

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

A Metrical Analysis of a Kuria Praise Poem

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree Master of Arts in Linguistics

by

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2006



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2006

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## ABBREVIATIONS

APPL	Applicative
Ass 'a'	Associative 'a'
CAUS	Causative
CP	Class Prefix
DEM	Demonstrative
EMP	Emphatic
F	Focus
FUT	Future
FV	Final Vowel
IMP	Imperative
Ind Pro	Independent Personal Pronoun
INF	Infinitive
IVE	Initial Vowel Elision
MP	Metrical Position
NEG	Negative
NPST	Narrative Past
OM	Object Marker
PA	Prefix Allomorphy
PASS	Passive
PERF	Perfect Tense
PROG	Progressive

PP	Pre Prefix
PPRoot	Possessive Pronoun Root
1PL	1 <sup>st</sup> Person Plural
Rel Pro	Relative Pronoun
1S	1 <sup>st</sup> Person Singular
2S	2 <sup>nd</sup> Person Singular
SM	Subject Marker
SUBJ	Subjunctive
UPAST	Unlimited Past
VD	Vowel Deletion
VG	Vowel Degemination

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I can hardly boast that this final product is my personal accomplishment; I owe so much to those who sacrificed and devoted their time to guide me through the whole process. I would therefore like to thank each member of my committee.

First, I would like to extend my gratitude to Kie Zuraw for helping me make up my mind about the topic of my thesis, providing valuable insights and advice during the writing of this thesis, and for prodding me to do things more thoroughly.

I also wish to thank Russell Schuh whose contribution to my committee was invaluable. His research on African languages proved to be a great asset to my work. He has an ear for tones and rhythms; so, when I could not make out what was happening in the recitation, I went to him and he demonstrated to me how to go about it.

I am indebted to Mwalimu Thomas Hinnebusch for a lot more than just this work. When I was new in America he provided for me a home 'away from home'. He encouraged me to work on Kuria from the beginning and I benefited immensely from his knowledge of Bantu linguistics. He made me look at my data more keenly.

Finally, I would like to thank Bruce Hayes for his time and resources and for being there for me whenever I had questions to ask. He was very patient, guiding me step by step through the process, and introducing the basics which were necessary for my analysis in

piece-meal so that I was not overwhelmed. Every time I had a meeting with him I came out wiser.

I wish to state that if there are any faults in this thesis, they are my own.

## ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

A Metrical Analysis of a Kuria Praise Poem

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University of California, Los Angeles, 2006

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This study is concerned with how a reciter of one Kuria praise poem organizes his recitation. I argue that though the poem is delivered at great speed, it follows well laid out rhythmic patterns; and that syllable count is the main organizational strategy that it uses.

Since poetry uses language as its building blocks, the study starts by looking at some aspects of the Kuria language, that is, the phonemic inventory and accompanying obligatory phonological rules which apply in the poem. The data is presented, then the prosodic theory is used to guide the delineation of lines in the poem. This is effected through optional rules - these apply in one place in a line but not in another. It is this selective application of rules that derives a poetic system from ordinary language. Taking

the output of the prosodic rules as its input, the metrical theory (Prince 1989) is then used to analyze the internal structure of the lines.

The findings are that though the reciter performs at great speed, the Kuria praise poem is highly structured and the reciter uses syllable count as the main strategy for organizing the poem. This is however complemented by word boundaries, syllable weight and tone.

## **1.0 Introduction**

The Kuria use poetry as a special way of expressing themselves. Various festivities will have poems befitting the occasion. One way of classifying Kuria poetry is by looking at the function of the poems. We can thus talk of love poetry, praise poetry, dirges, etc. The focus of this paper is praise poetry. The material under discussion in this paper was collected in 1995 in Kuria District, Kenya, during a wedding ceremony. The collected material consists of a praise poem from one of the participants with accompanying music from a fiddle and lyre. There are 15 clans in Kuria and each clan has its own variety of the language. The variety used in this paper is from the Bugumbe clan.

The motivation of studying these verses is twofold: First, this art, which used to be very prevalent in the community, is slowly fading away. This analysis is one way of acknowledging this rich poetical culture which has not been sufficiently studied in this language. Two, the mode of delivery and the product form an interesting subject for analysis. In the performance of Kuria praise poems, the reciter delivers the poem spontaneously and at great speed yet he is able to maintain the poem's rhythm. This study sets out to find how the reciter organizes his lines, words, and syllables within the poem. In this work, I will show that Kuria praise poetry, though delivered at great speed, follows well laid out rhythmic patterns.

Theoretically, Kuria is of interest because it is typologically unrelated to English and other European languages that have been subjected to metrical analysis. It therefore

offers a good test case for metrical theory. My contention is that the Kuria praise poem under study in this paper uses syllable count as the main tool in organizing the metrical patterns.

The paper is organized into five sections. First, there is a general introduction. This is followed by a discussion of some relevant aspects of Kuria phonology. In section three I show how the poem is organized into lines. I hypothesize that the lines are octosyllabic and show that the poem does not have stanzas. Section four deals with the recitation rhythm. A composite theory is used. Some elements about the organization of syllables and how to fill the metrical positions are adapted from the theory of prosody; and using the principle of binarity in metrical theory, the lines are divided into four beats which have triple rhythm. The role of tone, syllable weight, and syllable count in the organization of the meter are analyzed. In section five, I conclude that tone and syllable weight are significant in the interpretation of the poem but syllable count is the main organizational element in the poem.

## **2.0 Kuria Phonology**

This section identifies consonants, vowels, and types of syllables found in the language. It also looks at the issue of vowel length. These factors are important in analyzing the internal structure of lines in poetry.

## 2.1 Consonants

The consonant segments of the Kuria sound system are set out in the table below. They are adapted from Cammenga (1994) with slight modifications.

Table 1: Consonants

	Bilabial	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Stops oral		/t/		/k/	
prenasalized	[mb]	[nt] [nd]		[ŋk] [ŋg]	
Affricates oral			/tʃ/		
prenasalized			[ntʃ]		
Fricatives oral		/s/			/h/
prenasalized	/β/	[ns]		/ɣ/	
Nasals	/m/	/n/	/ɲ/	/ŋ/	
Trill		/r/			
Flap		/ɾ/			
Glides	[w]		[j]		

Among these consonant phonemes, [w] and [j] are positional variants of /u/ and /i/ respectively. The two sets of sounds are in complementary distribution; glides occurring before vowels and the high vowels occurring before consonants or at the end of words; for example:

(1) /o)ʏokeeria/ → [(o)ʏokéérjá] ‘to greet’ (line 1)

/okeeri/ → [okeerí] ‘(you) greet’

/tuiyue/ → [twííywe] ‘we hear’ (line 22)

/tuiyure/ → [twiiyúre] ‘we have heard’

Also, the voiced stops [b], [d], and [g] only occur as allophones of the voiced continuants /β/, /ɾ/, and /ɣ/ respectively, when these are preceded by a nasal (Cammenga 1994). Thus, [b, d, g] and [β, ɾ, γ] are in complementary distribution.

(2) /Nβaane/	→	[mbaané]	‘my comrade’	(line 5, 6, 55)
/NraikeNra/	→	[ndaíkéeenda] <sup>1</sup>	‘I do forcefully’	(line 34)
/ekaNɣa/	→	[ekááŋga]	‘it did not’	(line 42)

The prenasalized stops included in Table 1 above are made up of a nasal-obstruent sequence. In this paper, it is assumed that such a sequence constitutes a single prenasalized consonant. I submit that the two consonants of the sequence fall within one syllable since (a) words can begin with a nasal followed by a consonant (b) words cannot end in a nasal (c) my native speaker intuition is clear that the syllable division comes before the nasal. Here are examples from the poem.

(3) /kokeraNβo/	→	[ɣo.ké.ráá.mbó]	‘at the small dam’	(line 17)
/NkokeereriaNre/	→	[ŋgo.kéeé.ré.rjáá.ndé]	‘I am sending greetings’	(line 7, 25, 54)
/Ntimaro/	→	[ntí.má.ro]	‘name of place’	(line 13, 16)
/eNtʃera/	→	[ee.ntʃé.ra]	‘way’	(line 16)
/iNkio/	→	[íí.ŋkjo]	‘morning’	(line 29)

---

<sup>1</sup> Compare: /NraikeNra/ → [ndaíkéeenda] ‘I do forcefully’ (line 34)  
 /oraikeNra/ → [oraíkéeenda] ‘You do forcefully’  
 /araikeNra/ → [araíkéeenda] ‘S/he does forcefully’

The voicing dissimilation ( $k \rightarrow \gamma$  and  $Nk \rightarrow \eta g$ ) in the first two examples in (3) above has commonly been referred to as Dahl's law<sup>2</sup>. It is a common feature of Kuria phonology.

## 2.2 Vowels and Diphthongs

There are fourteen vowels in Kuria with seven contrasting qualities occurring in long and short pairs.

Table 2: Short Vowels

	front unrounded	central	back rounded
high	i		u
mid	e		o
mid	ɛ		ɔ
low		a	

Table 3: Long Vowels

	front unrounded	central	back rounded
high	ii		uu
mid	ee		oo
mid	ɛɛ		ɔɔ
low		aa	

---

<sup>2</sup> This is a voicing dissimilation rule in Bantu languages that affects consonants. The rule applies across morpheme boundaries. It can be stated as:

A voiced stem-initial segment requires a voiceless consonant in the prefix and a voiceless stem-initial segment requires a voiced consonant in the prefix.

A voicing dissimilation rule can be formulated as:

$$[- \text{sonorant}] \rightarrow [\alpha \text{ voice}] / \_ V \begin{matrix} \boxed{\phantom{-}} \\ \boxed{\text{- syllabic}} \\ \boxed{\text{- } \alpha \text{ voice}} \end{matrix}$$

Diphthongs are rare in this language (Cammenga 1994). So far, only two diphthongs have been identified in the data. These are /ai/ and /ei/ as in these examples:

(4) /ai/ [ndaíkéénda]	‘I do forcefully’	(line 34)
[koŋaína]	‘to flatter’	(line 2)
[waíto]	‘our home’	(line 11, 31)
[waísa]	‘a person’	(line 41, 52)
/ei/ [yeíto]	‘our’	(line 49)

It is my native speaker intuition that the words *ndai.kee.nda* and *o.ko.ŋai.na* in (4) above have three syllables each while *wai.to*, *wai.sa* and *yei.to* have two syllables each. The second vowel of the diphthong carries the high tone. If these are actually diphthongs as Cammenga suggests, then it is not possible to separate the two vowels so as to count them as different syllables. They must be kept in the same syllable.

There is a possibility that /eu/ and /au/ could also be diphthongs but the fact that the performer puts the vowels in two separate syllables makes me not consider them as diphthongs. Examples from the poem with this type of vowel sequence are as follows.

(5) [keuní]	‘even me’	(line 3, 7, 39, 56)
[taúti]	‘David’	(line 43)

### 2.3 Vowel Length

Long vowels can be either phonemic or derived.

### 2.3.1 Phonemic Vowel Length

The phonemic status of vowel length is seen in the minimal pairs below. I will mark tones throughout the paper as follows: unmarked (e.g. a) for low tone and acute accent (e.g. á) for high tone.

	PP	CP	Stem	
(6) a.	[i – ki	-	βíra]	‘the little finger’
	[i – ki	-	βííra]	‘a plastic container’
b.	[tumá]			‘sew’
	[tuumá]			‘jump’
c.	[nará]			‘be acquainted with’
	[naará]			‘wind around something’

Vowels that are underlyingly long are limited to the penultimate position of the word. Long vowels in other positions can be shown to be derived.

### 2.3.2 Derived Vowel Length

Phonemic long vowels are not the only source of long vowels in Kuria. Another way by which vowel length arises is by compensatory lengthening. In such cases vowels are predictably long in the following two environments:

(a) before prenasalized stops; (b) after glide formation has occurred.

### 2.3.2.1 Vowel lengthening before prenasalized stops

In many Bantu languages, vowels are lengthened if they occur before prenasalized stops. Such lengthening is found in Kihehe (Odden & Odden 1999), Kikuria (Cammenga 1994), Luganda (Clements 1986), and Kinyarwanda (Kimenyi 1979) among other languages.

This can be formulated as:

$$(7) V \rightarrow [+ \text{long}] / \_ \text{NC}$$

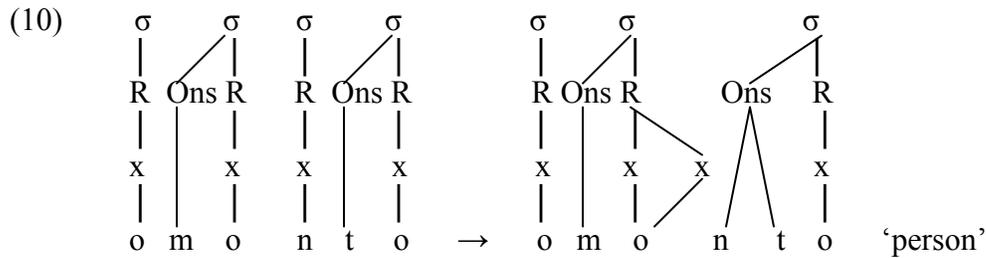
This is illustrated by examples from our data base shown in (8).

<i>(8) Underlying</i>	<i>Surface</i>	<i>Gloss</i>	
/neNkaɲora/	[nééŋkaɲóra]	‘even if’	(line 4)
/ɲiNɣeno/	[ɲiiŋgéno]	‘at this time’	(line 4)
/ekaNɣa/	[ekááŋga]	‘it did not’	(line 42)
/moNto/	[moontó]	‘person’	(line 44, 49)
/mareNɣe/	[marééŋge]	‘brief’	(line 61)

Justification for compensatory lengthening can be found in examples below which show that the presence of a prenasalized stop activates lengthening (9a, 9d) while its absence does not (9b, 9c).

	PP	CP	Stem			
(9) a.	/o - mo -		Nto/	→	[omoontó]	‘person’ (line 21)
b.	/o - mo -		te/	→	[omoté]	‘tree’
c.	/o - ko -		ɣɔɔra/	→	[okoɣóórá]	‘to praise’
d.	/o - ko - N -		ɣɔɔra/	→	[koŋgóórá]	‘to praise me’ (line 38)

One view is that compensatory lengthening is a consequence of spreading. The prenasalization rule disassociates the nasal segment from its position on the timing tier. This leaves an unoccupied position to which the preceding vowel is linked to resulting in lengthening (Clements & Keyser 1983).



### 2.3.2.2 Glide Formation

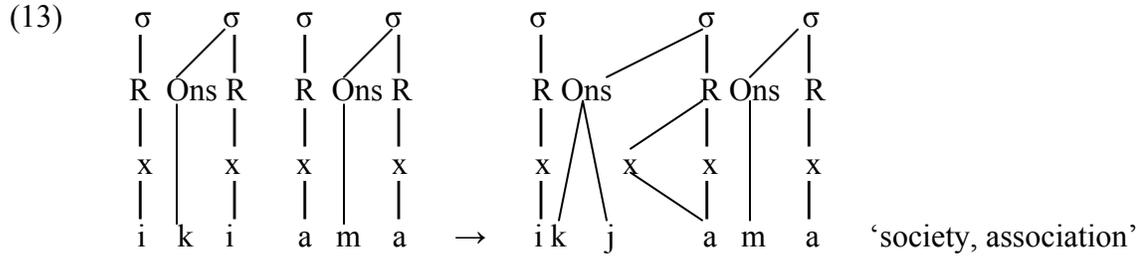
Kuria has many vowel sequences in underlying form but these are never realized on the surface except for /ai/ (Cammenga 1994) and /ei/. Most underlying vowel sequences are resolved by a process of glide formation. In these examples, the vowel /i/ changes to the glide /j/ if it is followed by another vowel (see 11a, 11c) but does not change if it is followed by a consonant (11b, 11d). There is also an example of an unlengthened vowel in (11e).

