'The ground can be slippery (therefore be aware!).'

As the above example shows, the suffix -érë is not restricted to transitive verbs; cf. also the following example:

én tů̀ he is sick'

vs.

én tìè kà tů̀- rè.

3.SG PROG be.sick.INF- REFL

'He's becoming sick.'

6 The adverbial phrase
Adverbial phrases consist either of a combination of a preposition plus noun (6.1) or an adverb (6.2). The former is preferentially placed clause-finally while adverbs are highly variable in their placement. There is some freedom in the placement of prepositional phrases relative to each other:

gün ścièhë bóth- ē k- ścièkà.

3.PL 3.go.PFV PREP- 3.SG.POSS PREP- car

or

gün ścièhë k- ścièkà bóth- ē.

3.PL 3.go.PFV PREP- car PREP- 3.SG.POSS

'They went to him with a car.'

6.1 Prepositions
We will distinguish loosely between primary and complex prepositions.

6.1.1 Primary prepositions
They consist of one morpheme, they are, with one exception, monosyllabic and express most of all basic concepts of spatial, temporal or logical orientation. We found the following items in our database:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preposition</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Main functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bóth</td>
<td>'to'</td>
<td>direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>´i</td>
<td>'in, at'</td>
<td>location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>´mé</td>
<td>'for'</td>
<td>benefactive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ká</td>
<td>'at, like'</td>
<td>location, similarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kù</td>
<td>'with, from'</td>
<td>comitative, instrumental, source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kèd, kèd</td>
<td>'with'</td>
<td>comitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mè, mè</td>
<td>'for'</td>
<td>purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nálkà</td>
<td>'until'</td>
<td>time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mì</td>
<td>'for'</td>
<td>benefactive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pì(r)</td>
<td>'for, because of'</td>
<td>purpose, reason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yó</td>
<td>'to'</td>
<td>direction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The prepositions both, ´mé, kèd and kèd, mè(g), and pì(r) are noun-like in taking possessive person markers:

1.SG  kèd-á  or  kèd-á 'with me'
2.SG  kèd-ì  or  kèd-ì 'with you'

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3.SG këd é or këd ë "with him, her"

1.EX këd wá or këd wá "with us"

1.IN këd önù or këd önù "with us"

2.PL këd wù or këd wù "with ye"

1.SG këd gi or këd gi "with them"

Note that the prepositions mé(g) and pu(r) end in a consonant when followed by a suffix (i.e. with singular person markers) while elsewhere the consonant disappears, e.g.,

1.SG mëg-á "for me" or "mine"

2.SG mëg-i

3.SG mëg-é

1.EX mé wá

1.IN mé önù

2.PL mé wù

3.PL mé gi

Otherwise, it is the object personal pronouns rather than subject pronouns that are used as complements of prepositions. Thus, in the following example it is the object pronoun gi rather than the subject pronoun (gñ or gññ) that appears after the benefactive preposition nà

wékóbò nì gi nì ìkël gíni ròm
1.EX.tell.PFV PREP 3.PL.O COMPL 3.bring.SUBJ 3.PL.S sheep 'We told them to bring sheep.'

Prepositions are as a rule restricted to occurring next to their nominal or pronominal complement, cf. (1), but there are also examples of stranding e.g. in a cleft construction (2).⁶

(1) ônêkô dîél mè nô? mè âcâmâ.

3.kill.PFV goat PREP what PREP eating 'What did he kill the goat for? For eating.'

(2) nô mà ân ônêkô ki dîél? ki mè pâlâ.

what RFI. 3.SG 3.kill.PFV PREP goat PREP knife 'What did he kill the goat with? With a knife.'

Examples

'î 'in, at'

This is a general preposition which, depending on the context, can express a range of locative and other concepts. The following example illustrates a typical context:

güëmb tiê ì èt wá.

chicken be PREP house 1.EX.POSS 'There is a chicken in our house.'

ki 'with, from'

kôr sô ga wù nú dòk ki lûth!

NEG.IMP 2.hit.SUBJ 2.PL.S cattle PREP stick 'Don't beat the cows with a stick!'

