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**A STUDY OF THE PHONOLOGICAL,  
MORPHOLOGICAL AND  
SYNTACTIC PROCESSES IN THE  
STANDARDISATION OF LIMBUM.**

THESIS PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A  
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*BY*

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# CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this thesis "A STUDY OF THE PHONOLOGICAL, MORPHOLOGICAL AND SYNTACTIC PROCESSES IN THE STANDARDISATION OF LIMBUM" is the original work of SAMUEL TABAH NFORGWEI. The dissertation has been written under the supervision of *PROF. CHIA EMMANUEL NGES* and *DR. ROBERT HEDINGER*.

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# DEDICATION

*May the Name of the Lord be praised both now and  
forever.*

This work is the realization of efforts of various individuals made directly or indirectly towards helping me to bring it to completion. The invincible healing power, presence and guidance of the Lord Almighty, furthermore, my grateful thanks are due to all those who made contributions and assisted me in the completion of this study.

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However, none of the above persons or organizations is responsible for the limitations of this work, for which I assume full responsibility.

May the Lord be blessed.

## ABSTRACT

Limbum, an Eastern Grassfield language spoken in the Nkambe plateau of Cameroon demonstrates marked dialectal differences, which are clearly distinguished at the levels of phonology, morphology and syntax. These differences block standardization as every dialectal region has its own orthography. This work is an attempt to harmonise these orthographics into a single standard norm by comparing and contrasting the dialects-Northern, Central and Southern using varied acceptable linguistic analyses relevant to language standardization. Of special interest at the level of phonology are consonant and vowel contrasts, syllable structure – where we specially show that certain consonant clusters demonstrate features of extra - syllabicity; tone, and basic phonological processes form the foundation for a multidialectal and standard orthography design. We have also included amongst other morphological elements for analyses, sufficient treatment of various forms of reduplication, numerals and adjective morphology. Similarly, syntactic analyses show that the language allows various movement transformations such as topicalization and relativization. These analyses also help to show that logophoric pronouns and passivization are not features of the Limbum language. At each level of the analyses standard grammar rules have been proposed.

These grammar rules are finally represented in a simplified and non-linguistic way called pedagogical grammar. This approach provides the mother tongue (MT) teacher and language learners with information sufficient enough, to construct learning activities especially as each grammar item presented is followed by well selected drills and answer keys. This would facilitate pattern practice, internalization and general performance. This brings to focus the pivotal role of pedagogical grammars in Language standardization processes.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

ADJ	Adjective
ADJP	Adjectival phrase
ADV	Adverb
AdvP	Adverbial phrase
ALCAM	Linguistic Atlas map of Cameroon
AN	Adjectival Noun
Art	Article
ASM	Associative marker
ASP	Aspect
ASPP	Aspectual phrase
Aux	Auxiliary
C	Consonant
CC	Concord
cf	Compare
CG	Consonant Glide
COMP	Complementizer
CP	Determiner
EQM	Echo Question Marker
Foc	Focus
Fo	General future
F1	Today future
F2	Near Future
F3	Remote Future
Fr	Fricativization
Fv	Final Vowel
Gen	Genitive
Gen P	Genitive phrase

H	High tone
HAB	Habitual
HL	High-mid tone
HM	High-mid tone
HNA	Hormoganic Nasal Assimilation
HORT	Hortative
HYP	Hyportative
IAV	Immediate After the Verb
IMP	Imperative
INFL (I)	Inflectional
Intr	Intransitive
IO	Indirect object
IP	Inflectional Phrase
ITER	Iterative
L	Low tone
LH	Low-high tone
LL	Low-Low tone
Loc	Locative
M	Mood
M	Mid-tone
ML	Mid-Low tone
N	Noun
Neg	Negation
NegP	Negative phrase
NP	Noun phrase
OBJ	Object
P	Past
P1	Today past
P2	Near Past

*How different...*



P3	Remote past
PART	Particle
PERF	Perfective
PL	Plural
PLUR	Pluractional
PP	Prepositional phrase
PR	Phonetic Representation
Prenas	Prenasalized
PREP	Preposition
PROG	Progressive
PROPELCA	Operational Research Project for the Teaching of Cameroonian Languages.
PSR	Phrase structure Rule
Q	Question
QM	Question marker
REL	Relative
S	Sentence •
SCM	Subject Concord Marker
SG	Singular
SM	Subject marker
Spec	Specifier
SPE	The Sound Pattern of English
SSP	The Sonority Sequencing Principle
SVO	Subject Verb Object
T	Tense
TL	Time Line
TP	Tense phrase
tr	transitive
V	Vowel

VP	Verb phrase
WILA	Wimbun Literacy Association
σ	Syllable
∅	Zero marker <i>morpheme</i>
+	Morpheme boundary
#	Phonetic material <i>word</i>
//	Phonemic material
/-	the environment of <i>structural</i>
→	rewrite rule. <i>is rewritten</i>

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# CHAPTER ONE

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is aimed at discussing the objectives of the study, the theoretical framework adopted, data elicitation and the analytical procedures. The historical, geographical and linguistic situations as well as earlier linguistic studies. *verb*

### 1.1 PROBLEM, AIM AND SCOPE OF THE WORK

Limbum is one of the national languages now on Area Extension Programme of PROPELCA. So it needs written materials, not only pedagogic or language learning assisted materials, but on other disciplines such as Arithmetic, History, Geography, just to mention but a few, written in Limbum. The principal objective of this study is to formalise the phonological, morphological, and syntactic processes with a view to establishing grammar rules that are explicit enough to foster the standardisation of Limbum. Consequently, it seeks to establish the phonological, morphological and syntactic rules of each category in each dialect, then compare the rules of each category across the board and synthesise them, such that summary rules are established based on linguistic principles.

It presupposes that the dissertation is based mainly on the grammar of the language. However, Discourse and Semantic implications of the language are discussed where necessary.

In this work, special attention is paid to the morphological and syntactic processes, because the phonological processes of the Central and Southern dialects have already been treated by Fiore (1977) and Franssen (1995) respectively. It was Fiore's work that led to WILA's (Wimbum

Literacy Association) adoption of the central variety as the standard and use it in writing.

But reading and writing problems have been manifested by most native speakers after the publication of the Alphabet Chart, Calendars, Diaries and the Limbum Version of the Cameroon National Anthem. One of such reading problems arises from dialectal differences. Documents written in the Central and Northern dialects cannot be easily read by Southern native speakers of Limbum. Besides, unfamiliar sounds such as the affricate /ts/ which is usually symbolized by ch- is represented in the Alphabet Chart by c as in words like cè' "clothes" and cér "quick". In this class of unfamiliar sounds, we can also cite /ʔ/, /ɥ/, /ŋ/ and /ɛ/. They present major reading problems to those who have already learnt to read English and French. Another reading problem arises from the tone marking system which is apparently very inconsistent. In a publication like "Jisos à ye nge', a kwe, a fua efa rkwe, the Easter story from the Gospel of St. Mark, Chapters 14-16(1989)" the following words carry inconsistent tone marking:

(1)

Verse	incorrect tone	actual tone	gloss
Mark 14:1	ŋká'	ŋkà'	"feast"
Mark 14:1/10	ngàa gèe tánshì	ngàa gèe tánshì	"chiefpriest"
Mark 14:5	né	nè	"to"
Mark 14 :5	mbáa	mbàa	"money"
Mark 14:7	nfé'	nfè'	"time"

To those who are literate in English and or French, they have serious spelling problems. For instance, Ngwang (1987) in the appendix writes the following:

(2)

- |               |                  |                                    |
|---------------|------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. chang kwaa | meaning càŋ kwâa | "grain store"                      |
| 2. ba nchep   | meaning bàa ncèb | "medicine bag"                     |
| 3. nkeng      | meaning ŋkén     | "special basket for carrying corn" |
| 4. konyu      | meaning kóo nyú  | "bee hive"                         |

Above all, the force of national languages politics has not been effective enough to form a viable language committee at the local level, that would establish, then implement a proper and adequate codification as well as corpus planning strategies. Even though WILA in collaboration with some linguists and researchers have been doing some good work in this area, her capacity to formulate procedures for achieving a standard variety is limited. With the recent production of the Limbum version of the New Testament Bible, the need for standardisation has been greatly heightened. We understand that variation is a feature of living languages but the existence of a standard variety accepted by all the speakers is often recommended. It is thus the target of this work. We hope to use scientific approaches to propose a variety that would be acceptable to all the native speakers-for use in reading and writing.

## 1.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework adopted for this work is eclectic. This needs a comment because, this study is being done at a time that the theory of Transformational Generative Grammar is in vogue. We recognise the commanding position of this theory in linguistic studies, do also make use of it in the work where necessary. However, some concepts we wish to treat require the use of other theories such as Radford's Minimalist Approach. It is precisely on the basis of justifiable pedagogical convictions that the structural approach to linguistic analysis has been used too.

## 1.3 METHODOLOGY

As a native speaker of Limbum, it is intended that most of the data will come from me. But the data from the Northern and Southern dialectal regions will be collected from their fluent speakers. That is, only native speakers, whose speeches have not suffered any form of interference.

Assistance will be sought from members of WILA specifically Pastor Samson Ngah, and Mr. Emmanuel Ngange. *for which non expert*

The first step of the work will consist in grouping the data under Northern, Central and Southern dialects. Items will then be selected and classified using Linguistic categories. This will be followed by a close study of each category, leading to the establishment of grammar rules for that category of language of the dialect in question. Then, the rules will be compared with those of the same category of the other dialects. The next step will be the collapsing of the rules in order to come up with rules that explicitly account for the grammar of the language. The rules will then be posited and proposed to the language Committee for possible application, hence prescription. Against this background, pedagogical grammar rules with accompanying examples and exercises will be developed to enable MT teachers, textbook writers and learners use the language naturally and effectively.

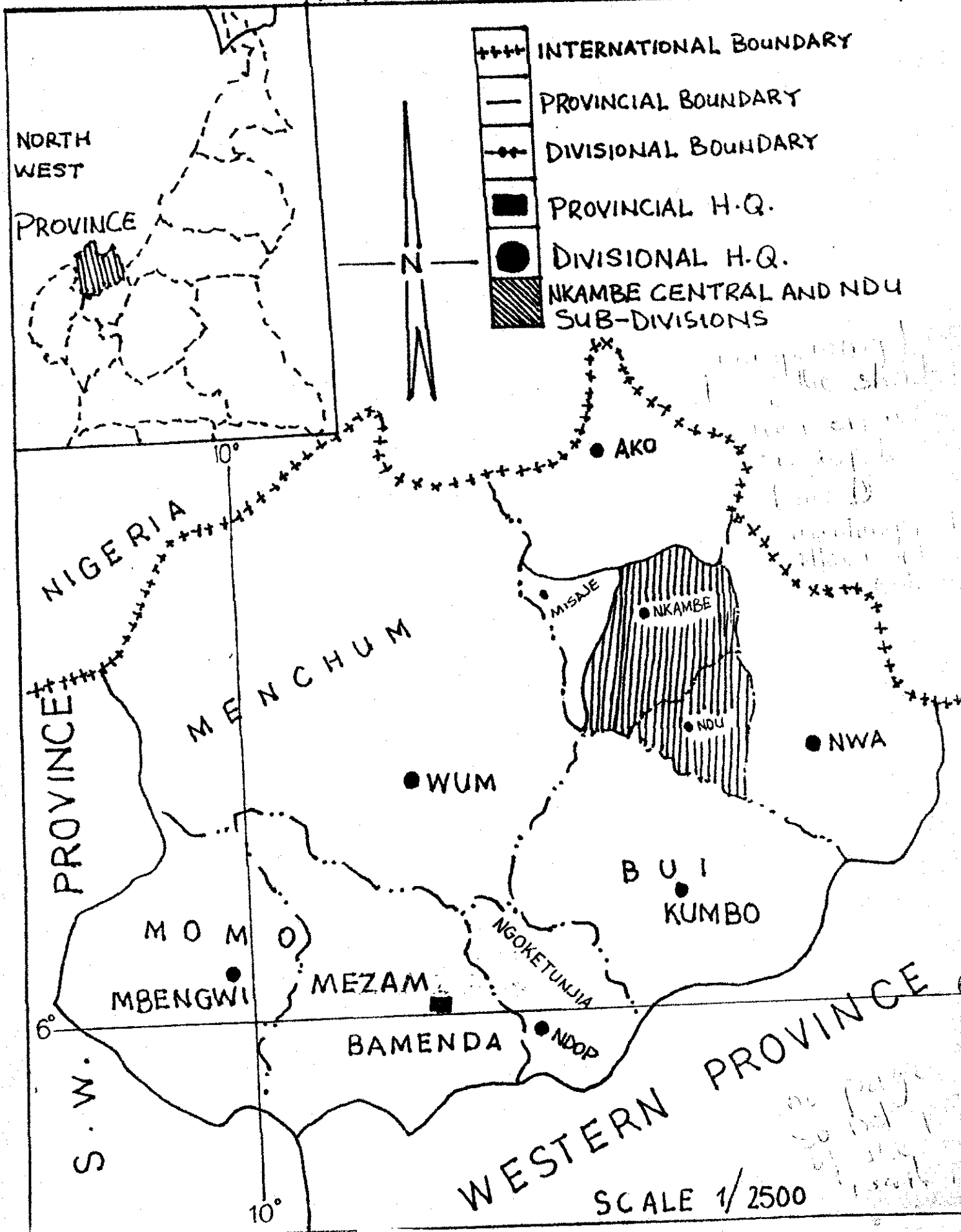
#### 1.4 TERMINOLOGY

Limum is a word referring to the language of the Wimum people of Nkambe and Ndu Sub Divisions of Donga-Mantung Division (See Map 1). The speakers often refer to themselves as belonging to the Wimum tribe. Etymologically, "Li" means language and "Wi" is a prefix meaning, "people" (people of a certain area). Thus, Limum actually means that "Language of Mbum" (Mbum Language). While, Wimum means the people of Mbum or "Mbum people". In Linguistic and early anthropological studies, they were referred to as "Nsungli". Nsungli is a Lamnso word meaning "talkers" or "speakers" (Fiore 1987:1). Actually, the word coined from the Limum word "Sànni" meaning "pull to yourselves" an instructive word, which the Wimum Commander used repeatedly during the war between the Nsos and Wimums.

*Nsos*

*Sànni*

# LOCATION OF NKAMBE CENTRAL SUB-DIVISION IN THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE OF CAMEROON



## 1.5 GEOGRAPHICAL SITUATION

The people live in the area called Nkambe plateau of the North West Province of Cameroon. It has an average height of above 1500m. It lies between Latitude 6°20' and 6°40' North and Longitude 6°25' and 11°20' East, and covers an area of 1350 Sqkm. It has a population of about 120.000 (1987 census). The people are divided into two Sub Divisions (Nkambe and Ndu). Although they are divided, each Sub division consists of a conglomeration of villages of Tang, Warr and Wiya clans (See maps 1 and 2).

The Limbum is surrounded by, Mfunto, Yamba and Dzodinka in the North East. Mbembe, Nsari and Ncane in the North West, while Noni lies to the West and Lamnsa' to the South. (See map 3).

## 1.6 HISTORICAL SITUATION

The Wimbun people are believed to be of Tikar origin. The general trend of migration to this part of the country was about 450 years ago. Before this time, the Warr people (njeb warr) or "mbwat" clan and the "nkoms" (Carpenter 1934) who claim to be the original inhabitants of the area were already well established in the area. However, it is believed that the Wimbun migrated from Tikari in three distinct groups (Wiwarr, Witang, Wiyaah), who today form three distinct clans. These clans live in several different non-contiguous areas within the Wimbun country. It is held that their ancestors left Tikari under the leadership of Kimi and settled in the Mbaw plain where he later died. After his death, they migrated to their present site.

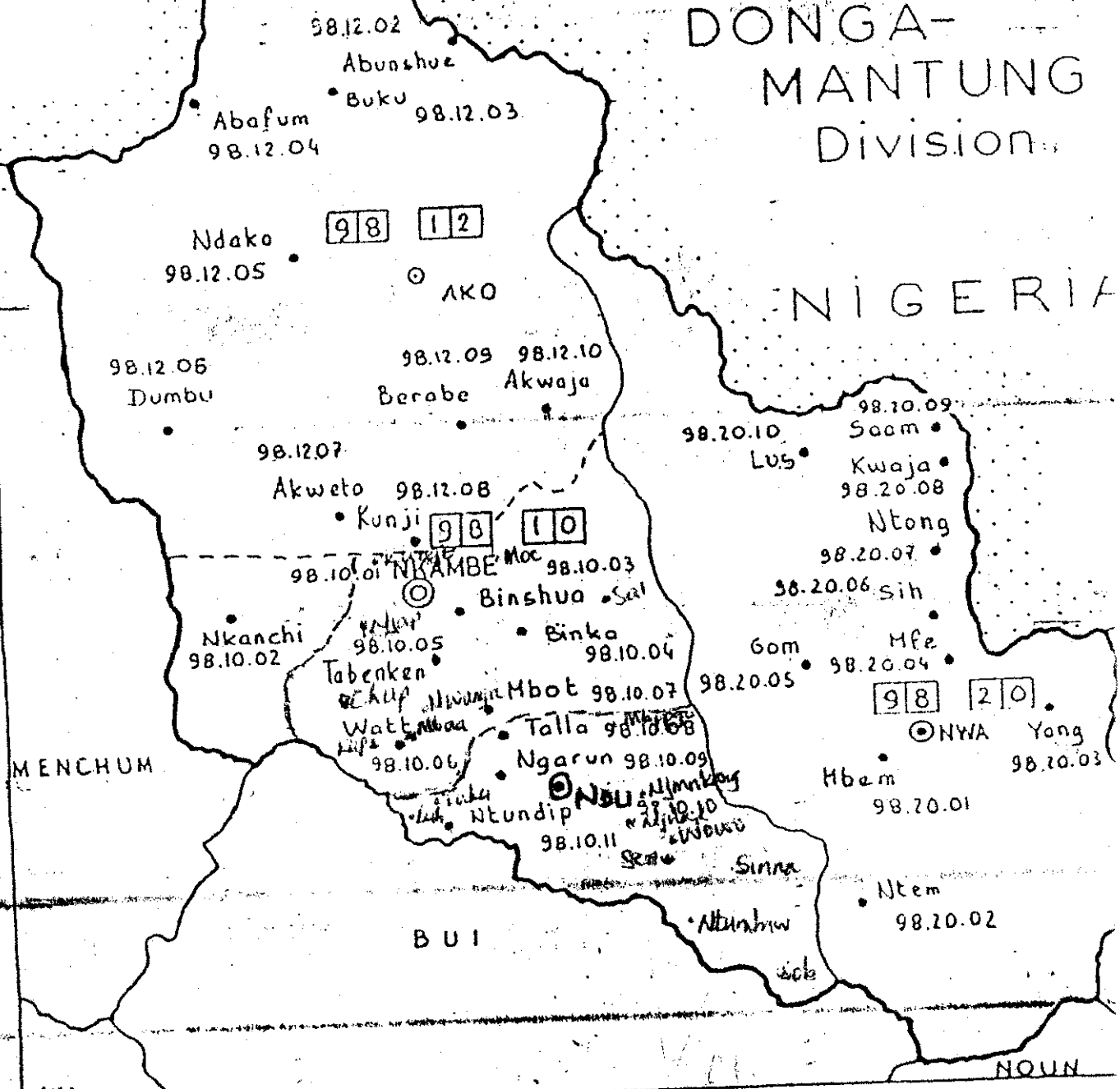
But Jeffreys (1963) holds that, Wiwarr originated from the fertile valley of Mberbo, situated between the present villages of Tallah and Binka. According to him, they were the natives of the area and spoke Limbum before the Witang and Wiyaah groups came. These other groups arrived the area, probably after 50 years of the final split up of the Warr clan (Carpenter 1934). Chilver and Kayberry (1968:27:28) mention that the

98 000 00

# Département de la DONGA-MANTUNG

## DONGA-MANTUNG Division

NIGERIA



⊙	chief town of division
⊙	chief town of subdivision
⊙	chief town of district
•	chiefdom

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—	divisional boundary
- - -	subdivisional boundary
⋯	district boundary
⋯	limits of chiefdom

Map 2.

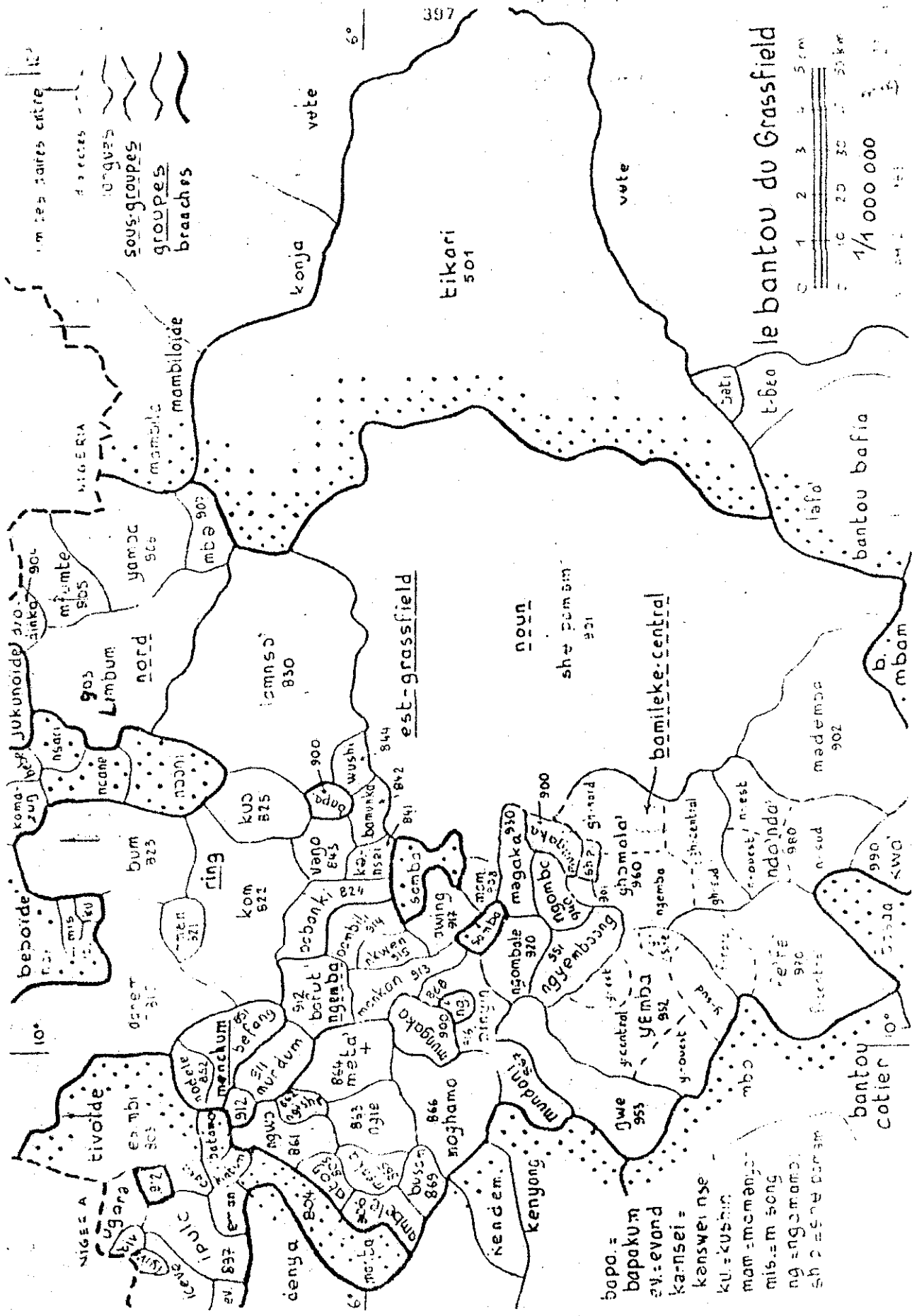


Wiyaah claim to have come via a Northern route from Kimi. They, escaping from the Fulanis and Chamba raids settled at Ntem, before finally arriving Nkambe plateau in about the 1840s. The Witang, the last wave of Tikar migration, arrived Mbum land (Nkambe plateau), long after the Wiyaah had already settled at "Mbandfung", present site of Ndu palace.

Jeffrey's historical account of the Warr clan is reported by Fiore (1987:2). It is on this ground that Mangoh (1986) asserts that the immigrant groups dropped their languages because the native speakers of Limbum were widespread. However, there is no trace of a dead language even in ritualistic circles to buttress this fact. It is historically and logically but fair to state that the Tikars of the Nkambe plateau came from the Tikar country of the Upper Benue in Old Adamawa. While the Mbums of Adamawa claim that their ancient ancestors came from ancient Egypt and that they are related to the Chambah of the Benue and the Tikar groups of the Bamenda Highlands (North West Province). These Tikar groups, which include Wiwarr, Witang and Wiyaah, are scattered all over the North West Province in no fixed pattern. While those of the Nkambe plateau speak Limbum, the rest speak different languages. Even groups alleged to have migrated from Mbiribaw (the birthplace of Warr clan) to other parts of the division (Adere, Mfume and Mbissa) speak different languages. Similarly, the Okus, Esus and Bums, who still enjoy ritual and ancestral ties with the Mbiribaw people (Mbot) with the same migration history also speak different languages. Consequently, the exact relationship between the history and the language is still to be traced.

### 1.7 THE LINGUISTIC CLASSIFICATION OF LIMBUM.

Limbum is one of the Eastern Grassfield languages of Cameroon. *bell* ALCAM (1983:7) gives it number (903), meaning that it belongs to the Northern sub group of the Eastern Grassfield of languages. This linguistic classification clarifies all the classification difficulties earlier presented by the works of previous linguists as discussed below.



Map 3.

bapa =  
 bapaku m  
 av = evand  
 kansei =  
 kanswe nse  
 ku = kushin  
 mam = mamanga  
 mis = m song  
 ng = ngamama  
 sh = shon daram

The classification problem began with Guthrie who referred to Limbum as "a Bantoid" (Watters 1980:99), while Greenberg classified it and all other languages earlier classified as Bantoid, Bantu. He, however, classified African languages into four broad linguistic families as follows:

- Congo - Kordofanian
- Nilo - Saharan
- Afro - Asiatic
- Khoisan.

According to this major classification, Limbum falls under the Congo-Kordofanian family.

More recent studies of languages of this family portray that they are characteristically Bantu and have a common genetic origin. This is confirmed by the studies of Voorhoeve and others, who state that 'Bamileke' languages demonstrate that they are definitely Bantu and not Bantoid. (Watters 1980:100) states that such languages were given a separate linguistic definition. Mbam Nkam unit, which consists of all Bamileke languages— Bamum, Ngwe, Ngemba, Bali and others. Interestingly, this sub classification did not include Limbum in the Mbam – Nkam group.

But the Grassfield Bantu working group, working on the Noun system of 45 languages in the grassfields in 1974, realised that the Mbam – Nkam group was not homogeneous as previously assumed but was linguistically vaster. They thus proposed a second linguistic group - Western Grassfield which consisted of Ring, Momo and menchum languages (See Map 4)

The Mbam – Nkam group was renamed the Eastern Grassfield (language characterized by nasal prefix) (Watters 1989). Limbum and all other languages that were left out in the 1971 studies of Voorhoeve, were included in the Eastern Grassfield Bantu because of their characteristic nasal prefixation.

# Cameroun langues nationales: Province du Nord-Ouest



ng: ngamambo  
 s.l., samba-l.: samba leeko  
 805: aton, 841: kanswei  
 865: menka  
 862: ngishe  
 877: bu. ND: NDOP  
 878: missong B: BALI  
 879: koshin B'DA: BAMENDA  
 915: nkwen

1987		province	département	arrondissement	district	aires linguistiques de langues	
©ALCAM						langues	dialectes
CREA-ISH	limites	—	- - - - -	.....			
R-BRETON	chef-lieu	◎	◎	◎	•	lamnsò'	
		BAMENDA	NKAMBE	BALI	FURU-AWA	830	

Bikia

Map 4

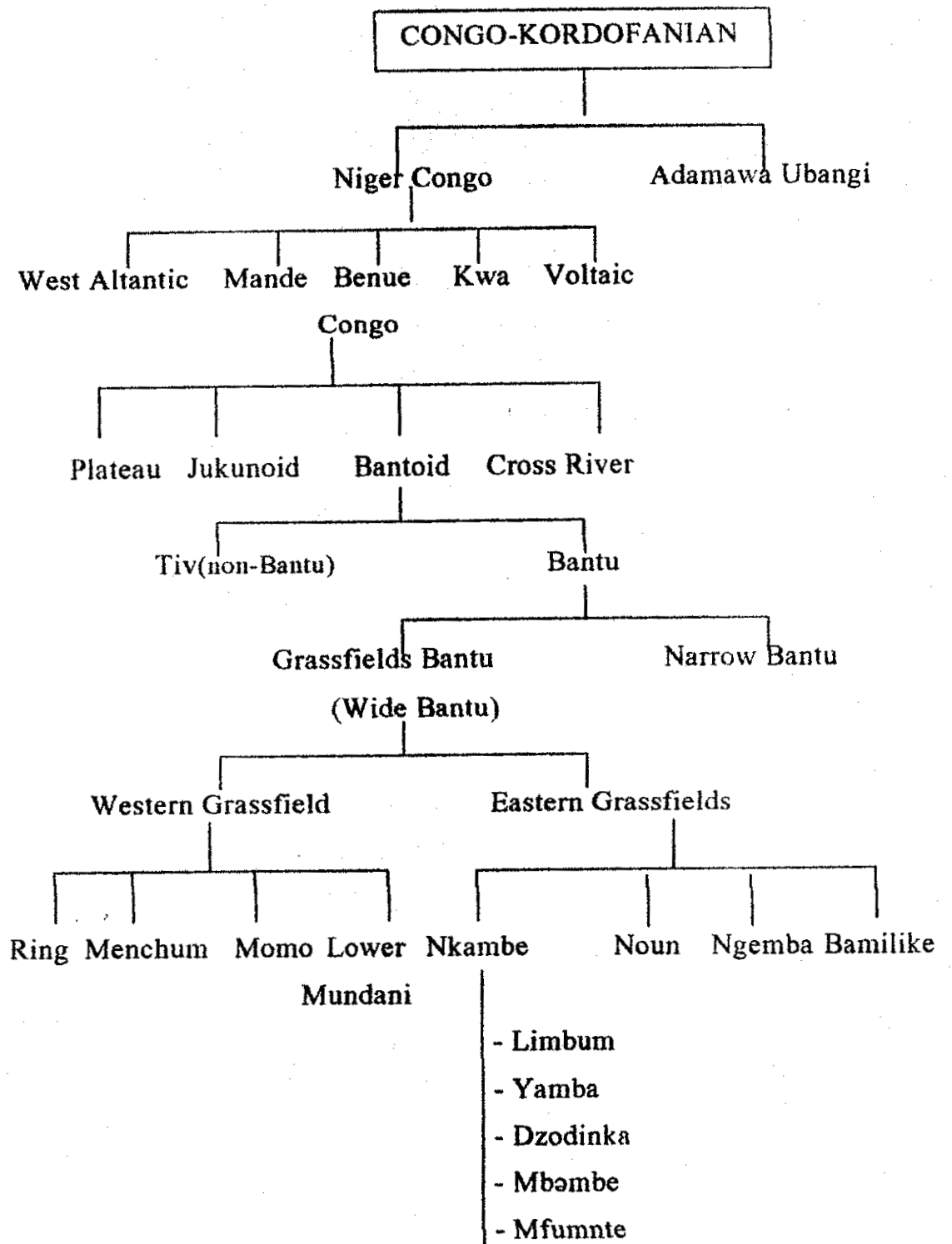
- the shaded area...  
 what does this map show?

Stallcup (1977:27) subdivided the two main sub-groups of Grassfield

Bantu:	Eastern	Western
1	Nkambe	Ring
2	Noun	Menchum
3	Ngemba	Momo
4	Bamileke.	Lower Mundani

Following this sub division, Limbum, Yamba, Dzodinka, Mbembe and Mfunte form the Nkambe or Northern sub group of the Eastern Grassfield Bantu language major sub group. The figure 1:1 below explains it.

**Figure 1:1 Grassfield Bantu Languages.**



*Culled from Williamson, Kay (2000) and Ndamsah (1997)17*

Within the Wimbun language Community, the native speakers sub divided the language into four dialectal regions (groupings). These groups are:

- Linti                      -spoken in (Nkambe, Tabenken, Kungi, Moo, Binshua)
- Liwarr                    -Spoken in (Wat, Mbaa, Kup, Nwangri, Ngarum Taku, Ntundip, Luh, Mbot, Chup)
- Liyaa                     -Spoken in (Ndu, Mbipgo, Njimnkang, Njila, Wowo)
- Lintumbaw              -Spoken in (Ntumbaw, Sob, Sina). See map 2)

This means that the language consists of a group of intercomprehensible dialects. Fiore (1997) and Nforgwei (1991) assert that the language has a lot of dialectal variations, even though there is mutual intelligibility amongst speakers. While Van Reenen and Voorhoeve (1980:217) speak of "quite a lot of dialectal variations", Pieter Van Reenen (1977) distinguishes four varieties spoken in the area, which he names as follows:

- Western    Spoken in Wat
- Northern   Spoken in Nkambe
- Central    Spoken in Tabenken
- Southern   Spoken in Ndu

When he says Western is spoken in Wat, he probably refers to the following areas-Wat, Mbot, Mbaa, Kup, Nwangri, Ngarum, Taku, Ntundip and Luh. While Nkambe refers to Binshua, Nkambe, Moh and Kungi. Similarly, Tabenken refers to Tabenken, Chup, Njap and Bongom. Ndu certainly refers to Ndu, Wowo, Njila, Mbipgo and Njimnkang.

Almost ten years later (Pieter Van Reenen (1986) comes to add a fifth dialectal region: -South-Western region - Spoken in Taku.

But Fiore (1987) works out a more comprehensive classification on the basis of pronunciation as follows:

- Northern:   Spoken in Binshua, Nkambe, Moo, Bih, Binka, Njap, Nge, Chup and Tabenken
- Central:    Spoken in Wat, Mbot, Luh, Taku, Talla, Ngarum and Ntundip
- Southern:   Spoken in Ndu, Ntumbaw, wowo, Mbipgo, sop, Njimnkang, Njilah, Manguu and Sina

Fiore's classification is illustrated below:

ENGLISH	NORTHERN	CENTRAL	SOUTHERN
kola	bi	rbi	rbzi
give	(há)	fá	fá
gun	ngár	ngár	ngár
pot	rkín	rkín	rtsín
water	mdíp	mndíp	mndzíp
mouth	tcù	cùu	shù

Fiore's classification implies pronunciation and vocabulary differences. These differences can further be exemplified using the following examples. Let us begin here by presenting words that do not portray any linguistic differences across the regions.

(3)	<u>North</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>gloss</u>
1.09	fón	fón	fón	also
	bàa	bàa	bàa	bag
	tòo	tòo	tòo	burn
	bònbón	bònbón	bònbón	good
	gòr	gòr	gòr	big
	tún	tún	tún	dig
	gwàgwá'	gwàgwá'	gwàgwá'	duck

Although these examples do not show any aspect of variation, the table following shows vocabulary differences between the South and the other regions.

4)	<u>South</u>	<u>Centre / North</u>	<u>gloss</u>
	bóbór	nyòbnyòb	soft
	máándzà	nduunjì	road
	shàmjúr	càa	toad/frog
	tsútsúyéni	ntòn	centre
	ndìi	ngèe	behaviour
	nyvâ'	káa	squeeze



The implications of these differences are crucial as far as Limbum Literacy programme is concerned. In line with Fiore's examples given above, are the following words. They show systematic changes in sounds from North to South:

5)	North	Centre	South	gloss
	nji	nji	ndzàa	back
	njikì	njikì	ndzándá	fly
	có'	có'	shó'	uproot
	cìr	cìr	shúr	tray
	yá	yá	zhvú	kill
	nyà'	nyà'	nyvá	squeeze
	jèé	jée	dyée	different
	jùu	jùu	dyùu	drive away

In the section of phonological processes, these differences will be further explained. These differences do not portray the variations that exist between the young and the old speakers. Again, the interference of Pidgin English, Fulfulde and English are becoming widespread and thus helping to make the situation more complicated. Today, we can hear native speakers say "suté" pidgin word for "until", "háràbàda" fulfulde word for "until" and "intí" for the English word "until". These were some of the reasons that led to WILA's (wimum Literary association) decision to adopt the central variety in its writing system. Even though, this was an attempt to seek to maintain the purity of the language for translation purposes, other linguists do not buy this idea and keep on writing in the other varieties. In order to make things good for WILA and writers who use the other varieties in writing, there is a dire need for a standardised form of the language, which is what this work sets out to achieve. This will raise Limbum from an "a, l" to an "S" language. (see figure 2)

fig 2 is on page 20 of the book

## 1.8 REVIEW OF LINGUISTIC WORK ON LIMBUM

Although much work has been done on Limbum, very little exists on the standardisation processes of the language. This section discusses in detail previous works on the language that are of relative importance to the present study. The first work of great importance is that of Fransen's (1995) PHD. Thesis titled "A Grammar of Limbum – a grassfields Bantu language" She describes the phonology, morphology and syntax of Southern Limbum. Although the work contributes reasonably to the grammar of Limbum it restricts itself to the Southern variety. Consequently it falls short of the standard Limbum, since it excludes the other varieties. The work is divided into five parts.

Part one deals with segmental and suprasegmental phonology.

Part two, which is subdivided into six chapters handles the Noun Phrase.

Part three focuses on pronoun;

While part four, which is sub divided into eight short chapters, treats the verb phrase.

Part five, focuses on other aspects of the grammar such as negation and interrogatives.

Fransen's work makes significant contributions to the present study in that it treats exhaustively one of the varieties that this work seeks to analyse. In this study, the Southern variety will be pitted against the Northern and Central varieties in every situation. From such analyses, formalised grammar rules will be drawn and posited for adoption by WILA for standardisation purposes.

The next work of interest is that of Nforgwei (1991) Maitrise Dissertation titled "Towards a Pedagogical Grammar of Limbum". In this work, nouns and verbs are treated and their classification is attempted. It will help in data collection and resolves some elementary problems of orthography. Other works of considerable importance to this present work include:

- Fiore (1987) "A Phonology of Limbum" is also of considerable importance in this study since it treats the phonology of Limbum and relates it to the grammar.
- Mpoche (1993) Dissertation "The Limbum Noun Phrase – A Generative approach" is also important in the present study when it comes to the analysis of the Limbum NP, especially the Northern variety.
- Ndamsah (1997) Dissertation "The Sentential Structure of Limbum" is equally of importance when it comes to the syntactic analysis of focus.
- Mfonyam and Ngah (1986) Mfonyam (1989) give exhaustive information on tone in the orthography of Limbum.
- Other valuable works include the articles of Voorhoeve (1980) Van Reenen and Voorhoeve (1980) on the noun class system. Peck (1973) provides some notes on grammatical structure, while Cheffy (1992)'s Lexicon of Limbum, Van Reenen's (1987) and (1988) on dialectal variations provide support for adequate spelling, tone and orthography analyses.
- Other publications in Limbum include WILA's "Bkɪnfɛr Tàta ba Nyako" Books I and II. Ndi and Ndi (1988) Jisos à yɛ ngɛ'a kwé, a fà'u efa rkwe", the Easter Story from the Gospel of St. Mark (chapters 14-16) an Alphabet Chart (1992) and Limbum Calendars.

For the present study all the dialectal variations will be considered, but the posited examples and grammar rules for adoption will be written using the Orthography of the central variety, which is considered the most prestigious and relatively purer.

## 1.9 OUTLINE OF THE WORK

This work is divided into seven chapters. Chapter one provides the reader with general information on the language and acquaints him with the theoretical orientation, methodology, the language and its people, earlier works on Limbum and ends with an outline of the work.

Chapter two is concerned with phonological processes. It gives an inventory of the vowel and consonants of the various regions before treating consonantal and vowel contrasts as well as phonological rules. Earlier proposed orthographies are presented and evaluated against the background of the phonological rules. Then a proposed alphabet is presented. A discussion of the tones is limited to marking and variations that exist, leading to proposed tone orthography.

Chapter three deals with morphological processes with a view to establishing standard morphological rules for Limbum. Hence, it considers noun and verb morphologies with a view to proposing rules for the Limbum Morphology.

Chapter four handles syntactic processes. A careful analysis of surface structures and their various combinations is done with the aim of drawing syntactic rules of reduction, sentence trappings, prescription extrapolation and relativisation.

Chapter five examines all the grammar rules so far posited and collapses them, thereby formalising fewer and acceptable grammar rules. These rules are then posited using pedagogical approaches. Hence, NP, VP, adjectives adverbs, prepositions, the simple sentence, complex sentence and word formation rules will be prescribed thereby standardising the writing system.

Chapter six is the concluding chapter. It reviews the whole work, chapter by chapter and spells out the value as well as the limitations of the work.

Chapter seven (appendices) presents texts written in the various dialects and rewritten in the various dialects and rewritten in the proposed standard with summary comments and explanations. The intention is to provide the reader with the effectiveness of writing using the proposed standard.

### **1.10 CONCLUSION.**

In this chapter, we have acquainted the reader with the objectives and the Linguistic classification of Limbum in an attempt to bring to focus the need for standardisation. We have also shown how an eclectic approach combined with the straight forward methodology will enable us achieve the set goal. Similarly, we have impressed on the reader the dire need for standardisation by making use of the existing literature, name, historical and geographical description of the area. This chapter therefore, sets the ground and provides the direction the work will take.

# CHAPTER TWO

## PHONOLOGICAL PROCESSES.

### 2. INTRODUCTION

The sound system of a language is very important in its standardisation. Since the transmission of verbal information makes use of sounds, and phonology is concerned with the study of the ways that different languages systematically make use of their sound systems and considering that it is a necessary preliminary to any complete grammatical description; it becomes clear that phonology constitutes a fundamental requirement in any Limbum standardisation endeavour. The spoken form has a significant influence on the written form and as a result, the spoken form has to be adequately studied in order to construe a sound and writing system.

To achieve the desired goals of this work, the sounds – consonants and vowels of the different dialects – Northern, Central and Southern will be compared and contrasted. We will also examine the syllable structures and tone marking systems of these dialects in order to investigate what similarities and differences do obtain in these dialects. The rules that govern the combination and production of sounds in these dialects will also be a cause for concern in this work. All of these provide evidence that Limbum needs standardisation and above all it will help us propose a standard and harmonious orthographic system for the language.

It should be mentioned that most of these phonological processes have been discussed in Fiore (1987) and Fransen (1995). We summarize those processes here and supplement them with what we found during our field work.

As mentioned in the prelude chapter to this work, our theory of analysis is eclectic in nature. For the purpose of this chapter, we will adopt three main theories:

1. The Standard Generative Phonology model of Chomsky and Halle (1968)
2. Autosegmental Theory of Goldsmith (1976). These notwithstanding the traditional and the
3. Classical phonemics that has been used in some early works done on Limbum, which have a bearing to the present study.

Before we embark on our phonological analysis, it is crucial to note some essentials of the two main and recent theories that we will be using in this section. The standard **Generative Phonology theory** also known in the literature as the **SPE (The Sound Pattern of English)** model recognizes two levels of representation: the systematic phonemic level and the systematic phonetic level. The sounds at the systematic phonemic level (**UR- Underlying Representation**) are linked to those at the systematic phonetic level (**PR – Phonetic Representation**) by phonological rules. This chapter will attempt making an inventory of the sounds attested at both levels in the different dialects of Limbum. The work will be complemented by a discussion of the phonological rules that map the systematic phonemic level (**UR**) to the systematic phonetic level (**PR**).

The notion that speech can be sliced into bundles of unordered features (**The Absolute Slicing Hypothesis**) inherent in the Standard Generative Phonology Model makes the theory limited in characterising some language phenomena especially tone and other suprasegmental phenomena. For this reason, some appropriate insights of the autosegmental phonology model will be appealed to.

The autosegmental theory recognises the fact that elements (features) exist in autonomous tiers and are linked to the skeletal tier by association lines. In so doing it breaks away from the absolute slicing hypothesis of the

standard generative theory. The association of elements or features unto the skeletal tier is not haphazard in nature. This is done in a principled manner. This issue has been discussed extensively first in Goldsmith (1976), Pulleyblank (1986). For more on these two theories see Chomsky and Halle (1968) for the Standard Generative Phonology theory and Goldsmith (1976) for the autosegmental phonology. We will like to note here that these theories will not be exhaustively applied in our analysis. Rather, we will turn to each theory once it proves adequate in explaining any phenomenon appropriately.

Fiore (1987) and Fransen (1995) are of vital importance to this chapter. The two works are basic to our work because they provide information on the phonology of the different varieties of Limbum, which are central in this study. Note again – that our study aims at examining what obtains in the different dialects so as to facilitate the standardisation process in Limbum by essentially providing a harmonious orthography. We will as a result, be juxtaposing most of the works done in these two projects and our phonology data in order to come out with the similarities and differences existing in the three systems. In other words, Fiore (1987) and Fransen (1995) besides our own field work, are the basic sources of the data for the present study.

## **2.1. SOUND INVENTORY OF DIALECTS**

### **2.1.1. THE SOUTHERN DIALECT**

The consonant chart below contains consonants attested at the systematic phonetic level of the southern dialect of Limbum. These consonants are drawn from Fiore (1987), Fransen (1995) and from the data collected during our field work).



# PHONETIC CONSONANTS OF SOUTHERN LIMBUM

MANNER of Articulation.		Liabial	ALVEOLAR	ALVEOR PALATAL	PALATAL	VELAR	GLOTAL
Stops	VL	p	t			k k <sup>w</sup>	ʔ
	VD	B	d			g g <sup>w</sup>	
	Prenas	<sup>m</sup> b	<sup>n</sup> t <sup>n</sup> d			ŋk ŋk <sup>w</sup> ŋg ŋg <sup>w</sup>	
Affricatives	VL		ts dz	tʃ dʒ			
	VD Prenas						
Fricates	VL	f	s	ʃ			
	VD Prenas	v mf	z ns	ʒ ʒ		ɣ	h
Nasals		m ᵹ	n			ŋ	
	syllatic						
	Non.syll	m	n			ŋ gw	
Liquids	lateral		l				
	trill		r				
	Prenas		Nr r				
Glides	Prenas	w ŋ <sup>w</sup>			j		

*Phonetic*  
**Figure 2:1**

There are some sequences in the language that deserve particular attention. These are considered below.

There is a phenomenon in Southern Limbum where all the consonants preceding the high central vowel [ɨ] must be fricative. This is illustrated by the data in 1 below:

- 1
- |    |                        |            |
|----|------------------------|------------|
| a) | i) [m̥ɨ? ] [maʔs̥ɨ] LH | "abandon"  |
|    | ii) [tʃɨ ] [toʃɨ?]     | "accuse"   |
|    | iii) [nʃɨ ndab] LH     | "angel"    |
| b) | i) [bz̥ɨ m̥ɨ]          | "accept"   |
|    | ii) [kũntombz̥ɨ] LH    | "ahead"    |
|    | iii) [bz̥ɨ bʃɨ]        | "ask"      |
| c) | i) [rv̥ɨ ɨ]            | "age(y)"   |
|    | ii) [lz̥ɨ b]           | "beat"     |
|    | iii) [rlz̥ɨ r]         | "eye"      |
| d) | i) [kɔs̥ɨ]             | "cough"    |
|    | ii) [rbɨis̥ɨ]          | "answer"   |
|    | iii) [s̥ɨʔs̥ɨ]         | "bathe"    |
| e) | i) [gv̥ɨʔɨ]            | "bow"      |
|    | ii) [ŋgv̥ɨ b]          | "fowl"     |
|    | iii) [gv̥ɨ ɨ]          | "corpse"   |
| f) | i) [ŋkf̥ɨ]             | "bachelor" |
|    | ii) [kf̥ɨ ts̥ɨ]        | "become"   |
|    | iii) [kf̥ɨ r]          | "crowd"    |
| g) | i) [bv̥ɨ]              | "ashes"    |
|    | ii) [mbv̥ɨ ŋ]          | "large"    |

It would be noticed in (1) above that only fricatives precede [ɨ]. Fiore (1987) and Fransén (1995) explain that the sequences [bv], [kf], [gv], [dv], [pf] are predictable and hence can be captured by a phonological rule. They postulate the rule that every consonant preceding [ɨ] should be labiodentalized. These sounds should thus be considered as phones (not phonemes) in this language. This is true of the central dialect, whose

distinctive feature is labiodentalisation. However, if we adopt this analysis, then we will also have to say something about, [bz], [lz], [ts], [dz] etc which are common sounds of the Southern dialect. This will equally warrant that we also postulate another rule alveolarizing all consonants before [ɹ̥]. This solution poses a number of problems:

The first problem is that we will find it difficult stating our rule, as it is not clear which process should apply where. In (1b), it is alveolarization occurring after [b] in (1a) it is labiodentalization applying after /b/. When does a speaker know that he has to labiodentalize or alveolarise a sound, when they occur in the same environment?

The second problem is that, it is not clear which sound undergoes these processes. In 1b, c, e, f, we have [b], [r], [l], [g] and [k] undergoing these processes. But there are words in which these very sounds fail to undergo even one of these processes. The data in (2) illustrate this.

- |    |    |               |            |               |               |
|----|----|---------------|------------|---------------|---------------|
| 2. | a) | i) [f̥ɹ̥:]    | "to shut   | i) [s̥ɹ̥:]    | "black"       |
|    |    | ii) [f̥ɹ̥:]   | "to tie"   | ii) [ʃ̥ɹ̥:]   | "to press"    |
|    |    | iii) [f̥ɹ̥ ?] | "to light" | iii) [ʃ̥ɹ̥ ?] | "to shake"    |
|    |    | iv) [ʃ̥ɹ̥ p]  | "to soak"  | iv) [ʃ̥ɹ̥ p]  | "to be quiet" |
|    |    | v) [ʒ v̥ɹ̥]   | "to kill"  | v) [ʒ v̥ɹ̥]   | "to know"     |

It is realized in (2) above that the same sounds behave in different ways in the same environments. This makes it difficult to characterise this using a phonological rule.

First of all, the issue we are battling with here is whether /b/ → [bz] /-+ or whether you have /b/ → /bv/, /bz/, before /-ɹ̥/.

Faced with these problems, we assume that these sequences are not individual sounds, rather, they constitute a sequence of two consonants that

occupy two slots in the onset leading to a CCV syllable type. For this reason these sounds (the individual sounds [z] and [v] will be included in the phonemic chart as independent sounds. This solution leaves much to be desired. First, the stock of syllables of the language will be tremendously increased. Secondly, a predictable phenomenon will be left unaccounted for and risks being put in the UR contrary to the requirements of the standard generative phonology whose insights we make use of in this work.

An alternative solution will be to attempt solving the problem from the point that [+ ] is predictable. An examination of the data in (1) above reveals a common feature. That it occurs exclusively after a fricative-like sound. In this case, it will be easy to postulate a rule either inserting an [+ ] or transforming another vowel to an [+ ] after a fricative-like sound.

A possible option is to assume that the vowel [+ ] is inserted after a fricative-like consonant. The claim that such a solution will be making is that all fricatives and affricates in this language are followed by [+ ]. This claim is not true. This suggests that this solution is not the best. The last solution that we propose here, is drawn from Van Reenen and Voorhoeve (1980:217) and Van Reenen (1987:164, 165). They propose syllabic consonants [v], [f], etc; for some words as can be seen below.

*Billie*

(3.) ENGLISH	Reenen/Voorhoeve	Fiore/Fransen
ash	[bv:]	[bv+]
rope	[kf:]	[kf+:]
fowl	[ŋgvp]	[ŋgv+p]
God	[nv:]	[ŋv+]

*↓ sec  
no syllabic  
consonant here  
for a word that is*

Postulating syllabic consonants will handle the cases of affricates but for the problem of explaining the fact that [+ ] occurs in this language only after fricatives. However, Fransen (1995) argues that in cases where we have affricates occurring before [+ ] a glide has undergone a phonological rule. She postulates the following two-frication rules:

- (4) (a)  $w \rightarrow v / - \dot{+}$   
 (b)  $j \rightarrow z / - \dot{+}$

These two rules will transform /w/ and /j/ to /v/ and /z/ respectively before [ $\dot{+}$ ].

In the same way, /b/, /d/, /g//k/, /m/, /l/ and /l/ are realized before / $\dot{+}$ / as /bv/, /dv/, /gv/, /kv/, /mv/, /v/ and /lv/. The insertion of /v/ before / $\dot{+}$ / in the Southern dialect causes the consonants to have a fricative quality. The examples following can be represented by this insertion rule:

$\emptyset \rightarrow v/c - \dot{+}$  The data in 5 below illustrate this.

- (5.) a) i) /w $\dot{+}$ /  $\rightarrow$  [v $\dot{+}$ ] "to come"  
 ii) /w $\dot{+}$ ] $\dot{+}$ /  $\rightarrow$  [v $\dot{+}$ ] $\dot{+}$ ] "to laugh"  
 iii) / $\exists$ w $\dot{+}$ /  $\rightarrow$  [ $\exists$  v $\dot{+}$ ] "to kill bear"  
 iv) / $\dot{+}$ w $\dot{+}$ ] $\dot{+}$ /  $\rightarrow$  [ $\dot{+}$ v $\dot{+}$ ] $\dot{+}$ ] "to tie"  
 v) /r $\dot{+}$ w $\dot{+}$ ] $\dot{+}$ /  $\rightarrow$  [r $\dot{+}$ v $\dot{+}$ :] "to age"
- b) i) /rbj $\dot{+}$ /  $\rightarrow$  [rbz $\dot{+}$ ] "kolanuts"  
 ii) /md $\dot{+}$ b/  $\rightarrow$  [mdz $\dot{+}$ p] "water"  
 iii) /tj $\dot{+}$ r/  $\rightarrow$  [tz $\dot{+}$ r.] "rat"

From the above examples, we understand that  $\emptyset \rightarrow z/c - \dot{+}$

- (6.) /b $\dot{+}$ /  $\rightarrow$  [bv $\dot{+}$ ] "tadpole"  
 /d $\dot{+}$ ] $\dot{+}$ /  $\rightarrow$  [dv $\dot{+}$ ] $\dot{+}$ ] "to be rowdy"  
 /g $\dot{+}$ ] $\dot{+}$ /  $\rightarrow$  [gv $\dot{+}$ :] "corpse"  
 /l $\dot{+}$ ] $\dot{+}$ /  $\rightarrow$  [lv $\dot{+}$ ] $\dot{+}$ ] *lv $\dot{+}$ si* "short"  
 /k $\dot{+}$ /  $\rightarrow$  [kv $\dot{+}$ ] "to pluck"  
 /m $\dot{+}$ ] $\dot{+}$ /  $\rightarrow$  [mv $\dot{+}$ ] $\dot{+}$ ] "middle" *middle*  
 / $\dot{+}$ /  $\rightarrow$  [v $\dot{+}$ ] "bees" *bees*

This means that all non continuants are realized as labiodental fricatives before the central high rounded vowel [ $\dot{+}$ ]. This affricate formation rule is formulated in the section where we discuss phonological

processes. The fact that [ + ] triggers many phonological processes does not imply that it cannot be considered as a phoneme in this language nor does the fact that it is always preceded by fricative-like sounds (does not stop us from postulating those fricative-like sounds as phonemes. Rather, what can be said about [ + ] in the southern dialect of Limbum is that the consonants have a fricative quality.

*how does it apply to  
like t, d, g, etc.*

We wish to point out that the labiodentalization process leads to the formation of complex consonants (affricates).

With this solution, all the other problems raised above are taken care of.

#### **2.1.1.1. PHONEMIC STATUS OF SOUTHERN LIMBUM CONSONANTS**

The sounds presented in the consonant chart above are not all attested in the systematic phonemic chart. This is because of a number of reasons. We consider some of these reasons below:

**[p]** This sound is considered a phone because its occurrence in this language is predictable by phonological rule. It occurs in this language only before voiceless consonants and in word final position. It is considered in this language as a variant of [b]. The rule to derive [p] is discussed in the section that discusses phonological processes. For this reason, this sound is excluded from the phonemic chart.

**[ʔ]** The glottal stop is limited in its occurrence as it occurs only in medial and syllable final positions. Fransen (1995) considers it as an allophone of /k/. She does not use it. We beg to differ with her on grounds of usage. We realize that it occurs after vowels in medial and syllable final positions, while /k/ occurs in initial and medial positions. The following examples show:

(7)	[káká]	“to worry”
	[kákà]	“wild garden eggs”
	[kákár]	“to stroll”
	[kaʔ]	“not”
	[kɛʔ]	“call”
	[kaʔ ʔ̣]	“to cut off”
	[kɛʔ ʔ̣]	“leg”

It is clear that [ʔ] and [k] are in complementary distribution and therefore are allophones of the same phoneme. Like in Mbili, its presence or absence will alter the meaning of an utterance. We therefore acknowledge its inclusion on the phonemic chart. At the level of the orthography, it will be represented by /'/.

[kw, gw, ŋkw, ŋgw, ŋw]. These sounds are considered as phonemes in our analysis for reasons that are discussed in Fiore [1987]. However, unlike Fiore (1987) and Fransen who considered these sounds as secondary articulations of labialization we argue here that they are sequences of consonants. These sounds are attested in other Mbam, Nkam languages. Besides, the syllable structure CCV(C) is attested in this language. Furthermore if we consider the skeletal tier analysis, we will treat such sequences as occupying a single slot, that is, two consonants occupying one slot on the skeletal tier.

[h] The glottal fricative like sound, is limited in its occurrence. This sound is believed to have come in from languages such as Fulfulde and Hausa, in words like “hába, “háràbàdá” and English “horpito” and “hama” for “hospital” and “hammer” respectively and is very limited in its occurrence as can be seen in the examples below.

In Limbum [h] occurs at initial position in the following words:

(8)	ha	"give" (northern variety)
	haar	"until"
	haba	"exclamation of surprise"
	ha'ntini	"next week" "last week"
	ha'ngani	"a year ago" "last year"

*you see the  
N is a digl*

*the  
N is a digl*

Even though its occurrence is terribly limited we include it on the phonemic and phonetic charts for two reasons that it is more plausible to appear at word initial than its counterpart ['] and that it plays a vital function- that of distinguishing meanings of lexical items and facilitates borrowing as an element of lexical expansion.

When these allophones are taken away from the phonetic chart above, the phonemic chart will be as shown on figure 2:2. For the prenasalized consonants, we postulate an archiphoneme [N] before all the stops since all nasals homorganize with their various partners.



## PHONEMIC CONSONANT CHART OF SOUTHERN LIMBUM

PLACE OF ARTICULATION MANNER OF ARTICULATION		Labial	Alveolar	Alveor Palatal	Palatal	Velar	Glotal
Stops	Vl		t				ʔ
	Vd	b	d			k	
	Prenas	mb	nt nd			g	
Affricates	Vl		ts	tʃ			
	Vd		dz	dʒ			
	Prenas						
Fricatives	vl	f	s	ʃ			
	vd	v	z	ʒ		ɣ	h
	prenas	mf					
Nasals	??	m̃	n		ɲ	ŋ	
	??	m					
Liquids	lateral		L nl				
	trill		r nr				
Glides		w			j		
		ɲw					

**Figure 2:2** <sup>newest</sup>

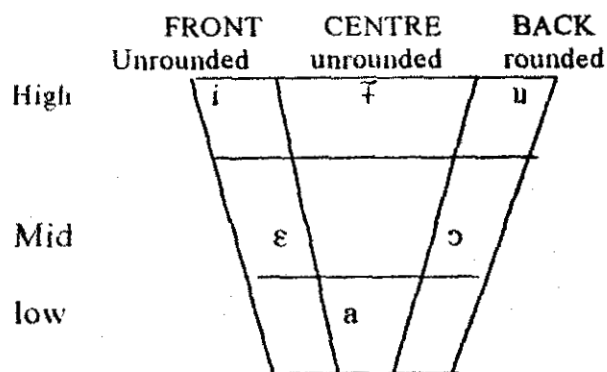
- you say nothing of the syllabic, which is a...  
 - the (consonant) about ʃr and where does it come from...  
 - how don't you clearly why at one pt...  
 - why the... L

### 2.1.1.2 ( VOWELS

In general, the commonest vowel system for Bantu languages is the 7-vowels system. It consists of three front vowels paralleled by three back vowels, with a low central vowel. In this section, we shall treat vowels of the various dialects against this background.

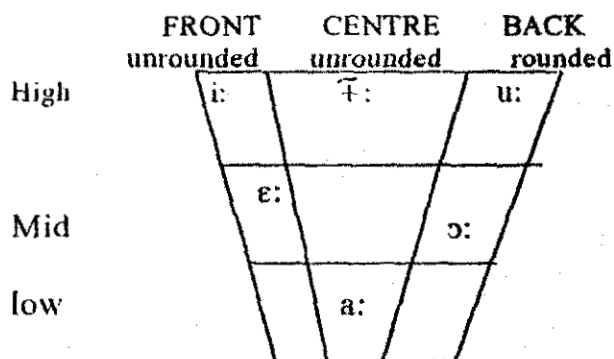
The vowel charts below contain vowels attested at the systematic phonetic level in southern dialect.

#### SHORT



*Figure 2:3*

#### LONG



*Figure 2:4*

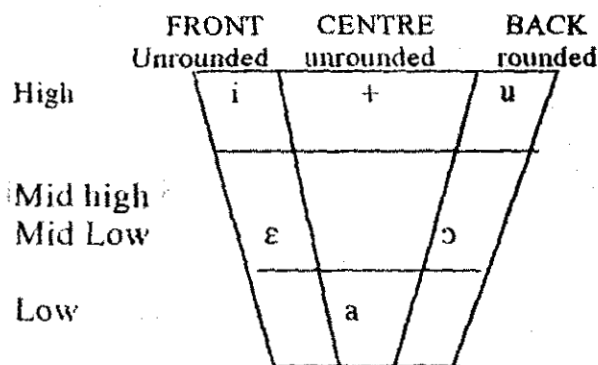
## 2.1.1.2.1 PHONEMIC STATUS OF THE VOWELS OF SOUTHREN LIMBUM

The sounds [i] and [i:] occur before [ŋ] and [r]. Their phonetic realizations are [i] and [i:].

The vowel /ɨ/ is realized as [w] when it occurs before [ŋ, v, f].

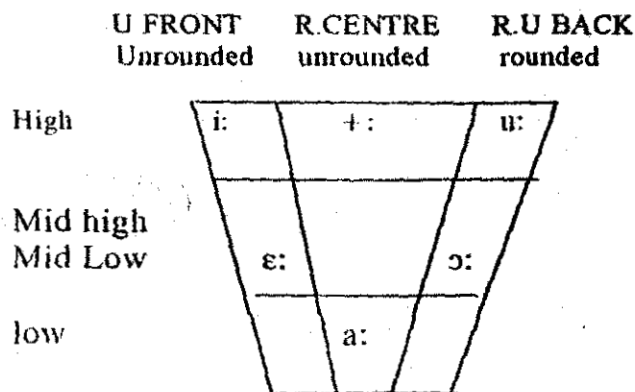
The vowels /ɛ /, /ɨ/ and /u/ are nasalised when they occur after nasal consonants. Following these considerations, the Southern Limbum vowel chart is as follows:

### SHORT



**Figure 2.5**

### LONG



**Figure 2.6**

From these charts we realise that the southern dialect has a 6-vowel system.

Although Fransen (1995:61) has established a six vowel chart with their consequent long vowels, she uses the grapheme *e* to represent mid-high vowel sound. The implication is that in that dialect, the sound is always [+tense], which is not always true.

### **2.1.2 THE CENTRAL DIALECT**

The chart below shows the consonants attested at the systematic phonetic level of the central dialect of Limbum.

# THE PHONETIC CHART OF CENTRAL LIMBUM

## PLACE OF ARTICULATION

MANNER OF ARTICULATION		Labial	Alveolar	Alveor palatal	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Stops	vl	p				Ⓚ	ʔ
	vd	b				g	
	Prenas	<sup>w</sup> b b <sup>y</sup>	t <sup>y</sup> d <sup>y</sup>			k <sup>y</sup> g <sup>y</sup>	
Affricates	vl				tʃ		
	vd				dʒ		
	Prenas						
Fricatives	vl	f	s	ʃ			h
	vd	v		ʒ		ɣ	
	Prenas	f <sup>y</sup> v <sup>y</sup>	s <sup>y</sup>				
Nasals		m	n		ɲ	ŋ	
		m <sup>y</sup>	n <sup>y</sup>			ŋ <sup>y</sup>	
Liquids	lateral		l l <sup>y</sup>				
	trill		r r <sup>y</sup>				
Glides		w			j		

state of glottis?

Figure 2:7

### 2.1.2.1.1 THE PHONEMIC STATUS OF SOUNDS:

Before we get into our discussion in this section, let us understand that the significant difference between the Southern and Central consonant chart is that the central has no prenasalized consonants. However labialization has been indicated instead of prenasalisation. Consequently, the above figure 2.7 does not show prenasalisation. Talking about the rest of the sounds, the following are excluded from the phonemic chart for various reasons:

[p] It is a voiceless bilabial stop, which does not occur syllable initially in central Limbum. As an allophone of /b/ its occurrence at coda is still disputable in words like /bàp/ "wing" /ndáp/ "house" and /fâp/ "snatch" phonetically, it is represented by [b] in loanwords from English. For example.

penknife	[bànév]
Peter	[bità]
passengers	[bàsénjà]

Consequently, we suggest its exclusion from the phonemic chart.

The palatalized consonants [b<sup>y</sup>, t<sup>y</sup>, d<sup>y</sup>, tʃ<sup>y</sup>, k<sup>y</sup>, g<sup>y</sup>, s<sup>y</sup>, ʃ<sup>y</sup>, ʎ<sup>y</sup>, m<sup>y</sup>, n<sup>y</sup>, p<sup>y</sup>, ŋ<sup>y</sup>, r<sup>y</sup>, v<sup>y</sup>] occur exclusively before [i]. They are therefore capturable by phonological rules. These are allophones of their respective unpalatalized counterparts.

[h] This sound is extremely limited in occurrence as earlier indicated in the section for the sound systems of the Southern dialect. Even though its frequency of occurrence is limited, we consider it here as a phoneme for the reasons given on page 26.

[ʒ] This sound is considered a variant of [j] (cf Fiore 1987:113). It occurs before [i] Fiore postulates a series of affricates before [+]. However, we

argued in the Southern dialect section that there are many problems, which will crop up once this solution is adopted. We equally do not consider labialized sounds and what Fiore [1987] calls weak palatalizations, as separate sounds. Rather, we consider them as CG (consonant Glides) sequences. The Cw sequences we believe may have emanated from Co sequence where "O" is any round vowel. While it is possible to consider these sounds, it is clear that they will add to the cost of the grammar. These allophones taken away, the systematic phonemic chart of Central Limbum will be as follows:

# CONSONANT CHART CENTRAL LIMBUM

## PLACE OF ARTICULATION

MANNER OF ARTICULATION		Labial	Alveolar	Alveor palatal	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Stops	vl		t			k	ʔ
	vd	b	d			g	
	Prenas						
Affricates	vl			tʃ			
	vd			dʒ			
	Prenaa						
Fricatives	vl	f	s	ʃ			h
	vd	v		ʒ		ɣ	
	Prenas						
Nasals		m	n		ɲ	ŋ	
		ɱ					
Liquids	lateral		l				
	trill		r				
Glides		w			j		

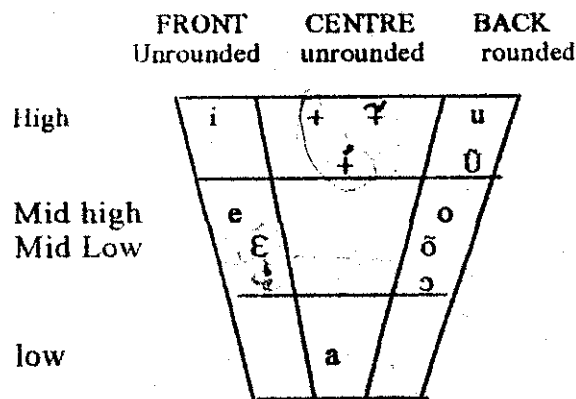
*Figure 2.8*



Notice that we have left out nasalised and palatalised consonants. This is because these are secondary articulations. Their place in the language will be discussed in the section for phonological processes. The glottal stop despite its limited occurrence has been maintained here as a separate phoneme also.

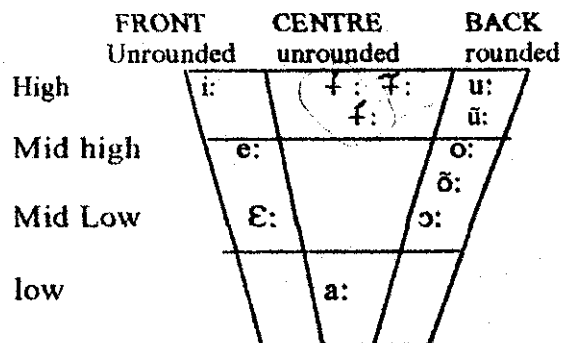
### 2.1.2.2 CENTRAL LIMBUM VOWELS: PHONETIC CHART

SHORT:



**Figure 2:9**

LONG :



**Figure 2:10**

### 2.1.2.2.1. PHONEMIC STATUS OF VOWELS

[ɨ, ɨ:, ɨ̃, ɨ̃:, ɨ̃:] simplified here as [ɨ] has been used by Fiore (1987:61) to represent the high back vowel [u]. The vowel occurs in open syllables and always proceeds non-nasal consonants. [u] Whether long or short is rare in open syllable in central Limbum e.g [bv +:] /b +:/ "White". Consequently, it is left out and the central systematic phonemic chart is as follows:

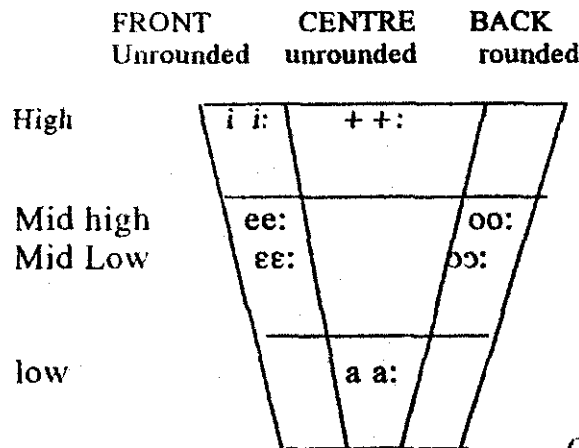


Figure 2:11

The central dialect thus has a seven vowel system but with different configurations.

### 2.1.3. THE NORTHERN CONSONANT CHARTS.

In our study we realize that the ordering of the Northern phonetic and phonemic consonant charts will be very much the same like those of the central dialect. This is because we realize that there are virtually no interesting differences in their manner and place of articulations. In this wise, we leave them out here, in order to avoid confusion and repetition.

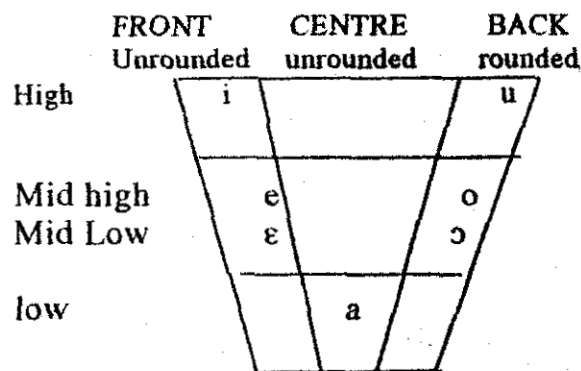
Since there are no differences we rather state here the order of the articulator parameters we have applied for the description of the phonetic and phonemic charts of central Limbum. We have taken into consideration the function of the larynx (voiced or voiceless in the vibration of the vocal

cords); place of articulation as per the position of the tongue (-ATR) or (-ATR) and manner of articulation-e.g stop, affricate, fricative, etc.

However, this situation does not obtain with the description of the vowel system, consequently, the vowel system for the Northern dialect appears hereunder.

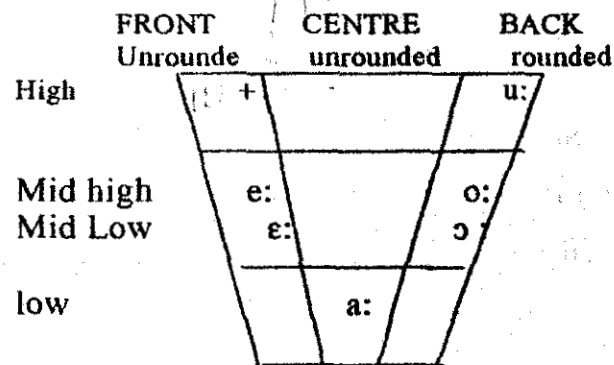
### 2.1.3.0 NORTHERN DIALECT VOWELS: CHART

#### SHORT:



*Figure 2:12*

#### LONG :



*Figure 2:13*

### 2.1.3.1 THE PHONEMIC STATUS OF NORTHERN

#### whole LIMBUM VOWELS.

Based on the above discussions, the northern systematic phonemic chart looks like this:

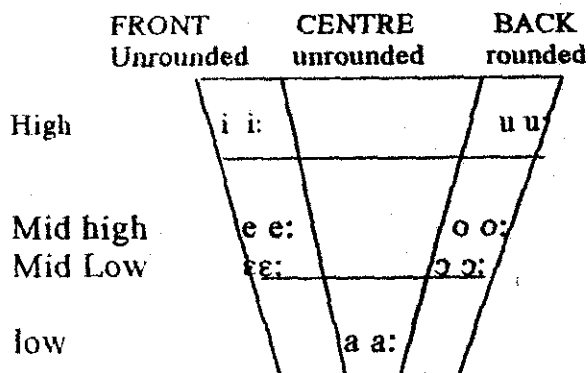


Figure 2:14

As can be seen from the above inventory of the Central and Northern vowel charts, they are very identical, except for the fact that the northern speakers use [u] high back open vowel in place of [ɨ] high central vowel of the central dialect.

Gloss	Northern	Central
"white"	[bu:] /bu:/	[bvɨ:] /bɨ:/
"waist"	[bu] /bu/ bu?	[bvɨ] /bɨ/ b.vɨ?
"goat"	[mbu] /mbu/	[mbvɨ] /mbɨ/

Consequently, we conclude that [u] is a variant of [ɨ] in these regions.

Just like the central dialect, the northern dialect has seven short vowels and seven long vowels.

#### 2.1.4.0 PERTINENT REMARKS

Notice that we have not included labialized sounds in the various charts for the following reasons. That this will add to the complication of the grammar. Fiore (1987) points out that these sounds come from sequences such as (CUV) where C is any consonant, (U) any round vowel

and (V) any other vowel. She argues that postulating such a sequence will produce an additional syllable type CVV which is not a syllable type of Limbum. Hence the preceding consonant has to be labialized. We agree with Fiore (1987) on the source of the glide especially if we bear in mind that most words that have such structures come from Proto Bantu noun classes, which are [mo-], [mu], etc.

Exs. ...

However, while we avoid creating an additional syllable type for the language, let us examine the rules that lead to that surface form.