	<i>Underlying</i>		<i>Surface</i>	<i>Gloss</i>
(11) a.	/io/ /i – ki – oma/	→	[ikjóóma]	'metal'
b.	/iβ/ /i – ki – βira/	→	[ikiβíra]	'the little finger'
c.	/io/ /o – ko – rioka/	→	[ukurjóóká]	'to rise from the dead'
d.	/ik/ /o – ko – rika/	→	[ukuríka]	'(of water) to be clear'
e.	/ok/ /o – ko – roka/	→	[okoróka]	'to weave, knit'
	PP CP Stem			

Here are the cases where /i/ is realized as /j/ in the data.

(12) <i>Underlying Form</i>	<i>Surface Form</i>	<i>Gloss</i>	
/okokeeria/	[oɣokéérjá]	‘to greet’	(line 1)
/βirioβa/	[βirjóóβa]	‘of the sun’	(line 6)
/NkokeereriaNre/	[ɲgokéérjáándé]	‘I am sending greetings’	(line 7, 25, 54)
/sereria/	[sérérja]	‘Sererya’	(line 18)
/kijnooria/	[kijnoórja]	‘it gets’	(line 28)
/iNkiɔ/	[íɲkjɔ]	‘morning’	(line 29)
/keranoria/	[keranóórja]	‘it then gets’	(line 30)
/Nkoβateβia/	[ɲkoβáteβjá]	‘I tell you’	(line 46)
/muyiβijnooria/	[muyiβíjnorjá]	‘one from the Gibinyorya circumcision group’	(line 50)
/NkomokeeriaNre/	[ɲkómokeerjáánde]	‘I am greeting him’	(line 57)
/iβiraario/	[iβíraarjó]	‘cowsheds’	(line 59)
/amatʃaria/	[amatʃarjá]	‘unfit food’	(line 60)

Glide formation normally triggers compensatory lengthening of the following vowel. In examples (11a) and (11c) above, the first vowel in the diphthong changes into a glide and the second vowel of the diphthong, which is underlyingly short, consequently lengthens. This is a common occurrence among Bantu languages with a vowel length contrast (Odden & Odden 1999). The explanation is that the first vowel is delinked from the V-slot and re-associated with a C-slot slot thereby becoming a glide. The following vowel is linked to the position left unoccupied resulting in lengthening.



In the examples that follow, the first vowel in the diphthong, /u/, also changes into a glide /w/ when it is followed by another vowel (14b). The phonemes /w/ and /u/ share the features [+ high] and [+ round]. It is therefore easy for /u/ to change to the said glide. If the first vowel is followed by a consonant, no change is realized (14a). We also see a process of regressive vowel height assimilation which raises any mid vowel to a high vowel if followed by a high vowel. This raising operates within the stem and the infinitival prefix /oko-/. In (14a-b) the infinitive has the mid vowel /o/ while the following syllables in the stems contain the high vowels /i/. This causes the mid vowels in the prefix to raise. Vowel height assimilation is a common process in Bantu languages.

<i>Underlying</i>	<i>Surface</i>	<i>Gloss</i>
(14) a. /uβ/ /o – ko – βina/	→ [ukuβina]	‘to sing’
b. /ui/ /o – ko – iβa/	→ [ukwiiβa]	‘to steal’
PP CP Stem		

There are examples in the data where the vowel /u/ changes to the glide /w/; for the short vowels after glide formation in *asiŋgirwe* and *twiiγwe* below see explanation below (16) with illustrations in (17), (18) and (19).

- (15) a. /asiNyirue/ → /asingirwe/ → [asiŋ́írwe] ‘s/he was partnered  
with in a dance’ (line 52)<sup>3</sup>
- b. /umuiro/ → /mwiro/ → [mwííro] ‘person’ (line 18, 58)
- c. /tuiyue/ → /twiywe/ → [twííywe] ‘we hear’ (line 62)
- glide            compensatory  
formation      lengthening

From the examples given in (11 -15), a glide formation rule can be given as follows:

(16) Glide Formation Rule

*A high vowel followed by another vowel is realized as a non-syllabic glide.*

$$\begin{array}{c} \boxed{\begin{array}{l} + \text{syllabic} \\ + \text{high} \end{array}} \quad \begin{array}{c} 1 \\ 2 \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c} [+ \text{syllabic}] \\ \rightarrow \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c} 1 \\ 2 \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c} [- \text{syllabic}] \\ [+ \text{long}] \end{array} \end{array}$$

Though it has been stated above that glide formation is accompanied by compensatory lengthening, it is not always the case. There are two instances where lengthening does not take place after glide formation: (i) word finally, (ii) if the glide is followed by two other vowels. Below, we look at glide-vowel sequences in word-final position.

- (17) /okokeeria/ → /oʝokeeria/ → [oʝokéérjá] (\*[oʝokeerjaa]) ‘to greet’ (line 1)
- voicing                      glide  
dissimilation              formation

<sup>3</sup> In (15)a, glide formation is realized by ue → we. Since the passive marker -w- usually appears on the last syllable of the word, we use a word with the same forms in mid position to justify the glide formation. /o-ko-ɣuem-a/ → [ukuɣwéémá] ‘to hunt’. If a consonant is placed immediately after the high vowel it is not possible to have glide formation e.g. /o-ko-ɣuβ-a/ → [ukuɣúβa] ‘to shield’. In (15)b /u-mu-iro/ becomes [umwííro] but its plural form /a-βa-iro/ remains [aβáiro] since the conditions for glide formation have been removed. In (15)c we see two processes of glide formation: ui → wi and ue → we. /tu-iɣue/ → [twííywe] ‘we hear’ alternates with /tu-iɣu-re/ → [twííyúre] ‘we have heard’ that is ɣu ~ ɣw; while we can also alternate /tu-iɣu-e/ → [twííywe] ‘we hear’ with /tu-βine/ → [tuβíne], ‘let’s dance’ that is tu ~ tw.



Our account derives a glide for the three examples above as follows:

(21)	‘theirs’	‘we hear’	‘to greet (praise)’	
	/o-a-ito/	/tu-iyue/	/oko-keeria/	Underlying Form
	.....	.....	oyokeeria	Voicing Dissimilation
	uaito	.....	.....	Vowel Raising
	waito	twiiγwe	oyokeerja	Glide Formation
	wai.to	twii.γwe	o.γo.kee.rja	Syllabification
	[wai.to]	[twii.γwe]	[o.γo.kee.rja]	Output

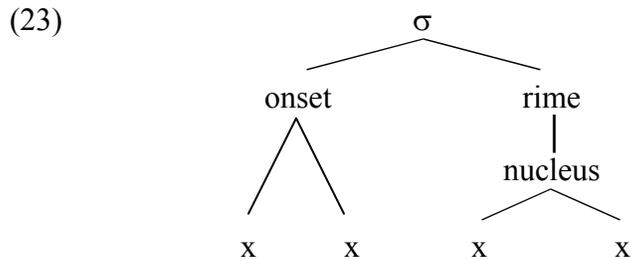
In the examples in (22) the diphthongs do not change at all. The underlying representation and the surface representation are the same. This is because the sequence of vowels that they have do not conform to what is stated in the glide formation rule in (16) above.

(22)	/ai/	/o – ko – ŋaina/	→	[okoŋaína]	‘to cheat’
	/e -	kooŋai/	→	[ekóóŋaí]	‘crowned crane’
		PP CP Stem			

In summary, it can be said that all /j/ and /w/ are derived from /i/ and /u/ or /o/ respectively. Glide formation involves compensatory lengthening except word finally or before another vowel. In glide formation, lengthening occurs in the vowel occurring after the glide while in prenasalization it occurs before the prenasal. Both are obligatory phonological process, that is, there is not one instance where they fail to apply.

## 2.4 Syllable Structure

Adapted for syllable analysis in this paper is the conventional hierarchical onset-rime model which maximally consists of onset and rime and (as applied to Kuria) recognizes the following syllable structure:



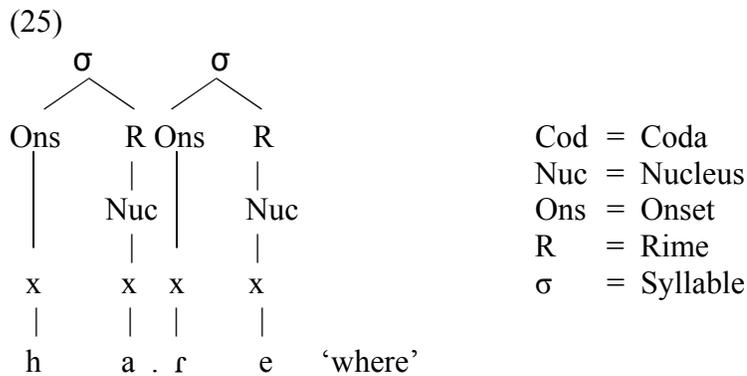
This structure represents a syllable with a branching onset and a non-branching rime, where the rime dominates the nucleus which may branch. All the levels of the structure have potentially binary branching except the rime and terminal nodes.

Consonants, vowels and units of length combine to form syllables which in turn combine to form words. A look at the data shows that Kuria uses only open syllables; the syllable nucleus never combines with a consonant in coda position. The following are the types of syllables found in the Kuria language: V, CV, VV, CVV, and CCV. This means that the Kuria syllable takes the form  $C_0^2 V_1^2$  where C denotes a consonant or glide.

The most common syllable in this language is the CV type. It is composed of an onset, which may be any consonant of the language, and a single vowel. Examples of this type of syllable abound in the data.

(24) nigure	[ni.ɣu.re]	‘I have heard’	(line 1)
buya	[βu.ja]	‘well’	(line 38)
hare	[ha.re]	‘where’	(line 2)

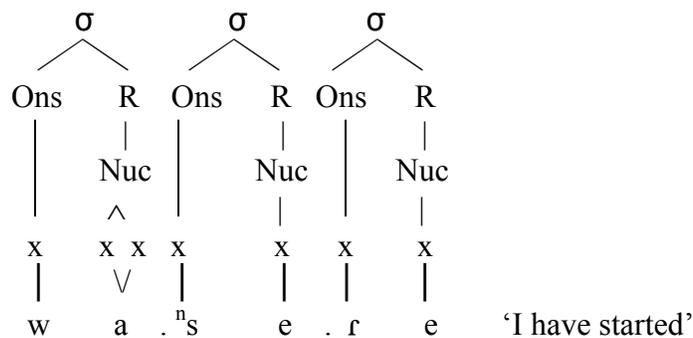
The word *hare* can be represented with its syllable structure as follows:



Syllables with a prenasalized consonant fall into the CV type. These are usually made up of a nasal-obstruent-vowel. This group is well represented in the poem under discussion.

Here are examples:

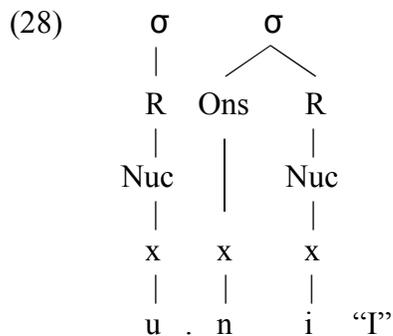
(26) wansere	[waa.nsé.ré]	‘I have started’	(line 2)
Ntimaro	[nti.má.ro]	‘name of a place’	(line 16)
nkomokombokande	[ŋko.mo.koo.mbó.kaa.ndé]	‘I am remembering him’	(line 20)



Another syllable found in this language is the V-type. This is a syllable consisting of a vowel nucleus without consonant margin. According to the data, the onsetless syllable is allowed mostly at the beginning of words. It is exemplified in (27):

(27) uni	[u.ní]	‘I’	(line 8, 20, 25, 46, 54)
okoβa	[o.ko.βá]	‘In fact’	(line 10)
okoore	[o.koo.ré]	‘You have done’	(line 38)

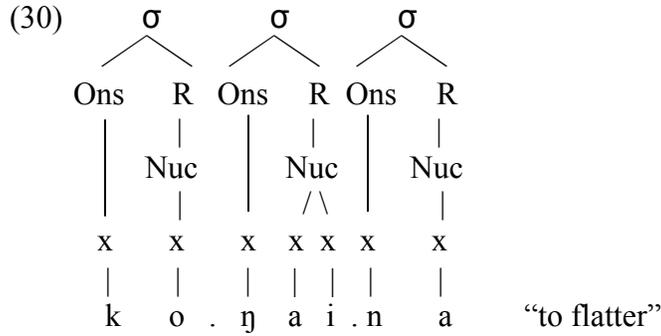
A single vowel syllable is shown with a non-branching structure.



The CVV syllable in Kuria is made up a consonant followed by a diphthong or long vowel. The following are examples:

(29) kong’aina	[ko.ŋaí.na]	‘to flatter’	(line 2)
ndaikenda	[ndaí.kéé.nda]	‘I do forcefully’	(line 34)
waito	[waí.to]	‘our home’	(line 11, 32)
waisa	[waí.sa]	‘a person who’	(line 41, 52)

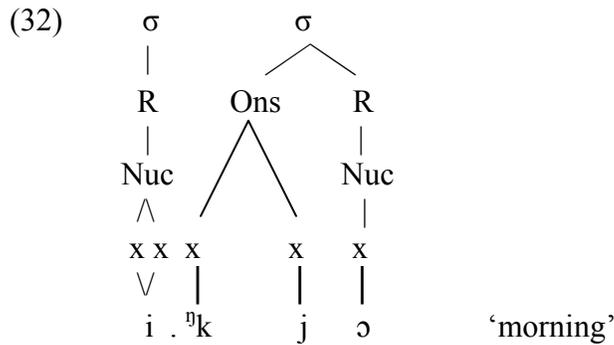
This can be represented as follows:



The other syllable type in Kuria is CCV. The syllable onset can contain as many as two consonants. This language upholds the ‘maximum onset and minimum coda’ rule. In this case, the first consonant is a prenasalized stop. The second consonant in this syllable type is a glide – it is a derived form. There is only one example of such a syllable in the data.

(31) inkio → [ii.ŋkjɔ]      “morning”      (line 29)

This word can be represented on the syllable structure as follows:

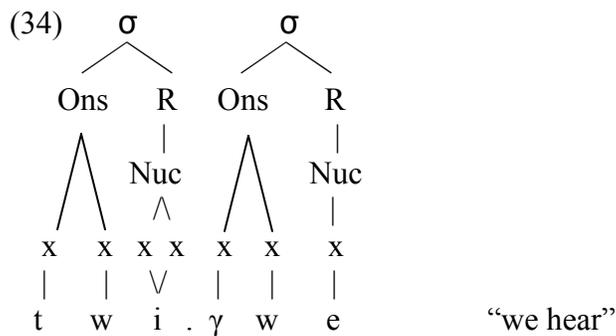


Example (31, 32) above also exemplifies the VV syllable type. This occurs as a result of the lengthening of a vowel in word initial position before a prenasalized stop.

Other examples of the CCV syllable are the following:

(33) kinyoorya	[ki.nóó.rja]	‘it gets’	(line 28)
twigwe	[twíí.ɣwe]	‘we hear’	(line 62)

In this case, the syllable is made up of an underlying diphthong but one in which the first vowel changes into a glide. Here is a representation of one of them. Notice that in syllabification, the consonants go to the onset.



### 2.5 Syllable Weight

I propose that there exists a distinction between two basic syllable weights in Kuria: light and heavy. The heavy syllables contain a branching nucleus. In this data they are represented by the forms VV and CVV. Light syllables contain a non-branching nucleus. The forms witnessed in the data are V, CV, and CCV.

