A grammar of Mundabli : a Bantoid (Yemne-Kimbi) language of Cameroon

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Non-declarative clauses

The current chapter deals with various kinds of non-declarative clauses. Section 15.1 deals with questions and question words. Polar questions (§15.1.1) and content questions (§15.1.2) are dealt with separately, followed by a section on questions in reported speech (§15.1.3). The imperative is described in §15.2, which is followed by sections on the prohibitive (§15.3) and on the jussive (§15.4). Imperatives and jussives with plural addressee are devoted a special section (§15.5) at the end of the chapter.

15.1 Questions and question words

The basic word order of questions is the same as that of declarative clauses: SVO. Polar questions are marked by a clause-final question particle and content questions contain a question word. The two types are described in §15.1.1 and §15.1.2, respectively.

15.1.1 Polar questions

Polar questions are distinguished from declaratives by the clause-final question marker **à**. Their word order is the same as that of pragmatically unmarked declarative sentences: Subject – Verb – Object, and there are no special intonational effects. However, the low-toned question marker **à** causes a characteristic pitch-drop at the end of a polar question. Three examples are provided in (635)-(637).

(635) wù   fə́ gān   à
       CL1 P1 go(a) Q

       'Did she go?'

(636) mɔ̀   dzū   dǐ   fín   wù   kán   tsɔ́   à
       CL1.person certain be(b) there CL1 lack(b) CL7/8.witchcraft Q

       'Is there any person who does not posses witchcraft?'

(637) bā   kə̀ tʃyé   yɛ̄   wù   dǐ ʃí   ʃú   à
       IMPERS P3 know(c) COMP CL1 F1 go_down(a) come(b) Q

       'Was it known that she will come down?'

Certain polar questions are conventionally used as greetings or as part of formulaic exchanges. Examples are found in (638), (639) and (640).

(638) à   ʃí   à
       2SG spend_day(b)   Q

       ◇'Have you spent the day [at home]?'

(639) à   ʃí   lī   à
       2SG spend_day(b) be_strong(a) Q

       ◇'Have you spent the day [at home] well?'

(640) à   kwé   à
       2SG return_from_bush(c) Q

       ◇'Have you returned from the bush?'

15.1.1.1 Tag questions

Payne defines a tag question as "a yes-no question consisting of a declarative clause plus a "tag" that requests confirmation or disconfirmation of the declarative clause" (Payne 1997: 297). Like polar questions, positive tag questions consist of a declarative clause, followed by the question tag **nǒ**, as in (641). The question tag is most likely borrowed from English 'no' via Cameroon Pidgin English, where it serves the same function.[1]

(641) mɔ̀   dzū   kə̀ dī fín   <u>nǒ</u>
       CL1.person CL1.INDEF P3 be(b) there QTAG

       'There [once] was a person, right?'

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[1]The same particle is also attested with the same function in Mungbam (Lovegren 2013: 458).

It is possible, although less common, to insert the tag in a complex tag question at the end of a non-final subordinate clause, as done in (642). The initial clause in (642), introduced by the particle **nā** 'as', is subordinate to the main interrogative clause.

(642) nā *accident* w-ɔ̄ dɪ́ ná f-án <u>nɔ̌</u>, bī nà ā kán
 as accident CL1-DET be(b) as PROX-here QTAG 1SG P2 NEG have(c)
 wɔ̄ bwɛ́, bī byā Pɛ́ yà
 NEG CL1/2.quarrel 1PL 1PL;COM P. EXCL

 'As the accident is here - right? - we did not have any quarrel, me and Pe.'

15.1.2 Content questions

Content questions require the use of a question word. They do not contain a question marker like polar questions. A comprehensive list of attested question words can be found in Table 15.1.

question word	gloss
ndɛ̀	'who'
mān	'what'
nā	'where'
bɛ̀n	'when'
mān, *why*	'why'
āgān	'how'
(-)mwān	'which one'
(-)mɪ̀ŋ	'how much', 'how many'

Table 15.1: Comprehensive list of question words

The word order of content questions is basically the same as that of declarative clauses; see e.g. (643).