⁶ The preposition appears to cliticize on the verb in this example, as is suggested by the fact that it occurs between the verb and the direct object.
èn òbinò kí kámpála
3.SG 3.come.PFV  PREP Kampala
‘He came from Kampala.’

kòd, kòd ‘with’

Like kò, kòd and kòd present comitative participles, but where kò takes nominal ones, the
latter take pronominal participants:

èn tiyò kí món.
3.SG  work.IMV  PREP women
‘He works with the women.’

kór ícúcém kòd ‘wá!’
NEG.IMP 2.eat.AP  PREP 1.EX
‘Don’t eat with us!’

cf. also:

lèc dít nà róm kí òt.
elephant be.big REL be.like PREP house
‘An elephant is as big as a house.’

vs.

àn àúdí nà róm kód- è.
1.SG 1.SG.be.small REL be.like PREP- 3.SG
‘I am as small as he is.’

mé ‘for’
ënèkò diël mé nyé? mé àcàmà.

5.kill.PFV goat PREP what PREP eating
'What did he kill the goat for? For eating.'

diégi 'nón óbedo mé jò wà.
goats HEA 3.be.PFV PREP people 1.EX.POSS
'Those goats belong to our people.'

nákà 'until'

kòr nákà kòth òcùél
'wait until rain 3.rain.PFV
'Wait until it rains!'

nì, iné 'for'

én ókèlò nì dhákò pì.

or

én ókèlò iné dhákò pì.
3.SG 3.bring.PFV PREP woman water
'He brought water for the woman.'

pì 'for'

én tuyò pì ñikonei mere.
3.SG work.IMV PREP friends 3.SG
'He works for his friends.'
yó 'to'

óntú čidhò yó kàmpála.

1.IN 1.PL-go.IMV PREP Kampala
'We went to Kampala'

6.1.2 Complex prepositions
They are morphologically complex, consisting of a primary preposition, typically à, plus another element that is almost invariably a grammaticalized noun. We found the following prepositions in our data collection:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preposition</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Nominal source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>̀kóm</td>
<td>‘about’</td>
<td>‘body’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>̀ṛè</td>
<td>‘behind’</td>
<td>‘back’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>̀ṛèt</td>
<td>‘beside, next to’</td>
<td>‘side, flank’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>̀nyím</td>
<td>‘in front of’</td>
<td>‘face, front’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>̀tièn, ̀thè</td>
<td>‘under’</td>
<td>‘leg’, ‘foot’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>̀wi</td>
<td>‘above, on top of’</td>
<td>‘head’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pàth kì, pàth kà,</td>
<td>‘instead of’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pàth ᵇ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yó kù</td>
<td>‘towards’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Personal pronominal complements are generally coded as possessive attributes:
`i njè-á ‘behind me’

`i njèt-f ‘next to you’

`i nyím și ‘in front of them’

**Examples**

kúr itúán i'kóm gën.

NEG.IMP 2.talk.SUBJ about thing.PROX

‘Don’t talk about this thing!’

gwèn tië `i tiën yâth.

chicken.PL be under tree

‘The chicken are under the tree.’

äyä k- aëthin ènë òbínò pàth i aëthin.

mother POSS- child FOC 3.come.PFV instead child

‘It was the child’s mother who came instead of the child.’

The extension of an activity in space or time is expressed by the construction ànikà kà ... nàkà ‘from ... to’:

òcùdlù ò ànikà k- òbínì nàkà mùróùù.

3.go PFV from Abim to Moroto

‘He went from Abim to Moroto.’

òbèdò ànikà k- òdíkò nàkà k- òtháênò.

3.bc.PFV from morning to evening

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'He stayed from morning to evening.'

Alternatively, kiri nàkà t'from ... to' is used:

kiri kàny nàkà t' from here to church be far
' It is far from here to the church.'

6.2 Adverbs

The following is a list of common adverbs:

ànikà 'ever since'
ctén 'behind, last'
dò 'now'
kékén 'only'
kàny-àcfèl 'together'
kòdikò 'in the morning'
nàkàjìni 'usually'
thòu 'also'
tín 'today'
wòró 'yesterday'
yám 'long ago'

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A distinct subset of adverbs is formed by relativizing verbs and adjectives:

bër.       'It is good.'

èt nà bër    'a good house'

òbèdò     nà bër.
3.SG.be.PFV REL be.good
'It has become good.'

kwàr       'It is red.'

