A grammar of Mankanya: An Atlantic language of Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and the Gambia
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Chapter 11 - The particle kë

This chapter discusses the particle *kë* which is found throughout natural texts, but is far less frequently found in elicited sentences. Trifkovič (1969) glosses it simply as NARR (for narrative particle) in her texts at the back of her volume, and doesn't describe it at all. When asked the meaning of the particle, native speakers tend to say "and" or "but", which could be translations in certain contexts, but inadequately describes its behaviour.

It's major use is to mark a different subject:

11.1 **Kë nduba akak aŧëfa aṭi , kë**
    kë nduba a- kak a- ŧëfa a- ṭi kë
    DS boy C1S REP SER land_on_ones_feet SER run DS
nanug btuur kë aṭi , kë naṭoŋ
na- nug b- tuur kë a- ṭi kë na- ṭoŋ
C1S buyer C5S coffin DS C1S run DS C1S driver
ukaaru akak aṭi
u- kaaru a- kak a- ṭi
C2S car C1S REP SER run
"The boy landed on his feet and ran off, the owner of the coffin ran off, and the driver of the car he also ran off."

But it is not required, and in some cases (particularly between sentences) a different subject is not marked explicitly with *kë:*

11.2 a **Napoṭ añowna du meeṭ ,**
    na- poṭ a- ñow -n -a d- u meeṭ
    C1S child C1S wash CAUS MID EXT LOC.DIST inside
uko unwoyi , du meeṭ meeṭ .
u- ko u- n- woy -i d- u meeṭ meeṭ
C2S thing C2S coref be ptcp EXT LOC.DIST inside inside
"The child is washed inside, this thing is done inside"

b **Ñaaʈ**   **ambukuŋ**   **aji**   **le**   **aji**
   ñ-   aaʈ   a- m-   buk   -uŋ   a- ji   le   a- ji
   C1S woman   C1S COREF produce SEL   C1S HAB   IRL   SER HAB

apën   **bdig**   ,   **aya**   **ya**   **kañowa**
a-   pën   b- dig   a- ya   ya   k-   a- ñowa
SER go_out C5S outside   SER go   go   IMPERF SER wash_oneself

"The woman who has given birth, if she goes outside, it is to wash"

In some situations it occurs with the same subject:

11.3 **Wori**   **mënʈan**   **ŋwo**   **nji**   **na**   **Bernard**   **na**   **Marcel**
      wori   mënʈan   ŋ- wo   nji   na   Bernard   na   Marcel
      time   that   1P be   1s   and   Bernard   and   Marcel

kë   **ŋpok**   **pya**   **ŋrisiya**
kë   ŋ- pok   p- ya   ŋrisiya
DS   1P refuse   INF go   church

"At that time we were me and Bernard and Marcel, and we refused to go to church"

11.1 Clause chaining and switch reference

One of the primary uses of the particle *kë* is to mark a different subject in a clause chain. Therefore its gloss is DS (Different Subject).

In section 9.2 I described the fact that sentences can be formed of multiple non-subordinate clauses, juxtaposed without connectors. This phenomenon, known as clause chaining, is found elsewhere in Africa (Heine and Nurse, 2007) as well as other parts of the world, for example Papuan languages (Foley, 1986) Where the subject of a clause is the same as the previous one, the verb takes a special agreement prefix *a-*. However, this special prefix is identical to the prefix used for singular, class 1 nouns. Therefore there could be an ambiguity in certain situations, and *kë* can be used to clearly mark when a subject has changed.

To illustrate this, consider the multi-clause sentence from the "Two Humpbacked Wives" text shown in example 11.4 below. I have noted the subject of each clause in the right hand column.

This sentence consists of a chain of seven clauses, with no connecting words (apart from *kë*) between them. Chaining is common in narrative texts, though this example is longer than average.