(643) à yɔ̀ tʃyē w-ɔ́ ndɛ̀ ŋgɔ̀
 2SG throw(a) CL3.stone CL3-DET who upon

 ◇'At whom did you throw the stone?'

However, the question word is often focused. Focusing is obligatory in subject interrogatives. Two different strategies are available to express constituent focus. The first is dislocation to immediate after verb (IAV) position, as in (644), which only applies to subject interrogatives and which results in VS order. The second is cleft-constructions, as in (645), which can be used to focus on any constituent. See Chapter 14 for more on information structure and word order.

(644) yǐ   n̠dɛ̀ ɲām   b-ɔ́
       eat(b) who CL8.fufu CL8-DET

       ◇'Who ate the fufu?'

(645) dǐ   n̠dɛ̀ (nə̄)   wù lyā   w-ɔ̄   ɲū
       be(b) who SUBORD CL1 go_to_bush(a).IPFV CL1-REL CL3/7a.farm

       ◇'Who is it that is going to the farm?'

15.1.2.1   The interrogative pronoun **mān** 'what'

The interrogative pronoun **mān** 'what' mainly functions as an interrogative pronoun, as in (646). It may also function as an interrogative modifier (see below). Because it represents inanimate participants, the interrogative pronoun **mān** 'what' more commonly functions as an object than as a subject. As pointed out in the introduction of §15.1.2, When it does not function as subject, the interrogative pronoun **mān** may remain in situ, as in the object interrogatives in (646) and (647), or it is are put in focus by using a cleft construction, as in (648).

(646) kpé   w-ɛ̄n,   à   kɔ́ lɛ̀   mān
       CL1.woman CL1-DEM.PROX 2SG HAB do(a).IPFV what

       'Woman, what are you doing?'

(647) à   dzě mān
       2SG say(b) what

       'What did you say?'

(648) kpé   w-ɛ̄n,   dǐ   bɑ̌ mān à   mwē   k-ɔ́
       CL1.woman CL1-DEM.PROX be(b) really what 2SG be_sad(a) CL7-REL
       tō   ɑ̌   bí-lō yɛ̄
       CL7/8.day ADVLZ CL8-all QUOT.Q

       'Woman, why are you sad every day?' (lit.: This woman, what is [it] really that you grieve for every day?)

Examples like (648) and (649) are best translated by an English 'why'-question. An alternative way to ask for the reason of something is to use the word **why**, loaned from English (see §15.1.2.6).

(649) à   kʊ̀   mān
       2SG cry(a).IPFV what

       'What are you crying [for]?'

Of the interrogative pronouns, **mān** 'what' is the only one which, parallel to other personal pronouns (see §6.1.4), has a special tonal form **mán** with a high tone instead of a mid tone. It is used when the pronoun is object of a postposition, as in (650).

(650) gbɔ̀   ndɛ̀ mān <u>mán</u>   ŋgɔ̄
       cut(a) who what what.ᴘᴘ upon

◇'Who cut what with what?'

Finally, **mān** 'what' can also function as a nominal modifier which best translated as 'what type of'. It is used in combination with the noun **ŋgwò** 'type' and it is unclear whether it is used to modify any other nouns. NPs containing the modifier **mān** may remain in situ, be dislocated to immediate after verb position or be clefted, as in (651).

(651) dɪ̌   [ŋgwò mɔ̀nɔ̄   <u>mān</u>] à   mū   w-ɔ̄   wù yɛ̄
       be(b) ᴄʟ1.type ᴄʟ1.person what 2ꜱɢ take(a) ᴄʟ1-ʀᴇʟ ᴄʟ1 ᴄᴏᴍᴘ
       mɔ̀   kɔ̌ dyà   wɔ̄ wú lā yɛ̄
       ᴄʟ1.person ʜᴀʙ see(a).ɪᴘꜰᴠ ɴᴇɢ ᴄʟ1.ᴘᴘ ᴅᴀᴛ ǫᴜᴏᴛ.ǫ

'What sort of husband is it that you have married, so that nobody sees him?'

