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A grammar of Lumun : a Kordofanian language of Sudan

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Citation

Smits, H. J. (2017, September 21). *A grammar of Lumun : a Kordofanian language of Sudan*. LOT, Utrecht. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/57165>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

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Title: A grammar of Lumun : a Kordofanian language of Sudan

Issue Date: 2017-09-21

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’
ɲɔ-	‘on, at’
tɔ-	‘up on, up at’
ɬɔ-	‘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’:

ɲɪ-	‘with, by, (away) from’
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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 **ɲɪ-** ‘with, by, (away) from’ to a different constituent than expected on grounds of the role that it expresses.

16.1. Tone

ɪ-, **ɲɔ-**, **tɔ-** and **ɬɔ-** 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-**, **ɲɔ-**, **tɔ-** and **ɬɔ-** without tone.

ɲɪ-, 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 **ʈɔ-** 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 **ʈɔ-** 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

	<i>ul</i> ‘person’	<i>əlla</i> ‘cats’	<i>cəɽɔkɪ</i> ‘gourd (k.o.)’	<i>əɽəmɛkkʊ</i> ‘bats (sp.)’
ɪ- (also nɔ- , tɔ- , and ʈɔ-)	ɪ-ʊl ‘among the people’	ɪ-əllâ ‘among the cats’	ɪ-cəɽɔkɪ ‘in the gourd’	ɪ-əɽəmɛkkʊ ‘among the bats’
ń-	n-ʊl ‘with the people’	n-əlla ‘with the cats’	ɲ-cəɽɔkɪ ‘with the gourd’	n-əɽəmɛkkʊ ‘with the bats’

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

ɪ-cáa ‘in the grape’

ɪ-éɛ ‘in the poison’ (< **ɪ-** + **ɲɛɛ**)

One L-noun has a different tonal realization when preceded by one of the proclitics **ɪ-**, **nɔ-**, **tɔ-** and **ʈɔ-**. With **cattak/mattak** ‘calabash (k.o.)’ all prepositional proclitics give a H-tone on the first mora:

⁴ There are attestations of a high tone realized on the initial nasal in the word **ɲɪk** (**ɲɪk**). I regard **ɲɪk** 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-cáttak ‘in the calabash (k.o.)’

When **ɪ-**, **nɔ-**, **tɔ-** and **tɔ-** 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-, tɔ-	ń-
tɔk ‘dog’ waɪ ‘cow’ kəɪttāŋ ‘knife’ tɛnnɛkkettā ‘test’	nɔ-tɔk tɔ-waɪ nɔ-kəɪttāŋ ɪ-tɛnnɛkkettā	n-tɔk n-naɪ ŋ-kəɪttāŋ n-tɛnnɛkkettā
kɪt ‘eye’ ɔpá ‘piece of meat’ aɾankál ‘bed’ mɪmānterɪ ‘hedgehogs’	ɪ-kɪt nɔ-ɔpá ta-aɾankál ɪ-cɪmānterɪ	ŋ-kɪt n-ɔpá n-áɾankál ɲ-cɪmānterɪ
mɪl ‘sorghum’ kurrōŋ ‘stick’ ŋáttɔkkɔl ‘calabash (k.o.)’ ŋáttərəpê ‘rabbit’	ɪ-mɪl nɔ-kurrōŋ ɪ-áttɔkkɔl ta-áttərəpê	m-mɪl ŋ-kurrōŋ ŋ-ŋáttɔkkɔl ŋ-ŋáttərəpê
tərɔma ‘ram’ lɔmóttu ‘bull (k.o.)’ ŋaccəpápa ‘tool (k.o.)’ aləppatúra ‘tomato’ ɪɾɪmaníɾɪman ‘spiders’	tɔ-tərɔma tɔ-lɔmóttu na-accəpápa ɪ-aləppatúra ɪ-ɪɾɪmaníɾɪman	n-tərɔma l-lɔmóttu ŋ-ŋáccəpápa n-áləppatúra n-íɾɪmaníɾɪman

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 **tɔ-**) 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. **mart** ‘beans’ in the example below is an entirely low noun:

pul **p-ɔɾəkɔt.ɛ** **mart** **nɔ-capó**
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-wék
shoe	C-be:PR	in-leg

the shoe is on the foot

kwɔk	k-a.ɪk	nɔ-wék
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 **ɬɔ-** 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 **ɬɔ-** 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 (**ɔ-**) no length seems to be retained, nor for a demonstrative starting with **ɛ**.

