6.1.2.
- The voicing value of a stem-final consonant, which is always in coda-position, depends on the sound to its right. When there is a pause, it is unreleased. When it is followed by a consonant, the coda stop can be released into the next consonant: stops are often released nasally before nasals, an alveolar stop can be released into a labial-velar consonant, and any stop can be released glottally when they occur before a *h*. In other cases, it may be released as a voiced or as a voiceless stop. The place of articulation of the final consonant can assimilate to that of the following initial consonant. Final consonants can also be omitted in some circumstances. These rules are discussed in more detail in § 6.1.3.
- Specifically in the case of stem-final alveolar T, taps are preferred to stops in many contexts. They are often the only attested choice.
- When /r/ or /ŋ/ occur as the second sound of a consonant cluster, an epenthetic *i* is often inserted. Whereas synchronically, this vowel can be analyzed as epenthetic, it may historically be a retention.

		Second consonant (stem-initial)																								
		m	n	ŋ	w	j	l	r	p	b	t	d	k	g	ɲ	f	v	s	z	ʃ	h	tʃ	dʒ	kp	gb	
First consonant (stem-final)	<b>m</b>	+	+	/ŋŋ/	[m̃w̃]	+	+	(/mbr/)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	[ŋmk̃p]	[ŋmg̃b]	
	<b>n</b>	/mm/	+	/ŋŋ/	+	+	+	(/nic/)	/mp/	/mb/	+	+	/ŋk/	/ŋg/	/ɲ/	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	[ŋmk̃p]	[ŋmg̃b]	
	<b>ŋ</b>	+	+	+	+	+	+	(/ŋir/)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
	<b>w</b>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
	<b>j</b>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
	<b>l</b>	+	+	/liŋ/	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
	<b>r</b>	+	+	/riŋ/	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
	<b>P</b>	[b <sup>m</sup> m]	[b <sup>n</sup> n]	/biŋ/	/bw/	/bj/	/bl/	/br/	/pp/	/bb/	/pt/	/bd/	/pk/	/bg/	/bɲ/	/ff/	/vv/	/ps/	/bz/	/pʃ/	[p <sup>h</sup> h]	/pʃ/	/bdʒ/	[p̃k̃p]	?	
	<b>T</b>	[d <sup>m</sup> m] /rm/	[d <sup>n</sup> n] /rn/	/riŋ/	/rw/	/dj/	/rl/	/r/	/rp/	/db/	/rb/	/rt/	/rd/	/rk/	/rg/	/ɲ/	/dɲ/	/rf/	/dv/	/rs/	?	/rʃ/	[t <sup>h</sup> h] /rh/	/rdʒ/	[r̃k̃p] [t̃k̃p]	[d̃gb]
	<b>K</b>	[ʔ <sup>m</sup> m] /m/	[ʔ <sup>n</sup> n] /gn/	/ŋ/	/w/	/gj/	/gl/	/gr/	/kp/	/gb/	/kt/	/gd/	/kk/	/gg/	/kɲ/	/kf/	?	/ks/	/gz/	/kj/	[k <sup>h</sup> h]	/kʃ/	/gdʒ/	/kp/	?	

### 6.1.1.3 Consonant clusters and gemination in partial reduplications

As stated in § 4.3.2, consonant clusters are more restricted in partial reduplication constructions than across stem boundaries.

When the final consonant of the reduplicant is nasal, it is homorganic with the first consonant of the stem.

- (86) búmbóm ‘long’ (resultative)  
 ðìndàm ‘clean’ (resultative)  
 fímfám ‘light’ (resultative)  
 sùnsóŋ<sup>+</sup>é ‘sweet’ (resultative)  
 tíntám ‘big’ (resultative)  
 wùm>wòm ‘hollow’ (resultative)

When the final consonant of the reduplicant is non-nasal, it completely assimilates to that of the following sound, creating geminates. /rp/-clusters become /pp/, /rb/ clusters become /bb/, /bd/ becomes /dd/, /gd/ becomes /dd/, etc. The result is usually a geminate consonant, except where affricates and labial-velar consonants are concerned.

- (87) ~pár → píppár  
 STAT~be.tight STAT~be.tight  
 ‘to be tight’
- (88) ~dáb → díddáb  
 STAT~be.far STAT~be.far  
 ‘to be far’
- (89) ~dèg → dìddèg  
 STAT~be.painful STAT~be.painful  
 ‘to be painful’
- (90) ~nár → nínnár  
 STAT~be.thick STAT~be.thick  
 ‘to be thick’
- (91) ~lòg → lìllòg  
 STAT~give.birth STAT~give.birth  
 ‘to be fertile’

- (92) ~dʒòr → dʒú<sup>†</sup>dʒó-r-í  
 FUT~descend FUT~descend-í  
 ‘will descend’

### 6.1.2 Homorganic nasals and non-homorganic nasals

In the lexicon of Kam, nasals are overwhelmingly homorganic with the consonant to their right. This is most clearly the case with prosodic prefixes, which have been discussed in § 4.2.4:

- (93) **n̄**.páŋírí ‘monkey, sp.’  
**n̄**.tén ‘spear, sp.’  
**n̄**.ŋwàŋ ‘bird, sp.’  
**ŋ**.kón ‘louse’  
**ŋm**.kpóŋé ‘thigh’  
**ŋm**.gbète ‘pouched rat’
- (94) ántwàb ‘young’  
 án<sup>†</sup>té ‘small (size)’  
 án<sup>†</sup>térí ‘truth’  
 àŋgwár ‘thirst’  
 àŋgwóg ‘house’  
 án<sup>†</sup>dérí ‘idiotic’

Across stem boundaries, this rule applies to a lesser degree. Only *n* undergoes such assimilation consistently. Other nasals retain their original places of articulation, except before labial-velar stops, where *m* also assimilates. There are no examples in the data where *ŋ* is followed by a labial-velar stop.

- (95) ***n* assimilating to following consonants**  
 bén ‘say’ + mām ‘give me’ → [bé**mm**ám] ‘tell me’  
 mín ‘thus’ + kā ‘conditional’ → [mí**ŋ**kā] ‘if (it) is like that ...’  
 tán ‘stay’ + pè ‘come’ → [tá**mp**è] ‘(they then) came and stood’

(96) **Non-homorganic nasals**

ʃám.kòn ‘sparrow’ (unanalyzable noun)

fám-lí ‘to feed someone’ (cf. *àfám* ‘meat’, probably with a historical causative suffix)

kòm-sí ‘to engage’ (kóm ‘to tie’ + -sí ‘causative’)

ṅkám sù ‘bladder’ (ṅkám ‘under’ + sù ‘navel’)

m̀púṅ dʒóṅ ‘ritual calabash’ (m̀púṅ ‘calabash’ + dʒóṅ ‘magic, sp.’)

ʃòṅ.tí ‘remove’ (cf. -tí suffix)

(97) **Assimilation before labial-velar stops**

nínám ‘flesh’ + kpò ‘body’ → [nínám̩kpò] ‘flesh of the body’

màn ‘fat’ + gbóʔó ‘shin’ → [màn̩mgbóʔó] ‘bone marrow’

6.1.3 Realization of stops in coda position<sup>57</sup>

In § 6.1.1, I mentioned that voicing contrasts are neutralized in coda position, and that the realization of bilabial, alveolar and velar stops in that position completely depends on the following sound. The realization of each stem-final stop before each possible consonant is summarized in Table 33 above. The current section synthesizes the possible realizations. I found the following possibilities.

- Non-release, specifically before a pause, and sometimes before labial-velar stops.
- Voicing agreement: a stop in coda position receives the voicing value of the following stop.
- Release as a stop, with free variation regarding the voicing value.
- Assimilation to the following sound, with a geminate consonant as the result.
- For alveolar consonants specifically, realization as an alveolar tap [ɾ] or lateral approximant [l].
- Nasal release before nasals.
- Labial-velar release before labial-velars.
- Glottal release before *h*.
- Debuccalization to a glottal stop.
- Elision of the consonant. The result is simply the initial consonant of the following syllable, or a pause if there is no following sound.

<sup>57</sup> The capital symbols P, T and K do not represent archiphonemes or any deep level of abstraction. They merely symbolize that voice distinctions are neutralized in the relevant positions and that choosing to represent each consonant with a voiced or voiceless phoneme would be an arbitrary choice.

### 6.1.3.1 Unreleased stops before a pause

Before a pause, velar consonants are realized as an unreleased velar stop [k̚], bilabial consonants as unreleased bilabial stops [p̚], and alveolar consonants as unreleased alveolar stops [t̚]. Alveolars can also be realized as [l] or [r]. In many cases, there is free variation or variation across speakers. Speakers identify the use of [l] vs. [r] as dialectal differences between Highland Kam and Lowlands Kam, but this was not confirmed by a small scale investigation of relevant data.

- (98) Prepausal [p̚]  
 àkpèP [àkpèp̚] ‘shoulder’  
 dʒìP [dʒìp̚] ‘to fence an area’  
 ántwàP [ántwàp̚] ‘young’
- (99) Prepausal [k̚]  
 véK [vék̚] ‘to die’  
 àgbáK [àgbák̚] ‘stool’  
 jīrāK [jīrāk̚] ‘two’
- (100) Prepausal [t̚], [r] or [l]  
 ʃàT [ʃàr], [ʃàt̚] or [ʃàl] ‘three’  
 àʃóT [àʃór], [àʃót̚] or [àʃól] ‘bee’  
 bàr [bàt̚], [bàr] or [bàl] ‘to farm’

Very rarely, during elicitation sessions, these stops were released, with some delay, to make the contrast between the different places of articulation more obvious to me. In those cases, they always came out as voiceless stops [p], [t] and [k].

### 6.1.3.2 Voicing agreement (and non-release before labial-velar stops)

Bilabial consonants followed by a voiced consonant are often released as the voiced bilabial stop [b]. Alveolar consonants, when they are not realized as an alveolar tap [ɾ] (§ 6.1.3.5), are realized as [d]. Velar consonants are realized as [g]. When a voiceless consonant follows, bilabial consonants are realized as [p] and velar consonants as [k]. Alveolar consonants in coda position are always realized as [ɾ] before a voiceless stop (§ 6.1.3.5), except before /kp/, where an alveolar stop can be realized as [ɾ] or can be an (unreleased) voiceless stop released into the labial-velar stop. More generally, before labial-velar stops, coda stops can be released into the labial-velar stop.



(101) **Voiced**

àlíP ‘head’ + wó ‘dog’ → [àlí**bw**ó] ‘head of dog’

àbèT ‘egg’ + jō ‘plural’ → [àbè**dj**ō] ‘eggs’

fóK ‘farm’ + zú<sup>+</sup>zórē ‘to be sour, resultative’ → [fó**gz**ú<sup>+</sup>zórē] ‘The farm is sour.’

(102) **Voiceless**

àlíP ‘head’ + ʃí ‘diminutive’ + rì ‘comitative’ + àné ‘hand’ → [àlí**pʃ**í rì né] ‘fingernail’

léK ‘to feel’ + tànfōŋ ‘always’ → [lé**kt**ànfōŋ] ‘(I) always feel (like this)’

àtàT ‘stone’ + kpējmī ‘twenty’ → [àtà**t**kpējmī ~ àtà**rk**pējmī] ‘twenty stones’

(103) **Stops released into labial-velar stops**

àǰōP ‘wind’ + kpò ‘body’ + ú ‘his’ → [àǰō**p**kpòwú] ‘The wind, his body (was weak)’

àtàT ‘stone’ + kpējmī ‘twenty’ → [àtà**t**kpējmī ~ àtà**rk**pējmī] ‘twenty stones’

gúrōK ‘lion’ + gbígí ‘shaked’ → [gúrō**g**<sup>+</sup>gbígí] ‘The lion shaked.’

The stem-final bilabial stop fully assimilates to a following labio-dental fricative (/f/, /v/). Preceding /h/, it is released glottally (§ 6.1.3.4).

Like P, K is not released as a stop before labio-dental fricatives and /h/. Before /w/ and /l/ it is usually elided (§ 6.1.3.7). Before /j/, it is a stop with variable voicing values. Before /ɲ/, it alternates between a released stop with free voicing value (§ 6.1.3.3) and a glottal stop (§ 6.1.3.6).

T can only be realized as a stop before /j/, /b/, /ɲ/, /v/ and labial-velar stops. Before /b/ and /ɲ/ such a realization is optional, the alternative being an alveolar tap (§ 6.1.3.5). Before /j/ and /v/, only the realization as [d] is attested in my data.

### 6.1.3.3 Free variation between /k/ and /g/ before palatal consonants

When followed by a palatal consonant /j/ or /ɲ/, velar consonants in coda position are realized as stops. The voicing value of these stops is free, so either [k] or [g] is a possible realization. Before /ɲ/, velar consonants can also be realized as a glottal stop (§ 6.1.3.6).

(104) ñpīrōK ‘rat’ + jō ‘plural’ → [ñpīrō**kj**ō ~ ñpīrō**gj**ō]

àmìrèK ‘nose’ + jō ‘plural’ → [àmìrè**kj**ō ~ àmìrè**gj**ō]

ʃùK ‘do’ + ɲínáŋé ‘fast’ → [ʃù**k**ɲínáŋé ~ ʃù**g**ɲínáŋé]

fóK ‘farm’ + ɲíní ‘some’ → [fó**k**ɲíní ~ fó**g**ɲíní]

### 6.1.3.4 Assimilation

When a bilabial or velar consonant in coda position is followed by a labiodental fricative (/v/ or /f/), it assimilates to the following fricative. The result is a geminated consonant.

(105) **Assimilation with labiodental fricatives**

kùP ‘to wear’ + àfú ‘shirt’ → [kùffú] ‘wear a shirt’

gbèP ‘to beat’ + vā ‘to flog’ → [gbèvvā] ‘to beat someone’

ʃùK ‘to catch’ + àfù ‘pregnancy’ → [ʃùffù] ‘to become pregnant’

No examples with K + v are attested.

### 6.1.3.5 T realized as [r] or [l]

The most commonly attested realization of an alveolar consonant in coda position is an alveolar tap [r]. In front of most consonants, such a realization is obligatory. Before /b/, /p/, /h/, /kp/ and /gb/, it is optional. Before /b/, and /gb/ it is in free variation with a voiced (unreleased) stop realization. Before /kp/, it is in free variation with a voiceless (unreleased) stop realization. Before /h/, it is in free variation with glottal release. Before /p/, all three possibilities (/t/, /r/ and /d/) are attested. Before /j/ and /v/, the only attested realization is a voiced stop [d].

(106) tòT ‘to fall’ + mísí ‘again’ → [tòrmísí] ‘fall again’

bìT ‘to slaughter’ + níʃóŋ ‘pig’ → [bìrníʃóŋ] ‘slaughter a pig’

àtT ‘stone’ + lìlè̄m ‘beautiful, resultative’ → [àt̄rlìlè̄m] ‘the stone is beautiful’

àtT ‘stone’ + wūwū ‘ripe, resultative’ → [àt̄rwūwū] ‘the stone is ripe’

tòT ‘to fall’ + pè ‘to come’ → [tòrpè] ‘fall (down)’

àtT ‘stone’ + búbbōrē ‘big, resultative’ → [àt̄rbúbbōrē] ‘the stone is big’

àtT ‘stone’ + t́ntám ‘big, resultative’ → [àt̄rt́ntám] ‘the stone is big’

àtT ‘stone’ + dùddùb ‘tall, resultative’ → [àt̄rdùddùp̄] ‘the stone is tall’

tòT ‘to fall’ + k̄ā ‘here’ → [tòrk̄ā] ‘fall here’

àtT ‘stone’ + ʃíʃób ‘hot, resultative’ → [àt̄rʃíʃóp̄] ‘the stone is hot’

náT ‘thick’ + h̄n ‘NEG’ → [nárh̄n] ‘thin, not thick’

àtT ‘stone’ + kp̄ó ‘twenty’ + b̄í ‘one’ → [àt̄rkp̄ób̄í ~ àt̄tkp̄ób̄í] ‘twenty stones’

kàT ‘to have’ + àgbàn ‘wife’ → [káḍgbàn] ‘(He) had (three) wives.’

In all of these environments, T can also be realized as a lateral approximant [l].

### 6.1.3.6 Glottal release before h and glottalization of K before /ɲ/

Before /h/, all coda consonants can be released glottally. Velar consonants can be released nasally before the palatal nasal /ɲ/.

(107) **Glottal release before /h/**

dùP ‘tall’ + hñ ‘NEG’ → [dùpʰhñ] ‘not tall’

lèb ‘inside’ + há ‘Q’ → [... lèpʰhá] ‘(He will repeat what is) inside, eh?’

nàT ‘thick’ + hñ ‘NEG’ → [nátʰhñ] ‘not thick’

àŋgwók ‘house’ + hñ ‘NEG’ → [... íŋgwókʰhñ] ‘(He did) not (build) a house.’

(108) **Glottalization before /ɲ/**

zùK ‘to put’ + ɲéb ‘to go’ → [zùʔɲéb] ‘to dip something in a fluid’

### 6.1.3.7 Nasal release before /n/ and /m/

Before /n/ and /m/, bilabial and alveolar consonants are formed as stops [p] and [t]. They are not released orally, however. Instead, there is a nasal release.

(109) gúp ‘to chase’ + ńfǒŋ ‘pig’ → [gúp<sup>n</sup>ńfǒŋ] ‘(The animal) chased a pig.’

tùP ‘to push’ + mísí ‘again’ → [tùp<sup>m</sup>mísí] ‘push again’

bèT ‘tree’ + mán ‘?’ → [bèt<sup>m</sup>mán] ‘bamboo’

àtàT + nád ‘thick’ + hñ ‘NEG’ → [àtàt<sup>n</sup>nátʰhñ] ‘The stone is not thick.’

### 6.1.3.8 Elision

A number of consonants in coda position can be elided before a following consonant. Alveolar consonants are often elided in front of a tap /ɾ/ and in front of palatal nasals /ɲ/. The vowel in the nucleus can be lengthened to compensate for the loss of the coda.

(110) ʃàT ‘three’ + rīK ‘NEG.POSS’ → [ʃà:rīk̄] ‘(He does) not (have) three (children).’

gbèT ‘to scratch’ + ɲì ‘thing’ → [gbèɲì] ‘to scratch something’

Velar stops are elided before the velar nasal /ŋ/ and the labiovelar approximant /w/. They are optionally elided before the lateral approximant /l/ and the bilabial nasal /m/.

- (111) fók ‘farm’ + àṅwāb ‘all’ → [fókŋwāb̄] ‘all farms’  
 dók ‘to see’ + wó ‘dog’ → [dókó] ‘to see a dog’  
 àṅgwók ‘house’ + àwàn ‘king’ → [àṅgwókàwàn] ‘house of the king’  
 jàk ‘take’ + mísí ‘again’ → [jàmísí ~ jàṁmísí] ‘take again’  
 líg bûk ‘to dance a dance’ + lígí ‘to dance, future’ → [lígbùlíḡí ~ lígbùglí] ‘(He) will dance a dance.’

A coda alveolar consonant is also elided before the causative/iterative suffix *-tí*, (cf. § 12.4).

- (112) dʒòT-tí go.down-CAUS → dʒòtí ‘to bring down’  
 kpèT-tí shiver-*tí* → kpètí ‘to be tired’<sup>58</sup>

Occasionally, bilabial and velar consonants are elided prepausally. Such elision is not frequent.

- (113) **Optional prepausal stops**  
 màn ìlíP → [mànìlí] ‘brain (i.e. ‘fat of the head’)’  
 jéP → [jé] ‘go’  
 dʒázúK → [dʒázú] ‘rice’

In the emphatic particle, *rĩK*, the final velar stop is optional in prepausal position. Some speakers only accept the form without the velar stop. There may be dialectal variation, but I did not attempt a dialectological study of these phenomena.

## 6.2 Vowels

### 6.2.1 Hiatus and hiatus resolution

When two vowels from different syllables collide, they become adjacent. Such situations are generally known as hiatus. When hiatus arises in Kam, three outcomes are possible. (a) Nothing happens: hiatus is maintained. Alternatively, (b) hiatus may be resolved by inserting an extra consonant in between the vowel segments. Thirdly, (c) hiatus may be resolved by elision of one of the vowels. Note that all vowel sequences

<sup>58</sup> It is not clear what the derivative function of *-tí* is in this example. It does not appear to be iterative (‘to be tired’ is not ‘to shiver repeatedly’) or causative (‘to be tired’ is not ‘to cause to shiver’).

across stem boundaries feature an /a/, /u/ or /i/ as the second vowel, since those are the only vowels that can occur stem- or affix-initially in Kam.

The consonants used to resolve hiatus are the approximants *j*, *w*, or the glottal stop *ʔ*. The central vowel *i* is the only vowel that is regularly elided. All cases of hiatus can be resolved, but not all of them are obligatorily resolved.

One of the most common cases of hiatus resolution happens when a prosodic *a*-prefix is preceded by another vowel. In those cases, *a* is always dropped (see § 4.2.9).

- (114) àʔfi kùr  
 àʔfi àkùr  
 child tortoise  
 ‘child of the tortoise’

- (115) àdʒé ʔi  
 àdʒé àʔfi  
 trousers child  
 ‘trousers of the child’

- (116) m pé kàpti  
 N pè\H àkàpti  
 1SG.S.PFV come\PFV morning  
 ‘I came in the morning.’  
 (session\_034, Samuel A. Adams, conversation)

- (117) dí \*lìb ú  
 be head 3SG:POSS  
 ‘It’s on his head.’

- (118) sírá \*lìb  
 sírá àlìb  
 hair head  
 ‘head hair’

(119) àkpò lǎŋ  
 àkpò àlǎŋ  
 food pot  
 ‘the food of the pot’

(120) gbógó zúb  
 gbógó àzúb  
 shin thief  
 ‘the shin of the thief’

(121) ʃũ wàn  
 ʃũ àwàn  
 uncle king  
 ‘uncle of the king’

The following cases of hiatus are attested without obligatory resolution: /e + u/, /a + u/, /o + u/, /e + a/, /o + a/, /u + a/. They all end with either /u/ or /a/, and none start with /i/.

(122) e + u  
 mē ú  
 mother 3SG:POSS  
 ‘his mother’  
 (session\_052, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

(123) a + u  
 àná ú  
 father 3SG:POSS  
 ‘his father’  
 (session\_052, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

(124) o + u  
 wó ú  
 dog 3SG:POSS  
 ‘his dog’  
 (session\_047, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, elicitation)

- (125) u + a  
 sùnù á bā  
 darter PRSTT PROX.ID  
 ‘This is a darter.’  
 (session\_214, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (126) e + a  
 àǎǎ è á bā  
 moon PRSTT PROX.ID  
 ‘This is (the) moon.’  
 (session\_037, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (127) o + a  
 wò á bā  
 blood PRSTT PROX.ID  
 ‘This is blood.’  
 (session\_037, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

Sequences starting with /i/ or /i/ are always resolved, either by elision or by inserting /j/ before /a/. Elision happens when /i/ belongs to a prosodically weak syllable, or when it occurs in a (otherwise prosodically strong) suffix. Glide-insertion happens when /i/ is part of a prosodically strong syllable of a morphological stem.

- (128) **Glide-insertion**  
 àbì á bā → [àbijábā]  
 soil PRSTT PROX.ID  
 ‘This is soil.’  
 (session\_068, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (129) **Elision of /i/ or /i/**  
 fàmlí + ú → [fàmlú]  
 feed:PFV 3SG:POSS  
 ‘(the lion) fed him’  
 (session\_252, anonymous, narrative)

sámrí + á <sup>+</sup>jí → [sámrá<sup>+</sup>jí]

bad:PFV PFV stand

‘(It is) spoiled’

(session\_341, Danjuma Bello, elicitation)

All other sequences are resolved by means of [j] before /i/ or /ĩ/, [w] before /u/, and [j], [w] or [ʔ] before /a/:

(130) ʧũ + á bā → [ʧũʔábā]

uncle PRSTT PROX.ID

‘This is (an) uncle.’

(session\_128, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

àjí ‘third person plural pronoun’, postpausal variant of *í*

àwú ‘third person singular pronoun’, postpausal variant of *ú*

## 6.2.2 Diphthongization, CwV-clusters and more hiatus resolution

### 6.2.2.1 Phonetic diphthongs

Various diphthongs occur in free variation with corresponding monophthongs in prosodically strong positions. Such optional diphthongization occurs only after certain consonants.

- [ĩe] and [e], following coronals, *gb*, or *m*

(131) sísé, [sísé] or [sís̩ĩé] ‘adder’  
 m̀ntē, [m̀ntē] or [m̀nt̩ĩē] ‘small (quantity)’  
 àlè, [àlè] or [àl̩ĩè] ‘fire’  
 gbê, [gbê] or [gb̩ĩè] ‘squirrel, sp.’

- [ĩẽ] and [ẽ], after coronals

(132) àǰě, [àǰě] or [àǰ̩ĩẽ] ‘bush’  
 àlě, [àlě] or [àl̩ĩẽ] ‘cave’

- [ĩĩ] and [ĩ], following *v*

(133) ñv̀inv̩ĩ, [ñv̀inv̩ĩ] or [ñv̀inv̩ĩẽ] ‘wasp’  
 àví, [àví] or [àv̩ĩé] ‘breast’



- [ɔ] and [ɤ], following bilabial stops *p* and *b*
- (134) pòpsí, [pòpsí] or [pɤ̀psí] ‘to press together’  
 m̀pòm, [m̀pòm] or [m̀pɤ̀òm] ‘rain, n.’  
 b̀òb, [b̀òp̄] or [bɤ̀òp̄] ‘to come out’  
 b̀ùbbòrē, [b̀ùbbòrē] or [b̀ùbbɤ̀rē] ‘big (quantity)’

There are four ways of accounting for the allophony between diphthongs and monophthongs:

- (1) There is optional diphthongization in the specified contexts.
- (2) There is optional synaeresis of underlying diphthongs, where a complex vowel sound is simplified into a simple vowel sound in the specified environments.
- (3) It is possible that most of the instances of monophthongs being realized instead of diphthongs are the result of hiatus resolution: when two vowels occur in sequence, one of the two vowels has to be dropped.
- (4) These diphthongs are sequences with a semivowel /w/ or /j/ (CwV or CjV) that are optionally simplified to CV.

Although different cases may be explained by any of the proposals in (1), (2), (3) or (4), I choose to analyze these cases as optional diphthongization. Such optional diphthongization may go back to historical long vowels, which synchronically either undergo diphthongization or shortening.

### 6.2.2.2 CwV sequences and hiatus resolution

A number of CwV sequences are attested in prosodically strong syllables in Kam. These are exhaustively inventorized and illustrated in § 5.5. All of these examples can be alternatively analyzed as diphthongs with *u* as the onglide. If this analysis is adopted, the following diphthongs are added to the inventory of Kam (examples are exhaustive):

- [ɥa] (28 examples)

ɲ̀fwàŋ ‘water bird, sp.’	ɲ̀fwàg ‘striped grass mouse’	kwàsí ‘to pluck’
àŋgwár ‘thirst’	m̀pwár ‘duck’	swár ‘to live’
hwár ‘to think’	kwàr ‘hip, loins, waist’	kwár ‘to make a rope’
kwàntón ‘Mumuye people’	kwàntírí ‘to fold’	àkwán ‘bean’
àdzwàn ‘snake, sp.’	ɲ̀kwàtìrì ‘joint’	lwàm ‘hippopotamus’
kùrùkwàb ‘bird, sp.’	p̀pwàb ‘liver’	ántwāb ‘young’
swàb ‘sing’	swàptí ‘to increase’	ɲ̀wāb ‘all’

ηwám ‘junior in-law’  
 ηwárí ‘to mix’  
 àηwán ‘senior in-law’

ηwàntí ‘to straighten’  
 ηwàrà ‘you’re welcome’

ηwàrí ‘to be sad’  
 àηwà ‘friend’

- [uɔ] (6 examples)

àηgwóg ‘house’  
 àkwóg ‘mushroom’

ákwoḡ ‘big one’  
 àgwòb ‘plant, sp.’

ηwóri ‘to tie a knot’  
 àηwòm ‘Kam’

- [ui] (5 examples)

kwî ‘walking stick’  
 àηwî ‘new’

ηwìkí ‘person name’  
 àηwî ‘story’

àηwí ‘place’

- [ue] (3 examples)

kúkwéj ‘stick, sp.’

kwêj ‘mudfish’

gwéj ‘elsewhere’

- [ũê] (2 examples)

ɸwē ‘newborn child’

gwáj ‘chest’

- [ue]

ñɸwé ‘rainy season’

- [uɔ]

gwó ‘to be light’

- [ũò]

swò ‘baboon’

- [ũâ]

àdzwā ‘cheek’

Since these diphthongs are fairly rare, it is more convenient to analyze the examples as CwV clusters. Such CwV clusters can, however, be treated as the result of hiatus resolution: an underlying /u/, when combined with another vowel, is reduced to a semivowel to avoid vowel sequences. A sequence of /u/ and /o/, for example, is reduced to /wo/, and a sequence of /u/ and /i/ to /wi/.

Sometimes (but not always) a complex HL tone is found on a CwV(C) syllable. Such complex tones may represent a H-L sequence of two erstwhile syllabic vowels: *Cu* carried H tone, and the second vowel was part of a syllable carrying L tone:

- (135) kú + ì → kwî ‘walking stick’  
 kú + èj → kwêj ‘mudfish’

CwV(C) syllables can also feature a M tone, which possibly goes back to a LH contour (see § 3.3.3). These syllables may go back to sequences of a *Cu*-syllable and a following syllable with H tone:

- (136) ʃù + é̃ → ʃwě̃ ‘newborn child’ (cf. ʃi or àʃi ‘child’)  
 àdʒù + á̃ → àdʒwā̃ ‘cheek’

### 6.3 Consonant-vowel interactions

#### 6.3.1 Fronted /i/ after coronals, l, j, ɲ, f and v

[i] freely alternates with [i̥] after coronals (*s, ʃ, dʒ, ʃ, l, j, ɲ, f* and *v*). In these positions, [i̥] can be seen as an optional fronted allophone of /i/.

- (137) /i/ → /i̥/                    /{s, ʃ, dʒ, ʃ, l, j, ɲ, f, v}\_  
 àlīlē vs. àlīlē̃ ‘yesterday’  
 jīrāk vs. jīrāk̃ ‘two’  
 áʃíʃàrì vs. áʃíʃàrì̃ ‘first (one)’  
 ɲìsīrī vs. ɲìsīrī̃ ‘money’  
 sírá vs. sírá̃ ‘hair’  
 mùsì vs. mùsì̃ ‘to fill something’  
 vírì vs. vírì̃ ‘dirty’  
 fírì vs. fírì̃ ‘to fly’  
 àlíp ʃí rì ɲé vs. àlíp ʃí̃ rì ɲé̃ ‘finger’  
 àdʒìrìkì vs. àdʒìrìkì̃ ‘epilepsy’

This rule neutralizes the distinction between /i/ and /i̥/ in some open syllables in strong prosodic positions. In closed syllables and in weak prosodic positions, and after nasal consonants, this opposition is already neutralized (cf. § 5.2.2, § 4.2.7). Note that /ɲ/ is both a nasal consonant that can centralize /i/ and a consonant that can cause fronting of /i̥/. It is my impression that after /ɲ/, vowels are realized as [i̥] more often than as [i].

This rule is applied more consistently before a pause than between consonants. Prepausally, one very rarely finds an [i̥], except after /s/ (e.g. *mùsì* ‘fill’ in (137)).

- (138) fàmlí ‘to feed someone’ (not attested in isolation: [fàmlí])  
 àmáí ‘flower’ (not attested in isolation: [àmáí])  
 jī ‘to stand’ (not attested in isolation: [jī])  
 àjì ‘world’ (not attested in isolation: [àjì])  
 gùjì ‘ground nut’ (not attested in isolation: [gùjì])  
 àfí ‘mat’ (not attested in isolation: [àfí])  
 àfjì ‘child’ (not attested in isolation: [àfjì])  
 dʒì ‘bat’ (not attested in isolation: [dʒì])

There are no clear examples of fronting after /z/.

Historically, it is possible that there was a sound change where *i* centralized to *ɨ* in most environments. After coronals, palatals and labiodentals, *i* was preserved. That the rule is applied more consistently before a pause than between consonants suggests that this was a process of utterance-internal vowel reduction.<sup>59</sup>

### 6.3.2 Fronted /u/ → [y] after coronals, palatals and /l/

/u/ can be fronted to [y] after coronals, palatals and /l/.

- (139) /u/ → [y] /{s, ʃ, dʒ, ʃ, l, j, ɲ, z}\_  
 [dʒùtì] vs. [dʒỳtì] ‘to gift something’  
 [zúúrák] vs. [zỳzỳrák] ‘shadow’  
 [ʃùtán] vs. [ʃỳtán] ‘to stop’  
 [súβí] vs. [sỳβí] ‘spear grass’  
 [ʃùròk] vs. [ʃỳròk] ‘elephant’  
 [àlúlù] vs. [àlỳlù] ‘kneecap’  
 [jùrù] vs. [jỳrù] ‘first person plural pronoun’

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<sup>59</sup> I wish to thank Dmitry Idiatov for this suggestion.



- (143) àgbìràg vs. àgbràg ‘francolin’  
 àkpírè vs. àkprè ‘cough, n.’  
 m̀p̄r̄ōg vs. m̀pr̄ōg ‘rat’  
 b̀r̄ì vs. br̄ì ‘day’  
 p̀àt̄úr̄ù vs. p̀atr̄ù ‘cat’  
 àfén<sup>†</sup>d̄r̄ì vs. àfén<sup>†</sup>dr̄ì ‘little grebe’  
 k̀r̄ìb̀ìg vs. kr̄ìb̀ìg ‘scorpion’  
 g̀úr̄ôg vs. gr̄ôg ‘lion’  
 v̀ír̄ì vs. vr̄ì ‘dirt’  
 s̀ùr̄ùp̄áj vs. sr̄ùp̄áj ‘vulture’  
 z̀úúr̄ág vs. z̀úcr̄ág ‘shadow’

There are generally more examples of dropped *i* than dropped *u*. After *m*, *u* cannot be dropped. When *i* is dropped after *m*, *m* is usually released into *r* through an epenthetic (or excrescent) bilabial stop *b*:

- (144) m̀r̄èg vs. m̀r̄èg [m̀br̄èg] ‘nasal mucus’  
 m̀r̄ì vs. mr̄ì [m̀br̄ì] ‘again, to repeat’  
 àm̀ír̄á vs. àmr̄á [àm̀br̄á] ‘brother’



## III Part three: Nominal morphosyntax





## 7 Nouns, numerals and attributive adjectives

### 7.1 Nouns: definition and general observations

Nouns prototypically refer to things, i.e. entities that can be conceptualized without reference to ‘time’ or to a period during which they exist or ‘persist’ (Givón 1984: 51). They are time-stable concepts. In this they differ from verbs, which prototypically refer to actions, events or states, which are always characterized by a certain time during which they take place or persist.

Nouns function as the head of a noun phrase and can fulfill the functions of a noun phrase by themselves, serving as the sole item expressing the subject or object of a clause. Other functions of nouns include complements of prepositions, modifiers of other nouns and vocatives. Formally, the head vs. complement or modifier status of a noun is indicated by its position in the noun phrase. The head of a noun phrase always comes first. Modifiers follow.

- (145) nún        í-bāg-ī  
 bird        ADJ-be.skinny-FV  
 ‘skinny bird’  
 (session\_173, Babangida Audu, Elicitation)

- (146) àṅgwóg í  
 house     3PL:POSS  
 ‘their house’

- (147) àbìràg    b̀er  
 leaf        tree  
 ‘leaf of the tree’  
 (session\_173, Babangida Audu, Elicitation)

Not the noun, but the noun phrase as a whole is marked for number in Kam. Apart from number and deictic distance (by means of demonstratives), no other grammatical categories (case, definiteness, etc.) are marked in non-pronominal noun phrases in Kam.

Gender is not a grammatical category in Kam, nor is there another grammatical system of nominal classification.

About half of all noun stems have a prosodic prefix, which can be either *à-* (one third of all stems), *Ñ-* (one sixth of all stems), or more rarely *Ñ́-* (just ten stems) or *á-* (just four stems).<sup>60</sup> These prosodic prefixes do not have a morphosyntactic function, although they may have had a function related to nominal classification in the past. Nasal prefixes are prosodically weak in that they are always homorganic with the following consonant (§ 4.2.4). The prosodic *a*-prefixes are prosodically weak in that they can be (and usually are) dropped or reduced to *ə-* when they occur utterance internally (§ 4.2.9). There are no examples where a nasal prefix precedes a palatal consonant.

- (148) àbàŋ ‘alcohol’  
 àwù ‘seed’  
 àlǐbírí ‘grave’  
 àdžàr ‘fishing net’  
 àfù ‘womb’
- (149) m̀fò ‘forest’  
 m̀kpálíléj [ŋ̀m̀kpálíléj] ‘butterfly’  
 m̀pájírí ‘monkey, sp.’  
 ñfàŋ ‘rat’  
 ñsé ‘gazelle, sp.’  
 ñf̣óm ‘hoe’  
 ñk̀ènsì ‘razor’  
 ñkwān ‘bean’  
 ñk̀ùròg ‘voice’

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<sup>60</sup> In other words, two thirds of all prosodic prefixes are *à-* and about one third is *Ñ*.

- (150)    *mpírâŋ* ‘fish, sp.’  
           *mprîm* ‘okra’  
           *nsâ* ‘fish, sp.’  
           *ntérî* ‘squirrel’  
           *ntŋwâg* ‘pig’  
           *ntŋwâg* ‘striped grass mouse’  
           *ngúrôg* ‘chameleon’  
           *ngúrôg* ‘goliath beetle’  
           *nkómî* ‘nile monitor lizard’  
           *nkón* ‘louse’
- (151)    *ápú* ‘bag’  
           *ákú* ‘cult, sp.’  
           *ásúrá* ‘trail’  
           *áfîfàrî* ‘first (one)’

The prosodic prefixes *à-* and *á-* are segmentally identical to the nominalizing prefix *à-* discussed in § 7.2.3 and the adjectivizing prefix *á<sup>L</sup>* described in § 7.5. These derivational prefixes are also prosodically weak and behave prosodically identically to the prosodic prefixes *à-* and *á-*: they are also either dropped or centralized to *ə-* utterance-internally.

Derivational morphology operating on nouns includes the adverbializer *k-* (e.g. in *k-átwàb* ‘in a small way’, from *átwàb* ‘small’, *k-ántērî* ‘truly’ from *ántērî* ‘truth’). This *k-* may as well be analyzed as an instrumental marker (cf. § 15.4.7). Nouns can be combined into nominal compounds, which are not structurally different from attributive possession constructions (§ 7.2.1). Productive diminutive and augmentative derivations exist (§ 7.2.1.2), and there are two productive strategies for deriving new nouns from verbs (§ 7.2.3).

Numerals can be considered a subcategory of nouns, since purely morphosyntactically there is nothing differentiating them from nouns. Numerals are discussed in § 7.4.

## 7.2 *Compounding and derivation*

### 7.2.1 Compound nouns

#### 7.2.1.1 General observations

Compounds are complex lexemes consisting of two or more other lexemes. Binominal compounds are very common in the lexicon of Kam (see also Pepper 2020). In Kam, a binominal compound is formally identical to an associative construction (§ 10.3.3.1). One could argue that binominal compounds are binominal phrases with a classifying modifier, whereas binominal phrases that are not compounds have a descriptive modifier (cf. Rijkhof 2008 on the distinction between *classifying modifiers* and *descriptive modifiers*).<sup>61</sup> For example, a binominal construction made up of the nouns *àfàm* ‘animal’ and *àηgwóg* ‘house’ is a regular phrase if *àηgwóg* refers to a specific house, or to any hypothetical house that can be mentally invoked, as in (152). If *àηgwóg* does not refer to any house in particular, but acts as a general concept that the referent is associated with, the binominal construction is a compound, as in (153). In (152), the modifier *àηgwóg* describes a characteristic of the animal. In (153), the modifier *àηgwóg* specifies the *kind* of the entity that being referred to (Rijkhoff 2008: 793), i.e. a ‘house’ type, as opposed to a ‘bush’ type (154). (153) and (154) are binominal phrases that behave like complex lexemes and can thus be considered binominal compounds.<sup>62</sup>

- (152) *àfàm*      *àηgwóg*  
 animal      house  
 ‘animal of the house’ or ‘animal of (a/some/any) house’

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<sup>61</sup> See also Giegerich (2015: 10-11) on associative attribution vs. ascriptive attribution in English.

<sup>62</sup> I do not believe that the only difference between a compound and a phrase is that phrases are compositional and compounds are non-compositional or lexicalized. From that perspective a compound is essentially a lexicalized phrase. One could, of course, continue along this line and say that nouns can simply be formed by means of complex noun phrases and that there is no such thing as a separate compound construction in Kam. I believe, however, that it is important to distinguish those complex noun phrases that can function as complex nouns (which I consider compounds) from those that cannot (=non-compounds). The main distinguishing characteristic between the two is, as I argue in the text, the descriptive vs. classificatory nature of the modifier.

(153) àfàm    èḡwóg  
 animal    house  
 ‘house animal’, or ‘domestic animal’

(154) àfàm    àḡě  
 animal    bush  
 ‘bush animal’, or ‘wild animal’

Some compounds have a non-compositional or conventionalized meaning. In (155), for example, the meaning ‘cancer’ cannot be computed from the meanings ‘disease’ and ‘bush’ alone. This meaning has to be stored in a lexicon. In (156), the meaning ‘cassava’ is not the same as the literal interpretation of the phrase ‘dry yam’ from which it is derived.

(155) àdég    ó<sup>+</sup>ḡě  
 disease    bush  
 ‘cancer’

(156) àdží fō    *from*    àdží    áfō  
 cassava            yam    dry  
 ‘cassava’            ‘dry yam’

Some compounds contain elements that are no longer recognizable as independent nouns and may be considered similar to the so-called cranberry morphs in English. An interesting case of this is (160), which seems transparent to a linguist working on the language, although the analysis presented here is rejected by my informants.

(157) àḡfi        séḡ    í<sup>+</sup>ḡún  
 child    ?    behind  
 ‘younger brother’

(158) àḡfi                    kpírág  
 child(DIM)            ?  
 ‘spoon’

(159) àván    ífál  
 ?            ?  
 ‘lung’ (cf. another unanalyzable compound àván džíréḡ ‘heart’)

- (160) m̀àn      ̀̀l̀í̀b  
 fat          head  
 ‘brain’

In Kam, compounds and phrases do not differ fundamentally in their morphosyntax. Rather, binominal compounds are a type of phrase with a classifying modifier rather than a descriptive one. Such binominal compounds can then by themselves operate as complex nouns. Binominal compounding is a productive way to form new, initially compositional nouns. These complex nouns can then, because of the classificatory, non-descriptive nature of the modifier, become non-compositional and lexicalized.

### 7.2.1.2 Noun + attributive adjective compounds with *ɲì* ‘thing’ or *ɲí* ‘person’

New nouns can be formed with a noun followed by an attributive adjective. In this case, the noun is *ɲì* ‘thing’ or *ɲí* ‘person’. I discuss this construction, a type of compound noun, in its own subsection because it is a common and productive way of creating new nouns.

Adjectives in these *ɲí/ɲì* compounds are derived from verbs according to the scheme discussed in § 7.5: they have a prefix *á<sup>L</sup>*, replacive M tone on the verb stem,<sup>63</sup> and a final vowel *-i* (in CVC-stems, cf. § 12.2). They could be considered minimal relative clauses.<sup>64</sup>

The *ɲí/ɲì* construction is used for basic lexical concepts such as ‘food’, ‘elder’, ‘farmer’ as well as for more specific concepts such as ‘scratch’, ‘infected rash’.

- (161) ɲì          í-n̄ĩm-ĩ  
 ɲì          á<sup>L</sup>-n̄im\M-i  
 thing      ADJ-eat\ADJ-FV  
 ‘food’

- (162) ɲí          í-b̄õr-ĩ  
 ɲí          á<sup>L</sup>-b̄òr\M-i  
 person    ADJ-be.big\ADJ-FV  
 ‘elder’

<sup>63</sup> This M could be a downstepped H, cf. footnote 69 on p. 174.

<sup>64</sup> I wish to thank Jeff Good for this suggestion.

- (163) *ɲí*      *í-bār-ī*  
*ɲí*      *á<sup>L</sup>-bàr\ADJ-FV*  
 person ADJ-farm\ADJ-FV  
 ‘farmer’
- (164) *ɲì*      *í-gbēr-ī*  
*ɲì*      *á<sup>L</sup>-gbèr\M-i*  
 thing ADJ-scratch\ADJ-FV  
 ‘scratch’
- (165) *ɲì*      *í-bōb-rī*  
*ɲì*      *á<sup>L</sup>-bòb\L-rí\M*  
 thing ADJ-come.out\CAUS-CAUS\ADJ  
 ‘infected rash’
- (166) *ɲì*      *í-dērī*  
*ɲì*      *á<sup>L</sup>-dèrī\M*  
 thing ADJ-draw\ADJ  
 ‘school’
- (167) *ɲí*      *í-fāg-ī*  
*ɲí*      *á<sup>L</sup>-fàg\M-i*  
 person ADJ-lock\ADJ-FV  
 ‘prisoner’
- (168) *ɲì*      *íjō*  
 thing warm  
 ‘living being’

### 7.2.1.3 Trinominal compounds: *ɲì* ‘thing’/*ɲí* ‘person + noun + adjective

Kam also features many trinominal compounds where *ɲì* ‘thing’ or *ɲí* ‘person’ is followed by a ‘noun + attributive adjective’ construction. These constructions involve an action, which is encoded by the final adjective (in (169) ‘to close’). This action affects a thing, which is expressed by the following noun (an



‘eye’). This action is executed by an agent, which is rendered by *ni* ‘thing’ or *ni* ‘person’. A Christian, then, is ‘a person who closes (their) eyes’.

- (169) *ni*        *nùŋ*        *tĩksĩ*  
*ni*        *ànùŋ*        <sup>L</sup>-*tĩksĩ*\M  
 person    eye        ADJ-close\ADJ  
 ‘Christian’ (literally: ‘person of closed eyes’)  
 (session\_052, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

This type of compound is very productive. Like the *ni/ni* compounds discussed in § 7.2.1.2, they can express fairly basic concepts (e.g. ‘tailor’, ‘hunter’, ‘deaf person’), but are also used for more recently introduced concepts (‘toothbrush’, ‘Christian’, ‘cup’). The syntactic structure of the construction is akin to a complex associative construction (cf. § 10.3.3.1), where *ni* ‘person’ or *ni* ‘thing’ is modified by a ‘noun + adjective’ noun phrase (e.g. ‘person of lowering of forehead’). It is notable that in this construction the segmental part of the prefix *á<sup>L</sup>* that usually derives adjectives from verbs is always dropped in the final adjective. It is never retained or centralized to *á<sup>L</sup>*. Its floating <sup>L</sup> tone remains, blocking H tone spread from preceding syllables (e.g. in (174) and (175)).

- (170) *ni*        *gòm*                *bāg-ĩ*  
*ni*        *àgòm*                <sup>L</sup>-*bāgĩ*\M-i  
 person    forehead        ADJ-lower.head\ADJ-FV  
 ‘muslim’ (literally: ‘person of lowered forehead’)  
 (session\_052, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (171) *ni*        *ni*        *bār-ĩ*  
*ni*        *ni*        <sup>L</sup>-*bàr*\M-i  
 person    thing        ADJ-farm\NMLZ-FV  
 ‘farmer’ (literally: ‘person of farmed thing’)  
 (session\_187, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (172) *ni*        *fàg*        *dēŋ-ĩ*  
*ni*        *àfàg*        <sup>L</sup>-*dēŋ*\M-i  
 thing     tooth        ADJ-wipe\M-FV  
 ‘toothbrush’ (literally: ‘thing of wiped thing’)  
 (session\_172, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (173) jì        nùŋ      bōk-sī  
 jì        ànùŋ    ˀ-bòk-sí\M  
 thing    eye      ADJ-be.black-CAUS\NMLZ  
 ‘shameful thing’ (literally: ‘thing of black eye’)  
 (session\_283, Babangida Audu, elicitation)
- (174) jí        nág      nīmsī  
 jí        nág      ˀ-nīmsí\M  
 person   cow      ADJ-feed\NMLZ  
 ‘cattle rearer’ (literally: ‘person of fed cow’)
- (175) jì        miŋkájá      tūg-ī  
 jì        miŋkájá      ˀ-tùg\M-i  
 thing    water      ADJ-fetch\NMLZ-FV  
 ‘cup’ (literally: ‘thing of fetched water’)
- (176) jí        jí        gbām-ī  
 jí        jì        ˀ-gbàm\M-i  
 person   thing      ADJ-sow\NMLZ-FV  
 ‘tailor’ (literally: ‘person of sowed thing’)
- (177) jí        kàr      fāg-ī  
 jí        àkàr    ˀ-fàg\M-i  
 person   ear      ADJ-lock\NMLZ-FV  
 ‘deaf person’ (literally: ‘person of closed ear’)
- (178) jí        jí        mgbāb-ī  
 jí        jì        ˀ-mgbàb\M-i  
 person   thing      ADJ-shoot\NMLZ-FV  
 ‘hunter’ (literally: ‘person of shot thing’)

## 7.2.2 Diminutive and augmentative derivation

Diminutive markers express small size of the entity referred to by the noun. (*à*)*f*i ‘child’ is used to form diminutives in Kam.

(179) a.

(*à*)*f*i      *m̄pārōg*  
 child      rat  
 ‘young of rat’

b.

(*à*)*f*i      *m̄pārōg*  
 DIM      rat  
 ‘mouse, small rat’

(180) *àŋgwóg á, àf̄i ŋgwóg á*  
 house    PROX DIM    house    PRSTT

‘This house is a small house.’

(Tope\_Bitrus\_06, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

Larger male animals are often modified with *àná* ‘father’ of *mè* ‘mother’, but I have no examples of it being used as an augmentative marker for inanimate nouns.

(181) *àná      mkpòŋ*  
 father    agama.lizard  
 ‘male agama lizard’

(182) *àná      sô*  
 father    large.ape  
 ‘older male large ape’

(183) *mè      sô*  
 mother    large.ape  
 ‘older female large ape’

## 7.2.3 Nominalization

**7.2.3.1 Deverbal participant nominalization with à- and replacive H tone**

The prefix à- can be found as a general nominalizer on verbs. The verb stem is almost always marked with a replacive H tone. The à- prefix is prosodically weak and behaves like other prosodic prefixes on nouns: it can be dropped utterance-medially or reduced to a central vowel ə (§ 4.2.9). This nominalization strategy is not synchronically productive, as no new nouns can be made with it. In the currently collected lexicon of 1,550 Kam lexemes, only 22 nouns are related to verbs in this way.

**Patient nominalization**

- (184) à-bén  
 à-bén\H  
 NMLZ-talk\NMLZ  
 ‘talk, speech, topic’
- (185) à-jé  
 à-jé\H  
 NMLZ-shout\NMLZ  
 ‘shout’
- (186) à-kpóré  
 à-kpōrē\H  
 NMLZ-cough\NMLZ  
 ‘cough’
- (187) à-nám  
 à-nàm\H  
 NMLZ-grind\NMLZ  
 ‘flour’

**Agent nominalization**

- (188) à-zúb  
 à-zùb\H  
 NMLZ-steal\NMLZ  
 ‘thief’

- (189) à-lóg  
à-lòg\H  
NMLZ-give.birth\NMLZ  
'maternal relative'

**Instrument nominalization**

- (190) à-bág  
à-bàg\H  
NMLZ-stab\NMLZ  
'knife'

**Other nominalization types**

- (191) à-búr  
à-búr\H  
NMLZ-white\NMLZ  
'cloud'
- (192) à-gág  
à-gág\H  
NMLZ-hang\NMLZ  
'branch'
- (193) à-kúptí  
à-kùptí\H  
NMLZ-kneel.down\NMLZ  
'lazy person' or 'laziness'
- (194) à-dég  
à-dêg\H  
NMLZ-be.sick\NMLZ  
'disease'

One example in the data unexpectedly shows a replacive L tone instead of a H tone on the verb stem.

- (195) à-vèg  
 à-vég\L  
 NMLZ-die\NMLZ  
 ‘death, corpse’

Another individual example shows no replacive tone whatsoever.

- (196) à-làŋ  
 à-làŋ  
 NMLZ-cook  
 ‘pot’

### 7.2.3.2 Abstract noun derivation with *à-* ... *-rì* and replacive H tone

Another nominalization pattern derives abstract nouns with a similar *à-* prefix, replacive H tone on the verb stem, and a *rì-* suffix. When the abstract noun denotes a property, its meaning can be metonymically extended to a person having that property. This nominalization process is fully productive and can be applied to any verb.

- (197) à-búní-rì  
 à-būnī\H-rì  
 NMLZ-cross\NMLZ-NMLZ  
 ‘(a) crossing’, ‘(someone’s) crossing (the road)’
- (198) à-džíŋ-rì  
 à-džíŋ\H-rì  
 NMLZ-be.foolish\NMLZ-NMLZ  
 ‘foolishness’ or ‘fool’
- (199) à-lém-rì  
 à-lém\H-rì  
 NMLZ-be.good\NMLZ-rì  
 ‘goodness, beauty’

- (200) à-sáŋ-rî  
 à-sáŋ\H-rî  
 NMLZ-go\NMLZ-NMLZ  
 ‘(the) going’

### 7.3 Proper names

Proper names refer to persons or characters, places, clans, ethnicities and traditional institutions, specific events, and weekdays. Some examples follow. I did not collect proper names of animals and songs.

- (201) **Person names**
- |           |          |             |
|-----------|----------|-------------|
| àkpàkán   | àkpàkàni | džúrkàkí    |
| màŋíni    | kìni     | kìŋkìndžírí |
| bòjí      | nēwī     | wàrkû       |
| àtàké     | gàŋsâ    | zìmà        |
| ʃòŋgàdžim | ìkàŋfín  | ànùŋdžál    |
| kávên     | dùwásām  | ŋwìŋkí      |
| ìkòntòró  | àjáwkánî | sòvírí      |
| ʃíwánʃà   | ʃìŋgáw   | mántì       |
| àfùwí     | vówî     | àsàbé       |





(203) **Clan names**

- ní ʃíríkú (Shiriku people)  
 ní mfɔ̃́ + séj (‘thorn tree forest’ people)<sup>65</sup>  
 ní ntóǵí wêj (‘mahogany tree mountain’ people)<sup>66</sup>  
 ní ntóǵ sání (‘people of mountain Sani’)  
 ʃǐbá (the clan that takes care of the needs of the traditional chief)

(204) **Ethnicities and religions**

- àṅwòm (Kam)  
 dàw (Jirim)  
 kwàntóǵ (Mumuye)  
 àkómlâ (Mumuye, alternative name)  
 màkrà (Hausa, also Muslim)  
 ní nág nīmsī (Fulani, literally ‘cattle rearer’)  
 ánīmsī (Fulani, alternative name, an adjectivized form of ‘to feed’)  
 nīmsī nág (Fulani, alternative name, literally ‘feeding of cow’)  
  
 ní dǵóǵ mé (followers of the traditional religion)  
 ní gòm bāǵī (Muslim, alternative name)  
 ní nùǵ tīksī (Christian, literally ‘people who close their eyes’)

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<sup>65</sup> *séj* is a species of tree with thorns that I was not able to identify. My informants called it *kaya* in Hausa, which is a general name for ‘thorn’.

<sup>66</sup> There is an unexpected vowel *i* after *ntóǵ* ‘mountain’ here. Note also that in the names including *ntóǵ* as a component, the L tone of *ntóǵ* is dropped.

(205) **Traditional institutions and titles**<sup>67</sup>

a. *Deities and cults*

kùrìkí (God, this name is used for the Christian and Islamic God)

màm (deity, sp.)

àléṅ (deity, sp.)

ákú (cult, sp.)

dǝ́ṅ (cult, sp.)

dàmǝ́ṅ (cult, named after a historical hero-chief)

b. *Types of magic*

tìdǝ́ṅ (magic, sp., also the name for ‘east’)

kú (magic, sp., also the name for ‘cobra’)

c. *Official titles*

àbēní (traditional king, literally ‘owner of people’)

wàṅkú (traditional king, alternative name; literally ‘king of *kú*’, *kú* being a cult)

àwàn (king, general name)

mē tìdǝ́ṅ (the mother of the traditional chief, literally ‘mother of *tìdǝ́ṅ*’)

ʃǎṅwádǝ́ (elder daughter of the traditional chief)

ʃǝ́ṅgádǝ́m (younger daughter of the traditional chief)

ʃìkú (priest, sp.)

àkìmpá (official, sp.)

ʃìwó (a group of people lead by the official called *àkìmpá*)

bōnū (group of people responsible for opening traditional festivals)

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<sup>67</sup> I do not currently have enough information to provide a clear picture of the meanings or uses of each term mentioned here. For example, it is not clear to me whether there are different deities that have different names, or whether there is one deity that goes by different names. The functions of different officials or different types of magic could also not be investigated within the scope of the current project. Meek (1931b: 538-550) provides some discussion of Kam traditional religion, but I was not able to fully verify his discussion with my consultants.

(206) **Events and dances**

̀̀nsúrón (traditional dance, sp.)

̀̀àkú bónù (festival, sp.)

(207) **Weekdays**

<b>Kam</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Etymology notes</b>
kàṅkánê	Monday	Name of a Jirim village that has a market event on Mondays. Also <i>Kankani</i> .
tàlátà	Tuesday	Borrowed from Hausa (Talata) – originally from Arabic <i>at-talaata</i> ‘Tuesday’, literally ‘day the third (starting from Sunday)’
màjòkàm	Wednesday	Name of Mayo Kam, a Kam village with a market event on Wednesdays.
àlà̀mî:s	Thursday	Borrowed from Hausa ( <i>alhamis</i> ); originally from Arabic <i>yoom al-khamiis</i> ‘Thursday’, literally ‘day the fifth (starting from Sunday)’
̀̀ḡùmbàrè	Friday	Borrowed from Adamawa Fulfulde ( <i>jumbaare</i> ), originally from Arabic <i>yoom aj-jum’a</i> ‘Friday’, literally ‘day of the mosque’
̀̀àsábâr	Saturday	Borrowed from Hausa ( <i>Asabar</i> ), originally from Arabic <i>yoom as-sabat</i> ‘Saturday’, literally ‘day the seventh (starting from Sunday)’
̀̀láhàdì	Sunday	Borrowed from Hausa ( <i>Lahadi</i> ), originally from Arabic <i>yoom al-aḥad</i> ‘Sunday’, literally ‘day the first’

People in Kam often have more than one name, including (1) a traditional name in Kam, (2) a Christian or an Islamic name, (3) one's father's name, (4) one or more nicknames.

The traditional name is chosen shortly after one's birth by one's grandparents, and can be a phrase referring to an event during which someone was born, or to something special about the pregnancy (e.g. *àjì fí* 'generation of poverty' for someone who was born in times of poverty, *kùrikì sín á* 'God has done it' when someone has given birth who was thought to be infertile). The name can also simply be the same name as a grandparent or an older relative.

The Christian or Islamic name is given in the presence of an imam or a priest. When the parents of a child are Christian, this is done during baptism. Christian names are generally borrowed from English, Islamic names are borrowed from Hausa. Some children receive a Hausa name regardless of their parents' religion.

Children automatically receive their father's name as their second name and are often referred to (or refer to themselves) by their father's name. People often get a nickname based on their attitude, behavior or on their speech (e.g. common phrases they use).

Some morphosyntactic operations on proper names have a different function than when they are applied to common nouns. Plural marking on person names, for example, elicits an associative plural reading: 'people associated with x' rather than 'multiple instances of x':

- (208) Vówí jō  
 Vówí PL  
 'Vowi and his associates/family/friends'  
 (session\_353, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)

When a person name is combined with a proximal or distal demonstrative modifier, it usually expresses frustration about that person, or it at least implies that the person has done something wrong.

- (209) Vówí ò  
 Vówí DIST  
 'That Vowi! (Has he done something bad again?)'  
 (session\_353, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)

Person names or titles serving as such often occur in the vocative construction:

- (210) Bàbàngídá ooj!  
 Babangida VOC  
 'Hey, Babangida!'

- (211) àlàsírá            ooj!  
 white.person        VOC  
 ‘Hey, white man!’

## 7.4 Numerals

### 7.4.1.1 Basic morphosyntax of numerals

Numerals are morphosyntactically like nouns. Like nouns, they can be the head or the sole member of the noun phrase. They can also be used in a possessive construction, modified with adjectives and used with prepositions.

- (212) ʃàr            kím                    rífàm, ìjwún    kím                    í<sup>+</sup>tábé  
 three        eat:PFV            meat, five        eat:PFV            fish  
 ‘Three ate meat, five ate fish.’  
 (session\_346, Danjuma Bello, elicitation)

- (213) ʃì            ʃàr            á  
 children    three        PRSTT  
 ‘The children are three.’  
 (session\_346, Danjuma Bello, elicitation)

- (214) ònár            á  
 four            PRSTT  
 ‘It is four.’  
 (session\_346, Danjuma Bello, elicitation)

- (215) bī            í  
 one            3PL:POSS  
 ‘one of theirs’  
 (session\_346, Danjuma Bello, elicitation)

- (216) ʃàr            á-ɲwī  
 three            ADJ-new  
 ‘three new (ones)’  
 (session\_346, Danjuma Bello, elicitation)

- (217) kó jírāg  
 INSTR two  
 ‘with two (e.g. hands)’  
 (session\_346, Danjuma Bello, elicitation)

When used as quantifiers, numerals always follow nouns.

- (218) àwàn ʃār  
 king three  
 ‘three kings’  
 (session\_346, Danjuma Bello, elicitation)

- (219) mpīrī jírāg  
 goat two  
 ‘two goats’  
 (session\_346, Danjuma Bello, elicitation)

## 7.4.1.2 Formation of cardinal numerals

### 7.4.1.2.1 Simplex numerals

Kam has a decimal (10-based) and vigesimal (20-based) counting system, possibly with a trace of a quinary (5-based) system in number seven: *džùb jírāg* ‘seven’ can be segmented into *džùb* ‘six’ and *jírāg* ‘two’. Two diachronic interpretations of this are possible: either the compound expression is derived from a phrase meaning ‘second six’ (cf. Pozdniakov 2018: 150, 165), or *džùb* was the original term for ‘five’ and the original meaning was five-two. Apart from ‘seven’, numerals from one to ten are synchronically monomorphemic.

(220)	<i>bī̄</i> or <i>bímbíní</i>	1
	<i>jīrāg</i>	2
	<i>ɸ̄ār</i>	3
	<i>ɲnár</i>	4
	<i>ɲwún</i>	5
	<i>ɖʒùb</i>	6
	<i>ɖʒùb jīrāg</i>	7 (lit.: ‘six two’)
	<i>sār</i>	8
	<i>ɲí<sup>+</sup>zá</i>	9
	<i>bō</i>	10

According to my current data, *bímbíní* is a free alternative to *bī̄* ‘one’. *bī̄* appears to be the default, most frequently used form. Possibly, *bímbíní* is or was an emphatic form meaning ‘exactly one’. *ɲnár* ‘four’ has an initial syllabic nasal followed by a non-syllabic nasal, a phenomenon that does not occur elsewhere in simplex lexemes in Kam, which points to possible historical morphological complexity. The syllabic nasals are dropped when these numerals are used in complex numerals (see below). *ɲí<sup>+</sup>zá*, the numeral for nine, features internal downstep, which may also be indicative of historical complexity. For *ɲí<sup>+</sup>zá*, it should also be noted that the form found in isolation is different from the form found in complex numerals, which has an added velar stop in the final syllable’s coda position (*ɲí<sup>+</sup>zág*, see below).

There are two separate numerals for twenty. *kpējmī*, which is synchronically monomorphemic, and *àkpó-bí̂* which is, by analogy with tens after twenty, analyzable into the bound stem *àkpó* ‘twenty’ that does not occur anywhere in isolation, and the numeral for one, *bī̄*. Possibly, the initial part of both terms for ‘twenty’ are etymologically related to *kpò* ‘body’. *-mī* in *kpējmī* may be related to the indefinite article *mí<sup>l</sup>* (cf. § 9.4.4). Some informants preferred *àkpó-bí̂* over *kpējmī* in isolation, but both are attested. These numerals have different combinatory properties with other numerals to form complex numerals: *kpējmī* is used to form numerals from twenty-one to twenty-nine, and *àkpó-bí̂* is used to form twenties above twenty, i.e. numbers that are multiples of twenty. Thirty can be formed with either numeral. See below for more on this.

(221)	<i>kpēj-mī</i>	20 ( <i>kpēj</i> [body?]- <i>mí<sup>l</sup></i> [some?])
	<i>àkpó-bí̂</i>	20 ( <i>àkpó</i> [body?]-one)

In general, for many numbers, Hausa numerals can also be used by Kam speakers as simplex alternatives to the Kam complex numerals. Examples where simplex Hausa and complex Kam numerals can be used alongside each other are Hausa (originally Arabic) *tàlâtín* ‘thirty’ – alongside Kam *àkpó bí̂<sup>+</sup>rá gún bō* (or

*kpèjmi gún bō*, see below) ‘thirty’ and Hausa *dàrí* ‘hundred’ – alongside Kam *àkpó ɣwún* ‘hundred’. Such alternative Hausa numerals can be used in complex Kam numerals, e.g. *dàrí bí* (hundred one) ‘one hundred’.

In some cases, only the numeral borrowed from Hausa is used, which is always simplex:

- (222) *dúbú* ‘one thousand’ (borrowing, likely from Hausa *dubu*)  
*mìljèn* ‘one million’ (borrowing, likely from Hausa *miliyan*, indirectly borrowed from English *million*)

#### 7.4.1.2.2 Complex numerals

Numerals from eleven to nineteen and twenty-one to thirty are formed according to a typical decimal system: with *bō* ‘ten’ or *kpèjmi* ‘twenty’ in combination with the prepositional noun *gún* ‘back, behind’ and one of the numerals from one to nine. Note that, for twenty-one to twenty-nine, only *kpèjmi* can be used to mean ‘twenty’, and never *àkpó-bí*, which is only used in isolation and in multiples of twenty (see below). For the number ‘thirty’, two forms are possible: one according to this pattern - *kpèjmi gún bō* (twenty behind ten) ‘thirty’, or one according to the pattern with *àkpó-bí* as discussed below.

##### Formation of numerals from eleven to nineteen and twenty-one to thirty

- (223) *bō* + *gún* + 1-9
- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <i>bō gún bí</i>                     | 11 (ten behind one)                                    |
| <i>bō gún bímbíní</i>                | 11, alternative (ten behind one)                       |
| <i>bō gún jírág</i>                  | 12 (ten behind two)                                    |
| <i>bō gún nár</i>                    | 14 (ten behind four)                                   |
| <i>bō gún wún</i>                    | 15 (ten behind five)                                   |
| <i>bò gún ní<sup>+</sup> zág</i>     | 19 (ten behind nine)                                   |
| <i>kpèjmi gún bí</i>                 | 21 (twenty behind one)                                 |
| <i>kpèjmi gún bō</i>                 | 30 (twenty behind ten)                                 |
| <i>àkpó-bí<sup>+</sup> rá gún bō</i> | 30, alternative (twenty-one COM behind ten, see below) |

In numbers from eleven to nineteen, *bō* is sometimes simply dropped, which results, for example, in *gún jírág* for ‘twelve’, or *gún wún* for ‘fifteen’.

Also note that, as mentioned above, the nasal prefixes of *n-nár* ‘four’ and *ɲ-wún* ‘five’ are dropped in these complex numerals. In both cases, the tone of the prefix is also dropped. Also note the different form of *ní<sup>+</sup> zág*, which has a final -g in complex forms and a different tonal pattern.



The preposition *gún* ‘behind’ is a form of the prepositional noun *àgún* where, as often happens with prepositional nouns, the *à*-prefix has been dropped as well as its tone (cf. § 11.2.3). In numerals, this *à*- or its tone never resurfaces.

Multiples of twenty are formed according to a vigesimal system, i.e. by means of the bound stem *àkpǎ́* ‘twenty’, followed by the number referred to by the complex numeral divided by twenty. Note that 400 is obligatorily formed by means of the two different numerals that exist for twenty: *àkpǎ́* followed by *kpējmī*. The form \**àkpǎ́-á<sup>+</sup>kpǎ́-bí* was not accepted by my informants here.

(224) **Formation of twenties**

<i>àkpǎ́</i>	+ 1-20
<i>àkpǎ́-bí</i>	20 (twenty one)
<i>àkpǎ́-jírāg</i>	40 (twenty-two)
<i>àkpǎ́ nār</i>	80 (twenty-four)
<i>àkpǎ́-ŋwún</i>	100 (twenty-five)
<i>àkpǎ́ dǔúb</i>	120 (twenty-six)
<i>àkpǎ́-bó<sup>L</sup></i>	200 (twenty-ten)
<i>àkpǎ́-kpējmī</i>	400 (twenty-twenty)

Numbers in between the twenties (41-59, 61-79, 221-239, etc.) are generally formed with the ‘twenty’, followed by a modified form of the comitative *rǎ́* – which has H tone in this construction but L tone elsewhere in the language – followed by the preposition *gún* ‘behind’ also found in other numerals, and then followed by the appropriate numeral from one to nineteen. *kpējmī* ‘twenty’ can also be used as the second part of this construction (instead of a numeral from one to nineteen), especially for numbers beyond 200, but in these cases no preposition *gún* is used, and the comitative *rǎ́* receives its normal L tone. For thirty, as mentioned before, the numeral can be constructed according to this pattern, or it can be constructed according to the same pattern as numerals from one to thirty as described above.

(225) **Formation of numbers in between twenties**

[ <i>àkpǎ́</i> + 1-20] + <i>rǎ́</i> + <i>gún</i> + 1-30	
<i>àkpǎ́-bí<sup>+</sup> rǎ́ gún bō</i>	30 (twenty-one COM behind ten)
<i>kpējmī gún bō</i>	30, alternative (twenty behind ten)
<i>àkpǎ́-jírāg rǎ́ gún bō</i>	50 (twenty-two COM behind ten)
<i>àkpǎ́-ŋjār rǎ́ gún bō</i>	70 (twenty-three COM behind ten)
<i>àkpǎ́-bō rǎ́ kpējmī</i>	220 (twenty-ten COM twenty)
<i>àkpǎ́-bō rǎ́ kpējmī gún bō</i>	230 (twenty COM thirty[twenty behind ten])

### 7.5 Attributive adjectives

Attributive adjectives are lexemes that typically function as adnominal modifiers. In that position, they describe a property of the head noun. Very sporadically, an attributive adjective occurs as the head of a noun phrase. In such cases, the adjective metonymically refers to something that has the expressed property.<sup>68</sup>

(226) **Adjectives modifying nouns**

àtār      í-dūb-ī  
stone     ADJ-be.tall:ADJ-FV  
'a tall stone'

àtār      í-būr-ī  
stone     ADJ-be.white:ADJ-FV  
'a white stone'

(227) **Adjectives functioning as head nouns**

ásūmrī    †jō  
old       PL  
'old things'

ábōgōrī   †jō  
black     PL  
'black things'

ádōmrī    †jō  
red       PL  
'red things'

ávān      jō  
male      PL  
'males'

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<sup>68</sup> One lexeme, *ántērī* 'truth' has all formal properties of an adjective but has only been attested as a noun.

ábōgō ‘night, dark’

áwū ‘ripe’ or ‘ripe fruit’

There are no unambiguously simplex adjectival stems in Kam. Most are derived from verbs. Some, listed in (231) below, have no corresponding verbal stem and are thus not synchronically derived from verbs.

The process deriving adjectives from verbs is morphologically complex, consisting of separate morphemes:

- Replacive M tone on the verb stem<sup>69</sup>
- á<sup>L</sup>- prefix (the floating <sup>L</sup> tone is evident from the fact that the H tone on *á* does not spread)
- -i final vowel (only if the verb ends in a consonant, cf. § 12.2)

This process is very productive. It is both visible in basic vocabulary and in the formation of neologisms. Adjectivized verbs are often found with the noun *ɲi* ‘thing’ to create new nouns (cf. § 7.2.1.2).

(228) **Examples of deverbal adjectives**

á-bōr-ī

á<sup>L</sup>-bōr\M-i

ADJ-climb\ADJ-FV

‘big’

á-dūb-ī

á<sup>L</sup>-dūb\M-i

ADJ-be.tall\ADJ-FV

‘tall’

---

<sup>69</sup> This M could be a downstepped H. In the examples I used to check the tone of this type of derivation, a H after these adjectives is pronounced higher than the M that is found on the stem (e.g. *ábōrī á bā* ‘This is a big [thing] here.’). However, I have also sporadically heard a H tone after adjectives that is pronounced at the same height as the tone pattern of the stem. The latter situation could be explained by an analysis that treats the replacive tone pattern on adjectives as H, which is downstepped by the floating L tone of the prefix *á<sup>L</sup>*. The H tones following an adjective could, then, be pronounced on the same (downstepped) register as the H tone on the adjective (*á<sup>L</sup> bōrī á bā*), or the register could be reset and the following H tones are pronounced as regular (non-downstepped) H tones. The exact pronunciation could depend on the phonological context and on the speaker.

á-fām-ī  
 á<sup>L</sup>-fām\M-i  
 ADJ-be.light\ADJ-FV  
 ‘light’

á-būr-ī  
 á<sup>L</sup>-būr\M-i  
 ADJ-be.white\ADJ-FV  
 ‘white’

á-wū  
 á<sup>L</sup>-wū\M  
 ADJ-be.ripe\ADJ  
 ‘ripe’

(229) **Examples of *ni* + adjectivized verbs forming basic and new nouns**

*ni*      í-nīm-ī  
 thing    ADJ-eat:ADJ-FV  
 ‘food’ (literally: ‘thing of eating’)

*ni*      í-gbēr-ī  
 thing    ADJ-scratch:ADJ-FV  
 ‘scratch, n.’ (literally: ‘thing of scratching’)

*ni*      í-dēr-ī  
 thing    ADJ-draw:ADJ-FV  
 ‘school’ (literally: ‘thing of drawing’)

*ni*      í-zūg-ī                      kār  
 thing    ADJ-put:ADJ-FV          ear  
 ‘earpiece’ (literally an associative phrase: ‘thing of putting of the ear’)

As exemplified in (229) and in (230), the á<sup>L</sup>-prefix is prosodically weak and behaves similarly to the a- prefixes found on nominal stems (§ 4.2.9 and § 7.1): they are omitted or reduced to /i/ utterance-internally.

In (229), this /i/ is raised to /i/ under the influence of a preceding /i/. Note that in examples such as (230), the a-prefix is never retained, but only the floating <sup>L</sup> tone remains (cf. § 7.2.1.3).<sup>70</sup>

- (230) ní            nùŋ      tĩksĩ  
          ní            ànùŋ    á<sup>L</sup>-tĩksĩ\M  
          person    eye      ADJ-close:CAUS\ADJ  
          ‘christian’ (literally an associative phrase: ‘person of closed eyes’)

For a small number of attributive adjectives, their deverbal origin is no more transparent synchronically. Such exceptions may be of three different types, and some attributive adjectives are exceptional in more than one of these regards: (1) some attributive adjectives have no corresponding verbal stem, (2) others show a historical relation between the adjective and the verbal stem, but cannot be synchronically derived from them, (3) some adjectives show the characteristic *á<sup>L</sup>*-prefix, but are otherwise exceptional in that they do not show an expected final vowel *-i*, end in a *-rì* suffix, or their stem shows an unexpected tone. The following lists of examples provide all the cases found so far in my current lexical database.

(231) **Adjectives without corresponding verbal stem**

- ábōgō ‘night, dark’  
 ábēfǎ ‘blue’  
 áŋwī ‘new’  
 ámō ‘good’  
 ántē ‘small’  
 áfǎ ‘unripe’  
 ántwàb ‘young, small’  
 ásūmrī ‘old’  
 ágbàn ‘female’ (cf. àgbàn ‘wife’)  
 ákòg ‘oldest, dominant’ (cf. kògè ní ‘old person’)  
 ávān ‘male’ (cf. àvān ‘husband’)

<sup>70</sup> This could mean that *á-* and the floating <sup>L</sup> tone are in fact two different prefixes. In constructions such as (230), there may not be an underlying *á*-prefix, but only a floating <sup>L</sup> tone. Perhaps this floating <sup>L</sup> tone goes back to a prefix *à-* segmentally identical to the H tone *á* prefix, maybe the nominalizing *à-* mentioned in § 7.2.3.

(232) **Adjectives with historically related verbal stems**

ádā ‘cold, well’ (cf. dág ‘to be cold, to become cold’)

áfō ‘dry’ (cf. fóg ‘to be dry’)

áfō ‘warm’ (cf. fób ‘to be hot’)

ádōmrī ‘red’ (cf. dindòm ‘to be red’)

(233) **Adjectives with unexpected morphology or tone**

ágbàn ‘female’ (cf. àgbàn ‘wife’) – unexpected L tone + no final vowel<sup>71</sup>

ákòg ‘oldest, dominant’ (cf. kògè jí ‘old person’) – unexpected L tone + no final vowel

ávān ‘male’ (cf. àvān ‘husband’) – no final vowel

ádōmrī ‘red’ (cf. dindòm ‘to be red’) – unexpected -rī suffix

ásūmrī ‘old’ – unexpected -rī suffix

ábōgōrī ‘black’ – unexpected -rī suffix

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<sup>71</sup> Here and in the next example, the fact the tone is not M may indicate that these are not deverbal derivations but that the derivational pattern is different. These adjectives may, for example, derive from nouns.



## 8 Pronominals

### 8.1 Overview

Pronominals refer to speech act participants (first and second persons) and other entities already introduced in the discourse (third persons). In Kam, there is also a singular logophoric personal pronoun *i<sup>l</sup>* that is used when a third person subject, object, or possessor in reported discourse has the same referent as the person whose discourse is being reported. There is no inclusive-exclusive distinction in the Kam pronominal system. Table 34 on p. 182 provides an overview of all the pronominals found in Kam.

Pronominals are a closed sub-class of nouns that can substitute other noun phrases. Pronominals and the pronominal system of Kam have the following features that set them apart from nouns:

- Number marking in pronominals is different from number marking in nouns. In pronominals, number is marked by means of suppletion: different stems are used, rather than a dedicated marker.
- Some pronominals feature argument marking. Subject pronominals are different from object pronominals and from possessive pronominals. The differences are mostly tonal: object pronominals have H tone, possessive pronominals have H<sup>L</sup> tone, and some subject pronominals have L tone.
- There are different subject pronominals for 1SG and 2SG depending on the tense, aspect and negation values of the clause. In the typological literature, these are referred to as STAMP morphs (portmanteau Subject-Tense-Aspect-Mood-Polarity morphemes, cf. Anderson 2011, 2012, 2015, 2016). I will not use this term for Kam, since mood is not encoded grammatically. The only difference between forms in Kam is tonal.
- Pronominals are not usually modified with adjectives or relative clauses. This is not attested, but no negative evidence is currently available to suggest that this is impossible either.

There is a distinction between independent pronominals and bound pronominals. This is only relevant for first person singular, second person singular and first person plural categories. Following Haspelmath (2013) I call bound pronominals *person indexes* or just *indexes*.

Speakers usually leave third person non-human arguments unexpressed. Like humans, they may, however, be referred to anaphorically with the demonstratives *bā* ‘PROX.ID, this one’ or *bô* ‘DIST.ID; that one’. An exception is found in many folktales, where animals may be personified.

Pronominals cannot co-occur with a noun phrase expressing the same argument in the clause. Such noun phrases have sometimes been called conominals in the literature, and the co-occurrence of a noun



phrase with a pronominal or index has been called conomination (Haspelmath 2013: 205-209). In Kam, conomination is impossible: pronominals and noun phrases are in complementary distribution. The examples in (234) to (236) demonstrate this. A noun phrase can occur by itself without a pronominal (*àfì ígbàn mí* ‘a certain girl’ in (234)). A pronominal can occur by itself without conominal (*àwú* ‘3SG’ in (235)). (236) illustrates that a pronominal cannot be accompanied by a conominal: conomination renders the clause ungrammatical. Pronominals should thus not be considered agreement markers on verbs, but as noun phrases in their own right. There is no person or number agreement on verbs in Kam.

- (234) *àfì ígbàn mí rẹ̀ fẹ́r jì*  
 girl ADJ-female some IPFV wash thing  
 ‘Some girl was doing her laundry.’  
 (session\_007, Garba Abubakar Bako, narrative)

- (235) *àwú rẹ̀ †fẹ́r jì*  
 3SG IPFV wash thing  
 ‘She was doing her laundry.’  
 (constructed example)

- (236) \* *àfì ígbàn mí àwú rẹ̀ †fẹ́r jì*  
 girl ADJ-female some 3SG IPFV wash thing  
 ‘Some girl was doing her laundry.’  
 (impossible, constructed example)

(237) may appear as an example with conomination: the pronominal *jìnm* seems to co-occur with the noun *àwàn* within the same clause. The pronominal *jìnm*, however, is syntactically separate from the clause, and is detached from it by an intonation break (indicated in the example with a comma). Although it is co-referential with the subject argument of the clause, *jìnm* does not encode an argument by itself (cf. Haspelmath 2013: 206).

- (237) *jìnm, àwàn jí ɲwòm*  
 1SG.ID, king person Kam  
 ‘I, the king of the Kam ...’  
 (session\_208, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

Another apparent exception to this rule are sentences with a relative clause, where a subject pronominal co-referential with the relativized noun is used after the relative clause. However, a pause is often inserted

between the relative clause and the subject pronominal. Like *ɲim* (237), the noun phrase with the relative clause is syntactically and intonationally separated from the rest of the clause.

(238)	àwàn	ā	míŋ	éŋ <sup>+</sup> gwóŋ	â,
	king	REL	build:PFV	house	REL,
	ú	dé	ré	ɲì	rīg
	3SG	be	with	thing	POSS

‘The king who built the house is rich.’ (lit.: ‘The king who built the house, he is rich’)

(Tope\_Bitrus\_06, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

Table 34 provides an overview of all subject pronominals, object pronominals, possessive pronominals and independent pronominals in Kam. I include the independent demonstratives *bā* ‘PROX.ID, this one’ or *bô* ‘DIST.ID, that one’ in the table, but I do not describe them in detail in this chapter. I treat them elsewhere, in § 9.2.