The interrogative pronoun **mān** 'what' can take the class 7 prefix **ki-**. The prefix is used, e.g. if the speaker already has a referent for the question pronoun in mind. The use of the Class 8 (plural) prefix, i.e. the form *biman is not attested at all. Examples (652) and (653) show contexts in which the prefix-less form and the form with the prefix are used, respectively.

(652) ɲùŋfù fɔ̌   [mān] ntí lā
       N.   give(b) what   N.   ᴅᴀᴛ

◇'What did Nyungfu give to Ntie?'

(653) dɪ̌   [kì-mān] ɲùŋfù fɔ̌ fɔ̌   k-ɔ́   ɪ̌   ntí lā
       be(b) ᴄʟ7-what N.   ᴘ1 give(b) ᴄʟ7-ʀᴇʟ ʟᴏᴄ N.   ᴅᴀᴛ

◇'What is it that Nyungfu gave to Ntie?'

In (652), the thing asked for is not yet established and the question comes out of the blue. In (653), the speaker and listener are both aware that Nyungfu gave something to Ntie and the question is only *what* he gave her.

Example (654) is similar to (653). It is a sort of "repetition question". It is clear that something fell down, but it is unclear what exactly it was.

(654) à   dzě   yɛ̄ gbò   [kì-mān]
       2ꜱɢ say(b) ᴄᴏᴍᴘ fall(a) ᴄʟ7-what

◇'What did you say fell?'

Examples (655) and (656) are a bit different, but ultimately of the same kind. It is clear in (655) that the addressee is starting something (here: trouble), and in (656) it is obvious that something has happened, but it is unclear what exactly it is that he is starting or what exactly has happened, respectively.

(655) dǐ   [kì-mān] nǭ   à   yīe   kɛ̌   dzɔ̄ŋ k-ɔ́   kɪ̌́ ɪ̌́
       be(b) cL7-what subord 2sg start(a) return(c) again cL7-rel cL7 loc
       tɛ̌n   mɪ̄
       there in

       'What is it that you are starting again in here?'

(656) wān   w-ɔ̄   tə́   kə̀ nǐm wù kyɛ́   yɛ̄   mɛ̀
       cL1.child cL1-det ver.foc p3 sit(a) cL1 look(c) comp ncs.quot.q
       dǐ   [kì-mān] kɪ̄ bɪ̌́   k-ɔ́   yán   yɛ̄
       be(b) cL7-what cL7 exit(b) cL7-rel like_that quot.q

       'The child was there watching [and asking herself]: What has happened like that?'

Furthermore, **kìmān** is also used as a noun modifier in non-interrogative contexts, where it means as much as 'whatever'; see §6.4.

15.1.2.2 The interrogative pronoun ndɛ̀ 'who'

The interrogative pronoun **ndɛ̀** 'who' is most commonly attested in subject function, as it represents an animate participant, which is likely to coincide with the agent. In this case, it is always put in focus, most commonly by dislocation to immediate after verb position. It precedes the object, as in (657), unless the object is defocalized and moved to preverbal position, as in (658) and (659). For clarity, the interrogative pronoun **ndɛ̀** 'who' in (657)-(659) is underlined, and other constituents are enclosed in square brackets.

(657) tǔ   <u>ndɛ̀</u> [ŋgī   mɪ̋ŋ]   yɛ̄
       scoop(b) who   cL6.water cL6;1sg.poss quot.q

       'Who has carried my water?'

(658) [tɛ̄]   [gbɔ̄   ŋgɪ̋   sɛ̀]   à
       cL7/8.walking_stick cL3.house cL3;1sg.poss house_front.loc p2
       gǐ   <u>ndɛ̀</u> yɛ̄
       put(b)   who   quot.q

       'The stick in front of my house, who put it [there]?'

(659) [mɪ̋ŋ gbɔ̄̂]   ʃyà   gǐ   <u>ndɛ̀</u> yɛ̄
       1sg   cL3.house.loc sweep(a) put(a) who   quot.q

       'Who has swept in my house?'