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

nɔ- + aɾəpu	> na-aɾəpu ‘on the things’
nɔ- + ɛpu	> nɛ-ɛpû ‘on the mushrooms’

The same happens before independent possessors and demonstratives. Concord **ɬ** in the examples below agrees, for example, with **ɬuk** ‘dog’.

nɔ- + **áɬaŋ** > **n-áɬaŋ** ‘on yours’
nɔ- + **enɬí** > **n-enɬí** ‘on this one’

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

nɔ- + **ɛɾəkê** > **nɔ-ɾəkê** ‘on the stirring spoons’

Attachment before one of the other vowels (**i**, **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 than upon direct adjacency of the vowels. The same assimilations take place, e.g.,

nɔ- + **ŋɛɾɪŋkâ** > **nɛ-ɛɾɪŋkâ** ‘on the donkey’

Attachment to (pro)nouns with the persona prefix

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

k-kw-ɔɬɬé.t **nɔ-kəmən ána** **n-a-paŋón** **ana nɔ-ɪmít**
 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

ɬɔkukkúón ‘at the house of Kukku and his family’

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

na-âk ‘on him/her’ (< **nɔ-** + **ɔâk**)

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 **ĩ-**) 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-kurrŋ ‘with the stick’

It fully assimilates to following **l**:

l-lŋn ‘with words’

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

n-naĩ ‘with the cow’ (< **ń-** + **waĩ**)

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 **ɸ**. 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.,

ɔkukkú kórítt̪t̪k ‘Kukku of in the field’ (i.e., Kukku 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-ípe	akk-ɔpərót	ná-í-c-íé
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- + **pət̪ək** ‘stone’ > **nɔ-t̪t̪ək** ‘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 tɔ-

All four locative proclitics (ɪ-, nɔ-, tɔ- and tɔ-) can be used both in static expressions and in movement expressions⁵.

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’.

mart	m-a.ɪk	ɪ-cakkəlɔk
beans	C-be:PR	in-calabash(k.o.)

the beans are in the calabash

ɔppɔt.ɛ	máɪt	ɪ-én-c-í
put_at:IMP	beans	in-DEM-C-NEARSP

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

ɔccu	tɔrək	én-t-í	á-ɪɪke	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 ...)

aɾəpu	w-ɔɾɪát.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 tɔ- (see chapter 4.4). Next to this form, a regular form is often

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 **ɾ-** are:

- pəṭək** ‘stone’
ɾ-pəṭək ‘under a stone’ (typically in a (small) hole that has been dug and that has been closed by a stone)
ɾ-ttək ‘in the cavity under stones that touch each other’ (typically shaped by nature)
- kərək** ‘farming field’
ɾ-kərək ‘in the bigger farming field away from the house’
ɾ-ttək ‘in the small farming field immediately around the house’
- pərɪt** ‘granary’
ɾ-pərɪt ‘in the space between the actual storehouse and the wall of a room in which it is located’
ɾ-ttɪt ‘in the granary (i.e. in the actual storehouse)’

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

- ka** ‘body’
ɾ-ká kə ‘in the centre/middle part of’ (in the sense of not at the edge)
ɾ-kkwâ ‘in the body’

‘The shoe is on the foot’ can be expressed with **ɾ-** (example given in 16.1), and **ɾ-** is used in the following situation:

ɔ-nənní	p-á.ík	p-á.kə	cuccú	ɾ-cələk
PERS-Nenni	C-be:PR	C-wear:INCOMPL	bead	in-neck

Nenni is wearing a necklace around her neck

The use of **ɾ-** 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): **ɪcəpə**.

ɪ-cəpɔ̌ **ul** **w-á.kɪɔ̌** **mɪl**
 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-**:

ul 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 **ɔ̌tɪt tɪt** ‘answer (to it)’. Such verbs have the absolute preposition **tɪt** 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’.