òbèdò     nà kwàr.
3.SG.cook.PFV REL be.red
'He cooked it red.'

Adverbs form a word category that shows the least constraints on ordering. For example, the adverb wòrò 'yesterday' can be placed clause-finally, clause-initially, or between the verb and the object:

(àn) ànènò gwòk wòrò    'I didn't see the dog yesterday'

wòrò (àn) ànènò gwòk .

(àn) ànènò wòrò gwòk.

In a similar fashion, òdô 'now' can occur in essentially any position except between the tense or aspect marker and the main verb (òdò):
a koth dō tie kà cuè. 'It is raining now.'

b koth tie dō kà cuè.

c koth tie kà cuè dō.

d koth tie kà dō cuè.

There are, however, a few restrictions of occurrence on a number of adverbs, which appear to be lexically determined.

7 Derivation

We have seen a few derivational mechanisms in the preceding chapters, e.g. the ability to derive antipassive and anticausative verbs from transitive verbs. The following are a few additional examples of derivation.

One mechanism concerns the prefixes ő- (masc) and ő- (fem) which are employed productively for gender distinctions in personal names and other nouns (Storch 2006: 104). These prefixes serve to form nouns from different word categories, including adverbs (1) and interrogative pronouns (2), even if this derivation is of limited productivity.

(1) cién 'behind, last' ő-cién (masc.), à-cién (fem.)

'the last born of twins'

(2) kwènè 'where?' ő-kwènè (masc.), à-kwènè (fem.)

'a person from where?'

Abstract nouns are mostly formed by using the infinitive verb stem, while agent nouns use the prefix ő- in the singular and ő-/ő- in the plural, e.g.,

fedò 'to cook'
tèdò  'cooking'

à-tèdò, PL è-tèdò  'a cook'

The following is a list of verbs and their derivations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal meaning</th>
<th>Abstract noun</th>
<th>Agent noun (<em>someone who X</em>)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'eat (tr.)'</td>
<td>è-kùò</td>
<td>à-kùò, è-kùò</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'steal'</td>
<td>è-lùàkò</td>
<td>à-lùàkò, è-lùàkò</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'wash (tr.)'</td>
<td>è-mòèhò</td>
<td>à-mòèhò, è-mòèhò</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 'drink (water)'
| è-ñèèhò       | à-ñèèhò, è-ñèèhò          |
| 'see'          | è-ñèèhò       | à-ñèèhò, è-ñèèhò              |
| 'know'         | è-ñèèhò       | à-ñèèhò, è-ñèèhò              |
| 'run'          | è-ñèèhò       | à-ñèèhò, è-ñèèhò              |
| 'cook'         | è-ñèèhò       | à-ñèèhò, è-ñèèhò              |
| 'speak'        | è-ñèèhò       | à-ñèèhò, è-ñèèhò              |
| 'be sick'      | è-ñèèhò       | à-ñèèhò, è-ñèèhò              |
| 'cough'        | è-ñèèhò       | à-ñèèhò, è-ñèèhò              |

8 Pragmatic functions

8.1 Topic

Sentence subjects are normally topics and topics are as a rule not specially marked. They can however be marked by placing topical non-subject participants sentence-initially:

à-thîn àtèè kà anîèl këkèn.

child 1.SG.be with one only

'A child I have only one.'
'I have one child.'

Frontshifting to the sentence-initial position can be accompanied by the use of the question marker -ŋ (which is reduced to a rising tone when the sentence ends in a vowel; see 9.3.1):

dhiŋ-ŋ atháəí ní ókélo ónèkò òkò.

cow- Q 1.SG.think.IMV COMPL Okelo 3.kill.PFV completely

'The cow, I think Okelo has killed it.'

A representative topic can be expressed by means of the stem gí(ŋ)- plus an appropriate possessive person marker:

1.SG án gí- 'á 'as for me'

2.SG èn gí- 'í

3.SG èn gí- 'è

1.EX wán gí 'wá

1.IN ónú gí- 'ónú

2.PL wúm gí- 'wú

3.PL gím gí- 'gí

This stem is placed after the topicalized constituent:

dhákò gír- è bà ñéò.
woman TOP- 3.SG.POSS NEG know.IMV
'As for the woman, she doesn't know.'