Syllable weight contrast can also be defined in terms of vowel length where a syllable with a short vowel is light while one with a long vowel or diphthong is heavy. The onset, however long, plays no role in the computation of syllable weight.

Syllables are important units in the organization of the lines of a poem. It will be necessary to know what constitutes a syllable when counting the number of syllables in a line in section 3.2. Also, section 4.2.3 discusses the role of syllable weight in verse scansion.

## 2.6 Tone

It is generally accepted that Bantu languages are diachronically in transition from being tone languages to being accent languages (Clements & Goldsmith 1984). This fact is exemplified by two languages which are on the opposite ends of this continuum: Kikuyu, which is fully tonal, and Swahili, which has lost distinctive tone. I regard Kuria as transitional between ‘pure’ tone languages and ‘pure’ accent languages. This is because its tone is not lexically distinctive and there is no evidence that it has stress.

Kuria, like most other Bantu languages, has two level tones: high (H) and low (L), which are assumed underlyingly (Cammenga 1994), to which may be added a rising tone (Whiteley 1955). Each vowel is marked with tone, either high or low as in these examples:

- (35) a.      [tumá]      ‘sew’  
              [uɣutúma]      ‘to sew’
- b.      [torá]      ‘pierce earlobes’  
              [oɣotóra]      ‘to pierce earlobes’

The rising tone has a sequence of LH within the same syllable. This is one tone, with the two extreme ends marked to yield a rising contour. Here is an example:

(36) [okoŋaína]      ‘to flatter’

I proceed under the assumption that the rising tone is an allotone of the high tone. The two are in complementary distribution; the rising tone occurring in a diphthong while the high tone occurs elsewhere.

One of the earlier formal studies of tone in Kuria was by Whiteley (1955). Later, Odden (1987) looked at one aspect of the tonal system, that is, the infinitival tone. The infinitive prefix in Kuria usually has a low tone when the word is considered in isolation. This contrasts with the first vowel of the stem which is assigned a high tone. Kuria assigns tone on the basis of vowel count on the stems.

(37) [oŋo-sóma]              ‘to read’  
      [uku-βína]              ‘to sing’  
      [oŋo-téma]              ‘to hit’

The tonal pattern of the infinitival verb changes when it is put in the context of other words. For example:

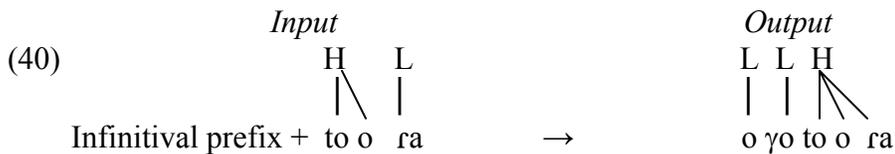
(38) a. [oŋosóma]              ‘to read’  
      [βaré]                      ‘they are’  
      [ŋgosómá βáre]           ‘they are reading’

- b. [ukuβína]                    ‘to sing’  
       [toré]                        ‘we are’  
       [ŋkuβíná tóre]            ‘we are singing’

Kuria infinitival forms exhibit two most striking characteristics of the Bantu tone system: the remarkable mobility of the tones and tone spreading (Clements & Goldsmith 1984). In examples (35a) and (35b) the high tone in the last syllable shifts to the penult when the infinitival morpheme is added. Also examples (38a) and (38b) exhibit tone mobility. The second characteristic is the occurrence of tone spreading. In example (39) tone spreading is seen. The high tone spreads from the first vowel of the stem to the second one if the first vowel is long.

- (39) [oyo-tóórá]                ‘to put’  
       [uɣu-túúmá]               ‘to jump’  
       [uku-βíímá]               ‘to measure’  
       [oko-mááhá]               ‘to see’

This can be illustrated as follows:



The basic tonal principles of Kuria infinitival are extended in (Odden 1987). It is noted that the infinitive can assign high tones to the first and fourth vowels of the stem, with tone being assigned with reference to the left edge of the stem. These examples are given:

- (41) oko [ménénékírja] ‘to shine for’  
 oko [ménénéká-hɔ] ‘to be shiny at’  
 oko [gé-méneńékja] ‘to shine it’

In the examples in (41) a high tone is assigned to the first vowel of the stem and the fourth; then the high tone on the first vowel spreads to the second vowel. The third vowel is left low so as to avoid violating the Obligatory Contour Principle.

Tone in Kuria is not lexically distinctive but can be used to signal grammatical function particularly in the tense system. See the examples below:

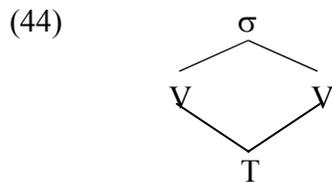
- (42) [naayátúníre] ‘S/he used to look for’ (remote past)  
 [naayátuníre] ‘S/he has been looking for’ (present perfect)
- [naasómére] ‘S/he read’ (past)  
 [naasóméré] ‘S/he has read’ (present perfect)

The nouns in Kuria consist of a noun pre-prefix and a class prefix which have the shape V-CV and a following stem of one or more syllables. Assignment of tone in the noun classes follows that of the infinitives. Table 5 in section 3.2.1.1 has examples of words from all the noun classes of the Kuria language marked with tone.

Each vowel in a syllable is marked with a tone; either high or low. The tone association rules of Kuria associate tones with the nucleus of the syllable. Short syllables are associated with only one tone as in:



Long vowels and diphthongs are also associated with one tone.



## 2.7 Fast Speech Phonology

The reciter delivers the poem under study at breakneck speed while shouting at the top of his voice. He constructs one line after another very rapidly and yet is able to maintain some uniformity. The need for the next line is on him even before he utters the final syllable of the previous line. In this rapid tempo, fast-speech phonological processes apply. These are optional rules which have a phonetic motivation. These reductions are an outcome the reciter not imposing the distinctions required on the articulation of words because of the pressure of fast tempo. Application of optional rules is usually suppressed in careful speech while fast speech provides the context for their application.

These fast speech rules apply both within and across words as in these examples.

Within words

(45) /aβamura/	→	[βamúra]	‘young men’ (line 4, 5)
/umuiro/	→	[mwííro]	‘person’ (line 18, 58)

Across words

The deletion of word final or initial vowels is common across words in this data. Here are two examples:

(46) /nuni okokeeria/	→	[nunóyókeerjá]	‘it is me you are greeting’ (line 1)
/waisa ayeetoore enati/	→	[waísayétóórenáti]	‘one who fixed a bolt’ (line 41)

### 3.0 Organization of the Poem

Poetic rhythms are usually highly organized. Some of their organizational units are stanzas, lines, and syllables. In this section I examine these units and show how they are used in organizing the poem. As indicated in the introduction, I hypothesize that this poem mainly uses syllable count to organize the lines.

### 3.1 Data

Below is the poem that forms the basis of this analysis. It is written in Kuria orthography.

See Appendix 3 for a complete morphological breakdown.

(47)

#### A Kuria Praise Poem

*Translation*

1. Nigure nuni ogokeerya	I have heard it is me you are greeting (praising)
Hayo wansere kong’aina	So I have started to ‘flatter’

Keuni nendagokeeri	I will also greet (praise) you
Nenkanyora nkenyingeno	Even if it is at this time
5. Abamura mbaane ba Mungo	My comrades of God
Abamura mbaane bairyoba	My comrades of the sun
Keuni ngokeererryande	I am also sending greetings.
Uni ngacha gusumacha	Once I talked (gave praises)
Nena abamura amaganda	With a handful of young men
10. Okoba hare nemeyeye	In fact where I live
Waito karibo Masaba	Our home is near Masaba
Hare gegateye eganda	Where they made turns
Egende geraya Ntimaro	Others going to Ntimaru
Egende geraya Mogori	Others going to Migori
15. Tamanyambe obotereba	So know that with driving
Enchera ya kuya Ntimaro	The way to Ntimaru
Gokerambo wabo Chacha	At the emaciated one at Chacha's home
Mwiro o bahiri Sererya	A person from the Sererya subclan
Egesaku kebo Mogongo	The family of Mogongo
20. Uni nkomokombokande	I am remembering him
Omonto oyo nembane sana	That person is a dear friend
Tamanyambe gose kweri	Surely, do know that
Gabaremere <sup>4</sup> Churyasi	Adversity has befallen Julius
Churyasi Magige o Chacha	Julius Magige son of Chacha
25. Uni ngokeererryande	I am sending my greetings (praises)
Iriina ree hata Gisumo	His name even in Kisumu
Gisumo ke nyamanyoori	Kisumu where they get them
Nigo bogokya kinyoorya	It gets them at dawn

---

<sup>4</sup> The translation of this line is problematic. It is not clear what 'gabaremere' means in this context. The translation is therefore an approximation of what I think it refers to.

Hano getanyoorri inkyo	If it does not get in the morning
30. Keranyoorya omogoroba	It then gets in the evening
Omotema ere ba waito	The player of that which is ours
Tamanyambe obotereba	Do know about driving
Nakahikire kobaru	I used to reach where there were crowds
Nakarumere ndaikenda	I used to bellow (praise) forcefully
35. Nena abamura amaganda	With a handful of young men
Tamanyambe gose kweri	Surely, do know that
Wandorra bayibirenge	The nasty one became feet (died)
Okoorre buya kongoorra	You have done well to praise me
Keuni nendagotooni	I will also praise you
40. Omogetang'osa nyatani	One from the Getang'osa circumcision group
Waisa agetoorre enati	One who fixed a bolt
Ekanga gotara ronde	And it never moved
Nuni Tauti wa Chacha	I am David son of Chacha
Omonto ono atagukuura	A person who does not cry
45. Egesaku ke wabo Choni	From the same family as John
Uni nigo nkobatebya	This is what I am telling you
Egesaku kebo Mobenda	From the same family as Mobenda
Otamobendere taya ogwe	If you do not like him go and 'fall'
Omonto wegesaku geito	A person from our family
50. Umugibinyoorya iching'ombe	One from the Gibinyooria circumcision group who get cattle.
Egesaku kebo Gentaro	From the same family as Gentaro
Waisa asingirwe na kenda	A person who was partnered in dance with nine
Owa ikumi numusubati	The tenth one was a married woman
Uni ngokeererryande	I am sending greetings (praises)
55. Abamura mbaane ba Mungo	My comrades of God
Kana keuni nambaane	Even me he is my comrade

Nkomokeeryande	I am greeting (praising) him
Mwirowabakarang'ombe	A person of Abakarang'ombe subclan
Abakara ng'ombe ibiraryo	Keepers of cattle in cowsheds
60. Abande baraarya amacharya	(While) others spread leather strips
Tiga nekore amareng'e	Let me be brief
Tasingisambe twigwe	Shake so that we hear.

This praise poem lasts about two and a half minutes when played. The original recording was on audio cassette tape. This was digitized and a compact disc recording made at normal speed and at half speed. The half speed disc made it easier to get all the words and syllables of the poem while the normal speed disc was used to guard against any distortion that could arise from the former. It was therefore possible to listen to small chunks of the poem to determine how the various elements of the metrics of the poem were used. By playing slowly I was able to tell where the syllables fit in the rhythmic pattern.

### **3.2 Lines in the Poem**

In this poem the reciter chants the words of the poem in recitative fashion. This makes the poem distinctive in its prosody and marks it off from common speech. Singing and chanting seem to be the most natural ways of delivering metrical poetry in Kuria. The recitation is spontaneous and the reciter improvises the poetry as he goes along. Moreover there is a fiddle and percussion player who is laying down the rhythm in 12/8 time by striking a note or short tune on the fiddle and pacing the reciter with the rattles.

Careful attention to the recitation shows that the reciter divides the poem into phrases or clauses which are delivered in one breath. This is done in what is felt to be equal intervals of time. It is this mode of delivery which justifies the division of the poem into lines<sup>5</sup>. The lines in this poem form some kind of breath group with the last or eighth syllable performed on a low tone and leading to a pause at the end of each line. The generally low last syllable is an anticipation of the end of a unit of measure while the pauses at the end of each group of words act as an indicator of line division.

In music, similar devices called cadences<sup>6</sup> are employed at the end of phrases, clauses, lines or verses to indicate a break of sorts. For example, the end of a verse will have a final cadence. Its quality signals finality, and thus the end of the song. There are also non-final cadences which show that the break is temporary. The same effect is felt in poetry and this is what helps to tell where the unit ends. It is therefore clear that this poem has lines. Lines are the main organizational units of rhythm in this poem. They are formed by words, and words are made up of syllables. Computation of line-length is the first step in scansion and metrical analysis. My claim is that this poem is made up of eight syllable lines.

A syllable count conducted in all the 62 lines yielded the following measures:

---

<sup>5</sup> The line is an important unit in the construction of praise poems. Apart from being a grammatical and semantic unit, it is a rhythmic unit of utterance.

<sup>6</sup> A cadence is a harmonic ending of a phrase or movement. Hayes & MacEachern (1998) state that rhythmic cadences appear to be a major element of recitative and sung verse forms.

(48) Lines with 5 syllables	=	1
Lines with 7 syllables	=	4
Lines with 8 syllables	=	56
Lines with 9 syllables	=	<u>1</u>
Total	=	<u>62</u>

This shows that majority of lines in the poem have eight (8) syllables. The regularity or near regularity that we see in the poem suggests that this is a syllabic verse; it is measured according to the number of syllables per line. There are six lines which are an exception to the octosyllabic measure. These are either shorter or longer as shown in the table below.

Table 4                      Number of syllables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Line 57	ŋko-	mo-	kee-	rjaa-	nde				
Line 25	u-	ni	ŋgo-	kee-	re-	rjaa-	nde		
Line 41	wai-	sa-	ɣe-	too-	re-	na-	ti		
Line 54	u-	ni	ŋgo-	kee-	re-	rjaa-	nde		
Line 62	ta-	si-	ŋgi-	sa-	mbe	twii-	ɣwe		
Line 10	o-	ko-	βa	ha-	re	ne-	me-	je-	je

The claim that this poem is made up of eight syllable lines is not obvious. To show this, we need to know how to count syllables. For such regularity to occur in meter, some adjustments must be made. There are devices which have been used by poets consciously or unconsciously to bring symmetry to poetic forms. These devices change the length of the lines in a number of ways without affecting their internal metrical structure. In this poem, phonological devices such as initial vowel elision, vowel deletion, vowel degemination, prefix allomorphy, and consonant elision are employed to ensure

numerical uniformity of the syllables in the lines and to maintain rhythm. These processes, which are optional, occur mostly due to the prosodic nature of the poem.

### **3.2.1 Prosodic Rules**

These are rules that apply on the regular phonological system of language modifying it for poetic use (Kiparsky 1977). They specify poetic language as a derivative of the system of ordinary language. The principal ways of modification are disregarding certain phonological rules and the addition of others. Prosodic rules are usually optional. Since prosodic rules have a form and content like that of ordinary phonological rules, I will state them in the format of ordinary phonological rules.

#### **3.2.1.1 Initial Vowel Elision**

Elision is the adjustment of syllable count by omission. The elision encountered in this data affects mostly vowels and is known as Initial Vowel Elision. This is the elision of the preprefix in a noun. A noun in Kuria canonically consists of a pre-prefix or augment, class prefix, and a noun stem. The pre-prefix vowel is always a copy of the class prefix vowel /V<sub>1</sub> – CV<sub>1</sub>/. Here is an example:

(49) Class 3: o                    – mo                    – te                    “tree”  
                  pre-prefix    class prefix    noun stem

The following are the main Kuria pre-prefixes and class prefixes numbered according to Cammenga (1994) with slight modifications.

