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A grammar of Nchane: A Bantoid (Beboid) language of Cameroon

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Chapter 8

Other word classes

This chapter is concerned with word classes other than nouns, nominal modifiers, verbs and grammatical markers such as tense and aspect auxiliaries. I begin in §8.1 with a description of prepositions, which function in locational deictic expressions, as well as establishing ‘aboutness’ relationships. §8.2 describes the comitative preposition **bé** ‘with’, which is also functions as a coordinating conjunction. Interjections and ideophones are presented in sections 8.3 and 8.4 respectively. A brief description of predication involving hand movements appears in §8.5, and locational adverbs are treated in §8.6. The chapter ends with §8.7, in which temporal adverbs are described.

8.1 Prepositions

The primary preposition type in the data corpus establishes locational and orientational relationships between verbs and their constituents. Description of these “locational” prepositions takes up the largest portion of this section. The preposition **kɔnɛ** ‘about’ represents a second type and is relatively uncommon in the data. Accordingly, it is briefly described at the end of the section.

There are four different locational prepositions attested in the data corpus. With each of these prepositions, the resulting prepositional phrases include the postpositional applicative marker **lē** ‘APPL’. (See §11.1.3 for a discussion regarding

the applicative analysis.) The various prepositions are described in the subsections which follow, where prepositional phrases in the examples appear in brackets and prepositions are bolded.

Table 8.1 summarizes the locational prepositions and the semantic expressions typically associated with each.

Preposition	Gloss	Semantic expression
fè	<i>at</i>	movement
à	<i>in</i>	bounded location
yè	<i>on</i>	unbounded location
m̄bébé	<i>near</i>	approximate location

Table 8.1 Summary of Nchane locational prepositions.

As a reminder, **fè** and **à** each have locative noun counterparts designated as classes 16 and 18 respectively, which are described in §5.2.3. Prepositional phrases are differentiated from their corresponding locative noun phrases by phrase syntax and agreement patterning. First, as stated above, prepositional phrases usually include the postposition applicative marker, while locative noun phrases do not. Second, prepositions do not generate agreement marking; their nominal complements maintain their own lexical class marking and agreement protocols. Locative nouns generate agreement, generally **fè** and **à** respectively, which is reflective of the locative noun class marking.

8.1.1 fè ‘at’

The preposition **fè** usually expresses a change in location of the subject and is glossed as ‘at’. The concept of ‘movement’ is illustrated in examples (8.1) and (8.2).

- | | |
|-------|---|
| (8.1) | lē bó dó bó gxi, bó bú [fɛ ki-tē ky-ē: lē] |
| | SET 3PL SIT 3PL go 3PL arrive at c7-tree c7-ANAL APPL |
| | <i>'As they went, they arrived at that tree.'</i> |

(8.2) lē Ø-bwē: làd-é mwē, wù gē: bī-nfūnē
 SET c1-mother go.goal-PROG c3.garden 3SG put c8-corn

lē wù shé¹
 SET 3SG remain

wū gō [fè Ø-ŋ-gò wù-bàlā lē]
 3SG grind at c1-NMZ-Grind c1-foreign APPL

'As the mother was going to the farm, she put corn aside so that she (the daughter) would remain (near the house) and take [it] to the grinding mill.'

Disobedient Child.1.3

Movement is also apparent in clauses with the verb **gē:** 'go', where the endpoint of the movement is expressed through the prepositional phrase, as in (8.3) and (8.4).

(8.3) wù tū bō: bā-ā
 3SG carry c2.child c2-ANAL

wù gē: [fè Ø-mū wù jnchē lē]
 3SG go at c1-person c1AM c10.medicine APPL

'...he took those children to a doctor.' What-goes-around.9.6

(8.4) bō gēn-è [fè bō lē] sēgè-chì,
 3PL.HORT go-PROG at 3PL APPL when-all

bō gvūn-è bō bō ká fì-ì bō
 3PL.HORT obey-PROG 3PL 3PL ITER help-PROG 3PL

'They (the husband and wife) should visit them (their parents) all the time, and respect them (lit. obeying them and helping them)'

Marriage.6.2

It is possible that the complements of **fè** prepositions are not primarily expressions of locations, but a mixture of LOCATION and some other semantic role such as RECIPIENT or BENEFACTIVE (perhaps generalized as GOAL), particularly those where the complement is Human. For example, a benefactive reading is appropriate for the prepositional phrase in (8.5).

