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Elisabeth Njantcho, Mark van de Velde

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Kwakum (A91)

Elisabeth Njantcho & Mark Van de Velde

1 INTRODUCTION¹

Kwakum (A91, ISO 639-3 kwu, glottocode kwak1266) is a cluster of Bantu language varieties spoken in the East Province of Cameroon. Ethnologue distinguishes four dialects: Baki, Beten, Til and Kwakum, which is the focus of this description. There is a high degree of intelligibility between Kwakum and Til, whereas dialectal variation is stronger between Kwakum, Baki and Beten. The Kwakum variety discussed in this chapter is spoken in the Doume sub-division. It is referred to by its speakers as *Kwàkúm*. The speakers' folk etymology for the language name is *kwày né kúm* 'generosity and fame/prosperity'. According to a 2013 census by Elecam, the Kwàkúm dialect has about 7000 native speakers, whose villages are spread around the Doume sub-division (Grand Sibita, Petit Sibita, Grand Paki, Petit Paki, Mendim, Loumbou, Kempong, Kobila, etc.).

Kwakum communities share borders with communities speaking Makaa (Bantu A83), Pol (Bantu A92), Gbaya (Gbaya-Ngbaka-Manza) and Baka (Ubangi). Moreover, Kwakum speaking settlements typically have immigrant communities speaking Kako (Bantu A93) and/or languages from the Grassfields area and northern Cameroon. In this multilingual setting, Kwakum is mainly used in informal or traditional settings (family, market, cultural ceremonies, etc.), while communication in formal contexts (administration, school, etc.) is

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mostly in French. In addition to these two languages, many Kwakum speakers also speak Ewondo (Bantu A72), Kakɔ (Bantu A91) and/or Gbaya.

The data used for the grammatical analyses in this chapter were collected by the first author between 2013 and 2017 from Kwakum speakers living in Grand Sibita. We rely on elicited materials as well as on a corpus of recorded and transcribed spontaneous speech (narrative and procedural texts, speeches, etc.). The only existing descriptive work on the language is the grammar sketch written by Belliard (2005, 2007), whose focus was an ethno-musicological study of the Kwakum people.

Kwakum is in many ways typologically unusual for a Bantu language. In order to characterise the structure of the language within the available space limits, we had to concentrate heavily on the morphology and the tone system. The morphological sections do contain quite a lot of syntactic information. A more thorough analysis of the syntax and segmental phonology of Kwakum will be provided in the doctoral dissertation of Njantcho (forthcoming).

2 PHONOLOGY

2.1 Vowels

Kwakum has a seven-vowel system with contrastive vowel length. The (mid-)open vowels are much more frequent than the (mid-)close vowels in stems.

	front	back
close	i i:	u u:
mid-close	e e:	o o:
mid-open	ɛ ɛ:	ɔ ɔ:
open	a a:	

Table 1: vowel phonemes

The (near-)minimal pairs in (1) illustrate that vowel length is contrastive.

- (1) a. /i/ vs. /i:/ dʒì° ‘be’ dʒì: ‘excrement’
 b. /u/ vs. /u:/ ì-búʰfè ‘ash’ bù:fè ‘gather’
 c. /e/ vs. /e:/ kè ‘what’ ì-kè:° ‘egg’
 d. /o/ vs. /o:/ lò ‘grow’ lò: ‘shoot’
 e. /ɛ/ vs. /ɛ:/ ì-fè ‘raffia’ ì-fé: ‘sand’
 f. /ɔ/ vs. /ɔ:/ ɲó ‘snake’ ɲó: ‘hip bone’
 g. /a/ vs. /a:/ bà ‘cut up’ bà: ‘kola nut’

2.2 Consonants

Kwakum has twenty-eight consonant phonemes, including a series of aspirated stops and a series of prenasalised stops. The aspirated stops are reflexes of historical NC clusters, of which the initial N tends to be a class 9/10 prefix that has dropped (2).

- (2) *n-pígò (9/10) ‘kidney’ > p^hí°kí ‘kidney’
 *n-bèdì (9) ‘front’ > p^hèl° ‘in front’
 *n-kákà (9/10) ‘pangolin’ > k^hà° ‘pangolin’
 *n-gáŋgà (1/2, 9/10) ‘medicine man’ > k^hà: ‘medicine man’

		labial	alveolar	palatal	velar	labial- velar
oral stops	- aspirated	p b	t d	tʃ ɕ	k g	kp gb
	+ aspirated	p ^h	t ^h	tʃ ^h	k ^h	
fricatives	- aspirated	f (v)		ʃ		
	+ aspirated			ʃ ^h		
nasals		m	n	ɲ	ŋ	
prenasalised stops		mb	nd	ɲɕ	ŋg	ŋmgb
approximants			l	y		w

Table 2: Consonant phonemes.

In our lexical database, the voiced labio-dental fricative is rare. When it occurs before a front vowel, it is in free variation with its voiceless counterpart /f/: ì-fítlò ~ ì-vítlò

‘darkness’, *ki-vèklà* ~ *ki-fèklà* ‘statuette’. The prenasalised labial-velar stop also has a marginal distribution, as it is found in two stems only: *ɲmgbéŋgá* ‘fishing net’ and *ɲmgbàŋ* ‘crow’. The borrowing *hámà* ‘hammer’ is the only word that contains an [h], which we did not include in the phoneme inventory. The voiced velar stop /g/ occurs either in front of /w/ (36 occurrences) or a (mid-) close back vowel (8 occurrences) (3). Furthermore, /g/ is found before an open vowel in one stem (*-ɲgàànò* ‘refuse, deny’, *ɲgàti* ‘refusal’) and before a /t/ in *-dùgtàà* ‘get tired’.

- (3) a. gwòó^hmbó ‘chase’
 b. gùŋlè ‘pluck’

The lateral approximant /l/ is optionally realised as a trill [r] in nine words in our lexical database. In each case, it is preceded by an alveolar obstruent /nd/ or /t/ and followed by a mid-open vowel: *-fítlò* [~fítrò] ‘night’, *-fíndlè* [~fíndrè] ‘knock down’, *tʃéndlè* [~tʃéndrè] ‘candle’ and *-tándlè* [~tándrè] ‘attach’, or a low vowel *-dzàndlàà* [~dzàndràà] ‘move (millipede)’ and *-fàndlàà* [~fàndràà] ‘urine’.

Voiceless stops are in free variation with affricates whenever they occur before /i/ (*ì-dí* ~ *ì-dʒí* ‘bait’, *tìlà* ~ *tʃilà* ‘lion’). Likewise, there is a free variation between alveolar and palatal nasals before /i/ (*nìkò* ~ *ɲìkò* ‘bend’).

2.3 Morphophonology

Nasals assimilate to a following consonant in place of articulation if a morpheme boundary separates the two consonants. In example (4) assimilation takes place after the deletion of the last vowel of *mòòndó* ‘child’.

- (4) mòòm p^hàâm
 mò-òndó ^H-p^hàâm
 1-child CON-1.man
 ‘boy’ or ‘the man’s child’

- (5) àp^hɪ ɲmgbó^hndó
 à-p^hɪ^H ^H-n-gbóndó^L

- (9) áptʃíl tàmbyè
^H-à-n-tʃílò tàmbyè
 PRS-3SG-PRS-write good
 ‘He writes well.’

2.4 Phonotactics

The syllable nucleus can be a vowel, a nasal or the lateral /l/. Only syllables with a vocalic nucleus can have a coda. Syllables with a nucleus /l/ can have an onset, as in à.yè.kí.kòò ‘he taught’. There is no straightforward way to identify syllable boundaries where two consonants succeed each other. We decided to assume a complex onset only in those cases where a succession of consonants can occur in utterance initial position. Defined this way, complex onsets always consist of a consonant followed by /w/ or /y/. If the glide is /w/, the initial consonant has to be velar.² The syllable types attested in the Kwakum lexicon are V, N, CV(:), CGV(:), CV(:)C, CGV(:)C and CL. The rule of non-prepausal vowel deletion described in Section 2.3 gives rise to complex codas with successions of obstruents, as in /bǎkʃé/ → [bǎkʃ] ‘keep!’, /pùʃkó/ → [pùʃk] ‘error’ or /fóktè/ → [fókt] ‘listen carefully’.

Only four words on a total of 1900 in our lexical database have a closed syllable with a long vowel, viz. *gbù:ŋlè* ‘plough, turn the soil’, *ì-tǎm* ‘five’, *mù:ŋlè* ‘uproot’ and *p^hââm* ‘man, male person’.

As is typical in the north-western Bantu languages, the distribution of consonant phonemes over stems is heavily skewed. Table 3 shows that the occurrence of half of the consonants is restricted to the onset of stem-initial syllables (O₁). Restrictions on the possible occurrence of consonants become stronger when we move to onsets of non-stem initial syllables (O₂), non word-final codas (C_{NWF}) and word-final codas (C_{WF}). Note that whenever the succession of symbols <kp> occurs outside of stem initial position, it is the orthographic representation of a succession of /k/ and /p/, as found in a small number of reduplicated stems, such as *kì-pèkpékì* ‘end’.

² The only exception in our lexical database is the verb stem ʃwíjè° ‘leave’.

