

A Grammar Sketch of Muyang

BEBEY Théodore
bebeylawane@yahoo.fr

The University of Maroua, Cameroon

0. Introduction

Muyang is spoken in the southern regions of Lake Chad, more precisely in the Republic of Cameroon. It is an Afroasiatic language that belongs to the Chadic phylum and to the Biu-Mandara sub-group. Its code is ISO 639-3 Glottolog muya1243. According to etnologue (2015), Muyang has about 30, 000 native speakers.

1. Phonetic and phonology

The Muyang sound system consists of 35 phonemes: 26 consonants and 9 vowels.

1.1 Identification of consonants

Natural classes (nasal, continued, strident, anterior, sonorant, coronal, rounded, voiced, central, rounded, anterior, etc) are the distinctive features that are going to be used to characterize each phoneme.

1.1.1 The labials

There are six consonant sounds whose production involves lips in Muyang.

1.1.1.1 The phoneme /p/

The consonant /p/ occurs in all positions. Its identification is the result of the following contrast in Muyang:

p/b: é pí / á bí (he sees / he is not there)

p/d: pra / dra (sacrifice / handicap)

p/k: pra / kra (sacrifice / dog)

p/h: pas / has (in a true manner / used to colour)

1.1.1.2 The phoneme /b/

The phoneme /b/ is more frequent in the word initial position in Muyang as illustrated in the contrast below.

b/p: á bí / é pí (he is not there / he sees)

b/ɓ: á báh / á ɓáh (he turns / he injects)

b/p: á bí / á kí (he is not there / he is on...)

b/w: baray / waray (washing / hunting)

b/d: ó ború / ó dorú (he went)

bekí / deki (write / put on)

1.1.1.3 The phoneme /ɓ/

Contrary to Ouldeme /ɓ/ (Colombel 1986:132), the Muyang /ɓ/ is pronounced with a high degree of sonority and has a broad distribution. Its identification is the result of the following contrast:

ɓ/b: ɓáh / báh

ɓá / bá

ɓ/d:ɓala / dala

ɓ/dz: ɓeruv / dzeruv

ɓ/ʃ: mbiɓ / mbiʃ (fat/huge)

ɓ/n: heɓay/henday (dance/fetch)

1.1.1.4 The phoneme /m/

The production of /m/ also involves lips. As it is the case in Chadic and non-chadic languages, it is a total nasalized consonant. Its identification is the result of the following contrast:

m/zl: maɗá / zlaɗá (Mada/ difficulty)

m/h: meték / heték (/ a kind of bag)

m/n: degúm / degún (go / hatred)

humbuz / hunguz (handled / noisy)

má / ngá (speech / come back)

amétá / angétá (he died / he found)

m/sl: má / sla (a speech/ a cow)

m/k : mru/ kru (naïve / ten)

amal / akal (oil / theft)

m/d: mbaɗay / daɗay (movement / swearing)

mb/ts: mbakala / tsakala (goods / price)

m/v: viʒék / miʒék (grill / antelope)

amedʔ / avedʔ (wind / like pepper)

doluv / dolum (the sea / an arch)

m/g: amedʔ / agédʔ (wind / he flees)

One notices that the sound /m/ is frequent in all positions. Nevertheless, the phoneme is sometimes doubled as illustrated in the following morpheme: [mma]: “mother”. The fact that it occurs in different positions suggests that it may be among the most frequent consonants in Muyang.

1.1.1.5 The phoneme /f/

The consonant /f/ is most frequent in the initial and final positions within the word. Its identification is the result of the following contrast

f/v: faɗʔ / vaɗʔ (four / day)

ndaɗʔ / ndav (sound of stick / finish)

f/d: faɗʔ / daɗʔ (free/much)

f/d: haɗʔ / haɗʔ (drogue / earth)

faɗʔ / ɗaɗʔ (free / up)

f/h: faɗʔ / haɗʔ (four / earth)

1.1.1.6 The phoneme /v/

The phoneme /v/ is less frequent in the word final position as one can see in the paradigm that follows:

v/m: vagam/magam (a kind of flute/ a home)

v/w: vri/wri (monkey/potassium)

v/h : vú/hú (give me /tell me)

v/g: avar/agar (stone /a kind of antelope)

v/f: vadʔ/faɗʔ (a day/four)

v/r: ávidʔ/aridʔ (like a pepper/tongue)

v/d: ví/dí (give it to him/give them to him)

1.1.2 The alveolar consonants

1.1.2.1 The phoneme /t/

The sound /t/ is attested in Muyaŋ as a voiceless occlusive alveolar. It occurs in all positions, but a little bit aspirated in the final position. It results from the following contrast:

t/d: átáy/ádáy (he digs / he takes)

atuka / aduka (okra/ it does not continue)

t/s: tway / sway (bereave/a species of tree)

t/m: tewır / mewır (shouting / venom)

t/d: fat / fađ (sun / four)

t/ʃ: áheḃáy / áhetáy (he dances / he waits)

1.1.2.2 The phoneme /d/

The identification of consonant /d/ is the result of the following contrast:

d/t : dúm / túm (take / trace)

d/d: ding / dńg (a hundred /wet)

d/n: day / nday (before / they)

d/k: dra / kra (handicap / dog)

d/l: dala / lala (plain / good)

d/z: aday / azay

d/b: ódorú / óború (he brought it along / he threw it)

dekí / bekí (add / write)

From the above examples, one observes that /d/ is most frequent in initial and middle positions.

1.1.2.3 The phoneme /dʒ/

Like /ʃ/, the sound /dʒ/ is glottal and implosive. It is most frequent in the beginning and the final positions of the word. The identification of consonant /dʒ/ is the result of the following contrast:

dʒ/d: dǎl / dal (act of tying / act of killing)

dńg / ding (wet / one hundred)

dʒ/t: fađ / fat (four / sun)

dʒ/z: dǔm / zǔm (tell / eat)

dʒ/f: đar / far (up / free)

d/h: dáf / haf (food / drogue)

d/s: hadf / has (earth / product used to colour)

d/y: hadf hay (earth / millet)

The frequency of the implosives /b/ and /d/ in Muyang, as it is the case in Ouldeme (Colombel 1986), Mofu-Godur (Barreteau 1988), Gbe (Frajzyngier 1993), Mada (Dieu et. al., 2000) and Mboku (Gravina and Smith 2010), is evidence that allows me to write, following Schuh et. al. (2003), that they are attested in all Chadic¹ languages.

1.1.2.4 The phoneme /l/

As illustrated in the following paradigm, /l/ is found in initial, middle and final positions contrary to other central Chadic languages² (see Colombel, 1986 where it is attested only in the word initial position.) .

l/r: daldal / dardar (so many / so difficult)

l/d: law / daw (act of making a node / act of walking)

l/v: dala / dava (a plain / a seat)

1.1.2.5 The phoneme /ʎ/

The phoneme /ʎ/ is produced in the lateral position of the mouth and, at the same time, the air stream is a little bit narrowed. Its identification is the result of the following contrast:

ʎ/ɟ: á slál / á zlál (he blows his nose / he pushes), sla / zla (cow / such)

ʎ/s: masláy / masáy (may he reap / may he cut)

ʎ/g: maslam / magam (a kind of grass / home)

ʎ/k : aslu / aku (meat / fire)

ʎ/ts: aslír / atsír (tooth / delicious)

A look at the data above shows that the consonant /ʎ/ occurs in the beginning, the middle as well as in the final position of the word.

1.1.2.6 The phoneme /ʒ/

The consonant /ʒ/, written zl, is the voiced counterpart of /ʎ/. The identification of consonant /ʒ/ is the result of the following contrast:

¹ See also Heine et. al. (2007)

² In other central Chadic languages such as Ouldeme (Colombel: 1986), the consonant /l/ is not frequent in all positions.

ʎ/ʎ: á zlá / á slál (he pushes / he blows his nose)

zla / sla (such / cow)

ʎ/m : maða / zlaða (Mada people / difficulty)

ʎ/j: zlam / yam (thing / water)

One realizes after a look at the above data that like /ʎ/, /ʎ/ occurs in initial, middle and final positions of the word. This suggests following the works by Colombel (1986), Dieu et. al. (2000), Gravina and Smith (2010) and Bebey (2010) that these two phonemes have a broad distribution in central Chadic³ languages.

1.1.2.7 The phoneme /n/

The phoneme /n/ occurs in initial, middle and final positions. It is less frequent in word end position. The identification of consonant /n/ is the result of the following contrast:

n/m: degúm / degún (go / hatred), ngá / má (come back / speech)

n/h: nak/ hak (you / action to fix something)

n/l: azana / azalá (a pant/ he called)

genaw / gelaw

n/g: genaw / gedaw (an animal /)

Let us notice that as demonstrated in my previous works (Bebey 2015), the phoneme /n/ is most used in verbal derivations in Muyang. In general, it is velarized when followed by a velar sound.

1.1.2.8 The phoneme /r/

The phoneme /r/ is articulated in the alveolar region with a great vibration of the vocal cords without a total buildup of the air pressure in the oral cavity. The phoneme /r/ occurs in initial, middle and final position. It is among one of the most frequent sounds in Muyang. The identification of consonant /r/ is the result of the following contrast:

r/l: rawraw / lawlaw (talking in disorder / making nodes in disorder), dardar / daldal (so difficult /so many)

r/j: palar / palaj (one side / a part)

r/d: hár / haḏ (winnow / earth)

r/b: hár / haḅ (winnow / worsen)

³The contemporary works on African linguistics (Stevens (1983), Frajzyngier (1993), Mutaka (1995), Mutaka and Tamanji (2000), Heine and Derek (2006), Clements and Osu (2002), Schuh et. al. (2003), Heine and Leyew (2007), show that these phonemes are less frequent in Bantu and Niger-Congo languages.

r/h: ruḅ / huḅ (act of hiding / filled of something)

r/ʎ: rá/sla (come/cow)

r/ʒ: rá/zla (come/such)

1.1.3 The palatal phonemes

The present sub-section discusses the palato-alveolar and the total palatal phonemes.

1.1.3.1 The palato-alveolar phonemes

1.1.3.1.1 The phoneme /s/

The identification of consonant /s/ is the result of the following contrast:

s/z: sá / zá (cut / take)

s/ʃ: sí / jí (beat / dring)

s/z: sa / ma (greeting / speech)

s/ʎ: masáy / masláy (may he cut it / may he reap it)

s/t: sway / tway (tamarind / mourning)

s/d: sáy / dáy (cut/take)

s/d: has / haḏ (a product to colour / earth)

When it is realized before the sounds /a/ and /ə/, the Muyaŋ /s/ does not behave as a pre-dorso-palato-alveolar as in Ouldeme (Colombel, 1986) and Moloko⁴. A look at the above data indicates that it is most frequent in the word initial and final positions.

1.1.3.1.2 The phoneme /z/

Like /s/, the phoneme /z/ is articulated in the palato-alveolar region. It occurs everywhere with a high frequency in initial position as illustrated in the following data:

z/s: zá / sá (take / cut)

z/p: zalay / palay (a call / a part)

z/m: ózúm / oyúm (he eats / bad millet)

z/ŋ: mbiz / mbiŋ (act of jumping / act of abandoning)

⁴ Moloko or Molkwo is a central Chadic language spoken in the South-East region of the division of Mayo-Sava, Sub-division of Tokombere (Cameroon).

1.1.3.2 The total palatal and palato-alveolar sounds

The majority of sounds that are going to be described in this sub-section are produced around the palatal region. Some are articulated between the palatal and the alveolar zone.

1.1.3.2.1 The phoneme /ʃ/

The phoneme /ʃ/, written /sh/, is produced in the palatal region with no vibrations of vocal cords. It is most frequent in word initial and final positions. This sound is distinct from the sound /s/, contrary to Smith (2003). The following contrast is more illustrative:

ʃ/s: ʃí / sí (dring / beat it)

ʃ/z: ʃí / zí (dring / rot away)

ʃ/p: ʃí / pí (dring / see)

ʃ/t: ʃwi / twi (laziness / work)

ʃ/h: ʃí / hí (dring / tell him)

1.1.3.2.2 The phoneme /ʒ/

The identification of consonant /ʒ/ is the result of the following contrast:

ʒ/s: ʒí / sí (rot away / beat it), víʒ / vís (negligible / an important number of things)

ʒ/ʃ: ʒí / shí (dring / rot away)

ʒ/p: ʒí / pí (dring / see)

ʒ/z: geʒel / gezal (a small thing hanging/ a huge thing hanging)

ʒel / zal (showing a small thing hanging / man)

1.1.3.2.3 The phoneme /j/

Known as a semi-vowel crosslinguistically, the sound /j/, written y, is the result of the following contrast:

j/w: wai / waw (who / total interrogation mark)

j/r: palay / palar (a half / a side)

j/d: hay / had (millet / earth)

j/s: hay / has (millet / product used to colour)

j/z: oyum / ózúm (a bad quality of millet / sharp)

j/ʒ : yam / zlam (water / thing)

One realises from the above data that /j/ is found in all positions with a high frequency in the final position. It is sometimes used in verbal derivations.

1.1.3.2.4 phoneme /tʃ/

Literatures in linguistics (Stevens: 1983, Frajzyngier: 1993, Bobda and Mbangwana: 1993), Heine and Derek, 2006, Clements and Osu: 2002, Schuh et. al., 2003, Heine and Leyew: 2006)) describe the phoneme /tʃ/ as a voiceless occlusive, affricate and oral sound articulated in the palato-alveolar region. Its orthographic symbol is /c/ in Cameroonian languages. This means that the symbol /c/ is not attested in this language as in the English capacity or club. In Muyang, the sound /k/ is materialised /k/ both in phonetics and orthography. As far as its distribution is concerned, the consonant /tʃ/ occurs in word initial, middle and final positions.

tʃ/t: tʃí/ti (listen / calm)

tʃ/dʒ: tʃeri / dʒeri (already / truth)

tʃ/sl: tʃokúm / slokúm (stand up / wear)

tʃ/n: tʃif / ngif (near / surprising)

tʃ/p: tʃí / pí (listen / see)

tʃ/v: tʃí / ví (listen / give him)

tʃ/g: tʃí / gí (listen / become)

tʃ/b: tʃí / bí (listen / give some of it to him)

tʃ/d: tʃí / dí (listen / give one part to him)

tʃ/s: tʃí / sí (listen / beat him)

tʃ/f: tʃí / shí (listen / drink)

1.1.3.2.5 The phoneme /dʒ/

The consonant /dʒ/ is the voiced counterpart of /tʃ/ articulated in the palato-alveolar region.

The identification of consonant /dʒ/ is the result of the following contrast:

dʒ/tʃ:dʒí / cí (dig / listen)

dʒ/ʒ:dʒí / zí (dig / rot away)

dʒ/f:dʒeri / sheri (truth / smiles)

dʒ/h:dʒí / hí (dig / tell him)

dʒ/p:dʒí / pí (dig / see)

dʒ/z:dʒí / zí (dig / take it to him)

dʒ/v:edʒir / evir (a kind of tree / bedroom)

dzirdzir / virvir (vertebra / numerous)

dʒ/d:dʒeling / deling (whitch man / node)

The above data show that it is less frequent in the word final position.

1.1.4 The velar phonemes

The velar phonemes are articulated in the velum. Three are attested in Muyang.

1.1.4.1 The phoneme /k/

The sound /k/ is frequently found in word initial, middle and final positions. Its identification is the result of the following contrast:

k/h: akur / ahur (stone / beans)

k/m: kru / mru (ten / naïve)

k/d: kra / dra (dog / a handicap)

k/p: kra / pra (dog / sacrifice)

k/g: kwasúm / gwasúm (check from the ground / deceive)

1.1.4.2 The phoneme /g/

The sound /g/ in gw/ngw: gwaragwara/ ngwarangwara “ram/a few” the voiced counterpart of /k/. Like in Mofu (Barreteau: 1988), Mada (Dieu et. al., 2000), Ouldeme (Colombel: 1986), Mboko and Zulgo (Gravina and Smith, 2010), this consonant is neither labialized nor palatalized in Muyang. The identification of consonant /g/ is the result of the following contrast:

g/dz : garáy / dzaray (hunting / locust)

g/sl: magam / maslam (home / a kind of grass)

g/v: agar / avar (a leopard / stone used to make flour)

g/w: gír / wír (shake / child)

garáy / waray (chase / hunting)

g/b: geli / beli (bush / drunkard)

g/h: guv / huv (filled in the mouth / filled in hand)

degúm / dehúm (go / split)

The preceding examples show that the phoneme /g/ is neutralized in final position in Muyang, but it is most frequent in initial position.

1.1.4.3 The phoneme /w/

It is a labio-velarized and oral sound cross linguistically. The identification of consonant /w/ is the result of the following contrast:

w/z: wal / zal (man / woman)

w/y: wum / yam (action of putting fire to.../ water)

w/g: wír / gír (child / shake)

w/d: awak / adak (goat / thorn)

way / day (who / not yet)

wír / dír (child / huge and heavy)

w/t: way / tay (who / them)

w/l: daw / dal (action of walking / action of killing)

One realizes after a close look at the preceding data that the phoneme /w/ is attested in all positions. It deletes in front of rounded vowels /ɤ/, /u/ and /o/ attested in the language as in Mofu-Gudur (Barreteau: 1988). This is illustrated in the following examples:

kwarshi → karshi (the chair)

okwur → okur (the stone)

okworu → okoru (the big frog)

When preceded by consonants, /w/ tends to be syllabic in examples such as *kwas* “dig”, *makwal* “rimbow”, etc.

1.1.5 The glottal phonemes

According to literature in linguistics, glottal sounds are articulated in the back region of the oral cavity, precisely at the level of glottis. In Muyang, there are not many glottal consonants.

1.1.5.1 The phoneme /h/

The phoneme /h/ is oral, voiceless and fricative as it is the case cross linguistically. Its identification is the result of the following contrast:

h/f: had / fad (earth / four)

h/k: ahur / akur (beans / stone), huk / kuk (visible/so much)

h/d: ahay / aday (house / stick)

h/ʃ: ahir / acir (he flies / it is delicious)

h/g: dehum / degum (big and tall / very big and not necessarily tall)

h/d: haf / daf (drogue / food)

h/n: hak / nak (action of penetrating / you)

h/v: had / vad (earth / day)

h/m: hetek / metek (a traditionally made bag / pulp), mbeh / mbel (low/though)

h/p: has / pas (product used to colour / telling in the true manner)

h/y: hay / bay (millet/chief)

h/s: hay / say (millet/cut), hwa / swa (running/well)

h/w: hir / wir (jump/child)

This sound is attested in all positions in Muyang. It tends to behave like the voiceless fricative velar /x/, which is attested in non-central Chadic languages, in some environments. The phoneme /x/ is the only total glottal consonant in Muyang.

In short, the description of consonants in the preceding sections enablesto obtains the following table:

Place of articulation Manner of articulation		Labial	Coronal		Velar	Glottal
			Alveolar	Palatal		
Plosives	vl	p	t		k	
	vd	b	d		g	
Implosives		ɓ	ɗ			
Fricatives	vl	f	s, ʃ	ç		h
	vd	v	z, ʒ	ʝ		
Nasals		m	n		ŋ	
Affricates	vl			tʃ		
	vd			dʒ		
Liquids	Lateral		l			
	Vibrant		r			
Semi-vowels				j	w	

Table 1: The consonant chart of Muyang adopted from Bebey (2010 and 2015).

Table 2 shows that the Muyang language uses 26 consonants⁵. They are the most used phonemes in the language, as compared to Muyang vowels which will be discussed in the next section.

