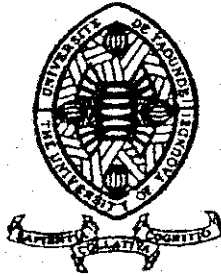


**THE UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE I
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AFRICAINES ET LINGUISTIQUE**

NOUN MORPHOLOGY OF BEFANG

*A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Award of the Maîtrise Degree in Linguistics.*

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Dedication

To my Father **Fotso Moïse**, my Mother **Yonkeu Jeanne**
and
To my beloved brothers and sisters.

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Abbreviat

SIGNS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AM	: Associative marker
ALCAM	: Atlas Linguistique du Cameroun
CV	: Consonant Vowel
CVC	: Consonant Vowel Consonant
VL	: Voiceless
VD	: Voiced
ASP	: Aspect
<u>cL</u>	: Class
QM	: Question Marker
Pref	: Prefix
RM	: Relative Marker
+	: And
/ /	: Phonemic boundaries

4

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CHAPTER I

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1. Objective of the study

The need to have a written version of African languages in general and of Cameroonian languages in particular is of a paramount importance. A good deal of studies have been undertaken in this respect, ranging from phonology, morphology, syntax to entire dictionaries. But in spite of the amount of work done to this day, it remains clear that much, and indeed still much, has to be done. It is in this light that we undertake yet another study on a Cameroonian language: Noun morphology of Befang. This dissertation is a study of the noun and other constituents of the noun phrase. It will also take a closer look at the relational pattern existing between the constituents of the nominal construction in terms of distribution and agreement.

1.2. Motivation

The present study was mainly motivated by the desire to contribute to the process of standardization of Befang. Our choice of this language was first of all inspired by our desire to transform all African languages from their oral to written forms. Another factor which motivated us was the development of the Befang language in a bid to contribute to the literacy of the native speakers.

1.3. The location of Befang.

This section will examine the geographical, historical and socio-economic situation of Befang as well as the linguistic classification of the latter.

1.3.1. Geographical location

Befang is the name used for the language, the ethnic group and the village. It is one of the six languages that make up the Beba-Befang clan which is one of the two clans that make up the Menchum valley sub-division. This sub-division is located in the valley between Wum and Bafut sub-division of the North West province of the Republic of Cameroon.

This clan has a population of about 15,000 inhabitants and lies between latitude 6°10' and 6°31' North and longitude 9°10' and 10°21' East. Ihims (1994:2)

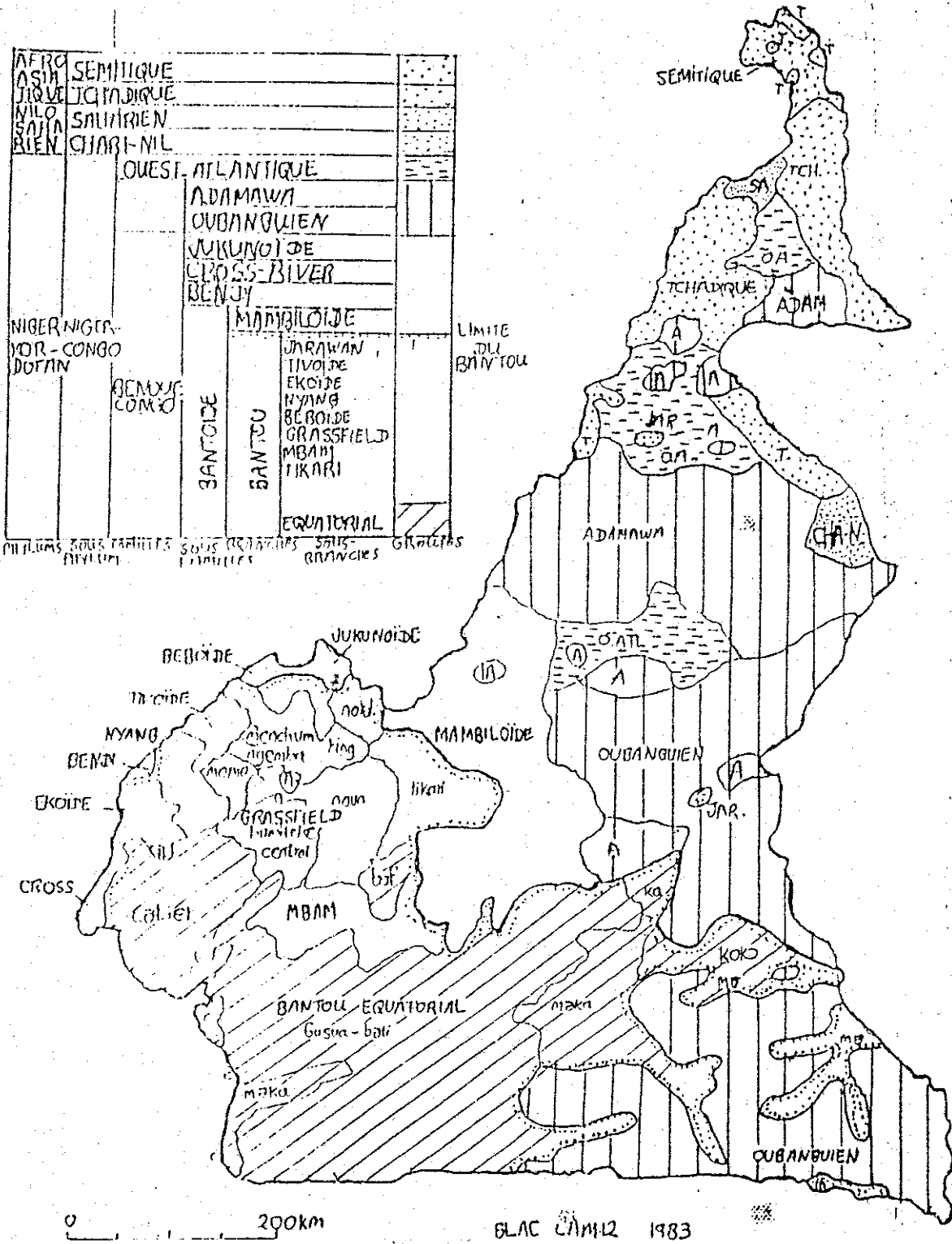
The Beba-Befang clan is bounded to the North by Wum and Bu, to the east by the Bafut sub-division in Mezam and Momo division, to the South by the Esimbi clan. The main occupation of the Befang people is palm oil production. This explains why their neighbours mentioned above call Menchum valley the "Mbanga area" and the people are called "Mbanga people". The geographical situation of Befang is illustrated by the following maps.

Map1 shows the family and linguistic groups in Cameroon.

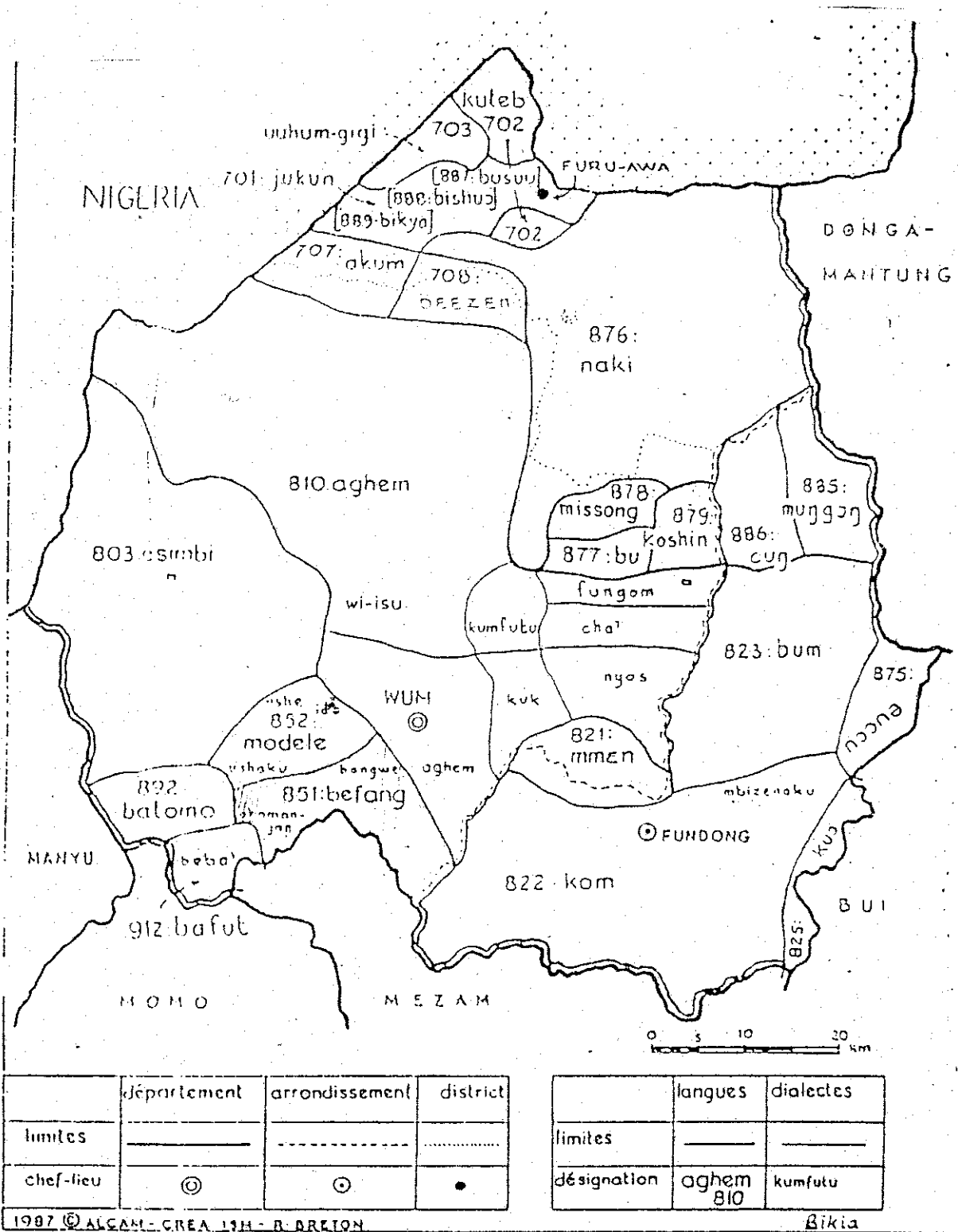
Map2 presents Befang as one of the national languages of Menchum.

Map3 shows the Befang language in the midst of neighbouring languages of the North West province.

MAP 1 : LINGUISTIC GROUPS OF CAMEROON.

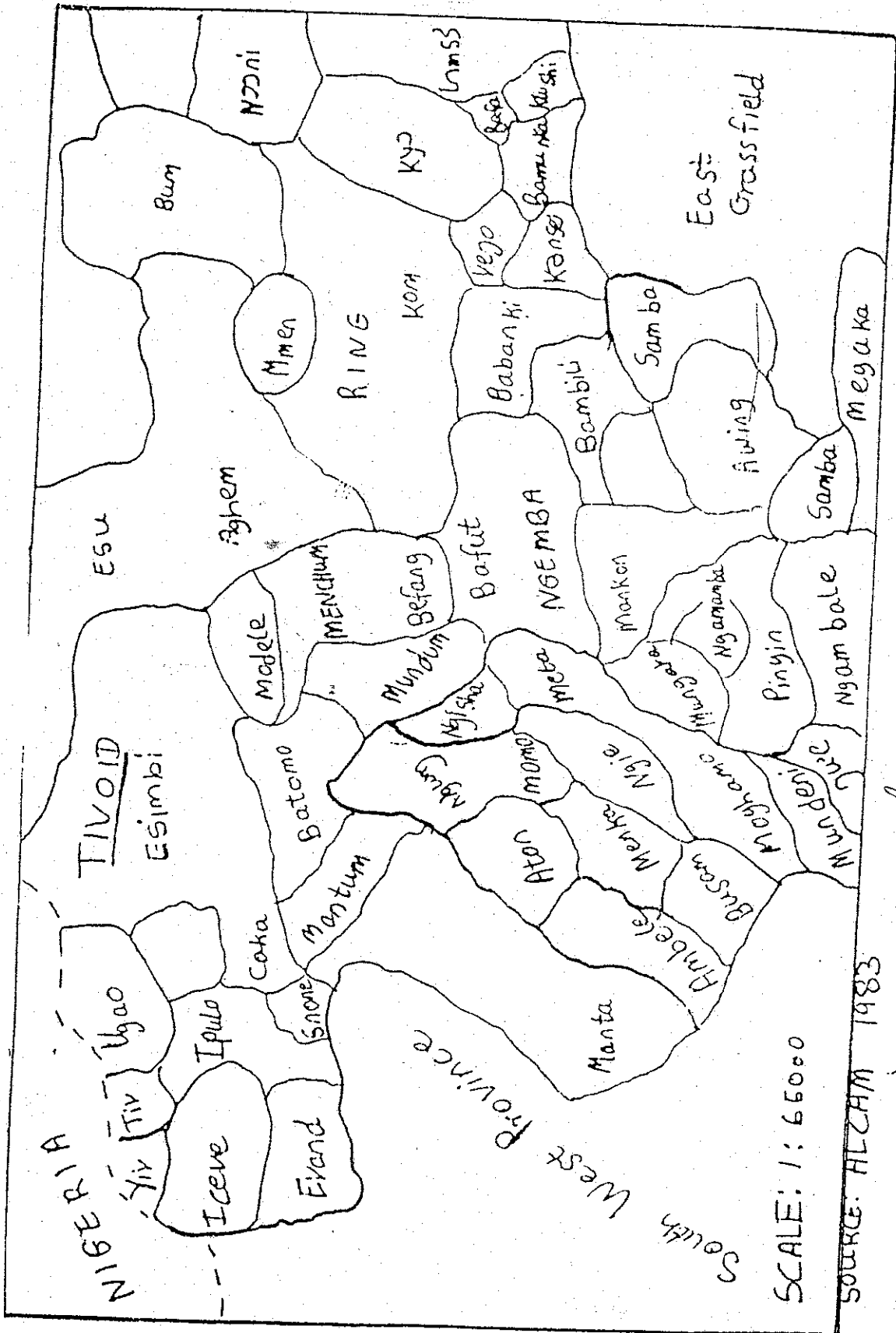


MAP 2: NATIONAL LANGUAGES OF THE MENCHUM DIVISION



The hatched area indicates the position of Befang in the Menchum division.