áu gú- 'á bá àjéó µiò Étnó.
1 SG TOP- 1.SG NEG 1.SG.know.IMV why 3.come
'As for me, I don't know why he comes.'

8.2 Focus
Focus constituents, expressing new information, are marked by the particle ëné placed after the constituent:

dhákó ñéó.
woman know.IMV
'The woman knows it.'

vs.

dhákó ëné ñéó.
woman FOC know.IMV
'It is the woman who knows it.'

Instead of ëné, ë is sometimes used:

b̄j̄ ëné gín 'cámó. or b̄j̄ ë gín 'cámó.

b̄j̄ FOC 3.PL eat.IMV
'It is b̄j̄ vegetable that they eat.'

The focus marker is not restricted to the position after the focalized noun but rather appears at the end of the focus noun phrase, e.g.,
róm kékén énè òbindó.
sheep.PL only FOC 3.come.PLV
'It is only the sheep that came.'

Focus participants may in addition be highlighted by an intensifier, as in the following example:

án kí kóm- à énè áyábó dhógálá.
1.SG PREP body- 1.SG FOC 1.SG.open.IMV door
'It is I myself who opens the door.'

Rather than focusing the preceding constituent, énè can sometimes be interpreted as having a copula-like function. Thus, the focus marker in (1) is roughly equivalent to the copula in (2):

(1) dhákó ná èn ṣjéó énè dhákó ná.
woman REL 3.SG know.IMV FOC woman POSS.1.SG
'The woman he knows is my wife.'

(2) dhákó ná èn ṣjéó óbédó dhákó ná.
woman REL 3.SG know.IMV 3.SG.be woman POSS.1.SG
'The woman he knows is my wife.'

9 Other domains
9.1 Predicative possession
As in other languages, have'-possession (X has Y), where the possessor is topical and typically definite, receives an entirely different expression than belong'-possession, where it is the possessee that is topical while the possessor is normally indefinite. The former is coded by means of a comitative construction using ìbó kí 'be with' as the predicate. The construction has a wide range of applications, being used not only for permanent possession but also for inalienable (kinship) possession, as in (1), or animative possession, where the possessor is non-human, cf. (2):

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(1) (án) àtiè k- áthin àciél.
   1.SG 1.SG.be with- child one
   'I have one child.'

(2) ót cè tìè kí dhógàë årò.
   house DIST be with door.PL two
   'That house has two doors.'

Instead of kí, the directional preposition bòth 'to' is found in the following example:

àjeò ècòó ná dhíàñ n- òthò wòò
   1.SG.know.IMV man REL cow REL- 3.die.PFL yesterday

ni tìè bòth- è.
   PROX be PREP- 3.SG.POSS
   'I know the man who has a cow which died yesterday.'

Since the negative counterpart of tìè 'be, exist' is pé 'not to be, be absent', tìè can be replaced by pé in negative possession, although this is not a requirement, as the following examples illustrate:

án bá àtiè kí gójùnà.
   1.SG NEG 1.SG.be with chicken
or
án até pé kí gójùnà.
   1.SG 1.SG.NEG be with chicken

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'Belong'-possession is coded by a predicate consisting of the copula bëdô and the purpose preposition më'for', thus literally translatable as 'Y is for X', e.g.,

\[
\text{dëgë} \ \text{hôn} \ \text{bëdô} \ \text{më} \ \text{jo} \ \text{wá}.
\]

\[
\text{goats} \ \text{HFA} \ 3 	ext{ be PFV} \ \text{PREP} \ \text{people} \ 1 \ \text{EX.PROSS}
\]

'Those goats belong to our people.'

We have presented pronominal forms of belong-possession in section 5.2.4, which are constructed with the "inalienable" set of person markers postposed to the prepositional root më(g)-, e.g.,

\[
\text{bëdô} \ \text{mëg-á}.
\]

\[
3 	ext{ be PFV PREP- 1 SG}
\]

'It is mine.'

9.2 Comparison
Both equative and simulative propositions tend to be coded by means of the verb cålô 'be like, resemble':

\[
\text{lièc} \ \text{dit} \ \text{cålô} \ \text{3t}.
\]

\[
\text{elephant} \ \text{be.big} \ \text{be.like} \ \text{house}
\]

'An elephant is as big as a house.'

\[
\text{gùn} \ \text{viènô} \ \text{cålô} \ \text{guôniu}.
\]

\[
3 \text{ PL.} \ \text{eat IMV AIP} \ \text{be like} \ \text{dogs}
\]

'They eat like dogs.'

