

**Boundaries, Backgrounding
and Highlighting in a
Chufie' (Bafanji) Narrative
Text**

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This article concerns the Bafanji language, spoken in Ngoketunja Division,
in the North West Region of Cameroon

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Abbreviations

0, 1, 2	degrees of remoteness (tense)
1SG	first person singular
3SG	third person singular
AGR	agreement
ASP	aspect
AUX	auxiliary
COMP	complementizer
F	future
FOC	focus
H	high tone
HAB	habitual aspect
IPFV	imperfective aspect
IRR	irrealis (non-visible)
L	low tone
N	nasal
NEG	negative
P	past
PART	particle (verbal)
POD	point of departure
PRF	perfect aspect
PROG	progressive aspect
REL	relativizer
SS	same subject
T	tense
X	non-finite verb form
´	High tone
`	Low tone

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to document a first look at features of discourse grammar of Bafanji (ISO 639-3 code: bfj), a Grassfields Bantu language of Cameroon, spoken in the village of Bafanji in the North West Region. There are approximately 20,000 speakers of Bafanji, most of which reside in their traditional homeland in the confines of the village of Bafanji (Lewis 2016). The autoglossonym is chufie' which means 'talk of Fie' people.' Since this report references both the village and the language, Chufie' will be used for the name of the language, reserving Bafanji for the name of the village. Over the past twelve years, SIL Cameroon has been assisting the Bafanji community to develop their language. There have been three linguistic papers written focusing on this language which have contributed to the development of the language: a phonology sketch (C. Hamm and V. Hamm 2007), an analysis of the Noun Phrase (Hamm, et al. 2013) and a detailed study of the noun class system (Hamm 2011). Some aspects of the grammar of the language were also documented in Koopman and Kural 1997. This paper is part of the series of descriptive papers that will be helpful to other aspects of language development, such as improving the quality of literature production and literacy, as well as translation of the Bible.

This study is based on one Chufie' narrative text. the text is presented in B and C in the practical orthography developed by the author (V. Hamm and C. Hamm 2007) with an experimental tone orthography. It is included in interlinear and text chart format since often context surrounding examples is helpful to see. A summary of the relevant features of the tone orthography is also to be found in A.

The text is an oral retelling of events that had transpired one day prior to the telling. It was recorded on Feb 26, 2007 and transcribed a few weeks later by the author of this report. The original speaker of the text, together with the researcher, have lightly edited the text to eliminate false starts and stuttered words. The scenario surrounding the recording is as follows. The narrator received a guest whom he had not seen in some time and invited the guest into the work office located in his family compound. The researcher (the author of this paper) asked the narrator to tell the guest about what had happened the day before and recorded the narration on a digital device. Present in the room was the narrator, Clifford Africa Tiemindeng, male, aged 35, who speaks Chufie' as his first and best language. Also present was the guest, a mother tongue speaker of Chufie' who was not residing in Bafanji at the time, as well as the researcher and his wife, Valerie Hamm, another researcher of the language.

The researcher transcribed the recording and made the word for word translation in English. He also worked directly with the narrator to both check the word for word translation and produce a free translation of each sentence of the text in English.

It should be noted that there were several speakers in this text. The guest who was being told the story interrupted two times to clarify certain details; these interactions are included in the text, but not the analysis and are marked as such. Also, the recording continues with some interaction between the researcher, the researcher's wife, and the narrator. Since there is a clear denouement after the peak of the story and a formulaic ending both of which precede the interaction of the author and the author's wife, the aforementioned interaction is not included in this analysis, however

it does help to fill in some details about how events actually transpired but were not addressed in the text as presented here.

This paper is organized into three major parts. First, the macrostructure of the text will be discussed, noting boundary features which have been seen to establish different sections of the story and illustrate cohesion and coherence in the text. Second, there will be an overview of the verb phrase which will be necessary to understand the third section which will be a discussion of devices used for backgrounding and highlighting in the text.

2. MACROSTRUCTURE WITH BOUNDARY FEATURES

2.1 Macrostructure

A possible title for the analysis text could be, "The Day We Left Hombege in Bambalang." It is a short story of a group of people¹ who traveled from the village of Bafanji to Bambalang, a neighbouring village about 10 km away to watch a football match. At the half-time break, Hombege, the main character, decided to visit the market to find a friend he had some business with and ends up not coming back for the return trip to Bafanji once the game was over. After a night of wondering, the narrator finds Hombege at his house, safe and sound, and finds out the reasons why he did not come back in time for the ride back to Bafanji.

The text clearly has two episodes which are on the same theme of waiting for and leaving without a person on a trip. The first episode is very short and takes place in the compound of the narrator in the village of Bafanji prior to leaving for the match, and the second episode takes place mostly in Bambalang (at the playing field and several points on the road) and some the next day in Bafanji again.

The macrostructure (overview) of the text is presented in Table 1 below, which gives the notional (universal) structure of the text, the sentences in which these occur, a summary of the text in each structure slot², along with the boundary features that coincide with these sections of the text. Finally, the episodes of the text are shown in the rightmost column. This will aid the reader to quickly understand the content and structure of the text.

A more detailed overview of the text is then given with examples. This correlates the boundary features (specific linguistic forms or devices) to the notional (universal) structure slots, thus giving formal clues to the boundaries in the text. These boundaries are used when speaking an oral text to promote coherence and understanding of text as a whole. In a written text, these boundary markers give additional justification for making a paragraph break. When paragraph breaks are made appropriately, the text is easier to read and understand.

2.1.1 Setting

The text starts off with the preposed temporal phrase *a mbi zuŋ* 'it was yesterday'. This is an example of what is called a point of departure (POD). A point of departure is "...a device that signals discontinuities of situation, of reference, and sometimes of action, namely the placement at the beginning of a clause or sentence of a situational or

¹ The group included the narrator, the author of this paper, Hombege, and some others.

² Examples of structure slots are setting, orientation, initial event, development, etc.

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referential constituent.” (Levinsohn 2012:39). Its function is to establish a starting point for communication and links what follows to the context (Levinsohn 2012:40). Often in Chufie', points of departure are pre-nuclear subordinate clauses, and some are also adverbial phrases. The text begins with the temporal phrase in order to give the time frame for the story, thus it is the linguistic feature which indicates the beginning of the story. It begins the setting of the story which lists relevant background information: there was a friendly football match in Bambalang between some Bambalang and Bamunka villagers.

Table 1. Macrosegmentation and boundary features

Notional structure	Lines	Summary	Boundary feature	Episode
Setting	1-2, 7	We traveled from Bafanji to a football match in Bambalang.	point of departure (POD)	
Initial Event	8-9	Clement said he was coming, but did not come.		Episode 1
Development	10-11a	We waited for him, but we did not see him.		
Peak	11b	We left.	reflexive pronoun	
Orientation	12-14	We traveled to Bambalang and watched the match, Bamunka won.	POD	Episode 2
Initial Event	17	Dan Hombege left for the market at half-time.	POD x2	
Development	18-19	The narrator warned Hombege not to stay long or he would miss the ride back to Bafanji.	reflexive pronoun reflexive pronoun	
Development	20-25	We waited and searched for him at the field, ahead on the road, further at a junction, but we didn't see him. So we went without him.	reflexive pronoun	
Development (slowing prior to peak)	26-27	The narrator can't stop thinking about how Hombege will get back to Bafanji.	change in deictic centre	
Peak	28-33	The next morning, the narrator goes to Hombege's house and finds him, asks how he got here.	POD x2 POD x2	
Denouement	34-40	Hombege's reasons given: he had to find money that had been given to a man for a student, finds man, gets the money, gives it to the student.	change from direct quote to indirect quote reflexive pronoun	
Coda	41	That is how it was yesterday.	Formulaic ending	
Lines 3-6 and 15-16 are audience interaction which are not part of the analysis.				

Lines 3 to 6 contain an audience question and response which is not included in the analysis. Line seven brings the text back to the story – that ‘we left here to go there.’

2.1.2 Episode 1

The first episode lasts from lines 8 to 11. This episode is the frustrating event of waiting for and leaving a friend named Clement, who said he would come to the football match. Lines 8 and 9 make up the inciting event in which the narrator tells the audience that Clement had said he would come, but he does not come. The episode develops when the group waits for him for a long time (line 10), they don't see him (line 11a), and the episode reaches its peak and finishes with the phrase *ɲgiɯ zɯgɯ* ‘and so we left’ in line 11b. It is implied that the group left for the match without Clement. A clue to this implicature is in the use of the reflexive pronoun *zɯgɯ* ‘us (exclusive)’ referring to the agent. This gives the idea of finality or unexpected result (cf. Mfonyam 1994 for the same structure in Bafut).