I discuss subject pronominals in § 8.2, object pronominals in § 8.3, possessive pronominals in § 8.4, independent pronominals in § 8.5 and the logophoric pronominal in § 8.6. I discuss other pronominals later in this chapter, including reflexive and reciprocal pronominals (§ 8.7), and the existential pronominal *ɲíɲí<sup>l</sup>* (§ 8.8).

**Table 34 – Kam pronominals and demonstratives (grey cells indicate that there is no specialized form)**

	Subject pronominal	Object pronominal	Possessive pronominal	Independent pronominal
1SG	Ṃ (PFV, FUT, NEG.FUT) Ṃ (IPFV, NEG:NFUT)	m̄	m̄ <sup>L</sup>	ṁim
2SG	á (PFV, FUT, NEG.FUT) à (IPFV, NEG:NFUT)	á	ṁá <sup>L</sup>	ṁà
3SG nonhuman	∅	∅	∅	∅
3SG human	àwú ~ ú	ú (= subject pronominal)	ú <sup>L</sup> (~ bú <sup>L</sup> after a vowel)	àwú (= subject pronominal)
1PL	ì ~ jùrù	júró	júró <sup>L</sup>	jùrù
2PL	ṁò	ṁó	ṁó <sup>L</sup>	ṁò (= subject pronominal)
3PL nonhuman	∅	∅	∅	∅
3PL human	àjí ~ í	í (= subject pronominal)	í <sup>L</sup> (~ bí <sup>L</sup> after a vowel)	àjí (= subject pronominal)
LOG.SG	í <sup>L</sup>	í <sup>L</sup> (= subject pronominal)	í <sup>L</sup> (= subject pronominal) (~ bí <sup>L</sup> after a vowel)	í <sup>L</sup> (= subject pronominal)
Pronominal demonstratives	bā ‘PROX.ID, this one’ bô ‘DIST.ID, that one’			

## 8.2 *Subject pronominals*

### 8.2.1 Overview

Table 35 provides an overview of the subject pronominals found in Kam along with some of their characteristics. Parameters along which different subject pronominals vary structurally are the following:

- (1) Whether they also mark the tense, aspect and polarity value of the clause. 1SG and 2SG subject pronominals have different forms according to tense, aspect and polarity. These are only different in terms of tone.
- (2) Whether the subject pronominal has a different tone from the corresponding object pronominal. When this is the case, the subject pronominal always has a L tone and the object pronominal has a H tone.
- (3) Whether there is a difference between the subject pronominal and the corresponding independent pronoun. When there is a difference, the subject pronominal is considered a bound pronominal or an index, since it cannot occur on its own. Indexes precede verbs or any preverbal marker that may occur in a clause (see § 13.1). Object indexes, on the other hand, are suffixes: they always occur immediately after the verb, and not to any markers or verbs that follow the verb in multi-verb constructions or future tense constructions (cf. § 13.1).

Note that there are no non-human subject pronominals. Note also that there is variation between *jùrù* and *ì* for the first person plural subject pronominal. *ì* is much more frequent than *jùrù* and only occurs in elicited data, but other than that I have not been able to find any difference in use between the two forms and I treat them here as free variants.

Subject pronominals occur in the initial slot of a clause, after any clause-initial adverbial modification in declarative clauses.

Table 35 - Subject pronominals		
Category	Pronominal	Comments
1SG	Ṃ́ (perfective aspect) Ṃ́ (future tense) Ṃ̀ (imperfective aspect) Ṃ̀ (negative non-future)	Different from independent pronoun ( <i>nìm</i> )
2SG	á (perfective aspect) á (future tense) à (imperfective aspect) à (negative non-future)	Different from independent pronoun ( <i>nà</i> )
3SG nonhuman	∅	
3SG human	àwú ~ ú	
1PL	ì ~ jùrù	<i>ì</i> is different from the independent pronoun ( <i>jùrù</i> )
2PL	nò	
3PL nonhuman	∅	
3PL human	àjí ~ í	
LOG.SG	í <sup>L</sup>	

Pronominals referring to speech participants (first and second persons) are different from those referring to non-speech participants (third persons) in a few ways. Firstly, third person pronominals (*àwú* ‘3SG’ and *àjí* ‘3PL’) have a prosodic prefix *à-* that functions exactly like prosodic prefixes on nouns (§ 4.2.9). These prosodic prefixes only occur postpausally and are dropped utterance-internally. Even postpausally, they are optional. This *à-* prefix arguably makes them more like nouns than the other pronominals. Secondly, singular speech participant pronominals have different forms depending on tense, aspect and polarity. Thirdly, singular speech participant pronominals (1SG and 2SG) have different tones in subject and object functions. For these pronominals, L tone indicates nominative arguments, H tone indicates accusative arguments. Finally, three out of four categories expressing speech participants (1SG, 2SG and 1PL) feature (or in the case of 1PL can feature) a distinction between subject pronominals and independent pronominals. Such a distinction is not available for third person pronominals.

### 8.2.2 Tense, aspect, and polarity distinctions in 1SG and 2SG subject pronominals

Tense, aspect and polarity are expressed by different markers in different places in the clause. A more comprehensive overview of such marking is provided in Chapter 1. One of the places where these categories are marked is on subject pronominals, specifically first person singular indexes and second person singular indexes. There are different pronominals for these categories depending on the tense, aspect and polarity value of the clause. The differences between these forms are exclusively tonal. Table 36 gives an overview of those tones (H or L tone) and the functions corresponding to each tone. Examples of these markers in context can be found in chapter 1 and throughout this dissertation.

**Table 36 - Tonal tense, aspect and polarity distinctions in 1SG and 2SG pronominals**

Tense	Polarity	Aspect	Tone of the pronominal
Non-future	Affirmative	Perfective	H
		Imperfective	L
	Negative	Any	L
Future	Any	Any	H

While I analyze these forms as portmanteau morphemes, another description is possible, although arguably less elegant from a comparative perspective. 1SG and 2SG subject indexes could be analyzed as toneless morphemes, and completely dependent on the tense, aspect and polarity value of the clause for their tones. From this perspective, tense, aspect and polarity are marked by tonal morphology on pronominals: a H tone marks perfective aspect or future tense, and a L tone marks imperfective aspect or negative non-future.

### 8.3 Object pronominals

Table 37 on p. 187 lists the object pronominals found in Kam.

Object pronominals express the object of a verb. They always immediately follow a verb and are never found in isolation. As such, they qualify as suffixes. I write them separately since they are not clearly phonologically bound to the verb.

Extended transitive clauses (e.g. ditransitive clauses) are expressed with multi-verb constructions, and goals or recipients are coded as the objects of individual verbs of multi-verb constructions (cf. § 14.5). It is not necessary to distinguish objects from indirect objects in Kam: they are morphologically and syntactically identical.

(239) **Object pronominal *júru* ‘1PL.O’ used as an object**

*nā*                      *pā*      *kòsí*                      ***júru***    *rè*      *jí*              *á*  
 thing:REL              come    join:PFV              **1PL.O**    COM    3PL      REL

‘the thing that happened to **join us** with them’

(session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

(240) **Object pronominal *júru* ‘1PL.O’ used as a recipient**

*àléŋ*      *má*      ***júru***      *kòm*      *dʒɔŋ*                      *émō*,  
 God              give      **1PL.O**    place    ADJ:sit:ADJ      ADJ:good

*má*              ***júru***      *nì*              *díní*  
 give              **1PL.O**    thing      ADJ:meet:ADJ

‘(That) God (may) **give us** a good place to live and **give us** prosperity.’

(session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

Many object pronominals are segmentally identical to the corresponding subject pronominals, excepting

- the 1SG pronominal *m* which may be pronounced as *ám* following a consonant.
- the 1PL pronominal *júru*, which does not have *ì* as an alternative short form unlike its subject equivalent, and
- 3SG and 3PL object pronominals, which are identical to the short form of the subject pronominals but cannot be expressed with a long form (cf. *àwú* ‘3SG.S’, *àjí* ‘3PL.S’).

All object pronominals have H tone, and for all except the 3SG, 3PL and logophoric pronominals, this H tone distinguishes accusative from nominative arguments, except in some tense-aspect-polarity categories where 1SG and 2SG nominative pronominals also carry a H tone.

Table 37 - Object pronominals		
Category	Pronominal	Comments
1SG.O	m̄ (~ é̄m after a consonant)	H tone indicates object function (only in some tense-aspect-polarity contexts)
2SG.O	á	H tone indicates object function (only in some tense-aspect-polarity contexts)
3SG nonhuman	∅	
3SG human	ú	= short form of subject pronominal
1PL.O	júrú	H tone indicates object function
2PL.O	ɲó	H tone indicates object function
3PL nonhuman	∅	
3PL human	í	= short form of subject pronominal
LOG.SG	í <sup>L</sup>	= subject and possessive pronominals

These are further examples of object pronominals.

- (241) àjí      dóg      é̄m      â  
 3PL      see:PFV      **1SG.O** PFV

‘They saw **me**.’

(Tope\_Bitrus\_04, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

- (242) m̄      móm      á      â  
 1SG.S.PFV      laugh:PFV      **2SG.O** PFV

‘I laugh **at you**.’

(session\_150, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (243) ú      mgbáb      ú      kó      b̀̀n  
 3SG      shoot:PFV      **3SG**      INSTR      arrow

‘He shot **him** with an arrow’

(session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (244) lém      júrú      â  
 good:PFV **1PL.O** PFV



‘It is good for us.’

(session\_187, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (245)    *m*                      *p*        <sup>+</sup>*d**n*                      ***n***        *k-á**d**a*?  
 1SG.S.PFV            come    meet:PFV            **2PL.O**    ADVZ-cold  
 ‘Did I meet **you people** (well) with the cold?’  
 (session\_084, Yuguda Manti, conversation)

- (246)    *i*            <sup>+</sup>*v**e**r*                      ***i***        *k*        *l**u**k**o**m*    *n**t**a**m*  
 LOG.SG    kill:PFV                      **3PL**    INSTR    road    poison  
 ‘(He said that) he killed **them** by means of poison.’  
 (session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (247)    *á**w**u*        *b**e**n**i*                      *i**b**i*        *n**i*        *j**r**a**g*        *j**a**g*                      ***i***  
 3SG        say:FV:PFV            QUOT    person    two        catch:PFV            **LOG.SG**  
  
*s**a**n*        *á*<sup>+</sup>*j**e*        *n**e*        *g**b**e**b*        <sup>+</sup>*i*  
 go        bush        go        beat        **LOG.SG**

‘He said that two people took **him** to the bush and started to beat **him**.’

(session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

#### 8.4 Possessive pronominals

Table 38 on p. 189 lists the possessive pronominals found in Kam. Possessive pronominals are found after nouns or prepositional nouns in Kam and do not occur in isolation. In noun phrases, they are found after adjectives.

Most possessive pronominals are segmentally identical to (subject and) object pronominals. There are four exceptions to this:

- The 2SG possessive pronominal *ná<sup>L</sup>* is segmentally identical to the 2SG independent pronominal *nà* rather than the subject and object pronominals (*à* ‘2SG.S.IPFV’, *à* ‘2SG.S.NEG.NFUT’, *á* ‘2SG.S.PFV’, *á* ‘2SG.S.FUT’ and *á* ‘2SG.O’).
- The 3SG possessive pronominal *ú<sup>L</sup>*, which has a free allomorph *bú<sup>L</sup>* (pronounced [βú]) when it occurs after vowels.

- The 3PL possessive pronominal  $i^L$ , which has a free allomorph  $bi^L$  (pronounced [βí]) when it occurs after vowels.
- The logophoric pronominal  $i^L$ , which has a free allomorph  $bi^L$  (pronounced [βí]) when it occurs after vowels.

The free allomorphs for 3SG, 3PL and logophoric possessive pronominals with initial *b-* are not accepted by all informants, so they are not full exceptions. Specifically, my main consultant Babangida Audu did not accept them as alternative pronunciations (session\_368). I have not yet investigated whether they are dialectal alternatives or whether their occurrence should be sought in individual variation across speakers.<sup>72</sup>

All possessive pronominals have H<sup>L</sup> tone. The floating <sup>L</sup> tone can be analyzed as a genitive case flag, except in the logophoric pronominal  $i^L$ , where both the subject pronominal and object pronominal also have a H<sup>L</sup> tone pattern.

Note also that the 3PL and logophoric possessive pronominals are identical.

Category	Pronominal	Comments
1SG:POSS	m <sup>L</sup> (~ óm after a consonant)	
2SG:POSS	ɲá <sup>L</sup>	Segmentally different from S and O
3SG nonhuman	∅	
3SG.human:POSS	ú <sup>L</sup>	
1PL:POSS	jú <sup>L</sup> rú <sup>L</sup>	
2PL:POSS	ɲó <sup>L</sup>	
3PL nonhuman	∅	
3PL:POSS	i <sup>L</sup>	
LOG.SG	i <sup>L</sup>	= subject and object pronominals

These are further examples of possessive pronominals.

<sup>72</sup> I only found these alternative pronunciations in possessive pronominals. The fact that I did not find them for object pronominals may be due to my pool of speakers or it may be because these pronunciations are only possible in possessive pronominals.

- (248) wó **m** ‘my dog’  
 wó **ɲá** ‘your dog’  
 wó **ú** ‘his/her dog’  
 wó **júrí** ‘our dog’  
 wó **ɲó** ‘your people’s dog’  
 wó **bí** ‘their dog’  
 (session\_048, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, elicitation)

- (249) àŋwà **ú** ‘his friend’  
 àná **í** ‘their father’  
 (session\_368, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (250) àŋgwóg **ɲá** †**dó** k-ádā?  
 house **2SG:POSS** be ADVZ-cold  
 ‘Is **your** house fine?’ (literally: ‘Is your house cold?’)  
 (session\_023, Adamu S. Baka, conversation)

- (251) àŋfi **bú** wō ŋwāb jág ágbàn à  
 child **3SG:POSS** PL all carry wife PFV  
 ‘All **his** sons are now married’  
 (session\_187, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (252) àwàn **í** †**dó** míŋkìm  
 àwàn **í<sup>L</sup>** **dó** miŋ<sup>L</sup>kìm  
 king **3PL-POSS** be different  
 ‘Their king was different.’  
 (session\_021, Yuguda Manti, narrative)

### 8.5 Independent pronominals

Kam has independent as well as bound pronominals. An independent pronominal can make up a clause by itself, syntactically and phonologically disconnected from another clause, as in (253). When independent pronominals make up a minimal utterance, they may be accompanied by a topic (254) or focus (255) marker. Indexes cannot occur in such examples (256), (257).

- (253) ɲim, àwàn ɲí ŋwòm  
 1SG.ID, king person Kam

‘I, the king of the Kam ...’  
(session\_208, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

(254) *ɲim*      *ɗʒē?*  
1SG.ID TOP  
‘What about me?’

(255) *ɲà*      *mā*  
2SG.ID too  
‘You too!’<sup>73</sup>

(256) \**ɲ/ń*      *ɗʒē?*  
1SG TOP  
‘What about me?’ (not possible)

(257) \**à/á*      *mā*  
2SG too  
‘You too!’

The main functions of independent pronominals are the following:

- They are the form used in a nominal predication construction, as subjects of verbless clauses (cf. § 15.2.2).
- They are used as the complement of prepositions proper (cf. § 11.2.1 and § 11.2.2)
- They are used for focus and topic marking, as illustrated in (253) to (255) above.
- They are used as one word responses to content questions.

For most person categories, the independent pronominal and the subject pronominal are identical. Only 1SG, 2SG and 1PL categories have separate subject pronominals.

Table 39 lists the independent pronouns of Kam, and whether each of them is also used in subject function.

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<sup>73</sup> *mā* is a Hausa additive marker that can be translated as ‘too, also, even, still’ which has a variety of different uses (Newman 2000: 327-328). It is also used in Kam but since I only found it twice in my corpus I do not discuss it in this dissertation. Readers are referred to Newman’s (2000) grammar of Hausa for more on this particle.

**Table 39 - Independent pronominals**

Categories	Independent pronoun	Identical to subject pronominal?
1SG.ID	ɲìm	-
2SG.ID	ɲà	-
3SG human	àwú	+
1PL	jàrù	+
2PL	ɲò	+
3PL human	àjí	+
LOG.SG	í <sup>L</sup>	+

The following examples illustrate some main functions of independent pronominals. I illustrated the topicalization and focus functions in examples (253), (254) and (255) above.

**As subject of verbless clauses (cf. § 15.2.2)**

- (258) ɲìm àwàn jí ɲwòm á  
 1SG.ID king person Kam PRSTT  
 ‘I am the king of the Kam people.’  
 (session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (259) í ɲá ɲì gbàn á h̃ñ  
 QUOT 2SG.ID person female PRSTT NEG  
 ‘(They say) that you are not a woman.’  
 (session\_254, Shawuya, narrative)

**As complement of prepositions proper**

- (260) jùrù r̀è ɲà  
 1PL COM 2SG.ID  
 ‘We and you’ (also: ‘you and me’)  
 (session\_068, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

First person singular and second person singular independent pronouns can never be used to express subjects of verbal clauses. In those cases, indexes are always used.

- (261) ́j wátírí wár â  
 1SG.S.PFV dream:PFV dream PFV

‘I dreamt a dream.’

(session\_150, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

(262) \*ɲim wátírí wár â

(session\_150, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

Use of the logophoric independent pronominal is illustrated in (263). In this example, the logophoric pronoun – merged with the quotative marker *íjíl* (see § 17.6) serves as the subject of a verbless clause. The predicate of the verbless clause is a relative clause meaning ‘the one who opened the window’.

(263) àɲí mí †wúr â  
 person some answer PFV

íjí †ā fárí ɲwé kòm íntē ā  
 QUOT:LOG.SG REL open:PFV mouth place small REL

‘Somebody answered (that) he was the one who opened the window.’

(session\_054, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, elicitation)

### 8.6 The logophoric pronominal

Kam has a specialized logophoric pronominal, *í<sup>L</sup>*. The logophoric pronominal is used in reported discourse. It indicates that its referent is the same entity as the entity whose speech is reported. Logophoric pronominals are only available for third person singular participants in Kam. In the plural, the regular 3PL pronominal is used (the possessive form of which is identical to the possessive logophoric pronominal). The examples in (264) and (265) illustrate the use of the logophoric pronominal. If the possessor of the knife in the reported discourse is the same person as the subject of the verb *béní* ‘say’, the logophoric pronoun *í<sup>L</sup>* is used (264). If the possessor is another third person, the regular third person singular possessive pronoun *ú<sup>L</sup>* is used (265).

(264) ú bèn-í íbí †bág í †wútír á †jí  
 3SG say:PFV-FV QUOT knife LOG.SG lose PFV stand

‘He<sub>i</sub> said that his<sub>i</sub> knife was lost.’

(session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (265)    ú           bén-í           íbí    <sup>+</sup>bág    ú           <sup>+</sup>wútír           á           <sup>+</sup>jí  
           3SG       say:PFV-FV    QUOT knife 3SG:POSS   lose:PFV       PFV       stand  
           ‘He<sub>i</sub> said that his<sub>i</sub> knife was lost.’  
           (session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

Logophoric pronominals are most obviously found in possessor functions and in object functions. They are also found as subjects of verbless clauses and in subject positions, usually after the quotative marker *íjǐ<sup>L</sup>/íbǐ<sup>L</sup>* (267), (268).

- (266)    ikà       àṅì       ván       á       táb           í<sup>+</sup>ṅé   kó       <sup>+</sup>táb    á,  
           then       person male   REL   touch:PFV   hand   with   fish   REL,  
  
           ú       bén-í           íjǐ    <sup>+</sup>í           <sup>+</sup>á  
           3SG       say:PFV-FV    QUOT LOG.SG       PRSTT

‘Then the man<sup>i</sup> who touched the fish said that it was him<sup>i</sup>.’  
 (session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (267)    ú       bén-í           íjǐ    <sup>+</sup>í           <sup>+</sup>ṅé    ró       hñ  
           3SG       say:PFV-FV    QUOT LOG.SG       go    EMPH NEG  
           ‘He<sup>i</sup> said that he<sup>i</sup> could not go (further).’  
           (session\_021, Yuguda Manti, narrative)

Very often, however, when the logophoric subject pronoun follows the quotative marker *íjǐ<sup>L</sup>/íbǐ<sup>L</sup>*, the pronoun merges with the quotative marker, as in (268), which makes the logophoric pronominal difficult to detect.

- (268)    àwú       bén-í           **íbǐ**                           <sup>+</sup>sín    â  
           3SG       say:PFV-FV    **QUOT:LOG.SG**           do:PFV PFV  
           ‘He said that he did it.’  
           (session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

In (269) and (270), exceptionally, the logophoric pronoun is pronounced with a L tone. This difference in tone is currently unexplained but is only observed in subject function.

- (269) àwú      bén-í      íbí                      †wós      á      †jí,  
 3SG      say:PFV-FV      QUOT:LOG.SG      forget:PFV      PFV      stand,  
  
 ì      ló      kpó      h̀̀ǹ̀  
 LOG.SG      wash:PFV      body      NEG

‘He said that he forgot to bathe.’ or ‘He said that he forgot, that he didn’t take bath.’

(session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (270) ì      túsí      kpó      à      ḱ́      lójí      bē      k̄ā;  
 LOG.SG      show:PFV      body      PFV      TEMP      day      PRSTT      COND  
 ‘(she<sub>i</sub> says that) she<sub>i</sub> then shows her<sub>i</sub> body on that day’  
 (session\_254, Shawuya, narrative)

The following examples show reported discourse introduced with other verbs of speech and thought: *túsí* ‘to show’, *ɸ̄ār* ‘to tell’, *màsí* ‘to know’, *hwár* ‘to think’, *jìb* ‘to ask’, and *wūrī* ‘to answer’.

- (271) àwú      túsì      íbí                      †líg      b̀̀g      líg-í  
 3SG      show:FUT      QUOT:LOG.SG      dance:FUT      dance      dance-FV  
 ‘He will show that he will dance.’  
 (session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (272) àwú      ɸ̄ār-í      íbí                      kp̀̀ǹ̀~kp̀̀ǹ̀í  
 3SG      tell:PFV-FV      QUOT:LOG.SG      PRED~strong  
 ‘He tells that he is strong.’  
 (session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (273) àwú      mäsí      íbí      †bág-í      †wútír      á      †jí  
 3SG      know:PFV      QUOT      knife-LOG.SG      lose:PFV      PFV      stand  
 ‘He knows that his knife is lost.’  
 (session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)



(274) àwú hwár íbí †dín  
 3SG think:PFV QUOT:LOG.SG meet:PFV

ní †mí ā lil~lèm  
 thing certain REL PRED~beautiful

‘He thinks that he found something beautiful.’

(session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

(275) àwú jíb-í íbí †sín kà,  
 3SG ask:PFV-FV QUOT:LOG.SG do:PFV COND

í gé rě †dín-í gí jī?  
 LOG.SG what COM meet:PRV-FV what Q?

‘He asks what he will get if he does it.’

(session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

(276) àwú wúr á íbí †ním ní à  
 3SG answer:PFV PFV QUOT:LOG.SG eat:PFV thing PFV

‘He answers that he has already eaten.’

(session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

### 8.7 Reflexive and reciprocal pronouns

Reflexive meanings are expressed with a possessive construction including either the noun *àlib* ‘head’ or *kpò* ‘body’, along with the possessive pronoun that is coreferential with the subject. When the subject is first person singular, the contracted form *àlím* from *àlib* + *m<sup>L</sup>* ‘my head’ is used.

(277) ní tígí †lím à  
 1SG.S.PFV cover:PFV self:1SG:POSS PFV

‘I covered myself.’

(session\_177, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

(278) *ń*            *bír*            *kpó*    *ń*            *à*  
 1SG.S.PFV    cut:PFV            body    1SG:POSS    PFV

‘I cut myself.’

(session\_294, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

(279) *àtʃ*            *à*            *vér*            *kpó*    *†ú*            *à*            *sīrī*  
*àtʃi*            *à*            *vèr*            *kpò*    *ú<sup>L</sup>*            *à*            *sīrī*  
 child            PROX    kill:PFV            body    3SG:POSS    PFV    completely

‘The boy killed himself.’

(session\_294, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

(280) *àwú* *vér*            *í†lib*    *ú*            *à*  
 3SG kill:PFV            head    3SG:POSS    PFV

‘He killed himself.’

(session\_298, John Peter, elicitation)

Reciprocal clauses may be expressed with a similar possessive construction. There are not many examples of this in my corpus. The clearest example does not feature a possessive construction, but simply the noun for ‘body’ (281). Examples with ‘head’ are not found in the data. Alternatively, object pronominals can also have reciprocal meanings without any additional marking (282). Note that in this example, which is the only example with an object pronominal, the pronominal is singular. More examples of this type of construction are needed to understand reciprocals in Kam.

(281) *àjí*            *ré*            *wūrī*    *kpò*  
 3PL            IPFV    love    body

‘They love each other.’

(session\_246, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

(282) *àmirá*    *ó*            *jīrāg,*    *àjí*    *ré*            *gbèb*    *ú*            *†né*  
 brother    DIST    two,    3PL    IPFV    beat    3SG    hand

‘Those two brothers, they were beating each other.’ (lit.: ‘they were beating each other by hand’, since *gbèb* means both ‘to beat’ and ‘to kick’)

(session\_294, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

### 8.8 *níní*<sup>l</sup> ‘some’: an existential pronominal

The existential pronominal *níní*<sup>l</sup> is used for referring to non-specific entities, usually translated as ‘some (people or things)’ into English.

- (283) *níní*      <sup>l</sup>*ǵúg*    *í*<sup>l</sup>*nág*    *k-ámò*,      *níní*      <sup>l</sup>*ǵúg*    *k-ámò*      *h̀̀*  
 some      do:PFV work    ADVZ-good,    some    do    ADVZ:good    NEG  
 ‘Some (people) can do this well, some (people) can’t.’  
 (session\_187, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (284) *ń*                      *dóg*                      *níní*    *à*,      *àmá*    *àjí*    *náni*    *h̀̀*  
 1SG.S.PFV              see:PFV              some    PFV,    but    3PL    many    NEG  
 ‘I can see some, but they aren’t many.’  
 (session\_187, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

## 9 Nominal markers and quantifiers

### 9.1 Optional plural ‘word’ *jō*

Kam distinguishes singular and plural number. Of these two, the plural can be marked by an optional segmentally invariable (or ‘phonologically free’) marker *jō*, on the noun phrase.

That the marker is segmentally invariable and prosodically strong makes it qualify as a *word* or a *particle* as opposed to a clitic (‘phonologically bound’ markers occurring with stems of different word classes) in some typological studies (e.g. Dryer 2013).<sup>74</sup> This is not a trivial fact, given that the presence of such plural words is a potential areal feature characteristic of languages in the Macro-Sudan belt (Dryer 2013; Güldemann 2018b: 481; 2019: 11).

Speakers accept utterances consisting exclusively of *jō* as grammatical with the meaning ‘many’, but I have not observed such uses in natural discourse. It is unclear how its meaning or function in isolation is different from the quantifier *nìnnānī* (§ 9.4.3).

The plural marker *jō* is entirely optional, and there do not appear to be any restrictions related to a referent’s animacy or humanness. When a noun is modified by a numeral, *jō* does not usually occur, but its use always remains possible. Future research could give a better idea of the frequency of plural marking in different grammatical contexts and different information structural settings. My impression is that marked plurals occur about as frequently as unmarked plurals. The plural marker is by no means rare.

- (285)    ʧì            jō            ním            ɖʒì        gbánákā  
           child      PL        eat:FUT      bat        later  
           ‘The children will eat bat later.’  
           (session\_288, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

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<sup>74</sup> A particle is often considered as a type of word, so some readers might point out that mentioning both is superfluous here. Neither *word* nor *particle* have a clear definition in the general linguistic literature. In this grammar, I generally refrain from using these terms but I mention them here since plural words have been of interest in the areal typological literature on the Macro-Sudan belt (cf. § 1.3.7).

- (286) àwàn ʃàr jō á  
king three PL PRSTT

‘These are three kings.’

(session\_339, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

Like other adnominal modifiers, *jō* follows, never precedes, the noun it qualifies. Its position is generally noun-phrase final, before demonstrative modifiers (288).

- (287) àmírà †ná m jō  
brother father 1SG:POSS PL  
‘my father’s brothers’, or ‘my paternal uncles’

- (288) ʃi jō ā rē ká †jé kpôŋ ká bəri míná ŋwāb  
child PL **PROX** IPFV shout shout always TEMP time PRSTT all

‘These children are always shouting’

(session\_286, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (289) àŋgwóg í-bōrī jō ninnānē  
house ADJ-big:FV PL many

‘There are many big houses.’

(session\_303, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

*jō* cannot occur in between two nouns of an associative construction. This means that plurality marked on an associative construction pertains to either the head, the modifier, or to both at the same time – without further context, it is always ambiguous:

- (290) mē ʃū m jō  
mother uncle 1SG:POSS PL

‘the mothers of my uncle’, ‘the mother of my uncles’, or ‘the mothers of my uncles’

(session\_303, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (291) \*ʃū jō mē m  
uncle PL mother 1SG:POSS

- (292) \*ʃũ      mē      jō      m̄  
 uncle      mother PL      1SG:POSS

There are examples where *jō* occurs inside a noun phrase rather than at the end, without any obvious difference in meaning involved. These examples can be analyzed as two noun phrases in apposition, *jō* marking the end of the first noun phrase (cf. § 10.5). If this is the case, one may expect the position of *jō* to be sensitive to information structural differences. I do not currently have the right data to investigate such differences, since all examples of *jō* in between nominals are elicited phrases with little discursive context. I did not yet discover any such uses in texts. There is currently not enough data to choose between one of these two analyses

- (293) àŋgwóg    **jó**      †í-bōr-ī  
 house      **PL**      ADJ-big-FV  
 ‘big houses’  
 (session\_303, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (294) àŋgwóg    **jó**      †í-bōr-ī                      á  
 house      **PL**      ADJ-big:ADJ-FV              PRSTT  
 ‘These are big houses.’  
 (session\_303, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (295) àsìséǵí                      †gún    óm                      jō      jīrāg  
 young.child                      back    1SG:POSS              PL      two  
 ‘my two younger siblings’ (or: ‘my younger siblings, the two of them’?)  
 (session\_004, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

For some speakers, *jō* has a variant *wō*. Speakers who use *wō* also use *jō*, but it is not clear whether all speakers using *jō* also use *wō*.

- (296) àǰwǎ̃ wō ‘cheeks’ (session\_030, Babangida Audu)  
 àǰwǎ̃ jō ‘cheeks’ (session\_010, Garba Abubakar Bako)
- (297) àlīb wō ‘heads’ (session\_030, Babangida Audu)  
 àlīb jō ‘heads’ (session\_010, Garba Abubakar Bako)

Sometimes, a longer form, *jūwō* is used without difference in meaning. It is used by speakers who use *wō* as a variant, but also by speakers who only use *jō* elsewhere. This form resembles reduplicated verbs and adjectives elsewhere in the language, in the sense that /u/ in the first syllable *jū-* features a high vowel, and

*wō* a lower vowel (compare: *bòb* ‘to come out’ → *bùbbòb* ‘to be out’). *u* could be seen as the prespecified high variant of *o* (cf. § 4.3.2). This form is not entirely similar to reduplications, however, since the syllables have a different onset (*j* vs. *w*).

(298) *ńǹǹí júwō* vs. *ńǹǹí jō* ‘tendons’ (session\_030, Babamngida Audu)

When *jō* is used with a proper name, its function is that of an associative plural. *Àjǹǹí jō* means ‘Àjǹǹí and people associated with him’. The people associated may be, family, friends, colleagues, or people who are physically around John.

*àná jó*, literally ‘fathers’, can refer to all relatives of the generation of one’s parents and above (i.e. mother(s), father, uncles, aunts, and grandparents).

## 9.2 Demonstratives and demonstrative modifiers

Kam has two sets of demonstratives. One set contains deictic demonstratives, which single out a referent by specifying its distal deixis. The set includes adnominal modifiers (*à* ‘this’ and *ò* ‘that’) and independent, pronominal demonstratives (*bã* ‘this one’ and *bõ* ‘that one’). The second set contains presentative demonstratives, which establish the presence or existence of a certain entity or action. I found three different presentative demonstratives in Kam.<sup>75</sup>

- *á*, a marker used as a demonstrative identifier in identificational clauses (e.g. *àmàrēg á* ‘It is a nose.’) and equational clauses (e.g. *ɲì mārēg á* ‘The thing is a nose.’).
- *miná*, a marker used as a nominal modifier drawing attention to an entity in discourse (e.g. *ɲèkù miná ló kpô* ‘See the toad (it) washes itself.’), as a demonstrative identifier in presentative clauses (e.g. *àbén miná* ‘there’s talk’).
- *bē*, a marker used as a nominal modifier, in a similar way to *min(á)*, but also often used to point out that an *event* happened rather than that an entity is present (e.g. *í bóḡ ábàḡ à ká bē* ‘There you go, after they prepared the beer...’).

### 9.2.1 Deictic demonstratives

In Kam, the deictic demonstrative system distinguishes between nearby referents (the proximal demonstrative *à* or *bã* ‘this’) and faraway referents (the distal demonstrative *ò* or *bõ* ‘that’). *à* ‘PROX’ and

<sup>75</sup> My analysis of presentative demonstratives was inspired by Treis (2018).

ò ‘DIST’ are exclusively used as adnominal demonstrative modifiers. Speakers use *bā̄* and *bô* both as independent demonstratives, for example as arguments of clauses, and as adnominal modifiers.

Demonstrative modifiers, like all adnominal modifiers, follow the noun they modify. They usually come at the end of the noun phrase, following the plural marker *jô*. They can also occur inside a noun phrase, and can even be marked simultaneously on different elements of the noun phrase, with no apparent difference in meaning (307). Like with the different positions of the plural marker *jô*, it is possible to analyze noun phrase internal demonstrative modifiers as marking a break between noun phrases in apposition. As is the case with *jô*, I do not have the necessary data to determine whether the position of demonstratives within the noun phrase (or in between different apposed noun phrases) is sensitive to other grammatical or information structural constraints. Note in this regard that I found more examples of the distal demonstrative modifier occurring in between nominals than I found of proximal demonstratives in this position. I only found multiple marking in a single noun phrase with distal demonstratives, not with proximal demonstratives. I did not find the longer forms *bā̄* and *bô* inside of a noun phrase, only following the noun phrase.

Examples of the proximal demonstrative modifier *à*.

- (299) ní léb ó<sup>+</sup>jě â  
 person in bush **PROX**  
 ‘the people in this bush’

(Tope\_Bitrus\_04\_Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

- (300) ʧī jō ā rě ká <sup>+</sup>jé kpôŋ ké bəri míná ɲwāb  
 child PL **PROX** IPFV shout shout always TEMP time PRSTT all  
 ‘These children are always shouting’

(session\_286, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (301) ñ rě wūrī ké bá àpá <sup>+</sup>sín â  
 ñ rě wūrī ké bā àpí à sín\H REL  
 1SG.S.IPFV IPFV want INSTR REL person PROX do\PFV REL

‘I want this person to do it.’

(session\_187, Babangida Audu, elicitation)



- (302) **ɲà**                      jō  
           ɲì              à              jō  
           thing      PROX PL  
           ‘these things’  
           (Tope\_Bitrus\_04, Saheed Kam Bala, elicitation)

Examples of the distal demonstrative modifier ò.

- (303) ɲí              léb              ó<sup>+</sup>ǰě      **ò**  
           person    in              bush      **DIST**  
           ‘the people in that bush’  
           (Tope\_Bitrus\_04\_Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

- (304) ɲì              ígbàn      ótām              jō      ò̄  
           person    female ADJ:big      PL      DIST  
           ‘those big women’  
           (Tope\_Bitrus\_02\_Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

- (305) ú              déb              áɲ<sup>+</sup>gwóg      **ó**      bōrī      ā̄  
           3SG      buy:PFV      house              **DIST**    big      PFV  
           ‘He bought that big house.’  
           (Tope\_Bitrus\_02, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

- (306) àmirá      **ó**              jīrāg,      àjí      ró              gbèb      ú              <sup>+</sup>ǰé  
           brother      **DIST**      two,      3PL      IPFV      beat      3SG      hand  
           ‘Those two brothers, they were beating each other.’  
           (session\_294, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (307) **ɲò**                      jō      ò̄  
           **ɲì**              ò              :jō      ò̄  
           **thing**      **DIST**    PL      **DIST**  
           ‘those things’  
           (Tope\_Bitrus\_04, Saheed Kam Bala, elicitation)

Speakers use *bā̄* and *bô* both as demonstrative modifiers and as independent demonstratives (e.g. as nominal arguments). The proximal demonstrative is also identical to the relativizer *bā̄*. They may be related to the numeral *bī̄* ‘one’, with the final vowels *a* and *o* being the demonstrative stems.

Examples of independent demonstratives.

- (308) màm                    **bô**  
 give:1SG.O            **DIST.ID**  
 ‘Give me that one.’  
 (session\_037, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (309) **bá**                    mà    ì            fǽnjírí            hń    à            jĩ?  
**PROX.ID**            also    1PL    finish:PFV            NEG    REL    Q  
 ‘This one too that we have not finished?’  
 (session\_271, Solomon Ahmadu, conversation)

Examples of *bā* and *bô* as demonstrative modifiers.

- (310) àtábí            **bā**  
 fish            **PROX**  
 ‘this fish’

- (311) níŋkā    àwú    pé                    <sup>+</sup>ké    <sup>+</sup>ɖǝ    mí    <sup>+</sup>bā  
 maybe    3SG    come:FUT            TEMP    month    some    **PROX**  
 ‘Maybe he will come some time this month.’  
 (session\_285, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (312) wó            **bô**  
 dog            **DIST**  
 ‘that dog’

- (313) kwí            **bô**  
 stick            **DIST**  
 ‘that stick’

I did not find contexts where independent demonstratives are obligatory. A type of construction that frequently features pronominal demonstratives is identificational clauses with *á bā* ‘this is’ or *á bô* ‘that is’ (§ 15.2.2).

- (314) *d̥ʒi á bā*  
 bat PRSTT PROX.ID  
 ‘This is a bat.’ (literally: ‘It is a bat this one.’)  
 (session\_040, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (315) *àŋwà ŋgwóg ém †á bô*  
 friend house my PRSTT DIST:ID  
 ‘That is my neighbor.’ (literally: ‘It is my neighbor that one.’)  
 (session\_047, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, elicitation)

### 9.2.2 Presentative demonstratives

There are three presentative demonstratives in Kam. Some of them have specialized functions in nominal predication constructions (§ 15.2), as adverbials, or in information structure. I briefly mention these functions here. Since those functions are only loosely tied to nominal morphosyntax, however, I treat them more elaborately in other sections in this grammar, together with the constructions they occur in.

The demonstrative identifier *á* occurs in identificational and equational clauses, where it is always clause final. I describe these constructions in § 15.2.2 and in § 15.2.3.

*míná* can also function as a demonstrative identifier, in presentative constructions. I illustrate this function in § 15.2.5.

Elsewhere, it occurs adnominally, where it draws attention to a certain entity in discourse

- (316) *àlàsírá míná pé dín júró â*  
 white.man PRSTT come meet:PFV 1PL.O PFV  
 ‘See the white man (he) came and met us.’  
 (session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (317) àwú mìná bá ʃínátáni gàn à  
 3SG PRSTT REL stand up REL

‘Here he is, standing up.’

(Context: my consultant was telling the frog story and came to a picture of a character standing up.)

(session\_181, Babangida Audu, narrative)

- (318) tò, àjí mìná bá kōmā mísí  
 so, 3PL PRSTT PROX here again

‘So, here they are again.’

(session\_181, Babangida Audu, narrative)

*bē* occurs as an adnominal modifier, where it functions similarly to *mín(á)*, drawing attention to an entity in the discourse.

- (319) **mè** **ntèkù** **bē** dzē mìná bá kúb á  
**mother** **frog** **PRSTTTOP** PRSTT PROX become.weak PFV

lù rē ñkám ʃì bú jō ā  
 lay.down COM rest child 3SG:POSS PL PFV

‘The mother-frog lies down here like this with the rest of her children.’

(session\_181, Babangida Audu, narrative)

- (320) **bàr** ò **bē**, àwàn rē míñ íñ<sup>+</sup>gwóg àléb í<sup>+</sup>ǰé  
**time** **DIST** **PRSTT**, king IPFV build house in bush

‘Earlier, the king was building a house in the bush.’

(Tope\_Bitrus\_06, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

- (321) àjí rē <sup>+</sup>wó **bé** rē ñwāb  
 3PL COM **dog** **PRSTT** COM all

‘(They are still looking for the frog,) he and the dog here, all of them.’

(session\_181, Babangida Audu, narrative)

It frequently occurs as a complement of the copula *dá* ‘to exist’, as I illustrate in § 15.2.1.

Elsewhere, speakers use *bē* to tie events together in discourse. Here, it can be translated as ‘there you go’. I illustrate these uses in § 18.3.

### 9.3 Relativizers and relativizers fused to nouns

The default relative clause construction in Kam employs two markers, one following the modified noun and preceding the relative clause *ā*, and one following the relative clause *à*. The second marker is optional. This section focuses on the morphology of the first relativizer, special relative forms of nouns and nominal markers. Relative clauses in general are discussed in more detail in § 17.2.

- (322) àwàn    **ā**    mǐŋ    íŋ<sup>†</sup>gwóg    â,    ú    dó    ró    ñì    rīg  
king    REL    build    house    REL,    he    be    with    thing    EMPH  
‘The king who built this house is rich (i.e. ‘he really has things’).’  
(Tope\_Bitrus\_06, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

The first relativizer often fuses with the preceding element. The outcomes of these cases are predictable by means of regular phonological rules of hiatus resolution (§ 6.2.1) and tone simplification. A few such combinations occur so frequently that they merit some discussion here. Some may be viewed as relative pronouns, such as *ñā* ‘the thing that’, *ñā̃* or *àñā̃* ‘the person who’. Another marker that frequently merges with the relativizer is the existential quantifier *mí<sup>L</sup>*, which results in *mā* ‘some:REL’.

Examples where *ñì* ‘thing’ precedes a relative clause, where *ñì* and *ā* merge into *ñā* ‘thing:REL’.

- (323) **ñā**                    dó    bé    léb    à  
**ñì**    **ā**    dó    bē    àléb    à  
**thing**    **REL**    be    PRSTT inside    REL  
‘The thing that is inside’  
(session\_007, Garba Abubakar Bako, narrative)

- (324) **ñā**                    pírá                    †jí    ā  
**ñì**    **ā**    pírá<sup>L</sup>                    jí    à  
**thing**    **REL**    come.PFV    arrive    REL  
‘The thing that came ...’  
(session\_019, Yuguda Manti, narrative)

- (325) ànā      **nā**                      dín                      ém      ā      ...  
 ànā      **nì**      ā      dín\H                      m̄      ā      ...  
 today      **thing REL**      meet\PFV      1SG.O REL      ...  
 ‘What happened to me today (made me angry).’  
 (session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

Examples with ànā (àní ‘person’ + ā ‘relativizer’):

- (326) **àná**                      †ú      mgbáb                      â  
**àní**      ā      ú      mgbàb\H                      à  
**person REL**      3SG      shoot\PFV      REL  
 ‘The person that he shot...’  
 (session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (327) **àná**                      †gá                      †tábí      kár      â  
**àní**      ā      gá\H                      àtábí      kàr      à  
**person REL**      trap\PFV                      fish      keep      REL  
 ‘the person that caught fish’  
 (session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

Non-merged examples of ní + ā are also occasionally attested.

- (328) ní      á      pè      līlē                      ā,      àjí      sánj      â  
 ní      ā      pè      àlīlē                      à,      àjí      sánj\H      à  
 person      REL      come      yesterday                      REL,      3PL      go\PFV PFV  
 ‘The people who came here yesterday have left.’  
 (session\_351, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

The indefinite quantifier *mí<sup>L</sup>* fused with the relativizer as *mā* ‘some:REL’ is special in that it can occur together with a noun already incorporating the relativizer, surprisingly resulting in relative clauses that are marked with two clause-initial relativizers.

- (329) **àná**                      **mā**                      gán      ú                      †íjí      \*\*\*      à  
**àní**      ā      **mí<sup>L</sup>**      ā      gán      ú<sup>-L</sup>                      íjí<sup>L</sup>      \*\*\*      à  
 person      REL      some      REL      name      3SG-POSS      QUOT      \*\*\*      REL  
 ‘A certain person whose name is \*\*\*...’  
 (session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (330) **jā**                      **mā**                      í                      sín      á  
**jì**      **ā**      **mí<sup>L</sup>**      **ā**      í                      sín\H      à  
thing      REL      certain      REL      LOG.SG                      do\PFV REL  
‘Something that he did.’  
(session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (331) **jā**                      **mā**                      kùrikí      sín      á      †míná  
thing:REL                      some:REL                      God      do:PFV REL      PRSTT  
‘This is something God has done.’  
(session\_056, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, narrative)

Some other relative markers may derive historically from combinations of a noun and the relativizer *ā* but are no longer synchronically segmentable since part of the original segmental or tonal form of the noun is lost. These are *bã* ‘PROX:REL’ (identical to *bã* ‘PROX’), *kā̃* ‘the place where’, and *mīnā* ‘which (interrogative relativizer)’.

*bã* ‘PROX:REL’ sometimes occurs as a regular relative clause marker.

- (332) **ɖá**      **bá**                      à      sín      á      †dó      gé      gí      jī?  
reason      PROX:REL      you      do\PFV REL      be      what      what      Q  
‘What is the reason why you did it?’ (lit.: ‘The reason that you did (it) is what?’)  
(session\_357, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)

*kā̃* ‘place:REL’ is a contraction of *kòm* ‘place’ and the relativizer *ā*. It retains some nominal properties. It can still be modified by the existential quantifier *mí<sup>L</sup>* ‘some’, for example (334).

- (333)      **ú**                      **jéḅ**      **kô**      **kā̃**                      **ú**      **ré**      **ɖzòŋ**      **à**  
                    **ú**                      **jéḅ\H**      **kô**      **kòm-ā**                      **ú**      **rè**      **ɖzòŋ**      **à**  
3SG      go      PURP      **place:REL**      3SG      IPFV      sit      **REL**  
‘She went to (for) the place where she would sit.’  
(session\_351, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (334) **kā̃**                      mā                      í                      námrí                      sīsīrā      ó                      méhùlá  
place:REL                      some:REL                      3PL      call:PFV                      now      QUOT      Maihula  
‘some place that they now call Maihula’  
(session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

The following example demonstrates the fused form *mīnā* ‘which:REL’ of the interrogative modifier with the relative marker. This interrogative modifier is only used in interrogative clefts. For more on this construction, see § 16.1.2.2.

- (335) àṅgwóg mīnā, àwàn míṅ           â  
           àṅgwóg mīnā, àwàn míṅ\H       à  
           house    which, king   build\PFV   REL  
           ‘Which house (is it) that the king built?’  
           (Tope\_Bitrus\_07, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

## 9.4 Quantifiers

Quantifiers are a semantically defined category in Kam: they indicate the relative amount of the referent of the noun they modify. There are no unifying morphosyntactic features setting them apart from other nominal modifiers as a separate morphosyntactic category. Some behave exactly like deverbal adjectives, others have some nominal or verbal characteristics but also have their own specific behavior. Only one quantifier, *mí<sup>L</sup>* ‘some’, is always an adnominal modifier. The other quantifiers are typically used outside of the noun phrase, separated from their semantic head noun by other clause elements. In other languages, such uses have sometimes been termed ‘floating quantifiers’ (cf. Hoeksema 1996). It may be more appropriate to treat them as unrelated adverbial uses of quantifiers rather than a subtype of adnominal modification. Adnominal uses of *ḡwāb*, *mīnté*, and *nīnnānē* have not been unambiguously attested.

The following quantifiers have been attested in Kam, the first three of which have also been found as ‘floating quantifiers’. Note that there is no mass noun vs. count noun distinction in quantifiers.

- (336) ḡwāb ‘all’, adnominal universal quantifier  
           mīnté ‘few, little’  
           nīnnáné ‘many, much’, multal quantifier  
           mí<sup>L</sup> ‘some’, existential quantifier

### 9.4.1 *ḡwāb* ‘all’: a universal quantifier

The only examples of possible adnominal use of *ḡwāb* in my data, such as (337), come from a simple lexical elicitation session, which has very little syntactic information. Example (338) features *ḡwāb* in apposition with the noun phrase it precedes (‘his sons’): it cannot be said with certainty that it is adnominal, since the plural marker (here: *wō*) may be interpreted as noun phrase final (cf. § 10.2). The other examples unambiguously feature *ḡwāb* as a ‘floating quantifier’.



- (337) àtár      ηwāb  
stone      all  
'All stones'  
(session\_338, Babangida Audu, elicitation)
- (338) àǵī      bú              wō      ηwāb      jág              ágbàn      à  
child      3SG:POSS      PL      all      carry:PFV      wife      PFV  
'All his sons are now married'  
(session\_187, Babangida Audu, elicitation)
- (339) àliè      ǵěmsí      jí      á      sīrī              ηwāb  
fire      take      thing      PFV      completely      all  
'The fire burnt everything.'  
(session\_187, Babangida Audu, elicitation)
- (340) ń              dóg              jí      á      ηwāb  
1SG.S.PFV      see:PFV      person      PFV      all  
'I saw all the people.'  
(session\_176, Babangida Audu, elicitation)
- (341) àjí      pǎ              ηwāp  
3PL      come:FUT      all  
'They will all come.'  
(session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

#### 9.4.2 *mīnté* 'few, little'

The same remarks as for *ηwāb* also apply to *mīnté*: most of its uses are as a floating quantifier, and only a few elicited examples exist where it may be interpreted as an adnominal modifier. *mīnté* does not have many attestations in my corpus. Note that in (343), it is partly reduplicated.

- (342) jí              mín<sup>†</sup>té  
person      few  
the people are few  
(session\_342, Isa Sarkin Dawa, elicitation)

- (343)    *ń*                      *nág*                      *àtár*    *je*                      *mīnté*    *mīn*  
 1SG.S.PFV              throw:PFV              stone    go                      few              few  
 ‘I threw a few stones (away).’  
 (session\_342, Isa Sarkin Dawa, elicitation)

### 9.4.3 *nìnnānē* ‘numerous, many, much’: a multal quantifier

Morphosyntactically, the multal quantifier *nìnnānē* resembles a lexicalized predicative adjective (cf. § 12.5.2). As is the case with predicative adjectives, its affirmative form is reduplicated, and its simplex form is only used under negation ((346), (347)) (cf. § 12.5.2). There are no clear examples where it may be used adnominally.

- (344)    *àfí*              *ú*                              *nìnnānē*  
 child              3SG:POSS              many  
 ‘She has many children.’ (lit.: ‘Her children are numerous’).  
 (session\_187, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (345)    *jí*              *á*              *⁺wúrí*    *bàṅ*              *à*                      *nìnnānē*  
 person    REL              want    alcohol REL              many  
 ‘The people that want alcohol are many.’  
 (session\_286, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (346)    *ń*                              *dóg*                      *jíjí*    *à,*              *àmā,*    *àjí*              *nánī*    *hñ*  
 1SG.S.PFV              see:PFV                      some    PFV,              but,              they              many    NEG  
 ‘I see some (monkeys), but they are not many.’  
 (session\_286, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (347)    *jí*                      *nán⁺é*    *ká*                      *hñ*  
 person    many    place:PROX              NEG  
 ‘Not many people live here’  
 (session\_187, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

9.4.4 *mí<sup>l</sup>* as existential quantifier ('some, any') and as specificity marker ('a certain')

*mí<sup>l</sup>* is an existential quantifier. It indicates that the number of the noun it modifies is one or more. It covers both affirmative existential quantification (*some* in English) and negative existential quantification (*any* in English). Like other modifiers, it follows the noun it modifies. This is the only quantifier that must be used adnominally and cannot 'float'.

- (348)    *jì*        *mí*        <sup>†</sup>*dó*    *bé*    *kā,*    *bén*                    *má*    <sup>†</sup>*júru*.  
           thing    some    be        EMPH COND say:PFV            give    1PL.O
- má*        *jì*        *mí*        *sìrí*                    *kā,*  
           but        thing    some    be.NEG                COND,
- jā*                    *mā*    *kùrikí*    *sín*    *á*        <sup>†</sup>*miná*  
           thing:REL        some    God    do:PFV REL    PRSTT

'If there is anything, tell us. But if there is nothing, this is how God has done it.'

(session\_056, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, narrative)

*mí<sup>l</sup>* is very often used to introduce a specific entity in the discourse, which is then further specified.

- (349)    *ázág*        *á*        <sup>†</sup>*Kánô,* *kòm*    *mí*    <sup>†</sup>*dó*    *bé*  
           side        PROX    Kano,    place    some    be        EMPH
- <sup>†</sup>*í*        *námrí*                    *í*        <sup>†</sup>*nákàsê*  
           3PL        call:PFV                QUOT    Nyakasai

'At this side of Kano, there is a place they call Nyakasai.'

(session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

In (350), two different referents are introduced into the discourse, and *mí<sup>L</sup>* is used in the second clause to make clear that the dog in the second clause is different from the dog introduced in the first clause. There is no dedicated lexeme or marker meaning ‘(an)other’ in Kam.

(350)	mí	gbéɓ	wó	mí	à,
	1SG.S.PFV	beat:PFV	dog	some	PFV,
	wó	mí	†ním	ém	à jàg.
	dog	some	bite:PFV	1SG.O	PFV catch.

‘I beat one dog, and another bit me.’ (or: ‘I beat some dog, and some dog bit me.’)

(session\_339, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)



## 10 Noun phrases

### 10.1 Function and internal structure

Noun phrases typically function as arguments in a clause. For example, as illustrated in (351), they can function as subjects (*àwàn* ‘king’) or as objects (*àṅgwógá* ‘the house’, *fì bú* ‘his son’) in (extended) transitive clauses.

- (351) *àwàn jág †ṅwógá mà fì bú*  
 king carry:PFV house PFV give son 3SG:POSS  
 ‘The king has given the house to his son.’  
 (Tope\_Bitrus\_05, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

Noun phrases can also function as copula subjects or complements (352) or complements of prepositions in a prepositional phrase (353).

- (352) *àkpò dǵázúg á*  
 food rice PRSTT  
 ‘The food is rice.’  
 (session\_071, Isa Sarkin Dawa, elicitation)

- (353) *ú mgbáb ú ké b̀̀n*  
 3SG shoot:PFV 3SG INSTR arrow  
 ‘He shot him with an arrow’  
 (session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

Noun phrases can also modify other noun phrases within a complex associative construction, occur in apposition with other noun phrases (§ 10.5), or function as minimal clauses as vocatives (cf. § 7.3) or as the answer to a content question.

Internally, noun phrases in Kam minimally consist of a head noun, which occupies the leftmost position in the noun phrase. The head noun indicates the entity the whole noun phrase refers to and can be followed by modifiers qualifying the entity or describing additional properties of that entity.

The head slot can be filled by any type of noun (common noun, proper name, locative noun, pronoun, numeral or any other quantifier). Common nouns, locative nouns and numerals can be followed

by modifiers (cf. § 7.4.1.1 and § 10.3). Attributive adjectives sporadically occur as the head of a noun phrase (see § 7.5)

The modifier slots in a noun phrase can be filled by an attributive adjective (§10.3.1), a relative clause (§ 10.3.2), a noun (§ 10.3.3) or a numeral (§ 10.3.3.2).

Noun phrases also contain a number of grammatical markers, including the plural marker *jō* (§ 9.1), proximal and distal demonstrative modifiers *à* and *ò* (or *bā* and *bô*) (§ 9.2), possessive indexes (§ 8.4 and § 10.3.3), an existential quantifier *mí*<sup>L</sup> (§ 9.4.4) and the interrogative modifier *mīnā* (§ 16.1.2.2). I discuss these markers and their position in the noun phrase in their respective sections. I only mention them in passing in this chapter.

I only found one example where a prepositional phrase may modify a noun phrase (354). This example is ambiguous, however, since the comitative phrase *rə zírág ábiràg* ('with vegetable soup') can also be analyzed as a comitative argument that links directly to the clause instead of to the noun phrase (cf. § 11.1.1). Alternatively, *rə* can be interpreted as a coordinator ('Do you like cow meat and vegetable soup') instead of a preposition, without clear 'modifier' and 'head' structure between the two coordinated noun phrases. I did not dedicate an elicitation session to the noun phrase modification with prepositional phrases, so it may still be possible. In any case, it is not a common strategy.

- (354)    *à*                    *rə*        *wūrī*    *àfám*    *nág*    *rə*        *zírág*    *ábiràg*    *jī?*  
           2SG.S.IPFV        IPFV    like     meat    cow    COM    soup    leaf    Q  
           'Do you like cow meat with vegetable soup?'  
           (session\_285, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

## 10.2 Word order in the noun phrase

The order of elements in the noun phrase is always head-modifier. Adjectives, numerals and other modifiers follow the noun. Possessors follow their possessee. Relative clauses follow relativized nouns. When adjectives and numerals co-occur, the order is adjective-numeral. In general, the order of elements can be summarized as follows. It is more difficult to say where the plural marker *jō* can occur in the noun phrase and where demonstratives appear, but they generally appear at the end of the noun phrase, in the order 'plural marker + demonstrative modifier'. I discuss more complex cases in § 9.1 and § 9.2. Quantifiers are usually located outside of the noun phrase (cf. § 9.4). NOUN<sup>MODIFIER</sup> in (355) captures all nouns occurring as modifier in an associative construction.

- (355)    NOUN<sup>HEAD</sup> + NOUN<sup>MODIFIER</sup> + ADJECTIVE + NUMERAL + *jō* 'PL' + DEMONSTRATIVE

- (356) àmīrēg āwàn  
 nose king  
 ‘the king’s nose’  
 (Tope\_Bitrus\_03, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

- (357) ní í-ǰāg-ī  
 person ADJ-be.ugly-FV  
 ‘ugly person’

- (358) ñì ígbàn étām jō ò  
 person female ADJ:big PL DIST  
 ‘those big women’  
 (Tope\_Bitrus\_02\_Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

- (359) àṅwóg í-bōr-ī m̄ ǰād  
 house ADJ-big-FV 1SG:POSS three  
 ‘my three big houses’  
 (Tope\_Bitrus\_03, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

The interrogative quantifier *sím* likewise follows nouns it modifies.

- (360) ní sím  
 person how.many  
 ‘How many people (came to church yesterday)?’  
 (session\_289, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

Possessive pronominals follow nouns and adjectives and precede the plural word *jō* (cf. § 9.1). I did not find them following an attributive numeral, only before numerals.

- (361) àmírá †ná m̄ jō  
 brother father 1SG:POSS PL  
 ‘my father’s brothers’, or ‘my paternal uncles’



### 10.3 Nominal modification

#### 10.3.1 Modification with adjectives

Attributive adjectives modify nouns by ascribing a property to the noun. The morphological properties of adjectives are discussed in § 7.5. To briefly repeat what is said there: adjectives are typically derived from verbs with a prosodically weak  $\acute{a}^L$ -prefix, a replacive M tone on the stem, and a final vowel *i*. There are some synchronically underived adjectives that appear to be historically derived, but synchronically form a closed adjective class in the language. Adjectives rarely function as the head of a noun phrase. When they do, they function as nouns, metonymically referring to referents by means of their properties (cf. § 7.5).

When modifying head nouns, adjectives always follow the noun, conforming to the head-modifier word order in the noun phrase. In this position, the vowel of their initial  $\acute{a}^L$ -prefix is usually centralized to  $\text{ə}$  (cf. § 7.1).

- (362) àtār      í-būr-ī  
 stone      ADJ-white\ADJ-FV  
 ‘white stone’

- (363) àtār      í-fām-ī  
 stone      ADJ-light\ADJ-FV  
 ‘light stone’

#### 10.3.2 Modification with relative clauses

Nouns can be modified by a relative clause. Relative clauses describe a property of the noun that helps to identify its referent. The order of noun and relative clause is always head-modifier. The default relative clause used in Kam is introduced by the marker  $\bar{a}$  and closed by the marker  $\grave{a}$  indicating the end of the relative clause. Relative clauses are further described in § 17.2.

- (364) [[[NOUN<sup>HEAD</sup> + [ $\bar{a}$  + RELATIVE CLAUSE +  $\grave{a}$ ]<sup>RELATIVE CLAUSE</sup>]]<sup>NP</sup> + ...]<sup>MAIN CLAUSE</sup>

- (365) àwàn    ā    míŋ    íŋ<sup>†</sup>gwóg    â,  
king    REL    build    house    REL,
- ú    dǎ    rǎ    jì    ríŋ  
3SG    be    COM    thing    POSS

‘The king who built this house is rich.’

(Tope\_Bitrus\_06, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

In Kam, ordinal numerals are usually expressed with a relative clause construction.

- (366) kwí    ā    jīrāŋ    ká    †jì  
stick    REL    two    break:PFV    stand

‘The second stick broke.’ (literally: ‘The stick that is two was broken’)

(session\_346, Danjuma Bello, elicitation)

### 10.3.3 Modification with nouns

#### 10.3.3.1 The associative construction

A construction where a noun or a possessive pronominal modifies another noun is called an associative construction. This construction often expresses a relation of possession, but it can also express various other relationships, including kin relationship, partnership, ethnicity or clan membership, relationship with a place, relationship with a certain time (‘yesterday’s work’) product-resource relationship (‘table of wood’), container-contents relationship (‘a calabash of water’), part-whole relationship, etc. Some examples:

- (367) **Kin relationship**

àŋfì    dááŋfì  
son    Danaci

‘The son of Danaci’

(session\_019, Yuguda Manti, narrative)

(368) **Place relationship**

àǽfi gárbátǽféde

child Garba.Chede

'The boy(s) from Garba Chede.'

(session\_020, Yuguda Manti, narrative)

(369) **Ethnic membership**

ǽí ǽwòm

person Kam

'Kam people'

(session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

(370) **Time relationship**

ǽǽwóg ém †lóg ô

house 1SG:POSS time DIST

'My house of that time', i.e. 'my earlier house'

(session\_054, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, elicitation)

An associative construction is expressed by simple juxtaposition of nouns or noun phrases, with the regular head-modifier order. There is no morphosyntactic difference between alienable and inalienable possession constructions in Kam.

## (371) àkùb wó

bone dog

'a dog bone' (inalienable) or 'a dog's bone' (alienable, a bone that a dog is chewing)

As is usually the case, utterance-internal nouns with a prosodic prefix *a-* lose this prefix, or it is centralized to *a*, and the usual tone rules apply (cf. § 7.1).

## (372) àkùb èbòg

àkùb àbòg

bone leg

'shin bone'

(373) àdég ó†jě  
 àdég àjě  
 disease bush  
 ‘cancer’

(374) àlímíné lè  
 àlímíné àlè  
 tongue fire  
 ‘flame’

The modifier in an associative construction can be a noun or a possessive pronominal.

(375) àṅwà m̄  
 friend 1SG:POSS  
 ‘my friend’

(376) àṅgwóg jò  
 house 2PL:POSS  
 ‘your people’s house’

Prepositional phrases headed by prepositional nouns are structurally very similar to associative constructions (cf. § 11.2.1 and § 10.3.3.1). There is no formal difference between nominal compounds and associative constructions (see § 7.2.1).

### 10.3.3.2 Noun + numeral phrases

In § 7.4, I presented the morphological characteristics of cardinal numerals. I argued that numerals are morphosyntactically related to nouns in Kam. In a similar vein, a construction where a numeral modifies a noun may be seen as a kind of associative construction, except that the plural marker *jò* may occur in between a noun and a numeral (378), but not between a possessor and a possessee. The relationship between modifier and head in a ‘noun-numeral’ construction is restricted to ‘unit-quantity’.

(377) àság ṅwùn  
 year five  
 ‘five years’  
 (session\_019, Yuguda Manti, narrative)

- (378) àfìséǵí †gún óm jō jīrāg  
 child behind 1SG:POSS PL two  
 ‘my two younger brothers’  
 (session\_159, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

As mentioned in § 10.3.3.2, ordinal numerals are expressed with relative clauses. Exceptionally, ‘first’ is expressed with a specialized form, *áǵǵàrì*<sup>76</sup> and ‘last’ with a deverbal nominalization *àlógórí* (from *lòg* ‘to deliver, to give birth’). These are not derived from cardinal numerals.

#### 10.4 Noun phrase coordination

Noun phrases in Kam can be coordinated with the conjunction *rə̀* ‘and’, which is identical to the comitative preposition *rə̀* discussed in § 11.2.2.2.

- (379) jùrù rə̀ nà  
 1PL COM 2SG.ID  
 ‘We and you.’ or ‘Me and you.’  
 (session\_068, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

Simple parataxis can also be used, in particular when the coordinator in English would be ‘or’. There does not have to be a pause in between the coordinated noun phrases.

- (380) bə̀rì pə̀ gbán jé, **jīrāg** **ǵār** hñ kā  
 day come arrive enter, **two** **three** NEG COND  
 ‘When it wasn’t (even) **two or three** days later ...’  
 (session\_276, Anonymous, narrative)

The meaning ‘or’ can also be marked by the conjunction *kò*, borrowed from Hausa (*ko* ‘or’). In the following example, there is a brief pause after each coordinated noun, and each final vowel is lengthened with rising intonation. I do not know whether this intonation is a consistent characteristic of lists.

- (381) á lóm ǵè(é), kò múró bē(é), kò ǵǵíǵ(ó)  
 2SG.S.FUT plant:FUT guinea.corn, or maize PRSTT,or cassava  
 ‘You will plant guinea corn, or maize, or cassava ...’  
 (session\_073, Sani Bello, narrative)

<sup>76</sup> The tones of this item are not certain.

Often, when noun phrases are presented as alternatives, they will occur in separate short clauses. The noun phrases are not coordinated in these cases, but rather the clauses. Such coordination has been attested with *kò* ‘or’, or with simple parataxis.

- (382) Bábángídá á jī, kò Sólómón †á jī?  
 Babangida PRSTT Q, or Solomon PRSTT Q  
 ‘Is it Babangida, or is it Solomon?’  
 (session\_351, Solomon Ahmadu & Danjuma Bello, elicitation)

- (383) àbén dǒ́ṣá mìná, à-bén kú mìná ...  
 talk magic, sp. PRSTT,talk magic, sp. PRSTT ...  
 ‘There’s talk of *dǒ́ṣá*, there’s talk of *kú* (what should I do?)’  
 (session\_142, Làmî, song)

### 10.5 Noun phrase apposition

Two noun phrases are in apposition if they refer to the same entity independently, while sustaining a syntactically independent status from each other. This means that there is no modifier-head relationship between the two noun phrases. In the vocative construction in (384), the second noun phrase identifies or more narrowly specifies the referent of the first noun phrase, but cannot be said to modify that noun phrase or to function as its head.

- (384) àṅwá kùl!  
 friend tortoise  
 ‘(My) friend, tortoise!’ (In a story, where the hare calls the tortoise.)  
 (session\_277, Wesam, narrative)

In § 9.1, I addressed the free position of the plural word *jō* within the noun phrase. A possible analysis for examples where this marker is inserted (a) in between a noun and an attributive adjective or (b) before a quantifier is that we are dealing with independent noun phrases in apposition here. Since these examples are elicited without much context, it is not possible to verify in what discourse contexts they are used. This is a topic for further inquiry.

- (385) àṅwóg jó †í-bōr-ī  
 house PL ADJ-big:ADJ-FV  
 ‘houses, big (ones)’  
 (session\_303, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (386) à̀s̀is̀é̀g̀í            †gún    é̀m            j̀o    j̀ir̀ā̀g  
young.child        back    1SG:POSS    PL    two  
‘my younger siblings, (the) two (of them)’  
(session\_004, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

## 11 Prepositions and prepositional phrases

### 11.1 Prepositional phrases

#### 11.1.1 Functions of prepositional phrases

One major way of introducing oblique or circumstantial arguments into a clause is by using prepositional phrases. These introduced arguments are locations (387), companions (388), instruments (389), and objects of comparison (390):

- (387) àwàn míṅ íṅ<sup>+</sup>gwóg léb jè hò  
 king build:PFV house **inside** **bush** NEG  
 ‘The king has not built a house in the bush.’  
 (session\_005, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

- (388) ì pè jóṅ rṓ <sup>+</sup>jí á  
 1PL come sit **COM** **3PL** PFV  
 ‘We came and sat with them (and asked them what happened).’  
 (session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (389) ú mgbáb ú kṓ b̀n  
 3SG shoot:PFV 3SG **INSTR** **arrow**  
 ‘He shot him with an arrow’  
 (session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (390) á f̀úg í<sup>+</sup>ṅág á<sup>+</sup>rí ṅ̀m  
 2SG.S.PFV do:PFV work **SIM** 1SG.ID  
 ‘You worked like me.’  
 (session\_354, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)

It is not clear whether prepositional phrases can also occur as modifiers complex noun phrases. I did not find clear examples of this (cf. § 10.1).

Some prepositional phrases occur in more specialized constructions. Comitative phrases with *r̀*, for example, can function as the complement in a copula clause expressing predicative possession (§ 15.2.1), while no other prepositional phrase is found in that position, and prepositional phrases with *sé*



‘until’ only occur as minimal clauses used for farewell biddings (§ 11.2.2.4). Similitive prepositional phrases are often used in an equative construction (§ 11.2.2.3).

When prepositional phrases modify whole clauses as circumstantial modifiers, they occur peripherally. They may occur at the left periphery of a clause (391) or at the right periphery (392). They come before or after any other elements of a clause.

- (391)    àrí            bá,                    àjì      tán      pé  
           SIM        PROX.ID        world stand come  
           ‘Like this, the world began.’  
           (session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (392)    nā                    pé      dúg      ígún      á      †pé      kó      b́rì      à  
           thing:REL        come follow behind REL come INSTR time PROX  
           ‘That which came after came some days ago...’  
           (session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

Prepositional phrases may be nested more tightly into the clause when they are not just circumstantial modifiers of the whole clause but act as verbal modifiers. In those cases, they introduce an argument that is more central to the action expressed in the clause, such as the arrow that is being shot in (389) or the bush where the king’s house has been built in (387). They fall within the scope of clausal negation and occur right after the object of a clause, or after the primary verb if the clause is intransitive.

### 11.1.2 Internal structure

Internally, prepositional phrases are structured like noun phrases. The leftmost element of the prepositional phrase is the head. This can be a preposition proper or a prepositional noun (cf. § 11.2.1). The second slot to the right is taken by a noun phrase that acts as the complement of the preposition.

- (393)    [HEAD]                    [COMPLEMENT]  
           [PREPOSITION] [NOUN PHRASE]
- (394)    ḱ                    làṅ  
           INSTR            pot  
           ‘(Heat it up) with a pot.’

- (395)    *ɲkám*                    *ílàɲ*  
           under                    pot  
           ‘underneath the pot’

## 11.2 Prepositions

### 11.2.1 Prepositional nouns and prepositions proper

There are two types of prepositions in Kam. One type corresponds to what have been called prepositional nouns and locational nouns in the literature (Elders 2000: 242-261; Anonby 2008: 428-430). The other type corresponds to the traditional notion of preposition and will be called here prepositions proper. Prepositional nouns and prepositions proper share a common syntactic function as prepositions, i.e. they are the head of a prepositional phrase, and they take a noun phrase as their complement (see § 11.1.2 above)11.1.2.

The three main characteristics of prepositional nouns are the following:

- (1) They take possessive pronominals as complements. This makes prepositional phrases with prepositional nouns similar to the associative construction (cf. § 10.3.3.1). For example, in isolation, *àgún ám* (back 1SG:POSS) can be translated both as a prepositional phrase (‘behind me’) and as a possessive noun phrase (‘my back’).
- (2) They are phonologically similar, and sometimes identical to a set of corresponding nouns that they derive from, often featuring a prosodic *à*-prefix (cf. § 7.1). Sometimes, this *à*-prefix does not occur in prepositional nouns whereas it would occur in the corresponding nouns.
- (3) They express prepositional meanings by means of the regular associative construction (cf. § 10.3.3.1), where the prepositional noun (*àlib* ‘head, top’) is the head noun and the noun expressing the argument of the preposition (*àɲgwóg* ‘house’) is the modifier.

- (396)    *àlib*                    *á<sup>+</sup>ɲgwóg*  
           head                    house  
           ‘on the house’, or ‘the top of the house’

Prepositional nouns retain their initial *à*-prefix only sometimes. This is a characteristic that sets prepositional nouns apart as a separate morphosyntactic category from common nouns in Kam. Most prepositional nouns, when used utterance-internally, drop the *à*-prefix, including its tone. This is apparent in the following examples, where the H tone of *dá* spreads to *lèb* ‘in’ (from *àlèb* ‘inside, n.’) and *gún* ‘behind’ (from *àgún* ‘back side’). If the *à*-prefix were present, we would expect *lèb* in (397) to have a L tone (*lèb*) and *gún* in (398) to be realized with a downstepped H tone (*<sup>+</sup>gún*) (cf. Chapter 3).

- (397) d́      ĺb      ́ú  
 be      inside 3SG:POSS  
 ‘It’s inside of him.’  
 (session\_354, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)

- (398) d́      gún      óm  
 be      behind 1SG:POSS  
 ‘It’s behind me.’  
 (session\_354, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)

In contrast to prepositional nouns, prepositions proper take independent pronouns as complements. In the following examples, *àrí* ‘like’ takes the independent pronoun *nìm* ‘1SG.ID’ as its argument, and the complex preposition *hár r̀* ‘including’ takes the independent pronoun *ǹ* ‘2SG.ID’.

- (399) á                      ǰùg      é́nág      àrí      nìm  
 2SG.S.PFV              do:PFV work      SIM      1SG.ID  
 ‘You work like me.’  
 (session\_354, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)

- (400) hár      r̀      ǹ  
 until      COM      2SG.ID  
 ‘Including you.’  
 (session\_354, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)

### 11.2.2 Prepositions proper

In my data on Kam, I distinguish seven prepositions proper (i.e. prepositions taking independent pronouns as complements). Most of the prepositions proper are monosyllabic, except for the similative *àrí*, which is derived from a noun *àrí* ‘type’. Four out of seven prepositions are probably borrowed from Hausa: *sé* ‘(not) until’, *hár* ‘until’, *à* ‘at/to’ and *dākā/dāgā* ‘from’.

- (401) **Prepositions proper not borrowed from Hausa**  
 ḱ, instrumental and temporal preposition, ‘with’  
 r̀, comitative preposition, ‘with, and’  
 àrí, similative preposition, ‘like’

(402) **Prepositions proper probably borrowed from Hausa**sé, temporal preposition, ‘(not) until’ (Hausa *sáí*)hár, temporal preposition, ‘until’ (Hausa *hár*)à, locative preposition, ‘at/to’ (Hausa *à*)dākā/dāgā, locative preposition ‘from’ (Hausa *dākā*)

The following sections give an overview of each of these prepositions, with some examples. The prepositions borrowed from Hausa are treated together in § 11.2.2.4.

**11.2.2.1 ká, instrumental and temporal**

*ká* has both instrumental and temporal uses. It is commonly used to introduce an instrument. It can also, for example, introduce the language in which something is said.

- (403)    ú            ṅgbáb            ú            **ká**            bùn  
           3SG        shoot:PFV        3SG        **INSTR** arrow

‘He shot him with an arrow’

(session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (404)    m̄                    bimbén á            rè            méra    m  
           1SG.S.PFV        speak PFV        COM    brother 1SG:POSS

‡**ká**        ní        nì        íbēnī  
**INSTR**    thing    thing    ADJ:speak:FV

‘I speak with my junior brother on the phone.’

(session\_054, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, elicitation)

- (405)    **ká**            ṅwé            ní            ṅwòm  
**INSTR**    language        person    Kam

‘(What is this word) in Kam?’

(session\_034, Samuel U. Adams, conversation)

- (406) ì nínm ó<sup>†</sup>lím kó <sup>†</sup>bén á bē?  
 1PL eat:PFV front INSTR talk PROX PRSTT?

‘So, do we continue with this discussion?’

(session\_271, anonymous, conversation)

- (407) kó <sup>†</sup>nág á àwú jág pè àbibí ní ɲwòm  
 INSTR work REL 3SG carry:PFV come earth person Kam

‘(We cooperate with him) in the work that he came to do in Kam land.’

(session\_052, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (408) ʃúg ú á jágì kó  
 catch:PFV 3SG PFV take INSTR
- ní sāmṛī ā àwú sín â  
 thing spoil:ADJ REL 3SG do:PFV REL

‘It (the trial) confirmed his guilt’ (lit. ‘it caught him with the bad things that he had done’.)

(session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (409) í <sup>†</sup>vér í kó lūkōm n̄tàm  
 LOG.SG kill:PFV 3PL INSTR road poison

‘(He said that) he killed them by means of poison.’

(session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

*kó* can also introduce a temporal argument:

- (410) kó lójí ró h̄n  
 TEMP day FUT:NEG NEG

‘(You will not sleep in the same room with your wife) on that day.’

(session\_076, Adamu S. Baka, narrative)

- (411) kó bérí mīnā  
 TEMP time what

‘When?’

### 11.2.2.2 *rə̀*, comitative

The comitative preposition *rə̀* encodes company, similar to the non-instrumental use of *with* in English. There is no difference between animate and inanimate comitative arguments. The comitative is also used for nominal coordination.

- (412) àwú lù rə̀ ŋwá ú wō.  
 3SG sleep:FUT COM friend 3SG:POSS PL.  
 ‘She will sleep with her friends.’  
 (session\_076, Adamu S. Baka, narrative)

- (413) jò lù sîm rə̀ fònú à?  
 2PL sleep:PFV how COM harmattan PFV?  
 ‘How are you sleeping with the harmattan period?’  
 (session\_084, Yuguda Manti, conversation)

- (414) ì pè fúg ènág á kã rə̀ jákúbù  
 1PL come do:PFV work PROX here COM Jakob  
 ‘We did this work here with Jakob.’  
 (session\_053, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, narrative)

- (415) tán sîm rə̀ jág  
 stand how COM work  
 ‘How is work?’ (lit.: ‘How does it stand with the work?’)

- (416) àfú rə̀ bèn tí  
 shirt COM trousers  
 ‘shirt with trousers’ or ‘shirt and trousers’  
 (session\_037, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

When coordinating two referents who are jointly participating in an action, an inclusory construction with *rə̀* is often used. This is a construction where an initial plural pronominal (*àjí* ‘they’ or *jùrù* ‘we’) refers to the group as a whole and a following noun or pronominal (*wó* ‘dog’ or *jà* ‘you’) picks out one of the two referents (cf. Singer 2001). This construction is ambiguous between an interpretation as ‘they and N’ and ‘he and N’ (when the relevant pronominal is 3PL) or ‘we and N’ and ‘I and N’ (when the pronominal is 1PL). A non-inclusory comitative construction (*jìm rə̀ já* ‘me and you.SG’; *àwú rə̀ wó á* ‘he and the dog’) can be used to disambiguate between these meanings.

- (417) jùrù rə̀ nà  
 1PL COM 2SG.ID  
 ‘I and you.’ (or ‘We and you’) (lit.: ‘we and you.SG’)  
 (session\_068, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (418) àjí rə̀ †wó â  
 3PL COM dog PROX  
 ‘He and this dog.’ (or, literally, ‘they and this dog’)  
 (session\_181, Babangida Audu, narrative)

The comitative marker *rə̀* is also used in the predicative possession construction (cf. § 15.2.1). It is also identical to the preverbal imperfective aspect particle *rə̀* (cf. § 13.3.1):

- (419) ú dǎ rə̀ gbàn  
 3SG be COM wife  
 ‘He has a wife.’ (lit.: ‘He is with a wife’)  
 (session\_004, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation, slightly adapted)

- (420) wó rə̀ †gúb níǰǰ  
 dog IPFV chase pig  
 ‘The dog is chasing the pig.’  
 (session\_005, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

There is no privative preposition (‘without’) in Kam. The equivalent of a privative construction is not expressed with prepositions, but with a clause including a comitative preposition and clausal negation:

- (421) à jé rə̀ nìm h̀n  
 2SG.S.NEG.NFUT go:NEG.NFUT COM 1SG.ID NEG  
 ‘You did not go with me’ or ‘You went without me.’  
 (session\_354, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)
- (422) à ǰǰ é†nág rə̀ nìm h̀n  
 2SG.S.NEG.NFUT do:NEG.NFUT work COM 1SG.ID NEG  
 ‘You did not work with me’ or ‘You worked without me.’  
 (session\_354, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)

The comitative preposition also occurs in complex numerals, where it sometimes has an unexplained H tone instead of a L tone. § 7.4.1.2.2 contains examples of this.

### 11.2.2.3 *àrí*, *similative*

The similative preposition, equivalent to English ‘like’, has the same form as the noun *àrí* ‘type’. It is often used in equative clauses.

- (423) á                      ʃúg    ó<sup>†</sup>ṅág    àrí    ṅim  
 2SG.S.PFV              do:PFV work    like    1SG.ID  
 ‘You work like me.’  
 (session\_354, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)

- (424) Bàbàngídá            <sup>†</sup>ʃúg    ó<sup>†</sup>ṅág    àrí    jákûb  
 Babangida              do:PFV work    like    Jakob  
 ‘Babangida works like Jakob.’ (alternatively: ‘Babangida works as much as Jakob’)  
 (session\_291, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (425) mē            ṛí                      kpìmkpáṅī    àrí    <sup>†</sup>ná    m  
 mother    1SG:POSS            STAT~strong    like    father    1SG:POSS  
 ‘My mother is strong like my father.’ (or: ‘My mother is as strong as my father.’)  
 (session\_291, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (426) àṅgwóg    ú                      àrí    <sup>†</sup>gbáj  
 house    3SG:POSS            like    palace  
 ‘His house is like a palace.’  
 (session\_291, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

### 11.2.2.4 **Borrowed prepositions proper: *sé*, *hár*, *à* and *dākā***

Four commonly used prepositions proper in Kam are likely borrowed from Hausa: *sé*, from Hausa *sáí* ‘(not) until, except’; *hár* ‘(up) to, including, until’ and *à* ‘in, at, on (stationary location) (cf. Jaggar 2001: 668-670) and *dākā/dāgā* ‘from’. They may also be borrowed from Fula or from another contact language.

