

NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

RELATIVIZATION IN KOM

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partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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STUDENT'S DECLARATION

RELATIVIZATION IN KOM

I declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any College or University for academic credit.

The views presented in this paper are not necessarily those of the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology or the Examiners.

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ABSTRACT

The main strategy for clause subordination in Kom is in the use of the relative clause. One matrix clause can have more than three subordinate clauses embedded in it, all being relative clauses. This phenomenon warrants a need to study and describe the different strategies for relativization in Kom given that to the best of my knowledge, this aspect of the language has not been described

It is obvious that this paper will not provide an exhaustive treatment of this important topic. I do hope however that it is going to serve as a launching pad for such an exhaustive study.

DEDICATION

In loving memory of:

“Sweet mother”, Nawain Esther Kuo, the woman to whom I owe all my primary socialization and most of my knowledge of the Kom language,

and

Crescence Mabimimeyn, the one who like his namesake accompanied Paul on a missionary trip; accompanied me in the womb and never opened his eyes to see the mission for which we came.

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ABBREVIATIONS

1incl/1excl	first person inclusive/first person exclusive
1sg/1pl	first person singular/first person plural
2sg/2pl	second person singular/second person plural
3sg/3pl	third person singular/third person plural
Adj	adjective
Asp	aspect
Ass	associative marker
CM	completive
COM	complementizer
Cont	continuous
CP	consecutive particle
Dec	deictic
Dem	demonstrative
Det	determiner
Fut	future
HAB	habitual
ID	ideophone
IM	imperfective

Incl	inclusive
Int	intensifier
loc	locative
N	noun
nc	noun class
neg	negative
NP	noun phrase
P	present
PF	perfective
Pro	progressive
PT	past
Q	question
R	relativizer
RP	relative pronoun
T	tense
V	verb

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 The People and their Geographic Location

Kom is the language spoken in Boyo Division of the North West Province of Cameroon. According to Grimes (2000, 41), there are about 127,000 speakers of this language, but I estimate that the speakers of the language have grown in number to well over 200,000 people. Boyo Division has four administrative sub-divisions, viz Belo, Njinikom, Fundong and Bum. The first three sub-divisions are where the Kom tribe is, where the language is spoken. Bum sub-division is the home of a separate tribe that speaks the Bum language. Other languages spoken within and around Boyo Division include the Mujang language, Babanki, and Oku.

1.2 Classification and Demographic Facts

Kom has been classified as follows: Niger-Congo > Atlantic-Congo > Volta-Congo > Benue-Congo > Bantoid > Wide-Grassfield > Narrow-Grassfield > Ring-Center (Grimes 2000, 41). The language is alternatively called Itanjikom (language of the Kom people), Bikom and Kom. Kom is thus used for both the people and the language. In this paper I shall refer to the language as Kom. Mbesinaku, spoken in some part of Belo sub-division has been classified as a dialect. The Kom people have a literacy rate of below 1% in the first language and 15-25% in the second language (Grimes 2000, 41). In my estimates, these figures have grown in the past seven years due to the adult

literacy campaign embarked upon by the Kom Language Development Committee (KLDC) and the church-based literacy campaign embarked upon by the New Testament translation team.

Kom is spoken in interpersonal communication for sentimental purposes, at home, in church services and in the local markets. Following the Government's policy of mother tongue education, the language is also the language of instruction in the first four years of primary school in some primary schools. It is broadcast on some local radio stations. There is not much literature in Kom. The main literacy materials published in Kom are portions of the Bible such as *The Four Gospels and Acts* and *Ijwa'li Luke*. Others include primers, *Kom Provisional Lexicon* and environmental shell books. There is also "The Jesus Film" translated and voice acted in Kom. Talking about the viability of the language, Shultz (1997, 5) affirms, "The Kom language will continue to be a viable language well into the future. The people are very proud of their language and culture and seek to preserve it from outside changes. It is the first and only language used in the home by small children. It is being used to teach the skills of reading and writing to over 5000 primary school children at this time."

1.3 Statement of the Problem

I remember vividly how the translation consultants that checked our translated New Testament books had each asked us at different occasions to restructure our sentences and make them shorter. Most of them were amazed at the length of the Kom

sentences and inferred from this that our renderings were unnatural. I had argued on these occasions that the sentences were natural in the language. One sentence could have one matrix clause with two or more relative clauses modifying the head noun. My arguments lacked good evidence because I argued just from the native speaker's intuition. Having been introduced to the notion of clause subordination in class, I therefore find it an opportunity to take an intimate look at relativization in Kom, which is one of the principal grammatical strategies used in lengthening strings in the language. The main topic of this paper therefore concerns relative clauses in Kom. However, in order to understand relative clauses, we must first lay some basic background about Kom phonology and syntax, especially elements of the noun phrase and noun classes which will help us in seeing how the Kom relative clause functions. As far as I know, there is little grammatical work available on the language. This paper therefore can serve as a launching pad in answering questions such as the ones our consultants posed to us about the length of our sentences. It can motivate further research and consequently further description of the grammar of the language.

1.4 Sources of Data

Most examples cited in this paper are from my own native-speaker knowledge of Kom. Some of the examples are drawn from a text in *The Four Gospels and Acts*, which has been put in this paper as an appendix. There are other examples from fables, also added to the work as an appendix.

1.5 Phonology and Orthography

Kom is a tonal language with many interesting phonological features. For example, there is a high prevalence of the central high vowel [ɨ] in the language. The double fricatives [fs] and [sf] occurring in words like *fsi* ‘take’ and *sfi* ‘fish’ are typologically uncommon.

The current Kom orthography has nine vowel symbols and twenty consonant symbols. The following sounds are represented in the Kom orthography by their phonetic symbols: [æ, ɨ, œ, ŋ].

The full list of vowels is: *a, æ, e, ɨ, i, o, œ, u, ue*. *Ue* is the orthographic symbol for the close central rounded vowel. The consonants are: *b, ch, d, f, g, gh, j, ’, k, l, m, n, ny, ŋ, s, t, v, w, y, z*. There are three tones, high, low and falling but only two tones are marked, viz, the falling tone marked by: ^ and the low tone marked by: `.

Tone can occur in all syllables and it plays a very significant role in contrasting words as can be seen in the following examples:

1a. *bo* ‘weave’

bò ‘bag’

bô ‘lord’

1b. *kaŋti* ‘fry a bit’

kàŋti ‘guess’

kâŋti ‘cut some branches (of a tree)’

Kom has both open and closed syllables as exemplified below.

2. V	<i>a</i>	'locative'
CV	<i>kæ</i>	'surround'
CVC	<i>wam</i>	'lie'
V. CV. CV	<i>a.se.se.</i>	'sand'
V. CVC. V. CVC	<i>ì.ghòŋ.a.ghoŋ</i>	'worm'
CCV. CV	<i>lwàsi</i>	'shine'

1.6 Morphology

Kom is predominantly an isolating language whereby verb stems and noun stems stand mostly on their own with little affixation. The main morphological process observed in the language concerns the noun class system.

1.6.1 Noun

The Kom noun consists of a prefix that marks both noun class and number, followed by the noun stem. N → (nc) nst. The plural of nouns is formed mostly by changing the noun class marker into its plural form.

Singular		Plural	
3. <i>isaŋ</i>	‘ear of corn’	<i>asaŋ</i>	‘ears of corn’
<i>ifvi</i>	‘leaf’	<i>tifvi</i>	‘leaves’
<i>atàm</i>	‘elephant’	<i>itwàm</i>	‘elephants’
<i>ileŋ</i>	‘bamboo’	<i>tileŋ</i>	‘bamboos’
<i>fjàm</i>	‘axe’	<i>mijàm</i>	‘axes’

Many plurals are also formed by adding a plural suffix *-sì* to the stem as in (4) below:

Singular		Plural	
4. <i>ndòŋ</i>	‘potato’	<i>ndòŋsì</i>	‘potatoes’
<i>bom</i>	‘cup’	<i>bomsì</i>	‘cups’
<i>ntòyn</i>	‘bucket’	<i>ntòynsì</i>	‘buckets’
<i>nchum</i>	‘drum’	<i>nchùmsì</i>	‘drums’
<i>kàè</i>	‘bachelor’	<i>kàèsì</i>	‘bachelors’

Some words form their plurals by just a slight change in the word stem, as in (5).

However, there are not many words that fall in this category.

Singular**Plural**5. *waynda* 'child'*woynda* 'children'

Table 1 shows the Kom noun class system (Shultz 1997, 14).