					Subject

11.4 | Subject

a: Kë hënk di   Naala ayaaŋ   na utejan   Naala
  kë   hënk   d-   i   Naala   a-   ya -aŋ   na   u-   ꞇejan
  DS   so   C9S GEN   Nala   C1S go SEL   and C2S night

"So Naala went at night"

b: aꞇënk   ŋntaayi   Naala
  a- ꞇënk   ŋ-   nꞇaayi
  SER find   C2P demon

"she found the spirits"

c: kë ŋado   pꞇoof   spirits
  kë   ŋa- do   p-   ꞇoof
  DS   C2P do   C4S half

"they made a circle"

d: aki   spirits
  a-   ki
  SER dance

"they danced"

e: kë aşë   ban   Naala
  kë   a-   şë   ban
  DS   C1S SEQ arrive

"she arrived"

f: anaꞇ   Naala
  a-   naꞇ
  SER stand

"she stood"

g: akob   iñen   na ŋa   Naala
  a-   kob   i- ñen   na   ŋ-   a
  C1S hit   C3P hand   and C2P OBJ

"clapped with them"

"So Naala went at night, found the spirits dancing in a circle, went up to them, stopped and clapped with them"

When the same subject does several actions in a chain the verbal agreement prefix is substituted by *a-* on second and subsequent verbs. We can't see this when the subject is a singular human, as the prefix is already *a-*, but this phenomenon is illustrated in clauses c and d in the example (repeated below).

c: **kë   ŋado   pɬoof**
   kë   ŋa- do   p-   ɬoof
   DS   C2P do   C4S half
"they made a circle"

d: **aki**
   a-   ki
   SER   dance
"they danced"

The spirits *ŋnɬayi* form a circle and dance. On the first verb, they are referred to by the full prefix form *ŋa-*, but the special *a-* prefix is used on the second verb.

If we now consider the final three clauses, Naala is again the subject.

e: **kë   aşë   ban**
   kë   a-   şë   ban
   DS   C1S SEQ   arrive
"she arrived"

f: **anaʈ**
   a-   naʈ
   SER   stand
"she stood"

g: **akob   iñen   na   ŋa**
   a-   kob   i-   ñen   na   ŋ-   a
   C1S   hit   C3P hand   and   C2P OBJ

"clapped with them"

Here Naala is again the subject. But without *kë* there would be no way of telling the referent of the verb prefix. The *kë* indicates that there has been a switch to a different subject.

If we look again at the whole sentence, and look for where *kë* is used, we see that it occurs at the beginning of clauses a, c, and e. Leaving aside the beginning of the sentence, we can see that the *kë* occurs each time the subject changes. That is, Naala is the subject of clauses a-b, the spirits are the subject of clauses c-d (introduced by a *kë*) and Naala is again the subject of the final clauses e-g, (and *kë* again marks this switch of subject).

It should be noted that *kë* is used even though there are other indications that the subject is different, e.g. verb prefix in clause c *ŋa-* can only refer to the spirits.

A second example from the "Two Humpbacked Wives" text illustrates another situation where *kë* is used:

11.5 **Wi ŋakiiŋ aban ţi a**
wi ŋa- ki -iŋ a- ban ţ- i a
when C2P dance SEL SER arrive INT LOC.PROX OBJ

kë aşë ji na wi akabiranuŋ
kë a- şë ji na w- i a- kab -ir -an -uŋ
DS C1S SEQ say with C2S GEN SER be_near_to RCP CAUS SEL

"When they were dancing and they arrived at her, she asked her neighbour …"

Here the first clause is actually a subordinate temporal clause, but *kë* is used in the same way as in example 11.4. The subject of the subordinate *wi* clause is the spirits (shown by the *ŋa-* prefix), but Naala is the subject of the main clause. The *kë* indicates a different subject and makes clear the referent of the subject prefix on the first main clause verb.

The *kë* is not obligatory after a *wi* clause. This is illustrated in the following sentence where there is a *wi* clause, but no change of subject means no *kë* is needed.

11.6 **Wi uwooŋ uunwina aşë ya na**
wi u- wo -oŋ u- un- win -a a- şë ya na
when C2S be SEL C2S NEG see C1S.OBJ SER SEQ go and

pa
pa
in_order_to

"When it (the spirit) could not find her, it went with it (the hump)."

However, in the "Hare and the Elephant" text, a similar structure *does* use *kë*, even though the subject has not changed. This would seem to indicate that *kë* sometimes has a broader discourse function.