*sé* is frequent in formulas for announcing departure (‘until later, see you soon, until tomorrow’). It does not occur outside of these uses.

- (427) sé            lómó  
 until            later  
 ‘See you later.’  
 (session\_012, Garba Abubakar Bako, conversation)



- (428) sé gbánákā  
 until later  
 ‘See you later.’  
 (Constructed example, very frequently heard)

- (429) sé pí<sup>+</sup>káŋ  
 until tomorrow  
 ‘See you tomorrow.’  
 (Constructed example, very frequently heard)

*hár* is used in the same sense as it is used in Hausa, as a temporal preposition meaning ‘(up) until’ and to introduce adverbial clauses (cf. § 17.5.1.2).

- (430) àjí mág <sup>+</sup>dóg òtèkù hñ, hár sísirā  
 3PL NEG:NFUT see toad NEG, until now  
 ‘They haven’t seen the toad, until now.’  
 (session\_181, Babangida Audu, narrative)

- (431) hár ónā, òim mā ...  
 until today, 1SG.ID also ...
- mí bór jéŋ á rā hñ  
 1SG.S.PFV climb:PFV horse PFV EMPH NEG

‘Until today, even me, I have never climbed a horse.’

(session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (432) ì pè jóŋ á pè, hár é<sup>+</sup>léŋ ónā  
 1PL come sit:PFV PFV come, until sun today  
 ‘We are still settled here, up until today.’  
 (session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

*à*, like *hár*, is used the same way as it is in Hausa, as a locative preposition. It is widely attested in narratives, conversations, and in songs, but is not usually accepted by speakers in elicitation sessions. Equivalent locative phrases can also be constructed without prepositions.

(433)    ú           jí                   pè       (à)       béldzûm  
           3SG       leave:PFV       come   LOC   Belgium

‘He came here from Belgium.’

(session\_053, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, narrative)

(434)    àtáb       á           <sup>†</sup>kósí               (à)       ɲwé       márê  
           fish       REL       gather:PFV       LOC   mouth   river

‘fish that was gathered at the bank of the river’

(session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

(435)    à           ɲwé    ɲgwóg,   ń                   dóg           ú,       mégādi  
           LOC       mouth   house, 1SG.S.PFV       see:PFV       3SG   guard

‘At the door, I see him, a guard’

(session\_156, Bebi, song)

*dākā* ‘from’ is another locative preposition used in the same way as it is in Hausa. It can be pronounced *dākā* or *dāgā*.

(436)    í           dǒí       <sup>†</sup>jág    dākā    kō               kā  
           1PL       TOP       carry   from   place:DIST   COND

‘If they, now, dug (earth) from that place (the river bank), (the water would gush away).’

(session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

(437)    ì           jí       pé       dāgā    māsàr  
           1PL       arrive   come   from   Egypt

‘We came here from Egypt’

(session\_021, Yuguda Manti, narrative)

(438)    dākā       ɲàmátāmāndā,       á           ɲé       kòl       bátimèrúwá  
           from       Nya.Matamanda,       2SG.S.FUT       go:FUTsurpass   Bati.Meruwa

‘From Nya Matamanda, you will go past Bati Meruwa.’

(session\_335, Babangida Audu, narrative)

## 11.2.3 Prepositional nouns

The main defining characteristics of prepositional nouns are the following.

- Prepositional nouns take possessive pronominals as complements. This distinguishes them from prepositions proper, which take independent pronominals as complements.
- Each prepositional noun has a corresponding noun – often a body part term – in the lexicon.
- The weak prosodic prefix *à-* in prepositional nouns can be left out without trace. This distinguishes those prepositional nouns from regular nouns, where the segmental part of the prefix *à-* can be dropped, but its tone is retained.

Prepositional nouns are quite common in African languages and have been discussed at length elsewhere (e.g. Welmers 1973: 216-217; Ruelland 1992: 230-231; Elders 2000: 242-261; Anonby 2008: 428-430).

The following prepositional nouns have been attested in Kam:

- (à)lib ‘on (top of)’ from *àlib* ‘head’, exemplified in (439), (440), (441)
- (à)lèb ‘in(side)’, from *àlèb* ‘inside (as in ‘inside of belly’), exemplified in (442) and (443)
- (à)gàw ‘beside’, from *gàw* ‘rib’, exemplified in (444)
- (à)gún ‘behind, after’, from *àgún* ‘back side, behind’, exemplified in (445) and (446), cf. also § 7.4.1.2.2)
- (à)lím ‘in front of’, from *àlím* ‘front’ (cp. *àlímíné* ‘tongue’), exemplified in (445)
- ñkùm ‘behind’, means ‘back’ as a noun, exemplified in (448)
- ñkám ‘under’, means ‘rest’ and ‘space underneath’ as a noun, exemplified in (449) and (450)

(439) àwú      dǎ      **lib**      jǎjí  
 3SG      be      on      horse  
 ‘He is on a horse.’

(session\_181, Babangida Audu, narrative)

(440) àsúwā    ñkā    jí      tǎr    pè      **lib**    bér    à  
 then:REL thunder arrive fall come on tree REL  
 ‘Then (that) the thunder struck the tree.’ (literally: ‘fell down on the tree’)

(session\_007, Garba Abubakar Bako, narrative)

- (441)    ń                    ǵítàn   **līb**        ń<sup>+</sup>tóŋ  
 1SG.S.PFV       stand   on       mountain  
 ‘I stand on (top of) the mountain.’  
 (session\_187, Babangida Audu, elicitation)
- (442)    àŋgwóg   mí       sirí       **lěb**       í<sup>+</sup>jě       ríg  
 house    some   be.NEG**inside**   bush   be.NEG  
 ‘There is no house in the bush’.  
 (Tope\_Bitrus\_06, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)
- (443)    dó               **lěb**       ú  
 be       **inside**   3SG:POSS  
 (It) is inside of him.  
 (session\_354, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)
- (444)    àwú       rě       <sup>+</sup>fér   jì       **àgàw**   bèr       mí  
 3SG     IPFV   wash   thing   **side**   tree     some  
 ‘She was washing clothes next to some tree.’  
 (session\_007)
- (445)    dó               **gún**       óm  
 be       **behind**   1SG:POSS  
 (It) is behind me.  
 (session\_354, Rahab Garba Precious)
- (446)    **àgún**    ú,                í       sí       <sup>+</sup>bén   “tò ...”  
**after**   **3SG:POSS**   3PL   SEQ   say   “so ...”  
 ‘After him, they said “so ...” (Context: succession of different kings in Kam oral tradition;  
 ‘after him’ refers to the time after the ruler Awan Sipiru died.)  
 (session\_019, Yuguda Manti, narrative)
- (447)    ń                    ǵítàn   **àlím**           <sup>+</sup>ŋgwóg  
 1SG.S.PFV       stand   **in.front.of**   house  
 ‘I stand in front of a house.’  
 (session\_054, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, elicitation)

(448) àdʒé dó bé ñkùm ηgwóg  
shea.tree be EMPH **behind** house  
‘There is a shea tree behind (my) house.’  
(session\_098, Danjuma Bello, narrative)

(449) dó ñ<sup>+</sup>kám bêr  
be **under** tree  
‘(It) is underneath the tree.’  
(session\_311, Danjuma Bello, elicitation)

(450) ñkám tâη  
**under** lap  
‘(The rabbit told the tortoise to hide him) under (his) lap.’  
(session\_277, Wesam, narrative)

## IV Part four: Verbal morphosyntax



## 12 Verbs

### 12.1 Introduction

#### 12.1.1 Definition and general remarks

Verbs express actions (where an agent and/or patient is involved), experienced events (where an experiencer is involved), and states (where an entity is described as in a particular state). What connects these meanings semantically is that they are time-unstable (Givón 1984: 51, 55): they persist for a certain amount of time. The meaning of a verb cannot be conceptualized without reference to a specific point in time during which the action, event or state persists. Functionally, verbs predicate something about one or more things (cf. Croft 2001): verbs say something about nouns.

The current chapter focuses on segmental and tonal morphology. Nominalization and derivation of adjectives were treated in § 7.2.3 and § 7.5. Where relevant, they are discussed only in passing here. I treat multi-verb constructions, which can be used to express aspectual distinctions, direction, valency change and comparison, in Chapter 1 below. Chapter 1 brings together all issues relevant to tense, aspect and polarity marking, which involves both morphological marking on verbs and other markers dispersed across the clause.

Segmental morphology on verbs includes

- Causative and iterative derivational suffixes (§ 12.4)
- Some derivational prefixes and suffixes that turn verbs into nouns (cf. § 7.2.3)
- The final vowel *-i* that occurs in some constructions, both derivational and inflectional (§ 12.2)
- Different types of reduplication that play a role in adjectival derivation and future tense marking (§ 12.5), and
- Object indexes (cf. § 8.3)

Other morphology is tonal, marking various tense and aspect functions, polarity, and playing an important role in verbal derivation and nominalization. I treat tonal morphology in § 12.3.

#### 12.1.2 Verb structure

Verbs in Kam are made up of a verb stem that has a CVC, CV or CVCi shape, CVC being the most canonical stem shape. Some verb stems have a free CVC and a CVCi allomorph, captured here under CVC(i). I



observed such allomorphy in 14 instances, which I list in (452). It is possible that more verb stems show this pattern than I have uncovered so far. I also found one root with a CCVC structure, *mgbàb* ‘to shoot’.

Each root has a lexical tone. Monosyllabic verbs have L, M or H tone. CVCi stems have L-H or M-M tone. CVC(i) stems have L-L and H-H tones, depending on the tone of their CVC-stem. The verbs in question can be analyzed as a combination of CVC stem + a final vowel *i*, where the tone of the stem is copied onto the toneless final vowel. One such verb, *tán(i)* ‘to stand’, has an irregular HL tonal pattern. This verb is peculiar in other ways and is discussed in some more detail in § 12.6.2. The final vowel *i* in these verbs may be related to the final vowel *-i* found in several grammatical constructions in Kam, although it is synchronically different (see § 12.2 below).

(451)	CV (18 stems)	fé ‘to harvest (maize)’, lù ‘to lie down’, wū ‘to be ripe’
	CVC (131 stems)	vín ‘to mould’, wàb ‘to tie’, būm ‘to spoil’
	CVC(i) (14 stems)	gúb(i) ‘chase’, dèb(i) ‘buy’
	CVCi (15 stems)	bāgī ‘to bend one’s head’, gbìgí ‘to shake’
	CCVC (1 stem)	mgbàb ‘to shoot’

(452) **CVC stems with CVCi allomorphs**

gúb(i) ‘chase’	ǰúg(i) ‘catch, carry’	jág(i) ‘take, carry’
dèb(i) ‘buy’	dóg(i) ‘see’	vég(i) ‘die’
ǰéb(i) ‘go’	gòm(i) ‘pay’	tàb(i) ‘touch’
swàb(i) ‘sing’	jìb(i) ‘ask’	sìn(i) ‘do’
tán(i) ‘stand’	dín(i) ‘find, meet’	kòr(i) ‘surpass’

Some examples of such verbs with CVC and CVCi allomorphs are given in (453) to (455).

(453)	àní	mínā	ǰúgí	jág	â?
	person	which	carry:PFV	catch	REL
	‘(Who is) the person who took it?’				
	(session_271, anonymous, conversation)				

- (454) ʃúg                      ú        á        **jàgì**  
 carry:PFV               him    PFV    catch
- kó        ní        sāmṛī    \*ā        àwú    sín        â  
 INSTR   thing   bad       REL    3SG   do:PFV REL

‘It (the investigation) caught him (with the bad things that he did).’

(session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (455) lámé        \*ɖʒág                níŋ                      ú                      à                      **dògì**  
 hare        spy:PFV               private.parts       3SG:POSS       PFV       **see**

‘The hare gleans at his private parts.’

(session\_254, Shawuya, narrative)

Grammatical tones may overwrite the lexical tone of a verb stem, and derivational suffixes may be attached to the stem.

- (456) ʃób ‘to be hot’  
 ʃòp-tí ‘to boil’ (replacive L tone on the verb + causative suffix *-ti*)

Object indexes are phonologically free but cannot occur in isolation. They may be considered verbal suffixes (cf. § 8.3). Object indexes follow any derivational suffixes. Rules of hiatus resolution apply (cf. § 6.2.1 e.g. *i + u → u*).

- (457) gbèb ‘to beat’  
 gbèb-rí ‘to beat repeatedly’ (replacive L tone + iterative suffix *-ri*)  
 gbèb ú ‘beat him’ (object index *ú*)  
 gbèb-r ú ‘beat him repeatedly’ (replacive L tone + iterative suffix *-ri* + object index *ú*)

When a verb is reduplicated, it involves a copy of the first syllable of the verb stem. This copy has a vowel that is prespecified for height: the vowel is always a high vowel. An *e*, *ɛ*, or *a* in the stem becomes *i* in the copy. An *o* or *ɔ* becomes an *u*.

The tone of reduplications depends on the construction (cf. § 12.5). One construction involves full reduplication of the tone of the stem. Another construction applies a replacive tone to the copy but leaves the base with its lexical tone. And yet another construction completely overwrites the tone of the whole reduplication.

- (458) lèm ‘to be good’  
 líl~lèm ‘good’ (predicative adjective, the tone is repeated)  
 líl~lèm-ì ‘It will be good’ (future tense, copy gets HL replacive tone, base keeps its lexical tone)  
 líl~lèm-ī hñ ‘very good’ (intensity construction, whole reduplication gets HM tone)

## 12.2 Inflectional and derivational final vowel *-i* on CVC-stems

### 12.2.1 General remarks

Several constructions feature an inflectional or derivational final vowel *-i* on CVC verbs and CVC(i) verbs. *-i* is toneless and it copies the tone of the preceding syllable. I call *-i* a final vowel and gloss it as FV, to draw attention to its similarities to *final vowels* in Bantu languages (see e.g. Grégoire 1979). In Bantu languages, like in Kam, a final vowel may co-express various morphosyntactic functions (e.g. a certain tense, aspect or mood distinction), together with other markers, but is never the sole dedicated marker of a function. In Kam, the vowel occurs in seven different constructions. It is impossible to attribute a single function to it.

The constructions it occurs in are the following:

- Deverbal attributive adjectives
- Future tense constructions
  - The affirmative future tense construction (the construction with an object and the construction without an object)
  - The negative future tense construction
- Speech and thought reporting clauses
- The ‘intensity’ construction with partial reduplication

Each of these constructions are exemplified in the following sections. Except for the ‘intensity’ construction, which I discuss briefly in § 12.5.4 below.

In § 12.1.2, I listed a number of verbs that have a CVCi structure or a CVC(i) structure, with optional final *i*. The inflectional final vowel *-i* and the optional final *i* in these stems are synchronically different morphs: the inflectional *-i* has a morphosyntactic function; the optional *i* does not. In these verbs, the *i* does not serve any of the functions listed in § 12.2.2 to § 12.2.4. They also occur outside of the relevant constructions. Nonetheless, it is likely that this final *i* and the final vowel in these constructions are

historically related. Stems ending in *i* may be historically complex. Alternatively, the constructions in § 12.2.2 to § 12.2.4 may retain a final *i* that was historically more widespread in verb stems.

### 12.2.2 Deverbal adnominal adjectives

When they are derived from a stem ending in a consonant, deverbal adnominal adjectives always carry the final vowel *-i*. The final vowel co-expresses this derivational function with a prefix  $\acute{a}^L$  and a replacive M tone on the verb stem (cf. § 7.5).

- (459)  $\acute{a}$ -bōr-ī  
 $\acute{a}^L$ -bòr\M-**i**  
 ADJ-go.up\ADJ-**FV**  
 ‘big’

not possible: \* $\acute{a}$ -bōr

- (460)  $\acute{a}$ -dūb-ī  
 $\acute{a}^L$ -dùb\M-**i**  
 ADJ-be.tall\ADJ-**FV**  
 ‘tall’

not possible: \* $\acute{a}$ -dūb

- (461)  $\acute{a}$ -fām-ī  
 $\acute{a}^L$ -fám\M-**i**  
 ADJ-be.light\ADJ-**FV**  
 ‘light’

not possible: \* $\acute{a}$ -fām

### 12.2.3 Future tense constructions

There are three different future tense constructions in Kam: an affirmative construction with object, an affirmative construction without object, and a negative future tense construction. In each of these constructions, the final vowel *-i* plays a role, but always in a different manner.

The affirmative construction with object is formed with optional repetition of the verb after the object (cf. § 13.6.3). It is possible to omit the repeated verb, but consultants prefer repetition, at least in

elicitation. I did not detect any pragmatic or information structural differences. The copy, located after the object, receives the final vowel *-i*. Other markers co-expressing future tense in this construction are pronominal H tone (only in 1SG and 2SG pronominals) and HL tone on the verb preceding the object.

- (462) àwú dóg òtèkù dóg-í  
 àwú dóg\HL òtèkù dóg-í  
 3SG see\FUT toad see-FV  
 ‘(whether) he will see the toad (or not)’  
 (session\_181, Babangida Audu, narrative)

- (463) m̄ búg à b̄g-ī  
 Ṃ b̄g\HL á b̄g-í  
 1SG.S.FUT pinch\FUT 2SG.O pinch-FV  
 ‘I will pinch you.’  
 (session\_345, Danjuma Bello, elicitation)

- (464) àwàn míṅ èṅgwóg m̄ṅ-ī àléb ó<sup>+</sup>ǰě  
 àwàn m̄ṅ\HL èṅgwóg m̄ṅ-í àléb àǰě  
 king build\FUT house build-FV middle bush  
 ‘The king will build a house in the bush.’  
 (Tope\_Bitrus\_06, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

- (465) wó gúb ù ḡb-ī  
 wó ḡb\HL ú ḡb-í  
 dog chase\FUT 3SG chase  
 ‘the dog will chase him’  
 (session\_218, anonymous, narrative)

Affirmative future constructions without an object are not expressed with repetition of the verb, but with a partially reduplicated verb and HL tone on the copy (§ 13.4.2). The subject pronominal is the same as in affirmative future constructions with an object. The reduplicated verb carries the final vowel *-i*.

- (466) n̄ ǰǰf̄ar-í  
 Ṃ ǰǰ\HL~ǰf̄ar-í  
 1SG.S.FUT tell\FUT~tell-FV  
 ‘I will tell (it).’  
 (session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (467) *m* búgbūg-ī  
 Ñ búg\HL~būg-ī  
 1SG.S.FUT pinch\HL~pinch-**FV**  
 ‘I will pinch (it).’  
 (session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (468) *n* fif<sup>†</sup>fēr-í  
 Ñ fif\HL~fēr-ī  
 1SG.S.FUT wash\HL~wash-**FV**  
 ‘I will wash (it).’  
 (Constructed example)<sup>77</sup>

The negative future tense construction does not have verbal repetition or reduplication. Instead, it features a H pronominal (if it is 1SG or 2SG), H verbal tone, a preverbal particle *rə<sup>L</sup>* and an optional post-verbal, post-object particle *rə*. Like in affirmative future tense constructions, the verb features a final vowel *-i*.

- (469) *i* *rə* †dʒóŋ-í kòm hñ  
*i* *rə<sup>L</sup>* dʒòŋ\H-í kòm hñ  
 3PL FUT.NEG live\FUT.NEG-**FV** place NEG  
 ‘They will not (be able to) live here.’  
 (session\_052, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (470) *á* *rə* †jéb-í hñ?  
*á* *rə<sup>L</sup>* jéb\H-í hñ?  
 2SG.S.FUT FUT.NEG go\FUT.NEG-**FV** NEG?  
 ‘Won’t you go?’  
 (session\_357, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)

- (471) *àjì* *rə* †dóg-í ntèkù rə hñ  
*àjì* *rə<sup>L</sup>* dóg\H-í ntèkù rə hñ  
 3PL FUT.NEG see\FUT.NEG-**FV** toad FUT.NEG NEG  
 ‘They will not see the toad.’  
 (session\_359, Garba Rahab Precious, elicitation)

<sup>77</sup> I do not have examples of future verbs with a lexical H tone in my corpus.

One exception was found in the data, where an affirmative future tense construction without object did not have a final vowel. Here, the future tense construction was also part of a sequential construction with the preverbal marker *sì* (§ 17.4.3). It is not clear why no final vowel is present in this example.

- (472)    *ń*                      *ǰúg*    *ə̀n<sup>+</sup>ág*    *nā̀ŋkō*, *ì*                      *sì*                      ***bín<sup>+</sup>bén***  
           *Ñ*                      *ǰúg\H*    *ànág*    *nā̀ŋkō*, *ì*                      *sì*                      ***bín\HL~bén***  
 1SG.S.PFV            do\PFV work    first,    1PL    SEQ    **talk\FUT~talk**  
 ‘I work first, then we will talk.’  
 (session\_351, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

#### 12.2.4 Speech and thought reporting constructions

When a speech/thought verb introduces reported speech or thought with the quotative marker *íjì<sup>l</sup>/ibí<sup>l</sup>/ə̀* (cf. § 17.6), it has a final vowel. It is sometimes optionally dropped due to hiatus resolution, since the quotative marker typically starts with an identical vowel *i*. However, a pause can be left between the verb and the quotative marker, and in those cases the final vowel is unmistakable. Note that the final vowel *i* is segmentally identical to the logophoric pronominal *í<sup>l</sup>*. It is not clear whether or how they may be related.

- (473)    *àwú*            *bén-í*                      *íjì*    *ˀsánj*    *â*            *fóg*  
 3SG            say:PFV-FV    QUOT:LOG.SG    go:PFV LOC    farm  
 ‘He<sub>i</sub> said that he<sub>i</sub> went to the farm.’  
 (session\_363, David Mamuda, elicitation)

- (474)    *í*            *sí*            *ˀbén-í*                      *ə̀*            *gé*            *sín*            *gì*            *jī?*  
 3PL            SEQ    say-FV                      QUOT    what    do            what    Q  
 ‘They then said: “What happened?”’  
 (session\_020, Yuguda Manti, narrative)

- (475)    *àní*            *mí*            *ˀjīb-í*  
 person    some    ask:PFV-FV
- ə̀*            *gá*                      *gì*            *ú*            *ré*            *sín*            *à*            *sīsīrā*    *gì*            *jī?*  
 QUOT    what:REL            what    3SG    IPFV    do            REL    now    what    Q?

‘Somebody asks what it is that he is doing right now.’

(session\_054, Muhammad Bose Yuguda)

- (476) àwú      ǵǵár-í      íbí      kpìṅ~kpáṅí  
 3SG      tell:PFV-FV      QUOT:LOG.SG      PRED~strong  
 ‘He tells that he is strong.’  
 (session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

The verb *hwár* has not been found with a final vowel in thought reporting constructions. This observation is based on only one example. More examples are needed to understand whether this is an exceptional omission, if *hwár* is a lexical exception, or if something else is going on here.

- (477) àwú      **hwár**      íbí  
 3SG      think:PFV      QUOT:LOG.SG  
  
 †dín      ní      mí      ā      líl~lèm  
 find:PFV      thing      certain      REL      PRED~beautiful  
  
 ‘He thinks that he found something beautiful.’  
  
 (session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

## 12.3 Tonal morphology

### 12.3.1 Inflectional tone

#### 12.3.1.1 Overview

Verbal tone plays an important role in the expression of tense, aspect and polarity. Each type of replacive tone is discussed in the following sections. By way of overview, Table 40 summarizes which tone patterns occur in which types of clauses, form to function. A function-to-form overview can be found in § 13.4.1.



**Table 40 - Tonal morphology on verbs, form to function**

<b>Tone pattern</b>	<b>Grammatical value</b>
Lexical tone (= unmarked)	Most imperatives Imperfective aspect (affirmative) Negative non-future without object Secondary verbs in multi-verb constructions Second verb of future tense constructions with object
H	Perfective aspect (affirmative) Negative future Negative non-future with object
HL	Affirmative future (in case of reduplication: only the copy)
Free variation	Some imperatives

### 12.3.1.2 Lexical tones

The citation form of verbs, from which all other forms can be predicted, is characterized by a lexical distinction between L, M, H, L-L, M-M, H-H and L-H patterns. Derived forms (discussed in § 12.4) always have a lexical L-H pattern when uninflected. Lexical tones are found in a subset of tense, aspect, and mood constructions, i.e. in most imperatives, affirmative imperfective aspect constructions, in negative non-future constructions without object, in secondary verbs in multi-verb constructions, and in the second verb of future tense constructions with an object. Each of these are exemplified as follows:

(478) **Lexical tone: imperatives**

- bòb ‘come out’
- bìr ‘blow’
- kṙāb ‘mix’
- tēb ‘count’
- fé ‘harvest (maize)’
- víŋ ‘mould (clay)’
- gùrì ‘vomit’
- dērī ‘snore’
- fīrī ‘jump’
- gúbí ‘chase away’
- ŋwórí ‘tie (a knot)’

gbìgí ‘shake’

tàgí ‘affect’

bùsì ‘bow (down)’

bòrsì ‘add’

(479) **Lexical tone: affirmative imperfective aspect constructions**

a.

wó      rẹ      <sup>+</sup>**gúb**    nǫ́ǫ̀

dog      IPFV    chase    pig

‘The dog is chasing the pig’

(session\_005, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

b.

m̀p̀m      rẹ      **kpàr**

rain      IPFV    rain

‘It is raining.’

(session\_007, Garba Abubakar Bako, narrative)

c.

jùrù      jí      ɲẁm    rẹ      **wūrī**    gwó

we      person    Kam    IPFV    like    stranger

‘We Kam like strangers.’

(Isolated\_Items\_01, Yuguda Manti, conversation)

(480) **Lexical tone: negative non-future constructions without object**

à                            **gbèb**    h̀ǹ  
 à                            **gbèb**    h̀ǹ  
 2SG.S.NEG.NFUT        beat    NEG

‘You didn’t beat (it).’

(David Mamuda, session\_364, elicitation)

m̀                            **fīrī**    h̀ǹ  
 Ñ                            **fīrī**    h̀ǹ  
 1SG.S.NEG.NFUT        jump    NEG

‘I didn’t jump.’

(David Mamuda, session\_364, elicitation)

ǹò                        **déŋ**    h̀ǹ  
 2PL                        roast    NEG

‘You people didn’t roast (it).’

(David Mamuda, session\_364, elicitation)

(481) **Lexical tone: non-initial verbs of multi-verb constructions**

a.

f̀úg                        ú        á        **jàg-i**  
 f̀úg\H                    ú        à        **jàg-i**  
 catch\PFV              3SG    PFV    **catch-FV**

‘It (the investigation) caught him (with the bad things that he did).’

(session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

b.

wó                        ŕ        làb        **džērī**  
 dog                        IPFV    hide        **look**

‘The dog is secretly looking.’

(session\_181, Babangida Audu, narrative)

(482) **Lexical tone: second verb of future tense constructions with object**

a.

í	líg	bùg	<b>líg-í</b>
í	líg\HL	bùg	<b>líg-i</b>
LOG.SG	dance\FUT	dance	dance-FV

‘(He showed that) he could dance.’

(session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

b.

ḿ	fá	†kúmé	<b>fà</b>
Ń	fà\HL	kúmé	<b>fà</b>
1SG.S.FUT	raise.chicken\FUT	chicken	raise.chicken

‘I will raise chickens.’<sup>78</sup>

(session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

**12.3.1.3 Replacive H tone: various functions**

In other tense, aspect and polarity constructions, verbal tonal patterns are determined by the construction rather than by the lexical tone of verbs. Verbs have a H tone in many constructions, viz. affirmative perfective clauses, negative perfective clauses with an object and negative future constructions.

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<sup>78</sup> *fà* ‘to raise chickens’ is realized with HL tone due to H tone spread

(483) **Perfective aspect construction**

ikā      m̄pīrōg **bób**                      á      pè      àlèb      ìgùm,  
 ikā      m̄pīrōg **bòb\H**                      à      pè      àlèb      àgùm,  
 then      rat      come.out\PFV      PFV      come      inside      hole,

**ním**      ú      â      jàg-i                      ηwé.  
**nìm\H**      ú      à      jàg-i                      ηwé  
 bite\PFV      3SG      PFV      catch-FV                      mouth

‘Then, a rat came from inside the hole and bit him on the mouth.’

(session\_181, Babangida Audu, narrative)

(484) **Negative perfective aspect with an object**

m̄                                      **gbé**                                      ú      h̄n̄  
 Ñ                                      **gbè\H**                                      ú      h̄n̄  
 1SG.S.NEG.NFUT                      **beat\PFV**                                      3SG      NEG

‘I did not beat him.’

(David Mamuda, session\_364, elicitation)

ɲò      **góm**                                      ú      h̄n̄  
 ɲò      **gòm\H**                                      ú      h̄n̄  
 2PL      pay\PFV                                      3SG      NEG

‘You people did not pay him.’

(David Mamuda, session\_364, elicitation)

(485) **Negative future**

a.

ń	ré	†góm-í	h̀h̀
Ñ	rə <sup>L</sup>	gòm\H-i	h̀h̀
1SG.S.FUT	NEG.FUT	pay\NEG.FUT-FV	NEG

‘I will not pay.’

(session\_364, David Mamuda, elicitation)

b.

ń	ré	†gbé <b>b</b>	ú	ré	h̀h̀
Ñ	rə <sup>L</sup>	gbè <b>b</b> \H	ú	rə	h̀h̀
1SG.S.FUT	NEG.FUT	beat\NEG.FUT3SG	NEG.FUT	NEG	

‘I will not beat him.’

(session\_364, David Mamuda, elicitation)

**12.3.1.4 Replacive HL tone: future tense constructions**

In affirmative future tense constructions, verbs have a HL tone scheme. As described in § 12.2.3 and § 13.6.3, future tense with a specific object can be partly expressed by means of repetition of the verb after the object. The repetition of the verb is expressed with the lexical tone of the verb (cf. § 12.3.1.2). Future tense without an object is expressed with partial reduplication of the verb (cf. § 12.2.3 and § 13.4.2). In this case, the copy gets a HL tone and the base receives the lexical tone of the verb. The partially reduplicated form can be analyzed as a contracted form of the future tense construction with a repeated verb: without the intervening object, the verbs are merged into a partial reduplication construction. Under this analysis, the tone of both the original and the repeated verbs are the same in both constructions.

(486)	ń	fá	†kú <b>m</b> é fâ
	Ñ	fà\HL	kú <b>m</b> é fâ
	1SG.S.FUT	raise.chickens\FUT	chicken raise.chickens

‘I will raise chickens.’

(session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (487) *m̀*                      **fi-fà**  
           *Ṃ*                        **fà\HL-fà**  
           1SG.S.FUT        raise.chickens\FUT-raise.chickens  
           ‘I will raise (chickens).’  
           (session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

### 12.3.1.5 Free variation: some imperative verbs

For a few monosyllabic verbs, there is a free choice of tones in imperative forms. This free variation is not consistent across speakers, and in my current dataset 15 verbs have been identified with such free choice by at least one speaker.

Most examples of such free variation occur in isolation. I checked some examples in a frame, with the adverb *mísí* ‘again’, where they also showed such free variation (session\_323, David Mamuda, elicitation).

Some examples of imperative verb forms that can have both a L and a H realization:

- (488) *b̀r*, *b̄r* or *b́r*        (lexical tone = H)        ‘to cut, to slaughter’
- (489) *s̀n*, *s̄n* or *śn*        (lexical tone = H)        ‘to do, to make’
- (490) *d̀èb*, *d̄èb* or *d́èb*    (lexical tone = L)        ‘to buy’
- (491) *b̀àr*, *b̄àr* or *b́àr*        (lexical tone = L)        ‘to farm, to weed’
- (492) a.            *m̀èr mísí*            ‘swallow again!’  
           b.            *m̄èr mísí*            ‘swallow again!’
- (493) a.            *gb̀èb mísí*            ‘beat again!’  
           b.            *gb̄èb mísí*            ‘beat again!’
- (494) a.            *b̀àr mísí*            ‘farm again!’  
           b.            *b̄àr mísí*            ‘farm again!’

### 12.3.2 Derivational tone

Derivation is partly accomplished with tonal morphology. The following derivational patterns make use of replacive tone on verbs. Note that these patterns are overwritten by inflectional replacive tones in certain grammatical contexts (§ 12.3.1).

- Causative and iterative derivation with *-tí*, *-sí* or *-rí* suffixes: replacive L tone on the verb stem. More examples can be found in § 12.4 below.

(495)     $\text{ʃòb}\backslash\text{L}$                     + *tí*    →     $\text{ʃòp-tí}$   
           be.hot\CAUS            CAUS            become.hot:CAUS-CAUS  
           ‘to boil’

- Deverbal participant and action/state nominalization with *à-* prefixes and with *-rì* suffixes: replacive H tone on the verb stem. See § 7.2.3.1 and § 7.2.3.2 for more examples.

(496)    *à*                    +  $\text{zùb}\backslash\text{H}$                     →    *à-zúb*  
           NMLZ    steal\NMLZ                    NMLZ-steal:NMLZ  
           ‘thief’

(497)    *à*                    +  $\text{lèm}\backslash\text{H}$                     + *rì*    →    *à-lém-rî*  
           NMLZ    be.good\NMLZ NMLZ                    NMLZ-good:NMLZ-NMLZ  
           ‘goodness, beauty’

- Deverbal adjectivization with the prefix *á<sup>L</sup>-* and final vowel *-i* include a replacive M tone on the verb stem (see § 7.5).<sup>79</sup>

(498)    *á-dūb-ī*  
            $\text{á}^{\text{L}}\text{-dùb}\backslash\text{M-i}$   
           ADJ-be.tall\ADJ-FV  
           ‘tall’

## 12.4 Derivational suffixes: causative *-tí* and *-sí*, iterative *-rí*, and other meanings

I found three marginally productive derivational suffixes on verbs: *-sí* and *-tí* derive causative verbs and *-rí* expresses an iterative meaning. In at least one case, *-sí* and *-tí* are interchangeable (*bòmtí* = *bòmsí* ‘to lengthen something’). Although I present *-tí* and *-sí* as suffixes because of their bound nature (they cannot occur as an utterance by themselves) and their derivational semantics, from a phonological point of view they are prosodic stems as their initial consonants are consonants that occur only in the prosodically strong stem-initial position (cf. § 4.2.10). Suffixes cannot be stacked to make more complex forms. All derivations

<sup>79</sup> This M could be a downstepped H, cf. footnote 69 on p. 174.



applying these suffixes also feature replacive L tone on the verb stem, which will not be explicitly marked in this section but has been discussed in § 12.3.2.

(499) **Iterative -rí**

gbèb-rí	beat-IT ‘to beat repeatedly’	(gbèb ‘to beat’)
tùb-rí	push-IT ‘to put holes in something’	(tùb ‘to push’)
wòm-rí	break-IT ‘to hit repeatedly’	(wòm ‘to break’)
bà-rí	remove-IT ‘to rinse’	(bà ‘to remove’)

(500) **Causative -tí and -sí**

ḡp-tí	be.hot-CAUS ‘to boil’	(ḡb ‘to be hot’)
mòm-tí	laugh-CAUS ‘to greet’	(mòm ‘to laugh’)
wòm-tí	break-CAUS ‘to break something’	(wòm ‘to break’)
lù-tí	lie.down-CAUS ‘to lay something down’	(lù ‘to sleep’)
tàm-sí	grow-CAUS ‘to nurture something’	(tám ‘to grow’)
jì-sí	leave-CAUS ‘to take something’	(jī ‘leave’)
dàk-sí	be.cold-CAUS ‘to cool something down’	(dág ‘to be cold’)
lèk-sí	be.sharp-CAUS ‘to sharpen something’	(lèg ‘to be sharp’)
mìlák-sí	be.soft-CAUS ‘to make something soft’	(mílág ‘to be soft’)
jàr-sí	be.wide-CAUS ‘to make something wide’	(jár ‘to be wide’)
bòm-sí ~ bòm-tí	be.long-CAUS ‘to make something long’	(bóm ‘to be wide’)

In two cases, *-tí* and *-sí* have a meaning related to physical contact or penetration. I have called this function ‘applicative’, but it is difficult to accurately characterize.

(501) **Applicative -tí and -sí**

jè-tí	enter-APPL ‘to lean against something’	(jé ‘to enter’)
tùp-sí	push-APPL ‘to pierce, to prick’	(tùb ‘to push’)

These suffixes are only marginally productive in the sense that they are found only with a limited subset of verbal roots. Causatives are very productive in stative verbs, as illustrated in (500) above, but elsewhere it is impossible to make new verbs with these suffixes.

- (502) m̀̀l ‘to swallow’ → \*m̀̀lsí, \*m̀̀ltí, \*m̀̀lrí  
 d̀̀ɛŋ ‘to roast’ → \*d̀̀ɛŋsí, \*d̀̀ɛŋtí, \*d̀̀ɛŋrí  
 g̀̀m ‘to pay’ → \*g̀̀msí, \*g̀̀mtí, \*g̀̀mrí  
 b̀̀n ‘to speak’ → \*b̀̀ntí<sup>80</sup>, \*b̀̀nsí, \*b̀̀nrí  
 s̀̀ ‘to roof’ → \*s̀̀tí, \*s̀̀sí, \*s̀̀rí  
 f̀̀ ‘to raise chickens’ → \*f̀̀tí, \*f̀̀sí, \*f̀̀rí<sup>81</sup>

In many verbs with these suffixes, the related source verb has disappeared from the language or the semantic relationship between the derived verb and the original is too opaque for the derivation to be analyzable as synchronic. Where the simplex stem has disappeared, there are usually still derived forms in the language that attest its former presence, for example in lexicalized resultative derivations or in adjectives.

(503) **Opaque semantic relationships**

p̀̀ntírí ‘to barter’	compare	p̀̀ntí ‘collect rest of crops’
l̀̀grí ‘to finish’	compare	l̀̀g ‘to deliver a child’
ɖ̀̀ibrí ‘to change’	compare	ɖ̀̀ib ‘to fence a place’
f̀̀grí ‘to gather’	compare	f̀̀g ‘to close, to cover, to lock’

(504) **No simplex stem in the language**

m̀̀nsí ‘to scatter’	compare	m̀̀n á ʔ́j́ ‘scattered’ (lexicalized resultative)
p̀̀psí ‘to press together’	compare	p̀̀ppɔ̀b ‘pressed together’ (lexicalized adjective)
ŋ̀̀nsí ‘to fold/bend’	compare	ŋ̀̀ŋān ‘bent’ (lexicalized adjective)
v̀̀ŋkrí ‘to make round’	compare	v̀̀ŋ á ʔ́j́ ‘moulded’ (lexicalized resultative)
v̀̀rí ‘to kill’	compare	v̀̀g ‘to die’?
ǹ̀mrí ‘to name’		?
kẁ̀ntrí ‘to fold’		?
gb̀̀sí ‘to loosen’		?

<sup>80</sup> *b̀̀ntí* exists as a verb meaning ‘to cut’ and as a noun meaning ‘trousers’.

<sup>81</sup> *f̀̀rí* exists as a verb meaning ‘to fold’ and a verb meaning ‘to open’.

(505) shows two cases where there is an obvious relationship between a form with a suffix and a source verb. Their derivation is, however, historical rather than synchronic.

- (505) kùtí ‘to bend something’ compare kùb ‘to be weak’  
 tìksí ‘to blink’ compare tīgī ‘to cover’

In other cases, there is no observable syntactic or semantic difference between the derived verb and the source verb, or between the same verb root used with different derivational suffixes.

- (506) gàb ‘share’ (e.g. àfī **gáb** m̀kpò à jàg mām ‘The child shared the food with me.’)  
 = g̀ap-sí ‘share’ (e.g. àfī **g̀ap-sí** m̀kpò à jàg mām ‘The child shared the food with me.’)  
 (session\_358, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)

- (507) fār ‘to fold’ (e.g. **fāt** fī sīrī ‘fold the mat completely’)  
 = f̀at-rí ‘to fold’ (e.g. **f̀at-rí** fī sīrī ‘fold the mat completely’)  
 (session\_358, David Mamuda, elicitation)

- (508) l̀ub ‘to remove/uproot’  
 = l̀up-sí ‘to remove/uproot’ (e.g. **l̀up-sí** pírí m k̄ ‘remove it and come to me’)  
 = l̀ub-rí ‘to remove/uproot’ (e.g. **l̀ub-rí** <sup>+</sup>dží fō ‘uproot the cassava’)  
 (session\_358, David Mamuda, elicitation)

- (509) gāg ‘to hang’ (e.g. jàg **gāg** k̄ nēb g̀aŋ ‘Go hang it up.’)  
 g̀ag-rí ‘to hang’ (e.g. jàg **g̀ag-rí** k̄ nēb g̀aŋ ‘Go hang it up.’)  
 (session\_358, David Mamuda, elicitation)

- (510) wārī ‘to dream’  
 = ẁat-rí ‘to dream’  
 (session\_358, David Mamuda, elicitation)

## 12.5 Reduplication (and repetition)

### 12.5.1 Overview

There are three different types of verbal reduplication in Kam, each with their own inflectional or derivational functions. Related to but distinct from reduplication is verb repetition.

- Predicative adjectives are derived by means of partial segmental reduplication with full tonal reduplication.<sup>82</sup> This process involves repetition of the first syllable of a verb with a vowel prespecified for height, but full repetition of the tonal pattern of the verb. Predicative adjectives do not have tense and aspect distinctions and cannot be negated directly. To negate them and to indicate tense and aspect distinctions, underived verb stems are used. Examples are *gìggàb* ‘shared’, from *gàb* ‘to share’ *kpìkpésí* ‘slippery, smooth’, from *kpésí* ‘to be slippery, smooth’ and *fìfóbb* ‘hot’, from *fób* ‘to be hot’. I discuss this construction in § 12.5.2.
- The future tense construction without object employs partial reduplication with replacive tone on the copy (which is the first syllable of the construction) and lexical tone on the base. A final vowel *-i* occurs on this construction. I discuss this future tense construction in § 12.2.3 and § 13.4.2.
- The future tense construction with an object employs repetition of the whole verb after the object. Since other lexemes can occur between the verb and its copy, they are not phonologically or morphologically linked to one another. The verb before the object receives replacive HL tone. The copy occurs with the final vowel *-i* and features the verb’s lexical tone. § 12.2.3 and § 13.6.3 deal with this type of construction.
- There is an ‘intensity’ construction in Kam that uses partial segmental reduplication, where the first syllable of the verb is copied and the whole reduplicated verb receives a HM replacive tone as well as a final vowel *-i*. This intensity construction also features the negator *hñ*. I discuss it in § 12.5.4.
- I also found examples of unmotivated reduplication in Kam. That is, instances, where a verb can be reduplicated without any difference in meaning. Such reduplications are also partial, involving a copy of the first syllable of the verb. They also feature replacive HM tone, and for some verbs a final vowel *-i*. I discuss these cases in § 12.5.5.

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<sup>82</sup> I analyze these as predicative adjectives, since they are not marked for tense and aspect. Another possibility would be to analyze them as a type of stative verb, since they are always derived from verbal stems.

## 12.5.2 Predicative adjectives

Predicative adjectives are always derived from a verb stem by means of reduplication. The reduplication process involves (1) making a copy of the first syllable of the stem, (2) assimilation of the final consonant of the copy to the first consonant of the base (cf. § 6.1.1.3), and (3) full reduplication of the tone of the stem. As discussed in § 4.3.2, the vowel in the copy of partial reduplications are always high. An *e*, *ɛ*, *i* or *a* becomes an *i*, an *o* or *ɔ* becomes an *u*.

Thus, a predicative adjective derived from the verb *pár* ‘to be tight’ is *píppár* ‘tight’. the first syllable is copied, and the vowel in the copy is high. The final consonant of the copy assimilates to the first consonant of the stem, and merges with it into a geminated *pp*. The tone is simply copied.

Some examples:

- (511) *dám* ‘to be clean’ → *dìndám* ‘clean’  
*būm* ‘to rot’ → *būmbūm* ‘rotten, spoiled’  
*kág* ‘to crunch’ → *kíkkág* ‘crunched’  
*lèm* ‘to be good’ → *lillèm* ‘good’  
*gàb* ‘to share’ → *gìggàb* ‘shared’  
*tùb* ‘to push’ → *tùttùb* ‘holed’  
*bóm* ‘to be long’ → *búmbóm* ‘long’  
*fám* ‘to be light’ → *fímfám* ‘light’  
*gáj* ‘to bend’ → *gíngáj* ‘bent’  
*tám* ‘to grow’ → *tíntám* ‘big’  
*wòm* ‘to be hollow’ → *wùmwòm* ‘hollow’  
*wū* ‘to be ripe’ → *wūwū* ‘ripe’

All examples in (511) derive from monosyllabic verbs. When a predicative adjective is derived from a disyllabic verb, the realization of tones can be more complicated. When *sòhí* ‘to be sweet’ is reduplicated, for example, the resulting reduplication has only three syllables, whereas there are four tones that have to be attached: L H L H. The result is *sùnsòhí*: the first L tone attaches to the copy; the following H tone attaches to the first syllable of the base, and the final L and H tone simultaneously attach to the final syllable, resulting in a M tone. Some more examples of this, where the process is identical, are the following.

- (512) kpèsí ‘to be slippery’ → kpìkpésī ‘slippery’  
 kòktí ‘to be smooth’ → kùkókṫī ‘smooth’  
 ʃòrí ‘to be sour’ → ʃùʃóṛī ‘sour’  
 kpàṅí ‘to be strong’ → kpìṅkpáṅī ‘strong’  
 ṅwàntí ‘to be straight’ → ṅwìṅwántī ‘straight’  
 pìrì ‘to be astringent’ → pàpírī ‘astringent’  
 mùsí ‘to fill’ → mùmúsī ‘full’  
 zòrí ‘to be bitter’ → zùzórī ‘bitter’

No tense, aspect or negation distinctions can be marked on predicative adjectives. When such distinctions must be expressed, the regular verb stem is used with the relevant morphology and clausal marking. For example, if a speaker wants to say that ‘the place is hot’, they can use a predicative adjective as in (513). If they want to code such a situation in the past that is no longer the case, they could use the same construction, or choose to code it in the perfective aspect (514). If they want to emphasize that the place is not hot now, but will be hot in the future, a future tense construction can be used with the regular verb stem (515). If they want to negate that it is hot, they would use the regular verb stem with a negative construction (516).

- (513) kòm      ʃíʃṵb  
 kòm      ʃíʃ~ʃṵb  
 place      PRED~be.hot  
 ‘the place is hot’
- (514) kòm      ʃṵb              â  
 kòm      ʃṵb\H              à  
 place      be.hot\PFV      PFV  
 ‘the place was hot’
- (515) kòm      ʃíʃ<sup>+</sup>ʃṵbí  
 kòm      ʃíʃ\HL~ʃṵb-i  
 place      FUT\FUT~be.hot-FV  
 ‘the place will be hot’
- (516) kòm      ʃṵb      hñ  
 place      be.hot    NEG  
 ‘the place is not hot’

## 12.5.3 Future tense constructions

I treat future tense constructions elsewhere in this grammar, in § 12.2.3, § 13.1, § 13.4.2 and § 13.6.3.

12.5.4 The ‘intensity’ construction with partial reduplication and the negator *hñ*

A rare *intensity construction* features a partially reduplicated form of verbs with HM replacive tone together with the clause-final negator *hñ*. This construction expresses emphatically affirmative meaning rather than negation (which would be expected given the presence of the negator). I only found this construction in elicited data, not in texts, songs or conversation. This may be an artefact of the relatively small size of the corpus. The functions of this construction are not well understood. The construction can be schematized as follows:

(517) The intensity construction  
NP + INT~V\HM-i + *hñ*

(518) àpàván á †dúb hñ, àmá, àwú dúddūb-ī hñ.  
man PROX be.tall NEG but 3SG INT~be.tall\INT-i NEG.  
‘This man is not (just) tall, but he is very tall.’  
(session\_287, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

(519) àṅgwóg á †tíntām-ī hñ.  
house PROX INT~grow\INT-í NEG.  
‘This house is very big.’  
(session\_071, Isa Sarkin Dawa, elicitation)

(520) àṅgwóg mō ā díddāg-ī hñ.  
house good PROX INT~cold\INT-í NEG.  
‘The good house was very cold.’  
(session\_342, Isa Sarkin Dawa, elicitation)

A negative future tense interpretation for these examples (‘The man will not grow.’, ‘The house will not cool down.’) is not possible. Negative future tense clauses are expressed with another construction that does not involve reduplication but tonal morphology and some clausal markers instead (cf. § 13.1).

It is possible that the negator *h̀̀* originally was an intensity marker, which was used with other negators in the clause<sup>83</sup> and later acquired a negative meaning. The intensity construction, then, preserves the earlier non-negative meaning of *h̀̀* which may have been something like ‘really, truly, absolutely’. This would be an example of the Jespersen Cycle that has been described for many other languages across the world (Jespersen 1917; Dahl 1979; van der Auwera 2009).<sup>84</sup>

Alternatively, this construction derives from a so-called ironic negative construction, where a negative clause may be used to express an emphatically positive proposition.<sup>85</sup> This ironic negative construction could have conventionalized and entirely lost its negative meaning to an emphatic positive one (cf. Shmelev 2016 on the conventionalization of irony and other pragmatic effects).

### 12.5.5 Unmotivated reduplication

Sometimes, reduplication appears completely optional in any tense-aspect configuration. In these cases, I failed to identify a clear function of reduplication, and my consultants said simplex forms are equally acceptable as reduplicated forms.

In all these cases, partial segmental reduplication applies, overlaid with replacive H-M tone. Some reduplications involve a final vowel *-i*, some do not. Note that the examples I found in imperatives are all verbs connected to bodily functions.

(521) **Some examples in imperatives**

bíbīrī ‘whistle’ (cf. bir ‘whistle’)

ŋjāmtī ‘yawn’ (cf. ŋàmtí ‘yawn’)

kpíkpirī ‘cough’ (cf. kpīrī ‘cough’)

ʃɪŋʃēmī ‘sneeze’ (cf. ʃēm ‘sneeze’<sup>86</sup>)

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<sup>83</sup> The optional preverbal negator *m̀̀g* may have been obligatory at some stage in the language (see § 13.3.3). There are various other non-final negation markers in Kam. These are all discussed in Chapter 1.

<sup>84</sup> I wish to thank Dmitry Idiatov for this suggestion.

<sup>85</sup> See the Lingtyp discussion on Ironic negative constructions in January 2020 at <http://listserv.linguistlist.org/pipermail/lingtyp/2020-January/007568.html>. I wish to thank Mark Van de Velde for pointing me in this direction and sharing with me the Lingtyp post on ironic negative constructions. I also wish to thank Pascal Boyeldieu for sharing his ideas on this type of antiphrasis.

<sup>86</sup> The tone of *ʃēm* ‘to sneeze’ is uncertain.



(522) **Imperfective aspect**

í	ré	†bimbēn	kā,
í	rè	bín~bén\HM	kā,
3PL	IPFV	UNM~say\UNM	COND,
í	ré	†dàk-sí	fědindàŋ.
í	rè	dág\L-sí	fě-dindàŋ
3PL	IPFV	cold\CAUS-CAUS	guinea.corn-?.

‘When they are talking, they are cooling beer.’

(session\_271, Danjuma Bello, conversation)

(523) **Perfective aspect**

ń	dʒídʒāgī
ń	dʒì~dʒàg\HM-i
1SG.S.PFV	UNM~do.secretly\UNM-FV

‘I spied.’

(session\_361, David Mamuda, elicitation)

## 12.6 Irregular verbs

### 12.6.1 Copulas

The copula *dá* has an affirmative existential and locational meaning. It also occurs in predicative possession clauses. It fills the verb slot in a clause, but does not behave like other verbs. It does not inflect for tense or aspect and it does not occur with tense or aspect particles. In locational predication clauses, the copula *dá* takes a circumstantial (adverbial) argument as its complement. In existential clauses, it takes the presentative demonstrative *bē* as its complement. *bē* may derive from an adverbial or demonstrative element meaning ‘here’ or ‘there’. *dá* is a special interrogative existential form of the copula, but it is not obligatory. I only occasionally observed it in informal settings but did not record data on it. Interrogative and conditional clauses can be formed in the regular way, by means of the regular interrogative and conditional particles *jī* and *kā* (cf. § 16.1 and § 17.5.1.6).

The negative equivalent of the copula *dá* is *sīrī* ‘not to be’. It is always used with the clause-final particle *rīg*, which forms an essential part of the negative locational and existential predication

constructions. The *sirī* ... *rīg* construction is used as the negative counterpart of any affirmative construction with *dá*.

Further description and examples of constructions with *dá* and *sirī* can be found in § 15.2.1 and in § 13.4.3.

## 12.6.2 Irregular conjugations

There are very few verbs that have irregular conjugations in Kam. Just three verbs have been identified that behave irregularly:

- (1) *pè* ‘come’, which has a special perfective aspect form;
- (2) *táni* ‘stand, stay’, which as a primary verb is only attested in a special uninflected complex form *fíná<sup>+</sup>táni* ‘stand’ as a primary verb. This is also the only verb with a H-L pattern in the language.
- (3) *mà* ‘give’, which has different forms depending on the object it takes

The verb *pè* ‘come’ has a special perfective aspect form *pírâ* that is often used when it is the only verb in a clause. The exact function of this special form is not yet clear, and I have not checked whether it can always be substituted by the regular forms *pè* or *pà*.

- (524) àlàsírá                      míná    **pírâ**  
 white.person                  PRSTT **come.PFV**  
 ‘The white man came like this.’  
 (session\_052, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (525) gó                      **pírâ**                      kâ,  
 guest                      **come.PFV**                      COND,  
  
 ì                      fǔg      ú                      ká<sup>+</sup>né                      jírág      jírāg  
 1PL                      take      3SG      INSTR:hand      two      two

‘When a stranger comes, we cooperate with him.’

(session\_056, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, narrative)

- (526) sù ní ní mgbāb-ī pírâ  
 section person thing ADJ:hunt-FV come.PFV  
 ‘(Then, when a certain year came,) a group of hunters came. (They came and met the Kam people)’  
 (session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

The verb *táni* ‘stay, stand’ (alternative forms: *tán<sup>L</sup>* or *tán*) is rarely found outside of multi-verb constructions (§ 14.3.2), except in the greeting *tán sìm* ‘how are things?’ (527). Elsewhere, where it means ‘to stand’ as a primary verb, it is accompanied by an unanalyzable morpheme *ʃíná<sup>L</sup>* (or its short form *ʃi*), which is not found anywhere else in the currently collected lexicon of Kam. The complex verb *ʃíná<sup>+</sup>-tán(i)* (and *ʃi-tán(i)*) is not marked for tense or aspect ((527)(528)-(530)).

- (527) tán sìm àléŋ á jī?  
 tán<sup>L</sup> sìm àléŋ á jī?  
 stand how sun PROX Q  
 ‘How do (things) stand today?’ (i.e. ‘How are things?’)  
 (session\_003, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

- (528) àwú míná bá ʃínátáni gàn à  
 3SG PRSTT REL stand up REL  
 ‘Here he stands up.’  
 (session\_181, Babangida Audu, narrative)

- (529) n ʃi<sup>+</sup>tán gàn  
 1SG.S.PFV stand up  
 ‘I stand up’  
 (session\_049, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, elicitation)

- (530) n ʃi<sup>+</sup>tán àlím ŋgwòg  
 1SG.S.PFV stand front house  
 ‘I stand in front of the house.’  
 (session\_054, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, elicitation)

The verb *mà* ‘give’ has irregular forms for different objects, except in the first person plural and second person plural. The irregular forms are the result of possessive indexes merging with the verb.

- (531) *mām* ‘give me’  
*mā* ‘give you’  
*mō* ‘give him’  
*mà júrú* ‘give us’  
*mà ɲó* ‘give you’  
*mē* ‘give them’



## 13 Aspect, tense and negation

### 13.1 Introduction and overview

Different tense, aspect and negation values are marked cumulatively in Kam. There is no one dedicated morpheme that expresses perfective aspect, imperfective aspect, or future tense, for example. These categories are expressed through a combination of morphemes co-occurring in a clause. Such combinations of morphemes are referred to in the literature as multiple exponence and sometimes as hypermorphemes (e.g. Payne 1997: 234).

Firstly, the tone of the primary verb in the clause plays an important role, as well as the tone of its accompanying subject pronominal (if they are singular speech act participants, i.e. 1SG and 2SG). I discussed such tonal marking in § 8.2.2 and § 12.3. They are briefly summarized in this chapter. There are some specialized preverbal markers expressing tense, aspect and polarity. I also identified two post-verbal (and post-object) tense, aspect and polarity markers. The final vowel *-i*, already discussed in § 12.2, is found in all future tense constructions. Reduplication and repetition of verbs also co-express future tense in a clause. All these markers are summarized in Table 41. I discuss each of them in more detail in the remainder of this chapter. I observed many of the same markers in subordinate clauses, although I did not study these in detail and there may be differences in subordinate clauses that I have not identified yet.

Time, aspect, polarity and modality can also be lexically expressed, by adverbial modifiers (§ 15.4), multi-verb constructions (§ 12.5.5), prepositional phrases (cf. § 11.1) and complex sentences (Chapter 1). The current chapter is only concerned with grammatical marking of these categories, and not with lexical or adverbial expressions.

Kam distinguishes the following tense, aspect, and polarity categories:

- Future vs. non-future tense
- Perfective vs. imperfective aspect
- Positive vs. negative polarity

These terms refer to the typical functions of each construction, and their meanings are straightforward. The only value that needs some more definition is the distinction between perfective and imperfective aspect. Perfective aspect constructions describe an event as viewed as a whole, without focusing on their internal structure. Imperfective aspect constructions, on the other hand, construe an action as ongoing. Perfective aspect is the most common aspectual value in the current Kam corpus, and it is the default aspectual value used to translate a basic English past or present tense clause.

Table 41 introduces the different markers used for expressing tense, aspect and polarity in Kam and gives an overview of the different slots they occur in. A few general observations can be made:

- Tense and aspect marking is very different in affirmative and negative clauses. Every construction and most individual markers simultaneously mark a tense/aspect and negation value.
- Out of four pre-verbal markers in the table, only one belongs to the affirmative construction set. Most pre-verbal markers are negators.
- The only clause-final markers are negators.

Table 41 – Tense, aspect and polarity marking in Kam clauses

Construction	1SG and 2SG subject index tone	Immediately pre-verbal markers	Copula and primary verb	Final vowel	Transitive object or copula object	Immediately post-object position	Secondary verbs	Clause-final markers
Affirmative perfective	H		H tone		Any object	à	Any secondary multi-verb component (see § 12.5.5)	
Affirmative imperfective	L	rə	Lexical tone		Any object			
Affirmative future with object	H		HL tone		Any object	(Repeated verb with lexical tone and -i)		
Affirmative future without object	H		Reduplication with HL tone (see § 12.5.3)	-i				
Affirmative copula clause	H		dó		(adverbial)			
Negative non-future with object	L	(màg)	H tone		Any object			h̃h̃
Negative non-future without object	L	(màg)	Lexical tone					h̃h̃
Negative future	H	rə <sup>L</sup>	H	-i		(rə)		h̃h̃
Negative imperative		kó	Lexical		Any object			gà
Negative copula clause	H		sirē		Any object			rīg
Negative continuative	Any of the affirmative constructions							dʒēn



The following clauses show cumulative marking. Each marker is highlighted. Subsequent sections further discuss and exemplify each position.

(532) **Affirmative imperfective**

à                      r̀è      b́én      ántḗrī.  
2SG.S.IPFV      IPFV    say      truth.

‘You are telling the truth.’

(session\_159, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

(533) **Affirmative future without object**

ḿ                      búg                      †á      b́ūg-ī.  
Ñ                      b́ūg\HL                      á      b́ūg-i.  
1SG.S.FUT      pinch\FUT      2SG.O    pinch-FV.

‘I will pinch you.’

(session\_345, Danjuma Bello, elicitation)

(534) **Negative non-future with object**

m̀                      (m̀àg)                      ním                      àfàm      nág      h̀h̄.  
Ñ                      (m̀àg)                      nìm\H                      àfàm      nág      h̀h̄.  
1SG.S.NEG.NFUT      (NEG.NFUT)    eat\NEG.NFUT      meat      cow      NEG.

‘I did not eat cow meat.’

(session\_285, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

(535) **Negative future**

r̀ó                      †kábírí                      r̀ó                      h̀h̄.  
r̀ó<sup>L</sup>                      kàbirí\H                      r̀è                      h̀h̄.  
NEG.FUT      break\NEG.FUT      NEG.FUT      NEG.

‘(Whatever you put in this bag,) (it) will not break.’

(session\_290, David Mark, elicitation)

(536) **Future negative continuative**

ráháb      gbán-i                      gárinhāmzà      pí†kán      d́žén.  
Rahab      arrive:FUT-FV      Garin.Hamza      tomorrow      NEG.CONT.

‘Rahab will not yet arrive in Garin Hamza tomorrow.’

(session\_288, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

(537) **Negative imperative**

ɲò      ká                      ɲéɓ      ʔɲgwóg wàn      nè      gá  
 2PL      NEG.IMP      go      house king      EMPH NEG.IMP

‘Don’t go to the house of the king!’ (to more than one person)

(Tope\_Bitrus\_06, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

### 13.2 1SG and 2SG subject pronominals (Subject-Tense-Aspect-Polarity morphemes)

A clause has different first person singular and second person singular subject pronominals depending on the tense, aspect and polarity value of a clause. Specifically, the tone of these pronominals is different. Segmentally, their forms remain the same. Other pronominals are constant, both segmentally and tonally. Pronominals are discussed in detail in § 8.2.2. Table 42 repeats the facts that are relevant to tense, aspect and polarity marking. Such portmanteau morphemes are never the sole markers of tense, aspect, or polarity in the clause, but are always combined with markers elsewhere in the clause.

**Table 42 - Tense, aspect and polarity distinctions in 1SG and 2SG subject pronominals**

Tense	Polarity	Aspect	Pronominal tone	1SG form	2SG form
Non-future	Affirmative	Perfective	H	ń	á
		Imperfective	L	ñ	à
	Negative	Any	L	ñ	à
Future	Any	Any	H	ń	á

While I analyze these forms as portmanteau morphemes, another description is possible, although arguably less elegant from a comparative perspective. 1SG and 2SG subject indexes could be analyzed as toneless morphemes (respectively *N* and *a*), and completely dependent on the tense, aspect and polarity value of the clause for their tones. From this perspective, tense, aspect and polarity are marked by tonal morphology on pronominals: a H tone marks perfective aspect or future tense, and a L tone marks imperfective aspect or negative non-future.

### 13.3 Pre-verbal markers

#### 13.3.1 *rə̀*, *màg*, *rə́<sup>L</sup>* and *ká*

Preverbal markers include the imperfective aspect marker *rə̀*, the optional non-future negator *màg*, the negative future marker *rə́<sup>L</sup>*, and the negative imperative marker *ká* (discussed in § 16.2). They follow subject pronominals and precede the first verb of a clause. The sequential marker *sì* (discussed in § 17.4.2) also

occurs in this slot, but since it is not directly relevant to tense, aspect, modality and polarity, it is not discussed here. All of these preverbal markers may derive from initial verbs in multi-verb constructions that grammaticalized into preverbal markers.

### 13.3.2 Imperfective *rà* and homophonous markers

The imperfective marker *rà* also serves as (or is homophonous with) the comitative/temporal preposition, (§ 11.2.2.2). It is also used in predicative possessive constructions (§ 15.2.1) and in complex sentences expressing wishes (§ 17.3). It is possible that one of these constructions served as the source construction for the other constructions (e.g. the use of *rà* could have started as comitative/possessive, and could have been extended to acquire both the imperfective and the modal ‘wish’ function). It is also possible that a single verb was grammaticalized at different times into different grammatical markers.

A marker *-rà* is also used as a deverbal nominalizer (cf. § 7.2.3.2), and an identical optional *rà* marker co-expresses the negative future after objects (§ 13.6.2). Furthermore, the marker is segmentally similar to the iterative/causative suffix *-rí* (§ 12.4), the preverbal negative future marker *rà<sup>l</sup>* (§ 13.3.1), the emphatic marker *rīg* (§ 18.4) and the negative possessive marker *rīg* (§ 13.7). Some of these similarities may be coincidental but they may also indicate divergent grammaticalization paths of a single marker.

The imperfective particle *rà* is one of the only markers in Kam that can express a certain tense, aspect or polarity value by themselves (the only other such markers are the verbal declarative negator *hà* and the affirmative copula *dá*). When the subject is expressed by anything other than a 1SG or 2SG pronominal, there is no other marking present in the clause.

### 13.3.3 *mà(g)*, an optional preverbal negation marker

Negative non-future constructions may feature an optional pre-verbal negator *màg*. It has an alternative pronunciation as *mà*, where the final velar is elided. This pronunciation is homophonous with the Hausa marker *mà* ‘also, too’, which is also sometimes found in Kam discourse (see example (255)). It is interesting to note that when my consultants were confronted with this pronunciation in a clause in isolation, they often could not tell for certain which *mà* was intended when not presented with the English translation. Leaving it in or omitting it does not change the semantics of a proposition. One could speculate that it serves an important function as an early signal of negation in those clauses where the only obligatory negation marker

is the clause-final particle *h̀̀*.<sup>87</sup> Some (but not all) of my informants said that *m̀̀g* is never obligatory but that it is always preferable, yet in elicited clauses it only occasionally occurs. Its frequency in different constructions in natural discourse remains to be studied.

- (538) *m̀̀* (m̀̀g) *ním* *àfàm* *nág* *h̀̀*.  
*Ñ* (m̀̀g) *nìm\H* *àfàm* *nág* *h̀̀*.  
 1SG.S.NEG.NFUT (NEG.NFUT) eat\NEG.NFUT meat cow NEG.  
 ‘I did not eat cow meat.’  
 (session\_285, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (539) *Gàmbó* (m̀̀g) *kím* *ńfàm* *ú* *h̀̀*.  
*Gàmbó* (m̀̀g) *kìm\H* *m̀̀fàm* *ú<sup>-L</sup>* *h̀̀*.  
 Gambo (NEG.NFUT) chew\NEG.NFUT meat 3SG-POSS NEG.  
 ‘Gambo did not eat his meat.’<sup>88</sup>  
 (session\_285, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (540) *àwú* (m̀̀g<sup>↓</sup>) *pó* *līlē* *h̀̀*.  
*àwú* (m̀̀g) *pə\H* *àlīlē* *h̀̀*.  
 3SG (NEG.NFUT) come\NEG.NFUT yesterday NEG.  
 ‘He did not come yesterday.’  
 (session\_285, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (541) *m̀̀ró* (m̀̀g) *fóg* *h̀̀*  
 maize (NEG.NFUT) dry:NEG.NFUTNEG  
 ‘The maize is not dry.’  
 (session\_301, David Mamuda, elicitation)

<sup>87</sup> See also § 12.5.4, where the possibility is suggested that *h̀̀* originated as an intensifier that grammaticalized into a negator. *m̀̀g* may have been an obligatory pre-verbal negator in the past which has now become optional, and the function of which has been completely taken over by *h̀̀* in some constructions. A similar process has been described in a wide variety of languages across the world as part of the *Jespersen cycle* (cf. Van der Auwera 2009; Dahl 1979; Van Gelderen 2008)

<sup>88</sup> *m̀̀g* has HL tone in this example because Babangida Audu left a pause in between *m̀̀g* and *kím*.

### 13.4 Verbal morphology

Verbal morphology is discussed in detail in Chapter 12. For understanding tense, aspect and negation distinctions, four types of verbal morphology are relevant (1) tonal morphology, (2) reduplication, (3) the (toneless) final vowel *-i*, and (4) suppletion, specifically for copulas.

#### 13.4.1 Tonal morphology

Verb tones in declarative clauses are summarized from a function-to-form perspective in Table 43.

**Table 43 - Tonal morphology on verbs, function to form**

Polarity value	Future	Non-future	
		Perfective	Imperfective
Positive polarity	HL	H	Lexical tone ( $\emptyset$ )
Negative polarity	H	Object present: H	
		No object present: Lexical tone ( $\emptyset$ )	

For ease of reference, verbal tones are summarized from a form-to-function perspective in Table 44.

**Table 45 - Tonal morphology on verbs, form to function**

Tonal pattern	Value
Lexical tone	Imperfective aspect (affirmative) Negative non-future without object
H	Perfective aspect (affirmative) Negative future Negative non-future with object
HL	Affirmative future (in case of reduplication: only the copy)

#### 13.4.2 Partial reduplication

The affirmative future tense construction without an object is co-expressed by means of partial reduplication of the verb. This type of reduplication takes the verb stem as the base and copies the first syllable. The copy, which is the first syllable of the reduplicated construction, takes a HL tone, as explained in the previous section. It features a vowel that is prespecified for height. An *i*, *e*, *ɛ*, or *a* becomes an /i/, an *o* or *ɔ* becomes an *u*. Already high vowels remain identical. The base retains its lexical tone. When the verb stem is a monosyllabic CVC-syllable, the final vowel *-i* is added at the end of the reduplication (cf. § 12.2). Other phonological details of partial reduplication constructions are described in § 4.3.2. The future partial

reduplication construction can be schematized as follows. (542) covers reduplication of monosyllabic CV stems and polysyllabic stems. (543) covers reduplication of monosyllabic CVC-stems.

$$(542) \quad [\sigma_1(\sigma_2)] \rightarrow [CV^{\text{HIGH}}(C)_i\backslash\text{HL}]^{\text{COPY}} \sim [\sigma_1(\sigma_2)]^{\text{BASE}}$$

$$(543) \quad [\sigma_1] \rightarrow [CV^{\text{HIGH}}C\backslash\text{HL}]^{\text{COPY}} \sim [\sigma_1]^{\text{BASE}-i}$$

Some examples:

- (544) fà ‘to raise chickens’  
 ḿ                      fí~fà  
 Ń                      fV<sup>HIGH</sup>\HL~fà  
 1SG.S.FUT          raise.chickens\FUT~raise.chickens  
 ‘I will raise (chickens).’  
 (session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (545) ʃàṅrí ‘to finish’  
 ń                      ʃín~ʃàṅrí  
 Ń                      ʃV<sup>HIGH</sup>N\HL~ʃàṅrí  
 1SG.S.FUT          FUT~finish  
 ‘I will finish (it).’  
 (session\_345, Danjuma Bello, elicitation)

- (546) tàb ‘to touch’  
 ń                      tít~tàb-ì  
 Ń                      tV<sup>HIGH</sup>t\HL~tàb-i  
 1SG.S.FUT          FUT~touch-FV  
 ‘I will touch it’  
 (session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

### 13.4.3 Suppletion in copulas

Although there are no aspectual and temporal differences in non-verbal constructions, there are two different locational-existential copulas. The first, *dá* ‘to be’, expresses presence and often co-occurs with the presentative demonstrative *bē*. The second, *sìrī* ‘not to be’, expresses absence and is always accompanied by the clause-final existential negator *rīg*. *dá* and *sìrī* take the same slot in the clause.

(547) àpág      **dó**      bē  
 work      be      PRSTT  
 ‘There is work.’

(548) ɲì      **sīrī**      rīg  
 thing      be.NEGNEG  
 ‘There is nothing.’  
 (session\_253, Anonymous, narrative)

(549) àŋgwóg    dá      bē      †léb    àjě  
 house      be      PRSTT inside bush  
 ‘The house is inside the bush.’  
 (Tope\_Bitrus\_06, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

(550) àŋgwóg    mí      sīrī      léb      ó†jě    rīg.  
 house      certain be.NEGinside bush NEG.  
 ‘There is no house in the bush.’  
 (Tope\_Bitrus\_06, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

### 13.5 Final vowel -i (future tense)

The final vowel *-i* is discussed in more detail in § 12.2. It is found on CVC-stems and CVC(i)-stems (but not on CV-stems) in all future tense constructions, both affirmative and negative. Future constructions differ, however, in where the final vowel *-i* occurs.

In negative future constructions, it appears on the primary verb:

(551) àjí      ró      †dóg-í      ntèkù    rə      hñ  
 3PL      FUT.NEG      see:FUT.NEG-FV      toad      FUT.NEG      NEG  
 ‘They will not see the toad.’  
 (session\_359, Garba Rahab Precious, elicitation)

(552) kòm lèm hò kō k̄,  
 place good NEG place:DIST COND,

í rá †dʒóŋ-í kòm hò  
 3PL FUT.NEG live-FV place NEG

‘If the place isn’t safe, they will not (be able to) live here.’

(session\_052, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

In the affirmative future construction with an object, it occurs on the verb that is repeated after the object.

(553) ḿ búg †á b̄ug-ī.  
 Ń b̄ug\HL á b̄ug-ī.  
 1SG.S.FUT pinch\FUT 2SG.O pinch-FV.

‘I will pinch you.’

(session\_345, Danjuma Bello, elicitation)

In the affirmative future construction without object, it comes after the reduplicated verb (§ 13.4.2).

(554) tàb ‘to touch’  
 ń tít~tàb-ì  
 Ń tít\HL~tàb-ì  
 1SG.S.FUT FUT\FUT~touch-FV

‘I will touch it’

(session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)



### 13.6 Immediately post-object position

#### 13.6.1 Affirmative perfective marker à

The marker *à* co-expresses perfective aspect in affirmative clauses. It occurs after the primary verb in clauses without an object, and immediately after the object in clauses with an object. I have never observed this marker in relative clauses.

- (555) àdèl óm wàb à ʃùg-ì  
 stomach 1SG:POSS tie:PFV **PFV** do-FV  
 ‘I have a cramp in my stomach’  
 (session\_305, Danladi Baleri, elicitation)

- (556) ḿ fá kúmí â.  
 Ń fà\H kúmí à.  
 1SG.S.PFV raise.chickens\PFV chicken PFV.  
 ‘I raised chickens.’  
 (session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (557) ḿ fár â  
 Ń fàrí\H à  
 1SG.S.PFV open PFV  
 ‘I opened (the door).’  
 (session\_056, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, elicitation)

- (558) ʃùg ú á jāgī kó ní sāmñī ā ú sín â  
 take:PFV 3SG **PFV** catch INSTR thing bad REL 3SG do REL  
 ‘It (the trial) confirmed his guilt’ (lit. ‘it caught him with the bad things that he had done’.)  
 (session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (559) àjí dóg í â  
 3PL see:PFV 3PL **PFV**  
 ‘They saw them.’  
 (Tope\_Bitrus\_03, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

- (560) àwú †jé tàb bèl ém à  
 àwú àjé tàb bèl m<sup>L</sup> à  
 3SG hand touch wood 1SG:POSS **PFV**  
 ‘He touched my wood.’  
 (session\_301, David Mamuda, elicitation)

There are also examples without *à*. It is not clear when *à* can be omitted. Very often, a prepositional phrase or other types of adverbial modification are present in such clauses ((561)-(567)). Example (558), however, shows that it can still occur in such clauses. And (568) and (569) show that it is optional even in clauses where no adverbial modification or circumstantial arguments are present.

- (561) ú ŋgbáb ú ká b̀n  
 3SG shoot:PFV 3SG **INSTR arrow**  
 ‘He shot him with an arrow’  
 (session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (562) àwú jág jí tīg ú rē sīrī.  
 3SG carry:PFV thing cover:ADJ 3SG:POSS **EMPH completely**  
 ‘The man that came, he completely took off his cloak.’  
 (session\_314, Danjuma Bello, narrative)

- (563) **jīṅkā** méri mási rē  
**maybe** Mary know:PFV **EMPH**  
 ‘Maybe Mary knows.’  
 (session\_187, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (564) m pé kàpti  
 Ñ pə\H àkàpti  
 1SG.S.PFV come\PFV **morning**  
 ‘I came in the morning.’  
 (session\_034, Samuel A. Adams, conversation)

- (565) ikā í sí †jág ú pé àgbáj ówàn  
 then 3PL SEQ carry:PFV 3SG come palace king  
 ‘Then, they brought him to the palace of the king.’  
 (session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (566)    *ń*                      *nág*                      *àtár*    *ǵè*                      ***mīnté***    ***mīn***  
 1SG.S.PFV              throw:PFV              stone    go                      **few**       **few**

‘I threw a few stones (away).’

(session\_342, Isa Sarkin Dawa, elicitation)

- (567)    *á*                      *ǵúg*    *ó<sup>+</sup>nág*    *àrí*                      ***ǵīn***  
 2SG.S.PFV              do:PFV work    **like**       **1SG.ID**

‘You work like me.’

(session\_354, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)

- (568)    *ú*                      *sín*                      *ǵí*                      *†sámrí*  
 3SG                      do:PFV thing    bad

‘(The man whose name is X,) he did something bad.’

(session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (569)    *ǵār*                      *kím*                      *mífàm,* *ǵwún*    *kím*                      *í<sup>+</sup>tábé*  
 three                      eat:PFV                      meat, five    eat:PFV                      fish

‘Three ate meat, five ate fish.’

(session\_346, Danjuma Bello, elicitation)

### 13.6.2 Optional marker *rə̀* in the negative future tense construction

Negative future tense is marked with a combination of markers, including a H tone subject pronominal (only when the subject is 1SG or 2SG), a dedicated pre-verbal marker *rə̀<sup>L</sup>*, H tone on the verb, the final vowel *-i*, the standard negator *hñ*, and an optional marker *rə̀* that appears immediately after the verb, or if there is an object, after the object. The following examples show the occurrence of *rə̀*.

- (570)    *á*                      *pé*                      *ǵájá*    *hñ*,  
 2SG.S.PFV              come:PFV              quickly NEG,

- ú*                      *ré*                      *†ǵí*                      *ré*                      *hñ*  
 3SG                      FUT.NEG                      get.up    FUT.NEG                      NEG

‘You came too late. She will not get up (again.)’ (context: The addressee arrived late for an appointment. The woman waiting for the addressee has already gone to bed.)

(session\_288, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (571) kó            já            mā,  
if            thing:REL    some:REL
- á                    jág            zúg    ólèb    pú    â,  
2SG.S.PFV    take:PFV    put    inside    bag    REL,
- ré                    †kábrí                    ré            hñ  
FUT.NEG    break:FUT.NEG    FUT.NEG    NEG

‘No matter what you put in this bag, it will not break.’

(session\_290, David Mark, elicitation)

- (572) àjí            ré                    †dógí            ntèkù    rə            hñ  
3PL    FUT.NEG    see:FUT.NEG    toad    FUT.NEG    NEG

‘They will not see the toad.’

(session\_359, Garba Rahab Precious, elicitation)

- (573) ì            ré                    †gbé́b    ú            ré            hñ  
1PL    FUT.NEG    beat    3SG    FUT.NEG    NEG

‘We will not beat him.’

(session\_364, David Mamuda, elicitation)

- (574) àwàn    ré                    †míṅ  
king    FUT.NEG    build:FUT.NEG
- éṅ†gwóg    ú                    rə                    àléb    í†jě    hñ  
house    3SG:POSS    FUT.NEG    in    bush    NEG

‘The king will not build his house in the bush.’

(Tope\_Bitrus\_06, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

My informants told me that leaving the marker in or leaving it out does not impact the semantics of the clause.

(575) **a. with *rə̀***

àjí bén  
3PL say:PFV

†í	rə̀	†pó	<b>rə̀</b>	†píkāŋ	hñ
3PL	NEG.FUT	come:NEG.FUT	<b>NEG.FUT</b>	tomorrow	NEG

‘They said that they would not come tomorrow.’

**b. without *rə̀***

àjí bén  
3PL say:PFV

†í	rə̀	†pó	píkāŋ	hñ
3PL	NEG.FUT	come:NEG.FUT	tomorrow	NEG

‘They said that they would not come tomorrow.’

(Tope\_Bitrus\_05, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

*rə̀* may be an emphatic marker, or an information structural marker indicating contrast. Most examples where it occurs were elicited, so no inferences could be made from discourse context. More examples where it does not occur are the following.

(576) kòm lèm hñ kō̄ kā,  
place good NEG place:DIST COND,

í	rə̀	†dʒóŋ-í	kòm	hñ
3PL	FUT.NEG	live-FV	place	NEG

‘If the place isn’t safe, they will not (be able to) live here.’

(session\_052, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (577) *ɲà*      *ɖʒē*,    *á*                      *rə́*              *ʔɲébí*    *hɲ?*  
 2SG.ID    TOP,    2SG.S.NEG.FUT      NEG.FUT      go      NEG  
 ‘What of you, won’t you go?’  
 (session\_357, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)

- (578) *ɲì*      *í-sāmrī*      *sī*      *bób*      *á*      *ɖʒē*      *à*      *kā*.  
 thing      ADJ-spoil:ADJ SEQ      come.out      PFV      TOP      EMPH COND  
  
*rə́*                      *ʔsín*    *né*      *hɲ.*”  
 NEG.FUT              do      EMPH NEG.”

‘If something bad comes out, it won’t work.’

(session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

It is likely that *rə̀* is related to the clause-final emphatic marker *rīg* (§ 18.4), and it may (directly or indirectly) be related to the imperfective and comitative marker *rə̀* (cf. § 11.2.2.2 and § 13.3.1).

### 13.6.3 Repeated verbs in the future tense construction with an object

There are two affirmative future constructions in Kam, depending on whether there is an object in the clause or not. The construction without object involves partial reduplication of the primary verb and is discussed in § 13.4.2. The construction with object involves optional repetition of the primary verb after the object. Whereas the first occurrence of the primary verb has HL tone, the copy occurs with its lexical tone and with the final vowel *-i* (§ 12.2).