Table 1. Kom Noun Classes

Noun class	Affix	Example	Meaning
1	∅	<i>bɛ̀</i>	father
2	<i>ghì-</i> , ∅	<i>ghìbɛ̀</i>	fathers
3	<i>ì-</i>	<i>ìlweŋ</i>	bamboo
4	<i>ì-</i>	<i>ìleŋ</i>	bamboos (pl)
5	<i>ì-</i>	<i>isaŋ</i>	corn
6	<i>a-</i>	<i>asaŋ</i>	corn (pl)
7	<i>a-</i>	<i>atàm</i>	elephant
8	<i>ì-</i>	<i>ìtwàm</i>	elephants
9	<i>n-</i> , ∅	<i>ndoŋ, kâf</i>	horn, armpit
10	<i>-sì</i>	<i>ndoŋsì, kâfsì</i>	horns, armpits
13	<i>tì-</i>	<i>tìbì</i>	kola nuts
19	<i>fì-</i>	<i>fìnàm</i>	axe
6a	<i>mì-</i>	<i>mìnjàm</i>	axes

Shultz (1997, 14) explains the table as follows: “The plural of class 1 nouns is in class 2 whereas the plural of class 3 nouns may be found in class 13 or class 4 indicated by the noun class prefixes. The plural of class 5 nouns may be found in class 13 or class 6 indicated by the prefixes. The plural of class 7 nouns may be found in class 8 or class 6a indicated by a noun class prefix.” These 13 noun classes can thus be classified into seven genders as in table 2.

Table 2. Noun Gender

Gender	Singular	Example	Plural	Example
1	∅	<i>bà</i> ‘father’	ghi-	<i>ghìbà</i>
2	i-	<i>ìlweŋ</i> ‘bamboo’	i-	<i>ìleŋ</i>
3	i-	<i>isaŋ</i> ‘ear of corn’	a-	<i>asaŋ</i>
4	a-	<i>atàm</i> ‘elephant’	i-	<i>itwàm</i>
5	N-	<i>ndoŋ</i> ‘horn’	-sì	<i>ndoŋsì</i>
6	i-	<i>ibi</i> ‘kola nut’	ti-	<i>tìbi</i>
7	fi-	<i>fìjàm</i> ‘small axe’	mi-	<i>mìjàm</i>

1.6.2 Verb

The Kom verb consists of the verb stem and optional tense (T) and aspect (A) markers. $V \rightarrow vst (T)(A)$

Aspect and tense are achieved with tone modification. Tone also plays a big role in contrasting verbs.

6. *mo* 'deny'
 mô 'recounting'
 mò 'recount'

- 6b. *kfe* 'cook'
 kfê 'cooked'
 kfê 'cooking'

There is no formal difference between the transitive and intransitive verb.

Compare the following imperative forms of transitive and intransitive verbs:

Transitive

7a.	<i>lam</i>	'mix fufu'
	<i>geli</i>	'carry on head'
	<i>leŋ</i>	'beat'
	<i>lum</i>	'bite'
	<i>yɪ</i>	'eat'
	<i>timi</i>	'stitch'

Intransitive

<i>buni</i>	'sleep'
<i>gvi</i>	'come'
<i>ndu</i>	'go'
<i>ko'</i>	'climb'
<i>timi</i>	'stand'
<i>nyɛŋi</i>	'lie'

7b.	<i>leŋ wayn ateyn</i>
	beat child that
	'beat the child'

<i>ko' gvi afeyn</i>
climb come here
'come up here'

1.6.3 Adjectives

Adjectives agree in number and in noun class with the nouns they qualify. They come after the head noun as can be seen in the following noun phrases:

	Singular	Plural
8.	<p><i>wul tofīni</i></p> <p>person clever</p> <p>‘an intelligent person’</p>	<p><i>gheli ghi-tofīni</i></p> <p>people pl- clever</p> <p>‘intelligent people’</p>
	<p><i>ndo gha’ni</i></p> <p>house big</p> <p>‘a big house’</p>	<p><i>ndo -si ghalīni -si</i></p> <p>house-pl big -pl</p> <p>‘big houses’</p>
	<p><i>ndyeynsi jûŋ</i></p> <p>teacher good</p> <p>‘a good teacher’</p>	<p><i>ndyeynsi-si jûŋ -sì</i></p> <p>teacher -pl good-pl</p> <p>‘good teachers’</p>

1.6.4 Demonstratives

Demonstratives follow the head noun. They agree in number and in noun class or gender with their head noun.

- 9a. *Wul wèyn chi a Kom.*
- person this stay loc Kom
- ‘This guy lives in Kom.’

9b. *Gheli gheyn lù a Kom.*
people these leave loc Kom
'These guys are from Kom.'

9c. *ifwo vzi lu a Kom*
things those leave loc Kom
'these things are from Kom'

Observe that demonstratives in (9a), (9b) and (9c) agree with their respective head nouns. *Wèyn* in (9a) agrees with singular *wul*, while the plural form of the noun *wul* is *gheli* in (9b) and the demonstrative changes to its plural form *gheyn* of the same gender. The demonstrative in (9c) changes in form to agree with *ifwo*.

Demonstratives can also be categorized into three groups, namely those that refer to an entity that is not in sight of speaker and hearer but is known to both of them, those that refer to something a bit remote from both the hearer and speaker but is seen by speaker, though not necessarily the hearer; and those that refer to something near to the speaker though not necessarily to the hearer. Table 3 is adapted from Jones (2001, 224), shows these categories:

Table 3. Demonstratives

Noun Class	Example	Proximate	Distal	Invisible
1	<i>wayn</i>	<i>wèyn</i>	<i>vzi</i>	<i>vzi</i>
2	<i>woyn</i>	<i>ghèyn</i>	<i>ghi</i>	<i>ghì</i>
3	<i>ilweŋ</i>	<i>wèyn</i>	<i>vzi</i>	<i>vzi</i>
4	<i>ileŋ</i>	<i>yèyni</i>	<i>zi</i>	<i>zì</i>
5	<i>isaŋ</i>	<i>yèyni</i>	<i>zi</i>	<i>zì</i>
6	<i>asaŋ</i>	<i>kèyna</i>	<i>ki</i>	<i>kì</i>
7	<i>àtàm</i>	<i>kèyna</i>	<i>ki</i>	<i>kì</i>
8	<i>itwam</i>	<i>wèyn</i>	<i>vzi</i>	<i>vzi</i>
9	<i>bi</i>	<i>yèyn</i>	<i>zi</i>	<i>zì</i>
10	<i>bisi</i>	<i>sèynsì</i>	<i>sisi</i>	<i>sìsì</i>
13	<i>tibi</i>	<i>tèyntì</i>	<i>titi</i>	<i>tìtì</i>
19	<i>fitam</i>	<i>fèynfì</i>	<i>fifi</i>	<i>fìfì</i>
6a	<i>mitam</i>	<i>mèyn</i>	<i>mzi</i>	<i>mzì</i>

1.6.5 Pronouns

“Pronouns are free forms (as opposed to affixes) that function alone to fill the position of a noun phrase in a clause. They normally have all the distributional properties of noun phrases” (Payne 1997,43). Kom pronouns adhere to this definition. Personal pronouns do not distinguish biological gender but distinguish noun gender and carry number marking. Kom distinguishes inclusive and exclusive pronouns in the first person plural. There is an impersonal or ‘dummy’ pronoun which is used when the subject is unknown and in passive constructions. Other pronouns have to agree with their noun class in number and in gender. See tables 4 and 5 below; table 4 presents the personal pronouns used for human referents.

Table 4. Personal Pronouns

	First Person			Second Person		Third Person		
	Sg.	Pl. Excl.	Pl. Incl.	Sg.	Pl.	Sg.	Pl.	Impersonal
1. Subject	<i>mi, ma</i>	<i>ghes</i>	<i>ghesina</i>	<i>wa</i>	<i>yi</i>	<i>wu</i>	<i>àɲena</i>	<i>ghi</i>
2. Object	<i>ma</i>	<i>ghes</i>	<i>ghesina</i>	<i>va</i>	<i>zi</i>	<i>ɲweyn</i>	<i>àɲena</i>	<i>ɲweyn, àɲena</i>
3. Poss.	<i>wom</i>	<i>wes</i>	<i>ghesina</i>	<i>va</i>	<i>vzi</i>	<i>ɲweyn</i>	<i>àɲena</i>	<i>ɲweyn, àɲena</i>

In table 4, the third person singular and plural are the same as the pronouns given for class 1 in table 5 below, which presents subject pronouns (in singular only) according to noun class.. Consider the following examples:

10a. **Wu** *be na* **wu** *se' iwe* *yuyɲ mivil.*

3sg say that 3sg go market buy oil

'He says he should go to the market and buy oil.'

The above is ambiguous and needs a pragmatic context to disambiguate it. It could mean that the subject is the speaker who intends to do the action himself, i.e. he has reported what he intends to do himself. It could also mean the speaker has asked a person to do the action, i.e. the second pronoun refers to a different subject of the action to whom the speaker has spoken.

10b. àŋena be na àŋenayi wi.
3pl say that 3pl-eat neg

‘They have said they will not eat.’

Like (10a) above, the second pronoun in (10b) could either be a reference to the same subject or to a different subject for the verb *yí*. Thus, this could mean a subject *x* has said *x* will not eat; or *x* has said *y* will not eat. This ambiguity arises only with third person participants.