Table 5

Class	Preprefix (Augment)	Class prefix	Examples	Gloss
1	o -	- mo -	omoontó	'person'
2	a -	- βα -	aβαantó	'people'
3	o -	- mo -	omoté	'tree'
4	e -	- me -	emeté	'trees'
5	i -	- ri -	iriiγí	'egg'
6	a -	- ma -	amaγí	'eggs'
7	e -	- ke -	eγeentó	'thing'
8	i -	- βi -	iβiintó	'things'
9	e -	∅	eβatá	'duck'
10	i -	- tʃi -	itʃiβatá	'ducks'
11	o -	- ro -	oroβáγɔ	'hedge'
12	a -	- ka -	aγatʃúβa	'small bottle'
14	o -	- βo -	oβokáánó	'sesame seed'
15	o -	- ko -	oγosóma	'to read'
16	a -	- ha -	ahasé	'a place'
17	∅	ku -	γuusúkúuri	'in/at school'
18	∅	mu -	moonsé	'inside'
19	i -	- hi -	ihiβéγo	'small seeds'
20	u -	- γu -	uγutʃúβa	'big bottle'

The pre-prefix is the initial vowel in nouns. Initial Vowel Elision is represented by the following rule:

(50) Prosodic Rule 1

$$V \rightarrow \emptyset / [s \text{ [NOUN] } \_ ]$$

This rule deletes the initial vowel in nouns when they are in sentence initial position as the list in (51) shows:

- (51) /aβamura/ → [βamura] 'youth, young men' (line 6, 55)  
 /eγeNre/ → [γéende] 'others (cl 4)' (line 13, 14)

/aβaNre/	→	[βáánde]	‘others (cl 2)’	(line 60)
/eγesaku/	→	[γesáku]	‘family’	(line 19, 45, 47, 51)
/omoNto/	→	[móóntó]	‘person’	(line 21, 44)
/iriina/	→	[ríina]	‘name’	(line 26)
/omoyetanosa/	→	[moyétanósa]	‘one from Getang’osa circumcision group’	(line 40)
/umuyiβijoria/	→	[muyíβijnórja]	‘one from the Gibinyorya circumcision group’	(line 50)
/owaikumi/	→	[waíkúmi]	‘the tenth one’	(line 53)
/aβakara/	→	[βakará]	‘name of clan’	(line 59)
/umuiro/	→	[mwíiro]	‘person’	(line 18, 58)

I submit that the initial vowel elision is a prosodic rule. This is because in non-poetic speech the elision mentioned above will not occur. The first three words in (51) deserve further mention because they have a variation relating to their retention or omission of the initial vowel. The first one, *abamura* ‘youth, young men’ can be used in the construction of kinship terms by deletion of the initial vowel and addition of a possessive.

(52) *bamura bane* [βamurá βáne] ‘my sons’

Where the initial vowel is omitted, the reference is to a particular person or people; where retained, the implication is of one amongst a number (Muniko et al 1996). This is not the way it is used in the poem.

In the second and third words; *egende* ‘others’ and *abande* ‘others’, the initial vowel is obligatorily dropped if they appear as modifiers to some nouns as shown below:

(53)a. emete gende [emeté γέένδε] ‘other trees’

\*emete egende

b. abanto bande [aβaantó βάάνδε] ‘other people’

\*abanto abande

In this poem the two words are pronominal quantifiers, not modifiers.

Where a noun has a pre-prefix and a class prefix, the preprefix is easier to delete because words are still recognizable without it. Here is a line with 9 syllables if the Initial Vowel Elision rule is not applied but 8 if it is applied.

(54) [e - γε – sa – ku κε - βo mo - γoo - ηgo] 9 syllables (line 19)

[Ø - γε – sa – ku κε - βo mo - γoo - ηgo] 8 syllables

“The family of Mogongo”

The elision of the initial vowel is an optional rule; that is why in some cases the preprefix was not deleted as shown here:

(55)a. [oγokéérjá] ‘to greet’ (line 1)

b. [eentjéra] ‘way, road’ (line 16)

c. [ííηkío] ‘morning’ (line 29)

d. [omoyoróóβα] ‘evening’ (line 30)

e. [omotéméréβα] ‘he who plays that which is for’ (line 31)

- f. [oβotéréβa] ‘driving/leadership’ (line 32)  
 g. [ítʃiŋómbɛ] ‘cattle’ (line 50)  
 h. [íβírarjó] ‘cowsheds’ (line 59)

Two of the words above, (55b, c), have only a preprefix but no class prefix (cl. 9). With the class prefix already missing, to delete the preprefix would render the words unrecognizable. Also, as in the other cases, the preprefix vowel is retained so that the syllables in the lines do not fall short of the required number. In the following example, the sentence has 8 syllables but if Initial Vowel Elision took place, the syllables could have been reduced to 7.

- (56) [ee - ntʃe - raa ku - ja nti – ma - ro] 8 syllables (line 16)  
 [Ø - ntʃe - raa ku - ja nti – ma - ro] 7 syllables  
 “The way to Ntimaro”

Other words whose initial vowels were not deleted include:

- (57) Pronouns: uni [uní] ‘I’ (line 20, 25, 46, 52)  
 Verbs: okoorre [okooré] ‘you have done’ (line 38)  
 ekanga [ekááŋga] ‘it did not’ (line 42)  
 atagukura [atayúkúra] ‘does not cry’ (line 44)

### 3.2.1.2 Vowel Deletion

It is often noted that languages disfavor adjacent vowels in separate syllables, a structure commonly known as *hiatus*, and shown as /...V<sub>1</sub>.V<sub>2</sub>.../. Languages have different repair mechanisms for hiatus resolution. In this poem, vowel deletion and vowel degemination

have been used to resolve the hiatus. These are some of the processes that the reciter uses to reduce the number of syllables to what is required in a line.

When two vowels are in consecutive positions in different words, it can happen that it is the first vowel that is deleted. This is shown as:

(58) Prosodic Rule 2

$$V_1 \rightarrow \emptyset / \_ \# V_2$$

This is poetic deletion; a device used by the poet to make the numerical intention clear. It is similar to the English style of reducing ‘heaven’ and ‘seven’ to *heav’n* and *sev’n* respectively. Here are some examples from the data. The vowel in bold in the underlying form is deleted in the surface form.

<i>Underlying Form</i>	<i>Surface Form</i>	<i>Gloss</i>
(59)a. /Nun <b>i</b> okokeeria/	→ [nunóyókeerjá]	‘It is me you are greeting’ (line 1)
b. /magi <b>y</b> e o tʃatʃa/	→ [magíyotʃátʃá]	‘Magige son of Chacha’ (line 24)
c. /keran <b>o</b> oria omoyoroba/	→ [keránóórjómoyóróóba]	‘It gets them in the evening’ (line 30)
d. /tama <b>n</b> aNβε oβotereβa/	→ [tamánámbóβotéréβa]	‘So know that with driving’ (line 32)
e. /umu <b>y</b> ibinyoria itʃiɲɔmbɛ/	→ [muγíβínoɾjítʃiɲɔmbé]	‘One from Gibinyorya circumcision group who gets cattle’ (line 50)

f. /ŋɔNβɛ iβirario/	→ [ŋɔombíβírarjó]	‘cattle in cowsheds’ (line 59)
g. /omotema ɛɛ βa/	→ [omotéméreβá]	‘The player of that which is ours’ (line 31)

According to Casali (1997), elision of the first of two adjacent vowels ( $V_1$ ) is more common cross-linguistically, especially at the boundary between two lexical words. Two reasons can be advanced to explain why  $V_1$  elision happened in this data. First, the preservation of word initial materials is related to the crucial function initial segments play in speech processing. A word can be recognized after the initial segments are processed. The second, and this is relevant for example (59b) only, has to do with functional reasons.  $V_2$  in example (59b) is made up of a one vowel functional word: *Magige o Chacha*. This word carries the information “son of”. If it is deleted, all segmental features of that morpheme will be lost and it will not be possible to recover its contents (Schuh 1995; Casali 1997).

Also there are instances where it is the second vowel that is deleted. This is represented by the rule:

(60) Prosodic Rule 3

$$V_2 \rightarrow \emptyset / V_1 \# \_$$

Here are examples:

	<i>Underlying Structure</i>	→	<i>Surface Structure</i>	<i>Gloss</i>	
(61) a.	/Nβaane aβa/	→	[mbaané βa]	‘comrade of’	(line 5)
b.	/Nβaane aβa iriooβa/	→	[mbaané βírjójóβa]	‘comrades of the sun’	(line 6)

- c. /tauti owa tʃatʃa/ → [taúti wa tʃátʃá] ‘David son of Chacha’ (line 43)  
 d. /Nβaane aβa/ → [mbaané βá] ‘comrades of’ (line 55)  
 e. /Nkore amareNye/ → [nékɔré marééŋɛ] ‘Let me be brief’ (line 61)

In (61a-d), the context of the hiatus is made up of a lexical word followed by a function word. In these cases, there is more semantic content encoded in the lexical word and hence the non-elision of its segments. There are two lexical items in (61e). The second one has a preprefix. In (51) we saw that it is easy for the preprefix to be dropped without affecting the noun much. That is what happens in (61e).

### 3.2.1.3 Vowel Degemination

When there are two vowels of the same type in adjacent positions, one of them is deleted, but as in (63) below, it is not possible to tell which has been deleted. The term vowel degemination has been used to account for such a process (Hasegawa 1979, Nespor 1987). Vowel degemination is a rule that deletes one of two identical adjacent vowels across two phonological words. It is a fast speech rule in that it applies more often as the rate of speech increases. It can be written as:

(62) Prosodic Rule 4

$$V_1\#V_1 \rightarrow V_1$$

Below are examples from our data.

- (63) *Underlying Structure*    *Surface Structure*                      *Gloss*  
 /ɣeyateie eɣaNra/ → [ɣéyatéjéyaanda]                      ‘they made turns’                      (line 12)

/muir <b>o</b> o bahiri/	→ [mwí <b>ro</b> bahíri]	‘a person of the subclan’	(line 18)
/n <b>ena</b> aβamura/	→ [né <b>na</b> βamúra]	‘with young men’	(line 35)
/aβamura amaya <b>Nra</b> /	→ [βamú <b>ra</b> amayáándá]	‘a handful of young men’	(line 35)
/o <b>aisa</b> a <b>yetore</b> /	→ [waí <b>sa</b> ayétóóré]	‘one who fixed/put it’	(line 41)
/o <b>aisa</b> asi <b>Nyirue</b> /	→ [waí <b>sa</b> asííngír <b>wé</b> ]	‘a person who was partnered with in dance’	(line 52)
/βara <b>aria</b> amat <b>§</b> aria/	→ [βarar <b>ja</b> mat <b>§</b> ár <b>ja</b> ]	‘they spread leather strips’	(line 60)
/omo <b>Nto</b> o <b>io</b> /	→ [moont <b>ó</b> j <b>ó</b> ]	‘that person’	(line 21)
/omo <b>Nto</b> o <b>no</b> /	→ [moont <b>ó</b> n <b>ó</b> ]	‘a person who’	(line 44)

The two examples below suffice to show that the lines are irregular before deletion but regular (i.e. eight syllables) after deletion.

- (64) a. [wai – sa a – sii – ŋgi - rwe na kee – nda]      9 syllables      (line 52)  
           [wai – sa Ø – sii – ŋgi - rwe na kee – nda]      8 syllables  
           “‘A person who was partnered with nine in a dance’”
- b. [ne – na a – βa – mu - ra a - ma – γa - nda]      10 syllables      (line 35)  
           [ne – na Ø – βa – mu - ra Ø - ma – γa - nda]      8 syllables  
           “‘With a handful of young men’”

### 3.2.1.4 Prefix Allomorphy

This is a process by which the poem reciter intentionally substitutes one grammatical variant with another one. Poetic grammar is superimposed on the grammar of the language. The process has the opposite effect to elision, that is, while elision decreases

the number of syllables, prefix allomorphy increases the number of syllables. Only two cases are noted in the data.

(65)	<i>Expected Form</i>	<i>Surface Form</i>	
a.	[tiya ŋkɔɾɛ]	[tiya nekɔɾɛ]	‘Let me do’ (line 61)
b.	[hare mepeje]	[hare nemepeje]	‘Where I live’ (line 10)

Although this process was only seldom used in this poem, it does point to formulaic patterns that performers employ in poetry. I submit that *nekɔɾɛ* and *nemepeje* are poetic lexicon since they are found in this form only in poetry. The phrase *tiya nekɔɾɛ mareɛŋgɛ* is commonly used by Kuria poets to signal the end of the poem.

For the purpose of this analysis, I hold that the first person singular morpheme has three allomorphs: an archaic variant {ne-} which is listed and is available for the composition of poetry, {ne-} and {N-} in prose. This allomorphy may be accounted for by (66).

(66) allomorphy: first person singular

1 <sup>st</sup> Person Singular	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{ne- in poetry (optional)} \\ \text{ne- / _ alveolar nasal} \\ \text{N- / _ elsewhere} \end{array} \right\}$

The allomorph /N-/ is subject to applicable nasal rules. It regularly assimilates to the following consonant and may surface as [m], [n], or [ŋ] (see 65a, b). While there are many instances where {N-} has been used in the data, only one instance is noted where {ne-} is used in a regular way.

(67) ne – na (line 9)  
 I - with  
 ‘(I) with’

As shown in (65), the poet sometimes uses the marked form {ne-} instead of the unmarked form {N-}. This is an unnatural process since similar words in the language do not undergo this process, for example:

(68) /Nkeɲere/ → [ɲkeɲeré] ‘I have run’  
 \*[nekeɲere]

/NkomokoNβokaNre/ → [ɲkómokóómbókaandé] ‘I am remembering him’ (line 20)  
 \*[nekomokoombokaande]

/NkomokeerjaNre/ → [ɲkómokeerjáánde] ‘I am greeting him’ (line 57)  
 \*[nekomokerjaande]

This shows that this is not phonology. I propose that this is a lexical convention similar to the Kiparskian prosodic rules. Like other prosodic rules, the rule described above is optional. Below is the line in which substitution of allomorphs was used and the hypothetical one which shows the line without application of the process.

(69) [ti – ɣa ne - kɔ - rɛ ma – rɛɛ – ɲɣɛ] 8 syllables (line 61)  
 [ti – ɣa Ø - ɲkɔ - rɛ ma – rɛɛ – ɲɣɛ] 7 syllables  
 “Let me be brief.”

The next example happens to be the only line in the poem with nine syllables.

(70) [o – ko – βa ha - re ne – me - ɲe – je] 9 syllables (line 10)

‘In fact where I live.’

It is evident that the motivation of using allomorphy alternation in (70) is other than to bring the number of syllables in the line to eight. The poet is more concerned in this line with poetic formula (*nemeɲeje*) than the number of syllables.

### 3.2.1.5 Consonant Elision

Consonants can also be elided, so that syllables on either side are fused. This is shown by the optional rule below:

(71) Prosodic Rule 5

$C \rightarrow \emptyset / V_1 - V_1$

There is only one example of this type of process in the data. This is illustrated in (72).

(72) [ee - ntʃe - ra(j)a ku - ja nti - ma - ro] ‘On the way to Ntimaro’ (line 16)

In the line above, the glide *j* is elided thereby making the preceding syllable –*ra* to join the vowel left behind after the elision to form one syllable /*raa*/. The result reduces the number of syllables in the line from nine to eight.