(8.5)	↑(yè n̄ɔ: lè), fí m̄ɔ fí jù l̄ɛ on like.that APPL c19 RES c19 COP(N) COMP
	bā-m̄i bá-dùdē l̄eg-è Ø-jɔ [fè b̄eŋ l̄ɛ] c2-person c2-many beg-PROG c1-god at 2PL APPL

'So, many people will be praying to God for you,' Marriage.4.1

8.1.2 à 'in'

The preposition à is the most common preposition in the text corpus and is most often best translated as 'in'. It expresses the location of a constituent, a location that is characterized as bounded. In other words, the location is conceived of as an entity with boundaries like a container and the identified constituent is located within the boundaries. Examples (8.6)-(8.8) illustrate.

(8.6)	bā d̄e: [à Ø-ká l̄ɛ] they cook in c1-barrel APPL
-------	---

'They cook [the palm nuts] in a drum.' Making Palm Oil.1.3

(8.7)	lé jū kìnfɛ:, Ø-kwèsɛ wé-ɛ būsɛ sh̄i, SET COP(N) soon c1-woman c1-ANAL remove c9.chicken
	bā jù bā yɔŋ bā k̄ɛnɛ wá, bā they COP(N) c2 cook c2 prepare already c2
	k̄ujɛ [à k̄i-ŋkámɛ l̄ɛ] wrap in c7-leaf APPL

'Immediately, that woman took the chicken out, having already cooked and prepared [it] and wrapped in a leaf.' Jealous Husband.12

(8.8)	m̄ɛ m̄ɔ ñ-ḡɛ:, m̄ɛ j̄-jɔ j̄ch̄ɛ ȳi 1SG.PRO RES 1SG-go 1SG.PRO 1SG-take c9.medicine c9REL
	bā yú-ȳi b̄i-kfūnè yú, they kill-DISTR.PROG c8-rat on.it
	m̄ɛ ñ-ḡɛ: [à m̄aŋ-kälä mà-à l̄ɛ] 1SG.PRO 1SG-put in c6a-cassava.puff c6a-ANAL APPL

'I went and brought medicine that kills rats and put [it] in that cassava puff.' What-goes-around.9.14

The located constituent and its location are usually concrete, as in the above examples. However, the locational relationship between the constituent and its location in (8.9) might be considered as abstract. This example comes from a story about two wives, one of whom can transform herself into an animal. The first wife goes home, while the second one stayed out in the wilderness in her animal form.

- | | | | | | | | |
|-------|----------|---------|------|---------|----|-----------|------|
| (8.9) | Ø-kwēsé | wú-yú | shè | jièchùŋ | [à | jìŋ | lē] |
| | c1-woman | c1-ANA2 | stay | c?.bush | in | c9.animal | APPL |

'That (other) "woman" remained in the bush as an animal.' (lit. inside the animal) Two Wives.4.3

Historically, many of the people groups throughout Cameroon believed that certain people can change their forms from that of a human to that of an animal. This is in contrast to a person's spirit leaving his or her body and possessing the body of an animal. Therefore, the bounded, locational expression made through the prepositional phrase in this example is figurative.

Most of the verbs appearing with this preposition express movement from outside the location to inside the location. In other words, the prepositional phrase serves as a GOAL. However, certain verbs appearing with the preposition require a SOURCE, with movement from inside the location to outside the location. The examples below illustrate this difference.

- (8.10) gélé kī-yò [à kī-tā: lē]
 put.IMP c7-elephant in c7-fence APPL

'Put the elephant inside the fence (enclosure). '

- (8.11) būsē kī-yò [à kī-tā: lē]
 remove.IMP c7-elephant in c7-fence APPL

'Remove the elephant from the fence (enclosure). '

8.1.3 yè 'on'

The preposition **yè** has a core meaning of ‘on’. Like **à** ‘in’ above, it is not directional, but rather expresses information regarding the location of a constituent or the location of the verb’s affect. The location is not considered bounded as it is with the preposition **à**, and the constituent is thought of as merely present at or in contact with the location, as seen in (8.12) and (8.13).

- (8.12) bē sū: ḥgō [yē Ø-ḥgwè lē]
 1PL string c10.termite on c1-fishing.pole APPL

'We put termites on the hook.' Fishing.1.4

- (8.13) kī já kī shì [yē Ø-tí: ch-ē lē]
 c7 leave c7 sit on c5-stomach c5-3SG.POSS APPL

'...it (the fly) left (the meat) and sat on his (the man's) stomach...' Greedy Friends.1.15

As with à, this preposition can sometimes express a SOURCE location, as in (8.14). This of course is dictated by the requirements of the verb.

