

~~Gbang-gu~~
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APPENDIX 13.

Complex Propositions in Kpelle

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0. This study is in no way intended to be complete. Mr. John Wealar has prepared some most useful materials describing a number of Kpelle expressions used to connect words and sentences, all of which enter into the construction of types of complex propositions. The present study is confined to some major types of complex propositions in which obvious connective words and phrases are not employed. These include both coordinate and subordinate constructions. If an effort is made to classify a very large number of Kpelle propositions under the categories that have been suggested in preceding studies and by Mr. Wealar, and are outlined here, the function of these categories will undoubtedly become more clear, and very possibly others will be added which have escaped our attention just now, though they may be familiar to us.

1. Uses of the "Consecutive". In a preceding paper, a verbal construction was described which was called "hortative". Precisely the same construction is used to mark action propositions in a series. The first action construction may be of any type (e.g., past or completive); later actions in the series use the hortative form in a usage labelled "consecutive". In informal story telling, even the first construction may be this hortative-consecutive, with a "narrative" usage.

1.1. In a few uses, the consecutive may indicate purpose, and the subject of the second action may be different from the subject of the first. These are expressions of desire and instruction.

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|------------------|-------------------|
| na ñwêlii ná lí. | I want to go. |
| na ñwêlii é lí. | I want him to go. |

a òwèlìlì ná tílì kẹ́.	He wants me to work.
mó mà é pá.	Tell him to come.
è mò díà dí tílì kẹ́.	He told them to work.

1.2. Some other combinations, in which the two subjects must be the same, also appear to indicate purpose. This seems to be characteristic of the verb used in the first construction, which is either "come" or "go" in all typical cases that come to mind. Equating these with "purpose" in some cases seems to be contextually determined; other cases may be quite ambiguous.

ná pá ná lóno ípó.	I came to speak to you.
lí í dífóli.	Go call them.
ná lí naa ná tílì kẹ́.	I went there and worked. <u>or</u>
	I went there to work.

1.3. In other combinations, mere succession of actions is indicated by the consecutive. The subject may be changed only by introducing the second action (or any one after that, of course) by an independent pronoun with the suffix /-n/. Such a subject change may, however, be followed by a second action construction like the first, rather than consecutive.

ná lí ná pá pôlu.	I went and came back.
ná tílì kẹ́ ná kpée mà.	I worked (for a while) and then stopped.
è pá sẹ́, òyáw ná lí naa.	He came here, and I (in turn) then went there.

(I'm not too sure of the last; it had better be checked more carefully. Perhaps the consecutive here is confined to informal narrative, as it is for an initial action.)

1.4. A special use of the consecutive indicates the subject matter of discourse:

ná lóno é pélan gáloṽ mā. I talked about the chief.

1.5. Another special use of a consecutive expresses a temporal relationship:

vá pà sé gbíníi é lée pài pelêi. I came before night fell. (I came and then night remained coming to spread.)

2. Coexistent propositions which involve only actions have previously been described (by myself) as a construction of "simultaneous action". However, description as well as action may be involved, so that coexistence is a more appropriate term than simultaneity. In connection with these constructions, it appears that "Action" and "State" are closely related to each other, and that "Aspect" and "Description" are closely related to each other; the latter pairing was suggested by other factors as well.

2.1. In expressing coexistent propositions, the first proposition may be one of several (specified below). The second is introduced by the verbal stem /ké/ with a noun or pronoun object, followed by a verb with the low-tone formative. A first type of coexistent propositions has an action or a state proposition as its first member, and only an action proposition as its second member. The actor is the same in both parts.

è wòlò gé yèlè. He laughed and cried (together).
dí kè tíi kâi díké wulè tóo. They were working and singing.
a seêni gé kòlò lònò. he is sitting (and) reading.

2.2. A second type of coexistent propositions has an aspect or a description proposition as its first member, and only a description proposition as its second member. In this case, the verb of the second member (paralleling /-kâa/ or /ké/) can only be /só/.

gétâi gé sò à nêlèè. It is big and (also) good.
gâa à tíi ké-nùu gé sò. He is a workman and also
à vâla-wòo só-nùu. an evangelist.

2.3. A third type of coexistent propositions may have action, state, aspect, or description as its first member, and a location proposition as its second member. This expresses only the coexistent location of something different from the subject of the first member. For location of the same subject, see 3³ below. (Again, /só/.)

è pà tée ké sò òyéèi. He came with (and had) a chicken.

a seèni kolo ké sò òyéèi. He is seated and has a book.

bérai léléèi, láa nina ké sò mà. The house is fine, and there is new thatch on it.

gáa à tíi ké-nuu, pala ké sò góò mà. He is a workman, with a sore on his leg.

(Note: /ké sò/ is often contracted to /kôc/.)

3. A statement of the location of a proposition may be added to the basic predication. Location is expressed by an "unmarked complement". This is a substitute place word (e.g., /naa 'there', /sé 'here'), or a possessed dependent noun. Because the dependent noun expresses a locative meaning, and particularly because some dependent nouns are most commonly used in unmarked complements, such dependent nouns have sometimes been called "postpositions" or even "prepositions". However, they have noun forms, and most of them can readily be used also as subject or object. The locative relationship which usually demands an English preposition in the translation is actually expressed solely by the juxtaposition of the unmarked complement after the rest of the proposition.

è tíi kè daai sù.

He worked in town.

gáa seèni naa.

He is seated there.

zoo ní léléèi ééi.

This thing seems fine to me.

(is fine at my eyes)

gáa à tíi ké-nùu sé. He's a workman here.
 gáa páre tòne mù daai sù. He's in a (one) house in town.
 melon ká tí gbôloí sù. That's rice in the basket.