The interrogative pronoun **ndɛ̀** 'who' does not bear a noun class prefix unless it has a plural referent, as in (660).[2]

(660) wɔ́   bɔ̀-ndɛ̀
       wash(b).ɪᴘꜰᴠ ᴄʟ2-who

       'Who are those who are washing?' (lit.: Who are washing?)

As mentioned in §15.1.2, the interrogative pronoun **ndɛ̀** 'who' has a special dative form **ndyɛ́n**; see §6.1.5 and §11.4.1.

15.1.2.3 The interrogative word nā 'where'

The interrogative word **nā** 'where' usually occurs toward the end of the clause, just like the locative phrase it represents; see e.g., (661) and (662).

(661) wù bɔ̄ŋ   mɛ̂,   nɪ́   nàn fɪ́   nā
       ᴄʟ1 call(a) ᴄꜱ.ǫᴜᴏᴛ;ǫ ᴄʟ1.mother N.   pass(b) where

       'She called out: Where has the mother of Nan gone?'

(662) ḿ = bʊ̌   gàn wú lā, yɛ̄ bwɛ̄   à   gàn
       1ꜱɢ = ask(b) go(a) ᴄʟ1.ᴘᴘ ᴅᴀᴛ ᴄᴏᴍᴘ ᴄʟ1/2.friend 2ꜱɢ go(a).ɪᴘꜰᴠ
       fɪ̰́   tɪ́   nā
       pass(b).ɪᴘꜰᴠ surprisingly where

       'I ask her: Friend, where are you going?'

In some cases, the question word 'where' is modified by the locative modifier **fɔ́** (see §10.4; NP in square brackets). What exactly determines the presence of this modifier is unclear and requires further investigations.

(663) n = dɪ̌   fɪ́   [nā   f-ɔ́]   yɛ̄
       1ꜱɢ = be(b) pass(b) where ᴘʀᴏx-ᴅᴇᴛ ǫᴜᴏᴛ.ǫ

       'Where will I go?'

15.1.2.4 The interrogative word bɛ̀n 'when'

The interrogative word **bɛ̀n** 'when' occurs in-situ, towards the end of a clause, just like the adverbial phrase it represents, as in (664). It does not take a prefix.

(664) à   ɲæ̀   bɛ̀n
       2ꜱɢ leave(a).ɪᴘꜰᴠ when

       ◇'When are you leaving?'

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[2]This sentence or an equivalent cleft construction is called out by people before they approach a stream where people are known to wash, in order to warn them and not to embarrass anyone.

15.1.2.5   The interrogative word āgān 'how'

The interrogative word **āgān** 'how' occurs in focus position, directly following the verb complex, as in (665) and (666). In the case of a transitive verb, as in the latter example, they precede the object NP. Unlike the interrogative word, adverbs generally occur at the end of the clause (see §10.1).

(665)   yɛ̄   mɛ̀   dzɪ́   dɪ́   [āgān] yɛ̄
        COMP NCS.QUOT.Q CL3/7a.journey be(b) how   QUOT.Q

        'How was your journey?'

(666)   à   sɪ̀ŋ   [āgān] mbɪ́
        2SG tap(a) how   CL6.palm_wine

        ◇'How do you tap palm wine?'

15.1.2.6   The borrowed interrogative word why

The function of the English interrogative word 'why' is mainly covered by the interrogative pronoun **mān** 'what', as mentioned in §15.1.2.1. However, a relatively common alternative to this is the use of the clause-initial loanword 'why' (borrowed from English, most likely via Cameroon Pidgin English), followed by a normal declarative clause, as in (667) and (668).

(667)   *why* à   fɔ̌ tsɔ̄   mɪ́   lā yɛ̄   bɛ̄n fɔ̌ dʒyè   dɔ̄   ɪ̌
        why 2SG P1 show(a) 1SG.PP DAT COMP 2PL P1 cook(a) CL3a.beans LOC
        nsɔ̄lā
        CL1.afternoon

        'Why did you show me that you [children] cooked beans in the afternoon?'