Alternatively, the verb rôn kô 'be equal with' is used:
 goat be.big REL be.equal with sheep
'A goat is as big as a sheep.'

For comparisons of inequality (X is Y or than Z) there are two constructions. Both involve the use of the verb l5 'surpass, defeat' as a marker of standard of comparison and both present the standard as an object argument. They differ in that either

(a) the "predicate" (is Y) is introduced as an adjective or stative verb which constitutes the first verb in a serial verb construction, or

(b) l5 is the only verb and the "predicate" is presented in a prepositional phrase as a nominalized verb introduced by the preposition kI

Examples

(a) b6o6 c6a dit lb- a bko.

man DIST be.big surpass 1.SG.O completely

or

(b) b6o6 c6a lb- 'a kI dit6o.

man DIST surpass 1.SG.O PREP bigness

'That man is clearly bigger than I.'

When (b) is used, the nominalized verb may be the copula b6d6 and the "predicate" presented as an adverb of the copula verb b6d6:

(b) ën lb- 'a kI b6d6 na t6di.

3.SG surpass- 1.SG PREP being REL be.small

or
én lọ 'á lá tìmò.
3.SG surpass- 1.SG PREP smallness
'She is smaller than I.'

15 is a lexical verb when not preceded by another verb.

That 15 is not fully grammaticalized as a standard marker is suggested by the fact that, in accordance with its lexical semantics of 'surpass, defeat', it can take only standard participants that are higher in value than the theme participant, not lower. Utterances such as the following are therefore not well-formed:

within cà tijdí 15- à.
child DIST be.small surpass- 1.SG.O
'That child is smaller than I.'

However, this behavior was not shared by all of our consultants, one of them found the following sentence to be acceptable:

dhiây tijdí 15 liệc.
cow be.small surpass elephant
'A cow is smaller than an elephant.'

That (a) has most properties of a serial verb construction can be seen in the following example, where both verbs have the same subject agreement markers:

án ạthùnẹ ạlọ́í.
1.SG 1.SG be.big 1.SG.surpass.2.SG.O
'I am bigger than you.'
There are two constructions used to express the notion of a superlative:

(a) Either by using the serial verb construction and simply omitting the standard, that is, by using the verb ló without a complement, e.g.,

liée thòonè ló.
elphant be.big surpass
'The elephant is the biggest.'

án àtìdi áló.
1.SG 1.SG.be.small 1.SG.surpass
'I am the smallest.'

(b) Or by presenting the theme participant as a focus constituent introduced by éné (see chapter 8):

liée éné thòonè.
elphant FOC be.big
'The elephant is the biggest.'

án éné àtìdi.
1.SG FOC 1.SG.be.small
'I am the smallest.'

9.3 Questions

9.3.1 Polar questions

Polar (yes-no) questions are coded by the sentence final suffix ñ:

én bèr. 'He is good.'
ókèlò tìè kàny. 'Okelo is here.'

ókèlò tìè kàny-ì? 'Is Okelo here?'

rómó gìn tìè bédò kàny-ì ẹnyò cídhó gìn pàcì? should 3.PL be.INF here- Q or go 3.PL home

'Should they stay here or go home?'

However, the use of the suffix is relatively infrequent, for the following reason: The majority of syllables in Labwor are open, and the suffix appears only after a consonant; when an utterance ends in a vowel, the suffix is replaced by a rising tone on the final vowel, e.g.,

gin tìè kà-cà. 'They are there.'

gin tìè kà-cà. 'Are they there?'

éì òbèdò dhàkì? pé, bì òbèdò dhàkì. 3.SG 3.be.PFV woman.Q no NEG 3.be.PFV woman

'Is she a woman? No she isn't.'

dhàkì nì žè? òù, dhàkì žè. woman PROX know.IMV.Q yes woman know.IMV

'Does this woman know it? Yes, the woman knows it.'