11.7 **Wal wi uşaaŋ atuh wa**
w- al w- i u- şa -aŋ a- tuh w- a
C2S moment C2S GEN C2S SEQ SEL SER close C2S OBJ

ţi bhër ,
ţ- i b- hër
INT LOC.PROX C5S hole

kë uşë ţij mnob muŋ akakanan
kë u- şë ţij m- nob ma- uŋ a- kak -an -an
DS C2S SEQ bring C8 honey C8 DEM.DIST

aya di untanka
a- ya d- i u- ntanka
SER go EXT LOC.PROX C2S village

"When he (Elephant) had closed him (Hare) in the hole, he took the honey and returned to the village."

Kë is also found in sentence initial position. This was seen in example in example 11.4 and is also seen in the following examples:

11.8 **Kë biki untanka bɬi baṭi abi**
     kë   bik- i   u- ntanka bɬi ba- ṭi a- bi
     DS   C1P GEN C2S village all C1P run SER come

ayit
a- yit
SER meet
"Then all the villagers came running to meet together."

11.9 **Kë Ṭwaraati , ahar umaalu , na**
     kë   Ṭwaraaṭi   a- har u- maalu   na
     DS   Tswaraatsi   C1AS wife C2S hare   and

bayiṭ baka bɬi kë babi aṭoo awooni
ba- yiṭ   baka bɬi kë ba- bi   a- ṭo a- wooni
C1P relative C1P.GEN all DS C1P come SER sit SER cry
"Tswarati, Hares wife, and all their relations, sat down and cried."

11.10 **Kë ñaaṭ aloŋ naṭaf kë aşë win**
      kë ñ- aaṭ   a- loŋ   na- ṭaf   kë a- şë   win
      DS C1S woman C1S INDEF C1S elderly DS C1S SEQ see

jibi Naala añagani ṭi katoh
jibi Naala a- ñagan -i   ṭ- i   ka- toh
like Nala   C1S be_sad CMPL INT LOC.PROX C3S house
"An old lady saw how Naala was sad and staying in the house."

This sentence initial *kë* can also occur after adverbial points of departure, and renewals.

11.11 **ṭi pla a mëntan puŋ kë**
      ṭ- i   p- la a   mëntan p- uŋ   kë
      INT LOC.PROX INF seek OBJ that   C4S DEM.DIST DS

umaalu ubi gañir aka ñaaṭ
u- maalu u- bi gañir a- ka   ñ- aaṭ
C2S hare   C2S PST win   SER have C1S woman
"In this courting, Hare succeeded in winning the women."

11.12 **Uwajanṭën kë uloŋ uşë tuh wa**
      u- waj -anṭën kë u- loŋ   u- şë   tuh   w- a
      C2S three ORD   DS C2S INDEF C2S SEQ close C2S OBJ

ṭi bhër
ṭ- i   b- hër
INT LOC.PROX C5S hole
"The third time, Elephant closed him into the hole."

In the wider context of these examples, *kë* is still marking a different subject.

This is also illustrated by the following single sentence example which has full noun phrases for most of the subjects:

11.13 **Subject**

Kë	**başë**	**ya**	**pla**		**mnob**	**na**	Hare and
kë	ba- şë	ya	p- la		m- nob	na	Elephant
DS	C1P SEQ	go	INF seek		C8 honey	and	

umaalu		**kë**	**bko**		**başë**		**wo**	
u- maalu		kë	b- ko		ba- şë		wo	
C2S hare		DS	c7s object		c7s SEQ		be	

kë	**bko**		**başë**		**wo**	Tree
kë	b- ko		ba- şë		wo	
DS	c7s object		c7s SEQ		be	

akab		**ṭi**		**pliik**		Tree
a- kab		ṭ- i		p- liik		
SER be_near_to		INT LOC.PROX		C6S well		

awo		**na**	**bhër**	Tree
a- wo		na	b- hër	
SER be		and	C5S hole	

kë	**bnob**		**bawo**	**da**	bee hive
kë	b- nob		ba- wo	d- a	
DS	C5S beehive		C5S be	C9S OBJ	

"So they (along with Hare) went to look for honey. Now there was a tree (*bko*) near to the well and it had a hole and there was a bee hive there."

