WHY KÛnda SINGS: NARRATIVE DISCOURSE AND THE MULTIFUNCTIONALITY OF BAKA SONG IN BAKA STORY

By

DANIEL FITZGERALD

A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

2011
To Yves Léonard: colleague, confidant, friend, and brother
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study was made possible by so many people for whom I am grateful. First and foremost, I am grateful for the constant and lively encouragement of my wife Debra, my four children, Emma, Aaron, Mary, and Jonathan, and my father- and mother-in-law, Douglas and Suzanne Burton.

In Cameroon, I became especially indebted to Yves Léonard, to whom this dissertation is dedicated. Without his foundational research of and gifted intuitions about Baka oral narrative, I would never had attempted this kind of interdisciplinary study. I have built upon his work because it has always seemed to carry the promise of making “black ink on white paper” serve real personal exchange, something I aspire to myself.

My initial exploration into the Baka community would not have proceeded so smoothly without the humble and wise counsel of Père Paul Cuypers. His many years of experience serving the Baka people eventually inspired me to do the same. The anthropological, linguistic, and missionary work of Kathleen Higgens was equally inspiring, though I have never met Kath face-to-face. Without the gracious gift of her original audio field recordings of traditional Baka narratives, my study would lack little historical depth.

I would never have continued my research without the warm and patient welcome and engagement of so many Baka friends. In the Baka camp of Ndjibot, Konji was my first mentor and confidant. The fire in his drumming, the solace of his evening harp, and the animation in his storytelling hooked me. The masterful and comic narrative delivery of Nguna (now deceased) eventually convinced me to focus my
research on Baka likànɔ, likànɔ song, in particular. In the camp of Nomedjo, my interest in likànɔ song deepened, as did my friendships. Njema, Mai, Andɔ, and Dieudonné continually shepherded me in their language and music traditions. Their exemplary cultural leadership provided me with a rich and rare entry into Baka oral art. Without their expert and generally transparent point of view, this study would have been immeasurably impoverished, perhaps undoable.

The broad support of my many colleagues in SIL Cameroon and SIL International provided me with helps too numerous to mention. I would not have navigated those early days of cross-cultural communication in Cameroon without the collective experience of so many dedicated colleagues. I am further grateful to Cameroon’s Ministère des Recherches Scientifique et Techniques (MINREST) for permission to carry out my research among the Baka people in Cameroon’s southeastern province.

The confidence to actually sit down and write this dissertation was decisively built into me early on by my dissertation committee. I am particularly grateful to my advisor, Dr. Larry Crook, for his steady oversight. Finally, what a relief it was to have Dr. Robert Wright read through and comment on much of the final stages of my writing before I submitted it to my committee for final review. Any errors in my research or writing are, of course, still my own.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF OBJECTS</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER

### 1 INTRODUCTIONS TO THE STUDY OF BAKA LIKANÇ SONG

- 1.1 Research Subject, Purposes, Theory, Models, and Motivations | 14
- 1.2 Research Literature Review | 18
- 1.3 Description of Chapters | 27
- 1.4 The Baka People
  - 1.4.1 Designations | 30
  - 1.4.2 Demographic, Geographic, and Historic Generalities | 30
- 1.5 Baka Language
  - 1.5.1 Language Classification | 31
  - 1.5.2 Linguistic Structures | 32
    - 1.5.2.1 Phonology | 32
    - 1.5.2.2 Morphology and syntax | 33
  - 1.5.3 Semantics | 34
  - 1.5.4 Sociolinguistics | 35
  - 1.5.5 Section Summary | 37
- 1.6 Research Data Sample | 37

### 2 BAKA VERBAL PERFORMANCE IN SONG, STORY, AND STORY’S SONG

- 2.1 Baka Verbal Performance | 48
- 2.2 Poetic Verbal Performance: Song
  - 2.2.1 Baka Song’s Rhythmic Generalities | 51
  - 2.2.2 Baka Song’s Melic Generalities | 53
  - 2.2.3 Baka Song’s Voice Register Generalities | 57
- 2.3 Narrative Verbal Performance: Story | 64
- 2.4 Sung Baka Narrative Performance: Story’s Song | 73
- 2.5 Summary | 80

### 3 BAKA SONG-TEXT POETICS: AN INVENTORY OF POETIC DEVICES

- 3.1 Baka Song-Text Poetics | 85

- 3.2 Poetic Devices: Introduction | 93
3.1 Introduction: Sung versus Unsung Verbal Discourse.......................... 93
3.2 Inventory of Baka Song-Text Poetic Devices........................................ 99
3.3 Rhythmic Poetic Devices........................................................................ 100
  3.3.1 Line................................................................................................... 100
  3.3.2 Pulse................................................................................................ 101
  3.3.3 Tempo.............................................................................................. 104
  3.3.4 Meter............................................................................................... 105
  3.3.5 Summary of Rhythmic Poetic Devices............................................. 107
3.4 Description of the Poetic Devices of One Baka Song............................. 108
  3.4.1 Ethnographic Background............................................................... 108
  3.4.2 Rhythmic Poetic Devices................................................................. 110
  3.4.3 Syntactic Poetic Devices................................................................. 111
    3.4.3.1 Available grammatical units..................................................... 112
    3.4.3.2 Available poetic syntactic units................................................ 112
    3.4.3.3 Complementary devices of syntactic development................. 113
    3.4.3.4 Frequency and distribution of syntactic poetic unit.............. 114
    3.4.3.5 Syntactic development and form............................................ 114
  3.4.4 Lexical Poetic Devices...................................................................... 114
  3.4.5 Phonological Poetic Devices............................................................ 116
  3.4.6 Semantic Level Poetic Devices....................................................... 117
3.5 Conclusion............................................................................................... 120

4 BAKA LIKANɔ-SONG AS A DISCOURSE FEATURE OF BAKA STORY......... 135

4.1 Performance Relationship of Baka Story and Song.............................. 135
  4.1.1 Story and Song in African Narrative Performance.......................... 135
  4.1.2 Story and Song in Baka Narrative Performance.............................. 138
4.2. Cohesion of Ḩikanɔ Story and Song..................................................... 144
  4.2.1 Generative Cohesion (Stories Engender Songs)............................... 144
  4.2.2 Performance Cohesion of Ḩikanɔ Story and Song............................ 147
  4.2.3 Textual Cohesion of Story and Song............................................... 148
    4.2.3.1 Grammatical cohesion............................................................... 148
      Grammatical cohesion through lexical repetition........................... 148
      Grammatical cohesion through lexical substitution........................ 151
      Grammatical cohesion through common point of view................... 151
    4.2.3.2 Semantic cohesion................................................................. 154
      Synonymy.......................................................................................... 154
      Meronymy......................................................................................... 156
4.3 Narrative Discourse Development through Song................................... 157
  4.3.1 Contextual Narrative Development through Song........................... 162
    4.3.1.1 Participant information through song..................................... 163
    4.3.1.2 Setting information through song......................................... 164
    4.3.1.3 Explanatory information through song................................... 165
    4.3.1.4 Collateral information through song..................................... 167
    4.3.1.5 Evaluative information through song.................................... 169
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-1</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-1</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-2</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-4</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-1</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-2</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-3</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-6</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-7</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-8</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-9</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-10</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-11</td>
<td>Adjacent verses and diagram of allowable verse progressions................. 130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-12</td>
<td>Diagram of the poetic patterns of “Ayé’s Lament” ............................... 131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-1</td>
<td>Axis graph of the potential performance distribution of speech, song, and music in African oral monologue narrative discourse......... 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-2</td>
<td>Outline of discourse analysis of Ṣikànò song in Ṣikànò narrative........... 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-3</td>
<td>Grammatical devices of textual cohesion............................................. 201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-4</td>
<td>Semantic devices of textual cohesion............................................... 201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>Types of sung narrative development.................................................. 201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>Subtypes of sung contextual development........................................... 201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>Higgens’ transcription and translation of “Lòndò” (‘Otter’).................... 202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-8</td>
<td>Framework of the narrative performance development of “Lòndò”.......... 203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-9</td>
<td>Composite melody of Lòndò refrain................................................... 204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-10</td>
<td>Summary outline of the functions of Ṣikànò song in Ṣikànò narrative........ 205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-1</td>
<td>Diagram of the narrative development of the story of “Súà te Kùnda” (Leopard and Turtle)................................................................. 237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-2</td>
<td>Melodic motive of “Kùnda’s Song”...................................................... 238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-3</td>
<td>Motive of “Kùnda’s Song” restated in melodic sequence between two voice parts................................................................. 239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-4</td>
<td>Motive of “Kùnda’s Song” strictly restated rhythmically, but with intervallic substitutions.............................................................. 240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-5</td>
<td>Motive of “Kùnda’s Song” restated with rhythmic contraction................ 241</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### LIST OF OBJECTS: AUDIO RECORDINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object: Audio Recording</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-1 Audio file of \textit{likànò} formula (clip)</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-2 Audio file of rarer \textit{likànò} rhythm (clip)</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 Audio file of typical \textit{likànò} rhythm (clip)</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-1 Audio file of elephant hunting song (clip)</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-2 Audio file of song of a young boy playing with his parents (clip)</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-3 Audio file of solo song of lament (clip)</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 Audio file of solo song of lament (with clapping) (clip)</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 Audio file of male initiation song (without accompaniment) (clip)</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-6 Audio file of male initiation song (with accompaniment) (clip)</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-7 Audio file of dance song (return form gorilla hunt) (clip)</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-8 Audio file of song associated with the spirit “\textit{Jengi}” (clip)</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-9 Audio file of solo lament with harp-zither accompaniment</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-9 Audio file of solo lament with harp-zither accompaniment</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-1 Audio file of \textit{likànò} story “\textit{Lòndò}”</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-1 Audio file of \textit{likànò} story “\textit{Lòndò}”</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-1 Audio file of \textit{likànò} story “\textit{Lòndò}”</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-1 Audio file of rarer \textit{likànò} rhythm (clip)</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-2 Audio file of typical \textit{likànò} rhythm (clip)</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-3 Audio file of \textit{likànò} story “\textit{Sùà te Kùnda}”</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHY KUNDA SINGS: NARRATIVE DISCOURSE AND THE MULTIFUNCTIONALITY OF BAKA SONG IN BAKA STORY

By

Daniel Fitzgerald

May 2011

Chair: Larry Crook
Major: Music

The subject of this dissertation is bë na likànɔ: a genre of song sung in the course of telling a traditional Baka narrative. The Baka people of Cameroon are one of several preliterate people groups in Equatorial Africa. Their culture is primarily oral. Most of what is socially significant is typically marked by oral art, by song in particular. Contrary to the cumulative trope of both the scholarly and popular literature on the music of “pygmy peoples,” the Baka do not simply, nor principally, yodel “wordless” songs. They most often sing songs with words. As one genre of Baka song, likànɔ song is both a specimen of the Baka song tradition and the Baka narrative discourse tradition. No other verbal performance phenomenon produces such an entanglement of Baka music and language as does likànɔ song. My dissertation disentangles the complexes of signs comprising likànɔ song. Its aim is to describe the multiple functions of Baka song in Baka story through an analysis of the semiotic forces that order the complex textual, musical, and contextual interactions of likànɔ music and language. As a primary thesis of my dissertation, I argue that likànɔ song most relevantly and inherently functions as a discourse feature of likànɔ oral narrative. In particular, I
demonstrate that likândo song effects both narrative cohesion and narrative development. Narrative cohesion is achieved generatively, performatively, and intertextually. Narrative development is contextual and climactic in nature. As social acts likândo songs encode multiple socio-cultural functions: among them are social cohesion, collective expression, social critique, shared memory, and shared experience. Thus, when the well-known narrative character Kûnda (Turtle) sings, layers of communicative intent are potentially served. Minimally, Kûnda gives voice to the development of the story’s action and conflict. His voice, however, is narrated, that is, it is embodied by the choir of Baka voices present at and participating in the likândo’s performance. His song is actually their song. He sings because they want to sing. And their reasons for singing Kûnda’s song, in turn, are intimately related to what is sung, how it is sung, when and where it is sung, and who sings it.
1.1 Research Subject, Purposes, Theory, Models, and Motivations

The subject of this dissertation is bè na likànɔː: a genre of song sung in the course of telling a traditional Baka narrative. The Baka people of Cameroon are one of several semi-nomadic, hunter-gatherer people groups in Equatorial Africa, commonly called “pygmies.” Although the Baka are now beginning to learn to farm, their culture is still primarily oral. Most of what is socially significant is typically marked by oral art, by song in particular. Bè na likànɔː—literally, “story’s song,” and glossed as / song / of / story /—can denote song sung with any story.¹ More often, however, it connotes song sung during the telling of a traditional Baka narrative, that is, one with traditional characters, settings, and themes. In order to maintain its traditional connotation, for the remainder of the dissertation I will most often refer to bè na likànɔː as “likànɔː song,” not as “story’s song.”

My study of Baka likànɔː song is an extension of my longstanding investigation of Baka song in general. I first encountered likànɔː song in 1997 during an all-night wake in the Baka encampment of Ndjibot. Since that time, I have found that of all the Baka’s song traditions, no other genre requires so much focused research on the nexus of music and language as does likànɔː song. Indeed, no other verbal performance produces such an entanglement of Baka music and language as does likànɔː song. Fox and Feld (1994) frame “the historical trajectories of thought about language and music in terms of four major predications: music as language, language in music, music in language, and language about music” (26). Any such research approach would be equally
applicable in the study of likànɔ song. My purpose, however, is to discover the functions of Baka song in Baka story through an analysis of the syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic “rules” that order the complex textual, musical, and contextual interactions of likànɔ music and language.

The theoretical framework of this study is based upon the assumption that likànɔ song, if nothing else, is fundamentally a communicative act, a complex human sign. For this reason, I have chosen to approach my subject semiotically, with the specific inductive goal of identifying the chains of musical, textual, and contextual sign forms, references, and effects that are commonly at play in likànɔ song performance. The explanatory power of semiotics lies in the inherent interdisciplinary capacity of its conceptual terminology to identify and explain the integration of the multivalent and multifunctional interactions of seemingly separate domains of communicative phenomena, whether musical, verbal, or contextual. The interdisciplinary evidence of the fruitful application of semiotics to music, anthropology, and linguistics was first proposed to me in the scholarly works of Turino (1999, 2000), Agawu (1991, 2009), Nattiez (1990), Geertz (1973) and Turner (1967) and Jakobson (1973, 1960).

Behind the theoretical strengths of semiotics lies “a happy methodological fault,” in that the capacity of semiotics to interpret so many domains of semiosis also runs the risk of generating an unwieldy body of sign vehicles, that is, too much research data for a single dissertation. For this reason, I have chosen to focus this dissertation on the semiotic processes of likànɔ song’s verbal signs (as distinct, though not separate, from its visual, tactile, meta-physical, or even non-verbal-auditory signs). This seemingly narrower field of data, however, does not then result in a “thin description” of the
research topic. The discourse-centered studies of Bauman (1977), Urban (1982), Sherzer (1987) and Sherzer and Urban (1988) are examples to the contrary. Moreover, to “focus on verbal signs” does not necessarily exclude a thorough investigation of pertinent musical or contextual signs either. “Thick descriptions” of verbal phenomena abound in many full-blown ethnographies of musical performances, as evidenced in the scholarship of Qureshi ([1987], 2006), Coplan (1988), Stone (1988), and Waterman (1990). As ethnographic models, many of these studies suggest enumerable ways to focus on verbal phenomena without reducing them to “mere words.” Instead, potential poetic, musical, and contextual signs are teased out from the performance fabric of diverse speech acts and combed for their significance. In the process of disentangling the complexes of signs comprising ̀likànò song, it has become apparent that, generically, ̀likànò song is not simply sung verbal performance, but rather, sung narrative discourse performance. This song, then, is to be taken as integral to narrative, and in no way incidental. Indeed, as a primary thesis of this dissertation, I argue that ̀likànò song—as a complex sign—most relevantly functions as a discourse feature of ̀likànò narrative, that is, as one, albeit unique, discourse feature among many.

To deduce and recognize ̀likànò song’s potential narrative discourse functions, I have most often consulted the analytical models of discourse analysts Robert Longacre (1996), Joel Sherzer (1986), Stephen Levinsohn and Robert Dooley (2001). The methodologies of Longacre, Dooley, and Levinsohn are held to produce analytical descriptions that approximate “how discourse is actually produced and understood” (Levinsohn and Dooley iii). In short, their research findings are aimed at “application,” and thus, are intended to facilitate the competent communication of actual social acts.
Kathleen Higgens (1981) and Yves Léonard (2003), as examples, have based their complementary text-linguistic analyses of Baka likàndà on the analytical models of Longacre (1996) and Levinsohn (2001). They did so with the expectation that these methodologies would facilitate more apt translations of Baka narrative discourse (Léonard 1997). Léonard’s forthcoming publication of Baka biblical narratives will offer evidence of the aptness of his analytical models.

Having adopted and expanded upon these same models of discourse analysis, I hope to complement Léonard’s analysis by innovatively modeling a suitable research method for perceiving, recognizing, and describing the sung narrative performance features of Baka likàndà. And like Léonard, my goal is not merely to objectively describe Baka narrative but also to subjectively participate in it, if only obliquely. That is why I have adopted a semiotic research approach. For as Clifford Geertz has stated, “The whole point to a semiotic approach is . . . to aid us in gaining access to the conceptual world in which our subjects live so that we can, in some extended sense of the term, converse with them” (1973:24 as cited in Schrag 2005:41). To this end, I have proposed my analysis of likàndà song to Yves Léonard as an indicator of how song might function in new Baka narrative translations (forthcoming).

While the greater part of this dissertation progressively explains how likàndà song informs a Baka narrative performance, its pragmatic (social) functions and effects are of no less importance. I imply as much in the dissertation’s title: “Why Kùnda (Turtle) Sings.” Kùnda is a well-known Baka likàndà character. In the story of “Súà te Kùnda” (“Leopard and Turtle”)—as narrated in Chapter 5—, Kùnda sings. In doing so, he gives voice to some of the story’s action and conflict. But his voice is narrated; that is, it is
embodied by the choir of Baka voices present at and participating in the likànɔ’s performance. *His song is actually their song.* He sings because *they* want to sing. And as it turns out, their reasons for singing the likànɔ song are intimately related—as I hope to show—to who actually sings, what they sing, how they sing, and even when and where they sing.

### 1.2 Research Literature Review

**Baka language and narrative.** My own fieldwork encounters with likànɔ song have been consistently informed (and re-informed) by the treasure of printed collections of traditional Baka stories transcribed and edited by Robert Brisson (1999), Daniel Boursier (1994), Kathleen Higgens (1981), Christa Kilian-Hatz (1989), and Yves Léonard (2003) (Sec. 4.1). To the study of these bodies of texts, I have also added the study of Brisson’s Baka-Français dictionary (1979/1999, 2002), Kilian-Hatz’s study of Baka grammar (1995), Kathleen Philips’s Baka phonology (1981), and Kathleen Higgen’s preliminary discourse analysis and anthropological studies (1981, 1984). Léonard’s unpublished discourse analysis became available to me in 2004. To all these, I then added my own Baka language acquisition routine, and most importantly, the audio and audiovisual documentation of Baka likànɔ and likànɔ-song performances. Of all the documented likànɔ performances mentioned above, initially only my personal collection provided both print and non-print representations of likànɔ performances in social settings. Arom and Renaud’s 1977/1990 recordings of Baka likànɔ only provided thematic synopses of narrative recordings; Brisson, Boursier, and Kilian-Hatz generally appeared to record likànɔ in their “natural” settings, but only published written
transcriptions of their recordings; and while Léonard made both his recordings and transcriptions available to me, the “tellings” he elicited were only done so during one-on-one interviews, that is, without a participating audience. In 2005 Higgens graciously sent me the original audio recordings from which she produced her 1981 text transcriptions (e.g., Sec. 4.3.2).

**Cameroonian music research.** When I arrived in Cameroon in 1995 as a researcher with the Christian faith-based non-governmental organization “SIL,” I did not initially know what language development project I would serve. As a result, my pre-field bibliographic research did not specifically focus on Baka culture, though I was certainly familiar with certain aspects. By 1999, as chronicled in my essay “A Profile of Cameroonian Music Research,” I was thoroughly familiar with the specifically ethnomusicological research carried out in that region of Africa (1999). The scholarship of four Cameroonian researchers, that is, Samuel Martin Eno-Belinga (1965, 1970), Francis Bebey ([1969] 1975, 1982, 1995), Abbé Pie-Claude Ngumu (1964, 1966, 1972a, 1972b, 1976), and Fr. Jean-Marie Bodo (1992, 1996), was of particular interest to me. Their writings, as well as their personal musical creativity, tellingly signaled a collective interest during their lifetimes for maintaining their most valued cultural identities, while still fruitfully engaging with the post-colonial world. My friendship with Fr. Bodo sealed my own commitment to these same interests.

**Music of African hunter-gatherers.** My engagement with the scholarly literature on the music of African hunter-gatherers has generally tended to focus on six to eight authors. I will review them here by summarizing the writings of each and then
characterizing them as a whole. I will conclude by assessing a few of the lacunae in this domain of research.

I do not consider the writings of Colin Turnbull as music research, strictly speaking. However, his 1961 *The Forest People*, his 1965 *Wayward Servants*, and his 1983 *The Mbuti Pygmies: Change and Adaptation* have served subsequent researchers with much helpful information. His earlier 1961 field recordings, *Music of the Rainforest Pygmies*, are, of course, of infinite historical value, but neither he (in his liner notes), nor any others that have followed have offered any substantive interpretive response to those recordings, other than, perhaps, the oft idealized tropes about pygmy egalitarianism and “naturalness.”

Nicholas England, in his brief 1967 article “Bushmen Counterpoint,” presented what appears to be the first (albeit brief) music-centered study of African hunter-gatherers. England presented excerpted transcriptions and a brief analysis of five songs of the Zulu Khuisan people of South West Africa and BechuanaLand. His was the first analysis to posit evidence of contrapuntal techniques in Bushmen vocal music, “the distinctive mark of Bushmen communal music.” Ten years later, Alan Lomax’s *Folk Song Style and Culture* (1968) and *Cantometrics: An Approach to the Anthropology of Music* (1976) also briefly included two other overtly “analytical” approaches to pygmy music, but eventually faded in explanatory power for lack of detailed, sustained ethnography.

In 1971, Charlotte Frisbie published the article “Anthropological and Ethnomusicological Implications of a Comparative Analysis of Bushmen and African Pygmy Music.” Three descriptive categories profile the music of African Bushmen and
Pygmies: instruments, vocal music, and musical styles and structures. Frisbie’s comparison of these three profiles suggests a high degree of similarity between Bushmen and Pygmy music, and are allegedly confirmed in other studies by Lomax, Grimaud and Rouget, Grauer, and Merriam. In turn, these similar profiles are said to support anthropologist G.P. Murdock’s claim that the two pygmy groups have a common historical region of origin.

The first sustained fieldwork on the music of the Aka people of C.A.R. was undertaken by French-Israeli ethnomusicologist, Simha Arom. Arom’s publications peaked in the early 1990s. The subsequent publications of those whom he mentored at the French C.R.N.S. research institute are still accumulating, though with less regularity. The works of Susanne Fünniss and Emmanuel Olivier are most notable. Fünniss has most recently made research trips among the Baka in Cameroon, though to my knowledge, no print publications have as yet resulted.

The bulk of the research carried out by Arom and his group at C.R.N.S. focuses on music analysis, that is, analyses of “scales,” “modes,” “polyphonies,” “polyrhythms,” “hocketing,” “yodeling,” etc.. Contextual studies, however, are not altogether neglected, as illustrated in Arom’s African Polyphony and Polyrhythm (1991), and Olivier’s “The Ju||hoansi Bushmen’s Conception of their Musical World” (1998). Still, (cognitive-) musico-structural analysis is clearly their research emphasis. The following three paragraphs briefly indicate the scope and method of their research.

Arom’s 1978 audio recordings, Centrafrique: Anthologie de la Musique des Pygmées Aka, document thirty-two audio music events of the Aka Pygmies in southwestern Central African Republic. The recordings are accompanied by a thirty-two page
booklet of his commentary on Aka life and music, and more than half of that commentary is given to ethnographic description of the recordings. Arom’s article “The Use of Play-Back Techniques in the Study of Oral Polyphonies” (1976) posits that all music traditions are coherent systems of cognition, and in order to analyze the constituent elements of a music system, the transcription of music is held as necessary to the analytical process. To facilitate the analysis, especially of multi-part textures, his innovative “play-back” recording technique is explained and applied. Similarly, in his article “Modélisation et Modèles dans les Musiques de Tradition Orales” (1991), Arom posits that the scientific method can and has demonstrated the existence of coherent systems of music cognition in oral societies, and that these, therefore, can be theorized, generalized, and taught. Arom’s African Polyphony and Polyrhythm: Musical Structure and Methodology (1991) is his most well-known study. It is not, however, a study of pygmy music exclusively, but of the polyphony and polyrhythm found in much of central Africa. This book-length work is primarily a synchronic study aimed (again) at the discovery of the underlying principles of musical forms. Broader contextual elements are intermittently addressed as well. Arom’s research theory, methodology, and analysis are explained along with 450 music transcriptions as supporting evidence. The resulting analysis claims sufficient findings to be able to generate “new” versions of central African music, which “traditional musicians are likely to find acceptable.”

Susanne Fürniss’s “Recherches Scalaires chez les Pygmées Aka” (1991a) gives an account of the research process that Fürniss undertook in discovering the Aka Pygmies’s use of “une échelle pentatonique anhémitonique … basé sur l’agencement vertical des intervalles en certains points prédéterminés.” Fürniss’s article “La
Technique du Jodel chez les Pygmées Aka (Centrafrique): Étude Phonétique et Acoustique” (1991b) presents a phonetic and acoustic study of the vocal technique commonly called “yodeling” as performed in the familiar polyphonic vocal music of the Aka Pygmies. Her acoustic and phonetic analysis of Aka song recordings, complete with charts, music transcriptions, and “sonagrammes,” argues that the most striking characteristics of yodel execution and timbre result from two alternating articulatory mechanisms, sung with specific vowels, on particular constitutive degrees of a scale system. Later, in “Rigueur et Liberté: La Polyphonie Vocale des Pygmées Aka” (1993), Fürniss explains how processes of thematic variation generate variations on the governing melodic pattern of one polyphonic Aka pygmy song, illustrating “the phenomenon that Aka music cognition is essentially polyphonic.” Her 2006 article, “Aka Polyphony: Music, Theory, Back, and Forth,” takes much the same approach.

In 1996, Emmanuelle Olivier and Suzanne Fürniss revisited the question of the relationship of pygmy music and Bushmen music in their article “Musique Pygmée/Musique Bochiman: Nouveaux Éléments de Comparaison.” They conclude that both music traditions are “multi-voiced,” though only pygmy music is strictly polyphonic, while Bushmen’s is monophonic. Yet as similar as these two traditions appear, they are said to be conceived of differently by their practitioners. Two years later, in 1998, Olivier published a more context-oriented study in the article “Jü|’hoansi Bushmen’s Conception of their Musical World.” In it, Olivier profiles the local meanings assigned to the interrelated musical and social entities of the Jü|’hoansi Bushmen music. Two broad genres of song are then posited: “healing songs and non-healing songs.”
In 1995, around the same time that the C.R.N.S. group was publishing so prodigiously, Louis Sarno published both *Bayaka: The Extraordinary Music of the BaBenzele Pygmys and the Sounds of Their Forest* and *Song from the forest: my life among the Ba-Benjellé Pygmies*. In both works, Sarno chronicles his sustained experience among the Bayaka/Ba-Benjelle. Both accounts are more journalistic than scholarly in style. Bayaka, in particular, is part diary, part ethnography, part photo-essay, social commentary, and multimedia presentation. The oft idealized narrative of pygmy life is prevalent.

In sharp contrast with both the musico-structural research orientation of the C.N.R.S. research group and the idealized accounts of Sarno, Arom, Lomax, and others, Michelle Kisliuk—in her 1991 dissertation “Confronting the Quintessential: Singing, Dancing, and Everyday life among the Biaka Pygmies”—challenges “the utopian myth” of African egalitarian societies. Kisliuk’s reflexive ethnographic analysis strikingly shifts the scholarly research focus from decidedly musical questions to socio-musical questions. Her ethnography highlights the social negotiation of gender tensions as performed in a particularly popular Biaka dance, a dance controlled by Biaka women. Music transcription and analysis is secondary to Kisliuk’s socio-cultural emphasis. A similar ethnographic approach is found in many of her subsequent publications (1997, 1998a, 1998b, and 2000). Her book *Seize the Dance* (a reworking of her dissertation material) is regularly cited in ethnomusicological literature.

Kisliuk’s ethnographies regularly address issues of gender, identity, performance, and reflexivity. Her 1997 essay “(Un)doing Fieldwork: Sharing Lives, Sharing Songs” further underscores her research ‘journey’ as she narrates her concern for the identity
of the field researcher, the challenge of writing about field experience, and the problem of interpreting the relevance of those experiences.

It is said by some that Kisliuk’s reflexive writing style runs the risk of self-indulgence, that readers learn more about her than her research “object” (Agawu 2003: 214–218). My perspective on Kisliuk’s reflexive description is not the same as most readers. Having lived among the Baka in Cameroon for a similar period of time, I am not as much at a loss as a typical reader when it comes to imagining what it feels like to dance, sing, play, talk, get angry, cry, and laugh with African pygmy peoples. Thus, the initial impact and attraction of her personal narrative—for me—is blunted. However, the fundamental point of her thick sociological representation is certainly not lost: that is, Aka or Baka or Mbuti music does not take place in a vacuum—or on audio recordings, or in musical transcriptions—but in Aka, Baka, or Mbuti communities. And to the degree that anyone might want to participate relevantly in such music-making, is the degree to which they would need to gain an adequate understanding of the social codes and cues that permeate these musical performances.

Among all the scholars representing the music of African pygmy peoples, the C.N.R.S. group and Michelle Kisliuk are the only authors who have published book-length studies. One publication privileges “the music itself,” while the other privileges the music’s context; and both focus on a single genre. My field recordings suggest that there are still many more genres and contexts yet to be described fruitfully (Sec. 1.6 and Fig. 2-1). This dissertation, therefore, will describe yet another, though not another study from the Aka music tradition. To my knowledge, this will be the first book-length study of a Baka music tradition.
Poetic analyses. There are other lacunae as well. One of the most conspicuous lacunae in the research literature related to this region of Africa, and of hunter-gatherer peoples in general, is in the area of poetic analysis of song. Poetic analysis is all too often reserved as the property of literary criticism, not linguistics—and certainly not ethnomusicology. But if my analysis of likànò song is to begin to penetrate the “interpenetration” of sound and sense in music and language, an analysis of song-text poetics is obligatory. The primary guide in my research of song-text poetics is loosely modeled after linguist Roman Jakobson’s well-known semiotic “principle of equivalence” (1960, 1966, 1973; Sec. 3.1). To this principle, I have added Banti and Giannattasio’s notion of “poetically organized discourse” (2004; Sec. 3.1 and Sec. 4.3.2.2). Numerous “lesser” poetic concepts have also found their way into my analysis, some from structural linguistics and literary criticism; others from ethnopoetics, folkloristics, orality studies, the ethnography of speaking and ethnomusicology. Of the scholarship from these areas that have marked me the most, the writings of Frisbie (1980), Feld (1982), Coplan (1988), Kindell (1996), Finnegan (1977, 1992, 2007), and Feld, Fox, Porcello, and Samuels (2004) have been most helpful.

intermittently—and in widely varying degrees of ethnographic detail—, the last twenty-five years of ethnomusicology’s fruitful interdisciplinary dialogue with linguistics, anthropology, sociology, and literary studies have progressively drawn attention to the role of music and song in the narrative discourse of oral traditions (e.g., Ben-Amos 1975; Coplan 1987, 1988, 1994; Stone 1988; Yung 1989; Kisliuk 1991; Opland 1983; Agawu 1995; Charry 2000; Seeger [1987] 2004; Stock 2006). My dissertation on “Baka song in Baka story” seeks to build on the momentum and collective understanding of these earlier studies, though it particularly strives to describe, analyze, and interpret in greater detail the nexus of the interplay of a narrative’s sung multivalent, multifunctional musical, textual, and contextual signs.

1.3 Description of Chapters

The formal development of my dissertation is organized in five chapters. I began the present chapter (Chapter 1) by introducing my research subject, purposes, and motivations. Concomitantly, I have described the constellation of theoretical and methodological approaches that have most stimulated, and constrained, my research. The interdisciplinary nature of this study was reflected in the preceding review of the scholarly literature pertinent to Baka language and narrative, Cameroonian music research, the music of African hunter-gatherers, poetic analyses, and oral narrative research. In the remainder of this chapter I will shift from introducing my research approach to introducing my research setting. In Sections 1.4 and 1.5, I will describe select demographic, geographic, historic, linguistic, social, and cultural generalities about the Baka people themselves. And in Section 1.6, I will sketch the setting of my
research interactions with the Baka, and conclude with an outline of the scope of the research data.

In Chapter 2, entitled “Baka Verbal Performance in Song, Story, and Story’s Song,” I begin my argument that =Gana, song is not so much “musical” performance as it is “verbal” performance, or rather, verbal performance that is particularly poetically, musically, narratively, and socially “marked.” Thus, as a type of verbal performance, =Gana song not only shares characteristic marks of both sung and narrated verbal performance types, but also bears distinctive song and story marks of its own. In Sections 2.2 and 2.3—under the headings of “Poetic Verbal Performance” and “Narrative Verbal Performance”—I frame Baka song and story as particular verbal performance types as well. Subsequently, in Section 2.4—entitled “Sung Narrative Verbal Performance”—I specify =Gana song as a unique sub-type of both story and song.

In Chapter 3, entitled “Baka Song-text Poetics,” I expand on Section 2.2 of Chapter 2 (“Verbal Poetic Performance”) by setting out a detailed inventory of Baka songs’ poetic devices. Section 3.3 covers Rhythmic Poetic Devices; Section 3.4.3 introduces Syntactic Poetic Devices; Section 3.4.4: Lexical Devices; Section 3.4.5: Phonological Devices; and Section 3.4.6: Semantic Devices. Section 3.5 concludes by introducing the potential effects of the cumulative patterning of these poetic devices.

Chapter 4, entitled “Baka =Gana-song as a Discourse Feature of Baka Story,” expands on Sections 2.3 and 2.4 of Chapter 2 (i.e., “Narrative Verbal Performance” and “Sung Narrative Verbal Performance,” respectively). I do so by tackling two fundamental questions regarding =Gana-song: that is, “Why do Baka stories include song?” and “What is the relationship of Baka songs to Baka stories?” The introductory
section (Section 4.1, “The Performance Relationship of Baka Story and Song”) explores the potential “performance integrity” of song and story, not just in Baka narrative performance, but throughout Africa. Are songs incidental to story, or intrinsic? In what ways and to what degree? In Sections 4.2 and 4.3, I progressively argue that likànò song is intrinsic to likànò story, both as a signifying force of narrative cohesion and narrative development. In Section 4.2, I explain that likànò song effects narrative discourse cohesion *generatively, performatively,* and *textually.* Then in Section 4.3, I demonstrate how likànò song signifies both *contextual* development and *climactic* development.

In the final chapter (Chapter 5, entitled “Why Kùnda Sings”) I finally examine the complex of symbolic, iconic, and indexical signs of song—musical signs, textual signs, and contextual signs—in a single likànò narrative performance: “Sùà te Kùnda” (“Leopard and Turtle”). Section 5.1 of Chapter 5 situates the performance of “Sùà te Kùnda” as one narrative performance among thirteen performed one evening in the Baka camp of Ndjibot. In Section 5.2, I narrate “the performance of that performance,” that is, I describe the particular musical, textual, and contextual song features—and their narrative functions—that progressively unite, develop, and distinguish the story of Sùà te Kùnda. I then highlight the fact that songs in Sùà te Kùnda are sung by the narrative character Kùnda (Turtle). Kùnda’s voice, however, is actually performed (enacted, embodied) by all in attendance that evening. As a result, layers of communicative intent and effects are simultaneously signified. And “why Kùnda sings” is set out in the conclusion.
1.4 The Baka People

1.4.1 Designations

“Pygmy” peoples are often spoken of as if they were culturally homogeneous. This, of course, is not true; and the failure to recognize the distinctives of each group is an unfortunate hindrance to an adequate understanding of the unique identities and experiences of each group.

Traditionally, the Baka are one of several semi-nomadic, hunter-gatherer people groups in Equatorial Africa, commonly called “pygmies.” The generic designation ‘pygmy’ (apart from how it may be politically construed) recognizes certain phenotypical and cultural similarities among these people groups. Figure 1-1 plots approximate locations of these groups under seven commonly held ethnonyms: the Mbuti, Twa, Aka, Bongo, Baka, Tikar, and Bagieli.

Pygmy identities, however, are further distinguished by more than twenty-five designations, each reflecting the perceptions of any number of local or academic communities. The Baka themselves are variously referred to as Bangombe, Bebayaka, Babinga, Bibaya, and Baka. Baka is the designation most widely used. The people in the Baka camps of Ndjobot and Nomedjo—where I have lived and worked—call themselves and their language, Baka (Fig. 1-2).

1.4.2 Demographic, Geographic, and Historic Generalities

There are an estimated 250,000 to 350,000 African ‘pygmies,’ 30,000 to 50,000 of which are Baka (Survival 1998:1, 3). The Baka are spread throughout the adjoining rainforests of Cameroon, Gabon, and Congo, the largest concentration living in Cameroon. The Baka form the largest of Cameroon’s three pygmy groups—the Tikar,
Bagieli, and Baka (Fig. 1-1). The Baka encampment of Ndjibot has an average population of three hundred to four hundred people; the camp of Nomdjo is nearly twice as populated.

A synthesis of current studies tends to link the Baka with the Aka and Mbuti pygmies, biologically, linguistically, and historically. The emerging hypothesis suggests that approximately 1000 AD a common ancestry of these three groups migrated west from the Ituri Rainforest (currently located in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo). Those that remained in the Ituri became known as the Mbuti people; those that settled in western Central African Republic became “the Aka”; and those that finally reached southeastern Cameroon emerged as “the Baka” (Duke 2001:8–13; Bahuchet and Thomas 1986:90; Thomas 1991:19; Bahuchet 1993b:49).

1.5 Baka Language

1.5.1 Language Classification

For all that may point to how similar the Baka, Aka, and Mbuti people groups are, it must be remembered that they do not speak the same language. The Baka and Aka, for example, may live in relatively close proximity and even share a significant number of forest terms, but the Baka speak a Ubangian language, while the Aka speak a Bantu language. Thus, while both languages spring from the Niger-Congo language family, they are still removed from each other by at least five language family strataums (Fig. 1-3). Baka and Aka, then, are as far removed from each other as, say, Italian and Russian.

The linguistic bases of Baka and Aka, then, are critically different and therefore do not have the same phonological, grammatical, or prosodic resources to poetically
exploit. So, as tempting and common as it is to cast the Baka and Aka in the same mold, their songs (sung in two different languages) are not mutually intelligible. Even if by some miracle their texts suddenly became mutually intelligible (propositionally), the poetic and rhetorical effect of those texts would still be of no effect, as neither party would be familiar with the patterns of sounds, structures, and senses poetically at play; and the loss of a lyric’s poetic effect is no lyric at all.

1.5.2 Linguistic Structures

The “poetic function” rests upon the poetic exploitation of fundamental linguistic elements of a received language tradition. Poetic devices depend upon the perception of distinctive linguistic features for their poetic effect. Perception of the following basic linguistic features of the Baka language is prerequisite to the perception of Baka poetic devices.

1.5.2.1 Phonology

Phonemes: consonants, vowels, tones, and syllables. The raw materials of phonological-level poetic devices (e.g., alliteration, consonance, assonance, homophony, and meter, as in Sec. 3.2) are taken from a language’s distinct phonemic and phonological features. Baka has a basic inventory of thirty-two phonemes: twenty-five phonemic consonants and seven phonemic vowels. Figure 1-4 presents a table of the Baka consonants.

Baka’s twenty-one phonemic vocalic sounds are derived from seven phonemic, short vowels, as shown in Figure 1-5. Each vowel may take three tone heights.12
Baka is a tone language with a register tone system of three level tones: high, mid, and low. Examples 1–3 illustrate the effects of these three phonemic tones on a single morphemic segment (la).

Example 1: a high tone (/á/) on /lá/ is glossed as ‘catfish.’
Example 2: an (unmarked) mid tone (/∅/) on /la/ is glossed as ‘sleep.’
Example 3: a low tone (/à/) on /là/ is glossed as ‘who.’

There are two Baka syllable types; both carry one obligatory vowel and one tone. The smallest dynamic syllable consists of a single vowel (V), while the second type carries a consonant onset (CV). As a result, with the exception of ideophones, some proper names, and a few Bantu loan words, no Baka word may contain a consonant cluster and all Baka morphemes end in a vowel (Phillips 1981:19; Killian-Hatz [1995] 2004:8–9).

1.5.2.2 Morphology and syntax

Syntactic poetic units are composed of grammatical phrases (Pinsky 1998:28, 34). Baka grammar, as outlined by Killian-Hatz, employs four basic grammatical structures. From smallest to largest, they are (1) the nominal phrase, (2) non-verbal clause types, (3) the simple sentence, and (4) complex sentences. A Baka simple sentence has an SVO structure with the direct object competing with an indirect object for the slot following the verb (Kilian-Hatz 9–14).

In addition to these four basic structures, Baka grammar is marked by three striking linguistic devices: vowel lengthening (e.g., Example 4; see also Sec. 3.2), reduplication (e.g., Example 5; see also Sec. 3.2), and ideophones (e.g., Example 6; see also Sec. 3.2) (Kilian-Hatz 37–40).
Example 4: vowel lengthening: of the verb jo (‘to eat’):

\[ \text{joooono, } \text{‘é } \text{ à jo } \text{ pàmè.} \]

\[ \text{eat... } \text{3.SG.H IMPV eat.PRES wild boar} \]

*He’s taking a long time to eat the wild boar.* (Kilian-Hatz 40)

Example 5: reduplication: of the verb gò (‘to go’):

\[ \text{‘é } \text{ à gò gò gò gò gò} \]

\[ \text{3.SG.H IMPV go.PRES go.VN go.VN go.VN go.VN} \]

*He walks on and on.... (for a long time).* (ibid.)

Example 6: ideophone

\[ \text{mo } \text{ ô } \text{jè’?} \]

\[ \text{2.SG PFV hear.PRES.ITR kpèèh!} \]

Can you hear? ‘kpèèh’ (= a twig breaks)! (ibid.)

These fundamental grammatical structures and devices, then, also become the building blocks of syntactic-level poetic constructions (e.g., strophes, stanzas, phrase repetitions, parallelisms, enjambment (see also Sec. 3.2).

1.5.3 Semantics

Semantically, Baka is marked by “extreme polysemy.” Morphemes with ten or more functions are by no means rare, but rather characteristic of the language (Kilian-Hatz 1, 170). The particle / tɛ /, for example, is defined as follows in a lexicon entry by Brisson & Boursier:


Kilian-Hatz suggests as many as nineteen functions for the grammaticalization of / tɛ / as the comitative preposition “with” (70). She concludes,

This multiple synonymy ... does not follow necessity, but rather has a different motivation - the creativity of the speaker who wishes to achieve *stylistic variation.* (emphasis added, 170)
Kilian-Hatz’s diachronic analysis further proposes that Baka language change is not so much driven by phonological convenience, as by a progression of semantic variations,

...[a] creative act which gives rise to a polyfunctional chain [that] takes place in tiny steps by way of *metaphoric-metonymic shifts* in meaning through expansion of context. (emphasis added, 3)

Stylistic variation, through metaphor and metonymy, are, of course, common elements of poetic expression. To find them in elemental grammatical strategies like polysemy suggests that the Baka language tends by nature toward poetic expression. Thus, metaphor and metonymy function not only diachronically, as fundamental grammatical devices at work in Baka language change, but synchronically, as semantic-level poetic devices in Baka song texts (Sec. 3.2). Such stylistic strategies intensify, however, when perceptions move from “non-poetic” to poetic structures.