	O ₁	O ₂	C _{nwf}	C _{wf}
C ^h , \overline{kp} , \overline{gb} , f, v, b, d, g, ɕ , ɲ	+	-	-	-
ʈʂ, ɲ ɕ , ɲg	+	+	-	-
p, t, k, ʃ, mb, nd	+	+	+	-
m, n, ɲ, l, y, w	+	+	+	+

Table 3: Phonotactic distribution of consonant phonemes

On a total of 911 occurrences, there are three exceptions to the generalisation that voiced stops are restricted to stem-initial onsets: *ʃilbà* ‘cooking pot’, *tèndbò* ‘spider’ and *-dùgtàà* ‘become tired.’ The first two of these can be respectively explained as a borrowing (< English *silver*) and a historical compound, cf. **-tanda* ‘spider, spider’s web’ and PB **-bùbì* ‘spider’ (Bastin et al. 2002). Whenever the voiceless affricate /ʈʂ/ occurs outside of O₁ position, it is followed by the vowel /ɛ/, for a reason that we do not know. The distribution of the velar nasal /ɲ/ is exceptional, because it does not occur in O₁ position, except in the verb stem *ɲwèɲlè* ‘persist.’

In reduplicated stems, the base forms a prosodic stem: *pè ~ bèlà* ‘seed’ (cf. *-bèlò* ‘plant, sow’), *pà ~ bám* ‘disapproval’ (cf. *ì-bàá’mó* ‘reprimand’). The prosodic status of the reduplicant is somewhat ambiguous. If the base starts in a voiced oral stop, it is devoiced in the reduplicant, arguably because voiced stops are restricted to stem-initial position. However, labial-velar stops are allowed in O₁ position of the reduplicant, as in *kpà ~ kpá’tí* ‘scissors’, although they too are normally restricted to stem-initial position.³

The mid-close vowels are absent from final open syllables of polysyllabic stems. The few exceptions to this generalisation mostly involve borrowings, reduplicated stems or the Past 3 suffix *-kòò*.

³ A possible explanation for this is that the voiceless labial-velar stop /kp/ is not restricted to stem-initial position, but that it simply has not been found elsewhere in our lexicon due to its low lexical frequency.

2.5 Tone

Syllables can be realised with a low (à), a high (á), a falling (â) a rising (ǎ), or a downstepped high (‘á) tone. In utterance final position, low tones can be realised low-falling (â) or level low (à°) (10). In certain contexts, utterance final downstepped high tones can be alternatively realised as level lows and vice versa. In our current analysis, the tone bearing unit (TBU) is the mora and there is a three way underlying opposition between low, high and zero. Underlying tones can be floating or attached to a TBU. In underlying representations, floating low and high tones are respectively represented by the superscript letters ^L and ^H (10a) and toneless TBUs are represented by means of the absence of a tone mark (10b). Example (10) also illustrates the fact that the level realisation of utterance final low tones is due to a following floating high.

- (10) a. |ŋgwàð^H| → ŋgwàð° ‘brain’ (level low realisation)
 b. |ʃòo| → ʃòò ‘fish sp.’ (low-falling realisation)
 c. |bùpà| → bùpà ‘animal’ (low-falling realisation)

On top of lexical tones, Kwakum also has a low boundary tone ^{L%} that can be optionally inserted at the beginning of every utterance.

A floating tone attaches to the first TBU to its right, whose underlying tone it delinks (11a). If it finds a succession of two TBUs of which the second is toneless, it links to both of them (11b).

- (11) a. ^H-kù → kú^L → [kú] ‘of the hole’
 b. ^{L%}tʃóo w-é → tʃòo^H wé → [tʃòò wé] ‘that iron’

Kwakum has a rule of rightward tone spreading across word boundaries. Spreading tones behave the same as floating tones in the way they attach (12).

- (12) a. pú kòndù → pú kòndù ‘the girl’s misfortune’
 b. kòndù w-é mòò mè-ʃé → kòndù wè mòò mè-ʃé ‘that girl who came’

Tone spreading also takes place from prefixes to stems (13a), except in words that are in utterance final position (13b). Example (13b) also illustrates the fact that tones link to a following TBU if it is structurally toneless, which is why *kiléwó* surfaces with two high tones in isolation.

- (13) a. *kilèwò wáàmbó*
 kì-léwó w-ààmbó
 7-baby PP₁-1SG.POSS
 ‘my baby’
 b. *kiléwó* ‘baby’

There are three contexts in which the attachment of a tone to a following TBU is blocked. The first is that a low tone cannot delink a following high if the latter is the last tone of an utterance. Compare the tone on the demonstrative *wé* in example (12b) to that in (14).

- (14) *kòndù w-é* → *kòndù wé* ‘that girl’ **kòndù wè*[°]

The second is the failure of a low tone to attach to a following high tone if the latter is immediately followed by a low tone within the same word.⁴ In (15), spreading of the final low tone of *tààkò* is blocked by the floating low that follows the linked high of *fén^L* ‘handles’. The same floating low prevents the linked high from spreading to the right, so that the initial low of *bùláàwè^H* ‘many, much, lots’ is preserved.

- (15) *|ì-tààkò fén^L bùláàwè^H|* → *ìtààk(ì) fén^L bùláàwè[°]* ‘to take many handles’

The third context in which tonal attachment is blocked is the mirror image of the second one: a floating or spreading high cannot attach to a following TBU with a low tone when the latter is itself followed by a high tone. However, an extra condition for blocking high tone attachment is that the LH contour must occur in a verb stem (16a) or it must occur within one syllable and the high part should not be floating (16b).

- (16) a. *|ndóm dʒòʃé^L kòò yè^H|* → *ndóm dʒòʃé^L kòò yè[°]* ‘the husband hid it’

⁴ The only exception attested so far is the numeral *mótu^H* ‘one’, of which the high can be replaced by a preceding low.

b. |^H-kòóndè| → kòóndè ‘of the fish sp.’

Finally, there are some morphemes, including agreement prefixes, that have fixed tones and are (optionally?) impervious to tone spreading.

Kwakum also has a number of rules of downstepping. First, downstepping takes place on the second high in a succession of two high tones in case of an intervening floating low. This floating low may be the result of delinking due to an incoming high from the left. In (17), the floating high tone of the connective relator attaches to the first TBU of *mòtú* ‘head’, of which it delinks the low tone, which subsequently attaches to the following high. Instead of delinking this high, it combines with it to create a downstepped high.

(17) |^H-mòtú| → mó⁺tú ‘of the head’

In (18), the high of *fén* ‘handle’ cannot spread, because it is blocked by the final floating low of this noun. Since this low is trapped in between two highs, it creates downstep.

(18) |fén^L wé| → fén ‘wé ‘that handle’

No downstep formation takes place in (19) for reasons that we have already explained. The connective high links to the first TBU of *ǰúké* ‘mouse’ of which it delinks the low tone. This delinked low cannot attach to the following high, because it is itself followed by a low within the same word.

(19) |^H-ǰúké^L| → ǰúké ‘of the mouse sp.’

Downstepping also takes place where two TBUs that are linked to a high tone meet. When this happens across a morpheme boundary, downstep is always optionally possible, as shown by the second downstep in (20), the one on *‘dú*.⁵ In contrast, within a morpheme two adjacent high TBUs lead to downstep of the second high only in prepausal position (21a). We have never heard clear cases of downstep of the high part of a falling tone.

⁵ The first downstep in (20), on *‘gwí*, is due to the low tone of the 3SG subject prefix *à-* that was delinked from its TBU by the preceding floating ^H.

- (20) áŋ'gwí 'dúŋéŋ
^H-à-n-gwí dúŋéŋ
 PRS-3SG-PRS-die morning
 'It dies in the morning.'

- (21) a. |ʃúlyé^L| → ʃú^Hlyé 'smoke'
 b. |ʃúlyé^L nè bèetàà| → ʃúlyé nè bèetàà 'smoke and fire'

The need for positing underlyingly toneless TBUs is demonstrated in three different ways in examples (22-23). First, the high tone nouns in (22) appear without downstep on the second syllable in prepausal position. This can be easily formalised by assigning an underlying High tone to their first TBU only, which surfaces on the next TBU as well.

- (22) a. |ʃóló^L| → ʃóló 'bench' (*ʃó^Hló)
 b. |ɕʒíkí| → ɕʒíkí 'river' (*ɕʒí^Hkí)

Second, when the low tone of *nè* 'with' spreads onto the following TBU in (23a-b) and deletes its high tone, it links to all unattached TBUs. This is why the low links to one TBU in (23a) versus two TBUs in (23b). Third, in (23c), we see that the high of the first TBU of *ʃóló* 'bench' is protected by its final floating low, meaning that there can be no intervening tone between them.

- (23) a. |nè ʃúlyé^L bùláàwè^H| → nè ʃùlyé bùláàwè° 'with much smoke'
 b. |nè ɕʒíkí bùláàwè^H| → nè ɕʒìkì bùláàwè° 'with many rivers'
 c. |nè ʃóló^L bùláàwè^H| → nè ʃóló bùláàwè° 'with many benches'

Finally, two tonal phenomena that cannot be represented in the basic description provided so far need to be mentioned. The first is that a number of syllables with an underlying low tone become rising when a high tone attaches to them (versus the expected high or falling pattern). This is the case of the past tense prefix *àà-* (Section 6.3.1), the first syllable of the stem of certain possessive pronouns (Section 4.4) and that of a number of nouns (24).

