Nominal and verbal allomorphy in Kugama

Lora Litvinova
loravlitvinova@gmail.com

2nd Adamawa Conference 2023, Paris

- *ɲáá ꜜɣwãm* 'the Wam (Kugama) language'

- Kugama is traditionally classified within the Adamawa language family

- Less than 10.000 speakers (Eberhard et al. 2023)

- Kugama is spoken in Adamawa State, Nigeria

- Data on Kugama:

  - eight months of fieldwork in Nigeria plus remote data collection

  - PhD dissertation on grammatical analysis of Kugama (Litvinova 2023)

- A number of nouns and verbs in Kugama can have different allomorphs

- The choice of an allomorph usually depends on the morphosyntactic environment

(1) *ɓám* vs. *ɓáámí* 'be old'

     dɛ́ɛ́kɛ́ vs. *dɛ́ɛ̄* 'house'

Overview:

- Syllable types and word structure

- Extensions of nouns and verbs (including their different allomorphs)

- Distributive properties of allomorphs of nouns and verbs

- Syllable types are V, CV, VV, CVV, VC and CVC

- Nouns and verbs are predominantly monosyllabic and disyllabic

  (2) *kpáā* 'direction, area', *gbɛ̀nɛ̄* 'horse', *dūmlɛ̄* 'son'

     kā 'see (VF1)', *bàkí* 'help', *kɔ́ɔ́sí* 'be dry'

- Monosyllabic nouns are typically heavy syllables

  such as VV, CVV, VC and CVC

- Stem-initial prominence:

  all syllable types occur stem-initially, only CV type occurs non-stem-initially

- A number of nouns and verbs have an **extension(s)**:

  (3) *wēm* 'person' (we +**m**)

     ɓám 'be old (VF1)' (ɓa +**m**)

- Nouns and verbs can have **more than one extension**

  (4) *kŭmpī* 'bone' (ku +**m** +**pi**)

     ɓáámí 'be old (VF4)' (ɓa +**V** +**mi**)

- Nouns and verbs can be grouped according to the **type of extension**

- Some examples of noun extensions:

(C)V +y	*ɓɛ̄ȳ* 'stomach', *pò̰y* 'face', *zō̰y* 'arrow', *yɔ̄y* 'beer'
(C)V +m	*wēm* 'person', *wà̰m* 'Kugama', *kpà̰m* 'chief'
(C)V +V +kī	*ɲɔ̄ɔ̄kī* 'daughter', *sɔ̄ɔ̄kī* 'snake'
(C)V +V +pī	*vḭ̄ḭ̄pī* 'blackness', *gɛ̀ɛ̄pī* 'bigness'

- Nouns that have the same extension type may also be semantically similar,

  e.g. +y in body-part terms like *nɛ̄ȳ* 'hand' and *ūy* 'head', +lɛ́, +lɛ̀, +tɛ́ and +tɛ̀ in some property nouns like *hɛ́ntɛ́lɛ̀* 'shallow'

- Nouns and verbs can be grouped according to the **type of extension**

- Some examples of verb extensions:

(C)V +m   *ɓám* 'be old (VF1)', *yɛ́m* 'disappear (VF1)'

(C)V +lí   *bɛ̀lí* 'hunt (VF2)', *hālí* 'pass by', *kálí* 'be strong'

(C)V +tí   *kɔ́tí* 'fetch (VF2)', *mítí* 'annoy'

(C)V +V +kí   *hḏ̄ḏ̄kí* 'break (VF4)', *mɔ̀ɔ̀kí* 'eat (VF4)'

- Kugama has nouns and verbs whose form is **stable** across different morphosyntactic environments, as well as nouns and verbs that **have allomorphs** depending on the morphosyntactic environment.

(5) *kpáā* 'direction'   vs.   *ɓɛ̄y / ɓáā* 'stomach'

(6) *kálí* 'be strong'   vs.   *kā / kālí* 'see'

- I focus on allomorphs of nouns and verbs in different **morphosyntactic environment**

- These allomorphs usually **differ by the type and number of extensions** they have in their form.