A word like "slave" [ɲkwàà] may have come from /ɲkuàà/. The first rule to apply will be a rule of glide formation. That is, U  $\rightarrow$  w/-v. This concerns the high open back vowel /u/.

This rule will produce /ɲkwàà/. We will need an additional rule to transform [k<sup>w</sup>] to -kw- whereas if we consider -kw- as a sequence of two consonants CG, it will be cost free as we will apply only the glide formation rule, and the resulting syllable type(s) will be independently motivated as the CCV syllable type which already exists in the language. Rather, this analysis will reduce the number of sounds into the consonant charts of the two dialects.

Finally, in our inventories, we have left out sound descriptions, sound contrasts and distinctive feature matrices. This is because our work is based on the works of others and the principle of a harmonious orthography and thus we pay attention only to issues that are directly linked to our goals. The sound inventory done in the preceding section reveals that the dialects differ in terms of their sound systems, while there is limited disparity between the Northern and Central dialects, the Southern dialect differs greatly from the other two dialects both in its phonetic and phonemic charts.

The table below contains statistics of sound variations between the three dialects.

		NORTHERN AND CENTRAL	SOUTHERN
VOWELS	UR	14	12
	SR	22	20
CONSONANTS	UR	21	35
	SR	42	39
TOTAL			

Figure 2.15

While the Southern dialect contains 39 phonetic consonants, the Northern and Central dialects each has 42 identical consonants. At the phonemic level the difference is even more as the Southern dialect has 35 consonants while the Northern and Central each has 21. The vowel systems are also different. At the phonemic level, the Southern dialect has 12 while the Central and Northern dialects have 14 phonemes. At the phonetic level, the Northern dialect has 22 and the Southern dialect 20. Their distribution varies immensely as we move from the south to the north. An exhaustive list of similarities and differences between the sounds of the different dialects is discussed below. It is worth noting that Limbum is broken down into two dialects as far as the sound system is concerned. The Southern dialect and the Northern dialect (made up of the Central and Northern dialects). Their specific differences are stated here.

#### 2.1.4.1. CONSONANT CONTRAST

At the phonetic level the following consonant sounds are present in the North but absent in the South.

1. Palatalized consonants /b<sup>y</sup>, t<sup>y</sup>, d<sup>y</sup>, tʃ<sup>y</sup>, k<sup>y</sup>, m<sup>y</sup>, g<sup>y</sup>, s<sup>y</sup>, f<sup>y</sup>, v<sup>y</sup>, n<sup>y</sup>, ŋ<sup>y</sup>, r<sup>y</sup>, v<sup>y</sup>/, that is, all consonants are palatalised before [i] in the North but not in the South.
2. /m/ which is a result of the juxtaposition of two bilabial nasals in the Northern dialect.

*This is not discussed anywhere*

The following are absent in the North but present in the South:

1. The affricates /ts/ and /dz/
2. The voiced alveolar fricative /z/
3. The prenasalised consonants /mf/, /ns/, /nʃ/, /n ʒ/, /nl/, /nr/, /mb/, /nt/, /nd/, /ŋk/, /ŋg/.

The following sounds are attested in the Southern dialect but absent in the Northern dialect.

1. the labialised sounds k<sup>w</sup>, g<sup>w</sup>, ŋ<sup>w</sup> → cf pg 3
2. Prenasalized consonants /Nf/ mb, nt, nd, nl, ns, nʃ, n ʒ

#### 2.1.4.2 VOWEL CONTRAST

The following nasalised vowels attested in the phonetic chart of the Southern dialect are absent in the Northern dialect. [ɪ̃], [ɪ̃:], [ɛ̃], [ɛ̃:]

The following vowels attested in the phonetic chart of the Northern dialect but absent in the Southern dialect. [e], [o], [o:]

At the phonemic level, the sounds listed in (A) below are present in the Southern dialect but absent in the Northern dialect, while those in (B) are present in the Northern and absent in the Southern.

A) /ɪ̃/, /ɪ̃:/

B) /e/, /e:/, /o/, /o:/

The differences registered above, reveal that Limbum needs standardisation and this process has to start with the sound system in order to lay grounds for a good orthographic system

The sounds that are common to the two dialects we expect should be maximally exploited in the orthography design while the differences are

adapted and fitted into the orthography. The following sounds are common to the two dialects:

1. **Consonants:**

a) PHONETIC: [p, t, k, ʔ, b, d, g, tʃ, h, f, v, s, ʃ, ʒ, m, n, ɲ, ŋ, l, r, w, j, m]

b) PHONEMIC: / b, t, d, k, g, tʃ, f, v, s, ʃ, ʒ, m, n, l, r, w, j, m/

2. **Vowels:**

a) PHONETIC: [i, i:, ε, ε:, ɔ, ɔ:, a, a], ʌ

b) PHONEMIC: /i, i:, u, u:, ε, ε, ɔ, ɔ:, a:, a, /

The preceding section has done an inventory of Limbum sounds both phonetically and phonemically. One may wonder why phonology should be a cause for concern here. Young (1962) answers this question: *Page*

*...languages of the same language family should be phonologically compared in order to standardize orthographies.*

It is believed that this approach will facilitate reading and teaching skills of a second language, but other linguists hold that it is not advisable to mix dialects because the results will probably please no one, as the issue of a multidialects orthography in orthography designs in multidialectal settings appear artificial to them. Simons (1977:327) very aptly forestalls this view by proposing principle 5 of multidialectal orthography design:

*The approach I am suggesting is not one of dialect mixture but one of dialect comparison to discover levels of phonological structure at which skewed systems converge. (principle 5). By lifting an insistence on "phonemic" orthographies, we may be able to discover a solution at a phonetic, morphophonemic, or fast speech level which finds agreement between all dialects, whereas the phonemic*



*solution would find disagreement. When such a solution is possible, the result is an orthography which is both multidialectal and the way everybody speaks.*

This excerpt reveals that a solid phonological foundation must be built for a solid orthography and that a phonological analysis that pays attention to the phonetic and phonemic levels is best. This makes our choice of, first the standard generative phonology model, the Autosegmental theory and even classical phonemics *prima facie*. We do believe that based on the recommendations of the various experts outlined above, a sound foundation has been constructed for a standard orthography for Limbum.

However, before we embark on proposing an orthography, we examine first, the syllable structure of the various dialects which is followed by the word structure of the dialects and then the phonological rules that map sounds at the phonetic and phonemic levels in the language .

## **2.2.0 THE SYLLABLE STRUCTURE OF DIALECTS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

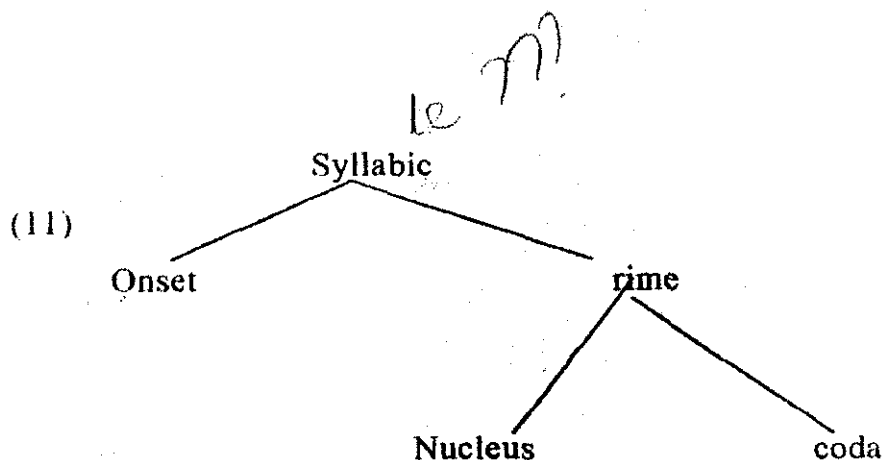
While the syllable has remained elusive, because of its lack of a direct phonetic correlate, it remains an essential phonological component in a language. Kenstowicz (1994:250) points to the central role that the syllable plays in the phonology of a language in these words:

*...the syllable is a natural domain for the statement of many phonotactic constraints. Second phonological rules are often more simply and insightfully expressed if they explicitly refer to the syllable. Finally, several phonological processes are best interpreted as*

*methods to ensure that the string of phonological segments is parsable into syllables.*

The syllable is therefore an essential part of the phonology of a language, this makes it imperative for us to discuss the syllable structure of Limbum in this work if the phonology aimed at in the chapter has to be complete.

According to Hyman (1975), a syllable is made up of three major parts: the onset, which is optional, the nucleus, which is compulsory, and an optional coda. For analytical purposes, the syllable is first broken down into two parts. This bifurcation contains the onset and the rime. The rime is then broken down into the nucleus and coda. Kenstowicz (1994:253) illustrates this as follows:



Our discussion of the syllable structure will be based on the non-linear theory proposed by Kiparsky (1981) and Steriade (1982).

*1982 in bablio*

Since the Nucleus is the essential element in a syllable, it is considered the core in this x-bar model. The onset is like the specifier of the nucleus just like a determiner in the noun phrase, "The boy who came". The coda is a complement of the nucleus just like, "who came" is

a complement of "boy". Consider the syntactic analysis of "The boy who came" and the analogical analysis of the syllable "sit" below:

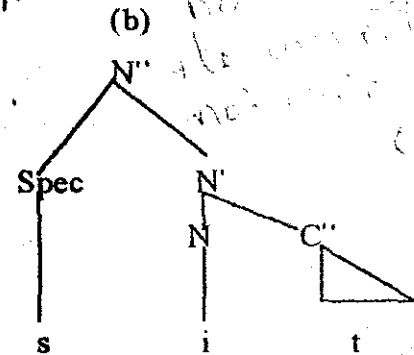
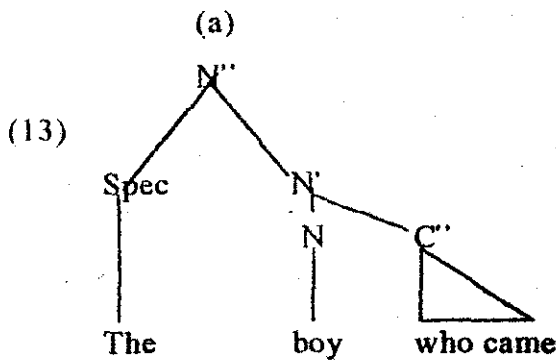
(12)

(a)  
"The boy who came"

(b)  
"sit"

In the phrase (a) "boy" is the core because without "boy" the determiner "the" will not exist and the complement "who came" will have no meaning.

In (b) [i] is the core of the syllable because without it [s] and [t] will not be meaningfully pronounced in English. As a result, while the noun (N) "boy" is the head of the phrase in (a) [i] is the head of the syllable in (b) hence the analysis below:



*Handwritten notes:*  
 does N in (a) mean the...  
 mean the...  
 list of abbr. N = ?  
 The three models

This x-bar ( $\bar{X}$ ) model together with other syllable principles guide our analysis of the syllable structure of Limbum in this section of our work.

Before we resume our discussion of the different dialects of Limbum, it will be crucial to examine some of these principles in brief.

*Handwritten note:* which?

1. The Core Syllables: It has been observed that the following syllables are attested in almost all world languages. V, CV, and CVC. Consequently, the following syllabification rules have been postulated.

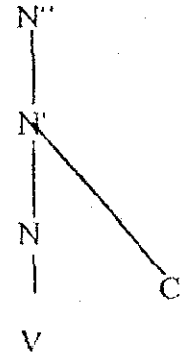
R1 Nucleus formation rule.



R2 Onset Rule



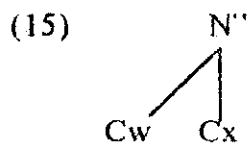
R3 Coda Rule



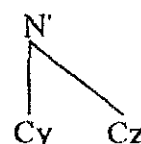
Rule 1 which must apply first, associates a vowel to a nucleus slot. The application of this rule produces a V-syllable type. If after the application of Rule 1 there are unassociated consonants, then apply R2 which assigns the first consonants on the left of the nucleus to the N'' slot. This will produce a CV-syllable type. If there are any consonants unassociated to the right of the nucleus, then apply Rule 3, by associating the first consonant to the N'-slot. Once this is done, we may have a CVC, or a VC-syllable type.

However, there are some languages that still have consonants unassociated after the formation of the four core syllables above. Steriade (1982) proposes rules that can augment either the onset or codas of a core syllable. These rules adapted from Kinstowicz (1994:225) are stated below:

Rule 4:



Rule 5:



Rule 4 assigns an unincorporated consonant to the onset position while Rule 5 assigns an unincorporated consonant to the coda position.

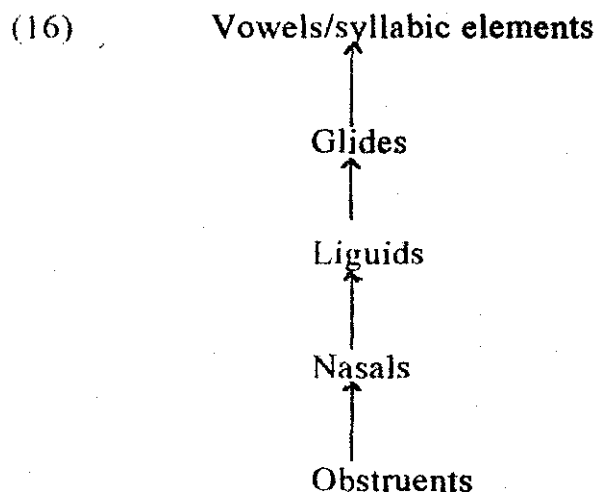
*after nucleus*

The application of these rules will produce complex syllable types. However, the application of these rules is governed by some principles.

## 2. The Sonority Sequencing Principle (SSP)

This principle requires that consonants must rise in sonority towards the nucleus and fall in sonority from the nucleus. This means that in applying our augmentation rules, we should respect this principle. The nearest consonant to the nucleus should be the most sonorous of all the elements in either the onset or the coda. Consequently, CW must not be more sonorous than CX and similarly Cy should not be less sonorous than CZ. Following this principle, a syllable can be seen as a pattern of increasing sonority from the beginning towards the peak or nucleus, followed by a decreasing sonority from the peak to the end of the syllable. Combinational possibilities of segments are then, however partial, explained by <sup>the</sup> sonority hierarchy.

The sonority hierarchy (Clements (1990:293) is as follows:



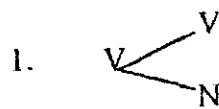
This ranking of features indicates the direction of increasing sonority. It is a necessary ingredient for the study of the syllable structure of a language. In the section that follows, it will be used to facilitate the understanding of the shape and structures of Limbum syllables

## 2.2.1 THE SYLLABLE STRUCTURE OF SOUTHERN LIMBUM

As observed in Fransen (1995), Limbum South, the three core syllables are attested in this dialect. That is the V, CV and CVC. These are illustrated in (4) below:

4a)	V	<i>Singular</i>	CV		CVC
(17)	à	"you"	to	"hole"	siŋ "bird"
	i	"he"	bí	"invite"	saj "to write"
			ye	"to see"	kib "to break"

However, in this language there are two elements that can fill the V-slot of the V syllable type. It can either be a vowel or a syllabic consonant. Thus, the core syllables attested in Southern Limbum are:



*N to show syllabic*

2. CV

3. CVC

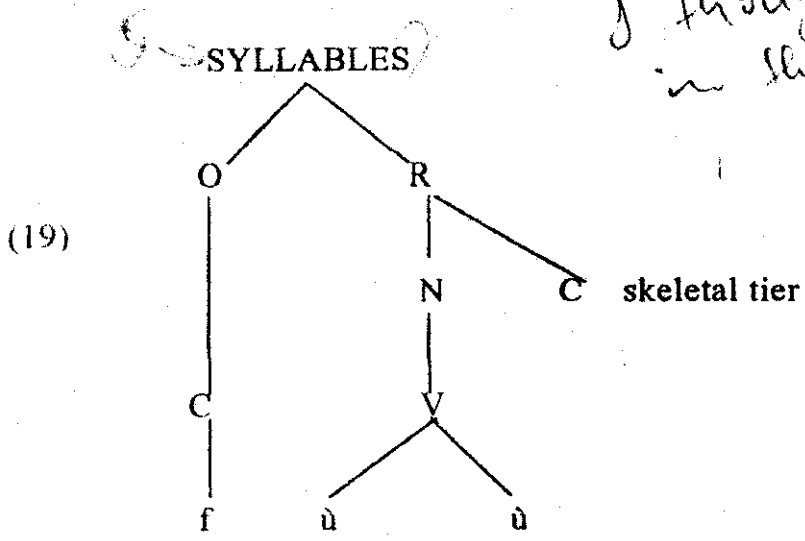
However, there are some sequences that deserve particular attention. Consider the data below:

(18)	fùù	"leaf"
	tóó	"supporting pole"
	bèè	"people"
	yéé	"to sing"
	wáá	"to shout"
	túú	"to send"

*(Verb) to sing, to shout, to send*  
*Ncl. people*

The problem that we have here is whether to consider the structures above as CV-syllables or as CVV syllables. An examination of the data above

reveals that the V V sequences are always identical. Besides they always bear identical tones. If we treat them as single individual phonemes Limbum will have V + V: that is, 12 vowels. This will be going against our earlier proposal. For this reason, we propose here that these vowels are phonetic realizations of the same vowel. We argue that following the skeletal tier analysis; the two vowels occupy one V-slot on the skeletal tier as illustrated below:



With this analysis, the CVV syllable proposed in Fransen (1995) is reduced to a CV-syllable type. This also reduces the CCVV syllable type to a CCV-syllable. This leaves us with a six vowel system for the Southern dialect.

Our next problem is words that contain syllables with complex onsets and codas. Consider the data below.

- |        |            |            |     |         |           |
|--------|------------|------------|-----|---------|-----------|
| 20) a) | [ʒw ɔ̃]    | “to kill”  | (b) | bbàa    | “bags”    |
|        | [ʃw ɔ̃ ɔ̃] | “to press” |     | btàa    | “insects” |
|        | [bz ɔ̃ ɔ̃] | “plant”    |     | blàaba' | “shoes”   |
- H. ...*

The above words enjoy the processes of palatalization, and labialization. Fransen (1995) and Fiore (1987) propose that these sequences are labialized and palatalized consonants. However, our position is that they are consonant clusters. That consonant clusters exist in this language is justified by the data in (b) above where they are illustrated

- (21) /b + baa/ → [bbaa] "bags"  
 /b + taa/ → [ptaa] "insects"  
 /b + lààba?/ → [blàaba] "shoes"

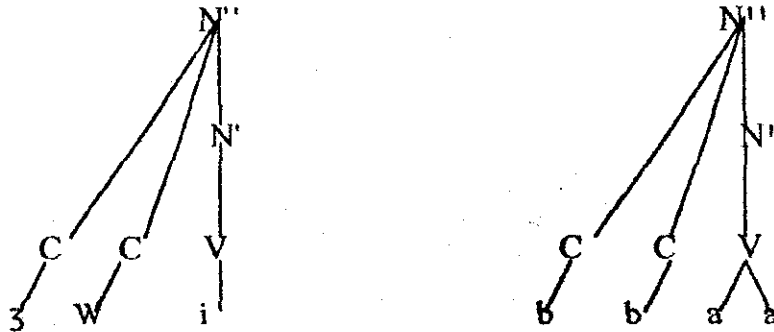
This nominal prefix as will be shown in chapter three seems to come from the Proto Bantu class two prefix –whose vowel has been dropped over the years. Our concern here is the syllable structure of these words. Below, we apply the syllabification rules discussed earlier in this section.

/ʒ w +/ "kill" /bbàa/ "bags"

If we apply the rules above, the representation will be as follows:

(22)

R2

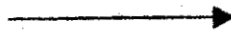
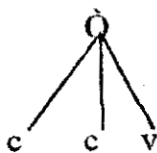


Following our core syllables rules, R2, will assign the first elements of the left of the nucleus to the N' slot, but not /ʒ / and /b/. These elements remain unassociated until we apply the sonority hierarchy principle. By this means, complex segments are counted as one single unit. It is this unit that is relevant for the sonority potential as the elements combine up and down the syllable peak.

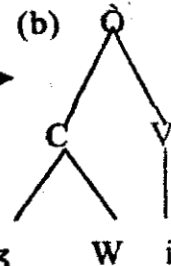
The sonority hierarchy principle is more plausible than the core syllables principle, which would apparently lead us to a defective application of onset augmentation rules 4 and 5 (see page 48). Proceeding with the sonority hierarchy principle, glides are more sonorous than fricatives. So, in order to arrive at our sonority plateau, [ʒw+], we use the following schema.



(23) a)

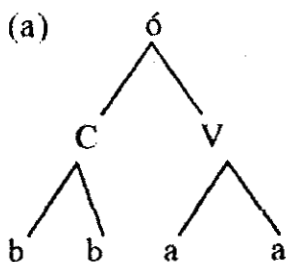


(b)

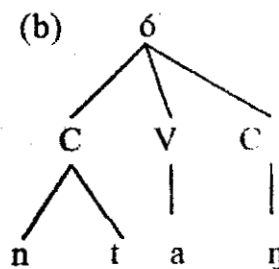


This approach helps us to be able to state the syllabic representation of other types of words, such as bbàa, “bags”, ntaŋ “advice”, ŋkwàa, “slave” and ŋkweŋ “cataract”.

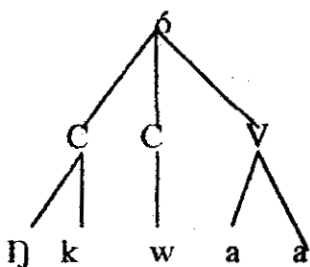
(24) (a)



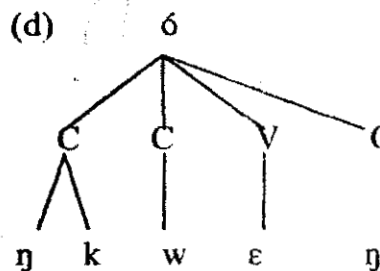
(b)



(c)



(d)



The application of the sonority hierarchy principle has made it possible for us to produce CV, CVC, CCV and CCVC syllable types from words that contain complex segments. At this point we could contain ourselves with these derivations and leave the syllable structure at that. But what about syllabic nasals and palatalized consonants (page 36)? We earlier mentioned nasalized and palatalized consonants just in passing, but let us demonstrate here the problems they raise in the analysis of the syllable structure. We consider the words below:

(25) (A)	<u>Singular</u>	→	<u>Plural</u>
	/mbab/ "rat"	→	/m-mbab/ "rats"
	/ndon/ "cup"	→	/m-ndon/ "cups"
	/ɲwà/ "book"	→	/mɲwà/ "books"
(B)	/kwàŋ/ "bracelet"	→	/bkwàŋ/ "bracelets"
	/kwàkwàr/ "musical instrument"	→	/bkwàkwàr/ "musical instruments"
	<i>kind of</i> /gwàgwá/ "duck"	→	/bgwàgwá/ "ducks"
(C)	/rYòYò/ "worm"	→	/mYòYò/ "worms"
	/rkár/ "wheel"	→	/mkar/ "wheels"
	/rgwán/ "jigger"	→	/mgwán/ "jiggers"
(D)	/mbv +/ "goat"	→	/mmbv +/ "goats"
	/mb +/ "testis"	→	/mmb +/ "testis"

For this reason, the words in the data above could be syllabified following the sonority hierarchy principles as follows:

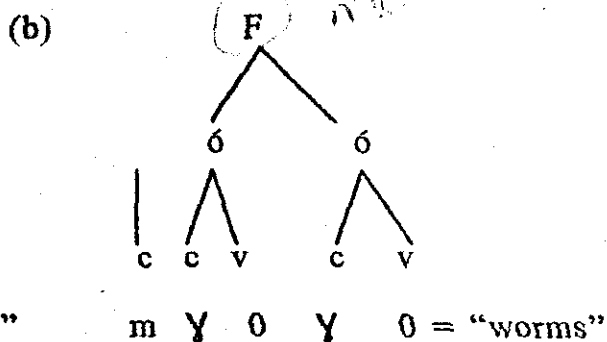
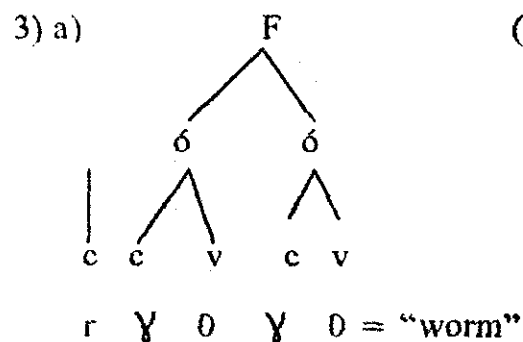
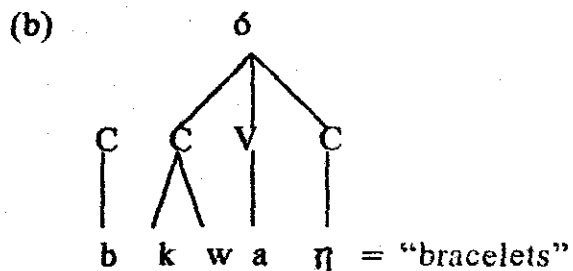
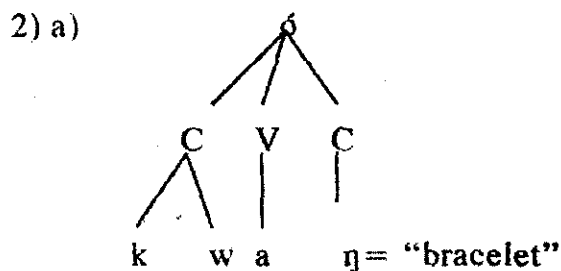
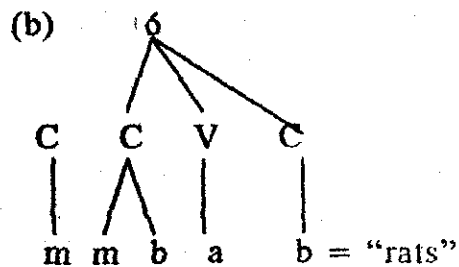
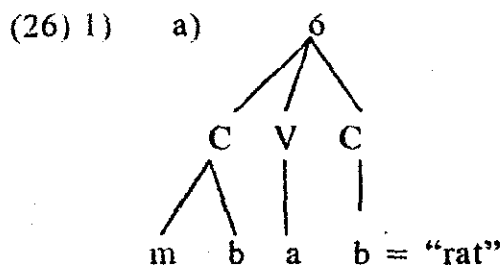
The initial nasals in (A) above are nominal class prefixes. In the same way [r] in C is also a nominal class prefix.

As far as the syllable structures of the words in (A) and (C) are concerned, Fransen (1995:43) has this to say:

*The basic syllable types mentioned above  
Show the canonical structures of roots. By  
Morphological operations, such as  
affixation of the prefix, the syllable  
receives a more complex structure.  
These words display a CCCV (C)  
structure caused by the affixation of  
r- and m-*

Thus, according to Fransen, the data above can be syllabified into CCCV and CCCVC Syllable types. We do not agree with this solution for a number of reasons:

The nasals in (A) and the [r] in (C) above are nominal class prefixes which Fransen (1995) and Fiore (1987) do not consider syllabic. But we argue here that these are syllabic sounds because when the native speaker is made to hum or whistle especially the words in (A), he whistles twice in each case revealing that the words are bisyllabic. Evidence to this is the fact that these nasals fail to homorganize as those in the singular nouns in (D).



Recall that we consider prenasalized consonants as consisting of complex sounds in this language while a sequence of a consonant followed by a

glide are considered as consonant clusters. Clusters are known for raising difficult problems of analysis. In the cases above, the main problem is that some segments have been left unassociated, with labialized and palatalized stops are treated as single segments. *while*

To be more precised, we realize that examples b demonstrate syllabic consonants which are followed on 1 and 2 by consonant clusters. The syllabic consonants are labials and nasals while in example three, a syllabic liquid changes into a syllabic nasal in the plural. What actually happens is certainly outside the scope of this work, but the essential thing here is that /m/, /b/ and /r/ are outside the syllabic structures. Consequently, they demonstrate features of extrasyllabicity ( a particular segment which might not be assigned to the syllable).

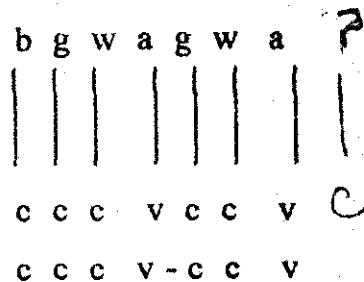
This concept is useful in our present discussion on syllable structure because we have already seen cases that have been left unassigned to the syllable by our sonority hierarchy principle. The words containing such segments are morphologically complex. As shown in the above representations in the words mmbàb, bkwàŋ, rghòghò and mghòghò /b,r,m/ are structurally outside the syllable. They bear tones and are syllabic. *why*

The extrasyllabic rule applies at the stage at which structural conditions such as the sonority hierarchy can no longer be valid or successfully apply. This partial independence of the syllabic stop, nasal and trill are certainly not part of the syllable, but are extrasyllabic, Wiese (1996:48). We should also point out here that extrasyllabic segments are associated to the word-node. *???*

Consequently, what Fransen describes as CCVC could be reduced to C<sup>n</sup>C<sup>w</sup> VC which is equivalent to V-CVC syllable types – syllables that are independently motivated in this language. Were it not the case, the data below would pose problems of analysis as can be seen in the discussion that follows:

- (27) [bgwagwa] "ducks"  
 [mkwar] "ticks"

Normally, words of this nature require that we postulate a CCCV (C) syllable that we have avoided above. This is illustrated below.



By not considering CG as a sound in this language can trigger a debate on the above representation. If we postulate a CCCV syllable type it will not be plausible. What solution do we then adopt in this situation? We believe here that the problem lies in the way that the words are written. The sequence Glide followed by a consonant (CG) are always confusing. They can be written in one of the three ways: CGV, CVGV, or CVV. That is, the word above can be written as:

1. bgwagwa
2. bguwaguwa
3. bguagua

1995

As far as this is concerned, Mutaka and Tamanji (1994) say that the general structure of the language should be considered. If the language exhibits a VV sequence where the two Vs are different then the third option above should be adopted. But we do not have such a combination in the language. That is, we do not have a +e combination or e + a or o + e combinations anywhere in this language and thus the third option is out of the question.

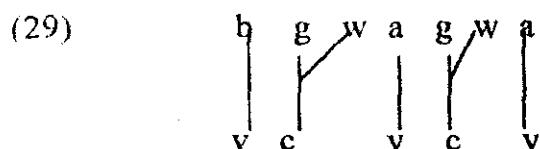
Remember also that we earlier had problems with considering the first option because of cost. And thus it remains a problematic structure. Fiore (1987) adopts this presentation for strong labialization but as we realize, it is problematic for our syllabification process.

Mutaka and Tamanji (1994) also points out that the syllable structure of the language in question should also be considered. If the preferred syllable of the language is CV then the second option is appropriate. This seems to be the case with Limbum.

Fiore (1987:51) notes about the Limbum syllable:

*As mentioned before, there is a tendency in Limbum towards CV syllables. There are also tendencies away from consonant clusters...*

Greenberg (1978:243) notes on his part that consonant clusters have a marked status and makes reference to the diachronic tendency towards their simplification. From the various views above, it is revealed that while the CV syllable is highlighted and tends to be preferred in Limbum, consonant clusters should be avoided as much as possible. Consequently, we adopt the second option that is, the CCV, - CV, - CVCV, -CV structure. Hence the word bgwagwa “ducks”, can be captured as follows :



V-CVCV

This ties in with our extrasyllabic solution presented above, since it comes out clear that the b- plural prefix just like the m- plural prefix and the r- nominal prefix are not actually features of the syllable, but like in Swahili are regularly realized as syllabic before consonants (Clements 2000:147)

In conclusion, we state that the Southern dialect of Limbum has the following syllable types: V, CV, CVC, CCV, CCVC, and that the V- syllable type can be a vowel, a syllabic [m]; [b] or [r]. These syllable types, 5 in number are fewer than the 9 postulated in Franssen (1995:41 and 43).

It should however be noted that this language is essentially an open syllable language and that sounds that occur in coda positions are nasals, the alveolar trill [r] and the glottal stop, which is considered a surface manifestation of [k].

It is worth pointing out here that the syllable structure discussed in this section on Southern Limbum is not very much different from the Central and Northern Limbum. In the next section, we do not discuss these dialects rather we embark on illustrating that our discussions on the Southern dialect syllable are also applicable to these other dialects. We present only a few illustrations to show that with the application of the non linear theories in syllabification, the three dialects are brought to one in terms of syllable types.

### **2.2.2 THE SYLLABLE STRUCTURE OF THE CENTRAL AND NORTHERN DIALECTS.**

Recall that as far as phonology is concerned, Limbum is broken down only into two dialects with the Central dialect fused with the northern dialect.

We equally point out here that as far as the syllabic structure of words is concerned, there are no differences. However, this is only achieved thanks to the application of explanatorily adequate and appropriate theories.

To justify the claim that the same syllable types attested in Southern Limbum are also attested in the Central and Northern dialects, we present the syllable types proposed for Southern Limbum by Fransen (1995) and those proposed for central Limbum by Fiore (1987). This will reveal that they are identical and as a result, the discussions advanced for Southern Limbum will apply to the central and northern varieties.

Fransen's (1995) Southern Limbum syllables		Fiore's (1987) Central Limbum Syllables	
Syllable type	Example of word	Syllable type	Example of word
V	[i] "he", "she"	V	[è] "he, she subj"
N	/mtaar/ "thirty" <i>Syll</i>	N	{m-ta} "fifty"
CV	/tɔ/ "hole"	CV	[sè] "to be tired"
CVC	/sin/ "bird /"	CVC	[kòr] "to tie"
CCV	/ɜw + / "to kill" "bear"	CCV	[blò] "honey"
CCVC	/djar/ "carelessness"	CCVC	[mfu:r] "crysops fly"
-	-	VC	[árbo?] "It is a pumpkin"
-	-	- ?	- ?
CVV	/tɔɔ/ "supporting pole"	-	-
CCVV	/fw + + / "to press"	-	-
CCCVC	/rdj + b / "stream"		
CCCV	/mbj + / "kola nuts"		

Figure 2.16

There are some syllables as we will notice that are found in the Southern dialect but absent in the north and vis versa. These differences come from the analyses and the assumptions that the two writers make.

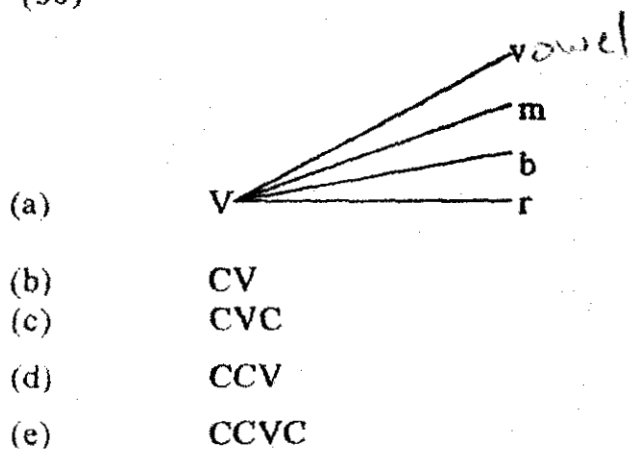
For example, while Fiore (1987) considers VV as a single vowel, Fransen (1995) considers them as two different vowels.

The results are the differences. The analysis that we have done in our work neutralizes these differences and in a way harmonizes one aspect of the different dialects, which might have constituted a problem to the designing of a harmonious orthography.



To close this discussion on the Limbum syllable structure, we conclude that while the sound system of the language especially the vowel system needs harmonization, the syllable structures are unique and need no standardisation. Also that the syllabic segment in Limbum constitutes a peak and bears a tone. And that [m] syllabic nasal is a counterpart of non-syllabic nasals [m,n,ŋ]. The something obtains with syllabic [b] and [r]. The five syllable types attested in Limbum will therefore be.

(30)



### 2.2.3 WORD STRUCTURE

In this section, we examine in brief the structure of words of the various dialects in terms of the number of syllables that a word may contain. Since the syllable structure of the various dialects is the same, we believe that the word structure will not exhibit much variation. As a result, we will treat the word structure of the dialects integrately.

**Monosyllabic Words:** Monosyllabic words are attested in all the Limbum dialects. Examples are presented below:

(31)

1. V- types

*poly nabi e a...*

/e/ } "he" "she"

/i/ }

2. CV- types

/kùu/ "leg"  
/ti/ "tea" <sup>l</sup>  
/tó/ "hole"

3. CVC- types

/ʃáŋ/ "prison"  
/tòŋ/ "sunbird"  
/áŋ/ "feed" <sup>náŋ</sup>  
/Yáb/ "vomit"

4. CCV- types

/ŋkwàa/ "slave" <sup>???</sup>  
/ŋgwà/ "wife"  
/ŋkáa/ "monkey" <sup>nl. 1000</sup>

5. CCVC- types

/ŋgwàr/ "chisel"  
/ŋkwɛŋ/ "cataract"  
/nsɛr/ "argument"

To round up this, discussion on syllable structure, let us make a brief statement on the distribution of phonemes in the syllable. In a CV (C) structure, all consonants may occur in syllable initial position, but only /b/, /k/, [ʔ] and /r/ occur in coda position. [ʔ] an allophone of /k/ is shown here because it has been given a separate realisation in this work.

In the case of a CCVC syllable type, the something obtains, for the fact that the first slot may be occupied by a nasal, prenasalised consonant cluster or syllabic consonant. <sup>CCVC syllable type</sup>

### 2.3.0. PHONOLOGICAL PROCESSES OF LIMBUM:

The choice of processes to be treated in this section are dictated by the basic objective of this work-standardisation. Consequently we go for those that will facilitate the attainment of our objective.

## 2.3.1 PHONOLOGICAL PROCESSES OF THE SOUTHERN DIALECT

### 2.3.1.1 HOMORGRANIC NASAL ASSIMILATION (HNA)

This is a process whereby a nasal consonant assimilates the place features of a following adjacent consonant. The process depends on the classes of consonants triggering it. In Limbum, the nasal consonants labial [m], alveor-palatal [n] and velar [ŋ] are found before labial, alveolar and velar stops. [m] and [n] appear before labial, alveolar and alveor-palatal fricatives as well as alveolar liquids. [n] specifically appears before alveor-palatal affricates. These configurations can be demonstrated by the examples below:

(32)	<u>singular</u>	<u>gloss</u>	<u>plural</u>	<u>gloss</u>
(m)	[mbàb]	rat	[m-mbàb]	rats
	[mtʃeb]	medicine	[mtʃeb]	medicines
	[mfóo]	fat	[m-mfóo]	fat
	[rg + r]	maggot	[m- gvr]	maggots
	[rkàr]	scabby	[m-kàr]	scabbies
	[rdʒ:]	grass	[m-dʒ:]	grass
	[rliʔ]	sweat "drop"	[m-liʔ]	sweat
	[rùʔ]	palm wine to be tapped	[m-rùʔ]	palm wine
	[rsán]	rice grain	[m-sán]	rice
	[rtɛ:]	palm tree	[m-te:]	palm tree
			nli	
(n)	[ntʃá]	fish	[n-tʃá]	fish
	[ndón]	cup	[m-ndón]	cups
	[nfje + ]	nose	[m-nfe + ]	noses
	[ndʒán]	xylophone	[n- ndʒán]	xylophone
	[nlàa]	gum	[n- nlàa]	gum
	[nser]	argument	[m- nser]	arguments

	[ntán]	advice	[m- ntán]	pieces of advice
(ŋ)	[ŋgàŋ]	vein	[m- ŋgàŋ]	veins
	[ŋká:]	monkey	[m- ŋká:]	monkeys
	[ŋwà?]	book	[m- ŋwà?]	books

Notice that the singular marker varies [m], [n], [ŋ], and [r]. A cross examination of the data shows that in Limbum, there is one underlying nasal phoneme which has the above phonetic variants. The phonetic variants' occurrences are triggered by the following consonants- causing the nasal to adjust to the place features of each following consonant. This is what is referred to as Hormoganic Nasal Assimilation. By this process therefore, the labial nasal [m] is found before labial, alveolar and velar stops. It also comes before voiceless alveolar fricatives, but this configuration is limited. Meanwhile, the alveolar- palatal nasal is found before alveolar stops, fricatives and liquids. It also comes before alveolar- palatal affricates. The velar nasal [ŋ] is found basically before labial glides and velar stops.

*(this is not HNA)  
Following in above data proves this*

### 2.3.1.2 FRICATIVIZATION (Fr)

Two fricativization rules are stated in four above.

The rules are:

- (33) (a) W → v/ ——— [+]
- (b) ʒ → z/ ——— [+]

In the first rule, the bilabial glide /w/ is transformed to its fricative allophone /v/ when it is followed by [+]. Similarly, / ʒ/ changes to /z/ when followed by [+]. Looking at the examples on page 33, we can conclude that the basic sounds here are /w/ and / ʒ/. Since they never occur before [+], it is but logical that they must be the underlying sounds

undergoing the change. This solution is more plausible as it accounts for the change that takes place from North to South. For example: to give birth

[bʲɪ] → [bɜɪ] → [bzɪ]

More of these examples are on page 80.

### 2.3.1.3 LABIODENTALIZATION

This process describes and captures a situation where a sound is transformed into a labiodental affricate. The rule states that alveolar stops, nasals, laterals and velar stops (obstruents) transform into labial fricatives before the high central unrounded tense vowel [ɨ̥]. This rule is illustrated below:

(34)	/bɨ̥/	→	[bvɨ̥]	“ashes”
	/dɨ̥ɨ̥/	→	[dvɨ̥:]	“be rowdy”
	/tɨ̥/	→	[tvɨ̥]	“deep spot in a stream/river”.
	/kɨ̥/	→	[kvɨ̥]	“rope”
	/lɨ̥r/	→	[lvɨ̥r]	“fool (n)”
	/mɨ̥ɨ̥/	→	[mvɨ̥ɨ̥]	“inside”
	/nɨ̥/	→	[nvɨ̥]	“God”

The P- rule that captures this phenomenon is below:

∅ → v/ — ɨ̥

### 2.3.1.4 FRICATIVE DEVOICING

*fricative* <sup>971</sup>  
 This is a situation where a consonant takes over the voiceless quality because of the preceding consonant. This process which must be ordered before labiodentalization applies to a fricative that has been created as a result of the application of labiodentalization. If the resulting affricate has its fricative component as voiced when the stop component is voiceless, the

voiced counterpart must be devoiced. This is illustrated in the data below:

(35)	/ʃ ÷ ÷/	→	[f ÷ ÷]	"tie"
	/t ÷ ÷ r/	→	[t f ÷ ÷ r]	"hold"
	/t ÷ /	→	[t f ÷]	"deep pool"
	/k ÷ /	→	[k f ÷]	"rope"

This phenomenon can be captured by the following P- rule;

$$\emptyset \longrightarrow f/ \longrightarrow \overset{\circ}{\div}$$

### 2.3.1.5 b - DEVOICING

Devoicing also takes place when [b] precedes a voiceless consonant as shown in (36) below.

(36)	/btāa/	→	[ptā:]	"traps"
	/bībs ÷ /	→	[bīps ÷]	"to destroy"
	/ndābjà/	→	[ndāpjà]	"drinking (corn beer house)"

The rule that captures this phenomenon is formulated below:

$$/b/ \longrightarrow [p]/ \left[ \begin{array}{c} \div \\ s \\ j \end{array} \right]$$

A bilabial plosive is devoiced before a voiceless consonant.

### 2.3.1.6 . FINAL CONSONANT DEVOICING

This rule states that all non nasal consonants are devoiced at word final position. The claim made here is that all non nasal consonants at word final position in this dialect are voiceless. That is, we can never find voiced oral consonants at word final position.

$$\left( \begin{array}{l} + \text{ cons} \\ - \text{ nas} \end{array} \right) \longrightarrow \left( - \text{ voice} \right) / \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } \#$$

Nasal consonants become devoiced at word final positions.

The above P- rule can be demonstrated using the following examples:

(37)

/nts + b/	→	[ntsèp]	“advice”
/mbèb/	→	[mbép]	“side”
/fìb/	→	[fìp]	“cheat”
/ŋgàr/	→	[ŋgàr]	“ant”
/nsùr/	→	[nsur]	“palm beetle or grub”
/n or/	→	[nór]	“body”

Non-nasal consonants that come at word final position in this case are /b/ and /r/. The glottal stop /ʔ/ is excluded.

### 2.3.1.7 VOWEL NASALIZATION

This refers to the process whereby a nasalized consonant spreads its specification feature of [+nas] to the following vowel. Fransen (1995:56) also identifies this process, which we hereunder illustrate as follows:

(38)	/mūū/	→	[mūū]	“child”
	/nār/	→	[n ār]	“buffalo”
	/niī/	→	[ni ī:]	“defecate”
	/mmīr/	→	[mmīr]	“eyes”
	/mv + +/	→	[mṽ ɥ:]	“inside”

This rule can be stated as follows:

$$V \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } \tilde{V}/N \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ }$$

In the above data, /a/, /ɥ/ and /u/ are nasalized whereas in words like /bár/ “rock lizard” /tír/ “small rat” and /rír/ “heavy” are not nasalized. It is also important to mention that nasalization is a basic feature of Southern Limbum. Consequently, some problems of dialectal variation exist as a result of the various forms of nasalization prevalent in the South. These differences have spread to the orthography as mentioned elsewhere in this work.

### 2.3.1.8 VOWEL BACKING

This refers to a phenomenon whereby a high front vowel is produced further back. In Southern Limbum it has been realised that /ɨ/ becomes or turns into [ɰ] when it is produced between labiodental fricative and velar nasal sounds. The examples below illustrate the process.

(39)

/sfɨŋ/	→	[sfɰŋ]	“python”
/mkfɨŋ/	→	[mkfɰŋ]	“flour”
/ntfɨŋ/	→	[ntfɰŋ]	“pot”
/ndvɨŋ/	→	[ndvɰŋ]	“traditional day 6”

From the data we can reformulate the rule as follows:

$$\begin{matrix} \dot{\text{ɨ}} & \longrightarrow & \text{ɰ} / \text{v} & \text{ŋ} \\ & & \text{f} & \end{matrix}$$

### 2.3.1.9 CONSONANT GLOTTALIZATION

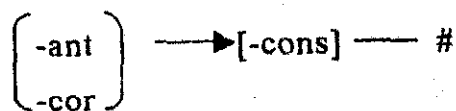
Shane (1973:22) states that glottalization is a consonant modification process whereby consonants have a secondary closure at the glottis in addition to the primary constriction higher up. This process takes place in southern Limbum. The velar voiceless stop /k/ is often heightened especially at word final position to a point where it turns to a glottal stop. This is illustrated in 40 below:

(40)	/yók/	[yóʔʔ]	“rub”
	/sák/	[sáʔ]	“rule over”
	/bák/	[báʔ]	“plait”
	/kákák/	[kákáʔ]	“no”
	/mrùk/	[mrùʔ]	“wine”

From this data we realise that:

$$k \longrightarrow \text{ʔ} / \text{---} \#$$





This is the more reason why we have considered the glottal stop as an allophone of /k/, since it appears in environments in which /k/ never appears. We therefore posit /ʔ/ as a separate consonant in the orthography. Remember that we realised with pleasure that this is the process Franssen (1995:54) refers to as debuccalization and Fiore (1987:52) as consonant weakening.

### 2.3.2.0 THE NORTHERN AND CENTRAL DIALECTS – PHONOLOGICAL PROCESSES.

Many of the processes discussed in the southern dialect are also attested in the central and northern dialects. We are not going to come back to these. Rather, we consider here only the processes not identified in the southern dialect. The processes are consonant palatalization and nasal lengthening.

#### 2.3.2.1 CONSONANT PALATALIZATION:

This is a secondary articulation process in which a high front vowel quality is superimposed on a consonant in a given environment. In fact, it is the realization of a consonant with the blade of the tongue raised towards the roof of the mouth. Consider the data below:

(41) (A) /sɪŋ/ [sʲɪŋ] “bird”  
/rɪ-bi/ [rɪbʲi] “kolanut”

(B) /bàa/ → [baa] “bag”  
/sàpsi/ → [sapsʲi] “to prolong”

In (A), [s] and [b] are palatalized to [sʸ] and [bʸ] respectively. While in (B) they are not. In (A), they occur exclusively before [i], while in (B), they occur before all other kinds of vowels. For this reason we suggest that it is the following [i] that conditions this change. The palatalized sounds are derived while the unpalatalized sounds are not derived. For example:

$$(42) \quad \begin{pmatrix} b \\ s \\ k \\ g \end{pmatrix} \quad \begin{pmatrix} b^y \\ s^y \\ k^y \\ g^y \end{pmatrix} / \text{---}i$$

This rule can be written as follows:

$$C \longrightarrow C^y / \text{---}i$$

This rule states that a consonant is palatalized before a high front tensed vowel [i]

This rule applies to all the consonants listed on page 33 above. However, as one moves further south palatalization is accompanied by some friction which takes the form of [s] or [z], depending upon whether the consonant is voiced or voiceless. The high front vowel [i] is pushed further back to the central position to sound as [+]. This process of palatalization is further replaced in the South by labialization. Consequently, we /kʷ/, /gʷ/ and /ŋʷ/ have labialised consonants.

This explanation gives the impression that there is a big contrast between palatalized and plain consonants, consequently the implication of this process on the orthographic system is very illuminating. For instance, there are instances that palatalized consonants are treated as single segments and there are instances that they are treated as separate consonants. The orthography design shows the separate representations, thereby helping to increase the number of consonants like in,

$$(41) \quad \begin{array}{lll} /bjúb/ & \longrightarrow & [bjúb] \quad \text{"shoulders"} \\ /rjèr/ & \longrightarrow & [rjèr] \quad \text{"broom"} \end{array}$$

This conforms to the syllable structure and fits into the overall pattern of phonemes.

### 2.3.2.2. NASAL LENGTHENING

In Limbum, there is a class (group) of nouns whose nominal class prefixes are bilabial nasals. When these nouns are pluralized by the prefixation of the plural marker /m/, there is nasal lengthening. -mm-structures are merged into an -m-. The data below show this structure, which in effect is a nasal lengthening structure.

(42)	/m + mbà' /	→	[mm:ǝà']	"cloud"
	/m + rbee/	→	[m:be:]	"breasts"
	/m + mèe /	→	[m:è:]	"labia hair"
	/m + mè' /	→	[mm:è']	"dew"
	/m + mir /	→	[m m:ir]	"eyes"
	/m + naŋ /	→	[m n:aŋ]	"partiality"

Read as /m/ plus bilabial nasal becomes /m:/ The rule that captures this process is postulated below:

mm → m:

### 2.3.2.3. SUMMARY COMMENTS ON PHONOLOGICAL PROCESSES.

In order to make summary comments on the phonological processes, we present here again, in juxtaposition the consonant phoneme charts of the Southern and Northern Dialects.

Figure 2.16

SOUTHERN DIALECT-FRANSEN (1995:60)		CENTRAL DIALECT FIORE(1987:66)											
PLACE/MANNER OF ARTICULATION		LABIAL	ALVEOLAR	ALVEOLAR PALATAL	PALATAL	VELAR	GLOTTAL	LABIAL	ALVEOLAR	ALVEOLAR PALATAL	PALATAL	VELAR	GLOTTAE
STOPS	VI Vd Prenas/ Palatals	b	t d p ʔd			k k <sup>w</sup> g g <sup>w</sup> ŋk ŋk <sup>w</sup> ŋg ŋg <sup>w</sup>		ɸ	t d	ts dʒ		k k <sup>y</sup> k <sup>w</sup> g g <sup>w</sup>	
AFFRICATES	VI Vd Prenas			ts ʔts									
FRICATIVES	VI Vd Prenas	f mf	s ns	ʃ ʃ <sup>m</sup> ʒ ʒ <sup>m</sup> ʒ		ɣ		ff <sup>y</sup> ʃ				ɣ	h
NASALS		m	n			ŋŋ <sup>w</sup>		m:m <sup>y</sup> n				ŋ ŋ <sup>w</sup>	
LIQUIDS	Latera Trill Pre-nas	l r ʔl <sup>n</sup> r						l r					
GLIDES		w			j			w			ɣ		

Looking at the above charts, we note the following:

1. Pre-nasalization and nasalization are features of the Southern dialect.
2. Palatalization is a feature of the central dialect, where as labialization is common.
3. The glottal stop is not considered a phoneme in these dialects.
4. The glottal fricative sound is not a feature of the Southern dialect.
5. The places of the alveolar liquids are swapped in Fiore's proposal.

These basic differences and the foregone discussions on the consonants and vowels of the dialectal regions will corroborate our discussion on the orthography of Limbum.

### 2.3.3.0 LIMBUM ORTHOGRAPHY

In this section, we briefly review the need for representing sounds as discrete segments. Because acoustically any utterance is a continuous flow of movements made by the vocal tract, we understand the difficulties that

exist in saying objectively where one sound ends and another begins. Having treated the phonology of Limbum, we have enough evidence to use to provide answers to the questions: How many letters are there in the Limbum Alphabet, which are the graphemes used to represent particular sounds and how is tone marked in Limbum?

These answers will help to establish an orthographic system that will take care of the existing inconsistencies in the Limbum Alphabet, such as spellings and tone (see page 2). The importance of good spelling and good tone orthography to literacy programmes cannot be over-emphasized. Since choosing symbols and what they represent often depends on community acceptance, and having noted already the differences that exist in the sound system of the Southern, Northern and Central dialects of Limbum, it is necessary to adopt an approach that is multidialectal, simple and psychologically acceptable, which will be acceptable to all the native speakers irrespective of dialect. Such an approach will minimise the existing dialectal differences, thereby providing consistency in the writing system.

Again, this approach is based on the phonological analyses that have been done in the previous section, and taking into consideration the works of earlier linguists. The first thing to note about symbols is that earlier linguists adopted symbols based on the writing systems of European languages, which makes it easier to learn for learners of Limbum who are literate in these European Languages. However, some of the symbols chosen like e, p, n and o do not adequately represent the sounds they are supposed to, consequently, the inconsistencies that exist as earlier pointed out make reading and writing Limbum difficult even to the native speaker.

In order to achieve maximum consistency and in the attempt to standardize the writing system, we review the various choices made by earlier linguists. This approach gives us a clear picture of the differences that exist, which we will use to provide solutions to the problems of the writing system. See chart below – extracted from the writings.

## 2.3.3.1.

## LIST OF GRAPHEMES

Phoneme	Fransen (1995)	Nforgwei (1991)	Fiore (1987)	African Reference Alphabet. UNESCO (1981)
<b>1. Consonants</b>				
- /b/	b	b	b	b
-/b/[P]	-	-	P	P
/t/	t	t	t	t
/d/	d	d	d	d
/k/	k	k	k	k
/k/ [ʔ]	ʔ	-	ʔ	-
/g/	g	g	g	g
/f/	f	f	f	f
/w/ [v]	v	v	v	v
/s/	s	s	s	s
/tʃ/	c	c	c	c
/z/	z	-	-	z
/m/	m	m	m	m
/n/	n	n	n	n
/ɲ/	ny	ny	ny	ɲ
/ŋ/	ŋ	ŋ	ŋ	ŋ
/l/	l	l	l	l
/r/	r	r	r	r
/w/	w	w	w	w
/dʒ/	zh	j	j	j
/y/ [ʒ]	y	y	y	y
/h/	h	h	h	h

/ʏ/	gh	gh	gh	ʏ
/ɝ/	sh	sh	sh	ɝ
<b>1. Vowels</b>				
/i/	i	i	i	i
/i:/	ii	ii	ii	-
/e/		e	e	e
/e:/		ee	ee	-
/ɛ/	e	ɛ	ɛ	ɛ
/e:/	ee	ɛɛ	ɛɛ	ɛɛ
/+ /	u	u	u	-
/+:/	uu	uu	uu	-
/a/	a	a	a	a
/a:/	aa	aa	aa	-
/u/	u	u	u	u
/u:/	uu	uu	uu	-
/ɔ/	o	o	o	o
/ɔ:/	oo	oo	oo	-

**Figure 2:17**

The chart above is divided into five columns. The first column (phonemes) and the fifth column (graphemes), consisting of internationally accepted signs that represent the respective phonemes in the first column, are the controlling indicators. Between these two columns are the lists of graphemes uses by Franssen, Nfongwei and Fiore to represent similar phonemes.

The phonemes have been selected based on our discussion on consonants and vowels of the different dialectal regions. At the background of these selections is the principle of economy ( the use of a few features to create a large number of phonemic contrasts). The symbols of the IPA (International Phonetic Association) and their allophones appear in [ ] have been adopted for the phonemes. The graphemes in the fifth column are

extracted from the African Reference Alphabet to match with the phonemes in the first column.

After comparing and contrasting the graphemes used by Fransen, Nforgwei and Fiore with the established graphemes, we realise that:

- Fransen and Nforgwei do not use the grapheme P.
- Fiore and Nforgwei do not have the grapheme z
- Fransen uses zh in place of j.
- Nforgwei does not use the diacritic '.

They all use the following digraphs gh for / ɣ /, sh for /ʃ/ and ny for / ŋ /.

Concerning vowels;

Fransen uses e to represent /e/ and /ɛ/.

They all use u to represent /+/

None of them uses ɔ

However, the following monographs are common to all and do match with those prescribed by the African Reference Alphabet.

Consonants :        b c d f g h j k l m n ŋ r s t v w y

Vowels:             a e i o u u

Surely, these differences affect reading and writing in Limbum.

Considering the fact that many documents have already been published in Limbum and that these differences have existed for long, we must adopt Simons' (1977) multidialectal approach which states that, "Multidialectal orthography is one in which the phonologies of many dialects of a language are compared and accounted for in designing the orthography. The social situation pertaining to the dialects is also considered".

Our work will be lopsided if we draw conclusions based only on our phonological analyses. We should consider the graphemes listed above first of all, because of the existing inconsistencies (see page 2) they have created in the writing system. A final statement will need to be made either for their inclusion or ultimate exclusion from the list of letters of the Limbum



Alphabet. Then a summary of the letters used to compose the Limbum Alphabet shall be pitted against our summary drawn from our phonological analyses. This will help us to come up with a hopefully acceptable alphabet for Limbum.

### 2.3.3.2. PHONEME/GRAPHEME IDENTIFICATION AND CONSIDERATION FOR INCLUSION:

#### The grapheme $\epsilon$

This grapheme is phonetically realised as a mid-low front unrounded vowel. It is found at the phonetic and phonemic levels of the South and Central dialects. Franssen (1995:64) identifies it as such but prefers to use  $\epsilon\grave{\epsilon}$  grapheme to represent it, a mid-high front unrounded vowel. We propose  $\epsilon$  as a grapheme to avoid over simplicity that could lead to ambiguity. Which ones are easier to read and write in the pairs below?

	A	B	
(43)	/j $\epsilon\grave{\epsilon}$ /	/j $\epsilon\epsilon$ /	“different”
	/ŋw $\epsilon\grave{\epsilon}$ /	/ŋw $\epsilon\epsilon$ /	“person”
	/f $\epsilon\grave{\epsilon}$ /	/f $\epsilon\epsilon$ /	“where”
	/l $\acute{\epsilon}\acute{\epsilon}$ /	/l $\epsilon\epsilon$ /	“bat”

The Bs are certainly easier to read and write. This was confirmed by learners at one of the IRA Literacy centers (Mbabi). /e/ remains a separate phoneme and is represented by e which makes the reading and writing of words like ghee” calabash bowl” and bce “people” easy.

#### The grapheme h

The glottal fricative sound, like in Mbili is extremely rare and could be said to have no distinctive feature of its own, had been adopted by earlier linguists and is needed to write words like ‘ha’ntini’ ‘next week’.

Secondly, its scope of occurrence can be widened to allow room for borrowed words such as:

- |      |             |               |
|------|-------------|---------------|
| (44) | "horpito"   | "hospital"    |
|      | "Hanwork"   | "handiwork"   |
|      | "handikraf" | "handicraft." |

The grapheme '

The glottal stop is common only in Ndi and Ndi (1985) and has been widely used in the writing system already. Fiore (1987:103) identifies it as an allophone of /k/, the voiceless velar stop, which occurs at word initial and medial positions. Although the native speakers who read and write English and French, do not find it psychologically real and feel that it should be replaced by the glottal fricative sound /h/, it is a characteristic of most Limbum words. Its presence or absence in a word may alter the meaning of the word. Imagine the confusion that would arise in meaning if we excluded it from the following pairs:

- |      |        |   |
|------|--------|---|
| (45) | [ba]   | "and"                                   |
|      | [bà']  | "leader"                                |
|      | [be]   | "to write"                              |
|      | [bè']  | "to read"                               |
|      | [ca]   | "this"                                  |
|      | [cà']  | "to shake a rattle"                     |
|      | [ce]   | "to spit"                               |
|      | [ce']  | "to be bitter"                          |
|      | [fu]   | "to go out"                             |
|      | [fù']  | "to foam up"                            |
|      | [kù]   | "to pluck"                              |
|      | [kù']  | "weevil"                                |
|      | [ma]   | "big"                                   |
|      | [mà']  | "throw"                                 |
|      | [njo]  | "consequence"                           |
|      | [njo'] | "small patch of hair on a noble's head" |

From the data, we conclude that even though it is generally considered an allophone of /k/, we consider it as a separate phoneme. It occurs mainly in word final positions and has a precise point of articulation (larynx). Consequently, we propose its inclusion in the orthography design.

### The grapheme j

This grapheme symbolizes the voiced prepalatal affricate sound /ɟʒ/. Our studies show that it occurs at initial and medial positions. Fransen (1995:64) fails to identify it. We realise that in the Southern dialect, it is phonetically realized by /dz/ and /j/. The /j/ is dentalised so that the actual realization of the palatal glide is [dj]. The examples below illustrate these differences.

(46)

<u>Gloss</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>Central</u>	<u>Our Proposal</u>	<u>Orthograph</u>
elephant	[djùʔ]	[ɟʒ ùʔ]	[ɟʒ ùʔ]	jù'
to chase	[djù:]	[ɟʒ ù:]	[ɟʒ ù:]	jùu
back	[ndz ɸ:]	[ndɟʒ ɸ:]	[ndɟʒ ɸ:]	nji
to be unable to dance	[dz ɸ r]	[dz ɸ r]	[ɟʒ ɸ r]	jàr
vulture	[dz ɸ káwà]	[ɟʒ ɸ káwà]	[ɟʒ ikáwà]	jikáwà
fly	[ndz ɸ ndz ɸ]	[ndɟʒ iki]	[n ɟʒ iki]	njìkì

From the data, it is clear that the underlying phoneme is /ɟʒ/, but has different phonetic realizations. In the Southern dialect, it is realised by [dz] and the unidentified consonant combination [dj]. (Tadadjeu, 1984:12). These differences in the phonemic realizations of the underlying phoneme create a problem in the orthography design. The problem here is whether to follow the Central dialect or the Southern dialect in the spelling of words like "elephant" [djùʔ] or [ɟʒ ùʔ] and "full" [dziŋ] or [ɟʒ íŋ]. If we follow the Southern dialect, it will mean that borrowed words like "John" "James" and "Jam" will be spelt as [djòn], [djems] and [djám]. Then "Jim" "Jidda"

and “Jennah” will be spelt [dzim], [dz+dà] and [dz+nà]. But this will not be psychologically real and would demand memorization as to when to use /dj/ or /dz/. If we follow the Central dialect, reading and writing will be relatively easy for both groups. Secondly, it demands less effort in the use of the single consonant /dʒ/ represented here by the grapheme j.

The grapheme **b** has its allophone [p] which is a bilabial voiceless stop. In Limbum, it essentially appears at word final position. Although it is attested in all the dialects native speakers and worse still, non-native speakers cannot say with exactitude, when a word should end in a /b/ or a /p/. Hence, in order not to overload the orthography with allophones of no significant contrasts, we, like Fransen (1995:71) opt for the phonemic representation. See data below.

(47)

Northern/Central	Southern	Proposed	Orthography	Gloss
[táp] /tàb/	/tàb/	/tàb/	tàb	‘hut’
[kòp] /kòb/	/kòb/	/kòb/	kòb	‘forest’
[táp] /táb/	/táb/	/káb/	táb	‘goiter’
[sòp] /sòb/	/sòb/	/sòb/	sòb	‘to come’
[sóp] /sób/	/sób/	/sób/	sób	‘chisel’

Looking at the above, we realise that it yields a simple approach to the writing system, thus facilitating reading and writing in the language.

The Z Fricative Variant is phonetically realised as a voiced alveolar fricative sound. It is common in the Southern dialect and is often considered a stigmatised feature of the Southern dialect. It occurs as a result of the very close articulation of /+/, which produces friction before it, thus forcefully producing a prepalatization or a /z/ fricative release of the preceding consonant and the consequent centralization of the vowel /+ / or /i/.

Fiore (1987:42) states that it is a steady change across the continuum in the friction that accompanies palatalization before /i/. In the North, it is heard as /y/ (palatalization), in the Centre, as /j/ or /ʒ/ and in the South as /s/ or /z/. Meaning that, it is an allophonic variation of the consonant preceding the high front vowel. Consequently, it is the result of the friction that accompanies the palatalization in the South. (see page 64)

The data below illustrate it:

(48)

North/Centre	South	Proposed	Orthograph	Gloss
[rb <sup>y</sup> i]	[rbz + ]	[rbî]	rbî	kolanut
[b <sup>y</sup> i:]	[bz + :]	[bi:]	bîi	dance
[b <sup>y</sup> î]	[bz + ]	[bî]	bî	co-wife
[b <sup>y</sup> ibʃi]	[bz + bsʃ]	[bîbʃi]	bîshʃ	requests
[b <sup>y</sup> igrî]	[bz + ŋrî]	[bîŋrî]	bîgrî	roll

It shows that [b<sup>y</sup>] changes to [bz] as one moves from extreme North to South.

Since our objective is to simplify the orthography, it is obvious that the inclusion of allophonic variations would only help to block it. We therefore, opt for the drop of /z/ fricative release.

The zh digraph: It represents the alveor-palatal voiced fricative /ʒ/. It is used in the orthography of Southern Limbum. Fiore (1995:65) proposes it as a solution to expressing labiodentalization orthographically. It is true that our objective is to make reading and writing easy for the native speaker, but it must be done cautiously. We believe that it is like /z/ fricative variants. It will benefit only the Southern speakers. Including it in the orthography purports the inclusion of other sequences like /bv/, /tf/, /kf/, /gv/. This would mean a terrible degree of overdifferentiation. In this wise therefore, we opt for its replacement with the grapheme y. This is because its actual phonemic realization is /j/ which has already been included in the orthography. This data illustrate it.

(49)

North/Centre	South	Proposed	Orthograph	Gloss
[jèɛ]	[ʒèɛ]	[jèɛ]	yèɛ	stealss
[jiʔní]	[ʒiʔní]	[jiʔní]	yi'ní	crowded
[jv+]	[ʒv+]	[jv+]	yá	kill
[jé:ni]	[ʒé:ni]	[jé:ni]	yéeni	filter
[ji]	[ʒi]	[ji]	yé	sseat

The digraph ny: It is used to represent the palatal nasal / ɲ / in orthography designs. It is attested in all the dialects. Since it is common in all the dialects, we propose the inclusion of its symbol as a grapheme of the Limbum orthography. Even though it is a single segment at the phonemic level, it is a digraph as can be seen in the data below.

(50)

North/Centre	South	proposed	Orthograph	Gloss
[ɲ+]	[ɲv+]	[ɲv+]	yà	'sun'
[ɲó]	[ɲó]	[ɲó]	nyo	'snake'
[ɲèŋ]	[ɲèŋ]	[ɲèŋ]	nyèŋ	'smash'
[ɲà:]	[ɲà:]	[ɲà:]	nyàa	'meat'
[ɲér]	[ɲér]	[ɲér]	nyér	'lift'
[ɲór]	[ɲór]	[ɲór]	nyór	'body'

#### 2.3.4.0 THE LIMBUM ALPHABET

In the section above, much has been done to justify the phonemes, which we will here propose for adoption. Having taken into consideration the views and proposals of earlier linguists, the results of our own phonological analysis and of course, the sociological situation, we believe that the symbols that form the orthography will be easy to read and write. The signs match with those prescribed by the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) for the sounds we identified. We make here a proposal for a

standard orthography of Limbum. This proposal is aimed at rendering the orthography practically useful, easy to read and write and above all to provide a consistent spelling system. Here, instead of reproducing the work of earlier linguists as found on page 73-74, we only make reference to it. However, we have produced composite phonemic consonant and vowel charts here, based on our analyses found in section 2.3, and the phonological analyses that followed.

The charts are followed by another chart, which is in effect, a list of the proposed phonemes and related graphemes.

**2.3.4.1. COMPOSIT PHONEMIC CONSONANT CHART  
OF LIMBUM.**

**PLACE OF ARTICULATION**

MANNER OF ARTICULATION		LABIAL	ALVEOLAR	ALVEOR- PALATALS	PALATAL	VELAR	GLOTTAL
STOPS	VL		t			k	[ʔ]
	VD	b	d			g	
	Prenas- alised	<sup>n</sup> b	nt nd				
AFFRI- CATES	VL			tʃ			
	VD			dʒ			
FRICA- TIVE	VL	f	s	ʃ			
	VD	v				ɣ	h
	Prenas	mf					
NASALS	NON syll.	m	n		ɲ	ŋ	
	Syllabic	ɱ					
LIQUIDS	Lateral		l <sup>n</sup> l				
	Trill		r <sup>n</sup> r				
GLIDES		w ɥ <sup>w</sup>			j		

*Figure 2:18*



### 2.3.4.2. COMPOSIT PHONEMIC VOWEL CHART OF LIMBUM

Before positing a composit phonemic vowel, chart of standard Limbum, let us recap here on one chart, the vowel phonemes of all the dialects.

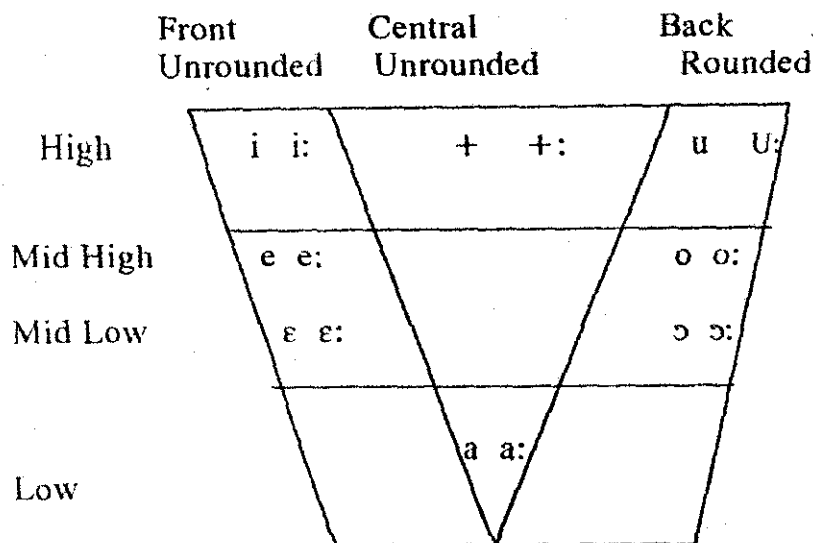
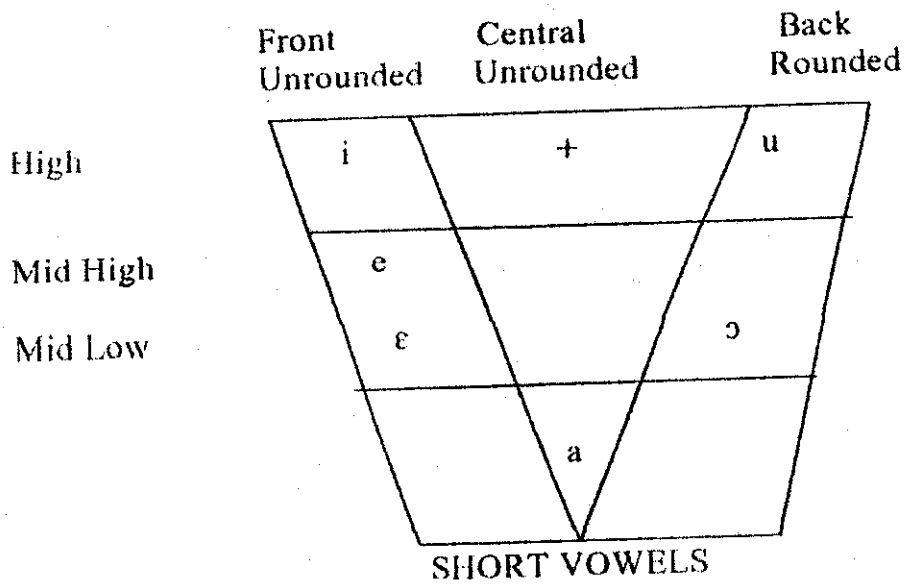
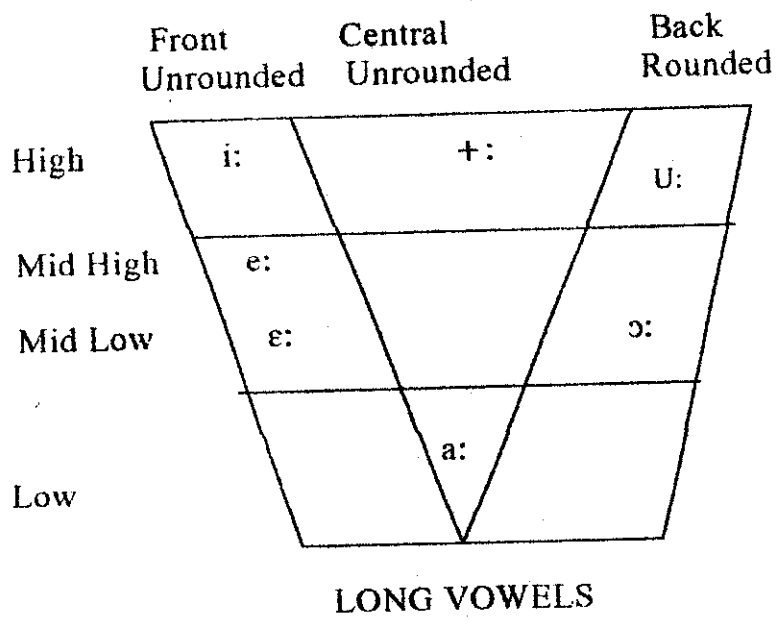


Figure 2.19

This chart shows that Limbum has an eight vowel system, but this is not true. Following our analyses, we made certain pertinent remarks (see page 43). We stated there that except /o/, all other sounds were phonemically similar in all the regions. We also realised that /ɨ/ is phonemically equivalent to /u/ in the central dialect. Consequently, the features of /u/ are borne by /ɨ/, the central high unrounded vowel in this dialect. The articulation of /o/ comes a little much higher to fill the gap of /u/. Meanwhile, the qualities of /o/ and /ɔ/ are not as discrete as those of /e/ and /ɛ/. One often finds it difficult to distinguish between /o/ and /ɔ/. We have, therefore chosen to allow /o/ and /ɔ/ share the features of /o/, thereby reducing the number of vowels to seven. The seven vowels are contained in the chart below.