ɲuccók **ɲ-á.ík** **nɔ-kəɽittǎŋ**
 blood C-be:PR on-knife
 there is blood on the knife

It can also be used in a directional way:

m-p-a.ík **p-a.ẽ** **nɔ-kəɽén** **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 **nɔppǎn** ‘inside’ (**nɔ-** + **tɔpan** ‘room’).

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

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

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

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

pəṭək	‘stone’
nə-pəṭək	‘on the stone’
nə-tṭək	‘in the country’

nə- 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-aṅkət	ittɪ	k-kw-ítta	(nə-)ṭopút	én-ṭ-í
3-C-NEG-want:DEP COMPL	that	3-C-be_married:INCOMPL	(on-)year	DEM-C-NEARSP

she does not want to get married this year

nə- is applied also in non-locative domains, expressing notions such as ‘about’ or ‘concerning’:

m-p-a.ɪk	p-a.ṭ-ére	nó-kammrâ
1-C-be:PR	C-IT:INCOMPL-talk	on-singing whip

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

lən	ɪ-l-a	k-kw-ókkəṭ.é	nə-pûl
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 **nə-**, for example **ṭṭe nán** ‘leave sb./sth. (behind)’. Such verbs have the absolute preposition **nán** when cited alone.

Comparative constructions

nə- 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-acókw-cəkət** **nə-lök**
 cats C-fast-REDUP on-dogs
 cats are faster than dogs

tök **t-a.kípa** **nə-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):

pul **i-p-špari** **p-ənó** **cúré** **c-érík** **ná-c-š-púl** **í-p-šcura**
 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).

ə-kín **t-əpərât**⁶ **n-a-nîñ**
 PERS-3A C-good on-PERS-1A
 they are better than we (are)

lotti **η-kw-ənó** **itti** **η-kw-a.rəkə** **turít** **t-əppət**⁷ **n-a-tuttô**
 Lotti 2-C-have that 2-C-eat:INCOMPL food C-many on-PERS-Tuttu
 Lotti, you must eat more than Tuttu

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

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

á-t-aŋ **ákk-ɔpərɔt**⁸ **n-á-t-in**
 PROB-C-POSS2 FOC-good on-PROB-C-POSS1

yours is better than mine (for example **tök** ‘dog’)

Also the verb **ɔllɔ** ‘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.llo** **nɔ-tök**
 cat C-run:INCOMPL on-dog

a cat runs (faster) than a dog

16.3.3. **tɔ-** ‘up on, up at’

Unlike **r-** 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:

puɾupé **p-ɔɾɔ.t** **nɔ-pirâ**
 bird C-land:COMPL on-tree

the bird has alighted in the tree

puɾupé **p-ɔɾɔ.t** **tɔ-pirâ**
 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.

ŋattɔkkɔl **ŋ-á.ík** **nɔ-cénâ**
 calabash(k.o.) C-be:PR on-grinding_table

the *ŋattɔkkɔl*-calabash is on the grinding table

ŋattɔkkɔl **ŋ-á.ík** **tɔ-cénâ**
 calabash(k.o.) C-be:PR on-grinding_table

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

the *ηαττῶκκῶλ*-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).

nəllapók	n-á.úrət	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 **tə-** (a few more examples are given in table 102).

k-kw-ónək.áte	tə-cəlâk
3-C-put:PST	up_on-neck

s/he put it on his neck

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

k-kw-árrót.ε	tə-εrɪŋkâ	(< tə- + <i>ηερɪŋkâ</i>)
3-C-cross:COMPL	up_on-donkey	

s/he has mounted the donkey

With motion verbs, **tə-** 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.εñ	tə-man	m-ś-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, **tə-** is used:

m-p-a.ɪk	p-a.ɛ̃	ṭə-man	m-ṣ-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 **ṭəpɔ̃n** (< **ṭə-** + **əpɔ̃n** (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-ṭ-ú.ɪ	ṭə.pɔ̃n
3A-C-descend:COMPL	at_farming_field

they have descended to the field

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

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

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

nəkkwɔ̃n and **ṭəkkwɔ̃n** also exist, but have specific meanings: **nəkkwɔ̃n** ‘near the field’ and **ṭəkkwɔ̃n** ‘at the side of the field’.