1.5.4 Sociolinguistics: Language Change

Baka language, then, like any living language, is a language in process. In addition to internal causes of language change, as demonstrated in the dynamics of polysemy, certain external forces are also at work effecting change. The most obvious external dynamics of Baka language change are Baka-Bantu relations, modernization, sedentarization, and deforestation. Their effects on songtexts are most readily seen in new lexical and thematic material.

Much lexical change is born of Baka-Bantu relations. Baka encampments are spread throughout the vast adjoining rainforests of Cameroon, Gabon, and Congo. This loose web of Baka-speaking communities is in contact with more than twenty-five
Bantu language groups.\textsuperscript{14} Each camp may be in vital everyday contact with as many as one to three neighboring Bantu communities. Baka camps commonly borrow Bantu words from their nearest Bantu neighbors. Some borrowed words find only limited local use, while others become more widely and commonly used.\textsuperscript{15} Some, then, enter song texts, and thus, the Baka lexicon changes. The Baka camps represented in this study lie within three to five kilometers of a Bantu speaking village: the Baka speakers in Ndjibot, for example, are flanked by Makaa and Mpoumpoum villages; and the Baka in Mbalam and Menzo are neighbors to Badwe’e-speaking villages (see maps in Fig. 1-6). Many of my text transcriptions reflect this borrowing.

Further lexical change is brought on by the spread of the national language, that is, French. French is slowly coming into use among Baka speakers through modern educational, political, commercial, spiritual, medical, and technological institutions. Daily speech and songtexts reflect an ever increasing use of French loan words, not to mention more subtle changes in Baka phonology, syntax, and semantics. Through these “modern” institutions, not only does Baka language change, but also Baka experience. As a result, new thematic materials gradually enter Baka songtexts.\textsuperscript{16 17}

While sedentarization and deforestation may not so much effect grammatical change, they do, like modernization, effect changes in cultural themes. The gradual shift from a lifestyle of hunting and gathering to farming, from a life in the forest to a life in a village is a fundamental change of experience. The themes of everyday conversation, as well as the themes of newly composed songtexts, reflect this experience.\textsuperscript{18} But songtexts in any culture are characteristically marked by what has
already been or what may very well become the most highly valued common experiences of a community.

1.5.5 Section Summary

In summary, Baka song texts are fundamentally informed by numerous anthropological, linguistic, and sociological forces, some of which may be summarized as follows: Anthropologically, Baka song texts are thematically marked by the Baka people’s particular experience as semi-nomadic, “pygmy,” hunter-gatherer forest dwellers of equatorial Africa. Linguistically, Baka song texts are deeply marked by the typological features of Ubangian languages, as well as the distinctive features of the Baka language. For instance, phonologically, Baka is distinguished by a phonemic inventory of thirty-two phonemes (twenty-five consonants and seven vowels), a register tone system of three level tones (high, mid, and low), and two syllable types (V and CV). And syntactically, Baka is primarily characterized by four basic grammatical units: the nominal syntagm, non-verbal clause types, the simple sentence (with an SVO structure), and complex sentences and secondarily characterized by three other striking linguistic devices: vowel lengthening, reduplication, and ideophones. Semantically, Baka is marked by extreme polysemy. Sociolinguistically, the Baka language is undergoing obvious lexical change (through lexical borrowing, in particular) due to dynamics of “Baka-Bantu relations” and modernization. Literary themes are changing as well, due to modernization, sedentarization, and deforestation.

1.6 Research Data Sample

Most of the ethnographic data on which this dissertation is based—e.g., audio and audio-visual recordings, text transcriptions, music transcriptions, photographs and
fieldnotes—is derived from seven years of sustained fieldwork among Baka speakers in the southeastern rainforest of Cameroon. During my initial period of fieldwork, from November 1996 to May 1998, I documented more than four hundred field recordings of Baka song performances. These performances took place in five Baka camps scattered along 175 kilometers of the Abong Mbang-Lomie Road in the Eastern Province of Cameroon (Fig. 1-6, Map 4).

During my fieldwork my family and I first lived in the Baka camp of Ndjibot (Fig. 1-6, Map 4, B). The research data cited in Chapter 5 is exclusively drawn from music performances in Ndjibot (Sec. 5.1). The data for Chapters 2 and 3 was documented from performance events in the camps of Ndjibot, Mayos, Mbalam, Malen/Menzo, and “le Bosquet” (Fig. 1-6, Map 4; see also, Sec. 3.1). Two years later, my family and I relocated to the Baka camp of Nomedjo—100 kilometers south of Ndjibot—and resided there from August 2001 to June 2004, and (intermittently) from August 2005 to June 2008 (maps in Figure 1-2 and Fig. 1-6, Map 4, F). During our sojourn in Nomedjo I added and documented numerous additional field recordings and ethnographic metadata.

The research data for Chapter 4 is drawn from my fieldwork in Ndjibot and Nomedjo, though greatly augmented by extensive research documentation from Pères Robert Brisson (1999) and Daniel Boursier (1994), and linguists Yves Léonard (2005), Kathleen Higgens (1981), and Christa Kilian-Hatz (1989). Collectively, the recordings, transcriptions, and analyses of these five researchers represent sung narrative performances of Baka likànò that span some thirty years (i.e., 1973–2005) and take place in regions of the equatorial rainforest as near as 100 kilometers in proximity, or
as far as 400 kilometers (Map 3 in Fig. 1-6). This sample, then, represents the most geographically, historically, and socio-linguistically diverse data sample possible from known existing documentation of Baka likànɔ̀ performance.
Figure 1-1. Map of central-African hunter-gatherers\textsuperscript{20}

Nomedjo

Figure 1-2. Map of Baka camp of Nomedjo\textsuperscript{21}
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>language classification stratum</th>
<th>BAKA</th>
<th>AKA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>phylum</td>
<td>ng.krd</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sub-phylum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family</td>
<td>north</td>
<td>ben.cng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>branch</td>
<td>ad.mwa</td>
<td>bntld</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sub-branch</td>
<td>ubngi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>group</td>
<td>sre-ngbaka-mba</td>
<td>bntu C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(western oubangi)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language</td>
<td>BAKA</td>
<td>AKA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1-3. Comparison of Baka and Aka language classifications.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>bilabial</th>
<th>dental alveolar</th>
<th>palatal</th>
<th>velar</th>
<th>labio-velar</th>
<th>pharyngeal</th>
<th>glottal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nasal</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>η</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plosive</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>kp</td>
<td>gb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fricative</td>
<td>Φ</td>
<td>w</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>affricative</td>
<td></td>
<td>dz</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prenasalized</td>
<td>mb</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td>ndz</td>
<td>ng</td>
<td>ηgb</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lateral</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>l</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trill</td>
<td></td>
<td>(r)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>implosive</td>
<td>b</td>
<td></td>
<td>d</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1-4. Table of Baka consonants (Kilian-Hatz [1995] 2004:6; Brisson and Boursier 1979:VI; Léonard 2009:1) Note: Transcriptions of Baka texts (depending upon the transcriber) variously represent [ɲ] as [ny], [ŋ] as [ng], [Φ] as [p] or [f], [j] as [y], [dz] as [j], [ŋ] as [ng], [ŋgb] as [ngb], [ndz] as [nj], [ʔ] as [ʔ] or [‘] or [‘]  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Central</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half closed</td>
<td>e</td>
<td></td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half open</td>
<td>ε</td>
<td></td>
<td>ɔ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1-5. Baka vowel system (Brisson 1979:V)
Grammatically, *na* (‘of’) is more a genitive marker than a benefactive or possessive marker (see Kilian-Hatz 1995, translated in 2004 into an unpublished English version by Yves Léonard.

Longacre, Levinsohn, Dooley, Higgens, and Léonard have been or are currently members of SIL. Examples of SIL’s research applications can be accessed through their Website at http://www.sil.org/.

Much of the same could be said of Grimaud and Rouget’s earlier 1957 recordings.

The Baka are *primarily* hunter-gatherers, gradually learning to farm.

For further explanation and discussion of the term “pygmy” see Bahuchet (1993c), Kisliuk (1998:6), and Duke (2001:5).


Variously referred to as Bayaka, Baaka, Ba-Aka, Biaka, Ba-MbeneleBa-Banjelle, Bambenga, Babenga, Benga (Duke 2001:10)


Further study might be given to describing how Baka song texts do (or do not) reflect and exploit the distinctive features of Ubangian languages.


See /pe/ “back” and /na/ “of” for other exemplary polysemic morphemes (see Kilian-Hatz 2004: Sec. 3.8.1 and Sec. 3.10.3 ‘na’).

See also, any of Brisson’s lexicon entries marked (K), i.e., Kakɔ̀ (‘non-Baka’) (1979).

On the other hand, old themes may be re-contextualized or disappear all together.

For example, my field recordings #A082097I-II (Catholic Church songs); #A113097A (plucked ideophone songs, one about the governmental sedentarization program); #A102497 (children’s game songs wherein “school” is mentioned); #A042197 (aita accomp. Lomie Catholic church song); #A040397 (youth dance song: one about village rivalries).

Ibid.

In Nomedjo I acquired a level 3 ILR (FSI) Baka language proficiency.


Ibid.


Kilian-Hatz and Léonard add the pharyngeal fricative [h] which occurs mainly in ideophones and borrowed words, also marginally as an initial consonant.

Kilian-Hatz adds the alveolar trill [r] which occurs in ideophones and loan words which have become part of the lexicon of Baka.
CHAPTER 2
BAKA VERBAL PERFORMANCE IN SONG, STORY, AND STORY’S SONG

“The relationship of music to language is an enormously broad area of research” (Feld and Fox 1994:26). Feld and Fox reference 379 research works in their 1994 review of the English literature on interdisciplinary studies of the relationship of music and language. “Ethnomusicological surveys…and substantial musical, linguistic, and literary dissertations…indicate how this vast interdisciplinary literature links research in musicology, acoustics, linguistics, literary studies, philosophy, psychology, and anthropology, and continues to inspire conferences, symposia, and research across these disciplines” (ibid.). The bibliography of my dissertation, moreover, suggests that the subject of music and language is of no less interest to researchers today than it was sixteen years ago.

Two years after Feld and Fox’s review, I began my fieldwork among the Baka people of Cameroon. At that time, however, I had no explicit intention to focus my research on the nexus of Baka music and language. My interests then generally lay in musico-structural phenomena, melody in particular. Eventually, however, as my collection of early field recordings grew, a surprisingly verbal dimension of Baka music became apparent. My awareness of this dimension of Baka music was first triggered by the elemental discovery that no matter how many field recordings I collected, most recorded songs remained an enigma to me insofar as I remained ignorant of what—semantically speaking—the Baka were singing about. For to my surprise, the Baka never seemed to “just make music”; they sang songs—songs with words. Contrary to what I had earlier and passively come to expect from the cumulative trope of both the
scholarly and popular literature on the music of “pygmy peoples,” the Baka did not simply, nor principally, yodel “wordless” songs. To be sure, “the most striking features of Pygmy music include the often wordless yodelling that results in disjunct melodies, usually with descending contours…and densely textured multi-part singing” (Cooke and Kisliuk 2008:1). Yet, yodeled song styles are but one among many other styles. And more importantly, for the Baka music tradition in particular, there are numerous other stylistic aspects of their music tradition that are no less relevant to them depending upon the performance context they serve.

In as little time as the first three months of my fieldwork, I also became aware of the enormous variety of Baka music styles and settings. The breadth of song styles represented in Simha Arom and Patrick Renaud’s 1977 recordings of Baka music should have adequately prepared me for this variety (1990). But the prevailing “World Music trope” of the “yodel-like, hocket style choral polyphony sung by pygmy women”—as well as my own initial fascination with that vocal style—predisposed me to expect otherwise. Eventually, however, my own field recordings revealed a broader repertoire. Figure 2-1 lists all of the song performance styles that I have thus far documented with audio or audio-visual media. The maps in Chapter 1, Sec. 1.6 indicate the geographical locations of these recordings; Chapter 3, Sec. 3.1 summarizes their attending cultural themes, composition histories, and performance practices. I do not intend to imply any kind of song taxonomy in this list (i.e., Fig. 2-1). However, the Baka “terms” for these groupings of song performances do generally seem to identify groups of song compositions according to similar constellations of stylistic and/or contextual features. That said, the list is still only intended to provide an
introductory impression of the stylistic breadth of the whole of their song tradition. More pertinently, the listing also introduces likànɔ song, the subject of this dissertation, as one among many other song performance types.

Likànɔ song is listed third in the table. As indicated, the social context of likànɔ song is most often a funeral or a hunt. Occasionally, it occurs during a divination ritual, or even during evening recreation. What is not explicitly indicated in the table is that the typical verbal discourse context of likànɔ song is oral narrative discourse (see also, Sec. 4.1.2). Likànɔ song, then, is both a specimen of the Baka song tradition and the Baka narrative discourse tradition. As such, it exhibits certain characteristic verbal performance elements of both song and story, while simultaneously distinguishing itself from other Baka song genres and narrative discourse features. The aim of the rest of this chapter is to introduce some of the more salient generalities of all three verbal performance types—songs, stories, and stories’-songs—in order to contextualize the more detailed descriptions of particular Baka song, story, and story-song features presented in Chapters 3, 4, and 5.

2.1 Baka Verbal Performance

To reiterate, Baka song, story, and story’s-song are types of Baka verbal performance (Bauman 1992). Ethnographies of verbal performance commonly comprise a complex of research approaches, drawing most often on research practices in performance theory, the ethnography of speaking, discourse analysis, and ethnopoetics (Finnegan 1992: 29–52). From a macro-level research orientation, performance theory recognizes verbal performance as but one cultural performance
type within a continuum of performance types (cf. Herndon and Brunyate 1975; McLeod and Herndon 1980). As a mid-level research orientation, the ethnography of speaking specifies the particularities of distinctive “speech acts.” The most fundamental distinction is between “everyday” speech patterns (the default pattern) and “performed” speech patterns. Such ethnographies claim that the patterns of “everyday speech,” when altered, are distinguished from “performed speech” by the execution of culture-specific “strategic devices” that “mark” “frame,” “key,” “cue,” and “codify” particular verbal acts for particular social purposes (Bauman 1977, 1986, 1992, 1998; Sherzer 1987; Dooley 2001).

Baka speakers identify a variety of speech acts. The Baka lexicon records a range of at least nine types of speech behaviors. Figure 2-2 displays a table of lexical entries of the most prevalent Baka speech act terms, along with their typical collocating verbs.

From these sets of lexical entries, I observe a repertoire of nine speech acts and their typical collocating verbs. Thus, in the Baka language someone may be said to

1. speak a word or have a discussion (ngômà);
2. make conversation (lômù);
3. explain formal counsel (kàlò);
4. give personal advice (lèwù);
5. relate an account (mòsimò);
6. tell, recount, or narrate a story, legend, or fable (lìkànò);
7. recount an allegory, proverb, or dictum (gbòngòngò);
8. strike a comparison or speak a parable (mbàli);
9. sing (be) a song (be). (Brisson 2002; Kilian-Hatz 1989)

The two terms ngômà (‘discussion’) and lômù (‘conversation’) implicitly identify an “ordinary,” “unmarked” “speech style,” that is, a Baka speaker’s “everyday linguistic
code.” The other seven terms—kålɔ, lɛwù, mòsimò, lìkànɔ, ghɔngɔngɔ, mbàli, and bè—, however, identify a “special,” “variant,” “marked [speech] code” (cf. Herndon 1975; Urban 1982:18–22; Levinsohn 2001:38–48; Alvarez-Cáccamo 2001:23–26; Banti and Giannattasio 294). And while the Baka do not as yet formulate abstractions about what actually constitutes distinctions between “marked” and “unmarked,” “ordinary” and “special” speech acts, I have empirically abstracted several of the distinctive features that constitute the two variant speech acts that the Baka identify as bè (‘song’) and lìkànɔ (‘story’). The Baka also specify a third, variant speech act which occurs when song is sung in the course of telling a traditional story. They identify that speech act as bè na lìkànɔ, that is, ‘story’s song.’ Thus, in this linguistic construction, that is, language about music, Baka speakers imply that lìkànɔ song not only shares characteristic marks of both sung and narrated verbal performance types, but also bears distinctive song and story marks of its own. General descriptions of these marks will be set out in the sections that follow, that is, Sections 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4. In those sections, I will introduce the generalities of Baka song, story, and story’s-song under the headings of “Poetic Verbal Performance,” “Narrative Verbal Performance,” and “Sung Narrative Verbal Performance,” respectively. I will take up song ( bè) first, but reframe it—in the words of Banti and Giannattasio (2004)—as “poetically organized discourse” (as opposed to “musically framed discourse”). I choose to frame song in this way because discourse about the nexus of music and language is more aptly discussed in poetic terms, especially when shared performance phenomena like rhythm and intonation are under discussion. Furthermore, the performance frame of lìkànɔ song is generically
verbal, as opposed to musical, that is, song is sung in the context of “telling,” not vice versa.

2.2 Poetic Verbal Performance: Song

“Ethnographic research has shown that “poetic” forms and behaviors are almost universally widespread…” (Banti and Giannattasio 2004:290; Feld and Fox 1994:30, citing Lomax 1968). Moreover, “poetry is performed more commonly as sung rather than spoken discourse in all oral traditions” (2004:297). Such is the case in Baka verbal communication. It should be added, however, that the potential for poetically organized verbal performance—sung or spoken—is always present in any kind/genre of Baka discourse, even during everyday speech. For as with most cultural performance forms—verbal or non-verbal—poetic procedures are “variable qualities, relatively more or less salient among the multiple functions served by a communicative act” (Bauman 1992:44). Thus, for example, from within the nine speech acts previously displayed in Figure 2-2, if I were to sample the relative presence of a single poetic procedure such as repetition, we would generally observe less repetitive phenomena in “conversation,” “discussion,” and “personal advice,” more repetition in “formal counsel,” and personal “accounts,” and still more in “proverbs,” “parables,” and “stories.” Tautologies of the greatest variety and frequency, however, would be reserved for “song.” Similarly, along this same continuum of speech acts we could expect to find the same relative increase in the presence of other poetic procedures, although song, again, would exhibit more “poetic” speech than all other Baka speech acts.
In Chapter 3, entitled, “Baka Song-text Poetics,” I provide a detailed inventory of those poetic procedures that generally distinguish sung Baka discourse (‘ɓe’) from everyday Baka discourse. That account, as its title indicates, tends to emphasize song text poetics, though the poetic procedures that it describes extend beyond mere “textual” concerns. Theoretically, the poetic formalization of Baka song texts is characterized by what Roman Jakobson (1960:358) describes as “the [semiotic] projection of the poetic function into a verbal sequence to the point that the principle of equivalence is promoted as the constitutive device of the sequence” (brackets and emphases added; see also Sec. 3.1). Formally, then, I identify five particular domains of poetic equivalence in Baka song: rhythmic, syntactic, lexical, phonological, and semantic equivalence. Each domain, in turn, exhibits numerous poetic devices of its kind. For example, equivalent rhythmic forms emerge as pulse and meter; syntactic similarities may include repeated verses and verse-segments; lexical tautologies may be manifested as repeated words or as homonyms; phonologically poetic phenomena may include assonances and ideophones; and semantic equivalences can be recognized in metaphor or parallelism.

As is suggested by these examples, the boundaries of syntactic, lexical, and semantic domains tend to most often include strictly “textual” phenomena. Rhythmic and phonological domains, however, more often constitute what many would consider to be “musical” phenomena, or, to put it in another way, “the music in language” (Feld and Fox 26). This interpretation is more likely when the scope of the “phonological” patterns, that is, sonic patterns, of verbal performance is thought to include melodic or timbric qualities. When speech sounds are interpreted in this way, melic, timbric, and
rhythmic phenomena are recognized as shared qualities of both language and music. The formalization and re-formalization of these three dimensions of speech is a hallmark of “poetically organized discourse.” In their 2004 essay on poetry and “poetically organized discourse, Banti and Giannattasio claim that “the main procedures for formalizing speech sounds beyond those used in normal conversation seem to be no more than three: 1. altering ‘voice register’... 2. altering melodic contour... 3. segmenting utterances rhythmically ...” (295). Banti and Giannattasio’s three “main formalizing procedures” roughly correspond to the distinctive timbric, melodic, and rhythmic qualities that typically infuse sung Baka discourse. Indeed, the most distinctive formal generalities that distinguish Baka singing from Baka speaking concern rhythmic segmentation, voice register (which is primarily constituted timbrically), and melodic contour. A more detailed discussion of these generalities will be set out in the immediately following sub-sections. Section 2.2.1 will introduce Baka song’s basic rhythmic distinctives, Section 2.2.2 will treat melodic generalities, and Section 2.2.3 will discuss song’s special voice register.

2.2.1 Baka Song’s Rhythmic Generalities

The predominant differentiation between everyday Baka discourse and poetic Baka discourse is rhythmic, periodic rhythm in particular. More generally, Jean Molino claims that “poetry cannot be confused with language or with any of its functions: it is the outcome of imposing upon language a structure that has very strong links with music and dance” (Molino 2002:31 cited in Banti and Giannattasio 2004:292). Vida Chenoweth frames the nexus of music and language (in song) in a similar fashion:
It is *musical grammar* superimposed upon verbal grammar which makes song transcend speech. This *musical grammar* has a ‘life’ of its own. It is the nature of song to enhance words. (italics added; 1972:102)

In the case of Baka song, the most pertinent generality regarding the relationship of musical grammar to verbal grammar concerns rhythm. This characterization is so, because the essential musical mark of sung Baka discourse is that it is rhythmically organized. Melodic organization may occasionally be absent, as in vocal compositions employing *sprechstimme*-like utterances (i.e., ‘rhythmic speech’), but rhythmic organization may not. Thus, the musical syntax of periodic phrase-level rhythmic units defines the bounds of a song-text’s poetic line, transforming verbal sequences into lyrical lines (Sec. 3.3.4–3.3.5).

Such a process is not unusual in African literary forms. “In fact the occurrence of music or of a sung mode of expression has sometimes been taken as one of the main differentiating marks between [African] prose and verse” (Finnegan 1970:75). Yet, the underlying dynamic and character of the musical organization of verse—any verse—goes beyond cultural particularities. Barbara Herrnstein Smith, in her book on poetic closure, posits that

... as soon as we perceive that verbal sequence has a sustained rhythm, that it is formally structured according to a continuously operating principle of organization, we know that we are in the presence of poetry and we respond to it accordingly ... expecting certain effects from it and not others, granting certain conventions to it and not others. (emphasis added; Herrnstein Smith 1968, cited in Alter 1985:6)

Thus, as concerns Baka poetics in particular, the primary distinctive poetic feature of sung Baka discourse is the *musically metered line* to which it is set.
It must be emphasized, that the poetic nature of a Baka line is not so much verbal, as it is musical. More precisely, a line is a rhythmical unit (an organized unit of time), not a syntactical unit (Pinsky 1998:28, 34). However, a Baka song line does not express rhythm formed of patterned prosodic or semantic units (as in Greco-Roman and Japanese meter, or Semitic parallelism), but periodic rhythm minimally formed from a continuously recurring sequence of pulses. More specifically, Baka song-line meter types are organized in units of either 16, 12, 8, or 4 pulses per line. Thus, the average meter is 12 pulses per line, though the predominant meter is 8 pulses per line (Chap. 3, Sec. 3.3.4). I set out a more detailed description of Baka rhythmic devices in Chapter 3, Section 3.3. For the purposes of this present introductory section on Baka song’s rhythmic generalities, it is enough to simply state that in all sung Baka discourse four rhythmic devices converge to form what Herrnstein-Smith would call “the continuously operating principle of [poetic] organization”: they are, pulse, tempo, meter, and line.

The recognition of a hierarchically organized “musically metered line” as the essential poetic mark of Baka song is an empirical—though I trust accurate—abstraction. The Baka, however, do not consciously articulate any such notion. Their conscious conceptions of rhythm in song begin with an explicit identification of particular rhythmic motifs (‘kole’) that they (the Baka) typically associate with ‘this or that’ song. For example, the traditional constellation of percussive rhythmic patterns associated with likànɔ song—as transcribed in Figure 2-4, Section 2.4—is simply identified by Baka speakers as “kole na bè na likànɔ,” that is, ‘the likànɔ song rhythm.’ Even when this composite rhythmic motif (or simply one or two of its component patterns) is percussively performed without vocal performance, the rhythm is still
indexically recognized as the “right one” (“èe nà kè e jòkò nè”) for that particular song genre. Most Baka speakers can identify numerous song styles in this manner, especially dance songs.

Every traditional rhythm is correlated with the musically metered line of its respective song style. Motif and line are found to correlate in one of three ways: (1) the boundaries of certain rhythmic motifs may also coincide with the boundaries of a song’s lyrical line, while (2) the boundaries of other rhythmic motifs are iterated twice before coinciding with song-line boundaries; and (3) still other composite motifs may span the duration of two complete song lines, depending upon the relative measure of pulses per rhythmic motif and pulses per poetic line.

Not only are specific rhythmic figures correlated with specific musical meters, grammatical constructions are correlated as well. Larger syntactic constructions, like verses, are set to particular metric lines. Similarly, smaller constitutive verbal constructions, like syllables, are subsequently synchronized with the component segments of the larger rhythmic motif.

A more detailed analysis of Baka songs’ rhythmic tradition is beyond the scope of this present section. Detailed descriptions of traditional rhythms would only serve to distinguish one song style from another song style. It is enough, then, to close this present section on the rhythmic generalities of Baka song and reiterate that all sung verbal utterances—as opposed to spoken verbal utterances—are always segmented according to a musically metered line.
2.2.2 Baka Song’s Melic Generalities

In addition to special formalizations of *rhythm*, Baka song—as opposed to Baka speech—is linguistically and musically marked by distinctive *intonational* and *melic* formalizations.

The raw material of intonational formalizations is constituted by the phenomenon of pitch. Verbal intonation is a variation in pitch *sequences* in speech (Loos 2004). An intoned melody, by extension, is a continuum of culturally regularized sequences of emically discrete tones (Chenoweth 1979:125). Pitches in Baka culture, however, are not culturally regularized; *intervals* between pitches are. Thus, the minimal unit of melodic organization is a melodic *interval*, a sequence of two tones (ibid.). To be sure, there are many other emic principles that subsequently order the *succession* of melodic intervals, but my goal here is not to posit all the patterns of intonational (or melodic) organization, only those that minimally distinguish the movement of pitch in Baka song from that in Baka speech.

Alexander Reed begins his 2005 dissertation, “The Musical Semiotics of Timbre in the Human Voice,” by distinguishing the semiotic potential of the *multiple individual frequencies* that normally constitute the complex spectrum of all periodic sound. At a most elementary level, *fundamental* frequencies are shown to constitute signs of *pitch*, while *partial* frequencies collectively signal timbre. In the process of discriminating these bands of frequencies, Reed formulates the simple yet important generalization that “one chief difference between speech and singing is that there is much greater movement of and stability between movements of the fundamental frequency in a singing voice” (emphasis added; Reed 2005:5).
Generalizations like Reed’s are normally posited with the aid of spectrograph analysis. Yet even without the confirmation of spectrograph measurements, the kinds of variations in fundamental frequencies of which Reed describes are plainly evident when comparing Baka speaking and singing. To my knowledge, however, the Baka make no such abstractions about alterations in fundamental frequency patterns. They do not, for instance, have an equivalent term for “pitch” in their lexicon. For the Baka, as already noted in Section 2.2.1, a speech act is identified as “song” (ɓè) when verbal segments are rhythmically metered, that is, when verbal segments are performed in particular periodic rhythmic patterns (‘kole’). However, even in the absence of explicit verbalizations about pitch, I have empirically observed that whenever such periodic segmentation is performed, “greater movement of and stability between the movement of the fundamental frequency” is always concomitant, though in varying degrees. Lesser increases in the degrees of alteration in fundamental pitches are exhibited in occasional Sprechstimme-like song styles. Most often, however, song is indexically (and iconically) signified by still greater degrees of movement of and stability between movements of fundamental pitches. When regularized, these alterations generate patterned melodic contours. The empirical and emic measures of these movements have yet to be adequately determined, but certain basic characteristics can be preliminarily proposed even now. But before doing so, a word about my pre-ethnographic research in this regard seems in order.

My initial research of Baka melodic formalizations began with an orientation to the fruitful and seminal analyses of Aka melodic and polyphonic music systems by French ethnomusicologists at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientific (e.g., Arom
Susanne Fürniss briefly summarizes Aka melody and polyphony

... as being based upon an anhemitonic pentatonic system—a five-tone scale in which neighboring degrees are separated by intervals that can vary between about a major second and a minor third. [Aka] Musicians, however, are more concerned with correct relationships between parts than they are with a rigid idea of interval sizes. (2006:177)

With greater specificity, Fürniss further explains that

Aka music issues from a system of multiple levels of significance: the principal parameter concerns the order of succession of scale degrees in a melodic pattern derived from a pentatonic scale in which the only constant is the absence of an interval of a half-step...the second significant parameter, which informs the realization of polyphonic songs, is based on a vertical arrangement of intervals at certain predetermined points. The unfolding of melodic lines, with all the freedom of development it allows, is nevertheless dependant upon the anchor points of the polyphony. (my translation; 1993:136, 137)

Given the common narrative concerning African pygmy peoples, one might presume that the melodic system of the Baka in Cameroon is the same as that of the Aka in Central Africa. However, the linguistic, geographical, and historical differences between the two groups—as briefly described in Chapter 1, Sections 1.4 and 1.5.1—should suggest caution before making such an assumption. Moreover, even if the music cultures were identical, the application of another theoretical model—i.e., one other than that of the C.R.N.S. group—might yield a slightly different, though presumably complementary, description and analysis. To this end, I have begun my own analysis.
My *emic* analysis of the Baka melodic system is not yet complete, though a few fundamental characteristics are already emerging. The theoretical model for an *emic* analytical approach was first developed by Vida Chenoweth in the 1970s (Chenoweth [1972] 2006, 1979). I first applied Chenoweth’s model during my 1989 Master’s thesis’ analysis of the melodic system of the Tewa Pueblo Indians of New Mexico.¹ Chenoweth’s model is based upon a slightly, though critically, different generative premise than that of the C.N.R.S. group, a premise that presumes—in short—that as a phoneme is to language, so a melodic interval is to music. Thus, from the start Chenoweth’s model theoretically assumes that the “paramètre principal” of melodic organization is first constituted by a *regularized quality of movement* from one pitch to another within a single given melodic interval; and thus, presumably, melody could not be principally constituted—as suggested by Fürniss’s hypotheses—by the quality of movement between degrees of pitch within a given scale.

I do not intend to posit a full description of the Baka melodic system in this dissertation, let alone constructively critique the analyses of other (presumably) similar melodic systems. My present focus is only on those qualities that *minimally* distinguish the patterns of fundamental frequencies of Baka speaking from those of Baka singing. My intent, then, is simply to account for yet one more distinctive feature of Baka verbal performance, that is, one verbalized sign among many signs that both indexically and iconically marks singing as an extra-ordinary Baka speech act. Thus, I have found it necessary to introduce, if only briefly, some of the rationale for establishing the melodic interval as the essential, initial measure of intonational and melodic variation.
Having done so, I quickly resume my introductory description of the essential melic marks of Baka song.

First, like the Aka of Central Africa, anhemitonic intervallic progressions predominate in Baka song. Thus, the melodic contours of Baka singing are predominantly informed by etic intervals akin to unisons, major seconds, minor thirds, perfect fourths, and perfect fifths. However, unlike Aka intervallic sequences, minor seconds and major thirds are not uncommon in the Baka repertoire. One probable reason for this discrepancy is undoubtedly due to the fact that unlike the corpus of songs analyzed by Arom and Fürniss, I have included a number of song styles in my data that most likely have (relatively recently) been borrowed from neighboring music traditions. I have chosen to include some of these borrowed styles only when there seems to be adequate evidence that the Baka themselves appear to be generating and sharing (with some regularity) new compositions in these styles. Whenever this appears to be the case, I consider such compositions to be an emerging style in the regional Baka repertoire, just as it seems the Baka do. Not surprisingly, most of these song styles exhibiting the less-common “hemitonic intervallic progressions” tend to emerge from performance contexts commonly associated with certain youth dance songs, particularly the basúka and mèbāsī.

As is readily deduced from the work of Fürniss et al., there are several other complementary levels of Baka melodic organization that organically extend well beyond isolated abstractions of “minimal units of movement.” One such formalization involves the typical distribution of the available melodic intervals. Simply put, that particular formalization stems from the fact that no single voice-part in the traditional
Baka repertoire coordinates the intervallic boundaries of melodic contours with less than two, or more than five distinct emic pitches per song. Some analysts would identify this parameter as a pentatonic scale. I prefer, however, to identify it as an inventory of five pitches, not fixed pitches, but rather, an inventory of five tones dynamically relative to a tonal center.

To clarify, only individual voice-parts may not employ more than five pitches. The composite inventory of distinct pitches in songs with multiple voice-parts, however, may exhibit more than five pitches. From a sample of eighty-six diverse songs, slightly more than half exhibit five or fewer pitches; slightly less than half appear to use more than five, that is, six, or possibly seven, distinct pitches. Exceptions to the typical five-tone inventory generally appear to occur in polyphonic songs. To reiterate, these five pitches are not fixed, but are only identified relative to a tonal center. And further, even though melody is essentially a continuum, any notion that these inventories of tones are somehow organized along a scalar continuum is not yet warranted in the light of my preliminary analysis of Baka song (Chenoweth 1979:125).

In analyzing Baka melodic contours, the notion of pentatonic scales as organizing principles of melically inflected verbal discourse might arise from the potentially prescriptive effects of tuned instruments. In Baka instrumental performance, for example, no traditionally tuned chordophone, regardless of how many strings it may have, exhibits more than five discrete pitch classes. But instrumental melodic practice does not necessarily prescribe sung melodic practice. For example, I know of no melodic sequence in the traditional Baka song repertoire—even when accompanied by a tuned instrument—that plainly exhibits an uninterrupted, descending or ascending
“scalar” succession of all five available melodic pitches. Such a continuum may be physically, and even theoretically possible, but within my corpus of recordings no such melodic figure is ever performed by a singing voice.

Before drawing this section to a close, I note that the concept of “scale” is not only problematic in discussions of Baka melodic phenomena, but in other contexts as well. Arnold Whittall, in his entry on melody in the *Oxford Companion to Music*, argues that

> It is important to the consideration not only of ancient music but also of the Western tradition to realize that the concept of scale is based on practice, rather than being the basis of practice…. The scale determines the kind of music made only in the sense that it becomes fixed in instrumental music. Thus the existence of five-string lyres some three thousand years ago, as well as of wind instruments with certain possible fingerings and transpositional relationships to other instruments, suggests the fixed-pitch content of ancient melody on a pentatonic basis. (Whittall 2010)

In an analogous article, Alexander L. Ringer writes,

> Leaving aside the admittedly important issue of fixed tuning, however, scalar considerations can hardly be said to place more than very general constraints on melodic activity, if only because the scales themselves are derived from existing melodic practices. The image of the scalar tail wagging the melodic dog would seem grotesque, were it not for the implied reminder of the extent to which musical notation, with all its blessings, has narrowed Western man’s understanding of a cultural phenomenon that is always aural in essence and rarely if ever graphic. (Ringer 2010)

A much more in-depth argument is called for in defense of my initial suppositions concerning Baka melodic perceptions. The preceding introductory comments are only
meant to clarify—as much as seems necessary—the bases for the measures I have chosen to characterize the kinds of variations of intonational patterns that distinguish sung from spoken verbal discourse.

To summarize, then: The increased movement of and stability between movements of fundamental frequencies that typically distinguish Baka singing from Baka speaking is minimally signaled (1) through anhemitonic intervallic sequences which are most often expressed through an available intervallic inventory of unisons, major seconds, minor thirds, perfect fourths, and perfect fifths, respectively, and (2) through two to five discrete tones (intervallically relative to a tonal center) that mark and correlate the boundaries of the available inventory of emic intervals.

### 2.2.3 Baka Song’s Voice Register Generalities

Not only are sung verbal performances marked by special *rhythmic* and *intonational* formalizations, special *voice registers* are often employed as well. At this point in my study of Baka-song voice registers, I am only able to propose two distinctive sets of binary features: first, two contrastive sets of “more-dense versus less-dense” spectral fields of high-register harmonics, and second, two contrastive sets of “closed-vowel formants versus non-closed-vowel formants.” These proposals are deduced in large part from earlier phonetic and acoustic studies by Susanne Fürniss (1991b) of the singing techniques of Aka yodelers in Central Africa.⁹

Before describing any fineries of Aka or Baka yodeling, it bears repeating that Baka yodeling (‘yeyi’)—according to the Baka—, is singing (*na be ’ɓe*). In Baka ‘talk’ about Baka song, Baka speakers often identify yodeling as “song” (‘ɓe’), but more often they identify it as ‘yeyi’ (‘yodel’). Non-yodeling songs, however, are never identified as
‘yeyi’. I find it particularly telling that in regards to the specific act of yodeling (‘yeyi’), singers (wa be ‘bè) are either said “to sing” (“na be”) when yodeling, or more often—in reference to female vocalists—, “to whistle” (“na ʉ”) when yodeling—as in “Wósè, wó ʉ ʉ yéyi” (‘The women are whistling a yeyi song’). This recognition by the Baka of a whistle-like component in yodeling, as I will discuss near the end of this section, corroborates with Fürniss’s spectral analysis of the so-called “head’ voice sound in Aka yodeling. But before proceeding with a discussion of the ‘head’ voice—‘chest’ voice phenomenon associated with voice register, the basic term “register” needs some preliminary clarification.

Often, confusion ensues when employing the term “register” in interdiscplinary studies involving both musicology and linguistics, especially when the linguistic components include studies of phonetics, phonology, and linguistic anthropology. Music theorists, for example, most often use register to denote a particular region of a vocal or instrumental frequency range. In addition, musicians may even use the term to refer to a set, or the control of a set, of organ pipes. Anthropological linguistics (or, sociolinguistics), on the other hand, employs the term register to indicate

...a linguistic repertoire that is associated, culture internally, with particular social practices and with persons who engage in such practices. [...] Formally, registers differ in the type of repertoire involved (e.g., lexemes, prosody, sentence collocations), and many registers involve repertoires of more than one kind. (Agha 2001:212)

In yet another research context, phoneticians apply the term register in reference to “the voice quality produced by a specific physiological constitution of the larynx” (Crystal 1997:327). For example, “variations in length, thickness, and tension of the
vocal cords combine to produce (in singing) the differences between, soprano, contralto, tenor, and bass etc. voices, and also (within one person) such differences as between ‘head’ (‘falsetto’) and ‘chest’ voice” (ibid.). Of all the various applications of the term “register,” this acoustic phonetic concept is most pertinent to my present discussion of Baka song’s voice register generalities.

While my present aims focus more on sonic phenomena, I do not want to imply that sociolinguistic notions of register are in any way irrelevant. The unique repertoire of physiological formations that produce such contrasting vibratory phenomena as the alternating ‘chest’ and ‘head’ voice in Baka yodeling most certainly indexes particular Baka social events and practices. Indeed, such sonic signs are perpetuated precisely for culture-specific events. But my aims are much more limited at the moment. And so, for those readers interested in the sociolinguistic implications of Baka or Aka voice register, I remind them of the various ethnographic descriptions by Turnbull (1961, 1965), Frisbie (1971), Arom (1991), Sarno (1995), Fünniss and Olivier (1996), Kisliuk (1998), or Fünniss (2006) that have already drawn attention to the numerous ritual, spiritual, and sociological contexts so potently indexed by the unique sonic signs of yodeling. With that said, I return to my general description of the physiological and acoustic formalizations of Baka-song voice registers.

Linguist Giorgio Banti and ethnomusicologist Francesco Giannattasio, as cited earlier, claim that “altering voice register” is one of the three main procedures for formalizing speech sounds. More specifically, “…altering intentionnly and/or by convention one’s voice register, is to alter its “frequency range, timbre, and intensity” (emphasis added; ibid.). Voice registers, then, are particular bundles (i.e.,
“ensembles”) of subtle voice qualities generated by particular vocal tract conditions (Fürniss 1991b:168). To better appreciate a voice register’s acoustic phenomena, some understanding of its physiological formation is helpful.

The initial physiological site of vocal production is the larynx. In both speaking and singing, the vibrating vocal folds of the larynx produce a complex spectrum of frequencies. The particular spectral formation of these frequencies, as alluded to earlier, is initially formed by particular combinatorial variations in the length, thickness, and tension of the vocal cords. Normally, the lowest and most prominent frequency generated by the vocal cords is the fundamental (Reed 2005:2). The perception of a fundamental frequency, however, has more to do with the sonic dimension of pitch, than with the dimension of timbre (ibid.). The specifically timbral qualities of voice register are primarily signified by particular configurations of the multiple non-fundamental spectral frequencies of a sound, that is, its partials, or harmonic overtones.10 As these partials progress through the vocal tract, some (either naturally or through manipulation) resonate with and cluster around particularly resonant vocal tract cavities. This resonance reinforces these frequencies. The loudest and most prominent clusters of frequencies are called formants. “The number, intensity, and position of a sound’s formants is the most important characteristic” of the timbral dimension of a sound (ibid.). Particular formant frequency resonances of a “lower” spectral tessitura (below F2, i.e., below 2000–3600 Hz) characterize phonemic vowel formations, while particular partials of a higher spectral tessitura (above F2, i.e., above 2000–3600 Hz) signify consonants and many other acoustic qualities like “sibilance, breathiness, and ‘brightness’” (2005:4). Further, and more importantly, from within
these higher levels of the spectral frequency range “we [also] receive a great deal of information regarding the location, clarity, and richness of a sound” (ibid.). Thus, while lower-level formants critically signal the vocalic, phonemic basis of a people’s language, particular formations of a voice’s higher partials signal who is speaking, or singing. These higher partials not only identify a person’s gender, or likely age group, but who they are as unique individuals (Sundberg 1987:2; Howie and Delattre 1962:6–9, cited in Reed 2005:4).

Given the special semiotic potential of sonic signs formed from a voice’s higher partials, it is tempting, at this point, to speculate about the collective voice-register identity of whole people groups like the Aka and Baka, people who share such unique physiological characteristics. One might ask, for example, “How significant is the relationship between the collective sizes and shapes of Baka female vocal tracts to the seemingly unique acoustic quality of their choral yodeling technique?” “What might a comparative spectral analyses with other people groups reveal about the uniqueness of Baka voice?” These and other similar questions, however, must be left for another study. For I should digress no longer, but directly progress to a description of the distinctive voice register and formant qualities produced by the vocal tract of Baka singers.

A “chest” voice, produced by shorter, thicker, denser vocal cords, is used in ordinary speaking and ordinary singing (Fürniss 1991b:169). Fürniss’s acoustic measurements of the Aka ‘head’ voice partials reveal a dense field of harmonics, much more dense than that produced by a ‘head’ voice technique (176–183). When a “special,” that is, a contrastive, voice register density is called for, as in the case of
yodeling, longer, thinner, and more attenuated vocal cords are called on to produce the ‘head’ voice sensation. Fürniss’s spectral measurements of the acoustic effects of this “mechanism” typically reveal a far less concentrated field of harmonics, affecting a “less-dense,” “lighter” acoustic quality (ibid. 182). The effect of this regularized alternation between “more-dense” and “less-dense” voice qualities (timbres) acts to promote the timbre of voice-register as an increasingly constitutive principle and special mark of this speech act (185). But as distinctive as this device may be, it is not the only device being timbrally foregrounded; special vowel formant patterns are correlated as well.

