

MINISTRY OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL RESEARCH

DRAFT AND NOTES TOWARDS  
A SKETCH GRAMMAR OF META'

Klaus W. Spreda

1995

Société Internationale de Linguistique  
B.P. 1299, Yaoundé  
Republic of Cameroon

## 2.2 SUPRASEGMENTAL FEATURES

### 2.2.1 STRESS

Stress, that is the prominence of one syllable as compared with neighbouring syllables by means of higher pressure of the airstream, is not contrastive in Meta'. It is, however, useful to distinguish between stressed and unstressed syllables, since certain tone rules can best be formulated by recourse to this distinction.<sup>1</sup> The initial syllable of each root has phonetic stress. All affix syllables and non-initial root syllables are unstressed. In the following examples stress is marked by ['] but will generally be left unmarked outside of this subsection.

- |     |     |  |                 |
|-----|-----|--|-----------------|
| (1) | (a) | ə- <sup>l</sup> bám ~ ə- <sup>l</sup> bámì | 'bag'           |
|     | (b) | ə- <sup>l</sup> zéd ~ ə- <sup>l</sup> zérì | 'tree, stick'   |
|     | (c) | <sup>l</sup> néb                           | 'house, family' |
|     | (d) | <sup>l</sup> wəd                           | 'person'        |

### 2.2.2 THE TONAL SYSTEM

As a Western Grassfields Bantu language one expects Meta' to be highly tonal, and in fact phonetically four different levels of tone and six contour tones must be recognized. The tone levels are not the result of a process known as "downstepping", "terracing", or "downdrift", which tends to result in a multitude of phonetic levels. Meta' does not employ such a phenomenon, but has discrete levels of pitch with corresponding phonetic tones which are variants or combinations of three register tonemes.

#### 2.2.2.1 The register tones

The level tones are generally also called register tones. The register tones of Meta' are listed in table Figure 1, starting from the highest tone downwards.

---

<sup>1</sup>See §xxx for details

No	Description	Abbreviation	Tone Mark
1	High	Hi	á
2	Decreased high	De	unmarked
3	Mid	Mi	ā
4	Low	Lo	à
5	Low-Falling	LF	à̃

Figure 1

These level tones are illustrated by examples (2)(a-e).

- (2) (a) jú 'bee, honey'  
 (b) tɪŋgəŋ 'k.o. lizard'  
 (c) tōʔ 'cup'  
 (d) təŋ 'umbilical cord'  
 (e) paʔ 'cloud'

The tones (1) to (4) of the table are register tones, while tone (5), the LF tone, is a downgliding contour tone, gliding from Lo to something like extra low. Despite the fact that it is a contour tone, phonetically the LF has the same status as the four register tones treated phonologically as a single tone associated with a single tone bearing unit. Gliding tones which are analyzed as phonological contours are treated in §2.2.2.2.

In the framework of phonemic theory the tones (1) (Hi) and (2) (De) can be analyzed as conditioned variations of the Hi toneme. The Hi tone occurs only after another Hi tone, the De tone occurs in other environments, e.g. after a non-high tone or directly at the beginning of an utterance or after a pause.<sup>2</sup> Examples (3)(a) vs. (b) illustrate the different realizations of the high toneme on the noun stem -zéd. The De tone is also shown on the high toned utterance initial prefixes of ə + zéd and ə + tú.

- (3) (a) ə + zéd 'tree'  
 (b) ətú ə̃ + zəd 'head of tree'

The low-falling tone is analyzed as a conditioned variant of the L toneme, occurring only as the last tone before a pause, i.e. at the end of either a sentence or an utterance (example (4)(a)). The same underlying tone is realized as [Lo] in other environments (example (4)(b)).

- (4) (a) paʔ 'cloud'  
 (b) pàʔ zē 'the cloud'

<sup>2</sup>See §xxx for a formal presentation in terms of a tone rule

The high toneme, with its variants Hi and De, are shown to be in phonemic contrast with the Mi and with the L tones in examples (5) and (6), the Hi toneme being realized as De in (5)(a) and (6)(a) and the Lo toneme being realized as HF in examples (5)(c) and (6)(c).

(5)	(a)	$\bar{i} + te$	<i>'to stand s.th. (somewhere)'</i>
	(b)	$\bar{i} + t\bar{e}$	<i>'to kick; slap; sting'</i>
	(c)	$\bar{i} + t\bar{e}$	<i>'to slip'</i>
(6)	(a)	$\bar{i} + gwe$	<i>'to reverse'</i>
	(b)	$\bar{i} + gw\bar{e}$	<i>'to pick (up)'</i>
	(c)	$\bar{i} + gw\bar{e}$	<i>'to fail to give'</i>

Elsewhere<sup>3</sup> it has been shown that the five tones in the table of table Figure 1 can be derived by tone rules from the two underlying tones [H] and [L]. The relationships of the four phonetic or surface tones [Hi, De, Mi, Lo, and LF] to the two underlying tones are shown in Figure 2.