*Figure 2.20*



*Figure 2.21*

### 2.3.4.3. PROPOSED GRAPHEMES OF THE ALPHABET.

Phoneme	Grapheme Alphabet	Phonetic	Phonemic	Orthographic	Translation
/a/	a	[káɲ]	/káɲ/	káɲ	pan
/b/	b	[béɲ]	/béɲ/	béɲ	dove
/t/	c	[tʃáɲ]	/tʃáɲ/	cáɲ	run
/d/	d	[dòɲ]	/dòɲ/	dòɲ	Honey dug from ground
/e/	e	[jé]	/jé/	yé	eat
/ɛ/	e	[jɛ]	/jɛ/	yɛ	see
/f/	f	[fòr]	/fòr/	fòr	castrated goat
/g/	g	[gàɲ]	/gàɲ/	gàɲ	surround
/ʏ/	gh	[ré:]	/ree/	ghée	calabash bowl
/h/	h	[há:r]	/háar/	háar	until
/i/	i	[ntʃir]	/ntʃir/	ncir	cover
/dʒ/	j	[dʒàʔ]	/dʒàʔ/	Jà'	help
/k/	k	[ká:]	/ká:/	káa	Squeeze
/k/ /ʔ/	/ʔ/	[ntaʔ]	/ntaʔ/	nta'	chair
/l/	l	[láʔ]	/là':/	la'	to gum
/m/	m	[máʔ]	/má/	Má'	throw
/n/	n	[nàsi]	/nàsi/	nàshi	straighten/correct
/ɲ/	ny	[ɲ]	/ɲ/	nyo	snake
/ŋ/	ŋ	[ŋàp]	/ŋàp/	ŋàb	crawl
/ɔ/	o	[kɔp]	/kɔp/	kòb	forest
/r/	r	[rɛɲ]	/rɛɲ/	rèɲ	to tap wine
/s/	s	[sáɲ]	/sáɲ/	sáɲ	to write
/ʃ/	sh	[sáɲ]	/sáɲ/	sháɲ	prison
/t/	t	[té:]	/té:/	tée	ring
/u/	u	[júʔ]	/júʔ/	yu'	yam(white)
/tʰ/	th	[ŋgúp]	/ŋgúp/	ŋgúb	fowl
/v/	v	[vàp]	/vàp/	vàb	bone
/w/	w	[wep]	/wep/	wɛb	fear
/j/	y	[yáɲ]	/yáɲ/	yáɲ	illness

Figure 2.22

- From the above chart, we realise that /z/ and /dz/ proposed and used in the works of earlier linguists have been dropped because they have been found to be (different realizations of the same phoneme. (See pages 78-80). Similarly, the digraph zh has been left out to minimise overdifferentiation.
- Following our phonological analyses [p] was identified as an allophone of /b/ and considered inconsequential in the Limbum Alphabet, and has therefore been dropped in order to avoid overloading the orthography with allophones that do not cause any significant contrast.
- Although our analyses showed that /h/ was a rare and limited sound, we propose its inclusion for the sake of other sociolinguistic factors such as borrowing.
- The glottal stop has been included and symbolised by the grapheme in the orthography. Its importance has been discussed on page 77.
- Finally, /ɲ/ though a single release, has been represented by a digraph ny. It is used for the spelling of most words that /n/ cannot be used for. Consequently, we propose its inclusion on our standard alphabet chart. With these proposals, Limbum standard alphabet is made up of 29 letters (22 consonants and seven vowels. (page 86).

#### **2.4.0 SOME BASIC PRINCIPLES OF TONE MARKING**

In this section, we review tone studies done in Limbum and analyse areas of differences in order to posit a standard tone orthography. Tadadjeu and Sadenmbouo (1984:17) state the principles of tone study. Some of these principles include punctual tone marking, which refers to the minimal height a tone may bear and which does not change. It could be high, mid, or low. A tone mark would then represent each tone level. According to this

principle, only the most frequent punctual tone attested should be omitted. That is in a three level tone language, two tones will be marked and the most frequent one omitted. The second principle states that vowels with complex-tones can be duplicated if they have elements of mid-tone and there are no contrasts between short and long vowels. But in a language in which a contrast exists between long and short vowels on the one hand and complex tones on the other hand, two tone values could be attributed to the same complex tone graphemes, provided the native speakers will always be able to predict the environment of occurrence. For instance, a tone grapheme can represent high-low if the environment is specified. These principles underlie tone marking in Limbum. The following graphemic tone marks have been used by people writing in Limbum.

(51)	ˆ	for high tone	e.g bá
	-	for mid tone	e.g bā
	˘	for low tone	e.g bà
	ˆ	for rising tone	e.g bǎ
	˘	for falling tone	e.g bǎ

Following these principles, we recap here the works of some linguists on tone in Limbum. Fiore (1987:119) states that Limbum has three level tones (high, mid and low). Two things are basic in her work, each syllable carries a tone and verb stems are monosyllabic.

MFONYAM (1989:459) In an attempt to determine the best way of representing tone in the orthography of Limbum uses four tone marking systems to arrive at his decision. System 2, which he prefers is adopted by WILA. It marks L(˘) HL(ˆ) LH(˘).

It does not mark M and H tones and HM contour tones, meanwhile, contour tones LM and LH are marked. However, weak as it may be, because of its inability to make lexical distinctions, it is easy to handle. This work resolves more than 75% of the tone problems of Limbum. That is why CHEFFY and TOH (1992) report that only a few problems remain to be finalised, for example, the position of tone marks on long vowels.

Fransen (1995:73), working on the suprasegmental phonology of the Southern dialect attests that it has three level tones- H, M, L, and five contour tones-HM, HL, ML, LM and LL (low falling to extra low). Like Fiore, she states that each syllable carries a tone, contour tone may be realised on a short or long vowel and that HM and LM occur only on syllables with long vowels. She also remarks that the final vowel, which in many Eastern Grassfield languages, has been dropped and is represented by a tone trace, is still present in Limbum specifically in nouns ending in a consonant. For instance:

In Limbum, nouns like ñjàb “vegetables (soup)”, ñgǎr “ant” and `rsòŋ “tooth” are sometimes pronounced ñjàbí, ñgǎrí and `rsòŋí. The tone sequence here is LLH. When the final vowel is dropped, the contour tone LLH undergoes simplification or is shifted to the preceding syllable, so that LLH is realized as LL as in ñjàb. The final vowel deletion is a feature of the young native speakers.

Ndamsah (1997:55) states that there are eight possible tonal melodies. These include:

(52)	HL	bérèŋ	“groundnuts”
	HM	mándab	“concubine”
	HH	lélé	“rain water”
	MH	tarkú	“grandfather”
	ML	nduunji	“road”
	MM	byenge	“women”
	LM	ngòmbé	“plantain”
	LL	mbùŋkùr	“evening”

These studies bring us to the following conclusions on tone in Limbum:

- Limbum has three levels tones (L, M, H) and five contour tones as identified by the above linguists (HM, HL, LM, LL).

In addition to the above contour tones we have attested HH and LH. Consequently, Limbum has three level tones and seven contour tones. They will be illustrated in the next section.

MH identified by Ndamsah (1997:55) could not be differentiated from LH. Consequently, we do not consider it as part of the contour tones. These studies and conclusions are essential because they form the background to the standard tone orthography.

#### 2.4.1.0 TONE RULES

Limbum, like most Bantu languages has three level tones (H, L, M), which have developed in different ways due to tone spreading, downstep and downdrift. Tone realization in Limbum can thus be explained using the following rules:

**DOWNSTEP** – Refers to the process whereby an underlying low tone not realized on the surface structure causes the following high tone to stop. Ayuminjam (1998:161) states that only two tones are involved. A downstepped high tone is immediately between a high tone and a mid-tone and occurs only at phrase level, but never within words. This process begins with tone floating, to tone docking and ends with tone simplification. In Limbum, a high tone can be realized at the level of a M tone and a M tone at the level of a L one. In such a situation, a H tone after this type of realization is no longer at its original H tone level. But at the level of a M tone, consequently, forming a new (ceiling). There could be a second downstep against a still lower level-forming another new ceiling again. This process of lowering may continue until a new clause is started., However, the lowering of a M tone does not make it a L tone. This process is common in Limbum. For instance, in non- verbal words, M (L) tone words bring about a downstep in nouns and adjectives:

(53)	[íntáa	ínbáa]	[H H L ▼ H]	“two caps”
	[índónj	b` táar]	[H H L ▼ H]	“three cups”
	[íntáa	ím̄nsí]	[H H L ▼ H]	“black caps”

In verbal constructions, downstep after H tone occurs in the preverbal group affecting verbs with H tone.

- Eg. É ▽bé tú' índíb "He / she will fetch water".  
 A índíb cé é ▽bá tú' "This is the water he/she fetched".

These sentences confirm the fact that downstep in Limbum can be cumulative.

DOWNDRIFT-(Hyman 1975:226) defines downdrift as the process whereby a tone sequence of H L H is not realized as [ - \_ - ]. That is, the two H tones are not pronounced on the same pitch level even though they are phonologically identical, but are realized as [- \_ -]. That is, the second H tone is lower in pitch than the first. The process affects all H tones preceded by low tones. The low tones which intervene the H tones are also subject to downdrift.

Even though the degree of lowering differs from language to language, Fransen (1995:79) states that Limbum does not manifest it, while Ndamnsah (1997:30) holds that Limbum manifests automatic downdrift. We understand that the process takes place over a syntactic unit and is automatic in units L tones, which may condition downdrift through deletion or assimilation. The sentences below :

- (54) 1. ɲwè yú ɲwè njó' ɲwè "man is made man by his fellows."  
 L H L ▽H L  
 2. É bá dù ntá "He/She went to the market."  
 H H L ▽H  
 3. É fá làa mè mɛɛb álé "Let him/her give me the medicines, please."  
 H H L L ▽H H H

#### 2.4.1.1 PROPOSED TONE ORTHOGRAPHY

As Van Reenen (1989) puts it, a good spelling and tone orthography are essential for literacy programmes to succeed. We have attempted a quick review of the tone system of Limbum. As started earlier, our



intention has been to propose a tone orthography that will be simple, systematic and follow a consistent pattern.

Before we propose tone rules, let us recap here, Mfonyam's Limbum tone orthography project. This project was done between 1984 and 1986, with the aim of determining the best way to represent tone in the orthography of Limbum. (Mfonyam 1989:459).

He tested four tone systems.

- System 1- All tones were marked-this was the master document.
- System 2- L tone ( ` ) LH tone ( ~ ), and HL tone ( ^ ) were marked. The following contour tones were marked LM / ~ / ML / ~ / . Thus, HL and ML were marked the same way.
- System 3- H tone ( ' ), HL tone ( ^ ), and LH tone ( ~ ) were marked.
- System 4- Marked only L tone ( ` )
- System 5- marked H tone ( ' ), L tone ( ` ), HL tone ( ^ ), LH ( ~ ), LM and HM ( ~ ) marked.

Finally, system 2 was chosen because it attained the highest score. It 'is relatively the easiest and probably the most efficient way of marking tone in Limbum' (Mfonyam 1989:469).

However, it fails to show lexical distinctions of meaning. Consequently words like;

(55) B́aa	"slope"
B́aa	"mad"
B́aa	"to embrace"
B́aa	"two"

May only be distinguished contextually because the tone system is weak at the lexical level.

In order to maintain a good spelling system and good orthography, tone should be marked systematically, for this reason therefore, we suggest that system 2, which had been adopted by WILA, should be maintained. To facilitate reading, tone marks should be placed above the vowel to which

the tones apply. Long vowels with low tones should have the marks put on the first vowel or grapheme.

#### 2.4.2.0 TONE MARKING IN LIMBUM ILLUSTRATED

Our studies show that tone orthography done by different people in all the dialects is almost the same. Generally, tonal variations that imply a difference in meaning of a word or structure between the dialects have not been attested. However, in some clauses and sentences, the behaviour of tones may vary from one speech community to another without actually affecting the conveyed meaning of the structure. For instance, in the following words there are slight tonal differences between the South and Central Limbum, without tempering with the meaning:

(56)	<b>Central</b>	<b>South</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
	bà'shí	bashu	unroll
	bèngér	bìngir	to turn
	ntòomór	tfúmor	fire place
	ntáangúu	ntàanguu	stick of firewood
	ngáamáandifò	ngàámáándzàfòd	praying mantis

In the section below, we illustrate tone marking in Limbum beginning with monosyllabic verbs. A monosyllabic verb bears either high or low tone.

#### 2.4.2.1. MONOSYLLABIC VERB TONE ORTHOGRAPHY

(57)	<b>English</b>	<b>Northern/Central</b>	<b>Southern</b>
H	To Run	cán	shán
	To press down	cí	shí
	To pluck	káb	káb
	To plait	bá'	bá'
	To drink	nó	nó
L	To sleep	nòŋ	nòŋ

To fall	gwè	gwè
To plant	sòb	sòb
To seal	sìŋ	sìŋ
To surround	sìr	sìr

In the section below, we illustrate tone mark in Limbum beginning with monosyllabic verbs. A monosyllabic verb bears either high or low tone.

#### 2.4.2.2. DISYLLABIC VERB TONE ORTHOGRAPH.

(58) Disyllabic verbs can bear a tone sequence of either HH or LM.

HH English	Northern/Central	Southern
To second	bární	barní
To be deep	cóomí	shóomí
To tune a song	fáshí	fásí
To hug	ghóŋsé	ghóŋsé
To vomit	ghó'ní	ghó'ní
LM To fill in soil	gàushī	gàusī
To shell corn	kùushī	kùusī
To bypass	bàase	bàase
To laugh	vàshī	vàsī
To feel ashamed	ghàaní	ghàaní
To show	dùŋshī	dùŋsī
LH To tickle	ŋìŋrí	nyìŋrí
To pour	kùuté	kfùuté
To try	ghàasé	ghàasé

### 2.4.2.3 MONOSYLLABIC NOUN TONE ORTHOGRAPHY.

Monosyllabic nouns can bear either H, M, L, HL or LH. The example show;

(59)	<u>English</u>	<u>Northern/Central</u>	<u>Southern</u>
<u>Low</u>	people	bèe	bèe
	toad	càa	shàa
	rain	mbèn	mbèn
<u>Mid</u>	tree	cē	cē
	dog	ngwē	ngwē
	wife	ngwā	ngwā
	monkey	ŋkáa	ŋkáa
<u>High</u>	canoe	kén	kén
	prison	shán	shán
	lid	ncír	nshír
<u>HL</u>	church	côr	shôr
	corn	kwâa	kwâa
<u>LH</u>	bread	brër	brër
	bedbug	ngǔr	ngǔr
	maggots	mgǔr	mgǔr

### 2.4.2.4 DISYLLABIC NOUN TONE ORTHOGRAPHY.

Disyllabic nouns may bear any of the following tones: HL, HM, LL, HH, MH, ML, MM and LM.

(60)

	<u>English</u>	<u>Northern/Central</u>	<u>Southern</u>
<u>HL</u>	Jesus	jísòs	yesòs
	woman	njénwè	njénwè
	soot	nsíkìŋ	nsíkìŋ
<u>HM</u>	ant	ngárúŋ	ngáróŋ
	Concubine	mándāb	mándāb

	raffia nuts	kúbŋkáá	kúbŋkáá
	lawn (yard)	mámbe	mámbe
LL	rattle	mbàcà'	mbàshà'
	Ridge	ndùubè	ndùubè
	chin	mbùucù	mbùushù
	seven	sàambà	sàambà
	thousand	ncùki	nshùki
HH	peacefulness	mányáŋ	mányáŋ
	Sand	nshárúŋ	nsáróŋ
	butterfly	ŋkáká	ŋkáká
MH	tears	ŋgómír	ŋgómír
	right	wáamí	wáamí
	bamboo	rèréŋ	rèréŋ
ML	Lefthand	bōŋkòb	boōŋkòb
	banana	ndōombù	ndōombù
	bridegroom	ncígùu	shúgùu
	sleep	mmírlò	mmírlò
MM	chairman	tù'ntā'	tù'ntā'
	child	mūunte	mūunte
	stick	ntāŋgūu	ntāŋgūu
	women	byēŋgē	byēŋgē
LM	nose	nfyènyū	nyslwìinyvū
	cockroach	nfyèkēb	nfyèkēb
	palm branch	bàb rtēe	bàb rtēe
	laugh	tvàshī	tvàshū

It can be mentioned here that tone combinations on three and four syllable nouns and adjectives have been attested. But most of the combinations are reduplications or commands of the above examples. However long words like “ŋgámándifò” “praying mantis” could be considered as carrying more than two tones.

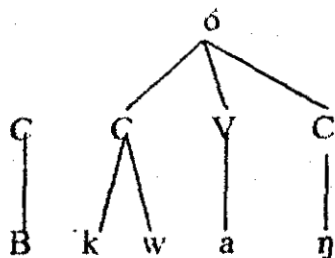
Pressed by the need for a harmonious orthography, this chapter set out to analyse the sound systems of the various dialects in order to come up with composit standard consonant and vowel charts from which a harmonious orthography would be determined. It began with the study of the sound system of the southern dialect. It was discovered during the analysis that in this dialect /w/ and /j / are transformed to /v/ and /z/ respectively before / $\dot{t}$ / and that /v/ and /z/ respectively come before / $\dot{t}$ / and that when /v/ is inserted before / $\dot{t}$ / the sound would have a fricative quality. Based on the analysis, [m] an archiphoneme for prenasalized consonants was proposed. The vowel chart did not present any major problem.

To further the discussion, the consonants of the Central and Northern dialects were also analysed, but found to be the same, but the case of the vowel systems was different. Even though they all have seven vowel systems, their configurations were different. A significant realization was that in the Northern region [u] was a variant of [ $\dot{t}$ ]. It was clear that Limbum has two distinct dialects at the level of phonology. The differences were as stated on page 41, underscoring the need for a harmonious orthography.


In addition to the above considerations, the generative phonology rules of syllabification were applied in the analysis of the syllable structure. It was realized that the sonority hierarchy principle could only apply partially in complex words like /mmbàb/ "rats" and /bkwàŋ/ "bracelets" because the syllabic nasals and labials were left unassociated. It required the application of the extrasyllabic rule (which applies at the stage at which structural conditions can no longer apply).

Following this rule :

2)



was analysed and it was clear that /b/ as an extrasyllabic element could only be associated to the word-node and that it bore a tone. However, the syllable structure was considered unique across the dialectal regions and therefore did not raise any problem of standardisation. The syllable types were then stated as follows:

- a) 
- b) C v
- c) C V C
- d) C C V
- e) C C V C

Since the syllable structure and word structure could not produce solutions to the consonant and vowel contrasts, it was therefore important that phonological processes be used to handle the contrasts. Various processes were used, for example, labiodentalisation and consonant glottalization for the Southern dialect; consonant palatalization and nasal lengthening for the Central and Northern dialects. Labiodentalisation was seen as a process that describes and captures situations whereby a sound is transformed into a labiodental fricative. Following example 34 above, the P-rule was formulated as  $\emptyset \rightarrow V / \text{ — } \dot{\text{t}}$ . Consonant glottalisation was seen as a consonant modification process whereby a consonant has a secondary closure at the glottis in addition to the primary constriction higher up. A case in point was that of the velar stop /k/ which is often heightened at word final positions to a point (height) where it turns to a glottal stop. The P-rule  $K \rightarrow ? / \text{ — } \#$  was used to illustrate it.

secondary process of articulation in which the high front vowel quality is superimposed on a consonant in a given environment. It is often realized by raising the blade of the tongue towards the roof of the mouth, for instance, [b] → [bʲ] / \_\_\_\_i, meanwhile, nasal lengthening was seen as the process whereby nasal prefixes are prefixed to nouns whose initial consonants are bilabial consonants, for example,

/m + mbà' / → [mmbà'] "cloud".

Following the analyses, standard consonant and vowel charts for each region were established, then compared and contrasted with each other. Based on valid linguistic and sociolinguistic judgements decisions for inclusion and exclusion of particular sound symbols from the orthography were proposed. The discussion on phonology rounded up with the review of tone marking system in Limbum, which resulted in the proposal of a standard tone orthography.



# CHAPTER THREE

## MORPHOLOGICAL PROCESSES

### 3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter treats the morphology of Limbum, focusing on noun and verb morphologies. Morphology essentially refers to the internal structure of words. Studies show that some languages have simple word forms, while others have complex word forms, which can be decomposed into the basic units of analysis, called morphemes.

Limbum, like most Bantu languages shows that most of its words are roots consisting of prefixes and suffixes or are compounds. Take for instance *ndáb*; "house" is in its base form. Its plural is *mdab* "houses". The *m* is a plural prefix. This same word can combine with other words to form compound nouns. For instance, "*ndab cor*" "a chapel" is compound because *ndab* is the grammatical head, being modified by the noun "*cor*" "church". In contrast, a compound like "*bèetí mánsà*", "coward" is different from the above because unlike "*ndáb cór*" or "*ḡká'nà'*" in which their rightmost members are heads, that is, "*ndáb cór*" is a kind of "*ndáb*" as well as "*ḡká'nà'*" is a kind of fence, but "*bèeti mansá*" is neither a kind of "*bèeti*" "cowardice" nor "*mansa*" "main case". Its meaning is covert and consequently has a free interpretation. Its actual meaning is a "typical coward" So in this section, we use morphological elements such as derivation, concord, genders and compounding to treat Limbum morphology.

### 3.1 THE LIMBUM NOUN MORPHOLOGY

The Limbum noun shares the features of the Proto-Bantu noun class system. According to Voorhoeve (1980), these features include singular and plural forms, augmentative, diminutives, endocentives, exocentives, concord, pronoun, possessives, adjectives etc. Most Bantuists, for example Tamanji (1991:31) affirms that nouns that display common agreement

patterns constitute a noun class, while a pair of singular /plural classes make up a gender.

Earlier studies on the noun classes in Limbum such as Voorhoeve (1980), describes the nouns by classifying them into four genders. The classification is based on the nominal prefixes and the possessive concords. Fiore (1987) combines Voorhoeve (1980), Van Reenen and Voorhoeve (1980) with her own studies and uses the noun prefix and the possessive pronoun "my" as the basis for forming the noun classes. (see table 3.1) below.

**Table 3.1 CONCORD TABLE FOR LIMBUM BY FIORE**

PB	Prefix	Long form	Example	Gloss	Possessive "my"
1 a	Ø		s <sup>y</sup> iŋ	"bird"	yà
1, 9	N-	ŋ	ŋgwê	"dog"	yà
2, 8	B-	wi	p-siŋ	"birds"	wá
			m-n-gwê	"dogs"	wá
3, 10	N-		m-n-ti:	"hearts"	yá
5	r-	li	r-koo	"arm"	lá
6	m-	mi	m-ŋ-koo	"arms"	má
7	Ø		tô	"head"	yá
7*	ki		k <sup>y</sup> i-bo?	"court room"	yá

- In Limbum, there are a very small number of loan words from Lamso, which take the prefix /ki-/.

The most recent work is that of Fransen (1995:94). She presents an outline of the noun class system after reviewing earlier studies. She also states the criteria for noun classification, giving innovative justifications, which make the treatment exhaustive, even though, she localises her examples in the Southern dialect area. In order to better understand the classification, we present here Fiore (1987) and Voorhoeve's 1977 concord, tables and their illustrations.

Table 3.2

CONCORD TABLE FOR LIMBUM BY VOORHOEVE														
Class Sign	PB	NP	ADJ	POSS	Dem-Pron	Subj. Conc.	Subj. Pron	Obj. Pron	Inter.	Numeral	How many	Other	All	Assoc.
A1	1a	Ø-	n-	ý-ø	yi	à-	é-	yé	ø-	ø-	ø-	ø-		ø-
A2	1,9	n-	n-	ý-ø	yi	à-	é-	yé	ø-	ø-	ø-	ø-	-	ø-
B1	2,8	p-	p-	w-p	p	vi-	vi-	vi	p-	p-	p-	p-	p-	é-
B2		n-	p-	w-p	p	yi-	yi-	vi	p-		p /yi-	é-	ø	é-
B3		m- n-	p-	w-p	p	vi-	vi-	vi	p-	v-	p-	é-	p-	é-
B4		p-	p-	w-	p	vi-	vi-	wówí	p-	ń-	à-	é-	p-	é
B5		p-	p-	w-	p	á-	vi-	wówì	ø-	á	á-	é-	p-	é-
B6		p-	p-	w-		vi-	vi-	wɔwi	ø-		vi-	é		
X1	2	p-	Ø-	ý-ø	p	á-	á-	wówí	ø-	á-	á-	ø-	p-	é-
X2	8	p-	Ø-	ý-ø	p	vi-	vi-	vi		v-	vi-		p-	
C1	3	n-	Ø-	ý-ø					ø-			ø-	-	é-
C2	7	Ø-	Ø-	ý-ø	yi	yi-	y-	yi	ø-	ø-	yi-	yi-	-	é-
C3		y-	Ø-	ý-ø	yi-	yi-	yi-	yi	ø-				-	
5	5	r-	r-	l-r	r	li-	li-	li	ø-	l-		ø-	-	é-
D1	6a	m-	m-	ń-	m	mi-	mi-	mi	m-	m-	m-	ø-	m-	é-
D2		m-		ń-p										
D3		m- n-	m-	ń-	m	mi-	mi-	mi	(m-)	m-		ø-		é-
10	10	n-		ý-ø	p	yi-	yi-	yi		yi-	yi-	ø-	ø-	é-

Adopted from Voorhoeve (1977)

He illustrates the concord system shown above as follows:

- A1/B1      bird, elephant, gorilla, lamp, rope, stone,  
            Ø-siŋ/p      “bird”
- A2/B2      chief,              “thief”  
            ŋ-kfɔ/p-
- A1/B3      bushcow,        “dog, leopard”  
            m-bɔŋ/p-      “bushcow”
- A2/B3      animal, axe, belt, body, branch, fly, god, chimpanzee  
            house, knife, male, market, monkey, snake, soup, vegetable  
            n-jaa/m-n-        “animal”  
            n-jaa/m-n-        “axe”
- A2b4      m-ɔɔ/b            “child”
- A2B5      ŋ-kar/p-         “friend”
- A2/x1      ŋ-wɛɛ/b-ee      “person”
- A2/10      goat, hen, rat, sheep  
            m-bv̄u/m        “goat”
- C1/B3      back, crab, day, gun, heart, message, nose, root, slave, tail  
            leaf, mouth, place, trap, tree, country, yam  
            ø-baa/b        “bag”
- C1/D3      n-fee/m-n-      “leg”
- C2/D1      ø-bo/m          “hand”
- C2/D3      ø-ko/m-ŋ-      “foot”
- 5/D1      arm, belly, breast, death, egg, eye, feather, horn, kola, mat,  
            mountain, nail, name, navel, net, palm tree, pepper, pot,  
            throat, tongue, tooth, work.

	r-kɔɔ/m-	"arm"
5/D3	r-gv̄/m-ŋ	"cadover"
A1	maize, iron, war Ø-kwâ	"maize"
A2	rain, tobacco m-beŋ	"rain"
B1	bridge, brain, bed, blood, face, thorn, wing b-raa	"bridge"
B3	cloud, hair m-m-ba'	"cloud"
C2	cornbeer, ashes Ø-sa	"cornbeer"
5	r-boo	"sky"
D3	beans, fat, oil, saliva, salt, water, medicine, wine m-ŋ-koo	"beans"
10	bee, cowry, dust, fire, firewood, fish, fruit n̄-u bee m-bàb̀v̀	"cowry"

We acknowledge that noun classes are very closely tied to the concord and that it is a necessary criterion for establishing the noun class systems. Again, that concord i.e. (adjectives, possessives, nominal prefixes, demonstratives, pronouns, numerals, interrogatives and associative markers) provide the differences in the classes.

Following Voorhoeve's noun classification, "one concord difference in one of the possible environments constitutes a difference in concord classes" Voorhoeve (1980:186). The implication is that the noun classification system is excessively complex, thereby making learning difficult. Figure 3.2 above shows the noun classification system of Limbum.

Although, Van Reenen and Voorhoeve (1980) as well as Fiore (1987) hold that the complexities of the Limbum noun class system are simplified by nominal prefixes and possessive concords, Fransen (1995:95) holds that the problems are better solved, when tone is also considered as one of the basic elements of noun class analysis. Looking at figure 3.1 above, we realize that the possessive concords *yà*, *yá*, and *lá* "my" for singular nouns in classes 1a and 1 have a consistent low tone, while those for singular nouns in classes 5 and 7 have a consistent high tone. Their plural forms *wá*, *má* and *yá* for nouns in classes 2, 6 and 10 respectively carry a consistent high tone. The possessed noun may or may not carry a similar tone.

The following examples show:

<b>Singular</b>				
	<u>noun class</u>	<u>possessive concord</u>	<u>noun</u>	<u>gloss</u>
(1)	1	<i>yà</i>	<i>léé</i>	my bat
	1 a	<i>yà</i>	<i>nà'</i>	my cow
	1	<i>yà</i>	<i>ŋkú</i>	my chief
	5	<i>lá</i>	<i>rtáa</i>	my cap
	7	<i>yá</i>	<i>kùu</i>	my foot
<b>Plural</b>				
	<u>noun class</u>	<u>possessive concord</u>	<u>noun</u>	<u>gloss</u>
	2	<i>wá</i>	<i>bléé</i>	my bats
	2	<i>wá</i>	<i>bkú</i>	my chiefs
	6	<i>má</i>	<i>mntáa</i>	my caps
	6	<i>maá</i>	<i>m̀k̀ùu</i>	my feet
	10	<i>yá</i>	<i>nà'</i>	my cows

Once more, we point out here that the tone of the singular concord element of *yà nà'* (my cow) better distinguishes it from *yá nà'* (my cows). Structurally, there appears to be no difference between the singular and plural. Consequently, the selection of the possessive pronoun as one of the criteria for setting up noun classes is laudable, especially as it helps to provide clarity in the variation that exists in the Limbum noun class system.

Albeit the advantage accruing from the classification of Limbum nouns on the basis of the possessive concords and tone, our main objective is to provide the learner with a reference grammar that will facilitate reading and writing in Limbum.

Even though the Limbum noun classification system is in line with the morphological classification of nouns recommended for Bantu languages, we realize that nouns that display similar agreement patterns constitute a noun class, which is semantically heterogeneous. It is possible that an alternative approach to the classification of Limbum nouns, that is from a semantic perspective, could be of additional advantage to the learners and MT teachers. After all, Fiore (1987) holds that the present concord system is splintered, thereby causing the existence of technically many noun classes. Voorhoeve (1980) believes that semantic considerations could help explain diachronic changes. More so, semantic classification provides ground for loan words and better treatment of dialect variation. Since semantic treatment of nouns cannot be done without due consideration to morphology and agreement patterns, we believe that this approach to the classification of nouns in Limbum could be more useful.

From a global linguistic perspective terms such as proper, common, countable and uncountable nouns have often be used to group nouns. We think that the Proto-Bantu classes 1 and 2 consisting of human nouns could form a class of proper nouns and their concord patterns established. After all, in Limbum, we often hear people talking of Tamfu (sg), B- Tamfu (pl) and Nformi (sg) as well as M- Nformi (pl). Similarly, nouns in class 1 a, which consists of nouns with Ø prefix could form a class of common nouns.

At the pedagogic level, learning and teaching transactions are better facilitated because learners are surer of what words mean when they know

the semantic area. Their productivity is heightened because it offers them better opportunities of learning the grammar as well as developing their vocabulary expansion skills.

In this wise, we attempt a semantic classification of the Limbum nouns with a view to consolidating the existing classification system. In 3.3 we treat various aspects of noun morphology and in 3.4 we focus on verb morphology and close up with tense and aspect.

### **3.1.1. SEMANTIC CLASSIFICATION**

According to Voorhoeve (1980) Limbum shows a complicated class system, which can be explained using phonological processes due to the excessive merger of the Proto- Bantu gender classification. But the learner and the teacher need adequate semantic and grammatical reasons or information on nouns in order to construct acceptable sentences. It is for this reason and those stated above that we apply the semantic approach to Limbum noun classification despite the fact that Fransen (1995:108) asserts that due to the merger of several classes, it is difficult to give a precise description of the semantic content of each class and gender for instance, "chief" and "thief" are in one class, based on Voorhoeve's system, but in our classification they are separated even though their plurals are formed in the same way. The tables that follow illustrate the clarity in semantic classification, and the implication on the noun classes and gender groups.

#### **3.1.1.1 PROPER NOUNS**

Names of people, places and institutions fall in this group. Proper nouns do take a zero nominal prefix in most cases. However, they usually take a nominal prefix, which denotes plurality. The examples below show:



(22)

(A.)	<u>Names of people:</u>	<u>Plural form</u>	<u>Gender class</u>	
	Ndī	M + Ndī	1/6	
	Shéi	B + Shèi	1a/2	
	Tántó'	B + Tántó'	1a/2	
	Mánjù'	M + Mánjù'	1/6	
	ŋgàndòŋ	M + ngàndòŋ	1/6	
<b>B</b>	<b><u>Names of places</u></b>			
	Tàkú	B + Tákù	1a/2	
	Wàt	B + Wàrr	1a/2	
	Ndú	M + Ndù	1/6	
	Mbót	M + Mbòt	1/6	
	Táng	B + Tàng	1a/2	
<b>C</b>	<b><u>Names of organisations/Institutions</u></b>			
	Cór	"church"	B + cór	1a/2
	Nfú'	"secret society"	M + nfú'	1/6
	Sàmbaa'	"a society for men"	B + Sàmbaa	1a/2
	Njù'	"women dance society"	M + njù'	1/6
	Sháŋ	"prison"	B + sháŋ	1/2

They form their plurals by prefixing **B** to nouns whose initial consonants are not nasals and **M** to nouns beginning with nasal consonants. In short, the plural morphemes occur as a result of phonological conditioning. This has been explained in chapter 2 of this work.

### 3.1.1.2. COMMON NOUNS

A common noun is a sub category of nouns that often have binary feature specifications of [ ± count], [ ± concrete] [ ± abstract.] They

refer to things generally. We present here the various sub categories of common nouns in Limbum and their singular and plural forms.

### 3.1.1.2.1

### COUNT NOUNS.

Nouns referring to things that can be counted are called count nouns. They have two forms – singular and plural. They form their plurals by the prefixation of either B or M, depending on the class.

(3)	Noun	Plural form	Gender class	Gloss
	bàa	B+ Bàa	1/2	bag(s)
	cé	B+cé	1/2	tree(s)
	cè'	B+cè'	1/2	cloth(es)
	dì'	B+dì'	1/2	stool(s)
	fè'	B+fè'	1a/2	year(s)
	gày	B+gày	1a/2	shepherd(s)
	jàakí	B+jàakí	1a/2	donkey(s)
	kàakéŋ	B+kàabéŋ	1a/2	dove(s)
	lábá'	B+làbà'	1a/2	shoe(s)
	mbàŋ	M+mbàŋ	1/6	walking stick(s)
	neír	M+neír	1/6	lid(s)
	ŋgán	M+ŋgán	1/6	root(s)
	Rdón	M+dón	5/6	horn(s)
	Rwée	M+wée	5/6	cat(s)
	Sásá'	B+sásá'	1a/2	crack(s)
	tàp	B+tàp	7/2	hut(s)
	wàawá	B+wàawá	1a/2	hawk(s)
	yée	B+yée	1a/2	song(s)

The examples show that most count nouns form their plurals by prefixing **B** to the initial non-nasalised consonants and **M** to initial nasalised consonants or dropping the **r** initial consonant and affixing **m** plural form in its place.

### 3.1.1.2.2. NON – COUNT NOUNS.

Nouns which refer to things such as feelings, qualities and some types of activity are called non-count nouns. They often have one form, either singular or plural, because they are either abstract and/or uncountable. In order to give concrete examples, we subdivide uncountable nouns into abstract and mass nouns.

#### 3.1.1.2.2.1. ABSTRACT NOUNS

An abstract noun is a noun, which denotes quality, idea or experience. There are concepts that can neither be touched nor seen with the naked eyes.

Below are a few examples.

(4)1	<u>Noun</u>	<u>Plural form</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
	fùb	fùb	1a	poverty
	tfù'	tfù'	1a	witchcraft
	fāa	fāa	1a	sin
	rlùshi	rlùshi	1a	joy
	rbòŋ	rbòŋ	1a	enjoyment
	làaye	làayé	1a	truth
	mlù	mlù	6	fear
	nàatu	nàatú	6	pride
	mnsé	mnsé	6	sorrow

The major characteristic that seems to bind these nouns together is that they express or refer to concepts. However, they have no plural prefix even

though, the morpheme kú' (an augmentative qualifier is often) prefixed to them to express the degree or intensity of the situation created by the noun.

(5)	Kù	fùb	1/2	"much poverty"
	Kù	rbòṅ	5/2	"much joy"
	Kù	mnsè	5/6	"much sympathy"

### 3.1.1.2.2.2 MASS NOUNS

Mass nouns refer to substances, which are usually used as uncount and cannot be separated into their various component parts. They are subdivided into two groups – liquid and solid. Solid mass nouns can be subdivided into two groups. Those with Ø prefix and those with r-prefix.

#### A. (6) SOLID MASS NOUNS with Ø prefix.

Noun	Plural form	Gender	Gloss
nshàrùṅ	nshárúṅ	1a	sand
dòṅ	dòṅ	1a	wild honey
nlàa	nlàa	1a	gum
nshè	nshè	1a	soil
bá	bá	1a	ashes
bérèṅ	bérèṅ	1a	groundnuts
kwáa	kwáa	1a	corn
sàa	sàa	1a	millet
tèètè	tèètè	1a	okro

#### (7) SOLID MASS NOUNS WITH r- PREFIX

<u>Noun</u>	<u>Plural form</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
rgwán	mṅgwán	5/6	salt
rjée	mṅjée	5/6	grass
rkúu	mṅkúu	5/6	beans
rsán	mṅsán	5/6	rice

rkfàŋ	mŋkfàŋ	5/6	flour
rgur	mgur	5/6	maggots

In the singular form, they often take a diminutive qualifier *má* or *bá* denoting "smallness or grain of". The qualifier comes before the *r-* prefix.

**B. Liquid Mass Nouns:**

All types of liquid fall in this group of nouns.

(8)	<u>Noun</u>	<u>Plural Form</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
	Mbà'	mbà'	6	clouds
	Mè'	mè'	6	dew
	Mrù'	mrù'	6	palm wine
	Mdìb	mdìb	6	water
	mgur	mgur	6	oil
	meè	meè	6	saliva
	mcèè	mcèè	6	urine
	mbèŋ	mbèŋ	6	rain
	nfùu	nfùu	6	pus

Liquid mass nouns are in a class, which is plural of singular class. They either begin with a nasal or a labial consonant. The nasal or labial is rarely detachable, except when one wants to express the concept of smallness or a drop. For example:

(9)	má rù'	"small wine"
	má rgúr	"small oil"
	má rdìb	"a book"

*má* expresses the diminutive concept of "smallness" in quantity/size.

### 3.1.1.2.3. EXCEPTIONAL COMPOUNDS.

These exceptional compound nouns refer to groups of people involved in an identified activity peculiar to them. In Limbum they refer mainly to groups of people of a particular occupation, hobby, professional activity, etc.

(10) Noun	plural form	Gender	Gloss
ɲwè ɲgár	ɲgǎa mɲgár	9/10	soldiers
ɲwè nfúu	ɲgǎa nfúu	9/10	member of nfúu
ɲwè samba	ɲgǎa sàmba	9/10	members of samba
ɲwèɲsa'	ɲgǎa mnsá'	9/10	judges
ɲwè cór	ɲgǎa bcòr	9/10	christians
ɲwè ye	ɲgǎa byé	9/10	chorusters
ɲwè bbàa	ɲgǎa bbàa	9/10	enemies

The striking thing with this class is that the nouns have common morphological characteristics that denote singular and plural. ɲwè (person) denotes a singular, while ɲgǎa denotes plurality. The nouns following take their normal class plural prefix. This group is an exceptional class. It should also be noted that the nouns strike the same agreement patterns. For example:

kú ɲgǎa mnsá' "many judges"  
 kú ɲgǎa bbàa "many enemies"

### 3.1.1.2.4 KINSHIP NOUNS

This refers to nouns that denote family relationships. These include:

(11) Noun	plural form	gender	gloss
Tárkú	btárkú	1/2	grandfathers
màkú	mmákú	1/2	grandmothers
tàà	btàr	1/2	fathers
màá	mmá	1/2	mothers
ndúu	bdúu	1/2	husbands
ɲgwá	bgwá	1/2	wife (wives)

malúù	mmálùu	1/2	mothers – in-law
táalúgùu	btáalúgùu	1/2	fathers-in-law
nfúr	bfúr	1/2	brothers
njàr	bjàr	1/2	sisters
njégùu	bjégùu	1/2	daughters-in-law
ncígùu	ncígùu	1/2	Sons –in-law
nbíshì	mbíshì	1a/6	grand daughters
nbíshì	mbíshì	1a/6	grandsons

This class presents characteristics, which are not readily justifiable. For instance, the underlying forms of ndúu “husband”, ngwá “wife” and nfúr “brother” are different to be more explicit, their underlying forms are:

/N- duu /:

/N- gwa /:

/N- fúr /:

Consequently they take the /b/ plural prefix. Fransen (1995:105) presents more examples from southern Limbum

### 3.1.2. COMPOUNDS.

Compounding refers to that aspect of morphology that derives new words by combining two or more other words or stems. It is a common feature of natural languages. English for example, has more than six ways of compounding words to form new ones. Jensen (1990:99) classifies them under endocentric and exocentric compounds. Whereas, endocentric compound systematically has a head and is relatively more productive, exocentric compound is generally headless and relatively less productive.

In this section, unlike Fransen (1995:134) who treats three forms of compounds of Southern Limbum, we approach it using Jensen (1990) and others.

### 3.1.2.1 ENDOCENTRIC COMPOUND

As mentioned above, endocentric compounds have heads. The following examples, taken from our data explicitly show various combinations (noun + noun; noun + adjective; adjective + adjective; preposition + noun and preposition + preposition). In each combination, the word on the left is the head-word.

(12)	(i)	<u>Noun</u>	+	<u>noun</u>	<u>combination:</u>
		muu		mbaṅrù	"a boy"
		child		man	
		muu		ṅgɔp	"chick"
		child		chicken	
	(ii)	<u>Noun</u>	+	<u>adjective</u>	<u>combination</u>
		cè'		sì	
		cloth		black	"blackcloth"
		muu		ṅkè'	
		child		small	"small child"
	(iii)	<u>Adjective</u>	+	<u>Adjective</u>	<u>combination</u>
		cer		cer	
		quick		quick	"quickly"
		boṅ		boṅ	
		good		good	"good"
	(iv)	<u>Preposition</u>	+	<u>Noun</u>	<u>combination</u>
		mbe		rbúu	
		up		sky	"heaven"
		mbe		nji	"behind"
		up		back	
	(v)	<u>Preposition</u>	+	<u>preposition</u>	<u>combination</u>
		mbe		kì	
		up		up	"upright"
		mbe		nduu	
		up		top	"on top of"



Looking at the above combinations only mbebúú “heaven” undergoes slight modification. Whereas rbúú “sky” begins with a /r/ prefix, mbebuu deletes the prefix. Again, that in Limbum adjective + adjective combinations are often reduplication compounds. We also notice that in Limbum, the first noun or word is the head unlike in English where the right member of the compound is the head noun. The syntagmatic well formedness of the combinations are explained on page 192.

It has been noted also that most endocentric Limbum compounds are formed by the use of nouns such as:

(13)	muu, + n	child e.g	muu mbanrù	“baby boy”
	mbuu + n	“bottom”	mbuu ndab	“foundation”
	ngwè + n	“person”	ngwè kimbàṅ	“whiteman”
	ngàa + n	“group of people”	ngàa cor	“Christians”
	nyàa + n	“meat of”	nyàa ṅgub	“chicken”

### 3.1.2.2. EXOCENTRIC COMPOUND:

Exocentric compounds are considered headless. In English for example, redcap does not refer to a kind of cap but a porter in a railway station. Similarly, Limbum exocentric compounds do not have direct primary meaning of the words combined. The following combinations are common:

(14)	(i)	<u>Noun</u>	+	<u>Noun</u>	<u>combinations</u>
		ngwè		ṅgèr	“syphilis”
		carrot		strength	
		mabò		ṅkwà	
		mother of children		slave	“red pepper”

(ii) preposition + Noun combination  
 mbà mbàù  
 down there bottom "south"  
 mbà yà "a male dance"

(iii) verb + Verb combination  
 kèe kèe "mushroom shaped ant-hill"  
 future future  
 nyàŋ + nyáŋ "to run away in confusion"  
 to feed to feed

Unlike endocentric that its head is clearly describable as can be seen below exocentric compounds have  $\emptyset$  as its head. The trees below show.

Figure 3.1 Endocentric

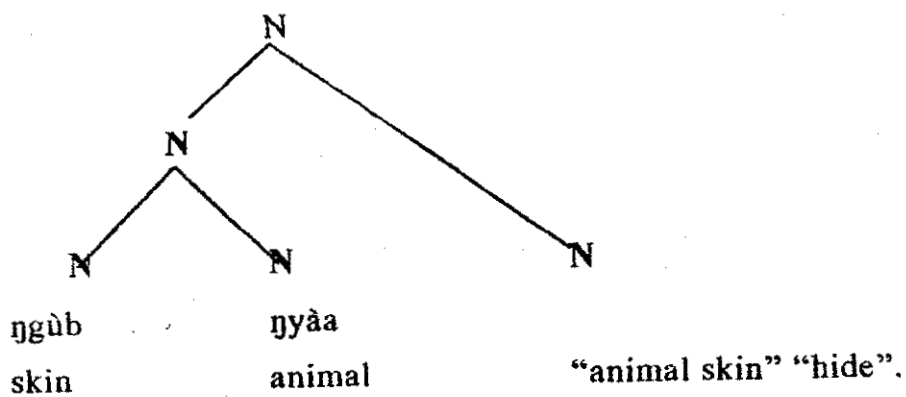
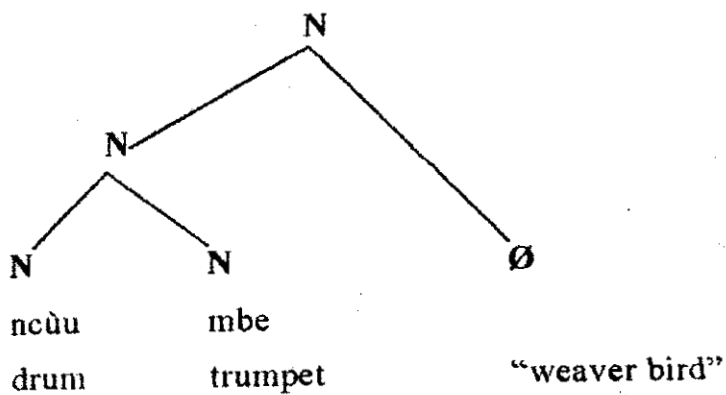


Figure 3.2 Exocentric



These examples show that virtually any relation can exist between members of endocentric compounds but not with exocentric compounds. This is because we say múu ngub “chicken” as well as ngub muu “child ‘s chicken”, but we cannot say mbe ncùu even though we can say ncùu mbe. Like Kiparsky argues, (1982b: 174) we cannot create “ncùu mbe sig” “drum trumpet bird”, because its rightmost branch is not overt. Since exocentric compounds lack formal property and their meanings cannot be inferred from the meanings of their parts, we must learn their meanings separately.

### 3.1.3.0 PLURAL FORMATION

Limbum nouns have their plurals formed in different ways. The following table shows the basic ways of forming the plurals.

*Table 3.3*

NOUN CLASS / CHARACTERISTICS	SINGULAR FORM	PLURAL MORPHEME CLASS	PLURAL FORM
1. (nouns with n-prefix in the singular (human))	nduu “husband” njár “sister” nfur “brother” ŋkar “friend”	/b/ 2 /b/ /b/ /b/	bduu “husbands” bjar “sisters” bfur “brothers” bkár “friends”
1a (nouns with ø prefix in the singular) (non human)	ndab “house” kfùu “rope” báa “slope”	/b/ 2 /b/ /b/	bndab “houses” bŋkfùu “ropes” bbáa “slopes”
5 (nouns with r-prefix in the singular)	rtaá “cap” rkaà “debt” rdonj “horn” rkub “nail”	/m/ 6 /m/ /m/ /m/	mtáa “caps” mkaa “debts” mdonj “horns” mkub “nails”

5 (abstract nouns derived from verbs with r-prefix in the singular)	rweb "fear"	/b/ 2	bweb "fears"
	rkù' "fatness"	/b/	bkù' "growth"
	rbòŋ "goodness"	/b/	bbòŋ "beauties"
	rghòoni "blessing"	/b/	bghòoni "blessings"
7 (nouns that denote body parts, crops and others with ø prefix in the singular)	ngàn "vein"	/m/ 6	mngàŋ "veins"
	bo "hand"	/m/	mbò "hand"
	kùu "foot"	/m/	mkùu "feet"
	rbò' "pumpkin"	/m/	mbò' "pumpkin"
7a (nouns without nasal prefix in the singular)	yo' "rubbing oil"	/b/ 2	byo' "rubbing oil"
	lee "blood"	/b/	blee "blood"
	tù' "ear"	/b/	btù' "ears"
7A (nouns with /ki-/ prefix in the singular)	cuu "mouth"	/b/	bcuu "mouths"
	kìbù' "council hall"	/b/ 2	bkìbù' "council halls"
	kìdàŋ "bench"	/b/	bkìdàŋ "benches"
	kìinta "cross"	/b/	bkìinta "cross"
	kimbàŋ "white person"	/b/	bkimbàŋ "white people"

### 3.1.3.1. IRREGULAR NOUNS

The above table does not show all the possibilities for plural formation in Limbum. Just like in English and some languages, some Limbum nouns have the same form for both singular and plural, while others completely change morphologically. We refer to them here as Irregular nouns. Limbum irregular nouns are divided into two groups. Those that have the same form for singular and plural are called irregular collective nouns, while the other group is called special irregular nouns. These refer to nouns of classes 1a and 9 respectively. The irregular

can take a possessive pronoun or modifier with a grammatical high tone to express plural. For example:

(15)	<u>Singular</u>		<u>Plural</u>		<u>Gloss</u>
(a)	yà	nà'	yá	nà'	my cow(s)
	yà	ngáb	yá	ngáb	my chicken(s)
	yà	ngwê	yá	ngwê	my dogs
(b)		mbú	kú'	mbá	many goats
		njèe	kú'	njèe	many sheep

Special Irregular nouns are shown here:

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
ŋwèe	bèe	people
Yúu	búu	things
Múu	bóo	children

To conclude this discussion on noun classes and plural formation, let us recap here the formal statements of Voorhoeve (1980) and Fransen (1995:96).

- Voorhoeve (1980:225): States, Lexicon should contain a pluralization rule which specifies the corresponding singular/plural classes.

(16)	<u>singular</u>	<u>plural</u>
	+1	+2
	+1a	+2
	+5	+6
	+7	+8
	+9	+10

- Fransen (1995:96) proposes such a pluralization rule by using the following singular/ plural pairings:

(17) Class	Singular	Plural	Class
1a,7,7a	Ø	b-/vú	2
1,	N	Ø -	10
5	r/lzú	m -/ miN -	6

This singular and plural pairings quite summarise things, but does not say what happens to irregular nouns. For this reason and in line with the previous discussion (table 3.3) above, we formalize the plural formation rules here as follows:

- a) Nouns fall into two broad groups- regular/ irregular.
- b) Regular nouns beginning with N- singular prefix form their plural by replacing the N- prefix with a b- plural prefix.
- c) Regular nouns beginning with r- singular prefix form their plural by replacing the r- prefix with m- plural prefix.
- d) Some nouns without prefixes may form their plurals either by prefixing b or m depending upon the noun class.
- e) Some *Irregular nouns* do not change in the plural.
- f) A few irregular nouns form their plurals by consonant and vowel changes (like 15 above).

#### 3.1.4.0. NOMINALISATION:

In Limbum, verbs nominalise in a number of ways. Nouns are often formed from verb roots using different prefixes. Once deverbalization takes place, the noun thus formed falls into gender classes of Van Reenen and Voorhoeve (1980) as shown above. The table below illustrates.

Table 3.4

Limbun verb	Gloss	Nominalised noun	Gloss	Plural prefix	Nominalised plural noun	Gloss	gender
-sà'	to judge	nsá'	court case	m-	msaà'	court cases	½
-fāa	to make a mistake	fāa	sin/mistake	b-	bfāa	sin/mistakes	5/2
-fa'	to give	rfá'	gift	m-	mfa'	gifts	5/6
-là'	to pay	rlà'	payment	b-	blà'	payments	5/6
-yèe	to sing	yèe	song	b-	byèe	songs	5/2
-tar	to entertain	ntár	entertainment	m-	mntar	entertainment	1a/2
-fūb	to be poor	fūb	poverty	b-	bfūb	poverty (pl)	5/2
-bòr	to be lazy	bòr	laziness	b-	bbòr	laziness (pl)	5/2
-wée	to grind	ngò'	machine	m-	mngò'	machines	5/6
-bor	to hunt	wee	hunting	b-	bwee	hunting	5/6
nt-	lazy person	nbór	lazy person	m-	mbòr	lazy persons	7/6

The table shows that in Limbum transitive verbs are often nominalised in different ways. These deverbal nouns take different prefixes and on the bases of their singular and plural prefixes are classified into the noun gender classes. However, a few intransitive verbs also nominalise, like “bòr” “to be lazy” in the table above. All the same, it is clear that most verbs nominalise into class 5 and have related meanings depending on the noun or gender class into which the corresponding verb nominalises. Generally, the nouns formed denote things or activity, except in the case of the last example, where it refers to a person. Consequently, takes /m/ prefix instead of /b/.

### 3.1.5. ASSOCIATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS

Larry Hyman (1980:35) states that “associative construction is used primarily to express possession, but have all of the typical functions characteristic of genitive constructions” and that in Aghem, the possessed

noun precedes the possessor noun. That is noun 1 + noun2 combination, which is commonly used as associative constructions in Bambili to express a wide range of functions such as kinship links, professions, measurements, possessions, nationality and imagery. Hyman's statement applies to Limbum Associative constructions too, because unlike in English where the genitive construction is most easily recognised by the use of the "of" occurring between two nouns, Limbum uses N1+N2 combination. The possessor noun (N2) comes after the possessed noun (N1), and there is concord between the two nouns. For instance, if N1 is noun class 1a it easily combines with N2 of noun class 2. Similarly, Fransen (1995:137) also asserts that an occasional downstep (!) a tonal trace of associative morpheme that had disappeared exists in Limbum Associative Constructions. In addition, we attest that native speakers often use associative constructions and genitive constructions (genitive constructions are not overtly marked in Limbum like in English) interchangeably. What happens is that the N1 (noun class) agrees with the N2 noun class. Let us begin by looking at the examples of noun noun associative constructions.

Table 3.5

Noun class	Singular Association Construction	Gloss	Plural Associative Construction	Gloss
1/2	ngwa ndúr	wife of brother	bgwà bdúr	wives of brothers
1a/2	ndáb sàŋ	house of python	bndáb bsàŋ	houses of pythons
5/6	rtáa nfár	cap of twin	mtáa mfár	caps of twins
1a/2	nsá'nyà	judgement of God	mnsá' nyà	judgement of God
7/2	cè'ntá'	cloth of chair	bcè' ntá'	clothes of chairs
7d/2	lée síŋ	blood of bird	blée bsíŋ	blood of birds
7/10	mbùu ngwé	bottom of dog	mbùu ngwé	bottoms of dogs
1a/2	nà' mbòróŋ	cow of bororo	nà' mbòróŋ	cows of bororos



We notice that in most cases the plural morphemes of (N1) and (N2) are prefixed to the constructions. However, in “mbùu ngwe” “bottom of dog” and “mbùu ngwé” “bottoms of dogs” as well as “nà' mbòroŋ” “cow of bororo” and “nà' mbòroŋ” “cows of bororos”, there are no plural morphemes. If we recall that “nà'” and “ngwé” are single class genders, we could state here that the initial nasals of the (N1) possessed and (N2) possessor are syllabic meant to show plural. The translation shows that N1+N2 show genitive construction, but we understand that N1+N2 also express possession, for instance the examples above can also be taken to mean:

(18)	mbùu yá ngwé	“my dog’s buttocks”
	mbùu ngwé	“dog’s buttocks”
	mbùu ngwé (pl)	“dogs’ buttocks”
	nà' mbòroŋ	“fulani’s cow”
	nà' mbòroŋ (pl)	“fulanis’ cows”
	nà' yá mbòroŋ (pl)	“my fulanis’ cows”

Just like in Bambili, N1+N2 combinations can be used as Association Constructions to express the following: (Ayuminjam 1998:210)

a) Kinship links:

tár muu	The father of the child.
	The child’s father.
ngwá ndúr	The wife of the brother.
	The brother’s wife.

b) Measurement:

rkó cè'	a fathom of cloth.
mkó bcè' mtár	three fathoms of cloth.

c) Nationality:

ngwè nso	a person of nsó'
	a native of nsó'
ngwè nfúu	foreigner

d) Imagery:

d) Imagery:

Kfàkfà sà' a broken piece of matchet.

These examples show that Limbum does not use N1 + N2 combinations to express only possession, but to express a variety of semantic structures.

Alterations in Limbum Associative Construction come as a result of the insertion of possessive pronouns. (see page 130 for a complete table of possessive pronouns determiners) .The pronouns are used depending upon the class of the noun N1 class. The examples below show

(19)	Noun class	construction	gloss
	1a	mbá yì ñkú	goat of chief
	10	mbá yì ñkú	goats of chief
	1	cé yì ñkú	tree of chief
	2	bcé vî ñkú	trees of chief
	1	mbàḡ yì ñkú	walking stick of chief

The above can be better illustrated using these tree diagrams.

Figure 3.3

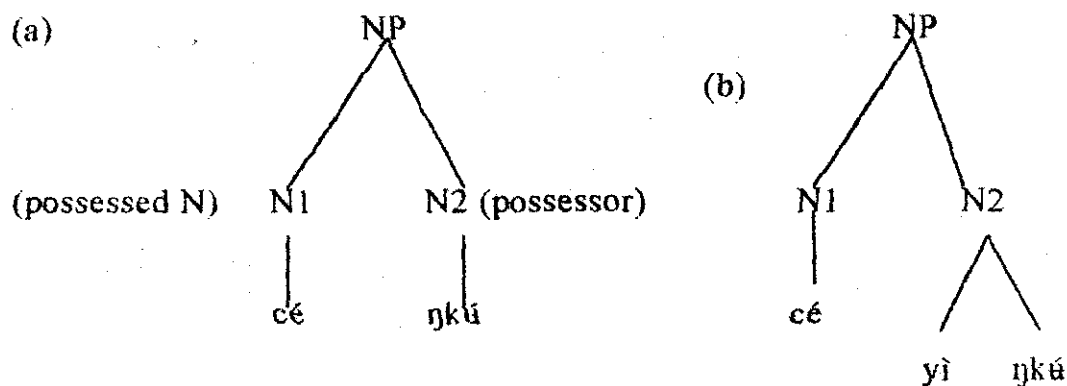
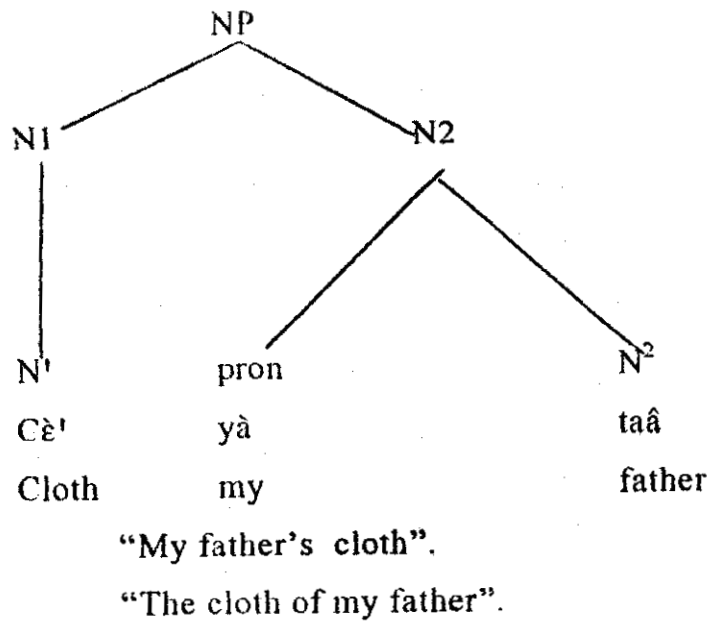


Diagram (a) shows only N1 + N2, which is often considered as being less or non emphatic, while (b) contains the possessive pronoun yì. When a speaker decides to insert a possessive pronoun, it may come before or after the possessor noun thereby making it emphatic. This tree diagram illustrates.

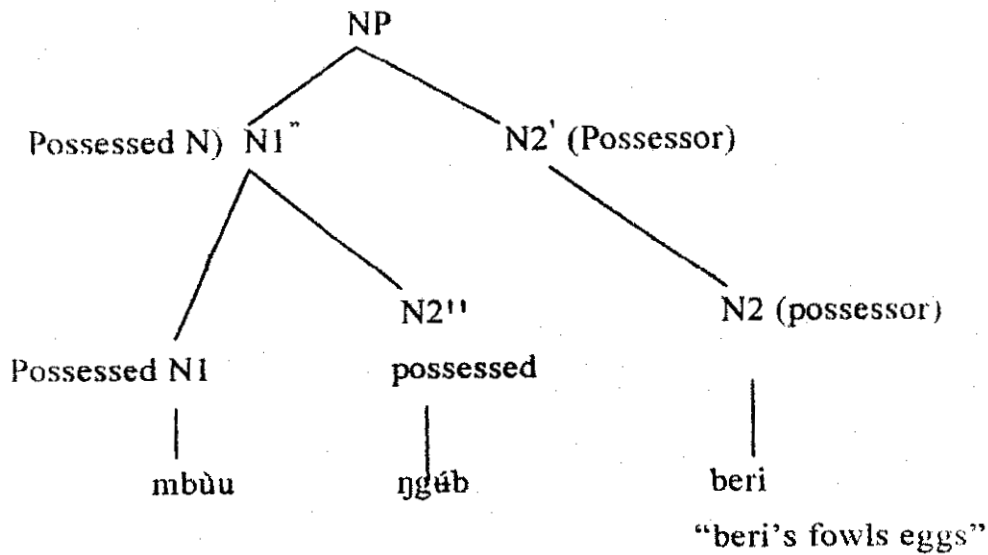
Figure 3.4



In some situations, the speaker may decide to be emphatic and so uses a possessive qualifier. For instance:

“mbùu ngúb Beri.”

Figure 3.5



Here, we have a sequence of three nouns: N2<sup>1</sup> possessor noun, branches into two (N1<sup>11</sup>) acting as the possessed of N2 and modifier of N1. That is ngúb is possessed by Beri and modifies the eggs (N1).

### 3.1.6.

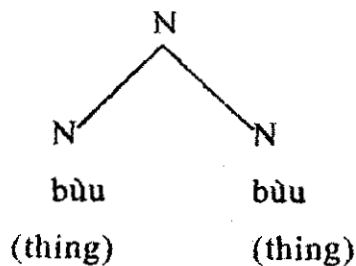
## REDUPLICATION

Reduplication is a morphological process that takes place in natural languages. It refers to the repetition of a part or all of a morpheme in a morphological category. (Jensen: 1990:68). It is considered complete when an entire morpheme is reduplicated and partial when only part of the morpheme is reduplicated. In this case, either part of a word, segment or syllable is reduplicated. In some cases, it involves syllables, words or entire phrases. Nyombe (1997) states that in Bari (a language spoken in the south of Sudan) words undergo reduplication for different purposes. In Limbum as well, the process is quite common, and words undergo the process for different functions such as onomatopoeic or simply descriptive. In most cases, the reduplicated word that surfaces may not have any direct semantic relationship with the original word. In this section, we attempt to treat reduplication broadly under total and partial. Examples of noun, verb, adjective, numeral and adverb reduplications will be considered under these two headings.

### 3.1.6.1. TOTAL REDUPLICATION:

Complete reduplication may be noun, verb, adjective, numeral or adverb. Noun reduplication for example can be better illustrated using the following examples.

*Figure 3.6*



$N + N = N$   $bùu + bùu = bùubùu =$  plantain flower

Here are some more examples

(20)	<u>Noun</u>	<u>class</u>	<u>Reduplicated form</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
	nfùt	"pus"	nfùnfù	dust
	fù'	"to foam up"	fù'fù'	lungs
	gà	"type of camwood"	gàgà	small hand drum
	cé	"tree"	cécé	stick
	kù	"rope"	kùkù	section/ chapter

In Limbum, some reduplicated nouns could be considered onomatopoeic because the new form is melodious and has a descriptive function.

- (21) lànlàn - traditional cloth. Name comes from its smooth nature  
The single word, làn is semantically meaningless.
- Ndàngndàn - mosquito name comes from the way it flies. The single word ndàn refers to young palm frond planted on graves of nobles. It has no relationship with the duplicated form
- ndòṅndòṅ - a type of long necked insect – ndòṅ is neck. The single word "ndòṅ" is lexically different from ndòṅ "cup". They differ in tone.
- ntàṅntàṅ - leg movement of tall people are described as ntàṅ. The single word ntàṅ carries a low tone and does not have a semantic relationship with ntán "advice" with high tone
- ntúṅntúṅ - very small jigger. Name comes from its sharp mouth that digs into the body. The single word, ntúṅ refers to a small or final hole of the traditional seed game "mbaṅ".
- l]gànggàn - type of long legged bird. Name comes from its galloping movement. The single word gànṅ refers to a "root" or "vein". It has no semantic relationship with the duplicated form.

### 3.1.6.1.1 ADJECTIVES

Limbum has a few permanent reduplicated forms of adjectives. There are not as productive as those derived from monosyllabic and disyllabic verbs. The first group of examples illustrates permanent or complete reduplicated forms of adjectives. They describe the quality of things.

(22)	nyòbnyòb	-soft
	còrcòr	-saltless
	ràrá	- clean
	dò'dò'	- extremely cold.

In Limbum, adjectives are formed from verbs, by reduplicating the verb. Although this is treated elsewhere under derived and non derived adjectives, we illustrate complete adjective reduplication based on monosyllabic verbs.

	<u>Verb</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Adjective</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
(23)	tàŋ	to be tough	tàŋtáŋ	strong
	béb	to be bad	bébéb	terrible
	bàŋ	to be red	bàŋbaŋ	red
	céb	to be sharp	cébcéb	sharp
	bèr	to be wide	bèrbèr	wide

### 3.1.6.1.2 NUMERALS:

Complete reduplication takes place in Limbum numerals also. This often describes the numerical strength of an action being undertaken. The examples below illustrate this.

(24)	Nòŋsì	bàabàa	-put in groups of twos
	Put	two two	-in pairs

tàrtàr -in threes

three three

ta'tá' -in fives

five five

### 3.1.6.1.3. ADVERBS:

In some constructions in Limbum, it has been attested that some adverbs are formed from reduplication of different categories of words. The list of adverbs below contains examples of reduplicated adverbs.

Table 3.6

Word	Category	Gloss	Adverb	Gloss
nji	noun	back	njinji	backwards
mùfé	adjective	gentle	mùfè mùfé	gently
àfó	adverb	there	àfóàfó	frequently
dà	noun	small storage house	dàdà	completely
bànrì	adjective	partially ripe	bànrìbànrì	looking suspiciously
cèr	adjective	quick	cércér	quickly

### 3.1.6.1.4. VERB:

Verb reduplication in Limbum is one common way of vocabulary development in the language. As already indicated, some verbs, monosyllabic as well as disyllabic reduplicate to form adjectives. Some verbs reduplicate in Limbum for purposes of aspect. That is to show aspectual meaning (Fransen 1995:204). But certain verbs undergo reduplication for purposes of emphasis. The examples below express the concept of emphasis or intensification.

Table 3.7

Verb	Gloss	Reduplicate form	Gloss
yé	to eat	yéyé	eat emphatic not the contrary
cwā	to chew	cwácwá	chew emphatic not the contrary
dāa	to slice	dāadāa	slice emphatic not the contrary
có'	to remove	có'có'	remove emphatic not the contrary
káa	to press	káakáa	press emphatic not the contrary

Summarily, we observe that in complex reduplication, tone has a regular pattern. If the morpheme or the word has a H tone, the H tone is also reduplicated. Similarly, if it is a L. tone the same thing happens.

### 3.1.6.2 PARTIAL REDUPLICATION

We have treated total reduplication as a morphological process in Limbum. It happens in the formation of nouns, verbs and adjectives. Here, we examine partial reduplication. It is important to examine what happens in Limbum when a segment or syllable of a stem is reduplicated. In some non-Bantu languages, for example, Ilocano, a language spoken in the Philippine, partial reduplication is an aspect of plural formation, for instance (Jensen 1990:69)

Pingan	"dish"	pingpingan	"dishes"
Dalan	"road"	daldálan	"roads"

But in Limbum, it is not a productive process. That is the process is not generative. A few nouns have either their prefixes or suffixes reduplicated to make them lexically well-formed. Here are some examples:

- (25) 1      kùkùŋ      "corn chaff"  
          kù-      "just"  
          -kùŋ      "semantically void"  
          kùkùŋ      "corn chaff"
- 2      kékéŋ      "frying pot"  
          kéké-      "what?"  
          -kékéŋ      "semantically void"



3	kàkúr	“fallow farm”
	kù-	“rope”
	- kúr	“semantically void”
	kàkúr	“fallow farm”
4	msùsùŋ	“elephant grass”
	m	“plural prefix”
	- sù-	“semantically void”
	msùsùŋ	“elephant grass”
5	rghòghò	“intestinal worm”
	r-	“singular prefix”
	ghò	“semantically void”
	rghòghò	“intestinal worm”

We notice that in nos 1-3 the initial syllables are repeated, whereas in nos 3-5 the final syllables are repeated. Except for number 3, it can be said that in partial reduplication, the tone pattern on the reduplicated segment is uniform. It appears that partial reduplication does not take place in categories such as verbs, adjectives, adverbs and numerals in Limbum.

### 3.1.6.3. COMPLEX PARTIAL REDUPLICATIONS

In Limbum certain words are formed by adding a reduplicated (totally reduplicated) stem to another noun. This could be considered as a compounding process. However, we have examined compounds under two sub-headings- endocentric and exocentric compounds (see 3.1.2) above. Those we treat here under complex partial reduplication, fall outside the aspects cited above. The new word formed from such a systematic reduplication of either the prefix of the first stem or the suffix of the second item is a compound. Here are some examples:

(26)	1	ci	“morpheme- semantically void”
		cící	“useless”
		-kùr	“ant hill”
		cìcìkùr	“white edible mushroom”

2	fú-	"to come out"
	fáfá-	"semantically void"
	- rún	"not full"
	fáfárún	"type of antelope"
3	tì	"morpheme- semantically void"
	titi	"floor"
	yée	"song"
	titi yée	"centre"
4	ló'-	"to deceive"
	- ngér	"strength"
	ló'ngér-	"winding"
	ló'ngérngér	"gecko"
5	rká'sì-	"to light"
	- nwàn	"to whisk light softly round"
	rká'sìnwànnwàn	"firefly"

Looking at the above examples, we realise again that the tone pattern on the reduplicated segments is consistent. The nouns formed do not have any relationship with the initial duplicated segments.

### 3.1.7. PRONOUNS

All natural languages use certain words such as "it", "they" and "nobody" in sentences containing nouns in order to avoid repeating the nouns. This is very common in discourse. That is, to minimise continuous repetition of particular nouns; pronouns are used to substitute the nouns. Limbum makes use of such pronouns also. In Limbum, the pronouns are divided into three broad groups. Human, non-human, and possessive pronouns. We begin with Human pronouns.

### 3.1.7.1

## HUMAN PRONOUNS:

There exist two types of human pronouns. When a pronoun serves as a subject in discourse, it is called subject pronoun and when it serves as an object, it is called an object pronoun. In Limbum, subject and object pronouns are also subdivided into simple and compound pronouns.

### 3.1.7.1.1. SIMPLE SUBJECT PRONOUNS

They are used as the subjects of the verb and are divided into 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular and plural as the chart below shows:

*Table 3.8*

PERSON	SINGULAR		PLURAL	
	LIMBUM	GLOSS	LIMBUM	GLOSS
1 <sup>st</sup> person	mè / m	I	wèr/wìr/sèe/sò	we
2 <sup>nd</sup> person	wè / à	you	wèe/wii	you
3 <sup>rd</sup> person	é / í	he/she	wówèe/o	they

In the first person plural, Limbum differentiates greatly- “wèr” with its southern synonym “wir” which is used when the speaker does not want to include the hearers (1 + 3). It is therefore hearer exclusive, while “sii” southern synonym for “sèe” is hearer inclusive (1 + 2), meanwhile “sò” is the dual form, referring only to the speaker and one hearer or the person to whom the sentence is addressed (1 + 2 singular). In the first person singular “mè” the full form of m̄ is used mostly in the central and southern dialects when talking about the present, whereas the syllabic m̄ is popular amongst the northern speakers. In the second person singular and plural, we observe that wè “you” second person singular, which is popular amongst the

southern and central speakers, is substituted by à in the northern. Similarly “wèe” “you” plural has “wii” as its synonym in the South.

Finally, we notice that the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular and plural forms have the following differences è “he/she” which is used in the North and Centre becomes ì in the South, while “wówèe” becomes “o”.

To conclude, in those dialects ì and à forms are used exclusively in the present progressive and future tenses, while mè and wè are used in the other tenses. e.g

(27)	M	cé	yé	baa	
	I	PROG	eat	food	“I am eating food
	Mè	má	yé	baa	
	I	P2	eat	food	“I ate food”
	À	cé	yé	baa	
	You	PROG	eat	food	“You are eating food”
	Wè	bá	yé	baa	
	You	P1	eat	food	“You ate food today”
	Ì	béldò	yé	baa	
	I	f1	eat	food	“I will eat food”
	bé	fá	yé	baa	
	They	f2	eat	food	“They will eat food tomorrow”

In hortative and rapid speech constructions, syllabic forms are preferred

(28)	e.g.	Teé mè yé	
		Let me eat- Hort	
		Tee m yé	“Let me eat”
		Let me eat- Hort	
		Mè làa nè wè	
		I speak- Hort to you	“I am speaking to you”.
		Ì laa nè wè	
		I speak- Hort to you	
		Mè yé	
		I eat- Hort	“I am eating”.
		Ì yé	
		I eat- Hort	

### 3.1.7.1.2. SIMPLE OBJECT PRONOUNS.

Simple human object pronouns refer to pronouns that are used to minimise the continuous use of particular objects in discourse. They therefore replace the objects and are called in Limbum, simple human object pronouns. Mpoche (1993:18) identifies them and treats in his own way. To him, they are simple prepositional object pronouns of prepositions which are used as objects in Limbum . Probably, he considers them so because they often come after prepositions. The table below illustrates our own way of considering them (as simple human object pronouns).

