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FROM DESCRIPTION TO STANDARD ORTHOGRAPHYAND PEDAGOGIC GRAMMAR IN THE REVITALISATION PROCESS OF ENDANGERED LANGUAGES: THE CASE Of BEMBELE

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FROM DESCRIPTION TO STANDARD ORTHOGRAPHYAND PEDAGOGIC GRAMMAR IN THE REVITALISATION PROCESS OF ENDANGERED LANGUAGES: THE CASE OF BƆMBƏLƆ

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A Ph.D. IN LINGUISTICS

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DEDICATION

To all those who have given a hand for the success of my education;

to the Bəmbələ linguistic community;

to all those who work for the promotion of African languages and linguistics.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Never give up!

The above exclamation underlies the several difficulties we went through in the realisation of this piece of research. At the same time, it expresses the synergy of actions and the excitement that boosted our morale and strengthened our determination to complete the present research.

In fact, this work could not being achieved without the scientific contribution and standpoint of our supervisors, their critical appraisal of the work, the availability of our so many informants, the wonderful push from God's hand and the financial contribution from CODESRIA.

In the first place, we address my sincere gratitude to our supervisors, Professors Tamanji and Sadembouo, who read this work, each with particular attention. Their comments, critiques and constructive remarks helped a lot to improve on the quality of the work. The convivial environment both of them built, underpinned by a positive attitude, conducive for gradual and quality evolution of the work is also a very important asset that contributed to make the accomplishment of this work possible. Once more, both of you, accept my sincere thanks.

We are very grateful to CODESRIA whose attribution of the "*Small Grant for Thesis Writing*" constituted the turning point in the achievement of this thesis. In fact, this grant came exactly when, because of an acute shortage of financial means, coupled with regular health problems, we fell like to abandon our project. It came up as a push, a new blow that gave us more energy to come up and polish the current version of the work.

We also owe special thanks to our mother who has never failed to contribute to our education. May all the members of my family and relatives who have ever kindly thought and prayed for the completion of this study find here the expression of all the gratitude they deserve. All the lecturers of the Department of African Languages and Linguistics should find and accept here the deepest expression of my thanks for their teachings, guiding steps and warm working environment.

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It would be ungrateful to close this page on acknowledgments without addressing our exceptional thanks to NACALCO and all its leading team. In fact, NACALCO has endowed me with know-how in the field of applied linguistics. The idea of this work was born at NACALCO, namely when we were volunteering in BASAL, grew up and has become a reality. NACALCO was indeed, my laboratory.

Finally, we want to thank those of our mates and colleagues who have never failed to encourage us when we were feeling like to give up the project for many social reasons.

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ABSTRACT

This work entitled “From Description to Standard Othography and Pedagogic Grammar in the Revitalisation Process of Endangered Languages: the case of Bəmbələ” Bantu (A40) aims at showing how a language could be efficiently revitalised by describing, establishing orthographic principles, organising literacy activities and proposing teaching materials like the pedagogical grammar, through the immersion of the researcher in the natural milieu of the language. The work focuses on Bəmbələ. The analysis of the study passes through the different stages of language description, language standardisation and development, and the total immersion of the researcher in the community of the language he is studying. Furthermore, to be systematic, the contents have been divided in two main parts.

The first part of the work deals with language description. Through the structural approach, the phonological, morphological and syntactic systems of the language are established. Bəmbələ has 15 phonemic vowels, 48 phonemic consonants and 4 tonemes made up of 2 level tones (High, Low) and 2 contour tones (HL, LH), with V, CV and CVC syllable structures, the most prominent in the language. Based on the agreement pattern generated by the head noun in a syntactic chain, mainly on its modifiers, we arrived at the conclusion that the language has 8 noun classes, although Guthrie argues that Bantu (A) languages cannot have less than 10 classes. Bəmbələ organises and expresses the different actions on the axis of the present, the past and the future. Each period is characterised by at least one tense. Tense, aspect and mood are so linked in the language that their separation could lead to some incongruities. As an SVO language, a Bəmbələ complete simple sentence can be made up of an NP, a VP and (PP). The last constituent, notably the (PP), is most often optional, a superfluous constituent whose suppression could not affect sentence grammaticality, although it could affect its semantic core to an extent.

The second part of the work focuses on standardisation, immersion approach and pedagogical grammar. Here, the examination of the writing system of the language reveals that it is composed of 35 graphemes made up of vowels, consonants and tones. The whole writing and reading principles of the language are elaborated through the choice of a standard reference dialect: manyɔ̀k spoken in Bibey.

The total immersion approach adopted for the promotion of the standard model developed has allowed the training of local people in reading and writing their language and to set a provisional frame of reference which will enable them to protect the norms, and to promote the language. This approach and the training of community members, have led to the elaboration of the guidelines for writing a pedagogic grammar in African languages. The guidelines are then followed by the production of a sample of the pedagogic grammar of the language under revitalisation. The work shows that the researcher, together with the native linguistic community within / with which he is working, must work hand in hand to consolidate and reinforce the revitalisation of the language. The outcome of such a piece of research is three dimensionally beneficial: first and foremost to the linguistic community, then to the researcher and finally to the scientific community.

In sum, this work is a sound contribution to the search for a model for elaborating pedagogic grammars from descriptive grammars.

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RESUME

Ce travail intitulé “ From Description to Standard Orthography and Pedagogic Grammar in the Revitalisation Process of Endangered Languages: the case of Bəmbələ” vise à montrer comment une langue africaine peut être revitalisée à travers sa description, le développement de son système d’écriture, l’organisation des classes d’alphabétisation et la proposition de matériels didactiques pour ses locuteurs. Pour ce faire, le chercheur, doit s’immerger dans la communauté linguistique en question. En s’appuyant sur la langue Bəmbələ, langue Bantu cotée A40, le travail met en exergue la faisabilité de cette méthode. Ainsi, il s’organise en deux principales parties.

La première partie décrit la grammaire de la langue. Alors, à travers l’approche structurale, le système phonologique et morphologique de la langue est établi. Cette même approche permet de décrypter la structure syntaxique de base de la langue. La langue Bəmbələ est constituée de 15 phonèmes vocaliques, 48 phonèmes consonantiques, et 4 tonèmes. Le système tonémique est constitué de 2 tons simples (H et B), et de 2 tons modulés (HB et BH). Les structures syllabiques prééminentes de la langue sont V, CV, et CVC. Sur la base des différents schèmes d’accords que le nominal principal charrie sur ses déterminants dans une structure donnée, nous avons découvert que contrairement à ce qu’affirme Guthrie, à savoir qu’une langue Bantu (A) ne peut avoir moins de 10 classes, le Bəmbələ est constitué de 8 classes nominales. Au niveau du verbe, l’organisation et l’expression du temps en Bəmbələ s’articule aussi autour de l’axe du passé, du présent et du futur. Chaque division du temps est constituée d’au moins un temps verbal. Le lien intrinsèque entre le temps, l’aspect, et le mode fait de ce trio un tout inséparable. C’est pour ainsi dire qu’ils ont été analysés dans un même chapitre. Langue à structure canonique SVO, la structure de la phrase simple et complète Bəmbələ est constituée du SN, du SV et éventuellement d’un SP, constituant superfétatoire dont la suppression ne nuit aucunement à la grammaticalité de la phrase. Néanmoins, cela peut altérer son sens.

La deuxième partie présente la standardisation et la revitalisation de la langue à travers l’approche d’immersion totale du chercheur. Ici, les résultats de l’étude descriptive présentée plus haut nous ont permis d’établir, avec la communauté linguistique Bəmbələ, l’alphabet de la langue. Cet alphabet est constitué de 35 graphèmes et il est composé de voyelles, de consommes et de tons. Le principe d’écriture et de lecture de la langue est établi sur la base du choix d’un dialecte de référence standard : le manyɔk, parler de Bibey et ses environs.

L’approche d’immersion totale du chercheur dans la communauté linguistique de l’étude, adoptée pour la promotion du modèle standard établi, a permis la formation des locuteurs natifs locaux à la lecture et à l’écriture de leur langue. Couplée à la formation des locuteurs natifs locaux, cette approche nous a permis d’élaborer la grammaire pédagogique de cette langue (voir annexe 3). En somme, ce travail montre que le chercheur, de concert avec la communauté linguistique dans laquelle il conduit sa recherche, devront travailler tous azimuts pour consolider et renforcer la revitalisation de la langue de ladite communauté. Ceci permettra d’obtenir des résultats probants et bénéfiques à la fois à la communauté linguistique, au chercheur et enfin à la communauté scientifique. Il s’agit donc d’une recherche à bénéfice tridimensionel.

Aude-là de toutes considérations, ce travail contribue clairement à la recherche d’un modèle pratique qui permette de passer de la grammaire descriptive à la grammaire pédagogique.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

ABBREVIATIONS

A:	Adjunct, adverbial
AC:	Associative construction
AC:	Adverbial complement
ADJ :	Adjective
ADV	Adverbial
AM:	Associative marker
AN:	Associated noun
ANP:	Associative noun phrase
AP:	Agreement prefix
APNP:	Appositive noun phrase
AUG:	Augment
BASAL:	Basic Standardisation of all unwritten African Languages
C :	Consonant
C:	Complement
CABTAL:	Cameroon Association for Bible Translation and Literacy
CAUS:	Causative
CGV:	Consonant, Glide, Vowel
C^j:	Palatalised consonant
CL :	Class
COMP:	Comparison
COND:	Conditional
CONJ:	Conjunction
COP:	Copula

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CP:	Complementiser phrase
CV :	Consonant + vowel
C^{w} :	Labialised consonant
DEF:	Defective
DEM:	Demonstrative
EM PRO:	Emphatic Pronoun
EXT:	Extension
FOC:	Focus
FV:	Final vowel
H :	High tone
HAB:	Habitual
HL :	High low tone
HN:	Head noun
IMP:	Imperative
IND:	Indefinite
INF :	Infinitive
INFL:	Inflexion
INS:	Instrumental
INT:	Interrogative
Intrans	Intransitive
i.e	That is,
L :	Low tone
LH :	Low high tone
LOC:	Locative
N :	Homorganic nasal
NACALCO:	National Association of Cameroonian Language Committees

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NC :	Nasal consonant
NEG:	Negation
NGO:	Non Governmental Organisation
NP:	Noun phrase
NPref :	noun prefix
NPrel	relativised noun phrase
NUM:	numeral
OBJ:	Object
OCP :	Obligatory Contour Principle
OD:	Direct object
OI:	Indirect object
OL1:	First official language
Op.cit	Opera citato (in the work already quoted)
PASS:	Passive
Pl :	plural
PM:	Person marker
POSS:	possessive
PP:	Preposition phrase
PR:	Present tense
PREP	Preposition
PRO:	Pronoun
PROG:	Progressive
QM:	Question marker
Qual:	Qualifier
RC:	Relative clause
REC:	Reciprocative
REFL:	Reflexive

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REL/Rel:	Relative pronoun
RES:	Restrictive
SIL:	Summer Institute of Linguistics
SIM:	Simultaneity
Sing :	Singular
SM:	Subject marker
St:	Stem
SUBJ	Subject
SUBJ:	Subjunctive
SVO:	Subject, Verb, Object
TAM:	Tense, Aspect, Mood
TOP:	Topic
trans	Tansitive
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNESCOCAT:	UNESCO Centre of Catalunya
V	Vowel
Vext:	Verbal extension
Vŋ:	Vowel followed by velar nasal
VP:	Verb phrase
Vroot:	Verb root

SYMBOLS

&	and
[ ] :	Phonetic representation
/ / :	Phonological representation
| | :	Morphological representation

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Ø- :	Zero morpheme
+ :	Association, addition
Ḥ :	Floating tone

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1. Definition and scope of the study

This work entitled "From *Description to standard orthography and Pedagogic Grammar in the Revitalisation Process of Endangered languages: The Case of Bəmbələ*" falls within the frame of language safeguarding and revitalisation, the current concern of many national and international institutions. In fact, language safeguarding and revitalisation has become the prime interest of language researchers, national and international NGOs such as CABTAL, NACALCO, SIL, Linguapax UNESCOCAT and UNESCO, just to cite a few. UNESCO, since about a decade, and recently Linguapax UNESCOCAT and Linguapax Afrika in particular, have been paying special attention to the issue of language preservation and revitalisation. This activity is more concerned with minority languages threatened by attrition. Bəmbələ is one of those languages which need to be rescued. The study proposes through a systematic study, a panacea for saving or rescuing all threatened African languages from endangerment. However, it is worth pointing out that the specificities or peculiarities of each area and each country must be taken into account in the application of the revitalisation method or any other revitalisation model.

1.2. Motivations

A number of arguments motivated our involvement in this research and the choice of the topic.

As a starting point, wenoticed that no descriptive grammar existed in Bəmbələ. Therefore, the language was, according to the criteria established by specialists and which are recalled and commented below, endangered or threatened by attrition being used only at the oral level.

Secondly, we observed that most researchers on lesser developed, underdeveloped or unwritten African languages in general and Cameroonian ones in particular, do not go beyond their traditional activities of description to set a bridge between language description and language development which usually leads to the production of didactic materials and various written literature. From there, we suggested that beyond financial constraints, the limitation of the activities of the researchers to simple description might be the result of a lack of an appropriate methodology to reconcile the different activities. Therefore, the burning concern to

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lay the foundation for solving such a problem pushed us towards the choice of the present topic, and to give it the current content. In fact, the fascination of providing the language with a descriptive grammar was underlain and catered for by the thrust to come up with a sound methodology capable of helping researchers address this issue. By effectively proposing a sample pedagogical grammar of the language under study on this basis at the end of this study, the work proves the feasibility and applicability of the method. These driving forces served as the backbone for the present piece of research.

1.3. The problem

Although significant efforts have been made and are being made to describe and develop African languages in general and those of Cameroon in particular, many of them are still undeveloped, underdeveloped, ignored. These languages are endangered because of their absence in formal education, administrative communication, in the media (critical domains), and gradually in family communication because of the phenomenon of subtractive bilingualism.

It is also worth noting that there exists a good number of descriptive grammars on underdeveloped African languages but very few pedagogical grammars aiming at teaching those languages do exist. Furthermore, researchers, or specialists in the field of teaching African languages have not drawn clear approaches to adopt in writing these pedagogical grammars.

This study is therefore built around the problem of transiting from descriptive to pedagogical grammar, taking into consideration the activities related to standardisation and the issue of community contribution, participation and concern in the process. The work paves the way for the search of an appropriate answer to this concern by attempting to lay a methodology that will help researchers transit from description to material development passing through standardisation in their search for an effective and practical contribution to the promotion and teaching/learning of African languages.

By limiting their activities to simple description, researchers in/on African languages fail to pay sufficient attention to the issue of language teaching/learning through the development of didactic materials. The result of such a limitation is that most descriptive works on many African languages have never served their linguistic community. Stating this problem implies advocating for an efficient transition from mere description to at least basic reference or pedagogic material design, by transiting through standardisation.

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It may be useful to consider why emphasis needs to be laid on the necessity to draw a transition from language description to language development in research on/in African languages. Today, with the increasing interest gaining ground in the field of mother tongue education in Africa, beyond the training of the trainers, pedagogical materials must be available for teachers and learners. Access to quality education in African languages implies the production of reference materials useful in formal education. It is, in fact, thanks to this transition that we make practical contributions for the promotion of our languages from the teaching point of view. By so doing, researchers shall be making a sound contribution which will enable the speakers of the language to access quality education in their mother tongue. As proven by UNESCO, quality education is the key and basis for sustainable development.

In general, the lack of a descriptive grammar and a pedagogic grammar in the language was already a problem.

1.4. Purpose of the research

The first part of the work sets out to describe the grammar of Bəmbələ. It unveils the phonological, morphological and syntactic structures of the language. This description is a sine qua non condition for the establishment of the writing and reading principles of the language. The orthographic principles open a window on the prescription of some useful guidelines for the elaboration of a pedagogical grammar. From these guidelines, a sample pedagogic grammar of Bəmbələ is produced indeed.

In order to achieve this goal, the work explores some features characterising and influencing the passage from language description to the production of pedagogic grammar. The basic premise for this research is that for fruitful and useful research on African languages and targeting the native community of the language, researchers should be able, in their research activities on the language, to shift or transit from the traditional activities of language description to the production of reference didactic materials. This implies that the researchers themselves are well acquainted with the existing methodology to this end. Since this methodology does not concretely exist, this work also sets out to propose such a methodology. Considering what has been said so far about the goal, the purpose underpinning this piece of research, it is evident that its underlying goal, as mentioned above, is to set a methodological framework for helping researchers to efficiently move from description to material production, passing through

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standardisation. As earlier mentioned the sample pedagogical grammar of Bəmbələ produced on that basis and attached to this work (see appendix) is tangible evidence of the feasibility of the method, an exemplification of its applicability.

My intention is therefore to show how researchers on African languages could go beyond mere description over all in the process of revitalising a language, to come up with a more fruitful and pragmatic result useful to the speech community. Here, the concepts of endangered language and revitalization must be interpreted in the context of African languages and African realities.

In sum, the work concretely aims at producing a descriptive grammar of Bəmbələ and then at elaborating the writing principles of the language. From the principles, the guidelines for elaborating a pedagogical grammar are established. Practically, from the established guidelines, the pedagogic grammar of Bəmbələ is elaborated and produced.

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1.5. The Bəmbələ People and their language

This section presents the historical origin, the geographic location and the socio-economic situation of the Bəmbələ people. In addition, it discusses the degree of endangerment of Bəmbələ.

1.5.1. Historical Origin of Bəmbələ

The word “Bəmbələ” is used to name both the language and its speakers. A speaker of the language is called “àmbələ”. From the etymological point of view, the word Bəmbələ is made up of the class 2 prefix |bə-| and the root mbələ which means “association of clans”. Therefore, the word is used to point out the association of the people that make up these tribes. From the pieces of information collected from our informants, the Bəmbələ people might have come from the Adamawa Region. They crossed the Sanaga River. Before arriving in the Adamawa Region, they probably came from the “Susu” tribes of Western African countries rooted in Conakry, Guinea. When they arrived in the Upper Sanaga Division, they settled down on the banks of the Sanaga

River and conquered the largest portion of the lands from Ndjore to Diang in the Eastern Region of Cameroon at that time.

There are Bəmbələ sub-clans or lineages such as Bìmpòl, Bəpàk, Bəwàŋ, Bìndòm, Àsɔ̀ɔ̀, Bìŋdùmə̀, Bəbùlùn, Sàsàà, Bàlkàm and the Èkàbà. The separation of these lineages from the mother tribe might date back to 1945 during World War II. It came up as the result of the imposition of hard works on local people by colonial masters during that period. In fact, they were compelled to build the Douala-Yaounde railway. The constraint to hard work obliged some of them to flee to Equatorial Guinea for a better and more secured living place. Unfortunately, one of their local traditional rulers Nàŋa Èbòkò, was also compelled to go into exile to Equatorial Guinea where he was hung.

Because of lack of documents on the history of these people, I was constrained to rely on pieces of information provided by my informants.

The word Bəbələ (Dieu and Renaud 1983), Bebele (Grimes 1980), Bamvele by the Church and Cameroonian administration, are used to refer to the same people and language.

1.5.2. Geographic location of Bəmbələ

The Bəmbələ linguistic area covers a large portion of the Upper Sanaga Division, South of the Sanaga River. A survey by Seguin (1990:2) shows that the largest concentration of Bəmbələ speakers is found in the Sub-divisions of Minta, Bibey and Nsem in the South Eastern area of Nanga Eboko Division, Centre Region. A considerable group of speakers also lives on the western edge of the Diang Sub-division in Lom and Djerem Division, Eastern Region, Cameroon. Bəmbələ has two dialects: Mânyɔ̀k and Èki.

Grimes (2000:32) quoting Welmers (1971) estimates that Bəmbələ speakers are about 24.000. Seguin (op cit) argues that with a population growth of 5% since 1971, the speakers of this language could be evaluated at about 36.000 in 1987. On the basis of the same consideration, Djomeni (2004 & 2007) estimates the speakers of this language at more than 56.200 speakers. All these figures are still inadequate and rough because in 2006, during the population census,

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questions related to the linguistic affinities of the citizens were not taken into account in the questionnaire, although proposed by linguists.

Geographically, Bɔ̀mbɔlɔ̀ is in contact with Eton and Bavek in the South, Makya in the West, Bɔ̀bil in the North, Gbete and Vɨte in the East. Below is the map localizing the Bɔ̀mbɔlɔ̀ linguistic area.

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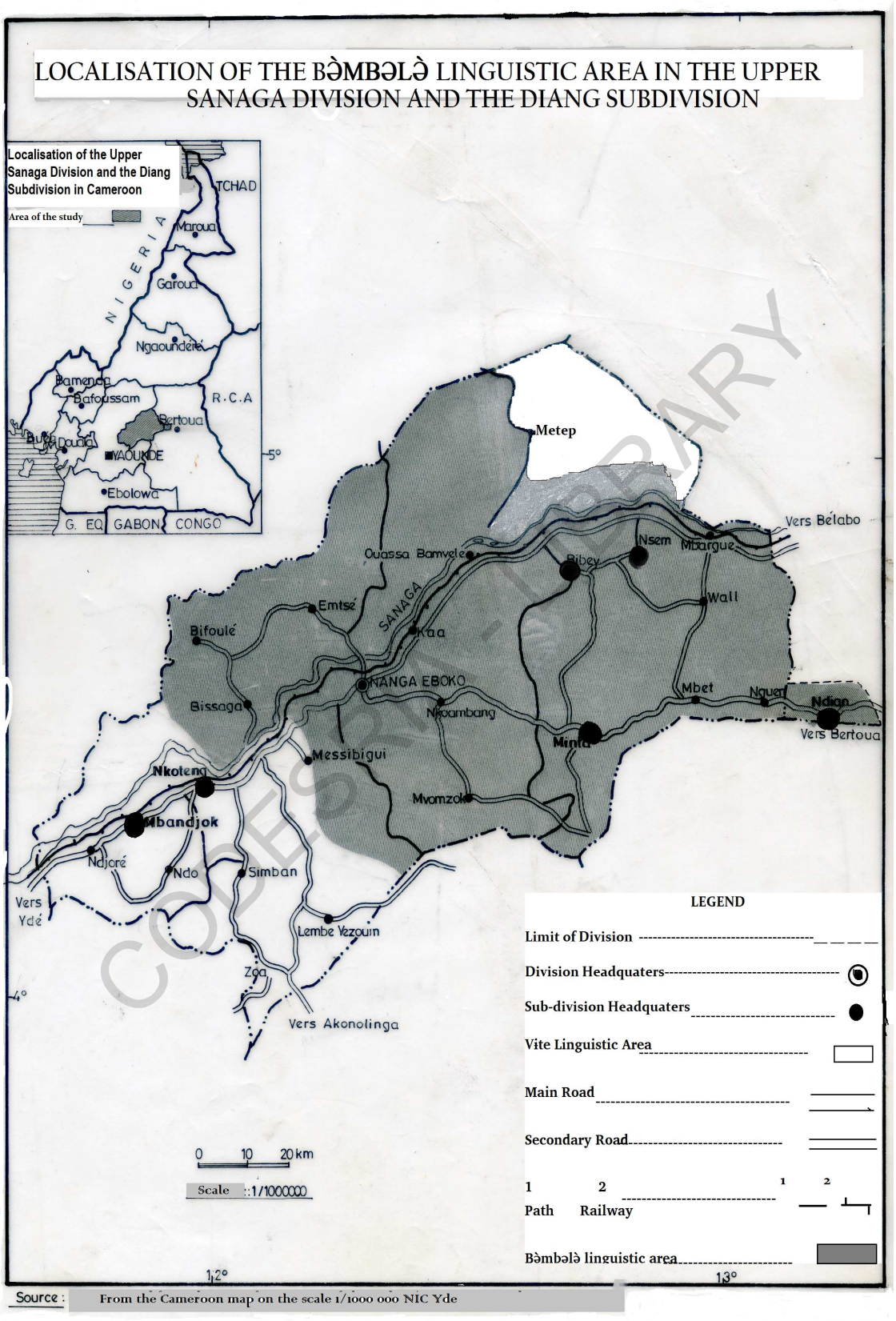
LOCALISATION OF THE BƆ̀MBƏLƆ̀ LINGUISTIC AREA IN THE UPPER SANAGA DIVISION AND THE DIANG SUBDIVISION
Localisation of the Upper Sanaga Division and the Diang Subdivision in Cameroon
Area of the study
TCHAD
NIGERIA
Maroua
Garoua
Ngaoundéré
Bamenda
Bafoussam
R.C.A
Bertoua
Douala
YAOUNDE
Ebolowa
G. EQ
GABON
CONGO
5°
Metep
Vers Bélabo
Ouassa Bamvele
Nsem
Mbargue
Bibey
Wall
Emtsé
SANAGA
Bifoulé
Kaa
NANGA EBOKO
Mbet
Nguer
Ndian
Bissaga
Nkoambang
Vers Bertoua
Minta
Messibigui
Nkoteng
Mvomzok
Mbandjok
Ndjoré
Ndo
Simban
Vers Ydé
Lembe Yezoum
Zoa
4°
Vers Akonolinga
0 10 20 km
Scale ::1/1000000
LEGEND
Limit of Division
Division Headquaters
Sub-division Headquaters
Vite Linguistic Area
Main Road
Secondary Road
1 2
Path
Railway
Bàmbàlà linguistic area
12°
13°
Source : From the Cameroon map on the scale 1/1000 000 NIC Yde

1.5.3. Socio-economic Background

Social considerations deal with the demography and some aspects of the cultural values of a given people whereas the economic background brings out the essentials or basis of the economy of a people. Here, we are going to give just an overview of the situation as reported by one of my informants, Ndongo Sabo Michel in a personal communication.

1.5.3.1. Social Consideration

Demographically, the Bəmbələ are the most numerous of the Upper Sanaga Division as reported by our many field informants and in addition, the language is largely used by the majority of the population of Nanga Eboko. However, we are not capable of providing comparative figures on this issue due to lack of adequate documents thereto related. Further research could shed more light on the issue. At the traditional level, the society is divided into traditional chiefdoms, each chiefdom being headed by a traditional ruler named mbwàn "chief". He is the protector of the traditions inherited from his ancestors. His dignitaries guide him in the management of societal matters. Although Bəmbələ people pay respect to their traditional rulers and consider them as the protectors of their traditions, they agree that his powers are limited. This power is so limited that he often plays the consultative role in the community. Here, traditional rulers are not highly venerated.

From the point of view of the eating habits of the Bəmbələ people, they have a highly valuable dish, *ìkes mbòŋ* "fufu" and *nkon* "pistachio". This dish figures among the main meals in the traditional life of this community. Not only it is eaten almost every day, it is also used to trim their important social and community events.

1.5.3.2. Overview of Bəmbələ Economy

Bəmbələ people uphold their life through basic economic activities like in most localities in Cameroon. Their economy is essentially based on the cultivation of cash crops such as cocoa and coffee. In addition, they grow staple food crops like cassava, groundnuts, cucumber, banana, maize for daily subsistence. Some of the Bəmbələ people make a livelihood from fishing and hunting thanks to their settlement in the forest and near the Sanaga River.

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1.5.3.3. The language: linguistic classification

Grimes presents the following classification for Bəmbələ: Bebele, Niger Congo, Atlantic Congo, Voltaic Congo, Bantoid, Southern, Proto-Bantu, North A, Yaoundé Faŋ (70). Nevertheless, this classification does not ease the conception of a tree family for the language. Therefore, Djomeni (2004), after having re-examined this classification, proposes the following: Niger Kordofanian, Niger Congo, Benue Congo, Bantoid, Bantu Equatorial North, Basaa-Bə̀ti, Bəti Faŋ, Bəmbələ. Ndongo Semengue.et.al (forthcoming) reproduce this classification with a slight difference although Gordon (2005) continues to classify the language as follows: Niger Congo, Benue Congo, Bantoid, Southern, Narrow Bantu, NorthWest, A, Yaoundé-Fang (A70). They classify the language under the Basaa subgroup of the Basaa-Beti group. This classification is based on the genetic nature of the language, its morphological behaviour and its internal structure. The following genetic tree draws the classification of the language following the Ndongo Semengue (forthcoming) proposal. A map that presents the different language families and linguistic groups of Cameroon follows the tree. The aim of the map is to facilitate the understanding of the tree.

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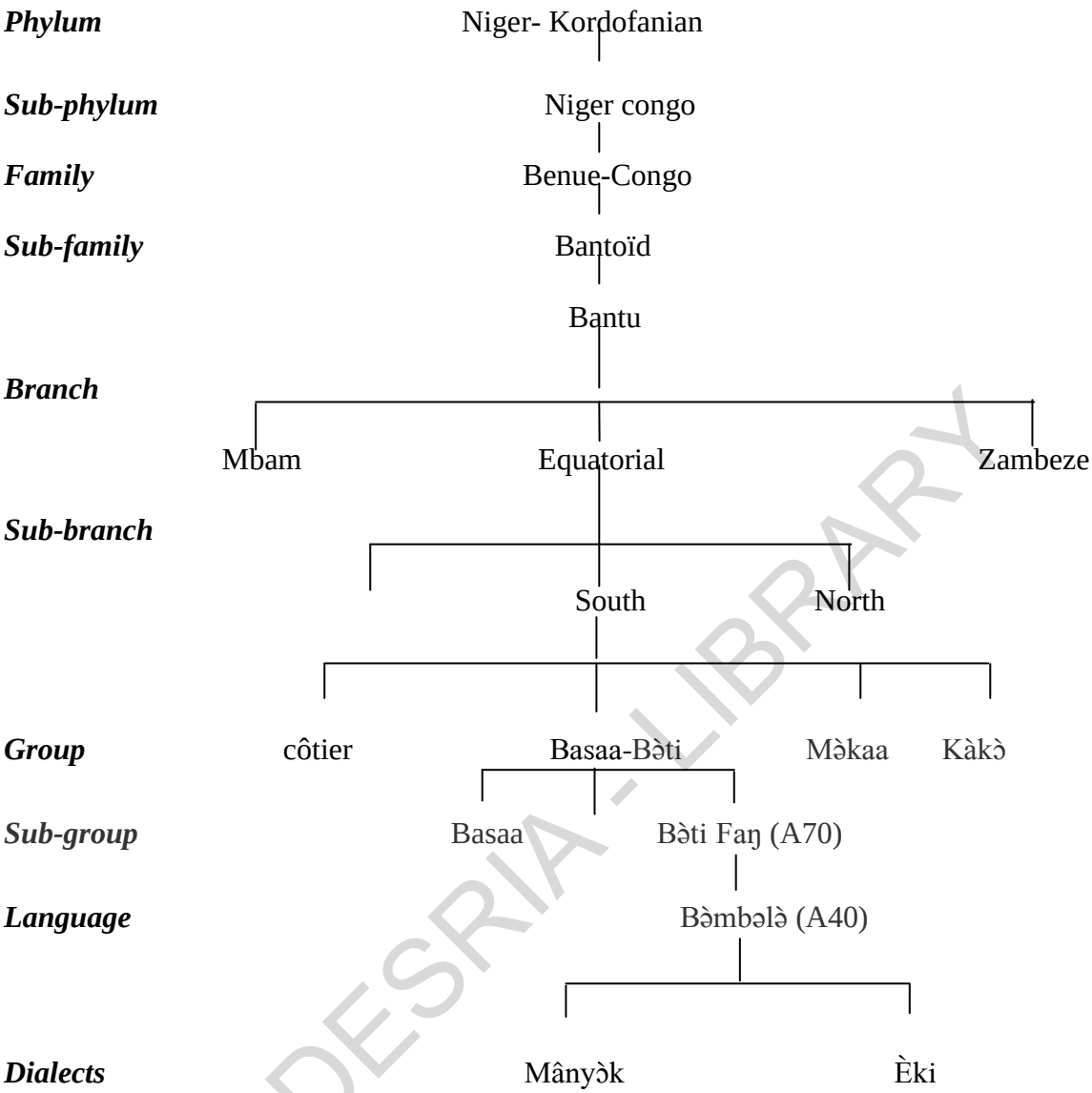

Ndongo Semengue (forthcoming) quotes the language A404.

The following map localises the different language groups and language families in Cameroon.

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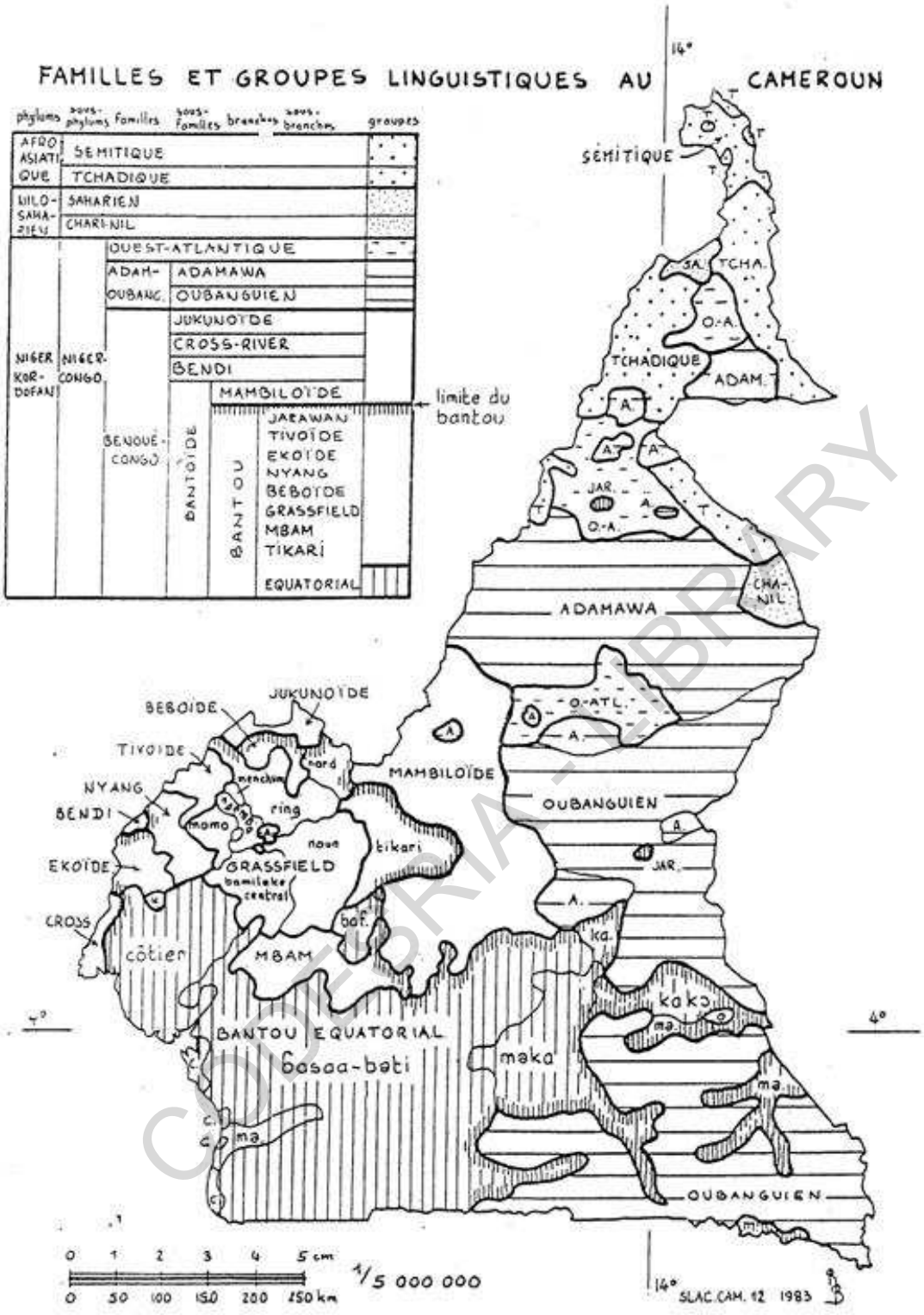

Source : Dieu & Renaud (1983)

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1.5.4. Bəmbələ: an endangered language?

A number of authors and experts have written about the assessment of language endangerment. Among them, we find UNESCO experts (2003) and Bitja'a Kody (2004). When one considers what these authors have said, Bəmbələ emerges as an endangered language.

Following are discussions related to the factors and criteria for assessing language vitality and endangerment. After the discussion of these factors, we shall mostly comment on UNESCO's criteria with regard to Bəmbələ to assess its degree of vitality or endangerment.

The UNESCO (2003) ad hoc experts group on endangered languages elaborated nine criteria for assessing language vitality and endangerment. They argue that the nine factors can be divided into three sub-groups: the first six factors evaluate language vitality, the next two assess language attitudes and the last one evaluates the availability of documentation. We present below the different factors with an application on Bəmbələ and short comments related to the language and most African languages. First and foremost, it is worth observing that these factors intertwine.

The factors include, intergenerational language transmission, absolute number of speakers, proportion of speakers within the total population, shifts in domains of language use, response to new domains and media, curriculum materials for education and literacy, governmental and institutional language attitudes and policies including official status and use, community members' attitudes towards their language and amount and quality of documentation about the language. Each of the factors shall be analysed below. A detailed description will help to capture the lingyuistic situation of Bəmbələ.

a- Intergenerational language transmission

This criterion is valid in Bəmbələ as I shall show in the second part of the study how the language is used in families, the most important setting for language intergenerational transmission. The language is transmitted from father / mother to children, but the daily widespread of French used as the first official language in the locality is not of good omen for the language. It constitutes a major threat if nothing is done. In the same vein, if the most dominant language of the Centre Region, namely Ewondo maintains its widespreading force

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which began since the arrival of Catholic missionaries in that language area, it will further constitute a danger to Bəmbələ.

b- Absolute number of speakers

Most African languages are not used in the wider circuit of international communication like English, French, Spanish and German among others. Even though Bəmbələ is credited both of a population of 56.200 speakers, it is still endangered because it is not yet used as a means of wider communication. Even a community with a less important number of speakers can decide to develop her language and make it spread all over the community. At this time, the language will be safer than that of a population compared to the Bəmbələ language which does nothing to protect its language. Therefore, the absolute number of speakers does not guarantee vitality because the speaker population must be considered in relation to other speech communities. By the same token, as pointed out by Genoble and Whaley (2006:5), the absolute number of speakers through an important demography, is not a good tool for determining the vitality of a language. Furthermore, while considering the large number of speakers, we must also take into account the weight of languages in contact. Therefore, in the whole Upper Sanaga Division, French speakers are more than those of Bəmbələ.

c - Proportion of speakers within the total population

In countries with linguistic megadiversity like Cameroon, most languages are just reduced to their native area with a small number of speakers compared to the general population. This is the case of Bəmbələ which does not spread over its native Divisions. Consequently, as compared to the general population of Cameroon, Bəmbələ speakers constitute a minority group.

d- Shifts in domains of language use

Bəmbələ is spoken among community members almost everywhere and in their daily life. Bəmbələ is almost vehicular in the town of Nanga Eboko where it is not the language of the locality per se, but where it has become the language of trade. As a consequence of this status, it has also become vehicular in the Division.

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It is however worth noting that some younger speakers are gradually turning to French in the community. But this not yet as symptomatic as what is observable in some other Cameroonian native language areas.

e- Response to new domains and media

Bàmbəlà is not yet introduced in the new domains of language use. The language development process has not yet met the challenges of modernity. We must recall that new domains here refer to information technology (IT). Bàmbəlà is used in just one local community radio for a few hours (Ò dama FM in Nanga Eboko) with a very limited scope of transmission.

f- Curriculum materials for education and literacy

Before we started the activities of safeguarding and revitalisation of Bàmbəlà, no literacy activities existed in the community. Neither books nor materials of any kind existed in /on the language.

g- Governmental and institutional language attitudes and policies including official status and use

The constitution of Cameroon provides clear instructions on national languages. In fact, this constitution prescribes the protection and promotion of minority languages or national languages in general. The government is gradually getting interested in the development of national languages; if we refer to the latest decision of the Ministry of Higher Education that created a Department and Laboratory of Cameroonian languages and cultures at the Higher Teacher's Training College of Yaounde I, the present formal teaching of these languages in some government school (pilot stage) and the effective training of teachers of Cameroonian languages and cultures. The same constitution also recognises that all Cameroonian languages are national languages.

h - Community members' attitudes towards their language

Not everybody could be positive enough for the idea of language development and the construction of a positive environment for its success. In the Bàmbəlà community, some people

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are still tied to their language and are ready to engage in its development process in spite of their disfavoured financial status. They still have a positive attitude towards their language.

i- Amount and quality of documentation on the language

No document existed in/on the language at the beginning of the BASAL programme. By the same token, no standardisation activity had been carried out on Bàmbəlà when we initiated the process within the BASAL programme. It is true that good documentation exists for some languages that are extinct whereas there is no documentation for vital languages. In this vein, documentation cannot be an evaluation method per se. The level of vitality therefore helps in assessing the urgency for new language documentation.

Grenoble & Whaley (2006:13–14) explain this point when they say:

> *Language endangerment typically involves two languages (and cultures) in contact, with one replacing the other. In the canonical case, then, language A is being adopted by speakers of language B, and language A is replacing language B, in the sense that fewer people use or learn B. In the case of language B, the language has been referred to variously as the minority language, heritage language, mother tongue, dominated language threatened language, or endangered language. Alternatively, language A has been referred to as the majority language, dominant language, killer language or matrix language.*

Bàmbəlà is in a diglossic situation with French being the dominant language as it is used in critical domains. The local language itself is reduced to community and family matters and is mostly used in the oral form. Therefore, if we refer to the quotation above, Bàmbəlà shall be considered as language B, while French is language A. On the other hand, two kinds of endangerment can be distinguished: overt and covert. Language endangerment is overt when speakers of language A adopt language B openly and consciously for socioeconomic purposes and latent when only the researcher's tact and critical analysis can lead one to perceive the phenomenon through observation. In this case, the researcher needs to carry out deep enquiry because speakers' viewpoints or arguments are most often biased due to the fact that they are not conscious of the replacement and their controversial attitude towards their language.

Bitjaa Kody (2004) discussing the factors causing language death, points out that a number of sociolinguists have worked on the issue of language endangerment and so did and are still doing some institutions. He examined the different factors pointed out by some other

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scholars as responsible for language death and retained those applicable to Cameroonian languages. We shall recall them in brief and by author in the followings. This will help assess the situation of Bəmbələ.

1. Brosnahan's factors re-examined by Mc Connell (1991)

Brosnahan (1963) quoted by McConnell (1991:68) and Bitjaa (2004) evokes 4 external factors influencing the vitality of languages in contact as follows: political domination, stability, multilingualism and prestige. Bitjaa mentioned that in Cameroon, these factors cause the death of local languages while favouring the expansion of official languages, namely English and French.

Political domination results from military conquest and the subjugation of the local population by a foreign language authority which organises, influences and manages the country in all the domains of social, political and economic life through language. Stability implies that the linguistic domination lasts long. Linguistic facts prove that the more a country is linguistically fragmented, the higher the exposure of its languages, especially lesser-used, to death. In such contexts, smaller languages are threatened by bigger ones. This is the result of local multilingualism. The prestigious role played by some languages in a multilingual context negatively affects the smaller languages which are consequently exposed to attrition. This is the case in Cameroon with English and French and their various functions in the media, administration, school, market, and gradually in families. They are progressively becoming a serious threat to local languages.

2. Leclerc (2003) factors

As mentioned by Bitjaa, Leclerc addressed factors such as: number of speakers, demographic spread of the speakers, mixed marriages, socio-economic domination and political power.

In Cameroon, the threshold for language survival has been established at about 100.000 speakers. However, as noted by Bitjaa, the survival of a language is precarious when it is spoken by less than a million persons. He further adds that, nevertheless, a small linguistic community can survive if living in isolation, i.e., far from greater languages. The demographic factor refers to a situation where the speakers of a small language are scattered all over a territory influenced by a dominant language. He noted that rural exodus that eases this situation by weakening minority languages can be avoided by reinforcing the economic structures of the rural areas and

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institutionalising the use of local languages. In mixed marriages, exogamy favours dominant languages and destroy smaller ones. This will depend on whether the society is matriarchal or patriarchal. The socio-economic domination of some languages plays a negative role on the others. As a result, the speakers of the less economically influential languages abandon them to adopt the one which is economically useful. Languages that do not have a strong consideration in the policies of a country are marginalised. They are influenced by those usually called official languages like in Cameroon. This status confers power and threat to languages according to the value added to them by the linguistic policy of the country.

3. Blench's factors

As for Blench (1998) the major causes of the death of a language are : urbanisation and rural exodus and assimilation to more linguistically numerically powerful groups.

As already mentioned above, when the speakers of a language leave their natural milieu for urban centres, their language is exposed to endangerment because, most often, once in town, they adopt the language of urban integration. In some other cases, speakers of a given language abandon their own language to adopt a more prestigious one. This is the result of assimilation by a most linguistically powerful group. Bitjaa cites the case of Fulfulde in the Northern regions of Cameroon where this language is gradually replacing many other local languages because of its vehicularity and prestige. When the greater languages control the media, the economic power, the school and the new domains, they impose on the smaller languages their cultural imperialism.

Glottophagy and loss of cultural values is also one of the factors favouring language endangerment or attrition.

Based on these different factors, the author establishes a hierarchy of language viability. The degree of vitality or endangerment of a language depends on the presence or absence of these factors. The discussion and the characterisation of the factors lead Bitjaa to retain some measurement factors applicable to Cameroonian languages as minority languages and reject others. The factors include formal teaching, use in radio, in television, newspapers, religion, modern music, the degree of the vehicularity of the language, standardisation, use in adult literacy or formal education. After having discussed the criteria, he establishes the following measurement for Cameroonian languages.

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- thoroughly protected Cameroonian languages (langues camerounaises à protection assurée);
- largely protected Cameroonian languages (langues camerounaises largement protégées);
- lesser endangered Cameroonian languages;
- heavily endangered Cameroonian languages (langues camerounaises en grand danger de disparition);
- dead Cameroonian languages (languages camerounaises mortes).

At the end of his discussion of the factors, Bitjaa classifies Bəmbələ as a significantly endangered Cameroonian language, "langue camerounaise à danger notable". He further states that "une très large majorité de langues Camerounaises sont en danger à des degrés variés."

In the same perspective, Campbell & Muntzel (1989:181–196) draw a six-way scheme to categorise languages with respect to endangerment: safe, at risk, disappearing, moribund, nearly extinct and extinct. According to them, a language is safe when it is used by all generations, in all domains or nearly, when it is the language of government, education and commerce and enjoys official status within nation states. It bears a higher prestige within the nation. The language is at risk when it is vital but used in a limited number of domains or has a smaller number of speakers than other languages in the same region. The language is disappearing when there is an observable shift towards another language in the community where it is spoken. It involves the decreasing of intergenerational transfer; its use is more restricted to a set of domains and a language of wider communication begins to replace it in a greater percentage of homes. It is moribund when it is not transmitted to children at all; it is nearly extinct when only a handful of speakers of the oldest generation remains and finally extinct when it has no remaining speaker. These considerations lead us to classify Bəmbələ as a language at "risk".

On the other hand, language revitalisation aims at increasing the relative number of speakers of the language and extending its domains of use. It is on the basis of all the above that Bəmbələ is an endangered language. However, we cannot define endangered local languages only on the basis of vital speakers (Grenoble & Whaley 2006:56) because some languages with a large number of speakers are still endangered. This might be true of some languages, but not of most African languages.

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The description, comment and analysis of UNESCO'S nine factors together with those discussed by Bitjaa, led to conclude that Bəmbələ was an endangered language at the beginning of the activities of the BASAL programme, and the starting point of this research. As such, it needed to be rescued.

1.6. Research Assumptions

A number of assumptions underlie this research.

1- Usually, most researchers on African languages limit their activities to simple description;

2- Researchers could describe and develop African languages at the same time and at a relative pace through an immersion approach and consecutive activities;

3- This efficient and practical mechanism could respond to the current concern of specialists in language revitalisation. It also responds to the expectations of the speech communities;

4- Henceforth, the description and development of any minority language should be centred on the challenge for protecting and promoting linguistic diversity and the linguistic rights of the minorities.

These research assumptions helped to address questions surrounding the process of describing a language and developing didactic materials in the same language at the same time by the same researcher in connection with the native community speaking the language. Among these questions, some were of major interest:

- Is language description an aim in itself?
- Is it possible for a researcher (within the perspective of a thesis) to describe a language and develop some didactic materials in the same language at the same time?
- If yes, which methodology is required in such a context?
- Is there any compatibility among the activities of language description, language development and literacy or teaching/learning material design?
- What relationship should exist between the researcher and the native community during such a research process?

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- Which guidelines shall be followed in elaborating materials such as pedagogic grammars in African languages?

Attempts to answer these questions, directly or indirectly, in connexion with the research assumptions, shall be our concern in this work.

1.7. Data elicitation techniques

In the first part of the study, the analysis consists of informants' assisted data elicitation, then individual data organisation, analysis and conclusion drew through the structural approach. In the second part, questionnaires, direct interviews, participant observation, personal observation are the techniques used for data elicitation. We present below these data collection procedures in details.

An aspect of this study is purely sociolinguistic. Consequently, the approaches adopted for the aspect are also sociolinguistic in nature.

a- Questionnaire administration

The sociolinguistic questionnaire we elaborated aimed at clearly establishing whether Bəmbələ was a language-unit or not. It also aimed at assessing language attitudes among speakers and localising the area of the dialect to be standardised. Normally, the questionnaire was built with the aim of verifying previously established facts by the SIL sociolinguistic team (Johnson and Seguin 1987, 1990, Hatfield & Reginar 1990). In general, the questionnaire was built to gather qualitative data based on informants' individual or personal points of view. It is however true that in the interpretation of the data, some quantitative figures occurred when we had to comment on the percentage of respondents who answered a given question.

b. Direct interviews

Direct interviews were used to gather information where the questionnaire was not useful enough. Its ultimate goal was to gather information related to the general attitudes, perceptions and impressions of the community towards the activities of language standardisation we were committed to. It was also to know whether the community members believed in the programme, whether they were interested in participating / learning how to write and read their language. In addition, it aimed at finding out whether they were willing to be deeply involved and contact

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their elite for an investment for the success of the programme. In order to collect my data through this method, we had to extend the interviews to a wider spectrum of native speakers or informants who were ready to collaborate than filling a “boring questionnaire”. It was the occasion for informants to freely react to questions and issues raised about participation, planning, management and functioning of the programme without any constraints or pre-elaborated questions. Therefore, consciously or unconsciously, they provide unexpected answers.

c. Personal observation

Through personal observation, we further examined the attitudes of community members towards the programme and the degree of their implication in the process. This method was relevant in that it helped to gather information that the result of the questionnaires would bias due to the reluctance of some informants to answer some of the questions. They felt more relaxed to comment (even among themselves) on the development of their language.

As literacy activities went on, we noticed that the high degree of volunteerism expressed by the informants and community members through questionnaire administration and direct interviews, to collaborate and participate in the programme was therefore open to debate. Personal observation led us to conclude that, most often, in such programmes, if the researcher is not careful and tactful enough, in lack of incentive, his expectation could easily be defeated.

d. Participant observation

As Mac an Ghaill (1994) points out “participant observer collects data by participating in the daily life of those he or she is studying”. Participant observation or inner view is therefore a set of research strategies which aim to gain a close and intimate relationship with a given group of individuals, sub-cultural group or a particular community. It is also interested in capturing the practices of the group, sub-group or community, through an active implication with people in their natural milieu, here Bɔ̀mbɔlɔ̀ natural environment. As we earlier mentioned, participant observation makes use of many other methods such as personal observation, direct interviews and personal interviews. It makes use of collective discussions as it was the case during the literacy classes in the field and during talks and discussions with community members. It makes use of personal documents within the group and self-analysis.

For participant observation to be efficient as a method, it must be conducted over an extended period, ranging from several months because of its nature of qualitative research. My

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long lasting stay with Bəmbələ people and in their community was of priceless importance and significance in this respect. In my challenge to observe and interact over long periods, we easily discovered the discrepancies or the loopholes between what community members said in the questionnaire and during personal interviews and what they actually did, or how they actually behaved. This method allowed me to experience Bəmbələ culture, and to get insights of their behaviour and degree of implication in the process of the development of their language. Participant observation allows an immersion of the researcher in the natural setting of his learning or research. Through participant observation, we were immersed in the day-to-day activities of the people whom we attempted to understand and to convince. This approach helped me to collect some qualitative data useful for my analysis.

Participant observation is inductive in that it is developed through observations. In strolling, or moving from one locality to another, we were able to understand and see the flux of social life in which we were also subjected.

At first sight, this method appears to be simply looking, listening, experiencing and writing, but it is more than that. It is a personally demanding and analytically difficult method. We were subjected to unfamiliar matters and behaviour, enormous personal risks, to secure and maintain social relationships in order to facilitate fieldwork. The method was of important interest in that it facilitated access to getting insights of Bəmbələ social life and relationship. Furthermore, it helped in coping with and managing attitudes toward the omnipresent phenomenon of the outsider we were.

In conclusion, through participant observation, in class, on roads, in houses, in public squares, in the markets, in church, almost everywhere, we became part and parcel of the Bəmbələ community. Acceptance and integration gradually grew up as the programme went on and data collection became easier, less boring and less tedious.

The combination of all these methods helped me to draw some conclusions about the programme, its effectiveness, and the capacity of community members to collaborate and to take it over.

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1.8. Review of literature and theoretical framework

This sub-section of the general introduction presents the review of literature and the theoretical framework that serve as the backbone for this study.

1.8.1. Review of literature

In general, the literature review examines the different pieces of work carried out on a language and traces out the importance of the current work according to the previous ones. The review we present here focuses on the Bəbəmlə language, the theories of standardisation and that of language revitalisation.

1.8.1.1. On the language

The Bəmbələ language belongs to the Basaa-bəti language group. Some of the Bəmbələ speakers, adults and old people are bilingual in Ewondo and Bəmbələ because in this community, Ewondo is the language of religion (Catholicism, predominant religion in the area). This situation also contributes to the endangerment of the Bəmbələ language.

The first two sociolinguistic enquiries were conducted on Bəmbələ in May 1989 and January 1990 by Johnson and Seguin and in August 1990 by Hatfield and Regnier. An SIL team under the supervision of Seguin conducted the very first surveys. The results of these surveys indicate that there is a generalised bilingualism in Ewondo among Bəmbələ speakers, but that adult Bəmbələ speakers use Ewondo with Ewondo speakers and not vice-versa. Another RTT conducted by Hatfield and Regnier further sustained the argument that Ewondo is not inherently intelligible with Bəmbələ and that Bəmbələ speakers acquire their comprehension of Ewondo through exposure and gospel. These surveys guided in considering Bəmbələ as a language-unit. Djomeni (2004) confirmed these results after another sociolinguistic survey in the community, in the vein of verifying the previously stated results, survey extended unto 2006 and 2009.

In 2004, Djomeni sketches out the phonology of the language. Since 2005, within the BASAL framework, developed in Cameroon under the supervision and coordination of the NACALCO (National Association of Cameroonian Language Committees) Centre for Applied

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Linguistics (CAL), Djomeni (as a volunteer fieldworker) has developed a number of initial standardization materials for literacy in this language. These materials include:

- an orthography guide
- a wall alphabet
- a transition book
- a small bilingual dictionary (2000 words and more)
- an alphabet book
- big books (3 published)
- a primer

These documents fall within the vein of the long-lasting process of standardization, development and literacy and revitalisation of the language.

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1.8.1.2. On the different approaches of language standardisation and revitalisation

There are two main approaches prevailing in the domain of language standardisation in Cameroon. Either the researcher can develop a standard based on a mixture of the dialects of the language or he can choose one of the variants and develop it as the standard form. This choice is done after having localised the linguistic area and pointed out the dialects of the language. The promotion of the standard model could be based on one of the methods presented above.

While Sadembouo (1980 & 2001) advocates the choice of a reference standard dialect, Capo (1988), developed an approach termed neo-language, based on the synthetic analysis of the different existing dialects of the language. Although Capo's approach seems difficult and bulky in terms of application, it constitutes however a step forward in the proposal of models for the development of African Languages. Kouesso's (2009) stratified writing system is based on the development of secondary standards or standards of the different dialectal poles as a transition strategy towards the main standard model. The standardisation model developed by Kouesso is applicable to languages with many dialectal differences like Yemba. However, the application of this approach is expensive enough because it requires more financial and human resources.

The description and development of Bɔ̀mbɔlɔ̀ is based on the choice of a reference standard dialect (Sadembouo 1980 et 2001). This approach finds its validity and justification in a number of important reasons and the principles applicable to the language.

- conformity with the written tradition of the language;

- the natural status of the written language;

- the systemic nature of the language;

- the didactic advantage for promoting one dialect;

-the common acceptance of the dialect;

According to Sadembouo (1980 & 2001), this kind of choice is based on three sets of criteria that will be discussed later on in the work.

Quite a number of scholarly works have addressed the issue of language revitalisation in the world these recent years. These works have led to a flourishing literature on the issue in different ways and according to field experience. Here is the description of some of those key works.

Tasuka (2005) in his book entitled *Language endangerment and language revitalisation*, presents a comprehensive overview of issues that concern language endangerment and language revitalisation. The book, as the result of his experience on Australian Aboriginal languages for over 35 years, shows the deep commitment he had for the speech forms and the communities with whom he has collaborated.

Sumbuk (2003) reporting on UNESCO's activities in Papua New Guinea in his paper *Langues indigènes: revitalisation et préservation en Mélanésie et dans le Pacifique* argues that the aim of the activities on the languages of this part of the world were targeting the establishment of a viable orthography, the elaboration of basic reference didactic materials and the establishment of audiovisual sources to modernize the teaching and the promotion of the languages. Other activities included the translation of official documents and their publication in local languages, by the same token, encouraging local communities to implement strategies for the protection of their languages. The author points out with focus on Vanuatu that local languages have retained the attention of the public authorities in that part of the world.

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Furthermore, the different activities have raised public and local awareness on the utility of local languages.

Hornberger and Kendall (1996) in their paper "Language revitalisation in the Andes: Can the Schools Reverse Language Shift?" argue that although Quechua is a vital language, with its over 10 million speakers, census records and sociolinguistic studies document a continuous cross-generational shift from Quechua monolingualism to Spanish monolingualism in the latter half of the twentieth century, at both individual and community levels. They claim that an increasing awareness of the potential threat to the language has led to a variety of new initiatives for Quechua revitalisation in the 1990s, initiatives which go beyond earlier experimental bilingual education projects designed primarily to provide mother tongue literacy instruction to indigenous children (in transitional or maintenance programs), to larger or more rooted efforts to extend indigenous language and literacy instruction to new speakers as well.

In *The green book* of *language revitalization in practice*, Hale (2001) claims that a few languages, especially English are spreading on the world-wide environmental destruction and globalization of economy whence thousands of other languages are disappearing, taking with them important cultural, philosophical and environmental knowledge systems and oral literature. In response to this situation, indigenous communities around the world have begun to develop countless projects to maintain their language alive. The book is an account of what is going on now as people struggle for their linguistic survival from Native American languages, Australian languages, Maori, Hawaiian, Welsh, Irish, and others. African researchers and Cameroonian ones in particular, also stood up to give a hand to rescue endangered languages.

In Cameroon in particular, the BASAL programme, under the auspices and the scientific coordination of the NACALCO team, has contributed a great deal to the revitalisation of some eleven Cameroonian languages with the ultimate goal of empowering local communities in their languages at very mitigated speed and levels and with comfortable results.

As a prelude to starting revitalisation activities on languages, UNESCO’s expert committee on language safeguarding and revitalisation has elaborated a number of criteria that should be taken into account in determining language endangerment from where revitalization must start. These criteria are already discussed above.

Grenoble and Whaley (2006) set six models for language revitalisation. These models include total immersion, partial-immersion, the local language as a second “foreign” language,

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community-based programmes, master-apprentice programme and language reclamation model. These models are discussed in details in the second part of this work.

The current work comes up as a step forward to strengthen such initiatives in Cameroon and in Africa in general.

1.8.1.3. Contribution of these studies

The review of literature on the language helps to capture how the language area has been identified and how Bəmbələ has been established as a language-unit. The different proposals of approaches on language standardisation map out the directions existing in this field for now. The proposals guided me in the choice and the implementation of a viable model of the standardisation of Bəmbələ. The chosen model is the one currently largely applied in Cameroon: the reference standard dialect model.

The activities carried out on revitalisation helped to capture and to assess what other researchers did / are doing in the other parts of the globe. Their contributions shed light on the activities that they carried out on the languages they worked on. It is noticeable that in general, language revitalisation results from an increasing awareness of the potential threat to a given language. However, what these researchers have not pointed out is the mechanism whereby they produce the didactic materials used and the approach they adopted in working with the community.

The proposed revitalisation model does not say how the researcher must behave once in the community of the language he is revitalising and in which context and why a model shall be chosen.

1.8.2. Theoretical framework

Since this work involves the two main branches of linguistics, namely General and Applied linguistics, different theoretical frameworks are taken into account for its realisation. In general, the approach we adopt is eclectic in nature. It makes use at the same time of the theories of descriptive linguistics and the frameworks of sociolinguistics which include those used in standardisation and revitalisation. So also, some concerns regarding material design are helphul in the elaboration of pedagogical grammar. The presence of the review of literature in this work is also the consequence of the hybrid nature of the study.

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1.8.2.1. The structural approach

The structural approach is adopted for the first part of this work. Structural linguistics is an approach to linguistics originating from the work of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, father of modern linguistics. In his *Course in General Linguistics*, posthumously published in 1916, Saussure set the basis of this approach.

As an approach to linguistics, structural linguistics implies collecting a corpus of utterances and then applying discovery procedures to them in an attempt to classify all of the elements of the corpus at their different linguistic levels: the phonemes, morphemes, word classes, noun phrases, verb phrases, and sentence types. The choice of this approach at this stage of my analysis is justified by the fact that, usually, it is required, prescribed and useful for the description of unwritten or lesser developed African languages. Nonetheless, where necessary, the generative approach would be used to elucidate some points.

1.8.2.2. The sociolinguistic and the applied linguistic approaches

In the whole part devoted to standardization and revitalisation, the approaches applied in the domain of language standardisation and language planning will be of chief interest. These approaches include at the same time the perspectives of applied linguistics and sociolinguistics. Frameworks related to language planning and language development are useful at this level. These frameworks include that of mother tongue literacy, sustainable development, and functional language planning.

- *Framework of mother tongue literacy*

This framework is also known as the framework of community literacy. It is different in national literacy in which the official language(s), English and French and foreign languages in Cameroon, is /are the main medium of communication and formal instruction. As noted by Chiatoh (2004:26), “the expressions mother tongue literacy, community literacy and vernacular literacy, are quite often used interchangeably”. UNESCO recognises that this form of literacy captures three levels of utility of mother tongue not only in education, but also in the whole developmental process of communities. This form of literacy captures and balances to community members’ psychological, sociological and educational factors. This explains why mother tongues are of great importance in the life of and development of mankind and his or her community and so, should be fully integrated into the processes of planned changes. Mother

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tongue literacy is closely related to culture which is "neither elite nor institutional" (Chiatoh 2004). Being the language in which Bəmbələ natives think, express their identity, dream and judge social relations, literacy in their language should be the first concern of the community. Mother tongue here is viewed not only as the learners' first medium of communication and work but also, as the direct link between them and their natural environment, thoughts and beliefs. Native speakers' worldview and early development are often shaped by their language which finally determines their future aspirations through the combination of their creative techniques and strategies. Local literacy can function in a wide range of domains: artistic engagement, religious practice, informal communication etc. We applied this framework during literacy classes and training sessions. In fact, literacy as the most complicated issue in language revitalisation, imbues the local language with greater sense of prestige. It allows the language to be used in any modern social domain through development. Ideally, literacy will be the product of a grassroots kind of movement, coming from within the community itself and involving community participation in all phases of development (Grenoble & Whaley 2006: 103).

- *The framework of sustainable literacy promotion*

Also called functional literacy, here, literacy is seen as an activity that covers the whole life of the community (lifelong activity) that requires endless series of efforts initiated and directed towards sensitising, encouraging and supporting continuing learning or literacy and capacity building for long lasting activities. It mostly deals with self-sustained literacy which at the cognitive level is necessary for the cognitive development of certain skills, such as scientific reasoning, logic, abstract thinking, to distinguish between literal and metaphorical meanings. At the social level, it is a prerequisite for economic development. To access political decisions and power equality, one must be literate and mostly in his mother tongue. This help to acknowledge and to defend one's rights. Functional literacy used to refer to adult education programmes. For UNESCO, basic literacy involves reading and writing, and we add calculation. For literacy to be useful to a community, its application must extend beyond the classroom. It fosters pride on one's culture, and awareness that includes social participation in the running of the community, including an awareness if civil rights and social responsibilities concerning issues such as environment, sanitation and public health and pollution. Sustainable literacy is empowering for local community.

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- *The framework of functional language planning*

This framework is based on the fact that different languages are assigned different functions or operational uses in line with the needs, interests, and expectations of the members of the community. Specific languages are assigned specific roles depending on the priority domains of use such as education, religion and administration. The socio-cultural interests of the learners, especially with respects to linguistic rights and identities need to be carefully considered.

1.9. Limitations and delimitations of the study

As aforementioned, this study is subject to some limitations and delimitations that have come about as the result of the resources available, the time and the bulkiness of the activities to be carried out.

1.9.1. Delimitations

This piece of research presents some delimitation because of its nature: it embraces at the same time the domains of descriptive and applied linguistics.

The work does not deepen the syntactic analysis of the language. It brings out its common phrase and sentence structure and some of their assets at the structural level. Consequently, the chapter points out only those key and striking elements useful for the understanding of the basic structure of the language. This analysis was just to respond to the objectives of the study and remain within its scope. Therefore, this leaves open a range of possibilities of descriptions on the syntax of the language. The work does not assess the degree of development of the language so far. This gives an opportunity to other researchers to focus on the issue.

In general, each of the chapter brings out the key elements of the language useful for its revitalisation. This is because of the immensity of the whole content of the work.

1.9.2. Limitations

The first limitation of this work has to do with its scope. It focuses on language safeguarding and revitalisation or, otherwise, on language instrumentation and “instrumentalisation” based on a particular language.

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Another limitation of the work is its inability to make an in-depth analysis of the syntax of the language. Because my intention and target here was not just describing the language, we believed that proposing just those elements necessary for building the pedagogic grammar of the language will be sufficient enough considering the size of the whole study.

One more limitation is its inability to evaluate the level, qualities of the activities carried out by the language committee itself on the language since it has been settled down. This fact is due to the amount of materials to be taken into account in the study and the time frame constraints. Being conscious of all these limitations, we have made a considerable effort to make the analysis accessible to the extent that any researcher could undertake these same activities on any language and the same result be obtained. This is replicability.

1.11. Informants

During my fieldwork, we collected pieces of information and our data through many informants. Nevertheless, among those informants, some were regular and devoted so that they were ready at all cost to provide us with the required information and data. In this category of informants fall those whose names are in the table below. This list also includes our permanent informants in Yaounde (out of the field), who were also regular in the field during periods of academic brake. The permanent informants listed here mostly provided me with the data utilised for the description of the work. The aspect of the work based on inner-view required groups of informants. These groups of informants were scattered in the community according to whether we were in this or that area of the locality. They were neo-literates, storytellers, community members in their entirety. They contributed a lot in text productions, discussions regarding the structure of the language and the organisation of their society. Most of them were conscious of the need to develop their language. The groups were made up of villagers of any social status. Therefore, the list we present below, essentially based on individual informants, is simply indicative and focussed on those regular and constant informants with whom we worked.

Table 1: Main informants and affiliation

N°	***Name and surname***	***Age***	***occupation***	***Living place***
1-	**Akak Justin**	66	Former Bibey council agent	Endoe
2-	**Ndongo Sabo Michel**	65	President of the Bibey customary court	Bibey
3-	**Ndong Esther**	44	Housewife	Bibey
4-	**Ndong Blaise**	28	University student	Bibey/ Yde

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1.12. Outline

This study is divided into parts and chapters. Before the first part, comes the general introduction, which lays the foundation of the work. It presents the language, its geographic location, the socioeconomic background of its speakers, the review of literature, the goal and motivation, the theoretical framework and methodology adopted throughout the work. After the General introduction, comes the first part of the study.

The first part of the study "The Descriptive grammar of Bəmbələ, is made up of six Chapters. The first chapter of this part, Chapter 2, "Phonology of Bəmbələ" analyses the sound system and tone pattern of the language. In fact, it deals with the study of its phonology, taking into account its segmental and suprasegmental features. The following chapter, chapter 3, "Noun morphology of Bəmbələ" addresses noun morphology. Here, noun classes, gender, lexical enrichment processes or noun formation are described. Chapter 4, entitled "The modifiers of the noun" is interested in the description of those elements which evolve around the noun and whose behaviour, from the point of view of concord, depends on. Chapter 5 tackles the elements of the verb group while in chapter 6, we embark on the study of "tense, aspect and mood" in the language. Chapter 7, "Syntax of Bəmbələ" brings up the structure of Bəmbələ sentence constituents, namely the noun phrase, the verb phrase, and the prepositional phrase. In fact, it deals with the basic syntax. It is the last chapter of this part of the study.

The second section deals with standardisation, revitalisation and the immersion approach for the promotion of the developed Bəmbələ standard model. It also comprises four chapters (the chapters are numbered consecutively to the previous chapters). The first chapter of this section, chapter 8, looks at the prerequisites for language standardisation and the choice of a standard model for Bəmbələ. The second chapter of this part, chapter 9, addresses the question of the total immersion of the researcher for the promotion of the standard model. In chapter 10, the pedagogical grammar of the language, is elaborated. This pedagogical grammar, rendered in a form of booklet, is attached to the work as appendix (appendix 3). Furthermore, in the appendices are found the questionnaire used for the survey and the universal declaration of linguistic rights. The work ends with a general conclusion.

Tables are numbered consecutively while examples are numbered by chapter.

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PART ONE

DESCRIPTIVE GRAMMAR OF BƏMBƏLƏ

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INTRODUCTION

This first part of the study addresses in general the description of Bàmbələ. As a matter of fact, it is made up of chapters. It contains six (6) chapters in total.

The first chapter, chapter 2, entitled “Phonology of Bəmbələ”, analyses the sounds and the syllables of the language. This is where consonants, vowels and tones are analysed. The second chapter, chapter 3, analyses the noun morphology of the language with special focus on noun classes. The modifiers of the noun are tackled in chapter 4 where due attention is paid to their function in relation with the noun they modify. The fifth chapter describes the elements of the verb forms and verbal derivation. This chapter is immediately followed by tense, aspect and mood, content of chapter 6, to complete the study of the verbal system of the language. The last chapter of the section, chapter 7, which addresses the syntax of the language, closes the first part of the thesis, paying special attention to the combination of the units useful to construct meaning in the language.

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CHAPTER 2
PHONOLOGY OF BƏMBƏLƏ

2.1. Introduction

This chapter examines the sound system of Bàmbəlà. Here, we intend to establish the distinctive function of the sounds, mainly through contrastive minimal pairs.

The theoretical framework adopted here is structuralism. This does not exclude the use of the generative approach to an extent to explain some phenomena. We believe that structuralism is the most appropriate approach for the development of the phonology of an unwritten language because it helps to capture the contrastive nature of the units.

2.2. Segmental Phonology

Here, our intention is to identify the vowels and the consonants of the language and undertake a contrastive analysis of these sounds. The identification is done by simply looking at the words of the language and picking up the required sound while the analysis itself is based on contrastive minimal pairs or near minimal pairs where necessary.

2.2.1. Vowels

At this level, we identify and analyse the different vowels of Bàmbəlà.

2.2.1.1. Inventory of phonetic Vowels

I have identified 15 phonetic vowels in Bàmbəlà. They are presented below in square brackets.

[i, e, ɛ, ə, a, u, o, ɔ, aa, ee, ɛɛ, ii, uu, oo, ɔɔ]

I distinguish short and long vowels in Bàmbəlà. This is evident in the list of vowels in the brackets above. The only vowel that does not have a long counterpart is the schwa [ə].

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2.2.1.2. Contrastive analysis of vowels

At this level of our analysis, we start by tackling the study of short vowels, then that of long vowels.

A. Short vowels

i/e kínkì "bank of the river"

kénkì "taking care of ones' guests"

e/ɛ mbèl "eagle"

mbɛ̀l "palm nut"

u/ɔ ŋkùk "tree bark"

ŋkɔ̀k "trunk"

ndú " husband"

ndɔ́ " head"

o/ɔ pó "rat"

pɔ́ "news"

mbɔ̀m "boa"

mbɔ̀m "fore front"

a/ə àták "rack"

àtə́k "weakness"

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B. Long vowels

Each long vowel contrasts in each of the following:

ii/i mə̀bíí “excretes”

mə̀bí “armpit”

ee/e àbéél “incense”

àbél “maternal milk”

ɛɛ/ɛ nsɛ́ɛ́ “ branch”

nsɛ́ “tuber”

uu/u mə̀vúú “supplication”

mə̀vú “period of production”

o/oo mbó “friend”

mbóó “raphia straw”

ɔ/ɔɔ ndɔ́ “head”

ndɔ́ɔ́ “medicine in banana leaves”

a/aa mbáám “cowry”

mbàm “grumbling”

We earlier mentioned that the schwa does not have a corresponding long counterpart.

The table below presents the different phonemic vowels of Bə̀mbələ̀.

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Table 2: Phonemic vowels of Bàmbəlà

	Front		**Central**		**Back**	
	Short	**long**	**short**	**long**	**short**	**long**
high	i	ii			u	uu
mid-high	e	ee	ə		o	oo
mid-low	ɛ	ɛɛ			ɔ	ɔɔ
low			a	aa		

The table above shows the 15 phonemic vowels of Bàmbəlà. There are 8 short and 7 long vowels.

2.2.1.3. Distribution of vowels

We present in the following table the different word positions in which each vowel phoneme appears.

Table 3: Distribution of vowels

vowels	initial	medial	final
i	+	+	+
e		+	+
ɛ		+	+
u		+	+
o	+	+	
ɔ		+	
a	+	+	+
ə		+	+
ii		+	+
ee		+	+
uu			+
oo		+	+
ɔɔ		+	+
aa		+	+
ɛɛ		+	+

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The table shows that in Bəmbələ, all the vowels appear in the final position. Vowels mostly occur in this position. The initial position is almost unoccupied. The usual vowels appearing here are *i, o, a*. The following data help us to capture this observation.