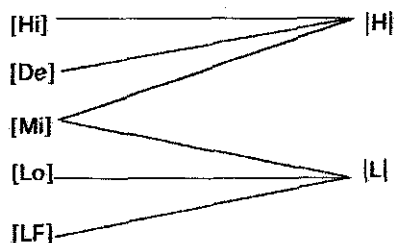


Figure 2

The diagram in Figure 2 indicates that both the high and the low tones are under certain conditions realized as a phonetic mid tone. This reflects the hypothesis that at a deeper level of abstraction there is no mid tone but that there are only high and low. Example (7) shows that a high tone is in certain environments realized as mid while example (8) shows that a low tone after a preceding underlying high tone is realized as mid.

(7)	(a)	$f\bar{i} + b\bar{i}$	<i>'small knife'</i>
	(b)	$m + b\bar{i}$	<i>'tapping knife'</i>
(8)	(a)	$ic\bar{u} \bar{i} f\bar{i} + ky\bar{i}\eta$	<i>'mouth of (the) pot'</i>
	(b)	$f\bar{i} + ky\bar{i}\eta$	<i>'pot'</i>

<sup>3</sup>K. W. Spreda (1986)

## 2.2.2.2 Contour Tones

The remaining five phonetic contour tones<sup>4</sup> of Meta' are listed in table Figure 3 and illustrated in examples (9) to (11). As has been shown in Spreda (1986) all the falling contours can be analyzed as underlyingly HL and all the rising contours as underlyingly LH.

No	Characteristic	Description	Abbreviation	Tone Mark
1	Falling	High-Low	Hi-Lo	∧
2	Falling	Decreased high-Low	De-Lo	∩
3	Falling	Mid-Low	Mi-Lo	∟
4	Rising	Low-Decreased high	Lo-De	∨
5	Rising	Low-Mid	Lo-Mi	∟

Figure 3

The five contour tones listed in Figure 3 consist of a sequence of two register tones which through tonological processes have become associated with the same syllable. The contours they form are defined by the register tones at their end points.

It is noticeable that all falling tones have as their final tone a Lo and all rising tones have as their initial tone a Lo. This is an indication of the fact in the Meta' tonal system the Lo tone is the most stable tone which gets changed only in few instances while the high tone, forming the other end of the contour, is much more susceptible to be modified by tonological processes. Example (9) illustrates how the Hi tone of the Hi-Lo contour (a) is realized as De-Lo in (b) and as Mi-Lo in (c).

- (9) (a) zón í nyâm!                    *'buy meat!'*  
       (b) nyâm                            *'animal, meat'*  
       (c) njim ì nyâm                 *'back of animal'*

Example (10) illustrates a contour which is realized as Lo-De since a high tone preceded by a low tone is always realized as De.<sup>5</sup>

- (10)            ànǎŋ                            *'cocoyam'*

Example (11) shows an underlying Lo-Hi combination which is realized as a Lo-Mi contour. The rule operating here attaches the floating final Hi tone and disassociates the

<sup>4</sup>See previous section for treatment of the low-falling contour tone.

<sup>5</sup>See discussion of NTP xxx

Lo tone before the following article which has an initial floating Lo tone. A further rule then lowers the Hi tone between Lo tones to Mid.<sup>6</sup>

- (11)            *tɔŋ zē*                            *'the umbilical cord'*

### 2.2.2.3 The Tone Patterns of the Noun

Nouns can be divided into tone classes according to the tone melody which they bear. Thus each tone class is characterized by a particular combination of tones which is called noun tone pattern (NTP). It is useful to recognize such tone patterns since their realization in different environments varies in a systematic way according to the interplay of phonological and grammatical factors.

Besides the set of regular noun tone patterns described in §2.2.2.3.1 a number of irregular noun tone patterns are found. These are briefly presented in §2.2.2.3.2.

#### 2.2.2.3.1 *The regular Noun Tone Patterns*

The tone patterns described in this paragraph are regular in the sense that their surface realizations can be derived from their underlying tone sequences by applying the phonological tone rules stated in §2.3.1.

Elsewhere<sup>7</sup> I showed that in their underlying form a regular noun tone pattern consists of a sequence of three tones, namely a prefix tone and two stem tones. Each of the tones is either Hi or Lo, and the eight logically possible melodies are derived from them by a set of phonological tone rules. The following table Figure 4 lists these patterns, labeling them with a letter from (a) to (h). Besides stating their melodies in phonetic as well as underlying tones it gives an example for each pattern.

---

<sup>6</sup>See discussion of NTP xxx and Rule xxx

<sup>7</sup>See Spreda (1986), Chapters xxx

Label	Phonetic	Underlying	Example	Meaning
a	Lo+Lo(Lo)	L+L	fì + jì	'fly'
b	Lo+Lo	L+LH	fì + nèn	'bird'
c	Lo+Mi	L+HL	fì + tōb	'branch'
d	Lo+Lo-De	L+H	à + nǎŋ	'cocoyam'
e	De+Hi-Lo	H+L	i + bāb	'wing'
f	De+Mi	H+LH	fì + tōŋ	'navel'
g	De+Hi	H+HL	i + bí	'cutlass'
h	De+Hi	H+H	ə + zéd	'tree'

Figure 4

It is noticeable that the NTPs (a) to (d) have a low toned noun class prefix, in isolation realized as Lo, and the NTPs (e) to (h) have a high toned noun class prefix, which in isolation is realized as De. In underlying representations the stems of the nouns occur in the four logically possible combinations of the assumed two underlying tones H and L. The Obligatory Contour Principle<sup>8</sup> reduces the sequences of [HH] and [LL] to [H] and [L] respectively.