(7)   *hɛ́ / hɛ́lí* (hɛ +li) 'wipe'

    kàm (ka +m) / *kààmí* (ka +V +mi) 'be full'

    nɔȳ (nɔ +y) / *nɔ́ɔ̄* (nɔ +V) 'eye'

- The main allomorph of a noun is called the **Free Form**, while secondary allomorphs of a noun are called **Construct Form 1** and **Construct Form 2**

  (8) *ɲɔ̄ɔ̄kɪ̄* 'daughter', *ɲɔ̄ɔ̄* 'daughter (CF1)'

  zɛ̄ȳ 'dog', *zɛ́* 'dog (CF2)'

- A verb may have up to four allomorphs: **Verb Form 1**, **Verb Form 2**, **Verb Form 3** and **Verb Form 4.**

  (9) *mɔ̀* 'eat (VF1), *mɔ̀kɪ́* 'eat (VF2)', *mɔ̀ɔ̀* 'eat (VF3)', *mɔ̀ɔ̀kɪ́* 'eat (VF4)'

- The **Free Form** of nouns occurs in isolation as well as in a number of noun phrases with the modifiers such as cardinal numerals, the demonstrative marker *=ɛ́*, and the definite marker *=rɛ́ ~ =rɛ̂*

- **Construct Forms** can occur in Possession constructions, as well as in noun phrases with ordinal numerals, noun phrases with Post-nominal Property Nouns modifiers

Free Form		**Construct Form 1**	
(10) ɗɛ́ɛ́kɛ́	⁺ɓíní	(11) ɗɛ́ɛ̄	Lúkpɛ̂wà
|ɗɛ́ɛ́kɛ́ᴸ	ɓíní|	|ɗɛ́ɛ̄	Lúkpɛ̂wà|
house	one	house.CF1	Luikpewa
'one house'		'house of Luikpewa'	

- A verb may have up to **four allomorphs**
- I distinguish **verbs with allomorphs** on the basis of their **word-internal consonant C2 *l*, *t*, *k*, *ŋ* or *m***, except for verbs like *yí / yíí* 'beat'

Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4	Example
(C)V		(C)VV		*yí / yíí* 'beat'
(C)V	(C)Vlí			*ɲā / ɲālí* 'boil'
(C)V	(C)Vtí			*só / sótí* 'enter'
(C)V	(C)Vkí	(C)VV	(C)VVkí	*ó / ókí / óó / óókí* 'run'
(C)Vŋ	(C)Vŋí			*tɛ̀ŋ / tɛ̀ŋí* 'lean'
(C)Vm			(C)VVmí	*kàm / kààmí* 'be full'

- NB! there are verbs that **do not have allomorphs**, e.g. *mákí* 'know', *lákí* 'taste, hear', *bàkí* 'help', *māā* 'build', *mítí* 'annoy'

Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4	Example
(C)V		(C)VV		*yí / yíí* 'beat'
(C)V	(C)Vlí			*ɲā / ɲālí* 'boil'
(C)V	(C)Vtí			*só / sótí* 'enter'
(C)V	(C)Vkí	(C)VV	(C)VVkí	*ó / ókí / óó / óókí* 'run'
(C)Vŋ	(C)Vŋí			*tɛ̀ŋ / tɛ̀ŋí* 'lean'
(C)Vm			(C)VVmí	*kàm / kààmí* 'be full'

- Different allomorphs of a verb can occur:

  - with a verb-to-verb derivational morpheme,

    e.g. Resultative $=^L$, Applicative $=s\acute{\imath}$ $(\sim =s\bar{\imath})$, Ventive $=r\bar{\imath}$

  - in a certain construction,

    e.g. the Applicative construction

  - with the Nominalization marker $=k\bar{\imath}$ / $=\bar{\varepsilon}$ / $=\bar{\imath}$ / $=\grave{\varepsilon}$ (a few cases)

Verbs with the Resultative marker $=^L$

- The Resultative marker =L comes immediately after a verb. In addition, the Resultative marker =L can mark a verb twice.