The question particle is also used in some non-interrogative constructions, namely with topic constituents (see 8.1) and in conditional protasis clauses (see 10.2.3).
9.3.2 Word questions
The following question words were found:

à ṣúò            'what kind of?'
ìwènè            'when?'
kwenè, kanyá, kanyé  'where?'
mènè              'which?'
ù, PL jò mènè    'who?'
ùó                'what?'
ùò, pùùó        'why?'

Two of these question words, à yò and mènè, are nominal attributes while all others are pronouns having clausal participant status.

9.3.2.1 Nominal attributes
Noun phrases containing question words as attributes are placed sentence-finally in their basic arrangement, cf. (1); however, quite commonly they appear sentence-initially, in which case they take the form of cleft constructions with the main predication being encoded as a relative clause, cf. (2):

(1)  `mènè    yàth    mènè?
     2.SG.sec.IMV tree which
   or
(2)  yàth   mènè n- `mènò?
     tree which REL- 2.SG.sec.IMV
'Which tree do you see?'

The question word mënë is a nominal attribute that is placed after the noun. It occurs most frequently with the noun jɔ 'person, people', e.g.,

jɔ mënë n- obino?

people which REL 3.come.PFV

'Who (PL) have come?'

The question word â jɔ 'what kind of?' contains a linking particle â (presumably a short form of the relativizer nà; see 10.2) which is occasionally dropped so that the question word is simply jɔ. The following examples illustrate both the basic sentence-final (1) and the sentence-initial position (2).

(1) gîntêdô 'clêm â jɔ?
      3.PL cook.IMV food what.kind.of

(2) 'clêm â jɔ â gîntêdô?
      food what.kind.of REL 3.PL cook.IMV

or

'clêm jɔ nà gîntêdô?
      food what.kind.of REL 3.PL cook.IMV

'What kind of food do they cook?'

9.3.2.2 Pronouns
Like the interrogative attributes discussed above, interrogative pronouns are placed clause-finally. However, the pronouns can also be frontshifted, in which case they are treated either as focus constituents or as heads of relative clauses, and in both cases the main predication is
introduced by a relative clause. The relative clause marker นั่ร tends to be reduced to -à in such cases.

kwènè, kányà, or kányè  ‘where?’

én tiè kányè?
3.SG be where
'Where does he live?'

นั่, PL จ่อ mènè ‘who?’

นั่ น่ น่èè?  dhàkó น่èè.

or

นั่- ่ะ น่èè?  dhàkó น่èè.

who- RFL. know IMV woman know IMV
'Who knows it? The woman knows it.'

นั่ น่ ่èèè?

who REL 2.SG 2.SG.see.PFV
'Who do you see?'

ง่อ mènè น่ ่èèè?

who.PL REL 2.SG 2.SG.see.PFV
'Who (PL) do you see?'

ง่อ what?

gin càmò ง่อ?
3.PL cat.IMV what
or

ŋò nà ĝin câmò?

what REL 3.PL eat.IMV

"What do they eat?"

ŋò 'why?'

àthǐn kókó ŋò?

child cry.IMV why

or

ŋò n- àthǐn kókó?

why REL- child cry.IMV

"Why does the child cry?"

plŋò why?"

ën óbinò plŋò?

3.SG 3.come.PFV why

or

plŋò n- ën óbinò?

why REL- 3.SG 3.come.PFV

"What did she come for?"

As we saw in section 6.1.1, there are occasionally instances of preposition stranding, whereby the question is placed sentence-initially while its preposition immediately follows the verb:

ŋò nà ën óńèkò lì dièl? lì pàlả.

what REL 3.SG 3.kill.PFV PREP goat PREP knife

"What did he kill the goat with? With a knife."
10 Clause combining

10.1 Coordination
Clause coordination need not, and frequently does not involve any linking device, even if it is always possible to use one:

gin tô kà- cà èntò an attè kàny.

or

gin tô kà- cà an attè kàny.

3.PL be LOC- DIST but 1.SG 1.SG.be here

They are there but I am here.

The following are the main coordinating conjunctions that are distinguished:

èká    'and'
èntò   'but'
ènyò   'or'

Examples

môn èkèdò bòò èká àcàmò.

women 3.cook.PFV box and 1.SG.eat.PFV

' The women cooked box vegetable and I ate it.'

rómò gńù bédò kàny- yi ènyò ćiiddó gńù pác̱5?