- (8.14) já [yē jàñ yí-nè lē] chègē
 leave.IMP on c9.meat c9-PROX APPL quickly

'Go away from this meat quickly!' Greedy Friends.1.11

Note that the preposition ‘from’ is used in the free translations for both examples (8.11) and (8.14), while these examples have different Nchane prepositions. The difference between the two is that (8.11) expresses the bounded location “in the fenced enclosure”, while (8.14) expresses the unbounded location “on the meat”.

Some conventionalized uses of yè are orientational and temporal, as seen in the examples below.

- (8.15) m̄bémbé [yè ki-bō kī-ṣkòjò lē],
 near on c7-arm c7-left APPL

- wù gē yēñ bā-mī bā-mū
 3SG P3 see c2-person c2-some

'Off to his left, he saw some people...' Lake.5.4

⁵⁶ The word ḥgwè ‘fishing pole’ actually refers to the apparatus used for fishing. This includes a stick or pole of some kind, a string, usually a float, and a hook. There are individual words for each of the parts. However, as seen in this example, it is appropriate to talk about attaching the bait using the word referring to the whole apparatus. I assume the speaker could also have used the actual word for hook if he had wanted to.

- | | | | | | | | |
|--------|-----------------------|------------|-------|-----------|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| (8.16) | kí-fé | kí-mú | lé | [yè | kí-lùŋ | lē] | Ø-ŋchfùgè |
| | c7-time | c7-some | COP | on | c7-year | APPL | c1-thousand |
| | bé | Ø-gi: | bvùgè | mbâŋbvùgè | ŋchò | bvūsōshwî | |
| | with | c4-hundred | nine | ninety | plus | seven | |
| | 'Sometime in 1997...' | | | | Training.1.1 | | |

8.1.4 m̄bémbé ‘near’

Proximity is expressed through the preposition **mbémbé** (or **mbébé**) ‘near’, which sometimes can be interpreted as ‘beside’, and is possibly derived from the noun **kimbè** ‘side’. This preposition, which is rare in the data, locates a constituent as being close to the preposition’s complement, as illustrated in (8.17) and (8.18).

8.1.5 kònè ‘about’

Aboutness relationships can be established through the preposition **kònè** ‘about’. Unlike the locational prepositional phrases above, **kònè** phrases do not have the applicative postposition. Example (8.19) illustrates the function of this preposition.

Prepositional phrases headed by **kònè** may also serve as predicate, as seen in (8.20).

(8.20) Ø-jì-shilè wú-yú gè bé [kònè] bá-mí bá
c1-NMZR-sit c1-ANA2 P3 ^PCOP about c2-person c2AM

Ø-nj-fíjé jé yí Ø-jò]
c1-NMZR-preach c9.word c9AM c1-god

'This meeting was about (or for) preachers.'

Training.1.2

8.2 The Comitative conjunction/preposition bé

The relational particle **bé** ‘with’ has multiple functions. In certain contexts, it behaves like a coordinating conjunction. In other contexts, it is a preposition, establishing a certain type of relationship, usually between the subject and the preposition’s complement. These different functions, and the syntactic contexts in which they occur, are summarized in Table 8.2. Note that this summary represents a generalization, since exceptions are observed. A description of each of these functions is given in the remainder of this section.

Syntactic context				Function/Expression
	Noun	Conjunction	Noun	
Noun	Verb _[+motion]	-	Preposition	Noun
Noun	Copula	-	Preposition	Noun
Noun	Verb _[+process]	Noun	Preposition	Noun

Table 8.2 Generalized syntactic contexts and corresponding semantic expressions of the conjunction/preposition **bé**.

As a conjunction, **bé** joins two noun phrases in a coordinate construction, as in (8.21) and (8.22). Note that the conjunction is bolded and the coordinated constituents are in brackets. See also §6.2.1 for a treatment of conjoined noun phrases.

(8.21) bā kē bā chùg-è bā búš-è
they begin c2 wash-PROG c2 remove-PROG

[chē] **bé** [Ø-gvúnē] yéyē
c10.palm.kernel with c5-chaff separate

'...they begin washing and separating the kernels and the chaff...'
Making Palm Oil.1.5

(8.22) [Ø-jwénsɛ] **bέ** [Ø-kwɛ] jɔd-è kī-fē kī
 c1-husband.HORT with c1-wife take-PROG c7-time COMP(K)

bó yūg-è Ø-n-tēfɛ wú būd-é
 3PL hear-PROG c1-NMZR-advise c1REL exit-PROG

Ø-dē yī [Ø-chíjì] **bέ** [Ø-bwɛ] lē
 c4-mouth c4AM c1-father with c1-mother APPL

'The husband and the wife should be taking time to be hearing from the father and mother.' Marriage.6.1

As a nominal coordinator, its function is similar to the English conjunction 'and', and can be used to complete a list of nouns, with the conjunction occurring between the final constituent and the rest of the list.

