Mandenkan **Numéro 51**

Bulletin d'études linguistiques mandé **Printemps 2014**

ISSN: 0752-5443

Grammatical sketch of Beng

Denis PAPERNO

Content

1. Introduction[1]

Beng is a South Mande language of Côte d'Ivoire. The core Beng population lives in a compact area in the Prefecture of M'Bahiakro at the northern edge of the tropical forest zone in Côte d'Ivoire. Until now, descriptions of only some aspects of the structure of Beng, particularly phonology and, to some degree, morphology, have been available to the general reader. The current work makes the first attempt at a systematic description of Beng grammar, providing a typologically oriented overview of phonology, morphology, and the basic syntactic constructions of Beng. While the content of this sketch is primarily descriptive, it is intended for a broad linguistic audience, written in particular for typologically minded readers.

The research presented here is based on three field trips to Côte d'Ivoire in 2004, 2005, and 2006.[2] My main Beng consultant was Kouadio Kouadio Destin (b. 1968), and a significant part of the data comes from Kouadio Kouadio Patrice (b. 1980). Both speakers represent the variety of Ouassadougou (Beng: *Àságbĕ*). In some cases I also used judgments by Augustin Yao Kouakou (b. 1967) from Totodougou (Beng: *Tótógbĕ*). Besides the original field data, I relied on previous scholarship on Beng, including unpublished materials (Paesler ms.), kindly provided to me by the Summer Institute of Linguistics, as well as the lexicographic notes of anthropologist Alma Gottlieb published in (Gottlieb, Murphy 1995).

The structure of this work is as follows. After a brief introduction (Section 1), I outline general information on Beng (Section 2), including basic sociolinguistic parameters and dialect divides, and then proceed to the history of the linguistic study of Beng (Section 3). Linguistic decription proper begins with an outline of phonological inventory and phonological processes, both segmental and tonal (Section 4). Sections that follow deal with personal pronoun morphology (Section 5;

[1] This work, after numerous revisions and additions, is ultimately based on a thesis defended at Moscow State University Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics in 2006, advised by Valentin Vydrin and Aleksandr Kibrik. An earlier version of this work appeared in Russian as (Paperno 2011).

[2] The 2004 and 2005 field trips were supported by the grant (04-04-00262a) "Languages of the world: Mande languages" of the Russian Foundation for Human Studies, and the 2006 trip by the grant SUBJ 062156.00 "Exploring an African terra incognita: Lexicology and reconstruction in South Mande languages" of the Swiss National Science Foundation.

see also (Paperno 2005)), and the morphology of other parts of speech (Section 6); the discussion of inflection and productive derivation of verbs, adjectives and location nouns is interspersed, grouped by morphological expression rather than by part of speech, as the same morphological means (an affix or reduplication) can combine with different parts of speech with similar semantic effects. Section 7 discusses empirical tests for (syntactic) parts of speech, as morphological criteria have limited applicability in Beng. I argue for distinguishing not only nouns, adjectives, postpositions, and adverbs, but also intermediate and finer classes: locative nouns, temporal nouns, locative postpositions, and pure postpositions. Section 8 describes NP (DP) structure, covering various noun modifiers: possessors, locative modifiers, appositions, adjectives, and determiners. Section 9 is dedicated to nominal number, a 'hidden' grammatical category, which can be expressed analytically, via verb of adjective agreement, or pronoun doubling, but almost never in the noun itself, and to the related issue of agreement in Beng; I describe two kinds of agreement marking, plural reduplication and pronoun doubling. Section 10 discusses the syntax and the semantics of locative constituents. Section 11 briefly introduces Beng equivalents of 'or' (*à lɛ́ ɛ́ nɪ̰̄*) and 'and', (*nə̰̀ ... lō*, which is only applicable to certain constituent types; due to the absense of verb/VP conjunction and restrictions on converb use the expression of predicate conjunction falls upon clause compounding, in particular sentence juxtaposition and temporal clause subordination). Section 12 describes simple clause structure, including the encoding of sentential grammatical categories: tense, aspect, modality, and polarity. In the following sections I characterize clausal arguments and adjuncts, and overview the main syntactic relations (arguments): subject, direct object, secondary object, and indirect object. While Beng subjects do possess a number of salient features, some syntactic phenomena are "ergative", uniting the direct object with the intransitive subject as opposed to transitive subject (these include control of secondary predicate, quantified NP float, and reduplicative plural agreement on the verb). Section 13 gives an overview of multiple predication in Beng, with a particular focus on temporal clause marking that is identical to information structure marking; I describe two positional classes of complementizers (such as the preposed complementizer *kɛ̄* 'that' and the postposed *dɛ́ɛ̄* 'if'), which turn out to be motivated by the typical linear position of the subordinate clause relative to the main clause. Section 14 discusses information structure marking: topic, contrastive topic, and focus, which are, as is typical in African languages, expressed by dedicated morphemes. Section 15 contains two sample texts in Beng, and Section 16 reproduces Beng words and phrases originally published by Louis Tauxier (1921) along with corresponding modern data.

2. General information

2.1. Beng people and their language

The South Mande language Beng is a minority language of Côte d'Ivore, spoken by the ethnic group of the same name. The Beng people is isolated in space from all other South Mande speaking groups. The closest of them, Wan, is spoken about 200 kilometers west of the Beng territory. In historic times, another closely related linguistic community, the Gbin, populated a territory to the East of the Beng (Delafosse 1904). The Gbin were heavily assimilated by the neighboring Gur ethnic groups of the Northern Côte d'Ivoire, and their language reportedly went extinct in the early 20th century (Tauxier 1921). Culturally, modern Beng language and culture show a considerable influence from the neighboring Baule, a major ethnic group dominant in central Côte d'Ivore. Among other things, the Beng borrowed Baule personal names given to the person according to the day of the week when one is born, the corresponding names for days of the week, as well as the seven-day week itself, which coexists in the core Beng area with the traditional six-day week.[3] The Baule influence goes so far that the Beng share the belief that their ancestors had arrived to their current area from the East, implausible on geographical grounds since the Beng are by far the eastmost among the whole South Mande group. This legend might have been directly borrowed from the Baule who have indeed arrived from the east just a few centuries ago; cf. (Gottlieb, Murphy 1995; Gottlieb 1992).

The Beng language belongs to the Southern-Eastern branch of the Mande language (Niger-Congo phylum), as confirmed by the lexicostatistic method (Vydrin 2009) that uses (Swadesh-based) 100 word lists of basic vocabulary. At any rate, separation of Beng within South Mande occurred quite early, right after the South Mande linguistic unity dissolved.

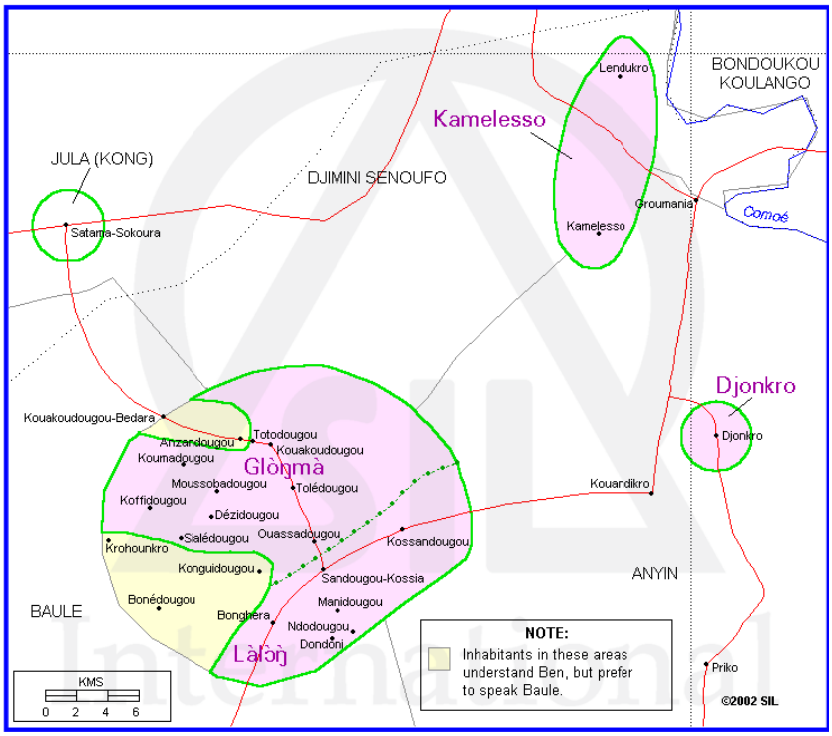
The main Beng area is within the Prefecture of M'Bahiakro of Côte d'Ivoire. Before the Ivorian civil war started in 2002, Beng was the main language of everyday communication in eighteen villages[4]: Bonguera, Dézidougou, Djonkro, Dondoni, Kamelesso, Kofidougou, Kossandougou, Kouakoudoudou, Koumadougou, Lendoukro, Manidougou, Mousobadougou, N'Dodougou, Sandougou-Kosia, Sialédougou, Toledougou, Totodougou, and Ouasadougou. In addition, five villages maintain Beng identity but are almost completely assimilated linguistically by the Baule; inhabitants of those villages (Anzandougou, Bonédougou, Kongidougou, Krohounkro, and Kouakou-Bédara) know Beng at best passively.

[3] Still, the six day cycle is deeply entrenched in the traditional Beng habits, determining market days and Earth adoration schedule.

[4] The main source for sociolinguistic information is (Paesler 1992).

Beng dialects have never been subject to linguistic study, although students of Beng note the existence of some, primarily lexical, differences among varieties of individual villages. Paesler (1992) lists four dialects of Beng, selected primarily by self-identification of territorial groups of the Beng rather than by linguistic criteria:

- The Savanna dialect (Dézidougou, Kofidougou, Kouakoudougou, Kounmandougou, Moussobadougou, Sialédougou, Toledougou, Totodougou, and Ouassadougou).
- The Forest dialect (Bonguera, Dondoni, Ndodougou, Sandougou-Kosia, and Kossandougou).
- The dialect of Kamelesso and Lendoukro.
- The dialect of Djonkro.



Map 1. Dialects of Beng. By Valentin Vydrin, digitized by Matt Shafer. Source: http://www-01.sil.org/silesr/2000/2000-003/Ben_map.htm

The Savanna and the Forest dialects are reported to be fully mutually intelligible, with slight lexical differences. The distinction between those two dialects, whose names only approximately correspond to natural zones referred to in their names, is based exclusively on the group identities of two previously rival groups of the Beng, each of which used to have its own 'king' in the pre-colonization times. Members of both groups call Beng their native language.

The dialect of Kamelesso and Lendoukro, on the one hand, and the central dialects (Savanna and Forest), are reported to be mutually intelligible to some degree. The dialect of Djonkro is not mutually intelligible with any others. We have no

credible information on the linguistic distinctions underlying the dialectal segmentation. Gottlieb (1995: xiii) largely agrees with Paesler (1992: 2) when it comes to Beng dialects, with two differences. First, she does not mention the villages of Kamelesso, Lendoukro and Djonkro. Second, she considers the variety of Sandougou-Kossia 'independent' from the Forest-Savanna divide. Neither a synchronic description nor a historical analysis of the Beng dialects exists to date.

During the Ivorian civil war of 2002-2011 the Beng country was crossed by the armistice line («ligne de confiance»). Most of the Savanna and the Forest zones were under control of the "New Forces" (i.e. the rebels), with the Forest zone right on the armstice line, partially controlled by peacekeepers. Some villages closer to the line, including Ouassadougou, were almost completely abandoned; the inhabitants moved either north to other Beng villages or south to the part of the country loyal to president Laurent Gbagbo. A few thousand of the Beng found refuge in the nearby Prikro, a sous-préfecture center.

2.2. Sociolinguistic situation

Beng is spoken by about 14 thousand people (based on the 1988 census). The total Beng population was about 16 thousand according to Paesler (1992). Some Beng are spread out in bigger cities of Côte d'Ivoire, particularly Abidjan, but it's hard to provide quantitative estimates on this part of Beng population.

The Beng are generally bi- or multilingual. The Beng's second languages are most often Baule (Akan), Jula (Mande), and French (Indo-European); older people also speak Jimini (Gur) and Ando (Akan). Second languages are used in inter-ethnic contacts, French is the official language of Côte d'Ivoire and is taught in school.

Beng, like other languages of similar speaker base, is potentially endangered. Projecting the assimilation trends into the future, in particular taking into account the Baule influence, it is possible that Beng will get extinct through assimilation. However, its present state of conservation is quite satisfactory.

Beng has no official status and is used orally, mostly in everyday communication. No literary standard exists, even though there is a folklore tradition, represented by folktales, historical legends, proverbs, as well as songs. The Beng themselves consider the Beng song genre to be a recent innovation: songs used to be sung only in other languages such as Baule.

In the mid-1980s a Summer Institute of Linguistics scholar W. Paesler, the first linguist to do a systematic study of Beng, developed a Latin-based writing system, with the addition of letters *ŋ, ɔ, ɛ*; and acute and grave diacritic marks for tone levels. In 2006 the Beng literacy enthusiast Kouadio Destin and I proposed a new variant of this orthographic system, with new featues primarily in tone notation, which to my knowledge has never been used.

Beng has no function in education. From 1980 till 1986 the Summer Institute of Linguistics published calendars in Beng. Later, adopting the orthography by W. Paesler, SIL published the first Beng primer (Kouadio, Kouakou 1997). The authors of the primer are Kouadio Kouadio Destin and Augustin Yao Kouakou, the first linguist of Beng provenance, who defended in the 1996/1997 academic year a D. E. A. degree thesis on his native language (Kouakou 1997). But despite the support from SIL and the enthusiastic efforts by Kouadio Kouadio Destin, massive literacy training in Beng was never organized.

2.3. Names of the language

Beng, a name of a people and its language, reproduces the native ethnic name *bèíŋ́*; this name has been used in most recent works on Beng (Paesler 1989; 1991; 1992; Gottlieb, Murphy 1995). Beng, however, has been mentioned in the literature under other, similar or unrelated, names: *bẹ̲*, *Ben*, *Gbëingn*, *Gan*, *Gạ̲*, *Gan-né*, *Ganra*, *Ngạ̲*, *Ngain*, *N'Gain*, *Ngen*, *Ngan*, *N'Guin*, *Ngin*. These names are derived from words for 'Beng' in the neighboring peoples' languages: *ŋ̀gɛ̂* (Baule), *gə̌* (Jula), *gbɔ̀mlɔ̄* (Jimini). The *-né* element in *Gan-né* is probably a plural marker from some Beng dialects, see 3.2.

3. The history of Beng studies

3.1. Students of the Beng language and society

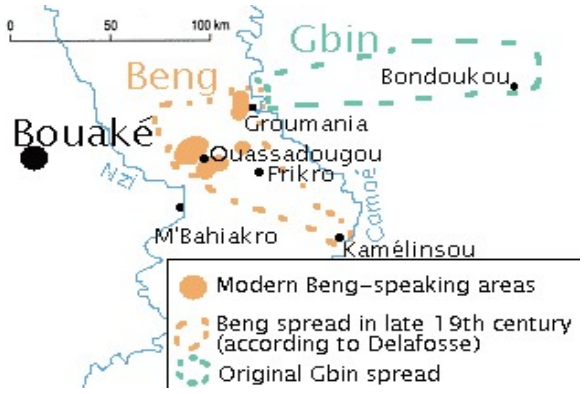
The first publications to report on Beng language and people were motivated by the urge to systematize the languages and peoples of West Africa. Like many other varieties of Côte d'Ivoire, the Beng and the neighboring South Mande Gbin languages were first described by the French colonial administrative officer Maurice Delafosse (1904). His account of the Beng language included just a list of the first ten numerals. Twenty years later, another scholar and colonial administrator Louis Tauxier studied the area of Bondoukou more deeply, both as a linguist and as an ethnographer. Among other things, Tauxier published an extensive list of Beng words and phrases (Tauxier 1921: 658-683), along with a very detailed ethnographic and sociological study of the Beng people. Now, 100 years after these first publications, we are in the position to look back at their data and interpret it building on the progress in African linguistics made over the last decades. In section 3.2, I describe Delafosse and Tauxier's Beng data and remark on what they are telling us about Beng dialects.