(1) àbàŋ “farm” ìsíŋə “cat”

ìŋgóŋ “tree” ìpùlóŋ “example”

ò “you”

We notice that in the data above, the previously mentioned vowels are those occurring in the initial position.

2.2.2. Consonants

In this section, we undertake an inventory and analysis of Bəmbələ consonants. As a reminder, the inventory is obtained simply by looking at words and identifying the required consonant while the analysis itself is based on contrast in minimal pairs.

2.2.2.1. Identification of phonetic consonants

The phonetic consonant sounds identified in Bəmbələ are the following in square brackets: [p, b, t, d, m, n, ɲ, ŋ, k, s, z, r, v, l, j, ʏ, w, h, ɣ, kp, gb, tʃ, dʒ, dz, mp, mb, mbʷ nt, nd, ŋk, ŋg, ŋgʷ, ns, nz, mv, nl, ŋkp, ŋgb, ntʃ, ndʒ, ndz, tʷ, ŋʷ, kʷ, sʷ, lʷ, pʲ, mʲ, vʲ, mbʲ, bʲ].

Fifty-one (51) phonetic consonant sounds are identified. Contrary to Djomeni (2004) who identified only thirty two (32) phonetic consonants, the current analysis brings out nineteen (19) more phonetic consonants. These additional consonants are the result of a deeper analysis conducted since then on the language, which came out as the result of longer exposure to the language, with the possibility to gather a wealth of data for the analysis. We present the phonetic consonants in the table below.

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Table 4: Phonetic consonants of Bàmbələ

Place of articulation / **Manner of articulation**	**bilabial**	**Labio dental**	**Alveolar**	**palatal**	**velar**	**Labio velar**	**glottal**
Implosive				ʏ			
Stops	p, mp, p^j, b, b^j, mb^w, mb mb^j		t, nt, t^w, d, nd		k, ŋk, k^w, $ŋg^w$, ŋg	kp, ŋkp, gb, ŋgb	
Nasals	m, m^j		n	ɲ	ŋ, $ŋ^w$		
Fricatives		v, v^j, mv	s, ns, s^w, z, nz			ɣ	h
Affricates			dz, ndz	tʃ, ntʃ, dʒ, ndʒ			
Laterals			l, nl, l^w				
Trill /Roll			r				
Glides				j		w	

Before analysing the contrastive nature of these consonants, it is worth tackling first the problem of interpretation of ambiguous segments such as prenasalised consonants, labialised consonants and palatalised consonants in this language.

2.2.2.2. Ambiguous segments

Ambiguous segments are those whose interpretation is not easy to process. These ambiguous segments include nasal consonants, labialised consonants and palatalised consonants.

2.2.2.2a. Nasal Consonants

Researchers in the A80 language group (Anyawu 2008, Henson 2007) differ as to whether the NC series should be analysed as prenasalised consonants or as homorganic consonant clusters i.e. whether they are monophonematic or biphonematic units. This question is of great interest in Bəmbələ, a language where there are many prenasalised consonants. In fact, let us rather consider the following data.

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(2)

a. ntɛ̀t "a hundred" b. ndàt "market" c. nsə̀ŋ "yard"

ŋkɔ̀k "trunk" ŋgɔ̀k "stone" nlìrə́ŋ "heavy"

mpɛ̀n "plait" mb^{w}àn "chief" nzìk "sewer

ntʃímə́ŋ "deep" ndzíl "kind of big mushroom" mvínə́ŋ "black"

ndʒíl "grand grand-son"

The data above are grouped into three main categories. This categorisation is going to help in the interpretation of the status of nasals. So also, the data shall help us to capture the different variations that might occur within these nasals in Bəmbələ. Range

The first observation is that in (a), the nasals are followed by voiceless stops or voiceless affricates, as even indicated in the literature about prenasalised consonants. In (b), the nasals are followed by voiced stops while in (c), they are followed by any other consonant.

There is a problem to be addressed: that of knowing exactly why researchers working on the languages of this group reserve the status of consonant clusters to voiced stops only and sometimes voiced affricates (see the examples in (b)) and do not state the nature of the other remaining prenasalised consonants (see examples in (c)).

In observing the case of prenasalised consonants in Bəmbələ, we shall question whether only voiced consonants should be considered consonant clusters. Some researchers on languages of this family such as Kouoh (2004:50) argue that it is usually impossible to maintain a nasal, voiced by nature, next to voiceless stops and affricates and consider them as clusters. Therefore, if we rely on this assumption, sounds such as [nt, mp, ntʃ, ŋk, ŋkp, mp^{j}, ns] cannot be interpreted as clusters, the nasals here should be considered as syllabic. In general, syllabicity is marked at the prosodic level by the perception of a tone on the nasal. In the literature, syllabicity is granted to those nasals that precede voiceless stops and affricates. This consideration therefore means that we shall solve the problem of prenasalised consonants in this work at two levels.

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My concern here is to know exactly whether the sequence N + voiced stop or affricate is to be considered as a cluster (one consonant) or as a sequence of two consonants or sounds. Furthermore, we must address the problem related to the nature of the other consonants as they appear in (c). The analysis relies on the interpretation criteria elaborated by Pike (1947), Martinet (1970) and Builles (1996)) because not only do they clarify the functioning of these sequences, but also, they give enough insight for the analysis of other contiguous ambiguous segments such as [kf, ŋf, st] in other languages.

We present below the criteria on which is based the analysis of N+stop or affricates.

- The analogous structure consonant + homorganic nasal does not exist in Bəmbələ. Therefore, we cannot have consonants like [bm, dn, gŋ, dzn] in the language. For instance, we cannot have words like *bmom* nor *dznil* in the language.

- The predominant syllable structure for Bəmbələ is CV (C) i.e. an alternation of a consonant (non syllabic) and a non syllabic vowel: criteria of syllable structure. We cannot find contiguous consonants or vowels belonging to the same syllable in the language. This means that CC clusters are not possible: we cannot have words like pkom, ŋbgal where p and k on the one hand and ŋ, b and g on the other belong to different syllables: phonotactics criteria

- The sequence of a nasal and oral sound is pronounced as one phonetic unit: phonetic criteria;

- There is no morphemic boundary between the oral and the nasal consonants in this language: morphotonal criterion.

There is another point to be taken into account here. In Bəmbələ, whether syllabic or not, nasals do not stand as morphemes (in full). For instance, in the sequence nasal + voiceless oral stop on the one hand and nasal + affricates on the other, none of the nasals stands as a morpheme. In fact, in Bəmbələ, nasals do not commute. Therefore, it is worth noting that they cannot function as noun class markers. Evidence of this is found in the data presented below:

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(3)	Sing	Pl	Sing	Pl
	ŋkùk ⟶	mìŋkùk	ŋkɔ̀k ⟶	mìŋkɔ̀k
	"tree bark"	"tree barks"	"trunk"	"trunks"
	nsəŋ ⟶	mìnsəŋ	nlɔ̀mì ⟶	mìnlɔ̀mì
	"courtyard"	"courtyards"	"bottle"	"bottles"

We notice that nasals do appear in the plural form of the words. They do not commute. Consequently, they cannot be considered as the singular marker in this language.

From one language to another, one or more criteria may not function. However, the major interest here is to weight the criteria and see which ones are dominant.

Finally, according to our analysis, in Bəmbələ, the sequence NC / N+C must be interpreted in one way: each sequence is made up of a voiced or a voiceless oral homorganic consonant shall be considered as a sequence representing only one sound. So do other types of consonants preceded by nasals. This position is also reinforced by Anyanwu (2008) who claims that "it is rare to find both [syllabic nasals and nasal clusters] in a language."

2.2.2.2b. Labialisation and Palatalisation

The problem of interpreting labialised and palatalised consonants is a familiar one for linguists working on African languages and Bantu languages in particular. Such consonants appear in Bəmbələ. My preoccupation here is to identify the source of labialisation and palatalisation in order to determine their status. In fact, labialisation and palatalisation are word level prosodies. They spread rightward from the end of the word, affecting all vowels, and certain consonants.

a. Labialisation

The effect of labialisation is restricted to the following consonants in Bəmbələ [t, k, mb, ŋ, ŋg, s, l]. Labialisation results from a "devoweled" back rounded vowel, namely the vowel /u /. This means that this vowel looses its vowel features in the process of transformation. In fact, the back rounded vowel /u/ becomes the labiovelar [w]. Therefore, the labio-velarisation of the

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affected consonants is a further development resulting from this labialisation. Underlyingly, we have the form CV whose surface or phonetic representation is C^w. Therefore, labialization occurs in one of the above mentioned consonants followed by the high back vowel [u] as observed below.

The following data help us to illustrate and capture labialisation in Bəmbələ.

(4)	|àlùàt|	⟶	[àl^{w}àt]	"duck"
	|ìkùàn|	⟶	[ìk^{w}àn]	"plantain"
	| ìkùárì|	⟶	[ìk^{w}árì]	"yam"
	|ŋgùàn|	⟶	[ŋg^{w}àn]	"young girl"
	|mbùàn|	⟶	[mb^{w}àn]	"chief"

The underlying level in phonological brackets stands for the phonological level while the surface representation in square brackets represents the phonetic level of the words.

Like in the case of palatalisation as we can observe below, the labialised consonant is often, if not always, followed by the central low vowel /a/.

At the tonological level, probably, after labialisation, the tone of the vowel which undergoes labialisation fuses with that of the immediate vowel.

b. Palatalisation

Whether as a shift in articulation to the palatal region or as a secondary articulation, palatalisation has been treated in the literature as an assimilatory process induced by a non-low front vowel. In Bəmbələ, this high front vowel is / i /. Bloomfield (1933:337) defends this point of view when he argues that palatalisation is triggered by an underlying front non-low vowel and that "it is a fairly assimilatory process". He argues that very often, after the operation of the rule of palataliation, the conditioning factor (which he believes is front vowel) is obscured and may not be seen in surface structure. In fact, in Bəmbələ, palatalisation occurs when a consonant is followed by the front high vowel.

Palatalisation (C^j) affects the following consonants: [p, m, b, v, mb]. Let us consider the following data which helps to explain what happens for palatalisation to occur in the language.

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(5)

mʲàn	“toucan”
bʲ áà	“beer”
mʲɛ̀kà	“snare stick”
bʲ àkɛ́ɛ́	“early in the morning”
vʲàŋlí	“ heat from sun”
pʲáá	“avocado”

The front high vowel /i/ is realised as the palatal glide [j] when followed by another vowel. This is evident in the data presented above where in general; the palatalised environment is mostly influenced by the central vowel /a/ that follows the palatalised high front vowel.

Palatalisation results from the reject of the VV structure i.e. a vowel followed by another vowel without syllable boundary in Bəmbələ. When such an offending sequence occurs in the language, the first vowel in the sequence becomes a glide. In general, in this language, the VV sequence without syllable boundary is offended. This gives room to another morphophonological rule, very rampant in the language: vowel coalescence or reciprocal assimilation (Anyanwu 2008) which involves complete fusion of the two vowel sounds involved. In fact, it involves fusion, or merger between two adjacent vowels that assimilate to each other:

(6) Mə à nùŋ ⟶ [mà nùŋ]. I PRES walk
“I walk.”

In (6), we observe that at the phonetic level, the vowels [ə] and [a] coalesce.

The analysis above shows that either palatalisation or labialisation originates from the fact that Bəmbələ rejects CC and VV structures without syllable boundary.

These interpretations are steps forward in an accurate analysis of the contrastive distribution of consonants with more precaution and arguments.

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2.2.2.3. Contrastive analysis of consonants

In this subsection, I study the phonemic status of consonants according to their different points of articulation and based on minimal pairs and near minimal pairs.

a. Labials

The sounds [p] and [b] contrast in the following data:

p/b ìpàk "digger

ìbàk "hoe"

pɔ́ "rat"

bɔ́ "them"

The sounds [p] and [mp] contrast in

p/ mp pɔ́k "one"

mpɔ́k "other"

The sounds [b]and [b^j] contrast in the data below:

b/ b^j báá "second"

b^jáá "beer"

The sounds [b] and [mb] contrast in the data below:

b/mb bòŋ "debt"

mbòŋ "cassava"

The sounds [mb] and [mb^w] contrast in the following:

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mb/mb^{w} mbàn “shed”

mb^{w}àn “chief”

The sounds [b] and [m] contrast in the following data:

b/ m bɔ́ “them”

mɔ́ “hand”

The sounds[p]and [p^{j}] contrast in the following data:

p/p^{j} mpáŋ “richness, financial ease”

mp^{j}áŋ “soup”

The sounds [m] and [m^{j}] contrast in the following data:

m/m^{j} màn “crocodile”

m^{j}àn “toucan”

The sounds [v] and [v^{j}] contrast in the following data:

v/ v^{j} ávɛ̀ɛ̀ “to defecate”

áv^{j}ɛ̀ɛ̀ “to sweep”

The sounds [v] and [b] contrast in the data below:

v/b ábɔ́k “to brake”

ávɔ́k “to measure”

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v/mv

The sound [v] occurs before the vowels i, and u, between the vowels o-o, i-u, ɔ-aa, i-o, i-ɛ as in ìvòò “width”, ìvún “stomach”, ìvɔ́váá “shade” víbə̀ “malaria”, vúkɛ́ɛ́ “timidity”, ìvɛ̀s “bone”. As for [mv], it appears initially followed by the vowels -e, -ɛ and –u, as in mvúl “breath”, mvùŋ “channel”, mvɛ̀skí “lightning”, mvèhə̀ŋ “breathing”

In conclusion, although [mv] occurs only in word intial position, it also is followed by the the high back vowel [u] like [v]. Consequently, they are two distinct phonemes.

b) Alveolars

The sounds [t] and [d] contrast in the data we present below:

t/ d	àtàn	“umbrella”
	àdàn	“boldness”
	tú	“earth in shifting cultivation”
	dú	“fire”

The sounds [s] and [z] contrast in the following data:

s/z	sàmá	“together”
	zàmá	“God”

The following sounds are distinct phoneme because of the following:

z/ nz

zó “name”	zàmá “God”
nzɔ́ “nakedness”	nzàŋà “well”

The sounds [d] and [nd] contrast in the data below:

d/nd	dɔ́	“so”	dú	“fire”
	ndɔ́	“head”	ndú	“husband”

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The sounds[d] and [dz] contrast in the following data:

d /dz	àdɔ́ŋ	“hole in the wall”
	àdzɔ́ŋ	“path”

The sounds [t] and [n] contrast in:

t/d	tú	“fallow land”
	dú	“fire”

The sounds [t] and [n] contrast in the data below.

t /n	ìtùn	“short, small”
	ìnùn	“kind of bird”
	átùŋ	“to slim”
	ánùŋ	“to walk”

The sounds [t] and [t^w] contrast in the following data:

t/t^w	átəŋ	“to tie, to bind”
	át^wəŋ	“to sing”

The sounds [l] and [r] contrast in the following data:

l /r	átɛ́rəŋ	“to start”
	átɛ́ləŋ	“to join banana leaves”

The sounds [l] and [l^w] contrast in the data we present below:

l /l^w	àlàt	“tailor”
	àl^wàt	“duck”

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c) Palatals

The sounds [ɲ] and [j] contrast in the data below:

ɲ /j	ɲɔ́	“snake”
	jɔ́	“sky”

The sounds [tʃ] and [dʒ] contrast in the following data:

tʃ /dʒ	átʃìmsì	“to render, to reimburse”
	ádʒìmsì	“to soften, to calm”

j /yˇ

The contrast between these two sounds is going to be captured by looking at the different environments in which they appear. Let us now consider the following:

júhə	“rain”	àyùhə	“banana”	yˇòlóŋgó	“chameleon”
yˇònók	“toad”	ìyˇɛ́ɛ́	“dress”	mbèj	“traditional torch”
tʃíjə	“name of a river”	ájɔ̀ŋ	“to carry”	yˇèrə́ŋ	“ripe”

The data above shows that [j] appears in the initial, median and final positions while [yˇ] appears in initial and median positions. Therefore, except the final position, both sounds share two identical positions. The following illustrates their distribution:

[j]	[yˇ]
V-	V-
V-V	V-V
-V	

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Hence, /y / and /y̰/ are distinct phonemes.

d) Velars

The sounds [k] and [ŋg] contrast in the examples below:

k/ŋg	kál	“sister”	kɔ̀k	“kind of leaves”
	ŋgál	“spouse, rifle”	ŋgɔ̀k	“stone”

The velar [k] also occupies the onset of the syllable. At this position, [g] is always preceded by a nasal (non-syllabic).

ŋg/ŋgw	ŋgàn	“waist”
	ŋgwàn	“young girl”
ŋk/k^{w}	ŋkás	“rope”
	k^{w}ás	“fish”

The sounds [k] and k^{w}] contrast in the following data:

k/k^{w}	kás	“drum”
	kwás	“fish”

The sounds [k] and [ŋk] contrast in the following data:

k/ŋk	kás	“drum”
	ŋkás	“rope”

The sounds [ɣ] and [ŋ] contrast in the following data:

ɣ/ŋ	ájáɣì	“to beg”
	ájáŋì	“to wait”

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The sounds [ŋ] and [ŋʷ] contrast in the following data:

ŋ/ŋʷ	ŋɔ́ŋlì	“kind of tree ”
	ŋʷɔ́ŋlì	“cry of death,”

e. Labio-velars

The sounds [kp] and [gb] contrast in the following data:

kp/gb	kpáp	“lion”
	gbáp	“instrument for making drums”

ŋkp / kp

In term of distribution, these sounds occur as follows:

ŋkp - ɛ, - a, as in ŋkpámát “new”, ŋkpɛ́ɣə̀ “caloa”

kp - ə -ɔ, - a, v-v, as in àkpán “broom”, àkpə̀ŋ “partridge”, kpáp “lion”.

We observe that both sounds occur before the vowel [a]. Therefore, they should be considered as distinct phonemes.

The sounds [w] and [gb] contrast in the following data:

gb/ w	gbɔ́m	“bark!”
	wɔ́m	“kind of mushroom”
kp/w	ákpɔ̀	“to fall”
	áwɔ́	“to die”

The sounds [ŋg] and [ŋgb] contrast in the following data:

ŋg / ŋgb́	ŋgál	“gun”
	ŋgbál	“sesame”

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The sounds [ndz] and [ndʒ] contrast in the data provided below:

ndz/ ndʒ ndzíl "kind of big mushroom"

ndʒíl "son of the grandson"

The sounds [w] and [j] contrast in the following:

w/j wɔ̂m "kind of small mushroom"

jɔ̂m "thing"

The sounds [ŋg^{w}] and [mb^{w}] contrast in the following data:

ŋg^{w} /mb^{w} ŋg^{w}àn "young girl"

mb^{w}àn "chief"

The following table presents the phonemic consonants of Bəmbələ.

Table 5: Consonant phonemes of Bəmbələ

Place of articulation / Manner of articulation		labials	alveolars	palatals	velars	labiovelars	glottal
stops	*simple*	p	t		k	kp	
		b	d			gb	
	labialised		t^{w}		k^{w}		
	palatalised	p^{j}					
		b^{j}					
implosives				ƴ			
nasals	*Simple*	m	n	ɲ	ŋ		
	labialised				ŋ^{w}		
	palatalised	m^{j}					
prenasalised consonants	*simple*	mp	nt	ns	ŋk		
		mb	nd	nz	ŋg		
		mv				ŋkp	
	affricate		ndz	ndʒ		ŋgb	
	labialised	mb^{w}			ŋg^{w}		
affricates				tʃ			

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	simple		dz	dʒ			
fricatives	*simple*		s				h
		v	z		ɣ		
	labialised		s^w				
	palatalised	v^j					
laterals	*simple*	l					
	labialised	l^w					
vibrants		r					
glides		w		j			

The table above presents the forty-eight (48) consonant phonemes of Bəmbələ.

2.2.2.4. Distribution of consonant phonemes

In order to capture the different positions of each phonemic consonant in Bəmbələ words, we shall study their distribution. A consonant can appear either at the initial, median or final position or at all of these positions in a word. In the table below, we indicate the position (s) occupied by each of the consonant phonemes in a word or in words. The sign (+) indicates the presence of a consonant at the indicated position.

Table 6: Distribution of Bəmbələ consonant phonemes

Consonants	**initial**	**median**	**final**
p	+	+	+
p^j	+	+	
b	+	+	
b^j	+	+	
t	+	+	+
t^w	+		
d	+	+	
k	+	+	+
k^w	+	+	
kp	+	+	
gb	+	+	
m	+	+	+
m^j	+	+	
n	+	+	+
ɲ	+	+	
ŋ	+	+	+
$ŋ^w$	+	+	

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mb	+		
mp	+		
mv	+		
nd	+	+	
nt	+		
ndz	+	+	
ndʒ	+		
ŋg	+	+	
ŋk	+		
ŋkp	+		
ŋgb	+		
ns	+	+	
mb^{w}	+		
$ŋg^{w}$	+		
ns	+		
nz	+		
dz		+	
tʃ		+	
dʒ		+	
s	+	+	+
s^{w}		+	
h	+	+	
v	+	+	
v^{j}	+	+	
z	+	+	
ɣ	+	+	
l	+	+	+
l^{w}	+	+	
r		+	
w	+	+	
j	+	+	+
y	+	+	

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The table above shows that few Bəmbələ consonant phonemes appear in word final position. Only the consonants /p, t, k, s, m, n, ŋ, l, j / do appear in this position. Most of them appear in the initial position except /dz, tʃ, dʒ, $s^{w,}$ /. In fact, six consonants in total appear in this

position. All the consonants appear in the median position except / t^w, mb^w, nd / that is, only three consonants do not appear in word median position.

2.2.2.5. Conclusion

We have identified 45 consonant phonemes in Bəmbələ. Consonant distribution shows that nine consonants do not appear in word final position while five others do not appear in word initial position and three in word median position. Most consonants therefore appear in word median position. The following section addresses the analysis of tone in Bəmbələ.

2.2.3 Tones

Like Bantu languages, Bəmbələ is a tone language. Tones are of great importance in the study of tonal languages like Bəmbələ. Most often, if not always, they play a distinctive function in those languages. In fact, without tones, the meaning of some words easily leads to confusion or misinterpretation. This is observable for instance in *ŋkǐ* and *ŋkî*.

In the study of tones, we look at their inventory and their contrastive nature.

2.2.3.1. Tone Inventory

Four tones are identified in Bəmbələ. They are high (´), low (`), Low high (ˇ) and High-low (ˆ). These tones are divided into two classes: register tones and contour tones.

Register tones appear in the following data:

high	(´)	low	(`)
mbə́ŋ	“big”	mə̀	“I, me”
ɲúŋ	“body”	ìnìŋ	“life”
sáŋ	“father”	nsìŋə̀	“kind of rope”

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Contour tones appear in the data we present below:

HL (ˆ)		LH (ˇ)	
wôŋ	“fear”	ŋkǐ	“son in law”
môk	“prison”	mbǎŋ	“kernel”
ŋkî	“interdict”	ŋgǒm	“kind of animal”

The following section addresses the tonemic status of these tones.

2.2.3.2. Contrastive analysis of tones

The contrastive analysis of tones is based on minimal pairs

In Bəmbələ, tones contrast in the following examples:

/H, L/	ɲóm	“male, spouse”	ŋkák	“spinal cord”
	ɲòm	“old man”	ŋkàk	“canary”
/H, HL/	ndɛ́m	“heart”		
	ndɛ̌m	“dream”		
/HL, LH/	ŋkî	“interdict”		
	ŋkǐ	“son in law”		

The following chart presents the tonemes of Bəmbələ.

Table 7: The tonemes of Bəmbələ

simple	Complex
/ ˊ /	/ ˋ /
/ˇ /	/ ˆ /

The four tones indentified as tonetic are also tonemic. The analysis of sounds and tones leads us to the study of syllable structures.

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2.2.4. Syllable types and syllable structures in Bəmbələ

In this subsection, we address at the same time the issue of basic syllable structures and syllable types in Bəmbələ. The different syllable types are closely related syllable structures. A syllable is a unit of utterance greater than the sound segment yet distinct from the morpheme or the word. There are as many syllables as there are syllabic peaks. Pure vowels constitute the peak of sonority. In languages where they exist, syllabic nasals also function as mora type syllables. It is worth noting that syllables can either be opened or close. Open syllables end with a vowel whereas close syllables end with a consonant. At the surface structure, the toneme a syllable can carry depends on whether it is prominent or not. Syllables are separated by full-stop in their abbreviated form in this work.

Referring to the previous discussions, it is stipulated based on the analysis that prenasalised consonants in Bəmbələ are all clusters. Consequently, morphophonological do not exist in this language.

Bəmbələ, has the following basic syllable structures: V, CV and CVC on the one hand. On the other hand, we identified the following syllable types in the language: monosyllables, disyllables, trisyllables, quatrisyllables and pentasyllables. We illustrate these different syllable types below.

a. Monosyllables

Structure	examples	gloss
V	a	“he
CV	bàà	two
	ndɔ́	“head”
CVC	mbél	“kernel”

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b. Disyllables

Stucture	examples	Gloss
V.CV	àlǒ	“ear
V.CVC	àbə̀ŋ	“farm”
CVC.CV:	ɲómkúú	“cock”

c. Trisyllables

Stucture	examples	Gloss
CV.CV.CV	pùláwà	“flower”
V.CV.CV	àbə́ŋə́	“bell”
V.CVC.CV	àsáŋsá	“small”

e. Quadrisyllables

Stucture	examples	Gloss
V.CV.CV.CV	ìbə́bə́mə̀	“swollen”
	àlàbínə̀	“perfume”
V.CVC.CV.CVC	ákúmə́bə̀ŋ	“to kneel down”
V.CV.CVC.V.CV	á.bɔ́m.mə́.kúú	“to applause”

e. Pentasyllables

structure	examples	gloss
CV.CV.CV.CV.CV	kə́ŋə́bə̀búrə̀	“scorpion”

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V.CV.CVC.V.CV	ìtʃíníkásɔ̀ŋ	“alveolar”

The recurrent and most evident syllable type in this language is the CV type. The different syllable types result from the main syllable structures.

2.4. Conclusion

In this chapter devoted to the study of the phonology of Bəmbələ, we have identified 45 consonant phonemes, 15 vowel phonemes and 4 tonemes. Three main syllable structures are attested in the language, namely V, CV and CVC. Five syllable types or structures also exist in the language. These syllable types which also make up the syllable structures of the words result from the four main syllable structures. Bəmbələ words can be monosyllabic, dissyllabic, trisyllabic, quadrisyllabic or pentasyllabic. The next chapter of our study addresses the noun morphology of Bəmbələ.

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CHAPTER 3
NOUN MORPHOLOGY OF BƆ̀MBƏLƆ̀

3.1. Introduction

In this Chapter, we address the issue of noun classes in Bàmbələ. Noun classes are fundamental in the study of noun morphology of Bantu languages. They constitute a core structure or even the cornerstone of the study of noun morphology of languages that have noun classes like Bàmbələ.

Researchers on Bantu languages propose different classification criteria for the identification of noun classes. Some hold that semantic contents and or class prefixes (see Van de Velde 2008) are key in determining noun classes of those languages which have classes. Others like Kadima (1969:82) argue that three criteria are taken into account in the classification of nominals, namely the noun prefix, the agreement marker, and the pairing. Another point worth raising is the number of noun classes to be found in a given Bantu language. According to Guthrie (1967), a Bantu language cannot have less than ten (10) classes. This idea is still held by many Bantuists these days. Yet, when we critically look at some of these languages, they seem to present less than ten classes. This is evident in my language of investigation. We shall come back on the issue in the conclusion of this chapter.

Nowadays, in some languages like Bàmbələ, it is possible to find nouns with the same prefix on the one hand and with the same semantic content on the other in the same class. In this vein, the criteria evoked above are not entirely applicable in Bàmbələ. Hence, the arguments raised by these researchers are still opened to debate in this language. In fact, our observation is that in this language, there are nouns with diverse semantic contents within the same class. This renders the classification based on these criteria not operational. We observe that in this language, nouns with the same prefix belong to distinct classes. It goes same with the semantic content of these nouns: we find nouns with different semantic content in the same class. Pairing usually occurs when the different classes are already identified to point out the different genders in the language. It is therefore difficult to use pairing as a classification criterion. As for concord markers, we observe that they play a crucial role in the classification and allow an easier and scientific identification of noun classes. In fact, agreement markers allow knowing exactly, through agreement patterns, the class to which a noun belongs.

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Based on the previous observation and demonstration, in Bəmbələ, noun classes are determined on the strict basis of agreement. Using this criterion, one obtains real classes based on scientifically established principles.

In the course of my discussion, we will demonstrate that the classification of nouns is more objective and scientific if based on the different concords or agreements that the nouns provoke on related elements (mainly its determiners) in a shorter or larger syntactic structure.

Before we delve into the full discussion, some notational conventions are to be precised. Then, phonetic forms of nouns are written in square brackets [ ] while their morphological forms are written in morpheme brackets | |. As for their phonological form, they will be written in slanting brackets / /. The presentation and discussion of the examples follow this shape: phonetic form, phonological form and morphological form. Otherwise put, the model used for presenting the examples (in this chapter and in the chapter on verb morphology) consists of three levels of analysis: a structural or a morphological level (written between vertical bars or morpheme brackets | |), a phonological level (written between slashes or slanting brackets / /), and a surface level (written between square brackets [ ]). Between the structural level and the phonological level, there is a relation of representation: a structural form is represented by a phoneme depending on its structural contexts. Between the phonological level and the phonetic or surface level, there is a relation of realisation: phonemes are realised by sounds, depending on the phonological context. This representation will be adopted in the study where necessary in order to help us capture both the surface and the underlying forms of noun prefixes and other elements.

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3.2. Noun classes in Bəmbələ

Nowadays, the classification of nouns into classes in most Bantu languages is based principally on the agreement pattern generated by the noun in a given syntactic structure or syntactic chain. Assigning numbers to the different classes often follows proposals from Bleek (1967).

Based on these criteria, we have identified eight noun classes in Bəmbələ and 7 genders (regular and irregular).

3.2.1. Class 1

Class1 has two subclasses, namely 1a and 1b represented by the morpheme |mu-|. This morpheme presents two surface manifestations: [m-] and [ø-]. Therefore, class 1 can be subdivided into two subclasses, namely class1a and class1b.

a- Class 1a

The prefix for this subclass is |mu-|. The following examples illustrate this sub-class.

(1)

a. [mùt]
/mù + ùt /
|mù-ùt |
CL1-person
"person"

b. [máŋá]
/mù + áŋá /
|mù-áŋá|
CL1- child
"child"

c. [mùŋɔ́]
/mù + ùŋɔ́/
|mù-ùŋɔ́|
CL1-woman
"woman"

d. [mǔm]
/mù + úm /
|mù-úm|
CL1- man
"man"

As we notice from these data illustrating class 1a, |mù-| becomes [m-] before vowel initial radicals.

b- Class1b

The prefix for class 1b is a zero /ø/ morpheme as illustrated below.

(2)

a. [kál]
/ ø + kál /
|ø-kál|
CL1-sister
" sister"

b. [sáŋ]
/ø + sáŋ /
|ø-sáŋ|
CL1- father
"father"

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b. [ɲóm]
/ø + ɲóm/
|ø-ɲóm|
CL1-husband
"husband"

d. [ɲáŋ]
/ø + ɲáŋ /
|ø-ɲáŋ|
CL1-mother
"mother"

Nouns belonging to this class (that is class 1) provoke the same agreement pattern on words in a syntactic construction. This fact justifies why they are grouped into one class. The following illustrations help to capture their concord phenomenon.

(3)

a. [kál wɔ́ŋ ɲínə́]
/ø + kál u + ɔ́ŋ ɲ + ínə́/
|ø- kál u - ɔ́ŋ ɲ-ínə́|
CL1-sister AP-POSS AP DEM
"This sister of yours"

c. [ŋkĭ wɔ́ŋ ɲínə́]
/ ø + kál u + ɔ́ŋ ɲ + ínə́/
|ø- ŋkĭ u- ɔ́ŋ ɲ-ínə́|
CL1-in–law AP POSS AP DEM
"This in-law of yours"

d. [mùŋə́ wɔ́ŋ ɲínə́]
/mù + ùŋə́ u + ɔ́ŋ ɲ + ínə́/
|mù-ùŋə́ u-ɔ́ŋ ɲ-ínə́|
CL1-woman AP POSS AP- DEM
"This woman of yours"

This example shows that all the nouns trigger the same agreement pattern. Consequently, they belong to the same class.

3.2.2. Class 2

Class 2 noun prefix is |bə̀-|. Class 2 is the plural of most class 1 nouns. Following are some nouns belonging to this class.

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(4)

a. [bəkál]
/bə + kál/
|bə-kál|
CL2-sisters
"sisters"

b. [bəsáŋ]
/bə + sáŋ/
|bə-sáŋ|
CL2-father
"fathers"

c. [bəɲáŋ]
/bə + ɲáŋ/
|bə- ɲáŋ|
CL2-mother
" mothers"

e. [bǒm]
/bə + óm/
|bə-óm|
CL2-man
" men"

A point worth raising here concerns the structure of some of these nouns. When two adjacent vowels occur in a word, one of the vowels deletes or semivocalises. This is evident in example (4e) where deletion occurs. In fact, from a morphophonological point of view, when two vowels are adjacent in the language, either one deletes, labialises or palatalises according to its environment. This deletion or semivocalisation results from the fact that in Bəmbələ, a VV sequence across morpheme boundary is not allowed.

We have identified one class 2 noun in Bəmbələ in which labialisation appears, namely [bwán] "children" plural of [mán]. We postulate a base |bəùán|. In the developmental process of this word, the vowel [ə] of the noun prefix (NPref) might have deleted and after this process, the vowel [u] might have semivocalised. In fact, the first vowel (V1) changes into a glide and during the process of gliding, the tone of the vowel also deletes.

3.2.3. Class 3 |ø-|

Class 3 has the following prefixes: |w-|, and |ø- |. Therefore, they can be divided into two sub-classes.

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a. Class 3a

The prefix of this sub-class is |ø-|. This zero morpheme |ø-| appears before nouns whose roots begin with a consonant.

(5)

a. [mʲ ɛ̀kə̀]
/ø + mìɛ̀kə̀/
|ø-mìɛ̀kə̀|
CL3-snare stick
"snare stick"

b. [mʲàn]
/ø + mìàn/
|ø-mìàn|
CL3-toucan
"toucan"

c. [ŋkùt]
/ø + ŋ̀kùt/
|ø-ŋkùt|
CL3-pressure
"pressure"

d. [mbòŋ]
/ø + mbòŋ/
|ø- mbòŋ|
CL3-cassava
"cassava"

e. [vʲə̀]
/ø-vìə̀/
|ø-vìə̀|
CL3-mushroom
"mushroom"

f. [vʲə̀ə̀]
/vì-ə̀ə̀/
|vì-ə̀ə̀|
CL3-laugh
"laugh"

In the data above (6a & b and 6e & f), we note the gliding of /i/ when followed by a vowel. This phenomenon is also evident in the following data and confirms by the same fact the argument that the language rejects a VV structure. Since the nasals in the examples in (6c & d) do not commute, the nouns in which they occur are assigned a zero prefix.

The vowel of the noun prefix undergoes gliding in the same context as mentioned above.

b. Class3b

The prefix of this subclass is |w-|. It also appears with a limited number of items.

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(6)

a. [wúlə]
/w + úlə/
|u-úlə|
CL3-kind of rope
"rope"

b. [wéé]
/w + éé/
|u-éé|
CL3- honey
"honey"

c. [wɔ́m]
/u + ɔ́m/
|u-ɔ́m|
CL3-mushroom
"mushroom"

d. [wúú]
/u + úú/
|u-úú|
CL3-theft
"theft"

These items (those in (6)) do not undergo pluralisation. Although all the nouns belonging to class 3 manifest many different prefixes, they all generate the same concord schema. In this vein, we present some of the nouns below to illustrate the agreement pattern of the nouns belonging to this class.

(7)

a. [wéé wámaŋ wúnə́]
/u + éé u + ámáŋ ú + nə́/
|u-éé u-ámàŋ u-nə́|
CL3-honey AP POSS AP-DEM
"this honey of mine"

b. [vʲɔ̀ wámàŋ wúnə́]
/vì + ɔ̀ u + ámàŋ ú + nə̀/
|vì- ɔ̀ u-ámàŋ u + únə́|
CL3- mushroom AP POSS AP-DEM
"this mushroom of mine"

c. [ndɔ́ wámàŋ wúnə́]
/ø + ndɔ́ u + ámàŋ u + únə́/
|ø-ndɔ́ u-ámàŋ u-únə́ |
CL3-head AP POSS AP DEM
"this head of mine"

We observe in the data in (7) that the entire nouns provoke the same agreement pattern all along the syntactic chains.

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3.2.4. Class 4 |mì-|

Class 4 is marked by the prefix |mì-|. This prefix appears before the CL3 prefix. The following examples illustrate this class.

(8)

a. [mìnsúmì]
/mì + nsúmí/
|mì-nsúmí|
CL4-termite
"termite"

b. [mìŋkɔ̀k]
/mì + ŋkɔ̀k/
|mì-ŋkɔ̀k|
CL4-trunk
"the trunk"

d. [mìndɔ́]
/mì + ndɔ́/
|mì-ndɔ́|
CL4-head
"the head"

e. [mìnsə̀ŋ]
/mì + nsə̀ŋ/
|mì-nsə̀ŋ|
CL4-courtyard"
"the court yard"

As we notice from the preceding data, the homorganic nasal |N-| does not commute. This might simply be explained by the fact that as the language develops, the noun prefix, namely the homorganic nasal fuses with the root.

3.2.5. Class 5 |a-|

In Bəmbələ, class 5 is marked by the prefix: |a-|. This prefix contains the following allomorphs: [di-], and [ø-]. Therefore, we shall divide class 5 into subclasses.

a. CL5a |a-|

Class 5a prefix is |a-|. I consider that |a-| is the basic allomorph because of its high frequency in the language. This prefix carries a low tone and appears before consonant initial roots like in the illustrations below.

(9)

a. [àkɛ́ɛ́]
/à + kɛ́ɛ́/
|à-kɛ́ɛ́|
CL5-leaf

b. [àbə̀ŋ]
/à + bə̀ŋ/
|à-bə̀ŋ|
CL5-farm

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“the leaf” “the farm”

c. [àbálà]
/à + bálà/
|à-bálà|
CL5-medecine
“medicine”

d. [àkɛ̀n]
/à + kɛ́n/
|à-kɛ́n|
CL5-buttock
“buttock”

b. Class 5b |di-|

The prefix of this subclass |di-| appears before vowel initial roots along with its variant |dz-| which appears only in one noun.

At the current stage of our study, we assume that in Bɔ̀mbɔlɔ̀, this prefix might have undergone some processes of simplification during its evolution. Initially, this prefix might have been |dzi-| and, as time went by, it underwent considerable simplification and gave room to the present |di-|. Therefore, the single noun in which |dz-| appears could be said to still be at the process of alteration. In the long run, this form might also undergo the same process. The noun referred to is presented below as follows:

dz-óé
CL5-nose
“nose”

When |dì-| is followed by a vowel, the vowel of the noun prefix [i], deletes. The following rule illustrates the deletion of the vowel |i|.

i ⟶ ø / -V

The data below (from CL5b) also help to illustrate the preceding rule.

(10)

a. [dùmɔ́]
/dì + ùmɔ́/
|dì-úmɔ́|
CL5-nest
“the nest”

b. [dùk]
/dì + ùk/
|dì-ùk|
CL5-watter closet”
“water closet”

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c. [dúmə́]
/dì + úmə́/
|dì-úmə́|
CL5-fromager
"cheese tree"

e. [dóé]
/dì + óé/
|dì-óé|
CL5-navel
"naves"

c. Class 5c |ø-|

This subclass has the zero morpheme as prefix. The Morpheme |ø-| appears before consonant initial roots as in the following:

(11)

a. [nzàl]
/ø- nzàl /
|ø + nzàl|
CL5-village
"village"

b. [ø-kíŋ]
/ ø+kíŋ/
| ø-kíŋ|
CL5-neck
"neck"

In spite of their different prefixes, all the nouns belonging to CL5 provoke CL5 agreement. This argument serves as the basis for their classification into a single class.

Some CL5 nominals carry noun prefixes similar to some CL1 prefixes. However, these nouns belong to different classes according to their different concord markers as we can observe below:

(12)

a. ø-ndóm wámàŋ ɲílí
CL1-brother POSS DEM
"that brother of mine"

b. ø-nzàl zámàŋ zílí
CL1-village POSS DEM
"this village of mine"

c. ø- kál wámàŋ ɲílí
CL1-sister POSS DEM
"this sister of mine"

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3.2.6. Class 6 | mə-|

The prefix for class 6 is |mə-|. Most often, this prefix indicates the plural of most CL5 nouns. It also appears in the plural form of some CL3 and CL1 nouns. We present below some nouns of this class for illustration.

(13)

a. [məkéé]
/mə + kéé/
|mə-kéé|
CL6-leaf
"leaves"

b. [mətók]
/mə + tók/
|mə-tók|
CL6-spon
"spoon"

b. [məbálá]
/mə + bálá/
|mə-bálá|
CL6-medecine
"medicine"

d. [mənùn]
/mə + nùn/
|mə-nùn|
CL6-bird
"birds"

The vowel of the prefix |mə-| deletes when it is followed by a vowel initial root.

The following data exemplifies this category of class 6 nouns.

(14)

a. [mùk]
/mə + ùk/
|mə-ùk|
CL6-water closet
"water closets"

b. [múmə́]
/mə + úmə́/
|mə-úmə́|
CL6-nest
"nests"

c. [móé]
/mə + óé/
|mə-óé|
CL6-nose
"nose"

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3.2.7. Class 7: | i-|

This class has the following prefixes | i-|, and the zero morpheme |ø-| which appears before consonants. Therefore, class 7 is divided into 7a and 7b.

a. class 7a

The prefix for this subclass is | i-|. It has a variant [ʸ]. The following data illustrate class7a nouns.

(15)

a. [ìnìŋ]
/ì + nìŋ/
|ì-nìŋ|
CL7-life
"life"

b. [ìsíŋə̀]
/ì + síŋə̀/
|ì-síŋə̀|
CL7-cat
"cat"

c. [ìnɛ́n]
/ì + nìŋ/
|ì-nìŋ|
CL7-mirror
"mirror"

d. [ìsɛ́ɛ́]
/ì-sɛ́ɛ́/
|ì + sɛ́ɛ́|
CL7-farm work
"farm work"

The vowels |i-| and |e-| are in free variation in a few words by some speakers. This observation is illustrated in the data below.

(16)

a. [èkúrə̀/ìkúrə̀]
/ì + kúrə̀ or è + kúrə̀/
|ì-kúrə̀|
CL7-punch
"punch"

b. [ìtɔ̀rɔ̀k or ètɔ̀rɔ̀k]
/ì-tɔ̀rɔ̀k or ètɔ̀rɔ̀k/
|ì-tɔ̀rɔ̀k|
CL7-mud
"mud"

The variant [j-] results from gliding. It appears before vowel initial roots. We can postulate the rule below to account for the process.

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i ⟶ j /#-V

The prefix |i-| undergoes semivocalisation because it is immediately followed by a vowel belonging to the same syllable. This structure is not permitted in the language as illustrated in the data below.

(17)

a. [ɣònók]
/ì + ónók/
|ì-ònók|
CL7- toad
"toads"

b. [ɣòlóŋgó]
/ì + òlóŋgó /
|ì-òlóŋgó|
CL7-chameleon
"chameleon"

c. [ɣɛ́ɛ́]
/ì + ɛ́ɛ́/
| ì- ɛ́ɛ́|
CL7-nail
"nail"

d. Class 7b |-ø|

The prefix for class 7b is the zero (null) morpheme. The following data illustrate this subclass.

(18)

a. [mbàk]
/ø + mbàk/
|ø-mbàk|
CL7-silver fox
"silver fox"

b. [mbʲə́]
/ø + mbíə́/
|ø-mbíə́|
CL7-dog
"dog"

c. [nzɔ̀k]
/ø + nzɔ̀k/
|ø-nzɔ̀k|
CL7-elephant
"elephant"

d. [ɲɛ́t]
/ø + ɲɛ́/
|ø-ɲɛ́t|
CL7-buffalo
"buffalo"

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d. [kpáp]
/ø + kpáp/
|ø-kpáp|
CL7-lion
" lion"

f. [k^{w}é]
/ø + kúé/
|ø-kúé|
CL7-monkey
"monkey"

All the nouns belonging to CL7a and CL7b provoke the same agreement in spite of their different prefixes. The following data illustrate this fact:

(19)

a. [ìnɛ́n jámàŋ jínə́]
/ì + nɛ́n í + ámàŋ í + ínə́/
|ì-nɛ́n í-ámàŋ í-ínə́|
CL7-mirror AP POSS AP DEM
"this mirror of mine"

b. [ɣónók jámàŋ jínə́]
/ ì + ònók í + ámáŋ í + ínə́/
|ì-ònók í-ámàŋ í-ínə́|
CL7-toad AP POSS AP DEM
"this toad of mine"

The nouns in class7b fall within class 9/10 in other languages of the same group or in a different class or different classes. We have classified them within this class because of their agreement pattern. Class 7b nouns do not have a plural form.

The syntactic structures presented in the following data illustrate CL7 concord markers. The structures also draw our attention to the fact that whether limited to a structure of the type N+Poss+Dem or extended to a larger structure, the concord schema generated is the same.

(20)

a. |bàláŋ ì-ònók ì-ámàŋ ì-tɔ́k á í-ɲǐ ájă á vè ákílí|
look CL7-toad AP-Dem AP-one PREP AP-four sing PR come DEM
"That is one of my four toads coming there."

b. |bàláŋ ø-mbíə́ í-ámàŋ í-tɔ́k á í-ɲǐ ájă á vè ákílí|
look CL7-dog CL7-DEM AP-one PREP AP-four sing PR come DEM
"That is one of my four dogs coming there."

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c. |bàláŋ ì-síŋə́ í-ámàŋ í-tɔ́k á í-ɲǐ ájă á vè ákílí|
look CL7-cat AP-DEM AP-one PREP AP-four sing PR come DEM
"That is one of my four cats coming there."

The data above illustrate the regularity of CL7 agreement markers in (20) above.

3.2.8. Class 8: | bì -|

This class contains the plural of most class 7 nouns. The class 8 prefix marker is |bì-| with a low tone. We illustrate this class through the following data.

(21)

a. [bìnìŋ]
/bì + ìnìŋ/
|bì-ìnìŋ|
CL8-life
"lifes"

b. [bìswá]
/bì + súá/
|bì-súá|
CL8-pan
"pans"

c. [bìnùŋ]
/bì + ìnùŋ/
|bì-ìnùŋ|
CL8-walk
"walks, travels"

d. [bìnɛ́n]
/bì + ìnɛ́n/
|bì-ìnɛ́n|
CL8-mirror
"mirror

The data presented above indicate that whenever the class prefix |bì-| is followed by the high front vowel, the class prefix vowel deletes as illustrated in the following rule:

V ⟶ ø /-V

In the same position, the vowel prefix becomes a glide when it is followed by any vowel other than [i] as illustrated by the rule and data below.

bi ⟶ b^j / -V

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(22)

a. [bʲòlóŋgó]
/bì + òlóŋgó/
|bì-òlóŋgó|
CL8-chameleon
"chameleons"

b. [bʲónók]
/bì + ònók/
|bì-ònók|
CL8-toad
"toads"

c.[bʲă]
/bì + á/
|bì-á|
CL8-song
"songs"

d. [bʲɔ̂m]
/bì + ɔ̂m/
|bì-ɔ̂m|
CL8-thing
"things"

The data above clearly indicate that deletion occurs when the root begin with the palatal high front vowel while palatalisation occurs when the root begins with any vowel other than /i/.

The overall analysis of the noun class system of Bəmbələ on the basis of concord patterns shows that the language has eight noun classes. The noun classes identified and analysed above are summarised in the table below.

Table 8: Noun classes in Bəmbələ

Classes	Noun prefixes
1	1a. mù- 1b. ø-
2	bə-
3	3a. ø- 3b. w-
4	mì-
5	5a. a- 5b. ø- 5c. di-
6	mə-
7	7a. i- 7b. ø-
8	bì-

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The presence of what we call subclasses here strengthens the argument that as time goes by, noun classes reduce. Some disappear while others fuse. This might explain why we have less than 10 classes in this language. Contrary to what some researchers argue on the languages of this group (there is no language with less than10 classes in this group), this language has less than 10 classes.

3.3. Gender in Bəmbələ

In Bantu languages, gender refers to a couple of nouns expressing the opposition singular / plural. Therefore, gender is a pairing of two noun classes. Conventionally, a comma separates the figures expressing paired classes. In Bəmbələ, we divide the nouns into two classes of gender, namely regular or canonical genders and irregular genders.

Genders generally associate two classes. Therefore, in Bəmbələ, those substantives that do not undergo pairing cannot be considered as genders: they are mono-classes or one-class nouns. This shall be considered as such in any other Bantu language.

3.3.1. Regular genders

Regular genders are those that accept or receive regular pairings such as 1/2, 3/4. The following pairings fall within this gender.

A- Gender I: 1,2

Most nouns belonging to this gender refer to human beings. This gender is made up of classes 1 and 2 as we can observe below.

(23)

a. [mùt] / [bòt] “person / persons”

[kál] / [bəkál] “sister / sisters”

b. [ndóm] / [bəndóm] “brother / brothers”

c. [sáŋ] / [bəsáŋ] “father / fathers”

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B. Gender II: 3, 4

Gender II is built from classes 3 and 4. The nouns found within this gender come from different semantic sources. Hence, it is possible to find within this gender nouns referring to human beings, trees, animals and things. The data below exemplify the gender.

(24)

a. [mbòŋ] / [mìmbòŋ] "cassava / cassava"

b. [nsəŋ] / [mìnsəŋ] "courtyard / courtyards"

c. [ŋkɔ́k]/ [mìŋkɔ́k] "gazelle / gazelles"

d. [nsúmí] / [mìnsúmí] "termite / termites"

C. Gender III: 5, 6

This gender is made up of nouns referring to human beings, trees and things. It comes from the pairing 5, 6 as we can observe in the illustrations below.

(25)

a. [àkàbà] / [məkàbà] "leaf / leaves"

b. [dùk] / [mùk] "water closet / "water closets

c. [dzóé] / [móé] "nose / nose"

d. [nzìk] / [mənzìk] "saw / saws"

D. Gender IV: 7, 8

In this gender, we find nouns that refer to human beings, animals and objects. Gender 7, 8 comes from the pairing of classes 7 and 8. The examples below illustrate the gender.

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(26)

a. [ìvès] / [bìvès] “bone / bones”

b. [ìséé] / [bìséé] “farm work / farm works”

c. [yɔ̀nók] / [bʲɔ̀nók] “toad / toads”

d. [ì-ŋgáŋ] / [bìŋgáŋ] “tree / trees”

e. [yɔ̀lóŋgó] / [bʲɔ̀lóŋgó] “chameleons /chameleons”

f. [èkúrə] / [bìkúrə] “punch / punches”

3.3.2: Irregular genders

Irregular genders are made up of non-consecutive classes. Otherwise put, in irregular genders, classes are not of a one-to-one consistency: pairing is not obtained from subsequent classes. The irregular genders of Bɔ̀mbɔlɔ̀ are presented below.

A. Gender VI: 1,4

In this gender, we find class 1 nouns that pair up with class 4 nouns.

(27)

a. [ŋkɔ́kɔ́k] / [mìŋkɔ́kɔ́k] “cutter / cutters”

b. [mɔ́mɔ́ɔ́] / [mìmɔ́mɔ́ɔ] “breaker / breakers”

c. [mpɔ́pɔ́k] / [mìmpɔ́pɔ́k] “cunning /cunnings”

Most of the nouns belonging to this gender are agent nouns.

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B. Gender VIII: 1,6

The gender VIII results from the pairing of classes 1 and 6. In this gender, some nouns refer to human species and others to objects as we observe in the data below.

(28)

a. [mbó] / [mèmbó] "friend / friends"

b. [sɔ́] / [mèsɔ́] "calabash /calabashes"

c. [kíŋ] / [mèkíŋ] "neck / necks"

d. [pà] / [mèpà] "cutlass / cutlasses"

C. Gender VIII: 3, 6

As we observe below, this gender is made up of nouns from classes 3 and 6. Within this gender are found nouns related to human beings, objects and abstract notions as illustrated below.

(29)

a. [mbéní] / [mèmbéní] "law / law"

b. [tân] / [mètân] "nest / nests"

c. [ndán] / [mèndán] "family / families"

D. Gender IV 7/2

At this stage of our analysis, we have found only two nouns that make up this gender. Following is an illustration of this gender.

(30)

a. [kúú] / [bèkúú] "chicken/chickens"

b. [tít] / [bètít] "animal, meat/animal, meats"

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In the course of the analysis, we have found a residual gender in this language: 7/6. We call it residual because it is, at the current stage of the analysis, the sole couple of noun that makes up this gender, namely: [ngál] / [màngál] “gun/guns”.

3.3.3. Mono-classes

As mentioned earlier, some nouns do not undergo pairing: they are mono-classes. These nouns express either singularity or plurality.

A. Class 1

In class 1, we find the following nouns:

(31)

a. [mpì] “profit”

b. [mpù] “powder”

B. Class 2

Within this class, we have the following nouns:

(32)

a. [bə̀kɔ̀l] “pygmies”

b. [bətɔ́ŋbə̀] “stories”

C. Class 3

Within this class, we can find the following unpaired nouns.

(33)

a. [wúú] “theft”

b. [vʲɔ̀ɔ̀] “laughter”

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c. [wéé] “honey”

d. [vʲək] “clay”

D. Class 4

At this stage of the analysis, we have found only one noun that falls within this class in the language.

(34)

[mìntàk] “joy”

E. Class 5

The following nouns fall within this class 5:

(35)

a. [àsón] “heat”

b. [àsúú] “ashes”

E. Class 6

Class 6 has the following nouns:

(36)

a. [məjíí] “water”

b. [mətùt] “odour”

c. [mətéɛ́] “saliva”

d. [məkʷàn] “salt”

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G. Class 7

Class 7 is very rich in mono-class items. We present some of them below for illustration. Some of these items refer to animals while others refer to abstract notions.

(37)

a. [mbàk] “silver fox”

b. [nzɔ̀k] “elephant”

c. [kpáp] “lion”

e. [èbólàŋ] “moon”

f. [ìŋgɔ́l] “pity”

H. Class 8

In class 8, we find the following:

(38)

a. [bìkɔ́k] “kitchen”

b. [bìzímì] “soldier”

c. [bìtʃíkɔ́k] “sanction”

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In sum, two types of gender exist in Bɔ̀mbɔlɔ̀: one regular and one irregular. Regular genders are made up of consecutive even and odd numbers while irregular genders are not. Some nouns do not fall in any of these categories: they are said to be mono-classes nouns.

The table below summarises the different genders in Bɔ̀mbɔlɔ̀ (regular and irregular).

Table 9: Regular and Irregular Genders in Bàmbələ

Genders	Classes
Gender I	CL1,2
Gender II	CL3,4
Gender III	CL5,6
Gender IV	CL7,8
Gender V	CL 1,4
Gender VI	CL1,6
Gender VII	CL 3,6

As the analysis demonstrates, Bəmbələ has 8 (eight) noun classes and 7 (seven) genders (regular and irregular). The classification of the nouns of this language is essentially based on the agreement patterns triggered by the head noun. However, this method of noun classification might not be useful for some Bantu languages, namely those in which the concord patterns are not/or are inconsistently present.

The example of Kàkɔ̀ language group made up of Kàkɔ̀, Pɔ́l and Kwàkùm is very illustrative. In Pɔ́l and Kwàkùm, although nouns bear Bantu prefixes, they do not provoke any agreement pattern. This is observable in the examples below. Kàkɔ̀ on its part has only 4 noun classes, two in the singular and two in the plural. Following are illustrations that shed light on this point.

(39)

Pɔ́l *(Ponka Tuebou 2008)*

a. mw-án dám
child my
"my child"

b. bw-án dám
children my
"my children"

b. lê dɛ́
tree his
"his tree"

d. bɛ̀-lê dɛ́
trees his
"his trees"

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Kwàkùm *(Dibwa Dimbele, 2007)*

a. dòm jùn
husband your
"your husband"

b. n-dòm jùn
husbands your
"your husbands"

c. pí jún
dog your
"your dog

d. à-pí jún
dogs your
"your dogs"

Kàkɔ̀ *(Urs Ernst, 1992)*

a. ø-tàbɔ̀ mbɛ̀
Cl2-goat my
"my goat"

b. ɓɛ̀-tàɓɔ̀
Cl2-goat
"my goats"

c. ø-pɔ̀ndɔ̀ mbɛ
Cl5-trap my
" my trap"

d. mɛ̀-pɔ̀ndɔ̀
Cl6-trap
"my taps"

The examples in Pɔ́l and Kwàkùm prove that, although the nouns carry some residual Bantu prefixes, these noun prefixes do not provoke agreement morphology. In these cases, we cannot talk of noun classes. On the other hand, in Kàkɔ̀, as we already pointed out above, based on agreement patterns (Urs Ernst) we find 4 noun classes in the language. It is however worth noting that the agreement patterns are limited to noun modifiers. The way the languages of this group behave shall draw the attention of the researchers on the study of noun morphology and may raise awareness on the need to redefine the classification criteria of nouns in languages with classes. Furthermore, it is a clue that contrary to what some Bantu A language group researchers have argued so far, there are languages with less than 10 noun classes in this group while other do not have them at all. In fact, there is no scientific evidence of the fact that Bantu A language groups should not have less than 10 classes. On the other hand, either the presence of residual Bantu prefixes or just four (4) noun classes in these language proves at least to some extent that they might have undergone grammaticalisation in their evolutionary process, so that today, it could be posited that in the coming years, these languages would respectively lose their remaining noun prefixes and noun classes.

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Evidence from these languages shows that as time goes by, noun classes, where they exist, reduces with the fusion of some with others. Based on all the considerations above, it could be argued that if relied on the strict bases of agreement patterns, Guthrie's viewpoint on the minimal number of classes in a language with noun classes is then open to debate.

3.4. Word formation processes in Bəmbələ

Language vitality depends on processes or mechanisms whereby its lexicon is revitalised daily. Therefore, African languages in general and Cameroonian languages in particular must develop internal and external mechanisms to enrich their lexicon in order to reflect the current socio-cultural realities. This process also involves the modernisation of the language.

In the following subsections, we examine the synchronic techniques and means whereby the Bəmbələ lexicon remains constantly and perpetually in transformation. We focus on more productive and synchronic phenomena such as derivation, reduplication, and compounding.

3.4.1. Derivation

There are two kinds of derivations in Bəmbələ: verb-to-noun derivation and verb-to-verb derivation.

Verb-to-noun derivation involves the derivation of a nominal stem from a verbal base. This kind of derivation is flexional and is obtained in Bəmbələ through the replacement of an infinitive marker (INF) by a nominal prefix (NPref). In some cases, some morpho-phonological modifications occur within the word form. The different derivations are presented below.

a. Replacement of the INF |á-| by the NPref |ì-|

Here, the infinitive marker (INF) |á-| with a high tone, is replaced by the noun prefix (NPref) |ì-| with a low tone.

(40)

Verb	**gloss**	**noun**	**gloss**
ánén	"to see"	ìnén	"vision"

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ávóɣòŋ	“to rest”	ìnáŋsì	“rest”
ánùŋ	to take care	ìnìŋ	“life”
álɔ̀ŋ	to whistle	ìlɔ̀ŋ	“whistle”
ánùŋ	to walk	ìnùŋ	“walk, trip”
ábílɛ̀ŋ	to roll	ìbílɛ̀ŋ	“rolling object”

The replacement happens exactly at the same position: word initial position.

b. Replacement of the infinitive marker |á-| by the nominal prefix |à-|

The infinitive marker |á-| is replaced by the nominal prefix |à-|.

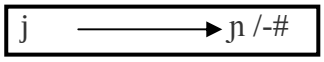
(41)

Verb	**gloss**	**noun**	**gloss**
ájó	to tell	àjó	“speech”
álúɣù	to respect	àlúɣù	“respect”
ákɛ́l	to circumcise	àkɛ́l	“circumcision”
ánóɛ́	to kill	ànóɛ́	“killing”
ájɛ̀ŋ	to seek	àjɛ̀ŋ	“seeking, a search”
álók	to marry	àlók	“marriage”

We observe in the data above that the stem remains unchanged. It is noticeable that the difference between the prefixes is at the level of the tones of the prefixes. The infinitive marker has a high tone while the noun prefix has a high tone.

c. Replacement of the verbal prefix |á-| by the noun prefix |ø-|

The verbal prefix is replaced in this context by the null noun prefix |ø-|. In this particular case, the first consonant of the verbal base is the palatal glide that changes into palatal nasal in its transformation from noun to verb and at word initial position, hence the following rule:



What is important to point out here is that in the absence of the verbal prefix, the noun root in Bəmbələ does not indicate the infinitive form of the verb, but the first person imperative.

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This argument stands against the position of many researchers (Guthrie 1967) who argue without restriction that from a morphophonological point of view, infinitives are nouns by virtue of their having a nominal prefix. This argument does not take into consideration the distinctive function of tones in Bantu languages. Therefore, in this case, the transformation process of nouns from verbs is the result of consonant alternation after replacement of the verbal prefix as observable in (42).

(42)

Verb	**gloss**	**noun**	**gloss**
ájɛ́klí	to teach	ø-ɲɛ́klì	teacher
ájɔ́k	to swim	ø-ɲɔ́k	swimmer
ájɔ́nɔ́ŋ	to cry	ø-ɲɔ́nɔ̀ŋ	he who cries

d. Substitution of the verb prefix |á-| by the homorganic nasal |N-|

In this context, the verbal prefix or infinitive marker is replaced by the homorganic nasal |N-|, as we observe in the following data.

(43)

Verb	**gloss**	**noun**	**gloss**
ápɛ́n	"to plait"	mpɛ̀n	"plait"
átʃísəŋ	"to sneeze"	ǹtʃísəŋ	"sneeze"
ábémənŋ	"to swell"l	mbémənŋ	"well"
ápəɣì	"to ask"	m̀pəɣì	"question"
ákùksəŋ	"to shake"	ŋ̀kùksəŋ	"shaking"
ápòlkəŋ	"to mix"	m̀pòlkáŋ	"mixture"

e. Substitution of the infinitive marker |á-| by |mə-|

In this context, the infinitive marker is replaced by CL4 noun prefix. The examples below illustrate the issue.

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(44)

Verb	**gloss**	**noun**	**gloss**
ándzə́	"to eat"	"màndzə́"	"food"
ánɛ́n	"to see"	"mànɛ́n"	"vision"
áɲíí	"to greet"	"màɲíləŋ"	"greetings"

Names of agents are also obtained by derivation. Therefore, nouns firstly undergo replacement of the infinitive marker by the homorganic nasal |N-|. This phenomenon is followed by suffixation. In fact, a suffix is added to the verb base to coin a new word. It is the homorganic nasal, together with the suffix that make up agent nouns.

Agent nouns are obtained through what Grevisse (1993:233) calls "parasynthetic derivation" that is, a derivation obtained by adding a prefix and a suffix to the root. Usually, the verb prefix is replaced by a noun prefix and the suffix Vŋ is added to the base. After this stage, a consonant is inserted between the verb stem and the suffix.

(45)

Verb	**gloss**	**noun**	**gloss**
ándzə́	"to eat"	ndzə́hə̀ŋ	"washer"
ásɔ̀ŋ	"to wash"	ǹsɔ̀hɔ̀ŋ	"washers"
ájă	"to sing"	njàhàŋ	"singer"
ávʲɛ̀ɛ̀	"to sweep"	mvʲ ɛ̀ɛ̀hɛ̀ŋ	"sweeper"
ásɛ́ɛ́	"to work"	ǹsɛ́hə̀ŋ	"workers"

To obtain the agent noun from *ándzə́* for instance, we replace the verbal prefix *á-* by the nominal prefix, the nasal *n,* thereafter we add the suffix *-əŋ* to the stem, and because the language does not accept the VV structure, a consonant / h / is inserted between the the suffix and the root. Therefore, we observe that in Bəmbələ, the VV structure is avoided by: glide formation, deletion, and insertion of the consonant *h* (epenthetic consonant inserted to break the VV).

The suffix added to the verb root here copies the vowel of the root (a case of complete vowel harmony).

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3.4.2. Reduplication

Reduplication is the total copying of a word or partial copying of a segment or syllable of a word. We shall address the issue here not only as a morphological phenomenon, but also as a syntactico-semantic process. Some forms are said to have been fossilized. Fossilized reduplication is also divided into full and partial fossilized reduplication.

3.4.2.1. Full reduplication

Full reduplication can affect nouns, prepositions, manner adverbs and numerals. Our concern here shall be on noun reduplication. It is worth noting that complete reduplication copies at the same time the segmental and the suprasegmental features of the root. Here, only reduplicated forms whose roots bear meaning in the language will be looked at. The other form will be addressed in a section devoted to fossilized reduplication.

As we mentioned earlier, in this type of reduplication, both segmental and suprasegmental features are copied.

(46)

a. ŋgbə́ŋgbə́ from ŋgbə́
“sorcerer” “witchcraft”

b. bìtùnbìtùn from bìtùn
“small small pieces” “pieces”

Some nouns can be doubled only in their plural forms. When reduplicated in their plural forms, these nouns usually express a very great or even uncountable number of items or objects. The followings exemplify them.

(47)

a. mìɲɔ̀ mìɲɔ̀ from ɲɔ̀
“from mouths to mouths” “mouth”

a’. mə́ á ánɔ́k mìɲɔ̀ mìɲɔ̀.
I Cl1 PRES to hear mouths mouths
“I heard from mouth to mouth.”

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b. mənzè mənzè from nzè
"Paths paths" "path"

b'. Bɔ́ bə́ ávè mənzè mènzè.
They VPref PRES come paths paths
"they come from different places"

c. mìŋkùt mìŋkùt from ŋkùt
"bags and bags" "bag"

c'. Nyádìŋ à á á kə́ á ndàt nə àwònə mìŋkùt mìŋkùt.
Nyádìŋ SM PR AUG go PREP market with groundnut bags bags
"Nyádìŋ goes to the market with bags and bags of groundnuts."

d. məsòŋ məsòŋ from sòŋ
"bowls and bowls" "bowl"

In the examples above, *mìɲɔ̀ mìɲɔ̀, mənzè mənzè, mìŋkùt mìŋkùt* express an undetermined quantity. The conjunction "nə" is also used to join the reduplicated forms of some nouns to express a huge quantity.

(48)

a. àtúrə nə àtúrə from àtúrə
"smoke with smoke" "smoke"
"full of smoke"

a'. ɲé ínə́ àtúrə nə àtúrə
House PR be smoke with smoke
"The house is full of smoke."

b. mìŋkàŋ nə mìŋkàŋ from ŋkàŋ
roots with roots "root"
"full of roots"

b'. mbòŋ ínə́ mìŋkàŋ nə mìŋkàŋ
cassava pres to be root with root
"The cassava has plenty of roots."

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c. məlɔ̀k nə̀ məlɔ̀k from məlɔ̀k
drink with drink "drink"
"full of drink"

c'. ɲé ínə́ məlɔ̀k nə̀ məlɔ̀k
House pres to be drink with drink
" The house is full of drink."

d. məmbó nə̀ məmbó from mbó
friends with friends "friend"

d'. məmbó nə̀ məmbó mə́ à tùhì ítè
Friends with frinds SM P0 be there
"Friends and friends were present."

The conjunction nə̀ "with" in the language does not seem to play its original role here i.e., that of connector. It rather looks like it expresses the notion of content, close or tied relationship. As could also be noted from the data in (48), this kind of reduplication is expressed through the plural forms of nouns as evident, for instance in, *mìŋkàŋ nə̀ mìŋkàŋ*, *məmbó nə̀ məmbó*.

3.4.2.2. Partial reduplication

In this form of reduplication, only the segmental feature of the root can be copied.

(49)

a. ìlɔ́lɔ́ŋ from ìlɔ̀ŋ
"Whistling" "whistle"

b. ìŋgɔ́ŋgɔ́l from ìŋgɔ́l
"unfortunate" " pity"

We realise through the examples in (49) that the partially-copied element, the root –lɔ́ŋ in (a) and –gɔ́l in (b) is inserted between the noun prefix and the initial stem. In (50a & b) below, the final consonant of the root is not reduplicated.

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(50)

a.	ɲéɲém	from	ɲém
	“disabled”		“infirmity”
b.	dʒídʒím	from	dʒím
	“blind person”		“blindness”

Partial reduplication could also be obtained by partially doubling the verbal stem. Following are examples illustrating this type of words.

(51)

a.	ŋkəkɔ́k	from	ákɔ́k
	“he who cuts”		“to cut”
b.	məmə̀ŋ	from	ámə̀ŋ
	“finishing”		“to end”
c.	mɔ́mɔ́ɔ́	from	ámɔ̀ɔ̀
	“brake”		“to brake”
d.	ɲɔ́ɲɔ́k	from	áɲɔ́k
	“a nervous person”		“to be nervous”

The reduction of the length of the root vowel in the process of doubling produces partial reduplication.

(52)

a.	kɛ́kɛ́ɛ́	from	kɛ́ɛ́
	“tomorrow”		“morning
b.	pɛ̌lpès	from	ápɛ̀ɛ̀
	“ lightning”		“ to shine”

Other reduplicated nouns are said to have been fossilized.

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3.4.2.3. Fossilized reduplication

The term “fossilization” in reduplication is used to refer to those forms of nouns that show visible copying but with a reduplicant that does not exist in the language, or the meaning of the simple forms of words is not related to that of the reduplicated word. Fossilized reduplication is also classified in two categories: full and partial.

Fossilized reduplication is said to be full when it copies the whole segmental and supra-segmental features of the root. This type of reduplication is observable in the data that follow.

(53)

a. mbòŋmbòŋ	from	mbòŋ
“bee”		“cassava”
b. kpákpá	from	kpá
“thooth-brush		?
c. kpàmkpàm	from	kpàm
“bricks”		?
d. ntàntá	from	ntá
“warrior”		?

The question mark indicates that the supposed initial word standing as the stem from which reduplication is done, does not exist in the language.

Fossilized reduplication is partial when only a segment of the pre-supposed root is copied. The following illustrates this type of fossilised reduplication.

(55)

a. ìɲéɲɛ́k	from	ɲɛ́k
“itching”		?
b. zàzàl	from	zàl
“kind of drum”		?
c. kpákpárà	from	kpá
“scissors”		?

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d. ɲɔ́ɲɔ́ŋ	from	ɲɔ́ŋ
"kind of insect"		?
e. àndɔ̀ndɔ̀	from	ndɔ̀
"needle"		?

As already mentioned above, it is not possible to deduce the root from which these words are reduplicated.

3.4.3. Compounding

Compounding is a process whereby a new lexical unit, with a new semantic meaning, is obtained from two or more lexical items capable of an autonomous function in the language. In Bɔ̀mbɔlɔ̀, compound words result from juxtaposition of two syntactically autonomous items. Most of these items are made up of nouns. Compounding in Bɔ̀mbɔlɔ̀ is characterised by an apparent absence of the associative marker (AM). This explains why it is easy to make confusion between a compound construction and an associative construction as we can notice in the examples below.

(56)

Compound construction		**Associative construction**
ø-ŋgál + mán	⟶ ŋgálmán	ìswá ´ ábɔ̀ŋ
wife child		pan farm
"sister- in- law"		"a pan used in the farm"

These two examples show that it is barely difficult to determine the nature of each element. However, it should be pointed out that the meaning taken along by each structure is very important in the determination of its overall meaning. The meaning resulting from the different constituents is deductible from the relation of association that unites them. The following illustrations give further clarity the issue.

(57)

a. máŋá + mŭm	⟶	máŋámŭm	"boy"
child man			

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b. àbùm + sɔ̌ŋ ⟶ àbùm ´ sɔ̌ŋ "grave"
belly death

c. ø-ɲé + àbàŋ ⟶ ɲé ´ ábàŋ "house of the farm"
house farm

d. àwòlà + júhà ⟶ àwòlà ´ júhà "rainy season"
hour rain

It is clear that in Bàmbəlà, the meaning resulting from an associative construction is different from that of a compound (one lexical unit).

a. N+N compound

We present below some compounds of N+N structure.

(58)

a. ø-ŋgóé + àpàn ⟶ ŋgóé ápàn
pig forest "wild boar"

b. ì-ŋgáŋ + môp ⟶ ìŋgáŋmôp
tree rope "rope"

c. ø-ɲóm + kúú ⟶ ɲómkúú
male chiken "cock"

d. ø-ŋgál + mán ⟶ ŋgálmán
wife child "sister-in-law"

e. káŋà + bàbúrà ⟶ káŋàbàbúrà
crab baboute "scorpion"

b. N + Adj

We have identified three substantives made up of a qualifier and a noun (Qual + N).

(59)

a. ìtùn + ɲé ⟶ ìtùnɲé
short house "room"

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b. mbéè + mbɔ̀m ⟶ mbéémbɔ̀m
bad forefront "bad luck"

c. ŋgòlɔ̀k + nzál ⟶ ŋgɔ̀lɔ̀knzál
elder village "successor"

c. N + Prep

We have identified two nouns made up of a preposition and a noun. They are presented below as illustration.

(60) nə + kéé nəkékéé
with morning "tomorrow morning"

What governs agreement in compound words is the first constituent of the compound. The second constituent undergoes the class prefix of the first constituent. In case, one of the constituent is a verbal adjective (see b), the real noun of the compound governs agreement. This is observable for instance in the following words.

a. ìjéɛ́ɲɔ̀ bìjɛ́ɛ́bíɲɔ̀, b. twɔ́ŋdís mìtwɔ́ŋmímís.
"lip" "lips" "one-eye" "one-eyes"

In (a), *ìjéɛ́* belongs to CL7 while *ɲɔ̀* belongs to CL3. When they are combined to make a compound, the first constituent, that is, *ìjéɛ́* governs the concord. In (b), the verbal adjective *twɔ́ŋ* accepts the prefix of the noun *dís* in its plural form.

