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*DEPARTEMENT DE LANGUES
AFRICAINES
ET LINGUISTIQUE*

**NOUN MORPHOLOGY AND THE INTERNAL
STRUCTURE OF THE NOMINAL CONSTRUCTION
IN Mpumpun**

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Award of the MAITRISE DEGREE.**

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DEDICATION

To
Jesus-Christ, my Lord and Shepherd .

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SIGNS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADJ.	Adjective	NP.	Noun phrase
AP.	Adjectival phrase	Num.	Numeral
AGR.	Agreement	NumP	Numeral phrase
A.M.	Associative marker	op. cit.	Already cited
ASP. :	Aspect	P.	Phrase
C.	Consonant	Pl.	Plural
Cl.	Class	Poss.	Possessive
		Pref.	Prefix
		Pro.	Pronoun
Def. :	Definite article	Quant.	Quantifier
Dem.	Demonstrative	QuantP.	Quantifier phrase
Det.:	Determiner	S.	Semi-vowel
DP.	Determiner phrase	Sg.	Singular
e.	empty	Spec.	Specifier
Excl.	Exclusive	U.R.	Underlying representation
Gen.	Genitive	V.	Vowel
GenP.	Genitive phrase	X'	X-bar
Incl.	Inclusive	#.	Number
N.	Noun	#P.	Number phrase
Neg.	Negative	∅.	Zero morpheme

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CHAPTER ONE

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 cannot be over emphasized. A good number of studies have been undertaken in this respect, ranging from phonology, morphology, syntax to entire dictionaries. But despite the bulk of work done to this day, it is a matter of fact that much, and indeed very much still has to be done. It is in this light that we undertake yet another study on a Cameroonian language: "Noun Morphology and the Internal Structure of the Nominal Construction in Mpumpuŋ". The present dissertation is a study of the noun and other constituents of the nominal construction. The major objective of this research is to bring out the relational patterns existing between the constituents of the nominal construction in terms of distribution and agreement.

1.2. THE LANGUAGE

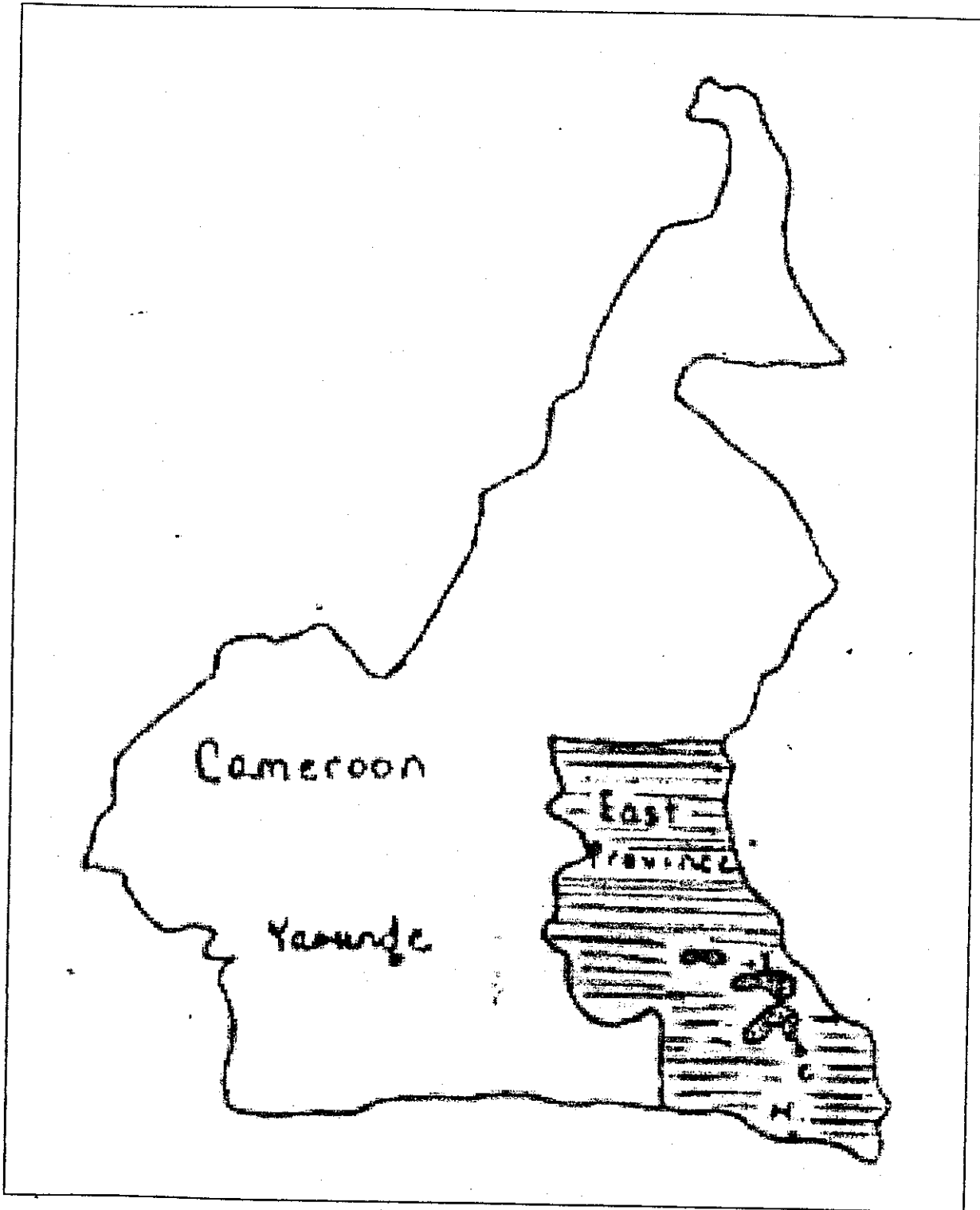
Spoken in the East province of Cameroon, Mpumpuŋ is the native language of the Mpú-mpóŋ people.

1.2.1. Geographic situation.

Johnson and Beavon (1989) gives the following physical situation of the Mpú-mpóŋ and related peoples.

"The Mpompo people live mainly in the south and west of Yokadouma in the Boumba and Ngoko division of the East province of Cameroon. They are bordered to the south by Kunabeeb speakers, to the west by Koozime speakers, to the north by Yangere speakers and to the east, extending into the Central African Republic, by speakers of Mpyemə. In the northwest of the Mpompo dialect area in the district of Mbang, live the Mezime (west of Mbang) and Baŋantu (east of Mbang)

Map 1: Situation of Mpumpuyin Cameroon



Adapted from Johnson & Beavon (1989)

speakers. Speakers of the Boman dialect are located just south of the Kunabeeb about halfway between the cities of Yokadouma and Moloundou

The area in which these groups live is all dense tropical forest. The principal administrative and commercial center for the Mpompo and Kunabeeb dialect areas is Yokadouma, while for the Mezime and Baqantu areas it is Mbang. For the Boman it is Moloundou. Roads between these areas are unpaved, but are generally kept in good condition. Access to villages located off these main roads is difficult without a 4-wheel drive vehicle, particularly during and immediately following rainy season."

This geographic situation takes into consideration not only the Mpumpun speakers but the Mezime, Kunabeeb, Baqantu and Poman speakers as well. This shall be understood as we discuss the linguistic classification of Mpumpun below.

1. 2. 2. Linguistic classification

1.2.2.1. Mpumpun: a language variety

There have been many controversies as to whether Mpumpun should be considered as a language or as the dialect variety of another language. In Guthrie's classification reproduced in Mutaka & Tamanji (1995), Mpumpun is considered to be a dialect variety of the Mpiemo language, coded A86. Grimes (2000) on her own considers Mpumpun and Mpiemo as two different languages, each with her dialect varieties (see map 2). In the classification of ALCAM(1983), both Mpiemo and Mpumpun, together with six other dialects, are considered as varieties of a Mpo language. Apart from the above classifications, there is a more recent analysis, which was proposed by the SIL after a sociolinguistic survey among the languages of Guthrie's A80. From the latter analysis are stated the followings:

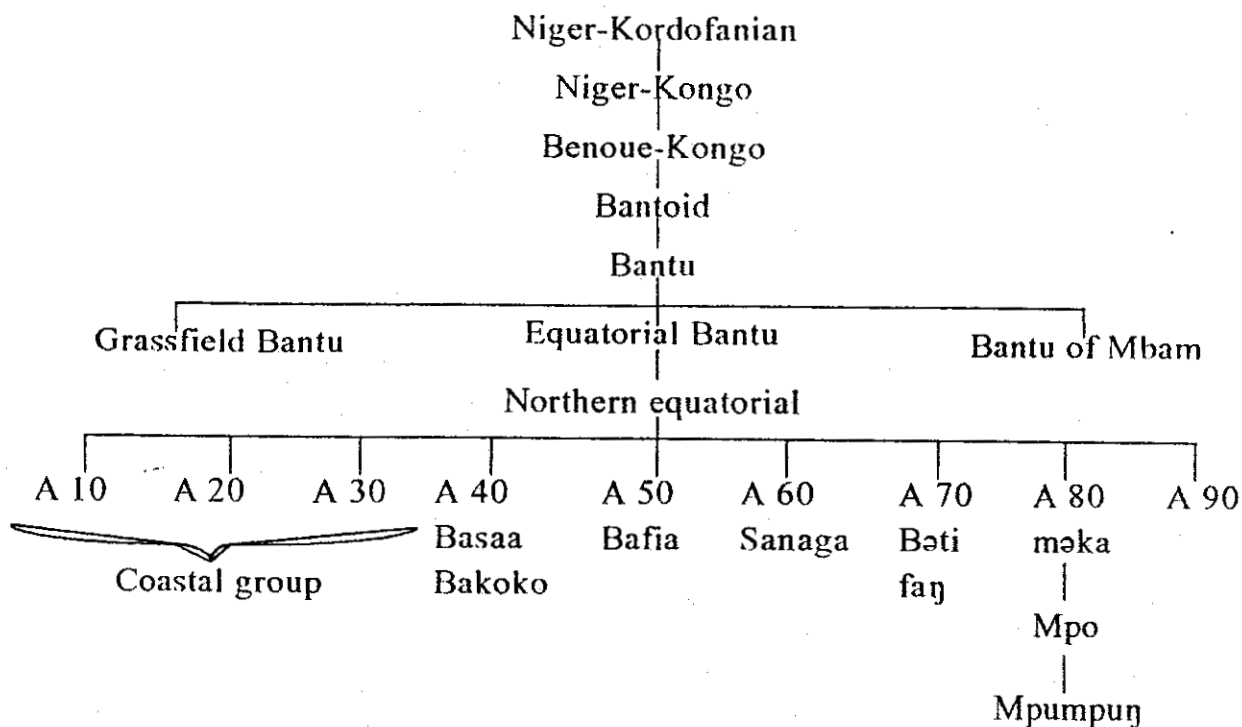
- ⇒ Mpumpuŋ, Kunabeeb, Mezime, Baŋantu and Poman are dialects of a single language.
- ⇒ There is mutual intelligibility among the speakers of all five varieties.
- ⇒ There is a high degree of intelligibility between the Mpyemɔ speakers and the speakers of the five dialects aforementioned. But strong negative feelings exist between the Mpyemɔ and the Mpumpuŋ peoples, thus affecting and limiting to a great degree the possible extension of Mpumpuŋ literature to the Mpyemɔ population
- ⇒ Speakers of all four other dialects would be happy to use Mpumpuŋ as their written standard.

1.2.2.2. Mpumpuŋ: the language standard

These facts led members of the SIL research team to draw the following conclusion:

"It is the survey team's consensus that one written language will be satisfactory in the eyes of the great majority of the speakers of Mpompo, Kunabeeb, Boman, Baŋantu and Mezime. This will be even more satisfactory if the dialect chosen as the language standard is Mpompo. It is well understood throughout the area. It is spoken at the main urban center in the division of Boumba and Ngoko..." P 12

This final statement added to some other fact certainly led Djiafeua (1989) to choose Mpumpuŋ as the standard variety. In the present study, we do not depart from this standard. We also maintain the appellation Mpumpuŋ. The diagram below gives the genetic situation of Mpumpuŋ, which is followed by the linguistic map of the southeastern Cameroon.



1.2.3. Sketch of the phonology

This phonological sketch is based on Djiafeua (1989).

1.2.3.1. phonemic Account

1.2.3.1.1. Vowel phonemes

There are 7 vowel phonemes attested in Mpumpuŋ. Below is the representative table.

Table 1

Height of tongue	Position of lips	Front unrounded	central	Back rounded
	High		i	
High (mid)		e		o
Low (mid)		ɛ		ɔ
Low			a	

1. 2. 3. 1. 2. Consonant phonemes.

Aspiration is contrastive in Mpumpuŋ. Table 2 represents consonantal phonemes of the language.

Table 2

Manner articulation	Place of articulation	Labial	Dental	Palatal	Velar	Lab-velar
	Stops	Aspirated	p ^h	t ^h	ts ^h	k ^h
Voiceless		p	t	ts	k	kp
Voiced		b	d	dz	g	gb
Pre-nasalized		mb	nd	ndz	ŋg	ŋgb
Nasals		m	n		ŋ	
Fricatives	Voiceless	f	s			
	Voiced	v	z			
Liquids			l			
Glides				y		w

1.2.3.2. Syllabification

As is well known, every language has restrictions on the patterns it makes use of to organize segments into syllables. Monosyllabic, disyllabic and trisyllabic structures are found in Mpumpuŋ. There are very few cases of four syllables words.

1.2.4.2.1. Monosyllabic structures

There are many types of monosyllabic structures attested in Mpumpuŋ. These are V, VC, CV, CVC, CV:, CGV, CGVC, etc. Below are some illustrations.

- a) V structures
e.g. é "he"
ú "you"
- b) CV structures
e.g. mí "I"
k^bõ "pig"
só "friend"
- c) CVC structures
e.g. wòn "groundnut"
pùm "fruit"
- d) CGV structures
e.g. lwĩ "talk"
- e) CV: structures
e.g. tò: "room"
- f) VC structures
e.g. òk "this"
- g) CGV: structures
e.g. pyò: "shadow"
- h) CGVC structures
e.g. zwóm "wild bush cow"
myàndz "type of bag"
pyán "over there"
pwòŋ "hair"

1.2.4.2.2. Dissyllabic structures

The following disyllabic structures are attested in Mpumpun.

- a) CV-CV
e.g. mùmá "woman"
sísó "duck"
- b) CVC-CV
e.g. sùklá "soap"
- c) CV-CVC
e.g. sísímb "spirit"
- d) CGV-CV
e.g. pyàlà "peace"
- e) CGV-CVC
e.g. m̀byàlòmb "okra"
- f) CV-CGV(C)
e.g. síswàs "naked"
k̀ùsyê "a type of rat"
- g) C(G)V-CV:
e.g. tsélò: "intelligence"
syáló: "meek"
tsándò: "clean "
twókò "slim"
- h) CGVC-CV
syàksà "sifter"

1.2.3.2.3. Trisyllabic structures

Below are some of the trisyllabic structures found in Mpumpun.

- a) V CV CV
e.g. àlambà "needle"
ǎk̀'átá "grasshopper"
- b) CV CV CV
e.g. m̀èndòlò "cat"
kúkúamá "chief"
- c) V CGV CV
e.g. èbwótá "toad"

- d) V CGVC CV
e.g. ègwóklà "ignorance"
- e) V CV CVC
e.g. ètàṅkúl "difficulty"
mèpàpáp "scales"
- f) CV CGV CVC
e.g. băgbwàmót "frog"
- g) CV CGVC CGVC
e.g. bàtwén-twén "dragonflies"

1.2.3.2.4. Four syllables words

Four syllable words are almost non-existent in Mpumpuṅ. They are found mostly in compound words. But since compound words are combinations of two or more separate words with their separate syllable structures, we will not treat them under this sub-heading. We, however, have four syllable words when consonant initial trisyllabic words are added to their plural prefixes. Below are some such instances.

V CV CV CV examples

- a. ìmángòlò "mangoes"
b. àbǒkòndòṅ "a type of frog"
c. ìtátálá "mirrors"
d. ìtùtùtù "motorcycles"

CV CV CV CV examples

- míkúkúmá "chiefs"
bàbǒkòndòṅ "frog"

1.2.3.3. Tones

Four tones are identified in Mpumpuṅ: two simple tones (high and low) and two contour tones (high-low and low-high).

1.2.3.3.1. The high tone (à)

Examples

- sáng "father"
náng "mother"
tít "meat"

1.2.3.3.2. The low tone (è)

Examples

kwànd	"plantain"
zòk	"elephant"
tèndz	"shelf"

1.2.3.3.3. The high-low tone (ê)

Examples

nôm	"beautiful"
kpêndz	"broom"
pyò:	"shadow"

1.2.3.3.4. The low-high tone (â)

Examples

zôm	"flower"
zâm	"leprosy"
păp	"wall"

Tone is contrastive in Mpumpuŋ as can be seen in the following examples :

péndz	"cockroach"	pêndz	"fence"
só	"friend"	sò	"hiding place"
kù	"gazelle"	kû	"hen"
kél	"sister"	kêl	"pineapple"

1.2.3.3.5 Combination of tones

Two or more tone sequences are found in disyllabic or trisyllabic words. We find low/low, high/high, low/high, high/low, low/high-low, high/low-high etc...

Low/low combination

e.g. pòndò "trap"

Low/high combination

e.g. fùmbú "orange"

High/low combination

e.g. dzúlùk "smoke"
límà "dream"

High/low-high combination

e.g. tíťò "twig"

Low/low-low combination

e.g. t^hùt^hùmà "crowd"

Low/low- high combination

e.g. mètòmbá "drunkard"

High/high-high combination

e.g. kúkúmá "chief"

High/high-low combination

e.g. ěkúmà "cassava"

High/low-low combination

e.g. àlámà "pepper"

1.3. STATE OF RESEARCH

The only descriptive work we have found on Mpumpuŋ is that of Djiafeua (1989). Djiafeua (1989), however mentions a four page work done on Mpumpuŋ class prefixes in 1976 by a team from the SIL. We have unfortunately not seen this work to this date.