Beng's position within the genetic classification was further scrutinized in the second half of the 20th century with the development of wider comparative studies (Prost 1953; Welmers 1958; Greenberg 1966). The last work mistakenly attributes Beng (referred to as Gan) to Voltaic languages.

Systematic study of Beng did not resume until the late 1970-es, when SIL-associated scholars produced preliminary grammatical notes (Bearth 1979), description of the tonal system (Flick 1979) and a phonological sketch (Ory 1981).

In 1979-1980 the then-PhD-student Alma Gottlieb spent fourteen months in Côte d'Ivoire doing anthropological fieldwork among the Beng. After another field trip to the Beng land in 1985, Gottlieb eventually published a monograph on Beng anthropology (Gottlieb 1992) and a Beng-English dictionary (Gottlieb, Murphy 1995). After her dissertation work, Gottlieb conducted further research among the Beng, focusing on the anthropology of childhood, which resulted in the monograph *The Afterlife Is Where We Come From: The Culture of Infancy in West Africa* (Gottlieb 2004). Gottlieb's collaboration with her husband, writer Phillip Graham, produced two well-written popular accounts of their encounters with the Beng (Gottlieb and Graham 1994, 2012).

An SIL member Wolfgang Paesler started studying Beng in 1981. Within a few years he gained a deep understanding of many aspects of the structure of Beng language. Paesler published the first morphological description of some aspects of verb morphology of Beng (Paesler 1989), which covered the properties of the base form, the low tone form, nominalization, and the progressive. Paesler gave the first account of personal pronouns and TAM expression in his orthographic manual (Paesler 1991), was the first to publish a phonological description of Beng (Paesler 1992), and, last but not least, collected a vast amount of unpublished texts and lexicographic data (Paesler ms.).



Map 2. Beng and closely related Gbin, now extinct, according to Delafosse (1904).

3.2. Beng dialects according to reports from the early 1900s

This section reproduces the content of (Paperno 2008a). I focus on the aspects of historical phonetics that Beng data from (Delafosse 1904) and (Tauxier 1921) seem to reflect and, for the dialect documented by Tauxier, on morphological features they exhibit. Tauxier's data also contains some information for a deeper grammatical analysis, but that would require more research on modern Beng dialects.

The present work, as well as the research of Wolfgang Paesler and of Alma Gottlieb and M. Lynne Murphy, represent a different dialect than those described by Tauxier and Delafosse, spoken in the prefecture of M'Bahiakro, in the area centered around the village of Ouassadougou. As mentioned above, this area is divided into two socio-geographic units, «Forest» and «Savanna», and the literature (e.g. Paesler 1992) even speaks of two dialects, dialect of the forest and dialect of the savanna, but this distinction has never been justified by linguistic data. All the varieties of the area of Ouassadougou are mutually understandable; the only certain isogloss I know of does not strictly divide the two regions: the subject pronoun of 3rd person singular has the form /e/ in varieties of some «Savanna» villages, e.g. Totodougou, and /o/ in some «Forest» villages, but also in the variety of Ouassadougou, which is generally attributed to the «Savanna» zone. Unfortunately, more precise information about dialectal distribution of these pronoun forms is not available. Therefore, I am not going to distinguish here the varieties of Ouassadougou area (the «Forest» and the «Savanna» dialects). Since a uniform term for this dialect does not exist, I will write « Modern Ouassadougou Beng », abbreviating it as *MOB*.[5]

Now that MOB is relatively well studied, we are in the position to interpret the data Tauxier and Delafosse had published in their relation to MOB facts. It turns out that the dialects described by Delafosse and Tauxier are substantially different from MOB. Delafosse documented the variety of Beng spoken in the 1890-s in the village of Kamélinsou near the Comoé river (see Maps 1, 2), which one might tentatively identify with the present-day Kamelesso. L. Tauxier, on the other hand, left a rather extensive record of the data that he had gathered "dans le village gan de Pattakoro, situé sur la route de Bouaké à Bondoukou, entre Kongodian et Groumania," and also later from "des Gans des villages environnants [de Groumania]" (Tauxier 1921: 372). It follows that data from more than one Beng dialect could make a way into Tauxier's book, and it is impossible to reliably separate them without external evidence on modern varieties of these dialects (those have never been studied to date). Presumably, though, most of Tauxier's data rely on the variety of the neighbourhood of Groumania (he qualifies his records from Pattakoro as "notes succintes"). If this is correct, Tauxier's data may represent a variety of modern Lendoukro or Bénidougou, villages situated in the proximity of Groumania, west from the Comoé river, where Beng is still spoken. To the best of my knowledge, there is no scholarship of these dialects, and Tauxier's notes remain the only source. I will make reference to the

[5] This is intended as a purely geographical label (Ouassadougou is the center of the area) distinguishing this variety of Beng from the dialects of Djonkro, Kamalesso, and Lendoukro.

varieties documented by Delafosse and Tauxier by abbreviations BK (Beng of Kamélinsou) and BG (Beng of Groumania neighbourhood), correspondingly.

3.2.1. Delafosse: Beng of Kamélinsou. Delafosse was the first to publish any Beng data; his records, however, are very scarce. They consist of a list on numerals from one through ten provided to him by Dr. Maclaud, "qui l'a recuillie sur place durant son voyage de 1893-1894" (Delafosse 1904: 149). The list is not very informative other than that it reliably identifies the variety as being close to MOB.

Table 1.1. Numerals from 1 through 10 in Beng dialects and Gbin

BK	BG	MOB	Gbin (Delafosse)	
do [do]	dô [do]	dō	do	one
pla [pla]	para [pala]	plāŋ̄	paa	two
ya [ya]	n'gan [ŋa̰]	ŋa̰ŋ̄	ñga, ña	three
syĩ [sieŋ]	syé [sie]	síéŋ́	sye	four
sõ [sɔŋ]	sôn [soŋ]	sɔ́ŋ́	sōo	five
so-do [sɔdo]	so-do [sɔdo]	sɔ́dō	sōrŭ-do	six
so-pla [sɔpla]	so-fala [sɔfala][6]	sɔ́plā	sosowa	seven
so-ya [sɔya]	sowoua [sɔwa]	sɔ́wà, kēŋēsíéŋ́	kyenze	eight
sisi [sisi]	sisi [sisi]	sīsí	sisi	nine
ebu [ebu]	bou [bu]	bū, èbū	bu	ten

Two peculiarities of BK deserve a comment. First, the Beng of Kamélinsou maintained the Proto-South-Mande form /ya/ for 'three' in *ya* 'three' and *so-ya* 'eight' (< '5 + 3'), as opposed to the innovative form /wa/, /ŋa̰/ in MOB *ŋa̰ŋ̄-ŋ̄*, BG *n'gan* [ŋa̰] 'three', MOB *sɔ́-wà*, BG *sowoua* [sɔ-wa] 'eight'.

Second, BK added the final -*N* in the numerals *syĩ* [sie-ŋ] 'quatre' and *sõ* [sɔ-ŋ] 'cinq', like in MOB (*síéŋ́*, *sɔ́ŋ́*), cf. *syé* [sie], *so* [sɔ] in a closely related language Gbin

[6] [f] in this numeral is the result of lenition of intervocalic /p/; unfortunately there are no other examples that would support such a phonological process in BG, except for the similar but non-identical development in *bouala* 'twenty', cf. MOB *būwlā* 'twenty' (< *bū* 'ten' + **plā* 'two').

(Delafosse 1904: 149). The *-N*, however, has not expanded to the numerals *pla* ‘deux’ and *ya* ‘trois’, cf. MOB *plā-ŋ̄* ‘two’, *ŋa̱-ŋ̄* ‘three’.

3.2.3. Tauxier: Beng of Groumania neighbourhood. Tauxier performed a far more profound study of Beng than Delafosse did, publishing a list of around 800 words and phrases. I will now highlight some features of BG that distinguish it from other dialects.

Minimal phonetic differences can be established between BG and MOB. First, the syncope of a vowel before /l/ had hardly ever happened in BG; etymological CVLV feet are consistently transcribed with two vowels. Examples include BG *pala* ‘deux’, cf. BK *pla*, MOB *plāŋ̄;* BG *iri* ‘arbre’, cf. MOB *yrí;* BG *sara* ‘tabac à priser’, cf. MOB *sra* ‘poudre de tabac;’ BG *zini* [zi̱li̱] ‘maïs’, cf. MOB *zrìŋ̀;* BG *diawafila* ‘oignon’, cf. MOB *jàflá;* BG *balanda* [balana] ‘banane’, cf. MOB *bláná*; NG *poro-iri* ‘baobab’, cf. MOB *plɔ̌ yrí;* BG *méné* ‘poulet’, cf. MOB *mlɛ̰̌;* BG *kélennzô* ‘buffle’, cf. MOB *kléŋ́ zǒ* ‘boeuf de la brousse’; BG *béré* ‘biche-cochon’, cf. MOB *blɛ̄* ‘duiker’, and many more.

Final nasal sonant /N/ tended to reduce phonetically in BG, often escaping from fixation, cf. the varying transcription of *lɛŋ* ‘enfant’ in BG *n’zô-lè* ‘veau’, *banngo-lè* ‘cheval, poulain’, *babalé* // *babalegnn* ‘mouton, agneau’, *ouolé* // *ouoleignn* ‘doigt’, *ninn, né* ‘enfant’ (MOB *ŋ̄ léŋ́* [néŋ́] ‘mon enfant’), or variation in BG *dowoué, dowouégnn* ‘gombo’. This variation may or may not reflect real dialectal differences.

Vowels before the final /N/ tended to change in quality, usually heightening or developing a heightening diphthong; these effects persisted even when the final /N/ was reduced, e.g. in BG *n’zaon, n’zamm* ‘rônier’, *n’zaommbéï* ‘fruit du rônier’ (MOB *zàŋ́ bɛ̄ŋ̄*), *ouolé, ouoleignn* ‘doigt’ (MOB *wɔ̄léŋ́*); BG *bahoum* ‘épaule’ (MOB *bàŋ̀*); BG *beïgnn* ‘menton’ (MOB *gbèŋ̀*); BG *youm* ‘visage’ (MOB *yōŋ́*); BG *lignn, li* ‘femme’ (MOB *lēŋ̄*); *n’zoulé* ‘grande soeur’ (MOB *zúlēŋ̄*); BG *pégnn // pain* ‘mortier’ (MOB *péŋ́*), BG *sarapoum* ‘tabatière’, cf. MOB *sra kpōŋ̄* ‘calebasse à tabac’, BG *pèlou* ‘voler (dans l'air)’ (MOB *pèlōŋ̄*). Not all of Tauxier’s transcriptions show the diphthongization/heightening of the vowel, so it was likely not regular, cf. the absense of diphthongization in BG *lignn’gala* ‘pagne de femme’, MOB *lēŋ̄ glāŋ̄;* BG *galanké* ‘tisser’, MOB *glāŋ̄ cɟ́* (?) ‘créer le pagne’; BG *zini* ‘maïs’, cf. MOB *zrìŋ̀;* BG *irikôm* ‘écorce’, MOB *yrí kóŋ́;* BG *irinni* ‘racine’, MOB *yrí nɟ̄ŋ̄;* BG *béhian* ‘chèvre’, MOB *béyàŋ̀;* BG *béha-sia* ‘bouc’, MOB *béyàŋ̀ síá;* BG *sômm* [soŋ] ‘animal sauvage’, MOB *sōŋ̄;* etc.

One consonantal phenomenon present in BG could have been prenasalization of [z] after a pause, compare BG *n’zaon, n’zamm* ‘rônier’ (MOB *zàŋ́*), *n’zoulé* ‘grande soeur’ (MOB *zúlēŋ̄*), BG *n'zié* ‘funérailles’ (MOB *zīɛ̄*), although Tauxier’s

transcriptions don't show it consistently, cf. BG *zonzon* 'moustique', MOB *zo̱zo̱*, *zoumounou* 'magnan', MOB *zū̱mlū̱ŋ̄*, BG *zazalè* 'disputer (se)', MOB *zázà*.

Few morphological characteristics differentiate the Beng dialect described by Tauxier from MOB. We note in particular that personal pronouns are in some respects more archaic in BG than in MOB. BG maintained at least traces of inclusivity distinction in 1st person plural[7], as testified by alternate BG translations *kasisi* and *asisi* for the French 'nous' (cf. Mwan 1st person plural inclusive pronoun *kɔ̀ɔ́*, exclusive *ó;* the final element *sisi* can be tentatively related to MOB *sēsē* 'all'). The 3rd person plural pronoun, which features an innovative initial nasal in MOB (see 9.1 on the spread of plural *ŋ* in Beng), in BG preserves the original /w/[8], compare BG *Ouomisipo?* 'Comment t'appelles-tu?' and BG *ouonion go parana* 'leur chien' with their MOB counterparts:

(1a) BG *Ouo mi si po?*
MOB *ŋò mī̱ sì pó?*
3PL:Hab+ 2SG call:L what
'What is your name?' (literally 'What do they call you?')

(1b) BG *Ouo nion go [ɲa̱ŋo < ɲa̱ŋ + wo] parana*
MOB *ŋò ɲā̱ŋ̄ ŋò*[9] *kpláŋ́-ná̱*
3PL EMPH 3PL flea-ATR
'their dog' (literally 'their possessor of fleas').

BG is also relatively conservative in introducing the numeral formative *-N* only in *sôn* [soŋ] 'five'; see discussion of BK and examples in 3.2.1.

One morphological innovation of BG is the plural marker. The original marker *nu̱* (MOB *nù̱*, see 9.1 for the discussion of number marking in MOB) is only preserved after the final /N/; after a vowel a novel plural marker *ŋe* is used:

[7] MOB, unlike most South Mande languages, uses a uniform 1st person plural pronoun *a̱ŋ* regardless of clusivity. Besides Beng, clusivity distinction has also been lost in Gban (Vydrin 2006) and in the newly recognized South Mande language Goo (Vydrine 2013).

[8] Compare 3rd person plural pronouns in three related languages: Mwan *wóō*, Gouro *wò*, Gban *ɔ́* (with loss of /w/); Vydrin (2006) reconstructs 3PL stem **wo* for Proto-South Mande.

[9] In MOB like in GB the second (non-subject) pronoun accompanies the noun phrase expressed by the 3rd person plural emphatic pronoun.

