A grammar of Lumun : a Kordofanian language of Sudan

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16. Prepositional proclitics

Lumun has five basic prepositional proclitics (PPCs). They can be attached to a noun, including a noun with the persona prefix, a full personal pronoun, an independent possessor, an independent demonstrative or an independent modifier. Four proclitics are locative:

ɪ-	'in'
nɔ-	'on, at'
tɔ-	'up on, up at'
ṭɔ-	'at'

The fifth marks instrumental role, comitative role, or agent role in a passive construction. It can also function in a locative context; there it expresses '(away) from':

ń-	'with, by, (away) from'

In this chapter, I first present the tonal, morpho-phonological and morphological properties of the PPCs and then discuss their semantics, specific collocations and collocational restrictions. I also discuss complex prepositions and the "absolute" forms of the PPCs, which I call "absolute prepositions". I will present different syntactic environments in which they are used. In the last section of the chapter, I provide some examples of attachment of **ń-** 'with, by, (away) from' to a different constituent than expected on grounds of the role that it expresses.

16.1. Tone

ɪ-, **nɔ-**, **tɔ-** and **ṭɔ-** impose a specific tone pattern on the nouns to which they are attached. Since these patterns deviate from what can be expected on the basis of the general tone roles, I represent **ɪ-**, **nɔ-**, **tɔ-** and **ṭɔ-** without tone.

ń-, on the other hand, behaves tonally as expected from a monomoraic element with a high or rising tone. There are, however,

no cues that allow for a choice between these patterns: the element cannot be realized in isolation, nor does it have additional morae that might (or might not) receive a high tone from another element. As set out in 3.8 on tone, I assign a high tone in such cases.[4]

When ɪ-, nɔ-, tɔ- and ṭɔ- precede a L-noun, a H tone comes on the second mora of the noun, followed by a L-tone. This results in a falling tone on the second mora when the noun is bimoraic. When the L-noun is monomoraic, ɪ-, nɔ-, tɔ- and ṭɔ- generate a falling tone on the first mora. When ń- precedes an all-low noun, the Tone Shift Rule is applied, bringing a falling tone on the first mora of the noun. Then Contour simplification is applied, unless the falling tone is in prepausal position.

Table 100 Tonal effects of the PPCs on low-toned nouns

	ʊl 'person'	*əlla 'cats'*	*cəɽɔkɪ 'gourd (k.o.)'*	*əɽəmɛkkʊ 'bats (sp.)'*
ɪ- (also **nɔ-, tɔ-**, and **ṭɔ-**)	**ɪ-ôl** 'among the people'	**ɪ-əllâ** 'among the cats'	**ɪ-cəɽɔ́kɪ** 'in the gourd'	**ɪ-əɽə́mɛkkʊ** 'among the bats'
ń-	**n-ôl** 'with the people'	**n-ə́lla** 'with the cats'	**ɲ-cə́ɽɔkɪ** 'with the gourd'	**n-ə́ɽəmɛkkʊ** 'with the bats'

L-toned nouns with a long vowel preceded by ɪ-, nɔ-, tɔ- and ṭɔ-also get the H-tone on the first vowel:

ɪ-cáa 'in the grape'
ɪ-ɛ́ɛ 'in the poisont' (< ɪ- + ŋɛɛ)

One L-noun has a different tonal realization when preceded by one of the procliticss ɪ-, nɔ-, tɔ- and ṭɔ-. With **caṭṭak/maṭṭak** 'calabash (k.o.)' all prepositional proclitics give a H-tone on the first mora:

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[4] There are attestations of a high tone realized on the initial nasal in the word **ɲcɪk** (**ńcɪk**). I regard **ɲcɪk** in these cases as a lexicalized item. Though the PPC **ń-** is clearly historically a formative here, synchronically I regard the initial nasal no longer as the PPC in this word (see also 15.4).

ɪ-cáṭṭak 'in the calabash (k.o.)'

When **ɪ-**, **nɔ-**, **tɔ-** and **ṭɔ-** precede a noun with a H-tone, whether or not as part of a contour, the tone pattern of the noun does not change. When preceded by **ń-**, sub-Rules 1 to 4 apply (see 3.3.3).

Table 101 Tonal effects of the PPCs on nouns containing a H-tone

	ɪ-, nɔ-, tɔ-, ṭɔ-	*ń-*
ṭŏk 'dog'	**nɔ-ṭŏk**	**n-ṭŏk**
waɪ̆ 'cow'	**tɔ-waɪ̆**	**n-naɪ̆**
kəɽittăŋ 'knife'	**nɔ-kəɽittăŋ**	**ŋ-kəɽittăŋ**
ṭɛnnɛkkɛttă 'test'	**ɪ-ṭɛnnɛkkɛttă**	**n-ṭɛnnɛkkɛttă**
kíṭ 'eye'	**ɪ-kíṭ**	**ŋ-kíṭ**
ɔpá 'piece of meat'	**nɔ-ɔpá**	**n-ɔpá**
aɽankál 'bed'	**ta-aɽankál**	**n-áɽaŋkál**
mɪ̧məntɛrɪ̧ 'hedgehogs'	**ɪ-cɪ̧məntɛrɪ̧**	**ɲ-cɪ́məntɛrɪ̧**
mîl 'sorghum'	**ɪ-mîl**	**m-mîl**
kurrɔ̂ŋ 'stick'	**nɔ-kurrɔ̂ŋ**	**ŋ-kurrɔ̂ŋ**
ŋaṭṭɔkkɔ̂l 'calabash (k.o.)'	**ɪ-aṭṭɔkkɔ̂l**	**ŋ-ŋáṭṭɔkkɔ̂l**
ŋaṭṭərəpê 'rabbit'	**ta-aṭṭərəpê**	**ŋ-ŋáṭṭərəpê**
ṭərɔ́ma 'ram'	**tɔ-ṭərɔ́ma**	**n-ṭərɔ́ma**
lʊmúttʊ 'bull (k.o.)'	**tɔ-lʊmúttʊ**	**l-lʊmúttʊ**
ŋaccəpápa 'tool (k.o.)'	**na-accəpápa**	**ŋ-ŋáccəpápa**
aləppaṭúra 'tomato'	**ɪ-aləppaṭúra**	**n-áləppaṭúra**
ɪɽɪmanɪ́ɽɪman 'spiders'	**ɪ-ɪɽɪmanɪ́ɽɪman**	**n-íɽɪmanɪ́ɽɪman**

The above description of tonal realizations of prepositional proclitics and nouns does not account for all tonal phenomena that relate to the prepositional proclitics, and a couple of attestations defy a clear analysis. **nɔ-** and **tɔ-** (and probably also **ṭɔ-**) can be realized with a high tone outside situations of tone bridge, and there are even attestations of **nɔ-** realized with a high tone where a preceding element providing this high tone appears to lack. **maɪt** 'beans' in the example below is an entirely low noun:

pʊl   p-ɔɽəkɔ́ṭ.ɛ   maɪt   nɔ́-capʊ́
person   C-eat_at:COMPL   beans   on-ground

the man has eaten the beans on the ground (i.e. while sitting on the ground)

ɪ-, on the other hand, never receives a high tone from a preceding element, nor is it ever realized high apparently 'out of the blue'.

The following minimal pair also testifies to **nɔ-** and **ɪ-** having different tonal effects. The verb preceding the PPC is realized differently:

kwɔk   **k-a.ɪk**   **ɪ-wɛ́k**
shoe   C-be:PR   in-leg

the shoe is on the foot

kwɔk   **k-a.ík**   **nɔ-wɛ́k**
shoe   C-be:PR   on-leg

the shoe is on the foot

16.2. Morpho-phonology and morphology

Vowel assimilation and coalescence

When **nɔ-**, **tɔ-** or **ṭɔ-** is prefixed to an **ɔ**-initial noun, the resulting vowel tends to retain some length. A difference is audible between minimal pairs such as **nɔ-ɔpá** 'on the piece of meat' and **n-ɔpá** 'with the piece of meat'. I therefore use a double vowel in the spelling in case of attachment of **nɔ-**, **tɔ-** and **ṭɔ-** before **ɔ** or an initial vowel to which the PPC assimilates, as far as this vowel is the initial vowel of a common noun. Before the persona prefix (**ɔ́-**) no length seems to be retained, nor for a demonstrative starting with **ɛ**.