Table 5. Noun Classes and Subject Pronouns

Noun class	Subject Pronoun	Sample Lexical Noun	Meaning
1	<i>wù</i>	<i>bè</i>	father
2	<i>ghi</i>	<i>ghìbæ</i>	fathers
3	<i>wu</i>	<i>#wɛŋ</i>	bamboo
4	<i>yi</i>	<i>ilen</i>	bamboos (pl)
5	<i>yi</i>	<i>isaŋ</i>	corn
6	<i>ki</i>	<i>asaŋ</i>	corn (pl)
7	<i>ki</i>	<i>atàm</i>	elephant
8	<i>wu</i>	<i>#twâm</i>	elephants
9	<i>yi</i>	<i>ndoŋ, kâf</i>	horn, armpit
10	<i>si</i>	<i>ndoŋsi, kâfsi</i>	horns, armpits
13	<i>ti</i>	<i>tibi</i>	kola nuts
19	<i>fì</i>	<i>fɛnjàm</i>	axe
6a	<i>mì`</i>	<i>mɛnjàm</i>	axes

1.7 Constituent order typology

The pragmatically neutral order of Kom constituents in simple sentences is the agent or subject followed by the verb and then the object or patient. Consider the following examples:

11a. *Bo wom ku meyn nyamabo.*

father mine catch CM lion

'My father has caught a lion.'

11b. *Bitā nin yi abayn*

Peter P eat fufu

'Peter is eating fufu'

The constituent order for a neutral Kom clause will be like (11a) and (11b) above where the agent or subject precedes the verb with the object coming after the verb. However, in pragmatically marked situations, the order may change. Consider (12) below:

12. *A ghi abayn a wayn ta Jam yi.*

it be fufu Ass child that Jam eat

'It is the child's fufu that Jam ate'

Kom is predominantly a head first language as exemplified in the following structures.

1.7.1 The VP

Verbs are head first in a verb phrase.

13. *yi abayn*

eat fufu

'eat fufu'

se' iwe

go market

'go to the market'

1.7.2 The PP

Kom has prepositions but no postpositions:

14. *atu aban*

head platform

'on the table'

Prepositions precede their complements.

15. *anteynì ndo*

inside house

‘inside the house’

isas ikuyn

under bed

‘under the bed’

1.7.3 Auxiliaries

Kom has auxiliaries, which occur just before the main verb as in (16) below:

16a. *Chia kya si fayti fìcha.*’

Chia know to fix bicycle

‘Chia knows how to repair bicycles.’

16b. *Ngong nin ye’i si gùf mutù.*

Ngong P learn to drag car

‘Ngong is learning how to drive.’

1.7.4 The Noun Phrase

Nouns are specified in a noun phrase by determiners. The determiner is the morpheme added to the noun, whether attached to the noun or free, which helps to identify the referent of the head noun in a noun phrase. Numerals, articles and demonstratives act as determiners of the head noun. Because relative clauses are elements of noun phrase, it will be important to first give an overview of the general structure of the noun phrases. It would therefore be helpful to begin with a noun phrase here, see its constituents and then proceed to examine all its constituents.

17. *Tileŋ ti yumni nì mà tìtì tì kà koyti meyn.*

bamboo Ass dry of 1sg those four break CM

‘Those four dry bamboos of mine are broken.’

1.7.4.1 Noun

The head of the noun phrase is the noun, which comes initially within the noun phrase. We will start by examining the morphological structure of the head of the noun phrase. The only morphological categories which nouns mark are number and noun class. As we saw earlier, Kom marks number on the noun by changing the noun class prefix to its plural form or by adding a plural suffix *-sì* to the noun depending on the gender or noun class.

18. *ibi* *tibi* gender 6
 'kola nut' 'kola nuts'
- fitam* *mitam* gender 7
 'fruit' 'fruits'
- ndo* *ndosi* gender 5
 'house' 'houses'

1.7.4.2 Numeral

When the number is marked in a noun phrase but is not sufficiently conveyed by the number affixes bound to the noun, it has to be marked by a numeral. Syntactically, the numeral occurs as the final word of the noun phrase.

- 19a. *ɲwà'li sì* *kà*
 book -pl four
 'four books'
- 19b. *ndo* *sì* *tal*
 house -pl three
 'three houses'

20. *Ma chi meyn bèn sè bò afeyn.*

1sg stay CM year-pl two here

‘I have lived here for two years.’

Noun classes that form their plural by changing the prefix morpheme to its plural form warrant an agreement with the numeral in a noun phrase. This agreement is marked by an ‘association marker’. The association marker occurs between the noun and the determiner.

21a. *gheli ghi tal*

people Ass three

‘three people’

21b. *tibi tì kè*

kolanuts Ass four

‘four kolanuts’

21c. *Mà yuyn asaŋ a kæ iwe.*

1sg buy corn Ass four market

‘I bought four ears of corn from the market.’

1.7.4.3 Articles and Demonstratives

Kom does not have prototypical articles. Very often the demonstratives function akin to articles in a noun phrase. However, there are two words, viz., *ateyn* ‘it’ and *ili* ‘certain’, which help to mark definiteness or indefiniteness in the language and thus may function sometimes in the discourse as definite or indefinite articles would in other languages. Considered as articles, these words and the demonstratives are preceded by the head noun in a noun phrase. *Ateyn* is used anaphorically; thus it cannot be used if the referent has not been previously mentioned and is perceived by the speaker to be in the working memory of the hearer.

22. *wul ateyn lu meyn*
person it leave CM
‘the person has gone’

23. *bi ili ndu’ iwe*
dog certain sit courtyard
‘there is a dog sitting in the courtyard’

24. *fiyuyñ fifi yemti atu fikà’*
bird Dem sing head tree
‘that bird sang from the tree’

1.7.4.4 Genitives

Genitives are constructions which mark a relationship between a possessed and a possessor. In some cases, this relationship is not necessarily that of literal possession but an adherence relationship by one entity to another. For convenience I will also call the adherent the “possessor”. In the noun phrase, the possessor is preceded by the head noun. The possessor is expressed in the noun phrase either by a possessive adjective as in (25a) and (25b) below or by a preposition as in (25c).

25a. *Mà lè fu Ayvis akema si gheli ghem.*

1sg Fut give Spirit mine to people mine

‘I shall give my Spirit to my people.’

25b. *Wayn wom ilvi imò’ kfì meyn ila’ atum.*

child mine certain one die CM country stranger

‘One of my children has died in a foreign land.’

25c. *ɲwà’lì baɲni nì mà zi le meyn.*

book red of 1sg that miss CM

‘That red book of mine is missing.’

1.7.4.5 The Relative Clause

When a relative clause occurs within a noun phrase, it follows the head noun just like all other modifiers do. There are two types of relativizers, *a* and *ta*. The relativizer *a* comes after a demonstrative, the demonstrative being preceded by the head noun. When the relativizer *ta* is used, it is preceded directly by the head noun.

26a. *Nawain vzi a wu ti gvi a Kom kasi meyn lù.*

mother Dem R 3sg PT come loc Kom return CM go

‘The woman who came from Kom has gone back.’

26b. *Ba ta wu n-keli bzisi li meyn lù.*

guy R 3sg have goats take CM go

‘The guy who has the goats has taken (them) away.’

I will show other discourse functions of the relativizer *a* and *ta* when I discuss relativizers in chapter three; the structure of the relative clause will be examined in detail throughout this paper.

1.7.4.6 Noun Phrase Rule

To summarize, I have not included a section on adjectives but it suffices to say here that the adjective in a noun phrase always immediately follows the noun. The noun phrase therefore can be summarized having the following syntactic order; optional items are in parentheses. (R = Relative clause).
NP → N (Adj)(poss)(dem)(num)(R)(num).

27a. *nyamsi belini nì mà sisì sè bò*
animals big of 1sg those Ass two
'those two big horses of mine'

27b. *ìlweŋ gha'ni nì mà vzi [a wu ghi itwa'] kola meyn*
bamboo big of 1sg Dem R 3sg be bush break CM
'that big bamboo of mine which is in the bush is broken'

27c. *Tileŋ ti gha'li ni ma titi ti bo a ti ghi aku koyti meyn.*
bamboos Ass big of 1sg Dem Ass two R 3pl be forest break CM
'The four big bamboos of mine which are in the forest are broken.'

CHAPTER TWO

GENERAL LITERATURE REVIEW ON RELATIVE CLAUSE

2.1 Definition

Relative clauses have been defined as “subordinate clauses that are embedded as noun modifiers inside a noun phrase” (Givón 1993, 107). Givón adds that “it has become very common to view the relationship between a relative clause and its corresponding simple clause as the process of relativization.” Functionally, “relative clauses, together with other noun modifiers, partake in the grammar of referential coherence, furnishing either anaphoric or cataphoric clues for referential identification” (Givón 2001,175). To fully understand relativization as opposed to just a relative clause I want to consider the definition of Palmer (1994, 96). “A relative clause is a modifier of a noun phrase, and relativization (relative clause formation) involves the referential identity between that NP and one of the NPs in the relative clause itself, although this second NP may be deleted or represented by a pronoun, often of a particular type – a relative pronoun.”

Relative clauses are of two kinds, viz, restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses. The former is said to be most common in text and languages. Non-restrictive relative clauses “have the communicative intent of parenthetical assertions, conveying

information that the speaker may deem less central for the main thematic thrust of the discourse” (Givón 2001, 179). They are said to occur rarely in text and in languages.

They do not restrict the head noun but only add more information to it.

This paper only deals with prototypical restrictive clauses given that the non-restrictive relative clause does not occur in Kom.