We see therefore that a primary use of kë is used to mark a change of subject, but if there are other indications that the subject has changed (e.g. different verb prefixes) then its presence is not obligatory. It is also occasionally used when there is no change of subject for reasons that need more research.

11.2 Kë after a noun phrase

Though the main use of *kë* is clause initially for marking a different subject it can also be found between a subject noun phrase and the verb. The following examples illustrate this.

11.14 **Kë   Ţwaraati   kë   aşë   bi   ,   akak**
      kë   Ţwaraaţi   kë   a-   şë   bi   a-   kak
      DS   Tswaraatsi   DS   C1S   SEQ   come   SER   REP
awat   ubaldu   wi   nul   ţuŋ
a-   wat   u-   baldu   w-   i   nul   ţ-   uŋ
SER bring_down   C2S bucket C2S GEN 3s.poss INT LOC.DIST
pliik
p-   liik
C6S well
"So Tsewaratsi came, and she also lowered her bucket into that well"

11.15 **Kë   ñaaţ   aloŋ   naţaf   kë   aşë   win**
      kë   ñ-   aaţ   a-   loŋ   na-   ţaf   kë   a-   şë   win
      DS   C1S woman C1S INDEF C1S elderly DS   C1S SEQ see
jibi   Naala   añagani   ţi   katoh   .
jibi   Naala   a-   ñagan -i   ţ-   i   ka- toh
like   Nala   C1S be_sad CMPL INT LOC.PROX C3S house
"An old lady saw how Naala was sad and staying in the house."

In these examples the first *kë* each time marks a subject switch, but the second does not have seem to have the same function. It does not occur every time there is a subject switch followed by a noun or noun phrase. The second *kë*, between the subject noun or noun phrase seems to highlight the subject.

One possible reason for this highlighting function is contrast. In the following example there is partitive contrast between all the spirits in sentence 11.16a and the one who had taken Nala's hump in 11.16b. (There are several occurrences of *kë* in this example, including the complementising *kë* COMP. The relevant one is underlined in sentence 11.16b.)

11.16a **Kë   ŋnţaayi   ŋaduka   ki   ki**
       kë   ŋ-   nţaayi   ŋa- duk -a   ki   ki
       DS   C2P demon   C2P leave MID dance   dance
ţuŋ   te   kë   unuur   udo   jinţ   kë
ţ-   uŋ   te   kë   u- nuur   u- do   jinţ   kë
INT DEM.DIST   until COMP C2S day   C2S INGR be_clean DS
ŋaşë   jun   pwayşër   .
ŋa- şë   jun   p-   wayşër
C2P SEQ   begin INF disperse
"The spirits stayed dancing there until daybreak, and then they started to disperse"

b **Unşaaŋ**   **ayeenk**   **pben**   **ţi**
   u-   n-   şa   -aŋ   a-   yeenk   p-   ben   ţ-   i
   C2S   COREF   SEQ   SEL   C1S   receive   C4S   swelling   INT   LOC.PROX

Naala   <u>**kë**</u>   **uşë**   **kak**   **ala**   **ñaaŋ**   **anwuluŋ**
Naala   kë   u-   şë   kak   a- la   ñaaŋ   a-   n-   wul   -uŋ
Nala   DS   C2S   SEQ   again   SER   seek   person   C1S   COREF   give   SEL

wa   **napoţ**   .
w-   a   na-   poţ
C2S   OBJ   C1S   child

"The one who had taken the lump from Nala, looked again for the one who had given him the 'child' "

It is also sometimes used as a way of introducing new characters:

11.17   **Kë**   **Ţwaraati**   ,   **ahar**   **umaalu**   ,   **na**
         kë   Ţwaraaţi   a-   har   u-   maalu   na
         DS   Tswaraatsi   C1AS   wife   C2S   hare   and

bayiţ   **baka**   **bti**   ,   **kë**   **babi**   ...
ba- yiţ   baka   bti   kë   ba- bi
C1P   relative   C1P.OBJ   all   DS   C1P   come

"Then Tsewaratsi, Hare's wife, and all their relations came …"

This is the first time in this story that Tsewaratsi has been mentioned. It is also the beginning of a new discourse unit.