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3.5. Conclusion

In classifying the nouns in this chapter, we essentially relied on the morphological principle that a noun class is basically determined by the agreement pattern triggered by the head noun on noun modifiers, namely possessesive and demonstrative determiners in a syntactic chain. The strict respect of this methodology led us to eight (8) noun classes in Bəmbələ. This number is below what is expected, and what is observed in some other languages, because according to some researchers, a language belonging to Bantu A cannot have less than ten (10)

classes (Guthrie 1967). Therefore, when we correlate Guthrie's first "principal criteria" which holds that "the sign of gender is a prefix, by means of which words may be assorted into a number of classes varying roughly from ten to twenty" with the data collected, analysed and interpreted in this study, it is remarkable that the language has less than ten (10) classes. This finding opens and stimulates further research in the validity of the position. Probably, this was evident at the time Guthrie was carrying out his research. However, as time goes by, languages, as living organisms, undergo change and some classes might fuse with others. This could be noticeable in Bəmbələ through the presence of nouns with distinct prefixes and which share the same concord pattern within the same class. This viewpoint is still therefore opened to debate. It is also worth noting that the semantic criterion which is still considered by some researchers to play a role in the classification of Bantu nouns is of lesser importance in Bəmbələ. Otherwise, it does not contribute in determining the class to which a noun belongs. The homorganic nasals, as they occur in some classes, do not commute in the plural forms. The plural form of such nouns is obtained by adding a plural noun class prefix before the homorganic nasal. Therefore, homorganic nasals do not influence noun classification. As we pointed out above, the classification was based on the concord pattern governed by the head noun on noun modifiers. In order to have a further insight of this agreement pattern, it is worth analysing noun modifiers.

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CHAPTER 4

THE MODIFIERS OF THE NOUN AND THE PRONOUNS

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter of the study, we examine the modifiers of the noun and pronouns. Noun modifiers are all those elements that stand besides the noun to the left or to the right to add a new piece of information to it. Within this category, we find adjectives, possessives, demonstratives, numerals, quantifiers and interrogatives: they are called determiners. In most cases, these elements can co-occur with a noun within the noun phrase as determiners. The discussion will also include the analysis of pronouns in another section of this chapter. Pronouns are used instead of the noun, or simply replace it. However, relative pronouns will be addressed at the level of the syntax as a constituent of the relative clause.

4.2. The modifiers of the noun

As we mentioned earlier, noun modifiers include adjectives, possessive determiners, demonstrative determiners, numerals, quantifiers and interrogatives.

4.2.1. Possessive determiners

Possessive determiners infer belonging. The possessive determiner depends on the head noun it determines. In fact, the possession relationship that links the possessive determiner to the independent nominal provokes, at the morpho-syntactic level, agreement in noun class. This concord phenomenon is identified by a class concord prefix added to the stem of the determiner. This is clearly observable in the table below that presents the full possessive determiners of Bəmbələ.

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Table 10: Possessive determiners in Bàmbəlà

NC	SINGULAR						PLURAL					
	1st pers		**2nd pers**		**3rd pers**		**1st pers**		**2nd pers**		**3rd pers**	
	AP	*St*	*AP*	*St*	*AP*	*St*	*AP*	*St*	*AP*	*St*	*AP*	*St*
1	w-	ámáŋ	w-	ɔ́ŋ	w-	én	w-	és	w-	ɔ́ŋ	w-	áá
2	b-	ámàŋ	b-	ɔ́ŋ	b-	én	b-	és	b-	ínéŋ	b-	áá
3	w-	ámàŋ	w-	ɔ́ŋ	w-	én	w-	és	w-	ɔ́ŋ	w-	áá
4	mʲ	ámáŋ	mʲ-	ɔ́ŋ	mʲ-	én	mʲ-	és	mʲ-	ínɔ́ŋ	mʲ-	áá
5	z-	ámàŋ	z-	ɔ́ŋ	z-	én	z-	és	z-	ɔ́ŋ	z-	áá
6	m-	ámàŋ	m-	ɔ́ŋ	m-	én	m-	és	m-	ínɔ́ŋ	m-	áá
7	j-	ámàŋ	j-	ɔ́ŋ	j-	én	j-	és	j-	ɔ́ŋ	j-	áá
8	bʲ-	ámàŋ	bʲ -	ɔ́ŋ	bʲ-	én	bʲ-	és	bʲ-	ínɔ́ŋ	bʲ-	áá

The stem of the possessive determiner changes according to the person or the possessor. For the first person singular possessor, the stem is |ámàŋ|. This stem has a V.CVC structure. Its first syllable bears a high tone while the second bears a low tone. The stem |- ɔŋ| is for the second person singular and the singular classes of the second person plural. The stem for the third person singular is |-én|. As for the stem |-és|, it is for the second person plural, |-ínɔ́ŋ| for the even classes of the second person plural, and |-áá| for the third person plural.

The concord consonant or agreement prefix (AP) of the possessive determiner varies according to the class of the noun it modifies. This is observable in the following:

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(1)

a. [bòŋə́ bámàŋ]
/bə́ + òŋə́ bə́ + ámàŋ/
|bə́-òŋə́ bə́- ámàŋ|
CL2-father AP-my
"my fathers"

b. [ɲé wámàŋ]
/ɲé + ú-ámàŋ/
|ø-ɲé ú-ámàŋ|
C3-house AP-my
"my house"

c. [àbə̀ŋ zés]
/à + bə̀ŋ z + és/
|à-bə̀ŋ z-és|
CL5-farm AP-our
"our farm"

d. [ɣ̀ónók jɔ́ŋ]
/ì + ònók ì + ɔ́ŋ/
|ì-ònók ì- ɔ́ŋ|
CL7-toad AP-your
"your toad"

e. [bʲònók bʲɔ́ŋ]
/bì + ònók bí + ɔ́ŋ/
|bì- ònók bí-ɔ́ŋ|
CL8-toad AP-your
"your toads"

f. [bìsɛ́ɛ́ bʲés]
/bì + sɛ́ɛ́ bì + és/
|bì-sɛ́ɛ́ bì- és|
CL8-farm AP-our
"our works"

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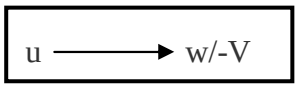
When we look at the data above, we notice that the stems of the possessive determiners of the second person singular and those of the second person plural of classes 1, 3, 5, and 7 are identical. This shows the consistency of this stem in the language for these classes.

Let us now analyse the different prefixes of the possessive determiner as they appear in table 7a in order to find out a common prefix for each class. Therefore, when we look at the possessives of first person, we postulate |u-| as the basic agreement marker in the underlying representation. This vowel undergoes labialisation when followed by any other vowel, hence the following rule:



This phenomenon is also perceptible in the class 3 concord marker. As for classes 2, 4 and 8, they respectively have |b-|, |m^j- | and | b^j-| as prefixes. We believe that |b-| has lost its vowel, the schwa, simply due to vowel coalescence. The vowel of their agreement marker undergoes palatalisation as the data in (1b, c, d) show. From this observation, we suggest that |bə́-| is the underlying form for class 2, |mí-| for class 4 and | bí-| for class 8. These underlying forms will be presented in the coming table.

As for agreement markers, table10 shows that class 7 agreement marker is | j-|. This results from palatalisation in a context where the concord maker is followed by a vowel. We propose |i-| as the underlying form, as the natural form of the vowel. From these remarks, we propose on the following table the Bəmbələ possessive determiners and their concord prefixes.

Table 11: Concord prefixes of possessive determiners in Bəmbələ

noun class	agreement prefixes
1	ú-
2	bə́-
3	ú-
4	mí-
5	z-
6	mə́-
7	í-
8	bí-

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The table above recapitulates the agreement prefixes of the possessive determiners of the language under study.

4.2.2. Demonstrative determiners

Demonstrative determiners point out and locate things or persons. Discourse analysis specialists often call it “shifter” or “diesis by monstration” (Kerbrat Orrechioni 1980) because its interpretation relies on the discourse context. Bəmbələ demonstrative determiners are made up of an agreement marker and a stem with a high tone. There are three types of demonstrative adjectives in the language whose forms are determined by two factors: (a) degree of proximity/relative distance between speaker, listener and object referred to, (b) the morphological class to which the relevant noun belongs almost like their pronominal counterparts. The three types are presented as follows: near the speaker, near the listener and far from the speaker and the listener.

4.2.2.1. Demonstrative determiner near the speaker

The demonstrative determiner that points out things near to the person speaking is also called demonstrative determiner of proximity. The stem of this type of demonstrative determiner is |-ínə́|. It has a variant |-únə́|. The concord consonant or agreement prefix of each of these demonstratives, like in other cases, depends on the class of the noun it determines. The following examples illustrate demonstrative determiners near the speaker.

(2)

a. [máŋámŭm ɲínə́]
/mə + áŋámŭm ɲ + ínə́ /
|mə-áŋámŭm ɲ-ínə́|
CL1 boy AP-this
“this boy”

b. [wéé wúnə́]
/ú + éé ú + únə́ /
|ú-éé ú-únə́|
CL3-honey AP-this
“this honey”

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c. [ìŋgə́ŋ jínə́]
/ì + ŋgə́ŋ + í + ínə́/
|ì-ŋgə́ŋ í-ínə́|
CL7-tree AP-this
"this tree"

Following is the analysis of the demonstrative determiners near the listener.

4.2.2.2. Demonstrative determiner near the listener

The stem of the demonstrative determiners near the listener is |-ílí|. Like in the previously mentioned case, its prefix agrees in class with the noun it determines. This is observable in the data below.

(3)

a. [mbə́ wílí]
/ø + mbə́ ú + ílí/
|ø-mbə́ ú-ílí|
CL3 pot AP-that
"that pot there"

b. [mìmbə́]
/mì + mbə́ mə́ + ílí/
|mì-mbə́ mə́-ílí|
CL4-pot AP-those
"those pots there"

c. [bìbə́lə́ bílí]
/bì + bə́lə́ bə́ + ílí/
|bì-bə́lə́ bə́- ílí|
CL7-cup AP-those
"those cups there"

d. [məbə̀ŋ mílí]
/mə́-bə̀ŋ mə́-ílí/
|mə́-bə̀ŋ mə́-ílí|
CL6- farm AP-those
"those farms there"

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The example in (3) shows that the demonstrative determiner agrees with the head noun, like in the case discussed above.

4.2.2.3. Demonstrative determiners far from the speaker and the listener

Some demonstrative determiners point out things or persons that are far from the speaker and the listener. This type of demonstrative determiners is marked by |ákílí|. This morpheme is preceded by the demonstrative determiners indicating something or somebody near the speaker as discussed above. Following are examples illustrating this type of demonstrative determiner.

(4)

a. [mbə́ wílí ákílí]
/ø + mbə́ ú + ílí ákílí/
|ø-mbə́ ú-ílí ákílí|
CL7-cup AP-that there
"that pot (far) there"

b. [bì-bə́lə́ wílí ákílí]
/bì + bə́lə́ ú + ílí ákílí/
|bì-bə́lə́ ú-ílí ákílí|
CL8-cup AP-that there
"the cups (far) there"

The morpheme *ákíli* does not accept agreement from the head noun. However, this agreement occurs in the demonstrative near the speaker that precedes the morpheme *ákíli*.

4.2.2.4. Anaphoric demonstrative determiner

Anaphoric demonstrative determiners refer to an object / idea already mentioned in the discourse or a state / event that took place some time ago and has already been mentioned in the discourse. In Bəmbələ, it is marked by the morpheme |ábʲá| which literally means "previously talked about". The use of this demonstrative is illustrated in the data below.

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(5)

a. [bàláŋ mùt ábʲá]

/mù + ùt ábíá/

|mù-ùt ábíá|

CL1 person this

"This is the man (previously talked about)"

b. [mìǹsəŋ ábʲá mínɔ́ mínáŋ]

/mì + ǹsəŋ ábíá mɔ́ + ínáŋ/

|mì-ǹsəŋ ábíá mɔ́-ínɔ́ nínáŋ|

CL4-yard DEM SM be big

"The courtyards (already mentioned) are bigs"

c. [mùŋɔ́ ábjá àbjɛ́ɛ́]

/mù-ùŋɔ́ ábíá àbíɛ́ɛ́/

|mù-ùŋɔ́ ábíá à bíɛ́ɛ́|

CL1-woman DEM P0-give birth

"The woman (already mentioned) gave birth to a baby."

d. [bǒm ábjá bə́ àváŋí]

/bə́-úm ábíá bə́ ávaŋì/

|bə́-úm ábíá bə́ á á vaŋì|

CL2-man DEM SM PR AUG come

"The men (already mentioned) came."

The anaphoric demonstrative morpheme |ábíá| does not undergo morphological change in class. It therefore stands as a free morpheme capable of functioning as an autonomous syntactic unit. In fact, this word cannot be broken into a prefix and a stem or radical.

The following table presents the demonstrative determiners of Bəmbələ.

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Table 12: Demonstrative determiners in Bàmbələ

NC	Demonstratives of proximity		Demonstratives of distance	
	AP	St	AP	St
1	ɲ-	-ínə́	ɲ-	-ílí
2	b-	-ínə́	b-	-ílí
3	w-	-ínə́	w-	-ílí
4	m-	-ínə́	m-	-ílí
5	z-	-ínə́	z-	-ílí
6	m-	-ínə́	m-	-ílí
7	j-	-ínə́	j-	-ílí
8	b-	-ínə́	b-	-ílí

This table only presents the demonstrative determiners of proximity and distance because they are the types that undergo morphological changes at the level of their concord prefixes.

Each stem takes a concord consonant that corresponds to the morphological class of the noun that the demonstrative determines modifies.

What is also observable in (table 12) is that it is possible to obtain a common agreement prefix for each class for all the demonstrative determiners.

The stem of the demonstrative adjective is of V.CV structure. Therefore, from the recapitulative chart presented above, we have obtained the following table that illustrates only the agreement prefixes of demonstrative determiners.

Table 13: Agreement Prefixes of demonstrative determiners in Bàmbələ

NC	Agreement prefixes
1	ɲ-
2	b-
3	ú-
4	m-
5	z-
6	m-
7	í-
8	b-

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In order to understand this chart, we must bear in mind that |-w| and |-j | are the surface realisations of |-u| and |-i|.

4.2.3. Quantifiers

Quantifiers are used to express a given number, an undetermined quantity. Bəmbələ has two main modifiers that denote quantity. The quantifier whose stem is |-sɛ̀| means “all, each” while the other whose stem is |-mpɔ́k| means “other”. Therefore, this language has two noun modifiers that denote quantity. The following data illustrate the use of quantifiers in the language.

(6)

a. [mùt wúsɛ́]
/mù + ùt ú + sɛ̀ɛ̀/
|mù-ùt ú-sɛ̀ɛ̀|
CL1-person AP-each
“each person”

b. [bǒm bə́sɛ̀]
/bə̀-úm bə́-sɛ̀/
|bə̀-úm bə́-sɛ̀|
CL7-man AP-all
“all the men”

c. [bə̀tít bə́sɛ̀]
/ bə̀-tít bə́-sɛ̀/
|bə̀-tít bə́-sɛ̀|
CL8 animal AP-all
“all the animals”

d. [tít wúsɛ̀]
/ø + tít ú + sɛ́/
|ø-tít ú- sɛ̀|
CL7-animal AP-each
“each / all animal”

We notice from the data above that the concord marker for singular classes is the mid-low back vowel. This morpheme is identical in all the classes of the singular. For plural classes, it

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varies according to the noun it determines. The meaning of the quantifier |mpɔ́k| depends on the context in which it is used.

It can mean “other” like in the data below.

(7)

a. [máŋá mpɔ́k sə́ ávé]
/mù-áŋá ø-mpɔ́k sə́ ávè/
|mù-áŋá ø-mpɔ́k sə́ á á vè|
CL1-woman AP-other PROG PR AUG come
“The other child is coming.”

b. [mùt mpɔ́k]
/mù + ùt ø + mpɔ̀k/
|mù-ùt ø-mpɔ̀k|
CL1-person AP-other
“the other person”

It can also mean “some” as in the following examples:

(8)

a. |bə̀-ùt bə́-mpɔ́̃k bə́ á á nɛ́n dzə́ ínìŋ ínə́ ǹtèɣə́ŋ|
CL1 person AP-other SM PR AUG see that life be soft
“Some people thing that life is easy.”

Some sentences in which it appears can be polysemic:

b. |bə̀-ɔ́ŋɔ́ bə́-mpɔ́k bə́ á á vè|
CL2-children AP-some/other SM PR AUG come
“some children come” or “other children come.”

The concord marker of |ø-mpɔ́k| does not agree with the noun it determines in the classes of the singular as observable in the table below.

(9)

a. [mùt mpɔ́k]
/mùt + ùt ø + mpɔ́k/
|mùt-ùt ø-mpɔ́k|
CL1-person AP-other
“other man”

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b. [àlɛ́n mpɔ́k]
/à + lɛ́n ø + mpɔ́k/
|à-lɛ́n ø-mpɔ́k|
CL5-palm AP-other
"other palm tree"

c. [ìŋgə́ŋ mpɔ́k]
/ì + ŋgə́ŋ ø + mpɔ́k/
|ì-ŋgə́ŋ ø-mpɔ́k|
CL7-tree AP-other
"other tree"

The quantifier *ø-mpɔ́k* agrees in class with plural substantives.

The other quantifier is the interrogative *táŋkà* "how many, how much?". This noun modifier also occurs following the noun and takes a concord marker or agrees with the noun for the classes of the plural.

The table below presents the quantifiers of Bəmbələ along with their concord consonants.

Table 14: Quantifiers in Bəmbələ

NC	mpɔ́k		sɛ̀	
	AP	St	AP	St
1	ø-	mpɔ́k	u-	sɛ̀
2	bə́-	mpɔ́k	bə́-	sɛ̀
3	ø-	mpɔ́k	u-	sɛ̀
4	mí-	mpɔ́k	mí-	sɛ̀
5	ø-	mpɔ́k	u-	sɛ̀
6	mə́-	mpɔ́k	mə́-	sɛ̀
7	ø-	mpɔ́k	u-	sɛ̀
8	bì-	mpɔ́k	bí-	sɛ̀

It is visible from table above that the quantifier *ø-mpɔ́k* has a zero morpheme for the noun classes of the singular.

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The quantifier |*ø-mpɔ́k*| can also function as a pronoun. Essono (2000) calls this kind of determiner "mixed determiners", although the expression seems not to be adequate enough. Let us consider the following examples:

(10)

a. |mù-ùt ø-mpɔ́k à á á vè|
CL1-person AP-another SM PR AUG come
"Another person comes."

a'. |bə̀- mpɔ́k bə́ á vè|
AP IND SM PR come
"others come"

b. | bì-ŋgə́ŋ bí-mpɔ́k bí-ínə́ kpɔ̀jə́ŋ á sí|
CL8- tree AP-other be fallen on down
"Other trees have fallen."

c. | ì-ŋgə́ŋ í-mpɔ́k ínə́ kpɔ̀jə́ŋ á nzè|
CL7-tree AP-other be fallen on road
" Another tree has fallen on the road."

b'. |bə̀-mpɔ́k bə́-ínə́ kpɔ̀jə́ŋ á nzè|
AP-other AP-be fallen on road
"Others have fallen on the road."

The examples help us to underscore the dual function of *ø-mpɔ́k*. In (10a & 10b), it functions as determiner. In this case, syntactically, it appears after the noun it determines. In (10a' and 10b', it functions as a pronoun. Here, it occupies the subject position and functions as such. Syntactic position is therefore vital in determining the nature of this dual-in-meaning item.

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4.2.4. Numerals

Numerals in Bəmbələ are also noun modifiers. They appear in post-nominal position. There are two kinds of numerals in Bəmbələ: ordinal numerals and cardinal numerals. Ordinal numerals help to show the rank, the position occupied by a being or a thing while cardinal numerals help to point out the number of things or beings.

4.2.4.1. Cardinal numerals

There exist simple and compound cardinal numbers.

- Simple cardinal numerals

Simple cardinal numerals are made up of numbers from 1 to 10, 100 and 1000 as we can observe in the data below. Any of the simple cardinal numbers can occur alone.

(11)

a. pɔ́k	"one"	f. sàmàn	"six'	k. ntɛ̀t	"a hundred"
b. bàà	"two"	g. zàgbá	"seven"	l. tɔ́ksìn	"a thousand"
c. láá	"three"	h. mɔ̀m	"eight"		
d. ɲĭ	"four"	i. ìbùù	"nine"		
e. tán	"five"	j. àwɔ̂m	"ten"		

The cardinal number pɔ́k "one" in isolation is encoded in discourse as *wá* (12a).

The larger numbers (greater than nine) can be considered as nouns because they accept agreement markers: e.g: 10 àwɔ̂m / mə̀wɔ̂m (5/6). Larger numbers (greater than 10) are modified by smaller numbers as in *mə̀wɔ̂m mə́báá* "20".

The numbers 100 and 1000 are borrowings from English. Some of the cardinal numerals accept agreement in class. The following data illustrate the the use of the cardinal numbers.

(12)

a. [máŋá wá]
/mù + áŋá ú + á/
| mù-áŋá ú-á|
CL1-child AP-one
"one child"

b. [b^{w}án bə́báá]
/bə̀-úán bə́-báá/
| bə̀-úán bə́-báá|
CL2-child AP two
"two sons"

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c. [àkpə̀ŋ wáá]
/à + kpə̀ŋ ú + áá/
|à-kpə̀ŋ ú-áá|
CL5-hare AP one
"one hare"

d. [məkɔ̀ŋ məláá]
/mə + kɔ̀ŋ mə́ + láá/
|mə-kɔ̀ŋ mə́-láá|
CL6-spear AP-three
"three spears"

e. [ìjɛ́ɛ́ wáá]
/ì + jɛ́ɛ́ ú + áá/
|ì-jɛ́ɛ́ ú-áá|
CL7-dress AP one
"one dress"

The cardinal numeral *pɔ́k* "one", *zàgbá* "seven" and *mɔ̀m* "eight" do not accept agreement morphology. This phenomenon is also reported in other Bantu languages such as Məkaá (Heath & Heath1998) where cardinal numbers "one and seven through nine, kɔ́l (Henson 2007:101) where the numbers "one" and "six" through "nine", Bàlòŋ (Kouoh 2004: 190-191), where the numbers from six through 10, Ewondo (Essono 2000: 336) where the numbers seven and eight and Eton (Van de Velde 2008) where the cardinal numbers from seven to ten, hundred and thousand do not present or accept agreement morphology. Some of the cases are illustrated below.

(Kɔ́l) bwárá twob mènjáb tábɛ̀l mèntɛ̀r èbù
CL2-woman six CL-houses seven CL4-hundred nine
"six women" "seven houses" "nine hundred"

(Bàlɔ̀ŋ) mà pàŋgà jòm bà án sămbà
CL6- wall ten CL2-child seven
"ten walls" "seven children"

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(Ewondo) mə-ndó zàmgbál bì-sóá mwòm
CL4- house seven CL8- plate eight
“seven houses” “eight plates”

The following examples illustrate the fact in Bəmbələ.

(13)

a. [bôm zàŋgbá]
/bə + úm zàŋgbá/
|bə-úm zàŋgbá|
CL2-man seven
“seven men”

b. [bəkál məm]
/bə + kál məm/
|bə-kál məm|
CL2-sister eight
“eight sisters”

c. [məkòŋ məm]
/mə + kòŋ məm/
| mə-kòŋ məm|
CL6-arrow eight
“eight arrows”

Normally, in the preceding illustrations, we were expecting that all the cardinal numerals take a concord prefix. At the current stage of the study, we have not found any motivation for the fact that those presented above do not show any concord although they also appear post-nominally. It seems to be one of the properties of the Bantu languages used for illustration and might also occur in many other Bantu languages. To my knowledge, none of the researchers working on such languages has given an explanation to the phenomenon. There seems to be no regular explanation on the issue. The fact is striking in that we are dealing with determiners that normally have to take the concord marker from the noun they determine.

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- Compound cardinal numbers

Compound cardinal numbers are linked by the copula *nə* meaning "with". The copula functions as coordinator in the language. Below are examples illustrating compound cardinal numbers.

(14)

a. [àwə̂m nə bə́ɲǐ]
/à + úɔ̀m nə́ bə́ + ɲǐ/
|à-úɔ̀m nə́ bə́-ɲǐ|
AP-ten with AP-four
"fourteen"

b. [àwə̂m nə bə̀tán]
/à + úɔ̀m nə́ bə́ + tán/
|à-úɔ̀m nə́ bə́-tán|
AP-ten with AP- five
"fifteen"

c. [àwə̂m nə bə̀lá́á]
/à + úɔ̀m nə bə́ + lá́á/
|à-úɔ̀m nə́ bə́-lá́á|
AP-ten with AP three
"thirteen"

d. [mìɲɔ̀ àwə̂m nə míláá]
/mì + ɲɔ̀ à + úɔ̀m nə́ mí + lá́á/
|mì-ɲɔ̀ à-úɔ̀m nə́ mí-lá́á|
CL5-mouth AP-ten with AP-three
"thirteen mouths"

e. [bìswá àwə̂m nə bítán]
/bì + swá à + úɔ̀m nə́ bí + tán/
|bì-swá à-úɔ̀m nə́ bí-tán|
CL8-pan AP-eight with AP-five
"fifteen pans"

Some compound cardinal numbers do not necessarily accept the coordinator *nə* as we can observe below.

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(15)

a. [məwôm mɔ̀m]
/mə + úɔ̀m mɔ̀m/
|mə-úɔ̀m mɔ̀m|
AP- ten eight
"eighty"

b. [mì-ntèt mí-láá]
/mì + ntèt mí + láá/
|mì-ǹtèt mí-láá|
AP hundred AP-three
"three hundred"

Cardinal numbers are also considered as "mixed determiners". They can function either as determiners or as pronouns.

Below is a table showing the concord patterns for the cardinal numbers in Bàmbələ.

Table 15: cardinal numbers in Bàmbələ

	two		thee		four		five		six	
NC	AP	St	AP	St	AP	St	AP	St	AP	St
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	bə-	báá	bɔ́-	láá	báá-	ɲǐ	bɔ́-	tán	bɔ́-	sàmàn
3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	mí-	báá	mí-	láá	mí-	ɲǐ	mí-	tán	mí-	sàmàn
5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
6	mɔ́-	báá	mɔ́-	láá	mɔ́-	ɲǐ	mɔ́-	tán	mɔ́-	sàmàn
7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
8	bí-	báá	bí-	láá	bí-	ɲǐ	bí-	tán	bí-	sàmàn

The table indicates that in their singular forms, numerals do not provoke agreement morphology. This is also true of ordinal numbers.

4.2.4.2. Ordinal numbers

As we mentioned earlier, ordinal numbers help to identify a position or a rank occupied by beings or things in a set of elements. In Bàmbələ, only the ordinal numbers 4^{th}, 5^{th} and 6^{th}

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accept agreement. Other ordinal numbers remain exactly like their cardinal counterparts except "first". This is observable in the data below.

(16)

a. mətɛ̀rə́ŋ "first"
b. tánə̀ "fifth"
c. sàmànə̀ "sixth"
d. [mùt mətɛ̀rə́ŋ]
|mù-ùt mətɛ̀rə́ŋ|
CL1-person first
"the first person"

e. [mìɲé mítánə̀]
|mì-ɲé mí-tánə̀|
CL6-house AP five
"the fifth houses"
f. [mùm báá]
|mù-úm bə́-áá|
CL1-man AP-two
"the second man"

g. [bə́ŋɔ́ bəsàmànə̀
|bə̀-ɔ́ŋɔ́ bə́-sàmànə̀|
CL2-children AP six
"the sixth children"

The following table presents only those ordinal numbers that undergo agreement.

Table 16: Ordinal numbers in Bəmbələ

NC	**4th**		**5th**		**6th**	
	AP	*St*	*AP*	*St*	*AP*	*St*
1	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	bə́-	ɲínə́	bə́-	tánə̀	bə́-	sàmànə̀
3	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	mí-	ɲínə́	mí-	tánə́	Mí-	sàmànə̀
5	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	mə́-	ɲínə́	mə́-	tánə̀	mə́-	sàmànə̀
7	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	bí-	ɲínə́	bí-	tánə̀	bí-	sàmànə̀

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The following table further presents the concord prefixes of ordinal and cardinal numbers that accept agreement.

Table 17: Concord prefixes of cardinal and Ordinal numbers

NC	**numerals**
1	-
2	bə́-
3	-
4	mí-
5	-
6	mə́-
7	-
8	bí-

It is observable from the table above that even those numerals, which accept concord, do not take agreement in the classes of the singular.

In the analysis of the numerals, we notice that the cardinal numeral “one” and “seven” through “nine” do not take concord marker. This is a striking issue in the language and other Bantu languages. As for the ordinal numerals, only the numbers fourth, fifth, and sixth take concord markers. Furthermore, other ordinal numbers keep the form of their cardinal counterparts. Their usage in discourse is the only clue that helps to catch their meaning.

4.2.5. Pure adjectives

Adjectives are attached to nouns to determine the quality of an object, of a being or of a notion. There are very few true adjectives in Bəmbələ̀, almost like in many other Bantu languages. Although some items or words in most Bantu languages could be translated as adjectives in western European languages for instance, they might not be adjectives per se in a Bantu language such as Bəmbələ̀. Let us rather consider the following data:

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(17)

a. [ɲé ínə́ nínə́ŋ]
/ø + ɲé ínə́ nínə́ŋ/
|ø-ɲé ínə́ nínə́ŋ|
CL3-house PR- be big
"The house is big."

c. [mìɲé mínə́ nínə́ŋ]
/mì + ɲé mí + nə́ nínə́ŋ/
|mì-ɲé mí-ínə́ nínə́ŋ|
CL4-house SM PR be big
"The houses are big."

In the data in (17), *nínə́ŋ* is translated into English as "big" an adjective in this language. However, the word does not function exactly in the same manner in Bəmbələ where true adjectives undergo agreement with the noun they qualify. As the constructions in (18) demonstrate, pure adjectives in Bəmbələ take the concord marker of the head noun.

(18)

a. |ì-jɛ́ɛ́ ø-mvínə́ŋ|
CL8-dress AP black
"black dress"

a'. |bì-jɛ́ɛ́ bí-mvínə́ŋ|
CL4-dress AP- black
"black dresses"

b. |ø-nzè ø-nlàháŋ|
CL3-path AP-far
"a long way"

b'. |mì-nzè mí-nláháŋ|
CL4-path AP-far
"long ways"

In (18a) and (18b), it is noticeable that pure adjectives accept the agreement marker generated by the head noun. However, in this language, even the so-called true adjectives function like associated nouns; normally we were expecting to have a low tone on the agreement prefix of the adjectives above, but they carry a high tone. In fact, there is a floating tone that provokes tone raising and the structure becomes like an associative construction. Consequently, even these elements that seem to function as pure adjectives are probably associated nominals.

From the syntactic point of view, pure adjectives can function as predicative adjectives when preceded by a copula verb as illustrated in example (19).

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(19)

a. |ø-ɲé ínə́ ø-mvínə́ŋ|
CL3- house PR-be AP-black
"The house is black."

b. ø- nzè ínə́ ø-nlàháŋ
CL3-path PR be AP-far
"The path is long."

Adjectives agree in class with the noun they qualify.

The next table summarises noun prefixes and concord prefixes of determiners in Bàmbələ̀.

Table 18: Noun prefixes and concord prefixes of adjectives in Bàmbələ̀

NC	**NP**	**AP**	**AP**	**AP**	**AP**	**AP**
		POSS	*DEM*	*IND*	*NUM*	*QUAL ADJ*
1	a. mù- b. ø-	ú-	ú-	ú-	-	ú-
2	Bə̀-	bə́-	bə́-	bə́-	bə́-	bə́-
3	a. N- b. ø- c.w- d.vi-	ú-	ú-	ú-	-	ú-
4	mì-	mí-	mí-	mí-	mí-	mí-
5	a. a- b. di-	z-	z-	z-	-	z-
6	mə̀-	mə́-	mə́-	mə́-		mə́-
7	ì-	í-	í-	í-	-	í-
8	bì-	bí-	bí-	bí-	bí-	bí-

The preceding section studied the determiners in Bàmbələ̀. I can safely state that independent nominals syntactically depend on the head noun they determine. The determiners are post-posed to nouns in Bàmbələ̀. We also noted that some determiners, depending on their nature, could play at the same time the role of determiner and pronoun: they are called "mixed determiners" by Essono (2000).

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4.3. Pronouns

Pronouns are substitutes of nouns. A pronoun is a grammatical unit whose meaning brings it closer to the noun. This explains why it can replace a noun. Bəmbələ has the following pronouns: absolute pronouns, logophoric pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, possessive pronouns, interrogative pronouns, relative pronouns, emphatic pronouns and reflexive pronouns. There is no distinction between human and non-human pronouns in this language.

4.3.1. Absolute pronouns

The function of the absolute pronoun is to stand for the noun in a clause or a sentence. This pronoun does not describe nor limit a noun. We distinguish two sets of this pronoun which either function as subject or object in a sentence. Then, each set is divided into simple and compound.

4.3.1.1. Simple subject pronouns

The simple subject pronoun substitutes human nouns in subject position. These pronouns are called simple pronouns because they contrast with the compound counterparts, which stand for groups of nouns functioning as subject. They are divided into singular and plural forms.

The simple absolute subject personal pronoun does not copy any of its features from any other pronoun. In fact, it is a non-derived pronominal form. Simple absolute pronouns include the three person singular *mə, wə /ò, ɲə /à* and the three person plural forms *bèès, bələ̀ŋ, bɔ́*. The following examples illustrate some of these forms.

(20)

a. mə sə́ á á ndzə́ àjùhə
I PROG PR AUG eat banana
"I am eating banana."

b. bənə́ŋ sə́ á á jó ɲɔ̀
you PROG PR AUG speak mouth
"You are speaking."

c. à tə́ á á ləm ø-mbwàn
s/he NEG PR AUG know Cl3 chief
"He does not know the chief."

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In the table that follows, we present all the independent pronouns of the language.

Table 19: simple absolute subject personal pronouns

	persons	**pronouns**	**gloss**
singular	1st	mə̀	I
	2nd	wə̀/ò	you
	3rd	ɲə́/à	s/he, it
plural	1st	bèès	we
	2nd	bànáŋ	you
	3rd	bɔ́	they

As the table shows, simple absolute subject personal pronouns are six in number.

4.3.1.2. Compound personal subject pronoun

The category of personal subject pronouns discussed here is designated as *compound* first because the pronouns substitute distinct groups of persons or separate individuals functioning together as a set and second, because in their internal constituency, each is a combination of two simple pronouns or a simple pronoun and an item referring to human species. We distinguish three types of compound pronouns in this language, namely restrictive pronoun, emphatic pronoun, and contrastive pronoun.

4.3.1.3. Restrictive personal pronoun

Restrictive pronouns indicate that the speaker is the sole agent of his action. Emphasis is on the fact that the doer acts alone. It shows that the person referring to is acting alone, not accompanied by others, or that the person himself is acting, not someone else in his place.

In Bəmbələ, the restrictive pronoun is made up of the simple personal pronoun, followed by the particle |míní| that expresses restriction. Therefore, the restrictive pronoun is a compound pronoun.

It is worth noting that |míní| is for singular persons while |bíní| stands for plural persons. Following are examples that illustrate this type of personal pronoun.

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(21)

a. Mímíní mə á á kà
PRO I PR AUG go
"I (alone), I go."

b. Wímíní wə à nám nìdúmə
PRO you P0 cook cassava
"You (alone) you, cooked cassava."

c. ɲímíní ɲə á á sák nìdúmə
PRO he PR AUG pound cassava
"He pounded cassava."

c. À à sɔŋ ɲímíní
He P0 wash PRO
"He bathed himself."

From a syntactic point of view, the restrictive pronoun appears at sentence initial position and plays subject role. It also occurs at sentence final position. The following table shows the restrictive pronouns of Bəmbələ.

Table 20: Restrictive pronouns of Bəmbələ

		Restrictive pronoun		
persons		***Simple pronoun***	***Restriction maker***	***meaning***
singular	1st	mí	míní	me alone
	2nd	wí	míní	you alone
	3rd	ɲí	míní	s/he alone
plural	1st	béès	míní	we alone
	2nd	bənəŋ	míní	you alone
	3rd	bɔ́	míní	them alone

Let us consider the following:

|mə míní | → [mí míní]

| wə míní| → [wí míní]

| ɲə míní | → [ɲí míní]

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It is obvious from the data that the vowel of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd person singular copies the features of the vowel of the restrictive marker. This is a case of complete vowel harmony. This phenomenon happens in this context when the independent pronoun ends with the schwa *[ə]*.

The restrictive pronoun in Bəmbələ might also be termed a reflexive pronoun according to its function and semantics in the language. In fact, this type of pronoun indicates that the action undertaken by the doer creates a kind of reflexivity on him (see 21d) i.e. it is in his own benefit. In the literature, it is also analysed within anaphora as a general concept. It also indicates that the person is acting alone (see 21a). Here, this pronoun expresses restriction.

4.3.1.4. Emphatic pronoun

The emphatic pronoun shows that the agent does not act alone. It shows that s/he is doing something alongside other people. It underscores the fact that he is associated with one or many other agents in the action. In Bəmbələ, this pronoun has the following structure:

EM PRO = IND PRO + Stem |-kì|

Therefore, the emphatic pronoun is made up of an independent pronoun and a morpheme |-kì|. This morpheme does not accept morphological change.

Bot Ba Njock (1970: 252) calls this |-kì| which means “too” associated to the simple personal pronominal form “autonomous moneme”. The following examples show the syntactic position of this pronoun. In fact, it is adjoined to the right of the simple personal pronoun.

(22)

a. mə kì mə́ á á pón
me too I PR AUG run
“Me too, I run.”

b. bɔ́ kì bɔ́ bə́ ámə̀ŋ
they too they VPref finish
“Them too, they have finish.”

The table I present below shows the different emphatic pronouns existing in Bəmbələ.

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Table 21: Emphatic pronoun of Bàmbəlà

Persons		**Emphatic pronouns**		
		IND PRO	***Emphatic marker***	***meaning***
Singular	1st	mə	kì	me too
	2nd	wə	kì	you too
	3rd	ɲɔ́	kì	him too
plural		bèès	kì	we too
	2nd	bənɔ́ŋ	kì	you too
	3rd	bɔ́	kì	them too

As the table shows, the singular and the plural forms of emphatic pronouns of Bàmbəlà do not exhibit agreement.

4.3.1.5. Contrastive pronoun

The contrastive pronoun indicates that the speaker refers to a specific object or person. In Bàmbəlà, this pronoun is made up of an independent pronoun, reduplicated to introduce the notion of focus somehow. The pronoun that occupies the focus position bears a high tone. This is also true of the pronouns whose tone is initially low. The focus varies from one person to another as we can observe all through the data below. When the independent pronoun has a high tone, its corresponding contrastive marker also carries a high tone.

(23)

a. mə mə á á ndzə́
I FOC PR AUG eat
"It is I who eats"

b. bɔ́ bɔ́ bə́ á á ndzə́
they FOC SM PR AUG eat
"It is them who eat"

c. wə wə́ á á nɔ́k ɲìjə́ŋ
you FOC PR AUG understand well
"It is you who is happy"

The table below shows the contrastive pronouns of the language.

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Table 22: Contrastive pronouns of Bàmbələ̀

Person		**Contrastive pronouns**		
		IND PRO	***FOC***	***meaning***
singular	**1st**	mə̀	mə́	It is me
	2nd	wə̀	wə́	It is you
	3rd	ɲə́	ɲə́	It is him
plural	**1st**	bèès	bí	It is we
	2nd	bə̀nə́ŋ	bə́nə́ŋ	It is you
	3rd	bɔ́	bɔ́	It is them

We can point out from this table that |bèès| becomes |bì|. The front mid-high long vowel undergoes regressive assimilation. Initially, the whole pronoun looses its final consonant. Thereafter, it is subjected to the transformation of its (previously mentioned) vowel that becomes front high.

From a syntactic point of view, the difference between subject and object personal pronoun is simply their syntactic position.

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4.3.1.6. Object personal pronouns

Syntactically, in Bàmbələ̀, the object personal pronoun appears after verb position. Object personal pronouns are derived from the subject independent pronoun. What makes the difference between these pronouns is their tones: the object personal pronoun has a high tone contrarily to its subject counterpart which bears a low tone. This is exemplified in the data below:

(24)

a. à à nɛ́n mə́
he P0 see me
"He sees me."

b. À à və́ ɲə́ nə̀ mə̀-ndzə́
he P0 give him with CL6-food
"He gives him food."

c. Bì ì kə́ á àbə̀ŋ nə̀ ɲə́
we F1 go to farm with him
"We shall go to the farm with him."

The change in the syntactic position of some pronominal forms can influence their semantic role. It is the case of the restrictive pronoun which functions as subject at sentence initial and as object at sentence final position, with the meaning of reflexive pronoun (see 25). The restrictive and reciprocal pronouns have the same structure and are only different in their syntactic positions. We illustrate this argument through the data below.

(25)

a. mù-úm ɲ-ínə́ á á ják ɲímíní
CL1-man AP-this PR AUG wound himself
"This man wounds himself."

b. à à sɔ̀ŋ ɲímíní
he P0 wash himself
"He washed himself (his own body)"

c. wímíní wə́ á á kə̀ á ndàt
you FOC PR AUG go PREP market
"You, you go to the market."

In examples (25a) and (25b), the restrictive pronoun functions as subject while in 25c, it functions as object.

4.3.1.7. Logophoric pronouns

Logophoric pronouns in Bəmbələ are very common in reported speech where the use of subordinate structures is frequent. The expression "logophoric pronoun" is used here to refer to devices (i.e. proforms) which indicate that in conjoined clauses, the subject of the following clause is identical with or different from the subject of the preceding clause. Following Wiesemann.et.al (1984) we use *coreference* in the situations where the subjects are identical and *switch reference* in situations where the subjects are not the same.

4.3.1.7.1. Coreference

A logophoric pronoun marking coreference is used mostly in temporary subordinative sentences. In fact, coreference means the same subject. In such cases, a pronoun *á* or *bɔ́* is used when a third person is coreferential with the third person doing the reporting. Following are examples illustrating the use of coreference.

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(26)

a. Ndòŋ à à láŋ dzə̀ à tə̀ á á láŋ ìláŋì jén.
Ndòŋ SM P0 say that he NEG PR AUG speak mother tongue his
"Ndòŋ said that he (Ndòŋ) does not speak his mother tongue."

b. Bə̀sáŋ bə́ í láŋ dzə́ bɔ́ tə̀ á á lɛ̀ɛ̀ mədóɣóŋ
CL1father SM P2 say that they NEG PR AUG like lies
"The fathers said that they do not like lies."

What is perceptible in (26a & b) is that the pronouns *à* and *bɔ́* in the subordinate clauses refer back to the subjects of the main clauses *Ndòŋ* and *Bə̀sáŋ* respectively. Hence, in each example, the subject of the main verb and that of the subordinate clause are coreferential.

4.3.1.7.2. Switch reference

Switch reference marking is indicated by the presence of a subject pronoun in the subordinate or second clause of the temporary subordinate and consecutive clauses. Let us consider the following:

(27)

a. Ndòŋ í nɛ́n mán
Ndòŋ P2 see child
"Ndòŋ saw the child."

b. Ndòŋ í nɛ́n mán à à ɲílə̀ŋ ɲə́
Ndòŋ P2 see child SM P1 greet him
"Ndòŋ saw the child and he (child) greeted him (that is Ndòŋ). "

In (27b), for instance, the pronoun *he* refers to child and not to the subject *Ndòŋ* while in (26a), the pronoun "he" refers to the subject *Ndòŋ*. Therefore, we are dealing with a coreference in (26a) and switch reference in (27b).

4.3.2. The possessive pronoun

The possessive pronoun is made up of an augment, a stem and a concord consonant determined by the morphological class of the noun which the pronoun stands for. The stems

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further subdivide into three groups marking the possessive pronoun for number (1st, 2nd and 3rd persons singular and plural). The first group is made up of pronouns which substitute for single nouns. The second group is made up of pronouns which substitute for dual nouns; that is the pronoun refers to a group made up of two distinct nouns, e.g. us meaning 'you and I'. In the third group, we find pronouns which substitute for a set of groups of plural nouns, e.g. **you** meaning 'you (pl) and them'.

As we earlier mentioned, the real marker for the possessive pronoun is the augment |i-| with a high tone. It precedes the stem of the possessive pronoun.

The stems for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd person singular are respectively |-*ámàŋ*|, | -*ɔ́ŋ*|, and |*én*|. This is noticeable in the following:

(28)

a. mán w-ámàŋ → í- w- ámàŋ
CL1-man AP-Poss AUG AP-mine
"my child" "mine"

b. à-bə̀ŋ z-ɔ́ŋ → í- z- ɔ́ŋ
CL5-farm AP-Poss AUG AP-yours
"your farm" "yours"

c. à-jùhə z-én → í- z- én
CL5- **AP**-his-her AUG AP-his/hers
"his /her banana" "his/hers"

The stems for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd person plural are respectively |-*és* |, |-*ɔ́ŋ* |, and |-*áá* |. The following examples illustrate these persons. The stem of the second person varies according to whether the number of objects and things possessed is one or more than one. For only one object, the stem is |-ɔ́ŋ|. For two or many objects, the stem is |-ínə́ŋ|.

(29)

a. à-jùhə z-és → í- z- és
CL5- banane Apou AUG AP -our
"our bananas" "ours'

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b. ø-ɲóm w-ɔ́ŋ → í- w- ɔ́ŋ
CL3-husband AP POSS AUG AP-your
"your husband" "yours"

c. |ì-kò i-áá| → í -j – áá
CL7-skin AP-their AUG AP-their
"their skin" "theirs"

The stem for the 2nd person singular and that of the second person plural for a single object possessed is identical.

The examples with the augment |i-| are possessive pronouns. This augment is the single marker that differentiates the possessive pronoun from its determiner form. In this case, possessive pronouns are drawn from possessive determiners. The following table presents the possessive pronouns of Bəmbələ and their concord consonants or agreement prefix (AP).

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Table 23: Possessive pronouns and their concord prefixes in Bàmbələ

NC	**Singular**							**plural**					
	Aug	**1st pers**		**2nd pers**		**3rd pers**		**1st pers**	**2nd pers**		**3rd pers**		
	Aug	AP	St	AP	St	AP	St	AP	St	AP	St	AP	St
1	í-	w-	àmàŋ	w-	ɔ́ŋ	w-	én	w-	és	w-	ɔ́ŋ	w-	áá
2	í-	b-	àmàŋ	b-	ɔ́ŋ	b-	én	b-	és	b-	ínəŋ	b-	áá
3	í-	w-	àmàŋ	w-	ɔ́ŋ	w-	én	w-	és	w-	ɔ́ŋ	w-	áá
4	í-	mʲ-	àmàŋ	mʲ-	ɔ́ŋ	mʲ-	én	mʲ-	és	mʲ-	énəŋ	mʲ-	áá
5	í-	z-	àmàŋ	z-	ɔ́ŋ	z-	én	z-	és	z-	ɔ́ŋ	z-	áá
6	í-	m-	àmàŋ	m-	ɔ́ŋ	m-	én	m-	és	m-	ínəŋ	m-	áá
7	í-	j-	àmàŋ	j-	ɔ́ŋ	j-	én	j-	és	j-	ɔ́ŋ	j-	áá
8	í-	bʲ-	ámàŋ	bʲ-	ɔ́ŋ	bʲ-	én	bʲ-	és	bʲ-	énəŋ	bʲ-	áá

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It is worth noting that the stem of |-ínəŋ | undergoes some morphological changes according to the nature of the agreement prefix. When it is preceded by a palatalised consonant, it is realised as |-énəŋ|. It remains |-ínəŋ| elsewhere.

4.3.3. The demonstrative pronoun

The demonstrative pronouns always infer gesture. Kerbrat Orrechioni (1980) calls them "deixis by monstration". The morphology and tone structure of demonstrative pronouns are identical to those of their determiner counterparts. In fact, like in the case of possessive pronouns, the augment | í-| is the pronoun marker here (see 30).

In specific discourse contexts especially in situations where the substantive is recoverable from the context, the demonstrative alone can be used (as a pronoun) in lieu and place of the noun. There are three types of demonstrative pronouns whose forms are determined by two factors: (a) degree of proximity/relative distance between speaker, listener and object referred to, (b) the morphological class to which the relevant noun belongs.

The demonstrative pronoun has three stems. Each stem is determined by the degree of proximity between the speaker, the listener and the referent. The first form signifies "this/these" indicating the proximity to the speaker. The second form signifies "that/those" indicating proximity to the listener. The third one signifies "that/those yonder (over there)" indicating the relative distance from both the speaker and the listener, but indicating that the object is within sight and can be pointed at. The stems of these three demonstratives are identical with their adjectival counterparts. In fact, like in the case of possessive pronouns, only the augment | i-| with its high tone makes the difference between the demonstrative adjective and the demonstrative pronoun. The following examples illustrate the three demonstrative pronouns.

(30)

a. bə̀-sáŋ bə́-ínə́ → í- bə́- ínə́
CL2-father AP-these Aug AP-these
"these fathers" "these one here"

b. ø-ɲé ɲ-ílí → í- ɲ- ílí
CL3 house AP-that AUG AP-that
"that house" "that one there"

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c. bì-lɛ́ɛ́ bí-ílí ákílí → í- bí-ílí ákílí
CL7-spear AP-taht there AUG AP-that there
"that spear there" "that one far there"

Each stem takes a concord consonant corresponding to the morphological class of the noun that the pronoun substitutes. The augment (an element other than a concord prefix that stands before a stem) does not accept agreement morphology: it is its natural property in Bantu languages (Guthrie 1967).

The following table shows the demonstrative pronouns and their agreement prefixes. It does not include demonstrative pronouns of relative distance between the speaker, hearer and reference because one of its constituent does not take concord marker.

Table 24: Demonstrative pronouns of Bàmbələ

NC	Proximity			Distance		
	AUG	AP	St	AUG	AP	St
1	í-	ɲ-	ínə́	í-	ɲ-	ílí
2	í-	b-	ínə́	í-	b-	ílí
3	í-	w-	ínə́	í-	w-	ílí
4	í-	m-	ínə́	í-	m-	ílí
5	í-	z-	ínə́	í-	z-	ílí
6	í-	m-	ínə́	í-	m-	ílí
7	í-	j-	ínə́	í-	j-	ílí
8	í-	b-	ínə́	í-	b-	ílí

The table shows that either for the demonstrative of proximity or distance, the augment does not receive any morphological change.

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4.3.4. Interrogative pronoun

There are five main interrogative pronouns in Bàmbələ used in the formation of content questions, that is, questions requiring the identity of a person, place or object as answer.

Interrogative pronouns are dependent nominals used to ask questions or to enquire about a fact. Syntactically, the interrogative pronoun replaces the noun about which the information is enquired. Except the interrogators *dzə́* that also functions as a noun because it accepts class

prefix marker and *mpɛ́* , Bəmbələ interrogative pronouns do not accept agreement. In fact, *dzɔ́* has the features of human beings. The following illustrate all the interrogative pronouns.

(31)

a. dzɔ́ á jó?
who PR say
"who speaks?"

b. wə á jó kà?
you PR say what
"what do you say?"

c. wə á jó kà?
you PR talk what
"what are you talking about?"

d. bəŋɔ́ŋ á váŋáŋ ávé?
you PR come where
"where do you come from?"

e. bɔ́ bɔ́ á sɛ́ɛ́ nə bə-dzɔ́?
they SM PR work PREP AP-who
"Whom with do they work?

f. bə-dzɔ́ bɔ́ á vè?
AP-who SM PR come
"Who (are those who) came?"

h. mŭm mpɛ́ yâ ávè.
man which FOC come
"Which man came?"

i. ìŋgɔ́ŋ í-mpɛ́ í kpɔ̀
tree AP-which P2 fall
"Which tree fell?"

When we look at the example in (31f), we realise that the interrogator functions exactly like class 2 substantives, provoking agreement on verbs. This is evident from the presence of the verbal prefix closely related to class 2 prefix, but different by its tone. This is also the case with

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the example in (31i) where the interrogator appears in the immediate after verb position and accepts agreement in class.

The table that follows presents the interrogative pronouns of Bəmbələ.

Table 25: Interrogative pronouns of Bəmbələ

INT Pronouns	Gloss
dzə́ (CL1)	to whom, whom, who
bə-dzə́ (CL2)	to whom, whom, who,
kà	what, why, how
kì	what, what of
ávé	where,
mpɛ	which
ándʒí	when

As can be observed from above, |dzə́| is only used for classes 1 and 2 substantives that refer to persons. Syntactically, there exists a variation in the position of |dzə́|. When it means "who", it stands in the sentence initial position (see 31a). It appears in sentence final position when preceded by a preposition (see 31e). Another important query to address here is whether |dzə́| is a question element or a pronoun. In our humble opinion, we think that because at the same time it is used as noun and as question marker, it plays a dual role in the language. Therefore, it is at the same time a question element and a noun according to the context in which it appears.

The English interrogators "what, why, how" are rendered in Bəmbələ by |kà|. Depending on the construction, "what" could either be rendered by |kà| or by |kì|.

4.3.5. Conclusion

In the discussion of noun modifiers and pronouns in this chapter, we have laid emphasis on the different types of noun modifiers, namely determiners (adjectives, possessives, demonstratives, numerals, and quantifiers) and pronouns (personal, emphatic, restrictive, demonstrative, and possessive), and interrogatives. The internal constituency of each component has been analysed. We also mentioned the agreement phenomenon between the noun and its

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modifier. With the exception of the human pronouns, most of the modifiers exhibit this agreement phenomenon which is rather rich in the language. In order to provide more analysis on the structure of Bəmbələ, the next chapter shall focus on the structure of verb group.

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CHAPTER 5

ELEMENTS OF THE VERB GROUP

5.1. Introduction

In the present chapter, we analyse the elements of verb group in Bàmbələ. The expression verb group is used here to refer to the verb stem and all the grammatical elements that are closely linked to the verb such as tense, aspect, mood, agreement, extensions. In other words, the verb group is made up of the verb and its "satellites". We shall start the discussion with the basic ordering of the elements within the verb group. This is followed by a broad view of the verb patterns in the language as well as some general comments on the syllable/phonological structure of Bàmbələ verb stems. The rest of the chapter then focuses on other verb inflections especially verb extensions: their form, distribution and meaning.

5.2. The structure of verbal elements in Bàmbələ

Meeussen (1967) indicates the verbal elements as follows: Pre-initial, Initial, Post-initial, Formative, Limitative, Infix, Radical and Suffix, Pre-final, Final and Post-final. He calls these elements "verbal satellites". Mutaka & Tamanji (2003) from a morphosyntactic point of view, reduce these elements into subject marker, tense, aspect and mood, verb and extensions (INFL (SM- TAM NEG) Vroot Vext, FV). My analysis is based on the latter consideration because it simplifies the capturing of the elements of the verb group, notably in Bàmbələ.

From a linear point of view, the first element of the verb group in Bàmbələ is the subject marker (SM). This subject marker establishes a kind of concord relationship between the subject of the clause and the verb itself. After the subject marker, occur tense, aspect and mood (TAM) markers. Then comes the verb stem followed by its extension(s) (EXT). Bàmbələ does not exhibit object marker. Tense, aspect and mood elements always precede the root. The structure of the verb group can be schematised as follows: SM-TAM- V- EXT. Sometimes, some mood markers (subjunctive, conditional) can occur at sentence initial position: this is to say that this order is not strict.

The following examples illustrate the order of the verbal elements in Bàmbələ.

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(1)

a. [mìmbwàn mìjɛ́səŋ á mbán]
/ mìmbwàn mí ìjɛ́s-əŋ á ø-mbán/
|mì-mbwàn mí ì jɛ́s-əŋ á ø-mbán|
3-chief SM F1 greet-REC in CL3-hut
"The traditional rulers will greet each other in the hut."

b.[Àkàk à sándzə́ sì mán]
/Àkàk à sə́ á ndzə́ sì mán/
|Àkàk à sə́ á ndzə́ - sì mu-án|
Àkàk SM PROG PR eat-CAUS CL1-child
"Àkàk made the child to eat."

What is questionable in the observation of Bəmbələ verb group is whether the elements described should be treated as affixes attached to the verb or separate words. Given that in this language, some mood markers (COND, SUB, IMP) appear sentence initially, then accept a full lexical item such as the noun to appear between them, there is no room to consider them as affixal elements attached to the verb. They are rather free forms. This is observable in the following data.

(2)

a. [dzə́ mbáámbé u ávúhíbəŋ]
/dzə́ ø-mbáámbé ú ávúhí-bəŋ/
|dzə́ ø-mbáámbé ú á vúhí-bəŋ|
SBJ CL1 door SM PR open-REFL
That the door opens."

b. [kə̀ mùt àɲɔ́ məŋgbàlàm, laŋ mə̀]
/ kə̀ à ´ áɲɔ́ məŋgbàlàm, laŋ mə̀/
|kə̀ mu- ŭm à á ɲɔ́ məŋgbàlàm, laŋ mə̀|
COND CL1-person SM PR drink məŋgbàlàm tell me
"If the man drinks məŋgbàlàm, tell me."

The data in (2) show that the mood markers (SUB & COND) appear sentence initial, permitting the subject to appear between the mood and the subject marker.

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According to the preceding observation, the major verb group elements that precede the verb stem are the subject marker, tense, aspect and mood. In the next chapter (chapter 6) we shall focus more on tense, aspect and mood as well as negation. We observed that these elements tend to behave more like independent morphemes within the Bəmbələ verb group than affixes. In the next sections, we shall shed light on the subject marker, and then focus on the verb stem and other verb related elements that follow the stem.

5.3. The subject marker (SM)

In Bəmbələ, the subject marker shows concord between the subject and the verb. The concord provoked by the subject is determined by the morphological class of the subject noun. This subjectival concord functions like a pronominal element since it can stands for the subject noun in contexts where the identity of the noun can be recovered from the discourse situation. This is often remarkable for class one nouns as illustrated in the following:

(3)

a. [à sánùŋ àvól àvól]
/à sə́ á nùŋ àvól àvól/
|à sə́ á nùŋ àvól àvól|
SM PROG PR walk fast fast
"He is walking very quickly"

b. [à tálèŋ ɲə́]
/ à tə ́álèŋ ɲə́/
|à tə ́álèŋ ɲə́|
SM NEG PR love him
"He does not love her."

The following table points out the subject concord markers in Bəmbələ. It is worth noting that proper nouns take class 1/2 subject concord marker: class 1 for the singular and class 2 for the plural.

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Table 26: Subject concord marker

Noun class	Concord marker
1	à
2	bə́
3	ú
4	mí
5	à
6	mə́
7	ì
8	bí

Some class 3 nouns that bear human features rather accept class 1 subject concord marker. The sentence that follows illustrates this point.

(4)

[mbwàn à mə́nə́ índzə́ àjùhə̀]
/ Ø-mbwàn à mə́nə́ í-ndzə́ à-jùhə̀./
|Ø-mbwàn à mə́nə́ í-ndzə́ à-jùhə̀.|
CL3-chief SM HAB P2-eat CL5-banana
"The chief used (far in the past) to eat banana."

In (4), normally, we were expecting the subjectival concord marker to be *ú*. The fact that the concordial morpheme for the subject is *à* is simply due to the fact that it bears a human feature.

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5.4. Nature of the Bəmbələ verb

In Bəmbələ, the verb is made up of an augment *á* and the verbal prefix *á* plus the stem of the verb. As in English, this verbal prefix seems to originate from a locative construction.

(5)

a. [ánùŋ]
/á -nùŋ/
| á á - nùŋ|
"to walk"

b. [ájó]
/á - jó/
| á á- jó|
“to speak”

c. [ábàk]
/á – bàk/
| á á-bàk|
“fold”

It is arguable whether the infinitive forms of those verbs whose stems are identical to those of class 5 nouns are not to be confused. The fact that class 5 noun prefix has a low tone (see 6 below) shows that there cannot be confusion between the infinitive forms of the verb whose citation forms has a high tone. The following illustrates the difference between class 5 nouns and the infinitive forms of the verbs with identical stems.

(6)

a. | á á-bók| “to break”	|à-bók| CL5-feast “feast”
b.| á á-kɔŋ| “to snore”	|à- kɔŋ| “CL5-stink “stink”
c.| á á-jó| “to talk, to speak”	|à-jó| CL5-, speech, problem “speech, problem”

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According to Meeussen (1967:85-90) the combination of a root and suffix (es) is called base. He argues that the base forms a stem together with an obligatory final vowel. Since Bəmbələ lacks this morpheme (final vowel), there is not a material distinction between the base and the stem.

The verb stems have the following pattern in this language: [[Radical (Expansion)]root (-suffix]stem. The following illustrates the structure of the verb stem *nùŋsì* derived from the verb *nùŋ* “to walk” by means of the suffix -*sì*. The underived stem can be formally divided into the Radical *nùŋ* and the extension -*sì*.

Monosyllabic and disyllabic verbs are very common in Bəmbələ. Monosyllabic verbs can either end with a consonant or a vowel (long or short). Monosyllabic verbs can have light (CV), heavy (CVC), or modified (CGV) syllables. The following table presents examples illustrating monosyllabic verb stems.

Table 27: Monosyllabic verbs

Light (CV/ CV:)		Heavy (CVC)		Complex (CGV)		Complex (CGVC)	
kə̀	"go"	nùŋ	"walk"	bʲéé	"give birth to"	byɛ́k	"burp, belch"
lèɛ̀	"desire, cry"	bɔ̀ŋ	"do"	bwɛ́	"chop up"	bwɛ́p	"burst"
kà	"divide"	sák	"dance"			kwàn	"be sick"
bìì	"catch"	nùm	"produce"			myɔ̀t	"squash"
jó	"talk, speak"	kə́k	"cut"			myàm	"sprout"
və́	"give"	nɛ́n	"see"			pyák	"rush"
lúú	"forge"	bàm	"blame, shout on"				

There are very few monosyllabic CGC in the language. At the current stage of the analysis, I have identified only two of them.

Disyllabic verbs on their part can be divided into two groups: those that end with a vowel and those that end with a consonant. Disyllabic verbs are of many syllable types. They have five main syllable types: CV.CV/ CV:CV, CV.CVC, CVC.CV, CVC,CVC and CGV.CV. The first syllable of those verbs with CVC.CVC syllable structures end up with a consonant and the following syllable also begins with a consonant. We mentioned earlier on that there is no consonant cluster in this language. This explains why adjacent consonants belong to distinct syllables. There might be deletion of a schwa between the first and second syllable of the verb in this case, that is, initially, we might have a CV.CV(ə).CVC structure. With the deletion of the schwa, the verbs end up with a CVC.CVC structure. The following table illustrates disyllabic verbs.

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Table 28: Disyllabic verbs

CV.CV / CV:CV		CV.CVC		CVC.CV		CVC.CVC		CGV. CV	
bàlàŋ	“look”	bàlàŋ	“look, visit”	cíklì	“push down”	bàkrəŋ	“join”	swárì	“undress”
bánì	“invite”	bámàŋ	“pinch”	tíklì	“chew”	dəmləŋ	“taste”	byánì	“imitate”
bíbì	“beat”	tʃínəŋ	“push”	képlì	“mock at”	tòrkəŋ	“delay”		
bùùsì	multiply	kàmàŋ	“split”	kìŋlì	“turn, trace out”	kòkləŋ	“pray”		
délì	“fly”	káràŋ	“set a trap”	vəklì	“draw”	kpɛ̀rkəŋ	“scari-fy”		

The table above indicates that most of those disyllabic verbs ending with vowel have the high front vowel at their final position while those ending with a consonant mostly carry the velar nasal. The second syllable of the examples in table 24 are termed expansions (Van de Velde 2008), and fossilized extensions (Tamanji 2009) because they cannot be separated from the rest of the stem on morphological grounds.

Some disyllabic verbs are of CV.V structure. These forms are not very common in the language. However, we can have examples such as: nóɛ́ “kill” and nòɛ̀ “laugh”.

The final syllable of some disyllabic verbs seems formally identical to an existing suffix. This is the case with reciprocative and causative, but the initial consonant of this final syllable is different from the sibilant *s*, the first consonant of the suffix while in CVC.CV structure, *lì* does not carry a meaning in the language like *sì*, causative marker. This is observable in the example below.

(7)

a. tòrkəŋ
“delay”

b. kòkləŋ
“scarify”

c. vènsəŋ
“hate reciprocally”

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d. nénsə̀ŋ
"see reciprocally"

e. tíklì
"chew"

f. və́klì
"draw"

g. ndzə́sì
"to make eat"

h. nùŋsì
"make walk"

In (7a & b), *tòr* and *kòk* do not constitute a stem, in contrary of *vèn* and *nén* that are verb stems. In the same vein, *kə̀ŋ* and *lə̀ŋ* do not carry a meaning in the language whereas |*-sə̀ŋ*| as an extension expresses reciprocity.

Trisyllabic verbs are mostly gotten from compounding. Most often, the first syllable can be taken away as a full stem. Following are examples illustrating trisyllabic words.

Table 29: Trisyllabic verbs

CV.CV.CVC		CVC.V.CV		CVC.CV.CV		CV.CV.CV	
véémə́ɲùŋ	"urinate"	váŋájɔ́	"enthrone"	sétmə́téé	"spit"	túmə́téé	"praise"
		nɔ́kálún	"revenge"				

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Let us have a look at one of the trisyllabic verbs in order to describe its compound nature: véémə́ɲùŋ is made up of *véé* "defecate" and *mə̀ɲùŋ* "urine".

In addition to the syllable stems discussed above, we have found a number of syllables that begins with the homorganic nasal (N).

(8)

a. CV (NCV) : ndzə́
"eat"

b. CV.CV (NCV.CV): ndáŋì
"jump"

c. CVC.CVC (NCVC.CVC): ndèŋbèŋ
"bend (bend) tree"

d. CV.CVC (NCV.CVC): ndzə́mùt
"burry"

5.5. Tone patterns on verb stems

Only the structural tone of a verb can be high or low. Consequently, there are very few verb stems with a rising tone or falling tone patterns. The only two verbs that carry these tones are *jă* "sing" and *pôn* "fear". In the language, the numbers of high and low tone stems are roughly equivalent. Monosyllabic verb stems can either have a high or a low tone.

(9)

a. pón
"run"

b. bòŋ
"do"

c. sák
"dance, pound"

d. ɲàn
"iron"

Most of the second syllables of disyllabic verbs carry a low tone while their first syllable can either bear a high or a low tone. The following exemplifies this observation.

(10)

a. və́klì
"draw"

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b. tíklì
“chew”

c.kìŋlì
“trace out, turn around”

d. bàkrèŋ
“join”

We notice from table 25 above that all trisyllabic verbs bear a high tone.

5.6. Verbal derivation

Verbal derivation is confined to the extensional slot of the verb structure. The difference between the complex verbs with a disyllabic structure and those treated in this section is that the latter are related to morphologically less complex verbs. Whether a verb is described as derived or underived depends first on its morphology, and then on its semantics. The set of verbs in (11) exemplify this.

(11)

a. jɛ́ɛ́sàŋ
“greet reciprocally”

b. jɛ́ɛ́
“greet”

c. kòklàŋ
“scarify”

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Bàmbəlà verb stems can take various kinds of suffixes to form derivative verbs. The commonly known verbal derivative meanings in this language are causative, instrumental, reciprocity, reflexive, passive and restrictive. The suffix added to the underived stem is known as verbal extension.

5.6.1. The suffix |-sì|

The suffix |-sì| marks causative in Bàmbəlà. Causatives are generally formed from verbs with low valency. This nature makes them ready for derivation than two-argument verbs. Causative meaning can be derived from state verbs, intransitive verbs and monotransitive verbs.

5.6.1.1. State verbs

From a semantic viewpoint, the causative verbs derived from the state verb expresses the idea of "making to become different". The suffix expressing cause added to the stem gives the possibility or rather the capacity to change the nature of the object expressed in the underived verb. In the table that follows, we present the causatives derived from state verbs.

Table 30 Causatives derived from state verb

	Basic verb	**gloss**	**derived causatives**	**gloss**
a.	vín	"be black"	vínsì	"cause to become black / blacken"
b.	vèè	" be red"	vèèsì	"make to become red / redden, ripe /ripen"
d.	sàŋáŋ	"be fade"	sàŋáŋsì	"cause to become fade"
e.	júŋ	"be hot"	júŋsì	"make to become hot / heat up"
f.	sɔ̀l	"be wet"	sɔ̀lsì	"cause to be wet"

Causative extension marker is a valency increasing suffix. Like in most languages (Van de Velde 2008 & Tamanji 2009), in Bəmbələ, the derived causative verb, when attached to a state verb, takes two arguments. The subject of the basic verb becomes the object of the derived causative and a new subject responsible for causing the change in the state expressed by the verb is introduced. This is exemplified in (12) below.

(12)

a. [àjùhə ávèè]
/à-jùhə ávèè/
|à-jùhə á á vèè|
CL5-banana PR AUG be ripe
"The banana is ripe."

b. [Àkàk à ávèèsì àjùhə]
/Àkàk à ávèè-sì à-jùhə/
|Àkàk à á á vèè-sì à-jùhə|
Àkàk SM PR AUG ripe-CAUS CL5-banana
"Àkàk makes the banana to ripen."

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c. [Àkàk à ávèèsì àjùhə nə mə-jíí]
/Àkàk à ávèè-sì à-jùh nə mə-jíí/
|Àkàk à á á vèè-sì à-jùhə nə mə-jíí|
Àkàk SM PR AUG ripe-CAUS CL5-banana with CL6-water
"Àkàk makes the banana to ripen with water."

The example in (12c) aims at demonstrating that it is possible for causatives derived from state verbs to take a third argument. This is possible only when a case-marking element is used (marked in the example by the preposition *nə* "with").

5.6.1.2. Intransitive verbs

As pointed out by Tamanji (2009) causatives derived from intransitive verbs can carry various meanings including assistive, causation and permission. We shall bring details about these meanings after a presentation of the verbs in the following table.

Table 31: Causatives derived from intransitive verbs

	Basic verb	**gloss**	**Derived verb**	**gloss**
a.	sùs	"descend"	sùsì	"help to descend"
b.	lɛ̀ɛ̀	"cry"	lɛ̀ɛ̀sì	"make to cry"
c.	nòɛ̀	"laugh"	nòɛ̀sì	"make to laugh"
d.	nùŋ	"walk"	nùŋsì	"cause to walk"
e.	jáhàŋ	"sit down"	jàhàŋsì	"help to sit down"
f.	kə	"go"	kìsì	"make/ help to go"
g.	nɔŋ	"sleep"	nɔŋsì	"cause/ help to sleep"
h.	jó	"speak, talk"	jósì	"cause to speak / talk"
i.	pón	"run"	pónsì	"help / cause to run"

An interesting observation about this table is the change of the vowel of *kə* in its derived form. In fact, in its derived form, the stem vowel raises and harmonises with the suffixal vowel.

The derived verb generally expresses the idea of helping someone do something when causative marker is attached to verbs of movement. It could also express causation or permission as illustrated in the following examples.

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(13)

a. [mǔm à ánùŋ]

/mù-úm à ánùŋ/

|mù- úm à á á nùŋ.|
CL2-man SM PR AUG walk
"The man walks."

b. [máŋámǔm à ánùŋsì mǔm á nzè]

/mu-áŋámǔm à ánùŋ-sì mù-úm á ø-nzè/

|mu-áŋámǔm à á á nùŋ-sì mù-úm á ø-nzè.|
CL2-boy SM PR AUG walk-CAUS CL2-man to CL3-path
"The boy permits the man to pass."
(when they meet on the path)

(14)

a. [mán á lèè]

/mu-án à álèè /

|mu-án à á lèè.|
CL2-child SM PR cry
"The child cries."

b. [ø-mbwàn à álèè-sì mu-án]

/ø-mbwàn à álèè-sì mu-án/

|ø-mbwàn à á á lèè-sì mu-án.|
CL3-chief SM PR AUG cry-CAUS CL1-child
"The chief makes the child to cry."

(15)

a. [ø-ŋgúŋgúú á pón]

/ø-ŋgúŋgúú à ápón /

| ø-ŋgúŋgúú à á á pón.|
CL1-thief SM PR AUG run away
"The chief runs away."

b. [bòt bə́ ápónsì ŋgúŋgúú.]

/bə̀-òt bə́ ápón-sì ø-ŋgúŋgúú./

|bə̀-òt bə́ á á pón-sì ø-ŋgúŋgúú. |
CL2 people SM PR AUG run-CAUS CL1-thief
"The people helped the chief to run away."

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The example in (13b) expresses the idea of permission. In (14b), the causation meaning is unveiled while in (15b), there is expression of the assistive meaning.

As mentioned earlier and as can be observed from the different examples discussed above, the causative requires an agentive subject and the subject of the underived verb becomes the object the derived causative.

Just like in the case of state verbs discussed above, causatives formed from intransitive verbs, can take up to three arguments. Even in this case, the use of case-marking introduced by the preposition *nə* is required as observable in the following data.

(16)

[Ndòŋ à àkpɔ̀sì àlèn nə øŋkpat]
/Ndòŋ à àkpɔ̀sì à-lèn nə ø-ŋkpat/
|Ndòŋ à à kpɔ̀-sì à-lɛ̀n nə ø-ŋkpat.|
Ndòŋ SM P1 fall-CAUS palm tree with CL3-cutlass
"Ndòŋ cut the palm tree with the cutlass."

5.6.1.3. Mono-transitive verbs

There are some mono-transitive verbs in Bəmbələ that take causation suffix. When such extensions are attached to the underived form of the verb, they can either express causation or the idea of assistance. The following table shows the causatives derived from mono-transitive verbs.