2.2 Classification of Relative Clauses

Payne says there are four pertinent notions for understanding relative clauses, namely the head, the restricting clause, the relativized noun phrase and the relativizer. “The head is the noun phrase that is modified by the clause.” In talking about the head, Keenan (1985,142) says “semantically, the common noun determines a class of objects which we shall call [the] domain of relativization and the restrictive clause identifies a subset of the domain, those elements which satisfy the conditions given by the restrictive clause.” The “restricting clause is the relative clause itself.” “The relativized noun phrase is the element within the restricting clause that is coreferential with the head.” “The relativizer is the morpheme or particle that sets off the restricting clause as a relative clause” (Payne 1997, 325-326). Relative clauses can be grouped using several typological parameters. Payne shows three ways this can be done which include: “(1) the position of the head noun, (2) the mode of expression of the relativized NP (sometimes called the ‘case recoverability strategy’), and (3) which grammatical relations can be relativized” (1997, 326).

Regarding the first parameter, relative clauses which occur before their heads have been called prenominal. Postnominal is when the head comes before the relative clause. When the head occurs within the clause, this is called internally headed. Payne adds that “though it is true that the position of the relative clause with respect to the head noun often is the same as the position of descriptive modifiers, there is a distinct tendency for relative clauses to be postnominal even in languages for which descriptive modifiers are prenominal” (Payne 1997, 326).

He highlights two ways in which case recoverability can be tackled. These are “the gap strategy” in which the relativized NP is left implicit and has no overt reference from within the relative clause. The head noun is represented within the relative clause by a gap. The immediate context helps the reader to see this gap as representing the head noun being relativized. The “pronoun retention” strategy is where a pronoun representing the head noun is used within the relative clause to help the reader trace the noun being relativized.

I would like to show some examples of relative clauses in English to explain the issue of which grammatical elements can be relativized.

28.

- a. Relativized subject: The teacher who wrote the letter has gone home
- b. Relativized object: The letter which the teacher wrote has just arrived
- c. Relativized indirect object: The boy to whom the teacher wrote a letter went home.
- d. Relativized oblique: The teacher from whom the boy stole money is angry.
- e. Relativized possessor: The teacher whose money was stolen is angry.

Consider also the following examples Payne gives (1997, 335) which show that English allows relativization on all positions with the relativizer *that*₁ except for possessors as can be noticed from (f) below.

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| a. I hate the alligator that \emptyset ate Mildred. | subject |
| b. I hate the alligator that Mildred saw \emptyset . | direct object |
| c. I hate the alligator that Mildred threw the ball to \emptyset . | indirect object |
| d. I hate the alligator that Mildred rode on \emptyset . | oblique |
| e. I hate the alligator that Mildred is bigger than \emptyset . | oblique |
| f. *I hate the alligator that \emptyset teeth are huge. | possessor |

CHAPTER THREE

RELATIVIZATION IN KOM

3.1 The Relativizer

3.1.1 Definition

A relativizer is “the morpheme or particle that sets off the restricting clause as a relative clause” (Payne 1997, 326). Payne adds that “a prototypical relativizer does not constitute a reference to the relativized noun phrase and thus cannot itself help recover the role of the relativized noun phrase in the relative clause.” Consider the following example (29a) and (29b) and observe the relativizers *ta* and *a*. Notice that they set off the restricting clauses indicated in brackets.

29a. *Nain [ta wu ti gvi li lu ni wayn] kasi meyn gvi lem.*

Nain R 3sg PT come take go with child turn CM come put

‘Nain who came and took the child away has brought him back.’

29b. *Ghi ghal meyn gheli ghi choṛni ghì [a ghi ti gvi choṛ ifwo].*

3pl hold CM people Ass thieves Dem R 3pl PT come steal thing

‘They have arrested the thieves who came and stole things.’

3.1.2. The *a* particle

The *a* particle is the main relativizer in Kom discourse. In other constructions, this particle plays the role of a locative particle, question tag and pronoun. For completeness, we will briefly examine each of these roles here. In all cases, it has a high tone and therefore the tone will not be marked as we said earlier.

3.1.2.1. *a* as a relativizer

The *a* particle often co-occurs in a noun phrase with the demonstrative though they do not have to be right together. When the demonstrative is followed by the *a* particle, the two particles together function as a relative pronoun, given that the demonstrative agrees with the head noun that is being modified in noun class and number. Consider (30) and (31) below.

30. *Mì koŋ wì wayn vzi [a wu ti gvi afeyn nìntu']*.

1sg love neg child Dem R 3sg PT come here night

'I don't like the child who came here in the night.'

31. *Njàŋ mà' ndzisi sisi [a bò ŋweyn ti yuyn iyoni]*.

Njàŋ wear clothes Dem R father 3sg PT buy yesterday

'Njàŋ is wearing the clothes her father bought yesterday.'

The particle functions as a prototypical relativizer when it is not preceded by a demonstrative. Consider (32a) with no demonstrative. In (32b) there is a demonstrative, but it is not next to the *a* relativizer.

32a. *A ghi bò wom [a wù yuyn ndzisi wayn].*

it be father mine R 3sg buy clothes child

‘It is my father who bought the child’s clothes.’

32b. *Ghi ghal meyn woyn ghi ghi tal [a ghi ti choŋ ikwo Ntam].*

3pl hold CM children Dem Ass three R 3pl PT steal money Ntam

‘The three children who stole Ntam’s money have been arrested.’

Notice from (32b) above that the demonstrative is physically separated from the relativizer by a numeral, thus showing that the relative clause structurally does not include the demonstrative. Consider also table 6 and observe how the demonstrative agrees with the noun it is determining; thus functionally when the demonstrative and *a* co-occur together they do what a relative pronoun would do. Because of this function when they co-occur, I will call the combination a “relative pronoun” even though each part has other functions when they occur independently.

Table 6. Relative “Pronouns” according to Noun Classes.

Noun class	Singular noun	Singular RP	Plural noun	Plural RP
1	<i>bàè</i> ‘father’	<i>vzì a</i>	<i>ghìbàè</i>	<i>ghì a</i>
3	<i>ìlweŋ</i> ‘bamboo’	<i>vzì a</i>	<i>ileŋ</i>	<i>zì a</i>
5	<i>isaŋ</i> ‘corn’	<i>zì a</i>	<i>asaŋ</i>	<i>kì a</i>
7	<i>atàm</i> ‘elephant’	<i>kì a</i>	<i>itwàm</i>	<i>vzì a</i>
9	<i>ndoŋ</i> ‘potatoe’	<i>zì a</i>	<i>ndoŋsi</i>	<i>sìsì a</i>
4	<i>ibi</i> ‘kola nut’	<i>zì a</i>	<i>tìbi</i>	<i>tìtì a</i>
19	<i>fìjjàm</i> ‘small axe’	<i>fìfì a</i>	<i>mìjàm</i>	<i>mzì a</i>

3.1.2.2. *a* as a Locative Particle

The particle *a* also occurs in discourse as a locative. Consider examples (33) and (34) below.

33. *Nawain se’ a gveyn.*

mother go loc farm

‘The mother has gone to the farm.’

34. *Ma yeyn meyn ŋwà’lì zì a wà kìŋ a bò ŋwà’lìsì nì Ngong.*

1sg see CM book Dem R 2sg find loc bag books of Ngong

‘I have seen the book you are looking for in Ngong’s school bag.’

3.1.2.3 *a* as a Question Tag

There is also a particle *a*, which occurs at the end of the clause as a question tag and the intonation rises. That is the high tone but as we have said, it is not marked in the language.

35. *Wà kɪŋ na mà ni gha si và a ?*

2sg find that 1sg do what to 2sg Q

‘What do you want me to do for you?’

3.1.2.4 *a* as a Pronoun

When the particle *a* occurs at the beginning of the clause with the existential verb *ghi*, it acts as an impersonal existential pronoun.

36. *A ghi mighi mem a lumi.*

it be sauce mine loc bowl

‘It is my sauce that is in the bowl.’

To summarize, I hypothesize that locative particle *a* functions as a relativizer when it co-occurs with a demonstrative, it is a question tag when it occurs at the end of the clause and functions as an impersonal pronoun when it occurs at the initial position of the sentence and is followed by an existential verb.

3.1.3 The *ta* Particle

The particle *ta* is also used as a relativizer but its use as a relativizer is limited only to a few grammatical arguments (which I will show in section 3.5.2 below).

Consider the examples (38) and (39) below to see this particle as a relativizer:

38. *Wul ta ma taɲi kum gvi meyn.*

person R 1sg speak about come CM

‘The person that I spoke about has come.’

39. *Ndo ta ghesinà ti nà taɲi kuma bisa meyn.*

house R we(incl) IM talk about scatter CM

‘The house which we spoke about has fallen.’

The use of *ta* as a relativizer also appears to be limited to pragmatic situations where the speaker is aware that the noun phrase being relativized has just been mentioned and is still very accessible in the mind of the addressee. Where this is not the case, the relativizer *a* will be used in conjunction with the demonstrative. Compare (38) above with (40) below. Example (38) may be spoken in a situation where the speaker and hearer have been speaking about a specific referent who is not with them at the time of speaking but who sooner or later comes when they are still in the setting where they had been speaking. Example (40) may be uttered in a situation where the

speaker gets a report about the referent which he has been talking about with the hearer.