1.4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Considering the state of linguistic research on Mpumpuŋ, the present study comes as a contribution to the description of this language. After Djiafeua's (1989) innovation with the phonology, some light is shed on the noun structure, on where the noun may occur in the nominal group and of how it relates to other constituents. Of course, more aspects still have to be studied before one can talk of a grammatical account of Mpumpuŋ. Were the present work to be considered as the infant stage of the description of Mpumpuŋ, it would be an encouragement to many who may work to take it to adulthood through the intermediate teens stage.

Beside the description of Mpumpuŋ as a sample, this work also contributes to the description of the nominal constituent of Bantu languages. How the

agreement is spelt out, and how it is distributed within the nominal group, thus exposing relation of constituents to each other. This sheds more light on the agreement system of Bantu languages.

The above facts and some others could be summarized in a single statement. This study is a contribution to universal grammar.

1.5. METHODS AND THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

1.5.1 Methods

1.5.1.1. Source of information

The language related information used for this study was provided by native speakers of Mpumpuŋ some of who are listed in table 3 below.

Table 3 :List of informants

Name	Age	Level of study	Village	Profession
1. Abono Anclaire Main informant	23	Bacc	Parny	Law student
2. Nkombo Flavien	28	Bacc	Mbol II	student of theology
3. Abono Deshannel	21	Bacc	Parny	student of sciences
4. Mme Veuve Mebel	45		Parny	House wife
5. Abono Jean Pierre	29	Bacc	Parny	student of theology
6. Pastor Shal Edmond	36	Bacc	Mendoungue	student /Pastor
7. Zhell. Jacques	27	Bacc	Parny	Computer student

1.5.1.2. Method of data collection

The 2000 Basic English Word List of W.Grebe was used in association to Bouquiaux and al (1992). Words were collected in isolation first, then in association as presented below:

- ⇒ Noun (sg)
- ⇒ Noun (pl)
- ⇒ noun + demonstrative

- ⇒ Noun + quantifier
 - ⇒ Noun + numeral
 - ⇒ Noun + adjective
 - ⇒ Noun + possessive
 - ⇒ Noun of noun
 - ⇒ Noun + possessive + adjective
 - ⇒ Noun + possessive + quantifier
 - ⇒ quantifier + possessive + Noun + adjective
 - ⇒ Infinitive verbs
 - ⇒ Simple sentences
 - ⇒ Complex sentences
 - ⇒ Short stories
- etc.

The various combinations were used in both singular and plural forms. Data were transcribed directly and were often retranscribed for verification.

1.5.2. Theoretical considerations

From chapter two to chapter four, this work is a structural description of the Mpumpu nominal group as used by native speakers to respond to their daily communicative needs. We, however, depart from the structuralist approach as the need to account for agreement arises in chapter five. In this respect, we adopt Chomsky's (1995) proposal regarding checking theory.

We however do not adopt a strict minimalist program as we maintain the minimal, intermediate and maximal projections in our phrase markers, and thus stick close to the principles and parameters framework as we also maintain deep and surface structures in our derivations. These derivations take place not in NP (as traditionally understood), but within the extended projection, the DP as proposed by Abney (1987) and many others; among whom Carsten (1991), Nkemnji (1995) and Tamanji (1999) which stand as a source of inspiration for our analysis of agreement.

1.6. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

We set out in this work to describe the nominal construction, looking at the distribution of its constituent elements and at their relational patterns in regard to agreement. As it is impossible to describe the nominal construction without at least a succinct knowledge of the morphology of the noun, we start by giving a brief account of the noun morphology of the language. We, however, do not linger over phonological and tonological details as may be expected from a study on morphology, as our aim here is to gather needed background material for the analysis of the nominal construction. Despite the fact that sentences were collected in our data, we do not analyze utterance types and tense variations in our study, nor do we present an actual study of case variation as this can be best done while studying the verbal phrase. Finally, our study of agreement is limited to agreement within the nominal group. Agreement within a text, as is recurrent in the language, is excluded from the scope of the present study.

1.7. LAYOUT OF CHAPTERS

The first part of this work (chapter two) studies 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. In the second part of the work (chapter three and four), we examine the nominal group in its internal structure, looking at the distribution of the constituents of the nominal group, at word order variations, related interpretations and considering the significance of the noun class system in the relation of constituents to each other. Finally, in the last part of our study, we take a step toward integrating our analysis into the DP theory, while giving an account of agreement within the nominal construction in Mpumpun.

CHAPTER TWO

NOUN MORPHOLOGY

This chapter studies the morphology of the noun in Mpumpun. According to Kenmogne (2000), "The noun morphology can be divided into stem formation and class morphology, (The latter being richer than the former)." The first section of this chapter examines the noun class system, while the second examines other noun formation processes that may be used to expand the lexicon.

2.1. THE NOUN CLASS SYSTEM

The Mpumpun noun is made up of a prefix plus a stem. The prefix bears a low tone, which is phonetically raised into a mid-high tone when followed by a high tone. A particular prefix, adjoined to different stems, produces different meanings. Nouns sharing the same prefix are grouped together and referred to as a class.

(1)

	Prefix	Stem	Gloss
a	ò	tól	Elder brothers
b	ò	Són	fathers
c	ò	Sú	fishes
d	ò	Só	friends
e	ò	Pyé	dogs

The class is thus assigned to a noun stem by its prefix. A stem by itself may not be said to belong to a class. This may be observed in the data below:

(2)

a	d-ís	"eye"	cl 5
b	m-ís	"eyes"	cl 6
c	d-él	"village"	cl 5
d	m-él	"villages"	cl 6

From these examples, we observe that *-ís* for example is assigned to class 5 when suffixed to the prefix *d-*, while it is assigned to class 6 when suffixed to *m-*.

As such, a noun stem usually belongs to two more than one class. This means that a noun stem associated with a specific meaning belongs to a class gender.

In assigning figures to the noun classes, we have not adopted the Bantu semantic criterion where cl 1 for instance is the class for humans, 6a that of liquids/mass nouns, 9 for animals, etc. This is because Mpumpuṅ morphological classes do not necessarily correspond to semantic groupings. Following Kadima (1969) we consider agreement as the pre-eminent criterion in the determination of classes. In Kadima's (op. cit.) sense, two classes are distinct if:

1-They exhibit a difference in agreement

2-Both their nominal prefixes and pairing systems are different -in case they share common agreement features.

To exemplify, the two forms /ṅdzyòṅ/ and /ṅzìlà/ may be considered as class9 nouns because of the nasal prefix. But we notice that their pairing system is different as the first has its plural in class2 and the second in class8. Thus we rely on their agreement patterns to classify them in class1 for the first and in class3 for the second. Following this criterion, we notice that all nouns with the syllabic nasal prefix ṅ share the same agreement patterns either with nouns of class1 or with those of class3. This eliminates class9 whose sole criterion of determination would have been the prefix.

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

2.1.1. Noun class 1

The majority of nouns in class one are kinship terms although, as is often the case with present day Bantu class systems, nouns of other semantic groupings are also found in this class. Class one nouns divide into four subgroups depending on their prefixes.

Group (a).

The prefix of this group is mù-. When this prefix is attached to a vowel-initial root, the tautosyllabic vowel sequence which results produces either a vowel deletion or a glide formation process. This prefix can thus take the following forms:

- ⇒ /mù/ before consonant initial stems;
- ⇒ /mw/ before vowel initial stems;
- ⇒ /m/ before vowel initial stems.

The following are examples of nouns in this class.

(3)

m-òt "human being"
 m-òróm "man"
 mù-má "woman"
 mw-ăn "child"
 m-ìèl "wife"
 mw-às "crefish"

Group (b).

This subclass designates insects, little animals etc. The prefix for this class is a-. Below are some examples:

(4)

à-lwól "ant"
 àdwám "frog"
 àngísà "head tie"
 àlúlà "needle"
 àlámà "pepper"

Group (c).

This group has a ø prefix and is made up mostly of animals, though some humans nouns as well as body parts are also found in this class.

(5)

ø-só "friend"
 ø-sáj "father"
 ø-tól "elder brother"
 ø-kèl "gun"

Group d

This group is made up of nouns with the nasal prefix, but which share common agreement patterns with other nouns of class 1.

(6)

ñdzyòŋ "stranger"
 ñbòp "pipe"
 ñbòsà "regret"
 ñgòmna "governor/administrator"

Although the nouns in (a), (b), (c) and (d) do not share the same prefix, we have grouped them under the same class I because they trigger the same agreement on the possessive determiner as illustrated below.

(7)

- | | | | |
|----|----------|-----|---------------|
| a) | m-ðróm | wám | "my man" |
| | man | my | |
| | mù-má | wám | "my woman" |
| | woman | my | |
| b) | àṅgísă | wám | "my head tie" |
| | head tie | my | |
| | àlúlă | wám | "my needle" |
| | needle | my | |
| c) | σ-Sáŋ | wám | "my father" |
| | father | my | |
| | σ-kêl | wám | "my gun" |
| | gun | my | |

- | | | | |
|----|----------|-----|---------------|
| d) | mbôsă | wám | "my regret" |
| | regret | my | |
| | ñdzyòŋ | wám | "my stranger" |
| | stranger | my | |

These nouns also trigger the same agreement patterns on demonstratives as seen in the examples below:

(8)

màmó: "this woman"
woman : this

mõrómó: "this man"
man this

àlámbó: "this paper"
paper this

àṅgísó: "this head-tie"
head-tie this

There is a vowel deletion process in the examples above. The underlying structure for the first example in 8 for instance should be *mù má-ǎ*. But the attachment of *ǎ* to a vowel final word causes a tautosyllabic vowel sequence which leads to the deletion of *a* and to the subsequent lengthening of *ǎ* giving: *mú má:*.

(9)

kèl-	ǎ	"this gun"
gun	this	
tól-	ǎ	"this elder brother"
elder	this	

2.1.2. Noun Class 2

Nouns of this class are subdivided into (a), (b) and (c). This is the corresponding plural class for some nouns of class 1.

Group (a).

The prefix for this group is *bù-*. This prefix causes a vowel deletion when it is attached to some vowel initial stem. It may also result in a glide formation process. We thus have three realizations as for class 1a: /bù/, /bw/ and /b/. Below are some examples:

(10)

- a) b-òt "human beings"
- b) b-òróóm "men"
- c) bw-ǎn "children"
- d) bù-wá "women"
- e) b-èl "wives"

Group (b).

The prefix of this group is similar to class 2 proto Bantu prefix *bà-*, though semantically speaking they are different. There is for instance no human noun in this subgroup.

(11)

- a) bà-ngísà "head-ties"
- b) bà-lúlà "needles"
- c) bà-dwám "frogs"

Group (c).

The prefix of this group is ò-. It is the corresponding plural class for class 1c, which has mostly animals' names.

(12)

- a) ò-sáj "fathers"
- b) ò-náj "mothers"
- c) ò-sú "fishes"
- d) ò-pyé "dogs"
- e) ò-nwòŋ "snakes"

The nouns in class 2 (a), (b) and (c), though not sharing the same prefix, trigger the same agreement patterns on the possessive determiner as illustrated below.

(13)

- a) bà-lùlǎ bám "my needles"
needles my
- b) bàngísǎ bám "my head-ties"
head-tie my
- c) bw-ǎn bám "my children"
children my
- d) ò-sú bám "my fishes"

2.1.3. Noun Class 3

This class is subdivided into two subgroups. The first subgroup has a zero prefix and designates trees, fruits, furniture and miscellaneous objects.

(14)

- a) ø-pòndò "trap"
- b) ø-bèmb "spoon"
- c) ø-dòŋ "bed"
- d) ø-lé "tree"
- e) ø-fùmbú "orange"

Class 3b

This subgroup has a nasal prefix as in the example below:

(15)

- òdzilà "successor"

2.1.4. Noun class 4

This is the corresponding plural class for some class 1c nouns. Some nouns of class 3 also have their plurals in this class. The prefix for this class is *mì-*. This class designates parts of body, fruits and miscellaneous objects. Below are some examples.

(16)

- a) *mì-ndza'* "houses"
- b) *mì-ndá* "intestines"
- c) *mì-ló* "heads"
- d) *mì-swòk* "corns"
- e) *mì-kpálá* "cutlasses"

2.1.5. Noun class 5

This class is subdivided into (a) and (b) and the nouns designate parts of the body, goods, some animals and miscellaneous objects. Class 5a, whose prefix is *d-*, is made up of vowel initial stems, while class 5b with the prefix *è-* is made up of consonant initial stems.

Class 5(a).

The prefix of this class is *d-*.

(17)

- a) *d-ís* "eye"
- b) *d-ó* "nose"
- c) *d-ó* "navel"
- d) *d-ín* "name"

Class 5(b).

The prefix of this class is *è-*.

(18)

- a) *è-kót* "back of the neck"
- b) *è-kòk* "stone"
- c) *è-kúmà* "cassava"
- d) *è-tsyé* "egg"

Though (a) and (b) do not share the same prefix, they are grouped under the same class 5 because they trigger the same agreement on modifying words as illustrated below:

(19)

- a) è-kúmǎ lám "my cassava"
cassava my
- b) è-gbès lám "my door"
door my
- c) d-ǎ lám "my navel"
navel my
- d) d-ís lám "my eye"
eye my
- e) d-ís lí "this eye"
eye this
- f) è-gbès lí "this door"
door this

2.1.6. Noun class 6

This is the corresponding plural class for some nouns of cl 1(c), of class 3, and for the nouns of class 5 and class 7. The prefix is m- for the nouns of class 5 and m̀è- for others. We subdivide this into (a) and (b).

Class 6a. Prefix m-

(20)

- a) m-ís "eyes"
b) m-ó "navels"
c) m-ín "names"

Class 6(b).

(21)

- a) m̀è-kó "feet"
b) m̀è-pèmb "spoons"
c) m̀è-tsés "legs"
d) m̀è-zyèl "beards"

2.1.7. Noun class 7

The prefix for this class is ø. The corresponding plural forms for some of the nouns are found in class 6, while some do not have any plural form.

(22)

- a) ø-zyèl "beard"
- b) ø-pyò "shadow"
- c) ø-bwòᅇ "fear"
- d) ø-kòmwal "darkness"
- e) ø-tùmb "power"
- f) ø-tò: "room"
- g) ø-kùl "strength"
- h) ø-zyòᅇ "ax"
- l) ø-tsuᅇᅇ "neck"

Despite the fact that nouns in this class share a zero prefix with those of class 3, we do not place them in the same class because the agreement they trigger on the possessive is different as illustrated below.

(23)

- | | | |
|---------------------------|--|--------|
| a) ø-zyèl nyám "my beard" | | Class7 |
| b) ø-bwòᅇ nyám "my fear" | | |
| c) ø-zyòᅇ nyám "my ax" | | |
| d) ø-pòᅇᅇ yám "my trap" | | Class3 |
| e) ø-dòᅇ yám "my bed" | | |
| f) ø-bèmb yám "my spoon" | | |

2.1.8. Noun class 8

This is the plural class for the majority of nouns in class 3. The prefix is ì-. The nouns of this class are mostly inanimate designating tools, plants, but most diminutives are also found in this class.

(24)

- a) ì-pán "bows"
- b) ì-ká "leaves"
- c) ì-tàᅇ "bottles"
- d) ì-lùᅇᅇ "fences"
- e) ì-lí-lyéklé "small teachers"
- f) ì-ní-nᅇn "small birds"

2.1.9. . Noun class 10

The prefix for this class is pì-. So far, this is a small class made of two nouns.

These are:

(25)

- a) pì-òŋ "beds"
- b) pì-ín "fingers"

This class shares the same agreement morphemes with the nouns of class 7.

But they are classified under two different classes because while class 7 nouns are all singular, class 10 nouns are plural.

(26)

- a) pyòŋ nyám "my beds"
- b) pĩ:n nyám "my fingers"
- c) zyèl nyám "my beard"
- d) tùm̄b nyám "my power"

Table 4 : Noun classes and concordial affixes.

class	pref.	poss.	class	pref.	poss.
1	mù- Ñ à- ø-	wám	2	bù- bà- ò-	bám
3	Ñ ø-	yám	4	mì	myám
5	ɖ- è-	lám	6	m- mè	mám
7	ø	nyám	8	ì-	byám
			10	pì	nyám

2.1.10 Noun classes and gender

2.1.10.1. Double and single class gender system

As seen in the above inventory, the features identifying different classes are noun prefixes. Not all classes have prefixes. Classes 3 and 7 for example are assigned a default zero prefix. The nouns of these classes are identified as belonging together by means of the agreement patterns they trigger on modifying elements. The same noun stem associated with a specific meaning forms a gender, which is made up of a singular and a plural class for double class gender. Mpumpuŋ has the following double class genders: 1/2, 1/4, 1/6, 3/6, 3/8, 3/10, 5/6, 7/6. There are however some nouns, though few in number which are always either singular or plural. Single class nouns are often found in classes 3, 5, 7, for singular, and in classes 2, 6 and 8 for the plural forms.

2.2. NOUN FORMATION PROCESSES

Derivation, reduplication and compounding are respectively examined in 2.2.1, 2.2.2 and 2.2.3., while section 2.2.4. examines the integration of loan words in Mpumpuŋ.