The Baka and Aka, interestingly, share the same set of seven short phonemic vowels: /i/, /u/, /ɛ/, /o/, /e/, /a/, and /ɔ/. The formants that characterize the timbre of both vowel systems, as in most languages, are constituted among lower formant frequencies. I assume that the formant formation of the seven phonemic vowels of the Baka language is phonemically the same in Baka singing as it is in Baka speaking. If this were not so, the resulting phonemic confusion would render texted voice parts unintelligible. The one significant exception to this pattern of vowel formalization takes place, as one might guess, during the performance of yodeled song styles.

In the Baka song tradition, sung verbal performance is normally executed by non-yodeling voices, or voice parts. Yodeling voices may vocalize, but they do not simultaneously verbalize. Not all the world’s yodeling traditions exclude lexical performance so strictly. For example, a number of American country music styles combine—in the same verse—yodeled vocables with lexical utterances (Wise 2007).
cannot as yet propose the exact reasons as to why the Baka typically choose to exclude verbal performance from most of their yodeled voice parts. However, Fürniss’s study of Aka yodeling, again, seems to suggest a few potential forces, among which the formation of vowel formants is most pertinent.

In the course of Aka yodeling, for instance, the contrastive alternation of ‘head’ voice and ‘chest’ voice register is also correlated with alterations between a specific set of the Aka’s closed vowels, that is, the phonemic /i/ and /u/, and the phonetic [y] and [u], with those of an opposing set of their non-closed vowels, that is, the phonemic /ɛ/, /a/, /ɔ/ and /o/ and the phonetic [œ] and [∅], respectively (175). I can confirm that nearly the same correlation takes place in Baka performance, though I have not had opportunity as yet to verify the subtle presence of the four additional, conditional phonetic vowels, that is, [y] and [u], [œ] and [∅]. Regardless, the cumulative effect of these correlated and homologous timbral “densities”—i.e., closed vowels with less-dense voice registers, and open vowels with more-dense voice registers—seems evident in their mutual reinforcement as emphatically contrastive timbres, and thus as marks of a “special” kind of verbal performance. These correlated alternations of “higher” and “lower” registers, along with their well-known “disjunct intervallic motion,” thus constitute the fundamental timbral character of the yodeling technique (Baumann 2011). As a result, whenever the contrastive timbral patterns of the yodel technique are promoted as the constitutive principle of a sung vocal sequence, the distinctive phonemic timbres of normal lexical utterances are at best, hard to realize, and more often, abandoned altogether (Fürniss 1991b:175).
Fürniss implicitly corroborates certain aspects of her empirical phonetic and acoustic analysis of Aka yodeling with ethnographic analysis. For example, she reports that within the typical four-part performance textures of Aka song, only one voice part utters words, that is, mòtángòlè;\textsuperscript{15} and mòtángòlè does not yodel. Yodeling is reserved for one of the other voice parts, that is, dìyè́è\textsuperscript{16}. Correlationally, mòtángòlè (literally, ‘one who counts’) exclusively sings with the (lower) “chest” voice register, while dìyè́è (‘yodel’) uses (in alternation) both a “chest” voice register and a (higher) “head” voice register (2006:175).\textsuperscript{17} The Baka differentiate voice parts, as well, but not nearly so finely. In multi-part voice textures, two categories apply: wànjàmba (‘the one who begins’) and wàttúkò (‘the one who “pours”’).\textsuperscript{18} While there is only one wànjàmba voice-part—though more than one person may sing it, depending upon the song style—there is often more than one distinct wàttúkò voice-part. So, while any “chest-voice-register” voice-part may utter either words, or non-lexical vocables, yodeled voice-parts—with their alternating “chest” and “head” voice registers—predominantly only utter non-lexical vocables (especially when the song style is explicitly identified as “yeỳì, or yèlì). In general, then, yodeled parts are most often identified as wàttúkò voice-parts, and lexical utterances are most often identified with the wànjàmba part.

As noted earlier in this section (Sec. 2.2.3), the Baka recognize a “whistling” (‘na ù ′ù’) quality in female yeỳì singing. For the most part, both scholarly and popular studies identify yodeling’s ‘head’ voice sound as “falsetto,” or “fausset,” (i.e., “artificial”) (Fürniss 1991b, Baumann 2011). Still, a number of acoustic and vocology studies further specify a difference between male and female “head and chest” voices. Johan Sundberg reports that
...while both men and women have a head voice, these registers are apparently not the same thing: for when women yodel, it is not between their ‘chest voice’ and their ‘head voice’, but rather between their head voice and ‘whistle’ register. (emphasis added; Wise 2007:7, citing Sundberg 1987:50)

While some confusion still surrounds academic definitions of a whistle register, the implications of the basic concept are clear enough in that the diminutive acoustic density of the higher-rangepartials produced by a flute is acoustically similar to that produced by the vibrating outer layers of the vocal folds of a female Baka yodeler (Miller and Schutte 1993).¹⁹

The special timbral status of the higher-level voice register of yeiyi is further reinforced by other socio-cultural claims and traditions. From his many years of ethnographic work among the Baka, Robert Brisson reports that not only is the sound of yeiyi likened to a whistle, or flute, some Baka have even said that “yesl-song originates from the resonant sound of God’s harp-zither” (“le chant du “yesl” viendrait de la résonance de la guitare de Komba”) (English translation, mine; 2002:626).²⁰ Baka ‘talk’ about yeiyi sound is further contextualized in the ethnographic work of Fr. Daniel Boursier and Robert Brisson. Both Boursier and Brisson document the ways in which the yeiyi song tradition is socio-culturally set apart. For example, the yeiyi tradition is set apart sociologically by perpetuating and framing it in a special rite of initiation for Baka girls. An insightful account of this tradition is documented in Pöli: Mémoires d’une Femme Pygmée: Témoignage Auto-Biographique d’une Femme Pygmée Baka (Sud-Est Cameroun), an autobiography of a Baka women, Pöli, as told to Fr. Daniel Boursier (1996).
There are other aspects of the dimension of voice register that deserve further attention but can only be briefly mentioned at present. For instance, I have occasionally heard and documented Baka singers performing a speech act that some western academic traditions call “sprechstimme,” or ‘speech-voice.’ The voice register of this speech act—comprised of lower formant frequencies and an irregular movement of and between fundamental frequencies—lies somewhere between speaking and singing. Baka speakers, nonetheless, simply refer to this verbal formalization as ‘song’ (’ɓè’), with no apparent regard for the etic distinctions that I perceive in the acoustic character of its fundamental frequency and formants (see also Sec. 2.1 and 2.2).

To conclude this section, then: the Baka implicitly recognize three basic voice registers, those of speaking, singing, and yodelling. The voice registers of “ordinary” singing and yodelling, however, are often differentiated still further. Empirically, for example, they are found in contrast in two binary sets of timbres: first, as either “more dense” or “less dense” voice registers, and second—as well as correlative—, as either “closed vowels” or “non-closed vowels.” Ethnographically, the “more dense” and “closed-vowel” registers may even be identified as whistle-like, or possibly even harp-like.

2.3 Narrative Verbal Performance: Story

Many scholars of discourse analysis explicitly claim, or even tacitly assume, that narrative discourse is a universal social act (e.g., Gulich and Quasthoff 1985:169; Dooley and Levinsohn 2001; Renkema 2004). Implicit in these claims is the notion that there are universal characteristics of narrative discourse, that is, general features
that distinguish narrative discourse from other types of verbal performance. To the degree that this is true, then, any attempt to describe the distinctive features of a culture-specific narrative—for example, a traditional Baka likàndo—must first establish the theoretical parameters of any such universal narrative features. In this present section, then, I will first outline the theoretical assumptions on which my description rests. Based on these assumptions, I will follow a decidedly functional and cognitive research approach, drawing particular attention to grammatical features, both formal and pragmatic. Once I have introduced the essentials of my adopted theoretical model, I will proceed to describe the generalities of Baka narrative in terms of that model.

In surveying the theoretical terrain of various approaches to discourse analysis, Mann and Thompson (1992) claim that no matter what one’s research orientation may be, whether it is a “semantic” orientation, a “speech-act” orientation or “social-act” orientation (or a combination of all three), the study of text relations practically (and historically) begins with semantic considerations.

… all three orientations are said to largely agree on 1) the centrality to discourse organization of semantic or discourse functional relations among the parts of the text, specifically between clause-like units… 2) ‘predications’ and ‘propositions’ are the basic units of text, 3) ‘clauses’ are prominent subsets of predications and propositions, and “minimal working units,” 4) textual units are relational, e.g., there are ‘interclausal relations,’ and ‘relations between predictions’ and larger aggregated units. […] Thus, discourse analysis minimally begins with the study of ‘text relations’ who’s clauses (liberally defined) are used to build discourse structure in different ways…for a variety of ends. (emphasis added; Mann and Thompson 1992:19, 21)
For the discourse analyst, then, grammar—clause-level grammar in particular—acts as the basic strategic resource for “framing,” “keying,” and “codifying” particular discourse performances. *Narrative* discourse performance, as one among several discourse genres, is marked by its own pattern of discourse features and pragmatic goals.

**Discourse analysis of narrative discourse** There are a variety of theoretical models applied to the analysis of *narrative* discourse (Van Dijk 1997; Beaugrande 1997; Renkema 2004). I have adopted an eclectic model, one proposed by Robert Dooley and Stephen Levinsohn as “a good approximation of how discourse is actually produced and understood” (2000:iii). In their research approach, Dooley and Levinsohn draw on the scholarship of a number of discourse analysts, the work of Robert Longacre, in particular. Longacre places the investigation of grammatical structures at the heart of his approach, but only after boldly typifying his understanding of the universal features of narrative discourse. Indeed, discourse typology is a major emphasis of Longacre, who argues that typology is an essential step in any linguistic analysis of a discourse.

Characteristics of individual discourses can be neither described, predicted, nor analyzed without resort to a classification of discourse types. It is pointless to look in a discourse for a feature which is not characteristic of the type to which that discourse belongs. So determinative of detail is the general design of a discourse type that the linguist who ignores discourse typology can only come to grief. (Longacre 1996:7)

Longacre’s classification of broad discourse genres is primarily based upon predicative, propositional *content*, as distinct from form. He classifies the content of a
discourse—any discourse, not just narrative discourse—on the basis of four pairs of parameters: agent orientation, contingent temporal succession, projection (i.e. future orientation), and tension. Within this schema, Longacre’s approach potentially yields sixteen discourse types (Clendenon 1989; Longacre 1996). Dooley and Levinsohn interpret the primary features of Longacre’s categorization schema as follows:

Longacre’s broad categorization makes use of plus and minus values for a set of four features. Two of these features—contingent temporal succession and agent orientation—can be taken as primary, and serve to identify the four broadest categories. CONTINGENT TEMPORAL SUCCESSION refers to a framework “in which some (often most) of the [discourse] events or doings are contingent on previous events or doings” (p. 9). The second primary feature, AGENT ORIENTATION, refers to whether the discourse type deals with “events or doings” which are controlled by an agent (one who performs an action), “with at least a partial identity of agent reference running through the discourse.” (emphasis added; Dooley and Levinsohn 2001)

The diagram in Figure 2-3 presents the four categories of discourse genre generated from these two primary features. From this diagram, then, I further note that the content of narrative discourse is most broadly and universally marked by the dual values of agent orientation and contingent succession.

Longacre further posits that the expression of these two primary generic qualities of narrative discourse, that is, of “agency in contingent temporal succession,” typically reflects the following template for narrative development: “stage, inciting incident, mounting tension, climax of tension, and release of tension” (1996). Strategies for the actualization of agency and contingent temporal succession, and of “mounting tensions,
climaxes, and denouements” are, of course, culture-specific, and legion. An outline of the culture-specific “strategies” of Baka narratives follow.

**Baka Narrative Discourse Features.** Both Kathleen Higgens (1981) and Yves Léonard (2003) have identified and described the presence of narrative discourse among the wide variety of Baka verbal performance types. Higgens’ description focuses on the more global concerns highlighted in Longacre’s “narrative (development) template”; Léonard’s description—following Levinsohn’s model—gives a more detailed description of the grammatical devices of Baka narrative, though always with a view to explaining *how such devices inform larger formal, functional, and pragmatic purposes*. Dooley and Levinsohn’s model, as presented in *Analyzing Discourse* (2001), distills a number of Longacre’s basic theoretical concepts, synthesizes them with the work of other analysts, and reformulates them in a template to which analysts can refer for the discovery of some of the most common worldwide strategies in realizing narrative discourse, oral narrative in particular. As stated earlier, Léonard’s analysis, for the most part, builds on Levinsohn’s model. A minimal, clause-level summary of Léonard’s analysis is as follows.

The principal grammatico-pragmatic strategies of traditional Baka oral narratives are (1) variations in the default order of clause constituents, (2) devices that give prominence to focal clausal constituents, (3) devices that foreground or background narrative events, (4) devices that highlight climaxes, significant developments, or key assertions, (5) varieties of clausal connectives or markers that coordinate sentences that describe the main events, describe successive events performed by the same subject, or describe new development or new material, (6) particular participant referencing, and
(7) distinct devices for the reporting of embedded narrative conversation (Léonard 2003 and Dooley Levinsohn 2000). Each strategy may be realized through any number of a variety of grammatical, rhetorical, or poetic devices: for example, tense markers; aspect makers; complementizers; relative clause markers; cataphoric, exophoric, and anaphoric markers; repetition; ideophones; conjunctions; demonstratives; and developmental markers. Some of these devices may function in isolation, though more often they complement others. These same devices may also function one way in one clause, and another way in another clause. Repetition, for example, “can bring emphasis, it can mark the progression of a story, or can slow down the story before a climax (Léonard 2005:12). Each narrative device, then, contributes in distinct and multiple ways to the realization of those common narrative qualities that typically focus on “agency and contingent temporal succession” expressed and developed in “mounting tensions, climaxes, and denouements.”

Before concluding this section on Baka narrative generalities, three other narrative performance devices should be briefly highlighted: first, opening and closing formulas; second, narrative ‘aspect;’ and third, song.

First: Baka storytellers most often, though not always, indexically frame the beginning and/or ending of a traditional likanɔ—or one of its episodes—with all or part of a traditional call-and-response exchange with the participating audience. The teller begins with “likanɔ pongu”; the audience responds with “pongũ”; then, the teller utters, “e sasa,” and the audience responds again with “sãa” (Léonard 2005:4). (An example of this formula can be heard in the first accompanying audio file (Object 2-1. Audio
clip of likànò formula (.mp3 24 KB)) and its gloss can be read in Chapter 5, Section 5.2.)

Second: One of the most essential grammatical features of Baka narrative is the narrative aspect marker / à /. The narrative tense is decisive in marking and recognizing a likànò’s storyline (i.e., its “contingent temporal succession”). Its essential role in the narrative cohesion and development of likànò is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4, Sections 4.2 and 4.3.

Third: The principal thesis of Chapter 4 is the claim that likànò song functions as a narrative discourse feature of Baka likànò. When Baka song is sung in the course of telling a Baka story, two kinds of verbal performance phenomena converge, wherein song is pragmatically subsumed in story. In this verbal performance context, story and song are not simply two “kinds” of speech acts, but one, wherein story, is the genre of verbal discourse performed, and song (along with speech) is one manner of producing that one verbal discourse type. The semantic, grammatical, syntactic, rhythmic, melic, and timbric peculiarities of this discourse type are encoded, configured, intertwined, and produced to achieve the especially inter-subjective effects of narrativized communication. “Any old” song, however, will not do. Likànò songs may bear the generic marks of all Baka songs, as generalized in Sections 2.2.1, 2.2.2, and 2.2.3, but they also bear marks of their own. In the remainder of this chapter, then, I will briefly outline those features that set likànò-song apart from other Baka song forms, song features that (for the Baka) are somehow more referentially, iconically, and indexically suited for narrative performance. For likànò songs are typically found to
exhibit particular discursive functions, poetic lines, musical rhythms, melodic textures, and voice registers.

2.4 Sung Baka Narrative Performance: Story’s Song

The particular discourse functions of ɓikanò songs will be described at length in Chapter 4. However, a summary preview of those functions is presented here in order to introduce and emphasize the integrity of the multiple complementary signs with which ɓikanò songs are imbued.

Fundamentally, Baka ɓikanò songs are found to function in two essential signifying domains of narrative discourse: first, as an agent of narrative discourse cohesion (Chap. 4, Sec. 4.2), and second, as an agent of narrative discourse development (ibid., Sec. 4.3).

ɓikanò songs are found to effect discourse cohesion generatively, performatively, and textually (ibid., Sec. 4.2). Intertextual cohesion of spoken and sung ɓikanò texts most often emerges as grammatical and semantic in nature.

ɓikanò songs also effect discourse development, both contextually and climactically (ibid., Sec. 4.3). Contextualizing devices typically constitute five “contextualizing information types” (ibid, Sec. 4.3.1), while climactic devices are recognized according to five common marks of climactic development (ibid., Sec. 4.3.2).

While it is likely that songs are largely experienced as undifferentiated wholes, they are, nevertheless, complex (semiotic) wholes (see also Turino 1999:237–245, 2000:174–177). Thus, when describing the multiple potential discourse functions of ɓikanò song in ɓikanò story, it should be remembered that ɓikanò songs are actually
ensembles of signs whose effects might only be signified by certain components of the song. Recognition of this componential condition goes a long way toward explaining ḋikànò songs’ multiple discourse functions (Chapter 4).

Lìkànò song is not only typified by common textual discourse functions, but also by common poetic and musical characteristics. The most fundamental poetic feature of ḋikànò song is its poetic line, which—according to my data sample—tends to be limited to either eight or sixteen pulses per line. (Twelve- or four-pulse lines are absent; see Sec. 2.2.1). Other characteristics of ḋikànò song’s poetic line include an average of 11 words per line (ranging from 7 to 16 words per line), with an average 21 syllables per line (ranging from 20 to 22 syllables per line). The most common syntactic, phonological, and lexical poetic devices include iterative verses and verse-segments, grammatical substitution, vocables, and interlinear lexical repetition. There may be as few as one type of vocable per song or as many as seven. All such poetic devices are commonly derived from an average inventory of 14 words per song, some songs with as few as 4 words, others with as many as 24. Chapter 3 presents a detailed inventory of all the poetic devices thus far identified in a representative sample of my field recordings. For a better understanding of the distinctives of ḋikànò song-text poetics, a comparative reading of Chapter 3 is recommended. For now, however, I move on to describe briefly the specific polyrhythmic patterns most often performed and associated with ḋikànò song.

Not all sonic rhythms performed in ḋikànò song are vocally produced. Some are manually produced. The voices of people (li-bo) are commonly accompanied by the sounds, or “voices” of drums (li-ndùmù) and other percussive instruments. Specifically,
two percussive polyrhythms indexically key ṭikànò song performance. Excerpts of each one can be heard in the following two audio clips: Object 2-2 and Object 2-3, respectively (Object 2-2. Audio file of rarer ṭikànò rhythm (.mp3 705 KB) and Object 2-3. Audio file of typical ṭikànò rhythm (.mp3 1.1 MB)). The (primarily) simple-meter pattern, heard in the audio clip linked to Object 2-2, is rare—according to my field recordings and recollection—and is not exclusively associated with ṭikànò song, but may be used in other song styles as well. For these reasons, I will forego its description for a later study.

By far, the ṭikànò-song rhythm (kole na bè na ṭikànò) that is performed most often is that which is heard in the audio clip linked to Object 2-3 and transcribed in Figure 2-4. The transcription in Figure 2-4 represents an archetypal composite of this traditional polyrhythm. It does not account for any of its common variations, for my present intentions are only to highlight the most typifying features.

The entire rhythm’s traditional cycle of eight pulses is executed once or twice in the course of one verse (or song line) depending on whether the song line’s ‘meter’ is a sequence of eight pulses, or, as is more common, sixteen pulses. The rhythmic hierarchy of this pattern is built upon a pulse ranging from 118 MM to 148 MM with a mean tempo of 125 MM. The tempo for each song—not to mention the variations in the rhythm’s execution—significantly informs not only the character of each song, but the rhythm, pace, tone, and development of each narrative. A pulse is most commonly subdivided into some form of triplet rhythmic figure, though it is not uncommon, especially in melodic-rhythms, to subdivide pulses into duple figures.
The likanò song rhythm does not need to be actuated. Song performances may be executed “without the ‘voice/sound’ of drums” (‘ndé li-ndûmû’). A minimal rhythmic framework, however, is often actuated by the clapping of (‘gbɔ'gbɔ kole te kpáó’) at least one of two complementary rhythmic patterns: “kole a lélé te kpáó” (“the smaller (infant) clapping rhythm”) (as shown in the first staff of Figure 2-4), or “kole a nyényè te kpáó” (“the mother clapping rhythm”) (as shown in the second staff). Kole a lélé te kpáó is most predominant, and quite often occurs alone. By it, likanò song is indexically “keyed.” When a song performance includes two drums, the kole a lélé te kpáó is further reinforced (as seen in the third staff of Figure 2-4) by the homologous dynamic accents of kole a lélé te kubù, that is, “the smaller rhythm of the (smaller) kubù (hand-drum).” Still more emphasis occurs during larger performance gatherings, when the basic framework of the smaller drum rhythm is mimicked in the mbànda, a rhythmic action performed by striking a large shaft of raffia bamboo—which is laying on the ground—with one or two smaller sticks of (raffia) wood. Yet in complementary contrast with the emphatic lélé rhythm, Baka hand-drummers additionally index likanò-song performance with kole na nyényè te mòkinda, that is, ‘the grander ‘mother’ rhythm of the larger mòkinda hand-drum’ (as transcribed on the fourth staff of Figure 2-4). The signal of this seemingly “single” drum rhythm—executed as it is by one hand-drummer on a large, single-headed cylindrical wooden drum—is actually distinguished by (1) a pattern of two contrastive levels of dynamics (e.g., “accented” and “unaccented”) patterning with (2) a pattern of three contrastive timbres, that is, a low-compact-and-sustained tone, a high-compact-and-sustained tone, and a high-diffuse-and-clipped tone (again, see the fourth staff in Figure 2-4). No other sonic structure associated with
líkànò song so potently indexes líkànò song experience as does the líkànò-song rhythm (kole na bè na líkànò)—whether that rhythm is performed by a polyrhythmic percussion ensemble or a quiet, lone hand-clapper.

Before closing this section and chapter, one generality concerning líkànò-song melody should be highlighted. I am only able to describe certain macro-level melodic characteristics because—as stated in Section 2.2.2 of this chapter—my analysis of the systemic nature of critical micro-level structures, such as melodic intervals, is not yet complete. Thus, most generalities concerning particular song genres would be premature. Nonetheless, it is still possible to address the question of who typically sings what elements of líkànò-song melodies.

As in most—but not all—Baka song genres, líkànò-song melodies are never performed solo, but by two or more voices, that is, by a choir of voices. Furthermore, líkànò-song—as with most genres—always exhibits two or more melodic voice-parts. Thus, two or more voice-parts are typically distributed among two or more singers’ voices. As set out earlier, in multi-part voice textures, two categories apply: wànjàmba and wàtúkò. And, while there is only one wànjàmba voice-part—though more than one person may sing it, depending upon the song style—, there is often more than one distinct wàtúkò melodic voice-part. In the case of líkànò song, however, the wànjàmba voice-part is normally performed by the storyteller-singer, though others may occasionally join. The wàtúkò voice-parts, then, are performed by the participating audience-choir (e.g., Chap. 5, Sec. 5.2). Líkànò song melodies may be segmented and organized as alternating, overlapping, interlocking, and/or polyphonic sequences, and then performed by responsorial, antiphonal and/or polyphonic choirs of voices. The
choirs of many other Baka song genres are commonly homogenous choirs of either
males or females, young or old; but likànɔ song exhibits no such gendered or
generational homogeneity. All attending voices, regardless of gender or age, join the
choir.

2.5 Summary

In summary, “everyday” speech and conversation constitute the “default”
formalizations of Baka verbal discourse. Alterations in these ordinary patterns of
verbal discourse—whether rhythmic, syntactic, lexical, phonological, or semantic
alterations—signal extra-ordinary verbal discourse, effecting extra-ordinary purposes.
Baka song, story, and story's-song, each in its own way, signal “special” verbal
performance. As a complex sign, sung verbal performance (bè), regardless of genre or
style, is poetically organized, and thus, typically constituted by a distinctive set of
rhythmic, syntactic, and intonational formalizations. Extra-ordinary phonological,
lexical, and semantic formalizations are often employed as well. The content of
narrative verbal discourse, on the other hand, is typified by the dual primary features of
“agent orientation” and “contingent temporal succession.” In Baka likànɔ, agency and
contingent succesion are actualized, unified, and developed by a variety of extra-
ordinary grammatical, rhetorical, and poetic devices, song being one such poetic
device. When song (bè) is sung in the course of telling a traditional Baka narrative
(likànɔ) Baka speakers specify it as “bè na likànɔ” (i.e., “likànɔ song”). As a type verbal
performance, likànɔ song not only shares characteristic marks of both sung and
narrated verbal performance types but also bears distinctive song and narrative
features of its own. The most conspicuous rhythmic features are (1) the typical polyrhythmic percussion accompaniment kole na bè na likànò (the likànò song rhythm) and (2) metered poetic lines of eight or sixteen pulses. This “likànò rhythm” and its corresponding line, in turn, inform the rhythmic segmentation of a likànò song’s lyric. Iterative, non-contrastive verses and verse-segments predominate. Simultaneously, melodic formalizations of likànò lyrics are ordinarily distributed among two or more voice-parts which in turn are (1) organized as alternating, overlapping, interlocking, and/or polyphonic sequences, and (2) performed by responsorial, antiphonal, and/or polyphonic choirs of voices. But unlike many Baka song styles and genres, the vocal timbres of likànò-song choirs are “mixed,” that is, anyone in attendance may sing, regardless of gender or age. So finally, complexes of rhythmic, syntactic and melodic signs that constitute and characterize likànò song do not simply encode sung verbal performance, but also and more significantly serve narrative verbal performance. Likànò song, then, is inherently a discourse feature of likànò narrative. In particular, likànò-song effects narrative cohesion and narrative development. Narrative cohesion—through song—is achieved generatively, performatively, and inter-textually. Narrative developmental, on the other hand, is contextual and climactic in nature. Elaborations on all of these generalities are set out in the chapters that follow.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Baka Term(s)</th>
<th>Etic Description</th>
<th>Typical Contextual Associations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bè na basíka</td>
<td>youth recreational dance songs</td>
<td>evening recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na mīha</td>
<td>youth recreational dance songs</td>
<td>evening recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na likan</td>
<td>traditional story's songs</td>
<td>hunting/funeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na Mboambó</td>
<td>dance songs w/ “Mboambó“</td>
<td>funeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na ngāŋ</td>
<td>divination songs</td>
<td>divination/healing ritual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na mbomba</td>
<td>divination “fire” songs</td>
<td>divination/healing ritual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na Jenji</td>
<td>dance songs assoc. w/ “Jenji” (spirit)</td>
<td>spirit initiation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na ‘ésonj</td>
<td>dance songs to dispel malevolent spirits</td>
<td>sorcery (Brisson 1999:84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na ḏinda</td>
<td>spiritual/ceremonial dance songs</td>
<td>to find one lost in forest (Brisson 81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na ‘ebò</td>
<td>dance songs assoc. w/ sorcery/healing</td>
<td>sorcery; healing; funeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na manghélèbò</td>
<td>ritual song(s) to dispel ancestral spirits</td>
<td>wake, funeral (81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na mòkòndò</td>
<td>(dance) songs assoc. w/ sorcer-spirit</td>
<td>healing (ibid.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na “ébùmà”</td>
<td>dance songs w/ “ébùmà” spirit</td>
<td>sorcery; funeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na mölingè</td>
<td>trapping songs</td>
<td>trapping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na mäka/na ndango</td>
<td>hunting songs (sung by women)</td>
<td>for a successful hunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na yéyi</td>
<td>women's ritual association songs</td>
<td>hunting; healing; benediction; sorcery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na mäka/na sò</td>
<td>women's hunting songs (men's return)</td>
<td>“great” hunt celebration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na mäka na gè yà</td>
<td>men's elephant hunting songs (return)</td>
<td>hunting celebration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na mäka na gè ˈebòbo</td>
<td>men's gorilla hunting songs</td>
<td>hunting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na mäka na gè sèkò</td>
<td>men's chimpanzee hunting songs</td>
<td>hunting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na mäka na gè pàmè</td>
<td>men's wild pig hunting songs</td>
<td>hunting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na ngàma</td>
<td>women's dam-fishing song</td>
<td>fishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na ɓèkà</td>
<td>circumcision ceremony dance song</td>
<td>male circumcision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na bo ɗindó</td>
<td>lullaby</td>
<td>night/sickness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na mûkó</td>
<td>dance songs celebrating birth of twins</td>
<td>birth celebration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na sîló</td>
<td>children's game song</td>
<td>recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na kàlu</td>
<td>children's vine-swinging song</td>
<td>recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na nda a Komba</td>
<td>church song</td>
<td>Catholic Church celebration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na àške</td>
<td>songs accomp. by bow harp</td>
<td>recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na aita</td>
<td>songs accomp. by frame harp</td>
<td>recreation/personal expression/narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na ngàmbi nà lo</td>
<td>songs accomp. by plucked idiophone</td>
<td>recreation/personal expression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na ngàmbi nà pèke</td>
<td>songs accomp. by harp-zither</td>
<td>recreation/personal expression/narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na lingbidi</td>
<td>songs accomp. double-string bow harp</td>
<td>recreation/personal expression/narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè a ngàmà/bålè</td>
<td>songs accomp. by “water-drumming”</td>
<td>fishing/recreation/washing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na pókì</td>
<td>honey-gathering songs</td>
<td>honey gathering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè na mûngulu</td>
<td>songs while constructing leaf-hut</td>
<td>habitat construction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2-1. List of Baka song field recordings
### Table: Nominal Term and Collocating Verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nominal Term</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Collocating Verbs</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ngɔmɛ̀</td>
<td>discussion, word</td>
<td>mɛɛ ngɔmɛ̀</td>
<td>make, speak, have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lɔmù</td>
<td>conversation, discussion</td>
<td>mɛɛ</td>
<td>make, (be in)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ˈè)kàlò</td>
<td>(formal) counsel from elders</td>
<td>manà</td>
<td>explain, give</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lèwù</td>
<td>(personal evening) advice</td>
<td>tɔ (pe)</td>
<td>give</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mɔsɪmɔ̀</td>
<td>proverb, recitation, account, narrative, monologue (w/o song)</td>
<td>kpo</td>
<td>relate, recount, bring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gbɔŋgɔŋgɔ</td>
<td>allegory, proverb, saying, dictum</td>
<td>kpo</td>
<td>recount, tell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mbàli</td>
<td>comparison, parable</td>
<td>gbɔ ngɔmɛ̀</td>
<td>strike, speak to, speak in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>likànte</td>
<td>story, legend, fable, history, chantefable</td>
<td>kpo</td>
<td>recount, narrate, tell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɓè</td>
<td>Song</td>
<td>ɓe</td>
<td>sing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2-2. Lexical sets of common Baka speech act terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contingent temporal succession</th>
<th>Agent orientation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>narrative</th>
<th>procedural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>behavioral</td>
<td>expository</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2-3. Fundamental categories and features of discourse genres
Figure 2-4. Composite transcription of likànò rhythms (my transcription); Pulse = 125 MM

---

1 Reference to Robert Brisson’s and Daniel Boursier’s work—especially the Petit Dictionnaire Baka (1979)—could be consulted to expand or modify this list. Brisson has told me in personal conversation (2006) that plans are in the works for Susanne Fürniss to supplement his 2002 version of Petit Dictionnaire Baka with additional musical entries. In either case, corresponding audio recordings would be needed to corroborate any conclusions that might be drawn from those lexical entries.

2 Fox and Feld initially frame their 1994 survey of the literature on the relationship of music and language “in terms of four major predications: music as language, language in music, music in language, and language about music.” Further, they discuss “attempts to integrate these four themes through semiotics and sociomusicology” [prominent in the 1980s] and through “the ethnographic approach to intersections of language and music.” i.e. “a refuged anthropology of the speaking and singing voice to key issues in contemporary [circa. 1994] social theory” (26).

3 Fürniss’ text reads: “Pour la musique aka, il se dégage un système à plusieurs niveaux de pertinence: le paramètre principal est l’ordre de succession des degrés dans un patron mélodique donné au sein d’une échelle pentatonique quelconque dont la seule constante est l’absence de l’intervalle de demi-ton…Le second niveau de pertinence, qui concerne la réalisation des chants polyphoniques, est fondé sur l’agencement vertical des intervalles en certains points prédéterminés. Le déroulement des lignes mélodiques, par delà la license de réalisation qu’il admet, est néanmoins tributaire des points d’ancrage de la polyphonie” (1993:136, 137).

Terms such as “major” or “minor” “seconds” or “thirds,” or “perfect” “fourths” or “fifths” do not, of course, refer to the fixed conventions of western music theory, but simply indicate etic approximations of acoustic “distance.” The culture-specific identities of such symbols is the subject and first step of emic analysis. Further, the melodic intervals of “unyodeled” song styles are normally articulated solely through a “head voice” “laryngeal mechanism.” The boundaries of melodic intervals in yodeled song styles, however, are marked by alterations between “chest voice” and “head voice” tones. Still, the predominance of major seconds, minor thirds, and perfect fourths and fifths applies to both unyodeled and yodeled styles. However, “head voice” tones most commonly terminate intervals of a perfect fifth, or, not uncommonly, perfect fourths or minor sixths. The emic status of these four intervally similar tones is yet to be determined.

This observation assumes that each voice sings only one melodic part per song (cf. Fürniss 2006).


Yodel [‘dɨyɛl’ in Aka] is sung “above” all the other parts by women. It is determined by the yodel technique, a constant alternation between laryngeal mechanisms 1 and 2, which is commonly called “falsetto,” or head voice”. It consists of melodies of mainly wide intervals and uses specific vowels correlated to the two yodel registers: low yodel register – mechanism 1 –[with] open vowels as [e, a, o]; high yodel register – mechanism 2 – closed vowels as [i, y, u] (Fürniss 1991, cited in Fürniss 2005:11).

Strictly speaking, all spectral frequencies are partials, the fundamental partial is just the lowest and most audible (see Reed 2005).

The phonemic basis of a people’s language is essentially built upon the timbral dimension of sound, more specifically, upon “consistent distinctions in the formant patterns” (cf. Jakobson, Funt, Halle 1967, cited in Reed 2005:3).
An excerpt of Fürniss’s definition of the yodel technique: “Yodel [‘diyèl’ in Aka] is sung above all the other parts by women. It is determined by the yodel technique, a constant alternation between laryngeal mechanisms 1 and 2, which is commonly called “falsetto,” or head voice”. It consists of melodies of mainly wide intervals and uses specific vowels correlated to the two yodel registers: low yodel register – mechanism 1 –[with] open vowels as [e, a, o]; high yodel register – mechanism 2 – closed vowels as [i, y, u]” (Fürniss 1991, cited in Fürniss 2005:11).

These shared vowel systems might suggest similar vocalic constraints in song performance. The implications of such an assumption should not be taken to far given the fact that the Baka and Aka do not share the same set of phonemic consonants or tones, not to mention grammatical systems. The Aka, for example, have two phonemic tones, while the Baka have three.

In the case of the Aka, the articulatory effect of the yodel technique can often even conditionally create its own set of vowels (see Fürniss 1991:175).

Literally, “the one who counts” (Fürniss 2006:175).

Literally, “yodel” (ibid.).

Aka use of the “head” voice does not oblige the singer to sing with words. For example, other voice parts, like the ngué wà lèmbò, and òsèsè most often articulate wordless syllables exclusively with ‘head’ voice.

Just as Fürniss points out that the Aka rarely “talk” about distinctive voice-parts and their functions (see Fürniss 2006:176), neither do the Baka. In fact, I hesitate to claim that all Baka speakers share the same lexical expressions when speaking of voice-part performance. It is highly likely that the word wànjàmba is widespread (see Brisson 1992:465), but use of the word wàttúkò would still need further verification.


Brisson claims that the etymology of the word yeyì is formed from the lexemes ye (‘to like’) + li- (‘voice of,’ or ‘sound of’), meaning ‘to like the voice-sound of,’ as in “é à ye li-ngombî” (“He likes the voice-sound of his guitar”) (see 1999:626; 2002).

I was initially motivated to adopt Dooley and Levinsohn’s approach because SIL colleagues Yves Léonard (2005) and Kathleen Higgens (1981) had both, in one way or another, at one time or another, based their complementary discourse analyses of Baka traditional narratives on the models of Longacre, Dooley, and Levinsohn.

“More specific genres often involve other textual properties. Drama, for example, may be a narrative according to broad genre, but one that is presented in the form of
dialogue (Chapter 1) and is typically written (Chapter 4) for live presentation. Letters are written discourses and may be of any one of several genres. Jokes are typically oral narratives with a particular goal (humor) and a specific register of speech, and so forth” (Dooley and Levinsohn 2001).

23 “Besides these two primary features, Longacre discusses two further ones: projection and tension. **PROJECTION** in its + value “has to do with a situation or action which is contemplated, enjoined, or anticipated, but not realized”; prophecy is + projection narrative, stories are – projection, and so forth. **TENSION** “has to do with whether a discourse reflects a struggle or polarization of some sort”. Narrative can be + or – tension, as can scientific articles (depending on how polemic they are), etc.” (Dooley and Levinsohn 2001: 9, 10).

24 “**Procedural discourse** (“how to do it, how it was done, how it takes place”) is marked by contingent succession, but not agent orientation (since “attention is on what is done or made, not on who does it); **behavioral discourse** (exhortation, eulogy, some speeches of political candidates, etc.) clearly exhibits agent orientation, but not contingent succession (since “it deals with how people did or should behave”; and **expository discourse** (budgets, scientific articles, etc.) is marked by neither feature” (cf. ibid).


26 The dependent lexeme ‘li-’ can be translated here as ‘voice of,’ or ‘sound of.’ In some contexts, it commonly translates as ‘language of’ (cf. Brisson 2002:259).

27 A variation of **kole a lèlè te kpáó**—one that simply displaces the actuation of the entire pattern by two pulses—is often performed complementarily.
3.1 Introduction: Sung versus Unsung Verbal Discourse

In Section 2.1 of Chapter 2, I reported that Baka speakers identify a variety of verbal discourse types. The table in Figure 3-1—a simplified version of the table in Figure 2-2—displays a set of lexical entries of nine of the most prevalent Baka speech-act terms. As I explained in Section 2.1, the two terms ngɔmà (‘discussion’) and lɔmù (‘conversation’) identify “ordinary” verbal acts. The other seven terms—kɔlɔ, lewu, mɔsimɔ, gbɔngongo, mbɔli, likanɔ, and ɓe—identify “extra-ordinary” verbal acts. Still, the Baka do not formulate abstractions about “ordinary” versus “extra-ordinary” speech acts. In this chapter, however, I have empirically abstracted several of the distinctive features that constitute the particular (extra-ordinary) verbal act that the Baka identify as ɓe, that is, “song.” My analysis is inductively developed from the notion that there is one underlying function in all of the features that distinguish song from non-song, that being a “poetic function.” What follows, then, is (1) a brief description of what generally constitutes poetically organized discourse and (2) an inventory of the poetic devices thus far discovered in Baka song texts.

In the opening statement of their essay “Poetry”—in Alessandro Duranti’s A Companion to Linguistic Anthropology (2004)—Giorgio Banti and Francesco Giannattasio assert that “ethnographic research has shown that “poetic” forms and behaviors are almost universally widespread…” (Banti and Giannattasio 2004:290). Further, they elaborate on the notion of “poetry” in this way.
It should be clear at this point that two different levels of definition for poetry have to be taken into consideration:

- [The first level is ] a wider level of *poetic procedures*, whose general features broadly correspond to what [Roman] Jakobson [(1960)] said about his poetic function of language. They not only characterize poetry proper, but also include magical spells, prayers, and ritual discourse, in proverbs and children’s games, and so on, right up to today’s advertising jingles and political slogans, and of course, in the different forms of chant and song. They all share the fact of being special, not ordinary speech. (293-294)

- [The second level is ] a narrower level of *poetry in the strict sense*, that is autonomously defined by each culture in the course of its history on the basis of its own choice of genres, specific contents, ways of production, functions, occasions of performance, and aesthetic and social values. (ibid.)

The scope of the analysis presented in this chapter is limited to Banti and Giannattasio’s “wider level of *poetic procedures,*” that is, that level which is roughly modeled after Roman Jakobson’s notion of the “poetic function.”

In the field of twentieth-century semiotics—a field first engaged in the 1960s by musicologists and ethnomusicologists alike¹—the writings of Roman Jakobson (1896–1982) bridged the two major streams of semiotics that initially flowed from the pioneering works of Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913) and Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914) (Cobley and Janz 1997:144).² In treating “song as sign,” there are two kindred articles from Jakobson to which I have gravitated: one, because it gives specific attention to *poetics* as a semiotic process; the other, because it addresses *music* as a semiotic process.
In his oft cited essay “Linguistics and Poetics” Jakobson justified and modeled a linguistic treatment of poetics, hitherto reserved as the property of the literary studies. He wrote,

This separation of the two fields from each other is based on a current but erroneous interpretation of the contrast between the structure of poetry and other types of verbal structure.

Many poetic features belong not only to the science of language but to the whole theory of signs, that is, to general semiotics. This statement is valid not only for verbal art but also for all varieties of language since language shares many properties with some other systems of signs or even with all of them (pansemiotic features). (1960)³

In 1973, in his article “Le language en relation avec les autres systèmes de communication,” Jakobson later characterized music as a semiotic system, one in which “introversive semiosis” (that is, the reference of each sonic element to the other elements to come) predominates over the “extroversive semiosis” (i.e., the referential link with the exterior world) (1973:99–100).⁴

Common to Jakobson’s semiotic notions of both poetics and music is an emphasis on sound—“figures of sound” and “sound symbolism.” Yet even while Jakobson championed a call to continually and more deeply give sound (as sign) its due, he simultaneously urged the investigation of yet another, more fundamental dynamic at work, that is, “the principle of equivalence.” Fully stated, it reads, “The poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination” (1960:358). Restated in 1968, Jakobson wrote, “in poetry, similarity is superimposed on contiguity, and hence “equivalence is promoted to the constitutive
device of the sequence” (1966:602).\(^5\) Literary scholar, Jonathan Culler tried to reduce
Jakobson’s formulation this way:

In other words, the poetic use of language involves placing together in a sequence items which are phonologically or grammatically related. Patterns formed by the repetition of similar items will be both more common and more noticeable in poetry than in other kinds of language. (1975:56)\(^6\)

Jakobson, however, would not agree to limiting his poetic principle to traditional literary categories of phonology and grammar.