MAP 3: BEFANG AND NEIGHBOURING LANGUAGES



not from ALZAM
but ALZAM's work

The hatched area indicates Befang amongst neighbouring languages.

1.3.2. Socio-economic situation

The inhabitants of Befang are people from various linguistic origins who live harmoniously under the supreme figure of their chief. The latter rules with the assistance of the traditional council, a council of sub-chiefs and various secret societies such as the “*indé bakùm*”. Saturday is the only market day for the week.

As far as the economic life is concerned, the people derive their mainstay from agricultural activities, favoured by very fertile alluvial soils. Fotoh (1999) says oil palm is the main cash crop of the Befang people. It is so important to these people that it has become a parameter for measuring wealth. Other activities of the people include poultry, hunting and fishing.

1.3.3. The language and linguistic classification.

1.3.3.1. The language

ùsà?bifān, as people refer to the Befang language, is the language spoken by the Befang people and Okomanjang with negligible differences, which, realized at the vocabulary level impede mutual intelligibility between the two speakers. Some of these differences are illustrated below as presented in Abre (2003):

(1)

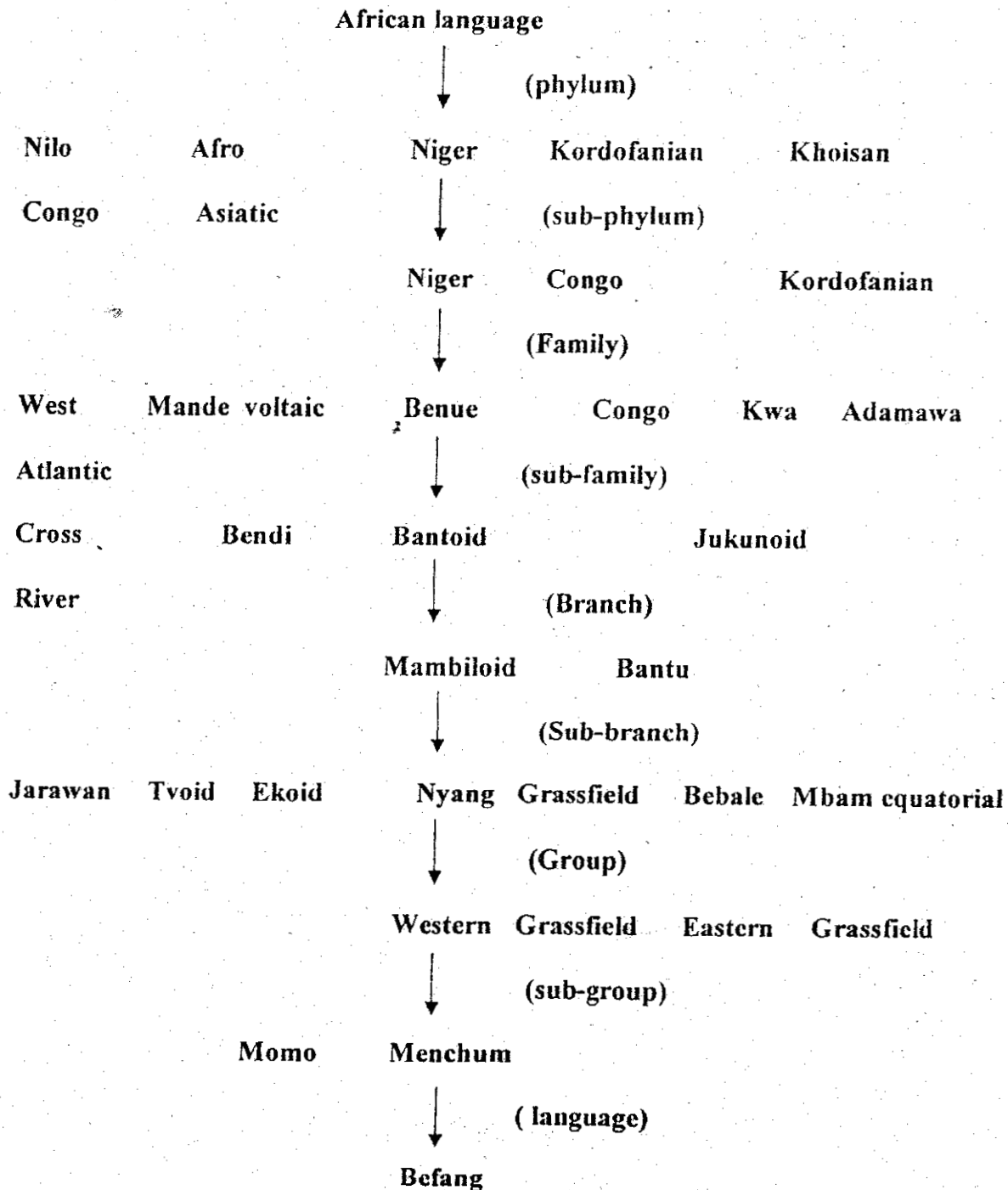
Befang	okomanjang	English gloss
ì - mbùke	ù- bùkí	Pot
í - gámá	í - ñám	Plantain
á - kúf	é - kúv	Bone
á - sàfé	á - jèn	Corn
ù - wón	ù - búkí	Cup
ù - sán	ù - sán	Broom
kívín	tívín	Palace

This table provides some variations between the two dialects. Apart from slight differences revealed by the table above, it's worth noting that the following villages: Obang, Bangwe and Agwili speak Befang without any noticeable differences. It therefore becomes clear that all these villages speak the same variety which is the Befang language.

1.3.3.2. Linguistic classification

In this study we will consider Greenberg's classification and ALCAM (1983). According to ALCAM, Befang falls under zone 8 of the languages of Cameroon and is coded 851. This zone covers all the languages spoken North of the South West and West of the North West.

The origin of the language is traced by the Greenberg's genealogical classification, from the phylum, family, branch and even its group as illustrated below.



1.4. Review of literature

The only descriptive work we have found on Befang is Abre (2003). He however mentions some unpublished documents on the language written by some indigenes of the region. These include the following: Ihims (1994) Menchum valley subdivision, an introduction, Fotoh (1999), Songs, dirges and female secret societies in the Beba- Befang clan

1.4.1. Sketch of phonology

This phonological sketch is entirely based on Abre (2002)

1.4.1.1. Phonemic account

1.4.1.1.1. Vowel phonemes

Fourteen phonological vowels are attested in the Befang language. Below is the representative table.

Table I: Vowels phonemes

Position of lips Height Of tongue	Front (unrounded)		Central (unrounded)		Back (rounded)	
	Short	long	Short	Long	Short	Long
high	/i/	/i:/			/u/	/u:/
Mid-high	/e/	/e:/			/o/	/o:/
Mid-low	/ɛ/		/ə/	/ə:/	/ɔ/	
Low			/ɑ/	/ɑ:/		

ful e h u e ?

1.4.1.1.2. Consonant phonemes

The phonemic analysis of consonant sounds in Befang reveals that out of 45 phonemic consonants, 44 are phonemes and only two were realised as variants or allophones of the same phonemes. These 44 consonant phonemes include 13 modified consonants, 4 affricates, 3 pre-nasals, and 24 simple consonants with a phonemic status. Table 2 below shows the consonant phonemes attested in Befang.

Velars

Place of Articulation manner of articulation	Place of Articulation							
	B I L L A B I A L S	D E N T A L S L A B I A L	A L V E O L A R S	V E L A R S	P A L A T A L S	G L O T T A L	L A B I A L	D E N T A L S
Stops	plosive	VL	/p/	/t/ /t ^w / /t'/	/k/ /k ^w / /k'/	/ʔ/	/kp/	
		VD	/b/ /b ^w / /b'/	/d/	/g/ /g ^w / /g'/		/gb/	
	Pre-nasal		/m/	/nd/ /ndz/				
Affricates	Nasal		/m/ /m ^w /	/n/	/ŋ/ /ŋ ^w /		/pɹ/	
		Pre-nasal	VL		/ts/		/tʃ/	
	VD			/dz/		/dʒ/		
Fricatives		VL	/f/ /f ^w / /f'/	/s/			/h/	
	VD		/v/	/z/	/ʒ/			
Lateral				/l/ /l ^w /				
Glides								/w/

Table II: Consonant phonemes

1.4.2. Syllabication

As it is well known, every language has restrictions on the patterns it makes use of to organise segments into syllables. Five syllables types are attested in Befang. They include : V-syllables, CV-syllables, C-syllables, N-syllables and CVC-syllables. Monosyllabic, disyllabic and trisyllabic structures are also attested in Befang.

1.4.2.1. Monosyllabic structures

There are many types of monosyllabic structure attested in Befang. These are CV, CV: and CVC

a) The CV structure

/wù / " person"

/zú / "to listen "

/té / "to call"

/ví / "to kill"

/sê / " to slice"

/bú / "dog"

b) The CV: structure

/mú: / " to swell"

/zé: / "to split"

/k^wá:/ "to breathe"

/kó: / "to harvest"

c) The CVC structure

/tsák / " to laugh"

/fáŋ / "bush"

/fàn / "red"

/núm / "to bite"

/tón / "strong"

/féf / "to blow"

high tones!

1.4.2.2 Disyllabic structure

Disyllabic structures attested in Befang include :

a) The VCV structure

/ábá / "bed"

/úkó / "ladder"

/ívi / "bed"

/ítsú / "mouths"

/átú / "head"

/íné: / "ankle"

b) The CVC. CV structure

/nyèmtsé / " anus"

c) The V. CVC structure

/úlérŋ / "bamboo"

/ágúŋ / "seed"

/íbúm / "egg"

/ágáp / "hoe"

d) The C V.CV structure

/búfé / "to ask"

/dájé / "to cross"

e) The C V.CVC structure

/kítáj / "moon"

/wúfán / "white man"

/úsóŋ / "rive"

/ítám / "heart"

/dzùwá / "snake"

/záfé / "to yawn"

/bándóŋ / "horns"

/bétəl / "lice"

1.4.2.3. Trisyllabic structure

a) The CV.CV.CV structure

/kíjèbé / "wings"

/fútsómó / "pipe"

/báŋòno / "intestines"

/kìlésé / "charcoal"

b) The V.CV.CV structure

/ádíbi / "door"

/imbàné / "fence"

/ígámá / "plantain"

/úbási / "dust"

c) The CV.CV.CVC structure

/bákìl'àm / "branches"

/kákùk^wét / "toad"

d) The V.CV.CVC structure

/ákéŋúm / "pig"

/ákànyàm / "horse"

1.4.3. Tones

Two sets of tones are identified in Befang. They are level tones and contour tones.

1.4.3.1. Level tones

There are two level tones in Befang :High and Low.

a) The high tone (H)

mó? "water"

úléŋ "bamboo"

í-dzómó "frog"

b) The low tone (L)

tèn "strong"

nùm	"hot"
fənə	"close"

1.4.3.2. Contour tones

There are two contour tones in Befang. The rising tone and the falling tone.

a) The rising tone (-L H)

fǒ "to lend"

bǎ "people"

b) The falling tone (H L)

dzû "climb"

dô "escape"

Tone is contrastive in Befang, that is, there are tones capable of changing the meaning in words. This can be illustrated in the following examples.

Sǎŋ	"pread"	sǎŋ	"select"
Kám	"tap"	kàm	"gong"
Némá	"quench"	nəmè	"put"
Núm	"bite"	nùm	"hot"

1.4.3.3. Combination of tones

Two or more tone sequences are found in disyllabic or trisyllabic words in Befang we find.

a) Low low combination.

e.g nəmè "pu"

b) High high combination

e.g úlǎŋ "bamboo"

c) Low high combination

e.g mǎwúl "palm tree"

d) High low combination

e.g mǎtèn "fir"

e) High low high combination

e.g úlǎné "boundary"

- f) High high high combination
e.g. úlúnú "suffer"
- g) Low low high combination
e.g. ùdàṅé "chief"
- h) Low high-low combination
e.g. ìwúm "firewood"
- i) Low high high combination
e.g. ìdzáwó "sky"
- k) Low low low combination
e.g. ìghàmè "crab"
- l) High low low combination
e.g. ákányàm "horse"
- l) low-high low combination
e.g. wuf[∨]ən "whiteman"
- l) high low-high high combination
e.g. áw[∨]óǵél "path"

1.5. Significance of the study

Considering the state of studies (linguistic research) on Befang, this work is a contribution to the description of this language. After Abre's (2002) innovation with the phonology, some light is shed on the noun structure, on where the noun may occur in the nominal group and how it relates to the other constituents. However, more aspects still have to be studied before talking of a grammatical account of Befang.