- (24) base noun after a connective ^H
 p^hòŋgò 'maize' p^hòŋgò 'of the maize'

t^hààlò ‘grandchild’ t^hàálò ‘of the grandchild’
 ʃòkù ‘elephant’ ʃòkù ‘of the elephant’

The second concerns a number of morphemes that change the final low tone of a preceding word to a high. This cannot be represented by means of an initial floating ^H, because that would be supposed to attach to the right, rather than to the left. We will mark these morphemes with an initial upward arrow in their underlying representation. Examples are the complementiser *ʔnàá^L*, interrogative *ʔfê* ‘where’ and the near-speaker demonstrative *ʔnê^L*.

(25) |^H-à-n-kèè ʔnàá^L/ → áŋkèé nàá ‘He says that...’

3 NOUNS

3.1 The syllable structure of noun stems

The majority of noun stems are disyllabic: sixty-three percent. Two thirds of the disyllabic stems have a CV.CV pattern. Twenty-eight percent of noun stems is monosyllabic, two thirds of which have a CVC pattern. Seven percent are trisyllabic, mostly of the CV.CV.CV type. These figures only contain consonant initial stems. The remaining two percent of noun stems begin in the vowel *a*, which adds a syllable to the above patterns, giving rise to di-, tri- and quadrisyllabic stems.

3.2 Nominal classification

Kwakum has eight morphological classes, defined as sets of nouns that have the same nominal prefix. There are seven prefixes, *mò-*, *gwò-*, *kì-*, *ì-*, *à-*, *ń-*, *n-* and the lack of a prefix, symbolised as $\emptyset-$. Three of these forms, viz. *mò-*, *n-* and $\emptyset-$ are used exclusively to mark singular nouns. Three others, *gwò-*, *ń-* and *à-*, are restricted to marking plural nouns. The prefixes *kì-* and *ì-* mark the singular of some nouns and the plural of others. Figure 1 is a somewhat simplified presentation of the singular-plural pairings in morphological classes.

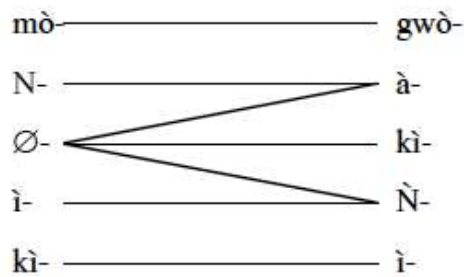


Figure 1: Kwakum morphological classes.

Figure 1 excludes a small number of marginal patterns, such as *k̀̀-ñ-* found only in the noun *k̀̀bábú / mbábú* ‘board/s’. Equally excluded from Figure 1 are the five nouns in our database with irregular singular-plural pairings, two of which are reflexes of PB class 5/6 nouns with a vowel-initial stem: *ǫ-íʃí / m-íʃí* ‘eye/s’ and *díʔnɔ́ (~ ì-díʔnɔ́) / ñ-míʔnɔ́ (~ ñ-díʔnɔ́ ~ k̀̀-díʔnɔ́)* ‘name/s’. We did include pattern *m̀̀- / gẁ̀-* despite its very low number of members, because the three nouns it contains are important: *m̀̀-mɔ́* ‘person’, *m-ð̀̀nɔ́* ‘child’ and *mɔ́-myáá* ‘woman’.

The morphological class system shows a high degree of variability, in that many nouns can have alternative class prefixes, mostly in the plural, but sometimes also in the singular. During elicitation, speakers often say they do not know the plural of nouns that lack a class prefix in the singular, or they accept alternative plural forms (26).

- (26) a. \emptyset -m̀̀ ~ ì-m̀̀ ‘shed’ / ñ-m̀̀ ~ à-m̀̀ ‘sheds’
 b. \emptyset -kótú ‘bag’ / à-kótú ~ k̀̀-kótú ‘bags’

Six percent of the nouns in our database begin in a syllabic nasal *ñ* in the singular. This nasal is always preserved in the plural, therefore does not commute and should not be analysed as a morphological class marker according to our definition, even though historically it is certainly a class marker and synchronically it can be analysed as a derivational prefix in nouns that have a derivational relation with a verb (27). We will have more to say on this set of nouns when we discuss gender assignment.

- (27) \emptyset -ñlækjàà / à-nlækjàà ‘question/s’ < lækfè ‘ask’

Finally, plural markers can be stacked (i.e. two plural markers) or additive (i.e. plural marker added to the singular marker). We find the optional stacked plural marking *à-ḥ-* in ten out of 155 nouns that have a singular in *ḥ-* and a plural in *ḥ-* (28).

(28) *ì-ǰúm / ḥ-ǰúm ~ à-ḥ-ǰúm* ‘bracelet/s’

Stacking is more generalised among younger speakers, who add an *à* before all other plural markers. Additive plural marking can be found in nine out of 136 nouns with a singular prefix *kì-* and a plural *ì-*. These can have an alternative plural in *à-*, which is then added to the singular prefix *kì-* (29). Both phenomena point to a certain tendency for *à-* generalising as a plural marking.

(29) *kì-bèkò / ì-bèkò ~ à-kì-bèkò* ‘shoulder/s’

Kwakum has five noun classes, defined as sets of nouns that trigger the same agreement pattern. Agreement in noun class is restricted to a relatively small set of adnominal modifiers, almost each of which has a separate paradigm of agreement markers, given in Table 4. These modifiers are possessive pronouns (I), demonstratives (I-V) and the connective relator (VI). For ease of reference, we have given the Kwakum noun classes a Bantu-style number, chosen somewhat arbitrarily (but see below for a partial justification). The agreement prefixes of the six paradigms will all be glossed as PP in this chapter. Nouns are assigned to noun classes on the basis of their morphological class and number.

noun class #	morphological class & number	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
1	<i>mò-</i> , <i>n-</i> , \emptyset -	<i>w-</i>	\emptyset -	<i>yí-</i>	\emptyset -	<i>yí-</i>	\emptyset -
2	<i>à-</i> , <i>gwò-</i> , <i>ì-</i> (PL)	<i>y-</i>	<i>yí-</i>	<i>yí-</i>	<i>yí-</i>	<i>yí-</i>	\emptyset - ~ <i>yì-</i>
5	<i>ì-</i> (SG)	<i>ly-</i>	\emptyset - ~ <i>lí-</i>	<i>lí-</i> ~ <i>yí-</i>	\emptyset -	<i>yí-</i>	\emptyset -
6	<i>ḥ(-)</i>	<i>m-</i>	<i>mí-</i>	<i>mí-</i>	<i>mí-</i>	<i>mí-</i>	\emptyset - <i>ḥ-</i>
7	<i>kì-</i>	<i>tʃ-</i>	<i>tʃí-</i>	<i>tʃí-</i>	<i>tʃí-</i>	<i>tʃí-</i>	\emptyset - ~ <i>kì-</i>

Table 4: paradigms of noun class agreement markers.

Class 6 has a subclass for the plural of five nouns, viz. *ì-tɔ́ / ñ-tɔ́* ‘ear/s’, *ì-lɔ́ / ñ-lɔ́* ‘intestin/s’, *ɲ-fɛ́ɛ́* ‘work’, *ì-tú / ñ-tú* ‘day/s’ and *mbɔ́ / ñ-mbɔ́* ‘hand/s’, defined by the agreement prefix *ñ-* in paradigm VI (connectives). The brackets around the hyphen in *ñ(-)* in the second column of Table 4 are meant to show that nouns that begin in a non-commuting syllabic nasal consonant in the singular tend to be assigned to class 6, as are the plural nouns that begin in *ñ-*, where this nasal can be straightforwardly analysed as a class prefix, because it commutes with a different singular prefix. This could be used as an extra argument to recognise *ñ-* as a class marker in singular nouns anyway. However, a minority of thirteen percent of singular nouns that start in *ñ* trigger agreement of class 1, as if they had no prefix. Singular *ñ-* is therefore somewhere in between a canonical class prefix and the initial syllable of a possibly derived stem.

Some of the Kwakum class markers are easily identified as cognate to the class markers of languages with a more typical Bantu noun class system. Among the morphological class markers, *mò-* corresponds to PB class 1, *ì-* (SG) to PB class 5, *kì-* (SG) to PB class 7 and *ì-* (PL) to PB class 8. Many instances of Kwakum *ñ-* correspond to PB class 6, as *ñ-* marks the plural of nouns that take *ì-* in the singular and the near totality of nouns for liquids take *ñ-*. The *à-* prefix may be a reflex of the PB class 2 prefix *bà-* that generalised to become a default plural marker. The form *gwò-* that currently marks the plural of nouns that have the prefix *mò-* in the singular must be an innovation.

3.3 Derivation

Slightly more than seven percent of the nouns in our lexical database are clearly in a derivational relation with a verb. In many instances nouns are derived from verbs by the addition of a class prefix to the verb stem. This prefix is most often *ì-* (30), sometimes also *kì-* (30b) or *ñ-* (30c). Some nouns are derived from verbs through reduplication of the verb stem (31).

- (30) a. *ì-fɔ́'ɔ́lɔ́* ‘peace, coolness’ < *fɔ́'ɔ́lɔ́* ‘be cool’
 b. *kì-lɔ́'ɔ́* ‘depth’ < *lɔ́'ɔ́* ‘be deep’
 c. *ɲ-dʒòðlàà* ‘bath’ < *dʒòðlàà* ‘bathe’

- (31) a. pè ~ bèlà ‘seed’ < bèlò ‘plant’
 b. pà ~ bàm ‘disapproval’ < bàá‘mó ‘reprimand’
 c. kà ~ kàn° ‘story’ < kàṅè ‘tell a story’

In the other types of derivational relations, there is no straightforward way to decide which is derived from which. Sometimes the addition of a prefix is accompanied by a change in the stem, which may be segmental (32a), tonal (32b) or both (32c). Sometimes, the noun does not have a prefix and the related verb and singular noun do not differ (33a) or only in the shape of their stem (33b).