Table 3.9

PERSON	SINGULAR		PLURAL	
	LIMBUM	GLOSS	LIMBUM	GLOSS
1 <sup>st</sup> person	m		wèr / sèe / sò	we
2 <sup>nd</sup> person	wè	you	wèe	you
3 <sup>rd</sup> person	yé/yí	him/her/it	wowèe	them

The only significant difference with the subject pronoun is in the third person singular yé/yí “him/her” instead of è/i. The other difference lies in the usage. E .g

(2.9) Mè / tú nyà á fá nì yé

I P1 shoot animal give to him “I have shot an animal”

Wè fá nyá nì mè

You P1 give animal to me

“You have given me meat.”

Nfò à dù àryè yè

Nfor SM go to see him/her

“Nfor has gone to see him/her.”

## 3.1.7.1.3

## COMPOUND PRONOUNS.

Fransen (1995:183) describes lengthily what are compound human pronouns in Limbum. We simply state here that compound human pronouns exist in Limbum. They can be used to substitute subject or object human pronouns. Their differences exist first of all due to speaker and addressee exclusion or inclusion, and secondly due to dual referents. Hyman (1981:17) states for NONI about plural forms... "these compounds do not reflect the composition of subgroups in the plural forms; they merely indicate which persons are involved in the total group." That is to say, the plural forms represent totalisation. The various forms are illustrated in the following table.

Table 3.10

PERSON	DUAL	GLOSS
2+1	wèr sò / sò	we (you & me)sg. i.e. S+A
1+3	wèr / wèr yé	we (I & him)sg. i.e. S+R
2+3	wèè / wèè yé	you (he/she & you)sg. i.e. A+R
3+3	á yé / ó yé	they (he/she & he/they)sg. i.e. R+R
PERSON	PLURAL	GLOSS
2+1	Sèè / wèr seè	we (you & we)pl. i.e. S+As
1+3	wèr wówèè	we (we & they)pl. i.e. S+RS
2+3	wèè wówèè	you (you & they)pl. i.e. A+RS
3+3	á /ó wówèè	they (he/she/&they)pl. i.e. R+RS

Note that speaker is (S), addressee (A) and referent (R). As earlier stated, these pronoun combinations can pass as subjects or objects of verbs. The examples below illustrate this point. E.g.

- (30) A) Sò bé dù ntà  
 We(1+2) F1 go market "We will go to the market."
- B) Wèe wówèe à fà' nsù  
 You (2+3) P1 work farm. "You have worked the farm."
- C) Wówèe(3+3) à befù dù ntá.  
 SM F2 go market "They will go to the market."
- D) É ké' wèr wówèe  
 He call us (1+3) "He has called us."
- E) Yé wèe wówèe  
 Eat you them (2+3) "Eat with them"
- F) É dù à wówèe  
 He go them 3+3 "He has gone with them."

### 3.1.7.2 NON – HUMAN PRONOUNS

So far, we have been dealing with human pronouns. (Personal pronouns). As Mfonyam and Ngah (1985) put it, things and animals also have their own pronouns in Limbum. They are referred to as non-human pronouns or independent and dependent pronouns, see Fransen (1995:191). Following Voorhoeve (1977) non-human pronouns are noun class dependent. Although, Mpoche (1993:19) claims that they function as substitutes for subjects only, we observe that they also function as indirect, prepositional or emphasized objects. Those that are noun class dependent

often show agreement between subjects and verbs. The table and the examples that follow illustrate the above claims.

*Table 3.11*

NOUN CLASS	SUBJECT NON-HUMAN PRONOUNS	OBJECT NON-HUMAN PRONOUN	SUBJECT VERB CONCORD PRONOUN
1a	e	Yé	ø
2	ví	ví	vì
5	lí	lí	lì
6	mí	mí	mì
7	lí	lí	lì
10	yí	yí	yí

- (31) (a) Sîŋ à yé kwâa = "the bird has eaten corn".  
 Cl.1 è yé kwâa = "It has eaten corn."
- (b) Bsîŋ vì yé kwâa = "The birds have eaten corn."  
 Cl.2 vì y kwaa = "They have eaten corn."
- (c) rèè' lí bí = "The yam is ready."  
 cl.5 lí bí = "It is ready."
- (d) Mrèè' mí bí = "The yams are ready"  
 Cl.6 mí bí = "They are ready".
- (e) Cè' yí gwè = "The cloth has fallen."  
 Cl.7 yí gwè = "It has fallen"
- (f) Bcè' ví ráa = "The cloths are clean."  
 Cl.2 2 ví ráa = "They are clean."



- (g) ngùb é' mà' rbùu = "The fowl has laid an egg."  
 Cl.1a é' mà' rbùu = "It has laid eggs."
- (h) ngùb yí' mà' mbùu = "The fowls have laid eggs."  
 Cl.10 yí' mà' mbùu = "They have laid eggs."

The examples above show the subject functions of the non-human subject pronouns. They also show their noun-prefixes – See examples b, d, and f. In the above examples the first sentence of each number shows subject –verb concord pronouns. The second set of examples begin with subject pronouns.

But the following examples represent the object functions

- (32) (a) mè táa síŋ "I have shot a bird"  
 I shoot bird  
 Mè táa yé "I have shot it"  
 I shoot it
- (b) Mè táa bsíŋ "I have shot birds".  
 Mè táa ví "I have shot them"
- (c) Mè yé rée' "I have eaten yam."  
 Mè yé lí "I have eaten it."
- (d) Mè yé mrée' "I have eaten yams"  
 Mè yé mí "I have eaten them"
- (e) Mè sù'sì cè' "I have washed cloth"  
 Mè sù'sì yí "I have washed it."
- (f) Mè sù'sì bcè' "I have washed clothes"  
 è sù'sì ví "I have washed them"

- (g) Mè kóo ngáb "I have caught a fowl"  
Mè koo yè "I have caught it"
- (h) Mè koo ngáb "I have caught fowls"  
Mè kóo yí "I have caught them"

In the same light, we notice here that the object pronouns are identical to the subject pronouns except those of noun class 1a, whose object pronoun is *yé* instead of *é*.

### 3.1.7.3. DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

In Limbum nouns may be followed by morphemes, which help us to point to the person or thing we are referring to. These morphemes called demonstrative pronouns are of three types. The classification or grouping is based on the position of the speaker in relation to the addressee and the referent. The object referred to, may be near speaker (NS) far away from speaker (FS) or closer to addressee (NA).

The form of the demonstrative changes according to the noun class it describes and depending also on whether the noun is singular or plural. The tables below illustrate the singular and plural forms of demonstrative pronouns as per the noun classes.

*Table 3.12*

#### SINGULAR DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

NC	NS	NA	FS
1	cá "this"	cà "that"	cénà "that one"
5	cá "this"	cà "that"	cénà "that one"
7	cá "this"	cà "that"	cénà "that one"
10	cá "this"	cà "that"	cénà "that one"

## PLURAL DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

NC	NS	NA	FS
2	bcá "these"	bcà "those"	bcénà "those ones"
6	mcá "these"	mcà "those"	mcénà "those ones"
10	cá "these"	cà "those"	cénà "those ones"

## REFERENTIAL DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

NC	NS	NA	FS
1	cánè "this one"	yáná "that one"	yáná "that one"
2	bcánè "these ones"	bwáná "those ones"	bwáná "those ones"
5	cánè "this one"	láná "that one"	láná "that one"
6	mcánè "these ones"	máná "those ones"	mána "those one"
7	cáne "this one"	láná "that one"	láná "that one"
10	mcánè "these ones"	máná "those ones"	máná "that one"

The demonstrative pronouns follow the nouns whereas the referential demonstrative pronouns show noun class concord in the singular and plural, the definite demonstrative pronouns do not. Meanwhile, the referential demonstrative pronouns also express locative meaning and can be used in place of the noun. In such nominal positions, they still reflect concord. The sentences below illustrate the forms mentioned above.

(33) A) Singular definite demonstrative pronouns:

cl1 nfúr cá "This brother" (NS)

nfúr cà "That brother" (NA)

nfúr cénà "That brother" (FS)

cl5 rdónj cá "This horn" (NS)

rdónj cà "That horn" (NA)

rdónj cénà "That horn" (FS)

cl7 rbò' cá "This pumkin" (NS)

rbò' cà "That pumkin" (NA)

rbò' cénà "That pumkin" (FS)

cl10 ngúb cá "This fowl" (NS)

ngúb cà "That fowl" (NA)

ngúb cénà "That fowl" (FS)

B) Plural definite demonstrative pronouns:

Cl2 bfúr bcá "Thses brothers" (NS)

bfúr bcà "Those brothers" (NA)

bfúr bcénà "Those brothers" (FS)

cl6 mbò' mcá "These pumkins" (NS)

mbò' mcà "Those pumkins" (NA)

mbò' mcénà "Those pumkins" (FS)

C) Referential demonstrative pronouns:

**SINGULAR**

cl1 nfúr cánè "This brother (specific one)" NS

nfúr yàná "That brother (specific one)" NA

nfúr yàná "That brother (specific one)" FS

cl5 rdónj cánè "This horn (specific one)" NS

rdónj làná "That horn (specific one)" NA

rdónj làná "That horn (specific one)" FS

cl7 rbò' cánè "This pumkin (specific one)" NS

rbò' làná "That pumkin (specific one)" NA

rbò' làná "That pumkin (specific one)" FS

cl10 ngúb cánè "This fowl (specific one)" NS

ngúb yàná "That fowl (specific one)" NA

ngúb yàná "That fowl (specific one)" FS

**PLURAL:**

c12	bfúr bcánè	"These brothers (specific ones)"	NS
	bfúr bwàná	"Those brothers (specific ones)"	NA
	bfúr bwàná	"Those brothers (specific ones)"	FS
c16	mbò' mcánè	"These pumkins (specific ones)"	NS
	mbò' màná	"Those pumkins (specific ones)"	NA
	mbò' màná	"Those pumkins (specific ones)"	FS
c110	ngúb cánè	"These fowls (specific ones)"	NS
	ngúb yàná	"Those fowls (specific ones)"	NA
	ngúb yàná	"Those fowls (specific ones)"	FS

It is important to note here again that the singular referential demonstrative pronouns are *cánè*, *yàná* and *làná* and do refer to one out of many things, just like the plural forms *bcánè*, *bwàná* and *màná* refer to specific ones (group) out of many. It appears that concord marker *yì cánè* "This one here" for nouns in classes 1 and 10 surfaces generally as *cánè*. Consequently, the concord markers are *ỳ*, *ù*, *ì* and *ñ*.

As earlier indicated, referential demonstrative pronouns can be used nominally. For example.

(34)	<i>cánè</i>	"This one here"	(NS)
	<i>yàná</i>	"That one over there"	(NA)
	<i>yàná</i>	"That one over there"	(FS)
	<i>bcánè</i>	"These ones here"	(NS)
	<i>bwàná</i>	"Those ones over there"	(NA)
	<i>bwàná</i>	"Those ones over there"	(FS)
	<i>cánè</i>	"This one here"	(NS)
	<i>làná</i>	"That one over there"	(NA)
	<i>làná</i>	"That one over threr"	(FS)
	<i>mcánè</i>	"These ones here"	(NS)

máná	“Those ones over there” (NA)
máná	“Those ones over there” (FS)

In some cases, some speakers use há “this” and hà “that” for things already mentioned or that the hearer has pre-knowledge of. For example, sà há céb se “This cutlass is very sharp”.

Nforgwei (1991:31) concludes that nouns that have their plurals formed by the prefixation of [b] plural marker also have this plural morpheme prefixed to their demonstrative pronouns. The same applies to [m] and [ø] plural, as illustrated in A, B, and C above.

#### 3.1.7.4. REFLEXIVE PRONOUNS

There are no direct reflexive pronouns in Limbum. However, Limbum expresses reflexivity by using body parts to denote it. Such parts include:

(35)	Nyór	body
	kuu	foot (sing/plural)
	bóo	hand
	túu	head

These parts are suffixed to the possessive adjectives depending upon the subject which, it modifies. For example.

Table 3.13

SINGULAR	NOUN CLASS	GLOSS	PLURAL	NOUN CLASS	GLOSS
yà-nyór (body)	la	myself	wèr -- byór	2	ourselves
yá - túu (head)	la	myself/alone	wèr -- btú	2	ourselves
yá - bó(hand)	la	myself	wèr -- mbó	2	ourselves
yá - kùu (foot)	la	myself/trekking	wèe -- mɲkùu	2	ourselves
yò-nyór (body)	la	yourself	wèe -- byór	2	yourselves
yó - tú (head)	la	yourself	wèe -- btú	2	yourselves
yó - bó (hand)	la	yourself	wèe -- mbó	2	yourselves
yó - kùu (foot)	la	yourself	wèe -- mɲkùu	2	yourselves
yì- nyór (body)	la	himself	wàb bnyór	2	themselves
yí- tú (head)	la	himself	wàb btú	2	themselves
yí - bó (hand)	la	himself	wàb mbó	2	themselves
yí - kùu (foot)	la	himself	wàb mɲkùu	2	themselves

Note that the use of the body part is determined by the event, and is noun class dependent as can be seen in the sentences below:

(36)

1. Béri à sɛ' ngúu nì yí bó. "Beri has fetched firewood  
Beri pí fetch woo with her hand. herself"
2. Dù yé yé nì yó kùu "Go and see him/her yourself".  
Go see him with your foot.
3. Múu à nyáj yí túu "The child has fed him/herself".  
Child pí feed him/her head.
4. Sèe fá' lí nì mɛsèe mbó "Let us work it ourselves".  
Us work it with our hands.
5. Bòò à dù nì wáb byór "The children have gone by  
Children pí go with their bodies themselves".

### 3.1.7.5 RECIPROCAL PRONOUNS

Just like reflexive pronouns, reciprocal pronouns do not exist in Limbum. However, *nyor* (body) and verbal extensions (*nì*) are used to denote reciprocity. The examples that follow illustrate these forms.

(37) (a)	ghónsé hug	wáb their	bnyór bodies	"hug each other"
	cà'ní greet	wáb their	bnyór bodies	"greet each other"
	kòṅ love	wáb their	bnyór bodies	"Love each other"
	bàa hate	wáb their	bnyór/btú bodies	"hate each other"
	tár entertain	wáb their	bnyór bodies	"entertain each other"
	súṅ inform	wáb their	bnyór bodies	"inform each other"
	rìṅ know	wáb their	bnyór bodies	"know each other"
	ye'ní teach	wáb their	bnyór bodies.	"teach each other"

(b) Some verbs allow verbal extensions of *nì* to be suffixed to them to express reciprocity. e.g

kòṅf love reciprocal	"Love each other"
bàanf hate reciprocal	"hate each other"
rìṅf Know reciprocal	"know each other"
súṅf Inform reciprocal	"inform each other"



báaní  
Embrace reciprocal

“embrace each other”

Reciprocal expressions are often used to express perfective actions. For instance, wówèè à “they P1 marker” usually comes before the verb, consequently making the verb have a perfective (present perfect) meaning. We also observe that in verbal extensions, verbs ending in nì, for example, yè'nì (teach) do not take nì reciprocal extension. The following examples illustrate these points.

(38)(A) Wówèè à báaní                      “They have embraced each other”.  
          Wówèè à rìgní                        “They already know each other”.

But verbs that end in nì verbal extension do not express reciprocity. For example:

B) Shà        cá    yí    wèní                      “This cornbeer has become weak”  
          cornbeer this it become weak

Bàrí à kóní Bérì à nsú                      “Bari has helped Beri with the farm.”  
Bari P1 help Beri with farm.

Wówèè à ghóní nsu                              “They have blessed the farm”  
          e    lápní múu                              “He has warned the child”

In example B, the verbs, whether transitive or intransitive do not permit reciprocity.

### 3.1.8.                      DETERMINERS

A determiner is a word used with a noun to indicate whether one is referring to a specific thing or just to something of a particular type. Determiner includes articles, definite and indefinite pronouns, possessives, interrogative pronouns and numerals. Limbum makes use of these categories of determiners. They may precede or follow the noun or pronoun they specify.

### 3.1.8.1

### DEFINITE / INDEFINITE ARTICLE:

Limbum does not have a separate definite article, (Fransen: 1995:146), but uses the reported particle *ánà* "that" and *hà* "that" which Fransen refers to as demonstrative pronouns with referential meanings. *Ánà* "that" in actual usage is anaphoric in nature and refers to persons or things earlier mentioned in discourse that may or may not be in sight. Ndamsah (1997:77) refers to it as the morpheme that designates the definite English article "the". Since the demonstrative pronoun *cá* "this" or *cá* "that" comes after the noun and the reported particle *ánà* "that" too occupies the same position in the sentence, it could easily pass for a demonstrative pronoun and also function as a definite article as can be seen below.

<i>sà' cá céb</i>	"This cutlass is sharp"
<i>sá' ánà à gwàr mè kùu</i>	"This cutlass has cut my foot"

(39a) But we can say:

<i>Sà' cá ánà à gwàr me kùu</i>	
cutlass this the pi cut my foot	
"The cutlass has wounded me on my foot."	

Following this explanation, the examples below are meant to illustrate the point.

- |           |                          |                                   |
|-----------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| (39b) (i) | <i>Fá me mrú'</i>        | "Give me some wine"               |
|           | Give me wine             |                                   |
|           | <i>Mrù' ánà mì bòṅsê</i> | "The wine is very good"           |
|           | Wine part it good very.  |                                   |
| (ii)      | <i>Mùu ghàshì sà'</i>    | "The child is holding a cutlass." |
|           | Child hold cutlass       |                                   |
|           | <i>Sà' ánà cèb</i>       | "The cutlass is sharp."           |
|           | Cutlass part. sharp      |                                   |

From the above examples, we realise that *ánà* is a particle that has a definite reference like the English "the". Even though it comes after the noun just like the demonstrative pronoun does, it is not noun class dependent. For example:

(40)	cl1	sà' áná ceb	"The cutlass is sharp"
	cl2	bsà' áná ví ceb	"The cutlasses are sharp"
	cl7	rbò' áná lí bòn	"The pumkin is good"
	cl6	mbò' áná mí bon	"The pnmkins are good"
	cl10	ngúb áná kù'	"The fowl is big"
		ngúb áná yí kù'	"The fowls are big"

Limbum definite articles originate from demonstratives and are morphologically demonstratives, even though they sometimes function as definite articles.

(b) Indefinite Referential Article: In Limbum, the indefinite article is not morphologically marked. If it were, it would most likely come after the noun like the indefinite determiner does in Bambili. For example:

(41) (i)	Fá mè mrù ø	"Give me some wine"
	Give me part Wine	
(ii)	Yè màngòrò ø	"Eat a mango"
	Eat part mango	
(iii)	Mè yé sìn ø	"I have seen a bird."
	I see part bird	

Sometimes the reported particle *mò'*, which refers to one unknown person or thing, is used to express indefiniteness. The morpheme semantically stands for "another" "a certain", or "some" or "others". It may follow the noun it designates or used in isolation. When it follows the noun, it does not take concord markers even though the noun takes, but when used in isolation it takes concord markers and therefore is considered to be noun class dependent. The examples below illustrate the claims made above:

(42) (a) Class:

1a	sín mò'	"another bird"	or	"a certain bird"
2	bsíŋ mò'	"some birds"	or	"other birds"
5	rèè' mò'	"a certain yam"	or	"another yam"
6	mrèè mò'	"certain yams"	or	"other yams"
7	cé mò'	"another tree"	or	"a certain tree"
2	bcé mò'	"some trees"	or	"other trees"
10	nà' mò'	"some cows"	or	"other cows"

(b) Class:

1a	lòr	mò'	"take another"	e.g cup
2	lòr	bmò'	"take some"	e.g cups
5	lòr	rmò'	"take another one"	e.g yam
6	lòr	nmò'	"take some"	e.g yams

### 3.1.8.2 TOTAL QUANTITY AND INDEFINITE QUANTITY

Here we refer to universal quantities such as "all", "every" and "each" in English. Limbum makes use of general quantities. Total quantity morphemes include wéewé "all", sīb "all" and mó' ká "no more". As a determiner, it comes after the noun and is not noun class dependent. The following examples illustrate definite quantities.

(43)

Yé ñbáŋ	wéewé	"Eat all the kernels"
Eat kernels	all	
Yé ñbáŋ	mó'ká'	"Don't eat any more kernels".
Eat kernels	nomore	
Nó mrù'	wéewé	"Drink all the wine"
Drink wine	all	
Nó mrù'	mó'ká'	"Don't drink any more wine"
Drink wine	no more	

ŋwè nsíb	"Everyone"
Person all	
Beè bsíb	"All the people"
People all	
Bee mò'ká'	"Not all people"
People nomore	

Unlike the total quantity determiners, there are no real indefinite quantities in Limbum. However, they are formed by the combination of separate morphemes. The indefinite quantity in Limbum is not noun class dependent. Usually, indefinite quantities are used to refer to people or things without indicating exactly who or what they are. They include:

(44) mò'	"some" "certain"
ndá wée	"anybody"
who all	
kè wée	"anything"
thing all	
ŋwè wéewé	"everybody", "all"
person all	
bèe wéewé	"everybody"
people all	
ŋwè ká'	
person neg	"nobody"
yúu ká'	"nothing"
thing neg.	

As an indefinite determiner mò' "some", for example is not noun class dependent, as these examples show.

ŋwè	mò'	
person	some	"somebody"
Bèe	mò'	
people	some	"some people"
Mrèè'	mó'	
yams	some	"some yams"

The rest can be used as in the following examples:

Mè yé bèe wéewé	"I have seen everybody."
I see people all	

Mè yé yúu ká'	"I haven't seen anything."
I see thing neg.	

Mè yé ŋwé mò'	"I have seen somebody."
I see person some	

### 3.1.8.3 POSSESSIVE DETERMINERS.

Collins (1993:542) describes possessive determiners as words that show who the person or thing you are referring to belongs to or is connected with. Limbum has two forms of possessive singular and two forms of possessive plural determiners, according to the nouns, which they modify. One form works with nouns in class 5 and the other with nouns in the rest of the classes. Like Mutaka and Tamanji (1995) we consider the possessive pronouns here as possessive determiners because their possessive functions in limiting the potential domain of reference of relevant nouns are just like determiners, and also for the fact that they do

not function independently as noun phrases. Commenting on the morphology of possessive determiners, Fransen (1995:129) states that the possessive concord of each class in Limbum consists of the initial consonant and the tone of the following vowel of the possessive qualifier. Following this explanation we indicate that the possessive concord of class 1/1a as y', that of class 2 as w' class 5 as l', class 6 as m', class 7/7a as y and class 10 as y' for first and second persons.

This greatly simplifies the possessive pronoun chart as presented by Voorhoeve (1980). We draw inspiration from him, Nforgwei (1991:22) and Ndamsah (1997:75) and posit a standard possessive determiner chart of Limbum here.

**Table 3.14**

NOUN CLASS	POSSESSIVE CONCORD MORPHEME	FIRST PERSON		SECOND PERSON		THIRD PERSON	
		SINGULAR	PLURAL	SINGULAR	PLURAL	SINGULAR	PLURAL
		MY/MINE	OUR/OURS	YOUR/YOURS	YOUR/YOURS	HIS/HER/HERS	THEIR/THEIRS
1/1a	y'	yà	yèr	yò	yèe	yì	yàb
2	w'	wá	wér	wó	wée	ví	wáb
5	l'	lá	lér	ló	lée	lí	láb
6	m'	má	mér	mó	mée	mí	máb
7/7a	y	yá	yér	yó	yée	yí	yáb
2	w'	wá	wér	wó	wée	ví	wáb
1	y'	ya	yèr	yò	yèe	yì	yàb
10	y'	yá	yér	yó	yée	yí	yáb

The qualifiers are -a, er, -o, -ee, -i and -ab as can be observed from the table above. The above table does not include compound possessive determiners. Examples A below show noun classes 1 and 2 possessive

determiners and examples B, show noun class 5 and possessive determiner forms:

**Table 3.15**

SINGULAR	FORM	PLURAL	FORM
1. yá kò	my cocoyams	2 wá bkò'	my cocoyams
yó kò'	your cocoyam	wó bkò'	your cocoyams
yí kò'	his/her cocoyam	ví bkò'	his/her cocoyams
yér kò'	our cocoyam	wér bkò'	our cocoyams
yée kò'	your cocoyam	wée bkò'	your cocoyams
yáb kò'	their cocoyam	wab bkò'	their cocoyams
5. lá rfùu	my feather	6 má mfùu	my feathers
ló rfùu	your feather	mó mfùu	your feathers
lí rfùu	his/her feather	mí mfùu	his/her feathers
lér rfùu	our feather	mér mfùu	our feathers
lée rfùu	your feather	mée mfùu	your feathers
lab rfùu	their feather	mab mfùu	their feathers

For possessive determiners designating kinship relations, the possessive determiner comes after the noun; even though, the possessive determiner in all other cases precede the possessed noun. Notice also that the tone of the possessive determiner follows the tone of the preceding noun as these examples show. If the noun carries a H tone, the possessive determiner will carry a H tone. If it carries a L tone the determiner will also carry same.

- (45)
- |          |                 |          |                  |
|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|
| nfùr yà  | my brother      | bfár wá  | my brothers      |
| nfùr yò  | your brother    | bfár wó  | your brothers    |
| nfùr yì  | his/her brother | bfár ví  | his/her brothers |
| nfùr yèr | our brother     | bfár wér | our brothers     |
| nfùr yée | your brother    | bfár wée | your brothers    |
| nfùr yàb | their brother   | bfár wáb | their brothers   |



Nouns in classes 9 and 10 demonstrate singular/ plural agreement only by a change of tone from L in the singular to H in the plural. Elsewhere in this work, we have treated them as single class genders. Their possessive forms are as follows: e.g

(46)

<u>Class 9</u>	yà ngúb	“my fowl”	<u>Class 10</u>	yá ngúb	“my fowls”
	yò ngúb	“your fowl”		yó ngúb	“your fowls”
	yì ngúb	“his/her fowl”		yí ngúb	“his/her fowls”
	yèr ngúb	“our fowl”		yér ngúb	“our fowls”
	yèe ngúb	“your fowl”		yée ngúb	“your fowls”
	yáb ngúb	“their fowl”		yáb ngúb	“their fowls”

Plural form in these examples is distinguished by a H tone pattern. As concerns compound possessive determiners their possessive concords are yì, vî, lì, mì, while the possessive qualifiers are sèe and sò. Sèe is used to express speaker inclusive functions and sò is used to express dual functions. They are also noun class dependent. See the examples below:

(47)

yìsèe nà'	“our cow” or our cows”	(noun class 10: (S + As))
vìsèe btàb	“our huts”	(noun class 2 (S + As))
lìsèe rrè'	“our yam”	(noun class 5 (S + As))
mìsèe mrè'	“our yams	(noun class 6 (S + As))
yìsò ngúb	“our fowl”	(noun class 10 (S + As) dual)
yìsò ndáb	“our house”	(noun class 1 (S + As) dual)
vìsò bsìṅ	“our birds”	(noun class 2 (S + As) dual)
lìsò rrè'	“our yam”	(noun class 5 (S + As) dual)
mìsò mre'	“our yams”	(noun class 6 (S + As) dual)

Notice that with compound nouns, the possessive determiner agrees with the first noun.

e.g.

(48)	là	rkìṅ	ndàmbá	my pipe
	mà	mkìṅ	ndàmbá	my pipes

yà	ntú	kùu	my toe
mà	mtú	mkùu	my toes

Another interesting aspect of the possessive determiner in Limbum is that all the above possessive determiner markers can be used independently with á "it is" particle preceding the possessive determiner to form nominal possessive determiners. e.g.

(49)

á yá	it is mine	á wá	they are mine
á yó	it is yours	á wó	they are yours
á yí	it is his/hers	á ví	they are his/hers
á yér	it is ours	á weí	they are ours
á yée	it is yours	á wée	they are yours
á yáb	it is theirs	á wáb	they are theirs
á lá	it is mine	á má	they are mine
á ló	it is yours	á mò	they are yours
á lí	it is his/hers	á mí	they are his/hers
á lér	it is ours	á mér	they are ours
á lée	it is yours	á mée	they are yours
á láb	it is theirs	á máb	they are theirs

### 3.1.8.4 INTERROGATIVE DETERMINERS

The interrogative determiner in Limbum comes after the noun it modifies, usually at the end of the sentences. The question marker helps to identify the participant. It may take or not take a concord marker. If the speaker wants specific information about the noun, it takes a concord marker. The following are interrogative determiners in Limbum.

(50)

nda?	"who?"
ke?	"what?"
fe?	"where?"

They can be used in sentences as follows:

- (51) 1.            á ndá?                            "who is it"?
- It is who
- á kéké?                                    "what is it"
- It is what
- á féké?                                        "Where is it?"
- It is where

2.    Nfò é kéké à ndá?                            "Who is Nfor calling?"
- Nfor he call who?
- Nfò cé gèe à kéké?                            "What is Nfor doing?"
- Nfor prog make what
- Nfò cé dù à féké?                            "Where is Nfor going?"
- Nfor Prog go where?

Limbus has compound forms of interrogative determiners, which are used to get more information from the speaker about the referent. A compound form consists of possessive determiner and a question word or marker. e.g

#### Concord Markers + Who: Referents

- (52) yì ndá    Whose? (for noun classes 1/1a,7/7a,10)
- vù ndá    Whose? (for noun class 2)
- mì ndá    Whose? ( for noun class 6)
- lì ndá    Whose? (for noun class 5)
- bàa ánà à yì ndá                            "whose bag is that?"
- bag that it concord who?

Bcè' áná à ví ndá?  
Clothes that it concord who?

"Whose clothes are those?"

Rrè' cá à lì ndá?  
Yam this it concord who?

"Whose yam is this?"

Mrù' ìncà à mì ndá?  
Wine this it concord who?

"Whose wine is this?"

Concord Marker + where: Referent

- (53) Yì fè? "Which place?" / which for noun cl., 1, 7, 10  
lì fè? "Which place?" / which for noun cl5  
ví fè? "Which place?" / which for noun cl2  
mì fè? "Which place?" / Which for noun cl6

Cá à kàṅ yì fè?  
This it dish concord where

"Which dish is this?"

Cà à rwèè lì fè?  
This it cat concord where

"Which cat is this?"

Bcà à brèrèṅ ví fè?  
These it bamboos concord where

"Which bamboos are these?"

Mcà à mrù mì fè?  
These it wine concord where

"Which wine is this?"

Concord Marker + What: Referent

- (54) yì kè? "which one?" / (for noun classes 1,7,10)  
lì kè? "which one?" / (for noun classes 5)  
mì kè? "which ones?" / (for noun class 6)  
ví kè? "which ones?" / (for noun class 2)

cè' yì k'é?	"Which cloth?"
Cloth concord what	
Rdìb lì k'é?	"which stream?"
water concord what	
Mhàdàb vî k'é?	"Which houses?"
Houses concord what	
Mru' mì k'é?	"Which wine?"
Wine concord what	

"yú" is a synonym of "fé" interrogative determiner is used in the same way like fé "where". However, sè'kè "when", à njèè kè "how" and njó'ké "why" are other forms of the interrogative determiners. They seek to know the time, manner and reason respectively, for which something is done. e.g

(55)	Wè vâ à sé'kè?	"When did you come?"
	You come when	
	Wè vâ à njèè ké	"how did you come?"
	You come how	
	Wè vâ njó'kè	"why have you come?"
	You come why	

### 3.1.8.5 PREPOSITIONS

Limbun has a few locative markers, which come before the noun. These include mbà "down there", kó "at", nì "with" and sèr "at" (sideways). They are used with nouns like in the following examples:

*Handwritten notes:*  
 Mbà yèd'...  
 kó yèd'...  
 nì yèd'...  
 sèr yèd'...

(56) Mbáa yí yú nì Nfò Money it be prep Nfor	“The money is with Nfor”
Nfò à dù mbà kòb Nfo P1 go prep forest	“Nfor has gone down the forest”
Mbà yú kù rtùu Goat be prep hill	“The goat is at the hill”
Mámà yú sèr ndáb Mother be prep house	“Mother is in the house”

Some prepositions function as locative adverbs and substitute nouns in discourse. There are só “There” (sideways) mbà “down there” mbò “in there” kò “upthere” njó “inside” e.g

(57)

Nfò yú mbà kob Nfor be prep forest	“Nfor is down the forest”
Nfo yú mbà Nfor be Loc. Adv	“Nfor is down there”
Nfò yú sèr kòb Nfor be prep forest	“Nfor is at the forest.”
Nfò yú só Nfor be Loc Adv	“Nfor is there’ (horizontal)
Mhá yú kù rtùu “Goat be prep	“goat is up the hill”(vertical)
Mbú yú ko	“The goat is up there”

Njàb yú njér rkìṅ  
Soup be prep pot

“The soup is in the pot”

Njàb yú njó  
Soup be Loc Adv

“The soup is inside”

While the following locative adverbs describe situations within the speaker's environment. àfá “here”, tàà “in here” and mbénà “here” or a bit up (upwards). e.g.

(58) Nfò yú àfá  
Nfor be prep

“Nfor is in here (area)”

Nfò yú tàà  
Nfor be prep

“Nfor is in here” (specific place/point)

Nfò yú mbénà  
Nfor be prep

“Nfor is up here”

Some locatives are used to express a horizontal axis position. It could be within or without the speaker's environment. àbgwàgwàṅ “sideways”, àbkè' “sideways”, àgèè “beside”, mbénjì “behind”, and mbétár “between”, sometimes à bò ṅkòb “by the left” and àbo mà' “by the right” mbékì “upright”, njémbbé “outside”, mbéndù “on top of” and njébtì “under” are also used. e.g

(59) Ndáb téè mbétár  
House stand specific location

“the house is standing between”

Cé yí téè àgèè mó

“a tree is standing {beside or near} it”

Tree it stand specific location

Cardinal directions (points) are often expressed using the following locatives:

(60)	kùuntíí	- upper horizon	"East"
	màmbùuntíí	- Lower horizon	"West"
	kùtú	- vertical horizon	"North"
	màmbùuntíí	- horizontal horizon	"South"

They refer to directions or positions with the speaker at the centre of the axis. e.g.

(61) Mbèṅ à sī kùntíí                      "Rain has clouded in the east"  
Rain P1 cloud specific location

Bà yúu kú túrò                      "There is a tadpole upstream"  
Tadpole be specific location.

### 3.1.8.6. NUMERALS AS DETERMINERS.

Limbum makes use of cardinal and ordinal numbers. Historically, cardinal numbers were quite popular in the days of the great kolanut market. Traders counted kolanuts in bases 10, 100 and 1000. Once Western Education was introduced in the area, Arabic and Roman numerals have since then become so popular that, most native speakers no longer count in the language. However, with the teaching of Limbum in schools, the need to standardise and formalise the Limbum numerals cannot be minimised.

#### 3.1.8.6.1 CARDINAL NUMBERS

Cardinal numbers naturally express the result of counting or of operations that depend on counting. In Limbum, the basic units used are:

(62)	mò'sìr	1	ntúunfú	6
	báa	2	sàmbá	7
	táar	3	wáamí	8



kyè	4	bà'á	9
tâ	5	râu	10

The numbers 11 – 19 are composed by prefixing ncób meaning “and ten” before the unit. e.g

(63) A) ncób mò'sir 11 “one and ten”	ncób ntùunful6	“six and ten”
ncób báa 12 “two and ten”	ncób sàmbà 17	“seven and ten”
ncób táar 13 “three and ten”	ncób wàami 18	“eight and ten”
ncób kyè 14 “four and ten”	ncób bà'á à ruù 19	“nine and ten”
ncób tâ 15 “five and ten”		

We realise that southern speakers use à ruù “on ten” (base 10) as suffix to all of the above. It is preferable to adopt that in order to make a proper distinction between numbers 11 – 19 and those ranging between 21 – 29, especially as ncób táar á rêu, for example is, more practically represented or glossed as “three and ten” than “ncób táar” where ten is not morphologically marked. e.g.

B) ncób mò'sir à rêu	11	ncób ntúunfú à rêu	16
ncób bàa à rêu	12	ncób sàmbá à rêu	17
ncób taar à rêu	13	ncób wáami à rêu	18
ncób kyè à rêu	14	ncób bú'á à rêu	19
ncób tâ à rêu	15		

The above could be read as:

ncób mò'sir à rêu means:  
 number of basic units on base ten  
 ncób báa à rêu  
 2 on 10 = 12

There is concord when we use the first three(1-3) basic units with a noun.  
 For example:

(64)	cl 1a	sín	mò'sir	=	one bird
	cl 2	bsín	btáar	=	three birds
	cl 5	rrè'	mó'sfr	=	one yam
	cl 6	mrè'	mbáa	=	two yams
	cl 7	táb	mó'sir	=	one hut
	cl 2	btáb	bbáa	=	two huts

Compare the above examples that take concord with these larger numbers:

Blé ncób táar à ràu	=	13bats
Mtáa ncób táar à ràu	=	13 caps

### 1. Counting in Tens:

Counting in tens is a common practice in traditional society amongst kolanut market dealers. The operation is realised by prefixing the bilabial syllabic nasal m, a remnant of mú after the deletion of "uu" from ràu "base ten singular". The m plural morpheme thus denotes tens. In a nutshell, m is the plural prefix of mú, which is the plural of ràu "ten". It is proposed to the basic unit; and it functions as a bilabial syllabic noun for all noun classes in the numeral groups below.

(65)	m	báa	20
	m	táar	30
	m	kyè	40
	m	tâ	50
	m	ntúunfú	60
	m	sàmbá	70
	m	waámí	80
	m	bà'á	90

In this case, there is no concord. What we mean here is that the noun bears its noun class plural prefix and the numeral plural prefix m. For example:

ble	m	kyè	=	40 bats
mtáa	m	sàmbá	=	70 caps

nà'	ín	túunfú =	60 cows
btàb	ín	mtáar =	30 huts

When counting goes beyond 20, we use ncób + basic unit + ten (plural). The order is like in German where a number like 47 is "sieben und vierzig" meaning "seven and forty".

ncób mò'sìr à mbáa	21	"one and twenty"
ncób taa à mtáar	35	"five and thirty"
ncób sàmba à ñkyè	47	"seven and forty"
ncób wàamì à mbù'á	98	"eight and ninety"

Again, when counting goes beyond 20, concord with noun is still absent. See the examples below:

Bsín ncób báa à mtáar = "32 birds"

Birds plus two and thirty

Mbì ncób kyè à ñtúufú = "64 kolanuts"

kolanuts plus four and sixty

Ngúb ncób tá à ñwáamì = "85 fowls"

Fowls plus five and eighty

2. **COUNTING ON BASE 100:** This goes up to 900. e.g. Here, the singular is rjèr "100" and the plural is mjèr "100s" classes 5/6 nouns.

(66)	rjèr	=	100
	ñjèr mbáa	=	200
	ñjèr mtáar	=	300
	ñjèr kyè	=	400
	mjèr tá	=	500
	ñjèr ntùunfú	=	600
	ñjèr sàmbá	=	700
	ñjèr wáamí	=	800
	ñjèr bà'á	=	900

Notice that agreement occurs here only in the 200s and 300s. Above a hundred, we use *bá* "plus". For example:

342 = *mjèr ìntáar bá ncób baa à ìnkyè*. "Three hundred and forty two"  
hundreds three plus tens two and forty

675 = *mjèr ntùunfú bá ncób tâ à ìnsámhá*. "Six hundred and seventy five"  
hundreds six plus tens five and seventy.

The order the figures appear on paper differs from the written word form. The interesting thing here is that it works like in German (that is the order) With the figures in words, the order is hundred + units + tens.

3. COUNTING ON BASE 1000: We use the word *ncàkì* = "1000". It is prefixed to the basic units in order to compose the number of thousands.

(67)	<i>ncàkì tâ</i>	=	5.000
	<i>ncàkì sàmbá</i>	=	7.000
	<i>ncàkì ràu</i>	=	10.000

In case of any additions we use *bá* as explained above. e.g

*Ncúkì tâ ba ncób táar a ràu* = 5013 = "Five thousand and thirteen"  
Thousand five plus three and ten.

*Ncàkì ntúufú ìì mjèr tâ bá ncób sàmbá à ìntáar* = 6537  
Thousand six and hundred five plus tens seven and thirty  
"Six thousand five hundred and thirty seven"

About concord in numerals, we make a few concluding remarks here. Numbers (units) 1-3 take concord when counting items up to nine. They take the concord of the nouns they qualify. We also realize that when counting goes above 1000, it is a bit complicated. But when counting people, We use *à* before the qualifiers (2 and 3) and finally, with counting some nouns in classes 9 and 10, we use *ìmbà* meaning "grain of" for grains and *mú* meaning also "a very small quantity" for powdered and liquid nouns. For example:

(68)	Mbà bérèṅ	“a grain of groundnut”
	Mbà rkúu	“a drain of bean”
	Mà rgwáṅ	“a very small quantity of salt”
	Má rcéḅ	“a very small quantity of medicine”
	Má rgár	“a very small quantity of oil”

But má diminutive morpheme, can also precede grains to reflect a very small quantity or amount. For example má kwâa “a very small quantity of corn”. Remember that má is inherently relative to the quantity demanded compared with the existing quantity. Notice that in the above usage, the noun remains in the singular.

4. **DEPENDENT NUMERALS:** we realise that only the basic (1-3) units dependent numerals show concord because they answer the questions.

(69)	Bse' = how many?	
	ví bsé'?	} how many or how much?
	yí se'?	
	mim se'?	

bbàa ví bse' = How many bags? Response “bbaà ví bbáa”

ngwé yí sé' = How many dogs? “ngwé yí táar”

Mrú' mím sé' = How many wines? / How much wine?

“Mrù mim mtáar”

As earlier stated, the units 1-3 are effectively dependent on the noun they quantify and bears the noun class concord marker.

### 3.1.8.6.2 ORDINAL NUMBERS:

Ordinal numbers express the order or sequence of counting or of any other way of breaking down a set or collection, one by one rather than dealing with its members all at once. Limbum ordinal numbers have no direct relationship with cardinal numbers whereas cardinal numbers run into the thousands. Limbum has only three basic ordinal numbers.

However, Limbum also makes use of loan words borrowed from English to improve on their system of ordinal numbers e.g

- (70) é ntómbì = "the first"  
 é mbénjì = "second/behind"  
 é làsimbùu = "last"

Nforgwei (1991) shows that there exists some ranking. For example:

- é ntómbì = "the first person"  
 é mbénjì = "next person/second"  
 é tóyé = "third person"

"nomba" an adapted word from the English word "number" is used to provide ranking after the third position. This demands the use of cardinal numbers.

- (71) nòmbà kyè = 4<sup>th</sup>      nòmbà sàmbá = 7<sup>th</sup>  
 nòmbà tâ = 5<sup>th</sup>      nòmbà wáamí = 8<sup>th</sup>  
 nòmbà ntúunfú = 6<sup>th</sup>      nòmbà bù'ú = 9<sup>th</sup>

Under ordinal numbers is an adverbial particle of frequency nfè' meaning "time", which Limbum uses to express the number of times an activity occurs or has occurred. For example:

- (72) nfè' mò'sfr = once  
 nfè' báa = twice  
 nfè' táar = thrice  
 nfè' kyè = four times  
 nfèe' tâ = five times

Above ten times, nfè' comes before ncób. For example:

- nfè' ncób táar à ràu "thirteen times"  
 nfè' ncób tâ à ràu "fifteen times"

**FRACTIONS:** When it comes to sharing items, the morpheme or words such as:

- (73) *bébé* = Fraction of a loaf or something that can be sliced (bread)  
*Kùkù* = Fraction of some long item that can be cut (sugar cane)  
*tété* = Fraction of some elastic item (meat, rope)  
*séséb* = Fraction of a fruit (kolanut, pear)

We can talk of:

- bébé' baa* = "half of fufu"  
*kùkù ñwánwán* = "piece of sugar cane"  
*tété nyà* = "piece of meat"  
*séséb rbi* = "slice of kolanut"

Notice that fractions are obtained by the process of reduplication. This concludes our discussion of the Limbum Noun morphology and brings us to the Verb morphology.

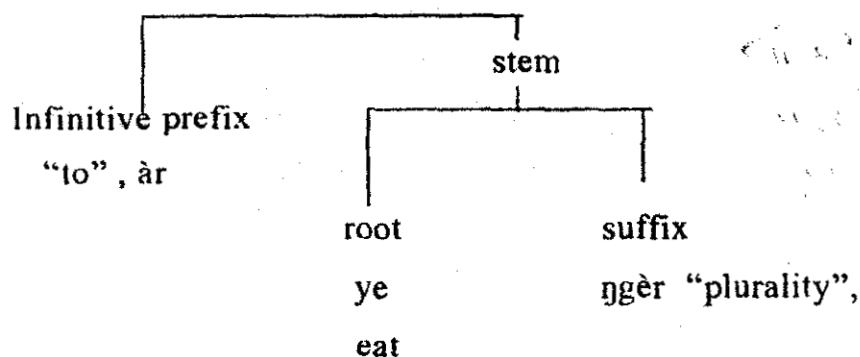
### 3.2. LIMBUM VERB MORPHOLOGY

A verb is a word, which is used with a subject (noun) to say what someone or something does, what they are, or what happens to them. In Limbum, verb morphology provides the verb with structures to enable the verb to be used to express various events adequately. In this section, we treat verb roots, extension, reduplications, causatives, tense and aspect. Then, end up with mood.

#### 3.2.1. VERB ROOTS:

Let us begin by making a clear distinction between roots and stems. Bauer (1987: 20) states that a root is the form (word form), which is not further analysable either in terms of derivational or inflectional morphology. For instance, in the word *àryèngèr* "to eat repeatedly" (plurality), we can distinguish the root as follows:

Figure 3.7



If we look at this diagram we can see that the infinitive prefix “àr” “to” and the plurality suffix ngèr “plurality or repetitive”, when removed leaves the form yé “eat”, as the root. This is different from a stem, which refers to that part of the word form, which remains when all inflectional affixes have been removed. Jensen (1990:35) explains that a stem may be a root as kaŋ “dish”, or bkàŋ “dishes”. Consequently, a stem consists of a root plus something else. Going back to our first example, yènggèr “eat repetitively” can be considered the stem. But in this discussion we choose to use root for root and stem.

Limbum has two basic verb forms monosyllabic and disyllabic, but the stock of disyllabic verb forms is not large. The verbs considered as disyllabic verb forms are those that when further analysed the separate parts or morphemes do not constitute any meaningful part, and if it does, the meaning does not relate to the meaning of the whole word. Take the case of bàtè “to get rotten”. In this word bá “to get lost” while té expresses the intransitive effect of an action. One could argue that bàtè refers to “self-destruction” or loss. But what about the following words whose parts do not have any lexical meanings? e.g.

- |      |        |                      |
|------|--------|----------------------|
| (74) | fáŋté  | “to refuse”          |
|      | dùŋshì | “to demonstrate”     |
|      | dàŋsé  | “to carry gently”    |
|      | bètér  | “to make excuses”    |
|      | bè'ínì | “to go out of sight” |



In the above examples, the first morphs ( fàŋ,dùŋ, dàŋ,bèt, bè') are not free and are semantically void.

Unlike monosyllabic word forms that take extensions, disyllabic word forms do not: yé "eat" for example can take the following extensions.

- (75) yé "to eat"  
yéngèr "to eat repeatedly and separately."  
yéshí "to chew or to eat well before swallowing."  
yéni "expresses instructions given to groups to start eating."

But disyllabic word forms like fànté "to refuse" cannot take another extension.

- \* fànténgèr does not exist
- \* fàntéshì
- \* fàntésè

This implies that Limbum verb root is inherently monosyllabic and disyllabic roots come probably from root extensions. This is the more reason why we have chosen to use <root> to refer to the basic word form. As already demonstrated in chapter two, the structure of the monosyllabic root is either CV or CVC, while the disyllabic structure is CVCV. They bear a HH or LM tone in their situation form.

### 3.2.1.1 VERB EXTENSIONS:

Most of the verb roots in Limbum can be extended using suffixes. Suffixes refer to affixes that are attached at the end of the roots and suffixes refer to those attached after roots. Fiore (1987) shows that suffixation demonstrates plurality of action, intransitive action etc. The signification of the verb suffix varies depending upon the verb root with which it is used. But before we go into the actual treatment of verb extensions, let us pause to examine what obtains in the Limbum verb prefixation. Remember that prefix refers to an affix, which precedes a root or stem. A verb stem in

prefixed to a verb stem, like *dù* meaning “go” it becomes “to go”. In the same manner when *r-* nominal prefix precedes a verb stem, the verb becomes a noun. In the above example, *dù* “go” can be nominalised by prefixing *r-* to *dù* “*rdù*” meaning “the going”. Such nominals show noun class distinction and do take the plural forms of the noun class to which they belong. That is *m-* or *b-* plural prefix.

Coming back to verb extensions, Limbum verb stems can be extended using the following suffixes: *-shî, -tí, -ní, -ngér, -té, -mí, -rí, -sí, -sé*.

### 3.2.1.1.1 VERB PREFIXATIONS:

*/âr-/* prefix is the commonest prefix and appears at the beginning of verb forms. When prefixed to a verb, it gives the verb an infinitive structure besides modifying the tone of the root form of the verb.

Ndamsah (1997:29) explains that since it bears a low tone, when prefixed to a monosyllabic verb with a high tone, the tone becomes M, and when prefixed to a disyllabic verb with a HH sequence, the sequence result is a MM sequence. Its implication on the tone system is thus extensive. The examples that follow show:

(76)	<i>/âr + yé/</i>	→	[ <i>âryē</i> ]	“to eat”
	<i>/âr + cáŋ/</i>	→	[ <i>ârcāŋ</i> ]	“to run”
	<i>/âr + vù/</i>	→	[ <i>ârvū</i> ]	“to come”
	<i>/âr + sán/</i>	→	[ <i>ârsāŋ</i> ]	“to write”

1. **r – Prefix:** It is a nominal prefix, which when prefixed to verb roots expresses the notion of act or manner of doing something. Unlike in English where a verb like “Laugh” can be nominalised and the morphology will still remain the same, in Limbum when *r –* prefix is prefixed to the verb the morphology changes. Fiore (1987) asserts that it is a remnant of the Proto – Bantu noun class prefix of *Li-*. The vowel *i-* has dropped leaving the language with a vibrant trill in place of the lateral. When the *r-* occurs at initial position of a verb beginning with a consonant, the verb

becomes noun. Such nouns must only get their plurals by replacing the r-singular prefix with m- plural prefix. The nouns formed are therefore classes 5 and 6 nouns.

(77) e.g.	Verb	Gloss	Verbal noun	Gloss
	fá'	"work"	rfáh	"work"
	kwé	"die"	rkwé	"death"
	lùŋ	"to be saved"	rlùŋ	"salvation"
	ráa	"light"	rráa	"light"
	yár	"luck"	ryár	"fortune"

2. **Plural Prefixes (m, b):** They are often used to express the plural forms of nouns of different classes. When affixed to verbs in order that they express the notion of plurality, the verb consequently needs the suffix-ni, which expresses reciprocity. The examples below show.

(78)	kòŋ	= verb root
	kòŋ-ní	= verb stem
	r- kòŋ-ní	= noun cl.5
	m-kòŋ-ní	= noun cl.6
	bàa	= verb root
	bàaní	= verb stem
	r-bàa-ní	= noun class 5
	m-bàa-ní	= noun class 6

### 3.2.1.1.2 VERB SUFFIXATIONS

Fransen (1995) and Hyman (1981) explain verb extensions by suffixes. They subdivide them into two categories – productive and non-productive. With non-productive verb extensions, no separate meaning is implied, whereas with productive verb extensions, there is a change in meaning. Fransen identifies eight forms or suffixes, which we have also identified in the other dialects. They are attached to monosyllabic verbs and do contain aspectual meanings. The standardised verb extensions of Limbum are explained here.

## 1. PLURACTIONAL –shí suffix

As a verb suffix, it expresses pluractional aspects –shí expresses the concept of an event involving several actions, one action is carried out many times and executing several equivalent actions at the same time. It surfaces in the south as sí.

For example:

(79)	<u>English</u>	<u>Verb Root</u>	<u>Suffix –shí keep on</u>
	eat	yé	yéshí (plurality of action)
	smash	nyèn	nyènshí (plurality of action)
	share	gàb	gàbshí (plurality of persons/place)
	call	ké'	ké'shí (plurality of objects)
	shave	kó	kóshí (plurality of object)

1. gàb shí njàb nì bèe  
share soup to people

“share the soup to people”

2. nyènshí nshé nì mkùu  
smash soil with feet

“smash the soil with your feet”

3. wówèe à kè'shí yàb bèe  
They P1call(pl) their people

“They have called their people”

Notice that the verb suffix shí takes a high tone and is not suffixed either to intransitive verbs or reduplicated verbs or with other verbal extensions. As indicated above the subject may be singular or plural. Similarly the object can be singular or plural.

2. **ITERATIVE –ngér Suffix:** The ngér suffix is used to express plurality of action carried out simultaneously or experienced separately several times by many people/things at the same instance or instances. It occurs only with intransitive verbs or ditransitive verbs. In the latter, the action is intransitivised. The table 3.16 below illustrates:

**Table 3.16**

English	Root	-ngér suffix	Gloss
die	kwé	kwéngér	die separately one by one
swell	kó'	kò'ngér	swell separately on many places
flash	bàb	bàbngér	flash separately many times
drink	nó	nóngér	drink separately many times
burst	wáa	wángér	burst separately many times
pluck	kàr	kàrngér	pluck separately one by one

e.g

(80) 1            Mcàr    mì    kóngér    muu    à    nyór  
 Scabbies SM swell + ITER child on body  
 Scabbies has attacked the child

2.            Wèr    a    nóngér    sê  
 We P1 drink + ITER much  
 We have drunk, a lot

The above examples show that, when used with a subject (plural), ngér indicates "several times one after the other, or just separately" that is why:

- (a) wèr    à    nó                    "we have drunk"  
 b) wèr    à    nóngér                "we have drunk a lot"

are different. Whereas (a) expresses group action carried out simultaneously (b) expresses group action carried separately many times. Notice that the suffix takes a high tone.

**3. SEPARATIVE – nì Suffix:** This suffix is used to express the idea of two or more people or things which are carrying out one action either splittingly or reciprocally. When used thus the verbs show transitive actions and plural subjects. The examples that follow show:

**Table 3.17**

English	Root	-ní suffix	Gloss
break	bè'	bè'ní	break into two separate parts(tr)
cut	tée	téení	cut into two separate parts(tr)
share	gàb	gàbní	share into two separate parts(tr)
give	fá	fání	give reciprocally(plural subject)
love	kòṅ	kòṅní	love reciprocally(plural subject)
look	kè'	kè'ní	look reciprocally(plural subject)

- (81) e m bé'ní báa muu "He broke the child's food".  
 e befú bé' ní báa muu "He/She will break the child's food".  
 e ce bé'ní báa muu "He/She is breaking the child's food".

Notice again that the tone of the suffix is consistently high. It is not affected by the change in tense as the examples above show.

**4. SEPARATIVE -tí suffix:** Unlike the separative -ní suffix which expresses transitive actions or ideas involving plural subjects, the separative -tí suffix expresses intransitive action involving singular subject. It implies reflexivity of a perfective action of the subject.

**Table 3.18**

English	Root	-tí suffix	Gloss
open	mà'	mà'tí	open by itself
shatter	wáa	wáatí	shatter by itself
raise	nàa	nàatí	rise itself
break	kéb	kébtí	break by itself
pluck	kàr	kàrtí	fall by itself
stick	ghúb	ghúbtí	stick by itself

(82)

1. kɛŋ yí m̀ù'tí "The door has opened by itself."  
Door sm ASP open-self
2. Kɛŋ yí m wáatí "The door got shattered by itself."  
Door sm ASP shatter-self
3. kɛŋ yí ce waatí "The door is shattering by itself."  
Door sm ASP shatter itself

Again the suffix carries a high tone, even if tense changes.

5. **ATTENUATIVE -rí suffix:** It implies "become a bit different from what an object was". This suffix, when attached to a root expresses the attenuative aspect. It changes the meaning of the verb to the extent that the action or state of the object (the intensity of the action) is reduced or weakened. There are very few examples to illustrate this:

*Table 3.19*

English	root	-rí suffix	Gloss
white	f̀ùb	f̀ùbrí	become whitish
red	b̀àŋ	b̀àŋrí	become reddish
black	s̀í	s̀írí	become blackish
dishonest	k̀àb	k̀àbrí	become dishonest

Although some verbs do take -rí suffix, they are non-productive and therefore do not belong to this group. Some of them are;

- (83) ñ̀ìŋrí "trickle"  
b̀èŋrí "examine"  
bíŋrí "roll"  
ỳúŋrí "play carelessly."

6. **DISTIBUTIVE -sé suffix:** When attached to a verb root, it expresses a distributive action which is done by different objects or groups of people, each person in the group carrying out the same action. It implies separately distributive. The table below has a few examples:

**Table 3.20**

English	Root	-sé suffix	Gloss
come	và	vùsé	come from different directions
go	dù	dùsé	go in different directions
run	cáŋ	cáŋsé	run in different directions
cry	wár	wársé	cry separately my many people
ill	yáŋ	yáŋsé	ill (sickness) of by many people

Notice that it is attached mostly to intransitive verbs. Again it expresses plural action when the agents are individualised.

7. **DISTRIBUTIVE -té suffix:** It modifies the meaning of the verb. It expresses separateness, but its stock is quite limited. Here we present a few examples:

**Table 3.21**

English	Root	-té suffix	Gloss
to fasten	cáú	cúté	to fasten separately
cut	gwàr	gwàté	to cut one after the other
To pour	Kúr	kàté	To pour out/spill out

The above verbs are transitive, but - té suffix also changes meanings of words, so that they convey intransitive effects of actions. This is a derivational suffix.

**Table 3.22**

English	Root	-té suffix	Gloss
to die	kwé	kwété	to cool down (intransitive)
to sew	tár	tárté	to meet (intransitive)
to tell lies	nyà'	nyà'té	to be muddy (intransitive)
go out	fū	fúté	to be cold (intransitive)
do	gèe	géeté	to be physically handicapped (intrans)



8. **CAUSATIVE -sɨ suffix:** Causative verbs are formed in Limbum by suffixing *-sɨ* to intransitive verbs to change them to transitive verbs. It implies "make or cause". We borrow the examples of Fransen (1995:205).

*Table 3.23*

English	root	-sɨ suffix	Gloss
bad	b éb	bébsɨ	make it bad
fill	rùu	rúusɨ	make it full
entangle	jèb	jébsɨ	make it confusing
lost	bá	básɨ	cause it get lost.
slide	sée	séesɨ	make it slippery
enter	nìŋ	níŋsɨ	cause it to enter
die	kwé	kwésɨ	cause it to die

Again it has a high tone. This brings us to the end of the discussion on Limbum verb extension. Note that a verb can take different extensions at different times to express different ideas. Kwé "die" can become kwéngér "die separately" (pl), kwété "cool down by itself" and kwésɨ "caused it to die" (transitive).

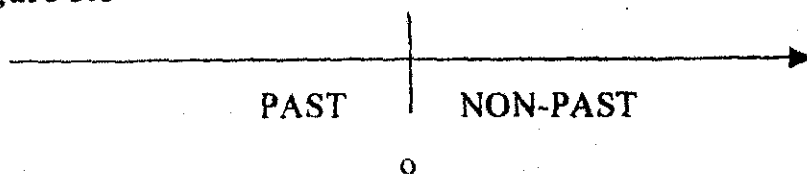
### 3.2.2.0 TENSE AND ASPECT

This section treats tense and aspect in Limbum. Tense usually refers to the different verb forms and verb groups that indicate roughly what time one is referring to. But then, what is time in Limbum? In Limbum, time is a perception of a sequence of events or activities. For instance, the different times of the day are based on natural events such as the early morning crowing of the cock, the singing of the birds announcing sunrise, then when the sun is overhead to the afternoon tilting position of the sun and when darkness falls. Similarly, the time of the year is very much tied to seasonal changes such as the rainy season, the setting in of the dry season, marked by the arrival of seasonal insects (termites, green grasshoppers and grass beetles), which appear in the months of (late October to early December).

This period is followed by the dry season, which runs until mid-March. The famine season (mid-March to mid-May) when food is usually difficult to get. The lunar month is represented by the *ɲwé* "moon" during which a particular activity takes place. For example *ɲwé byè kwâa* "March" i.e. the month of corn planting.

The Calendrical year is associated with important events such as wars, the passing away of Village heads (Fons), severe hunger, eventful hunting (the killing of a lion, leopard), the spread of an epidemic, the opening of an institution or the coming of a great visitor. In this wise therefore, time is essentially tied to the occurrence of some natural phenomenon. The event that occurs takes centre place (deictic centre) and marks the present time. Past and future are thus determined from this perspective. This notion can be explained using the time line.

**Figure 3.8**



The "O" point marks the cut-off point between past events and non-past events present and future).

This natural concept of time is represented in writing by the conventional word TENSE, which Comrie refers to it as "grammaticalisation of location in time" Comrie (1985:56). Tense or grammatical time in most languages is the function of the verb. It generally marks the time frame of the sentence.

In terms of temporal location (the duration an event takes), the Limbum verb does not morphologically mark tense, but uses grammatical devices (tense markers), which precede the verb to enable it express the three time references (past, present and future). Nforgwei (1991), Franssen (1995) and Ndamsah (1997) treat tense and aspect in Limbum. Since our objective is to propose standard tense and aspect for Limbum users, we approach their treatment here according to the different dialectal regions, in order to compare and contrast, then posit reference tense and aspect of Limbum.

### 3.2.2.1 TENSES OF THE SOUTHERN DIALECT:

Fransen (1995:212) identifies eight tenses of the Southern dialect, which are differentiated according to the degree of remoteness from the time of speaking.

**1. PRESENT TENSE:** It is unmarked but is expressed by the use of an aspect marker. e.g

- (84) Ndzi shí shánf "Ndzi is running"  
Ndzi scm PROG, ASP run FV (Final vowel)

**2. PAST TENSE:** The Southern dialect has three past tense forms. Today past (P1), near past (P2) and remote past (P3). They are expressed by different tense markers.

**Today Past (P1):** It is used for actions, which took place earlier today. It is marked by bá morpheme. e.g

- (85) Ndzi í bá shánf "Ndzi ran earlier today"  
Ndzi SCM P1 run FV

**Near Past (P2):** Used for action, which took place before yesterday, yesterday or even up to a week ago. The past tense marker is mú e.g

- (86) Ndzi í mu shánf "Ndzi ran (yesterday or some days ago)"  
Ndzi SCM P2 run FV

**Remote past (p3):** Used to express actions which took place about a week or more ago. It is marked by m. e.g

- (87) Ndzi í m shánf "Ndzi ran (a long time ago)"  
Ndzi SM P3 run FV

**3. FUTURE:** Southern dialect has four ways of expressing the future:

(F0, F1, F2, F3)

**General Future (F0):** Refers to actions or events, which will take place after the moment of speaking. It is marked by bí morpheme.

e.g

- (88)      ì    bí yé yí    nítà'    "He/she will see him/her tonight"  
he/she F0 see him/her tonight

**Today Future (F1):** Used to express actions that will occur later today.

The tense marker is bí'ò. e.g

- (89)      ì    bí'ò yé yí      "He/ She will see him/her( today)"  
he/she F1 see him/her

**Near Future (F2):** Used to express actions, which will occur tomorrow or within a week. It is marked by bífá morpheme. E.g

- (90)      ì    bífá yé yí      "He/she will see him/her (some  
days later)"  
he/she F2 see him/her

**Remote Future (F3):** Refers to actions, which will take place in the distant future. It is marked by bíkè morpheme. E.g

- (91)      í    bíkè yé yí      "He/she will see him/her (some day)"  
he/she F3 see him/her

We have presented the tenses of the Southern dialect here. This will enable us better understand the differences that occur, when we compare them with those of the other regions.

### 3.2.2.2 TENSES OF THE CENTRAL DIALECT

Mfonyam (1989) and Nforgwei (1991) identify nine tenses, which are differentiated according to the degree of remoteness from the time of speaking. We recap them here.

**1. PRESENT TENSE:** The present is expressed by the aspectual morphemes, because the time is not marked. e.g.

(92)        m        ce        fa'a        =        I am working  
              he/she PROG        work  
                                  ASP

**2. PAST TENSES:** The Central dialect has three ways of expressing past situations. They are classified under today past, yesterday past and remote past.

**Today Past (P1):** It is used to denote an action, which took place earlier today. The tense marker is bá. e.g.

(93)        é        ba'        faá        =        he/she worked (earlier today)  
              he/she P1        work

**Yesterday Past (P2):** It describes actions that took place yesterday, a few days ago, or even a week ago. The tense marker is mú. e.g.

(94)        é        mú        fa'a        =        he/she worked (some days ago)  
              he/she P2        work

**Remote Past (P3):** It describes actions, which took place a long time ago. The corresponding time is almost forgotten. Its time marker is m morpheme. e.g.

(95)        é        m        fa'a        =        he/she worked (a longtime ago)  
              he/she P3        work



**PRESENT TENSE:** Like in the South/Centre, it is unmarked.

**PAST TENSES:** There are three ways of expressing the past in this dialect. They are subdivided into immediate Past (P1), identifiable Past (P2) and Remote Past (P3).

**Today Past (P1):** It is used to express immediate past time. It is marked by bá morpheme. e.g.

- (100) Nfor à bá yé b́́́́ = Nfor ate fufu (not long ago today)  
Nfor SM P1 eat f́́́́

**Yesterday Past (P2):** It expresses an action, which took place within one week or so before the time of speaking. It is marked by mú morpheme. e.g.

- (101) Nfor à mú yé b́́́́ = Nfor ate fufu (some time ago  
Nfor SM P2 eat f́́́́ this week).

**Remote Past (P3):** It is used to express an action, which took place at some unidentifiable time in the past. It is marked by m̄ morpheme

- (102) e.g. Nfor à m̄ yé b́́́́ = Nfor ate fufu (sometime ago).  
Nfor SM P3 eat f́́́́

**3. FUTURE TENSES:** In this dialect, the four ways of expressing the future come under Today Future, and Remote Future.

**Today Future (F0):** It is used to express an action that will take place later today. It is marked by bé gèè morpheme. e.g.

- (103) Nfor bé gèè yé b́́́́ = Nfor will eat food (soon today)  
Nfor F0 F1 eat f́́́́

**Today Future (F1):** It is used to express an action that will take place later today. It is marked by bé ló morpheme. e.g.

- (104) Nfor bé ló yé b́́́́ = Nfor will eat food (later today)  
Nfor F0 F1 eat f́́́́

**Recent Future (F2):** It is used to describe actions that will take place tomorrow or in the days ahead. It is marked by fú morpheme.

(105) e.g. Nfor bé fú yé baa = Nfor will eat food (later this week)  
Nfor F0 F2 eat fufú

**Remote Future (F3):** It is used to express an action that will take place some time in future. The exact time is seemingly unidentifiable. It is marked by kée morpheme. e.g.

(106) Nfor bé kée yé baa = Nfor will eat food (sometime in the future)  
Nfor F0 F3 eat fufú

#### **4. EXPERIENTIAL PAST:**

In Limbum, some speakers make use of the experiential past to describe an action which took place once and which may never repeat itself.

(107) e.g. Ndi á mbée du nje Amárikaá "Ndi once went to the USA"  
Ndi SM (P4) go to America.

#### **3.2.3.0 SECONDARY TENSES:**

We have shown above that Limbum distinguishes morphologically past, present and future. It has been made clear that tense as a grammatical category marks a situation as occurring specifically in the past, present or future. Besides, these distinct periods, Comerie (1995:53-55) notes another type of tense as being:

... which indicates that a situation holds at one segment of the time line but does not hold at certain other segments of the time line, or a tense indicating specifically that a given situation holds at different segments of the time....

Comerie describes them all "still" "no longer" and "not yet" tenses. In Limbum, such tenses have been identified, and we consider them here under secondary tenses, more so, because they do not distinctly belong to



the past, present or future, but indicate situations that hold or do not hold along the time line, extending from the past to the future.

a) The "Still" tense [ku]

The [ku] morpheme indicates that an event, which started in the past, has continued up to the time of the utterance. This tense marker is similar to the mbili[bi] morpheme. Ayuninyam (1998: 278 – 279).

Ndi kú cèb mè "Ndi is still insulting me"

Ndi still insults me

Bari kú bi bàa Nfò "Bari still hates Nfor."

Bari still TL hates Nfor

TL = time line.

b) The "No-longer" tense [kú---ká']

This tense is marked by [kú ---ká'] particles. It indicates a discontinuity in the activity or event that took place in the past, and has ceased at the time of the utterance. For example,

(109) Ndi kú cèb mè ká' "Ndi is no longer insulting me."

Ndi still insult me not.

Bari kú bàa Nfor ká' "Bari no longer hates me"

Bari still hates me NEG

Notice that the "no longer" tense markers are formed by the combination of "still" morpheme and the negative morpheme [ká'].

c) The "not yet" tense [bé---ká']

This tense indicates that an event, which is supposed to have begun before the time of speaking has not yet begun. The speaker has in mind a certain time frame within which the situation ought to hold. It is formed by the combination of the Central dialect F1 morpheme [bé] and the Negative particle [ká']

(110) Ndi a bé cèb mè ká' "Ndi has not yet insulted me"

Ndi Sm F1 insult me not

Bari à be yé báa ká' "Bari has not yet eaten food"

Bari Sm F1 eat food not

From the above examples, we realize that the tenses are neither completely expressing past situations, nor present situation. They cut across the time frames.

### 3.2.4. LIMBUM STANDARD TENSES

Having treated tenses of the various dialectal regions and Secondary tenses, we now move to the next phase, which is that of collapsing them together in order to come up with standard Limbum tenses and aspect. The table below shows tenses of Limbum as formalised.

*Table 3.24*

DIALECT	PRESENT	PAST			FUTURE			
		p1	p2	p3	f1	f2	f3	f4
Southern	ø	bá	mú	m̄	Bí	biló	Bífú	bikli
Central	ø	bá	má	m̄	bé	béló	béfú	békèe
Northern	ø	bá	Má	m̄	bègèe	Béló	béfu	Békèe

This table shows that Limbum standard tenses are:

1. Present: habitual + progressive ( aspectual marker ké (see aspect)
2. past: P1 – earlier today – marker bá  
 P2 – yesterday or some days ago mú  
 P3 – a long time ago – marker m̄
3. Future: F1 – later today future – marker bé  
 F2 – later today future – marker béló  
 F3 – tomorrow or some days from today béfú  
 F4 – a long time from today békèe

It is important to leave the Limbum tenses at eight as analysed above. This table on Limbum standard tenses shows that all the dialects have a ø present tense marker and a progressive aspect marker. The past tenses are similar. Where there is a unique difference is with the future.

The Northern dialect uses, *bégèe* (F1 marker) whereas the rest of the dialects use *bé* (F1 marker). This does not constitute any big difference since it does not influence or cause any grammatical change.

Secondly, tone does not seem to constitute a tense feature in Limbum.

### 3.2.5.0 LIMBUM ASPECT

Aspect, which deals with the manner in which actions are experienced in terms of progression or completion, is marked by verbal suffixes in most African languages. Limbum makes use of both grammatical and lexical elements to express aspects, even though Welmers (1973:349) and Jackson (1980) hold that Niger-kordofanian languages use verbal suffixes to express aspect.

Greenbaum (1973:40) states, "what concerns the manner in which the verbal action is experienced or regarded (for example as completed or in progress)", while Comrie (1976) treats by stating that the verbal form "presents the totality of the situation without reference to its internal temporal constituency. The whole of the situation is presented as a single unanalysable whole, with a beginning, middle, and end rolled into one..." This definition of perfective aspect leads us to an understanding of what aspect actually is. That is, how do we view the situation – as complete or incomplete(perfective or imperfective) Hence, in order to better understand how aspect functions in Limbum we treat it under perfective and imperfective (habitual, progressive, pluractional and interative). Notice that in the section for tenses, aspectual morphemes have been used. Instead of reconstructing sentences from the various dialects to elicit aspectual forms, we summarise here Limbum aspect. Each form will be treated with examples to elicit their morphology. Let us begin by presenting a standard table of Aspect in Limbum.

*Table 3.25*

Function	Aspect form
Perfective	Ø, kú
Imperfective:	
Habitual	ké
Progressive	cé
pluractional	-shí
iterative	-ngér

### 3.2.5.1 PERFECTIVE ASPECT

It is understood that the perfective aspectual markers describe events as completed or actually carried out at some definite time in the past or would be carried out at some definite time in the future. Comrie (1985) distinguishes various types, we attest two in Limbum. These are kú and Ø, which imply perfected action or completed action but kú emphasizes on the accomplishment of the action just before present time.

1. **COMPLETIVE ASPECT:** It describes a situation as being the result of a past event. It is neither marked nor lexicalised. e.g

(111) Ngala à yé bérèŋ "Ngala has eaten groundnuts."

Ngala SM eat groundnuts.

Ngala à bá dú ntá "Ngala went to the market (today)."

Ngala SM P1 go market.

Ngala à mú du ntá "Ngala went to the market (yesterday)."

Ngala SM P2 go market.

In sentence one, the action is completed and the result is that Ngala is not hungry, while in the rest of the sentences, what we expected to buy from the market has been bought. But the difference lies in the fact that one

was bought today and the other yesterday. The completive aspect is thus not morphologically marked, but implicitly marked by past tense markers.

**2. RECENT PERFECTIVE ASPECT:** Indicates that the present relevance of the past situation referred to is, one of temporal closeness to the time of speaking. In Limbum, it is marked by *kú* morpheme. This morpheme, emphasizes on the point that the accomplishment of the action was done before present time.

(112) Ngala à bá kú yé bérèn

Ngala SM P1 recent. ASP eat peanuts.

“Ngala has just eaten peanuts”

Ngala à mú kú yé bérèn

Ngala SM P2 ASP eat peanuts.

“Ngala had just eaten peanuts, (yesterday)”

It is thus realised by the use of P1 or P2 + ASP + verb. But expressions like *é yé* “he/she has eaten”, *é càn* “he/she has run”. Also express perfective actions, which took place in the near past, but the aspectual marker is absent.

### 3.2.5.2 IMPERFECTIVE ASPECT

The imperfective aspect describes a situation as occurring over a span of time. That is, it indicates that a situation is either habitual, continuative (progressive), iterative or pluractional. What is common to all these is that the situation is either going on at present, goes on regularly, was going on or will be going on within the mentioned time span. Welmers (1973:345) refers to imperfective as “incompletive”. In this section four aspectual distinctions will be treated: habitual, progressive, pluractional and iterative. Even though we earlier treated pluractional and iterative morphemes under verb suffixations (3.4.1.1.2), we briefly touch them here to illustrate imperfective aspect.

## HABITUAL ASPECT

It is marked by ké. It describes situations that are essentially habitual of some extended period of time, repetitive, on a regular basis or routine nature. e.g

(113) Ngala é ké yé bérèṅ "Ngala eats peanuts."  
Ngala SM HAB eat peanuts

Mmír mí ké yáṅ Nfor "Nfor has eye problems."  
Eyes SM HAB ache Nfor.

## PROGRESSIVE ASPECT

It is marked by cé. It describes situations, which were or are progressive in meaning. When used with the past tenses, it helps to describe situations that were progressive just like when used with the future tenses it helps to describe actions that shall be going on. e.g

(114)

1. Ngala à bá cé yé bérèṅ  
Ngala SM P1 Prog. ASP. Eat peanuts  
"Ngala was eating peanuts (today)"
2. Ngala à mú cé yé bérèṅ  
Ngala SM P2 prog. ASP. Eat peanuts  
"Ngala was eating peanuts (yesterday)"
3. Ngala à ì cé yé bérèṅ  
Ngala SM P3 prog- ASP eat peanuts.  
"Ngala was eating peanuts (a long time ago)."
4. Ngala cé yé bérèṅ  
Ngala Prog-ASP eat peanuts.  
"Ngala is eating peanuts (now)."