1.2 The Muyang vowel system

Nine vowels are attested in Muyang as summarised in the following paragraphs:

1.2.1 The phoneme /ə/

The identification of the phoneme /ə/ is the result of the following contrast:

ə/u: hədāk/hudūk (derived from hudāk (move/soon))

ə/a: bəz/baz (sharpen/harvest)

1.2.2 The phoneme /a/

The identification of vowel /a/ is the result of the following contrast:

a/e: hay/hey (millet/he)

a/i: asak/asik (leg/a species of tree)

a/i: avar/avir (stone/rain)

a/u: kra/kru (dog/ten)

As far as its distribution is concerned, one observes from the above data that /a/ occurs in word initial, middle and end positions. The phoneme /a/ is rounded in contact with labial phonemes. This argumentation supposes that the sound /a/ assimilates the labial features of the following sound as illustrated in the data that follow:

amu (in Mada) → omu (honey)

aslu → oslu (meat)

1.2.3 The phoneme /ɑ/

The identification of the vowel /ɑ/ is the result of the following contrast:

ɑ/a: avid/avid' (burning/making)

The phonetic symbol of this sound is (o) as in other Chadic languages such as Mada (Dieu et. al., 2000) and Mofu-gudur (Barreteau, 1988). It is frequent in all positions of the word as one can observe in the following illustrations:

- məhɑsl (tale)

⁵With 26 consonants, Muyang is one of the Chadic languages that have the greatest number of consonants. Some of them are Ouldeme, Mada, Vame, etc. (Veronique de Colombel 1986, 129)

- məkwəl (dry period)
- əkwəl (white hair)
- atkwə (okra)

It seems that the phoneme /ɑ/ is reduced to /ə/ in front of /i/; also, it becomes labial when followed by a consonant sound.

1.2.4 The phoneme /ɛ/

In Muyaŋ, the identification of vowel /ɛ/ is the result of the following contrast:

- ɛ/ə: gɛli/gəli (resist to something/farm)
- ɛ/ɑ: məvid/məvi (sickle/bud)
- ɛ/i: cɛf/cif (action of percing/soon)
- ɛ/ʊ: ɛɛ/ɛʊ (he digged/he digged for me)
- ɛ/a: dʒɛr/dʒar (inversed/many)

The above data illustrate that /ɛ/ is less frequent in final and middle positions.

1.2.5 The phoneme /i/

The identification of the vowel /i/ is the result of the following contrast:

- i/i: wirwir/wirwir (with wisdom/in the child manner), bir/bir (once/the action of flying), gir/gir (shake/a huge quantity)
- i/ʊ: cí/cʊ (listen/two)
- i/u: kri/kru (wood/ten)
- i/a: kri/kra (wood/dog)

The few examples containing the vowel /i/ shows that it is one of the rare sounds in Muyaŋ language. As one can see in the above data, /i/ is less frequent in word initial position.

1.2.6 The phoneme /i/

The phoneme /i/ is frequent in Chadic languages such as Ouldeme (De Colombel, 1986), Mada (Dieu et al., 2000), Mofu-gudur (Barreteau, 1988) and Molko (Bow, 1997). It is described as a central, high and not tensed vowel. Its identification in Muyaŋ is the result of the following contrast:

- i/i: wirwir/wirwir (in the child manner/with wisdom), bir/bir (the action of flying/once), gir/gir (shake/a huge quantity)
- i/e: gili/geli (farm/resist to something)

i/a: avir/avar (rain/stone)

i/u: hir/hur (flight/together)

The preceding data show that the phoneme /i/ is more frequent in word middle position. It usually occurs in the word final position as in *wirwir* (in the child manner). The minimal pair it forms with the phoneme /i/ is illustrative that those vowels are not the derived form of a given vowel, they are distinct.

1.2.7 The phoneme /ɯ/

The Muyaŋ /ɯ/ is pronounced as the French /u/ in “utiliser”. Its identification is the result of the following contrast:

ɯ/u: mɯɯ/mɯ (mother-in-law/naïve)

ɯ/o: mɯɯ/mɯɔ (mother-in-law/dew)

ɯ/i: dɯ/dí (morning/prepare)

cɯ/cí (two/listen)

The above examples illustrate that there is a tendency for /ɯ/ to occur in word final position. As it is the case for /i/ and /i/, the minimal pair formed by /ɯ/ and /u/ indicates that they are distinct phonemes attested in Muyaŋ.

1.2.8 The phoneme /u/

The identification of the vowel /u/ is the result of the following contrast:

u/ɯ: mɯ/mɯɯ (naïve/mother in law)

u/ɔ: mɯ/mɯɔ (naïve/dew)

u/ə: huɖák/həɖák (soon/move away)

u/i: kru/kri (ten/wood)

u/a: kru/kra (ten/dog)

One observes that the phoneme /u/ occurs more frequently in word middle and final positions.

1.2.9 The phoneme /ɔ/

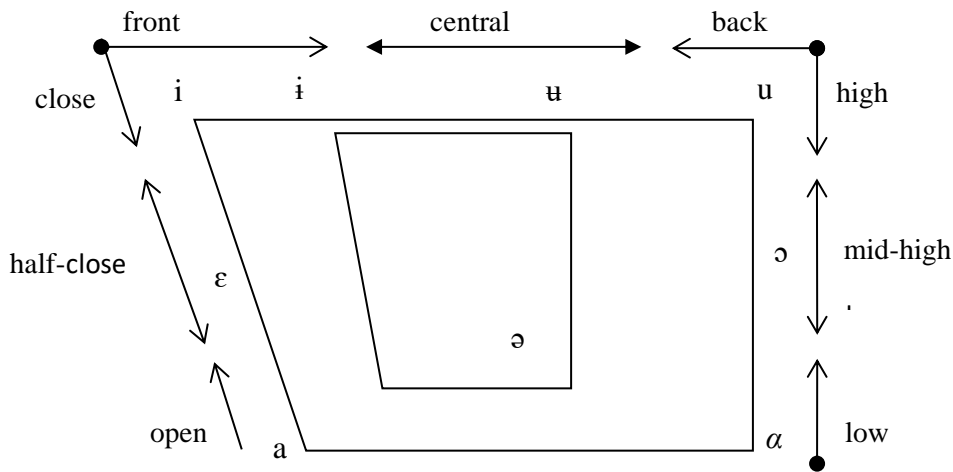
The identification of vowel /ɔ/, written o, is the result of the following contrast:

ɔ/e: məvid/mevid (bud/sickle)

ɔ/u: mɯɔ/mɯ (dew/naïve)

ɔ/ɯ: mɯɔ/mɯɯ (dew/mother-in-law)

From the above data, one realises that this sound is most frequent in word middle position. The description of the above vowels which form minimal pairs allows us to draw the vowel trapezium that follows:



The above table shows that Muyang uses nine underlying vowels the features of which differ from one to another. In fact, as one can observe, the following sets of vowels: the rounded vowels, the unrounded vowels, the high vowels and the low vowels are attested in the language.

1.3 The Backward Vowel Harmony

Vowel Harmony was thoroughly investigated and illustrated by data from a number of Chadic languages such as Kera (Gary, 2008). Backward vowel harmony operates from the righthand to the lefthand position (see Gary: 2008). It can occur word internally or at the word boundary structure. For Zygmunt (1980), there are two rules affecting vowels in Chadic one operating on the vowels of the stem and the other operates on the suffix itself. To see whether it accommodates the Muyang data, let us consider the following paradigm:

(21)a. Lawan á gráy ahay

Lawan SM.3sg do house

“Lawan builds a house.”

b) Lawan é shí yam

Lawan SM.3sg drink water

“Lawan drinks water.”

c) Lawan ó zúm ďáf

Lawan SM.3sg eat food

Lawan ó zúm ďáf

“Lawan eats food.”

d) Lawan ó zum-ába ďáfá

Lawan SM.3sg eat-P1 food-Asp

Lawan ó zumába ďáfá

“Lawan has eaten food.”

In the above paradigm, one sees that the third personal agreement marker *á*, which is a free morpheme (see Bebey, 2015) in (21a) becomes *sé* in (21b) when followed by the high *í* and it becomes *ó* before the high-rounded *ú* in (21c). One also sees that the agreement marker assimilates the features of the nearest vowel contained in the verb. These remarks allow writing in the sense of Zygmunt (1981) and Gary (2008) that there is Backward Vowel Harmony in Muyang.

Nevertheless, the rounded *u* in *zum* “wine” surprisingly does not assimilate the features of the tense marker *ába* in (21d). This observation is indicative that the backward vowel harmony rule does not apply to suffixes such as a tense marker. Let us look at the following example for further analysis:

- 22) ahur → ohur
 “Beans”
- 23) ahar → ahar
 “Hand”
- 24) argeli → ergeli
 “Basin”
- 25) balon → bolon
 “A ball”
- 26) eli → eli
 “Stew”
- 27) Hamu → hɔmu
 “Pot”

From the above, one sees that the unrounded /a/ and /ɔ/ in *ahur* “beans” assimilates the labial or the [+round] features of /u/ and /o/ in (22), (25) and (27) respectively while in (24) and (26), /a/ and /ɛ/ assimilates the [+high] or [+coronal] features of /e/ and /i/ respectively. From the previous paradigm, one notices that Vowel Harmony is attested in both stem and boundary structure in Muyang.

1.3.1 The root backward vowel harmony

There is root backward vowel harmony in Muyang as detailed in the following paragraphs.

- 28) Baskur → boskur (bicycle)
- 29) Lari → leri (a long bicycle)
- 30) Aslu → ɔslu (meat)
- 31) Asus → ɔsus (a given animal)
- 32) Vegul → vugul (thing)
- 33) Hamu → hɔmu (pot)

In, (30), (31), (32) and (33), the rounding [+round] or labial (LAB) features have effects on the vowels of the entire word. Let us look at the following data for further analyses:

34. gəli → gili (farm)
 35. bəli → beli (drunkard)
 36. əndəwi → endewi (shirt)
 37. ləwir → lewir (famine)
 38. mandəgir → mendengir (hoe)
 39. maləngir → melengir (terrace)
 40. ayeng → eyeng (squirrel)

In the above paradigm, one notices that the [-high] vowels become [+high] when followed by a high vowel. /ə/ for instance becomes /e/ in (34), (35), (36) and (37) while the [-high] /a/ assimilates [+high] features in (38), (39) and (40). This observation lends support to the proposals that [+high] or palatal (PAL) and [+round] or labial (LAB) features are harmonic features in Muyang.

From the above analyses, it is plausible to write that the Vowel Harmony rules apply word internally from right to left in this Muyang.

1.3.2 The stem boundary backward vowel harmony

Let us recall that backward vowel harmony also applies word boundary as illustrated in the following data:

41)a. Lawan á koru → Lawan á koru

Lawan SM.3sg go Lawan SM.3sg go

Lawan á koru Lawan ó koru
 “Lawan goes.”

b. Nak ká pí eri → Nak ké pí eri

You SM.2sg see eye You SM.2sg see eye

“You are a wise person”

c. á kwəlí → é kwelí
 SM.3sg dry SM.3sg dry

“It dries.”

d. Lawan á zúm → Lawan ó zúm
 Lawan SM.3sg eat Lawan SM.3sg eat

“Lawan eats.”

e. *Wir* goru *wur* goru
Child my → Child my
“My child”

Upon observation of the preceding data, one sees that there is a tendency for the final vowels to harmonize with the clause internal ones. In (41a) and (41d), the [-round] /a/ becomes [+round] /o/ when followed by the rounded phoneme /u/. (41b) and (41c) show that /a/ and /ɑ/ tend to assimilate the features of the final /i/. In (41e), one sees that /i/, in *wir* “child” when the word is used solely, becomes /u/ when followed by /u/. The above description indicates that Muyang exhibits also backward Vowel Harmony in the stem boundary more particularly between the agreement markers which assimilate the harmonic features of the vowels contained in the verbs.

Besides, the fact that nouns which form verbs subjects such as Lawan in (41a) and (41) are not affected supposes that in phrasal level, the rule applies to agreement marker + verbs.

However, vowel harmony cannot always apply freely. Let us examine the following data:

49. *Bəzza* → *bezza* (children)

50. *Yatti* → *yatti* (that)

51. *Gəḍḍakani* → *geḍḍakani* (huge)

52. *Motta* → *motta* (car)

These data indicate that consonant doubling within the same word does not allow vowel assimilation to take place in Muyang.

2. Word formation

The present section tackles the grammatical categories and word formation processes used by the language. The former include nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, articles, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions and interjections.

2.1 The noun morphology

Noun morphology consists in the description of noun formation and its different changes in contact with other grammatical categories. Here, the noun root, its inflexions and its semantic classification are discussed.

2.1.2 Semantic classification of noun

A noun can be “plural” or “non-plural”.

2.1.2.1 Plural nouns

In Muyang, plural nouns designate persons, ethnics, animals, religious realities except God. Let us consider the following data:

Ethnics

- 53. Muyang - Muyeyang (*a Muyang- the Muyang people*)
- 54. Mbuko - Mbukoko (*a Mbuko- the Mbuko people*)

Some animals

- 55. Kra – krá (*a dog – dogs*)
- 56. Patu- patutu (*a cat – cats*)
- 57. eding-ediding (*A bird – birds*)

Religious realities

- 58. Pra – prá (*a sacrifice – the sacrifices*)
- 59. Mezir- mezir (*a fairy – the fairies*)
- 60. Sheteni- sheteni' (*a satan – the satans*)

An observation of the nouns above shows that they change in number. Apart from this list, the other groups of nouns are not morphologically plural in Muyang, even though semantically, it is known that there is more than one of what they designate.

2.1.2.2 Non-plural nouns

Look at the following illustrations:

(61) a. Ahay bling

House one
“One house”

b. ahay cə
House two
“Two houses”

(62) a. Wandang bling

Knicker one
“One knicker”

b. Wandang zlam
Knicker five
“Five knickers”

(63) a. Mish bling

Person one
“One person”

b. Mish kru
Person ten
“Ten persons”

(64) a. Zla genaw bling
Thing wild one
“One animal”

b. Zla genaw zlam
Thing wild five
“Five animals”

One realises that nouns that designate buildings (61) and clothes (62) for instance do not change in number. Among morphologically non-plural nouns, there are nouns of species, musical and all other instruments, actions, food, historical and cultural realities, buildings, landscape, seasons, date and period of the day, plants and parts of the body, clothes, etc.

2.1.2 Noun formation

By noun formation, one means root nouns, nominalization, number and gender.

2.1.2.1 Roots

In Muyang, root nouns can be disyllabic or formed of more than two syllables. Some noun roots are reduplicated while others are not.

2.1.2.1.1 Non-reduplicated-root nouns

Non-reduplicated nouns comprise only the root. For illustration, let us observe the following data:

(65). Pra “Sacrifice”

(66). Hay “Millet”

(67). Wal “Wife”

(68). Zlam “Thing”

(69). Ngarama “A species of bird”

(70). Mīndegir “A hoe”

A glance at the data above shows that the different words are not reduplicated. Some contain more than two syllables. Examples (69) and (70) for instance contain three syllables, respectively. This description allows us to suggest contra Gravina and Smith (2010) that reduplication does not depend on the number of syllables.

2.1.2.1.2 Reduplicated-root nouns

A few nouns can have their roots reduplicated in Muyang. Let us look at the structure of the following data:

71. Krimkrim (rapidity or rapidly)

72. Váyvàyá (courage)

73. *Krim

One observes that the nouns in the above paradigm have their roots reduplicated. In (73), one sees that when sequences of these reduplications appear in their own within the sentence, they are meaningless.

2.1.2.2 Compound nouns

The composition of nouns consists in combining nouns, noun and adjectives, noun – preposition – noun, noun – verb- noun as discussed in the following sections:

2.1.2.2.1 Noun + noun

Two nouns can make one single noun which designates an individual, a thing, an animal, an abstract reality, etc. Consider the following examples:

74. akur - wal

Stone-wife

akurwal

“A stone used to charm wives.”

75. Eding - yam

Bird-water

Edingyam

“A bird which lives in the water.”

76. Hendir – mendegir

Nose-hoe

Hendirmendegir

“A small hoe.”

77. Zal–akal

Man-thief

Zalakal

“A thief”

78. Wir–hala

Child-prostitute

Wirhala

A prostitute

Example (74) for instance illustrates that the word *akur* “stone” and *wal* “wife” are associated to form a new word. An observation of these different examples shows that, as far as their meaning is concerned, there is a little relation between the resulting compound noun and the two nouns. In (75), the noun *eding* “bird” indicates the type of animal and the noun *yam* “water” indicates the place where it lives. The two nouns can therefore be considered as distinctive features that enable the interlocutors to refer to the specific element. It is worth noting from this reasoning that languages resort to compound words when they lack the specific word to designate what they refer to.

2.1.2.2.2 Noun + adjectives

Nouns can be associated to an adjective to form a new noun. The majority of nouns in the following examples can be used both as noun and adjectives. The word *masfa*, for instance, means *laziness*, when it is used as noun, and *lazy* when used as adjective. Let us look at this paradigm:

79. Mesuf - ndzelatani
Spirit/breathing-holy
Mosufndzelatani
“The holy Spirit”

One realises that adjectives in the preceding data qualify nouns with which they are associated to form the new noun. The adjective *ndzelatani* “holy” qualifies the noun *mesuf* “spirit” in (79).

2.1.2.2.3 Noun + verb

A noun can also be associated to an infinitive verb to form a new noun. Let us examine the following examples:

80. Ahay – magay-ani
House-construct-INF
Ahaymagrani
“Construction”

81. Daf –muzum-ani
Food-eat-INF
Dafmuzumani
“Eating”

82. Pra–magray-ani
Sacrifice-do-INF
Pramagrani
“Religion”

Example (81) for instance shows that the infinitive verb expresses the action of eating food. In (82), *magrani* “to do” expresses the action of doing sacrifice. The resulting nouns in the two examples are evidence in support to the assumption that the meaning of new nouns is, however, related to the one of the associated words.

2.1.2.2.4 Noun + preposition + noun

Here, a preposition links the two nouns; the second noun completes the meaning of the first. There is a kind of expression of possession. Illustrations are given in the following data:

83. Ahay–ga-sulay
House-of-money
Ahaygasulay

“A bank”

84. Eri-ge-eli

Eye-of-stew

Ergeli

“A stew’s pot cover”

85. Eri-ge-həmbu

Eye-of-flour

Ergohumbu

“Flour’s pot cover”

Example (85) shows that the cover belongs to the pot of flour. Since the whole expression behaves morphologically like a single word, this is additional illustration that leads to the conclusions that noun formation does not only involve affixes but also lexical words.

2.1.2.3 Number

There are two possibilities of marking plural in Muyang: the use of pitch accent and the reduplication of sequence of the root word (Bebey, 2010: 50).

2.1.2.3.1 The use of a pitch accent

It consists in putting a tonal accent on the last syllable of the singular noun. The noun stem remains without modification. Let us look at the following data:

86. Mbuko- Mbukó (a Mbuko man – Mbuko people)

87. Awak- awák (goat- goats)

88. Wal- wál (wife- wives)

89. Kra- krá (a dog – dogs)

90. Plish- plísh (horse- horses)

One sees that the last syllable of the singular noun bears a pitch accent in plural. In (87) for instance, the last syllable of *awak* “goat” bears a pitch accent on its nucleus to express plural. This analysis is evidence that in Muyang-type languages, the pitch accent has grammatical properties. Nevertheless, let us note that this rule is not applicable to all Muyang nouns. Some nouns do not take the pitch accent as a plural marker as illustrated in the following examples:

91. kreng - *kréng (frog –frogs)

92. sla - *slá (cow- cows)

93. wir - *wír (child- children)

94. mish - *mísh (someone- some people)

95. zal - *zál (man – men)

It can be seen from the nouns above that some nouns do not take a pitch accent as plural marker. What one remarks here, after a look at examples (86-90), is that, once again, it is not the number of syllables that determines whether the noun should take a pitch accent as plural marker or not. As argued so far, its motivation may be expressed in terms of plural or non-plural nouns.

2.1.2.3.2 The noun-stem reduplication

Some nouns reduplicate either the sequence of the root word or the entire noun root to indicate plural. Illustrations are given in the examples below.

- 96. Sla – sla-sla (cow – cows)
- 97. Kreng - ke-re-reng (frog – frogs)
- 98. Kamerun - Kame-re-run (Cameroonian – Cameroonians)
- 99. Awak – a-wa-wak (goat- goats)
- 100. Wir - beza (child – children)

The data above indicates that only stems of nouns designating human beings or animals are reduplicated. However, there are nouns that change completely to other forms. This remark supposes that there are some Muyang nouns to which any of the rules developed above apply. An example of such a noun is *wir* “child” as mentioned above. Its plural, *beza* “children”, is morphologically a completely different morpheme.

2.1.2.3.3 Zero plural marker

Some nouns do not morphologically take any plural markers, i.e they simply do not show morphological plurality. When they have plural determiners, they are understood to be plural as illustrated in the following paradigm.