2.1.3 Episode 2

The majority of the story consists of the second episode occurring in lines 12 to 40.

Lines 12 to 14 give an overview of how the match was played and who won, which forms the orientation section to the second episode and is mostly backgrounded material apart from the mainline event of moving the deictic centre of the text from narrator's compound in Bafanji to the playing field in Bambalang in line 12. This is achieved by a clause with ‘we go **come**’ and then another clause ‘**arrive** in Bambalang.’

12 Pɯgɯ giɯ **ntwó** **nchán** lɛ' Mbawuon , ntwó nzɯ
 we go.PO **come.PO** **arrive.PO** Bambalang come.PO see.PO
 mbo kwa' soŋ' .
 football very fine

We went and arrived in Bambalang and watched the match very well.

There is a major change of location in line 12 which indicates the beginning of a new episode. This line gives the setting of the second episode, which takes place mostly at the playing field in Bambalang.

Lines 15 and 16 contain the second audience question and response from the narrator which are not included in the analysis.

This episode's inciting event is found in line 17 where the main character is introduced and unexpectedly departs from the playing field. This is a point of significant discontinuity from the orientation section, shown by the use of a connective phrase and two successive temporal points of departure. In line 17, there is a comma after the connective and both points of departure. All of these boundary features are bolded in the example here.

17 A mbi no , ndi-a pou nfèi kɛ ndi , mbigi mbo
 it be.P1 it when they leave.P1 half time before football
 mbòŋ no po nzée mblè la , Dan Hombɛgɛ-a
 return.P1 to again restart.X play.X that Dan Hombege-the
 pɛgɛ-a pou ŋgɛ , a péi ndoŋ ŋgie' a gɛ mitaiŋ no
 he and I go.P1 he pick up.P0 path COMP he go.P0 to market to
 gɛ ŋkwé' chiŋ ŋooŋ hou .
 go.X look for.X certain man there

Just then, during half time, before they again started the second half, Dan Hombege who went with us left: he picked up the road (left for a purpose) in order to go to the market to see a certain man there.

The plot develops in a new paragraph in lines 18 and 19 when the narrator warns Hombege not to stay long. Hombege acknowledges the warning through indirect speech which allows the narrator to add the information that he remained at the market for a long time. The narrator's warning is in direct speech, while Hombege's response is in indirect speech. This is a reason for considering these two sentences as their own paragraph, separate from line 17.

One of the common boundary features in this story is the use of an object pronoun co-referential with the subject which often indicates a sense of finality, as has already been indicated. For the purpose of this paper it will be called a reflexive pronoun. Line 19 concludes with an example of this (bolded below) to show the end of the paragraph and a discontinuity with what follows.

19 A gie' , iŋ , a twótwó , ŋgɛ ŋgòŋ ze
 he COMP.P0 yes he coming.FOC go.P0 remain.P0 **him**
 mitaiŋ.
 in market

He said yes, he was coming, but went and remained (a long time) in the market.

In line 20, a new paragraph begins by moving the story to the end of the football match, and explaining how the group looked for Hombege without success. Finally in line 25 the paragraph ends as the group begins to drive back to Bafanji, leaving Hombege there. At this point the narrator uses the "reflexive pronoun" (bolded below) to indicate that the group had given up hope of finding Hombege and finally left.

25 Pɛgɛ péi ndoŋ ŋkwɛ **zugu** ligi tu' , nná-e
 we pick up.P0 path return.P0 **us** here night leave him.P0
 hou .
 there

So we started down the road and returned here at night, and left him there!

The beginning of the next developmental paragraph (lines 26-27) is signalled by a change in deictic centre (from Bambalang back to the author's compound in Bafanji), signaled by the word 'here' (bolded below).

26 ɲ:kwíu , nchichwó **ligi** , two yi ki nchwó nswéi wi
 I.return.PO sit.FOC.PO **here** head my only PROG tell.PO me
 ŋgie' , “ Te Hombugu ndwo ndàin ligi nder' nchán le' Fie' tu' ?”
 COMP so Hombege F2 pass here today arrive Bafanji night

*I returned, and sat **here**, my head was only asking me, "So how will Hombege arrive in Bafanji in the night?"*

This paragraph presents the author's thoughts, wondering how Hombege would manage to return in the night. This is restated in line 27 which is a feature used to slow down the narrative prior to the peak (Hollenbach and Watters 1998).

The peak of the story is in lines 28 to 33. It starts out with a double point of departure (a pre-nuclear subordinate clause and an adverbial phrase) in 28 and a double point of departure in 29 which are directly before the point of greatest suspense at the peak. This also serves to slow down the narrative directly prior to the peak, creating further suspense.

28 A pii chwèè nye , ma ma mikei wi' m:bii ŋkúa'
 it first cause.PO it early morning this I.first go up.PO
 mbéi ndon ndige-e .
 pick up.PO path to his house

That's why, early this morning, I first got up and started down the path to his house.

29 ɲgiu nchán» hou , ɲgiu ntwo» , a pí
 when arrive.IPFV.PO there go.come.IPFV.PO he be.PO
 lala nfèi» ndige .
 there.there leave.IPFV.PO house

When I was arriving there, as it was happening, he was right there, leaving the house!

The highest point of the peak is sustained from 29b where Hombege is seen coming out of his house until line 30 where the narrator begins to question him in surprise, in direct speech. As the questions continue in direct speech, slowly the peak diminishes.

The denouement begins in line 33 when Hombege's answers are given in indirect speech. Hombege's story emerges, and this paragraph and section ends with another "reflexive pronoun" at the end of line 40.

40 A giù nfi mbwo meŋ chiu , mbigi ŋkwíu ze tu' .
 he go.PO give.PO to child that before return.PO **him** night

*He went and gave it to the student before **finally** coming back in the night.*

The text ends at line 41 with a formulaic coda to a true story *a kie'a mbí zuŋ la*. 'That is what happened yesterday.'

2.2 Boundary Features

The most common boundary feature is the point of departure. This has been observed in other Chufie' narrative texts. This confirms its status as a boundary feature in the language.

This particular text also has five examples of reflexive pronouns as boundary features. However, upon researching other texts for examples of this boundary feature, it seems not to be as frequent overall. The use of reflexive pronouns like these do not function only as boundary markers, but there are also many cases of it functioning as a highlighting marker (giving the theme more prominence). In this text, it is common for the reflexive pronouns to have a prominence function. This will be dealt with more in detail in section 4.3.

Other boundary features observed in this text are a change of deictic centre, changing from direct to indirect quotation, and a formulaic ending. As these features are only present once each in this text, it remains for future research to find out if these features are legitimately marking boundaries.

Table 2 below summarizes the boundary features found in the text and how many times each is observed.

Table 2. Boundary features of the text

Boundary Feature	frequency
Point of departure	8
reflexive pronoun	5
change of deictic centre	1
change in quotation (direct to indirect)	1
formulaic ending	1

3. OVERVIEW OF THE VERB PHRASE

Since the following section on foreground, backgrounding, and highlighting make reference to elements of the verbal system, it is important that certain basic information about the verbal system in Chufie' is understood at this point.

The verb phrase consists of an optional prenasal element whose presence and tone depends on the tense of the verb (N_T), followed by an optional verbal particle (PART), an optional tense auxiliary (AUX), an optional aspect auxiliary (ASP), an optional verbal negation prefix (NEG-) which is attached to the verb. After the initial element of the verb phrase, all other morphemes are prenasalized (N)_{agr}. Post verbally, there may be an optional high tone suffix for imperfective aspect (-H). The minimal verb phrase consists of only the verb root.

The verb phrase can be summarized as follows:

Verb Phrase = (N)_{T/SS}(PART) (N)_{agr}(AUX) (N)_{agr}(ASP) (NEG-)(N)_{agr}VERB(-H)

Two more complicating factors in the verb phrase is that Chufie' has a same subject marker (SS) which surfaces as a homorganic prenasalized element, attaching as a proclitic to the first element of the verb phrase. The second complicating factor is that the normal first person singular pronoun (1SG) when no tense or aspect are present is a homorganic nasal that is a proclitic in exactly the same position as the SS marker and the tense marker. The practical orthography deals with this situation by adding the colon (:) directly after the 1SG pronoun to disambiguate it from the SS marker. Two orthographic marks are also used to disambiguate P2 tense from P1³ and F0.