16.3.4. **ṭə-** ‘at’

ṭə-, like **ṭə-**, functions only as a locative marker. **ṭə-** 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 **ṭ-** and **t-** are given in the table. **kucúl** ‘back’ occurs in its contracted form.

Table 102 Body parts collocated with **ṭ-** and/or **t-**

	ṭ-	t-
kucúl ‘back’	ṭ-ccúl ‘at the back’	t-ccúl ‘between the shoulders’
carók ‘belly’	ṭ-carók ‘at the belly’	
kuṅko ‘knee’	ṭ-kuṅkô ‘at the knee’	
cəkên ‘lower back’	ṭ-cəkên ‘at the lower back’	
marró ‘kidneys’	ṭ-marró ‘at the kidneys’	
cələk ‘neck’		t-cələk ‘at the neck’
cərĕṅ ‘chest’		t-cərĕṅ ‘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 (**tók**) is expressed with **ṭ-**, irrespective of whether one actually goes down or up the mountain in order to reach it.

m-p-a.ık

1-C-be:PR

p-a.εś

C-go:INCOMPL

ṭ-ı-rók

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 **t-**: **təkkú** (**t-** + **kupú** ‘hole in rock where water gathers’). Such places are typically found higher up in mountains.

Places belonging to **mottô** ‘Arabs’ are indicated with **ṭ-**, reflecting that such places are not on the mountains, but on the low plains in between or further away.

ɔ-kumán **p-á.ík** **ɬɔ-múttô**
PERS-Kumaŋ C-be:PR at-Arabs

Kumaŋ is in Arab country

Combinations of **ɬɔ-** and words with the persona prefix are restricted to plurals of kinship terms and personal names, and the noun **ɔpattôn** ‘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 **ɬɔ-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 **ɬɔ-patt-ôn**
3-C-NEG-be_married:DEPINCOMPL at.PERS-person-PL

she will not be married into the household of those people

ɬɔ- cannot be combined with a pronoun, whether singular or plural. Pronominal replacement of **ɬɔ-kakkân** ‘at the place of Kakka and her family’ and **ɬɔ-pattôn** ‘at the house of those people’ in the examples above is by the absolute form of **ɬɔ-**, **ɬán** ‘at, there’ (see 16.6), not by ***ɬɔ-kín** ‘at them’ (or ***ɬakín**).

ɬɔ may historically be a formative of the word **ɬəpət** (also **ɬəpút**) ‘outside’. There is also **ɬɔ-ɬəpút** ‘place outside which people use as toilet’⁹.

16.3.5. Place names

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

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.

ĩār	lit. 'In the mud'	< ḡār 'mud'
ĩcapó	lit. 'In the ground'	< capó 'ground'
nəṭupərǝ	lit. 'In the valley'	< ṭupərǝ 'valley'
nəkĩṭĩn	?	< ?
təpərĩncĩn	lit. 'Up the <i>pərĩncĩn</i> -tree'	< pərĩncĩn 'tree (sp.)'
təcamarāḡ	lit. 'Up at the free fight'	< camarāḡ 'free fight'
ṭammó	lit. 'At <i>ammó</i> '	< ammó (name of person)
ṭərək ṭápê	lit. 'At the waterplace of fish'	< tók ṭápê 'waterplace of fish'

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

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

Place names are not combined with one of the prepositions **ĩ-**, **nə-**, **tə-** or **ṭə-**. They can only be combined with **ń-**, expressing 'from'. Compare:

m-p-a.ĩk **təṭəmaṭṭĩn**
1-C-be:PR Təṭəmaṭṭĩn

I am in Təṭəmaṭṭĩn

m-p-a.ĩk **p-a.éǝ** **təṭəmaṭṭĩn**
1-C-be:PR C-go:INCOMPL Təṭəmaṭṭĩn

I am going to Təṭəmaṭṭĩn

m-p-aat **n-təṭəmaṭṭĩn**
1-C-come:COMPL with-Təṭəmaṭṭĩn

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

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

m-p-ḳnó **man** **m-a** **m-p-ḳeró.t** **kátúkəli**
 1-C-have house C-be:COP 1-C-trade:COMPL Kadugli