- 101. Ahay – ahay (house –houses)
- 102. Azana – azana (cloth – clothes)
- 103. Wakita – wakita (book – books)
- 105. Wandang – wandang (knickers –knickers)
- 106. Mawayavani (fraternity)
- 107. Mawayani (love)

As mentioned above, when nouns like the ones above are used within the sentence, they can be followed by a determiner which may bear plural features. Let us look at the following examples for illustrations:

- 108. N6 sek6m wandang zlam
SM.1sg buy knickers five
N6 sok6m wandang zlam
“I buy five knickers.”

- 109. N6 l6m ahay kay
SM.1sg build house many
“I build many houses.”

One sees that *wandang* and *ahay* in (108) and (109) respectively do not change their forms even when they are followed by plural determiners. This remark is evidence that plurality is not marked on some nouns in Muyang. In the preceding illustrations for instance, it is only the determiners which indicate plurality.

2.1.2.4 Gender

In Muyang, the noun class does not exist as it is the case in Bantu languages⁶. Gender in this language does not consist in the difference between feminine and masculine but in the difference between males and females.

Generic noun	glossary	female	glossary	male	glossary
110. Awak	goat	awak	goat	vogul	billy
111. Sla	cow	sla	cow	kokur	bull
112. Tembak	sheep	tembak	sheep	gwaragwara	ram
113. Mecekwir	chicken	mecekwir	hen	agwazl	cock
114. Mish	man being	wal	woman	zal	man

A sight at the data above shows that generally female and generic nouns have the same form in Muyang. It seems that the difference between female and male is the only way of gender differentiation in the language.

2.1.2.5 Syntactic functions of nouns

Nouns are generally subjects or objects within sentences. Consider the following sentences:

115. *Bezza té shí yam*
Children SM.3pl drink water
“Children drink water.”

116. *Satay á váy-i ďaf ana Lawan*
Satay SM.3sg give.Dat food to Lawan
Satay á ví ďaf ana Lawan
“Satay gives food to Lawan.”

In sentence (115), *beza* “children” and *yam* “water” are respectively subject and direct object of the verb. In sentence (116), the noun *Lawan* is indirect object of the verb. This supposes that noun or group of nouns can be subject and/or object of the verb within the sentence. Nevertheless, other grammatical categories, particularly adjectives and verbs can behave as nouns and syntactically play the roles of subject or object. This process that consists of other parts of speech to behave like a noun is known as nominalisation in the linguistics literature.

2.1.2.6 Nominalization

In Muyang, the grammatical categories concerned by this process are adjectives and infinitive verbs.

2.1.2.6.1 Nominalization of verbs

As noticed so far, infinitive verbs can be subject or object of the verb in Muyang. Let us consider the following examples:

⁶ See Biloa (1995, 2011), Tamanji (1999, 2009), Clédor Nseme (2011), Achille Fossi and Adrienne Lambo Ouafu (2011) and Kouankem (2012)

117. **Mahrana** á bláy do
Go out SM.3sg please Neg
“Going out is not good.”

118. Tá wáy **masawadani**
SM.3pl love walk
“They like walking.”

In (117), *mahrana* “to go out” is an infinitive, in (118) *masawadani* “to go out” is also an infinitive. The two verbs are respectively subject and object of the verb. It means that they do not describe an action or a state but they either do the action or complete the action of the verb: they are used as verb complement, they are nominalised.

2.1.2.6.2 Nominalization of adjectives

Like the verb, adjectives can also be nominalised. Look at the following data:

(119) a. Wir **kuduf-ani** á bláy
Child kind-Suffix SM.3sg please
Wir **kudufani** á bláy
“The kind child is good.”

b. **Kuduf-ani** á bláy
Kind-Suffix SM.3sg please
Kudufani á bláy
“The kind one is good.”

(120) a. Mish **tsuday-ani** á rá
Person wicked-Suffix SM.3sg come
Mish **tsudayani** á rá
“The wicked person comes.”

b. **Tsuday-ani** á rá
Wicked-Suffix SM.3sg come
Tsudayani á rá
“The wicked comes.”

(121)a. Má wáy awak **dedeling-ani**
SM.1sg love goat black-Suffix
Má wáy awak **dedelingani**
“We like the black goat.”

b. Má wáy **dedeling-ani**
SM.1sg love black
Má wáy **dedelingani**
“We like the black.”

The verb subject in sentences (119b) and (120b) are adjectives. In (120b), the adjective *tsudayani* “the wicked” is nominative whereas in (121b), *dedelingani* “black” is accusative.

From this remark, one can claim that in Muyaŋ, there is possibility to nominalise adjectives and verbs. Like a noun, they can function as subject or object of the verb within the sentence.

2.2 Adjective morphology

Adjectives express quality (qualifying adjectives) or relation (determiner). Among determiners, there are possessives, numerals and demonstratives. The main purpose in this sub-section is to identify and to describe the different semantic kinds of adjectives, their formation and the kind of sentence elements they modify. The section also examines their syntactic positions in the sentence.

2.2.1 Descriptive adjectives

In Muyaŋ; the majority of Muyaŋ qualifying or descriptive adjectives come in automatic pairs, one being the opposite of the other as remarked by Gravina and Smith (2010). The adjective *medewel* “old” for instance is the opposite of *dagwa* “young”. Let us examine the examples below:

- 122. Zebal (tall) – desl (short)
- 123. Gedakani (big) - gezukani (small)
- 124. Medewel (old) – dagwa (young)
- 125. Newnew (sweet) - beblek (bitter)

In the preceding paradigm, one realises that adjectives come in pairs. This opposition can be a result of phonological processes like the case in (123) where [d] and [ʒ] and [a] and [u] are respectively minimal pairs. This is an illustration of the hypothesis that automatic pairs of adjectives in this language are opposite.

Bear in mind that it is possible to obtain new words by the morphophonological transformation of other words in Muyaŋ. This reasoning leads to the assumption that qualifying adjectives may be derived from other parts of speech. To see how it works, let us observe the following data:

- 126. Təwir (talks) – tewirani (talkative)
- 127. Mru (naivety) – mrani (naïve)
- 128. Ngudngud (slowness) - Ngudngudani (slow)
- 129. Sheduk (selfishness) - Shedukani (selfish)

A look at (128-129) shows that the suffix *-ani* is added to nouns to form adjectives. Let us consider the following examples for further illustrations:

- 130. Wir zebalani á shí yam
Child tall SM.3sg drink water

Wir zebalani é shí yam
“The tall child drinks water.”

131. Yam magdavani á bláy do
Water bad SM.3sg please Neg
“It is not good to drink bad water.”

One notices that in the preceding data, qualifying adjectives are obtained by suffixation of *-ani* to root adjective *zebal* “tall” and to root noun *magwdar* “a person whose job consist in worsening” respectively. The following data give further illustrations:

132. Zal sheduk á záy payda do
Man selfishness SM.3sg take trust Neg
“One cannot count on a selfish man”

133. Zal matak á bláy do
Man witchcraft SM.3sg please Neg
“A witch man is not a good man.”

In (132) and (133), one observes that the adjective *sheduk* “selfish” and *matak* “witch” lose the final *-ani* when in contact with other constituents within the sentence.

As far as their syntactic distribution is concerned, the structures of sentences (132) and (133) show that qualifying adjectives are postnominal in Muyang. They are structurally found between the nouns and the verbs. The same remark is valid with adjectives of colour.

2.2.2 Adjectives of colour

Adjectives, which indicate colours, are numerous in Muyang. This is due to the possibilities that the Muyang handicraft has to combine some colours in order to obtain the most vivid and complex ones. It is also a consequence of the nature-changing colour in Muyang people’s geographical area. Here are some examples:

- 134. Bedbedani (white)
- 135. Dedelingani (black)
- 136. Azaywirazaywir (yellow)
- 137. Kuzirkuzir (green)
- 138. Ndize (red)
- 139. Gwaslgwasl (multicolour)
- 140. Kusikusi (ashen)
- 141. Ceklweticeklweti (blue)

A sight at the paradigm above shows that the majority of adjectives of colour stems are reduplicated. Some are obtained by derivation from other parts of speech such as nouns. In (136) for instance, it is the compound noun *azaywir* “the child’s poo” formed of *azay* “poo” and *wir* “child” which is entirely reduplicated to form the adjective *azaywirazaywir* “yellow”.

One also observes that some adjectives of colour take *-ani* in final position while the others do not. Nevertheless, let us note that the above remarks do not apply to all adjectives of colour. *Ndize* “red” is example of exceptions to these rules. When adjectives of colour occur within the sentence, they, in contrast, always take the final *-ani* as illustrated in the following paradigm:

142. Mé sokúm azana ndezani
 SM.1pl buy clothes red-Suffix
 Mó sokúm azana ndezani
 “We buy red clothes.”

143. Awak bedbed-ani á shí yam
 Goat white-suffix SM.3sg drink water
 Awak bedbedani é shí yam
 “A white goat drinks water.”

144. Wakita ceklweticeklwetani á ɓláy do
 Book blue-Suffix SM.3sg please Neg
 Wakita ceklweticeklwet-ani á ɓláy do
 “It is not appropriate to use a blue book.”

Sentences (142), (143) and (144) show that when the adjective has a final vowel sound, the latter is deleted. Consider sentences that follow for further illustrations:

145. Azana **azaywirazaywir-ani**
 Cloth yellow-suffix
 Azana **azaywirazaywirani**
 “Yellow clothes”

(146)a. Azana **kusikusi**
 Cloth ashen
 “Ashen clothes”

b. Azana **kusikusi-ani** á ɓláy
 Clothes ashen-suffix SM.1sg please
 Azana **kusikusiyani** á ɓláy
 “It is good to wear ashen clothes.”

One realises that when reduplication and suffixation obtain *azaywirazaywirani* “yellow” in (145), they do not obtain *kusikusi* “ashen” in (146a). The latter morphologically changes when it is used within the sentence. One also sees that contrary to qualifying adjectives that lose the final *-ani*, the data above show that the ones of colour do not when they are used within the sentence. This analysis indicates that, adjectives like *kusikusi* “ashen” are exceptions to reduplication-and-suffixation rule used in their formation.

As far as their distribution is concerned, data have shown that qualifying adjectives and adjectives of colour appear postnominally in Muyang.

2.2.3 Possessive adjectives

It is proposed in Bebey (2010) that there are six possessive adjectives which correspond to the six persons in Muyang. Their list is given in the following paradigm:

- (147)a. Goru _____ my
- b. Gayak _____ your
- c. Gayang _____ his/ her/ its
- d. Geli _____ our
- e. Gukuli _____ your
- f. Gatay _____ their

Table 2: Table of Muyang possessive adjectives

To see their distribution within a sentence, let us observe the following examples:

148. Wal **goru** à rà
Woman my SM.3sg come.P2
“My wife came.”

149. Beza gatay té zúm ďaf
Children their SM.3pl eat food
“Their children eat food.”

150. Wál **geli** tá gráy tewi
Women our SM.3pl do work
“Our wives work.”

151. Wal geli tá gráy tewi
Woman our SM.3pl do work
“Our wife works.”

152. Beza **gatay** tá zúm ďaf
Child their SM.3pl eat food
Beza **gatay** tó zúm ďaf
“Their child eats food.”

Let us ignore for the moment the morphological changes of verbs and agreement markers. In sentences (148), (149) and (150), one sees that the possessive adjectives *goru* “my”, *gatay* “their” and *geli* “our” respectively occur after the nouns *wal* “wife”, *beza* “children” and *wál* “wives”. In examples (151) and (152) thereafter, one realises that although nouns change in number, possessive adjectives do not.

Thus, apart from the fact that they denote ownership and possession relation, the preceding examples are indications that contrary to some languages such as English (Radford 1997, 2009), French, Spanish and Italian, possessives in Muyang-type languages do not determine nouns' agreement properties. In addition, after a look at the preceding constructions, one realises that they are restricted in postnominal position. The following data give further illustrations:

(152) a. Shəm zum **gukuli**

Drink wine your

“Drink your wine.”

b. *Shəm **gukuli** zum

Drink your wine

“Drink your wine.”

One remarks that in sentence (152b), the anteposition of *gekuli* “your” renders the sentence ungrammatical. This supposes that possessive adjectives are exclusively postnominal in the language.

2.2.4 Demonstrative adjectives

There are two demonstrative adjectives and their plural forms in Muyang. They are the proximal form *heni* which indicates objects, animal or persons, close to the speaker and *teguni* “that” which is the near addressee distance form. The latter marks persons or objects close to the addressee. They vary according to the number of the noun they determine and the position of the speaker in regard to what he shows. These demonstrative adjectives are summarised in the table that follows:

(153) Position/ number	Singular	Plural
Near	Heni (this)	Nday heni/ndeni (these)
Far	Teguni (that)	Nday teguni (those)

Table 3: Table of Muyang demonstratives

A glance at the preceding table shows that *heni* “this” and *teguni* “that” do not change forms in plural. They are preceded by the morpheme *nday* in plural. This supposes that *nday* “they” is not a demonstrative, it rather marks plurality. Let us consider the following data to see where they occur when they are used within the sentence:

(154) a. Wɛr **heni** kudkudʔ

child this kind

“This kind child.”

b. Beza **nday hen**i kudkudʔ

Children pl this kind

“These kind children.”

(155a). Wɛr **teguni** kudkudʔ

child that kind
 “That kind child.”

b. Beza **nday teguni** kudkud
 children pl those kind
 “Those kind children.”

Sentences (154a) and (154b) are illustrations that there are basically two demonstrative adjectives in Muyang *heni* “this” and *teguni* “that”. This is because *nday* is a freestanding morpheme that marks plurality as argued in the preceding paragraphs.

As far as their distribution is concerned, examples (154a), (154b), (155a) and (155b) show that demonstratives occur in the righthand position of the noun they demonstrate and agree with the latter in number. So, all like qualifying adjectives, adjectives of colour and possessives, they appear postnominally.

2.2.5 Numeral and ordinal adjectives

In Muyang, numerals and ordinals are not very restricted. Both of them vary between 1 and 99 999 and 1st and 99 999th respectively. If the formation of numerals does not cause any problem, the one of ordinals implies some phonological processes. In fact, the word *yati* which occurs leftwards loses its final syllable when followed by numerals to indicate ordinals. Consider the following data:

(156)

Numerals	Glossary
Beling	1
Cu	2
Kru	10
Kru-mahar-adiskla	17
Kru-kru-cu	20
Kru-kru-mahkir	30
Ding	100
Ding-ana-beling	101
Ding-ding-cu	200
Dobu	1000
Dobu-cu	2000

Ordinals

Logical Form	Phonetic Form	Glossary
yati-beling	ya-beling	1 st
yati-cu	ya-cu	2 nd
yati-kru	ya-kru	10 th
yati-kru-mahar-adiskla	ya-kru-mahar-adiskla	17 th
yati-kru-kru-cu	ya-kru-kru-cu	20 th

yati-kru-kru-mahkir	ya-kru-kru-mahkir	30 th
yati-ding	ya-ding	100 th
yati-ding-ana-beling	ya-ding-ana-beling	101 st
yati-ding-ding-cu	ya-ding-ding-cu	200 th
yati-dobu	ya-dobu	1000 th
yati-dobu-cu	ya-dobu-cu	2000 th

One realises that *yati*, described as relative pronoun in Bebey (2010), marks order when it is in front position of numbers. Consider the following sentences for further illustrations:

(157) a. Beza **zlam** tá sawadáy
 Children five SM.3pl walk
 “Five children are walking.”

b. Wír zalani **ya-zlam** á sawadáy
 Child male-Suffix that-five SM.3sg walk
 Wír zalani **yazlam** á sawadáy
 “The fifth boy is walking.”

c. Wír dahalay **ya-zlam** á sawadáy
 Child female that-five SM.3sg walk
 Wír dahalay yazlam á sawadáy
 “The fifth girl is walking.”

d. Beza **ya-zlam** tá sawadáy
 Children that-five SM.3pl walk
 Beza **yazlam** tá sawadáy
 “The fifth children are walking.”

Here, one observes that both numerals and ordinals do not agree with the noun they determine. Like other determiners, they occupy the right position of the noun. This remark supposes that all constructions that involve determiners, be they qualifying adjectives, adjectives of colour, possessives and demonstratives, show that they are placed after the noun they determine or qualify in surface structure. This remark is evidence to the hypothesis that they are postnominal in the language.

2.3 Pronoun morphology

The present section examines morphological properties and distribution of personal, possessive, demonstrative, reflexive, indefinite and interrogative pronouns depending on the context of noun they replace within the sentence, its role and its meaning.

2.3.1 Personal pronouns

Let us consider the following tables:

(158)

Subject PRN	Subject Marker or Agreement Marker	Indirect Object marker	Independent Object PRN	Possessive PRN
Nu (I)	N+V (ná, nó, né)	-u	nu	goru
Nak (You)	K+V (ká, kó, ké)	-uk	kur	gayak
Nang (He/she)	V (á, ó, é)	-i	nang	gayang
Leli (We)	M+V (má, mó, mé)	li	leli	geli
Neklúi (You)	K+V (ká, kó, ké)	klúi	klúi	gaklúi
Nday (They)	T+V (tá, tó, té)	tay	tay	gatay

Table 4: Table of Muyang personal pronouns

The table above shows that there are some differences between personal pronouns. In order to see how it works, let us observe the structure of the following data when they are used within sentences:

(159)a. **Ká** váy

SM.2sg give

“You give.”

b. ***Ká** váy – i

SM.2sg give - him/her

“You give him/her wine.”

c. **Ká** váy – i zum
SM.2sg give - him/her wine

Ké ví zum

“You give him/her wine.”

d. **Ká** váy-u zum

SM.2sg give - me wine

Kó vú zum

“You give me wine.”

e. **Tá** váy-úk zum

SM.2pl give - you wine

Tó vúk zum

“They give you wine.”

A look at the preceding paradigm shows that singular indirect objects are morphologically dependent, when they occur within the sentence. In examples (159b), (159c), (159d) and (159e) for instance, one sees that they are attached to verbs. This is obtained as follows: the final vocalic sound (if there is any) is dropped when the singular personal object pronoun is attached to the verb.

2.3.2 Possessive pronouns

Possessive pronouns are not morphologically different from possessive adjectives. Let us observe them in the table that follows:

(160)

Number / Person		Possessive pronoun	Glossary
Singular	1 st	goru	mine
	2 nd	gayak	yours
	3 rd	gayang	his/ hers/ its
Plural	1 st	geli	ours
	2 nd	gukuli	yours
	3 rd	gatay	theirs

Table 5: Table of possessive pronouns

A look at the table above shows that difference between possessive pronouns and possessive adjectives is not morphological. Let us see how it works in the sentences that follow:

(161)a. Awak **goru** á metá
 Goat **my** SM.3sg die
 “My goat died.”

b. Awak heni **goru**
 Goat this **mine**
 “This goat is mine.”

c. Awak **goru** heni
 Goat my this
 “This is my goat.”

d. Awak yati á mét ni **goru**
 Goat yati SM.3sg die ni mine
 “The goat which dies is mine.”

Sentences above indicate that the first difference between possessive adjectives in (161a) and (161c) and possessive pronouns in (161b) is structural. Here, one observes that the possessive adjective is restricted to the noun it determines properties whereas the possessive pronoun is not. As a matter of fact, the possessive pronoun that functions as noun is even a verb

complement in (161d). This analysis supposes that the difference between the two categories is not morphological but syntactic and semantic.

2.3.3 Demonstrative pronouns

Since they replace the nouns within the sentence, they can be subjective or objective. Let us consider the following examples:

(162) a. **Heni** á bláy do
This SM.3sg please Neg
“This one is not good.”

b. Ví zum ana **tuguni**
Give wine to that
“Give wine to that one”

c. **Nday heni** tá báz hay
Pl this SM.3pl harvest millet
“Those ones harvest millet.”

d. **Nang heni** á báz hay
He/she this SM.3sg harvest millet
“This one harvests millet.”

A look at bold constituents indicates that there are two basic demonstrative pronouns in Muyang. The other morphemes are attached to them in order to mark number and person. This depends on the kind and the nature of the noun the pronoun replaces. Thus, assuming that *nang* “him” and *nday* (plural) are personal pronouns, the two demonstrative pronouns in this language are:

(163)

heni ___ this
tuguni ___ that

Table 6: Table of demonstrative pronouns

As far as their syntactic role is concerned, examples in (162a) and (162b) for instance show that demonstrative pronouns are respectively assigned subjective and objective case by the verb. The occurrence of personal pronouns in (162c) and (162d), does not affect this case assignment. This illustrates the hypothesis that demonstrative pronouns play the role of nouns within the sentence.