(8.23) bó gɛ jā tīkālì, bō jnū bó bā-tèŋ, ĩkápí
 3PL P3 leave T. 3PL COP(N) 3PL c2-five N.
 chūŋɛ ĩŋfūmɛ kībó **bέ** bɛm
 Ch. N. K. with B.

'They left Tikari, five of them: Nkanchi, Chungue, Nfume, Kibbo and Bem.' History.2.1

Examples (8.24) and (8.25) illustrate rare cases where constituents other than noun phrases are coordinated. In (8.24) a prepositional phrase and a locative noun phrase are conjoined. In (8.25) a complex prepositional phrase is conjoined to an adverbial phrase.

(8.24) Ø-sōŋō lē kī-tē kī tēmē jñshēŋ
 c5-palm COP c7-tree c7REL strong c9.property
 [yè jñchànè lē] **bέ** [à-wé à-wōŋ ã-chī]
 on N. APPL with c18-up c18-world c18-all

'The palm is an important property tree in Nchane and to all the world.' King of Trees.1.1

- (8.25) kī-mā kí fwē lē, bā gē yēyē [kōnē bà-pchī
 c7-week c7REL front APPL they P3 teach about c2-law
 bā kī-yō kī yūdē bā-nē] bē [nō
 c2AM c7-spirit c7REL clean c2-four with like.that
 Ø-mù lé nō wú bì: bà-mbilē]
 c1-person COP like.that 3SG.FUT ask c2-question

'In the first week, they taught about the four spiritual laws and how to give a questionnaire.' (lit. like that a person will ask questions.)

Training.1.7

Comitative relationships are also expressed through **bé**. In this function, illustrated in (8.26)-(8.28), the particle follows the verb or verb complex, and the verb is usually a motion verb. The preposition indicates that the Agent carried out the action in the presence of the preposition's complement.

- (8.26) Ø-jwē wù já wē bē Ø-kwē: lād-è
 c1-husband 3SG leave up with c1-wife.3SG.POSS go.goal-PROG

'The husband got up with his wife, going [to the farm to work].'

Jealous Husband.3.3

- (8.27) wū bū bē kī-chídè à-bō
 3SG arrive with c7-food.mat c18-hand

'She appeared with a food-mat in [her] hand.'

Two Wives.3.4

- (8.28) wù lēgē wù kwé bē kī
 3SG run 3SG home with c7

'...she ran home with it (the food mat).'

Two Wives.4.2

Clauses containing **bé** phrases preceded by a copula usually have a possessive reading that is reflected in the free translations by the word 'have', as in (8.29) and (8.30).

- (8.29) jñchē:, mē lé bē jñchē yí yū bī-kfūnē
 true 1SG.PRO COP with c9.medicine c9REL kill c8-rat

'In fact (or truly), I have medicine that kills rats.'

What-goes-around.3.2

(8.30) m̄é lé b̄é m̄àŋ-kàl̄á yān̄é à k̄í-k̄é: l̄é
1SG.PRO COP with c6a-cassava.puff here in c7-bag APPL

'I have some cassava puff here in [my] bag...' What-goes-around.7.6

The verb **k̄ém̄é**, which is glossed as ‘have’, is also routinely used in possession expressions. While a careful study of the similarities of these two predication types has not been made, it appears that the **bé** phrase more often connotes physical co-occurrence rather than actual possession.

Example (8.31) represents an exception to the generalized context of a **bé** phrase following a copula as expressing possession. Here it is expressing a comitative relationship.

(8.31) l̄é k̄í-nf̄é: k̄é-̄é d̄ó kí t̄ó-̄ó Ø-jú
SET c7-blind.man c7-ANA1 SIT c7 come-PROG c5-day

chí-m̄í, Ø-kw̄é-sé wú káŋ-è m̄àŋ-kàl̄á
c5-some c1-woman c1REL fry-PROG c6a-cassava.puff

w̄é-̄é wù j̄ú fó b̄é n̄s̄á y-è
c1-ANA1 3SG COP(N) there with c9.friend c9-3SG.POSS

'As that blind man was coming one day, that woman who was frying cassava puff was there (in the neighborhood) with her friend.'