- (32) a. ì-dzòṣù ‘hiding place’ - dzòṣè ‘hide’
 b. ì-yépyé ‘religion’ < yé‘pyé ‘believe’
 c. ì-byàndzì ‘disobedience’ < byàndzè ‘disobey’
- (33) a. yéklè ‘teacher’ - yéklè ‘teach’
 b. tṣèw ‘game’ < tṣèwò ‘play’

The only more or less regular derivational pattern we were able to identify thus far is the derivation of instrument nouns involving the prefix *kì-* and the suffix *-kà*, on top of other formal changes.

- (34) a. kì-pètkà ‘plug, lid’ < pètò ‘close’
 b. kì-ṣìwùkà ‘key’ < ṣìtlè ‘open’
 c. kì-tṣàlkà ‘sharp weapon’ < tṣàá‘lò ‘be sharp, be fast’

4 PRONOUNS, ADNOMINAL MODIFIERS AND NOUN PHRASE STRUCTURE

4.1 Personal pronouns

Table 5 provides the paradigms of person markers in Kwakum. We distinguish between free forms (independent pronouns) and bound forms, analysing a person marker as an affix when its occurrence is restricted to immediate pre- or postverbal position. Some person/number combinations lack a subject and/or object affix and are therefore always represented by means of an independent pronoun. Kwakum does not have object prefixes.

	free forms	subject prefixes	object suffixes
1sg	ɲì	ɲ-	-εε
2sg	gwè	ɔ-	-ɔɔ
3sg	dʒɛ ^H	à-	-yɛ ^H
1pl	ʃɛ ^H		
2pl	díné	nɛ ^H -	
3pl	dʒà ^H	yɛ ^H -	-yà ^H

Table 5: Person markers.

The first and second person singular object suffixes are restricted to verbs that lose their final vowel in non-prepausal position, i.e. they attach only to verb forms that end in a consonant (35a). Other verbs are followed by an independent pronoun (35b).

- (35) a. ám⁴bíwéè
 ^H-à-n-bíwɔ^L-εε
 PRS-3SG-PRS-beat-1SG
 ‘He beats me.’
- b. ám⁴bèè ɲì
 ^H-à-n-bèè ɲì
 PRS-3SG-PRS-follow 1SG
 ‘He follows me.’

The 2nd person singular subject prefix ɔ- is in free variation with an independent pronoun (36).

- (36) a. óm⁴bíwéè
 ^H-ɔ-n-bíwɔ^L-εε
 PRS-2SG-PRS-beat-1SG
 ‘You beat me.’
- b. gwé ‘mbíwéè
 ^H-gwè n-bíwɔ^L-εε
 PRS-2SG PRS-beat-1SG
 ‘You beat me.’

In the presence of a nominal subject, the use of an additional subject marker is optional in the plural and ungrammatical in the singular (37). However, when the nominal subject is in focus, the verb always takes a subject marker.

- (37) a. p^hââm jífè°
 p^hââm ^H-n-fè^H
 1.man PRS-PRS-come
 ‘The man comes.’
- b. àp^hââm (yé-)jífè°
 à-p^hââm ^H-yé^H-n-fè^H
 2-man PRS-3PL-PRS-come
 ‘The men come.’

Kwakum also has a set of four dual number pronouns, presented in Table 6, which can take any position in the clause: subject (38a), primary object (38b), secondary object or prepositional complement (38c).

1sg + 2sg	díʃðð ^H
1sg + 3sg	díʃèè ^H
2sg + 3sg	díŋèè ^H
3sg + 3sg	yáŋèè ^H

Table 6: Dual number pronouns.

- (38) a. díʃðð^H mé⁺dʒí támbyè
 díʃðð^H ^H-mè-dʒí támbyè
 1SG + 2SG PST2-PST2-eat.PST2 good
 ‘We (you and I) ate well.’
- b. p^hââm mé⁺dʒéé díʃðð°
 p^hââm ^H-mè-dʒéé díʃðð^H
 1.man PST2-PST2-see.PST2 1SG + 2SG
 ‘The man saw us (you and me).’
- c. p^hââm mé⁺ʃéé né díʃðð°

p^hàâ^m ^H-mè-ʃéé nè díʃòò^H
 1.man PST2-PST2-work.PST2 with 1SG + 2SG
 ‘The man worked with us (you and me).’

Where a dual pronoun can be used, the corresponding plural pronoun can normally be used too (39b), as well as the two relevant singular pronouns linked by the preposition *nè* ‘and, with’ (39c).⁶

- (39) a. p^hàâ^m mé⁺dʒéé díʃòò[°]
 p^hàâ^m ^H-mè-dʒéé díʃòò^H
 1.man PST2-PST2-see.PST2 1SG + 2sg
 ‘The man saw us (you and me).’
- b. p^hàâ^m mé⁺dʒéé ʃé
 p^hàâ^m ^H-mè-dʒéé ʃè^H
 1.man PST2-PST2-see.PST2 1PL
 ‘The man saw us.’
- c. p^hàâ^m mé⁺dʒéé jí nè gwè
 1.p^hàâ^m ^H-mè-dʒéé jì nè gwè
 1.man PST2-PST2-see.PST2 1SG with 2SG
 ‘The man saw you and me.’

4.2 Connectives

The connective construction is used to link two, typically nominal constituents. Because the dependency relations between these constituents are ambiguous in Kwakum, we will designate them by means of the neutral terms *first relatum* (R1) and *second relatum* (R2). The connective relator in Kwakum is an optional floating high tone prefixed to R2, as in (40), where the connective construction is used to express a possessive relation. The connective relator optionally agrees in gender with the head noun (41). Only two classes have a connective agreement prefix, viz. class 2 and class 7. Surprisingly, these agreement prefixes, respectively *yì-* and *kì-*, have a low tone.

⁶ There are some co-occurrence restrictions in topic constructions between anteposed topical pronouns and resumptive pronouns. Both cannot be dual pronouns, for instance.

(40) kàkàn móònó
 kàkàn^H-mò-òónó
 1.story CON-1-child
 ‘the story of the child’

(41) kìdžìmá kifyâl
 kì-džìmá kì-^H-fyâl
 7-beautiful PP₇-CON-daughter_in_law
 ‘a beautiful daughter in law’

Some of the adnominal modifiers discussed in the remainder of this section involve a connective relator.

4.3 The nominaliser-linker mòò / gwòòm

Kwakum has a marker *mòò* (PL *gwòòm*) that originates in the noun *mòmó* ‘person’ and that is used as a nominaliser or a linker used to introduce adnominal modifiers. It is used to nominalise adnominal demonstratives, e.g. *mòó* ‘né’ ‘this one’ (see section 4.5 for demonstratives). Moreover, it can head R2 in connective constructions that express a possessive relation (optionally) (42) or an ordinal number (obligatorily) (43). The element that follows *mòò* takes the connective relator ^H-, optionally if it is a number (43), obligatorily elsewhere, including in the expression of ‘first’ and ‘last’ (44). *Mòò* can itself optionally be linked to the preceding element by the connective prefix ^H-.

(42) búpà mòò móònó
 búpà mòò ^H-mò-òónó
 1.animal NLNK.SG CON-1-child
 ‘the child’s animal’

(43) a. mòò íbá’á ~ mòò ìbá’á ‘the second one’
 b. mòòn mòò íbá’á ~ mòòn mòò ìbá’a
 mò-òónó mòò ^H-ì-báà^H mò-òónómòò ì-báà^H
 1-child NLNK.SG CON-2-two 1-child NMLZ.SG 2-two
 ‘the second child’

- (44) m̀̀̀n m̀̀̀ p^hẽ'Í
 m̀̀̀-̀̀nó m̀̀̀ ^H-p^hẽl^H
 1-child NLNK.SG CON-1.front
 ‘the first child’

The nominaliser-linker *m̀̀̀* is also used to introduce relative clauses (see Section 7.3). Its current distribution strongly suggests that *m̀̀̀* was initially grammaticalised as a nominaliser of adnominal modifiers that were used in apposition to their head noun and subsequently reintegrated in the noun phrase, leading to the further evolution of *m̀̀̀* from nominaliser to linker in some of its uses. This is a common scenario in the Bantu languages, responsible for the typologically unusual word order patterns in the noun phrase structures of the family (see Section 5.3 in Van de Velde, this volume). In contrast, the origin of the Kwakum nominaliser-linker in a noun for ‘person’ is a departure from the much more common demonstrative origin of this element.

4.4 Possessive pronouns

Possessive pronouns follow the noun and take an agreement prefix of paradigm I (see Table 4). There are segmental and tonal differences between the stem of possessive pronouns that agree with class 1 controllers and the stem of those that agree with nouns from the other classes. Since these differences cannot be described by means of the synchronic rules of the language, we treat them as being suppletive. Segmentally, the stems for 1st and 2nd person plural possessors have vowels that are identical to those of the agreement prefix, viz. /u/ in class 1 and /i/ elsewhere. Tonally, the 1SG possessor stem of the classes 2-7 has a rising tone on its first syllable, the high part of which must historically originate in the high tone of their prefix.