- (579) **Future tense construction with an object**  
*Ń* (1SG.S.FUT), *á* (2SG.S.FUT), or other Subject + *V*\HL + *NP*<sub>Object</sub>      (+V-FV)

- (580) *m*                      *búg*                      *ʔá*      *būg-ī*.  
*Ń*                      *būg*\HL                      *á*      *būg-i*.  
 1SG.S.FUT      pinch\FUT      2SG.O pinch-FV.  
 ‘I will pinch you.’  
 (session\_345, Danjuma Bello, elicitation)

- (581)    ñ                    wòm                    †ú                    wòm-i                    jàg-i  
           Ṇ̃                    wòm\HL                    ú                    wòm-i                    jàg-i  
           1SG.S.FUT                    slap                    3SG                    slap-FV                    carry-FV  
           ‘I will slap him.’  
           (session\_360, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

Such repetition is optional. When I asked my consultants if the second verb could be left out, they agreed but maintained that the construction with repetition is preferred. Leaving the second verb out does not change the meaning of the clause.

### 13.7 Clause-final negators *ḥḥ*, *ḍʒēn*, *gà* and *r̄īg*.

There are four different clause-final negators. *ḥḥ* is the standard negator used to negate non-imperative verbal clauses. *ḍʒēn* ‘not yet’ is a negative continuative marker and is exemplified in § 15.4.5. *gà* is a negative imperative marker, part of the negative imperative construction *ká ... gà* (see § 16.2). Finally, *r̄īg* is a negative existential marker and part of the construction *s̄ìr̄ ... r̄īg* (cf. § 15.2.1).

Since the other clause-final negators are exemplified elsewhere, I only provide examples of the standard negator *ḥḥ* here.

- (582)    ró                    †kábrí                    ró                    ḥḥ.  
           ró<sup>L</sup>                    kàbrí\H                    r̄ò                    ḥḥ.  
           NEG.FUT                    break\NEG.FUT                    NEG.FUT                    NEG.  
           ‘(Whatever you put in this bag,) (it) will not break.’  
           (session\_290, David Mark, elicitation)

- (583)    ñ    gòm                    ḥḥ.  
           1SG.S.NEG.NFUT                    pay                    NEG.  
           ‘I did not pay.’  
           (session\_364, David Mamuda, elicitation)

- (584)    à    p̄è                    ḥḥ.  
           2SG.S.NEG.NFUT                    come                    NEG.  
           ‘You did not come.’  
           (session\_364, David Mamuda, elicitation)

(585) ɲò gbéɓ ú hò.  
ɲò gbèb\H ú hò.  
2PL beat\NEG.NFUT 3SG NEG

‘You people did not beat him.’

(session\_364, David Mamuda, elicitation)





## 14 Multi-verb constructions

### 14.1 Overview

A multi-verb construction consists of a series of verbs where each verb expresses a facet of a complex event. It can, for example, include a verb of motion and a verb expressing the direction in which the motion occurs (*jàg ... pè* ‘carry ... come’, meaning ‘bring’ or ‘carry here’), or one verb can qualify another, much like adverbs can modify verbs in other languages (e.g. *màrè pè* ‘return come’, meaning ‘come again’ or ‘come back’). These are only two instances of various types of multi-verb constructions currently identified in Kam. This overview sketches general properties of such constructions and lists the multi-verb constructions I found in Kam so far.<sup>89</sup>

I prefer here the broader term *multi-verb construction* (cf. Aikhenvald & Muysken 2011) to the term *serial verb construction* to steer clear of terminological debates that in the past two decades have been conducted in the typological literature (c.f. Aikhenvald & Dixon 2006, 2019; Bisang 2009; Foley 2010; Haspelmath 2016; Paul 2008; Seiss 2009; Senft 2008; Stewart 2015). The structures identified here as ‘multi-verb constructions’ will be of interest to researchers of serial verb constructions as well as related concepts such as light verbs, auxiliaries, complex predicates, verb compounding and coordination.

Multi-verb constructions are morphosyntactically different from complex sentences in two main ways.<sup>90</sup>

- In complex sentences, subject pronominals can be repeated. In multi-verb constructions, the subject is expressed only once in the beginning of a clause.
- In complex sentences, each separate clause has a verb that is inflected for tense and aspect. In multi-verb constructions, only one verb is inflected. This is mostly apparent in the tone of verbs: when a

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<sup>89</sup> Further research will likely uncover more multi-verb constructions. For example, Dmitry Idiatov observed a potential construction involving the verb *ɲé(b)* ‘to go’, which may express an inceptive or sequential meaning ‘start, begin (doing something, to do something), proceed to, move on to (doing something)’. Examples of this construction, which I did not investigate in further detail, are found in (586) on p. 294, (589) on p. 298, (830) on p. 369 and (882) on p. 394.

<sup>90</sup> I did not study the prosodic properties of multi-verb constructions. In other languages, serial verb constructions often have a single intonation contour, as opposed to multi-clausal constructions (Aikhenvald 2006: 7; cf. Givón 1991).

verb is inflected, it often features grammatical tone replacing the verb's lexical tone. In multi-verb constructions, secondary verbs occur with their lexical tone.

I call the inflected verb in a multi-verb construction the primary. I call the non-inflected verbs the secondary verbs.

These morphosyntactic properties are illustrated in (586). In this example, three clauses are coordinated, and in each of them the subject, *ú* 'he' is repeated at the beginning of the clause. Each of them also has one inflected verb (*ló* 'wash', *jé* 'enter' and *ɲé* 'go'). Each of the clauses also features a multi-verb construction, where the subject is not repeated before every verb (*ló ... lɔ̀grí* 'wash ... finish'; *jé sàŋ* 'enter go' and *ɲé kúb* 'go wear'). The second verb in each construction is not inflected.

(586)	<i>ú</i>	<i>ló</i>	<i>kpô</i>	<i>lɔ̀grí,</i>
	3SG	wash:PFV	body	finish
	<i>ú</i>	<i>jé</i>	<i>sàŋ</i>	<i>lèsèr,</i>
	3SG	enter:PFV	go	room,
	<i>ú</i>	<i>ɲé</i>	<i>↑kúb</i>	<i>↑fú</i>
	3SG	go:PFV	wear	shirt

'He finished washing his body, went inside the room, and went to put on a shirt.'

(session\_351, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

There are various kinds of multi-verb constructions, each with their own functions and specialized verbs. These constructions and their properties are summarized in Table 46. Each of the constructions are further discussed and illustrated in the remainder of this chapter.

Specific characteristics of different constructions include the following:

- Secondary verbs have a restricted position in the clause. Different verbs have different positions depending on the construction.
  - Most secondary verbs always occur after the object of the clause (or, in case there is no object, right after the primary verb).
  - Two secondary verbs, viz. *pà*, a reduced form of *pè* 'come' and *màrà* 'return', always occur right before the primary verb.

- One secondary verb, *tán(i)* ‘to stand’, can occur either before the primary verb or after the object.
- In a multi-verb construction linking a sequence of events, the order of verbs is iconic: a verb expressing an earlier event comes before a verb expressing a later event (cf. Haspelmath 2016: 18).
- Some secondary verbs have a specific shape in multi-verb constructions.
  - *pə̀* ‘come’ has a reduced vowel when it precedes a primary verb. Its citation form is *pè*.
  - *ji* ‘(stand [up])’ has a H tone in a resultative construction, whereas its citation form has a M tone (*jī*)
  - *táni* ‘stand’ only occurs in this form in multi-verb constructions. As a primary verb it always occurs in a complex but unanalyzable form *ʃiná<sup>+</sup>-tán(i)* or *ʃi-tán(i)* (cf. § 12.6.2). It also has a reduplicated form *títānī*. It is not clear whether the reduplicated form has a different function.
  - *dúdd̄gī* ‘see’ always occurs in its reduplicated form in an experiential construction.

Table 47 - Multi-verb constructions

Function	Relevant secondary verb(s)	Position of secondary verb(s)	Comments on the form of the secondary verb
Link a sequence of events	Any	Sequence-iconic order	
Repetitive	<i>màrə̀</i> ‘return’	Before primary verb	
Persistive	<i>táni</i> ‘stand, stay’ (alternative forms: <i>tán</i> , <i>títàni</i> )	Before the primary verb or after the object	This verb is only found in multi-verb constructions; elsewhere, it is part of a complex lexeme (cf. § 12.6.2)
Resultative	<i>jí</i> ‘stand (up)’	After the primary verb	<i>jí</i> always has H tone in this construction.
Completive	<i>lə̀grí</i> ‘end’	After the object	
Ventive	<i>pè</i> ‘come’	After the object	
Andative	<i>sáŋ</i> ‘go’	After the object	
Benefactive	<i>mà</i> ‘give’	After the object	<i>mà</i> takes its own object; this construction forms a ditransitive clause
Comparative	<i>kə̀r(i)</i> ‘surpass’	After the object	<i>kə̀r(i)</i> takes its own object; this construction forms a ditransitive clause
Perfect aspect	<i>dúddə̀gĩ</i> ‘see’	After the object	<i>dúddə̀gĩ</i> is the reduplicated form of <i>də̀g</i> ‘see’
Unclear	<i>pə̀</i> ‘come’	Before the primary verb	<i>pə̀</i> is a reduced form of <i>pè</i>

Different types of multi-verb constructions may co-occur in a single clause, and various examples of this can be found throughout this grammar. In (587), for example, a benefactive construction with *mà* ‘give’ is combined with a ventive construction with *pè* ‘come’. I did not verify whether there are any co-occurrence restrictions or whether all multi-verb constructions can be combined freely.

- (587) séti      píráp      ó      †**mām**      pè  
 tear      cloth      DIST      **give:1SG.O**      come

‘Come tear that cloth for me.’

(session\_301, David Mamuda, elicitation)

Sometimes an example is ambiguous between different kinds of multi-verb constructions. The *sáŋ léb àǰě* (‘go in bush’) part in (588), for example, can be seen as part of the longer sequence multi-verb construction in the clause (i.e. ‘they catch him, carry him, and go to the bush’). But *sáŋ* can also be seen as a directional verb which indicates that the king was carried *away* (‘they catch him, carry him away into the bush’).

(588)    *í*            *ǰúg*            *ówàn*    *jàg*    *sáŋ*    *léb*    *àǰě*  
           3PL        catch:PFV        king    carry    go        in        bush

‘They caught the king and went to the bush.’ or ‘They caught the king off into the bush.’

(session\_143, Anonymous, song)

The following sections analyze and illustrate the different kinds of multi-verb constructions each in turn. The constructions are divided into five categories, depending on their functions.

- The sequence construction forms a category on its own
- Aspectual multi-verb constructions
  - Repetitive construction, with *màrə* ‘return’
  - Persistive construction, with *tán(i)* ‘stand’
  - Resultative construction, with *jí* ‘stand up’
  - Completive construction, with *ləgəri* ‘end, finish’
  - Directional constructions: ventive with *pə* ‘come’ and andative with *sáŋ* ‘go’
- Constructions that add an argument to the clause
  - Benefactive construction, with *mà* ‘give’
  - Comparative construction, with *kəri(i)* ‘surpass’
- A poorly understood perfect aspect construction with *dúddəgī* ‘see’, only found in negative and interrogative clauses.
- A poorly understood construction with pre-main-verbal *pə* ‘come’.

This chapter is largely based on discourse data with little elicitation, so not all co-occurrence restrictions with grammatical marking were investigated. Any possible interactions between multi-verb constructions and different tense, aspect, mood and polarity constructions are topics for further research.

### 14.2 Linking a sequence of events: sequence construction

Sequence constructions can be used to express a sequence of events or to arrange the parts of a complex event into a sequence of simple events. The verbs are ordered iconically: verbs encoding events that occur first come first and verbs encoding events that come later, occur later in the sequence (cf. Haspelmath 2016: 18). In (589), the subject went, gathered stones, then carried them away and then kept them. In (590), the object was first carried to the bush, and then beaten there. In (591), an event is broken up into separate facets that logically succeed each other: lightning first arrived and then struck the tree. This construction is similar to the *linking serial verb construction* in Bamgbose (1982) and the construction Elders (2000: 505-507) calls ‘construction liante’ in his description of Mundang.

(589)    ú            ɲé        kòsí    tàrì    jàg        kàr  
           3SG        go:PFV gather stone carry keep  
           ‘He went and gathered stones.’

(session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

(590)    àwú        béní            íbí    ɲí        jírāg    jág-í  
           3SG        say:FV:PFV    QUOT person two catch:PFV-LOG.SG  
  
           sáɲ        á<sup>+</sup>ǰě    ɲé        gbé<sup>+</sup>b-í  
           go        bush go beat-LOG.SG

‘He<sub>i</sub> said that two people took him<sub>i</sub> to the bush and beat him<sub>i</sub>.’

(session\_365, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

(591)    àsúwā            ɲkā    jí            tòr    pè        líb    bér    à  
           when:REL        thunder enter:PFV    fall    come    head    tree    REL  
           ‘When lightning struck the tree (she died).’

(session\_007, Garba Abubakar Bako, narrative)

As in other multi-verb constructions, tense and aspect are only marked on the primary verb. If two or more transitive verbs follow each other and they share the same object, the object follows the first transitive verb and is not repeated afterwards. This applies to (589), for example, where the stones are first gathered and then carried and kept, but they are only explicitly expressed after *kòsí* ‘gather’. If two verbs share the same referent as object, but they do not follow immediately after one another, then the object is repeated. This is

the case in (590) which literally reads that two people ‘caught him, went (to the) bush, and (went to) beat him’. ‘went to the bush’ intervenes in between the ‘catching him’ and ‘beating him’, so the pronominal referring to ‘him’ has to be repeated after *gbèb* ‘beat’.

Some examples were found that are ambiguous between a directional multi-verb construction (cf. § 14.3.4) and a multi-verb construction expressing a sequence of events. (592) contains the secondary verb *pè* ‘come’, and can be interpreted either as a sequence construction, i.e. ‘They carried him (and) came to the palace of the king.’ or as a directional construction where *pè* indicates movement towards a certain point (cf. § 14.4.1): ‘They carried him here to the palace of the king.’ (593) gives a similar example, this time with the verb *sáj* ‘go’, which in a directional construction expresses movement away from a certain point (cf. § 14.4.2). This example can either be translated as ‘They caught the king, carried (him) and went in(to) the bush.’ or as ‘They caught the king and carried him away into the bush.’

- (592)    *ikā*        *í*        *sí*        <sup>†</sup>*jág*        *ú*        ***pé***        *àgbáj*    *ówàn*  
           then        3PL    SEQ    carry:PFV    3SG    **come**    palace    king  
           ‘Then, they brought him to the palace of the king.’  
           (session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (593)    *í*            *ǰúg*            *ówàn*    *jág*        ***sáj***        *léb*        *ó<sup>†</sup>jě*  
           1PL        catch:PFV    king    carry    **go**        in        bush  
           ‘They took the king to the bush.’ (context: a song about the king being kidnapped)  
           (session\_143, Anonymous, song)

### 14.3 Constructions with aspectual functions

#### 14.3.1 Repetitive with *màrà* ‘return’

The repetitive multi-verb construction expresses that an action is repeated once. Such repetition is indicated with an uninflected form of the verb *màrà* ‘return’, which is placed before the primary verb of a clause. Most of the examples in texts were about the repetition of a movement from one place to another (e.g. ‘to go again’ in (594) and (595), (596), ‘to meet someone again’ in (594) and ‘to descend again’ in (596)). Some elicited clauses also show uses with verbs that do not indicate such movement: ‘to say again’ in (597), ‘to do again’ in (598), ‘to push again’ in (599), and ‘to beat again’ in (600).



- (594) àwú      **móró**    †sáŋ    ɲgwóg, ú      rɔ́      **mərə̀**    dín      ú  
 3SG      **return** go:PFV house, 3SG    IPFV    **return** meet    3SG  
 ‘He went home again, and he met him again.’  
 (session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (595) m̀                      **mərə̀**    sáŋ.  
 1SG.S.PFV              **return** go.

àná      dʒé      †m̀                      mэр                      á      pè  
 àná      dʒē      m̀                      mərə̀:PFV  
 today    TOP    1SG.S.PFV    return                      PFV    come

‘[Yesterday,] I went back [home]. Today, I returned here [to continue the work].’

(session\_053, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, narrative)

- (596) í              gáb                      kpó      †í,  
 3PL              separate:PFV    body    3PL:POSS,

í              **móró**    †dʒór                      sáŋ      pè.  
 3PL              **return** descend:PFV    go      come

‘They separated and they descended again [to] go [here].’

(session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (597) sàhídú    **móró**    †béní                      “m̀fàm”  
 Saheed    **return** say:FV:PFV    “m̀fàm”

‘Saheed said “m̀fàm” again.’

(Tope\_Bitrus\_01, Saheed Bala, elicitation)

- (598) **mərə̀**      sín  
**return**    do

‘Repeat (it)!’ or ‘Do (it) again!’

(Tope\_Bitrus\_08, Saheed Bala, elicitation)

- (599) àjí      **móró**    †túb            â  
 person    **return** push:PFV      PFV  
 ‘A person pushed again.’  
 (Tope\_Bitrus\_09, Saheed Bala, elicitation)

- (600) ú            **móró**    †gbéb            óm  
 3SG        **return** beat:PFV      1SG.O  
 ‘He beat me again.’  
 (session\_296, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

*màrà* ‘return’ is also found as non-initial verb in other examples of multi-verb constructions, following the primary verb instead of preceding it. Those instances should be interpreted as instances of the sequence construction (§ 14.2), and are different from the aspectual construction treated here.

- (601) í            bór            mórò    pè        zág        áwú        â  
 3PL        descend:PFV    return    come    side        north      PROX  
 ‘They [should] descend and return to the north side.’  
 (session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

### 14.3.2 Persistent aspect construction with *táni* ‘stand’

Persistent aspect constructions emphasize that an event is still going on at the reference point. Such constructions use the verb *táni(i)* ‘stand’, which can come before (602) or after (603), (604) the primary verb of a clause. I did not find many examples of this construction in my data, and I could not determine what may condition this ordering variation. It appears to be used mostly to indicate ongoing states (‘it is still on’) rather than actions (‘they are still searching’), although (602) shows that actions can also feature the persistent aspect construction. The verb *táni* only occurs in its monomorphemic form in these persistent aspect constructions. As a primary verb it always occurs in a complex but unanalyzable form *fíná<sup>†</sup>-táni(i)* or *fí-táni(i)* (cf. § 12.6.2). It also sometimes has a reduplicated form *títání* when used in persistent aspect constructions. It is not clear whether the reduplicated form has a different function.

- (602) ntèkù      á,        àjí      **táni**      sóg.  
 toad        PSTT, 3PL    **stand**    search  
 ‘They (are) still search(ing) for the frog.’ (lit.: ‘It is the frog they are still searching for’.)  
 (session\_181, Babangida Audu, narrative)

- (603) àjí      ɲwár      á      <sup>+</sup>tán  
 3PL      mix:PFV      PFV      stand  
 ‘(That is why) we are still mixed.’ (context: a historical explanation of why different tribes live together in Kam villages)  
 (session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)
- (604) àliè      títtīgī      tánì  
 light      on      stand  
 ‘The light is still on.’  
 (session\_288, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

### 14.3.3 Resultative or stative aspect construction with *jí* ‘stand up’

A form of the verb *jī* ‘stand up’ can occur as a secondary verb in multi-verb construction. It indicates that the situation described by the clause is a state resulting from the action denoted by the primary verb. The result of ‘tiring’ (*kpèti* ‘to tire’) is being tired (605). The result of ‘finishing’ (*fāñi* ‘to finish’) is being finished (606). Specific to this construction is that *jí* always has a H tone, whereas the lexical tone of *jī* ‘to stand up’ is M.

- (605) m      kpét      á      <sup>+</sup>jí  
 1SG.S.PFV      tire      PFV      stand.up  
 ‘I am tired.’
- (606) fāñ      á      <sup>+</sup>jí  
 finish      PFV      stand.up  
 ‘It is finished.’
- (607) dʒón      túsí      <sup>+</sup>mérá      ú  
 John      show:PFV      brother      3SG:POSS
- <sup>+</sup>ɲgwóg      fém      á      jì  
 house      burn:PFV      PFV      stand.up
- ‘John showed his brother (that) the house had burned down.’  
 (session\_337, Isa Sarkin Dawa, elicitation)

- (608) àbòg ém †vég á †jí  
 leg 1SG:POSS die:PFV PFV stand.up  
 ‘My leg has died.’ (i.e. ‘My leg is sleeping.’)  
 (session\_305, Danladi Baleri, elicitation)

- (609) àṅgwóg á †tíntám àlónj ô, àmá húm á †jí  
 house PROX big day.before DIST, but break PFV stand  
 ‘The house was big, but it has collapsed.’  
 (session\_041, Isa Sarkin Dawa, elicitation)

#### 14.3.4 Completive aspect construction with *lògrí* ‘end, finish’

The completive aspect construction can be formed by adding *lògrí* ‘to end, to finish’ as a secondary verb at the end of a multi-verb construction.

- (610) ú ló kpô lògòrí,  
 3SG wash:PFV body finish  
 ‘He finished washing his body.’  
 (session\_351, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (611) ñ ním jí à lògòrí  
 1SG.S.PFV eat:PFV thing PFV finish  
 ‘I finished eating.’  
 (session\_288, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

### 14.4 Directional constructions

#### 14.4.1 The ventive construction with *pè* ‘come’

Ventive multi-verb constructions indicate that the action described in a clause is centripetal: it moves towards a certain goal. Such constructions feature an uninflected form of the verb *pè* ‘come’, which is placed after a transitive object in transitive clauses, or directly after an intransitive verb.

- (612) *bìr*      *à,*                      *àjí*      ***dǵór***                      *á*      ***pè,***  
time      PROX,                      3PL      **descend:PFV**      PFV      **come.**
- ì*              *pè*      *díní*                      *zázówà*  
1PL              come      meet:PFV              Zazowa.

‘[The Kam were travelling ...] This time, they descended (in that direction). We came and met Zazowa.’

(session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (613) *ikā*              *ḡkā*      ***tór***                      *á*      ***pè***  
then              thunder **fall:PFV**                      PFV      **come**
- ‘Then, thunder fell down.’

(session\_007, Garba Abubakar Bako, narrative)

- (614) ***séti***              <sup>+</sup>*píráṅ*      *ó*                      <sup>+</sup>***mām***                      ***pè***  
**tear**              cloth      DIST      **give:1SG.O**                      **come**
- ‘Tear that cloth for me here.’

(session\_301, David Mamuda, elicitation)

In examples (612), (613) and (614), the goal of the movement is left implicit. But the goal can also be expressed right after the verb *pè* with a prepositional phrase or a noun referring to a location. In (615), the goal is the tree. In (616), an intonation break separates *pè* from the goal, which is Kam country.

- (615) *àsúwā*                      *ḡkā*      *jí*                      *tòr*      ***pè***      ***lib***      ***bér***      *à*  
when:REL                      thunder enter:PFV                      fall      **come**      **on**      **tree**      REL
- ‘When lightning struck the tree (she died).’

(session\_007, Garba Abubakar Bako, narrative)

- (616) *ṅág*              *á*              *àwú*      *ṅág*                      ***pê,***      ***àbìbí***      ***ṅí***      ***ḡwòm***  
work              REL      3SG      carry:PFV                      **come,**      **ground person**      **Kam**
- ‘The work that he brought to Kam country.’

(session\_052, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

14.4.2 The andative construction with *sáŋ* ‘go’

The andative construction indicates movement away from a certain point, i.e. movement that is centrifugal. This construction features an uninflected form of the verb *sáŋ* ‘go’, placed in the same position that *pè* ‘come’ is placed in the ventive construction. The point that is moved away from is always implicit in the examples I found in my data. In (617), the ‘source’ the dog runs away from is the path it was walking before. In (618), the source is the the room of a compound where the conversation takes place. In (619), the source is the subject’s friends’ house. And in (620), it is the village from which the king was kidnapped.

- (617) *ɲá<sup>+</sup>lib wó á rɛ̀ kàsí sáŋ á ...*  
 because dog REL IPFV branch go REL ...  
 ‘Because the dog that was branching away ...’  
 (session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (618) *bòb sáŋ gɛ̀r*  
 come.out go outside  
 ‘Go outside!’ (Context: Telling someone to leave a room)  
 (session\_049, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, elicitation)

- (619) *àwú lú rɛ̀ ŋwá ú wō.*  
 3SG sleep:FUT COM friend 3SG:POSS PL  
  
*kó mágárí kàptì,*  
 TEMP taste:NMLZ morning,  
  
*ú bób <sup>+</sup>sáŋ àŋwók <sup>+</sup>ná ú wō*  
 3SG come.out:FUT go house father 3SG:POSS PL

‘She will sleep with her friends. In the early morning (lit. ‘taste of the morning’), she will go away to her parents’ house.’ (context: a description of traditional marriage practices)

(session\_076, Adamu S. Baka, narrative)

- (620) í            ʃúg            ówàn    jàg    **sàŋ**    léb    n̄<sup>+</sup>tóŋ            wá  
 3PL        catch:PFV    king    carry    **go**    in        mountain        oh  
 ‘They caught the king and carried him away to the mountain, oh!’  
 (session\_143, Anonymous, song)

In (618), (619) and (620), a locative noun phrase (in (618) *gèr* ‘outside’, in (619) *àŋgwóg á<sup>+</sup>ná ú jō* ‘her parents’ house’) or a prepositional phrase (*léb n̄<sup>+</sup>tóŋ* ‘in the mountain’) follows the andative verb *sáŋ*. These phrases do not indicate the source from where the movement originates, but a direction that the movement goes towards. A ventive construction, with *pè*, could express roughly the same proposition as expressed in these andative examples. However, a ventive construction would put the emphasis on the arrival at the goal location, and background the source of the movement. An andative construction puts emphasis on the fact that the entity in question leaves its previous location (which is kept implicit), and can express a direction into which it moves, but it does not imply that this is the ultimate goal that will be or has been reached.

## 14.5 Valency increasing constructions

### 14.5.1 The benefactive construction with *mà* ‘give’

A benefactive construction express that something is done for someone’s or something’s benefit. In Kam, this construction is expressed with a multi-verb construction including the verb *mà*. The benefactive argument is expressed following *mà*. *mà* has specific forms when it takes 1SG (*mām*), 2SG (*mā*), 3SG (*mō*) and 3PL (*mē*) pronominal objects. In these specific forms, the pronominal objects have merged with the verb.

- (621) í            sóg            jéŋí    **mō**  
 3PL        search:PFV    horse    **give:3SG**  
 ‘They searched the horse for them’  
 (session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (622) àwàn    jág            í<sup>+</sup>ŋgwó?    á    <sup>+</sup>**mā**    ʃì    bú  
 king    carry\PFV    house        PFV    **give**    son    3SG:POSS  
 ‘The king has given the house to his son.’  
 (Tope\_Bitrus\_05, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

When the benefactee of the action is the speaker, the benefactive construction is often combined with a ventive multi-verb construction with *pè* ‘come’ (cf. § 14.4.1).

- (623) sẹ́tí píráp ó **mām** pẹ̀  
 tear cloth DIST **give:1SG.O** come  
 ‘Tear that cloth for me here.’  
 (session\_301, David Mamuda, elicitation)

- (624) gìmsí kpò **mām** pẹ̀  
 break food **give:1SG.O** come  
 ‘Break this food for me here.’  
 (session\_301, David Mamuda, elicitation)

#### 14.5.2 The comparative construction with *k̀̀r(i)* ‘surpass’

Comparison of inequality is expressed with a multi-verb construction with the secondary verb *k̀̀r(i)* ‘surpass’. The subject of a comparative construction typically refers to the comparee. The object of *k̀̀r(i)* indicates the standard to which the subject is compared.

- (625) àwàn bén éḡwòm k̀̀rì ʃìsẹ́ʒí  
 king speak:PFV Kam surpass child  
 ‘The king speaks Kam better than the children.’  
 (session\_291, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (626) ń níḡēb k̀̀r á â  
 1SG.S.PFV walk surpass 2SG.O PFV  
 ‘I walk faster than you.’  
 (session\_291, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

The comparee can also be the object.

- (627) ń dóg â k̀̀rí níjí  
 1SG.S.PFV see:PFV 2SG.O surpass other  
 ‘I see you more than (I see) other people.’  
 (session\_291, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

When two actions are being compared (i.e. ‘X does action A more than they do action B), the second action (action B) cannot be expressed with a simple verb, but it has to be referred to by a noun.



- (628) á lísí lú †kóri †jág  
 2SG.S.PFV sleep:PFV sleep surpass work  
 ‘You sleep more than you work.’  
 (session\_291, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (629) àjí swábí kòrì bén  
 3PL sing:PFV surpass speech  
 ‘They sing better than they speak.’  
 (session\_291, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

If there is no noun or nominalization that can refer to the action, a relative clause can be used.

- (630) ànàgbàn bímbēnī kōr jā ú rá †nīm â  
 person:female UNM~speak surpass thing:REL 3SG IPFV eat REL  
 ‘The woman speaks more than she eats.’  
 (session\_291, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (631) m bímbēn jājī jājī kōrī  
 1SG.S.PFV speak fast fast surpass  
  
 bā à rē dúb â  
 this:REL 2SG.S.IPFV IPFV write REL  
 ‘I speak more quickly than you are writing.’  
  
 (session\_291, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

## 14.6 Poorly understood constructions

### 14.6.1 The experiential construction with *dúddōgī* ‘to see’

I found three examples in my data where a *dúddōgī*, a partially reduplicated form of *dōg* ‘to see’ (cf. § 12.5), acts as a secondary verb in a multi-verb construction. Because of the scarcity of data, the exact function of this construction with *dúddōgī* is not entirely clear, but it appears linked with past experience, and hence is preliminarily called the experiential construction here. All three examples were translated using either *ever* or *never* in English. Two examples are questions and one is a negative continuative construction. More examples and elicitation are needed to arrive at a better understanding of *dúddōgī* in this multi-verb construction.

(632) á zúz<sup>†</sup> zúbí dúddōgī kòm gómnátí jī?  
 2SG.S.FUT FUT~steal:FV:FUT EXPA~see place government Q  
 ‘Would you ever steal from the government?’  
 (session\_286, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

(633) á.S.PFV néb á <sup>†</sup>dúddōgī légós jī?  
 2SG go:PFV PFV EXPA~see Lagos Q  
 ‘Have you ever visited Lagos?’  
 (session\_286, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

(634) m̀ mà dóg ú dúddōgī dzēn  
 1SG.S.NEG.NFUT NEG.NFUT see:NEG.NFUT3SG EXPA~see not.yet  
 ‘[I have heard his name, but] I have not seen him yet.’  
 (session\_271, Danjuma Bello, conversation)

#### 14.6.2 Suddenness, spontaneity, or absence of intention, with *pə* ‘come’

*pə* often occurs before a primary verb, forming a multi-verb construction with it. It is a reduced form of the verb *pè* ‘come’. *pə* is not inflected for tense or aspect, and it retains its lexical tone. In all examples I found, the primary verb is inflected for perfective aspect. All these examples describe something that ‘just happened’, or that ‘someone happened to do X’, without specific intentionality. Elsewhere in the literature (e.g. for Chadic languages and for some Senufo languages), serial verb constructions involving a verb for ‘come’ or ‘go’ are sometimes described as expressing suddenness, unexpectedness, or surprise (e.g. Dombrowsky-Hahn 2012: 103-104; Ebert 1987: 56; 2003: 115). Unexpectedness is a possible meaning of these constructions in Kam, although it is not present in all examples given here. The different possible meanings of this ‘pre-verbal’ *pə* remain to be disentangled.

- (635) ì            **pè**      sánj      á            kòrórofā.  
 1PL        **come**    go:PFVLOC    Kororofa.  
 ‘We happened to go to Kororofa.’  
 (session\_021, Yuguda Manti, narrative)

Context: “The Kam and the Jukun met together in Kano. We continued our journey, and passed some place called Yakafiye (?) in Jukun. This is what our ancestors told us. We slept and left from there. Then, nothing happened (for a while). **We happened to go to Kororofa.** There were no problems. But then, something happened. A king killed a man. And that made the Kam people bitter.”

- (636) àlāsírá            míná    **pé**      †dín            júrú      â  
 àlāsírá            míná    **pè**      dín\H            júrú      à  
 white.person      PRSTT **come**    meet:PFV      1PL.O    PFV  
 ‘The white person happened to meet us.’  
 (session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

Context: “In Kam, we do not do bad things that cause violence. We do not do things that make people angry. We live in peace. **The white man happened to meet us**, because in our land, his forefathers came and lived with us. Today, he comes back to talk again, in this peaceful settlement. So, now, our prayer is that God keep us in peace.”

- (637) àjì            m̄            ā  
 àjì            m̄<sup>L</sup>            ā  
 land            1SG-POSS      REL
- í            **pé**      †jág            ém      lùtí      kó      wàn      à  
 í            **pè**      jág\H            ém      lùtí      kó      àwàn      à  
 3PL        **come**    carry\PFV      1SG.O    appoint with    king      REL

‘This land where they happened to appointed me king.’

(session\_052, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

Context: “So, now, see the land. **This land where they happened to appoint me king.**  
The land has become big. We see it. Eyes have seen it. Progress has entered our land.”

- (638)    m̄                    p̄        †dín                    ɲó        k-ádā?  
           m̄                    p̄        dín\H                    ɲò        kə-ádā?  
           1SG.S.PFV        come    meet\PFV                2PL.O    ADVZ-cold

‘Did I happen to meet you well?’ (literally: ‘Did I meet you with the cold?’)

(session\_084, Yuguda Manti, narrative)

Context: A greeting used in the harmattan period.



## V Part five: Clausal morphosyntax



## 15 Simple clauses

I consider a simple clause to be a string of segments (along with their suprasegmental materials) that can make up an utterance, expressing at least a communicative reaction or an emotion and at most a single proposition (which may be requested or questioned). This can be a verb with its essential arguments, together forming a basic verbal clause (§ 15.1). Such basic verbal clauses may be extended with less essential circumstantial (or adverbial) modifiers (§ 15.4). But clauses can also be less elaborated, consisting of just a nominal predication in non-verbal clauses, copula constructions, identificational, equational or presentative clauses (§ 15.2). An utterance (and hence a simple clause) can be as minimal as a simple verbal, nominal or adverbial stem, or an interjection (Chapter 1).

I discuss much of the basic verbal clause structure of Kam in other chapters of this book, especially the chapters in Part IV of this thesis, which is dedicated to verbal morphosyntax. I provide a summary of basic clause structure with cross-references to relevant sections in § 15.1. The current chapter focuses on topics that have not received full attention elsewhere, such as adverbial modification (§ 15.4), nominal predication (§ 15.2), some special clausal constructions for expressing sensations and emotions (§ 15.2), and interjections (Chapter 1). § 15.1 brings together the basics of verbal clauses in Kam that are already covered, referring to sections where I provide more complete descriptions.

### 15.1 *Basic verbal clauses*

Verbs are the core of a verbal clause. They can receive various types of morphological marking for perfective aspect, future tense and positive and negative polarity. There is never just one morphological marker dedicated to marking one aspect-tense-polarity value. Rather, every value is expressed simultaneously by a variety of markers in the clause. Conversely, various markers also have more than one function and occur in different constructions (such as the final vowel *-i*, as described in § 12.2). Apart from the inflectional final vowel *-i* and partial reduplication, verbs can also be inflected for tense, aspect and polarity value by means of tone. Inflectional verbal morphology is treated in § 12.2, § 12.3 and § 12.5.

Core arguments are expressed by noun phrases, which contain either a pronominal or a nominal head (§ 10.1). There are two types of core arguments in the clause, subject and object. Constituent order is SVO and it is fixed. Pronominals have a different tone according to their argument function. 1SG and 2SG subject indexes are also (tonally) different depending on the tense, aspect and polarity value of the clause (§ 8.2.2).



New participants can be added to the clause, forming extended transitive clauses, by means of benefactive (§ 14.4.2) and comparative (§ 14.5.2) multi-verb constructions. Benefactive participants are introduced with the verb *mà* ‘give’ and comparative participants with the verb *kàri* ‘surpass’. The participants are coded as regular object arguments of these verbs.

To the basic ‘verb + arguments’ structure of a verbal clause can be added a variety of clausal markers and modifiers. Aspect, tense and negation is marked, in addition to verbal morphology, with pre-verbal markers (the imperfective marker *rà*, the optional negator *màg*, the negative future marker *ri<sup>l</sup>* and the negative imperative marker *ká*), an optional affirmative perfective marker *à* that is placed after the object of a verb, a repeated future tense form of the primary verb (with the marker *-i*), a future negator *rà* that comes immediately after an object, and three clause-final negators (the standard negator *hà*, the negative continuative marker *djēn* and the negative imperative marker *gà*). I discussed all of these markers in Chapter 1, and a summary overview, including relative ordering of markers, can be found in § 13.1.

Circumstances surrounding the proposition may be highlighted in a variety of ways in clauses. Circumstantial noun phrases may attach to a clause with prepositional phrases (§ 11.1.1). Various multi-verb constructions express circumstantial meanings that would in English be expressed with adverbial modifiers (§ 12.5.5). Finally, Kam also features adverbial modifiers, which I describe in § 15.4).

Clauses with multi-verb constructions can be analyzed as consisting of two types of verbal components. The first type, which I call primary verbs, are marked for tense, aspect and polarity. The other type, secondary verbs, may precede a primary verb or follow a primary verb and its object if there is one. Secondary verbs are not inflected. A clause typically has one primary verb and may have one or more secondary verbs.

Quantifiers, although semantically part of the noun phrase, are perhaps best seen as clause-level constituents, since they are typically syntactically separated from the noun phrase in their semantic scope (§ 9.4).

There are some specific simple clause constructions for expressing sensations and emotions, which I discuss in § 15.2 below. One construction encodes the experiencer as the object and the sensation or emotion as the subject of the clause. These are then linked with the generic verb *tàgi* ‘to affect’. Another construction uses an affected body part as the subject, the experiencer as either a possessor of the body part or the object of the clause, and a verb specifically encoding the experience. Some experiences are encoded with idiomatic expressions.

I analyze non-declarative utterances, such as questions and commands, in Chapter 16.

Other markers than the ones discussed so far may also occur in a clause. These include topic markers, focus markers and emphasis markers. I discuss four such information structure sensitive markers in Chapter 17.6: the topic marker *dʒē*, the presentative demonstrative *bē* that may derive from a spatial adverbial, the emphatic marker *rīg*, and an emphatic marker *nè* that is probably borrowed from Hausa (*ne*).

## 15.2 Nominal predication: copula clauses and verbless clauses

Nominal predication covers copula clauses, identificational clauses, equational clauses and presentative clauses. These clauses are different from verbal clauses in that they are not marked for tense or aspect.

Copula clauses with the copula *dá* ‘be’ (§ 15.2.1) express existence, presence in a certain location, predicative possession, or the attribution of a quality to an object or situation. Identificational clauses include the presentative demonstrative *á* and, optionally, a demonstrative that marks distance contrasts (‘It is a bird; this is a bird; that is a bird’) (§ 15.2.2). In equational clauses (‘The bird is a guinea fowl’), nominals are juxtaposed and the clause is marked with the presentative demonstrative *á* (§ 15.2.2). The quotative marker *íj* serves as a copula for attributing proper names to things, people or places (§ 15.2.4). Presentative clauses (‘see N’, ‘here is N’) are formed with the presentative demonstrative *míná* (§ 15.2.4).

### 15.2.1 Predication of existence, location, possession and quality with *dá*

Clauses that express that something or someone *exists* are existential clauses. Clauses that say *where* something is are locational clauses. Predicative possession clauses say that something belongs to someone or to something else (‘I have a house’). Predication of quality says something about the state something is in (‘good’, ‘different’). In Kam, all these expressions use the copula *dá* ‘to be’, followed by the presentative demonstrative *bē* (in the existential construction) or a relevant adverbial expression (a location, a quality, a comitative phrase).

In the existential construction, *dá* is always accompanied by the presentative demonstrative *bē* (§ 18.3). Given the semantically empty nature of *bē* in the existential construction, *dá bē* can synchronically be seen as a complex existential marker. Elsewhere, *bē* has presentative and information-structural functions. It is likely to derive from a demonstrative marker meaning ‘here’ or ‘there’, which would imply that the existential marker *dá bē* is lexicalized from a locational construction meaning ‘to be here/there’. (639) is a schematic representation of the existential construction, followed by some examples.

(639) S(subject) + *dá* + *bē*

(640) *kùrikí dá bē*

God be PRSTT

‘God exists.’ or ‘God is there.’

(session\_020, Yuguda Manti, narrative)

(641) *ni mí †dá bé kā, bēn má †júrú*  
 thing some be PRSTT COND, say give 1PL.O

‘If there is anything, tell us.’

(session\_056, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, narrative)

Apart from expressing that something exists, existential clauses are also the default construction used to express that something exists in abundance or in excess. I did not identify another construction dedicated to this.

(642) *sùnsòg dá bē*  
 salt be PRSTT

‘There is (too much) salt.’

(constructed example)

(643) *nišīrī dá bē*  
 money be PRSTT

‘There’s (plenty of) money.’

(constructed example)

(644) *àpág dá bē*  
 work be PRSTT

‘There is (a lot of) work.’

(constructed example)

Locational clauses are simply marked with the copula *dá*

(645) *àngwóg á †dá léb àjě*  
 house PROX be inside bush

‘This house is in the bush.’

(Tope\_Bitrus\_06, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

Any adverbial argument can be in the ‘location’ slot, allowing predication of quality or possession with a similar construction.

- (646) àngwóg ná †dó k-ádā?  
 house 2SG:POSS be ADVZ-cold  
 ‘Is your house fine?’ (literally: ‘Is your house cold?’)  
 (session\_023, Adamu S. Baka, conversation)

- (647) àwàn í †dó míṅkìṁ  
 king 3PL:POSS be different  
 ‘Their king was different.’  
 (session\_021, Yuguda Manti, narrative)

- (648) Májókàṁ dọ kpár  
 Mayo.Kam be close  
 ‘Mayo Kam is close.’  
 (session\_068, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (649) ń dọ rọ †wó  
 1SG be COM dog  
 ‘I have a dog.’  
 (session\_071, Isa Sarkin Dawa, elicitation)

- (650) ń dọ rọ †fóm rīg  
 1SG be COM hoe EMPH  
 ‘I have a hoe.’  
 (session\_071, Isa Sarkin Dawa, elicitation)

- (651) òtèkù dọ rọ fù rīg  
 toad be COM pregnancy EMPH  
 ‘The toad is pregnant.’  
 (session\_254, Shawuya, narrative)

Possessor and possessee can occur in any order in this construction, although the order ‘possessor + possessee’ is most frequently used. I did not check this, but word order choice may depend on information structure. I illustrate ‘possessee + possessor’ order in (652).

- (652) wó      d́      ŕ      n̄m  
 dog      be      COM   1SG.ID  
 ‘I have a dog.’  
 (session\_071, Isa Sarkin Dawa, elicitation)

Copula clauses with *də* are negated with the negative copula *sirī*, not with the standard clause-final negator *h̄n̄*. The emphatic morpheme *rīg* also obligatorily occurs clause-finally. The presentative demonstrative *bē* does not occur in negative copula clauses, and there is no comitative marker *rə* in the negative predicative possession construction.

- (653) n̄is̄rī      s̄r̄ r̄      rīg  
 money   be.NEGNEG  
 ‘There’s no money.’  
 (Constructed example)

- (654) àngwóg   mí      sirī              léb      àǰě      rīg  
 house      some   be.NEG              inside   bush   NEG  
 ‘There is no house in the bush.’  
 (Tope\_Bitrus\_06, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

- (655) n̄              s̄r̄ r̄              wó      rīg  
 1SG      be.NEG              dog      NEG  
 ‘I don’t have a dog.’  
 (session\_071, Isa Sarkin Dawa, elicitation)

### 15.2.2 Identificational clauses with the presentative demonstrative *á* (+ *bā/bô*)

Identificational clauses can be formed with a noun followed by the presentative demonstrative *á*, or *á* followed by one of the independent demonstratives *bā* ‘this one’ or *bô* ‘that one’. The presentative demonstrative *á* is similar to the relativizer *ā* (§ 9.2.2, § 17.2), to the perfective marker *à* (§ 13.6.1) and to the proximal demonstrative modifier *à* (§ 9.2). *bā* and *bô* are respectively proximal and distal demonstratives that can also be used as demonstrative modifiers (§ 9.2).

Identificational clauses are used to identify an entity in one’s surroundings in the same way as one would use ‘it is an x’, ‘this is an x’, or ‘that is an x’ in English. *á bā* is used for talking about close-by entities or when the closeness of an entity is not specified, *á bô* is used for distant entities. The construction

with simply the presentative demonstrative *á* does not specify distance but simply identifies the presence of an entity or provides an answer to a question (e.g. ‘Who/what is it?’).

- (656) *dʒì á bā*  
 bat PRSTT PROX.ID  
 ‘This is a bat.’ (lit.: ‘It is a bat this one.’)  
 (session\_040, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (657) *àŋwà ŋgwóg ém †á bô*  
 friend house 1SG:POSS PRSTT DIST:ID  
 ‘That is my neighbor.’ (lit.: ‘It is my neighbor that one.’)  
 (session\_047, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, elicitation)

- (658) *Sólómón †á*  
 Solomon PRSTT  
 ‘It is Solomon.’ (e.g. as an answer to the question: ‘Who is it? Babangida or Solomon?’)  
 (session\_351, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

Identificational clauses are negated with the regular verbal negator *hñ*.

- (659) *mìŋkáná mirèg á hñ*  
 water nose PRSTT NEG  
 ‘It is not snot.’  
 (session\_030, Babangida Audu, conversation)

### 15.2.3 Equational clauses with the clause-final presentative demonstrative *á*

A nominal predication clause where noun phrases are juxtaposed, without a verb, establishes the identity of the referents of those noun phrases (the same way English *is* does in ‘That man is my father.’). In all cases, the presentative demonstrative *á* follows the nominal predicate. A pause can be left between the two nominals. Tone rules and other prosodic rules do apply over the border.

When a nominal predicate is a proper name (e.g. ‘His name is Babangida’), the quotative marker *íjí* is used in between the noun phrases (see § 15.2.4).

- (660) *àkpò dʒázúg †á*  
 food rice PRSTT  
 ‘The food is rice.’  
 (session\_071, Isa Sarkin Dawa, elicitation)

- (661) àwú jí ηwòm á  
 3SG person Kam PRSTT  
 ‘He is Kam.’<sup>91</sup>  
 (session\_284, Saheedu, conversation)
- (662) ànà kàṅkáné †á  
 today Monday PRSTT  
 ‘Today is Monday’  
 (session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)
- (663) jìm àwàn jí ηwòm á  
 1SG.ID king person Kam PRSTT  
 ‘I am the king of the Kam’  
 (session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

Verbless clauses undergo the same negation as verbal clauses, with the clause-final negator *hñ*.

- (664) àkpò dʒázúg á hñ  
 food rice PRSTT NEG  
 ‘The food is not rice.’  
 (session\_071, Isa Sarkin Dawa, elicitation)

#### 15.2.4 The quotative marker *íjì*<sup>L</sup> as a copula for proper names

The quotative marker *íjì*<sup>L</sup> is used to identify proper names.

- (665) gán ém †íjì bùbàkàr  
 name 1SG:POSS QUOT Abubakar  
 ‘My name is Abubakar’  
 (session\_003, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)
- (666) àná mà gán ú †íjì bùbàkàr à  
 person:REL some:REL name 3SG:POSS QUOT Abubakar REL  
 ‘A certain person whose name is Abubakar ...’  
 (adapted from session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, elicitation)

<sup>91</sup> In the original translation: ‘He was Kam’. There are no tense and aspect distinctions in verbless clauses.

15.2.5 Presentative clauses with the presentative demonstrative *míná*

When the presentative demonstrative *míná* is combined with a preceding noun phrase, they form a presentative clause. Presentative clauses are used to draw attention to something, or to re(introduce) an entity into the discourse. Such clauses are generally translated into English by consultants as ‘see X’, e.g. *àṅwóg míná* ‘see the house’.

- (667) àfàm míná  
 meat PRSTT  
 ‘See (this) meat.’  
 (session\_029, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (668) tò, bá †tán á (...)  
 so, REL stand REL (...)

**àjì míná.**  
**country PRSTT.**

àjì m̄ ā  
 country 1SG:POSS REL

í pé †jág óm lùtí kó wàn à.  
 3PL come carry:PFV 1SG.O appoint INSTR king REL.

kòm tám â.  
 place grow:PFV PFV.

‘So, now (‘as it stands’) ... See the country. My country where they have appointed me king. The place has grown.’

(session\_052, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (669) òtàm míná ká ...  
 poison PRSTT COND  
 ‘Since it is poison (that he used to kill people, the king spoke to him and said ...)’  
 (session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)



- (670) j̄nā                      m̄ā                      ì                      r̄è                      wúr                      á                      †míná!  
 thing:REL                      some:REL                      1PL                      IPFV                      want                      REL                      PRSTT!  
 ‘That is how we like things!’ (literally: ‘See something that we like!’)  
 (session\_089, Yuguda Manti, conversation)

### 15.3 Clauses expressing sensations and emotions

In Kam, some sensations (e.g. hunger, thirst, pains, cramps, etc.) and emotions (anger, joy) are expressed with specific constructions, and sometimes idiomatic expressions. I identified the following three ways how such experiences can be coded.

- A construction with *tàgí* ‘to affect: the generic verb *tàgí* ‘to affect’ takes the experience (a noun) as subject and the experiencer as an object (e.g. *fěb tágí m â* ‘I am angry’, literally ‘anger affects me’)
- A construction with a body part term as the subject, a verb specifically encoding the experience, and the experiencer as the object of the verb and/or as the possessor of the body part (e.g. *àlib rá dèg ám* ‘I have a headache’, literally ‘my head is hurting me’).
- An idiomatic construction specialized for a specific experience (e.g. *lù r̄è déy ám* ‘I am sleepy’), literally ‘sleep is roasting me’; *àbòg ám †vég á †jì* ‘My leg is sleeping’, literally ‘My leg has died.’)

Table 48 summarizes the different uncontrolled experiences I came across featuring these constructions. The *tàgí*-construction occurs in most cases. Five experiences have their own specific construction, often using metaphors for describing certain feelings (sharp = suffering; sweet = happy; dead = numbness/weakness). The ‘body part + verb’ construction is used in three cases. Some examples follow the table.

**Table 48 - Expressions of sensations and emotions<sup>92</sup>**

Experience	Construction type	Template	Literal translation
feeling (generic)	tàgí-construction	àfám + tàgí + EXP	feeling affects EXP
anger	tàgí-construction	féb + tàgí + EXP	anger affects EXP
urge to defecate	tàgí-construction	àfìb + tàgí + EXP	shit affect EXP
hunger	tàgí-construction	àbób + tàgí + EXP	hunger affects EXP
thirst	tàgí-construction	àṅwár + tàgí + EXP	thirst affects EXP
pain in body	body part + specific verb	body part + dèg + EXP	body part pains EXP
cramp	body part + specific verb	body part + wàb + fùgí	body part ties (and) catches
itch	body part + specific verb	body part + nágí	body part itches
suffer	idiomatic construction	kpò + EXP + lègì	body of EXP is sharp
joy	idiomatic construction	kpò + EXP + sùnsóṅī	body of EXP is sweet
sleepiness	idiomatic construction	lù + déṅ + EXP	sleep roasts EXP
paresthesia (numbness of hand or leg, 'sleeping leg')	idiomatic construction	body part + vég á + jí	body part has died
food or drink going down the wrong way	idiomatic construction	THING dúg sáṅ kó ḡkùròg ófò	thing follows goes with the dry throat

<sup>92</sup> EXP = experiencer

Examples with *tàgí* ‘to affect’:

(671) féb      tágí              m      â  
 anger    affect:PFV    1SG.O PFV  
 ‘I was angry.’ (lit. ‘Anger affected me.’)  
 (session\_320, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

(672) àfìb      rẹ̀      tàgí      m  
 shit      IPFV    affect    1SG.O  
 ‘I want to use the toilet.’ (lit. ‘Shit is affecting me.’)  
 (session\_324, Anonymous, elicitation)

(673) àbób      rẹ̀      tàgí      m  
 hunger    IPFV    affect    1SG.O  
 ‘I am hungry.’ (lit. ‘Hunger is affecting me.’)  
 (session\_324, Anonymous, elicitation)

Examples with body parts and specific verbs. Note that sometimes, a possessive pronominal is used with the body part (675), (676), (677), (678), and sometimes no possessive pronominal is used (674). I could not determine when it is used and when it is left out.

(674) àlìb      rẹ̀      dẹ̀g      óm  
 head      IPFV    pain      1SG.O  
 ‘My head hurts.’  
 (session\_324, Anonymous, elicitation)

(675) àbòg      óm                      rẹ̀      dẹ̀g      óm  
 leg      1SG:POSS              IPFV    pain      1SG.O  
 ‘My leg hurts.’  
 (session\_324, Anonymous, elicitation)

(676) àdẹ̀l      óm                      \*wáb      á              \*fjúg-í  
 stomach 1SG:POSS              tie:PFV PFV      do-FV  
 ‘I have a cramp in my stomach’ (lit. ‘My stomach ties.’)  
 (session\_305, Danladi Baleri, elicitation)

(677) òǹǹí      b̀òg      óm                      ˀwáb      á              ˀǹǹúg-í  
 muscle    leg      1SG:POSS              tie:PFV PFV    do-FV  
 'I have a cramp in my leg.' (lit. 'My leg muscle ties')  
 (session\_305, Danladi Baleri, elicitation)

(678) àǹí              óm                      r̀è              ǹág-í  
 arm      1SG:POSS              IPFV    itch-FV  
 'My arm itches.'  
 (session\_150, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

Examples of idiomatic expressions:

(679) l̀ù              r̀è              déŋ      óm  
 sleep      IPFV    roast    1SG.O  
 'I am feeling sleepy.' (lit. 'Sleep is roasting me.')

(session\_324, Anonymous, elicitation)

(680) àb̀òg              óm                      ˀvég              á              ˀǵí  
 leg      1SG:POSS              die:PFV              PFV    stand  
 'My leg is sleeping.' (lit. 'My leg has died.')

(session\_305, Danladi Baleri, elicitation)

(681) m̀ìŋkájá      dúg                      sáŋ      ḱé      ǹk̀ùl̀òg      óf̀ò  
 water    follow:PFV              go      INSTR    throat    dry  
 'The water went down the wrong pipe.' (lit. 'water followed went with the dry throat')

(session\_305, Danladi Baleri, elicitation)

## 15.4 Adverbial modifiers

### 15.4.1 Overview

A clause or a verb can be modified by an adverbial modifier. Such modifiers provide a spatial, temporal, aspectual, modal, sequential or polar frame for the state of affairs described in the clause. I outlined the grammatical means of expressing tense, aspect and polarity in Chapter 1. Adverbial modifiers presenting temporal, aspectual, and polar meanings are different from grammatical markers in terms of (1) frequency and obligatoriness, (2) position, (3) morphological complexity, and (4) morphosyntactic independence.

- (1) Obligatoriness: most grammatical items are obligatory and leaving them out renders the clause ungrammatical<sup>93</sup>. Adverbial modifiers can always be left out. This has no consequences for the grammaticality of a clause.
- (2) Position: adverbial modifiers can occur peripherally, preceding or following a clause or a verb. Grammatical markers have a fixed position within a clause and are not peripheral.
- (3) Complexity: adverbial modifiers are rarely monomorphemic. When they are, they are longer than the typical morpheme in Kam and are probably historically complex.
- (4) Morphosyntactic independence: grammatical markers do not usually form an utterance by themselves. Adverbial modifiers can be meaningfully used as separate utterances.

Some of the meanings similar to the ones expressed by adverbial modifiers can also be expressed in Kam by verbs in multi-verb constructions (see § 12.5.5). The relevant verbs in multi-verb constructions share with adverbial modifiers their morphosyntactic independence (they also occur as independent verbs) and the fact that they are not strictly obligatory (although they are very frequent). They are structurally different from adverbial modifiers in that they are not morphosyntactically complex (excepting derivational suffixes) and they occur in a fixed set of multi-verb constructions.

Different types of lexemes and phrases can be used as adverbial modifiers. These include prepositional phrases ((682), (683)), adverbial clauses (684), nouns (685) and special adverbial expressions, including a small set of adverbial lexemes. Prepositional phrases are discussed in § 11.1 and adverbial clauses in § 17.5. The focus of the rest of this section is on adverbial lexemes and some frequently recurring specialized adverbial expressions.

(682)    á                    fǔ́g    é<sup>+</sup>nág    àrí    nîm  
           2SG.S.PFV           do:PFV work   like   1SG.ID  
           ‘You work like me.’  
           (session\_354, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)

(683)    ú            ngbáb            ú        kó        bùn  
           3SG       shoot:PFV   3SG   INSTR arrow  
           ‘He shot him with an arrow’  
           (session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

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<sup>93</sup> Some grammatical markers are optional, e.g. the pre-verbal negator *màg*, the perfective aspect marker *à* and the immediately post-object negative future marker *rə̀*. I discuss these and other markers, some optional and some obligatory, in Chapter 1.

(684) í            jág            ní            †dǵí    á            bē  
 3PL            take:PFV            thing    dig            PFV            PRSTT

hár            í            pá            †gbó    pé            †ɲwé    sùm  
 until            3PL            come:PFV            stream    come            mouth    lake

‘They dug until they came to the stream, to the mouth of the lake.’

(session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

(685) wò            ɲár            bì            rē            hñ  
 blood            drip:FUT            ground    FUT:NEG            NEG

‘There will be no bloodshed.’ (literally: ‘blood will not drip on the ground’)

(session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

In what follows, I discuss spatial adverbial modifiers first (§ 15.4.2). Next, I illustrate temporal (§ 15.4.3) and aspectual (§ 15.4.4) adverbial modifiers. The expression of phasal polarity receives separate treatment in § 15.4.5. The only attested modal adverbial expression, *ɲɪŋkã* ‘maybe’, is illustrated in § 15.4.6, and a few adverbials encoding manner are presented in § 15.4.7.

### 15.4.2 Space

I found the following spatial adverbial modifiers in Kam:

(686) kãmā or kã̄ ‘here’  
 kãmō or kō̄ ‘there’

Some examples:

(687) á                            pǎrá                            kã̄  
 2SG.S.PFV                            come.PFV                            here

‘You came here.’

(688) dǎ                            kō̄  
 be                            there

‘(It) is there.’

- (689) jì mí ā, àwú rẹ̀ tàg ā kēmā  
 thing some REL, 3SG IPFV touch REL here  
 ‘It is something that he is touching, here.’ (when reading a book)

- (690) àwú ɖzọ̀n kēmō  
 3SG sit there  
 ‘He sits there.’

*kā̃* and *kō̃* are short forms of *kēmā* and *kēmō* respectively. These adverbial modifiers derive from the noun *kəm* ‘place’, combined with the demonstrative modifiers *à* and *ò*. The short forms are currently used more frequently than the long forms. *kā̃* and *kō̃* can be combined with the nouns *àgàṅ* ‘sky’ and *àbì* ‘ground’ to form complex adverbial modifiers. I have not observed this with the long forms.

- (691) àgàṅ kō̃ ‘up there’  
 àbì kō̃ ‘down there’  
 àgàṅ kākā̃ ‘up here’  
 àbì kākā̃ ‘up there’

### 15.4.3 Time (and sequence)

When referring to a time in the past, an adverbial modifier can be used consisting of the distal demonstrative *ò* combined with a noun referring to a unit of time (*bèrì* ‘time, day’, *àlój* ‘day’) to signal a certain distance in time from the present moment.

- (692) b̃ər ò bē, àwàn rẹ̀ míṅ íṅ<sup>+</sup>gwóg àléb í<sup>+</sup>jě  
 time DIST PRSTT,king IPFV build house in bush  
 ‘Earlier, the king was building a house in the bush.’  
 (Tope\_Bitrus\_06, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

- (693) àlój ô, bèrì mà ì jí â,  
 day DIST, time some:REL 1PL grow.up\PFV REL,  
 jí b̃ər-ī jō jág ágbàn nī: ...  
 person ADJ:big:ADJ-FV PL carry:PFV wife like.this: ...

‘In those days, the time when we grew up, the elders married like this: ...’  
 (session\_076, Adamu S. Baka, narrative)

Other temporal adverbial modifiers include the following.

- (694) *kpānī* ‘before’  
*sīsīrā* ‘now’  
*àlūkō* ‘just now’  
*pí<sup>†</sup>káj* ‘tomorrow’  
*gbánákā* ‘later’  
*bàtànâ* ‘right now’  
*àlīlē* ‘yesterday’  
*nàṅkò* ‘first(ly)’

*kpānī* ‘before’ is often followed by the conditional particle *kā*.

- (695) *kpānī* *kā*, *àṅwóg* *bé* *†tíntám*  
 before COND, house PRSTT big  
 ‘Before, the house was tall.’  
 (Tope\_Bitrus\_06, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

- (696) *kpānī* *kā*, *á* *dín* *gúróg* *jàg* *rè* *jī?*  
 before COND, 2SG.S.PFV meet lion catch where Q  
 ‘Where could you find lions before?’  
 (session\_293, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

Some more examples with temporal adverbials:

- (697) *ń* *ǰúg* *í<sup>†</sup>nág* *nāṅkō*, *ì* *sì* *bímbēn*  
 1SG.S.PFV do:PFV work first, 1PL SEQ FUT~talk  
 ‘I work first, then we will talk.’  
 (session\_351, Solomon Ahmadu, Danladi Baleri, elicitation)



- (698) **bàtàná,** *nā*                    *ī*      *rè*      *tòg*      *à*      *kā,*  
**now,**      thing:REL      1PL      IPFV      beg      REL      ?,  
  
*kùrùkì*    *jág*                    *júru*    *kā*                    *kó*    *kóm*    *jōŋ*    *ímō*  
God      take:PFV      1PL.O    place:PROX      INSTR    place    sit      good

‘Right now, the thing that we are praying for, is that God may keep us in peace.’

(session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (699) *àlīē*      *óm*                    *póra*                    *kā*  
yesterday 1SG.S.PFV      come.PFV      here  
‘Yesterday, I came here.’

(session\_053, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, narrative)

- (700) *àwú*      *dó*      *ré*      *sīsīrā?*  
3SG      be      where      now?  
‘Where is he now?’

(session\_187, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

#### 15.4.4 Aspect

The two main aspectual adverbs that I identified in Kam are *mísí* ‘again’ and *sīrī* ‘completely’. Other expressions of repetition are made with a multi-verb construction with *màrè* ‘repeat, return’ (cf. § 14.3.1), or with a noun phrase including the noun *àbòg* ‘leg’ modified by a quantifier or a numeral (*àbòg fàr* ‘three legs’, for example, meaning ‘three times’).

*mísí* ‘again’ expresses repetition:

- (701)    ú            rè        mèrè   pè        mísí  
          3SG        IPFV   return   come   again

‘He is coming back again.’

(session\_052, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (702)    tò,           àjí       míná   bá        kōmā   mísí  
          so,         3PL     PRSTT   PROX   here   again

‘So, here they are again.’

(session\_181, Babangida Audu, narrative)

*sīrī* ‘all of it, completely’ expresses that an object has been affected by an action in its entirety.

- (703)    àwú        džáŋg            á        sīrī            ŋwāb  
          3SG        read:PFV        PFV    completely   all

‘He read it completely.’ (or: ‘He read all of it.’)

(session\_054, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, elicitation)

- (704)    m                    fárí            ŋwé   kòm    ńté    á        sīrī.  
          1SG.S.PFV        open:PFV        mouth   place   small   PFV    completely

‘I opened the window completely.’

(session\_054, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, elicitation)

- (705)    àwú        méns    á        sīrī  
          3SG        scatter   PFV    completely

‘He scattered it completely.’ (or: ‘He scattered all of it.’)

(session\_189, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (706)    wó        kásí                    kwí   à        sīrī  
          dog        break:CAUS:PFV        stick   PFV    completely

‘The dog broke the stick completely.’ (or: ‘The dog broke the whole stick.’)

(session\_301, David Mamuda, elicitation)

- (707)    bàrí        tásò    à        sīrī  
          clean    plate    PROX   completely

‘Clean this plate completely.’ (or: ‘Clean the whole plate.’)

(session\_301, David Mamuda, elicitation)

- (708) àǵá                      †pā,  
 person:REL              come:REL,  
  
 àwú      jág              jí      tīg              ú              rē      sīrī.  
 3SG      carry:PFV      thing      cover:ADJ      3SG:POSS      EMPH completely

‘The man that came, he took off all of his cloak.’ (or: ‘He completely took off his cloak.’)

(session\_314, Danjuma Bello, narrative; from ‘The North Wind and the Sun’)

#### 15.4.5 Phasal polarity

Phasal polarity constructions include those expressions that can be translated into English with ‘not yet’, ‘already’, ‘still’ and ‘no longer’. The current section briefly illustrates how these meanings are expressed in Kam. Van der Auwera’s (1998) terminology is used in this overview.

Positive phasal polarity expressions do not have a dedicated construction in Kam. Continuative constructions (English ‘still’) can be expressed with any of three adverbs: *tánfōŋ* ‘still, always’, *kpòŋ* ‘always, usually’ or *kpèn* ‘always, usually’.

- (709) Bábángídá              fúg      í†jág      tánfōŋ  
 Babangida              do:PFV work      always/still  
 ‘Babangida is still working.’ or ‘Babangida is always working.’  
 (session\_288)

- (710) àliè              tít~tīgī              tán-ì              kpòŋ  
 light              PRED~be.off      stand-FV              always/still  
 ‘The light is always off.’ or ‘The light is still off.’  
 (session\_288)

(711) àwú dúb ètóm dùbì kpèn  
 3SG write:FUT message write usually  
 ‘He will usually write a letter.’  
 (session\_288)

(712) ú ró †dúbí ní kpèn  
 3SG IPFV write thing usually  
 ‘He is usually writing letters.’  
 (session\_041)

Inchoative constructions (English ‘already’, cf. Kramer 2017: 10, 11) are either left unexpressed or can be expressed with a coordinated clause with *fànrí* ‘to finish’ or *lògrí* ‘to end’.

(713) ñ níím ní à ñ lógrí.  
 1SG.S.PFV eat:PFV thing PFV 1SG.S.PFV end  
 ‘I finished eating.’, ‘I have already eaten’ (lit.: ‘I ate, I finished’)  
 (session\_288)

(714) ñ níím á †fànrí  
 1SG.S.PFV eat:PFV PFV finish  
 ‘I finished eating’, ‘I have already eaten’ (lit.: ‘I ate, it is finished’)  
 (session\_288)

Negative phasal polarity constructions are more grammaticalized and feature dedicated clause-final markers in complementary distribution with the clause-final negator *hèn* (cf. § 13.6.3).<sup>94</sup>

The negative continuative (‘not yet’) is usually expressed with standard negative clauses, optionally including the preverbal negator *màg*. Instead of the clause-final particle *hèn*, however, the clause-final negation marker *džēn* is used.

(715) àjí mág dògí òtèkù džēn.  
 3PL NEG.NFUT see toad NEG.CONT.  
 ‘(It is the toad they are looking for,) they haven’t seen the toad yet.’  
 (session\_181, Babangida Audu, narrative)

<sup>94</sup> I would like to thank Dmitry Idiatov for providing useful references that I have not yet implemented but plan to use to flesh out the analysis of clause-final negation in Kam.



- (720) méri nínm jí nàŋ hñ.  
 Mary eat:NEG.NFUT thing no.longer NEG.  
 ‘Mary is no longer eating.’  
 (session\_288, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (721) déjvíd ʃúg í<sup>+</sup>ɲág nàŋ hñ.  
 David do:NEG.NFUT work naŋ NEG.  
 ‘David is no longer working.’  
 (session\_288, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

*nàŋ* also occurs in negative existential and locational negation constructions.

- (722) bàbàngídá sírī dʒàlìngò nàŋ rīg.  
 Babangida be:NEG Jalingo naŋ NEG.  
 ‘Babangida is no longer in Jalingo.’  
 (session\_288, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

#### 15.4.6 Modality

The only modal adverb I have found in my corpus is *ɲíŋkā* ‘maybe’. It seems historically complex, but it is synchronically impossible to segment into different morphemes. Historically, it may contain the conditional marker *kā* (cf. § 17.5.1.6). Or, given its tonal structure, it may be a lexicalized noun phrase or compound with *ɲì* ‘thing’ and a currently unidentified adjectivized verb (cf. § 7.2.1.2).

- (723) ɲíŋkā méri mási rē  
 maybe Mary know:PFV EMPH  
 ‘Maybe Mary knows.’  
 (session\_187, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (724) ɲíŋkā àwú pé <sup>+</sup>kó <sup>+</sup>dʒé mí <sup>+</sup>bā  
 maybe 3SG come:FUT TEMP month some PROX  
 ‘Maybe he will come some time this month.’  
 (session\_285, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

## 15.4.7 Manner

*mín* is a manner adverb that and can usually be translated as ‘like this’ or ‘thus’. It may be related to the presentative demonstrative *míná* (§ 9.2.2).

- (725) àní      ígbàn    dǵéí      mín  
 person    female    see:PFV    thus  
 ‘The woman sees it, like this.’  
 (session\_254, Shawuya, narrative)

- (726) ú          péntí          jág      †mín,  
 3SG        exchange:PFV    carry    thus  
 ‘So, she exchanges it (her sex), like this.’  
 (session\_254, Shawuya, narrative)

Adverbial modifiers of manner are often formed from adjectives with the instrumental preposition *ká*. Unlike in other positions where they occur, the *á<sup>L</sup>*- prefixes of adjectives are not dropped but retained after *ká*. The vowel of the instrumental preposition is dropped instead. In these cases, the instrumental preposition can be analyzed as an adverbializing prefix.

- (727) í          lútí                  m      **k-ájwī**      ã  
 3PL        lay:CAUS:PFV    1SG.O    ADVZ-new    REL  
 ‘(while) they have crowned me newly’  
 (session\_052, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (728) ú          rǵ          †dín    í          **k-ámō**  
 3SG        IPFV    meet    3PL    ADVZ-good  
 ‘He is meeting them well.’  
 (session\_052, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (729) k-ántēī  
 ADVZ-truth  
 ‘really, truly’  
 (session\_254, Shawuya, narrative)





- (734) á                      dógí                      mpō                      mí      à      jī,      Bábàngídá?  
 2SG.S.PFV              see:PFV              monkey              some    PFV    Q              Babangida  
 ‘Do you see any monkeys, Babangida?’  
 (session\_286, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

I did not investigate questions without *jī* but with a clause-final H/M tone marker in detail. It is possible that this construction is derived from the construction with clause-final *jī* where *jī* is dropped but its tone retained. Since the only examples I currently have involve clauses that would end in a L tone if they were declarative, I do not know whether the question marker is M or H, since either M or H could result in a M if merged with a preceding L – which is the case in all of the observed instances.

- (735) àkpó      ñwún, àkpó      ñwún      á      hñ?  
 àkpó      ñwún, àkpó      ñwún      á      hñ-M  
 twenty    five,    twenty five    PRSTT NEG-Q?  
 One hundred, isn't it one hundred?  
 (session\_034, Isa Sarkin Dawa, conversation)

- (736) a.  
 ú              dúddūb?  
 ú              dùd~dùb-M  
 3SG          STAT~be.tall-Q  
 ‘Is he tall?’

vs.

- b.  
 ú              dúddûb  
 ú              dùd~dùb  
 3SG          STAT~be.tall  
 ‘He is tall.’

(session\_350, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (737) á                      dín                      ó<sup>+</sup>mérá m                      ā?  
 á                      dín\H                      àmérá m<sup>-L</sup>                      à-M  
 2SG.S.PFV              meet:PFV              brother 1SG-POSS              PFV-Q  
 Have you met my brother?  
 (session\_054, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, elicitation)

- (738) á                      fár                      ā?  
 á                      fàrí\H                      à-M  
 2SG.S.PFV              open\PFV              PFV-Q?

ṃ,              ṃ                      fár                      â.  
 m              Ñ                      fàrí\H                      à  
 yes,              1SG.S.PFV              open\PFV              PFV

‘Did you open it (the door)? Yes, I opened it.’

(session\_056, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, elicitation)

## 16.1.2 Content questions

Content questions are formed in two major ways in Kam. One method involves the use of a specific content interrogative marker, referring to the questioned element as a human (*bé<sup>H</sup> ... bì* ‘who?’), a non-human object (*gè<sup>H</sup> ... gì* ‘what?’), a place (*rè* ‘where?’), or a manner or quantity (*sím* ‘how [much/many]?’). The question particle *jī* may also occur clause-finally. The other method involves modifying a noun phrase with a relative clause with *mīnā* ‘which’. This noun phrase and relative clause together stand as a full content question.

### 16.1.2.1 Content interrogatives

There are four content interrogatives in Kam.

- (739) *bé<sup>H</sup> ... bì* who?  
*gè<sup>H</sup> ... gì* what?  
*rè* where?  
*sím* how? or how much/many?

Two out of four content interrogatives are morphologically simple. Two are complex and involve quasi-repetition of the initial element at the end of the clause, a quite unusual strategy for forming content

questions cross-linguistically. The two content interrogatives (the initial one and its repetition) enclose the clause. The whole of the clause is optionally followed by the question particle *jī*. In (742), the tone of the initial *gè* is LH because the floating <sup>H</sup> tone (exceptionally) attaches to the preceding syllable and the tone of the final *gì* is H because of tone spread of the preceding H tone.

(740) *bè*      *í*      *ró*      *ɖʒērī*    *bì*      *jī?*  
 who      3PL    IPFV    look    who    Q  
 ‘Who are they looking for?’  
 (session\_020, Yuguda Manti, narrative)

(741) *gè*      *ú*      *ró*      *sìn*      *gì*      *jī?*  
 what    3SG    IPFV    do      what    Q  
 ‘What is he doing?’  
 (session\_054, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, elicitation)

(742) *gě*      *àwàn*    *mín̩*                    *ká*      *lèb*      *àǰě*      *gí?*  
*gè<sup>H</sup>*      *àwàn*    *mín̩*\PFV              *kā*      *àlèb*    *àǰě*      *gì*  
 what    king    build\PFV            here    inside    bush    what  
 ‘What did the king build inside the bush?’  
 (Tope-Bitrus\_07, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

In (743) and (744), the bipartite content interrogatives *bè<sup>H</sup> ... bì* ‘who’ and *gè<sup>H</sup> ... gì* ‘what’ are not separated. As a result, the floating <sup>H</sup> tones of *bè<sup>H</sup>* and *gè<sup>H</sup>* attach to the second part of the interrogative. Therefore, *bì* and *gì* are realized with a high tone.

(743) *bè*      ***bí***      *jī?*  
*bè<sup>H</sup>*      ***bì***      *jī*  
 who      who      Q  
 ‘Who (is it)?’ (Who will ascend the throne?)  
 (session\_020, Yuguda Manti, narrative)

(744) *gè*      ***gí***      *jī?*  
*gè<sup>H</sup>*      ***gì***      *jī*  
 what    what    Q  
 ‘What (is it)?’

When used as possessors or as complements of prepositions, simplex forms of the complex content interrogatives are used. In such cases, *bì* and *bè*, and *gì* and *gè* are used interchangeably. I do not have many examples of this sort, but in all examples the tone of *bì*, *bè*, *gì* and *gè* is L.

- (745) àfí bì?  
 child who?  
 ‘whose child?’  
 (session\_271, Saheedu, conversation)

- (746) ú dǎ rǎ bǎ?  
 ú dǎ rǎ bǎ  
 3SG be COM who  
 ‘He is with whom?’  
 (Tope-Bitrus\_06, Saheed Bala)

The interrogatives *rè* ‘where’ and *sím* ‘how (much/many)’ occur where locative and manner/quantity arguments would occur in clauses. Their use is illustrated as follows.

- (747) àfí dáǎfí dǎ ré jī?  
 child Dan.Aci be where Q  
 ‘Where is the son of Dan Aci?’  
 (session\_019, Yuguda Manti, narrative)

- (748) ń dín gúróg jàg rǎ jī?  
 1SG.S.PFV find:PFV lion catch where Q  
 Where can I find lions?  
 (session\_286, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (749) á núŋ míŋ<sup>†</sup>káná sím? ń núŋ kó ɲwé.  
 you drink:PFV water how? I drink:PFV with mouth.  
 ‘How do you drink water? I drink with (my) mouth.’  
 (session\_302, David Mamuda, elicitation)

- (750) jò lú sím rǎ bǎrì fònú ā?  
 you sleep:PFV how with time harmattan PFV:Q?  
 ‘How did you sleep with the harmattan period?’  
 (session\_084, Yuguda Manti, conversation)

- (751) dārí bī̀ sìm ā?  
 hundred one how COP:Q  
 ‘One hundred is how much?’  
 (session\_034, Samuel U. Adams, conversation)

- (752) nìsīrī̀ sìm ā ɣū́ ná mā àlīlē à jī?  
 money how REL uncle your give:you yesterday REL Q?  
 ‘How much money (is it) that your uncle gave you yesterday?’  
 (session\_286, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

### 16.1.2.2 Cleft structures with the interrogative modifier *mīnā* ‘which/what?’

In elicitation sessions, my informants often preferred a cleft construction with the interrogative modifier *mīnā* and a generic noun, such as ‘person’ or ‘thing’, over the constructions with interrogative pronominals described in § 16.1.2.1 This construction can be summarized as follows, where the elements in round brackets (the relative clause marker *à* and the question marker *jī*) are optional. The construction can be analyzed as a verbless clause including only a relativized noun phrase without copula, and an optional question marker. I discuss clefts more generally in § 18.1.

- (753) [N] + *mīnā* + [relative clause] (+ *à*) (+ *jī*)

*mīnā* is a historically complex modifier that has incorporated the relativizer *ā* (cf. § 17.2). It also bears formal resemblance to the presentative demonstrative *míná* (‘there you go’, ‘like this’) (§ 9.2.2).

The noun modified by *mīnā* refers to an argument of the relative clause. This argument is what the question is about. It can be a circumstantial argument such as a place (754) or time (755), and it can also be a core argument such as a subject ((756), (757)) or an object (758). In (754), for instance, the speaker enquires about the place (*kòm*) that (*mīnā*) the hearer went to (*á jéb á*). The interrogative is not selective (unlike English ‘which’, which implies the selection between different alternatives). The relative clause does not repeat the argument about which information is requested.

- (754) kòm mīnā á jéb á jī?  
 place which:REL 2SG.S.PFV go:PFV REL Q  
 ‘Where did you go?’ (lit.: ‘Which place (is it) that you went?’)  
 (session\_286, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

(755) b̀̀r̀̀ì m̀̀ǹ̀ā àẁ̀n m̀̀íj àjg̀̀́ẁ̀óg ú k̀̀á l̀̀èb ̀̀èj̀̀é á?  
 time which:REL king build:PFV house his here in bush REL:Q?  
 ‘When did the king build his house in the bush?’ (lit.: ‘Which time (is it) that the king ...?’  
 (Tope-Bitrus\_07, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

(756) àj̀̀í m̀̀ǹ̀ā s̀̀ín â  
 people which:REL do:PFV REL  
 ‘Who did it?’ (lit.: ‘Which person (is it) that did it?’)  
 (session\_169, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

(757) àj̀̀í m̀̀ǹ̀ā f̀̀júg̀̀í j̀̀ág â?  
 person which carry take REL  
 ‘Who took it?’ (lit.: ‘Which person (is it) that took it?’)  
 (session\_271, anonymous, conversation)

(758) àj̀̀í m̀̀ǹ̀ā j̀̀ǹ̀íj̀̀é ǹ̀ím ú j̀̀àg à  
 person which:REL snake bite:PFV 3SG carry REL  
 ‘Who did the snake bite?’ (lit.: ‘Which person (is it) that the snake bit?’)  
 (session\_350, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

## 16.2 Commands and prohibitions

In imperative clauses, most verbs occur with their lexical tone. For some monosyllabic verbs there is a free choice between high, mid or low tone for verbs in imperatives. This could be an indication that tonal contrasts in imperatives are fairly weak and are in a process of being neutralized in this construction. My informants mentioned that the tone of these imperative verbs is determined by extralinguistic factors such as emotions, importance of the command or urgency of the task. I did not check all verbs for such free variation, but out of 46 monosyllabic verbs that I did check, 15 allowed any tone.

(759)	b̀̀ìr, b̀̀īr or b̀̀ír	(lexical tone = H)	‘cut, slaughter’
	s̀̀ìn, s̀̀īn or s̀̀ín	(lexical tone = H)	‘do, make’
	d̀̀èb, d̀̀ēb or d̀̀éb	(lexical tone = L)	‘buy’
	b̀̀àr, b̀̀ār or b̀̀ár	(lexical tone = L)	‘farm, weed’

Most examples of such free variation occur in isolation. I checked some examples in a frame, with the adverb *m̀̀s̀̀í* ‘again’, where they also showed such free variation (session\_323, David Mamuda, elicitation).



(767) ɲò ká ɲéɓ ɲgwóg wàn nè gà  
2PL NEG go house king EMPH NEG  
'Don't go to the house of the king.' (to more than one person)  
(Tope\_Bitrus\_06, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

(768) ká dʒérī nūŋ gà  
NEG look bird NEG  
'Don't look at the bird.'  
(session\_137, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

(769) ká ním dʒò gà  
NEG eat fly NEG  
'Don't eat the fly.'  
(session\_137, Babangida Audu, elicitation)





## 17 Complex sentences

### 17.1 Introduction

Complex sentences include any sentence that is composed of more than one clause. Relative clauses (§ 17.2), complement clauses (§ 17.3) and adverbial clauses (§ 17.5) are subordinate clauses: they are clauses embedded into another clause (the main clause) as a constituent. Complement clauses function as an argument in the clause (e.g. a subject or object – only the latter in Kam). Relative clauses function as attributive modifiers of noun phrases. Adverbial clauses function as adverbial modifiers, provide information about the circumstances surrounding the presented state of affairs. Coordinated clauses (§ 17.4) are clauses with equal syntactic status. One is not embedded in the other, they are simply linked. I also briefly discuss some speech and thought reporting constructions in this chapter (§ 17.6). I discuss quotatives separately from complement clauses since there is no reason to assume that clauses in reported discourse are automatically object complements of a higher ‘main clause’ (cf. Idiatov 2011).

### 17.2 Relative clauses

A relative clause is a clause that prototypically functions as a modifier within a noun phrase. In accordance with the regular head-modifier order in the noun phrase, relative clauses in Kam follow the head noun they modify. This noun phrase then typically fills an argument slot in another clause, which is called the main clause. Other cases where relative clauses do not occur in argument functions is when they function as complement clauses (§ 17.3) or as clausal adverbial modifiers (§ 17.5). Relative clauses can also function as clefts, focusing a certain entity in the discourse (§ 18.1).