    The interrogative word 'why' occurs in clause-initial position, just like in English. This is untypical for Mundabli which tends to position focused elements behind the verb complex.

(668)   *why* wù lɔ̄   bwān   mɪ̄ yɛ̄
        why CL1 make(a) be_wounded(a) 1SG QUOT.Q

        'Why has he injured me?'

15.1.2.7   The interrogative nominal modifier -mwān 'which'

The interrogative word **-mwān** 'which' functions as a nominal modifier and is used to identify a specific referent within a group of the same kind. Its function is different from that of the noun modifier **mān** 'what' (§15.1.2.1), which is better translated as 'what type of' when it modifies a noun; see §15.1.2.1.

Like other interrogative modifiers, **-mwān** 'which' takes a noun class prefix. However, in the case of **-mwān**, prefixes for most noun classes can be replaced by a low-toned syllabic nasal prefix. The choice seems to be optional. For an overview of agreement prefixes, see §5.3. In (669), the modified NP occurs in situ. In (670), it is put in focus using of a cleft-construction.

(669) à   kɔ̀ŋ   [wān   kpé   m̀-mwān/wù-mwān]
       2sg love(a) cl1.child cl1.female cl1-which

       ◇'Which girl do you love?'

(670) dǐ   [sìŋ   yì-mwān/m̀-mwān y-ɔ̄]   à   læ   y-ɔ̄
       be(b) cl9.knife cl9-which   cl9-det 2sg do(a).ipfv cl9-det
       ŋgɔ́
       upon

       ◇'Which knife do you use?' (lit.: It is which knife that you do [it] with?)

In both of the above examples, the noun class prefix and the nasal prefix are interchangeable. The order of the alternative forms in the examples reflects their naturalness. The first forms are the ones that were used spontaneously by the speakers.

15.1.2.8 The interrogative noun modifier mìŋ 'how much, how many'

The question word **mìŋ** 'how much, how many' functions as noun modifier. It always takes a noun class prefix. It can co-occur with a head noun or stand on its own, as in (671). See §5.3 for an overview of prefix forms.

(671) ǎʔǎ   mbɛ̄   dʒwē b-ɔ̌   kpá   f-án,   wù bɔ̄ŋ
       interj cl2.people many cl2-det abound(b) prox-here cl1 call(a)
       yɛ̄   dī   bɔ́-mìŋ
       comp be(b) cl2-how_many

       'People, too many of them - she is saying that [it] is how many?'

15.1.2.9 Multiple interrogative words

It is also possible to combine multiple interrogative words in a single interrogative clause. However, this is not done frequently. An elicited example is found in (672).

(672) gbə̀   ndɛ̀ mān mán   ŋgɔ̄
       cut(a) who what what.pp upon

       ◇'Who cut what with what?'

A question like (672) could be uttered by someone who joins into a conversation, missing most of the information and hearing merely that someone cut something. The subject interrogative is dislocated to immediate after verb position, while the other interrogative phrases remain in situ.

15.1.2.10   Plural forms of interrogative words

The interrogative pronouns **mān** 'what' and **ndɛ̀** 'who' sometimes take noun class prefixes. However, the interrogative pronoun **mān** 'what' is only attested with the Class 7 prefix **ki-**, and **ndɛ̀** 'who' is only attested with the Class 2 prefix **bɔ-**. Agreement in cognate question words has also been reported for Noni (Hyman 1981: 104-105) and Mankon (Leroy 2007: 128).

15.1.3   Questions in reported speech

Questions in reported speech (or 'quoted interrogatives') receive special question markers, which are different from question markers in direct speech. A formal distinction is made between current speaker vs. non-current speaker quoted interrogatives, just like in quoted declaratives.[3]

Current speaker quotations (i.e., the speaker is quoting themselves) are introduced by the general-purpose complementizer **yɛ̄**. Non-current speaker quotations (i.e., the speaker is quoting someone else) are instead introduced by the non-current speaker quotative marker **mɔ́**, which serves no other function. Reported speech declaratives receive no other marking.