What-goes-around.2.1

Finally, this preposition is used to express instrumental relationships. Here, the PATIENT-object, when syntactically present, occurs between the verb and the INSTRUMENT-object. When the PATIENT-object is not present, it is always inferable. The verb is usually one which expresses a process carried out by the subject. Instrumental expressions are illustrated in (8.32) and (8.33).

(8.32) wù m̄ō wù b̄é: Ø-tí: b̄é f̄í-j̄í,
3SG RES 3SG stab c5-stomach with c19-knife

wù gw̄é wù kwé
3SG fall 3SG die

'...he then stabbed [his] stomach with the knife, he fell and died.'
Greedy Friends.1.15

(8.33)	Ø-táŋ wù m̄-m̄: jε-d̄ε chúlē, bā k̄ē bā c1-time c1REL c6a-oil cool-COMPL well they begin c2
	k̄ol-è b̄é k̄i-nt̄i, bā ḡel-è à sh̄a l̄ē catch-PROG with c7-bowl c2 put-PROG in c9.pot APPL

'When the oil has cooled off well, they start collecting [it] with a bowl,
keeping [it] in a pot.' Making Palm Oil.1.11

Example (8.34) illustrates an abstract instrumental relationship—the blindman has caused many people to be worried or bothered through his begging.

(8.34)	k̄i-nf̄: k̄i-nē lé k̄i f̄ūŋ-s̄ wá c7-blind.man c7-PROX COP c7 worry-CAUS already
	bā-m̄i w̄s̄ b̄é k̄i-l̄éḡ c2-person very with c7-beg

'...this blindman has already worried people too much with begging.'
What-goes-around.3.5

8.3 Interjections

Words that function to primarily express the emotion of the speaker are known as interjections. While interjections are certainly quite common in everyday speech, there are just a few examples of them in the text corpus, and none of them are exclusive to Nchane.

The interjections in the text data always occur clause-initial, often with a raised tonal register, usually with lengthened vowels, and prone to reduplication. Examples (8.35)-(8.37) illustrate two interjections that are common throughout the anglophone regions of Cameroon. As (8.35) and (8.36) show, the interjections **w̄é:**⁵⁷ and **h̄éb̄é** are interchangeable for the most part and express distress and/or surprise.

(8.35)	m̄ō n̄-dú l̄é, w̄é:, Ø-lā w̄-āŋ lé wú fyé RES 1SG-say COMP INTERJ C5-compound C3-1SG.POSS COP C3 burn
	'Then I said, "Oh! My compound has burned!"' ⁵⁸ Fire.2.4-5

⁵⁷ Possibly coming from German *weh* or *wehe* translatable as “woe” or “how dare you”. Note that Cameroon was colonized by Germany between 1884 and 1917.

⁵⁸ This example appears to illustrate a case of agreement confusion, since the noun **lā** ‘compound’ is usually treated as a class 5 noun and pairing with class 6. Note that the agreement consonant for class 5 is “ch”. Other examples of this noun in the corpus display the same confusion, while the plural form is always unambiguously class 6.

(8.36)	lē	ñ-dú	lē,	hēbē:	Ø-lā	w-āŋ	lé
	SET	1SG-say	COMP	INTERJ	c5-compound	c3-1SG.POSS	COP
	wú	fyé	...	bō	gē	bé	bō
	c3	burn	...	3PL	P3	^P COP	3PL
				já	bō	leave	bō
					lé-g-è,		run-PROG

'As I said, "Oh! My compound has burned!", ...they (all the people with me) had gotten up and were running (to where the fire was) ...'

Fire.2.6-3.2

(8.37)	Ø-kwēsé	wē-è	gē	lē,	hēbē:	wō	gé
	c1-woman	c1-ANAL	cry.out	COMP	INTERJ	2SG	do.COND
	bvū-jōyè,	...	wō	tō	wā		
	c14-good	...	2SG	come	already.QP		

'...that woman called out, "Oh! You-do-good..., have you already come?'"

What-goes-around.4.4

The interjection **ɔ:** in (8.38) expresses surprise, while **hāy** in (8.39) expresses frustration and general distress. This second one might be cognate with the Hausa word **kai**. Note that, while the text examples of these interjections show them reduplicated, non-reduplicated instances are common in natural speech.

(8.38)	ɔ:	ɔ:	nsā	y-āŋ,	lé	jichyé:	jichyé:
	INTERJ	INTERJ	c9.friend	c9-1SG.POSS	COP	true	true
	lē	Ø-ñfōŋ	wē-nè	gō:n-è			
	COMP	c1-chief	c1-2SG.POSS	want-PROG			

'kī wù jí fī-kūŋ fy-āŋ'

'comp(K) 3SG eat c19-heart c19-1SG.POSS.QP'

'Oh, oh, my friend! Is it really true that your chief wants to eat my heart?'