Besides the description of Befang as a sample, this work also contributes to the description of the nominal construction of Bantu languages, shedding more light on the agreement system of these languages.

1.6. Methodology

1.6. 1. Source of information

The language related information used for this study was provided by the native speakers of Befang some of which are listed below.

Table III : List of informants

NAMES	AGE	LEVEL OF STUDY	VILLAGE	PROFESSION
ATANG, George	40	A Level	Befang	Headmaster
Ketchem Rapheal	17	Form V	Befang	Student
Mr Izakius	37	Class 5	Befang	Driver
Mr John	53	Class 3	Befang	Farmer

1.6.2. Data collection and analytical procedure.

We have used Greenberg's, Tervuren's and Welmer's questionnaire, published in the university of Dakar in 1968. Words are collected in isolation first; then associated as presented below.

- ⇒ Noun (sing)
- ⇒ Noun (pl)
- ⇒ Noun + demonstrative, quantifier, adjective and so on
- ⇒ Infinitive verbs
- ⇒ Simple sentences
- ⇒ Complex sentences

Some combinations are in both singular and plural forms. Data are transcribed directly or recorded to be transcribed later with the help of more experienced elders.

1.7. Layout of chapters

The first chapter of this work is the general introduction that includes, amongst others, the objectives of the study, the location of the language, its linguistic classification and the review of literature. The second chapter is a study of noun morphology. Starting with the noun class prefix, we continue with noun formation processes and end with the integration of loan words into the language. Chapter three delves into the structure of the nominal construction. It begins with the functions of the noun in Befang and later studies the various pronouns in the language. Modified nominal constructions are handled in the fourth chapter. An emphasis is laid here on adjectives and relatives clauses. The focus of the fifth chapter will be on general conclusion.

CHAPTER II

NOUN MORPHOLOGY

check focus =

2.0. Introduction

This chapter focusses on the morphology of the noun in Befang. The first section will examine the noun class system and the second will describe other noun formation processes that may be used to derive nouns.

2.1. The noun class system

Nkwah Peter (1986) quoting Haig Der- houssikan (1974) defines the noun class as a term used to describe the Swahili (and Bantu) noun grouping on the basis of either similar prefixes or the identity of concordial prefixes they govern. The noun in Befang is made up of a prefix plus a stem. The prefix bears either a low or a high tone. In the one hand, nouns sharing the same prefix are grouped together and referred to as a class as evidenced by the figure below.

reflex?

(1)

	PREFIX	STEM	GLOSS
1	á	bá	Bed
2	á	ná	Ant
3	á	gáp	Hoe
4	á	kúf	Bone
5	á	káj	Dish
6	á	bán	Law

On the other hand, a class may also be made up of nouns triggering the same agreement on the possessive determiner, irrespective of their prefixes.

(2)

a) *ú-né ùmbâ* " my ant "

ants my

b) *ó - kójé ùmbâ* " my grasshoppers "

grasshoppers my

c) *bè – mbók ùmbâ* " my hawks "

hawks my

Since Befang morphological classes do not necessarily correspond to semantic grouping, we have not adopted the Bantu semantic criterion. We therefore consider agreement as the major criterion in the determination of classes. Ngangoum (2002), quoting Kadima(1969) stipulates that two classes are distinct if:

- a) They exhibit a difference in agreement
- b) Both their nominal prefixes and pairing systems are different in case they share common agreement features.

Below is a presentation of the noun classes attested in Befang.

2.1.1. Noun class 1

The majority of nouns in this class refer to animals. Nouns of other semantic groupings are also found in this class. Class one nouns divide into two subgroups depending on their prefixes.

Group a

The prefix of this group is **á**.

(3)

á – kànyèm " horse "

á – nè " ant "

á – tú " head "

Group b

This subgroup is made up of nouns with a zero prefix (\emptyset), but shares a common agreement pattern with other nouns of class 1.

(4)

\emptyset – *kítyá* " pepper "

\emptyset – *kákó* " snail "

Though (a) and (b) do not share the same prefix, they belong to the same class because of the agreement they trigger on the possessive determiner as illustrated below.

(5)

a) *á – né iká* " my ant "

ant my

á - tú ikâ " my head "
head my

b) ø - kítýá ikâ " my pepper "
pepper my

ø - kákó ikâ " my snail "
snail my

2.1.2. Noun class 2.

This is the corresponding plural class for class 1 and class 3(b) nouns. It is subdivided into a), b) and c).

Group a

The prefix of this group is u

(6)

ú - wá " hands "

ú - ná " ants "

Group b

O is the prefix for this subgroup.

(7)

Ó - kónjé " grasshoppers "

Ó - byén " Cornfufus "

Group c

The prefix for this subgroup is bə.

(8)

bə - kàtásé " spoon "

bə - mbók " hawks "

Although the nouns in (a), (b) and (c) do not share the same prefix, they trigger the same agreement pattern on the possessive marker.

(9)

a) ú - wá ùmbâ " my hand "
hands my

ú - né ùmbâ " my ants "
ants my

b) Ó - kóné ùmbâ " my spoons "
Graashoppers my

Ó - byán ùmbâ " my cornfufus "
Cornfufus my

c) bè - kàtásé ùmbâ " my spoons "
spoons my

bè - mbók ùmbâ " my hawks "
hawks my

2.1.3. Noun class 3

This class is subdivided into two subgroups the nouns of which designate some domestic animals, some elements of the environment and miscellaneous objects.

Group a

This class has a zero prefix.

(10)

∅ - bí " goat "

∅ - cém " war "

∅ - fán " bush "

∅ - nyém " night "

Although nouns in this subgroup share the same prefix with those of class 1(b), they do not belong to the same class because they trigger a different agreement on the possessive marker.

(11)

Class 3(a)

∅ - bí ìnzán " my goat "
goat my

∅ - cém ìnzán " my war "
war my

∅ - bú ìnzáŋ " my dog "
 dog my

Class 1(b)

∅ - kítýá ìkâ " my pepper "
 hawk my

∅ - kákó ìkâ " my snail "
 snail my

∅ - kàtásé ìkâ " my spoon "
 spoon my

Group b

i is the prefix for this group.

(12)

í - mbók " hawk "

í - ndáŋ " chair "

ì - ndòŋ " potato "

Though (a) and (b) have different prefixes we place them in the same class because, as illustrated in the following examples, they trigger the same agreement on the possessive determiner.

(13)

a) ∅ - bí ìnzáŋ " my goat "
 goat my

∅ - cém ìnzáŋ " my war "
 war my

∅ - dzé ìnzáŋ " my elephant "
 elephant my

b) í - mbók ìnzáŋ " my hawk "
 hawk my

ì - ndàŋ ìnzáŋ " my chair "
 chair my

í - gón ìnzáŋ " my girl "
 girl my

2.1.4. Noun class 4

This is the plural class for class 3(a) nouns whose prefix is i-

(14)

í - bí	" goat "
í - cém	" wars "
í - fáj	" bushes "
í - nyém	" nights "

what is the plural for "nyé"

2.1.5. Noun class 5

The nouns of this class designate some wild animals, fruits and miscellaneous objects.

The prefix of this class is fu-

(15)

fú - gèn	" star "
fú - bú	" cat "
fú - nùńó	" bird "
fú - dzúm	" iron "

what is the plural for "nyé"

2.1.6. Noun class 6

The prefix of this class is m-, this is the corresponding plural for class 5 nouns.

Contrary to what might be thought at first sight, this prefix is not a homorganic nasal.

(16)

m - gèn	" stars "
m - bú	" cats "
m - nùńó	" birds "
m - dzúm	" irons "

2.1.7. Noun class 7

This class is subdivided into two subgroups and designates parts of the body, some plants and animals.

Group a

i- is the prefix of this subgroup.

(17)

í-tón	" navel "
í-ghé	" termite "
ì-gáŋ	" grass "
í-gámá	" plantain "

Though this subclass shares a common prefix with class 3 nouns, they do not belong to the same class because of the agreement they trigger on the possessive determiner. Let us consider the following examples:

(18)

Class 7a

(a) í-tón	nzâ	" my navel "
navel	my	
í-ghé	nzâ	" my termite "
termite	my	

Class 3(b)

(b) í-mbók	inzán	" my hawk "
hawk	my	
í-ndán	inzán	" my chair "
chair	my	

Group b

This class has a zero prefix (\emptyset) and is made up of a single noun.

\emptyset - dziŋí " joint "

Although (a) and (b) do not have the same prefix, they belong to the same class because they trigger the same agreement marker on the possessive. Let us consider the following examples.

(a) í-tón	nzâ	" my navel "
navel	my	
(b) dziŋí	nzâ	" my joint "
Joint	my	

2.1.8. Noun Class 8

It is the corresponding plural class of some nouns in class 7 and 13. This class is subdivided into three subgroups (a), (b) and (c).

Group a

Words in this subgroup are prefixed by ki-

(19)

kí - kúm " names "

kí - lyé " bridges "

kí - yébé " wings "

Group b

α- is the prefix of this subgroup.

(20)

á - kám " drums "

á - gámá " plantains "

Group c

The prefix of this subgroup which contains a single noun is i-

í - dzìjí " joints "

Despite the fact that the nouns of this subgroup share the prefix i- with those of class 4, we do not place them in the same class because their agreement on the possessive is different as illustrated below.

(21)

Class 8(c)

í - dzìjí ikâ " my joints "

joints my

Class 4

í - bí nzâ " my goats "

goats my

í - cé m nzâ " my war "

wars my

The nouns in class 8(a), (b) and (c) though not sharing the same prefix, trigger the same agreement pattern on the possessive marker as illustrated below:

(22)

a)- k'í – kúm	ikâ	" my names "
names	my	
-k'í – lyé	ikâ	" my bridges "
bridges	my	
b)- á – kám	ikâ	" my drums "
drums	my	
-á – gámá	ikâ	" my plantains "
plantains	my	
c) í – dziŋí	ikâ	" my joints "
joints	my	

2.1.9. Noun class 9

This class has a zero prefix (\emptyset) and designates nouns referring to food, drinks and animals.

(23)

\emptyset – mèwúl	" oil "
\emptyset – méyí	" salt "
\emptyset – mó?	" water "
\emptyset – nyém	" animal "
\emptyset – mákyé	" cornbeer "

Though sharing the same prefix with those of class 3(a), the nouns of this class belong to a specific class because of the agreement they trigger on the possessive.

(24)

Class 9

\emptyset – mèwúl	mâ	" my oil "
oil	my	
\emptyset – méyí	mâ	" my salt "
salt	my	

Class 3(a)

\emptyset – bí	inzán	" my goat "
goat	my	

ø - cém inzán " my war "
 war my

2.1.10. Noun class 11

This class is subdivided into two subgroups and designates human beings, body parts and miscellaneous objects.

Group a

This subgroup has a zero prefix.

(25)

ø - yán " baby "
 ø - kúkú " jigger "

Group b

The prefix of this subgroup, which has a single noun, is u-.

(26)

ú - lènè " boundary "

Although (a) and (b) do not have the same prefix they belong to the same class because they trigger the same agreement on the possessive.

(27)

(a) ø - yán mbán " my baby "
 baby my
 (b) ú - lènè mbán " my boundary "
 boundary my

2.1.11. Noun class 13

u- is the prefix of this class the nouns of which designate parts of the body and miscellaneous objects.

(28)

ú - gús " fire "
 ù - tyé " toilet "
 ù - tsú " mouth "
 ú - kúk " mortar "

Though this class shares the same prefix with nouns in class 11 (b), they are not part of the same class because of the agreement they trigger on the possessive marker.

(29)

Class 13

ú - kúk ùmbâ " my mortar "
 mortar my

dis should be plural why is this not = cl 2

Class 11 b

ú - lènè mbáŋ " my boundary "
 boundary my

Table IV: Noun classes and their concordial affixes.

CLASS	PREF	POSS	CLASS	PREF	POSS	
1	a	σ	7	a	i	nzâ
	b	∅		b	∅	
2	a	U	8	a	ki	iká
	b	O		b	σ	
	c	bè		c	i	
3	a	∅	9		∅	mâ
	b	i				
4		i	11	a	∅	mbáŋ
				b	U	
5		fu	13		U	ùmbâ
6		m				

Prof

2.1.12. Noun classes and gender.

Contrary to indo-european languages where gender refers to a sex distinction such as male and female, gender in African languages means the singular and the plural forms of a noun or of nouns grouped together. Two systems of gender are attested in Befang: single class gender system and double class gender system.

2.1.12.1. Double class gender system

This system normally has a singular class and a corresponding plural class. Seven double class genders are found in Bifag: 1/2, 3/2, 3/4, 5/6, 7/8, 13/8 and 11/8. Each gender is illustrated below.