	1sg	2sg	3sg	1pl	2pl	3pl
class 1	wà̀̀mbó	̀̀̀ ^H	èè ^H	ùjù	̀̀n ^H	àà ^H
other classes	-à̀̀mbó ^L	-óó	-éé ^L	-íjí ^L	ín ^L	áá

Table 7: Possessive pronouns.

INSERT TABLE 7 HERE

As shown in example (45), singular nouns can trigger agreement of their own class (45a) or of class 1 (45b), in free variation. Note that a high tone that links to the 1SG possessor pronoun of class 1 links to its first TBU (45b).

- (45) a. kílèwò tʃááʼmbó
 kì-léwò tʃ-àámboʰ^L
 7-baby PP₇-1SG.poss
- b. kílèwò wáámbo
 kì-léwò w-àámbo
 7-baby PP₁-1SG.POSS
 ‘my baby’

Two nouns have an alternative inalienable possessive construction, in which the possessive modifier is merged with their stem. The inalienable construction is the most frequently used.

- (46) a. kòtʃ-èè° ~ kòkù w-èè° ‘his/her maternal uncle’
 b. ɲótʃ-èè° ~ ɲótú wèè° ‘his/her body’

In order to express dual possessives, the noun is followed by a connective relator and a dual independent pronoun (47).

- (47) gwòòn (yì)díʃòò°
 gwò-òno yì-^Hdíʃòò^H
 2-child pp₂-con-1sg + 2sg
 ‘our children’

Independent possessive pronouns agree with their possessee in number, but not in noun class. In the singular they take the prefix *gú-*, which may be a reflex of the Proto-Bantu class 17 marker, and the stem of the adnominal possessive pronouns of class 1. In the plural, their prefix is *ǫ-* and their stem that of the adnominal form of classes 2-7.

	SG possessee	PL possessee
1sg	gwáàmbó	ɕàámbó ^L
2sg	gwóó	ɕóó
3sg	gwéé	ɕéé ^L
1pl	gúfú	ɕíjǐ ^L
2pl	gún	ɕín ^L
3pl	gwáá	ɕáá

Table 8: Independent possessive pronouns.

4.5 Demonstratives

Kwakum has five series of demonstratives, one is used to identify referents as being close to the speaker (-nɛ̃), two are used to identify referents as being close to the hearer (-ɔ̃ɔ̃ and -ɛ̃), one for items far from speaker and hearer (-kɛ̃) and one for anaphoric use (-é̃). The difference in use between the two near-listener demonstratives is not clear yet. In elicited utterances they are interchangeable. The roman numbers in the headers of Table 9 refer to the paradigms of agreement prefixes provided in Table 4.

	near speaker (II)	near listener (III)	near listener (IV)	far (V)	anaphoric (I)
1	†nɛ̃ ^L	y-ɔ̃ɔ̃ ^L	kɛ̃ ^L	yí-kɛ̃ ^L	(w-)é̃
2	yí-nɛ̃ ^L	y-ɔ̃ɔ̃ ^L	y-ɛ̃ ^L	yí-kɛ̃ ^L	y-ɛ̃
5	lí-nɛ̃ ^L	ly-ɔ̃ɔ̃ ^L ~ y-ɔ̃ɔ̃ ^L	kɛ̃ ^L	yí-kɛ̃ ^L	ly-ɛ̃
6	mí-nɛ̃ ^L	m-ɔ̃ ⁺ ɔ̃ ^L	m-ɛ̃ ^L	mí-kɛ̃ ^L	m-ɛ̃
7	tʃí-nɛ̃ ^L	tʃ-ɔ̃ɔ̃ ^L	tʃ-ɛ̃ ^L	tʃí-kɛ̃ ^L	tʃ-ɛ̃

Table 9: Demonstratives.

4.6 Quantifiers

Numbers do not agree in class with the noun they quantify. Numbers from 1 to 5 have the formal characteristics of nouns and are assigned to morphological class *kɪ̃-* (SG) / *ɪ̃-* (PL). Numbers from 6 to 10 do not have a class assignment.

1	mótu ^H	6	tówo
2	ì-bàà ^H	7	tàmbályè ^H
3	ì-tátí	8	ʃál
4	ì-néè ^H	9	bùyé
5	ì-tàán	10	káamɔ

Table 10: Adnominal numbers.

In cardinal adnominal use, numbers are postposed to the noun they modify (49-50). In this construction, the numeral nouns 2-5 are always in their plural form, but the quantified head noun can take either its singular or plural form (48), unless if they belong to morphological class *mò-/gwò-*, in which case they have to be plural.

- (48) a. ìtóó ìbá'á
 ì-tóó^L ì-bàà^H
 5-house 2-two
- b. ̀ntóó ìbá'á
 ̀n-tóó^L ì-bàà^H
 6-house 2-two
 'two houses'

- (49) kìfyèti tówó
 kì-fyèti'tówó
 7-tree six
 'six trees'

The nominal prefixes of numbers 2-5 have in common with agreement prefixes that they can optionally prevent a preceding high from attaching.

- (50) kìfyèti ìbá'á ~ kìfyèti íbá'á
 kì-fyèti-ì-bàà^H
 7-tree 2-two
 'two trees'

Numbers from 1 to 5 can also be the first relatum in a connective construction, in which case the resulting NP has a definite interpretation. The stem of number 2 is *-bàlá* in this construction (51).

- (51) *ìbàlá kífyètí*
 ì-bàlá ^H-kì-fyètí
 2-two CON-7-tree
 ‘the two trees’

The numbers 2-5 can be used in the singular or in the plural, in free variation (52). When such an NP is extraposed in a topic construction, the resumptive subject pronoun is always in the plural, showing semantic agreement with the subject NP (the semantic head of which can be a singular noun) (53). The quantified noun too can be either in its singular or plural form, except, again if it belongs to morphological class *mò-/gwò-*.

- (52) *jàád3éé ìbàlá yífyâl ~ kíbàlá kífyâl*
 jà-^H-àà-d3éé ì-bàlá yì-^H-fyâl
 1SG-pst-PST2-see.PST2 2-two PP₂-CON-1.daughter_in_law
 ‘I saw the two daughters-in-law.’

- (53) *kìbàlá kíp^hââm wè yéñfè°*
 kì-bàlá kì-^H-p^hââm w-é ^H-yé^H-n-fè^H
 7-two PP₇-CON-1.man PP₁-ANAPH PRS-3PL-PRS-come
 ‘As for those two men, they are coming.’

The number 1 is used to mean ‘the only’, with a prefix *kì-* in the singular and *ì-* in the plural.

- (54) a. *kìmòt kífyâl*
 kì-mótù^H kì-^H-fyâl
 7-one PP₇-CON-1.daughter_in_law
 ‘the only daughter-in-law’
 b. *ìmòt yìgwòðnó*
 ì-mótù^H yì-^H-gwòð-ònó

2-one PP₂-CON-2-child

‘the only children’

There is a set of four quantifiers that have the same grammatical behaviour as the cardinal numbers, viz. *kì-pyàpyá* ‘very little, very few’, *kì-ṣàáʼí* ‘little, few’, *kòṣàáʼí* ‘little’ and *ʼíndí* ‘all’. The first two belong to class *kì-í-*, the other two have no class prefix, but trigger agreement of class 2. The special tonal behaviour of numbers 2-5 (optional blocking of ^H-attachment) does not apply to these quantifiers.

(55) a. *ṣ̀íṣ̀k kíp̀yàpyá*
 ṣ̀-ṣ̀kí k̀i-pyàpyá
 6-water 7-little
 ‘a little water’

b. *ìt̀àw ìpyàpyá*
 ì-t̀àw ì-pyàpyá
 5-sheep 5-few
 ‘few sheep’

(56) a. *àb̀ùpà ʼíndí*
 à-b̀ùpà ʼíndí^L
 2-animal 2.all
 ‘all the animals’

b. *ʼíndí ỳìb̀úpà*
 ʼíndí^L ỳì-^H-à-b̀ùpà
 2.all PP₂-CON-2-animal
 ‘All the animals’

(57) *gẁð̀n k̀òṣàáʼí*
 gẁð̀-ð̀nó k̀òṣàáʼí^L
 2-child little
 ‘few children’

(58) *p̀h̀ààm m̀édz̀í kíp̀yàpyá k̀ìp̀õṅ̀g̀ò*

p^hàâm ^H-mè-dzì kì-pyàpyá^L kì-^H-pòngò
 1.man PST2-PST2-eat.PST2 7-few PP₇-CON-maize
 ‘The man ate a small quantity of maize.’

When *tʃɪndí* is used preminally to mean ‘every’, it is not linked to the quantified noun by means of a connective relator (59).

(59) tʃɪndzì bùpà dzì né kùl àndzì
 tʃɪndzì^Lbùpà dzì^H nè kùl à-n-dzì^L
 2.every 1.animal COP with strength 3SG-CSC-eat.CSC
 ‘Every animal can eat.’