The numbers used in connection with the tenses show relative remoteness with respect to the time of the foreground events. In this system, P0 encodes a foreground event, and P1 encodes an event as having happened somewhat recently, while P2 is for events that had happened further in the past than P1 events. The same goes for the future tenses.

The following charts summarize how tense and aspect are encoded in Chufie' respectively.

Table 3. Tenses and their encoding in the verb phrase

Abbreviation	Relative Meaning	Tense nasal prefix (N _T)	Auxiliary/ Tone	Orthographic marking
P2	before yesterday	Ñ-	ø-L	<
P1	yesterday	Ñ-	ø-L	
P0	unspecified	ø	ø	
F0	unspecified	Ñ-	ø	>
F1	today	Ñ-	ŋgǔ	
F2	tomorrow	Ñ-	ndwǒ	
F3	after tomorrow	Ñ-	nyíé'	

Table 4. Aspect encoding

Aspect	Form	Orthographic marking
Perfective	ø	
Imperfective	-H tone verb suffix	»
Progressive	chwo	
Habitual	taa	

Perfective aspect is not marked in any way. Orthographically, the imperfective aspect is marked with » after the verb⁴.

³ There is a limitation in the practical orthography which leaves some ambiguity in the verb phrase and can make the identification of the P1 past tense less sure. However, this was overcome by consulting carefully with the narrator of the text to check for all tenses of all verbs.

⁴ For further clarifications on the tone orthography, please refer to A.

When there is tense or aspect information present in a clause, these forms mark the events to give them either less or more prominence than default foreground material. This will be discussed in the next two sections, respectively.

Table 5. Foreground, background, and tense (foreground is bolded)

Line	Tense of Subordinate Clause	Tense of Main Clause	Tense of Subordinate Clause	Line	Tense of Subordinate Clause	Tense of Main Clause	Tense of Subordinate Clause
1	P1	P1	P0 P0	22a		P0	
2		P1 P1		22b		P0	rel. clause
3		P1		23a		P0	
4		P0		23b		P0 P0	
5	P0	P1		24		P0	
6a		P0		25a		P0	
6b		P0		25b		P0	
7		P1	X	25c		P0	
8a	P1 P1	P1	rep. speech	26a		P0	
8b		P1		26b		P0	
9		P1		26c		P0	rep. speech
10		P0		27		P0	
11a		P0		28a	P0		
11b		P0		28b		P0	
12a		P0 P0		28c		P0	
12b		P0 P0		29a	P0		
13		P1		29b	P0	P0	
14		P1		29c		P0	
15		P1		30		P0	rep. speech
16a		P1		31		P0	rep. speech
16b		P1		32		P0	rep. speech
16c		P1		33		P0	rep. speech
17a	P1			34		P0	rep. speech
17b	P1			35a		P1 P1	
17c	P1 X X			35b		P1	
17d	P1	P0	rep. speech	36a		P0 P0	
18		P0	rep. speech	36b		P0 P0	
19a		P0	rep. speech	37		P2	rel. clause
19b		P0 P0		38a		P2	
20a		P0		38b		P2	
20b		P0 P0		39a	P1	P1	
20c		P0		39b		P0	
20d		P0 P0	rel. clause	39c		P0	
20e		P0		40a		P0 P0	
20f		P0		40b		P0	
21		P0		41		P1	

(lines 3 to 6b and 15 to 16c are audience interaction and not included in analysis)

As you can see from Table 4 above, the P1 past tense marker occurs frequently in backgrounded material. When a section of backgrounded material is finished, the P1 past tense marker is used to return a narrative to foreground events.

Sentence 35 occurs immediately following a long and complicated indirect quotation of one of the participants in the story. Returning to the event-line after reporting that speech, the narrator uses P1 (along with an English connective which may have a similar function in Chufie'). Sentence 36 then continues the story with foreground events presented without any tense markers.

35 SO a ŋgìu nzíu ŋooŋ chiu ndì-e pe' te .
 so he go.P1 see.P1 man that pressure him.P1 a lot
So he went and saw the man, and pressured him a lot.

Sentence 7 resumes the story after a short interaction with an audience member when the story was being told. Although this does not bring the story back to foreground, the author uses the P1 tense to return to what he was saying in the setting of the story.

7 Pugu nfèi ligi no giugìu hou .
 we leave.P1 here to go.X there
We left here to go there.

4.2 Backgrounding Events of Secondary Importance

4.2.1 Non-events

Background material can be divided into non-events and events of secondary importance. In the text under analysis, three different kinds of non-events can be observed: setting, collateral, and evaluative information. These are all considered to be background information by default, since they do not move the story forward, but rather give other information that are somewhat peripheral to the story-line (Levinsohn 2012:70).

An example of setting information is seen in the first two sentences of the story:

1 A mbí zuŋ ya kie' mbo mbí le' Mbawuoŋ , mbo ya
 it be.P1 yesterday REL as football be.P1 Bambalang again REL
 kie' piŋ pa pou chwo nfà' no chu Mbawuoŋ ,
 as people which they PROG work.P0 for language Bambalang
 mbaa piŋ pa pou fà' no chu Miŋkie .
 and people which they work.P0 for language Bamunka
*Yesterday there was football in Bambalang and the teams were the people working
 in Bambalang language, and the people who are working in Bamunka language.*

2 Pou ndèi mblè mbo zuŋ .
 they want.P1 play.P1 football yesterday
They wanted to play football yesterday.

What is commonly seen in non-events is some sort of tense or aspect marking. In these two sentences we see the P1 past tense marker (yesterday past) and the progressive aspect.

Another type of non-event is collateral information. That is, it “tells what did not happen, as a basis for what did happen” (Levinsohn 2012:70). In our story, this

happens five times, and often it is used in the story to introduce the need for the next event in the story.

9 A mɪntwó pi .

he didn't come.P1 NEG

*He **did not** come.*

10 Pɔgɔ po nzwé'e ligi pɛ' te .

we again waited for him.P0 here a lot

So we waited for him here for long.

11 Pɔgɔ nzíu-e pi , ŋgíu zɔgɔ .

we see him.P0 NEG go.P0 us

*We **did not** see him, and we left.*

In these examples, both negative statements in 9 and 11a introduce the need for the next event (waiting for a participant or leaving him behind). It is unclear why both P1 and P0 tenses are used for collateral information in this example. One would expect P1 to present collateral information since negative statements like these are intrinsically background. Negative statements are also found in sentences 21, 24, and 38b, where their tenses are P0, P0, and P2 respectively. One possibility is that the examples where P0 tense is used are considered negative foreground events, while those occurring in other tenses are backgrounded.

Finally, there are a couple of summary statements which can also be understood as evaluative material in sentences 13 and 14. Both feature the P1 past tense marker.

13 Mbo chíu nnìŋ soŋ' .

football that move.P1 well

The match passed well.

14 Mɪŋkie ŋwíŋ .

Bamunka win.P1

Bamunka won.

4.2.2 Events of Secondary Importance

In addition to these non-events, there are several devices used in Chufie' to mark events as backgrounded in a narrative, that is, to mark events as of secondary importance in relation to the foreground events. We will look first at certain verb forms and then discuss the case of the different kinds of subordinate clauses.

4.2.2.1 Special Verb Forms

A group of devices Chufie' uses to mark a clause as backgrounded events are what Levinsohn calls special verb forms. Specifically, they are the P1 and P2 past tense markers, the progressive aspect, the imperfective aspect, and the anterior marker.

The P1 past tense is a special verb form which backgrounds one clause, but subsequent clauses in the sentence can be presented as foreground. In line 35, the P1 past tense marker is used to background the events of going, seeing the man, and

pressuring him to give the money so that Hombege could give it to the student who it was destined for. The next sentence continues the story in foreground

35 SO a ηgìu nzíu ηooη χíu ndì-e pe' te .
 so he go.P1 see.P1 man that pressure him.P1 a lot
So he went and saw the man, and pressured him a lot.

Other examples P1 marking background events are combined with other devices and can be seen in lines 2, 8, 9, 17a, b, and c, 20d, 39a.

The P2 past tense marker (far past) is also used by the narrator in sentences 37 and 38 to relate events that had taken place long before the events of the story. These events that are told out of chronological order are also called flashbacks and are considered to be background material.