Gender 1/2

(30)

á - kányém " horse " ú - kányém " horses "
 á - né " ant " ú - né " ants "

kákó	" snail "	bə - kákó	" snails "
kàtásé	" spoon "	bə - kàtásé	" spoons "
á - kónjé	" grasshopper "	ó - kónjé	" Grasshoppers "
á - byén	" cornfufu "	ó - byén	" corfufus "

Gender 3/2

(31)

í - mbók	" hawk "	bə - mbók	" hawks "
í - ndánj	" chair "	bə - ndánj	" chairs "
í - ndép	" house "	bə - ndép	" houses "
í - ndónj	" potato "	bə - ndónj	" potatoes "

Gender 3/4

(32)

Ø - bí	" goat "	í - bí	" goats "
Ø - cém	" war "	í - cém	" wars "
Ø - fáj	" bush "	í - fáj	" bushes "
Ø - nyém	" night "	í - nyém	" nights "

Gender 5/6

(33)

fú - gən	" star "	m - gən	" stars "
fú - búš	" cat "	m - búš	" cats "
fú - nújǒ	" bird "	m - nújǒ	" birds "
fú - dzúm	" iron "	m - dzúm	" irons "

Gender 7/8

(34)

í - tónj	" navel "	á - tónj	" navels "
í - ghé	" termite "	á - ghé	" termite "
í - gánj	" grass "	á - gánj	" grasses "
Ø - dzinjí	" joint "	í - dzinjí	" joints "

Gender 11/8

(35)

Ø - kúkú	" jigger "	bə - kúkú	" jiggers "
Ø - kitək	" branch "	bə - kitək	" branches "

ú – lènè " boundary " bè – lènè " boundaries "

Gender 13/8

(36)

ú – kúk	" mortar "	kí – kúk	" mortars "
ú – káhí	" arrow "	kí – káhí	" arrows "
ú – kwòn	" tail "	kí – kwòn	" tails "
ú – kwíní	" hill "	kí – kwíní	" hills "

2.1.12.2. Single class gender system

Some classes do not have plural and others do not have singular. They constitute what is referred to as single class nouns. However, Befang has only singular class genders. Single class nouns are often found in classes 1, 3, 7 and 13 as illustrated below.

Gender 1

(37)

á – fúf " witchcraft "
 ø – kityá " pepper "

Gender 3

(38)

ì – ndzùm " wind "

Gender 7

(39)

ì – wúm " firewood "
 ì – zú " honey "

Gender 9

(40)

ø – mó? " water "
 ø – mawúl " oil "

Gender 13

(41)

ù – gúl " skin "
 ù – kó " ladder "

2.2. Noun formation processes in Befang

In the face of a new culture and new knowledge, languages resort to morphological and syntactic processes to express new ideas and new concepts. In Befang nouns are formed through three processes: Derivation, Compounding and Borrowing which are respectively examined in 2.2.1, 2.2.2, and 2.2.3.

2.2.1. Derivation

Derivation is a process whereby a prefix, an infix or a suffix is assigned to a stem to form a new word. In Befang, the derivation of some nouns is achieved through the processes of prefixation and suffixation. The morpheme " i " both functions as the prefix and the suffix and is assigned to the infinitive form of the verb to form a noun as evidenced below.

(42)

- 1) a) bá táf yán " They hurt the baby "
 they hurt baby
- b) ítáfí yán " The hurting of the baby "
 hurting baby
- 2) a) Atang lánj fúnùnjó " Atang looks at the bird "
 Atang look bird
- b) ílánjí fúnùnjó " The looking of the bird "
 looking bird

When the suffix " i " is attached to a vowel final root, the tautosyllabic vowel sequence which results produces the formation of a nasal " ŋ " which is inserted to break the vowel cluster as exemplified below.

(43)

- 3) a) bá fí: fúmbóné " They grow apple "
 they grow apple
- b) ífínjí fúmbóné " The growing of apple "
 growing apple
- 4) a) Mary yá búk kàtásé " Mary broke the spoon "
 Mary ASP break Spoon
- b) íbúkí kàtásé " The breaking of the spoon "
 breaking spoon

However, when the newly derived noun is followed by a vowel initial noun, the suffix *-i* deletes.

(44)

5) a) *ú fjàs ìgón* " he helps the girl "

He help girl

b) *ífjàs- ìgón* " The helping of the girl "

helping girl

6) a) *Mary yá búk átsè* " Mary broke the stick "

Mary ASP break stick

b) *íbúk- átsè* " The breaking of the stick "

breaking stick

2.2.2. Compounding

Compounding is a process whereby two or more words are combined to form a new word. According to Tamanji (1995) it "*involves bringing together lexical items that exist independently in the lexicon*". In Befang, compound words mostly have the structure Noun +Noun, though some Verb + Noun and Adverbs + Noun compounds may also be found.

2.2.2.1. Noun+Noun compounds

Noun+Noun compounds in Befang are divided into attributive nouns and qualificative nouns.

2.2.2.1.1. Attributive Nouns

We have termed this category of compounds attributive compounds because they somehow express the belonging of one thing to the other. Most of Befang attributive nouns literally mean "the husband of" Or "the wife of....". They are exclusively found in nouns referring to animals. *Únúm* "the husband of"

Úyí "the wife of...."

(45)

1) *bí* a) *únúm – bí* " he-goat "

husband goat

- b) úyí – bí "she-goat"
wife goat
- 2) bú a) únúm – bú "he-dog"
husband dog
b) úyí – bú "she-dog"
wife dog
- 3) ákə́júm a) únúm – ákə́júm "he-pig"
husband pig
b) úyí – ákə́júm "she-pig"
wife pig
- 4) ùgùwá a) únúm – ùgùwá "lion"
husband lion
b) úyí – ùgùwá "lioness"
wife lion
- 5) fúbús a) únúm – fúbús "cat"
husband cat
b) úyí – fúbús "she-cat"
wife cat

2.2.2.1.2. Qualificative Nouns

Parts of the body constitute the majority of qualificative nouns in Bəfang. In this case the second noun is that which gives a particular quality to the first noun. This process yields what is referred to in the literature as associative construction. The following phrases illustrate these respectively.

(46)

- 1) yə́n – áwá "finger"
child hand
- 2) ígíyáp – ùtsú "lip"
meat mouth
- 3) bóm – átú "skull"
calabash head

is that = f
familiar with

ok but my
hand a little
narrower

- 4) ítsìḡ - úgwé " elbow "
 end arm
- 5) kífóm - átú " brain "
 marrow head
- 6) ághé - íkwí " anus "
 hole buttock

It is worth mentioning here that, in Befang, it is the first noun that triggers the agreement with the possessive as illustrated in the following examples.

1) a- ígíyáp ìnzán " my meat "
 meat my

b- ùtsú ùmbâ " my mouth "
 mouth my

c- ígíyápùtsú ìnzán " my lip "
 lip my

2) a- únyá ùmbâ " my stomach "
 stomach my

b- áwú ìkâ " my leg "
 leg my

c- únyááwú ùmbâ " my sole "
 sole my

2.2.2.2. Verb+Noun compounds

Only one Verb+Noun compound is attested in Befang. The verb precedes and modifies the noun.

(47)

ílèp - áyích " eyebrow "
 to shake eyes

2.2.2.3. Adverb+Noun compounds

Adverb+Noun compounds are very rare in Befang. As the majority of compounds they refer to parts of the body. The adverb always precedes the head noun as illustrated below.

- 2) ítsén – ówú " Sole "
 behind leg

In some cases the noun is separated from the adverb by an associative marker as illustrated in the following example.

(48)

- 1) íkwi – kó – ótú " Nape "
 behind A.M head

2.2.3. Borrowing

In order to expand the vocabulary of Befang, the native speaker adopts foreign lexical items from other languages in a process known as borrowing. Mutaka and Tamanji (1995) define borrowing as " *an outright adoption of foreign lexical items from other languages the target language is in contact with*". Many of these words are integrated into gender 3/2 of Befang. Below are some examples of loan words from French and English in Befang.

2.2.3.1. Borrowing from French.

French loan words in Befang are very rare. This is due to the fact that the native speaker is not very familiar with French. Only two are attested by the native speakers.

Table V : Borrowing from French

GLOSS	FRENCH	Befang	
		Singular	Plural
Ananas	ananas	ánánás	únánás
bon	bɔ̃	mbón	

Contrary to other loan words, French ones are parts of class 1 and make their plural in class 2.

2.2.3. 2. Borrowing from English.

Borrowings from English are more common in Befang since English is the second language of the native speaker.

Table VI : Borrowing from English

GLOSS	ENGLISH	Befang	
		Singular	Plural
Trousers	trauzəz	trósá	bètrósá
Bottle	botl	bótélé	bèbótélé
Zinc	zɪŋk	ázán	Úzán
Mango	mango	mángóló	bəmángóló
Blade	bleid	fàblé	mblé
Table	teibl	tábáí	bètábáí
Coat	kəut	kót	bəkót
Towel	tauəl	táwùlò	Bètáwùlò
Cassava	kasava	gásálá	bègásálá
Paw – paw	pɔ: pɔ:	pó?pó?	bè pó?pó?
Lock	lɒk	lók	bəlók
Slipper	slipə	slé pá	bəslé pá
Sweater	swetə	swétá	bəswétá
Motor (car)	məutə	mútú	bəmútú
Pear	piə *	píyá	bèpíyá
Lime	laɪm	lámchí	bəlámchí
Plate	pleɪt	plét	béplét

Before being incorporated in the language, loan words should match the structure of the target language. This is achieved through a process known as loan adaptation.

2.2.3.3. Loan adaptation

In order to conform to the phonetic and syllable structure of the receiving language, loan words are generally adapted, that is subjected to phonological and morphological restructuring. In Befang this is achieved through three processes, namely Epenthesis, Prothesis, and reinterpretation of strange segments. These processes are examined below.

2.2.3.3.1. Epenthesis

Epenthesis or cluster simplification is a process of inserting vowels to break abnormal consonant cluster coming from the donor language. This process is attested in Befang in certain loan words from English.

(49)

ENGLISH	BEFANG	GLOSS
botl	bótólá	Bottle
teibl	tábólf	Table

In the above words, " ə " is inserted in between the consonant cluster *tl* and in between *bl* of the English words to produce the Befang ones.

2.2.3.3.2. Prothesis

Prothesis is one of the restructuring processes undergone by loan words in Befang. It can be defined as the introduction of a new sound, a prefix or a vowel, at word-initial position. This prefixation process is closely related to the class the loan word belongs to. In Befang, it is mostly observed in plural forms as evidenced below.

(50)

ENGLISH	BEFANG	PLURAL	GLOSS
kasava	gásalá	bègásalá	Cassava
kəut	kót	bəkót	Coat
tauəl	táwuló	bətáwuló	Towel
lok	lók	bəlók	Lock
piə	píyá	bəpíyá	Pear
pleit	plét	bəplét	plate

Here *bə* as the plural prefix of some class 2 nouns is the result of prothesis.

2.2.3.3.3. Re-interpretation of strange segments

According to Mutaka and Tamanji (1995), this process is said to take place when some sounds attested in the donor language are absent in the receptor language. These strange sounds will be approximated to the indigeneous sound segments with which they have the highest degree of phonetic similarity. Befang, through phonetic approximation, adopts sounds that are closest to its phonetic system. Let us consider the following words.

(51)

ENGLISH	BEFANG	GLOSS
trauzəz	trósa	trousers
kəut	kót	coat
pleit	plét	Plate
kasava	gásáá	cassava

In the above words, “əu” becomes “o”, “au” becomes “ó”, “ei” becomes “e” and “c” becomes “g”.

2.3. Conclusion

The nouns in Befang are classified according to either their prefix or on the agreement on the possessive determiner. Eleven noun classes are attested in the language. Their combination gives rise to twelve genders among which are seven double class genders and five single class genders that are singular. Noun formation in Befang is achieved through assigning “i” as both prefix and suffix to the infinitive form of the verb. In order to expand the vocabulary, three processes are implemented: Derivation, Compounding and Borrowing. The newly obtained words are integrated in the class system the role of which is capital in the in the following chapter where the simple nominal construction is studied.

CHAPTER III

THE SIMPLE NOMINAL CONSTRUCTION

3.0. Introduction

This chapter focusses on the structure of the simple nominal construction that is made up of a noun only, a pronominal element only, or a noun associated to a determiner.

3.1. The noun

The nominal group can be made up of a noun only. These nouns can function as subjects or objects of verbs, as well as objects of prepositions.

3.1.1. Single nouns functioning as subject

In the following sentences *bəgón* (girls) and *íbú* (dogs) function as subjects of verbs.

(1)

a) *bəgón nyámé bəndón* " The girls cook potatoes "

girls cook potatoes

b) *íbú má númé mbús* " Dogs have bitten cats "

dogs ASP bite cats

3.1.2. Single nouns functioning as objects of verb

íbí (goats) and *mól* (water) function respectively as objects of the verbs *tém* and *núwè* in the following sentences.

(2)

a) Jane *má tém íbí* " Jane has killed the goats "

Jane ASP kill goats

b) *bəgíyáp núwè mól* " Antelopes drink water "

antelopes drink water

3.1.3. Single nouns functioning as objects of prepositions

bəgón (girls) and *úsúm* (farm) function respectively as objects of the prepositions *nú* and *kú*.

- (3)
- a) $\acute{a}dz\grave{u}w\acute{a}$ $s\grave{e}b\acute{e}$ $n\acute{u}$ $b\grave{a}g\acute{o}n$ " The snakes play with girls "
- snakes play with girls
- b) \acute{m} $f\acute{e}$ $k\acute{u}$ $\acute{u}s\acute{u}m$ " I go to the farm "
- I go to farm

3.2. Pronouns

The pronoun is a word used in place of a noun expression. Unlike nouns, pronouns have no intrinsic descriptive content and are referred to as functors. Personal pronouns, possessive pronouns and interrogative pronouns are respectively examined in 3.2.1, 3.2.2 and 3.2.3, while section 3.2.4 examines the demonstrative pronouns.

so no from
= from
see p. 4

3.2.1. Personal pronouns

In Befang there is a distinction amongst subject personal pronouns, focus personal pronouns and reflexive personal pronouns. Below is a representative table.