2.2.1. Derivation

The derivation of nouns from some verbs is achieved in Mpumpuŋ through the process of prefixation. Here, nouns are derived from action verbs by adding a nominal prefix to the verb stem. This nominal prefix, è, is equivalent to the infinitive prefix. Thus, the derived noun, which is a class 5 noun may also be considered as the infinitive form of the verb. Below are some examples:

(27)

a) bé: gwósél bwók "they have organized the feast"
they organized feast

b) ègwósél bwók "the organization of the feast"
organization feast

(28)

- a) bé: kómbél dél "they have arranged the village"
 they arranged village
- b) èkómbél dél "the arrangement of the village"
 arrangement village

(29)

- a) bé: pùbél bwǎn "they have consoled the children"
 they console children
- b) èpùbél bwǎn "the consolation of the children"
 consolation children

There are also cases of zero prefixation in the derivation of nouns from verbs. Here, the noun is derived from the verb stem in what could be considered as a direct conversion process. In the examples in 29, the verb stem is added its infinitive prefix so as to render the translation into English easier.

(30)

- èdô "to laugh" dô "laughter"
 èndzilà "to replace" ñdzilà "successor"
 ètsím "to cry" tsím "a cry"
 èkòs "to cough" kòs "cough"

2.2.2. Reduplication

Reduplication is used to form diminutives in Mpumpuṅ. In the examples below, we have a case of partial reduplication. Here, the reduplicated particle is made up of the initial consonant of the stem plus a high tone *í*. Below are some examples:

(31)

- a) pyèmb : "farm"
 pí-pyèmb : "Little farm"
- b) dònṅ : "bed"
 dí-dònṅ : "little bed"
- c) ñdzá : "house"
 ñdí-ñdzá : "little house"

These nouns, when used to refer to parts of the body or to humans have a pejorative meaning and may be interpreted as insults.

(32)

- a) nùp "mouth" ní-nùp "little mouth"
 b) lyéklé "teacher"
 lí-lyékle "little teacher"/"not fit to be one"

2.2.3. Compounding

Compounding is a process where by two or more words are combined to form a new noun. The essential feature of a compound seems, according to Meeussen (1967: 95), to be that it has two stems in what is otherwise treated as one word. Compound nouns in Mpumpuŋ are mostly made up of the structure noun + noun, though some noun + verb compound may however be found.

2.2.3.1. Noun + Noun compounds

a) Agentive nouns

Most common in the noun + noun compounds are agentive nouns, which literally mean "the man of...". Below are some examples

(33)

- | | | |
|-------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| mòt-
man | myén
madness | "a mad man" |
| mòt-
man | ókáj
selfishness | "selfish man" |
| mòt-
man | èlwòk
fishing | "a fisherman" |
| mòt-
man | zúm
building | "the builder" |
| mòt-
man | èbómsá
trade | "the trader" |
| mòt-
man | èbómsá
trade | ítà: "sheep-seller" |
| man | trade | shẹ |

ep

mòt- ébómsá itè: "cows seller"

man trade cows

b) Qualificative nouns

Animals name, parts of the body, different kinds of oils, names of trees and of fruits are also found among Noun + Noun compounds. In these examples, the second noun is a qualificative noun which, when collocated with the head noun yields an associative construction. Examples 33 to 36 illustrate these respectively..

(34)

̀̀kó- dyúk "wild board"
pig bush

zòk- mé- dyú "hippopotamus"
elephant AM. water

̀̀syés-zòk "young female elephant"
girl elephant

̀̀gbwándz -zòk "young male
elephant"
boy elephant

(35)

a) kél- pòmb "shin"

b) bónd lò "scalp "
head

c) pwòpwò lò "skull"
head

d) tít- mé- dzyé "gum"
meat AM. tooth

(36)

múl- mé- lénd "palm oil"
oil AM. palm

múl- mé- wón "groundnut oil"
oil AM. groundnut

múl- mé- tít "meat oil" (Fat)
oil AM. meat

d) múl mé míbáŋ "kernel oil"

(37)

lé-ébèl "cola tree"
tree cola

búm-tán "grain of beans"
grain
beans

tú-púsá "cob of corn"
cob corn

(38)

a) ndóm tâà "sheep"
male Goat

b) ndò kû: "roaster/cock"
m
male hen

2.2.3.2. Verb + Noun compound

(39)

ètàn kúl "difficulty/incapacity"
to pass strength

2.2.4. Loan words

Mpumpuŋ makes use of borrowing as a process to expand her lexicon. Borrowing takes place in many ways among which are second language learning, cultural influence, imitation of prestige patterns, etc. More interesting however is the integration of loan words into the source language. In Mpumpuŋ, many of these words are integrated into gender $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{3}{8}$. Below are examples from English, French and Ewondo.

2.2.4.1. Examples from English.

(40)

Gloss	English	Mpumpuŋ	
		Singular	Plural
Altar	oltə	àlàtà	bàlàtà`
Market	ma:kit	mákís	ìmákís
Blue	blu:	bùlùm	
Soldier	səuldzə	sódà	ìsódà
Doctor	dəktə	dótà	ìdótà
Coat	kəut	kót	mikót
Money	mʌni	móní	ìmóní
Government	gʌvənmənt	ŋgónà	mìŋgómná
Trouser	trauzə	tRǒŋsís	ìtRǒŋsís

2.2.4.2. Examples from French

(41)

Gloss	French	Mpumpuŋ	
		Singular	Plural
Avocat	avoka	àvòkà	bàvòkà
Jupe	yp	dzyúp	ìdzyúp
Rechaud	Re o	Rètsò	
Cahier	kaje	káyé	ìkáyé

2.2.4.3. Examples from Ewondo.

(42)

Gloss	Ewono	Mpumpuŋ
Taxes	tòyà	tòyà
luggage	mimbèkè	mimbèpòk

2.2.4.4. Loan adaptation

Loan words are generally subjected to phonological and morphological restructuring in order to conform to the structure of the target language. Some of these processes are discussed below:

2.2.4.4.1. Prothesis

Prothesis involves the introduction of new sounds at word-initial position.

This is mostly observed in plural forms as seen below:

(43)

English	Mpumpuṅ	Plural	Gloss
mi ən	mísón	ìmísón	mission
kəut	kót	mì-kót	coat

2.2.4.4.2. Epenthesis

Vowels may be inserted to break consonant clusters as in the examples below.

(44)

English	Mpumpuṅ	Gloss
flaʊə	fúláwá	flower
ɔltə	àlàtà:	altar
blu:	búlúm	blue

2.2.4.4.3. Re-interpretation of segments

When some sound segments attested in the source language are not found in the target language, the latter changes them into other sounds known to her. For example əu, ai and t become respectively ɔ, ε, and s as seen below.

(45)

English	Mpumpuṅ	Gloss
səuldzə	sódà	soldier
taim	témp	time
kit in	kísín	kitchen

2.3.SUMMARY

The Mpumpum noun is made up of a prefix plus a noun. The prefix bears a low tone which may be phonetically raised to become a mid-low tone when followed by a high tone. The Mpumpun noun stem may be classified in more than one class depending on the prefix. There are 9 noun classes in Mpumpun. These are arrived at on the basis of:

- ⇒ 1-Agreement
- ⇒ 2-Noun prefix + pairing system.

Both single and double class genders are attested in Mpumpun.

Derivation, reduplication, compounding and borrowing are devices used to expand the lexicon. Loan words are integrated in the class system of the language. This class system is of great significance in the relationship among constituents of the nominal construction as shall be seen in the following chapters.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SIMPLE NOMINAL CONSTRUCTION

This chapter examines the structure of the simple nominal construction. The simple nominal construction as used in this work refers to the nominal construction that is made up of a noun only, a pronominal element only, or a noun plus a determiner.

3.1. THE NOUN

The nominal group can be made up of a noun only. This noun may have a generic as well as a specific interpretation.

(1)

⇒ A simple noun: ndzá: "house"

⇒ A compound noun: m̀̀t myén "mad man"

These nouns can function as subject or object of verb, as well as object of preposition.

3.1.1. Single nouns functioning as subject

(2)

a) kúkú má è bú: nd̀̀mb

chief S.M too old

"the chief is too old"

b) m̀̀t è lwí: nè nám

man SM tns. + talk to me

"a man has spoken to me"

3.1.2. Single noun functioning as object of verb

(3)

- a) mí í sùm ndzá: "I have built a house"
I Asp build house

3.1.3. Single noun functioning as object of preposition

(4)

- a) mí tò mè pyémb "I go to the farm"
I go to farm

3.2. PRONOUNS

The word pronoun is traditionally defined as a word used in place of a noun expression. Unlike nouns, pronouns have no intrinsic descriptive content, and so are functors. Below we examine personal pronouns (subject, object of verb or preposition, focus pronouns and reflexive pronouns) in section 3.2.1; possessive pronouns in section 3.2.2; interrogative pronouns in section 3.2.3 and demonstrative pronouns in section 3.2.4 respectively.

3.2.1. Personal pronouns

Mpumpuŋ distinguishes among subject personal pronouns, object of verb personal pronouns, object of preposition personal pronouns, focus personal pronouns and reflexive pronouns. Below is a representative table.

Table V Personal pronouns

	Singular			Plural		
	1 st pers	2 nd pers	3 rd pers	1 st pers	2 nd pers	3 rd pers
Subject	mí	ú	é	í	bí	bé
Verb object	mé	ó	é	bíná	bén	bé
Prep. object	nám	nó	né	níná	nén	nó:
Focus pronoun	myám	wó	nyé	nyó	byó	bó:
Reflexive form	myá mòt é	wó mòt é	nyé mòt é	wá mòt é	wa'mòt é	wá mòt é

3.2.1.1. Subject personal pronouns

There are six forms corresponding to the three singular persons and the three plural persons. The first person plural, however, manifests two alternative forms, one standing for the inclusive and the other being the exclusive form.

3.2.1.1.1. First person singular

(5)

- a) mí rẹ́ Súm ndzá: "I am building the house"
 I Asp build house
- b) mí í Súm¹ ndzá: "I have built the house"
 I Asp build house

3.2.1.1.2. Second person singular

(6)

- a) ú rẹ́ dẹ́ ékú má "you are eating cassava"
 you Asp eat cassava
- b) ú á dẹ́ "you don't eat"
 you Neg eat

¹ Tense is marked by a tonal morpheme.

3.2.1.2. Object of verb personal pronouns

There is one form corresponding to each of the persons, except for the first person plural with both inclusive and exclusive forms.

3.2.1.2.1. First person singular

(11)

- a) bí í bè mé "you have seen me"
 you Asp see me
- b) bí ré dzú mé móní "you are giving me money"
 you Asp give me money

3.2.1.2.2. Second person singular

(12)

- a) mí ré bè ò "I am seeing you"
 I Asp see you
- b) bé ré dzù ó mèdyù "they are giving you water"
 they Asp give you water

3.2.1.2.3. Third person singular

(13)

- a) mí í dzù é móní "I have given him money"
 I Asp give him money
- b) mí ré dzù é mèdyù "I have given him water"
 I Asp give him water

3.2.1.2.4. First person plural

There is a difference between the inclusive and the exclusive form. Unlike in the subject form with a stranded inclusive marker is not stranded from the pronoun.

(14)

- a) bé ré bè bíná "they are seeing us"
 they Asp see us

- b) é ré bè kà-bíná "she is seeing us"
 she Asp see incl us

The first person plural, unlike other verb object personal pronouns, manifests case distinction as can be observed from the difference between 14b and 14c below:

- c) ú ré dzù bés vég "you are giving us the bag"
 you Asp give us bag

"Us" translated in 14b as *bíná* (objective). But it is rendered as *bés* in 16c. This example leads us to the observation that a verb which has another argument in addition to its internal (object of verb) and external (subject) arguments may assign a case other than objective and subjective. But whether the case of *bés* is assigned by the verb *dzù* "give" or by some other element cannot be examined within the scope of this study. We just want to draw attention to the fact that *bés* is different from *bíná* in terms of case, though both seem to be objects of verb.

3.2.1.2.5. Second person plural

Unlike for the first person plural, there is no case distinction arising with verbs like *dzù*. Here *bén* "you" is used for both primary and secondary internal arguments. Below are some illustrations:

(15)

- a) é é dzù bén móní "he has given you money"
 he Asp give you money
- b) é ré bè bén "he is seeing you"
 he Asp see you
- c) lyéklé é ré dzò bén "the teacher is calling you"
 teacher he Asp call you

3.2.1.2.6. Third person plural

(16)

- a) sáŋg é ré dzù bé móní "the father is giving them money"
 father he Asp give them money

- b) mí í b̀e bé "I have seen them"
 I Asp see them

Table VII: Object personal pronouns

Person	Singular	Plural
1	mé	bíná (excl) kà-bíná (incl)
		bés (dative case)
2	ó	bén
3	é	bé

3.2.1.3. Personal pronouns object of preposition

The personal pronoun functioning as complement of a preposition has a form different from that of object or subject of verb personal pronouns. Here the pronoun is separated from the verb by a preposition as illustrated below.

3.2.1.3.1. First person singular

(17)

- á: lwí è nám "she does not talk to me"
 she + neg. Talk + tns to me

There is a contracted form in 17, that is á: which results from the combination of é, (she) and á, (negative particle).

3.2.1.3.2. Second person singular

(18)

- mí í lwí è nô "I have spoken to you"
 I Asp spoken to you

3.2.1.3.3. Third person singular

(19)

- a) ú ú lwí è né "you have spoken to him"
 you + Asp speak to him
- b) mí í lwí è né "I have spoken to him"
 I + Asp speak to him

3.2.1.3.4. First person plural

(20)

a) mǎmá é ré lwí è níná "mama is speaking to us"
 mama she Asp speak to us

b) mǎmá á: rá lwí tɛ̀l è níná
 mama S.M.+neg Asp speak no longer to us

"mama is no longer speaking to us"

3.2.1.3.5. Second person plural

(21)

a) mí ré lwí è nén "I am speaking to you"
 I Asp speak to you

b) nǎng wíná á: rá lwí è nén
 mother our S.M.+neg Asp speak to you

"our mother is not speaking to you"

3.2.1.3.6. Third person plural

(22)

é lwí é nɔ́ "she speaks to them"
 she speak + tns to them

Table VIII Object of preposition personal pronouns

Person	Singular	Plural
1	nám	bíná (excl)
		ká-bíná (incl)
2	nó	nén
3	né	nó:

3.2.1.4. Focus pronouns

It is important to state that 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. In the present discussion, we leave aside cases where the pronoun keeps its form, focusing on the changed form. Like the subject personal pronoun, the focus pronoun has one form corresponding to each person.

3.2.1.4.1. First person singular

(23)

a) í myám bé bè "they have seen me"

It's me they see + tns

b) í myám lwĩ é nõ "I am the one who is speaking to you"

It's me speak + tns to you

The focus pronoun, *myám*, is bi-morphemic, made up of the subject personal pronoun, *mí*, plus the person morpheme of the possessive, *ám*, whose combination gives $mí + ám = myám$

3.2.1.4.2. Second person singular

(24)

í wó bé é bè "it's you they have seen"

It's you They Asp see

b) í wò lwĩ ne né
It's you speak + tns with him

"it's you who speak with him"

As for the first person, the subject and complement of the verb have the same form *wó* made of the subject personal pronoun *ú*, plus the person morpheme of the possessive *ó* which, after a devocalisation process, gives the form *wó*.

3.2.1.4.3. Third person singular

(25)

a) í né nyé ní lwĩ "we speak with him"

It's to him we speak + tns

- b) í nyé lwĩ "he speaks"
It's him speak + tns

3.2.3.4.3. First person plural

(26)

- a) be bè kà bíná "they see us and no one else"
they see + tns incl.. us

- b) í nyó lwĩ kà "we speak"
it's us speak + tns incl

3.2.3.4.4. Second person plural

(27)

- a) í byó lwĩ "you speak"
it's you speak + tns

3.2.3.4.5. Third person plural

(28)

- a) í bó: lwĩ "they speak"
it's they speak

- b) í bé bé bè "they see them"
it's them they see + tns

Unlike the first two singular forms, the 3rd person singular and the three plural forms are not made up of the subject personal pronoun plus the possessive. They have the form *ó* in common. This form is preceded by *ní*, *bí*, and *bó* for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd person plural respectively. The 3rd person singular on its own is made up of *ní* plus *é* (subject pronoun).

Table IX Focus pronouns

Persons	Singular	Plural
1	myám	nyó
2	wó	byó
3	nyé	bó:

3.2.1.5. Reflexive pronouns

Reflexive pronouns are not attested in Mpumpuŋ. Verbs like *to bathe*, which take a reflexive pronoun in English and French do not take one in Mpumpuŋ. For the idea of reflexivity to be expressed, there is a need for one to add "mòt é" (this man) which is then preceded by some pronominal element varying from one person to the other. Below are some examples.

(29)

- a) mí ré dzwà "I am bathing"
I Asp wash
- b) mí ré dzwà myá mòt é "I am bathing myself"
I Asp wash my man this

(30)

- a) ú ré dzwàk "you are looking"
you Asp look
- b) ú ré dzwàk wó mòt é "you are looking at yourself"
you Asp look you man this

(31)

- a) é ré dà "she is lying down"
she Asp lie down
- b) é ré dà nyé mòt é "she is lying down herself"
she Asp lie down her man this

Table X Reflexive pronouns

Persons	Singular	Plural
1	myá mòt é	wá mòt é
2	wó mòt é	wá mòt é
3	nyé mòt é	wá mòt é

3.2.2. Possessive pronouns

Mpumpuŋ has two types of possessive forms. The possessive determiner and the possessive pronoun. Possessive determiners, which cannot stand alone, but must always accompany the noun, will be discussed in the modified nominal construction in chapter 4. Possessive pronouns on their own, can stand all alone and function as full nominal constructions. Below are some examples.

(32)

- a) bé m̀ndzá: myám "these are my houses"
 these are houses mine
- b) jíké á bé myám "those one are not mine"
 those one neg. be mine
- c) ìpyèmb bíné bí byó "those farms are yours"
 farms those are yours
- d) ìpyémb bíné bí byám "those farms are my mine"
 farms those are mine

The possessive pronoun agrees in class/number with the noun, and has the same morphemes (person morpheme plus gender/class morpheme) as the possessive adjective, the only difference being that the pronoun can stand alone as a single full noun, while the adjective cannot.