11.18   **Kë**   **ñaaţ**   **aloŋ**   **naţaf**   **kë**   **aşë**   **win**
         kë   ñ-   aaţ   a-   loŋ   na-   ţaf   kë   a-   şë   win
         DS   C1S   woman   C1S   INDEF   C1S   elderly   DS   SER   SEQ   see

jibi   **Naala**   **añagani**   **ţi**   **katoh**
jibi   Naala   a-   ñagan -i   ţ-   i   ka- toh
like   Nala   C1S   be_sad   CMPL   INT   LOC.PROX   C3S   house

"An old lady saw how Naala was sad and staying in the house."

Here an old lady, a minor character, is introduced. As in the previous example this also begins a new discourse unit.

Sometimes its only use is to mark a new discourse unit. The following example from the story of Nabanka Biyagi comes after a non-event line discursion about why the royal compound is a symbol for the Mankanya people. The sentence starts a new discourse unit describing the events after Nabanka Biyagi (who is no longer a new character) becomes king.

11.19   **Kë**   **Nabanka**   **Biyagi**   **kë**   **aneejan**   **pşih**
         kë   Nabanka   Biyagi   kë   a-   neejan   p-   şih
         DS   Nabanka   Biyagi   DS   SER   insert   C6S   kingdom/throne

"So Nabanka Biyagi became king"

Here is another example from the "Hare and the Elephant" This starts a new discourse unit where Tsewaratsi's actions reveal where Hare is trapped.

11.20 **Kë** **Ṭwaraati** **kë** **aşë** **bi** **akak**
      kë Ṭwaraaṭi kë a- şë bi a- kak
      DS Tswaraatsi DS SER SEQ came SER return

awat **ubaldu** **wi** **nul** **ṭuŋ**
a- wat u- baldu w- i nul ṭ- uŋ
SER bring_down C2S bucket C2S GEN 3s.poss INT LOC.DIST

pliik
p- liik
C6S well

"So Tsewaratsi came, and she also lowered her bucket into that well"

In all these examples above the *kë* between noun phrase and verb has occurred with the sentence initial *kë* marking a different subject. However, in the "Hare and Elephant" there are several places where *kë* does *not* occur in this position, even though there is a sentence initial *kë* marking a different subject. This shows it is not obligatory in this situation.

11.21 **kë** **umaalu** **ubi** **gañir** **aka** **ñaaṭ** .
      kë u- maalu u- bi gañir a- ka ñ- aaṭ
      DS C2S hare C2S PST win C1S have C1S woman
"..Hare won the girl"

  Udeeb **kë** **uşë** **de** **uloŋ**
u- deeb kë u- şë de u- loŋ
C2S anger DS C2S SEQ eat C2S INDEF
"Elephant got angry" (Lit. "Anger ate Elephant")

Here the *kë* highlights *udeeb* 'anger', and this indicates the beginning of a new discourse section. However, there is no sentence initial *kë* which would normally be associated with a different subject.

A similar situation occurs later in the story, after the women have lowered their bucket.

11.22 **kë** **ukak** **aⱦiink** , **aşë** **ji** :"...."
      kë u- kak a- ⱦiink a- şë ji
      DS C2S REP SER hear SER SEQ say
"He (Hare) heard it again and said "...." ""

Ṭwaraati **kë** **aşë** **hanṭla**
Ṭwaraaṭi kë a- şë hanṭla
Tswaraatsi DS C1S SEQ look_up
"Tsewaratsi lifted her eyes …"

It seems that where *kë* is used after the noun phrase, *kë* as a different subject marker before it is optional. This could be an indication that historically the *kë* after the noun phrase was in fact the same particle but has been moved to highlight the subject.

Though there are some instances where the use of *kë* after the noun phrase can be explained by contrast, the majority of cases of this usage of *kë* seem to mark the beginning of a new discourse unit. This might be considered a natural extension of its use, as often (but not always) the beginning of a discourse unit is in some way contrastive with the preceding unit.