Table VII: Personal pronouns

	SINGULAR			PLURAL		
	1 st person	2 nd person	3 rd person	1 st person	2 nd person	3 rd person
Subject	\acute{m}	\acute{a}	\acute{u}	$b\grave{a}$	$m\grave{a}n\acute{a}$	$b\acute{a}$
Verb object	$m\acute{e}$	$\acute{a}w\acute{o}$	$m\acute{e}$	$\acute{a}mb\acute{i}sh$	$\grave{a}m\acute{e}n$	$b\grave{a}m\acute{e}$
Preposition Object	$m\grave{e}$	$\acute{a}w\acute{o}$	$m\grave{e}$	$\acute{a}mb\acute{i}sh$	$\grave{a}m\grave{e}n$	$b\grave{a}m\acute{e}$
Focus pronoun	$m\acute{e}$	$\acute{a}w\acute{o}$	$m\acute{e}$	$\acute{a}mb\acute{i}sh$	$\grave{a}m\acute{e}n$	$b\grave{a}m\acute{e}$
Reflexive form	$\acute{u}g\acute{u}l\grave{u}mb\acute{a}$	$\acute{u}g\acute{u}l\grave{u}mby\acute{a}$	$\acute{u}g\acute{u}l\grave{u}m\acute{e}$	$\acute{u}g\acute{u}l\acute{u}k\acute{i}sh\acute{e}$	$\acute{u}g\acute{u}l\acute{u}k\grave{e}n\acute{e}$	$\acute{u}g\acute{u}l\acute{u}b\grave{a}m\acute{e}$

3.2.1.1. Subject personal pronouns

There are six forms corresponding to the three singular persons and the three plural persons.

3.2.1.1.1. First person singular

The first person singular is *m̄*.

(4)

a) *m̄ nù: óbé* " I take the knife "

I take knife

b) *m̄ é bwànè fyé* " I will sleep there "

I ASP sleep there

3.2.1.1.2. Second person singular

The second person singular is *á*.

(5)

a) *á kíbí ábá* " you have a bed "

you have bed

b) *á nù: kàtásé* " you take a spoon "

you take spoon

fa / 45 a = 3rd party.

3.2.1.1.3. Third person singular

The third person singular is *ú*.

(6)

a) *ú mé nēzí mbáŋ* " she is my mother "

she be mother my

b) *ú byá ìndép* " he builds a house "

he build house

→ mé = 1st person
at a 3rd level

3.2.1.1.4. First person plural

bà is the first person plural.

(7)

a) *bà fí: áséfé* " we grow maize "

we grow maize

b) *bá kíbí bú* " we have a dog "

we have dog

→ should be 1st person

3.2.1.1.5. Second person plural

mèná is the second person plural.

(8)

a) *mèná mâ nú : ágáp* " you have taken the hoe "

you ASP take hoe

b) *mèná mê fè kú Béfáng* " you will go to Befang "

you ASP go to Befang

3.2.1.1.6. Third person plural

The third person plural is *bá*

(9)

a) *bá nú ó mó* " they are drinking water "

they drink ASP water

b) *bá mê nyé kityá* " they will eat pepper "

they ASP eat pepper

These subject personal pronouns are summarised in the following table.

TableVII: Subject personal pronoun

Person	Singular	plural
1	<i>m'</i>	<i>bà</i>
2	<i>á</i>	<i>mèná</i>
3	<i>ú</i>	<i>bá</i>

3.2.1.2. Object of verb personal pronouns

3.2.1.2.1. First person singular

mé is the first person singular object of verb personal pronouns.

(10)

a) *ú ghá: mé mó* " he gives me water "

he give me water

b) *Atang lánj mé* " Atang sees me "

Atang see me

3.2.1.2.2. Second person singular

The second person singular object of verb personal pronouns is *áwó*.

(11)

a) *ú tìshé áwó kàtásé* " he shows you the spoon "

he show you spoon

b) *bà ghá: áwó úfyé* " we give you yams "

we give you yams

3.2.1.2.3. Third person singular

mé is the third person singular object of verb personal pronouns.

(12)

a) *ím táf mé* " I hurt him "

I hurt him

b) *mèná fyèsé mé* " you help her "

you help her

3.2.1.2.4. First person plural

The first person plural object of verb personal pronouns is *ámbísh*.

(13)

a) *ú fyèsé ámbísh* " he helps us "

he help us

b) *bá ghá: ámbísh ábyén* " they give us cornfufu "

they give us cornfufu

3.2.1.2.5. Second person plural

The second person plural object of verb personal pronouns is *àmén*.

(14)

a) *ím té àmén* " I call you "

I call you

b) *Atang fyèsé nêghí mbán* " Atang helps my mother "

Atang help mother my

3.2.1.2.6. Third person plural

bámé is the the third person plural object of verb personal pronouns.

(15)

a) *á ghá bàmé úká* " you give them money "

you give them money

b) *bá nyáí bàmé* " we see them "

hey see them

The following table gives summary object of verbs personal pronouns in Befang.

TableIX : Object of verb personal pronoun

Person	Singular	plural
1	<i>mé</i>	<i>ámáish</i>
2	<i>áwó</i>	<i>ámán</i>
3	<i>mé</i>	<i>bámé</i>

3.2.1.3. Object of Preposition personal pronouns.

The personal pronoun functioning as complement of a preposition is different from that of object or subject of verb in that it is separated from the verb by a preposition. The only difference between object of verb personal pronouns and object of preposition personal pronouns is that a low tone replaces a high tone in the latter except for the third person plural. Let us consider the following sentences.

(16)

a) *ú ghá mé mó* " he gives me water " → object of verb personal pronoun

he give me water

b) *ú sàbé nú mè* " he plays with me " → object of preposition personal pronoun.

he play with me

3.2.1.3.1. First person singular

àmè is the first person singular of object of preposition personal pronouns.

(17)

a) *ú sèbé nú mè* " he plays with me "

he play with me

mè or amè

b) *bá ghí nú mè* " they come with me "

they come with me

3.2.1.3.2. Second person singular

áwò is the second person singular of object of preposition personal pronouns. The initial vowel deletes when preceded by a vowel-final preposition as illustrated below.

(18)

a) *ím lèpé kú wò* " I talk to you "

I talk to you

b) *á fé nú wò* " you go with you "

you go with you

3.2.1.3.3. Third person singular

The third person singular of this category of personal pronouns is *ámá*. This personal pronoun stands for both feminine and masculine gender as evidenced in the following examples.

(19)

a) *bá sèbé nú mà* " they play with him "

they play with him

what is it = a boy, me, & him

b) *bà fé nú mà* " we go with him "

we go with her

we go with him

3.2.1.3.4. First person plural

The first person plural of object of preposition personal pronouns is *ámish*. The first vowel of the personal pronoun deletes because the preposition ends with a vowel.

(20)

a) Matt ghyé nú mbìsh " Matt comes with us "

Matt come with us

c) á lèpé nú mbìsh " you play with us "

you play with us

3.2.1.3.5. Second person plural

The second person plural object of preposition personal pronouns is *àmèn*. The initial vowel of the pronoun deletes because of the vowel-final preposition.

(21)

a) ú lèpé kú mèn " she talks to you "

she talk to you

b) bà sèbè nú mèn " we play with you "

we play with you

3.2.1.3.6. Third person plural

bàmé is the third person plural object of preposition personal pronouns.

(22)

a) í lèpé nú bàmé " I speak with them "

I speak with them

b) á nyí nú bàmé " you eat with them "

You eat with them

The following table is a summary of objects of preposition personal pronouns.

TableX: object of Preposition personal pronoun

Person	Singular	Plural
1	àmè	ámbìsh
2	áwò	àmèn
3	àmè	bàmé

The initial vowel of object of preposition personal pronouns deletes because of vowel-final prepositions.

3.2.1.4. Focus pronouns

Personal pronouns as well as noun expressions can be made emphatic by placing them at phrase or sentence initial position. In this position, the noun expression keeps its form, while the pronoun may have its form changed. The same way as other personal pronouns, the focus pronoun has one form corresponding to each person.

3.2.1.4.1. First person singular

This first person singular of focus pronouns is *mé*.

(23)

a) á má mé bá lǎǎǎ " It's me they see "

it be me they see

b) á má kú mé ú lǎǎǎ " It's to me she speaks "

it be to me she speak

3.2.1.4.2. Second person singular

wó is the second person singular of focus pronouns.

(24)

a) á má nú wó m sèbè " it is with you I play "

it be with you I play

b) á má wó bá té " it is you they call "

it be you they call

3.2.1.4.3. Third person singular

The third person singular of focus pronouns is *má*.

(25)

a) á má mé bá té " It is him we call "

it be him we call

b) á má kú má bá lǎǎǎ " It is to her they speak "

it be to her they speak

ho fu ni w t k m u
m e t m j

3.2.1.4.4. First person plural

The first person plural of focus pronouns is *ámísh*. When the preceding word ends with a vowel the first vowel deletes.

(26)

a) á má nú ámbísh Atang lèpé " It is to us atang speak "

it be to us Atang speak

b) á má ámbísh á fyèsé " It is us you help "

it be us you help

húshé

3.2.1.4.5. Second person plural

ámén is the second person plural of focus pronouns. The first vowel deletes in the examples below because it is preceded by a preposition that ends with a vowel.

(27)

a) á má mén í nyíá " It is you I see "

it be you I see

b) á má nú mén bà sèbé " It is with you we play "

it be with you we play

3.2.1.4.6. Third person plural

The third person plural of personal pronouns is *bámé*

(28)

a) á má bàmé í fyèsé " It is them I help "

it be them I help

b) á má nú bàmé ú lèpé " It is with them she speaks "

it be with them she speaks

The following table gives a summary of focus pronouns in Befang.

Table X: Focus pronouns

PERSON	SINGULAR	PLURAL
1	mé	ámísh
2	áwó	ámén
3	ámé	bámé

The fact that focus pronouns are almost identical to object of verb personal pronouns may be due to the fact that in focus constructions, the personal pronoun is actually object of the verb "má" (to be).

3.2.1.5. Reflexive pronouns

A reflexive pronoun is a pronoun used as the object of a verb when the person affected by an action is the same as the person doing it. The reflexive pronoun in Befang is a compound word made up of a noun and a possessive determiner. The noun, which means "person" or "body" is *úgúlú* for the first three singular pronouns and *ágúlú* for the plural ones. The possessive determiners come from class 13 for the singular and class 8 for the plural. Since the possessive determiner begins with u, the final vowel of the noun referring to the body deletes as illustrated in the following examples.

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \text{ágúlú} + \text{ikishé} & \longrightarrow & \text{ágúlikishé} \text{ "ourselves"} \\ \text{persons} \quad \text{our} & & \end{array}$$

3.2.1.5.1. First person singular

The first person singular of reflexive pronouns is *úgúl ùmbâ*

(29)

- a) *m̄ súwó* "I bathe"
 I bathe
- b) *m̄ súwó úgúl ùmbâ* "I bathe myself"
 I bathe person my

3.2.1.5.2. Second person singular

úgúl ùmbyá is the second person singular of reflexive pronouns.

(30)

- a) *á súwó* "you bathe"
 you bathe
- a) *á súwó úgúl ùmbyá* "you bathe yourself"
 you bathe person your

3.2.1.5.3. Third person singular

The third person plural of reflexive pronouns is *úgúl ùmá*.

(31)

a) *ú fyèsé* " he helps "

he help

b) *ú fyásé úgúl ùmá* " he helps himself "

he help person his

3.2.1.5.4. First person plural

ágúl íkishé is the first person plural of reflexive pronouns.

(32)

a) *bà táf* " we hurt "

we hurt

b) *bà táf é ágúl íkishé* "we are hurting ourselves"

we hurt ASP persons our

3.2.1.5.5. Second person plural

The second person plural of reflexive pronoun is *ágúl ikiné*.

(33)

a) *məná fá fyèsé* " you are helping "

you ASP help

b) *məná fá fyèsé ágúl íkiné*. " You are helping yourselves "

you ASP help persons your

3.2.1.5.6. Third person plural

ágúlu bàmé is the third person plural of reflexive pronouns.

(34)

a) *bá táf* "they hurt"

they hurt

b) *bá táf é ágúlu bàmé* " they are hurting themselves "

they hurt ASP persons their

This table summarises reflexive pronouns in Befang.