Table 1.2. Plural forms of nouns in Beng of Groumania neighborhood

BG	MOB	French	BG plural form
Stems ending in a vowel			
pilana	*kpláŋ́ ŋą́*	chien	*pilanangué* = /pilana + ŋe/
soro	*sɔ́ɔ́*	musulman	*soronngué* = /sɔlɔ + ŋe/
méné	*mlɛ̄*	serpent	*ménenngué* = /mɛl̰lɛ̰ + ŋe/
méné	*mlɛ̌*	poulet	*ménenngué* = /mɛl̰lɛ̰ + ŋe/
iri	*yrí*	arbre	*irigué* = /yili + ŋe/
Agni		Agni	*Agnigné* = /aŋn̰ + ŋe/
Baoulé		Baoulé	*Baoulenngué, baoulégné* = /baule + ŋe/
Soron	*sɔ́ɔ́*	Dyoula	*Sorongué* = /sɔlɔ + ŋe/
Stems ending in –N			
n'zi	*zı̀ŋ́*	poisson	*n'zinoungué* = /ⁿzi̱ŋ + nu̱ + ŋe/
G'Beïgnn	*bɛ̀ŋ́*	Gan	*G'Beïgnnou* // gbénou = /bɛŋ + nu̱/

To summarize, this section establishes several features that characterize the Beng dialects documented in the earliest literature in comparison to the well-studied Modern Ouassadougou Beng. The dialect of Kamélinsou has an archaic form of numeral ‘three’, and shares two innovations with MOB, syncope and wider spread of *-N* in numerals. The dialect of Groumania neighbourhood has several archaic features such as the absense of syncope, moderate use of *-N* in numerals, and the structure of the pronominal system. Tauxier’s data also allow us to establish some innovations unique to BG, both phonological and grammatical. MOB in turn shows more structural innovations than BG, corresponding to its central geographical position.

4. Beng phonology

4.1. Phonological inventory

Beng has a typical triangular vocalic system of seven oral and five nasal vowels.

Table 2.1. Vocalic phonemes

		oral			nasal	
		front	back		front	back
high		i	u	high	i̱	u̱
mid	upper-mid	e	o	mid	ɛ̰	ɔ̰
	lower-mid	ɛ	ɔ	low	a̰	
low		a				

MINIMAL PAIRS. Height: *yé* ‘mouth’ – *yí* ‘water’, *béŋ́* ‘horn’ – *béŋ́* ‘black monkey’, *bɛ̄ŋ̄* ‘fruit’ – *bāŋ̄* ‘rope’, *bā* ‘earth’ – *bɔ̄* ‘to leave’ – *bō* ‘to remove’, *fɔ̃* ‘to

multiply' – *fū* 'to take by surprise', *mɻ̄* 'to drink' – *mɛ̄* 'to beat' – *mą̄* 'to hear', *dą̄* 'to cough' – *dɔ̰̄* 'to know' – *dū* 'to enter'.

Backness: *blī* 'place' – *blū* 'sorcery', *blē* 'to eat' – *blō* 'to clear', *bèŋ́* 'Beng' – *bɔ̀ŋ́* 'lizard type', *(ŋó) ŋò* ***dɻ́*** *wē ɛ́* '(I) am not **near** them' – *ŋò* ***dū́*** *wē ɛ́* 'they did not **enter** there', *drɛ̰̄* 'work' – *drɔ̰̄* 'cough'.

Nasalization: *cɻ́* 'to vomit' – *cī* 'skin', *sɛ̰̄* 'pain' – *sē* 'all', *klɛ̰́* 'land' – *klɛ́* 'bag', *bą̄ŋ̄* 'scarification' – *bāŋ̄* 'rope', *dɔ̰̄* 'to know' – *dɔ̄* 'to cease' – *dō* 'one', *bɻ̰̄* 'carry' – *bū* 'ten'.

In addition to oral and nasal vowels there is a syllabic nasal *ŋ*, realized as [ŋ] before a pause, a vowel, or a *w*. In other cases /ŋ/ undergoes place assimilation to the following consonant (but it is realized as dental [n] before a palatal consonant), compare: [m̄ pɔ̄ú] 'my field', [n̄ dą̆] 'my pot', [n̄ jàbò] 'my water tank', [ŋ̄ kàfɛ̀] 'my coffee', [ŋ̄m̄ kpā] 'my locust tree fruit'.

Vowel + *ŋ* combinations can be considered diphthongoids (combinations of two segments capable of bearing tone into one mora). Other diphthongs of Beng consist of /i/, /ḭ/, /u/ or /ṵ/ followed by a different vowel of matching nasality: /ia/, /ua/, /ḭą̰/, /ṵą̰/, /iɛ/, /uɛ/, /ḭɛ̰/, /ṵɛ̰/, /ie/, /ue/, /io/, /uo/, /uɔ/, /ḭɔ̰/, /ui/. In diphthongs, /i/ and /u/ tend not to combine with each other: combinations /iu/, /ḭṵ/, /ṵḭ/ are unattested, /ui/ occurs in one word only. Vowel /ɔ/ is only marginally attested in diphthongs: /iɔ/, /ḭɔ̰/, and /ṵɔ̰/ are unattested in underived forms, and /uɔ/ is found only in three words: *pùɔ̀* 'soft' (by assimilation from */pùɛ̀/?), *Sùɔ̀* 'female name' and *Tùɔ́* 'male name'. Combinations [uɔ] and [ṵɔ̰], however, do arise in complex forms as a result of /l/ deletion and accompanying vowel quality assimilation (see 4.2.2): [plùɔ̀] < /plù lɛ̀/ 'the stomach', [nṵ̄ɔ̰̀ló] < /nṵ̄lɛ̀ló/ 'coming' (progressive). Examples of words with diphthongs: *blùá* 'to tire', *fìà* 'better', *klṵą́* 'to steal', *gbḭą́* 'smoke', *fɔ̀lḭ́ɛ̀* 'sacrificial package', *gúɛ̄* 'friend', *ŋṵɛ̰̀* 'fetish', *kɔ̰̀nɻ̄ɛ̰̀* 'hunt', *sìè* 'personality', *súé* 'to uproot', *píómíóŋ́* 'pointed', *súó* 'house', *pùɔ̀* 'soft, mobile', *súì* 'always'.

Table 2.2. Consonantal system

		labial	dental	palatal	velar	labiovelar
stops	vd	b	d	j	g	gb
	vs	p	t	c	k	kp
frica-tives	vd	v	z			
	vs	f	s			
nasals		m	n	ɲ	ŋ	ŋm
liquids and glides			l/r	y	(h)	w

The consonantal system distinguishes five places of articulation: labial, dental, palatal, velar and labiovelar. Labiovelar consonants are produced with double stop articulation, with air blockage created by lips, on the one hand, and tongue and soft palate, on the other hand.

Lateral [l] and vibrant [r] represent the same phoneme. In the speech of most speakers, they are distributed as follows:

– [r] after dental and palatal consonants;

– [l] otherwise.

[l] and [r] are written as *r* and *l* in Beng orthography according to the said distribution.

In fast, relaxed pronunciation the allophones [l]/[r] are not in complementary distribution. In fact both the [l] and the [r] variants are attested after any consonant, but only [l] is pronounced in the syllable onset position.

Consonant *h* is attested only in interjections: *hə̀ə́* 'huh?', *hàí* 'oh!', *hɛ́ɛ̄* 'take this!', *hô* 'wow!', *hōhōhōhō* 'ayayay!', *hʊ́ŋ̄* 'take this!'. Only the first of those can be part of complex utterances, e.g. *à dɛ̄ hə̀ə́* 'play it (e.g. drum), huh?', *ŋ́ mlɛ̄ bàmə̂ dō yè gblɛ̄ hə̀ə́* 'I saw a huge snake yesterday, huh!'. Although Paesler (1992) and Murphy (1995) characterize /h/ as a voiceless fricative, it can in fact be pronounced both voiced and voiceless, usually without significant acoustic noise.

4.1.1. Tones. Beng has three tone levels, including low (marked L or with the grave diacritic: ◌̀), mid (marked M or with the macron sign: ◌̄), and high (H or the acute sign: ◌́).

There are minimal triples distinguished just by tone levels, e.g. *báŋ́* 'trap' – *bāŋ̄* 'rope' – *bàŋ̀* 'shoulder'; *pɛ́ŋ́* 'mortar'– *pɛ̄ŋ̄* 'tale' – *pɛ̀ŋ̀* 'debt'. In accordance with their names, realization of the tones is manifested primarily in the pitch of the syllable. Pitch, however, also shows some contextual effects, including those of phrasal position. For instance, vocal cords do not immediately achieve the desirable vibration rate at the onset of an utterance, so level tones can be realized after a pause as raising to the corresponding level. The reverse effect of falling pitch can sometimes be observed before a pause, but is often obfuscated by a glottal stop optionally epenthesized before a pause. Consonantal context also plays a role in tone realization, so that pitch lowers automatically on voiced obstruents. In addition, transitions between tones tend to be smooth. Transitional effects particularly affect the low tone, which is normally realized after a non-low tone as a falling contour from the level of the preceding syllable to the low level:

(2a) /klí lɛ̀/ ⇒ [kli˥lɛ˩˧]
king DEF
'the king'

(2b) /à dē lɛ̀/ ⇒ [a˩˨de˦lɛ˨˩]
3SG father DEF
'his father'

The tendency for the low tone (L, v̀) to be realized in falling pitch is also observed in sequences of several low tone units. In this case all the low (L, v̀) tonemes except the last one are pronounced as low-mid tone, and the last L syllable is produced with pitch falling from the low to the utra-low level, compare example (3):

(3) /À zrɪ̀ŋ̀ ɛ̀/ ⇒ [a˦zrɪ̀˦ŋɛ̀˨˩]
3SG corn this.is
'This is his corn'.

A sequence of phonologically low tones after a high or mid tone is realized as very smoothly lowering pitch from the level of the preceding syllable. One could treat this effect as a phonological rule v́v̀v̀⇒ v́v́v̀, v̄v̀v̀⇒ v̄v̄v̀, for example: /gɔ̄ŋ̄ bìlɛ̀/ ⇒ [gɔ̄m̄ bīlɛ̀] 'this man', /ŋ́ gɔ̀lù dō cɪ̀/ ⇒ [ŋ́ gɔ́lù dō cɪ̀] 'I carved out a walking stick'.

However, a phonetic sequence of [H H L] (</H L L/) or [M M L] (</M L L/) of this nature does not cause downstep (see below) in the following syllable, so the [H H L] and [M M L] derived by tone spread behave differently from the underlying /H H L/ and /M M L/.

In addition to level tones, Beng possesses four countour tones: HL (v̂), ML (v̄), LH (v̌), MH (v̈). The last one is very rare and occurs only in several units, historically bisyllabic but synchronically light (monomoraic), of the form ClV (< *CVLV): *blä* 'to settle', *yrä* 'to stay', *zrä* 'to lose', *glë* 'difficult', *zrɛ̈* 'road', *blö* 'to drain, to press', *zrö* 'to wash', *bṵ́mlɔ̰̀* 'immediately'. Besides, a contour tone can appear as a result of vowel contraction, cf. stative pronominal series: 3SG *òó* > *ǒ*, 2SG *mɪ̰́ó* > *mɪ̈*; 'this' *ɲāā́* > *ɲǟ*.

The falling tone HL (v̂) is phonetically characterized by pitch lowering from the high level; despite the notation, this lowering usually does not reach the low pitch level phonetically. This is one phonetic feature distinguishing the realization of HL from the realization of L after H, which is also realized with pitch fall:

(4) /klí zɔ̀/ ⇒ [kli˥zɔ˩˧]
king net
'king's net'

(5) */klí zɔ̂/ ⇒ [kli˥ zɔ˩˧]*
king mat
'king's mat'

We consider contour tones as phonologically decomposable into a sequence of two level tones. This interpretation simplifies the description of both tonal sandhi and morphologically conditioned tonal alternations, see below.

4.1.2. Syllable structure. Beng's main prosodic unit is the syllable, which sometimes corresponds historically to a disyllabic foot of other South Mande languages as a result of a syncope CVLV>CLV. The maximum syllable structure is /ClUVŋ/, where C stands for any consonant except /l/, l is the consonant /l/, U is any high vowel, V – is any non-high vowel, and *ŋ* is a syllable-final nasal. Any of those components can be absent, as long as the syllable has one tone bearing element, i.e. at least one vowel, or consists of a syllabic nasal. A syllable usually carries one tonal unit, which the orthography (and the transcription system accepted here) marks on all potentially tone-bearing units. Thus [túà] 'to stay' consists of one syllable with a falling tone, and [a̰a̰ŋ̄]'us' consists of one syllable with a mid tone.

4.1.3. Segmental sandhi. After /ŋ/, the syllable-initial /l/ becomes [n]. The resulting long [nn] can then shorten to [n]. This process is regular word-internally, in suffixes *-lɛ* and *-lí*, and optional at word boundaries. Nasalization does not spread to vowels after the [n] resulting from such progressive nasal assimilation, contra the tendency for syllable-internal nasal harmony. Examples: /ŋ̄ lá/ ⇒ [n̄ ná] 'my medicine', /ɲi̱ŋ̱-lɛ́/ ⇒ [ɲi̱né] 'propping up', |gɛ̄ŋ̄-lɛ̀| ⇒ [gɛ̄nɛ̀] 'beauty' (the last two examples involve the nominalizing suffix *-lɛ*), /ń lé bɛ̀ń/ ⇒ [ń né bɛ̀ń] 'I am Beng'.

The glide /w/ is optionally deleted at morpheme boundaries, especially in function words, e.g. /klɛ́ń wó wɛ̄/ ⇒ [klɛ́ń ó ɛ̄] 'in the forest' ('forest IN there'). Droping /w/ is regular after /ŋ/, less regular after vowels.

After a morpheme boundary, all vowels except high-mid /e/ and /o/ undergo progressive nasal assimilation following /ŋ/ or a nasal vowel, cf. *bā ɛ̀* 'this is earth' vs. /bāŋ̄ ɛ̀/ ⇒ [bāŋɛ̰̀] 'this is a cord', /mla̰ ɛ̀/ ⇒ [mla̰ɛ̰̀] 'this is a drum'. The nasal assimilation does not occur in the "nasal consonant+oral vowel" combinations that result from the abovementioned processes of /w/ deletion and /l/ nasalization.

Two adjacent vowels of the same quality optionally fuse into one. The tones of both underlying segments get realized on the resulting short vowel. Examples: *dàáló* ⇒ *dălό* 'seeding' (progressive), *wlάáló* ⇒ *wlálό* 'laughing' (progressive), *bàá* ⇒ *bă* 'snake venom', *ɲa̰ŋ̰a̰* ⇒ *ɲa̰* 'this', *bā à* ⇒ *bā̀* 'the earth' (with the definite article).