40. *Wul vzi a ma taŋi kum gvi meyn.*

person Dem R 1sg speak about come CM

‘The person who I spoke about has come.’

3.1.3.1 Other Functions of the *ta* Particle

The *ta* particle also plays the role of a complementizer in other constructions and it is necessary here to consider some examples of complement clauses:

41. *Mi saŋli wi kum ta Mbu yuyn mbas.*

1sg happy neg about COM Mbu buy vegetable

‘I am not happy about the fact that Mbu bought vegetable.’

42. *Ta Mbu gvi meyn tèn mi bu lu wì.*

COM Mbu come CM thus 1sg neg leave neg

‘Since Mbu has come I will no longer leave.’

The *ta* particle can simultaneously function as a focus particle. In this role it is used with the purpose of highlighting a particular grammatical argument. In example (42) above it highlights the subject.

To summarize, I have said *ta* is used as a relativizer but in some contexts it functions as a complementizer. Its role as a relativizer is limited to some grammatical arguments. *Ta* can only be used in a situation where the speaker and hearer have recently activated the referent it is referring to in their memory.

3.2 The Head

Kom is predominantly a head first language and this is reflected in relative clauses. Thus, Kom relative clauses are post-nominal, i.e. they occur after the head noun being modified. Consider examples (43a) and (43b) below:

43a. *Bi yem zè a yi byem ti kfi meyn.*

dog mine Dem R 3sg hunt Dec die CM

‘My dog which hunts (very well) has died.’

43b. *Mi sanli wi kum iwo zè a yi gayn si Ndah.*

1sg happy neg about matter Dem R 3sg happen to Ndah

‘I am not happy about what has happened to Ndah.’

In (43a) and (43b) above, the respective heads *bi* and *iwo* are followed by a relativizer. Notice that the head could be a very specific noun like *bi* above, or one that is semantically not very specific like *iwo*.

Keenan says “noun phrases in a single branch of a coordinate structure cannot be relativized in English” (1985,151). Such a structure is also not relativizable in Kom. Consider the clause in (44a) and its relativized form in (44b):

44a. *Jam ηeyn Ntam se' meyn.*

Jam with Ntam go CM

‘Jam and Ntam have gone (to the farm).’

44b. **Jam ηeyn Ntam ghi a se' meyn.*

Jam with Ntam Dem R go CM

‘Jam and Ntam who have gone (to the farm).’

3.3 Headless Strategy

“Headless relative clauses are those clauses which themselves refer to the noun that they modify” (Payne 1997, 328). Kom uses headless relative clauses just when the head is a specific referent and is presumed to be known by the hearer. Consider examples (45a) and (45b) below:

45a. *ivzi a wu ghi si gvi si yeyn mà layn le' meyn.*

one R 3sg be to come to see 1sg today escape CM

'The one who is to come and see me today has escaped.'

45b. *Sam nin jaŋ bi kî ta wu se' ibyem.*

Sam PF call dog only R 3sg go hunt

'Sam calls the dog only when he is going hunting.'

The relativised noun phrase is achieved through a retained pronoun *wu* in both (45a) and (45b). The headless relative clause can only be achieved through this pronoun retention strategy (as will be discussed in section 3.4.1 below). Observe that the head in both (45a) and (45b) is presumed as known to the hearer. Consider (46a) and (46b) below and observe that they are not relativizable through the gap strategy:

46a. **ivzi a Ø ghi si gvi si yeyn mà layn le' meyn.*

one R gap be to come to see 1sg today escape CM

'the one to come and see me today has escaped.'

46b. **Sam nin jaŋ bi kî ta Ø se' ibyem.*

Sam PF call dog only R gap go hunt

'Sam calls the dog only when is going hunting.'

3.4 The Relativized NP

The speaker assumes that there is a basis for the hearer to recognize the element within the restricting clause that refers to the head noun. This will be referred to as the “relativized noun phrase.” Depending on which grammatical argument is being relativized, a language may use different strategies for the relativized NP. Kom uses the pronoun retention strategy and the gap strategy to identify the referent within the restricting clause.

3.4.1 Pronoun Retention Strategy

In the pronoun retention strategy, a pronoun that explicitly references the grammatical relation of the relativized noun phrase by its position, its form, or both, is retained within the relative clause (Payne 1997, 331). In example (47a) below the pronoun retention strategy has been used. Notice in the example how *wu*, the pronoun for *wul*, follows the relativizer. *Wu* thus replaces the relativized NP. In (47b), *ηweyn*, the pronoun for *ba* has also been retained within the restricting clause.

47a. *Wul vzi a wu zɪ a ndo cha'sɪ meyn wayn.*
person dem R 3sg enter loc house carry CM child

‘The person who entered the house has carried the child.’

- 47b. *Ba ta ghes nà taŋi kum ŋweyn se' meyn iwe.*
 guy R we(excl) IM talk about 3sg come CM market
 'The person we were talking about has come to the market.'

3.4.2 Gap Strategy

The gap strategy is applied when the relativized NP is not explicitly referred to in the relative clause but is implied because there is nothing where the noun phrase would be. The hearer recognizes that the relativized NP is represented in the restricting clause by a gap. A grammatical argument that needs to be relativized by a gap strategy will be redundant if a pronoun is retained in the place of the gap and when that is done the naturalness of the clause is also impaired. The use of such a strategy suggests that the processing effort to identify the referent to be relativized is not much. Kom uses this strategy for some grammatical arguments but does not use it for others. I will show the strategies used in relativizing the various grammatical arguments later when I discuss about Keenan and Comrie's hierarchy in section 3.5; for now consider examples (48a) and (48b) below for the purpose of exemplifying the gap strategy.

- 48a. *Ndum kfe mbàs yi mæ.*
 Ndum cook vegetable it finish
 'Ndum has cooked vegetables and it is finished.'

48b. *Mbàs zì a Ndum kfe Ø mæ meyn.*

vegetable Dem R Ndum cook GAP finish CM

'The vegetable which Ndum cooked is finished.'

49a. *Bo wom ti yuyn ndzisi si barj barj.*

father mine PT buy clothes it red red

'My father bought a red dress.'

49b. *Mà mà' ndzisi sisi a bo wom yuyn Ø.*

1sg wear clothes Dem R father mine buy GAP

'I have worn the clothes which my father bought.'

Notice the Gap marked by Ø in the above clauses. The Gap in example (48b) takes the place of *yi* the pronoun for *mbàs*, as can be seen in (48a). The Gap in (49b) takes the place of *si* the pronoun for *ndzisi* as can be seen in (49a).

3.5 The Keenan and Comrie Hierarchy and the Kom Relative Clause

Keenan and Comrie (1977) analyzed what semantic roles are relativizable using various strategies across a number of languages. As a result of their research they argued that there is an accessibility scale as follows:

SU > DO > IO > OBL > GEN > OCOMP (subject > direct object > indirect object > oblique > genitive > object of comparison.) This means that the subject is the most likely argument in a language to be relativized, followed by the direct object and then the indirect object. Also observed about this hierarchy, is the phenomenon that “in any given language, if one position on this hierarchy is relativizable, all positions to the left will also be relativizable, though not necessarily with the same strategy” (Payne 1997, 335). This means that if the indirect object is relativizable in a given language, then the direct object and subject arguments will also be relativizable though not necessarily with the same strategy. Keenan and Comrie claim that each strategy of relativization will be applied on a continuous segment of the hierarchy. This means that there is no provision for interruption. For example, Payne describes the main strategies in dealing with case recoverability viz., the ‘gap strategy’, ‘pronoun retention’ and the use of a relativizer. If in some language the pronoun retention strategy is used in relativizing the subject, and also for indirect object then it must also be used for direct object.

Kom does not accommodate the claims of this hierarchy. Kom uses pronoun retention for relativizing the subject and the indirect object but then switches to the gap strategy to relativize the direct object. Thus, there is interruption. Keenan and Comrie’s claim that the more explicit strategy like pronoun retention is used to relativize argument farthest to the right of the hierarchy is also not true of Kom. Kom

employs the use of the pronoun retention strategy to relativize the subject and the gap strategy to relativize the direct object. The Keenan and Comrie hierarchy can be put in the form of a rule here with the various strategies Kom uses to relativize the different arguments in order to show clearly how Kom does not accommodate it.

SU	DO	IO	OBL
pronoun retention	*gap	pronoun retention	pronoun retention

Observe that the DO in Kom is relativized through a gap strategy (not possible for the claims of the hierarchy). We shall now demonstrate the claims of this hierarchy.

3.5.1. Pronoun Retention and Gap Strategies

3.5.1.1 Subject

Subject relativization in Kom uses the pronoun retention strategy. Consider example (50) below.

50a. *Bi zì a yi choŋ awum zì meyn a ndo.*

Dog Dem R 3sg steal eggs enter CM loc house

‘The dog which stole the egg has entered the house.’

50b. *Wayn vzi a wu ti nya' ηwà'li si ndyeynsi se' meyn layn.*
 child Dem R 3sg PT write book to teacher come CM today
 'The student who wrote the letter to the teacher has come to school today.'