5. Ngala be cé yé bérèṅ  
 Ngala F1 prog-ASP eat peanuts.  
 “Ngala will be eating peanuts (soon today).”
6. Ngala bélé cé yé bérèṅ  
 Ngala F2 Prog-ASP eat peanuts.  
 “Ngala will be eating peanuts (later today).”
7. Ngala bífú cé yé bérèṅ  
 Ngala F3 Prog-ASP eat peanuts  
 “Ngala will be eating peanuts (future).”
8. Ngala bé kèe cé yé bérèṅ  
 Ngala F4 Prog-ASP eat peanuts  
 “Ngala shall be eating peanuts (future).”

#### ITERATIVE ASPECT:

Iterative aspect refers to the successive repetition of an event or action. Unlike habituality, it involves interruptions, which do not occur over and over again. In Limbum, it refers to the duplicating of one's efforts in carrying out an activity. The repetitions are viewed as one time occurrences on the time line. The morpheme used is -ṅger. A verb root may take the suffix in order to express the idea that an entire action is being experienced separately several times by many people or things. It occurs only with intransitive and ditransitive verbs. In the case of ditransitive verbs, the action becomes intransitivised. The examples below show:

(115) a) Mcàr mi ce kó'ṅgér Ngala à nyor  
 Scabbies sm prog. swell + ITER Ngala on body  
 Scabbies is attacking Ngala repetitively

b) Wèr à bá cé yéṅgér  
 We sm PI PROG EAT + ITER  
 We were eating respectively.

### PLURACTIONAL ASPECT:

Pluractional aspect signals the multiplicity of one action by an individual or individuals within the same time line. The morpheme *-shí* is used. A verb root may take it to express the idea that an action is being realized pluractionally, only transitive verbs take this suffix. The examples below show:

(116)(a) Ngala cé ké'shì mbá  
Ngala PROG call + PLUR goats.  
"Ngala is calling the goats severally."

(b) Nfò bé yéshí yí ká' nó mndib  
Nfor F1 eat.PLUR it before drink water.  
"Nfor will chew it repeatedly before drinking water"

### 3.2.6. MOOD

In English mood describes inflectional properties of finite verbs. The verbs can be in the indicative, subjunctive or imperative, meant to express the speaker's attitude towards what he is saying. That is, does the speaker think of what he is saying as being a fact, command, wish or possibility. In most African languages, it is marked by an independent lexical item. The item may be at sentence initial position or preverbal position. Since tense, aspect and mood often overlap, we have treated the indicative mood under tenses. In this section, we treat imperative, hortative, hypothetical and obligational moods.

#### 3.2.6.1 IMPERATIVE MOOD

In most African languages, the imperative mood is restricted to sentences with underlying (second person singular or plural subjects and even first person singular and plural subjects) action verbs and agents over whom the speaker has some control. For example, in the command "Be quiet!" could be taken to be "John be quiet" or "All of you be quiet". But the subject is not marked whereas in most African languages singular or



plural subject will be marked in the verb. In Limbum, there are various ways of expressing the imperative mood, For example, in cases of non-progressive and affirmative structures, the imperative is formed by using the stem of the verb only. Usually the tone of the verb is maintained. If the verb carries a H tone it is maintained.

(117)	<u>Singular</u>		<u>Plural</u>
	cáŋl =	runl	cáŋnìl
	cú! =	sit!	cúnìl
	nòŋ! =	lie down!	nòŋnìl
	kóh! =	climb!	Kó'ni!
	yér! =	warm yourself!	yérnì
	yéé! =	sing!	yéé

-nì separative suffix here indicates the involvement of plural subjects. In the Southern dialect cáŋ singular will surface as cáŋi, nòŋi, sàbí, etc.

Notice that our examples ignore the final vowel /i/ of the Southern, dialect, because we consider it a remnant of some morpheme, which is no longer relevant for purposes of standardisation. So we drop it. However, in spoken language we may hear imperative expressions like sáŋí "Write", , cáŋí "run", and nòŋí! "Lie down". Usually the final vowel /i/ carries a high tone.

In the plural, the verb stem takes ní suffix, só and sèe (dual and speaker inclusive) suffix pronouns.

(118)	cáŋ	caŋ sò	cáŋ ní	caŋ sèe
	run	run pl (dual)	run (pl)!	run (pl)! speaker inclusive
	nòŋ!	nòŋ sò	nòŋ ní	nòŋ sèe
	sleep	sleep pl (dual)	sleep (pl)!	sleep pl(speaker inclusive)
	let us sleep		you should sleep	let us sleep

Commands can also be given to third person singular or plural. This requires the use of *té* (resultative imperative morpheme). It implies that as a result of a past action, the present action has to take place. For example,

*Té é càn*      "let him run"  
*Té é vu*      "let him come"

In cases of non-progressive negative imperative forms, negation takes two parts. One part coming before and the other after the verb. For example,

*Fáa sán ká'*      "don't write"  
 Neg write Neg  
*Fáa dù ká'*      "don't go"  
 Neg go Neg

In the examples that follow, we show that the progressive, affirmative imperative mood is realised in Limbum by the use of *cè* progressive before the verb. e.g

(119).

*cé sàŋ!*      "be writing"  
*cé càn!*      "be running"  
*cé nò !*      "be drinking"  
*cé kwa'shì!*      "be thinking"

But the progressive negative imperative is realised by putting *fáa* before the progressive marker *cè* and *kà* after the verb or clause final position; e.g

(120) *Fáa cé sán ká'*      "Don't be writing"  
 neg prog write neg

*Fáa cé càn ká'*      "Don't be running"  
 neg prog. Run neg

*Fáa cé kwa'shì ká'*      "Don't be thinking"  
 neg prog. think neg

Note that whether dual or speaker inclusive, the verb comes between the negative morphemes *fáa ká'* as in the above examples. The negative morphemes carry H tones.

### 3.2.6.2 HORTATIVE MOOD

In Limbum it is distinguished from the imperative mood by the position of the pronoun, other morphemes and their semantic implication. For example, when the pronouns (dual and speaker inclusive or exclusive) come before the verb, the implication is a firm suggestion. e.g

- |                     |                                |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| (121) <i>sò cáŋ</i> | “let us run”                   |
| <i>sèè dù</i>       | “let us go”                    |
| <i>wèr dù</i>       | “let us go (hearer inclusive)” |

But, when an introductory morpheme such as *tée* or *mà'shí* meaning, “let”, “allow”, “leave” comes before the pronoun, it implies a confident permission to do something. e.g

- |                         |                |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| (122) <i>tée sò cáŋ</i> | “let us run”   |
| <i>mà'shí wèr cáŋ</i>   | “allow us run” |

However, negative hortative forms are similar to the negative imperative forms. For example, the preverbal negative morpheme and the final negative particle are used. *Fáa---ká'* are used with the verb coming in the middle.

- |                             |                         |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| (123) <i>Sò fáa cáŋ ká'</i> | “let us not run (dual)” |
| <i>Sèè fáa cáŋ ká'</i>      | “let us not run (pl)”   |

Even the Progressive affirmative hortatives and the Progressive negative hortatives exhibit the same structures as the imperative mood. The only difference is in the use of the pronoun. *Cé sáŋ!* Meaning “be writing!” as a progressive imperative can become a hortative mood, once it takes *té sò cé sáŋ!* “Let us be writing.”

The following examples show:

- (124) Té sò cé saŋl "Let us be writing!"(dual )  
 Té sèe cé dùl "let us be going!" (plural) speaker incl.
- Sò fáa cé sán ká'!  
 PRON Neg PROG write neg.  
 "Let us not be going! (Plural speaker incl)."

### 3.2.6.3. HYPOTHETICAL MOOD

The hypothetical mood is expressed in Limbum by the use of *sémò'* and *kádè'* adverbials. They often come at sentence initial position. e.g.

- (125) *Kádè'sò à bá nòn* "we could have slept (today)."  
 HYP we P1 sleep
- Kádè' é kú cé yefsì* "He could be sweeping."  
 HYP he ASP PROG Sweep
- Sémò' sèe à bá cé dù* "May be we should be going."  
 HYP we ASP PROG go.

In the first two sentences, *kádè'* meaning "it is possible" or possibility is used to express the hypothetical idea, while *sémò'* meaning "probable" or expressing probability is used to express the hypothetical view.

### 3.2.6.4 OBLIGATIONAL MOOD:

In Limbum it is formed using the verb *túr* "have" to indicate that one is under an obligation to perform an action e.g.

- (126) (a) *E túr àr dù* "He has to go."  
 He have to go
- (b) *E ba túr àr sù'sì* "He had to wash (today)."  
 He P1 have to wash
- (c) *E má túr àr nò* "He had to drink (yesterday)."  
 He P3 have to drink

This mood is applicable to all tenses. This brings us to the end of our discussion on verb morphology, tense, aspect and mood. The next section looks at Adjective morphology.

### 3.3. THE LIMBUM ADJECTIVE MORPHOLOGY

Adjectives are words that qualify nouns. In Limbum they follow the noun and are divided into two groups, derived and non derived adjectives.

#### 3.3.1 NON - DERIVED ADJECTIVES

These adjectives maintain form in all structures and are limited in stock. They are post posed though they take the concords of the class of nouns they modify. For example

(127)	béer = red	còŋ = wet
	bú = white	cùŋ = hot
	fí = new	gòr = big
	sàsáh = long	ké' = small

**Structure: N + Adjective**

Noun class 1	cé' fí	=	new cloth
Noun class 2	bcè' bfí	=	new clothes
Noun class 5	rtáa bá	=	white cap
Noun class 6	mtáa mbú	=	white caps

Most Limbum adjectives can be used attributively and predicatively. When used predicatively they take concord markers and copular particles. For example:

**Attributive use:** The adjective is in post nominal position in a sort of isolation.

(128)	cè' fí	=	"new cloth"
	cloth new		
	ntá gòr	=	"big chair"
	chair big		
	lé' ké'	=	"small calabash"
	calabash small		

**Predicative use:** In predicative usage, the class concord and the copular (yu) are inserted between the noun and the adjective.

- (129)      ríáa lí yu bú                      = "The cap is white"  
               cap cc be white
- mrù' mi yú gòr                      = "The wine is much"  
               wine cc be much
- cê' yí yú fí                              = "The cloth is new"  
               cloth cc be new

But in some cases only the copular is inserted. e.g.

- (130)      ndáb yú gór                              The house is small  
               house be small
- kà yú là'shí                              The rope is short  
               rope be short
- sà' yú cécéb                              The cutlass is sharp  
               cutlass be sharp

Only the predicative form is used to describe some situations. In such cases, the 3<sup>rd</sup> person concord marker functions also as the noun described.

- e.g.(131)      yí yú bér                              It is terrible  
                   it be red
- yí yú bá                                  It is terrible  
                   it be white
- yí yú tátáb                              It is difficult  
                   it be strong
- yí yú bònḡbònḡ                              It is nice  
                   it be nice

### 3.3.1.1 COMPARATIVE AND SUPERLATIVE FORMS:

Non-derived adjectives can be used in the comparison and superlative forms. That is, Limbum uses the following "gor" "big", and gòr sê "big very much" to express the comparative and superlative concepts when they follow adjectives. In some dialects some people use sê in place of gòr to express comparative idea. However, we posit here that gòr and sê can be used interchangeable at the comparative form, but combined to form the superlative with the adjective.

(132)

<u>Adjective</u>	<u>Comparison</u>	<u>Superlative</u>
Bà "white"	bá gòr "bigger than" white big	bé gòr sê "whitest" white big much
còŋ "wet"	còŋ gòr "wetter than" wet big	còŋ gòr sê "wettest" wet big much
cúŋ "hot"	cúŋ gòr "hotter than" hot big	cúŋ gòr sê "hottest" hot big much
fì "new"	fì gòr "newer than" new big	fì gòr sê "newest" new big much

ndáb cá sáb = "This house is long"  
house this long

ndáb cá sáb gòr = "This house is longer than"  
house this long big

ndáb cá sáb gòr sê = "This house is longest"  
house this long big much

The general tendency is to express the comparative and superlative forms as shown above, even though Fransen (1995:154) asserts that sháa "pass", verb, is used to express a comparison. Non-derived adjectives can also be used to express plural ideas of the nouns they modify. For example.

(133) sìn gòr = "big bird"

bsìn bgorbòr = "big birds"

birds big big

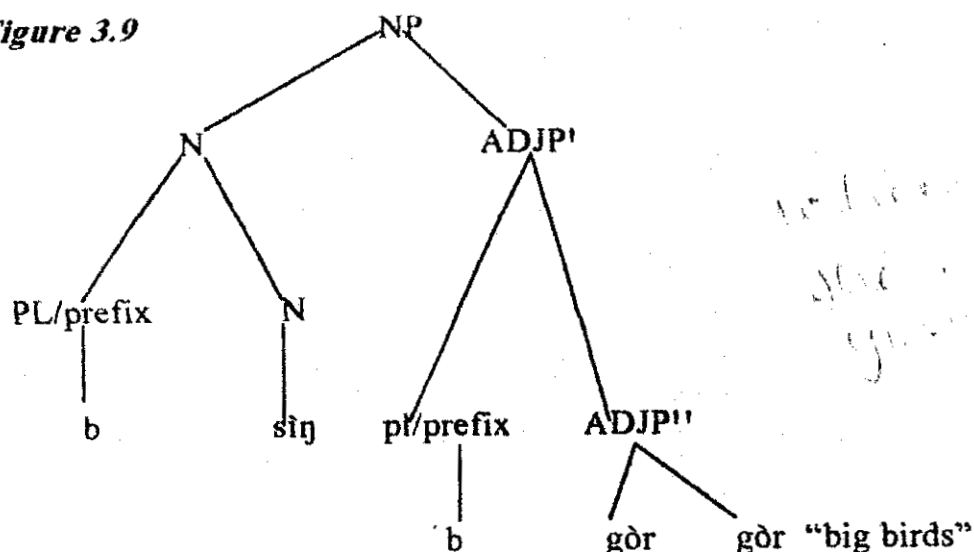
ntá' ke' = "small chair"

mntá' bke'ke' = "small chairs"

chairs small small

The plural comparative construction for non-derived adjectives for all dialectal regions can be illustrated using this tree.

Figure 3.9



### 3.3.2 DERIVED ADJECTIVES:

In Limbum, derived adjectives are formed from verbs. They are two groups called reduplicated and non-reduplicated derived adjectives.

#### 3.3.2.1 NON-REDUPLICATED DERIVED ADJECTIVES:

As Fransen (1995) puts it; these are disyllabic verbs. They express adjectival concepts by the lengthening of the final vowel e.g

<u>Verb</u>	<u>Adjective</u>	
fɛŋrì To be light	fɛŋfii light	"light"
comì To be deep	cómii deep	"deep"
fúnri To be deaf	fúnrii deaf	"deaf"

Non- Reduplicated derived adjectives can be used attributively and predicatively as well. But the copular is absent when the adjectives are used predicatively. For example:

#### Attributive use:

(134)            tù'        fúnrfi            "deaf ear"  
                  ear        deaf



ndúunji gwéesii road narrow	"narrow road"
rbò' bà'rfi pumkim decay	"decayed pumkim"

Predicative use: In this case only the concord is inserted.

tù' yí fúnrfi	"The ear is deaf"
ndúunji yí gwéesii	"The road is narrow"
rbò' lí bà'rfi	"The pumkim is rotten"

Tone plays a big role in the formulation of non-reduplicated derived adjective because where the tone of the verb is high, the final tone of the adjective is low as can be seen in the examples above.

### 3.3.2.2. REDUPLICATED DERIVED ADJECTIVES:

Reduplicated derived adjectives are formed from monosyllabic verbs. For example:

(135)	<u>Verb</u>	<u>Adjectives</u>
bé'	"to break"	bé'be' "half"
bòŋ	"to be good"	bòŋbòŋ "good"
rír	"to be heavy"	rírír "heavy"
raá	"to be clean"	rárár "clean"

bé'bé' baa	"half food"
bòŋbòŋ muŋgòŋgò	"a beautiful girl"
Rírír ŋúu	"heavy wood"

These examples show that reduplicated derived adjectives often precede the noun they describe. When used in this way, they express intensification and do not take any concord markers like in examples 1 below, whereas when used post-nominally they show concord like the examples 2 below.

(136) 1.	shéshé taa	"burnt insect"
	cécé' mrú'	"bitter wine"
	bébéb muu	"bad child"

jáǰár ɲwè	"careless person"
cécéǰ bsá'	"sharp cutlasses"
2. mǰi msí	"black kolanuts"
btáa bshéshé	"burnt insects"
bèe bcícf	"useless persons"
mrù' mtátáb	"strong wine"

### 3.3.3. ADJECTIVAL NOUNS:

Adjectival nouns refer to nouns which are placed in adjectival position. In this position, they function as adjectives and modify the nouns they follow. The examples below illustrate.

(137)	ndab ɲwáron	=	juju house
	N AN		
	ɲǰò' báa	=	corn mill
	N AN		
	cè' mbáa	=	expensive cloth
	N AN		
	má múu	=	nursing mother
	N AN		

Fransen (1995:161) discusses Human Propensity Concepts, which are expressed by means of Adjectival nouns. As indicated above, they are formed by the combination of noun + noun. Limbum uses the noun ɲwè "person" + the adjectival noun to express human propensity concepts. The examples show.

(138)	ɲwe bfé	=	a wise person
	ɲwe nté	=	a brave person
	ɲwe rshénté	=	a bad tempered person
	ɲwe mbáa	=	a rich person
	ɲwe ɲǰér	=	a powerful person
	ɲwe mbú	=	a whiteman

as above. e.g

é tár mbáa	“he is rich”
é tár ngér	“he is strong”
é tár bfé	“he is intelligent”

### 3.4. LIMBUM ADVERB MORPHOLGY

An adverb is a word that gives information about how, when, where, or in what circumstances something happens. In Limbum, adverbs usually come after the verb they modify and are divided into three groups- time, locative and manner adverbs. Unlike adjectives, Limbum adverbs do not have any systematic morphology. Perhaps, that is why linguists have tried to avoid its treatment in earlier works.

#### 3.4.1 TIME ADVERBS:

Time adverbs state when something will happen (happens).

(139)	ntìní	“today”
	nfésè	“forever”
	sémò'	“sometimes”
	nìṅkúr	“yesterday”
	á yáṅsè	“tomorrow”
	nì móti	“in the afternoon”
	à mbùṅkúr	“in the evening”

They maintain their form in all structures and do not undergo comparison.

#### 3.4.2 LOCATIVE ADVERBS:

They state where something happens or where something goes.

(140)	ntómbì	“first” or “front”
	kúntómbì	“ahead”
	kúyéè	“straight up (vertically)”

mbàyée      "down (straight down)"

The following locative adverbs are formed by the combination of preposition + noun.

- (141)      Kú    ntómbì      "ahead or firstly"  
             Prep + noun  
             Up    first  
             Sér    yée  
             Prep + noun      straight (horizontally)  
             Horizon flat  
             Mbà    yée      straight down.  
             Prep + noun  
             Down flat

### 3.4.3. MANNER ADVERBS:

They are used to describe the way in which something happens or is done.

Here are some examples:

- (142)      àmnú      "boldly"  
             à tèt      "easily"  
             à ndèe      "better"  
             àngòò      "plenty"  
             à wàa      "carelessly"  
             à wánj      "openly"  
             àfóàfó      "frequently"

These take the à prefix, which corresponds, to the English "ly", but when deleted some of the words become semantically void. An example is àfoàfo "frequently" in which the form "fóàfo" is semantically empty. However, some words change category. An example is à ndèe "better". When the adverbial prefix à is deleted the root ndèe becomes a noun "customs".

Some manner adverbs do not take the adverbial prefix, but they describe the manner in which something is done.

		, quickly”
máwèè	“ to do something slowly”	
ghub	“ to do speak truthfully”	
cíci	“ to go about freely”	

### 3.4.4 DERIVATION OF ADVERBS:

Some adverbs are derived from adjectives and verbs via the prefixation of *má*, which means “a bit like” or “-ish.” English adjectival suffix. When an adverb is derived in this way, the effect of the lexical change is that the adverb has a comparative meaning, as can be seen in the following examples:

(144) 1.	<u>Adjective</u>	<u>Adverb</u>
	dúntè “uneven”	mádúntè “a bit more unevenly than”
	cún “hot”	mácún “a bit hotter than”
	còn “wet”	mácòn “a bit wetter than”
	fí “new”	máfí “a bit newer than”
2.	<u>Verb</u>	<u>Adverb</u>
	cé’ “to be bitter”	mácécé’ “a bit bitter than”
	táb “to be difficult”	métátáb “a bit more difficult than”
	céb “to be sharp”	mácécéb “a bit sharper than”

### 3.4.5 POSITION OF ADVERBS

Although the adverbial phrase will be treated in 4.2.2.4, it is important to present here the adverbs that have been so far treated in isolation, in typical Limbum SVO sentences.

S | V | O | ADV

2. Nfò e | ké cà'nf | ngàbyán | cé'cé' "Nfor always visits the sick"  
 S | V | O | ADV

3. Ndi | à nònsí | rèréŋ | séryée  
 S | V | O | ADV  
 "Ndi has placed the bamboo horizontal"

Notice that the usual position of the adverb is at the end of the sentence. It may come immediately after the verb, where there is no object. For example:

Nfò bé vâ àyànsé "Nfor will come tomorrow"  
 Nfor fi come tomorrow

Nfò à fâ' cécé r "Nfor has worked quickly"  
 Nfor sm work averb

In this chapter, we discussed morphology as one of the main factors in the process of standardisation. In order to elucidate our point, we treated noun morphology, verb morphology, and others such as adjectives, prepositions, locative adverbs and mood.

Talking about noun morphology, we reviewed the Limbum noun class system and attempted a semantic classification. From the discussion that ensued, it was evident that a semantic classification of the noun class system alone, was not satisfactory. Consequently noun class system of classification remains fundamental to the treatment of noun morphology because plural formation rules, nominalization, associative constructions, compounding and reduplication all make use of it. Other categories that affect the morphology of the language such as pronouns, determiners and numerals were treated under noun morphology. It was realized among others that while the third person singular and plural human subject pronouns *é* (he / she) and *wówè* (they) changed to *é* (he/she) and *ó* (they) in the South, non-human object pronouns were identical to non-human subject pronouns. Similarly, counting in Limbum was seen as being very much similar to counting in German and that fractions were obtained by a process of reduplication of the verb describing the action. For instance, *té* "cut" in fraction becomes *tété* "pieces". It could be a piece of meat, rope, cloth and the like.

Verb morphology was exhaustively treated to bring to focus its relevance in the standardisation of Limbum. Issues such as verb roots, suffixation (extension) were treated. It was evident that a verb in Limbum may take different suffixes at different times to express particular ideas. For instance, a verb like *kwé* "die" can be used intransitively by suffixing the morpheme *-ngér* or *-té*. That is, *kwéngér* meaning "die" separately in the plural (each chicken dying on its own in a poultry farm such that many are seen as having died). Then *kwété* meaning "cool down by itself" like water that had been boiled and left to cool down. The same verb could be transitivised or used transitively by suffixing *-sí*. *Kwésí* "caused to die". A tree can be caused to die by cutting it or peeling off the bark.

time and aspect were treated. It was seen that Limbum had eight tenses, grouped under present, past and future. Present tense was seen as not being morphologically marked. For the past there are three forms P1 (earlier day marked by bá), P2 (yesterday or some days ago- marked by ma) and P3 (longtime ago marked by ni). Future has four tenses, that is, F1 (later day marked by bé), F2 (later today marked by bélé), F3 (tomorrow or some days from today marked by bífú) and F4 (a longtime from today marked by békée).

Since tense and aspect go together, it was realized in the treatment that Limbum aspect could either be perfective or imperfective. Perfective or completive aspect was not morphologically marked, except in cases whereby the action was accomplished not a long time ago before the present time. In such a circumstance it is marked by kú morpheme. On the contrary, imperfective aspect was marked by different aspect morphemes, such as ké-used to express habitual action, cé used to express progressive action, -shi used to express pluractional and -ngér used to express iterative actions.

Other morphological categories such as adjective, prepositions, locative adverbs and mood were also examined. It was realized that Limbum made use of attributive and predicative adjectives. Secondly, that there are possibilities for the formation of the comparative and superlative forms. Another outcome was that prepositions often function as locative adverbs, while some locatives express cardinal locations, for instance:

Mbèn à sí kùuntfi                      "Rain has clouded in the Earth."  
 rain sin black Loc

Before rounding up, mood was seen as being very closely related to tense and aspect in Limbum. It was clear that Limbum had various ways of marking mood, while the position of the pronoun was seen as being central to the formation of hortative mood, hypothetical mood could be marked by séndò' "perhaps". With these examples, it could be said that morphology contributes to standardisation.



# CHAPTER FOUR

## SYNTACTIC PROCESSES

### INTRODUCTION

Having treated the morphology of Limbum in the preceding chapter, it seems necessary to consider the way words combine to form phrases and how these phrases combine in the formation of sentences in the language. In order to better treat the syntactic processes of Limbum, we need to make an inventory of some of the phrases attested in the different dialects of Limbum. Then, establish generalised phrase structure rules that generate these phrases and show how they can be represented on the phrase markers. This will be followed by an examination of Limbum sentences. These sentences will be accompanied by rules and phrase marker representations.

The discussion indicated above will usher us into the discussion of sentence types in Limbum and their structures. This will gradually lead to the construction of complex sentences and syntactic rules that transform sentences viz: Substitution and adjunction. The chapter will round off with a discussion on whether Limbum is a pro-drop language or not—a problem that has been raised in earlier works on Limbum (NDAMSAH 1997).

Two main theoretical frameworks that will referee our discussion in this section are the Principles and Parameters Theory (PPT) a theory whose foundation is Chomsky (1995)'s transformational generative grammar, and the Minimalist Program (a theory of grammar outlined in Chomsky 1995b), whose core assumption is that grammars should be described in terms of the numerical set of theoretical and descriptive apparatus necessary.

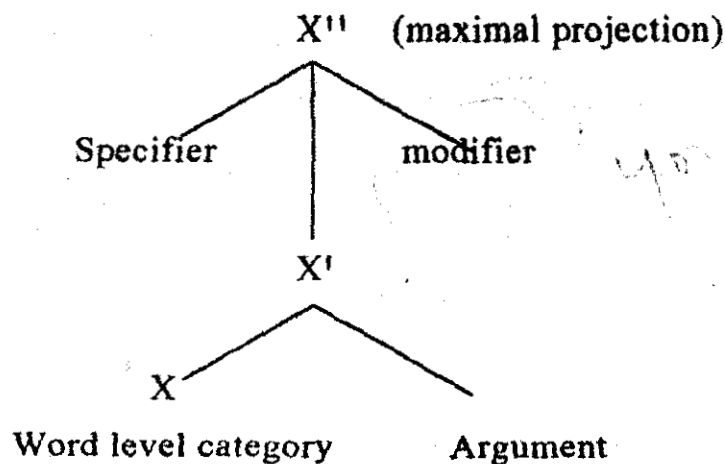
The main roles that these theories will play in this section of the work require a brief summary of some of their useful tenets.

1.1 THE X-BAR THEORY (X-THEORY)

This theory, developed in 1978 by Chomsky, is a way of characterising phrasal structures. It seeks to relate lexical categories to the composite syntactic category of which it is head. It therefore recognises that most phrasal constituents have heads upon which the other elements of the constitution are dependent.

The theory makes up for the restrictiveness of phrase structure grammar which allows one and only one phrasal projection of any given category, whereas the X-bar theory allows for an intermediate category between the lexical and the phrasal categories, that is, while the X-bar theory will be able to characterize the structure "Very beautiful girl" in "This very beautiful girl is lazy." Phrase structure grammar will not. Since the structure "very beautiful girl" cannot constitute a full noun phrase, and is certainly, larger than a noun, it will pose a problem to phrase structure grammar. On the contrary, the X-bar, syntax will have no problems in presenting this situation as it gives room for an intermediate category -X which projects a maximal node X and dominates a terminal node X. In this theory therefore, a maximal projection (NP-N'', adjp-adj'', VP-V'', etc.) dominate intermediate categories: N', adj' and V' respectively. These intermediate categories in turn dominate the head X that is N, adj and V respectively. The X'-schema for English (Culled from Tamanji (1991:5) is generated below:

1.

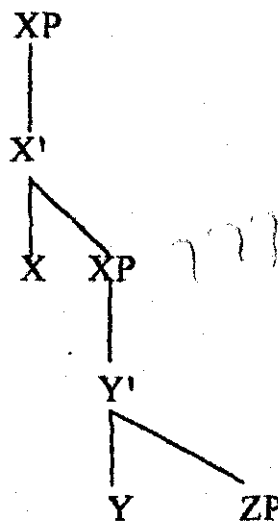


The minimalist theory or program is a theory of grammar, whose core assumption is that grammars should be described in terms of the minimal set of theoretical and descriptive apparatus (Chomsky 1995b). It simply refers to the requirement that a linguistic theory should provide grammars, which make use of the minimal theoretical apparatus needed to provide a descriptively adequate characterization of linguistic phenomena. It implies that grammars should be as simple as possible, in order to facilitate (minimize) the acquisition burden of young learners, consequently maximizing their ability to learn natural language grammars.

In developing the minimalist program, Chomsky was reacting to the complexity of syntactic structures and linguistic principles of the 1980s. By this means, minimalism has become the corner stone of linguistic theory. More so because it deals with internal structures of constituents, explaining what happens in a manner that X-bar theory does not. Take for instance the constituent "ye baa" "eat food". In this structure "eat food" eat is the head word of the VP. As a verb, it merges with the noun "food" to form "eat food". Hence, "eat food" is a projection of the verb "eat" which in itself is a minimal projection.

Relatively, the minimality condition as explained by the schema culled from Ouhalla (1994:166).

2.



perfluous steps of derivations are minimized. Consequently the learner of the grammar of a natural language makes little effort in the acquisition of the language. Since this work is meant to encourage formal learning of the grammar of Limbum, the importance of the minimalist program to the work is thus obvious.

It should be remarked here that the discussions of the above tenets of PT and minimalists program do not in anyway suggest independent treatment of each theory in a separate section. Rather, the notions presented above are going to be applied whenever need arises.

It is important to mention here that some work has been done on the syntax of Limbum (NDAMSAH (1997)'s The Sentential Structure of Limbum and MPOCHE (1993)'s The Limbum Noun Phrase – A Generative Approach must be particularly cited here. The reason is obvious; these works form the main sources of our inspiration for the syntax of the Northern dialect, while syntactic information on the Southern and Central dialects of Limbum will result from our own fieldwork.

## 4.2. LIMBUM STRUCTURE

To put it simply, Limbum like all other natural languages has a basic word order that serves as the most common way to form sentences. This means that Limbum sentences have a structure. What we mean here is that Limbum has principles for sound combination, word and sentence formation. In the previous chapters, we attempted a demonstration of the regular principles that determine sound combination and word formation. In the same way, the Limbum sentence is made up of constituent parts. Here we focus on the analysis of these constituent parts, in short the grammatical structure.

Usually, words come together to form a string called a phrase. The main word of a string serves as the head of the phrase. If the main word is a noun, then the phrase is an NP, if it is a verb, then it is a VP, if it is an adjective(AdjP) then, it is an AdjP. Although it was pointed out earlier that differences exist in the inventory of morphemes as one moves from one dialect of Limbum to the other, we discover here that the phrase structure is actually uniform. The data below clearly illustrate this uniformity.

3)

<u>English</u>	<u>Southern Limbum</u>	<u>Central Limbum</u>	<u>Northern Limbum</u>
1. My house	yà ndáb	yà ndáb	yà ndáb
2. Like men	à mbànrùu	à mbànrùu	à mbòmbánlúú
3. To dress	àr yàr shè'	àr yàr cè'	àr yàr cè'
4. Eat food	yé' baa	yé baa	yé baa

These data reveal that no matter the variation in morphological form, the structural arrangement is basically the same. For this reason, our discussion of the Limbum phrase structure will not always move from dialect to dialect as we did in the phonology and morphology sections. However, this does not cancel the fact that we will endeavour to highlight any dialectal variation we happen to identify. With this preliminary discussion in mind let us now examine the phrase types that exist in the language.

#### 4.2.1. THE NOUN PHRASE (NP)

Let us open this discussion by stating simply that subjects in a sentence contain a category of words called nouns. The phrases in which these nouns occupy head positions are called NOUN PHRASES. An NP may be unmodified or modified. It is along this line of discussion that this section will proceed.

By underived NP, we mean an NP that is not modified. That is, a noun phrase that is neither pre nor post modified. In the preceding chapter, we realised that the underived noun phrase can be a pronoun, or a noun. The data below illustrate these NP types.

4.) a) Me ké cir.

I ASP hit

"I hit."

b) Wóowèè à yúu mbáŋrùu.

They SM be man(pl)

"They are men."

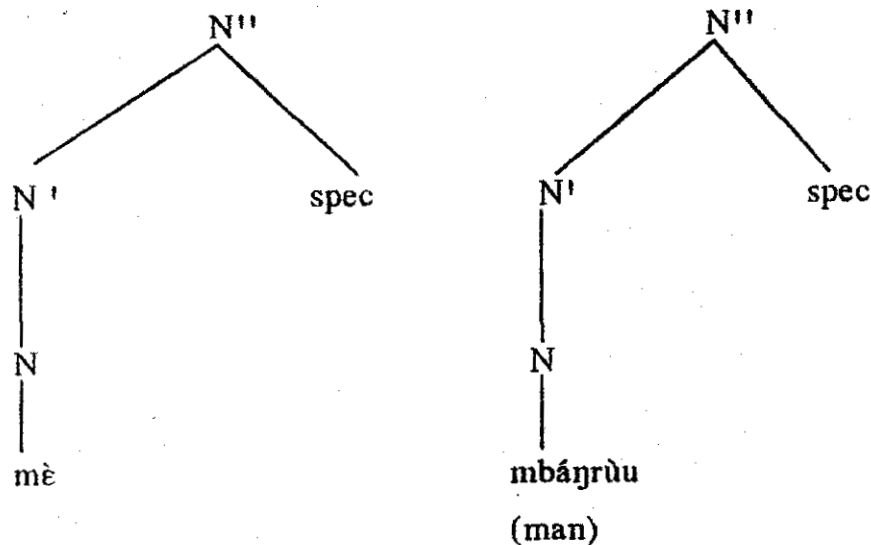
The underived structures in the above data are NPs. They can act as subjects to sentences or as objects. The Limbum underived NP can be generated using the following rule.

5.) a) NP → N

b) NP → Pron.

The phrase marker below illustrates the representation of this NP-type.

6.)



The underived NP discussed above can either be pre or post modified. In this section, we attempt a discussion of NP modification in Limbum. The derived NP can be modified by determiners, adjectives, numerals and pronouns. These modifications are presented below.

#### 4.2.1.2.1 DETERMINER MODIFIED NP

By determiner here, we mean any word that specifies or limits the meaning of the noun with which it occurs. Such words include demonstratives, definite articles, numerals, possessives and interrogatives. Consider the data below:

- 7). a) i) sà' cá = "this cutlass"  
cutlass this
- ii) síŋ yánà = "that bird"  
bird that
- iii) síŋ mó'sír = "one bird"  
bird one
- iv) ríŋr fé = "which eye?"  
Eye which
- v) bèe ánà = "those people"  
people the
- vi) ndúr yà = "my brother"  
brother my
- b)
- i) yà ndáb- = "my house"  
my house
- ii) wá bsíŋ = "my birds"  
my birds
- iii) \*yà nfúr = \*  
my brother

in all the cases, we notice that the modifier always comes first. This suggests that Limbum is a head-first language and therefore as Asah (1997:59) notes, it is a right branching language, since the head is the left most element of the phrase. However, in (B), the reverse is true. We also notice that the determiner precedes the head. We argue here that apart from (biii) which is an unacceptable structure, these forms are normally used in focus constructions and as argued in Tamanji (1991) such constructions involve movement and consequently [yà] "my" has moved from its post noun insitu position to the pre-noun position. Fransen (1995) presents the following examples to illustrate the occurrence of determiners in pre-noun position.

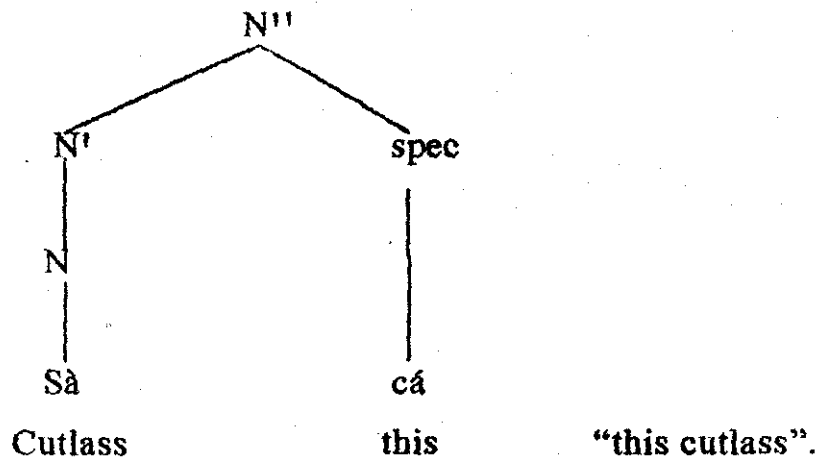
- a) à yà ndóŋ ná = "here/this is my cup"  
It is my cup here
- b) à yá bàa fī ná = "here/this is my new bag"  
It is my bag new here

The morpheme [à] is an anaphoric pronoun in the sentences above because it makes reference to an earlier noun. We will return to focus constructions later. Besides the focus construction, Limbum possessive pronouns have the ability of post noun posing. We hitherto underscored the point that Limbum is basically a head-first language. The phrase structure rules can be used to generate these kinds of phrases.

- a) NP → N. Det.

The phrase marker of the structures in (6a) above will thus be as follows:

9).





do not reflect determiner modified NP in Limbum as they show aspectual focus constructions

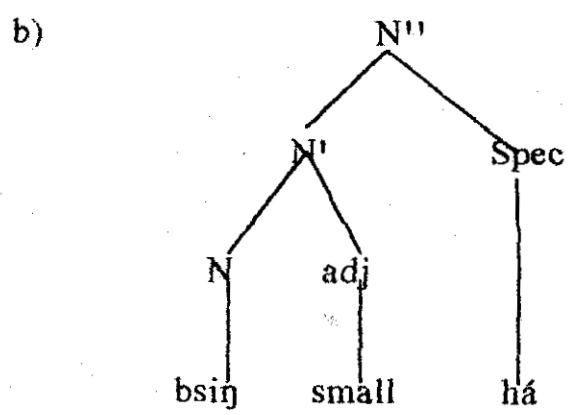
#### 4.2.1.2.2. THE ADJECTIVE MODIFIED NOUN PHRASE

In fact, the determiner modified NPs treated above could be considered adjectives if we go by the definition that adjectives give more information and delimit nouns. While this is true, we deem it necessary to consider the adjective modified noun phrase separately because there are some noun phrases where we can have a determiner and an adjective both modifying a noun. Secondly, determiners and adjectives have different distributions and so do not coordinate easily. The data in (10) below illustrate this phenomenon

- 10). a) ngáb nsfi cá "this black chicken"  
           fowl black this  
       b) bsíŋ bkè'ké há "these small birds"  
           Birds small this

These structures can be generated using the rules in (11a) and can be represented on a P-marker as shown in (11 b)

- 11 a)      NP      →      N''    adj    Det.  
           N''      →      N'     Spec  
           N'      →      N     adj

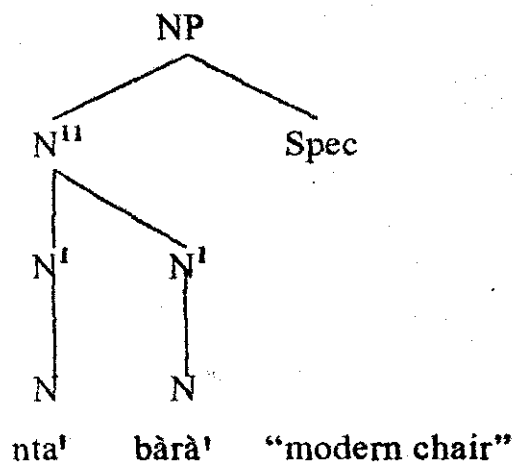


Nforgwei (1991:15) notices a phenomenon in Limbum whereby nouns modify other nouns. Although these types of noun modifications are syntactically similar to genitive constructions, they are semantically different. Whereas genitive constructions mark "possession". This type mark "kind of", that is a description of the "type of". Secondly, genitive constructions have concord possessive markers, noun modified NPs do not. See the data below.

- 12) a)    bii    mbágrùu            "kind of dance for men"  
           dance man                    manly dance
- b)    nta'    bàrà'                    "a kind of chair modernity"  
                   chair modernity                    modern chair
- c)    ndáb    cór                    "a kind of house church"  
                   house church                    church house

In these examples, N2 is the modifier of N1. It describes or specifies N1, which is the head noun, and follows it. The (PSR) Phrase Structure Rule in (13) below will generate such a noun phrase type.

13) a)    NP → NN



The Genitive Construction or Genitive Phrase (Gen P) is a kind of Noun Phrase containing two nouns in which the first noun is the possessed noun and the second noun is the possessor noun. Ndamsah (1997:81) states, (This is the type of phrase which this study refers to as Genitive Phrase (GenP)). We recap here her examples:

14) múu Nfor { cé nó mdib }  
 Child Nfor { Prog drink water }  
 "Nfor's child is drinking water."

15) { Cé à káp } ntá' maká  
 { Tree Pl break } chair grandmother.  
 A tree has broken grandmother's chair"

In the above sentences "múu Nfor" and Ntá' maká are Associative Constructions as we earlier noted in (3.1.5.0.) above. That is, in Associative Constructions, the possessor is N2 and N1 is the possessed noun. In such a construction, there can be concord, but the concord morpheme follows N1 or precedes N2. consequently, we can say,

16) Mbùu yà ngwé "my dog's buttocks"  
 Buttocks my dog

Nà' yà mbòróŋ "my fulanis' cows"  
 Cows my fulanis

Múu yèr Nfòr "our Nfor's child"  
 Child our Nfor

Ntá' yà maká "my grandmother's chair"  
 Chair my grandmother.

These examples differ from those on page 220 above where we state that Noun modified NP is a type of construction in which N2 is the modifier of N1 and describes N1 (the head noun). Let us go further to state that unlike

preceded by

morpheme, in a Noun Modified NP, N1 can be preceded. Secondly, in the Genitive Construction, the possessor noun (N2) can be preceded by a possessive morpheme, but the possessive concord cannot precede N2 in a Noun Modified NP. That is, why *ntá' bárà'* "modern chair" can be *yá ntá' bárà'* "my modern chair" and is grammatically correct, whereas *\*yá ntá' ákú* and *\*ntá' yà bàrá'* are ungrammatical.

Let us also note here in passing that the Noun Modified NP is in effect, what we refer to morphologically as noun + noun compound, but genitive constructions are not compounds. These examples illustrate the point.

17) Genitive Construction:	<i>rbùu ngáb</i>	"fowl's egg"
	<i>rbùu yà ngáb</i>	"my fowl's egg"
Noun Modified NP:	<i>ngáb mbùu</i>	"a laying fowl"
	<i>yá ngáb mbúu</i>	"my laying fowl."

In short, Associative Constructions and Genitive Constructions refer to one and the same type of NP in Limbum. The Noun Modified NP is a compound; and is structurally a descriptive genitive. (Remember N2 describes and specifies N1).

Coming back to our discussion on Genitive Construction, Ndamsah (1997:81) states, between the two nouns is an underlying floating high tone, which is what distinguishes genitive constructions from noun modification. Fransen (1995) notes that the associative construction always has an associative marker also (ASM) between the two nouns, which she notes, is not overt and further points out that, it occasionally surfaces as a downstepped high tone. To this bit, we still like to add that in some cases, the overtness of the associative marker sequentially appears to be optional but is always overt tonally and this is best explained with the autosegmental model used in chapter one.

It is very significant in that, it specifies the possessor and thus brings out the difference between noun, noun modification and genitive constructions.

the associative marker changes depending on the nominal class of the noun (N1)

- 18). a) i) mbú yì nká  
goat ASM chief "a goat of the chief"
- ii) bcé vî nká  
trees ASM chief "trees of the chief"
- iii) rsòŋ lì nká  
tooth ASM chief "the chief's trumpet"
- b) i) mbú nká  
goat chief "the chief's goat"
- ii) bcé nká  
trees chief "trees of the chief"
- iii) rsónŋ nka  
tooth chief "the chief's trumpet"
- c) bòò ngúb nká "the chief's chicks"  
ntá bàrá' nká "the chief's modern chair"

In (18a) the associative marker is "yì" in (i), vî and lì in (iii). Notice that they all carry low tones, while N1 in 18 a (i) and (ii) are high tones. In (5b) the associative marker is no longer sequentially overt, and the constructions remain grammatical. However, N1 and N2 surface with different tones that is, instead of low tones they surface with rising tones. Our argument is that when the segmental ASM is deleted, the stable tone remains behind and reassociates to N1 to cause the rising tone. In 18b(iii), we also by analogy assume that the remaining low tone also associates but is not noticed phonetically, since it is identical with the basic tone of the first noun (N1). This is illustrated within the autosegmental theory in 19.

19.1 a) UR # bcè' vi ñkú  
 L L H

2) a) # rsòŋ li ñkú#  
 L L H

b) Mapping bcè' # vi ñkú  
 | | |  
 L L H

b) rsòŋ li ñkú  
 | | |  
 L L H

c) ASM Deletion bcé' ñkà  
 | |  
 H L H

c) rsòŋ ñkú  
 | |  
 H L H

d) Reassociation bcé' ñkú  
 / \ |  
 H L H

d) rsòŋ ñkú  
 / \ |  
 H L H

e) SR [bcé' ñkà]

e) [rsòŋ ñkú]

Notice that obligatory contour principle or tone simplification rule is at work. With this analysis, it can be concluded that the ASM in Limbum is always overt, either segmentally or suprasegmentally only. Secondly, that if N1 belongs to class one for example and has a M (L) tone, it changes this low tone into a rising tone whatever the class of tone of N2 may be, when the ASM is deleted. For example,

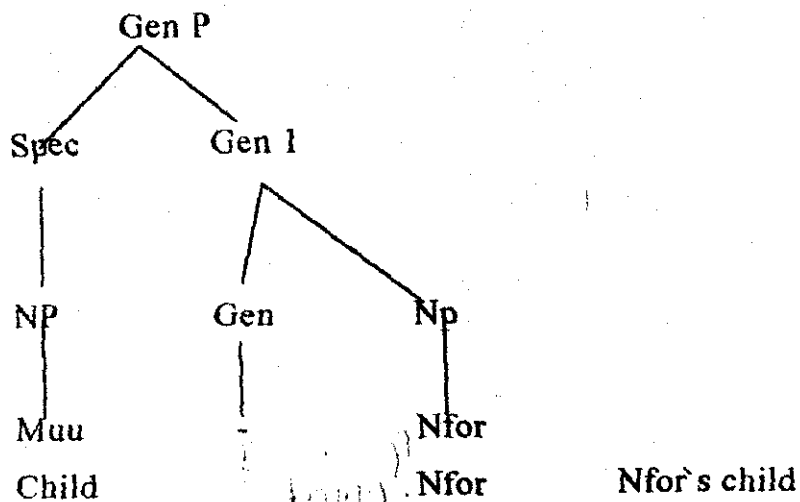
rsòŋ	ñkú	"the chief's tooth"
bcé'	ñkú	"the chief's clothes"
ñkár	ñkú	"the chief's friend."

Having understood what the genitive construction is, and what its constituents are, we wish to address the question concerning its syntactic representation, by simply stating the rule in 17 below:

19) Gen P  $\longrightarrow$  N + Gen + N

This rule requires further exemplification to justify its correctness. To begin, let us look at the structural representation proposed by Ndamsah (1997:81) as presented below

20)



This structure has a number of problems. We earlier established that Limbum is a head first language and as a result it is a right branching language a conclusion also drawn in Ndamsah (1997). This means that the Spec of X should be on the right since Spec is typically positioned before its head. (Raddford: 1999:131)

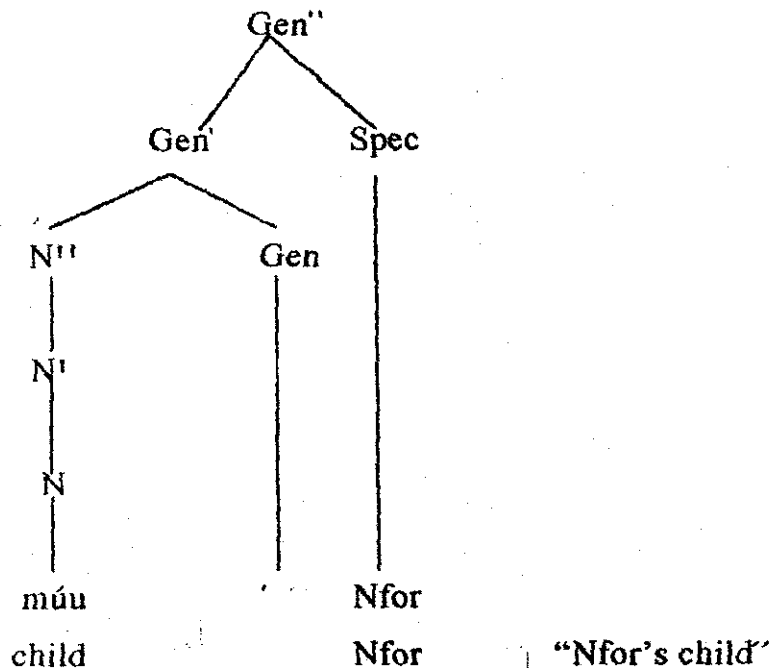
Our grammar will be easy to understand if all syntactic structures should obey this parameter. However, Ndamsah's structure in (20) above, is a breach and creates a lot of inconsistencies in the grammar. Besides, when she puts [múu] "child" in the spec of Gen P, she is supposing that [mùu] "child" is the modifier of "Nfor", whereas the reverse is true. Consider, for example her example which we presented in (14i) above and is presented here again for convenience as:

múu            Nfor  
 Child. ASM Nfor

- 21). múu Nfor ( ce nó mdip )  
 Child ASM Nfor ( prog drink water )  
 "Nfor's child is drinking water."

The question here is, who is actually drinking the water? Is it "Nfor" or the "child"? The answer is obvious, it is the "child" who is drinking water and so "Nfor" is in the sentence to tell us which "child" is drinking the water. Consequently "Nfor" is only a modifier of "child" and as a result "Nfor" should occupy the Spec position and not otherwise as presented by Ndamsah (1997). Also, the fact that the ASM must agree with the noun class of N1 [múu] is a pointer to the fact that [múu] is the head, at least syntactically. If we therefore stand for the consistent head first principle, and make the linguistically significant generalization that "Nfor" is modifying child, we will have the structure in (22) below

22. a)

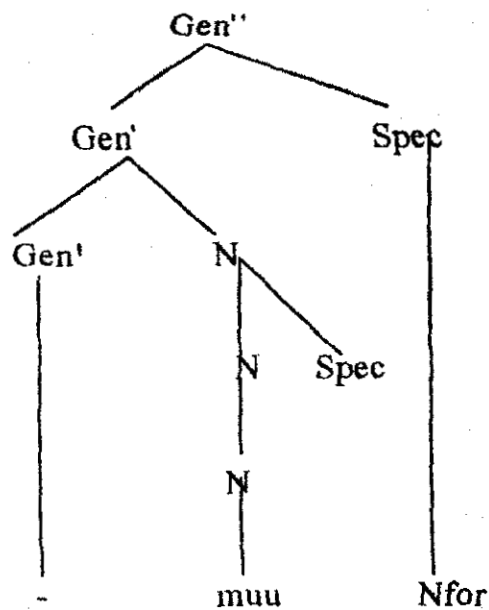


With this representation, we are still left wanting although we are at least able to capture the fact that "Nfor" is a modifier. But we have a problem in that we are still not able to have the head (Gen) in the left most side of the



tree as the Genitive marker must always occur between the two nouns. The structure (22b) with the head being left most, is ungrammatical

22. b)



*customarily  
converted to mark  
to mark the head  
the*

Whichever option we consider, we are always confronted by anomalies. Our proposal is that instead of postulating a Gen P as the maximal projection of the Genitive construction, we should rather consider it an NP for a number of reasons:

First, the genitive construction even in English can be replaced by a pronoun. This means that it is [+ nominal]. For example.

- 23) a) John gave the book to Mary's son
- b) Therefore, John gave the book to her
- c) Therefore, John gave the book to him.

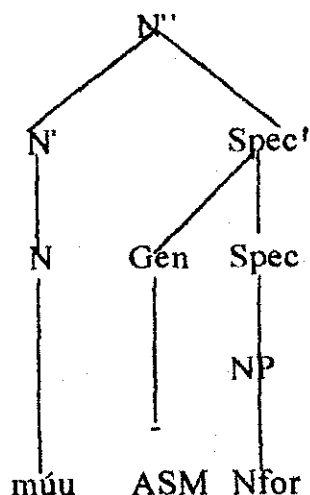
23 b) is not a good follow up of (a) just because it was the son who received the book and not his mother. The fact that the whole structure "Mary's son" can be replaced by a pronoun is indicative of the fact that it is a typical noun phrase.

Secondly, the fact that the pronoun can only be masculine and not feminine indicates that Mary is not performing an adjectival role in

the structure because it is fused into son. The structure thus becomes a nominal NP.

With this in mind, we propose the P-Marker in (24) as the representation of genitive construction in Limbum.

24)



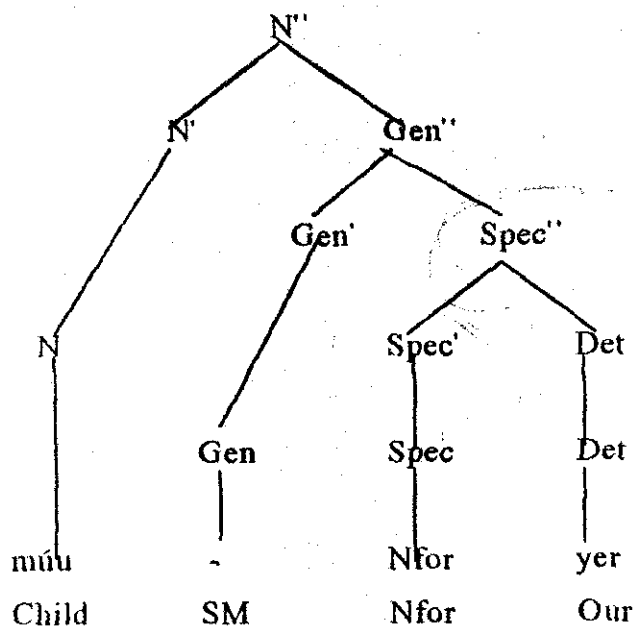
However, this representation though quite elegant seems to be posing another problem. The genitive construction can be modified by a determiner (possessive pronoun, article, numeral etc) in some constructions as presented below:

- 25). i) siŋ múu wà Central dialect  
 bird child my "my child's bird"
- ii) sàŋ máu wà' Southern dialect  
 bird child my "my child's bird"
- iii) siŋ mɔɔ wà Northern Dialect  
 bird child my "my child's bird"

In structures, of this nature, our structure in 24 may face a problem, as the determiner may not have a place to enter. If we put the determiner in the right most spec, that is, spec of N2, we leave behind the impression that the determiner is modifying only N2, whereas it modifies N2 and with N2

they both modify N1. To solve this problem, we rather prefer that the N2 should occupy the spec of Gen P while the Determiner should occupy the spec of N'' as shown in (26).

26)



In this case, "Nfor" can now adequately receive Genitive case from the Genitive marker even under government contrary to any analysis in which the whole 'Genitive Construction is considered a Gen P, which probably led to the conclusion that Genitive case is not assigned under government. Sells (1985:53). In this wise therefore we conclude that Genitive construction in Limbum has the PS marker:

27. Gen.P  $\longrightarrow$  N Gen.P, where Gen.P is the modifier of N1 and comes after it.

#### 4.2.1.2.5. THE COMPLEX NP

Let us begin by reminding ourselves of the discussion on the Limbum NP, we have done so far. From the discussion, we understand that there are two levels of categories (word level and phrase level categories). These categories are represented by the following NPs:

28) 1. Underived NP:  $\left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{rfũu} \\ \text{NP} \end{array} \right]$  "feather"

2. Determiner Modified NP:

$\left( \begin{array}{c} \text{rf\u00e0u} \\ \text{NP feather} \end{array} \right) \left( \begin{array}{c} \text{c\u00e1} \\ \text{Det this} \end{array} \right)$  "This feather"

3. Adjective Modified NP:

$\left( \begin{array}{c} \text{\u0117g\u00e1b} \\ \text{NP fowl} \end{array} \right) \left( \begin{array}{c} \text{nsfi c\u00e1} \\ \text{Adj.Black this} \end{array} \right)$  "This black fowl"

4. Noun Modified NP:

$\left( \begin{array}{c} \text{rf\u00e0u} \\ \text{NP feather} \end{array} \right) \left( \begin{array}{c} \text{\u0117g\u00e1b nsfi ca} \\ \text{NP fowl black this} \end{array} \right)$   
 "The feather of this black fowl"

These phrases show that the Limbum simple NP can take any of these patterns:

- NP  $\longrightarrow$  {N}
- NP  $\longrightarrow$  {N + N}
- NP  $\longrightarrow$  {N + N + Det}
- NP  $\longrightarrow$  {N + N + AdjP + Det}

These NPs do not express complete thoughts and are not structurally free units. They comprise a head Noun with or without an optional Determiner, Complement, or Adjunct. In the expression "\u0117g\u00e1b grik\u00f3c\u00f2 ns\u00ed c\u00e1" "This black agric fowl", the complement phrase [grik\u00f3c\u00f2] is optional just like the Adjunct [ns\u00ed] and the Determiner [c\u00e1]. But what is clear so far is that in an expression like this, the complement must precede the Adjunct. But that is not the case with the expression.

rf\u00e0u nd\u00fa-\u0117g\u00e1b grik\u00f3c\u00f2 ns\u00ed e nje \u0117kw\u00e9j  
 feather husband fowl agriculture black of Nkwen

This expression takes us into the consideration of the Limbum complex NP. In the expression above, rf\u00e0u nd\u00fa-\u0117g\u00e1b grik\u00f3c\u00f2 ns\u00ed "feather of the black agric fowl" expresses an of-phrase. Radford (1990:194) states

that all of-phrases are complement PPs, and complement phrases come nearest the nouns they modify. To this expression:

(29) Ndi à gháshí rfàù ndú-ngáb grikócò nsí e njé ñkwèn nì cùu.

Ndi PI hold feather husband fowl agric black of ñkwèn with mouth

“Ndi has held the feather of the black agric fowl of Nkwen with his mouth.”

nì cùu “with mouth” is a with-phrase, which as Radford states, all with-phrases are Adjuncts. What is important here is that the sentence above contains two PPs. The first PP modifies the first noun and the second PP modifies the second noun. The first PP answers the question “which?” and the second PP answers the question “How?” These questions reveal the embedded sentence and its function.

(30) Question: Ndi à gháshí bá rfàù lí fě?  
Ndi PI hold Q part. Feather it where  
“Which feather has Ndi held?”

Answer: rfàù ndú-ngáb grikócò nsí e njé ñkwèn  
Feather husband fowl agric black  
Feather of the black agric fowl of Nkwen

Question: Ndi à gháshí bá nì ké?  
Ndi PI hold Q part with what?  
“What has Ndi held it with?”

Answer: nì cùu  
With mouth  
“With his mouth”

To be more explicit let us show the structure of the Limbum complex NP

rfàù ndú-ngáb grikócò nsí nì cùu

“Feather of the black agric cock with his mouth”

(31) 

rfàù		ndú-ngáb grikócò nsí		nì cùu
N		CP		PP

Remember that the complex phrase as well as the Adjunct Phrase are optional. This discussion on the complex NP will be revisited in detail when we treat relativisation in Limbum.

However, before rounding up the discussion on the NP, let us come back to the possessive pronoun as a modifier. We said, earlier that it is the only determiner that can modify a noun. For convenience let us look at the data once more:

(32)

<u>Northern dialect</u>	<u>Central dialect</u>	<u>Southern dialect</u>	<u>GLOSS</u>
a) yà ndàb	yà ndáb	yà ndàb	my house
b) yèr ndàb	yisè ndàb	yìr ndàb	our house
c) wir mndàb	visé ndàb	wir mndáb	our houses
d) nduu wà	nduu yà	nduu wà	my husband
e) ñkár yò	ñkár yò	ñkár yò	your friend

From the data in (32), we realize that this phenomenon is not only attested in a single dialect but it is a general Limbum phenomenon. Our concern here is how to treat these forms. Are we going to postulate separate rules to generate these phrases thereby making our grammar complex beside making possessives exceptions to our head first principle? One possibility is to say that at deep structure, these possessives are post nominal and are preposed at surface structure. Looking at the problem with such an option, it is clear that there is nothing that motivates such a movement. While this remains a problem, we suggest here that in Limbum, possession is usually, made emphatic by changing the position of the possessive determiner to a particular part of the sentence (focus) and in such situations, the possessive element is obliged by focus imperatives and greed (the need to check possessive case) to move to the focus position. This applies to nouns of all classes except kinship nouns, where the reverse is true. That is, instead of possessive pronoun + noun, we have noun + possessive pronoun. In this way it behaves like *mungaka*, spoken in Bali Nyonga in the North West province of Cameroon. *Mungaka* is a head first language (language in which the key word which determines the properties of the phrase is canonically positioned before its complement), but when the possessive occurs in a focus phrase, it has to move. This is illustrated in (33) below:

(33)

Limum

Mungaka

a) i) bà yà "my bag"  
bag my

b) i) ɲwà? ànì le "my book"  
book the

ii) àtù yó "your head"  
head you

ii) bàm le "my bag":  
bag the

c) i) á yá bà "it is my bag"  
it my bag

d) i) à ɲwà? Ənì le "it is my book"  
for book the.

ii) à yó tú "it is your head"  
it your head

ii) à bàm le "it is the bag"  
it bag the

We realize that when the other determiners are focused, they (33b) remain insitu but when focused with the possessives (33c) they are bound to prepose. This seems to be what is happening in Limbum even if the focus element is not always present. MPOCHE (1993:54) claims that the various movements of the possessive determiner are motivated by noun classes and that word order in Limbum is not rigid. Should we borrow this conclusion we will be heading for a crash because this implies that Limbum is neither a head first nor head last language. To avoid this, we can say in conclusion that possessives in Limbum are always focused and that they originate from the post noun position. With this, we are able to maintain our claim that Limbum is a head first language as far as the NP is concerned. In effect, our aim here has been to underscore the point that the NP of Limbum possessive structure is complex because it involves movement. However, Limbum like most Bantu languages has simple NP,

(34) [Noun + det] like in ndùu wà

N det

NP = N Det.

#### 4.2.2. IP AND ITS CONSTITUENTS.

Mpoche (1993:56) and Ndamsah (1997:82) consider the *Inflectional* or *INFL* or just *I* node as hosting agreement features. The *Subject Marker* (which is also called a *resumptive pronoun*), is the closest element to the subject NP. the *Tense Phrase*, the *Aspectual Phrase*, the *Verb Phrase*, the *Prepositional Phrase* and the *Adjectival Phrase* may then come after it. To put our discussion here on a concrete footing, we briefly revisit what has been done on these phrase types, as usual, from a cross dialectal perspective. As stated in Ndamsah (1997), the subject NP of a sentence is hosted by the specifier position of IP-the *Inflectional Phrase* is a feature of the Northern dialect (from where most of her data is drawn). Let us consider data from the Central and Southern dialects too.

a)i)

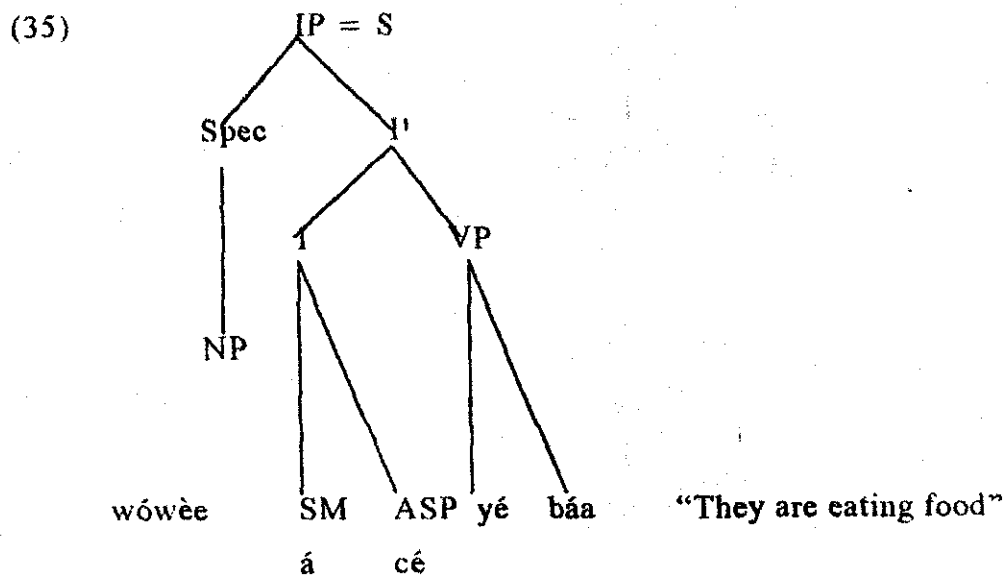
Table 4.1

Northern dialect	Southern dialect	Central dialect	GLOSS
mè é yé baa	mè é yé baa	mè é yé baa	"I am eating food"
I SM eat food	I SM eat food	I SM eat food	
wówèè à cé yé baa	wówèè à cé yé baa	wówèè à cé yé baa	"they are eating food"
They SM ASP eat food	they SM ASP eat food	they SM ASP eat food	

In the above sentences *é* and *á* intervene between the NP and the VP. In X-bar theory, their node is referred to as *INFLECTION* or *INFL* or just *I*. Ouhalla (1994:103) states that tense is a typical member of the node. However, the node also hosts subject markers. Our studies show that the inflectional category of subject marker in Limbum is obligatory in third person plural but not in the first and second persons. Consequently, the inflectional morphemes in (4.1) are agreement features. Unfortunately Limbum is limited in inflectional systems so our analysis cannot be more



exhaustive. Before we round up on this, let us look at (35) which illustrates the obligatory position of the SM or the I as a head-node



This reveals the fact that the same structure that exists in the Northern dialect holds true for the rest of the dialects. Notice however, that the I- double bar is formed by two merger operations. The verb "yé" to form VP "yé báa" the sister of I, which is the head. Notice that the NP subject is in the spec position and that the SM is co-indexed under I. Considering also the fact that NP subject is dominated by IP, is proof of the fact that it is in the spec-head agreement with the agreement category of I, call it the SM. The tree therefore encodes the agreement of relation between them in person and number. That is the head word of the NP, here referred to as the specifier is positioned before its complement (I).

With this preliminary discussion on the IP, we now turn to the other phrase types within the IP.

(35b) IP → Spec I

## 4.2.2.1

## THE VP (VERB PHRASE)

The Verb Phrase refers to a phrase, whose head word is a verb. For instance, in the structure or expression, *yé b́́á* "eat food" the VP comprises the verb *yé* "eat" and the complement *b́́á* "food". In Indo-European languages, there are two broad groups of the VP. That is, the VP that contains a lexical verb as its head, and the complex VP, which refers to a VP with an auxiliary verb, finite verb or a light verb. Within these two categories of VP are sub categories such as Transitive and Intransitive verb groups. Whilst the transitive verb takes the NP and PP complements, the intransitive verb takes PP complements, if not it can occur without any complement. The obvious question, which is begged by the above statements, "does this apply to all dialects?" Using the data collected from the various dialectal regions, let us examine the constituents that act as complements of the verb.

36 a)	<u>Northern dialect</u>	<u>Central dialect</u>	<u>Southern dialect</u>	<u>GLOSS</u>
i)	Nfor cé cáŋ Nfor prog run	Nfor cé cáŋ Nfor prog run	Nfor shíí sháŋ Nfor prog run	<i>"Nfor is running"</i>
vii)	Nfor cé yé b́́á Nfor prog eat food	Nfor cé yé b́́á Nfor prog eat food	Nfor shí yé b́́á Nfor prog eat food	<i>"Nfor is eating food"</i>
iii)	Nfor cé cáŋ ní m̀̀k̀̀ù for prog run with feet	Nfor cé cáŋ ní m̀̀k̀̀ù Nfor prog run with feet	Nfor cé cáŋ ní m̀̀k̀̀ù Nfor prog run with feet	<i>"Nfor is running on foot"</i>
iv)	Nfor cé yé b́́á mb̀̀mb̀̀ò Nfor prog eat food empty	Nfor cé yé b́́á à m̀̀ns̀̀òŋ Nfor prog eat food with teeth	Nfor cé yé b́́á à m̀̀ns̀̀òŋ Nfor prog eat food with teeth	<i>"Nfor is eating food without soup"</i>

Before we make any comment on the above sentences, notice that the SM is absent. As stated on page 235 it is optional in the first and second person.

In the strings (i) “càŋ”, “run” and (ii) “yé b́aa” “eat food” while “càŋ” is maximally projected, “yé b́aa” is a projection of the verb “yé”. Although both are verb phrases, the former occurs without a complement while the latter takes a complement.

In (iii) “càŋ” takes a prepositional phrase while in (iv) “yé” takes two complements (NP and PP complements).

Chomsky (1995) explains that the merger operation is responsible for this successive pairs of categories that merge to form the VP. We can better illustrate this using the traditional labelled bracketing in 37b.

- |      |    |                                     |                         |
|------|----|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| (37) | b) | i) [VP[V càŋ]]                      | “run”                   |
|      |    | run                                 |                         |
|      |    | ii) [VP[V yé][N b́aa]]              | “eat food”              |
|      |    | eat food                            |                         |
|      |    | iii) [VP[V càŋ][PP nì mŋkuu]        | “run”.                  |
|      |    | run with feet                       |                         |
|      |    | iv) [VP[V yé][N b́aa] [PP à mŋsòŋ]] | “eat food without soup” |
|      |    | eat food with teeth                 |                         |

Each of the bracketed VP complements are extracted from 30a above. It is clear that the verb phrase, exhibits essentially the same structure in all the dialects. That is, the VP can be made up of a verb and its complements as well as Adjuncts, that is NP, PP or CP. In cases where the VP takes an NP and a PP, the NP comes before the PP. With this in mind, let us go to the Tense, Aspect and Mood Phrases.

37.b VP → NP, PP, (CP)

*A rewrite rule with no head*

#### 4.2.2.2 THE TENSE, ASPECT AND MOOD PHRASES

As discussed in Ndamsah (1997:83), the mood morpheme will always dominate the tense and aspect morphemes. These three morphemes are followed by the verb. In a sentence in which the tense, aspectual and modal morphemes are present, mood precedes the tense and aspect markers.

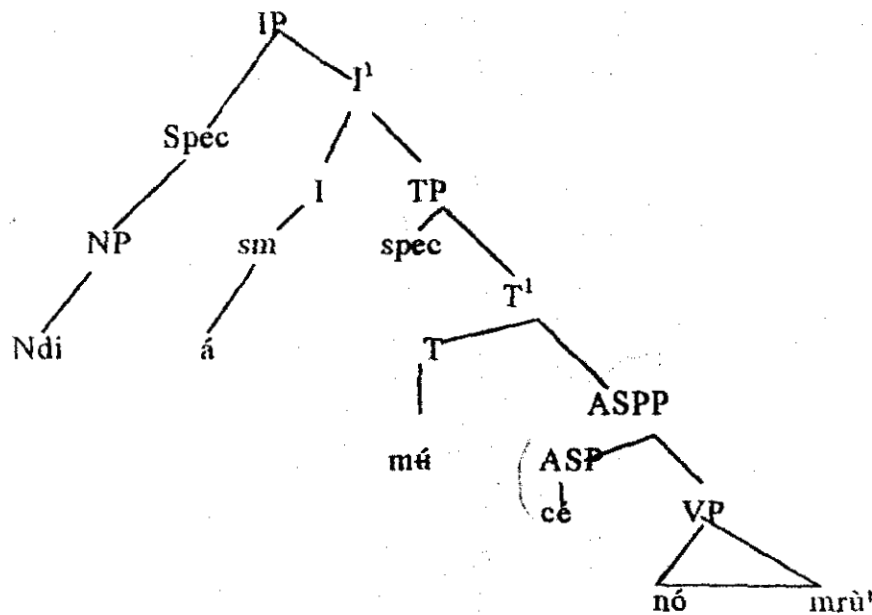
Consider the following sentences:

(38) a) Ndi à má cé nó mrù'  
 Ndi sm P2 ASP drink wine  
 "Ndi was drinking palm wine"

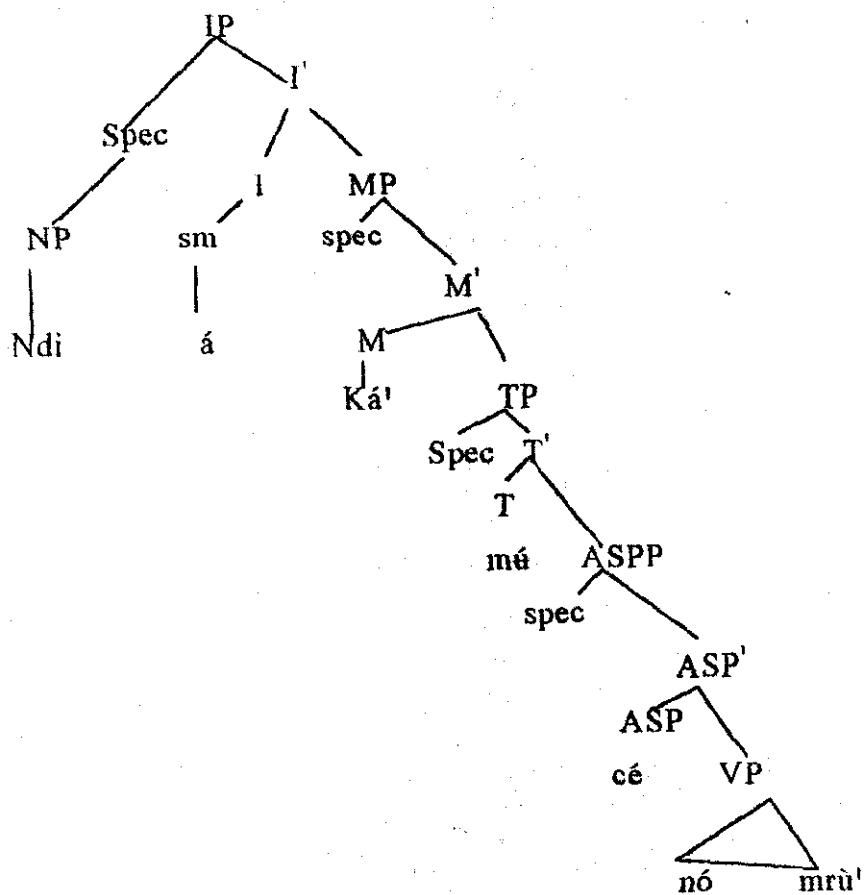
Ndi à ká' má cé nó mrù'  
 Ndi sm m P2 ASP drink wine  
 "If Ndi had been drinking palm wine".