Smart Monkey.1.11-12

(8.39)	hāy	hāy	fī	ghá	wù,	wù	tū:	bō:
	INTERJ	INTERJ	c19	surpass	3SG	3SG	carry	c2.child
	bā-ā,	wù	gē:	fē	Ø-mū	wù	jchē	lē
	c2-ANAL	3SG	go	at	c1-person	c1AM	c10.medicine	APPL

"Hey, hey!" It (their illness) was beyond his ability to give aid, and he took them to a doctor.'

What-goes-around.9.6

Example (8.40) illustrates the use of **jiché:** (or **jichyé:**) as an interjection, where it expresses a strong affirmation.

- (8.40) **jiché:**, mē lé [bé jiché yí yū bī-kfūnè]
 true 1SG.PRO COP with c9.medicine c9REL kill c8-rat

'In fact (or truly), I have medicine that kills rats.'

What-goes-around.3.2

This construction could also be viewed as an instance of verum focus, which is treated in §16.3.4.

8.4 Ideophones

Ideophones have not been intensively researched. However, a few occurrences are observed in the text data, which are presented here. Ideophones are words that are iconic in some way, referencing not only an entity, but also some intrinsic quality of the entity. Or as Dingemanse put it, they are “DEPICTIONS” which encourage the hearer to experience “the scene depicted” by the predication (2012: 655).

Perhaps the most common and readily recognized examples of ideophones are onomatopoeic, mimicking the sound of the referent. Examples (8.41)-(8.43) illustrate this type of ideophone. The ideophone **wáà** in (8.41) is clearly not a lexical noun, but is simply a mimicked sound of something being poured. Example (8.42) presents a similar ideophone type, where the utterance of the word **jishñi** is to a degree somehow representative of ‘silence’.

- (8.41) wù jó jù bvù-lé: bw-é:, wù chú **wáà**, à
 3SG take COP(N) c14-food c14-ANA1 3SG pour IDEO in
 jò lē, wū tú wū kēnè wū kēnè wū kēnè
 c9.water APPL 3SG then 3SG stir 3SG stir 3SG stir

'She took the FLOUR, poured [it], pssss, into the water, and stirred and stirred.'

Disobedient Child.1.10

- (8.42) mān-jüssè gè bé **jishñi**
 c6a-area P3 ^PCOP IDEO

*'The area was silent.'*⁵⁹

Lake.6.12

Meanwhile the ideophone **fññ** in (8.43) is clearly a lexical noun, but with idiophonic properties.

⁵⁹ Noni has the cognate **shùmm**, apparently with the [m] lengthened.

(8.43)	lē	fīmī	yé	lēs-è
	SET	c9.air	c9REL	enter-PROG

‘...so that air that was entering [the plane]...’

Training.1.14

In each of the above examples, the ideophone contains a long vowel. The vowel in **fīmī** ‘air’ in (8.43) is particularly long, measuring 0.35 ms, while long vowels typically measure around 0.25 ms. This word is also used to express that the weather is ‘cold’. In this usage, the vowel is often “dragged” very long and with falling tone, **fīmī** ‘It’s very cold.’ (presumably because the wind is blowing strongly). Note that the vowel of **fīmī** in other occurrences is consistent with typical long vowels, suggesting that the vowel length of ideophones can be varied for stylistic effect and/or expression of degree. (These long vowels are represented here in the orthography as double and triple vowels rather than utilizing the conventional long vowel representation **v:** to reflect this characteristic of ideophone phonology.)

Ideophones may also in some way mimic the movement of the referent. The verb **ñdēndè** ‘stumble’ in (8.44) appears to be a reduplicated form that expresses a stuttering action, although the non-reduplicated source of the verb has not been identified.

(8.44)	wù	gɛ	bé	yè	kì-màŋɛ	lē	bé	kì-n-chēŋj
	3SG	P3	^P COP	on	c7-doubt	APPL	with	c7-NMZR-soil
	f5,	wū	gɛ	ñdēndè	wù	bú	à-kfū	
	there	3SG	P3	stumble	3SG	exit	c18-out	

‘He was confused and ill, and he stumbled outside...’

Lake.6.4

Reduplicative morphology in ideophones is not unexpected, as Dingemanse points out that ideophones are “susceptible” to this type of “expressive morphology” (2012: 656). In addition, the reduplication here is consistent with that seen with certain Nchane infinitive verbs functioning as manner adverbs (see §9.4).