The vowel of **nɔ-**, **tɔ-** and **ṭɔ-** assimilates to a following **a** or **ɛ**:

nɔ- + **aṛǝpʊ**   > **na-aṛǝ́pʊ** 'on the things'
nɔ- + **ɛpʊ**   > **nɛ-ɛpʊ̂** 'on the mushrooms'

The same happens before independent possessors and demonstratives. Concord **ṭ** in the examples below agrees, for example, with **ṭʊk** 'dog'.

nɔ- + áṭaŋ > **n-áṭaŋ** 'on yours'
nɔ- + ɛnṭí > **n-ɛnṭí** 'on this one'

An exception is the following, in which **ɛ** of the noun assimilates to preceding **ɔ**:

nɔ- + ɛɽəkɛ̂ > **nɔ-ɔɽəkɛ̂** 'on the stirring spoons'

Attachment before one of the other vowels (**į**, **u**, **ɪ**, **ʊ**, **ə**) results in a diphthong.

Initial **ŋ** is (regularly) deleted between vowels. In such cases some length of the vowel tends to be more audible then upon direct adjacency of the vowels. The same assimilations take place, e.g.,

nɔ- + ŋɛɽɪŋkâ > **nɛ-ɛɽɪŋkâ** 'on the donkey'

Attachment to (pro)nouns with the persona prefix

Upon attachment of **nɔ-**, **tɔ-** or **ṭɔ-** to a noun with the persona prefix (**ɔ́-**) there is full coalescence, resulting in a short vowel. Recall that **ɪ-**, **nɔ-** and **tɔ-** cause the persona prefix to change into **á-**, but **ṭɔ-** does not (see 4.10.1):

k-kw-ɔ́ṭṭɛ́.t **nɔ-kəmən ána** **n-a-paŋɔ́n** **ana nɔ́-įmį́t**
3-C-leave_behind:COMPL on-houses and on-PERS-sibling.PL and on-goat
s/he left the house and his/her siblings and the goat behind

ṭɔkʊkkʊ́ɔ̂n 'at the house of Kʊkkʊ and his family'

A short vowel **a** also results upon attachment of **nɔ-** and **tɔ-** to a personal pronoun (**ṭɔ-** cannot occur in that position), i.e.:

na-âk 'on him/her' (< **nɔ- + ɔɔ̂k**)

Full paradigms are given in chapter 6.1.4.

ATR harmonization

The vowels of the prepositional proclitics may undergo some influence of a +ATR noun to which they are attached, but do not fully harmonize with the +ATR noun. I therefore spell 'in' as **ɪ-** (instead of **ị-**) in for example:

ɪ-cərúk 'in the opening'

Homorganic nasal

Lumun consonant clusters are always homorganic and the general rule is that the first consonant of a cluster adapts —at least— for place of articulation to the second. **ń-** 'with, by, (away) from' is no exception. It assimilates for place of articulation to a following obstruent consonant, e.g.,

ŋ-kurrɔ̂ŋ 'with the stick'

It fully assimilates to following **l**:

l-lɔ̂n 'with words'

A following **w**, however, assimilates to **ń-**:

n-naɪ̆ 'with the cow' (< **ń-** + **waɪ̆)**

Long initial consonants that are due to attachment of prepositional **ń-** tend to be pronounced with some length.

*Irregular assimilation of **t** or **k** before **ń-** and before **nɔ-** attached to a (pro-)noun with the persona prefix*

Deviating from the general rule, **ń-** does not cause the final **t** or **k** of a preceding word to become nasal. Instead, it causes lenition of **t** to **r**, and of **k** to **ɰ**. The absolute counterpart of **ń-**, **ŋŋɪn**, has the same effect. **nɔ-** and its absolute counterpart **nán**, on the other hand, have the regular effect of eliding a preceding word-final **t** or **k**.

Unexpectedly, however, when **nɔ**- is attached to a noun or pronoun with the persona prefix it causes lenition of a preceding **t** to **r**, and of a preceding **k** to **ɰ**. Examples of these different assimilations are provided in 2.1.1.

*Allomorph **rɪ**- of **ɪ**- 'in'*

ɪ- 'in' has an allomorph **rɪ**-, which is applied when 'in' is preceded by the connexive C-**ɔ** 'of', e.g.,

ɔkʊkkʊ́ kɔ́rɪ́t̪t̪ə̂k 'Kʊkkʊ of in the field' (i.e., Kʊkkʊ born from an unmarried mother) < **k-ɔ** 'of' + **rɪ**- 'in' + **kərək** 'farming field'

Assuming that **r** is the intervocalic allophone of **t** here, the same **t** preceding **ɪ**- is found in the absolute form of **ɪ**-, **tít**, and in the combination of **ń**- + **ɪ**-, realized as **ntɪ ɪ**-, with **ntít** as its absolute form (see 16.6). This suggests an older form of **ɪ**- with **t** preceding it (****tɪ**-), which has been retained in some words/environments.

*Allomorph **na**- of **nɔ**-*

nɔ- has an allomorph **na**- which occurs when the PPC is used in a comparative construction before an independent modifier:

ɪ-c-ípɛ	**akk-ɔpərɔ́t**	**ná-í-c-íɛ́**
RES-C-old	FOC-good	on-RES-C-new

the old one is better than the new one

*Changed shape of certain nouns after **ɪ**-, **nɔ**-, **tɔ**- or **t̪ɔ**-*

It is mentioned here also that certain nouns occur, or can occur, in a changed phonological shape upon prefixation of **ɪ**-, **nɔ**-, **tɔ**- or **t̪ɔ**-. One example is:

nɔ- + **pət̪ɔk** 'stone'   > **nɔ-t̪t̪ɔ̌k** 'in the country'

Further cases are listed in chapter 4.4. Some nouns occur both in original as in changed shape after a PPC and have developed different meanings. Such cases are presented in the subsections of 16.3.

16.3. Semantics and use of ɪ-, nɔ-, tɔ- and ṭɔ-

All four locative proclitics (ɪ-, nɔ-, tɔ- and ṭɔ-) can be used both in static expressions and in movement expressions[5].

16.3.1. ɪ- 'in'

ɪ- typically expresses a notion of being (or becoming) enclosed or enveloped or surrounded. It can often be translated as 'in' or 'into' or through (that is, moving through something) and with a plural noun as 'among' or 'between'.

maɪt	**m-a.ɪk**	**ɪ-cakkə́lɔ́k**
beans	c-be:PR	in-calabash(k.o.)

the beans are in the calabash

ɔppɔṭ.ɛ	**máɪt**	**ɪ-ɛ́ɲ-c-í**
put_at:IMP	beans	in-DEM-C-NEARSP

put the beans in this one! (in this *cakkəllɔk*)

ɔccʊ	**ṭɔɽək**	**ɛ́n-ṭ-í**	**á-ɪɽɪkɛ**	**ɪ-cərúk**
receive:IMP	rope	DEM-C-NEARSP	SUBJ-(2-)make_pass_entrance:DEPINCOMPL	in-opening

take this rope and pass it through the opening (lit.: in order to pass it ...)

aɽəpʊ	**w-ɔɽɪát̪.ɛ**	**ɪ-paŋ-k-ên**
things	c-become_red_at:COMPL	in-sibling-c-of:ABS

the fruits have become ripe between the other fruits (lit.: between their siblings)

Some nouns can occur in a changed form after the PPCs ɪ-, nɔ-, tɔ- and ṭɔ- (see chapter 4.4). Next to this form, a regular form is often

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[5] Examples of the use of the prepositions in static situations are provided in Smits (2007), which contains short locative sentences, elicited with the help of pictures designed by Melissa Bowerman (1993). The sentences answer the question 'where is X'.

possible as well. In some cases, the form with gemination and the regular form have different meanings. Examples with ɪ- are:

pət̪ɔk   'stone'
ɪ-pət̪ɔ̂k   'under a stone' (typically in a (small) hole that has been dug and that has been closed by a stone)
ɪ-t̪t̪ɔ̌k   'in the cavity under stones that touch each other' (typically shaped by nature)

kərək   'farming field'
ɪ-kərə̂k   'in the bigger farming field away from the house'
ɪ-ttə̂k   'in the small farming field immediately around the house'

pərɪt   'granary'
ɪ-pərɪ̂t   'in the space between the actual storehouse and the wall of a room in which it is located'
ɪ-ttɪ̌t   'in the granary (i.e. in the actual storehouse)'

ɪkkwâ (< ɪ- + **ka** 'body') is a comparable case because of the gemination of the consonant. The regular form **ɪ-ká** is part of a complex preposition (see section 16.4):

ka   'body'
ɪ-ká kɔ 'in the centre/middle part of' (in the sense of not at the edge)
ɪ-kkwâ   'in the body'

'The shoe is on the foot' can be expressed with ɪ- (example given in 16.1), and ɪ- is used in the following situation:

ɔ-nɛnní	**p-á.í́k**	**p-á.kɔ**	**cuccú**	**ɪ-cələ̂k**
PERS-Nɛnnɪ	C-be:PR	C-wear:INCOMPL	bead	in-neck

Nɛnnɪ is wearing a necklace around her neck

The use of ɪ- for temporal expressions is limited to forming a fixed part of the word for the early part of the dry season (roughly October till January): **ɪcəpɔ̂**.