2.3.4 Relative pronouns

It is argued in Bebey (2010) that the only relative pronoun attested in Muyang language is *yati* “that”. According to its meaning and the context in which it occurs, *yati* can be translated in

English into *that, who, which, whom* and *whose*. For illustration, let us pay attention to bold elements in the sentences that follow:

(164) a. Wír **yati** nu awayáy ni à rà
 Child yati SM.1sg love NI SM.3sg come.P2
 Wír **yati** n' awayáy ni à rà
 “The child **who** I love came.”

b. Wír **yati** bing-ani sheteni ni à rà
 Child yati father-Suffix mad NI SM.3sg come.P2
 Wír **yati** bingani sheteni ni à rà
 “The child **whose** father is mad came.”

c. Wír yati á zlapí ni à rà
 Child yati SM.3sg talk NI SM.3sg come.P2
 Wír yati á zlapí ni à rà
 “The child **whom** he talks to came.”

165. Kra **yati** á shí yam ni á zláh
 Dog yati SM.3sg drink water NI SM.3sg bow
 Kra **yati** é shí yam ni á zláh
 “The dog **which** drinks water bows.”

Sentences (164a), (164b), (164c) and (165) show that the Muyang relative pronoun does not change its form no matter what its antecedent is. This remark is evidence in support to the suggestion that the only relative pronoun in Muyang is *yati*.

2.3.5 Reflexive pronouns

There are six reflexive pronouns which correspond to the six persons as listed in the following sentences:

English sentences Muyang sentences

(166)a. I wash myself	Nu ná baráy nunuwani I SM.1sg wash myself
b. You wash yourself	Nak ká baráy naknakani You SM.2sg wash yourself
c. He/she washes himself/herself	Nang á baráy nangnangani She/he SM.3sg washes himself/herself
d. We wash ourselves	Leli mé baráy lelilelani We SM.1pl wash ourselves
e. You wash yourselves	Neklui ká barúm nekluinekulani You SM.2pl wash yourselves
f. They wash themselves	Nday tá baráy ndayndayani They SM.3pl wash themselves

A look at the preceding data shows that each reflexive pronoun is a reduplication of the corresponding personal pronoun. Then, the suffix *-ani* is added to the reduplicated word. Reflexives can be assigned both nominative and accusative cases in Muyang without changing their morphology as illustrated in the following sentences:

(167) a. **Nang** á baráy **nangnangani**
 He/she SM.3sg wash himself/herself
 “He/she washes himself/herself”

b. **Nangnangani** á baráy
 Himself/herself SM.3sg wash
 “He/she washes himself/herself”

Sentence (167a) reveals that there is coreference between the subject personal pronoun, the agreement or subject marker and the direct reflexive pronoun. In fact, the three constituents agree in number and person.

(168)

Reflexive pronouns	Morpheme breakdown	Gloss
Nunuwani	Nu-nu-ani I-I-suffix	Myself
Naknakani	Nak-nak-ani You-you-suffix	Yourself
Nangnangani	Nang-nang-ani He/she- He/she-suffix	Himself/herself
Lelilelani	Leli-leli-ani We-we-suffix	Ourselves
Neklúineklúini	Neklúi-neklúi-ani You-you-suffix	Yourselves
Ndaydayani	Ndaydayani They-they-suffix	Themselves

Table 7: Table of reflexive pronouns

2.3.6 Pronoun inflection

Recall that *nu* “I” and *nak* “you” are subjectives while *-u* “me” and *-uk* “you” are objectives. Let us consider the following data:

(169) a. **Nu** ná wáy zum
 I SM.1sg love wine
 “I like some wine.”

b. **Nak** ká wáy zum
 You SM.2sg give wine

“You give some wine.”

(170) a. ***Nak** ká váy-u zum ana nu
You SM.2sg give wine to me
Nak ké vú zum ana nu
“You give some wine to me.”

b. **Nak** ké váy-u zum
You SM.2sg give+me wine
Nak kó vú zum
“You give me some wine.”

(171)a. ***Nang** á váy-uk zum ana nak
He SM.3sg give wine to you
Nang ó vúk zum ana nak
“He gives some wine to you.”

b. **Nang** á váy-uk zum
He SM.3sg give you wine
Nang ó vúk zum
“He gives you some wine.”

(172) a. **Lawan** á ví zum ana **beza**
Lawan SM.3sg give wine to children
“Lawan gives some wine to children.”

b. **Nang** á ví zum ana **tay**
He SM.3sg give wine to them
“He gives them some wine.”

c. **Nang** á ví zum ana **leli**
He SM.2sg give wine to we
“He gives us some wine.”

d. **Nu** ná ví zum ana **kuli**
I SM.1sg give wine to you
“I give you some wine.”

(173) a. **Lawan** á ví yam ana **krá**
Lawan SM.3sg give water to dogs
“Lawan gives some water to dogs.”

b. **Nang** á ví yam ana **tay**
He SM.3sg give water to them
“He gives them some water.”

One sees in the preceding structures that pronouns depend on the lexical words they replace. In (171b), (172b) and (173b), it seems to be the case that they change in number and person in Muyang. When the lexical word is 1st singular, the corresponding pronoun is also 1st singular. One also observes that in some cases, pronouns depend on the role they play within the sentence. In (172b) and (173b), one remarks that the same personal pronoun *tay* “them” is used both for *beza* “children” and *krá* “dogs”. This supposes that there is no difference between human beings, animals and things in terms of pronouns in Muyang. This argument suggests that they are function words in Muyang. In (171b), the accusative *-úk* is bound by the verb while the nominative *nu* “I” in (172d) is not. From this observation, one can put that pronoun’s inflection depends on the grammatical function assigned to it by the sentence transitive verb.

2.4 Articles

Articles determine the noun they precede or they follow (depending on the language) crosslinguistically. Consider the paradigm that follows:

(174) a. *Wir á rá*
 Child SM.3sg come
 “A child comes.”

b. *Wir ni á rá*
 Child ni SM.3sg come
 “The child comes.”

(175) a. *Awák té shí yam*
 Goats SM.3pl drink water
 “Goats drink water.”

b. *Awák ni té shí yam*
 Goats ni SM.3pl drink water
 “The goats drink water.”

A sight at the above examples shows that while the Muyang noun *wir* “child” in (174a) appears with a null article, its English equivalent “a child” selects an indefinite article. Example (175a) also shows that no article determines the agreement features of the noun. In contrast, (174b) and (175b) contain respectively *ni* which is translated in English into the definite article “the”. This remark supposes that there is a null indefinite article in Muyang. The question that arises is whether one can analyse *ni* as a definite article. To answer this question, let us observe the following data for further illustrations:

(176) a. *Wir á rá*
 Child SM.3sg come
 “A child comes.”

b. Beza **ndahang** tá rá
Children other SM.3pl come
“Some children come.”

c. Beza **ndahang** ni tá rá
Children other ni SM.3pl come
“The other children come.”

(177) a. Beza maɓlani zlama ni tá rá
Children good five ni SM.3pl come
“The five handsome children come.”

b. Beza goru maɓlani zlama ni tá rá
Children my good five ni SM.3pl come
“My five handsome children come.”

c. Beza maɓlani ndeni ni tá rá
Children good these ni SM.3pl come
“These handsome children come.”

One realises that *ni*, which is still translated into “the” in (176c) and (177a), can occur in adjacency with other determiners in the noun’s righthand position. Like possessives, demonstratives, adjectives described in the preceding sections, one sees that it does not bear the grammatical properties of the latter. In (177b) and (177c), *ni* is not translated when there are possessive and demonstrative respectively. These remarks make it plausible to claim that this happens because the latter already mark definiteness. Thus, one can conclude following Tony Smith (2003) and Bebey (2010) that when occurred in the determiner position, *ni* marks definiteness in Muyang.

2.5 Conjunction

This section describes the formation of conjunctions and the position they occupy within the sentence. Their list is long in Muyang. Let us look at the following data:

(178) a. Satay á wáy Lawan
Satay SM.3sg love Lawan
“Satay loves Lawan.”

b. Lawan á wáy nang do
Lawan SM.3sg love her Neg
“Lawan does not love her.”

c. Satay á wáy Lawan **ama** Lawan á wáy nang do
Satay SM.3sg love Lawan **but** Lawan SM.3sg love her Neg
“Satay loves Lawan but Lawan does not love her.”

d. Lawan á bésh do **daɓaba** walani á yéy do

Lawan SM.3sg suffer Neg because wife+his SM.3sg smile Neg
 Lawan é bësh do **dadaba** walani é yéy do
 “Lawan suffers because his wife does not smile.”

A sight at the paradigm above shows that example (178c) is the combination of the independent sentences (178a) and (178b). This is achieved by the coordinating conjunction *ama* “but”. In (178d), one realises that the subordinating conjunction *dadaba* “because” relates two clauses, a main clause and a subordinate clause. The above examples show that both coordinating and subordinating conjunctions are attested in Muyang. Some are listed in the following table:

(179)

Coordinating conjunctions	_____	Glossary
Ama	_____	but
(tek), deni	_____	or
ata ...ndata	_____	and
watu	_____	so
ambatakani	_____	therefore
daya	_____	neither
dadaba	_____	for, because

From sentences (177a-c), one remarks that coordinating conjunctions are used to join the same grammatical categories. Consider sentences that follow for further illustrations:

180. Satay á wáy Lawan **ama** Lawan á wáy nang do
 Satay SM.3sg love Lawan **but** Lawan SM.3sg love her Neg
 “Satay loves Lawan but Lawan does not love her.”

181. **Ata** zal **ndata** wal tá shí yam
 Conj man **and** woman SM.3pl drink water
Ata zal **ndata** wal té shí yam
 “The husband and the wife drink water.”

The conjunction *ama* “but” in sentences (180), for example, links two independent clauses. It coordinates the little relation of meaning that exists between them. In (181), the discontinuous conjunction *ata...ndata* “and” joins *zal* “man” and *wal* “woman”.

According to traditional grammar, unlike coordinating conjunctions which have a large possibility to join complex sequences of the sentence, subordinate conjunctions relate main clauses to subordinate ones, the two clauses having a relation of dependency at semantic level. Depending on their distribution, one supposes that there is homophony between some coordinating and subordinating conjunctions in Muyang. Let us examine some examples below:

(182)

Subordinating conjunctions	_____	Glossary
Ha	_____	until
Dafaba	_____	because
Dega, (kwa)	_____	since
Lè...ama	_____	although

Bear in mind that the list of subordinating conjunctions is so long that we cannot write it here. Anyway, as one observes above, some conjunctions such as *le...ama* “although” are discontinuous. When they are used in the sentence, the first sequence stands at the sentence initial position and the second one in the middle. Example (183) gives relevant illustrations:

183. **Lè** Lawan á bësh do **ama** á gráy gevi
 Conj Lawan SM.3sg suffer Neg but SM.3sg do play
 “Although Lawan is sick, he plays.”

From the preceding discussion, one notices that, when they are not discontinuous, it seems to be the case that conjunctions, whose morphology does not change, occur between clauses.

2.6 Adverbs

The present section focuses on the semantic classification of adverbs in Muyang and the kinds of sentence constituents they modify. It also examines their syntactic positions in the sentence. According to their meaning, there are about nine adverbs: place adverbs, manner adverbs, negation adverbs, time adverbs, frequency adverbs, epistemic adverbs, aspectual adverbs, adverbs of restriction and adverbs of degree. In the following paragraphs, details and substantial illustrations are given.

2.6.1 Adverbs of place

Adverbs of place describe the manner in which particular actions happened in a particular place. They are also called location because they indicate place. Examples of place adverbs are given below:

(184)

ahalay	-	here
tegi	-	there
agavla	-	up
agezi	-	down
agavela	-	up
dring	-	far
tsif	-	near
kagevay	-	beside
ahayvu	-	inside
ametevu	-	outside

One realises after a look at the paradigm above that some locative adverbs are derived from nouns by affixation. The prefix *a-* and the suffix *-vu* are added to the noun which designates the place. For more illustration, let us examine the following data:

185. a – hay – vu
Pref house in
ahayvu
“Inside the house.”

186. a – dala – vu
Pref yard in
adalavu
“Inside the yard.”

187. a – huf – vu
Pref stomach in
ohufvu
“Inside the stomach.”

Examples (185-187) are evidence that some adverbs of place derive by affixation from nouns. Since *a-* and *vu-* cannot occur in isolation, they are attached to nouns to form adverbs. Let us consider the following examples:

188. Lawan á shí yam **ahay-vu**
Lawan SM.3sg drink water inside
Lawan é shí yam **ahayvu**
“Lawan drinks water inside.”

189. ***Ahay-vu** Lawan á shí yam
Inside-in Lawan SM.3sg drink water
Ahayvu Lawan é shí yam
“Inside Lawan drinks water.”

190. *Lawan **ahay-vu** á shí yam
Lawan inside SM.3sg drink water
Lawan **ahayvu** é shí yam
“Lawan inside drinks water.”

191. **Ahay-vu**, Lawan á shí yam
Inside, Lawan SM.3sg drink water
Ahayvu, Lawan é shí yam
“Inside, Lawan drinks water.”

Looking at entences (189) and (190), one realizes that the locative adverbs are not admitted in positions subjects should be, except in the cases where they are topicalized such as in example (191).

2.6.2 Adverbs of manner

They express how a given action is executed and how an event takes place. Consider the data that follow:

(192)a. *Á sawadǎy cekad-cekad*
SM.3sg walk slowslow
Á sawadǎy cekadcekad
“He/she walks slowly.”

b. *Á sawadǎy aka-lakal*
SM.3sg walk theft-theft
Á sawadǎy akalakal
“He/she walks calmly.”

193. *Má gráy tewi zal-zal*
SM.1pl do work man man
Má gráy tewi zalzal
“We work courageously.”

194. *Tá gráy pra ana memir-vu-ani*
SM.3pl do sacrifice with happiness-Rec-Suffix
Tá gráy pra ana memirvani
“They do sacrifice happily.”

195. *Avia á baráy zal gayang ana mawaya-vu-ani*
Avia SM.3sg wash man her with love-Rec-Suffix
Avia á baráy zal gayang ana mawayavani
“Avia washes her husband lovely.”

Examples (192-193) show that noun reduplication obtains adverbs of manner in Muyaŋ. Unlike plural formation where either the noun or only the part of the noun is reduplicated, one realises that there is a complete reduplication of the noun. In (193b) for instance, the adverb *zalzal* “courageously” is obtained by the complete reduplication of the noun *zal* “man”. A look at (194-195) shows that there is another way of obtaining adverbs which consists in a noun preceded by the preposition *ana* “with”. In one case or the other, the adverbs’ meaning depends on the meaning of the noun.

Another process of forming adverbs of manner consists in associating a qualifying adjective with the preposition *ana*. Let us observe the following example:

196. *Á shí yam ana watsa-watsa-ani*
SM.3sg drink water with rapid-rapid

Á shí yam **ana watsawatsani**
 “He drinks water rapidly.”

However they are formed, adverbs of manner always occur postverbally.

2.6.3 Adverbs of time

Consider the following list:

(197)

kani	_____	today
hadzeng	_____	tomorrow
eweni	_____	yesterday
hedzenahang	_____	after tomorrow
evini	_____	this year
alayni	_____	last year
kadzanga	_____	next year
fatnahang	_____	next time
alaynahang	_____	two years before
mendzid	_____	before
bakina, (nihi)	_____	now
(-ati)	_____	after
wedak	_____	soon

The examples above show that the list of adverbs of time is long. Contrary to adverbs of manner discussed above, adverbs of time do not derive from nouns or adjectives in Muyang. Let us consider the following data:

(198) a. Lele má zúm ďaf **kani**

We SM.1pl eat food today

Lele mó zúm ďaf **kani**

“We eat food today.”

b. ***Kani** lele má zúm ďaf

Today we SM.1pl eat food

Kani lele mó zúm ďaf

“Today we eat food.”

c. **Kani**, lele má zúm ďaf

Today, we SM.1pl eat food

Kani, lele mó zúm ďaf

“Today, we eat food.”

Sentence (198b) is ungrammatical because the adverb of time *kani* “today” is fronted. In (198c), the latter is the topic of the sentence. Here, movement to the left periphery of the sentence (Bebey: 2010) obtains it. The preceding analysis indicates that adverbs of time basically occur at the sentence final position.

2.6.4 Adverbs of negation

It is argued in Bebey (2010: 41) that there are three main morphemes that express negation in Muyang. They are *do*, *ba* and *bi*. When the action is expressed in present, the appropriate negative is *do*. The morpheme *ba* is used to deny an idea expressed in imperative whereas *bi* is used with some specific verbs. Accordingly, its occurrence is rare. Consider examples below:

199. Ná lém ahay **do**
SM.1sg construct house Neg
Né lém ahay **do**
“Don’t construct a house here.”

200. Nday tá bí ahalay **bi**
Them SM.3pl be here Neg
Nday té bí ahalay **bi**
“They are not here.”

(201)a. Ká lém **ba**
SM.2sg construct Neg
Ké lém **ba**
“Don’t construct.”

b.* Ká lém **bi**
SM.2sg construct Neg
Ké lém **bi**
“Don’t construct.”

The verb *melbani* “to be” conjugated in (200) and the ungrammaticality of (201b) illustrate the hypothesis that the negation adverb *bi* occurs after a restricted number of verbs. As far as their syntactic position is concerned, one realises that negation adverbs appear sentence finally.

2.6.5 Frequency adverbs

Adverbs of frequency indicate the number of times an action or an event takes place. Consider the following sentences:

202. Ká lém ahay **sak-cu** avad-vu
SM.2sg construct house time-two day – in
Ké lém ahay **sakcu** avadvu
“You construct a house twice a day.”

(203)a. Má gráy bolon **kela melakarawa**
SM.1sg do ball each evening
“We play football every evening.”

- b. **Kela melakarawa**, má gráy bolon
 Every evening SM.1sg play football
 “Every evening, we play football.”

A look at the preceding examples shows that adverbs of frequency are formed by a combination of different words. The latter can be noun and numeral adjectives (202), adverb and adverb (203a). When they are topicalised, adverbs of frequency are fronted (203b).

2.6.6 The epistemic adverbs

Epistemic adverbs indicate the speaker’s attitude towards certainty, truth or probability of what he or she makes as speech. Generally, epistemic adverbs modify the entire sentence. They can also modify the sequence of the sentence (clause). Consider the sentences below for illustration:

- (204) a. Lawan á srá nwa atamahay
 Lawan SM.3sg know me certainly
 “Lawan certainly knows me.”

- b. **Atamahay**, Lawan á srá nwa
 Certainly Lawan SM.3sg know me
 “Maybe Lawan knows me.”

- (205) a. Satay á dǔm Lawan á srá nwa **ededenga**
 Satay SM.3sg say Lawan SM.3sg know me really
 Satay ó dǔm Lawan á srá nwa **ededenga**
 “Satay says that Lawan really knows me.”

- b. Satay á dǔm **atamahay** Lawan á srá nwa **ededenga**
 Satay SM.3sg say certainly Lawan SM.3sg know me really
 Satay ó dǔm **atamahay** Lawan á srá nwa **ededenga**
 “Satay says that Lawan really knows me.”

- b.* **Ededenga** Satay á dǔm Lawan á srá nwa
 Really Satay SM.3sg say Lawan SM.3sg know me
 “Satay says that Lawan really knows me.”

One observes **that not all epistemic adverbs can fill the same positions**. that epistemic adverbs like *atamahay* “certainly” can occur in preverbal and in postverbal positions. In (205) for instance, it occurs in the subordinate clause initial position, while the adverb *ededenga* “really” cannot.

2.6.7 The aspectual adverbs

One uses aspectual adverbs to indicate how an action or an event happens in terms of time. They are sometimes confused with adverbs of manner. They, unlike the latter, indicate whether a given action or event is completed, recurring or continuing. Let us observe the following examples:

- (206) a. Lawan á báz hay **keti**
 Lawan SM.3sg harvest millet again
 “Lawan harvests millet again.”
- b. Lawan á báz hay **kekelinga**
 Lawan SM.3sg harvest millet still
 “Lawan still harvests millet.”
- (207) a. Lawan à baz-ába hay-à **andava**
 Lawan SM.3sg harvest.P2 millet.Asp already
 Lawan à bazába hayà **andava**
 Lawan SM.3sg harvest.P2 millet.Asp already
 “Lawan has already harvested millet.”
- b. ***Andava** Lawan à baz-ába hay-à
 Already Lawan SM.3sg harvest.P2 millet.Asp
Andava Lawan à bazába hayà
 “Already Lawan has harvested millet.”
- c. **Andava**, Lawan à baz-ába hay-à
 Already, Lawan SM.3sg harvest.P2 millet.Asp
Andava, Lawan à bazába hayà
 “Already Lawan has harvested millet.”
- (208) a. Lawan á báz hay **keti**
 Lawan SM.3sg harvest millet again
 “Lawan harvests millet again.”
- b. ***Keti** Lawan á báz hay
 Again Lawan SM.3sg harvest millet
 “Again Lawan harvests millet again.”