4.1.4. Tonal sandhi. In Beng orthography, as well as in the transcription system accepted here, tone is marked on all segments that have the potential to bear tone, i.e. on all vowels and syllable-final /ŋ/. Phonologically however the tone bearing units are not segments but morae, which contain a short vowel, a diphthong of the form "high vowel+a different short vowel" (*ie, ua* etc.) or "vowel+ŋ". Of course, tone is realized phonetically on all the voiced segments of a mora. Tone alternations,

discussed below, show that those segment conbinations indeed function as single tone bearing units.

v̌ ⇒ v̀| ¬_{v̀; v̌} (¬_L)

Rising tone (LH) becomes low [l] before the following tonal values: H, M, MH, ML, HL. The contexts can be generalized as "before a non-low", assuming that low tone (L) constitutes part of the rising contour LH. Examples: *dǔ* 'knife' – /dǔ LH dō M/ ⇒ [dù L dō M] 'one knife'; *òó wlá wǎ* 'he will destroy the house' – /ó wlá wǎ LH nā̰ M/ ⇒ [ó wlá wà L nā̰ M] 'he has destroyed the house', *mà̰nṵ́ŋ́ nḭ̀ ó ŋ̄ flṵ̀á̰* 'I will get bored of rice' – /mà̰nṵ́ŋ́ nḭ̀ ó ŋ̄ flṵ̀á̰ LH nā̰ M/ ⇒ [mà̰nṵ́nḭ̀ ó m̄ flṵ̀à̰ L nā̰ M] 'I have got bored of rice'. The last example shows that the rising tone on a mora with two vocalic segments undergoes the change just like in a mora with one vocalic segment, as is the case in the examples above.

v̂ ⇒ v́, v̌ ⇒ v̄ | _ {v̀; v̌} (_ L)

Falling tones lose the descending part before a low tone element (i.e. before L and LH tones). Thanks to the assumption that contour tones can be decomposed into level units, this rule generalizes four distinct cases (HL and ML before L and LH). Examples: *zɔ̂* 'mat' – /zɔ̂ HL ɛ̀ L/ ⇒ [zɔ́ H ɛ̀ L] 'this is a mat', *sī̀* 'oil palm'– /sī̀ ML ɛ̀ L/ ⇒ [sī M ɛ̀ L] 'this is an oil palm'.

Beng has downstep. Non-low level tones H and M are realized lower that usual after a falling tonal sequence /v́v̀/, /v̄v̀/, /v̂/, or /v̄̀/:

(6) /Ŋ-ó nṵ̄-ɔ̰̀ló/ ⇒ [ŋo˥ nṵ˧ɔ̰˧˩lo˧˥]
1SG-ST+ come-PROG
'I am coming'.

As noted already by Paesler (ms.), the cases of downstep triggered by the underlying falling tone of the preceding syllable are phonetically opaque, in the sense that the lowering of pitch on the syllable with underlying falling tone is small, undistinguishable from the phonetically automatic transition to the lower (downstepped) pitch level, e.g. /zɔ̂ ló/ HL H ⇒ [zɔ́ ꜜló] HꜜH 'over the mat'.

Sequences of two vowels that are not diphthongs are bimoraic, whether the two vowels have identical (e.g. *bàá* 'snake venom', *pī̀* 'wee') or different quality (*dɔ̀í* 'first'). Tone combinations on them are not subject to sandhi rules for contour tones.

The verb *gṵ̄à̰* 'to remain' is bimoraic (even though /ṵ̄à̰/ can be a diphthong in other words), so /ṵ/ and /a̰/ in it behave as separate tone bearing units. For example, *gṵ̄à̰* does not lose the low tone before another low tone element.

4.2. Morphonology

4.2.1. ŋC simplification. Combinations of the phoneme /ŋ/ with the following syllable-initial non-fricative consonant sometimes simplify into a nasal consonant

homorganic with the second underlying consonant. This rule is regular word-internally with nasals, /l/ and /w/, while with stops and /y/ its application has to be specified lexically. Examples of the change within a compound: *lēnrɛ̄* 'bride' < *lēŋ̄* 'woman' + *drɛ̄* 'new', *bàŋlṵ̄* 'shoulder joint' < *bàŋ̀* 'shoulder' + *ŋlṵ̄* 'head'; example within a reduplicated form: *plāmlāŋ̄* 'two each' < /*plāŋ̄ plāŋ̄*/ (reduplication of *plāŋ̄* 'two').

All examples of *ŋC* simplification on word boundaries include combinations with a personal pronoun and could be interpreted as indications of pronoun cliticization – however, even in this context the rule is still irregular, applying only to some frequent object pronoun+verb or possessive pronoun+noun combinations. Some examples include: *nā* 'my mother, Mommy' (form of address) < *ŋ̄* '1SG' + *dā* 'mother'; *nē* 'my father, Daddy' (form of address) < *ŋ̄* '1SG' + *dē* 'father', *ŋmā* 'give me' < *ŋ̄* '1SG' + *gbā* 'to give', cf. combinations that do not undergo any phonological rules: *mṵ̄ gbā* 'give you', *à gbā* 'give him'; compare also the form *a̱nă* 'let's go' < *a̱ŋ̀* '1PL' and *tá* 'to go' (with a unique but phonologically sensible tonal change from *a̱ŋ̀ ML tá H* to *a̱nă M LH*).

4.2.2. Deletion of /l/. Before /ɛ/, phoneme /l/ optionally drops in two kinds of morphological contexts:

- In the article *lɛ̀*, including its usage within the contrastive topic marker *pɔ̄ lɛ̀*.
- In the progressive verb form ending in -*lɛlɔ́* (but not in the deverbal noun in -*lɛ*!).

The deletion of /l/ is accompanied by the assimilation of the vowel /ɛ/ after the /l/ to the preceding vowel in rounding, labialization, and nasalization. Examples: *bā lɛ̀* ⇒ [bā à] 'the earth', *drɛ̱̄ lɛ̀* ⇒ [drɛ̱̄ ɛ̱̀] 'the work', *zū lɛ̀* ⇒ [zū ɔ̀] 'the breast', *mṵ̄lɛ̀lɔ́* ⇒ [mṵ̄ɛ̱̀lɔ́] 'drinking' (progressive), *pēlɛ̀lɔ́* ⇒ [pēɛ̀lɔ́] 'saying' (progressive), *bā̱lɛ̀lɔ́* ⇒ [bā̱à̱lɔ́] 'provoking' (progressive), *blùlɛ́lɔ́* ⇒ [blùɔ́lɔ́] 'getting blurry' (progressive), *bṵ̱̄lɛ̀lɔ́* ⇒ [bṵ̱̄ɔ̱̀lɔ́] 'educating' (progressive).

4.2.3. High tone in the low tone form of verbs. Beng has a tonal rule that applies in a specific morphosyntactic context and cannot be reduced to regular tonal sandhi. This rule applies to the low tone form of verbs that immediately follow a subject pronoun with a high or rising tone – or, in other words, that end in a high tone element. In those cases, if the first mora of the verb bears the grammatical low tone, it changes its tone to high or falling tone:

L ⇒ HL in verbs after a H or LH pronoun and before a suffix.

L ⇒ HL in verbs after a H or LH pronoun and before a pause.

L ⇒ H in verbs after a H or LH pronoun otherwise.

Examples:

(7a) |Ó nṵ̱| ⇒ *ó nṵ̱̂*
3SG:PST+ come:L

'He came'. (before a pause)

(7b) |Wă nu̱ é| ⇒ /wă nú̱ é/ ⇒ [wà nú̱ ḛ́]
3SG:PST- come:L NEG
'He didn't come'. (No pause; regular sandhi LH>H in the pronoun)

(7c) |Ó nu̱ nɔ̱̄| ⇒ *Ó nú̱ nɔ̱̄.*
3SG:PST+ come:L here
'He came here'. (no pause)

(8) |Ó mɛ̱̀.lá| ⇒ /ó mɛ̱̂.lá/[o˥mɛ̱˩la˥]
3SG:PST+ fall:L
'He fell down' (where -*lá* is a verbal suffixoid[10]).

Note that the L>H, HL change in verbs is not related to regular sandhi. Most similar are examples of the regular rule of high tone spread over low tone sequences, HLL⇒HHL, which can be triggered, among other things, by high tone pronouns followed by low tone nouns and verbs. However, the HLL⇒HHL change is restricted to its structural description; unlike the low tone form of the verb, lexical low tone won't undergo any change before a non-low tone, cf. (9) vs. (10):

(9) |Ó mlà̱ wà| ⇒ *ó mlá̱ wà*
3SG:PST+ drum break:L
'He broke a drum'.

(10) *Ó mlà̱ dō wà*
3SG:PST+ drum one break:L
'He broke a drum'.

Compare (10) with *ó nú̱ nɔ̱̄*, example (7), where the underlying HLM tone sequence is identical but the L>H change does happen.

5. Personal Pronoun Morphology

The structure of personal pronouns in Beng was thoroughly described in (Paperno 2005). Here we reproduce pronoun paradigms with minimal comments on the usage of pronoun series.

[10] By 'suffixoid' I mean here the part of verbal stem that does not change its tone in the low tone form of the verb (see 6.4). Although historically such tonally inert parts of verb stems are indeed suffixes, there are no synchronic reasons to separate them into a separate morpheme.

Table 3. Paradigms of personal pronouns

Series		Singular			Plural			Predicative marker with a singular subject NP
		1	2	3	1	2	3	
non-subject		*ŋ̄*	*mī̱*	*à*	*ā̱ŋ̄*	*kā*	*ŋò*	
possessive		*mɔ̄*	*mī̱pɔ̄*	*àpɔ̄*	*ā̱ŋ̄pɔ̄ // ā̱mɔ̄*	*kāpɔ̄*	*ŋòpɔ̄*	
reflexive		*ŋ̄ drà̱*	*mī̱ drà̱*	*à drà̱*	*ā̱ŋ drā̱̀*	*kā drà̱*	*ŋò drà̱*	
focus (independent)		*mā̱ŋ̄*	*mī̱ā̱*	*àŋā̱ // àŋɛ̱̄*	*ā̱ŋ̄ŋā̱ŋ̀ // ā̱ŋ̄yā̱ŋ̀*	*kāŋā̱ŋ̀ // kāyā̱ŋ̀*	*ŋòŋā̱ŋ̀ // ŋòyā̱ŋ̀*	
existential		*mā̱ŋ̄*	*mī̱*	*ò*	*ā̱ŋ̄*	*kā*	*ŋò*	Ø
preterite	+	*ŋ́ , má̱**	*mí̱*	*ó , é*	*á̱ŋ́*	*ká*	*ŋó*	
	-, -3	*mǎ̱*	*mǐ̱*	*wǎ*	*à̱ŋ́*	*kǎ*	*ŋǎ*	
	+3	*ma̱˥*	*mi̱˥*	*ā*	*ā̱ŋà*	*kā*	*ŋā*	
conditional	+	*ŋ̂, mâ̱**	*mî̱*	*ô, ê*	*á̱ŋ̀*	*kâ*	*ŋô*	
	+3	*mâ̱*		*wâ, â*			*ŋâ*	
	-, -3	(= habitual)						
habitual	+	*ŋ̀, mà̱**	*mì̱*	*ò, è*	*à̱ŋ̀, ā̱ŋ̀*	*Kà*	*ŋò*	
	-, +3,-3	*mà̱*		*wà, à*			*ŋà*	
stative	+	*ŋó*	*mī̱ó// mï̱*	*òó//ŏ*	*ā̱ŋó*	*kāó// kä*	*ŋòó// ŋŏ*	*ó*
	-	*ŋā*	*mī̱ā // mī̱wā*	*wàā*	*ā̱ŋā // ā̱ŋ̄wā*	*kāā // kāwā*	*ŋàā // ŋòwā*	*wā*
	+3	*ŋâ*	*mī̱â*	*àâ*	*ā̱ŋâ*	*kāâ*	*ŋàâ*	*â*
	-3	*ŋā̱*	*mī̱ā̱*	*wàā̱*	*ā̱ŋā̱*	*kāā̱*	*ŋàā̱*	*wā̱*

Notes on the table: + marks «affirmative non-contracted forms»; - marks «negative non-contracted forms»; +3 marks «affirmative forms contracted with a 3SG object pronoun»; -3 marks «negative forms contracted with a 3SG object pronoun». More on contraction with a 3SG personal pronoun see below.

The non-subject series has the widest range of usages, including the direct object position, the object of postposition, and the prenominal possessor. The possessive series is used as an adnominal possessor or headlessly and puts additional emphasis on the possessor (‘as for MY …’, ‘it is HIS …’, ‘our thing’). The focus series is used

practically in all contexts where a noun phrase can be used, marking, in contrast to the regular subject or non-subject series, certain contrastive emphasis on the pronominal referent. I also recognize a distinct reflexive series, despite the fact that reflexive pronouns transparently consist of the non-subject pronouns followed by marker *drə̀*, which the consultants perceive as a separate word. The reason for such an interpretation is that *drə̀* shows no morphosyntactic autonomy. It cannot change its position, be separated from its pronominal element, or attach to anything other than personal pronouns. Reflexive pronouns of Beng are exact functional counterparts of reflexive pronouns in European languages.

The remaining series are used in the subject position, distributed according to tense, aspect, modality, and polarity values (see Chapter 12 and especially section 12.1.3). Besides this, pronouns of the existential series have a special usage as the first conjunct in a coordinate NP with *A nə̀ B lō* marking.

5.1. On the allomorphy of the 1SG subject pronoun

The table above contains 1st person singular forms marked with an asterisk (*). These special 1SG forms have the stem *mə* (instead of *ŋ*), and are used whenever the subject pronoun is followed by another personal pronoun (of non-subject or reflexive series) of 1SG, 2SG, 3SG, or 3PL:

(11) *Mə́* *ŋ̄* *drə̀* *yè.*
1SG:PST+ 1SG RFL see:L
'I saw myself'.

(12) *Mə́* *mī* *yè.*
1SG:PST+ 2SG see:L
'I saw you'.

(13) *Mə́* *à* *yè.*
1SG:PST+ 3SG see:L
'I saw him'.

(14) *Ḿ̀* *ə̄ŋ̄* *yè.*
1SG:PST+ 1PL see:L
'I saw us'.

(15) *Ḿ̀* *kā* *yè.*
1SG:PST+ 2PL see:L
'I saw you (plural)'.

(16) *Mə́* *ŋò* *yè.*
1SG:PST+ 3PL see:L
'I saw them'.

In those kinds of contexts the regular form with the stem *ŋ* is also marginally possible (*ŋ́ ŋ̄drə̀ yè* etc.); acceptability judgments vary.

Note that the pronoun that triggers the selection of the 1SG stem *mə̀* is not always a direct object. It can also be in the possessor position of a direct object:

(17) *Mə́* *ŋ̄* *wlá* *lɛ̀* *wà*
1SG:PST+ 1SG house DEF break:L
'I broke my house'.

The distribution of *ŋ* vs. *mə̀* can be considered to be a manifestation of the contrastive strategy for coding core participants (along with the doubtlessly dominant accusative strategy of Beng), see (Vydrin 2006). However, there are more serious reasons for such an analysis in the case of Guro than in the case of Beng, because in Beng the choice of the 1SG form is fully determined by the morphological context and can be described as allomorphy[11].

5.2. Contraction with 3SG object pronoun

The 3SG object pronoun can contract with the preceding subject pronouns forming portemanteaus, e.g.:

(18) *Mə̀* *pē!* *(<* *mə̀* *à* *pē)*
1SG:HAB+3 say 1SG:HAB+ 3SG say
'Let me say it!'

(19) *Mì* *pē!* *(<* *mì* *à* *pē)*
2SG:HAB+3 say 2SG:HAB+ 3SG say
'Let you say it!'

(20) *ŋ̀-â* *pē.* *(<* *ŋ-ó* *à* *pē)*
1SG-ST+3 say 1SG-ST+ 3SG say
'I will say it'.

The portemanteau forms are not obligatory. Non-contracted alternatives are also acceptable, although infrequent.

Since contracted forms are not fully transparent, Table 3 lists them as distinct pronoun series (PST+3, PST-3, HAB+3 etc., where «3» stands for «contracted with a 3SG pronoun»).

[11] The «ergative» pronouns in Guro are triggered not just by morphological but also by semantic factors, including the referential status of the direct object, an independently known ergativity/accusativity factor. See (Vydrin 2006) for more detail.