Meta' also has nouns without overt noun class prefix. This phenomenon occurs systematically with nouns of the noun class combination 9/10<sup>9</sup>, if the initial consonant is a voiceless obstruent. The occurring tone patterns are listed in table Figure 5 in a way which corresponds to respective tone patterns for nouns with segmental prefixes.

Label	Phonetic	Underlying	Example	Meaning
a'	Lo(Lo)	L+L	pà'	'cloud'
b'	Lo <sup>Hi</sup>	L+LH	tōŋ	'umbilical cord'
c'	Mi	L+HL	tō'	'cup'
d'	Lo-De	L+H	fōŋ	'buffalo'
e'	Hi-Lo	H+L	nyàm	'animal'
f'	Mi	H+LH	—	—
g'	H <sub>i</sub> Lo	H+HL	néb	'house'
h'	Hi	H+H	jú	'bee; honey'

Figure 5

<sup>8</sup> first stated by Leben (1973)

<sup>9</sup>See §xxx for a presentation of the noun class system

It can be observed that there are fewer nouns with floating [H] prefix tone than there are with floating [L] prefix tone. The NTP f is empty. The reason for this is not known.

The tone patterns in the tables Figure 4 and Figure 5 are the regular tone patterns occurring with monosyllabic and disyllabic noun stems.



## 4.1.7 NOMINALIZING DERIVATIONAL PROCESSES

Nominalization is very productive in Meta'. Nouns are formed from verb (example (1)) roots or extended verb roots (example (2)) by adding on a noun class prefix and a suffix.

- |     |     |              |                       |
|-----|-----|--------------|-----------------------|
| (1) | (a) | ī + dān      | 'to train'            |
|     | (b) | è + dān + è  | 'trainer'             |
| (2) | (a) | ī + dān + dī | 'to train (extended)' |
|     | (b) | è + dān + dī | 'trainer'             |

The addition of the nominalizing suffix is optional in a some cases and in other cases it is never attached. Depending on the specific noun class prefix employed the deverbal noun belongs to one of the following noun class combinations of singular/plural noun classes.

NCL	1/2
NCL	3/6, 3/6a, 3/13
NCL	6a
NLC	7/8
NCL	9/10

Comparing this with the distributions of nouns in general among the pairs of noun classes the deverbal nouns do not present any striking difference, except that they do not occur in the nounclass pair 19/13, which consists mainly of objects which in the real world are small.

Looking at the semantic characteristics, which the so formed nouns possess, it seemed practical to assign them to a group roughly described by one of the following Labels:

ABS	Abstraction	the action itself, only grammatically a noun
ACR	Actor	the one who carries out the action
MNS	Means	the instrument for carrying out the action
PRD	Product	a tangible object produced by carrying out the action
NEG	Negatives	a person not performing the action

It will be noted in the subsequent treatment of the nouns according to their formal characteristics, that few generalizations concerning the semantic content and the noun class of the deverbal nouns can be made. The exception being NCL 1/2, where we find three groups of deverbal nouns which are both structurally and semantically distinct.

The nouns derived from verb roots are described here according to the derivational affixes employed and the noun classes into which these deverbatives fit.

## 4.1.7.1 NCL 1/2

There are three structurally distinct groups of deverbal nouns which fit into the NCL 1/2. Each of them denotes a different subgroup of actors. The subgroups can be characterized as follows:

- A. the habitual actor
- B. the prospective actor
- C. the actual actor

Subgroup A contains nouns denoting people who habitually carry out the action depicted by the verb. These nouns are formed by attaching to the verb root the NPF<sup>1</sup> *ə-* for the singular and *mə-* for plural. Further the suffix *-ə* is attached. This is illustrated by example (3) for verb roots with a Lo tone, in example (4) for verb roots with a De tone and in example (5) for verb roots with a Mi tone.

- |     |     |  |                    |
|-----|-----|--|--------------------|
| (3) | (a) | $\bar{i} + c\grave{a}?$                | <i>'to search'</i> |
|     | (b) | $\grave{a} + c\grave{a}?' + \grave{a}$ | <i>'searcher'</i>  |
| (4) | (a) | $\bar{i} + j\grave{e}$                 | <i>'to feed'</i>   |
|     | (b) | $\grave{a} + j\bar{e} + \grave{a}$     | <i>'feeder'</i>    |
| (5) | (a) | $\bar{i} + t\bar{o}$                   | <i>'to carve'</i>  |
|     | (b) | $\grave{a} + t\bar{o} + \grave{a}$     | <i>'carver'</i>    |

In example (3) no tone rule is applied to the verb root while in example (4) and (5) the underlying H tone of the verb root is realised as Mi, because the Lowring Rule is applied because after the formation of the noun the verb root stands between L tones.

If the final vowel of the verb root is *i* only the *i* is realized.. This is the case not only when the final vowel is part of a monomorphemic verb root (example (6)) but also when it is the vowel of the extension suffix (examples (7) and (8)).