Here is a breakdown of the discourse units in a story about Hare and Elephant. Where *kë* is used with a noun phrase the first part of each sentence of the unit is shown, and the *kë* is underlined. Some sentences also have a *kë* at the beginning of sentence indicating a different subject.

Introduction and background	1-2	
Elephant gets angry	3-4	*Udeeb __kë__ uşë de uloŋ*
Elephant tricks Hare and shuts him in a hole	5-7	*Kë uloŋ __kë__ uwini*
Elephant returns to the village and tells his story	8-9	
Hare's wife's reaction	10	*Kë Ţëwaraati, ahar umaalu, na bayiţ baka bŧi __kë__ babi*
Women draw water and hear Hare singing	11-14	
Hare's wife draws water and hears Hare singing	15-17	*Kë Ţëwaraaţi __kë__ aşë bi*
Hare's wife tells women to draw water again and Hare sings again	18-20	*Ţëwaraaţi __kë__ aşë ji na baaţ bukuŋ*
Hare's wife finds Hare and lets him out	21	*Ţëwaraaţi __kë__ aşë hanţla*
They return to village and conclusion	22-24	

The frequency of this usage of *kë* varies from text to text.

11.3 *Kë* with *hënk di*

Kë at the beginning of a sentence is sometimes combined with *hënk di* 'like this'. This is used three times in the "Two wives" story. The first time it introduces a summary statement that closes the introductory section.

11.23 **Kë   hënk   di   abaaŋ   kabi**
       kë   hënk   d-   i   a-   ba   -aŋ   k-   a-   bi
       DS   SO   EXT LOC.PROX   C1S CMPLTV SEL IMPERF SER PST
duka   duka   ţi   pdo   na   Naala   te   kë
duka   duka   ţ-   i   p-   do   na   Naala   te   kë
stay   stay   INT LOC.PROX   INF do   and Nala   until DS
bado   bot   awo   ţi   ploolan
ba- do   bot   a-   wo   ţ-   i   p-   loolan
C1P INGR do_something_next SER be   INT LOC.PROX   C4S one
na   ñiinţ   kë   ñaaţ   aji   bi   duka   duka
na   ñ-   iinţ   kë   ñ-   aaţ   a-   ji   bi   duka   duka
and C1S man   DS   C1S woman C1S HAB PST stay   stay
kañagan   ţuŋ   katoh
k-   a-   ñagan   ţ-   uŋ   ka- toh
IMPERF SER be_sad   INT LOC.DIST C3S house
"So this is what she (Dama) kept doing to Naala until she and her husband
were in agreement, and the woman (Naala) was sad and stayed in the
house."

The other two examples are parallel, and are the introductory clauses of
each of Naala and Dama's attempts to remove their humps. In these
examples, though there is a subject switch, there is also a proper noun, so
the *kë* is not required in order to disambiguate.

11.24 **Kë   hënk   di   Naala   ayaaŋ   na**
       kë   hënk   d-   i   Naala   a-   ya -aŋ   na
       DS   SO   EXT LOC.PROX   Nala   C1S go SEL   with
uţejan   aţënk   ŋnţaayi
u-   ţejan   a-   ţënk   ŋ-   nţaayi
C2S night   SER find   C2P demon
"And so Naala went at night, she found the spirits …"

11.25 **Kë   hënk   di   Dama   akaaŋ   aya**
       kë   hënk   d-   i   Dama   a-   ka -aŋ   a-   ya
       DS   SO   EXT LOC.PROX   Dama   C1S REP SEL SER go
na   uţejan   aya   ţënk   ŋnţaayi
na   u-   ţejan   a-   ya   ţënk   ŋ-   nţaayi
with C2S night   SER go   find   C2P demon
"And so Dama also went at night, she found the spirits …"

Another example of this construction can be found in the story of Nabanka
Biyagi which tells his rise to the chiefdom of all the Mankanya, and the
building of the first royal compound. *Kë hënk di* is found at the end of the
introductory section describing the expansion of Bula the chief village.