37 Ntyeηgie' <a mbí mbiη χíu meη siku , ya <pou
 because it be.P2 money certain child school REL they
 nfí mbwo-e ηgie' =a gíu nfí .
 give.P2 to-him COMP he should go.P0 give.P0
*Because it **was** a certain student's money that **had been** given to him, that he should go and give (to the student).*

38 <A nfí mbwo ηooη χíu , <ηooη χíu minfí pi .
 it give.P2 to man that person that didn't give.P2 NEG
*It **had been** given to the man, but the man **had** not given it (to the student).*

The progressive aspect is seen in this text twice in the part of the story that directly precedes the peak or climax of the story. Its function is to slow the narrative down and effectively heighten the tension just before the peak. This is discussed more in section 4.3.1.

26 η:kwíu , nchichwó ligí , two yi kí nchwo nswéi wí
 I.return.P0 sit.FOC.P0 here head my only PROG tell.P0 me
 ηgie' , " Te Hombugu ndwo ndàin ligí ndeη' ncháj le' Fie' tu?"
 COMP so Hombege F2 pass here today arrive Bafanji night
I returned, and sat here, my head was only asking me, "So how will Hombege arrive in Bafanji in the night?"

27 η:kí nchwo ηkwà'kwà' pila .
 I only PROG think.FOC.P0 that
I just kept thinking about it.

Progressive aspect is also found in the opening line of the story, giving the setting of who the football players were (people who were working...). It can also be observed in line 39 when Hombege's reasons were being given as to why he did not come back to the match in time for the ride back home.

The imperfective aspect is distinct from progressive aspect in that it simply looks at the event as incomplete, as seen in sentence 29. Here we see that it is found in both pre- and post-nuclear subordinate clauses.

29 ŋgiu nchán» hou , ŋgiu ntwo» , a pí lala
 when arrive.IPFV.PO there go.come.IPFV.PO he be.PO there.there
 nfèi» ndige .
 leave.IPFV.PO house

When arriving there, as it was happening, he was right there, leaving the house!

The anterior auxiliary *pii*⁵ 'first, earlier' is the last special verb form observed in this text that marks backgrounded material. In 8a, we see an example of how the use of this auxiliary sets off the clause as backgrounded. The effect here is to show that the participant had previously told the narrator that he would come on the trip.

8a a mbii ze swéi wi
 it be.first him tell.P1 me
 ... *it was him who had earlier told me...*

The use of this auxiliary is different from the P2 tense marker in that it situates the events as having happened a relatively short period of time earlier than the other events in the story. P2, on the other hand, relates events that had happened well before any of the other events of the story. Other examples of the use of *pii* can be found in 22a, 28a, b.

4.2.2.2 Subordinate Clauses

In addition to the special verb forms already discussed, two other constructions are found to co-occur with backgrounded events in *part of a sentence* (usually a clause). These are pre-nuclear subordinate clauses which function as points of departure, and relative clauses. While we have no examples of either of these unambiguously showing that they act to background a clause apart from special verb forms discussed above, their co-occurrence is striking.

Pre-nuclear subordinate clause. Narrators often use pre-nuclear (adverbial) subordinate clauses in Chufie' to link what has happened to what is going to happen. In the ten occurrences of pre-nuclear subordinate clauses in this text, all but three are backgrounded using the P1 past tense marker. The other cases are marked for backgrounding using the anterior marker, *pii* 'earlier', and the imperfective aspect marker, as we have already seen.

17 A mbi no , ndi-a pou nfèi ka ndi , mbigi mbo
 it be.P1 it when they leave.P1 half time before football
 mbòŋ no po nzée mblè la , Dan Hombug-a
 return.P1 to again restart.X play.X that Dan Hombege-the
 pug-a pou ŋgiu , a péi ndoŋ ŋgie' a giu mitaiŋ no
 he and I go.P1 he pick up.PO path COMP he go.PO to market to
 giu ŋkwé' chiu ŋooŋ hou .
 go.X look for.X certain man there

Just then, during half time, before they again started the second half, Dan Hombege who went with us left: he picked up the road (left for a purpose) in order to go to the market to see a certain man there.

⁵ In the example, there is a nasal prefixed to the anterior *pii* which causes the consonant to be voiced (b).

The above sentence features four consecutive pre-nuclear subordinate clauses, in which all the verbs that can be inflected⁶ are set in the P1 past tense.

The next examples give pre-nuclear subordinate clauses which feature the use of the anterior marker, *pii* 'first', in 28a, and the imperfective aspect in 29a and b.

28 A *pii* chwèe nye , ma ma miki wi' m:bii ŋkúá' mbéi
 it **first** cause.PO it early morning this I.first go up.PO pick up.PO
 ndoŋ ndige-e .
 path to his house

That's why, early this morning, I first got up and started down the path to his house.

29 ŋgiu nchar» hou , ŋgiu ntwo» , a pí lala
 when arrive.IPFV.PO there go.come.IPFV.PO he be.PO there.there
 nfèi» ndige .
 leave.IPFV.PO house

When I was arriving there, as it was happening, he was right there, leaving the house!

Other examples of these pre-nuclear subordinate clauses can be found in sentences 8a and 39a.

Relative clause. The other type of subordinate clause is the relative clause. These clauses are also only found in backgrounded events and, at least in this text, always coincide with other devices such as tense or aspect markers. In 8, the relative clause coincides with P1, and is introduced with *kie*'.

20 Pugu chichwó mo ndèi-e lèi ,
 we sit..FOC.PO again searched for him.FOC.PO search.PO
 momo ndaiŋ te ŋgiu nfiu ndoŋ-a **kie'** pugu ŋgé **no**
 again.FOC pass.PO until go.PO pass.PO path-the **as we had.P1 to**
làiŋ hou la , ŋgiu sɛ , ŋkwé'e .
pass.X there that go.PO ahead look for him.PO

We stayed and were again searching for him, and then went and even passed the turnoff for the road that we were to use and we moved ahead, and looked for him.

Sentence 22 also illustrates a relative clause followed by an adverbial clause. The verb in the relative clause has the habitual aspect, and this adds more morphosyntactic marking to show that the information is backgrounded with respect to the first two clauses of the sentence.

⁶ Verbs in subordinate clauses that begin with *no* are not inflectable for tense information, which is why the gloss includes X for these verbs.

22 Momo mbòŋ ndi chiɯ , ntwó ncháj yu' fi-a
 again.FOC return.PO then come.PO arrive.PO place where.the
 ya kie' pou ta nfigi yooŋ ligi la no kie' o fèi

REL as they HAB sell.PO things here that it as you leave.X
 le' Fie' mbii ncháj hou la , no mifiendoŋ le .

Bafanji first arrive.X there that at crossroads there

Then we returned, and came right to the place where they sell things when you first come out of Bafanji and arrive there at that junction.

Other examples of relative clauses in the text are in lines 8a, 17b, d, 34, and 37.

The following table summarizes the devices used in Chufie' to mark clauses as backgrounded.

Table 6. Backgrounding verb forms

Special verb forms:	P1 past tense
	P2 past tense
	progressive aspect
	imperfective aspect
	anterior marker
	relative clause

4.3 Highlighting

We have already seen that certain morphosyntactic forms are commonly used to give less prominence to events in relation to events that move the story forward. Now we turn our attention to those devices that give more prominence to events, participants or objects in relation to those found in the same context (Callow 1974:50). Levinsohn calls this thematic prominence or highlighting (Levinsohn 2012:79). We discuss devices used immediately before the peak (pre-peak), in the peak, and in other significant developments of the story.

4.3.1 Pre-peak

In narrative texts, Chufie' uses several rhetorical devices to slow down the progression of events immediately before a climax. This is achieved by backgrounding the events before the peak and using a number of highlighting devices in the pre-peak sentences. The sentences which are judged to be just prior to the peak in this story are 26 and 27. In these sentences, no less than five different devices are employed to highlight the immanent point of highest tension.

First in 26 we see that the narrator could have used the normal first person pronoun for the clause 'I was only asking myself', but he used a figure of speech, '**my head** was only asking me'. This is called synecdoche, defined as "the word used in the synecdoche is usually a part of the thing to which it refers" (Barnwell 2002:158). This is closely followed by *ki* 'only/just'. Then in the quotation, the narrator also uses an emotive particle *te* 'so' as a means to show compassion on Hombege.