ɪ-cəpɔ́   **ʋl**   **w-á.ki̯ɔ**   **mî̯l**
in-first_part_of_dry_season   people   C-cut:INCOMPL   sorghum

in the beginning of the dry season the people cut the sorghum

ɪ- is also used outside the locative (and temporal) domain. For example, engagement in hunting activities is expressed with **ɪ-**:

ʋl w-ɔ-rɪ-apê 'people of in fish' (that is, people engaged in fishing)

Some more examples of this type were provided in chapter 4.8.1.

A few verbs are obligatorily collocated with a prepositional phrase with **ɪ-**, for example **ɔt̪i̯ɔt tít** 'answer (to it)'. Such verbs have the absolute preposition **tít** when cited alone.

16.3.2. **nɔ-** 'on, at'

nɔ- typically expresses surface contact, often at the side of something, but it may also be on a high (or the highest) point of something. If there is an element of height, **nɔ-** does not draw attention to it (in order to do that, **tɔ-** is used). **nɔ-** often translates as 'on' or 'at'.

ŋʋccók   **ŋ-á.ík**   **nɔ-kəɽi̯ttăŋ**
blood   C-be:PR   on-knife

there is blood on the knife

It can also be used in a directional way:

m-p-a.ɪk   **p-a.ɛ̃**   **nɔ-kaɽə́n**   **k-əɽek**
1-C-be:PR   C-go:INCOMPL   on-place   C-some
I am going to some place

nɔ- does not express envelopment, nevertheless it is a formative of **nɔppăn** 'inside' (**nɔ-** + **tʋpan** 'room').

The location of holes and cracks is expressed with **nɔ-**:

cəruk	**c-a.ɪk**	**nɔ-kərét**
opening	C-be:PR	on-cloth

the hole is in the cloth (answer to: where is the hole?)

A case in which **nɔ**- preceding a noun in its regular form and in its changed form (see 4.4) have different meanings is the following:

pəṭɔk	'stone'
nɔ-pəṭɔ̂k	'on the stone'
nɔ-ṭṭɔ̌k	'in the country'

nɔ- can be used in the temporal domain, where it is typically optional. In fact, not using it seems often the preferred option. The example below easily goes without it:

k-kw-ânn-aŋkɔt	**ɪttɪ**	**k-kw-ítta**	**(nɔ-)ṭʊpót**	**én-ṭ-í**
3-C-NEG-want:DEPCOMPL	that	3-C-be_married:INCOMPL	(on-)year	DEM-C-NEARSP

she does not want to get married this year

nɔ- is applied also in non-locative domains, expressing notions such as 'about' or 'concerning':

m-p-a.ɪk	**p-a.ṭ-érɛ**	**nɔ́-kammɪâ**
1-C-be:PR	C-IT:INCOMPL-talk	on-singing_whip

I am going to talk about the singing whip (App. II, 2)

lɔn	**ɪ-l-a**	**k-kw-ɔ́kkɔṭ.ɛ́**	**nɔ-pôl**
words	RES-C-COP	3-C-do:COMPL	on-person

the things s/he did to the person

A few verbs are obligatorily collocated with a prepositional phrase with **nɔ**-, for example **ɔṭṭɛ nán** 'leave sb./sth. (behind)'. Such verbs have the absolute preposition **nán** when cited alone.

Comparative constructions

nɔ- is further used in comparative constructions. In such constructions it has an allomorph **na**-. The allomorph **na**- is applied

before independently used modifiers. Adjectives and verbs describing properties can serve as the predicate of comparison.

əlla	w-acɔ́kɔc-cɔkɔt	nɔ-lŭk
cats	C-fast-REDUP	on-dogs

cats are faster than dogs

ʈʊk	ʈ-a.kíɲa	nɔ-pəllâ
dog	C-become_tired:INCOMPL	on-cat

the dog will get more tired than the cat

The allomorph **na-** is used in the next example because of attachment to an independently used modifier (a connexive). The example comes from an (unpublished) Lumun dictionary (Kuku et al. 2006):

pʊl	ɪ-p-ɔ́parɪ	p-ɔnʊ́	cʊ́ɽɛ́	c-ə́rík	ná-c-ɔ́-púl	í-p-ɔ́cʊra
person	RES-C-female	C-have	buttock	C-big	on-C-of-person	RES-C-male

a woman has a bigger bottom than a man (lit.: a woman has a bottom that is big on that of a man)

Which allomorph is applied in the next examples is not apparent, since in all three cases 'on' precedes a vowel **a** (in the first two examples the allomorph **á** of the persona prefix after a PPC; in the last the pronominal base **a** that forms part of the independent possessor pronoun).

ɔ-kín	ʈ-ɔpərɔ̂t[6]	n-a-nḭ̂n
PERS-3A	C-good	on-PERS-1A

they are better than we (are)

lɔttí	ŋ-kw-ɔnʊ́	ɪttɪ	ŋ-kw-a.ɽəkɔ	ʈʊɽít	ʈ-ɔppɔt[7]	n-a-ʈʊʈʈʊ̂
Lɔttɪ	2-C-have	that	2-C-eat:INCOMPL	food	C-many	on-PERS-Ṭʊʈʈʊ

Lɔttɪ, you must eat more than Ṭʊʈʈʊ

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[6] The final **t** of **ʈɔpərɔ̂t** is realized here as **r** (cf. chapter 2.1.1).

[7] The final **t** of **ʈɔppɔt** is realized here as **r** (cf. chapter 2.1.1).

á-t̪-aŋ   **ákk-ɔpərɔ̂t[8]**   **n-á-t̪-ɪn**
PROB-C-POSS2   FOC-good   on-PROB-C-POSS1

yours is better than mine (for example **t̪ŭk** 'dog')

Also the verb **ɔllɔ̂** 'run' allows for the comparative construction. The example clearly shows that non-locative use of **nɔ**- does not trigger the Locative-applicative derivation.

pəlla   **p-a.llɔ**   **nɔ́-t̪ʊk**
cat   C-run:INCOMPL   on-dog

a cat runs (faster) than a dog

16.3.3.   **tɔ**- 'up on, up at'

Unlike **ɪ**- and **nɔ**-, **tɔ-** is not used outside of the locative domain. **tɔ**- typically expresses a vertical dimension: something is, or moves towards, a high point or the highest point of something. Compare the following sentences:

pʊɽʊpé   **p-ɔɽɔ.t**   **nɔ-pɪrâ**
bird   C-land:COMPL   on-tree

the bird has alighted in the tree

pʊɽʊpé   **p-ɔɽɔ.t**   **tɔ-pɪrâ**
bird   C-land:COMPL   up_on-tree

the bird has alighted in the top of the tree

In the following examples **nɔ**- and **tɔ**- describe the same situation. The use of **tɔ-** expresses that the location has a certain height, while **nɔ**- gives no information relating to height.