5.3. Subject series of pronouns

Information on the usage of subject pronoun series depending on clause type, tense, aspect, modality, and polarity (TAMP), is for reasons of brevity given in Tables 4 and 5 below. For sentential examples for each clause type, as well as for the full TAMP paradigm of a sentence, see Chapter 12.

Table 4. Subject pronoun usage in verbal sentences

construction	polarity :	affirmative	negative
preterite		PST+	PST-
perfect			
imperative/optative		HAB+	
habitual			HAB- = CND-
conditional		CND+	
future, progressive, stative		ST+	ST-

Table 5. Subject Pronouns in Non-Verbal Clauses

clause type | polarity:	affirmative	negative
adverbial	ST+	ST-
adjectival	HAB+ or ST+[12]	
existential	EX+	EX-

5.4. Stative pronouns with verbs *tá*, *nū̱*

Beng exhibits relics of an affirmative stative predicative marker alternative to *ó*. It is used instead of *ó* with just two verbs. Before the verb *nū̱* 'to come', the stative marker can have the form *yé*, as in *mū̱ yénū̱* 'you (singular) will come', *mū̱ yénū̱ɔ̀ló* 'you (singular) are coming', etc. The verb *nū̱* 'to come' is also compatible with the

[12] Sentences with predicative adjectives show both stative and habitual subject pronouns. The choice of the pronoun series depends on the adjective in question. Some adjectives require the stative series, others require the habitual series, several (e.g. *jàlí* 'stupid') show variation. The choice of series might be related to the semantic distinction of temporary vs. permanent property denoted by the adjective; one could identify this distinction with the individual vs. stage-level classification of predicates by (Carlson 1977). This hypothesis has not been thoroughly tested but some examples are suggestive (individual-level *gɛ̄ɛ̄ŋ̄* 'beautiful' requires a habitual pronoun, stage-level *fɔ̃ŋ̀vɔ̀ŋ̀* 'shaded', *gblù̱ŋ̀* 'cloudy', a stative one). If the distinction were driven by a semantic contrast of this kind, this could motivate the neutralization of the distinction under negation – indeed, when absence of a property is asserted, the temporary vs. permanent status of the absent property is irrelevant.

regular stative marker *ó*, as in *mɻ̄ó nū̱*, *mɻ̄ó nū̱ɔ̀ló*. The verb *tá* 'to go' fuses with the preceding stative marker into *yrá* (<**yɛ́ tá* instead of **ó tá*). Compare: *mɻ̄ yrá* 'you (singular) will go', *mɻ̄ yrááló* 'you (singular) are going'. Before the verbs *tá* 'to go' and *nū̱* 'to come', the final *ŋ* of first person pronouns fuses with the initial /y/ of the stative marker: *ɲrá* (< *ŋ̄ yrá*) 'I will go', *ā̱ɲɛ́nū̱* (< *ā̱ŋ̄ yɛ́nū̱*) 'we will come'.

6. Morphology of content words

Much of Beng's inflexional and derivational morphology is suffixal. Beng suffixes include the inflexional *-nā̱* (affirmative perfect), *-lɛ̀* (stative), *-lɛ́ló* (progressive), *-sà* (negative perfect), and the derivational *-lɛ* (nominalization), *-ya* (location nominalization), *-pɔ* (means nominalization), *-yà* (goal converb), *-lí* (agent nominalization), *-lɛ̄* (participle), *-dɛ̄ŋ̄* (profession suffix), *-lɛ̀í* (suffix that forms temporal adverbs from nouns that refer to parts of day cycle, e.g. *drúlɛ̀í* 'in the morning' from *drú* 'morning').

Beng also has elements that could be labeled as 'verbal prefixes', which precede the verb stem and form a semantic unit with it, e.g. *wó* 'in' within *wólā* 'to ask about,' literally 'to ask in,' *yé* 'mouth' on *yébū̱* 'to feed,' literally 'to carry mouth'. Such 'prefixes' do not change their tone in the low tone form. However, structurally such elements are not true prefixes but (part of) a direct object of the verb since they can be separated from the verb stem under passivization. The semantic object of predicates like *wólā* 'to ask about' can therefore be seen structurally as the possessor of the dummy noun rather than a full direct object.

The morphemes discussed here as suffixes are defined on distributional basis, with the main criterion being separability: unlike free standing morphemes from closed classes, e.g. personal pronouns, determiners, postpositions, etc., suffixes cannot be separated from the heads they combine with. For instance the negation marker follows the main verb of a sentence but can be separated from it by adverbs, indirect objects, etc.; on the other hand, verbal suffixes of positive or negative perfect, stative, or nominalization suffixes, always attach at the end of the verb stem and cannot be separated from it by any material. Similarly, while determiners and postpositions can be separated from the noun they combine with by adjectives, suffixes *-dɛ̄ŋ̄* and *-lɛ̀í* always attach to the noun stem and don't allow for interveners.

I also discuss below one element, *nā̱*, that fails to show unseparability from the head it combines with, but has tonal behavior typical for suffixes. So *nā̱* cannot be characterized as a suffix but rather as a phrasal suffix, since it combines with phrases rather than stems; see examples below.

6.1. Tonal changes in suffixation

6.1.1. Mobile tone suffixes. Some suffixes bear a high or a low tone depending on context. Those suffixes, which I call mobile tone suffixes, have a high tone after H, LH, MH, i.e. after a high tone element, and a low tone otherwise.

Another unit that exhibits the same tonal behavior is the attributive marker *nạ̀*. This phrasal suffix attaches to noun phrases (which can consist of a single noun), forming adjective phrases with the meaning 'having X', 'characterized by X', for example: *jrǎ* 'poverty' – *jrà nạ́* 'poor', *blū* 'sorcery' – *blū nạ̀* 'sorcerer', *léŋ́ plāŋ̄* 'two children' – *léŋ́ plāŋ̄ nạ̀* 'having two children'. These constituents exhibit the behavior of adjective phrases: they typically modify a noun (although, as with other adjectives one also finds them substantivized), and when modifying a noun they are always postposed rather than preposed; as discussed in 7.2, fixed position with respect to the modified noun is a feature distinguishing nouns from adjectives in Beng. When attaching to placenames, the attributive marker *nạ̀* produces the meaning 'resident of', e.g., *Àságbě* 'Ouassadougou' – *Àságbè nạ́* 'resident of Ouassadougou', *bā wó* 'savanna' – *bā wó nạ́* 'savanna dweller'. The attributivizer can also attach to full noun phrases with determiners:

(21) *Ŋ́* *(gbě* *bɛ́ɛ̄* *bìlɛ̀)* *nạ̀* *dō* *yè* *gblɛ̄.*
1SG:PST+ village big this ATR one see:L yesterday
'I saw one resident of this big village yesterday'.

6.1.2. Low tone suffixes. One syllable suffixes with a low tone undergo a shift of a H tone element of a preceding contour tone, so that LH.L>L.HL and MH.L>M.HL. Examples: {*drǔ* (LH)+ *sà* [l]} ⇒ /*drù* [l] *sâ* (HL)/ (negative perfect form of the verb 'to walk'), {*zrä* (MH) + *yà* [l]} ⇒ /*zrā* (M) *yâ* (HL)/ (goal converb of the verb 'to lose'). In verbal reduplication, the right reduplicant also shows tonal behavior of a low tone suffix, cf. the reduplicated form of the same verb 'to walk' {*drǔ* (LH) + *drù* [l]} => /*drù* [l] *drû* (HL)/ 'to walk back and forth'.

6.1.3. Other suffixes. Suffixes with lexical high (*-lí*, agent nominalization) or mid tone (*-nạ̄*, perfect), show no tone alternations.

6.1.4. Stems ending in L tone. The final L tone element of a verb stem is deleted before the attachment of suffixes. If the L is part of a contour tone, L simplifies, and the contour tone becomes level, e.g. *túà* 'to leave' – *túá-lɛ́* (nominalization). If the low tone characterizes a whole syllable, the tone of the preceding syllable spreads to replace L. The latter situation is typical for reduplicated verbs, cf. examples of nominalization of such verbs: *wláwlà* 'to smile' – *wláwlá-lɛ́*, *mī̱mì̱* 'to suck' – *mī̱mī̱-lɛ̀*.

6.1.5. The verb *blö* 'to press out'. The verb *blö* 'to press out' changes its lexical tone from MH to H when combining with suffixes, cf. the progressive form *blóóló* instead of the regular **blōóló*, nominalization *blólɛ́* instead of the regular **blōlɛ́* etc.

6.2. Nominalization in *-lɛ*

The suffix *–lɛ* forms action (or event) nominalization of verbs:

(22) *[Drɛ̰ wō-lɛ̀]* *ò* *gɛ̄ŋ̄.*
work do-NMLZ 3SG:HAB+ good
'To work is good'.

(23) *À* *gbě* *tá-lɛ́* *zá* *fù* *ā̰ŋ̄* *wó.*
3SG village leave-NMLZ matter suprise:L 1PL in
'His departure from the village took us by surprise'.

(24) *Kòfí* *ó* *[báŋ́* *klá-lɛ́]* *lā-àló* *Kùàjó* *nɪ̰̀.*
Kofi ST+ trap set-NMLZ show-PROG Kouadio BENEF
'Kofi teaches Kouadio to set traps'.

(25) *Bè-lɛ́* *kā* *ó* *mɪ̰̄* *mā̰?*
run-NMLZ need ST+ 2SG CONT
'Do you want to run?'

The suffix *-lɛ* nominalizes various predicates. It can attach to verbs (*nɪ̰̄* 'to come' – *nɪ̰̄lɛ̀* '(the) coming'), adjectives (*gɛ̄ŋ̄* 'beautiful' – *gɛ̄nɛ̀* 'beauty'), and a few nouns (*lɔ̌* 'slave' – *lɔ̀lɛ́* 'slavery').

In some usages, verbal stems with the suffix *-lɛ* function like participles, relativizing the semantic object:

(26) *gā̰* *wī-lɛ̀*
foot swell-NMLZ
'swollen foot' (can also be interpreted as 'swelling of feet')

(27) *ŋ̀-ó* *zrɪ̰̀ŋ̀* *kásíé-lɛ́* *lú.*
1SG-ST corn roast-NMLZ buy
'I'll buy roasted corn'.

(28) *ŋ̀-ó* *ŋ̄* *gā̰* *yrɔ̀-lɛ́* *búénélɔ́.*
1SG-ST+ 1SG foot wrench-NMLZ steam.PROG
'I am steaming my wrenched foot'.

Interestingly, there are examples where the definite article *lɛ̀* and the demonstrative element *bì*, which normally follow all adjectives in a noun phrase,

precede the "participial" nominalization in *-lɛ*, and the semantic head can even be doubled by an object pronoun, as is regular for direct objects:

(29) *ŋ̀-ó* *[[zrɨ̀ŋ̀ bì-lɛ̀]$_{NP}$ à kásíé-lɛ́]$_{NP}$ lú.*
1SG-ST+ corn this-DEF 3SG roast-NMLZ buy
'I will buy this roasted corn'.

The determiners can also follow the "participial" deverbal noun:

(30) *ŋ̀-ó* *[zrɨ̀ŋ̀ kásíé-lɛ́ bì-lɛ̀]* *à* *lú.*
1SG-ST+ corn roast-NMLZ this-DEF 3SG buy
'I will buy this roasted corn'.

Native speakers report a subtle contrast betweeen (29) and (30), whereby (29) can be interpreted as 'I will buy this corn roasted'. The exact syntactic structure of (29) is not entirely clear. We might be dealing with some kind of partitive or possessive construction ('the roast of this corn'), as indicated by the tentative syntactic bracketing in (29). On the other hand, the translation of (29) suggests that *kásíélɛ́* might be a secondary predicate, although the preverbal position of *kásíélɛ́* contrasts with all well-established instances of secondary predicates in Beng (see 12.2.4), which follow the main verb of the sentence rather than precede it as does *kásíélɛ́* in (29). I leave the question of whether the preverbal position of secondary predicates, as attested in cognate languages, is also available in Beng, for further study. Whatever the exact syntactic structure of (29), it is clear that the semantic contrast is based on the relative syntactic scope of the determiner and the "participle": in one case, one talks about the *(this corn) roasted*, while in the other case we hear about *this (roasted corn)*, reflecting the ordering of the two attributes of corn.

6.3. Locative nominalization in *–ya*

The mobile tone suffix *–ya* combines with verbs, adjectives, all locative nouns including locative postpositions, and a few nouns denoting social relations. From the distributional viewpoint derivatives in *-ya* are locative nouns, i.e. nouns that can be used in adverbial positions without a postposition:

(31) *ŋ́̀* *nṵ́* *pɔ̄* *blɛ̄-yà.*
1SG:PST+ come:L thing eat-PLC
'I came to the eating place'.

When derived from a verb, the *–ya* form refers to the place or time of an event. There's a systematic ambiguity between the temporal and the spacial readings, although context often helps to differentiate the two:

(32) *Ŋ-ó zrō-yá dɔ̄-ɔ̀ló.*
1SG-ST+ wash-PLC build-PROG
'I build a bathing place'.

(33) *Mă̰ zrō-yá yè ɛ́.*
1SG:PST- wash-PLC have:L NEG
'I had no time (*or* no place) to wash'.

A derived form in *–ya* referring to the time of an action and used in an adverbial position indicates simultaneity of two events:

(34) *Ŋò trí-yá ná̰ ŋò-ó dă ŋ̄ ló nɔ̰̄.*
3PL return-PLC TOP 3PL-ST find 1SG on here
'On the way back (literally 'returning') they will find me here'.

When the derived form in -*ya* is used in this function of a simultaneity converb, and the subject of action referred to in the *ya*-form is not overtly mentioned in a pronoun or a full NP, the said subject has to be coreferential with the subject of the main clause, cf.:

(35) $\varnothing_{i/*j}$ *Drɛ̰̄ wō-yà ná̰ má̰$_i$ ŋò$_j$ yè.*
work do-PLC TOP 1SG:PST+ 3PL see:L
'I saw them when I (*they) worked'.

In case the subject of the *ya*-converb is overt, it does not have to be coreferential with the main clause subject, cf. (35) and (36):

(36) *Ŋò$_j$ drɛ̰̄ wō-yà ná̰ má̰$_i$ ŋò$_j$ yè.*
3PL work do-PLC TOP 1SG:PST+ 3PL see:L
'I saw them when they worked'.

The form in *–ya* derived from adjectives refers to the place in which the property denoted by the adjective is localized, e.g.:

(37) *Bànɛ̀ yā̰ ná̰ à gɛ̄ŋ-yà ɲɛ̰̄*
Bane EMPH TOP 3SG beautiful-PLC FOC
ó lɛ́ à lòklɛ̄ lɛ̀ ɛ̄
3SG:PST+ COP:L 3SG neck DEF FOC
'Bane's neck makes him beautiful' (literally: As for Bane, it is the place of his beauty, his neck).

With locative nouns, *–ya* has the meaning of 'extended localization' and is an exact semantic equivalent of the suffix *-da:-/-dar-* in Bezhta (Daghestanian; Kibrik, Testelec 2004) which is added to suffixes of localization like 'in', 'on top of', etc.,

and means ‘in (the direction of) the area of whatever is specified by localization proper’, compare *märäL’ä* ‘on top of the mountain’ vs. *märäL’ädä:* ‘(somewhere) in the area on top of the mountain’ (Kibrik 2003: 44). Compare:

(38a) *Kósá̱ tá-nā̱ wlá.*
Kosan 3SG:PST+:go-PRF house
‘Kosan has gone home’.