Table XI Possessive pronouns

Class	Prefix	Singular			Plural			
		Mine	Yours	His	Ours	Yours	Theirs	
1	mù	wám	wó	wé	wíná	wén	wó:	
	à							
	N							
2	σ-							
	bù-							
	bà-	bám	bó	bé	bíná	bén	bó:	
3	ò							
	σ	yám	yó	yé	yíná	yén	yó:	
	N							
4	mì-	myám	myó	myé	míná	myén	myó:	
	5							
	ɗ-							
6	è-	lám	ló	lé	líná	lén	ló:	
	m-							
	mè-	mám	mó	mé	míná	mén	mó:	
7	σ	nyám	nyó	nyá	níná	nén	nó:	
	8	ì	byám	byó	byé	bíná	byén	byó:
		10	pì	nyám	nyó	nyé	níná	nén

3.2.3. Interrogative pronouns

Interrogative words are used in constructions or phrases to ask information about the identity, quality or quantity of an element. But they can be used in a pronominal fashion, standing alone and functioning as a noun phrase. Below are some examples.

(33)

- a) dzǒ bwǎn "call the children"
call children
- b) bǒ bwǎn "which children?"
which children
- c) bǒ "which ones?"
which

Interrogative pronouns are bimorphemic, that is, they are made up of two morphemes. The stem morpheme, which is the interrogative particle, is preceded by the class/number morpheme. The latter agrees in class and number with the head noun. From the illustrations below, we observe that while the class/number morpheme varies according to the class and number of the modified noun, the interrogative particle *ó* remains constant.

(34)

- a) wó mwǎn "which child?"
 (1) which² child
- b) wô "which ones?"
 which

(35)

- a) yó bèmb "which spoon?"
 (3) which spoon
- b) yô "which ones?"
 which

(36)

- a) myó mìnǵóp "which shoes?"
 (4) which (4) shoes
- b) myô "which ones?"
 (4) which

(37)

- c) ló díś "which eye?"
 (5) which (5) eye
- b) lô "which one?"
 (5) which

(38)

- a) mó mépèmb "which spoons?"
 (6) which (6) spoons
- b) mô "which ones?"

² The numbers in parenthesis are class number.

(6) which

(39)

a) nyó zyòŋ "which ax?"
(7) which (7) ax

b) nyó "which one?"
(7) which

(40)

a) byó ìpòndò "which traps?"
(8) which (8) traps

b) byó "which one?"
(8) which

c) nyó pyín "which fingers?"
(10) which (10) beds

d) nyó "which one?"
(10) which

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

(41)

a) myó mìkánd mínyè "which clothes are torn?"
(6) which (6) clothes (6) torn

b) myó mínyè "which ones are torn?"
(6) which torn

(42)

a) yó bèmb bús "which spoon is broken?"
(3) which (3) spoon broken

a) yó bús "which one is broken?"
(3) which broken

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

(43)

- a) ú nè bwǎn ótsúŋ "how many children do you have?"
 you have children how many
- b) ótsúŋ dí wá "how many are here?"
 how many are here

Table XII Interrogative pronouns

Class	Class pref	Interrogative	Class	Class pref.	Interrogative
1	mù-	wô	2	bù-	
	à-			bà-	bô
	Ñ			ò	
	ø-				
3	ø-	yô	4	mì-	myô
	Ñ				
5	d-	lô	6	m-	mô
	è-			mè-	
7	ø	nyô	8	ì-	býô
			10	pì-	nyô

3.2.4. Demonstrative pronouns

In Mpumpuŋ there are two forms of demonstrative adjectives. The first form designates something or somebody close to the speaker, while the second designates what is far from the speaker. The demonstrative pronoun is derived from the near speaker demonstrative adjective. This demonstrative form, which can be used alone, has exactly the same form as the demonstrative adjective, with the exception that the final consonant K is well articulated in the pronoun form, while it is tending to be left aside when the demonstrative adjective is uttered. In the examples that follow, the demonstrative is used in its adjectival form in (a), while it is pronominalised in (b).

(44)

- a) bwǎn bá "these children"
 children these

b) bák "these ones"
children

(45)

a) ěkúmã lí "this cassava"
(5) cassava (5)

b) lík "this one"
(5) this one

(46)

a) měkúmã má "these cassava"
(5) cassava these

b) mák "these ones"
these

(47)

a) pòndò ěk "this trap"
trap this

b) ěk "this one"
this

(48)

a) ìpòndò bík "these traps"
traps these

b) bík "these ones"
these

Table XIII Demonstrative pronoun

Class	Prefix	Dem. pronoun	Class	Prefix	Dem. pronoun
1	mù-		2	bù-	
	à-			bà--	bák
	Ñ-	ók		ò	
	ø-				
3	ø-		4	mì-	mík
	Ñ	ék			
5	d-	lík	6	m-	mák
	è-			mè	
7	ø	nyík	8	ì-	bík
			10	pì-	nyík

3.3. NOUN + DETERMINER

The Oxford advanced learner's Dictionary of current English defines the determiner as a word that determines or limits the noun that follows. According to Radford (1999), determiners, which can be used either pronominally (i.e. in front of a noun), or pronominally (on their own), are typically used to modify a noun, but have no descriptive content on their own. In this section, we discuss noun plus demonstrative in 3.3.1., while noun plus definite article are discussed in 3.3.2.

3.3.1. Noun + Demonstrative

Two types of demonstrative are attested in Mpumpuŋ. The near speaker demonstrative and a second demonstrative form designating that which is far from the speaker. The demonstrative is bimorphemic, that is, made up of two morphemes: A constant consonant-*K* preceded by the varying class/number morpheme. The stem consonant-*K* is usually not pronounced and many young native speakers seem unaware of it. One may not say if it ever existed in the far

from speaker demonstrative form, as it is never articulated when this form is used, even in the speech of quite elderly people. In the examples below, (a) illustrates near speaker demonstrative, while (b) illustrates far from the speaker demonstrative.

(49)

a) mwǎn ók "this child"
 (1)child (1)this (close to the speaker)

b) mwǎn ónó: "that child"
 (1)child (1)that (far from the speaker)

(50)

a) bwǎn bá "these children"
 (2)children (2)these (close to the speaker)

b) bwǎn bíné: "those children"
 (2)children (2)those (far from the speaker)

(51)

a) bèm̄b ék "this spoon"
 (3)spoon (3)this (close to the speaker)

b) bèm̄b íné: "this spoon"
 (3)spoon (3)that (far from the speaker)

(52)

a) m̄ndzá: m̄k "these houses"
 (4)houses (4)those (close to the speaker)

b) m̄ndzá: m̄né: "those houses"
 (4)houses (4)those (far from the speaker)

(53)

a) èkúmà lík "this cassava"
 (5)cassava (5)this (close to the speaker)

b) èkúmá líné: "that cassava"
 (5)cassava (5)that (far from the speaker)

(54)

a) m̄pèm̄b m̄k, "that spoon"

From the examples presented in 49 to 57, we have a linear structure with the noun at the initial position. The demonstrative determiner is thus post-posed to the noun.

3.3.2. Noun + Def. Article

The element we here refer to as the definite article is used to refer to an element already mentioned, especially when telling a story. This element is however not a relativiser, but a referential element that may be likened to Carstens (1991) aforementioned demonstrative. The constructions below illustrate definite articles in use.

(58)

- a) mǐ í bè m̀òt "I saw a man"
I+ Asp see + tns -man
- b) m̀òt ték é né ñgbwándz "the man has a boy"
man the he has boy
- c) ñgbwándz ték é dǐ bè kànd
boy the he is at town
"the boy lives in the town"

If the story continues, one will get phrases like the following.

- d) kúkúmá ték "the chief in question"
(3) chief the
- e) dél é ték "the village in question"
(5) villages A M the
- f) b̀wá ó ték "the women aforementioned"
(2) women (2)A M the
- g) m̀syé mé ték "the girls aforementioned"
(6) girls (6)A M the
- h) m̀kúkúmá mǐ ték "the chiefs in question"
(4) chief (4)AM the

As can be observed from the examples above, *ték* remains constant and may agree with the noun it follows via an associative marker which agrees in class and number with the noun as seen in the examples above.

3.3.3. A Demonstrative or a definite article slot ?

Like the demonstrative, the definite article is postposed to the noun it determines. Both have a constant element which agrees with the noun through a noun class prefix which clings to them as seen below.

(59)

	Dem.	Def Art
Class 4	mík	míték
Class 2	ók	óték
Class 6	mák	méték

Though this similarity may not go very far, the most interesting in the use of these two elements is that they never co-occur. Whenever *ték* is present, the demonstrative is absent and vice-versa. This may be checked through the recurrent translation of phrases containing both a demonstrative and a definite article, rendered always with only one of these.

(60)

- a) mòt ték "the man"
man the
- b) mòt ók "this man"
man this
- *c) mòt ók ték "the man in question"
man this the
- d) kúkúamá dél lík "the chief of this village"
chief village this
- e) kúkúamá dél ték "the chief of (the) village"
chief village the
- * f) kúkúamá dél lík ték "the chief of the village in question"

chief village this the

We observe from the data above that *ték* and the demonstrative are mutually exclusive. The possessive adjective on the contrary can co-occur with the demonstrative determiner as in 61a.61b hows the possessive co-occurring with the definite article as well. We see that 61ad b are grammatical unlike 60c and f.

(61)

a) *dél lé lí* "that village of his"
village his that

b) *dél lé ték* "his village in question"
village his the

From all the facts given above, we argue that *ték* and the demonstrative determiner belong to the same syntactic category, but occur in different contexts and in different forms. Carsterns(1991) discusses a subcategory of demonstrative determiners referred to as the "aforementioned demonstrative". We may liken *ték* to this element. We thus refer to *ték* as the narrative or the aforementioned demonstrative. It therefore occupies the same slot with other demonstrative forms discussed in 3.3.1., wherefore their mutual exclusiveness.

3.4. SUMMARY

The simple nominal construction in Mpumpuŋ may be made up of a noun alone, a pronoun alone or a noun plus a determiner. The single noun may function as subject or object of verb, or as object of preposition. Possessive, interrogative and demonstrative pronouns agree in class and number with the noun they replace. Like personal pronouns, possessive pronouns show person distinction and have a constant element for each of the three singular and plural persons. The simple nominal construction may also be made of a noun plus a determiner. The noun always occurs at phrase initial position, while the determiner follows. The agreement features on the determiner are determined by the class and number of the preceding noun.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE MODIFIED NOMINAL CONSTRUCTION

In this chapter, we will discuss the structure of nominals modified by possessives, other nouns, adjectives and quantifiers in Mpumpuṅ. We will be discussing the order of modifiers relative to the head noun, the variation in this distribution and the interpretation associated with these variations in word order.

4.1. THE POSSESSIVE NOMINAL CONSTRUCTION

There are possessive forms corresponding to each of the three singular and plural persons; the exception being the first person plural, which has two possessive forms meaning "both of us" for the first, and "all of us" for the second. Below are illustrations.

(1)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>a) dís lám
 (5) eye (5) my
 "my eye"</p> | <p>mís mám
 (6)eyes (6) my
 "my eyes"</p> |
| <p>b) dís ló
 (5) eye (5) your
 "your eye"</p> | <p>mís mó
 (6) eyes (6) your
 "your eyes"</p> |
| <p>c) dís lé
 (5) eye (5) his
 "his eye"</p> | <p>mís mé
 (6)eyes (6) his
 "his eyes"</p> |
| <p>d) dís lé
 (5) eye (5) our
 "our eye"</p> | <p>mís mé
 (6)eyes (6) our
 "our eyes"</p> |

- e) dís líná mís míná
 eye our(excl) eyes) our(excl)
 "our eye" "our eyes"
- f) dís lén mís mém
 eye your eyes your
 "your eye" "your eyes"
- g) dís: ló mís mó:
 eye their eyes their
 "their eye" "their eyes"

From the examples above, the possessive is made up of a stem (person morpheme which is a high tone vowel) and the concord morpheme (a consonant). This is illustrated in the following columns.

(2)

	Noun	Concord	Stem	Noun	Concord	Stem
1 st pers sing.	dís	l	ám	mís	m-	ám
2 nd pers sing.	dís	l	ó	mís	m-	ó
3 rd pers sing.	dís	l	é	mís	m-	é
1 st pers pl.	dís	l	íná	mís	m-	íná
2 nd pers. pl.	dís	l	én	mís	m-	én
3 rd pers. pl.	dís	l	ó:	mís	m-	ó:

The stem (person morpheme) is different but constant for each person. On the other hand, the concord morpheme which is an agreement morpheme, varies with the class and number of the modified noun.

4.1.1. Linear structure and the possessive in focus position.

In every day normal speech, the possessive stands in a position post-posed to the modified noun. This suggests the following linear structure of the possessive nominal construction: Noun + possessive determiner.

In focus constructions however, the possessive always precedes the modified noun as in the examples below.

(3)

- a) bè wám mwǎn "this is my own child"
this my child
- b) wám mù-mó: "this woman of mine"
my woman-this
- c) yám nòn é "my own bird"
my bird-this
- d) lám èkúmà lík "my own cassava"
this cassava this

From the examples in 3, one observes a different linear structure, which may lead us to say that there are two separate structural representations for the possessive nominal construction. This difference in linear order however corresponds to a difference in interpretation. There is therefore a need for the syntax to account for and reflect this difference. This will be tackled in chapter 5. For now we focus on the forms of the various possessive determiners.

Table XV Possessive determiners

Class	Prefix	Singular			Plural		
		Mine	Yours	His	Ours	Yours	Theirs
	mù-						
1	à-	wám	wó	wé	wíná	wén	wó:
	Ñ-						
	ø-						
	bù-						
2	bà-	bám	bó	bé	bíná	bén	bó:
	ò-						
3	Ñ						
	σ	yám	yó	jé	yíná	yén	yó:
4	mì-	myá m	myó	myé	mín á	myén	myó:
5	d-						
	ε-	lám	ló	lé	líná	lén	ló:
6	m-						
	mè-	mám	mó	mé	mín á	mén	mó:
7	σ	nyám	nyó	nyé	níná	nyén	nyó:
8	ì	byám	byó	byé	bíná	byén	byó:
10	pì	nyám	nyó	nyé	níná	nyén	nyó:

4.2. THE ASSOCIATIVE CONSTRUCTION

A noun can be modified by another noun. Such constructions are often referred to as associative constructions. The associative construction can express a relation of possession, material make-up, content, purpose, origin, etc. Below are some examples.

4.2.1. Types of associative construction.

4.2.1.1. Content

(4)

iták médyú "a bottle of water"
bottle water

4.2.1.2. Material make-up

(5)

a) syá mí dzàṅ "a bamboo chair"
chair AM bamboo

b) dōṅ mí dzàṅ "a bamboo bed"
bed AM bamboo

4.2.1.3. Origin

(6)

a) sú twónd "a fish from the sea"
fish sea

b) osú ó twónd "fishes from the sea"
fishes AM sea

c) sú máḡ "a fish from the ocean"
fish ocean

d) ósú ó máḡ "fishes from the ocean"
fishes AM ocean

4.2.1.4. Purpose

(7)

a) mìgòp mí pyèmb "shoes for the farm"
shoes AM farm

a) dì òdzá: sùkúl "a school bench"
bench house school

4.2.1.5. Possession

(8)

- a) myàndz mí kúkúmá "the chief's bag"
 bag A.M. chief
- b) kó mí ngono "the foot of Ngono"
 foot A.M ngono

4.2.2. The associative marker

There is an associative marker that links the first noun to the second. This associative marker may fall into one of three categories. In the first category, the shape of the associative marker is determined by the class of the head noun. In the second, the associative marker is segmentally null even when N1 has a visible prefix. In the last category, the form of the associative marker is segmentally marked, but its shape is not determined by the class of the head noun. The three situations are subsequently discussed in the following paragraphs.

4.2.2.1. Associative marker identical to N1 prefix.

This happens when the head noun is from classes 2, 4, 5, 6, and 8.

(9)

- a) bwǎn ó sǎng "the children of the father"
 (2) children (2) AM (1) father
- b) mǐndzá: mí sǎng "the houses of the father"
 (4) houses (4) AM (1) father
- c) dí:s é sǎng "the eye of the father"
 (5) eye (5) AM (1) father
- d) mís mé sǎng "the eyes of the father"
 (6) eyes (6) AM (1) father
- e) ìpòndò í sǎng "the traps of the father"
 (8) traps (8) AM (1) father

4.2.2.2. Segmentally null Associative marker

While nouns of classes 2, 4, 5, 6, and 8 always take a segmental associative marker, nouns of classes 1, 3, 7 and 10 do not. Classes 3 and 7 have zero prefix, while nouns in classes 1 and 10 have visible prefixes as illustrated below.

(10)

- a) àlúlà sǎng "the needle of the father"
 (1) needle (1) father
- b) mù-án sǎng "the child of the father"
 (1) child (1) father
- c) pì-ín sǎng "the fingers of the father"
 (10) finger (1) father
- d) pì-òh sǎng "the beds of the father"
 (10) beds (1) father

Faced with the absence of a segmental associative marker in some Bafut noun of noun expressions, Ambe (1989:167) postulates that the native speaker intuitively senses the link between N1 and N2 despite the absence of the AM. Nkemnji (1995: 35) goes further to propose that the associative marker is always marked by a tonal morpheme, whether the segmental marker is present or not. Drawing inspiration from this, we analyzed Mpumpuŋ as being marked only tonally for classes 1, 3, 7 and 10; while classes 2, 4, 5, 6 and 8 are marked both segmentally and suprasegmentally

The associative marker for class 1 and class 3 is a high tone. This we deduce from the observation of the data below.