Sentences above show that aspectual adverbs indicate the behaviour of the action indicated by the verb. It is recurring in (206a), completed in (207a) and continuing in (208a). Sentences (206b), (207b) and (208b) are not correct because aspectual adverbs are fronted. This supposes that they also occur postverbally.

2.6.8 Adverbs of degree

Adverbs of degree provide additional information on how something is done. The degree concerns quantity or number. In Muyaŋ, adverbs of degree include *gedák* “a lot”, *daldal* “much”, *gezuk* or *gezi* “a few”, *ndel* “a small quantity in terms of liquid”, *deh* “much in terms of uncountable and very small things”, *kay* “a lot in terms of big countable things or actions expressed by the verb”. Let us consider the following data:

209. Á wáy dáf gedák
 SM.3sg love food a lot

“He likes a lot of food.”

210. Á tsuhwáy kay
SM.3sg run a lot
“He runs a lot.”

211. Á sawadǎy gezuk
SM.3sg walk a few
“He walks a bit.”

212. Á zúm ďaf gezuk
SM.3sg love food a few
ó zúm ďaf gezuk
“He eats a few quantity of food”

213. Avir á téď daldal
Rain SM.3sg fall a lot
“It rains a lot.”

Examples of adverbs of degree in the above sentences show that the latter do not only modify the verb, they also determine the number of nouns. In (211) for instance, *gezuk* “a few” modifies the verb while it modifies both the verb and determines the noun in (212). The ungrammaticality of sentence (214) below illustrates that adverbs of degree are not attested in sentence beginning position.

214. *Daldal avir á téď
A lot rain SM.3sg fall
“A lot it rains.”

2.6.9 Adverbs of restriction

In Muyang, there is one adverb of restriction: *tiling* “only”. It indicates the limit of action expressed by the verb in the discourse. For illustration, let us observe the following data:

(215)a. Ná zúm ďaf **tiling**
SM.1sg eat food only
Nó zúm ďaf **tiling**
“I only eat food.”

b. Ná zúm ďaf ndata mongoru **tiling**
SM.1sg eat food and mango only
Nó zúm ďaf ndata mongoru **tiling**

“I only eat food and mangoes.”

In (215a), the doer of the action eats only food and does not eat something else. In sentence (215b), the doer of the action eats, but only food and mango, not something else. This remark allows us to assume that an adverb of restriction gives an idea about the number of verb complements. For further illustrations, let us consider the following examples:

c. ***Tiling** ná zúm ďaf
Only SM.1sg eat food
Tiling nó zúm ďaf
“Only I eat food.”

d. ***Tiling,** ná zúm ďaf ndata mongoru
Only SM.1sg eat food and mango
Tiling, nó zúm ďaf ndata mongoru
“Only I eat food and mangoes.”

e. ďaf **tiling,** ná zúm ni
Food only, SM.1sg eat def
ďaf **tiling,** nó zúm ni
Food only, I eat.

Since it determines the noun, it merges with the latter to form the verb complement. In this regard, it is not allowed to be fronted without the latter as illustrated in sentences (215d). So, it should drag the entire noun when it is topicalised in (215e). This remark indicates adverbs of restriction occur at the sentence final position. In (215a), it specifies that there is only one complement of the verb. In sentence (215f) below, one realises that it modifies the verb and indicates that the speaker does only one action.

f. Ná zúm tiling kani
SM.1sg eat only today
Nó zúm tiling kani
“I only eat today.”

g. Ná zúm kani tiling
SM.1sg eat today only
Nó zúm kani tiling
“I eat only today.”

The above construction shows that adverbs of restriction determine the NP, they modify the meaning of verbs and other adverbs. In (215f) for instance, it is the action described by the verb which is restricted whereas the meaning of kani “today” is concerned in (215g). As far as its locality is concerned, this paradigm reveals that it occurs after the verb. Let us look at sentence (215h) for further analysis:

h. Lawan tiling á zúm ďaf

Lawan only SM.3sg eat food

Lawan tiling ó zúm dáf

“Only Lawan eat food.”

In (215h) the adverb tiling “only” concerns the NP subject Lawan. In the latter, it is only Lawan who eats food. Contrary to arguments developed in the preceding paragraphs, one realises that adverbs of restriction can also appear in the position before the verb without any transformation. This supposes that adverbs of restriction occur in the position of grammatical category they modify; they can be fronted when the said grammatical category undergoes a leftwards movement to the sentence beginning position.

2.7 Prepositions and interjections

Interjections are used to express affective attitudes. Their list is restricted in Muyang. Prepositions in turn are link constituents within the sentence. They relate one grammatical element to another by completing or determining the meaning of the latter. The most frequent prepositions in Muyang are:

(216)

ga	_____	of
ana	_____	with
a	_____	to
ka	_____	on
gwara	_____	towards/through

The preposition *ga* “of” generally precedes the verb. It is the equivalent of the English preposition “to” which, used before the verb, indicates infinitives. Apart from infinitival contexts, “ga” can introduce noun complements, circumstantial complements; etc. As described in preceding section, this preposition is also used as the associative morpheme in nominals.

217. Á tsaféng nu **ga** ma-gray gevi-a
SM.3sg forbid me of Inf.do play.FV
Á tsaféng nu **ga** magray geva
“He forbids me to play.”

218. Lawan á wáy Avia **ga** ma-zay-ani **ka** wal
Lawan SM.3sg love Avia of Inf.take.Inf on woman
Lawan á wáy Avia **ga** mazani **ka** wal
“Lawan loves Avia to marry her.”

Examples (217) and (218) show that the preposition *ga* “of” is preposed to the infinitive verb. Unlike this preposition, the others do not precede verbs within the sentence but other grammatical categories. Let us see the following data for illustration:

219. Lawan á korú a Marua **gwara** Papata
 Lawan SM.3sg go to Maroua through Papata
 “Lawan goes to Maroua through Papata.”

220. Lawan á váy-i zum **ana** Satay
 Lawan SM.3sg give.PRN wine to Satay
 Lawan á ví zum **ana** Satay
 “Lawan gives wine to Satay.”

221a. Nday tá zlapáy **ka** wal-ma-zay-ani
 They SM.3pl talk on wife-Inf-take-Suffix
 Nday tá zlapáy **ka** walmazani
 “They discuss on marriage.”

b. ***wal-ma-zay-ani** á bláy
 wife-Inf-take-Suffix SM.3sg please
walmazani á bláy
 “Marriage is good.”

c. **wal-ma-zay-ani** á bláy
 wife-Inf-take-Suffix SM.3sg please
walmazani á bláy
 “Marriage is good.”

d. Azana guro ni á gil, ama **ga Lawan** á tamá ana ma-bláy-ani-a
 Cloth my def. SM.3sg solid, but of Lawan SM.3sg outclass with Inf.please-Suff-FV
 Azana guro ni á gil, ama **ga Lawan** á tamá ana ma-blána
 “My cloth is solid, but the one of Lawan outclasses it with beauty.”

In Muyang, infinitives cannot be assigned a nominative case when they are preceded by prepositions such as in (221b), but prepositions are allowed before NP subject as one can see in (221d). Example (221d) is evidence that all like locative adverbs; prepositional phrases can play the role of subjects within Muyang sentences. Since it merges with nouns to form the Prepositional Phrase or the Genitival Phrase, it drags the latter in sentence beginning when there are transformation such as topicalization as better illustrated below:

222. **Ka wal-ma-zay-ani ni**, nday tá zlapáy -----
 On wife-Inf-take-Suffix def they SM.pl talk
Ka walmazani ni, nday tá zlapáy
 “On marriage, they discuss.”

A sight at the sentence above shows that the preposition *ka* “on” merges with the *walmazani* “marriage” to form the PP. The whole constituent is moved to the left periphery when it is topicalised.

2.8 Verb

The verb expresses action or state. In Muyang, it is the word that has the most changing form. The present section describes its different derivations.

2.8.1 The verb roots

Roots of verbs in Muyang are not stressed (Gravina and Smith, 2010). Some of them occur in their own while others cannot. Let us take into consideration the examples that follow:

(223)

zum	_____	eat
gr	_____	do
za	_____	take
ra	_____	come
way	_____	love

Examples in the paradigm above show that roots like *gr* “do”, *za* “take”, and *ra* “come” are meaningful only when they are attached to other morphemes such as infinitive markers, tense markers, and mood and aspect markers.

2.8.2 Infinitives

It is argued in Bebey (2010: 28) that two morphemes are attached to the root verbs to indicate infinitive in Muyang. They are the prefix *ma-* and the suffix *-ani*. Consider the following data:

(224)

Prefix	Root	Suffix	Glossary
ma	zum	ani	to eat
ma	zay	ani	to take
ma	ra	ani	to come
ma	ro	ani	to go
ma	fikad	ani	to put
ma	way	ani	to love
ma	ded	ani	to fall

The preceding data indicate that in their surface structures, verbs do not have these forms in Muyang. They are obtained by derivations as follows

(225)

Logical form	Phonetic form	Glossary
ma - ro - ani	mo- ro -ni	to go
ma - fikad - ani	ma- fikad - ani	to put
ma - slə -ani	me -slə -ni	to be sufficient
ma - zum - ani	mo-zum- ani	to eat
ma- shi – ani	me- shi- ni	to drink
ma- wir- ani	me- wir- ani	to hurt
ma-zay-ani	ma-za-ani	to take
ma-ra-ana	ma-ra-ana	to come

ma-ro-ani

mo-ro-ni

to go

The derivation of infinitives above leads us to say that the suffix *-ani* is used in the formation of a variety of word types in Muyang. It is attached to nouns to form adjectives, to verb stems to form infinitives and participial, to verbs to form nouns.

2.8.3 Mood

Mood is the character of the verb form that expresses the attitude of the speaker with the process expressed by the verb. It indicates the type of communication established by the speaker, between him and his interlocutor or the attitude of the speaker with his speeches (Dubois et.al., 1973). It is associated to tense and, the two have the tendency to be interwoven. Traditional grammar distinguishes imperative, conditional, indicative and subjunctive mood as personal moods. Infinitive and participle moods are impersonal. Let us examine examples below:

(226)

Mood	Tense	Example	Glossary
Indicative	present	ná gráy	I do
Subjunctive	present	nà grày	I should do
Imperative	present	gráy	do
Conditional	present	akal ká gráy	I would do
Participle	past	magrani	done
Infinitive	present	magrani	to do

The above data are illustrations that the six moods are attested in Muyang. However, one remarks that there is no morphological indication that differentiates verb tense from verb mood and verb mood from verb aspect. Each mood is associated to the aspect and the tense of the verb. The relevance of this remark is evidence that the three grammatical categories (tense, mood and aspect) are interwoven in the language.

2.8.4 Aspect

Aspect indicates the manner an action is expressed by the verb. It is the representation of the time, the development and the completion of the action expressed by the verb. It can be progressive, inchoative, perfective or imperfective. The present section goes on to describe aspect's markers and morphology.

2.8.4.1 The perfective aspect

According to Mutaka and Tamanji (2000), the perfective aspect “indicates that the action suggested by the verb was indeed carried out and as of the moment of speaking, the action had come to an end.” This aspect indicates that the action described by the verb is accomplished. Consider the following examples:

227. Ata Lawan tò zum-à daf-à
 Pl Lawan SM.3pl eat.P2 food.Asp
 Ata Lawan tò zumà dafà
 “The Lawan ate food.”

228. Nu nà ahpèd-à
 I SM.1sg chew.P2-Asp
 Nu n'ahpèdà
 "I chewed."

A close look at the preceding structures shows that the perfective aspect is marked by the suffix /-à/ attached to the righthand boundary of the last sentence constituent. One also sees that there is not a very remarkable difference between aspect and tense. Example (227) indicates that while the tense affix is attached to the sentence verb boundary, the aspect affix is attached to the sentence last constituent boundary. Apart from this difference, it seems to be a homophony between the tense and the aspect marker.

The question that arises from this observation is how one can account for this morphology. In (228) for instance, when there is no complement of the sentence verb, it is the aspect affix that marks both tense and aspect. This remark suggests that tense and perfective aspect are morphologically sometimes confused. This analysis is a supportive argument to the assumptions that they are interwoven in Muyang.

In the semantic perspective, the difference between the two is that tense expresses the owned characters of the discourse indicated by the verb. This is different from the representation of the discourse by the speaker. So, the perfective aspect expressed by the forms of the preceding structures shows that the described actions are completely finished.

Let us consider the following data for further analyses:

229. Nà zùm
 SM.1sg eat-P2
 Nò zùm
 "I have been eating."

230. Tà zày
 SM.3pl carry-P2
 "They have been carrying."

The constructions above show that the different actions described by the verb started in the past and continue in the present. In (229) and (230) respectively, one realises that the actions of eating and the one of carrying are not completely accomplished. In the English equivalent sentences, the verb tense is the present perfect that expresses relation between past and present. This reasoning leads to the conclusion that there is not a morphological difference between past 2 and imperfective aspect in Muyang. This is obtained by the low tone on the agreement marker as shown in the above data. Since sentences in this tense indicate incomplete events in the past they are understood as perfective, i.e. they mark perfect aspect.

2.8.4.2 The imperfective aspect

Consider the following paradigm

231a. Ná lém ahay
SM.1sg construct house
Né lém ahay
“I construct a house.”

231b. Ná rá ná lém ahay
SM.1sg come SM.1sg construct house
Ná rá né lém ahay
“I will construct a house.”

Verbs in presents simple and future simple describe incomplete events. They are examples of imperfective aspect in Muyang

2.8.4.3 Progressive aspect

Some actions can be described while they continue to take place. Let us observe the following examples:

232. Ná bú ná gráy tewi
SM.1sg be SM.1sg do work
Nó bú ná gráy tewi
“I am working.”

233. Á bú á lém ahay
SM.1sg be SM.1sg construct house
ó bú á lém ahay
“He is constructing a house.”

Actions described by the verb above are not finished. In this connection, one can say that progressive aspect expresses a gradual evolution of actions described by the verb within the sentence. It is materialised by the association of the verb to be in simple present followed by the action verb always conjugated in the present simple in Muyang. Examples (232) and (233) above are more illustrative of this analysis.

2.8.5 Tenses

Richards et. al. (1985) define tense as the relationship between the verb form and time. Nguessimo Mutaka and Tamanji (2000) state that in “most African languages, tense is lexicalized with various time divisions marked by different independent morphemes”. Let us suppose that tense is expressed in terms of past and non-past in Muyang. We demonstrated in our previous work that the non-past tenses comprise the present, the future 1, the conditional 1, the imperative 1 and the subjunctive 1.

2.8.5.1 Non past tenses

This subsection looks at the past tenses’ markers and the morphology of the verb within the sentence.

2.8.5.1.1 The simple present

To see how it works, let us observe the following data:

234. Lawan á lém gudu
Lawan SM.3sg construct wall
“Lawan constructs a wall.”

235. Tá wáy đaf
SM.3pl love food
“They want food.”

236. Tá đúm
SM.3pl say
Tó đúm
“They say.”

237. Krá tá sawadáy
Dogs SM.3pl walk
“Dogs walk.”

From structures (234), (235), (236) and (237), one realises that agreement markers and the nuclei of the last syllable of the verb bear a high tone. Actions described by the respective verbs take place in the moment of the utterance. The action in (234), for instance, takes place in the moment one speaks. This remark shows that the simple present is marked by a high tone on the agreement marker and the nucleus of the last syllable of the conjugated verb.

2.8.5.1.2 The simple future or future 1

Let us observe the following structures where verbs are conjugated in simple future in Muyang.

238. Nu á nà lèm ahay
I Fut.1 SM.1sg construct house
Nu á nè lèm ahay
“I will construct a house.”

239. Nday á tò zùm đaf
They Fut.1 SM.3pl eat food
Nday ó tò zùm đaf
“They will eat food.”

The action described in structures (238) and (239) have not yet taken place. It is marked by the phoneme /a-/ with a high tone. Except the latter, one sees that both the agreement marker and the verb bear a low tone. This observation allows proposing, following Bebey (2010), that the low tone marks simple future or future 1 in Muyang.

2.8.5.1.3 The conditional 1

The conditional tense is used when there is a doubt. In Muyang, it is marked by the morpheme **akal** placed before the agreement marker. Let us see the following examples:

240. **Akal** na lem ahay
Cond.1 SM.1sg construct house
Akal ne lem ahay
“I would construct a house.”

241. **Awák** akal ta shi yam
Goats cond.1 SM.3pl drink water
Awák akal te shi yam
“Goats would drink water.”

When one looks at the preceding paradigm, one observes that the verb and the agreement marker do not morphologically bear tones. In fact, they bear middle tones that are not realised.

2.8.5.1.4 The imperative 1

In Muyang, imperative1 is indicated by a high tone on the verb last syllable. Let us see how this claim applies in the following examples:

242. Lèm
Construct.P2
“Construct.”

243. Shì yam kay
Drink.P2 water lot
“Drink a lot of water.”

244. Grùm gevi ahalay
Do.2pl play here
“Let us play here.”

245. Nak, tsahày zlam
You learn.2sg things
“You, learn your lessons.”

246. Grùm gevi ahalay
Do.2pl play here
“Play here.”

The verbs in the structures above bear a high tone on their last syllable nuclei. They are not preceded by an agreement marker which indicates both their number and person. Here, one notices that the use of low tone does not suffice to mark the imperative tense. Let us precise

that the absence of agreement marker is also a significant remark. From the preceding, it is plausible to note that the absence of agreement markers and the high tone on the verb term indicate imperative 1 in Muyang. This raises the following question; Since there is no agreement marker, how can the verb agreement features be interpreted?

To answer this question, let us reconsider examples (244) and (246). The verbs in these sentences have the same form. In (243), the verb is second person singular whereas it is second person plural in (244). To understand what the speaker means, one should take into consideration not only the syntax and the morphophonology of the verb, but also its pragmatic meaning. This analysis leads to suggest that it is the context of the utterance that determines the difference between the two sentences.

2.8.5.1.5 The subjunctive 1

Let us observe the examples to see how the subjunctive 1 is obtained:

247. Ahár á hú nè lèm ahay
Head SM.3sg tell SM.1sg construct house
Ahár ó hú nè lèm ahay
“I wish to construct a house.”

248. Beza tà grày lekwel
Children SM.3pl do school
“It is a wish that children go to school.”

A sight at examples above indicates that, apart from the tone, there is no lexical morpheme that marks subjunctive 1. This tone is the low one on both the agreement marker and the verb stem. In Muyang subjunctive 1 expresses a wish or a prayer in the moment one speaks. It is the equivalent of the French “subjonctif present”. To sum up, let us notice that discussions above lead us to the conclusion that there are five (5) non past tenses in Muyang (simple present, future 1, subjunctive 1, conditional 1 and imperative 1). Their structures vary from one tense to another.

2.8.5.2 Past tenses

Past tenses are past 1, past 2, past 3, conditional 2, future 2, future 3, subjunctive 2, and imperative 2. Their state of past tenses is defined from the present or non-past tenses.

2.8.5.2.1 Past 1

Let us consider the examples that follow:

249. Lele mà gr-àba ahay-à
We SM.1pl do.P1 house.Asp
Lele mà gràba ahayà
“We had constructed.”

250. Lawan à shi-àba zum-à
Lawan SM.3sg drink.P1 wine.Asp

Lawan à shàba zumà
“Lawan had drunk wine.”

A sight at the preceding data shows that the root verbs are attached to the morpheme *|-ába/* to express tense. One also sees that in the sentence final positions, there is the perfective aspect morpheme *|-à/* which indicates that the action is finished. Actions described in this tense last in the past and are fairly connected to the present.