(12)   ɗɛ̄   vɛ̰̄ɛ̰́   ⁺wàsí⁺kà   wà

        |ɗɛ̄   vɛ̰̄ɛ̰̄   =L   wàsíLkà   =wā|

        3SG   write   RES   letter   PFM

        'S/he has written a letter(s).'

(13)   ɓɔ̀   tá̰⁺pù   tú   wā

        |ɓɔ̀   tá̰   =L   pí   =L   =tí   =wā|

        3SG   be_cold$_1$ RES   be_cold$_2$ RES   PFV   PFM

        'It (water) has become cold.'

17

- Forms used with the Resultative marker $=^L$

Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4	Example
(C)V		**(C)VV**		*yí / yíí* 'beat'
(C)V	**(C)Vlí**			*ɲā / ɲālí* 'boil'
(C)V	**(C)Vtí**			*só / sótí* 'enter'
(C)V	(C)Vkí	(C)VV	**(C)VVkí**	*ó / ókí / óó / óókí* 'run'
(C)Vŋ	**(C)Vŋí**			*tɛ̀ŋ / tɛ̀ŋí* 'lean'
(C)Vm			**(C)VVmí**	*kàm / kààmí* 'be full'

- Allomorphs of the verb *ɓám* / *ɓáámí* 'be old'

(14)　　ā　　　　ɓáá⁺mù　　　　　　　　　　　　　　tú　　　wā
　　　　|ā　　　ɓáá　　　　　=ᴸ　　　mí　　　　　=ᴸ　　　=tí　　=wā|
　　　　1SG　be_old.VF4$_1$　RES　　be_old.VF4$_2$　RES　　PFV　　PFM
　　　　'I am old.'

(15)　　mɛ́　　ɲā　　ɓám　　　　rí　　　ā̰
　　　　|mɛ́　ɲā　　ɓám　　　　=rí　　ā̰|
　　　　1SG　NEG　be_old.VF1　PFV　　NEG
　　　　'I am not old.'

19

Verbs in the Applicative construction

- Kugama has the Applicative marker *=sí (~ =sɪ̄)* that comes after a verb, e.g. *ɲɔ́mlí* 'laugh'

(16)   Yáálò   ɲɔ́mlí   sí   tí   Lúkpêwà

|Yáálò   ɲɔ́mlí   =sí   =tí   Lúkpêwà|

Yaalo   laugh   APPL   PFV   Luipkewa

'Yaalo made Luikpewa laugh.'

- The Applicative marker *=sí* comes after **Verb Form 1 of verbs with no C2** and after **Verb Form 2 of verbs with C2 *k***

Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4	Example
(C)V		(C)VV		*yí / yíí* 'beat'
(C)V	(C)Vlí			*ɲā / ɲālí* 'boil'
(C)V	(C)Vtí			*só / sótí* 'enter'
(C)V	**(C)Vkí**	(C)VV	(C)VVkí	*ó / ókí / óó / óókí* 'run'
(C)Vŋ	(C)Vɲí			*tɛ̀ŋ / tɛ̀ɲí* 'lean'
(C)Vm			(C)VVmí	*kàm / kààmí* 'be full'

- The Applicative marker *=sí* with **Verb Form 2 of verbs with C2 *k***, e.g. the verb *mɔ̀ / mɔ̀kí / mɔ̀ɔ̀ / mɔ̀ɔ̀kí* 'eat'

(17)   Yáálò   mɔ̀kí   sí   Lúkpêwà

      |Yáálò   mɔ̀kí   =sí   Lúkpêwà|

      Yaalo   eat.VF2   APPL   Luikpewa

      'Yaalo fed Luikpewa'

