

### 3. Nouns

Midob has basically two kinds of nouns, substantives and adjectives. Numerals are treated separately (cf. 3.3.). The distinction between a substantive and an adjectives lies in that a substantive can, in contrast to an adjective, as such be the subject of a sentence. Both can, with a predicative element, form the predication of an utterance.

Examples:

éən silibì èerìciyâm 'My garment is short.' (adjective as predication)

ùmúdd éən sùbúun ùurà 'Today is my wedding day.' (substantive as predication).

#### 3.1. Substantives

##### 3.1.1. Original substantives

Original substantives in Midob are of the following morphological structures:

- |            |                      |
|------------|----------------------|
| a) VV:     | àa 'place of living' |
| b) VVC:    | ùud 'day'            |
| c) VCV:    | àwà 'grandmother'    |
| d) VVCV:   | èemí 'tail'          |
| e) VCCV:   | òtti 'foot'          |
| f) VCCVC:  | èggár 'blood'        |
| g) VCVCV:  | ùfùdi 'agreement'    |
| h) VCVCCV: | ùbúddí 'lung'        |

i) VCCVCCV:	àkkàəndí 'guest'
j) CVV:	tíi 'sheep'
k) CVC:	tèr 'goat'
l) CVVC:	káəl 'camel'
m) CVCV:	tàni 'monkey'
n) CVVCV:	tàamì 'upper arm'
o) CVCCV:	tàrti 'shoe'
p) CVCVC:	tùrùd 'fog'
q) CVCVCV:	tàmàtí 'baboon'

Nouns that are longer than the examples given, tend to be either loans from Arabic, as e.g. pùrtúkáal 'orange', or noun constructs, as e.g. pàədìnkàr 'sarha-tree'.

### 3.1.3. The plural

The plural of the noun is not normally expressed, as the noun can semantically both be singular or plural, according to the context. If a plurality of subjects is to be explicitly expressed, this can be done through

a) the predication, which must then be plural,

cf. ákán ír íhùm 'That man came.', with  
ákán ír íhàm 'Those men came.'

b) a numeral expressing quantity,

cf. ày tér éenyé kèttàhêm 'I herded many goats.'

c) Plurals formed with the suffix -tí/-tì:

But there is also a suffix denoting plurality of the noun itself:

sáar	'thing'	pl	sàarti
àd	'house'	pl	àttì
kòosi	'lip'	pl	kòositi
póor	'friend'	pl	pòortì
tártí	'shoe'	pl	tártítí
tóori	'woman'	pl	tóorítí

Note: This plural suffix -tí/-tì is morphologically identical with the singular substantive ending -tí/-tì (as in tártí 'shoe') (cf. -tí in Nobiin, Werner 1987: 87). It is not clear, however, if this is a chance identity or not. A connection with Kenzi plural suffix -cii (von Massenbach 1933: 110) and possibly Nobiin -ncii (Werner 1987: 80), both of which most likely go back to a hypothetical plural suffix \*-ti, holds a greater degree of plausibility.

d) Plural formations in -e-ti/-e-di:

úccí	'child'	pl	ùccédí
íddí	'women'	pl	íddédí
ír	'man'	pl	íjéttí
pàngáttí	'old man'	pl	pàngáttétí

Note: In the above examples the plural suffix is added onto an element -e-. In two instances the consonant is voiced.

e) Reduplicative plurals:

tàa	'cow'	pl	tàyítí
tàdì	'girl'	pl	tàttì/tàtn iccédí
tèdì	'girl'	pl	tètédì
tàgàdí	'fatness'	pl	tàgàgídí

### 3.1.4. Singularization

There is no indefinite article in Midob. Some substantives, however, carry the remnants of a singulative element.

The shape of this element seems to have been something like \*-èe(r). (cf. the numeral wèer 'one' in Nile Nubian.)

Examples:

ùud	'day'	->	wèer	'one day'
ír	'man'	->	íjjèe/íjèe	'one man'

## **3.2. Adjectives**

**Midob possesses quite a number of primary and derived adjectives. They can easily be substantivized and thereby become the subject of a sentence.**

### 3.2.1. Primary adjectives

Primary (underived) adjectives mostly end in -é/-è:

pòjjé	'strong'
àddé	'white'
tàssè	'long'

With a predicative ending the final consonant -e- changes to -i-:

pòjjiyâm	'he is strong'
àddiyâm	'it is white'
tísingiyâm	'it is beautiful'

The same applies to the plural predication -yûm:

tísingiyûm 'they are beautiful'

The final consonant can also drop out completely, as is the case when the predicative -òyâm is affixed:

sàngaccè: tùud sàngaccòyâm 'he has a small chin'  
(cf. 6.12.)

## 6. The verb

### 6.1. General verbal structure

The Midob verb is made up of the following ~~elements~~:

verbal stem + (extension) + ending

The verbal stem remains unaltered throughout all conjugations. The extensions modify the tense, aspect, and mood of the utterance. The endings can either be finite or non-finite (such as infinitives, connecting forms etc.).

## 4. Pronouns

In Midob there are personal pronouns, possessive pronouns, demonstrative and interrogative pronouns. They take the place of nouns in the syntactic structure.