8.5 Quotable gestures

This section presents a short description of what some researchers refer to as “quotable gestures” (see Kendon 2013: 12 for example). These are expressions accomplished through the use of a movement of a hand or some other physical gesture with semantic content. The text corpus has only a few examples, two of which are presented below in (8.45) and (8.46). Both of these examples contain the word **né** ‘GEST’, which is possibly derived from the adverbial pronoun **né** ‘like.this’.

In example (8.45), at the moment **né** was uttered, the speaker made a motion with his hand across his neck, mimicking the action of the knife cutting across the neck.

- | | | | | | | |
|--------|-----------|-----|---------|---------|------|-------------|
| (8.45) | já | lò | chégé, | mē | lé | mé |
| | leave.IMP | FOC | quickly | 1SG.PRO | COP | 1SG.PRO.FUT |
| | íj-kó | wò, | mē | n-sé: | né | fè-bwē |
| | 1SG-catch | 2SG | 1SG.PRO | 1SG-cut | GEST | c16-neck |

'Leave quickly or else I will catch you and cut you like this, at your neck!' Greedy Friends.1.19

Example (8.46) is taken from a hortatory text in which a father is giving advice to his son before he is sent off to school in a village outside of the speaker's tribal area. Whether figuratively or literally, the father is holding out some money for the son to take as he says "né".

- | | | | | | | | |
|--------|-----------|----------|--------------|-------------|-----------|-----|-----|
| (8.46) | né | kwà | kfū-nè | shēgē | nò | wō | gè: |
| | GEST | c3.value | c3-PROX | small | like.that | 2SG | go |
| | wō | kè | ki-jn-ché | k-ùŋ | yú | | |
| | 2SG | begin | c7-NMZR-stay | c7-2SG.POSS | on.it | | |

'Here is a little money for you to go and start your stay with.'

School Advice.6

8.6 Locational adverbs

Intentional study of locational deictics has not been undertaken. Nevertheless, several locational adverbs are present in the data corpus, allowing for some analyses to be made. These adverbs usually occur immediately after the verb, but may also follow one of the postverbal constituents, such as an Object or Comitative Oblique. This section presents two different locational paradigms expressed through adverbs: place deixis and vertical deixis.

Place deixis expresses the notions of “here” and “there”. The most common way of expressing the notion of “there” in the data corpus is through the locational pronoun **fɔ**, which is described in §7.2. This pronoun is coreferential with a location expressed through a prepositional phrase headed by the preposition **fè** ‘at’. It is likely that specific, referential locations are expressed in this way, while nonspecific location reference is made through one of the adverbs described below.

The adverb **fēnē** ‘here’ refers to a generic place and often is interpreted as the present location of the speaker. Its form suggests that it is derived from the proximal demonstrative marked with class 16 agreement. It is cognate with the Noni adverb **fēn**, which looks to be further along in the grammaticalization process. Examples (8.47) and (8.48) are given to illustrate the adverb’s use.

- (8.47) mē lé **fēnē** Ø-ŋgē lē
1SG.PRO COP here c1-trouble APPL

'...I am here in trouble.'

Richman.16

- (8.48) bē já **fēnē**,
1PL.HORT leave here

- bē g̪ɛ: wōŋ wū-mū lē
1PL.HORT go c3.village c3-some APPL

'We should leave here and go to some other village.'

Inheritance.5

The notion “here” may also be expressed through the adverb **yānē**, as seen in (8.49) and (8.50). The difference between the adverbs **fēnē** and **yānē** is not clear, although the form of this second adverb hints at a derivation from the proximal demonstrative marked with class 18 agreement. Therefore, in addition to proximity, **yānē** might encode the notion of “inside”, which is associated with class 18 semantics. It is cognate with the Noni form **jān**.

- (8.49) mē lé bē màŋ-kàlà **yānē** à kī-kē: lē
1SG.PRO COP with c6a-cassava.puff here in c7-bag APPL

'I have some cassava puffs here in [my] pocket...'

What-goes-around.7.6

- (8.50) n̄sā y-ē bí: wù lē lā:, kī-f̪ɛ:
c9.friend c9-3SG.POSS ask 3SG APPL Q.COMP c7-blind.man
- kī-nē tó kī tò-ò **yānē** té lè
c7-PROX HAB c7 come-PROG here also APPL.QP

'Her friend asked her, "(Does) this blind man also come here?"'

What-goes-around.2.2

Example (8.51) shows **yānē** being used in opposition to the adverb **yālē**. The identical onsets indicate shared prefixes, again suggesting class 18 agreement. This “there” adverb does not appear elsewhere in the data corpus and no further analysis is available at this time.