No doubt, verse is primarily a recurrent “figure of sound.” Primarily, always, but never uniquely. Any attempts to confine such poetry conventions as meter, alliteration, or rhyme to the sound level are speculative reasonings without any empirical justifications. The projection of the equational principle into the sequence has a much deeper and wider significance. Valery’s view of poetry as ‘hesitation between the sound and the sense’ is much more realistic and scientific than any bias of phonetic isolationism.\(^7\)

Russian folk poetry (for example) can be fruitfully analyzed on all linguistic levels—phonological, morphological, syntactic, and lexical: we learn what elements are conceived as equivalent and how likeness on certain levels is tempered with conspicuous difference on other ones. (1960:369)

The inventory of Baka song text poetic devices identified in this study are recognized within and across five musico-linguistic poetic domains: rhythmic, syntactic, phonological, lexical, and semantic domains. In addition, the recognition of the poetic function in these five domains is guided not only by an abstract search for Jakobson’s “principle of equivalence,” but also, more specifically, by Peirce’s “second
trichotomy” of semiotic concepts (Turino [1988], 1999:226–229). In it, Peirce posits that there are “three ways that a “sign and [its] object’ are related in perceivers” (emphasis added; ibid.). First, a sign and object may be related “iconically,” whereby sign and object are said to be related through “resemblance.” Second, sign and object may be related “indexically,” wherein sign and object may be related through “co-occurrence,” or “association.” Third, a sign and object may be related referentially, or “symbolically”—as Peirce defines it—through language (i.e., words) (ibid.). As it relates to poetic analysis, foreknowledge of these three distinct ways of relating sign and object aids poetic analyses in that it lends greater specificity to how Jakobson’s “principle of equivalence” might be potentially constituted. Equivalencies among song signs—that is, the ways that signs and objects might “relate”—are not expected to be of one order, but of many, though iconic, indexical, and symbolic in nature. In addition to semiotic methodologies, the identification of the constitutive poetic elements—whether rhythmic, syntactic, phonological, lexical, semantic, or other—is further aided by familiarity with (1) conventional analytical methods of music theory, linguistics, poetics, and literary criticism, and (2) pertinent local terminologies. Indeed, though the theory and methodology employed in this analysis is rooted in semiotics, semiotic terminology will not be prevalent in the sections that follow. Rather, descriptive terms of poetic constituents are primarily drawn from the conventions of linguistics, poetics, ethnopoetics, literary criticism, and music theory. I have chosen to employ conventional terms simply because they are more widely understood than semiotic terms.
With this framework in mind, the plan for the rest of this chapter is first, to introduce the scope and sources of the Baka song-texts under study; second, to present an overview of all Baka song-text poetic devices found to date; third, to examine in detail the rhythmic devices at play in nine select Baka songs (Sec. 3.3); fourth, to describe all of the poetic devices found at play in one particular Baka song (Sec. 3.4); and last, to summarize the cumulative effect of that one song’s multiple, interconnected poetic signs (Sec. 3.5).

**Song text sources.** In Section 1.6, I reported the scope and location of the ethnographic data that I collected during my initial period of fieldwork from November 1996 through May 1998. During that period I collected over four hundred field recordings of Baka song in five Baka camps in the Eastern Province of Cameroon (maps in Fig. 1-6). From this corpus, preliminary textual transcriptions were made of approximately seventy-five song texts representing a cross-section of potentially thirty to forty song types (Fig. 2-1). From these seventy-five song texts, nine contextually divergent texts were selected for more detailed analysis (Fitzgerald 2003).

These nine detailed song-text transcriptions represent songs with a variety of cultural themes, composition histories, and performance practices. Compositely summarized, they are songs both ancient and contemporary composed by individuals and groups of Baka people from all age groups and genders. Furthermore, they represent songs performed by individuals and groups (homogenous or mixed) of all genders and age groups, with and without instrumental accompaniment, with and without dance, antiphonally and polyphonically, staged and naturally, at night and in day, casually and formally, in solitude or in community, as sacred or profane.
3.2 Inventory of Baka Song-Text Poetic Devices

Figure 3-2 presents an inventory of all of the poetic devices thus far identified in my analysis of the nine selected song texts. The inventory is guided and organized by the etic perception of signifying patterns in five distinct but interrelated poetic domains, that is, \textit{rhythmic, syntactic, phonological, lexical, and semantic} domains. With some elaboration, particularly in regard to the systemic distribution of these poetic devices, the entire inventory may be read as follows: First, in the domain of rhythmic poetic devices, all Baka song texts have the poetic devices of \textit{pulse, tempo, meter,} and \textit{line}. Second, in the domain of syntactic-poetic devices, all Baka song texts include the device conventionally termed “\textit{verse}”; most also have \textit{verse-segments}, and some have \textit{stanzas}. All \textit{verses, verse-segments, and stanzas} are at some point \textit{repeated}, and most become \textit{varied}. \textit{Contrastive} verses and verse-segments are most commonly exhibited; \textit{derivative} verse types occur less so. \textit{Enjambment}—both syntactic and rhythmic in nature—is not an uncommon syntactic poetic device. Third, in the domain of lexical poetic devices, it is quite common to find intra- and inter-linear \textit{repetition, reiteration}, or \textit{reduplication} of \textit{phonemes, ideophones, and words}. \textit{Homonyms} occur less frequently, but certainly are not rare. Fourth, the phonological functioning of poetic devices is too diverse to give much elaboration here. A simple listing of these devices is adequate for our present purposes. The phonological devices, then, include the use of \textit{vocables, vocable repetition, vocable substitution, ideophones, assonance, consonance, alliteration, borrowed words, vowel lengthening, and sprechstimme} (sometimes referred to as “\textit{rhythmic speech}”). Fifth, and last, is the functioning of poetic devices on the semantic level.
This also is too diverse to offer much elaboration at present. Simply listed, semantic level devices include the use of ideophones, reiterated ideophones, reduplicated ideophones, similes, metaphors, metonyms, lexical reiteration of metonyms, anthropomorphism, meronymy, hyponyms, semantic parallelism, complimentary syntactic-semantic parallelism, syntagmatic-paradigmatic grammatical substitution, loan word synonymy, and ellipsis.

The preceding plain reading of the entire inventory is only intended to present a quick profile and overall impression of the kinds of poetic devices performed in Baka song texts. I have, however, documented a description of each device listed in the inventory, but the presentation of that lengthy study lies outside the scope of this chapter. What follows, then, is first, a description of all the rhythmic poetic devices found in the selected corpus of nine songs, and then second, a description of all of the poetic devices recognized thus far in one particular Baka song.

3.3 Rhythmic Poetic Devices

3.3.1 Line

The primary distinctive poetic feature of sung Baka discourse is its *musically metered line*. It must be emphasized, that the poetic nature of a line is not so much verbal, as it is musical. More precisely, a line is a *rhythmical unit* (an organized unit of time), not a syntactical unit. A Baka song line, however, does not express rhythm formed of patterned prosodic or semantic units (as in Greco-Roman and Japanese meter, or Semitic parallelism), but rhythm *minimally formed from a continuously recurring sequence of pulses*. Restated then, the primary distinctive poetic feature of sung Baka discourse is the *musical meter* to which it is set.
The poetic line in all nine song texts in this study is musically metered.\textsuperscript{10} Musical meter, however, is not always apparent in conventional text transcriptions using Roman script. Meter of this nature is better represented by way of a music notation system.\textsuperscript{11} In lieu of music notation in all the examples that follow, it is adequate for my purposes here—purposes decidedly linguistic and literary in emphasis—to (1) tacitly mark the bounds of a musically metered poetic line by the typographical convention of “stopping at the right margin and returning to the left margin”\textsuperscript{12} and (2) explicitly note both tempo and meter in the upper-left margin of the first line. In addition to text examples, audio excerpts (clips) accompany most text examples in this section.

3.3.2 Pulse

The recognition of pulse is fundamental to an authentic understanding of a song line’s nature. A pulse (a periodic unit of time) is the minimal rhythmical unit of a line. However, as the pulse in any given song or song line is not always actuated, a cultural “outsider” may not immediately experience its presence. To a cultural “insider,” however, its presence, actuated or not, is still experienced. As Vida Chenoweth writes:

In any particular composition not all the pulses are necessarily actuated, but because of their regularity, all of the pulses are anticipated and felt by the listener [i.e., a cultural insider]. (1972:99)

This phenomenon of perception was corroborated in the transcription of the data under question. The pulse in Example 1, for instance, is clearly actuated by the simple clapping of hands and was readily perceived and transcribed by me—a cultural outsider. I iconically represent it here with numbered quarter notes equidistantly plotted above the text, roughly synchronizing pulse and text.\textsuperscript{13}
Example 1: Elephant Hunting Song (Object 3-1. Audio file of elephant hunting song (mp3. 944 KB))

8 pulses per line

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3a)

(hé 'e) ya mo le (nde)...

(3b)

(hé 'e) ya mo le ya ke, ngoikonja (-o)

In another example, Example 2, the pulse was again readily perceived, but its actuation was less evident in the accompanimental rhythm of an aita, a Baka seven-string frame-harp. (Again, numbered quarter notes are added to the original transcription to make the line’s rhythmic character explicit.)

Example 2: Song of a Young Boy Playing with His Parents (Object 3-2. Song of a young boy playing with his parents (mp3. 932 KB))

8 pulses per line

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1)

‘Amá, wá binjà lè.
Maman! Ils me trompent!

(2)

‘Apá, wá binjà lè ko, nkó éme.
Vraiment, papa! Ils me trompent. (Meme,) moi!

(3)

Am-biance à bümá-lè ko (-i-e) bo(-o) wè-
Pauvre de moi! (Ecoutez) tout le monde! C’est vrai (qu’ils me trompent ... meme, moi!)

(4)

ngaà (-e) wá binjà le,

(5)

‘amá, wá binjà lè,

In still another case, the presence of the pulse was not plainly evident, yet still suggested in the regularity of both the melodic rhythm and the accompanimental rhythm of the ngɔmbi nà pèke, a plucked harp-zither. However, its emic timing was
initially unknown to me. As an outsider, I was not culturally competent to immediately respond to it. It was, however, eventually revealed to me when Baka friends began clapping and dancing to a recording playback of the song. The pulse is plotted below in Example 3. (An audio clip in Object 3-3 presents the original recording (Object 3-3. Audio file of solo song of lament (.mp3 952 KB)). The audio clip in Object 3-4 records a Baka speaker clapping to a playback of the original recording (Object 3-4. Audio file of solo song of lament with clapping (.mp3 804 KB)).

Example 3: Solo Song of Lament, with Harp-Zither Accompaniment (ibid., i.e., Object 3-3 and Object 3-4 above)

```
1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4...
| | | | | | | |
```

(140 MM)

(line 1) 

Wu we wu we(-o),

(line 2) 

Wu we wu we(-o),

(line 3) 

là – mò bà sià;

(line 4) 

mò-mò bà ngomà;

(line 5) 

je-mò bà je b e l e.

Finally, there are those songs where the pulse is not actuated at all, where neither accompaniment nor dancing exist to realize it. Melodic rhythm alone is left to suggest it. Yet, should the melodic rhythm be characterized by syncopation, which of course is not uncommon in sub-Saharan Africa, the pulse may be all the more imperceptible to the uninitiated. This phenomenon was the case in song Example 4. It was not until the song was re-performed months later in another context (with drumming and dancing)
that the pulse was made explicit. (The audio clip in Object 3-5 presents an
unaccompanied performance and the audio clip in Object 3-6 documents an
accompanied version, with drums (‘ndûmû’). (Object 3-5. Audio file of male initiation
song without accompaniment (.mp3 1 MB) and Object 3-6. Audio file of male initiation
song with accompaniment (.mp3 944 KB), respectively.)

Example 4: Male Initiation Song (with the spirit, Jengî) (ibid., i.e., Object 3-5 and 3-6
above)

16 pulses per line
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
(7a)
(‘i ya-)(w)è! wè-nganga là kɔ---   (‘i ya-e-----)
// ah! / pauvre de nous / qui / comme ça /
// On va faire comment, avec Jengî comme ça?//

sàlèsale(-e)     (‘œ-)Momba(-ε)
// entrez! /   Jengî (maître du couteau) //

I have found, then, that the first step in the process of defining the rhythmic
nature of a poetic line begins with emically distinguishing the minimal dynamic unit of
rhythm, the pulse. Once competently determined, a pulse may then be described in
terms of its tempo.

3.3.3 Tempo

Tempo is pulse rate. Detailed etic descriptions of song performance tempi are
more properly the realm of musicological studies. Linguistic and literary conventions
do not typically account for this element of a poetic line. I include tempo markings at
the beginning of each of my linguistic transcriptions to underscore the extent of the
musical character of the Baka poetic line and to indicate, even if only slightly, the
quality of movement and energy animating a song line. Data of performance tempi
might also become pertinent to linguistic description if correlations emerge between
tempo and tendencies concerning compositional word choice, word performance, or a
line’s text load. Plainly put, there are only so many verbal segments one can
comfortably articulate in a given period of time. Thus, for example, poetic devices
such as elision and ellipsis may tend to be found in songs of faster tempi.

In my transcriptions, a line’s tempo is described by way of the musical convention
of metronome markings displayed next to the meter measure at the upper-left margin
of the first line. The table in Figure 3-3 displays the various tempi in our song sample.
The range of song line tempi in our sample varies fairly evenly between 105MM to
160MM, the mean tempo being 126MM. Personal recollection suggests that a more
complete sample may extend these extremes, but not radically so. Even with a broader
range, the mean tempo would not likely change significantly.

3.3.4 Meter

While pulse and tempo are fundamental dynamics in the temporal organization of
a Baka song line, they do not define its boundaries. Pulse is but a minimal rhythmic
unit from which other larger units are constructed.\textsuperscript{15} We recognize the organization of
larger units in \textit{prevailing patterns of repetition}, that is, varyingly repeated segments of
music, texts, and performance textures. In Baka song texts, patterns of syntax are
patterned with patterns of rhythm. In most cases, syntax patterns coincide with line
patterns. \textit{This patterning defines a song line’s boundaries}. The number of pulses within its
boundaries is termed its \textit{meter}. Meter then, is the “length” of a Baka song line, the
measure of its primary organizing principle.\textsuperscript{16}
The table in Figure 3-4 displays the distribution of the four meter types found in my data. The four meter types are 16, 12, 8, or 4 pulses per line. Each type is shown in Examples 5–8, respectively. Some examples excerpt two lines from a complete song text transcription in order to demonstrate coinciding patterns of line and syntax.

Example 5: Dance Song (1) Returning from a Gorilla Hunt or, (2) during a Circumcision Rite (Object 3-7. Audio file of dance song for return from gorilla hunt (.mp3 848 MB))

16 pulses per line; pulse = 118MM

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10  11  12  13  14  15  16

(13a) ‘Ámù yekèyèkè tópe sòkè. à ¶ù ngò,

(13b) ‘Á ye à ¶ù ngò, (‘ee-) à ¶ù ngò, ‘á ye à ¶ù ngò.

Example 6: Song Associated Jengi (Spirit of the Forest) (Object 3-8. Audio file of song associated with the spirit, Jengi (.mp3 976 KB)

12 pulses per line – 105MM

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10  11  12

(6a) (*e ye) bu là-bàngì(-ε) (*e ye)

(6b) (*e-e-e- ‘i ye-o)

(6c)

‘e dòto (te) pítìmà de(-ε) (*e-) wá tù-e de(-ε)

Example 7: (see Example 1)

8 pulse per line – 125MM

Example 8: (see Example 3)

4 pulse per line – 140MM

Within the sample, then, there are four songs with metered lines of 8 p.p.l. (pulses per line), three songs with 16 p.p.l., two songs with 12 p.p.l., and one song with 4 p.p.l.. Taken as a whole, the sample suggests the following preliminary summary of
Baka song line meter types: (1) lines are organized in metrical units (“lengths”) of either 16, 12, 8, or 4 p.p.l.;\(^1\) (2) the maximum line length allowable is 16 pulses; (3) the minimum line length allowable is 4 pulses; (4) half the line types have 12 or 16 p.p.l., while another half have 4 to 8 p.p.l.; (5) the average line length is 12 pulses; (6) the predominate (typical) song line length is 8 pulses.

### 3.3.5 Summary of Rhythmic Devices

In summary, the rhythmic poetic devices of Baka song texts may be described as follows: The primary distinctive poetic feature of sung Baka discourse is its musically metered line. A Baka song line is essentially a rhythmical unit, an organized unit of time. The minimal rhythmic unit of a Baka song line is a pulse. From a pulse, other larger rhythmic units are constructed. In any given Baka song a pulse is not necessarily actuated, but can nonetheless be emically recognized because of its regularity. The measure of its regularity is its tempo. Baka song tempos range from 105MM to 160MM, with a mean tempo of 126MM. A song line is minimally formed from a continuously recurring sequence of pulses. The organization of these sequences is recognized in patterns of repeated segments of music, texts, and textures. In Baka songtexts, patterns of syntax are patterned with patterns of rhythm. In most cases, syntax patterns coincide with line patterns. This patterning, then, defines a song-line’s boundaries. The number of pulses within its boundaries is its meter, that is, its relative “length,” the measure of its primary organizing principle. Baka song line meter types are organized in units of either 16, 12, 8, or 4 p.p.l.; the average meter being 12 p.p.l., the predominant meter, 8 p.p.l.
3.4 Description of the Poetic Devices of One Baka Song

Having presented an analysis of the rhythmic poetic devices of Baka songs, what follows is a description of all of the poetic devices—rhythmic, syntactic, phonological, lexical, and semantic—thus far analyzed in one particular Baka song, a lament. Figure 3-5 presents a textual transcription of the song. Object 3-9 documents the audio performance of the song (Object 3-9. Audio file of solo song of lament (.mp3 1.9 MB)). The analysis is applied to the entire song performance, not just one representative refrain as is so often the case in literary studies of partially improvised song-texts. Performance examples will be identified and presented for each device found in the transcription, but elaboration on their poetic function must be reserved for a future article.

3.4.1 Ethnographic Background

The song selected—the simplest of the nine select, transcribed songs—was recorded in 1998 in the Baka encampment of Mbalam (Map 3 in Fig. 1-6). It was sung by a 30 to 45 year old Baka man named Ayé (Figure 3-6). The composer is unknown.

Ayé sang and instrumentally accompanied himself on a plucked four-metal-string rafia-frame harp-zither (‘ngômbi nà pèke,’ or ‘ngômbi nà kpokpo’) (Figure 3-7). The six components of the ngômbi nà pèke are constructed from five locally available materials, mostly forest materials. The bridge (‘mbôônjò’) is whittled from the wood of the mòsasàa tree. The neck (‘mbéngà’ = ‘lance’) and the soundboard/resonator (‘dèdè’) are fabricated from various parts of a raffia-palm tree (pèke). Traditionally, the four strings (‘ku’) of the harp-zither were made from the rattan kpokpo vine; today, however, wire
strands (‘wàydá’ = Eng. ‘wire’) from metal trapping cable are used. The strings are attached to two end-pegis whittled from the wood of mòsasàa tree saplings, or are simply wound around three- to five-inch metal carpentry nails. Finally, the eight tuning cinches (‘kìyɔ́’) are made from thin strips of bark peeled from kpongbo vines. The four strands of metal trapping cable are attached to and stretched along the straight, slender shaft of the raffia palm branch. The four metal cords are then further stretched and set in four notches (‘tète’) carved in the wooden bridge which is perpendicularly attached to the raffia shaft. The intersection of bridge and cords effectively doubles the four cords, producing eight distinct pitches when plucked. The pitches of Aye’s zither where approximately tuned to F-3, Ab-3, Bb-3, C-4, Eb-4, F-4, Ab-4, Bb-4. Tension in the cords, and thus tuning, is effected by sliding each of the eight thin bands of vine that encircle the raffia shaft and cords toward or away from the bridge nodes. The zither is normally laid across a players lap and plucked with the index fingers.

The song is sung solo, as are many Baka songs which are sung to the accompaniment of the ngòmbi nà pèke. The themes of songs sung with ngòmbi accompaniment are often personal, and even intimate, in nature. Ayé sings a personal lament—a “song of woe”—while communing with the forest for solace, a telling expression of the degree to which many Baka identify with their forest home.

In brief, in the opening verses, that is, Verses 1–2 (Example 9), Ayé utters the “moan-like” ideophone “Wu we wu we-o... Wu we wu we-o.”
Example 9: Song of Lament, Verses 1–5

(1) **Wu we wu we-o,**

*Wu we wu we-o.* *(wu we (wu we-o): ideophone = ‘moan’)*

(2) **Wu we wu we-o,**

*Wu we wu we-o.*

(3) **Là-mò bà sià,**

*My eyes are looking to...*

(4) **mò-mò bà ngomà(-e),**

*My mouth is speaking to...*

(5) **jè-mò bà jè bele.**

*My ears are listening to... the forest...*

Then, in Verses 3-5, he directs his attention to the forest, singing, “Là-mò bà sià” *(‘my eyes are looking to’), “mò-mò bà ngomà(-e)” *(‘my mouth is speaking to’), [and] “jè-mò bà jè bele” *(‘my ears are listening to the forest [for help … for consolation…for provision]’). The accompanying audio file in Object 3-9 documents Ayé’s entire performance (Object 3-9. Audio file of solo lament with harp-zither accompaniment (.mp3 1.9 MB)).

In the sections that follow, that is, Sections 3.4.2 through 3.4.6, I will describe the rhythmic (Sec. 3.4.2), syntactic (Sec. 3.4.3), phonological (Sec. 3.4.4), lexical (Sec. 3.4.5), and semantic (Sec. 3.4.6) poetic devices thus far discovered in Ayé’s text.

### 3.4.2 Rhythmic Poetic Devices

**Pulse, tempo, meter, and line (Fig. 3-2).** Four rhythmic devices converge in Baka poetic texts to form what Herrnstein-Smith would call the “sustained rhythm...the continuously operating principle of organization” in Baka poetic discourse: pulse, tempo, meter, and line. And as explained in Section 3.2, Example 3 of this Chapter, there are four pulses per line in Aye’s lament (Example 10). The presence of the pulse is not plainly evident, but is nonetheless suggested in the regularity of both the song’s
melodic rhythm and the zither's accompanimental rhythm. In Example 10 (as in Example 3) the pulse is placed above the transcription and is represented with numerals equidistantly plotted above the text, roughly synchronizing pulse and text.

Example 10: 4 pulses per poetic line

\[
\text{Pulses} \rightarrow 1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \quad 1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \ldots
\]

(140 MM)

(1) Wu we wu we(-o),

(2) Wu we wu we(-o),

(3) là – mò bà sià;

(4) mò-mò bà ngoma;

(5) je-mò bà jè ble

(Line boundaries and text boundaries do not, however, coinicide, as described further in Section 3.4.3 and Chap. 2, Sec. 2.2.1.)

The measure of a song line's pulse is its tempo, that is, its pulse rate. This song normally averages 140 MM, an average tempo for a Baka song.

Four meter types are present in Baka song: 16, 12, 8, or 4 pulses per line. The meter of this song is four pulses per line.

3.4.3 Syntactic Poetic Devices

Contrastive verses and verse variations (Fig. 3-2). Sung Baka discourse is not only subject to particular patterns of rhythm, but to particular patterns of verbal syntax as well. Syntactic patterns, as opposed to rhythmic patterns, are composed of grammatical units, not chronological units; and every kind of grammatical unit (morpheme, word, phrase, sentence, etc.) is potentially subject to poetic treatment. Generally stated, the poetic function distinctively marks the verbal syntax of a Baka
song by the cumulative action of particular poetic devices, acting on particular syntactic units, particularly ordered.

3.4.3.1 Available grammatical units

As for the natural grammatical units available for poetic exploitation in this song, one solo voice part versifies an available grammatical inventory of 10 different words and 2–6 distinct vocables. For each verse of this poetic discourse, 0–5 words and 1–6 vocables are uttered in a span of 5–6 syllables and synchronized to poetic lines of 4 pulses.

3.4.3.2 Available poetic syntactic units

From the text transcription (shown in its entirety in Figure 3-5), we discover that this song is composed of four available poetic-syntactic units (represented here in Figure 3-8 as Verses A, B, B¹, and B²). Example 11 presents the two basic contrasting verses (Verse A, e.g., l.1 and Verse B, l.3). In addition, one verse, (Verse B) is further subject to two kinds of variation (e.g., Verse B¹, l.4 and B², l.5).

Example 11: Verses in Contrast and in Variation

(pulse)

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & (1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & etc.) \\
\end{array}
\]

(line 1)

[Verse A]

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{Wu we wu we-o,} \\
// wu wu wu (-o) // \\
Wu wu we we-o. (wu we (wu we-o): ideo. = gémir(fr.)/moan(eng.))
\end{array}
\]

(line 2)

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{Wu we wu we-o,} \\
// wu wu wu (-o) // \\
Wu wu wu we-o.
\end{array}
\]

(line 3)

[Verse B]

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{Là-mò bà sià,} \\
// oeil de moi / IMP / regarder // \\
Mes yeux regardent;
\end{array}
\]
3.4.3.3 Complementary devices of syntactic development

In this song, both verse variations (i.e., variations B¹ and B², e.g., l.4 and l.5 respectively) are created by grammatical substitution, that is, syntagmatic-paradigmatic substitution. One variation is also altered by textual expansion (i.e., B², e.g., l.5).

To explore grammatical substitution further—as it is quite common in Baka song-texts—we note that two syntagmatic slots, that is, the subject slot and the predicate slot, in contrastive verse “B” are subject to paradigmatic substitution. Both slots may be improvisationally filled by one of three paradigmatic substitutes: first, the subject slot in all “B” verse-types may be filled with one of three co-hyponyms from a semantic set of what might be called “the singer’s communicative sensory organs,” that is, his “mouth,” “eyes,” and “ears”; second, the predicate slot in all “B” verse-types may be filled by one of three co-hyponyms from a semantic set of what might be called “functions performed by the singer's communicative sensory organs,” that is, “speaking,” “looking,” and “listening.”

The textual expansion of the verse is accomplished by the addition of an indirect object (i.e., “forest.”) as heard in “B²” verse-types.

As briefly noted earlier, verse boundaries and line boundaries do not coincide in verse-type “B²”; in this song, verse-terminal boundaries overlap line-initial boundaries.
Technically, this is a kind of *enjambment*, though its regularity tends to temper its typically tension-producing effect.

### 3.4.3.4 Frequency and distribution of available syntactic poetic units

The table in Figure 3-9 presents the frequency and distribution of the available verse types. Relative to the frequency of each verse type, the two basic verse types are distributed fairly evenly throughout. The initial contrastive verse (A) evenly pervades nearly two-thirds of the discourse while the subsequent contrastive verse (B) and its variations (B₁ and B²) together, fairly evenly share the remainder of the sung discourse.

### 3.4.3.5 Syntactic development and form

Figure 3-10 charts the overall syntactic development of the entire song-text. The table and diagram in Figure 3-11 depicts the allowable pairs of adjacent verse types and verse progressions. From Figures 3-10 and 3-11, I induce that the syntactic development and form of the entire discourse generally tends to be both iterative and revertive in that most often a series of one of the two contrastive verses is followed by a series of the other contrastive verse (or one of its variations). However, while a series of immediately repeated verses seems to generally mark the syntax as iterative, the alternation of the two contrastive sets of immediately repeated verses eventually produces a revertive effect as well. These sets of contrastive verses always revert to “A” verses-types.

### 3.4.4 Lexical Poetic Devices

*Lexical repetition and homonym repetition (Fig. 3-2).* In the domain of lexical poetic devices, this song exhibits two devices: simple *lexical repetition* and
*homonym repetition.* *Lexical repetition,* that is, simple lexeme repetition, is intra-linearly recurrent in the performance of Verse A (e.g., line 21, Example 12).

Example 12: Intra-linear Lexical Repetition

(21)\[ Wu \text{ we} Wu \text{ we-o.} \]

It is also inter-linearly recurrent in words sung in a series of “B” verse-types (e.g., lines 25–27, Example 13).

Example 13: Inter-linear Lexical Repetition

(25)\[ L\text{à-mò bà sià;} \]

(26)\[ mò-mò bà ngomà(-e); \]

(27)\[ jè-mò bà jè bele. \]

*Repetition in homonyms* recurs intra-linearly in most stanza-final lines, as in line 31 and 32 of Example 14; with the homonyms *mò* (the noun for “mouth”) and –*mò* (the 1S possessive pronoun), as well as the homonyms *jè* (the noun for “ear”) and *(na)*jè (the verb “to hear”).

Example 14: Homonyms

(3)\[ mò-mò bà ngomà(-e); \]

// *mò* / 1S pos / IMPV / *speak* / voc //

*My* *mò* *is speaking.*

(3)\[ jè-mò bà jè bele. \]

// *jè* / 1S pos / IMPV / *listen* / forest //

*My* *jè* *are* *listening*... *to the forest.*
3.4.5 Phonological Poetic Devices

**Assonance and alliteration (Fig. 3-2).** In the domain of phonological poetic devices, there are two basic devices: *assonance* and *alliteration*. *Assonance* occasionally recurs improvisationally in Verse B in word-final, line-final *vocalrepetition* (e.g., line 38 with line 39, Example 15).

Example 15: Assonance (word-final, line-final *vocalrepetition*)

(38)
Là-mò bà sià(è);
(39)
mò-mò bà ngomà(è);

Assonance also intermittently recurs in Verse A in word-initial, line-initial *vocalrepetition* (e.g., lines 42, 43, and 46 in Example 16).

Example 16: Assonance (word-initial, line-initial *vocalrepetition*)

(42)
(e-)Wu we wu we-o.
(43)
(e-)Wu we wu we-o.
(44)
Wu we wu we-o.
(45)
(w)Wu we wu we-o.
(46)
(e-)Wu we wu we-o.

**Alliteration** (of voiced, bilabial fricatives) is recurrent in Verse A, phoneme-initially, in the reiterated phonemes of the ideophone *Wu We Wu We-o* (e.g., line 22, Example 17).

Example 17: Alliteration (phoneme-initially)

(22)
Wu we wu wu we’.
3.4.6 Semantic Level Poetic Devices

Ideophones, syntagmatic-paradigmatic grammatical substitution, reiteration of co-hyponyms, reiteration of meronyms, complimentary syntactic-semantic parallelism, and anthropomorphism (Fig. 3-2). Finally, in the domain of semantic level poetic devices, this song makes use of at least six semantic level poetic devices: ideophones, syntagmatic-paradigmatic grammatical substitution, reiteration of co-hyponyms, reiteration of meronyms, complimentary syntactic-semantic parallelism, and anthropomorphism. Unfortunately, the scope of this chapter only allows for a presentation of examples; detailed description of their poetic function must be left for a future study.

The ideophone\textsuperscript{22} \textit{wu we wu we-o} (an ideophone that stands for “moaning”) serially recurs in all occurrences of the contrastive Verse A (e.g., lines 1 and 2, Example 18).

Example 18: Ideophone

1. \textbf{Wu we wu we-o.}
   \textit{Wu we wu we-o. (wu we (wu we-o): \textit{ideo.} = gémir(fr.)/moan(eng.))}
2. \textbf{Wu we wu we-o.}

The semantic devices at play in the typical ordering of Verse B and its variations (B\textsuperscript{1} and B\textsuperscript{2}) represent many of the most typical semantic poetic devices in the Baka song repertoire. Like many sequences of Baka song verses, the sequence of Verse B, B\textsuperscript{1}, and B\textsuperscript{2} in Ayé’s lament simultaneously effects and affects multiple semantic-level signals. The five semantic devices that converge and bring this about are highlighted in these final five examples.
The first semantic device is grammatical substitution, syntagmatic-paradigmatic substitution, in particular. It is a commonly constituted when, as in Example 19, two syntagmatic\textsuperscript{23} slots (e.g., the subject slot and the predicate slot in contrastive verse “B”) are subject to paradigmatic substitution.

Example 19: Syntagmatic-paradigmatic Grammatical Substitution (three co-hyponyms)

Improvisationally, both slots may be filled by one of three paradigmatic substitutes: first, the subject slot in all “B” verse-types may be filled with one of three co-hyponyms from a semantic set of “the singer's communicative sensory organs: his “mouth,” “eyes,” and “ears”; second, the predicate slot in all “B” verse-types may be filled by one of three co-hyponyms from a semantic set of “functions performed by the singer's communicative sensory organs”: “speaking,” “looking,” and “listening.”

The second semantic device, also shown in Example 18 (above), is the reiteration of hyponyms.\textsuperscript{24} Throughout the song, the reiteration of hyponyms is inter-linearly intermittent, though prevalent, in the same-syntax-slot co-hyponyms là, mò, and jè ("eyes, mouth, and ears", i.e., “kinds of the sensory organs"), as well as the co-hyponyms sià, ngomà, jè ("see, talk, and listen", i.e., “kinds of sensory communication”), as seen in lines 30–32.
The third device is lexical reiteration of meronyms. The reiteration of meronyms is inter-linearly intermittent, though prevalent, in the same-syntax-slot meronyms là-mò, mò-mò, jè-mò (i.e., “my eyes, my mouth, and my ears”) in lines 30–32, Example 20. These organs are meronyms in that they each ultimately “stand for” the person of whom they are sensorial parts.

Example 20: Meronymy

(30) Là-mò bà sià(-e);
(31) mò-mò bà ngomà-e);
(32) jè-mò bà jè bele.

The fourth semantic device, complimentary syntactic-semantic parallelism, is inter-linearly intermittent, though prevalent, where successive lines, like lines 30, 31, and 32 in Example 21, progressively develop and intensify similar semantic images in three adjacent verses containing what might be called “sensory communication modes.”

Example 21: Complimentary syntactic-semantic parallelism

(30) Là-mò bà sià(-e); // eye / 1S pos / IMPV / look / voc // My eyes are looking
(31) mò-mò bà ngomà(-e); // mouth / 1S pos / IMPV / speak / voc // My mouth is speaking
(32) jè-mò bà jè bele. // ear / 1S pos / IMPV / listen / voc // My ears are listening

The fifth, and last, semantic device is anthropomorphism. In the Ayé’s lament, anthropomorphism is semantically implicit in the inter-linear and intermittent occurrences of lyrics that give expression to the singer’s personal engagement with the forest, that is, in his “looking to,” “speaking to,” and “listening to” the forest for solace,
sympathy, or help. They are performed in any recurrence of Verse B$^2$ (e.g., lines 3–5 in Example 22).

Example 22: Anthropomorphism

(3) La-mò bà sìà(-e);
// eye / 1S pos / IMPV / look / voc //
My eyes are looking.

(4) mò-mò bà ngoma (-e);
// mouth / 1S pos / IMPV / speak / voc //
My mouth is speaking.

(5) je-mò bà je bele.
// ear / 1S pos / IMPV / listen / forest //
My ears are listening...to the forest.

3.5 Conclusion

Having discussed each of the principal poetic devices for this single song one by one, I conclude by re-presenting them together, as a complementary whole. I recapitulate in this manner because the peculiar effects of poetically organized discourse are not ultimately experienced by considering poetic devices one by one, but in the cumulative perception and experience of the ebb and flow of multiple interconnecting poetic devices. In the diagram in Figure 3-12, I have depicted the interconnectedness of most of the aforementioned poetic devices in Ayé’s lament.

Any one of the song-text’s ten words and two vocables might function in multiple poetic devices. The poetic “equivalencies” of the lyric’s sixteen poetic devices signify multiple “chains of semiosis” (Peirce, cited in Turino 1999: 222–240). Any one of these sixteen poetic devices is potentially linked to another. For example, *rhythmic* poetic devices (like pulse, tempo, meter, line) are linked to *syntactic* poetic devices (in verses repeated, verses contrasted, verses in variation, or verses in enjambment). These linked devices, in turn, are also “chained” to *lexical* poetic devices (like repeated words
and homonyms), or to phonological devices (signified in assonance and alliteration), or to semantic poetic devices (like ideophones, hyponyms, meronyms, semantic parallelism, and anthropomorphism). Each device communicates its own qualities, yet all are unified in time.

The most conspicuous semiotic effect of these semiotic chains is the interconnected patterns that they create. These patterns, in and over time, create expectations and unify experience (Meyer 1956:22–42; Dooley and Levinsohn 2000:26; Chenoweth 2001:112). Variations on these patterns reshape expectations, and thus engender a sense of drama as they unfold. In Baka song, as in all poetic traditions, the perception and performance of traditional poetic patterns—like those in Ayé’s lament—is indispensable for anyone who would competently participate in the communication of the unique and powerful communicative effects of poetically organized discourse. Even the generation of new poetic creations will build upon received forms, even and especially if these new creations would generate new effects to serve new purposes. Expectation—as an experiential effect of poetic patterning—is but one, albeit fundamental, poetic function of Baka song texts. Other effects are of course created. Examples of such effects will be taken up in Chapters 4 (e.g., Sec. 4.3.2) and 5 (e.g., Sec. 5.2). The scope of those effects, however, will be limited to the particular poetic effects achieved through songs sung in the course and context of performing traditional Baka oral narratives.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Baka Noun</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ngòmà</td>
<td>discussion, word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l̡ɔmù</td>
<td>conversation, discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ˈè)kàlò</td>
<td>(formal) counsel from elders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lèwù</td>
<td>(personal evening) advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mòsimò</td>
<td>proverb, recitation, account, narrative, monologue w/o song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gbɔ̃ngongo</td>
<td>allegory, proverb, saying, dictum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mbàli</td>
<td>comparison, parable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>likàñò</td>
<td>story, legend, fable, history, chantefable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè</td>
<td>song</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3-1. Common Baka speech act terms

### Five Poetic Domains

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(1) <strong>Rhythmic Poetic Devices</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pulse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tempo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>line (musically metered)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(2) <strong>Syntactic Poetic Devices</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>repeated verses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>repeated verse-segments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>repeated stanzas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contrastive verses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contrastive verse-segments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verse variations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verse-segment variations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stanza variations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verse derivations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enjambment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(3) <strong>Phonological Poetic Devices</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vocables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vocab repetition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vocab substitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ideophones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assonance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consonance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alliteration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>borrowed words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vowel lengthening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sprechstimme (speech-song)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(4) <strong>Lexical Poetic Devices</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>repeated phonemes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>repeated ideophones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>repeated words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>homonyms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reiterated homonyms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reduplicated homonyms (rhythmically)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(5) <strong>Semantic Poetic Devices</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ideophones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reiteration of ideophones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reduplication of ideophones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>similes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>metaphors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>metonyms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reiteration in metonyms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anthropomorphism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meronymy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(co-)hyponyms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>semantic parallelism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(complimentary) syntactic-semantic parallelism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>syntagmatic-paradigmatic grammatical substitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhetorical questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>archaic language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loan word synonymy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellipsis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3-2. Inventory of Baka song-text poetic devices
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song</th>
<th>Tempo (pulse rate: MM =)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V98032100338: story-song with bow-harp accompaniment (lingbidi)</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A081497III251: dancesong in celebration of the birth of twins</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V980204102110: solo &quot;lament&quot; with zither accompaniment</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D980227100423: elephant hunting song</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V980204100900: song with frame-harp accompaniment of a young boy playing with his parents</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A102997A200: dancesong (1) returning from a gorilla hunt or, (2) during a circumcision rite</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A102997A252: song announcing the return from a successful elephant hunt</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A110697A022: male initiation song (with the spirit Jengi)</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A110697A000: song associated with Jengi, a spirit</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3-3. Table of song tempi**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song</th>
<th>Meter (pulses per line)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A110697A022: male initiation song (with the spirit Jengi)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A102997A200: dancesong (1) returning from a gorilla hunt or, (2) during a circumcision rite</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A102997A252: song announcing the return from a successful elephant hunt</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A110697A000: song associated with Jengi, a spirit</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A081497III251: dancesong in celebration of the birth of twins</td>
<td>12 / 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D980227100423: elephant hunting song</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V980204100900: song with frame-harp accompaniment of a young boy playing with his parents</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V98032100338: story-song with 2-string bow-harp accompaniment (lingbidi)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V980204102110: solo song of woe with zither accompaniment</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3-4. Table of song meter types**
(1) Wu we wu we(-o).
// wu we wu we(-o) //
Wu we wu we-o. (wu we (wu we-o): ide. = gémir(fr.), moan(eng.).)
(2) Wu we wu we(-o).
// wu we wu we(-o) //
Wu we wu we-o.
(3) Là-mò bà sià;
// oeil de moi / IMPV? / regarder //
Mes yeux regardent;
(4) mò-mò bà ngomà(-e);
// bouche de moi / IMPV? / parler(-e) //
ma bouche parle;
(5) jè-mò bà jè bele.
// oreille de moi / IMPV? / écouter / foret //
mes oreilles écoutent la foret.
(6) Wu we wu we-o.
(7) (-)Wu we wu we(-o).
(8) Là-mò bà sià;
(9) mò-mò bà ngomà(-e);
(10) jè-mò bà jè bele.

(11) Wu we wu we-o.
(12) Là-mò bà sià(-e);
(13) mò-mò bà ngomà(-e);
(14) jè-mò bà jè bele.
(15) Wu we wu we-o.
(16) Wu we wu we-o.
(17) Wu we wu we-o.
(18) Là-mò bà sià(-e);
(19) mò-mò bà ngomà(-e);
(20) jè-mò bà jè bele.
(21) Wu we wu we-o.
(22) Wu we wu we-o.
(23) Wu we wu we-o.
(24) Wu we wu we-o.
(25) Là-mò bà sià;
(26) mò-mò bà ngomà(-e);
(27) jè-mò bà jè bele.
(28) Wu we wu we-o.
(29) Wu we wu we-o.
(30) Là-mò bà sià(-e);
(31) mò-mò bà ngomà(-e);
(32) jè-mò bà jè bele.
(33) Wu we wu we-o.
(34) Wu we wu we-o.
(35) Wu we wu we-o.
(36) Wu we wu we-o.
(37) Wu we wu we-o.
(38) Lâ-mò bà sià(-e);
(39) mò-mò bà ngomâ(-e);
(40) jê-mò bà jê bele.

(41) Wu we wu we-o.
(42) (ê-)Wu we wu we-o.
(43) (ê-)Wu we wu we-o.
(44) Wu we wu we-o.
(45) (*) Wu we wu we-o.
(46) (ê-)Wu we wu we-o.
(47) Jê-mò bà sià(-e).

(48) (ê-)Wu we wu we-o.
(49) Lâ-mò bà sià(-e);
(50) jê-mò bà jê bele.

(51) Wu we wu we-o.
(52) (ê-)Wu we wu we-o.
(53) (ê-)Wu we wu we-o.
(54) Wu we wu we-o.
(55) (ê-)Wu we wu we-o.
(56) Lâ-mò bà sià(-e);
(57) jê-mò bà ngomâ(-e).

(58) (ê-)Wu we wu we-o.
(59) (ê-)Wu we wu we-o.
(60) (ê-)Wu we wu we-o.
(61) Lâ-mò bà sià(-e);
(62) lâ-mò bà sià(-e).

(63) Wu we wu we-o.
(64) Wu we wu we-o.
(65) Lâ-mò bà sià(-e);
(66) jê-mò bà jê bele.

(67) (ê-)Wu we wu we-o.
(68) (ê-)Wu we wu we-o.
(69) Lâ-mò bà sià(-e);
(70) mò-mò bà ngomâ(-e);
(71) jê-mò bà jê bele.

(72) Wu we wu we-o.
(73) (ê-)Wu we wu we-o.
(74) (ê-)Wu we wu we-o.
Wu we wu we-o.  
(e-) Wu we wu we-o.  
Wu we wu we-o.  
Là-mò bà sià(-e);  
jè-mò bà jè bele.  
Mò-mò bà ngomà(-e).  
Wu we wu we-o.  
(e-) Wu we wu we-o.  
Wu we wu we-o.  
(e-) Wu we wu we-o.  
Là-mò bà sià(-e);  
jè-mò bà jè bele.  
Wu we wu we-o.  
Wu we wu we-o.  
(e-) Wu we wu we-o.  
Là-mò bà sià(-e);  
jè-mò bà jè bele.  
Wu we wu we-o.  
Wu we wu we-o.  
Wu we wu we-o.  
Wu we wu we-o.  
Wu we wu we-o.  
(e-) Wu we wu we-o.  
(e-) Wu we wu we-o.  
Là-mò bà sià;  

\[\text{jè-mò bà ngomà(-e);}\]  
\[\text{jè-mò bà ngomà(-e);}\]  
jè-mò bà jè bele.  

