PREPOSITIONS

Lesson 36

There are only a few basic prepositions in Kiribati and their use is restricted. The basic set is as follows:

i  locative, at
irou  by
mai  from
man  from
n(i)  at, in, with...
nako  to

1. i

This form has the general meaning 'at', and is never used before the article. It is used:

a. before proper place names:

   i Tarawa  at Tarawa
   i Amerika  in America

   Bon te kaabenta i Amerika ngaia.
   He is a carpenter in America.

b. before cardinal points and other nouns which don't take the article:

   i meang  in the north
   i taari  in the sea

   A tebotebo i taari naakekei.
   Those people are swimming in the sea.

c. before parts of the body or of a thing:

   i baim  in your hand
   ibukin  behind

   E mena ibukin te aiine.
   It is behind the woman.
d. before aba (land) with the possessive or genitive:

    i aban te... in/at the land of

    E tiku i abana.
    He stayed in his land.

2. irou-

This is only used before animate things, with the meaning 'by'. It
must be followed by one of the possessive suffixes:

    E tiku iroun te unimm'aane.
    He stayed by (with) the old man.

It is also used in combination with jai (there is/are) to mean 'to have':

    jai te boki iroua.
    We have a book.

3. mai

This form of the preposition meaning 'from' has the same general dis-
tribution as j. It does not occur before the article, but is used before
proper place names, cardinal points and nouns not taking the article,
body parts or other parts of things, and land (aba) when followed by
the possessive or genitive.

    I roko mai Bairiki.
    I came from Bairiki.

    Bon te b'ai mai tinaniku.
    It's something from outside (imported).

It is not used before animate nouns, where mairou- replaces it:

    Ti karekea te b'ai n tangira mairoun natiira.
    We received the gift from our child.

    Bon te reta mairouna!
    It's a letter from him!
4. **man**

This form of the preposition meaning from fills the gaps left by mai. It occurs before the article, aba when not possessed or taking the genitive, but again not before animates, which take mairou-:

\[
\text{E roko man te titooa.} \\
\text{He came from the store.}
\]

\[
\text{man aaba aika a bati} \\
\text{from many lands}
\]

5. **n(i)**

Like i this form generally indicates location without movement. However its meaning is much broader, and may include means, cause, agent, nature, result, and related meanings. It occurs before the article, derivations of cardinal points, astral bodies, and before verbs. It is not used before animates in these senses, for which irou- is used.

\[
\text{E kabooa te raiti n te titooa.} \\
\text{He bought the rice at the store.}
\]

\[
\text{E korea te kariki n te biti.} \\
\text{He cut the bread with a knife.}
\]

\[
\text{E nako Nauru n te kaibuke.} \\
\text{He went to Nauru by ship.}
\]

\[
\text{E nakon te titooa ni kabooa te raiti.} \\
\text{He went to the store to buy rice.}
\]

\[
\text{E tei n te m'aneaba n taetae.} \\
\text{He stood in the m'aneaba to speak.}
\]
6. **nako/nakon**

These two forms of the preposition meaning 'to' have the same general distribution as i and n(i). That is, in the situations where i is used, before proper place names, not before the article, etc, nako is used. Before the article and in other positions where i cannot be used, nakon is called for:

I toka n te b'ati nako Bairiki.
I rode the bus to Bairiki.

I toka n te b'ati nakon te titooa.
I rode the bus to the store.

When used before animate nouns, the possessive suffixes must be used (as described in lesson 24):

nakon te aomata to the person  
nako'ina aomata to the people  
nako'iu to me

(Note that nako the verb means go to, and is used without the preposition:

E nako Tarawa. He went to Tarawa.)
Translate the following exercise into Kiribati:

A. (i)

1. He lives on Tarawa.

2. The sun rises in the east.

3. He's holding the book in his hand.

4. There are three hotels in the Gilberts.

5. I stayed on that man's land.

6. Are there many roads in America?

7. They are fishing in the sea.

8. The moon is in the sky.

9. He is standing behind the boy.

10. There are many islands in the west.
Translate the following exercise into Kiribati:

B. (irou-)

1. He stayed with us in America.

2. They have two children.

3. It was done by that man.

4. She lives with that family.

5. The letter was written by John.

6. We have a big dog now.

7. The chicken was killed by the boy.

8. Who is living with you?

9. Have you any butter?

10. It was gotten by my father.
Translate the following exercise into Kiribati:

C. (mai/mairoun)

1. He came from America yesterday.

2. Those canoes came from the south Monday.

3. It dropped from my hand.

4. I got it from the boy.

5. She brought it from her brother in Tuvalu.

6. Those people come from here.

7. It was like a dog from Hell.

8. Did you get a letter from David?

9. The storm is coming from the east.

10. Give her the present from her father.
Translate the following exercise into Kiribati:

D. (man)

1. I got it from the village.

2. They came from the land far away.

3. The butter from the store is bad.

4. It fell from the roof.

5. Give her the book from the library.

6. Is that the man from the government?

7. That egg is from his chicken.

8. She came from the house.

9. That nut is from my tree.

10. Any news from the ship?
Translate the following exercise into Kiribati:

E. *(n(i))*

1. She bought it at the store.

2. He hit the dog with a stick.

3. I took a bus to Bairiki.

4. She wants a pen to write a letter.

5. She stood in the room.

6. I found it on the playing field.

7. He cut his leg with a knife.

8. He went to America by plane.

9. Go to the store to buy some bread!

10. She sat in the chair.
EXERCISES

PREPOSITIONS

LESSON 36

Translate the following exercise into Kiribati:

1. Give it to that man!
2. She took the plane to America.
3. I went to the store.
4. I walked to the house.
5. She sent it to her brother.
6. Do you run to school?
7. Take it to your father.
8. I swam to the island.
9. He will write to the president.
10. They went to Beru.
G. Written. Translate the following sentences into Kiribati:

1. She has a pencil in her hand.

2. That book was written by me.

3. There are no clouds in the sky.

4. There are three men staying with us.

5. Those planes came from Japan.

6. It dropped from that tree.

7. The children were running from the east.

8. I got it from the teacher.

9. It came from his mother yesterday.

10. They came from the airport by car.

11. He tied it to the door with string.

12. Go to church now!

13. They broke it with a hammer.

14. They gave it to us yesterday.