The main strategy for forming relative clauses in Kam includes the use of a relativizer  $\bar{a}$  preceding the relative clause, right after the modified head noun, and a relativizer  $\grave{a}$  following the relative clause. A pause can be inserted after the relativizer  $\bar{a}$ . This strategy can be summarized as follows:

$$(770) \quad [ [ [ \text{NOUN}_{\text{HEAD}} + \bar{a} + [ \text{RELATIVE CLAUSE} + \grave{a} ]_{\text{RELATIVE CLAUSE}} ] ]_{\text{NP}} + \dots ]_{\text{MAIN CLAUSE}}$$

When a relative clause modifies a human noun that refers to the subject of the main clause, a pause is inserted between the relative clause and the main clause. A pronominal coreferential with that noun is used in the main clause. The relativized noun phrase and the pronominal could be viewed as noun phrases in apposition, and the relative clause can be analyzed as a correlative relative clause.

- (771) àwàn    **ā**    **míŋ**    **óŋ<sup>+</sup>gwóg**    **â**,  
king    REL    build:PFV    house    REL,  
  
**ú**    **dó**    **ró**    **ŋì**    **rīg**  
3SG    be    with    thing    POSS

‘The king who built this house is rich.’ (lit. ‘The king who built this house, he is rich’)

(Tope\_Bitrus\_06, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

- (772) àŋíván            **á**    **<sup>+</sup>táb**            **í<sup>+</sup>ŋé**    **kó**    **tàb**    **á**,  
person:male    REL    touch:PFV    hand    INSTR fish    REL  
  
**ú**    **béní**            **íjì**    **<sup>+</sup>í**            **<sup>+</sup>á**,  
3SG    say:PFV            QUOT LOG.SG    PRSTT

‘The man who touched the fish said it was him.’ (lit. ‘The man who touched the fish, he said it was him.’)

(session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (773) **ŋí**    **á**    **<sup>+</sup>pé**    **līlē**    **â**,  
person    REL    come    yesterday    REL  
  
**àjì**    **sáj**    **â**  
3PL    go:PFV PFV

‘The people who came here yesterday left.’ (lit.: ‘The people who came here yesterday, they left.’)

(session\_351, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

When an object is relativized, a human object index co-referential with the relativized noun occurs in the relative clause. The same applies to relativized possessors (779).

- (774) àjí mìnā ñìjě ním ú jág â?  
 person which:REL snake bite:PFV 3SG take REL?  
 ‘Which person is it that the snake bit?’ (lit. ‘Which person (is it) that the snake bit him?’)  
 (session\_350, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (775) àjí mìnā á jág ñísīrī mō?  
 person which:REL 2SG.S.PFV take:PFV money give:3SG?  
 ‘Whom did you give money to?’ (lit. ‘Which person (is it) that you gave the money to him’)  
 (session\_350, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

The second relativizer, *à*, is optional and is often omitted. In elicitation sessions, my consultants always accepted such omission. It is not clear whether there are any restrictions in natural discourse.

- (776) àjì m̄ ā  
 country 1SG:POSS REL  
  
 í p̄ †jág óm lùtí kó wàn (à)  
 3PL come carry:PFV 1SG.O appoint INSTR king (REL)

‘(In) my country where they appointed me king.’

(session\_052, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (777) ànág á àwú jág p̄ àbibí ní ñwòm  
 work REL 3SG carry come land person Kam  
 ‘the work that he brought to Kam country’  
 (session\_052, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

In § 9.2.2, I provided an overview of how the relativizer *ā* can be fused to different nouns and nominal markers. Some of these instances are synchronically transparent. Others are lexicalized but were clearly derived from such combinations. Some examples of relative clauses with a fused *ā* are presented here. I describe the individual properties of each of these combinations in § 9.2.2.

(778) ànā      **ɲā**              dín              ém      **â**  
 today      **thing:REL**      meet:PFV      1SG.O **REL**

féb      tág              ém      à  
 anger      affect:PFV      1SG.O PFV

‘What happened to me today made me angry.’

(session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

(779) àǵá              **mā**              gán      ú              †íbí      é  
**person:REL**      **certain:REL**      name      3SG:POSS      QUOT QUOT

N.      à,      ú      sín      jí      †ísāmṛī  
 N.      REL,      3SG      do:PFV thing      ADJ:bad:ADJ

‘Some person whose name is N. did something bad.’ (lit.: ‘Some person that his name is N., he did something bad.’)

(session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

(780) **ɲā**              **mā**              ì      rè      wūr      ā      míná  
**thing:REL**      **certain:REL**      1PL      IPFV      like      REL      PRSTT

‘We like this like this.’ (presentative clause (cf. § 15.2.4))

(session\_089, Yuguda Manti, conversation)

(781) dǵá      **bá**      †á              sín      á      †dó      gé      gí      jī?  
 reason      REL      2SG.S.PFV      do:PFV REL      be      what      what      Q

‘The reason why you did it is what?’

(session\_357, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)

(782) ú      ɲéb      kô      **kā**              ú      ró      dǵòŋ      à  
 3SG      go:PFV PURP      place:REL      3SG      IPFV      sit      REL

‘She went to the place where she would be living.’

(session\_351, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

(783) àjǐ      **mónā**      jìjě      ním      ú      jàg      à  
 person      **which:REL**      snake      bite:PFV      3SG      carry      REL

‘Which person is it that the snake bit?’

(session\_350, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

(784) ikā,      **māmbá**      sùm      gím      jí      á      kā  
 then,      that.is.why:REL      lake      tear      stand      REL      COND

‘Then, that is why the water gushed (down from the lake)’ (lit. ‘that is why the lake tore.’)

(session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

I have not encountered any restrictions on the accessibility of different arguments to relativization. The relative clause in (773), for example, targets a subject. In (785) and (786), an object is relativized. The relative clause in (787) relativizes a questioned copula subject. (788) relativizes a location, (789) an instrumental argument, (790) a benefactor. I have no data on whether a possessor or possessed in an attributive possession construction can be relativized. The role of a relativized noun within the relative clause itself is also flexible, including subject (773), object (785), various oblique roles (787), (788) and possessor roles (779).

(785)      n̄      déb      j̄nā      à      wúrí      â  
 1SG.S.PFV      buy:PFV      thing:REL      2SG.S.PFV      want:PFV      REL

‘I bought what you wanted’ (i.e. ‘I bought the thing you wanted.’)

(session\_351, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

(786) àjǐ      nágí      j̄nā      àjǐ      r̄é      s̄òg      à      àlèb      èjě  
 3PL      leave:PFV      thing:REL      3PL      IPFV      search      REL      in      bush

‘They left the thing that they were searching in the bush.’

(session\_351, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

(787) d̄z̄á      bá      à      sín      á      d̄è      gé      ḡì      j̄ī?  
 reason      REL      2SG.S.PFV      do      REL      be      what      what      Q

‘The reason why you did it is what?’

(session\_357, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)

(788)      ú      j̄é̄b      k̄ô      k̄ā      ú      r̄é      d̄z̄òŋ      à  
 3SG      go      PURP      place:REL      3SG      IPFV      sit      REL

‘She went to the place where she would live.’

(session\_351, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (789)    ʃúg                    ú        á        jàgì  
           catch:PFV        3SG    PFV    carry
- ká        ní        †sámrí á        àwú    sín    â  
           INSTR    thing    bad    REL    3SG    do:PFV REL

‘It (the trial) confirmed his guilt’ (lit. ‘it caught him with the bad things that he had done’.)

(session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (790)    àní        mánā                    á                    jág                    nísīrī    mō?  
           person    which:REL        2SG.S.PFV        take:PFV        money give:3SG
- ‘Whom did you give money to?’ (lit. ‘Which person (is it) that you gave the money to him’)
- (session\_350, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

### 17.3 *ká bā̃*, a complementizer introducing wishes

Complement clauses are clauses functioning as core arguments in another clause, which is called the main clause. In Kam, I only found complement clauses functioning as objects, specifically complement clauses expressing wishes. The complementizer *ká bā̃* introduces such wishes and is used after the verb *wūrī* ‘want’. Morphologically, it is a combination of the instrumental/temporal preposition *ká* and the relativizer *bā̃* ‘(the one) that’. It is also used as a temporal adverbial conjunction translating into English as ‘when’ or ‘while’ (§ 17.5.1.1).

Kam features a periphrastic modal construction for expressing wishes and needs. It consists of an imperfective construction with the verb *wūrī* ‘want, accept, like’, followed by a complement clause with the complementizer *ká bā̃* (TEMP REL). The complement clause takes the form of a relative clause. The construction exemplified in (791), for example, literally translates to ‘I want with this that I drink my medicine.’

(791) ñ                      r̀̀      wūrī  
 1SG.S.IPFV              IPFV    want

ḱ      bá      ˘́ñ                      núŋ      ñtám              ém  
 TEMP    REL    1SG.S.PFV              drink    medicine              1SG:POSS

‘I want to take my medicine.’

(session\_309, David Mamuda, elicitation)

(792) ñ                      r̀̀      wūrī      ḱ      bá      ́                      d́b                      mân  
 1SG.S.IPFV              IPFV    want    TEMP    REL    1SG.S.PFV              buy:PFV                      oil

‘I want to buy oil.’

(session\_309, David Mamuda, elicitation)

(793) k̀m      ā,      ì                      r̀̀      wūrī      ḱ      bá      ˘́tám                      â  
 place    REL,    1PL    IPFV    accept    TEMP    REL    grow:PFV                      REL

‘This place that we want to develop.’

(session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

### 17.4 Parataxis and coordination

Independent main clauses can be linked together in discourse in two main ways in Kam. One method involves the use of a coordinator (§ 17.4.1). The other way is simple juxtaposition or parataxis (§ 17.4.2). I also discuss the use of the sequential preverbal marker *sì* ‘then’ (§ 17.4.3), which marks sequentiality (vs. simultaneity) of events in linked clauses. *sì* functions similar to a coordinator, but I treat it separately here because it is syntactically different. Rather than occurring in between two clauses, it occurs before the verb of a coordinated clause.

Subject pronominals are repeated when linked clauses share the same subject referent. This is one of the main distinctions setting linked clauses apart from multi-verb constructions in Kam (cf. § 12.5.5).



## 17.4.1 Coordinators

The following three coordinators are found in my current corpus of Kam, two of which are found in neighboring languages and are probably borrowed from Hausa. Most coordinators are also used as floor holders in conversations. More coordinators will appear in a more extensive analysis of Kam texts and natural discourse.

- *ikā* ‘then’
- *àmā* ‘and’ and ‘but’, borrowed from Hausa (*àmmā*).
- *kō* ‘or’, borrowed from Hausa (*ko*)

Some examples of each coordinator in use:

*ikā* ‘then’

- (794) *m̀pwòm r̀è kpàr, ikā ñ̀kā tór á p̀è*  
 rain IPFV rain, then thunder fall PFV come  
 ‘Rain was falling, (and) then thunder came down.’  
 (session\_007, Garba Abubakar Bako, narrative)

- (795) *ú sín jí sām̀rī*  
 3SG do:PFV thing bad
- ikā í sí †jág ú pé àgbàñ àwàn*  
 then 3PL SEQ carry 3SG come palace king

‘He did something bad. (And) then they brought him (here) to the palace of the king.’

(session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

*àmā* ‘and’, ‘or’ The *à*-syllable in this coordinator is a weak prosodic prefix and is often dropped.

- (796) *ń dóg jíjí à, àmā àjí nání h̀*  
 1SG.S.PFV see:PFV some PFV, but 3PL many NEG  
 ‘I can see some, but they aren’t many.’  
 (session\_187, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (797) àwàn      bób              pè      gèr,  
king      come.out      come      ouside,
- àmā      jí      ú                      jō      móm̄t      ú  
and      person 3SG:POSS      PL      greet      3SG

‘The king came out and his people greeted him.’

(session\_351, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (798) à                      rè      dín      jí      nīm              k̄ā,  
2SG.S.IPFV      IPFV      find      thing      ADJ:eat      COND,
- dāmūwā      júró                      h̄n̄,  
problem 1PL:POSS      NEG
- m̄ā**,      á                      m̄ásí      rīg,      jì      mí      †d̄ó      bé      k̄ā,  
**but**,      2SG.S.PFV      know      EMPH, thing      some      be      PRSTT COND,
- bén      má      †júró,      **m̄ā**      jì      mí      s̄irī      k̄ā  
say      give      1PL.O      **and**      thing      some      be.NEGCOND
- j̄à                      mì      k̄ùríkí      †s̄ín              á      †m̄íná  
thing:REL      some      God      make:PFV      REL      PRSTT

‘If you find food to eat, we don’t have a problem. But, you know, if there is anything, tell us. And if there is nothing, that is how God has made it.’

(session\_056, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, conversation)

kō ‘or’

- (799) bàbángídá á jī, kō sólómón à jī?  
 Babangida PRSTT Q or Solomon PRSTT Q  
 ‘Is it Babangida or is it Solomon?’  
 (session\_351, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (800) ú ním á jī, kō ú jéní?  
 3SG eat:PFV PFV Q or 3SG refuse:PFV  
 ‘Did he eat or did he refuse?’  
 (session\_351, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

#### 17.4.2 Parataxis: no coordinator

*àmā*, which is borrowed from Hausa (*ammā*), is the only coordinator corresponding to English ‘and’ and ‘but’ in Kam. When the Hausa-borrowed strategy is not applied, coordinated clauses are simply juxtaposed without a coordinator.

- (801) wó ré †tintóm, pàtùrú †téḡ á sàṅ  
 dog IPFV bark, cat run\PFV PFV go  
 ‘The dog was barking, and the cat ran away.’  
 (session\_351, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (802) àwàn bób pè gèr, ní ú jō mómt ú  
 king come.out:PFV come outside, person 3SG PL greet:PFV 3SG  
 ‘The king came out (here) and his people greeted him.’  
 (session\_351, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

- (803) ú ló kpô lògòrí, ú jé sàṅ lèsèr,  
 3SG wash body finish, 3SG enter:PFV go room,  
 ú jé jàḡ fú kùb  
 3SG go:PFV carry shirt wear

‘He washed his body, entered the room, and put on a shirt.’

(session\_351, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)



(805)	ń	ʃàṅrí	ńí	í-dērī	ń	à	kā
	Ñ	ʃàṅrí\PFV	ńì	í <sup>L</sup> -dèrì\ADJ	ń- <sup>L</sup>	à	kā
	1SG.S.PFV	finish	thing	ADJ:draw	1SG-POSS	PFV	COND

	ń	sì	jág	àgbàn
	Ñ	sì	jàg\H	àgbàn
	1SG.S.SEQ	SEQ	carry\PFV	wife

‘After I finish school, I (will) marry.’ (possibly: ‘It is after I finish school that I (will) marry.’)

(session\_119, Jauro Babangida Tukura, elicitation)

(806)	ń	ʃúg	é <sup>+</sup> nág	nàṅkò, ì	sì	bín <sup>+</sup> bén
	1SG.S.PFV	do:PFV	work	first, 1PL	SEQ	talk:FUT

‘I work first, and then we will talk.’, (possibly: ‘It is after I worked that we will talk.’)

(session\_351, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

(807)	ń	ʃúg	é <sup>+</sup> nág	nàṅkò, ñ	sì	rè	mòmí wàn
	1SG.S.PFV	do:PFV	work	first, 1SG.SEQ	SEQ	IPFV	greet king

‘I work first, and then I am meeting the king.’ (possibly: ‘It is after I worked that I will be meeting the king.’)

(session\_351, Solomon Ahmadu, elicitation)

(808)	ú	sín	ńí	sāmṛī
	3SG	do:PFV	thing	bad

īkā	í	sí	ʃág	ú	pé	àgbàn	àwàn
then	3PL	SEQ	carry	3SG	come	palace	king

‘He did something bad. And then they brought him (here) to the palace of the king.’

(session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

(809)	ɲí	íʃě	ɖɔ́r	pê		
	person	ADJ:war	descend:PFV	come		
	í	sí	bē	tór	í	ʃíʃũgī
	3PL	SEQ	PRSTT fall:PFV	3PL	catch	

‘Warriors came down. Then, they (the Kam) fell on them (the warriors) and caught them.’

(session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

### 17.5 Adverbial clauses

Adverbial clauses are essentially complex adverbial modifiers. Just like complement clauses are substitutes for simplex nominal core arguments in a clause, and just like relative clauses are complex adjective-like modifiers within a noun phrase, adverbial clauses are the clausal equivalents of peripheral clause modifiers (cf. § 15.4).

In this section, I distinguish two morphosyntactic types of adverbial clauses: those that are introduced by an adverbial conjunction (17.5.1) and conditional clauses, which are marked with a clause-final conditional marker (17.5.1.6) instead of a conjunction. The main difference between the two is thus where the clause-linking marker occurs: in the beginning of a clause, or at the end of a clause.

#### 17.5.1 Adverbial conjunctions

I collected a variety of adverbial conjunctions in Kam, some of which are widely attested and some of which are fairly rare in the current corpus. It is expected that more conjunctions and more examples will be found after more texts are analyzed. Adverbial conjunctions often have other functions in other parts of the grammar. One conjunction, *ká bá* (TEMP REL) ‘when, temporal; since, reason’ is also used as a complementizer (see § 17.3 above). *hár* ‘until, temporal’ – borrowed from Hausa (*har*) – is also used as a preposition (cf. § 11.2.2). *àrí bá* (SIM PROX.ID) ‘like, manner’, *àmīnā* ‘like, manner’ and *māmbá* ‘that is how, reason’ are also used as floor holders in conversations. Other conjunctions, which have not been found in other functions, include the purposive marker *kô*, *àsúmà* ‘when/after’, *àsúwá* ‘when/after’, *àɲá<sup>+</sup>lib* ‘because, since, reason’ *sīkā* ‘if not, lest, conditional/apprehensive’.

### 17.5.1.1 Temporal clauses with *ká bá* ('when', 'while')

*ká bá* introduces temporal clauses ('when', 'while'), and by extension reasons ('since, because') for an earlier mentioned state of affairs. When it introduces a temporal clause, it often signals co-occurrence of the events described in the linked clauses (like English 'while'). *ká bá* is probably a combination of the temporal preposition *ká* (§ 11.2.2.1) with the relativizer *bá* (§ 9.2.2).

- (810)    *ɲì*        *gɛ́*        *àɲá*        *bɔ̄lĩ*        *ɲá*  
           thing    what    person    ADJ:climb:FV    2SG:POSS
- rə*        *sìn*        *ɲì*        *gì*        *jĩ,*  
 IPFV     do        thing    what    Q,
- ká***        ***bá***        *†á*                    *gbán*        *pè?*  
**TEMP**    **REL**    2SG.S.PFV        arrive:PFV        come?

'What will your older brother be doing when you arrive?'

(session\_288, David Mark, elicitation)

- (811)    *ɲì*        *ná†ní*        *hñ,*  
           person    many    NEG,
- ká***        ***bá***        *àjí*        *nág*        *á*        *kō*        *kã*        *sīsīrā*  
**TEMP**    **REL**    3PL    leave:PFV    PFV    place:DIST    place:PROX    now

'There are not many people, since they left this place here now.'<sup>95</sup>

(session\_187, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

<sup>95</sup> The use of both a distal form and a proximal form of 'place' in this clause is peculiar and currently unexplained.

- (812) lillèm kó bá †á jútí ní â  
 good when REL 2SG.S.PFV give thing REL  
 ‘It is good to give things (away).’ (lit.: ‘It is good when you give things.’)  
 (session\_187, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

- (813) ú pé †tór á à kòm  
 3SG come fall:PFV PFV LOC place  
 kó ba †í lútí m k-áŋwī â  
 TEMP REL 3PL lay.down:CAUS:PFV 1SG.O ADVZ-new REL

‘He has come to visit the place during the time that I am appointed king.’

(session\_052, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

### 17.5.1.2 Temporal clauses with *àsúmà* ‘when’, *àsūwā* ‘when’ and *hár* ‘until’

*àsúmà* and *àsūwā* have both been found introducing adverbial clauses with a temporal meaning (functioning like English ‘when’). It is not clear how these adverbial clauses are different from clauses introduced with the complementizer *ká bá* (§ 17.3). *àsúmà* and *àsūwā* may be historically complex but cannot be segmented synchronically. In (814), the adverbial clause is expressed by a relative clause, so the final vowel *ā* of *àsūwā* seems to be related to the relative marker *ā*. No evidence of a relative clause is found in (815): the final vowel has a L tone, and there is no clause-final *à*. Given that this clause-final marker is optional in relative clauses, it is still possible that *àsúmà* contains a relativizer and that (815) contains a relative clause. Since this is the only example of a temporal clause with *àsúmà* in my data, I cannot provide a definitive analysis.

- (814) àsūwā ñkā jí tòr pè líb bér â  
 when:REL thunder arrive:PFV fall come on tree REL  
 ‘When lightning struck the tree (she died).’  
 (session\_007, Garba Abubakar Bako, narrative)



(815) àsumà àléŋ jí †jɔ̀b tán pè àgèr k-áfɔ̀  
**when:REL?** sun arrive:PFV be.hot stay come outside ADVZ-hot

nāŋī nāŋī, àná †pé,  
 quickly quickly, person:REL come,

àwú jág ní tīg ú rē sīrī  
 3SG take thing cover:FV 3SG:POSS EMPH completely

‘When the sun quickly shone out with warmth, the man that had come took off all of his cloak.’

(session\_314, Danjuma Bello, narrative)

*hár* also has only one clear example in the data where it introduces a temporal clause.

(816) í jág ní †dʒí á wē  
 3PL take:PFV thing dig PFV EMPH

**hár** í pé †gbó pé †ŋwé sùm  
**until** 3PL come:PFV stream come mouth lake

‘They dug until they came to the stream, to the mouth of the lake.’

(session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

### 17.5.1.3 Reasons and consequences (*māmbā* ‘that is why’ and *àná* ‘because, since’)

The conjunction *māmbā* ‘that is why’ also serves as a discourse marker. As a conjunction, it is attested in only a few examples in the current corpus. It introduces consequences of an earlier mentioned action. Its last syllable (*bā*) likely derives from the relativizer *bā*, since the adverbial clauses that go together with this conjunction are relative clauses. It is unclear where the first syllable (*mām*) stems from.

- (817) ìkā      **māmbá**                      sùm      gím                      jí      á      k̄ā  
 then      **that.is.why:REL**                      lake      tear:PFV                      stand      REL      ?<sup>96</sup>  
 ‘(They dug the banks of the river away.) That is why the lake tore.’  
 (session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

*àṅá* <sup>+</sup>*lib* (analyzable as ‘thing:REL head’) introduces adverbial clauses that signal reasons why the event described in the previous clause happened.

- (818) **àṅá**                      <sup>+</sup>**lib**      sòm      ò      ...  
**thing:REL**                      **head**      lake      DIST      ...  
  
 gèr      r̀̀      d̀̀zór                      s̄āṅ      k̄ā  
 outside      IPFV      descend                      go      ?<sup>96</sup>

‘(They dug the banks of the river away) so that the lake would be gushing down.’

(session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (819) àṅ̀̀v̀̀n      mí                      ā      dín      ṅwá      <sup>+</sup>ú  
 man                      some                      REL      meet      friend      3SG:POSS  
  
**ṅá**                      <sup>+</sup>**líp**                      <sup>+</sup>**bén**      <sup>+</sup>**táb**      á                      <sup>+</sup>**kósí**      à                      ṅwé      márê  
**thing:REL**      head                      talk      fish      REL      gather:PFV      LOC      mouth      river

‘A man met his friend because of an issue of fish gathered at the river bank.’

(session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

#### 17.5.1.4 Manner clauses with *àrí bā* and *àmīnā*

Both of these items have a similar meaning and are often translated by my consultants as ‘like this’. They are fairly poorly attested in my data as conjunctions. *àrí bā* is composed of the simulative preposition *àrí* ‘like’ and the relativized demonstrative *bā*. *àmīnā* is synchronically unanalyzable but is probably related to the presentative demonstrative *míná*. They are frequently found as floor holders, similar to ‘like’ in English.

<sup>96</sup> The function of *k̄ā* here is unclear. It appears to be semantically empty.

In those contexts, they can be literally translated as ‘like this’. The following two examples show them as conjunctions.

(820)    ú           pá           <sup>+</sup>dóg   rə       nùŋ    ú           rā,  
          3SG       come:PFV   see    COM   eye    3SG:POSS   EMPH

**àrí**       **bá**           jàkú           jō       tán    pé  
**like**       **this:REL**    ancestor       PL       stay   come

‘He came to see it with his eyes, how (his) ancestors stayed here.’

(session\_052, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

(821)    **àmīnā**   í           rə       jàg       kùb           sàŋ    máré  
**like.this** 3PL    IPFV   take    be.weak       go       river

‘(The lake flooded ...) and like that they were drowning in the river.’

(session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

### 17.5.1.5 Purposive clauses with *kô*

The following examples illustrate the use of the purposive conjunction *kô*. Note that in examples (823) and (824) the subject is not repeated after *kô* and that the verb after *kô* is not marked for tense or aspect in those examples. This makes the construction in these examples syntactically similar to a multi-verb construction (cf. § 12.5.5). This may be a hint that *kô*, which is not currently found as a lexical verb in Kam, may derive from a verb, and that this purposive adverbial clause construction may be a grammaticalized instance of a multi-verb construction. Example (822), unambiguously shows *kô* as a conjunction. To corroborate or reject this hypothesis, we need more examples than what is available in the current corpus.

(822)    ŋì           mí       ā       ú       rə       lāb    džērī,  
          thing    certain   PROX   3SG    IPFV   hide   look,

**kó**        àwú    dógì            ntèkù   dógì  
**PURP**   3SG   see:FUT        toad    see

‘He was secretly looking at something, so that he would see the toad.’

(session\_181, Babangida Audu, narrative)

- (823) ì r̀̀ p̀̀ r̀̀ k̀̀ d̀̀g r̀̀ m̀̀s̀́  
 1PL IPFV come EMPH **PURP** see EMPH again  
 ‘We are coming to see it again.’  
 (session\_052, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (824) ì p̀̀ k̀̀ t̀̀b̀́ ǹ̀g á r̀̀  
 1PL come:PFV **PURP** start work PROX EMPH  
 ‘We came to start the work (where we left yesterday).’  
 (session\_053, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, narrative)

### 17.5.1.6 Negative conditional and apprehensive clauses (*s̀̀k̀̀* ‘if not, lest’)

*s̀̀k̀̀* can be used both as a negative conditional coordinator meaning ‘if this is not the case’ (825) and as an apprehensive coordinator corresponding to English ‘lest’ (825), (827). It is not synchronically analyzable but may be related to the conditional marker *k̀̀* (cf. § 17.5.2).

- (825) m̀̀ ǹ̀ b̀̀ǹ́  
 and 2PL say:PFV
- íj̀́ \*̀̀ǹ̀ s̀̀r̀́ k̀̀, ...  
 QUOT alcohol be.NEG ?<sup>97</sup>
- s̀̀k̀̀ í ǹ̀ k̀̀ s̀̀g̀́ p̀̀h s̀̀ẁ́?  
 if.not 3PL go:PFV **PURP** search come TAG

‘And you people say that the alcohol is finished, right? ... If not, they should go and search for it.’

(session\_271, Danjuma Bello, conversation)

<sup>97</sup> The function of *k̀̀* here is unclear. It appears to be semantically empty.

- (826) ì wóg èwàn à, sīkā í pé †jǔg èwàn ...  
 1PL hide:FUT king PROX, lest 3PL come catch:FUT king ...  
 ‘We will hide the king, lest they will come and catch (our) king.’  
 (session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (827) í tìn gópsí,  
 3PL move:PFV separate,  
  
 sīkā àjí sámri kòm sámrí.  
 lest 3PL spoil:FUT place spoil

‘(The Kam say that) they moved away, lest they (the Jukun) will ruin the place.’

(session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

### 17.5.2 Conditional clauses with the clause-final conditional marker *kā*

Conditions are coded with the clause-final particle *kā*. *kā* follows all other particles, including the negator *hñ*. No examples have been observed where it co-occurs with the interrogative marker *jī*, so their relative positions are uncertain. In a construction where a condition is given for a certain situation to actualize, the order is usually condition then situation. Other orders are possible too, however.

- (828) jì mí †dó bé kā, bèn má †júrú  
 thing some be PRSTT COND, say give 1PL.O  
 ‘If there is anything, tell us.’  
 (session\_056, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, narrative)

- (829) jò dóg jí nīmī hñ kā,  
 2PL see:NEG.NFUT thing ADJ:eat:ADJ NEG COND,  
  
 jò ré †jéb-í mákáràntà hñ.  
 2PL NEG:FUT go\NEG:FUT-FV school NEG.

‘If you people do not see food, you people will not go to school.’

(session\_271, Wesam, conversation)

- (830)    *gì*      *jī*      *jà*    *bòrì*      *jà*      *rè*    *síní*    *gê,*    *ànā,*  
           what    Q      person ADJ:climb    2SG:POSS    IPFV    do-i    what,    today,  
  
           *á*                    *jàéb*    *jēī*    *hñ*    *kà,*  
           2SG.S.FUT      go:FUTsee    NEG    COND,  
  
           *jà*      *gè*      *á*                    *hwál*    *gì*      *jī?*  
           thing    what    2SG.S.PFV    think    what    Q

‘What is your brother doing today, if you don’t go see him, do you think?’

(session\_290, David Mark, elicitation)

*kā* is often used to mark the first event in a chronological sequence of two events. In that sense, it is not just a conditional marker but also a sequential marker:

- (831)    *àwú*      *sáj*      *áj<sup>+</sup>gwóg*      *án<sup>+</sup>á*    *ú*      *jò*      *kà,*  
           3SG      go\PFV house      father    3SG<sup>NS</sup> PL    COND,  
  
           *àléb,*    *àwú*    *sín*                    *áj<sup>+</sup>í*    *nīm-ī,*  
           evening, 3SG    make\FUT    thing    eat:ADJ-FV,  
  
           *ú*      *jàg*                    *mísí*    *pê*  
           3SG    carry\FUT    again    come

‘When she goes back to her parents’ house, in the evening, she will prepare food and she will bring it back (to you).’

(session\_076, Adamu S. Baka, narrative)



The reporting verb can be left out, leaving only the quotative marker followed by the reported discourse.

- (836) **íjì** vág júrú sīrī kō̄ bē  
 QUOT border 1PL.O be.NEGplace:DIST PRSTT  
 ‘(They said) that our boundary is not there.’  
 (session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (837) **íjì** †sóg pè bā,  
 QUOT:3PL search:PFV come EMPH,  
  
**í** †né kô sóg pá bē  
 QUOT:3PL go:PFV PURP search come PRSTT.

‘(We suggested) that they look for it, that they go searching for it.’

(session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

Example (837) shows that, when *íjì<sup>L</sup>* is followed by the third person plural pronoun *àjì*, the pronoun merges with the quotative marker. The same is true when the quotative marker is followed by the singular logophoric pronoun *ì* (cf. § 8.6).

- (838) ú bēní **î** rə̀ pè pí<sup>†</sup>káj  
 3SG say:FV **QUOT:LOG.SG** IPFV come tomorrow  
 ‘He said that he is coming tomorrow.’  
 (Tope-Bitrus\_03, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

- (839) àní mí †wúr â  
 person some answer PFV  
  
**ìjì** á †fárí ŋwé kòm éntē ā  
**QUOT:LOG.SG** REL open:PFV mouth place small REL

‘Someone<sub>i</sub> answered that he<sub>i</sub> is the one who opened the window.’

(session\_054, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, elicitation)



The quotative marker is also used to identify proper names (cf. § 15.2.4).

- (840) gán ém †íjí bùbàkàr  
 name 1SG:POSS QUOT Abubakar  
 ‘My name is Abubakar’  
 (session\_003, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)

- (841) àná mà gán ú †íjí bùbàkàr à  
 person:REL some:REL name 3SG:POSS QUOT Abubakar REL  
 ‘A certain person whose name is Abubakar ...’  
 (adapted from session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, elicitation)

### 17.6.2 Reported speech without overt quotative marker

In just a few instances, the quotative marker was omitted and a pause was left between the reporting verb and the reported speech. In a few examples, both the verb and the quotative marker are dropped. It is not clear how natural such omissions are or whether they have something to do with the distinction between direct and indirect speech. This distinction has not been investigated in Kam.

- (842) jàkúbú †bén, ní déb àfàm ʃàr  
 Jakob say:PFV, 1SG.S.PFV buy:PFV meat three  
 ‘Jakob says: “I bought three (pieces of) meat”.’

- (843) jàkúbú †bén mā gàmbó,  
 Jakob say:PFV give Gambo,  
 á níím jí àfàm sīrī?  
 2SG.S.PFV eat:PFV thing meat completely?

‘Jakob says to Gambo: “Did you eat your meat?”’

(844) àfí bú bĩ,  
 child 3SG:POSS one,

Gàmbó mág †kímí mfàm ú hñ  
 Gambo NEG eat:PFV meat 3SG:POSS NEG

‘One of his children (says): “Gambo did not eat his meat”.’

(845) Gàmbō, ò m̄, àbìràg ā íj kím bím.  
 Gambo, no, vegetable REL 1SG.S.PFV eat:PFV only.

“Gambo (says): “No, I only ate vegetables.””



## 18 Information structure

A comprehensive analysis of information structure in Kam is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Here, I present a basic description of a number of markers and constructions. These were difficult to analyze in terms of traditional nominal, verbal or adverbial categories. I focus on presenting relevant data. Terminology and specific analyses are preliminary. The topics I consider in this chapter are clefts, which can mark focus (§ 18.1), the marker *d̥ʒē* marking topic and emphasis (§ 18.2), discourse-cohesive uses of the presentative demonstrative *bē* (§ 18.3) and two emphatic markers with currently little understood functions: *rīg* (§ 18.4) and *nè* (§ 18.5).

### 18.1 *The cleft construction marking focus*

Clefts may introduce new referents which may be contrasted with earlier introduced referents or which may provide new information about an already introduced state of affairs. (846) shows the basic structure of relative clauses, which form the basis of cleft constructions (cf. § 17.2)

(846) [N] + *ā* + [relative clause] (+ *à*)

A cleft construction allows referents utterance-initially that would occur utterance-finally or utterance-medially in main clauses not preceded by clefts. For instance, main clauses always have SVO order ('I washed a shirt', (847)a). A cleft strategy allows the object referent of a main clause ('a shirt') to be encoded utterance-initially in its corresponding cleft construction ('It is a shirt that I washed', (847)b.). I did not find any instances of a cleft construction introducing new subjects. New subjects may be introduced by other means.

(847) a.  
 ḿ f́ér é†fú  
 1SG:PFV wash:PFV shirt  
 ‘I washed a shirt.’

b.  
 àfú ā, ḿ f́ér  
 shirt REL, 1SG wash:PFV  
 ‘It is a shirt that I washed.’

(constructed examples)

Example (848) shows a clear case of contrastive focus. The first clause describes what type of meat the speaker did not eat, and the second clause, a cleft construction, introduces a new referent contrasting with the subject of the first clause: the type of meat that the speaker *did* eat.

(848) ḿ m̀àg ním àfàm nág h̀n.  
 1SG.S.NEG.NFUT NEG eat meat cow NEG.  
 m̀fàm m̀pīrī ā, ǰ kím  
 meat goat REL, 1SG.S.PFV eat:PFV

‘I did not eat cow meat. It was goat meat that I ate.’

(session\_285, Babangida Audu, elicitation)

In (849), a state of affairs is introduced where a group of jihadi raiders were taken prisoner by the Kam and held as slaves. The second and third clauses, instances of the cleft construction, introduce supplementary information about who exactly was taken slave.

(849)	í	ʃúg	í	jág	ˀkó	pínî.	
	3PL	catch:PFV	3PL	take	INSTR	slave.	
	zág	ní	gbàn	jō,	í	ʃúg	â.
	side	person	female	PL:REL,	3PL	catch:PFV	REL.
	zág	ní	vān	mā,	í	ʃúg	â.
	side	person	male	some:REL,	3PL	catch:PFV	REL.

‘They (the Kam) captured them (the intruders) as slaves. They captured women. They captured some men.’

(session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

Example (850) is taken from the description of a criminal trial in which the political king of Kam judges someone who has committed various murders. The king calls the perpetrator to him, subjects him to a test which verifies his guilt, and then banishes him. The cleft construction, “It is in this land that we don’t want bad things”, has to be understood within the perspective of this banishment. The king says that he does not want evil things to happen in *this* land, that the murderer and his actions do not fit in the society he wants to represent, and that he should move to another place, away from the Kam country. The focus construction introduces the decision to banish the murderer.

- (850) àwàn bén:  
king say:PFV
- “àbìbí á mā, ì wúrí jì í-sāmrī hñ.  
“land REL certain:REL, 1PL want:PFV thing ADJ-spoil:ADJ NEG.
- àjì míná ró tám á †jí.  
world PRSTT IPFV grow REL stand
- jì í-sāmrī sī bób á ɖʒē à kā,  
thing ADJ-spoil:ADJ SEQ come.out PFV TOP EMPH COND
- rè sìn nè hñ.”  
IPFV do EMPH NEG.”

‘The king said: “In this land, we don’t want bad things. This world that has been developing (lit. ‘growing’). And now, if something bad comes out, it won’t work.”’

(session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

In § 16.1.2.2, I introduced a cleft structure with the interrogative modifier *mīnā* ‘which [N]?, what [N]?’, which is a variation of the cleft constructions discussed in this section.

## 18.2 Topic shift and emphasis with ɖʒē

The marker ɖʒē has a variety of different uses. It can also be found as ɖʒī, ɖʒō and ɖʒē.

Speakers use ɖʒē to introduce or change a topic in discourse. ɖʒē follows noun phrases that are introduced as a new topic. (851) is a question where a new person gets involved in the discourse situation. This person becomes the new topic of the conversation as information is inquired about them.

- (851) jà ɖʒē, á ró †jébí hñ?  
2SG.ID TOP, 2SG.S.FUT NEG.FUT go:NEG.FUT:FUT NEG  
‘What of you, won’t you go?’  
(session\_357, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)

In (852), a speaker is recounting events that happened the day before, and in the third clause shifts the topic and time frame from yesterday's (*àlīlē*) course of events to today's (*ànā*) plans.

(852)    *ń*                      *nág*                      *á*    *kā̄*    *ā<sup>+</sup>līlē*                      *kó*    *kárfé*    *jīrāk*.  
           1SG.S.PFV            leave:PFV            LOC    here    yesterday            TEMP    hour    two.

*ń*                      *mérè*    *sáj*.  
           1SG.S.PFV            return    go:PFV.

**ànā**    **ǰē**    *ń*                      *mér*                      *á*    *pè*.  
**today**    **TOP**    1SG.S.PFV            return:PFV            PFV    come.

*ì*            *pè*                      *kô*    *túbí*                      *†nág*    *á*    *rē*  
           1PL            come:PFV            PURP    start:PFV            work    PFV    EMPH

‘I left here yesterday at two o’ clock. I went back (home). Today I came back. We came here to start the work.’

(session\_053, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, narrative)

(853) comes from a narrative where the king of Kam recounts a disagreement between two men that has escalated into violence. After he explains the case, he briefly takes a step back and focuses on the stability that he thinks should be upheld in Kam land. Here, the topic marker *ǰē* also distances the Kam from the troublemakers, who are apparently from another ethnic group.



- (853) tò,        **jùrù** **ɖzē**,    àjì    ηwòm,  
 so,        **1PL** **TOP**,    world    Kam
- kábá    ì        ɖzój    kóm    jōη    pā    rā,  
 since    1PL    sit:PFV    place    ADJ:sit come    EMPH,
- àjì        jákú            júrú            †á,  
 world    ancestor        1PL:POSS        PRSTT,
- wò        jár            óbì    rā            hñ.  
 blood    drip:NEG.FUT    ground    NEG.FUT        NEG
- ì        sín            á-sāmṛī        rā            hñ  
 1PL    do:NEG:FUT    ADJ-spoil:ADJ    NEG.FUT        NEG
- tò,        bó            †tán    à,        àjí    sú            jì    mí    †á  
 so,        DIST:REL    stand    REL,    3PL    ethnicity    thing    some    PRSTT
- ì        wūrī    kábá    †wó    í            †jár        óbì    à        hñ  
 1PL    want    when    blood    3PL:POSS    drop:PFV    down    REL    NEG

‘So, as for us, the Kam land: when we live here in this place – it is the land of our ancestors –, there will be no bloodshed. We cannot do anything bad. So, that thing (that we discussed), they are another ethnicity. We do not want their blood to be shed.’

(session\_048, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

Finally, (854) gives a fragment of a story where a criminal is brought to the king's court to be judged. The first three clauses tell the sequence of events of his arrival at the palace: he is accused, he is brought to the palace, and he is trialed. Then, the topic shifts to the result of the trial, and the outcome is presented

(854)	í	pó	†bír	ú	nùŋ.				
	3PL	come:PFV	blow:PFV	3SG	eye				
	<b>ànùŋ</b>	<b>ā</b>	<b>í</b>	<b>pó</b>	<b>†bír</b>	<b>ú</b>	<b>á</b>	<b>ɖǝ̄,</b>	
	<b>eye</b>	<b>REL</b>	<b>3PL</b>	<b>come:PFV</b>	<b>blow:PFV</b>	<b>3SG</b>	<b>REL</b>	<b>TOP,</b>	
	ʃùg		ú	á	jàgì	kó			
	catch:PFV		3SG	PFV	take	INSTR			
	jí	sāmrī	ā	àwú	sín	â			
	thing	spoil:ADJ	REL	3SG	do:PFV	REL			

‘They came and brought him to trial. That trial that they brought him to, it confirmed his guilt (lit. ‘They came and blew into his eye. The eye that they blew, it caught him with the bad things that he had done’.)’

Context: ‘He did something bad. Then they took him here to the palace of the king. They came and brought him to trial. **That trial that they brought him to, it confirmed his guilt.**’

(session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

I also found *ɖǝ̄* in some unrelated syntactic contexts following verbs. In (855), *ɖǝ̄* occurs after an imperative verb and urges the hearer to start telling his story. In (856), it is used after a simple clause. My informants translated *ɖǝ̄* here as ‘finally’. Like the examples given above, both (855) and (856) mark a shift in topic. The difference is that here the topic is not present in the clause as a noun phrase. It is implicit: in (855) the hearer is urged to start the new topic, and in (856) the following chapter of a story is announced.

(855)	bímbēn	<b>ɖǝ̄</b>
	~say	<b>TOP</b>
	‘go ahead, start talking’	
	(session_019, Awunu Yakubu, conversation)	

- (856) m̀, gbán á **d̥ǐ** k̄a  
 mm, arrive PFV **TOP** COND  
 ‘so, when (the day) finally arrives ...’  
 (session\_254, Shawuya, narrative)

### 18.3 Emphatic uses of the presentative demonstrative *bē*

In § 9.2.2, I discussed the presentative demonstrative *bē*. It is mostly used as an emphatic marker in clauses.

- (857) àjì r̀ <sup>+</sup>wó **bē** r̀ ɲwāb  
 3PL COM **dog** **PRSTT** COM all  
 ‘(They are still looking for the frog,) he and the dog, all of them.’  
 (session\_181, Babangida Audu, narrative)

- (858) **àt̥ʃr** **bē** míná bá gágár á <sup>+</sup>tán-ì gàn à  
**bee** **PRSTT****PRSTT** REL hang:PFV PFV stand-FV up REL  
 ‘See the bee(hive) here, that hangs down (up on the tree).’  
 (session\_181, Babangida Audu, narrative)

- (859) **mè**      **ntèkù** **bē**      dzē      míná      bá      kú      bá  
**mother** **frog** **PRSTTTOP**      PRSTT PROX      become.weak      PFV
- lù      rə      ñkám      ʃì      bú      jò      à  
lay.down COM      rest      child      3SG:POSS      PL      PFV

‘The mother frog here is laying down with the rest of her children.’

(session\_181, Babangida Audu, narrative)

*bē* can also occur immediately following verbs, however. Here, it can also be translated as ‘then’, ‘now’, or ‘there you go’. It highlights what happens next, after what came before in a narrative, for example.

- (860) àwú      firí      wūrī      kībá      jág      **bé**      ʃòr      ʃùg      jág      à  
3SG.S      jump      want      COMP      grab      **PRSTT**bee      catch      grab      PFV

‘Then/now/there you go, he jumps and wants to grab and catch the bee here.’

(session\_181, Babangida Audu, narrative)

- (861) àlírí      dzē      būbbōb      pē      **\*bē**      lēb      gùm      bər  
hawk      TOP      ?~come.out      come      **PRSTT**inside      hole      tree

(When the dog fell out of the tree,) then (suddenly) a hawk came out of the tree hole.’

(session\_181, Babangida Audu, narrative)

In (862) and (863), *bē* follows entire clauses. If it is left out, my consultants explained, the soaking of the alcohol does not entail any link with the return of the person mentioned in the first part of the sentence. In (863), *bē* appears to link back in some way to the alcohol or the event of soaking the alcohol, for which the participants of a certain festival have to take off their clothes.

- (862) àwú      rá      mərə      pè,      í      bóg      óbàṅ      à      **bē**.  
3SG      IPFV      return      come      3PL      soak:PFV      alcohol PFV      **PRSTT**

‘(As) he’s coming back, there you go, they brewed the beer.’

(session\_357, Shawuya, narrative)

- (863)    *í*            *bóg*            *ébaŋ*    *à*        *kā*        ***bē***,            *àbaŋ*    *túttūbī* ...  
           3PL        soak:PFV        alcohol PROX COND **PRSTT**,        alcohol FUT~start
- í*            *túsi*            *kpò*        ***bē***.  
           3PL        show:FUT        body        **PRSTT**.

‘There you go, after they soaked the alcohol, the alcohol will then start ... and then they will show their body.’

(session\_357, Shawuya, narrative)

### 18.4 Emphatic marker *rīg* (or *rē*)

The emphatic marker *rīg* (or *rē*) occurs clause-finally before any clausal adverbials and negators. I have found *rīg* in many different functions, for example stressing that something is the case, counter to expectation (864), or as a modal particle that can be translated as ‘also’ into English (865).

- (864)    *m*                    *mási*            ***rīg***  
           1SG.S.PFV        know:PFV        **EMPH**  
           ‘I do know.’ (countering some assumption or expectation that the speaker doesn’t know.)  
           (session\_357, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)

- (865)    *n*                    *ǰúg*        *ènág*        ***rē***  
           1SG.S.FUT        do:FUTwork        **EMPH**  
           ‘I also want to work.’  
           (session\_357, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)

Other examples include the following.

- (866)    *àwú*        *jág*        *ní*        *tīg*            *ú*            ***rē***        *sīrī*  
           3SG        take        thing    cover:FV        3SG:POSS        **EMPH** completely  
           ‘[When the sun quickly shone out with warmth,] he took of all of his cloak.’  
           (session\_314, Danjuma Bello, narrative)

- (867)    *ú*            *pá*            <sup>+</sup>*dóg*    *ré*        *nùŋ*        *ú*            ***rē***  
           3SG        come:PFV        see        COM    eye        3SG:POSS        **EMPH**  
           ‘He came to see it with his eyes.’  
           (session\_052, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (868) ʃãmbã dɔ́ lɛ̀b jí ɲwòm rɔ́  
 Chamba be inside person Kam **EMPH**

There are Chamba among the Kam people.

(session\_191, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

- (869) ì pɛ̀ kô túbí †nág á rɔ́  
 1PL come PURP start:PFV work PFV **EMPH**

‘We came to start the work.’

(session\_053, Muhammad Bose Yuguda, narrative)

*rīg* is very often found in an affirmative predicative possession construction. There is no semantic difference between clauses that have *rīg* and those that do not (871). Such clauses do occur more frequently with *rīg* than without, however, and consultants express that the construction with *rīg* is preferred.

- (870) ñ dɔ́ rɔ́ †ʃóm rīg  
 1SG be COM hoe **EMPH**

‘I have a hoe.’

(session\_071, Isa Sarkin Dawa, elicitation)

- (871) ñtèkù dɔ́ rɔ́ fù (rīg)  
 toad be COM pregnancy **EMPH**

‘The toad is pregnant.’

(session\_357, Rahab Garba Precious, elicitation)

*rīg* is obligatory in the negative predicative possessive construction (cf. § 15.2.1). It is also likely that the postverbal negative future marker *rɔ́* is related to the emphasis marker *rīg*, although it probably does not have any emphatic meaning in that context (cf. § 13.1 and § 13.6.2).

### 18.5 Emphatic marker *nè*

Kam allows the use of *nè*, an emphatic marker borrowed from Hausa (*ne*) (cf. Jaggar 2001: 508-510).<sup>98</sup> This marker appears in both affirmative and negative, imperative and declarative clauses. It has scope over the whole clause. In negative clauses, I have currently only found *nè* in the slot before negators ((873), (874)). In Hausa, it can also occur after clause-final negators.

<sup>98</sup> Hausa also has a feminine emphatic marker, *ce*, which is not borrowed into Kam.

- (872) ɲéb      ɲgwóg wàn      nè  
 go      house king      EMPH  
 ‘Go to the house of the king!’  
 (Tope\_Bitrus\_06, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)
- (873) ká      ɲéb      ɲgwóg wàn      nè      gà  
 NEG:IMPgo      house king      EMPH NEG:IMP  
 ‘Don’t go to the house of the king!’  
 (Tope\_Bitrus\_06, Garba Abubakar Bako, elicitation)
- (874) rə      sɪn      nè      hɪ  
 IPFV      do      EMPH NEG  
 ‘It is not doing (it)’, i.e. ‘It cannot work like this.’  
 (session\_051, Isa Sarkin Dawa, narrative)

## 19 Minimal clauses: interjections

Interjections form a word class that cannot combine with other syntactic items to form a clause<sup>99</sup>. They are always a separate utterance. Functionally, they are characterized by expressive and socio-pragmatic functions rather than propositional meaning. Most of them can be described as backchannels. They are by no means a ‘minor’ linguistic category in the language, since they are so frequent and are so important in natural conversation, in terms of turn-taking and discourse-related functions.

Each interjection has a wide variety of specific functions that differ according to the discourse context in which it is used, and it is difficult to abstract across these functions to find a general meaning for each. Functions of interjections include the expression of surprise, disbelief, endorsement, disagreement, humility, hesitance, delight, insistence, encouragement, discouragement, understanding, misunderstanding and a request for repair, anger, fear, relief, etc. At some times, they express emotions. At other times they are essential discourse tools and serve as expected cues to show that someone is following a conversation. In some cases, they may be considered formulaic.

Probably because of their important social and expressive functions, their generally high salience in speech, their flexibility to be used in many different contexts and their high frequency, they are very memetic, very easy to mimic and very easy to pick up and integrate into one’s own speech. As a result, interjections are very easily borrowed from one language into another (cf. e.g. Matras 2007; Andersen 2014). Most of the interjections found in Kam are also found in many other languages in the region. Some items are identified by my consultants as not Kam (although they are frequently used in Kam discourse), and some items are identified as purely Kam, not borrowed from or occurring in any other languages (although some of these interjections generally do occur elsewhere, such as *m* for ‘yes’ and *m m* for ‘no’ – according to my consultants, these do not have a fixed tone).

A list of general interjections is given here. It is not exhaustive, but it exemplifies the range of items and emotions and functions that are expressed by interjections, as well as some typical phonological

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<sup>99</sup> I do not specifically discuss any other minimal utterances than interjections. Any noun phrase, prepositional phrase, verb and adverbial modifier can occur on its own, forming a minimal utterance. These are all described in their respective sections. At a later stage in the description and documentation of Kam, I plan to include a fuller discussion of such minimal clauses as vocatives, insults, greetings, other formulaic expressions and elliptic clauses (cf. Elders 2000:584 -600).



properties. All of these interjections are also found in other languages in the area, possibly with different shades of meaning.

- εε* (no associated tone) agreement, compliance (identified as Hausa by consultants)
- aa* (no associated tone) agreement, compliance
- ʔaʔa* (no associated tone) disagreement, noncompliance (identified as Hausa by consultants)
- ε↓* (ingressive ε; can also be other sounds, sometimes *m↓*, an ingressive bilabial nasal; both eyebrows are raised while inhaling, and head is tilted lightly backwards for a moment) agreement, confirmation
- ɣ* (back-released uvular click with closed lips) agreement, compliance (see also Lionnet [to appear]),
- ɣɣ* (two back-released uvular clicks with closed lips) disagreement, noncompliance
- éé* insistence while offering something
- ʔàʔá* surprise, disbelief, endorsement of a previous statement
- m̃h̃m̃* strong agreement with and endorsement of a previous statement, encouragement, delight, relief
- mmm* (no associated tone) doubt, reluctance to answer, reluctance to agree or disagree with a statement
- kà* agreement, satisfaction, generally translatable as ‘OK’
- wéjjj* endorsement, agreement, delight, humor, empathy
- wájjj* endorsement, agreement, delight, humor, empathy
- wàné* delight, humor
- èhêj* endorsement, agreement, empathy
- jáwwàà* endorsement, agreement, delight (from Hausa or Fulfulde, where it has the same form).
- wájjòò* empathy
- ójjòò* empathy

<i>kaj</i>	(no associated tone) surprise, disbelief, anger, dissatisfaction, frustration, empathy (a Hausa or Adamawa Fulfulde borrowing, where it has the same form). This item can also be repeated many times in a row quietly ( <i>kaj kaj kaj kaj kaj</i> ) to express agreement and empathy
<i>sss</i>	call for attention

The following interjections are identified as Kam, and not (borrowed from) any other language, by my consultants.

<i>m</i>	(no associated tone) agreement, compliance
<i>mʔm</i>	(no associated tone) disagreement, noncompliance
<i>óóôj</i>	agreement, call for attention
<i>oʔo</i>	(no associated tone) disagreement, noncompliance
<i>ǰ</i>	insistence
<i>ǰǰ</i>	hesitant acceptance to receive something
<i>támîn</i>	agreement, probably a short form of <i>táʔá mîn</i> ‘It happened like that.’
<i>dàr</i>	humility, apology, translatable as “sorry”
<i>nùg</i>	frustration, anger, dissatisfaction, translatable as ‘fuck!’



## VI Part six: texts and lexicon



## Texts

### *A fable*

This fable tells the story of a man who dresses up like a woman. The king notices him, takes interest in him, and wants to marry him. The hare, however, spies on the man and notices that he is, in fact, male. When the hare tells the king about his discovery, the king is dismayed and decides to put the man to the test. He organizes a festival where each participant has to take off their clothes in order to receive traditional beer. The cross-dressing man hears about this plan, is afraid, and goes to the toad for help. The toad, who is female, agrees to exchange her sex with the man, who makes his transition into a woman. When the festival takes place and the participants have to take off their clothes, the woman appears to be female. Everybody turns on the hare, who fears for his life and runs off. The story then goes back to the toad, who turns out to have been pregnant when he exchanged his sex with the woman. He is unable to give birth to his children and dies.

I collected this fable in Sabongida Kamajim on October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017, during a storytelling session with around twenty-five participants. The story was performed by a lady called Shawuya. The participants, mostly male, urged her to tell a story so that the recordings would not just represent the men of Kam but all of Kam society (session\_254).



**Figure 21 – Storytelling session with Shawuya in Sabongida Kamajim, 18th of October 2017**

- (875) àfí ívān bīnī  
 child male one  
 One boy,
- (876) àwú jág kpá kôm kǒ jé ní ígbàn  
 3SG carry:PFV wrapper tie PURP go person female  
 he wears a wrapper to walk (like) a woman.
- (877) kpánjì dǒ, kpánjì dǒ hākā,  
 hang.out FOC hang.out FOC like.that  
 Moving around, moving around like this.
- (878) wáj! àwàn jéí ká: wàné  
 EXCL king see:PFV COND it.is.good  
 Hey! When the king sees them, (he thinks) it is good.
- (879) àgbàn á àwàn fǐnì gbàn à jàg  
 woman REL king betroth:PFV wife REL carry  
 This is the woman that the king wants to marry.
- (880) ú fǐnì ú dǒ à dǒ kā  
 3SG betroth:PFV 3SG FOC PFV FOC COND  
 When he has paid the dowry,<sup>100</sup>
- (881) tò  
 so  
 then
- (882) bəri bā í jéḅ kpánjì fìjè  
 time REL 3PL go hang.out:PFV washing.place  
 The time that they (the women) go hang out at the river,

<sup>100</sup> The tone of *dǒ* is unexpected here. M tone is expected.

- (883) í            rẹ̀        lẹ̀        kpò  
 3PL        IPFV    wash    body  
 they are washing themselves,
- (884) ikā        lámé    †d̥zág        níj            ú            à        dọ̀gì.    wéí!  
 then        hare    spy:PFV        privates        3SG:POSS        PFV    see:FV EXCL  
 the hare spies on his private parts, hey!
- (885) ú            pé                    à        bén  
 3SG        come:PFV        PFV    say  
 He comes (to the king and) says:
- (886) “àshíná, àwàn”  
 swear    king  
 “I swear, king,”
- (887) “jńá                    †á                    ǰín            á        kà,”  
 person:REL        2SG.S.PFV        betroth:PFV        REL    ?  
 “the person you paid a dowry for,”
- (888) “àjńí        ígbàn    á        há?”  
 person    female PRSTT eh  
 “(you think) she’s a woman, eh?”
- (889) “jńì        ígbàn    á        dúddōgī        hń,        jńí        ívān    á”  
 person    female PRSTT ?~see        NEG    person    male    PRSTT  
 “She is not a woman, she is a man!”
- (890) jńí        ívān    á,        àwú    jńí        ígbàn    á        hń  
 person    male    PRSTT,3SG    person    female PRSTT NEG  
 “She is a man, she is not a woman!”
- (891) “é            k-ántēī        wá? “  
 QUOT    ADVZ-truth    eh  
 (The king:) “Is that true?”



- (892) “m̄”  
yes  
(The hare:) “Yes.”
- (893) “ì sín dʒá ò sìm?”  
1PL do reason DIST how  
(The king:) “What can we do about it?”<sup>101</sup>
- (894) “j̄nā ī r̄è sìn r ā kà há”  
thing:REL 1PL IPFV do EMPH REL ? eh  
(The hare:) “What we are going to do (is this):”
- (895) “jág ébàŋ, jág ébàŋ bòg”  
carry beer, carry bear soak  
“Take beer, take beer, (and) soak it”  
(i.e. prepare beer, organize a festival)
- (896) “á jág ébàŋ bòg k̄ā, í túsí kpô”  
2SG.S.PFV carry:PFV beer soak COND 3PL show:PFV body  
“When you prepare beer, they show their body.”  
(i.e. for the festival, they have to take off their clothes)
- (897) tò  
so  
So,
- (898) í jág ébàŋ à, í jág bòg dʒī k̄ā  
3PL carry:PFV alcohol PFV 3PL carry:PFV soak FOC COND  
They take the alcohol, and they soak it.
- (899) í jág ébàŋ à,  
3PL carry:PFV beer PFV  
When they take the beer

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<sup>101</sup> The translation of *dʒá* is not entirely clear here.

- (900) í jág d̥ǵī bòg d̥ǵī kā  
 3PL carry:PFV FOC soak FOC COND  
 and they soak it,
- (901) àní ígbàn d̥ǵélí mín  
 person female see:PFV thus  
 The woman sees it.
- (902) àwú d̥ǵé, †ú mási h̄n̄  
 3SG TOP, 3SG know:PFV NEG  
 He does not know (of the plan).
- (903) ní d̥ǵé má r̄  
 person TOP know EMPH  
 (Other) people do know.
- (904) àní ígbàn mé sì pè bèn m̄o  
 person female some SEQ come say:PFV give:3SG  
 Some woman then tells her:
- (905) “d̥ǵèlí, nà há”  
 see 2SG.ID eh  
 “See, you, eh”
- (906) “kòm d̥ǵōŋ ná,”  
 place ADJ:sit 2SG:POSS  
 “Your living space,”
- (907) “á d̥ǵóŋ élèb ŋwóg á h̄n̄”  
 2SG.S.PFV sit:PFV inside house PROX eh  
 “(as) you sit inside this house, eh”
- (908) “í dé kó bímbēnī kpóŋ †līb ná wànē”  
 3PL be PURP talk always on 2SG:POSS it.is.good  
 “They are always talking about you.”

- (909) “í nâ ...”  
 QUOT 2SG.ID  
 “That you ...”
- (910) “í nâ ní vān á, í nâ ní ígbàn á hñ”  
 QUOT 2SG.ID person male PRSTT QUOT 2SG.ID person female PRSTT NEG  
 “They say that you are a man, they say that you are not a woman.”
- (911) “í nâ ní vān á”  
 QUOT 2SG.ID person male PRSTT  
 “They say that you are a man.”
- (912) “í bóg ébàṅ à kà bē.”  
 3PL soak beer PFV ? PRSTT  
 “Then they soak the alcohol,”
- (913) “àbàṅ tùtúbí, í túsì kpò”  
 alcohol FUT~start 3PL show:FUT body  
 “the alcohol will start, and they will show their body.”<sup>102</sup>
- (914) m bén mā,  
 1SG.S.PFV say:PFV give:2SG.O  
 “I tell you (this)”
- (915) à māsí hñ kā  
 2SG.S.NEG.NFUT know NEG COND  
 “in case you did not know.”
- (916) àní ígbàn jág á d̥zòṅ kò d̥èr jībī  
 person female carry:PFV PFV sit ? belly ?  
 The woman sits and is worried.<sup>103</sup>

<sup>102</sup> The tone of *tùtúbí* ‘to start’ is unexpected here.

<sup>103</sup> The analysis of this clause is unclear. *kò d̥èr jībī* appears to mean something like ‘with a worried belly’.

- (917)    ú            láj                ékpò   kā,        ú        nīm    hè  
           3SG        cook:PFV        food   COND 3SG   eat    NEG  
           When she cooks food, she doesn't eat it.

- (918)    jì            ívān   ā        mā        jí        ígbàn   á  
           person    man    PRSTT but    person woman PRSTT  
           It is a man, but also a woman.

- (919)    ú            pé        <sup>+</sup>jág                á        ḍzòŋ  
           3PL        come   carry:PFV   PFV   sit  
           She sits down

- (920)    kò            dèd    jībī,    kò        dèd    jībī    ḍzī    kā        hàkà  
           ?        belly ?        ?        belly ?        FOC ?        like.that  
           and is worried.<sup>104</sup>

- (921)    àlēj        mí,        māmbā,  
           day        some   that.is.how.  
           That is how, one day,

- (922)    ú            fúg        ó<sup>+</sup>jé    bú  
           3PL        do:PFV arm   3SG:POSS  
           she takes her arm.<sup>105</sup>

- (923)    ú            sáj,                ú        jéb    jéb,  
           3SG        walk:PFV,    3SG    go:PFV go  
           She goes for a walk, she goes and goes.

- (924)    ú            gbáj                kā,    ntèkù   míná   táni   ló    kpó    à  
           3SG        arrive:PFV   COND, toad   PRSTT stand   wash   body   PFV  
           When she arrives, a toad is washing itself.

<sup>104</sup> *kò dèd jībī* appears to mean something like 'with a worried belly'. The analysis of this phrase is unclear.

<sup>105</sup> I am not certain of the analysis of this clause.

- (925) ñtèkù r̀̀ ló kpó  
 toad IPFV wash body  
 The toad is washing itself.
- (926) ú kúntí bì, ú jīb ɲwé rá ñtèkù  
 3SG bend:PFV ground, 3SG greet:PFV mouth COM toad  
 She bends down, and she greets the toad.
- (927) ñtèkù: “m̃?”  
 toad yes  
 (The toad:) “Yes?”
- (928) “tán sìm jī?”  
 stand how Q  
 (The woman:) “How are you?”
- (929) “tán jí h̀̀.”  
 stand thing NEG  
 (The toad:) “There’s nothing.” (i.e. ‘I’m fine.’)
- (930) í †jéb á, í †jéb á pè kà hā  
 LOG.SG go:PFV PFV LOG.SG go:PFV PFV come ? eh  
 (The woman says that) she has gone here (because)
- (931) í bóg èbàṅ k̄ā bē, í túsì kpò bē,  
 3PL soak:FUT beer COND PRSTT,3PL show:FUT body COND  
 when they will soak beer, they will show their body.
- (932) ikā, í jí ívān á.  
 then LOG.SG person male PRSTT  
 Then, that she is a man.
- (933) jí ívān pè ʃíńí m̄ á jàg  
 person male come pay.dowry:PFV 1SG.O PFV carry  
 (The woman:) “A man has paid my dowry.”

- (934)     $\acute{o}$              $\acute{i}$                     $\acute{j}n\acute{i}$      $\acute{i}gb\grave{a}n$     $\acute{a}$   
 QUOT   LOG.SG           person female PRSTT  
 (That she says) that she is a woman.
- (935)     $\text{\textcircled{f}}n\acute{i}$                     $j\acute{a}g$      $h\grave{a}k\bar{a}$ ,  
 pay.dowry:PFV   carry   like.that  
 Since he paid the dowry,
- (936)     $n\bar{a}$                     $m\bar{a}$                     $\acute{i}$                     $w\acute{u}r\acute{i}$     $k\bar{a}$   
 thing:REL        certain:REL   LOG.SG           want   ?  
 what she wants is that
- (937)     $\grave{a}w\acute{u}$      $p\acute{e}ntr\acute{i}$             $kp\acute{o}$     $k\acute{o}m$     $m\bar{e}$                     $r\bar{e}$      $\acute{k}\bar{a}$ ,  
 3SG       exchange:PFV   body   tie       give:LOG.SG   EMPH COND  
 that if she (the toad) exchanges her body with her (the woman)<sup>106</sup>
- (938)     $n\text{\textcircled{f}}\acute{e}$      $\acute{u}$                      $m\bar{e}$                     $r\bar{e}$      $k\bar{a}$ ,  
 vagina   3SG:POSS       give:LOG.SG   EMPH COND  
 if she (the toad) gives her (the woman) her vagina,
- (939)     $\acute{i}$              $t\acute{u}s\acute{i}$                     $kp\acute{o}$     $\grave{a}$      $k\acute{o}$      $l\acute{o}n\acute{j}\acute{i}$     $b\bar{e}$      $k\bar{a}$ ;  
 LOG.SG   show:PFV       body   PFV   TEMP   day   PRSTT COND  
 if she (the woman) then shows her body on that day,
- (940)     $n\acute{i}$              $d\acute{o}g$                     $b\bar{e}$ ,     $t\acute{o}$   
 person   see:FUT           PRSTT so  
 then people will see it.
- (941)     $\acute{u}$              $p\acute{e}ntr\acute{i}$              $j\acute{a}g$      $m\bar{i}n$ ,  
 3SG       exchange:PFV   carry   thus  
 So, she exchanges it (her sex), like this.

<sup>106</sup> It is not clear what the verb *kóm* ‘to tie, to complete’ does in this clause.

- (942) òtèkù jéní hñ. òtèkù péntí á mō  
 toad refuse NEG toad exchange:PFV PFV give:3SG  
 The toad does not refuse. The toad exchanges it (her sex) with her.
- (943) í kpén, í túbí óbàḡ. í pír óbàḡ  
 3PL hang.out:PFV 3PL start:PFV beer 3PL brew beer  
 They go, they start (preparing) the beer. They brew the beer.<sup>107</sup>
- (944) gbán á dǵī kó †lòḡí ḡwāb ḡwāb ḡwāb ḡwāb ḡwāb  
 arrive:PFV PFV FOC TEMP day all all all all all  
 Then everyone arrived on the day.<sup>108</sup>
- (945) í túsí kpô dǵī kā  
 3PL show:PFV body FOC COND  
 When everybody shows their body,
- (946) jí míná ḡwāb pé túsí,  
 person PRSTT all come:PFV show  
 Everyone comes to show it.
- (947) jí míná ḡwāb pé túsí,  
 person PRSTT all come:PFV show  
 Everyone comes to show it.
- (948) àjí míná ḡwāb †lári kpá ú,  
 person PRSTT all open:PFV wrapper 3SG:POSS  
 So, everyone opens their wrapper.
- (949) àjí míná ḡwāb †gári bén†tí ú  
 person PRSTT all take.off:PFV pants 3SG:POSS  
 Everyone takes off their pants.

<sup>107</sup> This is the only place where I found the verb *pír* ‘to brew’.

<sup>108</sup> I am not certain about the translation of this sentence.

- (950) màmúwà gbán á dǔī tǐf ò  
 turn? arrive:PFV PFV TOP child DIST  
 When it is finally that child's turn (who is now a woman)<sup>109</sup>
- (951) “jī gáŋ”, ú jéńí, “jī gáŋ”, ú jéńí  
 stand up 3SG refuse:PFV stand up 3SG refuse:PFV  
 “Stand up!”, but she refuses, “Stand up!”, but she refuses.
- (952) àsūwā ú jí gáŋ,  
 when 3SG stand:PFV up,  
 When she stands up
- (953) ú gbásí kpá míná kā,  
 3SG loosen:PFV wrapper PRSTT ?  
 and when she loosens her wrapper,
- (954) àwú jí ígbàn á  
 3SG person female PRSTT  
 (they see that) she is a woman.
- (955) í lápsí lámê, í tí vèrí hàkā,  
 they sneak:PFV hare 3PL hammer:PFV kill like.that  
 When they sneak up to the hare to kill him,
- (956) í dín ú hèn,  
 3PL meet:PFV 3SG NEG  
 they do not find him.
- (957) í tí vèrí á kā, í dín ú hèn  
 3PL hammer:PFV kill ? COND 3PL meet:PFV 3SG. NEG  
 When they (want to) kill him, they do not find him.

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<sup>109</sup> The analysis of this sentence is not entirely clear.



- (958) m̀, gbán á d̄ǐ k̄ā ...  
 so arrive:PFV PFV FOC COND  
 So, when it (the time?) arrives, (i.e. ‘after that’) ...
- (959) ñtèkù d̄ǐ ...  
 toad FOC  
 Where the toad is concerned ...
- (960) ñtèkù d́ ŕ fù r̄  
 toad be COM pregnancy EMPH  
 The toad is pregnant.
- (961) ñtèkù d́ ŕ fù r̄  
 toad be COM pregnancy EMPH  
 The toad is pregnant.
- (962) àfú ñtèkù d́ †j́.  
 pregnancy toad grow.old:PFV stand  
 The toad’s pregnancy is old. (i.e. ‘it is ready to give birth’)
- (963) àlɛ́j̄ ā ñtèkù r̀ lóg ó†j̄f̄i j̄ō ā †k̄ā  
 day REL toad IPFV give.birth child PL REL COND  
 On the day that the toad is giving birth to its children,
- (964) ñtèkù jí ívān á  
 toad person male PRSTT  
 the toad is a man.
- (965) àd̀èr ú †féb féb féb féb féb.  
 belly 3SG:POSS swell:PFV swell swell swell swell  
 His belly swells and swells and swells.
- (966) ñtèkù véjí  
 toad die:PFV  
 The toad dies.

(967) ʧǎŋ      á      †jǐ  
finish    PFV    stand  
It is finished.

### *A fragment of oral tradition*

This fragment of oral history presents a scene where the Kam are raided by an alliance of Chamba and Fulani invaders. The story mentions a historical character, Burba dan Hamman (*Buruba* in the text). Burba was the Fulani chief of Bakundi<sup>110</sup> in 1860 and the Emir of Muri<sup>111</sup> from 1869 to 1873 (cf. Meek 1931b,c; Kirk-Greene 1958, 1972). Since the fragment begins in the middle of a scene, it needs some context to be understood.

The narrative is set in the time of Fulani jihads, where people are captured and forced to convert to Islam. In the narrative that came before, the Kam decide to hide their king so that he is safe from these raids. To keep the king safe, they build a platform covering a lake. With the help of their gods, they manage to make the water from the lake dry up, to set poles in the lake, and to create a platform. On this platform, they construct a compound for the king and his family. Once everything is finished, they pray to their deities to fill up the lake again. When the intruders arrive, they try to shoot the Kam with arrows, but these fail to hit their mark. Since the Kam are better marksmen and enjoy protection by their deities, their arrows *do* hit their targets. They manage to fend off the intruders without casualties of their own. Now, Burba's men go to a nearby village where they meet some people of the Chamba ethnic group. The invaders convince the Chamba to join them in their pursuit of the Kam. Together, they make a plan to dig into the main river that drains the lake. By making the river broader, they hope to empty the lake so that they can catch the Kam. At this point, the fragment begins.

I did not collect this text myself. Babangida Audu recorded it with his phone on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017. The speaker is Isa Sarkin Dawa, the political king of Kam. The whole text is a thirty-minute compilation of various episodes from Kam traditional history (session\_191). This is one fragment.

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<sup>110</sup> Bakundi is a district in Bali Local Government area. Around 1875, the Fulani of Bakundi gained power in Bali town, which had been independent Jukun territory until then (Meek 1931b: 507). The emir of Bali is still known today as the chief of Bakundi. For a while, the Kam speaking area fell within the Bakundi district, but today there is an independent Kam district, headed by Sarkin Dawa, the Kam political king.

<sup>111</sup> Muri was an emirate in the 19<sup>th</sup> century spanning much of present-day Taraba State. Today, it is a town in northwestern Taraba.

Note that the construction of a “pile village” on a lake in defense of a Chamba invasion is also mentioned in discussions of the history of the Wurbo people, who speak a few different Jukunoid languages (Temple 1919: 364)<sup>112</sup>.

- (968) dākā ηwé márê  
 from mouth river  
 From the mouth of the river
- (969) í dzí jág  
 3PL dig:PFV carry  
 they (the Chamba/Fulani invaders) dug.
- (970) dākā ηwé márê  
 from mouth river  
 From the mouth of the river ...
- (971) dākā ηwé máré †ní ηwòm  
 from mouth river person Kam  
 From the mouth of the river of the Kam people,
- (972) bā mā, í námrí sīsīrā  
 PROX:REL certain:REL, 3PL call:PFV now  
 the one (river) that is now called
- (973) íjí májó kàm à  
 QUOT Mayo Kam REL  
 Mayo Kam.
- (974) í dzí jág dākā kō kā,  
 3PL dig:PFV carry from place:DIST COND,  
 They dug from that place so that ...

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<sup>112</sup> These languages together form the Wurbo subgroup of Central Jukunoid (Hammarström et al. 2019). They are Como Karim [Glottocode: como1258], Jiru [Glottocode: jiru1238] and Shoo-Minda-Nye [Glottocode: shoo1247]. Documentation of these languages is currently limited to the lexical data presented in Shimizu (1980).

- (975) *ré* *gbó* *sáŋ* *ŋwé* *sòm* *kā*  
 because? stream go mouth lake COND  
 So that a stream would flow from the mouth of the lake.<sup>113</sup>
- (976) *àná<sup>+</sup>lib* *sòm* *ò* *gèr* *rè* *ɖʒɔ̄r* *sāŋ* *kā*  
 because lake DIST outside IPFV descendgo COND  
 So that (the water of) that lake would gush away.
- (977) *sòm* *ní* *ŋwòm* *nág* *á* *kàr* *kā*  
 lake person Kam leave:PFV PFV have? COND  
 (So that) the lake of the Kam people would empty<sup>114</sup>
- (978) *mā* *í* *ró* *<sup>+</sup>ɸúg* *í* *jàg*  
 and 3PL IPFV catch 3PL carry  
 and they (the invaders) would (be able to) catch them (the Kam),
- (979) *àlib* *kámtirà* *í* *ò* *wè*  
 on platform 3PL:POSS DIST there  
 on their platform there.
- (980) *ikā* *í* *jág* *ní* *<sup>+</sup>ɖʒí* *á* *wē*  
 then 3PL carry thing dig PFV there  
 So, they dug,
- (981) *í* *jág* *ní* *<sup>+</sup>ɖʒí* *á* *wē*,  
 3PL carry thing dig PFV there  
 and they dug,
- (982) *í* *jág* *ní* *<sup>+</sup>ɖʒí* *á* *wē*,  
 3PL carry thing dig PFV there  
 and they dug,

<sup>113</sup> The translation of *ré* is uncertain, and the tense and aspect marking of this clause is unclear.

<sup>114</sup> The function of *kàr* ‘to have’ in this sentence is unclear.

- (983) í jág ní †dǵí á wē  
 3PL carry thing dig PFV there  
 and they dug...
- (984) hár í pǎ †gbó pé †ɲwé sùm  
 until 3PL come stream come mouth lake  
 Until they came to the stream, came to the mouth of the lake.
- (985) ikā māmbá sùm gím jí á kā  
 then that.is.how:REL lake tear:PFV stand REL COND  
 Then it happened that the lake tore,
- (986) mámbá, í jágí lárí sàŋ dǵór sàŋ  
 that.is.how:REL, 3PL carry:PFV open go descendgo  
 and then it happened that they (the invaders) were carried down (by the water)<sup>115</sup>
- (987) áminà rǎ jàg kùb sàŋ mǎré  
 that.is.why IPFV carry weak go river  
 and they were drowning.
- (988) bā mā fǒr bób â, fǒr bób  
 PROX:REL some:REL survive come.out REL, survive come.out  
 Those who survived, survived.
- (989) bā mā fǒr h́ à, tò ...  
 PROX:REL some:REL survive NEG REL, so ...  
 Those who did not survive, well ...
- (990) tò, zágá ká mā, ní ɲwòm  
 so, side place:REL some:REL person Kam  
 So, from the side where the Kam ...

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<sup>115</sup> The analysis of this sentence is unclear.

- (991) í dzór dzí pê, ní †fě dzór:PFV pê  
 3PL descend:PFV dig come, person war descend come  
 they came down, warriors came down.
- (992) í sì bē tóri fífūgī  
 3PL SEQ PRSTT fall:PFV ?~catch:FV  
 Then they (the Kam) fell on them and caught them (the intruders).
- (993) nā mā íjí †ηwár á tòn,  
 thing:REL some:REL 3PL mix:PFV PFV stand  
 That is how they (our groups) are mixed,
- (994) á dōg  
 2SG.S.PFV see:PFV  
 you see,
- (995) fāmbā dó lèb ní ηwòm ré  
 Chamba be inside person Kam EMPH  
 there are Chamba within the Kam people.
- (996) ámīnā sù fāmbā dó lèb ní ηwòm ré  
 that.is.why section Chamba be inside person Kam EMPH  
 That is why a section of Chamba is inside of Kam.
- (997) dōη íjí †fúgí jàg kó pínî  
 ? 3PL catch carry INSTR slave  
 They caught them as slaves.
- (998) zágí ní gbàn, í fúg á  
 side person female, 3PL catch:PFV PFV  
 The women, they caught.
- (999) zágí ní vān mā, í fúg á  
 side person male also, 3PL catch:PFV PFV  
 The men, they caught.

- (1000) tò, àjí jí zág mákpà ò  
 so, 3PL stand:PFV side muslim DIST  
 So, they are the muslim side.
- (1001) bà mà íjí †námrí †búrúbâ  
 PROX:REL some:REL they call:PFV Buruba  
 The one (man) that they call Buruba ...
- (1002) àjí bínbín á, í nágí kâ  
 person one PRSTT, 3PL leave:PFV COND  
 It is one man that they left.
- (1003) àjí bínbín á, í nágí kâ  
 person one PRSTT, 3PL leave:PFV COND  
 It is one man that they left.
- (1004) àfú ndzámdí á †ú kúb kâ  
 shirt iron REL 3SG wear:PFV ?  
 It was an iron shirt that he wore.
- (1005) àjí nág ú kâ  
 3PL leave:PFV 3SG COND  
 When they (the Chamba) left him (Buruba),
- (1006) íjí bó í méré jé kâ †ú rè bén  
 3PL ? 3PL return:PFV go PURP 3SG IPFV say  
 they returned to him and told him
- (1007) mà kò kâ mē í námr á sīsīrā  
 give ? place:PROX some 3PL call:PFV PFV now  
 that this place they now call
- (1008) í gásòl á  
 QUOT Gassol PRSTT  
 Gassol.



- (1009) *ú jé bén má jí bé kā*  
 3SG go say:PFV give person PRSTT ?  
 (That) he should go and tell the people that
- (1010) *àwú á bání*  
 3SG PRSTT remain:PFV  
 he is the one who remained
- (1011) *jí ɲwòm vér:PFV í á sīrī*  
 person Kam kill 3PL PFV completely  
 (and that) the Kam killed them all.
- (1012) *tò, àmīnā, àwú àjí ván †fú ndzámdí ò jéḅ*  
 so, that.is.why, 3SG person male shirt iron DIST go:PFV  
 So, that is why he, the man with the iron shirt, went
- (1013) *jé kòsí tàrì jàg kàr*  
 go gather stone carry keep  
 and gathered stones.
- (1014) *àtár á dọ bē,*  
 stone PRSTT be PRSTT  
 There are stones there,
- (1015) *àmīnā dʒòŋ ijì á ká júró*  
 that.is.why sit world PRSTT ? 1PL:POSS  
 now, it is our boundary area<sup>116</sup>
- (1016) *í ró kǎ mī í námr á*  
 3PL COM place:PROX some 3PL call:PFV PFV  
 with the place they call

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<sup>116</sup> The analysis of this clause is uncertain.

- (1017) \*í táwrífàb á  
 QUOT Tauri.Chab PRSTT  
 Tauri Chab.
- (1018) kó bá \*tán à kó \*léb bìr à mà  
 INSTR REL stand REL ? inside time REL some:REL  
 Now, even in our time – recently
- (1019) àjí jé á pè  
 3PL enter:PFV PFV come  
 they (some intruders) came into our land.
- (1020) íjí vág júró sirē kó bē  
 QUOT border 1PL:POSS be.NEGplace:DIST PRSTT  
 They said that our boundary is not there.
- (1021) àminà  
 that.is.why  
 That is why
- (1022) ní jág tákàdà bób pè  
 1SG.S.PFV carry:PFV document come.out come  
 I brought out the document.
- (1023) mí mórò tár kóm jàg  
 1SG.S.PFV return collect:PFV tie carry  
 I collected it again, tied it and carried it,
- (1024) mē kã àtār à  
 give.3PL place:PROX stone PROX  
 and showed them the place of these stones.