ŋat̪t̪ɔkkɔ́l   **ŋ-á.ík**   **nɔ́-cə́nâ**
calabash(k.o.)   C-be:PR   on-grinding_table

the *ŋat̪t̪ɔkkɔl*-calabash is on the grinding table

ŋat̪t̪ɔkkɔ́l   **ŋ-á.ík**   **tɔ́-cə́nâ**
calabash(k.o.)   C-be:PR   on-grinding_table

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[8] The final **t** of **ákkɔpərɔ̂t** is realized here as **r** (cf. chapter 2.1.1).

the *ŋaṭṭɔkkɔl*-calabash is on the grinding table (attention is paid to the grinding table having a certain height)

A human being, unlike a living tree and a grinding table, can assume different positions with respect to the ground. The following sentence can be said when the speaker is in upright position (the frogs will climb onto his head), but also when he is lying on the floor (the frogs are all over him).

nəllapɔ́k   n-á.ʊ́rɔt   ta-ôn
frogs   C-crawl_at:INCOMPL   up_on.PERS-1

the frogs will crawl on me (different positions of the body possible, the frogs reach the highest point)

The body parts of the upper half of the human body tend to be associated with **tɔ-** (a few more examples are given in table 102).

k-kw-ɔ́nɛk.áṭɛ   tɔ-cəlêk
3-C-put:PST   up_on-neck

s/he put it on his neck

For the position on the back of a donkey, **tɔ** is used:

k-kw-árrɔ́ṭ.ɛ   tɛ-ɛrɪŋkâ   (< tɔ- + ŋɛrɪŋkâ)
3-C-cross:COMPL   up_on-donkey

s/he has mounted the donkey

With motion verbs, **tɔ-** can also be used in order to express that a distance has to be covered without giving information about height of the location. In the example below it is used irrespective of the location of the church (on the mountain or in the valley):

m-p-a.ɪk   p-a.ɛ̃   tɔ-man   m-ɔ́-kapɪk
1-C-be:PR   C-go:INCOMPL   up_on-house   C-of-God

I am going to the church (the speaker has to cover a distance)

By contrast, when the church is near, **ṭɔ-** is used:

m-p-a.ɪk   **p-a.ɛ̃**   **ʈɔ-man**   **m-ɔ́-kapɪk**
1-C-be:PR   C-go:INCOMPL   at-house   C-of-God

I am going to the church (the church is near)

Both sentences above do not provide any information about the 'path' of movement, i.e. whether the agent has to climb the mountain, descend, or remain more or less at the same level to reach the church.

Farming fields, apart from some fields directly around the house, are traditionally situated in higher places on the hills, often at considerable distance from people's houses. Although people have in more recent times started to cultivate in the valleys as well, the traditional high location and the element of distance of the fields is reflected in the combination **tɔpɔ̂n** (< **tɔ-** + **əpɔn** (probably), see also 4.4) which is used regardless of the location of the field with respect to people's homes on a vertical axis:

ń-ʈ-ʊ́ɔ́.t   **tɔ́.pɔ̂n**
3A-C-descend:COMPL   at_farming_field

they have descended to the field

kəpɔn can also be marked with **ɪ-**. Use of **ɪkkwɔ̂n** (**ɪ-** + the contracted form of **kəpɔn**, see 4.4) as compared to **tɔpɔ̂n** conveys that the farming field is near (perhaps easily visible from the house), whereas the use of **tɔpɔ̂n** conveys that a distance has to be covered.

m-p-a.ɪk   **p-a.ɛ̃**   **ɪ-kkwɔ̂n**
1-C-be:PR   C-go:INCOMPL   in-farming_field

I am going to the farming field (which is near)

nɔkkwɔ̂n and **ʈɔkkwɔ̂n** also exist, but have specific meanings: **nɔkkwɔ̂n** 'near the field' and **ʈɔkkwɔ̂n** 'at the side of the field'.

16.3.4. **ʈɔ-** 'at'

ʈɔ-, like **tɔ-**, functions only as a locative marker. **ʈɔ-** can generally best be captured by 'at'. It collocates with some nouns that share a

notion of being situated in a low(er) place on a vertical axis, but probably rather involves the semantic notion of a non-high location (as opposed to a high location) than of a low-lying location as such. Collocations with some body parts, contrasting ṭɔ- and tɔ- are given in the table. **kucúl** 'back' occurs in its contracted form.

Table 102 Body parts collocated with ṭɔ- and/or tɔ-

	ṭɔ-	*tɔ-*
kucúl 'back'	**ṭɔ-ccúl** 'at the back'	**tɔ-ccúl** 'between the shoulders'
carə́k 'belly'	**ṭɔ-carə́k** 'at the belly'	
kʊŋkʊ 'knee'	**ṭɔ-kʊŋkô** 'at the knee'	
cəkên 'lower back'	**ṭɔ-cəkên** 'at the lower back'	
marrú 'kidneys'	**ṭɔ-marrú** 'at the kidneys'	
cələk 'neck'		**tɔ-cəlêk** 'at the neck'
cɛrɛ̌ŋ 'chest'		**tɔ-cɛrɛ̌ŋ** 'at the chest'

In a few other fixed collocations an element of lower altitude can be recognized. Water tends to be found at lower places, which is probably why going to the well (**tɔ́k**) is expressed with ṭɔ-, irrespective of whether one actually goes down or up the mountain in order to reach it.

m-p-a.ɪk   **p-a.ɛ̂**   **ṭɔ́-rɔ́k**
1-C-be:PR   C-go:INCOMPL   at-waterplace

I am going to the well (no information about going up or down the mountain)

A place where water gathers in a hole in a big stone, on the other hand, is expressed with tɔ-: **tɔkkú** (tɔ- + **kupú** 'hole in rock where water gathers'). Such places are typically found higher up in mountains.

Places belonging to **mʊṭṭô** 'Arabs' are indicated with ṭɔ-, reflecting that such places are not on the mountains, but on the low plains in between or further away.

ɔ-kʊmáŋ	**p-á.ík**	**ṭɔ́-mʊ́ṭṭô**
PERS-Kʊmaŋ	C-be:PR	at-Arabs

Kʊmaŋ is in Arab country

Combinations of **ṭɔ-** and words with the persona prefix are restricted to plurals of kinship terms and personal names, and the noun **ɔpaṭṭɔ̂n** 'people, folk'. Such expressions refer to the living place or household of a person and his/her family or group, not to the people themselves:

m-p-a.ɛ̃	**ṭɔ-kakkâ-n**
1-C-go:INCOMPL	at.PERS-Kakka-PL

I will go to the place of Kakka and her family (the sentence contains no information about the location of Kakka's house)

k-kw-ânn-ítta	**ṭɔ-paṭṭ-ɔ̂n**
3-C-NEG-be_married:DEPINCOMPL	at.PERS-person-PL

she will not be married into the household of those people

ṭɔ- cannot be combined with a pronoun, whether singular or plural. Pronominal replacement of **ṭɔ-kakkân** 'at the place of Kakka and her family' and **ṭɔ-paṭṭɔ̂n** 'at the house of those people' in the examples above is by the absolute form of **ṭɔ-**, **ṭán** 'at, there' (see 16.6), not by *****ṭɔ-kɪn** 'at them' (or *****ṭakɪn**).

ṭɔ may historically be a formative of the word **ṭəpát** (also **ṭəpʊ́t**) 'outside'. There is also **ṭɔ-ṭəpʊ́t** 'place outside which people use as toilet'[9].

16.3.5. Place names

All indigenous place names contain one of the prepositions **ɪ-**, **nɔ-**, **tɔ-** or **ṭɔ-** as a formative. Places with **tɔ-** are mostly located higher up the mountain, but there are counter-examples. For example, **tɔʊ́** is a

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[9] Especially in the rainy season, when all the land around the house is being used for growing crops, and the pigs, who eat the human excrements, are locked inside, there is a place assigned for use as a toilet, often near a big stone.

place in the valley in Saraf Jamous. Some examples of place names
follow here (some were also listed in chapter 4.7); there are many
more. The noun involved is not always synchronically attested.

ɪǎr	lit. 'In the mud'	< **ŋǎr** 'mud'
ɪcapʊ́	lit. 'In the ground'	< **capʊ́** 'ground'
nɔt̪ʊpəɽʊ̆	lit. 'In the valley'	< **t̪ʊpəɽʊ̆** 'valley'
nɔkɪt̪în	?	< ?
təpɛɽíɲcɪn	lit. 'Up the *pɛɽɲcɪn*-tree'	< **pɛɽíɲcɪn** 'tree (sp.)'
tɔcəmarâŋ	lit. 'Up at the free fight'	< **camarâŋ** 'free fight'
t̪ɔmmʊ́	lit. 'At *ammʊ́*'	< **ammʊ́** (name of person)
t̪ɔrɔk t̪ápê	lit. 'At the waterplace of fish'	< **t̪ɔ́k t̪ápê** 'waterplace of fish'

t̪ɔ is part of the name for the place where the spirits of dead people
reside. **t̪ɪɽîn** (or **t̪ɪɽɪn**) is not attested as a noun on its own:

t̪ɔt̪ɪɽîn   'The place where the spirits of dead people reside'

Place names are not combined with one of the prepositions **ɪ-**, **nɔ-**,
tɔ- or **t̪ɔ-**. They can only be combined with **ń-**, expressing 'from'.
Compare:

m-p-a.ík   tɔɽəmat̪ɔ̂n
1-C-be:PR   Tɔɽəmat̪ɔ̂n

I am in Tɔɽəmat̪ɔ̂n

m-p-a.ɪk   p-a.ɛ̂ɔ́   tɔɽəmat̪ɔ̂n
1-C-be:PR   C-go:INCOMPL   Tɔɽəmat̪ɔ̂n

I am going to Tɔɽəmat̪ɔ̂n

m-p-aat   n-tɔ́ɽəmat̪ɔ̂n
1-C-come:COMPL   with-Tɔɽəmat̪ɔ̂n

I come from Tɔɽəmat̪ɔ̂n (i.e. I have just come from Tɔɽəmat̪ɔ̂n)