- Verbs with C2 *l, ŋ,* and *m* are used **without an overt Applicative marker =sí**

Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4	Example
(C)V		(C)VV		*yí / yíí* 'beat'
(C)V	**(C)Vlí**			*ɲā / ɲālí* 'boil'
(C)V	(C)Vtí			*só / sótí* 'enter'
(C)V	(C)Vkí	(C)VV	(C)VVkí	*ó / ókí / óó / óókí* 'run'
(C)Vŋ	**(C)Vŋí**			*tɛ̀ŋ / tɛ̀ŋí* 'lean'
(C)Vm			**(C)VVmí**	*kàm / kààmí* 'be full'

- Applicative verb forms ~ Verb Form 2, e.g. *tà / tàlí* 'hang'

(18)　　　ɓɔ̀　　　　tà　　　　　tí　　　náá　　　　　⌐dìŋsì

　　　　　|ɓɔ̀　　　　tà　　　　　=tí　　　náá^L　　　dìŋsì|

　　　　　3SG　　　hang.VF1　　PFV　　branch:GEN　tree

　　　　　'It (rope) hung from the branch.'

(19)　　　Lúkpɛ̂wà　　　tàlí　　　　　tí　　　dóò　　náá　　　　　⌐dìŋsì

　　　　　|Lúkpɛ̂wà　　　tàlí　　　　　=tí　　　dóò　　náá^L　　dìŋsì|

　　　　　Luikpewa　　　hang.APPL　PFV　　rope　　branch:GEN　tree

　　　　　'Luikpewa hung the rope on the branch.'

- Applicative verb forms ~ Verb Form 2, e.g. *tɛ̀ŋ / tɛ̀ŋí* 'lean'

(20)　　　dʉ́úkī　　tɛ̀ŋ　　　　　rí　　　mɛ́ɛ́　　　↓bõm

|dʉ́úkī　　tɛ̀ŋ　　　　　=rí　　　mɛ́ɛ́ᴸ　　　bõm|

hoe　　　lean.VF1　　PFV　　against:GEN　hut

'The hoe leaned against the hut.'

(21)　　　Lúkpɛ̂wà　　tɛ̀ŋí　　　　tí　　　dʉ́úkī　　mɛ́ɛ́　　　↓bõm

|Lúkpɛ̂wà　　tɛ̀ŋí　　　　=tí　　　dʉ́úkī　　mɛ́ɛ́ᴸ　　　bõm|

Luikpewa　　lean.APPL　　PFV　　hoe　　against:GEN　hut

'Luikpewa leaned the hoe against the hut.'

- Applicative verb forms ~ Verb Form 4, e.g. *tɑ́m ~ tɑ̄m / tɑ̀ɑ̀mí* 'be sweet, please'

(22)   ɓɔ̀   tɑ̄m   wā
        |ɓɔ̀   tɑ̄m   =wā|
        3SG   be_sweet.VF1   PFM
        'It is sweet.'

(23)   ɔ́↑sì   ɲā   tɑ̀ɑ̀mí   rɛ́   ā
        |ɔ́ᴸsì   ɲā   tɑ̀ɑ̀mí   =rɛ́   ā|
        something   NEG   please.APPL   3SG.O   NEG
        'Nothing pleases him/her.'

- No information on these verbs

Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4	Example
(C)V		(C)VV		*yí / yíí* 'beat'
(C)V	(C)Vlí			*ɲā / ɲālí* 'boil'
(C)V	(C)Vtí			*só / sótí* 'enter'
(C)V	(C)Vkí	(C)VV	(C)VVkí	*ó / ókí / óó / óókí* 'run'
(C)Vŋ	(C)Vŋí			*tɛ̀ŋ / tɛ̀ŋí* 'lean'
(C)Vm			(C)VVmí	*kàm / kààmí* 'be full'

Verbs with the Ventive marker *=rī*

- The Ventive marker *=rī* is found after (C)V, (C)VV and (C)VC verbs. However, **more verbs need to be checked** with the Ventive marker *=rī*