Table XI: Reflexive pronouns

PERSON	SINGULAR	PLURAL
1	úgúl ùmbâ	ágúl íkishé
2	úgúl ùmbyá	ágúl íkiné.
3	úgúl ùmé	ágúlú bàmé

3.2.2. Possessive pronouns

Two types of possessive forms are attested in Befang: The possessive pronoun and the possessive determiner. The former can stand all alone and function as a full nominal construction whereas the latter, which cannot stand alone, must always accompany the noun. Possessive determiners will be discussed in the modified nominal construction in chapter 4. Below are some examples of possessive pronouns

(35)

- 1) a- yí ámè ìndàng ìnzánj " This is my chair "
- This be chair my
- b - yí ámè yinzáng " This is mine "
- this be mine
- 2) a- yí á mè ìndàng ìndzjá " This is your chair "
- His be chair your
- b - yí ámè yìndzjá " This is yours "
- this be yours
- 3) a- bú ámè bëndép umbâ " Those are my houses "
- those be houses my
- b- bú ámè bùm̄bâ " Those are mine "
- those be mine
- 4) a- bú ámè bëndép ìmè " Those are her houses "
- those be houses her
- b- bú ámè bìm̄é " Those are hers "
- those be hers

Table XII: Possessive pronouns

CLASS	PREFIX	SINGULAR			PLURAL		
		Mine	Your	His/Her	Ours	Yours	Theirs
1	a-	kìkâ	kìkyá	kìmé	kíkíshé	ikéné	kíbámé
	ø-						
2	u-	bùmbâ	bùbyá	bìmé	bùmbíshé	bùbéné	búbámé
	o-						
	bà						
3	ø-	yìnzán	yìndẓyá	yìmè	yìndẓísh	yìdẓéné	yíbámé
	i-						
4	i-	yìnzâ	yìndẓyá	yìmè	yìndẓíshè	yìbéné	yíbámé
5	fú-	fúfá	fúfyá	fùmé	fúfíshé	fúféné	fúbámé
6	m	mùmá	mùmýá	mùmé	mùmíshé	mùméné	múbámé
7	i-	yìnzâ	yìndẓyá	yìmé	yìndẓíshé	yìdẓéné	yíbámé
	ø-						
8	Ki-	kìkâ	kìkyá	kìmé	kíkíshé	kìkéné	kíbámé
	a-						
	i-						
9	ø-	mùma	mùmýá	mùmé	mùmíshé	mùméné	múbámé
11	ø-	wùmbang	wùmbyà	wùmé	wùmbísh	wùméné	wúbámé
	u-						
13	u-	wùmbâ	wùmbyá	wùmé	wùmbíshé	wùbéné	wubámé

From the above table we notice that the possessive pronoun varies not only in person but also in class. The class variation of possessive pronouns is highlighted by the fact that all the pronouns of a class have the same initial consonant that we refer to as the class morpheme. The latter varies from one class to another. For instance, the initial consonant of class 1 possessive pronouns is **K**, that of class 5 is **F** and that of class 13 is **W**.

highlighted

3.2.3. Interrogative pronouns

Interrogative words are used in construction or phrases to ask information about the identity, quality or quantity of an element. However, they can also be used in a pronominal way either standing alone or functioning as a noun phrase. Below are some examples.

(36)

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1) a- nùúze fúbús | " Bring the cat " |
| bring cl5cat | |
| b- fúbús fanǎ | " Which cat? " |
| cl5cat which | |
| c- fanǎ | " Which one? " |
| which | |
| 2) a- nùúze mbús | " Bring the cats " |
| bring cl6cats | |
| b- mbús mánǎ | " Which cats? " |
| cl6cats which | |
| c- mánǎ | " Which ones? " |
| which | |

Interrogative pronouns are made up of two morphemes. The interrogative particle which is the stem morpheme is preceded by the class/number morpheme. The latter agrees in class and number with the head noun the interrogative pronoun refers to. From the examples below, we notice that the interrogative particle " *ánǎ* " remains constant while the agreement morpheme varies according to the class and number of the modified noun.

(36)

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1) a-ábwé káné | " Which fish? " |
| cl1fish which | |
| b- káné | " Which one? " |
| Which | |
| 2) a-úwá báné | " Which hands? " |
| cl2hands which | |
| b- báné | " Which one? " |
| which | |

- 3) a-bí yáné " Which goat? "
 cl3goat which
 b- yáné " Which one? "
 which
- 4) a-íbí yáné " Which goats? "
 cl4goats which
 b- yáné " Which ones? "
 which
- 5) a-fúmbán fáné " Which nail? "
 cl5nail which
 b- fáné " Which one? "
 Which
- 6) a-mbán máné " Which nails? "
 cl6nails which
 b- máné " Which ones? "
 Which
- 7) a-ítóŋ yáné " Which navel? "
 cl7navel which
 b- yáné " Which one? "
 which
- 8) a-kíkúm káné " Which names? "
 cl8names which
 b- káné " Which ones? "
 Which
- 9) a-méwúl máné " Which oil? "
 cl9oil which
 b- máné " Which one? "
 Which
- 11) a-yén wáné " Which baby? "
 cl11baby which
 b- wáné " Which one? "
 which

12) a-úsúm wáné " Which farm? "

cl12farm which

b- wáné " Which one? "

Which

Interrogative pronouns can function in clauses like full nouns as shown in the examples below.

(37)

1) a- á ném indàn yáné " which chair is lost "

QM lost chair which

b- á ném yáné " which one is lost? "

QM lost which

2) a- á ndón fúbús fáné " which cat is big? "

QM big cat which

b- á ndón fáné " which one is big? "

QM big which

3) a- á búk kúkúk yáné " which mortar is broken? "

QM broken mortar which

b- á búk yáné " which one is broken? "

QM broken which

Interrogative pronouns may ask information about quantity as illustrated in the following examples.

(38)

1) a- á gyé bàngón bázèné " how many girls are coming? "

QM come girls how many

b- á gyé bázèné " how many are coming? "

QM come how many

2) a- mèná kíbí bàndép bázèné " how many houses do you have? "

You have houses how many

b- á gyé bázèné " how many are coming? "

QM come how many

Table XIII: Interrogative pronouns

CLASS	PREF	INTERROGATIVE	CLASS	PREF	INTERROGATIVE
1	a	Káné	7	a	báné
	b			∅	
2	a	báné	8	a	yáné
	b			∅	
	c			U	
3	a	yáné	9	∅	yáné
	b			i	
4	∅	yáné	11	a	fáné
				b	
5	fu	fáné	13	U	wáné
6	m	máné			

3.2.4. Demonstrative pronouns

Two forms of demonstratives are attested in Befang. The first form designates something or somebody close to the speaker while the second designates what is far from the speaker. The demonstrative is derived from the near speaker demonstrative adjective. This demonstrative pronoun has exactly the same form as the demonstrative adjective, with the exception that the high tone is replaced by the falling tone. Moreover, it can be used alone. In the following examples, the demonstrative is used in its adjectival form in *a-* and in its pronominal form in *b-*.

(39)

CLASS 1 a-	ákónyém	ké	" this horse "
	horse	this	
	b- ké		" this one "
	this		
CLASS 2 a-	úwá	bé	" these hands "
	Hands	these	
	b- bé		" these ones "
	these		

CLASS 3	a- cém	yé	" this war "
	War	this	
	b- yě		" this one "
	this		
CLASS 4	a- ícém	yé	" these wars "
	wars	these	
	b- yě		" these ones "
	these		
CLASS 5	a- fúmbán	fé	" this nail "
	nail	this	
	b- fé		"this one "
	this		
CLASS 6	a- mbán	mé	" these nails "
	nails	these	
	b- mě		" these ones "
	these		
CLASS 7	a- íghé	yé	" this termite "
	termite	this	
	b- yě		" this one "
	this		
CLASS 8	a- ákám	ké	" these drums "
	drums	these	
	b- ké		" these ones "
	these		
CLASS 9	a- mǎwúl	mé	" this oil "
	oil	this	
	b- mě		" this one "
	this		
CLASS 11	a- kúkú	ké	" this jigger "
	jigger	this	

	b- kě		" this one "
	this		
CLASS 13 a-	úkúk	ké	" this mortar "
	mortar	this	
	b- kě		" this one "
	this		

Table XIV :Demonstrative pronouns

CLASS		PREF	DEMONSTRATIVE	CLASS		PREF	DEMONSTRATIVE
1	a	a	Kě	7	a	i	yě
	b	∅			b	∅	
2	a	U	bě	8	a	ki	Kě
	b	O			b	a	
	c	bè			c	i	
3	a	∅	yě	9		∅	mě
	b	i					
4		i	yě	11	a	∅	wě
					b	U	
5		fu	fě	13		U	wě
6		m	mě				

3.3. Noun + Determiner

A determiner is a word or a group of words that determine a noun or a noun phrase. It can be post-posed or pre-posed to the noun it modifies depending on the language concerned. In this respect, Ngangoum (2002), quoting Radford (1987), stipulates that determiners which can be used pronominally or pronominally are typically used to modify a noun but have no descriptive content on their own. This section will examine Noun + Demonstrative and Noun + Definite article respectively in 3.3.1 and 3.3.2.

3.3.1 Noun + Demonstrative

In Befang there are two types of demonstratives: the far speaker demonstrative and the near speaker demonstrative which respectively designates that which is far from and close to the speaker. The demonstrative is biphormic, that is, made up of two morphemes. The interrogative particle, which is the stem morpheme, is preceded by the class/number morpheme. The latter agrees in class and number with the head noun. In the following

examples, a illustrates the near speaker demonstrative and b exemplifies far from the speaker demonstrative.

(40)

CLASS 1 a - kítýá ké " this pepper "
pepper this

b - kítýá kú " that pepper "
pepper that

CLASS 2 a - ókóné bé " these grasshoppers "
grasshoppers these

b - ókóné bú " those grasshoppers "
grasshoppers those

CLASS 3 a - bí yé " this goat "
goat this

b - bí yú " that goat "
goat that

CLASS 4 a - íbí yé " these goats "
goats these

b - íbí yú " those goats "
goats those

CLASS 5 a - fúgén fé " this star "
star this

b - fúgén fú " that star "
star that

CLASS 6 a - mgén mé " these stars "
stars these

b - mgén mú " those stars "
stars those

CLASS 7 a - íghé yé " this termite "
termite this

b - íghé yú " that termite "
termite that

CLASS 8 a - kíkúm ké "this pepper"
pepper this

b - kítýá kú "that pepper"
pepper that

CLASS 9 a - mèyí mé "this salt"
salt this

b - mèyí mú "that salt"
salt that

CLASS 11 a - úlóné wé "this boundary"
boundary this

b - úlóné wú "that boundary"
boundary that

CLASS 12 a - úsúm wé "this farm"
farm this

b - úsúm wú "that farm"
farm that

Table XV: Demonstrative determiners

CLASS		PREF	DEMONSTRATIVE	CLASS	PREF		DEMONSTRATIVE
1	a	a	ké	7	a	i	yé
	b	∅	kú		b	∅	yú
2	a	U	bé	8	a	ki	ké
	b	O	bú		b	a	kú
	c	bè			c	i	
3	a	∅	yé	9		∅	mé
	b	i	yú				
4		i	yé	11	a	∅	wé
			yú		b	U	wú
5		fu	fé	13		U	wé
			fú				wú
6		m	mé				
			mú				

From the above example, it is to be noted that the structure of the noun phrase is linear with the noun at initial position. The demonstrative determiner and the pronoun are thus postposed to the noun and agree with the latter in class and number.

3.3.2. Noun + definite article (Narrative)

The narrative is the element we refer to as definite article. It is a word used to refer to an element already mentioned. Let us consider the following examples.

(41)

- 1) a- *m̄ nùúze ákànyèm* " i bring the horse "
 I bring horse
 b- *ákànyèm kágé ndóŋ* " the horse is big "
 horse the big

In the above sentences, *kágé* attached to the noun *ákànyèm* in b- enables to infer that the latter has been already mentioned in a previous sentence (a-). "*ákànyèm kágé ndóŋ*" can equally mean "*the horse that I am talking about is big*". The narrative or definite article can therefore be used only to refer to a noun already mentioned. Accordingly, a sentence with a narrative, standing alone, would be ungrammatical. The narrative varies from one class to another insomuch as it agrees in class and number with the nouns it determines as illustrated below.

(42)

- CLASS 1** a- *m̄ nùúze ákànyèm* " I bring the horse "
 I bring horse
 b- *ákànyèm kágé ndóŋ* " the horse is big "
 horse the big
- CLASS 2** a- *m̄ nùúze ókóŋé* " I bring the grasshoppers "
 I bring grasshoppers
 b- *ókóŋé bágé ndóŋ* " the grasshoppers are big "
 grasshoppers the big
- CLASS 3** a- *ú yá nú: ìndàŋ* " he took the chair "
 He ASP take chair
 b- *ìndàŋ yágé ímè búkó* " the chair is broken "
 chair the be broken

CLASS 4 a- á nyáyí íbí	" you see goat "
you see goats	
b- íbí yágé íkú kpásé	" the goats are small "
goats the be small	
CLASS 5 a- məná yá nyáyí fúbús	" I saw the cat "
you ASP see cat	
b- fúbús fágé úbéríbó	" the cat is wicked "
cat the wicked	
CLASS 6 a- bá nùzè mbús	" they bring cats "
they bring cats	
b- mbús mágə ndón	" the cats are big "
cats the big	
CLASS 7 a- ú nómó ítón	" he touches the navel "
he touch navel	
b- ítón yágé ndón	" the navel is big "
navel the big	
CLASS 8 a- m téké akám	" I carry the drums "
I carry drums	
b- akám kágé dəl	" the drums are heavy "
drums the heavy	
CLASS 9 a- bá nùze méyí	" they bring salt "
they bring salt	
b- méyí mágé dəl	" the salt is heavy "
salt the heavy	
CLASS 11 a- məná yá nyáyí yén	" I saw the baby "
you ASP see baby	
b- yén wágə títén	" the baby is sick "
baby the sick	
CLASS 13 a- m téké úkúk	" I carry the mortar "
I carry mortar	
b- úkúk wágé dəl	" the mortar is heavy "
mortar the heavy	

Table XVI: Narratives

CLASS	PREF	NARRATIVE	CLASS	PREF	NARRATIVE
1	a	kágé	7	a	yágé
	b			∅	
2	a	bágé	8	a	kágé
	b			∅	
	c			i	
3	a	yágé	9	∅	mágé
	b			i	
4	i	yágé	11	a	wágé
				b	
5	fu	fágé	13	U	wágé
6	m	mágé			

3.4. Conclusion

In Befang, the simple nominal construction can be made up of a noun only, a pronoun only or a Noun associated to a determiner. The noun can function as either subject of verb or object of verb and of preposition. Personal pronouns and possessive pronouns show person distinction. Interrogative and demonstrative pronouns vary from one class to another, depending on the noun they replace. The noun in Befang can be determined by the demonstrative and the definite article. The narrative is the element we refer to as definite article. Both demonstrative adjectives and narratives agree in class with the noun they determine. This is the first insight in the nominal construction whose modified structure is studied in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV

THE MODIFIED NOMINAL CONSTRUCTION

4.0. Introduction

This chapter discusses the nominal construction in Befang and its internal structure. The possessive and associative nominal constructions are analysed here as well as nominal constructions modified by adjectives, quantifiers and numerals. Complex nominal constructions will be handled at the end of the chapter.