(38b) *Kósá̱ tá-nā̱ wlá-yá.*
Kosan 3SG:PST+:go-PRF house-PLC
‘Kosan has gone towards home’.

(39a) *Kósá̱ tá-nā̱ zīē lù.*
Kosan 3SG:PST+:go-PRF kapok under
‘Kosan has gone under the kapok tree’.

(39b) *Kósá̱ tá-nā̱ zīē lù-yà.*
Kosan 3SG:PST+:go-PRF kapok under-PLC
‘Kosan has gone towards the area under the kapok tree’.

(40a) *Ó jɛ́ wlá wē.*
3SG:PST+ pass house there
‘He passed through the house’.

(40b) *Ó jɛ́ wlá-yá wē.*
3SG:PST+ pass house-PLC there
‘He passed by the house’.

Finally,–*ya* derived forms from some nouns denoting social relations adverbs with the meaning ‘according to the social relation X’:

(41) *ŋ̀ɔ́ ŋ̀ɔ̀ gbà blɛ̌ lɛ̀ sīā-yà.*
3PL:PST+ 3PL give:L wine DEF in.law-PLC
‘They gave them wine according to in-lawhood’ (e.g. everyone gave wine to his mother-in-law).

(42) *Dā̱ŋ̄ nì̱ yrámà̱ ná̱ ŋ̀ɔ̀ lɛ́ŋ́ nù̱ŋ̀ bɔ̀ sɔ̀lásí lɔ̀-yá.*
war DEF time TOP 3PL:HAB+ child PL extract soldier slave-PLC
‘During war, one selected children for military service by slave status’ (in other words: One chose slave kids to become soldiers).

6.4. Predicative forms of verbs

Beng uses six different verb forms in the predicate position, distinguished on the basis of tense, aspect, modality, and polarity. For more information on their usage, see 12.1.

Two of the predicative forms do not bear affixes and are distinguished by tone. In one of those affix-free forms, the tone is lexically specified. I call this form the **base form**. The other form bears a low grammatical tone; I call it the low tone form. Here are some examples of the two affix-less forms of several verbs: *mī̱, mì* 'to drink'; *tá, tà* 'to go'; *dă, dà* 'to drop'; *zrö, zrò* 'to wash'; *jàtê, jàtè* 'to respect'. Several verb stems keep a high tone on the last syllable constant in the low tone form, compare *yāló, yàló* 'to stand up', *mɛ̱lá, mɛ̀lá* 'to fall on the ground'. Paesler (1989) calls such syllables 'suffixes', although it might be more precise to characterize them as 'suffixoids' as there aren't sufficient reasons to consider them distinct morphemes from the synchronical viewpoint: they are not productive and it is hard to to differentiate their exact semantic contribution. All verbs with suffixoids share the semantics of movement; compare the status of an etymologically identical element in Tura (Idiatov 2009).

Four predicative forms bear suffixes, and can be given more functional labels: stative; affirmative perfect; negative perfect; and progressive.

The stative suffix *–lɛ̀* and the negative perfect suffix *–sà* are low tone suffixes. The suffix of affirmative perfect *nā̱* (or sometimes *ā*) bears a constant mid tone. The suffix *nā̱* also differs from all other suffixes in that the stem-final low tone of the verb is not elided before it, contra the general rule (cf. 6.1.4): *mī̱mì* 'to suck' – *mī̱mì nā̱*, *drùdrû* 'to walk a lot' – *drùdrû nā̱*, *túà* 'to leave' – *túà nā̱*. An idiosyncratic exception is the verb *gū̱à̱* 'to remain', perfect form *gū̱à̱ nā̱*).

The progressive marker *–lɛló* consists of two elements: *–ló*, grammaticalized from the postposition 'on', and *–lɛ*, derived from the nominalization marker, which bears a mobile tone and has surface variants *-lɛ* and *-ɛ* (the latter can be seen as the result of [l] deletion). The vowel in the *-ɛ* variant normally assimilates to the immediately preceding vowel in nasality and quality. It becomes *a* after *a* and *ɔ* after rounded vowels, and remains *ɛ* after front vowels.

Along with mobile tone, the progressive form is also attested with low tone on the *-lɛ* / *-ɛ* component. So along with the more frequent progressive form *tááló*, the verb *tá* 'to go' has a rare form *táàló*, the progressive *drùɔ́ló* of *drŭ* 'to walk' has a rare variant *drùɔ̀ló*, etc.

Verbs with a low tone on the last syllable and a mid tone on the penultimate syllable (mostly reduplicated verbs), have a special tonal behavior in the progressive. Unlike in other suffixed forms, the final low tone of those verbs is not deleted, cf. the

progressive *mḭ̄mḭ̀ɛ̀ló* of *mḭ̄mḭ̀* 'to suck' vs. L deletion in the nomilanization *mḭ̄mḭ̄lɛ̀*, location nominalization *mḭ̄mḭ̄yà* etc.

The progressive marker is clearly segmentable into the nominalization suffix *-lɛ* and the locative postposition *ló*. However, the [l] deletion and the abovementioned tonal idiosyncrasies (the *mḭ̄mḭ̀ɛ̀ló* and *drùɔ̄ló* types) formally distinguish the progressive from nominalization.

6.5. The goal converb

The goal of motion converb is derived with the low tone suffix *-yà*, distinct from the location nominalization suffix *–ya* that bears a mobile tone. For the verbal stems ending in a non-high tone element the two forms are identical. E.g. *mḭ̄yà*, the location nominalization, is at the same time the goal converb of *mḭ̄* 'to drink'. For stems ending in a high tone, the two forms differ, cf. *jóyá* 'time or place of talking' (locative nominalization) vs. *jóyà* 'in order to talk' (goal converb) from *jó* 'to talk'. The goal converb's distribution is limited to combinations with only three motion verbs. With the verbs *tá* 'to go' and *nṵ̄* 'to come' the converb indicates the goal of motion. The combination of these two verbs with the goal converb can also be used as a periphrastic future construction similar to the English *to be going to*, see 12.1.5. With the verb *bɔ̄* 'to come (from)' the goal converb indicates the subject's actions at the point of departure:

(43a) *Ŋ́ nṵ́ drù-yâ.*
1SG:PST+ come:L walk-GL
'I came for a walk'.

(43b) *(*Ŋ́ drɛ̰̄ wò drù-yâ.)*
1SG:PST+ work do:L walk-GL
(*I worked to walk.)

(44) *Ŋ́ bɔ́ drù-yâ.*
1SG:PST+ come.form:L walk-GL
'I came from a walk'.

6.6. Agent and means nominalizations

In addition to the event nominalization in *-lɛ* and the location/time nominalization in *–ya*, which we have already discussed, Beng also has suffixes for the agent and the means nominalizations.

The means nominalization, formed with the mobile tone suffix *–pɔ* (derived from the noun *pɔ̄* 'thing'), can refer to the instrument, the means, or the cause of an event:

(45) *Bèyā̰ à lēŋ̄ túá-pɔ́ lɛ́ blɛ̌ lɛ̀.*
Beyan 3SG woman leave-MEN 3SG:PST+COP:L wine DEF
'Alcohol was the reason of Beyan's divorce'.

(46) *Ḿ̀ yā-pɔ̀ dō lù.*
1SG:PST move-MEN one buy:L
'I bought an instrument for moving around' (this could be shoes, a car, a bicycle etc.).

The agent nominalization in *-lí* relativizes the subject and can have arbitrary aspectual or temporal interpretation:

(47) *Ḿ̀ pɔ̄ blē-lí lɛ̀ yè.*
1SG:PST+ thing eat-AG DEF see:L
'I saw the eater' (the one who eats / was eating / will eat etc.).

But usually, the agent nominalization refers to the habitual rather than episodic agent:

(48) *pɔ̄ béɛ̄ blē-lí, drɛ̰̄ wō-lí, sɔ̰̀ŋ̀ dɛ̄-lí, jó-lí*
thing big eat-AG work do-AG human kill-AG talk-AG
'glutton, worker, murderer, talker'

(49) *Dēlà ó lɛ́ vlòŋ̀vló-lí béɛ̄ dō.*
Dela 3SG:PST+ COP:L worry-AG big one
'Dela (male name) is easy to disturb'. (literally: 'Dela is a great worryer'.)

6.7. Relics of the participle

The suffix *-lē* forms adjectives with resulting state meanings from several verbs. The verb's stem changes its tone from M to L when combining with *-lē*. Here are all the attested examples:

gā 'to die, to dry out' – *gàlē* 'dead, dry'
mā̰ 'to boil' – *mà̰lē* 'boiled'
mā̰mà̰ 'to ripen' – *mà̰mà̰lē* 'ripe'
ŋṵ̄ā̰ 'to burn' – *ŋṵ̀à̰lē* 'burned'
pā 'to fill' – *pàlē* 'filled'
tā 'to close' – *tàlē* 'closed'
trā̰ 'to redden, to ripen' – *trà̰lē* 'red, ripe'
vɔ̰̄ 'to rot' – *vɔ̰̀lē* 'rotten'

Suffix *-lē* combined with the verb *bā* 'to bear fruit' produces a somewhat irregular meaning: *bàlē, pɔ̄bàlē* 'seeds, plants'

6.8. Reduplication

6.8.1. The formal aspect of reduplication. In Beng, reduplication is generally full, applying to stems of adjectives, verbs, numerals, and some adverbs and nouns. The major exception to the full reduplication pattern is the fact that in verb reduplication, only the segmental base is repeated. The tonal pattern of the original stem stays on the first part of the reduplicated verb, while the second part gets a low tone: *mī̱* 'to drink' – *mī̱mì̱* 'to suck', *gā* 'to dry out'– *gāgà* 'to dry out (referring to multiple objects)', *só* 'to chew' – *sósò* 'to thin down', *yāló* 'to stand up' – *yālóyàlò* 'to stand up (referring to multiple people)'. If the last syllable of the original verb stem has a contour tone, the latter component of the contour tone spreads to the following syllable, by general rule (see 6.1.2): *fǎ̱* 'to strip'→ *fǎ̱fâ̱* → *fâ̱fâ̱* 'to strip repeatedly', *dă* 'to drop' → *dădà* → *dàdâ* 'to put in (multiple objects)', *blä* 'to stick in' → *bläblà* → *blāblâ* 'to stick in (multiple objects)'. Reduplicated verb stems form all predicative and derivational verb forms by general rules.

Adjective reduplication is usually complete with respect to both segmental and tonal patterns, compare: *gɛ̄ŋ̄* 'beautiful' – *gɛ̄ŋ̄gɛ̄ŋ̄* 'beautiful (plural)', *că* 'short' – *căcă* (plural), *blúá* 'blue' – *blúáblúá* (plural). However, long vowels at the end of adjectives can shorten in reduplicated forms. The conditions of this shortening are not clear. Sometimes reduplicated adjectives do not exhibit any shortening, cf. *fééfée* 'very narrow' (in reference to a hole) from *fée* 'narrow' (in reference to a hole), *pîîpîî* 'very tiny' from *pîî* 'tiny', *fóófóó* 'very deep' from *fóó* 'deep', *pɔ̀ɔ̀pɔ̀ɔ̀pɔ̀ɔ̀pɔ̀ɔ̀* 'very malleable' from *pɔ̀ɔ̀pɔ̀ɔ̀* 'malleable'. Sometimes shortening occurs only in the first part of the reduplicated form, cf. *té̱té̱é̱* 'very red' from *té̱é̱* 'red', *fífíí* 'very narrow' from *fíí* 'narrow', *kótíkótíí* 'very little' from *kótíí* 'little', *títíí* 'very black' from *tíí* 'black', *yóyóɔ́* 'very cool' from *yóɔ́* 'cool'. The third group of adjectives shorten the final vowel in both parts of the reduplicated form: *bètèbètè* 'very slow' from *bètèè* 'slow', *kpɔ̀sɔ̀kpɔ̀sɔ̀* 'very grainy' from *kpɔ̀sɔ̀ɔ̀* 'grainy (texture)', *mɔ̱̀tɔ̱̀mɔ̱̀tɔ̱̀* 'very soft' from *mɔ̱̀tɔ̱̀ɔ̱̀* 'soft', *nɔ̱̀fɔ̱̀nɔ̱̀fɔ̱̀* 'very elastic' from *nɔ̱̀fɔ̱̀ɔ̱̀* 'elastic'. For *púú* 'white', two reduplicated forms are attested in my notes, *púpúú* in the sense of 'very white' and *púpú* in the sense of 'white (plural)'. It is not clear if there is a regular relation between the shortening pattern and the intensive vs. plural interpretation that this pair of examples seems to point at.

Stem-final /ŋ/ can cause a change in the first consonant of the second half of a reduplicated form. Some of those forms exhibit *ŋC* simplification (see 4.2.1), e.g. *plāmlāŋ̄* 'two each' < /*plāŋ̄ plāŋ̄*/ (reduplication of *plāŋ̄* 'two'), *bū̱̄mū̱̄ŋ̄* 'thirty each' < /*bū̱̄ŋ̄ bū̱̄ŋ̄*/ (reduplication of *bū̱̄ŋ̄* 'thirty'); such simplification is not regular, cf. *būkēŋēsíéŋ́būkēŋēsíéŋ́* 'eighty each' (reduplication of *būkēŋēsíéŋ́* 'eighty') without simplification. Fricatives are not subject to *ŋC* simplification but undergo voicing

after /ŋ/ in a reduplicated form, e.g. *fɔ̀ŋ̀vɔ̀ŋ̀* ‘cloudy’ < /*fɔ̀ŋ̀fɔ̀ŋ̀*/ (reduplication of *fɔ̀ŋ̀* ‘having shade’); *sɔ́ńzɔ́ń* ‘five each’ < /*sɔ́ń sɔ́ń*/ (reduplication of *sɔ́ń* ‘five’).

Two adjectives, *glë* ‘difficult’ and *béɛ̄* ‘big’, are exceptions to full reduplication at the tone level. Their reduplicated forms are *gléglë* and *bébɛ̄* respectively.

6.8.2. Semantics of reduplication. The semantic effect of reduplication is similar across parts of speech, always adding a quantitative component to the meaning. In adjectives, reduplication may indicate plurality (‘more than one object’), cf. (50a) and (51), or property intensity (52b):

(50a) *sɔ̰̀ŋ̀* *gɛ̄ŋ̄~gɛ̄ŋ̄* *(nṵ̀ŋ̀)*
person beautiful~PL PL
‘handsome people’

(50b) *sɔ̰̀ŋ̀* *gɛ̄ŋ̄* *nṵ̀ŋ̀*
person beautiful PL
‘handsome people’

(51) *sɔ̰̀ŋ̀* *gblɛ̰̄ŋ̄~gblɛ̰̄ŋ̄* // *gblɛ̰̄ŋ̄* *nṵ̀ŋ̀*
person tall~PL tall PL
‘tall people’

(52a) *gɔ̄ŋ̄* *dɔ̀í*
man first
‘the first man’

(52b) *gɔ̄ŋ̄* *dɔ̀í~dɔ́í*
man first~very
‘the very first man’

For some adjectives, the reduplicated form is used only in the function of plural, cf. the ungrammatical NP **sɔ̰̀ŋ̀ gblɛ̰̄ŋ̄gblɛ̰̄ŋ̄ dō* ‘one (very) tall person’.