I have a house which I bought in Kadugli

cárit **éś** **kéccók** **ír-ḳṭ-ḳkk¹⁰** **ḡépak**
 12HORT go:DEPINCOMPL market (SUBJ-)12-IT:DEPINCOMPL-drink:DEPINCOMPL beer

let's go to the market and drink beer

k-kw-áa.t **ḡ-kárəṭúm**
 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-**, **nə-**, **tə-** and **ṭə-**, a noun (mostly a body part), and the connexive **C-ḳ-** 'of' function as what I will call 'complex prepositions'. The connexive is proclitic to a noun. A list follows here:

ɪ-cuṛé C-ḳ-	'under, at the bottom of'	(cuṛé 'buttock')
ɪ-carək C-ḳ-	'inside'	(carək 'belly, stomach')
ɪ-poṛut p-ḳ-	'in the middle of (on a vertical axis)'	(poṛut 'waist')
ɪ-ká k-ḳ-	'in the centre part of'	(ka 'body')
ɪ-ṭəṛəkṭ ṭ-ḳ-	'among, between, in the middle of'	(ṭəṛəkṭ 'space between two things')
ɪ-ccík k-ḳ-	'near (no contact)'	(cík 'place(s)')
nə-kuṭút k-ḳ-	'at the edge of, at the side of'	(kuṭút 'lip')
tə-kṭ k-ḳ-	'before, in front of'	(kṭ 'eyes')
ṭə-ccul k-ḳ-	'behind'	(kucúl 'back')
ṭə-cəkén C-ḳ-	'behind, under'	(cəkén 'lower back')
ṭə-carək C-ḳ-	'in front of'	(carək 'belly, stomach')

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

The formative **ṛá** in the following complex prepositions is probably related to **cá** ‘head’:

ṇṇ-ṛa w-ṣ-, **ṇṛṣ-** ‘on top of, over, above of’
ṭṭ-ṛa w-ṣ-, **ṭṛṣ-** ‘on top of, over, above of (element of height expressed)’

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

ṛ-mṛṛé **m-ṇ-mṛṇṇ**
 in-buttocks C-of-mountains

at places at the bottom of the mountains

m-p-ṇká.t **cik** **a-n-ṣllṭ** **ṛ-lṛṛəkṛt** **l-ṣ-kəṃán**
 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 **ṭṛṛəkṛt**.

m-p-ṇká.t **ṛ-ṭṛṛəkṛt** **ṭ-ṣ-ṭl**
 1-C-be:COMPL in-space_in_between C-of-people

I was between the people

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

ṇṛukṛ **ṭṛṛṛṭán** **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.ccíe **ṭík** **ṇ-kurúṭta**
 1-C-ignite:INCOMPL fire with-rubbing_stick

I will make a fire with a rubbing stick

ɔ-paṭṭi **p-ɔkkottát.ε** **ṇ-kəṛṭṭāṇ**
 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-pól** **p-εn**
 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-ɔṅkat **l-lɛcək** **cɪk-ɪpəriaṇ**
 CONJ-1-go:DEPPRFV with-goats LOC-ɪpəriaṇ

... and I went with the goats to ɪpəriaṇ

k-kw-áa.t **m-máṭṭák** **m-én**
 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 (**ɔ-**). 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-paṭṭi **p-ɔkkottáṭ.ɛ** **n-tóllérák** **tɔ.pɔn**
 PERS-person C-be_killed:COMPL with-thunder_and_lightening at_farming_field
 the person was killed by lightening in the farming field

ɔ-paṭṭi **p-ɔkkottáṭ.ɛ** **n-tők**
 PERS-person C-be_killed:COMPL with-dog
 the person was killed by a dog

k-kw-ɔkkottáṭ.ɛ **p-cuttô**
 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 (ɔ-) use a construction with the absolute counterpart of ń-, **ɲɲm**. 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 **ti** in **nti i-** is possibly an older form of the PPC **i-**.