(11)

- a) àlámbà pepper
- b) àlwól Ant
- c) àlámbǎ àlwól" The pepper of the ant"
- d) sá "plum"
 ìlyéklè teacher

d) *sá ílyéklè* "The plum of the teachers"

In citation form, *álámhá* has a final vowel with a low tone. For it to bear a contour tone in the construction *àlàmbǎ ílèklè* and in *àlàmbǎ àlwól*, there needs to be a floating high tone in its surroundings. In example (d), we propose that the floating high tone is still present, but fuses with the high tone on *sá* "plum", wherefore the surface *sá ílèklè*. Example c' and d' lead us to say that the A M for class 1 and class 3 is a high tone. Having observed that all segmental associative marker also bear a high tone (class 2, 4, 5, 6, and 8), we deduce that class 7 and 10 also have a high tone for associative marker.

4.2.2.3. The associative marker differs from N1 Prefix

In our discussion of section 4.1.2.1, we presented nouns of classes 2, 4, 6 and 8 as generating associative markers of an identical class when they happen to be head nouns. We nevertheless come across situations where this associative marker is followed by another one. This second associative marker is always of class 4. It always occurs before the noun *kúkúmá* "chief". Below are some illustrations:

(12)

- a) *Ndzá: mí Kúkúmá* "the house of the chief"
 (1) house (4) AM (1) chief
- b) *bwǎn ó mí kúkúmá* "the children of the chief"
 (2) (2)AM (4) AM (1) chief
- c) *ègbès é mí Kúkúmá* "the door of the chief"
 (5) door (5)AM (4) AM chief
- d) *òsáng ó mí kúkúmá* "the fathers of the chief"
 (2)fathers (2)AM (4) AM (1) chief

The expected associative marker in example (b), (c) and (e), are *ó*, *é*, *ó* respectively. One may attribute the *mí* preceding them to a sociological fact mirroring through language, and according to which one may not attribute something to the chief directly. This may be further confirmed by the example in

13, where kúkúmá being N1, generates an associative marker agreeing in number and class not with N2, but with N1 as should be expected.

(13)

- a) kúkúmá dél "The chief of the village
(1) chief (5) village
- b) míkúkúmá mí mél "The chiefs of villages
(4) chief (4)AM (6) villages

There are however some situations where mí (AM) occurs alone and, which is most striking, after nouns of class one which normally do not generate segmental associative markers. This is illustrated in 14 below.

(14)

- a) tít ñkó "pork/(pig's meat)"
(1) meat (1) pig
- b) tít mí ñkó "the meat of the pig"
(1) meat (4) AM (1) pig
- c) tít pyé "dog's meat"
(1) meat (1) dog
- d) tít mí pyé "the meat of the dog"
(1) meat (4) AM (1) dog

Table XVI: Associative markers

Class	Prefix	Ass m	Class	Prefix	Ass m
1	a) mù-			a) bù-	
	b) à-	H	2	b) bà-	ó
	c) N-				
	d) ø			c) ò-	
3	ø	H	4	mì-	mí
5	è-			m-	mé
	d-	é	6	mè-	
7	ø	H	8	ì-	í
			10	Pì-	H

4.3. NOMINAL CONSTRUCTIONS MODIFIED BY ADJECTIVES

Adjectives are usually termed attributive or predicative, depending on their use. According to Radford (1997), attributive adjectives are used to modify a following noun expression, and contrast with predicative adjectives which are linked to the noun they modify by a copular verb. In Mpumpuṅ, adjectives are used both predicatively and attributively. Unlike predicative adjectives which have a unique and regular pattern, attributive adjectives present a varying and very rich pattern. In section 4.3.1. we discuss predicative adjectives, and attributive adjectives follow in section 4.3.2.

4.3.1. Predicative adjectives

Two major elements normally separate the head noun from the predicative adjective. These are the copular verb preceded by the subject marker. The head noun may however be followed by an immediate determiner: here a demonstrative or a possessive. The predicative adjective, unlike many other modifiers, does not agree with the noun it modifies. Examples 15 and 16 are illustrations of predicative adjectives in use.

(15)

a) pwòṅ nyé ní rí dzyùnd "her hair are black"
hair her they be black

b) pwòṅ nyé ní rí lyèl "her hair are hard"
hair her the be hard

(16)

a) mùmá ́ é rí byò "this woman is wicked"
woman this SM be wicked

b) bùwá bá bé rí byò "these women are wicked"
women these SM be wicked

4.3.2. Attributive Adjectives

As illustrated in 17 and 18 below, attributive adjectives may be pre- or post-posed to the noun they modify.

(17)

- a) pòndò ályèlyèl "a solid trap"
trap solid
- b) ipòndò byályèlyèl "solid traps"
trap Agr solid
- c) òdzá: áfúfúb "a clean house"
house clean
- d) míndzá: myáfúfúb "clean houses"
houses Agr. clean

(18)

- a) ból kwánd "rotten plantain"
rotten plantain
- b) ìból by-ìkwánd "rotten plantains"
rotten Agr plantains
- c) yáṅá sú "fried fish"
fried fish
- d) míyáṅá my-ósú "fried fishes"
fried Agr fishes

The adjectives in 17 agree in class and number with the preceding noun. In 18, the pre-posed adjective has a class prefix and the agreement marker which links the noun to the adjective is triggered by the pre-posed adjective. Examples like these shall be further examined in section 4.3.2.4. under nominal adjectives.

4.3.2.1. Types of adjectives

Tamanji (2000) groups adjectives into three broad categories:

- ⇒ pure adjectives which are very limited, if not rare,
- ⇒ verbal adjectives which are derived from verbs,
- ⇒ and nominal adjectives which are pure nouns assuming the evaluative function of adjective via inheritance.

Nkemnji (1995:135) terms pure adjectives "those lexical items that are specified in the lexicon as belonging to the category of adjectives". They semantically bear colour and size meaning. This classification does not necessarily correspond to the facts encountered in Mpumpuṅ. In our data, colour adjectives for instance are derived from verbs like verbal adjectives. Example 19 below shows some colour adjectives stemming from verbs.

(19)

- a) ètwàm "to redden" átwámtwám "red"
- b) èdzyùndèl "to make black" ádzyúndzyúnd "black"
- c) èpùmèl "to whiten" ápúpúm "white"

The facts in example 19 do not enable us to consider colour adjectives in Mpumpuṅ as pure adjectives. We will instead classify them among derived adjectives. Also, the constituent morphemes of colour and size adjectives, as well as their distribution within the nominal group is similar to that of derived adjectives. The table below compares the morphology of colour/size adjectives with that of other derived adjectives.

(20)

Colour/size adjectives			Derived adjectives		
Prefixe	Reduplicated stem	Gloss	Prefixe	Reduplicated stem	Gloss
á	dzyúdzýúnd	"black"	á	ljéljél	"hard"
á	twátwám	"red"	á	tsátsák	"weak"
á	kíkí	"small"	á	dídíl	"heavy stick"
á	nínín	"big"			
á	bwóbwòk	"large"			

In view of these facts, colour and size adjectives are classified as verbal adjectives in our discussion of adjectives in Mpumpuŋ.

4.3.2.2. Pure adjectives

So far, we have found only one pure adjective in Mpumpuŋ. It expresses quality. It is always pre-posed to the noun it modifies, and does not agree with it.

(21)

- a) váŋ múl "good oil"
good oil
- b) váŋ mèmúl "good quality oils"
good oils
- c) váŋ zíŋgí "nice dress"
nice dress
- d) váŋ ìzíŋgí "nice dresses"
nice dresses

4.3.2.3. Verbal adjectives

Verbal adjectives in Mpumpuŋ express size, colour, quality, etc. They are mostly used as post-modifiers of the noun. But they are sometimes also used as pre-modifiers. In this second case, they bear a nominal prefix and trigger agreement on the noun as nominal adjectives do. Because of this similarity in behavior, the pre-modifying verbal adjectives will be discussed alongside nominal

adjectives in section 4.3.2.4.. For the moment, let us consider those which post-modify the noun.

The verbal adjectives that post-modify the noun all agree with the noun in class and number as illustrated below.

(22)

- a) ká ábwóbwòk "a large leaf"
leaf large
- b) ìká by-ábwóbwòk "large leaves"
leaves Agr large
- c) vég ádzyúdzýúnd "a black bag"
bag black
- c) mívég my- "black bags"
ádzyúdzýúnd
bag Agr black

In these examples, agreement on the adjective is triggered by the pre-posed noun.

4.3.2.4. Nominal Adjectives

Nominal adjectives behave like nouns in that they bear an inherent class prefix. They are found in classes 1 and 3 for the singular forms, and in classes 2, 4 and 8 for the plural forms. Nominal adjectives are always pre-posed to the noun they modify, and the agreement morpheme between the noun and the pre-posed adjective is a concordial affix of the same class with the prefix of the adjective. Below are illustrations.

(23)

- a) ìbyólá í-bùwá bák "these wicked women"
wicked women these
- b) òtómá ó-búwá óná "four old women"
old women four

- c) m̀iyáńá mí-òsú "fried fishes"
 fried fishes

Examples a) and b) show that while the nominal adjective triggers agreement on the noun it modifies, this agreement pattern does not extend to numerals and demonstratives.

In the Nweh examples discussed by Tamanji (2002), nominal adjectives extend their agreement patterns beyond the modified noun to determiners that follow. But in Mpumpuń, nominal adjectives do not trigger agreement on determiners. Even in constructions with the quantifier all, the latter agrees with the noun it quantifies and not with the adjectives as can be seen below.

(24)

- a) m̀indómb my- òńáńg b́ám b́ák
 (4)old (4)Agr (2)mothers (2)my (2)these
 "these old mothers of mine"

- b) m̀indómb my- òńáńg b́ám b́ééz
 (4) old (4)Agr (2)mothers (2)my (2)all
 "all my old mothers"

Noun expressions modified by nominal adjectives have a structure identical to that of noun of noun constructions. There is however a difference in these two constructions as regard headedness. In associative constructions, the head noun stands at initial position, while the modifiers follow. In the adjectival construction, the head noun stands at final position and is preceded by its modifier. The linear structure for nominal constructions modified by nominal adjectives is thus: Adjective + Noun.

4.4. NOUNS MODIFIED BY QUANTIFIERS AND NUMERALS

In this section, we discuss noun expressions modified by both numeral and non-numeral quantifiers. We also look at their position relative to the noun they modify.

4.4.1. Nominals modified by non-numeral quantifiers

Radford (1997) defines the quantifier as a type of determiner used to denote quantity. There are eight non-numeral quantifiers in Mpumpuŋ. They are listed in 25 below:

(25)

- | | | |
|-------|--------|--------------|
| i. | kát | "no one" |
| ii. | dákè | "every" |
| iii. | bél | "some" |
| iv. | tû:n | "many, much" |
| v. | tá:bù | "not many" |
| vi. | ébùbù | "too many" |
| vii. | bíbyók | "few" |
| viii. | éz | "all" |

4.4.1.1. Pre-posed non-numeral quantifiers

dákè, bél, kát, and tû:n are always pre-posed to the noun, and never agree with the quantified noun. Below are illustrations.

(26)

- a) *dákè mwǎn* "every child"
 every child

- *b) *dákè bwǎn* "every children"
 every children

dákè is used only with singular nouns.

(27)

- a) *kát mwǎn* "no child"

no child

- *b) kát bwǎn "no children"
no children

kát is used only with singular nouns.

(28)

- a) bél bôt "some people"
some people

- *b) bél môt "some man"
some man

bél is used only with plural nouns.

(29)

- a) tû:n bwǎn "many children"
many children

- *b) tû:n mwǎn "many child"
many child

tû:n is only used with plural nouns.

4.4.1.2. Post-posed quantifiers

ébùbù, *tá:bù*, and *éz* are always post-posed to the noun they quantify.

ébùbù

In its non reduplicated form, *bù* is also used as an adverb expressing degree. *ébùbù* expresses the idea of a crowd, uncountable, exceedingly great number. Example a) below is the quantifying form, while example b) is an adverbial form.

(30)

- a) bwǎn *ébùbù* "too many children/a crowd of children"
children too many

- b) sǎng é *bù:* ndòmb "the father is too old"

child S.M. too old

tá: bù

tá: is a negative particle modifying the meaning bù. tá:bù means not many.

((31)

a) bwǎn tá:bù "not many children"
children not many

*b) mwǎn tá:bù "few child"
child not many

éz:"all"

(32)

a) bwǎn byéz "all the children"
children all

b) m̀èkúmà myéz "all the cassavas"
cassavas all

c) èkúmà lyéz "all the cassava"
cassava all

Unlike other quantifiers, éz always agrees in class and number with the noun it modifies. The table below presents the various forms of éz as it varies with the class and number of the noun it modifies.

Table XVII: éz and concordial affixes

Class	Pref.	Quant.	Class	Pref.	Quant.
	mù-			bù-	
1	à-	wéz	2	bà-	byéz
	Ñ-				
	ø			ò-	
3	Ñ				
	ø	yéz	4	mì	myéz
5	d-	lyéz	6	m-	lyéz
	è-			mè-	
7	ø	nyéz	8	ì-	byéz
			10	pì-	nyéz

bíbyók: an adjectival quantifier

bíbyók is used to denote little quantity. But it is also an adjective meaning small, little. In its quantifying use *bíbyók* may be used both pre-nominally or post-nominally. It however does not agree with the noun it quantifies.

(33)

a) *bwǎn* *bíbyók* "few children"
 children few

b) *bíbyók* *púsá* "a small quantity of corn"
 little corn

4.4.2. Nouns modified by numerals

Both cardinal and ordinal numerals are attested in Mpumpuŋ. We'll discuss ordinal numerals in section 4.4.2.2.

4.4.2.1. Cardinal numerals

There are simple and complex cardinals in Mpumpuŋ.

(34): Simple cardinals

<i>gwát</i>	"one"
<i>íbá</i>	"two"
<i>ílél</i>	"three"
<i>íná</i>	"four"
<i>ítén</i>	"five"
<i>twó</i>	"six"
<i>kám</i>	"ten"
<i>tsèt</i>	"one hundred"

(35): Complex cardinals

a)	<i>tén</i>	<i>é</i>	<i>gwát</i>	"six"
	five	with	one	
b)	<i>tén</i>	<i>é</i>	<i>íbá</i>	"seven"
	five	with	two	

c) kám é gwát "eleven"
 five with one

c) kám é íbá "twenty"
 five with two

Cardinal numerals are always post-posed to the noun they modify. Below are illustrations.

(36)

a) bwǎn óbá "two children"
 children one

b) bwǎn òtén é óléí "eight children"
 (2)children five with three

c) ìpòndò íbá "two traps"
 (8)traps two

d) pyòṅ mbá "two beds"
 (10)beds two

e) èkòk é gwát "one stone"
 (5)traps A.M. one

e) kó é gwát "one foot"
 (1)foot A.M. one

Cardinal numerals agree in class/number with the noun they modify. Like in noun of noun constructions, the agreement marker is segmentally marked only for classes 2,4,5,6 and 8. Other classes are not marked segmentally. The table below contains cardinal numerals and their related concordial affixes.

Table XVIII : Numerals and concordial affixes

Class	Pref.	Numeral	Class	Pref.	Numeral
	mù-			bù-	
1	à-	σ	2	bà-	ó
	N-				
	σ			ò	
3	N-				
	σ	σ	4	mì-	mí
5	d-		6	m-	mé
	è-	é		mè-	
7	σ	σ	8	ì-	í
			10	pì-	σ

Cardinal numerals can be used pronominally. Even then, they do agree with the noun they replace as illustrated below in example 38(b).

(37)

a) bwǎn ótén bé: tò "five children have gone"
 children five S.M. tns- go

b) ótén bé: tò "five have gone"
 five S.M. tns- go

4.4.2.2. Ordinal numeral

Apart from the first, *èsòk*, which differs from one *gwát*, ordinal numerals have the same form with cardinals in Mpumpuŋ. Like cardinals, ordinal numerals are always post-posed to the noun they modify. Unlike cardinals, they do not vary with the class of the nouns they modify, except when the ordering system is dealing with plural items like in "the first two wives", "the three younger children", etc.

(38)

b) pyèmb ésók "the first farm"
 farm first

b) òdzá: ésók "the first house"
 house first

- c) só mbá "the second friend"
friend second
- d) só lél "the third friend"
friend third
- e) ñdzá: lél "the third house"
house third

Example 40: Ordering plural items.

- a) ìpyèmb bí- ésók "the first farms"
farms Agr first
- b) ìpyèmb í bá "the second farms"
farms Agr second
- c) mìndzá: mí- lél "the third houses"
houses Agr three

The linear structure of nominal constructions modified by numerals is thus
N+Numeral

4.5. THE COMPLEX NOMINAL CONSTRUCTION

Quoting Ross (1986), Mutaka and Tamanji (1995) presents the complex NP as one that dominates an S'node. The complex nominal construction is thus a noun expression modified by a clause (here a relative clause). In many languages, the relative clause functioning as a noun modifier is preceded by the relative marker. In Mpumpuñ, the relative clause is distributed as described in the two situations below:

- ⇒ 1) The relative clause immediately follows the modified noun and is followed by an element that we name R^0 for the purpose of argumentation. Here we have the linear order {Noun-Rel clause - R^0 }

- ⇒ 2) The relative clause is preceded by an element that we name R and is followed by the already mentioned R⁰. Here we have the linear order {Noun-R-rel.clause-R⁰}.

Examples 41 and 42 below illustrate situations 1 and 2 respectively.

(40)

a) mwǎn ám dì ré dzwà yè "my child who is bathing"

child my tns asp bathe R⁰

b) mwǎn mí kúkúamá dì ré dzèmb yè

child A.M chief tns Asp sing R⁰

"the child of the chief who is singing"

c) dònj mí dí ré bè yè "the bed which I am seeing"

bed I tns Asp see R⁰

(41)

a) dél é mí dí ré bè yè "the village which I am seeing"

bed -R- I tns Asp see R⁰

b) bwǎn ó mí dí ré bè yè

children R I tns Asp see R⁰

"the children whom I am seeing"

c) bwǎn biné ó mí dí ré bè yè

children those R I tns Asp see R⁰

"those children whom I am seeing"

d) bwǎn bám ó mí dí ré bè yè

children my R I tns Asp see R⁰

"my children whom I am seeing"

d) bwǎn ó mí kúkú má ó dí ré dzyèmb yè
 children AM AM chief R tns Asp sing R⁰

"the children of the chief who are singing"

The question we will first of all want to answer following these examples is the status of the element *yé* (R⁰).