26 ŋ:kwíu, nchichwó ligi , **two yi ki** nchwo nswéi wi
 I return.PO sit.FOC.PO here **head my only** PROG tell.PO me
 ŋgie' , “ **Te Hombugu** ndwo ndàinj ligi nder' nchánj le' Fie' tu?"
 COMP **so** Hombege F2 pass here today arrive Bafanji night

I returned and sat here, my head was only asking me, "So Hombege will arrive here in Bafanji in the night?"

27 ŋ:ki nchwo ŋkwà'kwà' **pila** .
 I **only** PROG **think.FOC.PO that.IRR**

I just kept thinking like that.

In 27, we see *ki* ‘only’ again. In addition, the verb ‘think’ is reduplicated to show focus on these thoughts. Finally, *pila* ‘that.IRR’ means ‘like that (which is not visible).’ The addition of this demonstrative highlights his ongoing thoughts. Clearly, the narrator feels responsible for leaving a companion in a different village.

4.3.2 In the Peak

In addition to these devices used immediately *before* the peak of a story, there are devices that give prominence to the significant developments and the climactic sentences themselves. In the text under analysis, the peak is seen in 28 to 33.

The peak of the story starts out in line 28 with a double point of departure ‘that is why’ and ‘early this morning’. Instances of multiple points of departure clearly indicate that a significant development is about to happen very soon in the story. This will be discussed more in the next section.

Not surprisingly, two points of departure also occur in 29 to highlight the event of unexpectedly finding Hombege coming out of his house, safe and sound, after wondering about his situation for a long time the night before.

28 A **pii chwèè nye** , **ma ma miki wi'**, m:bii ŋkúa'
it first cause.PO it early morning this I.first go up.PO
 mbéi ndoŋ ndige-e .
 pick up.PO path to his house

That's why, early this morning, I got up and started down the path to his house.

29 **ŋgiu nchánj» hou** , **ŋgiu ntwo»** , a
when arrive.IPFV.PO there as it was happening.IPFV.PO he
 pí lala nfèi» ndige .
 be.PO there.there leaving.IPFV.PO house

When I arrived there, as it happened, he was there, coming out of the house!

30 ŋ:gie' “ **Wi ! O ŋkwíu ?**”
 I said.PO wow you return

I said, "Wow! You returned?!"

31 A gie' , “ iŋj .”

he COMP.PO yes

He said, "Yes."

32 ŋ:gie' , “ Te-o nìŋ soŋ' ?”

I said.PO so-you travel well

I said, "So did you travel well?"

33 ŋ:gie' “ O mo ndàŋ fi ?”

I said.PO you again pass where?

I said, "Where were you?" (OR: I said, "Where did you then go?")

Repeating words seem to be another device used to highlight the peak. In line 29, the narrator repeats *la* ‘there’ which intensifies the expression of surprise of finding Hombege at his home. Also, the particular form of ‘very early in the morning’ is achieved by repeating *ma* ‘mother’. Literally it is ‘in mother of mother of morning.’

Another highlighting device used is tail-head linkage. This can be defined as, “a construction where part of the preceding clause (the tail) is repeated in the first clause (the head) of the next sentence” (Bartsch 2012:4). This is seen at the end of 28 and the beginning of 29 as another way to signal the upcoming peak of the story. Although the same verb is not used, the idea of going and arriving pick up the same theme and serve the purpose to heighten the audience’s attention to what follows.

Then in the peak, sentences 30 to 33 are very short, as opposed to many other sentences in the text which can be quite long, many times with multiple clauses.

4.3.3 In Significant Developments in the Story

It was mentioned that multiple points of departure indicate that a significant development is about to happen. In line 17, we see four pre-nuclear subordinate clauses when Hombege is introduced into the story for the first time (as a means to highlight the introduction of Hombege as the main character).

17 A mbi no , ndi-a pou nfèi kɛ ndi , mbigi mbo

it be.P1 it when they leave.P1 half time before football

mbòŋ no po nzée mblè la , Dan Hombɛgɛ-a

return.P1 to again restart.X play.X that Dan Hombege-the

pɛgɛ-a pou ŋgɛ , a péi ndoŋ ŋgie' a gɛ mitaiŋ no

he and I go.P1 he pick up.PO path COMP he go.PO to market to

gɛ ŋkwé' chiɛ ŋooŋ hou .

go.X look for.X certain man there

Just then, during half time, before they again started the second half, Dan Hombege who went with us left: he picked up the road (left for a purpose) in order to go to the market to see a certain man there.

Another device used to highlight actions are the reflexive pronouns we discussed earlier as boundary features. It is clear that these can also function as highlighting devices to give thematic prominence to the event. This can be seen in line 8 in the first

episode, where the narrator says that it was Clement himself who said he was coming, but in the end, did not show up. The pronoun used here is *ze* 'him'.

8 Clement , ya kie' pɔgɔ-a pou ndèi ɲgɛ̃ la , a mbii ze
 Clement REL as he and I want.P1 go.P1 that it be.first **him**
 swéi wi ɲgie' a twótó , ndíe' sindoŋ .
 tell.P1 me COMP he coming.FOC remain.P1 road

Clement who was going to go with us, it was him who had earlier told me that he would come, but he got stuck on the road (was not able to come).

This is also clearly seen in the quoted warning in line 18, as Hombege was leaving the football match. Twice the narrator uses the pronouns *zou* 'them', to emphasize the fact of leaving (and not returning or staying to wait), and the fact that the vehicle owners don't drive at night.

18 ɲ:ki nswéi-e ɲgie' , “ O gɛ̃ pɪla la , ō ntù'
 I only tell him.PO COMP you go that that if you delay
 mbi-o ɲgɛ̃ ntwó , piŋ pi' ka gɛ̃ zou ,
 will you be able? go come people these COMPL go **them**
 ntyeŋgie' o zí ɲgie' pou nta nnìŋ zou tu' pi' .”
 because you know COMP they HAB move **them** night NEG

I only told him, "As you are going like that, if you stay (a long time) and then return, these people will have already left because you know that they don't travel in the night."

This is followed in the next sentence by another instance of the reflexive pronoun, *ze* 'him', when Hombege acknowledges the warning and says that he is coming back, but instead goes and remains there, away from the match.

19 A gie' , iŋ , a twótó , ɲgɛ̃ ɲgòŋ ze
 he COMP.PO yes he coming.FOC go.PO remain.PO him
 mitaiŋ .
 in market

He said yes, he was coming, but went and remained (a long time) in the market.

The following table summarizes the highlighting devices found in this text.

Table 7. Highlighting devices

Pre-peak	figure of speech: synecdoche
	<i>ki</i> 'only, just'
	<i>te</i> 'so'
	verbal reduplication
	<i>pila</i> 'that.IRR'
Peak	multiple points of departure
	repetition
	tail-head linkage
	comparatively short sentences
Other significant developments	multiple points of departure
	reflexive pronoun

5. CONCLUSION

This study has looked at the macrostructure of one narrative text in Chufie' and seen several boundary features which confirm semantic divisions in the text. The most common boundary features are points of departure (pre-nuclear subordinate clauses), and the use of a reflexive pronoun to show finality.

It has also confirmed that Chufie' is similar to many of the world's languages in that the most common verb form for presenting foreground events in a narrative involves the least morphosyntactic marking. In the case of Chufie', the verb lacks any tense or aspect marking in the verb phrase.

Conversely, almost all non-events and backgrounded events are marked morphosyntactically with a tense or aspect marker, and sometimes with other features like verbal auxiliaries. Relative clauses and, in particular, pre-nuclear subordinate clauses are also very productive devices to background a clause or give a temporal setting to an event.

Finally, a wide variety of devices are used to highlight significant developments or the peak of a story. Of particular note are multiple points of departure, the use of the reflexive pronoun to show surprise, and repetition. A narrative may be slowed down before the peak by backgrounding the events immediately preceding it.

6. FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

There are some areas in which further investigation could reveal more insights into the discourse features studied so far. The most important is that this study is based on one text. More careful study of several good quality texts would be desirable to see if the same patterns are observed.

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In addition to this, other features of discourse would be interesting to investigate: points of departure, focus constructions, the use of connectives, reported speech, participant reference, and the functions of relative clauses.

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APPENDICES

A. Tone orthography conventions

Summary: The marking of lexical tone is proposed only in verbs and in the contrast between the first person singular pronoun and the pronoun for same subject. All other lexical tone is unmarked. Five grammatical categories are marked, not their actual tone melodies.