These two sentences can be represented on a tree diagram to show the dominance relations that mood Tense and Aspect have in Limbum.

38a)



c)



In b, the T' node dominates Tense and Aspect nodes. This means that it occurs higher up the tree and is the mother of Tense and ASP nodes, who are sisters. Similarly, in the second tree diagram the M' node, daughter of MP node, dominates M and TP nodes. In that order, the TP dominates T', ASPP and ASP' nodes. Still looking at the tree diagram, we can say that, by precedence (left to right ordering) of constituents, the M- node precedes the T- node in (c).

This is true of the Northern dialect, we now turn to see what obtains in the Central and Southern dialects with attention paid to the structural presentation of these various phrases. We start by considering mood. In chapter 3, we treated the morphology in detail. Here, we go straight to the syntactic aspects. The NP presents interesting features as the examples in 39 (a) below show:

**Central dialect**

(39a) i) Ndi e kòṅ é nè sèe yé bà.  
Ndi he wants that we eat food.

“Ndi wants that we should eat food.”

**Northern dialect**

Ndi e koṅ é nè sèe yé baa.  
Ndi he wants that we eat food.

“Ndi wants that we should eat food.”

**Southern dialect**

Ndzi é kòṅ é nè sèe yí bà.  
Ndi he wants that we eat food.

“Ndi wants that we should eat food”

ii)

**Central dialect**

Sèe á bá yé baa  
We SM MOOD eat food

“we should eat food.”

**Northern dialect**

Sèe á bá yé baa  
We SM MOOD eat food

*Is this the food?*  
“we should eat food.”

**Southern dialect**

Sèe á bá yí baa  
We SM MOOD eat food

*ba - do we*  
“we should eat food.”

iii)

**Central dialect**

Sémò' Ndi bé ye baa  
MOOD Ndi TP eat food

“May be Ndi will eat food.”

**Northern dialect**

à kádé' Ndi kú yé baa  
MOOD Ndi SM eat food "May be Ndi will eat food."

**Southern dialect**

Sémò' Ndi bé kú ye baa  
MOOD Ndi TP ASP eat food "May be Ndi will eat food."

The examples in 39a (i) and (ii) show that the position of the mood morphemes in the southern and central dialects agree with what obtains in the northern dialect. But 39a above presents an interesting feature. Here the mood morpheme occupies pre-object position in the sentence. Having stated already that Limbum is a first head language and therefore is a right branching language, how can we go back on our claim? However, a quick look at the examples below shows that the mood introduces the complementizer phrase (CP) in the indicative and hortative situations.

39b) i) Ndi é kòŋ [[éné sée yé baa] <sup>777</sup> indicative mood  
Ndi SM MOOD COMP we eat food.  
"Ndi wants that we eat food"

ii) Wè bá làa [éné sù'sí bcè'  
you mood comp VP wash clothes. hortative mood  
"you ought to say wash clothes."

iii) Sèe à bá [yé baa] hortative mood  
we SM mood VP eat food  
"we should eat food."

In these sentences, the bracketed clauses are preceded by "kòŋ" (wants) and "bá" (should), which encode mood morphemes. In one, the complement phrase, is introduced by "éné", "that" whereas in (iii) the VP

is introduced by “yé”, “eat” a finite verb, which follows a non-past modal verb “bá.” Here tense is absent and the mood morpheme carries the tense function, consequently the absence of the éné (that) complementizer. But the situation in the sentence that follows is different.

- iv)            sé mò [Ndi bé yé bàa]                            hypothetical mood  
                  Mood Np Ndi TP eat food  
                  “may be Ndi will eat food”

This example taken from 39a(iii) presents a striking mismatch with the first two sentences. What we notice first of all is that the mood takes a pre-subject position. Radford (1999:108) explains that Head to Head movement is what accounts for this movement. Remember that what constitutes mood here is the adverbial *semò*, an expression of probability. This movement of mood from a medial position to a pre-subject position makes the difference between an indicative and a hypothetical mood in Limbum. Secondly, the semantically tentative nature of the hypothetical mood encourages this movement in order to raise doubt “probability” to a prominent position.

As earlier mentioned elsewhere in this work., the subject marker takes a pre tense position and co-occurs with the subject. From the examples below it is evident that it is noun class dependent, see table 3.11 above. Besides this, it can occur at sentence initial position when subject is deleted. In this case, it functions as a noun.

(39c)

<u>CENRAL DIALECT</u>	<u>NORTHERN DIALECT</u>	<u>SOUTHERN DIALECT</u>
ŋkfáa é ké nó mrù'	ŋkuu yé ké nó mlù'	ŋkfáa é ké nó mrù'
Chief SM ASP drink wine	chief SM ASP drink wine	chief SM ASP drink wine
		“Chief usually drinks wine”

bkfáa ví ké nó mrù'      ŋkúu woóyè o ké nó mlù'      bkfáa ví ké nó mrù'



Chief (pl)SM ASP drink wine chief (pl)SM ASP drink wine chief(pl)SM ASPdrinkwine  
 "Chiefs usually drink wine."

rbùù lí kẹ̀ tùu  
 Egg SM ASP spoil

rbúú lí kẹ̀ tùu  
 eggs SM ASP spoil

rbùu lí kẹ̀ tùu  
 eggs SM ASP spoil  
 "egg usually rots"

mbuu mí m tùu  
 Eggs SM TP spoil

mbùu mí m tùu  
 eggs SM TP spoil

mbùu mí m tùu  
 eggs SM TP spoil  
 "eggs got rot"

From our treatment of tense and aspect in chapter 3, we realize that they are expressed in Limbum using grammatical particles. Aspect in Limbum like in most languages is closely linked to tense, and comes between the tense phrase and the verb phrase. The traditional labelling here shows the hierarchical order of their occurrence in a sentence, which ties in with the tree diagrams presented above.

(40) NP [NP Ndi][IPà má cé [vphò mrù']  
 TP ASP

#### 4.2.2.3. PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

Traditionally a prepositional phrase refers to a structure whose head word is a preposition. Limbum like most natural languages makes use of prepositions. Mpoche (1993:62) and Ndamsah (1997:91) attempt a classification of the Limbum prepositions. The conclusions they draw are that Limbum prepositions can be classified under:

41)

- Directional** - mbe = on-direction-higher from speaker's environment  
 mbà = down-direction-lower from speaker's environment  
 kù = up - direction higher from speaker's environment  
 sér = across at- direction horizontal from speaker's environment  
 njé = across to-direction horizontal from speaker's environment

- Locational** - njeb, njer = in  
 mbénjì = behind  
 mbértú = "on top of"

Accompaniment - nè "with"

Instrumental - à "with"

We capture the classifications here under two broad groups – transitive and intransitive prepositions. Prepositions like those indicated above under directional, locational, accompaniment and instrumental fall under transitive prepositions because they permit nouns and pronouns as their complements. They describe different environments and are not interchangeable, for instance a locational preposition cannot replace a directional one. Meanwhile, another group of prepositions, which is not presented above, but actually exist is considered here as intransitive prepositions. These do not take preobject position and occupy sentence final position. They are locative prepositions (and can easily pass for locational adverbs) with spatial and temporal references:

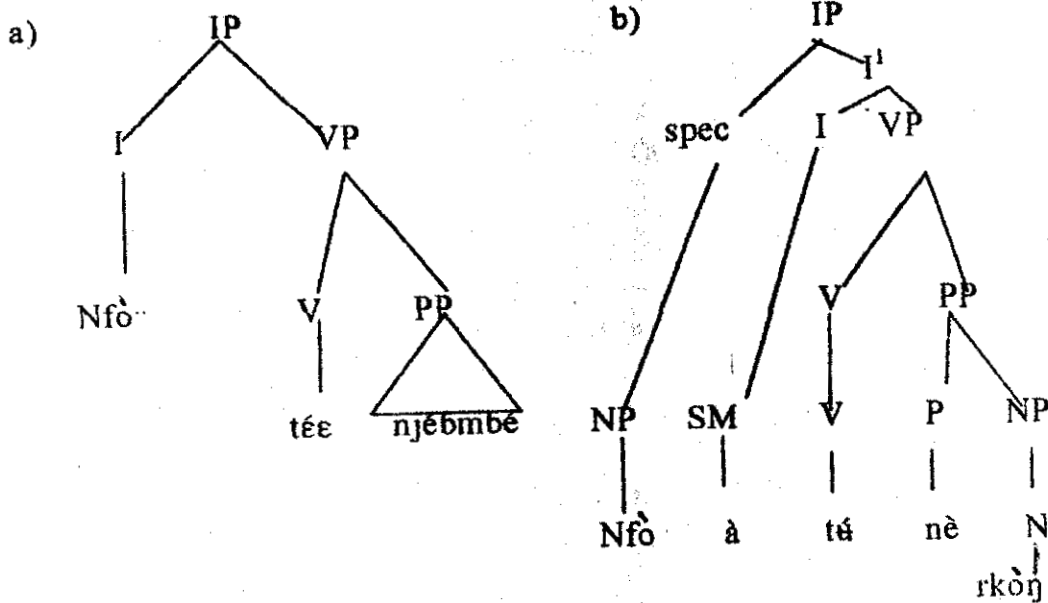
- (42)
- |        |   |                       |
|--------|---|-----------------------|
| mbéki  | = | "upright"             |
| mbéndù | = | "on top of"           |
| mbétar | = | "between"             |
| njémbé | = | "outside"             |
| njébtì | = | "under"               |
| sèryée | = | "across a level area" |

Table 4.2

Central	Northern	Northern
a)i) Nfò tée njémbé Nfor stand prep (int) "Nfor is standing outside"	Nfò tée màmbé Nfor stand prep (int)	Nfò tée njémbé Nfor stand prep (int)
ii) Nfò à ná rèreŋ mbéki Nfor SM raise bamboo pret (int) "Nfor has raised the bamboo up"	Nfò à ná rèreŋ mbéki Nfor SM raise bamboo pret (int)	Nfò à ná rèreŋ mbéki Nfor SM raise bamboo pret (int)
b)i) Nfò à tú nè rkòŋ Nfor SM shoot PP(r) spear "Nfor has shot with a spear"	Nfò à tú nè rkòŋ Nfor SM shoot PP spear	Nfò à tú nè rkòŋ Nfor SM shoot PP spear
ii) Màmí yú mbé ndáb Mother be prep(tr) house "Mother is in the house"	Màmí yuré mbé ndáb Mother be prep(tr) house	Màmí yú mbé ndáb Mother be prep(tr) house

The obvious conclusion to draw from the data like these is that their derivation cannot be the same. As the tree diagrams show, they are not the same, because prepositions function as adverbials:

(43)



“Nfor is standing outside.”

“Nfor has shoot with a spear”

We conclude that intransitive prepositions in Limbum may occur sentence final, while transitive prepositions do not. We then posit the following, PS rule.

(43b) PS: PP → P, (NP)

#### 4.2.2.4 ADVERBIAL PHRASE

In chapter three (3.3.0) we treated the Limbum adverb morphology. In the definition of adverb, we stated that it gives information about how, when, where or in what circumstances something happens. Since the adverb follows the verb in Limbum, it gives or adds meaning to the verb, let us focus on its structure. Consider these sentences:

(44a) Nfò bé và àyànsé  
Nfor F1 come ADV

“Nfor will come tomorrow”

b) Nfò à m̀dú nfèsè

“Nfor went forever”

Nforsm P go ADV

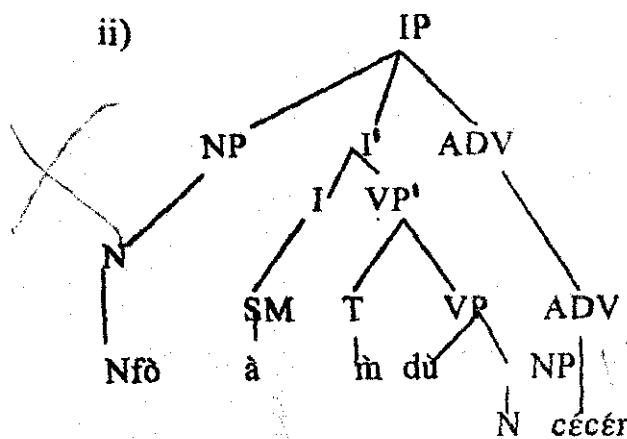
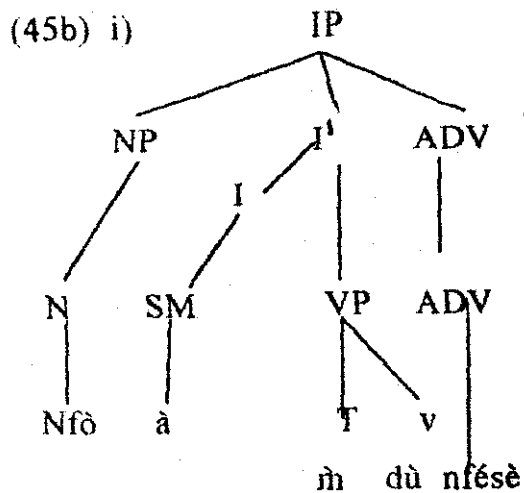
- c) Ndi à tée kútombì "Nfor has taken first position"  
Ndi sm tand ADV
- d) Ndi à nõnsf rèrèŋ séryée "Ndi has put the bamboo horizontally"  
Ndi sm put bamboo ADV
- e) Tamfu é kée cà'nì ngábyán cé'cé' "Tamfu always visit the sick"  
Tamfu sm ASP visit sick people ADV
- f) Tamfu à fà' nsú cécér "Tamfu has worked the farm quickly"  
Tamfu sm work farm ADV

There are a number of things we should observe about these sentences in order to determine the constituent structure of the Limbum ADV. In the first place, notice that the adverbs in sentences 44a-c are optional without àyàngsé "tomorrow", "nfése" "forever", "kútombì" "first position". Meanwhile, in sentences d-f, the adverbs are preceded by the objects and take sentence final position. (see 3.3.5). However, the two groups of sentences are acceptable.

Secondly, the adverb in each of the sentences (44a-c) does not constitute a criterion for choosing the verb it purports to modify. The sentence, Nfò à ìndù nfèsé, could as well read!

- (45a) Nfò à ìndù cécér "Nfor went quickly"  
Nfò à ìndù niŋkùur "Nfor went yesterday"  
Nfò à ìn dù séryèe "Nfor went across"

From the above sentences we realise that be it time, locative or manner adverb, their position is post verbal and also optional. We demonstrate this assumption –using these tree diagrams.



(i) "Nfor went forever"

(ii) Nfor went to school quickly.

In conclusion, we explicitly point out here that in a typical SVO structure, the Limbum adverb comes after the object. However, whether a sentence has an object or not, it modifies the verb it follows and seems to function as an adjunct. The phrase structure rule is thus:

(45c) IP  $\longrightarrow$  NP + I' + VP (+ Adv).

#### 4.2.2.5 ADJECTIVAL PHRASE

Let us remind ourselves of the fact that an adjective is a word that is used to describe someone or something or give information about them (Sinclair et.al: 1993) whereas in English, adjectives occur prenominally (i.e. we can say tall boy, big book) in Limbum they occur postnominally (i.e. múu nké' "boy small" or ñwà' gor "book big") Ndamsah (1997:92) holds that Limbum adjectives do not have modifiers unlike in English where an adjective can be modified (rather careless play). Before we proceed, let us state here like we did in 3.2.2 above, that some Limbum adjectives are formed from verbs. But then, let us start with our syntactic analysis of the adjectival phrase, by looking at the examples below:

- (46) múu nké' "child small"  
 ñwà' gor "book big"

47)

CENTRAL

A.1)

Nfò à tûr cè' béer  
Nfor SM has cloth red  
Nfor has a red cloth

2) Cé béer cá yi yúu fèyri  
cloth AP this SM be light  
this red cloth is light

3) Nfò à tûr tété cè'  
Nfò SM has small cloth  
Nfor has a piece of cloth

4) Nfò é yúu gwè mbàa  
Nfor SM be person Money  
Nfor is a rich person

B(1) Banana yi gkè'  
Banana SM small  
Small banana

2) banana yi gkè' boy  
banana SM small good  
small banana id good

C(1) Má ndáb m̄r̄u  
Large house old  
Large old house

2) Kú' ygàa mbàa  
Many people money  
Many rich people

NORTHERN DIALECT

Nfòr yé à nûr cè' béer  
Nfor SM has cloth red  
Nfor has a red cloth

Cé' béer cáyeyúu fèyri  
Cloth red this SM be light  
This red cloth is light

Nfò yé à tûr tété cè'  
Nfòr SM has small cloth  
Nfor has a piece of cloth

Nfò yé yúu gwè mbàa  
Nfor SM be person money  
Nfor is a rich man

Banana cé gkè'  
Banana sm small  
Small banana

Banana cé gkè' boy  
Banana SM small good  
The small banana is good

Má ndáb cé n̄r̄u  
Large house SM old  
Large old house

Kú' ygàa mbàa  
Many people money  
Many rich people.

SOUTHERN DIALECT

Nfò à tsâr shè' béer  
Nfor SM has red  
Nfor has a red cloth

Shè' béer shà zí yúu fèyri  
Cloth red this SM be light  
This red clothe is light

Nfò à tsâr tété shè'  
Nfor has a piece of cloth

Nfò é yúu gwè' mbàa  
Nfor SM be person money  
Nfor is a rich man

Banana zí' gkè' boy  
Banana SM small good  
Small banana is the best

Banana zí' gkè' bòn gòr sé  
Banana SM small good big much  
The small banana is the best

Má ndáb zí' r̄u  
Large house SM old  
Large old home

Kú' ygàa mbàa  
Many people money  
Many rich people.

The above examples reveal striking syntactic information about Limbum adjectives. The first thing is about the position of adjectives in a Limbum sentence. Attributive adjectives (those that modify the preceding nouns) for example:

- (48) Nfò à tur cè' béer.  
 Nfor sm have cloth red  
 "Nfor has a red cloth"

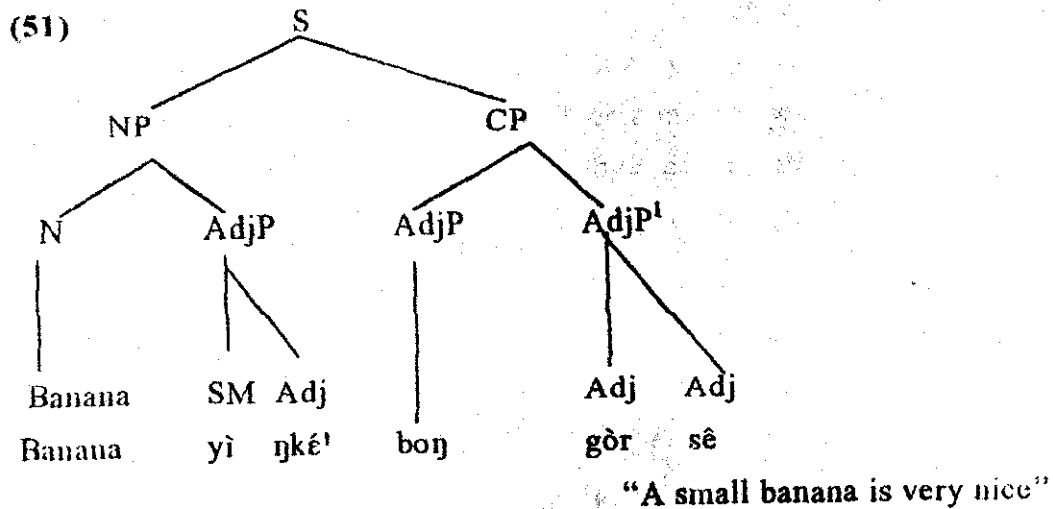
appear post-nominally in the sentence. This is the case with examples A1 and A3 above. But with predicative adjectives (those that do not modify an immediate preceding noun) the adjective precedes a verb. In this example-

- (49) Mrù' mcá mí yúu gòr  
 Wine this cc be much  
 "This wine is much"

gòr "much" follows the verb yúu "be" and does not seem to modify the noun mrù' "wine" probably because the demonstrative adjective mcá "this" already specifies the wine. This is the situation with A2 and A4 above. Talking about examples B/C above, two interesting features distinguish them. First of all, we see that an adjective can be followed by another adjective whose function is to modify the preceding one. For instance in B2, "Banana yì ñké' boy" "A small banana is nice". "Boy" meaning "nice" modifies "ñké'" meaning "small". Similarly, in a structure like

- (50) Banana ñké' boy gòr sê.  
 Banana small nice big much  
 "A small banana is the nicest"

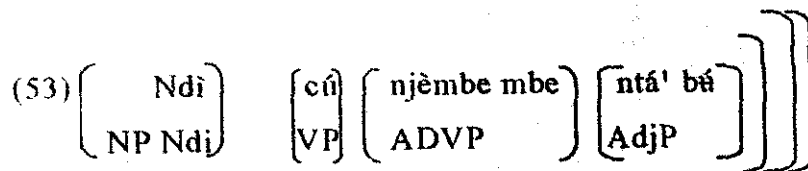
This shows that Limbum underived adjectives often take comparative and superlative forms and that they can recursively be stacked after the preceding noun. This tree diagram shows the possibility for comparative and superlative forms.



From this we posit the following phrase structure rule:

- (52) S  $\longrightarrow$  NP + CP  
 NP  $\longrightarrow$  N + AdjP  
 CP  $\longrightarrow$  AdjP + AdjP

To close up on the AdjP, it is important to point out that in a simple Limbum sentence, the AdjP follows the ADVB, for example:



"Ndi is sitting outside on a white chair"

### 4.3. SENTENCE TYPES

We began this chapter by looking at the different ways words combine in Limbum to form phrases and sentences, and the various constituent structures that can be represented on a standardised schema. In this section, we will be concerned with sentence types and their structural conditions, as per the data collected from the different regions. Then we posit a standard version of each type and possible transformation rules.



We begin by revisiting the definition of a sentence. Sinclair (1993:626) states that a sentence is a group of words, which express a statement question or order. A sentence usually has a verb and a subject. A simple sentence has one clause. A compound or complex sentence has two or more clauses. Limbum like any natural language has two types of sentences (simple and complex). In this section we consider the basic word order these sentence types take in Limbum.

#### 4.3.1 LIMBUM SIMPLE SENTENCES

Ndamsah (1997:178) categorically states that Limbum is an SVO language with a rigid word order. We accept this description and begin our study by looking at statements, questions, negations, focus and topicalisation.

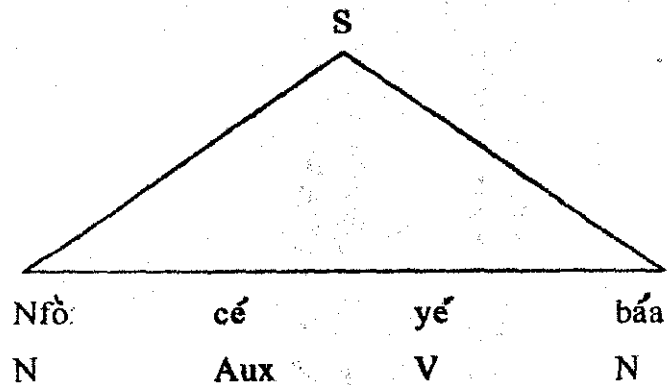
##### 4.3.1.1 LIMBUM STATEMENTS

Normally, we understand that a well-formed statement should have a subject followed by a verb, then an object.

(54) <u>Central</u>	<u>Northern</u>	<u>Southern dialect</u>
1. Nfò ce yé baa Nfor prog eat food	Nfò cé yé byé Nfor prog eat food	Nfò shí ye byé "Nfor is eating food" Nfor prog eat food
2. Nfò bé fà' Nfor F1 work	Nfò bé fà' Nfor F1 work	Nfò bé fà' "Nfor will work" Nfor F1 work
3. Nfò à kò'mbé nyàbàrá Nfor P1 climb on horse	Nfò à kò'mbé nyàbàrá Nfor P1 climb on horse	Nfò à kò'mbé nyàbàrá Nfor P1 climb on horse "Nfor has climbed on a horse"

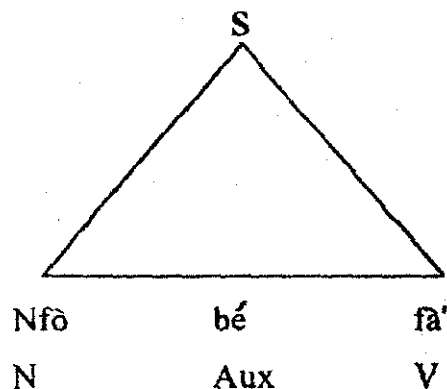
Using the above data, we can begin by specifying the categorial features of each word by using the already known categorial labels, which combine to form the larger category called sentence. See the diagram below. Since we have not yet made a specific claim concerning the internal structure of the sentence, we have used a simple triangle to represent the sentence.

(55) a)



This diagram differs from the one below in that the categorial features are not all present. In this section we use Aux (auxiliary) as a categorial feature, which encodes (Tense, Aspect and Mood)

b)

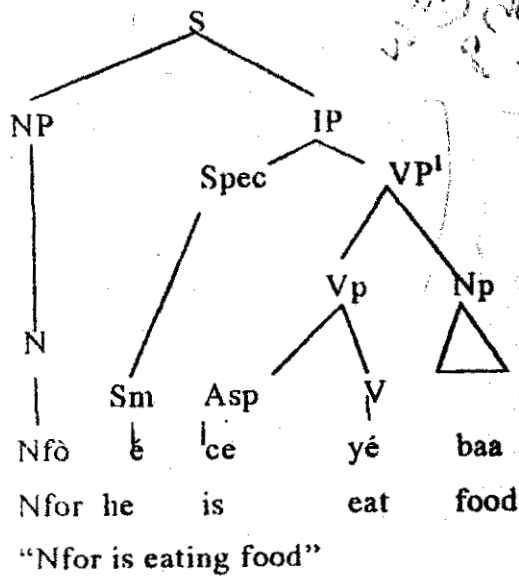


This sentence though complete could be made more complete by affixing the word "fà'" work. To its verb node to form the object NP. Consequently, the sentences in the data above show that standard Limbum sentence is:

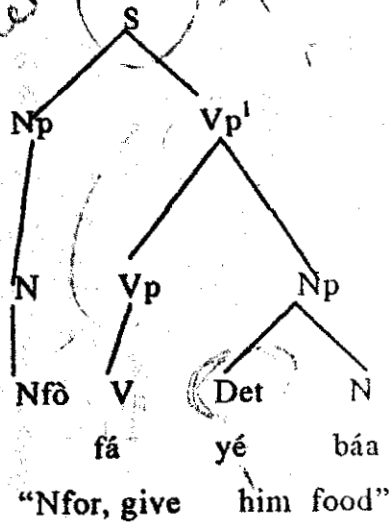
(55c) S → NP Aux VP

This rule can be expanded as follows

d)



*why Adj V  
 perfect when you want*



The claim about the Limbum simple sentence as represented by these diagrams is that Limbum is an SVO language, because the rewrite rules are clear on the issue.

(55f)

- S → NP Aux VP
- NP → N
- VP → V NP

#### 4.3.1.2. LIMBUM QUESTION FORMS

In Limbum, an interrogative marker (á) at the end of the sentence marks interrogative sentences. Here we consider yes - no questions, wh - questions and focussed questions. The data here consist of these forms. Fransén (1995) treats this in detail. But our concern here is with the standard forms.

## 4.3.1.2.1.

## YES - NO QUESTIONS

Table 4.3

Central Dialect	Northern Dialect	Southern Dialect	Gloss
á kánj á? It is pan Qm	á kánj á? It is pan` Qm	á kánj á? It is pan Qm	Is it a pan?
é bá gwì á? He P1 fall Qm	E bá gwì á' ? He P1 fall Qm	í bá gwì á? He P1 fall Qm	Did he/she fall?
Ndi à dù á? Ndi sm go Qm	Ndi yé à dù á? Ndi sm go Qm	Ndzi à dù á? Ndzi sm go Qm	Has Ndi gone?

Syntactically, YES-NO QUESTIONS do not present any variation. What we notice here is basic to a declarative statement but for the fact that the question marker is located in final position. We simply state here that a well formed yes-no question in Limbum is a statement + á meaning therefore that it is:

$$S \longrightarrow S(Q)$$

$$S \longrightarrow N \text{ Aux VP}(Q)$$

## 4.3.1.2.2. WH - QUESTIONS:

Table 4.4

Central Dialect	Northern Dialect	Southern Dialect	Gloss
1. A bá mǎ' ndá kèn? SM P1 open who door	Nwè é ba mǎ' kèn á ndá? Pron. Sm P1 open door who	A bá mǎ' ndá kèn? SM P1 open who door	Who opened the door?
2. Báa cà à yì ndá? Food this It is SM who	Báa ha à yì ndá? Food this It is SM who	Báa shá à zì ndá? Food, this It is SM who	Whose bag is this?
3. À cé yé bá kè? SM Prog eat part what	À cé yé bá kè? SM prog eat part what	A shí yí bá kée? SM Prog eat Part what	What are you eating?
4. À rì bá fè? SM fl build part where.	A bé bà' rì bá hè? SM fl build part where.	A bé bà' rí bá fée? SM fl build.	Where will you build?

Looking at the above examples, we notice that the question word (wh-question) word takes post verb position.

In 3 & 4 above it is separated from the verb by a pre-question word particle (bá) which could be confused with P1 or the conjunction "bá" (and). Here it is a focus particle. Again, we notice that in Limbum, a statement becomes a wh-question, when the subject is deleted at sentence initial position. The SM particle (morpheme) moves from its spec position to occupy the NP gap existing at sentence initial position for the question word to take post verb position. For a better understanding look at these examples:

(56) STATEMENT: Nfò à bá mà' kèn: "Nfor opened the door."  
Nfor SM P1 open door

Question: A bá mà ndá kèn?  
SM P1 open who door "who opened the door?"

We realize that the subject and the wh-question word cannot co-occur in a sentence. However, the subject marker, (also called subject pronoun or resumptive pronoun) becomes an independent (free) morpheme and functions as a subject. To this bit, we add that the Limbum question words have focus function and therefore require a special constituent order, which we identify here as post-verb order. Let us examine the following:

- (57) a) À bá mà' ndá kèn? "Who opened the door?"  
SM P1 open who door
- b) Keñ à bá mà' ndá? "Who opened the door?"  
Door SM P1 open who
- c) À ndá cé é bá mà' kèn? "It was who that opened the door?"

It be who comp cc P1 open door

In order to better understand the differences, let us assume that wh-clauses in Limbum have empty constituents because the S-structure implies a movement as can be seen below:

D-structure;

(58) NP Ndá à bá mà' kèŋ "who opened the door"  
 QM SM P1 v obj

At the D-structure, the wh-phrase appears in the subject position. We can assume that it is the subject of the verb at this level.

S- structure:

(59) NP [i À [bá má'] [bá ndá i, kèŋ ?  
 SM VP CP

Notice that the wh- phrase is generated in the subject position and subsequently moved to the post verb position of the sentence, thereby creating an empty NP constituent at sentence initial position (which is immediately filled by the subject marker) besides dislocating the verb from its normal pre-object position. Since the subject marker and the VP are naturally (syntactically) joined together, thereby permitting no stranding of the VP, the raising of the subject marker to NP position immediately triggers another movement, that is, that of the VP from its pre-object position to pre-COMP position. The VP gap is then occupied by the wh-phrase. (gap is its landing site). In a simple wh- question, the object kèŋ "door" will be deleted and the sentence À bá mà' ndá? "Who opened it"

SM P1 open who

Will be grammatically correct. This is the case for a and b above. But c is an interrogative cleft-sentence, consequently the features are different. This is a special construction meant to give prominence to the wh-phrase. In this wise therefore, the focus particle takes initial position and precedes the wh-phrase, which evacuates its initial landing site (COMP position) or pre-object position to a new-site, which we call here-focus position to enable it function as a complement of the focus particle à "it be" thereby becoming the focus element. At this point, it appears as if no movement has taken place, but actually it has undergone double-movement that is, from subject position at the D-structure then to focus position at Cleft sentence level.

As a final point, Limbum wh-question phrases occur at sentence final position and there is concord. They can be fronted like in focus questions

- à ndá cé é mà'? "It is who that has opened?"  
 A ké cé é mà'? "It is what he has opened?"

We will revisit this when we treat focus in Limbum.

Let us round up this discussion on the wh-questions by using the Limbum Q-words to ask information questions based on the following statement:

(60) Statement: Nfò à bá mà' kèn. "Nfor opened the door"  
 Nfò SM P1 open door

Questions:

- |    |   |                              |
|----|---|------------------------------|
| 1. | à bá mà' ndá?<br>SM P1 open who                 | "Who opened it?"             |
| 2. | é bá mà' bá ké?<br>He P1 open what              | "What did he open?"          |
| 3. | é bá mà' kèn yì ndá?<br>He P1 open door cc who  | "Whose door did he open?"    |
| 4. | é bá mà' kèn yì fě?<br>He P1 open door cc where | "Which door did he open?"    |
| 5. | é bá mà' kèn njo-ké?<br>He P1 open door why     | "Why did he open the door?"  |
| 6. | é bá mà' kèn à njé ké?<br>He P1 open door how   | "How did he open the door?"  |
| 7. | é bá mà' kèn à sê-ké?<br>He P1 open door when   | "When did he open the door?" |

#### 4.3.1.2.3. ECHO QUESTIONS:

One aspect of question forms in Limbum is Echo question forms. Traditionally, echo questions are considered echo questions when wh-question marker remains in-situ. That is, it does not undergo any operational movement. To begin with, we have in the previous discussion identified two positions for the wh-question word in Limbum. It may take

post verb or pre-verb position. In Echo questions, these syntactic positions of the main *wh*-question word are not changed, but an echo question marker is affixed to sentence final position. Take for instance, Nfor's expressions

(61a) Nfò: mè bá yé báa "I ate food"  
I P1 eat EQM

If Tamfu does not understand or believe him, he may ask with an air of incredulity.

Tamfu: wèe bá yé ké lé? "You ate what?"  
You P1 eat what EQM

Nfò: mè bá yé báa "I ate food"  
I P1 eat food

Nfò: mè mù noŋ  
I P3 sleep

Tamfu: wèe mù gèe ké lé? "You did what?"  
You P2 do what EQM

Nfò: Mè mú noŋ  
Nfò: I P3 "I slept"

Having presented in this section, the various question forms, we can here round up the discussion on Question Forms by positing this rule:

(61b) S → Det + VP + Q + (NP)

#### 4.3.1.3 NEGATION IN LIMBUM

In our study of the language, we realise that negation, like the Yes – No Question form, treated in the previous section, is an autonomous category and does not affect the *intrinsic* properties of grammatical units in Limbum. Sytactically, "ká' "not" the negative marker is the category head of the Neg phrase (NEGP). Let us consider the following examples.

##### (62) A) NON-VERBAL NEGATION:

Central dialect	Northern dialect	Southern dialect	GLOSS
À ŋwà'	à ŋwà'	à ŋwà'	"It is a book"
SM book	SM book	SM book	
A ŋwá' kà'	á ŋwá' ká'	á ŋwá' ká'	"It is not a book"
SM book NegP	SM book NegP	SM book NegP	



## B) NON-NOUN Negation (NP)

Central dialect	Northern dialect	Southern dialect	GLOSS
Dù	Dù	Dù	"go"
Go	go	go	
Fá dù ká'	fá dú ká'	fá dú ká'	"don't go."
IMP go NegP	IMP go NegP	IMP go NegP	

## C) STATEMENT:

- i) Nfò à bá yé baa "Nfor ate food today"
- ii) Nfò à bá yé baa ká' "Nfor didn't eat food"
- Nfor SM P1 eat food NegP

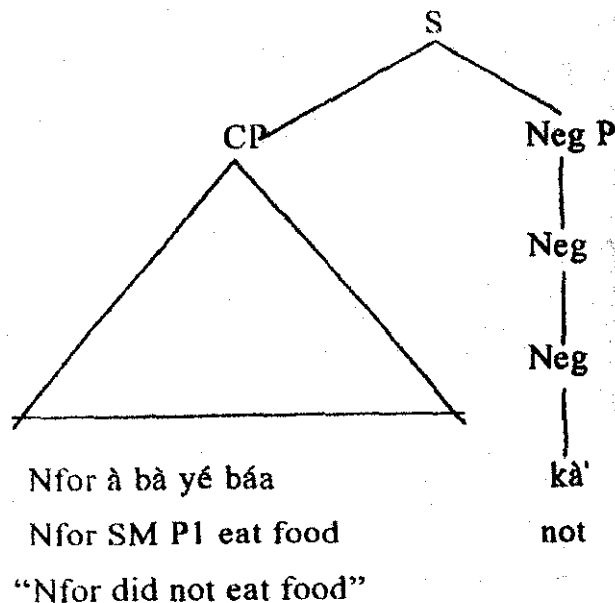
## D) QUESTIONS:

- i) Njòkè nfò à bá yé baa? "Why did Nfor eat food?"
- QM Nfor SM P1 eat food
- ii) Njòkè Nfò à bà yé baa ká' "Why did Nfor not eat food?"
- QM Nfor SM P1 eat food Neg
- iii) Á ndá cé é bé yé baa? "Who will eat food?"
- SM QM that he F1 eat food
- iv) Á ndá cé é be yé baa ká'? "Who will not eat food?"
- SM QM that he F1 eat food Neg

Looking at the above examples A-D, we confirm that negation in Limbum is achieved by simply positioning the negative morpheme "ká'" "not", at the end of the sentence. These examples also demonstrate the fact that in Limbum, a word, phrase or clause can be negated. Finally that it does not depend on noun class agreement or tense.

The above conclusion of NEGP can be summarised in this derivation.

(63)



#### 4.3.1.4 FOCUS IN LIMBUM

When we treated wh-question words, we made mention of focus constructions. Here we treat focus in Limbum in detail. Watters (1984:234) defines focus as “a pragmatic function”, where pragmatic function here refers to a role assigned to a constituent in relation to the information assumed to be shared or not shared by the speaker and addressee. This information is thus brought into focus or “communicative prominence.. Fransen (1995:297) treats focus construction in Southern Limbum and Ndamsah (1997:112) considers focus as a +<sup>^</sup> movement construction. Using data from the three dialectal regions, we show here how focus is achieved in Limbum. To begin, it is important to state that Limbum uses the following strategies to achieve focus:

- A) **Special constituent order:-** that is by placing the subject, for example at IAV position (immediate after the verb position) which is a departure from the fact that Limbum is basically an SVO language.

(64) CENTRAL DIALECT/Northern

- i) Nfò á cé yé b́́á. "Nfor was eating food"  
Nfor SM Prog eat food
- ii) À bá ce ye Nfò b́́á "it was Nfor who was eating food"  
It be P1 Prog that eat FOC food

SOUTHERN DIALECT:

- i) Nfò á shí yí b́́á "Nfor was eating food"  
Nfor SM Prog eat food
- ii) À bá shí yí Nfò b́́á "It was Nfor who was eating food"  
It be Prog eat FOC food
- iii) Nfò cé yé b́́á "Nfor is eating food"  
Nfor Prog eat food
- iv) Cé yé Nfò b́́á "It is Nfor who is eating food"  
Prog eat Foc food
- v) Nfò b́́fú yé b́́á "Nfor will eat food in future"  
Nfor F2 eat food
- vi) B́́fú yé Nfò b́́á "It will be Nfor who will eat food"  
F2 eat Foc food

In all the sentences numbered (ii) above, we realize that the word order is changed. This change places focus on the subject, which now comes after the verb, while, its subject position is filled by the focus marker *à bá* meaning SM + Bé "It was". Meanwhile present and future clause do not exhibit formally marked focus on the surface as the last two sentences above show.

not b́́á  
b́́á

**B). SPECIAL FOCUS MARKERS:** Ndamsah (1997:102) traces the origin of the low tone focus marker *à* as being “*à bá*” “it is” and asserts that *à* special focus marker, marks focus at clause initial position. But Franssen (1995:303) believes that the special focus marker is *bá*. Special focus marker, when used to mark object NPs presents interesting features. Before we state our proposal, let us look at the examples below taken from Ndamsah (1997:102)

**(65) NORTHERN DIALECT:**

*À bá bá mrù' cè Nfò à bá nǒ*  
 FOC P1 be wine that Nfor SM P1 drink  
 “It was wine that Nfor drank.”

**SOUTHERN DIALECT:**

*À bá bá mrù shì Nfò. ì bà nǒ.*  
 FOC P1 be wine that Nfor he P1 drink.

In these sentences, we notice that the D-structure, though left out should be

*Nfò à bá cé nǒ mrù*                    “Nfor was drinking wine”  
 Nfor he P1 Prog drink wine

The implication is that there were probably other kinds of drinks available, but he chose to drink wine. So at S-structure, the focussed constituent is given more prominence by the additional use of *bá* or by inserting *bá*-special forms morpheme before the verb. In conclusion, *à* is a dummy subject, which like in English cleft sentences, specially marks the focus of information. while *bá* is a special focus marker. This is exemplified by the following:

*à bá bá mrù shì Nfò. ì bà nǒ.*

(66) Nfò à bá yé baa "Nfor was eating food."  
Nfo SM pl eat food.

À bá baa cé Nfò à bá yé  
It be FOC food that Nfor SM Pl eat.

"It was food that Nfor ate."

**C. Special Focus Construction:** This refers to cleft sentences, which can be interrogative or declarative, for example:

(67) À bá ndà cé é bá nó mrù? (Interrogative)  
It be Foc who Prog he Pl drink wine?

"Who drank palm wine?"

À bá Nfò cé é bá nó mrù'  
It be Foc Nfò Progs he Pl drink wine.

"It was Nfor that drank Palm wine."

In this section we have demonstrated how focus is achieved in Limbum, except for the fact that we have not shown what movement takes place. In brief, sentences in A, B, C all show movement of some kind. In A, for example, the focussed subject moves to post verb position followed by the object, at sentence final position. We find verb, subject and object appearing in the clauses in that order, which as we stated above is a deviation from the SVO structure. Its place is taken at the initial position by the SM à dummy subject marking the focus of the following information. In B, we find the focussed element (object) following the focus marker bà, and in C, we realize that the question marker is preceded by the focus element. In all these situations movement is triggered by à or bá focus element. We realise that a trace is left behind at the base. Since baa "food" moves from its usual object position (immediately after the verb) to a prominent place (immediately after the focus marker), its place is left empty. This example shows

(68) **D-structure:** Nfò à bá cé yé báa “Nfor was eating food.”

Nfor SM P1 Prog eat food

**S-structure:** À bá báa cé Nfò à bá yé [ti]

It be Foc food Prog Nfor SM P1 eat

“It was food that Nfor ate”

#### 4.3.1.5. TOPICALIZATION IN LIMBUM

In the previous section we treated focus constructions in Limbum. In this section we devote our time to the treatment of TOPICALIZATION in Limbum. It actually refers to a constituent, which is made into a topic sentence by being moved to a more prominent position at the front of the sentence. Ouhalla (1994:53) states that topicalization rule moves XP and attaches it to the left most constituent of S. Here XP refers to any variable, which stands for any phrasal category.

Talking about topicalization in Limbum, Ndamsah (1997:147) states that topicalization construction has as its head an NP followed by an IP. The head NP is separated from the IP by an obligatory pause. Since it involves movement, the topicalised phrase moves from inside the IP to a pre-IP position. In the case of [+ human] there must be a resumptive pronoun at the extraction site, meanwhile [- human] it can either have a resumptive pronoun or a trace. This brief summary provides us with the distinctions between a focussed and a topicalized construction in Limbum, which are obligatory pause, resumptive pronoun or trace left at the extraction site.

We move ahead to state that topicalization in Limbum does not only involve NP phrases, but VP and PP phrases. To begin, let us consider the following examples:

(69) 1. **D - STRUCTURE:**

a) Nfó bé yé báa cá nè ìnbó

Nfor FI eat food this with hands

“Nfor will eat this food with his hands.”

b) Támfú bé fá Nfò sà'  
 Tamfu FI give Nfor matchet  
 Tamfu will give Nfor a matchet

c) Mè sán gwà' cà nè bó  
 I write book this with hand  
 "I have written this letter."

2. **S-STRUCTURE: TOPICALIZED CATEGORIES**  
**CENTRAL DIALECT**

1. [Báa cá] Nfò bé [yé yí] nè ìnbó  
 NP ↑  
 Food this, Nfor will eat it with hands.  
 "This food, Nfor will eat it with his hands".

2. [yé bàa cá nè ìnbó] Nfò bé gèe  
 PP ↑  
 Eat food this with hands, Nfor will do.  
 "Eat this food with hands, Nfor will do it."

3. [Nè ìnbó] Nfò bé yé' báa cá t  
 PP ↑  
 With hands Nfor will eat food this.  
 "With his hands, Nfor will eat this food."

**NORTHERN DIALECT:**

4. Nfò [Támfú bé [fá yé] sà'  
 NP ↑  
 Nfor, Tamfu will give him matchet  
 "Nfor, Tamfu will give the matchet to"

5.  $\boxed{\text{Fá Nfò sà'} \text{ Támfú be gèe}}$   
 VP ↑  
 Give Nfor matchet Tamfu will do.  
 "Give Nfor a matchet, Tamfu will do"

6.  $\boxed{\text{Sà' Támfú}} \text{ bé fá Nfò t}$   
 NP ↑  
 Matchet, Tamfu will give nfor  
 "Matchet, Tamfu will give Nfor."

**SOUTHERN DIALECT:**

7.  $\boxed{\text{ŋwà' shá } ] \text{ mè [ sán zì ] nì 'bó}}$   
 NP ↑  
 Book this I write it with hand  
 "This book, I have written it by hand"

8.  $\boxed{\text{Sán ŋwà' ] shá nì bó mè gèe}}$   
 VP ↑  
 Write book this with hand I do  
 "Write this book manually, I have."

9.  $\boxed{\text{Nìbó } ] \text{ mè sán ŋwà' shá t}}$   
 PP ↑  
 With hand I write book this.  
 "With my hand I wrote the book."

The above data present fascinating features about topicalization in Limbum. The first thing we notice is that at D-structure, sentences a, b, and c, all begin with subjects. But at S-structure, the derivations are varied depending upon what the speaker wants to topicalize in the utterance. Secondly, all the topicalised sentences above are grammatical, but they



depart from the basic Limbum word order. In sentences 1, 6 and 7 we realise that the direct object NP is topicalised. Consequently, it moves to sentence initial position.

Their extraction sites can either be filled with resumptive pronouns like in 1 or left empty like in 6 and 9. But this is not the case with the indirect object NP, "Nfor" in 4. Once the IO (Indirect object), moves to subject position, the extraction site must be obligatorily filled with a resumptive pronoun. Like Tamanji (1991:132) argues, it is +<sup>h</sup> human and therefore must take a resumptive pronoun. We understand that the object NPs remain objects of the sentences even though they occupy subject positions.

In 2, 5 and 8 we find that the verb phrases

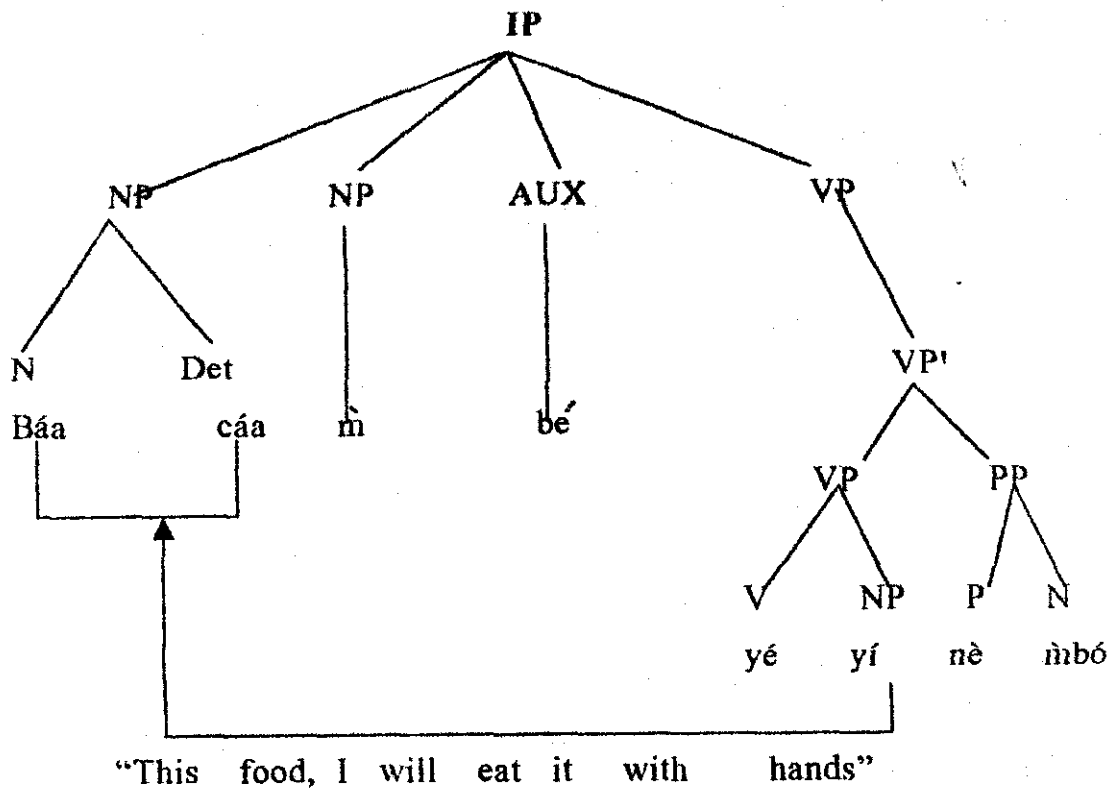
- |      |                   |                            |
|------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| (70) | - yè baá cá nèmbo | "Eat this food with hands" |
|      | - Fà Nfò sà'      | "Give Nfor a matchet"      |
|      | - sàj ɲwà' nèbó   | "Write this book by hand"  |

also take pre-IP position, but the VP constituents move with their objects. What is more revealing is that their extraction sites are filled not with resumptive pronouns, but with auxiliary verb *gèe* "do", which comes at sentence final position. "gèe" plays the rule of do-support to the tense. Finally, 3 and 9, show PP topicalization.

- |      |       |              |
|------|-------|--------------|
| (71) | Nèmbò | "with hands" |
|      | Nèbó  | "With hand"  |

Their extraction sites are not filled. Topicalization as it shows therefore, moves constituents and attaches them to their left most constituents of sentences. Remember that, the left most constituent is the subject, which in the above examples, takes medial position, because the topicalised construction has moved to the sentence initial position. Having said this about Limbum topicalization, we recap the discussion as follows:

(72)



The *ti* in the direct object position of the VP marks the gap from which the object NP *báa* “food” has been displaced. Similarly this is what will happen with “VP” or “PP” when displaced or moved to pre-sentence position.

#### 4.3.2. LIMBUM COMPLEX SENTENCES

In the previous section, we have been concerned with sentences that have one clause. In this section, we now look at complex sentences. In English, a complex sentence contains a subordinate clause and at least one main clause. In Limbum, similar sentences are instantiated by the use of coordinating markers such as:

- (73)
- |               |                                   |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| <i>cé</i>     | – who (+ human) modifying NP      |
| <i>cé</i>     | – which (- human) modifying NP    |
| <i>enè</i>    | – that (+ / - human) modifying NP |
| <i>fādi'</i>  | – so that (linker) purpose        |
| <i>njobé'</i> | –because (linker )-reason         |

ká'	-or (coordination)
té	-so that, until, (conjunction)
a	- and ( coordination)
kér bá	- and (coordination )

Examples of complex sentences from the different dialects will be examined here under relativisation, coordination, passivisation and reported speech. As usual, our interest is to establish a standard structure by observing critically, the processes that underpin such constructions.

#### 4.3.2.1 RELATIVISATION

Traditionally, relativisation refers to the process whereby sentences, are modified or restricted to a particular referent, by a subordinate clause: It comes after the noun which it modifies or gives more information about it. OUHALLA (1994:73) , states that,

“Its function is to modify the noun, much as an adjective does, by restricting its reference to a specific entity among an existing class of similar entities.” In Limbum, it is instantiated by the relative clause marker cé “who” or “which.”

The important thing to note here is that the head noun does not undergo movement, but the cé phrase related to it does. Other major characteristics of Limbum relative clause include:

- The appearance of the relativised noun at clause initial position followed by a cé phrase (relative clause marker) that introduces the subordinate clause
- Inside the subordinate clause, is a gap which is coindexed with the cé phrase (relative pronoun) as often called, whose antecedent is the NP it modifies.

- NDAMSAH (1997:143) "The elements within the IP that can undergo relativisation are subject, the object (*direct*), the indirect object or object of a preposition and the verb".
- An optional *nà* "that", may close the clause.

FRANSEN (1995:257) provides us with a syntactic structure of Limbum subject relative clause. We recap it here to facilitate understanding:

Antecedent noun- [Shì relative pronoun (+ shì)] concord – verb - (object) -(*nà*).

Let us consider the sentences in A, B, and C below:

- (74) A) Two sentences: *ngwé à mú lúu mè.* "A dog bit me."  
*ngwé áná à kwí* "That dog had died."

Relativisation – subject relative clauses:

- (75) **Central dialect:** *ngwé [cé' é mú luu mè ná] à kwí.*  
 Dog REL pron SM P2 bite me that SM die

**Southern dialect:** *ngwí [shi í mù luu me ná] í kwí*  
 Dog RELPron SM P2 bite me that SM die

**Northern dialect:** *ngwè [ cè è mbù lùu mè ná] à kwí*  
 Dog REL pronoun P2 bite me that SM die  
 "The dog that bit me has died"

B) Two Sentences:

- Mè yúu mrù'* "I have bought palm wine!"  
 -*mrù áná mí lèe* "that wine is sweet."

Relativisation – object Relative clauses.

(76) **Central Dialect:** mrù' [mì (cé) mè yúu nà] mì lèe.  
 Palm wine REL.Pron.(which) I buy- PERF that SM sweet.

**Southern Dialect:** Mrù' [mì (shí) mè yúu nà] mì líi  
 Palm wine REL.Pron. (which) I buy PERF that SM sweet

**Northern Dialect:** Mrù' [mì (ce) mè yúu nà] mì lèe  
 Palm wine REL Pron (which) I buy PERF that SM sweet.  
 "The palm wine that I bought is sweet."

C) Two Sentences:

Question -wè gwàr cé nì kè? "What have you cut the tree with?"

Answer -mè gwàr cé nì njàa. "I have cut the tree with an axe".

Question -njàa yúu? "Where is the axe?"

Answer -njàa à kébtí "The axe is broken"

Relativisation – Indirect Relative Object

(77) njàa [ce Mè gwàr cé àgho nà] à kébtí  
 axe REL Pron I P1 cut tree with that SM P1 break  
 "The axe with which I have cut the tree is broken"

In sentences (A), the relative clause is introduced by cé (shí) and closed by nà (that). Fransen (1995:258) notes that where the relative pronoun has subject function, there is concord with the relativised noun. The same thing obtains in the (B) sentences, but for the fact that when the relativised noun is the object of its clause, the markers cé / shí relative pronouns are optional. But in C, the instrumental phrase is introduced by a preposition nè (with). This summary makes us say that relativisation in Limbum involves movement. Looking at the dialogue in C above, in the first response, the Indirect object njàa "axe" comes at the end of the clause. In order to know which axe is broken, relativisation is bound to take place. Just like in focus, the Indirect object moves to the left most position of the IP. However, the

difference here is that, it is immediately followed by cé “which” relative pronoun, which introduced the subordinate clause, which we find in the brackets above. This movement of the relativised noun with its relative pronoun leaves behind a gap, which cannot be filled by the preposition àghó “with” alone. The nà “that” relative pronoun is pied-piped to it to constitute a PP capable of filling the gap. Let us examine another sentence.

(78) ɲwɛ [ce wè fá ndon nè yé nà] á yèr cícà.

Man REL you give cup to him that sm our teacher.

“The man to whom you have given a cup is our teacher.”

We realise that the indirect object relative clauses can be introduced by prepositions and that a resumptive pronoun is required to fill the gap created by the movement of the relativised NP. What has happened here is that the NP position now at S-structure occupied by a gap was occupied by an IO at D-structure. The supposed gap ought to be completed with a relative pronoun, but it has been moved to pre-clause position via relativisation. Consequently the PP comes to fill the gap.

#### 4.3.2.2 COORDINATION

When discussing NPs we came to the conclusion that in an NP, only one noun can be head of the NP phrase. But this is not always the case. Look at these examples:

(79) Nfò ba Tamfu à bé vâ  
 Nfo and Tamfu they F1 come  
 “Nfor and Tamfu will come.”

Here both Nfor and Tamfu are the noun heads of the NP Nfò bà Tamfu. In Limbum, coordinate NPs are coordinated by ba or á (and). Coordination thus refers to the process by which two or more expressions are joined together by a coordinating conjunction. Limbum has many coordinating conjunctions:

- (80)      bá, á          “and”  
             Kè            “or”  
             Kér            “also”  
             Ka'bawa'      “it so”

We have already illustrated the point that NPs can be coordinated using *bá*. In the same way, VPs can be conjoined using *à* (and) referring to successive actions. For example

- (81)    é du` à kúfí            “He has gone and come back”  
           He go and come back

Nfò à yé baa à nó mdíb    “Nfor has eaten cornfufu and drunk water”  
 Nfor sm eat food and drink water

Prepositional phrases can also be coordinated. For example:

- Njé ntà ba mbà kób    “The market and in the forest”  
 At market and in forest

Similarly, adjectival phrases too are coordinated using *à*. In the following examples, the coordinate adjectives describe simultaneity of taste

- (82) Mrù' mcá mí lée à cé'  
       Wine this sm sweet and bitter.  
       “This palm wine is sweet and bitter”.

The various examples given above illustrate the possibilities of And-coordination. *Kè*-coordination is mostly used to coordinate clauses that have something in common (either the subject or object). We refer to such conjoins as shared strings. For example:

- (83)      Àdé' Ndi yé baa    “Ndi can eat food”  
             Adé' Ndi nò mrù'    “Ndi can drink wine”  
             Kè Ndi bé yé baa kè é bé nò mrù' e

Or Ndi will eat food or he will drink wine

“Ndi will either eat food or drink wine.”

1. Kè wèè fá' è kè wèè fà' ka' e á yo nsá'

“Whether you have worked or you have not worked is your problem”

2. kè è dù é mè riŋ kà' “ he may have gone I don't know”

or he go I know not

In sentence one à yò nsà (it is your problem) is the shared string, which has been coordinated by kè (or). This shows that Limbum like other natural languages allows coordination for constituents belonging to the same sentence.

NFORGWEI (1991:89) states that besides using conjunctions, clauses can be joined or coordinated using cé “that” “who” té “before” and juxtapositioning of clauses so that one expresses a condition for the other. The examples below illustrate.

(84) Njèŋwè [ cé é bàr múu nà ] yú ŋgwà wà  
Woman who she carry child that be wife my  
That women who is carrying a child is my wife

[ É bé vù ] té [ m ka' dù ]

He FI come before I go

He will come before I go

[ Njuh à ka' vù ] [ ìn dù ]

Njuh sm if come I go

If njuh comes I will go.

To conclude, notice that the most common conjunctions are:

(85) bá,á = and, with

énê = that



ce	=	that clause
njobe'	=	because
te	=	before, so that
Ka'	=	if

### 4.3.2.3 PASSIVIZATION

Watters (2000:209) explains that passivization is a movement operation, whereby at the syntactic level, the object of a passive sentence becomes the subject, while the subject of the active sentence is relegated to a secondary position or just simply deleted completely. It implies that the order in simple active sentences, that is, subject – verb – object or agent – verb – patient becomes subject = patient – verb – oblique by-NP = agent. Consequently, passivization as a language feature involves movement of some kind. To better understand the nature of the movement that obtains in true or basic passive sentences, let us recap here focus and topicalization movements. A sentence like:

	S		V		O	
(86)	Nfò	à	bá	cé	yé	baa
	Nfor sm		P1	Prog	eat	food
	“Nfor was eating food”					

can be put into focus as follows:

(87)	À	bá	báa	cé	Nfò	à	bá	ye	[ti]
	It be	Foc	food	Prog	Nfor sm	P1	eat		
	“It was food that Nfor was eating”								

We realize that báa “food”, has moved from its position of immediately after the verb to a more prominent place, just before the focus marker because the speaker wants to focus on what Nfor was eating. That is, Nfor was eating food and not kolanuts to be precise. The movement leaves

behind a gap, which is not filled as can be seen above. The gap left behind is represented by [ti].

In 4.3.1.5 above, we also realized that topicalization involves movement. In this case the object NP is moved and attached to the left most constituent. When the object NP moves to sentence initial position, the subject shifts to medial position. Meanwhile the gap left at the extracted site of the object NP is filled with a resumptive pronoun or do-support. Take for example, this statement:

- (88) M bé yé baa cá nè mbó  
I F1 eat food this with hands  
"I will eat this food with my hands"

The object can be topicalized or our attention drawn to it by moving it from its medial position (immediately after the verb) to the beginning of the sentence, thereby making it topical. For example:

- (89) Baa caa m bé yé yí nè mbó  
Food this, I F1 eat it with hands  
▲  
"This food, I will eat it with hands"

Coming back to passivization, Keenan (1985a) argues that basic passives tend to be well integrated in the rest of the grammar of the English language and most Indo-European languages, whereas, topicalization and dislocations tend to be limited to main clauses. He further states that we cannot recognize a passive in terms of its NPs being marked or positioned in the sentence in ways different from those used in basic actives. It means that the formation of basic passives takes place at the level of the Verb-Phrase syntax. That is, in sentences like:

1. The cat has eaten the mouse.
2. The mouse has been eaten by the cat,

the relevant semantic relationship lies essentially in the fact that both sentences share the same 'agent' (the cat) who carries out the action of eating, and the same 'patient' (the mouse) who is affected by the action of eating. What we are saying is that even though the ordering differs, the cat is the eater and the mouse the eaten in both sentences.

However, the major syntactic difference lies in the Verb-Phrase syntax. In the first sentence, (traditionally described as active) the verbal constituent "has eaten" consists of the auxiliary verb "has" followed by the past participle of the main verb "eaten", whereas in the second sentence (passive) the verb constituent is changed by the insertion of "been" between the auxiliary and the main past participle of the verb to form the passive structure of the VP. We realize that in English and some world languages, the morphology of the passive verbs show the difference between active and passive structures. But most African languages do not have passive verb morphology forms. However, languages that have no passive verb forms use *indefinite constructions*. For example, Babungo Grassfields Bantu language.

(90) vi            jia            ηwə́  
       3PL:INDF    hold:PFV    3PS  
       "They/someone caught him" = "He was caught"

Secondly, in Bambili, another Grassfields language, the passive verb does not undergo modification but the declarative marker changes from *lə* to *ləgə* and becomes an obligatory element in the passive sentence.

(91) at<sup>+</sup>    ləgə    mi ( + )η    gua    ηwenčə  
       "tree P4(ling ago)            cut    3PL:INDF  
       "A tree was felled by someone"

We realize that true passivization is absent in these languages. This is the situation with Limbum. To begin with, let us look at the translations of the following passive structures taken from LE' F1 "New Testament".

(92)

Luke 2: 21           A    fa    rlii   muu   ene   Jisòs  
                          3PL:INDF give name child that Jesus  
                          “He was named Jesus”

Luke 3: 21           A    baptir   Jisòs   foŋ  
                          3PL:INDF baptize Jesus    too  
                          “Jesus was baptized too”

Luke 7: 12           A    byè'   gàu   ŋwè    a    ce   fuu   àgho  
                          3PL:INDF carry corpse person 3PL:INDFs Prog go out with  
                          “A dead man was being carried out”

Luke 9: 44           A    be   lòr   muu   ŋwè   fa   mbà   m̀m̀bo   bèe'  
                          3PL:INDF F1 take child person give into hand pl people  
                          “The son of man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men”

Luke 22: 66          A    lor   Jisòs    a    vu    àgho   mbo  
                          3PL:INDF take Jesus 3PL:INDF come with there.  
                          “Jesus was led before them”

From the above examples we realize that the sentences begin with indefinite pronouns. That is, third person indefinite plural pronoun à “they”. The verbs do not undergo any modifications just like the subject NPs do not surface anywhere in the constructions. But what about the following?

(93)

1.   Active:       Ndi   à   m   kubshi   nta'   ca  
                          “Ndi made this chair”

      Passive:     À       m    kubshi   Ndi   nta'   ca.  
                          3PL:INDF P3    make    Ndi   chair   this  
                          “**This chair was made by Ndi.**”

2. Active: Beri à mu laa mbu'  
 "Beri cooked potatoes."
- Passive: A mu laa Beri mbu'  
 3PL:INDF P3 cook Beri potatoes  
 "Potatoes were cooked by Beri."
3. Active: Wowèe à gèe yi  
 "they have done it"
- Passive: À gèe yi  
 3PL:INDF do it  
 "It has been done."
4. Active: E ce mù' kèn  
 "He is opening the door."
- Passive: À ce mù' kèn  
 3PL:INDF Prog open door.  
 "The door is being opened (by him)"
5. Active: E m fa mè ñwà'  
 "He gave me a book".
- Passive: À m fá mè ñwà'  
 3PL:INDF P3 give me book  
 "I was given a book (by him)."
- Passive: À m fá ñwà' nì mè.  
 3PL:INDF P3 give book to me.  
 "A book was given to me."

6. Active: ɔwè-ryɛ'nì be lib yé  
"The teacher will beat him."

Passive: À be lib yé  
3PL:INDF F1 beat him  
"He will be beaten."

Looking at the sentences numbered 1-6, we realize that the agents (subject NPs) of the constructions named "passive" have been moved to medial positions, specifically immediately after the verb (1AV) like in numbers 1-2 or are deleted completely like in no. 3. Number 5 provides us with two forms. In the first form, the indirect object takes the place of the direct object, which shifts to a more oblique position (sentence final position). In such constructions, the animate patient comes before the inanimate patient. This is also the case with sentence two. In the second form of no 5, the prepositional phrase *nì mè* "to me" takes its traditional syntactic position, that is, at the end of the sentence, despite the fact that the NP is animate. These switching of places at the syntactic level by the subjects and object without any modifications at the level of the verb-phrase syntax permits us to make the following concluding remarks:

- Limbum uses indefinite and agentless constructions to represent passive structures.
- By this means, basic or true passivization which usually takes place at the level of verb-phrase syntax is impossible.
- However, the constructions are well integrated into the grammar unlike focus and topicalization.
- Consequently passivization per se is not a feature of Limbum
- These constructions, will be referred to as INDEFINITE CONSTRUCTIONS, henceforth.

#### 4.3.2.4. INDIRECT SPEECH

In most natural languages, two grammatical forms encode speech events. These are direct and indirect speech. In direct speech, the speaker is quoted more or less exactly, but in indirect speech, the actual words of the speaker may not be used, but the meaning is maintained. Most often, linguistics fail to see this as some aspect of syntax. Limbum makes use of the two forms, consequently, we attempt its treatment here under complex sentences. Firstly, because of the morphological and syntactic changes that take place when one moves from direct to indirect speech. Secondly, because of its vital place in story telling in Limbum as the reporting verb often focuses on the sequential verb form which carries the pivotal story line. Finally for the fact that it plays a very vital role in conversations, reading and reporting messages and instructions.

To begin with, Limbum reporting words include the following:

(94)

lâa	=	say
sùŋ	=	tell
bibshì	=	ask, question
bèsè	=	reply
byémi	=	accept, agree, believe
nàshì	=	correct.

In order to better understand the syntax of indirect speech, let us consider the following sentences under two groups- direct and indirect.

(95)	<u>DIRECT:</u>	<u>REPORTING CLAUSE</u>
1.	"Mè ké yé nyá' ká" "I HAB eat garden eggs not" "I don't eat garden eggs."	Nfor am làa Nfor P2 say Nfor said.
2.	"Mè ce kè' Ntala," "I PROG wait Ntala" "I am waiting for Ntala."	Ndi à làa Ndi say Ndi said.

- |    |  |  |
|----|--|--|
| 3. | <p>“Mè yé ndáb”<br/>         “I see house”,<br/>         “I have seen a house”,</p>  | <p>Tamfu à súj Ndi<br/>         Tamfu he tell Ndi<br/>         Tamfu told Ndi.</p> |
| 4. | <p>“Mè mụ lór kùkù sà' à mà”<br/>         “I P2 take half matchet and throw”<br/>         “I took the piece of matchet and threw.”</p> | <p>Ndi à làa<br/>         Ndi SM say<br/>         Ndi said</p>                     |
| 5. | <p>“Mè bé fù dù kù Bamenda.”<br/>         “I F2 go up Bamenda.”<br/>         “I will go to Bamenda”</p>                                | <p>Tata à súj wowèe<br/>         Tata SM tell them<br/>         Tata told them</p> |

### INDIRECT

1. Nfò àm làa éne é ké yé nyá' ká  
 Nfor P2 say that he HAB eat garden eggs not  
 “Nfor said that he does n't eat garden eggs”
  
2. Ndi à làa éne è bá cé kè' Ntala  
 Ndi P1 say that he P1 PROG wait Ntala  
 “Ndi said that he was waiting for Ntala”
  
3. Tamfu à súj Ndi éne é yé ndáb  
 Tamfu P1 tell Ndi that he see house  
 “Tamfu told Ndi that he had seen a house.”
  
4. Ndi à làa éne é mú lór kùkù sá á má'  
 Ndi P1 say that he P2 take matchet and throw.  
 “Ndi said that he had taken a piece of matchet and thrown.”
  
5. Tata à súj wówèe éné;é bé fá dù kù Bamenda  
 Tata P1 tell them that he will go up Bamenda  
 Tata told them that he would go to Bamenda.



The above examples reveal the following: that in indirect speech, the reporting clause, Ndi à làa, "Ndi said" Tamfu à sùŋ "Tamfu told"... contains the reporting verb làa "said" sùŋ "told."

That the reported clause forms the second part of the reported or indirect construction.

In the sentence, Tamfu à sùŋ Ndi éne é yé ndab. Ene é yé ndab "That he has seen a house," is the reported construction or clause. It is this part of the indirect speech that contains the actual meaning of what was spoken. It is also important to note that the reported clause begins with éne "that". Nfor àm làa éne é ké yé nyá' ká'. "Nfor said that he doesn't eat garden eggs."

And finally, first person pronouns change to second or third person pronouns, depending upon, the person reporting. Specifically, mè "I" is replaced by é "he/she".

This third person reported pronoun, differs from the logophoric or "self-reporting" pronouns used in reported speech in Aghem and other Bantu languages. Even though in Limbum it refers to an ambiguous third person, in Aghem for example, it refers to the subject reported about, that is, whereas in Aghem (Hyman 1979:50) the following sentences are distinguished by the use of the logophoric pronoun é as in b below:

(96) a) wizín mós dzè ñ + 'á ò mɔ bvà nò

"The woman said that she fell"

(b) wiz + n mós dzè ñ + ' á é mɔ bvà nò

"The woman said that she (herself) fell"

In Limbum there is no distinction, as these examples show:

(97)

(c) njénwè à làa éne é mú gwé

woman sm say that he/she P2 fall

"The women said that he/she (someone else) fell"

(d) njénwè à làa éne é mú gwé

woman sm say that he/she P2 fall

“the woman said that she (herself) fell”

However, when hearer is mentioned or the person to whom the report is made is mentioned the *é* third person singular changes to *wè* (you) sg or *wèe* (you) pl. for example:

- (98)            *njénwè à laà éné wè mà gwé*  
                  woman sm say that you P2 fall  
                  “the woman said that you (hearer) fell”

Again from the above examples, we realize that the tense does not seem to undergo any change. What if sentence 5 above were reported a week or two after Tata had gone to Bamenda? Will it be the same? Certainly not. it would be:

- (99) *Tata à m sún wówèe ené tà' raa te e dù kù Bamenda.*  
      Tata sm P3 tell them that night clean then he go to Bamenda.  
      “Tata told them that he would go to Bamenda the following day.”

Similarly, if the same sentences were reported by someone in Bamenda where Tata intends to go, it would be:

- (100)          *Tata à sún wówèe ené é bэфá và à fá*  
                  Tata sm P1 tell them that he will come to here.

These reported forms show that locative adverbs and time undergo changes to reflect the distance from the original utterance. The distance here in terms of time in the former is reflected by *tà raa* and the tense marker *in*, while in the latter, the distance in terms of place is reflected by the change in the verb (*dù* becomes *và*) and locative adverb *fá* “here”. The implication is that Limbum indirect speech allows changes in reference to time and place. Here are some of the words that change:

- (101)          *à fá*            →          *à fó*  
                  “here”        →          “there”  
  
                  *sè'ní*          →          *à nfè' áná*  
                  “now”         →          “then”  
  
                  *ntini*         →          *nyù áná*  
                  “today”       →          “that day”

à yànsè	→	tà' raa
tomorrow	→	the following day
và	→	dù
"come"	→	"go"
kóo	→	fá
"take"	→	"give"

In reporting interrogative sentences, the same changes mentioned above take place. For example,

(102)

1. Tata à bíbshí nè yé 'éne "à dù fè?"  
Tata sm ask to him that "You go where?"  
Tata asked him, "where are you going?"
2. Tata à bíbshí nè Ndi éne, "wè mà gèe ké?"  
Tata sm ask to Ndi that "You P2 do what?"  
Tata asked Ndi, "what did you do?"
3. Tata à bíbshí nè yé 'éne, "Ndi bé fá dù kú Bamenda à?"  
Tata sm ask to him that "Ndi F2 go to Bamenda Qm?"  
Tata asked him/her that, "will Ndi go to Bamenda?"
4. Tata à bíbshí nè yé éne é dù fè?  
Tata sm ask to him /her that he/she go where  
Tata asked him where he was going
5. Tata à bíbshí nè Ndi éne, é m ú gèe ké ?  
Tata sm ask to Ndi that he P2 go where?"  
Tata asked him, what he did."
6. Tata à bíbshí nè yé 'éne, Ndi bé fá dù kú Bamenda a.?  
Tata sm ask to him/her that Ndi F2 go to Bamenda  
Tata asked him if Ndi would go to Bamenda.

Looking at the reported questions (No 4-6) we realize that the reporting clause is linked to the reported clause by *é* (he/she) reported pronoun. The question word still comes at the end of the sentence.

Summarily, the syntax of reported (indirect) speech is - The reporting clause which contains the reporting verb + that + the reported clause.(which could be a statement, order, suggestion or question being reported.