4.1. The possessive nominal construction

The possessive nominal construction is made up of a Noun + a Possessive determiner that agrees in class and number with the head noun as illustrated below.

(1)

CLASS 1 a- ákànyè̀m ikâ	:	" my horse "
horse my		
CLASS 2 a- úwá ùmbâ		" my hands "
hands my		
CLASS 3 a- ø - bí inzán		" my goat "
goat my		
CLASS 4 a- íbí inzâ		" my goats "
goats my		
CLASS 5 a- fúgán ùfâ		" my star "
star my		
CLASS 6 a- mgán mâ		" my stars "
stars my		
CLASS 7 a- ítón inzâ		" my navel "
navel my		
CLASS 8 a- ágámá ikâ		" my plantains "
plantains my		

- CLASS 9 a- m^éyí m^â " my salt "
 salt my
- CLASS 11 a-kúkú ìmbáŋ " my jigger "
 jigger my
- CLASS 13 a- úkúk ùmbâ " my mortar "
 mortar my

TableXVII: Possessive determiners

	My	Your	His/Her/Its	Our	Your	Their
1	iká	ikyá	ímé	íkíshé	ikéné	ìbámé
2	ùmbâ	ùmbyá	ímé	ùmbíshé	ùméné	ìbámé
3	ìnzáŋ	ìndz ₃ yà	ímè	ìndz ₃ ish	ìndzèŋ	ìbámé
4	ìnzâ	ìndz ₃ yá	ímé	ìndz ₃ ishé	ìndzéné	ìbámé
5	ùfâ	ùfyá	ùmé	ùfíshé	ùféné	ùbámé
6	mâ	ùmyá	ùmé	ímíshé	ùméné	ùbámé
7	ìnzâ	ìndz ₃ yá	ímé	ìndz ₃ íshé	ìndzéné	ìbámé
8	iká	ikyá	ímé	íkíshé	ikéné	ìbámé
9	mâ	ùmyá	ùmé	ùmíshé	ùméné	ùbámé
11	ìmbáŋ	ùmbyà	ùmé	ùmbish	ùmén	ùbámé
12	ùmbâ	ùmbyá	ùmé	ùmbíshé	ùméné	ùbámé

4.2. The associative construction

Contrary to many other Bantu languages, Befang seldom makes use of associative markers in associative constructions. The first part of this section will handle, amongst others, some types of associative constructions and the second will take a closer look at associative markers.

4.2.1. Types of associative constructions

Associative constructions in Befang can express a relation of contents, material, possession and origin.

4.2.1.1. Contents

Generally, Befang makes use of the associative marker " ó " to express contents as illustrated below.

(2)

1) bótálá ó mó? " A bottle of water "

bottle AM water

2) bóckít ó mó? " A bucket of water "

bucket AM water

When the noun of the container ends with a velar (k, ŋ, g), a phonological process turns " ó " into " í " as exemplified below.

(3)

1 a-súk í mósón " a calabash of palmwine "

calabash AM palmwine

b-ákánj í kityá " a dish of pepper "

dish AM pepper

c- jīŋ í mó? " a hole of water "

hole AM water

When is it ok to use "í" instead of "ó"?

However, certain words ending with K maintain the " ó " as evidenced by the following phrase.

(4)

1-úkúk ó mósón "a mortar of palmwine"

mortar AM palmwine

When the word expressing contents is vowel initial, the associative marker deletes as illustrated by the following examples.

(5)

- | | | |
|--------------|------|----------------------|
| 1) a- bóckít | óbwé | " a bucket of fish " |
| bucket | fish | |
| b- ákáj | óbwé | " a dish of fish " |
| dish | fish | |
| c- jīŋ | áné | " a hole of ant " |
| hole | ant | |

4.2.1.2. Material

No associative marker is attested in Befang to express material association. This is clearly illustrated in the following examples.

(6)

- | | | |
|----------|--------|--------------------|
| 1) indáj | ilyé | " a bamboo chair " |
| chair | bamboo | |
| 2) ábá | ázáj | " an iron bed " |
| bed | iron | |
| 3) indép | íté | " a stone house " |
| house | stone | |

4.2.1.3. Possessive

To express possession, no associative marker is used in Befang as evidenced by the following examples.

(7)

- | | | |
|----------|-------|---------------------------|
| 1) kityá | áné | " the pepper of the ant " |
| Pepper | ant | |
| 2) móʔ | Yén | " the water of the baby " |
| water | baby | |
| 3) mèyí | fúbús | " the salt of the cat " |
| salt | cat | |

4.2.1.4. Origin

Associative constructions expressing origin are achieved using the associative marker "kà". Let us consider the following examples.

(8)

- 1) ókójé kà fáj " Grasshoppers from the forest "
grasshopper AM forest
- 2) b̂ê k̂a k̂ĵé " people from the river "
people AM river
- 3) íwúm kà fáj " wood from the forest "
wood AM forest

4.3. Nominal constructions modified by adjectives

An adjective is a variable word that indicates the quality of a being or a thing. In Befang the adjective can agree in class and number depending on its function, its position, and its type.

4.3.1. Functional categories of adjectives

Two functions can be achieved by adjectives in Befang : attributive and predicative.

4.3.1.1. Attributive adjectives

Attributive adjectives are placed at the side of the noun they qualify. They are entirely part of the noun phrase as illustrated in the following examples.

(9)

- 1) bí díshí " a black goat "
goat black
- 2) áné káféné " a red ant "
ant red
- 3) ìndàŋ íkpàsé " a small chair "
chair small

4.3.1.2. Predicative adjectives

A predicative adjective is separated from the noun or the pronoun it modifies by a verb. It is not part of the noun phrase. Let us consider the following examples.

(10)

1) *ánánás ómḗ mbóŋ* "the pineapple is good"
 pineapple be good

2) *ókóŋá bú má dóŋ* "those grasshoppers are big"
 grasshoppers those be good

4.3.2. Position of the adjectives in the noun phrase

The position of the adjective in the Befang noun phrase often influences its structure. Some adjectives are only pre-posed to the noun they modify. Others are exclusively post-posed to the noun they qualify while the majority can be both pre-posed and post-posed.

4.3.2.1. Pre-posed adjectives

A pre-posed adjective is an adjective that can only occur at initial position in the noun phrase. Only one preposed adjective is attested in Befang : *agəkə* (beautiful).

(11)

1) *ágəkḗ íngóŋ* "a beautiful girl"
 beautiful girl

* *íngóŋ ágəkḗ*
 girl beautiful

2) *ágəkḗ yán* "a beautiful baby"
 beautiful baby

* *yán ágəkḗ*
 baby beautiful

The noun phrases marked with an asterisk are grammatically unacceptable for *agəkə* should always precede the noun it modifies.

4.3.2.2. Post- posed adjectives

As opposed to the former, post-posed adjectives can only appear after the noun they modify. Only one post- posed adjective is attested in Befang : *ákwós* (wicked) . Let us consider the following example.

(12)

1) *ígón ákwós* " a wicked girl "

girl wicked

* *ákwós ígón*

wicked girl

2) *fúbús ákwós* " a wicked cat "

cat wicked

* *ákwós fúbús*

wicked cat

The noun phrases marked with an asterix are not grammatically correct for *ákwós* must always follow the noun it qualifies.

4.3.2.3.Pre-posed and post-posed adjectives

The majority of adjectives in Befang can be both pre-posed and post-posed to the noun they modify. However, when the adjective is at initial position it should be preceded by the prefix " *á* " irrespective of the class of the noun modified by the adjective. This can clearly be illustrated by the following examples.

(13)

1) *tén*

strong

a- *átén ákányèm* " a strong horse "

strong cl1horse

b- *átén úkányèm* " strong horses "

strong cl2horses

2) *táfá*

short

a- *átáfá ízón* " a short spear "

short cl7spear

b- *átáfé* *ázóŋ* " short spears "

short cl8spears

When the adjective precedes a consonant initial noun, the latter takes " *é* " as suffix irrespective of the class of the modified noun as exemplified below.

(14)

1) *átáné* *ábá* " a strong bed "

strong cl1bed

2) *átáfé* *bàmbòk* " short hawks "

short cl2hawks

3) *átáfé* *fúbús* " a short cat "

short cl5cat

When the adjective is postposed to the noun it modifies, it is preceded by an associative marker which agrees in class and number with the head noun as evidenced in the following examples.

(15)

1) a- *fúgén* *fú* *díshí* " a black star "

Cl5star AM black *

b- *bàkátásé* *bú* *délé* " heavy spoons "

Cl2spoons AM heavy

When the adjective has a final consonant, the morpheme " *é* " is added to its root. Let us consider the following example.

(15)

1) *tén*

strong

bí *yí* *téné* " a strong goat "

goat AM strong

The following phrases illustrate the different associative markers that always precede pre-posed and post-posed adjectives in Befang.

(16)

CLASS 1 *óné* *ká* *téné* " a strong ant "

ant AM strong

CLASS 2 *bàkákó* *bú* *délé* " heavy snails "

Snails AM heavy

CLASS 3	ákúf yí téné	" a strong bone "
	bone AM strong	
CLASS 4	íbí yí téné	" strong goats "
	goats AM strong	
CLASS 5	fúbús fú téné	" a strong cat "
	cat AM strong	
CLASS 6	mnùjò mú fáné	" red birds "
	birds AM red	
CLASS 7	íbu yí dóné	" a large angle "
	Angle AM large	
CLASS 8	ágámá kí táfé	" short plantains "
	Plantains AM short	
CLASS 9	mó? mú béfé	" a bad water "
	Water AM bad	
CLASS 11	yán wú táfé	" a short baby "
	Baby AM short	
CLASS 12	úsúm wú dóné	" a large ^{farm} match "
	Farm AM large	

The following table summarises the associative markers of pre-posed and *post*-posed adjectives in Befang.

Table XVIII: Associative markers of adjectives

CLASS	PREF	POSS	CLASS	PREF	POSS
1	a	ɑ	7	a	i
	b	∅		b	∅
2	a	U	8	a	ki
	b	O		b	ɑ
	c	bè		c	i
3	a	∅	9		∅
	b	i			
4		i	11	a	∅
		yí		b	U
5		fu	13		U
6		m			
		fú			wú
		mú			wú

We also notice that class 3 and class 5 have the same associative marker as well as class 11 and Class 12. *when is class 12?*

4.3.3. Types of adjectives

Generally, in Bantu languages, adjectives pattern in three broad categories: pure adjectives, nominal adjectives and derived adjective (or verbal adjectives). In Befang, two major categories of adjectives are attested: pure and nominal adjectives.

4.3.3.1. Pure adjectives

Contrary to the majority of Bantu languages where very few pure adjectives are attested, most of adjectives in Befang are pure ones. A pure adjective agrees in class and number with the noun it modifies. This is exemplified above (in section 4.3.2.1) where we have for instance:

(17)

CLASS 5	fúbús	fú	téné	" a strong cat "
	cat	AM	strong	
CLASS 6	mnùṅó	mú	féné	" red birds "
	birds	AM	red	

Contrast
as in
the

Here the agreement is not borne by the adjective but by the associative marker that precedes it and which, orally, seems to be part of the adjective.

4.3.3.2. Nominal adjectives

According to Tamanji (2002: P.8) “ *Nominal adjectives are pure nouns which are made to function like attributive adjective in a N1- N2 construction type*”. He further adds that “*Nominal adjectives generally occur in pre-nominal position where they attribute a quality to the noun they modify*”. In fact, these adjectives though exhibiting ordinary nominal properties modify the head noun just as any other qualificative would do. Let us consider the following example :

(18)

yén ótsé " the little stick"
baby stick

yén here is a noun that functions as a qualificative by modifying the noun it is attached to.

4.4. Nouns modified by quantifiers and numerals

The noun phrase in Befang can also be made up of quantifiers and numerals that will be handled respectively in 4.4.1 and 4.4.2.