Foreign place names are treated in the same way as indigenous place
names and can only be combined with **ń-**:

m-p-ɔnʊ́	**man**	**m-a**	**m-p-ɔkɛrɔ́.t**	**káʈʊ́kəlɪ**
1-C-have	house	C-be:COP	1-C-trade:COMPL	Kadugli

I have a house which I bought in Kadugli

cə́rít	**ɛ́ɔ́**	**kéccók**	**ír-ɔʈ-íkkɔ**[10]	**ŋə́pak**
12HORT	go:DEPINCOMPL	market	(SUBJ-)12-IT:DEPINCOMPL-drink:DEPINCOMPL	beer

let's go to the market and drink beer

k-kw-áa.t	**ŋ-káraʈûm**
3-C-come:COMPL	with-Khartoum

s/he comes from Khartoum (i.e. s/he has just come from Khartoum)

16.4. Complex prepositions

Fixed collocations of one of the prepositions **ɪ-**, **nɔ-**, **tɔ-** and **ʈɔ-**, a noun (mostly a body part), and the connexive C-**ɔ**- 'of' function as what I will call 'complex prepositions'. The connexive is proclitic to a noun. A list follows here:

ɪ-cʊɾɛ́ c-ɔ-	'under, at the bottom of'	(**cʊɾê** 'buttock')
ɪ-carək c-ɔ̂-	'inside'	(**carə́k** 'belly, stomach')
ɪ-pʊɾʊt p-ɔ̂-	'in the middle of (on a vertical axis)'	(**pʊɾʊ́t** 'waist')
ɪ-ká k-ɔ-	'in the centre part of'	(**ka** 'body')
ɪ-ʈɔɾəkɪt ʈ-ɔ̂-	'among, between, in the middle of'	(**ʈɔɾəkɪ́t** 'space between two things')
ɪ-ccík k-ɔ-	'near (no contact)'	(**cĭk** 'place(s)')
nɔ-kʊʈʊ́t k-ɔ-	'at the edge of, at the side of'	(**kʊʈɔ̂t** 'lip')
tɔ-kɪ̧t k-ɔ̂-	'before, in front of'	(**kɪ̧́t** 'eyes')
ʈɔ-ccul k-ɔ̂-	'behind'	(**kucúl** 'back')
ʈɔ-cəkén c-ɔ-	'behind, under'	(**cəkên** 'lower back')
ʈɔ-carək c-ɔ̂-	'in front of'	(**carə́k** 'belly, stomach')

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[10] The subjunctive particle **â-** is underlyingly present, as can be seen from the high tone on the 12 pronoun clitic.

The formative **ɽá** in the following complex prepositions is probably related to **cá** 'head':

nɔ-ɽa w-ɔ̂-, **nɔɽɔ̂-**　　'on top of, over, above of'
tɔ-ɽa w-ɔ̂-, **tɔɽɔ̂-**　　'on top of, over, above of (element of height expressed)'

All body parts in the complex prepositions listed above are singulars, except **kɪ́t** 'eyes'. However, prepositions can in principle also be formed with the plurals of these nouns, namely when referring to several locations:

ɪ-mʊɽɛ́　　　**m-ɔ-mɔɽɔŋ**
in-buttocks　　　c-of-mountains

at places at the bottom of the mountains

m-p-ɔká.t　　**cɪk**　　**a-n-ɔ́llɔt**　　　　　**ɪ-lɔɽəkɪt**　　　　**l-ɔ́-kəmə́n**
1-c-be:COMPL　　VREF　　CONJ-1-run_at:DEPINCOMPL　　in-spaces_in_between　c-of-houses

I was running between the houses (passing through spaces between several houses)

By contrast, the next sentence has the complex preposition with the singular noun **ṭɔɽəkɪ́t**.

m-p-ɔká.t　　**ɪ-ṭɔɽəkɪ̦t**　　　　**ṭ-ɔ́-ʊl**
1-c-be:COMPL　　in-space_in_between　c-of-people

I was between the people

A special case of a complex preposition is **ṭɔɽəṭán** 'behind, beyond' which probably contains the absolute preposition **ṭán** 'at' as a formative. **ṭɔɽəṭán** is unusual as a complex preposition because it immediately precedes the noun, without a connexive:

ɔrʊkɪ　　**ṭɔɽəṭan**　　**páa**
hide:IMP　　behind　　　　vine

hide behind the vine!

16.5. ń- 'with, by, (away) from'

ń- 'with, by, (away) from' can mark the instrumental role of the noun, the comitative role, and the agent role in a passive construction. In combination with the verb 'be' it can express 'have'. With locative constituents ń- functions as an ablative marker, expressing 'from, away from'.

Examples of ń- marking the instrumental role of the noun:

m-p-a.ccíɛ   **ṭık**   **ŋ-kʊrʊ́tta**
1-C-ignite:INCOMPL   fire   with-rubbing_stick

I will make a fire with a rubbing stick

ɔ-paṭṭı   **p-ɔkkʊttáṭ.ɛ**   **ŋ-kəɽıttăŋ**
PERS-person   C-be_killed:COMPL   with-knife

the person was killed with a knife

Examples of ń- marking the comitative role of the noun:

k-kw-áa.t   **m-pʊ́l**   **p-ɛn**
3-C-come:COMPL   with-person   C-DEM

s/he has come with that person (i.e. the person that we talked about)

… a-n-ɔíŋkat   **l-lı̧cɔk**   **cık-ıpərían**
CONJ-1-go:DEPPRFV   with-goats   LOC-ıpərıaŋ

… and I went with the goats to ıpərıaŋ

k-kw-áa.t   **m-máṭṭák**   **m-ɛ́n**
3-C-come:COMPL   with-calabash(k.o.)   C-POSS3A

s/he has arrived with their plates

Example of 'be' + ń- expressing 'have':

ń- cannot be attached to a (pro)noun with the persona prefix (ɔ́-). Such (pro)nouns in a comitative role need an entirely different construction, which makes no use of a prepositional element (see chapter 6.7).

ń- marking the agent role in a passive construction

ń- can mark non-animate and animate agents in passive constructions:

ɔ-paṭṭɪ	**p-ɔkkʊttáṭ.ɛ**	**n-ṭʊ́llé̞ɽák**	**tɔ́.pôn**
PERS-person	C-be_killed:COMPL	with-thunder_and_lightening	at_farming_field

the person was killed by lightening in the farming field

ɔ-paṭṭɪ	**p-ɔkkʊttáṭ.ɛ**	**n-ṭʊ̆k**
PERS-person	C-be_killed:COMPL	with-dog

the person was killed by a dog

k-kw-ɔ́kkʊttáṭ.ɛ	**ɲ-cʊṭṭô**
3-C-be_killed:COMPL	with-Arab_person

s/he was killed by the Arab

Agents in a passive construction that have the persona prefix (**ɔ́-**) use a construction with the absolute counterpart of **ń-**, **ŋŋɪn**. Examples are provided in 14.4 and 16.6.