- |     |     |  |                              |
|-----|-----|--|------------------------------|
| (6) | (a) | $\bar{i} + kyw\bar{i}$                 | <i>'to forge'</i>            |
|     | (b) | $\grave{a} + kyw\bar{i}$               | <i>'smith'</i>               |
| (7) | (a) | $\bar{i} + d\grave{a}n$                | <i>'to train'</i>            |
|     | (b) | $\bar{i} + d\grave{a}n + d\grave{i}$   | <i>'to train (extended)'</i> |
|     | (c) | $\grave{a} + d\grave{a}n + d\grave{i}$ | <i>'trainer'</i>             |
| (8) | (a) | $\bar{i} + t\bar{u}m$                  | <i>'to shoot'</i>            |
|     | (b) | $t\bar{u}m + b\bar{i}$                 | <i>'to shoot (extended)'</i> |

<sup>1</sup> NPF is the abbreviation for noun class prefix

(c) à + tūm + bī 'shooter'

The resulting tone pattern for a low tone verb root looks like a NTP (a). However in its underlying form it has three L tones, one from each of its morphemes, and not two as the regular NTP (a) has. Parallel to this the resulting tone melody of a noun derived from a high toned verb root is Lo-Mi-Lo, which is not a regular noun tone pattern.

The subgroup B consists of nouns denoting prospective actors, i.e. persons who are expected to carry out the action or who under certain circumstances would do so (ex. (9)).

(9) Tijíg ē kō?, à yī ē cə í mbirajigə  
*food SCON plenty it is CC not he eaters*

Food is plentiful, but there is none who would eat it.

Verb roots with underlying high tone form this type of noun by attaching the sg./pl. noun class prefixes *tə-/mbirə-* and a suffix *-ə* (see examples (10) to (12)).

- |      |     |                  |                       |
|------|-----|------------------|-----------------------|
| (10) | (a) | ī + zōn          | 'to buy'              |
|      | (b) | təzonə/mbirəzonə | 'prospective buyer'   |
| (11) | (a) | ī + bīn          | 'to dance'            |
|      | (b) | təbinə/mbirəbinə | 'prospective dancer'  |
| (12) | (a) | ī + nō           | 'to drink'            |
|      | (b) | təncə/mbirəncə   | 'prospective drinker' |

The subgroup C contains nouns referring to the person who actually performed the action denoted by the verb (see example ).

(13) Tijíg ē fō mī í,  
*food SCON PERF finish it*

The food is all finished,

à yī ē, cə í wēd kyri mbirajigə.  
*it is CC not he person know eaters*

but none knows who has eaten it

The nouns of this subgroup corresponding to the examples (10) to (12) are listed under

(14)	təzōnə/mbìrəzōnə	'actual buyer'
(15)	təbīnə/mbìrəbīnə	'actual dancer'
(16)	tənōə/mbìrənōə	'actual drinker'

#### 4.1.7.2 NCL 3/6, 3/6a, 3/13

#### 4.1.7.2 NCL 7/8

The deverbal nouns which fit into the NCL 7/8 are formed by attaching the singular prefix *í-* or the plural prefix *è-* as well as the suffix *-ì*. Examples (17) to (23) are instances of the derivation of roots with a L tone melody. Examples (20) and (21) are instances of noun root plus the extension affix which has a final vowel *í*. On the strength of the treatment of the nominalization suffix in the case of NCL 1/2 it is assumed that after this vowel the nominalization affix drops off. Example (18) looks like an extended verb, however it belongs to the group of verbs for which a basic, i.e. unextended, form has not been found and which in present day Meta' seem to exist only in what looks like the extended form.

(17)	(a)	í + bàʔ	'to clear'
	(b)	è + bàʔ + ì	'k.o. native medicine (magic)'
(18)	(a)	í + bàʔ nì	'to cross out'
	(b)	è + bàʔ nì	'cross'
(19)	(a)	í + fàʔ	'to work'
	(b)	è + fàʔ + ì	'work'
(20)	(a)	í + ghàb	'to go around s.th.'
	(b)	í + ghàb + rì	'to divide'
	(c)	è + ghàb + rì	'divider'
(21)	(a)	í + kwàʔ	'to count'
	(b)	í + kwàʔ + nì	'to test'
	(c)	è + kwàʔ + nì	'test[N]'
(22)	(a)	ì + nyòd	'to press'
	(b)	è + nyòr + ì	'crowd'
(23)	(a)	í + zòd	'to cry; howl'
	(b)	è + zòr + ì	'cry[N]'

There is only one clear example in this group with a Mid tone root (see example (24)) and no example of a H tone root. Example (24) also shows, that it is the vowel of the nominalization suffix which drops off. Its tone remains and gets associated with the previous syllable.

(24)	(a)	í + twēŋ	'to twist'
------	-----	----------	------------

- 
- (b)  $\bar{i} + twen + ni$                     *'to twist (extended)'*  
(c)  $\grave{a} + tw\bar{e}n + ni$                     *'stick for twisting'*

The semantic characteristics of a noun formed in this way are diverse. In examples (17), (20), and (24) the noun denotes the instrument with which the action is performed, in examples (19) and (21) it denotes the action itself and is what is normally called an abstract noun. In example (18) and (22) the deverbal noun signifies what could be called the product of the respective action. In the case of example (18) one the noun could be referring to either the product or the instrument.

## 21. THE PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE

The following prepositions are found:

(1)	{ī}	ī  -  ē	'to'	(directional)
	{í}	í  -  é	'in, at'	(non-directional)
	{rī}		'from'	
	éñí		'with'	
	imbà?		'about'	

The two PRPs {ī} and {í} have many features in common, which are described in 21.3.