Figure 3-5. Textual transcription of a Baka lament (see also, audio file in Object 3-9. Audio file of solo song of lament (.mp3 1.9 MB)). Arrows and boxed texts draw attention to poetic equivalencies. Each poetic device (equivalency) is only highlighted once, then, excerpted and described in Examples 10-21. Spaces between lines indicate approximate temporal passing of non-texted instrumental accompaniment.
Figure 3-6. Photo of Ayé singing song and playing ngòmbi nà pèke

Figure 3-7. Photo of a Baka harp-zither (‘ngòmbi nà pèke’/‘ngòmbi nà kpokpo’)

127
Figure 3-8. Composite of available syntactic verse types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>number of unit occurrences</th>
<th>percentage of unit occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A x 35</td>
<td>A = 62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B x 8</td>
<td>B x 14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B¹ x 6</td>
<td>B¹ = 11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B² x 7</td>
<td>B² = 13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3-9. Frequency of available verse types
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Syntax</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) A (2) A (3) B (4) B¹ (5) B²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) A (7) A (8) B (9) B¹ (10) B²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11) A (12) B (13) B¹ (14) B²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(15) A (16) A (17) A (18) B (19) B¹ (20) B²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(28) A (29) A (30) B (31) B¹ (32) B²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(33) A (34) A (35) A (36) A (37) A (38) B (39) B¹ (40) B²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(41) A (42) A (43) A (44) A (45) A (46) A (47) (B)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(48) A (49) B (50) B²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(51) A (52) A (53) A (54) A (55) A (56) B (57) B¹</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(58) A (59) A (60) A (61) B (62) B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(63) A (64) A (65) B (66) B²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(67) A (68) A (69) B (70) B¹ (71) B²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(72) A (73) A (74) A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(75) A (76) A (77) A (78) B (79) B² (80) B¹</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(81) A (82) A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(83) A (84) A (85) A (86) B (87) B²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(88) A (89) A (90) A (91) A (92) A (93) A (94) B (95) B¹ (96) B¹ (97) B²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(98) A (99) A (100) A (101) A (102) A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3-10. Chart of syntactic development
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjacent Verses</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>B'</th>
<th>B''</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>+'</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B'</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B'' (Note ii)</td>
<td>-Ⅲ</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3-11. Adjacent verses and diagram of allowable verse progressions
Figure 3-12: Diagram of the poetic patterns of “Aye’s Lament.” (The color-coded arrows, boxes, highlighting, numbers, letters, and words are intended to iconically and symbolically suggest the complementarity of the poetic devices previously set out in Sections 3.4.2 through 3.4.6. The performance of all ten verses is hypothetically patterned with ten metered lines of four pulses each, lasting approximately twenty seconds.)


The metered line is the primary poetic feature because it is the sole poetic device (thus far in this study and in my personal recollection of the whole of the Baka song tradition) which no Baka song may be without and still be called song (ɓè). While it is true that most sung Baka discourse employs highly formantal vocal techniques and highly repetitive syntactical structures, not all songs do. Thus, songs may exclusively employ *sprechstimme* (“spoken-song,” vocal techniques with relatively little formant articulation), or (non-denotative, non-grammatical) *vocables* (as in the ‘yodelling’ song-style called *yeyi*) and still be called song, primarily because it is marked by a musically metered poetic line.


Indeed, every song from a corpus of more than 400 field recordings of Baka songs has a musically metered poetic line.

In either case, technical verification of this auto-segmental reality requires competency in music literacy.

There are cases that typographically necessitate using half-lines. Such cases are indicated accordingly. The effect (real and representational) of superimposing a line upon the syntax of a verbal utterence is described later in Sec. 3.4.3.3, after line and syntax have been described as units in themselves. The relationship of line to verbal syntax is like wind is to leaves on a tree, that is, it is only perceived in the effect one
has on the other. This effect then, of the line on syntax, is symbolized in the formatting conventions of a writing system.

13 Other conventions, slashes for example, would be sufficient modifications in text transcriptions using Roman script.

14 Another poetic effect of the line (a rhythmical principle) on the verbal syntax (a grammatical principle) is indicated by the relative spacing of words and syllables as performed in time, that is, in reference to the pulse.

15 And tempo is but an elementary quality of a pulse.

16 It is not yet known whether or not the meter of a particular Baka song or song genre is “principally” dictated by received musical forms, textual forms, or both. (Forthcoming music analysis will help to determine this.) As has been said, what is known from the data is that meter in a Baka song line respects the prevailing patterns of verbal syntax. This relationship of line and syntax can be measured. It is doubtful that a lingua-literary description would need a more detailed description of the musically rhythmic nature of a poetic line than a description of its tempo and meter.

17 It will be pertinent to music analysis to then characterize these metrical units (even the lines of 12 p.p.l.) as formed from duple rhythms. Thus (so far), we see pulses organized into duple rhythms which in turn are organized into metrical lines divisible by two.

18 Composite representations of song refrains may serve many purposes, but they cannot bring into relief variational or contrastive performance features that may progressively signify any of the emerging structures of oral performance. Only a thick analysis of a full performance can suggest such structures.

19 Tunings vary with compositions. Another song, preformed by another musician, for example, uses the approximate tuning of F-3, [G-3], Bb-3, C-4, [D-4], F-4, [G-4], Bb-4. Careful measurements have been documented for many Baka instruments and will likely be accounted for in a forthcoming emic analysis of the Baka melodic system, currently underway.

20 This term refers to the ordering of sequences in grammatical structures.

21 Both iterative and revertive processes involve repetition, but an iterative process is one in which you repeat something again and again, using the results from an immediately preceding stage (e.g., A A A A A); whereas revertive processes repeat results from a more distant stage (e.g., A B C B A) (Chenoweth 1972:94, citing Nettl 1956:66-71).

22 See Section 4.3.2.2 for an explanation of ideophones.
Again, this term refers to the ordering of sequences in grammatical structures.


I understand a *meronym* to be a kind of *synecdoche* which, in turn, is a kind of *metonym*. All three concepts deal with “whole-part,” or “part-whole” lexical relationships. *Meronomy*, however, specifies “a non-hierarchical relationship between lexical units that deals with the significant parts of a whole.” From: “What is a whole-part lexical relation?” Glossary of linguistic terms, Eugene E. Loos (general editor) Susan Anderson, Dwight H. Day Jr., Paul C. Jordan, and J. Douglas Wingate (editors). 5 January 2011 <http://www.ethnologue.com/LL_docs/show_bookdesc.asp?bookid = 48>
CHAPTER 4
BAKA LIKANÒ-SONG AS A DISCOURSE FEATURE OF BAKA STORY

4.1 Performance Relationship of Baka Story and Song

Song (ɓे) sung in the course of telling a traditional Baka story (likanò) is referred to by the Baka as ɓे na likànò (‘story’s song’). Most Baka likànò include song. Of 147 Baka likànò documented in seven distinct collections of traditional Baka narratives, 109 (77%) include song (Higges 1981; Brisson 1981, 1996, 1999; Kilian-Hatz 1989; Boursier 1994; Léonard 2003; Fitzgerald 2007). Additional songs would have likely been included in these seven collections had all of the original audio recordings been carried out in more “natural” circumstances, that is, in settings with both a storyteller and a participating audience, as opposed to a storyteller and an ethnographer in a “staged,” one-on-one interview. Even so, it is plain enough that most Baka stories do include songs. To say so may state the obvious, but not all of the world’s story-telling traditions do, in fact, include song. And so, it is reasonable to ask, “Why do most traditional Baka narratives include song? What is the relationship of Baka songs to Baka stories?” These two questions are the principal concerns of this chapter.

4.1.1 Story and Song in African Narrative Performance

In Africa—and throughout the world—story and song (or, story and music) co-occur in countless varieties of social settings.

African communities combine texts with music to create recitations of narrative songs, genealogies, and epics. Aside from a study on the Kpelle Woi epic (Stone 1988) and phonograph recordings documenting sung stories, genealogies, and histories of the Zulu, the Shona, the Karanga, the Duma, the Soga, the Wolof, and their West African neighbors,
ethnomusicologists have given little attention to analyzing such music thoroughly. (Hampton 2000:107)

This present analysis—as it seeks to contribute to the body of research that addresses this lacuna—begins with the observation that while story and song do indeed co-occur in countless African communities and in a variety of social settings, it is equally, if not more, important to note that their performance integrity varies just as greatly.

A brief survey of Africanist scholarship—linguistic, folkloristic, anthropological, and musicological—documenting African oral narrative performance types ranging from North and West African epics (épopées), to Central African chantefables, to East African folktales, to South African sung narrative poetry, initially suggests three broad performance distinctions. At one extreme, story may, of course, be told without music (and vice versa) (Dorson 1972; Abrahams 1983; Finnegan 1967; Kisliuk 1991:373-383). In other performance contexts, story and song may be performed “in alternation” with varying degrees of cohesion. The music and songs of some of these narrative events are variously described as “intermissions,” “interludes,” or “intercalated [songs]...which punctuate the narrative” (Léonard 2003:2; Agawu 1995:170-179; Johnson, Hale, and Belchner 1997: xvii, 255; see also Ben-Amos 1975:24, 51; Finnegan 1977:109, 119, 2007:51). The songs of other “alternating” performance practices, however, are viewed as significantly more integral to the narrative’s structure and storyline (Biebuyck and Mateene 1969; Stone 1988:3, 6; Kisliuk 1991:74-80, 364-372; Agawu, ibid.). The most extreme integration of story and song, of course, is achieved when certain narratives are entirely sung (Coplan 1987, 1988, 1994; Opland 1983). And
whether exclusively spoken, or exclusively sung, or a combination of both, African monologue narrative discourse is also commonly performed with intermitent or continual instrumental or choral accompaniment, or both (Okpewho 1979:59-66; Johnson, Hale, Belcher 1997:255).

I have initially described these three broad characterizations of African monologue narrative performance in terms of a relative and variegated “promoting and demoting” of certain binary distinctions, comparing the descriptors “story and song,” “song and music,” “speaking and singing,” “instrumental and choral,” “intermittent and continual.” Cumulatively, this description generally and simultaneously suggests that (1) the semiotic relationship between story and song, that is, their performance integrity, inherently tends more toward synthesis than antithesis, (2) the nature of their tendency toward unity is predicated on their shared verbal properties, and (3) the nature of their boundaries is more complex than simple. Ruth Finnegan expands on the relationship of verbal and non-verbal modes in her book The Oral and Beyond: Doing Things with Words in Africa.

So we can see Africa as indeed the rich home of words—but emphatically not of words separate from their multiplex multi-modal settings or of some mysterious and distinctive “orality.” (2007:223)

... getting rid of the over-ambitious claims for “language” in fact allows a clearer perspective on humans’ active use of words—but words now seen, more modestly, as set in the context of, and intermingled with, the array of other communicative modes of which verbal language is only one. (ibid., 210)

The boundaries of “the oral”, of “performance,” and of literature may come to dissolve...but at the same time such notions, treated more
critically and imaginatively, can lead into a deeper understanding of people's creative and reflective ways with words, more sophisticated and more richly intermingled into intricately meshed modalities than we once realized. (224)

In Figure 4-1, I have abstracted the verbal and aural qualities of the aforementioned song-and-story performance practices and (re)configured them in a graph in order to (re)present the relationship of story and song in Africa as “more richly intermingled” and “intricately meshed...than...once realized.” The axis graph abstractly posits that the performance distribution of speech, song, and music in African monologue narrative discourse results from the axis of a “speech-song continuum” variously projected into the axis of an “instrumental/choral accompaniment continuum.”

From the graph, we read that along a simple speech-song continuum, monologue narrative discourse performance may be (1) exclusively spoken with varying degrees of “everyday” and “heightened” speech registers, (2) alternately spoken or sung in varying manners and degrees of frequency and distribution, or (3) exclusively sung. Simultaneously, each of these verbal performance practices—whether spoken, sung, or both—is potentially subject to varying degrees of instrumental and/or choral accompaniment.

4.1.2 Story and Song in Baka Narrative Performance

To find examples of some of the basic permutations of African narrative performance practices, one need not comb all of the literature on all of the narrative
discourse traditions of Africa: a cross section of Baka narratives conveniently exhibits a good number of verbal performance types.

The distinction between those Baka stories with song and those without was first made by French priests Robert Brisson and Daniel Boursier. Brisson and Boursier lived among the Baka, in different communities, for over twenty and thirty years respectively, and were the earliest to document Baka traditional stories (1979, 1984, 1994, 1996). In their respective commentaries on traditional Baka narratives—as well as their collaborative work on a dictionary of the Baka language—they specifically assign the French term chantefable (‘sung tale’) to describe those Baka ȋikanò that include singing. However, both Brisson and Boursier—and later, Higgens, Kilian-Hatz and Léonard—in each of their collections, only modestly describe the characteristics that distinguish sung narrative texts from spoken narrative texts. Further, the typographical conventions of the text transcriptions of their audio field recordings could not (nor doubtless, were they ever intended to) adequately represent either the temporal distribution of song in a story, or the performance duration of such songs, especially when speaking and singing overlap. Indeed, when a song is first uttered or reintroduced in these recorded narrative performances, most song text transcriptions only present a single, typified version of the refrain. Neither subsequent lyric variation, nor the relative temporal performance relationship of speaking and singing were germane to the initial purposes of these collections (and no one would necessarily expect otherwise). By drawing attention to the limitations of these conventional transcription practices, I only mean to aid the appreciation of the emerging processes
that have guided the understanding of oral narratives. This present analysis, to which I return, only benefits from these former representations regardless of their limitations.

As reported in the opening paragraph of this chapter, my tabulations of the narrative collections of Brisson and Boursier, as well as Higgens, Kilian-Hatz, Léonard and Fitzgerald, confirm that most Baka narratives include song. Yet plainly, those same tabulations indicate that it is not uncommon to hear some Baka narratives exclusively spoken. Roughly a quarter of the documented narrative collections have no singing. These exclusively spoken performances, however, vary greatly in their proportional usage of “everyday” versus “heightened” speech patterns, depending upon who is narrating and what they are recounting. For example, a sought-after and practiced adult Baka teller telling a well-known and highly formalized traditional story (lîkànɔ) employs many more heightened speech devices than does a Baka child recounting (and re-recounting) a memorable personal experience in the forest.²

By far the most common Baka narrative performance styles and practices exhibit both spoken and sung performance—sometimes in alternation, sometimes overlapping. Taken as a structural and sequential whole, the relative temporal distribution of speaking to singing in a Baka lîkànɔ, at least in my initial analysis, seems to resist generalization: sung discourse may be distributed at the beginning, middle, or end of a lîkànɔ; it may occur one or multiple times, intermittently or constantly, briefly or protractedly. In some cases, for instance, choral accompaniment may be performed during the entire narrative performance while the teller-singer weaves in and out of speaking and singing.
The only verbal performance style not exhibited in Baka narrative performance is that in which the entire narrative discourse—strictly speaking—is sung. In fact, as the bulk of the rest of this chapter will point out, “mainline” narrative material is rarely produced in sung mode. So while occasionally an entire narrative performance may be permeated with singing, as highlighted above, the main storyline is rarely produced in sung-mode. Instead, the storyline is reserved for speech-mode. However, I do not mean to imply that sung discourse material does not intrinsically and critically inform the “mainline” material of a likàn. To the contrary, whether “mainline or supportive,” “foreground or background,” the pragmatics of singing in Baka narrative discourse indicate that sung discourse mode can be decisive in achieving the intra- and supra-pragmatic goals of a narrative performance. This particular role of song is progressively set out in greater detail in Sections 4.2–4.3 of this chapter, and Sections 5.2–5.3 in Chapter 5.

Having introduced in some detail the breadth of variation in the relative co-occurrence of speaking, singing, and instrumental accompanying in Baka narrative (or any similar narrative tradition), I now move from a description to an analysis of these variations in actual performance practice. For my interest is not so much in discovering “how much or how little” is spoken or sung in a traditional Baka narrative, but in understanding the nature of such a variety of choices. For the choosing of one configuration of “speaking to singing to musiking” over another implies communicative intent. I borrow this conclusion from functional linguistics which claims, according to Levinsohn, that
... one basic principle of a functional approach to text-linguistics is that choice implies meaning. In virtually every sentence, authors have the option of expressing themselves in more than one way. Are these ways simply “stylistic variations”? Text-linguistics answers, No! Because there is a choice of ways, the ways differ in significance; there are reasons for the variations. (2004:0.2.1)³

To move on then from quantitative and comparative descriptions of surface structures of “speaking and singing and musiking,” to interpreting the semiotic significance of the principal aural signs of Baka song in Baka story, what follows is a discourse analysis of the intertextual nature of bè na likànɔ (Baka ‘story’s song’) in likànɔ (Baka ‘story’). The aim of the analysis will be to understand better why the Baka sing—as opposed to simply speak—when they tell a traditional narrative. A discourse analysis is applied because the nature of discourse analysis, regardless of its application, whether sociological, political, linguistic, or other, is essentially ordered to asking why “this or that” discourse is executed in “this or that” way.⁴

The data for the analysis is based upon the documentation of 12 select Baka likànɔ—two narratives from each of the six collections of traditional Baka narratives cited at the beginning of this chapter. This data sample represents the most geographically, historically, and socio-linguistically diverse sample possible from existing documentation. First, because the areas from which these field recordings originate represent the most culturally diverse regional concentrations of Baka speakers in the southeast rainforest of Cameroon (Map 3 in Fig. 1-6). And second, because the recorded performances are not limited to my fourteen years of field experience, but span nearly forty years, the earliest recorded in 1973. A comparison of these diverse
documentation projects is made quite feasible by the fact that most, if not all, of the
recordists and ethnographers were quite competent in the Baka language and
followed a fairly similar and consistent transcription methodology and technique.

The original field recording for every documented narrative is still not available
for study. Thus, while all twelve text transcriptions are available, only the recordings
of Higgens, Léonard, and Fitzgerald provide audio documentation. For this reason, the
text-linguistics findings of the following textual analyses are more fruitful than the
more performance-centered analyses. Once the audio recordings for all of the narrative
performances are gathered into one place, additional performance-centered studies can
be performed.

The basic format of the analysis is presented in Figure 4-2. The prose sections
that follow (Sections 4.2 through 4.3) mirror the order of the outline.

Fundamentally, Baka likànò songs are found to function in two essential signifying
domains of narrative discourse: first as an agent of narrative discourse cohesion
(presented in Section 4.2), and second as an agent of narrative discourse development
(presented in Section 4.3).

In Section 4.2, my analysis reveals that likànò songs effect discourse cohesion
generatively, performatively, and textually. Descriptions and examples of each of these
four sub-domains of cohesion are documented in their respective sub-sections, though
textual analyses predominate. Within this domain, (inter)textual cohesion of spoken
and sung likànò texts emerges as chiefly grammatical and semantic in nature. In the
sub-sections of Sections 4.2.3.1 and 4.2.3.2, examples of typical grammatical and
semantic devices are cited from the texts of our aforementioned sample of 12 traditional narratives (Sec. 4.1.2).

In Section 4.3, the analysis further reveals that ūkànɔ songs also effect discourse development, both contextually and climactically. The sub-sections of Section 4.3.1 then present typical examples of contextualizing devices for five “contextualizing information types.” Most are textual devices. Finally, the sub-sections of Section 4.3.2 cite examples of devices that frequently contribute to climactic development. These devices are recognized according to five common marks of climactic development. And while climactic devices—like cohesive devices and contextualizing devices—are often signified textually, many other climactic signs are formalized musico-poetically, as we shall see.

4.2 Cohesion of ūkànɔ Story and Song

4.2.1 Generative Cohesion (Stories Engender Songs)

Baka songs are not merely “included” in most stories; stories engender songs. My longtime friend, Tombombo, once explained that, “All [Baka] songs come from stories...not just [ūkànɔ] story songs...but even hunting songs, lullabies, divination or dance songs [come from “narratives”]” (Tombombo 2007). He further claimed that “stories might be forgotten, but [stories’] songs are not” (ibid.). Some songs, then, as they become disassociated with the story from which they arose (for any number of reasons), may gradually and eventually become appropriated for use in social contexts other than the narrative contexts in which they originated, as in the case of “dance” ūkànɔ songs at Baka funerals. In such cases, the temporal cohesion of story and song—normally implied by their mere co-occurrence—is absent.
During Baka funerals likànò songs may be sung outside the temporal context of a storytelling event. At such times, likànò songs are performed, though no story is told, no story-teller telling. This does not mean that stories are not or cannot be told during funerals, for they often are; but they need not be. A story’s song can stand on its own.

I observed this practice during my first few years of fieldwork among the Baka in the encampment of Ndjibot (1996–1997). In Ndjibot I recorded and participated in—that is, attended, mourned, danced, and contributed monetarily to—a number of funerals. The audio recordings were mainly of the dance music performed at funerals. Initially, I assumed that all or most of the dance songs performed during a funeral were exclusive for that context. However, as I continued to gather audio-visual recordings, collect ethnographic information, and progress in Baka language competency, I gradually learned that four or five distinct dance song genres were typically performed in the course of an all-night funeral celebration. These included dance song genres invoking the forest spirits Jengi, Ebûmà, Esènjì, and Mboàmbòa, as well as likànò dance songs. Most of these dance songs for spirits, however, were also performed in social and ritual contexts other than funerals. In addition to these dance songs for spirits, however, likànò songs were also sung, and “danced,” though without narrative.

Initially, with the absence of a storyteller, I did not assume that the term likànò (dance) and likànò (story) necessarily referred to the same thing. None of the literature, Brisson, Boursier, et al., made explicit mention of dancing taking place during storytelling. So I assumed at first that perhaps these songs shared the same term, but not the same song texts. As each song was sung and danced, Baka friends would simply seem to describe the import of the dance-song as somehow (ipso facto)
referring to the character of a well-known forest animal (fieldnotes: dry season, 1997). What was not made explicit—though plainly assumed—was that song texts were not abstractly composed and associated with some forest animal, or legendary character, but rather, generated in and thereby associated with a particular Baka narrative, whose protagonist (or antagonist) was the subject of the dance song at hand. Thus, songs index stories. For the Baka, the integral link between dance, song, and story is assumed. They eventually made this connection explicit to me in their claim that, “We clearly see the story as we sing the story’s song and dance its dance” (emphasis added; Nomedjo group interview, March 2008).

It is unlikely, then, that the Baka generate many songs, if any, “for song’s sake.” In all my collection of several hundred field recordings, I know of no song (whether likànɔ song or non-likànɔ song) that is clearly not somehow the related experience of some individual or group, fictitious or non-fictitious. Over time the intertextual cohesion of a Baka song—any Baka song—and the experience that generated it may become obscure indeed. Yet, what is suggested by the process that generates likànɔ song is that Baka song in Baka story is no mere “interlude” or “intermission,” but an intrinsic feature of the discourse. For even when likànɔ songs occur outside the passing context of a storytelling event, the cohesive effects of other cohesive phenomena still indexically, iconically, and symbolically effect a connection in the minds of the Baka.
4.2.2 Performance Cohesion of likàŋò Story and Song

The cohesive nature of Baka story and story-song is further confirmed not only in what is learned from how they are generated (i.e., from a common experience), but in how they are performed.

Baka narrative cohesion is embodied in the constellation of spoken and sung speech acts performed by a Baka community at each storytelling event. Story and song cohere all the more because they are performed by a socially homogenous choir of voices, a Baka-speaking community. At the hub of this constellation of voices stands the storyteller-singer (wa kpo). The story unites with the song through the voice of one narrator who intermittently tells the narrative, intones the song, and leads others to join in the refrain (see, for example, the narrative of “Lòndò,” Sec. 4.3.2, Fig. 4-8, or “Súà te Kùnda,” Chap. 5). Through the performance of this refrain, the participants’ voices are joined to that of the storyteller-singer, and through his (or her) voice all are joined to the story. If the storyteller is not competent to both tell the story and lead in singing, the “story-with-song” (‘chantefable’) is not normally performed. A Baka story is not typically told by one person and sung by others, as is the case in some African cultures (Agawu 1995:165-166).7 The common performance thread, then, is the voice of the singer-storyteller, who simultaneously tells, sings, and joins: joining story to song, people to song, people to story, and people to people.

Having considered the cohesive relationship of likàŋò and bè na likàŋò, both generatively and performatively, I now move on to consider how they also unite textually.
4.2.3 Textual Cohesion of Story and Song

The most salient phenomena of (verbal) discourse is the fact that sentences or utterances are linked together (Renkema 2004:103). Texts are considered “discourse” if they are interpreted as connected to each other somehow. Two criteria of this “connectedness,” according to de Beaugrande (1981), are intertextuality and cohesion (Renkema ibid.:49-51). In discourse analysis, connections which result when the interpretation of a textual element is dependent on another element in the text is called cohesion (ibid.). In the spoken and sung texts of Baka łykànɔ textual cohesion is manifested grammatically and semantically (Figures 4-3 and 4-4).

4.2.3.1 Grammatical cohesion

Three grammatical devices may effect inter-textual cohesion between spoken and sung łykànɔ texts: lexical repetition, lexical substitution (anaphora, specifically), and common point of view (Figure 4-3).^8^

Grammatical cohesion through lexical repetition. Intertextual cohesion is compounded when the narrative’s spoken and sung texts not only share a common voice (embodied in the storyteller-singer), but also share common words and phrases. Sung texts often simply reiterate, verbatim or near-verbatim, previously spoken texts. In the łykànɔ Kálá, for example, the entire refrain of the łykànɔ song (Example 1, Verse 8b) is a verbatim repetition of the opening spoken line (Example 1, Verse 1) of the story.

Example 1: Brisson (1996), “Kálá,” v.1 and 8b
(verbatim sung reiteration of previously spoken phrases)
(Verse 1, the character, Komba (God), speaks)
"Ma à ngengè, ngò sià kè: bele a bo..."
"I look all around, only to see this... forest of people..."

"Ma à ngengè, ngò sià kè: yòmbò a bo..."
"I look all around, only to see this... world of people..."

(Verse 8b, the character, Komba (God), sings)

"Ma à ngengè, ngò sià kè: bele a bo..."
"I look all around, only to see this... forest of people..."

"Ma à ngengè, ngò sià kè: yòmbò a bo..."
"I look all around, only to see this... world of people..."

Many song texts are near-verbatim repetitions of previously spoken texts, as exemplified in the following excerpt from the story Dëngbè (Example 2).


(near-verbatim sung reiteration of previously spoken phrases)
(Verse 9, the narrator speaks)

li-ndùmù à Sùà, é bà meè 'kpeng! kpeng!'  
The sound of the Leopard’s drum goes, ’Kpengl! Kpengl!’
(Verse 10, the narrator sings)

yá ya bí ná, siki sìkì  
Friend! Move! Move!

ya bí ná, e de ’? li-ndùmù a Dëngbè, é bà meè sì’kì  
Friend... don’t you agree? The sound of Leopard’s drum moves [us to dance].

No less common is a song’s simple echo of the spoken name of a story’s principal character, as in the case of the name Kpàngbala in the story Kpàngbala (Example 3).

Example 3: Léonard (2003), “Kpàngbala,” v. 6, 8, 10 and 38

(sung reiteration of previously spoken words, e.g., proper names)
(Verse 6, 8, 10, the narrator intermittently speaks the name of the main character)

(6) Wá kɔ̀tɔ te bite Kpàngbala nyía-ô.  
They go to live with their mother, Lizard.

(8) Wá mɛ̀ pe Kpàngbala bela na jɔ.  
They work for their mother, Lizard, preparing food.
(10) Ekɔ̀, Kpángbala, é pe, "wɔ-là a ngɛ̀ọ́ wó be pé wà wode!

However, Lizard says that her daughter-in-laws don't gather any firewood for her.

(Verse 38, the character, Kpángbala, sings)

"èé Kpángbala ma mè pe?"
"Mother Lizard, what am I to do?"

Lyric texts not only reiterate spoken texts; spoken texts may occasionally reiterate lyric texts. In the story of “Sèkɔ̀,” the protagonist's central imperative (“Go away!”) is first expressed in song (Example 4, Verse 13), and then later reiterated in speech (Example 4, Verses 2, 24, 25).

(spoken reiteration of previously sung phrases)
(Verse 13, the character, Chimpanzee, sings)
(choir)
"mbamba tó mbamba tó... lèji kè... mbamba tó mbamba tó
(meaning unknown) Go away! (meaning unknown)

(storyteller)
"lèji, lèji kè; tè Kàkà? tè Báka? mbamba tó... Tè pe me? lèji ke!"
Go! Leave here! Are you a villager? A Baka? (?) A spirit? Go away!
(Verse 22, the character, Chimpanzee, speaks)
"Ọngi na sikà lè? Okà! Lèji peè..."
Were you waiting for me? Come on! Go away..."
(Verse 24, the character, Chimpanzee, speaks)
"e mò là? Tè pe Kàkà? Tè pe Báka?"
"Who are you? Are you a villager? Are you a Baka?"
(Verse 25, the character, Chimpanzee, speaks)
"Tè pe me? e mò là? Lèji peè!"
"Are you a spirit? Who are you? Get away from me!"
Grammatical cohesion through lexical substitution. As illustrated above, lexical reiteration signals inter-textual cohesion both iconically and symbolically: reiterated words—first spoken, then sung, or sung then spoken—bring about inter-textual connections because they sound the same, and mean the same. However, when particular sung words are interpreted as lexical substitutes for certain previously spoken words—and vice versa—inter-textual cohesion is signaled symbolically; that is, the words do not sound the same, but do have the same or similar meanings.\(^9\)

In Baka  tôkàn, anaphora is a common type of lexical substitution, therefore often functioning as a symbolic semitoic sign of textual cohesion. Through anaphora, back-referential pronouns in tôkàn song-texts function intertextually as grammatical substitutes for anteceding spoken tôkàn narrative subjects (Example 5).

Example 5: Léonard (2003), “Mbòàsèka,” lines 11-12
(Line 11, the narrator speaks)

Pe è kọtò mbòli tò, é jè... èmbòàsèkao
When he arrives there, he hears Deerflies.

(Line 12a, the narrator continues to speak)

wà tongoà te na’ bè, te 'e-lè.
They start to sing his name (i.e., about him).

(Line 12b, the characters “Mbòàsèka” sing)

"kpa-Komba ko mbìndò ná"
"God's hand is filthy."

(Line 12c, the narrator sings about “them,” i.e., Deerflies)

È ngengè lù, è ngengè lúúú\(^10\)
They (he/she) mock [God]. They (he/she) mock [God]. [Eng. trans., mine]

Grammatical cohesion through common point of view. Every Baka tôkàn song is connected to a tôkàn story by way of a common point of view. The point of view taken in a story’s song is most often that of a story’s principal character,
occasionally that of the narrator, or both (though the personal identity of the song’s voice is not always explicit). In the course of the story-song of “Lòndò,” for example, the narrator occasionally tells us explicitly that it is the main character, Lòndò (Otter), who is speaking or singing (Example 6).

(Lines 5f – 6a narrator narrates the action and speech of the main character, Otter)

Lòndò pe: "Ma à be mbeè nè mòsubù." Na go Lòndò kò yiè.
Otter says, "I will go a little way downstream." Otter goes.

(Line 6b: the main character, Otter, sings)
"Hi, hi lûkà nyëè ngo, A go a lûkà nyëè ngo…"
"We are going to prospect at the great river, hi hi…"

(Line 9a – the narrator narrates)
E bèe didïlí, na be bè kòpe…
Finally, he [Lòndò (Otter)] sings, sings the whole song…

(Line 9b – the main character (Otter) sings)
"Hi, hi lûkà nyëè ngo, A go a lûkà nyëè ngo…"
"We are going to prospect at the great river, hi hi…"

As a lîkànò unfolds, the point of view in the spoken discourse may frequently change between that of the narrator and one of the principal characters; the voice of the narrative’s sung discourse, however, with its smaller text load, typically expresses but one point of view, most often, that of a principal character. The following excerpt from the story “Kálà” (Example 7) briefly illustrates this tendency: the song refrain (Verse 8b) only expresses the main character’s point of view (Komba), but the immediately preceding and ensuing spoken verses narrate two points of view, first through the voice of the main character (Verse 8a) and then through the voice of the narrator (9a).
Example 7: Brisson (1996), “Kálá,” Lines 8–9a
(Line 8a, the character, Komba (God), speaks)
"I wëɛ na geè lè géè!"
"So that, then, was why you were looking for me."
(Line 8b, the character, Komba (God), sings)
"Ma à ngengè, ngɔ sià kɛ: bele a bo..."
"I look all around, only to see this... forest of people..."

(Line 9a, the narrator narrates)
Ee ná à méɛ kɔ, deɛ! E kè, Káláó wá wëɛ te ëlibɔnjo-nyiàó bo yìɛ... 
So then, the Crabs, they come and touch the forehead of their Father (God)...

While the point of view of a likànò song is most often that of a principal character, occasionally the voice of the narrator sings, as in the story “Gbanga” (Example 8, Verse 5).

(Line 4b, the narrator narrates)
... na gɔ gbanga à bu ngo kɔ yìɛ ...
... the calebasse goes down the river...
(Line 5, the narrator voices the song)
... okà! Gbanga wànì, oo!
àmìnà nkùɛ! àmìnà nkùɛ!
gbanga títà, oo, gbanga wànì. Be!
Let's go! [let's sing!] Calebasse of God! Oh!
Nothing but water! Nothing but water!
Uncle's calebasse, Oh! God's calebasse. [Sing!]

Songs typically express only one point of view, yet two are apparently not unheard, as in the following example from the likànò “Gbanga” in which half of the refrain is the voice of the Deerfly characters and the other half is that of the narrator (Example 9, Verses 12b and 12c, respectively).
Example 9: Léonard (2003), “Mbòásèka,” Verses 12a,b,c

(V.12a, the narrator narrates)

wá tongoà te na´ bè, te 'e-lé.
They start to sing his name (i.e., about him).

(V.12b, the characters “Mbòásèka” sing)

"kpa-Komba ko mbîndò ná"
"God's hand is filthy." [Eng. trans., mine]

(V.12c, the voice of the narrator sings)

E (ɔ) ngengè lù, é (ɔ) ngengè lúúú ['null' symbol added]
They mock God. They mock God. [Eng. trans., mine]

Over the entire course of a likàmò, then, both the narrator, or a narrative character, may speak or sing, or both. In either case, and most importantly, both texts—sung or spoken, poetic or prosaic—are united by a common point of view, a common voice. The grammatical effect is inter-textual cohesion, whereby a common voice weaves together a narration of sung texts and speaking texts. Thus, in contrast to other narrative performance traditions that include singing, likàmò songs do not merely comment on, embellish, or “frame” a narrative through some anonymous, disembodied voice, but speak as an integral voice from within the narrative (cf. Agawu 1995:165-179).

4.2.3.2 Semantic cohesion

In addition to the typical lexical devices of inter-textual cohesion mentioned previously (i.e., lexical repetition and anaphora in Sec. 4.2.3.1), Baka likàmò and their songs occasionally signal their relatedness semantically, particularly through the devices of synonymy and meronymy (Fig. 4-4).
**Synonymy.** Inter-textual lexical synonymy is not merely limited to synonymous words. In Example 10, the synonymous *lexemes* are the verb *na subùṅgà* (‘to walk in water’) and the ideophone *njàngàmu* (‘walking-in-the-water-sound’).

(Verse 30b, the character, Mbîlo, speaks)
… *e kọ kẹ nẹ: na subùṅgà* e kọ, *I go to the other side of the river.*
(Verse 35, the character, Mbîlo, sings)
Mbîlo, kọ-lè kọ, *njàngàmu* taà bàlè,
Ngbándà mòpèngọ, *njàngàmu* taà bàlè,
Ma mòòlo Mbîlo de, *njàngàmu* taà bàlè,
Ngbándà mòkàke, *njàngàmu* taà bàlè...

Neither of the two synonymous lexemes, however, are necessarily words. In the same *likàŋ̀ọ* excerpted above, the intertextual cohesion of the *likàŋ̀ọ*’s sung and spoken texts is further signaled by the utterance of two synonymous ideophones: *tchubu* and *njàngàmu*, both meaning “walking-in-the-water-sound” (Example 11).

(Verse 12, the character, Mbîlo, speaks)

*Tchubu*... *tchubu*...nè à bu-ngo
*[Walking-in-the-water-sound (idio), Walking-in-the-water-sound (idio.)]* here in the stream
(Verse 35, the character, Mbîlo, sings)
Mbîlo, kọ-lè kọ, *njàngàmu* taà bàlè,
Ngbándà mòpèngọ, *njàngàmu* taà bàlè,
Ma mòòlo Mbîlo de, *njàngàmu* taà bàlè,
Ngbándà mòkàke, *njàngàmu* taà bàlè...
Mbilo, my husband, then... [walking-through-water-sound (idio.)]... truly... in the river,
I'm testifying to the truth... [walking-through-water-sound (idio.)]... truly... in the river,
I did not murder Mbilo... [walking-through-water-sound (idio.)]... truly... in the river,
I'm bearing witness to the truth... [walking-through-water-sound (idio.)] truly... in the river,

Meronymy. The last inter-textually cohesive device to note is meronymy. In the
story of “Sangongo,” the narrator tells us that Sangongo-bird is off in search of yams,
singing along the way. As Sangongo-bird comes upon each yam plant, his lyric does not
explicitly indicate that he has found a yam, rather, he meronymically implies it by
describing each kind of yam flower that he comes upon (Example 12).

Example 12 Higgens (1981), “Sangongo,” Verses 2a, 2c, & 9
(Verse 2a, the narrator narrates)
Sangongo kɔ̀ laðɔ̀ gàje... nà kɔ̀ nɔ̀ sapà yìɛ̀ de? ...
That Sangongo-bird goes off in one direction... [and] isn't he looking for yams?

(Verse 2c, the narrator narrates)
Sangongo á sià ɛkɛ nɔ̀ mɔfima.
Sangongo-bird sees another yam (stem).

(Verse 9, the character, Sangongo-bird, says, then sings)
Sangongo á doɔ njamba diɔlii.
Sangongo-bird has started up singing, and goes on and on.

ie, Kóngofálɔ̀, ie ie ie, Kóngofálɔ̀, ie ie
ie, Kóngofálɔ̀, ie ie ie, Kóngofálɔ̀, ie ie
é gàje na mànjùmbà,
He is by the yam flower,
é gàje na bèlèbo,
He is by the yam flower,
é gàje na mànjùmbà ko
He is by the yam flower there
4.3 Narrative Discourse Development through Song

Having described the intrinsic unity of likànò song in likànò narrative performance, that is, the cohesive relationship of likànò’s sung-mode and speech-mode discourse, I now turn to consider the internal, purposive nature of that unity—how likànò song serves narrative discourse development.

As introduced earlier, likànò is shown to effect two kinds of narrative development: contextual development and climactic development (Figure 4-5).

The particulars of contextual development will be discussed in Section 4.3.1 and those of climactic development in Section 4.3.2. First, however, both of these dynamics of narrative development will first be distinguished from the more prominent and fundamental notion of storyline development, for such a distinction is critical to recognizing the distinctly narrative discourse functions of likànò song in likànò story.

Storyline prominence. Among many discourse analysts, the most salient developmental dynamic of narrative discourse concerns the formation of the narrative’s “storyline.” “It is commonly recognized that viable discourse has cohesion/coherence and prominence” (emphasis added; Longacre 1996:33). Longacre refers to storyline prominence, that is, the basic constitutive elements of the narrative framework, as “mainline” material; Dooley and Levinsohn use the term “foreground”; Grimes describes it as “event” information (Longacre 21-24; Dooley and Levinsohn 41-44).

Discourse analysts (particularly in textlinguisitics) not only single out a narrative’s mainline/foreground/event material, but also distinguish it from the same narrative’s supportive/background/non-event material (ibid.). Grimes asserts that “the first
distinction made in the analysis of discourse is between *events* and *non-events*”

(emphasis added; Dooley-Levinsohn 2001: Chap. 12:2, citing Grimes 1975: 35; see also Longacre 21 for others). To distinguish event and non-event, foreground and background, mainline and supportive material, Longacre and others maintain that such a search is most often signalled by “a characterisitic constellation of verb forms,” or rather, is marked by particular “uses of a given tense/aspect/mood form” (2003:39-48).

Discourse grammarians are coming to recognize more and more that in the telling of a story in any language, one particular tense is favored as the carrier of the backbone or storyline of the story while other tenses serve to present the background, supportive, and depictive material in the story. (ibid, 59, 64)

Thus, “for any language, each type of text [i.e., genre of discourse] has a mainline development and contains other material which can be conceived of as encoding progressive degrees of departure from the mainline” (Lonagacre 1996:23, citing Longacre 1989a). Such is the case in Baka narrative.

In his discourse analysis of Baka țikànɔ, Léonard—modeling Dooley and Levinsohn’s methodology—reports that in Baka țikànɔ

... *foreground events* are carried out with the perfective/narrative aspect marked by [à] which elipses with the pronoun in the 3rd person singular and plural.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perfective/Narrative aspect (verb ‘to go’)</th>
<th>1.SG ma à gɔ</th>
<th>1.PL.(excl) nga à gɔ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.SG mo ò gɔ</td>
<td>1.PL.(excl) nga à gɔ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.SG.(human) á gɔ</td>
<td>1.PL.(incl) a gɔ nì</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.SG.(neutral) a gɔ</td>
<td>1.PL(dual) a gɔ nì</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.PL i à gɔ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.PL wá gɔ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The *narrative* [aspect] has two functions in discourse: It indicates completeness of the immediate action, and it indicates [strict] chronological sequence. (emphasis added; 2005:13)

Complementarily, “the *background* in Baka narrative allows the use of *different* tenses” (emphasis added; ibid. 14).

Thus, the default grammatical form used to signal Baka storyline is the narrative aspect; background (“non-event”) material is uniquely marked with other tense-aspect forms; and nowhere is this binary distinction of foreground versus background more apparent than in the case of *likànɔ* song, for the perfective-narrative aspect is never observed in any of the song text transcriptions at hand. Moreover, in all of the six collections of Baka traditional stories (noted earlier), *likànɔ* song rarely, if ever, manifests constituitive elements of the basic narrative framework of a *likànɔ*—that is, its mainline narrative events. Instead, *likànɔ* song communicates supportive elements.

Song text clauses—with their non-narrative tense-aspect status—uniquely serve as contextual material, and are therefore marked by either the imperfective aspect (Examples 13–14), distant and recent past tense markers (Ex. 15–16), general future tense (Example 17), or more often as verb forms with no tense-aspect at all (Ex. 18–19). \(^{16}\) Examples 13 and 14 (below) demonstrate performances of the imperfective aspect:


[Choir sings]

**yá ya bí ná, siki sìkì**

// ? ? / ami / là / bouger / bouger //

*Friend! Move! Move!*

159
[Soloist sings]

ya bí ná, e de ? li-ndùmù a Dèngbè, é bà mèè sì’kì

// ? ami / là / n’est-ce pas / son de tambour // / de / antilope / il / IMP / fait / bouger //

Friend… don’t you agree? The sound of Leopard’s drum moves [us to dance].

(To avoid confusion, the [à] aspect in the “Ma à ngengè” clause in Example 14 should not be mistaken for a perfective-narrative aspect marker; it is, rather, a phonologically eroded variant of the imperfective marker bà (Kilian-Hatz [1995], translated by Léonard 2007:29). The potential for this formal confusion is most apt to occur in the conjugation of 1.S, 1.PL.EXCL, 1.PL.INCL, 1.PL.DUAL, and 2.PL structures. The discourse context of the verb phrase, however, clarifies the intended aspect; as is the case in Example 14 where the mere repetition of the verbal phrases alone indicates that the action of “looking side to side” is ‘habitual’, ‘progressive’ (ibid.).)