Table 32: Causatives derived from mono-transitive verbs

	Basic verb	**gloss**	**derived verb**	**gloss**
a.	ndzə́	"eat"	ndzə́sì	"make to eat / help someone to eat"
b.	núm	"produce"	númsì	"make / help someone to produce"
c.	dàŋ	"cross (river)"	dàŋsì	"help someone to cross over"
d.	nóɛ́	"kill"	nóɛ́sì	"cause somebody to kill"
e.	màŋ	"finish"	màŋsì	"make somebody to finish"
f.	jùk	"wound"	jùksì	"to make someone wound somebody"

When a causative derived from mono-transitive verbs is used in a sentence, the basic subject becomes the causative object while the basic object of verb becomes the object of a

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preposition: there is change of grammatical roles due to the arguments of the verb. The examples in (17a&b) illustrate the change in grammatical roles. The example in (17c) shows the requirement of a case marking (prepositional) element for the introduction of a third argument.

(17)

a. [bwán bə́ ìndzə́ ìkés]
/ bə̀-wán bə́ ì ndzə́ ì-kés/
|bə̀- wán bə́ ì ndzə́ ì- kés.|
CL2-child SM P2-eat CL7-fufu
"The child eats fufu."

b. [ɲáŋ à ìndzə́sì bwán ìkés]
/ø-ɲáŋ à ì ndzə́sì bə̀-wán ì-kés/
|ø-ɲáŋ à ì ndzə́-sì bə̀-wán ì-kés.|
CL1-mother SM P2 eat-CAUS CL2-child CL7-fufu
"The mother forced the children to eat fufu."

c. [ɲáŋ à ìndzə́sì bwán ìkés á àbə̀ŋ]
/ø-ɲáŋ à ì ndzə́-sì bə̀-wán ì-kés á à-bə̀ŋ/
| ø-ɲáŋ à ì ndzə́-sì bə̀-wán ì-kés á à-bə̀ŋ|
CL1-mother SM P2 eat-CAUS CL2-child CL7-fufu in CL5-farm
"The mother forced the children to eat fufu in the farm."

The case-marking element used in (17c) to change grammatical role is *à.*

5.6.2. The suffix |-sə́ŋ|

This suffix derives reciprocal verbs. Reciprocity requires the presence of at least two participants. As pointed out by Tamanji (op.cit.), "the suffix indicates that the action/meaning of the verb affects more than one argument". In fact, s/he who initiates the action is affected at the same level as s/he who undergoes it. For instance, in a situation where two or more participants are shaking their hands, each of them shakes at the same time the hand of the opposite member. The following table illustrates verbs with reciprocal reading.

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Table 33: reciprocal verbs

	basic verb	gloss	derived form	gloss
a	sɛ́n	"change"	sɛ́nsə́ŋ	"exchange "
b.	vɛ̀n	"hate"	vɛ̀nsə́ŋ	"hate each other"
c.	jɛ́ɛ́	"greet"	jɛ́ɛ́sə́ŋ	"greet each other"
d.	nóɛ́	"kill"	nóɛ́sə́ŋ	"kill each other"
e.	nɛ́n	"see"	nɛ́nsə́ŋ	"see each other"
f.	lə̀ŋ	"love"	lə̀ŋsə́ŋ	"love each other"
g.	lə̀m	"know"	lə̀msə́ŋ	"know each other"

There are also some cases where the suffix |-sə́ŋ| adds an additional meaning. The derived verb in (18) has either the reciprocal meaning or a habitual one.

(18)

dòk "deceive"
dòksə́ŋ "deceive each other"
[Bɔ́ bə́ ádòksə́ŋ]
/Bɔ́ bə́ ádòk-sə́ŋ/
|Bɔ́ bə́ á á dòk-sə́ŋ|
They SM PR AUG deceive-REC
"They deceive each other."

Let us consider the following:

(19)

a. [Àkàk à ádòk Ndéŋgè]
/Àkàk à ádòk Ndéŋgè/
|Àkàk à á á dòk Ndéŋgè|
Àkàk SM PR AUG deceive Ndéŋgè
"Àkàk deceives Ndéŋgè."

b. [Àkàk nə̀ Ndéŋgè bádòksə́ŋ]
/Àkàk nə̀ Ndéŋgè bə́ ádòk-sə́ŋ/
|Àkàk nə̀ Ndéŋgè bə́ á á dòk-sə́ŋ |
Àkàk PREP Ndéŋgè SM PR AUG deceive-REC
"Àkàk and Ndéŋgè deceive each other."

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The subject and the object in (19a) have become the subject in (19b). The verb itself is transitive in (19a) intransitive in (19b) where both of the agents initiate and experience the action stated by the verb. Reciprocal is a valency reducing suffix since it does not accept another argument than the subject. So also, reciprocal verbs always require animate agents.

5.6.3. The suffix |-bəŋ|

The suffix |-bəŋ| entails two main meanings according to the context in which it is used. The suffix carries the meaning of reflexivity and so also, derives passive verb forms.

5.6.3.1. Reflexive

The reflexive meaning of the suffix |-bəŋ| means that the doer undertakes an action for his own benefit, on his own behalf or that the doer undertakes an action that starts an ends on him. It shows that A is the agent and the experiencer (A ↔ A). In fact, it shows that the agent's action is upon himself. The following table illustrates reflexive verbs.

Table 34: reflexive verbs

	Basic verb	gloss	derived verb	gloss
a.	bàk	"bend"	bàkbəŋ	"bend oneself down"
b.	bàn	"press"	bànbəŋ	"press oneself"
d.	tèɛ̀	"stretch out"	tèɛ̀bəŋ	"stretch oneself"
e.	vùhì	"open"	vùhìbəŋ	"open"
f.	kà	"share/ divide"	kàbəŋ	"divide"
g.	və́	"give"	və́bəŋ	"give to oneself"
h	dép	"beat"	dépbəŋ	"beat oneself"
i.	jó	tell, speak, say	jóbəŋ	"speak to oneself"
	ndɔ́k	touch	ndɔ̀kbəŋ	"touch oneself"

When the reflexive extension is added to a verb, it loses is transitivity. This extensional morpheme is known as valency decreasing suffix.

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(20)

a. [Àkàk àvùhì mbáámbé.]
/Àkàk àvùhì ø-mbáámbé./
|Àkàk à à vùhì ø-mbáámbé.|
Àkàk SM P1 open CL3-door
"Àkàk opened the door."

b. [mbáámbé ú vúhíbəŋ.]
/ø-mbáámbé ú ávúhí-bəŋ./
|ø-mbáámbé ú à vúhí-bəŋ.|
CL3-door SM P1 open-CAUS
"The door opened."

The object of (20a) becomes the subject in (20b) and the initial subject of the basic verb simply disappears.

Typologically, it is known that in many languages, reflexive is developed from reciprocal (Li-May Sung 2006). According to Kemmer (2003 quoted by Li-May Sung 2006), the similarity between the two uses results from the fact that in both cases, "each participant is both the initiator and the endpoint." This observation is not attested in Bəmbələ since verbal reflexives and verbal reciprocals are distinct and unrelated morphologically and semantically. In fact, reciprocity requires at least two participants while reflexivity involves one participant who is at the same time the agent and the experiencer. This is evident in (19 & 20) above. Unlike reflexives that also accept inanimate agents (20a), reciprocals always require animate agents.

5.6.3.2. Passive

The extensional suffix |-bəŋ| also derives passive verb forms. In the passive, the subject (agent) undergoes the action in spite of his own volition and could not influence it. Passive sentence marks the resultative state of an action. The following table illustrates passive verb forms.

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Table 35: Passive verbs

	Basic verb	"gloss"	Derived verb	gloss
a.	lók	"marry"	lókbəŋ	"be married"
b.	dép	"beat"	dépbəŋ	"be beaten"
c.	nóɛ́	"kill"	nóɛ́bəŋ	"be killed"
d.	jă	"sing"	jăbəŋ	"be sung"
e.	pèn	"plait"	pènbəŋ	"be plaited"
f.	tàŋ	"attach"	tàŋbəŋ	"be attached"

Passive constructions are reported not to be frequent in the speech of the native speakers of Bəmbələ. They prefer using the active form of the sentence. Most often, even when the language makes use of a passive construction, not all the different operations for passivization are respected. This is observable in (21b&d) below.

(21)

a. [àbók ìkáyáŋ á àbəŋ.]
/à bók ìkáyáŋ á àbəŋ./
| à à bók ì-káyáŋ á à-bəŋ.|
He P1-brake CL7-pineapple in CL5-farm
"He harvested pineapple in the farm."

b. [ìkáyáŋ ínə́ bókbəŋ.]
/ì-káyáŋ ínə́ bók-bəŋ./
|ì-káyáŋ ínə́ bók-bəŋ.|
CL7-pineapple be brake-PASS
"The pineapple is broken.(in the farm)"

c. [ɲɔ́ ánlɔ́ ɲə́]
/ø-ɲɔ́ ánlɔ́ ɲə́/
|ø-ɲɔ́ á á nlɔ́ ɲə́.|
CL3-snake PR AUG bite him
"The snake bites him."

d. [á nlɔ́-bəŋ]
/á nlɔ́-bəŋ/
|à á á nlɔ́-bəŋ.|
He PR AUG bite PASS
"He is bitten. (by the snake)"

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e* [á nlɔ́-bàŋ á ø-ɲɔ́]
/á nlɔ́-bàŋ á ø-ɲɔ́/
| à á á nlɔ́-bàŋ á ø-ɲɔ́|
He PR bite PASS PREP CL3-snake
"He is bitten. (by the snake)"

The puzzle in (21b&d) is that in the passive constructions, the agentive complement is absent. What is however evident is that the object of the active sentence has become the subject of the passive sentence. The passive constructions reduce verb valency in Bəmbələ: inherently transitive verbs become intransitive when associated with the passive morpheme. In case the speaker forces the introduction of the agentive complement, the sentence becomes ungrammatical (see 21e*).

Because of the morphological identity between the reflexive and the passive suffix, only their context of usage permits to differentiate them.

(22)

a. [Ndòŋ à ádépbàŋ.]
/Ndòŋ à ádép-bàŋ./
|Ndòŋ à á á dép-bàŋ.|
Ndòŋ SM PR AUG beat REFL
"Ndòŋ beats himself."

b. [á nlɔ́-bàŋ]
/á nlɔ́-bàŋ/
|à á á nlɔ́-bàŋ.|
He PR AUG bite PASS
"He is bitten. (by the snake)"

The sentence in (22a) illustrates reflexive while the one in (22b) illustrates passive. At first sight, there is no indicator which shows the difference between them. Only their discourse context allows identifying whether we are dealing with a passive construction (rarely used in the language) or a reflexive construction.

5.6.4. The suffix |-nə́ |

The suffix |-nə́| has the general instrumental meaning. The instrumental indicates the instrument used by the agent (subject) to accomplish an action. Instrumentals are generally

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formed from verbs, those verbs that have low valency. One-argument verbs have a high propensity to accept the derivation of instrumentals. The following table summarises the instrumentals.

Table 36: Instrumental verbs

	Basic verb	**gloss**	**Derived verb**	**gloss**
a.	ndzə́	eat	ndzə́nə́	"dowith"
b.	nùŋ	walk	nùŋnə́	"walk with"
c.	kàráŋ	set a trap	kàràŋ	"set a trap with"
d.	pímì	clean	pímì	"clean with"
e.	bɛ̀ɛ̀	cultivate	bɛ̀ɛ̀	"cultivate with"
f.	sɛ́ɛ́	work (farm)	sɛ́ɛ́	"work with"

The instrumental suffix |-nə́| is different from the preposition |-nə̀| "with" because of its high tone. The instrumental requires an inanimate object while the preposition |-nə̀| either accepts animate or inanimate object.

(23)

a. [á nùŋ nə́ mə́ŋáŋ.]
/á nùŋ nə́ mu-ə́ŋáŋ./
| à á á nùŋ nə́ mu-ə́ŋáŋ.|
he PR AUG walk with CL1-brother
"He walks with his brother."

b. [á nùŋnə́ ntóŋ.]
/á nùŋnə́ ø-ntóŋ./
| à á á nùŋ-nə́ ø-ntóŋ.|
he PR AUG walk-INS CL3-stick
"He walks with a stick."

In case |-nə̀| is a preposition, it allows a patient to appear between the verb and the third argument. This is not the property of instrumental.

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(24)

a. [á ndzə́ nə ø tók.]
/á ndzə́-nə́ ø- tók /
|à á á ndzə́-nə́ ø- tók.|
he PR AUG eat-INS CL5-spoon
"He eats with (the aid) a spoon."

b. [á ndzə́ ajùhə nə tók]
/á ndzə́ ajùhə nə ø-tók/
|à á á ndzə́ a-jùhə nə ø-tók.|
he PR AUG eat CL5-banana with CL5-spoon
"He eats banana with a spoon."

Instrumental implies that the agent (subject) initiates an action passively undergone by the patient (object), which is an instrument, an object in the semantic meaning of the word.

5.6.5. The suffix | -və̀ |

The suffix |-və̀| derives restrictive verbs. The restrictive indicates that the agent's activity is limited to one and only one action. The restrictive suffix is usually attached to CVC-stems as can be observed in the following table that summarises restrictive verbs.

Table 37: Restrictive verbs

	Basic verb	**gloss**	**Derived verb**	**gloss**
a.	ndzə́	"eat"	ndzə́və̀	"eat only"
b.	sák	"dance"	sákvə̀	"dance only"
c.	nɛ́n	"see"	nɛ́nvə̀	"just to see"
d.	pón	"run"	pónvə̀	"run only"
e.	tʃì̀l	"write"	tʃì̀lvə̀	"write only"

Because of the idea of restriction, restrictive verbs usually require an object NP towards who/ which is directed the agent's action: a patient who does not participate in the action, who passively undergoes the effect of the agent's action as illustrated in (25).

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(25) a. [á ndzə́və̀ ŋkón]
/ á ndzə́və̀ ŋkón /
|à á á ndzə́-və̀ ŋkón. |
he PR AUG eat-RES ŋkón
"He eats ŋkón (and nothing else)."

b. [Nàŋ ànɛ́nvə̀ Àbánà]
/Nàŋ ànɛ́n-və̀ Àbánà/
|Nàŋ à à nɛ́n-və̀ Àbánà.|
Nàŋ SM P1 see-RES Àbánà
"Nàŋ saw Àbánà (and nobody else)."

c. [à tʃîl ìkàŋə́.]
/ à tʃîl ì-kàŋə́ /
|à à tʃîl ì-kàŋə́.|
"he P1-write CL7-letter
"He wrote a letter (of the alphabet)."

d. [À tʃîlvə̀ ìkàŋə́]
/à tʃîl- və̀ ì-kàŋə́/
|À à tʃîl- və̀ ì-kàŋə́.|
he P1 write-RES CL7-letter
"He wrote only a (letter of the alphabet), but not the whole letter (mail)."

In (25d) derived from (25c), the idea of restriction is underscored by the fact that the verb *tʃîlvə̀* limits the activity of the agent on one and only one fact: that of limiting his writing activity on a grapheme without extending it to a whole text (mail).

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5.7. Conclusion

In this chapter, we have examined the elements of the verb group. The verbal elements in Bəmbələ include subject marker, tense, aspect and mood, the verb stem and the extensions. The analysis revealed that because some mood markers appear sentence initial position, the TAM cannot be taken as affixal elements attached to the verb stem. The subject marker shows concord in between the subject and the verb. This agreement is triggered by the subject. Although this language has verb stems made up of three syllables, monosyllabic and disyllabic verb stems are

known to be predominant. The tone pattern exhibited by these verb stems are mostly low or high, verb stems with contour tones being very few in the language. Stems can take extensions or verbal derivatives such as causative, instrumental, reciprocity, reflexive, passive and restrictive. It is observable that the language under study cannot take more than one extension. In studying these verbal extensions therefore, we looked at their form, distribution and meaning. A complete study of the verb in a language also involves the analysis of all the other grammatical elements attached to the verb stem. Therefore, in the following chapter, focus shall be on tense, aspect, mood and negation.

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CHAPTER 6

TENSE, ASPECT, MOOD AND NEGATON

6.1. Introduction

In this chapter, we pay attention to the analysis of tense, aspect, mood and negation. Most often, in Bantu languages, tense aspect and mood (TAM) interact so that they cannot really be separated in a study like the current one: they have a one-to-one relationship. Bəmbələ is no exception. In order to avoid any inconsistency in the analysis, they will be analysed together.

As it is cross-linguistically proven, there are three major tense divisions:

Past: here, event time precedes speech time;

Present: here, event time is simultaneous with speech time;

Future: at this level, event time follows speech time. This division is also true of Bəmbələ, and can be represented as follows:

tense system in Bəmbələ

Bəmbələ TAM system makes use of two non-finite forms: infinitive and imperative, and six moods, namely indicative, imperative, subjunctive, conditional, simultaneity, and potential. The indicative mood and the conditional mood express tense and aspect. This chapter is organised in three main sub-sections. In the first sub-section, the one by which the analysis begins, we discuss the TAM system of the language. The following sub-section addresses negation while the last main sub-section tackles the issue of irregular verbs.

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6.1. The TAM system of Bɔ̀mbɔ̀lɔ̀

This section describes the study of tense, mood and aspect system of Bɔ̀mbɔ̀lɔ̀. The analysis starts by tackling non-finite forms, namely infinitive and imperative before looking at mood proper.

6.1.1. The infinitive

In Bɔ̀mbɔ̀lɔ̀, the infinitive (INF) form of the verb is expressed by two agglutinating elements: the verbal prefix preceded by an augment *á-,* identical to the infinitival prefix itself, and finally, comes the verbal base.

The infinitive mood is that of the lexical form of the verb. According to Meeussen (1967), this mood is rather a noun "by virtue of its prefix and through part of its syntactic uses but also a verb by its stem." In fact, the infinitive mood is nominal what justifies why we term it impersonal mood. The difference between the infinitival marker and the CL5 noun prefix is at the level of their tones. The infinitive has a high tone what makes the infinitive form of the verb to look like originating from locative constructions while CL5 noun prefix has a low tone (see section 5.1). Following are examples of the infinitive form of verb in Bɔ̀mbɔ̀lɔ̀.

(1)

a. ákɔ̀ "to work"
b. ánùŋ "to walk"
c. ábɔ̀ŋ "to do"
d. ándzɔ́ "to eat"
e. ábàlàŋ "to look at"
f. ánɛ́n "to see, to meet"
g. áɲɔ́ "to drink"
h. ájó "to say, to speak, to talk"

In Bɔ̀mbɔ̀lɔ̀, infinitive can be used as a second verb of a proposition, to mark means-purpose relations or true value of statement and prohibition. The examples in (1) and (2) illustrate respectively the case of second verb of a proposition and means-purpose relation.

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(2)

a. [mákánɛ́n ɲə́]

/mə ákə ánɛ́n ɲə́/

|mə á á kə á ánɛ́n ɲə́.|

I PR AUG go AUG see him

"I am going to meet him."

b. [kájɔ̀ŋ mə́ ìlìɣə̀]

/kə ájɔ̀ŋ mə́ ì-lìɣə̀/

|kə́ á á jɔ̀ŋ mə́ ì-lìɣə̀.|

IMP AUG INF bring me CL7chair

"Please, go and bring me a chair."

(3)

a. [àkə á ndàt ákòjɔ̀ŋ nə́ àjùhə̀]

/à kə á ø-ndàt ákòjɔ̀ŋ nə́ à-jùhə̀./

|à kə á ø-ndàt á á kòjɔ̀ŋ nə́ à-jùhə̀.|

he P1 go to CL3-market AUG INF buy on CL-5 banana

"He went to the market to buy banana."

b. [ì ká àbə̀ŋ ákə́k ìŋgə́ŋ]

/ì kə á à-bə̀ŋ ákə́k ì-ŋgə́ŋ/

| ì kə á à-bə̀ŋ á á kə́k ì-ŋgə́ŋ.|

he F2 go to CL5-farm AUG INFcut CL7-tree

"He will go to the farm to cut the tree."

Beyond the fact that it can function as the second verb of a proposition, as we mentioned above, the infinitive form of verb can also be used as true-value statement (4a) and prohibition (4b).

(4)

a. [ábɔ̀ŋ à-bə́ tàɣá ɲìjə́ŋ]

/ábɔ̀ŋ à-bə́ tàɣá ɲìjə́ŋ./

|á á bɔ̀ŋ à-bə́ tàɣá ɲìjə́ŋ.|

AUG INFdo CL5-evil NEG good

"To do the evil is not good."

b. [tə ándzə́ á ø-nzè]

/tə ándzə́ á ø-nzè/

|tə á-ndzə́ á ø-nzè.|

NEG INF eat to CL3 path

"Not to eat on the foot path."

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In some cases, the infinitive reinforces the action as in (5).

(5)

[mə ákə ádép wə́]

/mə ákə ádép wə́/

|mə á á kə á á dép wə́.|

I PR AUG go AUG INF- beat you

"I will really beat you."

In (5), the verb in the infinitve (INF) reinforces the action expressed by the conjugated verb.

6.1.2. The imperative

The imperative is realised in two forms for the second person singular and the first and second person plural. The first person plural form is preceded by the simple subject human pronoun *bì.* This pronoun is realised as *bèès* in isolation as observable in (6) illustrating first person singular imperative.

(6)

a. *[*bì ká*]*

/bèès Ḥ kə̀/

|bèès Ḥ kə̀|

we IMP go

"Let us go."

b. *[*bì súsˋ*]*

/bèès Ḥ sùs/

|bèès Ḥ sùs|

we IMPgo down

"Let us go down."

c.*[*bì və́*]*

/bèès Ḥ və́/

|bèès Ḥ və́|

we IMP give

"Let us give."

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d. *[* bì núŋ *]*
/bèès Ḥ nùŋ/
|bèès Ḥ núŋ|
we IMPwalk
"let us walk."

There seems to be no motivation for the change of *bèès* into *bì.* The only plausible argument might be that the change is motivated by the use of the pronoun in context i.e. when it is followed by a verb (finite). In fact, in most Bantu languages, the form of the pronoun can change according to whether it is in isolation or used in conjugation (see the booklet attached). This form can also vary depending on the tense of the verb.

The second person plural is marked by the absence of the person marker and the presence of a vowel plus nasal (Vŋ) in verb final position. Usually, in this case, the suffixal vowel harmonises with the stem vowel. Generally, when the verb ends in a vowel, a consonant is inserted between the stem and the suffix as observable in (7).

(7)

a. [kìjə́ŋ]
/kə̀j + ə́ŋ/
|kə̀j-ə́ŋ|
"go !"

b. [jə́ŋə́ŋ]
/jə́ŋ + ə́ŋ/
|jə́ŋ-ə́ŋ|
" give !"

c. [nə́ŋə́ŋ]
/nə́ŋ-ə́ŋ/
|nə́ŋ-ə́ŋ|
"follow !"

d. [ndzə́nə́ŋ]
/ndzə́n + ə́ŋ/
|ndzə́n-ə́ŋ|
"eat!"

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e. [sáɣáŋ]
/sáɣáŋ /
| sák-ə́ŋ |
“dance!”

f. [káɣə́ŋ]
/kə́k + ə́ŋ/
|kə́k-ə́ŋ|
“dance!”

When the stem final consonant is a voiceless velar stop, it becomes a voiceless velar fricative in between the root vowel and the suffixal vowel. This is evident in (7e&f). In some cases, the nature of the inserted consonant affects the root vowel. In (7a) for instance, where the stem is *kə* “go”, the inserted consonant /*j*/ raises the stem vowel /*ə* / and it becomes / i /.

Like the second person plural, the second person singular is marked by the absence of the person marker. When the infinitival marker deletes in the second person singular, its tone remains floating, and then, raises that of low tone verbs. This is not observable in high tone verbs because of the obligatory contour principle (OCP) as stipulated by Goldsmith (1995). The following illustrates second person singular imperative.

(7)

a. [núŋ]
/Ḭ nùŋ /
|Ḭ nùŋ|
IMP walk
“(you SING) walk !”

b. [Ḭ sák]
/Ḭ sák/
|Ḭ sák|
IMP dance
“(you SING) dance!”

c. [ká]
/Ḭ kà /
| Ḭ kà|
IMP go
“(you SING) go!”

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d. [ndzə́]
/Ḥ ndzə́ /
| Ḥ ndzə́|
IMP eat
“(you SING) eat!”

Generally, verbs in the imperative carry a high tone. As we pointed out above, this naturally results from the tone of the infinitival marker, which after deletion of its vowel, remains floating and raises the tone of the stem vowel (s) if it/they has/have a low tone. In case of high tone, the phenomenon is not overtly observed due to the phenomenon pointed out above.

6.1.3. The indicative

The indicative include the present, past and future tenses. Indicative is then used to point out an action that took place, an action that is taking place at the discourse moement and finally, an action that is still to take place. This mood is known as the mood of reality, the mood of certainty because it locates actions on the three mentioned axes of the chronology. The tenses divide the time reference into four past, three future times and one present, the moment of the action.

6.1.3.1. The present

There is one present tense in Bəmbələ. This tense is marked by the vowel *á* with a high tone. This vowel has not to be confused with the infinitival prefix nor the augment which have exactly the same form. The present tense indicates that the action expressed by the verb is taking place at the time / moment of the action.

The present tense marker occurs between the subject and the augment (AUG) which is then followed by the verb stem. This means that in the present tense, the augment does not delete. It rather fuses or coalesces with the tense marker as vowel coalescence is rampant in this language. Generally, the tone of the low tone subjects (when the subject carries a low tone like in the case of first person singular pronoun) does not influence that of the present tense marker. Following is an example illustrating present tense.

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(8)

a. [máká ndàt]

/mə á kə á ø-ndàt/

|mə á á kə á ø-ndàt.|

I PR AUG go to CL3-market

"I am going to the market."

b. [Ndòŋ átɔ̀ŋ ndzíl]

/Ndòŋ à átɔ̀ŋ ø-ndzíl/

|Ndòŋ à á á tɔ̀ŋ ø-ndzíl|

Ndòŋ SM PR AUG harvest CL7-mushroom

"Ndòŋ harvests mushroom."

c. [bwán bándzə́ məkàbà á nsə̀ŋ]

/bəuán bə́ ándzə́ mə-kàbà á ø-nsə̀ŋ./

|bəuán bə́ á á ndzə́ mə-kàbà á ø-nsə̀ŋ.|

CL2-child SM PR AUG eat CL6-cocoyam to CL3 courtyard

"The children eat cocoyam in the courtyard."

The example in (8c) expresses a habitual action in the imperfective. Present time is a time reference that includes the actual moment of speech, but can go beyond. Therefore, the present is also used to predicate permanent qualities or status as we can see in (9).

(9)

a. [à nă mbwàn]

/à nə á ø-mbwàn./

|à á nə á ø-mbwàn.|

he PR be PREP CL3chief

"He is a chief."

b. [mə átʃîm wə́.]

/mə átʃîm wə́./

| mə á á tʃîm wə́.|

I PR AUG forgive you

"I forgive you."

The present can have past time reference when it is used as a narrative present. The narrative is normally set in the past, and when the action starts, the speaker switches to the narrative present as we observe in (10).

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(10)

[kɔ́l ànùŋ á pɛ́ á mɔ́jáŋ məndzə́ mʲàn ú sávábérbì á nsɛ́ɛ́ íŋgáŋ úsàjónòŋ Kɔ́l íɲílí ɲə́ máɲáŋ wámàŋ, nə wə áləm dzə́ sɔŋ jâvè?]
/ø-kɔ́l ànùŋ á pɛ́ á mə́-jáŋ mə-ndzə́. ø-mʲàn ú sə́ àvè ábérbì á that CL3death FOC come ø- nsɛ́ɛ́ í-ŋgáŋ, ú sə́ àjónòŋ. Ø-Kɔ́l íɲílí ɲə́: mu-áɲáŋ w-ámàŋ, nə wə áləm dzə́ ø-sɔŋ jâ ávè?./

|ø-kɔ́l à mánə́ ànùŋ á pɛ́ á mə́-jáŋ mə-ndzə́. ø-mʲàn ú sə́ à vè ábérbì á
CL7-snail P0-walk in forest in CL6-search CL6-food CL3-toucan SM PROG P0 come stay to
ø-nsɛ́ɛ́ í-ŋgáŋ, ú sə́ á á jónòŋ. Ø-Kɔ́l í ɲílí ɲə́: mu-áɲáŋ w-ámàŋ, nə
CL3-branch CL7-tree SM PROG PR AUG shout CL7-snail P2-call him CL1 brother AP-POSS be
wə tə́ á á ləm dzə́ ø-sɔŋ jâ á á vè?|
you NEG PR AUG know that CL5-death FOC PR AUG come
“The Snail was walking in the forest in search of food. The Toucan came and stayed on the branch of a tree and started shouting. The Snail called to him: My brother, don’t you know that death is coming?”

The present can also be used with reference to situations that will hold in the future. Here, it expresses a present intention (11a), or a present directive for future behaviour (11b).

(11)

a. [Àkàk áláŋ dzáká ndàt nəkɛ́ɛ́]
/Àkàk à áláŋ dzə́ à ákə́ á ø-ndàt nəkɛ́ɛ́/
|Àkàk à á á láŋ dzə́ à á á kə́ á ø-ndàt nəkɛ́ɛ́.|
Àkàk SM PR AUG say that SM PR AUG go to CL3-market tomorrow
“Àkàk says he goes to the market tomorrow.”

b. [nsìŋə́ áká Mə́ngè nə ngólkó]
/nsìŋə́ á kə́ á Mə́ngè nə ngólkó/
|Ø-nsìŋə́ á á kə́ á Mə́ngè nə ngólkó.|
CL7 train PR AUG leave to Mə́ngè with afternonn
“The train leaves Mengue in the afternoon.”

Continuous actions or events in the present are expressed using the morpheme *sə́*. This morpheme has a surface high tone. It occurs immediately after the subject /subject marker, or at best, between the subject marker and the tense marker. The example that follows illustrates constinuous action in the present.

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(12)

a. [mùŋə́ à sá ká ndàt]

/mù-ùŋə́ à sə́ ákə́ á ndàt/

|mù-ùŋə́ à sə́ á á kə̀ á ø-ndàt|

CL1-woman SM PROG PR AUG go to CL3-market

"The women are going to the market."

b. [mù-ùt à sálɔ̀ŋ ɲé]

/mù-ùt à sə́ álɔ̀ŋ ø-ɲé/

|mù-ùt à sə́ á á lɔ̀ŋ ø-ɲé|

CL1person SM PROG PR AUG construct CL3-house

"The person is constructing the house."

c. [máŋá sə́ ánùŋ ánzè]

/mù-áŋá à sə́ ánùŋ á nzè/

|mù-áŋá à sə́ á á nùŋ á ø- nzè|

CL1-child SM PROG PR AUG-walk on CL3-path

"The child is walking on the path."

d. [bwán bə́ sápák nìdúmə̀]

/bwán bə́ sə́ ápák nìdúmə̀/

|bə̀-úán bə́ sə́ á á pák nìdúmə̀|

CL2-child SM PROG PR AUGdig cassava

"The children are harvesting cassava."

As we pointed out above, when we look at (12) above, the continuous aspect marker occurs between the subject marker and the present tense marker.

6.1.3.2. The past tenses

We identified four past tenses in Bəmbələ marking the immediate past (P0), today past (P1), yesterday past (P2) and remote past (P3). From a morphological point of view, each of these tenses is marked by a distinct morpheme. In some cases, these morphemes are reduced to tones (this is the case for P0 and P1). I must mention that even in the past tenses, the augment is still present even underlyingly.

6.1.3.2.1. Immediate past

The immediate past (P0) is used to indicate actions that have just occurred. It indicates that an action happened just few minutes, or hours ago before the speech time. The immediate

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past is marked by the central vowel *à* with a low tone on the contrary of the present tense marker which carries a high tone. In the following examples, we illustrate the immediate past.

(13)

a. [àndzə́]
/à àndzə́/
|à à á ndzə́|
he P0 AUG eat
"S/he has eaten."

b.[àŋɔ́]
/à àŋɔ́/
|à à á ŋɔ́|
he P0 AUG drink
"He/she has drunk."

c. [mán à sák]
/mu + án à àsák/
|mu-án à à á sák|
CL2-child SM P0 AUG dance
"The child has danced."

d. [yɔ̀nók à ndáŋì ítábák]
/ì + ònók àndáŋì ítábák/
|ì-ònók à á ndáŋì í-tábák|
CL7-toad P0 AUG jump CL7-pool
"The toad has jumped into the pool."

In the immediate past, the tone of the augment does not influence the tone of the P0 marker. It can be argued that the tone of the augment remains floating after the fusion of the augment with the tense marker (this rule of coalescence is very frequent in the language). Another plausible explanation of the issue is that due to the fact that the augment occurs after the tense marker which has a low tone, its tone also lowers during fusion being influenced by the low tone of this tense marker.

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6.1.3.2.2. Today past

The today past (P1) is used to denote actions that took place early in the same day of the speech time (for instance in the morning according to the speech time). From a morphophonological point of view, this tense is marked by the the central vowel *ă* with a rising tone. We observe that on the contrary of what occurs in the P0, after the fusion of the augment with the tense marker, the tone of the augment docks on the tense marker, what gives room to a contour rising tone. The following examples illustrate today past.

(14)

a. [ă lɔ̀ŋ ɲé]
/à álɔ̀ŋ ɲé/
|à à á lɔ̀ŋ ø-ɲé|
he P1 AUG build CL3-house
"He built a house."

b. [mùt ă kə́k ìŋgə́ŋ]
/mu + ùt ă kə́k ì + ŋgə́ŋ/
|mu-ùt à á kə́k ì-ŋgə́ŋ|
CL1-person P2 AUGcut CL7-tree
"The person cut the tree.

c. [máŋá ă nùŋ á nzè]
/mu + áŋá à ánùŋ á ø-nzè/
|mu-áŋá à ánùŋ á ø-nzè|
CL2-child P2-walk PREP CL3-path
"The child walked on the path."

Actions expressed in the today past can be perfective (see 14), or imperfective (see 15). The today past imperfective is obtained by means of the today past perfective form, the imperfective marker *mə́nə́* for the singular *and bə́nə́* for the plural followed by the P1form of the verb as indicated in the following illustration. This imperfective marker also encodes habitual actions/ events in the past as shall be described later on.

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(15)

a. [À mánə́ ándzə́ ŋkón]
|À mánə́ ă ndzə́ ŋkón.|
/À mánə́ à á ndzə́ ŋkón/
He IMP P1 AUG eat ŋkón
"He was eating nkón."

b. [Nàŋ à mánə́ ákòjì àjùhə̀]
/Nàŋ à ă kòjì àjùhə̀/
|Nàŋ à mánə́ à á kòjì à-jùhə̀|
Nàŋ SM IMP P1 AUG-buy CL3-banana
"Nàŋ was buying banana."

c. [bə́ŋɔ́ bənákòjì àjùhə̀]
/ bə́-ɔ́ŋɔ́ bə́ bə́nə́ ` ákòjì à-jùhə̀ /
|bə́-ɔ́ŋɔ́ bə́ bə́nə́ à á kòjì à-jùhə̀|
CL2-child SM IMP P1 AUG buy CL3-banana
"Nàŋ was buying banana."

The imperfective marker mánə́/bə́nə́ occurs immediately after the subject marker as observed in (15) above.

6.1.3.2.3. Yesterday past

The yesterday past (P2) tense is used to indicate actions or events that took place yesterday, the day before yesterday, last week, last month, and last year. The yesterday past tense is marked by the morpheme |*ɨ́* | prefixed to the verb stem with a high tone. The following example illustrates yesterday past tense.

(16)

a. [Àkàk íkə́ á àbə̀ŋ]
/Àkàk ɨ́ kə́ á àbə̀ŋ/
|Àkàk à ɨ́ á kə́ á à-bə̀ŋ|
Àkàk SM P2 AUG go PREP CL3-farm
"Àkàk went to the farm."

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b. [í kə̀]
/à í kə̀/
|à í á kə̀|
he P2 AUG go
"He went away."

c. [ɲádìŋ íjɔ̀ŋ ìbə́lə̀]
/ɲádìŋ í jɔ̀ŋ ìbə́lə̀/
|Nyádìŋ í jɔ̀ŋ ì-bə́lə̀|
Nyádìŋ P2 take CL7-cup
"Nyádìŋ took the cup."

The P2 marker does not co-occur with the subject marker *à*. This is due to a general phenomenon observable in this language: vowel coalescence as discussed in chatper 2 of this work. In fact, as a reminder, in the language under study, when two vowels occur adjacently, they fuse or coalesce.

In order to specify the exact period an action or event happened in the yesterday past tense, one can use the temporal adverbs and expressions that stand for temporal adverbial, *ájáŋ* "yesterday", *ámbús ájáŋ* "before yesterday", *sɔ́nɔ̀ jâ àlɔ̀* "last week", *ŋgɔ̀n jâ à lɔ̀* "last month", *mbú jâ à lɔ̀* "last year". In this situation, the time adverb or the expression occupies either the sentence initial (mostly for stylistic effects) or the sentence final position.

(17)

a. [Àkàk íkə̀ á àbə̀ŋ]
/Àkàk í kə̀ á àbə̀ŋ *mbú jâ àlɔ̀* /
|Àkàk à í á kə̀ á à-bə̀ŋ *mbú jâ àlɔ̀* |
Àkàk SM P2 AUG go PREP CL3-farm year FOC end
"Àkàk went to the farm last year."

b. [ɲádìŋ íjɔ̀ŋ ìbə́lə̀]
/ɲádìŋ í jɔ̀ŋ ì-bə́lə̀ *sɔ́nɔ̀ jâ àlɔ̀* /
| *sɔ́nɔ̀ jâ àlɔ̀* Nyádìŋ à í á jɔ̀ŋ ì-bə́lə̀|
week FOC end Nyádìŋ SM P2 AUG take CL7-cup
"Last week, Nyádìŋ took the cup."

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The illustration above shows that the temporal adverbal expression occurs at the sentence initial position.

6.1.3.2.4. Remote past

The remote past tense (P3) is used to indicate actions or events that happened far in the past or actions/ events that occurred a long time ago. This tense is marked by the morpheme |ŋgə́| that occurs immediately after the subject. As we already mentioned, the infinitival augment does not deletes; it remains visible. This explains why at the phonetic level, what we hear is [*ŋgá*]. Following is an illustration of the use of P3.

(18)

a. [mə ŋgá kójí]
/mə ŋgə́ ákòjì/
|mə ŋgə́ á kòjì|
PM P3 AUG buy
"I bought (a long time ago)."

b. [à ŋgákə́]
/à ŋgə́ ákə́/
|à ŋgə́ á kə̀|
He P3 AUG go
"He left (a long time ago)."

c. [bwán bə́ ŋgálɛ́ɛ́ àsə̌]
/bwán bə́ ŋgə́ álɛ̀ɛ̀ à-sə̌/
|bə́-uán bə́ ŋgə́ á lɛ̀ɛ̀ à-sə̌|
CL1 child SM P3 AUG-like egg
"The children liked egg (a long time ago)."

d. [Ndòŋ à ŋgásɛ́ɛ́]
/Ndòŋ à ŋgá sɛ́ɛ́/
|Ndòŋ à ŋgə́ á sɛ́ɛ́|
Ndòŋ SM P4 AUG worked
"Ndòŋ worked (a long time ago)."

The tone of the remote past tense prefix spreads rightward onto the last vowel of the verb stem. This is mostly observable when the verb stem has a low tone. The augment affects the P3

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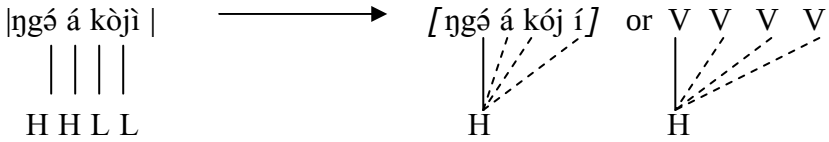
marker and fuses with its vowel so that from an articulatory viewpoint, what we hear is [ŋgá]. The tone of the P3 vowel spreads onto the last vowel of the stem. Following is an illustration of this spreading.



It is observable in this illustration that the high tone of the augment does not block the spreading. Due to vowel coalescence, *ŋgə́* is phonetically realised as [*ŋgá*]. As mentioned above, in discourse context, the vowel of the morpheme coalesces with the infinitival augment, and then captures some of its features.

The remote past tense makes use of the morpheme |*mənə́/bənə́* |to express continuous actions. This morpheme stands between the subject/subject marker and the remote past tense marker.

(19)

[bwán bə́ bənə́ ŋgákə́ á àbəŋ]
/bwán bə́ bənə́ ŋgákə́ á àbəŋ/
|bə́-uán bə́ bənə́ ŋgə́ á ká á à-bəŋ|
CL2-child SM ASP P3 AUG go PREP CL5-farm
"The children used to go to the farm."

In a construction like (19), we observe that the aspectual marker occurs between the subject marker and the P3 marker.

6.1.3.3. The future tenses

The future tense describes actions or events yet to occur. In Bəmbələ, the future is divided into two distinct parts. We distinguish the imminent future (F0), and the remote future (F1). Each of the future tenses has a morphological marker that distinguishes it from the other and that behaves differently in conjugation.

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6.1.3.3.1. The imminent future

The imminent future is used to denote actions or events that are expected to take place imminently (today or tomorrow), next week, next month, next year. The imminent future (F1) is marked by the high front vowel |ì| with a low tone. This morpheme appears between the subject/subject marker and the verb stem. It must not be confused with the P2 marker which has a high tone.

(19)

a. [mìndzə̀ ìkɔ́rì]
/mə̀ ì ndzə̀ ì + kɔ́rì/
|mə̀ ì á ndzə̀ ì-kɔ́rì|
I F1 AUG eat CL7-yam
"I will eat yam."

b. [wì ɲɔ́ məŋgbàlàm]
/wə̀ ì ɲɔ́ məŋgbàlàm/
|wə̀ ì á ɲɔ́ məŋgbàlàm|
you F1 AUG drink kind of beer
"You shall drink traditional beer."

c. [àsɛ̌n ìnùŋ á ŋkɔ̀k]
/à + sɛ̌n ì nùŋ á ø-ŋkɔ̀k/
|à-sɛ̌n ì á nùŋ á ø-ŋkɔ̀k|
CL5-squirrel F1 AUG walk on CL3-trunk
"The squirrel shall walk on the trunk."

The augment fuses with the F1 marker. The tone of the F1 marker does not affect the tone (s) of the verb stem.

Expressions and words denoting temporal adverbs *nəkéé* "tomorrow", *sɔ́nɔ̀ jâ ávè* "next week", *mbú wâ ávè* "next month", and *ngɔ̀n jâ ávè* "next month" are used where required, to specify the expected time of the occurrence of the event or the action as illustrated below.

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(20)

a. [wìɲɔ́ məŋgbàlàm nəkɛ́ɛ́]

/wə ì ɲɔ́ məŋgbàlàm nəkɛ́ɛ́/

|wə ì á ɲɔ́ məŋgbàlàm nəkɛ́ɛ́|

you F1 AUG-drink kind of beer tomorrow

"You shall drink traditional beer tomorrow."

b. [mìndzə́ ìkɔ́rì ngɔ̀n jâvè]

/mə ì ndzə́ ì + kɔ́rì ngɔ̀n jâ ávè/

|mə ì á ndzə́ ì-kɔ́rì ŋgɔ̀n jâ ávè|

I F1 AUG eat CL7-yam month FOC come

"I will eat yam next month."

Expressions or words denoting temporal adverbs can appear sentence initial position (for stylistic effects) or in sentence final position.

6.1.3.3.2. Remote future

The remote future tense is marked by the morpheme |ŋgə̀| followed by the infinitival augment *á* and then by the verb stem. This morpheme stands between subject / subject marker and the verb. Remote future tense is used to report on actions, events or situations that will occur in a future far away from the moment of speech. The remote future tense and the remote past tense markers differ in their tone. In fact, the remote future marker has a low tone while the remote past has a high tone. The following illustrate the use of the remote future tense.

(21)

a. [mə ŋgàkòjì]

/mə ŋgə̀ àkòjì/

|mə ŋgə̀ á kòjì|

I F2 AUG-buy

"I will buy (in the remote future)."

b.[ŋkàɣá à ŋgà nùŋ á kɔ́ŋɔ́ məjíí]

/ø + ŋkàɣá à ŋgə̀ ànùŋ á ø-kɔ́ŋɔ́ mə + jíí/

|ø-ŋkàɣá à ŋgə̀ á nùŋ á ø-kɔ́ŋɔ́ mə-jíí|

CL7-alligator SM F2 AUG-walk on CL5-bank CL6-river

"The alligator will walk on the bank of the river."

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c. [bwán bə́ ŋgàléé ndàmà nsə̀ŋ]
/bə̀-úán bə́ ŋgə̀ àléé ø-ndàmà á ø-nsə̀ŋ/
|bə̀-úán bə́ ŋgə̀ á léé ndàmà á ø-nsə̀ŋ|
CL2-children SM F2 AUG play ball in patio
"The children will play football in the patio."

Contrary to what happens in the remote past tense, in the remote future, the tone of the prefix affects only the immediate vowel (the augment): it spreads onto this vowel, and then, the spreading is blocked by the immediate following vowel. Simply put, the spreading does not affect the verb stem in the remote future. In fact, we notice the lowering of the tone of the augment influenced by the P3 marker. The phenomenon that gives rise to vowel coalescence also affects the remote future tense marker.

6.1.3. The Conditional mood

The conditional is the mood of uncertainty. It denotes a *condition–consequence* relationship in which one proposition results if another holds (Tamanji 2009). There is no strict order in the appearance of the clauses in the conditional. However, usually, the consequence clause precedes the condition clause. The condition clause is also known as protasis while the consequence clause is known as apodosis. Syntactically, the consequence clause is the subordinate clause and the condition clause the main clause. Formally, based on Salomé (1979), we have identified three types of conditional clauses in Bəmbələ̀: the simple/open conditional, the unrealizable conditional / or hypothetical conditionals and the concessive conditionals.

6.1.3.1. The simple conditional

The simple conditional is marked by the morpheme |kə̀|. This morpheme has a low tone and appears at sentence initial position. In the simple conditional, the degree of uncertainty is low. It also states that a proposition results if another holds. There is little doubt or uncertainty regarding the actualisation of the event or action expressed by the verbs in either clauses. The followings illustrate simple/open conditionals.

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(22)

a. [Kà ávè láŋ mə]
/Kə à ávè láŋ mə/
|Kə à á á vè láŋ mə.|
COND he PR AUG come tell me
"If he comes, tell me."

b. [Kà áɲɔ́, láŋ mə]
/Kə à áɲɔ́, láŋ mə/
|Kə à á á ɲɔ́, láŋ mə.|
COND SM PR AUG drink tell me
"If he drinks, tell me."

c. [kə àvé, jáŋ Àkàk]
/kə àvé, jáŋ Àkàk/
|Kə à á á vé, jáŋ Àkàk.|
COND SM PR AUG come wait Àkàk
"If he comes, wait for Àkàk."

In Bəmbələ, the simple conditional is realised only in the present tense. The verb of the consequence clause carries the feature of an imperative sentence in that it seems to give an order, and therefore, does not indicate the subject of the clause overtly.

6.1.3.2. The unrealisable conditional

The unrealisable conditional is marked by the morpheme |ŋgə| "if". This morpheme is similar in form to the remote future tense marker. However, it appears at sentence initial position to mark the conditional. In the past, the morpheme appears at the initial position of each of the clauses as a discontinuous morpheme. The unrealisable conditional is also called counterfactual conditional or hypothetical conditional. Here, the speaker expresses with regret, conjecture or hypothesis, an action s/ he would have liked to realise in the past, or an action or event s/he wishes to accomplish or to see happen in the future. The following examples illustrate unrealisable conditional.

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(23)

a. [ŋgə̀ mà bìì mɔ́ní, ŋgə̀ mə̀ kòjì mə́twə́]
/ŋgə̀ mə̀ àbìì mɔ́ní, ŋgə̀ mə̀ àkòjì mə́twə̀/
|ŋgə̀ mə̀ à bìì mɔ́ní, ŋgə̀ mə̀ à kòjì mə́twə̀|
COND I P0 catch money COND I P1 buy car
"If I had money, I would buy a car."

b. [ŋgə̀ mí túhí nə̀ mɔ́ní, ŋgə̀ mí kójí mə́twə̀]
/ŋgə̀ mə̀ ítúhí nə̀ mɔ́ní, ŋgə̀ mə̀ íkójí mə́twə̀/
|ŋgə̀ mə̀ í túhí nə̀ mɔ́ní, ŋgə̀ mə̀ í kójí mə́twə̀|
COND I P2 be with money COND I P2-buy car
"If I had have money, I would have bought a car."

c. [ŋgə̀ Mbàŋ nə̀ mɔ́ní, ì kòjì mə́twə̀]
/ŋgə̀ Mbàŋ nə̀ mɔ́ní, ì kòjì mə́twə̀/
|ŋgə̀ Mbàŋ nə̀ mɔ́ní, à ì kòjì mə́twə̀|
COND Mbàŋ with money he F1 buy car
"If Mbàŋ has money, he will buy a car."

In the unrealisable conditional, when the condition clause is in the present, the consequence clause is in the future. When the condition clause is in the past, the consequence clause also falls in the past: if P0 then P0, if P1 then P1.

6.1.3.3. The concessive conditional

The concessive conditional is introduced by tɔ̀ɣɔ̀ with the English reading "even if". This morpheme occurs in sentence initial position. In the concessive conditionals, the antecedent clause indicates a condition that would seem to be opposed to the statement made in the consequence clause. The sentence as a whole expresses a situation that is surprising, altogether contrary to normal expectations. Following is an example illustrating the use of concessive conditional.

(24)

a. [tɔ̀ɣɔ̀ á dép mɔ́, mə̀ ì nɔ́k míntàk]
/tɔ̀ɣɔ̀ à á á dép mɔ́, mə̀ ì nɔ́k mì-ntàk/
|tɔ̀ɣɔ̀ à á á dép mɔ́, mə̀ ì nɔ́k mì-ntàk |
COND he PR AUG-beat me, I F0-hear CL4-joy
"Even if he slaps me, I will be happy."

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b. [tɔ̀ɣɔ̀ wə́ á jít mə́, mì nɔ̀ŋ wə́]
/ tɔ̀ɣɔ̀ wə́ á jít mə́, mə̀ ì nɔ̀ŋ wə́/
|tɔ̀ɣɔ̀ wə́ á á jít mə́, mə̀ ì á nɔ̀ŋ wə́|
COND you PR AUG beat me, I F0 AUG follow you
"Even if you beat me, I will follow you."

c. [tɔ̀ɣɔ̀ júhə̀ á nɔ́ mə̀ ì kə̀ á àbə̀ŋ]
/ tɔ̀ɣɔ̀ júhə̀ á nɔ́ mə̀ ì kə̀ àbə̀ŋ /
| tɔ̀ɣɔ̀ júhə̀ á á nɔ́, mə̀ ì kə̀ á à-bə̀ŋ |
COND rain PR AUG fall I F0 go to CL5-farm
"Even if it rains, I will go to the farm."

The concessive conditional marker has the same form like the discontinuous marker of the alternative noun phrase as illustrated in section in chapter 5. They differ however in their syntactic distribution. The concessive conditional morpheme occurs in sentence initial position while the alternative discontinuous conjoined noun phrase occurs immediate after verb for the first constituent and after the first noun of the phrase for the second.

6.1.4. The subjunctive

The subjunctive expresses will, wishes, feelings and judgement. It is used with verbs of wishing, desiring, liking, and intending. Kroeger (2005) defines subjunctive as a "*category used to mark propositions which the speaker does not assert to be true*." The Bəmbələ subjunctive is marked by *dzə́*, which appears immediate before the subject in simple clauses and, more precisely, between the verb of the main clause and the subject of the subordinate clause in complex clauses (see 25). The tone of the subjunctive marker spreads onto the last vowel of the verb stem. This is observable in the following illustration.

(25)
a. [dzə́ mə́ sák]
/dzə́ mə̀ sák/
|dzə́ mə̀ sák|
SUB I dance
"That I dance."

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b. [dzə́ ó bɔ́ŋ]
/dzə́ ò bɔ́ŋ/
|dzə́ ò bɔ́ŋ|
SUB you do
"That you dance."

c. [dzə́ bí jó]
/dzə́ bèès jó/
|dzə́ bèès jó|
SUB we speak
"Let us speak."

d. [dzə́ bɔ́ ndzə́]
/dzə́ bɔ́ ndzə́/
|dzə́ bɔ́ ndzə́|
SUB they eat
"That they eat."

e. [dzə́ mbé ú vúhíbə́ŋ]
/dzə́ mbé ú vúhíbə̀ŋ/
|dzə́ mbé ú vúhíbə̀ŋ|
SUB door SM open
"That the door opens."

Because the subjunctive also expresses command, its forms are closer to those of the imperative, except that the imperative does not have all the persons and the person marker occurs only in the first person plural.

In some instances, when the subjunctive expresses feelings or wishes, it requires a main clause and a subordinate clause as exemplified in (26).

(26)
[málɛ̀ɛ̀ dzə́ bɔ́kə́ nə̀kɛ́ɛ́]
/mə̀ á lɛ̀ɛ̀ dzə́ bɔ́ kə́ nə̀kɛ́ɛ́ /
|mə̀ á á lɛ̀ɛ̀ dzə́ bɔ́ kə́ nə̀kɛ́ɛ́ |
I PR AUG want SUB they go tomorrow
"I wish them to go tomorrow morning."

The sentence in (26) is the in present, but has a future intent. Only two tenses are recognised in this mood: the present and the future.

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6.1.5. The simultaneity

The simultaneity indicates that two actions are taking place at the same time, and that the second action or event is the result of the first action. This mood is almost equivalent to the English participial mood. The simultaneity mood is marked in Bəmbələ by |kì|. This morpheme stands at sentence final position. The simultaneity mood is expressed in the imperfective. It is articulated in all the tenses revealing "imperfectivity". The following exemplifies the use of the simultaneity.

(27)

a. [à sándzə́ ŋkón ánóɛ̀kì]
/à sə́ ándzə́ øŋkón ánóɛ̀ kì/
|à sə́ á á ndzə́ ø-ŋkón ánóɛ̀ kì.|
He PROG PR AUG-eat CL3- ŋkón laugh SIM
"He is eating ŋkón laughing."

b. [ìndzə́ ŋkónásák kì]
/ì ndzə́ ø-ŋkón ásák kì./
|à ì sə́ á á ndzə́ ø-ŋkón ásák kì.|
He F1 PROG PR AUGeat CL3-ŋkón dance-SIM
"He will be eating ŋkón dancing."

c. [ítùhì ándzə́ ŋkón ásák kì]
/í tùhì ándzə́ ø-ŋkón ásák kì./
|à í tùhì á á ndzə́ ø-ŋkón ásák kì.|
He P2-be PR AUG-eat CL3-ŋkón dance SIM
"He was eating ŋkón dancing."

The simultaneity morpheme fills the postion after the stem of the second verb of the stream (construction).

6.1.6. The potential

The potential is the mood of ability. It expresses the ability to do something. The potential is marked in Bəmbələ by *ŋgə̀lə́*. This marker appears immediately after the verb "to be". In the potential in Bəmbələ, the verb "to be" is used after the subject/ subject marker to accompany the potential marker. The potential marker does not undergo morphological change. The potential mood is used in present and future tenses.

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(28)

a. [dòrò ínə ŋgəlá nóɛ́ mbʲə́]
/dòrò ínə́ ŋgələ́ ánóɛ́ ømbʲə́/
| dòrò ínə ŋgələ́ ánóɛ́ ø-mbʲə́.|
cyno be POT kill CL7-dog
"The cynocephalus can kill the dog."

c. [mənə ŋgəlánɔ́sì júhə]
/mə nə ŋgələ́ ánɔ́ sì júhə ./
| mə nə ŋgələ́ ánɔ́-sì júhə .|
I be POT fall CAUS rain
"I can cause the rain to fall."

d. [ònə ŋgəlákàbì ŋkàt wɔ́ŋ]
/ò nə ŋgələ́ ákàbì ø-ŋkàt wɔ́ŋ/
| ò nə ŋgələ́ ákàbì ø-ŋkàt wɔ́ŋ|
You be POT succeed CL3-exam your
"You can succeed your exam."

e. [wìjàŋŋgəlákàbìŋkàtwɔ́ŋ]
/wə ìjàŋ ŋgələ́ ákàbì ø-ŋkàt wɔ́ŋ /
|wə ì jàŋ ŋgələ́ ákàbì ø-ŋkàt wɔ́ŋ |
You F1-be POT succeed CL3-exam your
"You can succeed your exam (if you work hard)."

The verb "to be" is defective. This explains why its form changes in the examples above. We shall come back on this issue later on. In the future, the potential sentence requires the F1 marker to which is added the verb "to be" rendered as *ájàŋ* in the future. The potential can be rendered only in the F2.

6.2. Negation

In this section of the analysis, we shall tackle negation. In order to capture negation, we shall analyse its functioning in each of the moods. Of all the moods analysed above, only the simultaneity does not accept negative conjugation (as far as my data is concerned). From a typological viewpoint, negation is syntactically marked in Bəmbələ. This language uses *tə* and *tàɣá* to encode negation. The two markers do not co-occur. The morpheme *tə* is used for all verbs and tenses while *tàɣá* is used only for the verb "to be" in the present and future and the

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verb “to have”. The insertion of the negation particle does not usually affect the initial melody of the sentence. We begin the analysis by looking at negation in the imperative, and then looking at how it functions in the indicative mood. The section ends with the study of negation in the conditional, in the subjunctive and in the potential.

6.2.1. Negation in the imperative

In the imperative, negation gives rise to what we call “prohibitives”. In prohibitives, the contrary of command, an interdiction is given to somebody. The negative form of the imperative is obtained by inserting the negation marker *tə* immediately before the verb. The following exemplifies negative forms of the imperative.

(29)

a. [ndzə́nə́ŋnì]
/ndzə́nə́ŋnì/
|ndzə́nə́ŋnì|
IMPeat
“eat!(2nd plural)”

a’. [tá ndzə́nə́ŋnì]
/tə á ndzə́nə́ŋnì/
|tə á ndzə́nə́ŋnì|
NEG AUG IMP eat
“ Do not eat! (2nd plural”

b. [ndzə́]
/ndzə́/
|ndzə́|
eat (2nd sing)
“eat !.”

b’. [tándzə́]
/tə ándzə́/
|tə á ndzə́|
NEG AUG IMP
“Do not

c. [bì núŋ]
/bì núŋ/
|bèès núŋ|
we IMP walk
“Let us walk!”

c’. [tə bì núŋ]
/tə bì núŋ/
|tə bèès núŋ|
NEG we IMP walk
“Do not let us walk!”

The examples in (29a, b & c) above are the positive forms of the negated versions in (29a’, b’& c’). In the second person singular and plural, the expression of the negative imperative requires the presence of the infinitival form of the verb. Generally, prohibitives are used to encode emphasis whose degree depends on the speaker’s attitude or strength of the idea expressed.

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6.2.2. Negation in the indicative mood

The indicative mood includes the tenses of the past, the present and the tenses of the future. All the verbs in all the tenses in the indicative mood encode negation with the morpheme |*tə̀*|, which occurs immediate after the subject / subject marker. This excludes the existential verb "to be" which is defective and which uses a distinct negation marker in the present and in the future, namely *tàɣá*.

In the past tenses, the negation marker occurs, as I said above, in immediate after verb position. (174) illustrates the use of negation in the indicative.

(30)

a. [à vè]
/à àvè/
|à à vè|
SM P0 come
"He has come."

a'. [à tàvè]
/ à tə̀ àvè/
|à tə̀ à vè|
SM NEG P0 come
"He has not come."

b.[à ŋgə́ álɔ̀ŋ ɲé]
/à ŋgə́ a lɔ̀ŋ ɲé/
|à ŋgə́ á lɔ̀ŋ ø-ɲé|
I P4 AUG build CL3-house
"I built a house."

b'. [à tə̀ ŋgə́ álɔ́ŋ ɲé]
/ à tə̀ ŋgə́ álɔ́ŋ ɲé/
|à tə̀ ŋgə́ á lɔ́ŋ ø-ɲé|
I NEG P3 AUG build house
"I did not build a house."

The examples in (30a, b & c) are the positive versions of the negated forms in (30a', b' & c'). Continuous actions in the past do not have negative counterparts.

The present tense also encodes negation with the morpheme *tə̀*, which occurs at the same position as described just above.

(31)

a. [mándzə́ àjùhə̀]
/ mə́ á á ndzə́ à-jùhə̀ /
|mə́ á á ndzə́ à-jùhə̀|
I PR AUG go CL5 farm
"I eat banana."

a'. [mə́ tə̀ ándzə́ àjùhə̀]
/mə́ tə̀ ándzə́ àjùhə̀/
|mə́ tə̀ á á ndzə́ à-jùhə̀|
I NEG PR AU-Geat CL5-banana
" I do not eat banana.

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b. [mǔm ànùŋ á nzè]
/mù-úm à ánùŋ á nzè/
|mù-úm à á á nùŋ á nzè|
man SM PR AUG walk PREP way
"The man walks on the way."

b'. [mǔm à tánùŋ á nzè]
/ mù-úm à tə ánùŋ á nzè/
|mù-úm à tə á á nùŋ á nzè|
CL1-man SM NEG PR AUG walk PREP way
"The man does not walk on the way."

The constructions in (31a' & b') are examples of negative sentences in the present.

As I pointed out above, the existential verb "to be" makes use of a different negator, namely *tàɣá* to encode negation in the present tense. As usual, it occurs in immediate after the subject/subject marker. In this language, the presence of this negation marker in the present tense excludes the occurrence of the verb *ánə̀* "to be", as observable in the following data.

(31)

a. [mə nə̀]
/mə nə̀/
|mə nə̀|
I be
"I am."

a'. [mə tàɣá]
/mə tàɣá/
|mə tàɣá|
I NEG
"I am not."

b. [bənáŋ nə̀]
/bənáŋ nə̀/
|bənáŋ nə̀|
you be
"You are."

b'. [bənáŋ tàɣá]
/bənáŋ tàɣá/
|bənáŋ tàɣá|
you NEG
"You are not."

c. [mə nə̀ ø-mbuàn]
/mə nə̀ mbuàn/
|mə nə̀ ø-mbuàn|
I be CL3-chief
"I am the chief."

c'. [mə tàɣá mbwàn]
/mə tàɣá ø-mbùàn/
|mə tàɣá ø-mbùàn|
I NEG CL3-chief
"I am not the chief"

d. [ò nə̀ mbéé mùt]
/ ò nə̀ mbéé mù + ùt/
|ò nə̀ mbéé mù-ùt|
you be bad CL1-person
"You are a bad man."

d'. [ò tàɣá mbéé mùt]
/ ò tàɣá mbéé mù-ùt/
|ò tàɣá mbéé mù-ùt|
you NEG bad CL1-person
"You are not a bad man."

The examples in (31a',b', c' & d') are the respective negative versions of those in (31a, b, c & d).

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The future tenses employ the same negation marker like the past tenses to express negation (see 32). This consideration does not include the case of the existential verb, which uses *tàɣá* to express negation in the F1 like in the case just discussed above for the present tense (see 32). Here, the negative morpheme behaves exactly like in the other cases discussed above.

(32)

a. [wì nùŋ á pɛ́]
/wə̀ ì nùŋ á pɛ́/
|wə̀ ì nùŋ á pɛ́|
You F1 walk in bush
"You will walk in the bush."

a'. [wə̀ tìnùŋ á pɛ́]
/wə̀ tə̀ ì nùŋ á pɛ́/
|wə̀ tə̀ ì nùŋ á pɛ́|
I NEG F1 walk in bush
"You will not walk in the bush."

b. [mə̀ ŋgà vè]
/mə̀ ŋgə̀ àvè/
| mə̀ ŋgə̀ á vè|
I F2 AUGcome
"I will come."

b'.[mə̀ tə̀ ŋgà vè]
/ mə̀ tə̀ ŋgè àvè/
|mə̀ tə̀ ŋgè á vè|
I NEG F2 AUG come
"I will not come."

(33)

a. [mə̀ ì jàŋ]
/ mə̀ ì jàŋ /
| mə̀ ì jàŋ|
I F1 be
"I will be."

a'. [mə̀ tàɣìjàŋ]
/mə̀ tàɣá ì jàŋ /
| mə̀ tàɣá ì jàŋ|
I NEG F1be
"I will not be."

b. [Ndòŋ ìjàŋá ndàt]
/Ndòŋ ì jàŋ á øndàt/
| Ndòŋ ì jàŋ á ø-ndàt |
Ndòŋ F1be in CL1-market
"Ndòŋ will be in the market.

b'. [Ndòŋ tàɣìjàŋá ndàt]
/Ndòŋ tàɣá ì jàŋ á ø-ndàt /
|Ndòŋ tàɣá ì jàŋ á ø-ndàt|
Ndòŋ NEG F1be in CL3-market
"Ndòŋ will not be in the market."

As we observe in (33a' & b') the existential verb "to be", as a defective verb, is realised in the tomorrow future as *ájàŋ.* This verbal form, as already mentioned, expresses negation with the morpheme *tàɣá* which occupies the same position as the present tense.

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6.2.3. Negation in the subjunctive mood

In the negative conjugation, the subjunctive takes the marker *tə̀.* It appears between the subject /subject marker and the verb.

(34)

a. [dzə́ ó tə́ ásák]
/dzə́ ò tə̀ ásák/
|dzə́ ò tə̀ á sák|
SUB you NEG AUG dance
"You should not dance."

b. [dzə́ bí tə́ bɔ́ŋ]
/dzə́ bì bɔ́ŋ/
|dzə́ bèès tə̀ bɔ́ŋ|
SUB you NEG do
"Let us not dance."

c. [dɔ́brɔ̀ áláŋ dzə́ bɔ́ tə́ ápɔ́m ŋkwánŋkwán]
/dɔ́brɔ̀ à áláŋ dzə́ bɔ́ tə̀ ápɔ́m ø- ŋkwánŋkwán/
|dɔ́brɔ̀ à á á láŋ dzə́ bɔ́ tə̀ ápɔ́m ø-ŋkwánŋkwán|
doctor SM PR AUG-say SUB they NEG examine CL1-patient
"The doctor says that they should not examine the patient."

e. [áláŋ nə̀ ɲə́ dzə́ à tá kɔ́k ìŋgə́ŋ]
/à áláŋ nə̀ ɲə́ dzə́ à tə̀ ákɔ́k ì-ŋgə́ŋ/
|à á á láŋ nə̀ ɲə́ dzə́ à tə̀ ákɔ́k ì-ŋgə́ŋ|
He PR AUG tell with him SUB he NEG cut CL7-tree
"He tells him that he should not cut the tree."

Like in the imperative, when the negation marker is used for the third person singular, it requires the reappearance of the infinitival augment. This is the case in (34a & c). We observe in the data above the spreading of the tone of the subjunctive marker onto the last vowel of the verb stem as already pointed out in section *6.1.4*. This spreading is worth noting here because it also raises the tone of the negator as observable in (34).

6.2.4. Negation in the conditional

The negative conjugation in conditionals is marked by *tə̀.* Naturally, in the conditional, the negator appears in immediate after the subject/subject marker of the condition

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clause position. No exception has been noticed for the different conditionals. Whatever is said of simple conditional is also true of the concessive and unrealizable conditional. The following illustrates the use of negation in the conditional.

(35)

a. [kàtáɲɔ́, láŋ mə̀]
/kə̀ à tə̀ áɲɔ́, láŋ mə̀/
|kə̀ à tə̀ á á ɲɔ́, láŋ mə̀|
COND he NEG PR AUG drink tell I
"If he does not drink, tell me."

b. [ŋgə̀ mə̀ títúhí nə̀ mɔ́ní ŋgə̀ míkójí mətwə̀]
/ŋgə̀ mə̀ tə̀ ítúhí nə̀ mɔ́ní, ŋgə̀ mə̀ íkójí mətwə̀/
|ŋgə̀ mə̀ tə̀ í túhí nə̀ mɔ́ní, ŋgə̀ mə̀ tə̀ í kójí mətwə̀|
COND I NEG P2 have with money COND I NEG P2 buy car
"If I had no have money, I would not have bought a car."

c. [ŋgə̀ mə̀ tà bìì mɔ́ní, mə̀ ŋgă kòjì mətwə̀]
/ŋgə̀ mə̀ tə̀ à bìì mɔ́ní, mə̀ ŋgə̀ ăkòjì mətwə̀/
|ŋgə̀ mə̀ tə̀ à bìì mɔ́ní, mə̀ ŋgə̀ ă kòjì mətwə̀|
COND I NEG P1catch money I COND P2-buy car
"If I had money, I would buy a car."

d. [kə̀ Ndòŋ à távè òkə́ nə̀ bɔ́]
/kə̀ Ndòŋ à tə̀ ávè ò kə́ nə̀ bɔ́/
|kə̀ Ndòŋ à tə̀ á á vè ò kə́ nə̀ bɔ́|
COND Ndòŋ SM NEG PR AUG come you go with them
"If Ndòŋ does not come, you leave with them."

It is noticeable from the data above that |*tə̀*| is the negation morpheme in the conditional.

6.2.5. Negation in the potential

The negative construction in the potential employs the morpheme *tàɣá* which functions exactly like in the present tense with the main characteristics that it excludes the presence of the verb "to be", and can also be used to encode the potential . This negation marker appears between the subject / subject marker and the potential marker as exemplified in (36).

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(36)

a. [ò tàɣá ŋgèlánɔ́sì júhà]
/ò tàɣá ŋgèlə́ ánɔ́-sì júhà/
|ò tàɣá ŋgèlə́ ánɔ́-sì júhà|
you NEG POT fall-CAUS rain
"You cannot cause the rain to fall."

b. [ò tàɣá ŋgèlə́ ákà ìnùŋ nàkɛ́ɛ́ ŋgà ò támí]
/ò tàɣá ŋgèlə́ ákà ìnùŋ nàkɛ́ɛ́ ŋgà ò támí/
|ò tàɣá ŋgèlə́ á kà ì-nùŋ nàkɛ́ɛ́ ŋgà ò támí|
you NEG POT AUG go CL7-trip tomorrow COND you want
"You cannot go tomorrow if you want."

c. [mbjə́ ìtàɣá ŋgèlájɔ́]
/ mbjə́ ì tàɣá ŋgèlə́ ájɔ́/
|ø-mbjə́ ì tàɣá ŋgèlə́ ájɔ́|
CL7-dog SM NEG POT swim
"The dog cannot swim."

The class 7 subject marker | ì| in (36c) should not be confused with the F1 marker which appears immediately before a verb stem. These morphemes have the same shape but function differently.

Intrinsic negative words such as nobody, nowhere, and nothing are expressed in Bàmbələ through the negation marker |tə|. Even in such cases, the negation morpheme appears in the same position that is, immediately after the subject / subject marker as illustrated below.

(37)

a. [mùt à tà vè]
/ mù-ùt à tə àvè/
|mù-ùt à tə à à vè|
CL1 person SM NEG PR AUG come
"Nobody comes."

b. [à tà kə ámpá mpɔ́k]
/à tə ákə ámpá mpɔ́k/
|à tə á á kə ámpá mpɔ́k|
he NEG PR AUG go place IND
"He goes nowhere."

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c. [à tá ndzə́ jɔ̂m]
/ à tə́ ándzə́ jɔ̂m/
|à tə́ á á ndzə́ j-ɔ̂m.|
he NEG PR AUG eat CL7-thing
"He eats nothing."

In this case, the negation marker gives a negative connotation to the key word of the construction: this is what occurs for instance in (37a) where the negator makes *mùt* to become "nobody" in its negative form.

Some verbs are known not to have a regular conjugation. The following section addresses this type of verbs.

6.3. Some irregular verbs

Some aspectual, manner-adverbial, modal notions and tense are expressed by means of lexical verbs instead of markers. These verbs are generally irregular and among them, are found defective or deficient verbs. The defective or deficient verb is characterised by the fact that it is not associated to a specific meaning. The real meaning is determined from the context in association with another verb, the main verb. The deficient verb is also known for its irregularity in form in the conjugation. Since there is not yet appropriate term to call such verbs, some other linguists will call them "auxiliary verbs" or quasi-auxilliary verbs". We call them defective verbs instead of auxiliary verbs because they behave differently from what we know of the English / French auxiliary verbs. Some of the Bə̀mbələ defective verbs carry tense morphology while others do not. Generally, they cannot be separated from the main verb almost like in English / French. However, some of these verbs can be used independently. The defective or deficient verbs are characterised by the fact that their meaning is determined from their context of usage (where it is associated with a main verb) and by their irregularity. In Bə̀mbələ̀, the verbs "to be" and to "have" belong to this category, but before having a look at them, we shall first analyse some other Bə̀mbələ̀ defective verbs. In their negative conjugated forms, the negation marker also occurs immediate after subject position.

On the other hand, what we call irregular verbs here vould also be considred as aspectual markers according to the position they occupy within the verb phrase.

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6.3.1. The andative ákə̀

First of all, it is worth noting that the andative *kə̀* is used independently meaning “go”. This irregular verb is frequently used to express actions about to occur and immiment future actions i.e. it denotes “be about to do something”. This irregular verb accepts a tense marker. The example in (38) illustrates the use of andative.

(38)

a. [máká sɔ̀ŋ íjɛ́ɛ́]
/mə ákə̀ ásɔ̀ŋ í+jɛ́ɛ́/
|mə á á kə̀ ásɔ̀ŋ í-jɛ́ɛ́|
I PR AUG go wash dress
“I am about to go to wash the dress.”

b. [wìkánám ájúhə̀]
/wə ìkə̀ ánám à-jùhə̀/
|wə ì kə̀ ánám à-jùhə̀|
you F0 go cook CL5-banana
“You will be about to go to cook the banana.”

c. [Sáŋdìŋ ákátʃìl kálàrà]
/Sáŋdìŋ à ŋgə́ ákə̀ átʃíl kálàrà/
|Sáŋdìŋ à ŋgə́ á kə́ átʃíl kálàrà|
Sáŋdìŋ SM P4 AUG go write letter
“Sáŋdìŋ was about to write a letter.”

Because this verb expresses imminent future along with the main verb it precedes, we believe that it is in the process of grammaticalisation. In other words, this verb is slowly shifting from an independent verb to a tense marker.

In the imperative, the form of the andative deficient verb in the second person plural is different from that of the main verb meaning “go” in the same person. It has the same form like the second person singular of the main verb. Here, to be noted is also that the tone of the infinitival augment occurs before the verb stem raises the tone of this verb stem like in the conjugation of the independent verb. This is illustrated in (39).