- (1025) *kḍ*                      *kā*  
 place:DIST              place:PROX (?)  
 This place.<sup>117</sup>
- (1026) *í*              *bén*      *ká*  
 3PL              say      ?  
 They said that
- (1027) *ɲí*              *ɲwòm*,  
 person      Kam  
 the Kam people ...
- (1028) *jùrù*      *ɲí*      *ɲwòm*      *ā*      *kósí*              *kár*      *h̀ǹ*,  
 1PL              person      Kam      REL      gather:PFV      keep      NEG  
 We, the Kam people, did not gather and keep the stones.
- (1029) *ɲì*              *ā*              *ì*              *sín*      *éǵě*      *ré*              *à*              *mīnā*      *kósí*      *kār*  
 person      REL      1PL      do:PFV war      EMPH REL      which      gather      keep  
 It's the people that we were fighting who gathered them.
- (1030) *sábòdà*      *hákà*,  
 because      this,  
 Because of this (the document?)<sup>118</sup>,
- (1031) *káùjè*      *dàbà*              *ré*              *†sín*              *rè*              *h̀ǹ*  
 village      different              NEG.FUT      do:NEG.FUT      NEG.FUT      NEG  
 a different village (to set the boundary) will not work.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> This use of two nouns phrases with seemingly incompatible meanings is puzzling.

<sup>118</sup> This is Hausa.

<sup>119</sup> *káùjè dàbà* is Hausa, with some slight differences. In Standard Hausa, it would be written *kauye dabam*. I want to thank Lora Litvinova for helping me understand this phrase.

(1032) kó bá †tán à mīn, ní tár á jàgì  
 INSTR REL stand REL thus, 1SG.S.PFV collect:PFV PFV carry  
 Even now, I still have it.<sup>120</sup>

(1033) tò, dākā kō̄ mīnā  
 so from place:DIST thus  
 So, from that place,

(1034) jí ηwòm  
 person Kam  
 the Kam ...

(1035) àǰé á bē pá ǰǎη jí à  
 war REL PRSTT come finish stand REL  
 the war that had finished<sup>121</sup>

(1036) àminà, jí ηwòm bén: “tô ... bā tán à mīnā”  
 that.is.why, person Kam say:PFV so REL stand REL thus  
 that is why the Kam said “well, now ...”

(1037) í bór méré pé zág áwú à  
 3PL descend:PFV return come side north PROX  
 They descended and returned to the north side.

(1038) sīkā í dʒóη-ì, í sóg jí  
 lest 3PL settle:FUT-FV, 3PL search:PFV thing  
 Lest they (the intruders) would settle, they (the Kam) searched something.

(1039) í wūrī dāmūwà hñ  
 3PL want trouble NEG  
 They did not want trouble.

<sup>120</sup> Literally: “With now, I collected it.”

<sup>121</sup> This sentence is incomplete.

(1040) tò, í sí †jí ó d̥ɔ̀ jī  
 so 3PL SEQ arrive:PFV ? dig stand  
 So, they then arrived, dug and stayed

(1041) í bór á pè, à zág ówù  
 3PL descend:PFV PFV come, LOC side north  
 They descended toward the north side.

(1042) àminà í pé †d̥zɔ̀ŋ á pè  
 that.is.why 3PL come sit PFV come  
 That is why they settled here,

(1043) à kǎ mā  
 LOC place:REL some:REL  
 at the place

(1044) í námrí sīsīrā ó méhùlá  
 3PL call:PFV now QUOT Maihula  
 they now call Maihula.

### *A song*

I recorded this song with Bèbí in Garin Hamza, in the room of Hamza, the village head, during a short visit there on May 22<sup>nd</sup> (session\_156).

The song laments that the traditional and ritual places of Kam are no longer as well protected as they used to be. It makes reference to a former political king selling pieces of Kam land to people of other groups (*sárkín dáwà jág jì à dèbì* “Sarkin Dawa has sold the world.”). My consultants mentioned that at some point a piece broke off the Kamajim mountain, and in this song, they connect this natural event with the sale of traditional land.



**Figure 22 - Session in Garin Hamza with Bèbí**

- (1045) òtòŋ húm á pé ŋwé kámádžim wò  
 mountain break:PFV PFV come mouth Kamajim oh  
 ‘The mountain broke at the mouth of Kamajim, oh!’
- (1046) sù ní ŋwòm sámrí jì à  
 ethnic.group person Kam spoil:PFV world PFV  
 ‘The Kam people have spoiled the world.’
- (1047) sárkín dáwà jág jì à dèbi  
 Sarkin Dawa carry:PFV world PFV buy  
 ‘Sarkin Dawa has sold the world.’
- (1048) ò lég á dúddōgī, ò ní ŋwòm jō wò?  
 2PL hear:PFV PFV EXPA~see 2PL person Kam PL oh  
 ‘Did you ever hear that, you Kam people?’
- (1049) mòtō bóri māvàn  
 car climb:PFV Sabongida.Kamajim  
 ‘A car went up to Sabongida Kamajim.’
- (1050) à ŋwé ŋwóg, ní dóg ú, mégādi  
 LOC mouth house, 1SG.S.PFV see:PFV 3SG:POSS guard  
 ‘By the door of the house, I can see a guard.’
- (1051) màm màm àjì  
 Màm create:PFV world  
 ‘Mam (the creator) created the world.’
- (1052) ikà jì júrí †sámr á wò.  
 then world 1PL:POSS spoil:PFV PFV oh  
 ‘And then the world spoiled.’

## Kam-English lexicon

## A a

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
a	Interjection	yes	positive response word	This marker does not have a fixed tone. <i>o:j</i> is the preferred positive response word.
á	Pronoun	2SG.O; you	second person singular object index	
á	Pronoun	2SG.S; you	second person singular subject index, used in future tense and perfective aspect constructions	
à	Pronoun	2SG.S.IPFV; you	second person singular subject pronominal, used in imperfective constructions	
à	Derivational affix	NMLZ	a synchronically unproductive nominalizing prefix that derives patientive and agentive nouns from verbs	
à	Particle	PFV	perfective aspect marker	This marker follows the object if one is present. The marker is optional.
à	Particle	PROX; this	proximal demonstrative marker	



Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
à á	Interjection	EXCL; aha	an expression of surprise, disbelief, or endorsement of a previous statement	
àbág	Noun	knife		
àbàŋ	Noun	alcohol; beer; wine		
àbób	Noun	hunger		
àbòg	Noun	foot; leg		
àbòg	Noun	time		Used when counting the number of times something happened (e.g. àbòg jīrāg 'two times, twice')
àbómrī	Noun	length		cf. bóm 'to be long'
àbóŋ	Noun	breath; life		
àbóŋó	Noun	breath; life		
ábōrī	Adjective	big		cf. bōr 'to go up, to mount'
àbòràg	Noun	leaf		
àbórég	Noun	bag, sp.	a bag where harvested crops are stored	
àbórég	Noun	locust bean tree		
àbòrèg	Noun	antelope, sp.	red-flanked duiker	
àbóri	Noun	grave		
ábētfā	Adjective	blue		
àbég	Noun	termite hill, sp.	a small type of termite hill, made "as if there is a cap on it"	
àbèg	Noun	jealousy		

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
àbéfí	Noun	belch		
àbén	Noun	talk		cf. bén 'to speak, to tell, to, say, to talk'
àbén ndéí	Proper Noun	place name	a place name, referring to a village commonly known as Abanderi.	The name literally translates to 'curse' or 'idiotic talk'.
àbén ɸè	Noun	lie		cf. àbén 'talk' and ɸè 'to lie'
àbējí	Noun	traditional king		Literally 'the owner of people' (?).
àbèr	Noun	egg		
àbèr àṅgwóg	Noun	host; householder		cf. àṅgwóg 'house'
àbì	Adposition	down		cf. àbì 'soil'
àbì	Noun	soil		cf. àbìbí 'soil'
àbì	Noun	song		
àbìbí	Noun	down		cf. àbìbí 'soil'
àbìbí	Noun	soil		cf. àbì 'soil'
àbìm	Noun	steam		
àbìɸè	Noun	tree, sp.	an unidentified tree that looks similar to the kiriya tree or iron wood tree	
àbô	Noun	day after tomorrow		
ábōgō	Adjective	dark		cf. ábōgō 'night', ábōgōrī 'night'
ábōgō	Noun	night	night time, when it is dark, roughly from 7 p.m. to 5 a.m.	cf. ábōgō 'dark', ábōgōrī 'night'

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
ábōgōrī	Adjective	black		cf. ábōgō 'night, dark'
àbù	Noun	mahogany tree		
àbùn	Noun	arrow		
àbúnrī	Noun	crossing	a crossing over a road, or over a river	cf. bŭnī 'to cross, to be across'
àbúr	Noun	cloud		cf. bŭr 'to become white'
ábūrī	Adjective	white		cf. bŭr 'to become white'
àbúró	Adverb	day after tomorrow		
àbúró	Noun	tree, sp.	a very common tree with black fruit that looks like a bambara nut	
ádā	Adjective	cold		cf. dág 'to be cold'
ádā	Adjective	well		cf. ádá 'cold'
àdāgrī	Noun	coldness		cf. dág 'to be cold'
àdāgrī	Noun	wetness		cf. dág 'to be cold'
àdām	Noun	menstruation		
àdóm	Noun	beard		
ádōmrī	Adjective	red		cf. dīndòm 'red'
àdòŋ	Noun	south		
àdèbòg	Noun	sole of foot		cf. àdèr 'outside of the belly', àbòg 'leg, foot'
àdég	Noun	disease		
àdég	Noun	pain		
àdég ǎ́'fě	Noun	cancer		cf. àdég 'disease'
àdègàŋ	Noun	sky		cf. àdèr 'outside of the belly', àgàŋ 'up(side)'

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
àdégrí	Noun	pain		cf. àdég 'pain'
àdèné	Noun	palm of hand		cf. àdèr 'outside of the belly', àné 'hand, arm'
àdèr	Noun	outside of belly		
àdérí	Noun	snore		cf. dēī 'to snore'
àdíkàrí	Noun	sweat		cf. àdžíkàrí 'armpit'
àdìm	Noun	deep water		cf. lim 'dive'
àdú	Noun	angle		
àdžár	Noun	gate, backdoor		
àdžàr	Noun	fishing net		
àdžòg	Noun	driver ant, sp.	a type of army ant that makes temporary anthills with big colonies	cf. àdžògbàrí 'driver ant, sp.'
àdžògbàrí	Noun	driver ant, sp.	red ant	cf. àdžòg 'driver ant, sp.'
àdžóŋ	Noun	saliva		
àdžór	Noun	pinch		
àdžé	Noun	trousers		
àdžè	Noun	month, moon		
àdžé	Noun	shea tree	shea tree	
àdžé làsírà	Noun	coconut tree		cf. àdžé 'shea tree'
àdží fō	Noun	cassava		cf. àdžú 'yam', áfō 'dry'
àdžíkàrí	Noun	armpit		cf. àdíkàrí 'sweat'
àdžíŋrí	Noun	fool, foolishness		cf. džíŋ 'to be foolish'

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
àḍḗrèkì	Noun	epilepsy		cf. àḍḗrèkì 'ground-beetle, sp.'; probably related to this meaning: a beetle, when turned upside down shakes his legs in the air like someone with epilepsy
àḍḗrèkì	Noun	ground-beetle sp.	a type of saber-toothed ground beetle that can spray acid to defend itself	
àḍḗ	Noun	yam		
àḍḗwā	Noun	cheek		
àḍḗwā ḡwé	Noun	lip		cf. àḍḗwā 'cheek', ḡwé 'mouth'
àḍḗwàn	Noun	short, poisonous snake	a type of short, poisonous snake	
àfām	Noun	animal		cf. àfām 'meat'; generally refers to mammals and not to insects, fish, birds and reptiles
àfām	Noun	meat		cf. àfām 'animal'; food from an animal
àfām àḡwóg	Noun	farm animal, domestic animal		cf. àfām 'animal', àḡwóg 'house'
àfām àḡé	Noun	bush animal, wild animal		cf. àfām 'animal', àḡé 'bush'
àfār	Noun	sugar		
àfār	Noun	lung		

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
àfárómkpà	Noun	sugar cane		cf. àfár 'sugar'; tone is uncertain.
àfí	Noun	mat		
àfíb	Noun	calf		
àfíb òbòg	Noun	calf		cf. àfíb 'calf'
àfijè	Noun	water fetching place	a water fetching place, such as a river or a lake	
àfir	Noun	foam		
àfir	Noun	needle		
áfò	Adjective	dry		cf. fóg 'to be dry'
àfú	Noun	shirt		
àfù	Noun	pregnancy		cf. àfù 'womb'
àfù	Noun	womb		cf. àfù 'pregnancy'
àgág	Noun	branch		cf. gág 'to hang'
àgàm òbòg	Noun	ankle		cf. àbòg 'leg'
àgàm líp fí rò né	Noun	knuckle		cf. àlíp fí rò né 'finger'
àgàṅ	Noun	dry season		
àgàṅ	Adposition	up		
àgàṅ	Noun	upside		
àgàtínà	Noun	hat		
àgàw	Adposition	beside		Tone is uncertain.
àgàw	Noun	ribs, side		Tone is uncertain.
àgbág	Noun	stool		
àgbām	Noun	fig tree		
àgbàn	Adjective	female		

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
àgbàn	Noun	wife		
àgbàn ókwòg	Noun	first wife		cf. ákòg 'biggest one, dominant one'
àgbàn óntfwē	Noun	co-wife		cf. ffwē 'newborn child'
àgbānē	Noun	plant sp.	a type of crinum, a plant with a leafless stem that develops from bulbs	This plant is used for medicinal purposes. Its name in Hausa is gadeli. Tone is uncertain.
àgbáŋ	Noun	chin		
àgbáŋ	Noun	palace		
àgbáŋ ŋwé	Noun	jaw		cf. àgbáŋ 'chin'
àgbáŋásù	Noun	market		cf. àgbáŋásùb 'market'
àgbáŋásùb	Noun	market		cf. àgbáŋásù 'market'
àgbòràg	Noun	francolin	clapperton's francolin, double-spurred francolin	
àgbér	Noun	neck		
àgbér á <sup>+</sup> né	Noun	wrist		cf. àgbér 'neck', àné 'arm, hand'
àgòb	Noun	plant sp.	a type of crinum, a plant with a leafless stem that develops from bulbs	This plant is used for medicinal purposes. Its name in Hausa is gadeli.
àgòm	Noun	forehead		
àgòrù	Noun	heron		
àgèr	Noun	outside		
àgíníŋ	Noun	buttocks		cf. gínéné 'round'
àgùm	Noun	hole	a pit, hole (in the ground)	
àgùm àmòrēg	Noun	nostril		cf. àgùm 'hole', àmòrēg 'nose'

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
àgùm àfìb	Noun	toilet		cf. àgùm 'hole', àfìb 'shit'
àgùm fâ	Noun	flood plain hole	a hole that is dug in a flood plain in order to get fresh water	
àgún	Adverb	backwards		cf. àgún 'behind'
àgún	Noun	behind		
àgúnj óbòg	Noun	heel		cf. àgún 'behind', àbòg 'leg, foot'
àgùrì	Noun	vomit		cf. gùrì 'vomit'
àjárí	Noun	width		cf. jàr 'to be wide'
àjáwkáńí	Proper Noun	person name		
àjé	Noun	cry, shout		
àjè	Noun	gut		
àjè	Noun	intestines		
àjé kà	Noun	shout		cf. àjé 'cry, shout', ká 'to shout'
àjé t̄ò	Noun	cry		cf. àjé 'cry, shout'. Tone is uncertain.
àjén	Noun	wound		
àjí	Pronoun	3PL.S; they	third person plural subject pronominal	
àjì	Noun	era, generation		
àjì	Noun	world		
àjírí	Noun	draw soup ingredient	soup ingredient for draw soup, a type of traditional soup	
àkàptì	Noun	morning	time of the day from 6 to 10 a.m.	cf. àkàptìfìbìfìbì



Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
àkápílibílibì	Noun	dawn, early morning	time of the day from 4 to 6 a.m.	cf. àkàptì 'morning'
àkár	Noun	snake, sp.		
àkàr	Noun	ear		
ákòg	Adjective	biggest one, oldest one, dominant one		Used with peoples (e.g. the oldest of two wives) or 'higher' mammals (e.g. the leader of a band of gorillas).
àkóg	Noun	mushroom		
àkòk swò	Noun	large ape	a type of large ape, used for a variety of species, e.g. gorillas and chimpanzees	cf. ákòg 'biggest one, oldest one, dominant one', swò 'baboon'
àkómlá	Proper Noun	Mumuye		
àkórág	Noun	fence		
àkòràg	Noun	soldier termite		
àkòrè	Noun	pumpkin		
àkìmpá	Noun	official, sp.		
àkpág	Noun	bottom		
àkpág ñwé bì	Noun	bottom of mouth		cf. àkpág 'bottom', ñwé 'mouth'
àkpág ñwé gàṅ	Noun	palate		cf. àkpág ñwé 'palate', àgàṅ 'upside'
àkpàkán	Proper Noun	person name		cf. àkpàkàní
àkpàkàní	Proper Noun	person name		cf. àkpàkán
àkpóré	Noun	cough		cf. kpōrī 'to cough'
àkpèb	Noun	shoulder		

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
àkpèb àjé	Noun	shoulder		cf. àkpèb 'shoulder', àpé 'arm, hand'
àkpétí	Noun	tiredness		cf. kpétí 'to become tired'
àkpímkpáṅá	Noun	force, strength		cf. kpímkpájí 'strong, hard'
àkpò	Noun	tuwo		
àkpó bī	Cardinal numeral	twenty		cf. bī 'one'
àkpó bí †rò gún bō	Cardinal numeral	thirty		cf. àkpó bī 'twenty', bō 'ten'
àkpó bō	Cardinal numeral	two hundred		cf. àkpó bī 'twenty', bō 'ten'
àkpó bō rò kpējīmī	Cardinal numeral	two hundred and twenty		cf. àkpó bī 'twenty', kpējīmī 'twenty'
àkpó bō rò kpējīmī gún bō	Cardinal numeral	two hundred and thirty		cf. àkpó bī 'twenty', kpējīmī 'twenty', bō 'ten'
àkpó dǵúb	Cardinal numeral	one hundred and twenty		cf. àkpó bī 'twenty', dǵúb 'six'
àkpó jíràḡ	Cardinal numeral	forty		cf. àkpó bī 'twenty', jírāḡ 'two'
àkpó jírāḡ rò gún bō	Cardinal numeral	fifty		cf. àkpó jírāḡ 'forty', bō 'ten'
àkpó kpējīmī	Cardinal numeral	four hundred		cf. àkpó bī 'twenty', kpējīmī 'twenty'
àkpó nār	Cardinal numeral	eighty		cf. àkpó bī 'twenty', nnār 'four'
àkpó nār †rò gún bō	Cardinal numeral	ninety		cf. àkpó nār 'eighty', bō 'ten'

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
àkpó ñwún	Cardinal numeral	hundred		cf. àkpó bí 'twenty', ñwún 'five'
àkpó ƣár	Cardinal numeral	sixty		cf. àkpó bí 'twenty', ƣár 'three'
àkpó ƣár rē gún bō	Cardinal numeral	seventy		cf. àkpó ƣár 'sixty', bō 'ten'
àkprà	Noun	plate		
ákú	Proper Noun	cult, sp.		cf. kú 'magic, sp., deity, cobra'
àkùb	Noun	bone, skeleton		
àkùb àbòg	Noun	shin		cf. àkùb 'bone, skeleton', àbòg 'leg, foot'
àkùb gwāj	Noun	chestbone		cf. àkùb 'bone, skeleton', gwāj 'chest'
àkùb lántí gwāj	Noun	breastbone		cf. àkùb 'bone, skeleton', lántí 'joint' gwāj 'chest'
àkùb ñkùm	Noun	spine		cf. àkùb 'bone, skeleton', ñkùm 'back'
àkùp tábé	Noun	fishbone		cf. àkùb 'bone, skeleton', àtábé 'fish'
àkúptí	Noun	laziness		cf. kùb 'to become weak'
àkúptí	Noun	lazy person		cf. kùb 'to become weak'
àkùr	Noun	tortoise, turtle		
àkúrí	Noun	smell		cf. kúr 'to stink'
àkúró	Noun	noon		
àkwān	Noun	bean		

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
á <sup>L</sup> -	Derivational affix	NMLZ	a prefix that turns verbs into adnominal adjectives	This prefix is part of a larger construction that also involves a toneless suffix -i in case the verb has a CVC shape, and replacive M tone on the verb root.
àlámî:s	Noun	Thursday		Borrowed from Hausa (alhamis); originally from Arabic yoom al-khamiis 'Thursday', literally 'day the fifth (starting from Sunday)'
àlámíné	Noun	tongue		
àlání	Noun	spider		
àlàŋ	Noun	pot	any type of pot, e.g. for cooking or for carrying water	cf. lán 'to cook'
àlàŋ òbì	Noun	bowl		cf. àlàŋ 'pot', cf. àbì 'soil, down'
àlàŋ ódā	Noun	fridge		cf. àlàŋ 'pot', ódā 'cold'
àlàŋ pǰáw	Noun	heavy container	a container that is used as a basin to keep water	cf. àlàŋ 'pot', pǰáw 'sub-village inside Sarkin Dawa'
àlāsíné	Noun	sand	a type of sand found by the riverside	cf. àlǎǰíné 'sand'
àlǎǰíné	Noun	sand	a type of sand found by the riverside	cf. àlāsíné 'sand'
àlāsírā	Noun	moringa tree		cf. àlāsírā 'white person'
àlāsírā	Noun	white person		cf. àlāsírā 'moringa tree'

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
àlàwàn	Noun	west		
àlóg	Noun	maternal relative		cf. lóg 'to deliver a child'
àlóg	Noun	bamboo bed		
àlógórí	Noun	birth		cf. lóg 'to deliver a child'
àlógórí	Noun	end		cf. lógòrí 'to finish, to end'
àlógórí	Noun	last, final one	the last one in a sequence	cf. lógòrí 'to finish, to end'
àlógórí	Noun	root (of plant)	the root of a plant	cf. lógòrí 'to finish, to end'. The root of a plant is the 'final' part when looked from the perspective 'above ground'.
àlè	Noun	fire, light, electricity		
àlè	Noun	cave		
àlè	Noun	gun		cf. àlè 'fire'
àlè áǰā	Noun	light bulb		cf. àlè 'fire, light, electricity', áǰā 'fresh, unripe'
àlèb	Noun	late afternoon, evening	time of the day from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.	cf. àlèb 'inside', àlilèb 'middle', àlèḡ àlèb 'afternoon'
àlèb	Adposition	in		
àlèb	Noun	inside		
àlèb àdèr	Noun	inside of the belly		cf. àlèb 'inside', àdèr 'outside of the belly'
àlébrí	Noun	fruit		cf. àlèb 'inside', bèr 'tree'

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
àlémrí	Noun	beauty, goodness, correctness		cf. lèm 'good, beautiful, correct'
àléŋ	Noun	deity, sp.		cf. àléŋ 'sun'. This word is dispreferred by some speakers, who prefer the word kùrikí for 'God'.
àléŋ	Noun	sun		
àléŋ dág â	Noun	late afternoon, evening	time of the day from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.	Literlaly 'the sun has cooled off'. cf. àléŋ 'sun', dág 'to become cold', à 'PFV'
àléŋ óléb	Noun	late afternoon, evening	time of the day from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.	cf. àléŋ 'sun', àléb 'evening', àlèb 'inside', àliléb 'middle'
àléŋ kúró	Noun	noon	time of the day from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.	cf. àléŋ 'sun', àkúró 'noon'
àlésèr	Noun	room		cf. àlèb 'inside', sèr 'room'
àlíb	Noun	head		
àlíb	Adposition	on		
àlíbóri	Noun	grave		
àlíè	Noun	armband		This word used to refer only to an armband that was traditionally given when a man wanted to marry a woman. Now, it refers to any kind of armband. Tone is uncertain.
àhíè	Noun	yesterday		

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
àlìléb	Adposition	in between, in the middle of		cf. àlìléb 'middle'
àlìléb	Noun	middle		cf. àlèb 'inside'
àlím	Noun	front		cf. àlìb 'head, on', àlímíné 'tongue, horn'
àlím	Adposition	in front of		cf. àlím 'front'
àlímíné	Noun	horn		cf. àlímíné 'tongue', àlìb 'head, on', àlím 'front'
àlímíné	Noun	tongue		cf. àlímíné 'horn', àlìb 'head, on', àlím 'front'
àlímíné lè	Noun	flame		cf. àlímíné 'tongue', àlè 'fire'
àlíp sêr	Noun	roof		cf. àlìb 'head', sêr 'room'
àlíp ʒí rə bə̀g	Noun	toe		cf. àlìb 'head', ʒí 'child, diminutive', rə̀ 'comitative', àbə̀g 'foot, leg'
àlíp ʒí rə̀ jé	Noun	finger, fingernail		cf. àlìb 'head', ʒí 'child, diminutive', rə̀ 'comitative', àjé 'hand, arm'
àlíp ʒí rə̀ jé bōrī	Noun	thumb		cf. àlíp ʒí rə̀ jé 'finger, fingernail', àbōrī 'big'
àlíp ʒí rə̀ jé ntwàb	Noun	pinky		cf. àlíp ʒí rə̀ jé 'finger, fingernail', àntwàb 'small'
àlísírí	Noun	guinea corn pap		
àlítárí	Noun	hawk		
àlō	Noun	sling		

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
àlūkōm	Noun	road		cf. àlūkōm 'through'. Tone is uncertain.
àlūkōm	Adposition	through		cf. àlūkōm 'road'. Tone is uncertain.
àlūkōm wò	Noun	vein		cf. àlūkōm 'road', wò 'blood'. Tone is uncertain.
àlúlù	Noun	kneecap		
àlúlù pé	Noun	elbow		cf. àlúlù 'kneecap', àpé 'hand, arm'
àmā	Connective	and	conjunction that connects clauses; not used for noun phrases, where the comitative preposition rə̀ is used	Borrowed from Hausa (àmmā).
àmā	Connective	but	conjunction that connects clauses	Borrowed from Hausa (àmmā).
àmálfí	Noun	flower		
àmàmbórí	Noun	coconut		cf. bèr 'tree'
àmán	Noun	bamboo		
àmérá	Noun	younger relative		
àmèrēg	Noun	nose		cf. mèrèg 'nasal mucus'
àmí	Noun	dew		
àmí nùŋ	Noun	teardrop		cf. àmí 'dew', ànùŋ 'eye'
ámō	Adjective	good, kind		
àmùl	Noun	fruit, sp.	an unidentified type of fruit that becomes yellow when ripe. Its leaf is used for relieving throat ache	Tone is uncertain.



Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
àná	Noun	father		
ànā	Noun	day		
ànā	Adverb	today		
àná ábōrī	Noun	elder brother of father		cf. àná 'father', ábōrī 'big'
àná ántē	Noun	younger brother of father		cf. àná 'father', ántē 'small'
àpà bōrī	Noun	older sibling		cf. àpí 'person', ábōrī 'big'. Tone is uncertain.
àpà mārēg	Noun	left hand		cf. àpí 'hand, arm', àmārēg 'nose'. Literally 'nose hand', the hand used for blowing one's nose, as opposed to the right hand, which is used for eating.
ànā m̀kpōŋ	Noun	male agama lizard	male agama agama	cf. àná 'father', m̀kpōŋ 'agama lizard'
àpà nīmī	Noun	right hand		cf. àpà 'hand, arm', nīm 'to eat'. Literally 'eating hand', the hand used for eating.
àná swò	Noun	older male large ape	the largest or oldest male ape in a troop	cf. àná 'father', swò 'baboon'. Used for different species.
àpág	Noun	work		
àpàgbàn	Noun	woman		cf. àpí 'person', àgbàn 'female'
ànám	Noun	flour		cf. nàm 'to grind'
ànám òkànsīrān	Noun	grinded charcoal		cf. ànám 'flour', òkànsīrān 'charcoal'

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
àpá <sup>+</sup> lib	Connective	because		Tone is uncertain.
àpé	Noun	arm, hand		
àpí	Noun	person, people		
àpí	Noun	owner		
àpí sèt tūr	Noun	blacksmith		cf. àpí 'person', sèt tūr 'forge'
àpì vān	Noun	man		cf. àpí 'person', ávān 'male'
ántē	Adjective	small		cf. ɸwē 'newborn child, newborn animal'
ántērī	Noun	truth		
ántwàb	Adjective	small, young		
ànùŋ	Noun	eye		
ànùŋ òbòg	Noun	front of heel		cf. ànùŋ 'eye', àbòg 'leg, foot'
ànùŋ óḍzībī	Noun	faintness, dizziness		cf. ànùŋ 'eye', ḍzīb 'to turn'
ànùŋ àpé	Noun	wrist		cf. ànùŋ 'eye', àpé 'arm, hand'
ànùŋḍzál	Proper Noun	person name		
àḡám̄tí	Noun	yawn		cf. ḡám̄tí 'to yawn'
àḡwóg	Noun	house		
àḡwóg ób̄ōrī	Noun	city	large town, city	cf. àḡwóg 'house', áb̄ōrī 'big'
àḡwóg ó <sup>+</sup> kórág	Proper Noun	Garin Zana	Kam village, called Garin Zana in Hausa	cf. àḡwóg 'house', àkórág 'fence'
àḡwóg góp <sup>+</sup> tí	Proper Noun	Gunduma B	Kam village, called Gunduma B in Hausa	cf. àḡwóg 'house'

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
àḡwóg kádirì	Proper Noun	Garin Kadiri	Kam village, called Garin Kadiri in Hausa	cf. àḡwóg 'house'
àḡwóg ḡḡḡ <sup>+</sup> gáw	Proper Noun	Garin Shingaw	Kam village, called Garin Shingaw in Hausa	cf. àḡwóg 'house'
àḡwà	Noun	friend		
àḡwà ḡwóg	Noun	neighbor		cf. àḡwà 'friend', àḡwóg 'house'
àḡwán	Noun	in-law		
àḡwár	Noun	thirst		
àḡwòm	Noun	Kam		
áḡwī	Adjective	new		cf. àḡwī 'story'
àḡwí	Noun	village		
àḡwī	Noun	story		cf. áḡwī 'new'
àḡwí bóg	Proper Noun	Kamajim 1	Kam village, called Kamajim 1 in Hausa	cf. àḡwí 'village', bóg 'to prepare alcohol' (tone uncertain)
àḡwí bún <sup>+</sup> tí	Proper Noun	Garin Lah	Kam village, called Garin Lah in Hausa	cf. àḡwí 'village', buntí 'to drive, to ride (a horse)'
àḡwí fěnsòḡ	Proper Noun	Kamajim 3	Kam village, called Kamajim 3 in Hausa	cf. àḡwí 'village', ñsòḡ 'salt'
àḡwí lí <sup>+</sup> léb	Proper Noun	Kamajim 2	Kam village, called Kamajim 2 in Hausa	cf. àḡwí 'village', àliléb 'middle'
àḡwí né	Proper Noun	Garin Tukura		cf. àḡwí 'village'. Tone is uncertain.
àpírápí	Noun	cloth, blanket, clothing, handkerchief	any piece of cloth or clothing	
ápú	Noun	bag		

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
ápú dèr	Noun	stomach		cf. ápú 'bag', àdèr 'outside of belly'
àrí	Adposition	like	similative preposition	
àrí bā	Adverb	like this		cf. àrí 'like', bā 'this one'
áfā	Adjective	unripe		
àfā	Noun	floodplain, swamp		In Nigerian English it is called a 'fadama area'. The term refers to an area that is fit for agriculture and can be irrigated. It usually refers to low-level plains close to water sources.
àsábār	Noun	Saturday		Borrowed from Hausa (Asabar), originally from Arabic yoom as-sabat 'Saturday', literally 'day the seventh (starting from Sunday).
àsàbé	Proper Noun	female name		
àság	Noun	year		
àfāg	Noun	tooth		
àfāg àdú	Noun	last teeth		cf. àfāg 'tooth', àdú 'angle'
àfāg àgàṅ	Noun	upper teeth		cf. àfāg 'tooth', àgàṅ 'up'
àfāg àvǐ	Noun	milk teeth		cf. àfāg 'tooth', àvǐ 'breast, milk'
àfāg álí+léb	Noun	incisor teeth		cf. àfāg 'tooth', àliléb 'middle'
àfāg fùròg	Noun	horn of an elephant		cf. àfāg 'tooth', fùròg 'elephant'

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
àfám	Noun	feeling		
àfǒb	Noun	fly, sp.	fly that often disturbs people, usually in the bush	cf. àfǒb 'air, wind, apparition, possessed person'
àfǒb	Noun	air, wind		
àfǒb	Noun	apparition, ghost		
àfǒb	Noun	possessed person		
àsòm	Noun	lake		
àsòm àmàmbóri	Proper Noun	lake Amamberi	a lake within the Sarkin Dawa area	cf. àsòm 'lake', àmàmbóri 'coconut'
àsòm kpágárág	Proper Noun	lake Kpagarag	a lake close to Bayaro	cf. àsòm 'lake', kpágárág 'tilapia fish'
àsòm kwàn	Proper Noun	lake Kwàn	a lake close to Ardo Sonvini	cf. àsòm 'lake', kwàn 'Jukun'
àsòm wúra	Proper Noun	lake Wura	a lake close to Wura	cf. àsòm 'lake'
àsé	Noun	tail		
àfě	Noun	bush		
àfém	Noun	sneeze		cf. fém 'to sneeze' (tone uncertain)
àfìb	Noun	shit, excrement		
àsínj	Noun	fart, flatulence		
àfiròmán	Noun	pepper		
áfífàrì	Noun	first (one)		Tone is uncertain.
áfō	Adjective	warm		cf. fǒb 'to be hot'
àfùgèrì	Noun	termite's nest		

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
àfùkù	Noun	rooster		
àsúm	Noun	digging tool	any tool used for digging holes, e.g. boreholes	
àsúmà	Connective	when		cf. àsūwā 'when'. Tone is uncertain.
ásūmrī	Adjective	old		
àfúr	Noun	hit		
ásúrá	Noun	trail		Tone is uncertain.
àsūwā	Connective	when		cf. àsúmà 'when'. Tone is uncertain.
àfūwí	Proper Noun	person name		Name of Hamza, the village head of Garin Hamza.
àtábé	Noun	fish		
àtāké	Proper Noun	person name	female person name	
àtámrí	Noun	growth, greatness		cf. tám 'to grow'
àtār	Noun	stone		
àtār kàpirù	Noun	fire stone		cf. àtār 'stone', cf. kàpirù 'match'
àtār nīnnāmī	Noun	grinding stone		cf. àtār 'stone', cf. nīnnám 'flesh'
àtār ɲě	Noun	grinding stone, sp.	a stone used to make holes while grinding	cf. àtār 'stone'
àtóm	Noun	message		cf. tóm 'to send'
àɲàgbàn	Noun	younger sister		cf. àɲì 'child', ágbàn 'female'

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
àfjári	Noun	wisdom, wise person		cf. fjar 'to tell (a story)'
àfjóm	Noun	hoe		
àfjór	Noun	bee		cf. fjór 'to throw a spear (tone uncertain). Also used for bee-flies.
àfjòr	Noun	propeller	a propeller used to throw spears	cf. fjór 'to throw a spear (tone uncertain). Also used for bee-flies.
àfjór ógán	Noun	beehive		cf. àfjór 'bee', àgán 'up'
àfjé	Noun	war, fighting		cf. ñfjé 'war'
àfjér	Noun	fear		
àfji	Noun	poverty		
àfji	Noun	child, boy		
àfji	Particle	DIM	diminutive marker	cf. àfji 'child'
àfji ígbàn	Noun	daughter		cf. àfji 'child', ágbàn 'female'
àfji ígbàn	Noun	girl		cf. àfji 'child', ágbàn 'female'
àfji ígbàn	Noun	girlfriend		cf. àfji 'child', ágbàn 'female'
àfji ígbàn óntfjwē	Noun	baby girl		cf. àfji ígbàn 'girl', ffwē 'newborn child'
àfji íntē	Noun	baby, child		cf. àfji 'child', ántē 'small'
àfji ívān	Noun	bachelor		cf. àfji 'child', ávān 'male'
àfji ívān	Noun	boy		cf. àfji 'child', ávān 'male'
àfji ívān	Noun	son		cf. àfji 'child', ávān 'male'

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
àf̄i ívān ónf̄wē	Noun	baby boy		cf. àf̄i ívān 'boy', f̄wē 'newborn child'
àf̄i kpírág	Noun	spoon		cf. àf̄i 'diminutive'
àf̄i kùríkí	Noun	Jesus		cf. àf̄i 'child', kùríkí 'God'
àf̄i f̄ɔb	Noun	stubborn boy		cf. àf̄i 'child', àf̄ɔb 'possessed person'
àf̄i wàṅkú	Proper Noun	person name		cf. àf̄i 'child', wàṅkú 'traditional king'
àf̄íróg	Noun	bitterleaf		
àf̄iségé	Noun	boy		cf. àf̄i 'child'
àf̄iségé	Noun	child		cf. àf̄i 'child'
àf̄iségé + gún	Noun	younger brother		cf. àf̄iségé 'boy', àgún 'behind'
átúkú	Noun	hill		
átwàb	Adjective	small, young		
àvàm	Noun	clay		
ávān	Noun	male		cf. àvān 'husband'
àvān	Noun	husband		cf.ávān 'male'
àvān óf̄àr	Noun	lung		Tone is uncertain.
àvándzírég	Noun	courage		cf. àvándzírég 'heart'
àvándzírég	Noun	heart		cf. àvándzírég 'courage'
àvèg	Noun	corpse		cf. àvèg 'death', vég 'to die'
àvèg	Noun	death		cf. àvèg 'corpse', vég 'to die'
àví	Noun	breast, nipple		



Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
àví	Noun	lungfish	West African lungfish, an air-breathing fish with an eel-like body that can reach 1m in length and lives in riverbeds	
àví nág	Noun	udder		cf. àví 'breast, nipple', nág 'cow'
àvìràkwàb	Noun	mud		
àwám	Noun	evil person		
àwàn	Noun	king		
àwár	Noun	place with flat stones	a place with many flat stones	
àwàr	Noun	bulrush millet, sp.	a type of bulrush millet that is harvested during the dry season	
àwárí	Noun	noise		
àwóg	Noun	grinding stone	a type of grinding stone	
áwū	Noun	ripe fruit		cf. wū 'to be ripe'
àwú	Pronoun	3SG.S, he, she, they (singular)	third person singular subject pronominal	
àwù	Noun	north		
àwù	Noun	seed		
àwù jì	Noun	seed		used for any type of seed
ázág ávān	Adverb	right side		cf. zág 'side', ávān 'male'
àzání	Noun	termite, sp.	an unidentified type of termite	
àzàntí	Noun	centipede		
àzóg	Noun	lazy person	lazy person	

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
àzònú	Noun	sickle		
àzér	Noun	granary		
àzírè	Noun	calabash		
àzúb	Noun	thief		cf. zùb 'to steal, to deceive'

## B b

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
bà	Verb	remove by cutting		
bā	Particle	this (one)	proximal demonstrative	cf. à 'proximal demonstrative'
bàbà	Noun	father		Borrowing, likely from Hausa, baba. Tone is uncertain.
bàg	Verb	stab		
bàgàràg	Noun	hyena		
bāgī	Verb	lower head	to lower one's head	Tone is uncertain.
bàr	Verb	farm		
bàr	Verb	weed	to weed an area, to remove unwanted plants	
bárí	Noun	rodent, sp.		Looks like a smaller cane rat. It is called burugu in Hausa.
bàrí	Verb	rinse		
bòb	Verb	come out		

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
<b>b̀̀jí</b>	Proper Noun	person name		
<b>b̀́m</b>	Verb	long	to be or to become long	
<b>b̀̀msí</b>	Verb	lengthen	to make something long	
<b>b̀̀mtí</b>	Verb	lengthen		
<b>b̀́nū</b>	Noun	festival openers	group of people responsible for opening the traditional festivals	Tone is uncertain.
<b>b̀̀r</b>	Verb	go up	to climb or go up an elevated surface	
<b>b̀̀r</b>	Verb	mount	to mount an animal or a vehicle	
<b>b̀̀rsí</b>	Verb	add	to add to something, to make something increase or grow	
<b>b̀̀rì</b>	Noun	day, period, time		
<b>b̀̀</b>	Particle	PRSTT, here is	presentative demonstrative	
<b>b̀̀d màmb́rì</b>	Noun	coconut tree		cf. b̀̀r 'tree', àmàmb́rì 'coconut'
<b>b̀̀d mán</b>	Noun	bamboo tree		cf. b̀̀r 'tree', àmán 'bamboo'
<b>b̀̀<sup>H</sup> ... bì (jī)</b>	Interrogative pro-form	who		
<b>b̀́n</b>	Verb	say, speak, talk, tell		Tone is uncertain.
<b>b̀̀ntí</b>	Verb	cut nails	to cut one's nails	
<b>b̀̀ntí</b>	Noun	pants		
<b>b̀̀r</b>	Noun	tree		

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
<b>bèr</b>	Noun	wood		
<b>bèr àǰǰb</b>	Noun	haunted tree		cf. bèr 'tree', àǰǰb 'ghost, apparition'
<b>bètúg</b>	Noun	pestle (to pound food with)		cf. bèr 'tree', túg 'mortar'
<b>bī</b>	Cardinal numeral	one		cf. bímbíní 'one'
<b>bíbīrī</b>	Verb	blow	to blow	cf. bir 'to blow'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>bìgè</b>	Noun	quiver		
<b>bí<sup>L</sup></b>	Pronoun	3PL:NS, them	Third person plural non-subject pronominal	
<b>bímbíní</b>	Cardinal numeral	one		cf. bī 'one'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>bír</b>	Verb	cut	to cut	Tone is uncertain.
<b>bír</b>	Verb	slaughter	to slaughter	Tone is uncertain.
<b>bìr</b>	Verb	blow		
<b>bír ànùṅ</b>	Verb	stand trial	literally 'swear on one's eyes'	cf. bir 'to blow', ànùṅ 'eye'. Literally 'to blow one's eye'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>bô</b>	Particle	that	distal demonstrative	cf. ò 'distal demonstrative'
<b>bō</b>	Cardinal numeral	ten		
<b>bō gún bī</b>	Cardinal numeral	eleven		cf. bō 'ten', bī 'one'
<b>bō gún bímbíní</b>	Cardinal numeral	eleven		cf. bō 'ten', bímbíní 'one'
<b>bō gún dǰûb</b>	Cardinal numeral	sixteen		cf. bō 'ten', dǰûb 'six'
<b>bō gún dǰúb jīrāg</b>	Cardinal numeral	seventeen		cf. bō 'ten', dǰúb jīrāg 'seven'

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
<b>bō gún jírág</b>	Cardinal numeral	twelve		cf. bō 'ten', jírág 'two'
<b>bō gún nár</b>	Cardinal numeral	fourteen		cf. bō 'ten', nár 'four'
<b>bò gún pízàg</b>	Cardinal numeral	nineteen		cf. bō 'ten', jí <sup>+</sup> zá 'nine'
<b>bò gún sâr</b>	Cardinal numeral	eighteen		cf. bō 'ten', sâr 'eight'
<b>bō gún ƣâr</b>	Cardinal numeral	thirteen		cf. bō 'ten', ƣâr 'three'
<b>bò gún wún</b>	Cardinal numeral	fifteen		cf. bō 'ten', òwún 'five'
<b>bùbbòd</b>	Adjective	big, heavy, large		cf. bôr 'to go up, to mount'
<b>búbbōrī</b>	Adjective	many		cf. bôr 'to go up, to mount'
<b>búbbúr</b>	Adjective	white		cf. búr 'to become white'
<b>būg</b>	Verb	pinch		
<b>búgbág</b>	Adjective	skinny		Tone is uncertain.
<b>bú<sup>L</sup></b>	Pronoun	3SG:NS, him, her, them (singular)	third person singular non- subject pronominal	
<b>būm</b>	Verb	rot, spoil	to rot, to spoil	
<b>búmbóm</b>	Adjective	long		cf. bóm 'to be long'
<b>būmbūm</b>	Adjective	spoiled, rotten, decayed'	rotten, spoiled, decayed	cf. būm 'rot, spoil'
<b>būnī</b>	Verb	be across, cross		
<b>bùntí</b>	Verb	drive, ride (a horse)		cf. būnī 'to be across, to cross'
<b>búr</b>	Verb	become white		
<b>búr á<sup>+</sup> jí</b>	Verb	whitened	to be whitened	cf. búr 'to become white'
<b>bùsí</b>	Verb	bow	to bow down to someone, for example to the king	

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
<b>bùsí</b>	Verb	carry	to carry something or someone on one's back	
<b>bùsí</b>	Verb	close	to close something	
<b>bùsí ñkùm</b>	Verb	carry on your back	to carry something or someone on one's back	cf. <i>bùsí</i> 'to carry'

## D d

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
<b>dáb</b>	Verb	to be far		
<b>dág</b>	Verb	to be cold, to become cold		
<b>dāgā</b>	Adposition	from		cf. <i>dākā</i> 'from'. Borrowed from Hausa.
<b>dākā</b>	Adposition	from		cf. <i>dāgā</i> 'from'. Borrowed from Hausa.
<b>dàksí</b>	Verb	cool down	to make something colder, to cool something down	cf. <i>dág</i> 'to be cold'
<b>dàm</b>	Verb	clean	to be clean	
<b>dàmpón</b>	Proper Noun	cult, sp.	a cult that involves secret rituals performed by the traditional chief	
<b>dáṅâ</b>	Noun	termite hill	a big termite hill consisting of dry sand	
<b>dàr</b>	Interjection	sorry	An apology, sorry	Tone is uncertain.
<b>dàrá</b>	Noun	palm tree		
<b>dàw</b>	Proper Noun	Jirim		

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
<b>dóg</b>	Verb	see		Tone is uncertain.
<b>dó</b>	Verb	to be, to exist		
<b>dèrí</b>	Verb	draw		
<b>dèb</b>	Verb	buy		
<b>dèg</b>	Verb	to be sick	to be or to become sick	
<b>déŋ</b>	Verb	press clothes		
<b>déŋ</b>	Verb	roast	to roast something, e.g. maize	
<b>déŋ</b>	Verb	scrape	to scrape something	
<b>déŋ</b>	Verb	whet a knife		
<b>déŋ</b>	Verb	wipe		
<b>dēri</b>	Verb	snore		
<b>díddáb</b>	Adjective	far		cf. <b>dáb</b> 'to be far'
<b>díddág</b>	Adjective	cold		cf. <b>dág</b> 'to be cold'
<b>díddág</b>	Adjective	wet		cf. <b>dág</b> 'to be cold'
<b>dìddèg</b>	Adjective	painful		cf. <b>dèg</b> 'to be sick'
<b>dìddèg</b>	Adjective	sick		cf. <b>dèg</b> 'to be sick'
<b>díg</b>	Noun	hiccough		
<b>díg</b>	Noun	drum, sp.		
<b>dìgì</b>	Noun	fish, sp.	Senegal bichir, an eel-like fish with a serrated dorsal fin, found in lakes, swamps and close to rivers. Reaches about 30cm in length.	
<b>dílóg</b>	Noun	shrew		
<b>dín</b>	Verb	find		Tone is uncertain.

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
dín	Verb	meet		Tone is uncertain.
dìnà	Noun	mosquito		
dìndàm	Adjective	clean		cf. dàm 'to be clean'
dìndòm	Adjective	red		cf. ádōmrī 'red'
díráj bêr	Noun	root of a tree		cf. bêr 'tree'
dó	Verb	insult	to insult someone	Tone is uncertain.
dùb	Verb	deep		
dùb	Verb	high, tall		
dúbú	Cardinal numeral	thousand		Borrowed from Hausa. Tone is uncertain.
dùddùb	Adjective	deep		cf. dùb 'deep, high, tall'
dùddùb	Adjective	high		cf. dùb 'deep, high, tall'
dùddùb	Adjective	tall		cf. dùb 'deep, high, tall'
dúg	Verb	follow		Tone is uncertain.
dùwásām	Proper Noun	person name		Tone is uncertain.

## Dʒ dʒ

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
dʒá	Noun	blade	the blade of something, e.g. a knife, an axe, a hoe, a key, or a tooth	
dʒá	Noun	grain, seed		
dʒá	Noun	reason		cf. dʒá 'grain, seed, situation'



<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>ɖʒá</b>	Noun	situation		cf. ɖʒá 'grain, seed, reason'
<b>ɖʒá gúfi kpò</b>	Noun	kidney		cf. ɖʒá 'grain, seed', kpò 'body'
<b>ɖʒá ntʃè</b>	Noun	clitoris		cf. ɖʒá 'grain, seed', ntʃè 'vagina'
<b>ɖʒá f̂ag</b>	Noun	tooth blade	the part of a tooth that can be considered its blade	cf. ɖʒá 'blade', àf̂ag 'tooth'
<b>ɖʒá zùg</b>	Noun	rice		cf. ɖʒá 'grain, seed', zùg 'grass'
<b>ɖʒá ʹlib</b>	Noun	brains		cf. ɖʒá 'reason', àlib 'head'
<b>ɖʒàg</b>	Verb	hide, do secretly	to do something secretly	cf. ɖʒàg 'whisper'
<b>ɖʒàg</b>	Verb	whisper		cf. ɖʒàg 'hide'
<b>ɖʒám</b>	Adverb	well		Borrowed from Hausa or Fulfulde. Tone is uncertain.
<b>ɖʒán</b>	Verb	plant	to plant a tree or fruit	
<b>ɖʒàngirigò</b>	Noun	school		Borrowed from Fulfulde (janngirde).
<b>ɖʒāŋī</b>	Verb	crawl		
<b>ɖʒáʃmûŋ</b>	Noun	fish, sp.	an unidentified fish; it looks similar to species of Africa tetras, but grows much bigger (up to 2m) than the (other) tetras found in the area	cf. ɖʒá 'grain, seed'

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
ḍázò	Noun	fish, sp.	Cromeria, a small (ca. 4cm) type of freshwater fish that is often eaten smoked and dried	cf. ḍá 'grain, seed'
ḍóḡ	Noun	deity, sp.		
ḍòḡ	Verb	sit		
ḍòḡ	Verb	live, settle		
ḍóḡ égbàn	Noun	female magic	the magic for which women are responsible	cf. ḍóḡ 'deity, sp.', ágbàn 'female'
ḍòḡ wór	Verb	guard		cf. ḍòḡ 'sit'
ḍòḡ wór	Verb	wait		cf. ḍòḡ 'sit'
ḍòr	Verb	decrease		
ḍòr	Verb	descend		
ḍòtí	Verb	bring down	to bring something down	cf. ḍòr 'to descend'
ḍòtí	Verb	wake up	to wake up	cf. ḍòr 'to descend'
ḍē	Particle	TOP, wat about	a topicalizer that affects the event or object described by the phrase or clause it is postposed to.	cf. ḍə, ḍē. In English, it can be paraphrased as "What about X?", X being this event or object. Such topicalization often occurs as a cohesive device in storytelling, to tie the discourse together. When used in natural interaction, it also functions as a question marker, pointing the hearer to an entity or topic they have neglected in his discourse.

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
ɖʒɔ̃	Particle	TOP, wat about	a topicalizer that affects the event or object described by the phrase or clause it is postposed to.	cf. ɖʒē, ɖʒē̃. In English, it can be paraphrased as "What about X?", X being this event or object. Such topicalization often occurs as a cohesive device in storytelling, to tie the discourse together. When used in natural interaction, it also functions as a question marker, pointing the hearer to an entity or topic they have neglected in his discourse.
ɖʒē̃	Particle	TOP, wat about	a topicalizer that affects the event or object described by the phrase or clause it is postposed to.	cf. ɖʒɔ̃, ɖʒē. In English, it can be paraphrased as "What about X?", X being this event or object. Such topicalization often occurs as a cohesive device in storytelling, to tie the discourse together. When used in natural interaction, it also functions as a question marker, pointing the hearer to an entity or topic they have neglected in his discourse.
ɖʒérî	Noun	guinea fowl		
ɖʒērî	Verb	look	to look at something	
ɖʒì	Noun	bat		
ɖʒì	Verb	dig		

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>ɖʒìb</b>	Verb	fence	to fence a place	
<b>ɖʒìb</b>	Verb	round	to make something round	
<b>ɖʒìb</b>	Verb	turn	to turn around	
<b>ɖʒìbrí</b>	Verb	change		cf. ɖʒìb 'to turn'
<b>ɖʒìbrí</b>	Verb	exchange		cf. ɖʒìb 'to turn'
<b>ɖʒìbrí</b>	Verb	turn		cf. ɖʒìb 'to turn'
<b>ɖʒìm</b>	Proper Noun	place name	the place where all past chiefs are buried	
<b>ɖʒìndʒìŋ</b>	Adjective	foolish		cf. ɖʒìŋ 'to be foolish'
<b>ɖʒìŋ</b>	Verb	be foolish		
<b>ɖʒò</b>	Noun	fly		
<b>ɖʒò nág</b>	Noun	tsetse fly		cf. ɖʒò 'fly', nág 'cow'
<b>ɖʒùb</b>	Cardinal numeral	six		
<b>ɖʒùb jīrāg</b>	Cardinal numeral	seven		cf. ɖʒùb 'six', jīrāg 'two'
<b>ɖʒúɖʒúrág</b>	Noun	shade		cf. ɖʒúɖʒúrág 'shadow', zúɖʒúrág 'shade'
<b>ɖʒúɖʒúrág</b>	Noun	shadow		cf. ɖʒúɖʒúrág 'shade', zúɖʒúrág 'shadow'
<b>ɖʒùmbàrè</b>	Noun	Friday		Borrowed from Adamawa Fulfulde (jumbaare), originally from Arabic yoom aj-jum'a 'Friday', literally 'day of the mosque'
<b>ɖʒúná</b>	Noun	face		
<b>ɖʒúná</b>	Noun	structure		

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>ɖzùrkàkí</b>	Proper Noun	person name		cf. ɖzùtí 'dash, give', kùríkí 'God'
<b>ɖzùrùkí</b>	Proper Noun	place name	name of the place also known as kurugbe	
<b>ɖzùrú<sup>+</sup>ɲé</b>	Noun	claw		cf. zùr 'to pull', àɲé 'hand, arm'
<b>ɖzùrú<sup>+</sup>ɲé</b>	Noun	finger		cf. zùr 'to pull', àɲé 'hand, arm'
<b>ɖzùtí</b>	Verb	dash, give	to give a present or a (pre-)tip	cf. zùr 'to pull'
<b>ɖzùtí</b>	Verb	hand over		cf. zùr 'to pull'

Ɔ ɔ

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<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>ɔ́</b>	Particle	QUOT, (say) that	quotative marker, introduces reported speech	cf. íbí <sup>L</sup> 'quotative', í <sup>L</sup> 'quotative', íjí <sup>L</sup> 'quotative'

## F f

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>fà</b>	Verb	raise chickens	to raise animals; this verb is specifically used for chickens	
<b>fàd</b>	Verb	suck		
<b>fàg</b>	Verb	close, cover, lock		
<b>fág á jí</b>	Verb	closed	to be closed	cf. fàg 'close, cover, lock'
<b>fàgrí</b>	Verb	gather	to gather things	cf. fàg 'close, cover, lock'
<b>fam</b>	Verb	plait hair	to plait someone's hair	cf. fam 'to squeeze, to wring out'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>fam</b>	Verb	squeeze	to squeeze something	cf. fam 'to plait hair, to wring out'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>fam</b>	Verb	wring out	to wring something out	cf. fam 'to squeeze, to plait hair'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>fàr</b>	Verb	blow nose	to blow one's nose	
<b>fàr</b>	Verb	fold, wrap	to fold something or wrap something in	
<b>fàr</b>	Verb	think		
<b>fàrí</b>	Verb	fold	to fold something	cf. fàr 'to fold, wrap'
<b>fàrí</b>	Verb	open	to open a door	cf. fàr 'to fold, wrap'
<b>fàtóri</b>	Verb	fold	to fold something	cf. fàr 'to fold, wrap'
<b>fóg</b>	Verb	dry		
<b>fóg</b>	Noun	farm		

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>fòg</b>	Noun	fish, sp.	grass-eater, a fish found in rivers that can grow to more than 60cm	
<b>fònù</b>	Noun	harmattan		
<b>fé</b>	Verb	break	to break something long, such as maize or an arm	
<b>féb</b>	Noun	anger		cf. féb 'to swell'
<b>féb</b>	Verb	swell		cf. féb 'anger'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>fèngfó</b>	Proper Noun	Fincon		cf. ñgǒ 'coco yam'
<b>fér</b>	Verb	clean, wash		
<b>fímfám</b>	Adjective	light		cf. fam 'to squeeze, wring out' (tone uncertain).
<b>fīrī</b>	Verb	fly		cf. fīrī 'to jump'
<b>fīrī</b>	Verb	jump		cf. fīrī 'to fly'
<b>fúffóg</b>	Adjective	dry		cf. fóg 'to be dry'
<b>fúrú</b>	Noun	mission grass	mission grass or foxtail, a very widespread type of grass	
<b>fú<sup>+</sup>kúnú</b>	Noun	grass, sp.	an unidentified type of grass	

## G g

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>gág</b>	Verb	hang	to hang	
<b>gàgrí</b>	Verb	hang up	to hang something up	cf. gág 'to hang'
<b>gàj</b>	Noun	beginning of spine	the piece of the spine that meets the neck	
<b>gán</b>	Noun	name		
<b>gàṅsá</b>	Proper Noun	person name		
<b>gàṅtú</b>	Proper Noun	Gangtu Kamaajim	the place where the people closest to the traditional king live	
<b>gàpsí</b>	Verb	divorce	to divorce people	cf. gáb 'to separate'
<b>gàpsí</b>	Verb	separate	to separate things	cf. gáb 'to separate'
<b>gàpsí</b>	Verb	share	to share something, to divide something among one another	cf. gáb 'to share'
<b>gàrí</b>	Verb	undress	to take off one's clothes, to undress	
<b>gàw</b>	Noun	ribs		
<b>gàw ɖɔwǎ</b>	Noun	jaw		cf. gàw 'ribs', àɖɔwǎ 'cheek'
<b>gòm</b>	Verb	pay		
<b>gòpsí</b>	Verb	separate	to separate things	
<b>gòptí</b>	Proper Noun	Gobti		
<b>gè<sup>H</sup> ... gí jī</b>	Interrogative pro-form	what	content interrogative for non-humans	
<b>gèr</b>	Noun	outside		cf. àgèr 'outside'



<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>gìggàb</b>	Adjective	cut		cf. gàb 'to share, to separate'
<b>gím á jí</b>	Adjective	broken		cf. gìmsí 'to tear'
<b>gím á jí</b>	Adjective	torn		cf. gìmsí 'to tear'
<b>gìmsí</b>	Verb	tear	cutting or breaking a part from, e.g., bread or tuwo	
<b>gìn</b>	Verb	drum	to beat drums	Tone is uncertain.
<b>gín ánùṅ</b>	Noun	eyebrow		cf. gínéné 'round', àgínín 'buttocks', ànùṅ 'eye'
<b>gínéné</b>	Adjective	round		cf. àgínín 'buttocks', gín ánùṅ 'eyebrow'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>gìntí</b>	Verb	knock	to knock, e.g. on wood or on a door	cf. gìn 'to drum'
<b>gíṅgáṅ</b>	Adjective	bent	not straight	
<b>gìṅgàṅ</b>	Noun	drum, sp.		
<b>gìrè</b>	Noun	grasshopper		
<b>gó</b>	Noun	stranger, guest		
<b>gúb</b>	Verb	chase, chase away	to chase something or someone away, to pursue something or someone	
<b>gúbí</b>	Verb	chase, chase away	to chase something or someone away, to pursue something or someone	cf. gúb 'to chase'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>gùm</b>	Noun	grunt		
<b>gúrôg</b>	Noun	lion		
<b>gùrì</b>	Verb	vomit		cf. àgùrì 'vomit'
<b>gúru</b>	Noun	dust		

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>gùfi</b>	Noun	ground nut, peanut		
<b>gùfi kpìmkpájá</b>	Noun	bambara nut		cf. gùfi 'ground nut', kpìmkpájá 'hard, strong'
<b>gwáj</b>	Noun	chest		

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## GB gb

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<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>gbá</b>	Noun	type of flute	a flute used for communication	
<b>gbàm</b>	Verb	sew		
<b>gbán</b>	Verb	arrive		Tone is uncertain.
<b>gbánáká</b>	Adverb	later	in the same day, or generally later, but not much later	
<b>gbàsí</b>	Verb	loosen		
<b>gbógó</b>	Noun	shin		
<b>gbòrù</b>	Noun	stream		
<b>gbòrù</b>	Noun	valley		
<b>gbê</b>	Noun	squirrel, sp.		
<b>gbèb</b>	Verb	beat		cf. gbèb 'to kick'
<b>gbèb</b>	Verb	kick		cf. gbèb 'to beat'
<b>gbèb vā</b>	Verb	to flog		cf. gbèb 'to beat'
<b>gbèbrí</b>	Verb	beat repeatedly	to beat or kick someone repeatedly	cf. gbèb 'to beat'

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>gbēnī</b>	Verb	carve	to carve something inside something else (e.g. to carve text in a tree), to ridge something	cf. gbèr 'to remove, to scratch'
<b>gbēnī</b>	Verb	dig open	to dig open yam heaps, or to dig for groundnuts	cf. gbèr 'to remove, to scratch'
<b>gbèr</b>	Verb	remove		
<b>gbèr</b>	Verb	scratch		
<b>gbìgí</b>	Verb	shake		
<b>gbùgbúrú</b>	Noun	striped polecat		

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## H h

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>hár</b>	Adposition	(not) until		borrowed from Hausa or Fulfulde
<b>h̀̀</b>	Particle	INT, very	intensifier	cf. h̀̀ 'negator'. Used in an 'intensity construction', together with a reduplicated form of the verb, to indicate a high presence of a certain quality.
<b>h̀̀</b>	Particle	NEG, not	clause-final negator	
<b>hwár</b>	Verb	think		Tone is uncertain.

## I i

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
i	Affix	FV, final vowel	final vowel, which is an optional part of some verb stems and part of a variety of constructions, but does not have one specific morphosyntactic function	It is toneless and takes the tone of the preceding syllable.
í	Pronoun	3PL.O, them	third person plural object pronominal	
í	Particle	QUOT, (say) that	quotative marker, introduces reported speech	cf. é 'quotative', íbíl 'quotative', íjí <sup>l</sup> 'quotative'
ì	Pronoun	1PL:S, we	first person plural subject pronominal	
íbíl <sup>l</sup>	Particle	QUOT, (say) that	quotative marker, introduces reported speech	cf. é 'quotative', í <sup>l</sup> 'quotative', íjí <sup>l</sup> 'quotative'
ídǵíb	Proper Noun	Egypt		Borrowed from English.
íjí <sup>l</sup>	Particle	QUOT, (say) that	quotative marker, introduces reported speech	
ikā	Particle	then	conjunction, linking clauses	
í <sup>l</sup>	Pronoun	3PL.POSS, their	third person plural possessive pronominal	
í <sup>l</sup>	Pronoun	LOG.SG, that they	logophoric pronominal	

## J j

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>jàg</b>	Verb	carry		
<b>jàg</b>	Verb	take		
<b>jág àgàṅ</b>	Verb	pick up	to pick something up, to lift something up	cf. jàg 'to carry, to take', àgàṅ 'up'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>jág àgbàn</b>	Verb	marry	to marry a woman	cf. jàg 'to carry, to take', àgbàn 'wife'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>jág ñkùròḡ</b>	Verb	record	to record something	cf. jàg 'to carry, to take', ñkùròḡ 'voice, throat'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>jàkú</b>	Noun	ancestor		cf. jàkú 'grandparent/grandchild', kùkú 'ancestor'. It is not clear what the difference is between kùkú and jàkú.
<b>jàkú</b>	Noun	grandparent /grandchild		cf. jàkú 'ancestor', kùkú 'grandparent/grandchild'. It is not clear what the difference is between kùkú and jàkú.
<b>jár</b>	Verb	to be wide	to be or to become wide	
<b>jārī</b>	Verb	announce	to announce something	
<b>jàrsí</b>	Verb	widen	to make something wider	cf. jár 'to be wide'
<b>jáwwà</b>	Interjection	yes!	exclamation of agreement or delight	This is a common exclamation in the area.
<b>jé</b>	Verb	cry, shout		Tone is uncertain.

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>jé</b>	Verb	enter		Tone is uncertain.
<b>jé kôm</b>	Noun	door, entrance		cf. ηwē 'mouth', kôm 'place'
<b>jèsí</b>	Verb	bring inside		cf. jé 'enter'
<b>jètí</b>	Verb	lean	to lean against something	
<b>jêb</b>	Verb	fry		Tone is uncertain.
<b>jéñé</b>	Noun	horse		
<b>jéñí ntē</b>	Noun	foal		cf. jéñé 'horse', ántē 'small'
<b>jèrí</b>	Verb	be plenty	to be plenty, to be sufficient, to be too much	
<b>jī</b>	Verb	arrive		cf. jī 'leave'
<b>jī</b>	Verb	leave		cf. jī 'arrive'
<b>jī</b>	Particle	Q, ?	question marker	
<b>jī</b>	Verb	stand		
<b>jī</b>	Verb	wake up		
<b>jīb</b>	Verb	ask		
<b>jīb</b>	Verb	greet	greet	
<b>jīb wé</b>	Verb	greet	to greet someone	cf. jīb 'greet', ηwé 'mouth'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>jífurú</b>	Noun	stingray	Niger stingray, a stingray found in rivers in the area	
<b>jíjár</b>	Adjective	wide		cf. jār 'to be wide'
<b>jīrāg</b>	Cardinal numeral	two		
<b>jīsí</b>	Verb	put straight	to put something straight	cf. jī 'to stand'
<b>jítí</b>	Verb	carry up	to carry something up	cf. jī 'to stand'
<b>jō</b>	Particle	PL, -s	Plural marker	

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>júró</b>	Pronoun	1PL.O, us	first person plural object pronominal	
<b>jùrù</b>	Pronoun	1PL, we	first person plural subject pronominal	
<b>júró<sup>L</sup></b>	Pronoun	1PL.POSS, our	first person plural possessive pronominal	

## K k

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<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>ká</b>	Verb	shout		Tone is uncertain.
<b>kà</b>	Verb	break	to break something	
<b>kà</b>	Verb	harvest maize	to harvest maize by breaking it	
<b>kā</b>	Particle	COND, if, when	postclausal conditional particle	
<b>kā̄</b>	Adverb	here	this place, here	
<b>kā̄</b>	Noun	place		
<b>kág</b>	Verb	crunch	to crunch (intransitive)	
<b>kág á 'jí</b>	Verb	crunched		cf. kág 'to crunch'
<b>kaj</b>	Interjection	hey		This interjection does not have a fixed tone.
<b>kàj</b>	Noun	falcon		
<b>kàksàg</b>	Noun	basket		
<b>kàksí</b>	Verb	crunch	to crunch something	cf. kág 'to crunch'

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>kàm sírá</b>	Proper Noun	place name	name of Kam Sira, a Kam village	
<b>kàndà</b>	Noun	grasshopper, sp.	a big type of grasshopper	
<b>kàndàgà</b>	Noun	insect, sp.		
<b>kántô</b>	Noun	sugar		
<b>káŋáí</b>	Noun	ant, sp.	an unidentified type of red ant	
<b>káŋóláŋ</b>	Noun	hanging basket		
<b>kàŋkánê</b>	Noun	Monday		Name of a Jirim village that has a market event on Mondays. Also Kankani.
<b>káŋkāŋā</b>	Adjective	empty		Tone is uncertain.
<b>kàpèj</b>	Noun	cutlass		
<b>kàpìrù</b>	Noun	match		
<b>kár</b>	Verb	accompany		Tone is uncertain.
<b>kàr</b>	Verb	have		
<b>kàr</b>	Verb	keep		
<b>kár ní mī hñ</b>	Clause	there are no problems	a response in a greeting, used to say that one is doing well	cf. kàr 'to have', jì 'thing', mī <sup>L</sup> 'some', hñ 'not'. Literally: 'I don't have anything.'
<b>kàsí</b>	Verb	branch	to branch off, to take a different path	cf. kà 'break'
<b>kàsí</b>	Verb	break		cf. kà 'break'
<b>kàfírí</b>	Noun	weaver ant		
<b>kávên</b>	Proper Noun	person name		



Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
<b>ká<sup>+</sup>ʃírí</b>	Noun	hedgehog		
<b>kò nīnnāmī</b>	Noun	grinding place	a mill, a grinding place	cf. kòm 'place', nām 'to grind'
<b>kògòjí</b>	Noun	old person		cf. ákòg 'biggest one, dominant one', àjí 'person'
<b>kòktí</b>	Verb	smooth	to be smooth	
<b>kóm</b>	Verb	complete	to complete something, to finish something	cf. kóm 'to tie'
<b>kóm</b>	Verb	tie	to tie a wrapper	cf. kóm 'to complete'
<b>kòm</b>	Noun	place		
<b>kòm ɖʒòŋ</b>	Noun	chair		cf. kòm 'place', ɖʒòŋ 'to sit'
<b>kòm lù</b>	Noun	bed		cf. kòm 'place', lù 'to sleep'
<b>kòm sí</b>	Verb	engage	to be engaged to someone or to be betrothed to someone	cf. kóm 'to tie, to complete'
<b>kòjí</b>	Verb	repair	to repair something	
<b>kòŋʃinì</b>	Noun	snail	May be a water snail or a land snail	
<b>kòr</b>	Verb	to surpass	to surpass someone or something	
<b>kòrí</b>	Verb	praise	to praise someone	
<b>kòsí</b>	Verb	gather		cf. kòsí 'to join'
<b>kòsí</b>	Verb	join		cf. kòsí 'to gather'
<b>kó</b>	Adposition	INSTR, with	instrumental preposition	cf. kó 'temporal preposition'
<b>kó</b>	Adposition	TEMP, at, during	temporal preposition	cf. kó 'instrumental preposition'



<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>kō</b>	Particle	place	that place, there	cf. kòmò 'there'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>kò ́sō</b>	Noun	sweat		cf. kò ́jō 'sweat'
<b>kò ́jō</b>	Noun	sweat		cf. ́jō 'hot'
<b>kò gòm bāgī</b>	Noun	mosque		cf. kòm 'place', àgòm 'forehead', bāgī 'to lower one's head', ní gòm bāgī 'Muslim'
<b>kú</b>	Noun	cobra		cf. kú 'deity, magic'
<b>kú</b>	Noun	deity	generic name for all gods	cf. kú 'cobra, magic'
<b>kú</b>	Noun	magic		cf. kú 'deity, cobra'
<b>kúb</b>	Verb	wear		
<b>kùb</b>	Verb	rain lightly	to rain lightly	
<b>kùb</b>	Verb	weaken	to become weak	
<b>kûb</b>	Noun	reed fish	reed fish or snakefish, a snake-like fish that can grow more than 30cm in length	
<b>kúbórí</b>	Noun	dustbin		
<b>kùkóktī</b>	Adjective	smooth		cf. kòktī 'to smoothen'
<b>kúkórú</b>	Noun	donkey		
<b>kùkkùb</b>	Adjective	weak	to be weak	cf. kùb 'to become weak'
<b>kúkkúr</b>	Adjective	smelly	to be smelly	cf. kúr 'to stink'
<b>kùkú</b>	Noun	ancestor		cf. jàkú 'ancestor', kùkú 'grandparent/grandchild'. It is not clear what the difference is between kùkú and jàkú.

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>kùkú</b>	Noun	grandparent /grandchild		cf. jákú 'grandparent/grandchild', kùkú 'ancestor'. It is not clear what the difference is between kùkú and jákú.
<b>kúkwéj</b>	Noun	stick, sp.	a stick that is used to send messages from village to village, carried around by messengers, e.g. to call meetings	cf. kwî 'walking stick'
<b>kúmé</b>	Noun	chicken		
<b>kúmé vān</b>	Noun	rooster		cf. kúmé 'chicken', ávān 'male'
<b>kùnì</b>	Noun	dirt		cf. kùṅì 'dustbin', kúr 'to stink'
<b>kùṅì</b>	Noun	dustbin		cf. kùnì 'dirt', kúr 'to stink'
<b>kùntí</b>	Verb	bend down		cf. kùptí 'to bow down, to kneel down, to squat'
<b>kùptí</b>	Verb	bow down, kneel down, squat		cf. kùntí 'to bend down'
<b>kúr</b>	Verb	stink	to stink, to be smelly	
<b>kùrikî</b>	Proper Noun	God	term used for both the primary traditional deity and the Abrahamic deity	cf. kú 'magic, deity'
<b>kùrukùrù</b>	Noun	grasshopper, sp.	a big grasshopper	
<b>kùrukwàb</b>	Noun	bird sp	an unidentified big type of non-water bird	
<b>kùsí</b>	Verb	smell	to smell something	cf. kúr 'to stink'

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>kwàn</b>	Proper Noun	Jukun		cf. òkwān 'bean', àkwān 'bean'
<b>kwàntóŋ</b>	Proper Noun	Mumuye		cf. kwàn 'Jukun', òtón 'mountain'
<b>kwàntórí</b>	Verb	bend	to bend something, such as the branch of a tree	
<b>kwàntórí</b>	Verb	fold	to fold something, such as clothes	
<b>kwár</b>	Verb	make a rope		Tone is uncertain.
<b>kwàr</b>	Noun	hip, loins, waist		
<b>kwàsí</b>	Verb	pluck		
<b>kwêj</b>	Noun	mudfish	mudfish, an airbreathing type of catfish that can grow up to 1m in length.	
<b>kwî</b>	Noun	walking stick		cf. kúkwéj 'stick, sp.'

## KP kp

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<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>kpá</b>	Noun	grazing ground	a path cattle follow to go to water	
<b>kpá</b>	Noun	wrapper	a colorful piece of clothing worn by women	
<b>kpà</b>	Noun	claw		cf. kpà 'cover, nail'
<b>kpà</b>	Noun	cover		
<b>kpà</b>	Noun	nail		cf. kpà 'cover, claw'

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>kpà bèr</b>	Noun	bark		cf. kpà 'cover', bèr 'tree'
<b>kpà líp ʒí rò bòg</b>	Noun	toe nail		cf. kpà 'cover, claw, nail', àlíp ʒí rò bòg 'toe'
<b>kpà líp ʒí rò né</b>	Noun	finger nail		cf. kpà 'cover, claw, nail', àlíp ʒí rò né 'finger'
<b>kpāb</b>	Verb	mix		
<b>kpágárág</b>	Proper Noun	place name	name of Bayaro, a Kam village.	cf. kpágárág 'tilapia'.
<b>kpágárág</b>	Noun	fish, sp., tilapia		
<b>kpānē</b>	Adverb	before	at least one year ago	cf. kpānēkā 'before'
<b>kpānēkā</b>	Adverb	before	at least one year ago	cf. kpānē 'before'
<b>kpáj</b>	Adverb	usually		Tone is uncertain.
<b>kpàŋí</b>	Verb	strong	to be strong	
<b>kpàŋrí</b>	Verb	hang out	to go outside without a particular goal in mind	
<b>kpár</b>	Verb	rain		Tone is uncertain.
<b>kpáfinè nág</b>	Noun	bird, sp.	an unidentified type of bird; it is white and is often seen moving along with cow herds	cf. nág 'cow'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>kpàtí bá</b>	Noun	north		
<b>kpǎŋ</b>	Noun	illiterate person		Tone is uncertain.
<b>kpǎrī</b>	Verb	cough		
<b>kpèsí</b>	Verb	slippery	to be slippery	cf. kpèsí 'to be smooth'
<b>kpèsí</b>	Verb	smooth	to be smooth	cf. kpèsí 'to be slippery'
<b>kpēj mī</b>	Cardinal numeral	twenty		

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>kpējīmī gún bī</b>	Cardinal numeral	twenty-one		cf. kpējīmī 'twenty', bī 'one'
<b>kpējīmī gún bō</b>	Cardinal numeral	thirty		cf. kpējīmī 'twenty', bō 'ten'
<b>kpét á *jí</b>	Adjective	tired		cf. kpètí 'to tire'
<b>kpètí</b>	Verb	tire	to become tired	
<b>kpìkpésī</b>	Adjective	slippery		cf. kpèsí 'to be slippery'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>kpìkpésī</b>	Adjective	smooth		cf. kpèsí 'to be smooth'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>kpìmkpàñī</b>	Adjective	difficult, hard, strong		cf. kpàñí 'to be strong'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>kpír</b>	Verb	brew	to brew something, to prepare a liquid	Tone is uncertain.
<b>kpò</b>	Noun	body		
<b>kpò</b>	Particle	REFL, self	reflexive marker	cf. kpò 'body'
<b>kpò bèr</b>	Noun	tree trunk		cf. kpò 'body', bèr 'tree'

## L 1

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<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>là</b>	Noun	skin		
<b>là kpò</b>	Noun	skin		cf. là 'skin', kpò 'body'
<b>là kúmé</b>	Noun	book, paper, tissue		cf. là 'skin', kúmé 'chicken'
<b>là nùṅ</b>	Noun	eyelid		cf. là 'skin', ànùṅ 'eye'

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>làb</b>	Verb	do secretly	to do something secretly, to hide oneself while doing something	Tone is uncertain.
<b>làg</b>	Verb	lick		
<b>làgàtār</b>	Noun	fish, sp.	Ansorge's Neolebias, a small (max. 2.6cm) fish that lives close to stones and tastes bitter.	cf. làg 'to lick', àtār 'stone'. It is called data in Hausa.
<b>lágá<sup>+</sup>sô</b>	Noun	alligator		
<b>láhàdì</b>	Noun	Sunday		Borrowed from Hausa (Lahadi), originally from Arabic yoom al-aḥad 'Sunday', literally 'day the first'
<b>lámê</b>	Noun	hare		
<b>làmikàr</b>	Noun	earwax		cf. àkàr 'ear'
<b>lántí</b>	Noun	joint		
<b>láj</b>	Verb	cook		Tone is uncertain.
<b>lájî</b>	Noun	blind person		
<b>làpsí</b>	Verb	hide	to do something secretly	cf. làb 'to do something secretly'
<b>làrí</b>	Verb	open	to unwrap something that is covered with cloth; also to open curtains	
<b>lòg</b>	Verb	deliver		
<b>lògòrí</b>	Verb	end		cf. lòg 'to deliver'
<b>lòm</b>	Verb	plant	to plant crops	
<b>lèb</b>	Adposition	inside		cf. àlèb 'inside, in'



<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>lèg</b>	Verb	sharp	to be sharp	
<b>lèg</b>	Verb	hear, listen		
<b>lèksí</b>	Verb	sharpen	to make something sharp	cf. lèg 'to be sharp'
<b>lèm</b>	Verb	beautiful, good, correct	to be beautiful, good, correct	
<b>lém m á</b>	Phrase	It is good for me.	An expression of delight. Literally 'it is good for/to me'.	cf. lèm 'good', m 'me'
<b>lèmsí</b>	Verb	beautify	to make something good, beautiful; to promote something	cf. lèm 'to be beautiful, good, correct'
<b>lénî</b>	Noun	axe	a small battleaxe	
<b>lèsí</b>	Verb	pick it		
<b>líb</b>	Adposition	on		cf. àlib 'head, on'
<b>lig</b>	Verb	dance	to dance	Tone is uncertain.
<b>líg gbîg</b>	Verb	dance	to dance	cf. lig 'to dance', gbígí 'to shake'
<b>lìllòg</b>	Adjective	fertile	to be fertile	cf. lòg 'to deliver'
<b>lìllèg</b>	Adjective	sharp	to be sharp	cf. lèg 'to be sharp'
<b>lìllèm</b>	Adjective	beautiful, good, correct		cf. lèm 'to be beautiful, good, correct'
<b>lìm</b>	Verb	dive		
<b>lò</b>	Verb	wash (body)	to wash one's body	
<b>lò kpò</b>	Verb	take bath	to take a bath, to have a shower	cf. lò 'wash body', kpò 'body'
<b>lù</b>	Verb	lie down		
<b>lù</b>	Verb	sleep		

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>lù</b>	Noun	worm-like insect		
<b>lù bì</b>	Verb	lie down		cf. lù 'to sleep, to lie down', àbì 'down'
<b>lùb</b>	Verb	uproot		
<b>lúb á jí</b>	Verb	removed	to be removed	cf. lùb 'to uproot'
<b>lùbrí</b>	Verb	remove	to remove something	cf. lùb 'to uproot'
<b>lùbrí</b>	Verb	uproot	to uproot a crop	cf. lùb 'to uproot'
<b>lùmò</b>	Noun	market		cf. lùmò 'week'
<b>lùmò</b>	Noun	week		cf. lùmò 'market'
<b>lùpsí</b>	Verb	remove		cf. lùb 'to uproot'
<b>lùtí</b>	Verb	appoint somebody	to appoint someone, to crown someone	cf. lù 'to sleep, to lie down'
<b>lùtí</b>	Verb	lay something down	to lay something down	cf. lù 'to sleep, to lie down'
<b>lwàm</b>	Noun	hippopotamus		

## M m

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<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>m</b>	Interjection	yes		This interjection does not have a fixed tone.
<b>ń</b>	Pronoun	1SG.O, me	first person singular object pronominal	
<b>m m</b>	Interjection	no		This interjection does not have a fixed tone.