(Verse 8b, the voice of the character, Komba (God), singing)

"Ma à ngengè, ngò sià kè: bele a bo…"
// 1S / IMP / look side-to-side / OBL / see // forest / POS / people //
"I look all around, only to see this… forest of people…"

"Ma à ngengè, ngò sià kè: yòmbò a bo…"
// 1S / IMP / look side-to-side / OBL / see // world / POS / people //
“I look all around, only to see this… world of people.”

Among the twelve transcriptions under analysis only one lyric (Example 15) employs the past tense; in this case the distant past tense.

[the character, Mbïlo, sings]

Ma mòòlo Mbïlo de, njàngàmu taà bèlè,
// 1.S / murder / P3 / NEG / idio.walking-through-water / truly / river //
I did not murder Mbïlo… [walking-through-water idio.]… truly… in the river,
Despite this solitary example from the twelve principal narratives under investigation, it is not, however, uncommon to find other non-mainline clauses within the larger corpus of 109 documented narratives whose verb constructions also use past tenses, not to mention future tenses, or no verbal aspect marker at all.

Example 16 illustrates singing of the recent past (glossed “P1”).


ma ṣe mò wèče ’ëe a lè a nda! e!
/je/ai laissé/toi/auxil./chose/de/moi/à/maison/hé/ [Brisson's French gloss]
//1S/leave.P1/2S/be.P1/thing/POS/1S/POS/house/hé.ideo// [English gloss, mine]
Je t’avais laissé! tu étais mon bien, là, dans la maison! Héé!

Example 17 illustrates singing of with the general future tense (glossed “fut.”).


kɔmbɛ ma mèè là pe...
//fut./je/fais/comment//
Qu’est-ce que je vais faire?
What am I going to do? [Eng. trans., mine]

And finally—from our primary corpus of twelve narratives—Examples 18 and 19 illustrate lyrics with no aspect marker in the verbal syntagm (see ‘∅’; also, Léonard 2003: Sec. 5.2.2).


Sima longo (K.), ma (∅) kpe lɔkɔ
//sima/longo(K.)/1S/fear/unclean// [English gloss, mine]
Miracle! Je n’aime pas la saleté! (J’ai peur de la saleté!)
(Miracle! I don’t want (to be near)/am afraid of this ritually unclean corpse). [Eng. trans., mine]

Example 19: Léonard (2003), Mbòàsèka, Line 12c
(the narrator sings about Deerflies)
E (∅) ngengè lù, é (∅) ngengè lúúú ['null' symbol added]

They mock God. They mock God. [Eng. trans., mine]

### 4.3.1 Contextual Narrative Development through Song

While it is informative to note quantitatively the relative use of the various non-narrative tense-aspect forms in likànɔ lyrics, it is more pertinent to this study to move on from this elemental distinction and begin to more finely characterize song’s multiple structural-functional roles in Baka likànɔ. So, having posited that song does not ever constitute a likànɔ’s basic narrative “skeleton,” but rather, its supportive “sinew,” I will now move on to describe the particular kinds of supportive material it provides. For as fundamental as it is to determine song’s basic role vis-à-vis the “event/non-event saliency scheme” of a Baka likànɔ, what song does not do is not nearly as pertinent as what it does do, and how.

Grimes distinguished event from non-event and divided the latter into setting, background, evaluations, and collateral. Setting was posited as having to do with “where, when, and under what circumstances actions take place” (p.51). By background he meant secondary information that is used to clarify a narrative (p. 56)... In reference to evaluations Grimes stated: “Not only do speakers report the state of the world; they tell how they feel about it” (p. 61). He mentions that evaluations can be directly on the part of the narrator or that he may put such an evaluation into the mouth of one of the participants in the story. As to collateral information, Grimes comments: “Some information, instead of telling what did happen, tells us what did not happen. It ranges over possible events, and in so doing sets off what actually happens against what might have happened” (p. 64). Under this heading Grimes includes most instances of negation, adversatives, questions, and the content of quotations (especially denial,
question, or prediction (pp. 64-70). (emphasis added; Lonagacre 1996:23-24, citing Grimes 1975)\textsuperscript{18}

Dooley and Levinsohn build on Grimes’ categories and add that

These categories [i.e., setting, background, evaluation, collateral,] are not always mutually exclusive; bits of information in a text can belong to more than one, having more than one discourse function. Quite often, different kinds of information are mixed together in a single utterance…

(2001: 43)

Many, if not all, of Grimes’ non-event information subtypes are demonstrated in \textit{likànò} song texts, and often occur “mixed together.” Figure 4-6 lists five of Grimes’ six subtypes evidenced in the lyric texts of the twelve \textit{likànò} under investigation.

Participant orientation, setting, explanatory, and collateral information are common, but evaluative information is most predominant. Performative information is the only contextualizing material absent from the data.\textsuperscript{19} Examples of each non-event text type are cited and explained in the sections that follow, Sections 4.3.1.1 through 4.3.1.5.

4.3.1.1 Participant information through song

Occasionally, song texts “introduce, reintroduce, or describe in greater detail” particular narrative participants, as in the stories of “\textit{Súà te Kùnda}” (Example 20) and “\textit{Kùnjenje}” (Example 21). In the lyric of “\textit{Súà te Kùnda},” the text makes explicit, as well as poetically highlights—by way of \textit{paradigmatic substitution} (Sec. 3.4.3.3 and 3.4.6)—the local knowledge that the two principal characters, \textit{Súà} (‘Leopard’) and \textit{Kùnda} (‘Turtle’), are not merely two disinterested and unrelated characters, but \textit{Súà} is \textit{Kùnda}’s uncle (\textit{títà}) (Example 20).\textsuperscript{20,21}
Example 20, Fitzgerald (Appendix A), “Súà te Kùnda,” Verse 8
Lè-ke, la’mòôle títa(-e)? La’mòôle Súà(-e)? Kùnda! Títa(-o-e), la’mòôle títa(-e)?
Here, who killed Uncle? Who killed Sua (Leopard)? Kùnda (Turtle)! O Uncle, who killed Uncle?

In the story of “Kûnjenje” (Example 21), local knowledge of the narrative setting and natural habitat of the protagonist, Kûnjenje, is made explicit in the song’s lyric.

Kûnjenje is held to resemble both a duck and a chicken (personal conversation; Brisson 2002:213). Local knowledge of Kûnjenje’s peculiar forest role as nu na ngo (‘water bird’) and nu na bale (‘river bird’) is made explicit and reinforced in the song’s text.

Example 21, Fitzgerald, “Kûnjenje”
Kûnjenje, Kûnjenje(-o), Kûnjenje, nu nà ngo…
Kûnjenje(-o), Kûnjenje, nu nà bâlè…
Kûnjenje! Kûnjenje(-o)! Kûnjenje…bird of the water…
Kûnjenje! Kûnjenje(-o)! Kûnjenje…bird of the river…,

4.3.1.2 Setting information through song

Just as frequently as “participant orientation” information is included, “setting” background information is occasionallly embedded in a lyric clause.22

In the song of the story “Kâlà” (Example 22), Komba (‘God’) locates, both generally and specifically, the scene of the story’s conflict, that is, the (humanly) inhabited forest (bele), or the world…of people (yòmbô).23

(Verse 8b, the character, Komba (God), sings)
"Ma à ngengè, ngò sià kë: bele a bo..."
"I look all around, only to see this… forest of people…"
"Ma à ngengè, ngò sià kë: yòmbô a bo..."
"I look all around, only to see this… world of people..."
In the story of “Sàngòngo” (Example 23), Sàngòngo has wandered off in search of wild yams (safà/sapà), and details his surroundings as he goes, describing the specific types of flowering yam plants that he comes upon along his path.²⁴

(Verse 9, the character, Sàngòngo-bird, sings)

\textit{ie, Kóngofálò, ie ie ie, Kóngofálò, ie ie}
ie, Kóngofálò, ie ie ie, Kóngofálò, ie ie
\textit{é gàje na mànjumbà.}

\textit{He is by the (large) yam flower,}
\textit{é gàje na bèlèbo.}
\textit{He is by the (small) yam flower.}

4.3.1.3 Exploratory information through song

In addition to the “participant orientation” and “setting” information subtypes, exploratory information may also inform a lyric clause, and by comparison, does so more frequently. In my initial analysis, I simply searched for explanatory material in adjectival or adverbial phrase constructions, but eventually found that the most prevalent explanatory materials were communicated through ideophones.

Exploratory information through sung ideophones. Kilian-Hatz’s (1989, 2001) fruitful study of Baka ideophones provides a most helpful orientation to the signifying potential of Baka ideophones. This present section on explanatory background information is but one domain of discourse in which ideophones are prominent. In an early, introductory description of Baka ideophones, Kilian-Hatz writes,

[Ideophones] serve the [Baka] story-teller as a stylistic device allowing him to describe as realistically as possible what happened and so give the
Léonard later confirms the descriptive power of Baka ideophones in Baka narrative discourse.

These short utterances provide greater precision in the description of an action that would otherwise require sentences to communicate. A single ideophone can describe with accuracy abstract concepts, such as sounds, feelings, odours, colours, actions, or even complete activities. (Léonard 2005:11)

Baka ideophones are either nominal or verbal, though most often verbal, as is reflected in the likànò songs of the narratives “Lòndò” (Ex. 24), “Sùà te Kûnda” (Ex. 25), “Mbòasèka” (Ex. 26) and “Mbîlo” (Ex. 27). In the story of “Lòndò” (Example 24) the reduplicated verbal ideophone “hi” (‘to go away quickly’) symbolically signals a more realistic and intense image of the main character’s “going” in the forest, that is, the continuous, brisk nature of his walking and searching.26

(Line 6b: the main character, Otter, sings)

A go a lùkà nyèè ngo... "hi, hi lùkà nyèè ngo...
// 3S / go / INF / to prospect / mother / water / IDE. “to go away quickly” / to prospect / mother / water //
"We are going to prospect at the great river, hi hi..."

In another song, from the likànò of “Sùà te Kûnda” (Example 25), the verbal and reduplicated ideophone “kpɔ” (‘to chop with an ax’) symbolically signals a more vivid representation of the actors busily “chop... chop... chopping” the “tree of calamity.”

Example 25, Fitzgerald (Appendix A), “Sùà te Kûnda,” Verse 39

Nga buù wà nà weè(-ehee)... Nga buù wà nà weè(-e)... kpɔ! kpɔ!, kpɔ!
We are cutting down the “tree of calamity”... “Chop! Chop! Chop!”
In the following excerpt from the story of “Mbòàsèka” (Example 26), the verbal ideophone “lú” (rendered “lúúú” when subjected to vowel lengthening, to indicate continual action) more realistically portrays the mocking gesture the Deerflies perform as they continually and actively “shake their heads and eyes” at Komba.

[the narrator sings about “them,” i.e., Deerflies]

É ngengè lú, é ngengè lúúú
//3S/agité/action de se tourner.[IDEO]/3S/agité/action de se tourner.[IDEO]// [ideophone marker added; Brisson 2002:285]
They mockingly shake their heads at God. [Eng. trans., mine]

And for a final example of the use of an ideophone as a device for conveying background information, I cite the narrative of “Mbïlo” (Example 27). Here, the nominal ideophone njàngàmu symbolically encodes “the sound of walking in water,” evoking a more realistic sonic environment during the climax of the narrative’s conflict, as the accused wades through the poisoned waters.

[the character, Mbiïlo, sings]

Ma mòôlo Mbïlo de, njàngàmu taà bàlè,
// 1.S / murder / P3 / NEG / idio.walking-through-water / really / river //
I did not murder Mbiïlo… [walking-through-water idio.]… really… in the river,

4.3.1.4 Collateral information through song: quoted questions and denials

In addition to the occasional presence of participant, setting, and explanatory information in the contextual discourse materials of likànò song, collateral information is sometimes included.

Some information, instead of telling what did happen, tells what did not happen. It ranges over possible events and in doing so sets off what actually does happen against what might have happened. Under this
heading Grimes includes most instances of negation, adversatives, questions, and the content of quotations (especially denial, question, or prediction. (Longacre, 24; citing Grimes 1975:64-70)

Collateral information, simply stated, relates non-events to events. By providing a range of non-events that might take place, it heightens the significance of the real events. (Grimes 65)

In líkânò song lyrics (the content of) quoted questions of the principal characters are the most typical form of expressing collateral information; quoted denials are less frequent, but not uncommon. The question voiced by the main character in the song of “Sèkò” (Example 28), for instance, brings into relief Sèkò’s concern over the unknown identity of a creature in the distance along his path, that is, whether or not it is “friend or foe.” The future “eventline,” in turn, hinges on this non-event collateral question.

(Verse 13, the character, Chimpanzee, sings)

lèji, lèji kè; te Kàkà? te Báka? mbamba tó... Te pe me? lèji ke!
Go! Leave here! Are you a “villager” (Bantu)? Baka? (?) A spirit? Go away!

In another example, from the líkànò song of “Súà te Kùnda” (Ex. 29), the protagonist, Kùnda, asks the question, “Who killed my uncle (Súà)?” And like the function of the collateral question in Example 28 (immediately above), Kùnda’s (non-event, collateral) question heightens the listener’s expectation as to what will actually happen, that is, what significant event will take place, once the alledged tragedy is brought to light.

Example 29, Fitzgerald (Appendix A), “Súà te Kùnda,” Verse 8
Lè-ke, la’mòôle títà(-e)? La’mòôle Súà(-e)? Kùnda! Títà(-o-e), la’mòôle títà(-e)?
Here, who killed Uncle? Who killed Sua (Leopard)? Kùnda (Turtle)! O Uncle, who killed Uncle?
In addition to quoted questions, quoted *denials* can communicate collateral information in song texts, though less frequently. In the narrative of “Mbîlo” (Example 30), each of the accused denies murdering their husband (*Mbîlo*). Their denials heighten the anticipation (in the listener) of a likely future event—their potential demise from the swallowing of a poisoness truth serum—that will potentially reveal the truth of their respective professions.


[a wife of *Mbîlo* sings]

Ma mòòlo Mbîlo de, njàngàmu taà bàlà,

// 1.S / murder / P3 / NEG / idio.walking-through-water / really / river //

*I did not murder Mbîlo*… [walking-through-water idio.]… really… in the river,

4.3.1.5 **Evaluative information through song**

Of all the contextual information subtypes found in *líkanô* song texts, *evaluative* texts predominate. Through them, “speakers not only report the state of the world,” “*but how they feel about it.*” Evaluative materials in *líkanô* song texts may be encoded propositionally, lexically, grammatically, rhetorically, poetically, and musically. They may report the speakers’ subjective assessment of the relative virtue of the state of affairs at hand; or as is more often the case, they may express the speakers’ feelings or attitudes toward another person, or about circumstances in the past, present, or future. The affective evaluations expressed through Baka *líkanô* songs are numerous; they encode feelings of anxiety, grief (or pseudo-grief), annoyance, obligation, eagerness, anticipation, fear, self-pity, dread, helplessness, victimization, offense, shock, scandal, isolation, frustration, unhappiness, loneliness, antagonism, dislike, intolerance, confidence, self-satisfaction, and delight.
The following sub-sections of this sub-section (Sec. 4.3.1.5) highlight the most prevalent devices found in Baka likànò song for the expression of evaluative discourse: propositions, obligatory mood, imperative mood, exclamatives, interjectives, ideophones, intensifiers, rhetorical questions, and vocatives.

**Evaluative information through propositions.** Explicitly evaluative utterances are most plainly communicated *propositionally*. In the song of “Mángɔ” (Example 31), the story’s principal character expresses his fear of what might happen to him if he goes to his mother’s burial.


[the character, Mángɔ, sings]

**Sima longo (K.), ma kpe lɔkɔ**

*Miracle! Je n’aime pas la saleté! (J’ai peur de la saleté!)*  
(Miracle! I don’t want (to be near)/am afraid of this ritually unclean corpse). [Eng. trans., mine]

And in another story (Example 32), the protagonist, Bòkisà (the solitary male gorilla), plainly laments his isolation when he sings “wâmèlɔ” (‘malheureux’ Fr., ‘poor me’ Eng.) as he complains of his lonely predicament.


[the character, Bòkisà, sings]

’àlòngɔ na mò-bi wâmèlɔ ’è  
/ séjour / de / bouche-buisson / malheureux / hé /  
Séjour de l’entrée du buisson… Malheureux que je suis…  
Opening-day of entanglements… poor me…

In the story song of “Mbilo” (Example 33), Mbilo’s wives flatly deny their culpability in Mbilo’s murder, and thus, assert the injustice of their trial.

[a wife of Mbîlo sings]

Ma mòòlo Mbîlo de, njàngâmu taà bâlè,

// 1.S / murder / P3 / NEG / idio.walking-through-water / really / river //

I did not murder Mbîlo... [walking-through-water idio.]... really... in the river,

In the song of “Mbòàsèka” (Example 34), Deerflies express their opposition to God as he approaches; they mock him in song, singing that his “hand is filthy,” that is, that what he is likely to do is unjust, unfair, immoral, arbitrary.

Example 34: Léonard (2003), “Mbòàsèka,” Line 12b

[the characters “Mbòàsèka” sing]

"kpa-Komba ko mbìndò nà"

"God’s hand is filthy." [Eng. trans., mine]

Evaluative information through grammar. The import of most evaluative strategies, however, is not so explicitly propositional. Instead, valuations are more often implied through the inherently “heightened” evaluative and expressive functions of certain grammatical forms. In song texts, the most common evaluative grammatical forms are obligatory and imperative moods, exclamations and interjections, vocatives, ideophones, intensifiers, and rhetorical questions.

Evaluative information through obligatory mood marker. In the lyrics of two story-songs, “Bòkisà” (Ex. 35) and “Kâlã” (Ex. 36), the principal characters utter the obligatory mood marker “nɡɔ̀” (‘must’) in order to express the obligation they feel to act on the intolerable situation in which they find themselves. In the story of “Bòkisà” (Ex. 35), Bòkisà feels compelled to do something about his intolerable isolation and loneliness. And in the likànɔ “Kâlã” (Example 36), Komba (‘God’) feels so annoyed with
the distracting sound of someone’s (Kάλδ’s) noisy singing that he is driven to set out to find the source of the noise and put an end to it.

[the character, Bòkísà, sings]

{o ngò mè taà ììì, ngò mè taà ììì,}
/ oh / OBL27 / faire.IMP / vrai / chose / OBL / faire.IMP / vrai /chose /

“Oh! fais vraiment quelque chose, Oh! fais vraiment quelque chose,”

“Oh! Really... (you must) do something! Really... (you must) do something!” [Eng. trans., mine]

[Komba sings]

Ma à ngengè, ngò sià kë: bele a bo...
Je regarde de tous les cotes, mais regarde donc! C’est la foret des gens!

“I look all around, (but you should) see this... a forest of people!” [English translation, mine]

**Evaluative information through imperative mood marker.** In addition to the obligative mood, the imperative marker also encodes heightened feelings, and attitudes regarding the action and hand. In the story song of “Sèkò” (Example 37), the cowardly protagonist is inordinately leary of the unknown object in his path ahead, an object which in the end simply turns out to be a stump. In the face of a potential threat, Sèkò calls out with false bravado and orders “it” to “Go (away)!”, to “Leave!” (lëji’), and let him pass.

[Sèkò sings]

lëji, lëji kë; tè Kàkà? tè Bàka? mbamba tò... tè pe me? lëji kë!

“Go! Leave here! Are you a ‘villager’ (Bantu)? Baka? (?) A spirit? Go away!”
And again in the song of “Bòkisà” (Example 38), Bòkisà, compelled by his growing sense of an obligation to take action, commands himself (at least interiorly) to “do something” about his intolerable isolation.


[Bòkisà, sings]

\[\text{o ngò meè taà òee, ngò meè taà òee,} \]

/ oh / OBL / faire.IMP / vrai / chose / OBL / faire.IMP / vrai / chose /

“Oh! fais vraiment quelque chose. Oh! fais vraiment quelque chose” (French translation, Boursier)

“Oh! Really... (you must) do something! Really...(you must) do something!” [English trans., mine]

Evaluative information through exclamative and interjective markers. Other grammatico-rhetorical devices may co-occur with and augment the expressive effect of devices like exlamatives and interjectives; they may even function as the sole textually heightening formalization of a song lyric. In the song of “Bòkisà” (Example 39), in addition to the obligative marker “ngò” and the imperative “meè...èé,” the exclamative “O!” and the intensifier ‘taà’ are added to the text to further enhance the lyric’s expressively heightening effect.\(^{28, 29}\)


[the character, Bòkisà, sings]

\[\text{o ngò meè taà òee, ngò meè taà òee,} \]

/ oh / OBL \(^{30}\) / faire.IMP / vrai / chose / OBL / faire.IMP / vrai / chose /

“Oh! fais vraiment quelque chose, Oh! fais vraiment quelque chose.”

“Oh! Really... (you must) do something! Really...(you must) do something!” [Eng. trans., mine]

Not all songs, however, bundle so many expressive signs in its lyric as does that of “Bòkisà.” In the song of “Mángo” (Example 40), for example, the exclamatory phrase “sima longo” (‘miracle!’), borrowed from the neighboring Djem language, is the sole grammatical formalization used to indicate the strength of the emotional impact of the
protagonist’s experience, that is, of his horror of coming in contact with his mother’s dead body.


**Sima longo (K.), ma kpe lɔ̀kɔ̀**

*Miracle!* Je n’aime pas la saleté! (J’ai peur de la saleté!)
*Miracle!* I don’t want [to be near] (am afraid of) this ritually unclean corpse. [Eng. trans., mine]

**Evaluative information through intensifier markers.** In another example, in “Mbòèsèka” (Example 41), the lone grammatical intensifier *ko* is chosen to heighten the already affectively pregnant poetic import of the mockery expressed in the lyric of the Deerflies.

Example 41: Léonard (2003), “Mbòèsèka,” line 12
[Deerflies sing]

"**kpa-Komba ko mbìndɔ ná**"

// hand-God / INT / dirty / DEM //

“God’s hand...(it) is really filthy.” [Eng. trans., mine]

**Evaluative information through ideophones.** Along with obligatives, imperatives, exclamatives, and intensifiers, ideophones may occasionally, connotatively contribute to a lyric’s evaluatory signal. The ideophone *hi* (‘to go quickly’, as noted earlier in Ex. 24, from the story song of “Lòndɔ”) not only explicitly details the quality of the action at hand, but also implies the eager (perhaps carefree, though ultimately self-centered) attitude with which the actor is carrying it out.

**Evaluative information through rhetorical questions.** Rhetorical questions may also constitute evaluative material, for while their direct illocutionary force is a question, “[they are] not generally used with the expectation of an answer, but with some different, indirect force, such as a command, or an evaluation” (brackets and
emphasis added; see “illocutionary force” in Loos 2004). In the story song of Dèngbè (Example 42), the effectiveness of the sound of Dèngbè’s drum to “move one to dance” is judged to be so self-evident that the speaker confidently elicits that same evaluation from the others in the form of the rhetorical question “e de’?” (‘n’est pas?’).


[Choir]

yá ya bí ná, siki sikì

// ? ? / ami / là / bouger / bouger //

Friend! Move! Move!

[Soloist]

ya bí ná, e de´? li-ndûmù a Dèngbè, é bà mèè sì’kì

// ? / ami / là / n’est-ce pas / son de tambour // // / de / antilope / il / IMP / fait / bouger //

Friend… Don’t you agree? The sound of Leopard’s drum moves [us to dance]. [Eng. trans, nine]

Another rhetorical question commonly uttered as an evaluative expression is the interrogative phrase “ma mèè pe?” (‘What am I to do?’). As in Example 43, it expresses fear, frustration, or, more commonly, a cry of self-pity.

Example 43: Léonard (2003), “Kpángbala,” line 38

(the character, Kpángbala, sings)

kè li nge te kè li nge te, ha yo ha yo kè li nge te è

(archaic, unknown words)

"èè Kpángbala ma mèè pe?"

// thing / Lizard / IS / do / ITR what //

“Mother Lizard, what am I to do?”

Evaluative information through vocatives. Finally, the most common grammatical device connoting evaluative and expressive illocutionary force is a vocative, that is, “a noun whose referent is being addressed” (Loos 2004). Seven of the
twelve stories sampled contain vocatives in their songs’ texts; some songs may even employ more than one.

According to McCormick and Richardson, “the functions of vocatives is a topic that is highly debated amongst linguists” (2006).

Vocatives are said to “express attitude, politeness, formality, status, intimacy, or a role relationship, and most of them mark the speaker, characterizing him or her to the addressee” (Zwicky, 1974) ... Elizabeth Axelson (2003) references research that identifies vocatives as “markers of power and solidarity (Hook, 1984), in-group status (Wood & Kroger, 1991, Brown & Levinson, 1978), or pseudo-intimacy (McCarthy & O’Keeffe, 2001), equality (Troemel-Ploetz, 1994) or condescension (Wood & Kroger, 1991) ... and as redressive action for facethreatening acts (Ostermann, 2000, Brown & Levinson, 1978)” ... the Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English (1999) states that there are three main functions: Summoning Attention ... Addressee Identification ... Establishing and maintaining social relationships. (McCormick and Richardson 2006)

Paul Portner adds to the debate by suggesting “that the meaning of vocatives be formulated as expressive content” (emphasis added; Portner 2004:5).31

In Baka song texts, vocatives are most often proper names, though not always. Singers/speakers utter vocatives to address other narrative characters and/or themselves. The illocutionary point of a sung vocative, that is, a speaker’s basic purpose in uttering (or singing) it, is at once directive and expressive (Loos 2004.). It is directive in that likànọ vocatives may summon attention, elicit pity, solicit solidarity, plead for sympathy, call for help, and/or direct (one’s) attention; it is expressive, and thus evaluative, in that vocatives may index (connote) feelings of anxiety, fear, self-pity,
dread, anticipation, expectation, isolation, vulnerability, self-absorption, self-satisfaction, obligation, loneliness, unhappiness, frustration, discontent, and/or anger.

The referent of a likàñò song vocative is most often a proper name (Examples 44–49), though not always (Ex. 50). Further, the addressee of the vocative is most often the addresser. Thus, sung vocatives are often self-referential (Examples 44–49). Through these vocatives the speaker is primarily “talking to him/herself,” revealing his/her inner thoughts, attitudes, and feelings about the narrative circumstance in focus. Indeed, as is evidenced by the pattern of the contexts in which these vocatives are uttered in our sample, likàñò song vocatives are most often contextually associated with tense emotional circumstances, and thus, are indices of strong emotional experience.

Expressive and directive purposes of vocatives need not be mutually exclusive; but rather, can be complementary, wherein strong emotional states act as perlocutionary forces that incite the addressee to act as a responsible agent in the face of a problem at hand. In the songs of “Kpângbala,” “Bòkîsà,” and “Sûà te Kũndà,” for example, each of the stories’ respective protagonists address themselves in order to incite themselves to action. For her part, Kpângbala (Example 44), frustrated and even angered with the undutiful behaviour of her daughter-in-laws, calls out her own name in song and indexes her frustration in the question, “What am I to do?”

Example 44: Léonard (2003), “Kpângbala,” line 38

(the character, Kpângbala, sings)

"éé Kpângbala ma mɛɛ pe?"

// thing / VOC.Lizard / 1S / do / ITR.what //

“Mother Lizard, what am I to do?”
The self-referential vocative uttered by the ḋikànò character Bòkìsà in Example 45, however, does not so much collocate with an interogative and its accompanying feelings of frustration, but rather, with an inciting directive to “Do something!” given Bòkìsà’s vulnerable, and thus, anxious state of isolation (as a solitary male gorilla).

[the character, Bòkìsa, sings]
O ngò mèè taa ‘èe! ngò mèè taa ‘èe!
/oh/ asp. / faire / vrai / chose / asp. / faire / vrai / chose /
Oh! fais vraiment quelque chose, Oh! fais vraiment quelque chose!
O! You must do something, really! You must do something, really! [Eng. trans., mine]

Bòkìsà ’e ̀àlòngò wà-mèè
/VOC Bòkìsà / heà / séjour / celui-faire /

’àlòngò na mò-bi wámèlo ’è
/séjour / de / bouche-buisson / malheureux / heà/
Séjour de l’entrée du buisson… Malheureux que je suis…

This negative, affective evaluation of “solitary living” is not, of course, simply the self-expression of a single abstract narrative character such as Bòkìsà. Through the group performance of the narrative voice of Bòkìsà, the Baka people strongly and socially express in song their collective valuation of community over individuality.

In a slightly different example, the pragmatics of the self-referential vocative of the character Kùnda, in the story “Sùà te Kùnda” (Example 46), indexes neither frustration nor anxiety, but grief and self-pity—though ingenuinely—as Kùnda pretentiously laments his uncle Sùà’s alleged death.

[the character Kùnda, sings; performed by storyteller-singer and choir]
Lè-ke, la’mòôle tità(-e)? La’mòôle Sùà(-e)? Kùnda! Tità(-o-e), la’mòôle tità(-e)?
Here, who killed Uncle? Who killed Sua (Leopard)? Kùnda (Turtle)! O Uncle, who killed Uncle? [my translation]
Not all likànò song vocatives are self-referential. In the likànò “Kùnjenje” (Example 47), as Kùnjenje (‘Water-fowl’) floats down the rising river he utters his disgust (‘ma à kpo’) with what he sees along the river bank. He does not, however, utter his disgust to himself. Instead, he first draws attention to himself, identifying himself to others as “the one speaking/singing”—the self-identified “moral authority.” He then summons those along the river bank to listen to him, “Kùnjenje,” and stop all their ostentatious behaviour (môngmông). And as I noted in the story of “Bôkîsà” (Ex. 45), the collective sung social performance of such evaluative strategies, through the voice of narrative characters like Kùnjenje, not only develops the narrative context, but as a social act potentially signifies and reaffirms traditional Baka social values.


[Kùnjenje sings]

Kùnjenje, Kùnjenje(-o), Kùnjenje, nu nà ngo...
Kùnjenje(-o), Kùnjenje, nu nà bâlè...
Kùnjenje! Kùnjenje(-o)! Kùnjenje...bird of the water...
Kùnjenje! Kùnjenje(-o)! Kùnjenje...bird of the river... [Eng. trans. mine]

Similarly, the carefree and self-centered Kôngofálò (Example 48) sings his own name not to address himself, but to make himself the narrative subject of his own “happy-go-lucky,” self-satisfied song.

[Verse 9, the character, Sàngôngo-bird, sings]

ie, Kôngofálò, ie ie ie, Kôngofálò, ie ie
// go quickly.ideo. / Kôngofálò / go quickly.ideo. / Kôngofálò / go quickly.ideo. //

The referent of a sung likànò vocative is not, however, always the addresser, but may occasionally be another character in the narrative. In Example 49, the wives of
Mbílo call out the (proper) name of their deceased husband, in fear and in search of pity during their present trial. The illocutionary point of their vocative is “to maintain and reinforce their [familial] relationship” and thereby gain an advocate in their crisis (Biber 1999:1108, cited in McCormick and Richardson 2006).

(Verse 35, the character, Mbílo, sings)

Mbílo, kɔ-λɛ kɔ, njàngåmu taà bɔlɛ,  
Ngbândà mɔpɛŋɔ, njàngåmu taà bɔlɛ,  
Ma mòòlo Mbílo de, njàngåmu taà bɔlɛ,  
Ngbândà mɔkake, njàngåmu taà bɔlɛ...

Mbílo, my husband, then... [walking-through-water idio.]... truly... in the river,  
I'm testifying to the truth... [walking-through-water idio.]... truly... in the river,  
I did not murder Mbílo... [walking-through-water idio.]... truly... in the river,  
I'm bearing witness to the truth... [walking-through-water idio.]... truly... in the river,  

Similarly, in Example 50, the addresser calls out and refers to the addressee—an anonymous narrative character, or a performing participant—as “friend” (bi-) in an attempt to elicit his solidarity of opinion regarding the exceptional sound and power of the drum “to move one to dance.”


[Choir]

yá ya bi na, siki siki
// ? ? / ami / là / bouger / bouger //
Friend! Move! Move! [Eng. trans, mine]

[Soloist]

ya bi na, e de ’? li-ndùmù a Dèngbè, é bà me siRé
// ? ami / là / n’est-ce pas / son de tambour // / de / antilope / il / IMP / fait / bouger //
Friend, don’t you agree? The sound of Leopard’s drum moves [us to dance]. [Eng. trans, mine]
4.3.2 Climactic Narrative Development through Song: the Story of “Lòndò”

Having dwelt at some length on a description of the unifying and contextualizing/developmental functions of Baka song in Baka story, a brief recapitulation of the preceding sections may be helpful before moving on to the final section of my discourse analysis.

From the point of view of the broadest textual concerns of narrative discourse analysis, it has been necessary to account for how (if at all) likànò song serves the fundamental narrative dynamics of these performances, with the essential dynamics, thus far, being narrative cohesion and prominence (or saliency) (Sections 4.2 and 4.3). Within the dynamic of prominence, I have shown that likànò song texts rarely, if ever, signal foreground storyline content. Rather, a song text typically communicates background content, that is, it does not extend the basic narrative framework but primarily “aids in [the] internal and external contextualization” of the narrative’s storyline (Dooley and Levinsohn 2000:12). And further, of all the subtypes of background information, song texts most often signify evaluative information, that is, expressive content. Yet song texts serve narrative development in other ways.

The formal and functional development of any narrative not only forms a unity while simultaneously signifying peculiar supportive qualities more or less salient to the emerging storyline framework; but a narrative also progresses. Longacre puts it plainly:

While a discourse has cohesion/coherence and prominence, it just as necessarily involves progress, a well-formed discourse is going somewhere. The [macrostructure] progress of a discourse typically issues in some sort of climactic development (or developments). (1996:33)
Of the various and potential signs of narrative “progress,” climactic development is typical. Longacre underscores the analytical importance of the recognition of narrative climax.

It is especially crucial that we be able to recognize the peak... in the surface structure. We can then identify prepeak episodes and postpeak episodes and can consequently better articulate the [entire] surface structure of the narrative. (emphasis added; 1996:38)

Longacre characterizes climactic development (or “peak”, as he prefers to call it)

... [as] essentially...a zone of turbulence in regards to the flow of the discourse in its preceding and following parts. Routine features of the storyline may be distorted or phased out at the peak. Thus, the characteristic storyline tense/aspect may be substituted for by another tense/aspect. (emphasis added; 1996:38)

Such a substitution, of course, is true of the default grammar of Baka likànɔ song (as mentioned earlier in the “Storyline Prominence” paragraphs of Section 4.3). There, we noted that the perfective-narrative aspect that so normally constitutes the foreground of Baka traditional narrative is never heard in a likànɔ song text (at least not in the data sample at hand). Thus, the performance of likànɔ song and its attending non-storyline verb forms has the innate potential to signal climactic development. Such a single “distorted” feature, however, is but one mark of “turbulence.” Other “positive” features, according to Longacre, commonly contribute to the evidence that development is afoot. Thus, in addition to the conditions of “minus [verb form] features and distortion,” “peak has features peculiar to itself and the marking of such
features takes precedence over the marking of the mainline” (1996:38). And such
generalized features are observed in sung ɓikànɔ discourse.

Longacre posits six common marks/keys of narrative structure peaks: (1) rhetorical underlining, (2) concentration of participants, (3) heightened vividness, (4) change of pace, (5) change in vantage point, and (6) incidence of particles and onomatopoeia (ibid., 39–48). Of these six signs, four are exhibited in the corpus of ɓikànɔ songs analyzed in this chapter. They are (1) rhetorical underlining, (2) heightened vividness, (3) change of pace, and (4) a shift of incidence of onomatopoeia (or as we shall specify later, a shift of incidence of ideophones). Several, or even all four, of these four qualities commonly coalesce in song to form the “zone of turbulence” that typifies climactic development.

**Climactic development in the story and song of “Lòndɔ” (‘Otter’).** In the following description of the climactic development of one traditional Baka story, “Lòndɔ,” all of the four common marks of sung climatic development (i.e., rhetorical underlining, heightened vividness, change of pace, and shift of incidence of ideophone) are exhibited. As each of the four key marks is presented, it will also be elaborated upon. By choosing to exemplify each of the four features from a single story—as opposed to presenting select examples from all twelve narratives—not only will the particularities of each distinct mark be considered, but also their cumulative complementarity should be made more apparent as well.

With some modification, Figure 4-7 (re)presents Kathleen Higgens’ transcription and English translation of the traditional Baka narrative “Lòndɔ” (‘Otter’) (1981:35-42). Higgens abbreviates her transcription of the sung refrain by presenting in italics only
its first and last iterations (6b and 9d). I have added gray highlighting to the representation to indicate the continual repetition of the refrain as it simultaneously overlaps with the spoken narration. The relative sonic prominence and timing of the overlapping telling and singing is best appreciated, at least initially, by listening to the accompanying audio excerpt of the original field recording (Object 4-1. Audio file of likàndë story “Lòndò” (.mp3 3.4 MB)) (Higgens 1981).

Figure 4-8, then, reframes Higgen’s transcription in order to further disclose the particularly developmental structures and features of this narrative performance. What follows is a brief “reading” of the diagram in Figure 4-8. The reading summarizes the temporal representation of the plot, and the relative distribution of singing and speaking to the plot’s peak.

About a quarter of the way into the narrative [i.e., at :50 sec.], the principal character (Lòndò) shifts from speaking to singing (mode) at which time he sings the words “we are going prospecting, hi hi, at the great river.” As he sings on his way to the river, Komba (God) hears Lònđò’s song and becomes increasingly annoyed with his singing. (Lònđò’s singing is “disturbing the peace of the forest” and hindering Komba from hearing the humming of the bees, the very sound that, according to local knowledge, invariably leads Komba to his prized forest honey.) The resulting two-minute and fifty-second syntactic versification of the single clause “we are going prospecting at the great river” issues in a refrain (of modest musical variation) that continues throughout the last three quarters of the story’s performance [i.e., from :50–3:40 sec.] and terminates suddenly at the narrative’s peak [i.e., at 3:40 sec.], that is,
the point at which Komba touches the forehead of Lònô, “the person,” and thus transforms him (kwa, kwa, kwa) into Lònô, “the otter.”

The initial two thirds of the refrain’s performance [:50–2:37] are sung in a simple two-part polyphonic texture: the narrator sings one part (the wà-njàmba part) while the small audience-choir sings the other (the wà-túkò part) (Example 51).

Example 51: Higgens (1981), Sung Refrain from Lònô (‘Otter’).
[The following is a modified (re)presentation of Higgens' transcription: format and gloss are added; numbers 1-4 indicate the pulses of a metered line; wà-túkò = choir, wà-njàmba = storyteller-singer]

1 2 3 4  
[wà-túkò: accompanying voices]

a go a

lùkà  nyëë ngo...  
/ prospect / mother-river // // 3.SG.N / go / LOC  
We're going prospecting at the great river.

[wà-njàmba: storyteller-singer]

hi(-i)  hi...

(balémbeò)

During the last third of the performance [2:37–3:40] the narrator leaves off singing and takes up the spoken narrative once more while the choir continues singing the (wà-túkò) refrain “in the background.”

Having presented the basic narrative framework of Lònô’s story and the distribution of song in it, I move on to describe the most common marks of sung narrative development in Baka ëkàn, again, as exemplified in the narrative of “Lònô” (‘Otter’). Figures 4-2 and 4-10 outline these five marks of sung climactic development
alongside the five marks of sung contextual development to serve as a reminder that these signs are not signified in isolation, but in concert—potentially—with many other distinct, though complementary signs.

4.3.2.1 Climactic development through rhetorical underlining: repetition

Of all the marks of likànɔ̀ climactic development—in the story “Lònđò,” or any other Baka likànɔ̀—none is more ubiquitous than that of rhetorical underlining.

The importance of rhetorical underlining must not be underestimated. It is one of the simplest and most universal devices for marking the important point not only of a narration but of other sorts of discourse as well. (1996:39)

And of all the potential types of emphatic rhetorical devices, repetition is most common.

The narrator does not want you to miss the important point of the story so he employs extra words at that point. He may employ parallelism, paraphrase, and tautologies of various sorts to be sure you don’t miss it. (emphasis added; ibid.)

In the song of “Lònđò,” for instance, the most prominent form of rhetorical underlining observed in the versification of the clause “we are going prospecting at the great river” is repetition. Indeed, Baka song of any kind, likànɔ̀ song or otherwise, typically employs not one or two, but a variety of tautologies. As demonstrated in previous chapters treating likànɔ̀ song musical structures and text poetics (Chapters 2 and 3, respectively), bundles of syntactic, lexical, phonological, rhythmic, and melodic redundancies are always converging in the musical and poetic formalizations of any genre of Baka song. The plainly redundant nature of Baka song thus imbues it with the
requisite “emphatic characteristics,” that is, the rhetorical underlining, so typical of likàndì climatic development.

**Syntactic repetition.** Within the initial bundle of repeated textual constituents in Lòndò’s song in particular, syntax-level repetition is most apparent. Two concurrent (overlapping and/or interlocking) syntactic units—the propositional clause “we are going prospecting at the great river” and the ideophonic phrase “hi hi” (‘to go away quickly’), as shown previously in Example 51—are repeated in one varied form, or another, approximately sixty-four times [from :50–3:40 sec.] before culminating at the narrative’s peak [at 3:40 sec.]. Both the clause and the phrase are initially intoned in their entirety by the singer-storyteller [from :50–54]; however, the clause and phrase are subsequently and varyingly repeated and distributed between the singer-storyteller’s voice part and the audience-choir’s voice part [from :54–3:40] (again, see Example 51, and listen to accompanying audio file in Object 4-1 (Object 4-1. Audio file of likàndì story “Lòndò” (.mp3 3.4 MB)).

**Rhythmic repetition.** The text’s syntactic repetition [from :50–3:40] coincides with units of rhythmic repetition, as the boundaries of these two concurrent, repeated textual units synchronize, transforming sixty-four (merely) verbal sequences into sixty-four poetic/lyric lines (Example 51; see also Chapter 3, Sections 3.3.4, 3.3.5 and 3.4.3). And furthermore, within this musically metered line, still other redundancies emerge, converge, and thus multiply the refrain’s rhetorical effect when the syllabic units of these verses are also rhythmically segmented and iconically patterned with likàndì song’s typical eight-pulse poetic meter and underlying (though latent) generic polyrhythmic percussion pattern (Sec. 2.4 and Figure 2-4).
Melic (melodic) repetition. In addition, the redundancies of Lòndò’s song are neither limited to syntactic nor to rhythmic elements. The rhythmic formalizations of speaking are also intonationally formalized into melic patterns. Sixty-four repetitions of complementary syntactic and rhythmic patterns are also patterned with sixty-four repetitions of the single, basic melodic refrain shown in Figure 4-9.

If the scope of this chapter allowed, a detailed description of the compositional devices that develop this simple musical refrain would further reveal many more musical redundancies. Such a description, however, is reserved for the narrative of “Súà te Kùnda” in the following chapter (Chapter 5), and even there, only modestly so. In this present section, our point is simply to give adequate evidence of the basic types of syntactic, rhythmic, and melic repetitive devices that typically coalesce in the service of “rhetorical underlining,” or rather, in the service of climatic narrative development. Having done so, we move on, for as was said earlier, the “zone of turbulence” enroute to a narrative’s peak consists of more than rhetorical underlining. “Heightened vividness”—as Longacre refers to it—is typically effected as well.37

4.3.2.2 Climactic development through “heightened vividness”

In his chapter “Plot and Peak” Longacre (1996) does not define “heightened vividness,” per se, but rather, deduces it: “Heightened vividness [as a mark of climatic development] may be obtained in a story by [1] a shift in the nominal-verbal balance, [2] by a tense shift, [3] by a shift to a more specific person, or [4] by a shift along the narrative-drama parameter” (40-43). In addition to Longacre’s four parameters of “heightened vividness,” I would propose a fifth: that of “a shift to a more poetic
organization of discourse.” I base my proposal to expand Longacre’s notion of “heightened vividness” on the cumulative implications of a number of factors. A brief summary of these factors seems in order before continuing with our description of the parameters of heightened vividness found in likànd song.