A first possibility is to treat *yé* as a relative marker. If we consider *Yé* as the relative marker, we would be faced with two questions :

⇒ Why does it not agree in class with the noun it replaces?

⇒ Why does it stand after the relative clause?

To the first question, one may want to say that the relative marker in some other Bantu languages does not always agree with the noun it replaces. We have the example of *fé[?]fé[?]* to corroborate this observation.

(42)

a) mú: yí ngó mǎ ndí lǎ "the child that I am seeing"
 child whom I Asp see foc

b) pè[?] yí ngó mǎ ndí lǎ "the house which I am seeing"
 house which I Asp see foc

c) ka[?] yí ngó mǎ ndí lǎ "the pan which I am seeing"
 pan which I Asp see foc

The relative marker, *yí* in the *fé[?]fé[?]* examples is a constant element not subject to agreement.

To the second question, we have no answer, especially that if we were to continue relating Mpumpuṅ to other Bantu languages, we would identify a similar element which also stands after the relative clause as the "*yé*" in Mpumpuṅ. In

our fé'fé' examples above, we may parallel the distribution of léc to that of "yé". The léc element in fé'fé' is no relative element, but a focalysing element referring back to the relativised noun. A similar element with the same distribution is also found in Bafut and is a focalysing element as in fé'fé'. We deduce from these facts that "yé" in Mpumpuṅ may not be a relative marker, but instead a focalysing element.

Considering the second element in the construction R, we want to propose that R is the relative marker. It will then be said to have the same distributional pattern as the relative marker in fé'fé'. The two main differences being that in Mpumpuṅ it agrees with the class of the relativised noun, while it does not in fé'fé'. Also, it is present for all noun classes in féfé, while it is present only for classes 2, 4, 5, 6 and 8 in Mpumpuṅ, and is unmarked for classes 1, 3, 7 and 10.

4.6. SUMMARY

The modified nominal construction may be a possessive, an associative, an adjectival, a quantified or a relativised nominal construction. The agreement features on modifiers is determined by the class of the modified noun.

CHAPTER FIVE

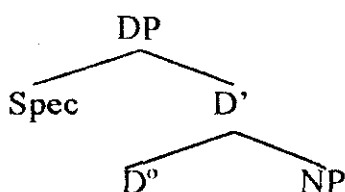
AGREEMENT IN THE MPUMPUNJ NOMINAL CONSTRUCTION

From chapter two to chapter four, we presented the noun and the nominal group, describing the varying positions of nouns and their modifiers. In usual daily speech, the noun is at phrase initial position, while modifiers follow. In the present chapter, we visually represent the structure of the nominal group and also account for the agreement system in the Mpumpunj nominal group. For this purpose, we adopt the determiner phrase hypothesis (Abney 1987) according to which the determiner, as a functional category, heads the nominal group and selects NP as its complement in the same way that I° selects VP as its complement. The basic DP, the pronominal DP, the genitive DP, the adjectival DP, the numeral DP, and the DP modified by a relative clause are respectively discussed in section 5.1. through section 5.6.

5.1. THE BASIC DP

According to X-bar theory in which the DP analysis is incorporated, every XP (maximal projection of X) has X as an obligatory constituent. Still in X-bar terminology, the obligatory constituent of a maximal projection is called the head of that maximal projection. These assumptions lead us to postulate that there can be no DP without a determiner, its head. The D° slot may however be empty or filled by some determiner. We thus have two types of basic DP_s. DP_s with a null determiner, and DP_s with overt determiner. Below is the phrase marker of the basic DP.

(1)



5.1.1. Null determiner DP_s

According to Radford (1997), null determiners have the same quantificational, person and complement selection properties as typical overt determiners. So we analyse bare nominals in Mpumpuŋ as DP_s headed by a null determiner. Below are some examples.

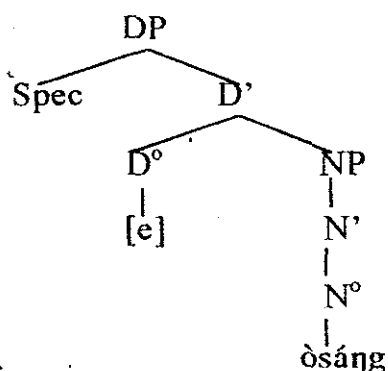
(2)

a) sáŋg "father" b) náŋg "mother"

According to Radford (op. Cit.: 96), these nominals headed by a null determiner are given a generic interpretation. In Mpumpuŋ sáŋg or náŋg may be given a generic or specific interpretation depending on the speaker or on the context. But the question we seek to answer at this point is how the number feature associated with the morphology of the noun are checked on bare nominals.

2b is the phrase marker of example 2a below.

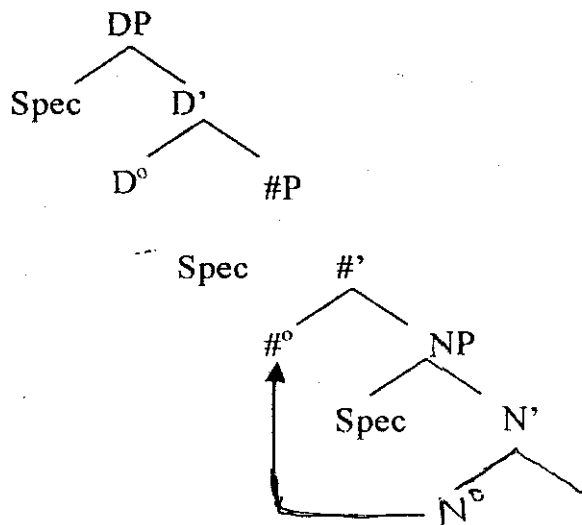
(2b)



In Carstens' (1991) opinion, number in Bantu languages is phonologically spelled-out by noun class prefixes. She postulates number (#) as a functional head which selects NP as its complement. The noun must then raise to #° to check its

number feature. This is done, according to Tamanji (1999) in a "head-head" configuration". This derivation is illustrated in 2c below.

(2c)



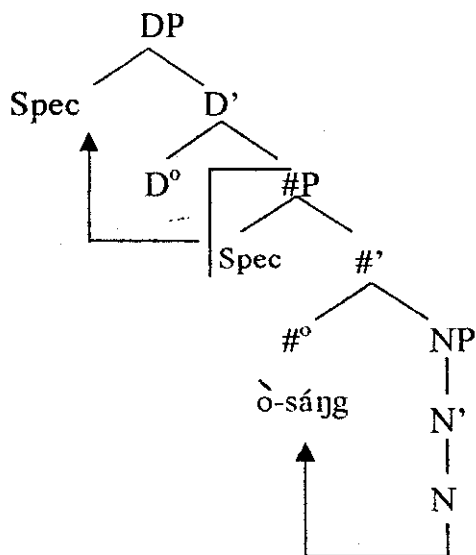
5.1.2. DPs with overt determiners

This DP construction differs from the one discussed above because the Det head is not empty, but filled by an overt determiner, a functional element. In Mpumpuḡ, the D° slot is supposedly filled by one of two elements: the demonstrative article and the referential/narrative demonstrative. As discussed in chapter three, these two elements never co-occur, which is a proof (to our understanding) that they belong to the same category. In the DP analysis, NP is the complement of D. How then do we account for the surface position with the noun initial order?

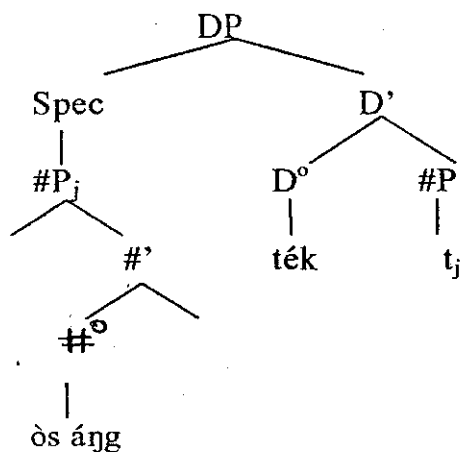
According to Ouhalla (1999: 203) "There are languages where N carries overt agreement inflection which parallels the agreement inflection of V_i in sentences. In these languages, the agreement inflection of N is in agreement with the features of the subject, presumably an instance of spec-head agreement". Ouhalla's view corroborates Carstens' (1991) claim that Bantu languages phonologically spell-out number through class prefixes. There is thus a need for N, base generated at a lower position as shown by 2c to be in a spec-head relation with D° to check agreement on det. As #° containing the noun cannot cross D°

without violating the H.M.C, the entire #P is moved to spec DP, giving the surface order where N precedes the determiner. This derivation is outlined in 2d and e. Below.

(2d)



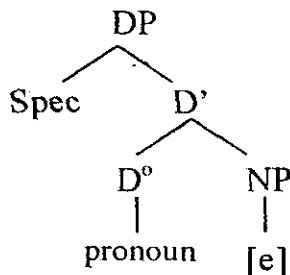
(2e)



In the derivation, the noun first raises to #⁰ where it checks its number feature in a head-head configuration. Then the entire #P moves to spec-DP where the number plus class features in D⁰ are then checked in a spec-head configuration.

5.2. PRONOMINAL DPs

Pronouns are pro-forms as they can stand for a whole nominal group. Following our assumptions on X as an obligatory constituent of XP , we deduced that pronouns are Det elements without a complement. So, their phrase marker is the following.



But pronouns in Mpumpuŋ show class number distinctions as seen in the examples in 3 below.

(3)

a) byó ìpòndò "which traps?"
which traps

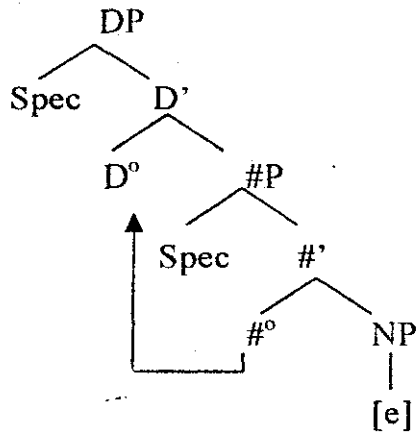
b) byô "which ones?"

c) yó pòndò "which trap?"
which trap

d) yô "which one?"

The pronouns in 3 show class and number features. This leads us to project a number phrase in our preceding phrase marker for pronominal DP_s . The number feature in $\#^0$ are then attracted to D^0 covertly, thus enabling D^0 to check its number feature. The derivation is outlined below in 4.

(4)



5.3. GENITIVE DP_S

In our analysis in chapter four, pronominal and lexical genitives both surface at a position post-posed to the noun they modify. In 5.3.1. below, we discuss pronominal genitives while lexical genitives are examined later in 5.3.2.

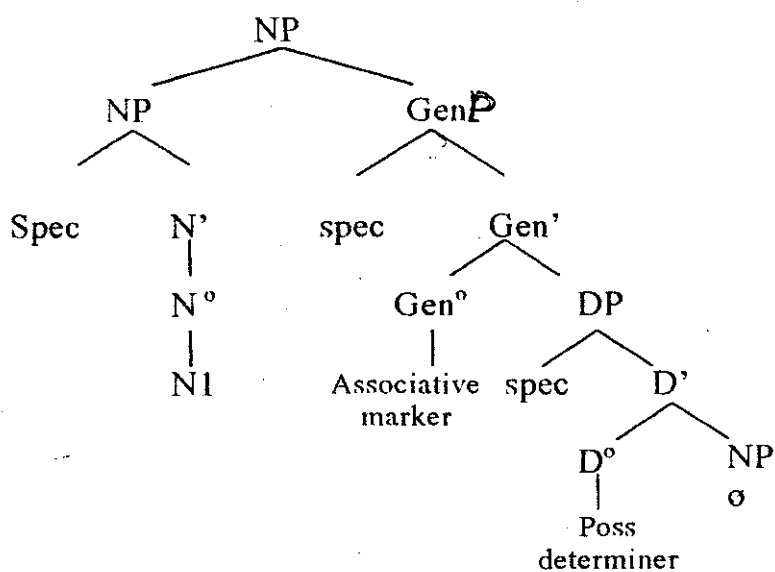
5.3.1. The pronominal genitive

In the Mpumpuñ genitive construction, the head noun may be modified by a pronominal genitive as illustrated below.

(5)

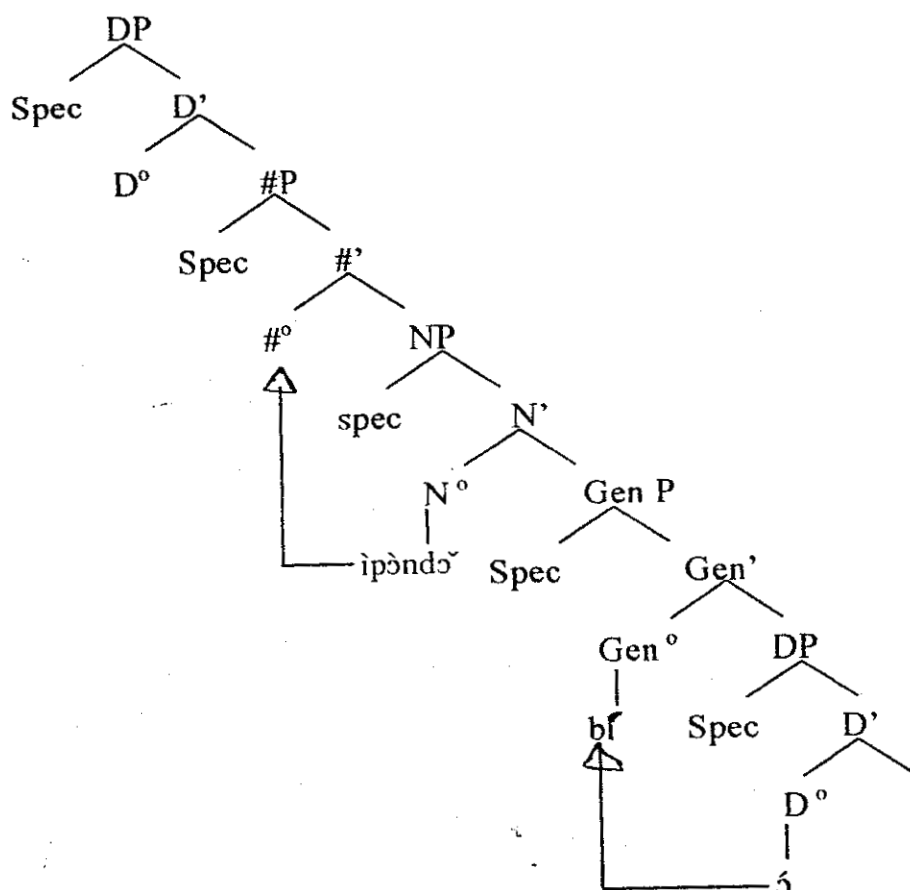
ìpòndò byó "your traps"
traps your

According to Tamanji (1999), the pronominal genitive is a three morpheme complex comprising a class/number concord consonant, a genitive morpheme (a tone) and the possessive vowel which is a determiner generated under D°. Below is the underlying structure proposed by Tamanji (1999).



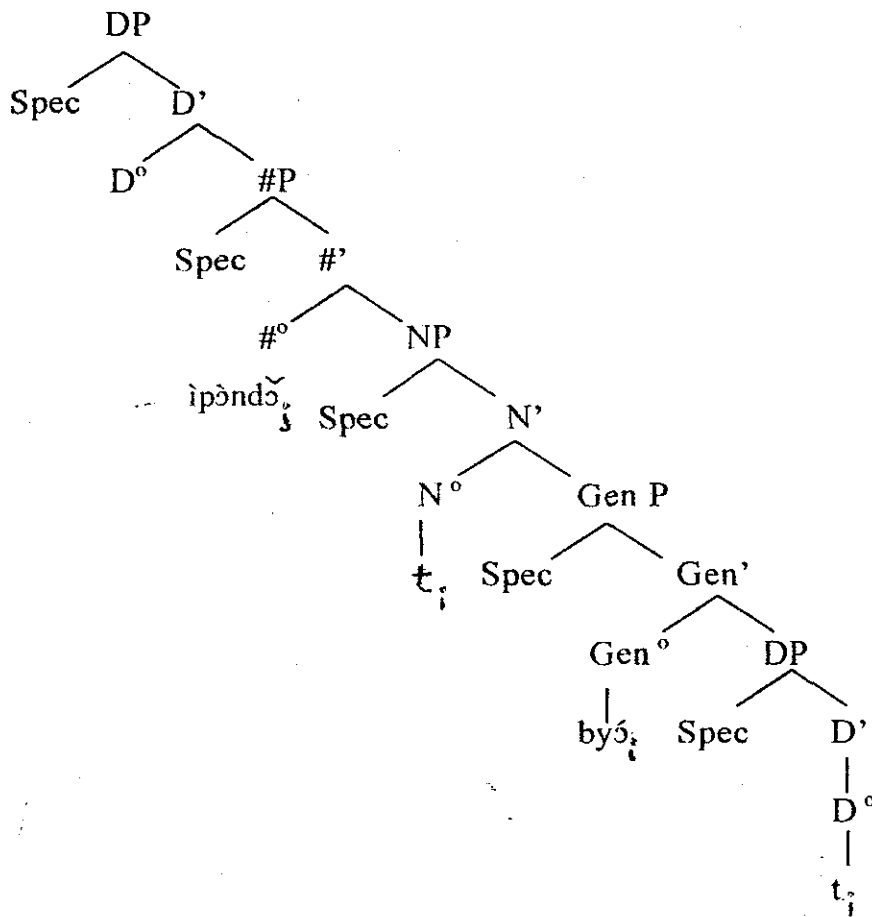
Transferring this structure to Mpumpuj, we obtain the underlying phrase marker as in 7a and the surface phrase marker as in 7b.