The relativized noun phrase is referenced by the pronoun *yi* in (50a) and by *wu* (50b). Subject relativization therefore is achieved through the pronoun retention strategy. Now consider (51a) and (51b) below to see that the subject cannot be relativized through the gap strategy.

51a. **Bi zì a Ø choŋ awum zi meyn a ndo.*
 Dog Dem R gap steal eggs enter CM loc house
 'The dog who stole the egg has entered the house.'

51b. **Wayn vzi a Ø ti nya' ηwà'li si ndyeynsi se' meyn layn.*
 child Dem R gap PT write book to teacher come CM today
 'The student who wrote the letter to the teacher has come to school today.'

3.5.1.2 Direct Object

Unlike the subject, direct object cannot be relativized using the pronoun retention strategy. Consider the normal relativized clause (52a) without the pronoun and then (52b) with the retained pronoun in the relative clause.

52a. *Ma ma' ndzisi sìsì a bo wom yuyn Ø.*

1sg wear clothes Dem R father mine buy gap

'I have put on the clothes my father bought.'

52b. **Ma ma' ndzisi sìsì a bo wom yuyn **seyinsi**.*

1sg wear clothes Dem R father mine buy it/them

'I have put on the clothes my father bought.'

In (52b), the corresponding pronoun for the head is put in bold. Notice that the clause is ungrammatical and that the syntactic position where the pronoun occurs corresponds to a gap in the natural clause in (52a). Thus, pronoun retention as a strategy for relativizing the direct object is not allowed by the language.

3.5.1.3 Indirect Object

The pronoun retention strategy is used in relativizing indirect objects. Consider example (53a), the normal way of relativizing the indirect object; and then ungrammatical (53b) where the pronoun has not been retained within the relative clause.

53a. *Wayn vzi a Tim ti fu ηwà'lì si ηweyn se' meyn iwe.*
child Dem R Tim PT give book to 3sg go CM market
'The student to whom Tim gave a book, he has come to the market.'

53b. **Wayn vzi a Tim ti fu ηwà'lì si Ø se' meyn iwe.*
child Dem R Tim PT give book to Gap go CM market
'The student to whom Tim gave a book has come to the market.'

3.5.1.4 Oblique

Like subjects and indirect objects, obliques can be relativized through the pronoun retention strategy. Consider (54a) which is the normal way of relativizing the oblique and then consider (54b) with the pronoun of the oblique not retained within the relative clause.

54a. *Jam se ifo zi a mà gvèl igom ateyn.*

Jam sharpen cutlass Dem R 1sg cut banana it

‘Jam sharpened the cutlass with which I cut the banana stem.’

54b. **Jam se ifo zi a mà gvel igom Ø.*

Jam sharpen cutlass Dem R 1sg cut banana gap

‘Jam sharpened the cutlass which I cut the banana stem.’

3.5.1.5 Possessor

Possessors, like the subject, the indirect object and obliques are relativized through the pronoun retention strategy strategy as in (55a) below.

55a. *Ba vzi a ghi choŋ ifwo ŋweyn le’ meyn si chì.*

guy Dem R 3pl steal things 3sg deny CM to curse

‘The guy whose things were stolen has refused to curse (the thief through a witch doctor).’

55b. **Ba vzi a ghi choŋ ifwo Ø le’ meyn si chì.*

guy Dem R 3pl steal things gap deny CM to curse

‘The guy things were stolen has refused to curse (the thief through a witch doctor).’

3.5.2 The Pronoun Retention and the Gap Strategies with the *ta* Relativizer

Not all grammatical arguments can be relativized using *ta* as a relativizer. In this section I will show which arguments can be relativized using *ta* as a relativizer.

3.5.2.1 Subject

The subject can be relativized in Kom using the *ta* relativizer. Consider example (56) below:

56a. *Bobe ta wu kfa itsiyn bu se' iwe layn.*

man R 3sg come coast neg come market today

'The man who came from the coast has not come to the market today.'

56b. **Bobe ta Ø kfa itsiyn bu se' iwe layn.*

man R gap come coast neg come market today

'The man who came from the coast has not come to the market today.'

Notice from example (56a) that the pronoun retention strategy has been used to relativize the subject with the *ta* relativizer and that (56b) is ungrammatical because of the gap. The *ta* relativizer can only be applied with the pronoun retention strategy. I will demonstrate with examples that the gap strategy cannot be used when the relativizer is *ta* as I have done with the subject above. Most of the examples will be

ungrammatical as some of the arguments cannot be relativized with the *ta* relativizer but because we need to be thorough in researching the topic I will pursue this.

3.5.2.2 Direct Object

The direct object cannot be relativized using the *ta* relativizer in that the Gap strategy is used. Consider the examples in (57) below.

57a. *Mi koŋ wi ndzisi ateyn.*

1sg like neg clothes it

‘I don’t like the clothes.’

57b. *Mi koŋ wi ndzisi sɪ̀̀ a nawain mà’ Ø.*

1sg like neg clothes Dem R mother wear gap

‘I do not like the clothes the mother is wearing.’

57c. **Mi koŋ wi ndzisi ta nawain mà’ Ø.*

1sg like neg clothes R mother wear gap

‘I don’t like the clothes that the mother has worn.’

57d. **Mi koŋ wi ndzisi ta nawain mà’ si.*

1sg like neg clothes R mother wear it

‘I don’t like the clothes that the mother has worn.’

Observe that (57a) is the normal clause which can be relativized using the relativizer *a* as in (57b) with the gap strategy. Notice that (57c) cannot be relativized using *ta* as a relativizer. Example (57d) shows that the pronoun *si* has been retained for *ndzisi* to show that the pronoun retention strategy also cannot be applied in relativizing the direct object.

3.5.2.3 Indirect Object

The indirect object can be relativized with *ta* as a relativizer only when the speaker presumes that the hearer is well aware of the referent in his working memory. Consider example (58a) below. Notice that the gap strategy in (58b) cannot be used in relativizing the indirect object with the *ta* relativizer.

58a. *Bobè ta ghi ti fu ikwo nchiynti si ηweyn le' meyn lù.*
 man R 3pl PT give money meeting to 3sg escape CM leave
 'The man to whom the money for the meeting was given has escaped.'

58b. **Bobè ta ghi ti fu ikwo nchiynti si Ø le' meyn lù.*
 man R 3pl PT give money meeting to gap escape CM leave
 'The man to whom the money for the meeting was given has escaped.'

3.5.2.4. Oblique

Obliques like the direct object cannot be relativized using *ta* as a relativizer. Consider examples (59c) and (59d) below which shows that the oblique cannot be relativized with the *ta* relativizer.

59a. *Mi koŋ wi nyam zi.*

1sg like neg animal that

‘I don’t like that horse.’

59b. *Mi koŋ wi nyam zì a Jam se’ iwe nì nyeyn.*

1sg like neg animal Dem R Jam come market with it

‘I don’t like the horse with which Jam has come to the market.’

59c. **Mi koŋ wi nyam ta Jam se’ iwe nì nyeyn.*

1sg like neg animal R Jam come market with it

‘I don’t like the horse that Jam has come to the market.’

59d. **Mi koŋ wi nyam ta Jam se’ iwe nì Ø.*

1sg like neg animal R Jam come market with gap

‘I don’t like the horse that Jam has come to the market.’

Observe from the examples above that (59a) is relativizable using the *a* relativizer as exemplified in (59b) but that it cannot be relativized using the *ta* relativizer as exemplified either with the pronoun retention strategy as in example (59c) or with the gap strategy as in example (59d).

3.5.2.5. Possessor

60a. *Nawain ta Bi ti se' cho' akuyn a gveyn ni ŋweyn kfi meyn.*
 mother R Bi PT go remove beans loc farm of 3sg die CM
 ‘The woman from whose farm Bi harvested beans has died.’

60b. **Nawain ta Bi ti se' cho' akuyn a gveyn ni Ø kfi meyn.*
 mother R Bi PT go remove beans loc farm of gap die CM
 ‘The woman from whose farm Bi harvested beans has died.’

The possessor argument can be relativized using the *ta* relativizer as in example (60a) above but this is limited to the use of the pronoun retention strategy. Notice from (60b) that the gap strategy cannot be used in relativizing the possessor.

3.6. Summary Statement of the Keenan and Comrie Hierarchy and Kom Relative Clauses

Kom does not accommodate the claims of the Keenan and Comrie hierarchy. Keenan and Comrie claim that each strategy of relativization will be applied on a continuous segment of the hierarchy. This is not true of Kom. When *a* is the relativizer, the ‘pronoun retention’ strategy is used in the relativization of the subject, the indirect object, the oblique and the possessor, but direct object uses the gap strategy. When *ta* is used as the relativizer, the ‘pronoun retention’ is used for the relativization of the subject, the indirect object and the possessor. Keenan and Comrie also claim that the more implicit strategies, like gapping, will occur to the left of the hierarchy while the more explicit ones like pronoun retention will occur to the right. This is not true of Kom as the more implicit strategy of gapping is used in the relativization of direct object whereas the more explicit strategy like pronoun retention occurs to the left of the hierarchy in relativization of the subject.