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(39)

a. [ká nám àjùhə̀]
/kə̀ ánám àjùhə̀ /
| Ḥ kə̀ ánám àjùhə̀|
IMP go cook banana
"Go and cook banana (2nd plural."

b. [kíjə́ŋ]
/ Ḥ kìjə́ŋ /
| Ḥ kìjə́ŋ|
IMP go
"Go!."

The example in (39b) illustrates the second person plural of the verb "to go" while the one in (39a) illustrates how the verb functions while used with a defective meaning.

In the negative conjugation, the negative marker appears immediate after the subject/ subject marker as (40) exemplifies.

(40)

a. [bóŋɔ́ bə́ tá kə̀ áɲɔ́ məlɔ̀k]
/bóŋɔ́ bə́ tə́ ákə̀ áɲɔ́ mə-lɔ̀k/
|bə̀-ɔ́ŋɔ́ bə́ tə́ á á kə̀ áɲɔ́ mə-lɔ̀k|
CL2-child SM NEG PR AUG go drink CL6-drink
"The children are not about to drink the drink.

b. [wə̀ tìkánám àjùhə̀]
/wə̀ tə̀ ìkə̀ ánám àjùhə̀/
|wə̀ tə̀ ì kə̀ ánám à-jùhə̀|
you NEG F0 go cook banana
"You will not be about to go to cook the banana."

With the English reading "to go", the verb *ákə̀* can be used transitively or intransitively. This issue shall be addressed later on.

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6.3.2. The repetitive *ádú*

The defective verb *ádú* denotes repetition “do again”, “repeat”. In the negative conjugation, it employs *tə̀*. This defective verb cannot be used independently. This defective verb does not carry tense marker. The examples in (41) and (42) illustrate repetitive in the positive and negative conjugation. This defective verb, according to its position in the sentence, could also be considered as aspectual marker.

(41)

a. [á du ádép mán]
/ à ádú ádép mu-án /
| à ádú ádép mu-án|
he again slap CL1-child
“He has slapped the child again.”

b. [á du ákɔ́k bìŋgə́ŋ]
/à ádú ákɔ́k bìŋgə́ŋ /
| Bɔ́ bɔ́ ádú ákɔ́k bì-ŋgə́ŋ|
he SM again cut CL8-tree
“They have cut the trees again.”

(42)

a. [á du ádép mán]
/à ádú ádép mu-án /
| à tə̀ ádú ádép mu-án|
he NEG again slap CL1-child
“He has slapped the child again.”

b. [ádu ákɔ́k bìŋgə́ŋ]
/à ádú ákɔ́k bìŋgə́ŋ /
| Bɔ́ bɔ́ ádú ákɔ́k bì-ŋgə́ŋ|
he SM again cut CL8-tree
“They have cut the trees again.”

It is worth noting that the repetitive *ádú* gives to the sentence the meaning of accomplished actions.

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6.3.3. Volition *álèè*

The defective verb *álèè* expresses the volition "want". This defective verb is also used independently and expresses volition. Even in its defective form, it accepts tense marker. In the negative conjugation, it employs the marker *tə,* which appears exactly at the same position like in the previous mentioned cases. With an inanimate subject, this defective verb can have a prospective aspectual meaning as exemplified in (43b).

(43)

a. [málèè ándzə́ nkón]
/ mə álèè ándzə́ nkón./
| mə álèè ándzə́ nkón.|
I want eat nkón
"I would like to eat nkón."

b. [ŋné álèè ákpɔ̀]
/ø-ŋné álèè ákpɔ̀./
| ø-ŋné álèè ákpɔ̀.|
CL3-house want fall
"The house is about to collapse."

(44)

a. [mə tálèè ándzə́ nkón]
/mə tə álèè ándzə́ nkón./
| mə tə álèè ándzə́ nkón.|
I NEG want eat nkón
"I would not like to eat ŋkón."

c. [ŋné tálèè ákpɔ̀]
/ø-ŋné tə álèè ákpɔ̀./
| ø-ŋné tə álèè ákpɔ̀.|
CL3-house NEG want fall
"The house is not about to fall."

The volition *álèè* naturally occurs before the main verb.

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6.3.4. The persistive *ándəŋ*

The defective verb *ándəŋ* encodes persistive, continuative "still". It describes a situation that persists from a non-present time to the present, and is likely to extend to the future. It cannot be used as a main verb and cannot take tense marker. In the negative conjugation, it employs the negator *tə* which occupies the same position and functions like in the examples discussed just above. In (45) and (46), we illustrate respectively the negative and the positive forms of the persistive.

(45)

a. [mándəŋ ánùŋ á pɛ́]
/mə ándəŋ ánùŋ á pɛ́/
| mə ándəŋ ánùŋ á pɛ́.|
I still walk in forest
"I am still walking in the forest."

b. [À ándəŋ ákə á ndàt]
/À ándəŋ ákə á ndàt/
|À ándəŋ ákə á ø ndàt|
he still go to CL3-market
"He is still going to the market."

(46)

a. [mə tándəŋ ánùŋ á pɛ́]
/mə ándəŋ ánùŋ á pɛ́/
| mə tə ándəŋ ánùŋ á pɛ́.|
I NEG still walK in forest
"I am not still walking in the forest."

b. [À tándəŋ áká ndàt]
/À tə ándəŋ ákə á ø ndàt/
|À tə ándəŋ ákə á ø ndàt|
he NEG still go to CL3-market
"He is not still going to the market."

The following sub-section analyses the verbs to "be" and to "have".

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6.3.5. The verbs “to be” and “to have”

In this sub-section of the analysis, we am going to have a look at the verbs “to be” and “to have” known as defective or deficient verbs. In their conjugated version, the verbs “to be” and “to have” have the same form in isolation in the future.

6.3.5.1 The verb “to be”

The verb to be in Bəmbələ has three distinct stems according to whether it is conjugated in the past, in the present or in the future tense. In the present tense, the stem is *nə́,* in the past; it is *bə́ /tùhì*, and in the future *jàŋ*. The forms *bə́* and *tùhì* are interchangeable. Future actions or events are expressed in only one future: F1. At the level of their negative conjugation, the present and the future forms of “to be” make use of the negator *tàɣá* while in the past tenses; they employ *tə̀*. Whatever the event time, the verb “to be” could be used for identification, for describing a state of existence or to indicate a location.

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6.3.5.1.1. Expressing identification

The presentative form is used to express identification *ínə́* “It is” for the present or bə́ / tùhì for the past events. The form employed is like the following: “It is the man.”, “It is the rain.” The form can actually be broken into two like in *í* “it”, *nə́* “is”. In the negative conjugation, as we earlier mentioned, either *tàɣá or tə̀* is used according to whether we are in the present, future or past tense. In the present tense, it is characterised by the exclusion of the occurrence of the verb itself. In the past, the past tense morphemes precede the verb.

(47)

a. [ínə́ kà]	a’. [ínə́ mbʲə́]
/ ínə́ kà/	/ínə́ ø-mbjə́/
|í nə́ kà|	|í nə́ ø-mbiə́|
it is what/how	it is CL7-dog
“What is it/ how are you?”	“It is the dog.”

b. [ínə́ dzə́]
/ ínə́ dzə́/
|í nə́ dzə́|
it is who
"Who is it?"

b'. [í nə́ mbwàn]
/ínə́ mbwàn/
|í nə́ ø-mbùàn |
it is CL1-chief
"It is the chief."

c. [ì jàŋ dzə́]
/ì jàŋ dzə́/
|ì jàŋ dzə́|
It be who
"Who will it be?"

c'. [ìjàŋ màn]
/ì jàŋ mùán/
| ì jàŋ mù-án|
It be CL1child
"It will be the child."

d. [ítùhì dzə́]
/ì tùhì/ bə́ dzə́/
|í tùhì dzə́|
It be who
"Who was it?"

d'. [ítùhì /bə́ màn]
/ítùhì / bə́ mù-án /
|í tùhì /bə́ mù-án|
It be CL1-child
"It was the child."

(48)

a. [í tàɣá mbʲə́]
/í tàɣá mbjə́/
|í tàɣá ø-mbiə́|
it is NEG CL7-dog
"It is not the dog."

b. [ítàɣá mbwàn]
/í tàɣá ø -mbwàn/
|í tàɣá ø-mbùàn |
it NEG CL1-chief
"It is not the chief."

c. [ì tàɣá jàŋ màn]
/ì tàɣá jàŋ mùán/
| ì tàɣá jàŋ mù-án|
It NEG be CL1-child
"It would not be the child."

d. [ítətùhì mán]
/ítə tùhì mù-án /
|í tə bə́/tùhì mù-án|
It NEG be CL1-child
"It was not the child."

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The presence of the negative marker does not allow the tense marker to occur in the future. This is clearly illustrated in the data above.

6.3.5.1.2. Expressing description

The form of "to be" expressing description is the stem *nə́* preceded by the pronominal "it", "s/he" whose form varies according to the class of the noun under description. Description is only made in the present tense.

(49)

a. [mùt ɲínə́ ínə́ mbwàn wɔ́ŋ]
/mù-ùt ɲínə́ ínə́ ø-mbwàn wɔ́ŋ./
|mù-ùt ɲínə́ í nə́ ø-mbwàn wɔ́ŋ.|
CL1-person this it be CL3-chief your
"This man is your chief."

b. [mbòŋ únə́ màndzə́ wén]
/ø-mbòŋ ú nə́ mə̀-ndzə́ wén./
|ø-mbòŋ ú nə́ mə̀-ndzə́ wén.|
CL3-cassava it be CL6-food his
"Cassava is his food."

(50)

a. [mùt ɲínə́ à tàɣá mbwàn wɔ́ŋ]
/mù-ùt ɲínə́ à tàɣá ø-mbwàn wɔ́ŋ./
|mù-ùt ɲínə́ à tàɣá ø-mbwàn wɔ́ŋ.|
CL1-person this he NEG CL3-chief your
"This man is not your chief."

b. [mbòŋ ú tàɣá màndzə́ wén]
/ø-mbòŋ ú tàɣá mə̀-ndzə́ wén./
|ø-mbòŋ ú tàɣá mə̀-ndzə́ wén.|
CL3-cassava it NEG CL6-food his
"Cassava is not his food."

As can be observed in (50), the negator *tàɣá* is used to express the negative form of the expression of description.

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6.3.5.1.3. Expression of location

The expression of location requires the use of the form *nə́.* It is preceded by a regular subject marker and followed by a locative complement as illustrated in the examples in (51). The examples in (52) illustrates the negative conjugation of the previous sentences, showing that negation is encoded using the negator tàɣá.

(51)

a. [mə nə ìté]
/mə nə ìté/
|mə nə ìté|
I be here
"Here I am."

b. [à bəŋ á nə́ àŋgóŋgón]
/ à bəŋ á nə́ àŋgóŋgón./
| à-bəŋ í nə́ àŋgóŋgón.|
CL5-farm it be hill
"The farm is on the hill."

(52)

a. [mə tàɣá ìté]
/mə tàɣá ìté/
|mə tàɣá ìté|
I NEG there
"I am not there."

b. [à bəŋ á tàɣá àŋgóŋgón]
/àbəŋ á tàɣá àŋgóŋgón./
| à-bəŋ tàɣá àŋgógón.|
CL5-farm NEG hill
"The farm is on the hill"

This data in (52) clearly illustrates that negation is encoded in this case through the negator *tàɣá* .

6.3.5.2. The verb "to have"

In Bəmbələ, the verb "to have" in the present tense is composed of the verb "to be" *ánə* and the preposition *nə* rendered literally in English as "to be with". In the future, "to have" is *ájàŋ,* and *átùhì* in the past. In each of the tenses, the verb stem is followed by the preposition *nə*

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whose tone can change according to the tone of the following word. The verb “to have” can be used to point a simple statement, yes/no question or content question.

6.3.5.2.1. “to have” in Simple statement / Yes-No questions

My intention is not to address the issue of question formation and question in this section, but to look at the issue with focus on the verb “to have”. Question formation shall rather be tackled in the following chapter.

In simple statements or Yes/No questions, the verb “to have” expresses possession. This is observable in the following.

(53)

a. [mənənə àbəŋ]
/mə nə nə à-bəŋ/
|à nə nə à-bəŋ|
you be with CL5-farm
“I have a farm.”

b. [ìjàŋ nàbəŋ]
/ ì jàŋ nə à-bəŋ/
| ì jàŋ nə à-bəŋ|
F2 have with CL5 farm
“He will have a farm.”

c. [à ŋgátúhí nàbəŋ]
/à ŋgə́ átúhí nə́ à-bəŋ /
| à ŋgə́ átúhí nə́ à-bəŋ|
I P3 have with CL5 farm
“I had a farm.”

The simple sentences in (53) can be turned to Yes/No questions by raising the intonation. In any of the cases, the rising intonation raises the left most tone of the utterance.

The verb “to have” uses *tàɣá* to express negation in the present and in the future whereas in the past, *tə̀* is employed. In the present, the stem standing for “be” do not also occur in the conjugation like in the case of the verb “to be” itself as previously indicated.

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(54)

a. [mə *tàɣá* nə àbəŋ]
/mə *tàɣá* nə àbəŋ/
|mə *tàɣá* nə à-bəŋ|
I NEG be CL5-farm
"I do not have a farm."

b. [mə *tàɣá* jəŋ nàbəŋ]
/ mə *tàɣá* jəŋ nə à-bəŋ/
| mə *tàɣá* jəŋ nə à-bəŋ|
I NEG have with CL5 farm
"I will not have a farm."

c. [mə tə ŋgátúhí nàbəŋ]
/ mə tə ŋgə́ átúhí nə́ à-bəŋ /
| mə tə ŋgə́ átúhí nə́ à-bəŋ|
I NEG P3 have with CL5 farm
"I had not a farm."

In general, the negator, whatever its form, appears between the subject and the tense marker (if not a tone).

6.3.5.2.2. "to have in " Content questions

In content questions, the verb "to have" has the same shape according to the tense as described above. The negative form uses the same marker in each of the tenses as described in section *6.3.5.2.1*. In this usage, the verb "to have" expresses the notion of possession or no possession.

(55)

a. [dzə́ ànənə mətwə?]
/dzə́ à nə nə mətúə/
|ndzə́ à nə nə́ mətúə?|
who SM be with car
"Who has the car?"

a'. [ndzə́ à *tàɣá* nə mətwə?]
/ndzə́ à *tàɣá* nə mətúə/
|ndzə́ à *tàɣá* nə́ mətúə?|
who SM NEG with car
"Who has the car?"

b. [ndzə́ à ŋgátúhí nə́ mətwə]
/ndzə́ à ŋgə́ átúhií nə́ mətúə /
|ndzə́ à ŋgə́ átúhí nə́ mətúə?|
who SM P3 be with car
"Who had the car?"

b'. [ndzə́ à tə ŋgátúhí nə́ mətwə]
/ndzə́ à tə ŋgə́ átúhií nə́ mətúə /
|ndzə́ à tə ŋgə́ átúhí nə́ mətúə?|
who SM NEG P3 be with car
"Who had the car?"

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c. [ndzə̀ ì jàŋ nə́ mə́twə́]
/ndzə̀ ì jàŋ nə́ mə́túə́/
|ndzə̀ ì jàŋ nə́ mə́túə́|
who F2 have with car
"Who will have a car?"

c'. [ndzə̀ *tàɣá* àŋ nə́ mə́twə́]
/ndzə̀ *tàɣá* jàŋ nə́ mə́túə́/
|ndzə̀ *tàɣá* jàŋ nə́ mə́túə́|
who NEG have with car
"Who will have a car?"

The sentences in (55a', b'& c') are the negated forms of those in (55a, b & c).

The distinction between the verb "to be" and "to have" in the future and in the past is at the syntactic level. In fact, both verbs have the same forms and constructions in both of the tense; except that the verb "to have" requires a preposition that shows accompaniement and the semantics of the following noun plays a role in the choice of the verb to be used as we can observe in the following illustration.

(56)

a. [mìjàŋ mìntàk]
/mə̀ ì jàŋ mìntàk/
|mə̀ ì jàŋ mìntàk|
I F2 be joy
"I will be happy."

b. [mìjàŋ nə́ wás]
/mə̀ ì jàŋ nə́ wás/
|mə̀ ì jàŋ nə́ wás|
I F2 have with watch
"I will have a watch."

c. [mə ŋgá túhi nə́ wás]
/mə̀ ŋgə́ átúhi nə́ wás /
|mə̀ ŋgə́ átúhi nə́ wás|
I P3 have with watch
"I had a watch."

d. [mə ŋgátúhi mìntàk]
/mə̀ ŋgə́ átúhi mìntàk/
|mə̀ ŋgə́ átúhi mì-ntàk|
I P3 have with watch
"I was happy."

The preposition *nə* is employed to indicate possession, hence the meaning of "to have". This requires a certain valency for the following noun, this valency been not accepted by "to be".

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6.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, the discussion included tense, mood, aspect and negation because of the inter-connexion that exists among the elements. Separating these elements during their analysis would lead to some shortcomings. Tone is an important tool in conjugation in the language under study because some tenses, namely PR, P0 and P1, and P2 and F0 for instance are morphologically marked by an identical vowel, but with distinct tones. The tone of the P3 marker spreads onto the last vowel of the verb stem while the tone of the subjunctive marker spreads onto the last vowel of the rightmost constituent of the sentence. The main observation worth mentioning in the interaction between tense and negation is that in the present tense, the introduction of the negation marker for the verb "to be" excludes the occurrence of the verb itself. In addition, in the future, the occurrence of the negation marker for the verbs "to be" and "to have" excludes the tense marker. So also, from a syntactic point of view, there is symmetry between the positive and negative constructions in Bəmbələ since at first glance, they do not show any structural change. In their essence, the verbs "to be" and to "have" are defective in that they require a particular conjugation with distinct forms. In addition to the verbs "to have" and "to be", we also analysed some other defective verbs which are called auxiliaries or quasi-auxilliaries by other researcher (Velde 2008). All the elements analysed, together with those described in the preceding chapters of the work are combined to make a whole structure within which each constituent has a particular position, distribution and function. In order to unveil how the different constituents function in a chain, it is worth tackling the basic syntax of the language.

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CHAPTER 7

THE SYNTAX OF BÀMBƏLÀ

7.1. Introduction

The present chapter describes the basic syntax of Bàmbəlà. Basic syntax here refers to the elementary constituents that make up a phrase, a clause and a sentence. Tackling the issue from a structural point of view, we shall consider the sentence as being made up of an NP, a VP, and a PP, the PP being an optional constituent. In general, a phrase is defined as a group of words without a subject and a predicate. The discussion begins with the analysis of the main sentence constituents, namely the noun phrase (NP), the verb phrase (VP) and the prepositional phrase (PP). This is followed by the basic word order in the language. The next section examines the modality of sentences. The description of topic and focus and finally semantic roles constitute the last two sections of the chapter.

7.2. Phrase and sentence structure in Bàmbəlà

In this present subsection of the study, we analyse the structure of the noun phrase (NP), the verb phrase (VP) and the prepositional phrase (PP). The section begins with the noun phrase followed by the verb phrase and then the prepositional phrase.

7.2.1. The noun phrase

The present sub-section discusses the structure of the noun phrase. In order to simplify the discussion, we shall categorise the noun phrase into simple noun phrase and complex noun phrase, the simple noun phrase including a single noun or pronominal element or a noun modified by a single modifier and the complex noun phrase being modified by complex units such as genitive constructions or a relative clause.

7.2.1.1. The simple noun phrase

We distinguish two types of simple noun phrases. The first type is made up of single nouns or pronouns that stand alone and function as subject or object while the second category contains a noun modified by simple modifiers such as determiners, adjectives and genitives. The first category shall not be treated here because we have already discussed the form and meaning

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of individual noun and determiners respectively in chapters 3, and 4. Even in the second category that consists of a noun and a modifier, we present just a few striking issues, guiding the discussion towards their forms and their meanings.

The noun phrase which is made up of a single noun and a determiner contains two main constituents: the head noun which is an NP reduced to a single item, and the determiner. There are instances where the head noun and the determiner are connected by an associative marker. This is observed for instance in the case where the determiner is an adjective (1).

Syntactically, in Bəmbələ, there is no strict order in the appearance of the constituents in this noun phrase type. Nevertheless, the structure noun / determiner is the most common in the language. The noun phrase essentially made up of noun and determiner is illustrated in the following example.

(1) bì-bùmə́ bí-ntɔ́kbɔ́ŋ
CL8-grain AM AP- small
"small grain"

In (1), the head noun, the rightmost constituent, agrees in noun class with the determiner, the leftmost element. As we mentioned earlier, the determiner could be made up of one or more constituents. Following is an example illustrating this point. The determiner and its expansions are in italics.

(2)

a. mə̀-mbó *mə́-láá mə́-ámàŋ mə́-ínə́*
CL6-friend AP-three AP-mine AP-these
"these three friends of mine"

b. bə̀-úán *bə́-ámàŋ bə́-mpɔ́k táŋkà?*
CL2-child AP-my AP- other QM
"How many of my other children?"

c. bì-ŋgə́ŋ bí-ɲǐ *bí-mvínə́ŋ bí-mpɔ́k bí-ámàŋ bí-ínə́ ávé?*
CL7- tree AP-four AP-black AP-other AP-my AP-these how many
"How many of those other black trees of mine?"

The example in (2c) combines at the same time demonstrative, possessive, indefinite, qualificative and interrogative determiners. Agreement in noun class is evident in the whole

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structure. The head noun governs this agreement. However, it is recognizable that question markers do not accept agreement markers.

In the simple noun phrase made up of noun and determiner, the determiner can be a demonstrative, a possessive, a cardinal number or an adjective. Following are examples illustrating these structures.

(3)

a. *ì-lìɣə* **ɲ-ílí**
CL7-chair AP-that
"that chair"

b. *à-bəŋ* **z -és**
CL5-farm AP-your
"your farm"

c. *bì-lìɣə* ´ **bí-lá**á
CL8-chair AM AP- three
"three chairs"

d. mì-ɲé ´ mí-ŋkpámát
CL4 -house AM AP -new
"new houses"

In (3a), the determiner is a demonstrative. The relationship that exists between the two constituents of this type of phrase is that of "monstration" (Kerbrat Orrechioni 1980) in terms of diesis. The demonstrative constituent appears in the immediate right of the head noun. In (3b), the determiner is a possessive while that in (3c), it is a numeral. In the illustration in (3d), the determiner of the determinative phrase is an adjective. A lot has already been said about these determiners in chapter 5 where we discussed noun modifiers. Therefore, the information related to their form and functions presented in that chapter are also to be taken into account here.

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7.2.1.2. The complex noun phrase

In the complex noun phrase, the modifier of the head noun is complex in the sense that it is larger than one-word units in contrary of the category discussed in the previous section. Within this category, we shall discuss the coordinate noun phrase, the genitive noun phrase and the relative clause.

7.2.1.2.1. The coordinate noun phrase

The coordinate noun phrase is characterised by the existence of a hierarchy between the constituents of the phrase. In Bɔ̀mbəlɔ̀, the symmetry between the constituents leads us to identify the following types of coordinate noun phrases: interrogative, distributive, adjunctive, alternative, coordinative and functional. Usually, there is a connector linking the two constituents of the phrase. Below, we analyse each of these sub-types in detail. In the different examples, the coordinate noun phrase is in italics.

7.2.1.2.1.1. The interrogative coordinate noun phrase

The morpheme *kɛ*, a connector (CON), introduces this type of structure. This morpheme stands between the nominal constituents of the structure. The idea behind its use is that of choice, as can be observed in the data below.

(4)

a. wə á jáŋ *mə-jíí kɛ̀ mə-kwàn?*
you PR check CL6- water CON CL6- salt
"Are you looking for water or salt?"

b. wə *á* àlɛ̀ɛ̀ *à-kàbà kɛ̀ à-jùhə?*
you PR want CL5 -cocoyam CON CL5 -banana
"Do you want cocoyam or banana?"

c. *à* á nɛ́n *mù-àŋə kɛ̀ mù-úm?*
He PR see CL1- woman CON CL1-man
"Did you see a woman or a man?"

The two constituents that make up the interrogative associative noun phrase are so symmetrical that they could be interchangeable without distorting the grammaticality of the sentence. In fact, we can safely invert the position of the nouns separated by the copula and the structure remains grammatically acceptable. Therefore, (4b) can be rendered as follows: wə à lɛ̀ɛ̀ *àjùhə kɛ̀ àkàbà ?* The change in the position of *àjùhə and àkàbà* does not make the sentence to become ungrammatical.

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7.2.1.2.1.2. The distributive coordinate noun phrase

From a semantic point of view, there is an idea of exclusive possession between the two nouns of the distributive coordinate noun phrase. The distributive coordinate noun phrase in Bəmbələ is introduced by the morpheme *kà*. This morpheme carries along a restrictive value. It appears in sentence initial position. This morpheme also functions as interrogator. We shall come back on the issue later.

The examples below illustrate distributive coordinate noun phrase.

(5)

a. kà mù-ùt ø-ɲé u-én
Each CL1 person CL3 house AP-his
"to each man his house"

b. kà mù-ùŋə́ ø-ɲɔ́m u-én
each CL1 woman CL1 husband AP-his/her
"to each woman her husband"

c. kà mù-úm ø-ɲé u-én
each CL1-man CL3-house AP-his
"to each man his day"

Here, if we invert the order of the nouns that make up the phrase, the sentence might undergo semantic alteration. Hence, let us invert the order of the constituents in (5b) as follows *kà ø-ɲé mù-ùt u-én*. After inversion, the construction becomes ungrammatical.

The introducer |kà| "each" clearly shows the existence of the idea of possession, which drives the relationship between the two nouns of the structure. This semantic interpretation could be extended to that of individualism or egocentrism.

7.2.1.2.1.3. The alternative coordinate noun phrase

In the alternative coordinate noun phrase, the constituents of the phrase express an alternative situation through the conjunction |ŋgə́| "either…or" when the statement is positive or |tɔ̀ɣɔ̀…tɔ̀ɣɔ̀| a discontinuous marker with the English reading "neither …nor" when the statement is negative. The following illustrate the alternative conjoined noun phrase.

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(6)

a. mə à lɛ̀ɛ̀ à-lés ŋgə́ à-jùhə
I P0 want CL5-rice either or CL5-banane
"I want either rice or banana."

b. ì vè nzén ŋgə́ nəkɛ́ɛ́
F2 come today either or tomorrow
"He will come either today or tomorrow."

c. à tə à lɛ̀ɛ̀ tɔ̀ɣɔ̀ ì-kwàn tɔ̀ɣɔ̀ ì-kɔ́rì
he NEG P0 want neither CL7-plantain neither CL7-yam
"He wants neither plantain nor yam."

In case the idea of alternation or choice is positive, the conjunction appears between the two nominal constituents of the phrase (see 6a and b) whereas in the other case (negative), the first constituent of the noun phrase appears between the two elements of the discontinuous morpheme. This is observable in the example in (6c).

7.2.1.2.1.4. The strict coordinate noun phrase

What we call strict coordinate noun phrase here is different from the other subcategories of coordinate noun phrases discussed so far in that it contains what is known as the traditional coordinator.

In Bəmbələ, coordination is marked by the conjunction |nə̀| "and". Syntactically, the coordinator or conjunction stands between the two coordinated items. The examples below illustrate this type of noun phrase. The two coordinated items are noun + noun (N+N) in nature. It is also worth noting that the conjunction also functions as preposition "with" (see 7c) in another context or in some other syntactic constructions. This aspect shall be addressed later on.

(7)

a. ø-mbòmbòŋ, ø-kpáp nə̀ ø-ndòé
CL7-bee CL7 lion with CL3-fly
"the bee, the lion and the fly"

b. mù-àŋá, mù-úm nə̀ ɲ-ɔ́
CL1-child CL1-man with CL3-snake
"the woman, the man and snake"

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c. Ndòŋ à àkə á ø-ndàt nə ø-mbjə́ j-én
Ndòŋ he go to CL3-market with CL7-dog AP-his
"Ndòŋ went to the market with her dog."

The coordinator appears before the final noun of the noun phrase or immediately before the last constituent of the coordinated phrase. In this case, the leftmost element of the structure is juxtaposed to the coordinated phrase. This is observable in (7a&b), where *mbòmbòŋ* and *mù-ùŋə́* are respectively juxtaposed to their coordinated phrases via the use of comma.

At the same time, the above structures also present cases of juxtaposition. In fact, in 7, each of the constructions begins with a noun which is detached to the second one by a comma. This comma allows the second noun to be juxtaposed to the first one.

7.2.1.2.2. The associative or genitive noun phrase

In Bəmbələ, the genitive construction or associative construction (AC) is made up of three main elements: the head noun (HN), the associative marker (AM) and the associative noun (AN). This order is irreversible in the language and is schematised as follows:

AC =HN+ AM+ AN

Following are examples illustrating the genitival or associative noun phrase.

(8)

a. mì-mɔ́ mí mù-án
CL5-hand AM CL1-son
HN AN
"the hands of the son"

b. ø-mɔ́ ´ mù-áŋá
CL3-hand AM CL1-child
HN AN
"the hand of the child"

c. à-wòlə ´ ø-júhə
CL5-time AM CL7-rain
HN AN
"the rainy season"

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d. ø-ndɔ́ ì-kə́lə
CL3-head AM CL7-goat
HN AN
"she goat's head"

e. mì-nsə̀ŋ mí ø-ɲé
CL4-yard AM CL3-house
HN AN
"the courtyard of the house"

The head noun, the leftmost element, is the first constituent of the structure. This leftmost constituent is followed by the associative marker and the associated noun occurs in the immediate after the associative marker position. In order to understand the structure of associative construction, I shall analyse each of the constituents in details.

7.2.1.2.2.1. The associative marker (AM*)*

When we scrutinize the data in (8), we notice that in (8b) and (8e), the associative marker seems to agree in class with the head noun (HN). However, the examples in (8a), (8c) and (8d) give room to question this observation because the apparent agreement with the head noun is not visible.

Generally, in Bəmbələ, nouns belonging to the different classes of the singular (CL1, 3, 5 and 7) have as connective or associative marker a high tone. It would not be adequate in this case to argue that the associative marker is not operational. The high tone plays the role of connective in these cases. This argument is underscored by the fact that previous pieces of research on Bantu languages established that in most Bantu languages, the associative marker (AM) is a tone. In this vein, Tamanji and Ndamsah (2004:67) say: "It has been established for most African languages*[* mainly northwest Bantu*]* that the associative marker which links nouns of various classes to the associative noun is simply tonal". To strengthen their point, they refer to some previous researchers such as Hyman (1979b), Mfonyam (1989), Nkemnji (1995) and Boum (1980) whose works lead to reveal the same observation. If we attempt to bring an explanation to the phenomenon, we could argue that diachronically, the connective marked by a high tone might have lost its vowel, probably a copy of the noun prefix.

The fact that the form of some associative markers in the language is identical to the prefix of the head noun makes me attempt to analyse them as simple agreement markers. Indeed, associative markers are not just agreement markers, but the surface realisation of a more

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complex unit made up of an associative marker and a concord consonant. This is obvious from the fact that it (associative marker) bears a high tone, which is different from the tone of the noun prefix that carries a low tone. On the other hand, Bəmbələ associative markers could be literally rendered in English as the preposition “of”. This could not be plausible because in this language (Bəmbələ), prepositions do not carry agreement markers.

The tone of the connective spreads over the vowel of the following substantive in cases the associative marker is not a floating tone and the associated noun begins with a vowel. The following illustrations shed more light on the issue.

(9)

a. bì-swá bí á-bəŋ
CL8-pan AM CL5-farm
“the pan of the farm”

b. mə-bɔ mɔ́ í-ŋgɔ́ŋ
CL6-foot AM CL7-tree
“tree’s feet”

c. mì-mɔ́ mí ø-mbwàn
CL4-hand AM CL3-chief
“chief’s hands”

Let us consider the example in (9a) to illustrate the issue. In fact, we will have the following representations: bì-swá bí àbəŋ ⟶ bì-swá bí á-bəŋ. The tone of the associative marker spreads and raises the tone of the initial vowel of the associated noun, here the central vowel /*a*/ whose tone was initially low.

In (9c), there is not apparent spreading because the associated noun does not begin with a vowel.

The table below presents the different associative markers that exists in Bəmbələ.

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Table 38: Associative markers in Bəmbələ

Noun classes	Noun prefixes	Associative markers
1	ø- , mu-	´
2	bə-	bə́
3	ø-, w-	´
4	mì-	mí
5	à-, ø-, di-	´
6	mə-	mə́
7	ì-, ø-	´
8	bì-	bí

In general, only the classes of the singular accept the floating tone as associative marker.

7.2.1.2.2.2. The head noun (HN)

The noun class of the head noun governs the form of the associative marker (AM). The head noun could be either a dependent or an independent nominal as exemplified in (10). The head noun is in bold.

(10)

a. **à-bòm** ´ í- ŋgóŋ
CL5-roof AM CL7-tree
"the roof of the tree"

b. **í- ɲ- ínə́** ´ ø-ɲé
AUG AP-that AM CL7-house
"that of the house"

The head noun can be followed by one or more expansions forming a whole phrase as observed in (11) where head nouns are in bold.

(11)

a. **bì-kə́lə́ bí-lá́á** bí ø-mbwàn
CL8-shegoat AP-three AM CL3-chief
"the three she goats of the chief"

b. **bì-kə́lə́ bí-lá́á bí-mpɔ́k** bí ø-mbwàn
CL8-shegoat AP-three AP-other AM CL3-chief
"all the three other she goats of the chief"

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The expansion is made up of a numeral (11a) and numeral plus indefinite determiner (11b). This expansion could be extended even farther. However, whatever the number of the elements that modify the headword, the relationship of qualification, of modification carried by the whole structure of the associated noun is governed by the first constituent of the phrase, the head noun.

7.2.1.2.2.3. The Associated noun (AN)

Syntactically, the associated noun appears to the right of the associative marker (AM). Let us consider the following data:

(12)

a. ø-nzè á-*bəŋ*
CL3-way AM CL5-farm
"farm's way"

b. ø- ŋkùt á-*lés*
CL3-bag AM CL5-rice
"a bag of rice"

The associated noun phrase can comprise either one item like in (12a & b) above or more items. In (12), the associated noun is the rightmost element and is in italics. In the examples in (13) below, the associated noun is a whole noun phrase (ANP).

(13)

a. mù-ùŋɔ́ ø-mbwàn ú- mpɔ́k
CL1-woman AM CL1-chief AM AP other
HN ANP
"the other wife of the chief"

b. ø- ŋgál mù-úm ø-nzál
CL1wife AM CL1-man AM CL3-village
HN ANP
"the wife of the man of the village"

c. à-bəŋ mí-mbwàn ø-nzál Bìŋdùmə̀
CL5-farm AM CL4-chief AM CL3-village AM Bìŋdùmə̀
HN ANP
"The farm of the chiefs of the village of Bìŋdùmə̀"

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The last example sheds light on the fact that the associated noun phrase can accept many expansions. It is worth recalling that the tone of the associative marker raises that of the first vowel of the associated noun, provoking spreading. In (13c), the expansion comprises three items: the associated noun, the associative marker and the noun phrase which is reduced to a single noun.

The associative noun phrase is governed by a special kind of semantics that drives the relationship between the constituents of the structure. In the following lines, I shall discuss this semantics.

7.2.1.2.2.4. Semantics of the genitive noun phrase

Noun phrases in Bəmbələ have specific semantics. This semantics helps in their categorisation. There are noun phrases that express possession, goal, place, time, substance and dependence. These noun phrases are most often genitive in nature.

7.2.1.2.2.4.1. Genitive of possession

There are at least three ways for interpreting the genitive in the case of possession. It can express:

A. Pure possession

Pure possession shows that the entity belongs to somebody or something. This is illustrated below:

(14)

a. ì-lìɣə ´ ø-mbwàn
CL7 chair AM CL3-chief
"the chief's chair / the chair of the chief"

b. ì-jɛ́ɛ́ ´ ø-mbwàn
CL7-dress AM CL3-chief
"chief's cloth"

c. mə̀-ndzə́ ´ mù-án
CL6-food AM CL1-baby
"baby's food"

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When we look at the data in (14), we notice that the idea of belonging is clearly brought out. The AN is the possessor of what the HN expresses. In (14a), *ìlìɣə̀* "chair" is the belonging of *mbwàn* "chief". It goes alike with the idea expressed by the examples in (14b) and (14c) where the "dress" belongs to the "chief" and the "food" to the baby.

B. Genitive of quality

In this case, we can be dealing with a noun phrase expressing the idea of description or quality, source or origin, place from which one comes. This type of genitive is adjectival if taken from a semantic point of view in that it expresses a quality.

(15)

a. ø-nsə́lə̀k ´ á-jíí
CL7-sand AM CL5-water
"river's sand"

b. à-lŏŋ ´ mə́- jíí
CL5-snail AM CL6-water
"sea's snail"

c. mù-ùt ´ púlàsí
CL1-person AM French
"the French man"

C. Kinship genitive

Kinship genitives are related to blood relationship or biological relationship, as we can observe in (16).

(16)

a. mú-án ´ Ndòŋ
CL1-child AM Ndòŋ
"Ndòŋ's son"

b. ø-ɲáŋ ´ mù án
CL1-mather AM child
"mother of the child"

When we observe the example in (16), we notice that from a semantic point of view, there is an overt blood relationship between the associated component and the associative component.

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7.2.1.2.2.4.2. Compound genitives

In compound genitives, the genitive nouns are linked to the head /domain noun. They are treated along with the head noun as a unit, a compound. In this category, we find genitive of purpose, genitive of place, and genitive of time.

Genitives of purpose, place and time show the purpose, the place or the time for which the referent head noun is used as well as the time and /or the place generally associated to its use. This is evident in the examples below.

(17)

a. ì-lìɣə ´ ø-ɣəŋ
CL7 chair AM CL3 bamboo
"chair in bamboo"

b. ø-nlɔ́mì ´ mɔ́-lɛ́n
CL3 bottle AM CL6-palm tree
"a bottle of palm wine"

c. ì- swá ´ í-kɛ́
CL7-pan AM CL7-iron
"pan made from iron"

d. à-wòlə ´ júhə
CL5-time AM rain
"rainy season"

In case of the compound genitive, only the head noun can be pluralized. The constituents of the compound genitive are so tied that they seem to be a single entity. The example in (17c) can also be considered as a genitive of quality while that in (17b) can also be interpreted as a genitive of container because of the semantic nature of its constituents.

7.2.1.2.2.4.3. Genitive of dependence

Genitive of dependence or dependent genitives, sometimes called "part-whole relationship" stands in close relationship to the head noun. Dependent genitives comprise genitive nouns which stand in a close relation to the head noun akin to the one between the verb and its object. Dependent genitives are interpreted as denoting separate entities from what the head noun denotes. Nevertheless, the relation between the two entities is not as movable as the one between the head noun and the possessor genitives in the sense that, in their distribution, the

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dependent genitive is always in a position adjacent to the head noun. At the same time, the relation between the two is not as close as the one between the head noun and a compound genitive. Unlike the compound genitive, the dependent genitive is not frozen with the head noun.

The most common type of dependent genitives are genitive nouns which mark inalienable possession that is possession expressed by inseparable entities. Following are some examples illustrating dependent genitive.

(18)

a. dí-ís ´ á-kpɔ̀ŋ
CL5-eye AM CL5-hare
"hare's eye"

b. ø- ndɔ́ ´ mù-ùt
CL3-head AM CL1-man
"man's head"

c. mì-mɔ́ ´ Ndòŋ
CL4-hand AM Ndòŋ
"Ndòŋ's hands"

We observe in the data above that there is no way of separating the associative noun and the associated noun and the entity remains alive or safe i.e. the consequence of separation in this case is either death or sufferings.

Beyond the categorisation of noun phrases into simple and complex noun phrases, we can also have what we call appositive noun phrase. In an appositive noun phrase, the apposed constituent could be a single unit, limited to a noun or an associative construction. In the process of formation of the appositive noun phrase (APNP), there is no linking unit between the head noun and the apposed nominal. At the prosodic level, the appositive noun phrase is marked by a pause between the HN and the apposed nominal. The following examples illustrate the issue.

(19)

a. ø-kpáp, ø-mbwàn ´ bɔ́-tít
APNP
CL7-lion cl3-chief AM CL8-animal
"the lion, king of animals"

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b. Nàŋ, ø- súrmàn
Nàŋ CL7-hunter
APNP
"Nàŋ, the hunter"

c. Bìbɛ̀, ø- nzàl z-én
Bìbɛ̀ CL3-village AP-DEM
APNP
"Bibey, his village"

The determination of an apposition relationship is bound to the linguistic and extralinguistic context in which the utterance is produced. There is always a one-to-one semantic relationship between the head noun and the appositive phrase. This relationship gives grounds for the notion of apposition. We must also note that the apposed nominal could rather be a noun phrase, namely an associative construction as we observe in (19a).

7.2.1.2.3. The relative clause in Bəmbələ

From a syntactic point of view, relative clauses function as modifiers in a noun phrase. The relative clauses modify the head noun. They are propositions in which one of the participants is coreferential with the head noun (Payne 1997 & Whaley 1997).

The analysis of relative clauses in Bəmbələ follows Payne (1997:325) and Shopen (2007), with respect to Bəmbələ language. They present four (4) elements for a restrictive relative clause: the head noun, the restrictive relative clause itself, the relativised noun phrase and the ralativizer (Rel). Each of the constituents is analysed in detail in the following subsections.

7.2.1.2.3.1. The head of the relative clause

The head noun rules the relative clause. Traditional grammar calls this constituent "antecedent". In Bəmbələ, the head of a relative clause appears outside the clause (RC). This kind of construction is called external-headed relative clause construction. Let us consider the following illustration.

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(20)

a. *ì-síŋə́ [* ávè jí *]* ínə́ mvínə́ŋ
CL7-cat P0-come REL be black
"The cat that came is black."

b. à lírì mə́ *à-kə̀ŋ [* à kòjì zí*]*
he Past show me CL5-knife P0 buy REL
"He showed me the knife that he bought."

c. *bə̀-ùt [* bə́ à vè bí *]* bə́nə́ bə̀-súrmàn
CL2-person SM P0 Rel REL be CL2-hunter
"The men who came are hunters."

d. *mù-àŋá [* mə à nén ɲí *]* à á kwàn
CL1-child me P0 see REL he PR be sick
"The child that I saw is sick."

e. *í- ɲ- ínə́ [* à á vè ɲí*]* á kwàn
AUG- AP- this he PR come REL PR be sick
"He who comes is sick."

In these examples, the items in italics play the role of head of the relative clause. In the language we analyse, the head of the relative clause is a noun phrase that could be reduced to a nominal or an anaphoric pronoun: personal, demonstrative or possessive (see 20e). When the noun phrase (NP) comprises a nominal determiner, this determiner could appear either before or after the noun itself as the following examples show.

(21)

a. *mù-ùt ɲ-ínə́* á vè ɲí ínə́ mù-ùt ø-mpjóŋ
CL1-person AP-this PR come REL be CL1-man CL3-liar
"This man who comes is a liar."

b. *ø-mpàŋ mù-ùt* à á nùŋ ɲí á ø-nzè ínə́ Ndòŋ
AP- big CL1-person SM PR walk REL on CL3-way be Ndòŋ
"The big man who walks on the way is Ndòŋ."

In (21a), *mù-ùt* comes before the demonstrative whereas in (21b), the attributive adjective precedes it.

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7.2.1.2.3.2. Restrictive relative clause or restricting clause

The restricting clause is said to be coreferential with the head noun in languages where the relative clause appears at the right of the head noun. In this case, the restricting clause is called external post nominal relative clause (Kroeger 2005). This is the type of relative clause found in Bəmbələ as the preceding examples illustrate. According to Kroeger, in languages with verb medial position like Bəmbələ, i.e. in languages with SVO structure, post-nominal restricting clause is the norm.

Within a relative construction where we clearly identify a relative clause and a main clause, the head of the relative occurs within the matrix sentence. The matrix sentence contains the head of the relative clause and the restricting clause itself. Let us consider the following:

(22) mù-ùt [í-lèè ɲí] í váŋì
CL1-man P2 cry REL P3 come
"The man who came was crying."

In this sentence (in 22), *mù-ùt í váŋì* is the matrix sentence whereas *mù-ùt í lèè* is the embedded clause (in square brackets) in the matrix sentence. Generally, head initial languages favour post nominal relative constructions. The restricting clause plays the role of modifier. It helps to identify and qualify its head noun. In the examples presented above (see 22), the relative clauses are indicated in square brackets. At the same time, these same illustrations allow us to emphasize the status of the embedded structure.

If the restricting relative clauses function as modifiers, consequently, we must expect it to be suppressed without altering the grammatical correctness of the sentence. Therefore, examples in (20a) and (20e) above can be reduced as follows:

(23)

a. *ì*–síŋə́ ínə́ mvínə́ŋ
CL7-cat PR be black
"The cat is black."

b. í- ɲ-ínə́ á nə́ ákwàn
Aug AP Dem PR be sick
"This one is sick."

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Although the suppression of the restricting clause does not affect the grammaticality of a sentence, it alters, to a lesser extent, its semantic core. Structurally, the restricting clause is embedded either in the main clause or simply follows it when it is right-shifted.

The restricting clause modifies a subject or object or other noun phrases in the sentence, such as indirect object, instrument, location etc.

Let us now consider the examples in (24) below:

(24)

a. ì-**sún** mə à nén jí à lúm Kpékà
CL7 fly I P0 see REL P1-sting Kpékà
"The fly that I saw stung Kpékà."

b. *ì-sún* à nén mə́ jí à lúm Kpékà
CL7-fly P0 see me REL P0 sting Kpékà
"The fly which saw Kpékà stung me."

In the example in (24a), the head noun ((HN) in bold), is interpreted as the object of the restricting clause. Kroeger (2004 & 2005) calls it internal grammatical relation, i.e. a relativised function assigned to the head within the restricting clause. However, in (24b), the noun phrase which contains the restricting clause functions as subject (in italics). This is called external grammatical relation (Kroeger op.cit).

7.2.1.2.3.2. The relativised noun phrase (NPrel)

Most often, the relativised noun phrase is identified according to the position of the headword. Let us observe the following data.

(25)

a. yʼ-ónók mə í nén jí *Ḥ* ínə́ à-jíí
CL7 toad I P2 see Rel P0 be CL5-river
"The toad that I saw is in the river."

b. yʼo-ònk mə í nén jí *[*yʼ-ònók*]* ínə́ à-jíí
CL7-toad I P2 see REL NPrel be CL5-river
"The toad that saw me is in the river."

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In (25b), derived from example (25a), the relativised noun phrase (NPrel) is within square brackets. A crucial problem arises while identifying the grammatical relation of the underlying NPrel (in square brackets): that of determining the (real) direct object of this NPrel. We can argue that in reality, NPrel lacks a direct object, which is paradoxically present. Given that this relative clause needs a direct object for the sentence to be grammatically correct, the relativised function should be assigned to the head noun (head of the relative). This technique of indicating the relativised function is called "gap strategy" (Keenan & Kroeger op.cit). Since the only clue is a gap, the head noun is interpreted as filling this gap. In the literature, this strategy is only efficient for languages with SVO structure. This means that at the surface representation, the NPrel is occupied by a gap (see example 25a). However, the presence of a relative pronoun gives (to an extent) a hint for the acknowledgement of the existence of NPrel.

As for the position of the relativised noun phrase (NPrel) in Bəmbələ, all nominals within the relativised clause or independent clause (subject, direct or indirect object, adjunct) can be relativised. Let us consider the following:

(26) mù-ùŋə́ à á kə á à-bə̀ŋ
CL1 woman SM PR go to CL5- farm
"The woman who goes to the farm is her mother."

a. mù-ùŋə́ à á kə ɲí á à-bə̀ŋ ínə́ ø-ɲáŋ wén
CL1-woman SM PR go REL to CL5-farm be CL1-mother your
"The woman who goes to the farm is your mother."

b. à-bə̀ŋ á nə́ zí á kóŋɔ́ ø-ɲé ínə́ í-z-ínə́ ø-ɲáŋ wén
CL5-farm SM be REL to near CL3-house be AUG-AP-this CL1-mother your
"The farm which is near the house belongs to your mother."

In (26a), the subject in (26) is relativised while in (26b), it is the adjunct (*à-bə̀ŋ)* in (26) that undergoes relativisation.

7.2.1.2.3.4. The relative pronoun

The relative pronoun is a subordinating element. It is a special kind of pronoun which is anaphoric in nature. In fact, it refers to the domain / head noun. In Bəmbələ, we can call this constituent relative pronoun and not a relativizer because it agrees in number and noun class with

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the head noun. This morphosyntactic property is characteristic of all the types of noun phrases in Bəmbələ.

The relative pronoun is a nominal element in Bəmbələ because it bears the same prefix as the demonstrative pronoun concord prefix. It may be worth noting that the relative pronoun is often a property of post-nominal restricting clauses.

From a syntactic point of view, it is attested that in many languages, the relative pronoun is always the leftmost element in the relative clause. This argument also holds in Bəmbələ. The concord consonant of the relative pronoun is identical to that of the demonstrative pronoun. To this consonant, I can add the invariable stem, the vowel / i / (stem vowel) with its high tone and then obtain the relative pronoun as illustrated below.

(27)

a. à á sòlì bì-jéé **bí** ø- sáŋ u-én í kòjì
he PR wear CL8-dress REL CL1-father AP-his P2 buy
"He wears the clothes that his father bought."

b. Nàŋ à á ndzə́ mə-dzə́ **mí** ànám
Nàŋ VPref PR eat CL6-food REL P1-cook
"Nàŋ is eating the food that she cooked."

c. mù-ùt í láŋ **ɲí** í nə́ ø-sáŋ u-én
CL1-person P2-tell REL PR be CL1-father AP-his
"The man who spoke is his father."

In these examples, relative pronouns are in bold. They agree in number and class with the head /domain noun. The table below presents all the relative pronouns of Bəmbələ.

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Table 39 : Relative pronouns of Bàmbəlà

NC	*NC prefix*	*relative pronoun*
1	mù-, ø-	ɲí
2	bà-	bí
3	ø- w-	wí
4	mì-	mí
5	a-, ø-, di-	zí
6	mà-	mí
7	ì-, ø-	jí
8	bì-	bí

Unlike in languages such as Japanese (Whaley op cit.) and Kwasio (Ngue Um 2006) where the relative pronoun is optional, it is an obligatory constituent in Bàmbəlà. Its absence reduces the clause to a simple sentence. Relative pronouns of classes 2 and 8 on the one hand and classes 4 and 6 on the other are similar in form because of the phenomenon of vowel coalescence which affects the markers for classes 2 and 6. Normally, we were expecting to have *bəí* for class 2 and *məí* for class 6, but a backward assimilation or better put, vowel coalescence occurs and affects both morphemes and their schwa disappears. This might be the result of economy of articulation in addition to the fact that this kind of phenomenon is broadly observed in the language, or according to the fact that VV structures without syllable boundary are banned in the lexical representation of the words in the language.

The noun phrase is not the sole obligatory constituent of the sentence. To express a clear and complete idea, we must adjoin to the noun phrase a verb phrase, even if we can either have minimal sentences reduced to a noun, or verbal sentences reduced to a sole verb. The subsequent section of the study then focuses on the study of the verb phrase.

7.2.2. The structure of the verb phrase

The present sub-section analyses the verb phrase (VP) in Bàmbəlà. The analysis of the noun phrase structure in the preceding sub-section gave enough insight that shall ease the study of the verb phrase. The verb phrase in Bàmbəlà is a head modifier phrase having a verb as its head and adverbials (where necessary) being its modifiers. The head verb itself has its own internal structure having moods, aspects, persons in a disclose sequence. The following is an

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illustration of the different types of verbs phrases found in Bəmbələ. Let us start with a list of verb phrases which we would like to account for.

(28)

a. kə́
"Go!"

b. kə́ ávól kɛ́kɛ́ɛ́ ndʒìp!
Go quickly morning early
"Go quickly early in the morning!"

c. kə́ á ndàt
"Go to the market!."

d. ì nɔ́k dzə́ Àkàk à ákə́ á àbə̀ŋ
F1-hear that Àkàk SM go to farm
"Will hear that Àkàk goes to the farm."

e. ì kə̀
F1 go
"will go"

f. sə́ á ndzə́
PROG PR eat
"is eating"

g. tə̀ á á ndzə́
NEG PR eat
"Do not eat."

h.ŋgə̀lə́ ándzə́ kól á nsə̀ŋ
POT eat snail in courtyard
"Can eat snail in the courtyard."

In (28), it is observable that VPs can contain a single verb (28a), a verb followed by adverbials (28b), a verb stem preceded by tense marker and followed by a complementiser phrase (CP) as in (28e), a verb stem preceded by TAM (28f), a verb stem preceded by the augment, tense marker and then the negation marker (28g). Finally, comes the verb preceded by a TAM marker and followed by an NP within which is found a (PP).

From the above observation, the following inferences can be drawn:

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1. The verb phrase in Bəmbələ is either a head-modifier phrase or it consists of a single word (no modifier).

2. The head is made up of three inter-connected systems, namely the verbal system; mood, aspect and tense system and the person, number system (chapter 6 was mainly devoted to this issue).

3. The modifier slot is filled by adverbials, which in turn may be single units or phrases.

The verb phrase in Bəmbələ therefore has an optional modifier slot filled by an adverbial or adverbial phrase and an obligatory head slot filled by a transitive or intransitive verb along with TAM and person, number elements.

7.2.2.1. The overall verb phrase

The overall verb phrase is a head modifier phrase. The head slot of this phrase is filled by a finite verb (either transitive or intransitive) including mood and aspectual elements. The modifier slot is essentially filled by adverbs or adverbial phrases.

Adverbials of intensification, adverbials of manner, adverbials of time and location occur as modifiers of the headword (verb). Quantifiers can also occur as adverbials. Following are examples illustration this point.

(29)

a. ø-mbwàn à á jó ɲìjəŋ kɛ́kɛ́ɛ́ ndʒìp
CL3-chief SM PR speak well morning early
"The chief speaks nicely early in the morning."

b. Ø-kɔ́l á nùŋ ìtək ìtək
CL7-snail PR walk slowly slowly
"The snail walks very slowly."

c. Nàŋ ì kə̀ á ø-ndàt nəkɛ́ɛ́
Nàŋ F1 go to CL3-market tomorrow
"Nàŋ will go to the market tomorrow."

d. à á nə á ø-ɲé
He PR be to CL3-house
"He is at home."

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In general, in Bəmbələ, the adverb or adverbial phrase as verb modifier occurs at sentence final position or after the verb, headword in the construction.

From a segmental point of view, the head of the verb phrase can conveniently be divided into two parts: the head consisting of the verbal base, and the non-head composed of the mood, tense, aspect and indirectly, person and number system.

In the language under study, the tense, mood and aspect markers occur to the left of the verbal base. Following is an illustration of the head verb phrase.

(30)

a. Ndòŋ à *sə́ á kə̀* á à-bə̀ŋ nə̀ ø-ŋkpát á ø- mɔ́
Ndòŋ SM PROG PR go PREP CL5-farm with CL3-cutlass in CL3-hand.
"Ndòŋ is going to the farm with a cutlass in the hand."

b. bɔ́ *bə́ ŋgə́ á nùŋ* á pɛ́
They SM P3 AUG walk in bush
"They walked (a long time ago) in the bush."

The italicised constituents correspond to the verb phrase. Within this verb phrase, some verbs accept an object or objects while others do not.

7.2.2.2. Transitive and intransitive verbs

VPs can also have noun phrases in them. As we have already mentioned, some verbs must be followed by an NP, like those in (31) below. In contrast, others cannot be followed by an NP, like those in (32). Following are examples illustrating transitive and intransitive verbs.

(31)

a. mùt à á á ndzə́ à-jùhə̀
CL1-person SM PR AUG- eat CL3-banana
"The person eats banana."

b. bǒm bə́ á á léé ndámà
CL2-man SM PR AUG play football
"The men play football."

c. À sə́ á á kə̀ á à-bə̀
he PROG PR AUG go to CL3 farm
"He is going to the farm."

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(32)

a. bwán bə́ á pón
CL2-child SM PR run
"The children run."

b. à á nùŋ á nsə̀ŋ
He PR walk to courtyard
"He walks in the courtyard."

As we can simply observe from their acceptance or not of an object, the verbs in (31) are transitive while those in (32) are intransitive. We will reflect this in the rules in the following manner:

VP (V") ⟶ V[trans] NP

VP (V') ⟶ V [intrans]

Following the first rule, a representation of the transitive verb in a construction like *á ndzə́ nìdúmə̀* will be drawn as follows: *á ndzə́* is the verb head while *nìdúmə̀* is the object of the NP.

In the case of the phrase *á pón ávól,* where the verb is intransitive, we shall have the following: *á pón* is the head verb while *ávól* is the modifier of the head verb. Some verbs accept two objects while others do accept only one. Those verbs that accept two objects are termed ditransitive verbs. The following examples illustrate such verbs.

(33)

a. Ndòŋ ì ndzə́ àjùhə̀^{obj1} nə̀ tók^{obj2}
Ndòŋ F1 eat banana PREP spoon
"Ndòŋ will eat banana with a spoon."

b. súrmàn ì nóɛ́ dòrò^{obj1} nə̀ ŋgál^{obj2} jén
hunter F1-kill cynocephalus PREP gun his
"The hunter will kill the cynocephalus with his gun."

In (33), the verbs *ánóɛ́* "to kill" and *ándzə́ "to eat"* are ditransitive in that they accept two objects: one direct, and another indirect. Some verbs are intrinsically intransitive while other transitive verbs could also be used intransitively. Evidence of this is found in the ditransitive verb *ándzə́* "eat" as in:

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mə á á ndzə́
I AUG PR eat
"I eat."

Here, the verb does not absolutely require an object.

Both transitive and intransitive verbs can accept a PP as complement. In the case of transitive verb, the prepositional phrase follows the NP. On the contrary, in the case of intransitive verb, it immediately follows the verb.

The type of the clause in which the phrase occurs is determined by the verbal base that is, if the verbal base is transitive, then the whole verb phrase is transitive and consequently fills the transitive slot in a transitive clause. Similarly, if the verb base is intransitive, the verb phrase is intransitive, and fills the intransitive slot in an intransitive clause.

From a syntactic point of view, in Bəmbələ, TAM markers and negation marker precede the verb.

7.2.2.3. The VP with some irregular verbs

Some VPs contain irregular or deficient (DEF) verbs. In such contexts, the irregular verb comes before the main verb as schematised by the following rule:

DEF + VP

V" ⟶ DEF + VP (V)

Therefore, a sentence like *ákə́ á sák á nsəŋ nəkéé* will be represented as follows:

VP= V (DEF) + VP= TM+ PP = P + NP= N +ADV

The irregular verb is *ákə́,* the verb itself is *sák* preceded by TAM element(s) and followed by a modifier phrase.

Finally, on the other hand, some VPs contain sentences just as some NPs do. Therefore, a sentence like *nɔ́k dzə́ Àkàk à á léé ndámà* "hear that *Àkàk* plays the ball" will be represented as follows:

VP ⟶ V + CP (complementiser phrase)

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VP= V+CP= C+NP= N+SM+ VP= TM+ stem +NP (N)

The verb is *nɔ́k* and the complementiser phrase is *dzə́ Àkàk à á léé ndámà.*

The complementizer phrase within the verb phrase is composed of the complementizer and a whole sentence as depicted by the structure described above.

7.2.3. The prepositional phrase

Prepositions (PREP) show direction, location or association. Pure prepositions are rare in Bəmbələ. There are only two elements that can be termed prepositions in the language under study. These elements include *á* used to specify a location or direction, and *nə̀,* which has the meaning of accompaniment and instrument.

The morpheme *á* has a number of usages in this language: it can be used as the present tense marker; it can be used as the verbal augment; finally it is a preposition. The preposition *nə̀* is not to be confused with the applicative *nɔ́:* their difference is tonal. Other prepositions include the locatives *ájɔ́* "up" , *ásí* "down", *ágôn* "up, above", *ámbús* "behind". The prepositional phrase (PP) consists of the preposition and its object. In the prepositional phrase, the preposition is the head word. Sometimes, the noun phrase which serves as the object of the preposition has modifiers, but the important words in the phrase are the preposition and the noun phrase that could be reduced to a noun. It is worth noting that the prepositional phrase is not an obligatory constituent of the sentence. Following is an illustration of the prepositional phrase.

(34)

a. ø-ɲáŋ wén à á á nə̀ á ø-ɲé
CL1-mother your SM PR AUG be at CL3-house
"Your mother is at home."

b. Bwán bə́ sə́ á á nùŋ á à-bə̀ŋ
CL3-child SM PROG PR AUG walk at CL3-farm
"The children are walking in the farm."

According to Wechsler (1997) although PPs are considered to be optional, some are really optional, but others are obligatory. Let us consider the following to illustrate the point.

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(35)

a.bwán bə́ á á ndzə́ ŋkón á ø-ɲé
CL-2 child SM PR AUG eat ŋkón in CL3-house
"The children are eaten ŋkón in the house."

b. Ndòŋ à á á pùrì ø-tók á ì-lìɣè
Ndòŋ SM PR AUG pour CL6-spoon on CL7-cup
"Ndòŋ puts the spoon on the chair."

In (35a) the PP is optional in that its removal from the remainder of the sentence does not make it (the sentence) ungrammatical. On the contrary, in (35b), the absence of the PP will make the sentence to become ungrammatical. The obligatory PP in (35b) is complement and the optional PP in (35a) is an adjunct (Dowty 1979).

Syntactically, Bəmbələ prepositional phrases usually occur after the object NP when the verb of the sentence is transitive and in the immediate after verb position when the verb is intransitive.

Unlike in English, it is not possible in the language under study to shift the PP with pure prepositions at sentence initial position even for stylistic reasons. However, some locatives with the value of "diesis of monstration" can be taken to this position (see topicalisation).

7.3. Word order

This sub-section of the study describes the basic word order in Bəmbələ. My intention is just to give an overview of word order in the language under study. Baker (2001) sets a parameter of word order in natural languages. He states that languages belong to one of the three groups, namely SVO, VSO, or SOV. In this vein, Dryer (2006) argues that one way in which languages differ is in the manner they combine their constituents. He further suggests that word order does not only limit to subject, verb, object with respect to each other, but goes beyond that to include any set of elements be them at the phrase level or at the clause level.

Cross-linguistically, languages can be of these three basic word order correlations: verb initial languages, verb median languages and verb final languages. From a typologically point of view, SVO languages are known to be the second widespread type among the languages of the world, but less widespread than verb final languages (Dryer op cit).

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Bəmbələ is an SVO language that is a verb median language. The following analysis is going to take into account clausal and phrasal level structures. This means that a basic sentence in this language is first of all to be taken as being made up of a subject (SUB), a verb (V) and an object (O) as illustrated in (36) below.

(36)

a. bòŋə́ bə́ á á pák nìdúmə̀
S V O
CL2-woman SM PR AUG dig cassava
"The women harvest cassava."

b. Nàŋ à á á yɔ̀ŋ àyùhə̀
SUB V O
Nàŋ carry PR AUG carry banana
"Nàŋ carries the banana."

c. mán à tə̀ à lɛ̀è̀ məndzə́
S V O
Baby SM NEG P0 like food
"The baby did not like food."

In general, in case the subject of the sentence is overtly marked in this language, a subject marker immediately follows it. The subject marker is obligatory both with clause-external and clause-internal subjects. Following (37) is an illustration of this point.

(37)

a. Bòŋə́ bə́ á məksì dzə́ bɔ́ kə́.
CL2-woman SM PR think that they go
"The women think that they should go."

b. Àkàk à á məksì dzə́ bòŋə́ bə́ í kə̀ á ø-ndàt
Àkàk SM PR think that CL2-woman SM F0 go to CL3-market
"Àkàk thinks that the women should go to the market."

(38)

a. ì nùŋ á pɛ́.
F0 walk in bush
"He will walk in the bush."

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b. á bók ì-kájáŋ á à-bəŋ
PR break CL7-pineaple in CL3-farm
"He harvests pineapple in the farm."

In (37a), the subject (*Bòŋə́*) is clause-external while in (37b), it is clause-internal. In each case, we notice the presence of the subject marker (SM). This presence indicates that in a language with a system of noun classes like Bəmbələ, the subject agreement marker, as currently understood, indicates agreement between a subject and a verb. However, there are instances where the language presents null subject constructions (38). In this very case, the query is to know whether we shall also talk of a subject marker that we do not see. According to Chomsky (1982), for zero syntactic pronoun in null subject constructions, there is an underspecified subject and by implication a subject marker. This view is shared by Zeller (2007) who in his analysis of the subject marker through what he calls *pro analysis*, argues that the subject marker in null subject constructions in Bantu languages is an inflectional-affix that expresses agreement between the verb in tense and the subject (pro subject). He adds that it (the subject marker) can therefore be treated alike with the subject marker in constructions with full subjects where the subject marker is simply regarded as an agreement marker between the subject and the verb. In general, the subject marker follows the subject NP and precedes the verb in Bəmbələ. Between the subject marker and the verb stem, can occur TAM markers. An important question worth addressing is whether this SM is prefixed to the verb or whether it is a free morpheme. The observation that a lexical entity (noun, adverb, adjective, pronouns) and even negation cannot occur between the SM and the verb stem in this language leads us to conclude that the SM is a morpheme prefixed to the verb. Therefore, a construction like the following where a noun appears after the SM is not permissible in the language. As we have already mentioned, in this language, the SM is a morpheme that shows agreement in class and number with the subject and the verb.

(39)*
*. bɔ́ŋɔ́ bə́ Ákàk á lɛ̀ɛ̀ à-jùhə̀.
CL2-child SM Àkàk PR like CL3-banana
"Ákàk's children like banana."

For a sentence to accept an object, its verb must be transitive. Bəmbələ sentences can have any of the structures based on the word order described below.

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7.3.1. Subject Verb (SV)

The following examples confirm the existence of this word order in the language. However, we must recognise that a sentence can be made up of a verb: this is also called verbal sentence. The case of 2nd person imperative is very illustrative in this vein as it is observable in *kíjə́ŋ* "go!". Following is an illustration of this structure.

(40)

a. Àkàk à á á jă
S V
Àkàk SM PR AUG sing
"Àkàk sings"

b. mán à á á ndzə́
S V
CL2-baby SM PR AUG eat
"The child eats."

7.3.2. SVA: subject + verb + adverbial complement (AC)

This structure is made up of a subject, followed by a verb and then by an adverbial complement. Following is an illustration of this type of structure.

(41)

a. bəsáŋ bámàŋ bə́ á á jàhàŋ á Bíbɛ̀
S V A
CL1- father my SM PR AUG live to Bìbɛ̀
"My parents live in Bibey."

b. bòŋə́ bə́ á á kə̀ á àbə̀ŋ
S V A
CL2-woman SM PR AUG go to CL3- farm
The women go to the farm"

The adverbial complement is always made up of an adverb and a noun phrase that can be limited to a single noun or extended to a whole phrase.

7.3.3. SVOA: subject + verb + object+ adverbial complement (Adjunct)

In this structure, the constituents occur as follows: subject, verb, object and adverbial complement.

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(42)

a. Ndòŋ à à pèrəŋ məjíí á ìbálə
S V O A
Ndòŋ SM P1-pour water in cup
"Ndòŋ poured the water into the cup."

b. ɲáŋ wén à á nám məkàbà á kísìn
S V O A
mother your SM PR cook cocoyam in kitchen
"Your mother cooks cocoyam in the kitchen."

7.3.4. SVOC : subject+ verb + object +object + complement

This type of word order is illustrated by the following example:

(43)

a. Mbàŋ ì və́ mə nə ŋkùt nəkéé
S V OI PREP OD C
Mbàŋ F1 give me with bag tomorrow
"Mbàŋ will give me a bag of rice tomorrow."

b. mŭm ì ndzə́ ŋkón
S V O
man F2 eat ŋkón
"The man will eat ŋkón."

After having analysed the Bəmbələ basic word order, we shall now look at the syntactic functions of sentence constituents in the language.

7.4. The syntactic functions of sentence constituents in Bəmbələ

Syntactic functions constitute the relationship that exists among the different constituents of a phrase or a sentence. My attention will be on the main and primary functions, namely subject, object, adjunct and predicate.

7.4.1. Subject

In a sentence with a predicative verb, the subject is the first constituent. The position of the subject in Bəmbələ influences the morphology of the verb and its expansions (if any). The following data illustrate the issue.

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(44)

a. mán **à** á á lèɛ̀
CL1-child SM PR AUG cry
"The child cries."

b. bwán **bɔ́** á á lèɛ̀
CL2-child SM PR AUG cry
"The children cry."

In these examples, we notice the presence of class markers (in bold). The function of subject could either be assigned to a noun or to a pronoun that occupies the subject position in a sentence as we observe in (45) below.

(45)

a. Nàŋ ì kə̀
Nàŋ F1 go
"Nàŋ will go"

b. mə̀ ì kə̀
I F1 go
"I shall go"

c. bóŋɔ́ bə́ á á sák
CL2-child SM PR AUG dance
"The children dance."

d. bìŋgə́ŋ bí á á kpɔ̀
CL7-tree SM PR AUG fall
"The trees fall."

In the examples above, *Nàŋ, mə̀, bóŋɔ́, bìŋgə́ŋ* are respectively subjects. Each subject governs the agreement in each of the construction. This agreement reflects in the subject marker.

The subject could be a simple nominal (see 46). It can also be a whole phrase (see 46a and 46b) or a relative clause (see 46c & 46d).

(46)

a. ø-mbwàn ´ ø-nzál à á á ndzə́ ø-kɔ́l
CL3-chief AM CL-3 village SM PR AUG eat CL7-snail
"The chief of the village eats snail."

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b. bwán nə bə-ɔ́ŋɔ́ bə́ á á ndzə́ à-jùhə
CL2-child with CL2-child SM PR AUG eat CL3-banana
"Babies and children eat banana."

c. ìsíŋə à vè jí ínə́ mvínə́ŋ
CL7-cat P0 come Rel PR be black
"The cat that came is black."

d. bə-kúú á í-nɛ́n bí bə́ nə́ í- j- áá
CL8- hen he P2 see Rel SM PR be AUG-AP-my
"The fowl he saw are mine"

What is evident in these data is the multiform appearance of the subject. It can appear as an item, a phrase or a clause. This is respectively evident in (46a), (46b) and (46c) among other examples.

The subject of a sentence can also be a complex subject (NP). Complex subjects are those which are made up of a coordinated phrase i.e. two entities or two distinct subjects. They are linked by the coordinator *nə́*. Generally, in complex subjects, the verb agrees with both subjects. They are not characterised by a semantic agreement pattern. Be the subjects human or not, the subject marker is *bə́* in case of complex subjects. Following is an illustration of complex subjects.

(47)

a. ø-mbə́ nə ø-tók bə́ á á kpɔ̀
CL3-pot with CL5-spon SM PR AUG fall
"The pot and the spoon fall."

b. ìsíŋə nə ø-mbjə́ bə́ nə́ á ø-ɲé
CL7-cat with CL7-dog SM PR be with CL3-house
"The cat and the dog are in the house."

We observe that in either example (47a) or (47b), the subject marker is identical, this indeed at the detriment of the noun classes of the substantives constituting the group.

Some constructions have a null subject in this language. In this case, the features of the subject are underspecified, and can be perceived through some constituents of the sentence such as the verb. In such a case, the sentence begins with the tense marker. This behaviour is peculiar to constructions with the third person singular pronoun (see 38).

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7.4.2. Object

In Bàmbələ, those verbs that are said to be transitive accept an object while intransitive verbs do not. Some transitive verbs accept only one object while others can accept two. Verbs belonging to the first category are called monotransitive verbs while those belonging to the second are termed ditransitive verbs. In the following examples, we firstly illustrate monotransitive verbs and thereafter ditransitive verbs.

(48)

a. bwán bə́ á á lèè à-lés
CL2-child SM PR AUG like CL5-rice
"Children like rice."

b. à á á bəɣì à-jùhə
he PRES AUG carry CL5-banana
"He carries the banana."

c. bə́ bə́ á á kə́k ì-ŋgə́ŋ
they SM PR AUG cut CL7-tree
"They cut the tree."

In the data above, the rightmost items function as object. In those cases, the verbs are monotransitive. In (49), the rightmost constituents are direct object (^{DOBJ}) while those in bold function as indirect object (^{IOBJ}), meaning that the verbs are ditransitive.

(49)

a. à à və́ **mə̀**^{IOBJ} nə̀ mə̀-jíí^{DOBJ}
he P1 give me with CL6-water
"He gave me water."

b. bòt bə́ á á kòjɔ̀ŋ **ɲə́**^{IOBJ} à-jùhə̀^{DOBJ}
CL2-people SM PR AUG buy him CL5-banana
"The people sell them banana."

Syntactically, indirect object (^{IOBJ}) occupies the immediate after verb position. The semantic role of object indirect is that of beneficiary. Adjunct is another syntactic function identified in the language.

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7.5. Adjuncts and adjunct clauses

An adjunct adds supplementary information to the initial sentence. It is considered as a non-obligatory or optional sentence constituent so does the adjunct clause. The section begins with the discussion of adjuncts and then follows the analysis of adjunct clauses or adverbial clauses.

7.5.1. Adjuncts

In Bəmbələ, we identified the following main types of adjuncts: adjunct of place, adjunct of time, of comparison, and of cause to name just the most common. The constituents functioning as adjuncts will be presented in italics in the illustrations. The function of adjunct is the property of prepositional phrase.

7.5.1.1. Adjunct of place

Adjunct of place indicates where an action takes place or has taken place. Place adverb is generally expressed by the locative *á* whose meaning depends on the context. The following data focus on this type of adjunct.

(50)

a. à à jòŋ nsìŋə *á* *Məŋgè*
he P1 carry train PREP Məŋgè
"He took the train at Məŋgè."

c. à á á jàháŋ á *Bìbɛ̀*
he PR AUG remain in Bibey
"He lives in Bibey."

d. À ì kə á Kəŋləŋ
He F1go to Kəŋləŋ
"He shall go to Kəŋləŋ."

In the preceding examples, the constituents in italics function as adjuncts of place.