**Heightened vividness through poetically organized discourse.** First, the descriptive term “heightened vividness” is vague, and presumably intentionally so. It *connotes* certain semiotic phenomena more than *denotes* them, and in doing so, already allows for the perception of a broader range of related signs (which is what naturally happens when a more interdisciplinary approach is taken to discourse analysis).

Second, poetic procedures are inherent in nearly all of Longacre’s higher-level inventory of prototypical features of narrative peak (e.g., rhetorical underlining, heightened vividness, change of pace, and use of onomatopoeia). Third, Longacre’s own exemplary analysis of the Hebraic *Genesis* narrative claims that poetic discourse lies at the heart of both episodic and global narrative peaks of the *Genesis* narrative (2003:21,39,300).

And last, it is striking how many interdisciplinary studies of the relationship of music and language share the kindred terms “heightened text,” “heightened speech, and “heightened voice” in their discussions of a number of expressive and poetic speech acts. For example, in their survey of (English) interdisciplinary studies investigating “the relationship of music and language,” Feld and Fox, citing the studies of Lomax (1967), Hinton (1984), Basso (1985), and Feld (1990), posit that “music’s formal redundancy and auto-referentiality *heighten poetic texts*” (emphasis added; 1994:27). In other studies, List (1963), Finnegan (1977, 1988), Banti and Giannattasio
(2004), and Feld, Fox, Porcello, and Samuels (2004) similarly use the kindred terms of “heightened voice,” or “heightened speech” to develop the notion of “different levels of formalization of speech by means of timbric, rhythmic, and/or melodic procedures that heighten and specialize its symbolic effect” (emphasis added; Banti and Giannattasio 295). Linguistic anthropologist Giorgio Banti and ethnomusicologist Francesco Giannattasio then recast and re-term these “levels of formalization of speech” as “poetically organized discourse (POD).”

Poetically organized discourse (POD) and, in general, poetic procedures may be regarded as a special way of formalizing speech by means of a number of constraints on how the text is organized—such as meter, rhythm, morphosyntactic parallelism, assonance, and other procedures—[procedures] that effect speech sounds in the voice register, in the melodic and accentual contour, and, especially, in their recurrence through time, on the basis of an equivalence between vocallic or syllabic units, stresses, and/or several recurring text or sound units, so as to frame one’s speech in a cyclic time, often relying on a periodic measure unit or beat. Such constraints, that often occur together, heighten and specialize the symbolic impact of an utterance. (emphasis added; 315)

The marks of “poetically organized discourse,” then, are numerous. In the case of Baka song in general, many such marks have already been illustrated in our previous chapter on Baka poetic texts (Chapter 3). In this present chapter and section, however, these poetic procedures (and more) are not simply abstracted and enumerated, but framed and interpreted in a particular context, that is, that of narrative discourse, and more specifically, within the particular activities of climactic development in narrative discourse. In this genre of Baka discourse, as we shall see, the “zone of turbulence” so often associated with climactic development often bears many marks of poetically
organized discourse; and these marks are not only perceived in the timbric, rhythmic, and melodic formalizations of speech that effect heightened vividness, but may also be present in (1) the redundant procedures of rhetorical underlining, (2) the rhythmic nature of a narrative “change of pace,” and (3) the semantic and phonological effects of onomatopoeia.

Having expanded and reconfigured the notion of “heightened vividness” to include the parameter of “a shift to a more poetic organization of discourse,” we resume our identification of poetically organized discourse in the climatic development of the particular Baka narrative of “Lòndò.”

“P.O.D.” through voice register, intonation, and rhythm. To reiterate, “the main procedures for formalizing speech sounds beyond those used in normal conversation seem to be no more than three: 1. altering ‘voice register’... 2. altering melodic contour... 3. segmenting utterances rhythmically ... (Banti and Giannattasio 295). As for the particular repertoire of formalized speech sounds in the subtle domain of voice register, “altering intentionally and/or by convention one’s voice register, is to alter its “frequency range, timbre, and intensity” (emphasis added; ibid.). Shifts in these three vocal qualities alone (i.e., pitch, timbre, and intensity) can by themselves signal heightened vividness (Sec. 2.2.3). Yet, even when bundled with other shifts in poetic intonational contours and rhythmic segmentation (Sec. 4.3.2.1) “any of these procedures can work as an indexical framing device for picking out an utterance as special in some way” (emphasis mine; 295; Bauman 1977:15-25).

Many such poetic procedures are at play in the climactic development signaled by the performance of bè na likàndè. The Baka, as we have already seen in Sec. 2.1, “pick
out” a number of distinct speech acts (e.g., conversations, discussions, accounts, counsels, proverbs, parables, stories, and songs). Within the particular performance context of traditional story (likànɔ), the Baka explicitly distinguish *speech*-mode from *sung*-mode discourse. Their conceptual distinctions (i.e., what they say about it) can be correlated initially with alterations in vocal pitch range, timbre, and intensity, and eventually with patterned alterations in melodic contour and rhythmic segmentation. During the performance of the story of “Lòndò,” for example, the singer-storyteller first “tells the story” (*na kpɔ likànɔ*) [from 0 to :50 sec.], then “intones the song” (*na tɔ njàmba*) [at :50 sec.], and then “sings the song” (*na bɛ bɛ*’ [from :50 to 2:37 sec.]. The first signs of the shift are signified within a second or two [from :50 to :52 sec.] by an alteration in the sound (‘li-’) of “the intoner’s voice” (‘li na wà-njàmba’), that is, a conventional alteration of the teller-turning-singer’s vocal frequency range, timbre, and intensity. This vocal shift at and in the njàmba (‘the intoning of a song’) instantly indexes the possibility that something “special”—as Banti and Giannattasio put it—is in the offing. This “special” (i.e., extra-ordinary, “more-than-everyday”) speech-sign is quickly formed as the “teller-turning-intoner-turning-singer” reflexively changes the size and shape of his vocal tract in order to intone the phrase “a gɔ a lùkà.” He changes from the default vocal register associated with a “telling voice” to the special register of the njàmba voice, a register marked by a prolonged “low”-range fundamental frequency, a distinctive cluster of overtones (‘formants’), and increased intensity. In just a few seconds more [Fig. 4-8, at :52 sec.] intoning quickly becomes singing as the inflected voice utters the words “a gɔ a lùkà” in new and protracted melic and rhythmic patterns. At this point in the narrative’s development a more poetic organization of
the verbal discourse predominates. This shift, then, perlocutionarily evokes qualities of heightened vividness, qualities that so often index climactic development in Baka likànò.

**“Heightened vividness” through a shift in tense.** At the beginning of this subsection (Sec. 4.3.2.2), I noted that “a shift in tense,” according to Longacre, is also a common parameter of heightened vividness. And of all of the four parameters of heightened vividness originally observed by Longacre, only “a shift in tense” is exhibited in all twelve of the likànò songs under investigation. This shift, of course, is consistent with our earlier discussion of “storyline prominence” in Section 4.3 in that song text clauses rarely, if ever, employ the conventional narrative tense-aspect marker reserved for the foreground storyline, but rather use either the imperfective aspect, the distant and recent past tense markers, the general future tense marker, or verb forms with no tense-aspect markers at all (e.g., Examples 13–19). These are the tenses and aspects conventionally associated with supportive background material. The song of “Lòndò,” then, is no exception. The verbal construction “a gö a lûkà...” (‘we are going prospecting’), especially in its prolonged and redundant song form, conspicuously contrasts with the strict chronological sequencing that typifies much of the previous narrative foreground. The construction does not signal a sequence of actions but indicates an action in progress, one that is ongoing and oriented to the future. Léonard describes such verbal constructions in this way:

The two auxiliary verbs gö ‘going’ and dɔ ‘coming’ play a crucial role in setting a point of orientation in Baka stories. Gö is most often used, and its main function is to mark that the story is going towards a point of
interest. By doing this, it indicates that an action is already in progress and is taking time to fulfill. (emphasis mine; 2005:36)

“Heightened vividness” through change of pace. As stated earlier, Longacre’s third peculiar feature of climactic development is “change of pace.” In most likànò songs “change of pace” can be signified in more than one manner. In Lòndò’s song in particular, a “change of pace” is signaled through (1) variation in the regularity of narrative action, as indicated in the relative pattern of foreground versus background verb constructions, (2) variation in the relative sizes of grammatical constructions (e.g., clauses, paragraphs, or embedded discourses), and (3) variation in the relative rhythmic regularity of spoken utterances versus sung utterances.

Variation in the regularity of narrative action. The foreground action that precedes Lòndò’s song is fairly regular and indicative of the stricter sequential flow of mainline likànò discourse (cf. Léonard citation early in Sec. 4.3). But Lòndò’s song, like all likànò song, is not a foreground verbal construction, but rather, background. In Lòndò’s refrain the verbal construction “a go”—as previously discussed in Sec. 4.3.2.2—is understood as meaning “taking time to fulfill,” that is, an action “in progress.” This prolonged action contrasts with the previous narrative action (i.e., in Fig. 4-8: lines 1-6a, 0–:50 sec.) which changes fairly regularly, as recognized in the foregrounded sequence “Otter says... Otter sets off... Otter goes... He arrives... He says... Otter spear... he looks... Otter says... Otter goes.”

Variation in the relative sizes of grammatical constructions. Beyond these shifts in verb constructions and regularity of action, there are variations in the sizes of discourse constructions. The redundancies of poetic constructions, like songs, lengthen
grammatical units; and the mere length of time it takes to perform the sixty-four repetitions of Londò’s refrain plainly “slows down” discourse development.

Léonard observes three or four other (spoken) discourse features that “slow down” a story in order to “build the climax”: they include “use of non-narrative aspect,” “variation in the order of clause constituents,” “tail-head linkage,” and “repetition,” (2003:11, 13, 15). The principle of repetition, in fact, is at play in most of these “pace-changing” devices, and illustrates the multifunctionality of the syntactic, rhythmic, and melodic repetition treated earlier in our analysis of Londò’s song, and other likànà songs.

**Variation in the relative regularity of spoken utterances to sung utterances.**

The last kind of pace-changing device to highlight is that which is observed in the variation that takes place between the relative rhythmic regularity of spoken utterances versus sung utterances. In sung discourse the “ordinary” rhythms of everyday speech (or even those of oratory) are subjected to “extra-ordinary” rhythms. The most striking quality of these extra-ordinary rhythms is their periodicity, a fairly strict periodicity at that, in the case of likànà song. The utterances of sung likànà discourse are always segmented and rhythmically patterned with one or two particular traditional polyrhythmic percussion patterns: kole nà bè na likànà (as shown in Sec. 2.4). In turn, the boundaries of kole nà bè na likànà are patterned with a fairly strict pulse which, in turn, is metered into groups of 8, or 16 pulses (Sec. 2.4). The combined and complementary periodicities of pulse, meter, and percussion pattern may be further affected by variations in tempo; and to the degree that the segmented utterances of narrative discourse are (re)patterned with the periodic patterns of kole nà
 bè na likànò, a “change of pace” is perceived in the development of a likànò and a narrative climax may be anticipated.

**Climactic development through a shift in incidence of ideophones.** The last of four features exhibited in likànò song that commonly contributes to the “zone of turbulence” that so often marks climactic narrative development is “a shift in incidence of ideophones.” Longacre initially chooses to describes it as “a shift in incidence of onomatopoeia,” but later implies that the concept of ‘onomatopoeia’ is more appropriately termed *ideophone* when speaking of many African languages (48). For the Baka language in particular,

... the different formal features of ideophones... [semantically] represent two points on a scale leading from onomatopes (i.e., ideophones representing pure audible sensations) to non-onomatopes (i.e., ideophones representing all other kinds of sensations). (Kilian-Hatz, 2001:163)

[Thus,]... the various semantic concepts [of Baka ideophones] don’t illustrate only audible events but... *can generally point out every detail of every lexeme* that [a Baka speaker] wants to use.” (emphasis added; ibid., 162)

Léonard observes that “[spoken] ideophones often appear at the climax of a story” (5.3.4). And from the data at hand I observe that sung ideophones are occasionally exhibited in likànò songs as well. In fact, as has already been illustrated in Sec. 3.2, ideophones are common in the general Baka song repertoire. Of the twelve likànò songs sampled for this present chapter, two employ ideophones (“Sùà te Kùnda” (2nd song) and “Lòndò’s” song). Both participate in climactic development.
The ideophonic phrase in Lôndô’s refrain, as shown earlier in Example 24, is “hi hi” (‘to go away quickly’). Minimally, it grammatically functions to modify the verbal phrase “a go a lûkà...” (‘we are going prospecting’). But Kilian-Hatz claims that the pragmatics of Baka ideophones exceed mere grammatical categories.

Ideophones... are direct speech, a verbalized imitation of extra linguistic events or situations. By the use of ideophones the speaker simulates—or raises the illusion—that the verbalized event happens simultaneously the moment of its production/pronunciation (ibid, 155)... [It] is a vivid representation or re-creation of an event in sound. (emphasis added; Kilian-Hatz, 155, citing Fortune 1962:6)... [Its] function is to dramatize a narration... (157)

A shift in a narrative’s “incidence of ideophones,” then, not only has the potential to indexically signify narrative climactic development, but can also iconically and symbolically signify numerous affective qualities of “heightened vividness” which, as presented earlier, are also so often associated with climatic development. This bifunctionality of ideophones is indicative of a number of verbal discourse devices and conveniently segues to the generalization that few narrative discourse devices in a likànò song act as isolated, unifunctional signs. (This generalization will be made more evident in the following chapter, Chapter 5).

4.4 Summary

In summary, likànò song functions as a discourse feature of likànò narrative in at least two signifying domains of narrative discourse: first as an agent of narrative discourse cohesion, and second as an agent of narrative discourse development. In the immediately preceding sub-section (Sec. 4.3.2), I described likànò song’s effect on
climactic development; in the prior sub-section (Sec. 4.3.1), I discussed its effects on contextual development; and in Section 4.2, I identified song’s unifying effect on the entire narrative performance. Figure 4-10 recaps the numerous specific ways in which likànò song can potentially function as a feature of likànò narrative discourse. I summarize the outline as follows.

Likànò song effects discourse cohesion generatively, performatively, and (inter-) textually. The fundamental unity of story and song is inherent in that stories engender songs and that both are generated from a common experience. This cohesion is reinforced performatively through the embodiment of the discourse in the speaking and singing voice of the storyteller-singer who in turn is joined by the singing voices of the storytelling’s participants. The intertextual cohesion of their spoken and sung texts is further manifested both grammatically and semantically. Grammatical devices may include lexical repetition, lexical substitution (e.g., anaphora), and/or a shared point of view. Semantic devices often include synonymy and meronymy. Narrative texts do not simply cohere, however, but also develop.

Likànò song effects narrative development both contextually and climactically. Song lyrics commonly contextualize the main storyline by providing supportive participant information, setting information, explanatory information, collateral information, and evaluative information. Any of these information types can be communicated directly through propositions, but more often they are expressed indirectly through devices like ideophones, obligative mood markers, imperative mood markers, exclamations, interjections, intensifiers, rhetorical questions and vocatives. Finally, likànò song may develop a narrative’s climax through either special verb forms,
rhetorical underlining, heightened vividness, a change of pace, or a shift in the incidence of ideophones—or a combination thereof. Signs of rhetorical underlining include syntactic, rhythmic, and melodic repetition. Signs of heightened vividness may include a shift in tense or a shift to a more poetic organization of discourse. The potential devices of poetic organization are particularly encoded in special formalizations of verbal syntax, phonology, semantics, rhythm, intonation, and timbre. The changes of pace that so commonly mark climactic development are typically signaled in the shifts in the kinds and sizes of a song’s verbal constructions, or the shifts in the regularity of action suggested by a song’s verb forms. Finally, ìkànò song texts also contribute to the “zone of turbulence” that so often marks climactic development by employing a shift in the incidence of ideophones.

Ìkànò song, then, functions as a discourse feature of Baka narrative discourse in multiple, complementary ways, ways that both unify and develop narrative discourse performance. Yet even as I close this section of my analysis I am still becoming aware of other related functions. I suspect, for instance, that the unifying function of song does not simply unite sung and spoken “texts,” but more specifically unites particular narrative episodes, or sequences of actions. These potential functions, and others, however, must be left for a future study. Still, in Chapter 5, I will gradually extend my description of ìkànò song’s multifunctionality beyond the domain of discourse and into the more pragmatic domains of social and spiritual experience.
Figure 4-1. Axis graph of the potential performance distribution of speech, song, and music in African oral monologue narrative discourse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sung Texts</th>
<th>Spoken Texts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LIKÀNÒ SONG AS A DISCOURSE FEATURE OF LIKÀNÒ NARRATIVE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. IN NARRATIVE DISCOURSE COHESION (Sec.2)</strong></td>
<td><strong>II. IN NARRATIVE DISCOURSE DEVELOPMENT (Sec.3)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Generative Cohesion (Sec.2.1)</td>
<td>1. Contextual Development (Sec.3.1) through</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Performance Cohesion (Sec.2.2)</td>
<td>a. Participant Information (Sec.3.1.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Textual Cohesion (Sec.2.3) Grammatically (Sec.2.3.1) &amp; Semantically (Sec.2.3.2)</td>
<td>b. Setting Information (Sec.3.1.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Explanatory Information (Sec.3.1.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. Collateral Information (Sec.3.1.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e. Evaluative Information (Sec.3.1.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Climactic Development (Sec.3.2) through</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Particular Verb Forms (Sec.3.2.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Rhetorical Underlining (Sec.3.2.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Heightened Vividness (Sec.3.2.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. Change of Pace (Sec.3.2.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e. Incidence of Ideophones (Sec.3.2.5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4-2. Outline of discourse analysis of likànò song in likànò narrative
3. TEXTUAL COHESION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatically</th>
<th>Semantically</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• LEXICAL REPEITION</td>
<td>• LEXICAL SUBSTITUTION</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4-3. Grammatical devices of textual cohesion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatically</th>
<th>Semantically</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• LEXICAL REPEITION</td>
<td>• LEXICAL SUBSTITUTION</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4-4. Semantic devices of textual cohesion

**Lîkànô Sample Song as a Discourse Feature of Lîkànô Narrative**

II. IN NARRATIVE DISCOURSE DEVELOPMENT

1. CONTEXTUAL DEVELOPMENT 2. CLIMACTIC DEVELOPMENT

Figure 4-5. Types of sung narrative development

II. IN NARRATIVE DISCOURSE DEVELOPMENT

1. CONTEXTUAL DEVELOPMENT
   through
   a. Participant Information
   b. Setting Information
   c. Explanatory Information
   d. Collateral Information
   e. Evaluative Information

Figure 4-6. Subtypes of sung contextual development
1. Lòndò fe: "Ma à go lükà. Ma à go lükà naà".
2. "Lòndò?"
   "Hè é?"
   "Yèkè ndàindo na màka nà, ngè à mèè-le. À mèè ndàindo kò nè, à de-ngo kè, i go a jè njambo kò nè nè "
4. Lòndò à lo m bèmbèa, r lò na mimmìlì, rrrrr...kòtò à ngo.
5. Te a kotè nè à ngo nè, 'è sià, 'è sià, 'è sià bu-ugo.
   'È fe: " O, yèkè mòàmòà na ndèngë na ngè kokò là? Si ngè mèè mòàmòà na 'èe kokò".
   O, lòndò à de nò. Kpan kpan kpan kpan.
   "O, yèkè ngè kò sì, o, yèkè ngè kò sì."
   Kòndò, lòndò wèè nè, gàjè kè 'è mèè fe 'è sià te gàjè kà lükà wèè bo, fe 'è manà fe wà-dàdio.
   Lòndò fe: " Ma à be mbèè nè mòsubè".
   A go a lükà nyèè nga bi hi, nyèè nga, balembèo, hi hi, lükà nyèè nga, balembèo.
8. Fe Komba à go àkò, 'è fe: "Woo, yèkè je bè nà, 'è na ngè okò là?"
   Komba à yèji ba kàmbàsà, te nà lòbòà lòndò wèè.
   Fe lòndò do te yèfé na bèbè à nè:
   "Ngo sìà okò."
   Komba à do te na feè kpàjè kpìbwu a ba kusa.
   'È mèè fe:
   "E, ma à mu nyè nè fe à bò? Ngo sìà okò."
   O, nye nga kòna. Yèkè nga mò a njëma te bèlè kokò nè, ma àe na nyèè mògëmëjì kò te bè nà ekè mò mèè nè.
   Ngo bà do te bè ko mo, mo wèè te libànjò-jo."
   "O, tìà, tìà, maà le lèlè ko bè yèkè de, ma le ekè ngè lèlè, 'è na lekè te òde."
   Oo, bà bë!
9. 'È bèè didìfdì, na bè bè ko fe. 'È do te na bèbè kòna nè, fe 'è ja yèè mòsùma nè, 'è mèè fe kòbà te à nà a sò-Komba à go àkò. Te ekè 'è wèè libànjò. Hì, hi lükà nyèè nga, a go a lükà nyèè nga..."
   Kòndò te 'è wèè libànjò - kwa kwa kwa kwa. A mèè.
1. Otter says: “I am going prospecting. I am going prospecting for myself”.
2. "Otter?"
   "Yes?"
   "This rest in the hunt has lasted a long time. While we are resting here beside the water, you go and listen to the swamp".
4. Otter goes quickly to the place where animals pass, he goes really quickly - rrrrr... He arrives at the water.
5. When he arrives at the water he looks, he looks, he looks into the water. He says: "O, what wonderful fish is this? What wonderful fish is here". O, otter spear another. Kpan, kpan, kpan.
   "O, what a lovely fish. O, what a lovely fish".
Finally, from where the otter is, he looks in the direction of the place he was going to prospect, so that when he goes back he can tell everyone. Otter says: "I will go a little way downstream".
6. Otter goes.
We are going to prospect at the great river, hi hi.
7. Finally, though the otter was at first close by, now he goes a long way off.
8. When God hears this, he says:
   "Woo, who is singing this beautiful song?"
As God leaves in one direction to look for a vine, otter comes from the other direction. When otter comes along with this dance - "I must see this"

God comes along clearing the path - kpìbwu looking for a vine he says:
   "Oh, what is that I see like a man? This I must see. Oh, there it goes again. Why are you disturbing the forest like this, while I am trying to hear the bees humming? You really must come hear with that song of yours, come and touch my forehead".
   "O, grandfather... that song wasn’t the one I was singing. The only one I know I don’t do very well."
   "O, please sing."
9. Finally he sings, sings the whole song. As he comes along singing again, dancing in his own personal style, it seems as if he will dance right up to God’s side. Then he would touch his forehead.
We are going to prospect at the great river, hi hi...
Just as he touches his forehead - kwa, kwa, kwa, kwa.

Figure 4-7. Transcription and translation of “Lòndò” (‘Otter’) (Higgs 1981:35-42) (also, Object 4-1. Audio file of likànò story “Lòndò” (.mp3 3.4 MB))

202
**Figure 4-8. Framework of the narrative performance development of “Lòndò” (‘Otter’) (also, see Object 4-1. Audio file of likànò story “Lòndò” (.mp3 3.4 MB))**
Figure 4-9. Composite melody of “Lòndò” refrain (Object 4-1. Audio file of Òkànò story “Lòndò” (.mp3 3.4 MB)). (Two voice parts are performed: that of the storyteller-singer (Voice 1) and of the storytelling participants (Voice 2). The basic melodic figures for Voice 1 and 2 are framed in dashed rectangles; improvised melodic substitutes are then aligned with their respective slots below each of the two basic figures. Pulse = 94 MM. The refrain is repeated sixty-four times during the performance.)
**Likànò Song as a Discourse Feature of Likànò Narrative**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. FOR NARRATIVE DISCOURSE COHESION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Generatively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Performatively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Textually</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatically</th>
<th>Semantically</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Lexical Repetition</em></td>
<td><em>Lexical Substitution</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Point of View</em></td>
<td><em>Synonymy</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Meronymy</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>II. FOR NARRATIVE DISCOURSE DEVELOPMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contextual Development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Participant Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Setting Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Explanatory Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ideophones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Collateral Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Quoted Questions/Denials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Evaluative Information ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Explicit Evaluation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Propositions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Implicit Grammatical Evaluation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Obligative Mood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Imperative Mood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Exclamations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interjections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ideophones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Intensifiers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rhetorical Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Vocatives (proper names •••)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>other- and self-referential</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>directive and expressive</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>inciting action</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>validating experience</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4-10. Summary outline of the functions of Likànò song in Likànò narrative


3 This quote from Stephen Levinsohn is taken from the introductory chapter of his lecture notes for a course in the “Analysis of Narrative Texts” given February 3–14, 2003 at Horsleys’s Green, UK. A similar course was presented in Yaoundé, Cameroon in 2004.

4 Despite its common association with postmodern thinkers (e.g., Derrida, Foucault, Kristeva, Jameson, etc.), discourse analysis is not the exclusive methodological property of deconstructive or critical theory. As mentioned above, all discourse analysis, regardless of its application, asks why “this or that” discourse is executed in “this or that” way. However, answers to such questions need not solely be applied to deconstructing or “subverting” the hidden motivations, aims, or agendas of social, political, or philosophical discourse (cf. Beard and Gloag 2005:38). In translation studies, for example, discourse analysis (or “text-linguisitics”) is often appropriated for use in addressing the pragmatic problems of “relevency” in translation. In the task of translation, for example, an informed choice between two similar linguistic forms (whether lexical, syntactic, semantic, or poetic) is greatly aided by a more explicit understanding of which of two or more optional forms are most relevant to the purposes of the discourse at hand. Likewise, in the case of Baka narrative discourse, it is hoped that discourse analysis will help determine the relevency of choosing the peculiar verbal forms of sung discourse over those of similar, yet distinct, spoken discourse when performing a traditional story.

5 Temporal cohesion, that is, the mere fact that story and song occur together “in time” during discrete social events, is implicit in Sections 4.1, 4.1.1, and 4.1.2. It is also presented more explicitly in Section 4.2.1. Otherwise, there seems little advantage in treating temporal cohesion more fully in this analysis.

6 Having made this claim, Tombombo would not, however, deny that certain elements of a song (especially the lyrics) would be forgotten, modified, or become archaic. Often, when he and other Baka speakers would assist me in transcribing song texts, the meaning of various words or phrases could not be identified, and would often be explained as archaic, even by elders.
Yves Léonard has told me that some Baka speakers in the camp of Ndjibot claim that a likàn’s song may occasionally be initiated by someone other than the story’s teller (2010, personal conversation).

My search for cohesive devices is built on the work of Halliday and Hassan (1976, cited in Renkema 2004:103-108) who distinguish five types of cohesion: substitution, ellipsis, reference, conjunction, lexical cohesion (e.g., repetition, synonymy, hyponymy, meronymy, antonymy).

Possible exceptions may include certain ideophones, grammatical reduplication, or onomatopoeia.

Léonard explains this ideophonic gesture this way: “Les bourdons s’agitent en faisant des gestes de provocation pour se moquer de Komba. Ils bougent leurs yeux et leurs têtes d’un côté à l’autre” (2003:80).

Earlier in the narrative, the narrator does not explicitly indicate that it is the voice of Otter performing the first entrance of sung discourse.

This example is not taken from the twelve representative songs in focus in this chapter because it is not clear that any of the twelve indisputably presents the point of view of the narrator in the song (though it is very likely that the song in Higgen’s “Dèngbè” (verse 10) also functions as the grammatical voice/point of view of the narrator. Example 8, then, is from the story of “Gbanga a Tità” on pages 152-153 in Volume I of Robert Brisson’s Mythologie des Pygmées Baka, 1999.

The accuracy of Brisson’s translation and transcription is in question here. I have bracketed those words and phrases that I have reinterpreted. “òkà” and “ɓe” are not, then, properly part of the narrative, but the narrator’s instructions to the gathered community to “begin singing!” and “sing strong!” respectively. Therefore, it is not likely that these phrases are repeated in the refrain.

“Na subùngà” is also uttered in verses 31 and 32.

Also uttered in verses 13, 27, 28, and 36.

Léonard outlines similar, as well as additional, correlations of verb forms with narrative information types, though only non-lyric/poetic narrative clauses are cited (2005:14–17).


Dooley and Levinsohn cite two additional “Grimes-like” “non-event types”: participant orientation and performative information (ibid.).
According to Dooley and Levinsohn, “PERFORMATIVE INFORMATION (Grimes, Chapter 5) deals with aspects of the situation under which the text is produced, especially the speaker-hearer axis. This comes out when the speaker speaks in first person to the hearer in second person. Also included in this category are morals, conclusions, and applications to the audience, which also overlap with evaluation” (2000:43). It is to be expected, then, that performative information is typically absent from “traditional” song texts, given that sung lyrics, among the Baka, are pre-composed and remain relatively fixed.

According to local knowledge, Sù̀à is Kù̀nda’s notorious uncle.

It can also be said that this information is not only participant orientation background information, but explanatory information as well.

In addition to the following two examples, the story of “Lò̀ndò” could also be cited as an example of a lyric with setting/orientation information.

It is common (local) knowledge that this stereotypical scene, that is, the forest...with noisy people in it, is likely to annoy Komba.

It might also be said that this information is both setting and background material.

Also from Kilian-Hatz, “Ideophones in Baka have the function of communicating reality. Their proper use is "Proof that one knows the world in which the story is taking place" (Kpokpo Maurice, personal communication)... ([1995] 2004:37).

Reduplication, in Baka, indicates that the meaning of the lexeme is somehow augmented, either in duration, iteration, speed, or quantity (see Kilian-Hatz 39).

Boursier glosses ngò as a verbal aspect (‘asp.’), but linguist Kilian-Hatz more accurately identifies ngò as an “agent-oriented obligative modality marker” (‘OBL’) (see p. 30).

See Léonard regarding the grammatico-pragmatic function of the lexeme taà (2003).

See taà in Mbilò also.


For further clarification, Portner goes on to write that “the meaning of vocatives be formulated as expressive content in the sense discussed recently by Potts (2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2004).”

33 While the refrain of “Kùnjenje” does make Kùnjenje’s disgust/disapproval explicit, the improvised lyric of the storyteller-singer also does, as indicated in the excerpted phrases ma à kpo (‘I refuse/disapprove/hate’) and mbomêmgê (‘ostentatious strutting’).

34 I too have found in a previous musical analysis that the identification of macro-level climatic structures seems to be an analytical prerequisite to an apt description of many lesser-level structures and developmental strategies. In my comparative analysis of Monteverdi’s Italian opera Orfeo and Yang’s Chinese opera The Prostitute’s Tears, for example, “the larger-scale formal designs of both Orfeo and Tears greatly inform smaller-scale forms: larger-scale narrative development gives rise to larger-scale musical development; “lesser-scale” musical forms and devices serve the greater, though the subtlest devices (e.g., ornaments, register, voice timbre, and silence) seem most critical to the realization of a narratives heightened dramatic affect. No musical “sign,” then, no matter how nuanced, should go unidentified, if one would understand why any sung narrative “sounds the way it does” (Fitzgerald 2009, unpublished).

35 By “minus features” Longacre means those verb forms that are not typically used in the main storyline material.

36 Therefore, repetition—as a quintessential iconic and indexical sign of rhetorical underlining—is plainly signaled as the narrative’s climax builds.

37 In his Storyline Concerns and Word Order Typology in East and West Africa, Longacre uses the term “immediacy” instead of “heightened vividness” (1990:9).

38 It may also be expressed as “na kpô njàmba,” or “na tongô bê” (‘begins the song’) (cf. Brisson 2002:465). Further, I surmise that the term njàmba (intonation) potentially signifies any combination of four aspects of that speech act: for example, (1) the solo beginning of a song, (2) the “lead” song part, (3) the essential and composite elements of the song (text and tune) from which other singers are enabled to “pick up” or recall their complementary “part” in the song, and (4) the essential sonic features associated with the typical vocal register of Baka singing, that is, its frequency range, timbre, and intensity.

39 A fuller description of these voice register qualities, that is, frequency range, formant, and intensity, is beyond the scope of this chapter, but intended for future studies. Vocal formant qualities is of particular interest. Pages 332–336 of Feld, Fox, Porcello, and Samuel’s “Vocal Anthroplogy: From the Music of Language to the Language of Song” (2004) seem to indicate a fruitful approach.
40 Léonard outlines similar, as well as additional, coorelations of verb forms with narrative information types, though only non-lyric/poetic narrative clauses are cited (cf. Léonard 2005:14-17).

41 Léonard focuses on the texts of spoken discourse, not the texts of sung discourse.

42 This composite version of the refrain of “Lòndò” is an etic transcription, and not very detailed at that. It is merely intended to bring into relief some of the more obvious repetitive melodic figures that overlap with, intermingle with, and enhance the other redundant non-melic, non-rhythmic elements at play. A fuller emic analysis of the Baka melodic system has already begun and is intended for publication at a later date.
CHAPTER 5
WHY KUNDA SINGS: SONG IN THE STORY OF “SUA TE KUNDA”

5.1 One Storytelling Event: Fourteen Stories and Sixteen Songs

From my original data sample of four hundred recorded songs, more than forty are likànò songs (Sec. 1.6). Sixteen of those forty likànò songs were recorded during a single storytelling event one evening in August 1997. What immediately follows is a brief description of that event: the setting, the people, and a few generalities concerning that evening’s fourteen stories and sixteen songs. This general description will then segue into and provide the context for a more detailed description of one particular story, “Súà te Kùnda” (“Leopard and Turtle”), and its embedded songs. My description of this single likànò song will serve as the preamble to my conclusions regarding (1) how a likànò song functions in a traditional Baka story and in Baka experience in general, and (2) why Kùnda (Turtle)—in the story of “Súà te Kùnda”—sings, rather than speaks, when expressing himself.

5.1.1 Ethnographic Synopsis of the Storytelling Event

One clement evening (August 14, 1997) in the short dry season of the southeast rainforest of Cameroon in the Baka encampment of Ndjibot, fourteen traditional Baka stories (likànò) were performed over a period of approximately one and one-half hours. The principal organizer of the storytelling event, as well as its principal storyteller, was a Baka man named Nguna, an elder (kobo) of about 60 years of age. A few days prior to the event, Nguna had asked me for some money. (I had been living in Ndjibot about three months at this point.) I gave him what he asked for, and in return I asked to hear
him tell a few traditional Baka stories (as weeks prior I had heard that he was a “very good storyteller” (“wa-\(\text{kpo'kp\text{ò \ e ko kpéké}\)”).

On that evening Nguna assembled a group of fifteen to thirty people for a story telling under a 4 x 5 meter rafia shelter at the entrance of my home in Ndjibot. The shelter was illuminated by two or three kerosene lamps. The gathered group was fairly evenly mixed in gender and age, from nursing infants, children, and adolescents, to young adults, older adults, and elders of approximately seventy years of age. Almost all were members of one of three or four clans (yëe-). All were Baka speakers; no Bantu neighbors from nearby villages were present. The number of participants fluctuated slightly during the evening, as a few came and went at will. Most sat around in a small circular arrangement, some on wooden benches and some on the ground. A few others, like Nguna, stood.

Nguna was positioned well inside the northern rim of the circle. On the opposite rim of the circle were two adolescent male drummers, each seated upon and straddling an approximately 40 cm. by 14 cm., single-headed, cylindrical wooden drum (ndùmù) that laid horizontally on the ground. With the drumheads straddled between their legs, the drummers struck the deer-skinned heads with their hands.

Nguna narrated and led the singing in thirteen of the fourteen stories. A younger man, Konji, recounted one other story.

The sonic ambience for the entire evening’s event was one of continual low-level chatter, light banter, intermittent giggles, and occasional harmless reprimands (as certain sporadic behavior by the children during the performance seemed “ill regarded”). A few utterances from within this continual verbal stream converged with
the formal narrative, as storyteller-singer and participating audience-choir
intermittently exchanged fleeting comments and rhetorical questions. These exchanges
also included interjections of surprise and disapproval, playful mockery, and occasional
questions regarding the story’s characters, or the story’s action.

5.1.2 General Narrative Features

The average duration of a single story’s narration, including any pre- and post-
narrative discussion, was six and one-half minutes, though the story “proper” averaged
only four minutes. The shortest story lasted two and one-half minutes; the longest
nearly nine. Each story segued into another.

The settings, characters, and plots of all fourteen stories were typical of the Baka
likànò repertory, in that (1) the setting is always in the forest—at a hunting camp, a
forest camp, a river’s edge, or some spot along any number of forest paths between
well-known areas for hunting, fishing, gathering food, or collecting honey; (2) the
characters are most commonly drawn from a familiar cast of animals, people, and
spirits, such as Kùnda (Turtle), Súà (Leopard), Sèkò (Chimpanzee), Lìmbènù (an ancient
heroine), Komba (God), Jelò (God’s first daughter), and më (spirits); other less
predominant, though no less familiar characters are Mònjombe (the great leaping deer),
Bìlli (Mouse), Kpángbala (Lizard), Kpìnyà (Anteater), mókísè (an ordinary man), and
wòsè (an ordinary woman); (3) plots ordinarily revolve around well-known, ongoing
and inherent conflicts between certain stereotypical characters (like the dangerous Súà,
the clever Kùnda, or the attractive Jelò). Many other plots, however, are built around
the familiar challenges, hazards and dangers of life lived in the forest, ranging from
lesser problems posed by such things as prickly thorns and stinging bees, to more
earnest problems experienced in childbirth, child-rearing, marriage, and death. Still other plots are etylogical, told in order to explain, or at least imply, the causes, nature, or origins of certain animals, peoples, or spirits.²

5.1.3 General Lîkànò Song Features

5.1.3.1 Performance distribution of songs in stories

As for the general patterns of the occurrence of song during the evening’s tellings, twelve of the fourteen stories included at least one song; two stories included two songs.³ Each song occurred only once (as opposed to a few stories in the greater repertory that intermittently reiterate a song throughout). Songs ranged from forty seconds to five minutes in length, the average song lasting about two and one-half minutes.

The relative duration of a Lîkànò to its song, as well as the chronological distribution of the song within a story both bear significantly on a story’s rhythm and pace, and by extension, upon its dramatic development and poetic effect. It is therefore noteworthy that on the average, well over half the duration (60%) of a story involves singing (regardless of song length); a few stories were nearly completely performed with song.⁴

All songs occurred within the “main body” of a story, with the main body normally preceeded, at the very least, by a spoken opening formula and some type of introductory section. (Some stories, however, included an episode or two in the main body of the narrative before introducing the song).⁵
5.1.3.2 Discourse functions of songs in stories

As for the narrative discourse function of all the story’s songs, little can be said about their general character that has not already been outlined in Chapter 4. That is, every song in every story that evening, in a variety of ways, contributed to both the cohesion and development of its respective narrative. Each song was story-specific; each one connected and developed intra-narrative material; and none functioned inter-narratively, that is, as if it were a mere interlude between contiguous narrative performances.

In regards to narrative cohesion (Sec. 4.2), it is worth reiterating that in all fourteen of the evening’s ɪkànmọ́ the voice of the storyteller-singer embodied the cohesive locus of both verbal discourse and narrative performance: his voice told and sang the narrative, and his voice led and enjoined the choir.

Occasionally, songs were performed during the telling of a short series of contingent narrative actions, or during the transition from one narrative episode to another. Such an occurrence of song seemed to reinforce the connection between these contiguous discourse units.6

As generally regards the narrative development of all fourteen stories, all song texts, in various ways and in varying degrees, provided supportive, contextual information for each story. Song texts often contained information about the narrative’s characters or settings, commonly provided explanatory or collateral information, and always communicated evaluative information wherein and whereby the thoughts, emotions, and attitudes of narrative characters and performers were
explicitly or implicitly expressed. In addition to contextual development, songs often indexically signaled (“foreshadowed”) climactic development (Sec. 4.3.2).

5.1.3.3 Stylistic features of story’s songs

All fourteen songs were performed by an adult male soloist and mixed vocal choir composed of all in attendance—male and female, young and old. Drumming (on two drums) and hand-clapping accompanied nearly all the songs (Sec. 2.4). It is presumed that drumming and clapping would have accompanied all the songs had the drums and drummers been in place earlier.

The choral performance textures of all fourteen likànò song performances generally reflect the typified descriptions presented in earlier chapters (Chapters 2 and 4). To briefly reiterate and elaborate: The Baka refer to two fundamental voice parts in their performance of likànò song: the voice part of wànjàmba and the voice part of wàtúkò. The storyteller is primarily responsible for singing the wànjàmba part; the audience-choir sings the wàtúkò parts. Often, wàtúkò is subdivided into two or three other constituent parts. The term wànjàmba also, and more fundamentally, refers to “one who” sings the opening njàmba part. “Njàmba” denotes the action whereby the song-leader prompts the audience-choir to begin singing their respective wàtúkò voice-parts. The prompt is signaled when the storyteller-singer intones an aggregate song-line from segments of both the wànjàmba and wàtúkò voice-parts. Once the njàmba is repeated once or twice, members of the participating audience-choir immediately take up their respective wàtúkò part(s). Soon after, the storyteller-singer—in this case, Nguna—begins to gradually leave off those figures and phrases of the composite song line that are strictly proper to the wàtúkò part in favor of those figures and phrases
normally associated with the wànjàmba part. The storyteller-singer then tends to only sing the wànjàmba part, though intermittently may perform wàtûkò phrases, freely varying either part, though within the unspoken bounds of Baka “improvisation.”

Once all voice parts have entered, from that point forward their composite performance relationship may generally be described as an overlapping responsorial choral style. Occasionally, voice parts in some songs, or song sections, may overlap and interlock to the extent that the choral texture can no longer be considered homophonic, but polyphonic. Thus, the relative choral textures and contours of the lìkànò song voice-parts performed during the evening’s fourteen story-tellings ranged from irregularly alternating unison and/or parallel-chordal textures, to modestly polyphonic textures.

**Musically rhythmic features.** All but one of the sixteen lìkànò songs performed that evening employed the accompanimental rhythm most often associated with lìkànò song, that is, *kole na bè na lìkànò*. The audio clip for Object 5-1 presents one song’s performance of the predominant rhythm pattern; Object 5-2 documents the only song featuring the single alternative rhythm (see Object 5-2 audio file of “rarer” lìkànò rhythm (.mp3 705 KB) and Object 5-1 audio file of “typical” lìkànò rhythm (.mp3 1.1 MB)). Both rhythms, especially the most common one, have already been described in more detail in Section 2.4.

Instrumental accompaniment did not begin promptly with the first lìkànò telling. However, by the time the second lìkànò was being recounted, both drummers had arrived with drums. From that time on, all songs were accompanied by the drumming duo and audience hand-clapping. Pulse tempi ranged from 118 MM to 148 MM. Often
enough, the tempo of a song would accelerate as the song progressed. Frequently a
song’s tempo would accelerate once the choir had refamiliarized themselves with their
respective voice parts. Other times, the drums and singers accelerated the tempo at the
direct command of the storyteller to “Get going!” (“okà!”), or “[Sing] stronger!” (“të
kpéké!”). At such times, dynamics often increased as well. As already described in
Chapter 2, the percussion ensemble most commonly subdivides the pulse into some
form of triplet figure, though it was not uncommon in the songs performed that
evening for the pulse of melodic-rhythms to be subdivided into duple figures as well.
The entire rhythm’s traditional cycle of eight pulses was executed either once or twice
in the course of a poetic line, depending on whether or not a song line’s meter was
constituted by a sequence of eight pulses, or, as was more common, a sequence of
sixteen pulses.

Poetic features of song texts. The most characteristic poetic features of the
evening’s sixteen song-texts can be adequately generalized from the texts of just four
select songs. It does not suit my present purposes to account for the poetics of all
sixteen song texts. For a more systemic discussion of songtext poetics, the reader is
directed to Chapter 3.