nti i- (< ń- + i-)
n-nɔ- (< ń- + nɔ-)
n-tɔ- (< ń- + tɔ-)
n-tɔ- (< ń- + tɔ-)

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 lɔn í-l-ɔkɪtak 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.ɔ 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-tɔ-mɪʁɔk p-átt-ɔŋáɛɔ
 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:

ɬupəɬɔ ɬ-ɔ-ɬɔcurák ɬ-úkwɪt n.tɪ ɪ-lɔpəɬɔ áppɪk tɔrrô
 valley C-of-ɬɔcurák C-long from in-valleys all Lumun_country

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

ń- can also precede complex prepositions. Some examples:

n.tɪ ɪ-ccɪk kɔ- from near
n-nɔ-kuɬút kɔ- from at the edge of, at the side of
n-tɔ-kɪt kɔ- from before, in front of
n-ɬɔ-cəkén cɔ- from behind, under

ɔll.ɔ n.tɪ ɪ-ccɪk k-úŋ
 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 **cɪk** ‘place(s)’:

ŋ-kw-aa.t
2-C-come:COMPL

ŋ-kárə̀ta
with-where

m-p-aa.t
1-C-come:COMPL

ŋ-kárə̀ttôm
with-Khartoum

where have you come from? I have come from Khartoum

ɲ-cínâɲ

with-there_where_you_are

from there, *also*: from then onwards

ana

and

w-íɬt

PRO.C-find:INCOMPL

ul

people

ɲ-cɪk

with-place

áppɪk

all

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

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

m-p-aa.t

1-C-come:COMPL

ɲ-cɪk-kéccôk

with-LOC-market

I come from the very market

m-p-ɪcát.ɛ

1-C-lie_down:COMPL

mɛccɪn

yesterday

ɲ-cɪk-ɪ-cɪŋkɪ

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-** + **cɪk** (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:

i-	> tít	‘in’
nɔ-	> nán	‘on, at’
tɔ-	> tán	‘up there’ (‘up on, up at’)
ɬɔ-	> ɬán	‘there’
ń-	> ɲɲm	‘with, by’

ɲɲm 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 **ɲ** sometimes receives a high tone from a preceding element, which is not compatible with a rising tone. **ɲɲm** 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 **ɬán** 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’. **ɲɲm** contains the formative **ɲm** ‘what’, which is also part of the question word **ɲín-ɬa** ‘what’ and the related words **akkaín/akaín**, **akkaínɬa/akaínɬa** ‘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

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

ɔt̪t̪ɛ nɔ-t̪ʊk
 leave:IMP on-dog
 leave the dog behind!

ɔ̃t̃t̃e **nán**
 leave:IMP on:ABS

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

***ɔ̃t̃t̃e**
 leave:IMP

ɔ̃t̃t̃ɔ̃t **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:

ámamá **m-p-ípíttɔ̃t.é** **nón** **lón** **ɔ̃-nɔ̃n** **t̃-ǎnn-ɔ̃t̃t̃ɔ̃t-in** **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

ɔ̃p̃ər̃əttakɔ̃t **tít** ‘be surprised, be amazed’ (related to **ɔ̃p̃ər̃əttakɔ̃** ‘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 **nɔ̃-**:

ɔ̃k.kw.í-ón **í-t̃-ɔ̃ccíkkɔ̃t-ɔ̃k** **t̃-ɔ̃ká.t** **cík**
 the_one-PL RES-C-hear:COMPL-O3 C-be:COMPL VREF
a-kín **ɔ̃p̃ər̃əttakɔ̃t** **tít** **nó-t̃-ma** **cík** **t̃-óŋ**
 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-kəpa** **a-kín** **ónókke.kat** **nó-t̃-ɪk**
 CONJ.PERS-3A divide_in_two:DEPPRFV in-meat CONJ.PERS-3A put:DEPPRFV on-fire
kurek-kurek **m-marro** **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 ónék.at túttórúk á-kín óínkat η.ηm cı̣t.tán
 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 túsı̣r t-əmmá.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)

tə ‘up at’ and tə ‘at’ always refer to a place. Their absolute counterparts (tán and tán) function as locative adverbs, ‘(up) there’ and ‘there’ respectively. Compare:

n-t-əká.t tərəmatón-ı
 2A-C-be:COMPL Tərəmatón-Q
 ın-t-əká.t tán máı
 1A-C-be:COMPL up_on:ABS a_short_while_ago