Table 7. Grammatical Arguments and their Relativization Strategies with the Relativizer *a*

Pronoun Retention Strategy	Gap Strategy
Subject	
	Direct object
Indirect object	
Oblique	
Possessor	

Table 8. Grammatical Arguments and their Relativization Strategies with the Relativizer *ta*

Pronoun Retention Strategy	Gap Strategy
Subject	
Indirect object	
Possessor	

CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This paper has been a study of relativization in Kom. In chapter one, I explained some of the general features of the language and in chapter two I reviewed some literature about relative clauses using English examples to acquaint the reader with general background expectations about the subject matter. In chapter three, I described the features of the Kom relative clause. Here are some of my conclusions:

1. Kom is an SVO language and the relative clause is postnominal.
2. I have argued in this paper that the main relativizer is the *a* particle used in conjunction with the demonstrative. The occurrence of the particle and the demonstrative together could in a sense be perceived as a relative pronoun since the demonstrative has to agree with the head noun in noun class and in number.
3. I have suggested that *a* is used as a relativizer in a situation of more referential competition for understanding the reference of the head.
4. I have suggested that the relativizer *ta* is used in a situation where the referent is assumed by the speaker to be in the active memory of the hearer, and therefore very unlikely to be missed. Its use is however limited to only a few grammatical relations.
5. There are two strategies used in relativization of the different grammatical roles namely, the pronoun retention strategy and the gap strategy.

6. The gap strategy is used for relativizing the direct object whereas the pronoun retention strategy is used in relativizing the subject, the indirect object and the oblique and possessor arguments.
7. The use of the *ta* relativizer applies only to the subject, the indirect object and the possessor.
8. Only the pronoun retention strategy can be used when *ta* is used as a relativizer.
9. The Kom relative clause does not support the claims of the Keenan and Comrie hierarchy.

My conclusions are open to further investigation and I would welcome any proven contradictions or further elaborations on the issues raised.

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APPENDIX A

Acts 2: 14-31

Bità i taŋi si anoyn a gheli-a.

Peter CP talk to crowd loc people

‘Peter talks to a crowd.’

14. *Bità ta wu nà ghi ŋeyn gheli ntum ni Jisos ghey nja-imo’*

Peter R 3sg IM be with people message of Jesus these eleven

i kæ timi iyvi i taŋi si anoyna ghel na ki ni gya

CP then stood up CP speak to crowd people that with voice

ito na,

strong that,

“Gheli Jusi zi ghijim ta yi chi a Jelusalem yi yviti si mà.

people Jews 2pl all R 2pl stay loc Jerusalem 2pl hear to me

‘Peter who was with the eleven apostles then stood up and spoke with a strong voice to the crowd saying “You Jews who live in Jerusalem listen to me.’

Mi fe'ti iwo zi a iwo nayeyni nin dyeyn si zi.

1sg tell thing that R thing this P show to you

'I will tell you what this thing means.'

15. *A bu ku milu' ku gheli gheynta yi kfa'ti bomta lviyn bu ghi*

it neg catch wine catch people these as 2pl think because now still be

ki chuesi bulamo' ni bisi bisi.

only hour nine in morning

'These people are not drunk as you are thinking because this is still nine o'clock
in the morning'

16. *Iyeyn na yeyni nin kwo ghi iwo zi a nfe'ti gha'ni Jowel nin*

Dec this is rather be thing that R teller big Joel PF

lae be yi n-lae be na Fiyini fi be na,

PT say he PT say that God say that

'This is rather what the prophet Joel said, he said God said that.'

17. *A ti iwo zi a mà læ ni a michi ngosini. Mà læ fu Ayvis*
 it Dec thing Dem R 1sg Fut do loc days end 1sg Fut give Spirit
si gheli ghijim, a woyn ghi ghilumni ni woyn ghiki na fe'ti
 to people all then children you male and children female IM tell
awo akema si gheli.
 things my to people

'This is what I shall do in the last days. I shall give my Spirit to all people then boys and girls will tell my things to people'

18. *Mà læ ni-a a awo na fvi ike' ni tikun̄ti*
 1sg Fut do loc things IM come face of young
teyn ta ki fvi a jemsi, jemsi na chi ghilumni ghilema.
 thus as it come loc dreams dreams IM come men grown

'I shall cause things to appear to young men as if it were dreams and dreams will come to old men.'

19. *Mà læ fu Ayvis akema si gheli ghi felini ni mà,*
 1sg Fut give Spirit mine to people ones workers of 1sg
a mìchi ngo'sini na ghe a àṅena na fe'ti awo akema si gheli
 loc days end those loc 3pl IM tell things my to people
 'I shall give my Spirit to my workers and give in those last days and they will be
 telling my things to people.'

20. *Mà læ ni a awo kayni ki a ki dyeyn adya' akma a ki na*
 1sg Fut do loc things wonderful that R it show power mine loc it IM
ghi iyvi ghi a nse, ghi læ yeyn miluṅ ni ivis ni mba' fīle'.
 be up be loc ground 3pl fut see blood and fire and cloud smoke
 'I shall make the wonderful things that show my power to be on earth, they shall
 see blood and fire and a cloud of smoke.'

21. *Chue læ kasi nà ghi ta abe afimni-a a njoṅ kasi nà banban*
 sun Fut turn IM be as outside dark loc moon turn IM red
 'The sun shall become darkness and the moon shall become red.'

22. *Bô Fiyini læ boesi nômi ndà vzi a wu toŋti iziyn i ŋweyn.*

Lord God Fut save even who that R 3sg call name Ass him

‘The Lord God shall save whoever who calls his name.’

23. *Bità i tarji ti be na zi ghi a yi n-ghi gheli Isilæ yi*

Peter CP speak thus say that 2pl those R 2pl P-be people Israel 2pl

yvitì iwo zi a ka mà be

hear thing that R then 1sg say

‘Peter spoke thus and said you who are people of Israel listen to the thing I will say.’

Jisos nin ghi wul Nazalet ma Fiyini fi dyeyn meyn a ndayn.

Jesus IM be person Nazareth and God show CM loc open

‘Jesus is a person from Nazareth and God has revealed this clearly.’

Fì ni teyn a dzi na Jisos ti meyn nà ni tifel ti bemniti

He do thus loc way that Jesus PT CM IM do works Ass wonderful

ni nchwæsi ni awo ki a ki ndyeyn adya’ a Fiyini. Yi kya

with signs with things those R it show power of God 2pl know

awo nakeynà nô àjīm bom ta ki ti nà gayn ko' a yi anteyni

things these Int all because it PT IM happen up loc 2pl inside

'He did so in that was doing wonderful works with signs that show the power of God and you know all these things because it was happening among you.'

24. *Ghi n-bey'li meyn Jisos na weyn si zi ki ighel ta Fiyini fi læ*

3pl sell CM Jesus Dec this to 2pl just right as God PT

lem i nà fi kya jæ na achi ateyna kfeyn, Yi zue ηweyn a dzi

keep and again know before day it reach 2pl kill him loc way

na yi fu meyn ηweyn gheli awo bi-a baynti ηweyn a ànwamni,

that 2pl give CM him people things bad nail him loc cross

'They sold this Jesus to you just as God had kept and knew before the day came and you killed him in that you gave him out and sinners nailed him on a cross.'

25. *Miti Fiyini fi ni wu làli si ikfi, i bæsi ηweyn si adya' ikfi*

but God make 3sg rise from death CP save him from power death

bom ta ikfi-i na ka' yi bu ghal nweyn si wul ndo ncha'.

because death PT can it neg hold him as person house chains

'But God made him to rise from death and saved him because death could not have held him as a prisoner.'

26. *David nin lae meyn taji awo nakèynà kum Jesus na, mi n-yeyn*

David PF PT CM speak things these about Jesus that 1sg IM-see

Bô Fèyìnì a mi asi kè milvi ìnjìm

Lord God loc 1sg infront in time all

'David spoke these things about Jesus saying I see the Lord God before me always'

Bom ta wu n-ghi ikæ itwo ni mà ma afo kà' ki bu nè'si mà.

Because 3sg P-be arm right of me then thing can it neg shake 1sg

'Because he is on my right hand side and nothing can shake me.'

27. *Bom iyeyn nayeyni atem akema nin saṅli-a, ma fi ko'si ṅweyn ni*
 because this one heart mine P glad, 1sg again praise 3sg with
ichfi.

mouth

Nômi ta mà lè kfî, mà na ki ndù ki ni iwo zi a wu læ
 eventhough 1sg Fut die 1sg cont look go to thing that R 3sg Fut

ni si mà.

do to me

‘Because of this, my heart is happy and again I praise him with my mouth
 even though I shall die I will keep on looking at what he shall do to me.’

28. *Bom ta wa ni visi wi ayvis akema a Fiyini fî na ki faṅ anteyni*
 because 2sg Fut allow neg spirit my loc God that it remain inside
gheli ghi kfîṭini, Wa ni visi wi igviyn i wul felini ni và na yi fœ.
 people Ass dead 2sg Fut allow neg corpse worker 2sg that it rot

‘Because you will not leave my spirit God to remain among dead people. You
 will not leave my corpse to rot.’