2.8.5.2.2 Past 2

It is used for accomplished actions. Consider the following sentences:

251. Lawan à lèm ahay
Lawan SM.3sg construct.2 house
“Lawan constructed a house.”

252. Lawan à dùm pakama
Lawan SM.3sg say speech
Lawan ò dùm pakama
“Lawan spoke.”

The doers of actions in the above sentences are no longer building and speaking. These actions are accomplished in a short time in the past. This remark illustrates that verbs in these sentences are conjugated into a tense that expresses short past actions. Its mark is the low tone on the agreement or subject marker and the verb last syllable nucleus.

2.8.5.2.3 Past 3

When the speaker wants to describe an action, a state or an event, or when he wants to express an idea that happened many weeks, months or years ago, he or she uses past 3. It indicates a long time ago. Let us consider the following sentences:

253. Lawan à lem-à ahay alay-à
Lawan SM.3sg construct.P3 house here.Asp

Lawan à lemà ahay alayà
Lawan SM.3sg construct.P3 house here.Asp
“Lawan constructed a house here.”

254. Ata Avia tà zlapày-à kiyi cɛ-hi-à
Pl Avia SM.3pl speak.P3 month two.now.Asp
Ata Avia ta zlapá kiyi cɛhà
“The Avia spoke two months ago.”

One observes that the tense of the verbs in the above data, marked by the morpheme *|-a/* bearing a low tone and the perfective aspect morpheme *|-à/* in the sentence final position, is anterior to both past 1 and past 2.

2.8.5.2.4 Conditional 2

For Bebey (2010: 39), conditional 2 is the last possibility to express the conditional mood in Muyang. Its mark is the morpheme *akal* which occurs before the agreement marker. The past 3 morpheme *|-à/* is attached to the verb stem while the perfective aspect marker appears at the sentence end position. Let us consider the data below for illustrations:

255. Krá á tè zlah-à deni akal à rà
Dogs Fut SM.3sg bow.TNS.Past otherwise Cond. SM.3sg come
Krá á tè zlah-à deni akal à rà
“Dogs would have bowed, otherwise he would come.”

256. Nak akal kà lem-à ahay-à
You cond SM.2sg construct house.Asp
Nak akal kè lemà ahayà
“You would have constructed a house.”

An observation of the preceding structures indicates that the English equivalents of the Muyang sentences are third conditional. This supposes that the past conditional is attested in the language.

2.8.5.2.5 The future 2

This tense is more anterior than future 1 described so far. Let us consider the data that follow:

257. Nak á kè lèm-à ahay-á dayti á kà rà
You Fut SM.2sg construct.Past house.Asp then Fut SM.2sg come.Past
Nak á kè lèmà ahayá dayti á kà rà
“When you will have constructed a house, you will come.”

258. Beza á tà shi-à yam-à dayti á tà zùm ďaf
Children Fut SM.3pl drink.P3 water.Asp then Fut SM.3pl eat.P2 food
Beza á tè shà yamà dayti á tò zùm ďaf
“When children will have drunk water, they will eat food.”

The double occurrence of future morpheme supposes that there are actions that take place in future with necessarily one action before the other. In (257) and (258) for instance, one remarks that the tense of the verb that describes the first action is marked by the combination of the future morpheme and the perfective aspect morpheme. The latter illustrates that it is an accomplished action. The second action in turn is described in simple future. Then, the anteriority of the first action in regards to the second one is a relevant reason that shows that the first verb is conjugated in an anterior tense in future.

2.8.5.2.6 Future 3

When the action takes place in more than one year before another action in the future, it is expressed differently. Let us observe the following examples:

259. Nak á kà rà kà lem-à ahay fat nahang-á

You Fut SM.2sg come SM.2sg construct.Past house sun other.Asp
Nak á kà rà kè lemà ahay fat nahangá
“You will have constructed a house next year.”

260. Nekɛli á kà dogum-à á kà lemum-à ahay fat nahang-á
You Fut SM.2pl come.Past Fut SM.2pl construct house sun other.Asp
Nekɛli ó kò dogumà ó kò lomumà ahay fat nahangá
“You will have constructed a house next year.”

Future 3 can describe an action that will take place even in more than twenty (20) years. It is the most posterior future tense in the language.

2.8.5.2.7 Subjunctive 2

When a wish or a prayer is expressed in the past, one uses subjunctive 2 in Muyang. Let us observe the sentences below:

262. Nekuli kà lemum-à ahay-à
You SM.2pl construct.Past house.Asp
Nekuli kò lomumà ahayà
“It was wished you constructed a house.”

263. Leli mà gray-à tewi-à
We SM.1pl do.Past work.Asp
Leli mà grayà tewà
“We wished we worked.”

One sees that the agreement and the verb roots bear marker low tones. This supposes that subjunctive 2 is marked prosodically.

2.8.5.2.8 Imperative 2

One can express order or authority in the past in Muyang as materialized in the structures below:

264. Lèm-à
Construct.TNS.Past-Asp
Lemà
“You should have constructed.”

265. dèm-à pakama
Say.TNS.Past-Asp speech
dèmà pakama
“You should have delivered a speech.”

A look at sentences (264) and (265) shows that this tense is remarkable by the absence of agreement markers and the low-high tone on the verb final syllable. In fact, it is the association of imperative 1 and the perfective aspect that make imperative 2 in Muyang.

From the preceding analyses, one notes that differences between all the tenses are obtained by changes of tones in majority. This suggests that tone is a meaningful grammatical element in Muyang. One also realizes that tense marking sometimes does not lexically affect the verb form and for this reason, cannot constitute an instance of verb extension. The speaker expresses time by changing tones on verb affixes and agreement markers. In general, except the case of conditional and future tenses where lexical items are used to mark tense (Bebey: 2010), the relationship between time and verb form as formulated by Richards et. al. (1985) is not materialised in terms of lexical morphemes, but rather in terms of tones changing on VP particles in the language.

However, since tense, mood and aspect deal with the attitude of the speaker, the use of negation can influence these ones and vice-versa.

2.8.6 Negation and the expression of mood, tense and aspect

As it is the case in Nchufie⁷ (Nam, 1994), the present section proposes a functional characterization of a negative marker whose appearance is conditioned by the tense, the aspect and the modality of the sentence. Bebey (2010: 41) has reported that there are four negative morphemes in Muyang: *do*, *ndo*, *ba* and *bi*.

2.8.6.1 The negation *do/ndo*

The negation *do* is used when the aspect of the verb is imperfective and the action or the state described by the verb is in the present. It becomes *ndo* when the action expressed or the states described by the verb are in the past (Bebey: 2010).

2.8.6.1.1 The negation *do*

The negation “do” is the most used in Muyang. Consider the following examples:

(266) a. Lawan á lém ahay
Lawan SM.3sg build house
“Lawan builds a house.”

b. Lawan á lém ahay **do**
Lawan SM.3sg build house Neg
“Lawan does not build a house.”

(267) a. Akal ná záy wal
Cond SM.1sg take wife

⁷ Nchufie is a Bantu language spoken in the Northwestern Cameroon

“I would marry a wife.”

- b. Akal ná záy wal **do**
Cond SM.1sg take wife Neg
“I would not marry a wife.”

A look at the preceding structures shows that both agreement markers and verb last syllable nuclei bear a high tone. It means that verbs in these sentences are conjugated in simple present and the negative adverb used within the sentence is *do*. From this remark, one can claim that this negative adverb is the appropriate one in the present.

2.8.6.1.2 The negation *ndo*

In Muyang, use *ndo* when the aspect of the verb is perfective. Let us look at the following data:

- (268)a. À gray-à **ndo**
SM.3sg do.P2 Neg
À grayà **ndo**
“He didn’t do.”

- b. *Á gráy **ndo**
SM.3sg do.Present Neg
“He doesn’t do.”

- (269)a. À lem-àba ahay-à **ndo**
SM.3sg build.P1 house.Asp Neg
À lemàba ahayá **ndo**
“He has not built a house.”

- b. *Á lém ahay **ndo**
SM.3sg build.Present house Neg
“He does not build a house.”

The actions of doing and building described in sentences (268a) and (269a) above are accomplished. The negation marker used here is *ndo*. These sentences would be ungrammatical if the verbs were conjugated in the present and the actions imperfective as the case in (268b) and (269b). This is indicative that the negation *ndo* is not allowed with imperfective aspects. This reasoning illustrates the proposals that the difference between *do* and *ndo* is expressed in terms of perfective and imperfective aspect of the finite verb.

2.8.6.2 The negation *bi*

Some verbs select the negation adverb *bi*. Examples of these verbs include:

(270)

- Ma-say-ani (Masani)** - to please
Ma-bu-ani (Mobani) - to be

Ma-fing-ani (Mefingani) - to possess

When the action or states described or expressed by the above verbs are denied, the appropriate negation is *bi*. Consider examples which follow:

271. Zlam á fíng-u **bi**
Thing SM.3sg possess.Dat Neg
Zlam ó fú **bi**

“I don’t have anything.”

272. Maslanga á bú **bí**
Somebody SM.3sg be Neg

Maslanga á **bí**

“There is nobody.”

The verb *bu* is deleted in (272) for morphophonological needs. The construction in first line is admitted when the speakers formulates a total question.

2.8.6.3 The negation ba

When one wants to deny an idea, a state or an action expressed by the verb conjugated in imperative, the appropriate negation is *ba* (Bebey 2010: 47). Let us look at the following sentences.

(2273) a. Lém
Build.2sg

“Build.”

b. Ká lém **ba**
SM.2sg build Neg
Ké lém **ba**
“Don’t build.”

(274) a. Zum-úm dáf
Eat.2pl food
Zumúm dáf
“Eat food.”

b. Ká zumúm dáf **ba**
SM.2sg eat food Neg
Kó zumúm dáf **ba**
“Don’t eat food.”

No other negation can be used in place of *ba*. It is for this reason that the following sentences are ungrammatical.

c. *Ká zumúm ďaf ndo
 SM.2sg eat food Neg
 Kó zumúm ďaf ndo
 “Don’t eat food.”

d. *Ké zumúm ďaf **bi**
 SM.2sg eat food Neg
 Kó zumúm ďaf **bi**
 “Don’t eat food.”

Nevertheless, there are some ambiguities related to the use of negations *do* and *bi* given that sentences in simple present and imperative have the same structures. Let us look at the following data for illustrations:

(275)a. Kà zumúm ďaf **do**
 SM.2sg eat food Neg
 Kó zumúm ďaf **do**
 “You don’t eat food.”

b. Ké zumúm ďaf ba
 SM.2sg eat food Neg
 Kó zumúm ďaf ba
 “Don’t eat food.”

In (275a), the speaker means that his interlocutors do not eat food while he forbids them to eat food in (275b). The latter indicates that negation of imperative in Muyang involves the agreement marker and the negation *ba*. In the semantic perspective, one realizes that, here again, it is only the pragmatic meaning of the sentence which indicates whether the verb should select the negative *ba* or not.

The above argument is evidence that there is a syntactic relation between negation, tense and mood in Muyang. The formation of the negation depends on the aspect, the tense and the mood of the verb. Inversely, negative structures determine the aspect, the mood and the tense of the verb.

2.8.7 Agreement markers/subject markers are not personal pronouns

It has been argued in the preceding sections that personal pronouns function either as subjects or objects of the verbs within a sentence. It has been said that pronouns and verbs change according to person and number. It has been also claimed that some personal object pronouns are attached to verbs as clitics. This includes indirect object personal pronouns. This section looks at the disparity between personal pronouns and subject markers (agreement markers in my terminology). Let us observe the following sentences:

276. Nu ná gráy tewi
 I SM.1sg do work

“I work.”

(277)a. Mish tá shí yam
 People SM.3pl drink water
 Mish té shí yam
 “People drink water.”

b. Nday tá shí yam
 They SM.3pl drink water
 Nday té shí yam
 “They drink water.”

One remarks that there are two constituents which indicate person and number. In (276) for example, *nu* “I” is a personal pronoun subject of the verb. It is first singular. The morpheme *né* is also first singular. In (277a), the noun *mish* “people” is not replaced by a pronoun. It is third plural. The constituent *té* is also third person plural. From this description, one realises that while personal pronouns replace nouns (see 277b), other words occur in adjacency with whatever constituents which function as verb subject to indicate both person and number. These elements do neither replace nouns nor occur in their position within the sentence.

In (277), for instance, the sentence contains both a subject which is the doer of the action described by the verb and an agreement marker which indicates agreement features. This reasoning is evidence these words are quite different from verb subjects within the sentence. However, since they have the same interpretable features with the latter, it happens that the NP subjects are their antecedents. Thus, interpretations of their nominal features depend on the antecedent grammatical properties.

This observation suggests that they mark agreement features between the verb and its subject. In virtue of this role, they can be called agreement markers and not verb pronouns as argued in Bebey (2010: 30) following Brunet and Barreteau (2000).

In the following table is the list of Muyang agreement markers:

(278)

Person	Agreement marker	Glossary	Examples
1 st	N (v)	I	Nu ná gráy I SM.1sg do “I do.”
2 nd	K (v)	You	Nak ká gráy You SM.2sg do “You do.”
3 rd	(v)	She/ it/ he	Nang á gráy She/he/it SM.3sg do “He/she/it does.”
1 st	M(v)	We	Leli má gráy We SM.1pl do “We do.”

2 nd	K(v)	You	Nekəli ká grúm You SM.2pl do Nekəli kó grúm “You do.”
3 rd	T(v)	They	Nday tá gráy They SM.3pl do “They do.”

Table of Muyang agreement markers

Derivations of the verb described in this section allow us to posit that it is the grammatical category that has the great number of variations. It varies in person, tense, mood and aspect as it is the case crosslinguistically. Within the sentence, the verb selects other grammatical elements. These constituents include NP subject and object. As far as its meaning is concerned, the verb describes an action, it expresses a state. For this reason, it can help another verb to be conjugated. This leads to distinguish main verbs and helping or auxiliary verbs.

3. Processes of grammaticalization

The forms of some linguistic units change over years. This includes some processes of reduction of lexical units to semantic, phonetic and morphological units. It even involves their forms and distributions within the sentence. Here, one goes on to scan some changes of lexical and syntactic units through some processes which are phonetic, morphosyntactic and functional.

3.1 Phonetic processes

Phonetic processes to which attention is paid in this subsection are erosion and loss.

3.1.1 Erosion

In Muyang, some phonological substances of morphemes are reduced in accordance with their new status. Erosion is syllabic, junctural and peripheral.

3.1.1.1 Syllabic erosion

Syllabic erosion consists in the reduction of a syllable. Consider the following data:

(279) a. Zal **ga** wal
Man of woman
“The wife’s husband.”

b. Zal **a** wal
Man of woman

“The wife’s husband.”

c. Zál-wál

Zálwál

Man woman

“The wife’s husband.”

In the data above, the syllable *ga* (of) (279a) is reduced to *a* (see 279b) before being completely elided in (279c). Semantically, one remarks that there is no change within the sentence. This is an illustrative evidence of syllabic erosion in the language.

3.1.1.2 Junctural erosion

There is junctural erosion when a morpheme disappears between two words. They are numerous in conjugation. Let us consider the examples below:

(280) a. Tá ahtsá

SM.3pl not to be sufficient

“They are not numerous/sufficient.”

b. T’ ahtsá

SM.3pl not to be sufficient

“They are not sufficient.”

(281) a. Má epí-yu okoru

SM.1pl see-in big frog

Mé epiyú okoru

“We see the big frog inside.”

b. M’ épiy’ okoru

SM.1pl see-in big frog

“We see the big frog inside.”

An observation of the structures above shows that the morpheme *a* in (280a) disappears between the agreement marker *tá* and the verb *ahtsá* “not to be sufficient” (280b). In (281b), both the agreement marker and the verb lose their final vowels whose tones are, by merging, borne by the following vowels. This analysis suggests that junctural erosion seems to be a simple synchronic phonological process (vowel deletion when followed by another vowel).

3.1.1.3 Peripheral erosion

Peripheral erosion consists in the erosion of linguistic unit at the morpheme initial or final position. Let us consider the following examples:

(282) a. Ná wayáy daf

SM.1sg love food
“I like food.”

b. Ná wáy dáf
SM.1sg love food
“I like food.”

In (282b), the morpheme *-ay* in final position disappears. Its tone, which indicates the tense, is borne by the preceding syllable. So, the verb loses its peripheral phonemes but not its grammatical properties.

3.1.2 Loss

Loss is a phonetic process of grammaticalization whereby a lexical item becomes a grammatical category and loses its former status. Let us consider examples that follow:

(283) a. **Pis**
“Long (in terms of duration).”

b. Ma- **pis-** ani
Inf long Suffix
Mep**is**ani
“To last.”

c. Á **pis**
SM.3sg last
“It lasts.”

A look at sentences above shows that the adjective *pis* “last” in (283a) no longer exists as an adjective. It has become a verb (see 283b and 283c). From this remark, one realises that it has lost its adjectival status and it completely behaves like any Muyang verb.

3.2 Morphosyntactic processes

This subsection looks at word attraction and clitization.

3.2.1 Word attraction

It consists in the basic arrangement of lexical units. In Muyang, the relevant example is the attraction of some linguistic units by verbs, nouns or any other grammatical constituents. Consider the following data:

(284)a. À zum-**àba** dáf-à
SM.3sg eat.TNS.Past food-Asp.Acc
ò zum**àba** dáfà
“He had eaten food.”

- b. Wál tà zum-à daf-à
 Women SM.3pl eat.TNS.Past food.Asp
 Wál tò zumà dafà
 “Women had eaten food.”

Apart from tenses morphemes (|-àba/ past 1 in (284a) and past 3 |-à/ in (284b) which are naturally attracted by the verb roots, one observes that there is also noun attraction of the perfective aspect marker |-á/. Also, one sees that agreement markers, subject and objects occur close to the verb. This supposes that subjects, agreement markers and objects are attracted by the verb within the sentence. Let us observe the example below for further illustrations:

- c. *Tá wál zum-à daf-á
 SM.3pl women eat.TNS.P3 food-Asp.Acc
 Tá wál zumá dafá
 “Women had eaten food.”

The sentence above is ungrammatical because the agreement marker *té* (3pl) is separated from the verb. Thus, the different elements merge according to the language rules to form the sentence. This observation allows us to propose that some sentence constituents and even larger sequences are formed by merging.

3.2.2 Clitization

Clitization, according to literature in linguistics, is a process of grammaticalization whereby full words become syntactically and morphologically dependent on others. We can observe these kinds of construction in the following words:

- (285) a. Eri
 “Something”
- b. Eli
 “Stew”
- c. Ga
 “Of”
- d. Eri-ga-eli goru
 Something-of-stew my
 Ergeli goru
 “My stew pot”

The word *ergeli* “stew pot” in (285d) is obtained by the clitization of three words: “eri” (285a), “ga” (285b) and “eli” (285c). One realises that the resulting word in (285d) has its independent morphological and syntactic structure. *Eri* “something” and *ga* “of” and *eli* “stew” are clitics.

3.3 Functional processes

This section deals with verb extension. The latter includes locative suffixes, indirect object and tense indicators and aspects markers.

3.3.1 Indirect object markers

In sections which precede, it has been stated that personal pronouns that mark indirect objects are attached to the right periphery of the verb. To make this conclusion concrete, let us examine the following illustrations:

286. Lawan á váy-**i** dáf ana Satay
Lawan SM.3sg give.Dat food to Satay
Lawan á ví dáf ana Satay
“Lawan gives food to Satay.”

One remarks that the indirect object affix /i/ “him or her” in (286) is attached to verb lefthand boundary. In order to respect phonological rules which disallow vowels to appear in adjacency in the same item, the verb loses its final vowels and merges with the indirect object affix. Then, the latter bears the grammatical features of the verb by merger operation. Let us observe the following data for further illustrations:

- (287)a. Lawan à vày-**uk** dáf
Lawan SM.3sg give-Dat.2nd.sg food
Lawan ò vù**k** dáf
“Lawan gave you food.”

- b. Lawan á váy-**u** dáf
Lawan SM.3sg give-Dat.1st.sg food
Lawan ó vù**u** dáf
“Lawan gives me food.”

One realises that the morphemes *-uk* “you” in (287a), *-u* “me” in (287b) and *-i* “him/her” in (286) function as the indirect objects of verbs to which they are attached in Phonetic Form. Within the sentence as illustrated above, they cannot appear in isolation. This reasoning means that these elements constitute the verb extensions.

