

**PROBLEM BOOK IN PHONOLOGY:**

**A Workbook for Introductory Courses  
in Linguistics and in Modern Phonology**

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## Kikuyu Verb Conjugation

The following forms illustrate two verb tenses in Kikuyu. Tones are indicated as follows:

á = high

a = low (unmarked)

A. Current imperfect.	‘look at’	‘send’
1. ‘we are V-ing’	torɔraya	totomáya
2. ‘we are V-ing him/her’	tomorɔraya	tomotomáya
3. ‘we are V-ing them’	tomarɔraya	tomatómáya
4. ‘they are V-ing’	márɔraya	mátómáya
5. ‘they are V-ing him/her’	mámórɔraya	mámótomáya
6. ‘they are V-ing them’	mámárɔraya	mámátómáya
B. Current past.		
7. ‘we V-ed’	torɔriré	totomíré
8. ‘we V-ed him/her’	tomorɔriré	tomotomíré
9. ‘we V-ed them’	tomarɔriré	tomatómíré
10. ‘they V-ed’	márɔriré	mátómíré
11. ‘they V-ed him/her’	mámórɔriré	mámótomíré
12. ‘they V-ed them’	mámárɔriré	mámátómíré

1. Identify the following morphemes, ignoring the tone.

‘look at’

‘send’

‘1st plural subject’

‘3rd plural subject’

‘3rd singular object’

‘3rd plural object’

‘current imperfect’

‘current past’

2. Now consider the tone. The simplest way of describing these verbs is to assume that each morpheme has a fixed basic tone (high or low). A simple phonological rule will describe all the surface tones. State the rule. (Hint: this rule has no segmental conditioning.) Enter the basic tones to the right of each morpheme identified in 1.