4.7 Qualifiers

Nominal qualification is particularly interesting in Kwakum, due to the wide range of constructions in this domain. From a lexical perspective, Kwakum qualifiers can be divided into those whose use is restricted to qualification (dedicated qualifiers), and those who are also used to refer (referring-qualifying nouns). The former group can be divided into a set of twelve underived qualifiers and an open class of derived qualifiers. Qualifiers are derived from verbs by means of one of three suffixes, shown in Table 11.

referring-qualifying	jómtu ‘wise, wisdom’		
dedicated to qualification	underived	tàmbyè ‘good’	
	derived	-áá	dèt-áá ‘hard’
		-áàwè ^H	dèt-áàwè ^H ‘hard’
		-éŋ/-áŋ	dèt-éŋ ‘hard’

Table 11: Lexical types of qualifiers, with an example of each.

The suffix *-áàwè^H* most probably originates in a possessive form consisting of the Proto-Bantu connective stem *a* and a third person pronominal form. It is an instance of the possessee-like qualifiers that are common in Northern Sub-Saharan Africa.

Qualifiers are similar to quantifiers in that they can be used in a variety of constructions, as illustrated for *dètáàwè^H* ‘hard’, which is simply preposed in (60a), R2 in a connective construction in (60b) and R1 in a connective construction in (60c).

- (60) a. *dètáàwè kídžà*
dèt-áàwè^H kì-džà
 be.hard-ADJ 7-chair
 ‘a hard chair’
- b. *kídžà kìdétáàwè^o*
kì-džà kì-^H-dèt-áàwè^H
 7-chair PP₇-CON-be.hard-ADJ
 ‘a hard chair’
- c. *dètáàwè yìkífyètí*
dèt-áàwè^H yì-^H-kì-fyètí
 be.hard-ADJ PP₂-CON-7-tree
 ‘hard trees’

The underived qualifier *tàmbyè* ‘good’ is simply postposed to the semantic head in the singular (61a) and R2 in a connective construction in the plural (61b). It cannot occur in front of the semantic head. There is no space here for a full description of the morphosyntactic behaviour of qualifiers.

- (61) a. *kòòndè tàmbyè*
kòòndè tàmbyè
 1.plantain in.good.condition
 ‘a plantain in good condition’
- b. *àkòòndè yìtàmbyè*
à-kòòndè yì-^H-tàmbyè
 2-plantain PP₂-CON-in.good.condition
 ‘plantains in good condition’

The underived qualifier *tàmbyé* and the ones derived by means of the suffix *-áàwé^H* can also be used as adverbs, whereas those derived by means of the suffix *-éŋ/-áŋ* can be used as secondary predicates.

4.8 Agreement and word order in the noun phrase

Agreement in complex noun phrases is often determined by proximity, rather than syntactic structure or semantic scope. The demonstrative in (62), for instance, modifies the noun *ntóó* ‘houses’, but agrees in noun class and number with the quantifier *kìpyàpyá* ‘few, little’.

- (62) *ntóó* *kìpyàpyá* ⁴tʃé
ntóó^L *kì-pyàpyá^L* *tʃí-é*
 6-house 7-little *pp₇-anaph*
 ‘those (aforementioned) few houses’

Elsewhere, speakers volunteer agreement with either the head noun (63-64a), or the immediately preceding nominal form (63-64b).

- (63) a. *ntóó* *ìbáà* *mí⁴ké*
ntóó^L *ì-báà^H* *mí-ké^L*
 6-house 2-two *PP₆-DEM*
 ‘those two houses’

- b. *ntóó* *ìbáà* *yí⁴ké*
ntóó^L *ì-báà^H* *yí-ké^L*
 6-house 2-two *PP₂-DEM*
 ‘those two houses’

- (64) a. *kìbàlá* *kìntóó* *màá⁴mbó*
kì-bàlá *kì-^H-ntóó^L* *m-àámbó^L*
 7-two *PP₇-CON-6-house* *PP₆-1SG.POSS*
 ‘my two houses’

- b. *kìbàlá* *kìntóó* *tʃ-àá⁴mbó*
kì-bàlá *kì-^H-ntóó^L* *tʃ-àámbó^L*

7-two PP₇-CON-6-house PP₆-1SG.POSS
‘my two houses’

Class 1 serves as a default agreement class for all singular controllers, which can optionally be used instead of the controller’s lexically determined agreement class. Occasionally, we have found examples of this default agreement with a plural controller too, mostly in noun phrases that contain a numeral.

Word order in complex noun phrases is schematised in (65). QUAL and QUANT are formal-functional notions, used for the quantifiers (including numbers) and qualifiers that are juxtaposed to the noun they modify, i.e. excluding the use of these lexemes in connective constructions.

(65) HN - {QUAL, QUANT, POSS, ANA, CON} - REL – DEM

The abbreviation *HN* stands for the head noun from a morphosyntactic point of view: the nominal element that is not used to modify any other element in the noun phrase. Needless to say, this is not necessarily the semantic head, which happens to come at the very end of the NP in (66).

(66) ìbàlá yìdétáá tʃìndí wèè dʒóʷó
ì-bàlá yì-^H-dèt-áa ^H-tʃìndí^L w-èè^H ^H-dʒòwó
2-two PP₂-CON-be.hard-ADJ CON-all PP₁-3SG.POSS CON-day
‘all his two difficult days’

5 ADPOSITIONS

Kwakum has six prepositions and three “ambipositions”. The latter are postposed with nominal complements and preposed with pronominal complements.

(67) a. prepositions
 nè ‘with, by’
 pǒmbú ‘for’
 p^hèl^H ‘in front of’

ʃimó ~ ʃim ‘behind’

lémé lémé ‘between’

pákláá ‘among’

b. ambipositions

ʃi^H ‘under’

kóó^L ~ kól^L ‘on’⁷

téé ‘in’

Except for the comitative-instrumental-agentive preposition *nè*, they all originate from nouns in a connective construction, which is synchronically evidenced by the fact that they take possessive pronouns as pronominal complements, rather than personal pronouns. On their pronominal complements, they take the agreement pattern of the nouns from which they originate, which is in all cases class 1. However, the pronominal complements of the prepositions *pǎmbú* ‘for’, *p^hè^H* ‘in front of’, *kól^L* ‘on’ and *ʃimó* ‘behind’ can alternatively have the *y*-prefix of class 2, in which case they do still have the tone pattern of possessives of class 1 (68).

(68) a. pǎmb yé⁺é ~ pǎmb wé⁺é ‘for him’

b. ʃim yé⁺é ~ ʃimó wé⁺é ‘behind him’

In order to disambiguate between the adpositional and the nominal use of these lexemes, the nominaliser-linker *mòò* can be used in the nominal use.

(69) p^hèl (mòò) tóó

p^hèl^H mòò ^H-ì-tóó^L

l.front NLNK CON-5-house

‘the front of the house’

The complements of all Kwakum adpositions are accessible to relativisation, but only *nè* can be stranded. The other adpositions require a resumptive pronoun.

⁷ The form *kól^L* is obligatory in prepositional use, i.e. with a pronominal complement.

6 VERBS

6.1 The structure of verb stems

Table 12 summarises the most frequent syllable structures of underived verb roots. As can be seen, ninety per cent of the verb stems are disyllabic, which is unusual for a Bantu language.

CV scheme	%	example
CV.CV	25	bè.nò ‘deny’
CVC.CV	21	yék.lè ‘teach’
CVV.CV	17	bà.àndò ‘peel’
CV.CVV	10	dò.wáà ‘call’
CVC.CVV	5	lùk.làà ‘buzz’
CV.CCV	3	fí.‘myé ‘wipe’
CVV	5	bèè ‘follow’

Table 12: The most common syllable schemes of underived verb stems.

Ten verb stems in our database of 614 verbs are trisyllabic. There is only one verb stem that ends in a consonant, viz. *kèn* ‘go’. There are strong phonotactic constraints on the last vowel of verb stems: /*ɛ, ɔ, aa*/ in disyllabic stems and /*ɛ, aa*/ in trisyllabic stems.

6.2 Derivation

Kwakum has four verb-to-verb derivational suffixes. One is valency increasing (causative *-fê*), two are valency reducing (*-yè* and reciprocal *-àà*) and one can be either (*-lê*). These suffixes almost always attach to a base with CVC-shape, usually obtained by the addition of /*y*/ to CV roots⁸ and /*ŋ*/ to CVV roots⁹ or by deletion of the last vowel of CV(V)CV roots and the shortening of the vowel of their initial syllable if that happens to be

⁸ The only examples we have in our lexical data base consist of CV verbs derived by means of *-àà*. We don’t know whether /*j*/ will also occur in coda position if the verb is derived with other suffixes.

⁹ Some exceptions include *fáá* ‘do’ and *féé* ‘work’ where the inserted consonant is /*l*/ (e.g. *fáá* ‘do’ > *fàláà*, ‘be done’; *féé* ‘work’ > *fèláà* ‘be processed’) and *dʒéé* ‘see’ where it is /*n*/ (*dʒéé* ‘see’ > *dʒènàà* ‘see each other’). These “inserted” consonants are most probably retentions of root consonants that have eroded in other contexts.

long.¹⁰ CVCV roots with an alveolar second consonant drop their last syllable and lengthen their first vowel in front of the suffix *-fɛ̀*. We have no examples of verbs derived from a trisyllabic root.

Verbs derived from roots that are not entirely low have a fixed tone pattern determined by the derivational suffix, as illustrated in (70). Entirely low roots remain low when a derivational affix is added.