11.26 **Kë hënk di ŋtaak ŋi**
       kë   hënk d-   i   ŋ-   ɬaak   ŋ-   i
       DS   so   C9S DEM.PROX C2P country C2P GEN

namehaŋ ŋuŋ bɬi ŋakyaaŋ ya aya
na- meh -aŋ   ŋ- uŋ   bɬi   ŋa- k-   ya -aŋ   ya   a-   ya
2P   know SEL   C2P DEM.DIST all   C2P IMPERF go SEL   go   SER go

aya
a- ya
SER go
"And so it was that all those villages that you know were appearing."

The expression *hënk di* does not require a *kë* as it also found twice in that story without it.

The first occurs at the end of the second section which describes how the older men have begun to fight over who will be king.

11.27 **Kë ugut umeeɬ ubi bot**
       kë   u-   gut   u- meeɬ   u-   bi   bot
       DS   C2S war   C2S interior C2S PST   do_something_next

aneejan
a- neejan
SER insert
"And so a mystic war started."

Hënk di bawooŋ abi fiŋar fiŋar
hënk d- i   ba- wo -oŋ   a- bi   fiŋ -ar   fiŋ -ar
so   C9S DEM.PROX C1P be SEL   SER PST   kill DIST   kill DIST

te kë naşih nafeey aşë ka pnduud
te   kë   na- şih   na- Feey   a- şë   ka   p-   nduud
until COMP C1S chief C1S Feey   C1S SEQ   have   C6S compound

pi nul pi abëkani baɬaşa
p- i   nul   p- i   a- bëkan -i   ba- ɬaşa
C4S GEN 3s.poss C4S GEN SER put_down CMPL C1P teenager_(boy)

biki nul da
bik- i   nul   d- a
C1P GEN 3s.poss C9S OBJ
"So like this they started killing each other until the chief of the Nafeey formed his group of those who had been initiated there."

Kë   baţaşa   mënţan bukuŋ   ñaaŋ
kë   ba- ţaşa   mënţan buk- uŋ   ñaaŋ
DS   C1P teenager_(boy)   that   C1P   DEM.DIST   person
anduwaniiŋ   Nabanka Biyagi aşë   wo
a-   n-   duw -an -i -iŋ Nabanka Biyagi a- şë   wo
SER COREF call CAUS MID SEL Nabanka Biyagi C1S SEQ be
da   kë   aşaaŋ   awo   naweek   baka
d-   a   kë   a- şa -aŋ   a- wo   na- week   baka
C9S OBJ   DS   C1S SEQ SEL   C1S be   C1S elder_sibling C1P.GEN
"Amongst those initiates, there was someone who was called Nabanka
Biyagi, and he was the eldest."

Here the *hënk di* still serves as a summariser, but the marker *kë* appears on
the sentence before, and on the following sentence which is the beginning
of a new episode.

The second occurs at the end of the story as a conclusion.

11.28 **Hënk   di   Nabanka Biyagi aneejanuŋ**
       hënk   d- i   Nabanka Biyagi a- neej -an -uŋ
       so   C9S DEM.PROX   Nabanka Biyagi C1S enter CAUS SEL
apaş   Pmeş
a- paş   p- meş
SER create   C4S royal_compound
"So this was how Nabanka Biyagi became king and founded Pmesh"

Here *kë* is not used in any of the immediately surrounding sentences.

As both *kë* and *hënk di* separately are used to mark discourse units it may be
that using them together empahsises this marking.

11.4 What sort of information does kë occur with?

Some languages have words for marking discourse units which are only
found in either background material or in the main event line. This is not
the case in Mankanya with *kë* as it occurs in both situations. For example,
the following excerpt is from the introductory section of the "Two
Humpbacked Wives", describing the household situation of the two wives.
All the sentences are background material, but *kë* is found in sentences
11.29a and 11.29c.