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>má</b>	Connective	and	connects clauses, not noun phrases (which are conjoined with the comitative marker rà 'with')	cf. àmá 'and'
<b>má</b>	Connective	but	connects clauses	cf. àmá 'but'
<b>mà</b>	Particle	also	additive marker	borrowed from Hausa (ma)
<b>mà</b>	Verb	give	to give something to someone	Tone is uncertain.
<b>má 'féb</b>	Verb	make angry	to make someone angry	cf. mà 'to give', féb 'anger'
<b>mag</b>	Verb	measure	to measure something	Tone is uncertain.
<b>mag</b>	Verb	taste	to taste something	Tone is uncertain.
<b>màgàrí</b>	Verb	imitate, act	to imitate something or someone; to act in a play	
<b>mágàrí káptì</b>	Noun	early morning	time of the day from 4 a.m. to 5 a.m.	cf. màgàrí 'to imitate', àkàptì 'morning'
<b>màjòkàm</b>	Nominal	Wednesday		Name of Mayo Kam, a Kam village with a market event on Wednesdays.
<b>màkpà</b>	Noun	muslim		
<b>málám</b>	Noun	teacher		Borrowed from Hausa.
<b>mām</b>	Verb	give me		cf. mà 'to give', m 'me'
<b>màn</b>	Noun	fat		cf. màn 'oil'
<b>màn</b>	Noun	fuel		cf. màn 'oil'
<b>màn</b>	Noun	oil		cf. màn 'fat'
<b>màn àlìb</b>	Noun	brains		cf. màn 'fat', àlìb 'head'
<b>màn àfjór</b>	Noun	honey		cf. màn 'fat', àfjór 'bee'

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>mánî</b>	Noun	fish, sp.	an unidentified greasy-tasting fish that looks similar to a tarpon but is found in freshwater	cf. màn 'fat'
<b>mántî</b>	Proper Noun	person name		
<b>màngóró</b>	Noun	mango		Borrowed from Hausa
<b>màrè</b>	Noun	river		
<b>màrè fǽb</b>	Noun	haunted river		cf. màrè 'river', àfǽb 'ghost, apparition'
<b>màsàr</b>	Proper Noun	Egypt	Egypt	Borrowed from Hausa
<b>màsí</b>	Verb	know		cf. mà 'to know', màsí 'to notice'
<b>màsí</b>	Verb	notice		cf. màsí 'to know'
<b>màfíní</b>	Proper Noun	person name		
<b>mòg</b>	Noun	smoke		
<b>mòm</b>	Verb	laugh		
<b>mòmí</b>	Verb	greet		cf. mòm 'to laugh'
<b>mē</b>	Noun	mother		
<b>mē</b>	Verb	give them		cf. mà 'to give', í 'them'
<b>mè dáḡâ</b>	Noun	queen termite		cf. mè 'mother', dáḡâ 'termite hill'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>mè swò</b>	Noun	older female large ape	older female in a troop of apes	cf. mè 'mother', swò 'baboon'. Used for different species of apes (e.g. baboons, chimpanzees, gorillas).

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>mè tàr nīnnāmī</b>	Noun	big grinding stone		cf. mè 'mother', àtār 'stone', nām 'to grind'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>mē tīdʒóŋ</b>	Noun	official, sp.	the mother of the traditional king; she's responsible for the magic called tīdʒóŋ	cf. mè 'mother', tīdʒóŋ 'magic, sp., east'
<b>mèléŋ</b>	Noun	insect, sp.		cf. mè 'mother'
<b>màràsà</b>	Noun	python		
<b>màrà</b>	Verb	return		
<b>màrèg</b>	Noun	ant, sp.	an unidentified type of ant that stings	
<b>màrèg</b>	Noun	nasal mucus		cf. àmārèg 'nose'
<b>mén á 'jí</b>	Verb	scattered	to be scattered	cf. mēnsí 'to scatter', mīnsí 'to scatter'
<b>mēnsí</b>	Verb	scatter	to scatter things	cf. mīnsí 'to scatter'
<b>mēr</b>	Verb	swallow		Tone is uncertain.
<b>m̀fàm</b>	Noun	animal, meat		cf. àfàm 'animal, meat'
<b>m̀fò</b>	Noun	forest		
<b>m̀fò kú</b>	Noun	paternal relative		cf. m̀fò 'forest', jàkú 'ancestor', kùkú 'ancestor'
<b>mgbàb</b>	Verb	shoot		
<b>m̀gbètè</b>	Noun	pouched rat		
<b>mījírág</b>	Adjective	alone		cf. jīrāg 'two'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>mí<sup>L</sup></b>	Particle	some, any, a certain	existential quantifier	

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
mílágmílág	Adjective	soft		cf. mīlāksí 'to soften'. Tone is uncertain.
mīlāksí	Verb	soften	to make something soft	
mīljêñ	Cardinal numeral	one million		Borrowed from Hausa. Tone is uncertain.
mín	Adverb	like this		
míná	Particle	PRSTT, see it	presentative demonstrative	cf. mín 'like this'
mīnā	Interrogative pro-form	which	interrogative modifier	
mīnsí	Verb	scatter	to scatter things	cf. mēnsí 'to scatter'
mīnté	Adjective	few		cf. ántē 'small'
mīnté	Adjective	little	little, only used for mass nouns (fluids, food, fruit)	
míṅ	Verb	build		
mìṅkájá	Noun	water		
mìṅkájá b̀èr ábūrī	Noun	egg white		cf. mìṅkájá 'water', àb̀èr 'egg', ábūrī 'white'
mìṅkájá b̀èr ádōmrī	Noun	yolk, egg yolk	egg yolk	cf. mìṅkájá 'water', àb̀èr 'egg', ádōmrī 'red'
mìṅkájá mōrēg	Noun	nasal mucus		cf. mìṅkájá 'water', àmōrēg 'nose'
mìṅkájá nùṅ	Noun	iris (of the eye)		cf. mìṅkájá 'water', ànùṅ 'eye'
mìṅkájá nùṅ	Noun	tears		cf. mìṅkájá 'water', ànùṅ 'eye'
mìṅkájá n <sup>+</sup> tòg	Noun	semen		cf. mìṅkájá 'water', ñtòg 'penis'

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
mìḡkàḡá †fǝr	Noun	honey		cf. mìḡkàḡá 'water', àfǝr 'bee'
mìḡkàḡá †ví	Noun	milk		cf. mìḡkàḡá 'water', àví 'bee'
míḡkìḡ	Adjective	different		
mìsàḡ	Noun	broom		
mísí	Adverb	again		
m̀kpákár	Noun	back of head		
m̀kpálíléj	Noun	butterfly		
m̀kpàtì	Noun	plant, sp.	a leaf that is used for the preparation of draw soup	
m̀kpòkóróg	Noun	tree, sp.	an unidentified type of tree that is used for making traditional toothbrushes	Its name in Hausa is dada toka.
m̀kpóḡ	Noun	mute	someone who cannot speak	
m̀kpōḡ	Noun	agama lizard	agama lizard	
m̀kpóḡé	Noun	thigh		
m̀kpè	Noun	benniseed	sesame seed, benniseed	
m̀kpìntèrì	Noun	banana		cf. m̀kpìntèrì 'banana'
m̀kpìntèrì	Noun	lame person		cf. m̀kpìntèrì 'lame person'
m̀kpò	Noun	tuwo		
m̀kpò ɖzú	Noun	pounded yam		cf. m̀kpò 'tuwo', àɖzú 'yam'
m̀ <sup>L</sup>	Pronoun	1SG.POSS, my	first person singular possessive pronominal	
m̀ò	Verb	give him		cf. mà 'to give', ú 'him'

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
ṁpāj	Noun	lutefish, sp.	a type of lutefish, living on the bottom of lakes and growing to around 60cm in length. It goes upstream to lay eggs.	
ṁpàndzój	Noun	mouse, sp.	possibly a jerboa	
ṁpājərí	Noun	monkey, sp.		
ṁpəḡ	Noun	male goat		
ṁpəḡm	Noun	rain		
ṁpəḡm	Noun	wing	wing of a bird	
ṁpə́rāḡ	Noun	fish, sp.	featherback, a type of fish with slender and long bodies that has a knife-like shape and is also called knifefish	
ṁpə́rəḡ	Noun	rat		
ṁpə́rè	Noun	bird, sp.		
ṁpə́rèḡ	Noun	testicle		
ṁpə́rī	Noun	goat		
ṁpə́rimì	Noun	dung beetle		
ṁpə́rimì fìb	Noun	cockroach		cf. ṁpə́rimì 'dung beetle', àfìb 'shit'
ṁpə́rè	Noun	leopard		
ṁpə́	Noun	monkey, sp.		Tone is uncertain.
ṁpṛím	Noun	okra		
ṁpṛúj	Noun	jug, calabash		
ṁpṛúj dʒój	Noun	ritual calabash		cf. ṁpṛúj 'calabash', dʒój 'deity, sp.'



<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>ìpúr</b>	Noun	spring	a spring, a point where groundwater reaches the surface	
<b>ìpwár</b>	Noun	duck		
<b>múg</b>	Verb	lick	e.g. to taste soup, to eat sugar or flour	Tone is uncertain.
<b>mùmúsī</b>	Adjective	full		cf. mùsí 'to fill something'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>mùjà</b>	Noun	patience		
<b>mùrì</b>	Noun	pearl millet	harvested in august or september	
<b>múrô</b>	Noun	maize		
<b>mùrù</b>	Noun	neighbor		
<b>mùrù</b>	Noun	peer	someone in the same social group	
<b>mùsí</b>	Verb	fill	to fill something, such as a cup, or a dictionary	

## N n

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
ń	Pronoun	1SG.S.PFV, I	first person singular perfective and future STAMP-morph/pronominal	
ñ	Pronoun	1SG.S.IPFV, I	first person singular imperfective STAMP-morph/pronominal	
ɲà	Pronoun	2SG.ID, you	second person singular independent pronominal	
nàb	Verb	cut	to cut something with a cutlass or an axe	
nág	Noun	cow		
nàg	Verb	give a name	to give something or someone a name	Tone is uncertain.
nàg	Verb	lay eggs	to lay eggs	Tone is uncertain.
nàg	Verb	throw	to throw something	Tone is uncertain.
nág á <sup>+</sup> bóŋ	Verb	be alive		cf. nàg 'to throw', àbóŋ 'breath'
nág á <sup>+</sup> bóŋ	Verb	breathe		cf. nàg 'to throw', àbóŋ 'breath'
nág á <sup>+</sup> bóŋ	Verb	rest		cf. nàg 'to throw', àbóŋ 'breath'
nám	Noun	buffalo		
nàm	Verb	grind	to grind something	Tone is uncertain.

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>námboǵórí</b>	Noun	elephantfish	freshwater elephantfish, a family of fish that encompasses a wide range of species with widely varying sizes and different colors (dark and light), all characterized by a big head, and some characterized by an elephant-trunk-like mouthpart.	
<b>nāŋkō</b>	Adverb	first		Tone is uncertain.
<b>nár</b>	Verb	thick	to be thick	
<b>nòr</b>	Noun	spear, sp.		Tone is uncertain. The final <r> may represent a trill rather than a tap.
<b>ndǵámdí</b>	Noun	iron		Borrowing from Fulfulde (njamndi)
<b>ndǵámdí</b>	Noun	time	time on a clock	Borrowing from Fulfulde (njamndi)
<b>ndǵìndǵènakù</b>	Noun	mantis		
<b>nēwī</b>	Proper Noun	Person name		
<b>ñfàŋ</b>	Noun	rat		
<b>nìgí</b>	Verb	stamp	to stamp with one's feet on the ground	cf. nìgí 'to trample'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>nìgí</b>	Verb	trample	to trample someone or something	cf. nìgí 'to stamp'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>nìm</b>	Verb	eat, bite	to eat something that you can bite; to bite (e.g. of a dog)	









<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>ni díní</b>	Noun	progress		cf. ni 'thing', dín 'to meet, to find'
<b>ni dūgī</b>	Noun	drunk person		cf. ni 'person'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>ni dʒùtí</b>	Noun	gift		cf. ni 'thing', dʒùtí 'to give a present'
<b>ni fāgī</b>	Noun	prisoner		cf. ni 'person', fāg 'to close, to cover'
<b>ni gbàn</b>	Noun	woman, women		
<b>ni gòm bāgī</b>	Noun	Muslim		cf. ni 'person', àgòm 'forehead', bāgī 'to lower one's forehead', kò gòm bāgī 'mosque'
<b>ni ídērī</b>	Noun	school		cf. ni 'thing', dērī 'to draw'
<b>ni ípāgē</b>	Noun	itch		cf. ni 'thing'
<b>ni íʒòb tūrī</b>	Noun	pump		cf. ni 'thing', àʒòb 'air', tūr 'to pump'
<b>ni íʒò</b>	Noun	creature	creature, living being	cf. ni 'thing', áʒò 'hot'
<b>ni kàr fāgī</b>	Noun	deaf person		cf. ni 'person', àkàr 'ear', 'fāg 'to close, to cover'
<b>ni làkòm</b>	Noun	termite		cf. ni 'thing'
<b>ni làŋ mōŋī</b>	Noun	potter		cf. ni 'person', àlàŋ 'pot'
<b>ni mfó <sup>+</sup>séj</b>	Proper Noun	royal clan that brings the king		cf. ni 'person', m̀fò 'forest', séj 'tree, sp.'
<b>ni m̀iŋkáŋá tūgī</b>	Noun	cup		cf. ni 'thing', m̀iŋkáŋá 'water', tūg 'fetch'
<b>ni nág nĩmsī</b>	Noun	cattle rearer		cf. ni 'person', nág 'cow', nĩmsī 'to feed'



<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>ní ní bārī</b>	Noun	farmer		cf. ní 'person', nì 'thing', bār 'to farm'
<b>ní ní dūbī</b>	Noun	teacher		cf. ní 'person', nì 'thing', dūbī 'to write' (tone uncertain)
<b>ní ní gbāmī</b>	Noun	tailor		cf. ní 'person', nì 'thing', gbām 'to sew'
<b>ní ní mgbābī</b>	Noun	hunter		cf. ní 'person', nì 'thing', mgbāb 'to shoot'
<b>ní ní tī</b>	Noun	hammer		cf. ní 'person', nì 'thing', tí 'to hit'
<b>ní ntóŋ sání</b>	Noun	clan, sp.	one of the clans within Kam	cf. ní 'person', ntóŋ sání 'place name'
<b>ní ntóŋí wēj</b>	Proper Noun	clan, sp.	the clan that is responsible for rainfall	cf. ní 'person', ntóŋ 'mountain', wēj 'tree, sp.'
<b>ní nùŋ tìksī</b>	Noun	Christian	a Christian	cf. ní 'person', ànùŋ 'eye', tìksī 'to close'
<b>ní ŋwòm</b>	Noun	Kam people, Kam person		cf. ní 'person', ŋwòm 'Kam'
<b>nì ŋwé lâŋ</b>	Noun	pot cover		cf. nì 'thing', ŋwé 'mouth', àlâŋ 'pot'
<b>ní †jě kārī</b>	Noun	hunter		cf. ní 'person', àjě 'bush', kār 'to accompany', kàr 'to have, to keep'
<b>ní séd ntàm</b>	Noun	doctor		cf. ní 'person', sèr 'room', ntàm 'medicine'
<b>nì sèt tùd bírí</b>	Noun	bellows		cf. nì 'thing', sèr 'room', tùr 'to pump', bír 'to blow'
<b>ní jìb</b>	Noun	anus		cf. nì 'thing', àfìb 'shit'

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>ɲì sín rə ɲí</b>	Proper Noun	person name		cf. ɲì 'thing', ɲí 'person', sín 'to do, to make', rə 'with', ɲí 'person'
<b>ɲí ʃíríkú</b>	Proper Noun	clan, sp.	clan responsible for magic in general	cf. ɲí 'person'
<b>ɲí tábé ʃūgī</b>	Noun	fisherman		cf. ɲí 'person', àtábé 'fish', ʃúg 'to catch'
<b>ɲí vān</b>	Noun	man, men		cf. ɲí 'person', ávān 'male'
<b>ɲí <sup>+</sup>zóg</b>	Noun	lazy person	lazy person	cf. ɲí 'person', àzóg 'lazy person'
<b>ɲim</b>	Pronoun	1SG.ID, me, I	first person singular independent pronoun, also used for focus	
<b>ɲíɲí</b>	Pronoun	other one	another one (both used for people and objects)	
<b>ɲíɲí</b>	Pronoun	some	some (indefinite pronoun, used for both people and objects)	
<b>ɲíɲkā</b>	Particle	maybe		This is probably a complex word, but the parts are not clear. Perhaps kā is the conditional marker. Tone is uncertain.
<b>ɲíʃé</b>	Noun	snake		cf. ɲì 'thing', àʃé 'bush'
<b>ɲísīrī</b>	Noun	money		cf. ɲì 'thing', sīrī 'completely' (?)
<b>ɲí<sup>+</sup>zá</b>	Cardinal numeral	nine		cf. ɲì 'thing'
<b>ɲó</b>	Pronoun	2PL.O, you	second person plural object pronominal	

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>ɲò</b>	Pronoun	2PL.S, you	Second person plural subject pronominal	
<b>ɲó<sup>L</sup></b>	Pronoun	2PL.POSS, your	second person plural possessive possessive pronominal	
<b>ɲù ɲgūbī</b>	Noun	urine		cf. ɲì 'thing', ɲgub 'to urinate' (uncertain tone)

## ɲ ɲ

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>ɲ</b>	Interjection	come have it	an interjection used for presenting something to someone, urging them to take it	
<b>ɲàm tí</b>	Verb	yawn		cf. ɲà tí 'to open one's mouth'
<b>ɲànsí</b>	Verb	bend	to bend something, e.g. the branch of a tree	cf. ɲànsí 'to fold', ɲán 'to be bent'
<b>ɲànsí</b>	Verb	fold	to fold something, such as clothes	cf. ɲànsí 'to bend', ɲán 'to be bent'
<b>ɲáɲ</b>	Verb	to be bent		
<b>ɲáɲ á <sup>+</sup>jí</b>	Verb	bent	to be bent	cf. ɲán 'to be bent'
<b>ɲà tí</b>	Verb	open (mouth)	to open one's mouth	cf. ɲàm tí 'to yawn'
<b>ɲgub</b>	Verb	urinate		Tone is uncertain.
<b>ɲgúrôg</b>	Noun	chameleon		cf. ɲgúrôg 'goliath beetle'
<b>ɲgúrôg</b>	Noun	goliath beetle		cf. ɲgúrôg 'chameleon'

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
ḡíḡámṭí	Verb	yawn		cf. ḡámṭí 'to yawn'. Tone is uncertain.
ḡíḡán	Adjective	bent		cf. ḡán 'to be bent'
ḡká	Noun	crocodile		
ḡkā	Noun	thunder		
ḡkāḡá <sup>+</sup> līb	Noun	skull		cf. àlīb 'head'
ḡkám	Noun	rest (of something)		cf. ḡkám 'underneath'
ḡkám	Adposition	underneath		cf. ḡkám 'rest (of something)'
ḡkám sù	Noun	bladder		cf. ḡkám 'underneath', sù 'navel'
ḡkànsīrāḡ	Noun	charcoal		
ḡkáy	Noun	tick		
ḡkàḡ	Noun	edge		Tone is uncertain.
ḡkáy wó	Noun	tick		cf. ḡkáy 'tick', wó 'dog'
ḡkāḡfīn	Proper Noun	person name		
ḡkázárî	Noun	ostrich		
ḡkómî	Noun	nile monitor lizard	West Africa nile monitor, an aquatic type of monitor lizard that grows to one or two meters in length; it is called water monitor lizard in English by Kam speakers	

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
ḡkòmpánē	Noun	fish, sp.	a type of fish that is dried and smoked before it is eaten; the exact species is not clearly identified	Tone is uncertain.
ḡkòntòró	Proper Noun	person name		
ḡkóḡ	Noun	louse		
ḡkènsì	Noun	razor		
ḡkímá	Noun	milliped		
ḡkùm	Noun	back		
ḡkùm àgbèr	Noun	nape of neck		cf. ḡkùm 'back', àgbèr 'neck'
ḡkùm àbòḡ	Noun	upper part of foot		cf. ḡkùm 'back', àbòḡ 'leg, foot'
ḡkùm àmàrēḡ	Noun	bridge of nose		cf. ḡkùm 'back', àmàrēḡ 'nose'
ḡkùm àḡé	Noun	back of hand		cf. ḡkùm 'back', àḡé 'hand, arm'
ḡkùròḡ	Noun	throat		cf. ḡkùròḡ 'voice'
ḡkùròḡ	Noun	voice		cf. ḡkùròḡ 'throat'
ḡkūrū	Noun	cane rat		
ḡkwān	Noun	bean		
ḡkwàtèrì	Noun	joint		
ḡkwàtèrì bòḡ	Noun	knee		cf. ḡkwàtèrì 'joint', àbòḡ 'leg'
ḡkwàtèrì ḡé	Noun	elbow		cf. ḡkwàtèrì 'joint', àḡé 'arm'
ḡwāb	Quantifier	all		Tone is uncertain.

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
ηwàpá	Phrase	welcome		Tone is uncertain.
ηwàntí	Verb	straighten		
ηwárí	Verb	mix	to mix small things that can still be separated, such as seeds, beans, rice or pepper	Tone is uncertain.
ηwóri	Verb	tie a knot		Tone is uncertain.
ηwé	Noun	language		cf. ηwé 'mouth'
ηwé	Noun	mouth		
ηwé	Noun	place		
ηwé	Noun	river bank		cf. ηwé 'mouth'
ηwé bûn	Noun	arrow point		cf. ηwé 'mouth', àbùn 'arrow'
ηwé lâη	Noun	mouth of a pot		cf. ηwé 'mouth', àlâη 'pot'
ηwé márê	Noun	river bank		cf. ηwé 'mouth', màrê 'river'
ηwé nín dá <sup>+</sup> rá	Proper Noun	place name	Garin Hamza, a Kam village	cf. ηwé 'mouth', àgínîη 'buttocks', dàrá 'palm tree'
ηwé ηwôm	Noun	Kam language		cf. ηwé 'language', àηwòm 'Kam'
ηwìηkî	Proper Noun	person name		
ηwìηwántî	Adjective	straight		cf. ηwàntí 'to straighten'. Tone is uncertain.
ηwún	Cardinal numeral	five		

## O o

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
ò	Particle	DIST		
o o	Interjection	no		cf. o:j 'yes'
o:j	Interjection	hey		
o:j	Interjection	yes		

## P p

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
pàg	Noun	kitchen		
pàg àbàṅ	Noun	wine kitchen, brewery	literally 'wine kitchen'; a place where alcohol is made, a (small) brewery	cf. pàg 'kitchen', àbàṅ 'beer, alcohol, wine'
pákpágìní	Noun	giant water bug		
pár	Verb	to be tight		
pàtárí	Noun	skirt		
pátárí tàr	Noun	cave		cf. pàtárí 'skirt', àtár 'stone'. Tone is uncertain.
pàtúrû	Noun	cat		
pób	Verb	to be compressed		
pób á ʹjí	Verb	pressed together	to be pressed together	cf. pób 'to be compressed'
pòm	Noun	venom		

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>pòpsí</b>	Verb	press together	to press something together (e.g. a can of soda)	cf. pób 'to be compressed'
<b>pə</b>	Verb	come		cf. pè 'to come'
<b>pəpírí</b>	Adjective	astringent	astringent, rough, harsh; the taste one gets when biting an unripe banana or other types of raw fruit or vegetables; it is sometimes translated as 'too dry' into English, because of the dry feeling it leaves in the tongue and mouth; it is closely associated with bitterness but still different from it	cf. pírí 'to be astringent'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>pè</b>	Verb	come		cf. pə 'to come'
<b>pêj</b>	Noun	axe	big axe used to cut trees	
<b>pén</b>	Verb	jump	to jump across trees	Tone is uncertain.
<b>pén</b>	Verb	replace	to replace something	
<b>pèntárí</b>	Verb	barter		cf. pén 'to replace something'
<b>pèntárí</b>	Verb	exchange		cf. pén 'to replace something'
<b>pèntárí</b>	Verb	pass		cf. pén 'to jump across trees'



<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>pínî</b>	Noun	non-believer	someone who does not believe in a certain deity	This word is used in the context of the jihadi raids that happened in the nineteenth century, where 'infidels' were captured and/or forcibly converted to Islam.
<b>pínî</b>	Noun	slave		
<b>pìpèj</b>	Noun	shoulder blade		
<b>píppár</b>	Adjective	tight		cf. pár 'to be tight'
<b>pìrí</b>	Verb	astringent	astringent, rough, harsh; the taste one gets when biting an unripe banana or other types of raw fruit or vegetables; it is sometimes translated as 'too dry' into English, because of the dry feeling it leaves in the tongue and mouth; it is closely associated with bitterness but still different from it	
<b>pìsí</b>	Verb	dry	to dry something	
<b>pìsí</b>	Verb	spray	to spray something	
<b>pí<sup>+</sup>káŋ</b>	Adverb	tomorrow		
<b>pjáw</b>	Proper Noun	village inside Sarkin Dawa	one of the sub-villages within the larger central village of Sarkin Dawa	
<b>púppób</b>	Noun	can		cf. pób 'to be compressed'

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>púppób</b>	Adjective	pressed together	cf. pób 'to be compressed'	cf. pób 'to be compressed'
<b>pùpwàb</b>	Noun	liver		

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## R r

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>rò</b>	Adposition	COM, with	comitative preposition	cf. rò 'imperfective'
<b>rò</b>	Particle	IPFV, to be V-ing	imperfective aspect marker that indicates that the action referred to by the verb is viewed as ongoing	cf. rò 'with'
<b>rò</b>	Adposition	TEMP, during	temporal preposition	cf. rò 'with'
<b>rí</b>	Derivational affix	ITER	This suffix conveys the meaning that an action is executed multiple times or repeatedly	
<b>rì</b>	Derivational affix	NMLZ	Nominalizing suffix, part of some nominalization constructions	
<b>rīg</b>	Particle	EMPH	emphatic marker	cf. rīg 'possessive'
<b>rīg</b>	Particle	POSS	possessive marker	cf. rīg 'emphasis'

## S s

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
sá	Noun	monkey, sp.		
sǎ	Verb	roof	to roof a building	
sàb	Verb	grab		
sábórág	Noun	spear, sp.		cf. sàb 'to grab'
sàg	Noun	basket		
sàg àǰǰr	Noun	beeswax		cf. sàg 'basket', àǰǰr 'bee'
sàmàrí lím	Proper Noun	place name	Sabon Gida Kamajim, a Kam village	cf. àlím 'front'. Tone is uncertain.
sàmbògòrì	Noun	porcupine		cf. àbògòrì
sámṛ á ʰjí	Adjective	rotten		cf. sámṛí 'to be bad, cruel'
sámṛí	Adjective	bad, cruel		Tone is uncertain.
sánígâw	Noun	ribs		cf. gâw 'ribs'
sáŋ	Verb	go, walk	to go, to walk	Tone is uncertain.
sár	Verb	comb		Tone is uncertain.
sâr	Noun	rest after filtering	something that remains behind after filtering a liquid or mass	
sâr	Cardinal numeral	eight		
sàrí	Verb	peel		
sóg múpà	Phrase	plead	to plead with someone	cf. sóg 'to search', múpà 'patience'. Tone is uncertain.
sòj	Noun	iron		
sòj	Noun	spear, sp.		

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
s̀̀j ájā	Noun	aluminium		cf. s̀̀j 'iron', ájā 'fresh, unripe'
s̀̀ŋ	Verb	remove	to remove something	Tone is uncertain.
s̀̀v́ŕí	Proper Noun	person name		
s̀̀é	Adposition	until		Borrowed from Hausa sáí '(not) until, except'.
s̀̀ébí	Noun	fin		cf. s̀̀ébí 'thorn'
s̀̀ébí	Noun	thorn		cf. s̀̀ébí 'fin'
s̀̀éj	Noun	tree, sp.	an unidentified tree with thorns	Its name in Hausa is kaya.
s̀̀êŋs̀̀êŋ	Adjective	pointed		Tone is uncertain.
s̀̀èr	Noun	room		
s̀̀èt t̀̀ùr	Noun	forge		cf. s̀̀èr 'room', t̀̀ùr 'to pump'
s̀̀ètí	Verb	tear	to tear a fabric	
s̀̀í	Derivational affix	CAUS	causative suffix	
s̀̀ì	Particle	SEQ, then	preverbal sequential particle indicating that the action denoted by the clause happens after an earlier mentioned event	
s̀̀í	Noun	weed, sp.	red sorrel, sheep's sorrel, sour weed, field sorrel, a type of weed that is also called yakuwa in Hausa	
s̀̀ìb̀̀òg	Noun	shoe		cf. àb̀̀òg 'foot', s̀̀ìlib̀̀òg 'shoe'

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>sikā</b>	Connective	lest	apprehensive clause connector	cf. s̀ 'then', k̄ 'if'
<b>s̄im</b>	Interrogative pro-form	how much /many, how	quantity content interrogative, used for enquiring after the quantity of something; quality interrogative	
<b>s̄in</b>	Verb	do		cf. s̄in 'to make'
<b>s̄in</b>	Verb	make		cf. s̄in 'to do'
<b>s̄irá</b>	Noun	hair		
<b>s̄irá kp̄ô</b>	Noun	body hair		cf. s̄irá 'hair', kp̄ô 'body'
<b>s̄irá núŋ</b>	Noun	feather		cf. s̄irá 'hair', núŋ 'bird'
<b>s̄irá nùŋ</b>	Noun	eyelash		cf. s̄irá 'hair', ànùŋ 'eye'
<b>s̄irá ŋwé</b>	Noun	whiskers		cf. s̄irá 'hair', ŋwé 'mouth'
<b>s̄irá †dóm</b>	Noun	beard		cf. s̄irá 'hair', àdóm 'beard'
<b>s̄irá †l̄ib</b>	Noun	head hair		cf. s̄irá 'hair', àl̄ib 'head'
<b>s̄ir̄ō ... r̄īg</b>	Particle	be.NEG, is not, does not exist	negative existential construction, expresses that something does not exist or is not present	cf. r̄īg 'emphasis'
<b>s̄ir̄òkiŋ</b>	Noun	frankfish	Gymnarchus niloticus, frankfish, freshwater tail-rat, or African knifefish, a long, eel-like electric fish found in swamps, lakes, and rivers. It can grow up to 1.5m	Its name in Hausa is youni.

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>sīrī</b>	Adverb	completely	completely, altogether, indicates that the state or action that has been applied to an object has reached its end state	Tone is uncertain.
<b>sísé</b>	Noun	adder, snake, sp.	this name is used for adders but also a variety of other species of snake, e.g. <i>Gonylophis muelleri</i> (short); <i>Lytorhynchus diadema</i> (long); <i>Cerastes vipera</i> ; <i>Echis ocellatus</i>	
<b>sīsīrā</b>	Adverb	now		
<b>sù</b>	Noun	clan, ethnic group, section within a clan		
<b>sù</b>	Noun	navel		
<b>súbí</b>	Noun	spear grass		
<b>súkò</b>	Phrase	hello	a greeting	Probably borrowed from a Jukunoid language (e.g. <i>súko</i> in Kuteb)
<b>sùnsòg</b>	Noun	salt		cf. <i>nsòg</i> 'salt', <i>sòḡí</i> 'sweet'
<b>sùnsòḡí</b>	Adjective	sweet		cf. <i>sòḡí</i> 'sweet'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>sùnù</b>	Noun	dart		
<b>sùr</b>	Verb	crush	to crush something with a stick	
<b>sùr</b>	Verb	pound	to pound something with a mortar	
<b>sùrùpáj</b>	Noun	vulture		

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
swàb	Verb	sing		
swàptóri	Verb	add	to make something increase, to add to something	cf. swàptí 'to increase'
swàptí	Verb	increase	to increase (intransitive)	cf. swàptóri 'to add'
swár	Verb	live		
swò	Noun	baboon		

## Σ J

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
ǰág	Verb	to be ugly		
ǰag	Noun	laugh		
ǰâg	Noun	fish, sp.	African pike, a type of gamefish that has a pike-like body shape that usually lives in deep water. It grows up to 40cm in length.	
ǰób	Verb	to be hot	to be or to become hot	
ǰób á ǰí	Verb	heated	to be heated	cf. ǰób 'to be hot'
sóg	Verb	search		Tone is uncertain.
ǰôg	Noun	savannah monitor lizard	savannah monitor, a large type of lizard	
ǰôṅtí	Verb	remove	to remove something	cf. sôṅ 'to remove'
ǰôptí	Verb	boil	to boil something	cf. ǰób 'to be hot'

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
ʃór	Verb	survive		
ʃè	Noun	ash		
ʃem	Verb	sneeze		Tone is uncertain.
ʃɪŋgáw	Proper Noun	person name		
ʃíʃág	Adjective	ugly, disgusting	to be ugly or disgusting	cf. ʃág 'to be ugly'
ʃíʃób	Adjective	hot	to be hot	cf. ʃób 'to be hot'
ʃòrí	Verb	sour	to be sour, e.g. of milk that has spoiled	
ʃüròg	Noun	elephant		
ʃùʃòrí	Adjective	sour	to be sour, e.g. of milk that has spoiled	cf. ʃòrí 'sour'. Tone is uncertain.

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## T t

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
tàb	Verb	breastfeed	to feed on a breast	cf. tàb 'to touch'
tàb	Verb	touch	to touch something	cf. tàb 'to breastfeed'
tàgàrí	Verb	forbid	to forbid something	cf. tàgí 'to happen'
tàgàrí	Verb	save	to keep safe	
tàgí	Verb	happen	to happen, to affect something or someone	



<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>tàlátà</b>	Nominal	Tuesday		Borrowed from Hausa (Talata) – originally from Arabic at-talaata ‘Tuesday’, literally ‘day the third (starting from Sunday)’
<b>tám</b>	Verb	grow	to grow (intransitive)	
<b>tàmsí</b>	Verb	grow	to make something or someone grow	cf. tám 'to grow'
<b>tàmsí</b>	Verb	nurture	to nurture something or someone	cf. tám 'to grow'
<b>táni</b>	Verb	stand, stay		
<b>tán ni hñ</b>	Phrase	no problem	a response in a greeting, used to say that one is doing well.	cf. tání 'to stand, to stay', ni 'thing', hñ 'not'. Literally 'There is nothing.'
<b>tán sim</b>	Phrase	how are you	a question in a greeting	cf. tání 'to stand', sim 'how much, how'
<b>tánfɔŋ</b>	Adverb	still		cf. tání 'to stand, to stay'
<b>tàjà</b>	Noun	traditional bell	bell used in traditional dances	
<b>tárê</b>	Noun	fish net	fishing net	
<b>tárhî</b>	Noun	history		Borrowed from Hausa.
<b>tàsí</b>	Verb	drag	to drag something or someone along	cf. tási 'to lead'
<b>tàsí</b>	Verb	lead	to lead something or someone	cf. tási 'to drag'

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
tàsò	Noun	dish		Borrowed from local Hausa (taso) – probably originally from Arabic taasa ‘bowl’.
t̀	Particle	so, thus		
t̀g	Verb	beg, pray		cf. t̀g 'to request'
t̀g	Verb	request		cf. t̀g 'to beg, to pray'
t̀g	Verb	shine	shining or burning of a light, the sun, the moon, fire	
t̀g	Verb	spit		
t̀kpár	Adposition	at, near		
t̀ksí	Verb	light	to light a fire	cf. t̀g 'to shine'
t̀ksí	Verb	turn on	to turn on the light	cf. t̀g 'to shine'
t̀m	Verb	send		Tone is uncertain.
t̀msí	Verb	message		cf. t̀m 'to send'
t̀msí	Verb	send		cf. t̀m 'to send'
t̀nī	Verb	swear, promise		used both as in promising as in saying bad words
t̀r	Verb	fall		
t̀ēb	Verb	count		cf. t̀ēb 'to press'
t̀ēb	Verb	press		cf. t̀ēb 'to count'
t̀g	Verb	run		
t̀í	Derivational affix	CAUS	causative suffix	cf. t̀í 'to hit'
t̀í	Verb	hit	to hit something, e.g. with a hammer	

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>tí fíb</b>	Verb	defecate		cf. tí 'to hit', àfíb 'shit'
<b>tìbá</b>	Noun	tobacco		Borrowed from English, possibly through Hausa.
<b>tùdḡḡ</b>	Noun	east		cf. dḡḡ 'deity, sp.'
<b>tùdḡḡ</b>	Noun	magic, sp.		cf. dḡḡ 'deity, sp.'
<b>tùg</b>	Verb	roof	to roof a place, to cover a room	
<b>tíg á 'jí</b>	Verb	be off	to be turned off, of light or of equipment	cf. tīgī 'to cover'
<b>tīgī</b>	Verb	cover	to cover or close something	cf. tīg 'to roof a place'
<b>tīgī</b>	Verb	roof	to roof a building, to cover a room	cf. tīgī 'to cover'
<b>tīgī</b>	Verb	turn off (light)	to turn off light	cf. tīgī 'to cover'
<b>tìksí</b>	Verb	close	to close one's eyes	cf. tīgī 'to cover'
<b>tìksí</b>	Verb	turn off	to turn something off, such as light or fire	cf. tīgī 'to cover'
<b>tíntám</b>	Adjective	big, fat, great, large		cf. tám 'to grow'
<b>tíntám</b>	Noun	rank		cf. tám 'to grow'
<b>tùb</b>	Verb	push		
<b>túb á jí</b>	Verb	be holed	to have a hole	cf. tùb 'to push'
<b>túbī</b>	Verb	start	to start doing something	cf. tùb 'to push'
<b>tùbrí</b>	Verb	gut	to gut a fish before cooking it	cf. tùb 'to push'
<b>tùbrí</b>	Verb	put holes	to put holes in something	cf. tùb 'to push'

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
túg	Noun	mortar (in which to pound food)		
tùg	Verb	fetch		Tone is uncertain.
tún	Noun	forest		
tún̄	Noun	hunchback	a person with a hunchback	
tùpsí	Verb	pierce		cf. túb 'to push'
tùpsí	Verb	prick		cf. túb 'to push'
tùr	Verb	pour inside	to pour something inside a target with a narrow mouth, like a bottle or a calabash	
tùr	Verb	pump		
tùsí	Verb	show		cf. túsí 'to teach'
tùsí	Verb	teach		cf. túsí 'to show'
tùttùb	Adjective	gape	to gape, to have a hole	cf. túb 'to push'

## TΣ ʄ

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
ʄāb	Verb	knead	to knead something	
ʄāb	Verb	mould	to mould something with one's hands	
ʄámkòn	Noun	sparrow, bird, sp.	northern grey-headed sparrow	
ʄáŋ á <sup>+</sup> jí	Verb	finished	to be finished	cf. ʄànrí 'to finish'

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
ʃànrí	Verb	finish	to finish (something)	
ʃàṅwádʒè	Noun	elder daughter of the traditional chief	the first or second born daughter of the traditional chief	Tone is uncertain.
ʃàr	Verb	tell	to tell (e.g. a story)	
ʃàr	Cardinal numeral	three		
ʃòḡ	Noun	earthworm		
ʃòḡgádʒìṃ	Noun	junior daughter of the traditional chief	one of the younger daughters of the traditional chief	Tone is uncertain.
ʃòḡgádʒìṃ	Proper Noun	person name		cf. ʃòḡgádʒìṃ 'junior daughter of the chief'
ʃàr	Verb	throw a spear		Tone is uncertain.
ʃè	Verb	block		cf. ʃè 'to lie'
ʃè	Noun	guinea corn		
ʃè	Verb	lie		cf. ʃè 'to block'
ʃé á 'jí	Verb	be cut	to have been cut	cf. ʃèsí 'to cut'
ʃè dindàṅ	Noun	alcohol		cf. ʃè 'guinea corn'
ʃèrí	Verb	chop	to cut something into pieces	cf. ʃèsí 'to cut'
ʃèrí	Verb	turn into		
ʃèsí	Verb	cut	to cut something with a knife	cf. ʃèrí 'to chop'
ʃéj	Noun	jerboa		
ʃèm	Verb	burn	to burn (intransitive)	
ʃèmsí	Verb	burn	to burn (transitive)	cf. ʃèm 'to burn'
ʃì	Noun	child, boy		cf. àʃì 'child, boy'

Kam	Word class	Glosses and translations	Definition	Notes
ʒì díg	Noun	drum, sp.		cf. ʒì 'diminutive', díg 'drum, sp.'
ʒí bá	Noun	clan, sp.		
ʒíkú	Noun	priest	a type of traditional priest	cf. ʒì 'child', kú 'magic, deity, cobra'
ʒìnè	Noun	teeth gums		
ʒìnī	Verb	betroth		
ʒìntāj	Noun	twin		Used to refer to one of the twins.
ʒìntʒán	Noun	dragonfly		
ʒìwántʒà	Proper Noun	person name		cf. ʒì 'child', àwàn 'king'
ʒìwó	Noun	group of people under akimpa	a traditional group of people under the leadership of an official called akimpa	cf. ʒì 'child'
ʒū	Noun	maternal uncle /sister's child		
ʒú jè	Verb	cry		cf. jé 'to cry, to shout'
ʒúg	Verb	carry		cf. ʒúg 'to catch, to do'
ʒúg	Verb	catch		cf. ʒúg 'to carry, to do'
ʒúg	Verb	do		cf. ʒúg 'to catch, to carry'
ʒùg	Verb	choke	to choke (intransitive) or to choke someone or something (transitive)	cf. ʒúg 'to catch, to carry, to do'
ʒúg ó <sup>+</sup> nág	Verb	work		cf. ʒúg 'to do', ànág 'work'
ʒùtán	Verb	stand		cf. tánì 'to stand, to stay'
ʒùtán	Verb	stop		cf. tánì 'to stand, to stay'

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
ʃwē	Noun	newborn animal		
ʃwē	Noun	newborn child		

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## U u

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
ú	Pronoun	3SG.O, him, her, them (singular)	third person singular object pronominal	
ú <sup>L</sup>	Pronoun	3SG.POSS, his, her, their (singular)	Third person singular possessive pronominal	

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## V v

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
vàndzírég	Noun	heart		cf. àvándzírég 'heart'
vég	Verb	die		Tone is uncertain.
vèr	Verb	envelop		cf. vèr 'to roll up, twist, wrap'
vèr	Verb	roll up	to roll up a rope	cf. vèr 'to envelop, twist, wrap'
vèr	Verb	twist	to twist something	cf. vèr 'to envelop, to roll up, wrap'

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
vèr	Verb	wrap	to wrap something	cf. vèr 'to envelop, to roll up, to twist'
vèrí	Verb	kill	to kill someone or something	cf. vég 'to die'
vì	Noun	pot	a specific type of traditional pot	
vín + ʔííí	Noun	lizard		
víŋ	Verb	mould	to mould something into a shape; to give shape to a shapeless material	
vìŋkàrí	Verb	make round	to make something round	cf. víŋ 'to mould'
vìŋkàrí	Verb	mould	to mould something, to form something	cf. víŋ 'to mould'
vírí	Noun	dirt		
vìtòrí	Verb	stumble	to stumble	
vówî	Proper Noun	person name		
vùm̀v̀ò̀ǹù̀	Noun	tsetse fly, sp.		

## W w

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<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
wàb	Verb	embrace	to embrace somebody	
wàb	Verb	tie	to tie something	
wàŋkú	Noun	traditional king		cf. àwàn 'king', kú 'magic, deity, cobra'
wár	Noun	dream		



<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>wárí</b>	Noun	dream		cf. wár 'dream'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>wàrkû</b>	Proper Noun	person name		
<b>wàtórí</b>	Verb	dream		cf. wár 'dream'
<b>wóg</b>	Noun	malaria		
<b>wògí</b>	Verb	hide	to hide someone or something	
<b>wòkórí</b>	Verb	hide	to hide someone or something	cf. wògí 'to hide'
<b>wòm</b>	Verb	slap	to slap someone	
<b>wòmrí</b>	Verb	hit repeatedly	to hit or slap something or someone repeatedly	cf. wòm 'to slap'
<b>wòmті</b>	Verb	break	to break something	cf. wòm 'to slap'
<b>wòr</b>	Verb	be careful		cf. wòr 'to guard'
<b>wòr</b>	Verb	guard	to guard something	cf. wòr 'to be careful'
<b>wórû</b>	Noun	snake, sp.	a type of snake; various types of snakes are subsumed under this name, including the speckled shovel-snout snake, the northern (or irregular) green bush snake, and the spotted blind snake	
<b>wòsí</b>	Verb	forget	to forget something	
<b>wééèj</b>	Interjection	EXCL	an exclamation of endorsement of another speaker's opinion	

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
wéj	Noun	tree, sp.	a large shade tree that grows in the bush	Its name in Hausa is kawo.
wó	Noun	dog		
wò	Noun	blood		
wū	Verb	to be ripe	to be ripe	
wùbrí	Verb	pour	to pour something	
wùmwòm	Adjective	broken	to be broken	cf. wòm 'to slap'
wùmwòm	Adjective	hollow	to be hollow	cf. wòm 'to slap'
wúrá	Proper Noun	Wura		
wūrōg	Noun	handle		
wūrī	Verb	accept		cf. wūrī 'agree, answer, love, need, want'
wūrī	Verb	agree		cf. wūrī 'accept, answer, love, need, want'
wūrī	Verb	answer		cf. wūrī 'accept, agree, love, need, want'
wūrī	Verb	love		cf. wūrī 'accept, agree, answer, need, want'
wūrī	Verb	need		cf. wūrī 'accept, agree, answer, love, want'
wūrī	Verb	want		cf. wūrī 'accept, agree, answer, love, need'
wùsí	Verb	rub		cf. wùsí 'to sweep'
wùsí	Verb	sweep		cf. wùsí 'to rub'
wùtrí	Verb	lose		
wūwū	Adjective	done	ready to be harvested	cf. wū 'to be ripe, done'
wūwū	Adjective	ripe		cf. wū 'to be ripe, done'

## Z z

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>zâ</b>	Noun	frog		
<b>zág</b>	Noun	side		
<b>zág ágbàn</b>	Noun	left side		cf. zág 'side', ágbàn 'female'
<b>zág áwù</b>	Noun	north side		cf. zág 'side', àwù 'north'
<b>zág áwù</b>	Noun	upwards		cf. zág áwù 'north side'
<b>zánê</b>	Noun	cricket		
<b>zàṅ</b>	Verb	snatch	to snatch something; to take something and quickly steal away	
<b>zàṅ</b>	Verb	wrestle		
<b>zìm</b>	Verb	shave		
<b>zímá</b>	Noun	fencing wood	wood used for fencing	
<b>zìmà</b>	Proper Noun	person name		
<b>zírág</b>	Noun	soup, soup ingredient		
<b>zírág á<sup>+</sup>jírí</b>	Noun	draw soup		cf. zírág 'soup', àjírí 'draw soup ingredient'
<b>zórí</b>	Noun	fish, sp.	an unidentified small fish that tastes bitter	cf. zòrí 'to be bitter'
<b>zòrí</b>	Verb	be bitter		
<b>zùb</b>	Verb	deceive	to deceive people, to scam people, to participate in fraud	
<b>zùb</b>	Verb	steal		

<b>Kam</b>	<b>Word class</b>	<b>Glosses and translations</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>zùg</b>	Noun	grass		
<b>zùg</b>	Verb	put	to put something somewhere	
<b>zùg áǰǎ</b>	Noun	fresh grass		cf. zùg 'grass', áǰǎ 'fresh, unripe'
<b>zúná</b>	Noun	face		cf. ɖzúná 'face'
<b>zùpǰǎ</b>	Noun	snake, sp.	a type of green snake that lives in green grass	cf. zùb 'to steal, to deceive', àǰǎ 'floodplain, swamp'
<b>zùr</b>	Verb	argue		
<b>zùr</b>	Verb	leak		
<b>zùr</b>	Verb	pull	to pull something	
<b>zùr</b>	Verb	stretch a rubber	to stretch rubber or plastic	
<b>zǔǰǎ</b>	Noun	fresh grass		cf. zùg áǰǎ 'fresh grass'
<b>zùzórī</b>	Adjective	bitter		cf. zùrí 'to be bitter'. Tone is uncertain.
<b>zúzúrág</b>	Noun	shade, shadow		cf. ɖzúdúrág 'shadow, shade'

## English-Kam lexicon

### 1

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**1PL.O** *Pronoun* **júró**

**1PL:POSS** *Pronoun* **júró<sup>L</sup>**

**1PL** *Pronoun* **jùrù; ì**

**1SG.ID** *Pronoun* **ɲìm**

**1SG.O** *Pronoun* **ń**

**1SG:POSS** *Pronoun* **ń<sup>L</sup>**

**1SG.S.FUT** *Pronoun* **ń**

**1SG.S.IPFV** *Pronoun* **ń**

**1SG.S.NFUT** *Pronoun* **ń**

**1SG.S.PFV** *Pronoun* **ń**

### 2

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**2PL.O** *Pronoun* **ɲó**

**2PL:POSS** *Pronoun* **ɲó<sup>L</sup>**

**2PL.S** *Pronoun* **ɲò**

**2SG.ID** *Pronoun* **ɲà**

**2SG.O** *Pronoun* **á**

**2SG:POSS** *Pronoun* **ɲá<sup>L</sup>**

**2SG.S.FUT** *Pronoun* **á**

**2SG.S.IPFV** *Pronoun* à

**2SG.S.NFUT** *Pronoun* à

**2SG.S.PFV** *Pronoun* á

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3

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**3PL:POSS** *Pronoun* í<sup>L</sup>

**3PL** *Pronoun* àjí; í

**3SG** *Pronoun* ú

**3SG:POSS** *Pronoun* ú<sup>L</sup>

**3SG.S** *Pronoun* àwú

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A a

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**Abanderi** *Proper Noun* àbén ndéí A place name, referring to a village commonly known as

Abanderi. The name literally translates to 'curse' or 'idiotic talk'.

**accept** *Verb* wūri

**accompany** *Verb* kár (tone is uncertain)

**add** *Verb* b̀̀rsí to add to something, to make something increase or grow; swàptéí

**adder** *Noun* sísé

**additive marker** *Particle* mà likely a borrowing from Hausa (mā 'too, also')

**ADJ** *Verb*>*Adjective* á<sup>L</sup>- adjectivizer

**adjectivizer** *Verb*>*Adjective* á<sup>L</sup>-

**adverbializer** *Adjective*>*Adverb* k-

**ADVZ** *Adjective*>*Adverb* k- adverbializer

**African pike** *Noun* **ʃāg** African pike, a type of gamefish that has a pike-like body shape that usually lives in deep water. It grows up to 40cm in length.

**afternoon** *Noun* **àléŋ óléb** 4 to 7 pm

**again** *Adverb* **mísí**

**agama lizard** *Noun* **m̀kpōŋ**

**agree** *Verb* **wūrī**

**air** *Noun* **àʃòb**

**alcohol** *Noun* **àbàŋ; ʃè d̀indàŋ**

**all** *Quantifier* **ŋwāb**

**alligator** *Noun* **lágá'sò**

**alone** *Adjective* **m̀jírág**

**also (too)** *Particle* **m̀à** additive marker, likely borrowing from Hausa (*m̀ā* 'too, also')

**aluminium** *Noun* **s̀j ʃǎ**

**ancestor** *Noun* **j̀ákú; k̀úkú**

**and** *Connective* **àmm̄** clause linking marker, likely borrowing from Hausa (*àmm̄*). Not used for linking noun phrases. For this, the comitative marker *r̀è* is used.

**anger** *Noun* **f̀éḃ<sub>1</sub>**

**angle** *Noun* **àdú**

**animal** *Noun* **àfām** refers to mammals and not to insects, fish, birds and reptiles

**ankle** *Noun* **àgàm èb̀òg**

**announce** *Verb* **j̀ārī**

**answer** *Verb* **wūrī**

**ant, sp.** *Noun* **àḏ̀òg** driver ant, a type of army ant that makes temporary anthills with big colonies. It rarely stings. It is called karkwasa in Hausa; **k̀ánjálí** an unidentified type of red ant; **m̀èrèg** an unidentified type of ant that stings

**antelope, sp.** *Noun* **àbàrèg** red-flanked duiker

**anus** *Noun* **ńí ńìb**

**apparition** *Noun* **àńb**

**appoint someone** *Verb* **lùtí** to appoint someone, to crown someone

**argue** *Verb* **zùr**

**arm** *Noun* **àńé**

**armband** *Noun* **àlĩè** an armband that was traditionally given when a man wanted to marry a woman.

Now, it refers to any kind of armband.

**armpit** *Noun* **àńkérí**

**arrive** *Verb* **gbán; ńì** (tone is uncertain)

**arrow** *Noun* **àbùn**

**arrow point** *Noun* **ńwé bùn**

**ash** *Noun* **ńè**

**Ashuwi** *Proper Noun* **àńwí** Name of Hamza, village head of Garin Hamza.

**ask** *Verb* **ńìb**

**astringent** *Adjective* **pàńrírí** Astringent, rough, harsh. The taste one gets when biting an unripe banana or other types of raw fruit or vegetables. It is sometimes translated as 'too dry' into English, because of the dry feeling it leaves in the tongue and mouth. It is closely associated with bitterness but still different from it.

**astringent (be astringent)** *Verb* **ńìrírí**

**at** *Adposition* **tókpár**

**axe** *Noun* **péj** big axe used to cut trees; **léní** a small axe used for fighting



## B b

**baboon** *Noun* swò

**baby** *Noun* àt̄fì íntē

**baby boy** *Noun* àt̄fì ívān ónt̄fwē

**baby girl** *Noun* àt̄fì ígbàn ónt̄fwē

**bachelor** *Noun* àt̄fì ívān

**back** *Noun* ñkùm

**back of hand** *Noun* ñkùm àrjé

**back of head** *Noun* ñkpákár

**backdoor** *Noun* àḡár

**backwards** *Adverb* àgún

**bad** *Adjective* sámrí (tone is uncertain)

**bag** *Noun* ápú

**bag, sp.** *Noun* àbórég a bag where harvested crops are stored

**bambara nut** *Noun* gùfì kpímkpájá

**bamboo** *Noun* àmán

**bamboo bed** *Noun* àlòg

**bamboo tree** *Noun* béd mán bamboo tree

**banana** *Noun* ñkpìntèrì

**bark** *Noun* kpà bèr

**barter** *Verb* pèntórí

**barwood** *Noun* àvāñkàṅ

**basket** *Noun* kàksàg; sàg

**bat** *Noun* **ɔ̄jì**

**Bayaro** *Proper Noun* **kpágárág** a Kam village

**be** *Verb* **ḁ́**

**be across** *Verb* **būnī**

**be alive** *Verb* **nág á'ból̄**

**be bitter** *Verb* **zòré**

**be careful** *Verb* **wòr**

**be holed** *Adjective* **tùttùb** to gape, to have a hole

**be plenty** *Verb* **jèrí** to be plenty, to be sufficient

**be.NEG** *Particle* **sìrē ... rīg** Negative existential construction. This construction expresses that something is not present, either in general or in a specific place.

**bean** *Noun* **àkwān; ñkwān**

**beard** *Noun* **àdóm; sírá 'dóm**

**beat** *Verb* **gbèb**

**beat repeatedly** *Verb* **gbèbrí** to beat or kick someone repeatedly

**beautiful** *Adjective* **lìllèm**

**beautiful (be beautiful);** *Verb* **lèm** to be beautiful

**beautify** *Verb* **lèmsí**

**beauty** *Noun* **àlémrî**

**because** *Connective* **àpá'lib**

**become long** *Verb* **bóm** to be or to become long

**become weak** *Verb* **kùb**

**become white** *Verb* **búr** to become white

**bed** *Noun* **kòm lù**

**bee** *Noun* àtʃór Also used for bee-flies.

**beehive** *Noun* àtʃór égáŋ

**beer** *Noun* àbàŋ

**beeswax** *Noun* sàg àtʃór

**before** *Adverb* kpānēkā; kpānē At least one year ago.

**beg** *Verb* tòg

**beginning of spine** *Noun* gǎj the piece of the spine that meets the neck

**behind** *Noun* àgún behind

**belch** *Noun* àbélí

**bell, sp.** *Noun* tàŋà bell used in traditional dances

**bellows** *Noun* ñì sèt tùd bírí

**bend** *Verb* ñànsí to bend something, such as the branch of a tree; kwàntórí to bend something, such as the branch of a tree

**bend down** *Verb* kùntí to bend down

**benniseed** *Noun* m̀kpè sesame seed, benniseed

**bent** ñíŋán *Adjective* to be bent; ñáŋ á 'jí *Verb* to be bent

**bent (be bent)** *Verb* ñáŋ to be bent

**beside** *Adposition* àgàw (tone is uncertain)

**betroth** *Verb* t̄ĩnĩ

**big** *Adjective* t́ntám; búbbōrĩ; ábōrĩ; bùbbòd

**big grinding stone** *Noun* mè tàr ñinnāmĩ

**big man** *Noun* ñí bōrĩ

**big one** *Adjective* ákòg of a person, for example the oldest in the family

**bird** *Noun* núŋ<sub>1</sub>

**bird, sp.** *Noun* **kùrùkwàb** an unidentified big type of non-water bird; **ntɔwàn** an unidentified type of waterbird that resembles a storm petrel. It is frequently heard as it has a loud and frequent screech; **mpèrè; nsìràŋ** an unidentified medium-sized type of bird that comes to feed on maize on farms during harvest period; **kpáɟinè náɟ** an unidentified type of bird. It is white and is often seen moving along with cow herds (tone is uncertain)

**birth** *Noun* **àlógórí**

**bite** *Verb* **kìm**

**bitter** *Adjective* **zùzóri**

**bitterleaf** *Noun* **àtɟíróg**

**black** *Adjective* **ábōgōrī**

**black scorpion** *Noun* **kèrèbig ɟùgèrì**

**blacksmith** *Noun* **àní sèt tùr**

**bladder** *Noun* **ɲkám sù**

**blade** *Noun* **ɟá** the blade of something, e.g. a knife, an axe, a hoe, a key, or a tooth

**blanket** *Noun* **àpírání**

**blind person** *Noun* **lání**

**block** *Verb* **ɟè**

**blood** *Noun* **wò**

**blow** *Verb* **bìr; kéb** of the wind (tone is uncertain); **bíbìrì** to blow

**blow nose** *Verb* **fàr<sub>2</sub>** to blow one's nose

**blue** *Adjective* **ábētɟā**

**boat** *Noun* **kimpōnī**

**body** *Noun* **kpò**

**body hair** *Noun* **sírá kpô**

**boil something** *Verb* **ṣòptí** to boil something

**bone** *Noun* **àkùb**

**book** *Noun* **là kúmé**

**border** *Noun* **vág**

**Bosc's monitor** *Noun* **ṣòg** savannah monitor, a large type of lizard

**bottom** *Noun* **àkpág**

**bottom of mouth** *Noun* **àkpág ɲwé bì**

**boundary** *Noun* **vág**

**bow** *Noun* **ɲtǽí**

**bow down** *Verb* **kùptí; bùsì** to bow down to someone, for example to the king

**bowl** *Noun* **àlàɲ ɛ̀bì**

**boy** *Noun* **àtǽíségé; àtǽí ; àtǽí ívān**

**brain** *Noun* **mān ɛ̀líp**

**brains** *Noun* **ɔ́ǽ 'líp**

**branch** **kàsí** *Verb* to branch off, to take a different path; **àgág** *Noun*

**break** *Verb* **kàsí**

**break (maize)** *Verb* **kà** to break something

**break (maize)** *Verb* **fé** to break something long, such as maize or an arm

**break (something long)** *Verb* **fé** to break something long, such as maize or an arm

**break something** *Verb* **kà; wòmí**

**breast** *Noun* **àvǽí**

**breastbone** *Noun* **àkùb lántí gwǽj**

**breastfeed** *Verb* **tàb**

**breath** *Noun* **àbóɲó**

**breathe** *Verb* náǵ á'bólǵ

**brew** *Verb* kpír brew, make a liquid (tone is uncertain)

**bridge of nose** *Noun* ñkùm àmàrēǵ

**bring down** *Verb* ǵòtí to bring something down

**bring inside** *Verb* jèsí

**broken** *Adjective* gím á 'jí; wùm̀wòm̀

**broom** *Noun* mìsàǵ Used to sweep floors

**buffalo** *Noun* nám

**build** *Verb* míǵ

**bulrush millet, sp.** *Noun* àwàr a type of bulrush millet that is harvested during the dry season

**burn** *Verb* ǵè̀m̀

**burn something** *Verb* ǵè̀msí

**bush** *Noun* àǵé

**bush animal** *Noun* àfàm əǵé

**but** *Connective* àmā

**butterfly** *Noun* ñkpálílêǵ

**buttocks** *Noun* àǵíníǵ

**buy** *Verb* dè̀b̀

## C c

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**calabash** *Noun* àzíré

**calf** *Noun* àfíb ébòǵ; àfíb

**calm yourself down** *Phrase* dá á'vánǵírég ná bì

**can** *Noun* **púppób**

**cancer** *Noun* **àdég ɔ'ʃé**

**cane rat** *Noun* **ɲkūrū**

**carry** *Verb* **jàg; ʦúg**

**carry (on one's back)** *Verb* **bùsí ɲkùm** to carry something on one's back

**carry something** *Verb* **bùsí** to carry something or someone on one's back

**carry up** *Verb* **jítí** to carry something up

**carve something** *Verb* **gbēnī** to carve something inside something else (e.g. to carve text in a tree), to  
ridge something

**cassava** *Noun* **àɕí fō**

**cat** *Noun* **pàtúrū**

**catch** *Verb* **ʦúg**

**cattle rearer** *Noun* **ɲí nág nīmsī**

**CAUS** *Verb>Verb* **-lí** Possible historical causative suffix. Not synchronically productive.; **-sí** Causative  
suffix; **-tí** causative suffix: this conveys that the action is caused to happen to the object by a subject

**causative suffix** *Verb>Verb* **-tí** causative suffix: this conveys that the action is caused to happen to the  
patient by an agent; **-lí** Possible historical causative suffix. Not synchronically productive.; **-sí**  
causative suffix

**cave** *Noun* **pátárí tàr; àlè**

**centipede** *Noun* **àzàntí**

**chair** *Noun* **kòm ɕɔŋ**

**chameleon** *Noun* **ɲgúrôg**

**change** *Verb* **ɕìbrí**

**charcoal** *Noun* **ɲkànsīrāŋ**

**chase** *Verb* **gúb**

**chase away** *Verb* **gúbí**

**cheek** *Noun* **àḍwā**

**chemicals** *Noun* **ntàm**

**chest** *Noun* **gwàj**

**chestbone** *Noun* **àkùb gwàj**

**chew** *Verb* **kìm**

**chicken** *Noun* **kúmé**

**chief (traditional)** *Noun* **àbējí** literally “the owner of people”

**child** *Noun* **àṭṣíségé ; àṭṣì ; àṭṣì íntē**

**chill something** *Verb* **dàksí** to make something colder, to cool something down

**chin** *Noun* **àgbáṅ**

**choke** *Verb* **ṭṣùg** to choke (intransitive) or to choke someone or something

**choke someone or something** *Verb* **ṭṣùg** to choke (intransitive) or to choke someone or something

**chop** *Verb* **ṭṣèrí** to cut something into pieces

**christian** *Noun* **jí nùṅ tìksì** a christian

**ciciyawa (Hausa)** *Noun* **fḍg** grass-eater, a fish found in rivers that can grow to more than 60cm

**city** *Noun* **àṅgwóḡ ébōrì** large town, city

**clan** *Noun* **sù**

**clan, sp.** *Noun* **jí ntóṅ sání** one of the clans within Kam

**claw** *Noun* **kpà; ḍúró'jé**

**clay** *Noun* **àvàm**

**clean dindàm** *Adjective; fér* *Verb*

**clean (be clean)** *Verb* **dàm** to be clean



**clitoris** *Noun* **ɔ́ǎ ntjè**

**close** *Verb* **fàg**

**close one's eyes** *Verb* **tìksí** to close one's eyes

**close something** *Verb* **bùsí** to close something

**closed** *Verb* **fág á 'jí** to be closed

**clothing** *Noun* **àpíránî** any piece of clothing

**cloud** *Noun* **àbúr**

**cobra** *Noun* **kú**

**cockroach** *Noun* **m̀p̀èr̀im̀ì s̀ib**

**coco yam** *Noun* **̀ǹt̀j̀õ**

**coconut** *Noun* **àmàmbórí**

**coconut tree** *Noun* **bèd màmbírí; àɔ́é làsírá**

**coil (rope)** *Verb* **vèr** to roll up a rope

**cold dé** *Noun*; **díddág** *Adjective* ; **ádā** *Adjective*

**cold (be cold)** *Verb* **dág** to be cold, to become cold

**coldness** *Noun* **àdágri**

**COM** *Adposition* **rè** comitative preposition, with

**comb (hair)** *Verb* **sár** (tone is uncertain)

**come** *Verb* **pè**

**come out** *Verb* **bòb**

**comitative marker** *Adposition* **rè** comitative preposition, with

**commit fraud** *Verb* **zùb** to deceive people, to scam people, to participate in fraud

**comparative verb** *Particle* **kòr** to surpass someone or something

**complementizer (for wishes)** *Particle* **kó bā** complementizer used for expressing wishes

**complete something** *Verb* **kóm** to complete, finish something

**completely** *Adverb* **sīrī** completely, altogether, indicates that the state or action that has been applied to an object has reached its end state (tone is uncertain)

**compressed (be compressed)** *Verb* **pób** to be compressed

**conditional particle** *Particle* **kā** postclausal conditional particle, roughly equivalent to 'if' and 'when' in English

**content interrogative (non-human)** *Interrogative pro-form* **gè<sup>H</sup> ... gī jī** Content interrogative for non-humans

**content interrogative (quantity)** *Interrogative pro-form* **sīm** Quantity content interrogative, used for enquiring after the quantity of something.

**cook** *Verb* **lāŋ** (tone is uncertain)

**cool down** *Verb* **dág** to be cold, to become cold

**copulate** *Verb* **nùg**

**corpse** *Noun* **àvèg**

**correct** *Adjective* **lillèm**

**cough** **kpārī** *Verb*; **àkpáré** *Noun*

**count** *Verb* **tēb**

**courage** *Noun* **àvándǵírég**

**cover fàg** *Verb*; **kpà** *Noun*; **tīgī** *Verb* to cover or close something

**cow** *Noun* **nág**

**co-wife** *Noun* **àgbàn éntǵwē**

**crab** *Noun* **ntǵīmā**

**crave** *Verb* **ntǵag** to crave something, to really feel like eating something

**crawl** *Verb* **ǵāŋī** to crawl

**creator deity** *Proper Noun* **màm**

**creature** *Noun* **ɲì íṣò** creature, living being

**cricket** *Noun* **zánê**

**crinum** *Noun* **àgòb** a type of crinum, a plant with a leafless stem that develops from bulbs. It is used for medicinal purposes. Its name in Hausa is gadeli.

**crinum, sp.** *Noun* **àgbānē** A type of crinum, a plant with a leafless stem that develops from bulbs. It is used for medicinal purposes. Its name in Hausa is gadeli. (tone is uncertain)

**crocodile** *Noun* **ɲká**

**chromeria** *Noun* **ɔ́ázò** Chromeria, a small (ca. 4cm) type of freshwater fish that is often eaten smoked and dried

**cross** *Verb* **būnī**

**crossing** *Noun* **àbúnrí** a crossing over a road, or over a river

**cruel** *Adjective* **sámrí** (tone is uncertain)

**crunch** *Verb* **kág**

**crunch something** *Verb* **kàksí** to crunch something

**crunched** **kíkkág** *Adjective* to be crunched; **kág á 'jí** *Verb* to be crunched

**crush (with a stick)** *Verb* **sùr** to crush something with a stick

**cry** **ɬú** *Verb* **jè** *Verb* (tone is uncertain); **jé** *Verb* (tone is uncertain) ; **àjé ɬò** *Noun* (tone is uncertain) ;

**àjé** *Noun*

**crybaby** *Noun* **ɲàɲ**

**cult, sp.** *Proper Noun* **ákú; dàmpon**

**cup** *Noun* **ɲì mìnkáɲá tūgī**

**cut** *Verb* **nàb** with a cutlass or axe; **bír** to cut (tone is uncertain)

**cut (be cut)** **ɬé á 'jí** *Verb* to have been cut (resultative derivation of 'to cut'); **gìggàb** *Adjective* to be cut

**cut (into pieces)** *Verb* **ɬèrí** to cut something into pieces

**cut (with knife)** *Verb* **ṭṣésí** to cut something with a knife

**cut nails** *Verb* **bèntí** to cut one's nails

**cutlass** *Noun* **kàpèj**

## D d

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**dabchick** *Noun* **àfén'dírí** little grebe or dabchick, a small waterbird that is often found in and around lakes; **ñfén'dírí** little grebe or dabchick, a small waterbird that is often found in and across lakes

**damo (Hausa)** *Noun* **ṣṅg** savannah monitor, a large type of lizard

**damu (Hausa)** *Noun* **ṣṅg** savannah monitor, a large type of lizard

**dance** *Verb* **lig** (tone uncertain), **lig gbîg**

**dance, sp.** *Noun* **ñsúrónj** A dance that is done in September

**dark** *Adjective* **ábōgō**

**darkness** *Noun* **ñtāb**

**darter** *Noun* **sùnù**

**dash (Nigerian English)** *Verb* **ḡùtí**

**daughter** *Noun* **àṭjì ígbàn**

**dawn** *Noun* **àkápṭílibílibì**

**day** *Noun* **ànā**

**day** *Noun* **bèrì**

**day after tomorrow** *Noun* **àbúró**

**day after tomorrow** *Noun* **àbô**

**deaf person** *Noun* **jí kàr fāgì**

**death** *Noun* **àvèg**

**deceive** *Verb* zùb

**decrease** *Verb* ɕòr

**deep** *Adjective* dùddùb

**deep (be deep)** *Verb* dùb

**deep water** *Noun* àdim

**defecate** *Verb* tí ʃib

**deity** *Noun* kú generic name for all gods

**deity, sp.** *Noun* ɕóŋ

**deliver** *Verb* lòg to deliver a child

**demonstrative (distal)** *Particle* bô

**demonstrative (presentative)** *Particle* bē; mīná; á presentative demonstrative

**demonstrative (proximal)** *Particle* bā

**descend** *Verb* ɕòr

**dew** *Noun* àmí

**die** *Verb* vég (tone is uncertain)

**different** *Adjective* mīŋkīm

**difficult** *Adjective* kpìmkpáŋī

**dig** *Verb* ɕì

**dig something open** *Verb* gbēnī

**digging tool** *Noun* àsúm

**DIM** *Particle* àtʃī

**diminutive marker** *Particle* àtʃī

**dirt** *Noun* kùnì

**dirt** *Noun* vírí

**disease** *Noun* àdég

**disgusting** *Adjective* jífág

**dish** *Noun* tàsò – from local Hausa (*tasò*), probably originally from Arabic *ṭaasa* 'bowl'

**DIST** *Particle* ò

**DIST** *Particle* bô

**distal demonstrative marker** *Particle* ò

**distal demonstrative marker** *Particle* bô

**dive** *Verb* òm

**divide** *Verb* gàpsí to share something, to divide something among one another

**divorce** *Verb* gàpsí to divorce someone

**dizziness** *Noun* ànùṅ éḡìbì

**do** *Verb* tǔg

**do** *Verb* sìn

**do secretly** *Verb* làb (tone is uncertain)

**do something secretly** *Verb* ḡàg

**doctor** *Noun* jí séd ntàm

**document** *Noun* tákàdà (tone is uncertain)

**dog** *Noun* wó

**done** *Adjective* wūwū

**donkey** *Noun* kúkórú

**door** *Noun* jé kôm

**down** *Noun* àbìbì

**down** *Noun* àbì

**drag something** *Verb* tàsí

**dragonfly** *Noun* ʦɪntʃán

**draw** *Verb* dèrí

**draw soup** *Noun* zírág á'jírí

**draw soup ingredient** *Noun* àjírí

**dream wàtèrí** *Verb* wár *Verb* wárí *Noun* (tone is uncertain)

**drink** *Verb* núŋ

**drip** *Verb* ɲàr

**drive** *Verb* b̀untí

**driver ant** *Noun* àɕ̀òg

**driver ant** *Noun* àɕ̀ògbérí

**drop, or rain** *Verb* k̀ùb

**drum** *Verb* g̀ìn (tone is uncertain)

**drunk person** *Noun* ɲí d̀ūgī (tone is uncertain)

**dry** *Adjective* áfō

**dry** *Adjective* f̀úffòg

**dry (be dry)** *Verb* f̀òg

**dry season** *Noun* àgàŋ

**dry something** *Verb* p̀ìsí

**dry tasting** *Adjective* p̀èpírí

**duck** *Noun* m̀pwár

**dung beetle** *Noun* m̀pèrìmì

**during** *Preposition* r̀è

**dust** *Noun* g̀urú

**dustbin** *Noun* k̀úbérí

**dustbin** *Noun* kùṅì

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## D d

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**ɗata (Hausa)** *Noun* làgàtār Ansorge's Neolebias, a small (max. 2.6cm) fish that lives close to stones and tastes bitter. It is called ɗata in Hausa; **zóri** A small fish that tastes bitter. It is not precisely identified.

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## E e

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**ear** *Noun* àkàr

**early morning** *Noun* àkáptílibílibì 5 to 6 a.m.; **mágárí káptì** 4 to 5 a.m.

**earthworm** *Noun* tʃòg

**earwax** *Noun* làmìkàr

**earwig** *Noun* kàrèbìg tʃè

**east** *Noun* tìtʃóŋ

**eat** *Verb* nìm

**edge** *Noun* ñkàŋ (tone is uncertain)

**egg** *Noun* àbèr

**egg white** *Noun* mìnkáŋá bèr ábūri

**egg yolk** *Noun* mìnkáŋá bèr ádōmrì egg yolk

**Egypt** *Proper Noun* ítʃíb; màsàr Egypt

**eight** *Cardinal numeral* sâr

**eighteen** *Cardinal numeral* bò gún sâr

**eighty** *Cardinal numeral* àkpó nâr



**elbow** *Noun* ñkwàtèrì jé; àlúlù jé

**elder brother of father** *Noun* àná ábōrì

**elder daughter of the king** *Noun* tǎñwáǎǎ the first or second born daughter (tone is uncertain)

**elder person** *Noun* jí bōrì

**electricity** *Noun* àlè

**elephant** *Noun* fùròg

**elephantfish** *Noun* námbóǎǎrì freshwater elephantfish, a family of fish that encompasses a wide range of species with widely varying sizes and different colors (dark and light), all characterized by a big head, and some characterized by an elephant-trunk-like mouthpart.

**eleven** *Cardinal numeral* bō gún bí; bō gún bímbíní

**embrace** *Verb* wàb to embrace somebody

**EMPH** *Particle* rīg emphatic marker

**emphatic marker** *Particle* rīg emphatic marker

**empty** *Adjective* kánkǎñǎ (tone is uncertain)

**end** àlǎǎrì *Noun*; lǎǎrì *Verb*

**engage** *Verb* kǎmsí to be engaged to someone or to be betrothed

**enhance** *Verb* lèmsí

**enlarge** *Verb* bǎrsí to add to something, to make something increase or grow

**enter** *Verb* jé (tone is uncertain)

**entrance** *Noun* jé kǎm

**envelop** *Verb* vèr

**epilepsy** *Noun* àǎìrǎkì

**era** *Noun* àjì

**ethnic group** *Noun* sù

**evening** *Noun* àléb (4 p.m. to 7 p.m.)

**evil person** *Noun* àwám

**EXCL** *Interjection* wééèj an exclamation of endorsement of another speaker's opinion

**exclamation of disbelief** *Interjection* àʔá an expression of surprise, disbelief, or endorsement of a previous statement

**exclamation of endorsement** *Interjection* wééèj an exclamation of endorsement of another speaker's opinion; àʔá an expression of surprise, disbelief, or endorsement of a previous statement

**exclamation of surprise** *Interjection* àʔá an expression of surprise, disbelief, or endorsement of a previous statement

**excrement** *Noun* àʃib

**exist** *Verb* dǎ

**existential quantifier** *Particle* mí<sup>l</sup>

**eye** *Noun* ànùŋ

**eyebrow** *Noun* gín ánùŋ

**eyelash** *Noun* sírá nùŋ

**eyelid** *Noun* là nùŋ

## F f

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**face** *Noun* ɕúná

**fadama area hole** *Noun* àgùm ʃâ A hole that is dug in a flood plain in order to get fresh water.

**faintness** *Noun* ànùŋ ɔɕìbì faintness, dizziness

**falcon** *Noun* kǎj

**fall** *Verb* tǒr

**far** *Adjective* díddáb

**far (be far)** *Verb* **dáb** to be far

**farm** *Verb* **bàr** to farm *Noun* **fóg** field, farm

**farm animal** *Noun* **àfàm èṅgwóg**

**farmer** *Noun* **ní bārī; ní ní bārī**

**fart** *Noun* **àsín**

**fat màn** *Noun*; **tíntám 3** *Adjective*

**father** *Noun* **aná; bàbà** (borrowing, likely from Hausa, *baba*; tone is uncertain)

**fear** *Noun* **àtjér**

**feather** *Noun* **sírá núṅ**

**featherback** *Noun* **ńpórân** featherback, a type of fish with slender and long bodies that has a knife-like shape and is also called knifefish

**feed** *Verb* **nìmsí; tàmsí** to nurture something or someone

**feed water** *Verb* **nùṅsí** to feed someone a fluid, such as milk or water

**feel angry** *Verb* **féb tàʔè** to feel angry, literally "anger happens" (tone is uncertain)

**feeling** *Noun* **àfám**

**female** *Adjective* **ágbàn**

**female magic** *Noun* **ṣ́j́ṅ égbàn** the magic for which women are responsible

**fence** **ṣ́j́b** *Verb* to fence a place; **àkórág** *Noun*

**fencing wood** *Noun* **zímá** wood used for fencing

**fertile** *Adjective* **lillòg** to be fertile

**fertile area** *Noun* **àfà 1** In Nigerian English it is called a 'fadama area'. The term refers to an area that is fit for agriculture and can be irrigated. It usually refers to low-level plains close to water sources.

**festival, sp.** *Noun* **àkú bónú** festival for màm, the creator deity, held during the dry season, around march, after they finish harvesting

**fetch** *Verb* **tùg** (tone is uncertain)

**few** *Adjective* **mīnté**

**field** **fóg** field, farm

**field sorrel** *Noun* **sí** red sorrel, sheep's sorrel, sour weed, field sorrel, a type of weed that is also called yakuwa in Hausa

**fifteen** *Cardinal numeral* **bò gún wún**

**fifty** *Cardinal numeral* **àkpó jírāg rē gún bō**

**fig tree** *Noun* **àgbām**

**fill** *Verb* **mùsì** to fill something, such as a cup, or a dictionary

**fin** *Noun* **sébí**

**final vowel** *v: Any -i* Final vowel, which is an optional part of some verb stems; Inflectional/derivational Final vowel, which is part of a variety of constructions, but does not have a dedicated morphosyntactic function.

**Fincon** *Proper Noun* **fēntfó**

**find** *Verb* **dín** (tone is uncertain)

**finger** *Noun* **ɔ́júrí<sup>l</sup>né**

**finger nail** *Noun* **àlíp tjí rē né; kpà líp tjí rē né**

**finish** *Verb* **tjànrí**

**finished** *Verb* **tján á 'jí** to be finished

**fire** *Noun* **àlè**

**fire stone** *Noun* **àtār kàpìrù**

**first** *Adverb* **nāṅkō** (tone is uncertain)

**first one** *Noun* **áṣíṣàrì** first, ordinal numeral (tone is uncertain)

**first person plural object pronominal** *Pronoun* **júró**

**first person plural possessive pronominal** *Pronoun* **júró<sup>l</sup>**

**first person plural subject pronominal** *Pronoun* **ì**

**first person plural subject pronominal** *Pronoun* **jùrù**

**first person singular future subject index** *Pronoun* **ń**

**first person singular imperfective subject index** *Pronoun* **ñ**

**first person singular non-future subject index** *Pronoun* **ñ**

**first person singular object pronominal** *Pronoun* **ń**

**first person singular perfective subject index** *Pronoun* **ń**

**first person singular possessive pronominal** *Pronoun* **ń<sup>L</sup>**

**first person singular subject pronominal** *Pronoun* **àwú**

**first wife** *Noun* **àgbàn ékwòg**

**firstly** *Adverb* **nāṅkō** (tone is uncertain)

**fish** *Noun* **àtábé**

**fish, sp.** *Noun* **ńpérāṅ** featherback, a type of fish with slender and long bodies that has a knife-like shape and is also called knifefish; **ḵāg** African pike, a type of gamefish that has a pike-like body shape that usually lives in deep water. It grows up to 40cm in length.; **ḵátḵinúṅ** an unidentified fish. It looks similar to species of Africa tetras, but grows much bigger (up to 2m) than the (other) tetras found in the area; **mání** An unidentified greasy-tasting fish that looks similar to a tarpon but is found in freshwater; **làgàtār** Ansorge's Neolebias, a small (max. 2.6cm) fish that lives close to stones and tastes bitter. It is called *ḵata* in Hausa; **ṅkòmpánē** a type of fish that is dried and smoked before it is eaten. The exact species is not clearly identified. (tone is uncertain); **ṅsàṅà** an unidentified type of fish that could be a tigerfish or the Niger tetra; **fḵg** grass-eater, a fish found in rivers that can grow to more than 60cm; **ḵigì** Senegal bichir, an eel-like fish with a serrated dorsal fin, found in lakes, swamps and close to rivers. Reaches about 30cm in length.; **sirèkìṅ**, frankfish, freshwater tail-rat, or African knifefish, a long, eel-like electric fish found in swamps, lakes, and rivers. It can grow up to 1.5m; **ḵázò** Cromeria, a small (ca. 4cm) type of freshwater fish that is often eaten smoked and

dried; **zórí** A small fish that tastes bitter. It is not precisely identified.; **ńsâ** African arowana, a species of fish belonging to the bonytongue family with a long body and large scales that can reach up to 1m in length.