7.5.1.2. Adjunct of time

Adjuncts of time indicate the period of an action, when an action takes place or is taking place. This adjunct is expressed through a constituent that indicates time. In fact, this constituent is an adverb or an adverbial phrase. Adverbs and adverbial phrases of time include: nàkɛ́ɛ́

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"tomorrow", ájân "yesterday", nzén "today", *ndzìp "early", ŋgùmə́ àwòlə "for an hour", ɲè á vè "next day" etc.* The data that follow help us to capture the phenomenon.

(51)

a. Nàŋ à mánə́ ànùŋ *ŋgùmə́ àwòlə.*
Nàŋ walked for CL5-hour
"Nàŋ walked for an hour."

b. à à váŋì *ndʒìp kékéé* .
he P0 come early morning
"He comes early in the morning."

We observe that *ŋgùmə́ àwòlə* and *ndʒìp kɛ́kɛ́ɛ́* refer to time. They appear at sentence final position.

7.5.1.3. Adjunct of comparison

The adjunct of comparison gives room to the establishment of comparison, of a close relationship of resemblance between two items. The notion of comparison is introduced by *ánə́*. This morpheme appears immediately before the constituent on which is based the comparison.

(52)

a. í lòt á*nə́* *à-kút*
P2 drive like CL5-mad
"He drove like a mad man."

b. Ndòŋ à sə́ á nùŋ *ánə́* *Pàrà*
Ndòŋ SM PROG PR walk like priest
"Ndòŋ walked like a priest."

The idea of comparison is introduced by the copula *ánə́*. In (52b) for instance, the way Nàŋ walks is compared to that of a priest *pàrà*.

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7.5.1.4. Adjunct of cause

The adjunct of cause indicates the origin of a fact, of an event. In fact, it shows what causes something to happen. The adjunct of cause is introduced by *ámú*, which occurs between the two clauses of the construction. The examples that follow shed light on this type of adjunct.

(53)

a. À tə́ í láŋ j-ɔ̂m mpɔ́k *ámú* *à ásí* *ntəɣə́ŋ*
he NEG P0 speak CL7 thing other because he ground soft
"He did not speak because he was tired."

b. à sə́ à nɔ̀ɛ̀ *ámú à à ndzə́ à-lés*
he PROG he laugh because he P0 eat CL5-rice
"He laughed because he ate rice."

This adjunct, like others, occurs at the left of the verb.

7.5.1.5. Adjunct of consequence

The adjunct of consequence shows the result, the consequence of the action indicated in the main clause. It is ordinarily introduced in Bəmbələ by *ádàŋ*. This marker appears in subordinate clause initial position. The following illustrate this type of clause. It is worth pointing out that this word is different from the verb *ádàŋ* which means "to cross."

(54)

a. ádàŋ ánɔ̀ ŋgə mə tə́ áŋgɔ́k áváŋì.
sothat rains if I NEG be able to come
"It rains so that I cannot (I am not able) to come."

b. ádàŋ á á ndzə́ à tàɣá nə̀ àpólə̀ mənùŋ.
So that PR AUG eat he NEG PREP health walk
"He eats so that he is no more able to work."

c. ìdùŋ ínə́ ndàɣáŋ dzə́ mbéé ù tàɣá ŋgɔ́k ánɔ́k.
noise be PP that bad SM NEG able hear
"The noise becomes so intense that we cannot hear anything."

We observe that *ádàŋ* is a verb per se because it undergoes flexion. In (54c) for instance, it is in the past participle form after the copula verb *ínə́*. This observation leads us to posit at least

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two semantic values to this word in the language: it carries the semantic features of the conjunction and that of the verb, meaning “to cross”. The meaning thereto attached depends on the context.

7.5.2. The adjunct clauses

In this subsection, we discuss the different characteristics of adjunct or adverbial clauses in Bəmbələ in general before tackling the analysis of each adverbial clause type. The adjunct clauses or adverbial clauses are group of words that function as a unit in that it has it own subject-verb combination. In general, an adverbial clause has a subordinator. Another characteristic of the adjunct clause is that it may not stand as a complete sentence.

Diessel (2001) stipulates that there are two major crosslinguistic patterns of adverbial clauses: either a language uses adverbial clauses both before and after the main clause, or the adverbial clause usually precedes the main clause. Bəmbələ adjunct clauses belong to the firstly mentioned pattern. The use of adverbial clauses after the main clause is not rigid: if a language uses adverbial clauses in final positions, it also makes common use of adverbial clause before the main clause. In this case, the position of the adverbial clause varies with its meaning or function. It is observable that in this language, conditional clauses usually precede the main clause, while other adverbial clauses might follow it. In general, in adverbial clauses, the adverbial subordinator indicates the semantic relationship between main and adverbial clauses.

There is no room to confusion between adverbial clauses and relative clauses. What is true is that both of them are adjuncts that can be omitted. However, while the adverbial clause modifies an associated main clause or verb phrase, relative clauses are modifiers of the noun or noun phrase (Keenan op cit). Furthermore, while adverbial clauses are marked by an adverbial subordinator, relative clauses are marked by a relative pronoun, coreferential with the head noun in Bəmbələ i.e the noun that they modify.

As far as the order of distribution of adverbial clauses is concerned, Diessel (op cit) holds that “*languages differ in how they arrange main clause and adverbial clause*.” He further points out that six distribution classes of adverbial clauses can be distinguished, namely:

- Rigid ADV-S/VP languages: adverbial clauses (almost) always precedes the main clause;

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- Non Rigid ADV-S/VP languages: adverbial clauses usually precede the main clause, but also readily occur in sentence final position;
- Flexible ADV-S/VP + S/VP-ADV languages: adverbial clauses commonly precede and follow the main clause;
- Mixed ADV-S/VP + S/VP-ADV languages: adverbial clauses occur both before and after the main clause; while specific semantic types of adverbial clauses always precede or always follow the main clause;
- Non-Rigid S/VP-ADV languages: adverbial clauses usually follow the main clause but also readily occur in sentence initial position;
- Rigid S/VP-ADV languages, languages in which adverbial clauses (almost) always follow the main clause.

Bàmbələ falls within the fourth category. In this language, the conditional clause is always pre-posed to the main clause while others are post-posed to. In general, as noted by Diessel, the conditional clauses occur in sentence initial position in mixed ADV-VP/ + VP-ADV languages.

In the subsequent lines, we shall analyse the commonly known adverbial clauses: time clause, reason clause, conditional clause and manner clause.

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7.5.2.1. The conditional clause

As mentioned above, the conditional clause in Bàmbələ precedes the main clause. In the preceding chapter, while addressing mood, we discussed the different conditional mood types in this language. Therefore, I shall not extend on here. The conditional clauses can be marked by kà, tòɣò, or the discontinuous morpheme ŋgà …ŋgà according to the conditional clause type. All the morphemes occur in sentence initial position. In the case of the discontinuous morpheme, each of the components occurs in the initial position of both clauses. Following is an example illustrating the conditional clause.

(55)

a. Kà à á á vè láŋ mà.
if SM PR AUG come tell me
"If he comes, tell me."

b. ŋgə̀ Mbàŋ nə́ mɔ́ní, à ì kòjì mə́twə́
if Mbàŋ PREP money he F1 buy car
" If Mbàŋ has money, he will buy a car."

c. tɔ̀ɣɔ̀ à á á dép mɔ́, mə̀ ì nɔ́k mì-ntàk
if he PR AUG beat me, I F0-hear CL4-joy
"Even if he slaps me, I will be happy."

It is noticeable in (55) that as earlier mentioned, the conditional clause occurs sentence initially. As discussed in the preceding chapter, each conditional clause type depends on the degree of "realizability" of the action it expresses.

7.5.2.2. The adverbial clause of time

This type of adverbial clause produces a time reference for the action of the independent clause. Time adverbial clause is introduced in Bəmbələ by *áwòlɔ́*, which seems to be a borrowing from English "hour", and which has not to be confused with àwòlə̀ "hour", also seemingly borrowed from English. Temporal clauses can occur either before or after the main clause. The following exemplify the use of conditional clauses in this language.

(56)

a. áwòlɔ́ í bòk ì-kájáŋ á pɛ́, í nɛ́n ø-ɲɔ́.
when P1 break CL7-pineapple in bush P1 see CL3-snake
"When he broke the pineapple in he bush, he saw a snake."

b. Nàŋ ì ndzə́ ì-kés mbòŋ áwólɔ́ ø-sáŋ wén ì nùŋ.
Nàŋ F0 eat CL7-fufu cassava when CL1-father F0 walk
"Nàŋ will eat fufu when his father will be walking."

The subordinator indicating time adverbial clause always occurs at the beginning of the adverbial subordinate clause.

7.5.2.3. Manner adverbial clause

The manner adverbial clause usually modifies the meaning of the verb of the main clause by showing how the action its expresses is accomplished. In Bəmbələ, the adverbial clause of

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manner has as subordinator *táŋnə̀* "as". It occurs at the beginning of the subordinate clause. The following example illustrates the use of manner clause.

(57)

a. í nám à-jùhə̀ táŋnə̀ ø-ɲáŋ wén í lírì ɲə́
F0 cook CL3-banana as CL1-mother her F0 show her
"She cooked the banana as her mother showed her."

b. ì bɔ̀ŋ táŋnə̀ ø-mbwàn í láŋ nə̀ ɲə́
F0 do as CL3-chief P2 tell with him
"He will do as the chief told him."

In lines with what we said above, the manner adverbial clause qualifies or modifies the verb of the main clause. In (57a) for instance, *táŋnə̀ ɲáŋ wén í lírì ɲə́* adds manner in the sentence. This adverbial clause qualifies or modifies the verb *nám* by indicating how she cooked the banana.

7.5.2.4. The adverbial clause of reason

The most common subordinator of adverbial clause of reason is *ádàŋ* "because" which is a full verb, but which functions here as a subordinator. This subordinator also occurs in the initial position in the subordinate clause. Following is an illustration of the use of the adverbial clause of reason.

(58)

a. mə̀ tə̀ í vè ádàŋ júhə̀ í nɔ́ mbùjáŋ
he NEG P2 come because P2 rain F0 fall much
"I did not come because it rained too much."

b. à sə́ á lɛ̀ɛ̀ ádàŋ ø-sáŋ wén í kə́
he PROG PR cry because CL1-father his P0 go
" He is crying because his father left."

The subordinate clause of reason explains why the action expressed by the verb of the simple clause takes / took place or why it does/did not.

It is worth noting that in Bəmbələ, in general, except in the case of the discontinuous morpheme of one of the conditionals, the adverbial subordinator occurs in the subordinate clause initial position.

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7.6. Predicative function

The predicative function deals with those nouns that function as predicate after state verbs. In Bàmbəlà, we have identified two forms: the copulative and the presentative.

7.6.1. The presentative form

The presentative form of the predicative function is preceded by the copula verb *ínə́* "it is" which functions like a presentative in the syntax. We exemplify this form in (59).

(59)

a. ínə́ ɲɔ́
COP snake
"It is a snake."

b. ínə́ mə̀
COP I
"It is I"

d. ínə́ bwán
COP children
"It is the children."

c. ínə́ mbwàn
COP chief
"It is the chief."

Whatever the number of the noun (singular or plural), the presentative does not undergo morphological change. This is observable in the case of *bwán* in (59c) where the presentative does not change. Syntactically, the noun that functions as such comes after the copula verb.

7.6.2. The copulative form

The copulative form falls within a sentence whose complement (noun) is subject predicate. In the examples that follow, the noun or noun phrase functioning as predicate is in italics.

(60)

a. Nàŋ ànə̀ *ɲɛ́klì*
Nàŋ COP teacher
"Nàŋ is a teacher."

b. mbʲə́ ínə́ *súmàn*
dog COP hunter
"The dog is a hunter."

c. Kpáp ànə̀ *mbwàn bətít*
Lion COP king animals
"The lion is the king of animals."

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From a syntactic point of view, a noun in predicative function follows the copula verb. This noun can also accept expansions. It is the case in (60c) where *mbwàn ´bɔ́tít* is actually an associative construction.

7.7. Sentence modality in Bàmbələ

As pointed out by Bybee et. al. (1994), traditionally, the study of modality distinguishes between verbal modality (which deals with the modal verb and the mood of verbs) and sentence modality (which deals with sentence types such as declarative (statement), imperative (command), interrogative (question) etc ;). In this section of the study, we shall focus on sentence modality.

We often discriminate between simple and complex sentences. This is not going to be our concern in this subsection. Here, we refer to those grammatical structures that are routinely assigned information and that make assertions about the world. We distinguish the following types of sentences: declarative, imperative, interrogative and exclamative. These types of sentences are called obligatory modality of sentences. The following discussion begins with the analysis of declaratives, and then follows the imperative statement, the interrogative and exclamative sentences.

7.7.1. Declaratives

Syntacticians agree on that declaratives tend to be the most neutral of all sentence types. Morphologically, they do not require special forms or changes, or are not really affected and tend to have the fewest restrictions on what verbal categories can be used. This explains why it serves as the basis for generalisation and transformation for other sentence types. The examples that follow illustrate declarative sentences.

(61)

a. Kɔ́l ínə́ tít.
snail be animal
" The snail is an animal."

b. Bɔ́ŋɔ́ bə́ áléé ndámà á nsəŋ.
child SM play football in courtyard
"The children play football in the courtyard."

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c. Nàŋ ì kà á àbàŋ nàkɛ́kɛ́ɛ́.
Nàŋ F0 go to farm tomorrow
"Nàŋ shall go to the farm tomorrow."

The intonation of declarative sentences is usually relatively level. In fact, this intonation can rise or fall according to the state of the mind of the speaker whose goal is just to communicate information to a hearer. The information could take the form of doubt, or conviction through specific markers.

Most often, the indicative mood is used in such sentences because it captures the time by expressing a precise chronology as indicated in the data below.

(62)

a. Ndòŋ ì kà á ndàt kɛ́kɛ́ɛ́ ndʒìp.
Ndòŋ F0 go to market morning early
"Ndòŋ shall go to the market early in the morning."

b. mbwàn à á á lɛ́ɛ́ kpáp tít.
Chief SM PR AUG like lion animal
"The chief likes lion's meat."

The data indicates as specificity, limited and delimited period within which an action has occurred or took place. In (62a) for instance, the period during which *Ndòŋ* will accomplish his action is clear-cut through the use of the time adverbial *kɛ́kɛ́ɛ́ ndʒìp*.

Declaratives are the basic sentence types from which we can obtain transformations.

7.7.2. Imperatives

The most common way to indicate imperative sentences is to "employ entirely affixless verbal base" (Saddock & Zwicky 1985:172). In the formation of imperative sentences, tense and aspect are often omitted. They are usually mainly characterised by their restriction to main clauses. In Bəmbələ, the imperative is reduced to three grammatical persons as observed below.

(63)

a. vɔ́ m ə nə kpɔ́
give me with salt
"Give me salt! "

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b. ndzə̀ àjùhə̀
eat banana
"Eat banana!"

The imperative is a pragmatic modality because it requires or provokes a reaction from the interlocutor. Therefore, an imperative sentence constitutes a speech act that intends to achieve the evoked act. From a morphological and internal point of view, an imperative sentence has a proper mood with simple and complex forms as presented below.

(64)

a. lə́ŋ ɲə́ !
love him
"Love him!"

c. sáɣáŋ !
dance
"dance!"

In the cases presented above, the imperative sentence ends with an exclamation mark. From the suprasegmental viewpoint, imperative sentences have a falling melody.

7.7.3. Interrogatives

Interrogative sentences help to enquire about a piece of information from an interlocutor. According to Whaley (op. cit.), languages differ between two types of interrogatives, namely polar or yes/no question and content questions. In addition to these types, we can also add confirmation questions and alternative questions. We shall adopt this model of distinction in analysing this sentence type in Bə̀mbələ̀.

7.7.3.1. Polar interrogatives

Whaley (op. cit) says that "polar questions, are those that are framed in such as way as to make "yes" or "no" the minimally expected answer". From a morphosyntactic point of view, yes/no questions are similar to declarative sentences except that it has a question marker an a rising intonation at its final position. This is also characteristic of Bə̀mbələ̀ polar questions. Let us consider the following:

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(65)

a. à kə̀ ɛ̌ ?
he go INT
"Does he go?"

b. à tə̀ ándzə́ ɛ̌?
he NEG eat INT
"Don't he eat?"

c. Bɔ́ bə́ áséɛ́ á àbə̀ŋ ɛ̌ ?
They SM work PREP farm INT
"Do they work in the farm?"

When we look at the examples in (65), we notice that the answer could either be *íín* "yes" or *âjí* "no". Yes / no question use a rising intonation in sentence final position in Bəmbələ̀, notably with the mid-low front vowel that carries the rising tone. The conventional use of yes /no questions is for a variety of communication purposes. It is used to determine the true value of a given proposition. This is not true of content questions with *dzə́* and *kà*.

7.7.3.2. Content questions

In content questions, particular pieces of information are requested rather than the truth value of a proposition. They always involve a question word or expression as we observe in the illustrations below.

(66)

a. dzə́ á nùŋ á pɛ́
who PR walk PREP forest
"Who walks in the forest?"

b. wə̀ á lɛ̀ɛ̀ kà
you PR want why
"Why do you cry?"

Normally, this type of interrogation focuses on one of the sentence constituents (NP, VP, (PP)). Let us look at the following:

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(67)

a. bwán bənə́ *kà* ?
child are what
"How are the children?"

b. ø-ɲáŋ wén ànə̀ *ávé?*
mother your be where
"Where is your mother?"

c. à á kə̀ á ndàt nə̀ *bəndzə́*
he PR go to market with who
"Whom with does he go to the market?"

d. à ì və̀ *ándʒíí* ?
he F0 come when
"When will he come?"

In content questions, the type of information desired on the part of the speaker is indicated through question words (in italics) as observed in (67). We can also distinguish multiple interrogatives in this language. In fact, this is a type of question in which more question words are used as illustrated in (68).

(68)

a. *dzə́* á bɔ́ŋ *èkí* nə̀ *bəndzə́* ?
Who PR do what with who
"Who did what with whom?"

b. *èkí* yâ á kpɔ̀ *ávé* ?
What FOC PR fall Where?
"What falls where?"

In the preceding data, the multiple interrogators are italicized. Most often, in Bəmbələ, question words appear either word finally or word initially. In fact, in this language, question words usually appear in sentence final position.

There are four main question words in Bəmbələ among which the interrogative pronoun used in the formation of content questions, that is, questions requiring the identity of a person, place or object.

Except the interrogator *dzə́* that also functions as a noun because it accepts a class prefix marker, Bəmbələ question words do not accept agreement. In fact, *dzə́* carries along a human

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semantic feature. This might justifies why it also functions as CL1 nouns. The following illustrate all the interrogative pronouns.

(69)

f. dzə́ á jó?
INT PR say
"Who speaks?"

g. wə ajó kà?
you talk/say what
"What do you say?"

h. wə á jó kà?
you PR talk what
"What are you talking about?"

i. bəŋə́ŋ á váŋáŋ ávé?
you PR come what
"Where do you come from?"

j. bó bə́ á sɛ́ɛ́ nə bə-dzə́?
they CL2 PR work PREP AP what
"Whom with do they work?

f. bə-dzə́ bə́ á vè?
AP INT SM PR come
"Who (are those who) came?"

When we look at the example in (69f), we realise that the interrogator functions exactly like class 2 substantives, provoking agreement on the verb. This is evident from the presence of the subject marker closely related to class 2 nouns. The table that follows presents the question words in Bəmbələ.

Table 40: Question words in Bəmbələ

INT Pronouns	Gloss
dzə́ (cl1)	to whom, whom, who
bə-dzə́ (cl2)	to whom, whom, who, which
kà	what, why, how
kì, èkí	what, what of
ávé	where,
ándʒíí	when

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The English interrogators “what, why, how” are rendered in Bəmbələ by *kà.*

The Q-element, *dzə́* is used only for classes 1 and 2 substantives that have human features.

The interrogator *dzə́* occupies two main positions in Bəmbələ sentence. The issue worth addressing is to know the exact position of this question element in the syntax of the language. It occurs in sentence initial position and sentence final position. It occupies the initial position of the sentence when it means “who”, and function as a question element (69). In a multiple interrogative, it can appear in sentence final position.

Another important query to address here is whether dzə́ is a question element or a noun. In my humble opinion, we think that because it is used at the same time as a noun and as question marker, it plays a dual role in the language. It functions as question word in interrogative constructions (see illustrations above) and as noun when it occupies any other position and accepts agreement in class.

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7.7.3.3. Alternative questions

Alternative questions are formed in Bəmbələ with the conjunction *kɛ̀,* which usually occurs between the two propositions. Following is an illustration of alternative questions.

(70)

a. Mbàŋ ì vè kɛ̀ ì-pón?
Mbàŋ F0 come or F0 run
“Will Mbàŋ come or will he run?”

b. í və́ ɲə́ nə àkàbà kɛ̀ í və́ nə àjùhə?
P2 give him with CL5-cocoyam CONJ F0 give with CL5-banana
“Did s/he give him cocoyam or did s/he give him banana?

Alternative questions occur in constructions where at least two clauses interact.

7.7.3.4. Confirmation questions

The confirmation question is one in which the speaker expects a "yes" from the hearer. This type of question is obtained by making an ordinary declarative statement to which we attach a question tag marker. A confirmation question is marked in Bəmbələ by *ŋgâ,* meaning literally "Is it not so?". Following is an illustration of confirmation questions.

(71)

a. wə á ndzə́ àjùhə, ŋgâ?
You PR eat CL5-banana, is it not so
"You eat banana, don't you?"

b. Àkàk ì kə́k ìŋgə́ŋ, ŋgâ?
Àkàk P2-cut CL7-tree, is it not so
"Àkàk cut the tree, didn't he?"

In the statements above, the speaker forces the hearer to provide a "yes" answer ***íín.*** Usually, according to the context, a "no" answer is not expected.

On the other hand, in general, when the question directly echoes or takes up a given portion of the declarative sentence uttered before, it is called "echoe question". The following illustrate this type of question (b and d) built from the declarative constructions (a & c).

(72)

a. Mə alèɛ̀ ŋkón.
I like ŋkón
"I like ŋkón (local food)"

b. ŋkón?
"ŋkón?"

c. Və mə nə àyùhə.
IMP me with banana
"Give me banana"

d. àyùhə?
"banana?"

In (72), the questions in (c & d) respectively echo the words they are referred to, and which are mentioned in the previous declarative utterances. In the example above, it is noticeable that the "echoed words" function as direct object.

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7.7.4. Exclamatives

In an exclamative sentence, the speaker expresses his viewpoint or his feelings. From a pragmatic perspective, this modality of sentence expresses the affective reaction of the speaker towards the targeted referent. These reactions are of different kinds and could express attitude such as surprise, happiness, sadness, admiration or indignation among others. An exclamation mark with a rising melody indicates exclamation sentences. This melody allows the transformation of a declarative sentence with an emphatic accent. This argument is attested as such in (73) below.

(73)

a. Nàŋ sə́ á vè!
Nàŋ PROG PR come
"Nàŋ is coming!"

b. dzə́ à sáɣáŋ!
That he IMP dance
"That he dances!"

c. Mbàŋ í kə̀!
Mbàŋ P2 go
"Mbàŋ had gone!"

Most often, the difference between declaratives and some exclamative statements is found at the level of intonation. This is evident in the examples presented in (73).

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7.8. Topic and focus in Bəmbələ

In this sub-section of the analysis, I tackle topic and focus in Bəmbələ. Topic and focus are two distinct syntactic processes that are in relationship with semantics and discourse analysis. They fall within the domain of prominence in discourse studies. These two processes help to emphasise a fact. Emphasis could be laid on an element of a proposition or sentence. In fact, prominence could be on new information (focalisation) or well-known information (topicalization).

7.8.1. Topic in Bəmbələ

Lambrecht (1994) points out that the topic of a sentence is "the thing which the proposition expressed by the sentence is about". Gundel (1988:210) holds that "An Entity E is the topic of a sentence iff in using S, the speaker intends to increase the addressee's knowledge about, request about, request information about, or otherwise get the addressee to act with respect to E". As for Tony (2003), topicalisation is the marking of an element as the background to something that follows and which the speaker wishes by this process to highlight. From these different definitions, I notice that topicalised constituents, like definite ones, are usually known or inferable by the interlocutor(s) and are thus normally definite.

Most often, grammatical subjects and topic coincide but topics are not always necessarily grammatical subjects and grammatical subjects are not necessarily topics. When the topic and the subject coincide, they give room to what is called "inherent topic". The examples in (74) illustrate inherent topic.

(74)

a. máŋá à á á ndzə́ mə-kàbà
CL1-child SM PR AUG eat CL6-cocoyam
"The children eat cocoyam."

b. Bwán bə́ á á nùŋ á pɛ́
CL1-child PR AUG walk in forest
"The children walk in the forest."

In the examples above, *máŋá* and *bwán* are at the same time subject and topic. When they function as topic, they are characterised by a rising intonation with a slight pause immediately after the topicalised constituent.

When the topic is different from the subject, topicalisation is marked by a locative. This locative plays the role of shifter from a pragmatic point of view. This type of topicalisation is obtained in Bəmbələ by transposing to the sentence head the topicalised constituent. Following is an illustration of this point.

(75)

a. Bwán bə́ á á léé ø-ndámà və́nə́
CL2-child SM PR AUG football here
"The children play football here."

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a'. **Vɔ́nɔ́**, bwán bɔ́ á á léé ndàmà
TOP CL2-child SM PR AUG play football
"Here, the children play football."

b. Nàŋ à á á kòjɔ̀ŋ nìdúmə̀ vílí
Nàŋ SM PR AUG sell cassava there
"Nàŋ sells cassava there."

b'. **Vílí**, Nàŋ à á á kòjɔ̀ŋ nìdúmə̀ .
TOP Nàŋ SM PR AUG buy cassava
"There, Nàŋ sells cassava."

In (75a'& b') topicalised sentences from (75a & b), *vɔ́nɔ́* and *vílí* are respectively the marked topic. When they are taken from the sentence final position to the sentence initial position, they are topicalised. So also, the marked topic here requires a rising intonation and a perceptible pause immediately after it.

7.8.2. Focus constructions in Bàmbələ̀

According to Mutaka and Tamanji (2000), "a focus construction is one in which the speaker brings some information(new) into communicative prominence *[…]* i.e by manipulating the constituents of the utterance in such a way as to bring the listener to focus attention on the constituent bearing the special information".

For Gundel (1988), "a focus structure is the conventional association of a focus, meaning with a sentence form". Lambrecht (2000) on his part holds that "focus is semantic component of a pragmatically structured proposition whereby the assertion differs from the presupposition". The different definitions show that a focus construction is the conventional association of a focus meaning with a sentence form.

Gundel (1988:222) distinguishes two types of focus, namely predicate focus structure and sentence focus predicate that she said are universally the marked types that coincide with the traditionally recognised "topic-comment" organisation of information in a sentence. Lambrecht (op.cit) on his part distinguishes three types of focus namely predicate focus structure which is the unmarked subject – predicate (subject is in presupposition), argument focus; here, focus identifies the missing argument in a presupposed open proposition and sentence focus which is an event-reporting on presentational sentence type in which the focus extends over both the VP,

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the NP or the PP. As for Mutaka & Tamanji (op cit), with focus on African languages, mainly Bantu languages, they distinguish two types of focus namely contrastive and assertive focus. They argue that in contrastive focus, the intention of the speaker is to provide information, which is contrary to the one known by the listener; or to bring a constituent into sharp contrast with all other members of a group to which it belongs. In assertive focus, the intention is to reinforce a known fact or to affirm an assertion. We shall mostly base my analysis of focus on Mutaka & Tamanji (op cit).

Bàmbələ makes use of a set of strategies to mark focus. Among these methods, the most prominent are pronouns, cleft constructions and use of special particles.

7.8.2.1. Pronouns

In Bàmbələ, a number of personal pronouns tend to be used when the subject of the clause does not have the same reference as the subject of a previously stated / implied clause to mark focus. These special contrastive pronouns are already analysed in the previous chapter of this work as contrastive pronouns. From a syntactic viewpoint, this contrastive focus pronoun is used as the subject of the sentence. It occupies the initial position in the sentence. In general, this type of pronoun occurs in a construction where it is immediately followed by an identical personal pronoun. The presence of this second personal pronoun gives the nature of focus to the first one. Following is an example illustrating contrastive focus pronouns.

(76)

a. mə mə á ndzə́
FOC I PR eat
"me, I meat."

b. wə wə á nɔ́k ɲìjə́ŋ
FOC you PR hear good
"You, you are happy."

c. ɲə́ à tə á lə̀ŋ ɲé
FOC SM NEG PR build house
"Him, he does not build the house."

In the language under study, the predicate may also be preceded by a personal pronoun. This pronoun also occupies the subject position and is followed by the particle *kì*. The pronoun,

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together with the particle were analysed far above as emphatic pronouns. Again, in this case, it (the pronoun) is followed by another personal pronoun as the following example demonstrates.

(77)

a. màkì mə á kə́k ìŋgə́ŋ
FOC I PRES cut CL7-tree
"Me too, I cut the tree."

b. ɲə́kì à tə á làŋ ŋkón
FOC SM NEG PR like ŋkón
"Him too, he does not like ŋkón."

The association of the particle *kì* to the subject pronoun to mark focus renders the pronoun more contrastive than the previously examined one.

7.8.2.2. Cleft focus

A further strategy employed to mark focus in Bəmbələ is the cleft construction. In general, the cleft construction occurs in sentence initial position, followed by the focused constituent. The sentence from which the focused constituent is extracted then follows. This sentence is introduced by the complementizer *dzə́.* Following is an example illustrating subject focus.

(78)

a. í nə́ Ndéŋgè dzə́ ì kə á ø-ndàt
It is Ndéŋgè COMPL F2-go to CL3-market
"It is Ndéŋgè that will go to the market."

b. í nə́ ì-ŋgə́ŋ dzə́ à kpɔ̀ á ø- nzè
it is CL7-tree that P1- fall on CL3-path
"It is the tree that fell on the foot path."

Generally, in a sentence, the subject, the object and even the adjunct can be focused. In other words, the NP and the PP are the *focalisable* constituents in a sentence, notably when cleft focus is concerned. Let us look at the following:

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(79) Nàŋ ìkə́ á àbə̀ŋ kɛ́kɛ́ɛ́ ndʒìp

a. í nə́ Nàŋ dzə́ ì kə́ á à-bə̀ŋ kɛ́kɛ́ɛ́ ndʒìp
It is Nàŋ COMPL F1-go to CL5-farm morning early
"It is Nàŋ who will go to the farm early in the morning."

b. í nə́ à-bə̀ŋ dzə́ Nàŋ ì kə́ kɛ́kɛ́ɛ́ ndʒìp
it is CL5-farm that Nàŋ F1-go morning early
"It to the farm that Nàŋ will go early in the morning."

c. Í nə́ kɛ́kɛ́ɛ́ ndʒìp dzə́ Nàŋ ì kə́ á àbə̀ŋ
it is morning early that Nàŋ F1-go to CL5-farm
"It is early in the morning that Nàŋ will go to the farm."

From the preceding example, we observe that any of the sentence constituents, be it NP or PP, can be focused. In any of the cases, the focused particle occurs immediately after the copula or the cleft construction *í nə́*. In (79a), the subject NP is focused. In (79b), the focused element is the adjunct of place *àbə̀ŋ* whereas in (79c), the adjunct of time *kɛ́kɛ́ɛ́ ndʒìp* is the focused constituent.

With transitive verbs, the object can also be focused. This is illustrated in the following example:

(80) Nàŋ í və́ mán nə̀ ø-tók

a. í nə́ mán dzə́ Nàŋ ì və́ nə̀ ø- tók.
It is CL1-child that Nàŋ F1-give with CL5-spoon
"It is to the child that Nàŋ will give the spoon."

b. í nə́ ø-tók dzə́ Nàŋ ì və́ nə̀ mán
it is CL5-spoon that Nàŋ F1-give with CL1-child
"It is the spoon that Nàŋ will give to the child."

We observe that in (80a & b), the respective objects, namely *ø-tók* and *mán* are focused. As we earlier mentioned, the complementizer *dzə́* always follows the focused constituent. Another point worth mentioning at this level is that in addition to NPs and PPs, verbs can be focused via clefting. Here, the verb occurs in the nominalised form while a copy of the basic form remains in its original position. The following illustrates the point.

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(81)

a. ínɔ́ ì-nùŋ dzɔ́ ì nùŋ
It is CL7-walk that F1-walk
"It is walking that he will walk."

b. í nɔ́ mə̀-ndzɔ́ dzɔ́ bɔ́ ì-ndzɔ́
It is CL6-eat CONP they F1-eat
"It is eating (food in good and nice quality) that they will eat."

Nominalised verbs in Bəmbələ take a noun prefix, but keep the same stem. In the example in (81a), we notice that it is also possible to confuse the class prefix with the tense marker. What makes the distinction between the two in this particular context is their syntactic position, then their semantic contribution to the grammaticality of the sentence. Cleft constructions are very common in Bəmbələ. Therefore, it is frequent in everyday communication.

7.8.2.3. Special particles

There are two distinct special particles used to encode focus in Bəmbələ, namely *wâ /jâ* and *jɔ̀/zɔ̀*. *Wâ / jâ* are used to focus subjects while *zɔ̀ / jɔ̀* are used to focus complements (adjuncts).

In the first mentioned case, the focus particle, which agrees in class with the subject NP, occurs in the immediate right position of the focused subject. In the second case, it (focus particle) occurs in the immediate right of the verb. The following illustrates the use of special particlse to mark focus in Bəmbələ.

(82)

a. ø-mbwàn wâ á vè
CL3-chief FOC PR come
"The chief (and not somebody else) comes."

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b. ø-kpáp jâ á vójɔ̀ŋ
CL7-lion FOC PR rest
"The lion (and not any other animal) rests."

c. ø-ɲáŋ wén ì nám jɔ̀ nə̀ ø- ŋkón
CL1-mother his F1-cook FOC with CL3- ŋkón
"His mother will cook it (the yam and not any kind of tuber) with ŋkón."

d. à- sə́ŋ zâ à kpɔ̀ á í-ŋgə́ŋ.
CL5-squirrel FOC P0 fall on CL7-tree
"The squirrel (and not any other) has fallen on the tree."

Generally, for human subjects, the occurrence of the focus particle assimilates the subject marker that becomes in fact invisible (82a). With the special particles, the focus particles occur immediately after the subject, the focused element. In case focus is not an object, the focus particle appears immediately after the verb.

In (82d), the focus particle agrees in class with the subject NP. It takes the class 5 agreement marker.

7.9. Semantic roles in Bəmbələ

The study of semantic roles falls within what structural grammarians call case grammar. In fact, this aspect of grammar can have different names. Whether it is called case grammar, semantic case, semantic roles, thematic role, theta role or deep case, it refers to the same reality. As Longacre (1983) points out, there will never be a uniform inventory of cases among linguists. Theoretically, over twenty possible cases are identified. Most linguists agree to retain only those cases that have surface structure indices in the language under study. This explains why the identification of semantic roles seems to differ from linguist to linguist although all of them trace out the real scientific structure related to this aspect of grammar to Fillmore (1968). The identification process in this study is based on Longacre (op cit) who recognises ten main cases or semantic roles, namely Agent (Ag), Patient (Pt), Experiencer (Exp), Range (Rg), Measure (M), Instrument (Ins), Locative (Loc), Source (S), Global (Gl) and Path (Pth). Other linguists have added two frequent cases, Item (It) and Description (Desc).

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Linguists point out the overlapping of some semantic roles while some include others. Therefore, for some of them, there is no distinction between Agent and Experiencer; the difference among Agent, Experiencer and Item is not obvious. For most linguists, Locative include Source, Goal and Path while in several languages, it is difficult to distinguish between Range and Measure.

In this work, we are going to analyse eight cases or semantic roles (also called thematic roles) because they are indispensable for the syntactic description of the basic sentences likely to occur in derived or extended sentences not necessarily studied here. The eight basic semantic roles are Agent (Ag), Patient (Pt), Experiencer (Exp), Locative Beneficiary(Loc), Beneficiary Recipient (Ben), Measure Evaluation (M), Item (It), Description (Desc). Fillmore (1968), points out an association between verbs and semantic roles. Therefore, the selection of a particular case or of particular cases depend(s) on whether the verb is intransitive (monadic), transitive (dyadic) or ditransitive (triadic).

7.9.1. Agent

An agent is an animate or an inanimate entity which /who is the investigator of a process or an action, and capable of acting with volition. Following is an illustration of agent.

(83)

a. mùt à á ákə́ á àbə̀ŋ.
CL1-Person SM go to farm
"The person goes to the farm."

b. máŋámŭm ì sák.
Boy F0 dance
"The boy will dance"

In the examples in (83a &b), the noun phrases *mùt* and *máŋámŭm* are agent of their respective actions.

7.9.2. Patient

A patient is an animate or inanimate entity which / who undergoes the effect of an action. This semantic role is illustrated by the example below.

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(84)

a. Ndòŋ à á kə́k íŋgéŋ.
Ndòŋ SM PR cut tree
"Ndòŋ cut the tree."

b. Mbàŋ à nə̀ á ɲé
Mbàŋ SM PR be in house
"Mbàŋ is in the house."

In (84), *ìŋgéŋ* and *ɲé* are the respective patients of the action undertaken by each doer.

7.9.3. Experiencer

An experiencer is an animate being which/ who initiates and undergoes an action; it is an entity which is aware of the action described by the predicate but which is not in control of the action or state. The following illustrate how it operates.

(85)

a. mùŋə́ à á nén ìsíŋə̀
woman SM PR see cat
"The woman looks at the cat."

b. bǒm bínə́ bə́ tə́ á lɛ̀ɛ̀ ìkés
men these SM NEG PR like fufu
"These men do not like fufu."

Mùŋə́ and *bǒm* are experiencers in the sentences above.

7.9.4. Locative beneficiary

Locative beneficiary is an entity, often inanimate but which is associated with the action or situation expressed by the verb as indicated below.

(86)

a. Mán à sə́ á kə̀ á sìkúlə̀
Child SM PROG PR go to school
"The boy is going to school."

b. ɲáŋ wén à nə̀ á ɲé
mother your SM be at house
" Your mother is at home."

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In (86), the prepositional phrases *á sìkúlə* and *á ɲé* introduce each one locative beneficiary in that they indicate a place to be or to go.

7.9.5. Beneficiary recipient

Beneficiary recipient is an animate entity towards which the action expressed by the verb is directed. This semantic role is illustrated in (87).

(87)

a. Àkàk à á və mán nə́ tók
Àkàk SM PR give child with spoon
"Àkàk gave a spoon to child"

b. à sə́ á ɲílə̀ŋ bwán bén
he PROG PR call child his
"He is calling his children"

The noun phrases *mán* in (87a) and *bwán* in (87b) are beneficiary recipients.

7.9.6. Measure

Measure is an inanimate entity that indicates the quantity, rate, evaluation expressed by the verb as illustrated in the examples below.

(88)

a. àjùhə́ ínə́ ǹtɛ̀t sínə̀ŋ
banana is hundred franc
"The banana costs one hundred franc."

b. à sə́ á sák Àsíkò
he PROG PR dance Àsíkò
"He dances àsíkò."

In the constructions above, *ntɛ̀t sínə̀ŋ* and *Àsíkò* express the semantic role of measure in (88a&b).

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7.9.7. Item and Description

Description portrays the state of an animate being, mostly human being. In the case of the verb to be "áná", the sentence is composed of two other elements: subject and non-verbal part of the predication or the complement. The subject entity is referred to as the item whereas the complement entity is referred to as the description. The following data aims at illustrating the point.

(89)

a. à ánə́ máŋá sìkúlə̀.
He is child school
"He is a pupil."

b. Bɔ́ bə́ nə́ bəsúrmàn
they be hunter
"They are hunters."

As earlier mentioned, the eight basic semantic roles analysed in the section above are Agent (Ag), Patient (Pt), Experiencer (Exp), Locative Beneficiary(Loc), Beneficiary Recipient (Ben), Measure Evaluation (M), Item (It), Description (Desc). These semantic roles are important in the analysis of the structure of the language.

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7.10. Conclusion

This chapter discussed the basic syntax of sentence constituents in Bəmbələ. The NP and the VP are considered the obligatory sentence constituents. The PP on its part, although considered an optional sentence constituent, can be obligatory at times, usually when it is directly attached to the VP. Each of these sentence constituents has an internal structure that we neatly described in the corresponding section. The relative clause was analysed under noun phrase because of its NP characteristics. Bəmbələ is an SVO language. This basic word order can exhibit internal expansions. Analysing sentence modality, we have described declaratives, imperatives, interrogatives and exclamatives. Interrogative statements included polar questions, content questions, alternative questions and confirmation question, each question type being characterised by specific features. Bəmbələ makes use of three main strategies to mark focus, namely pronoun, cleft construction and special particle. We further extended the analysis on semantic roles where eight cases or semantic roles were addressed. These semantic roles

interplay with grammar in that the selection of a particular role by a sentence depends on whether the verb is intransitive, monotransitive or ditransitive. The valency of the verb is therefore very important in determining semantic roles. Furthermore, each role is assigned to a word, which has a particular grammatical function in the sentence.

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CONCLUSION OF PART ONE

The study of the phonology has revealed that Bəmbələ possesses 15 vowel phonemes, 48 consonant phonemes and 4 tonemes. The 8 (eight) noun classes of the language are obtained based on the concord pattern provoked by the main noun on its modifiers. The modifiers agreement pattern therefore depends on the class of the noun they modify.

The verbal elements of the language are composed of tense, aspect, mood, the verb stem and its extensions. Bəmbələ verbs cannot take more than one extension. The analysis also showed that TAM markers cannot be taken as affixal elements for the mood marker occurs in the sentence initial position. Bəmbələ verbal system is built on the time axis of the past, the present and the future. Each time division, at the exception of the present, (with one tense), is made up of at least two tenses. The past has 4 tenses while the future possesses two. In each case, each tense is marked by a particular morpheme. In some cases, the tone is the distinctive element for the tense markers.

Bəmbələ is essentially and SVO language. This basic word order can accept some internal expansions. To mark focus, the language makes use of three techniques, namely pronoun cleft construction and special particle. In the language, semantic roles interplay with grammar because the selection of a particular role by a sentence depends on whether the verb is intransitive, monotransitive or ditransitive. Verbal valency therefore influences syntactic description.

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PART TWO

THE IMMERSION APPROACH, ORTHOGRAPHY DESIGN AND PEDAGOGIC GRAMMAR IN THE REVITALISATION OF BƆ̀MBƏLƆ̀

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INTRODUCTION

This second part of the thesis tackles the immersion approach in the revitalisation process of Bəmbələ. It comprises three chapters. The first chapter discusses the prerequisites for language standardisation. Here the criteria of the viability of Bəmbələ as a standardisable language are established. The alphabet and orthography of the language are designed. The second chapter talks about the immersion approach in the revitalisation of Bəmbələ with focus on the researcher and his diverse activities with the native speakers within the community. The third and last chapter, of the section addresses the elaboration of the pedagogical grammar of the language. In effect, this chapter traces out the procedures that underlie the elaboration of the pedagogical grammar attached to the work as an appendix and which could also be helpful for the elaboration of the pedagogical grammars of those language which have the same morphological and syntactic behaviour like Bəmbələ. It could also inspire scholars in the elaboration of their pedagogic grammars.

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CHAPTER 8

PREREQUISITES AND FOUNDATIONS FOR LANGUAGE STANDARDISATION

8.1. Introduction

This chapter aims at analysing the prerequisite and foundations for the standardisation of a language. In fact, the analysis of these prerequisites and foundations shall help us address most of the issues governing language standardisation. Before getting there, we must clearly define the concept of standardisation. Therefore, what is standardisation?

Linguists borrowed the concept of standardisation from the field of technology and artistic design where manufacturers or artists build a model, a style within which, products or measurement instruments are shaped according to a unique and recognised designed norm. In the field of linguistics, standardisation deals with the establishment of an acceptable written model for all the language users of a speech community. This model results from the willingness to build homogeneity (that does not exist in the spoken form of the language amongst the speakers) in writing the language. Therefore, in the field of linguistics, standardisation deals with the challenge of building a standard, a uniform model in writing but not in speaking. Sadembouo (2001) puts it in these terms:

> *[standardisation consists in] identifying and establishing a unique written model for the language, according to certain principles which will be taught to the speakers who will strictly respect the rules anytime they are involved in written communication with other trained speakers*. (translated by us)

Whatever the field, standardisation deals with universally recognised units of measurement. Standardisation in the domain of linguistics stands for that only one written form should be spread over the community. However, each speaker should maintain speaking his own dialect.

Standardisation is a necessary and vital process in any language. A natural standardisation process occurs in living languages. It prescribes that certain standard rules must be followed so that people can effectively communicate among them with the written form of the language.

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However, there are differences in speech that occur among all speakers of any language. Sometimes, the differences are so obvious that one can identify from which area of the community a speaker originates and can also tell if the speaker is a child, a beginner, or an elder. In addition, one can identify when a speaker is giving a formal speech, such as an opening address, or simply having a friendly chat. The task of the Bàmbəlà language standardisation project was to design a writing system, which would accommodate these differences for each of the Bàmbəlà -speaking member.

Standardisation is particularly important when there are great differences between dialects. Standardisation does not mean the elimination of dialects in favour of a new literary form. The non standard dialect(s) is/are preserved in the family and in the community of speakers.

Developing and hence, revitalising any language requires establishing a standard writing system, developing methods for the integration of new words into the language and modernising the vocabulary. The existence of modern dictionaries and grammar makes the work of standardisation much easier. Sadembouo and Watters (1987) share this view when they argue that language development is defined as a process in which a language passes from the stage of oral use to that of both oral and written use. The process involves a number of intermingling activities, summarised by Sadembouo (2001) in four stages: pre-standardisation, standardisation, post-standardisation and modernisation.

Standardisation deals with a language-unit. In order to obtain a language-unit, the researcher or agent for standardisation must carry out a number of activities that respect the established criteria. As Haugen (1959) points out, a typical standard language shall go through the following stages: selection, codification, elaboration of functions and acceptance.

a. Selection

A researcher selects one dialect to be developed into a standard form. This may be an existing variety or an amalgam of various varieties (Capo 1986). The choice also has a great social and political importance, based on prestige. In fact, as the chosen variety gains prestige, as all the native speakers without discrimination share the prestige of the variety.

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b. Codification

Codification refers to the fixing of the writing and reading norms of the standard variety so that everybody agrees with what is correct or not. Codification therefore deals with the prescriptive rules governing the use of the language. This activity leads to the rejection of the "incorrect" form and implies formal classroom teaching or self-training. Self-training is prescribed for those speakers who are literate in official or any foreign languages or other national language(s).

b. Elaboration of functions

The elaboration of functions refers to the different areas where the language is used or within which it functions. The functions are related to the daily life and domains of language use: government, parliament, courts, schools, bureaucracy, education and science, documents of all kinds, literature, media, etc.

c. Acceptance

The community as a whole must accept the chosen variety. The standard variant shall serve as:

- a strong force of unification for community members;
- a symbol of its independence from other communities;
- a mark of difference from other communities.

After having defined the stages, the agent for standardisation must determine the criteria governing the choice of the standard model. In fact, it should be noted that sensitivity, wisdom and knowledge are needed for success in any standardisation programme. This implies that language standardisation must be based on a reference standard model. Therefore, what are the criteria for choosing a standard model?

Sadembouo (1980 and 2001) elaborates a number of criteria on which is based the choice of the reference standard dialect. Below, we discuss the criteria. He divides the criteria into three categories, namely major, secondary and extraneous or marginal criteria.

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1- Major criteria

The following factors are considered primordial for the choice, of a reference standard dialect.

- the high degree of the comprehension of the dialect,
- the high foresight degree of comprehension of the dialect,
- the great number of speakers of the dialect,
- the advantageous geographic location of the dialect (located at the centre of the community),
- the location of the dialect at the main administrative centre of the locality,
- the prestige acquired by the dialect (within the community),
- the purity of the dialect (not influenced by neighbouring languages),
- the vehicular nature of the dialect: the dialect is mostly spread and used by different users (native and non-native speakers).

2- Secondary criteria

The following fall within this classification:

- attitude of the government towards the dialect,
- religious influence of the dialect,
- previous works on the language,
- historic influence of the dialect,
- the socio-economic influence of the dialect,
- historic movement or the expansion of the dialect,
- attitude of all the speakers towards the facilities of understanding the standard dialect.

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3-Extraneous or marginal criteria

Are considered marginal the following factors:

- the availability of informants,
- research conditions of the researchers on the dialect,
- a friendly relationship with a speaker of the dialect,
- the social status of the speakers of the dialect.

He further argues that the order of classification of the criteria within a category is not important; none of the criteria is sufficient alone and the dialect that respects most of the criteria will be presented and maintained as the standard dialect of the language. We relied on this criterion to choose the standard model for Bəmbələ.

It is also worth defining the concept of language and dialect in order to shed more light on them so that they can be well understood in the perspective of this work. Therefore, what is a language-unit, and what is a dialect?

It is not always obvious to answer these questions. This explains why we would like to clarify these concepts before addressing the next section of the study. For Saussure (1916), a language is a set of linguistic signs and symbols arbitrarily combined for inter-human communication. From a sociolinguistic perspective, this definition could not help to understand the concept of dialect because it is focussed on the functional aspect of language. What is therefore the difference between the two concepts? On the one hand, there is a difference of size between them because a language is larger than a dialect. The variant called “language” is for the whole community. On the other hand, there is a feeling of prestige. A language is made up of one or more dialects. In this vein, language can be defined from a sociolinguistic point of view as a set of mutually intelligible dialects. Mutual intelligibility is established in terms of inter-comprehension among the speakers (native) of the same language even though of different dialects. If the speakers of two varieties can understand each other without communication hampering, the varieties are indeed instances of the same language. A dialect is therefore, a regional variant of a language. It is worth mentioning that the difference between dialect and language is the result of a deliberate intervention of human beings. This must be so because language is the main vector for the transmission of our living heritage as asserted in the convention for the safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, and the viability of languages as a prerequisite for the safeguarding of many forms of that living heritage. In this

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respect, human action on languages gives room to standardisation, and each standard language has well-known characteristics. The following section of this chapter of the study is organised in three main points. The first one discusses the characteristics of a standard language. The second point shed light on the elaboration of the viability of a language-unit while the last section tackles the problem of the choice of Bəmbələ standard model with special focus on orthography design. Each point addresses the issues in general, and then states on the case of Bəmbələ.

8.2. Characteristics of a standard language

Standardised languages are characterised by the prestige of their literature within the speech community and among the native speakers as compared to other languages. The speakers-hearers of these languages acknowledge the written form which was developed. They accept the standard form as their unique language. These languages have harmonised and have a non-conflicting written form well known by their users. From a linguistic point of view, standardised languages are characterised by the relatively weak distance between/among their variants. In fact, these languages are also characterised by their internal cohesion

They could spread over all the groups and communities, but with a well-established geographic area. In spite of the dialectal differences noticed in their oral practices, the speakers accept the standard language as the common official form. Thanks to alphabetisation and schooling, the speakers practice the standard variety.

This brief presentation of the main characteristics of a standardised language leads us to the definition of the main features of a standard language through linguistic and sociolinguistic factors following Sadembouo (op cit). These main features are:

a) the relative low distance between the variants: the different dialects of a standard language are mutually intelligible;

b) geographic extension: the standard language is supra-dialectal i.e., it spreads all over its different dialectal areas;

c) the internal social cohesion of speakers-hearers: all the native speakers accept the standard variant of their language; it is largely used in various domains;

d) vitality of the standard language from the point of view of usage;

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e) prestige: speakers-hearers have a very great esteem in the standard form;

f) uniformity: the standard language is not multiform. It has a harmonised writing system with rigorous but sometimes flexible rules, taught to all its users.

From (a) to (f), the main characteristics of a standard language are established and clearly defined. Below, we address the issue of the elaboration of a viable language-unit.

8.3. Elaborating the viability of a language-unit/ language

This sub-section analyses the different characteristics that help to determine the viability of a language. This activity is one of the prerequisites for language standardisation. Even though human action on language standardisation is not theoretically linked to their effective success per se, it is worth paying an attention to viable languages. Establishing language viability is examining and gathering factors propitious to the development of its orthography and literature. These factors were also taken into consideration in the development of Bəmbələ. Therefore, in general, a number of indicators help to describe language viability. Taken alone, one factor does not suffice to measure this viability. Also, not all languages might initially be assessed through these criteria. Nevertheless, the more a language possesses factors conducive for its development, the higher the indicators for its viability and the most successful its standardisation will be. These indicators are presented at three levels: sociolinguistic, organisational and socio-political (Sadembouo 2001). I examine the indicators below with focus on Bəmbələ.

8.3.1. At the sociolinguistic level

Three criteria are taken into account at the sociolinguistic level. These criteria include demography, oral use of the language, and use of the written form.

8.3.1.1. Demography

The more the number of speakers of a language are the greater the possibility of that language to be standardised. It is however true that today this criterion does not count a lot in the choice of the languages to be developed given the efforts of national and international NGOs to protect the linguistic rights of minority communities. For a language to be viable for standardisation the number of speakers must reach a certain threshold. The number of speakers who could use the language in its written form should be high enough to ease the viability of the

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written form. This does not mean that we cannot develop languages with low number of speakers. Even if we argue for a threshold to be reached by the population for her language to be viable for standardisation, it is difficult to establish this threshold because the context of viability has to be taken into consideration. Sometimes, we might face a monolingual and minority speech community who has engaged in the activities of standardising and developing her language. Specialists should not stop such activities. If the issue of the number of speakers should be strictly respected for a language to be standardised, the linguistic rights of those native speakers whose languages are considered minorities would be violated. UNESCO experts currently privilege the safeguarding and revitalising of minority languages without any accent on the number of speakers.

If some linguists fix the threshold at 10.000 speakers (Wiesemann et.al. 1984), currently this figure is open to debate given the considerable attention paid to the safeguarding of minority languages. Nevertheless, the number of Bəmbələ speakers is far beyond this figure. Djomeni (2004) evaluates Bəmbələ speakers, at about 56.200 speakers. The factor "demography" is satisfactory for this language. It is the first and positive step for the viability of Bəmbələ.

8.3.1.2. Oral use of the language

The oral use of the language is an important factor in the assessment of language viability. The oral use of a language is easy to evaluate. This is easily observed through the daily life of the community. The language has not to be in a situation of social transitory bilingualism i.e. being under the dominance of a neighbouring or vehicular language so that the local language is being replaced in the community by the neighbouring language.

Bəmbələ is a vital language. It is used almost everywhere in the community except in the critical domains. The more the oral use of a language is widespread within the community, in families, in daily life (at home and outside the homes), the more the language is vital and dynamic, the best its intergenerational transmission and by the same token, its viability at the oral level is established and guaranteed.

It may be worth noting that Bəmbələ is rather in a situation of social bilingualism with Ewondo, language of religion in the community and in the whole Centre and part of South Regions of Cameroon since the settlement of the missionaries. In the past, Catholic missionaries

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spread the use of this language in the perspective of gospel in these two Regions. Today, the Holy Bible is gradually being translated into the other local languages of the Region. Although Ewondo is used in Church, it remains in this area only for a few religious services i.e., it does not supplant the local language in the community, even the younger generation does not use it. This argument is sustained by my personal observations in the field and the result of the survey (questionnaire: see appendix 1) we conducted in the field with a point addressing this issue. In fact, all the respondents clearly stated that when their children play with other children, they use their mother tongue, Bəmbələ and that they speak their language with their husband / wife and children at home.

8.3.1.3. Use of the written form of the language

It is always an important task to evaluate the degree of interest of a speech community in the development of her language before undertaking standardisation activities. It is true that there usually exists a loophole between the results of the questionnaire submitted and the practical realities observed by the researcher in the field.

The need for written communication is unquestionable in the current world of literacy and education for all, governed in our field by the challenge of preserving cultural identities whose vehicle is language. This is also favoured by an environment where speech communities are encouraged by local, national and international NGOs to stand and act for the promotion of their language through perennial means. In fact, they are invited to get involved in the activities of safeguarding and revitalisation of their different languages. This explains the awareness of Bəmbələ speakers of the prestige of their language in its written form as a local development factor. Therefore, as the questionnaire, personal observation and indirect interviews show, local people expressed their wish to see the Bible translated into their language. This will ease the transmission of the word of God in their language. In fact, through the questionnaire we submitted, we observed that the overwhelming majority of the respondents, approximately 85%, pointed out their language as their first choice in a list of languages where they were asked to choose by order of interest, the language (s) they would like to see in a written form and taught in school. They expressed their willingness to be part of their language committee. This fact results from that speakers are conscious of the prestige carried by their language and the role it plays in the daily life of community members for effective communication. So also, they argued

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to be ready to read and write the language and even use it as means of instruction / subject at the level of the basic and secondary education to preserve their culture and tradition.

8.3.2. At the community level

Revitalisation efforts are effective and sustainable only if they have a wide support in the community concerned. Therefore, scholars, institutions and governments are outsiders who only give a hand to support the efforts of communities who wish to safeguard their languages. Selection and codification are not the only aspects of the standardisation process of a language, which have traditionally been interpreted as a result of the sole concern of relatively exclusive powerful as well as socially and educationally privileged groups within a speech community. A focus on elite activities also informs on the importance this particular group of people plays in the development process of local languages. Cooper's (1989) assessment of the conditions under which language planning decisions are successfully implemented and diffused teaches us about the issue. He simply purports that

> *Language planning may be initiated at any level of the social hierarchy, but it is unlikely to succeed unless it is embraced and promoted by elites and counterelites.… Either elites or counterelites are likely to embrace the language planning initiatives by others unless they perceive it to be in their own interest to do so… Elites influence the evaluation and distribution of language varieties within a speech community […] Whereas it is in the interest of counterelites to promote acceptance of a counter standard.*

At the level of the organisation of the community, two criteria are valid and are taken into account for assessing language viability, namely public assistance and community response and the existence of a coordinating organ for talks and discussions.

8.3.2.1. Public assistance and community response

Public participation to the development of the language or community response deals with the commitment of the community in the different activities for effective standardisation. The activities are so hulking that the standardisation of a language cannot be the sole concern of the standardisation agent(s). Native speakers of the language must be involved in the process because they are the first beneficiaries. They must collaborate and work hand in hand for the establishment and elaboration of the standard reference documents, training for the use of the

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written form, training to writing and reading. Furthermore, the role of elites is not to be neglected in the whole process as indicated above.

Before we engage in the standardisation proper of Bəmbələ, we submitted a sociolinguistic questionnaire to the speakers (native) in the field. Through this questionnaire, they express their willingness to fully participate and own the development of their language.

8.3.2.2. Coordination through a local agency

The local agency is an organisation, a frame within which problems related to the standardisation and the development of the language as well are debated. In this organisation, we can find authors and specialists, their collaborators, native speakers, members from the different sectors, religious, political and social organisations, community leaders who naturally belong to the different dialectal components of the language.

As pointed out by Sadembouo (2001), in Cameroon, for the most developed languages, this organisation bears the name of “language committee” or “language academy”. Language committee cares about the norms of the language. This organisation is indispensable not only at the beginning of the process, but during the whole process of language development. As for Bəmbələ, this organisation is still under construction. We shall come back on this issue in one of the forthcoming sections.

8.3.3. At the socio-political level

Two factors are to be considered at the socio-political level: social cohesion and political choices.

8.3.3.1. Social cohesion

According to Watters (1991) social cohesion is one of the three factors that affect the nature and the development of language programmes. They evolve around the homogeneity of the community. Massive participation of a community to the development of her language results as a consequence of its homogeneity. Some key factors are taken into account in the determination of the homogeneity of the community as pointed out by Sadembouo (op. Cit.). These factors include linguistics, cultural, geographic, political, economic and socio-religious. All these factors characterise social cohesion in a community.

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Linguistically, there is cohesion when dialectal variations or dialectal differences are not sizeable enough. Otherwise, we talk of cohesion when all or almost all the speakers of a language accept the standard variant and their own internal dialectal differences. In this vein, Bəmbələ is made up of two dialects. These two dialects are so mutually intelligible that they cannot threaten to any extent the social cohesion of the community. Mânyɔ̀k and Ékì, the two dialects of the language are so well-known by speakers-hearers that when the speakers of both dialects meet in any circumstance, each one uses his variant without frustration. However, it might be useful to point out that from one dialectal area to another, most often, phonetic differences in speaking result in burst of laugh. We humbly think that this phenomenon is true of all human languages. The point we would like to raise here is that when one comes from one dialectal area and communicate with members of the other dialect or dialects, one's accent usually expresses amusement. In fe'efe'e for instance, even within the same dialectal area (Central-South), some variations are noticed in the speech of the speakers. These variations sometimes result in fun or mockery in communication situations and according to the context of the communication. The following examples illustrate this observation. In fact, we are going to present Fe'efe'e (a Grassfield language spoken in the Upper-Nkam Division, West Region, Cameroon) data from the same dialectal area to illustrate the point raised above.

Banka (nkɑ')	*Bafang (fa')*
a. Ă pwèn ntām ntʃì	a'. Ă pɛ̀n ntām nʃì
He push fall water	He push fall water
"He falls in the water.	"He falls in the water."
b. Ngă ɣùù zĕ lá	b'. Ngă ɣɛ̀nà ză lá
I go me then	I go me then
"I am about to go"	"I am about to go"

In Bəmbələ, this phenomenon is also observable in the two dialects as the following illustrate.

Mânyɔ̀k	Ekì
a. mə ákə ánám ìkwárì	mə ákə ánám ìkɔ́rì
I go cook yam	I go cook yam
"I shall cook yam"	"I shall cook yam"

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b. à ánén ŋgwàn Ndéŋgè	à ànén ŋgɔ̀n Ndéŋgè
he see daughter Ndéŋgè	he see daughter Ndéŋgè
“He saw Ndéŋgè’s daughter”	“He saw Ndéŋgè’s daughter”

These data give us the tip-off to argue that even within the same dialect area (the case of Fe’efe’e), slight differences are still perceptible. However, these slight differences cannot and will not affect social cohesion when speakers respect each other. The whole Bəmbələ community shares the same culture in all its different areas, therefore, everybody fights for the protection of the same culture and this fact constitutes a strong argument for preserving their unity. They share the same principal meal (nkóngŏn), they share the same traditional organisation with a traditional ruler *mbwàn,* who heads each chiefdom. Therefore, Bəmbələ community members also fight to preserve their cultural cohesion.

From the economic point of view, the majority of these people grow coffee and cocoa for exportation. Their main commercial centre is Nanga Eboko (although not their linguistic area). There, they meet for their inter-economic exchange when it is possible.

At the socio-religious level, in the Bəmbələ community, most of the community members are catholic Christians as far as imported religions are concerned, but this does not impede the participation of every body and each one in the development process of the language. Although many religious denominations exist in the community, community members argue that it does not negatively influence their social cohesion because they belong to the same ancestor. They acknowledge that before the arrival of colonial masters along with their religions, they did believe in one God “Zàmá”, the same God in whom they still believe.

On the other hand, Watters (1991) quoted by Sadembouo (2001) argues that there are two instances where communities vary in their attitude towards development, namely resistance and acceptance. At the local level, leaders should be honest people who frankly earn their living and are able to influence the daily life of their society members with a close and positive relationship. In the Bəmbələ community, this aspect is of particular interest. Usually, leaders influence the daily life of their fellows; and as such they are respected. Socioeconomic factors ease the

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viability of the standard form of the language. To these factors, should be added the political choices acting for the promotion of local languages.

8.3.3.2. Political choices

Normally, language standardisation and literature promotion follow a specific policy within the geo-political area or administrative area of the language. Language standardisation must respect the linguistic policy prescribed by the national government. Otherwise, community members who would like to participate in the development of the language might fear the reprisal of the government. In Cameroon in general, local language development respects the national government policy. This policy recognises English and French as official languages of equal status and guarantees the promotion of official bilingualism. At the same time, it caters energies for the protection and promotion of national languages (Law n° 96/06 of January 8th 1996, modified and completed by the law n°2008/001 of 14 April 2008 that stipulates in its article 1 that "The Republic of Cameroon works for the protection and promotion of national languages"). It is with regard to these concerns that I have undertaken the development process of this language. Furthermore, we can mention the most recent and important decisions of the government to teach Cameroon mother tongues in secondary schools through the creation of a Department and Laboratory of National Languages and Cultures in the Higher Teacher's Training College Yaoundé (Letter n°07/4905/MINESUP/CAB/IGA/CA of November 9, 2007). This decision came after that of the Ministry of Secondary Education to include the teaching of local mother tongues into its curricula. The environment that characterises the development of national languages or mother tongues in Cameroon is conducive enough for undertaking any action in favour of their development. Unlike in the past, people are gradually getting aware of the importance of the teaching of national languages and the government is also setting forth to catch up through truth worthy decisions.

Political arguments that stand in favour of the development of national languages are a positive worth factor for the viability of all Cameroonian languages. At this very stage, considering all the factors presented, described and applied to Bəmbələ above, standardisation proper could start. However, before starting the standardisation activities, the researcher or standardisation agent must choose a model.

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8.4. Choosing and adopting a standard model for Bəmbələ

Right at the beginning of this activity, the Bəmbələ reference standard diaclect was identified. A reference standard dialect could simply be understood as a language variety chosen and used by a group of people in formal oral discourse and written communication. The variety chosen becomes standard by undergoing a process of standardisation during which its writing principles are formalised and encoded for reference works. Based on the criteria developed above, the Mânyɔ̀k dialect, spoken in Bibey has been chosen.

One of the purposes of the Bəmbələ language standardisation project was to convince native speakers to come to a consensus on a writing system that could be used among them and to establish the writing rules that reflect the differences among community members and their dialects. The standardisation method involved selecting a process, which would lead to consensus on the alphabet and on the writing practices used among Bəmbələ speakers. Social and stylistic differences in speech among community members were to be respected. In fact, stylistic differences are natural facts which should not be looked at as language norms to be imposed on all speakers. Once consensus reached, it must be consolidated. This consolidation is characterised by factors such as the speakers' practice of the written form of the language, their ability to train their fellows in reading and writing the mother tongue and their will to preserve the established principles through a well established agency.

During consultations and talks, it was highly recommended that the speech of elders be selected as the basis for writing the language. This also explains why most of my data were collected from this generation of speakers. Since the rules established are for all the speakers of the language, the established model must be respected by all the users of the language in their daily written communication.

The process of standardisation implies two steps: the creation of a model and the promotion of the created model. Ray (1970) summarises the idea in these terms: "Standardisation consists basically of two steps: at first, the creation of a model for imitation, secondly, the promotion of this model over rival models *[*if any*]*". Here, the model relies on the standard written form.

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The choice of a standard model is a prerequisite, the almost first task to be done in the activities of language development. It is considered as the framework for real, pertinent and efficient standardisation. One of these models involves the selection of one dialect and establishing it as the standard. The second involves creating a composite language out of all the main dialects. Finally, we adopted the choice of reference standard dialect applied for the development of Cameroonian languages so far.

The reference standard dialect model is also adopted for Bəmbələ. The standard model, developed together with language users, native speakers of the language and agent(s) of standardisation, is therefore the corner stone of standardisation. This argument helps to explain why the choice of a standard model for the development of a language should not be the concern of an individual, but must take into account the opinion and contribution of the community. This kind of choice is "community-based". Bəmbələ underwent this very process. In fact, in the questionnaire we submitted to the speakers in the field before starting the activities of standardisation and revitalisation of the language, there were questions addressing this issue. As Fishman ((1972) puts it, "all varieties of all languages are equally expandable and interchangeable […]. Their virtues are in the eyes of their beholders." In fact, he argues that, it is possible to standardise any of the dialects of a language since each speaker feels the same degree of esteem for the variant he speaks. The chosen model should be efficient, adequate and acceptable. This is to avoid confusion because "if all speakers of a language write exactly as they talk, soon will emerge a far more confusion: that of the inability to communicate with ease." (Simons 1977). In order to choose the standardisation model for Bəmbələ, although the result of the sociolinguistic enquiry (RTT) conducted by the SIL team under the coordination of Seguin (1986) clearly pointed out mânyɔk as the reference standard dialect, I built a sociolinguistic questionnaire where we included questions (section 3.4: see appendix) related to this aspect of language development in order to verify the validity of the issue.

Native speakers are able to evaluate each other in their speech community and are also conscious of their differences. Therefore, they are able to easily locate the area where they estimate that their language is still well spoken i.e. where it is not affected or very affected by a neighbouring or neighbouring languages. Eighty per cent (80%) of the respondents pointed out without hesitation Bibey and its suburbs as the area where their language is still pure. They argue that the mânyɔk variant spoken in this locality could be standardised for all. This does not go

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without saying that the 20% of the testees who argue each for the development of his variant were not right. It is just a matter of prestige and self-esteem vis-à-vis the dialect one speaks.

After the choice of the standard dialect, codification, a deliberate and technical activity can start. At this stage, the rules and regulations of the standard model shall be established.

8.4.1. Elaboration of the rules governing the standard model

Establishing the rules governing the standard model is a highly technical task. It requires linguistic knowledge, notably knowledge related to the development of writing systems, based on the principles of phonetic transcription, phonology, and morphosyntactic analyses. In this vein, the phonological study of a language is not sufficient enough to prescribe these rules. In fact, to some researchers, writing systems should be considered a separate branch in language development process. Capo (1986) puts that "Nowadays, it is advocated that orthography be considered as a separate branch of linguistic science in which phonology, morphology, syntax and lexis (the traditional levels of descriptive linguistics) are inter-related". Three categories of rules must be established in the orthography design of a language, namely rules of graphology, principles for integrating lexical items from other variants and grammatical principles of the standard variant.

A strict application of these rules contributes to harmonising the dialects not only at the level of graphemic symbols and orthography proper but also at the level of the non-traditional and modern concepts and at the level of their usage in daily communication and within the linguistic community. The aspect of language standardisation concerning the development of non-traditional and modern concepts is mostly the concern of the language committee. It is worth noting that the rules governing the standard model are prescribed after the description of the language (phonology, morphology and syntax).

8.4.1.1. Establishing the rules of graphology for Bàmbəlà

This is one of the benchmarks of the activities characterising the establishment of the rules governing the standard model. This activity deals with the identification and selection of the symbols to be used by native speakers and those who would like to write and read the language. These symbols are diacritics, signs and letters of the alphabet. In fact, why do we establish the rules of graphology?

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Standardising the writing system of Bəmbələ would be of great benefit to the maintenance, survival, and revitalisation of the language within the whole linguistic area, within the community and among community members. Reinforcing the standard literary form will be useful in the preservation of the older forms of speech, especially the speech of the elders.

If all the Bəmbələ speakers were to utilise one standard written form, it would ease the teaching of the language. Literacy activities will help developing and making curriculum materials available to schools in the community in one and only one written form.

The standardisation of the Bəmbələ orthography constitutes the groundwork in the on-going promotion, development, and production of materials in this language. Sebba (2000) emphasises the need of collaboration between local speakers and trained linguists in the development of a truly practical orthography of a language. This author further highlights that it is not that difficult for a trained linguist to devise an elegant orthography for an ethnic minority group which accounts for the most important linguistic features of the language, but which is not acceptable to linguistically untrained users of the language, often for very good and important sociolinguistic reasons.

Cultural considerations frequently override linguistic considerations when it comes to decision-making in orthography development. Writing system and social systems are intricately interwoven. Thus, sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics become very important fields of study in orthography design.

Reducing an oral language into writing does not mean “diminishing the rich oral heritage of the language” as Mühlhäusler (1990 & 1995) claims, but linking the language to the current evolution of the world. In this vein, Mühlhäusler’s argument is obsolete and takes back to the precolonial and colonial eras. Literacy has long ago been brought into the linguistic and cultural lives of most of the minority communities and has been shaped and used by them and the dire consequences invoked by Mühlhäusler have not resulted. He further argues that not to eliminate literacy from the resources available to a threatened community is to consign them to a “romanticised and impossible future”. This viewpoint is completely contradicted by the current environment characterising mother tongue development in the world as a whole and in Cameroon in particular.

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As earlier mentioned, the task of elaborating an alphabet in the perspective of standardising a language made up of dialectal variants follows different but intertwined stages. They are discussed in details below.

8.4.1.1. Phonological analysis of the standard reference dialect

The operational theory established, based on more than fifteen years of experience on Cameroon languages is the structural approach. We adopted this same approach in describing the phonology of Bəmbələ.

The second chapter of this work analyses the phonology of the language through this method. Using this method, we have identified the sounds of the language, mainly through contrast in functional minimal pairs. All in all, we have identified 48 consonants phonemes and 15 vowel phonemes in the language. Four (4) tonemes, namely two register tones (low, high) and two contour tones (high low and low high) were also identified.

8.4.1.2. Harmonisation of the system

The harmonisation of the system involves a reconciliation of the standard form with ékì dialect. It is worth noting that harmonisation does not necessarily need a phonological sketch of other variants or the other variants. During data collection, the researcher gathers information on other variant(s). Harmonisation takes into account what may be different in other / the other dialect (s).

Harmonisation is an important task. The standardisation agent must know the phonological differences between the variants. This knowledge leads to a judicious choice of the graphemes of the alphabet.

The tonological rules must be established. Lexical tones are easier to manage in the writing system than grammatical ones. In order to be consistent, lexical tones could be maintained on words in context depending on the language. This tone marking system eases the learning of the language and softens the acquisition of rules. Mfonyam (1990) prescribes consistency in tone marking in words: “if it is decided that only grammatical tones should be marked, for example, then all grammatical tones should be marked. If, on the other hand, it is better to mark lexical tones, these should be marked consistently.” This method might sound interesting and practical but might face resistance from those communities where tone marking

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has been taught for long and where grammatical and lexical tones are marked. Grammatical tones are complex to manage in orthography indeed because their perception is not always easy, and we usually fail to perceive them. Misperception will naturally lead to misinterpretation and production of wrong tone marking. Consistency in tone marking might be a helpful solution for tonal problems in orthography. However, we also maintained the marking of grammatical tones in the writing system proposed for this language for common reasons: the same rules are applied elsewhere on other languages of Cameroon. Kutsch Lojenga (1993 quoted by Kouesso (2009)) stands for this position when she argues: “The teaching of tone reading is easiest when tone is written everywhere in the language, rather than at certain places only to disambiguate lexical and grammatical ambiguity.”