### 21.1 THE PREPOSITIONS {ī} AND {í}

The two prepositions {ī} and {í} are closely related in form and meaning. They differ in that {ī} is directional and {í} is non-directional. The directional form is used, when there is movement to the location denoted by the prepositional phrase, labelled DIR in example (2). The non-directional form is used when there is no movement, labelled LOC in example (3).

- (2) [tètòṅwè ìṅgāfeti wô]  
 tì è tòṅ əwè ī ìṅgā ī ìfeti wô  
 we SC call you DIR inside AM meeting this  
 'We call you into this meeting.'

- (3) [tìbirìgha? ìzā əwè ìṅgāfeti wô]  
 tì birì gha? ī zā əw ī ìṅgā ī ìfeti wô  
 we FI like INF see you LOC inside AM meeting this  
 'We would like to see you in this meeting.'

Prepositional phrases with both forms of this PRPs have a number of features in common which are being described here below.

A morphophonemic tone rule operates in conjunction with the prepositional phrase (PRP). This rule lowers the [H] prefix tone to [M]. The [M] tone can best be observed on a CV prefix, as in example (4).

- (4)
- |     |     |     |        |
|-----|-----|-----|--------|
| Ndè | zi  | ī   | mīnib! |
| go  | put | DIR | water  |
- 'Go and put it in water!'*

### 21.1.2 The Locational Expressions

Both PRPs form locational expressions consisting of the PRP followed by a noun which describes a location. This noun is the N1 of an associative phrase. The following is a list of the more common nouns used in this way:

- |     |     |       |                         |
|-----|-----|-------|-------------------------|
| (5) | (a) | ibān  | 'side'                  |
|     | (b) | icû   | 'mouth'                 |
|     | (c) | ifë   | 'face'                  |
|     | (d) | ingà  | 'inside'                |
|     | (e) | igūn  | 'top surface'           |
|     | (f) | njim  | 'back'                  |
|     | (g) | ikān  | 'upper space, sky'      |
|     | (h) | ikyé  | 'surface'               |
|     | (i) | injìn | 'over-side'             |
|     | (j) | inū?  | 'door, entrance'        |
|     | (k) | inyĩ  | 'bottom, underneath[N]' |
|     | (l) | ngò   | 'rim, margin'           |
|     | (m) | sàmi  | 'field'                 |
|     | (n) | sàn   | 'gap'                   |
|     | (o) | ətón  | 'bottom'                |
|     | (p) | ətú   | 'head'                  |

The following examples illustrate the use of these nouns in combination with the PRP {ī}, which gives a directional meaning. They can, however, all be used with {i}. In that case the meaning will be non-directional.

Locational expressions consisting of the PRP followed by an associative phrase can be freely formed by using a noun which denotes some location as the N1.

- |     |     |                |                                       |
|-----|-----|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| (6) | (a) | ē sām i tàd    | <i>'at the site of Tad market'</i>    |
|     | (b) | ī ibigi i ndòm | <i>'in the hole of the giant rat'</i> |

- (c)    ē ētām ē ngāb                    *'in the antelope trap'*  
 (d)    ē nāb ì ndàṅ                      *'in the prison house'*

Some combinations of the locational PRP plus a locational noun are used to express locations for which in languages like English there are separate prepositions like 'in, at, on, above, under, before, between etc.'

- (7) (a)    ɪ ɪbàn ē nāb                      *'besides the house'*  
 (b)    ɪ ɪcù ɪ nāb                            *'at home (at the door)'*  
 (c)    ɪ ɪfè ɪ nāb                            *'in front of the house'*  
 (d)    ɪ ɪngā nāb                            *'beside the house'*  
 (e)    ɪ ɪgùn ē nāb                        *'on (top of) the house'*  
 (f)    ē nɔ̀m ì nāb                        *'behind the house'*  
 (g)    ē nɔ̀m ɪ ɪgyɪ                        *'overseas'*  
 (h)    ɪ ɪkàṅ ē nāb                        *'in the loft of the house'*  
 (i)    ɪ ɪkye ə nāb                        *'on the floor of the house'*  
 (j)    ɪ ɪnù? ɪ nāb                        *'at home'*  
 (k)    ɪ ɪnyɪ ɪ nāb                        *'undemeath the hoouse'*  
 (l)    ē sàṅ ɪ ɪsòṅ                        *'between the teeth'*  
 (m)    ē ēton ə nāb                        *'below the house'*  
 (n)    ē ētū ē nāb                        *'on the roof of the house;  
          in a room of the house'*

There are some locational expressions for which the nominative of the noun denoting the location is not known:

- (8) (a)    ēka? ē bād                        *'in the midst of people'*  
 (b)    ɪgwí ə nāb                            *'on top of the house'*

The fact that in example (9) it is not possible to put the noun 'inside' into the plural indicates that the locative phrase ɪ ɪngā is a fixed expression, which could even be considered to be a single morpheme ɪngā 'into'.