Questions in non-current speaker quotations are introduced by the complementizer **yɛ̄** plus the non-current speaker quoted question marker **mɛ̀**[4] and followed by the quoted question marker **yɛ̄** (which sometimes takes the shape **ā** or, more rarely, **ɛ̄**). Whereas in direct speech, only polar questions take a final question marker (**à**), in reported speech, content questions (673) and polar questions (674) are marked in the same way.

(673)   wù bú   y̱ɛ̄   m̱ɛ̀,   b-ɛ́n   ndʒɔ́m   mɪ́ŋ
        cl1 ask(b) COMP NCS.QUOT.Q CL8-DEM.PROX CL8.things 1SG.PP

        gbə̄   à là   ndɛ̀ y̱ɛ̄
        house.LOC P2 do(a) who QUOT.Q

        'Then she asked [herself]: All these things in my house, who has done them?'

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[3]Apart from the current section, quotatives are not discussed in this thesis. For some findings on quotatives, see Voll (2017).
[4]The markers **yɛ̄** and **mɛ̀** can phonologically merge under certain circumstances.

(674) nǐ   wū   bú   wú   lā   yɛ̄ mɛ̀,   à
      CL1.mother CL1;3SG.POSS ask(b) CL1PP DAT COMP NCS.QUOT.Q 2SG
      kə̌   dǐ   ā   mɔ̀   nō   yɛ̄
      P3.HAB be(b) COM CL1.person CL1.male QUOT.Q

      'Her mother asked her: Do you have a husband?'

Questions in current speaker quotations are introduced by the current speaker quotative marker **mɔ́**, which may or may not be followed by a particle of the shape **à**. I gloss this particle Q because it has the same shape as the direct speech interrogative particle **à**. Questions in non-current speaker quotations are followed by the quoted question marker **yɛ̄** or a variant thereof, just like current speaker quoted questions (see above). An example of a current speaker quoted question is found in (675).

(675) n=dzé   mɔ́   [...] mɔ́   à bɔ̀   kǐ   k-ɔ́
      1SG=say(b) CS.QUOT [...] CS.QUOT Q CL7.bag CL7.3SG.POSS CL7-DET
      mī̠ dǐ   mān wù twő   k-ɔ́   yɛ̄
      in be(b) what CL1 carry(b) CL7-REL QUOT.Q

      'I said that [if she was going to come up that I was going to come up as well]. I asked [her]: in that bag of hers, what was it that she carried [in it]?'

15.2 The Imperative

The imperative form of a verb consists of the segmentally unmarked stem and a specific imperative tone pattern. Table 15.2 contains examples of imperatives of all three verb tone classes.

verb tone class	imperative example	gloss	citation form
A	**gǎn**	'Go!'	**gân**
	ɲə̌	'Leave!'	**ɲə̂**
B	**tʃū**	'Come!'	**tʃű**
	yī	'Eat!'	**yǐ**
C	**yə́m**	'Sing!'	**yə́m**
	yó	'Run!'	**yó**

Table 15.2: Imperative verb forms in single verb cores

The tonal patterns in Table 15.2 are representative of simple core imperatives, i.e. of imperative clauses whose verbal core contains no more than one verb, and of initial verbs in complex core imperatives, i.e. of imperatives

whose verbal core contains two or more verbs. Examples for Class A and B imperative verbs in simple verbal cores taken from spontaneous texts are given in (676) and (677).

(676) ní   wū   dzé   yɛ̄,   ɲǎ
      CL1.mother.3SG/PL.POSS CL1;3SG.POSS say(b) COMP leave(a)

      'The mother said: Leave!'

(677) tɛ́là mwɔ́m dzé   hǎyì, dzē   gbàn   ŋgī   lā yɛ̄
      T.   M.   say(b) INTERJ say(b) CL1.in-law CL1;1SG.POSS DAT COMP
      n = tɔ́   tʃṹ
      1SG = VER.FOC come(b).IPFV

      'Tela Mwom said: No! Tell my in-law that I am coming!'