**fishbone** *Noun* àkùp tábé

**fisherman** *Noun* ní tábé ʦūgī

**fishing net** *Noun* àʦà; táre fishing net

**five** *Cardinal numeral* ñwún

**flame** *Noun* àlímíné lè

**flesh** *Noun* nínám

**flog** *Verb* gbèb vā

**flour** *Noun* ànám

**flower** *Noun* àmálí

**fly firí 1** *Verb*; ʦò *Noun*

**fly, sp.** *Noun* àʦòb A fly that disturbs people in the bush.

**foal** *Noun* jéñí ntē

**foam** *Noun* àfir<sub>1</sub>

**fold** *Verb* fātórí to fold something; fàrí 1 to fold something

**fold** *Verb* kwàntórí 1 to fold something, such as clothes; ñànsí 2 to fold something, such as clothes

**fold something** *Verb* fār<sub>1</sub> 1 to fold something

**follow** *Verb* dúg (tone is uncertain)

**fool** *Noun* àʦíñrí

**foolish** *Adjective* ʦínʦín

**foolish (be foolish)** *Verb* ʦín to be foolish

**foolishness** *Noun* àʦíñrí

**foot** *Noun* àbòg

**forbid** *Verb* tàgàrí 1 to forbid

**force** *Noun* àkpímkpáṅá

**forefather** *Noun* jí bōrī

**forehead** *Noun* àgòṁ

**forest** *Noun* m̀fò; tún

**forge** *Noun* sèt t̀r

**forget** *Verb* wòsí to forget something

**forty** *Cardinal numeral* àkpó jíràg

**four** *Cardinal numeral* ñnár

**four hundred** *Cardinal numeral* àkpó kpéjmi

**fourteen** *Cardinal numeral* bō gún nár

**foxtail** *Noun* fúrú mission grass or foxtail, a very widespread type of grass

**francolin** *Noun* àgbèràg Clapperton's francolin, double-spurred francolin

**freeze something** *Verb* dàksí to make something colder, to cool something down

**fresh grass** *Noun* z̀g éfã; z̀fã

**Friday** *Noun* ɔ̀ùmbàrè Borrowed from Adamawa Fulfulde (*jumbaare*), originally from Arabic *yoom* *aj-jum'a* 'Friday', literally 'day of the mosque'

**fridge** *Noun* àlàn ́dã

**friend** *Noun* àṅwà

**frog** *Noun* zã

**from** *Adposition* dāgã; dākã

**front** *Noun* àlím

**front of heel** *Noun* ànùṅ èbòg

**fruit** *Noun* àlébrí

**fruit, sp.** *Noun* àmùl an unidentified type of fruit that becomes yellow when ripe. Its leaf is used for relieving throat ache (tone is uncertain)

**fry (food)** *Verb* jéḃ (tone is uncertain)

**fuck** *Verb* nùg

**fuel** *Noun* m̀àn

**full** *Adjective* m̀ùmúsi

**FV** *v: Any -i* Final vowel, which is an optional part of some verb stems; Inflectional/derivational Final vowel, which is part of a variety of constructions, but does not have a dedicated morphosyntactic function.

## G g

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**gadeli (Hausa)** *Noun* àgbānē A type of crinum, a plant with a leafless stem that develops from bulbs.

It is used for medicinal purposes. Its name in Hausa is gadeli. (tone is uncertain); àgḁḁ a type of crinum, a plant with a leafless stem that develops from bulbs. It is used for medicinal purposes. Its name in Hausa is gadeli

**gall bladder** *Noun* àwám f̀ar

**Gangsa** *Proper Noun* g̀ans̀a

**Gangtu Kamajim** *Proper Noun* g̀angt̀ú this is the place where the king's people live

**gape** *Adjective* t̀utt̀ub to gape, to have a hole

**Garin Hamza** *Proper Noun* ḡwé nín dá'rá a Kam village

**Garin Kadiri** *Proper Noun* àḡwóḡ kádìrì a Kam village

**Garin Shingaw** *Proper Noun* àḡwóḡ jíḡ'gáw a Kam village

**Garin Tukura** *Proper Noun* àḡwí né a Kam village (tone is uncertain)

**Garin Zana** *Proper Noun* àḡwóḡ é'kórág Kam village, called Garin Zana in Hausa



**gate** *Noun* àǵár

**gather** *Verb* kòsí ; fàgrí to gather things

**gazelle, sp.** *Noun* ñsé

**generation** *Noun* àjì

**generosity** *Noun* àné ǵūti

**get** *Verb* tùg (tone is uncertain)

**giant water bug** *Noun* pákpágìní

**gift** *Noun* ñì ǵùtí

**girl** *Noun* àtǵì ígbàn 1

**girlfriend** *Noun* àtǵì ígbàn

**give** *Verb* mà (tone is uncertain)

**give him** *Verb* mō

**give me** *Verb* mām

**give them** *Verb* mē

**go** *Verb* jéǵ (tone is uncertain); sán to go, to walk (tone is uncertain)

**go up** *Verb* bǵr 1 to climb or go up an elevated surface

**goat** *Noun* ñpǵrì

**Gobti** *Proper Noun* gǵptí

**God** *Proper Noun* kùrikí; àléǵ

**goliath beetle** *Noun* ñǵúrǵǵ<sub>1</sub>

**good** *Adjective* lillèm; ámō

**good (be good)** *Verb* lèm to be good

**goodness** *Noun* àlémrí

**grab** *Verb* sàb

**grain** *Noun* **ɔ́ǎ**

**granary** *Noun* **àzér**

**grandparent/grandchild** *Noun* **kùkú; jàkú 1**

**grass** *Noun* **zùg**

**grass, sp.** *Noun* **fú'kúnú** an unidentified type of grass

**grass-eater** *Noun* **fɔ̃g** grass-eater, a fish found in rivers that can grow to more than 60cm

**grasshopper** *Noun* **kùrúkùrù** big grasshopper; **gìrè; kàndà** the big one

**grave** *Noun* **àlìbóri; àbóri**

**grazing ground** *Noun* **kpá<sub>1</sub>** a path cattle always follow to go to water

**great** *Adjective* **tíntám**

**greatness** *Noun* **àtámrí**

**greet** *Verb* **mòmí; jìb** greet; **jíb ɲwé** to greet someone (tone is uncertain)

**grind** *Verb* **nám** to grind something (tone is uncertain)

**grinded charcoal** *Noun* **ànám ɲkànsirān** grinded charcoal. Literally 'flour of charcoal'.

**grinding place** *Noun* **kò nīnnāmī** mill, grinding place

**grinding stone** *Noun* **àtār nīnnāmī**

**grinding stone, sp.** *Noun* **àtār ɲé** a stone used to make holes while grinding; **mè tār nīnnāmī;**

**àwóg** a type of grinding stone

**ground nut** *Noun* **gùfì**

**ground-beetle, sp.** *Noun* **àɕìrèkì** a type of saber-toothed ground beetle that can spray acid to defend itself

**group of people under akimpa** *Noun* **ɲiwó**

**grow** *Verb* **tám** to grow (intransitive); **bòrsí** to grow (transitive), to add to something, to make something increase or grow

**growth** *Noun* àtámrí

**grunt** *Noun* gùm

**guard** *Verb* ɕ̀òŋ wór; wòr

**gugale (Hausa)** *Noun* ɕ̀ámkòn northern grey-headed sparrow

**guinea corn** *Noun* ɕ̀è

**guinea corn pap** *Noun* àlísírí

**guinea fowl** *Noun* ɕ̀érí

**gun** *Noun* àlè

**Gunduma B** *Proper Noun* àŋgwóg góp'tí

**gut** *Noun* àjè

**gut (fish)** *Verb* tùbrí to gut a fish before cooking it

## H h

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**hair** *Noun* sírá

**hammer tí** *Verb* to hit something, e.g. with a hammer; **ńí ńí tí** *Noun*

**hand** *Noun* àné

**hand over** *Verb* ɕ̀ùtí

**handkerchief** *Noun* àpírání

**handle** *Noun* wūrōg

**hang** *Verb* gág to hang

**hang out** *Verb* kpàŋrí to go out without a particular goal in mind

**hang up** *Verb* gàgrí to hang something up

**hanging basket** *Noun* káŋólán

**happen** *Verb* **tàgí** to happen

**hard** *Adjective* **kpìmkpánì** not soft

**hare** *Noun* **lámê**

**harmattan** *Noun* **fɔ̀nù**

**harsh tasting** *Adjective* **p̀èpírí** Astringent, rough, harsh. The taste one gets when biting an unripe

banana or other types of raw fruit or vegetables. It is sometimes translated as 'too dry' into English, because of the dry feeling it leaves in the tongue and mouth. It is closely associated with bitterness but still different from it.

**harvest (maize)** *Verb* **fé** to break something long, such as maize or an arm

**harvest (maize)** *Verb* **kà** to harvest maize by breaking it

**hat** *Noun* **àgàtìnà**

**haunted river** *Noun* **màrì ʃɔ̀b**

**haunted tree** *Noun* **bèr ɔ̀ʃɔ̀b**

**have** *Verb* **kàr**

**hawk** *Noun* **àlítórí**

**head** *Noun* **àlìb**

**head hair** *Noun* **sírá 'lìb**

**hear** *Verb* **lèg**

**heart** *Noun* **àvándʒírég; vándʒírég**

**heat up (intransitive)** *Verb* **ʃɔ̀b** to be or to become hot

**heated** *Verb* **ʃɔ̀b á 'jí** to be heated

**heavy** *Adjective* **bùbbòd**

**heavy container** *Noun* **àlàn pjàw** a container that is used as a basin to keep water

**hedgehog** *Noun* **ká<sup>+</sup>tjírí**

**heel** *Noun* **àgúŋ ɔ̀bòg**

**hello** *Phrase*, **súkò**

**help grow** *Verb* **tàmsí** to make something or someone grow

**herbicide** *Noun* **ntàm zùg**

**here** *Adverb* **kāmā**; **kā̃** this place, here

**here you go** *Interjection* **ñ** an interjection used for presenting something to someone, urging them to take it; *Particle* **bē** presentative demonstrative

**heron** *Noun* **àgòrù**

**hey** *Interjection*, **o:j**

**hey!** *Interjection* **kaj**

**hiccough** *Noun* **díg**

**hide** *Verb* **wògí**; **làpsí** to do something secretly; **wòkórí**

**hide oneself (while doing something else)** *Verb* **làb** to do something secretly, to hide oneself while doing something

**hide oneself (while doing something)** *Verb* **ɔ̀gàg** to do something secretly (tone is uncertain)

**high** *Adjective* **dùddùb**

**high (be high)** *Verb* **dùb** to be high

**hill** *Noun* **àtúkúró**

**hip, loins, waist** *Noun* **kwàr**

**hippopotamus** *Noun* **lwàm**

**history** *Noun* **tárhî**

**hit àjúr** *Noun*; **tí** *Verb* to hit something, e.g. with a hammer

**hit repeatedly** *Verb* **wòmrí** to hit or slap something or someone repeatedly

**hoe** *Noun* **àt́sóm**; **nt́sóm**

**hole** *Noun* **àgùm** a pit, hole (in the ground)



## I i

**i.e.** *Connective* **wàtò** that is to say, in other words, i.e.

**idiotic** *Adjective* **ándērī** about talk, about a person, a very insulting word to use

**if not** *Connective* **sikā**

**illiterate person** *Noun* **kpǒŋ** (tone is uncertain)

**imperfective marker** *Particle* **rè** Imperfective aspect particle, indicates that the action referred to by the verb is viewed as ongoing

**improve** *Verb* **lèmsí**

**in between** *Adposition* **àliléb**

**in front of** *Adposition* **àlím**

**in other words,** *Connective* **wàtò** that is to say, in other words, i.e.

**in the middle** *Adposition* **àliléb**

**incisor teeth** *Noun* **àfàg ólílé**

**increase** *Verb* **swàptí**

**infidel** *Noun* **pínî**

**in-law** *Noun* **àŋwán**

**insect, sp.** *Noun* **nt̄f̄ir̄òŋ; mèléŋ; kàndàgà**

**inside** **àlèb** *Adposition*; **àlèb** *Noun*

**inside of the belly** *Noun* **àlèb àdèr**

**INSTR** *Particle* **kó** Some oblique prepositional sense that has yet to be discovered. Possibly instrumental.

**insult** *Verb* **dó** (tone is uncertain)

**INT** *Particle* **hñ** intensifier, used in the *intensity* construction

**intensifier** *Particle* **hñ** intensifier, used in the *intensity* construction

**interrogative modifier** *Interrogative pro-form* **mīnā** interrogative modifier

**interrogative relativizer** *Interrogative pro-form* **mīnā** interrogative modifier

**intestines** *Noun* àjè

**IPFV Particle** **rè** Imperfective aspect particle, indicates that the action referred to by the verb is viewed as ongoing

**iron** *Noun* **ndǎmǎdí; sòj**

**iron wood tree** *Noun* **tǎítǎg** iron wood tree, African mesquite, or iron tree. It is called kiriya in Hausa.

**is not** *Particle* **sīrē ... rīg** Negative existential construction. This construction expresses that something is not present, either in general or in a specific place.

**it is good for me.** *Phrase* **lém m á** an expression of delight. Literally 'it is good for/to me'.

**itch** *Noun* **nì ípāgē**

**IT Verb>Verb** **-rī** This suffix conveys the meaning that an action is executed multiple times or repeatedly

**iterative suffix** *Verb>Verb* **-rī** This suffix conveys the meaning that an action is executed multiple times or repeatedly

## J j

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**jaw** *Noun* **àgbán ɲwé; gàw ɔwā**

**jealousy** *Noun* àbèg

**jerboa** *Noun* **tǎj**

**Jesus** *Noun* **àtǎ kùrìkì**

**join** *Verb* **kòsì**

**joint** *Noun* **ɲkwàtèrì; lántí**

**jug** *Noun* **m̀púɲ**

**juju** *Noun* **kú**





**king** *Noun* àwàn

**king (traditional)** *Noun* àbēní the owner of people

**kiriya (Hausa)** *Noun* ƙíríƙírí iron wood tree, African mesquite, or iron tree.

**kitchen** *Noun* pàg

**knead** *Verb* ƙnāb to knead something

**knee** *Noun* ñkwàtèrì b̀g

**kneecap** *Noun* àlúlù

**kneel down** *Verb* kùptí

**knife** *Noun* àbág

**knifefish** *Noun* ñpórân featherback, a type of fish with slender and long bodies that has a knife-like shape and is also called knifefish

**knock** *Verb* gintí to knock, e.g. on wood or on a door

**know** *Verb* màsí; mǎ

**knuckle** *Noun* àgàm líp ƙí r̀ jé

**Kurupbe** *Proper Noun* ƙ̀r̀r̀kí

## L 1

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**lake** *Noun* às̀m

**lake amambèri** *Proper Noun* às̀m àmàmb̀rì a lake within the Sarkin Dawa area

**lake kpā?ārāg** *Proper Noun* às̀m kpágárág a lake close to Bayaro

**lake Kwàn** *Proper Noun* às̀m kwàn a lake close to Ardo Sonvini

**lake Wura** *Proper Noun* às̀m wúrá Close to Wura

**lame person** *Noun* ñkpìntèrì

**language** *Noun* ñwé

**large** *Adjective* **tíntám; bùbbòd**

**large ape** *Noun* **àkòk swò**

**last** **àlógórí** *Noun* the last one in a sequence

**last teeth** *Noun* **àfàg àdú**

**late afternoon** *Noun* **àléṅ dág â** from 4pm to 7 p.m.

**later** *Adverb* **gbánákā** in the same day, or general

**laugh** **mòm** *Verb*; **ṣàg** *Noun*

**lay eggs** *Verb* **nàg** to lay eggs (tone is uncertain)

**lay something down** *Verb* **lùtí** to lay something down; to appoint someone

**laziness** *Noun* **àkúptí**

**lazy person** *Noun* **àkúptí** ; **àzóg** lazy person; **ṣí 'zóg** lazy person

**lead someone** *Verb* **tàsí** to lead something or someone

**lead something** *Verb* **tàsí** to lead something or someone

**leaf** *Noun* **àbèràg**

**leak** *Verb* **zùr** to leak

**lean** *Verb* **jètí** to lean against something

**leave** *Verb* **jì**

**left hand** *Noun* **àṅà mètṛég** left hand, literally 'nose hand', the hand used for blowing your nose, as opposed to the right hand, which is used for eating

**left side** *Noun* **zág ágbàn**

**leg** *Noun* **àbòg**

**length** *Noun* **àbómṛí**

**lengthen (intransitive)** *Verb* **bòmṛí; bóm** to be or to become long

**lengthen something** *Verb* **bòmṛí** to make something long

**leopard** *Noun* **m̀p̀èr̀è**

**lest** *Connective* **s̀ik̀ā**

**lick** *Verb* **m̀úg** e.g. to taste soup, to eat sugar or flour (tone is uncertain); **l̀àg**

**lie** **t̀f̀è<sub>1</sub>** *Verb*; **àb̀én t̀f̀é** *Noun*

**lie down** *Verb* **l̀ù**; **l̀ù b̀ì** to lie down

**life** *Noun* **àb̀ónó**; **àb̀ón**

**lift** *Verb* **j̀it̀í** to carry something up

**light** **àl̀è** *Noun*; **f̀ím f̀ám** *Adjective*; **g̀wó** *Verb* e.g. to light a match (tone uncertain)

**light (fire)** *Verb* **t̀òks̀í** to light a fire

**light bulb** *Noun* **àl̀è éf̀ā**

**like** **àr̀í b̀ā** *Adverb*; **àr̀í** *Adposition*

**like this** **m̀ín** *Adverb*; **m̀íná** *Particle*

**limp** *Verb* **j̀é r̀ó g̀aw** to limp, to walk with difficulty

**lion** *Noun* **g̀úr̀òg**

**lip** *Noun* **àf̀ẁā ñẁé**

**listen** *Verb* **l̀èg**

**little** *Adjective* **m̀ínt̀é** little, only used for mass nouns (fluids, food, fruit)

**little grebe** *Noun* **àf̀én<sup>1</sup> d̀ír̀í** little grebe or dabchick, a small waterbird that is often found in and around

lakes; **ñf̀én<sup>1</sup> d̀ír̀í** little grebe or dabchick, a small waterbird that is often found in and across lakes

**live** *Verb* **sẁár**; **f̀ò̀ñ** settle

**liver** *Noun* **p̀ùp̀ẁàb**

**living being** *Noun* **j̀ì íf̀ò** creature, living being

**lizard** *Noun* **v̀ín<sup>1</sup> t̀j̀íǹí**

**lobster** *Noun* **k̀èr̀èb̀ìg m̀ìṅk̀áná**

**lock** *Verb* fàg

**locust bean tree** *Noun* àbórég

**LOG.SG** *Pronoun* í<sup>L</sup> logophoric pronominal

**logophoric pronominal** *Pronoun* í<sup>L</sup> logophoric pronominal

**long búmbóm<sub>1</sub>** *Adjective*; **bóm** *Verb* to be or to become long

**look** *Verb* ɔ̀ɛ̀rì

**loosen** *Verb* gbàsí

**lose** *Verb* wùtrí

**louse** *Noun* ńkón

**love** *Verb* wūrì

**lower one's head** *Verb* bāgì to lower one's head (tone is uncertain)

**lung** *Noun* àfàr; àván ófàr (tone is uncertain)

**lungfish** *Noun* àvì West African lungfish, an air-breathing fish with an eel-like body that can reach 1m in length and lives in riverbeds.

**lutefish, sp.** *Noun* m̀pāj A type of lutefish, living on the bottom of lakes and growing to around 60cm in length. It goes upstream to lay eggs

## M m

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**madman** *Noun* jí kǎnsì

**madrid** *Noun* àvā̀nkà̀n

**magic, sp.** *Noun* tìɔ̀són

**mahogany tree** *Noun* àbù

**maiwa (Hausa)** *Noun* àwà̀r a type of bulrush millet that is harvested during the dry season

**maize** *Noun* múró

**make** *Verb* **māmī** to make or create something; **sin**

**make a rope** *Verb* **kwár** (tone is uncertain)

**make angry** *Verb* **má** <sup>4</sup>**féb**

**make beautiful** *Verb* **lèmsí**

**make good** *Verb* **lèmsí**

**make grow** *Verb* **tàmsí** to make something or someone grow

**make holes in something** *Verb* **tùbrí** to put holes in something

**make round** *Verb* **vìnkérí** to make something round; **ḡìb** to make something round

**make something cold** *Verb* **dàksí** to make something colder, to cool something down

**make something long** *Verb* **bòmtí**

**make wide** *Verb* **jàrsí** to make something wider

**malaria** *Noun* **wóg**

**male** *Noun* **ávān**

**male agama lizard** *Noun* **ànā mkpôḡ** male agama agama

**male goat** *Noun* **mpòg**

**malice** *Noun* **àbésí** malice

**man** *Noun* **jí; ànì vān; jí vān; àní**

**mango** *Noun* **màngóró**

**mantis** *Noun* **ḡìndḡènakù**

**many** *Quantifier* **nìnnānī** multal quantifier, expressing that there is a large quantity of something.

There is no distinction for count or non-count nouns

**market** *Noun* **lùmò; àgbáḡásùb**

**marry** *Verb* **jág ágbàn** to marry a woman (tone is uncertain)

**mat** *Noun* **àfí**

**match** *Noun* **kàpìrù**

**maternal relative** *Noun* **àlóg**

**maternal uncle/sister's child** *Noun* **ṭjū**

**matoni (Hausa)** *Noun* **àsúm** any tool used for digging holes, e.g. boreholes

**maybe** *Particle* **ńíjḱā** (tone is uncertain)

**me** *Pronoun* **ńìḱ** me, first person singular independent pronoun, also used for focus

**measure** *Verb* **mag** to measure something (tone is uncertain)

**meat** *Noun* **àfàm** meat, food from an animal

**medicine** *Noun* **ńtàm**

**meet** *Verb* **ḱín** (tone is uncertain)

**men** *Noun* **ńí vān**

**menstruation** *Noun* **àḱàm**

**message** **àtóm** *Noun*; **tòmsí** *Verb*

**middle** *Noun* **àlìléb**

**millipede** *Noun* **ḱíḱímá**

**milk** *Noun* **mìḱkájá** 'ví

**milk teeth** *Noun* **àḱàg àvì**

**mill** *Noun* **kò nìnnāmì** mill, grinding place

**millet, sp.** *Noun* **àwàr** a type of bulrush millet that is harvested during the dry season

**mission grass** *Noun* **fúró** mission grass or foxtail, a very widespread type of grass

**mix** *Verb* **kpāb**

**mix (small things)** *Verb* **ḱwárí** to mix small things that can still be separated, such as seeds, beans, rice or pepper (tone is uncertain)

**Monday** *Noun* **kàḱkánê** Name of a Jirim village that has a market event on Mondays. Also *Kankani*.

**money** *Noun* **nìsīrī**

**monitor lizard** *Noun* **ʃɔŋ** savannah monitor, a large type of lizard

**monkey** *Noun* **m̄pō** (tone is uncertain); **sá**

**monkey, sp.** *Noun* **ɕim; m̄pájórí**

**month** *Noun* **àɕè**

**moon** *Noun* **àɕè**

**moringa tree** *Noun* **àlāsírá**

**morning** *Noun* **àkàptì** from 6 to 10

**mortar (in which to pound food)** *Noun* **túg**

**mosque** *Noun* **kò gòm bāgī**

**mosquito** *Noun* **dìnà**

**mother** *Noun* **mē**

**mould** *Verb* **vín** to mould something into a shape; to give shape to a shapeless material; **vínkórí** to mould something, to form something; **ɕāb** to mould something with one's hands

**mount** *Verb* **b̄r** to mount an animal or a vehicle

**mountain** *Noun* **ntón**

**mouse, sp.** *Noun* **m̄pàndɕón**

**mouth** *Noun* **ɲwé; mwé**

**mouth of a pot** *Noun* **ɲwé lâŋ; mwé lâŋ**

**much** *Quantifier* **n̄nnānī** multal quantifier, expressing that there is a large quantity of something.

There is no distinction for count or non-count nouns

**mud** *Noun* **àvìràkwàb**

**mudfish** *Noun* **kwêj** mudfish, an airbreathing type of catfish that can grow up to 1m in length.

**Mumuye** *Proper Noun* **kwàntón; àkómlâ**



**mushroom** *Noun* àkǒg

**Muslim** *Noun* màkpà; jí gòm bāgī

**mute** *Noun* òkpóh

## N n

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**nail** *Noun* kpà

**name** *Noun* gán

**name something or someone** *Verb* nàg to give something or someone a name (tone is uncertain)

**nape of neck** *Noun* òkùm àgbèr

**nasal mucus** *Noun* mìnkáhà mārēg; mārèg

**navel** *Noun* sù

**near** *Adposition* tókpár

**neck** *Noun* àgbér

**need** *Verb* wūrī

**needle** *Noun* àfír

**NEG** *Particle* hñ Clause-final negation marker

**negative existential** *Particle* sīrō ... rīg Negative existential construction. This construction expresses that something is not present, either in general or in a specific place.

**negator** *Particle* hñ Clause-final negation marker

**neighbor** *Noun* mūrù; àhàwà hgwóg

**new** *Adjective* àhàwī

**newborn animal** *Noun* tšwē

**newborn child** *Noun* tšwē

**night** *Noun* ábōgō nighttime, when it is dark, roughly from 7 p.m. to 5 a.m.

**Nile monitor** *Noun* **ńkómí** West Africa Nile monitor, an aquatic type of monitor lizard that grows to one or two meters in length. It is called water monitor lizard in English by Kam speakers

**nine** *Cardinal numeral* **ń'zá**

**nineteen** *Cardinal numeral* **bò gún ńízàg**

**ninety** *Cardinal numeral* **àkpó nár 'ré gún bō**

**nipple** *Noun* **àví**

**NMLZ** *Verb>Noun* **à-** a synchronically unproductive nominalizing prefix that derives patientive and agentive nouns from verbs; **-rì** Nominalizing suffix, part of some nominalization constructions

**no** *Interjection* **o o; m m**

**no problem** *Phrase* **tán ńì hñ**

**noise** *Noun* **àwáří**

**nominalizing affix** *Verb>Noun* **à-** a synchronically unproductive nominalizing prefix that derives patientive and agentive nouns from verbs; **-rì** Nominalizing suffix, part of some nominalization constructions

**noon** *Noun* **àkúrí; àléń kúrí** 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**north** *Noun* **àwù; kpàtíba**

**north side** *Noun* **zág áwù**

**nose** *Noun* **àmèrēg**

**nostril** *Noun* **àgùm àmèrēg**

**notice** *Verb* **màsí**

**now** *Adverb* **sisirā**

**Ntɔŋ sani** *Proper Noun* **ńtɔŋ sání** A mountain in Sarkin Dawa

**nurture** *Verb* **tàmsí** to nurture something or someone

**ńí mfó 'séj** *Proper Noun* a clan of Kam

**nyi shiriku** *Proper Noun* **ɲí síríkú** clan responsible for magic in general

**Nyintɔngwei** *Proper Noun* **ɲí ntóní wêj** the clan that is responsible for rainfall

O o

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**official, sp.** *Noun* **àkìmpá; mē tìḗḗ** the mother of the traditional king; she's responsible for the magic called tìḗḗ

**oil** *Noun* **màn**

**okra** *Noun* **íprîm**

**old** *Adjective* **ásūmrî**

**old person** *Noun* **kògòɲí**

**older female large ape** *Noun* **mè swò** (tone is uncertain)

**older male large ape** *Noun* **àná swò**

**older sibling** *Noun* **àɲà b̀̀rì** (tone is uncertain)

**on top of** *Adposition* **àlìb**

**one** *Cardinal numeral* **bī; bímbíní** (tone is uncertain)

**one hundred and twenty** *Cardinal numeral* **àkpó ḗúb**

**one million** *Cardinal numeral* **mìljên** (tone is uncertain)

**open (cloth)** *Verb* **làrí** to unwrap something that is covered with cloth, also to open curtains

**open (door)** *Verb* **fàrí** to open a door

**open (mouth)** *Verb* **ɲàtí** to open one's mouth

**open something (by digging)** *Verb* **gbēnī** to dig open yam heaps, or to dig for groundnuts

**openers of the traditional festivals** *Noun* **bōnū** people responsible for opening the traditional festivals  
(tone is uncertain)

**or** **kó** *Connective* ; **mi** *Particle*

**ostrich** *Noun* ñkázárí

**other** *Quantifier* níjî

**outside** àgèr *Noun*; àgèr *Adverb*

**outside of belly** *Noun* ñtúnjédèr; àdèr

**owner** *Noun* àjí

## P p

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**pain** *Noun* àdégrî; àdéḡ

**painful** *Adjective* diddèḡ

**palace** *Noun* àgbáḡ

**palate** *Noun* àkpág ḡwé gáḡ

**palm of hand** *Noun* àdèjé

**palm tree** *Noun* dàrá

**pants** *Noun* bèntí

**paper** *Noun* là kúmé paper

**pass** *Verb* pèntérí

**paternal relative** *Noun* m̀fò kú

**patience** *Noun* mùjà

**pay** *Verb* ḡòm

**pearl millet** *Noun* mùrì harvested in august or September

**peel** *Verb* sàrí

**peer** *Noun* mùrù

**penis** *Noun* ñtḡḡ



**place with flat stones** *Noun* àwár<sub>1</sub> A place with many flat stones.

**plait hair** *Verb* fam to plait someone's hair

**plant (crops)** *Verb* lòm to plant crops

**plant (fruit)** *Verb* ɗǎn to plant a tree or fruit

**plant (tree)** *Verb* ɗǎn to plant a tree or fruit

**plant, sp.** *Noun* òkpàtì A leaf that is used for the preparation of draw soups.; àgbānē A type of crinum, a plant with a leafless stem that develops from bulbs. It is used for medicinal purposes. Its name in Hausa is gadeli. (tone is uncertain)

**plate** *Noun* àkprà

**platform** *Noun* kámtìrà (tone uncertain)

**plead** *Phrase* sǒg mújǎ to plead with someone; literally: to look for patience (tone is uncertain)

**pluck** *Verb* kwàsí; gǎbrí to pluck something, such as a blade of grass

**plural marker** *Particle* jō Plural marker

**plural word** *Particle* jō Plural marker

**pointed** *Adjective* sēṅsēṅ (tone is uncertain)

**porcupine** *Noun* sàmbògòrì

**positive response word** *Interjection* a; o:j

**POSS** *Particle* rīg Possessive marker.

**possessed person** *Noun* àfǎb

**possessive marker** *Particle* rīg

**pot** *Noun* àlàn

**pot cover** *Noun* jì ṅwé lán

**pot, sp.** *Noun* vǐ a kind of traditional pot

**potter** *Noun* jí làn mōṅì

**pouched rat** *Noun* **m̀gbètè**

**pound** *Verb* **s̀ur** pound with a mortar

**pounded yam** *Noun* **m̀kpò ɔ́ú**

**pour** *Verb* **t̀ur** to pour something inside a target with a narrow mouth, like a bottle or a calabash

**pour something** *Verb* **ẁubrí** to pour something

**pour something (into something large)** *Verb* **ǹasí** pour something into or onto a target with a wide opening, e.g. the floor or a large pot

**poverty** *Noun* **à̀t́í**

**praise someone** *Verb* **k̀orí** to praise someone

**pregnancy** *Noun* **à̀fù**

**presentative demonstrative** *Particle* **b̀ē; m̀íná; á**

**press** *Verb* **t̀ēb**

**press clothes** *Verb* **d̀éŋ**

**press together** *Verb* **p̀òpsí**

**pressed together** **p̀úppòb** *Adjective* to be pressed together; **p̀òb á 'j́í** *Verb* to be pressed together

**prick** *Verb* **t̀ùpsí**

**priest** *Noun* **t́ìkú**

**prisoner** *Noun* **ǹí f̀āgí**

**progress** *Noun* **ǹì d̀íní**

**promote** *Verb* **l̀ēmsí**

**propeller** *Noun* **à̀t́òr**

**proverb** *Noun* **à̀bén ózúkārí**

**PROX** *Particle* **à; b̀ā**

**proximal demonstrative marker** *Particle* **b̀ā**

**proximal demonstrative marker** *Particle* à

**PRSTT** *Particle* bē presentative demonstrative; **míná** presentative demonstrative; **á** presentative demonstrative

**pull** *Verb* zùr

**pump tūr** *Verb* to pump; **ɲì ífòb tūrī** *Noun*

**pumpkin** *Noun* àkàrè

**puncture** *Verb* tùbrí to put holes in something

**push** *Verb* túb

**put** *Verb* zùg to put something somewhere

**put straight** *Verb* jisí to put something straight

**python** *Noun* mərəsà

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## Q q

**Q** *Particle* jī polar question particle

**queen termite** *Noun* mè dájâ (tone is uncertain)

**question** *Particle* gə<sup>H</sup>

**question marker** *Particle* jī

**quickly** *Adverb* ɲájí (tone is uncertain)

**quiver** *Noun* bigè

**quotative marker** *Particle* íjí<sup>L</sup> quotative marker, introduces reported speech; **í**; **é**; **íbí**

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## R r

**rag** *Noun* àpírání a piece of cloth



**rain kpár** *Verb* (tone is uncertain); **m̀p̀d̀m** *Noun*

**rain lightly** *Verb* **k̀ùb** to rain lightly

**rainy season** *Noun* **̀ǹt̀f̀wé**

**raise chickens** *Verb* **f̀à** to raise animals; this verb is specifically used for chickens

**rank** *Noun* **t̀ìntám**

**rat** *Noun* **̀ǹf̀à̀ŋ; m̀p̀ḕr̀ṑg**

**rattle (traditional)** *Noun* **t̀f̀í̀t̀f̀á̀g** traditional rattle used in traditional dances

**razor** *Noun* **̀ŋ̀k̀è̀nsì**

**reason** *Noun* **̀d̀ǵá**

**record** *Verb* **j̀á̀g ̀ŋ̀k̀ù̀r̀è̀g** to record something (tone is uncertain)

**red** *Adjective* **á̀d̀ṑm̀r̀í; d̀ìnd̀ṑm**

**red ant** *Noun* **k̀á̀ŋ̀á̀l̀í** an unidentified type of red ant

**red sorrel** *Noun* **s̀í** red sorrel, sheep's sorrel, sour weed, field sorrel, a type of weed that is also called yakuwa in Hausa

**red-flanked duiker** *Noun* **à̀b̀è̀r̀è̀g** red-flanked duiker

**reedfish** *Noun* **k̀ùb** reedfish or snakefish, a snake-like fish that can grow more than 30cm in length

**reflexive** *Particle* **k̀p̀ò** reflexive pronoun

**refrigerate something** *Verb* **d̀à̀ks̀í** to make something colder, to cool something down

**refuse** *Verb* **j̀é̀ǹí** to refuse something (tone is uncertain)

**remove** *Verb* **s̀ó̀ŋ** (tone is uncertain); **l̀ù̀ps̀í; g̀b̀è̀r; ̀f̀ò̀ŋ̀t̀í; l̀ù̀br̀í**

**remove (by cutting)** *Verb* **b̀à**

**removed** *Verb* **l̀ù̀b á ̀j̀í** to be removed

**repair something** *Verb* **k̀ò̀ŋ̀í** to repair something

**replace something** *Verb* **p̀é̀n** to replace something

**request** *Verb* tɔ̀g

**rest** *Verb* nág á<sup>+</sup>bɔ̀ŋ

**rest (of something)** *Noun* ŋkám

**rest after filtering** *Noun* sàr

**Resultative marker**

**return** *Verb* m̀̀r̀̀

**ribs** *Noun* sánígàw; g̀̀w; àg̀̀w (tone is uncertain)

**rice** *Noun* ɔ̀́á zúg

**ridge something** *Verb* gb̀̀n̄i to carve something inside something else (e.g. to carve text in a tree), to  
ridge something

**ridi (Hausa)** *Noun* m̀̀kp̀̀ sésame seed, benniseed

**right hand** *Noun* ànà n̄im̄i

**right side** *Adverb* ázág áv̄ān

**rinse** *Verb* bàrí

**ripe** *Adjective* wūwū

**ripe (be ripe)** *Verb* wū to be ripe

**ripe fruit** *Noun* áwū

**ritual calabash** *Noun* m̀̀p̀̀úŋ ɔ̀́óŋ

**river** *Noun* m̀̀r̀̀

**riverbank** *Noun* ŋwé márê; ŋwé

**road** *Noun* àlūkōm (tone is uncertain)

**roast** *Verb* déŋ

**rodent, sp.** *Noun* bárí

**roll up (rope)** *Verb* v̀̀r̀̀ to roll up a rope

**roof** *Verb* **sà** to roof a building

**roof tìg** *Verb* to roof a place; **tìgì** *Verb* to roof a building; **àlíp sêr** *Noun*; **kám̀tìrà** *Noun* (tone uncertain)

**room** *Noun* **sêr**; **àlèsêr**

**rooster** *Noun* **kúmé vān**; **àfùkù**

**root (of a plant)** *Noun* **àlógórí**

**root of a tree** *Noun* **díránj bêr**

**rope** *Noun* **̀ǹt̀f̀ù̀j̀**

**rot** *Verb* **būm** to rot, to spoil

**rotten** *Adjective* **sám̀r á 'jí**

**rough** *Adjective* **dàm h̀ǹ**

**rough tasting** *Adjective* **p̀è̀p̀í̀r̀í̀** Astringent, rough, harsh. The taste one gets when biting an unripe banana or other types of raw fruit or vegetables. It is sometimes translated as 'too dry' into English, because of the dry feeling it leaves in the tongue and mouth. It is closely associated with bitterness but still different from it.

**round** **gínéné** *Adjective* (tone is uncertain); **ɔ̀j̀b̀** *Verb* to make something round

**rub** *Verb* **ẁs̀í̀**

**run** *Verb* **t̀è̀g̀**

## S s

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**saber-toothed ground beetle** *Noun* **à̀ɔ̀j̀r̀è̀k̀ì̀** a type of saber-toothed ground beetle that can spray acid to defend itself

**Sabon Gida Kamajim** *Proper Noun* **sàm̀à̀r̀í̀ l̀í̀m̀**, a Kam village, part of Kamajim (tone is uncertain)

**safari ant** *Noun* **à̀ɔ̀j̀ò̀g̀** driver ant, a type of army ant that makes temporary anthills with big colonies. It rarely stings. It is called karkwasa in Hausa

**saliva** *Noun* àḍḍḍḍ

**salt** *Noun* ñsòg; sùnsòg

**same** *Adverb* tántfḍḍ

**sand** *Noun* àlàjíné a type of sand found by the riverside

**Saturday** *Noun* àsábâr Borrowed from Hausa (*Asabar*), originally from Arabic *yoom as-sabat* ‘Saturday’, literally ‘day the seventh (starting from Sunday)’

**savannah monitor** *Noun* jḍḍg savannah monitor, a large type of lizard

**save** *Verb* tàgàrí to keep safe

**say** *Verb* bén (tone is uncertain)

**scam** *Verb* zùb to deceive people, to scam people, to participate in fraud

**scatter** *Verb* mèn sí

**scatter something** *Verb* mìn sí to scatter things

**scattered (be scattered)** *Verb* mén á ‘jí

**school** *Noun* ḍàḅḅḅḅ; ñì ídēri

**scorpion** *Noun* kèrèbìg

**scrape** *Verb* déḅ

**scratch** *Noun* ñì ígbēri

**scratch something** *Verb* gbèr

**search** *Verb* sḍḍg (tone is uncertain)

**second person plural object pronominal** *Pronoun* ñó

**second person plural possessive pronominal** *Pronoun* ñó<sup>L</sup> pronominal

**second person plural subject pronominal** *Pronoun* ñò

**second person singular future subject index** *Pronoun* á

**second person singular imperfective subject pronominal** *Pronoun* à

**second person singular independent pronominal** *Pronoun* **ɲà**

**second person singular object pronominal** *Pronoun* **á**

**second person singular perfective subject index** *Pronoun* **á**

**second person singular possessive pronominal** *Pronoun* **ɲá<sup>L</sup>** pronominal

**secret** *Verb* **làpsí** to do something secretly

**section** *Noun* **sù**

**see** *Verb* **dóg** (tone is uncertain)

**seed** *Noun* **àwù<sub>2</sub>; àwù ɲì** a generic noun used for any type of seed; **ɔ́á**

**semen** *Noun* **mìŋkáná n'tòg**

**send** *Verb* **tóm** (tone is uncertain); **tòm sí**

**Senegal coucal** *Noun* **ntútú** *Centropus senegalensis*

**separate** *Verb* **gèpsí** to separate things; **gàpsí** to separate things

**separated** *Verb* **gáb á 'jí**

**SEQ** *Particle* **sì** preverbal sequential particle indicating that the action denoted by the clause happens after an earlier mentioned event

**sequential marker** *Particle* **sì** preverbal sequential particle indicating that the action denoted by the clause happens after an earlier mentioned event

**sesame seed** *Noun* **m̀kpè** sesame seed, benniseed

**seven** *Cardinal numeral* **ɔ̀ùb jirāg**

**seventeen** *Cardinal numeral* **bō gún ɔ̀úb jirāg**

**seventy** *Cardinal numeral* **àkpó ɲár rē gún bō**

**sew** *Verb* **gbàm**

**shade** *Noun* **ɔ̀úɔ̀úrág**

**shadow** *Noun* **ɔ̀úɔ̀úrág**

**shake** *Verb* **gbìgí**

**shame** *Noun* **ànùṅ ɛ'bólé**

**shape** *Verb* **vín** to mould something into a shape; to give shape to a shapeless material

**share** *Verb* **gàb** to share something; **gàpsí** to share something, to divide something among one another

**sharp** *Adjective* **lillèg**

**sharp (be sharp)** *Verb* **lèg** to be sharp

**sharpen** *Verb* **lèksí** to make something sharp

**shave** *Verb* **zìm**

**shawo (Hausa)** *Noun* **m̀p̀r̀è̀**

**shea tree** *Noun* **àḗé** shea tree

**sheep** *Noun* **̀ǹt̀í̀m̀á̀**

**sheep's sorrel** *Noun* **sí** red sorrel, sheep's sorrel, sour weed, field sorrel, a type of weed that is also called yakuwa in Hausa

**shin** *Noun* **àkùb ɛ̀b̀ò̀g̀; gbógó**

**shine** *Verb* **tòg** shining or burning of a light, the sun, the moon, fire

**shirt** *Noun* **àfú; àpírání** any piece of clothing

**shit** *Noun* **àfìb**

**shoe** *Noun* **sìbòg**

**shoot** *Verb* **mgbàb**

**short, poisonous snake** *Noun* **àḗwàn** A type of short, poisonous snake.

**shoulder** *Noun* **àkpèb ɛ̀ǹé; àkpèb**

**shoulder blade** *Noun* **pìpèj**

**shout** **àjé** *Noun*; **ká** *Verb* (tone is uncertain); **àjé kà** *Noun*; **jé** *Verb* (tone is uncertain)

**shout for attention** *Interjection* **o:j**

**show** *Verb* **tùsí**

**shrew** *Noun* **dílóg**

**sick** *Adjective* **diddèg**

**sick (be sick)** *Verb* **dèg** to be or to become sick

**sickle** *Noun* **àzònú**

**side** *Noun* **zág; àgàw** (tone is uncertain)

**sing** *Verb* **swàb**

**sit** *Verb* **ḡḡḡ**

**situation** *Noun* **ḡḡá**

**six** *Cardinal numeral* **ḡḡùb**

**sixteen** *Cardinal numeral* **bò gún ḡḡùb**

**sixty** *Cardinal numeral* **àkpó ḡḡár**

**skeleton** *Noun* **àkùb**

**skin** *Noun* **là; là kpò**

**skinny** *Adjective* **búgbág** (tone is uncertain)

**skirt** *Noun* **pàtàrí**

**skull** *Noun* **ḡkḡgā'líb**

**sky** *Noun* **àdègàḡ**

**slap** *Verb* **wòm** to slap someone

**slaughter** *Verb* **bír** (tone is uncertain)

**slave** *Noun* **píní**

**sleep** *Verb* **lù; lùsí**

**sling** *Noun* **àlō**

**slippery** *Adjective* **kpìkpésì**

**slippery (be slippery)** *Verb* **kpèsí** to be slippery

**small** *Adjective* **átwàb; ántē; ántwàb**

**smell àkúrí** *Noun*; **kùsí** *Verb* to smell something; **kúkkúr** *Adjective*

**smell (intransitive)** *Verb* **kúr** to stink, to be smelly

**smoke** *Noun* **mòg** *Verb* **núnj** to smoke (tobacco)

**smooth** *Adjective* **kpìkpésì; kùkókùtì**

**smooth (be smooth)** *Verb* **kpèsí** to be smooth; **kòktí** to be smooth

**snake** *Noun* **nìsě**

**snake, sp.** *Noun* **sísé; àkár; wórú** a type of snake. various types of snakes are subsumed under this name, including the speckled shovel-snout snake, the northern (or irregular) green bush snake, and the spotted blind snake; **zùpǎ** A type of green snake that lives in green grasses.

**snatch** *Verb* **zànj** to snatch something; to take something and quickly steal away

**sneeze** *Noun* **àfém**

**snore dēri** *Verb*; **àdérí** *Noun*

**so** *Particle* **tò**

**soft** *Adjective* **mílágmílág** (tone is uncertain)

**soften** *Verb* **mìlàksí** to make something soft

**soil** *Noun* **àbìbí ; àbì<sub>1</sub>**

**soldier termite** *Noun* **àkèràg**

**sole of foot** *Noun* **àdèbòg**

**some** *Pronoun* **níní**

**some** *Particle* **mí<sup>l</sup>** existential quantifier

**something** *Noun* **nì**

**somewhere** *Noun* **gwéj**



**son** *Noun* àt̪f̪i ívān

**song** *Noun* àbì

**sorry** *Interjection* d̪àr an apology (tone is uncertain)

**soup** *Noun* zírág

**soup ingredient** *Noun* zírág

**sour** *Adjective* ʃùʃórí taste of something that is spoiled, something that has become sour

**sour (be sour)** *Verb* ʃòrí to be sour

**sour weed** *Noun* sí red sorrel, sheep's sorrel, sour weed, field sorrel, a type of weed that is also called yakuwa in Hausa

**south** *Noun* àdòŋ; ñtówéj

**sparrow** *Noun* t̪ámk̀̀n northern grey-headed sparrow

**speak** *Verb* bén

**spear** *Noun* sábórág; s̀̀j

**spear grass** *Noun* súbí

**spider** *Noun* àlání

**spine** *Noun* àk̀̀b ñk̀̀m

**spit** *Verb* t̀̀g

**spoil (intransitive)** *Verb* b̪ūm to rot, to spoil

**spoiled** *Adjective* b̪ūmb̪ūm rotten, spoiled, decayed

**spoon** *Noun* àt̪f̪i kpírág

**spray something** *Verb* p̪isí to spray something

**spring** *Noun* ñpúr

**squat** *Verb* k̀̀ptí

**squeeze** *Verb* fam to squeeze something

**squirrel** *Noun* **ńtérí**

**squirrel, sp.** *Noun* **gbê**

**stab** *Verb* **bàg**

**stamp (on the ground)** *Verb* **nìgí** to stamp with one's feet on the ground (tone is uncertain)

**stand** *Verb* **jī; ɸùtán**

**stand trial** *Verb* **bír ónùṅ** literally 'swear on one's eyes' (tone is uncertain)

**star** *Noun* **ńɸǎ**

**start** *Verb* **tūbī**

**steal** *Verb* **zùb**

**steam** *Noun* **àbìm**

**stick** *Noun* **kwî**

**stick used for communication** *Noun* **kúkwéj** a stick that is used to send messages from village to village

**stick, sp.** *Noun* **kúkwéj** a stick that is used to send messages from village to village

**stingray** *Noun* **jífúró** Niger stingray, a stingray found in rivers in the area

**stink** *Verb* **kúr** to stink, to be smelly

**stock** *Noun* **ńɸàtèrì** A stock that is used to make fences

**stomach** *Noun* **ápú dèr**

**stone** *Noun* **àtár**

**stool** *Noun* **àgbág**

**stop** *Verb* **ɸùtán**

**story** *Noun* **àṅwī**

**straight** *Adjective* **ṅwìṅwántí**

**straighten something** *Verb* **ṅwántí**

**stranger, guest** *Noun* **gó**

**stream** *Noun* **gbòrù; gbó**

**strength** *Noun* **àkpímkpáná**

**stretch (rubber, plastic)** *Verb* **zùr** to stretch rubber or plastic

**striped grass mouse** *Noun* **ńtṣwâg** It is also called a 'bad-luck rat'. If you catch one, you should not kill it, because you won't ever be able to catch any rat again.

**striped polecat** *Noun* **gbùgbúrù**

**strong** **kpìmkpánì** *Adjective*; **kpàṅí** *Verb*

**structure** *Noun* **ḡúná**

**stubborn boy** *Noun* **àṭṣì ṣòb**

**stumble** *Verb* **vìtórí** to stumble

**suck** *Verb* **fàd**

**sugar** *Noun* **kántô; àfár**

**sugar cane** *Noun* **àfárómkpà** (tone is uncertain)

**sun** *Noun* **àléṅ**

**Sunday** *Noun* **láhàdì** Borrowed from Hausa (*Lahadi*), originally from Arabic *yoom al-aḥad* 'Sunday', literally 'day the first'

**surpass** *Particle* **kòr** to surpass (someone or something)

**survive** *Verb* **ṣòr**

**swallow** *Verb* **mer** (tone is uncertain)

**swamp** *Noun* **àṣà**

**swear** *Verb* **tōnì** both as in promising as in saying bad words

**sweat** *Noun* **àdíkórí; kò óṣò**

**sweep** *Verb* **wùsì**

**sweet** *Adjective* **sùnsónjī**

**swell** *Verb* **féb** to swell (tone is uncertain)

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**tail** *Noun* **àsé**

**tailor** *Noun* **jí jí gbāmī**

**take** *Verb* **jàg**

**take bath** *Verb* **lò kpò** to take a bath, to have a shower

**talk** **bén** *Verb* (tone is uncertain); **àbén** *Noun*

**tall** *Adjective* **dùddùb**

**tall (be tall)** *Verb* **dùb** to be tall

**taste** *Verb* **mag** (tone is uncertain)

**teach** *Verb* **tùsí**

**teacher** *Noun* **málâm; jí jí dūbī**

**tear** *Verb* **gìmsí** cutting or breaking a part from, e.g., bread or tuwo; **sètí** to tear a fabric

**teardrop** *Noun* **àmí nùŋ**

**tears** *Noun* **mèŋkáná nùŋ**

**teeth gums** *Noun* **ťjìnè**

**tell** *Verb* **ťjār<sub>2</sub>** to tell (e.g. a story); **bén** (tone is uncertain)

**TEMP** *Adposition* **ká** Used as NP conjunction in time reference. Possibly a preposition in this use.

Possibly only used together with quantified time indications.; **rè** temporal preposition, during

**temporal preposition** *Adposition* **rè** temporal preposition, during

**ten** *Cardinal numeral* **bō**

**tendon** *Noun* òtǽí

**termite** *Noun* ɲì làkòm

**termite hill** *Noun* dǎŋâ a big one, made with dry sand

**termite hill, sp.** *Noun* àbég A small type of termite hill, made as if there is a cap on it

**termite, sp.** *Noun* àzání an unidentified type of termite

**termite's nest** *Noun* àjùgèrì

**testicle** *Noun* mpèrèŋ

**that** *Particle* ò distal demonstrative marker

**that** *Particle* bô distal demonstrative

**that (complementizer expressing wishes)** *Particle* kó bǎ complementizer used for expressing wishes

**that is (to say)** *Connective* wàtò that is to say, in other words, i.e.

**the clan that takes care of the chief** *Noun* tǽí bǎ

**the sun has gone down** *Phrase* àlén jí â This phrase is used when the chief has died. Mentioning it explicitly is taboo.

**then** *Particle* ìkǎ (tone is uncertain)

**there** kòmò *Adverb* (tone is uncertain); kô *Particle* that place, there

**there are no problems** *Particle* kár jí 'mí hèn A response in a greeting, used to say, 'I am doing alright'. Literally: 'I don't have anything.'

**there you go** *Particle* bē presentative demonstrative

**thick** *Adjective* nínǎr (only for things)

**thick (be thick)** *Verb* nár to be thick

**thief** *Noun* àzúb

**thigh** *Noun* òkpóŋé

**thing** *Noun* ɲì

**think fâr** *Verb* to think; **hwár** *Verb* (tone is uncertain)

**third person plural possessive pronominal** *Pronoun* **bí<sup>L</sup>**

**third person plural object pronominal** *Pronoun* **í**

**third person plural possessive pronominal** *Pronoun* **í<sup>L</sup>**

**third person plural possessive pronominal** *Pronoun* **bí<sup>L</sup>**

**third person plural subject pronominal** *Pronoun* **àjí**

**third person singular possessive pronominal** *Pronoun* **bú<sup>L</sup>**

**third person singular object pronominal** *Pronoun* **ú**

**third person singular possessive pronominal** *Pronoun* **ú<sup>L</sup>**

**third person singular possessive pronominal** *Pronoun* **bú<sup>L</sup>**

**thirst** *Noun* **àḡwár**

**thirteen** *Cardinal numeral* **bō gún t̄jâr**

**thirty** *Cardinal numeral* **àkpó bí 'ré gún bō; kpējmī gún bō**

**this** *Particle* **bã** proximal demonstrative; **à** proximal demonstrative marker

**thorn** *Noun* **sébi**

**thousand** *Cardinal numeral* **dúbú** (tone is uncertain)

**three** *Cardinal numeral* **t̄jâr**

**throat** *Noun* **ḡkùrḡg**

**throw** *Verb* **nàg** to throw something (tone is uncertain)

**throw a spear** *Verb* **t̄jɔr** (tone is uncertain)

**thumb** *Noun* **àlíp t̄jí rḡ né bōri**

**thunder** *Noun* **ḡkã**

**Thursday** *Noun* **àlàmi:s** From Hausa (*Alamis*), originally from Arabic *yoom al-khamiis* ‘Thursday’

**thus** *Particle* **tḡ; Adverb** **mín**

**tick** *Noun* ñkáj; ñkáj wó

**tie** *Verb* wàb to tie something

**tie (a knot)** *Verb* ñwórí to tie a knot (tone is uncertain)

**tie (wrapper)** *Verb* kóm to tie a wrapper

**tigerfish** *Noun* ñsàṅà an unidentified type of fish that could be a tigerfish or the Niger tetra

**tight** *Adjective* píppár

**tight (be tight)** *Verb* pár

**tighten (intransitive)** *Verb* pár

**tilapia** *Noun* kpágárág

**till** *Adposition* hár

**time** *Noun* àbòg used when counting a number of times something happened; **bèri**; **ndzámdí** time, as read on a watch

**tired** **kpètí** *Verb*; **kpét á 'jí** *Adjective*

**tiredness** *Noun* àkpétí

**tissue** *Noun* là kúmé tissue

**to** *Adposition* hár

**toad** *Noun* ñtèkù

**tobacco** *Noun* tìbá

**today** *Adverb* ànā

**toe** *Noun* àlíp tjí rè bòg

**toenail** *Noun* kpà líp tjí rè bòg

**toilet** *Noun* àgùm əʃib

**tomorrow** *Adverb* pí<sup>4</sup>káj

**tongue** *Noun* àlímíné; àlámíné

**too (also)** *Particle* **mà<sub>1</sub>** additive marker, likely borrowing from Hausa (*mā* ‘too, also’)

**tooth** *Noun* **àfàg**

**toothblade** *Noun* **ɔ́á fàg** the part of a tooth that can be considered its blade.

**TOP** *Particle* **ɔ́ē** A question-like marker that topicalizes the event or object described by sentence it is postposed to. In English, it can be paraphrased as "What about X?", X being this event or object. Such topicalization often occurs as a cohesive device in storytelling, to tie the discourse together. When used in natural interaction, it also functions as a question marker, pointing the hearer to an entity or topic he has neglected in his discourse.

**torn** *Adjective* **gím á 'jí**

**tortoise** *Noun* **àkùr**

**touch** *Verb* **tàb**

**tough** *Adjective* **ɬíɬfár** e.g. of a vein in meat

**town** *Noun* **àṅgwóg ébōrī** large town, city

**traditional bell** *Noun* **tàṅà** bell used in traditional dances

**traditional chief** *Noun* **àbēní** lit. the owner of people

**traditional king** *Noun* **àbēní** lit. the owner of people

**traditional rattle** *Noun* **ɬíɬfág** traditional rattle used in traditional dances

**trail** *Noun* **ásúrá** (tone is uncertain)

**trample** *Verb* **nìgí** to trample someone or something (tone is uncertain)

**tree** *Noun* **bèr**

**tree trunk** *Noun* **kpò bèr**

**tree, sp.** *Noun* **àbitfè** an unidentified tree that looks similar to the kiriya tree or iron wood tree; **ɬíɬfág** iron wood tree, African mesquite, or iron tree. It is called kiriya in Hausa; **m̀kpòkéróg** an unidentified type of tree that is used for making traditional toothbrushes. Its Hausa name is dada toka.; **àgbām**; **àvāṅkàṅ**; **séj** A tree that has thorns. It is called kaya in Hausa.; **wéj** A larger shade



tree that grows in the bush. In Hausa it is called kawo.; **àbúrí<sub>2</sub>** A very common tree with black fruit that looks like a bambara nut.

**trousers** *Noun* àɕé

**truth** *Noun* ántēri

**tsetse fly** *Noun* ɕò náǵ

**tsetse fly, sp.** *Noun* vùmvònú

**Tuesday** *Nominal* tàlátà Borrowed from Hausa (Talata) – originally from Arabic at-talaata ‘Tuesday’, literally ‘day the third (starting from Sunday)’

**tumbu fly** *Noun* nìmtím

**turn** *Verb* ɕìbrí

**turn into** *Verb* ɕèrí

**turn off** *Verb* tìksí to turn something off, such as light or fire

**turn off (light)** *Verb* tīgī to turn off light

**turn on light** *Verb* tòksí to turn on the light

**turned off** *Verb* tíg á ‘jí to be turned off

**turtle** *Noun* àkùr

**tuwo** *Noun* àkpò; òkpò

**twelve** *Cardinal numeral* bō gún jírāǵ

**twenty** *Cardinal numeral* àkpó bí; kpējmi

**twenty-one** *Cardinal numeral* kpējmi gún bí

**twin** *Noun* ɕìntāǵ (one of them)

**twist** *Verb* vèr

**two** *Cardinal numeral* jírāǵ

**two hundred** *Cardinal numeral* àkpó bō

**two hundred and thirty** *Cardinal numeral* àkpó bō rē kpēj̄mī gún bō

**two hundred and twenty** *Cardinal numeral* àkpó bō rē kpēj̄mī

**type of drum** *Noun* díg<sub>2</sub>; gìṅgàṅ; t̄ṣì díg

**type of flute** *Noun* gbá a flute used for communication

**type of spear** *Noun* òtén; nòrr (tone is uncertain)

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**udder** *Noun* àvī nág

**ugly** *Adjective* s̄íṣág

**ugly (be ugly)** *Verb* s̄ág to be ugly

**underneath** *Adposition* ñkám

**undress** *Verb* gārí to take off one's clothes, to undress

**unripe** *Adjective* áṣā

**until** *Adposition* sé

**unwrap** *Verb* làrí to unwrap something that is covered with cloth, also to open curtains

**up** *Adposition* àgàṅ

**upper part of foot** *Noun* ñkùm èbòg

**upper teeth** *Noun* àṣàg àgáṅ

**uproot** *Verb* lùb

**uproot (a crop)** *Verb* lùbrí to uproot a crop

**upwards** *Noun* zág áwú

**urinate** *Verb* ṅgub (tone is uncertain)

**urine** *Noun* jù ṅgūbī

**usually** *Adverb* **kpáŋ** (tone is uncertain)

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V v

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**vagina** *Noun* **̀ntfè**

**valley** *Noun* **gbòrù; gbó**

**vein** *Noun* **̀alùkòm wò; ̀ntfí**

**venom** *Noun* **pòm**

**veranda** *Noun* **̀akìmpég** back of the house

**village** *Noun* **̀aŋwí**

**village inside Sarkin Dawa** *Proper Noun* **pjájw**

**voice** *Particle* **bē** presentative demonstrative

**voilà** *Noun* **̀ŋkùròg**

**vomit** *Verb* **gùrì** to vomit *Noun* **̀agùrì**

**vulture** *Noun* **sùrùpáj**

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**wa** *Noun* **̀ntfè**

**wait** *Verb* **̀dòŋ wór**

**wake up** *Verb* **̀dòtí** to wake up

**wake up** *Verb* **jī**

**want** *Verb* **wūrì**

**war, fighting** *Noun* **̀atfè**

**warm** *Adjective* **̀áŋō**

**wart hog** *Noun* **ńtǎ́ńǎ ǎ'ǎé**

**wash** *Verb* **fér**

**wasp** *Noun* **ńvìnvè**

**water** *Noun* **mìńkájá**

**water fetching place** *Noun* **ǎfijè** a water fetching place, such as a river or a lake

**water monitor lizard** *Noun* **ńkómí** West Africa Nile monitor, an aquatic type of monitor lizard that grows to one or two meters in length. It is called water monitor lizard in English by Kam speakers

**water snail** *Noun* **kòńtǎ́ńì** May be a water snail or a land snail

**weak** *Adjective* **kùkkùb** to be weakened

**wear (clothes)** *Verb* **kúb**

**weaver ant** *Noun* **kàtǎ́rì**

**Wednesday** *Nominal* **màjòkàm** Name of Mayo Kam, a Kam village with a market event on Wednesdays.

**weed** *Verb* **bàr** to weed an area, to remove unwanted plants

**weed, sp.** *Noun* **sí** red sorrel, sheep's sorrel, sour weed, field sorrel, a type of weed that is also called yakuwa in Hausa

**week** *Noun* **lùmò**

**welcome** *Phrase* **ńwàńá** (tone is uncertain)

**well** **àbùndù** *Noun*; **ǎám** *Adverb* (tone is uncertain); **ádā** *Adjective*

**west** *Noun* **àlàwàn**

**West Africa Nile monitor** *Noun* **ńkómí** West Africa Nile monitor, an aquatic type of monitor lizard that grows to one or two meters in length. It is called water monitor lizard in English by Kam speakers

**wet** *Adjective* **díddág**

**wetness** *Noun* **àdágí**

**what?** *Interrogative pro-form* **gè<sup>H</sup> ... gì jī** Content interrogative for non-humans

**when** *Particle* **àsūwā** (tone is uncertain); **àsúmà** (tone is uncertain)

**whet a knife** *Verb* **déŋ**

**which** *Interrogative pro-form* **mīnā** interrogative modifier

**whiskers** *Noun* **sírá ŋwé**

**whisper** *Verb* **ɔ̀g** to whisper

**white** *Adjective* **búbbúr; ábūrī**

**white man** *Noun* **àlàsírá**

**whitened** *Verb* **búr á 'jí** to be whitened

**who?** *Interrogative pro-form* **bè<sup>H</sup> ... bì jī**

**wide** *Adjective* **jíjár**

**wide (be wide)** *Verb* **jár** to be or to become wide

**widen** *Verb* **jàrsí** to make something wider

**widen (intransitive)** *Verb* **jár** to be or to become wide

**width** *Noun* **àjári**

**wife** *Noun* **àgbàn**

**wind** *Noun* **àjòb**

**wine** *Noun* **àbàŋ**

**wine kitchen** *Noun* **pàg àbàŋ** literally 'wine kitchen'; a place where alcohol is made, a (small) brewery

**wing** *Noun* **m̀pōm** wing of a bird

**wipe** *Verb* **déŋ**

**wisdom** *Noun* **àtjári**

**wise person** *Noun* **àtjári**

**with** *Adposition* **r̀** comitative preposition, with

**woman** *Noun* **ńí gbàn; àpàgbàn**

**womb** *Noun* **àfù**

**women** *Noun* **ńí gbàn**

**wood** *Noun* **bèr**

**work** **àpág** *Noun*; **ṭúg ó'pág** *Verb*

**world** *Noun* **àjì**

**worm-like insect** *Noun* **lù**

**wound** *Noun* **àjén**

**wrap** *Verb* **vèr**

**wrap something** *Verb* **fàr**

**wrapper** *Noun* **kpá<sub>2</sub>** a colorful piece of clothing worn by women

**wrestle** *Verb* **zàṅ**

**wring out** *Verb* **fam** to wring something out

**wrist** *Noun* **àgbér ó'pé; ànùṅ èpé**

**Wura** *Proper Noun* **wúra**, a Kam village

## Y y

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**yakuwa (Hausa)** *Noun* **sí** red sorrel, sheep's sorrel, sour weed, field sorrel

**yam** *Noun* **àḍú**

**yawn** **ńíṅāmṭí** *Verb*; **àṅámṭí** *Noun*; **ṅàmṭí** *Verb*

**year** *Noun* **àság**

**yes** *Interjection* **m; a** Positive response word.; **o:j**

**yes!** *Interjection* **jáwwà** an exclamation of agreement or delight.



## Appendix: Main consultants

### *Introduction*

Many people helped me to collect the data that formed the basis of the current description. The pool of people I worked with was diverse, including men and women, people from various age groups, and from different religious backgrounds. The people I ended up spending the most time with was heavily skewed, however. Six main consultants are Christian men in their mid to late twenties who finished their secondary education, are comfortable speaking English and who want to continue their studies. The majority of my consultants were part of the Kam royal family, the *ní mfǒ́ †séj* clan. Four main consultants were Muslim. None of my main consultants practices the traditional religion, although I collected some texts from speakers who do. One main consultant is female, but I collected data from other women over the course of my field work. Four main consultants are considered elders in the community.

To provide some relevant background information, but also to duly acknowledge their share of work, I want to briefly discuss the Kam speakers who have worked with me most intensively during the last couple of years. I include some information that may be sociolinguistically relevant or that is important to speakers, such as age, religious background, other languages they speak, and in some cases the clan in which they were born. Many more speakers than I mention here have contributed, and the metadata to the individual recordings mention the speakers that provided them (see also the Acknowledgements at the beginning of this dissertation). Where possible, I also provide the name of the individuals who contributed each example in this grammar.

For each speaker, I include a picture. I took most of these pictures. I asked each speaker for permission to use their picture, and in some cases, speakers provided their own preferred pictures.



### *Isa Sarkin Dawa*

Isa Sarkin Dawa is the head of the Kam district, also considered the political king of the Kam community, and he carries the title *àwàn*. He was born in Fincon in the summer of '69 into the Kam royal family. He was 47 years old when we started working on this grammar book. His birth name is Isa Yakubu Kini and his traditional Kam name is *džúrkàkī*. Isa Sarkin Dawa finished his secondary school and received his diploma for a certificate course in Tractor Operation and Maintaining in Jalingo. His father was the former political king, Yakubu Sarkin Dawa, whom he succeeded in 2014 when he was turbaned by the Emir of Bali. He currently lives in Sarkin Dawa where he exercises his daily responsibilities, mostly from his palace (see pictures in Chapter 1). He practices Islam and his linguistic repertoire includes Kam, Jirim, Hausa and English.

Isa Sarkin Dawa worked with me almost every evening during my first field trip in December 2016 and January 2017 and again during the last field trip in November 2018. We worked on every aspect of the language and culture that found its way in this thesis: vocabulary, basic and more advanced morphosyntax, various texts and history, adding up to 34 sessions. He also provided the ideal conditions under which I could work and gave crucial advice throughout the project about safety and logistics. When necessary, he organized trips from the village to Jalingo, Bali and Sabongida Kamajim.



**Isa Sarkin Dawa**



**Isa Sarkin Dawa**

### ***Babangida Audu***

Babangida Audu was born in Kamajim in 1987. His traditional Kam name is *ni sín rà ní*, possibly translated as ‘thing/person who does [something] with people’, and his nickname among friends is Pharmacy. He was 29 years old when we met and started working on this grammar together. His parents moved to Sarkin Dawa when he was three years old. He completed his secondary school in Garba Chede and studied in Bali to obtain his Computer Training diploma. He lived in Abuja for two years when he was 18 years old and lived in Jalingo for three years in his early twenties. He is a farmer, practices Christianity, and speaks Kam, Hausa and English. The traditional chief in Kamajim and Maigandi Kaigama, the chief of Garba Chede, are his uncles.

Babangida is the person who spent the most time working with me. I collected vocabulary data with him, a few texts and a variety of grammatical data. Babangida features in 85 data collecting sessions in my corpus. He orally annotated a lot of the texts that were used for this project in SayMore, and he provided preliminary written transcriptions for stories and spontaneous conversations. He also helped me get around in Sarkin Dawa and in other Kam villages. When I was in Sarkin Dawa, I stayed at his house during most of the field trips. We spent a lot of time working in Jalingo, where Babangida’s network helped us to settle and travel around the town easily. We occasionally worked remotely through WhatsApp when I was in Europe.



**Babangida Audu**

### *Solomon Ahmadu*

Solomon Ahmadu was born in Sarkin Dawa in 1992. He is part of the royal family and was 24 years old when he started working as my consultant. He finished class three in secondary school and started to work as a carpenter, a trade for which he has traveled around the country. He is also a farmer. In 2018 he married and started a family in Sarkin Dawa. He practices Christianity and his linguistic repertoire includes Kam, Hausa, English and some Jirim.

Solomon started working with me on vocabulary collection and tone analysis in December 2016 and continued to work intensively with me every following visit, visiting Jalingo twice for a few weeks when I could not stay in Sarkin Dawa. We worked on many different aspects of the language, including specific grammatical topics such as comparison, phasal polarity, tense and aspect, reported speech and complex sentences. He features in 36 of the data collection sessions in my corpus. Solomon also helped me by slowly respeaking and translating a number of stories. He showed me around in Sarkin Dawa and in other villages. He accompanied me to other villages for data collection sessions, together with babangida and Danjuma, and he provided assistance with solar energy, generators and other electronic equipment.



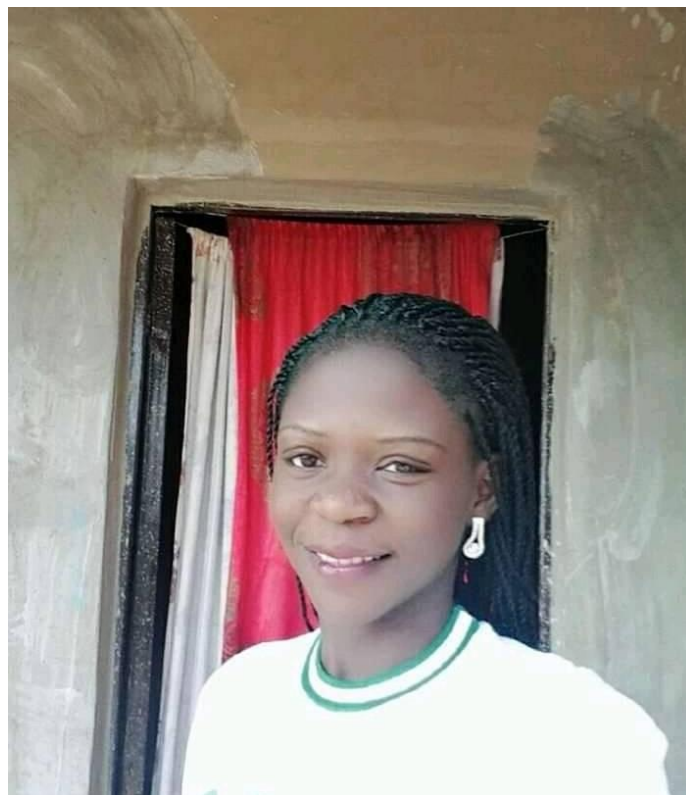
**Solomon Ahmadu**

**(picture provided by Solomon)**

### *Rahab Garba Precious*

Rahab Garba Precious is my main female consultant. She was born in 1993 in Garin Hamza into the royal family and was 25 years old when she began working on this project. She moved to Kaduna and Abuja from ages 10 to 18 to go to school. She completed her NYSC assignment with Taraba TV in Jalingo in 2017 and 2018, after which she stayed in Jalingo to teach at a primary school. Currently, she lives in Gunduma where she helps relatives to take care of their children. She practices Christianity and speaks Kam, Hausa and English.

While Rahab was fulfilling her corper duties for the NYSC, she often came to visit me in Jalingo to work on this project. She spent much of her time translating texts and spontaneous conversation, and helped me with glossing and grammatical analysis based on texts. Her help was invaluable in understanding those topics where contextual data is essential such as information structure and multi-verb constructions. She also helped me understand the history texts that were collected by Babangida from Isa Sarkin Dawa (session\_191) and often helped me through WhatsApp and Facebook messenger when I was not in Nigeria.



**Rahab Garba Precious**

**(Picture provided by Rahab)**

### *Danjuma Bello*

Danjuma Bello was born around 1993 in Sarkin Dawa where he also grew up. He went to school in the Zing College of Education. He is a farmer and a health worker, distributing vaccines every year to remote Kam villages. His father was a traditional doctor, and Danjuma has some knowledge of traditional medicine and what different kinds of plants are used for. He practices Islam and his linguistic repertoire includes Kam, Hausa and English.

Danjuma briefly worked with me the during the first few field trips. He also came to Jalingo to work on this project in May 2018. He worked on various tasks, recording vocabulary data and collecting grammatical data on topics such as complex sentences, numerals and general nominal grammar as well as translating and annotating texts. He provided crucial assistance during interviews and story collecting sessions we conducted in Sabongida Kamajim. Danjuma features in a total of 34 sessions in the corpus.



**Danjuma Bello**

### *Garba Abubakar Bako*

Garba Abubakar Bako was born in 1977 into the Kam royal family as the younger cousin of Isa Sarkin Dawa, the political king. Yakubu Sarkin Dawa, Isa Sarkin Dawa's father, was Abubakar's uncle. When I started working with Abubakar, he was 39 years old. Currently, he is the secretary of the political king. He practices Islam and his linguistic repertoire includes Kam, Hausa, Fulfulde, English and Tiv. He lives in Mayo Kam, where he also grew up.

Garba Abubakar Bako was the first Kam speaker I met. He came to visit when I stayed in Ilorin during my first trip to Nigeria in November 2016 (cf. § 1.5.3) and introduced me to Isa Sarkin Dawa, the political king of Kam, and the Kam community as a whole. When we met in Ilorin, we worked together for 4 days, during which we recorded thirteen sessions on basic vocabulary, basic morphosyntax and basic expressions to prepare me for my trip to the Kam community. Abubakar also provided two short texts which were the first two samples of natural Kam discourse recorded for this project. When I arrived in Jalingo a few days later, he escorted me to the Kam community. His efforts were instrumental to the early progress of this project.



**Garba Abubakar Bako**

### *Muhammad Bose Yuguda*

Muhammad Bose Yuguda was born into the royal family of Kam in 1965 and is the older cousin of the political king, Isa Sarkin Dawa. He was raised in Mayo Kam, finished his secondary school and afterwards added an additional diploma. He currently works as a civil servant in Bali, where he also lives with his two wives and seventeen children. He practices Islam and his linguistic repertoire includes Kam, Hausa, English and

Muhammad was one of the first speakers to volunteer to work with me in the Kam community. After a few vocabulary elicitation sessions in a larger group, we arranged regular one-on-one meetings discussing specific topics. Over the course of a month, Muhammad frequently made time in his busy schedule to visit me in Sarkin Dawa from Bali. We recorded thirteen sessions covering vocabulary, basic clausal grammar, tense, aspect and mood, possession, greetings and basic conversation, and two short texts.



**Muhammad Bose Yuguda**



### *David Duwasam Mamuda*

David Mamuda was born in Sarkin Dawa into the *ní mfó́ + séj* in 1991 and is currently 29 years old. His traditional Kam name is *Dùwásām*. Since he finished his secondary education he often moves between Sarkin Dawa and Jalingo, where he works various jobs. He is currently training to become a professional driver. David practices Christianity and his linguistic repertoire includes Kam, Hausa, English and Jenjo.

David frequently came to visit me in Jalingo. He helped me with tone analysis, elicitation of data on various grammatical topics such as tense, aspect and negation, comparative constructions and the expression of sensations and emotions. He also helped translate and annotate texts, correct vocabulary data in the dictionary, and provided much appreciated logistic support. He also helped me with remote data collection when I was in Europe.



**David Duwasam Mamuda**

**(Picture provided by David)**

### *David Mark*

David Mark (also Markus) was born in Garin Baba in 1995 and is currently 25 years old. He moved between various Kam villages when he was young, living in Garin Hamza when he was 9, then moving to Garin Lah to go to school. After that, when he was 17 years old, he left for Lagos and travelled to Imo State for a year. He went to secondary school in Yorro Local government and finished the rest of his education in Jalingo. His mother was Kam but his father was Hausa and was adopted into different families throughout his youth. He is currently a student, shoemaker and farmer. He practices Christianity and speaks Kam, Hausa and English.

While he was training to become a shoemaker in 2017, David often came to visit me in the evenings in Jalingo. When he came, he helped me to translate and transcribe texts, check my dictionary and elicit data on comparison, tense and aspect.



**David Mark**

**(picture provided by David)**

### *Adamu S. Baka*

Adamu S. Baka was born in Sarkin Dawa in 1957 into the royal family. He is currently 63 years old. He is the maternal nephew of the late political king, Yakubu Sarkin Dawa. Adamu's father was considered the 'king of hunters'. Adamu is the former secretary of the king of Kam. He went to primary school in Garba Chede and continued his studies in Gembu and Jalingo. He obtained his National certificate of education and was head teacher of Sarkin Dawa for a while but currently holds a position as school supervisor in Garba Chede. He practices Christianity. His wife is Wurkun and, apart from Kam, Adamu speaks Jirim, Hausa, English, Fula, Chamba Leko, Mumuye and Wurkun.

In the framework of this project, Adamu taught me the basics of Kam conversation, provided some early texts and worked with me on vocabulary elicitation in December 2016. He features in 11 sessions in the current corpus of Kam.



**Adamu S. Baka**

### *Jauro Babangida Tukura*

Jauro was born in 1984 in Sarkin Dawa, where he was also raised and where he currently lives. He went to school in both Garba Chede and in Jalingo. He finished his secondary school in 2010. He is part of the Kam royal family and is a civil servant and a farmer. He practices Christianity and his linguistic repertoire includes Kam, Hausa, English and Fulfulde.

I met Jauro Babangida Tukura in Sarkin Dawa, where he hosted me during my first trip to the Kam community in November 2016 to January 2017. Jauro allowed me to stay in his newly built house which he had equipped with fans and with connections for a generator. This allowed me to charge my field equipment in the evening. His hospitality made fieldwork in the village much easier. He is a busy man and often travels around various Kam villages, but made time to visit me to work on vocabulary collection and tone analysis. He also showed me around in Abanderi, the village where his wife comes from and was my driver when I travelled to Sabongida Kamajim.



**Jauro Babangida Tukura**



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Jakob LESAGE

## A grammar and lexicon of Kam (àṅwòm), a Niger-Congo language of central eastern Nigeria

### Résumé

Cette thèse fournit la première description détaillée du Kam (àṅwòm), une langue Niger-Congo parlée à Taraba State, dans le centre-est du Nigéria, par environ 8 000 à 10 000 personnes. La thèse propose une analyse de la grammaire et du lexique du Kam, informée par la typologie et la linguistique aréale, et contribue ainsi à notre compréhension de la structure grammaticale des langues Niger-Congo. Cette description est basée sur des nouvelles données linguistiques récoltées dans la communauté Kam entre 2016 et 2018. Elle se compose de six parties : (1) introduction, (2) analyse phonologique, (3) morphosyntaxe nominale, (4) morphosyntaxe verbale, (5) morphosyntaxe des propositions et (6) un échantillon de texte et un lexique composé de 1550 entrées. Les caractéristiques du Kam qui peuvent être d'un intérêt particulier pour la linguistique africaine et la linguistique générale comprennent les plosives labio-vélaires *kp* et *gb* ; une différence prosodique entre les positions fortes et les positions faibles dans les thèmes prosodiques ; la morphologie tonale utilisée pour la dérivation et pour la flexion ; l'absence de classes nominales et du genre grammatical ; des pronoms logophoriques ; les STAMP-morphs (des morphèmes qui expriment simultanément la personne et le nombre grammatical du sujet, le temps, l'aspect et la polarité d'une proposition) ; les constructions multi-verbes ; des stratégies de reduplication verbale ; la négation de la proposition finale ; et les interrogatives de contenu bipartite. Les Kam et leur langue font partie du paysage linguistique et culturel diversifié du nord-est et du centre-est du Nigéria. A ce jour, on classifie le Kam comme une langue isolée dans la sous-famille Adamawa du Niger-Congo. Cependant, comme l'unité généalogique des langues Adamawa n'est plus largement acceptée aujourd'hui, la classification du Kam et des autres langues devra être révisée. Bien que cette thèse ne traite pas la classification de Kam, elle fournit les données grammaticales et lexicales indispensables pour toute comparaison entre le Kam et d'autres langues et familles de langues.

**Mots-clés** grammaire, langues africaines, langues Adamawa, prosodie, ton, morphologie tonale, pronoms logophoriques, reduplication

### Résumé en anglais

This thesis is the first extensive description of Kam (àṅwòm), a Niger-Congo language spoken in Taraba State, central eastern Nigeria, by an estimated 8,000 to 10,000 people. It offers a typologically and areally informed analysis of the grammar and lexicon of Kam, thereby advancing our understanding of the grammatical structure of Niger-Congo languages. This description is based on novel linguistic data collected in the Kam community between 2016 and 2018. There are six parts: (1) introduction, (2) phonological analysis, (3) nominal morphosyntax, (4) verbal morphosyntax, (5) clausal morphosyntax and (6) a sample of text and a lexicon with approx. 1,550 entries. Features of Kam that may be particularly interesting for African and general linguistics include labial-velar stops *kp* and *gb*; a difference between prosodically strong and prosodically weak positions in prosodic stems; tonal morphology used for both derivation and inflection; the absence of noun classes or gender; logophoric pronominals; STAMP-morphs; multi-verb constructions; verbal reduplication strategies; clause-final negation and bipartite content interrogatives. The Kam community and their language are part of the linguistically and culturally diverse landscape of north-east and central-east Nigeria. Previous research classified Kam as an isolated language within the Adamawa sub-family of Niger-Congo, whose genealogical unity is no longer widely accepted. Therefore, the classification of Kam and other languages should be reviewed. While classification is not addressed in this thesis, it provides grammatical and lexical data indispensable for any comparison between Kam and other languages and lineages.

**Keywords** kdx, Kam, Nyingwom, grammar, African languages, Nigeria, Niger-Congo, Adamawa languages, prosody, tone, tonal morphology, logophoric pronouns, serial verb constructions, reduplication, clause-final negation