### 4.1. Personal pronouns

The personal pronouns can be in either subject case, connective or object case.

#### 4.1.1. Subject case

1	sgl	áy	1	pl	àadí (excl)	àngá (incl)
2	sgl	íin	2	pl	ùnngú	
3	sgl	òon	3	pl	ànngá	



#### 4.1.2. Connective case (Genetive)

1 sgl éə̀n  
2 sgl náan  
3 sgl náan

1 pl àadín (excl) àngán (incl)  
2 pl ùnngún  
3 pl ànngán

### 4.1.3. Object case

There are three different sets of object case personal pronouns. They are the short form, the form ending in -k, and the form ending in -yé/(-yén).

#### 4.1.3.1. Short form

1 sgl	é	1 pl	àadí (excl)	àngá (incl)
2 sgl	ná	2 pl	ùngú	
3 sgl	nà	3 pl	àngá	

#### 4.1.3.2. Form ending in -k

1 sgl	ék	1 pl	àadí k (excl)	àngák (incl)
2 sgl	nák	2 pl	ùngúk	
3 sgl	nàk	3 pl	àngák	

#### 4.1.3.3. Long form ending in -yé/(-yén)

1 sgl	áyé	1 pl	àadí yé (excl)	àngáyé (incl)
2 sgl	náyé	2 pl	ùngú yé	
3 sgl	nà yé	3 pl	àngáyé	

## 4.2. Demonstrative pronouns

### 4.2.1 Basic demonstratives

In Midob we find a number of demonstrative pronouns. Basically there exists a semantic dichotomy between near and far:

nèn 'this' :	nèn ír 'this man' (present, visible, near)
àn 'that' :	àn ír 'that man' (distant, visible or invisible, far)

When used independently of a noun, a morpheme -e is added:

àné	'that one'
ànéyá	'only that one'
ànéreyá	'only that one'

With a predicative element: nèrà 'it is this'

A second demonstrative pronoun that denotes distance is:

ákán 'that' : ákán ír 'that man (over there)'

The independent form is:

ákáné/ákánér 'that one'

áan 'that' : áan ír 'that man' seems to be simply a variant form of ákán.  
áané 'that one' is formed in analogy to ákáné

### 4.3. Interrogative pronouns

Midob has a large number of interrogative pronouns. They come in two forms, depending on whether they contain the (interrogative) predication in themselves or whether they are included in a phrase containing a verb (cf. also the opposition between Question forms 1 and 2 as an analogy, 6.6.3.).

#### 4.3.1. Interrogative pronouns without a predicative element

índón?	'why?'
ìkinánén?	'why?'
ìkkìnyínén?	'why?'
ìkírrá?	'how?'
íkkírdínén?	'how?'
ìndàriâ?	'how?'
óon/ón?	'which?'
óndé?	'where?'
òndéyén inyéekín?	'from where?'
òndérrén/óndéréén?	'where, where to?'
óonèyé/óonèyèn?	'which one?' (of several)
òmbúrrén?	'how?'
òndáarén/òndáarén?	'when?'
nèen?	'what?'
kààyén?	'to whom?'
kààrén?	'who?'
kàànéén?	'whose?'
kààgóssírén?	'who? (pl)'
nèen?	'what?'
nèen óodèn?	'for what reason/why?'
nìccê?	'how much?'
nìccéarén?	'for how much?'

Example: àkkæandi òndérrén ùssèríyì? 'Where do the guests lodge?'

(Note: One example may suffice to show the syntactic structure.)

#### 4.3.2 Interrogative pronouns containing a predicative element

nèeâ?	'what is?'
nèyâ?	'what are?'
nìccâ/nìccê?	'how much is?'
tàriyâ?	'how is it?'
ìndáriyâ?	'how is it?' (quality)
óndériyò?	'where are they?'
kàæréni?	'who are you?'
kàæreyè?	'who are you?'
kàægòsêy?	'who are they?'
kàænâ?	'whose is it/are they?'
kàægédà/kàgédà?	'what (kind) is?'
nèegédà/nègédà?	'what is?'
òndéá/òndéá/òndéyà?	'where is?'
òndérrí/òndérré?	'where is?'

Example: náan érí kàægédà? 'What is your name?'

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TÌDN-ÁAL: A STUDY OF MIDOB

(Darfur-Nubian)

Die Deutsche Bibliothek – CIP-Einheitsaufnahme

**Werner, Roland:**

Tìdn-áal: a study of Midob : (Darfur-Nubian) / Roland Werner.

– Berlin : Reimer, 1993

(Sprache und Oralität in Afrika ; Bd. 17)

ISBN 3-496-02507-7

NE: GT

Gedruckt mit Unterstützung der  
Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft

© 1993 by Dietrich Reimer Verlag

Dr. Friedrich Kaufmann

Unter den Eichen 57

1000 Berlin 45

Umschlaggestaltung: Thomas Rode, Frankfurt am Main

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Printed in Germany

ISBN 3-496-02507-7

1993

DIETRICH REIMER VERLAG BERLIN