The adjective *béɛ̄* ‘big’ is unique in restricting the non-reduplicated form to the singular and allowing only the reduplicated one in the plural (*kló* ‘little’ shows a similar number distinction but produces the plural form by suppletion, not reduplication). Unlike *gblɛ̰̄ŋ̄*, which shows variation in the plural, *béɛ̄* has complementary distribution of the two forms:

(53a) *gɔ̄ŋ̄* *béɛ̄ (/ *bé~bɛ̄)* *dō*
man big / *big~PL one
‘one big man’

(53b) *gɔ̄ŋ̄ bé~bɛ̄ (/*béɛ̄) nṵ̀ŋ̀*
man big~PL / *big PL
'big men'

Apart from irregular idiomatic meaning, **verb reduplication** can add iterativity, as in (54b), or plurality of a participant, as in (55b,d):

(54a) *ŋ́-ó drù-ɔ́ló.*
1SG-ST+ walk-PROG
'I am walking'.

(54b) *ŋ́-ó drù~drú-ɔ́ló.*
1SG-ST+ walk~ITER-PROG
'I am walking (repeatedly back and forth)'.

(55a) *Ǒ bè-ɛ́ló.*
3SG:ST+ run-PROG
'He is running'.

(55b) *Ǒ bè~bé-ɛ́ló.*
3SG:ST+ run~ITER-PROG
'He is running (repeatedly back and forth)' (event plurality).

(55c) *ŋǒ bè-ɛ́ló.*
3SG:ST+ run-PROG
'They are running'.

(55d) *ŋǒ bè~bé-ɛ́ló.*
3SG:ST+ run~PL /~ITER-PROG
'They are running' (partricipant plurality) *or* 'They are running (back and forth)' (event plurality).

Verb reduplication indicating participant plurality can be seen as ergative number agreement, i.e. the participant that controls the agreement is the direct object or the intransitive subject. This agreement is semantic rather than syntactic in nature.

Reduplication of cardinal numerals produces distributive ones:

(56) *Nə̰̀ gɔ̄ŋ̄ blɛ̀ɲà ŋò nə̰̄ plāmlāŋ̄ ŋə̰̄ŋə̰̄ŋ̄.*
DT man rich 3PL:HAB+ wife two~DISTR three~DISTR
'Rich people used to have two or three wives each'.

(Note two instances of *ŋC* simplification in reduplicated forms in example 56; see 4.2.1.)

Finally, the reduplicated form of temporal nouns (see 7.1 for a brief discussion of this class) also has a distributive interpretation ('on Fridays', 'nightly', etc.). This reduplication pattern is productive for the following classes of words: a) names of days in the traditional six-day week; b) names of days in the seven-day week borrowed from the Baule; and c) names of parts of the day cycle *pàló* 'daytime', *yēnɔ̌* 'evening', *drú* 'morning', *yrú* 'night'. Example of usage:

(57) *Yrú~yrú* *nā̰* *ŋ̀* *yì.*
night~DISTR TOP 1SG:HAB+ sleep
'At night I (generally) sleep'.

7. Part of speech criteria

Inflectional criteria differentiate only three classes of words in Beng: personal pronouns, verbs, and inflectionally invariable words (I'm setting aside the problematic inflectional status of reduplication for the moment). Let me now turn to the distributional criteria that allow us to distinguish parts of speech within the inflectionally invariable class.

I avoid here any discussion of ideophones in Beng which may constitute one or several additional grammatical classes. Let me note only the existence of onomatopoetic words that imitate various noises, e.g. *cócó* 'gnash', *kúkù* 'cry of wild pigeon', *bà* 'sound of machete' and that seem to be able to be included in larger syntactic structures, and of interjections like *bɔ́cɛ́* and *cróló* 'exactly!', or *èé* 'oh really!'. There is also a pattern, probably of Baule origin, of apparently onomatopoetic adjectives CVClVCV where all consonants (stops), vowels and tones have to match, e.g. *kàklàkà* 'enormous,' *gbɛ̀gblɛ̀gbɛ̀* 'big and flat', *jàjràjà* 'huge' (of a person), *kɛ́klɛ́kɛ́* 'thin', *kèklèkè* 'hard on the inside', *pàplàpà* 'wide and flat', *píplípí/pìplìpì* 'fat and short'.

7.1. Nouns vs. Adverbs vs. Postpositions

Beng lacks dedicated nominal morphology that would mark case, number, definiteness, or agreement, even if some of those notions are not entirely alien to Beng grammar (see 8.3, 9 below). Therefore part of speech criteria have to be purely distributional. Let me now proceed to the description of distributional classes of Beng nominals and adverbials.

I take the direct object position as the distinctively nominal position in Beng. One could also rely on other nominal positions such as the subject position; however, the subject slot is less appropriate to use in an operational definition of nominal status

because, being leftmost in the clause, it is not always superficially distinct from the topic slot.

The postverbal modifier position is characteristic for adverbs, and for postpositions the core context is combination with a noun phrase into a postverbal sentential modifier. All postverbal modifiers can also function as predicates in locative sentences, see 12.4. (We count as postverbal modifiers all phrases that occur after the sentence's main verb, with the exception of several special cases discussed in 12.2 below where noun phrases without a postposition can occur postverbally in a number of functions: secondary object, nominal predicate, floating quantifiers, and arguments of *gūà* 'to stay, to be left'. Indeed none of those are sentential modifiers semantically but rather arguments or predicates, so we ignore them here).

However, the distinctions between the three a priori classes (nouns, adverbs, and postpositions) are not as straightforward empirically. Some words that typically occur in adverbial contexts are also found in nominal ones, compare:

(58a) *ŋ́* *nṵ́* *wē.*
1SG :PST+ come:L there
'I came there'.

(58b) *ŋ́* *wē* *yè.*
1SG :PST+ there see:L
'I saw that place'.

Several postpositions exhibit similar position variability:

(59a) *ŋ́* *nṵ́* *klɛ́ŋ́* *nì* *wó.*
1SG :PST+ come forest DEF in
'I came to the forest'.

(59b) *ŋ́* *klɛ́ŋ́* *nì* *wó* *yè.*
1SG:PST+ forest DEF in see:L
'I saw the space of the forest'.

Lastly, some words occur in all three kinds of context – both as direct objects and as sentential modifiers, and furthermore, either with a dependent noun phrase or without one:

(60a) *ŋ́* *pɔ̄ú* *lù.*
1SG :PST+ field buy
'I bought a field'.

(60b) *ŋ́̄* *nṵ́* *pɔ̄ú.*
1SG :PST+ come:L field
'I came to a field'.

(60c) *ŋ́̄* *nṵ́* *mṵ̄* *pɔ̄ú.*
1SG :PST+ come:L 2SG field
'I came to your field'.

So there are two criteria for distinguishing nouns from adverbs and postpositions: position in the sentence (object, modifier, or both) and dependent NP (none, obligatory, or optional). The two three-valued criteria give rise to three potential classes shown in Table 6 below. For each class, Table 6 lists examples and an estimate of class size.

Table 6. Logically possible classes of nominal and adverbial elements

		dependent NP		
		impossible	optional	obligatory
syntactic position	only nominal: NOUNS	1. deictic noun *ɲrɛ̈̄* 'this' (< 5)	2. absolute noun *bábá* 'sheep', *Kòlā* 'Kola' (name) (> 1000)	3. (relational noun)
	nominal or adverbial: ADVERBIAL NOUNS	4. adverbial deictic noun *wē* 'there', *gblē* 'yesterday' (< 20)	5. absolute adverbial noun *Bùàkê* 'Bouake', *wlá* 'house', *fɛ̄̈* 'day' (> 100)	6. locative postposition *ló* 'on', *wó* 'in' (< 20)
	adverbial only: ADVERBS AND POSTPOSI-TIONS	7. PURE ADVERB *bàtú* 'soon', *dɪ̄nɪ̄ɪ̄ŋ* 'nearby' (< 50)	8. adverb / postposition	9. PURE POSTPOSITION *nɪ̀* 'for', *lō* 'with' (< 10)

As indicated in the table, Beng has only seven out of the nine potential classes. There are no relational nouns with an obligatory possessor, and no items that have only sentence modifier uses and oscilate between pure adverbs and postpositions. This observation is non-trivial as both of the classes absent in Beng are attested in other languages; absence of relational nouns is unexpected for a Mande language.

Among absolute adverbial nouns there are two groups with distinct syntactic properties: temporal nouns and locative nouns. Temporal nouns are found in the adverbial position with dependants such as adjectives, determiners, and quantifiers:

(61) *Ŋ́* *nṵ́* *kùé* *gɛ̄ŋ̄* *bì-lɛ̀.*
1SG :PST+ come:L year good this-DEF
'I arrived in this good year'.

(62) *Ŋ́* *nṵ́* *kùé* *sɛ̄kpá.*
1SG :PST+ come:L year every
'I came every year'.

In contrast, whenever locative nouns combine with an adjective, a determiner, or a quantifier, they cannot be used in an adverbial position unless accompanied with a postposition:

(63a) *Ǒ* *pɔ̄ú* *bì-lɛ̀* **(wó).*
3SG:ST+ field this-DEF IN
'He is in this field'.

(63b) *Ǒ* *pɔ̄ú* *sɛ̄kpá* **(wó).*
3SG:ST+ field every IN
'He is in every field'.

(64) *Ŋ́* *tá* *Àságbɛ̌.*
1SG :PST+ go Ouassadougou
'I went to Ouassadougou'.

(65) *Ŋ́* *tá* *Àságbɛ̌* *bàmâ* *lɛ̀* **(wó).*
1SG :PST+ go:L Ouassadougou great DEF IN
'I went to the great Ouassadougou'.

The incompatibility of postmodification with adverbial modifier position (without a supplemental postposition) also characterizes locative postpositions:

(66) *Zɔ̧́zɔ̧́* *lɛ̀* *ǒ* *tàbàlí* *ló* *tīī* *lɛ̀* **(ló)*
mosquito DEF 3SG:ST+ table SUPER black DEF SUPER
'The mosquito is on the black surface of the table'.

7.2. Adjectives vs. nouns

In many languages of the world the distinction between nouns and adjectives is based on rather subtle criteria. In some languages morphology comes to help, for instance, adjectives can have gender agreement markers absent in nouns in gender. However, in Beng morphology does not reliably differentiate nouns from adjectives.

Syntactic criteria are also often unsatisfactory. Prototypical adjectives modify head nouns while a prototypical noun is a head of its own noun phrase. But then

adjectives can more or less routinely undergo substantivation, thereby functioning and NP heads, while nouns can be appositive modifiers of other nouns.

For Beng, two criteria are found differentiating nouns from adjectives. First, in the predicative position nouns (except for locative ones) require a copula verb, while adjectives can be predicated without a verbal copula, cf. (67) vs. (68a,b):

(67) *Ò* *gɛ̄ŋ̄.*
3SG:HAB+ beautiful
'He is handsome'.

(68a) *Ó* *lɛ́* *ŋ̄* *dē-gbɔ́.*
3SG:PST+ COP:L 1SG father-old
'He is my father's elder brother'.

(68b) *Ó* *lɛ́* *bɛ̀ŋ́.*
3SG:PST+ COP:L Beng
'He is Beng'.

Predicative adjectives contrast with verbs in that they lack typical verbal morphology. For example, if there were a verb meaning 'to be handsome', it would have to bear a low grammatical tone in examples like (67), to mark habitual aspect. Also, sentences with predicative adjectives are always indicative and have default time reference to the present. To express e.g. future tense or imperative, a copula verb has to be injected into a sentence with a predicative adjective, see 12.1.

Another contrast between nouns and adjectives is that in the modifier function, adjectives always follow the head noun while nouns can precede or follow the noun they modify:

(69a) *klṵ́á̰lí* *gɛ̄ŋ̄* // **gɛ̄ŋ̄* *klṵ́á̰lí*
thief beautiful beautiful thief
'handsome thief'

(69b) *Dēlà* *klṵ́á̰lí* // *klṵ́á̰lí* *Dēlà*
Dela thief thief Dela
'Dela the thief'

According to these criteria, as well as in other aspects, cardinal numerals are a special case of adjectives, compare the fixed order of the numeral *plāŋ* 'two' and the head noun *sɔ̰̀ŋ̀* 'person': *sɔ̰̀ŋ̀ plāŋ* vs. **plāŋ sɔ̰̀ŋ̀*. Like adjectives, numerals occur in the predicative position without a copula verb, and participate in the partitive construction (8.2). What distinguishes cardinal numerals from adjectives is special

behavior with respect to number (9.1), the ability to form complex numerals and to trigger the float of quantified NPs (12.2.6).

8. Noun phrase structure.

The order of constituents in the (maximal) noun phrase structure is as follows: possessor + nominal modifiers + head noun and appositive modifiers + adjectives + determiners + relative clause.

8.1. Possessors and nominal modifiers

Possessor is expressed with a noun phrase and / or a personal pronoun. There is no special possession or alienability marking, so possessor NPs are distinguished from e.g. direct object NPs only in syntactic position.

Nominal modifiers can:

– refer to matter, as in *pēn̰ʊ́ŋ́ srɛ̰̄* ‘iron needle’, or

– be adverbial noun phrases, pointing to the relation of an object to a particular time or place, e.g. *gblē zùnálí* ‘yesterday’s newspaper’, or (70a):

(70a)	*klɛ́ŋ́*	*n̰ì*	*wó*	*sōŋ̄*
	forest	DEF	IN	animal

‘forest animal’ (*literally*: ‘animal in the forest’).

(70b)	*Bíè*	*lòmlê*	*lɛ̀*	*à*	*klɛ́ŋ́*	*wó*	*pɔ̄*	*wé.*
	elephant	lemon	Def	3SG	forest	IN	thing	exist

‘There’s a wild variety of grapefruit’ (*lit.*: ‘Grapefruit, its thing in the forest exists’).

(70c)	*ŋ̄*	*dē*	*pɔ̄*	*drɔ́ŋɔ̄ŋ̄*
	1SG	father	thing	older.brother

‘my father’s elder brother’ (*literally*: ‘My father’s thing older brother’).

All preposed modifiers, including possessors, locative modifiers, etc., can be accompanied with the semantically empty noun *pɔ̄* ‘thing’, which nominalizes premodifiers (70b) and can turn them structurally into appositive modifiers (70c). Combination of non-subject pronouns with *pɔ̄* ‘thing’ gives rise to the possessive pronoun series.

8.2. Adjectives and appositives in noun phrases

Adjectives can not only modify nouns but can also function as the head of a noun phrase in the absence of a noun. Adjectival modifiers – as well as adjectives in other positions – can have degree modifiers, for example:

(71) *sɔ̰̀ŋ̀* *gɛ̄ŋ̄* *kpà̰*
person beautiful very
'very nice person'

A special usage of adjectives (or numerals, as a subclass of adjectives) as effective NP heads is the partitive construction, whereby an adjective or a numeral is accompanied by a definite NP with the postposition *wó*, compare:

(72a) *ŋ̄* *bábá* *ŋā̰ŋ̄* *(nḭ̀)*
1SG sheep three DEF
'my three sheep'

(72b) *ŋ̄* *bábá* *ŋò* *wó* *ŋā̰ŋ̄*
1SG sheep 3PL IN three
'three of my sheep'

The partitive construction with an adjective head and a definite article is the way to express **superlative degree** in Beng:

(73) *Sɔ̰̀ŋ̀* *nṵ̀ŋ̀* *ŋò* *wó* *sɔ̀klò* *lɛ̀*
person PL 3PL IN inert DEF
'the most inert person' (*literally* 'the inert among the people').