OBL 3.PL be.INF here- Q or go 3.PL home

"Should they stay here or go home?"
Noun phrase conjoining 'and' is commonly achieved by the phrase *gĩn kir* 'they with':

 eve ko gĩn ki dhákọ ̀dácú obẹdọ ̀gĩn jịaábúún.
man and woman all 3.be PFV 3.PLS Labwor 'The man and the woman are both Labwor.'

The alternative noun phrase conjunctions are *bọnyọ* and *kàdè'or*:

ìmítọ̀ ̀cáf kàdè pì ̀y?
2.SG.want.IMV tea or water.Q 'Do you want tea or coffee?'

10.2 Subordination

10.2.1 Relative clauses

The general marker of relative clauses is *ná*, which is placed between the head noun and the relative clause. Since relativization is a central strategy for expressing a variety of different functions, *ná* belongs to the most frequently used grammatical particles of the language. For example, relativization is used to present adjectives (1), verbs (2), preposed question words (3) and other constituents signaling new information.

(1) pì ná bèr
water REL be.good 'good water'

(2) dhiañ n- èkùalọ
cow REL 3.steal.PFV.AC 'a stolen cow'

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(3) ṭò n à’thìn kòkò?

why REL- child cry.IMV

'Why does the child cry?'

As the examples above show, the relative marker nà is reduced to n- preceding vowels. On the other hand, it is also shortened to ń in frequently used collocations, such as in common noun–adjective combinations, e.g.,

èthìnò nà títíné 'small children'

or èthìnò à títíné

children REL- small PL.

Other than the relative particle nà, no marking is required to present relative clauses. However, when the head noun is coreferential with the object argument of the relative clause, there usually is a bracketing structure in that the relative clause takes the proximal demonstrative nì as a final marker:

èt nà ńgërò nì dit.

house REL 3.build.PFV PROX be.big

'The house that he built is big.'

ńtíè kà nèn- ńthìn nà tùò nì?

2.PROG INF- child REL bc.sick PROX

'Do you see the sick child?'

But the use of nì does not appear to be obligatory, it is not found in examples such as the following:

dhákò nà èn ńēò ńbèdò dhákò nà.
woman REL 3.SG know.IMV 3.bc.PFV woman POSS.1.SG
'The woman that he knows is my wife.'

mán énè 'áthún nà ám n̂ āmyó clém.
PRON PROX FOC child REL 1.SG 1.SG.give.PFV food
'This is the child whom I gave food.'

Relative clauses can be used recursively; that is, one relative clause can be embedded in another:

 rèn̂ có ée̓ có nà d̂ hí̊ n̂ 3.̄hò wò̓
1.SG.know.IMV man RFI. cow REL- 3.die.PFV yesterday

n̂ ti̓ cè bòt- è.
PRON he PRFP- 3.SG POSS
'I know the man who has a cow which died yesterday.'

The head noun phrase of the main clause can be coreferential with an adjunct (1) or a possessive modifier (2) of the relative clause:

(1) mán énè ée̓ có ná án ĥ wóthó kèd- è
PRON.PROX FOC man REL 1.SG 1.SG.walk.IMV PREP- 3.PG.POSS
'This is the man with whom I walk.'

(2) mán énè 'l̂ dhákó n̂ ámènò
PRON.PROX FOC man REL 1.SG.see.IMV

át̂ hún mèrè wò̓
child 3.SG.POSS yesterday

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This is the woman whose child I saw yesterday.'

Headless relative clauses are presented primarily by means of question words (see section 9.3), such as ṭẹ́rẹ̀ 'what?', ṽára 'where?', ọ̀wé́nè ‘when?’, with clause-final ṭé as a boundary marker. The question word may be followed by a relative clause marker, cf. (1), but this is not always the case, cf. (2).

(1) bá ọ́jọ́ ọ̀wé́nè nà ẹ́n bínó ṭéyé.
   NEG 1.SG.know when REL 3.SG come.IMV PTC
   'I don't know when he'll come.'

(2) bá ọ́jọ́ káhá ẹ́n tié ṭéyé.
   NEG 1.SG.know where 3.SG be PTC
   'I don't know where he lives.'