(7a)



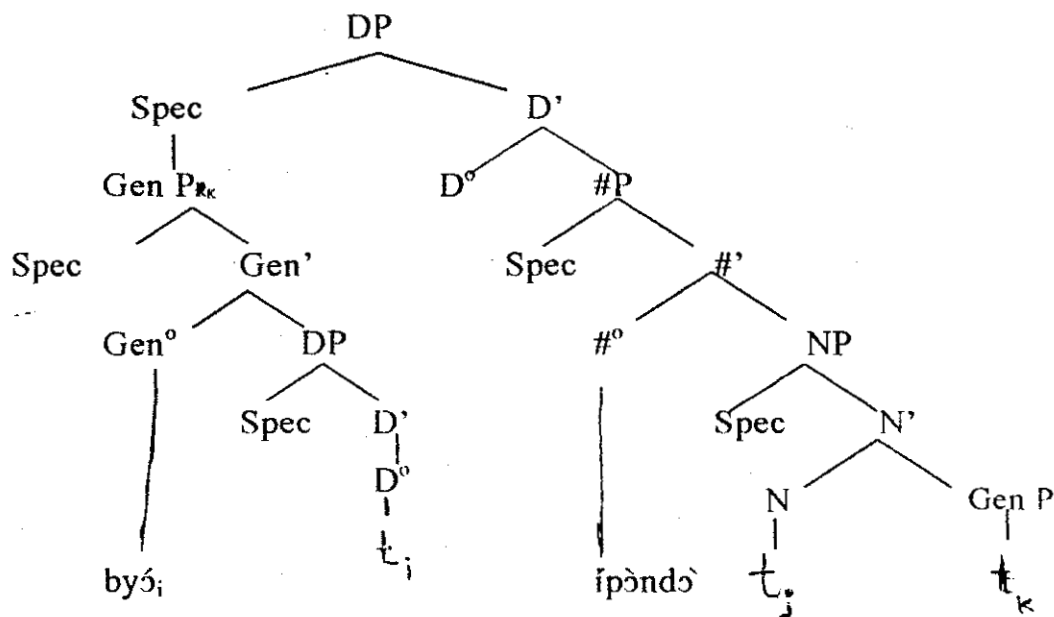
In the derivation, the possessive determiner cliticises to the genitive marker. N° raises to $\#^\circ$ as usual to check its number feature. From the derivation we obtain the surface structure in 7b in which the head noun precedes the pronominal genitive.

(7b)



In its landing site in $\#^0$, the noun dominates the pronominal genitive contained in Gen^0 . The number feature of the genitive raises covertly to $\#^0$ where they enter into a checking relation with the features of the noun. For us to obtain the focus position with the possessive at phrase initial position, the genitive phrase raises to spec DP giving possessive in focus position as exemplified in 4.2.2. 7c is this last phrase marker.

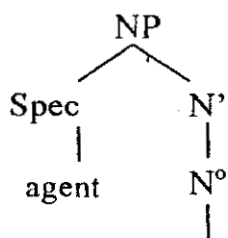
(7c)



5.3.2. Lexical genitives

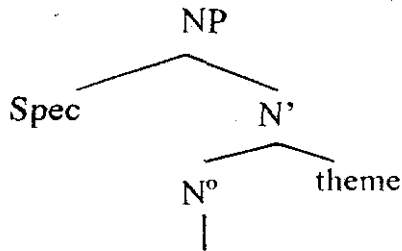
According to our discussion in 4.1.3., lexical genitives are post-posed to the noun they modify. But Tamanji (1999) following Giorgi and Longobardi (1991) proposes three positions where lexical genitives are base generated in relation to the noun they modify. When the associative noun is an agent, that is "a person who deliberately causes some state of affairs to come about", it is generated in spec NP as illustrated in 8a below.

(8a)



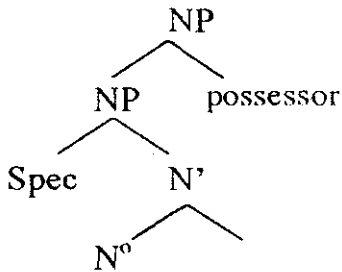
when the associative noun is a theme/patient, that is the person "associated with the entity undergoing the effect of some action", it occupies the complement position of the modified noun as shown in 8b.

(8b)



If the associative noun is possessor, the person owning the entity described by the modified noun, it is base generated as an adjunct to the modified noun as shown in Example 8c

(8c)

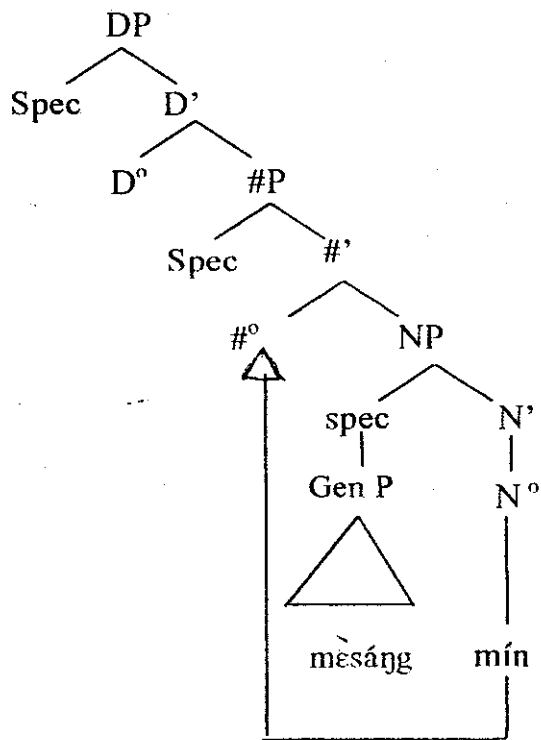


Of the three genitives represented above, none stands in the standard spec-head relation with the noun. But agreement between the head noun and the genitive nouns can be checked in a structural government position as proposed by Carstens(1991) and modified by Tamanji(2000). Here, the head noun in #⁰ dominates all lexical genitives whose number features can raise covertly to #⁰ in order to enter into a checking relation with the features of the head noun. Example 9b below illustrates the case of the the agent genitive in 9a.

(9)

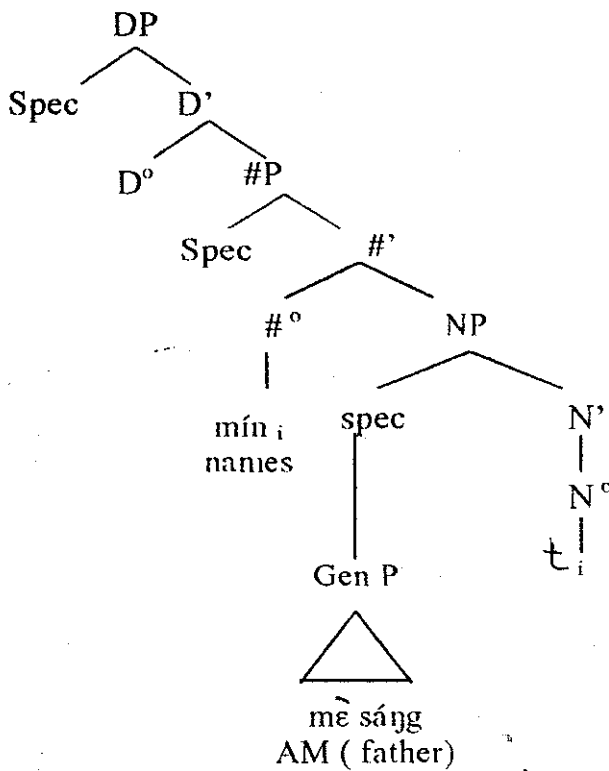
- a) mín mé sǎng "the names of the father"
 names AM father

(9b)



After the derivation, we obtain a surface structure like 9c below, which corresponds to the linear order in 9a.

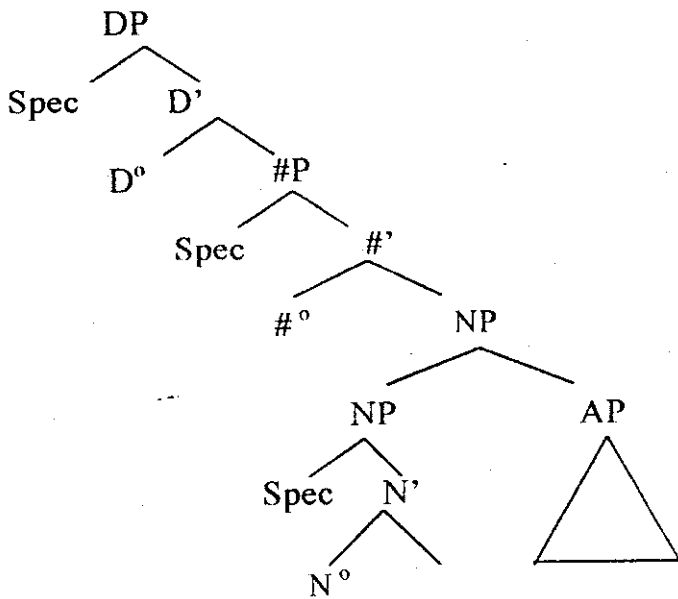
(9c)



5.4. ADJECTIVAL DPS

In X-bar theory, adjectives are excluded from the single bar domain because they are not complements of the noun they modify. Adjectives are said to be adjoined to NP. In Mpumpun, verbal adjectives are right adjoined to the noun they modify, while pure and nominal adjectives are left adjoined. We propose that both the right and left adjoined surface structure are derived from an underlying structure like 10 below.

(10)



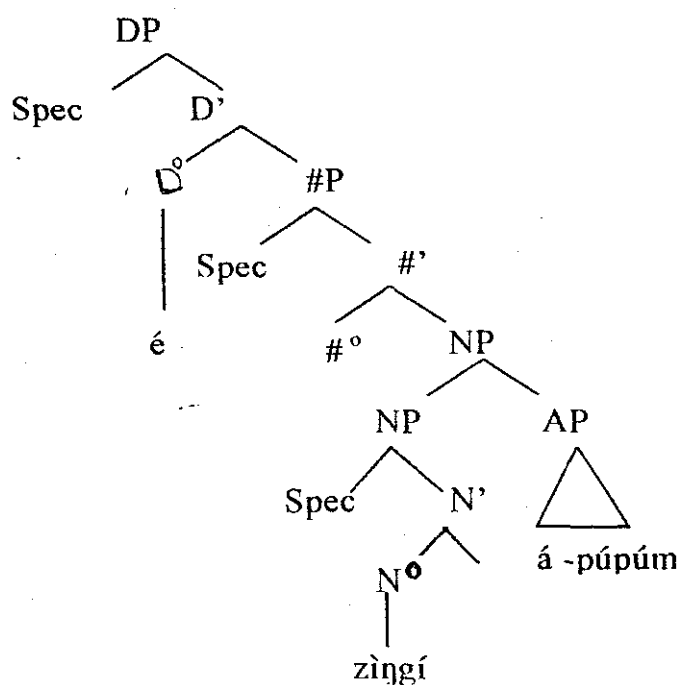
Examples 11 below, which represents verbal adjectives, would be represented by the phrase marker in 12.

(11)

zìngí á-púpúm é "this white dress"

dress white this

(12)

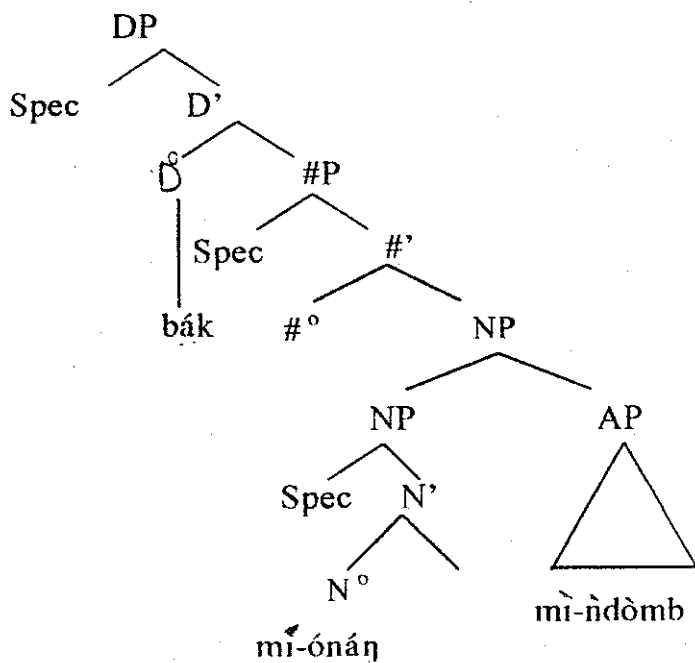


The phrase marker shows the adjective at final position and the demonstrative at initial position, unlike 11 with a noun initial and determiner final position. In the derivation, the noun raises at #° to check its number features. In this position, N° structurally governs AP. The features of the adjective are then raised covertly to the noun in #° where they enter into a checking relation with the features of the noun. The surface structure in 11 is obtained through further movement of the #P to spec,DP.

Coming to the nominal adjective, the phrase marker in 10 may still be reproduced as 14 to structurally represent example 13 below.

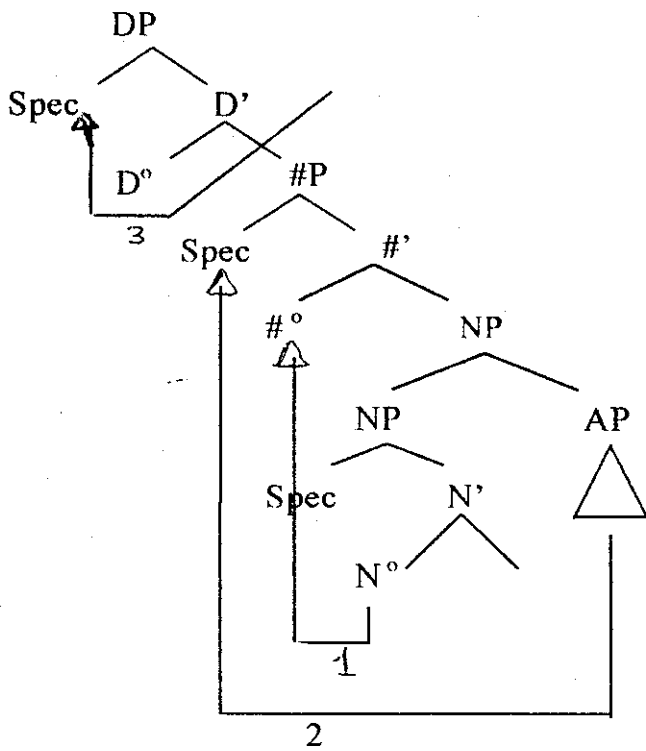
- (13) mǐ-ndòmb mǐ-ònáŋ bák "these old mothers"
 old Agr mothers these

(14)



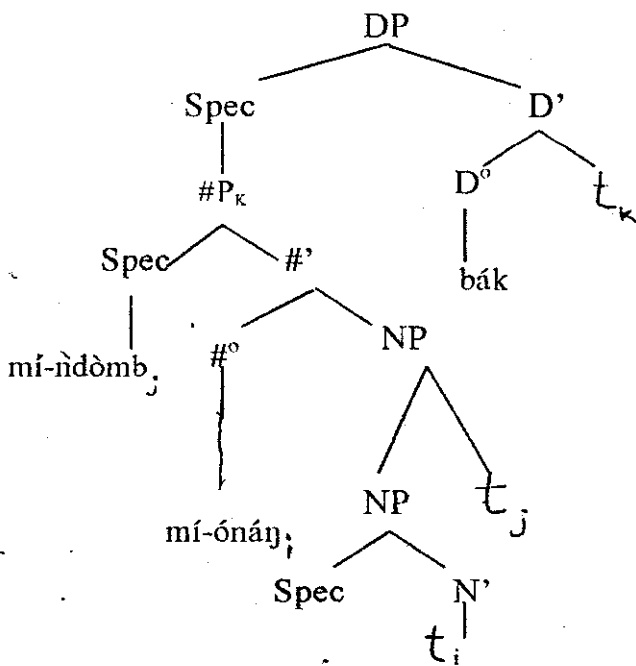
In the derivation, N^0 raises to $\#^0$ as usual to check its number features. But unlike for verbal adjectives whose features alone raise to $\#^0$, the AP here moves to spec, #P, from where agreement features between the noun and the adjective are checked in a derived spec-head configuration with the noun in $\#^0$ and the adjective in the specifier position. -Here, the trigger of agreement is the adjective and the noun the agreeing element. Subsequent movement of the entire #P to spec, DP brings about the linear surface order as in 13, with the nominal adjective at initial position and the determiner at final position. This derivation is displayed in 15 below.

(15)



Example 16 displays the surface structure obtained.

(16)



5.5. QUANTIFIED DPS

In chapter four, we presented quantifiers as subdivided into numeral and non-numeral quantifiers. Apart from *éz* "all", all other non numeral quantifiers do not agree with the head noun. *Éz* behaves like cardinal numerals in agreeing in class and number with the noun it modifies.

5.5.1. Non numeral quantifiers

Example 17 below shows that non numeral quantifiers can be phrase initial or phrase final.