- (9) (a) [ndɪŋgānāb rɪbəd mɪjɪmjɪm]  
 ndè        ɪ ɪngā    ɪ        nāb    tɪ        bəd    mɪjɪmjɪm!  
 go(IMP) to inside AM house AM(10) people all  
*'Go into the houses of all people!'*
- (b)  
 ndè        ɪ \*tɪngā    tɪ        nāb    tɪ        bəd    mɪjɪmjɪm!  
 go(IMP) to insides AM house AM(10) people all  
*'Go into the insides of the houses of all people!'*



Moreover, the tonal realization of  $\bar{i}ng\bar{a}$  is not that of a regular prepositional phrase. If it were regular, the tonal configuration of the stem, which is [LH], should be realized as [LM] (after operation of the rule A1). The realization as [M] is the regular output of the rule A2, which points to a non-low prefix tone. (see Spreda 1968, pp66ff).

This seems to be an instance of a lexicalization in process, where certain expressions are further along the scale of lexicalization than others. The expression  $\bar{i}ng\bar{a}$  is further along than the other expressions listed under § 21.3.

## 21.2 THE PREPOSITION {i}

This preposition is the directional form. It is distinguished only by tone from the non-directional counterpart (see 21.1.1.1)

In its basic forms it is realized with a [M] tone. It is assumed that its underlying representation is [LHL].

### 21.2.1 Further tonal behaviour of this preposition

The tonal realization of the PREP is influenced by the FUT TM *biri* as seen in comparing (ex. (10)) with (ex. (11)).

(10) à kà? wò ē Bàmendà èni əyè?  
 you P2 go LOC. B. on\_day what  
 'On what day did you go to Bamenda?'

(11) à biri wò ə Bàmendà èni əyè?  
 you FUT go DIR B. on\_day what  
 'On what day are you going to Bamenda?'

The LOC bears a [M] tone after the P2 TM but a [D] tone after the FUT TM.

See § .... (on TM *biri*) for explanation and further details.

## 21.3 THE PREPOSITION {i}

This PRP is the locational counterpart of the PRP described under § 21.2, from which it is distinguished only by its tonal realizations. Its basic tonal realization is with a [H] tone as in example (12).

- (12) izíg è gywì òméd ó nāb  
 demon SC catch him in house:PC  
 'A demon caught him in the house.'

After a [L] tone the PRP's tonal realization is with a [D] tone as in example (13).

- (13) [tìbirigha' ízē āwè ìngāfetiwô]  
 tì biri gha' í zē āwè í ìngā í ifeti wô  
 we FUT like INF see you at inside AM meeting:OC this  
 'We would like to see you in this meeting.'

### 21.3.1 Formal Characteristics

The PRP can be realized with a [H], or [D] tone, depending on the preceding tone in the clause. It is [H] after a preceding associated [H] tone, which is realized as [H] as in ex. (14) or [D] as in ex. (15). It is [D] after a floating [H] tone as in ex. (16).

- (14) mē tēm ēbān í íscsc wô  
 I clear farm PRP morning\_OC this  
 'I cleared the farm this morning'

- (15) mē biri tēm ēbān í íscsc wô  
 I FI clear farm LO morning\_OC this  
 C  
 'I shall clear the farm this morning'

- (16) mē kùd ìngwī í íscsc wô  
 I chew termites PRP morning\_OC this  
 'I ate termites this morning'

After a preceding [L] tone the PRP is realized as [D] (ex. (17)).

- (17) mbàŋ è tō nyààri í íscsc wô  
 rain SC9 little shower LOC morning\_OC this  
 'It rained a little this morning'

### 21.3.2 The semantics of this PRP

As shown so far this PRP is used to encode locational information. It can however be used to encode other than locational information.

The PRP {í} is also used to encode temporal information as seen in example (18).

- (18) izíg è gywì èméd é èni ə tàd  
*demon SC catch him LOC day:PC AM Tad*  
*'A demon caught him on the Tad market day.'*

The example (19) demonstrates that the temporal information can be encoded as a second prepositional phrase after a prepositional phrase with this PRP, which encodes locational information.

- (19) izíg è gywì èméd é nāb ə èni ə tàd  
*demon SC catch him PRP house:PC PRP day:PC A Tad*  
*'A demon caught him in the house on the Tad market day.'*

## 21.4 THE PREPOSITION {rí}

The basic meaning of this PRP is 'from' (example (20)). There are however instances, as in example (21), where there is no obvious locative or directional meaning present.

- (20) mīnīb ègò mbē jwìè rī īnyèrì  
*water clear CNT come\_out\_CNT from spring*  
*clear water is flowing from the spring*

- (21) Sò rí ìrgā mīnīb ègò!  
*wash\_IMP from inside water clear*  
*Wash it in clear water!*

### 21.4.1 Tonal Behavior of rí

The tonal realization of this PRP is dependent on the immediately preceding tone and is [H] after a [H] tone as in example (22a), it is [D] after a [M] as in ex. (22b), and it is [M] after a [L] tone as in ex. (22c).

- (22) (a) mə kəʔ yèʔe rí éfàʔì  
*i P1 come from work*  
*I came from work*

- (b) mə kəʔ tōm rí éfàʔí  
 I P1 send from work  
 I sent from work
- (c) mə kəʔ nōʔ rí éfàʔí  
 I P1 leave from work  
 I left from work

## 21.5 THE PREPOSITION éní

The basic meaning of this PRP is to indicate the means by which an action is to be achieved and therefore can be glossed as 'with'.

- (23) Sò(ə) éní mīnib ègò!  
 wash\_IMP with water clear  
 Wash it with clear water!