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

n-t-əká.t t-ə-kakká-n-ı
 2A-C-be:COMPL at.PERS-Kakka-PL-Q
 ın-t-əká.t tán máı
 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-əkkwe ı-attâl
 2A-beat:DEPINCOMPL in-palms_of_hands

n-əpákkot tán
 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 **oretta** ‘be forgotten’, the complement (‘these things’) of **no** ‘on, at’ is present in the clause but, as the subject, stands before the verb. Functioning as subject, it cannot be marked by **no-**. The verb, however, still requires the prepositional phrase, which is realized as **nán**. A corresponding active sentence is given in the second example.

lon	el-l-i	l-a.ka	l-oretta	nán
words	DEM-C-NEARSP	C-be:INCOMPL	C-be_forgotten:INCOMPL	on:ABS

these things will be forgotten

ul	w-óre	no-lón	él-l-í
people	C-forget:INCOMPL	on-words	DEM-C-NEARSP

the people will forget these things

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

wək	en-n-i	w-a.llóra	η.ηm
shoes	DEM-C-NEARSP	C-be_run:INCOMPL	with:ABS

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

ul	w-a.llə	n-nók	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 **ᎡᎡᎡᎡ**. In such constructions the agent (pro)noun comes after the verb and is then followed by **ᎡᎡᎡᎡ**.

k-kw-ᓴkkottát.ε **ᓴ-kukku** **ᎡᎡᎡᎡ**
 3-C-be_killed:COMPL PERS-Kukku with:ABS
 s/he was killed by Kukku

k-kw-ᓴkkottát-ᓴk **ᎡᎡᎡᎡ**
 3-C-be_killed:COMPL-O3 with:ABS
 s/he was killed by him / her

ᎡᎡᎡᎡ does not always follow the agent immediately:

mén **m-á.fk** **m-á.cúraᓴ-ᓴk** **nᓴ-kwεε** **ᎡᎡᎡᎡ**
 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 **ᎡᎡᎡᎡ** and the construction with **ᎡᎡᎡᎡ**:

k-kw-ᓴkkottát.ε **Ꭱ-cuttô**
 3-C-be_killed:COMPL with-Arab_person
 s/he was killed by the Arab

k-kw-ᓴkkottát.ε **cuttô** **ᎡᎡᎡᎡ**
 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 **ᎡᎡᎡᎡ** was initially rejected, but on a later occasion considered possible, though not preferred. The construction in the second example, with **ᎡᎡᎡᎡ**, is the common expression.

***/?k-kw-ᓴkkottát.ε** **kεᓴttan** **k-ᓴ-kukku** **ᎡᎡᎡᎡ**
 3-C-be_killed:COMPL knife C-of.PERS-Kukku with:ABS
 s/he was killed with Kukku's knife

k-kw-ókkottát.ε **η-kəɽittan** **k-ó-kukkô**
 3-C-be_killed:COMPL with-knife C-of.PERS-Kukku
 s/he was killed with Kukku'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 **m-p-ápó.t** **ná-átərapé ...**
 if 1-C-grab:INCOMPL on-rabbit
 when I grab the rabbit ...

ámmá **ó-nín** **t-áp.árs.t** **nán** **ó-nín** **átərapé ...**
 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-kukkú **í-k-á** **m-p-ócorót.é** **tít**
 PERS-Kukku RES-C-COP 1-C-meet:COMPL in:ABS
 Kukku, whom I met with in the way, ...