- | | | | | | | | | |
|--------|---------------------|----------------|------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| (8.51) | kī-ntūgè
c7-hole | lé
COP | ā-bè-ntēnē
c18-1PL-middle | kī
COMP(K) | táj
be.able | lò
FOC | | |
| | Ø-mù
c1-person | gé
NEG2 | jā
leave | yè
on | yālē,
there | wú
3SG | tó
come | yānē
here |
| | kī
COMP(K) | táj
be.able | lò
FOC | Ø-mū
c1-person | gé
NEG2 | jā
leave | yānē,
here | |

'There is a hole between us, so that a person cannot leave from there and come here, and cannot leave here and come there.' Richman.17

Vertical deixis expresses the notions of “up” and “down”. The adverb **wē** is often marked with class 16 agreement and usually follows the verb, as in (8.52). It is unknown if it can be marked with agreement for any class other than 16.

It commonly appears, as in (8.53) and (8.54), without any class agreement.

The difference between the prefixed and nonprefixed forms is probably nuanced, with the prefixed form expressing movement as well as location.

While the adverb usually immediately follows the verb, it can also follow an Object.

- (8.54) Ø-mū wù Ø-jñō wú-né chāsē chy়া়: wē^{c1-person} c1AM c1-god c1-PROX.FUT raise c9.hand up
'This man of god will raise [his] hand up...' Marriage.3.7

The adverb **fè-kū** ‘down’ always appears marked with class 16 agreement and may immediately follow the verb or some postverbal constituent, as examples (8.55)-(8.57) show.

- (8.55) Ø-jwɛ: shī **fè-kū**
c1-husband sit c16-down

‘*The husband sat down.*’ Jealous Husband.8

- (8.56) bā shī-shɛ **fè-kū**
they sit-CAUS c16-down

‘*...they put [the oil] down.*’ Making Palm Oil.1.9

- (8.57) mɛ ū-gɛ yɛn-é bà-mì lɛ **fè-kū**
1SG.PRO 1SG-P3 see-PROG c2-person APPL c16-down

‘*I was seeing people on the earth...*’ Training.1.16

Example (8.58) shows that multiple locational adverbs can occur in the same clause, although this is the only such example in the data corpus.

- (8.58) gɛ fy-ɛ: fī-mī jùmɛ yú
NEG2 c19-thing c19-some COP(N) on.it

fī ghàg-ɛ bvù-gù **fēnɛ** **fè-kū** gɛ
c19REL surpass-PROG c14-marriage here c16-down NEG2

‘*...there is nothing greater than marriage here on earth.*’ Marriage.3.1

8.7 Temporal adverbial constructions

Several different types of structures are used in expressing temporal information in Nchane sentences, ranging from simple nouns or adverbs to noun phrases with modifying relative clauses. Simple nouns and adverbs, serving as time adverbials are common in natural speech, where they usually appear in sentence-initial position. The time adverbials in the text data are primarily more complex structures. Some of these structures are presented below, with the temporal adverbial structure bolded.

Time adverbials often consist of a noun phrase with a time word like **kilūŋ** ‘year’ as the head, as in (8.59) and (8.60).

The time adverbial can also take the form of a prepositional phrase. In these constructions, the applicative postposition, which usually appears in prepositional phrases, is not present.

- | | | | | | | |
|--------|-----------|--------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|------------|
| (8.61) | à | bvú | bw-é: | bè | gē | jā, |
| | in | c14 | c14-ANA1 | 1PL | P3 | leave |
| | | | | | | |
| | bè | bèn-è | fè-wé | fè | Ø-jò | lē |
| | 1PL | ascend-PROG | c16-up | at | c1-god | APPL |

The time adverbial in (8.62) appears to be a lexicalized clausal construction, consisting of **byū-chū yú** ‘c14-day kill’.⁶⁰

- (8.62) **bvūchūyū:**, n̄-jò bī-gè by-ɛ:, n̄-lē ï-gè yē
 next.morning 1SG-take c8-teeth c8-ANAL 1SG-enter 1SG-put c9.house
 ‘*The next morning, I took that money (lit. teeth) and put it in my house.*’

⁶⁰ The root for ‘day’ has an unclear analysis, since its use as a time reference is limited. The word for ‘day’ when counting or referring to a certain ‘day’ is **jú**, which also means ‘sun’. It is possible that the root **chū** actually means something like ‘dark’ or ‘darker’, which could explain its assignment to the abstract noun class 14.