- (75) a. [a - βa - mu - ra mbaa - nε a - βa muu - ηgo] 10 syllables (line 5)  
 [Ø - βa - mu - ra mbaa - nε Ø - βa muu - ηgo] 8 syllables  
 IVE VD  
 “My comrades of God.”
- b. [o - moo - nto o - jo ne - mbaa - nε saa - na] 10 syllables (line 21)  
 [Ø - moo - nto Ø - jo ne - mbaa - nε saa - na] 8 syllables  
 IVE VG  
 “That person is a dear friend.”
- c. [o - ta - mo - βεε - nde - re ta - ja o - γwe] 10 syllables (line 48)  
 [Ø - ta - mo - βεε - nde - re ta - ja Ø - γwe] 8 syllables  
 IVE VD  
 “If you do not like him, go and ‘fall’”
- d. [ti - γa ηkɔ - rε a - ma - rεε - ηγε] 8 syllables (line 61)  
 [ti - γa ne - kɔ - rε Ø - ma - rεε - ηγε] 8 syllables  
 PA VD  
 “Let me be brief.”

In example (75d) the application is stylistic because the line already had eight syllables but since the poet has to use the formulaic phrase *tiya nekore mareηγε* to signal the end of the poem; he substitutes {N-} with {ne-} but has to reduce the number of syllables by initial vowel elision.

Having determined the length of the normal line, I proceed to determine whether lines form stanzas in this poem.

### **3.3 Stanza**

It is not clear that a level of stanzas exist in this poem. The poet delivers the whole poem from beginning to end without any structural indications of where the stanzas start or end. In other poems like Swahili classical poetry, this could be indicated by the poet slowing down on the last line of the stanza, but this does not happen in this poem. Also, there are no rhyme schemes which act as a guide to the stanzas. These are indications that as a structural unit this poem does not have stanzas.

Semantic indicators like change of theme can also be used to divide the poem into stanzas. I looked at the poem using this criterion and there were no clear divisions which delineate stanzas. This confirms that there are no stanzas in the poem.

The absence of stanzas is an indication of the freedom and flexibility of the poet in forming the poem. The praise poem is very flexible in length because the reciter can go on with his recitation endlessly if not for the instrumentalist who cuts in and begins a solo. Its length cannot be defined in terms of the number of stanzas or lines that it is composed of.

### **3.4 Organization of the Poem: Conclusions**

In the foregoing I pursued the claim that the verse analyzed here is fundamentally a syllabic system<sup>7</sup>. On account of the analysis done so far, the basic rules of the system are as follows:

- (a) There must be a certain number of syllables in a line of verse (eight in this case) to which may be appended one or two extra-metrical syllables.
- (b) Any extra syllables must be accounted for by elision, deletion etc

### **4.0 Recitation Rhythm**

A line is more than just a sequence of eight syllables. It also has a particular recitation rhythm. Traditionally, poetic meter has been viewed as a phenomenon of hierarchical structure (Prince 1989). This hierarchy can be represented as a metrical tree or grid. The line breaks down into a sequence of feet, the foot into a sequence of syllables or metrical positions.

### **4.1 Metrical Grid**

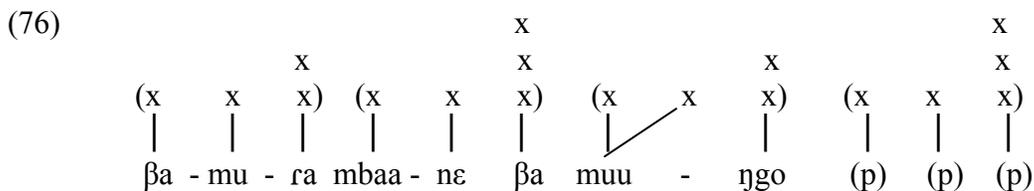
This study uses the framework of Prince (1989) which arranges lines on a metrical grid so as to capture the rhythm of the phrases. The poem under discussion was produced within a musical context. The reciter fits his recitation into the rhythm provided by the musical instruments. The timing of the syllables is connected with the timing of the musical instruments. Careful attention to the percussion instrument makes it clear that the reciter is reciting a line of text that corresponds to four-beat lines. This is not surprising

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<sup>7</sup> According to Shapiro & Beum (1965), syllabic verse was pioneered by Robert Bridges as a poet.

since four-beat lines are a common type of line arrangement in folk metrics (Burling 1966). The fiddle plays a rhythm that is in triple time. This means that the four beats are divided into three metrical positions each.

I listened to the half speed file of the poem and paid attention to which syllables fall on which musical beats. When the reciter begins to recite the poem, he takes a while before settling into a regular pattern. It is from line four (4) that he gets into a regular rhythm and it is from that point onwards that this analysis will be based. Taking line 5 as a norm line<sup>8</sup>, this is the alignment of the words of the text to the musical beats.



The representation derived from the performance shows a number of things:

- (i) the syllable *βa-* at the beginning falls on a weak metrical position.
- (ii) the grid has four beats but three metrical positions per beat.
- (iii) the text does not occupy all the metrical positions of the beats in the performed grid.

In this grid two weak metrical positions precede a strong metrical position to form one beat. This follows the triple meter that is played by the fiddle. It is usually called 12/8 compound time in Western musical notation. What is presented above is an idealized version of syllable alignment which will generally guide the whole poem. While this

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<sup>8</sup> A norm line is a scansion that represents the theoretically perfect line. It is a model that the rhythms appear to be following. Though so, each line may have its own variation (Malof 1970).

generalization holds true for most of the lines, some lines deviate from this pattern in the number of syllables and their positioning. For example in Table 4, I showed that the poem has five lines which are shorter than the regular eight syllables per line. The short lines use pauses (p) to compensate for the missing syllables.

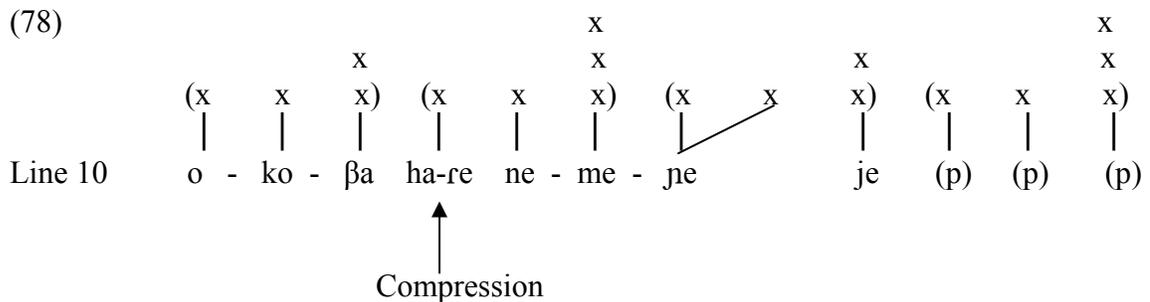
(77)

		x			x			x			x						
(x	x	x)	(x	x	x)	(x	x	x)	(x	x	x)						
syl	Ø	Ø	Ø														
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8										
(p)	u	ni	ŋgo	-	kee	-	re	-	rjaa	-	nde	(p)	(p)	(p)	(line 25)		
(p)	wai	-	sa	-	ɣe	-	too	-	re	-	na	-	ti	(p)	(p)	(p)	(line 41)
(p)	u	ni	ŋgo	-	kee	-	re	-	rjaa	-	nde	(p)	(p)	(p)	(p)	(line 54)	
(p)	(p)	(p)	ŋko	-	mo	-	kee	-	rjaa	-	nde	(p)	(p)	(p)	(p)	(line 57)	
(p)	ta	-	si	-	ŋgi	-	saa	-	mbɛ	twii	-	ɣwe	(p)	(p)	(p)	(line 62)	

We can also generalize that lines 4 – 62 have pauses in the last beat as reflected in (77). Pauses ‘fill’ the empty positions on the line thus maintaining the rhythm. It is something that the performer obeys unconsciously as he fits the words into the grid. Without doing so, the meter would fall apart because lines of different length will require different scansion.

It is instructive to note that all five lines in (77) have a zero syllable in the first position. The first phonetically realized syllable in lines 25, 41, 54, and 62 is in the second metrical position while that of line 57 is in the fourth position. Such lines are called headless lines (Halle & Keyser 1966, Malof 1970).

Table 4 also gives an example of a line with nine syllables. We have hypothesized above that this poem is made up of eight syllable lines. When faced with more than eight syllables in a line the reciter squeezes two syllables into one metrical position. This is called compression (Malof 1970) or resolution (Kiparsky 1977, Hayes & Kaun 1996). The term is used to convey any instances where two syllables of ordinary pronunciation are scanned as one metrical syllable. In this poem, some syllables have been pronounced quickly to take up the time of one metrical position. Here is an example:



The syllables in the fourth metrical position are compressed. For line 10, the compression can be explained to be the result of trying to accommodate the nine syllables in eight metrical positions.

When lines that have eight syllables are compressed, the result is a metrical position that has no syllable as in line 4 below. This can be viewed as borrowing of syllables by one metrical position from another. When the reciter anticipates a pause within the line, he will recite some syllables faster to compensate for the lengthening or pause that will take place.

(79)													
	(x	x	x)	(x	x	x)	(x	x	x)	(x	x	x)	
Line 4	nee -	ŋka -	jo -	<b>ra-ke</b>	(p)	jii -	ŋge	-	no	(p)	(p)	(p)	
Line 9	(p)	ne -	na -	<b>βa-mu-ra</b>	-	ma -	γaa	-	nda	(p)	(p)	(p)	
Line 11	(p)	wai -	to	<b>ka-ri</b>	-	βo	ma -	sa	-	βa	(p)	(p)	(p)
Line 15	<b>ta-ma</b>	-	jaa -	mbo	(p)	-	βo -	tε -	rε	-	βa	(p)	(p)
Line 30	ke -	ra -	joo -	rjo -	(p)	-	<b>mo-γo</b>	-	rɔɔ	-	βa	(p)	(p)
Line 48	(p)	-	ta -	mo -	βεε -	nde -	re	<b>ta-jo</b>	-	γwe	(p)	(p)	(p)
Line 56	(p)	-	ku -	ra	<b>ke-u</b>	-	ni	ne -	mbaa	-	nε	(p)	(p)

The one to one mapping of syllables with metrical positions is interfered with during compression. Halle & Keyser (1966) see compression as an issue of how the line is performed and that this should not be confused with what constitutes the metrical structure of a given line. In example (78) the poet uses compression to force the syllables to adhere to the provided structure while in (79) it is used to create pauses within the line by not strictly following the structure.

There are eight compressions in the data (see 78 and 79) which are positioned as follows on the grid.

(80)															
	(x	x	x)												
Compressions :	1	0	0	5	0	1	1	0	∅	∅	∅	∅			

Line 15 has a compression in syllable 1; lines 4, 9, 10, 11 and 56 have compressions in syllable 5; line 30 has a compression in syllable 6; and line 48 has a compression in

syllable 7. These compressions do not give any information which could be useful in the interpretation of the grid.

The meter suggested in (76) must remain tentative until a closer examination of all the facts bear that out. To further explore that meter I looked at word boundaries, tone, and syllable weight to see whether their distribution reflect a metrical structure of some kind.

#### 4.1.1 Word Boundaries

Word boundaries can give a clue about the internal organization of the poem. In looking at word boundaries I faced a problem of determining word divisions. Two cases are notable here. The first has to do with how to treat lexical and functional words in adjacent positions and words whose vowels are elided. The question is how to divide these words.

When dealing with lexical and functional words, we could take each as a separate word or make the functional words bound morphemes as in these examples:

- (81) a. [aβamura mbaane aβa irjooβa]      ‘My comrades of the Sun’      (line 6)  
           [aβamura mbaane βairjooβa]<sup>9</sup>  
           [aβamura mbaane βa irjooβa]

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<sup>9</sup> [a - βa - mura      mbaa - ne βa - a      - i - rjo - oβa]  
 PP<sub>2</sub> - CP<sub>2</sub> - young man comrade - my CP<sub>2</sub> - Ass ‘a’ - PP<sub>5</sub> - CP<sub>5</sub> - sun  
 “My comrades of the sun.”

- b. [owa ikumi nu musuβati]                    ‘The tenth one is a married woman’ (line 53)  
       [owaikumi numusuβati]<sup>10</sup>  
       [owaikumi nu umusuβati]

I decided to join the function words to the lexical words.

The second problem which is related to this one has to do with elision. In fast speech, speakers tend to elide vowels at the beginning or at the end of words especially where one word ends in a vowel and the next starts with a vowel e.g.

- (82) [nuni oyokeerja]      ‘It is me you are greeting’      (line 4)      is pronounced as:  
       [nun oyokeerja]

The question here is, after these vowels are elided do we consider the two words as one and disregard the word break between them? I chose to count the two words as one since it sounds more natural to say the two words as if they were one. For example,

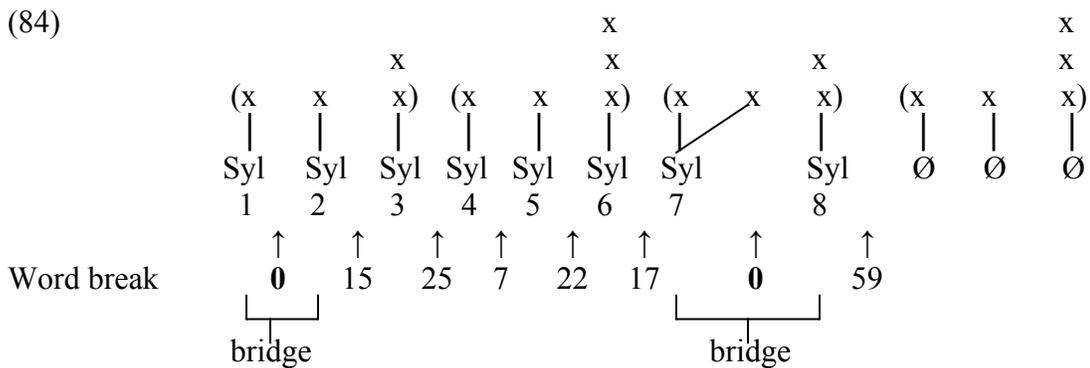
- (83) (a) [nun oyokeerja]            (two words)  
       (b) [nunoyokeerja]            (one word)

While (83a) keeps the words separate and intact, it sounds quite unnatural without a final vowel in the first word. In (83b) the words are joined. It is therefore possible to see the dilemma one is faced with when analyzing word boundaries since in some cases two or even three ‘words’ are joined as one.

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<sup>10</sup> [o - a - ikumi nu - mu - suβati]  
 PP<sub>1</sub> - Ass ‘a’ - ten      F - CP<sub>1</sub> - married woman  
 “The tenth one was a married woman.”

To learn more about the organization of the line in this poem, I carried out an exercise to locate caesuras. This is a break or pause in a line of verse. Usually it marks the rhythmic divisions of the line. Strictly speaking, the caesura is not part of the meter, but by creating line divisions, it provides a place where certain metrical effects can be achieved (Malof 1970). I counted the number of word breaks in the poem as from line 4 to 62 and found these figures:

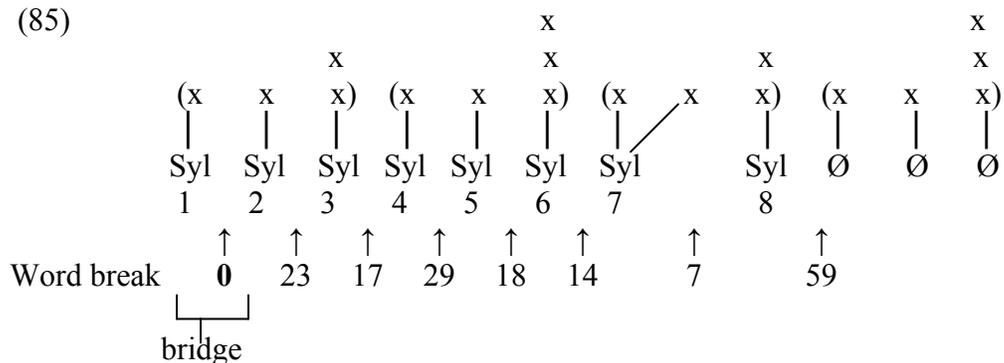


The results show a possibility of a caesura after syllable 3, syllable 5, and an obvious break after syllable 8 because that is the end of the line. According to the triple meter adapted in this analysis, the caesura should have fallen after syllables 3, 6, and 8. The triple meter is therefore not ‘fully’ supported by the word breaks unless we take it that the break expected after syllable 6 above is illusory.