## 21.6 THE PREP ímbəʔ

A concord element ə or í occurs between the PREP ímbəʔ and the following noun (Example (24)).

- (24) (a) ənú ímbəʔ ə bəd 'the matter about people'  
 ənú ímbəʔ í títámí 'the matter about stars'

Apparently the concord element is zero in certain phonological environments (example (25)).

- (25) (a) ənú ímbəʔ mīməd 'their matter'  
 (b) ənú ímbəʔ mīwúd 'the matter of the oil'

Most likely there is however a high central vowel before the noun class prefix.

### 4.3. ADJECTIVALS

There are several different classes of words qualifying a noun in Meta'. They are called adjectivals because their function is to qualify the nouns like adjectives; however, their formal characteristics vary. These are:

the adjectival directly following the noun (Aj1) and (Aj2)

preceding nouns in the associative phrase (Aj3)

All the above are treated in the following subsections.

#### 4.3.1. THE ADJECTIVE FOLLOWING THE NOUN (AJ1)

Certain adjectives can follow the noun which they qualify. The formal characteristics of the resulting construction are investigated here below.

##### 4.3.1.1. Formal Characteristics

The adjective follows the noun, but between noun and adjective a particle occurs. This could at first glance be analyzed as an adjectival prefix which expresses concord with the noun. The sets of examples (ex. (1) and (2)), which have been selected for their noun classes and noun tone patterns, reveal however that the tonal behavior of the resulting construction is that of an associative phrase.

- |     |     |                    |               |
|-----|-----|--------------------|---------------|
| (1) | (a) | NCL 1: wèd ì còm   | 'good person' |
|     | (b) | NCL 3: ìnèŋì ì còm | 'good bamboo' |
|     | (c) | NCL 7: əbá' ē còm  | 'good piece'  |
| (2) | (a) | NCL 1: wèd ì sè    | 'tall person' |
|     | (b) | NCL 3: ìnèŋì ì sè  | 'long bamboo' |
|     | (c) | NCL 7: əbá' ē sè   | 'long piece'  |

The first observable fact is that the particle between noun and adjective has the same segmental and tonal form as an associative marker (AM) in the associative phrase.

Looking at the realizations of the two adjectives, one can state on the basis of (ex. (1a)) and (2a)) that both adjectives have a L tone stem. The difference in surface realization between (ex. (1b,c)) and (ex. (2b,c)) are evidence for different underlying tones on their prefixes. (ex (1)b,c) can be derived by the regular application of Meta' tone rules on the underlying tone melody [L+L] as applicable on the N2 of an Associative Phrase. The prefix tone is analyzed as a .i.floating tone;. Likewise (ex. (2b,c)) are regular realizations of the underlying melody [H+L] with a floating prefix tone. The prefix tones are considered floating because it is not possible to realize a separate surface tone for them.

This analysis is strengthened when we consider adjectives whose prefix consists of the vowel ə bearing a [L] tone, as in (exs. (3)a-d).

(3)	(a)	minib əgô	'natural water'
	(b)	wəd əgô	'native person'
	(c)	ənəŋ əgô ??	'native cocoyam'
	(d)	nəb əgô	'native house'

The [L] tone prefix stays unchanged, as this is also the case with a [L] tone prefix of a N2 in an associative phrase.

Note that in ex. (3)(c) the prefix tone is [L] although the AM has a [H] tone.

In the light of these findings it seems justified to consider the combination of noun plus Aj1 to be formally an Associative Phrase, which means that formally the Aj1 is a noun.

#### 4.3.1.1.1. Evidence for underlying tonal representations

The [LH] stem of the noun in example (4) can only be realized as [D], if a [L] tone is following. This is in keeping with the above assumption that an AM, which has an initial floating L tone, occurs between the noun and the Aj1.

If one further assumes that this Aj1 has a floating [H] prefix tone, regular tone rules produce the above surface configuration.

(4)	[ibi fibì]	
	ibi i fibì	'one colanut'

After a noun of NCL 1, which takes an AM with a [L] tone, the realization of the Aj1 is [L.L]. This is again the outcome of the regular application of tone rules.



(d) |tífí| 'white

### 4.3.2. ADJECTIVES FORMED FROM VERBS (AJ2)

A third group of adjectives occurring with the formal characteristics of a N2 of the Associative Phrase are the deverbatives, somewhat similar to participle (s. § \*\*\*) (s. exs. (10)).

- |          |              |                                |
|----------|--------------|--------------------------------|
| (10) (a) | ìnèṅí ì sání | 'split bamboo'                 |
| (b)      | əbé? ə zóbí  | 'dried piece'                  |
| (c)      | ṅgūb ì tiə   | 'cooked fowl'                  |
| (d)      | mbàṅ ì kòmi  | 'carved walking stick'         |
| (e)      | ibí ì kywí   | 'forged knife' (kywí to forge) |
| (f)      | əghí ə tóí   | 'carving (lit. carved thing)'  |

### 4.3.3. THE ADJECTIVE PRECEDING THE NOUN (AJ3)

There are certain words that function like adjectives, which precede the noun they qualify.

#### 4.3.3.1. Formal characteristics of the Aj2

In comparing the word preceding the qualified noun with the characteristics of the Aj1 it is apparent that the Aj2 are also nouns which form an associative phrase with the noun they qualify. They take however the position of the N1. They have the characteristics of a noun of NCL 7.