4. A statement of the time of a proposition may be added to the basic predication. Time is expressed by either an unmarked complement ("location in time") or by a marked complement with /à/. In some cases a difference in meaning may be involved, but in many cases the two constructions seem to be interchangeable.

è tíi kè hôkuí tí sù. He worked last (that) week.
 è tíi kè à hôkuí tí. He worked last week.
 è lí à kpíni. He went by night.
 è lí gbíni sù. He went during the night.

There are also time adverbs for a few times such as "today, yesterday, tomorrow, day after tomorrow"; these may be used in one of two positions in a sentence:

è sáa lí. or è lí sáa. He went today.

5. Subordinate expressions of time are commonly introduced by /tâi/, borrowed from English "time". It would seem that this is unavoidable in Kpelle as spoken to speakers of English. However, in completely indigenous Kpelle, identical constructions have been heard with this word simply omitted. There is another important marker of the construction which is too easily ignored; it is simply the specific suffix /-i/ appended to the entire clause. "Whenever" is expressed generally by /tâi kélee/ 'every time'; here a noun is required in Kpelle, and no form has been recorded with another noun; it is likely, however, that such an expression as /vele kélee/ could be used.

(tâi) ná pá sái, ná gáloū káa. When I came here, I saw the chief. (Cf. ná pá sé 'I came here')
 tâi kélee ná pá sái, ná gáloū káa. Whenever I come here, I see the chief.

6. Subordinate expressions of place are introduced by /sáí/, which is certainly related to /sá/ 'here', but in this construction does not indicate proximity; the subordinate clause must end with /naa/, 'there', and the entire clause then has the specific suffix /-i/. This is really a form of relative clause (see 8 below).

sáí è lí naai, fa pôri líi naa. Where he went (there),
I can't go. = I can't go where he went.

7. Subordinate expressions of manner are of two types. (For other expressions of manner, which should have been added after 4 above, see 9 below).

7.1. A second clause is introduced by /yêe berei/ 'like the way'; the clause ends with a specific suffix.

gé yêe berei na gé làí. Do it like I do it.

7.2. A first clause is introduced by /berei/ 'the way', and ends with a specific suffix; in this as in the above, the clause must include /là/, a substitute for a marked complement with previous reference. By extension, this construction is also used with the idea of "whereas", "inasmuch as"; the example below happens to be a translation of an English syllogism, but is typical of many indigenous Kpelle expressions.

berei ná mò làí, fêe í gé là. In the way I said it,
you must do it.

berei núu kélee a pâi saâi làí,	Inasmuch as all men will
berei máv sumo káa là à núui,	die, inasmuch also as
berei (tí) sé sumo a pâi	Sumo is a man, in so
saâi là.	much Sumo will die.

8. Relative clauses are sometimes introduced by /nyíi/, but the significant factor is simply that they must be complete sentences. They usually end with the specific suffix /-i/, but in the case of an indefinite antecedent even this is not necessary; in this instance, the relative is expressed by mere parataxis.

núu kélee (nyíi) a p̄ri tíi k̄iĩ every person who
can work

(cf. a p̄ri tíi k̄iĩ he can work)

núui gáa naai the person who is there

(cf. gáa naa he is there)

mani kélee naâ m̄oi everything I have said

(cf. naâ m̄oi I have said it; note repeated object)

kp̄l̄c ká ní da mol̄on p̄u z̄u This is a basket they
put rice in. (cf. da mol̄on p̄u z̄u they put rice
in it)

9. An added expression of manner, material, product, and possibly other relationships (inadvertently omitted in its logical position after 4 above) is constructed by adding a marked complement to a simple proposition. The variety of "meaning" may seem surprising, particularly for the second and third examples below; the construction simply expresses any appropriate relationship.

è gè à berei ní.

He did it in this way.

da konâ kp̄te à sinan.

They make mortars out of iroko.

da sinan kp̄te à konâ.

They make iroko into mortars.

è dèe à sóa.

He cut it with a knife.

10. Conditional relationships are expressed by using the conditional construction (pronoun with -à, verb low tone) in the first of two clauses. This expresses a somewhat higher expectation than is implied by English "if", and the simple conditional may more commonly be translated by "when". This is not temporal, however; for an event that has not as yet taken place, the time cannot be made explicit. To express a condition with lower expectation, the conditional /à k̄e/ is used before another conditional.

yà pà, yá pái ɔ́gáái.	When you come, you will see me.
tuna á pù, mólou a pái léléí.	When it rains, the rice will grow well.
à kè tí, kúlíí a pái kèí à hée.	In that case (when it is so), we will be happy.
à kè yà pà, ya pái ɔ́gáái.	If you come, you will see me.
à kè tuna à pù, mólou a pái léléí.	If it rains, the rice will grow well.

11. Contrary-to-fact conditions are expressed by two instances of the desiderative construction in sequence.

ii pà, kúí íkàa.	If you had come, we would have seen you. (cf. ii pà 'I wish you would come', kúí íkàa 'I wish we would see you'.)
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This can be semantically equated with the following:

ifé pá ní. maa-mèni mà, kú fé íkàa ní. You didn't
come. Because of it, we didn't see you.

12. An alternative, which Mr. Wealar has discussed in part, can be expressed by /kpàa mán/ connecting substantives, or by a negative conditional connecting propositions.

na sua wéíí, kpàa mán nyéé.	I want meat or (otherwise) fish.
na pái tíí kfi. à wàla ké tí, na pái líí naa.	I will work or otherwise I will go there. (I will work. If it is not so, I will go there.)

The above outline is to be taken as a framework, not an outline of parts of Kpelle grammar. There are probably omissions, and there may be occasional errors in sentences that were reconstructed from my own memory and competence. Nevertheless, a framework of this type appears to be needed and useful for the purposes of this project, and a far more elegant and refined outline hardly seems necessary just now.

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