ń- as ablative '(away) from'

ń- preceding a locative phrase takes up ablative meaning. **ń-** can precede one of the locative prepositional proclitics, giving the following forms. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the formative **tɪ** in **ntɪ ɪ-** is possibly an older form of the PPC **ɪ-**.

ntɪ ɪ-	(< **ń-** + **ɪ-**)
n-nɔ-	(< **ń-** + **nɔ-**)
n-tɔ-	(< **ń-** + **tɔ-**)
n-ṭɔ-	(< **ń-** + **ṭɔ-**)

Some examples:

ŋ-kw-a.ná   lɔn   n.tɪ   ɪ-cá
2-C-bring:INCOMPL   words   from   in-head

you will bring words from in your head (i.e. you must come up with an idea)

k-kw-á.kwɔ   lɔ́n   í-l-ɔ́kɪ̰tak   n-nɔ-kâ
3-C-blow:INCOMPL   words   RES-C-bad   with-on-body

s/he will blow the bad things away from the body

ɔll.ʊ   n-t-a-ôn
run:IMP   with-up_on-PERS-1

get away from me! (the suggestion is that the speaker is lying down and the addressee is on top of him/her)

m-p-aa.t   n-t̰ɔ́-mɪ̰ʊk   p-át̰t̰-ɔ́ŋáɛ̃
1-C-come:COMPL   with_at-bush   C-ITVEN:COMPL-urinate:DEPINCOMPL

I come from the bush, having gone to urinate

ntɪ ɪ- can be used in a superlative expression:

t̰ʊpət̰ʊ   t̰-ɔ́-t̰ɔcʊrák   t̰-ûkwɪ́t   n.tɪ   ɪ-lʊpət̰ʊ   áppɪk   tɔrrô
valley   C-of-T̰ɔcʊrâk   C-long   from   in-valleys   all   Lumun_country

the valley of T̰ɔcʊrâk is the deepest of all valleys in the Lumun area

ń- can also precede complex prepositions. Some examples:

n.tɪ ɪ-ccík kɔ-   from near
n-nɔ-kʊt̰ɔ́t kɔ-   from at the edge of, at the side of
n-tɔ-kɪ̰t kɔ̂-   from before, in front of
n-t̰ɔ-cəkén cɔ-   from behind, under

ɔll.ʊ   n.tɪ   ɪ-ccík   k-ʊ́ŋ
run:IMP   from   in-place   C-POSS3

get away from him/her! (the addressee is near the person, not on him/her)

Words that inherently denote a place, such as the question word 'where', place deictics and place names can be directly preceded by ablative **ń-**, as can the noun **cĭk** 'place(s)':

ŋ-kw-aa.t   ŋ-kárəṭa
2-C-come:COMPL   with-where

m-p-aa.t   ŋ-kárəṭṭôm
1-C-come:COMPL   with-Khartoum

where have you come from? I have come from Khartoum

ɲ-cínâŋ
with-there_where_you_are

from there, *also:* from then onwards

ana   w-íɔt   ʊl   ɲ-cɪk   áppɪk
and   PRO.C-find:INCOMPL   people   with-place   all

and they (the people) will find people from everywhere (lit. from all places)

cík- as pro-clitic pragmatic marker of a locative phrase (see chapter 15.3) can also be preceded by **ń-**:

m-p-aa.t   ɲ-cɪk-kéccôk
1-C-come:COMPL   with-LOC-market

I come from the very market

m-p-ɪcáṭ.ɛ   mɛccɪn   ɲ-cɪk-ɪ-ciŋkı̂
1-C-lie_down:COMPL   yesterday   with-LOC-in-sun

I slept early yesterday (lit.: I slept yesterday from in the sun (but not necessarily when it was still light))

ń- is furthermore a formative of the lexical item **ɲcɪk** which tonally differs from a combination of **ń-** + **cǐk** (or **ń-** + **cɪk**), because **ɲ**, as the initial mora of this low-toned item, can receive a high tone from a preceding element. **ń-** as a PPC is not able to receive a high tone from a preceding element. Some examples with **ɲcɪk** can be found in 15.4.

16.6. Absolute prepositions

All PPCs have absolute counterparts, which I call absolute prepositions. This is the list:

ɪ-	> **tít**	'in'
nɔ-	> **nán**	'on, at'
tɔ-	> **tán**	'up there' ('up on, up at')
ṭɔ-	> **ṭán**	'there'
ń-	> **ŋŋɪn**	'with, by'

ŋŋɪn is a tonally irregular item. In isolation it is realized as an element with a rising tone (i.e. without downglide), but in context initial **ŋ** sometimes receives a high tone from a preceding element, which is not compatible with a rising tone. **ŋŋɪn** seems to fluctuate between an element with rising tone and with low tone. I therefore represent it without tones.

The absolute prepositions all have a formative relating to the corresponding PPC. **nán**, **tán** and **ṭán** contain a same formative **an** or probably rather **n,** which may well be the same element as occurs in the absolute connexive C-**ên** 'of'. **ŋŋɪn** contains the formative **ŋɪn** 'what', which is also part of the question word **ŋín-ṭa** 'what' and the related words **akkaîn/akaîn**, **akkaínṭa/akaínṭa** 'why' (lit. 'that what', see 20.1.2).

The absolute prepositions do not include pronominal reference to their complement, which appears from their ability to co-occur with their complement in the same clause. Constructions where this happens are presented in 16.6.1.

There are, however, also situations in which the absolute prepositions can be translated as preposition and pronoun with non-human reference ('in it', 'on it', etc.). This is not surprising since, in Lumun, non-humans other than subjects cannot be pronominally referenced. In such cases the absolute preposition relates to PPC + non-human noun in the same way as PPC + pronoun to a human noun.

16.6.1. Syntactic constructions involving the absolute prepositions

Verbs with prepositional phrase

Some verbs must be used together with a prepositional phrase (either a phrase with **ɪ-** or a phrase with **nɔ-**). In the absence of such a constituent an absolute preposition is used. Examples follow here with **ɔcúrɔt** (**tít**) 'meet sb.' (which must be combined with a prepositional phrase when the subject has singular reference, see chapter 14.5) and **ɔ̯t̯ɛ nán** 'leave behind'.

ŋkɔ   **á-ṭ-ɔcúrɔt**   **ɪ-a-nnân**
go:IMP   SUBJ-(2-)IT:DEPINCOMPL-meet:DEPINCOMPL   in-PERS-mother

go to meet the mother!

ŋkɔ   **á-ṭ-ɔcúrɔt**   **ɪ-a-âk**
go:IMP   SUBJ-(2-)IT:DEPINCOMPL-meet:DEPINCOMPL   in-PERS-3

go to meet her!

ŋkɔ   **á-ṭ-ɔcúrɔt**   **ɪ-lįcɔ́k**
go:IMP   SUBJ-(2-)IT:DEPINCOMPL-meet:DEPINCOMPL   in-goats

go to meet the goats!

ŋkɔ   **á-ṭ-ɔcúrɔt**   **tít**
go:IMP   SUBJ-(2-)IT:DEPINCOMPL-meet:DEPINCOMPL   in:ABS

go and meet them (i.e. the goats, cannot refer to people)

*ŋkɔ   **á-ṭ-ɔcúrɔt**
go:IMP   SUBJ-(2-)IT:DEPINCOMPL-meet:DEPINCOMPL

ɔ̯t̯ɛ   **n-a-kʊkkɔ̂**
leave:IMP   on-PERS-Kʊkkʊ

leave Kʊkkʊ behind!

ɔ̯t̯ɛ   **n-a-âk**
leave:IMP   on-PERS-3

leave him/her behind!

ɔ̯t̯ɛ   **nɔ-t̯ŭk**
leave:IMP   on-dog

leave the dog behind!

ɔt̪t̪ɛ   nán
leave:IMP   on:ABS

leave it behind! (i.e. the dog, or other things or animals, but not people)

*ɔt̪t̪ɛ
leave:IMP

ɔt̪ɪ́ɔt tít 'answer (to it)' is a verb that is commonly used with absolute preposition, since what is answered (the question) is typically stated, in one way or another, in the preceding discourse. For example:

ámmá   ḿ-p-ípíttɔ́t̪.ɛ́ nɔ́n lɔ́n   ɔ-nɔn   t̪-ănn-ɔt̪ɪ́nt̪-ɪn   tít
if   1-C-ask:COMPL   O2A words PERS-2A C-NEG-answer:DEPINCOMPL-O1 in:ABS

when I ask you something, you will not answer me

ɔpɘ́rɘttakɔt tít 'be surprised, be amazed' (related to **ɔpɘ́rɘttakɔ** 'turn oneself') cannot occur without **tít**, at least not without acquiring a different meaning. **tít** cannot be replaced by **ɪ-** + noun (phrase). If what people are surprised or amazed about is present in the clause, this constituent is marked by **nɔ-**:

ɔ́k.kw.í-ɔ́n   í-t̪-ɔ́ccɪ́kɔ́t̪-ɔk   t̪-ɔká.t   cɪk
the_one-PL   RES-C-hear:COMPL-O3   C-be:COMPL   VREF

a-kín   ɔpɘrɘttakɔt   tɪt nɔ́-t̪-ɪna   cɪk   t̪-ʊ́ŋ
CONJ.PERS-3A turn_oneself:DEPINCOMPL in:ABS on-NOM-know VREF C-POSS3

those who heard him were amazed at his wisdom (Luke 2:47)

Non-human complements

A non-human complement of a PPC is not pronominally expressed. In such cases an absolute preposition is used. Examples:

… a-kín   ɪll.at   ɪ-kɘpa a-kín   ɔ́nɘ́kkɛ.kat nɔ́-t̪ɪk
CONJ.PERS-3A divide_in_two:DEPPRFV in-meat CONJ.PERS-3A put:DEPPRFV   on-fire

kʊrɛk-kʊrɛk   m-marrʊ   tít
each-REDUP   with-kidneys   in:ABS

… they divided the meat in two and they each put (his part of the meat) on the fire, with the kidneys in (it) (fr. written story)

... a-kín   ɔ́nɛ́k.at   túṭṭə̣rúk á-kín   ɔ́íŋkat   ŋ.ŋɪn   cɪṭ.ṭán
CONJ.PERS-3A take:DEPPRFV pig   CONJ.PERS-3A go:DEPPRFV with:ABS far

... and they took the pig and they went far away with (it) (fr. written story)

The understood complement can be an afore-mentioned noun with non-human reference, but also a whole clause, as in the next case:

ana   ṭúʋlɪ   ṭ-ɔmmá.t   nán
and   hyena   C-not_know:COMPL   on:ABS

and the hyena was not aware of (it) (i.e. of the lamb being near the opening in the fence)

tɔ 'up at' and **ṭɔ** 'at' always refer to a place. Their absolute counterparts (**tán** and **ṭán**) function as locative adverbs, '(up) there' and 'there' respectively. Compare:

n-ṭ-ɔká.t   tɔɽəmaṭɔ́n-ɪ
2A-C-be:COMPL   Tɔɽəmaṭɔ̂n-Q

ịn-ṭ-ɔká.t   tán   máí
1A-C-be:COMPL   up_on:ABS   a_short_while_ago

have you been in Tɔɽəmaṭɔ̂n? we have just been there some hours ago

n-ṭ-ɔká.t   ṭɔ-kakká-n-ɪ
2A-C-be:COMPL   at.PERS-Kakka-PL-Q

ịn-ṭ-ɔká.t   ṭán   máí
1A-C-be:COMPL   at:ABS   a_short_while_ago

have you been at Kakka's place? we have just been there some hours ago

n-ɔkkwɛ   ɪ-attâl
2A-beat:DEPINCOMPL   in-palms_of_hands

n-ɔpákkɔt   ṭán
2A-return:DEPINCOMPL   at:ABS

clap your hands! do it again! (lit.: go back there!)

Absolute prepositions are further used in grammatical constructions in which PPC and noun are separated. This is the case in passive constructions with subjects that, in a corresponding active

construction, are marked with a PPC. It is also found in constructions in which a prepositional phrase is relativized.

Absolute prepositions in passive constructions

In the first example below, with the passive verb **ʋrɛtta** 'be forgotten', the complement ('these things') of **nɔ** 'on, at' is present in the clause but, as the subject, stands before the verb. Functioning as subject, it cannot be marked by **nɔ**-. The verb, however, still requires the prepositional phrase, which is realized as **nán**. A corresponding active sentence is given in the second example.

lɔn	**ɛl-l-ɪ**	**l-a.ka**	**l-ʋrɛtta**	**nán**
words	DEM-C-NEARSP	C-be:INCOMPL	C-be_forgotten:INCOMPL	on:ABS

these things will be forgotten

ʋl	**w-ʋrɛ**	**nɔ-lɔn**	**él-l-í**
people	C-forget:INCOMPL	on-words	DEM-C-NEARSP

the people will forget these things

The next example has **wɔk** 'shoes' in instrument role, first as subject in a passive construction with **ŋŋɪn**, then in a corresponding active sentence. Some further examples of this construction can be found in chapter 14.4 on Passives.

wɔk	**ɛn-n-ɪ**	**w-a.llʋra**	**ŋ.ŋɪn**
shoes	DEM-C-NEARSP	C-be_run:INCOMPL	with:ABS

these shoes are for running (lit.: these shoes are run with)

ʋl	**w-a.llɔ**	**n-nɔk**	**én-n-í**
people	C-run:INCOMPL	with-shoes	DEM-C-NEARSP

people run with these shoes (people use these shoes for running), *also*:
people will run away with these shoes (a warning that they will steal them)

It was shown earlier in this chapter that **ń**- can mark common nouns with agent role in passive constructions. Agents, however, with the persona prefix, i.e. kinship terms, personal names and personal

pronouns, need a construction with **ŋŋɪn**. In such constructions the agent (pro)noun comes after the verb and is then followed by **ŋŋɪn**.

k-kw-ɔ́kkʊttáṱ.ɛ   **ɔ-kʊkkʊ́**   **ŋ.ŋɪn**
3-C-be_killed:COMPL   PERS-Kʊkkʊ   with:ABS

s/he was killed by Kʊkkʊ

k-kw-ɔ́kkʊttáṱ-ɔk   **ŋ.ŋɪn**
3-C-be_killed:COMPL-O3   with:ABS

s/he was killed by him / her

ŋŋɪn does not always follow the agent immediately:

mɛ́n   **m-á.ík**   **m-á.cʊ́raṱ-ɔ́k**   **nɔ-kwɛɽɛ**   **ń.ŋɪn**
palm_fruits   C-be:PR   C-be_impaled_at:INCOMPL-O3   on-pointed_stick   with:ABS

the palm fruits are being impaled on a stick by him/her

Human agents lacking the persona prefix allow for both the construction with **ń-** and the construction with **ŋŋɪn**:

k-kw-ɔ́kkʊttáṱ.ɛ   **ɲ-cʊṱṱô**
3-C-be_killed:COMPL   with-Arab_person

s/he was killed by the Arab

k-kw-ɔ́kkʊttáṱ.ɛ   **cʊṱṱʊ́**   **ŋ.ŋɪn**
3-C-be_killed:COMPL   Arab_person   with:ABS

s/he was killed by the Arab

A comparable construction with an instrument after the verb followed by **ŋŋɪn** was initially rejected, but on a later occasion considered possible, though not preferred. The construction in the second example, with **ń-**, is the common expression.

*/?k-kw-ɔ́kkʊttáṱ.ɛ   **kəɽittaŋ**   **k-ɔ́-kʊkkʊ́**   **ŋ.ŋɪn**
3-C-be_killed:COMPL   knife   C-of.PERS-Kʊkkʊ   with:ABS

s/he was killed with Kʊkkʊ's knife

k-kw-ɔ́kkʊttáṭ.ɛ   **ŋ-kəɽ̥ittaŋ**   **k-ɔ́-kʊkkɔ̂**
3-C-be_killed:COMPL   with-knife   C-of.PERS-Kʊkkʊ

s/he was killed with Kʊkkʊ's knife

Absolute prepositions in reciprocal constructions

Reciprocal formation is another operation that can lead to the use of
an absolute preposition, since reciprocals can be based on verbs that
realize the other participant in the event in a prepositional phrase.
Compare the following clauses:

ámmá   **m̄-p-ápɔ́.t**   **ná-áṭərəpé …**
if   1-C-grab:INCOMPL   on-rabbit

when I grab the rabbit …

ámmá **ɔ́-nín̩** **ṭ-áp.árɔ́.t**   **nán** **ɔ́-nín̩** **áṭə́rə́pé …**
if   PERS-1A   C-grab.REC1:INCOMPL   on:ABS   PERS-1A   PERS.rabbit

when the rabbit and I grab each other … (when we grab each other, I and
the rabbit …)

Some further examples were given in chapter 14.5 (on Reciprocals).