- |          |              |                          |
|----------|--------------|--------------------------|
| (11) (a) | ənyéṅ ə mbān | 'small, thin nail'       |
| (b)      | [əkún iwòṅ]  |                          |
|          | əkún ə iwòṅ  | 'worn out (short) spear' |

The adjectival in the above examples cannot be traced to a verb root. There are however adjectivals which are nominalizations of verbs as in the following example (12):

- |          |          |                  |
|----------|----------|------------------|
| (12) (a) | ī swàgrí | 'to make watery' |
|----------|----------|------------------|



- (b) əswágrì ā ju 'watery honey'

#### 4.3.3.2. Membership of the Aj2

There is no formal difference between the two groups of adjectivals mentioned under §4.2.1 even though the first group cannot be traced back to verbs. So one can say that the Aj2 are an open class. Some further examples are given below (examples (13)).

- (13) (a) ənyéí á nyám 'maggot infested meat'  
(b) əbúʔrí é wêd 'crippled person'  
(c) əfín é ngywi 'dirty cloth'  
(d) əghámni ā èjòŋ 'deranged young man'

## 6.1.4 OTHER VP CONSTITUENTS

In this section constituents of the predicate are described. These are the adverbials which specify

location and direction  
time  
instrument  
manner.

In all these instances the adverbial is either a prepositional phrase or an adverb.

### 6.1.4.1. ADVERBIALS OF LOCATION AND DIRECTION

The locational and directional adverbials are treated together in this section because of their similarity of function, placement, and form. Example (1) is an illustration of a directional adverb *mbì*, while example (2) is an instance of a locational prepositional phrase *é nāb*.

- (1) Wəd fìbì è wò i mbì.  
*person one SC go he ahead*  
 "One person went ahead. (on his own initiative)"

- (2) wì è kəʔ cùbì é nāb  
*he SC PI remain at house:p*  
 "He stayed at the house."

Further locational/directional adverbs are

- (3) (a) ēghā "here"  
 (b) ēwò "there"

There are many different prepositional phrases giving locational or directional information. They are described in §5.5.

### 6.1.4.2. ADVERBIALS OF TIME

Adverbials of time normally follow the verb phrase (examples (4) to (6)). If the clause contains also complements of location or direction the adverbial of time comes last, as in examples (5) and (6).

In example (4) and (5) the adverbial is an adverb, while in example (6) it is a prepositional phrase.

- (4) wì è kà? ye'e pè tìwò.  
 he SC PI come reach yesterday  
 "He came yesterday."

- (5) mə wò pè ā Bàmendà isò.  
 I go reach to Bamenda tomorrow  
 "I will go to Bamenda tomorrow."

- (6) wì biri nò? ri əbà? ə n̄jítù?  
 he FI leave from bed.p at back^of^dawn  
 "He will get up from bed before dawn."

Further temporal adverbs are listed in example (7).

- (7) (a) təcòŋ today  
 (b) isòsò early in the morning

Further adverbials consisting of prepositional phrases are listed as example (8)

- (8) (a) ì ikwiri in the evening

### 6.1.4.3. ADVERBIALS OF INSTRUMENT

Only one instrumental adverb has been found which occurs in example (9). The preposition for prepositional phrases of instrument is *éŋí* as demonstrated in example (10).

- (9) Kəb əfáánì émò'ò fà tìcwì zē əŋgú!  
 look^for gripper some grip millipede the with^it  
 "Look for a gripping instrument and grip the millipede with it!"

- (10) Sò(ə)      ɛnī    mīnīb    əgô!  
*wash IMP with water clear*  
 "Wash it with clear water!"

#### 6.1.4.4. ADVERBIALS OF MANNER

Manner adverbials occur either as an adverb (examples (13) and (12)) or as a prepositional phrase (example (13)).

- (11) Sí      mɛ      ŋwà'ni    ɛnī.  
*Let me write like^this*  
 "Let me write (it) like this!"

- (12) Tɪŋgòm    tɔ̄      ɛ̄      nyɔ̄      əkó.  
*plantains these SC crowded too^much*  
 "These plantains are too crowded."

- (13) Wɪ      ɛ̄      fɔ̄ŋ      ŋwà'ni    í    ɪci    còm.  
*he SC read book in way nice*  
 "He read (the) book nicely."

## 6.1.5 CLAUSE LEVEL ADVERBIALS

Clause level adverbials are optional constituents which specify the proposition as a whole. In Meta' there is an adverbial adding an indication of what seems to be modality. Meta' has other adverbials which are described in §6.1.4.

### 6.1.5.1 ADVERBIALS OF MODALITY

Adverbials of modality occur only at the beginning of a clause (example (1)). An adverbial of modality can occur in the same clause with an adverb of time (example (2)).

- (1)        ighàm    mə    wa        kəʔ    gwě    fíbí    fē  
               *perhaps I    possibly P1    pick^up knife the*

"Perhaps I (possibly) picked up the knife."

- (2)        ighàm    mbəŋ    birí    nō        tàcòŋ.  
               *perhaps rain    F1    fall    today*

"Perhaps rain will fall today."

[KWS1]

Page:

[KWS1] Get examples with other adverbials

1