Related to the caesura is the *bridge*. The term is used here to mean ‘a location where a word boundary is not allowed’. The illustration in (84) shows a bridge after syllable 1 and syllable 7. This means that there are no sentences that begin or end with monosyllabic words in the poem since there is an obligatory absence of a break after the first syllable

and also after the seventh syllable. How do we know that this did not happen by accident? We can use the method of the prose sample (Tarlinskaja 1976, 1993; Biggs 1996) and compare it with the appropriate verse. The purpose of comparing the patterns of poetry to those of prose is to find out whether particular patterns of verse (e.g. the word break restrictions) are general phonological responses of poetry or they are merely the language's phonological tendencies.

I took the first 59 sentences of prose that were eight syllables in length, from *The New Testament in Iyikuria* and counted the word breaks in each column as done in (84) above. For convenience, I have plotted the results from the prose on the same metrical grid as that used in the poem in (84).



In both (84) and (85) there is a bridge after syllable 1. This shows that sentences in this language rarely start with a monosyllabic word. It is therefore possible to conclude that the bridge after syllable 1 in (84) is not due to poetic constraints but is a response to the language's syntax. There however are differences in the results. The bridge after syllable 7 in (84) is not replicated in the prose in (85). I performed a chi square test to find out

whether the difference in syllable 7 between poetry and prose is significant. My hypothesis is that poetry requires that there be no word boundary after syllable 7.

Table 6

syllable 7 only	break	no break
poetry	0	59
prose	7	52

I found out that  $\chi^2$  is 7.44 and  $p < 0.01$ . The difference is significant. The chi square test therefore shows that the figure 7 in syllable 7 of the prose does not arise due to mere chance. This proves that while poetry puts a bridge after the seventh or line-penultimate syllable, it is not always the case with prose, that is, it is possible for a sentence to end with a monosyllabic word. A similar phenomenon where a monosyllabic word is never found in the final position of a poem was also found in the Finnish Kalavela (Kiparsky 1968).

It is observed that while the word breaks in prose are close to random, in the poetic lines they display a pattern close to the triple rhythm as anticipated. A bridge in the first two and final two syllables in the line require that each of these groups of syllables belong to the same word-unit and the same foot.

#### 4.1.2 Tone

While some languages like English use stress as a principal form of metrical basis, others like Chinese use tonal properties (Chen 1979). In this section, I tried to find out the role of tone in the meter used in this poem. First, all the words of the poem were marked for

tone, then a tabulation of the high tones was done for every column. Lexical tone and performed tone were marked. Lexical tone refers to the tone found in a word when it is pronounced in isolation from other words while performed tone is used here to refer to the tone given to the words by the reciter as he performs the poem. The lexical tone was marked as shown in Appendix 1 while the performed tone was marked as shown in Appendix 2. In both cases only the sum of the high tones per column, for lines 4 – 62, is displayed. The results were as follows:

(86)

			x			x				x				x	
	(x	x	x)	(x	x	x)	(x	x	x)	(x	x	x)	(x	x	x)
Performed tone:	14	<b>44</b>	<b>41</b>	36	31	<b>48</b>	<b>51</b>	23	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø
Lexical tone:	9	<b>37</b>	18	<b>24</b>	23	19	<b>50</b>	14							

In the analysis of the performed tones we notice that the second (44), third (41), sixth (48), and seventh (51) syllables are heavily marked with high tone but it is only the third and the sixth syllables that are lined up with the strong metrical positions of the grid. However, one notices that the reciter creates a specific tonal melody by starting low on the first syllable then rising on the second syllable and maintaining that tonal height until the seventh syllable from where he drops to the eighth, which is low. As for the lexical tone, all the columns heavily marked with high tone do not coincide with the strong metrical positions in the grid. They fall one syllable to the right or the left of the strong metrical positions. In both performed tone and lexical tone, the seventh syllable is marked with more high tones enhancing the prominence of the phrase-penultimate syllable and thereby marking the phrases or lines as metrical units. There is a correlation

between tone and the metrical structure but this is limited to the marking of the phrase or line.

For comparison purposes, below is a tabulation of high tones in the prose sample.

(87)

						x						x
		x				x			x			x
	(x	x	x)	(x	x	x)	(x	x	x)	(x	x	x)
Prose lexical tone:												
	12	<b>32</b>	27	27	18	25	<b>37</b>	29	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø

There are slight similarities between the performed/lexical tone and the prose tone. In both groups the penultimate syllable has the highest number of high tone syllables. This shows that the poem follows natural speech rhythms in giving prominence to the penultimate syllable.

I performed a chi square test to find out whether the distribution of the performed and lexical tones in syllables 7 and 8 is significant.

Table 7

	syllable 7	syllable 8
Performed Tones Poetry	51	23
Lexical Tones Poetry	50	14
Lexical Tones Prose	37	29

The results show that  $\chi^2$  is 7.31 and  $p = 0.05$ . This shows that the difference in the distribution of the tones in syllable 7 and 8 is significant. The fact that the poem has many high tones in syllable 7 than in syllable 8 gives prominence to the penultimate syllable.

### 4.1.3 Syllable Weight

In this section we look at the role of syllable weight in determining the grid. Syllables are relatively short or long, according to the time it takes to utter them. The heavy syllables are marked in Appendix 2 in bold. In this chart the compressed syllables are also treated as heavy. Below are the numbers of heavy and light syllables per column.

(88)

			x			x					x
	(x	x	x)	(x	x	x)	(x	x	(x	x	x)
Heavy Syllables:	15	6	9	13	10	6	<b>35</b>	0	∅	∅	∅
Light Syllables:	35	<b>52</b>	<b>50</b>	45	47	<b>53</b>	24	<b>59</b>			

It is evident that light syllables are more common than heavy syllables. The light syllables in (88) above form a concentration on roughly all the three strong beats of the line. It can be said that the distribution of the light syllables is somehow sensitive to the internal structure of the metrical grid. It shows that if syllables are counted without caring about their weight, then there is a possibility of getting the correct scansion. They also generally display a high plateau which falls only in the seventh metrical position.

The heavy syllables have a high concentration in the seventh syllable. This is the only position where the heavy syllables outnumber the light syllables. This could be because the seventh syllable is the phrase penult and occupies two metrical positions. The seventh syllable is therefore lengthened. Many Bantu languages exhibit penultimate lengthening, a feature which is related to penultimate prominence. The arrangement in (88) also shows that lines of the poem do not end in heavy syllables.



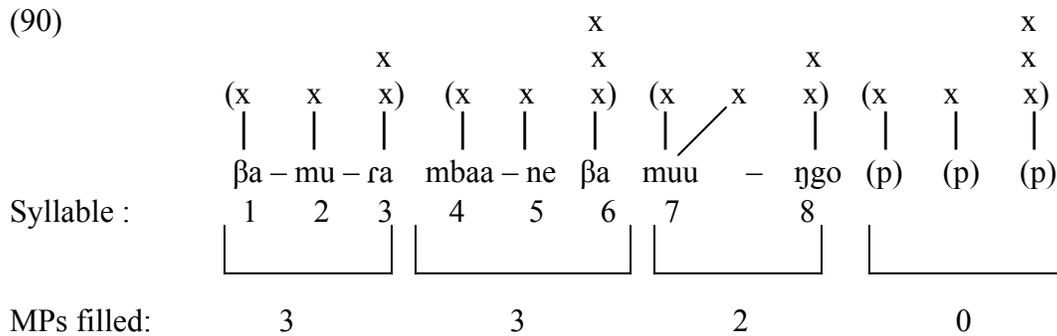
metrical position) does not arise due to chance. It is a poetic design in the poem under discussion.

The word boundaries, tone, and syllable weight all provide insights about the scansion suggested in (76). What emerges here is that the seventh syllable is the most prominent in this poem; it has the highest number of high tones and heavy syllables. This poem is delivered in phrases or lines and the seventh metrical position marks the penult of the phrase. While the tone and heavy syllables mark the line as a metrical unit, the word boundaries and light syllables give an approximation of how the syllables fit into the given scansion. The possibility that this poem is guided by syllable count is therefore viable but this is complemented by word boundaries, tone, and syllable weight.

#### **4.1.4 Foot**

Metrical feet are used to analyze the grouping behavior of syllables. In this section I try to formalize the scansion suggested in (76). The examples seen so far suggest that this poem favors the end of the ‘line’ as the locus of line alignment. This means that the poem has a Right Edge Alignment – the metrical positions are aligned from the right. A look at the poem shows that the lines 1, 2, 3, 9, 11, 25, 48, 54, 56, 57, and 62 do not start on the same metrical position on the left as the other lines; but they all end in the same metrical position on the right. This performance corresponds to the “beginnings free, endings strict” principle (Kiparsky 1968). That a meter’s constraints are observed less stringently at the beginning of the line but increasingly towards the end of the line is a common

pattern that has emerged across many poetic traditions. If we adapt the right alignment, we get the following feet.



On grounds of conceptual simplicity it makes sense to divide the lines into triple feet.

This is slightly supported by the following observations.

- (i) the fact that the fiddle plays in triple time.
- (ii) the suggestive nature of the word breaks in (84).
- (iii) the arrangement of the light syllables (88).

Though I give these pointers, concrete evidence for feet in Kuria seems to be hard to come by. The conjecture is that the poem has anapestic feet. This is a triple rhythm which consists of two slacks followed by a stress | x x — |. Taking the whole line, I identify the meter as anapestic tetrameter. In English, the anapest<sup>11</sup> is known for lightness and speed (Shapiro 1965). It is no wonder that the recitation of the poem under study is very fast.

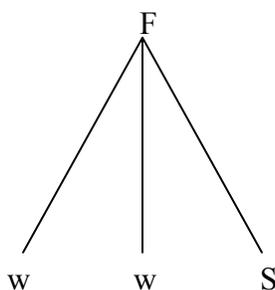
The grid in (90) shows that though the third foot is in triple time only two of its three metrical positions are filled. This is the pattern for most of the lines from 4 – 62.

<sup>11</sup> Anapests are in origin a marching meter, first attested in Spartan soldier's songs and much used in drama, where the anapestic systems regularly accompany the exits and entrances of the chorus (Cole 1972).

Listening to the lines of the poem, I noted that the reciter takes the first two triple beats fast but slows down on the third beat and holds the first syllable in that group longer than the second one. It has been said that a variation frequently found in anapestic foot is the substitution of an iamb for an anapest, creating a momentary slowing of the pace from triple to duple rhythm and providing counterpoint to the anapest (Malof 1970). This is what happens in this poem; the poet pulls his rhythm away from the established metrical pattern but not too far away to lose the initial rhythm. What we see are lines consisting of phrases of eight metrical positions each; and these are subdivided into 3 + 3 + 2. This kind of rhythm allows switching back and forth between two and three syllables per foot.

There is need to assign an internal structure to the ternary foot discussed above. Given that there is lack of more refined evidence on this form, I suggest that the anapest used here has the metrical structure shown in (91) which contains two weak positions followed by a strong position:

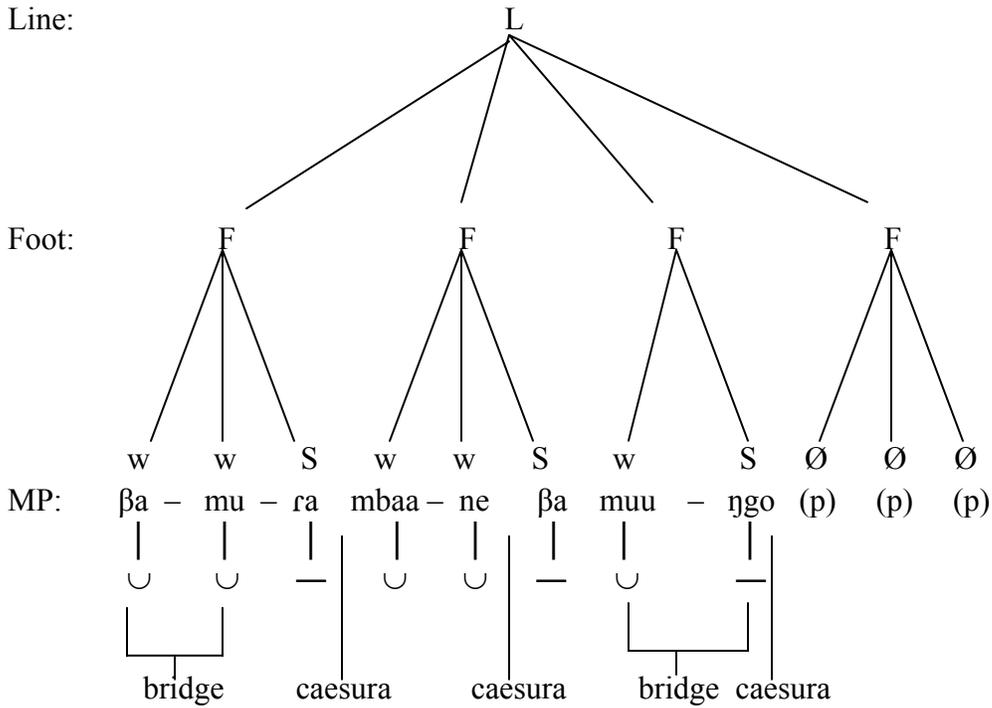
(91)



On the hierarchical constituent structure, a line of this poem can be represented in a metrical tree as in follows:

(92)

Line:



## 5.0 Conclusion

This paper has looked at Kuria praise poetry from a metrical point of view. It has established that despite the fact that the reciter performs with high speed and produces the words of the poem spontaneously, he does indeed employ specific rhythmic patterns. The following are the findings from this study:

- Fundamentally, the poem has eight syllable lines.
- Both phonology and prosodic rules play a role in the production of the eight syllable lines.
- The structure of the eight syllable lines is anapestic.

- Word boundaries, syllable weight, and tone are related to the anapestic structure of the meter.
- A monosyllabic word is not permitted at the beginning and end of the line.