Relativized prepositional phrases

An absolute preposition is used in relativized prepositional phrases,
irrespective of whether the head is human or not:

ɔ-kʊkkʊ́   **í-k-á**   **m-p-ɔ́cʊ́rɔ́ṭ.ɛ́**   **tít**
PERS-Kʊkkʊ   RES-C-COP   1-C-meet:COMPL   in:ABS

Kʊkkʊ, whom I met with in the way, …

caɽɪ   **ɪ-c-a**   **k-kw-á.ṭ-ʊnɔ**   **nán**
day   RES-C-COP   3-C-IT:INCOMPL-build:DEPINCOMPL   on:ABS

the day on which he will go and build

aɽəpʊ   **ɪ-ʊ́nta**   **ŋ.ŋɪn**
things   RES-(C-)be_built:INCOMPL   with:ABS

building materials (lit.: things which are built with)

The question word 'where' and place names, which can be used in combination with **ń-**, are relativized with **ná** 'where' (11.3). Thus:

k-kw-ákənn-ɪɽɛ   **na**   **k-kw-áa.t**   **ŋ́.ŋɪn**
3-C-NEG-say:DEPCOMPL   where:REL   3-C-come:COMPL   with:ABS

s/he did not say where s/he came from

tɔʋmáŋ   **na**   **k-kw-áa.t**   **ŋ́.ŋɪn**
Tɔʋmâŋ   where:REL   3-C-come:COMPL   with:ABS

Tɔʋmâŋ, where s/he came from

In constructions with a location as subject and 'have'

Preposition and noun are also separated in constructions with C-**ɔnû** 'have' in a locative interpretation. The prepositional phrase cannot function as subject, so that the PPC occurs in its absolute form. Compare the first with locative 'be' and a locative phrase with the second example:

cɛṭə́na   **c-ɔ-ṭərɔ́ma**   **c-a.ɪk**   **nɔ-kurrɔ̂ŋ**
ornamental_tail   C-of-ram   C-be:PR   on-stick

the ram's tail is on the stick

kurrɔ́ŋ   **k-ɔnʊ́**   **cɛṭə́na**   **c-ɔ-ṭərɔ́ma**   **nán**
stick   C-have   ornamental_tail   C-of-ram   on:ABS

the stick has a ram's tail on it

Two absolute prepositions figure in the next sentence. The complement of **ṭɔ** (realized as **ṭán**) is the place name **ṭaɽʋ,** which functions as the subject of a clause with 'have'. The complement of **ń-** (realized as **ŋŋɪn**) are the three big roads:

ṭáɽʋ́   **ṭ-ɔ́nʊ́**   **aṭər**   **w-əɽapʊ́rʊk**   **ɪ-íttí~íttík**
Ṭaɽʋ   C-have   roads   C-three   RES-(C-)PLR~(C-)big

ɪ-íṭɪkakɔ   **ŋ.ŋɪn**   **ṭán**
RES(-C)-be_entered:INCOMPL   with:ABS   at:ABS

Ṭaɽʋ has three big roads for entering it (with which it can be entered into)

16.6.2. Absolute prepositions preceded by **ń-**

The absolute prepositions can be preceded by **ń-**:

n-tít   'from, out of'
n-nán   'away from'
n-tán   'away from up', 'fully', 'towards the deictic centre'
n-ṭán   'away from'

Some examples:

ɛṭ-ɪn	**aón**	**cəné**	**á-n-ɔṭɔ́**	**ŋərɛ**	**n.tít**
give:IMP-O1	bees	here	SUBJ-1-pull:DEPINCOMPL	honey	from:ABS

Give me the honeycombs here, so that I suck the honey out of them (App. IV, 90)

m-p-aá.t	**n.tít**
1-C-come:COMPL	from:ABS

I have just now arrived

appɛnṭíná	**w-árɔ́ṭâ**
groundnuts	C-where

ɔ-cɛccé	**p-á.ík**	**p-á.cáɽɔ**	**áɽɔl**	**n-nán**
PERS-Cɛccɛ	C-be:PR	C-peel:INCOMPL	shells	with-on:ABS

where are the groundnuts? Cɛccɛ is peeling them (lit.: peeling the shells from on)

ʊl	**w-a.nɔ́kɔ**	**áɽəpú**	**á-kín**	**ɔ́kéttɛ**
people	C-take:INCOMPL	things	SUBJ.PERS-3A	trade.PLUR:DEPINCOMPL

á-kín	**ɪɔt**	**âkúccị**	**n-nán**
SUBJ.PERS-3A	find:DEPINCOMPL	money	with-on:ABS

the people carry things in order to sell them, so that they make money from them

pʊɽʊpé	**p-ɔká.t**	**tɔ-pɪrá**
bird	C-be:COMPL	up_on-tree

mɔ́ná	**á-p-íɽr.at**	**n-tán**
until	CONJ-C-jump:DEPPRFV	with-up_on:ABS

the bird was in the tree top, then it flew away from there

n-tán does not always have an ablative interpretation. It can express 'fully', 'to the bottom', as in the following sentence:

į̇kk.į̇   **n-tán**
drink:IMP   with-up_on:ABS

drink it all! (i.e. drink it to the bottom, finish it!)

It can also express rather the opposite from ablative meaning: 'towards, facing the deictic centre', as in the following example. Note that unlike in the second example, the Locative-applicative derivation is not used:

ɔll.ʊ   **n-tán**
run:IMP   with-up_on:ABS

run to me/here!

ɔllɔ̱ṭ.ɛ   **n-a-ôn**
run_at:IMP   on-PERS-1

run to me!

In the following sentence, **ntán** expresses 'towards the deictic centre'. It is as if the storyteller positions himself up in the tree, so that the tortoise climbed towards him:

akka   **k-kw-ɔ́kʊɽɔ̱ṭ.ɛ́**   **n-tán**   **a-kəɽɔ́l**   **ɔ́ṭ-íat**
that   3-C-move_up:COMPL   with-up_on:ABS   CONJ-tortoise   IT:DEPINCOMPL-find:DEPPRFV

ɪttɪ   **mɛ́n**   **m-ɛllâ**
that   palm_fruits   C-be_absent:INCOMPL

when he$_i$ had climbed up, the tortoise$_i$ found there were no palm fruits (anymore) (App. IV, 118-119)

ntán in the sense of 'towards the deictic centre' has become a fixed part of the irregular Dependent Incompletive and Incompletive variants of the verb **aɔ** 'come', respectively **ânṭán** and C-**ânṭán**.

16.7. Attachment of **ń**- to an argument that is not its complement

Interestingly, in certain constructions **ń**- 'with, by, (away) from', can be attached to a noun that is not its complement. This happens when the complement is dislocated and an object argument follows the verb. **ń**- can attach to this object argument. In the first example below the complement is dislocated as the head of a relative clause, in the second as subject of a passive clause, and in the third as the head of a predicative adjectival phrase with a passive verb.

lɔn	**ɪ-l-a-kín**	**ɔ́cɔ́kkɪɛ**	**ɲ-ɲókól**
words	RES-C-COP.PERS-3A	make_grow:DEPINCOMPL	with-children

pápénnaŋ	**ɪttǐ …**
well	that

things with which they bring up the children in a good way are …

kəɽɪttaŋ	**éŋ-k-í**	**k-ɔ́-ṭ-ɔkɛccɛtta**	**n-ṭûn**
knife	DEM-C-NEARSP	C-of-NOM-be_cut	with-onion

this knife is for cutting onions (lit.: this knife is of being cut with onions)

kəɽɪttaŋ	**é.ŋk.í**	**k-á.kéccɛtta**	**n-ṭûn**
knife	DEM-C-NEARSP	C-be_cut:INCOMPL	with-onion

this knife is for cutting onions / this knife is for onions to be cut with. (lit.: this knife will be cut with onions)

The construction is also possible when the instrument is the object of the preceding clause:

pʊl	**p-ʊ́mmɔ**	**kʊrǐn**
person	C-take:INCOMPL	awl

á-kw-ɔkʊrrɔ	**ɲ-cakkɔ́ŋ**	**lɔ́n**	**l-ɔ́pə́ṭṭəɾé**
SUBJ-3-engrave:DEPINCOMPL	with-calabash(k.o.)	words	C-very_good

the person takes an awl, in order to engrave the calabash with it very nicely (App. III, 4-5)

Alternatively, constructions with **ŋŋɪn** are possible:

lɔn	ɪ-l-a-kín	ɔ́cɔ́kkɪɛ	ɲókúl
words	RES-C-COP.PERS-3A	make_grow:DEPINCOMPL	children

pápénnaŋ	ŋ.ŋɪn	ɪttǐ …
well	with:ABS	that

things with which they bring up the children well are …

kəɽɪttaŋ	éŋ-k-í	k-á.kéccɛtta	ʈún	ŋ.ŋɪn
knife	DEM-C-NEARSP	C-be_cut:INCOMPL	onion	with:ABS

this knife is for cutting onions / this knife is for onions to be cut with (lit.: this knife will be cut with onions)

The same type of construction is not possible with any of the other absolute prepositions. The first sentence, with **tít**, is fine, the second was rejected.

pərɪt	p-íttat	mɪ̧́l	tít
granary	C-be_put:INCOMPL	sorghum	in:ABS

the granary is for storing sorghum (lit.: the granary is stored sorghum in)

*pərɪt	p-íttat	ɪ-mɪ̧́l
granary	C-be_put:INCOMPL	in-sorghum

the granary is for storing sorghum (lit.: the granary is stored sorghum in)

When the arguments are reversed, a grammatical sentence results:

mɪ̧́l	m-íttat	ɪ-ttĭt
sorghum	C-be_put:INCOMPL	in-granary

the sorghum is put in the granary