(17)

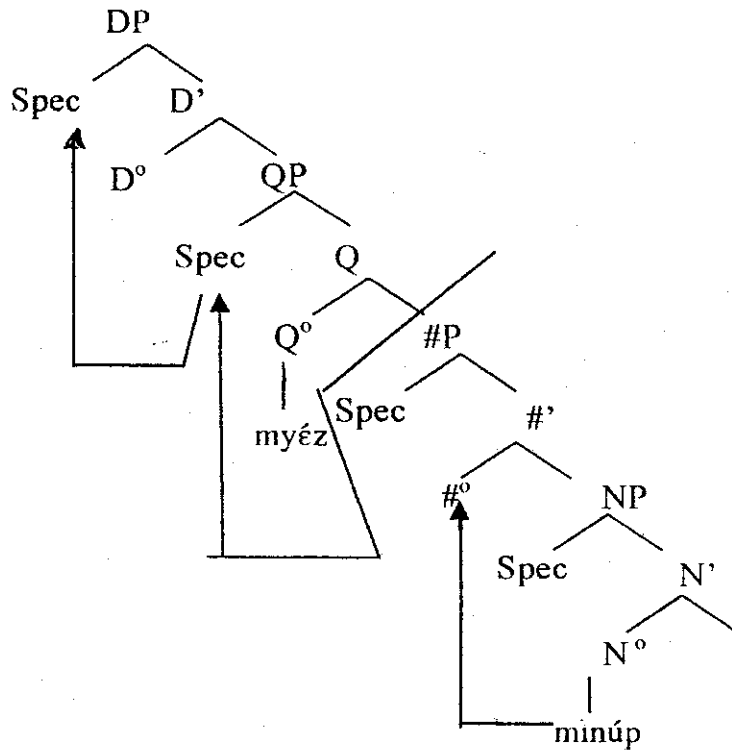
a) *tũ:n mínúp* "many mouths"
many mouth

b) *mìnúp myéz* "all mouths"
mouth all

c) *mèzyé mé dél lík myéz*
paths AM village this all
"all the paths of this village"

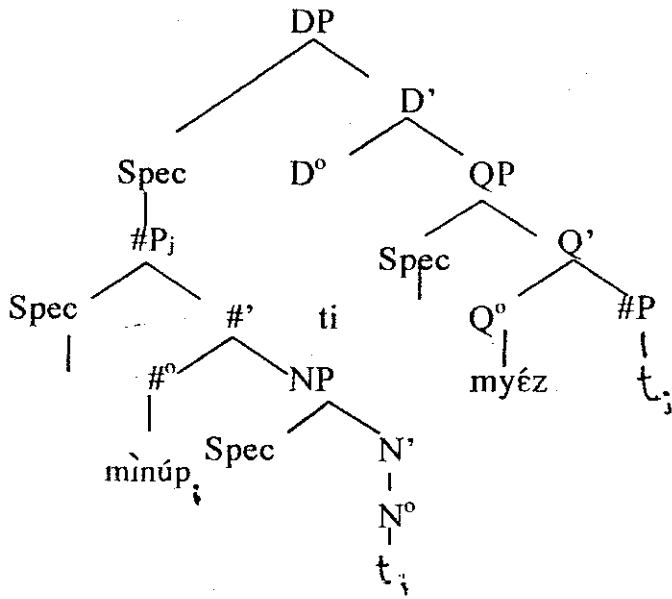
We propose that the quantifier projects a quantifier phrase as shown in the phrase marker in 18a.

(18a)



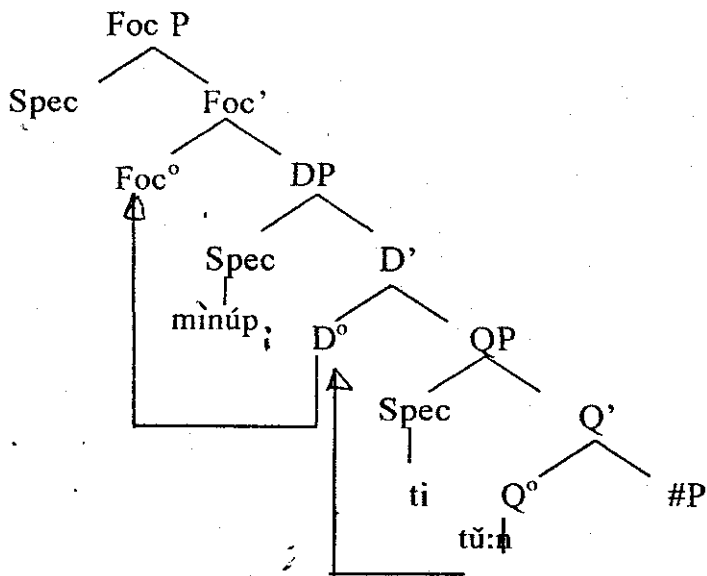
Agreement between the noun and the quantifier is checked in a spec-head fashion when the #P containing the raised noun stops in Spec QP. The #P raises from there to Spec DP, giving the correct surface order as in 18b below.

(18b)



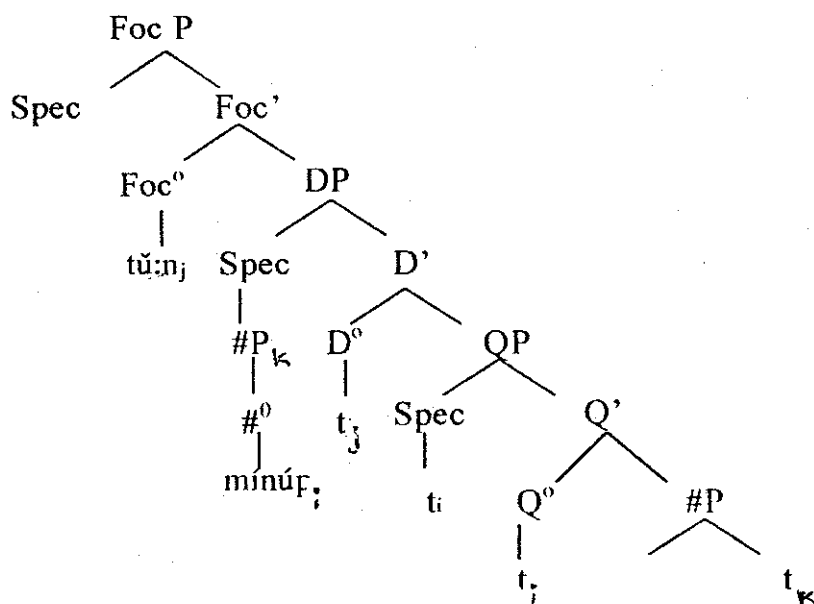
There is however the need to account for cases where the quantifier is always pre-posed to the noun. This may be done through a focus phrase projected above DP as seen in 18c.

(18c)



We thus obtain 18d for the surface structure of pre-posed quantifiers.

(18d)



5.5.2. Numeral quantifiers

Numeral quantifiers are always post-posed to the noun they modify. Cardinal numerals always agree with the noun they modify as shown below.

(19)

- a) bwǎn óbá "two children"
 (2) children (2) two
- b) ìpòndò óbá "two traps"
 (8) traps (8) two
- c) mǐndzá: mímbá "two houses"
 (4) houses (4) two

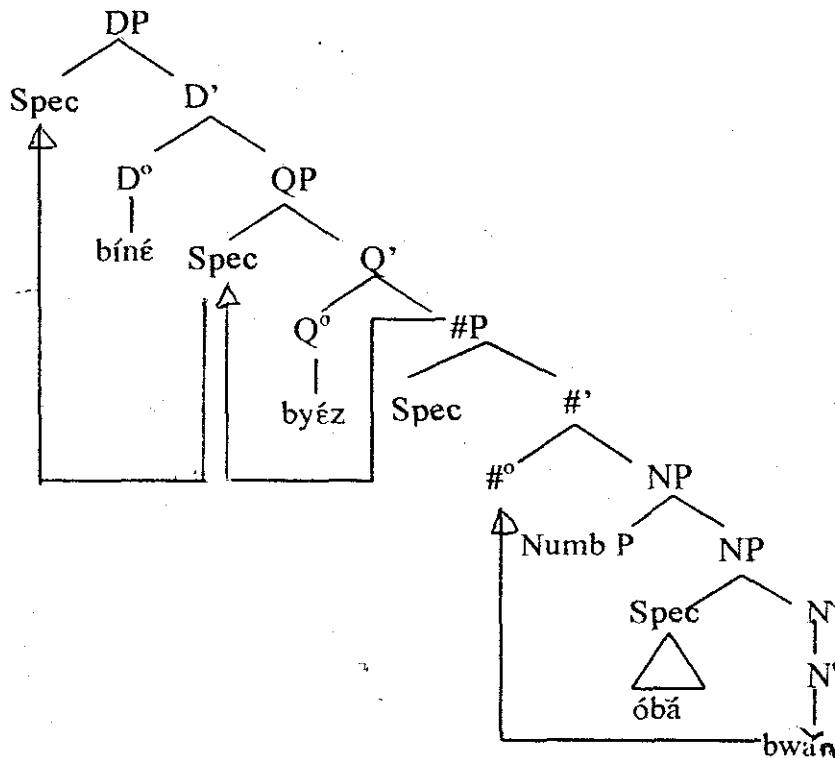
When they co-occur with possessive determiners or with demonstratives, numerals directly follow the noun as in 20.

(20)

- a) bwǎn óba bám "my two children"
 children two my
- b) bwǎn óbá bíné byéz "all those two children"
 children two those all

We proposed that numerals are base generated as an adjunct phrase to NP in 21 below.

(21)



The head noun raises to #° and subsequent movement of #P to spec-DP gives rise to the correct surface word order in

5.6. THE RELATIVE DP

The relative clause is adjoined to DP as illustrated by the phrase marker in (22). 22a and b show that the relative marker can be preceded by a demonstrative or a possessive determiner.

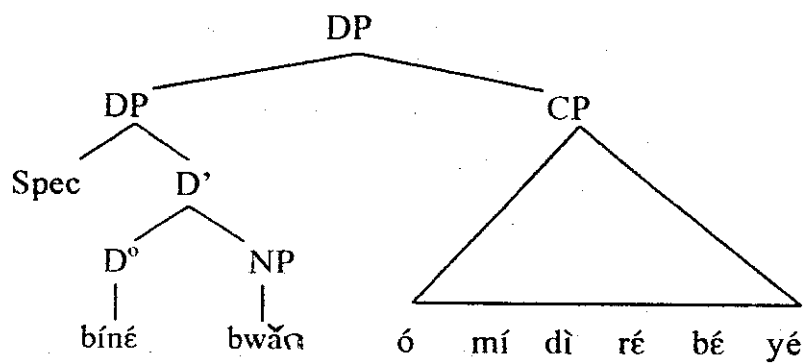
(22)

a) bwǎn bíné ó mí ðì ré bé yé
 children those RM I tns Asp see Foc
 "those children that I am seeing"

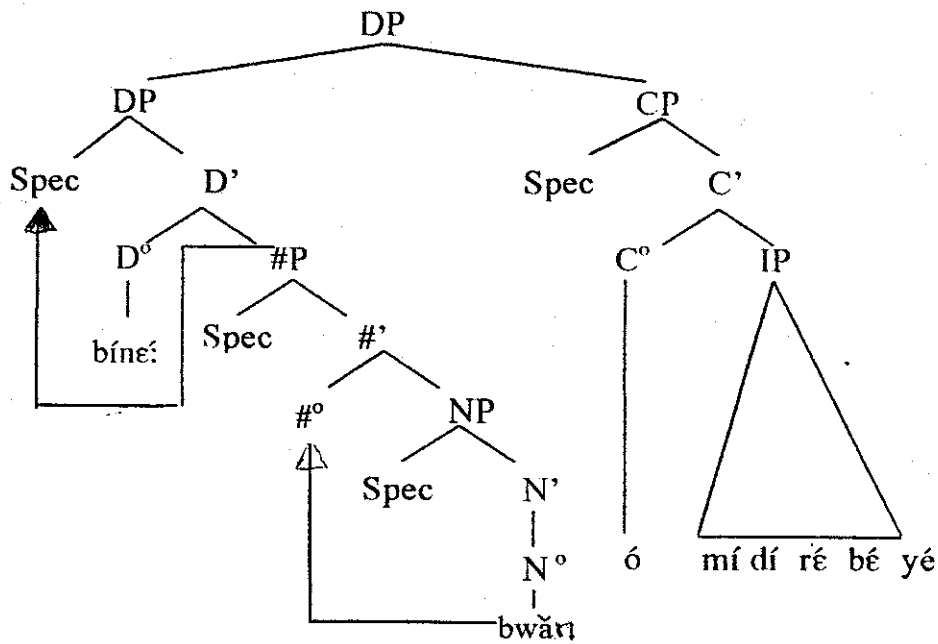
b) bwǎn bám ó mí ðì ré bé yé
 children my RM I tns Asp see Foc
 "my children that I am seeing"

These constructions are derived from a structure like 23 below.

(23)

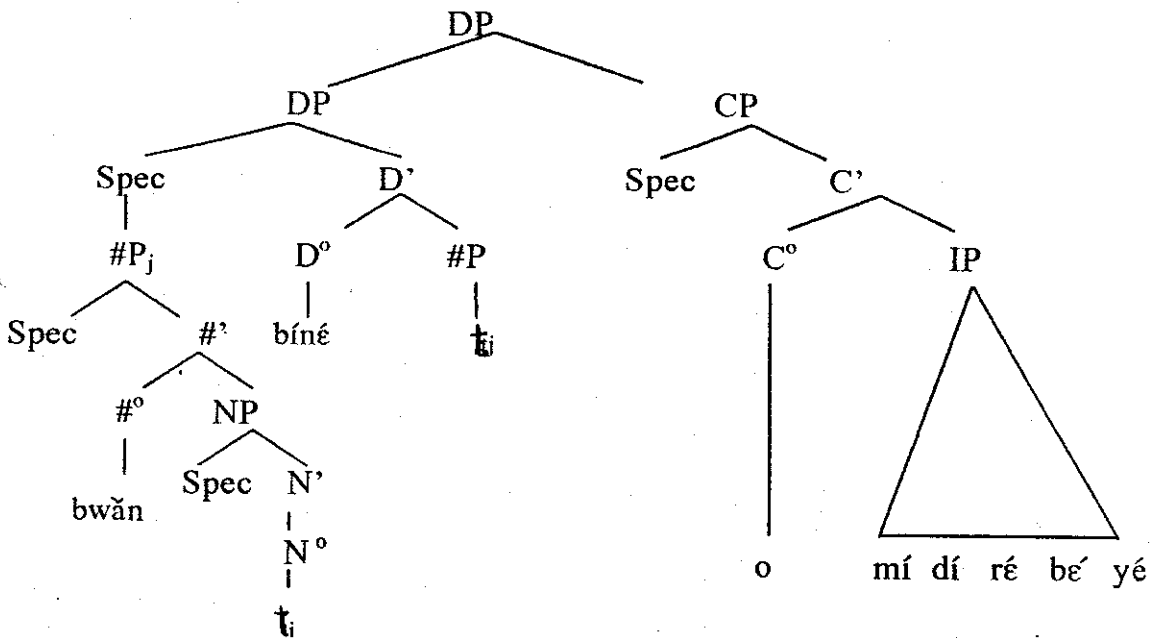


24



Once N° is moved to $\#^{\circ}$, agreement is checked between N° contained in $\#^{\circ}$ and C° in a quasi head-head configuration. The correct order is then derived through movement of $\#P$ to spec-DP. This surface structure is seen below in 25.

25



5.7. CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, the nominal construction is a determiner phrase which selects NP as its complement. The basic DP is headed by a Covert (null) or by an overt determiner. The pronominal DP on its own is considered as a head D with a null complement. In genitive constructions, the DP is modified by a lexical genitive or by a possessive determiner embedded in a genitive phrase. Finally, while non-numeral quantifiers modify DP in terms of a head-complement relation, numerals, adjectives and relative clauses modify DP in terms of an adjunction structure.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Stepping from the necessity to describe African languages, we set out in this study to describe the nominal construction in Mpumpuŋ, a Bantu language spoken in the East province of Cameroon. The major objective of the study was to bring out the relational patterns which exist between the constituents of the nominal group. For this to be done, we used a three-step procedure : first, we examined the noun in its internal structure in part one. Secondly, we investigated the nominal construction as a whole, paying attention to the external distribution of the noun and other constituents within the nominal group, to word order variations and related variations in interpretation. Finally, we examined the agreement patterns relating the constituents of the nominal group to each other. A combination of the structuralist and generative approaches was used as both were needed to give a descriptive account of the nominal group of Mpumpuŋ, and to account for the agreement system within the nominal group .

As should be expected, each step of our analysis provided us with some information on the language under study. Our findings are summarized below.

- ⇒ The Mpumpuŋ noun is made up of a prefix plus a stem. The noun may be classified in more than one class depending on the prefix adjoined to it.

Example

d-	ís	"eye"
m-	ís	"eyes"
·pref.	stem	gloss

- ⇒ There are ten noun classes in Mpumpuŋ. These are arrived at not on the sole basis of class prefixes but also on the basis of agreement triggered on modifying elements.
- ⇒ Both single and double class genders are attested in Mpumpuŋ.

Derivation, reduplication, compounding and borrowing are devices used to expand the lexicon. Loan words are integrated in the class system of the language and sometimes adapted even phonemically.

The nominal construction may be simple or modified. The simple nominal construction is made up of a noun alone, a pronoun alone or a noun plus a determiner. Each of these can function as subject, object of verb or of preposition. The modified nominal construction can be a genitive, an adjectival, a quantified or a relativized nominal construction.

The last part of our study brings out the following facts: The nominal construction is a DP whose head selects NP as its complement. While functional categories check their agreement features in a spec-head fashion, lexical categories check theirs in a head-head relation with the noun.

The present study was limited to examining the noun in its internal structure, and in its external distribution in relation to other constituents within the nominal construction. There are many interesting aspects which could not be analyzed here : Case and its source for example, as manifested through personal pronouns; the reason why copular verbs are segmentally null in constructions like "The father is old" while the subject marker is marked segmentally; The variation of tone in accordance with tense variation, etc were questions we could not address within the scope of this study but which unquestionably drew our attention.

Our wish is that further research be done on these points and others like verb morphology, tone assignment, the syntax of the relative clause, etc. May the present study motivate many so that Mpumpun be further studied and analyzed.

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