- (70) a. *-fɛ̀*: HL.L
 lí^L ‘get black’ > líŋ-fɛ̀ ‘blacken’
 bé^Llól^L ‘be cooked’ > béè-fɛ̀ ‘cook’
 dʒàálól^L ‘give birth’ > dʒàà-fɛ̀ ‘deliver’
- b. *-lɛ̀*: H.L
 bé^Lfɛ̀^L ‘rise’ > bé^Lf-lɛ̀ ‘lift’
- c. *-àà*: L.HL
 fé ‘give’ > fɛ̀y-àà ‘receive’
 dʒé^Lé^L ‘see’ > dʒèn-àà ‘see each other’
 bíwól^L ‘beat’ > bìw-àà ‘beat each other’
- d. *-yɛ̀*: H.H^L
 dʒàálól^L ‘give birth’ > dʒál-yɛ̀^L ‘be born’

There is only one verb in which the suffix *-fɛ̀* is not clearly causative, viz. *fɛ̀k-fɛ̀* ‘shake’ (< *fɛ̀k* ‘sieve’). Some typical causative examples are provided in (71).

- (71) líŋ-fɛ̀ ‘darken’ < lí ‘get dark’
 pûp-fɛ̀ ‘clean’ < pú^Lpól ‘recover’
 nîŋ-fɛ̀ ‘let in’ < nîŋlɛ̀ ‘enter’
 dáà-fɛ̀ ‘put to bed (sp.)’ < dàá^Llól ‘sleep’
 dèè-fɛ̀ ‘strengthen’ < dètò ‘be strong’

¹⁰ The only exception in our database is *dʒòòlàà* ‘bathe (intr.)’ (cf. *dʒòòlè* ‘bathe (tr.)’) where shortening of the initial long vowel fails to occur.

bànd-àà ‘bend (intr.)’ < bàá’ndó ‘bend (tr.)’
pàndɔ̄-àà ‘scatter (intr.)’ < *pàndɔ̄ɛ̀* ‘separate’

(74) àdòók ímànḡàà nè p^hàâm
 à-dòók^L ^H-n-mànḡ-àà nè p^hàâm
 2-mango PRS-PRS-gather-PASS with 1.man
 ‘The mangoes are gathered by the man’

Our lexical database contains four verbs derived by -yè.

(75) já’n-yé ‘split (intr.)’ < jáá’nó ‘split (tr.)’
 pé-m-^hyé ‘change (intr.)’ < pémlè ‘change (tr.)’
 dɔ̄ál-^hyé ‘be born’ < dɔ̄àá’ló ‘give birth’
 bòm-yè ‘burst (intr.)’ < bòmò ‘burst (tr.)’

We have found only one example of stacked derivational suffixes, viz. the verb *bómjáà* ‘sell’ (< *bòó’mó* ‘buy’), which is formed by means of the suffixes -*fè* and -*àà*.

Verbal derivation is not productive in Kwakum. Causation can be expressed by means of a complex sentence that has *jáá* ‘do’ as its main verb. The lexical verb occurs in a complement clause introduced by the complementiser *’nàá’* (76).

(76) àfèé jáá nàá òḡùm ìtóó
 à-fèé^L jáá^L ’nàá^L ò-ḡùmò ì-tóó^L
 3SG-FUT1 do COMP 2SG-build.SBJV 5-house
 ‘He will make you build a house.’

Periphrastic passives are productively formed with a copula and a participial form of the verb derived by means of the suffix -*éḡ/-áḡ* (see Section 4.6, table 11). As with derived passive verbs, the agent is introduced by the preposition *nè*.

(77) ìtóó dɔ̄ì ḡú’méḡ né p^hàâm
 ì-tóó^L dɔ̄ì^H ḡùm-éḡ nè p^hàâm
 5-house COP build-ADJ by man

‘The house is built by the man.’

There is no applicative derivation. Beneficiaries are dependent marked by means of the preposition *pǎmbú*.

- (78) ǎŋʃùm ìtóó pǎmb p^hââm wé
 ^H-à-n-ʃùmð ì-tóó^L pǎmbú p^hââm w-é
 PRS-3SG-PRS-work 5-house for man PP₁-ANAPH
 ‘He is building a house for the man.’

6.3 Inflection

6.3.1 Tense and aspect in the indicative mood

In the indicative mood, Kwakum distinguishes 15 tense-aspect combinations, summarised in Table 13. It has four past tenses, a present and three future tenses, as well as a distinction between perfective versus imperfective aspect. Past 1 and 2 are not distinguished in the imperfective.

perfective	temporal reference	imperfective
Past 4	remote	Past 4
Past 3	yesterday	Past 3
Past 2	today	Past 2
Past 1	immediate	
Present	now	Present
Future 1	immediate/today	Future 1
Future 2	tomorrow	Future 2
Future 3	remote	Future 3

Table 13: temporal and aspectual distinctions

More research is needed on the exact use of the different past and future tenses. Basically, Past 4 is a remote past, Past 3 is typically used for events that took place the day before utterance time. Past 2 and Past 1 are today’s pasts, with Past 1 being used for events that

took place right before the time of utterance and Past 2 for earlier events. The distinctions in the future are similar.

Table 14 gives an overview of the verb forms that express the eight tenses in the perfective. By way of an example, the last column gives the surface representation of the inflected verb *ì-dàá'mbó* 'to cook' in utterance final position, with a third person singular subject prefix *à-*. Verb forms that can only be used with nominal subjects are illustrated with the noun *p^hââm* 'man' in subject position.

PST4	(SM-)STEM-me	àdám(í)mé
PST3	(SM-)STEM kòò	àdám(í) kóò
PST2	^H -mè-STEM	p ^h ââm mēdáámbé
	SM- ^H -àà-STEM	àadáámbé
PST1	mè-STEM	p ^h ââm mēdáámbó ~ mēdáámbé
	SM-àà-STEM	àadáámbó ~ àadáámbé
PRS	^H -(sm)-n-stem	ándàá'mbó
FUT1	(SM-)fêé ^L -STEM	àfêédàá'mbó
	^h -sm-stem	ádàá'mbó
FUT2	(SM-)fòò- ^H -STEM	àfòòdàá'mbó
FUT3	(SM-)fòò-ηgè- ^H -STEM	àfòòηgèdàá'mbó

Table 14: Kwakum tenses (perfective forms)

The schemes in Table 14 show that tense is expressed by means of prefixes, suffixes and postverbal particles or clitics (in PST3) and that tense prefixes can be tonal morphemes. Past 2 and Past 1 have different tense prefixes depending on whether their subject is nominal or pronominal. An interesting feature of the initial floating high tone in the Present and Future 1 is that it is realised on the subject whenever it is pronominal, whether it is a prefix or an independent pronoun, as shown in (79), repeated from (36).

- (79) a. óm^hbíwèè
 ^H-ò-n-bíwó^L-εε
 PRS-2SG-PRS-beat-1SG
 'You beat me.'

- b. gwé 'mbíwéè
^H-gwè n-bíwó^L-εε
 PRS-2SG PRS-beat-1SG
 'You beat me.'

Table 14 also shows that the future has as many formal distinctions as the past. Since we were not able to find any difference in the use of the two hodiernal future tense forms, we treat them as allostructs of Future 1. More research might identify a functional difference between both verb forms.

Finally, the forms in the third column of Table 14 show that the verb stem in the past tenses differs tonally and segmentally from the basic allomorph *dàá'mbó* found in the other tenses and in the infinitive. Every verb stem has three or four non-basic allomorphs. Their shape is predictable and determined by tense and mood, by the position of the verb in the utterance (final versus non-final), as well as by the tone, the syllable structure and the final segment of the basic allomorph. A full description of the patterns of allomorphy will be provided in the doctoral dissertation of the first author (Njantcho forthcoming). In Table 14, the use of a non-basic allomorph of the verb stem is signalled by curly underlining.

Tense suffixes are treated as part of the verb stem with respect to the application of fixed tone schemes in non-basic stem allomorphs. This observation justifies the distinction in morphological status of the post-stem tense marker between the Past 4 suffix *-mε* and the Past 3 unbound morpheme (or clitic?) *kòò*. The difference in their behaviour is illustrated in the verb forms in Table 15. In the second column, F is short for (utterance) final and NF for non-final. The third column contains the tone scheme of the non-basic allomorph of the verb stem. The examples in the last column have a 3SG subject prefix *à-*. The verb *bà* means 'cut up' and *ǫ̀ǫ̀f̃ε* means 'hide'.

Stem	Conjugation	Tone scheme	Example
bà	PST4 F	LH	àbàmé
	PST4 NF	L ^H	àbàmè ^H
	PST3	L ^H	àbà kóò
ǫ̀ǫ̀f̃ε	PST4	LHH	àǫ̀ǫ̀f̃ε'mé

	PST3	LH ^L	àɕɔ̀ɔ̀ʒé kò̀
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Table 15: The difference in morphological bonding between *-mɛ* and *kò̀*

INSERT TABLE 15 HERE

The verb ‘be’, whether used as a copula or to express existence or location, has a suppletive paradigm, with the stem *ɕɔ̀ʒʰ* (most probably cognate with *ɕɔ̀lɔ̀* ‘stay, live’) in the Present indicative and *bé* in the other verb forms, including non-indicative moods.

Imperfective verb forms are construed by means of an auxiliary and the stem of the lexical verb, as shown in Table 16. The last column is again an example with the verb *dàá'mbó* ‘cook’.