Lexical tone

Nouns⁷: when comparing tonal minimal pairs between the four main tonal melodies, no one contrast is particularly infrequent, so either all melodies should be marked, or none marked. Compared to these, there are very few minimal tone contrasts involving the HLH or LHL melodies (see charts below). After examining the potential for ambiguity if none of these melodies are marked, it was found to be unlikely to have much ambiguity, thus, lexical tone in nouns is proposed to be completely unmarked. This avoids graphic overload, letting proposed tone marks (see grammatical tone below) be more significant when they appear.

Number of contrasts per melody:

Number of	for this melody	
43	H	many
44	L	many
33	HL	many
36	LH	many
1	HLH	very few
3	LHL	very few

Proposal for lexical tone in nouns: The first person singular (1SG) subject pronoun in narrative tense and the consecutive/same subject marker (SS) are a tonal minimal pair with high functional load. It is proposed to mark the 1SG subject pronoun as (m: n: ŋ:) with colon to distinguish it from the SS.⁸ This is the only lexical tone mark proposed in word classes other than verbs.

Verbs: Lexical tone in verbs has a very high functional load, because verbs have two tone classes, H and L and there are many minimal pairs (50+ pairs when looking at 580 basic verbs).

Proposal for lexical tone in verbs: Since no nouns are being marked for tone, all verbs will be marked for lexical tone, according to its tone class.

⁷ There are more than nouns in this group. Here and in the rest of this tone proposal, 'noun' includes all classes of words except verbs.

⁸ Should this difference be judged to require more explicit marking in the future, the same subject marker could be marked with a circumflex (^) over the nasal consonant (m̂, n̂, ŋ̂).

Grammatical tone

There are five grammatical categories which consist solely of a tonal morpheme (no segmental information exists with any of these morphemes in any context). These grammatical morphemes need to be accounted for in the orthography. The marks used are shown below with sentences which show the mark in the context of a sentence. In both the example sentence and the English translation, the mark in question is shaded in grey.

1. < Far past (P2), placed directly *before* the first element of the noun phrase which functions as the subject of a clause.

< Yeso nfèi ndige luon Mbou'mbi ngiù ndige Saimu.

P2. Jesus left the synagogue and went to the house of Simon. (Luke 4:38)

Kie' <a nchwo nchán nchoo nka' ngwo chiù la, nzù kie' pou táin kwu noon ngiù twéitwéi.

As P2, he was reaching at the gate of the village, he saw that they carried a dead man going to bury. (Luke 7:12)

2. > General future (F0), same as above, placed directly *before* the first element of the noun phrase which functions as the subject of a clause.

Nchinchye tã-a a ka zún miteen son' la, > pou nkíù', mè' ngua' muon.
Any tree that does not bear good fruits, F0, they will cut down and throw in fire. (Luke 3:9)

Kee mbúa, ki nge píj nzua', > meñ-o ndùu.

Don't be afraid, only have faith, your F0, child will be well. (Luke 8:50)

3. ˘ Conditional clause marker, placed *on top* of the first letter of the first word in the conditional clause.

̄ mbí Men Mbou'mbi, o sè ngua' yi' a chú' mble.

COND. If you are the Son of God, change this stone to become bread.

4. = Hortative mood marker, placed directly *before* the first element of the noun phrase which functions as the subject of a clause.

Ma ngan fa' Mbaanden'. = A pí kie' o chú la.

I am God's worker. HORT. Let it be as you said. (Luke 1:38)

̄joon nkwa ná ngwë-e kigé meñ, = nziñ-e lùà nkúu-e mbí pain no mbwo-e.

COND. If someone dies and leaves a wife without a child, HORT, the brother should take his widow and deliver children with her for him. (Luke 20:28)

5. » Imperfective aspect marker, placed directly *after* the verb which is in the imperfective form.

<A ŋka chwo nfèi ndige Mbou'mbi pi, a ŋki nchwó» hou nzi ŋki, ndúoŋ» Mbou'mbi noon pou tu'.
She was not leaving (PROG) the house of God, she was only staying. IPV there (in a state of) fasting and she was praying. IPV to God day and night. (Luke 2:37)

Yi' kintye no-a ya n:zou'» ntye-o?
What kind of thing am I hearing. IPV about you? (Luke 16:2)

The reason that the first four are not marked directly on the verb is that the tonal effects of these tense, aspect, and mood (TAM) markers often extend leftward to affect the subject of the clause (the imperfective marker only affects the tone on the verb itself, as it is a H tone suffix to the verb). Since the subject of the clause is where a hearer picks up the first auditory clues of the above tonal TAM markers when such an utterance is spoken, this is where we have chosen to place the grammatical marking. In this way, the reader gets the grammatical clue early enough in the sentence to read it correctly the first time. This strategy has been proposed in at least two other language communities in the North West Region of Cameroon (Bambalang and Pinyin), and has great potential in Bafanji to reduce the effects of rereading sentences due to grammatical ambiguity.

B. Interlinearized text

Lie'mbi pɔgɔ ná Hombɔgɔ Lɛ' Mbawuɔ

The Day we Left Hombege in Bambalang

1 A mbí zuɔ ya kie' mbo mbí lɛ' Mbawuɔ , mbo ya kie' piɔ
it be.P1 yesterday REL as football be.P1 Bambalang again REL as people
pa pou chwo nfà' no chu Mbawuɔ , mbaa piɔ pa pou
which they PROG work.P0 for language Bambalang and people which they
fà' no chu Miɔkie .
work.P0 for language Bamunka

Yesterday there was football in Bambalang and the teams were the people working in Bambalang language, and the people who are working in Bamunka language.

2 Pou ndèi mblè mbo zuɔ .
they want.P1 play.P1 football yesterday

They were wanting to play football yesterday.

3 “ A ŋki mbí pamike nee ?”
it only be.P1 white people all

(Audience Question): "Were they all white people?"

4 Ŋga , a ka fà' pamike tiu' gou pi .
no it NEG work.P0 white people alone them NEG

(Answer): "No, the whites are not working alone. (No, it was not the work of white people alone.) (No, it wasn't limited to white people alone.)"

5 Piɔ sisi pa pou chwo fà' la , pou mbí no .
people black which they PROG work.P0 that they be.P1 with it

(Answer): Black people who are working (with them), were there.

6 Pamike pí no mbi nchwo mblè .
white people be.P0 with.it also PROG play.P0

(Answer): White people were there also playing.

7 Pɔgɔ nfèi ligi no giugiu hou .
we leave.P1 here to go.X there

We left here to go there.

8 Clement , ya kie' pɔŋa-a pou ndèi ŋgìu la , a mbii ze swéi wi
Clement REL as he and I want.P1 go.P1 that it be.first him tell.P1 me
ŋgie' a twótwó , ndíé' sindoŋ .
COMP he coming.FOC remain.P1 road

Clement who was going to go with us, it was him who had earlier told me that he would come, but he got stuck on the road. (was not able to come)

9 A mintwó pi .
he didn't come.P1 NEG

He did not come.

10 Pɔŋa po nzwé'e ligi pe' te .
we again waited for him.P0 here a lot

So we waited for him here for a long time.

11 Pɔŋa nzíu-e pi , ŋgìu zuŋa .
we see him.P0 NEG go.P0 us

We did not see him, and we left.

12 Pɔŋa gíu ntwó ncháj le' Mbawuoŋ , ntwó nzíu mbo
we go.P0 come.P0 arrive.P0 Bambalang come.P0 see.P0 football
kwa' soŋ' .
very fine

We went and arrived in Bambalang and watched the match very well.

13 Mbo chíu nnìŋ soŋ' .
football that move.P1 well

The match passed well.

14 Míŋkie ŋwíŋ .
Bamunka win.P1

Bamunka won.

15 “ Míŋkie ŋwíŋ Mbawuoŋ ?”
Bamunka win.P1 Bambalang

(Audience Question): Bamunka beat Bambalang?

16 Pou ŋwíŋ Mbawuoŋ , pou ŋgé yipaa , Mbawuoŋ ŋki ŋgé yimu' .
they win.P1 Bambalang they had.P1 two Bambalang only had.P1 one

(Answer): They beat Bambalang, they got two (goals), Bambalang had only one.