#### 4.4 CONCLUSION

We began this chapter by stating the principles that underpin our syntactic analyses and by stating the objectives of the chapter. One of the objectives was to show through our syntactic analyses whether Limbum was a pro-drop language or not. In order to make a valid statement on this issue, we started off with the examination of Limbum NP structure. Underived and derived NPs were closely examined, which led to the point that Noun Modified NP was different from Associative and Genitive Constructions. Whereas Associative and Genitive Constructions referred to one and the same type of NP, the N modified NP is a compound and is structurally descriptive. Meanwhile, an examination of Limbum complex NP revealed that possessive pronoun, as a modifier remained a problem. Even though it was clear that possessives in Limbum are always focused and do originate from post nominal position. This revelation went to underscore the point that Limbum is a head first language. The NP possessive structure appeared complex because it involves movement from post-noun position to pre-noun position.

Concerning IP we realised that the noun it modifies takes spec-position in the IP. This led to the analyses of the various phrase types within the IP. Conclusions about the syntax of each of them were reached. For example, PPs were grouped under transitive and intransitive preposition

for appropriate considerations. Using tree diagrams in 43 above it was clear that intransitive prepositions may occur sentence final whereas transitive prepositions would not. The Ps rule.  $PP \longrightarrow P, (NP)$  was then suggested.

Similarly ADV phrase structure was considered and it was realized that the ADV usually takes post verbal position and at the same time could be optional. In a typical SVO structure it was seen as coming after the object, modifies the verb it follows and seems to function as an adjunct. Other Limbum sentence types were considered including question forms and Negation. On the issue of question forms it was realized that wh-question word and the subject cannot co-occur in a sentence. A resumptive pronoun must be brought in to take the place of the subject whilst the wh-question word, takes a post-verbal order and has a focus function. This was demonstrated by the application of the rule:

$S \longrightarrow \text{Det} + \text{VP} + \text{Q} + (\text{NP}).$  *QV or SV*

Movement operation was examined under focus and topicalization in simple sentences and under relativization and indefinite construction in complex sentences. Each case showed that there was movement of some kind for instance in the case of relativization, it was noted that the Indirect object moves to the left most position of the IP and is immediately followed by cé "which" relative pronoun. In such movement, a gap is left behind which is filled by a preposition + nà "that" as shown in 77 above.

The chapter rounded up with Reported Speech. It was seen that Locative adverbs, tense and some verbs undergo changes to reflect distance. Secondly, that even though Limbum did not make use of logophoric pronouns like some Bantu languages do the reporting verb làa "said", sún "told" for example, in discourse could be understood when the object was dropped. Consequently in Ndi à sún "Ndi told" is understood. In this wise therefore, we could conclude that Limbum is a pro-drop language.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## PEDAGOGICAL GRAMMAR OF LIMBUM

### 5. INTRODUCTION:

This chapter handles all the grammar rules so far posited and collapses them as a means of formalising the grammar of Limbum. The main objective is to make the grammar of Limbum more explicitly accessible to MT teachers, who must not only depend on their intuitive knowledge of the language when teaching or preparing instructional materials, but will have a source of reference from which to draw. Secondly, MT learners need to develop the ability to read and write in standard Limbum. It is true that young native speakers learning the language in their different dialectal regions, speak the language, but how many of them are well aware of the grammar rules? Consequently, it is important that they be able to produce grammatically written sentences and passages, as well as be able to distinguish the one, which is appropriate to the context from the one, which is not, through rule application. Non-native speakers of Limbum and even native speakers, who are proficient in English and French, need a reference and practice grammar book, which will help facilitate their learning to read and write in Limbum. In fact, above all, this chapter has very far reaching implications on the production of MT course books, MT dictionaries, and other instructional materials. Consequently, it is very important to textbook writers, who need to exhibit their mastery of the standard Limbum in their works.

In order to achieve these goals, we approach the task from a pedagogical perspective. Since pedagogical grammar has registered considerable progress in the development of first and second language acquisition, we make use of it here. But the question is, why pedagogical grammar? Let us begin by quoting (Odlin T (1994:1) who describes pedagogical grammar as "the types of grammatical analysis and instructions designed for the needs of second language students". It certainly does not only apply to second language learners alone but also to

first language learners. After all, experience has shown that learners who receive formal language instructions outperform those who do not. Hence it is important to understand that pedagogical grammar can be better understood, if we understand what grammar as prescription, grammar as description, grammar as an internalized system and grammar as an axiomatic system mean.

Prescriptive grammar, for example is concerned with rules "dos and don'ts". Although most linguists consider prescriptive as an exercise in incompetence e.g. (Leith 1983 and Sledd 1988) it certainly makes possible the standardisation of languages. Hughes and Trudgill (1987) argue that standardisation makes communication easier between highly different dialectal regions. Having a target language codified (even if imperfectly) simplifies both the teaching and learning of second languages. It helps learners to modify their language toward a single standard such as the one we are proposing, which is based on dialect approach or at least towards a narrower range of standards (e.g. American and British English). The implication here is that language teaching in general entails the use of prescriptive grammar. The thing is, the standard variety which language learners look up to, must maintain some homogeneity and in order to achieve this, it must be rule oriented. Consequently, the grammar is bound to be prescriptive because it specifies which usage to adopt or avoid.

Descriptive grammar on its own part, provides a much more detailed look at languages than prescriptive grammar. It consists of accounts of phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. It may provide a detailed look at both contemporary usage and earlier patterns as well as focus on nonstandard forms, unlike prescriptive grammar would do. MT teachers for example, may find the boundary between prescriptive and descriptive grammar quite straight forward, but this is not the case with second language teachers and learners. For instance, native speakers of English have no problems using "the" specific determiner. Sinclair et al (1992:186).

"You use specific determiners when the person you are talking to will know which person or thing you

are referring to. The man began to run towards the boy."

Actually, such descriptive information about specific determiners functions as a prescription to forestall deviations from the target.

In standard Limbum, we need such descriptions, explicit enough, to help native and non-native speakers to master the use of *ɲga* "group of" quantifier or even *à* "and". In Limbum, *à* functions as a conjunction, an article, a subject marker, tense marker and focus marker. These examples show the different functions of *à* as enumerated.

- |    |  |  |
|----|--|--|
| 1. | <i>a</i> Nfor cé é vù<br>Foc Nfor that he come           | "It is Nfor that has come."                            |
| 2. | Nfor <i>a</i> Ndi à vù.<br>Nfor conj Ndi P1 come.        | "Nfor and Ndi have come."                              |
| 3. | Fá <i>njab a</i> báa.<br>Give soup conj food.            | "Give soup with food."                                 |
| 4. | Nfor <i>a</i> Ndi à dù<br>Nfor and Ndi P go.             | "Nfor and Ndi have gone."<br>"Nfor and Ndi have gone." |
| 5. | <i>à</i> rfà' nsú yí boj.<br>Art work farm SM good.      | "To work farm is a good."                              |
| 6. | <i>à</i> yú f é?<br>SM<br>2 person be where<br>singular. | "where are you?"                                       |

These examples show that we need sufficient descriptions to enable us use *à* in the various contexts. Except when using it as a second person marker, past tense marker and infinitive particle that it bears a low tone,



there is no other distinctive feature . What we are saying is that the M1 teacher like the SL teacher ought to and should know the rules of the language, in order to prepare instructional materials that will guide learners from possible deviations.

Talking about grammar as an internalized system, it is important to know that the mind is the source of grammatical patterning. Although it is complex, let us understand simply that psychologists are more concerned with performance mechanisms in speech production and comprehension, while linguists tend to focus on the more abstract knowledge that makes production and comprehension possible. This is often referred to as competence. It is the competence that speakers have that is evident in the grammatical patterning of any language, even though, much of the patterning is not easily accessible to consciousness. For example, these sentences show that different rules are needed for noun morphology in Limbum. For instance, that the prefix *wí* refers to the "people of" and that some nouns form their plurals by prefixing *m*-plural prefix or *b*-plural prefix depending on the noun class. *Mrù'* "wine" and *byé* "food" show.

e.g.	1	<i>Wínsó' à nò mrù</i>	"Nso people are drinking wine"
	2	<i>Wimbum à yé byé</i>	"Bum people are eating food."
	3	<i>Ŋgà nfù à yób</i>	"Nfù group is dancing".

Speakers know these noun morphology patterns. Once speakers demonstrate the competence expected of them, it can be viewed as an internalized system; which is important in first language acquisition. The notion of competence helps linguists to easily account for the systematicity of grammatical knowledge.

Grammar as an axiomatic system refers to formal analysis of grammar, for example, generative grammar. Human language lends itself to highly formalized analysis of generative grammar. Generative work has encouraged more systematic approaches to the study of language as well as greater interest in language acquisition. Approaching grammar as an

axiomatic system, means paying attention to rules and principles of universal grammar and language acquisition. Each of the four perceptions of grammar discussed above has implications for language teaching, but none of them alone satisfactorily covers the concerns of practitioners of pedagogical grammar. Teaching grammar in a second language setting for example, involves prescription just like in an MT classroom that seeks some form of standardisation, yet the range of structures important to consider resembles a descriptive grammar more than a prescriptive grammar for native speakers. Moreover, teachers who are more concerned about how their learners succeed in learning any grammar will naturally be curious about the psychological constraints that underlie interlanguage competence and performance. Besides, teaching materials draw inspiration or have its root from axiomatic grammar, (formal analysis of grammar).

In the light of the above analysis, pedagogical grammar is thus a practically oriented hybrid drawing on work in several fields. Since one of its purposes is to help language learners to augment or classify classroom activities, it begs its application in this work. We also understand that it is used by prospective teachers to intensify their detailed knowledge of the working of the grammar of the language. As earlier stated, theoretical linguists use it to confirm the workings of some theory that is being developed. The language teacher, who uses it daily for language instructions in the classroom, sees it as translations of linguistic descriptions, which should help him, enhance instructional efforts in providing explicit descriptions of grammatical structures and use in a simple straight forward manner.

In this wise, pedagogical grammar which is our approach, to this part of the work, must provide the language teacher (MT teacher) with information sufficient enough to construct learning activities targeting a selected grammatical problem.

To begin with, we will first of all provide pronunciation (alphabet and orthographic rules), morphological and syntactic descriptions and usage

of different grammatical categories of the standard language. This refers to the variety that we have so far succeeded in proposing to WILA. This variety is based on the phonological, morphological and syntactic analyses done in the previous chapters. Each description and standard rules for usage, will be followed by drills (exercises). This approach provides room for pattern practice, internalization, performance, and competence. Once learners achieve acceptable competence, then standardisation has been achieved.

## 5.1 PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

In this section, we draw inspiration from the proposed graphemes of the Limbum alphabet treated in chapter two of this work. Instead of presenting the proposal as it was, we choose here to divide it into vowel and consonant pronunciation guides. These vowel and consonant charts show the graphemes on the left and the corresponding words in which the sound is realized on the right.

### 5.1.1 VOWEL SOUNDS

<u>grapheme</u>	<u>word</u>	<u>gloss</u>
aa	bàa, fàa, càa	(food, mistake, toad)
a	tàb, táb, tár	(hut, goitre, stitch)
ee	bèe, bée, tée	(people, heap, ring)
e	yé, bé, yé	(eat, invite, him)
ee	lée, tée, jée	(bat, stand, different)
ε	kèr, cér, céb	(pulloff, quick, insult)
i:	bii sii, fii	(dance, black, new)
i	yi, bì, fii	(know, deliver a baby, cheat)
oo	tóo, tòo, toò,	(support, pole, roast)
o	tó, bó, kór	(hole, hand, knot)
u:	yúu, túu, búu	(thing, send, things)

u	rù, cú tú	(scrabbard, sit, head)
u:	rúu, rùu, cúu	(ten, smell, tie)
u	yú', vúb, kur	(steam, bone, squirrel)

## 5.1.2 CONSONANT SOUNDS:

<u>grapheme</u>	<u>word</u>	<u>gloss</u>
b	bèe, bàa, báb	(people, bag, lizard)
c	càa, cér, cé	(toad, quick tree)
d	dâa, dé', dùnshí	(cutlass, noise, show)
f	fòr, fúb, fùb	(castrated goat, white, poverty)
g	gán, gèe, gáb	(grass stalk, do, share)
gh	ghée, ghòni, ghúb	(calabash bowl, bless, true)
h	háar, hábá!, ha'ntiní	(until, exclamation, next week)
j	jìkàwà, jìŋ, jòr	(vulture, dizziness, easy)
k	káa, kàabèn, kén	(squeeze, dove, dish)
l	lâa, lábá!, làayé	(cook, shoe, truth)
m	mágòr, mákú, mángúb	(big, grandmother, hen)
n	nàh, ncá, ncéb	(cow, fish, advice)
ŋ	ngàn, ngàa, ngár	(root, week, gun)
n	nyór, nyó nyú	(body, snake, bee)
r	râa, ràŋ, rágá	(clean, surround, hanging bridge)
s	sâa, sán, sàr	(millet, write, scatter)
sh	shán, shà, shè	(prison, corn beer, refuse)
t	tâ, tàa, táb	(five, insect, goitre)
v	và, vúb, vùshí	(come, bone, laugh)
w	wàawá, wáami, wángá	(hawk, eight, rabbit)
j	yán, yãa yée	(illness, queen, song)
'	ntá', sáa', fú'	(chair, matchet, wind)

## 5.2. THE STANDARD LIMBUM ALPHABET

Based on our analysis of the Limbum sounds, we recap here the alphabet as proposed on page 75 of this work.

A a	as in baa	"food"
B b	as in baà	"bag"
C c	as in càa	"toad"
D d	as in dâa	"cutlass"
E e	as in ye	"eat"
É é	as in béb	"he-goat (billy)"
F f	as in fòr	"castrated billy"
G g	as in gàb	"share"
Gh gh	as in ghòni	"bless"
H h	as in háar	"until"
I i	as in ncír	"lead"
J j	as in jìkawà	"vulture"
K k	as in kàabén	"dove"
L l	as in làa	"cook"
M m	as in mágòr	"big"
N n	as in nà'	"cow"
Ŋ ŋ	as in ngár	"gun"
NY ny	as in nyór	"body"
O o	as in kór	"knot"
R r	as in ráa	"clean"
S s	as in sàa	"millet"
SH sh	as in shán	"prison"
T t	as in tàa	"insect"
U u	as in yú'	"white yam"
Uu	as in rûu	"ten"
V v	as in vúb	"bone"
W w	as in Wàawá	"hawk"
Y y	as in yá'	"ram"
Y'	as in yá'	"ram"

*just for fun*

### 5.2.1 COMMENTS

Two major differences appear between this work and LIMBUM-ENGLISH LEXICON (Bradley 1995). The non-inclusion of p as a grapheme and the inclusion of ny as a grapheme. However, minor differences can be noticed, such as the non-inclusion of the following graphemes of the Southern dialect – z and zh.

As indicated in Bradley (1995) every vowel can be long or short depending upon the word. The following letters are unfamiliar to English learners of Limbum –ε, ʌ, gh, ŋ ny and sh. Wherever, the consonant clusters or consonant digraphs appear should be pronounced as one unit and treated same in the writing system.

In the teaching learning process, the familiar letters should be introduced first.

### 5.3 TONE GUIDE

We earlier saw the importance of tones in Limbum in particular and African languages in general. Tone is a grammatical element, for instance, in limbum, the tone of the future progressive is HLHH. Thus once the tone of a word changes, its meaning changes, here we give a brief guide to tone study in Limbum based on our study of the tones in Limbum. Although there are seven different tones in Limbum, we agree with Mfonyam (1989:451) that only low tones should be marked and go further to mark falling and rising tones.

<u>High</u>	<u>mid</u>	<u>Low</u>
baa "madness"	baa "food",	bàa "bag."

The tone mark “˘” is put over the vowel on which the tone falls. It should be noted that tone marks are not written on words said with high or mid tone. If a word has a long vowel sound, put the tone on the first grapheme for example

bèe	“people”
bòo	“children”
kyèe	“stripped rat”
lùu	“hot”
làa	“say”

Mark glide tones – that is, low-high and high – low.

For low-high tones, we mark them by putting “v” over the vowel on which it falls. E.g

ngǎr	“ant”	ngar	“gun”
nfūr	“mosquito”	nfur	“wound”
mnyör	“hairs”	mnyor	“bodies”

These examples show the changes in meaning of each word, due to tone marking. Mark also high-low (Λ) tones e.g

cê	ladder	ce	“tree”
tâ	“five”	taa	“trap”
sâb	“file”	sàb	“long”
rkîr	“louse”	rkiŋ	“pot”
rsii	“small rat”	rsii	“green grasshopper”

### 5.3.1 PRACTICE 1

– Put the proper tone mark on the following words.

beŋ	“dove”
gaga	“small hand drum”
gee	“do”
mbaanyo	“black cobra”
ncuki	“thousand”
nyor	“a beard”

ngur	“bedbug”
ruu	“ten”
se	“much”
kuu	“leg”
taace	“cricket”
mbab	“rat”
nsur	“palm beetle”

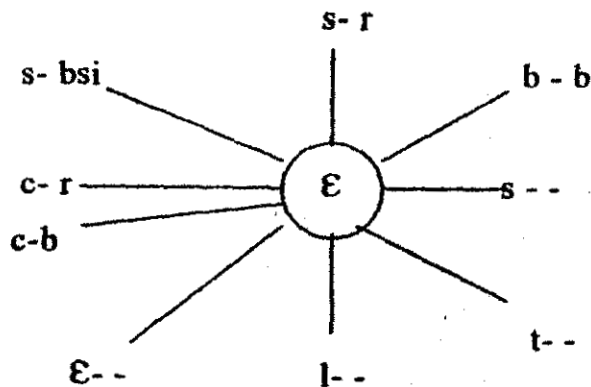
### 5.3.2 SPELLING DRILL USING UNFAMILIAR LETTERS

Remember that;

- ɛ - is different from e
- ŋ - is used to write the sound ng like in mbenj “rain”.  
It is completely different from letter n.
- ɹ - this letter does not exist in English. It is different from u
- gh - is different from letter g and occurs only at word initial position.
- ny - is also different from letter n. It also occurs at the beginning of words.

Below are a few spelling exercises based on the letters above.

**Exercise 1.** Fill the gaps with letter ɛ





**Exercise 2:** In the lines below write five words on each line that have the letter  $\eta$ .

**Exercise 3:** Fill the blanks with letter  $\acute{u}$

$\eta$ k----- $\eta$ k-----

c-----c-----r

$\eta$ k----- $\eta$ ji

f-----shi

r ----- si

k-----r

b----- b-----

l-----r

b-----r-----'

$\eta$ j-----r

**Exercise 4:** Form ten words by adding gh to the endings below:

-----aa

----- ee

-----aanì

----- ee

----- a $\eta$

----- òni

----- ar

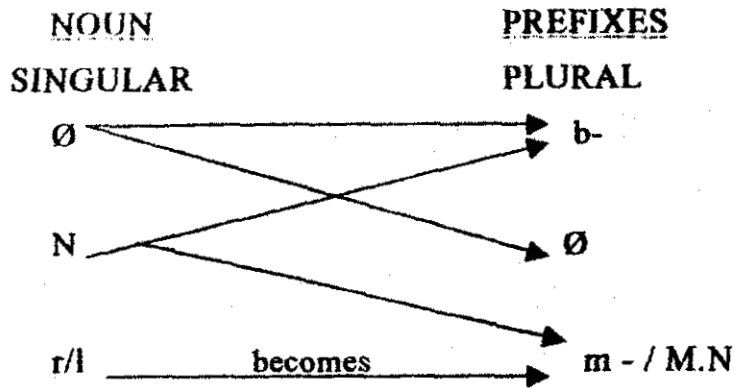
----- òb

----- asi

----- úb

## 5.4 NOUNS – FORMING PLURALS

Singular nouns have either no – prefix, an N – prefix or an r- prefix. Nouns beginning with non-nasals)  $\sigma$  - take a b–prefix to form the plurals, whereas those beginning with nasal n – prefix) form their plurals by prefixing m-. Here is a table (formular) for plural formation.



This diagram gives the following five groups of nouns:

Ø - / b -

Ø - / Ø -

n- m = / b -

n - / m

r / l - / m -

Their singular and plural nouns are illustrated below:

**Plural Nouns with b-** The words in the plural column are read with a /b/ sound at the beginning. In writing the plural forms, you simply add the b- to the beginning of the singular word.

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	
ce'	bce'	"clothes"
kfàù	bkfàù	"ropes"
sa'	bsa'	"cutlasses"
kaŋ	bkaŋ	"dishes"
bàa	bbàa	"bags"

**Exercise 5:**

Write the plurals of the following:

- |          |       |         |
|----------|-------|---------|
| 1. wàwa  | _____ | hucks   |
| 2. cécé  | _____ | sticks  |
| 3. buru' | _____ | lions   |
| 4. bab   | _____ | wings   |
| 5. bar   | _____ | lizards |

KEY:           bwàwá bburu'

Bcécé bbab, bbár.

### Plural Nouns With m-

Some nouns beginning with n or m form their plurals by adding an m to the beginning of the word see these examples:

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	
ncir	mncir	"lids"
ngàŋ	mngàŋ	"roots"
nta'	mnta'	"chairs"
ncùu	mncùu	"drums"
ntob	mntob	"corn-beer".
ndab	mndab	"houses"
mbàŋ	mmbàŋ	"walking sticks"
mbee	mmbee	"bells"
mbàb	mmbàb	"rats"
mbu	mmbu	"goats"

Some nouns which begin with r form their plurals by deleting the r and replacing it at the initial position with m plural prefix. Some of these nouns are:

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
rtaa	mtaa	chairs
rwàa	mwàa	mats
rtùu	mtùu	hills
rgwaŋ	mrgwaŋ	giggers
rkab	mkaab	bride - prices
rgòò	mghòò	hailstones

**Exercise 6:** Write the plural of these words:

- |         |           |
|---------|-----------|
| 1. ntar | 5. rwàa   |
| 2. kuu  | 6. rùurùu |
| 3. nfár | 7. mbee   |
| 4. nguŋ | 8. mbab   |

Some solid and liquid mass nouns are considered already pluralised. They do not change their spelling when they are in the plural form. For example

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	
mor	mor	fire
mrù'	mrù'	palm wine
mngâr	mngâr	oil
mngwan	mngwan	salt

Collective nouns have a special way of forming their plurals. The singular form takes a singular *ngwè* (person who) and the plural form takes *ngàa* (people who) for example:

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	
ngwè cor	ngàa cor	christian
ngwè nfu'u	ngàa nfu'u	"nfu'u" people
ngwè bii	ngàa bii	dancers
ngwè wee	ngàa wee	hunters
ngwè ngar	ngàa ngar	soldiers
ngwè ngwàh	ngàa ngwàh	pupils

**Kinship nouns** - describe relationships people have. These nouns take the plural prefix /b/ or /m/ as the case may be.

The rule is b + noun or m e.g

<u>Singular</u>		<u>Plural</u>
tarku	"grandfather"	btarku "grandfathers"
ndùr	"brother"	bdùr "brothers"
malûu	"mother-in-law"	mmalûu "mothers-in-law"
ncigùu	"brother-in-law"	mcigùu "brothers-in-law"

In this group, we have a few irregular nouns.

muu	"child"	boo	"children"
ngwè	"person"	bee	"people"
njenwè	"woman"	biengée	"women"

### 5.4.1 PRACTICE 2:

Give the plurals of the following:

ɲwè nta	_____
ɲwè samba	_____
berèŋ	_____
mɲgâr	_____
maku	_____
talugùu	_____
muu	_____
ɲwè	_____

### 5.4.2 COMPOUNDS:

In chapter three, we saw the various ways compounds are formed in Limbum. In compound nouns for instance, combinations such as :

- noun 1 + noun 2
- noun + adjective
- noun + normalized verb or verb.

When two nouns combine, the singular and plural forms are marked by the first noun, but in some situations the second noun also takes a plural marker. This depends upon the noun class of the first noun.

e.g	ɲwè	cor	“Christian”
	ɲgàa	cor	“Christians”
	mbuu	rkoo	“elbow”
	mbuu	ndab	“foundation”
	ɲwè	ncheb	“medicine man”
	ɲgàa	mncheb	“medicine men”

In noun + adjective combination, the noun comes before the adjective and may take a singular or plural prefix.

nduunji sàsab	“long road”
cè' si	“black cloth”
nta' lushi	“short chairs”
mnduunji sasab	“long roads”
mnta' lushi	“short chairs”
bcè' bsi	“black clothes”

In Noun + Nominalized verb, the plural form is marked on the noun. In Limbum most nominalized verbs, when added to nouns to form nouns for professions e.g.

ɲwè rsaŋ	“writer”
ɲwè nsà'	“judge”
ɲwè rdòo	“driver”
ɲwè raboo	“bricklayer”

In order to put these nouns into the plural, use the plural form of “ngàa” e.g.

ngàa rsaŋ	“writers”
ngàa rsa'	“judgers”
ngàa rdòo	“drivers”

### 5.4.2.1 PRACTICE 3:

Add adjectives to the following nouns:

ɲwè _____	“black man”
ndab _____	“big house”
cè _____	“red cloth”
kwâa _____	“red corn”

Add verbs to the following nouns:

ɲwè _____	medicine man
ngàa _____	“singers”
ɲwè _____	“worker”
ngàa _____	“runners”

There are four ways of forming nouns from verbs.

1. By adding the prefix /n/ to the verb.

Verb	Noun
sà' "to judge"	nsà' "case"
tuu "to send"	ntuu "message"

2. By adding the prefix /r/ to the verb

Verb	Noun
là to pay	rlà payment
fa to give	rfa gift

3. By adding either the prefix /m/ or /ŋ/ as the case may be.

Verb	Noun
bor "to be lazy"	mbor "lazy person"
gò' "to grind"	ngò' "grinding machine"

4. By adding nothing to the verb.

Verb	noun
yee "to sing"	yee "song"
wee "to hunt"	wee "hunting"

5.4.3.1 PRACTICE 4:

Give the verbs of the following noun.

Nouns	Verbs
fāa "mistake"	_____
ntar "entertainment"	_____
füb "poverty"	_____
ngò' "grinding machine"	_____
rfā "offering"	_____

#### 5.4.4 REDUPLICATION:

This is a common lexical device in Limbum. Usually some words are reduplicated to form other words of the same category or other grammatical categories. There are six ways of achieving complete reduplication in Limbum.

##### 1. Noun – Noun reduplication:

<u>Noun</u>	<u>Gloss</u>	<u>Reduplicated form</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
ga	“camwood”	gàgà	“handdrum”
ce	“tree”	cècè	“stick”
mboo	“hands”	mbòomboo	“empty handed”

##### 2. Adjective reduplication:

<u>Adjective</u>	<u>Gloss</u>	<u>Reduplication form</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
cé	bitter	cé cé	bitter
nyòb	soft	nyòbnyòb	soft

##### 3. Verb Reduplication is another way of forming adjectives from verbs:

<u>Verbs</u>	<u>Gloss</u>	<u>Reduplicated form</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
tab	“to be strong”	tatab	strong
bàŋ	“to be red”	bàŋbàn	red
ceb	“to be sharp”	cebceb	sharp

##### 4. Numeral reduplication is used to describe the numeral strength of an action:

<u>Numeral</u>	<u>Gloss</u>	<u>Reduplication form</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
mo'sir	one	mo'sir mo'sir	in ones
baa	two	baabaa	in twos
tá	five	tátá	in fives



5. **Verb reduplication for emphasis:**

<u>Verb</u>	<u>Gloss</u>	<u>Reduplicated form</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
ye	"to eat"	yéyé	eat emphatic
dàa	"to slice"	dàadàa	slice emphatic
nò	"to drink"	dònò	drink emphatic

6. **Reduplication of various categories of words to form adverbs:**

<u>Word</u>	<u>Gloss</u>	<u>Reduplicated form</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
nji (noun)	"back"	njìnjì	backwards
bànrì (adj)	"partially ripe"	bànrìbànrì	suspiciously
àfo (adv)	"near"	àfoàfo	frequently

5.4.4.1 **PRACTICE 5:**

Form words from the following:

<u>Word</u>	<u>Gloss</u>	<u>Reduplicated</u>
co'	"to remove"	_____
ká	"to press"	_____
cer	"quick"	_____
samba	"seven"	_____
bèr	"wide"	_____
dò'	"cold"	_____
ntùṅ	"small"	_____
kà	"rope"	_____

5.4.5 **PRONOUNS**

In chapter three, we discussed in detail, the morphology of Limbum pronouns. In this section, we approach it again from a pedagogical perspective.

### 5.4.5.1 SUBJECT PRONOUNS:

We use subject pronouns to refer to the subject of the sentence or clause.

Here, we treat:-

- Simple singular subject pronouns
- Simple plural subject pronouns
- Compound singular subject pronouns
- Compound plural subject pronouns

#### Simple singular subject pronouns:

- When referring to yourself – you use me e.g

mè kòṅ Ndi.	“I love Ndi.”
mè gèè fàa.	“I make mistake.”

- When referring to another person (the person your are talking to) use wè (you)

wè kòṅ mè	“you like me”
wè sàṅ nwà'	“you write letter”

- When referring to another person, when talking to someone else, use e (he/she) .

Bèrì yùu?	“Where is Beri?”
é dù ntáa	“She has gone to the market.”
Nfò yùu?	“Where is Nfor?”
é yùu mbé ndáb	“He is in the house.”

### 5.4.5.2 PLURAL SUBJECT PRONOUNS.

- When talking about a group to someone else (non member) or referring to a group of people to which the speaker is a member, you use “wèr” and when addressing the group, you use “sèè” because the speaker is included. e.g

wèr cè dù ntaa  
sèe be dù ntaa

"we are going to the market"  
"we will go to the market"

- When referring to a group of people, speaker non-inclusive, you use "wèe" (you-second person plural)

wèe ce dù ntaa

"You are going to the market"

wèe be dù nì m̄kkuu

"You will go on foot"

- When referring to a group of people (speaker and hearer) not included you use "wowèe" (they). e.g

wowèe a ce dù ntaa

"they are going to the market"

wowèe a ce dù nì m̄kkuu

"They are going on foot"

#### 5.4.5.3 SINGULAR COMPOUND SUBJECT PRONOUNS:

- When talking to yourself and another person (the hearer) you use "so" (we two). That is, speaker and hearer. First and second person singular.

sò caŋ

"let us run"

we run.

sò dù ntaa

"let us go to the market"

we go market.

- When talking to someone else about yourself and another person (he and I), you use "wer" or "wèr ye" (we he)

Wèr bé dù cor

"We will go to church."

He & I will go church

- When referring to a group of people or e.g (Beri and Ndi) or to one of them about the group, use “wèe yé” (you and him/her).

wèe ye yee

“sing with him/her”

wèe yé dù ntá

“go to the market with him”

You and him go market

- When talking to someone about one and the other person, you use “á yé” (he/she and he/she).

Béri à Nfor à bé dù nta

Beri and Nfor SM will go market

“Beri and Nfor will go to the market”

Or

á yè à bé dù ntá

“They will go to the market”

#### 5.4.5.4. PLURAL COMPOUND SUBJECT PRONOUNS

- When referring to your group and another group, you use “sèe” (You & us)

sèe bè ta Nigeria

“We will play Nigeria.”

- When talking to someone about your group and one other, use “wèr wowèe” (we and they).

wèr wowèe be tarté je Douala

We and they will meet in Douala

“We will meet in Douala”

- When referring to a group to which you do not belong and another, use “wèe wówèe” (you and they)  
e.g when talking to group (A) about what they will do with group (C)

wèe wówèe be súsí nsú

You they will weed farm.

You and them will weed the farm

“You will weed the farm”

- But when talking about what Bari will do with group C, use “à wowèè” (he/she and they) e.g

Bari à bkar vi à be susi nsu

Bari and friends Possess pron will weed farm.

à wowèè à bè susi nsu

They will weed the farm.

John can tell Bari that he loves her by saying “mè kòŋ wè” “I love you” just like he can say to Bari that, “You love me” by saying “wè kòŋ mè” “You love me.”

So whenever you want to use a pronoun to refer to an object, use the corresponding (category) of subject pronoun.

The tables below illustrate the pronouns in Limbum.

1. Simple subject pronouns:

Person	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1 <sup>st</sup> person	mè/m	wèr/sèe/so
2 <sup>nd</sup> person	wè/à	wèe
3 <sup>rd</sup> person	é/i	wòwèe/o

2. Simple object Pronouns:

Person	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1 <sup>st</sup> person	mè/m	wèr/sèe/so
2 <sup>nd</sup> person	wè	wèe
3 <sup>rd</sup> person	yé/yi	Wòwèe

### 5.4.5.5. PRACTICE 6

- Fill the gaps in the sentences below with appropriate pronoun.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ be dù nta.
2. Jòn koŋ \_\_\_\_\_ sê
3. fa ŋwà' nê \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_ a yu bèe ntâ
5. mè làa éne \_\_\_\_\_ ño mrù

- Write the following sentences in Limbum

1. He has given it to me.
2. I have worked for him.
3. They are looking at us.
4. She wants to go with them.
5. You will dance with her.

### 5. 4. 6. NON-HUMAN PRONOUNS.

- In Limbum, things and animals have their own pronouns. That is, the pronouns stand only for animals and things and are used depending upon the noun class of the nouns for which they (pronouns) stand for. Read the sentences below and note the pronouns

- |    |                 |                             |
|----|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. | siŋ e ye kwâa   | "The bird has eaten corn"   |
|    | e ye kwâa       | "It has eaten corn"         |
|    | bsiŋ vi ye kwâa | "The birds have eaten corn" |
|    | vi ye kwâa      | "The have eaten corn"       |
| 2. | rêe' li bi      | "The yam is ready"          |
|    | li bi           | "It is ready"               |
|    | mrêe' mi bi     | "The yams are ready"        |
| 3. | cè' yi gwè      | "The cloth hass fallen"     |

yi gwè "It has fallen"  
 bcè' vi raa "The clothes are clean"  
 vi raa "They are clean"

4. ngub e mà' rbù "The fowl has laid an egg"  
 e mà' rbù "It has laid an egg"  
 ngub yi mà' mbù "The fowls have laid eggs"  
 yi mà ' mbù "They have laid eggs"

The pronouns used in the above examples are summarised in the table below.

#### Non Human Subject Pronouns

Noun Class	Non-Human subject Pronouns	Non-Human object Pronouns
1a	e	yé
1.7a	yì	yì
2	ví	ví
5	lí	lí
6	mí	mí
7	ø	yì
10	yí	yí

Remember that classes 2, 6 and 10 nouns are plural forms and do have subject and object plural pronouns.

The object pronoun yé refers to animal objects. E.g

mè koo ngub "I have caught a fowl."

mè koo ye "I have caught it."

#### 5.4.6.1. PRACTICE 7:

Make sentences in Limbum using

e, ye, li, yi, vi, mi, yi.

### 5.4.7.1 DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS.

#### SINGULAR DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS:

- When referring to something nearer the speaker, you use ca (this) or cenà (that). Notice that the tone is H, but we do not mark it. e.g.

Cl 1	mè kòŋ ɲwà' ca.	"I like this book"
Cl 1a	mè kòŋ bàa ca.	"I like this bag"
Cl 5	mè kòŋ rtaa ca.	"I like this cap"
Cl 7	mè kòŋ bo ca.	"I like this hand"

- But when referring to something far away from the speaker, you use cà "that".

Cl 1	mè kòŋ ɲwà' cà.	"I like that book"
Cl 1a	mè kòŋ bàa cà.	"I like that bag"
Cl 5	mè kòŋ rtaa cà.	"I like that cap"
Cl 7	mè kòŋ bo cà.	"I like that hand"

- Also you may refer to something far away from you, but near the person to whom you are talking, you use, cenà (that one). e.g

Cl 1	mè kòŋ ɲwà' cenà.	"I like that book"
Cl 1a	mè kòŋ bàa cenà.	"I like that bag"
Cl 5	mè kòŋ rtaa cenà.	"I like that cap"
Cl 7	mè kòŋ bo cenà.	"I like that hand"

### 5.4.7.2 PLURAL DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS:

In the plural, use either bca or mca to refer to things near you. If things referred to form their plurals by prefixing /b/ plural morpheme, prefix /b/ to ca, but if things referred to form their plurals by prefixing /m/ plural morpheme, prefix /m/ to ca. e.g



rbi ca li bòn	"This kolanut is nice."
m̄bi m̄ca mi bòn	"These kolanuts are nice."
sà' cà c̄eb	"That cutlass is sharp."
bsà' bcà vi c̄eb	"Those cutlasses are sharp."

Remember that demonstrative pronouns come after the nouns they describe.

### 5.4.7.3. PRACTICE 8:

Write these phrases in Limbum, noting the demonstratives and their concord elements,

- This bird
- These birds
- This cat
- These cats
- This dress
- These dresses
- This chicken
- These chickens
- This yam
- These yams

### 5.4.8. POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

Possessive pronouns are words that show who the person or thing you are referring to belongs to or is connected with. They differ according to the noun class gender they refer to. Read these examples and see how they operate.

	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1.	ya kò' "my cocoyam"	wa bkò' "my cocoyams"
	yo kò' "your cocoyam"	wo bkò' "my cocoyams"
	yi kò' "his/her cocoyams"	vi bkò' "his/her cocoyams"

yee kò' "your cocoyam"  
yab kò' "their cocoyam"

wee bkò' "your cocoyams"  
wab bkò' "their cocoyams"

- |    |             |                      |          |                    |
|----|-------------|----------------------|----------|--------------------|
| 2  | la rfàù     | "my feather"         | ma mfàù  | "my feathers"      |
|    | lo rfàù     | "your feather"       | mo mfàù  | "your feathers"    |
|    | li rfàù     | "his/her feather"    | mi mfàù  | "his/her feathers" |
|    | ler rfàù    | "our feather"        | mer mfàù | "our feather"      |
|    | lee ràù     | "your feather"       | mee mfàù | "your feathers"    |
|    | lab rfàù    | "their feather"      | mab mfàù | "their feathers"   |
|    |             |                      |          |                    |
| 3. | nfur yà     | "my brother"         | bfur wa  | "my brothers"      |
|    | nfur yò     | "your brother"       | bfur wo  | "your brothers"    |
|    | nfur yi     | "his/her brother"    | bfur vi  | "his/her brothers" |
|    | nfur yèr    | "our brother"        | bfur wer | "our brothers"     |
|    | nfur yèe    | "your brother"       | bfur wee | "your brothers"    |
|    | nfur yab    | "their brother"      | bfur wab | "their brothers"   |
|    |             |                      |          |                    |
| 4. | yà ngub     | "my fowl"            | ya ngub  | "my fowls"         |
|    | yò ngub     | "your fowl"          | yo ngub  | "your fowls"       |
|    | yi ngub     | "his/her fowl"       | yi ngub  | "his/her fowls"    |
|    | yèr ngub    | "our fowl"           | yer ngub | "our fowls"        |
|    | yèe ngub    | "your fowl"          | yee ngub | "your fowls"       |
|    | yab ngub    | "their fowl"         | yab ngub | "their fowls"      |
|    |             |                      |          |                    |
| 5. | yìsèe nà    | "our cow" (1 + 2pl)  |          | (noun class 1)     |
|    | yìsèe nà    | "our cows" (1 + 2pl) |          | (noun class 10)    |
|    | vìsèe btab  | "our huts" (1 + 2pl) |          | (noun class 2)     |
|    | lisèe rèe'  | "our yam" (1 + 2pl)  |          | (noun class 5)     |
|    | mìsèe mrèe' | "our yams" (1 + 2pl) |          | (noun class 6)     |

yìsò' ngub	"our fowl" (1+2)	(noun class 10)
yìsò' ndab	"our house" (1+2)	(noun class 1)
visò' bsiḡ	"our birds" (1+2)	(noun class 2)
lisò' rrè	"our yam" (1+2)	(noun class 5)
misò mrèɛ'	"our yams" (1+2)	(noun class 6)

Notice that the difference between our cow and our cows is only in tone.

Note that the noun class concord elements of the possessives are:

y`-, w`-, ɾ-, m`-, y`-.

While the modifier stems are:

-a, -er, -o, -ee, -i and -ab

- For possessive pronouns designating human relations, the possessive determiners come after the nouns. (See example 3 above).
- Some nouns do not take a plural prefix and, so the difference between their singular plural forms is tone alone. Whereas the singular forms take low tone, the plural possessive determiners take high tone. (See example 4).
- Compound possessive concords are ye, vi, li, mi and their possessive qualifiers are sèe and sò "dual", that is, speaker inclusive, while sèe "plural", that is, more than two with speaker inclusive.

Possessive pronouns actually fall in two groups. The first group, (possessive adjectives) have been treated above. Possessive pronouns per se (mine, yours, his, hers, ours, yours, theirs) usually replace my, your, our, his, her, their, etc), in Limbum like in English, they are never followed by nouns.

In Limbum, we use a + possessive adjectives to produce short possessive sentences as shown below.

**Possessive**

	<u>adjective</u>	<u>Singular</u>
1.	a ya	"it is mine"
	a yo	"it is yours"
	a yi	"it is his/hers"
	a yer	"it is ours"
	a yee	"it is yours"
	a yab	"it is theirs"
2	a la	"it is mine"
	a lo	"it is yours"
	a li	"it is his/hers"
	a ler	"it is ours"
	a lee	"it is yours"
	a lab	"it is theirs"

**Possessive**

<u>adjective</u>	<u>plural</u>
a wa	"they are mine"
a wo	"they are yours"
a vi	"they are his/hers"
a wer	"they are ours"
a wee	"they are yours"
a wab	"they are theirs"
a ma	"they are mine"
a mo	"they are yours"
a mi	"they are his/hers"
a mer	"they are ours"
a mee	"they are yours"
a mab	"they are theirs"

This table will help you master the usage of possessive adjectives.

Noun class	Possessive concord morpheme	First Person		Second Person		Third Person	
		Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
		my/mine	our/yours	your/yours	your/yours	his/her/hers	their/theirs
1./1a	ỳ	yà	yèr	yò	yèe	yì	yàb
2	w̄	wá	wér	wó	wée	ví	wáb
5	l̄	lá	lér	ló	lée	lí	láb
7/7a	ý	yá	yér	yó	yée	yí	yáb
10	ý	yá	yér	yó	yée	yí	yáb

### 5.4.8.1. PRACTICE 9:

Write the following phrases in Limbum.

- my pot                      their cat
- our pots                    our kolanuts
- their chief                his house
- his sister                 our house
- her goat                    their houses

Write the following sentences in Limbum.

- 1     The yams are mine.  
      The yams are ours.  
      The yams are theirs.
  
- 2     This bag is mine.  
      These bags are his.  
      These bags are theirs.
  
- 3     The fowl is his.  
      These fowls are ours.  
      Those fowls are yours.

### 5.4.9 REFLEXIVE PRONOUNS

In limbum, reflexive pronouns are used as the object of a verb when the subject and the object of the sentence refer to one and the same person or thing. We use body parts + possessive adjectives to express reflexivity. These body parts are nyor "body", tuu "head", bo "hand" and kùu "foot".

Person	Singular		Plural	
1 <sup>st</sup> person	yà-nyor	“myself”	wer-bnyor	“ourselves”
	yà-tuu	“myself”	wer-btuu	“ourselves”
	ya-bo	“myself”	wer-mbo	“ourselves”
	ya-kùu	“myself”	wer-mṅkùu	“ourselves”
2 <sup>nd</sup> person	yò-nyor	“yourself”	wee-bnyor	“yourselves”
	yo-tuu	“yourself”	wee-btuu	“yourselves”
	yo-bo	“yourself”	wee-mbo	“yourselves”
	yo-kùu	“yourself”	wee-mṅkùu	“yourselves”
3 <sup>rd</sup> person	yi-nyor	“himself”	wab-bnyor	“themselves”
	yi-tuu	“himself”	wab-btuu	“themselves”
	yi-bo	“himself”	wab-mbo	“hemselves”
	yi-kùu	“himself”	wab-mṅkùu	“themselves”

Look at these examples:

- |                              |                                    |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Ndì be kwàr yì nyor.      | “Ndi will cut himself.”            |
| 2. Bàri a yaṅ yi-tuu.        | “Bari has fed herself.”            |
| 3. Wè yu yo-tuu.             | “You have killed yourself.”        |
| 4. Mè ja' yà-nyor.           | “I have helped myself.”            |
| 5. Wee à dùṅshí wee bnyor.   | “You have introduced yourselves.”  |
| 6. Wowèe à dùṅshi wab bnyor. | “They have introduced themselves.” |

These sentences can be referred to as true reflexives because the actions are done by the subjects on themselves. Limbum also uses reflexive pronouns to say that someone did something without any help from anyone else. Here are some examples:

- |                               |                                      |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. E lãa baa nè yi-bo.        | “He has cooked the food himself.”    |
| 2. Bàri à byè' bàa nè yi tuu. | “Bari has carried the bag herself.”  |
| 3. Mè saṅ ḡwà' nè ya bo.      | “I wrote the letter myself.”         |
| 4. Wèr be kóo nyè nè wer mbo. | “We will catch the thief ourselves.” |

### 5.4.9.1. PRACTICE 10:

Using the above examples as clues, write the following sentences in Limbum.

1. I have enjoyed myself.
2. You will hurt yourself.
3. They will feed themselves.
4. She will wash herself.
5. They will cook it themselves.
6. You will climb the tree yourself.

### 5.4.10 RECIPROCAL PRONOUNS

Reciprocal pronouns are used to refer to an action carried out by two or more subjects not on themselves but on each other or other subjects.. In Limbum they are formed by using;

(1) Transitive verb + 3<sup>rd</sup> person possessive plural + nyor.

(2) Transitive verb + ni (verbal extension)

e.g

1. À ghonse wab bnyor "They have hugged each other"
2. À cà'ni wab bnyor "They have greeted each other"
3. À kòŋ wab bnyor "They Love each other"

### 5.4.10.1 PRACTICE 11:

Write the following sentences in Limbum

1. Embrace each other
2. They danced with one another
3. Bantar and Nyah love each other
4. They hate each other
5. They greeted one another

## 5.5. ARTICLES:

Limbum does not have separate definite and indefinite articles but uses demonstrative pronouns which function as articles.

1. The definite referential article refers to something specific or definite. The demonstrative pronoun "anà" is a particle which has a definite reference like the English "the". For example:

1. Fà mè mrù' "Give me some wine"  
Give me wine
2. Mrù' anà mì bònṣé "The wine is very nice"  
Wine the it good very
3. Sà' anà cèb "The cutlass is sharp"
4. Ɔwà' anà yi bòn "The book is good"

2. Indefinite referential article refers to something unspecific or something indefinite. In Limbum it is neither phonologically nor morphologically marked. Normally, a noun on its own is considered definite unlike in English where it is marked by a/an

ṅwè	=	a person
tà	=	a hat
ṅwà'	=	a book
sìṅ	=	a bird
rbùu ṅgub	=	an egg

3. However, mò' "some, another, a certain" can be used to express an indefinite reference e.g

sìṅ	mò'	"another bird"
bsìṅ	mò'	"some birds"
ṅwè	mò'	"a certain person"
bce	mò'	"some trees"

Note that mò' could have these meanings depending upon the context or usage. mò' can also follow a verb e.g



ye mò'	"eat another"
lòr bmò'	"take some"
nòṅsi rmò'	"put another/one"

### 5.5.1. PRACITCE 12:

Write the following phrases and sentences in Limbum

- The chair
- This pan
- A box
- A banana
- The tea is sweet.
- The food is nice.
- Another man has come.
- A certain bag is here.

### 5.6.0 TOTAL QUANTITY AND INDEFINITE QUANTITY

1. In Limbum, total quantity morphemes are

wewe	all
sib	all
mò'...kà'	none

2. Indefinite quantity morphemes are

mò'	some
ndà wee	whoever
ke wee	anything
fe wee	anywhere
yuu ka'	nothing
yuu wewe	everything

3 Indefinite quantity morphemes can be used to form the following compounds.

Referring to ɲwè "person"	ɲwè mò' somebody	nda wee anybody	ɲwè ka' nobody	ɲwè weewè everybody
Referring to yuu "thing"	yuu mò' something	ke wee anything	yuu ka' nothing	yuu weewè everything
Referring to dì' "place"	dì'mò' somewhere	fè wee anywhere	à yuu ka' nowhere	fèweewè everywhere

Remember that nda means "who?", ke "what?" fè "where?" and ka' "no".

### 5.6.1 PRACTICE 13:

Write the following phrases/sentences in Limbum.

1. I haven't seen anybody
2. I don't know anything
3. I like everything
4. Mother will not eat
5. Somebody is looking for you

### 5.7 INTERROGATIVES

In Limbum, interrogative pronouns come at the end of the sentence.

- When asking questions about a person use nda (who?) e.g

ɲwè ca à nda? "Who is this ?"

È dù bgùu a nda? "Who is she married to?"

Wè ye ba nda? "Who have you seen?"

- When asking questions about which person something belongs to, use any of the following, but making sure there is concord  
 yì nda (whose? For noun classes 1a/1a, 7/7a, 10.  
 vî nda (whose? For noun class2  
 mì nda (whose? For noun class6  
 lì nda (whose? For noun class5

e.g.

mrù' mca à mì nda?	“Whose wine is this?”
cè' ca à yì nda?	“Whose cloth is this?”
mḡwà' ca à vî nda?	“Whose books are these?”

When asking someone to identify a specific person (ḡwè yì fè = which person) a specific thing out of a number of things, use yì ke, mì ke, vì ke “which.”

à làa ba ḡwè yì fè?  
 “Which person are you talking about?”

á bàa yì fè?  
 “Which bag is this?”

á mrù mi ke?  
 “Which wine is this?”

á kàu vî ke?  
 “Which ropes are these?”

- When asking questions about a thing, use ba ke? (what?) eg  
 wè gèe ba ke? “What are you doing?”  
 Nfò ye ba ke? “What is Nfor eating?”

- When you are asking questions about time, when an activity took place, use à se' ke? (when?) eg.

Ndi bé vâ à se'ke

“When will Ndi come?”

sèe bé fâ' à se'ke?

“When will we work?”

- When asking questions about the place, position or direction, use fe (where) eg

Nfor ce dù bâ fe?

“Where is Nfor going?”

ya bàa yi yuu ba fe?

“Where is my bag?”

- When asking questions about the reason for something, use njo-ke (why).

à yuu nta njo-ke?

“Why are you buying a chair?”

à ye ni mbo njo-ke ?

“Why are you eating with your hands.?”

- When asking questions about the method used for doing something, use à njèke (how)

sò mà' à njèke ?

“How do we open it ?”

wowèe à be dù à njèke?

“How will they go?”

### 5.7.1. PRACTICE 14:

Write the following sentences in Limbum:

1. What did you do?
2. Whose book is this?
3. Who took my gun?
4. Which of the hands did you use?
5. Which of them do you know?
6. Why were you late?
7. How did you come?

## 5.8. LOCATIVE DETERMINERS

They refer to what the English call prepositions of place. Limbum has a few simple locative determiners

mbà	“down there”
kú	“at”
ni	“with”
ser	“at”

Sà' yu ni Nfor.	“The cutlass is with Nfor.”
Mba yu kù rtuu.	“The goat is at the hill.”
Mamà yu ser ndáb.	“Mother is in the house.”
Mbab yu mba too.	“A rat is down the hole.”

- These locatives substitute nouns in discourse só “there” or “sideways”. They express situations about the speaker's environment.

mbà	“down there”
mbo	“in there (a little here)”
ko	“up there”
njo	“inside”

Eg

E yu mbà kob	“He is down in the forest”
Mba yu ko	“The goat is up there”
Nyà yu mbo	“There is meat in there”
Njab yu njo se	“There is a lot of soup inside”

- These locatives describe situations withing the speaker's environment.

àfa	here
taa	in here
mbena	here or a bit upwards

Nfo yu àfa	"Nfor is here"
Nfo yu taa	"Nfor is in here"
Nfo yu mbena	"Nfor is on that spot up there."

- These locatives are used to express a horizontal axis position:

àbgwàgwan	sideways
àgee	beside
mbenji	behind
mbetar	between
à bò ñkòb	by the left
à bò mà'	by the right

tab yi te mbe tar mndab.

A hut is standing between houses

sà' non àbgwàgwan

The cutlass is lying sideways.

ngwe non mbenji nta'

A dog is sleeping behind a chair

- These locatives are used to express a geographical position from the speakers environment: (cardinal points)

kùntii	east
màmbùntii	west
mbàmbùu	south
kùtú	north

e.g.

- mbèn à si kuntii "Rain has clouded in the east."
- ghùghu mbèn yi fa ma mbuntii "There is a rainbow in the west"
- nà 'yi sù mbàmbùu "Cows have gone to the south."
- ngòn yi yushi kùtu "In the north it is dry."

### 5.8.1 PRACTICE 15:

Fill the gaps with suitable locatives.

sà'yu \_\_\_\_\_ Nfor  
mba yu \_\_\_\_\_ rtuu  
nsò yu \_\_\_\_\_

njab yu \_\_\_\_\_ sè  
ngub non \_\_\_\_\_ ntá'  
ghùghu mben yì fu \_\_\_\_\_  
ya ntab nte \_\_\_\_\_

### 5.9: NUMBERS

- Cardinal numbers 1-9 are basic in the Limbum numerals.

e.g.	mo'sir	1	ntuunfu	= 6
	baà	2	sàmba	= 7
	taar	3	wàar	= 8
	kye	4	bu'ê	= 9
	tâ	5	râu	= 10

- When you use a number and a noun, the noun comes before the number. e.g.

Bsà' ntuunfu = 6 cutlasses.

- When counting numbers between 11 and 19, we use ncob à râu  
"meaning, units and 10."

e.g.	ncob	mò'sir	à	râu	= 11
	ncob	baà	à	râu	= 12
	ncob	taar	à	râu	= 13
	ncob	kyè	à	râu	= 14
	ncob	tâ	à	râu	= 15
	ncob	ntuunfu	à	râu	= 16

ncob	sàmba	à	rôu	= 17
ncob	wàamì	à	rôu	= 18
ncob	bu'á	à	rôu	= 19

- When counting in tens, the numeral plural prefix *m* comes in before the number. e.g.

mbaa	= 20
mtaar	= 30
kyè	= 40
mtá	= 50
mtuunfu	= 60
msàmba	= 70
mwàamì	= 80
mbu'á	= 90
rjèr	= 100

- When counting goes beyond 20, we use *ncob* + basic unit + tens (plural) e.g.

ncob	mò'sir	à	mbàa	= 21
ncob	tá	à	mtaar	= 35
ncob	wàamì	à	mbu'á	= 98

- When counting goes up to 900, we count in hundreds-rjèr = 100

mjèr	mbàa	200	mjèr	ntuunfu	600
mjèr	mtaar	300	mjèr	sàmba	700
mjèr	kyè	400	mjèr	bà'á	900
mjèr	tá	500			

- When reading a specific three digit number we use *ba* "plus" e.g.

343 = mjèr mtaar ba ncob taar à mkyè

675 = mjèr ntuunfu ba ncob tá à msàmba.

- One thousand is *ncuki* "1000"



### Ordinal Numbers:

- When you want to refer to something in a sequence, use é ntombi “first” é mbenji “second” from the third position you premodify the numbers using nòmbà until you get to (lusimbùu (last).e.g. nombata.
- When you want to refer to a part of something (a whole) use bəbe' (a piece or sector of) or kùkù (part or section of) a chapter of a book.  
Bəbe' ngombe                      a piece of plantain.  
Kùkù nwànwàn                      a piece of sugar cane
- When you want to say how old some one , thing or place is, you use (bfe') e.g. years.  
bfe' samba      “seven years”  
nfe' rùú      “ten years”

### **5.9.1 PRACTICE 16:**

Write the following numbers in Limbum.

13

134

245

1455

½ cup of salt.

½ a piece of sugar cane.

### **5.10**

### **ADJECTIVES.**

An adjective generally refers to a word which is used to describe someone or something. It gives more information about the name it describes. In limbum adjectives follow the nouns they describe and do take concord markers. Limbum adjectives can be divided into two groups – Attributive and Predicative uses.

**Attributive Use:** Here the adjective comes after the noun in a sort of isolation. E.g.

cè fi	“new cloth”
ntaŵ gòr	“big chair”
kaŋ sîi	“black pan”

**Predicative use:** Here the noun class concord and the copular (yu) are inserted between the noun and the adjective e.g.

mrù' mi yu gòr	“The wine is much”
rbò' li yu rber	“The pumkin is raw”
nà' yi yu bu	“the cows are white”

The predicative form can be used to describe some situations eg.

yi yu ber	“It is terrible”
yí yu tatab	“It is difficult”
yi yu rara	“It is clean”

### 5.10.1 COMPARATIVE AND SUPERLATIVE FORMS:

Limbum uses gor “big” to describe nouns in the comparative form and sê as the superlative morpheme e.g.

<u>Adjective</u>	<u>Comparative</u>	<u>Superlative</u>
còŋ “wet”	còŋ gòr “wetter”	còŋ gòr sê “wettest”
fî “new”	fî gòr “newer”	fî gòr sê “newest”
sàb “long”	sàb gòr “longer”	sàb gòr sê “longest”

We can say:

Ndab ca sàb.	“This house is long”
Ndab ca sàb gòr.	“This house is longer”
Ndab ca sàb gòr sê.	“This house is the longest”

Notice longer here means "very long" while longest means "extremely long".

Non-derived adjectives can be used to express plural ideas of the nouns they describe. For example:

Singular:	siŋ	gòr	=	"big bird"
Plural:	bsiŋ	bgòr	=	"big birds"
Singular:	rbì	ke'	=	"small kolanut"
Plural:	mbì	mke'	=	"small kolanuts"

There is another group of adjectives called Derived- Adjectives. These are formed from verbs. This group can be subdivided into:  
Non-Reduplicated – Those with syllables:

e.g	<u>Verbs</u>	<u>Adjectives</u>
	fèŋ ri "to be light"	fèŋrii "light"
	fuŋri "to be deaf"	fuŋrii "deaf"

We can say attributively: tù' fuŋrii "deaf ear"

Predicatively: tù yi fuŋrii "The ear is deaf"

Meanwhile, Reduplicated Derived Adjectives are formed from monosyllabic verbs. e.g

<u>Verb</u>	<u>Adjective</u>
be' "to break"	be'be' "half"
bòŋ "to be good"	bòŋbòŋ "good"
rìr "to be heavy"	rìrir "heavy"

Adjectives of this group often precede (come before) the nouns they describe.

e.g.	be'be' baa	"half food"
	tete nyà	"piece of meat"

Some Adjectives are formed from nouns. That is some nouns describe other nouns and are called adjectival nouns, on the one hand, while ɲwè + an adjectival noun is used to express some concepts. e.g.

Cè' mbàa = "expensive cloth"

AN

Ma muu = "nursing mother"

ɲwè mbàa = "a rich person"

ɲwè bfe = "a wise person"

### 5.10.2 PRACTICE 17:

1. Match the nouns with the adjectives

ndab	sii
ce'	mke'
mbi	nrà
kaŋ	beer

2. Write the following sentences in Limbum.

The food is too much.

The goat is expensive.

The kolanut is bitter.

It is easy.

It is clean

3. Form adjectives from the following verbs:

beb "to be bad"

raa "to be clean"

jè' "to fool about"

ce' "to be bitter"

she "to be burnt"

4. Write the following sentences in Limbum.

A powerful person.

A brave person.

A whiteman.

A bad tempered person.

5. Form the Comparative and the Superlative forms of these adjectives:

Adjective

Comparative

Superlative

sab

lù'shì

si

beer

bə

còŋ

### 5.11. ADVERBS.

An adverb gives information about how, when, where or the manner in which something happens. In Limbum adverbs usually come after the verb they modify. The adverbs are divided into three groups: time, locative and manner adverbs.

1. Time Adverbs state when an event happens. e.g.

ntìní	“today”
nìŋkùr	“yesterday”
nfè'sìb	“always”
nfèmò'	“sometimes”

They maintain their form in all structures and do not undergo comparison.

2. Locative Adverbs state where something happens or goes. e.g.

ntombi	“first or front”
seryee	“straight across”
mbayee	“straight down”

3. Manner adverbs are used to describe the way in which an event happens or is done. They begin with the adverbial prefix à- “ly”

à ter	“easily”
à mnù	“boldly”
à waa	“carelessly”
à wanj	“openly”

Some manner adverbs do not take the adverbial prefix, but also describe the manner in which something is done. e.g.

<u>Adverb</u>	<u>Comparative</u>	<u>Superlative</u>
seryee “straight across”	seryee gòr “very straight across”	seryee gòr sê “extremely straight across”
cècèr “quickly”	cècèr gòr “very quickly”	cècèr gòr sê “extremely quickly”

Adverbs can be formed from verbs and nouns using

mu + verb e.g.	mucèr	“a bit quick”
mu + adject e.g.	mucòrj	“a bit wet”

### 5.11.1 PRACTICE 18:

1. Complete the following sentences with suitable adverbs:

Ndì belò du nta ----- (ntìni, nìnlair)

Bari e ke vù à fa à ----- (nfesê, nfè'sib)

Nonji rèrèj anà ----- (nfè'mo, mbayee)

Nfò à ku cib ----- (à mna, ntombi)

Yò ta à laa ene dù ----- (cècèr, cici)

2. Can you form adverbs from the following verb using m̀a adverbial prefix? e.g.

<u>Verb</u>	<u>Adverb</u>
ce' "to be bitter"	m̀acece' "a bit bitter"
còṅ "to be saltless"	m̀còrcòr "a bit saltless"

3. Form adverbs from the following nouns:

cun "hot"  
còṅ "wet"  
lu "warm"

## 5.12. USING THE LIMBUM VERB

A verb is a word, which is usually used with a subject to say what someone or something does, what they are, or what happens to them. In this section, we treat the different verb forms – affixation, suffixation, tense and aspect.

### 5.12.1 USING VERB PREFIXATIONS

- When you want to use the verb in the infinitive form, you prefix /àr- to the stem. (Verb + infinitive prefix). E.g

ye	"eat"	àr ye	"to eat"
saṅ	"write"	àr saṅ	"to write"
gwàr	"cut"	àgwàr	"to cut"

- A verb can be used as a noun. In this case it takes the /r-/prefix e.g

<u>Verb</u>	<u>verbal</u>	<u>Noun</u>
fa' "work"	rfa'	"work"
kwe "die"	rkwe	"death"
yur "to have luck"	ryur	"fortune"

- A verb can be used to express the sense of reciprocity. We use either /m/ or /b/ plural morphemes and suffix -ni reciprocity morpheme to the verb stem. E.g

Verb

kòṅ = "like"

bàa = "hate"

rkòṅni "the act of liking each other"

rbàani "the act of hating each other"

Although, rkòṅni and rbàani are nouns, they can be used verbally. e.g.

Wowèe à kòṅni "They like each other"

Bàri ba Jòn bàani "Bari and John hate each other"

Plural reciprocity = /m/ or /b/ + verb + ni

mkòṅni "the act of liking one another in a group"

bbàani "the act of hating one another in a group"

### 5.12.2. PRACTICE 19:

1. Form infinitives from the following verbs:

ye kè

caṅ laa

du làa

vu tuṅ

2. Form verbal nouns from the following verb

ye koo

caṅ kur

du luu

3 Form plural reciprocity from the following verbs

fa

ca'ani

ba



### 5.12.3. USING VERB SUFFIXATION

- To express plural actions which are carried out simultaneously or experienced separately by many people either at the same instance or different instances, we use -nger suffix: e.g

“die”	kwe = kwengèr	“die separately one by one”
“flash”	bàb = bàbngèr	“flash separately any time”
“drink”	no` = nòngèr	“drink separately many times”

- To express the concept of an event involving several actions, one action is carried out repetitively, use /-shi/ “keep on doing” e.g

#### Verb

“eat”	ye	yeshi	“plurality of action”
“share”	gàb	gàbshi	“plurality of action /persons participating.”

- To express the idea that two people are carrying out a single action splittingly or reciprocally, use /-ni/, suffix e.g.

<u>Verb</u>			<u>Separative Action</u>
“break”	bè'	=	bè'ni “to break into two”
“share”	gàb	=	gàbni “share into two parts”
“love”	kòṅ	=	kòṅni “love reciprocally”

- To express the idea that something has happened by itself (reflexivity), use /-ti/ suffix: e.g

<u>Verb</u>			<u>Reflexivity</u>
“open”	má'	=	má'ti “open by itself”
“shatter”	waa	=	waati “shatter by itself”
“break”	keb	=	kebti “break by self”

only intransitive actions or notions are expressed.

- To express the notion that an object is changing a bit from the original state or that it is attaining a different state from its original state, we use /-ri/ suffix. E.g

<u>Verb</u>		<u>Alternative</u>	<u>Notion</u>
"white"	fab	fubri	"become whitish"
"red"	bàṅ	bàṅri	"become reddish"
"dishonest"	kùb	kùbri	"become dishonest"

- To express the notion that many people or groups are carrying out a single action in a distributive manner, use -sé suffix: e.g

<u>Verb</u>		<u>-se suffix</u>	
"come"	và	vàse	"come from different directions"
"go"	dù	dùse	"go in different directions"

- To express the notion of action that makes or causes, suffix /-si/ to intransitive verbs and they become transitivised e.g

<u>Verb</u>		<u>-si suffix</u>	
"lost"	bu	busi	"cause to get lost"
"die"	kwe	kwesi	"cause to die"
"bad"	beb	bebsi	"make it bad"

#### 5.12.4 PRACTICE 20:

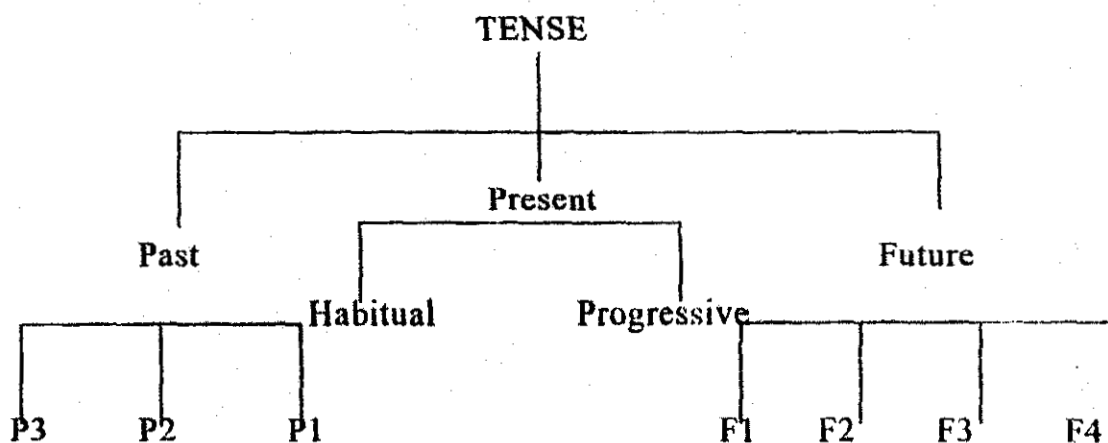
Write the following sentences in Limbum using the appropriate verb forms:

1. To eat food is good
2. Nfor is doing some work in the farm
3. Take the corn and share it out
4. Scabbies have attacked the children
5. Nfor and Bari love each other
6. The door has opened by itself

7. The dancers have gone to their homes
8. Put the chairs in the house

### 5.13. TENSES

Tenses are the different verb forms and verb groups that indicate roughly what time you are referring to. Tenses in Limbum have been treated in detail in chapter three. In this section we are concerned with usage. We consider the standard tenses that should be taught. To facilitate learning, the tenses can be summarised as follows:



From this diagram we can realise that tenses are based on the three – way opposition between the present, past and future. In each case, habitual and progressive situations can be expressed. The examples below show.

#### 5.13.1 PRESENT TENSES:

There are two types:

1. Simple Present is used to refer to habitual actions. E.g.

mè ø cu à fa

I SPT live here

“I live here”

Jòn ø fà' nje Yaounde.

John SPT work in Yaounde.

“John works in Yaounde.”

2. Present tense is also used to talk about temporary situations that stretch on for sometime in the present.

e.g. Ndi ø e dù nta "Ndi is going to the market"  
Ndi PPT Pn go market.

Nyako ø e saŋ ɲwà' "Nyako is writing"  
Nyako PPT Pn write book.

Notice that these two tenses are not marked. The understanding is that Ndi is going to the market or is on his way to the market.

### 5.13.2. Past Tenses:

There are three Standard forms:

P1 Earlier - Today Past or Immediate Past. It is marked by the tense marker ba - To say that an event took place in the past within the same day.

The tense marker comes before the verb. e.g.

Ndi à bá saŋ ɲwà'  
Ndi sm P1 write book  
"Ndi wrote a letter (today)."

Bari à ba dù nta  
Bari sm P1 go market  
"Bari went to the market (today)."

P2. Yesterday Past - is used to refer to or talk about events that occurred one or a few days ago. We use mu tense marker before the verb to locate the event.

e.g. Ndi à mu saŋ ɲwà'  
Ndi sm P2 write book  
"Ndi wrote a letter (yesterday)" (a few days ago)

Bari à ma dù nta  
Bari sm P2 go market

“Bari went to the market (yesterday)” (a few days ago)

**P3. A Long time ago Past or Remote Past** – is used to refer to events that may have taken place as early as a year ago or as late as some months back.

Even in narrative past, it is the same tense that is used. It is marked by m.

e.g. Ndi à m fà' nsu.

Ndi sm P3 work farm

“Ndi worked a farm (a long time ago).”

Bari à m dù njè Amerika.

Bari sm P3 go in America.

“Bari went to America (a long time ago).”

### 5.13.2.1 PRACTICE 21:

1. Write the following sentences in Limbum:

He saws timber

They eat snails

Nfor is going to church

She is eating groundnuts

He gave us some corn (today)

He tapped some wine (today)

She went to school (yesterday)

She had cough (a few days ago)

He once bought a horse

He fought with a lion (a long time ago).

### 5.13.3 FUTURE TENSES

These are used to refer to situations that will occur at a future time.

In Limbum, there are four distinct future tense markers: Earlier today or

immediate future (F1), later today future (F2), tomorrow or several days after the time of utterance (tomorrow) (F3) and a long time from today or remote future (F4).

- The immediate future (F1) – is used to locate an event in the immediate future not long from the time of the utterance. It is marked by be which is functionally equivalent to the English expression of “be about to” or “will soon” eg.

Bàri be dù nta.

Bari F1 go market.

“Bari will go to the market (today)”

- Later today future (F2) is used to locate an event at a subsequent point in time within the same day of the utterance. It is marked by bélò, which very much is functionally closer to the English will eg.

Bàri belò dù nta.

Bari F2 go market.

“Bari will go to the market (later today)”

- Tomorrow future (F3) is used to locate an event that is due to occur tomorrow or within a few days from the time of the utterance. It is marked by befu. e.g.

Bàri befu dù nta.

Bari P3 go market.

“Bari will go to the market (tomorrow)”

- Remote future (F4) – It is used to refer to events that are due to take place in weeks, months, years, or the indefinite future. In short, it situates events that are far removed from the present time. It is marked by békè, which can be glossed as “some day.”

Bàri	bekè	dù	bgùu
Bari	F4	go	marry

“Bari shall (one day) get married”

### 5.13.3.1. PRACTICE 22:

Write the following sentences in Limbum, using appropriate tenses.

He will (soon) eat food.

They will (soon) go to class.

I will give him a bag (today)

Her father will come (today).

They will go to Yaounde (next week).

He shall be a teacher.

### 5.14. ASPECT

In the previous section, we treated tense as a grammatical category by which we locate events as having taken place either in the past, present or future. “Aspectual expressions have no –clear-cut reference points and there is a possibility for overlap between the past, the present and the future time.” Ayunijam (1998:281). Verbs in English for example have two aspects – the perfective and the progressive aspect (which is expressed by the auxiliary verb be + ing form – implies that the activity is incomplete at the moment referred to – the activity could be in the present, the past or the future. The perfective aspect (which is expressed by the auxiliary verb have + past participle) relates a happening at one moment of time with a later moment of time in either – the present, the past or the future. Similarly, two types of aspects are identified in Limbum. The table below shows the aspectual forms and their functions:

Function	Aspectual Forms
Perfective	ku
Imperfective	Ké - Habitual Cé- Progressive

### 5.14.1 COMPLETIVE OR PERFECTIVE ASPECT:

- To express the idea that an action recently took place today (not so long) and the effect is felt at the time of speaking use the verb without a tense marker. Or use Today Past- ba + ku (perfective marker)

Bàri à ye berèṅ.

Bari SM eat groundnuts

“Bari has just eaten groundnuts.”

Bàri à ba ku ye beréṅ.

“Bari has just eaten groundnuts”

- To express the idea that the action occurred one or a few days ago, before another action of a temporal nature also occurred. We use ku (had) before the verb. eg.

Ngala à mu ku ye berèṅ

Ngala sm P2 CASP eat groundnut

“Ngala had Just eaten groundnuts.”

- To express the idea that the completive action took place at some remote time in the past, ( a long time ago – one year etc, ) use ku “had” eg.

Ngala à m ku ye berèṅ

“Ngala had just eaten groundnuts.”

### 5.14.2 IMPERFECTIVE ASPECT

It has two forms- habitual and progressive.



- To express the idea that a situation is essentially habitual of some extended period of time, repetitive on a regular basis or routine nature –we use ke, before the verb. eg.

mmir mi ke yaŋ Nfor

Eyes SM H ASP ill Nfor

“Nfor usually has eye problems”

- Progressive Aspect – is used to express an idea that is taking place at the time of speaking, or took place and continued for sometime in the past, or shall take place and continue for sometime in the future, use ce (be + ing) or (will + ing) helps to distinguish past, present and future progressive from other tenses. Eg.

1. Ngala ce ye berèŋ  
 Ngala Prog.ASP eat groundnuts  
 “Ngala is eating groundnuts.”

2. Ngala à ba ce ye berèŋ  
 Ngala SM P1 prog.ASP eat groundnuts  
 “Ngala was eating groundnuts (today)”

3. Ngala à mæ ce ye berèŋ  
 Ngala SM P2 Prog.ASP eat groundnuts  
 “Ngala was eating groundnuts (yesterday)”

4. Ngàla à m ce ye berèŋ  
 Ngala SM P3 Prog.ASP eat groundnuts  
 “Ngala used to eat groundnuts (a long time ago)”

5. Ngàla be ce ye berèŋ  
 Ngala F1 Prog.ASP eat groundnuts  
 “Ngala will be eating groundnuts (soon today).”

6. Ngàla belò ce ye berèŋ

Ngala F2 Prog.ASP eat groundnuts  
"Ngala will be eating groundnuts (later today)"

7. Ngàla befù ce ye berèṅ  
Ngala F3 Prog.ASP eat groundnuts  
"Ngala will be eating groundnuts (tomorrow)."

8. Ngàla bekè ce ye berèṅ  
Ngala F4 Prog. ASP eat groundnuts  
"Ngala shall be eating groundnuts (sometime in future)"

Notice that for nos 2-4, the à-sm, which is an obligatory part of past constructions is used, but this is not the case with present and future progressive constructions.

#### 5.14.2.1 PRACTICE 23:

Write the following sentences in Limbum using the appropriate tenses.

1. He is staying with us at the moment.
2. We have bought some wine.
3. Bari was watching TV last night.
4. Ndi has just come back from the farm.
5. Nyako has worked hard today
6. Ngwang used to live in Nkambe
7. I had known him before he went to Bamenda.
8. I will go home, early today
9. I will be working in the office tomorrow.
10. They shall be living in Yaounde.

#### 5.15. INTERROGATIVE AND NEGATIVE SENTENCES.

- *Interrogative Sentences* – In Limbum, question formation is very simple. There are two main ways of asking questions. There are-

yes-no questions and wh-question forms.