4.4.1. Noun modified by quantifiers

The quantifiers that are attested in Befang are :

(19)

- 1- bámóó : " some "
- 2- ndámé : " many "
- 3- ndámé..... twá : " too many "
- 4- úkpásé : "few"
- 5- úkpásé.....twá : " too few "
- 6- úgúm : " all "
- 7- dówè : " no "

Some of these quantifiers can only occur before the noun they modify while others can be placed after. The former are referred to as *pre-posed quantifiers* and the latter as *post-posed quantifiers*.

4.4.1.1. Pre-posed quantifiers

In Befang, *ndámé* and *úkpásé* are quantifiers that always precede the noun they modify. Moreover, these quantifiers do not agree in class and number with the head noun. These features are illustrated below in the plural classes of Befang.

(20)

CLASS 2 a- ndámé bàdóŋ " many chairs "
 many chairs

b- ndámé úkányám " many horses "
 many horses

CLASS 4 a- ndámé íbí " many goats "
 many goats

b- ndámé ícám " many wars "
 many wars

- CLASS 6** a- úkpásé mgén " few stars "
 few stars
 b- úkpásé mbús " few cats "
 few cats

- CLASS 8** a- úkpásé kiyèbé " few wings "
 few wings
 b- úkpásé ágámá " few plantains "
 few examples

ndèmú...twá and *úkpásé.....twá* can also be classified in this category of quantifiers though they are actually discontinuous morphemes in so much as the noun appears in the middle as illustrated in the following phrases.

(21)

- CLASS 2** a- ndèmé bàdán twá " too many chairs "
 many chairs too

- b- úkpásé ukànyám twá " too few horses "
 few horses too

- CLASS 4** a- ndèmé íbí twá " too many goats "
 many goats too

- b- úkpásé ícém twá " too few wars "
 few wars too

- CLASS 6** a- ndèmé mgén twá " too many stars "
 many stars too

- b- úkpásé mbús twá " too few cats "
 few cats too

- CLASS 8** a- ndèmé kiyèbé twá " too many wings "
 many wings too

- b- úkpásé ágámá twá " too many plantains "
 few plantains too

using the same structure as in the previous examples

4.4.1.2. Post-posed quantifiers

gúm, *dáwè* and *bámóó* are always placed behind the noun they modify. *dáwè* and *bámóó* do not agree in class and number with noun they are attached . This is exemplified below.

(22)

1) ígónj *dáwè* " no girl "

cl3girl no

2) bàgónj *bámóó* " some girls "

cl2girls some

3) fúbús *dáwè* " no cat "

cl5 cat no

4) mbús *bámóó* " some cats "

cl6 cats some

5) iyèbè *dáwè* " no wings "

cl7 wing no

6) kiyèbè *bámóó* " some wings "

cl8 wings some

On the contrary, *gúm* is always preceded by an associative marker that agrees in class and number with the noun modified by the quantifier and behaves like pure adjectives described in 4.3.3.1 .

(23)

CLASS 2 a- ókójé bá *gúm* " all the grasshoppers "

Grasshoppers AM all

b- bəkátásé bá *gúm* " all the spoons "

spoons AM all

CLASS 4 a- íbí yí *gúm* " all the goats "

goats AM all

b- ínyám yí *gúm* " all the animals "

animals AM all

CLASS 6 a- mbús má *gúm* " all the cats "

cats AM all

b-mgən	má	gúm	" all the stars "	
	stars	AM	all	
CLASS 8	a-kíkúm	ká	gúm	all the names"
	dames	AM	all	
	b-ákám	ká	gúm	"all the drums"
	drums	AM	all	

The following table presents the associative markers that should be inserted between the modified noun and gúm.

Table XIX: Associative markers preceding gum

CLASS	PREFIX	ASSOCIATIVE MARKER
2	u-	bá
	o-	
	bə	
4	i-	yí
6	m	má
8	ki-	ká
	a-	
	i-	

Unlike the other classes, class 2 maintains the associative marker used for pre-posed and post-posed adjectives (4.3.2.1).

4.4.2. Nouns modified by numerals

As in all languages, numerals in Befang are divided into cardinal and ordinal numerals.

4.4.2.1. Cardinal numeral

A cardinal is a word used for counting. Cardinal numerals can also be divided into simple and complex cardinals.

4.4.2.1.1. Simple cardinals

Simple cardinals are cardinals that are made up of one word. In Befang they include exclusively eight numbers which are:

(24)

mó? = "one "

fé = "two "

tái = "three "

íkjwá = "four "

ítjón = "five"

índúfú = "six"

ífómó = "eight"

iwún = "ten"

However, *fé* and *tái*, contrary to the other simple cardinals, are always preceded by an associative marker which exhibits an agreement in class and number with the nouns they modify as illustrated below.

(25)

CLASS 2 a- bəkátásé bá fé "two spoons "

Spoons AM two

b- bəkátásé bá tái "three spoons"

Spoons AM three

CLASS 4 a- íbí yí fé "two goats "

goats AM two

b- íbí yí tái "three goats"

goats AM three

CLASS 6 a- mgén má fé "two stars "

stars AM two

b- mgén má tái "three stars"

stars AM three

CLASS 8 a- ágámá ké fé "two plantains "

plantains AM two

b- ágámá ké tái " three plantains "
 plantains AM three

The following table summarizes the associative markers that should precede *fé* and *tái*.

Table XX: Associative markers preceding *fé* and *tái*

CLASS	PREFIX	ASSOCIATIVE MARKER
2	u-	bá
	o-	
	bə	
4	i-	yí
6	m	má
8	Ki-	ké
	a-	
	i-	

Except for the associative marker of class 8 the other ones are similar to those used with *gúm* in 4.4.1.2.

4.4.2.1.2. Complex cardinals

A complex cardinal is a numeral that is made up of the association of two simple cardinals. They can be classified into three specific groups with reference to their structure.

The first group is made up of complex cardinals that are made up of two simple cardinals linked without any associative markers. This group includes only one numeral:

(26)

1) ítjèn íkjwà " nine "

five four

The second group is made up of two simple numerals that are linked by an associative marker: *ná*.

(27)

2) íkjwà ná táí " seven "

Four AM three

The third group includes cardinals that are made up of two simple numerals which are not linked by an associative marker but by a word : útswá or bàtswá that respectively mean " remainder " and " remainders ".

(28)

1) iwúm útswá mó? " eleven "

ten remainder one

iwúm bàtswá bá táí " thirteen "

ten remainders AM three

4.4.2.2. Ordinal numerals

An ordinal numeral is a number that is used to indicate where something comes in an order or a sequence. Ordinal numerals in Befang are divided into simple and complex ordinals.

4.4.2.2.1. Simple ordinals

Generally, simple ordinals are in post-nominal position and do not agree in class and number with the nouns they modify. Only one simple ordinal, *ébíŋ*, is attested in Befang.

(29)

1) ákànyàm ébíŋ " the first horse "

cl1 horse first

2) úkànyàm ébíŋ " the first horses "

cl2 horses first

3) ákwéŋ ébíŋ " the first lizard "

cl3 lizard first

4) íbí ébíŋ " the first goats "

cl4 goats first

These examples illustrate the fact that the simple ordinal is invariable in that it does not agree in class and number with the noun it modifies.

4.4.2.2.2. Complex ordinals

Apart from *ébiŋ* the remaining ordinal in Befang are complex ones. Complex ordinal in Befang almost display a phrase structure as analysed below

(30)

- 1) *ámbàké dzém bĕ bĕfé* " the third person "
 behind back people two

Literally 1) above means " behind the back of two people ".

- 2) *ámbàké dzém bĕ bàtáí* " the fourth person "
 behind back people three

- 3) *ámbàké dzém bĕ ítjĕn* " the sixth person "
 behind back people five

- 4) *ámbàké dzém bĕ ífómó* " the ninth person "
 behind back people eight

More interesting is the fact that " *bĕ* " in the preceding examples can be replaced by any noun as illustrated in the following sentences.

(31)

- 1) *ámbàké dzém bàndĕp bàtáí* " the fourth houses "
 behind back houses three

- 2) *ámbàké dzém úkúf bĕfé* " the third bone "
 behind back bones two

- 3) *ámbàké dzém mbús ífómó* " the ninth cat "
 behind back cats eight

- 4) *ámbàké dzém bàgój íkjwá* " the fifth girl "
 behind back girls four

A general structure of complex ordinals in Befang can therefore be deduced as follow:

***ámbàké* + *dzém* + N + CARDINAL NUMERAL.**

Thus a complex cardinal phrase is always made up of *ámbàké* followed by *dzém*; the noun and the cardinal numeral vary according to the message the speaker wants to convey. Here the value of the cardinal numeral should be of one lesser than that of the ordinal. In other words to represent "ninth" it is "eight" that should be used in the phrase to obtain the result expressed (3) above.

4.5. Complex nominal constructions

Complex nominal constructions in Befang often include relative clauses. Generally three relative clauses are attested: restrictive, non-restrictive and correlative. However, Befang, like most Bantu languages employ just restrictive relative clauses as will be illustrated in this section.

(32)

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1) bú yú m swé | " the dog which i am bathing " |
| dog RM I bathe | |
| 2) íngóŋ yé ú tíshé | " the girl that she is showing " |
| girl RM she show | |
| 3) wúláyí wé ú fyáfé | " the woman whom she helps " |
| woman RM he help | |
| 4) úsúm wé á nyáŋé | " the farm that you see " |
| farm RM you see | |
| 5) yán wú bà té | " the child that i am calling " |
| child RM we call | |

A close analysis of relative clauses in Befang has enabled us to come up with the following points.

First, in Befang, relative markers agree with the relativised noun in class and number as exemplified in the following sentences.

(33)

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| CLASS 1 a- áná ké á nyáŋé | " the ant that you are seeing " |
| ant RM you see | |
| b- kityá ké á nyáŋé | " the pepper that you are seeing " |
| pepper RM you see | |
| CLASS 2 a- úná bé á nyáŋé | " the ants that you are seeing " |
| ants RM you see | |
| b- bèkákó bé á nyáŋé | " the snails that you are seeing " |
| snails these you see | |

CLASS 3 a- bí yé á nyáǵé	" the goat that you are seeing "
goat RM you see	
b-ìndàṅ yé á nyáǵé	" the chair that you are seeing "
chair RM you see	

Secondly, relative pronouns are identical to the demonstrative adjectives as evidenced below.

(34)

1) a- bí yé	" that goat "
goat that	
b- bí yé á nyáǵé	" the goat that you are seeing "
goat RM you see	
2) a- kítýá ké	" that pepper "
pepper that	
b- kítýá ké á nyáǵé	" the pepper that you are seeing "
pepper RM you see	
3) a- bàkákó bé	" these snails "
snails these	
b- bàkákó bé á nyáǵé	" the snails that you are seeing "
snails RM you see	

The relative pronoun thus behaves like a demonstrative in that it takes into account the distance between the speaker and the object he is referring to. As a result the sentence *ìndàṅ yé á nyáǵé* the translation of which is " the chair that you are seeing " rather primarily means " that chair that you are seeing ".

4.6. Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with the modified nominal construction in Befang and its internal structure. Possessive nominal constructions, associative nominal constructions and nouns modified by quantifiers have been given careful consideration. Adjectives have been studied in terms of their functions, their positions and their types. Relative clauses have been studied under complex nominal constructions and a similarity has been noticed between the relative pronoun and the demonstrative adjective.

CHAPTER VI

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Led by the necessity to describe African languages and to broaden the base on which the internal structure of the noun phrase can be explored, we set out this study to describe the nominal construction in Befang.

We started our study by looking at the linguistic community of the language. Here we tackled the geographical and socio-economical set-up of the speech community. After giving the linguistic classification of the language we presented a review of literature centered on the phonology on the language. This has revealed that the Befang alphabet is made up of fourteen phonemic vowels and forty-four phonemic consonants.

From the study of the internal structure of the noun phrase in Befang we came up with the following results.

- Nouns in Befang are classified according to either their prefix or on the agreement they trigger on the possessive determiner. The eleven noun classes that are attested in Befang are divided into seven singular classes and four plural classes. Twelve distinct genders are found in the language: seven double class genders and five single class genders. Noun formation processes are achieved through derivation, compounding and borrowing. Loan words are incorporated into the language through a process of adaptation known as loan adaptation.
- In Befang the noun can function as either subject of verb or objects of verbs and of prepositions. Personal and possessive pronouns show class distinction. The nominal construction may be simple or modified. In the former case it is made up of a noun or a pronoun alone or a noun with its determiner. In the latter case it can be made up of a noun plus an adjective, a quantifier or a relative clause. The relative pronoun in Befang is identical to the demonstrative adjective.

Hopefully, this work will contribute to the standardization of the Befang language and will also enable to better understand the internal structure of the nominal construction in the language.

Besides the description of Befang as a sample, the present study contributes to linguistics in general in that it enables the linguist to understand the internal working of Bantu languages; better still it is a contribution to universal grammar.

The present work did not go on without a certain number of problems due, on the one hand, to our inexperience in the domain of research and, on another, on our background in linguistics studies. The trip to the village and the phonetic transcription of the corpus have also been hard nuts to crack. The above problems, without justifying our mistakes, may explain some of them.

To put it bluntly the focus of this study was on the structure of the noun phrase in Befang. Yet a lot remains to be done to account, for instance, for the agreement in the noun phrase. We therefore wish further research to be carried out on this aspect of the language as well as others such as verb morphology and syntax to provide the native speaker of the language and possible learners with a reliable and comprehensive grammar of the language.

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