3.3.2 Locative affixes

Locative clitics are also attached to the verb in Phonetic Form. Following the conclusion of the preceding discussion, one assumes that they are also verb extensions. Let us look at examples below:

- (288)a. Á gráy tewi ka má Muyang
SM.3sg do work on language Muyang

“He works on Muyang language.”

b. *Á gráy-ka-i tewi*
SM.3sg do.Loc.Dat work
Á grákí tewi
“He works on it.”

c. *Herayá ahay-vu-a*
Get out.2sg house-Loc.FV
Herayá ahayvâ
“Get out the house.”

d. *Herayá-ú*
Horuyú
Enter-in
“Get in.”

In sentences (288b) and (288d), the expression *ka mà Muyang* “one Muyang language” and *ahayva* “in the house” are replaced by the morpheme *ki* and *u* which are attached to the verb. They function as adjuncts of place. Here, the italicised constituents are respectively their antecedents in sentences (288a) and (288c). This analysis is evidence in support to the hypothesis that adjuncts markers which, morphologically form one word with the verb at PF, are verb extensions. Therefore, many morphemes marking arguments are attracted and merged to the verb root to form one word.

4. The case system

Julia Horvath (1995: 52) states that case is usually thought of as involving a particular X° category that assigns it. The analysis of sentence constituents sketched in the preceding section has shown that basic sentence elements include the subject, the verb, the object and the circumstantial complements. One has realised that these syntactic functions depend on the verb. This suggests to note following Noam Chomsky (1980, 1986b) quoted by Lasnik (1999: 74-75) that the verb is the sentence element that assigns specific role to others. He claims that case requires expletives and the arguments associated with them. It means that the case requirement of an argument is satisfied via its association with other constituents of the sentence. The present work focuses attention on case assignment by the verb. It particularly scans nominative and accusative cases.

4.1 The nominative case

Sentence elements that function as verb subjects are assigned a nominative case. They typically indicate the doer of the action or the person, the idea or the thing described or defined in the sentence. In order to see how it works in Muyang, let us examine the verb subjects in the sentences below.

(289)a. **Lawan** á zúm ďaf
Lawan SM.3sg eat food

Lawan ó zúm ďaf
“Lawan eats food.”

b. **Nang** á zúm ďaf
He/She SM.3sg eat food
Nang ó zúm ďaf
“He/She eats food.”

c. **Ata Lawan ndata Satay** tá zúm ďaf
Pl Lawan and Satay SM.3pl eat food
Ata Lawan ndata Satay tó zúm ďaf
“Lawan and Satay eat food.”

(290)a. **Shelik** á bláy do
War SM.3sg please Neg
“Fighting is not good.”

b. **pro** á bláy do
SM.3sg please Neg
“It is not good.”

As argued so far, the subject position to which is assigned the nominative case can be an NP (a noun, a group of nouns and a pronoun) or a null category. If this observation is correct, it means that since the null category does not syntactically bear overt agreement features and semantically do any action performed by the verb, the nominative case is assigned to a null pronoun, i.e., *pro*.

4.2 The accusative case

An accusative category typically plays the role of object within the sentence. It is discussed in the previous section that it is selected by transitive verbs. For Chomsky (1980, 1986), a transitive light verb carrying person and number T-features serves as probes which assigns accusative case to a goal with matching person and number features and active (unvalued) case feature. Along the same lines, Andrew Radford (2004: 280) states that if Universal Grammar principles determine that all structural case assignment involves assignment of case to a goal by a T-complete matching, we can hypothesise that accusative case is likewise assigned to a goal by a T-complete probe which matches the goal in respect of its person and number features. Recall that the probe is a finite verb within the sentence that bears both person and number features. Its ability to assign case can only be explained if it selects object. Let us examine the following paradigm:

291. Lawan á shí ergi
Lawan SM.3sg drink arki
Lawan é shí ergi
“Lawan drinks arki.”

292. Nak ká pí tay
You SM.2sg see them
Nak ké pí tay
“You see them.”

293. Nday tá ndzí dēwir
They SM.3pl sleep sleep
Nday té ndzí dēwir
“They sleep.”

294. Beza tá pí nday
Children SM.3pl see they
Beza té pí nday
“The children see them.”

The verb *shí* “drink” in (291) merges with the NP *ergi* “arki”, its complement. In the following sentence, the verb *pí* “see” merges with the personal pronoun *tay* “them” to form the VP *é pí tay* “he sees them”. One realises from these remarks that the verb merges with its complements to form the VP. Sentence (291) shows that the NP *ergi* “arki” does not carry any person features. In sentence (292) for instance, the object with which the verb merges is the personal pronoun *tay* “them”. The verb is second person singular whereas the accusative NP is third person plural. This supposes that the verb does not bear the same number and person features with the personal pronoun that is the goal to match in T-features in the language.

Moreover, one remarks that contrary to the case in some African languages where it agrees in person and number with the probe, the object does not bear verb agreement features in Phonetic Form in the language. This can be explained by the fact that since verbs do not overtly bear agreement features in the language as described in the preceding paragraphs, it is not strong enough to share the latter. Given that agreement markers bear the verb agreement features, it supposes that the accusative case is merged by a verb that has any agreement feature in Muyang-type languages. Thus, the verb does not necessarily bear the same agreement features with the accusative within the sentence.

5. Overview of the sentence constituents

The present section examines and analyses the sentence constituents. It is argued that one can form a simple or a complex sentence depending on whether it contains independent or subordinate clauses.

5.1 The discourse larger constituents

The present section describes the Muyang discourse larger constituents which are sentences and clauses.

5.1.1 The simple sentence

Let us consider the examples below:

(295) a. Shí

Drink.2pl

“Drink.”

b. Ná shí

SM.1sg drink

Né shí

“I drink.”

c. Nu ná shí zum ahalay kani

I SM.1sg drink wine here today

Nu né shí zum ahalay kani

“I drink some wine here today.”

d. Nu ná shí zum metsirani watsawatsi ahalay kani

I SM.1sg drink wine good rapidly here today

Nu né shí zum metsirani watsawatsi ahalay kani

“I rapidly drink some good wine here today.”

Sentences (295a), (295b), (295c) and (295d) contain one finite verb: *shi* “to drink”. In (295a), the sentence comprises only the verb, sentence (295b) contains an agreement marker and the finite verb, sentence (295c) contains a nominative personal pronoun, an agreement marker with which the subject agrees and the finite verb. One realises that apart from the verb, it is possible to obtain many other constituents that play different roles within the sentence. These constituents complete the information expressed by the verb. They are analysed as verb complements by the traditional grammar.

Moreover, one remarks that there is one event/state designated by each verb predicate and all of the additional constituents in (d) bear on the description of that one event or state. This supposes that it is the number of full predications that determines if the sentence is simple or not. If that conclusion is in the right track, it means that the simple sentence comprises a predicate and many grammatical constituents. These ones can be the nominative NP, the agreement marker, the accusative NP and adjuncts. Let us observe the example below:

5.1.2 The complex sentence

Let us consider the following examples:

(296)a. Wal yati Lawan á wáy ni á zúm dáf

Woman yati Lawan SM.3sg love NI SM.3sg eat food

Wal yati Lawan á wáy ni ó zúm dáf

“The woman who Lawan loves eats some food.”

b. Má rá má sleká ka sarta yati á ká ndeveringá ni
SM.1pl come SM.1pl go on moment yati Fut SM.2sg finish NI
Má rá má sleká ka sarta yati á ké ndeveringá ni
“You will go when you will have finished.”

c. Ná wáy beza dadaba tá gráy tewi
SM.1sg love children because SM.3pl do work
“I love children because they work.”

d. Zaláy Galu tamal ká wáy nang ni
Call.2sg Galu if SM.2sg love her NI
“Call Galu if you love her.”

e. Ná dúm kado nday tá srá nu-w-à
SM.1sg say that they SM.3sg know I.FV
Nó dúm kado nday té srá nuwà
“I say that they know me.”

f. Nè dùm kado wal yati Lawan á wáy ni á rá
SM.1sg say that woman yati Lawan SM.3sg love NI SM.3sg come
Nò dùm kado wal yati Lawan á wáy ni á rá
“I say that the woman who Lawan loves comes.”

g. Ahay yati ká ndzì-vu-yu dēwir ni Lawan ná vú
House yati SM.2sg sleep-Rec.in sleepiness NI Lawan SM.1sg be
Ahay yati ké ndzìviyú dēwir ni Lawan nó vú
“Lawane is found in the house where you sleep.”

h. *Wal kado Lawan á wáy ni à rà
Wife that Lawan SM.3sg love NI SM.3sg come.TNS.P1
“The woman that Lawan loves came.”

In (296a), the two predications are related by *yati*. One realises that in terms of meaning, the second statement depends on the first one. Given that the term *yati* is a relative pronoun (Bebey: 2010), it supposes that sentence (296a) contains a main predication, that is a main clause, and a relative clause. In sentence (296b), the group of words, *kasarta yati* “when” expresses time, it relates the two predications. In examples (296c), (296d) and (296e) just like in example (296b), one sees that the first statement is related to the second by a subordinating conjunction. This remark is an indication that a variety of clauses can be built by the means of subordination complex sentence.

However, one realises that if clauses that function as adjuncts of time, cause and condition are introduced by their respective conjunctions, the completive clause, which is assigned the accusative case by the verb, is introduced by the complementizer *kado* (that) (see 298f). Contrary to English (Radford, 1999: 57 and 2009) and French (Biloua 2004) where respectively *that* and *que* can introduce both completive and relative clauses depending on the structure of the sentence, the complementizer *kado* “that” only introduces subordinate completive clauses. Let us examine the following sentences:

- (297)a. Ná dzałáy zlam solumani
SM.1sg think thing good
“I think to an important thing.”
- b. *Ná dzałáy kado Lawan á gráy zlam solumani
SM.1sg think that Lawan SM.3sg do thing good
“I think that Lawan achieves good projects.”
- c. Je pense que Lawan realise de bons travaux
“I think that Lawan achieves good projects.”
- d. Pienso que Lawan realisas buenos trabajos.
“I think that Lawan achieves good projects.”

Surprisingly, one sees that sentence (297b) is ungrammatical in Muyang but grammatical in languages such as English, French and Spanish. The ungrammaticality of this sentence is due to the fact that the verb *madzalani* “to think” does not select the complementizer *kado* “that”. The list of verbs that select it is very restricted. There are *modumani* “to say, to tell” and *ahar mefiyani* “to believe). This description supposes that the complementizer *kado* “that” is neither used as a determiner nor as a relative pronoun in Muyang. It is only used as a complementizer. One also remarks that in Muyang, verbs such as “to think” (297a), “to believe”, “to be sure” that tend to select only completive clauses in languages like English (297b), French and Spanish, do not behave that way.

5.1.2 Clauses

The preceding section dealt with simple and complex sentences. It has been argued that the latter are made up of different types of clauses that are the focus of the present section.

5.1.2.1 The independent clause

According to traditional grammar, an independent clause does not depend on another clause semantically and syntactically. As argued so far, they are found in simple sentences. Let us look at data that follow:

- (298)a. Beza tá shí yam a hema-vu
Children SM.3sg drink water at mountain-Loc
Beza té shí yam a hemavu

“Children drink water on the mountain.”

b. Leli má gráy gevi
We SM.1pl do play
“We play.”

c. Leli má gráy gevi, má shí yam **mek** má hebáy
We SM.1pl do play SM.1pl drink water and SM.1pl danse
Leli má gráy gevi, mé shí yam **mek** má hebáy
“We play, drink water and danse.”

Sentences (298a) and (298b) show that independent clauses can stand on their own. In example (298c) for instance, one observes that they can be related by the means of punctuation and coordination. As far as their grammatical function is concerned, there is no evidence which shows that independent clauses play a specific role within the sentence. This remark leads to propose following traditional grammar that independent clauses may not have any syntactic function within the sentence.

5.1.2.2 Subordinate clauses

As argued in the preceding section, clauses that depend on others are known as subordinate clauses. They semantically and structurally depend on the main clause within the sentence. This sub-section is devoted to give some details on relative, conjunctive or adverbial, complete and infinitival clauses in the language.

5.1.2.2.1 The relative subordinate clause

In Bebey (2010), it is argued that the only relative pronoun attested in Muyang is *yati*. It relates the main clause to the subordinate construction. Let us observe the following examples:

(299)a. Lawan á lém ahay
Lawan SM.3sg construct house
Lawan á lém ahay
“Lawan constructs a house.”

b. Lawan á lém ahay zebal-ani
Lawan SM.3sg construct house high-suffix
Lawan á lém ahay zebalani
“Lawan constructs a high house.”

c. Ahay **yati** Lawan á lém ni á bú zebal
House *yati* Lawan SM.3sg construct NI SM.3sg be high
Ahay **yati** Lawan á lém ni ó bú zebal
“The house that Lawan constructs is high

(300)a. Lawan á korú a magma

Lawan ó korú a magam
 Lawan SM.3sg go at home
 “Lawan goes home.”

In (299c) and (300b), one sees that the relative pronoun *yati* joins the main clauses to subordinate clauses. It appears immediately after its antecedent (the noun phrase). What seems relevant in these examples is its function. In sentence (299b), the qualifying adjective *zebalani* “long” is the epithet of the noun it qualifies, it occurs in the same position as the relative clause. This construction suggests following traditional grammar that the relative clause in (299b) functions like a qualifying adjective. It qualifies the height of the house.

5.1.2.2.2 Subordinate conjunctive clauses

This sub-section scans the structure of some subordinate clauses in Muyang.

(301)a. **Kasarta yati** Lawan á sawadǎy ni, leli má gráy gevi
 Moment yati Lawan SM.3sg walk NI we SM.1pl do play
Kasarta yati Lawan á sawadǎy ni, leli má gráy gevi
 “At the time when Lawan walks, we play.”

b. Ata Satay tá dí đaf **kasarta** yati nak ká dí zum
 Pl Satay SM.3pl prepare food moment yati you SM.2sg prepare wine
 Ata Satay té dí đaf **kasarta** yati nak ké dí zum
 “The Satays prepare food when you prepare wine.”

(302)a. Galu á shí yam watsawatsi
 Galu SM.3sg drink water rapidly
 Galu é shí yam watsawatsi
 “Galu drinks water rapidly.”

b. Satay á shí zum watsawatsi
 Satay SM.3sg drink wine rapidly
 Satay é shí zum watsawatsi
 “Satay drinks wine rapidly.”

c. Galu á shí yam watsawatsi **akadfa** Satay á shí zum
 Galu SM.3sg drink water rapidly like Satay SM.3sg drink wine
 Galu é shí yam watsawatsi **akadfa** Satay é shí zum
 “Galu drinks water rapidly like Satay drinks wine.”

303. á bekí zlam **akadfa** á sawadǎy
 SM.3sg write thing like SM.3sg walk
 É bekí zlam **akadfa** á sawadǎy
 “He writes as he walks.”

(304)a. Lawan á zlapáy **akadfa** agwazl á zláh

Lawan SM.3sg talk like coq SM.3sg bow
Lawan á zlapáy **akada** agwazl á zláh
“Lawan talks like the coq sings.”

b. **Akada** agwazl á zláh , Lawan á zlapáy
Like coq SM.3sg bow Lawan SM.3sg talk
Akada agwazl á zláh , Lawan á
“Like the coq sings Lawan talks.”

305. **Dadaba** á lém ahay, Lawan á gráy tewi ndahang do
Because SM.3sg construct house, Lawan SM.3sg do work other Neg
Dadaba á lém ahay, Lawan á gráy tewi ndahang do
“Because he constructs a house, Lawan does not do other thing.”

306. Ná gráy-uk sa **dadaba** ká wayáy mish
SM.1sg do.Dat salutation because SM.2sg love people
Nó grúk sa **dadaba** ká wáy mish
“I greet you because you love people.”

307. **Tamal** nak dagwa ni, kád-vu ahalay
If you adult ni, kill-Rec here
Tamal nak dagwa ni, kadvú ahalay
“If you are courageous, fight here.”

308. Leli má sleká **tamal** bay á herayá do ni
We SM.1pl go if chief SM.3sg get out Neg NI
Leli má sleká **tamal** bay á herayá do ni
“We go back if the chief doesn’t get out.”

In the paradigm above, the bold subordinating conjunctions *kasartayati* “when” indicates time, *akada* “like” introduces manner, *dadaba* “because” introduces cause and *tamal* “if” that introduces condition occur in all positions within the sentences. Their distribution depends on the way the speaker uses them.

5.1.2.2.3 Complement clauses

Complement clauses are introduced by the subordinating conjunction *kado* “that” in Muyang as illustrated in the following example:

(309)a. Galu á dúm kado leli má rá mba
Galu SM.3sg say that we SM.1pl come yet
Galu ó dúm kado leli má rá mba
“Galu thinks that we are coming.”

b. *Leli má rá mba, Galu á dúm kado
We SM.1pl come yet Galu SM.3sg say that
Leli má rá mba, Galu ó dúm kado

“We are coming Galu thinks that.”

The above sentence illustrates that complement clauses, which appear in the direct object position in Muyaŋ, complete the meaning of the main, they complete the event by filling in the argument role that a clause can fill. The unacceptability of (309b) shows that they are exclusively ranged in the righthand periphery of the verb in affirmative sentences.

5.2 The discourse basic constituents

Sentences are combinations of many smaller constituents. The latter include nuclear and peripheral elements. This section deals with the sentence different constituents and their grammatical roles.

5.2.1 Central constituents

Central elements of the sentence are compulsory. These constituents include the subject, the verb and the object. The present section analyses their distribution, their structure and their syntactic functions.

5.2.1.1 The subject

To see how it works in Muyaŋ, let us examine the structure of the following sentences:

310. **Beza** tá gráy bolon
Children SM.3pl do ballon
“Children play football.”

311. **Ata Lawan ndata Satay** tá wis vedang
Pl Lawan and Satay SM.3pl cultivate farm
Ata Lawan ndata Satay té wis vedang
“Lawan and Satay work in the farm.”

312. **Leli** má shí yam
We SM.1pl drink water
Leli mé shí yam
“We drink water.”

(313)a. **Nekeli** ká zúm-vu akaba krá
You SM.2pl look like.Rec with dogs
Nekeli kó zumvú akaba krá
“You look like dogs.”

b. **Ká** zúm-vu akaba krá
SM.2pl look like.Rec with dogs
Kó zumvú akaba krá
“You look like dogs.”

314. **Ma-sleka-ana** á gegir
 Go Inf.back.Suffix SM.3sg be difficult
Maslekana é gegir
 “To go back is difficult.”

315. **Wal-mazay-ani** á bláy
Walmazani á bláy
 Woman take.Suffix SM.3sg please
 “Mariage is good.”

316. **Ahay-magray-ani** á pis
 House-do-Suffix SM.3sg last
Ahaymagrani á pis
 “To construct a house takes a long time.”

In sentences (310) and (311), the subjects of the verb are respectively noun and group of nouns. In (312), (313a) and (313b), the subjects are pronouns. They morphologically and syntactically agree with the agreement marker. The subject of the verb in sentence (314), (315) and (316) is an infinitive. This observation suggests that different words can play the role of subject of the verb within the sentence. Let us look at the following examples for further illustrations:

(317a). **Muyáng** tá wáy wal gedák
 Muyang.PI SM.3pl love woman much
Muyáng tá wáy wal gedák
 “The Muyang people love wives very much.”

b. -----tá wáy wal gedák
 SM.3pl love woman much
 “They love wives very much.”

318. ----- tá shí zum a Mbogo
 SM.3pl drink wine at Mbogo
 té shí zum a Mbogo
 “They drink wine in Mbogo.”

319. ----- ká gráy zlam solumani
 SM.2sg do thing good
 “You do a good thing.”

320. ----- má sawadáy watsawatsi te ----- má ndziyú endzi
 SM.1pl walk rapidly so SM.1pl arrive first
 má sawadáy watsawatsi te ----- mé ndziyú endzi
 “We walk rapidly so that we arrive first.”

322. ----- á dǔm kado ----- á wáy bay
 SM.3sg say that SM.3sg love chief
 ó dǔm kado ----- á wáy bay
 “She says that she loves the chief.”

322. ----- á wáy ----- á gí bay
 SM.3sg love SM.3sg become chief
 á wáy ----- é gí bay
 “He wants to become a chief.”