**Appendix 1: Lexical Tone (high tone in acute accent)**

						x						x
			x			x			x			x
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
1.						ni-	γύ-	re	nu-	no-	γο-	kéé-
1/2.		ɾjá							ha-	jó	waa-	nsé-
2.	re	ko-	ɳái-		na							ke-
3.	u-	ní- nee-	ndá-		γο-	keé-		ri.				
4.	néé-	ɳka-	ɲó-	ra-ke		ɲii-	ngé-		no			
5.	βa-	mú-	ra	mbaa-	né	βa-	múú-		ɳgo			
6.	βa-	mú-	ra	mbaa-	né	βi-	ɾjáo-		βa			
7.	ke-	u-	ní	ɳgo-	kee-	re-	ɾjáá-		nde			
8.	u-	ní	ɳga-	tʃá	γu-	su-	má-		tʃa			
9.		né-	na-	βa- mú-	ra-	ma-	γáá-		nda			
10.	o-	ko-	βá	ha-ré	ne-	me	ɲé-		je			
11.		wáí-	to	ka-rí-	βo	ma-	sá-		βa			
12.	ha-	ré	γé-	γα-	té-	je-	γáá-		nda			
13.	γéé-	nde	γε-	rá-	ja	nti-	má-		ro			
14.	γéé-	nde	γε-	rá-	ja	mo-	γó-		ri			
15.	ta- má-	ɲaa-	mbo-		βo-	te-	ré-		βa			
16.	ee-	ntʃé-	ra(j)a	kú-	ja	nti-	má-		ro			
17.	γο-	ké-	raa-	mbó	waa-	βó	tʃá-		tʃá			
18.	mwíí-	ro	βa-	hí-	ri	sé-	ré-		ɾja			
19.	γε-	sá-	ku	ke-	βó	mo-	γóó-		ɳgo			
20.	u-	ní	ɳkó-	mo-	kóó-	mbó-	kaa-		ndé			
21.	moo-	ntó-	jo	ne-	mbaa-	né	saa-		ná			
22.	ta-	má-	ɲaa-	mbé	γο-	sé	kwéé-		ɾí			
23.	γα-	βá-	re-	mé-	re	tʃu-	ɾjáá-		si			
24.	tʃu-	ɾjáá-	si	ma-	γí-	γο-	tʃá-		tʃá			
25.		u-	ní	ɳgo-	kéé-	ré-	ɾjáá-		nde			
26.	ɾíí-	na	reɛ	ha-	tá	γi-	sú-		mo			
27.	γi-	sú-	mo	ke-	ɲa-	má-	ɲóó-		ri			
28.	ni-	γó	βo-	γο-	kjá	ki-	ɲóó-		ɾja			

29.	ha-	νό	γε-	τά-	joo-	ρί	ίί-		ηkjɔ			
30.	ke-	ra-	jóó-	rjoo-		mo- γɔ-	ρός-		βα			
31.	o-	mo-	τέ-	μέ-	ρε-	βά	waí-		to			
32.	ta-	má-	jaa-	mbo-	βο-	τέ-	ρέ-		βα			
33.	na-	ká-	hí-	kí-	re	ko-	βά-		ru			
34.	na-	ká-	ρú-	μέ-	re	ndaí-	kée-		nda			
35.	né-	na-	βα-	μú-	ra-	ma-	γάá-		nda			
36.	ta-	má-	jaa-	mbé	γο-	sé	kwee-		ρί			
37.	waa-	ndó-	ra-	βα-	jí-	βi-	ρέέ-		ηγε			
38.	o-	koo-	ρέ	βú-	ja	koo-	ηγός-		ρά			
39.	ke-	ú-	ni	nee-	ndá-	γο-	τέέ-		ni			
40.	mo-	γέ-	ta-	ηό-	sa	ja-	ta-		ní			
41.		waí-	sa	γε-	toó-	re-	ná-		ti			
42.	e-	káá-	ηga	γο-	taá-	ra	ρóó-		nde			
43.	nu-	ní	ta-	ú-	ti	wa	tʃá-		tʃá			
44.	moo-	ntó-	no	a-	ta-	γú-	kúú-		ra			
45.	γε-	sá-	ku	κε	wáá-	βός	tʃó-		ni			
46.	u-	ní	ní-	γο	ηko-	βά-	te-		βjá			
47.	γε-	sá-	ku	ké-	βɔ	mo-	βέέ-		nda			
48.		ta-	mo-	βέέ-	nde-	re	ta-jó-		γwe			
49.	moo-	ntó	we-	γε-	sá-	ku	γεί-		to			
50.	mu-	γί-	βί-	joo-	rjí-	tʃi-	ηός-		mbe			
51.	γε-	sá-	ku	κε-	βός	γee-	ntá-		ro			
52.	waí-	sa-	sí-	ηgí-	rwe	na	kée-		nda			
53.	waí-	ku-	mí	nu-	mu-	sú-	βα-		tí			
54.		u-	ní	ηgo-	kée-	ρέ-	rjáá-		nde			
55.	βα-	μú-	ra	mbaa-	né	βα	μúú-		ηgo			
56.		ku-	ρά	ke-ú-	ni	ne-	mbáá-		ne	(joo)		
57.				ηkó-	mo-	kee-	rjáá-		nde			
58.	mwíi-	ro	wa-	βα-	ká-	ra	ηɔɔ-		mbé			
59.	βα-	ká-	ra	ηɔɔ-	mbi-	βί-	ra-		rjó			
60.	βaa-	ndé	βα-	raa-	rjá	ma-	tʃa-		rjá			
61.	tí-	γα	ne-	kɔ-	ρέ-	ma-	ρέέ-		ηγε			
62.		ta-	síi-	ngí-	saa-	mbé	twíi-		γwe			

**Appendix 2: Syllable Weight and Performed Tone** (syllable weight in bold and high tone in acute accent)

						x						x
			x			x		x				x
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
1.						ni-	γύ-	re	nu-	nó-	γό-	<b>kee-</b>
1/2.		ɾjá							ha-	jó	<b>wáá-</b>	nsé-
2.	ré	kó-	<b>ɳaí-</b>		na							ke-
3.	ú-	<b>ní-</b> <b>néé-</b>	nda-		γο-	<b>kée-</b>		ri.				
4.	<b>nee-</b>	ɳka-	ɳó-	<b>ra-ke</b>		<b>ɳíí-</b>	ngé-		no			
5.	βa-	mú-	ra	<b>mbaa-</b>	né	βa-	<b>múú-</b>		ɳgo			
6.	βa-	mú-	ra	<b>mbaa-</b>	né	βí-	<b>ɾjóó-</b>		βa			
7.	ke-	ú-	ni	ɳgo-	<b>kée-</b>	ré-	<b>ɾjáá-</b>		ndé			
8.	u-	ní	ɳga-	tʃá	γύ-	sú-	má-		tʃa			
9.		né-	na-	<b>βa-</b> <b>mú-</b>	ra-	má-	<b>γáá-</b>		nda			
10.	o-	ko-	βá	<b>ha-ré</b>	né-	mé-	ɳé-		jé			
11.		<b>wai-</b>	to	<b>ka-rí-</b>	βo	ma-	sá-		βa			
12.	ha-	ré	γέ-	γα-	té-	jé-	<b>γaa-</b>		nda			
13.	<b>γée-</b>	ndé	γέ-	ra-	já	ntí-	má-		ro			
14.	<b>γée-</b>	ndé	γέ-	ra-	já	mó-	γο-		ri			
15.	<b>ta-</b> <b>má-</b>	<b>ɳáá-</b>	mbó-		βo-	té-	ré-		βa			
16.	<b>ee-</b>	ntʃé-	<b>ra(j)a</b>	kú-	ja	ntí-	má-		ro			
17.	γο-	ké-	<b>ɾáá-</b>	mbó	<b>wáá-</b>	βó	tʃá-		tʃa			
18.	<b>mwíí-</b>	ro	βa-	hí-	rí	sé-	ré-		ɾja			
19.	γε-	sá-	kú	ké-	βo	mo-	<b>γóó-</b>		ɳgó			
20.	u-	ní	ɳkó-	mo-	<b>kóó-</b>	mbó-	<b>káá-</b>		nde			
21.	<b>moo-</b>	ntó-	jó	né-	<b>mbáá-</b>	né	<b>saa-</b>		na			
22.	ta-	má-	<b>ɳáá-</b>	mbé	γο-	sé	<b>kwée-</b>		ri			
23.	γα-	βá-	ré-	mé-	ré	tʃú-	<b>ɾjáá-</b>		si			
24.	tʃu-	<b>ɾjáá-</b>	sí	ma-	γί-	γο-	tʃá-		tʃá			
25.		u-	ní	ɳgó-	<b>kée-</b>	ré-	<b>ɾjáá-</b>		nde			
26.	<b>ɾíí-</b>	na	<b>ɾée</b>	ha-	ta	γί-	sú-		mo			
27.	γi-	sú-	mó	ke-	ɳa-	ma-	<b>ɳóó-</b>		rí			

28.	ni-	γό	βό-	γό-	kja	κί-	<b>ηόό-</b>		rja			
29.	ha-	νό	γε-	ta-	<b>ηόό-</b>	ρί	ίί-		ηkjo			
30.	ke-	ρά-	<b>ηόό-</b>	<b>ηjόό-</b>		<b>mo-</b> <b>γό-</b>	<b>ρjό-</b>		βα			
31.	o-	mo-	τέ-	μέ-	ρε-	βά	<b>wai-</b>		to			
32.	ta-	μά-	<b>ηάά-</b>	μβό-	βο-	τέ-	ρέ-		βα			
33.	νά-	κά-	ήί-	κί-	re	κό-	βά-		ru			
34.	νά-	κά-	ρú-	μέ-	re	<b>ndaí-</b>	<b>κέέ-</b>		nda			
35.	né-	na-	βα-	μú-	ra-	μά-	<b>γάά-</b>		ndá			
36.	ta-	μά-	<b>ηάά-</b>	μβέ	γο-	σέ	<b>kweé-</b>		ρί			
37.	<b>wáá-</b>	ndó-	ra-	βα-	jí-	βί-	<b>ρέέ-</b>		ηγε			
38.	o-	<b>koó-</b>	ρέ	βú-	ja	<b>koó-</b>	<b>ηγjό-</b>		ra			
39.	ke-	ú-	νί	<b>νέέ-</b>	nda-	γο-	<b>τόό-</b>		νί			
40.	mo-	γέ-	τά-	ηjό-	sa	ηa-	τά-		νί			
41.		<b>wai-</b>	sa	γέ-	<b>τόό-</b>	ρέ-	νά-		ti			
42.	e-	<b>káá-</b>	ηga	γό-	<b>τάά-</b>	ra	<b>ροό-</b>		nde			
43.	nu-	νί	ta-	ú-	tí	wa	tjá-		tjá			
44.	<b>moo-</b>	ntó-	νό	a-	ta-	γú-	<b>κúú-</b>		ra			
45.	γέ-	sa-	κú	κέ	<b>waa-</b>	βjό	tjό-		ni			
46.	u-	νί	νί-	γο	ηkό-	βά-	τέ-		βjá			
47.	γε-	σά-	κú	κέ-	βo	μό-	<b>βέέ-</b>		nda			
48.		ta-	μό-	<b>βέέ-</b>	ndé-	ρέ	<b>ta-jό-</b>		γwe			
49.	<b>moo-</b>	ntó	wé-	γέ-	sa-	κú	<b>γεί-</b>		to			
50.	mu-	γί-	βί-	ηo-	ηjί-	tjί-	<b>ηjoo-</b>		μβέ			
51.	γέ-	sa-	κú	κέ-	βjό	<b>γέέ-</b>	ntá-		ró			
52.	<b>wai-</b>	sa-	<b>σί-</b>	ηγι-	ρwé	na	<b>κέέ-</b>		ndá			
53.	<b>wai-</b>	κú-	μί	nu-	μú-	σú-	βα-		tí			
54.		u-	νί	ηγό-	κέέ-	ρέ-	<b>ηjáá-</b>		nde			
55.	βα-	μú-	ρά	<b>mbaa-</b>	né	βά	<b>μúú-</b>		ηgo			
56.		κú-	ra	<b>ke-ú-</b>	νί	né-	<b>mbáá-</b>		né	(joo)		
57.				ηkό-	mo-	<b>κέέ-</b>	<b>ηjáá-</b>		nde			
58.	<b>mwii-</b>	ρό	wa-	βα-	κά-	ρά	<b>ηjoo-</b>		μβέ			
59.	βα-	κά-	ρά	<b>ηjoo-</b>	μβί-	βί-	ra-		ηjό			
60.	<b>βáá-</b>	ndé	βα-	<b>raa-</b>	ηja	μά-	tjá-		ηjá			
61.	tí-	γα	né-	ko-	ρέ-	ma-	<b>ρέέ-</b>		ηγε			

62.		ta-	<b>sí-</b>	ngí-	<b>saa-</b>	mbe	<b>twí-</b>		γwe			
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### Appendix 3: Morpheme by Morpheme Analysis

1. /N - iγu - re N - o - ni o - ko - keer - i - a /  
1S - hear - PERF F - PP<sub>1</sub> - 1S Ind Pro PP<sub>15</sub> - INF - greet - CAUS - FV

[niγure nuni oγokeerja]

“I have heard it is me you are greeting.”

2. /haio waNs - er - e o - ko - ηain - a /  
so start - PERF - FV PP<sub>15</sub> - INF - flatter - FV

[hajo waansere koηaina]

“So, I have started to flatter.”

3. /ke - o - ni ne - N - ra - ko - keer - i /  
similarly - PP<sub>1</sub> - 1S Ind Pro F - 1S - FUT - OM<sub>1</sub> - greet - FV

[keuni nendayokeeri]

“I will also greet you.”

4. /ne - Nkaɾora ke - ɲiNγeno /  
even - if as - at this time

[neenkaɾora keɲiingeno]

“Even if it is at this time.”

5. /a - βa - mura Nβaa - ne βa - a mu - Nγo /  
PP<sub>2</sub> - CP<sub>2</sub> - young man comrade - my CP<sub>2</sub> - Ass ‘a’ CP<sub>1</sub> - God

[βamura mbaane βa muηgo]

“My comrades of God.”

6. /a - βa - mura Nβaa - nε βa - a - i - ri - oβa /

PP<sub>2</sub> - CP<sub>2</sub> - young man comrade - my CP<sub>2</sub> - Ass 'a' - PP<sub>5</sub> - CP<sub>5</sub> - sun

[βamura mbaane βirjooβa]

“My comrades of the sun.”

7. /ke - o - ni N - γo - keer - er - i - a - N - re /

similarly - PP<sub>1</sub> - 1S Ind Pro F - INF - greet - APPL - CAUS - FV - 1S - PROG

[keuni ηgokeererjande]

“I am also sending greetings.”

8. /o - ni N - γa - tʃ - a ko - sumach - a /

PP<sub>1</sub> - 1S Ind Pro 1S - NPST - come - FV INF - talk - FV

[uni ηgatʃa γusumatʃa]

“Once I talked.”

9. /ne - na a - βa - mura a - ma - γaNra /

1S - with PP<sub>2</sub> - CP<sub>2</sub> - young man PP<sub>6</sub> - CP<sub>6</sub> - handful

[nena βamura mayaanda]

“With a handful of young men.”

10. /o - ko - βa hare ne - meɲ - ei - e /

PP<sub>15</sub> - INF - be where 1S - live - PERF - FV

[okoβa hare nemeɲeje]

“Infact where I live.”

11. /o - a - ito kariβo masaβa /  
 PP<sub>1</sub> - Ass 'a' - PPRoot near Masaba  
 [waito kariβo masaβa]  
 "Our home is near Masaba."
12. /hare γε - γat - ei - e e - γaNra /  
 where SM<sub>9</sub> - make - PERF - FV PP<sub>9</sub> - turn  
 [hare γεγatejeγaanda]  
 "Where they made turns."
13. /e - γεNre γε - ra - i - a Ntimaro /  
 PP<sub>4</sub> - others SM<sub>4</sub> - UPAST - go - FV Ntimaru  
 [γεende γεraja ntimaro]  
 "Others go to Ntimaru."
14. /e - γεNre γε - ra - i - a moγori /  
 PP<sub>4</sub> - other SM<sub>4</sub> - UPAST - go - FV Migori  
 [γεende γεraja moγori]  
 "Others go to Migori."
15. /ta - maηa - Nβε o - βo - τερεβα /  
 IMP - know - EMP PP<sub>14</sub> - CP<sub>14</sub> - drive  
 [tamaηaamboβotereβα]  
 "So know that with driving."

16. /e - Ntʃera e - a o - ko - i - a Ntimaro /

PP<sub>9</sub> - way PP<sub>9</sub> - Ass 'a' PP<sub>15</sub> - INF - go - FV Ntimaru

[eentʃera(j)a kuja ntimaro]

“The way to Ntimaru.”