17 A mbi no , ndi-a pou nfèi kɛ ndi , mbiḡi mbo mbòḡ no
 it was.P1 it when they leave.P1 half time before football return.P1 to
 po nzée mblè la , Dan Hombugu-a pɛḡu-a pou ḡḡu , a péi
 again restart.X play.X that Dan Hombege-the he and I go.P1 he pick up.P0
 ndoḡ ḡḡie' a ḡu mitaiḡ no ḡu ḡkḡé' chiḡ ḡooḡ hou .
 path COMP he go.P0 to market to go.X look for.X certain man there

Just then, during half time, before they again started the second half, Dan Hombege who went with us left: he picked up the road (left for a purpose) in order to go to the market to see a certain man there.

18 ḡ:ki nswéi-e ḡḡie' , “ O ḡu pila la , o ntù' mbi-o
 I only tell him.P0 COMP you go that that if you delay will you be able?
 ḡḡu ntḡó , piḡ pi' ka ḡu zou , ntyeḡḡie' o zí ḡḡie' pou nta
 go come people these PRF go them because you know COMP they HAB
 nnìḡ zou tu' pi' .”
 move them night NEG

I only told him, "As you are going like that, if you stay (a long time) and then return, these people will have already left because you know that they don't travel in the night."

19 A ḡie' , iḡḡ , a twótḡó , ḡḡu ḡḡòḡ ze mitaiḡ .
 he COMP.P0 yes he coming.FOC go.P0 remain.P0 him in market

He said yes, he was coming, but went and remained (a long time) in the market.

20 Pɛḡu chichwó mo ndèi-e lèi , momo ndàḡḡ
 we sit..FOC.P0 again searched for him.FOC.P0 search.P0 again.FOC pass.P0
 te ḡḡu nfɛḡ ndoḡ-a kie' pɛḡu ḡḡé no làḡḡ hou la , ḡḡu sɛ ,
 until go.P0 pass.P0 path-the as we had.P1 to pass.X there that go.P0 ahead
 ḡkḡé'e .
 look for him.P0

We stayed and were again searching for him, and then went and even passed the turnoff for the road that we were to use and we moved ahead, and looked for him.

21 Pɛḡu minzíu-e pi' .
 we didn't see him.P0 NEG

We did not see him.

22 Momo mbòŋ ndi chiũ , ntwó ncháj yũ' fi-a ya kie' pou
 again.FOC return.P0 then come.P0 arrive.P0 place where.the REL as they
 ta nfigi yooŋ ligi la no kie' o fèi le' Fie' mbii ncháj hou la
 HAB sell.P0 things here that it as you leave.P0 Bafanji first arrive.P0 there that
 , no mifiendoŋ le .
 at crossroads there

Then we returned, and came right to the place where they sell things when you first come out of Bafanji and arrive at that junction there.

23 Momo ntitiŋ hou mbii ŋkwé' Hombũgũ kwé' .
 again.FOC stand.P0 there again look for.FOC.P0 Hombege look for.FOC.P0

We stood there again and were looking for Hombege.

24 Pũgũ minziũ-e pi .
 we didn't see him.P0 NEG

We did not see him.

25 Pũgũ péi ndoŋ ŋkwíũ zugũ ligi tu' , nná-e hou .
 we pick up.P0 path return.P0 us here night leave him.P0 there

So we started down the road and returned here at night, and left him there!

26 ŋ:kwíũ nchichwó ligi , two yi ki nchwó nswéi wi ŋgie' , “ Te
 I return.P0 sit.FOC.P0 here head my only PROG tell.P0 me COMP so
 Hombũgũ ndwo ndàin ligi ndeŋ' ncháj le' Fie' tu' ?”
 Hombege F2 pass here today arrive Bafanji night

I returned and sat here, my head was only telling me, "So how will Hombege arrive in Bafanji in the night?"

27 ŋ:ki nchwó ŋkwà'kwà' pila .
 I only PROG think.FOC.P0 that

I just kept thinking about it.

28 A pii chwèe nye , ma ma mikeyi wi' m:bii ŋkúá' mbéi ndoŋ
 it first cause.P0 it early morning this I.first go up.P0 pick up.P0 path
 ndigε-e .
 to his house

That's why, early this morning, I got up and started down the path to his house.

29 ɲgiɯ nchán» hou , ɲgiɯ ntwo» , a pí lala
 when arrive.IPFV.P0 there as it was happening.IPFV.P0 he be.P0 there.there
 nfèi» ndige .
 leaving.IPFV.P0 house

When I arrived there, as it happened, he was there, coming out of the house!

30.1 ɲ:gie' " Wi !
 I said.P0 wow

I said, "Wow!"

30.2 O ɲkwíɯ ?"
 you return

You returned?!"

31 A gie' iɲ .
 he COMP.P0 yes

He said, "Yes."

32 ɲ:gie' , " Te-o nìɲ soɲ' ?"
 I said.P0 so-you travel well

I said, "So did you travel well?"

33 ɲ:gie' " O mo ndàɲ fi ?"
 I said.P0 you again pass where?

I said, "Where were you?" (OR: I said, "Where did you then go?")

34 A gie' a nfèi no pila , ɲgiɯ no kwéi chiɯ mbiɲ , a
 he COMP.P0 he leave.P1 to it that go.P1 to take.X certain money he
 ndiɛɲliɛɲ no chú ɲgie' , piɛɲ' nná kizíɯ-e , =piɛɲ'
 forgot.FOC.P1 to say.X COMP if we permit.P0 without seeing him.P0 we should
 gɲɯ yien' , ntyɛɲgie' a ɲgɲɯ no píi mbiɲ-e mbwo ɲooɲ ya a
 go.P0 us because he go.P1 to demand.X money-his from man REL he
 ɲka zí ke >a nzíɯ ɲooɲ chiɯ pi .
 NEG know.P1 or it see.F0 man that NEG

He said that as he left, he went to collect a certain sum of money, but he forgot to say that if we didn't see him, we should just go, because he went to demand his money from somebody who he didn't know if he would even see.

35 SO a ɲgɲɯ nzíɯ ɲooɲ chiɯ ndii-e pe' te .
 so he go.P1 see.P1 man that pressured him.P1 a lot

So he went and saw the man, and put pressure on him.

36 A g̃iɛ ɲki ɲkwéi mbiɲ chiɛ ɲkwíɛ nfi mbwo-e .

3SG go.P0 only take.P0 money that return.P0 give.P0 to him

He went and just collected the money and gave it to him.

37 Ntyeɲgie' <a mbí mbiɲ chiɛ meɲ siku , ya <pou nfi mbwo-e

because 3SG be.P2 money certain child school REL they give.P2 to-him
ɲgie' =a g̃iɛ nfi .

COMP he should go.P0 give.P0

Because it was a certain student's money that had been given to him, that he should go and give (to the student).

38 <A nfi mbwo ɲooɲ chiɛ , <ɲooɲ chiɛ minfi pi .

3SG give.P2 to man that person that didn't give.P2 NEG

It had been given to the man, but the man had not given it (to the student).

39 A nchwèe nye , a nchwo ndii ɲooɲ chiɛ , te a ki

3SG do.P1 it he PROG put pressure.P1 man that until he only
nfi mbiɲ chiɛ , a g̃iɛ nfi mbwo-e .

give.P0 money that he go.P0 give.P0 to-him

That is why he was putting pressure on that man until he finally gave back the money, (so that) he could give it to him (the student).

40 A g̃iɛ nfi mbwo meɲ chiɛ , mbiɲi ɲkwíɛ ze tu' .

he go.P0 give.P0 to child that before return.P0 him night

He went and gave it to the student before finally coming back in the night.

41 A kie'a mbí zuɲ la .

it as it be.P1 yesterday that

That is how it was yesterday.