The texts of all sixteen ḫikânò songs are set to recurring poetic lines of either eight
or sixteen pulses. Settings are primarily syllabic. Quasi-neumatic figures are common
enough, though most are performed as vocables in word-final, phrase-final, or line-final
positions. In addition to lexical units (words), a lyric almost always employs vocables
(non-lexical phonemes). Average song lines carry a “text-load” ranging from 5 to 16
words per line, and 2 to 11 vocables per line. A line’s syllabic count ranged from 20 to 22 syllables.

Beyond the phonological level of syllable and pulse, the nature of the relationship of text and line is most obviously expressed syntactically. In particular, what is most conspicuous is that in most of the sixteen likànò songs, as in any Baka song (regardless of genre), verse boundaries typically coincide with line boundaries. Enjambment is occasionally employed, but co-terminal boundaries of text and tune predominate.

Whether verse boundaries coincided with line boundaries or are enjambed, there tends to be but one basic recurring verse in any song—conventionally represented as Verse “A”. From the songs sampled, no verse was found in contrast with another, textually or musically; that is, there was no Verse “B” or “C”. (cf. Sec. 3.4.3). A basic likànò-song verse can, however, undergo variation, as is often represented with the conventions Verse “A¹” or “A²” or “A³”. Verse (or verse-segment) variations were most often due to some form of textual or musical expansion, diminution, or substitution. Various paradigmatic (textual) substitutions were particularly prevalent.

The syntactic development of these likànò songs may be characterized as iterative, given there are no contrastive verse types. Even so, strict repetition is avoided and syntactic development is still achieved through the more subtle complementary devices of verse variation and derivation as implemented through various improvisatory musical and textual expansions, diminutions, and substitutions.

The aforementioned generalities are culled from a brief survey of the fourteen stories and sixteen songs of a single performance event. Many more generalizations could be induced from this event, its stories, and its stories’ songs. However, my
purpose in this section is not to be exhaustive, but rather, to prepare an adequate
context for a more detailed description of one particular likànò performance that
evening—the likànò of “Súà te Kùnda” (“Leopard and Turtle”). In the following section
(Sec. 5.2.), I will detail the particular song features and their narrative functions that
unite, differentiate, and develop “Súà te Kùnda.”

5.2 Song’s Discourse Functions in the Narrative Performance of “Súà te Kùnda”

The likànò “Súà te Kùnda” (“Leopard and Turtle”) was the tenth traditional story
told that evening. The elder male, Nguna, was the storyteller-songleader. The setting,
characters, plot, and dialogue are archetypal. The audio file in Object 5
documents
the performance (Object 5.3. Audio file of likànò story “Súà te Kùnda” (.mp3 4.4 MB),
and a text transcription is presented in Appendix A. A synopsis of the story is as
follows:

Súà (Leopard) feigns his death in the hope that all the other animals of
the rainforest will gather for his funeral, at which time Súà plans to
suddenly arise, spring on them, and kill them. Meanwhile, from another
part of the forest, Kùnda (Turtle, Súà’s nephew) hears the rumor, but is
naturally skeptical, given Súà’s dubious and dangerous reputation. Kùnda
then sets out for the funeral with his own scheme to outwit Súà and
thwart his likely plans for treachery. Along the way, Kùnda gathers every
manner of itchy, prickly plant and insect in the forest. Kùnda arrives at
the funeral where the other animals are gathered around Súà’s seemingly
lifeless body. Then, by stealth, Kùnda takes a notoriously poisonous
caterpillar from his pouch and slips it next to Súà’s inert body... right on
Súà’s testicles! Súà can pretend no longer; and his body, ever so slightly,
begins to twitch. Kùnda, his suspicions confirmed, quickly organizes a
few other animals (behind the scenes) to fell a nearby tree in the hope
that it might fall on the pretender Súà and crush him before he rouses in
fury to carry out his plan to attack and kill them all. But just as the tree begins to fall, Suà jumps up in pain, and in a craze, flees into the forest… and the schemes of both rivals, once again, are foiled.

The performance of “Suà te Künda” is a multi-layered progression of interwoven signs: words, rhythms, tunes, timbres and gestures. The diagram in Figure 5-1 progressively represents the simultaneous and contingent interrelationship of a number the narrative’s more salient layers of signifying sonic phenomena. Special attention is given to the interrelationship of the dynamic structures of the songs’ texts and tunes, and how they, in turn, relate to the entire story’s development.

An amplified and expanded “reading” of and commentary on the performance represented in the diagram in Figure 5-1 follows. Reference to performance chronology is parenthetically inserted when indicated.

The entire performance of “Suà te Künda” lasts a little more than four and one-half minutes (:00—4:50), slightly longer than the average duration of the other thirteen likànò performed that evening. It was one of two likànò performances that included two likànò songs. The first song of “Suà te Künda,” as is typical, lasted two and a half minutes; the second song, however, only lasted forty seconds. And though bits of spoken narration are interjected in the course of both songs, we note that the temporal ratio of song to story is unusually high, that is, three-quarters of the story is taken up in song.

The basic structure of “Suà te Künda” is typical of any likànò: a traditional opening formula is stated (:00—:05), followed by an introductory exposition of the circumstances (:05—:19); introductory material then transitions into the “inciting moment” and main
body of the story (in this case, the main body consists of two episodes (:20–2:50 and 2:50–4:30); the story finally climaxes and soon closes with the traditional closing formula (4:30–4:49) (Higgens 1981:1-34; Longacre 1996:34-38).

The introductory material of “Sùà te Kùnda” (:00–:20) is entirely spoken. At the beginning of the introduction Nguna initiates the first responsorial formula, and his audience, as expected, responds (Appendix A, line 1).

(call)  
e sá’sá
(response)  
sáá
(call)  
likànɔ pɔŋgu
(response)  
pɔŋgu

This opening formula is a potent index of the likànɔ performance experience. Most traditional Baka narratives are generically framed this way, although many of the participants freely admit that they do not know what this expression lexically denotes. Minimally—at this point in the narrative—, the formula is explicitly held to signify “the beginning” (‘à na tòŋgòà’). Implicitly, such “performative speech”—given its repeated, shared-group use over time—also typically indexes a host of expectations as to what kind of discourse is likely to follow, and what kind of experiences it might likely invoke (Behagué 1992:174–177; Gumperz 1995:395; Kahlberg 1998:5, 9–10; Turino 2000:174–176; Briggs and Bauman 2009:226 in Duranti 2009). The formulaic opening, then, is the first generic, indexical mark of a shift from “ordinary” verbal interaction, to a specific “extra-ordinary” verbal interaction (cf. Sec. 2.1).

Once the formula is uttered, the general circumstances of the narrative—as so often happens—are briefly explained (:05–:20, see also Appendix A, lines 2–5). Then
immediately, with the scene set, Nguna shifts from speaking mode to singing mode and transitions to the first episode (at :20). Together, the alteration of his vocal intonation, that is, “the increase in movement of and stability between the movement of the fundamental frequency,” and his shift to a periodic segmentation of his speech (both iconically and indexically) signal a “heightened” orality, and with it the potential of narrative “progress” (cf. Sec. 2.2; Sec. 4.3.2). The pace of the narrative has changed. The introductory njàmba has been sounded and the audience-choir is implicitly being cued to participate (cf. Sec. 2.4).

Concurrently, the sung narrative voice and lyric of Kùnda (Turtle) (Appendix A, line 8), embodied through Nguna’s voice, reveals critical additional contextual information:

Lè-ke, la’mòôle tìtà(-e)? La’mòôle tìtà(-e)? Kùnda.
Who then? Who has killed Uncle? Who has killed Uncle? Oh Kunda!

Tìtà(-o-e). La’mòôle tìtà(-e)?
Uncle! Who has killed Uncle?

Through it we learn that the allegedly deceased, Sùà (Leopard), is not just any old animal in the forest, but is Kùnda’s own (albeit, infamous) uncle (tìtà). In addition, Kùnda’s collateral, value laden question “Who killed Uncle?” forcefully expresses and highlights Kùnda’s distress and apprehension regarding the circumstances surrounding his uncle’s alleged demise, not to mention the potential difficulties that lie ahead at the wake. Still more evaluative context is added when the intensity of Kùnda’s ambivalent feelings are reinforced through the exclamatory vocatives “Kùnda!” and “Tìtà(-o-e)!”

Through these vocatives, he reveals and expresses his familial solidarity with his
deceased uncle, and his subsequent self-pity, distress, and anxiety—or so we are lead to believe (see also Sec. 4.3.1.5).

After *Nguna* has intoned these emotionally expressions two and one-half times, other participants begin to join him (and *Kùnda*?) in singing (:40). Soon after, *Kùnda*’s questioning lyric is segmented (~:45): *Nguna* sings one segment in the *wànjàmba* voice-part; the audience-and-choir sings the other in a *wàtúkò* voice-part. At this point in the narrative, each one in attendance is now participating in the story and its telling. The multiple voice-parts of the solo male singer and mixed choir soon begin to overlap and interlock the lyric’s complementary verse-segments whereby a new collective vocal timbre emerges. Lexemes, words, verses, lines, and motifs—both rhythmic and melodic—are repeated. By the end of the fourth verse (~:50), the clipped timbres of drums and clapping have also emerged as the unmistakable *lìkànò*-song rhythm begins to permeate the performance. More voices are added; the volume grows a little louder, the tempo a little faster, and even the choir’s pitch begins to “go sharp” (1:00 and 2:30). Clearly, the patterns of ordinary verbal discourse are being reconfigured, and a unmistakable “zone of turbulence” is developing (Chap.4, Sec. 3.2).

Suddenly (though not unexpectedly), about halfway through the song (1:18), *Nguna* begins to narrate—not sing—how *Kùnda*, on the path to *Sùà*’s funeral, is slowly gathering all manner of poisonous plants and insects as perfect tools for his devilish scheme (Appendix A, line 9). The choir continues the refrain. (Everyone assembled, teller and choir, already knows what *Kùnda* will do with these itchy, prickly things, so expectations seem to mount all the more. One or two participants momentarily abandon the singing and blurt out feigned cries of incredulity at *Kùnda*’s dubious
intentions, exclaiming “éé’?” (“What’s this?”), or “a yì” (“No way!”) (e.g., 2:26, line 12b; 2:33, line 15b). By the last four verses of the singing, the choir is full-throated, the drums and clapping are strong, and Kùnda has gathered all the poisons he needs. The song performance and storyline seem to be peaking (2:36). But suddenly, Nguna abruptly and sharply cues the choir to stop singing and the drummers to stop drumming (“he he he!” (2:42)), and without pause again initiates the formulaic episodic call and response (2:44):

(call) $e$ sa’sa’
(response) saa’
(call) likànò pòngu
(response) pòngu

The performance formula marks the end of the first episode. But Kùnda still does not know who has killed his uncle, and we, or rather, the Baka have yet to hear about—or perhaps, participate in?—Kùnda’s purposes for collecting all those harmful insects and plants. Narrative resolution is delayed. We are told that Kùnda simply paddles upstream a little further and arrives at the funeral site where the rest of the animals are gathered around Sùà’s lifeless-looking body—the scene of a second episode (2:47; see also Appendix A, line 18).

Episode 2 is shorter than Episode 1. Most of the first half of Episode 2 is spoken (2:50–3:50); most of the second half is sung (3:50–4:30). As outlined in the story’s synopsis, at the funeral site we are told that Kùnda’s suspicions are quickly revealed and confirmed when the narrator recounts how Sùà can no longer lie lifeless, moments after Kùnda places the prickly caterpillar on Sùà’s body (2:51–3:13; Appendix A, lines 20–28).
Having incited Súà to action, Kùnda immediately counteracts. Nguna quickly narrates Kùnda’s covert and frantic effort to organize the other animals to fell a tree and crush Súà beneath it (3:13–3:38; Appendix A, lines 28–36). The conflict now develops quickly. A second discourse shift, that is, another “zone of turbulence,” is conspicuously signaled in the narrative as Nguna and the entire audience-and-choir give voice—in song—to the entire choir of narrative characters singing and narrating their frenzied attempt to fell the tree. Nguna, as expected, begins this second song (3:40). First, he intones the opening verse of the wàtúkò voice-part: “Nga buù wà nà weè(-e)” (“We are cutting down this tree of calamity!”). The lyric contextualizes the action: the narrative’s participants are intensely concentrating, the chopping is continuous, and the scene is calamitous. Nguna then switches to his wànjàmbe part. His ideophone kpò kpò kpò (‘chop chop chop’) heightens and vivifies the sound and movement of the tree-chopping action, and its repetition reinforces it. His words are sung, not spoken; poetically organized, not ordinarily organized. His vocal sounds are altered; intonational contours and rhythmic segmentations are re-formalized. The intonational contours are not as overtly melic as in the narrative’s earlier song; the intervals of the fundamental frequencies are not as melodically formalized; they are more “sprechstimme-like”—though the Baka still recognize such verbal performance as bè (song) (Chap. 2, Sec. 2.3). The sung clauses are repeated, and thus become verses; and these same verses then overlap and pattern (in enjambment) with sixteen-pulse lines. By the second repetition of the these lines, Nguna’s wànjàmbe line and voice-part is regularly alternating with the choir’s line and wàtúkò part. And by now, the extra-linguistic sonic signs of clapping and drumming are re-sounding again. The drummers,
as anticipated, index the likànɔ-song experience with the familiar likànɔ-song rhythm (Chap. 2, Sec. 4). Climactic development resurges. Expectations are again building. The tempo even increases slightly, as does the overall amplitude. But a third and fourth verse delay the narrative climax when Nguna—as the voice of Kùnda—lingers and shouts out two quick commands in an effort to coordinate the group’s desperate efforts to fell the tree (4:00, 4:08). He even improvises with additional, though brief, melic variation (Figures 5-3, 5-4, 5-5). But finally, in the fifth verse, with everyone participating—singing, clapping, drumming, performing—Nguna suddenly stops singing and abruptly shifts to speaking the penultimate “closing” formula, “e sa’sa’l” (4:16). And all the others immediately respond, “saa’l” Their singing, clapping and drumming stop too. And we are immediately told—from within the relative silence—that Súà unexpectedly springs up, and flees away, into the forest in pain (Appendix A, line 42). So, Kùnda, thwarted by Súà’s escape, blurs out the narrative’s final words: “You’re lucky! If I had cut the tree down myself, you’d be dead!” (Appendix A, lines 44–45). To this last-ditch threat and expression of frustration, many of the performers respond in laughter; and a few (once again) pretend incredulity. The “closing” formula is once more performed and thereby marks the end of that likànɔ’s performance (4:33).

In general, the pace of Episode 2 moves faster than that of Episode 1; its “length” is also shorter—almost a third as long. The duration of its song is also a third as long as that of the first episode. But the development of Episode 2, in many ways, still mirrors that of Episode 1—rhythmically, syntactically, dynamically, and dramatically. As the entire likànɔ unfolds—as the intensifying red hue of the diagram in Figure 5-1 indicates—each section of this oral narrative, and every element within each section,
builds upon another to bring about the collectively desired dramatic effect. The Baka’s song is particularly effective, especially in its ability to both unify and develop their narrative.

5.3 Conclusion: Why Kùnda Sings

At the heart of this performance stands the storyteller-singer, Nguna; and at the heart of his likàñò stands the character Kùnda (Turtle). Nguna narrates Kùnda’s actions, but embodies Kùnda’s voice. When Kùnda sings Nguna sings, but Nguna does not sing alone; he is joined by others. Everyone present, then, embodies Kùnda’s singing voice. And it is that voice which both unifies and develops the evening’s verbal discourse in so many distinct and complementary ways: rhythmically, syntactically, grammatically, phonologically, melodically, timbrically, and semantically. To be sure, not all Baka likàñò exhibit singing. Discourse cohesion and development are not, therefore, dependent upon song (Léonard 2003:44–155). But most likàñò do have song, presumably because there are unique advantages to sung narrative discourse.

Sung verbal discourse encodes narrative cohesion and development in ways that speech, even heightened speech, does not. As I have demonstrated in Kùnda’s song and numerous other songs cited in Chapters 3 and 4, Baka song’s peculiar rhythmic, syntactic, melic, timbric, and semantic formalizations far outnumber those of most Baka speech acts. Yet the advantages of likàñò song are not simply discursive, but social, as well.

As one kind of song among many, likàñò song is a mode of collective social communication that provides a type of communal expression unlike any other in Baka
culture. As I noted earlier, virtually no one present at this storytelling event did not actively participate in singing. Except for the two drummers and a few infants, everyone in attendance that evening sang the likànò songs—male and female, young and old. This inclusive participation is not the case with most Baka song types. Certain kinds of songs tend to be sung exclusively by women, or girls; others are only sung by men, or teenage boys; still others are typically reserved for the youth, or just for solo singing in a quiet corner of the camp. Not so with likànò song. Nearly everyone gathered sings. When Kùnda, or any likànò character sings, everyone present at the storytelling event is afforded the opportunity to lend their voice to his and join in singing. As such, the opportunity that likànò song provides for social cohesion is unique among Baka performance genres. This unity is not, however, exclusively formed through shared vocal performance, but also achieved through shared expressive performance.

In the first song of the likànò of “Súà te Kùnda,” Kùnda expresses his incredulity, self-pity, and distress over the news of his uncle Súà’s alleged death. Later, in the second song, he and all the other animals present, express their anxious anticipation in felling the “calamitous” tree. Many likànò songs, maybe even most, give voice to intensified emotional experience, grief and delight, loneliness and confidence, eagerness and dread (Sec. 4.3.1.5; Boursier 1994:8). It is not likely that such performed expressions are simply the imagined experiences of narrative characters like Kùnda, but rather, are opportunities for likànò singers to collectively express and participate in those emotional experiences common to any Baka community. Fr. Daniel Boursier, having lived among the Baka for many years, and witnessed numerous likànò
performances in their natural settings, frames the collective expressive function of 
likànò song in a very similar way. Borrowing from French sociolinguist Ferdinand 
Agblemagnon, Boursier writes:

These refrains contribute to creating an atmosphere and to rendering the 
hearers invested parties: “These songs…carry an emotional charge which 
again encourages and emphasizes collective public participation, such 
that the storyteller and his audience form but one and the same person, 
one and the same body. To a large degree, the story is a veritable socio-
drama, not only involving participation in the play of one or several 
privileged personalities (actors), but those of the entire assembly.” (my 
translation; Agblemagnon 1969:220 cited in Boursier 1994:8)\(^{11}\)

Thus, when Kùnda sings, he sings in order that the Baka themselves may sing and give 
“free expression to genuine social conflict” and experience (ibid. 10).

Beneath the mask of personalities who distract us, arises our admiration 
or our indignation, often hiding an exacerbated irony or social critique. 
(ibid.)\(^{12}\)

To be sure, this social critique is not always veiled behind “the mask” of a traditional 
narrative character like Kùnda. Whether sung or not,

Elders may…use storytelling to [explicitly] address particular problems 
among the people, and thus resolve conflicts within an atmosphere of 
relaxation, humour, and entertainment. The storyteller can end a story 
with an explanation, a comment, or a moral. If he or she is an authority 
figure, such as an elder, he/she can direct an application to a situation, 
such as a rebuke or an admonition. (Léonard 2003:4)

Likànò song’s collective expression of shared experience and shared values also 
reflects and reinforces a shared memory. At many, maybe even most Baka social events 
involving song or dance, everyone participates in one way or another, whether
dancing, singing, drumming, clapping, speaking, or otherwise. But in likànò song nearly everyone unites around and utters the same words, important words for the Baka, words that form and re-form traditional narratives long associated with Baka notions of who they are, where they came from, and what is most important about life in the rainforest (Boursier 1994, Brisson 1999, Higgs 1981, and Léonard 1997).

As I have reported in Section 4.2.1, even when a likànò song is performed in isolation from its likànò narrative (e.g., as a dance-song at a funeral), the Baka nonetheless “see” (i.e., remember) the basic story with which it is associated and from which it was generated. Thus, it is assumed that when the Baka sing Kùnda’s song in the story of “Sûà te Kùnda,” that story—through song—is somehow made more memorable. Plainly, likànò song plays an important role in the Baka’s collective memory. The mnemonic capacity of likànò song is not surprising, for “the power of music to trigger associations in the memory is legendary” (Dunsby 2011, referencing Nattiez 1989). Indeed, it is well documented that song is an effective cognitive aid to memory (Yalch 1991, Wallace 1994, Rainey & Larsen 2002). Songs performed in many traditional African stories—or in any primarily oral society—are generally held to be powerful mnemonic aids in the collective memory of that community (Finnegan, 1970). The implications of this phenomenon merit a closer look at some of the more potent mnemonic devices at work in likànò song.

A fundamental dynamic of mnemonics is, of course, repetition; and likànò song, as has so often and in so many ways been pointed out in this study, is replete with repetition: repeated vowel sounds, repeated phonemes, repeated lexemes, words, phrases, syntaxes, meters, lines, verses, verse-segments, semantic categories, rhythmic
figures, melodic figures, tempi, dynamics, and timbres. As demonstrated in Chapter 4, most of these tautologies build cohesion, others effect development, and many signal both. Nearly all such patterning also make a song and its story more memorable. But no pattern marks a likànò song so uniquely as does melodic patterning. All likànò songs may share certain typical metrical patterns, syntactic patterns, and rhythmic patterns (Sec. 2.2), but no two likànò songs bear the same melodic pattern. A song’s melody is likànò-specific.

Yet, while no two song lyrics are set to the same melody, nearly all melodic movement in Baka song is constituted by at least two basic melodic units: repeated melodic refrains and repeated melodic motives. The motives constitute the refrains while the refrains constitute the song’s greater open, iterative structure. The choice to repeat or vary a motive is acted on improvisatorially. Within any likànò song’s choral texture, melodic motives may be repeated or developed, that is, repeated with variation. Their repetition and development may take place intra-linearly and/or inter-linearly, for example, within a single voice-part (like the wànjàmba or the wàtúkò) or between multiple voice-parts. Thus, the refrain of Kùnda’s first song, for instance, is iconically constituted by numerous variations on a single melodic motive: a “short-short-long” triplet formation of an intervallic sequence etically comprised of a descending perfect fourth/major third and a unison, as shown in Figure 5-2.¹⁴ The motive regularly begins on the first, fifth, ninth, and thirteenth pulses of Kùnda’s sixteen-pulse refrain.

Most often the motive is restated as a melodic sequence in a single voice, as shown in measures 9, 13, 17, and 21 of Figure 5-2. Melodic sequence between two voices, as
between measures 121 of the lead-voice and 125 of Voice 1 (in Figure 5-3), is also common.

Often enough, the motive’s rhythm is strictly repeated, but *intervallic substitutions* are improvised and added. This kind of variation is exemplified in measures 81 and 85 of Voice 1 and measures 49 and 53 of the lead voice, shown in Figure 5-4. At other times, however, the motive’s rhythm is *contracted* (Fig. 5-5, measures 149, 157, and 165, V1 & V2).

In general, subtly improvised *combinations* of sequences, substitutions, and contractions permeate the forty iterations of Kûnda’s melodic refrain. Such repeated refrains and their constitutive motives act as the distinguishing mnemonic devices of each unique ɓikànò song. As suggested by a number of popular music studies, melodic motives, in particular, function as songs’ principal mnemonic “hooks” (Adorno 1976:34–37 Burns 1987, Kronengold 2005:381–397). Informal evidence of the mnemonic effectiveness of these melodic hooks has often been observed whenever I have elicited the identity of a particular Baka song by simply humming a small portion of its melody to a Baka friend. The moment my Baka friends recognize a melodic motive, the song’s words soon follow; and if the song is a ɓikànò song, a synopsis of the story soon follows as well, maybe even an entire story telling. Nearly every ɓikànò song verse has at least one ‘hook’ of some kind—be it a repeated verse segment, a repeated rhythmic figure, a repeated melodic motif, or some combination thereof.

*Processes* of repetition do not aid memory on their own, for they are inextricably linked with *that* which is repeated. The *particular* form of each motive is the unique index of each story and song; its multiple reiterations increasingly ensure its
recognition. It is not likely that all melodic motives are equally effective “hooks,” but to the degree that the melodic motives of ɓikànɔ songs are emically “well-formed,” songs (and their stories) are more likely made more memorable.

ɓikànɔ songs and stories are not, however, simply “things to be remembered.” As Chapter 4 suggests, ɓikànɔ song’s developmental function also makes the performance experience more memorable. In the performance of Kùnda’s song, for example, as Kùnda gathers his poisonous plants and insects, melodic and syntactic variations incrementally unfold, the choral performance intensifies, the pitch rises, the tempo increases, and drums and voices crescendo. Layers of symbolic, iconic, and indexical signs coalesce and induce a “semantic snowballing effect” (Turino 2000:175–176). Thus, as the performance develops, not only is the narrative marked by ɓikànɔ song, the Baka are “marked” as well. For “signs calling forth densely layered meanings often initially create complex effects which ‘we’ experience as feeling” (italics added; ibid.). Thus, the affective experiences associated with ɓikànɔ song performance further complicate the semiotic potential of ɓikànɔ song and so index the Baka experience of the narrative that the memory of both its performance and storyline are rendered all the more memorable.

As social acts, then, ɓikànɔ songs implicitly encode multiple socio-cultural functions: among them are social cohesion, collective expression, social critique, shared memory and shared experience. But there is more, according to the Baka. In the ethnographic accounts of Boursier, Brisson, Higgens, and Léonard many more explicit functions of ɓikànɔ song and story are reported (Boursier 1994:8–10 and Higgens 1981:5–7, cited in Léonard 2003:3–5). For example, in semi-permanent forest camps,
songs and stories are traditionally held to “weaken the heart of the animals” so that they fall into Baka traps (ibid.). Similarly, at camps on hunting trips, songs and stories “weaken the forest” so that hunters’ “chances” for a successful hunt are ensured (Higgins 1985:101, ibid.). These are no small purposes for a people so dependent on the forest for their food. In addition to the basic struggle for food, elders are said to tell stories during wakes “to please the spirit of the deceased person” in order to maintain peace in the community (Léonard 2003:5). Yet the purposes of stories and their songs are not always so explicitly pragmatic.

As explained above, likànɔ̀ song and story are memorably marked. But they are not only memorable in themselves, but also for what they explicitly and implicitly “pass on” about everyday life in the forest, beliefs about the origins of things, and traditional customs, mores, and spirituality (Boursier 1991:26–31, 16 1994:10–17, 26–30; Brisson 1999:8–103). Strikingly, such consequential themes are not only sung and spoken in earnest, but are plainly—and often simultaneously—performed to amuse and recreate (na meè soba/sòlɔ) as well. As Boursier describes it,

*In an atmosphere of play and relaxation*, an impressive knowledge is transmitted to the newer generations regarding all that touches the forest, from animals and their habits, to the world of the sacred. There emerges a very clear overall impression: this very unified vision of the world of the Baka where the realm of the supernatural, the world of men and of nature communicate and exchange incessantly. The daily life and conduct of the Baka only serves to reinforce this impression. (my translation; emphasis added; 1994:10)17

Therefore, when Kùnda sings, layers of communicative intent are potentially served. The greater part of this dissertation has decidedly focused on likànɔ̀ song’s
discursive purposes, that is, how it serves the narrative discourse of which it is a part. Yet, it is likely that the Baka take such abstract functions quite for granted. Their purposes, as I have just explained, are much more socially, physically, and spiritually pragmatic. Yet, to say that the Baka would take abstractions like “discourse functions” for granted, does not mean that they would be indifferent to how a likànò song is composed or performed. For the discernable patterns in their traditional performances strongly suggest that the relationship of form and function are not arbitrary, but ardently intentional. So, for example, Kùnda does not merely speak, but also sings. And when he sings, he sings in earnest. And we know he is in earnest because of what he sings, and when and how he sings it.
Figure 5.1. Diagram of the narrative development of the story of "Suá te Kunda" (Leopard and Turtle)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>chronology</th>
<th>:00</th>
<th>:10</th>
<th>:20</th>
<th>:30</th>
<th>:40</th>
<th>:50</th>
<th>1:00</th>
<th>1:10</th>
<th>1:20</th>
<th>1:30</th>
<th>1:40</th>
<th>2:00</th>
<th>2:10</th>
<th>2:20</th>
<th>2:30</th>
<th>2:40</th>
<th>2:50</th>
<th>3:00</th>
<th>3:10</th>
<th>3:20</th>
<th>3:30</th>
<th>3:40</th>
<th>3:50</th>
<th>4:00</th>
<th>4:10</th>
<th>4:20</th>
<th>4:30</th>
<th>4:40</th>
<th>4:50</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>oral mode</td>
<td>tell</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>tell</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>tell</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>discourse structure</td>
<td>opening formula &amp; singing</td>
<td>main body</td>
<td>episode 1</td>
<td>episode 2</td>
<td>closing formula</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chorus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>storyteller-songleader</td>
<td>tell</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>tell</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>tell</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chorus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>song verse #</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>song verse syntax: (musical &amp; poetic)</td>
<td>(A)</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>(fb)</td>
<td>(fb)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 5-2. Melodic motive of “Kùnda’s Song”: a “short-short-long” triplet formation of a descending perfect fourth/major third and a unison. (See also within the complete transcription in Appendix B, measures 9–24)
Figure 5-3. Motive of “Kùnda’s Song” restated in *melodic sequence* between two voice parts
Voice 1, Measures 81, 85

Lead Voice, Measures 49, 53

Figure 5-4. Motive of “Kùnda’s Song” strictly restated rhythmically, but with *intervallic substitutions*
Figure 5-5. Motive of “Kùnda’s Song” restated with rhythmic contractions

1 “wà-kpɔ’kpɔ ko kpékè” is more literally “a very strong story-teller.”


3 Interestingly, the second song in both of these narratives employed sprechstimme throughout.

4 This should not be taken to mean that the story still carried a typical text load; it did not. In fact, it is difficult to understand if there was any narration spoken at all in such cases. Just how such a short lyric and such little spoken narration could constitute a “complete” story will need further investigation.

5 More complete transcriptions are needed to verify this, and to better describe the distribution in a story’s structure.

6 This discourse function warrants more study, though requires better representation of the overlap of speaking and singing in performances.

7 In other contexts, for example, other likànɔ songs and other Baka song genres, these terms would need further clarification. The clarification is needed in that while these terms may be the lexical extent to which the Baka distinguish voice parts, there may be other distinctives.
The nature of these composite versions of both parts varies with any likànò song and is an interesting study in itself. As an example, the description of Sùà te Kùnda presents some of the particulars as to the composite nature of its introductory wànjàmba.

The wànjàmba part is normally only performed by the lead singer, but not always. Occasionally, once the lead singer has adequately stated the wànjàmba part, the wànjàmba part may be picked up by other voices as well (especially other adult male voices, as in the case of a few of these sixteen likànò songs, for example, “Kùnda te Jelo”).

When a traditional Baka story includes more than one occurrence of song in the course of a narrative’s performance, songs typically become progressively shorter in duration. This pattern is consistent with the “change of pace” that Longacre claims is so commonly found in narrative discourse development, climactic development in particular.


Ibid.: “Sous le masque de personnages qui nous distraient, suscitent notre admiration ou notre indignation, se cache souvent une forme exacerbée d’ironie ou de critique sociale” (ibid.).


My etic transcription includes quarter-tones, indicated by a “+” over the notehead. Because of this, a number of the motive’s descending intervals are neither /P4/ (perfect fourths), nor /M3/ (major thirds), but rather, M3+ (e.g., see measure 13).


17 Boursier’s text reads: “Dans une ambience de jeu and de détente, un savoir impressionante est transmit aux nouvelles générations pour tout ce qui touche à la forêt, aux animaux et leur moeurs, au monde du sacré. Il s’en dégage une impression globale très nette: cette vision très unifiée du monde baka où l’au-delà, le monde des hommes et la nature communiquent et échangent sans cesse. Le vécu et le comportement quotidiens des Baka ne font que renforcer cette impression” (italics added; 1994:10).
APPENDIX A
TEXT TRANSCRIPTION OF THE STORY OF “SUA TE KUNDA”

(My English translation is a “free” translation. Line numbers are indicated in parentheses. Chronology is intermittently indexed in brackets. Sections highlighted in gray represent an ongoing choral refrain.)

(1) [:00]
   e sasa e.          såa.
likànò pòngu.       pòngu.
(Opening “Formula”)
(2)
Wó pe, lömù a gò pe Sùà á kpie.
News has spread that Leopard is dead.
(3)
Ndéèkè Sùà, é à mè̀ pe ‘ e’ a na jo yèè-sòo pe wó tòa té(tó).
But Leopard plans to eat all the animals that come to his funeral.
(4)
wó sì gèngà.
So the animals begin to gather.
(5)
é à (ye pe é) moò sòo.
But Leopard won’t kill them just yet.
(6)
Wóè, é à bie (jungi).
His wife is going to have a baby.\textsuperscript{134}
(7) [:15]
e sasa e.          såa
likànò pòngu.       pòngu.
(8) [:21]
(Sung Refrain)  

<p>| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who killed my uncle, Sua (Leopard)? Who killed my uncle, Sua (Leopard)? O Kunda (Turtle)... O Sua (Uncle Leopard)...  

(Storyteller narrates while choral refrain continues.)

(9) [1:30]  
Kunda á ja. Sùa nè Kunda á ja nò. Á ja sása, á lìngé. Á ja sása, á lìngé. Á ja kòko, á lìngé. (Èèèè).  
Á dù a mpe’è.  
_Turtle starts packing... He picks up a biting soldier ant...wraps in a leaf... he picks up a giant stinging black ant...wraps it up; and puts them in his travel sack._

[longer narrative pause]

(10) [2:07]  
Sùa, á ja na gòè... Kunda, á ja na gòè te èkè kònò.  
_He sets out on his trek to the funeral... collecting these insects as he goes._

(11)  
È à go te. a esue a Sùà.  
...traveling with them...to Sua’s funeral.
(12) [2:25]
Á ja êbâmbi. Á lingà.  
Ààà! 140
He wraps up a venomous caterpillar;
(13)
Á ja kóko. Á lingà.  
Ààà? 141
He wraps up (another) biting ant;  
What’s this?!
(14)
Á ja èkàlo. Á lingà.  
He wraps up a biting termite;
(15)
Á ja pààmbò. A a lingà.  
Ayi!  
He wraps up another stinging black ant;  
No way! Can you believe it? 142
(16)
È à gö te. a esue.  
And heads off to Sua’s funeral.

[narrative pause]

[2:45]
[He he he heèè.]
[Stop! (A signal to the choir to stop singing.)]
(17)
e sasa e.  
sàa.
lùkànô pòngu.  
pòngu.
(Formula)

(18)
A ndaà kèè. Kûnda, wò koàlo te à ga pe é koà jò o kò. Sùà kè latì.  
From here, Turtle paddles upstream with the others to finally see Leopard’s body lying there.

(19) [2:51]
(KONJI: Ngàa jè wa- kòbo, l145
(We hear talking about the deceased.)
Kùnda ja pe jo Ngé, Sùà kè pe ndoò à kołélé.
Turtle prepares to speak, but notices that Leopard’s testicles are exposed and moving.

É te (Kùnda)... é te wò pe (en privée):
He whispers to his wife.

Moò dòto nè a èe kè ma à likù (frotter) te tìti-lè ma à bandamà té te èbàmbì a (léka-)nje-lè tè.
Get ready for what’s about to happen... when I lay this stinging caterpillar on Leopard’s testicles.

Ngò dòto tie.
Get ready...

Ngò dòto tie.
Get ready...

à nye èbàmbì kè.
because the sting of this caterpillar...

À wa é wà kékè.
...is really painful.

Pe Kùnda weè (les testicules) pe é likì te Sùà a nge-lè ò kò sisisisi.
So Turtle lays the itchy caterpillar on Leopard’s testicles, and Leopard begins to twitch (ideophone)!

Woof
Yikes! Woe!

é te Mbambè pe: wòtò go
Turtle says to Giant Lizard, Come on!
(30) Pe wó té Mbambè, wó kò a ja kòkò. Á (kòkò) nyomò té ngé tité. Tité, á kpe.
So, Turtle leaves with Lizard, and pricks Leopard again, and now Leopard is afraid.

(31) [3:20]
é te wòè mo müe dé?
Turtle says to his wife, “Did you see that?”

(32)
tità-lè, é kpie de.
My Uncle’s not dead!

(33) [3:23]
Gó nù. Buù nì wà.
Let’s go! Let’s chop down this tree over here.

(34)
kpò kpò kpò, ngè buù wà nà we.
Chop, chop, chop. Let’s cut down this tree...

(35)
i ngò buù kò-lo kè à mu teè.
Giant Lizard and you others, help cut down this tree!

(36)
Kòe te a kà? Wóó! Kòe te nè!
Where’s it gonna fall?! Right here on Leopard.

(37) [3:35]
esasa e. sàa [“formula”]

(38)
Boo, wá lò kò ngò-bo a kò-lo. Wó té Mbambè.
So everybody gathers around the tree with Giant Lizard!
(39) [3:40]
(Sung Refrain)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a (wa-njāmbā)</td>
<td>kpō</td>
<td>kpō</td>
<td>kpō</td>
<td>nga</td>
<td>buū</td>
<td>wa</td>
<td>nā</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b (wa-tūkō)</td>
<td>(ngā</td>
<td>bu)</td>
<td>wa</td>
<td>nā</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a</td>
<td>we(-e)</td>
<td>kpō</td>
<td>kpō</td>
<td>kpō</td>
<td>wā</td>
<td>buū</td>
<td>wā</td>
<td>nā</td>
<td>we(-e)</td>
<td>kpō</td>
<td>kpō</td>
<td>kpō</td>
<td>kpō</td>
<td>nga</td>
<td>bu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b</td>
<td>weë</td>
<td>eeh</td>
<td>kpō</td>
<td>kpō</td>
<td>kpō</td>
<td>nga</td>
<td>bu</td>
<td>wā</td>
<td>nā</td>
<td>weë</td>
<td>eeh</td>
<td>kpō</td>
<td>kpō</td>
<td>kpō</td>
<td>nga</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chop, chop, chop, We’re cutting down this tree of calamity.

(Storyteller coaches and narrates while choral refrain continues.)

(39a) [3:59]
Jeje jō, jeje jō
Hey! Listen there! Listen!

(39b)
[4:09]
Jaja e lo e koë
Fell the tree like this!

(40) [4:16]
e sasa e. sāa. ["formula"]

(41)
ē puē.
(But to his (Kunda’s) surprise...)

(42)
lo te é meç pe é go a moō Sūà o kò nè (na boō bo) te Sūà o kò Yiē Sūà
(...just as the tree begins to fall, Leopard springs up in pain and flees into the forest.)
(43) [4:25]
likànò pònù. pònù.
(Formula)

(44)
Kùnda te tité pe, é dò ngaà lo kë lekë mo kpië we.
Kunda shouts to Leopard, “If I had cut down the tree myself, you’d be dead now!”

(45)
Pe’ e¹⁴⁵ a mò à wòtò
“You’re just too smart. You’ve got all the luck!”

(46) [4:33]
e sasa e. sàa.
likànò pònù. pònù.
(“formula”)

(47)
[O kà nò bo wëë sì.]
(?)
APPENDIX B
ETIC MUSIC TRANSCRIPTION OF VOICE PARTS:¹
“KUNDA’S SONG” FROM THE BAKA NARRATIVE “SUÀ TÈ KUNDA”
(Object 5-3. Audio file of likànò story “Suà tè Kùnda” (.mp3 4.4 MB))

Note: (1) This transcription only represents the melodic and rhythmic elements of the
voice parts; percussion parts are represented in a composite transcription in Chapter 2,
Figure 2-4; textual representation is only provided during the initial entries of certain
voice parts; (2) a plus symbol over a note-head indicates that the pitch is a quarter-tone
sharp; a diagonal slash through a plus symbol, however, indicates that a quarter-tone
alteration is cancelled; (3) note-stems without note-heads rhythmically indicate a vocal
presence, but only an approximate pitch; (4) notes with “x” note-heads indicate
indefinite pitches/tones.

\[ \dot{\cdot} = 140 \text{ MM.} \]
sua te kunda
sua te kunda

V1

lamoola ti-ye Kunda

V2

V3

lead

ti-ta-e le-ke lamoda ? ? ?

V1

Kunda

V2

V3

lead
In Section 2.2.2, I implicitly question etic (i.e., “outsider”) notions of Baka perceptions of melodic intervals. Thus, in preparing for my forthcoming emic analysis of Baka intervals, I have included quarter tones in most of my transcriptions in the event that these melodic variations turn out to be emically significant to the Baka. I have left the representations of quarter tones in this present transcription of “Kunda’s song,” but they have little relevance to my present concerns.
REFERENCES


Cooke, Peter and Michelle Kisliuk. "Pygmy Music." In Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online,


Grimaud, Yvette, Gilbert Rouget, Jane Wenning, Musée de l'homme (Muséum national d'histoire naturelle), and Département d'ethnomusicologie. 1957. *Notes sur la musique des bochiman comparée à celle des pygmées babinga, établies*. Paris: Muséo de l'Homme Département d'Ethnomusicologie.


Levinsohn, Stephen. 2004. “Analysis of Narrative Texts.” Lecture notes for a course given from February 3-14, 2003 at Horsleys’s Green, UK. (A similar course was presented in Yaoundé, Cameroon in 2004.)


McCormick, Jennifer, Sarah Richardson. 2007. “Vocatives in MICASE.”
(accessed January 2011).

edited by Eugene Loos, with Susan Anderson, Dwight H. Day Jr., Paul C.
Jordan, and J. Douglas Wingate. SIL International

McLeod, Norma, and Marcia Herndon. 1980. *The Ethnography of Musical

Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Miller DG and HK Schutte. 1993. “Physical Definition of the "Flageolet
University, New York.


Molino, Jean and Joëlle Tamine Gardes. 1982. *Introduction à l’analyse linguistique
de la poésie*. Linguistique nouvelle. 1re éd ed. Paris: Presses universitaires de
France.

Analysis?” *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 4 (1)
(Jun.): 51-68.

(2) (Jul. - Dec.): 153-71.

——. 1988. *De la sémiologie à la musique*. Cahiers du département d’études
littéraires; 10. 1ère éd ed. Montréal, Quebec: Service des publications,
Université du Québec à Montréal.

Press.

Princeton University Press.


——. 1976. Les Mendzan: des Chanteurs de Yaoundé: Histoire, Ouganologie, Fabrication, Système de Transcription. WEIN. (ACTA Ethnologistica et Linguistica, no. 34.)


Njema and Tombombo, Mai, Andɔ and Awu. 2008. Recorded interview with authors, Nomêdjo, Cameroun, March. (Baka musicians, singers, and storytellers)


Tombombo, Dieudonné. 2007. Personal conversation/interview with author, Nomedjo, Cameroun (Baka cultural leader).


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH


Dan performed as a percussionist with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra from 1976-1977, with the Pasadena Symphony from 1978-1979, and as an ethnic percussionist with the Rwanda Lewis Afro-Cuban Dance Company in Los Angeles in 1979. He also taught and performed percussion as a member of the faculties of music at the State University of New York at Geneseo and Brockport from 1979-1986 and 1981-1983, respectively.

Dan began his ethnomusicological field work in Cameroon, Africa, in 1995, as a member of SIL, an international Christian faith-based language development NGO. From 1996 to 2008, Dan and his family intermittently lived in Cameroon’s eastern rainforest among the Baka people as part of SIL’s Baka Language Development Project.

Dan and his wife, Debra, and their four children, Emma, Aaron, Mary, and Jonathan, returned to the U.S. in June 2008. Currently, Dan is teaching at the
Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics (GIAL) in Dallas, Texas. Upon completion of his Ph.D in May 2011, he will continue to pursue a career in teaching and ethnomusicological research.