29. *Wà dyeyn meyn dzi sîsî sî mà ta ka mà na jel ateyn i chi*
 2sg show CM way those to 1sg that 1sg cont walk it CP stay
faŋ.

remain

‘You have shown me the ways in which to walk and live forever.’

Mi keli no isanli igha’ni i bom ta ghesivà i nì na ghi
 1sg have Int happiness big because 2incl CP Fut Cont be
amo.

together

‘I have big joy because I will be with you together.’

30. *Bità fi kæ be na, “woynà ghem mi keli si tanji samo’ kum*
 Peter again then say that brother my 1sg have to talk true about

David, bò ghesinà wu àsî. Wu læ meyn kfî ghi gvîmî. Is e i
 David father 2incl one first 3sg PT CM die they buried grave Ass

ŋweyni na bu ghi ki afeyn si ko’ si chem. layn.

him cont still be here to climb reach today

‘Peter then said “Brother, I have to talk truly about David our first father; he died and was buried but his grave still remains here up to today.’

31. *David nin læ nà ghi nfe'tì igha'ni nì Fìyìnì fì, kya na Fìyìnì fì*
 David PF PT IM be teller big of God know that God
læ meyn yini màkayn ñeyn ñweyn na yì lè cho' wul isas indo
 PT CM agree covenant with him that 3sg Fut choose person family
ni ñweyn si a fòyn.
 of him as king

‘David was a prophet of God knowing that God had a covenant with him that He shall choose his family member as king.’

32. *Wu læ meyn yeyn mesi iwo zì a Fìyìnì fì kelì si nì jàe taka*
 3sg PT CM see finish thing that R God have to do before
ilvi ñweyn ko' kfeyn wu tañi kum wul vzi a Fìyìnì fì cho'
 time him climb reach 3sg talk about person that R God choose
bè na, 'Fìyìnì fì bu visi ñweyn anteynì gheli ghi kfitini, igviyni
 say that God neg allow him inside people Ass dead corpse

ijweyni bu fà.

him neg rot

‘He finally saw the thing God had to do before his time reached and he spoke about the person God chose and said God had not allowed him among the dead, that his corpse had not rotted.’

APPENDIX B

Fìtiti fì nà wayn ilvì ñeyn fñnyuyn fì

Story mother child certain with bird

‘The story of a certain mother and a bird’

1. *Na nà wayn ilvì læ meyn nà sî ghi boŋ isi i ingœ kaynti*

that mother child certain PT CM IM be pick eye Ass seed fry

kfil ki kfil, isi chem. a nse fñyuyn fì boŋ ndu tò’.

eat eat eye fall loc ground bird pick go plant

‘Once upon a time there was a woman who was frying and eating all her seed and when a grain fell on the ground a bird picked it and went and planted’

2. *ilvì to’ni læ chem. gheli nà sî fvi nì ngœsî àjena se’ tò a*
time planting PT reach people IM come with seed theirs go plant

nà wayn vzi i keli wi ngœ.

mother child that have neg seed

‘The time for planting came and people went with their seed to plant but that woman had no seed.’

3. *Wu kumti ngò'sì i se' tò' si ibuyn, ilvi kfini læ kfeyn gheli*
3sg pick stones go plant on ridges time harvesting Fut reach people

nà si se' cho' akuyn, kè àbo'.

IM go remove beans, pluck pumpkins

'She picked pebbles and went and planted and when harvesting time came,
people were going and harvesting beans and pumpkins.'

4. *Nà wayn vzi boṅ tuṅ nkem se' kè àbo' be'i nà si*
mother child that also carry basket go pluck pumpkins carry IM Pro

kfa, fīnyuyn fifi yemti atu fikà' na:

come bird that sing head tree that

'That mother too carried her basket and went and harvested pumpkins and
began to go home but that bird sang from a tree saying:'

Wa nà kaṅti kfīl kfīl gvà'

2sg IM fry eat eat ID'

Ma na boṅ fīmò' ma ndu tò'.

1sg IM pick one 1sg go plant

abo' akema yala ki a titeŋ a titeŋ.

pumpkins mine scatter only loc stems loc stems

'you were frying and eating then I would pick one and plant

let my pumpkins get back, each on its stem.'

5. *Ta wu yemti ti nô milvi gha abo' ateyna yalà ki yala*

As 3sg sing thus immediately pumpkin that scatter scatter

i kasi ndu dùŋti ki iwuyŋ a titeŋ.

CP back go join body loc stem

'When he sang thus, the pumpkins returned and went and connected back to the

stems.'

6. *Nà wayn vzi ndu kœ gvì si chem. finyuyn fifi fi*

mother child that go pluck come reach bird that again

yemti ki ti ki fi yalà.

sing thus it again scatter

'Each time that woman went and harvested and was coming that bird sang

the same and it scattered again.'

7. *Wu kfa fè'tà si lum ηweyn, itu' layn àηena nù mighii*
3sg go tell to husband her, morning 3pl mix sauce

we a kuf, lum ηweyn se' du'i isas i fikà' nà lo.
put loc bowl husband her go sit under tree Fut lick

'She went home and told her husband and the next morning they prepared sauce and put it in a wooden bowl for the husband to go to the farm and be licking under a tree.'

8. *Nà wayn vzi ndu kè àbo' se si gvì fīnyuyn fīfī i fi*
mother child that go pluck pumpkins on coming bird that again

yemti njàη zi ki yàlà.
sing song that it scatter

'The woman went and harvested pumpkins and on coming the bird sang the song again and the pumpkins scattered.'

9. *Fīyuyn fī ateyn yeyn bò vzi isasi fikà' ta wù lo mighi*
bird it see man that under tree as 3sg lick sauce

i be "wà lo ghà ti a ba mà kali gvi lo?"

and say 2sg lick what thus friend 1sg down come lick

'The bird saw that man under the tree licking sauce and asked, "What are you licking friend so that I can join you?"

10. *Bobè vzi bè "kali gvi."*

man that say come down

'The man answered and said "Come down."

11. *Fì nà si kàyti kì kayti i ni kali chem. ichfi kuf.*

it Pro come on come CP then come reach mouth bowl

'It began to come down and finally reached the wooden bowl.'

12. *Bobè na vzi i be na fì chfinti lo, fì nà chfinti gvi tèn*

man that say that it bend lick it IM bend come thus

wu chiyl kì kuf na bìk.

3sg cover then bowl that ID

'The man asked it to bend down and lick and while it bent down he quickly covered the bowl.'

16. *itu' layn achi alia, ghi fvè se'ni, wayn i yisi kfè ifwo yini*
 morning day certain 3pl go out child day cook food
 'One morning when everybody had gone to the (farm), the child cooked food during the day.'
17. *i bè "mi li wo mivil si we afo afeyn a?"*
 and say 1sg take where oil to put thing this Q
 and he said, 'Where will I take oil to put in this food?'
18. *Ffiyuyn fifi bè na wù fvisi tom zi yì nyij mivil.*
 bird that say that 3sg remove put it it give oil
 'That bird said he should remove and keep it (on the floor so that) it should give oil.'
19. *Wu fvìsì, fi fi be na wu tom zi ichfi ndo yì nyij mivil*
 3sg remove it again say that 3sg put it mouth house it give oil
 'He removed and it again said he should put it at the door so that it gives the oil.'

wu nà tom gvì tèyn fì tàyn ki tayn.

3sg on put come thus it fly only fly

‘Just as he put it, it flew.’

20. *Wu nyij ibàm fì le’ wu ku aghes i kfa kfisi.*

3sg run behind it escape 3sg catch weaver bird CP come cover

‘He ran after it and it escaped but he caught a weaver bird and came and covered it.’

21. *Ghi ni kfa kfe ifwo yin i i bif mivil si we ateyn.*

3pl later come cook food and CP ask oil to put it

‘They later came (from the farm) and cooked food and asked for oil to put in the food.’

22. *Aghes kì som isas i kwò. ghi ndù sesi ki yeyn aghes.*
 weaver that sigh under basket 3pl go on looking see weaver bird
 ‘That weaver bird sighed under the basket and they on looking saw a weaver
 bird.’

23. *Wayn vzi i fe’ti ìwo zi a yi nì gàyn ghi leŋ ŋweyn tsiyn abe.*
 child that tell thing that R it PT happen 3pl beat her push out
 ‘That child told what had happened and they beat her and pushed her outside.’

24. *Wu nà dzi à. ivi byal nô si ŋaŋ gvi lì lu nì ŋweyn.*
 3sg cont cry thunder shout Int big come take go with her
 ‘She began to cry and thunder came very loud and took her away.’

25. *itu’ layn achi alia fīnyuyn fī bè si nà wayn vzi na wu ndoyn*
 morning day certain bird say to mother child that that 3sg go

yì ndu dyèyn ale’ ki a wayn ŋweyn chi ateyn.
 it go show place that R child her stay it
 ‘One morning a bird asked that woman to come along with it so that it should go
 and show her where the child lives.’

26. *Wu ndù yeyn nà si dyati à ñeyn wayn ñweyn.*

3sg go see IM happy with child her.

‘She went and saw (the child) and began to rejoice.’