C. Text chart

#	Pre-nuclear		Nucleus			Post-nuclear	
	Outer	Inner	Subject	Verb	Object/Complement	Inner	Outer
1		A mbí zuɔ it be.P1 yesterday ya kie' REL as	mbo football	mbí be.P1		le' Mbawuoɔ Bambalang	mbo ya kie' piɔ pa again REL as people which pou chwo nfà' no they PROG work.P0 for chu Mbawuoɔ mbaa language Bambalang and piɔ pa pou fà' no people which they work.P0 for chu Miɔkie language Bamunka
2			Pou they	ndèi mblè want.P1 play.P1	mbo [3-6b] football	zuɔ yesterday	
3			[A it	ɲki mbí only be.P1	pamiɔ nee white people all		
4	ɪga no		a it	ka fà' NEG work.P0	pamiɔ tiɔ' gou white people alone them		pi NEG
5		Piɔ sisi pa people black which pou chwo fà' they PROG work.P0 la that	pou they	mbí be.P1	no with it		
6a			Pamiɔ white people	pí be.P0	no with it	mbi also	
6b			---	nchwo mblè] PROG play.P0			
7			Puɔu we	nfèi leave.P1		ligi here	no giɔgiɔ hou to go.X there

Boundaries, Backgrounding and Highlighting in a Chufie' Narrative Text

8a	Clement ya kie' Clement REL as pɛɣu-a pou ndèi he and I want.P1 ɲgiu la go.P1 that	a it	mbii ze swéi be.first him tell.P1	wi me	ɲgie' a twótó COMP he coming.FOC
8b		---	ndíe' remain.P1	sindonj road	
9		A he	míntwó didn't come.P1		pi NEG
10		Pɛɣu we	po again nzwé'e waited for him.P0		ligi pɛ' te here a lot
11a		Pɛɣu we	nziú-e see him.P0		pi NEG
11b		>>	ɲgiu go.P0	zɛɣu us	
12a		Pɛɣu we	giu ntwó go.P0 come.P0 ncháɲ arrive.P0	le' Mbawuoɲ Bambalang	
12b		---	ntwó nziú come.P0 see.P0	mbo football	kwa' soɲ' very fine
13		Mbo chiú football that	nniɲ move.P1		soɲ' well

Boundaries, Backgrounding and Highlighting in a Chufie' Narrative Text

14		Miŋkie Bamunka	ŋwíŋ win.P1		[15-16c]
15		[Miŋkie Bamunka	ŋwíŋ win.P1	Mbawuŋ Bambalang	
16a		Pou they	ŋwíŋ win.P1	Mbawuŋ Bambalang	
16b		pou they	ŋgé had.P1	yipaa two	
16c		Mbawuŋ Bambalang	ŋki ŋgé only had.P1	yimu'] one	
17a	A mbi no it was.P1 it	---	---		
17b	ndi-a pou nfèi when they leave.P1 ku ndi half time	---	---		
17c	mbigi mbo before football mbòŋ no po return.P1 to again nzée mblè la restart.X play.X that	---	---		
17d	Dan Hombuŋ-a Dan Hombege-the puŋ-a pou ŋgiu he and I go.P1	a he	péi pick up.P0	ndoŋ path	ŋgie' a giu mitaiŋ no COMP he go.P0 to market to giu ŋkwé' chiŋ ŋsoŋ go.X look for.X certain man hou there

Boundaries, Backgrounding and Highlighting in a Chufie' Narrative Text

18		---	ŋ:ki nswéi-e I only tell him.P0			<p>ŋgie' O gù pila la COMP you go that that</p> <p>ō ntè' mbi-o if you delay will you be able?</p> <p>ŋgù ntwó piŋ pi' go come people these</p> <p>ka gù zou ntyengie' COMPL go them because</p> <p>o zí ŋgie' pou nta you know COMP they HAB</p> <p>nnìŋ zou tu' pi move them night NEG</p>
19a		A he	---			<p>gie' iŋ a twótówó COMP.P0 yes he coming.FOC</p>
19b		>>	ŋgù ŋgòŋ go.P0 remain.P0	ze him	mitaiŋ in market	
20a		Pugù we	chichwó sit..FOC.P0			
20b		---	mo again ndèi-e searched for him.FOC.P0 lèi search.P0			
20c		---	momo ndàiŋ again.FOC pass.P0			

Boundaries, Backgrounding and Highlighting in a Chufie' Narrative Text

20d	te until	---	ηγιη nfiη go.P0 pass.P0	ndon-a kie' pugη path-the as we ηγε no laηη hou had.P1 to pass.X there la that		
20e		---	ηγιη go.P0	sη ahead		
20f		---	ηkwé'e look for him.P0			
21		Pugη we	minziη-e didn't see him.P0			pi NEG
22a		---	Momo mbòη again.FOC return.P0		ndi chiη then	
22b		---	ntwó ncháη come.P0 arrive.P0	yη' fi-a ya place where.the REL kie' pou ta nfigi as they HAB sell.P0 yoηη ligi la no kie' things here that it as o fèi le' Fie' you leave.P0 Bafanji mbii ncháη hou la first arrive.P0 there that no mifiendoy le at crossroads there		
23a		---	Momo ntitiη again.FOC stand.P0		hou mbii there again	

Boundaries, Backgrounding and Highlighting in a Chufie' Narrative Text

23b			---	ηkwé' look for.FOC.P0 Hombuɣu Hombege kwé' look for.FOC.P0	<<		
24			Puɣu we	minziɯ-e didn't see him.P0			pi NEG
25a			Puɣu we	péi pick up.P0	ndonɔ path		
25b			>>	ηkwíɯ return.P0	zuɣu us	ligi tu' here night	
25c			---	nná-e leave him.P0		hou there	
26a			---	I:kwiɯ I return.P0			
26b			---	nchichwó sit.FOC.P0		ligi here	
26c			two yi head my	ki nchwo nswéi only PROG tell.P0	wi me		ηgie' Te Hombuɣu ndwo COMP so Hombege F2 ndàinj ligi ndeɲ' ncháj pass here today arrive le' Fie' tu' Bafanji night
27			---	I:ki nchwo I only PROG ηkwà'kwà' think.FOC.P0		pila that	

Boundaries, Backgrounding and Highlighting in a Chufie' Narrative Text

28a	A pii chwèe nye it first cause.P0 it	---	---		
28b	ma ma mikei wi' early morning this	---	m:bii nkúá' I.first go up.P0		
28c		---	mbéi pick up.P0	ndoy ndige-e path to his house	
29a	ŋgiɪ ncháŋ» when arrive.IPV.P0 hou there	---	---		
29b	ŋgiɪ ntwo» as it was happening.IPV.P0	a he	pí be.P0	lala there.there	
29c		---	nfèi» leaving.IPV.P0	ndige house	
30		>>	---		ŋ:gie' Wi O nkwiɪ I said.P0 wow you return
31		A he	---		gie' iiŋ COMP.P0 yes
32		---	---		ŋ:gie' Te-o niŋ soŋ' I said.P0 so-you travel well
33		>>	---		ŋ:gie' O mo ndaiŋ I said.P0 you again pass fi where?

Boundaries, Backgrounding and Highlighting in a Chufie' Narrative Text

34		A he	---			<p>gie' a nfèi no COMP.P0 he leave.P1 to it</p> <p>pila ηgìu no kwéi chiü that go.P1 to take.X certain</p> <p>mbiy a ndienlien no money he forgot.FOC.P1 to</p> <p>chú ηgie' pieŋ' nná say.X COMP if we permit.P0</p> <p>kizíu-e without seeing him.P0</p> <p>=pieŋ' gèu yien' we should go.P0 us</p> <p>ntyenjie' a ηgìu no because he go.P1 to</p> <p>píi mbiy-e mbwo demand.X money-his from</p> <p>ηooŋ ya a ηka zí man REL he NEG know.P1</p> <p>ke > a nzíu ηooŋ chiü or it see.F man that</p> <p>pi NEG</p>
35a	SO so	a he	ηgìu nzíu go.P1 see.P1	ηooŋ chiü man that		
35b		---	ndii-e pressured him.P1		pé' te a lot	
36a		A 3SG	gèu ηki ηkwéi go.P0 only take.P0	mbiy chiü money that		
36b		---	ηkwíu nfí return.P0 give.P0	mbwo-e to him		

Boundaries, Backgrounding and Highlighting in a Chufie' Narrative Text

37	Ntyengi e' because		< a 3SG.IMP	mbí be.P2	mbiŋ chiɯ meŋ money certain child siku ya <pou school REL they nfi mbwo-e ŋgie' give.P2 to-him COMP = a giɯ nfi he should go.P0 give.P0		
38a			< A 3SG.IMP	nfi give.P2	mbwo ŋooŋ chiɯ to man that		
38b			< ŋooŋ chiɯ person that	minfi didn't give.P2			pi NEG
39a	A nchwèe nye it do.P1 it	a he	nchwo PROG ndii put pressure.P1	ŋooŋ chiɯ man that			
39b	te until	a he	ki nfi only give.P0	mbiŋ chiɯ money that			
39c		a he	giɯ nfi go.P0 give.P0	mbwo-e to-him			
40a		A he	giɯ nfi go.P0 give.P0	mbwo meŋ chiɯ to child that			
40b	mbigi before	---	ŋkwíɯ return.P0	ze him	tu' night		
41		A it	kie'a mbí as it be.P1		zuŋ yesterday	la that	