- Yes-No questions simply ask for a positive or negative response. The question marker a comes at the end of the construction.

Statement-positive orientation.	Question
akàn                      "It is a pan"	à kān à?              "Is it a pan?"
e ba gwè                  "He fell"	e ba gwi à ?          "Did he fall?"
Ndi à ba dù nta "Ndi went to the market today"	Ndi à ba dù nta à? "Did Ndi go to the market today?"

Statement-Negative orientation	Question
1. mè ye baa kà' "I haven't eaten food"	wà' me ye baa à? "I have n't eaten food, have I?"
2. e dù nta kà' "He hasn,t gone to the market"	wà' e dù nta à? "He hasn't gone to the market, has he?"

Notice that negative orientation (yes-no questions operate like questions tags in English. The negative tag marker is wà' while the negation marker is ka' as shown in the above examples.

In wh- questions- the word order is different from that of the affirmative sentences, because the question word comes before the object causing a systematic shift in the word order to the left, so that the subject marker takes the place of the subject.

e.g

Affirmative: Ndi à ba fa mrù' "Ndi gave wine"  
Question: A ba fa nda mrù' "who gave wine?"

Limbus wh- question words are-

nda ?	who?
kè?	what?
fe?	where?
njo-kè?	why?
à sé' kε	when?
à njè kè	how?

- When these words are used, they generally require as answers some specific missing information. The question word comes after the verb. When the construction begins with a subject marker, the question word is followed by an object. If it begins with a subject it ends with a question word.

1. à ba fa nda mrù'? "Who give wine today?"  
Pm p1 give wh-q wine?
2. Ndi à mu fa ke? "What did Ndi give?"  
Ndi P2 give wh-q
3. Bàri belò dù fe? "Where will Bari go?"  
Bari F1 go wh-q
4. Nyako à mu non̄si à njèkε?  
Nyako sm P2 put wh-q  
"How did Nyako put it?"
5. Nyako à mu non̄si à sé' kè?  
Nyako SM P2 \* put wh-q  
"When did Nyako put it?"

### 5.15.1 PRACTICE 24:

a) Write the following questions in Limbum.

1. Who are you talking to?
2. What did you buy?
3. When will you go to Yaounde?
4. How deep is the river?
5. Where is your office?
6. Why did he sell the house?

b) Put these statements into questions.

1. e ke cu nje Takù
2. me riŋ àrbu' rdib
3. Nyako koŋ gwà'
4. Bàri e ke web buu kà'

### 5.15.2 NEGATIVE SENTENCES

In Limbum, an affirmative sentence can be changed into a negative sentence by simply adding the negative particle *ka'* (not) at the end of the sentence. E.g.

#### Statement

mè tur sà'

"I have a cutlass"

Bàri e ke fà' nsù

"Bari works a farm"

Nfor à ba ye baa

Nfor sm P1 eat food

"Nfor ate food today"

#### Negative

me tur sà' ka'

"I don't have a cutlass"

Bàri e ke fà' nsù ka'

"Bari does not work a farm"

Nfor à ba ye baa ka'

Nfor sm pl eat food Neg.

"Nfor did not eat food today."

Negative questions – the question word comes after the negative marker.

Eg.                    ɲwê    e   mɔ   vâ   cor   ka'   à   nda?  
Person sm P2 come church not wh-q  
“Who did not come to church?”

                          e   yu   kwâ   ka'   njokè?  
Sm buy corn not why?  
“Why has he not bought corn?”

### 5.15.2.1 PRACTICE 25:

A) Form negatives from the following:

1. Ndi à mu fâ' nsu.
2. Nyako belo dù nta.
3. Yé baa se'ni.
4. Nyag muu ni baa.
5. We gèe à su'si bce'

B) Write the following questions in Limbum:

1. Why hasn't he gone to Ndu?
2. Who didn't dance yesterday?
3. Didn't you like my new bag?
4. Couldn't you wait for him?
5. Haven't you finished the work?

## 5.16. PREPOSITIONS

Having treated prepositional phrases in chapter four, we now focus on the usage. Usage differs in respect to location, direction, company and instrument. We begin with location.

### 5.16.1. LOCATION

You may want to specify the position of something, you use prepositions indicating position, before the object whose position it describes. eg.

kù ntombì	"in front"
mbé nji	"behind"
mbe tar	"between"
àgeŋ	"next to, near."

e.g.

Sà' yuu àgeŋ nta'	
Cutlass it near chair	"The cutlass is near the chair"

### 5.16.2. DIRECTIONAL

You may want to indicate the direction of the place that someone or something is going to, use prepositions that describe the direction before the place or desired destination. e.g.

kù = up to
ser = across at/to
mbà = down to

Ndi be dù kù Bamenda.  
Ndi F1 go up to Bamenda  
"Ndi will go to Bamenda"

To make directional prepositions locational, they must be followed by nouns. For example:

mba kòb	"down in the forest"
kù rtù	"up the hill"

### 5.16.3 ACCOMPANIMENT

You may want to say with whom, or what someone or something did an action, you use prepositions of accompaniment. e.g.

nì = with

Bàri à dù nì muu

Bari SM go with child

Bari has gone with the child

#### 5.16.4 INSTRUMENTAL

You may want to express the fact that someone used a particular instrument to effect an action. Use prepositions that signal instruments before the instrument used: e.g.

Ndi à gwàr ntangùu nì sá'

Ndi has cut the wood with a matchet.

#### 5.16.4.1 PRACTICE 26:

Write the following sentences in Limbum using the appropriate prepositions:

1. There's a cat under the chair.
2. Put the books on top of the table.
3. The village is between two hills.
4. They live in Bamenda.
5. Bàrì's husband works in London.
6. Pick with your hands.
7. Nfor kept it in the box.
8. You can eat it with groundnuts.
9. Cook it with salt.
10. Open it with your teeth.

#### 5.17. FOCUS CONSTRUCTION

Focus construction involves changing the position of the subject or object in the sentence by moving them to some place of prominence. In the case of the subject, it often moves to, or comes after the verb. When this



happens, the speaker is putting prominence on the subject. But when prominence is on the object, it comes before the subject. The focus marker for subject prominence is simply: subject marker + Tense.

Object prominence: subject marker + Tense + bá. e.g

Specification of subject prominence.

1) Statement: Nfor à ce ye baa "Nfor was eating food."

Become: à bà ce ye Nfor baa

SM P1 Prog.ASP eat Nfor Food

"It was Nfor who was eating food."

2) Statement: Nyakó à mu tu nyaa. "Nyako shot an animal yesterday"

Become: à mu tu Nyakó nyaa.

SM P2 shoot Nyako animal.

"It was Nyako who shot an animal."

Specification of object prominence:

1) Statement: Nfor à ce nõ ba mrù'  
Nfor was drinking but wine.

Become: à bà bá mrù' ce Nfor à ba nõ.

SM P1 FM wine Prog. ASP Nfor SM P1 drink.

"It was wine that Nfor was drinking."

2) Statement: Nyakó befa ku mbi  
"Nyako will pluck kolanuts tomorrow"

Becomes: befa bà ba mbi ce Nyakò befa kà

F2 object subject F2 verb

"It shall be but kolanuts that Nyako shall pluck"

In object prominence, it is understood that there were other objects but the participant chose to act on one.

### 5.17.1 PRACTICE 27

Change the following sentences into focus constructions.

1. Bari à ce fà' nsu
2. Ndi àba du nta
3. Tamfu à mụ gwàr nà'
4. Ndi à ce su'si ba bcè'
5. Bari à mụ ce láa ba bkò'

### 5.18. TOPICALIZATION CONSTRUCTIONS:

Topicalization means changing the normal word order in a sentence by moving a phrase to a more prominent position at the front of the sentence. Usually, phrases that move are Noun phrases, verb phrases or prepositional phrases. If a noun phrase moves to the front of the sentence, its former position is filled with a pronoun, meanwhile when a verb phrase moves, its place is filled with an auxiliary, but when a prepositional phrase moves, the gap is filled with a comma or nothing. e.g.

#### 1. Topicalizing Noun Phrases

Statement: Nfor be ye baa ca ni mbo.

“Nfor will eat this food with his hand”

Becomes: Baa ca, Nfor be ye yi ni mbo

“This food, Nfor will eat it with his hands”

#### 2. Topicalizing Verb Phrases:

Statement: Tamfu be fa Nfò sà' “Tamfu will give Nfor a matchet.”

Becomes: fá Nfor sà', Tamfu be gèe

“ Give Nfor a matchet, Tanfu will do.”

#### 3. Topicalizing Prepositional Phrases:

Statement: mè saṅ ḡwà' ca ni bo “I have written this letter manually.”

Becomes: ni bo, mè saṅ ḡwà' ca.

“Manually, I have written this letter.

Or this letter is handwritten”.

### 5.18.1 PRACTICE 28:

Here are four sentences. Transform them using the three ways shown above.

1. Bari be laa baa ca ni ŋguu.
2. Tamfu befa dù skull nì m̀̀k̀̀u.
3. Bari à nyaŋ muu nì bàar
4. Nyako à koo nyaà à ndeŋ.

### 5.19. RELATIVE CLAUSES

A relative clause is a subordinate clause which gives more information about someone or something mentioned in the main clause Sinclair et al. (1992:579). In Limbum it comes after the noun it modifies, thereby restricting (the person or thing it refers to). Limbum Relative Pronouns include:

- ce      “that” “which”  
nì      “that.”

nà marks the end of the relative clause.

In Limbum there are two types of relative clauses. One kind simply gives a little more information about someone or something. This extra information is not important and could be omitted without distorting the meaning. This type of Relative clause is called non-restrictive relative clause).

1. le' [ce mè yuu nà] yì boŋ

Relative Clause

This calabash which I have bought is good.

2. ŋguu [ce Nfor à se' nà] yì yushi

Relative Clause

This firewood which Nfor has fetched is dry.

Restrictive relative clause defines and limits what is being referred to.

The clause is very important to the whole sentence and cannot therefore be omitted without distorting the meaning of the sentence. e.g.

1. ngwe [ce e ma luu mè nà] à kwi  
"The dog which bit me has died."
2. rkoŋ [ce Nfor a ba ta ngwe àgho nà] li yuu ni Ndi  
"The spear which Nfor shot the dog with is with Ndi."

### 5.19.1. PRACTICE 29:

Join the following sentences using Relative pronouns.

1. Nfò à ma sè nguu nì sà'. Sà' à kebti.
2. ndab wer cu mbó. Ndab e cu.
3. muu ce war. Bàri tur muu.
4. njàa à gwè mè mbe kùu. Njàa ceb.
5. Nfò à vu nì mrù' mi lee.

### 5.20. INDEFINITE CONSTRUCTIONS

Indefinite Constructions are formed when the speaker is interested in the person or thing that was affected by the action. It is formed by using the third person Indefinite Plural Pronoun à (someone or they) at the beginning of the sentence followed by the verb and then the person or thing that is affected. The examples below show:

1. Statement:

S	V	O
Ndì a	ma cemi	nsu.
Ndi sm	P3 clear	farm
		"Ndi cleared the farm"

Indefinite Construction:

S	V	O
À	mà cemù	nsu.
3PL:INDF	P3 clear	farm

“They / someone cleared the farm”  
or “The farm was cleared”

2. Statement:

S	V	O
Ŋwaè ryè'ni	be fà ye	mnsaŋ.
Teacher	F2 eat	rice

“The teacher will eat rice”

Indefinite Construction:

S	V	O
À	be fà ye	mnsaŋ
3PL:INDF	F2 eat	rice.

“Someone / They will eat rice”  
or “Rice will be eaten.”

For somethings or category of nouns, e “it” third person singular for common nouns is used. In some cases as the concord elements such as *li* for nouns beginning with *r-* prefix or *mí* for plural nouns as well as *yí* (they) is used. e.g.

Statement:

S	V	O
Rwèè li	ko	nyà.
Cat	catch	animal.

“The cat has caught an animal”.

Indefinite Construction:

S	V	O
Li	ko	nyà.
It	catch	animal

"It has caught an animal".

Statement:

S	V	O	Neg P
Nà' yi	ye	kwâa	ka' .
Cows sm	eat	corn	not

"The cows have not eaten corn".

Indefinite Constructions:

S	V	O	Neg P
Yi	yé	kwâa	Ka'
They	eat	corn	not

"They haven't eaten corn"  
or "Corn hasn't been eaten"

### 5.20.1 PRACTICE 30

Form indefinite constructions from the following sentences:

1. Nyako à bu' kaŋ.
2. Nyo à ba luu Ndi
3. Wer be fu sɛ' ŋguu.
4. Rweè li ko fuu.
5. Wowèè à nòŋsi mŋwà' mbe nta'.

### 5.21. DIRECT AND INDIRECT SPEECH

There are two ways of reporting what somebody has said. You either use direct or indirect speech. In direct speech we repeat the original speaker's words and put them between inverted commas. A comma is placed immediately after the reporting expression. e.g.

1. Ndi à m làa, "Me ke ye nyà ka'".  
Ndi said, "I don't eat meat".

2. Tata às suŋ wowèe, “Jòn be fu dù kù Bamenda”.  
Tata told them, “John will go to Bamenda”.

In indirect speech we report the meaning of a speech, without necessarily using the speaker's words:

Direct: Tamfu a suŋ Ndi, “Me ye ndab.”  
Tamfu told Ndi. “I have seen a home.”

Indirect: Tamfu à suŋ Ndi ene e ye ndab  
Tamfu has told Ndi that he saw a house.

Direct: “Nyakò à lòr kàkù sà' à mà'” Ndi à làa.  
Nyako has taken the broken matchet and thrown it,  
Ndi said.

Indirect: Ndi à làa ene Tamfu a mu lorkàku sà' à mà'.  
Ndi said that Tamfu took the piece of matchet and  
threw it.

Limbum uses the following reporting words

làa	“say”
suŋ	“tell”
bibshi	“ask”, “question”
bèsè	“reply”
byemì	“accept” “agree” “believe”
nàshi	“correct”
enè	“that”

### 5.21.1. PRACTICE 31:

Put the following sentences into reported speech.

1. Sàmba à làa, “mè koŋ àryuu motò nfi.”
2. Bàri à mu làa, “mè ce ye'ni li bàrà'”.

3. e ba làa                    “mè be lo dù nta.”
4. Ndi à mu bibshì        “rtuu nko li yu?”
5. Nfor à làa ,              “mè ke fâ' tàa”.

## 5.22. COORDINATION

Generally coordinating conjunctions link clauses or, groups of words of the same grammatical type. In Limbum we can join clauses, in five different ways, using common conjunctions such as-

ba	=	and
à	=	with / to
σ	=	v + v (verb + verb)
kè	=	or

1. Noun phrase + Noun Phrase coordination-In this situation, two noun groups, words or phrases are linked together. e.g.

1.a) lor sà' ba m̀kɔŋ                    “Take a cutlass and spears.”  
           Take cutlass and spears

2.b) ye baa à njàb                    “Eat food with soup.”  
           Eat food with soup

2. Verb Phrase + Verb Phrase-Coordination.

e.g. 1.a) caŋ dù vù                    “Go and come back quickly.”  
           run go come

2.b) vù ko baa ye à njàb  
           Come take food eat with soup

In this case the verbs are used imperatively. Verbs often co-occur like this in Limbum, without any conjunctions.



3. Propositional Phrases can also be coordinated.

- e.g. a.) bèe à yòb nje nta ba mbà kòb.  
People SM sing in market and in forest  
People are singing in the market and in the forest.
- b.) wè kòshi à ma' njeb nkàa ba kùu cùu.  
When harvest SM throw in basket and in mouth.  
When harvest throw some in the month and in the basket

4. Adjectival phrases are often coordinated using à.

- e.g. a) mrù' mcá mi leē à ce'  
This wine is sweet and bitter.
- b) Mè yu cè' mo' yi bàŋ à sii  
I have bought a dress which is red and black

5. OR Coordination

- a) ka' wè gee bõŋbõŋ e kee wè gèe bebeb e, a yo nsà'  
Whether you have done well or not is your problem.
- b) kè wè ye e, ke we ye ka' e mē riŋ ka'  
Whether you have eaten or not, I don't know

**5.22.1 PRACTICE 32:**

Write the following sentences in Limbum using appropriate conjunctions

1. He is small but strong
2. Ndi and Ngala are good friends
3. He can neither read nor write.
4. Eat and drink water.
5. You can go and come back tomorrow.
6. You or Mary can come.

## PRACTICE 1

bén	ngǔr
gàgà	ráa
gèe	sê
mbàanyó	kùu
ncùkì	mbàb
nyör	nsìr

## Exercise 1

sebsi	tee
ser	lee
beb	ene
see	cer

## Exercise 2

ḡkò'	kwàḡ
ḡkáa	kweg
ḡkwà	teg
ḡkwe	ntag
ḡkar	ntòḡ

## Exercise 3

ḡkúnji	ḡkunḡku
bàrbàr	njàr
càcàr	ràusi
lur	buràr'
fàshì	kàr

## Exercise 4

ghaa	ghar	ghòni
ghaanì	ghee	ghòb
ghaḡ	ghèe	ghub

### Exercise 5

bwàwa

bcece

bburù'

bbab

bbar

### Exercise 6

mntar

mṅkùu

mufar

mṅgùṅ

mwàa

mrùuruu

mbee

mbab

### PRACTICE 2

ṅgàa nta

ṅgàa samba

berèṅ

mṅgâr

maku

boo

bèe

### PRACTICE 3

ṅwè nsì

ndab ṅòr

cè' ber

kwáa mber

ṅwè mceb

ṅgàa bye

ṅwè rfâ'

ṅgàa mcaṅni

### PRACTICE 4

fâa

tar

fub fa

gò'

### PRACTICE 5

co'co

kaka

beber

dò'dò'

cercer

ntugntug

sàmba sàmba

kàkà

## PRACTICE 6

### Exercise 1

1. ò / e

2. wè / me

3. ye / me

4. wowèe

5. mè / e / wè

### Exercise 2

1. e fa yí nè mē.

2. me à fà' nè ye.

3. wowèe à ce fye' sò'.

4. e kòn àrdù à wowèe.

5. a be bii bii wèe ye.

## PRACTICE 8

siŋ ca

bcè' bca

bsiŋ bca

ŋgub ca

rwèe ca

ŋgub ca

mwèe mca

rè' ca

cè' ca

mrè' mca

## PRACTICE 9

### Exercise 1

la rkìŋ

lab rwè

mer mŋkìŋ

mìsee mbì

yab ŋkfu

yì ndab

njar yì

yìsee ndab

yì mbu

wab mndab

## Exercise 2

mrè' anà à ma      ngub ca a yi  
mrè' anà à mîsee    ngub ca a yer  
mrè' anà à mab      ñgub ca a yee

bàa ca a ya  
bbàa bca a vi  
bbàa bca a wab

## PRACTICE 10

à be dù nì yo- kùu  
e be dù nì yi- kùu  
wowèe a be dù nì mab mḡkùu  
e be nyàḡ nì yi- bo  
wowèe a be laa nì mab- mbo  
a be laa nì yo- bo.

## PRACTICE 11

ghoḡse wab bnyor  
wowèe a mû bii bii wab bnyor  
Bantar a Nyab a kòḡni  
Wowèe à cà'ni wab bnyor

## PRACTICE 12

(A) nta'

kaḡ ca  
ḡkub  
banana

(B) tí ce lee

baa yi boḡ  
ḡwè mò' a vu  
bàa mo' yi yuu mbena.

### PRACTICE 13

mè ye ñwè ka'  
mè rìṅ yuu mo'ka'  
mè kòṅ yuu wewee  
màmí be ye yuu ka'.  
Ḷwè mò' ce tà' wè.

### PRACTICE 14

1. wè mù gèe ba-ke?
2. ñwà' ca a yì nda?
3. ñwè e mu lor ya ngar a nda?
4. wè a gèe ba nì bo yì fe?
5. ñwè we yí a nda?
6. wè a vù nfè' a càni njo-ke?
7. wè à vù a njè ke?

### PRACTICE 15

- |        |            |
|--------|------------|
| 1. nì  | 4. gòr     |
| 2. ku  | 5. mbe     |
| 3. mbà | 6. kùuntii |
|        | 7. mbe tar |

### PRACTICE 16

1. ncòb taar à ràu
2. rjèr ba ncòb kyè a mu mtaar
3. mjèr mbaa ba ncòb tâ a mu mkyè
4. ncukì nì mjèr kyè ba ncob tâ a mu ntâ.
5. tete ndonṅ mṅṅwanṅ
6. kùkù ṅwanṅwanṅ.

## PRACTICE 17

sheshe tàa  
mbii msii  
cìcì ɲwè  
ɲwè bfe  
ɲwè nte

## PRACTICE 18

1. àr ye	àr kè
àr caɲ	àr laa
àr dù	àr làa
àr rà	àr tuɲ

2. rye	rkòo
rcaɲ	rkur
rdù	rluu

3. fa ni  
cà'ni  
bani

## PRACTICE 19

1. àr ye baa yi bòn
2. Nfò ce gèe rfâ' mo' ma mu nsu.
3. lor kwâa gabshi
4. mcar mi koo boo
5. Nfò à Bàri à kòɲni
6. kèh yi mà'ti ni yi bo.

7. ngàa bii à dùse a wab mla'
8. non̄si mnta' mbe ndab

### PRACTICE 20

1. e ke fa' mntanguu
2. wowèe a ke ye btà'
3. Nfò ce dù cor
4. e ce ye berèŋ
5. e ba fa wèr kwâa
6. e ba reŋ mrù'
7. e mu dù gwà'
8. kosì yi mu ko ye
9. e mbe yuu nya bàrà'
10. e mbe rè bkòr à burà'

### PRACTICE 21

1. e be ye baa
2. wowèe a be dù mbe ndab gwà'
3. mbelò fa ye baa
4. yi tâ belò vù'
5. wowèe a bekè dù nje Yàwundè
6. e bekè ba gwè rye'ni

### PRACTICE 22

1. e ce cu wèr wowèe sé'ni.
2. wèr a ba yuu mrù'.
3. Bàri a mce ye TV ni ŋkùr
4. Ndi à ku kuti e fa m̄jkà.
5. Nyakò a fà' tatab ntini.
6. Ngwan̄ à mce cu mbe Nkambè'



7. mèm riŋ ye tà e ka' ke dù kù Bamendà.
8. mbelò yàŋse dù à la'.
9. mbefù fà' mbe wafis à yàŋse
10. wowèe a bekè ce cu nje Yàwundè.

### 5.6.6. PRACTICE 23

- A)
1. wè laà ba ni nda?
  2. wè ba yuu ba ke?
  3. e bi du njè Yawundè à sê'ke?
  4. rdib anà li coomi à njè-ke?
  5. yo wafis yuu ba fe?
  7. e m fuèni ndab njo-ke?
- B)
1. e ke cu fe?
  2. wà' à riŋ àrbu' rdib à?
  3. Nyakò à kòŋ ke?
  4. wà' Bàri e ke web buu a?

### 5.6.7. PRACTICE 24

1. e ba dù kù yàa ka' njo-ke?
2. ɣwè ce e mu bìi bìi ni ɣkùr ka' à nda?
3. à mbò wè mu kòŋ ya bàa fi a?
4. Kade' wè ba tee ye ka' a?
5. à mbò wè m̀isi rfà' anà ka'a?

### 5.6.8. PRACTICE 25

1. rwèe li yuu njeb mbù nta'
2. non̄si m̄ɣwà' mbe ndu TV anà
3. rla' li yuu mbetar mntùu
4. Wowèe à ke cu kù Bamendà

5. Ndu Bàri e ke fà' njè London
6. lor nì yo bo
7. Nfò à mụ nònsi njè ñkùb
8. Kade' à ye yi nì berèṅ
9. laa nì mngwaṅ
10. mù' nì mo mnsòṅ

### **PRACTICE 26**

- à ba ce fà' Bàri nsu'  
 à ba dù Ndi nta  
 à mụ gwàr Tamfu nà'  
 à ba ba bcè' ce Ndi à ba sù'si  
 à mu ba ba bkò' ce Bàri à mụ láa

### **PRACTICE 27**

1. nì ṅguu baa ca, Bàri be laa.
2. skull nì mṅkuù, Tamfu befu dù.
3. muu nì bàar, Bàri à nyaṅ.
4. njà a ndeṅ, Nyakò à koo

### **PRACTICE 28**

1. sà' ce Nfò à mụ se' ṅguu àgho nà à kebti.
2. ndab wer cu mbo nà ce cu.
3. muu ce Bàri tur nà ce war.
4. njaà ce e gwè mè mbe kùu nà ceb.
5. mrù' ce Nfo à vù àgho na mì lee.

### **PRACTICE 29**

1. À bu' kaṅ.
2. E ba luu Ndi.
3. À be fu se' ṅguu.

4. Li ko Iuu.
5. À nòṅsi mṅwà' mbe nta'.

### **PRACTICE 30**

1. Sàmba à laa ene e kòṅ aryuu motò nfi.
2. Bàri à mu laa ene e ce ye'ni li bàrà'.
3. e ba laa enè e belò dù nta.
4. Ndi à mu bibshi fàdi' ce rtuu ṅkò' li yuu.
5. Nfò à mu laa ene e ke fà' mbo.

### **PRACTICE 31**

1. e ṅwe si à tab.
2. Ndi à Ngàla à Kòṅni
3. ka' arbè' e kè àrsan e riṅ ka'.
4. mbanrùu à bàa byèṅge njo bè' wowèe a gee mntanṣhi gòr.
5. mbe fa ni nyakò ba Ndi.

## **5.2.4 CONCLUSION**

We began this chapter by making a comment on pedagogical grammar and its central place in this work. Grammatical items were then selected and presented on the analyses done in the previous chapters. The approach adopted was that of simple to complex to facilitate acquisition. Since we took into consideration the various proposals made for the standardization of the language, the items provide the most up to date and standard reference material for both learners and teachers.

Each grammar point was explained in simple straightforward language in an attempt to make it accessible to non-linguists. In order to check understanding, each item was followed by practice exercises. To make the section more composite and tidy, a key section containing answers to all the practice exercises was attached at the end of the chapter. This, it is believed would help facilitate independent learning as it is user friendly.

# CHAPTER 6

## CONCLUSION

### 6. SUMMARY:

The principal objective of this work has been to formalise the phonological, morphological, and syntactic processes of Limbum with a view to establishing grammar rules that are explicit enough to foster the standardization of Limbum.

In chapter one, the main objective and the scope of the work were presented. It was clear that reading and writing inconsistencies existed even in documents produced by WILA (Wimbum Literacy Association). The need for a standard variety was therefore overdue. The choice for an eclectic approach was stated with comments as to the rate of utilization of the various linguistic theories in vogue. Also stated was the methodology – which had to be followed systematically in order to get the desired results. Then, the genetic, geographical and historical location of Limbum and its speakers were reviewed. Then the review of the linguistic classification of Limbum was done, in order to give this work a solid foundation for the phonological, morphological and syntactic analyses that would follow.

This was preceded by a detailed review of linguistic works on the language that were of relative importance to the study. From the reviews it was underscored that varied inconsistencies existed. Consequently, the standardisation process to be carried out in this study was certainly necessary.

In chapter two, the main form of the study was the phonological processes in order to forge an acceptable or standard sound and writing system of the language. In order to achieve this goal, the consonant and vowel charts of the different dialectal regions were established, compared and contrasted. This also required a thorough examination of the syllable structures and tone marking systems with particular reference to the works of Fiore (1987) and Fransen (1995). Using the standard Generative

Phonology Model of Chomsky and Halle (1976) and the traditional classical phonemics approach. Concrete conclusions were arrived at. For instance, after reviewing the phonetic consonants of Southern Limbum, it was concluded that consonants have a fricative quality due to their elaborately labiodentalization process. After analyzing the phonemic status of the Southern Limbum consonants, the following consonant chart was adopted.

### PHONEMIC CONSONANT CHART OF SOUTHERN LIMBUM

Place of Articulation		Labial	Alveolar	Alveor Palatal	Palatal	Velar	Glotal
Manner of Articulation							
Stops	Vl		t			k	ʔ
	Vd	b	d			g	
	Prenas	mb	nt nd				
Affricates	Vl		ts	tʃ			
	Vd		dz	dʒ			
	Prenas						
Fricatives	vl	f	s	ʃ			
	vd	v	z	ʒ		ɣ	h
	prenas	mf					
Nasals		m̩	n		ɲ	ŋ	
		m					
Liquids	lateral		L nl				
	trill		r nr				
Glides		W ɲw			j		

Figure 6.1

Similarly the phonemic review of its vowel status led to the adoption of this chart.

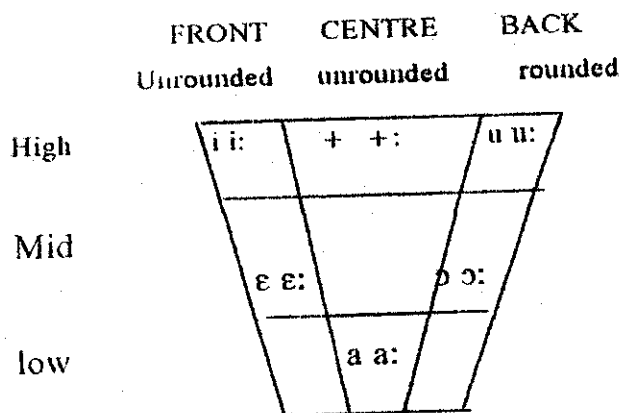


Figure 6.2

The Central Consonant Chart was then reviewed as shown below:

PLACE/MANNER OF ARTICULATION		Labial	Alveolar	Alveor palatal	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Stops	vl		t			k	ʔ
	vd	b	d			g	
	Prenas						
Affricates	vl			tʃ			
	vd			dʒ			
	Prenaa						
Fricatives	vl	f	s	ʃ			h
	vd	v		ʒ		ɣ	
	Prenas						
Nasals		m	n		ɲ	ŋ	
		ɱ					
Liquids	lateral		l				
	trill		r				
Glides		W			j		

Figure 6.3

In its consideration, the fricative column was deleted. Consequently [ts] and [dʒ] were treated as palatal-alveolar stops and [ʔ] though highly restricted was maintained. The issue of vowel chart was resolved as having a seven-vowel system with the following configuration.

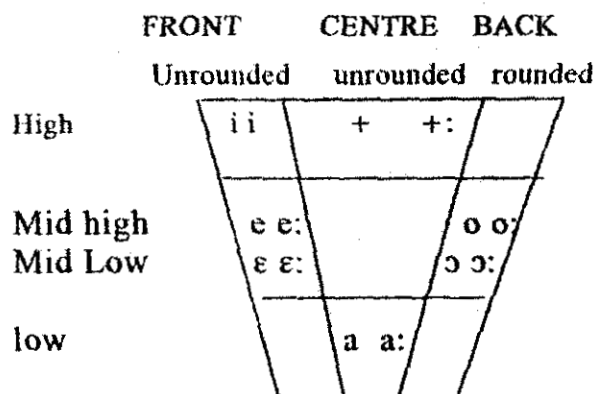


Figure 6.4

This conclusion applied for the Northern dialect too, as they were highly similar (see figure 2.14). It was realized that whereas the sound inventories for the Northern and Central dialects had limited disparities; that of the South exhibited high disparity. In this wise therefore Limbum was considered as having two dialects as far as the sound system was concerned. Their differences were established as follows:

1. Consonants not attested in the Southern dialect;

- Palatalized consonants [kʸ, bʸ, dʸ, gʸ, tʃʸ, rʸ, sʸ, ɲʸ, yʸ, mʸ, nʸ, ɲʸ, ŋʸ, rʸ] in fact, all consonants palatalized before [i]
- /m/ which is a result of the juxtaposition of two bilabial nasals in the Northern dialect.
- The voiced velar fricative /ɣ/

2. Consonants not attested in the Northern dialect:

- The affricates /ts/ and /dz/.
- The voiced alveolar fricatives /z/
- The prenasalized consonants /mf/, /ns/, /nf/, /ɲʒ/, /nl/, /nr/, /mb/, /nt/, /nd/, /ŋk/, /ŋg/.

3. At the phonemic level, the velar fricative /ɣ/ attested in the North was absent in the south, just like labialised sounds /mb/ and pre-nasalized /Nf/, attested in the South were absent in the North as well. With these analyses, we then posited the Limbum Standard consonant chart as follows:

### STANDARD CONSONANT CHART OF LIMBUM

MANNER OF ARTICULATION		PLACE OF ARTICULATION					
		Labial	Alveolar	Alveor palatal	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Stops	vl		t			k	ʔ
	vd	b	d			g	
Affricates	vl			tʃ			
	vd			dʒ			
Fricatives	vl	f	s	ʃ			h
	vd	v		ʒ		ɣ	
Nasals		m	n		ɲ	ŋ	
		ɱ					
Liquids	lateral		l				
	trill		r				
Glides		w			j		

Figure 6.5



For vowel differences, it was clear that [ + ] [ +: ] were present in the Southern dialect while [ e ], [ e: ], [ o ], [ o: ] were only present in the Northern dialect at the phonemic level. At this point, the need for the standardisation of the sound system was evident with all these considerations, we then posited the Limbum Standard vowel chart as follows:

## STANDARD VOWEL CHART OF LIMBUM

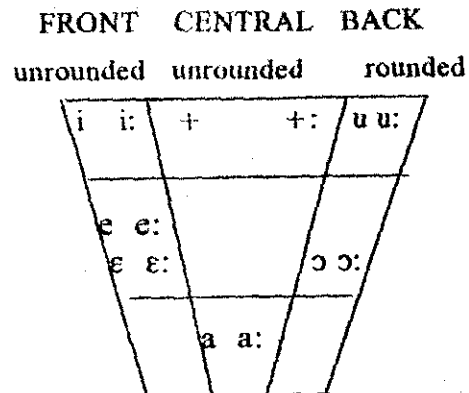
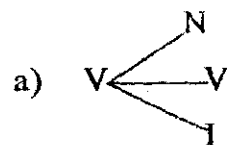


Figure 6.6

However, before proposing a standard orthography, the syllable structure of the dialect was revisited. For the Southern dialect, a new syllable structure V, CV, CVC, CCV, and CCVC was established contrary to Fransen's (1995:41) CV, CVV, CVC, ccv, CCVV, CCVC, N, N. syllable structure. In the new syllable structure, v-syllable type was identified as being a vowel, a syllabic nasal or syllabic [r]. Similar arguments were presented for the Northern dialect meaning therefore that Limbum syllable structures were uniform and needed no standardisation. The syllable types are:



- b) CV
- c) CVC
- d) CCV
- e) CCVC

This was followed by the study of the Limbum word structure. Applying Homorganic Nasal Assimilation (HNA). Fricativization (Fr) Consonant Devoicing, consonant glottalization, vowel nasalization, vowel backing phonological processes for the Southern dialect and consonant palatalization, labialization, nasal lengthening processes for the Central North dialects, it was concluded that:

[r] is not heard at word initial position in the Central and (Northern) regions but is heard in the Southern region.

[i] is heard in the Central and Northern regions and gradually moves to alveolar position as one moves further South. For example;

<u>Gloss</u>	<u>Northern/Central</u>	<u>Southern Central</u>	<u>Further South</u>
	<u>velar</u>	<u>ɕ</u>	
"pot"	[rk <sup>y</sup> iŋ]	[tʃ <sup>y</sup> iŋ]	[rt <sup>s</sup> iŋ]
"egusi"	[ŋg <sup>y</sup> i]	[ndz <sup>y</sup> iʔ]	[ndziʔ]

Again [dz] which occurs before /i/ and other vowels in the Southern dialect is realized as /d/ plus the semi vowel /j/:

<u>Central</u>	<u>Southern</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
[rdʒ ê]	[rdʒi]	hundred
[dʒ er]	[dʒer]	walk
[ndʒ ar]	[ndʒàr]	sister

After having considered the various phonological processes as indicated above and further taking into consideration sociolinguistic factors for the establishment of an acceptable multidialectal orthography void of inconsistencies, the following alphabet chart was proposed:

Aa as in kán	"pan"
Bb as in bàa	"bag"
Cc as in cán	"run"
Dd as in dòn	"honey"

Ee as in yé	"eat"
Ɛɛ as in yé	"see"
Ff as in fòr	"castrated goat"
Gg as in gàn	"surround"
Gh as in ghée	"calabash bowl"
Hh as in háar	"until"
Ii as in ncir	"lead"
Jj as in já'	"help"
Kk as in káa	"squeeze"
Ll as in lá'	"to gum"
Mm as in mà'	"throw"
Nn as in nàshi	"correct"
ny as in nyó	"snake"
ŋŋ as in ñàb	"crawl"
Oo as in kòb	"forest"
Rr as in rèn	"tap wine"
Ss as in sán	"to write"
Sh as in shán	"prison"
Tt as in téé	"ring"
Uu as in yú'	"yam"
Ʋu as in vub	"bone"
Ww as in wéb	"fear"
Yy as in yàn	"illness"
' as in nta'	"chair"

In effect, our work summarily proposed the deletion of /z/, /dz/ and /p/, the maintenance of /h/ and /'/, and finally the inclusion of / ŋ / on the alphabet chart of Limbum. This gave us a total of 29 letters (7 vowels and 22 consonants). For tone orthography, system 2 of Mfonyam's (1989:459) proposed was confirmed and considered most appropriate for the writing system.

Chapter three dwelt purposely on the morphology and morphological processes of Limbum in an attempt to come up with standard morphological rules for the language. Inspiration was drawn from the works of Van Reenen and Voorhoeve (1980), Fiore (1987) and Fransen (1995). This enabled the treatment of the morphology from a semantic perspective – considered to be a better asset in the learning and teaching transaction of the language. It was viewed that the noun class system corroborated by the semantic approach heightened the productivity of each category, thereby facilitating the learning of the grammar and vocabulary expansion skills. Various aspects of noun, pronoun, numeral, adjective, adverb and verb morphology were treated in detail in order to provide a rich reference for grammar and vocabulary lessons. Tense and aspect as well as mood were treated accordingly.

Chapter four brought into focus syntactic processes of Limbum by making an inventory of some of the phrases of the different dialects of the language. Transformational Grammar and the Minimalist Program as outlined in Chomsky (1995), gave a lot of inspiration. These theories were used to generate phrase structure rules in a simplified manner, thereby minimizing our understanding of the acquisition burden of young learners, in effect maximizing their chances for the acquisition of Limbum. Our investigation of phrase typology in Limbum showed that it was basically the same no matter the dialectal differences that existed at the phonological and morphological forms.

For instance, in the phrase “my house”, all dialects would read it as “yà ndab” just like, “to dress” would be read as “àr yár shè’” in the Southern dialect and in the Centre and North, it will be “àr yár cè’.” The difference is in the sh letter of the Southern dialect being replaced by the c letter. This difference as it was seen did not affect with the phrase typology of the language.

Many grammar rules were established. Amongst them were-The Limbum underived NP which was generated as:

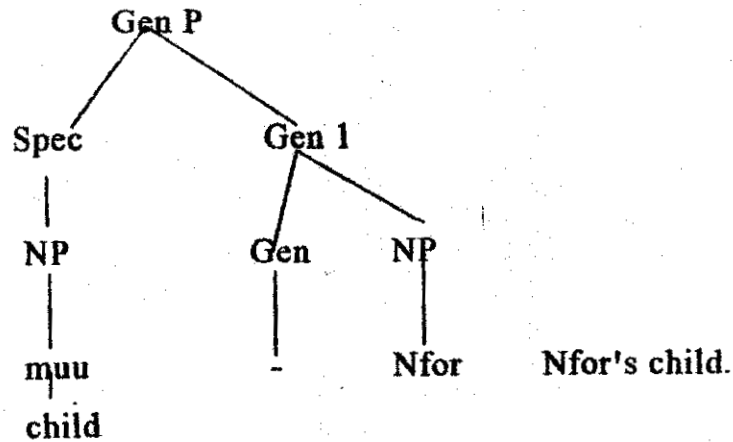
(1) NP → N

(2) NP → Pron.

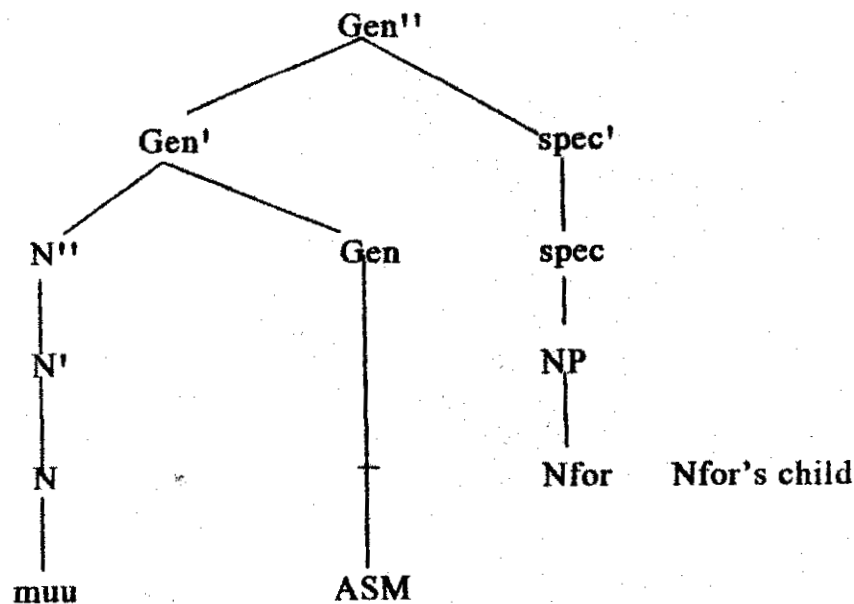
For derived NP it was observed that Limbum is basically a head-first language and the phrase structure rule for derived NP is NP → N Det.

For noun modified NP, NP → N' was generated. Or NP → N Adj

In the case of Genitive Construction, Ndamsah's argument (1997:81) was reviewed with Raddford's (1999:31), Spec position in mind.

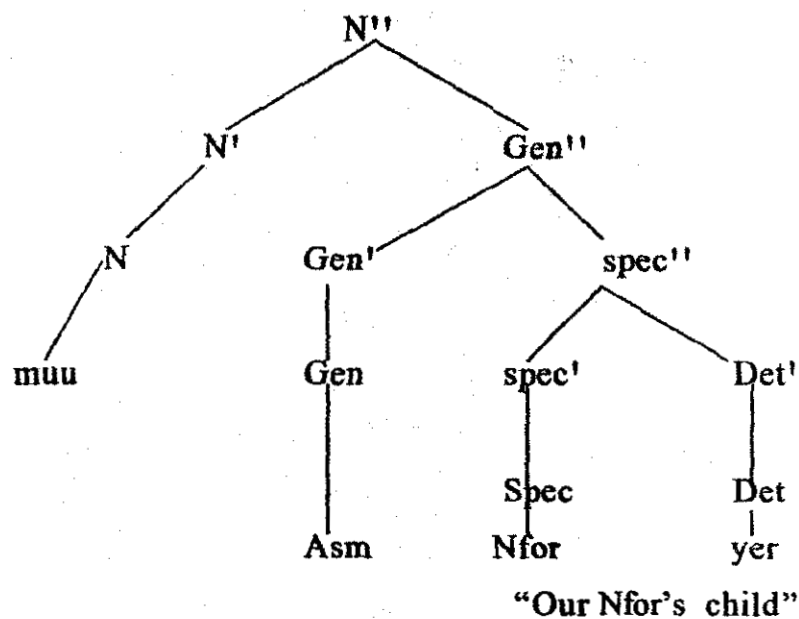


In this tree diagram it presupposes that [múu] child is the modifier of Nfor. If this were to be taken, Limbum would no longer be a head first language or right branching language. The actual thing in this phrase is that Nfor is the modifier of múu, consequently ought and should occupy the spec position. This drove us to the conclusion of head first principle and thereby permitting us to make the linguistically significant generalization that Nfor is modifying child as shown in the tree diagram below:



Even though this representation of the Genitive Construction was considered elegant, it still posed another problem. In a situation where a genitive construction had a determiner as a modifier (possessive noun or numeral) for instance, muu Nfor yer "Our Nfor's child". There would be a problem as to where the determiner would enter in the tree above.

If it were put in the right most spec, that is, spec of N2, we would leave behind the impression that the determiner was modifying N2, whereas it was supposed to be modifying N2 and with N2 they would modify N1. To solve this problem it was considered that it would be more preferable that the N2 should occupy the spec of Gen P while the Determiner should occupy the spec of N'' as shown below:



In this case Nfor could then adequately receive Genitive case from the Genitive marker. The PS marker was thus posited as:

Gen. P → N Gen.P

Where Gen P is the modifier of N1 and comes after it.

Next was complex NP whose rule as posited as NP → N CP NP after due consideration.

- For Inflectional Phrase and its constituents, the rule was posited as  
IP → spec I.

This was followed by the treatment of other category labels such as *vr*, *rr*, *AdjP* and *AdvP*.

After treating the category labels, the standard Limbum sentence was then considered. It was viewed as an SVO language, the rewrite rules for a simple Limbum sentence would be

S → NP Aux VP

NP → N Det

VP → V NP

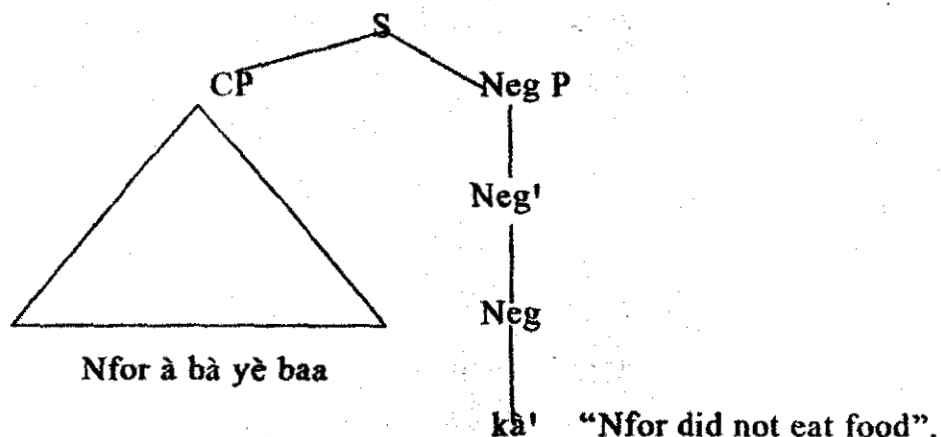
- Whereas that for Yes – No question form was posited as

S → NP Aux VP (Q),

that for the rest of the question forms was posited as

S → Det + VP + Det + (NP)

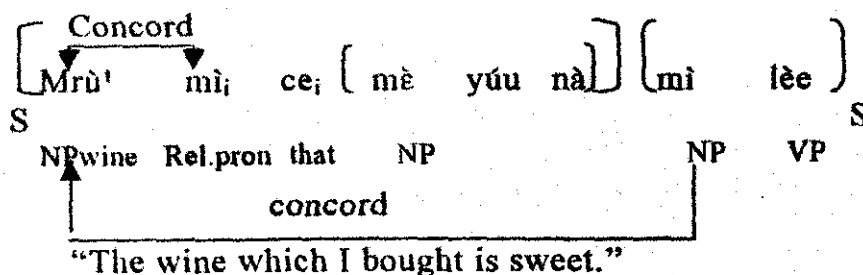
- Negation was simply summarized using a derivation like this shown here: CP-NegP



Focus and topicalization were also treated in detail as they had to do with various forms of movements.

Concerning relative clauses it was realized that in Limbum, the indirect subject and object relative clauses were introduced by preposition and that a resumptive pronoun was required to fill the gap created by the movement of the relativised NP. The NP position was then occupied by a gap at the D-structure and at the S-structure it was filled by a relative

pronoun, which had been moved to pre-clause position, as can be seen in the sentence below:



Another construction that had to do with movement was identified as Indefinite Construction. Unlike passivization in other languages that was marked by modifications at the VP level, Limbum indefinite construction was marked by third person indefinite plural pronoun at sentence initial position. Indirect speech and Coordination were also treated and basic explanations given as to what obtains in each.

The main objective of the last chapter was to make the grammar rules so far posited more explicitly accessible to MT teachers and textbook writers, who needed to exhibit their mastery of the standard Limbum in their works. In order to achieve this objective, the chapter was tackled from a pedagogical perspective, because pedagogical grammar has registered considerable progress in the development of first and second language acquisition. In this light, pronunciation (alphabet and orthographic rules), morphological and syntactic descriptions and usage of different grammatical categories and standard rules for usage followed by 32 practice exercises were treated.

The language items treated in that section were presented in a non-linguistic approach with precise explanations to facilitate their understanding by MT teachers, textbook writers and learners. As already indicated, the explanations were followed by various examples. For instance 5.15.0 and 5.15.1. above on Negation in Limbum. It is believed that if MT-teachers and others in the language development market, make use of this reference grammar section effective standardization target of the language could be reached, especially in the writing system. In order to encourage their usage, a complete answer key to all the practice exercises



was included at the end of the chapter. As we have already mentioned, this would greatly permit self-study or individualised learning. It was seen that with the help of such a language study guide, learners could choose what they wanted to study easily.

It was also considered that MT-teachers could use the reference grammar section to prepare language syllabuses, schemes and lesson plans. On the other hand, MT-teachers could use the exercises for classroom practice or set them aside as consolidation material for self-study. It was concluded that this approach provided room for pattern practice, internalization, performance and competence. Consequently leading to an effortless achievement of the standardization process.

## **6.1 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED**

In the course of this work, a few linguistic problems were identified but ready solutions could not be found. For instance, in the treatment of tone, it was not clear as to where tone should fall on words such as *bàa*, *wèè* or *kōo*. The question was, should it fall on the second or first letter?. However, we concluded that it should directly fall on the first letter without any proper phonological justifications. It would be proper that further research should be carried out to enable us mark it exactly where it should be.

Another issue we discovered in the course of the work was that basic passivization was not a feature of Limbum. However, it was realized that Limbum uses Indefinite Constructions in place of Passivization. Unlike focus and topicalization that involved movements and the creation of gaps at the extraction sites, Indefinite constructions appeared to be well integrated in the grammar of the language just like passivization does in other languages.. It would be proper that further research be carried out to ascertain our conclusion.

## 6.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROJECT

The project was geared at systematizing in linguistic terms the implicit knowledge of the native speaker in the area of phonology, morphology and syntax (grammar of Limbum). By this means rules were formalized, which were used to write the pedagogical rules of the grammar of the language. The pedagogical rules provide a broad spectrum for the production of instructional materials for schools. These goals were attained. To begin with, the descriptive chapters, phonological processes, morphological processes and syntactic processes, present the linguist and research students with a profound stock of grammatical descriptions of the language. They will find it a useful source for studies on the standardisation of other African languages. Besides, the work has made clear certain issues about Limbum. For instance that Limbum is a right branching language and also that it is a pro-drop language. These conclusive statements are quite beneficial to research students.

Secondly, this work has provided an orthography that is generally acceptable as it is multidialectal. Consequently speakers of all dialectal regions will identify with it. This will go a long way to reduce the writing inconsistencies that have existed in the writing system of Limbum over the years. This will greatly improve on the reading and writing of Limbum by native speakers.

Thirdly, the needs of MT teachers will be reached once they start exploiting the work; especially the pedagogical section for the production of instructional materials for literacy programmes and literature in the language. Furthermore, the work abounds with data and illustrations of various structures, words and phrases that could be easily adapted for classroom exploitation. The practice sections make available a reachable source of quick evaluation which MT teachers and textbook writers should avail themselves of.

The implication of the MT teachers' use of standard materials in the classroom is far reaching. The fact that it facilitates the production of acceptable structures in the MT classroom, is just a tip of the iceberg, as it goes a long way to provide fertile spots in the learners for the acquisition of

other languages. This is certainly very vital to a multilingual nation like Cameroon. What we mean here is that when once learners are confidently reading and writing Limbum, this will facilitate the easy acquisition of other languages. To be more specific, the work provides an opportunity for better and profound acquisition of English as learners move from MT to the learning of English. This is definitely possible because from the phonological and syntactic perspectives, reading and writing problem areas will be easily identified and teaching materials (Second Language) produced in order to tackle the problems systematically.

Take for instance pronunciation problems that arise as a result of the absence of some English phonetic sounds amongst which are the interdental fricatives /θ / and / ð / in Limbum sound system, Limbum learners of English will find it difficult to pronounce words like three, think, with, mouth. The inability to pronounce words clearly will certainly result in the impairment of communication. Therefore the English language teacher must organise instructional materials in a way that will help the learners resolve their pronunciation problems.

Similarly, syntactically speaking Limbum speakers apply the Wh-question word at the end of a statement to convert into a question, whereas in English it comes at sentence initial position. So second language grammar lessons must systematically focus on such structural contrasts. This will solve problems of interference in cases like-

Ndi ce dù ba fé, will not be interpreted as "Ndi is going where?" as many people want to say in language classrooms but as "Where is Ndi going.?"

Finally, non-native speakers would easily learn to read and write Limbum once standard instructional materials are available. In brief, the work would move Limbum from the status of a language with which standardisation activity is in progress to a language for which standardization is achieved or possible. Dunnigam (1989)

### **6.3 PROPOSAL FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

We have pointed out already that the work demands further research on Indefinite Constructions. This movement transformation could be thoroughly researched so that it could be clearly distinguished from focus and topicalization.

Speakers of Limbum and Mbum, spoken in Adamaoua claim to have one common ancestral history. Even though their languages are linguistically not cognates, they also claim that there is mutual intelligibility. It is important that further studies be carried out to see how far this project of standardisation can be extended to Mbum of Adamoua.

It is believed that this work has registered relative successes in proposing a standard grammar of Limbum with a pedagogical perspective.

# APPENDICES

## 1. DEMONSTRATION TEXTS

### INTRODUCTION

This story was performed by Mrs. ALICE NDIKONTAR at the National Executive meeting of WACUDA (Warr Cultural and Development Association) held at Mbot palace in march 1994. The audience was held spell-bound by the inter-locking themes and the blend of characters. Her female voice conveyed the emotional effects steadily in the audience and soon reached climax when the audience joined in. Everyone was caught dancing and of course the story-time went by unnoticed.

#### 1.1 NDÀNCÒ BY NDIKONTAR ALICE

(1) Ɔwè mo' àmba a ke' enè Ndàncò (2) À yi ma' àm ce cu à ge kòb bbu'. (3) Bbu' vi mba à kob anà sê. (4) Vi mfa' nya' sê. Ma yi Ndàncò àm lò dù ce yè nya' ce ye.

(5) À ka' ba nya mo ', bbu' vi ko ma yi Ndàncò anà a yu. (6) Ndàncò à ka' kuti à ntàa a tur mngur. E ke' yi ma ene e vù sùsi ye mngur. (7) E ke' àa à lo à molàr a ghèter à sùsi mngur anà a niŋ mbe ndab, a ye yi ma ka'. (8) E kushi enè bbu' vi m làa enè mama am ce yè yab nya'. (9) E kwa'shi ene ba enè se mo' bbu' vi ko yi ma'. (10) E ka' dù à ye ene bbu' vi m ko yi ma' à yu.

(11) Ndàncò à cu à fa ntaŋ. E kwa'shi enè e be gee rkwi yi ma'. (12) E ke' bbu' wewe enè wowèe à vù ŋka' rkwi yi ma'. (13) Bbu' wewe vim vù ni boo ŋwè mbe ŋji. (14) Ndàncò a fa wowee ku baa, wowee a ye. (15) E ker bà ni ku' shaà ba mrù', wowèe à nò aa a lo a kè ' bii. (16) Ndàncò a fa wowèe mcùu. Wowèe à yob e bii enè:

(17) Ndàncò ee yò mà e ŋdenkè.

(18) Ndàncò ee yò mà e ŋdenkè.

(19) Bbu' vi ye ma ŋwè mo' o ŋdenkè.

(21) À nfe' vi bii ná Ndàncò à fu njeb mbè a ko' mbe tu ndab à cu' tu ndab ni mor.

(22) Mor yi ka' ce shee, mu muu bu' mo' à làa ni yi ma' enè, "màmi, màmi mor yi rà mè."

(23) Yi ma' à làa enè e fa jebisi bii ka'.

(24) à ka' cu sê mor yi shee aà tò ndab sib. (25) Bbu' vi ke' à ce warsé ce bibshi ni Ndàncò ene, "Ndàncò o wèr dù fele o o?"

(26) Ndàncò enè ku dù ni fàdi' wèe ariṅ ná o o'.

(27) Mor yi tò bbu' vi shèe mbe ndab à ji'.

(28) Ndàncò à vù se'ni e tar sheeshee bbu' ce ye ce ye ene.

(29) M̄ ye m̄ vub bu' m̄ ma' kù cùu

(30) M̄ ye mu vub màmi m̄ ma' mà riṅ

(31) À ka' cusè e gèe fàa a ye vub yi mà'

(32) Tu yi ke' a kar ye e mbo. E te enè kú yu àmbò m̄ncùu tàràa vi làa ye e nje tu. (33) E yu' ryaṅ sè'. Bèe à ce riṅ ka'. (34) Ku' boo m̄ṅòṅṅò à ce vù à yi mbù. (35) Nku à to' anà a ka' ye wa' à làa enè ndàncò faye yuu ce e tur, yi ka' gèe boo m̄ṅòṅṅò à ka' ce vù à yi mbù.

(36) Ndàncò a laa enè Nku dù te kù tu ntaa te e te mà mbù ntaa. (37) Te à ye à caṅ vù tuni ni btu'. (38) À ka' gèe wa m̄ncuu e nje tu Ndàncò vi ku tuse nje tu nku. (39) Nku à ke' a ku bònì bònì.

(40) Bèe à kar a ta' Ndàncò. Ndàncò àm̄ ba ni caṅ e yu à dù à lor bu a yo' a nyor a ker lor bkàkà bce' ba kùkù mbàṅ à fà à cu mbe kàkà nta' njeb mbè, à bo'shi enè e yu nfèb. (41) Bèe à cà ce riṅ ene a ye Ndàncò ka'. (42) À lo a mòlār a ko ṅwe à Nku à tu ni ni btu (43) M̄ncuu e nje tu Nku ná vi tuse nje tu ṅwe.

(44) Iṅwe à kar àgho à a à lo à kwi.

## NDANCHO-TRANSLATION

(1) Once upon a time there was a man called Ndancho. (2) He used to stay with his mother near a thick forest. (3) In this forest lived large groups of chimpanzee. (4) The chimpanzees used to cultivate large hectares of garden eggs. (5) His mother used to go and steal the garden eggs to eat.

(6) One day when Ndancho was away to a market far away, his mother went there again. (7) She was caught by the chimpanzees and killed. (8) When ndancho came back, he called for his mother to come help put down the large container of palm oil he had brought. (9) He called and called. (10) Nobody answered. (11) He finally managed to put it down. (12) It occurred to him as he got into the house that the chimpanzees had reported his mother to him. (13) They had promised to deal with her, if she dared touch their garden eggs again. (14) So he rushed to the farm of the animals, and discovered that they had caught his mother and killed her.

(15) He sat mournfully not until an idea came to him that he should celebrate the funeral of his mother. So he invited the chimpanzees to come for this funeral ceremony. (16) They came in their numbers. (17) Ndancho gave them a lot of food to eat. (18) He also gave them a lot of corn beer and palm wine. (19) They drank and were greatly excited. (20) They decided to dance. (21) So Ndancho gave them drums. (22) They started with a nice but insulting song.

(23) Ndancho o o your mother o o dead

(24) Ndancho o o your mother o o dead

(25) Chimpanzees have eaten somebody's mother- dead

(26) And were dancing the dirge of Ndancho's mother

(27) In the midst of this drunken excitement, Ndancho saw that it was the right time to carry out vengeance. (28) So he trickishly climbed up the roof of the house and set fire to it. (29) The fire destroyed the roof, even before the chimpanzees could realize. (30) Although a young one cornered near the tired mother had coughed incessantly and nervously complained that he had smelt fire, nobody listened to him, even its mother.

(31) So before they could realize that there was danger in delay flames and tongues of fire had darkened and overwhelmed the whole house.

(32) There was turbulence in the hall. (33) Frightened they were all crying and shouting and calling on Ndancho to serve them by giving directives on how to get out. (34) Ndancho responded from outside in a frenzy mood that they should just go anywhere within. (35) But of course, they were all burnt to ashes.

(36) Having succeeded in his jungle law, Ndancho hummed a song of pride;

(37) A small bone of chim, I throw in the mouth

(38) A small bone of mum I throw in the bush.

(39) He was going around and picking pieces of roasted chim and eating.

(40) Unfortunately, he could not distinguish that of his mother in a chim's stomach and the chim itself. (41) He ate his mum's and went mad. (42) Drums and bells rang in his head. (43) Though the sounds of the drumming of the great "tarra" dance in his head kept crowds happy, it gave him pains.

(44) Young girls loved the music that flew from his head and could not help following him.

(45) The chief of the village became jealous and asked Ndancho to offer him the instrument. (46) Ndancho told the chief to go in the opposite direction. (47) They would then organize a race, which would lead the two of them into a head on collision. (48) This happened. (49) Of course, the chief suddenly became weak. (50) Ndancho had freed himself as the invisible orchestra crossed into the head of the chief. (51) It boomed out painfully from the Chief's head. (52) Ndancho ran and disguised himself, shabby clothes and having applied wood ash on his body, he sat on a dirty stool out pretending to be a blind man.

(53) The messengers of the chief who were in search of him could not see him. (54) They ended up negotiating with a dog for another cross. (55) The chief knocked his head against that of the dog. (56) The invisible music passed onto the dog. (57) It wandered and finally died.



## 1.2 LUŊGA – BY CHUFFE

### INTRODUCTION:

Lũngà was performed by a certain Mrs Cufe Ndi, 45 of Baptist Church Taku at the funeral celebration of Mami Winto' Fàke of Boyungòŋ. The late woman was a maid to Mrs Gwei Elizabeth, sister of the interviewer.

After having a sumptuous dinner of corn foofoo, njamànjamà and traditional mutton steak, the interviewer stretched himself out and asked, "Why do people die?" In trying to answer the question, almost everyone in the house blamed death for its wickedness on humanity.

Mrs Cufe soon seized the floor and thrilled people with her point of view on the invaluable importance of death which was summed up in this performance. To her death was part of life because even God acknowledges the work of death. This performance was done in May 1996. It was recorded by Sammuèl Nfòrgwei.

À mba à nfè' mo' Wimbum à ce ye nge' gòr njobè' rkwe li mce kobèè sè'. Yab bu'rà' ce àm ce kè enè lũngà à nàti à dù enè e be dù làa ni Nyà enè e tee rkwe. E nàti à ko à kà mo' à dù mbe buu. Ekà' bà mbo à ku càcá àr dù ser nto'. Bcìndab nyà à tee ye mbe kibu'. A bibshi ni ye enè e dù ba fele? E làa ni wowèè àm mntee enè e tà' ye Nyà enè e tee rkwe njobè bèè à ce kwengèr gòr.

Bcìndab Nyà àm suŋ ye enè Nyà yeye à dù à ca'ni nfar yi ce rkwe li mà ko ye. E ka' yuu wa' mŋkoo mi sèè ye sè'. Ntee yi kwe ye. E mòlar à bèngèr àr kwati.

Bcìndab Nyà à sèsi à ye enè à be kyee ye kà nje bu'. Tee e sù ba njob nshe cii' ku tee wowèè à bo tee. E ka' sù bà à dunjì, fu' yi cii' kà. Bcìndab . Nyà vi kwáshi enè e sù à niŋ war. Wowèè à tee kà ca. lũngà à dà' nje ki ar jee mbe ryee andòŋsi bfèfè' mndigmbùu, mŋkùu ,mŋkòŋ ba rùu sa' mbo.

Njè àm yaŋ ye ma gòr sé' njo em cu ninjè. E caŋ à dù mà nɔunji a ka' tarte à njeŋwè mò' ce em ce kuti e fa mŋkàu ni ryee. Lungà à ko ye a see à ye. Nsuŋ à dāa' à ngòŋ. Bèe a fa ni mŋkòŋ ba bsa' à rju lungà. E caŋ à niŋ ser mbuŋròo mà mbim a tàŋte so. Lungà à m dù ar tee rkwe à dù à ko ŋkar a rkwe.

## LUNGA – TRANSLATION

Once upon a time, the Mbum people suffered greatly. People were dying so much that their giant warrior, Lunga decided to go up to Heaven and tell God to stop death. When the day came, he climbed up a string that served as a ladder. As soon as he arrived there, he went straight into the palace of the supreme being. On his way to the inner courts of the heavenly palace, some angels stopped him. He angrily told them his problem.

To his greatest dismay, he was told that God had just gone out of the heavenly realm to condole with a relative who was bereaved. Lunga was shocked. Dumbfounded, he felt terribly disappointed. However, he decided to return home immediately as it was a long way away.

The heavenly hosts resolved to help him go home quickly. So they tied a string round his waist on the understanding that he would jump down through the still atmosphere. And that as soon as he touched ground, he would shake the rope to announce his safe arrival on earth. Unfortunately for him, as he was swapping through the atmosphere, the wind tossed the rope left and right, as he was swinging down. The angels thought he had reached and cut the rope. Lunga swapped down and landed on a rock at luh. His buttocks, spears, feet and sheath left deep marks on a rock, which are still visible today.

As hungry and tired as he was, he wanted to eat anything. He saw a pregnant woman coming back from her farm. Lunga could not help it, so he caught her and ate. News went round the Wimbum country and people came

out with their spears to kill lunga. He ran into the river mbim, where he is believed to be residing today.

### 1.3 ƆWÈ A VI BYEƆGE (BY MAMA BOLAMI)

#### INTRDUCTION:

This was performed by Mami Bolami Esther, 68 one summer evening in July 1998 when the interviewer was in Wat on research. That evening the conversation was centred around the troubles of women in society. Mami Bolami in a very significant way made her point by performing this very touching performance.

Ɔwè mò' à mba a tur byeƆge à baa. E m laa ni wowèe ene, "Ɔwe ce e ka' bi muu njeƆwè ba enè e bejà ye." Ɔgwa yi e ntombi a lo bi muunje. Yi mbe nji à bi muu mbaƆrù.

NjeƆwè ce e m bi muunje nà à ka' dù àm Ɔkà à ka' ce fa' nsu a ce war. MusiƆ a ka' yu ambo e ce war, e vu a bibshi ni ye enè e war ba kele. E làa ni mu siƆ ene e war njobè' ndu yi à làa enè e be ja ye.

Mu siƆ anà à làa ni ye enè e ka' fa ye té kwàa ba enè e be suƆ ye yuu ce e dù gèe fadi, ndu yi bo ja ye ka: E fa mu siƆ anà té kwàa. MusiƆ à ka' ye à làa ni ye enè e ba'ri tàb bònbon sè'. Tàb ce yi tur toto ka! E ba'ri e k o mbab to'shi fur mnte nònŋsi mbe ngùƆ. BsiƆ vi ka ye tee vi vu nyer ye dù àgho mbe tàb. Vi ka' ba' ni ye mbe tàb e ku bo'shi à mbo e kwe wa. Vi ghèter ene vi be nònŋsi ye nje titi, e ghèter gee te vi nònŋsi ye kù mbu keƆ.

E ka' dù à gèe wa, bsiƆ vi kari a. ce yee byee enè e kwe, e ku sa'ti cete keƆ koo bsiƆ anà du laa à web. RkiƆ li te mbe mor, e fa nje mbe ce gò' baa, ce yob enè;

"ghibghib, gò' baa ye à kè?"

Gò' baa ye à nya

Nyà te fè

Nya te mbe mor ce yor fò'fò'." (bis)

E ka' dù à gèe wa'a, ndu yi à ka' vè à yu à mbo e ce yob wa'a e niñ mbe ndab a fye' njer rkiñ a ye bsiñ a mbo vi yor. E fur mo' btaar a ye. Vi bon ye, e laà enè e be ker yà ngwa yi ka'. Enè e be yu ñwe ce em bi muu mbanrè nà.

Ñwè ce em bi muu mbanrè anà a ká yu' yuu ce ndu yi à làa e ke' a kosi msé' fon? E ka dù an' nkà, mu siñ a ker vè à làa ni ye à mbo e m làa ni bii yi na.

Njeñwè à nà a mba mbor. E ka' dù a ke' gèe a mbo musij a m' laa ka'. E ka' ghèter a ku koo bsiñ vi btaar cà. E ka' dù laa. Ndu yi à ka' vè yu' ambo e gò' gò'

Baa ce ye

Ghíghib gò' baa ye à kè?

Gò' baa ye à nya

Nyà tefè?

Nyà te mbe mor

Ce yor fò'fò'

E niñ a ye bsiñ btaar ca'. E lór a ye, a ker yu ngwa yi anà fon,

### 1.3 A MAN AND HIS WIVES

There was a man who had two wives. He was interested in having only male children. So he made it clear to his wives that he would kill any one of them who would bring forth a female baby. They were all pregnant.

It happened that the first wife gave birth to a baby girl and the second wife to a baby boy.

The first wife was internally worried and spent all the time in her farm crying. A weaver bird heard her cry and asked her what was the matter; she recounted her problem to the bird. The bird gave her counsel. She was told to build a hut then catch a rat and open it and leave the heart and the lungs on her chest. She would then pretend to be dead. Birds would come to drag her into the hut. If they did she should just try to sleep by the door. This she did.

Many birds entered the hut and suddenly she closed the door and caught all of them. She rushed home and prepared them and put on the fire. While grinding corn into flour, she was singing:

Grinding corn to eat with what?

Grinding corn to eat with meat.

Where's the meat?

It's on the fire boiling – fò'fò'

When her husband came and listened to the song, he immediately rushed into the hut, found the delicious pot on the fire. He deeped his hand into it and ate, several birds at once. They were so nice that he went out and told his first wife that he would not kill her again. His decision was reversed. He would kill the second wife instead.

When the second wife got the news she was terribly worried. She tried to consult the bird too, and was given similar instructions. Unfortunately for her, she was a lazy person and could not succeed in constructing a good hut. When birds got in, she managed to catch only three. She tried to cook and grind corn while humming the song:

Grinding corn to eat with what?

Grinding corn to eat with meat.

Where's the meat?

It's on the fire boiling – fò'fò'

Her husband soon arrived and was excited. He rushed into the kitchen, opened the pot and could only find three miserable birds. He ate them all at once. But could not change his mind. He drew his sword went straight to her and pierced her. She fell down and died.

#### 1.4 PRAYER-FOR KÀBÀ NGUNGU'S FAMILY BY TATAMFU.

##### INTRODUCTION:

This prayer was performed at the ritual ceremony of the introduction of Kàbà Ngungu's family head-Ta-Tamfu. After all the reception rituals of his three children, he had with his non-native wife, it was time to go back to Bamenda. As one of the guests, I recorded the prayer as I was playing the role of a camera man. That was in December 2001 at Mbabi(Wat). The old man in his 80s almost half-naked except(sànjà') a piece of cloth that he hung between his legs and tied with a leather belt around his waist, invoked the gods of their family in a very solemn manner to shower blessings on Kàbà Ngungu and his family.

À wèè KÀBÀ NGUNGU

A wèè Tamfu Chella

A wèè lambi

Ka' wèè Tantoh Gur

Kèr ba wèè Tantoh Laban Nginyu

Boo wee a tee mbe nà à ñwè mò'sir

A yuu le à ngòn bàra'.

A mbù wowèe à ke vu dù.

Yi ba wa' à wèe ma' wowèe le ? ka' lè.

A le mem mrù' ce wowèe a vù àgho nà.

Budì' nò fa Sheí

Tamfù nò fa Tantoh

Tee Kàbà Ngungu nò fa Tamfu Chella, ba Lambi-ngòn  
còn.

Mù' nì kèn tee Nyù kè'ni ker ghoni wowèe.

Wà' wowèe à ka' bu à cici yi bòn le ? ka' lel

Wowèe à dù à mbò à dù na, ñwè tu mbâa.

ñwè sob ñgu, ñwè saa ñfar, tee wowèe à

bumi mmìrlo mbòñmbòñ.

A le mem mrù' nà

Ngòn còn.

## PRAYER TRANSLATION.

Oh you Kàbà Ngungu

Oh you Tamfu Chella

Oh you Lambi

Even you Tamfu Laban Nginyu

These are your children

Standing before you.

Drinking and eating from one bowl.

See these ones are civilized people

They only come and go –

Because they work and live –

Far far away in government country.

Shall you reject them because of that? No!

This is your drink

Budih drink and give Shei

Tamfu drink and give Tantoh

Kàbà Ngungu drink and give Tamfu Chella, Lambi,  
and Nginyu.

Peace.

That your heart may be cool.

All of you open the way

Let God drink this wine

And shine on, protect and provide for them,

If you let them be destroyed, how shall you have more?

Give them power and progress and honour and multiply  
their number.

Let their hearts be cool as you are happy.

Peace

## **1.5 VICTORY OVER THE WORLD – JOHN. 16: 25 - 33**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

The English version of this text was taken from the Devotional Study Bible.

“ I have told you these things, using stories that hide the meaning. But the time will come when I will not use stories like that to tell you things; I will speak to you in plain words about the father. In that day you will ask the father for things in my name. I mean, I will not need to ask the father for you. The father himself loves you. He loves you because you loved me and that I came from God. I came from the Father into the world. Now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father. . . .



Then the followers of Jesus said. "You are speaking clearly to us now and are not using stories that are hard to understand. We can see now that you know all things. You can answer a person's question even before it is asked. This makes us believe you came from God."

Jesus answered, "So now you believe? Listen to me; a time is coming when you will be scattered, each to his own home. That time is now here. You will leave me alone, but I am never really alone, because the Father is with me.

I told you these things so that you can have peace in me. In this world you will have trouble, but be brave! I have defeated the world."

### TRANSLATION - JISÒS À SO ÌGÒN - JON 16: 25-33

Mè suṅ wèe buu ha ba à mṅgàa. Nfè' ce ghee ce m be kèr suṅ wèe buu ba à mṅgàa ka'. M be suṅ wèe rara àmbò Tàr. Be baà nfè' anà te wèe loo buu fa mé rlii. M ce suṅ wèe m be kèr loo nè Tàr a wée btù ka'. Tàr yeye kòṅ wèe njòbè' wèe koṅ mè, a byemi ene mè m lo ese Nyù. Mè m lò ese Tàr, a vu njeb ṅgòṅ na. M ce lô sè' ni enjeb ṅgòṅ na a ce kuti à rye Tàr. Ìjgãa ye'ni yi buu a laa enê, èhê! A ce laà sè'ni rara, à ker ce mà' ba ṅgãa ka' wèr à riṅ sè'ni na enè à riṅ buu weewe. Mbùu mò' ker ba àgho nè ṅwè à rbibshi yuu mo' nè wè ka'. Aka' ba njòbè' cena, wèr a byemi ene wè lò ese Nyù! Jesòs à beesi ni wowie enè, "Wèè à byemi sè'ni a? Yê nfè' ce ghee, e ghee wee, ce wèè be da'se, te ṅwè weewe kuti fa yè' là', mà'shi mè mamngi'. M be ba mamngi' ka', njòbè' Tàr ku ba wèr ye. Mè làa cena ni wèe te wee bo koni cumunyaṅ njeb mè. Wèe be ye ṅgè' njeb ṅgòṅ na. Ka' yi yu wa' kur nì ntee. Mè so ṅgòṅ ca."

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