Imperative verbs in serial verb constructions show a different tonal behavior than imperative verbs in single-verb cores. Examples (678) and (679) illustrate imperative clauses with complex verbal cores. This special tonal behavior of non-initial verbs in verb sequences is not attested in declaratives (at least not in the present tense). For more on this, see §3.2.2.4.

(678) [gǎn tsē] mù-dántʃɛ́n
      go(a) find(a) CL18-berry

      'Go and find [some] Dantshen berries!'

(679) yɛ̄   [gǎn bɔ̄ŋ   ʃū]   wān   nɛ̌
      COMP go(a) call(a) come(b) CL1.child CL1.mother.2SG/PL.POSS
      w-ɔ̄
      CL1-DET

      '[...] Go and call your sister!'

My data do not contain any examples of imperatives with a verbal core starting in a Class B verb. Therefore, I cannot say for sure whether initial verbs in imperative clauses always have the same tone pattern as imperative verbs in single-verb cores, although this seems likely since it is the case for Class A and Class C verbs. The data show that the tonal pattern of non-initial imperative verbs in complex verbal cores differs from that of imperative verbs in single-verb cores. Non-initial verbs of Class A and B bear a mid tone (see (678) and (679)). In short, the tone pattern of imperative Class A verbs in non-core-initial position differs from their tone pattern in core-initial position. They bear a rising tone in initial position and a mid tone in non-initial position, so that, in non-initial position, the tonal distinction between Class A and Class B verbs is neutralized. It is unknown what exactly causes the irregular tone patterns of Class A verbs in SVCs.

15.3 The Prohibitive

The prohibitive uses segmentally unmarked verb forms, just like the impera-
tive, but requires a subject pronoun. The tonal pattern of prohibitive verbs is
the same as that of non-initial verbs in imperative SVCs: Class A and B verbs
bear a mid tone and Class C verbs a high tone. Instead of the circumfixal neg-
ative marker **ā...wɔ̄** as used in declarative clauses, the prohibitive employs
the preverbal prohibitive marker **ʃá**, which is sometimes realized as **tá**. Table
15.3 contains examples of the prohibitive for all three verb tone classes. Table
15.3 only contains examples of prohibitions aimed at the second person, but
note that the same form is also used to issue negative commands to third and
first person referents.

verb tone class	example	gloss	citation form
A	**à ʃá ʃī**	'Don't go down!'	**ʃî**
B	**à ʃá tʃū**	'Don't come!'	**tʃű**
C	**à ʃá yó**	'Don't run!'	**yó**

Table 15.3: Examples of second person prohibitives with single verb cores

Spontaneous text examples of the prohibitive are given in (680)-(682). The
examples illustrate that not only the second person singular (680), i.e. the
addressee of the utterance, may be the object of the negative command, but
also the third person plural (681) or the first person plural (682), i.e. people
other than the addressee, including the speaker.

(680) [à ʃá dzē] dzɔ̄ŋ
2SG PROHIB say(b) again

'Don't say [that] again!'

(681) [bɔ̌ ʃá tsɪ̄] f-án ɲwén ɪ̌ kwɛ̌
CL2 PROHIB spend_night(b) PROX-here today LOC CL3/7a.village
w-ɛ́n mɪ̄
CL3-DEM.PROX in

'They must not spend the night in this village tonight.'

(682) ɲwám   b-ɔ́   dzé   yɛ̄   ǎy, bə̀-tǐ   bɔ́   ā
       cl2.children cl2-det say(b) comp no cl2-father cl2poss com

       nɪ́   fɔ̃́ dzɛ̃́ kə́   mɔ̀   tʃŭ   fán
       cl1.mother p1 say(b) cond cl1.person come(b) here

       nsɔ̄lā   wù ɲwǎn níŋ   dọ̄   bí   lā   yɛ̄ [bī
       cl1/2.afternoon cl1 beg(b) cl7.thing certain 1pl.pp dat comp 1pl

       ʃã̂   fə̃]
       prohib give(b)

       'The children said: No, our fathers and mothers said if anybody comes
       here in the afternoon, we must not give [anything].'