8.4.1.3. Inventory of the graphemes

At the end of the phonological and tonological analysis, a list of phonemes and tonemes is established. From this list, the graphemes of the language could be proposed. This is where the orthography designer valorises his craft of orthography. It is established that all the phonemes of a language should be part of its alphabet. But, we notice that some Bəmbələ simple consonants phonemes have corresponding labialised and palatalised counterparts. Since “w” and “j” are also part of the phonemes, labialised, palatalised and even prenasalised consonants will not be included in the list of graphemes. This would avoid coming up with a broad list of graphemes that would be boring to the learner. Nevertheless, prescriptions will be given on how to write such consonants. Orthography designers must fine-tune the list of their graphemes so as to come up with a least boring list. Simplification is required in the establishment of the list of graphemes. This would also encourage the potential learners of the language.

It is often argued that languages of the same group share almost the same principles with the same graphemes and rules. This should be done taking into account the specificities of each language. This kind of choice can ease reading and writing, or simply the learning of languages belonging to the same group. In Cameroon, this problem is addressed and solved in Tadadjeu & Sadembouo (1984) who recommend that neighbouring languages shall have similar graphemes and principles. For instance, if a symbol is used in a neighbouring language, the same graphemic representation shall be adopted in the language under development. These same principles are taken into account in the elaboration of the Bəmbələ graphemes. However, this simplification must respect the criteria of one sound one grapheme as far as possible. Those sounds that share

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very close features could be represented by the same grapheme as it is the case for [j] and [ʸ] in this language.

We should be capable of making the difference between phonemes and graphemes. As we mentioned above, the alphabet of African languages should be as simplified as possible to facilitate the learning process. The problem of establishing the graphemes of Bəmbələ has been solved through some reasonable strategies:

- At first, to respect uniformity and harmonisation as prescribed by Tadadjeu & Sadembouo (1984), we established the orthographic form of those consonants whose phonological form is different from their orthographic form. Such consonants are presented in the following table.

Table 41: differences between the Phonological form and the Orthographic form of some graphemes in Bəmbələ

Phonological form	**Orthographic form**
tʃ	c
dʒ	j
ɲ	ny
ɣ	gh

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This table simply shows that the orthographic form of the consonants therein indicated is different from their phonological form.

- Secondly, all prenasalysed consonants will be written as such. This method helps us not to have prenasalised consonants in the list of the graphemes because they can simply be obtained by associating the nasal (n or m) that exists in the list of graphemes with the main consonant: e.g: ndàt, mbwàn, ntèt;

- Labialised and palatalised consonants will not be part of the alphabet. Instructions will be given at the level of orthography on how to write and read such modified

consonants. For instance we will not have letters such as *my* or *py* in the list of the graphemes;

- Alveolar instead of velar nasals will precede velar consonants. For instance, we will write *nk* instead of *ŋk,* e.g: ŋkùt = nkùt. This is useful for harmonisation and simplification. This application offers readability and write-ability considerations easy to apply. But it is noticeable that *ŋ* will be written as such in syllable boundaries and word final positions.

Finally, we maintained the following consonant graphemes for Bàmbələ.

Table 42: Consonant graphemes of Bàmbələ in small and capital letters

Upper case	Lower case
P	p
B	b
D	d
K	k
Kp	kp
G	g
Gb	gb
H	h
L	l
M	m
N	n
Ny	ny
Ŋ	ŋ
P	p
R	r
S	s
Y	y
C	c
J	j
Dz	dz
V	v
R	r
W	w
Z	z

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/ j / and / ʏ / will be represented orthographically by Y y.

Twenty-four (24) consonant graphemes are therefore maintained in the alphabet.

The following table presents the vowel graphemes of Bàmbəlà in upper and lower cases.

Table 43: Vowel graphemes of Bàmbəlà

Upper case	Lower case
I	i
E	e
Ɛ	ɛ
Ə	ə
U	u
O	o
Ɔ	ɔ
A	a

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Given that vowel length is considered as a suprasegmental feature, and each long vowel has a short counterpart, long vowels will not be part of the graphemes. Nevertheless, instructions will be given on how and when to write and read them.

The Bàmbəlà alphabet has eight (8) vowel graphemes. Most often, in the identification of the number of graphemes of a language, consciously or unconsciously, we forget about tones. If we all agree that tones have distinctive functions like consonants and vowels, tones are then also part of the graphemes. In Bàmbəlà, we do not write the high tone. Therefore, we have three tonal graphemes to add to the list: low, low-high and high-low.

In Bantu languages, graphemes are made up of consonants, vowels and tones. The Bàmbəlà alphabet is made up of 35 graphemes.

In the table below, we present the full set of graphemes of Bàmbəlà in alphabetical order.

Table 44: Graphemes of Bàmbəlà / Bàmbəlà alphabet

graphemes	examples	gloss
A a	àtòlkì	sore throat
B b	bɔlɔ̀	gazelle
C c	acìmsì	to reimburse
D d	du	fire
Dz dz	ndzɔŋ	eggplant
E e	ìkes	fufu
Ɛ ɛ	ìbɛ̀	twig
Ə ə	mbə	pot
G g	àgŏn	mountain
Gb gb	ngbàlkà	okra
Gh gh	nkàgha	varanus
H h	hamà	hammer
I i	ìkandò	kind of tree
J j	njil	great grand son
K k	kayak	pangolin
Kp kp	kpap	lion
L l	lamà	lamp
M m	mùŋə	woman
N n	nam	soup
Ny ny	nyɔ	snake
Ŋ ŋ	mbòŋ	cassava
O o	po	rat
Ɔ ɔ	Pó	news
P p	palkà	comb
R r	ngbàra	measles
S s	àsə̌	egg
T t	tok	spoon
U u	mbu	year
V v	vyàŋli	sun's heat
W w	wuu	theft

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Y y	yònok	toad
Z z	zo	name
`	mbààs	maize
ˇ	ngɛ̂kə	sparrow
ˇ	nkǐ	son-in-law

In languages, words are combined into phrases and clauses to form sentences from which we obtain a text. Therefore, communication does not imply the use of words in isolation. The rules and regulations that govern words in isolation, in phrases, clauses and sentences shall be established. These rules are called orthography.

8.4.2. Orthography design

The establishment of the alphabet of a language constitutes the groundwork for orthography design. The goal of orthography is fundamentally to empower the speakers to read and write their language as the result of their own informed orthography decisions.

Normally, the orthography of a language cannot be built without the contribution of native speakers. Native speakers' viewpoints usually help the researcher or the agent for standardisation to improve on it. This aspect is respected and adopted for Bəmbələ. Community ownership / involvement is therefore priceless in every stage of orthography development. Therefore, orthography is a set of rules governing the how to write and read a language.

At this level, it is not always required to engage into a deep grammatical analysis of the language but to present and get acquainted with the main phrase structure (NP, VP, (PP)) rules of the reference dialect. Knowledge on dialectal differences may help in the elaboration of orthographic principles of a language (interpretation of problems, neutralisation, word separation, punctuation and texts), because "a good orthography enables readers to quickly recognise meaning, and its spelling rules are as simple as possible, to aid the writer." (Schroeder 2008).

Orthography is known as a complex visual representation of language and thought which are designed to facilitate communication. In orthography interweave phonology, morphology, syntax, several cognitive processes in the encoding of print, sociolinguistic and pedagogical considerations. Smalley (1964) establishes four criteria for orthography decisions. I summarise

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those criteria as follows: maximum motivation for the learner (ethnic and national identity), maximum speech representation, ease of learning (the rules shall be as simple as possible), maximum transfer from/to literacy in a language of wider communication, and simplicity of reproduction essentially for publication purposes. However, it is observable that Smalley's proposal is focused on transfer from mother tongue to a language of larger communication. In Africa in general and Cameroon in particular, today, it is the reverse with mother tongue literacy usually coming later on. This is so because for most of the learners, it comes after literacy in a language of larger communication. Snider (2011), discussing orthography strategies distinguishes the underlying morphophonemic form (Chomsky & Halle 1968) and the surface or phonetic orthography form (Pike 1947). To these approaches, Snider adds a third one called "lexical orthography hypothesis". This new approach to orthography is based on the lexical phonology of the language. Although this third approach offers a "worthy" alternative, the author argues that neither of the orthography strategies should be strictly recommended because, "with respect to overvall orthography strategies, what works in one situation is not necessarily a good indicator of good strategy." (p2). This position reinforces the importance of the implication and the contribution of the native speakers of undeveloped, underdeveloped and lesser developed languages in the developmental process of their different languages.

Before establishing the writing system of Bəmbələ, as we observed as from chapter three of the first part of this study, we tackled the analysis of the phonology, noun and verb morphology and the basic syntax of the language. Herein, we shall come back on the modified consonants and long vowels.

- Modified consonants, notably palatalised and labialised consonants shall be written as follows:

lw	as in àlwàt	"duck"
mbw	as in mbwàn	"chief"
vy	as in vyə̀k	"clay"
my	as in myàn	"toucan"

Thus, the labial feature shall be converted to "W" while the palatal feature is converted to "Y".

Long vowels shall be maintained in the words where they are perceived because at some points, they have a distinctive function.

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8.4.2.1. Orthographic principles of vowels

Following are the rules governing the writing and reading of vowels in Bəmbələ.

a. Never write “è” when you hear “è” rather write ɛ: pɛ “bush”, kɛkɛɛ “tomorrow”.

b. Write “ɔ” when you hear the sound “ɔ” like in the English words corps, door, in the French words porte, sorte, corde: ndɔ “head”, kɔl “snail”, mɔ “hand”.

a. Rather write “u” when you hear the French sounds “ou” like in pou, doux, like in English do, cool: du “fire”, mul “palm oil”, ìvùn “stomach”.
b. Double the vowel where its pronunciation lengthens such as in bàà “two”, mbààs “maize”, mbòò “marrow of sisongho”.
c. All the vowels can be doubled except *ə*.
d. All the other vowels are pronounced exactly like their French counterpart: i, o, e, a.

8.4.2.2. Orthographic principles of consonants

The rules that follow prescribe the way consonants shall be written.

a. All nasals that precede the velar consonants k, g, gb and kp within the same syllable shall be written “n” as in ngal “spouse”, ngbal “sesame”, nkɔk “gazelle” etc. The same nasal “n” will precede other voiceless consonants that take a nasal in the language while voiced consonants will be preceded by “m”: ntèt “a hundred”, nsìŋə “train”, mpù “powder”, mbə “pot”

b. Consonants are never doubled within the same syllable in Bəmbələ.

c. Write “ny” read “gne” like in the French words “pagne, bagne”: nyɔ “snake”, nyɔ̀ “mouth”, nye “house”

d. Labialised consonants are written as follows: the simple consonants are linked to the labial “w” as in: lw, mbw, sw: mbwàn “chief”, lwe “wood”.

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e. Palatalised consonants are written as follows: to the simple consonant, we attach the palatal “y” as in the following: py, my, by, vy: myɛ̀kə̀ “snare stick”, vyàŋli “sun’s heat”.

f. Final stops and sibilants are voiceless that is, voiced stops and sibilants will not appear at word final position. Therefore, we will write: kpap “lion”, tit “animal”, nkùt “bag”, mbààs “maize”.

8.4.2.3. Tones in Bə̀mbələ̀ orthography

We identified four (4) tonemes in Bə̀mbələ̀, two register tones and two contour tones, namely H (´), L (`), HL (ˆ) and LH (ˇ). We have decided not to mark the high tone in the orthography because it seems grammatically most frequent. This choice was also supported and adopted by the speakers during our working sessions in the field. They found the low tones easier to mark.

Kɔ́l will be written kɔl,

Mɔ́ will be written mɔ,

Ndɔ́ will be written ndɔ.

The low tone will be written as the French grave accent on the corresponding vowel as in the following:

àbə̀ŋ “farm”

ìngə̀ŋ “three”

nkùk “chest”

The rising tone LH (ˇ) will be marked as the inverted French “circumflex” accent on the vowel as in the followings: nkǐ “son-in-law”, jǎ “sing!”.

The falling tones HL (ˆ) will be written as the French circumflex accent on the corresponding vowel as in nkî “interdict”, ngêkə̀ “sparrow”.

Tones are pertinent. Therefore, they play a crucial role in orthography. They can be lexical or grammatical. Lexical tones are tthose on words in isolation. Grammatical tones are

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very important in that they usually change the meaning of a sentence, play a distinctive role, mark distinct tenses, aspects and moods according to the language. In Bəmbələ, some of the grammatical tones are associative markers.

For example, in isolation, the initial vowel, class prefix of the word *àbəŋ* has a low tone whereas in some constructions, it bears the unmarked high tone, like in the following:

À nə a nyə abəŋ.

This goes alike with other class prefixes that follow the tonal associative marker in a construction.

Floating tones are not marked in the Bəmbələ orthography.

8.4.2.4. Writing principles of words

It is difficult to understand what a word is. A word can be defined from a phonological or from a syntactic point of view. Let us intend to shed light on the definition of this concept.

A phonological word is the smallest possible utterance in a language. Speakers do not normally say anything which is smaller than a complete phonological word. In fact, the contracted auxiliary “d” and “ll” of English like in we’d and I’ll cannot be pronounced meaningfully in isolation because they are too short to be independent phonological words. Deliberate pauses and intonation breaks occur only at phonological word boundaries and never in the middle of a phonological word. Secondly, each phonological word is made up of one or more well-formed syllables. Thirdly, stress placement is frequently determined by phonological word boundaries and each phonological word normally only contains a single primary stress or only one tone.

The syntactic word is the smallest possible constituent in a language: the smallest unit which can be moved, replaced or deleted by syntactic operations assigned to a position by phrase structure rule.

Therefore, the word has been taken in this study in isolation as the phonological unit and in context as a syntactic constituent in order to cope with the impact of phonology and morphology in orthography.

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Words are not hyphenated in Bɔ̀mbɔlɔ̀. In general, our choice of how to break words respects the morphophonological approach. This approach presents forms capable of being understood by everybody overall by the native speakers of the language. In the sayings of Keith Snider (2005),

> *The "trick" in developing a good orthography is to write words the way the mother- tongue speaker perceives a word to sound, not necessarily the way the mother-tongue speaker actually pronounces it. This is great for the immature reader. There is an added bonus, however, and that is that when we write this way, we are also able to maintain a constant word-image. [Write] the way mother-tongue speakers perceive the language.*

Van Dyken and Kutsch Lojenga (1993) set some guidelines that should help in matching the intuitive knowledge of mother tongue speakers:

a. The principle of referential independence: a morpheme is qualified as a word if it clearly communicates meaning, even when heard or seen in isolation. Conversely, each language has certain morphemes which cannot communicate meaning in isolation, such as Bantu noun class prefix.

b. The principle of conceptual unity: this requires that each written word convey only one concept. When compound words are formed, it is because the two words join to form a new and unique concept.

c. The principle of minimal ambiguity: word space can show that two words are pronounced with different tone patterns.

d. When a morpheme demonstrates mobility, it is usually written as a separate word, even if it doesn't make sense in isolation: associative markers like *mɔ́, bɔ́, bí,* etc.

e. Principle of separability: a functor is written separately from the word with which it usually occurs when other words can intervene between them. For example, in Bɔ̀mbɔlɔ̀, the associative marker is usually made up of a concord prefix and a vowel: it should be written as a separate word.

The phoneticophonological approach is limited in that an analysis must be carried out in order to distinguish between two words whose phonetic articulation causes a kind of assimilation

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within which some components undergo change in nature as observed in *mà nùŋ* where we normally have *mə̀ ànùŋ* "I walked". Words will be written and read as indicated in the following:

	instead of	**rather write**
	mə̀ tandzə̀	mə̀ tə̀ andzə̀
	mándzə̀	mə̀ andzə̀
	mə̀ talə̀m dzə̀ wabə̀ŋ nyə̀ àbə̀	mə̀ tə̀ alə̀m dzə́ wə̀ abə̀ŋ nyə̀ àbə̀

The morpho-phonological approach simplifies the writing system of the languages and allows a distinctive spelling of words and morphemes.

e. Elision will not be adopted in Bəmbələ. There may be much elision in rapid speech. We shall choose the full form as separate words, striving then for a constant word-image. Therefore, how shall we write affixes, noun prefixes, tenses, mood and aspect markers and what about vowel coalescence?

Noun prefixes (class prefixes) shall be linked to the noun root as I illustrate in the following:

a. bə̀ + kal ⟶ bə̀kal
CL2 sister sisters

b. bə̀ + mùŋə ⟶ bòŋə

CL2 -woman women

c. ì + bəŋ ⟶ ìbəŋ

CL7- lizard lizard

d. à + turə̀ ⟶ àturə̀

CL5-smoke smoke

When tense, mood and aspect markers are identical, like in the indicative, they shall also be tied to the verb stem as indicated below:

mùt ì + kə̀ a àbə̀ŋ ⟶ Mùt ìkə̀ a àbə̀ŋ.

person F0 go to farm "The person will go to the farm."

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In case tense, mood and aspect are marked by distinct morphemes, the tense marker shall be attached to the verb stem while the mood and aspect markers stand as free morpheme.

a. Mə ngə anuŋ. "I walked."

b. Mə ŋgə àkək ingəŋ. "I will cut the tree."

In case tense, mood or aspect markers end in a vowel and the verb stem begins with a vowel, the markers shall be distinctively written from the stem as illustrated in the following.

a. Bɔ bakə a ndàt ⟶ Bɔ bə akə a ndàt.

"They are going to the market"

b. Mùt à sandzə àyùhə nə tok ⟶ Mùt à sə andzə àyùhə nə tok.

"The man is eating banana with spoon"

Negation particles are written in full and stand as separate word as indicated in the following examples.

a. À tə alèm mə.
"He does not know me"

b. Nàŋ tàgha ite.
"Nàŋ is not around."

Conjunctions, prepositions and coordinators are also written as separate words in a sentence: functors shall be considered as separate words.

Nàŋ nə saŋ ikə a Nàŋà.

"Nàŋ and his / her father will go to Nanga Eboko."

Another important issue worth addressing in the orthography principles is to know whether the surface or the deep structure of the words should be written. In fact, is it adequate to adopt the contracted form of a word or its full form when it is used in a sentence? Most often, the basic form of the word is recommended. Following is an illustration of this point.

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Write: À sə alaŋ nə mə dzə à sə anùŋ **Read:** À salaŋ nə mə dzə à sanùŋ

Write: bɔ bə ìnùŋ a pɛ nəkɛɛ. **Read**: bɔ́ bînùŋ a pɛ nəkɛɛ

The rules governing the writing and reading principles are those prescribed for Cameroonian languages (Tadadjeu & Sadembouo op cit). Therefore, the efforts for harmonisation are taken into account so far.

At the phonological level, the morpho-phonological writing system is privileged because it eases writing and reading. This form also helps in chosing simplified symbols. In most cases, there is a one-to-one relationship between a symbol and its phonetic realisation in such a way that to each sound corresponds one grapheme, except in specific cases. Contrary to English and French, the system is conceived to be as convenient as possible to ease the learning of the language. This form maintains a certain consistency in the writing system.

Vowels standing for pronominal augment should not be separated from the main word while verbal augment can be attached to the verb stem in cases where it has not been fused with the tense marker as illustrated below.

a. i + nyili = inyili "there"

b. i + yamàŋ = iyamàŋ "mine"

c. mə ngə à vè = mə ngə àvè "I will come."

8.4.2.5. Punctuation rules and capital letters

The different punctuations that govern the writing system of Bəmbələ are the following:

A. Full stop (.)

Each sentence shall be separated from another by a full stop. In fact, each declarative sentence shall end in full stop as we observe in the following illustrations.

a. Mùt à akə a àbəŋ.

"The man goes to the farm."

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b. Bwan bə alee ndamà a kɔŋɔ nye.

"The children are playing football near the house."

B. Comma (,)

The comma is used to separate long sentences, parallel clauses, enumerations or words within a clause. This is illustrated below.

a. Pel, dòrò nə̀ mbyə bənə a pɛ.

"The viper, the monkey and the dog are in the forest"

b. Mbwàn, bòŋə, bǒm nə̀ bwan, inùŋ a kɔŋɔ nzè.

"The chief, the women, the men, the children, walked along the foot path.

C. The semi-colon (;)

Although less used, the semi-colon is used to separate very long sentences within which ideas are embedded in many independent sentences.

D. Question mark (?)

The question mark shall be represented by the symbol (?) at the end of a sentence indicating a question.

a. Ò sə akə̀ ave ?

"Where are you going to?

b. Ò vaŋaŋ ave?

"Where are you coming from?"

E. Exclamation mark (!)

The exclamation mark shall be used to indicate interjections, surprise or order. It betrays the attitude of the speaker vis-à-vis his utterance. The following illustrate the use of exclamation mark.

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a. Ve !

“come”

b. Nàŋ ivè !

Nàŋ came !

F. Colon (**:**)

The colon is used to announce an enumeration or to explain an idea. It is also used to announce a set of examples.

G. Suspension marks

The suspension marks (…) will be used to indicate an incomplete idea, an incomplete sentence in a text.

H. Quotation marks

Quotations will be in quotation marks. Here, we prescribe that either the French (« ») or the English quotation marks (“ ”) could be used without incidence.

A sentence shall begin with capital letters. Proper names, names of places and people names begin in capitals. After an exclamation or an interrogation mark, the sentence also starts in capital letter.

Each of the preceding stated rule contributes in establishing the reading and writing rules of Bəmbələ.

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8.5. Establishing the rules governing the lexical integration of the non-standard variant of Bəmbələ

In the process of harmonisation, lexical integration of the words peculiar to the non-standard variant is a very important step in language development. Language standardisation through the choice of a reference standard dialect does not mean ignoring other dialects of the language. It is recommended that the words that are specific to the non-standard dialects be

integrated in the lexicon of the language. This strategy also stands for dialect unification. Two processes could be taken into account at phonological and semantic levels.

8.5.1. At the level of phonology

Words of the same root are written alike. For instance, in Bəmbələ, in the standard dialect (mânyɔk), farm is *àbəŋ,* knife is *àkəŋ* while in ɛki they are respectively ɔbəŋ and ɔkəŋ. Both forms could be accepted, but because of uniformity, we maintain only one of them. Àbəŋ and àkəŋ are maintained in the orthography and used by the whole community.

If in the language, words with different roots from the distinct dialects mean the same thing or have the same meaning, they will all be accepted and maintained in writing. This strategy favours lexical expansion. For instance, the word for cutlass is *pà* in Bibey and *nkpat* in Nsɛm. Here, we are still within the same dialect, mânyɔk. Both words shall be introduced in the lexicon of the language. This argument is also true of words with different spellings but with the same meaning in both dialects. Therefore, the word for salt is *nkpɔ́* in ɛkì and *məkwàn* in mânyɔk. Both of the words must integrate the lexicon of the language.

All the strategies developed above require a long process. In the long run, the Bəmbələ language committee, in its effort to translate and develop non traditional concepts into the language will progressively contribute to this harmonisation. In fact, lexical varieties enrich the lexicon of the language.

8.5.2. At the level of semantics

During the standardisation process of a language, one can find words with the same spelling, but with different meanings. The assignment of meanings to such words from one dialect to another could lead to false friends, what could easily hamper communication.

This activity is essentially carried out by the committee through her language agency. This is why we are not going to spend more time talking about. However, we can precise what the activity consists of.

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Semantic expansion means broadening the initial meaning of a word to a new concept that shall integrate the language. The process of semantic development of a word is a step forward in the modernisation process of the language. Here, a new meaning is added to an existing word. This is usually the task of the language committee through community members and not that of the standardisation agent who, most often, is a researcher, a non native speaker, an outsider, external to the community, and who cannot spend all his life in the linguistic area. The role of the community in the development process of her language is therefore crucial. The language committee, made up of native speakers or speakers-hearers of the language, has pertinent and efficient tools (more than an outsider) for semantic expansion. In fact, native speakers, through their language committee are aware of their traditions, their beliefs and culture. Coining new words with new meanings in a language requires a good mastery of the cultural values of the community speaking the language. The standing group yet to become the Bəmbələ language committee is therefore encouraged to work in this vein.

8.6. Elaboration of the grammatical principles of the standard form

Researchers and specialists in the domain of language standardisation agree that a sketch grammar of the standard reference dialect is sufficient enough to establish the grammatical principles in designing the orthography. This sketch grammar is to ensure that the orthography takes into account some peculiarities at the level of morpho-syntax. It deals with the basic description of the language. Here, morphology deals with forms that influence the orthography of words in contexts (the case of associative marker). This aspect of orthography design could answer questions such as:

-What are the noun forms? Do they possess fixed particles (those that do not undergo morphology change) and variable particles (those that accept morphology agreement)?

- How do determiners and pronouns behave?

- What are the verb forms? Does the verb possess a variable and an invariable part or form?

- Which nuances do these verb particles bring to the elements that vary (tense, aspect, mood)?

- Shall morphemes be separated or joined to the root or fix form?

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These questions are already addressed. The answers to most of the questions above are found in chapter two and three of the first part of this study. In fact, in those chapters, we have studied the noun and verb morphology of Bəmbələ. As a language with noun classes, the agreement driven by the head noun is a morpheme directly tied to the noun, to the determiner or to the pronoun. As I said, tense, mood and aspect markers either are joined or appear in isolation according to the context as stated already at the level of orthography itself.

In sum, most of the morphemes are joined to the root or fixed form of the word. These rules are rendered possible and easy to establish thanks to the morphology (noun and verb) analysis. Another important matter to address here is the differentiation between the future marker (the high front vowel [i] with a low tone) and class 7 (the high front vowel i with a low tone) prefix in the orthography. I think that this should not be a source of confusion given the semantic contents of each item (verb, noun). At the level of the syntax, before establishing the principles, we must answer the following question:

- What is the minimal acceptable sentence and sentence structure in the language?
- What are the other types of sentences?
- What are the different kinds of clauses and the constraints that govern them?
- What are the main phrase structures of the language?
- Is there any difference in the syntactic construction of both dialects?

We addressed the question of the main phrase and sentence structures in Bəmbələ in chapter7. Moreover, there is room now for stating that from the basic syntax analysed, we can easily categorise the main sentence types (declarative, interrogative, exclamative and imperative). The afore-established rules guided us in writing these kinds of sentences. As for their structure, they are also established in chapter 7.

Therefore, at the level of syntax, the required basic study is satisfactory. However, this is a language area where analysis flourishes. In this vein, many descriptive works are still to be carried out in this domain to enrich the language.

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A minimal Bəmbələ sentence can be made up of a verb. Usually, these verbs are in the imperative mood. Most often, such sentences are called mono-lexematic sentences. The following illustrates the issue:

Kiyəŋ ! “go!” (second person plural)

Nuŋ ! “walk!” (2nd person singular)

Following is a sample text illustrating all these rules. It is selected from a set of texts provided by the native speakers during our working sessions in the field. They were firstly recorded thanks to a recorder, then transcribed (and the spelling checked up) with native speakers.

8.7. Sample text for illustration

Àkpəŋ nə dòrò

(1) Àkpəŋ nə dòrò bə itəŋ àbo . (2) Inde, nzèè ngə isə alɔ̀ɔ̀. (3) Àkpəŋ à tàgha nə yɔ̂m nə andzə nə bwan a nye. (4) Dòrò nyə à kili à kə anoɛ tit yen. (5) Dòrò à sə avè nə àkòyəŋ nə tit. (6)Àkpəŋ à pək Dòrò ndzèè, tit inə taŋkà ɛ̌ ? (7) Dòrò nyə à yo nə nyə dzə, nəkɛkɛɛ, mə àbip wə, nə ngolko mə adu abip wə, deekɛɛ, deekɛɛ.... (8) Inde, Àkpəŋ à yo nə ngal dzə, bi alə̀m dzə bi abɔ̀ŋ kà ? (9) Ngal, nyə à yo n ə nyə dzə, nzèè àdaŋ bèès. (10) Inde, Àkpəŋ iyɔ̀ŋ tit yen. (11) Ngal à sə anam.

(12) Nəkɛkɛɛ, Dòrò àvaŋaŋ, à yo nə Àkpəŋ: vaŋaŋ nsəŋ iyə. (13) Àkpəŋ à àvaŋaŋ. (14) Dòrò sə abip Àkpəŋ, à sə abip Àkpəŋ, mbee mbibəŋ!. (15) Àkpəŋ à kə a nyə, Dòrò à àtɛməŋ (16) Nìtɛrəŋ a ngogho, Dòrò àkə avaŋì à sə adu akə abip nyə. (16) Inde, Àkpəŋ ivə pək.

(17) Dòrò à vaŋaŋ, à àjo nə Àkpəŋ: vaŋaŋ nsəŋ iyə. (18) Àkpəŋ ànɛn dzə mbɛt idaŋ bɔ nə ngal. (19) Inde, Àkpəŋ àvə pək mbee mbibəŋ! (20) Àkpəŋ à àyo nə ngal ndzɛɛ, Dòrò à àvaŋaŋ

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ngələvɛ̀, wə àyo nə nyə dzə, mə à tàgha ite. (21) Mə à àtùmì mə àkə̀ bəndumanyaŋ. (22) Inde, Àkpə̀ŋ ipari ìnùŋ à kili. (23) Dòrò à àvaŋaŋ, àyo: Àkpə̀ŋ vaŋaŋ nsə̀ŋ iyə̀: (24) Ngal Àkpə̀ŋ à àyo nə̀ nyə dzə, Àkpə̀ŋ à tàgha. (25) Dòrò sə adu abip ngal Akpə̀ŋ; mbee mbɛt !. (26) Dòrò à àpari ìnùŋ, à kili. (27) Àkpə̀ŋ à àlirì, àvaŋaŋ a mbus, ngal nyə yo ndzə, ndu wamàŋ, àpolə tàgha nə̀ mə ambus iyə̀.

(28) Àbòk Àkpə̀ŋ àtèmə̀ŋ, Àkpə̀ŋ à àkə̀ ayə̀ŋ bòbə mbyə a bəndumanyaŋ ben. (29) Àkpə̀ŋ à àyo nə̀ ngal ndzə, yàhaŋ adə̀ŋ, tə̀ àdu akə̀ nə̀ ayɔnə̀ŋ. (30) Inde, Àkpə̀ŋ nə̀ ngal bɔ inaŋsi

(31)Kɛɛ ilɛmə̀ŋ, Dòrò àvaŋaŋ, à lɛ̀ɛ, Àkpə̀ŋ, vaŋaŋ nsə̀ŋ ivə̀. (32) Àkpə̀ŋ nə̀ àdee naŋaŋasi, Àkpə̀ŋ vaŋaŋ nsə̀ŋ iyə̀!. (33) Àbokte, Àkpə̀ŋ à àyo nə̀ nyə̀ ndzə, Àkpə̀ŋ vaŋaŋ nsə̀ŋ iyə̀ ! , Àkpə̀ŋ vaŋaŋ nsə̀ŋ iyə̀ ! (34) Àwòlə̀ à àkulì à àyo kɛɛ lè, Àkpə̀ŋ à àlòm bòbə mbyə abə Dòrò. (35) Àbòk bòbə mbyə bɔ anɛn ìdò Dòrò, inde, bɔ bə akə̀ nəDòrò zûm ! Dòrò àdu à àkə̀, abèrbì ìngə̀ŋ a yɔ.

(36) Dòrò à tə̀ adu akùlì avè abə Àkpə̀ŋ ki inɛn mbyə, ikək məbɔ̀ à tə̀ ìdoghɔ̀ŋ àkùlì abip Àkpə̀ŋ. (37Ngə̀ ibɔ̀ŋ tə̀ Àkpə̀ŋ à àyɔ̀ŋ mbyə, ngə Àkpə̀ŋ iwɔ mbɛt nə̀ Dòrò.

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Free Translation

The Hare (Àkpàŋ) and the Cynocephalus (Dòrò)

(1) Mr. Hare and Mr. Cynocephalus were fiends. (2) At that time, hunger persisted in their community. (3) Àkpàŋ had nothing at home to eat with his children. (4)Mr. Cynocephalus was a good hunter and used to kill animals and sell them to others. (5)Mr. Hare went, met him and asked him, how much is the meat? (6)Mr. Cynocephalus replied: I cannot sell my meat to you; I rather have a simple condition for giving you the meat. (7)This is the sole price to pay: in the morning, I beat you; in the evening, I beat you again and so on and so forth. (8)Therefore, Mr. Hare asked his wife; what are we going to do? (9) His wife told him that they were overwhelmed with hunger that they had no other choice, and they accepted the offer. (10) Àkpàŋ took the meat. (11) His wife cooked it, and they ate.

(12)In the morning, Mr. Cynocephalus came to Mr. Hare's compound and told him, comes outside here! (13)Mr. Hare went out. (14) Mr. Cynocephalus seriously beat him, what a whip! (15)Then, Mr Hare entered his house, and Cynocephalus went away. (16)In the evening, Mr. Cynocephalus came again and whipped Mr. Hare. (17)When Cynocephalus went away, Mr Hare began to think how he and his family will overcome the situation. (18)Mr. Hare felt that he and his wife were overwhelmed with whips. (19) Mr. Hare was an intelligent man. Therefore; he exclaimed no! No! What a whip! (20) He told his wife that if Mr. Cynocephalus comes there; tell him that I am not around. (21) I am going to my uncles (mother's brothers) I am overwhelmed with whips, whips are beyond me. (22) Mr. Hare went to his uncles and come back. (23) As he came back, in the following morning, Mr. Cynocephalus came and shouted: Mr. Hare, come outside here! (24)Mr. Hare replied: no! His wife went out and Mr. Cynocephalus whips her, whips her, what a whip! (25)He whipped Hare's wife until… and went back home. (26)When Mr. Hare came back, his wife told him that she was overwhelmed with whips and that the situation was out of her control. (27) In the meantime, Mr. Hare brought dogs from his trip. (28) He tells his wife: "Do not shout again; stay quiet." (29)Therefore, she stayed quiet and they began to wait for the Cynocephalus arrival.

(30)The following morning arrived and Mr. Cynocephalus came once more. (31) He shouted, "Mr. Hare come outside here!" Mr Hare did not come. (32) He shouted again, "Mr. Hare come outside here, you accepted the deal and I am going to show you what I amf ! "

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(33)As soon as he stopped shouting, Mr Hare instantly replied imitating him in his nose, Mr Hare come outside here, Mr. Hare come outside here. (34) Thereafter, he sent the dogs he brought from his uncles to bite Cynocephalus zûm! Mr. Cynocephalus rushed and climbed on a tree.

(35) Since that day, the Cynocephalus does not dare to come to Mr. Hare's house because of fear of dogs. (36) Since then, when Mr. Cynocephalus meets up with a dog in the bush, he cuts a branch of tree and beats him until he dies.

(37) If Mr. Hare was not cunning enough and went to bring dogs from his uncles, he and his wife would die whips from Cynocephalus.

8.8. Conclusion

In this chapter, we have examined the prerequisites and foundations for effective language standardisation. We have discussed the criteria for identifying a reference dialect. A standard language is characterised by the mutual intelligibility between / among its dialects, its geographic expansion, its internal social cohesion, its vitality, prestige and uniformity. This discussion led me to argue that Bəmbələ, with its about 56.200 speakers, its attested intergenerational transmission, the willingness of its speakers to commune with the researchers and to be part of their language committee, is viable for standardisation. With the choice of a reference standard model, we have established the alphabet and the orthography of the language. Bəmbələ has 34 graphemes made up of 24 consonants, 8 vowels and 3 tones. The orthography principles we established are the backbone of the standardisation of Bəmbələ. The chapter ends with a sample text illustrating the application of the established principles.

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CHAPTER 9

THE IMMERSION APPROACH FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE BƆMBƆLƆ STANDARD MODEL

9.1. Introduction

This chapter describes the immersion approach applied for the promotion of the prescribed Bàmbələ standard model. It therefore traces out the activities that underlay the production of the materials in the field, notably with the community. The chapter is essentially focused on the practical activities, the procedure we adopted for the community to be part and parcel of material development. The pedagogical grammar, as one of the core constituents of the work is developed in an independent chapter, the next chapter indeed. This chapter is divided into five sections. The first section discusses the relevance of the adopted model for the revitalisation of the language in the field. The second section addresses the issue of the sensitisation of the community, a crucial aspect in field language development. As for the third section, it studies the procedure we used to produce the different materials. The fourth section recounts the life of the researcher in the field while the last one comments on the issue of language committee in language revitalisation.

9.2. Relevance of the model adopted for the field revitalisation of Bàmbələ

In this section we address the relevance of the model adopted for the field revitalisation of Bàmbələ, notably the immersion approach. Before getting there, it is worth defining what immersion is.

Originally, immersion is a method of teaching a second language in which the target language is used as the means of instruction. The target language is used here as a teaching tool, surrounding students in the second language. It allows the learner to spend time in an environment operating solely in the target language. Today, with field linguistics, and anthropological linguistics, it has become a useful method in the process of language revitalisation.

According to Grenoble and Whaley (2006), there are six main methods for language revitalisation, namely total immersion, partial-immersion, the local language as a second

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"foreign language" language, community-based programmes, master-apprentice programme and language reclamation model. We shall briefly explain each of the method below

Total immersion allows the researcher to be fully immersed in the native community of the language he is developing. On the contrary, in partial immersion, not only the researcher is not fully immersed, but also, he conducts some classes in the local language and some in the language of wider communication. In the local language as a second "foreign language" model, local languages introduced in school settings are viewed as something "foreign" to learners. The master-apprentice programme, developed in 1992 in California to address language vitality, helps to produce apprentice-graduates who are conversationally proficient in the target language and are prepared to teach it to others. Finally, the language reclamation model refers to the revival or reclamation of languages, which are no longer spoken. It deals with resuscitation and awakening.

Among all the methods presented above, total immersion, the model we adopted for this study, is known as the best option to revitalise a language. Although the target of the immersion approach model is language learners or community members, the researcher himself/herself, through immersion also learns the language. This model is then built on common sense premise that the best way to learn (at the same time the language development agent teaches, he also learns) a language is to create an environment in which that language, and only that language is used constantly. This model is convenient to communities where there is still some speaker base to draw form in creating the immersion environment. It is true; it is not always easy to handle such a model for researchers or agents in charge of developing the language. Most often, they are not speakers of the language, they are outsiders. This model requires that all field instructions be conducted in the local language with the researcher living in the community.

Although I was compelled to speak French during our working sessions, the main target of our activities was the mother tongue. This model is also pragmatic in that it allows the researcher(s) to acquire, through his long-stay in the community and with community members, the local culture, to live with the local people, and to have a privilege for a day-to-day exposure to the language he is developing.

In field linguistics, the total immersion approach goes beyong immersion in language learning, notably in second language learning. In the case of field immersion that falls within the framework of language revitalisation, s/he who immerses himself is the researcher not the

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learner. He gets into direct touch with the people and the natural milieu of the language s/he is developing. Then, he acquires the natural ability to learn the language and the local culture through language development activities and exposure to the natural environment. Otherwise, the total immersion approach in language development aims at building the researcher's language and cultural competence through the acquisition of at least basic interpersonal communication skills (Cummins 1979). This is useful for daily communication purposes and as a strategy for easing field activities. Furthermore, in the field of language revitalisation, immersion is perceived as a bi-directional cost-effective research tool. Here, both the researcher and the community benefit from the language development project. The researcher is at the same time a learner and an agent of development in the community. The language development agent is different from that researcher who comes in the community, gathers his materials then leaves. The activity of the later is self-centred while in the case of he who acts as language development agent, his activities are community-based. The immersion approach in language revitalisation through its characteristics has given birth today to a new field in linguistics called "anthropological linguistics".

For the model to be fruitfully implemented, the community must be highly involved in the activities. Her conviction is only possible if the researcher has successfully conducted a strategic sensitisation to value the work.

9.3. Sensitisation of the community: a strategic task

When a linguist, researcher and essentially an outsider settles in a community in the perspective of developing the language of that community, s/he must first find the strategies that will allow him / her to build an acceptable and conducive environment for the success of his/her action and activities. This goes through the sensitisation of local people. The main goal of sensitisation is to capture the responsiveness of the native speakers and convince them to contribute and collaborate through their effective participation, to the success of the development of their language through empowerment.

Most often, according to the ideas spread all over the years about our local languages, even some of those who speak these languages as natives do not perceive any interest in their development. This behaviour is usually construed from the underestimation glued to our mother tongues since the colonial era, and consciously or unconsciously nurtured at a given moment by our national, regional or local governments. Although in these days, the situation is changing,

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most people are still not convinced of the role played by their language in their education and development. This is the case of most African mother tongues because nowadays, some Africans have developed as their mother mother a foreign language. It is actually the case of English and French in Cameroon as pointed out by Bitjaa (2001). Thus, to convince the population to adhere to the project, language promoters should establish strategic programmes for sensitisation.

Hence, as soon as I arrived in the Bəmbələ community, thanks to an invitation (done from the local council), we invited twenty-seven people, selected on the basis of their assumed willingness to attend a general sensitisation meeting a few days after. The local traditional ruler assisted me with his dignitaries to identify and select those people. Most of the invitees attended the meeting. This is where and how we started to involve community members in literacy activities. Following is a table presenting the list of those who participated to the meeting.

Table 45: Participants at the first sensitisation meeting in Bibey

Name	**age**	**sex**	**occupation**	**Level of study**
Mrs. Dong Esther		Female	housewife	Primary school
Mrs. Meyama Marthe		Female	housewife	Primary school
Kpeka Désiré	34	Male	cultivator	Secondary education
Endjanga Fréderic	45	Male	Farmer	Primary education
Bekono Jean Marie	46	Male	Farmer	Primary education
Bouloug Richard	47	Male	farmer	Secondary education
Zanga Marie	46	female	housewife	
Ndong Blaise	24	Male	student	Higher education
Nang Joseph	42	Male	farmer	Secondary education
Biton Helene	48	Male	housewife	Primary education
Ngouldjock Gearges	38	Male	farmer	Primary education
Nyikoe Marlyse	24	female	student	secondary
Nkouma Sandjock J.Pierre	26	male	farmer	Primary school
Ndock Obam	47	male	farmer	Primary school
Ndongo Sabo Michel	60	male	Notable/ president of the customary court	Secondary school
Eboko Isabelle	30	Female	housewife	
Ndongo Oscarine	50	female	housewife	Secondary education
Sabeng Emini	62	male	traditional ruler	
Ekek Lazare	45	male	farmer	Sedondary

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				education
Mbat Ndong Ernest	48	male	farmer	Secondary education
Sangon Benjamin	36	male	farmer	Secondary education
Ekol Jean Roi	47	male	farmer	Primary education
Andjongo Ghislain	39	male	farmer	Secondary school
Sakom Bernard	38	male	farmer	Primary education
Ndong NdjockGaspard	69	male	retired	Primary education
Andjongo Paul	38	male	farmer	Secondary school
Nkok Bipane Achille	28	male	farmer	Primary education
Sandjock Zacharie	29	male	farmer	Secondary school

The sensitisation campaign consisted in:

- explaining to community members the role and goal of our presence in the community;
- explaining to the native-speakers the role of language committee in the socio-economic, political and cultural development of the community;
- encouraging parents to take care of the intergenerational transmission of the language;
- inviting the local population to effectively cooperate all along the execution of the project;
- inviting the population to be part of the programme we (I and the local people) were to establish for the development of the language.

We raised a special attention on the issue of dialectal differences (not as a source of conflict) and the need to develop a standard model for all. In fact, sensitisation on dialectal differences and dialect unification in the written form is a crucial task in the promotion of a language. Community members were instructed to preserve a unique written form of their language while at the speaking level, every speaker keeps his/ her own dialectal accent. Community members were all informed on the advantages of dialect unification.

The invitees were informed that sociologically, dialect unification (in its written form), is a source of unification, social cohesion for speakers when mutual intelligibility is attested. This does not imply that the oral use of the language in all its dialectal components is a source of

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problem. In fact, unity is prescribed for the written form, but not at the oral level. From an economic point of view, documents are produced in one dialect and its costs are reduced. It goes alike with personnel training which will be less expensive with the development of one dialect.

Sensitisation of Bàmbəlà community members consisted in presenting the advantages of a common written model, in instructing them on the broadcasting and popularisation of the standard norm. In addition, the speakers of the non-standard dialect were invited to show a conducive and positive attitude towards the standard norms. According to Watters (1989), this attitude favours social cohesion.

It was not always easy to convince everybody on the above stated facts in the Bàmbəlà community. Whenever we went in the community, we were compelled to provide strong argumentation in order to clarify, convince and reinsure some incredulous native speakers. Bàmbəlà speakers were already aware of their dialectal differences and their mutual intelligibility. Therefore, a much more accent on sensitisation galvanised them and led them towards the understanding of the necessity of dialect unification.

This sensitisation campaign was generalised in the whole linguistic area because it was a continuous activity. Wherever we went, we were obliged to proceed alike and say the same thing given that community members usually have the same degree of interest or the same concern. The sensitisation campaigns were synchronised according to our working days. Most often, from one locality to another, we were accompanied at least by a native speaker, neo-learner, who already mastered the contours and concepts of the project and who could easily explain the goal of the project to his fellows in the local language. S/he was acting as facilitator.

As pointed out above, when we arrived in that locality, we met the local traditional rulers at first (who usually helped me in the organisation of sensitisation campaigns), and other authorities. In fact, everywhere we went, local people were astonished and exclaimed: "*À tàgha ambəlà, à tà alaŋ, à tà anɔk Bàmbəlà, inde a vè à alaŋ nà bèès: " mà avè ayəklì bànəŋ alaŋ nà acìl ìlaŋì yes*". Otherwise, "he does not speak nor understand our language, however he comes and tells us that he is going to teach us how to write and read it, it is strange!" Fortunately, the earlier facilitators who assisted me when we arrived in the field were always present to channel the sentiments and reiterate the idea behind the project. Sensitisation campaigns took place until

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the end of our fieldwork activities. They were spread over urban centres, mainly in Yaoundé. In general, sensitisation helped in the continuation of literacy activities in Bəmbələ because it was also intended to cure those minds who were still doubting the capability of the local language to favour local developent. This sensitisation was then the first factor whose success or failure will condition the participation of the population, native speakers and learners to whom the programme was destined. The involvement of the local population, even to a lesser extent, showed the positive reaction and reception of the programme in the community through collaboration. Otherwise, I could not continue to implement the project.

9.4. Promotion of the standard model through training

This section shows how the developed model was promoted through the training of local people. It is indeed during the training sessions that we were also able to acquire the elementary grammatical structures of the language for day-to-day communication. Furthermore, training sessions allowed us to gather materials useful for elaborating the different booklets we produced. Among these materials, is found the pedagogical grammar elaborated in the framework of this study and whose guidelines are developed in a full chapter of the work.

9.4.1. Promotion of the standard model through literacy classes

The initial literacy classes we organised in the field were firstly to establish and validate the alphabet and the orthography principles we elaborated before. This was in fact, the first step to build a community-based orthography, an orthography made with the community and for the community as we mentioned in the preceding chapter.

Literacy begins with reading and writing. This is why we started the promotion of the standard model by training local people to write and read. The training took the form of literacy classes where participant observation was the main data elicitation technique, formal classroom the main setting and teacher / student role-playing the teaching- learning strategy. This was the occasion to gather useful data for the elaboration of the pedagogical grammar. Literacy in Bəmbələ within the community started the very day we met with the speakers (native) to set up the working plan of our activities. Thereafter, the following days, we started elaborating, testing and validating the alphabet, and then the orthography, identifying the keywords, short sentences

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for the conception of the wall alphabet and alphabet book. In fact, literacy activities in this community were presented according to the following three (3) axes:

a. Teach volunteer speaker-hearers to write and read their language through an alphabet and a well-established orthography. After a few months of apprenticeship / learning, some neo-learners could be able to acknowledge / recognise, identify and read any grapheme. They could be able to find a concrete word (within which is found the grapheme, focus of the lesson of the day), which materialised the graphemes, and finally, use it in a short sentence. This was a huge task, because we were not a speaker of the language. Consequently, in our classes we used French and Bəmbələ (French-Bəmbələ / Bəmbələ-French);

b. Literacy allowed us to identify and solve some problems related to those speakers who were literate in French and who had the possibility for self-literacy in their language. With the contribution / assistance of some neo-literates who already knew how to read and write, we elaborated some manuals. This was done alternatively with the teaching activities;

c. Literacy classes were those instances where we were able to identify community members who could possibly be empowered and later on become trainers of the trainers. During alphabetisation classes, we could collect few texts, thanks to neo-literates for the elaboration of the primer.

During this stage of our many activities, we were obliged to move from one area to another in order to set up new literacy centres and to teach. Normally, in each area, classes took place twice a week and were organised as follows:

- Test of orthography: the strategy here was to start from what is known to what is unknown. We began with those graphemes and rules that also exist in French (given that learners were almost all literate in French) to those specific to Bəmbələ;

- Presentation of the whole alphabet: this activity was done in collaboration with the learners in the vein of improving on what we initially established;

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- Systematic presentation of the alphabet: at the beginning of each session (teaching session), we revised the previous lesson and the alphabet. Each learner went to the board and read the wall alphabet we built on a large sheet of paper (A2), which was pasted on the board at the beginning of each session (see the illustration below). This was an exceptional opportunity for evaluating neo-learners' knowledge acquisition speed and aptitudes, and their different areas of difficulties and then providing efficient panacea to solve them.

This picture shows a woman, Mrs Ndong reading the Bàmbəlà alphabet on an A2 paper in Bibey

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We structured our training sessions according to the observation from our previous classes as follows:

- Overview of the alphabet, pronunciation;
- Lesson 1: known graphemes. Here, we studied those vowels, consonants that neo-literates know from French;
- Lesson 2: graphemes of identical spelling but with (a) different pronunciation, tones and spelling (which tone do we have to write and where?);
- Lesson 3: same as lesson 2; each letter was illustrated by a word and a short sentence capable of being illustrated;
- Lesson 4: the nasals that precede some consonants;
- Lesson 5: group of letters, labialised and palatalised consonants,

- Lesson 6: Unknown graphemes (those difficult to read and write). I raised awareness on letters such as *ɛ, ə, ŋ, ɔ*; etc;
- Lesson 7: tones and spelling: which tone to write and where?;
- Lesson 8: orthographic principles, punctuation and capitals.

The issues addressed as from lesson 3 allowed us to start the elaboration of the manuals. Many activities took place at the same time:

The order of these lessons is strategic. As from lesson 1, we started practicing exercises. Each learner went to the board, wrote a word and a sentence within which was found the grapheme which was to be read aloud. Together, we proceeded to the possible corrections (if there were any).

Each of the lessons was not taught in only one session. Generally, we allocated three (3) sessions of four (4) hours each per lesson. But, in case learners expressed certain shortcomings, an additional session was added to tackle the problem.

9.4.2. Promotion of the standard model through elaboration of reference documents

Initiation to reading and writing is a decisive step in reference materials production. In fact, as we can observe, at the same time we were instructing local people on how to learn, we were also working out strategies for material production. Our intention in this section is not to explain the techniques of the production of the reference documents because they could be found in Tadadjeu et.al (2004), Gudshinsky (1973), Van Dyken & Mba (1993), but to focus on how the activities that lead to the elaboration of the documents were conducted.

Most of the aspects of the documents were elaborated during literacy classes while others were built outside the classroom through personal observation, discussions and talk with community leaders and storytelling. Notwithstanding, after elaboration in class, we checked accuracy together. Some sessions were geared towards special issues related to the type of the document we were expected to build within that limited period. At the end of the teaching on reading and writing, neo-learners were already able to write and read simple sentences. This was the stage where the alphabet chart, the alphabet book and the transitional manual were elaborated. Each time we started the elaboration of a new document in class, lessons were

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organised in such a way as to gather information on the type of contents to build and to target the aspect of the manual to be elaborated.

The elaboration of the primer required a special attention in that it did not involve only classroom instructions, but we had to collect texts for analysis. The texts were mostly collected through elders and in the evening when they were free from their farm work. This was also time for relaxation around the fire in the *mban* (local hut in front of the main house where men usually meet to share their meals and discuss local issues). In addition to my recorder, we always had my note book and a pencil to take down interesting data. The texts were further subjected to analysis. The words gathered for the elaboration of the lexicon were also collected as our literacy classes, and different field activities went on. We usually walked with my note book to write down all what sounded interesting for further analysis.

Special sessions were devoted to the training of how to elaborate big books. Those special sessions took ten days. Through an example, we instructed the learners on how to construct the lessons of their document by themselves.

9.5. Trotting within the community to generalise the model

The promotion of the developed standard model was not only the matter of those community members who were around the area where we settled. We went to the different local areas to instruct other local people on how to read and write the language. We had to move on foot, to run long distances on foot because of lack of means of transportation.

The strategy was very simple. Every time we wanted to move from one locality to another, we moved with a neo-learner who could possibly facilitate communication. Once in the locality, the first step was to contact the local authorities, commencing from the local traditional ruler: this is fundamental in field contacts. When the contacts were secured, the first day during which we explained to everybody the goal of my presence, we could discuss about and schedule the first meeting day. Then, I and my facilitator could go back.

When the meeting day came, we went back to the community, and according to the terms and conditions established during our previous discussions, those who were expected to be the first learners came to the literacy centre. Generally, once the contact with the traditional ruler was established, he was the intermediary between me and the director of the nearby primary school to negotiate the acquisition of a classroom where our literacy sessions would henceforth

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take place. Our literacy classes were shaped according to the model already described above. During lectures, we could collect new words, and out of the class, new texts.

Sometimes, classes could not take place because neo-learners were occupied by their farm work, although we initially built a convenient timetable together. This was usually during the sowing and the harvesting periods. In such situations, during the following class, we planned a catch up class or added an extra hour to accomplish the planned activities.

Most of the time, in the majoty of the areas where we went, the local traditional ruler lodged me. This was so because the first facilitator we had was a local powerful man whose "word of mouth" only could have a great influence. We could trot to Bibey, Bibea, Nsem, Minta, among other areas, to promote the standard model and assess local people's reception of the project.

9.6. The researcher and the immersion approach

Ethically, if a fieldworker is not wanted in a community, s/he would not stay in that community. A fieldworker will only go and stay in a community which welcomes him/her and the work s/he is doing.

Dixon (2007) points out that usually, when a language is still spoken as a first language by everyone in the community, such a community is likely to welcome a stranger or outsider who wishes to learn her language and to provide whatever linguistic feedback the community requests.

The total immersion approach is an opportunity to the researcher to get involved in the natural milieu of the language, to chat with local people. This occasion allows the field researcher to learn the language at the same time he is developing and teaching it.

We could learn the local culture, acquire day-to-day communication tools and try to speak the language. Through daily exposure to the local culture and local people, we could learn their social know-how, try to get assimilated. We went to the farm, went to fetch water, played in the field with other young people.

In general, we had many consultants outside classrooms in each locality. However, usually, we had two to three permanent language consultants who were elders who could no more carry out effective farm work and who spent most of their time at home. With such

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consultants, we had to arrange a timetable such that we worked with each of them for two successive days.

A mistake one should not make as a young researcher without sustainable financial means is to start fieldwork by providing substantial concrete financial compensation to one's language consultants. If so, this could make a special resonance in the community such that everywhere the researcher goes, he is asked for incentives from his consultants, regularly or at times. What could be done to motivate the consultants is giving them recompense in kind, by systematically checking what they like and granting them to whom it may concerned when necessary. In that community, we noticed that men usually like red wine, whereas women were in need of some common goods such as soap, and salt. What we usually did then was keeping a bottle of red wine to each of the men consultants and soap and salt for women from time to time. This was not in fact to be considered as a pay for the job they were doing, but as a gift in respect of services rendered. This had to be considered as a gift because it was exactly like a service rendered by a community member to his fellow. Since field situations are different, if a consultant has a regular job, the language researcher should arrange to have time off to work with him.

In immersion field research, one builds a relationship with each of a small coterie of intelligent reliable language consultants. The consultant should move on the same speed as the linguist, understand what he is trying to do and help him to learn the language. The consultant may even anticipate in what the linguist is looking for. This is the result of a priceless community-based, immersion-related partnership. The researcher must integrate the community in order to be accepted to the extent that could allow him carry out the research.

From what precedes, we notice that in the field, within the perspective of revitalising the language of a community, the linguist must be working simultaneously on many fronts; six of them being prominent:

a) becoming part of the community and beginning to learn to speak the language. This will give you more esteem;

b) collecting data for elicitation;

c) recording and analysing texts;

d) developing a standard model for the language;

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e) promoting the standard model developed;

f) developing basic reference materials.

We usually checked the accuracy of my data by asking native speakers to listen and to correct me, by constructing short sentences and asking them to check their correctness. A mistake we usually avoided was to record our texts and transcribe them out of the field. We transcribed them at home when they were recorded thanks to a recorder, then the following day, we went to my consultants to check the accuracy of the transcription.

All the issues evoked above show that when the researcher is welcomed in the community of the language s/he is going to develop; s/he must assimilate into the community, immerge into the community and try as far as possible to acquire the good local cultural habits. These considerations will pave the way to the success of his field activities.

Because the different activities carried out by the researcher are community driven, since s/he is an outsider and must leave the community at some point in time, s/he must empower the community such that even after his departure, the literacy activities could continue. In Cameroon, in general, in such contexts, the linguist fieldworker, before leaving the community sets a local entity that will continue the promotion of the language and look after its correct usage at least at the level of writing. This approach will also favour learning by doing in the community because as Mba (2007: 38) points out "the learning by doing process will better be a way to acquire ownership and boost the local managerial capacities."

Every field research being exclusive, every field researcher must mould his or her strategies to match the very situation s/he faces. It is therefore worth pointing out that for a collaborative fieldwork, many potential obstacles are to be overcome by the researcher in order to maintain an ongoing working relationship with community members. To overcome these obstacles the researcher must plan his activities tactfully.

9.7. Towards the end of the immersion

As we pointed out above, when the researcher is already about to leave the field, s/he must build a socio-scientific and technical framework that will take care of the promotion of the language. The creation of this structure is also the task of the fieldworker because the empowerment of the community also falls within the different activities he must carry out. This

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structure is called “language committee”. In this sub-section, we are going to recall the main characteristics of a “language committee” before describing how we set the Bàmbəlà local language committee which is still in the making.

9.7.1. Some general characteristics and the role of language committee in language development

A language committee is the ideal framework or local organisation for the promotion of a language.

The creation and functioning of language committees has however not gone without challenges. According to the model proposed by NACALCO and briefly recalled by Nforbi (2000), a language committee is made up of the following:

a. President and a vice;

b. Secretary and a vice;

c. treasurer;

d. financial secretary;

e. technical adviser;

f. Auditors;

g. literacy co-ordinators, translation co-ordinators, a publication officer,

This constitutes the administrative part of a language committee as organisation. Beyond this consideration, it is also an academy.

The first motive behind the creation of every language committee is the development of the language and literacy (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) in the language. This explains why the term academy has been used to describe a language committee. Another motive is to raise awareness towards reading and writing in the local language. This requires the intervention of influential people. This academy serves within the context of socio-cultural development more like a technical body than a socio-political body. The team should be capable of addressing issues related to technical knowledge on matters related to the development of the language and literacy work.

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Given that the language committee is the literacy agency at the grassroots where language promotion and development is conceived, planned, coordinated and popularised, its members should be aware of a number of factors that could come up as a hindrance to the evolution or success of the activities of their language committee. Normally, the language committee trains personnel, ensures material production and evaluation through general supervision. It also plays a crucial role in sensitisation and mobilisation. In addition, it raises awareness on issues such as language development and dialect unification. It collects raw materials, secures funds and establishes a synergy between the different community literacy-centres. Therefore, if the language committee is dynamic, it can be evaluated on its ability to stimulate and strengthen awareness and stability within the network for the success of the community literacy programme. Chiatoh (2004) argues that community response within a language committee is determined by three closely related factors: acceptance, participation and ownership. He further adds that the interrelationship among these factors determines the degree of community commitment for self-sustaining literacy promotion. However, taking into account the prevailing economic situation of Cameroonian population, there is room for asking if self-sustaining literacy is thoroughly possible even if these factors are applicable. The overall role of each language committee in the process of language revitalisation falls within the framework established above.

In the perspective of language revitalisation and anthropological linguistics, a language committee has a priceless role to play. As some researchers (Chiatoh 2004), Sadembouo (2001), Nforbi (2001) demonstrated, in Cameroon, language development cannot be successful without the implication and commitment of the community. In fact, the community, in view of ensuring self-sustaining literacy promotion, must be part of the overall initiatives undertaken. As we already mentioned above, the language committee, a socio-cultural and scientific agency for the promotion of the language and its culture, plays the most important role at this stage. This role must favour the culture of acceptance, involvement / participation and ownership.

a. cceptance

The concept of acceptance refers to the acknowledgement of the value of literacy in the community. This value covers the process of social change, cultural, economic and political concerns of the community. The socio-cultural and linguistic levels bring out the degree of affection of community members to their language and culture, so as the role they do play in their daily life. Language committee and the community as a whole cultivate this idea of

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acceptance to restore their ethnic cultures and to ease access to written information in the language and the domain of religious knowledge.

b. Participation

It has been attested that the role of community collaboration and participation is of towering importance in the process of language development. There cannot be ownership without participation i.e. the readiness for the community to encourage and support the development of her language and playing roles and responsibilities in the promotion activities as an indication of the firm commitment that the community has built in the programme. Participation is a vital step in literacy promotion. It results from motivation and self-esteem of each community member. This implies that within a community, as understanding grows, motivation progressively raises up and so too, resources could be easily mobilised after a massive involvement of all in the language development process.

However, the pace of community participation is not always what the language developer expects. The low speed of community participation is usually explained by the fact that literacy activities do not directly generate income. People like participating in those activities that generate direct profit. In rural areas too, local people do not find it useful wasting their time for nothing. They lack deep enthusiasm indeed. Yet, if some native speakers did not participate; the project would be a failure.

Participation also implies taking part in decision making and achieving the different activities built in the programme. Through language committee, the community acquires certain know-how, a greater skill, and awareness for challenge, due to the difficulties faced in the activities of literacy promotion. Participation is mirrored in commitment, and deep involvement to guarantee long lasting promotion and revitalisation activities. It involves through language committee, personal training, literature production, mobilisation of funds and people, sensitisation of the community. Participation is worthwhile because it allows the community to evaluate herself and determine her strengths and weaknesses, and be able to prescribe by themselves the possible and efficient panacea to cure their problems and improve on their programmes through adjustments. Finally, through language committee, the community expresses her readiness to become part of the project and give her best for its accomplishment.

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c. Ownership

Ownership means that the community has grasped the project. In fact, it shows that the community has effectively taken the responsibility to elaborate policies and implement them for the success of literacy promotion. Ownership implies the acquisition of high skills necessary for the promotion of literacy and the solving of language technical problems. It also entails the capacities to manage human, financial or material resources. It shows that the community has become the central actor for literacy and language promotion in all its aspects. Ownership is a pragmatic expression of the community for the achievement of self and long-lasting promotion of the literacy programme at all levels. Awareness is still to be arisen in this community where literacy is an almost new concept and activity.

Community entails empowerment as a vital strategy that consists in acquiring competencies in areas known as sensitive for the management of literacy in the community. These areas include technical orientation, financial resources and equipment, literacy monitors, school teachers, authors and writers and finally supervisors.

Language committee has the ultimate role of mobilising the community so that sensitisation and education both at the local and national levels (within the same community) should be the concern of everybody. When the language committee is known as active, training of neo-literates is ensured and the agency can benefit from the public presentation of attestation granted to a new batch of learners in order to broaden sensitisation and raise awareness. As Chiatoh (op cit) points out, church announcements, world literacy day, national feasts day, world mother tongue day are strategies or channels through which sensitisation can be expanded, and community mobilised.

Through the language committee, each linguistic community must effectively own the development of her language. Therefore, the degree of involvement of the community in literacy activities both at the local level and outside the community expresses its capacity of owning all the developmental processes of the language through full implication. The more a community is dynamic in the activities of developing her language, the better the success of these activities and the less the degree of endangerment of the language. The community acts as the backdrop for the development of her language. As the previous pieces of research pointed out shows, no literacy or language development activity can succeed without a prior implication of the community (Sadembouo 2001 & Chiatoh 2004).

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The training of local leaders (usually neo-learners), the active functioning of language committee depend on the quality of teaching techniques acquired, and applied by trainees. The activities for safeguarding and revitalisation cannot be perennial without the empowerment and the ownership of the community. Hence, community leaders must be trained and an agency in charge of regulating the development of the language settled down. This agency must take care of the development of the language at all its various stages.

9.7.2. Raising awareness and setting up the Bəmbələ language committee

In this sub-section we are concerned with how I and the local people set up the embryonic language committee of Bəmbələ whose texts and statuses are yet to be formalised. It might be worth pointing out that the setting of a language committee, its management, be it embryonic, requires a certain degree of awareness of its essence from the local population. The fieldworker only successfully raises this awareness when s/he is carrying out his many field activities. As previously mentioned, setting up a language committee underlies the fact that the project has been accepted, local people have participated, and at the end of the project, they are empowered and try to own it.

In spite of some misunderstandings from local people or native speakers of the language, in spite of some misinterpretations, we can state that the participation of the community was admirable. It could not be otherwise, the project being community-centred. Its acceptance was one of the cornerstones for its success. If at all costs we completed our goal, it was thanks to this participation even to a lesser extent.

In order to live and work in the Bəmbələ community, we first organised a meeting during which the main issue on the agenda was the building of this agency, the local language committee. It was an exceptional circumstance during which we explained to community leaders and members the role and structure of a language committee. A community leader, who was already aware and well-acquainted with the utility and validity of such an agency, thanks to individual experience, clearly explained to his fellows the why and how they must own the project after my departure from the field. Men, women and children attended the meeting. Participants were advised on the technical and the administrative aspects of the organisation.

Currently, the embryonic Bəmbələ “language committee” whose rules and regulations are yet to be established as mentioned above, is composed of a few members who do not have the

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necessary resources to step forward in the establishment of the structure and in training their local fellows. It is still very young as a group intending to become an organisation and needs follow up in order to ensure the broadening of community literacy activities. The query is then to know who will ensure the follow up, with which means and from where. The answer to these questions is only possible if we find funding for this activity after this work. Before the creation of this group standing for the embryonic language committee, the potential members were advised to avoid bringing Church differences in the functioning of the structure. Furthermore, the Bəmbələ language committee is being reinforced. During the latest training session, community members were counselled on the need of an unavoidable presence of this agency in the community to regulate the promotion of their language and culture at all levels. According to the latest report we got from the field, the group is still truggling to become a committee. However, it is being strengthened, and the first trainees who have become trainers are training some neo-literates and are looking forward to convincing local and external elites for their contribution so that they can effectively settle their language committe and secure finances to continue their activities, even as volunteers.

9.8. Conclusion

The total immersion approach adopted for the promotion of the standard model for revitalising Bəmbələ reveals four main components. Three are addressed in this chapter. At first, the local people must be aware of the model; and this awareness is practically made through a well-planned sensitisation strategy. The strategic sensitisation plan must be shaped according to the expectations of the researcher or the agent and those of the community. Secondly, the training of local leaders and the language committee play a prominent or rather a central role in the promotion of the standard model of the language. Thirdly, for the language of a community to be developed, it must accept the idea of the development, own the project and massively participate in its implementation. Empowerment shall then be followed by ownership. The standard model must be promoted using the reference standard documents produced. Among the reference standard materials, we also note the pedagogical grammar. The following chapter of this study addresses this issue in this language.

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CHAPTER 10

THE PEDAGOGIC GRAMMAR OF BƏMBƏLƆ

10.1. Introduction

In this chapter, we elaborate the pedagogical grammar of Bàmbələ. The chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section lays the foundation of the chapter, discussing the different types of grammar. The second section focuses on the definition and the general characteristics of a pedagogical grammar while the third and last point, the core of this chapter, presents the content of the pedagogical grammar of the language under study. The result of the discussion is summarised in a practical document termed "**Grammaire Pratique du bàmbələ**" attached at the end of the work as a booklet.

10.2. The different types of grammar

This sub-section of the study discusses, in brief, the different types of grammar. The number of the different types of grammar varies from one author to another. Nordquist (2006) distinguishes up to ten (10) types of grammar, namely comparative grammar, generative grammar, mental grammar, pedagogical grammar, performance grammar, reference grammar, theoretical grammar, traditional grammar, transformational grammar and universal grammar. Cristal (1997) lists six types of grammar, namely descriptive grammar, pedagogical grammar, prescriptive grammar, reference grammar, theoretical grammar and traditional grammar. As for Domche (2001), there are four types of grammar, namely normative or prescriptive grammar, historical grammar, descriptive grammar with its different streams of thought (transformational, structural, generative; etc.), pedagogical grammar and scientific grammar.

Historical grammar studies the different transformations that occur within a language from a diachronic point of view. It compares the states of changes and transformation of the same language at different times. Comparative grammar can be considered as a subfield of historical linguistics or grammar which is concerned with studying and comparing languages derived from a common original language. Comparative grammar shows whether languages are linked by convergence through borrowing or by genetic descent. It shows that languages are

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capable of changing and are also able to cross-relate. Genetic relatedness implies a common origin or proto-language. Therefore, comparative linguistics has the goal of constructing language families, proto-languages, specifying the changes that have resulted in the language.

Scientific grammar is focused on one language/dialect, and makes use of one and only one method and theory for its analysis. It is essentially addressed to specialists, scientists and has open rules.

Transformational grammar, as presented by Chomsky (1965), deals with the deep structure and the surface structure of an utterance. The deep structure (D-structure) represents the core structure of a sentence which takes an input and changes in some restricted way to result in a surface structure (S-structure). This version of the Chomskyan theory underwent evolution and took the name of Generative grammar. A generative grammar of a language attempts to give a set of rules that will correctly predict which combinations of words will form grammatical sentences. As he argued, many properties of a generative grammar arise from what he calls "innate" universal grammar.

Theoretical grammar or theoretical linguistics is mostly concerned with developing models of linguistic knowledge. This knowledge often evolves around phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics.

Performance grammar deals with the actual production of the speaker of a language. It focuses on what the speaker is actually producing when speaking or writing.

Descriptive grammar aims at revealing the structure (mental grammar) which represents the knowledge a speaker of the language has. It does not attempt to prescribe what speakers' grammars should be. Prescriptive grammar or normative grammar outlines a series of "rules" based essentially on the model of language that is proposed by the educated and the school. It also explains how to use the rules. It fixes the practical rules of the language. Reference grammar is "a prose-like description of the major grammatical constructions" (Lingualinks).

It is not easy to draw a clear-cut line between reference grammar and pedagogical grammar. However, when a reference grammar is organised according to universal structural categories, pedagogical grammar is organised according to usefulness and ease of learning. While pedagogical grammar abounds with exercises, reference grammar consists mostly of explanation based on chapters. Finally, while pedagogical grammar is built for anyone who is

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interested in learning the language, a reference grammar is written for those who have some understanding of language as a universal phenomenon and who wish to know how a given language falls in the understanding of human languages.

The different grammars presented and characterised above can be grouped as follows: specialists' grammar and teaching/learning grammar. Within specialists' grammar therefore, we can find comparative grammar, generative grammar, theoretical grammar, transformational grammar and descriptive grammar, comparative and historical grammar. Normally, the generic term theoretical grammar must be used to typify all the above-cited grammars because they are related to the development of linguistic knowledge. Furthermore, these grammars are restricted to linguistics science specialists. Learning/teaching grammar includes prescriptive grammar, reference grammar and pedagogical grammar. Mental grammar, performance grammar and universal grammar, which actually deal with cognition, belong to any of the categories.

A good grammar includes at least the traditional areas of phonetics, phonology, morphology and syntax. The writing style of a good grammar must be clear: there should be a wealth of data which are authentic and appropriate. "They should be meticulously checked for consistency spelling, glosses, and manner of glosses" (Payne and Weber 2000).

Writing a good specialists' grammar or good learning/teaching grammar is a difficult task, demanding a sound theoretical background, the ability to pursue a well-founded chain of argumentation. From the point of view of style, a good grammar conveys to the reader some of the excitements the linguist experiences while analysing the language. Part of the goal in writing grammar is to make it user-friendly. This explains why facts must be stated in a dry-manner. In the same vein, Payne & Weber (op cit) argue that a good grammar is comprehensive and complete.

From the organisational point of view, it requires one to begin with simpler patterns and move to more complex patterns. Therefore, usually it moves from what we posit that the learner knows or can easily learn to what s/he does not know or can learn with more difficulties. It is progressive in nature like in the process of language acquisition. Each point must be appropriately illustrated with examples. These examples must be comprehensive and attempt to describe every aspect of the structural organisation of the language.

After having described and characterised each type of the grammars, it is worthwhile now focus on the pedagogical grammar, the main concern in this chapter.

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10.3. Pedagogical grammar: some general characteristics

My intention in this sub-section is to define and discuss the general characteristics of a pedagogical grammar. The concept of pedagogical grammar was elaborated by Corder (1973). To him, pedagogical grammars intend to help the learning process, but are not the object of the learning itself. They help the learner to learn the structure of a specific language.

Pedagogical grammar prescribes and formalises the rules and regulations governing a language. It renders the grammar of that language more accessible to mother tongue (MT) teachers and literacy agents or promoters. It also guides the intuitive knowledge of MT learners towards their ability to write and read. In its search for easing language learning, pedagogical grammar allows young native speakers and illiterate adults to be aware of the grammatical rules and internal structure of their language. The rules and regulations set a reference guide to the learners. It is a description of a given language, which has been created (usually in written form) with the intention of enabling a defined set of learners to learn that language. As such, it is influenced by several external factors: it is written with an audience (learners, native and non-native speakers of the language) in mind. It makes use of one or more linguistic theories in establishing its descriptive framework. It makes a number of assumptions about how learners learn. It often includes or is accompanied by a set of complementary exercises and illustrations.

Oldin (1994) seems to limit the concept of pedagogical grammar to some “types of grammatical analysis and instructions designed for the needs of second language students”. That conception is very restricted because a pedagogical grammar can also be built for first language (L1) learners who are not aware of the rules and regulations governing their language. In fact, an intuitive knowledge of the language does not necessarily guarantee its practical usage. Research demonstrates that those speakers who, even native speakers of the language, learn the grammar of their language in school outperform those who only have an intuitive knowledge of it. By the same token, learning / teaching experience shows that learners who receive formal language instruction outperform those who do not. Pedagogical grammar is therefore rules-oriented, rules-governed to strengthen the learner’s abilities. It follows descriptive grammar (phonology, morphology and syntax) in all the contexts of language development and notably in pedagogical material development.