caɽɪ **ɪ-c-a** **k-kw-á.t-ɔnɔ** **nán**
 day RES-C-COP 3-C-IT:INCOMPL-build:DEPINCOMPL on:ABS
 the day on which he will go and build

aɽəpu **ɪ-ónta** **η.ηm**
 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 **ńá** ‘where’ (11.3). Thus:

k-kw-ákənn-ɪɛ **na** **k-kw-áa.t** **ń.ɲɪn**
 3-C-NEG-say:DEPCOMPL where:REL 3-C-come:COMPL with:ABS
 s/he did not say where s/he came from

tɔumáŋ **na** **k-kw-áa.t** **ń.ɲɪn**
 Tɔumáŋ where:REL 3-C-come:COMPL with:ABS
 Tɔumáŋ, where s/he came from

In constructions with a location as subject and ‘have’

Preposition and noun are also separated in constructions with **C-ɔnô** ‘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:

cɛtəna **c-ɔ-tərɔma** **c-a.ɪk** **nɔ-kurrɔŋ**
 ornamental_tail C-of-ram C-be:PR on-stick
 the ram’s tail is on the stick

kurrɔŋ **k-ɔnô** **cɛtəna** **c-ɔ-tərɔma** **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 **ɬɔ** (realized as **ɬán**) is the place name **ɬaɬu**, which functions as the subject of a clause with ‘have’. The complement of **ń-** (realized as **ɲɲɪn**) are the three big roads:

ɬáɬú **ɬ-ɔnô** **aɬər** **w-əɬapóruk** **ɪ-íttí~íttík**
 ɬaɬu C-have roads C-three RES-(C-)PLR~(C-)big
ɪ-íɬɪkako **ɲ.ɲɪn** **ɬán**
 RES(-C)-be_entered:INCOMPL with:ABS at:ABS
 ɬaɬu 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-ťán	‘away from’

Some examples:

ę-in	aún	cəné	á-n-ɔʔó	ɲəre	n.tít
give:IMP-01	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

appentíná	w-árəťâ
groundnuts	C-where

ɔ-cɛccé	p-á.ík	p-á.cáɔ	áɔl	n-nán
PERS-Cɛccé	C-be:PR	C-peel:INCOMPL	shells	with-on:ABS

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

ul	w-a.nókɔ	áɔpú	á-kín	ókétte
people	C-take:INCOMPL	things	SUBJ.PERS-3A	trade.PLUR:DEPINCOMPL

á-kín	ɾɔt	âkúccɪ	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

puɔupé	p-ɔká.t	tɔ-pirá
bird	C-be:COMPL	up_on-tree

méná	á-p-írr.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:

ikk.i 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:

oll.u n-tán
 run:IMP with-up_on:ABS

run to me/here!

ollot.e 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-ókut.t.é n-tán a-kəɽɔl ɔt-íat
 that 3-C-move_up:COMPL with-up_on:ABS CONJ-tortoise IT:DEPINCOMPL-find:DEPPRFV
ittı mén m-ellâ
 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 **ântán** and **C-ântán**.

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** **ʒɔ́kkɪɛ** **ɲ-ɲókúl**
words RES-C-COP.PERS-3A make_grow:DEPINCOMPL with-children

pápénnan **ittĩ ...**
well that

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

kəɽɪttan **éŋ-k-í** **k-ʒ-t-ʒkɛccɛtta** **n-tũn**
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)

kəɽɪttan **é.ŋk.í** **k-á.kɛccɛtta** **n-tũn**
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:

pɔl **p-úmmɔ** **korĩn**
person C-take:INCOMPL awl

á-kw-ɔkurɔ **ɲ-cakkóŋ** **lɔn** **l-ʒpáttərə́**
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 **ŋŋm** are possible:

lən **ɪ-l-a-kín** **ʒcɔkkɪɛ** **ɲókól**
 words RES-C-COP.PERS-3A make_grow:DEPINCOMPL children

pápénnaŋ **ɲ.ɲm** **ittĩ ...**
 well with:ABS that

things with which they bring up the children well are ...

kəɽɪttaŋ **éŋ-k-í** **k-á.kéccetta** **tún** **ɲ.ɲm**
 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.

pərit **p-íttat** **mɪl** **tít**
 granary C-be_put:INCOMPL sorghum in:ABS

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

***pərit** **p-íttat** **ɪ-mɪl**
 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:

mɪl **m-íttat** **ɪ-ttĩt**
 sorghum C-be_put:INCOMPL in-granary

the sorghum is put in the granary