11.29a **Kë   baaţ   batëb   bukuŋ   başë   wo**
        kë   b- aaţ   ba- tëb buk- uŋ   ba- şë   wo
        DS   C1P woman   C1P two C1P   DEM.DIST   C1P SEQ be
na   mben   ţi   feţ   .
na   m-   BEN   ţ- i   feţ
and   c6p swelling INT LOC.PROX back
"And these two women had humps on their backs"

b **Anwooŋ   naweek   i   katoh   awo**
   a- n-   wo -oŋ   na- week   i   ka- toh   a-   wo
   C1S COREF be SEL   C1S elder_sibling GEN C3S house C1S be
na   pben   pmpoṭi   .
na   p-   BEN   p-   mpoṭi
with   C4S swelling   C4S small
"The eldest in the household had a small hump."

c **Kë   pi   anwooŋ   Naala   pawooŋ**
   kë   p-   i   a-   n-   wo -oŋ Naala pa- wo -oŋ
   DS   C4S GEN   C1S COREF be SEL Nala   C6S be SEL
pweek   kë   aşaaŋ   akaana   kanuura
p-   week   kë   a-   şa -aŋ   a-   ka   -an -a   ka- nuura
C4S older   DS   C1S SEQ SEL   SER have CAUS MID   C3S beauty
maakan   .
maakan
very
"But Naala's was big, though she had great beauty."

d **Ul   i   ñiinṭ   aṭuuŋ   ṭi   uhaaş**
   ul   i   ñ-   iinṭ a- ṭu -uŋ   ṭ-   i   u- haaş
   3s.subj GEN   C1S man C1S place SEL INT LOC.PROX   C2S soul
wi   nul   .
w-   i   nul
C2S GEN   3s.poss
"It was her that the husband loved."

In the story of Hare and Elephant *kë* introduces a reminder of background
information at the start of a new section.

11.30 **Kë   işë   me   bko   buŋ   bakab**
       kë   i-   şë   me   b- ko   b-   uŋ   ba- kab
       DS   2S   SEQ know c7s object c7s DEM.DIST c7s be_near_to
ṭi   dko   di   pliik   pi
ṭ-   i   d-   ko   d-   i   p-   liik p-   i
INT LOC.PROX   C9S place   EXT LOC.PROX C6S well C4S GEN
untanka   wi   bañaaŋ   bakliiknuŋ
u-   ntanka   w-   i   ba- ñaaŋ   ba- k-   liik   -n   -uŋ
C2S village   C2S GEN   C1P person   C1P IMPERF draw_water CAUS SEL
"Now you know that tree is near to the village well where people draw
water."

For examples of kë used in the main event line, we could look at many of
the examples already given. Here are two more:

11.31 **Kë   bawat   ubaldu   du   pliik**
    kë   ba- wat   u-   baldu   d-   u   p-   liik
      DS   C1P bring_down   C2S   bucket   EXT LOC.DIST C6S well

kë   udo   do   kluŋ   meel   kë   mampën   ado   ŧar
kë   u-   do   do   kluŋ   meel   kë   mam- pën   a-   do   ŧar
DS   C2S INGR   do   water DS   C8   go_out SER do

ŧar   ŧar   kë   ukak   aŧiink
ŧar   ŧar   kë   u-   kak   a-   ŧiink
         DS   C2S REP   SER hear

"Now they (the women) dropped the bucket down the well, it started to go
'klung', the water slopped out, going 'thar, thar,thar', and he heard it again."

11.32 **Kë   unŧaayi   uşë   yeenk   pben**
    kë   u-   nŧaayi   u-   şë   yeenk   p-   BEN
      DS   C2S demon   C2S   SEQ   receive C6S swelling

amëban   kë   Naala   aşë   neej   aki
a-   mëb -an   kë   Naala   a-   şë   neej   a-   ki
SER carry CAUS   DS   Nala   C1S   SEQ   enter SER dance

"So the spirit took the hump and held it, and Naala entered the ring and
danced"

11.5 Summary

This chapter has given a brief overview of some of the uses of *kë*.

The primary function of *kë* with event line clauses seems to be that of
signalling a switch in subject but it is occasionally used where there is no
switch of subject.

Sometimes *kë* appears after the subject noun phrase, in order to mark that
noun phrase, either for the purpose of contrast, or maybe for the
introduction of a new character.

However, *kë* is sometimes used when the subject has not changed. Often
these occur at the beginning of a new discourse unit, and highlight this
change.

A more in-depth study of the discourse level uses of this word is required.