17. /ko - ke - raNβo o - a - βo tʃatʃa/

at - CP<sub>7</sub> - emaciated one PP<sub>1</sub>- Ass 'a' - PPRoot Chacha

[γokeraambo waaβo tʃatʃa]

“At the emaciated one in Chacha’s home.”

18. /u - mu - iro o a - βa - hiri sereria /

PP<sub>1</sub> - CP<sub>1</sub> - person of PP<sub>2</sub> - CP<sub>2</sub> - subclan Sererya

[mwiiro βahiri sererja]

“A person from the Sererya subclan.”

19. /e - γε - saku e - κε - βo moγoNγo /

PP<sub>7</sub> - CP<sub>7</sub> - family PP<sub>7</sub> - SM<sub>7</sub> - PPRoot Mogongo

[γesaku κεβo moγoNγo]

“The family of Mogongo.”

20. /o - ni N - ko - mo - koNβok - a - N - re /

PP<sub>1</sub> - 1S Per Pro F - INF - OM<sub>1</sub> - remember - FV - 1S - PROG

[uni ŋkomokoombokaande]

“I am remembering him.”

21. /o – mo – Nto o - io ne – Nβaa - nε saana /  
 PP<sub>1</sub> – CP<sub>1</sub> – person 2S - DEM F – comrade - my very much  
 [montojo nembraane saana]  
 “That person is a dear friend.”
22. /ta – maŋ - a – Nβε γose kueri /  
 IMP – know - FV – EMP or surely  
 [tamaŋaambe γose kweeri]  
 “Surely, do know that.”
23. /γα – βα – rem – er - e tʃuriasi/  
 SM<sub>6</sub> – OM – plough – PERF - FV Julius  
 [γαβaremere tʃurjaasi]  
 “Adversity has befallen Julius.”
24. /tʃuriasi mayiye o tʃatʃa /  
 Julius Magige son of Chacha  
 [tʃurjaasi mayiyotʃatʃa]  
 “Julius Magige son of Chacha.”
25. /o - ni N – ko – keer - er - i - a - N - re /  
 PP<sub>1</sub> - 1S Ind Pro F – INF – greeting - APPL - CAUS - FV - 1S - PROG  
 [uniŋgokeererjaande]  
 “I am pass my greetings.”

26. /i – riina rε – ε hata γisumo /  
 PP<sub>5</sub> – name SM<sub>5</sub> – PPRoot even Kisumu  
 [riina rεε hata γisumo]  
 “His name even in Kisumu.”
27. /γisumo κε ρα – ma – ρoor - i /  
 Kisumu of one with - OM<sub>6</sub> – get - FV  
 [γisumo κε ρα μα ροορι]  
 “Kisumu, where they get them.”
28. /n – ιγo βo – γo – kea ki – ρoor - i - a /  
 F – just SM<sub>4</sub> – INF – dawn SM<sub>7</sub> – get - CAUS - FV ind  
 [niγo βoγokja kiρoorja]  
 “It gets them immediately it dawns.”
29. /hanɔ γε – ta – ρoor – i i – Nkiɔ /  
 if SM<sub>7</sub> – NEG – get – FV PP<sub>9</sub> – morning  
 [hanɔ γε τα ροορι ιηκιο]  
 “If it does not get in the morning.”
30. /ke – ra – ρoor - i - a o – mo – γoρoβa /  
 SM<sub>7</sub> - UPAST - get - CAUS - FV PP<sub>3</sub> – CP<sub>3</sub> – evening  
 [ke ρα ροορι ροορι ομο γορoβa]  
 “It gets in the evening.”

31. /o – mo – tɛma ɛɛ βa o - a - ito /

PP<sub>1</sub> – CP<sub>1</sub> – play belong CP<sub>2</sub> PP<sub>1</sub> - Ass ‘a’ - PPRoot

[omotɛmɛɛβa waito]

“The player of that which is ours.”

32. /ta – maŋ - a – Nβɛ o – βo – tɛɛβa /

IMP – know - FV – EMP PP<sub>14</sub> – CP<sub>14</sub> – drive

[tamaŋaamboβotɛɛβa]

“Do know about driving.”

33. /N – aka – hik – ir – e ko – βaru /

1S – NPAST - reach – PERF - FV at – many

[nakahikire koβaru]

“I used to reach where there were crowds.”

34. /N – aka – rum – ɛr – e N – ra – ikeNra /

1S – NPST – bellow – PERF- FV 1S – PROG - forcefully

[nakarumere ndaikeenda]

“I used to bellow forcefully.”

35. /ne – na a – βa – mura a – ma – γaNra /

1S – with PP<sub>2</sub> – CP<sub>2</sub> – young man PP<sub>6</sub> – CP<sub>6</sub> – handful

[nenaβamuramayaanda]

“With a handful of young men.”

36. /o - ta - maɾa - Nβɛ ɣose kueri /  
 2S - IMP - know - EMP or surely  
 [tamaraambe ɣose kweeri]  
 “Surely, do know that.”
37. /o - a - N - rora a - ba - i - e i - βi - rɛNɣɛ /  
 PP<sub>1</sub> - Ass ‘a’ - ? - nasty 3S - be - PERF - FV PP<sub>8</sub> - CP<sub>8</sub> - foot  
 [waandoraβajiβirɛɛŋɛ]  
 “The nasty one became feet (died).”
38. /o - kor - e βuja o - ko - N - ɣɔɔr - a /  
 2S - do - FV well PP<sub>15</sub> - INF - OM<sub>1</sub> - praise - FV  
 [okɔɔre βuja koŋɔɔra]  
 “You have done well to praise me.”
39. /ke - o - ni ne - N - ra - ko - toon - i /  
 even - PP<sub>1</sub> - 1S Per Pro F - 1S - FUT - OM<sub>1</sub> - praise - FV  
 [keuni neendayotooni]  
 “I will also praise you.”
40. /o - mo - ɣetaŋɔsa ɲa - tani /  
 PP<sub>1</sub> - CP<sub>1</sub> - name of circumcision group one with - strength  
 [moɣetaŋɔsa ɲatani]  
 “One from the Getang’osa circumcision group.”

41. /o - a - isa a - γe - tor - e e - nati /  
 PP<sub>1</sub> - Ass 'a' - father 3S - OM<sub>9</sub> - fix - FV PP<sub>9</sub> - bolt  
 [waisa aγetoorenati]  
 "One who fixed a bolt."
42. /e - ka - aNγ - a o - ko - taar - a roNre /  
 SM<sub>9</sub> - NPST - refuse - FV PP<sub>15</sub> - INF - move - FV ever  
 [ekaanga γotaara roonde]  
 "And it never moved."
43. /N - o - ni tauti o - a tʃatʃa /  
 F - PP<sub>1</sub> - 1S Per Pro David PP<sub>1</sub> - Ass 'a' Chacha  
 [nuni tauti wa tʃatʃa]  
 "I am David son of Chacha."
44. /o - mo - Nto ono a - ta - ko - kuur - a /  
 PP<sub>1</sub> - CP<sub>1</sub> - person Rel Pro 3S - NEG - INF - cry - FV  
 [moontono atayukuura]  
 "A person who does not cry."
45. /e - ke - saku kε o - a - βo tʃoni /  
 PP<sub>7</sub> - CP<sub>7</sub> - family of PP<sub>1</sub> - Ass 'a' - PPRoot Choni  
 [γesaku ke waaβo tʃoni]  
 "(From) the same family as John."

46. /o - ni N - iyo N - ko - βα - teβ - i - a /  
 PP<sub>1</sub> - 1S Ind Pro F - in that way 1S - INF - OM<sub>1</sub> - tell - CAUS - FV  
 [uni niyo ηκοβατεβja]

“That is what I am telling you.”

47. /e - ke - saku κε - βω μοβεNra /  
 PP<sub>7</sub> - CP<sub>7</sub> - family SM<sub>7</sub> - PPRoot Mobeenda  
 [γesaku κεβω μοβεenda]

“(From) the same family as Mobeenda.”

48. /o - ta - mo - βεNr - er - e ta - i - a o - γoe /  
 2S - NEG - OM<sub>1</sub> - like - PERF- FV IMP - go - FV 2S - fall  
 [tamoβεenderetajoywe]

“If you do not like him go and ‘fall’.”

49. /o - mo - Nto o - a e - ke - saku ke - ito /  
 PP<sub>1</sub> - CP<sub>1</sub> - person PP<sub>1</sub> - Ass ‘a’ PP<sub>7</sub> - CP<sub>7</sub> - family SM<sub>7</sub> - PPRoot  
 [moonto weγesaku γeito]

“A person from our family.”

50. /o - mo - γιβjoria i - tʃi - ηωNβε /  
 PP<sub>1</sub> - CP<sub>1</sub> - name of circumcision group PP<sub>10</sub> - CP<sub>10</sub> - cattle  
 [myγιβjorjiti ηωombe]

“One from the Gibinyorya circumcision group who gets cattle.”

51. /e - ke - saku kε - βo γεNtarο /

PP<sub>7</sub> - CP<sub>7</sub> - family SM<sub>7</sub> - PPRoot Gentaro

[eyesaku kεβo γεentaro]

“(From) the same family as Gentaro.”

52. /o - a - isa a - siNγ - ir - u - e na kεNra /

PP<sub>1</sub> - Ass ‘a’ - father 3S - partner in dance - PERF - PASS - FV with nine.

[waisasiingirwe na kεenda]

“A person who was partnered in dance with nine (girls).”

53. /o - a ikumi N - o - mo - suβati /

PP<sub>1</sub> - Ass ‘a’ ten F - PP<sub>1</sub> - CP<sub>1</sub> - married woman

[waikumi numusuβati]

“The tenth one was a married woman.”

54. /o - ni N - ko - keer - er - i - a - N - re /

PP<sub>1</sub> - 1S Ind Pro F - INF - greet - APPL - CAUS - FV - 1S - PROG

[uni ηgokeererjaande]

“I am passing my greetings.”

55. /a - βa - mura Nβaa - ne βa - a mu - Nγo /

PP<sub>2</sub> - CP<sub>2</sub> - young man comrade - my CP<sub>2</sub> - Ass ‘a’ CP<sub>1</sub> - God

[βamura mbaane βa muηgo]

“My comrades of God.”

56. /kana ke - o - ni ne - Nβaa - nε /  
 EMP even - PP<sub>1</sub> - 1S Ind Pro F - comrade - my  
 [kana keuni nembraane]  
 “Even me he is my comrade.”
57. /N - ko - mo - keer - i - a - N - re /  
 F - INF - OM<sub>1</sub> - greet - CAUS - FV - 1S - PROG  
 [ηkomokeerjaande]  
 “I am greeting him.”
58. /u - mu - iro wa - βa - kara - ηɔNβε /  
 PP<sub>1</sub> - CP<sub>1</sub> - person Ass ‘a’ - CP<sub>1</sub> - root subclan name - cattle  
 [mwiiro waβakara ηɔombε]  
 “A person from Abakarang’ombe subclan.”
59. /a - βa - kara - ηɔNβε i - βi - rario /  
 PP<sub>2</sub> - CP<sub>2</sub> - root of subclan name - cattle PP<sub>8</sub> - CP<sub>8</sub> - cowshed  
 [βakara ηɔombiβirarjo]  
 “Keepers of cattle in cowsheds.”
60. /a - βa - Nre βa - ra - ar - i - a a - ma - tʃaria /  
 PP<sub>2</sub> - CP<sub>2</sub> - other SM<sub>2</sub> - UPASt - spread - CAUS - FV PP<sub>6</sub> - CP<sub>6</sub> - leather strips  
 [βaande βaraarjamatʃarja]  
 “(While) others spread leather strips.”

61. /tiya ne – kɔr - ε      a - ma - rɛNɣɛ /

let 1S – do - SUBJ PP<sub>6</sub> - CP<sub>6</sub> - measured ones

[tiya nekɔrɛ marɛɛŋɛ]

“Let me be brief.”

62. /o - ta – siNɣisa - Nβɛ tu – iɣu - e /

2S - IMP – shake - EMP 1PL – hear - FV

[tasiŋgisaambe twiiɣwe]

“Shake so that we hear.”

**Appendix 4: Table of Morphemes and Words Used in Poem**

<i>Nouns</i>		<i>Verbs</i>		<i>Adverbs</i>	
aβahiri	a subclan	-aŋg-	refuse	βuja	well
aβakara ηoombε	a subclan name	-ar-	spread	hata	even
aβamura	young men	-βa-	be	hajo	so
amatɕarja	leather strips	-βεend-	like	iγo	in that way
amayaanda	handful	-γo-	fall	kariβo	near
amareeŋge	measured ones	-γooɾ-	praise <sub>1</sub>	ke-	similar, as
eγanda	a turn	-hik-	reach	kweeri	surely
eyesaku	family	-iyu-	hear	ne-	even
enati	bolt	-ikeend-	do forcefully	ronde	ever
entɕera	way, road	-j-	go	saana	very much
yeentaro	person's name	-ke-	dawn	ɲiŋgeno	at this time
γetaŋoɕa	name of circum- cision group	-keer-	greet		
γiβiɲorja	name of circum- cision group	-koombok-	remember	<i>Tense &amp; Aspect</i>	
γisumo	place name	-kooɾ-	do	Prefect -er-, -ir-, -re, -j-, -ej-	
iβirarjo	cowsheds	-kuur-	cry	Unlimited Past -ra	
iβireeŋge	feet	-maɲ-	know	Future -ra-	
iiŋkjɔ	morning	-meɲ-	live	Progressive -ra, -re	
ikumi	ten	-na	have	Narrative Past -aka-	
iriina	name	-ŋain-	flatter	Causative -i-	
irjooβa	sun	-ɲoor-	get	Applicative -er-	
isa	father	-rem-	plough	Passive -w-	
itɕiŋoombε	cattle	-rum-	bellow		
kεenda	nine	-siŋg-	partner with in dance		
mayiγe	person's name	-siŋis-	shake		
masaβa	place name	-sumatɕ-	talk	<i>Other Words &amp; Forms</i>	
mbaane	my comrade	-tɕ-	come	N-, ne- Focus	
moβεenda	person's name	-taar-	move	-a- Associative 'a'	
moyooŋgo	person's name	-teβ-	tell	-ta- Imperative	
moyori	place name	-toon-	praise <sub>2</sub>	-mbe Emphasis	
muuŋgo	God	-tor-	put, fix	kana Emphasis	
mwiiro	person	-wans-	start	-ta- Negative	

ntimaro	place name	-ror-	be nasty	ono	Rel Pronoun
oβoteβa	driving			o	Son of
omoyorɔβa	evening	<i>Final Vowels</i>		γose	or
omooonto	person	-a	indicative	ko-	at (prep)
omotema	player	-ε	subjunctive	hano	if
sererja	subclan name	-e, -i	perfective	ηκαηora	if, perhaps
tauti	David			eyeende	others
tʃatʃa	Chacha	<i>Subject Markers</i>		aβaru	many
tʃoni	John	N-, ne-	1S class 1	hare	where
tʃuriasi	Julius	o-	2S class 1		
umusubati	married woman	γε-	SM class 4		
		γα-	SM class 6		
<i>Pronouns</i>		γε-	SM class 7		
uni	1S Independent personal pronoun				
		<i>Object Markers</i>			
-ito	1PL Possessive personal pronoun	-mo-	3S class 1		
		-βa-	2/3PL class 1		
-βɔ	3S Possessive personal pronoun	-ko-	2S class 1		
-ε	3S Possessive personal pronoun				
ojo	Demonstrative pronoun				

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