PST4	(SM-)ɕɔ̀ʒʰ/yɪʰ-mɛ STEM	àɕɔ̀ɔ̀mɛ̀ dàá'mbó
PST3	(SM-)ɕɔ̀ʒʰ/yɪʰ kò̀ STEM	àɕɔ̀ kò̀ dàá'mbó
PST1/2	^H -mɛ̀-yɪʰ STEM	p ^h àám méyɪ̀ dàá'mbó
	SM- ^H -àà-yɪʰ STEM	àáyɪ̀ dàá'mbó
PRS	(SM-)yɔ̀kù ^H STEM	àyɔ̀kù dàá'mbó
	(SM-)ɕɔ̀ʒʰ/yɪʰ STEM	àyɪ̀ dàá'mbó
FUT1	(SM-)fɛ̀é ^L -bé SM-ɕɔ̀ʒʰ/yɪʰ STEM	àfɛ̀é'bé àɕɔ̀ dàá'mbó
FUT2	(SM-)ʃɔ̀ɔ̀ ^H -bé SM-ɕɔ̀ʒʰ/yɪʰ STEM	àʃɔ̀ɔ̀bé àɕɔ̀ dàá'mbó
FUT3	(SM-)ʃɔ̀ɔ̀-ŋgɛ̀ ^H -bé SM-ɕɔ̀ʒʰ/yɪʰ STEM	àʃɔ̀ɔ̀ŋgɛ̀bé àɕɔ̀ dàá'mbó

Table 16: Kwakum tenses: Imperfective forms

INSERT TABLE 16 HERE

Interestingly, past imperfective forms involve the Present tense stem *ɕɔ̀ʒʰ* of the auxiliary ‘be’ with past tense morphology. In some TA-forms this stem has the reduced form *yɪʰ*, suggesting that it is prosodically evolving towards affix status. In the Present tense, the

auxiliary $yɪ^H/\text{ɕ}ɪ^H$ is used when the verb is in focus, the $\text{ɕ}ɪ^H$ -form being obligatory with nominal subjects. When the verb is not in focus, the auxiliary $y\text{ɔ}k\text{u}^H$ is used. Imperfective forms in the future tenses involve a succession of two ‘be’ auxiliaries. The first one is inflected for tense and may take a pronominal or nominal subject. The second one is the Present tense stem preceded by a subject pronoun.

6.3.2 Non-indicative moods

The three non-indicative moods of Kwakum - Imperative, Subjunctive and Consecutive - all involve non-basic allomorphs of verb stems. The Imperative singular has no extra marking, except with CV-stems, where it takes the suffix $-k\text{e}^L$ (81). The suffix of the Imperative plural is $-k\text{in}^L$ (82). Two verbs have a suppletive Imperative form (83).

(80) Imperative verb forms

- a. $\text{CV-k}\text{e}^L$ (SG)
- b. stem (sg)
- c. $\text{STEM-k}\text{in}^L$ (PL)

(81) $\text{b}\text{a}k\text{e} \text{ b}\text{u}p\text{a}$

$\text{b}\text{a-k}\text{e}^L \quad \text{b}\text{u}p\text{a}$
 cut_up.IMP-2SG.IMP 1.meat
 ‘Cut up (SG) the meat!’

(82) $\text{b}\text{a}k\text{in} \text{ b}\text{u}p\text{a}$

$\text{b}\text{a-k}\text{in}^L \quad \text{b}\text{u}p\text{a}$
 cut_up.IMP-2PL.IMP 1.meat
 ‘Cut up (PL) the meat!’

(83) a. $\text{ɕ}\text{ɪ}^H$ ‘eat’ → $\text{ɕ}\text{ɪ}k\text{e} \sim \text{ɕ}\text{ɔ}k\text{e}$ ‘Eat!’

b. $\text{ɕ}\text{e}^H$ ‘come’ → $\text{ɕ}\text{ɔ}^Hk\text{o}$ ‘Come!’

The Subjunctive mood is used in subordinate clauses and to express hortative modality (85). It is formed by means of a non-basic allomorph of the verb stem and a subject prefix (84).

(84) the Subjunctive verb form

(sm-)stem

- (85) ʃèbáà ìtáà'mbó
ʃè^H-báà ì-táámbo^L
1PL-set.SBJV 5-trap
'Let us set the trap.'

The Consecutive mood is formed by means of the prefix *n-* and a non-basic allomorph of the verb stem (86).

- (86) the Consecutive verb form
(SM-)n-STEM

It has a wide array of uses. In its consecutive use it functions as a relative tense form indicating that an event takes place after a previously mentioned event. Second, it can function as a general present, typically in proverbs (87). Third, it can be used in either or both the apodosis and the protasis of conditional clauses. Finally, it can be used in subordinate clauses instead of the Subjunctive.

- (87) mòmýàà mbé t^hà kìbàpù
^{L%}mó-myaa N-bé^L t^hà kì-bàpù
1-woman CSC-COP.CSC CMP 7-horsefly
'A woman is like a horsefly.'

6.3.3 Negation

The negative form of the verb *ɔ̃ʃ* 'be' is *fètéeé~téeé* (88).

- (88) pèngè fètéeé tʃàk bósʃéŋ
pèngè fètéeé^L tʃàkí bòʃ-éŋ
1.money NEG.COP 1.thing be.bad-ADJ
'Money is not a bad thing.'

In indicative verb forms, the negative marker is *wéeé*. It originates in a third person singular possessive pronoun, a path of grammaticalisation that is not unusual in the Bantu languages

(Devos and van der Auwera 2013). When the subject is a first person pronoun, the 1SG possessive pronoun *wàá'mbó* can be used as well and some speakers use the 2SG possessive pronoun *wóó* with 2SG subjects. In the present and future tenses the negative marker is in between the Tense marker(s) and the stem (89). In the past tenses it follows the stem of the conjugated verb immediately (90).

(89) àfěéwéédzì búpà
 à-fěé^L-wéé^L-dzì^H búpà
 3SG-FUT1-NEG-eat 1.meat
 'He will not eat meat.'

(90) àádzìwéé búpà
 à-^H-àà-dzì^H-wéé^L búpà
 3SG-PST2-PST2-eat.PST2-NEG 1.meat
 'She did not eat meat.'

In non-indicative moods, negation is marked by means of the marker *běk* (91).

(91) běkdzì búpà
 běk^L-dzì^H búpà
 NEG-eat.2SG.IMP 1.meat
 'Don't eat meat!'

7 CLAUSAL SYNTAX

7.1 Simple clauses

As in most Bantu languages, the subject precedes the verb and the object follows it. In clauses with two unmarked complements the Goal precedes the Theme (92), an order that can be optionally reversed if and only if the Theme is pronominal and the Goal a noun with human reference (93). Both the Theme and the Goal are accessible to relativisation, but only the Theme is accessible to passivisation.

(92) p^hââm rí⁺fě móðn á⁺máŋgòlò

p^hàám^H n-fé m̀-òńó à-máńgòlò

1.man PRS-PRS-give 1-child 2-mango

‘The man is giving the child mangoes’

(93) p^hàám^H n-fé já m̀-òńó

p^hàám^H n-fé já^H m̀-òńó

1.man PRS-PRS-give 3PL 1-child

‘The man is giving them to the child.’

7.2 Questions

Polar questions are marked intonationally by a rising tone on the last syllable of the sentence. Information questions are formed by replacing the questioned constituent by an interrogative, such as *kè* ‘what, why’ or *tà* ‘who’, which remains in situ (94). Alternatively, interrogatives can occur in clause initial position in a focus construction.

(94) gwé ndàámbú kè?

^H-gwè n-dàámbó^L kè

PRS-2SG PRS-cook what

‘What are you cooking?’

7.3. Subordinate clauses

Subordinate clauses are optionally marked by means of the clause-final subordinator *jí*. Relative clauses can additionally be marked by means of a connective relator, which may or may not be preceded by the nominaliser-linker *m̀ò-ò/gwò-ò* (95a). The connective relator that introduces relative clauses is not an agreement target. Alternatively, relative clauses with a plural head noun can be introduced by the copula *ǫ^h* (95b). Since both the subordinator and the relativiser are optional, relative clauses can be totally unmarked (96). All positions in the clause are accessible to relativisation.

- (95) a. àp^hââm (gwóòm) bá kòò bùpà (yí)
 à-p^hââm ^H-gwòòm ^Hbà^H kòò bùpà yí^L
 2-man CON-NLNK.PL CON-cut_up.PST3 PST3 1.animal SUB
- b. àp^hââm dʒì bá kòò bùpà (yí)
 à-p^hââm ʒì^H bà^H kòò bùpà yí^L
 2-man COP cut_up.PST3 PST3 1.animal SUB
 ‘the men who cut up the meat’
- (96) àp^hââm bà kòò bùpà
 à-p^hââm bà^H kòò bùpà
 2-man cut_up.PST3 PST3 1.animal
 ‘the men who cut up the meat’ or ‘The men cut up the meat.’

Complement clauses are introduced by the complementiser ^ʔnàá^L, which has an initial *í* when introducing a clause functioning as subject.

- (97) ínàá pùlò mé^ʔnó búláàwě (yí) ndělkáà jì
 ínàá^L pùlò ^H-mè-nó bùl-âàwě^H yí^L n-dělkáà jì
 COMP 1.rain PST2-PST2-fall.PST2 be_numerous-ADJ SUB PRS-surpass 1SG
 ‘It surprises me that it rained so abundantly.’

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