One remarks that the subject position in (317a) is empty in (317b) and the sentence is still acceptable. From sentences (318) to (319), there is no morphologically realised subject. This observation supposes that there is a possibility to obtain empty subjects in Muyaŋ sentences. From this analysis, one can note that the language selects null-subject categories conventionally called PRO-subjects (Radford 1997, 2009). Among them, there are those which are subjects of finite verbs like in (317a), (317b), (318), (319), (320), (321) and (322). Consider the following data:

323. -----á wáy bay ----- ma-ge-ani
 SM.3sg love chief become-Suffix
 ----- á wáy bay ----- megeni
 “He wants to become a chief.”

324. Á wáy wal ----- ma-zay-ani
 SM.3sg love wife Inf.take.Suff.
 Á wáy wal ----- mazani
 “I want to marry a woman.”

325. Lawan á dǎbáy vedang ---- ma-səkum-ani
 Lawan SM.3sg check farm Inf.buy-Suffix
 Lawan á dǎbáy vedang ---- musokumani
 “Lawan wants to buy a farm.”

326. ----- á wáy duláma ----- ma-say-ani do
 SM.3sg love lie Inf.cut-Suffix Neg
 ----- á wáy duláma ----- masani do
 “He does’nt want to tell a lie.”

One observes that some verbs in sentences above are not conjugated. They are preceded by neither a subject nor an agreement marker. This remark shows that non-finite verbs do not select both subject and agreement marker. It means that non-finite verbs do not select any phonetic and syntactic categories that bear subject grammatical and referential properties

contrary to finite verbs where agreement markers appear to mark subject syntactic features when the latter is deleted.

The basic question here is whether the Muyang language can be qualified as null-subject language. Given that null-subject languages are languages which allow finite verbs to have a null subject (Radford, 1997: 131), let us come back to the structures in the two preceding paradigms to answer this question. A look at sentences (317a), (317b), (318), (319), (320), (321), (322) and (323-326) shows that verbs in Muyang (finite and non-finite) allow null pronominal constituents which are not pronounced. These illustrations lead to propose that Muyang is a null-subject or pro-subject language.

However the questions that arise from these observations are what the null subjects' origin in Muyang-type languages? How are they interpreted? One sees that when it occurs within the sentence, the null subject does not have any antecedent to which it refers. In finite structures, even if it is demonstrated that it is a pro category, it remains that the null subject does not refer to any antecedent. In infinitive clauses, PRO does not even agree with agreement markers that would indicate that the empty categories were caused by an NP or a pronoun deletion.

Given that the agreement marker bears the phonetically realised subject's agreement features, be it a noun, a group of nouns or a pronoun, its occurrence after the trace in finite clauses suggests that the null subject is either a pronominal or a nominal category. This supposes that it is the NP subject deletion that obtains the null subject in the position before the verb. In this view, it cannot have any antecedent that is phonetically realised within the sentence. This analysis indicates following Noam Chomsky (1982) that it is difficult to interpret the null subject as any other empty category.

5.2.1.2 The verb

In Muyang five state verbs are attested as shown in the following table:

(327)

<i>State verbs</i>	<i>Glossary</i>
mebani	to be, to remain
megeni	to become
mandzехаdani	to stay/ to remain
mamdzavani	to appear
matamahani	to seem

Table 8: Table of Muyang state verbs

The conjunction of the last verb of the group *metamahani* (to seem) is possible only in the third person singular. This suggests that it is an impersonal verb in the language as illustrated in sentences that follow:

(328)a. á matamaháy mlang zingzing
 SM.3sg seem place darkness
 "The world seems dark."

b. á matamaháy zlezlana
SM.3sg seem difficult
“It seems difficult.”

c. á matamaháy wal-ma-zay-ani zlezlana
SM.3sg seems woman-Inf-take-Suffix difficult
á matamaháy walmazani zlezlana
“It seems difficult to marry a wife.”

5.2.1.2.1 Transitive verbs

Transitive direct verbs and transitive indirect verbs are attested in the language.

5.2.1.2.1.1 Direct transitive verbs

No constituent stands between the sentence direct verb and the object. The two elements are directly related as far as the sentence structure is concerned as one can observe in examples below:

329. Kra á zúm **ɖaf** a geli
Dog SM.3sg eat food at bush
Kra ó zúm **ɖaf** a geli
“The dog eats food in the bush.”

330. Beza tá gráy **gevi** kani
Children SM.3pl do play today
“Children play today.”

331. Leli má shí **yam** krimkrim
We SM.1pl drink water rapidly
Leli mé shí **yam** krimkrim
“We rapidly drink water.”

332. Nday tá tsaháy **zlam**
They SM.3pl learn thing
“They study their lessons.”

5.2.1.2.1.2 Indirect transitive verbs

Unlike direct transitive verbs, prepositions separate objects from the verbs within the sentence. Illustrations are visible in the following sentences:

333. Á zlapí **ana** Lawan
SM.3sg talk to Lawan
“He/She talks to Lawan.”

334. Á tsalfíng **ka** pra
SM.3sg mention of sacrifice

“He/She talks about sacrifice.”

335. Á sawadǎy **ndata** Lawan
SM.3sg walk and Lawan
“He walks with Lawan.”

336. Á korú **anà** plish
SM.3sg go to horse
Ó korú **anà** plish
“He goes with a horse.”

337. Lawan á hí pakama **ana** Galu
Lawan SM.3sg say speech to Galu
Lawan say something to Lawan

338. Satay á dí zum **ana** ata dedeng ni
Satay SM.3sg prepare wine to pl uncle Def
Satay é dí zum **ana** ata dedeng ni
“Satay prepare some wine for her uncles.”

Verbs contained in the data above are joined to their object by prepositions. In (333) for instance, the verb *zlapí* “talk” is separated from the object *Lawan* by the preposition *ana* “to”. They are not directly related one to another.

5.2.1.2.2 Intransitive verbs

The list of verbs that belong to this group is not long in Muyang contrary to languages such as English and French. Consider sentences below:

(339)a. Avir á téf a hema-vu
Rain SM.3sg fall at mountain-in
Avir á téf a hemavu
“It rains at the mountain.”

b.*Avir á téf yam a hema-vu
Rain SM.3sg fall water at mountain-in
Avir á téf yam a hemavu
“It rains water at the mountain.”

c. Avir á téf kay a hemav-u kani
Rain SM.3sg fall lot at mountain today
Avir á téf kay a hemavu kani
“There is a lot of rain in mountain today.”

d. Mlang á tsadǎy lala
Place SM.3sg shine good

“The sun shines well.”

e. Nekɛli ká ndzɪm dɛwir
You SM.2pl sleep sleep
Nekɛli ké ndzɪm dɛwir
“You sleep.”

f.*Nekɛli ká ndzɪm kaykay
“You SM.2pl sleep lot
Nekɛli ké ndzɪm kaykay
“You sleep a lot.”

Sentence (339f) is ungrammatical because the verb *ndzɪm* (sleep) does not directly govern an object. One realises that contrary to languages such as French and English where *to sleep* is an intransitive verb, it is direct transitive in Muyang. This verb selects but only the noun *dɛwir* “sleep” as direct object. The ungrammaticality of sentence (339b) is due to the fact that the verb *téd* “fall” selects a direct object *yam* “water”. One also remarks that in Muyang, if intransitive verbs do not select any object, they at least select circumstantial complements of time, place, manner, condition, etc.

The above remarks suppose that the concept of transitivity of verbs depends on languages: they are rare in some languages and numerous in others. As far as Muyang is concerned, analyses in preceding paragraphs indicate that it may have many transitive verbs.

From the above analysis, one can conclude along Chomsky (1986 and 1993) that although Universal Grammar principles account for the structure of all natural languages, each language has its internal functioning both in syntactic and semantic level.

5.2.1.2.3 Bitransitive verbs

340. Lawan á wáy-i zum ana Galu
Lawan SM.3sg give.Dat wine to Galu
Lawan á ví zum ana Galu
“Lawan gives some wine to Galu.”

341. Ká grúm gevi akaba Galu
SM.2pl do play with Galu
Kó grúm gevi akaba Galu
“You play with Galu.”

342. Ká homí pakama ana Nang
SM.2pl say speech to Nang
Kó homí pakama ana Nang
“You say something to Nang.”

343.*Nday á sawadǎy sawadǎy ana sak
They SM.3pl walk walk with foot
“He walks walk on foot.”

Sentences (340), (341) and (342) contain two objects. They can even contain many by the means of punctuations. Example (343) is ill-formed because the verb *sawaday* “to walk” does not select an object. It is an intransitive verb

5.2.1.2.4 The sentence modalities

(344)

Verb/Mode	Declarative	Imperative	Interrogative	Negative
Transitive	Ké shí yam 2sgdrink water <i>You drink water</i>	Shí yam Drink water <i>Drink water</i>	Ké shí mam 2sg drink Int <i>Wat do you drink?</i>	Ké shí yam do 2sdrink water Neg <i>You don't drink water</i>
Ditransitive	Á ví yam 3sg give water ana Lawan to Lawan He gives water to Lawan	ví yam ana give water to Lawan Lawan Give water to Lawan	Á ví mam ana 3sg give waht to Lawan mam Lawan Int What does he give to Lawan?	Á ví yam 3sg give water ana Lawan ba to Lawan Neg He doesn't give water to Lawan
Intransitive	Tá tsuhwáy 3pl run They run	Tsuhwáy Run run	Tá gráy mam 3pl do Int What do they do?	Tá tsuhwáy do 3pl run Neg They don't run
Stative	Nak kó bú You2sgbe bebelek Weaked You are weakened	ké bú bebelek 2sgbe weakened Be weakened	Way ná bú Who 3sg be bebelek way weaked who Who is weakened?	Nak ké bí You2sgbe bebelek bi Weaked Neg You are not weakened

Table of Muyang sentence modalities

5.2.1.3 Objects

5.2.1.3.1 The direct object

It is argued in the preceding section following traditional grammar that transitive verbs select direct objects within the sentence as shown in the following sentences:

345. Leli má hepéd **aslu**
We SM.3pl eat meat
Leli má hepéd **oslu**
“We eat meat.”

346. Wál tá tsáh yam ka swa
Women SM.3pl fetch water on well
“Women fetch water from the well.”

347. Lawan á wáy **beza dahalay ma-blay-ani** gedák
Lawan SM.3sg love children female handsome much
Lawan á wáy **beza dahalay ma-blani** gedák
“Lawan loves many beautiful girls.”

348. Lawan á wáy-i **nang** ana Satay
Lawan SM.3sg give.Dat him/her to Satay
Lawan á ví **nang** ana Satay
“Lawan gives him/her to Satay.”

349. Satay á wáy **tay** kani
Satay SM.3sg love them today
“Satay wants them today.”

One observes that the direct object can be a single word (see 345 and 346), a group of words that form a nominal (e.g., a modified noun) (see 347) or a pronoun (see 349). Contrary to other languages like French, one realises that it is not possible for the direct object – be it a pronoun – to occur before a verb – be it an auxiliary, a semi auxiliary or a main verb.

5.2.1.3.2 Indirect object

Recall that the verb and the indirect object are separated by a preposition. At the semantic level, the indirect object can be benefactive; it can be an instrument or even an accompaniment.

5.2.1.3.2.1 Benefactive object

A benefactive object indicates the participant for whom benefits an action that is performed by the verb. Consider the following sentence.

350. Ká hí pakama **ana wal** **gayak**
SM.2sg say speech to woman your
Ké hí pakama **ana wal** **gayak**
“You talk to your wife.”

The constituents in bold contained in the sentences above are introduced by the preposition *ana* which means *to*. The latter separates the object from the verb. These elements indicate the benefactor of the action performed by the verb in each construction. Let us look at sentences below for further analyses:

351. Lawan á wáy-i sulay **ana Satay**
Lawan SM.3sg give-Dat.3sg money to Satay
Lawan á ví sulay **ana Satay**
“Lawan gives (her) some money to Satay.”

352. Lawan á wáy-uk sulay **ana nak**
Lawan SM.3sg give.Dat.2sg money to Satay
Lawan ó wúk sulay **ana nak**
“Lawan gives you some money (to you).”

353. Galu á zlapáy-i **ana tay**
Galu SM.3sg talk.Dat.3pl to them
Galu á zlapí **ana tay**
“Galu talks to them.”

354. Galu á zlapáy-u **ana nu**
Galu SM.3sg talk.Dat.1sg to me
Galu á zlapú **ana tay**
“Galu talks to me.”

It seems to be the case, after a sight at the above paradigm, that although the prepositional objects are overtly marked, an indirect object pronoun which varies in person and number attaches to the verb, it bears the agreement features of the prepositional object. This phenomenon supposes that there is a “double occurrence” of the indirect object within the same sentences achieved by both overt prepositional objects and clitics known as “clitic doubling” in the literature.

5.2.1.3.2.2 Instrument object

Instrument object indicates the thing or simply the instrument. It is also related to the verb by a preposition. Consider sentences that follow:

355. Ká sawadáy ana mota
SM.2sg walk with car
“You travel by car”

356. á tsuhuwáy ana boskur
SM.3sg run with bicycle
Ó tsuhuwáy ana boskur
“He goes by bicycle.”

357. á korú ana sak
SM.3sg go with foot
Ó korú ana sak
“He goes by foot.”

The preposition *ana* “to” which introduces objects here can be translated in *by* depending on the sentence’s meaning. It introduces the instrument, rather the means which the actor uses to perform the action.

5.2.1.3.2.3 The accompaniment object

Let us look at the following structures:

358. Lawan á sawadáy ndata **Satay**
Lawan SM.3sg walk with Satay
“Lawan walks with Satay.”

359. Krá tá ndehád akaba **awák**
Dogs SM.3pl sleep with goats
“Dogs sleep with goats.”

360. Ata Lawan tá sawadáy akaba **Satay**
Pl Lawan SM.3pl walk with Satay
“Lawan walks with Satay.”

361. Avia á gráy tewi ndata **Lawan**
Avia SM.3sg do work with Lawan
“Avia works with Lawan.”

The data above show that the object of accompaniment is introduced by *ndata* “with” for singular noun phrases (see 358 and 361) and *akaba* “and” for plural noun phrases (see 3359 and 360). One realises that, in general, the Muyang sentence nuclear constituents’ position does not vary within the sentence. The subject occurs in the lefthand of the verb whereas the object is found in the righthand.

5.2.2 The sentence peripheral constituents

Sentence peripheral elements constitute the expansion of the nuclear constituents discussed in the preceding section. According to traditional grammar, the sentence peripheral elements include circumstantial complements or adjuncts of time, place, manner, cause, condition, consequence, etc. To see how this works, let us examine the structure of the following sentences:

362. Lawan á zúm dáf **ga** mlavad
Lawan SM.3sg eat food of night
Lawan ó zúm dáf **ga** mlavad
“Lawan eats food in the night.”

363. Nday tá baráy ahar kusi
They SM.3pl wash hand cold
“They wash themselves during the cold moment.”

364. Leli má dí lemish **kasarta** ga eyedzɛ
We SM.1pl prepare song moment of Ahidjo
Leli mé dí lemish **kasarta** g’ eyedzɛ
“We sing during the Ahidjo’s reign.”

365. **Ga-mlang-vad**, Sali á korú a Marwa
 Of-earth-night, Sali SM.3sg go at Maroua
Gamlavad, Sali ó korú a Marwa
 “In the night, Sali goes to Maroua.”

The preceding paradigm shows that one can obtain a number of circumstantial complements introduced by adverbs.

In sentences (362-365), the circumstantial complements of time is introduced by a variety of adverbs. Each adverb is used to indicate a specific time according to the sentence meaning. The adverb *ga* (of) (see 362) is used to indicate short periods of time, while *ahar*, which first means *hand*, has another meaning. It can be translated into *during*. When it occurs before a group of word to express time, it indicates long periods. The adverb *kla* “each”, in turn, expresses the frequency of time.

366. Satay á dí daf **ahay-vu**
 Satay SM.3sg prepare food house-in
 Satay é dí daf **ahayvu**
 “Satay prepares food in the house.”

367. Nak ká zlapáy **gwara dala-vu**
 You SM.2sg talk towards plain-in
 Nak ká zlapáy **gwara dalavu**
 “You talk towards outside.”

368. Galu á korú **ka hema**
 Galu SM.3sg go on mountain
 Galu ó korú **ka hema**
 “Galu goes to the mountain.”

369. Nday tá hebáy **akika plad**
 They SM.3pl danse on stone
 “They danse on the stone.”

Examples (366-369) indicate that many adverbs of place are also used according to the speaker’s needs to introduce the circumstantial complement of place. In sentence (366) for instance, one realises that the adverb of place is splited into discontinuous words: *a...vu*. It means that the equivalent of the English adverb of place *in* is not a single word but an adverb of place plus *vu*. Other adverbs of place include *gwara* which means *towards*; *a* (at); *akika* “on”.

(370)a. Lawan á zúm daf **akada** Mbuko
 Lawan SM.3sg eat food like Mbuko
 Lawan ó zúm daf **akada** Mbuko
 “Lawan eats like Mbuko people.”

b. **Á zúm dáf mbuko-mbuko**
SM.3sg eat food Mbuko-Mbuko
Ó zúm dáf mbukombuko
“He eats like Mbuko people.”

c. ***Mbuko-mbuko á zúm dáf**
Mbuko-Mbuko SM.3sg eat food
Mbukombuko ó zúm dáf
“*Mbuko people he eats like.”

(371)a. **Akadá plish, Lawan á ndzí dēwir**
Like horse, Lawan SM.3sg sleep sleep
Akadá plish, Lawan é ndzí dēwir
“Like a horse, Lawan sleeps.”

b. Lawan á ndzí dēwir **plish-plish**
Lawan SM.3sg sleep sleep horse-horse
Lawan é ndzí dēwir **plishplish**
He sleeps like a horse

c. ***Plish-plish** Lawan á ndzí dēwir
Horse-horse Lawan SM.3sg sleep sleep
Plishplish Lawan é ndzí dēwir
“Like a horse, he sleeps.”

Circumstantial complements of manner are introduced by adverbs of manner. Examples (370a) and (371a) are illustrations in support of this argument. Sentences (370b) and (371b) thereafter show that there is another possibility to obtain circumstantial complement of manner. It consists in the duplication of the word that expresses the manner to which the action expressed by the verb is compared. In sentence (370a) for instance, the action of the NP *Lawan* is compared to the one of *Mbuko*. This comparison is achieved by the means of the adverb of manner *akadá* “like”. In example (370b), the action of the NP *Lawan* is still compared to the one of *Mbuko*. The latter is duplicated and one sees that sentences (370a) and (370b) have the same meaning. This is evidence that the use of adverb of manner is not the only possibility to obtain comparison in Muyang.

372. Nu ná wáy Galu **dadaba** ana solum gayang
I SM.1sg love Galu because of goodness her
Nu ná wáy Galu **dadaba** ana solum gayang
“I love Galu because of her goodness.”

373. Leli má zúm dáf dadaba ana lewir
We SM.1pl eat food because of hunger
Leli mó zúm dáf dadaba ana lewir
“We eat food because of hunger.”

374. Ká b̄etsumí ana Galu **dadaba** ana zal gayang
SM.2pl obey of Galu because of husband her
Kó b̄otsumí ana Galu **dadaba** ana zal gayang
“You obey to Galu because of her husband.”

375. Beza tá yéy **dadaba** ana memri
Children SM.3pl smile because of feast
Beza té yéy **dadaba** ana memri
“The children smile because of the feast.”

Sentences (372-375) show that there is only one adverb of cause attested in the language *dadaba* “because” which is always followed by a preposition. As far as the distribution of the circumstantial complements is concerned, one realises after a sight at the entire paradigm that when introduced by adverbs, they generally occur postverbally. Some can be found in sentence beginning when they are focused. This possibility leads to the conclusion that peripheral constituents are mobile within the sentence. The question that arises concerns the reduplicated noun’s function that expresses manner.

Recall that word reduplication also achieves manner in Muyang. Given that it expresses manner and appears in the adverb position, it is obvious that it functions as a circumstantial complement of manner. In (370b) for instance, the reduplicated noun *mbukombuko* “like Mboku” modifies the verb. It occurs in the postverbal place.

6. Conclusion

Muyang is an SVO null subject language that has some notable properties not found in many other languages, including backward vowel harmony, reduplication processes for word formation, the rarity of intransitive verbs, an atypical lexically sensitive negation construction, and a complex and interdependent mood, aspect and tense system, among many other features that have been discussed.

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