10.2.2 Complement clauses

Complement clause and main clause may simply be juxtaposed, especially when subject complements are involved, where the connection is achieved by some coreferential pronoun, e.g.,

bá ọ́kọ́nyọ́ ọ́jú kẹ́yì ì́rù ọ́mọ̀ ní ń gá rúkì.
   NEG 3.help.PFV child 3.SG.POSS PRON- HEA be.bad very
   'That he didn't help his child is very bad.'

But in general, complement clauses are introduced by the complementizer ní(COMPL):

àmútíí ní ẹ́n ọ́kọ́nyọ́ wá.
   1.SG want.IMV COMPL 3.SG 3.help.SUBJ 1.EX
   'I want him to help us (both you and me).'

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children know.IMV COMPL 3.PL be.sick.IMV
'The children know that they (not they themselves) are sick.'

wékóbò ní gi ní òkêl gini róm.
1.EX.tell.PFV PREP 3.PL.O COMPL 3.bring.SUBJ 3.PL.S sheep.PL
'We told them to bring sheep.'

10.2.3 Adverbial clauses
Adverbial clauses can as a rule be both postposed and preposed to the main clause:

ömòdhò pi nábárá ócídhò.
3.drink.PFV water before 3.go.PFV

or

nábárá ócídhò òmòdhò pi.
before 3.go.PFV 3.drink.PFV water
'The drank water before he left.'

én bá òbinò pièn óníọnò túò.
3.SG NEG 3.come.PFV because PAST be.sick.IMV

or

pièn óníọnò túò òmùyò
because PAST be.sick.IMV 3.cause.PFV

én bá òbinò.
3.SG NEG 3.come PFV
'She couldn't come because she was sick.'
The conjunction *ndakó ‘until’ can introduce temporal clauses either directly or as a preposition of the noun *wáj ‘time'; in the latter case the subordinate clause is coded as a relative clause:

3. *eat PFV AP until 1 SG *come PFV
'He ate until I came.'

en ciémó ndakó wáj n- ábinó.
3.SG *eat.IMV.AP until time REL- 1.SG *come.PFV
'He will eat until I have come.'

Cause and reason clauses are coded by means of the conjunctions *pién ‘because’ and *pijó ‘why’:

en tiyó pién en óbédo ácan.
3.SG *work.IMV because 3.SG 3.bc.PFV poor
'He works because he is poor.'

án 'girá bá àngó pijó ábinó.
1.SG TOP 1.SG NEG 1.SG know why 2.SG *come.PFV
'As for me, I don’t know why you have come.'

In conditional sentences, both orders of clauses are possible. The protasis clause is introduced by *ká while the apodosis clause may be unmarked:

ká (en) òbinó àbinó konyó.
if 3.SG 3.come IMV 1.SG FUT help INF

or

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àbínò kényò ká àbínò.

1.SG.FUT help.INF if 3.com.eIMV
'The comes I'll help him.'

The last syllable of the preceding protasis clause may receive a question intonation, i.e. a rising tone, and the clause is introduced by the conjunction *ká*:

ká onùọjọ en bá t’úo kó àbínò.

if PAST 3.SG NEG be.sick CONJ 3.SG.IMV
'The had not been sick he would have come.'

There are two particles expressing purpose, namely *èkè* and *mè*, where the former presents clauses and the latter noun phrases including non-final verbs:

èn t’iyò èkè èwíl bônjọ.

3.SG work.IMV PUR 3.buy.SUBJ clothes

*or*

èn t’iyò mé wíl bônjọ.

3.SG work.IMV PUR buy.INF clothes

àbínò ’kány èk- élnènà.

3.com.ePFV here PUR- 3.see.1.SG.O

*or*

àbínò ’kány mé nínò ná

3.com.ePFV here PUR see.INF POSS.1.SG
'The came here in order to see me.'
10.3 Direct and indirect speeches

Both direct and indirect speech clauses have essentially the structure of object complement clauses, being introduced by the complementizer níg:

en ókòbò ní: ábinó (nák) kòdikò.
3.SG 3.say.PFV COMPL 1.SG.come.IMV tomorrow
'He said: I will come tomorrow.'

en ókòbò ní en ébinó (nák) kòdikò.
3.SG 3.say.PFV COMPL 3.SG 3.SS.come.IMV tomorrow
'He said that he would come tomorrow.'

The morphology of this non-finite verb form is unclear to us.
References