(24)   kī 'go out' + =rī VEN   → kī rī 'come out'

váá 'marry' + =rī VEN   → váá rī 'marry and come back'

● The Ventive marker *=rī* is found after Verb Form 1

Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4	Example
(C)V		(C)VV		*yí / yíí* 'beat'
(C)V	(C)Vlí			*ɲā / ɲālí* 'boil'
(C)V	(C)Vtí			*só / sótí* 'enter'
(C)V	(C)Vkí	(C)VV	(C)VVkí	*ó / ókí / óó / óókí* 'run'
(C)Vŋ	(C)Vŋí			*tɛ̀ŋ / tɛ̀ŋí* 'lean'
(C)Vm			(C)VVmí	*kàm / kààmí* 'be full'

31

- The Ventive marker *=rī* is found after Verb Form 1

  e.g. *mī / mīlí* 'return', *zíŋ / zíŋí* 'descend'

(25)   mī 'return (VF1)'+ =rī VEN   → mī rī 'return'

   zíŋ 'descend (VF1)'+ =rī VEN   → zíŋ rī 'come down'

- The Ventive marker =*rī* is used with **Verb Form 3 of verbs with C2 *k***

Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4	Example
(C)V		(C)VV		*yí / yíí* 'beat'
(C)V	(C)Vlí			*ɲā / ɲālí* 'boil'
(C)V	(C)Vtí			*só / sótí* 'enter'
(C)V	(C)Vkí	**(C)VV**	(C)VVkí	*ó / ókí / óó / óókí* 'run'
(C)Vŋ	(C)Vŋí			*tɛ̀ŋ / tɛ̀ŋí* 'lean'
(C)Vm			(C)VVmí	*kàm / kààmí* 'be full'

- The Ventive marker =rī is used with **Verb Form 3 of verbs with C2 k**

  e.g. *tó / tókí / tóó* 'carry on head', *ó / ókí / óó / óókí* 'run'

(26) tóó 'carry on head (VF3)' + =rī VEN → tóó rī 'come carrying on head'

ÓÓ 'run (VF3)' + =rī VEN → óó rī 'run back'

34

- No information on these verbs

Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4	Example
(C)V		**(C)VV**		*yí / yíí* 'beat'
(C)V	(C)Vlí			*ɲā / ɲālí* 'boil'
(C)V	**(C)Vtí**			*só / sótí* 'enter'
(C)V	(C)Vkí	(C)VV	(C)VVkí	*ó / ókí / óó / óókí* 'run'
(C)Vŋ	(C)Vŋí			*tɛ̀ŋ / tɛ̀ŋí* 'lean'
(C)Vm			**(C)VVmí**	*kàm / kààmí* 'be full'

Verbs with the Nominalization marker $=k\bar{\imath} \mathbin{/} =\bar{\varepsilon} \mathbin{/} =\bar{\imath} \mathbin{/} =\grave{\varepsilon}$

- Verbs can be nominalized by the marker *=kī / =ē̄ / =ī / =ɛ̀*

- There are a few verbs whose allomorphs are chosen depending on whether the verb form is **finite** or **nominalized**, e.g.

  - *yàà / yààkí* 'allow': *yààkí* as a finite verb vs. *yàà* with *=kī* NMLZ

    → *yàà kī* 'allowing'

  - *kā / kālí* 'see': *kā* or *kālí* as a finite verb vs. *kālí* with *=ē̄* NMLZ

    → *kāl ē̄* 'seeing'

Thank you!

References:

Eberhard, David M., Gary F. Simons, and Charles D. Fennig (eds.). 2023. Ethnologue: Languages of the World. Twenty-sixth edition. Dallas, Texas: SIL International. Online version: http://www.ethnologue.com.

Litvinova, Lora. 2023. A grammatical analysis and documentation of Kugama, an Adamawa language of Nigeria. Paris: INALCO PhD thesis