The aim of a pedagogical grammar is also to help the teacher to construct learning activities targeting a selected grammatical problem and a particular audience.

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The main characteristics of the audience, which have to be borne in mind, are his existing knowledge of other language(s), his existing knowledge of the language to be learnt, his age and set of interests and his knowledge of grammatical terminology.

The pedagogical grammars of African languages must be written with a group of native speakers of those languages. Therefore, if addressed to L2 learners, authors of such grammars must select the items to present on the basis of a contrastive awareness of where the two languages differ, modified by experience as to which differences create genuine learning difficulties. Pedagogical grammars can be written for learners of any level: beginners, intermediate and advanced learners. In each case, authors make assumptions about what the learners already know, depending on whether the learners are native or not, whether the language is lesser-developed, under-developed or well-developed. Pedagogical grammars have to explain how language works: to do so, they make use of a combination of textual explanation and examples. Therefore, the textual explanations must not use terminology, which the audience will not understand. The terminology has to be within their reach. The examples have to be simple and accessible to the learners in order to motivate them to learn and to facilitate the learning process.

Pedagogical grammars have to adopt a frame of reference, which ultimately derives from what linguists have said about the linguistic structure of the language in question. This will vary greatly: French, English, Spanish and German have literally centuries of linguistic scholarship to draw on. Other languages may have less. This is actually the case of most African Languages and the case of Bəmbələ in particular. For the better studied languages, pedagogical grammars usually draw on standard reference grammars and the work of descriptive linguists is to re-interpret the information to be found there. Nevertheless, for lesser-developed or underdeveloped languages, it is not the same case, because of the existence of very few teaching materials in those languages.

In providing an explanation of how a given language works, authors of pedagogical grammars are already making an assumption that explanations help in learning. The pragmatic view is that teaching grammar may explicitly be the only method we have available for learners over the age of seven. Therefore, we must make the process as efficient as possible (Engel & Myles 1996). In fact, usually, for the lesser-developed /described languages, a pedagogical grammar:

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- is designed to teach someone *how to use* a language;
- is organized according *to* usefulness and ease of learning;
- contains chapters which tend to be *short* and contain very brief grammatical explanations;
- contains chapters which consist mostly of *exercises* that help the reader practice and internalise the various structures as well as vocabulary and pronunciation;
- written for anyone who is interested in *learning* a language;
- is built on the strict respect of the writing principles of a language;
- written to promote and popularise the reference standard model of a language;
- built to contribute to the pedagogical material development of a language.

From the point of view of language acquisition, the organisation of the contents of a pedagogical grammar can be influenced by the natural order of the acquisition of the different components of the language. It is commonly believed that a normal human brain comes prime for language acquisition. That is the human being is borne with an innate ability (Chomsky 1975) to acquire sounds, words and generate syntax from the combination of words. This innate ability helps in internalising rules of the native language grammar. Language acquisition starts with vocalisation, with intonation, or with sound acquisition and production (Piaget 1954). After vocalization with intonation comes the different stages of gradual word/vocabulary acquisition with pronouns and then adjectives included. This is normally between 6, 18 and 36 months. By the end of the 36th month, the child starts to acquire verbs. At this stage, the acquisition of the syntax of the language becomes possible. The stages of the acquisition of the different components of the language are clearly expressed through child's language acquisition. It is established that the child first expresses himself through crying. Then, he begins with the acquisition of vowel "a" sound. After this stage, comes cooing and laughing, a stage during which he makes different cooing noises "coo, goo". Therefore, he starts producing unconscious syllables. Stage 3 deals with vocal play. Here, the child begins to use consonants and vowels and is able to make pitch. After this stage, comes stage 4 (25-50 weeks), the Babbling stage, where the child reduplicates sounds, syllables and words that normally do not make sense. The melodic utterance stage (10-13 month) shows a variation in rhythm, melody and tone with production of

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proto words. At about the age of 12-18 months, development rapidly occurs with production of single word utterances, concrete nouns, and holophrastic phrases (couple of words put together which have no grammatical concept). It is believed that at this stage, the child acquires about 10-20 words per month. This is usually followed by over extension (when the child uses the same word to describe many things), under extension (the child knows that there are many bicycles in the world) but faces mismatch (wrong name to something) and begin to use modifiers (add extra words in front of another words). Between 18-24 months, his speech is still inconsistent; he starts to develop syntax.

It has been observed that at the level of the phonology, simple consonants are acquired before complex ones whose acquisition comes a little bit later. In general, children first acquire nasals and labials. As for the vowels, high and central vowels are acquired first.

The acquisition of the morphosyntax also follows a number of stages. At the morphological level, initially, children's speech lacks any internal morphological structure because affixes are entirely absent. Morphemes gradually appear and by the age of five, almost all of them are present in children's speech. At the level of the noun morphology, it is noticed that singular forms of the words are acquired before their plural forms. Nouns are acquired before verbs. As for verb morphology, the child acquires tense and then aspect, before mood. At the level of tense, simple tenses are usually acquired before complex ones. Chronologically, the child acquires the present and the future before the past. The acquisition of aspect begins with perfective and, it is later on that the child begins to exhibit imperfective in his speech. Mood begins with imperative since child's speech is primarily characterised by commands. This is continuously followed by indicative and subjunctive, and other moods as he grows. A child's syntactic system starts with two-words, and then occurs the telegraphic stage. After many months, he is capable of producing longer and more complex syntactic structures which usually lack bound morphemes. So also, these constructions lack non lexical categories (affixes, determiners, auxiliaries, etc.) which appear several months. With the appearance of the grammatical morphemes, changes are observed in development of modalities such as: declaratives, interrogatives, imperatives and negatives. At the level of the different sentence types, imperatives come first in the order of acquisition. After imperatives, occur declaratives and interrogatives. Structurally, the V structure is acquired, then the V+DET, and NP+VP later. This structure gradually becomes complex as the child grows. It is, in fact, when the obligatory sentence modalities (declaratives, imperatives, interrogatives) is acquired that the child develops

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the ability for non-obligatory forms (negation, focus). This order of acquisition of the phonology and the morphosyntax has been attested in African languages, notably in children speaking some Cameroonian languages such as Ewondo (Nkolo (2007) and Nguini 2005)), Nugunu (Ngayambena (2003), and Kenyang (Ayuk (2007).

This discussion on the natural order of acquiring grammar components allows us to shed more lights on some of the features characterising the elaboration of a pedagogical grammar from the learners' psychology and psycholinguistics point of view. In general, it is observed that children firstly acquire sounds, vowels by extension, and then follows words or vocabulary in general before stepping to syntax. At the level of morphology, nouns come before verbs, with the details presented above at each level. At the level of the combination of units, and sentence production, it is observed that the child speech begins with imperatives and in general, the acquisition of obligatory sentence modality occur before the non-obligatory ones such as negation and focus. Therefore, in language acquisition, the phonological component of the language comes first, and then follows the lexis, with the putting in place of the morphology module which is finally followed by the development of its syntactic components. In this vein, a good pedagogical grammar shall be organised as far as possible, taking into consideration this natural order of acquiring the grammar during the process of language acquisition. This will probably allow and ease the disposal or organisation of materials (lessons and exercises) from what is supposed to be hardly learnable. In fact, it has been observed that, at each stage, children first acquire simple elements before complex ones. This is seen in the acquisition of question, with polar questions coming before content questions, which need more complex constructions.

As earlier pointed out, pedagogical grammar is learners-centred while descriptive grammar is built for language specialists. It is also worth noting that the development of the pedagogical grammar of a language follows that of a descriptive grammar of the same language. Therefore, as pointed out by Domche (op cit), descriptive grammar and pedagogical grammar intertwine because it is not possible to conceive a pedagogical grammar which is not based on the prior description of the language. He also distinguishes two types of pedagogical grammars: scheduled pedagogical grammar, which is peculiar to a country and which takes into account the official guidelines prescribed by the country and reference pedagogical grammar, oriented towards the balanced development of children. This sub-categorisation is of no importance or effect in the grammar elaborated.

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10.4. The pedagogical grammar of Bɔ̀mbɔlɔ̀

In this sub-section, we elaborate the pedagogical grammar of Bɔ̀mbɔlɔ̀. This pedagogical grammar is based on the description done in the preceding part of the study. This shows the direct link between the two types of grammars, as already pointed out. I do not intend to provide a complete pedagogical grammar of the language, but to present, as the pioneer teaching/learning grammar, at least those fundamental components that should be found in a mother tongue pedagogical grammar material. My concern here therefore is not to elaborate the pedagogical grammar booklet, but to explain the procedure that governed its elaboration by commenting on the target audience of the pedagogical grammar, the types of lessons and their sequencing, the exercises therein developed and their usefulness.

The pedagogical grammar of Bɔ̀mbɔlɔ̀ responds to the following three activities which involve the learner and which aim at facilitating the learning process of the grammar of the language:

- Explanation: in explication, I make use of the metalanguage, statements about the grammar and simple terminology. The vocabulary of the pedagogical grammar is user-friendly. Explanation can also be viewed as learning by understanding. Because the booklet is written in French, I shall refer to some of the avoided terminologies in the book here in French: syntagme, schemes d'accord, désinence, syntagme verbal, marqueur associatif, jonctifs, élément-Q; etc (phrase, agreement pattern, morpheme, verb phrase, associative marker, coordinator, Q-element; etc.

- Exemplification: I have provided selected texts which serve to focus on the grammatical items. In exemplifying, I try to provoke a certain degree of observation in the learner. Therefore, exemplification draws attention on learning by observing.

- Exploration and utilisation: the different tasks (practice exercises) are given to the learners in view of enhancing their level of the language. This aspect of the grammar involves learning-by-doing. Exploration and utilisation require respectively, reflexion and use.

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10.4.1. The audience of the pedagogical grammar

As we have already mentioned above, the content of a pedagogical grammar depends on the audience. The audience depends on the degree of competence in the language and the level of the development of the language itself. In fact, a pedagogical grammar can be designed for native speakers of a language or for non-native speakers or both at the same time. Everything depends on its scope and the academic level of the learners too.

The present pedagogical grammar of Bəmbələ is built essentially for the native speakers of the language. Since mother tongue literacy is still at its beginning in the community, the grammar is conceived so that any speaker of the language, of any level of study, with knowledge in French, can access it. Formally, it is addressed to elementary school teachers and learners. Due to its bilingual nature (French-mother tongue), the pedagogical grammar is also within the reach of the non-native speakers who would like to learn the language for the first time. The conception of this pedagogical grammar gives room to self-learning. This is one of the justifications for including lessons on the alphabet and orthography in the book.

Hence, native speakers have the opportunity to make use of the tacit knowledge of their language, to learn how to use it formally from the writing, reading, speaking and listening point of view. In fact, this grammar is especially built in the mother tongue and French with the intention to respond to the expectations of the following category of the learners: native speakers who are not literate at all in any language, native speakers who are literate in any Cameroonian language, native speakers who are literate in any Cameroon official language (English/French) and those non native speakers who are struck by the language and are willing to learn it.

Specifically, those native-speakers who are not literate at all in French (the OL1 of the locality) will need the assistance of a facilitator to help them access the content of the book. This is the sine qua non condition for this category of speakers to benefit from the document.

In sum, the pedagogical grammar is intended for elementary school teachers, pupils, adult learners, even those who are exposed to the learning of the language for the first time and even those non-native speakers who would find it useful to learn the language.

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10.4.2. Lessons /topics in the pedagogical grammar

The discussion in this sub-section includes the exposition of the types of lessons included in the pedagogical grammar and the sequencing of those topics.

10.4.2.1. The types of lessons

In pedagogical grammars focused on African mother tongues, mainly on underdeveloped or lesser-developed languages, special attention should be paid to the types of lessons to be used in order to facilitate the learning process. In general, such languages are characterised by no or few literates. Therefore, the lessons shall be built such that learners could find motivation for learning the language, to easily get into touch with the principles of the language.

The pedagogical grammar of Bəmbələ entails the following: pronunciation (alphabet and orthographic rules, tones), morphological and syntactic descriptions and use of the grammatical categories - phonology, morphology and syntax -, analysed in the first part of this work. Each description and presentation of standard rules for usage is followed by a battery of exercises with an aim to provide room for direct practice.

In fact, phonology, morphology and syntax are known as the main constituents of the grammar of a language. This is why they should be integrated in the pedagogical grammar. In the same vein, we cannot elaborate the alphabet or the orthographic principles of a language if at least its phonology is not established.

As the first document of this sort in this language, we have not included lessons on stylistics in this pedagogical grammar. This type of lesson shall be included in a further volume.

The lessons on morphology study the forms of the nouns and its modifiers while those on verb expose the verbal system of the language with focus on conjugation. The lessons on the verb tackle issues such as tense mood and negation. The lessons evolving around the syntax of the language contain the structure of the simple sentence and that of the complex sentence.

All these lessons give the possibility to the learner to acquire the minimal material useful for the reading and writing of the language on the one hand, and the ability of speaking on the other.

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10.4.2.2. Sequencing of the lessons

Before presenting the sequencing of the lessons, it might be judicious defining the concept of lesson. Therefore, what is a lesson? Etymologically, the word “lesson” came from Latin lectio “ the action of reading (out)”. From there, the word was also used for the text itself, “very often, a passage in the Bible” (Wong 1988) read during church service. Then, it was used to point out any portion of a book to be studied. Today, a lesson is often generally defined as a daily description of the course of instruction for an individual, developed by a teacher to guide class instruction. It is a structured period where learning is intended to occur, where learners are taught about a particular subject. It involves one or more students being taught by a teacher or instructor. A lesson may be either one section of a textbook, elaborated to be taught in one or more class (es). The potential format of a lesson is dependent upon factors such as culture, learning objectives and the style of each teacher. A lesson may range from a lecture, a demonstration or a discussion.

In the present pedagogical grammar, the quantity of information provided in a lesson is linked to the “topic” or the theme of the lesson and not to the duration of a class. Consequently, some lessons could be taught in two or more sessions.

The order of the lessons in a pedagogical grammar, especially a pedagogical grammar of a lesser developed language like Bàmbələ, should not be haphazardly established. The lessons must be built so as to allow the teacher to teach or the learner to learn from what is known to what is not known, from what is simple to what is complex in order to facilitate the teaching/learning process. This technique of building lessons from what is supposed to be known or to be easy to learn is also a strategy for motivating the learner to progress in his learning activities. Generally, it is observed that when the learning process is tedious, it finally discourages the learner. From the psychological point of view, this method of conceiving the lessons renders the learning process less boring and stimulates the learner’s mind.

The sequence of the lessons proposed in this pedagogical grammar cannot be generalised to all the languages. In fact, each language is unique and some languages do not have the same grammatical behaviour like Bəmbələ. For instance, this sequencing of the lessons cannot work with an Indo-European language, because, just to mention two facts, they have neither tones nor noun classes. However, for those languages, which have the same grammatical and internal functioning like Bəmbələ, the same sequencing of the lessons could be employed. In fact, this

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sequencing takes into account a number of logical features characterising the progression of the lessons.

In general, in the pedagogical grammar of underdeveloped languages or lesser-developed languages, that is when it is the first document of the type, the first three lessons shall be respectively on the alphabet, orthography principles and tones (if a tone language) . These first three lessons recall the rules and regulations for writing and reading, and consequently, broaden the scope of the learners on the principles guiding their initial steps in the written version of the language. These lessons give room to self-literacy, with focus on the possibility for non-native speakers to be acquainted with the grammar of the language without the assistance of a teacher. This is only possible if the non-native speakers (who lack native-speaker's intuition of the language) are literate in an official language (mostly French in this case) or any other Cameroonian language. The prior knowledge of a language is useful for learning a new one. However, the learner shall be conscious of the nature of each language, its internal structure in order to avoid any negative transfer. The lesson on tones occupies the third position. Tones are very useful in tone languages. Because of their distinctive and their grammatical function, they shall be taught in a whole an independent lesson because their mastery will be very important for the following lessons and for the learner himself.

After the first three lessons on the afore-mentioned aspects, the subsequent three lessons deal respectively with noun classes with focus on the plural and the singular forms, gender and noun formation. The choice of this order is explained by the fact that in Bantu languages, the notion of noun classes along with that of agreement constitute a turning point in teaching (more information is provided on this issue in one of the following paragraphs). Then, the subsequent lessons discuss progressively the modifiers of the noun: adjectives, possessives, demonstratives, quantifiers and adjectives, and numerals with each modifier discussed in an independent lesson.

After the lessons on noun modifiers, the next two lessons are on pronouns and the types of verbs. After the presentation of the different types of verbs, the next lesson addresses mood. The study of mood includes lessons on tenses and conjugation. After these lessons, follow the lessons on negation and then prepositions and adverbs. At this level, all the coming lessons are focused on syntax. The first two lessons on syntax deal with the noun phrase and the verb phrase. At this stage, it is already possible to combine all the different elements to make a sentence. Therefore, the lesson on simple sentence is followed by the object complement. The penultimate

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lesson teaches the complex sentence while the ultimate one deals with the teaching of interrogation in the language.

There is a fundamental reason for sequencing the lesson on noun classes and its modifiers before those on verbs and the different phrases. In general, the agreement pattern triggered by the head noun in the noun class system of the language influences the elements of the noun phrase and then affects some elements in the verb phrase. When the subject of the verb is not a pronoun, it provokes a subject marker, and this feature is actually an expression of the presence of the noun class system that has to be mastered a priori by the learner. Therefore, it is necessary for the learner to know the noun class system first. In Bəmbələ, like in many other Bantu languages, the noun class system affects the whole structure of the language. This is the main reason why it precedes all the other lessons after the lessons on alphabet, orthography and tones.

The position of the lesson on adjectives (immediate after noun formation) in the booklet is because in this language, true adjectives receive their agreement pattern from the noun they qualify. Therefore, the lesson on adjectives in such a language must follow the one on noun formation. In fact, noun formation comes after the lesson on noun classes. Furthermore, it is systematic that the lessons on noun modifiers in general come after the lesson on noun class because the behaviour of these modifiers depends on the class of the noun they modify. In fact, they receive their agreement pattern from the head noun as I mentioned above. The following illustration shed light on these points.

(1)

a. Mìnye minkpamat myamàŋ minə minə ninəŋ.
   Houses white my this be big
   "This white house of mine is big."

b. Bìngəŋ bili binə kpɔ̀yəŋ a nzè.
   Trees that be fallen to path
   "Those threes there have fallen on the way."

c. Bwan bamàŋ bənə a nye.
   Children my be to house
   "My children are at home."

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d. Ìngəŋ nyinə inə kpɔ̀yəŋ a nzè.

Tree this be fallen to path

"That tree has fallen on the way."

The examples above help us to capture the phenomenon of agreement in the language. In fact, it shows how the agreement pattern of the whole sentence depends on the class of the head noun. The underlined items in each of the sentences above trace out the notion of agreement generated by the head noun, the first constituent in each of the sentences. Let us consider the case of the sentence in (a) to emphasise the point: In (a), we observe that, the head word *Mìnye "houses"* has a prefix *mì-* which occurs in the other items in the sentence. The class 4 noun prefix then generates a prefix which affects its modifiers, and the verb, namely ***mi****nkpamat* "new" ***my****amàŋ* "my" ***mi****nə* "that" ***mî****nə* "are" where the highlighted items attest the point. This same phenomena are observable in the other sentences. In (b) for instance, we can appreciate the recurrence of ***bi*** in **bì**ngəŋ "tree", **bi**li "those" **bi**nə "are" as another very striking examples. The features are the expression of the noun class to which belongs the head noun.

One more important issue worth raising is the position of the personal pronoun in the booklet. The lessons on personal pronouns immediately precede the lesson on the verb because most often, in Bantu languages, either the tense of the verb or its form influences the initial form of the pronoun. In Bəmbələ, the form of the second person plural depends on whether it is used in conjugation or in isolation. In isolation, this pronoun is *bèès* and *bì* in conjugation. In the third person singular, the pronoun varies according to whether it is subject or object. When it is a subject, it is *à* and when it functions as object, it is *nyə*, as illustrated in the following examples.

(2)

a. À sə andzə .
He PROG eat

"He is eating."

b. À tə alèm nyə.
He NEG know him

"He doesn't know him."

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c. À sə adep.
He PROG knock

"He is knocking."

d. À tə adep nyə.
He NEG knock him

"He does not slap him."

In (a & c), the pronoun is subject while in (b & d) it is object.

The form of some pronouns also differs according to whether they are used in an affirmative or in a negative construction. It is the case of the second person singular pronoun *ò/wə*. This is observable in the following:

(3)

a. Wə andzə àyùhə.	a'. Ò tə andzə àyùhə.
You eat banana	You NEG eat banana
"You eat banana."	"You do not eat banana."
b. Wə akək ingəŋ	b'. Ò tə akək ingəŋ.
You cut tree	You NEG cut tree
. "You cut the three."	"You do not cut the three."

It is observable in the examples above that the forms in the negative (a'& b') require a subject pronoun which is different from the pronoun used in those in the affirmative (a & b). Although the pronouns stand each for the second person singular "you" and occupy the subject position, their contexts of use differ according to whether the construction is positive or negative.

The lessons on syntax help the learners to be acquainted with the structure of the language, the way the different parts of speech are combined to express meaning. The disposition of the elements is fundamental in these lessons. In fact, the learners are taught how words are combined into phrases to make clauses and then from clauses to sentences. These lessons therefore help them to distinguish between simple and complex sentences in the language. They occur almost at the end of the document because, to teach or learn them, all the grammatical categories or parts of speech of the language and their characteristics must be

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mastered first. The mastery of these elements allows the learners to comprehend with ease the way this or that element is combined with others to convey meaning.

Now, how can we justify the presence of texts and sentences right at the beginning of the book in the first lessons? These texts and sentences have to be taught according to the global approach which pays more attention to the cognitive skills of the learners. In fact, the method helps the learners to acquire words and sentences as visual images. This also explains why it is also called “ideo-visual method”. Before reaching the stage where the words of the text should be effectively taught in the language, the learners already have a visual image of them.

The successive outlook of the lessons is such that the learner feels that s/he is effectively progressing in his learning process. It has always been taught that (mostly in mother tongue literacy), the lessons shall be built in order to facilitate the learning process through the presentation of the materials from the easiest lessons to the difficult ones. This is the credo of the teaching / learning process.

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10.4.2.3. Practice exercises in the pedagogical grammar

The practice exercises included in the pedagogical grammar of Bəmbələ comprise spelling exercises, reading, writing exercises, word construction, gap filling, conjugation, sentence constructions and grammatical analysis.

It is unimaginable to conceive a pedagogical grammar which does not contain practice exercises. In fact, these exercises attest the pedagogical nature of the book. They reinforce the pedagogical dimensions of the document. It is well known that the most important pedagogical activity is undoubtedly the exercise. Hence, practice exercises are to learners what training is to footballers. In fact, to improve on his/her skill, each footballer has to train everyday under the supervision of a coach. To learners, this coach is their teacher in formal classroom settings. Thus, in this pedagogical grammar, practice exercises are designed to provide controlled-practice, to consolidate the rules that have been given and then to test the learner’s mastery of what has been presented. Intensive practice should therefore lead to a fast mastery and production of a good grammar of the language.

Practice begins with simpler exercises, adapted to the content of the lessons. They are sequenced with the presence of the learner in mind and his/her possible pace of progression and the ease of learning.

Spelling exercises aim at helping the learners to spell out the different letters of the alphabet and move from letter formation to word formation. For those learners who are already knowledgeable in an official language, spelling exercises aim at helping them to learn how to form the specific letters of the mother tongue or local language.

Gap filling and word building are exercises which from a hierarchical point of view, are below sentence construction in that the latter requires the combination of all the knowledge acquired from the first lessons. For native speakers, gap filling and word building require only the use to their native speakers' intuition of the language.

Because Bàmbəlà is a tone language, a special attention is paid to the teaching of tones. It is true, they are informally or tacitly shaped in the learners' mind, but what the teacher has to do is to make them concrete and let the learners be formally aware of them. For those learners who already master an official language, it will be a contrastive element in that tone exists neither in English nor in French. Therefore, the exercises on tones are presented such that the learner can learn or the teacher can teach from any of the perspectives discussed in Tadadjeu et.al (2004). They include the method of miming/whistling the tones (minimal pairs), combination of many level tones and the technique of searching the tone of a word. Exercises on conjugation lessons help the learners to test their knowledge of the tense system of the language. To the native speakers, they allow them to become conscious of the tense markers of the language and its whole conjugation system.

Phrase and sentence construction exercises help the learners to assess by themselves their degree of evolution in the learning process.

Because of the fact that the pedagogical grammar is designed at the same time for the native speakers and for non-native speakers, the different exercises are designed so as to serve at the same time the two categories of learners. It is however true that pre-eminence is given to the native speakers of the language as the first beneficiaries of the document.

10.4.3. Illustrating and editing the pedagogical grammar

The industry of books is not yet developed for the promotion of African languages in general. Therefore, it is not always easy to conceive a pedagogical book in these languages. The conception of a pedagogical book requires a number of techniques and the intervention of a

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number of specialists. The industry of books includes issues such as edition, illustration and publishing. This supposes a priori that a qualified author has already written the book.

Initially, comes the writer, usually assisted by the community if s/he is an outsider (in the perspective of mother tongue material development), then the illustrator, the editor and the publisher. Writing a book and making it available is therefore respecting these steps. However, as already noted above, the industry of books in mother tongues is still embryonic in Africa in general and in Cameroon in particular. Most often, it is not easy to find specialists in the field of illustration and editing. Where they are available, there is no substantial financial means to support all their activities. Therefore, these fields are still to be broadened and exploited by mother tongue specialists in Africa as a whole so that specialist in editing, illustration and publishing which are not really the tasks of the applied linguist per se, should be conveniently trained given that the domains are linked to pedagogical materials development. Normally, in this particular context, the task of the applied linguist shall be limited to the elaboration of the pedagogical materials.

Shall we therefore stay and wait until these people are conveniently trained or until this industry in really set up before starting to develop pedagogical materials in African mother tongues? Most of the modern linguists have acquired approximate computer knowledge, notably in editing. They must make use of this elementary knowledge in computing and editing. Although it does not belong to their field of competence, those who prove to be skilful in the domains can exploit their skills to find a provisional solution to the problem. The elaborators of pedagogical materials can make use of existing pictures to illustrate their books while waiting for the development of a real mother tongue book industry.

We made use of the computer knowledge we had acquired to edit the booklet, attached as appendix to this work. This is therefore, as we mentioned above, a path to follow while waiting for the specialists to emerge in the domain.

Illustration also plays an important role in building pedagogical books in general and pedagogical grammars in particular. In fact, illustration ensures an inter-connexion between the text, the whole book and the image. Illustration can be considered as a conceptual pedagogy, helping the learner and the reader in comprehension abilities. It is a decisive step in the cultural relation between texts and images. This point of view is highly defended by specialists of advertising texts such as (Leconte 1980) and strongly highlighted by Day (2003) when she

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argues, “The mind recalls best with context, a global understanding and complete pictures to remember.”

Classroom practices and learning strategies have proven that a combination of text and illustrations have a greater impact on student learning and comprehension than the text alone. Pedagogues have described illustration as a source of motivation. In fact, with illustrations, learners could acquire new vocabulary in a book by looking at the pictures and the words that refer to the pictures even without the assistance of a tutor. In a book, words, expressions or sentences that are pictured, are identified with a significantly higher frequency than those words that are not accompanied by a picture. Illustrations help the learners of a second language to grasp words with their reference. Illustrations in pedagogical books are helpful in that they increase the value of the text. They can easily get into the mind of the readers and learners. They are capable of conveying the right message to the right audience in a very short space of time. They are attested to be highly appreciated by children since they are all fascinated by images more than texts.

Dorance & Leveuf (2004) distinguish three main roles for illustrations. They argue that illustrations complete the text in that in a document like a pedagogical grammar, it follows the text. Then, they point out that illustrations ease the reading, motivate the reader and render the book more accessible. Finally, illustrations are decorative in that they beautify the whole book. The book has to be attractive in order to seduce the learners. Beyond its intellectual and pedagogical aspects, a book is also a piece of artistic expression.

In sum, learning with the help of icons, graphs, charts and drawings provide better understanding of the texts of the book. These reasons justify the inclusion of a few illustrations in the pedagogical grammar we designed. It is worth pointing out that images are present in term of quantity in reading books than in pedagogical grammars. Reading books are below pedagogical grammar books. In the learning process, the learner gets access to the reading book before the pedagogical grammar book. Therefore, here, illustrations must be built in such a way as to ease the learning process and capture the younger learner’s attention through a considerable number of drawings. The illustrations used in the booklet are existing pictures selected according to the targeted goal. Following is a portion of text, illustrated to capture the discussion above.

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Ndàt Bibè

A nyè ndàt it ɛrəŋ a Bibè, a nzaŋhaŋ nsəŋ bòt b ənə avè, mbùyəŋ. Bɔ bə avè á Nsɛm, a Wasa, a Wàl, Mətɛp, Nzɔ̀mbè. Ndàt à mənə ayɛɛ a nə kòsəŋ məlu məlaa.

Mìntaŋ, mənə avè m əkòs akàbà , àwònə, mìmbàŋ, ngbal, ndzɔŋ gbəbgələ. Mìntaŋ mimpɔk, bɔ lɔŋkì mìnye ìp ès bɔ awɔm nə ayɛɛ nə mìmbàghi mya a nyè te.

Just by looking at the text and its illustration above, one needs not to be a native speaker, a speaker of Bəmbələ to understand that the text is depicting a local market. With the title ***Ndàt Bibè,*** the potential learner, with the help of the illustration, imagines and then understand that the word for market in this language is *ndàt* and this process will sped up its acquisition of new words and concepts in the language. The access to this knowledge will be facilitated by the fact that s/he is supposed to know at least the geography of the locality. Therefore, s/he will understand that the text is talking about the market of Bibey.

10.5. Conclusion

The discussion in this chapter was on the pedagogical grammar of Bəmbələ. We have attempted to describe the content of the pedagogical grammar of Bəmbələ, describe the different types of lessons included in the pedagogical grammar and comment on their order of occurrence. In general, the noun class system of the language deeply influences the order of the occurrence of the lessons. This influence is expressed through the agreement markers provoked by the head noun and which affects constructions. The application of the prescribed methodology is found in the booklet attached to the work. However, it is important to underscore that the model or methodology adopted for the elaboration of the pedagogical grammar is only applicable to those languages, which behave like Bəmbələ. Therefore, it is difficult to build a common methodology for the elaboration of pedagogical grammars. In fact, the methodology adopted here cannot work for English nor for French or any other language which has an internal structure different from

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that of my language of study. The chapter also raised the issue of editing and illustrating mother tongue teaching materials. We prescribed the use of computer knowledge acquired by some modern linguists to solve the problem while waiting for the development of a real enterprise of books in mother tongues in Cameroon and in Africa as a whole.

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CONCLUSION OF PART 2

Bəmbələ is a viable language for standardisation for it responds to all or almost all the required criteria for this activity to start up. With its 35 graphemes (including tones, vowels and consonants) and reading and writing principles, the alphabet and the orthography of the language are established through its standard reference dialect, the Mânyɔ̀k dialect spoken in Bibey. In general, for a sustainable and perennial revitalisation of a language, the researcher must live in the community and with the community of the language, he analyses; this is the sine qua non condition for an efficient revitalisation. Then, the immersion approach has been adopted for the revitalisation of Bəmbələ and has been proven fruitful. The last chapter, which discusses the elaboration of the pedagogical grammar of the language, shows how the choice, the order and the content of the lessons, are explored and how systematic they should be for the manual to be adequate to the learners. The pedagogical grammar of Bəmbələ itself, as a practical application of the prescribed rules, is attached at the end of the work in the form of a booklet.

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GENERAL CONCLUSION

11.1. Recall of the objectives of the study

The objectives set at the beginning of this study were among others, the production of a descriptive grammar of Bəmbələ, elaboration of the writing and reading principles of the language. These writing and reading principles were the sine qua non condition for elaborating the pedagogical grammar of the language. However, before reaching this stage, the rules and regulations governing the writing of a pedagogical grammar had to be set. The elaborated pedagogical grammar of BəmBələ results from the application of these principles. These activities were carried out within the framework of the total immersion approach.

11.2. Findings and General observations

The findings and observations could be presented as in the following.

11.2.1. The structure of the language

In accordance with the goal set at the beginning of this research, the analysis of the language at the level of phonology, morphology, syntax and the elaboration of the pedagogical grammar passing through standardisation, have revealed some major points worth recalling here.

11.2.1.1. At the level of the phonology

In the first section of the study related to the analysis of the structure of the language, we discovered that the phonological and tonological system of the language is made up of 15 phonemic vowels, 48 phonemic consonants and 4 tonemes made up of 2 level tones (High, Low) and 2 contour tones (HL, LH). This composition is common to many other Bantu languages.

11.2.1.2. At the level of the morphology (noun and verb)

As for the noun morphology of Bəmbələ, noun classification was not an easy task because of the divergent viewpoints among researchers on the classification principles or criteria in Bantu A. The so-called semantic criterion has been proven obsolete, so does the sole use of noun prefixes. Furthermore, although Guthrie argues that a language cannot have less than ten classes, an argument which is still held by some scholars, in their private communication,

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Bəmbələ exhibits less than the indicated number of classes. The assumption above led me to gather an important amount of data in this vein to verify the validity of the positions nowadays. After observation and analysis, we realised, based on the current and most prominent method used to classify nouns in any language (namely the agreement pattern triggered by the head noun on its modifiers) that Bəmbələ is made up of 8 noun classes. As already mentioned above, the classification of the nouns was based on the agreement pattern generated by the head noun on its modifiers. In fact, noun modifiers receive their agreement from the head noun they modify. The study of noun morphology also required describing lexical enrichment processes such as derivation, compounding, reduplication as those internal processes which revitalise the vocabulary of the language. The noun prefixes, the concord prefixes of the language are similar to those of some neighbouring languages.

The study of the verb morphology has unveiled that the verbal system of Bəmbələ respects the chronology of past, present and future. Each division of time is made up of at least one tense. The past has 4 tenses, each tense being materialised by a particular marker, namely the vowel |*à* | with a low tone for P0, the vowel |*ǎ* | with a contour low high tone for P1 the vowel |*á*| with a high tone for P2 and |*ŋgə́*| with a high tone for P3. The present has only one tense, marked by the vowel |á|with a high tone. As for the future, it has 2 tenses, namely F0 marked by the front high vowel |ì |with a low tone while F1 is expressed by the morpheme |*ŋgə̀*|, with a low tone. This tone makes the morpheme of the tense different from the P2 marker. The mood system interplays with tense. These moods include imperative, conditional, progressive, subjunctive and potential. Each of these moods is marked by a specific morpheme. Because negation depends on tense and mood, it is also analysed in correlation with tense and mood. Negation is marked by either *tə̀* or *tàɣá* according to the verb used or the tense.

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11.2.1.3. A the level of the syntax of the language

As an SVO language, Bəmbələ sentence structure is composed of NP, VP and (PP). Like in many other languages, here, the (PP) is also an optional constituent. Within the NP, we find the relative clause introduced by a relative pronoun, the associative NP and the coordinated NP. The relative clause has been analysed within the NP because they function alike. The Bəmbələ relative pronoun agrees in class and number with the head noun. This even justifies the

appellation “relative pronoun”. The head of the VP is the verb, central element of the phrase to which are attached some satellites. The (PP), as an optional constituent, is an extensional slot of the sentence which at times, could be suppressed without breaking down the grammaticality of the sentence, but by altering its semantic core to an extent. This optional constituent could play the grammatical functions of adjuncts (time, place, manner etc.) in the syntax of the language. All these analyses and results were conducted and obtained in the first part of the work. In general, the structural approach was the main research route through which the results were obtained in the first part of the study.

11.2.2. The status of the language and proposals for standardisation

The second part of the study started with talk about the choice of the standard reference model for the language. Then follow the elaboration of the alphabet and the orthography of the language. From there, it was established that Bàmbəlà has 35 graphemes: 8 vowels, 24 consonants, and 3 tones. The alphabet set, together with the orthographic principles of the language make up its writing system. The writing system occurs as the last step in the determination of the prerequisites for standardising the language, and one of the core activities of the standardisation proper. For the principles to be built and applied efficiently and perennially, they must be elaborated in the community and with the community members of the language under study.

11.2.3. The total immersion approach, the language committee and didactic material design

Field literacy is of priceless importance in language development contexts. This actually requires from the researcher to be totally immersed in the natural milieu of the language under study. Evidently, for the activities to be perennial and to go beyond time, at the end of his field activities, the researcher must have empowered the said community with literacy know-how capable of helping the members to generalise the practice in their community. The empowerment of the community involves not only training, but also, material development for promoting the standard model. The pedagogical grammar elaborated within the same vein shows how the lessons shall be built and sequenced in order to respond to the internal structure of the language, the learning pace and the expectations of the teachers and the learners. Editing and illustrating books in African languages are other activities related to the elaboration of this type of document.

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Field literacy, the elaboration of the pedagogical grammar and other field activities did not go on without difficulties. We faced a problem with generalising literacy activities in the field. In fact, as we pointed out above, we could not cover all the villages where the language is spoken because either of the transportation means, time constraints or financial constraints. The difficulties in establishing the order of the lessons in the pedagogical grammar (see attached booklet) were not of minor impact. In fact, we took more time than planned for its elaboration because of its practical nature. The systematic ordering of the lessons implied taking into account the phenomenon of noun class that affected most of the lessons and their positions as observed in the booklet.

The problem of editing and the illustration of practical books/manuals in African languages and Cameroonian ones in particular has also been raised in the work. This problem is still to be solved since the industry of books for mother tongue education is not really developed in this continent. Yet, linguists should make use of their knowledge acquired in computing and in editing in particular to solve this problem while waiting for the development of such enterprises which include all the assets governing book publication: editing, illustration; etc. While waiting for the brighter days of this domain in Africa, at the level of illustrations for instance, images could be copied from here and there to solve this particular problem or non-specialists who are endowed with the craft of drawing could be contacted to this end. The attached pedagogical grammar of Bəmbələ is a practical illustration of the prescriptions.

In general, the second part of the work shows how efficiently a language could be revitalised through the total immersion of the researcher into the native linguistic area of the language under study right from description to standardisation, from literacy to material development. As clearly mentioned in the study, immersion does not refer, like in the field of second language learning, to the settlement of the learner in the natural milieu of the language he is learning for direct exposure with the language and its speakers. In the field of language revitalisation, immersion is referred to the installation of the researcher in the natural milieu of the language s/he is revitalising in order to live in the community, with the community and work with the community. This approach allows the researcher himself not only to be in daily touch with the local people and culture, but also to have the possibility to learn the language. In each case, that is, be it in second language learning or language revitalisation, there is a direct contact with the native or near-native community of the language and a daily exposure to the language. Therefore, the key points of immersion in the perspective of this work include for the researcher:

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living in the community, training community members to write and read the language, being daily in touch with the language and the culture of the locality, in order to easy integration and acceptation, very useful for success in language revitalisation.

11.3. Contribution to research

Like any piece of research, this thesis contributes to reduce the frontiers of ignorance as a whole and to expand knowledge on Bantu languages in particular. The findings on Bəmbələ reinforce existing knowledge on Bantu languages in general and Bantu languages of Cameroon in particular. With the conciliatory nature of the study since it falls between general and applied linguistics, it shows how lasting should be the revitalisation process of a language through the total immersion of the researcher in the community of the language he is revitalising. The results of such research activities shall be bidirectionally beneficial (for the researcher and mostly for the community).

The work formalises the said strategy, drawing the attention of researchers on the feasibility and practicability of the method. To efficiently respond to the challenge of language revitalisation as a process, mere description is not sufficient. Henceforth, for practical reasons, in Africa in particular, or any other part of the world where languages are lesser developed or underdeveloped, the researcher or language developer must go beyond this simple description to train local people, native speakers of the language, on the reading and writing of their language. He must work hand in hand with the community so that its empowerment should be ensured. Furthermore, as the outcome of his field activities, s/he must also build some reference documents to reinforce and generalise the prescribed writing and reading principles. For this empowerment to last long, before leaving the field, the researcher, together with native speakers, trainees or neo-literates, must build a frame of thought within which will be discussed the problems related to the development and the protection of the norms established. This frame of thought is known in Cameroon as “language committee”.

In general, the different stages for language revitalisation, as a process, could be schematised and then scaled as follows:

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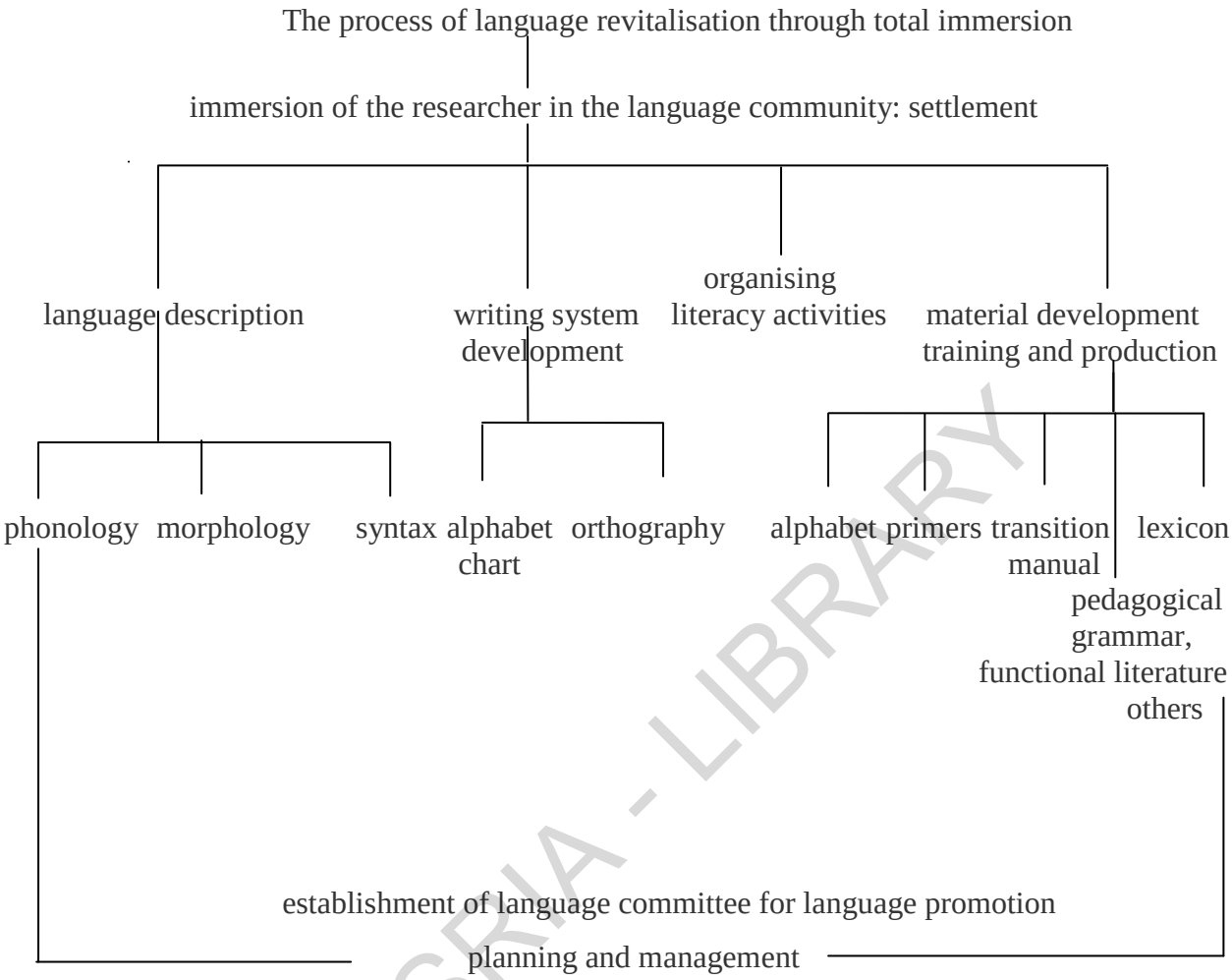

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This schema, is largely explained in chapter nine (9) of the work. It shows that the total immersion approach ecompasses the settlement of the researcher in the community where he must live and carry out his activities, the description of the language, the development of its writing system, the training of local leaders (literacy activities and material development and production. By the end of the researcher's stay and activities, the community shall be empowered so as to continue the activities through a structured agency called "language committee / academy".

Beyond all the considerations mentioned above, the description of this language is another step forward in the study of the Basaa-bàti language group. Furthermore, the work is a significant contribution to the protection and promotion of the linguistic rights of the Bàmbəlà people as stated in the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights, Barcelona, 1996 (see appendix for full text). These linguistic rights are still to be popularised.

11.4. Limits of the study and solutions

The achievement of this piece of work was not without difficulties. We faced a number of obstacles that we had to overcome for the work to be effective. Among these difficulties, three were prominent. The first was related to the nature of the work itself, the second to the fieldwork and the field activities, the third to noun classification, and the last to the ordering of the lessons in the pedagogical grammar.

11.4.1. Problem related to the seizing of the methodological framework

The very first problem we faced with this study was related to the nature of the work. In fact, because it falls at the same time within general and applied linguistics, it was at the first trial easy to build a methodological framework which will take into account both aspects of the study. We could not find previous work (s) which tackled the same issue and consequently, we were invited to build a framework that will cope with the nature of the piece of research. Finally, ecclectism has been chosen as the strategy to address the issue. This is obvious right from the general introduction.

11.4.2. Problems related to my settlement in the community and solutions

The establishment of the first and tight contacts and relations with the Bəmbələ community was not an easy task because of my status as an outsider. Although the goal of my project was clearly explained to the community and the native speakers of the language, some of them were still incredulous all along the project, in spite of the assistance of those who accepted to contribute. Some were still thinking that we came as a spy to take away the “soul” of their society. By the end of the project, thanks to my facilitators, most of them came to be convinced of the utility of the project, centred on the community itself.

To overcome these problems, we multiplied sensitisation campaigns, looked for more facilitators, and visited more local traditional rulers to explain to them the foundation of the project. The very first facilitators were the channel through which we also had access to some localities. In fact, when we went to any village where we did not previously settle, we were accompanied by a facilitator who had to explain in the local language, the real reasons of my presence in the locality and the importance of the work being carried out for their community.

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Sensitisation came out then as a key strategy to succeed in fieldwork and field activities. Through sensitisation, if well conducted, as the project goes on, as its importance becomes visible, many more community members can cooperate and participate, although beyond all considerations, not everybody can accept an outsider. It is worth noting that, were we a white man, the access to the community would be easier because, as some community members said, "at least, white men give us money when they come here. Therefore, you can see that you are telling us lies, you must pay for the information." This behaviour could be surprising, but is still the expression of the stigma of neo-colonialism and underestimation of black men by their very brothers and sisters. Nowadays, the attitude has to be fought out in order to reshape the mentality of such Africans.

11.4.3. Problems related to field mobility and fieldtrips and solutions

We was unable to visit all the villages where the language is spoken because of lack of transport means, time constraints and the multiple concomitant activities related to the language (data collection, literacy, material development, etc.). This could not also allow the collection of a broad database although what we collected was sufficient enough for this study.

As for the field trips, they were at some point tedious and tiring. In fact, at times, while going to the field, we spent the night in the car park in Nanga Eboko, or in the midway because of car breakdown, coupled with the scarcity of the transportation means in the locality. Furthermore, very often we could run more than 15 kilometres on foot and at night to join the field because of the same reasons.

11.4.3. Documentation problems

One of the major difficulties we had in writing this piece of research was related to documentation. We could not have the possibility to read more literature on revitalisation activities as they are being carried out in the world although Internet gave another option to learn a bit on the issue. This lack of adequate documentation also constituted one of the major obstacles we faced and that we had to overcome by referring to the few accessible documents, notably at the SIL library.

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11.5. Suggestions for further research and recommendations

From the limitations of this work, a number of proposals for further research could be indicated.

11.5.1. Suggestions

Because of the scope of the study, we were not able to make an in-depth analysis of the syntax of the language. Therefore, further researchers could focus on this aspect of the language. From what has already been done, many aspects of the syntax of the language could be addressed, namely through the generative approach. Issues such as verb movement, left periphery among many others could be addressed in the language.

With the description and development of Bəmbələ, it is henceforth possible to start a comparative and contrastive study of the Basaa-bəti language group with the inclusion of the language. This will be of sound pragmatic and pedagogical interest, over all at the time when the teaching of Cameroon mother tongue is gradually and formally gaining ground and is being introduced in the school system of the country. This comparative and contrastive study could help to develop what Mba (2009) calls “pédagogie de l’intercompréhension”, otherwise, the “pedagogy of mutually intelligible languages”, based on closely related languages.

An evaluation of the level and quality of the literacy activities on Bəmbələ, as its impact on the community, could also be another field of interest for further research.

The challenge of Africa today is to develop an education system based on the socio-cultural realities of the continent. This engagement passes through a number of significant actions such as education in African mother tongues and with African mother tongues. Therefore, the industry of books and the culture of reading in these languages are considered as very important assets of the process after language standardisation. This consideration opens a new window on an aspect of research related to mother tongue education in Africa. Therefore, the impact of books industry in/on mother tongue education in Africa could also be addressed as another very interesting field of interest for upcoming researchers.

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11.5.2. Recommendations

At the end of this study, we would like to recommend the total immersion approach to researchers and students working on their different research projects. This recommendation goes straight to Ph.D. students and Universities including other research institutions. The approach is fruitful in that it allows both the researcher, agent of development and the communities to gain from the different field activities. As far as Ph.D. students are concerned, the approach will help them speed up their research project through a wealth of data and materials they have gathered, and possibly, they will come up with a more satisfactory result than any other research situations. The method is practical in that it strengthens students, junior researchers' aptitudes and helps them acquire new skills in field linguistics.

Universities in general and the University of Yaounde in particular, through the Department of African languages and linguistics could formalise the method and prescribe for any work which falls within the vein of revitalisation. This would give a new blow to the development of Cameroonian languages by encouraging local people to participate. As the programme will be implemented under the label of a University, funding for follow up would be available.

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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX 1

SOCIOLINGUISTIC QUESTIONNAIRE
(To be used with a representative sample of the population)

1. PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENT

Name (if you want):……1.2. Age:……

1.3. Occupation:……1.4: Sex:……...

1.5. What is your highest level of schooling?.....

1.6.What was the first language you spoke at home as a child?.....

1.7. a. What other language(s) do you speak?.....

…….

Do you speak it / them well? (+) or just a bit (-)?.....

1.7.b. What other language(s) do you understand but not speak?.....

…….

1.8. Apart form your village; where did you live for at least one year? ……

…….

Place	what language(s) is/ are spoken there?
……..	…….
How long	Did you speak it or them?
……	…….

1.9.What is your father's mother tongue?.....

1.10.What is your mother's mother tongue? .....

1.11. What language(s) do / did your father and mother speak with each other?.....

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…….....1.

12. What is the mother tongue of your husband (wife (ves))…….....

2. MULTILINGUALISM

2.1. Are you always able to understand the speakers of:

Ewondo?	☐ yes	☐ no		Bobilis?	☐ yes	☐ no	
French?	☐ yes	☐ no		Babek?	☐ yes	☐ no	
Bamvele?	☐ yes	☐ no		English?	☐ yes	☐ no	

2.2. Are you always able to utter jokes and proverbs in:

……	☐ yes	☐ no……	yes☐.		☐ no		
…….	☐ yes	☐ no…….yes☐			☐ no		
……	☐ yes	☐ no…….yes☐			☐ no		

2.3. Can you always find the words to express your thought in:

…….	☐ yes	☐ no ……..yes	☐		☐ no		
……	☐ yes	☐ no …….yes	☐		☐ no		
…….	☐ yes	☐ no ……..yes	☐		☐ no		

2.4. Let us say you are in (village): ……and witness a fight between two people, the customary court of that village summons you to tell them what you saw. Could you describe in detail exactly what you saw using only:

……	☐ yes	☐ no ……	yes ☐		☐ no		
…….....	☐ yes	☐ no ……..	yes ☐		☐ no		

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……. ☐ yes ☐ no ……. Yes ☐ ☐ no

2.5. What language(s) do you use:

With your husband?.....

With your children?.....

With your friends of the same age? ……...

(from your language) …….

(from another language) ……

At the local market: ……

At the larger market: ……..

in the fields: ……..

At the sub-divisional office: ……...

At the District office ……

2.6. What language(s) do your children speak in playing with other children?.....

…….

2.7. When you are among : what language do they speak?

The Ewondo ……...

The Bobilis ……

The Bavek ……..

The Bamvele ……..

What do they respond in your normal manner of speaking?.....

…….

3. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

3.1. Which of the following languages would you like to see; used as a means of

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Instruction in the primary schools? (include the respondent's own speech form)

Ewondo? …….. ☐ yes ☐ no

Bobilis? ……☐ Yes ☐ no

Bavek ?…….. ☐ yes ☐ no

Bamvele? …….. ☐ yes ☐ no

3.2. Would you be willing to learn to read the written form of?:

Ewondo? ☐ yes ☐ no Bobilis? ☐ yes ☐ no

Bavek? ☐ yes ☐ no Bamvele? ☐ yes ☐ no

3.3. Which language in (3.2.) will be your first choice? Second? Third? Why?

1st ……

2nd ……...

3rd ……

3.4. Where is your language spoken the best? ……...

…….

3.5. Do you believe that young people in your village are in the habit of abandoning their own language (name of local language) to speak another one instead?.....

. …….....

Which one?: ……Is this good or bad?.....

Why? ……..

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APPENDIX 2

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF LINGUISTIC RIGHTS
PRELIMINARIES

The institutions and non-governmental organizations, signatories to the present Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights, meeting in Barcelona from 6 to 9 June 1996,

Having regard to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights which, in its preamble, expresses its "faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women"; and which, in its second article, establishes that "everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms" regardless of "race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status";

Having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 16 December 1966 (Article 27), and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of the same date which, in their preambles, state that human beings cannot be free unless conditions are created which enable them to enjoy both their civil and political rights and their economic, social and cultural rights;

Having regard to Resolution 47/135 of 18 December 1992 of the General Assembly of the United Nations Organizations which adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National, Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities;

Having regard to the declarations and conventions of the Council of Europe, such as the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, of 4 November 1950 (Article 14); the Convention of the Council of Ministers of the Council of Europe, of 29 June 1992, approving the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages; the Declaration on National Minorities by the Summit Meeting of the Council of Europe on 9 October 1993; and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of November 1994;

Having regard to the Santiago de Compostela Declaration of the International PEN Club and the Declaration of 15 December 1993 of the Translations and Linguistic Rights Committee of the International PEN Club concerning the proposal to hold a World Conference on Linguistic Rights;

Considering that, in the Recife, Brazil, Declaration of 9 October 1987, the 12th Seminar of the International Association for the Development of Intercultural Communication

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recommended the United Nations Organization to take the necessary steps to approve and implement a Universal Declaration on Linguistic Rights;

Having regard to Convention 169 of the International Labour Organization of 26 June 1989 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries;

Having regard to the Universal Declaration of the Collective Rights of Peoples, Barcelona, May 1990, which declared that all peoples have the right to express and develop their culture, language and rules of organization and, to this end, to adopt political, educational, communications and governmental structures of their own, within different political frameworks;

Having regard to the Final Declaration of the General Assembly of the International Federation of Modern Language Teachers in Hungary on 16 August 1991, which recommended that linguistic rights be considered among the fundamental rights of the individual;

Having regard to the report of the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, of 20 April 1994, concerning the draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which assesses individual rights in the light of collective rights;

Having Regard to the draft Declaration of the Inter-American Human Rights Commission on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, approved at session 1278 on 18 September 1995;

Considering that the majority of the world's endangered languages belong to non-sovereign peoples and that the main factors which prevent the development of these languages and accelerate the process of language substitution include the lack of self-government and the policy of states which impose their political and administrative structures and their language;

Considering that invasion, colonization, occupation and other instances of political, economic or social subordination often involve the direct imposition of a foreign language or, at the very least, distort perceptions of the value of languages and give rise to hierarchical linguistic attitudes which undermine the language loyalty of speakers; and considering that the languages of some peoples which have attained sovereignty are immersed in a process of language substitution as a result of a policy which favours the language of a former colonial or imperial power;

Considering that universalism must be based on a conception of linguistic and cultural diversity which prevails over trends towards homogenization and exclusionary isolation;

Considering that, in order to ensure peaceful coexistence between language communities, a series of overall principles must be found so as to guarantee the promotion and respect of all languages and their social use in public and in private;

Considering that various factors of an extralinguistic nature (historical, political, territorial, demographic, economic, sociocultural and sociolinguistic factors and those related to collective attitudes) give rise to problems which lead to the extinction, marginalization and degeneration of numerous languages, and that consequently linguistic rights must be examined in an overall perspective, so as to apply appropriate solutions in each case;

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In the belief that a Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights is required in order to correct linguistic imbalances with a view to ensuring the respect and full development of all languages and establishing the principles for a just and equitable linguistic peace throughout the world as a key factor in the maintenance of harmonious social relations;

HEREBY DECLARE THAT

PREAMBLE

The situation of each language, in view of the foregoing considerations, is the result of the convergence and interaction of a wide range of factors of a political and legal, ideological and historical, demographic and territorial, economic and social, cultural, linguistic and sociolinguistic, interlinguistic and subjective nature.

More specifically, at the present time, these factors are defined by:

1. The age-old unifying tendency of the majority of states to reduce diversity and foster attitudes opposed to cultural plurality and linguistic pluralism.
2. The trend towards a worldwide economy and consequently towards a worldwide market of information, communications and culture, which disrupts the spheres of interrelation and the forms of interaction that guarantee the internal cohesion of language communities.
3. The economicist growth model put forward by transnational economic groups which seeks to identify deregulation with progress and competitive individualism with freedom and generates serious and growing economic, social, cultural and linguistic inequality.

Language communities are currently under pressure from dangers arising from a lack of self-government, a limited population or one that is partially or wholly dispersed, a fragile economy, an uncodified language, or a cultural model opposed to the dominant one, which make it impossible for many languages to survive and develop unless the following basic goals are taken into account:

In a political perspective, the goal of conceiving a way of organizing linguistic diversity so as to permit the effective participation of language communities in this new growth model.

In a cultural perspective, the goal of rendering the worldwide communications space compatible with the equitable participation of all peoples, language communities and individuals in the development process.

In an economic perspective, the goal of fostering sustainable development based on the participation of all and on respect for the ecological balance of societies and for equitable relationships between all languages and cultures.

For all these reasons, this Declaration takes language communities and not states as its point of departure and is to be viewed in the context of the reinforcement of international institutions capable of guaranteeing sustainable and equitable development for the whole of

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humanity. For these reasons also it aims to encourage the creation of a political framework for linguistic diversity based upon respect, harmonious coexistence and mutual benefit.

PRELIMINARY TITLE

Concepts

Article 1

1. This Declaration considers as a language community any human society established historically in a particular territorial space, whether this space be recognized or not, which identifies itself as a people and has developed a common language as a natural means of communication and cultural cohesion between its members. The term language specific to a territory refers to the language of the community historically established in such a space.

2. This Declaration takes as its point of departure the principle that linguistic rights are individual and collective at one and the same time. In defining the full range of linguistic rights, it adopts as its referent the case of a historical language community within its own territorial space, this space being understood, not only as the geographical area where the community lives, but also as the social and functional space vital to the full development of the language. Only on this basis is it possible to define the rights of the language groups mentioned in point 5 of the present article, and those of individuals living outside the territory of their community, in terms of a gradation or continuum.

3. For the purpose of this Declaration, groups are also deemed to be in their own territory and to belong to a language community in the following circumstances:

i. when they are separated from the main body of their community by political or administrative boundaries; ii. when they have been historically established in a small area surrounded by members of other language communities; or iii. when they are established in an area which they share with the members of other language communities with similar historical antecedents.

4. This Declaration also considers nomad peoples within their historical areas of migration and peoples historically established in geographically dispersed locations as language communities in their own territory.

5. This Declaration considers as a language group any group of persons sharing the same language which is established in the territorial space of another language community but which does not possess historical antecedents equivalent to those of that community. Examples of such groups are immigrants, refugees, deported persons and members of diasporas.

Article 2

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1. This Declaration considers that, whenever various language communities and groups share the same territory, the rights formulated in this Declaration must be exercised on a basis of mutual respect and in such a way that democracy may be guaranteed to the greatest possible extent.

2. In order to establish the appropriate articulation between the respective rights of such language communities and groups and the persons belonging to them, the quest for a satisfactory sociolinguistic balance must take into account various factors, in addition to their respective historical antecedents in the territory and their democratically expressed will. Among such factors, which may call for compensatory treatment aimed at restoring a balance, are the following: the coercive nature of the migrations which have led to the coexistence of the different communities and groups, and their degree of political, socioeconomic and cultural vulnerability.

Article 3

1. This Declaration considers the following to be inalienable personal rights which may be exercised in any situation:

- the right to be recognized as a member of a language community;
- the right to the use of one's own language both in private and in public;
- the right to the use of one's own name;
- the right to interrelate and associate with other members of one's language community of origin;
- the right to maintain and develop one's own culture;

and all the other rights related to language which are recognized in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 16 December 1966 and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of the same date.

2. This Declaration considers that the collective rights of language groups, may include the following, in addition to the rights attributed to the members of language groups in the foregoing paragraph, and in accordance with the conditions laid down in article 2.2:

- the right for their own language and culture to be taught;
- the right of access to cultural services;
- the right to an equitable presence of their language and culture in the communications media;
- the right to receive attention in their own language from government bodies and in socioeconomic relations.

3. The aforementioned rights of persons and language groups must in no way hinder the interrelation of such persons or groups with the host language community or their integration into that community. Nor must they restrict the rights of the host community or its members to the full public use of the community's own language throughout its territorial space.

Article 4

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1. This Declaration considers that persons who move to and settle in the territory of another language community have the right and the duty to maintain an attitude of integration towards this community. This term is understood to mean an additional socialization of such persons in such a way that they may preserve their original cultural characteristics while sharing with the society in which they have settled sufficient references, values and forms of behaviour to enable them to function socially without greater difficulties than those experienced by members of the host community.

2. This Declaration considers, on the other hand, that assimilation, a term which is understood to mean acculturation in the host society, in such a way that the original cultural characteristics are replaced by the references, values and forms of behaviour of the host society, must on no account be forced or induced and can only be the result of an entirely free decision.

Article 5

This Declaration is based on the principle that the rights of all language communities are equal and independent of their legal status as official, regional or minority languages. Terms such as regional or minority languages are not used in this Declaration because, though in certain cases the recognition of regional or minority languages can facilitate the exercise of certain rights, these and other modifiers are frequently used to restrict the rights of language communities.

Article 6

This Declaration considers that a language cannot be considered specific to a territory merely on the grounds that it is the official language of the state or has been traditionally used within the territory for administrative purposes or for certain cultural activities.

TITLE ONE

General Principles

Article 7

1. All languages are the expression of a collective identity and of a distinct way of perceiving and describing reality and must therefore be able to enjoy the conditions required for their development in all functions.

2. All languages are collectively constituted and are made available within a community for individual use as tools of cohesion, identification, communication and creative expression.

Article 8

1. All language communities have the right to organize and manage their own resources so as to ensure the use of their language in all functions within society.

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2. All language communities are entitled to have at their disposal whatever means are necessary to ensure the transmission and continuity of their language.

Article 9

All language communities have the right to codify, standardize, preserve, develop and promote their linguistic system, without induced or forced interference.

Article 10

1. All language communities have equal rights.

2. This Declaration considers discrimination against language communities to be inadmissible, whether it be based on their degree of political sovereignty, their situation defined in social, economic or other terms, the extent to which their languages have been codified, updated or modernized, or on any other criterion.

3. All necessary steps must be taken in order to implement this principle of equality and to render it real and effective.

Article 11

All language communities are entitled to have at their disposal whatever means of translation into and from other languages are needed to guarantee the exercise of the rights contained in this Declaration.

Article 12

1. Everyone has the right to carry out all activities in the public sphere in his/her language, provided it is the language specific to the territory where s/he resides.

2. Everyone has the right to use his/her language in the personal and family sphere.

Article 13

1. Everyone has the right to know the language specific to the territory in which s/he lives.

2. Everyone has the right to be polyglot and to know and use the language most conducive to his/her personal development or social mobility, without prejudice to the guarantees established in this Declaration for the public use of the language specific to the territory.

Article 14

The provisions of this Declaration cannot be interpreted or used to the detriment of any norm or practice deriving from the internal or international status of a language which is more favourable to its use within the territory to which it is specific.

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SECOND TITLE

Overall linguistic regime

Section I

Public administration and official bodies

Article 15

1. All language communities are entitled to the official use of their language within their territory.

2. All language communities have the right for legal and administrative acts, public and private documents and records in public registers which are drawn up in the language of the territory to be valid and effective and no one can allege ignorance of this language.

Article 16

All language communities have the right to communicate in their own language with the central, territorial, local and supraterritorial services of the public authorities and of those administrative divisions which include the territory to which the language is specific.

Article 17

1. All language communities are entitled to have at their disposal and to obtain in their own language all official documents pertaining to relations which affect the territory to which the language is specific, whether such documents be in printed, machine-readable or any other form.

2. Forms and standard administrative documents, whether in printed, machine-readable or any other form, must be made available and placed at the disposal of the public in all territorial languages by the public authorities through the services which cover the territories to which each language is specific.

Article 18

1. All language communities have the right for laws and other legal provisions which concern them to be published in the language specific to the territory.

2. Public authorities who have more than one territorially historic language within their jurisdiction must publish all laws and other legal provisions of a general nature in each of these languages, whether or not their speakers understand other languages.

Article 19

1. Representative Assemblies must have as their official language(s) the language(s) historically spoken in the territory they represent.

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2. This right also applies to the languages of the communities established in geographically dispersed locations referred to in Article 1, Paragraph 4.

Article 20

1. Everyone has the right to use the language historically spoken in a territory, both orally and in writing, in the Courts of Justice located within that territory. The Courts of Justice must use the language specific to the territory in their internal actions and, if on account of the legal system in force within the state, the proceedings continue elsewhere, the use of the original language must be maintained.

2. Notwithstanding the above, everyone has the right to be tried in a language which s/he understands and can speak and to obtain the services of an interpreter free of charge.

Article 21

All language communities have the right for records in public registers to be drawn up in the language specific to the territory.

Article 22

All language communities have the right for documents authenticated by notaries public or certified by other authorized public servants to be drawn up in the language specific to the territory where the notary or other authorized public servant performs his/her functions.

Section II

Education

Article 23

1. Education must help to foster the capacity for linguistic and cultural self-expression of the language community of the territory where it is provided.

2. Education must help to maintain and develop the language spoken by the language community of the territory where it is provided.

3. Education must always be at the service of linguistic and cultural diversity and of harmonious relations between different language communities throughout the world.

4. Within the context of the foregoing principles, everyone has the right to learn any language.

Article 24

All language communities have the right to decide to what extent their language is to be present, as a vehicular language and as an object of study, at all levels of education within their territory: preschool, primary, secondary, technical and vocational, university, and adult education.

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Article 25

All language communities are entitled to have at their disposal all the human and material resources necessary to ensure that their language is present to the extent they desire at all levels of education within their territory: properly trained teachers, appropriate teaching methods, text books, finance, buildings and equipment, traditional and innovative technology.

Article 26

All language communities are entitled to an education which will enable their members to acquire a full command of their own language, including the different abilities relating to all the usual spheres of use, as well as the most extensive possible command of any other language they may wish to know.

Article 27

All language communities are entitled to an education which will enable their members to acquire knowledge of any languages related to their own cultural tradition, such as literary or sacred languages which were formerly habitual languages of the community.

Article 28

All language communities are entitled to an education which will enable their members to acquire a thorough knowledge of their cultural heritage (history, geography, literature, and other manifestations of their own culture), as well as the most extensive possible knowledge of any other culture they may wish to know.

Article 29

1. Everyone is entitled to receive an education in the language specific to the territory where s/he resides.

2. This right does not exclude the right to acquire oral and written knowledge of any language which may be of use to him/her as an instrument of communication with other language communities.

Article 30

The language and culture of all language communities must be the subject of study and research at university level.

Section III

Proper names

Article 31

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All language communities have the right to preserve and use their own system of proper names in all spheres and on all occasions.

Article 32

1. All language communities have the right to use place names in the language specific to the territory, both orally and in writing, in the private, public and official spheres.

2. All language communities have the right to establish, preserve and revise autochthonous place names. Such place names cannot be arbitrarily abolished, distorted or adapted, nor can they be replaced if changes in the political situation, or changes of any other type, occur.

Article 33

All language communities have the right to refer to themselves by the name used in their own language. Any translation into other languages must avoid ambiguous or pejorative denominations.

Article 34

Everyone has the right to the use of his/her own name in his/her own language in all spheres, as well as the right, only when necessary, to the most accurate possible phonetic transcription of his/her name in another writing system.

Section IV

Communications media and new technologies

Article 35

All language communities have the right to decide the extent to which their language is be present in all the communications media in their territory, whether local and traditional media, those with a wider scope, or those using more advanced technology, regardless of the method of dissemination or transmission employed.

Article 36

All language communities are entitled to have at their disposal all the human and material resources required in order to ensure the desired degree of presence of their language and the desired degree of cultural self-expression in the communications media in their territory: properly trained personnel, finance, buildings and equipment, traditional and innovative technology.

Article 37

All language communities have the right to receive, through the communications media, a thorough knowledge of their cultural heritage (history, geography, literature and other

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manifestations of their own culture), as well as the greatest possible amount of information about any other culture their members may wish to know.

Article 38

The languages and cultures of all language communities must receive equitable and non-discriminatory treatment in the communications media throughout the world.

Article 39

The communities described in Article 1, paragraphs 3 and 4, of this Declaration, and the groups mentioned in paragraph 5 of the same article, are entitled to an equitable representation of their language in the communications media of the territory where they are established or where they migrate. This right is to be exercised in harmony with the rights of the other language groups or communities in the territory.

Article 40

In the field of information technology, all language communities are entitled to have at their disposal equipment adapted to their linguistic system and tools and products in their language, so as to derive full advantage from the potential offered by such technologies for publication, translation and information processing and for the dissemination of culture in general.

Section V

Culture

Article 41

1. All language communities have the right to use, maintain and foster their language in all forms of cultural expression.

2. All language communities must be able to exercise this right to the full without any community's space being subjected to hegemonic occupation by a foreign culture.

Article 42

All language communities have the right to full development within their own cultural sphere.

Article 43

All language communities are entitled to access to the works produced in their language.

Article 44

All language communities are entitled to access to intercultural programmes through the dissemination of adequate information, and to support for activities such as teaching the language to foreigners, translation, dubbing, post-synchronization and subtitling.

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Article 45

All language communities have the right for the language specific to the territory to occupy a pre-eminent position in cultural events and services (libraries, videotheniques, cinemas, theatres, museums, archives, folklore, cultural industries, and all other manifestations of cultural life).

Article 46

All language communities have the right to preserve their linguistic and cultural heritage, including its material manifestations, such as collections of documents, works of art and architecture, historic monuments and inscriptions in their own language.

Section VI

The socioeconomic sphere

Article 47

1. All language communities have the right to establish the use of their language in all socioeconomic activities within their territory.

2. All language communities are entitled to have at their disposal, in their own language, all the means necessary for the performance of their professional activities, such as documents and works of reference, instructions, forms and computer equipment, tools and products.

3. The use of other languages in this sphere can only be required in so far as it is justified by the nature of the professional activity involved. In no case can a more recently arrived language relegate or supersede the use of the language specific to the territory.

Article 48

1. All language communities have the right to use their language with full legal validity in economic transactions of all types, such as the sale and purchase of goods and services, banking, insurance, job contracts and others.

2. No clause in such private acts can exclude or restrict the use of a language in the territory to which it is specific.

3. All language communities are entitled to have the documents required for the performance of the above-mentioned operations at their disposal in their own language. Such documents include forms, cheques, contracts, invoices, receipts, delivery notes, order forms, and others.

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Article 49

All language communities have the right to use their language in all types of socioeconomic organizations such as labour and union organizations, and employers', professional, trade and craft associations.

Article 50

1. All language communities have the right for their language to occupy a pre-eminent place in advertising, signs, external signposting, and all other elements that make up the image of the country.

2. All language communities have the right to receive full oral and written information in their own language on the products and services proposed by commercial establishments in the territory, such as instructions for use, labels, lists of ingredients, advertising, guarantees and others.

3. All public signs and announcements affecting the safety of the public must be written at least in the language specific to the territory, in conditions which are not inferior to those of any other language.

Article 51

1. Everyone has the right to use the language specific to the territory in his/her relations with firms, commercial establishments and private bodies and to be served or receive a reply in the same language.

2. Everyone has the right, as a client, customer, consumer or user, to receive oral and written information in the language specific to the territory from establishments open to the public.

Article 52

Everyone has the right to carry out his/her professional activities in the language specific to the territory unless the functions inherent to the job require the use of other languages, as in the case of language teachers, translators or tourist guides.

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ADDITIONAL DISPOSITIONS

First

The public authorities must take all appropriate steps to implement the rights proclaimed in this Declaration within their respective areas of jurisdiction. More specifically, international funds must be set up to foster the exercise of linguistic rights in communities which are demonstrably lacking in resources. Thus the public authorities must provide the necessary support so that the languages of the various communities may be codified, transcribed, taught, and used in the administration.

Second

The public authorities must ensure that the authorities, organizations and persons concerned are informed of the rights and correlative duties arising from this Declaration.

Third

The public authorities must establish, in the light of existing legislation, the sanctions arising from the violation of the linguistic rights laid down in this Declaration.

FINAL DISPOSITIONS

First

This Declaration proposes the creation of a Council of Languages within the United Nations Organization. The General Assembly of the United Nations Organization is to be responsible for setting up this Council, defining its functions and appointing its members, and for creating a body in international law to protect language communities in the exercise of the rights recognized in this Declaration.

Second

This Declaration recommends and promotes the creation of a World Commission on Linguistic Rights, a non-official, consultative body made up of representatives of non-governmental organizations and organizations working in the field of linguistic law.

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APPENDIX 3
PEDAGOGICAL GRAMMAR

(see attached booklet)

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