Prohibitions can also be formulated in an indirect way, as in (683). Here
a negated future verb form is employed to imply that something shouldn't
happen.

(683) n=lyã́   ná f-án,   n=dã́   wú   wɔ̄ yɛ̄
       1sg=go_to_bush(a).ipfv as prox-here 1sg=f1;neg hear(b) neg comp

       bɛ̄n fɔ̃́ mù ʃŭ   kpē   tsyĕ   w-ɛ̄n
       2pl p1 take(a) come(b) cl3.pot cl1.father.2pl.poss cl1-2pl.poss

       w-ɔ́   wú-kwɛ̃́ w-ɔ́   yɛ̄ bɛ̄n lā níŋ   dọ́ tʃín
       cl3-det cl3-home cl3-det comp 2pl do(a) cl7.thing certain there

       mī
       in

       'As I am going to the bush, I don't want to hear [when I come back] that
       you have taken your father's traditional pot in order to do something
       inside.'

15.4 The Jussive

The jussive is mainly used to issue commands concerning first or third person
referents. However, it is also used when an order is issued by wish of someone
else. It requires a subject pronoun combined with the segmentally unmarked
verb form and the same verb tone pattern as attested in non-initial imperative
verbs (§15.2) and prohibitives (§15.3): Class a and b verbs bear a mid tone
and Class c verbs a high tone.

The first person plural jussive makes use of the impersonal pronoun **bə̄** (see
§6.3) rather than the first person plural pronoun **bī**. Example (684) contains
two jussive clauses, one with a third person singular subject and one with a
first person plural subject, each enclosed by square brackets.

(684) yɛ̄   gǎn bɔ̄ŋ ʃū   wān   ně   bwébwé
      COMP go(a) call(a) come(b) CL1.child CL1.mother.2POSS toddler
      w-ɔ̄   yɛ̄   ɲ=ɲwɔ̌m mɛ̀   ɲām   b-ɔ́   yɛ̄   [wù
      CL1-DET COMP 1SG=stir(b) finish(a) CL8.fufu CL8-DET COMP CL1.PVB
      tʃū]   [bə̄   yī]
      come(b) IMPERS eat(b)

      '[...] Go and call your little sister [and tell her] that I've finished stir-
      ring the fufu, that she should come, let's eat.'

When used with the impersonal pronoun **bə̄** as its subject, the jussive is
best translated as 'Let us ...'.

As pointed out above, the jussive is used for second person subjects when
an order is issued by wish of someone else. In this case, the order is introduced
by the complementizer **yɛ̄**, as in (685).

(685) ŋkǔŋ   dzɛ̌   yɛ̄   ā   mū   nǐŋ   k-ɔ́
      CL1.chief say(b) COMP 2SG take(a) CL7.thing CL7-DET

      ◇'The chief said that you should take that thing!'

The presence of a main clause such as the initial clause in (685) is not
obligatory. However, the use of the complementizer is obligatory in this case,
even if the main clause is omitted.

15.5 Imperatives and jussives with PL addressee

A plural addressee in imperatives, as in (686) and jussives, as in (687) is
marked by the post-verbal particle **nǐ**. Here, the clause containing the plu-
ral addressee is enclosed in square brackets and the particle **nǐ** is underlined.
These examples contain the only two attested instances of this particle.

(686) bī   mɨ̄   dzě   gàn bǒ   lā, yɛ̄   [nǐm nǐ   ā
      1PL CONSEC speak(b) go(a) CL2.PP DAT COMP sit(a) IMP.PL COM
      mɔ̀   kwɛ́]
      CL1.man CL3/7a.home

      'And we keep telling them: Stay with a native man!'

(687) kɔ́   bɔ̌ kɔ̀ mū   kpān,   wù tsú bɔ̌ yɛ̄   [bɛ̄n ɲā
      COND CL2 P3 drink(b) be_full(b) CL1 hit(b) CL2 COMP 2PL leave(a)
      nǐ]
      IMP.PL

      'When they had drunk enough, he beat them saying: Leave!.'