An appositive modifier can be any NP without determiners. The order of appositive modifiers and the head is free, but for nouns indicating the gender of a person or an animal postposition is preferable:

(74) *sɔ̰̀ŋ̀* *púú* *gɔ̄ŋ̄* *dō*
person white man one
'a white man'.

8.3. Determiners

NP-final determiners follow the linear sequence
bì > *tè* > DEF > *nṵ̀ŋ̀* > *dō*

The determiners in this sequence have the following functions. *bì* is a deictic marker 'this / that'; *tè* is an intensifier 'even, one/him/her/itself'. Both require the presence of a definite article, which can then be absent only under the influence of overriding factors: before a relative clause or in a plural NP. Both cases block the definite article *lɛ̀*.

DEF stands for the definite article. Overt definite article is generally optional, unless preceded by *bì* or *tè*. There are two overt allomorphs of the definite article in Beng: *nḭ̀* is used after *ŋ* (in singular or plural NPs), and *lɛ̀* is used after vowels, but only in singular NPs. In plural NPs after a vowel no overt article is used.

nù̱ŋ̀ is a plural marker. In most cases it is also optional, see more on the expression of number below.

dō is the numeral 'one', which doubles as an indefinite article. It can also accompany a plural NP:

(75) *Ḿ̀* *lēŋ̄* *(nù̱ŋ̀)* *dō* *ŋò* *yè.*
1SG:PST+ woman PL one 3PL see
'I saw (some) women' (plural interpretation even in the absence of *nù̱ŋ̀*).

The article *dō* is incompatible with determiners other than the plural marker.

In the absence of any determiners a noun phrase can receive the 'non-arithmetic' interpretation (Polivanova 1983), i.e. the number of objects in question can only be inferred from the context.

Names of substances usually occur without determiners, but can also be used with determiners, including articles and the plural marker: *yí lɛ̀* 'the water', *yí nù̱ŋ̀* 'water in several containers'. Some of these cases are clearly instances of productive conversion 'substance X' > 'mass of substance X' or 'object made of X'. This conversion is quite regular. For example, *gɔ́* 'plastic' can also be a name for a plastic bucket, a plastic pin, etc., functioning as a count noun.

9. Number and agreement

9.1. Number expression within a noun phrase

Generally, the number of a noun phrase is not manifested in the head noun. The single exception is the suppletive pair:

(76) *lɔ́kló* 'child' – *lɔ́mlé̱ŋ̀* 'children'

It is clear however that historically even this pair contains an invariable noun and a number-marked adjective *kló* (singular) / *plé* (plural) 'little'. The plural form also incorporates two copies of *ŋ̀*, probably a reduced version of the plural marker *nù̱ŋ̀*, so the plural form *lɔ́mlé̱ŋ̀* is derived from **lɔ́-ŋ̀-plé-ŋ̀*. The same *ŋ*, although not a productive plural marker synchronically, might be responsible for the final consonant in Beng numerals such as *plāŋ̄* 'two', the initial consonant of the 3PL pronoun *ŋò*, and the final consonant of the 1PL pronoun *ā̱ŋ̄*. Other South Mande languages have no nasal sonorant in cognate forms, compare for instance Mwan forms *plɛ̄* 'two', 3PL pronoun *ò*, 1PL exclusive *ó*, Dan-Gwetaa *plɛ̀* 'two', 3PL pronoun *wɔ̀*, 1PL exclusive *yī*, Yaure *flí* 'two', 3PL pronoun *ò*, 1PL exclusive *kʊ̀*, etc. (Vydrin 2006, 2009), (Perexval'skaja ms.). The only South Mande language that seems to consistently share the "nasal plural" element with Beng is Wan, with *pīlɔ̄ŋ̄* 'two', *á̱* 'three', 3PL pronoun *à̱*, 1PL exclusive *kà̱* (Nikitina ms.); Gban has an odd nasality in *fɛ̃̄ĩ̄* 'two' but not in *yĩ̀ã̀* 'three,' 3PL *ɔ̃̀* or 1PL *ù*.

The most universal marker of plurality is *nù̱ŋ̀*:

(77) *glāŋ̄ púú nù̱ŋ̀*
loincloth white PL
'white loincloths'

The plural marker is optional when followed by an NP-doubling plural pronoun (see (Paperno 2005) for more detail):

(78) *Ŋ-ó mlà̱ (nù̱ŋ̀) ŋò yē-lɛ̀.*
1SG-ST+ drum PL 3PL see-RES
'I see drums'.

Here's another striking example showing optionality of the plural marker *nù̱ŋ̀*:

(79) *Bíɛ̀ ŋò nà̱ cīyà ŋò lō ŋó nû̱.*
elephant 3PL and bushbuck 3PL with 3PL:PST come:L
'Elephants and bushbucks came',

with three instances of the 3PL pronoun: one doubling the NP 'elephants', another one doubling the NP 'bushbucks', and the third one doubling the coordinate NP 'elephants and bushbucks'. The sentence does not contain a single instance of the plural marker *nù̱ŋ̀*.

Noun phrases with numerals behave as singular when semantically indefinite and as plural when definite. This includes numerals used both as attributes within a noun phrase and a predicates.

9.2. Reduplication as number agreement

Plural number of a noun phrase can be manifested through the reduplication of adjectives in that NP. Plural-marking reduplication is also observed in predicative adjectives and verbs, where reduplication marks the plurality of a direct object or an intransitive subject:

(80) *Bléŋ́ nù̱ŋ̀ ŋò-ó drà~drá-lɛ̀.*
chair PL 3PL-ST+ fall~PL-RES
'Chairs are fallen'.

(81) **Bléŋ́ dō ò-ó drà~drá-lɛ̀.*
chair one 3SG-ST+ fall~PL-RES
('A chair is fallen').

So adjective and verb reduplication functions as number agreement. At least in the case of verbs such agreement seems to be semantic in nature; the NP whose plurality is signalled by reduplication can have no other indication of plurality:

(82) *ŋ̀ò-ó kɔ́ŋ́ blā~blâ.*
3SG-ST+ peg stick~PL/ITER
'They will stick in pegs'.

(multiple pegs; another possible reading is event plurality whereby the sentence may refer to multiple acts of sticking in the same peg).

(83) *ŋ̀ò-ó kɔ́ŋ́ dō blä.*
3SG-ST+ peg one stick
'They will stick in a peg'.

In most cases, while the reduplicated form may indicate participant plurality, the corresponding stem without reduplication does not imply singular number of the participant. A handful of verbs, however, strictly associate presence or absence of reduplication with plural vs. singular participant, compare:

(84) *Ḿ̀ blànâ dè yrí-drǎ lɛ̀ ló.*
1SG:PST+ banana put:L tree-fall DEF SUPER
'I put a banana/*bananas on the fallen tree'.

(85) *Ḿ̀ blànâ dè~dè yrí-drǎ lɛ̀ ló.*
1SG:PST+ banana put~PL:L tree-fall DEF SUPER
'I put bananas/*a banana on the fallen tree'.

In a similar vein, while many adjectives use reduplication as a form of plural agreement marking, only two have a specialized form restricted to singular NPs: *bɛ́ɛ̄* 'big', plural *bɛ́bɛ̄*, and *kló* 'little', plural *plé*.

9.3. Pronominal doubling and the status of pronouns

Pronominal doubling is widespread in Beng. Personal pronouns are often used after a full NP, as if backing it up. Literal translation of some sentences with pronominal doubling is something like "David he is a pagan", "I see horses them", "Kola she goes to her uncle him".

So Beng personal pronouns are functionally analogous to agreement affixes of other languages. Can Beng pronouns themselves be analyzed as affixes? The idea has certain appeal; indeed, personal pronouns largely immediately precede their syntactic host: direct object pronouns precede the verb, possessor pronouns precede the head noun, other ones precede postpositions; subject pronouns can be treated as TAMP particles with personal agreement affixes, and similarly for other pronominal series. Unavailability of pronominal doubling (e.g. in the secondary object position – see 12.2 below) can be explained by the lack of syntactic head in those positions that could host agreement markers.

However, some syntactic facts speak in favor of their autonomous status. First, direct object pronouns can be separated from the verb by certain particles, including *gbɔ̀* 'also' and *kló* 'a bit' (86a,b,c). Second, possessor pronouns are separated from the head noun by temporal and locative modifiers that can be syntactically complex, so we are sure that we are dealing with phrasal modification and not compounding (86d). Third, in nominalization the subject is expressed as a possessor; in particular, it can be instantiated as a non-subject pronoun. Then in nominalization direct object is expressed immediately before the verb stem, just like in a finite clause, so the Subject – Object – Verb order is maintained in nominalization. In addition, in nominalization clausal modifiers can precede the nominalized verb and its direct object (86e), separating them from the pronominal subject. An indirect object with a postposition can also intervene between the subject and the verb stem in nominalization (86f). Since direct and indirect objects, as well as clausal modifiers, can be arbitrarily complex, and can also combine with each other, it turns out that the non-subject pronoun that corresponds to the subject of a nominalized verb can be separated from the head by indefinitely long chunks of syntactic structure (in practice, many of the longer interveners would probably be hard to process because of the center-embedding structures they introduce, but that does not diminish the argument).

(86a) *À gbɔ̀ blɛ̄.*
3SG also eat
'Eat that too'.

(86b) *Mą̀ à kló yè.*
1SG:HAB+ 3SG little see:L
'I see that a bit'.

(86c) *À kló lɛ̄ kpèsè.*
3SG little make big
'Increase it a bit'.

(86d) *mɪ̱̄ kùénɔ̱̄ pɔ̄ sɔ̱́ lɛ̀*
2SG this.year POS field DEF
'your field of this year'

(86e) *Mɪ̱̄ pɔ̄ú Kòfí yɛ̄-lɛ̀ ò gɛ̄ŋ̄.*
2SG field Kofi see-NMLZ 3SG:HAB+ beautiful
'It's good that I saw Kofi in the field'.

(86f) *à* *blā* *nɟ̀* *vɟ̄-lɛ̀*
3SG fight BENEF love-NMLZ
'his fondness of fights'

9.4. Constraints on the distribution of personal pronouns

Factors of overt expression of personal pronouns include:

– syntactic position;

– presence of a noun phrase doubled by the pronoun (if a syntactic position is obligatory to fill by overt material but no full NP is present, a pronoun is unavoidable);

– number and definiteness of the NP to be doubled by a pronoun. Indefinite singular NPs usually aren't doubled by pronouns. Doubling of definite singular NPs is optional, and doubling of plural NPs is almost always obligatory:

(87a) *ŋ́-ó* *mlą̀* *lɛ̀* *(à)* *yē-lɛ̀.*
1SG-ST+ drum DEF (3SG) see-RES
'I see the drum'.

(87b) *ŋ́-ó* *mlą̀* *nʉ̀ŋ̀* *ŋò/*Ø* *yē-lɛ̀.*
1SG-ST+ drum PL 3PL see-RES
'I see (the) drums'.

As already mentioned, a 3PL pronoun can be the only formal exponent of NP plurality, and the plural marker *nʉ̀ŋ̀* is optional in the presence of a pronoun.

Information on pronoun usage in different context are summarized in Table 7. Additional remarks are provided below the table.

Table 7. Pronoun usage

Syntactic positions	NP doubled			
	none	SG indefinite	SG definite	PL
possessor	OK (11.6.5)	OK	OK	!!
direct object, object of postposition, conjunct, contrastive topic	!!	*	OK	!!
subject (except presentative clauses)	!!	OK (see 9.4.1)	OK (see 9.4.1)	!!
focus, non-contrastive topic, subject in presentative clauses, nominal predicate	!! (focus series only)	*	*	*
postpositionless secondary object	*	*	*	*

Notes. * – personal pronoun is ungrammatical; OK – personal pronoun is optional; !! – personal pronoun is obligatory.

9.4.1. Personal pronouns in the subject position. Subject position must always be filled, so a 3SG pronoun can be omitted only if it doubles a full NP, as in the following example:

(88) *[À lɛ́ŋ́]$_{NP}$ (ó) gā-nā̰.*
3SG child 3SG:PST+ die-PRF
'His child has died'.

Note however that although the subject pronoun is absent at segmental level, it still leaves a trace: a tonal change in the low tone form of the verb in (89b) (see 4.2.3). It might be preferable to analyze those examples as pronoun elision rather than pronoun optionality.

(89a) | À lɛ́ŋ́ ó gà| → *À lɛ́ŋ́ ó gâ.*
3SG child 3SG:PST+ die:L
'His child died'.

(89b) *À lɛ́ŋ́ gâ.*
3SG child die:L
'His child died'.

Recall however that subject pronouns serve in part to express TAMP value of the clause. If they were to be omitted freely, certain TAMP constructions would end up being indistinguishable. The need to differentiate TAMP motivates additional constraints:

– conditional pronouns are always overt; otherwise conditional mood would merge with the optative;

– negative series are always present (except for the stative series);

– 3SG stative pronouns can be freely omitted, but a stative predicative marker is always present:

(90) *À lɛ́ŋ́ ó gā-àló.*
3SG child ST+ die-PROG
'His child is dying'.

– (affirmative) preterite and habitual pronouns are omitted only in intransitive clauses, where TAMP value can be inferred from the tone change of the verb stem.

Imperative is a special case: the 2SG pronoun *mı̰̀* is usually absent in affirmative clauses expressing imperative; the pronoun is obligatory under negation and in embedded uses of the optative/imperative mood.

9.4.2. Possessor. The possessor position in Beng does not have to be overtly filled even in the case of semantically relational nouns such as kinship terms and body parts, for which the possessor can be inferred. This optionality is the only feature that distinguishes the possessor position from other positions listed in the second row of Table 7, such as the direct object position:

(91) *Ŋó (mḭ̄) dē lɛ̀ à yē-lɛ̀.*
1SG:ST+ 2SG father DEF 3SG see-RES
'I see (your) father'.

(92a) **Ŋó Ø yē-lɛ̀.*
1SG:ST+ see-RES
('I see').

(92b) *Ŋó dē lɛ̀ (à) yē-lɛ̀.*
1SG:ST+ father DEF (3SG) see-RES
'I see the father'.

(92c) *Ŋó *(à) yē-lɛ̀.*
1SG:ST+ 3SG see-RES
'I see him'.

10. Locative phrases

10.1. Distribution

A locative phrase consists of either a locative noun, which may or may not have syntactic dependents on the left, or a noun phrase with a locative postposition. On top of that, locative phrases also usually have a deictic marker on the right edge, see 10.3. Locative phrases occur in a variety of contexts: as postverbal modifiers, as predicates in clauses of adverbial type (see 12.4), as prenominal modifiers, or referentially in all NP positions.

10.2. Semantics.

Locative phrases refer to a localization only. The semantic role of the localization, also known as its orientation (e.g. as the goal or the source of motion), is not marked in the locative phrase and has to be inferred from the verb modified by the locative phrase. With the verb *jě* 'to pass' locative phrases refer to a location which the trajectory of motion crosses. With the verbs *bɔ̄* 'to come from, to leave', and *wlō* 'to move out', locative phrases refer to the source of motion. When combining with *nṵ̄* 'to come', *tá* 'to go', *srǒ* 'to arrive', *drǎ* 'to fall', locative phrases define the goal, or the final point, of motion. With all other verbs, including manner

of motion verbs like *bě* 'to run', *dōŋ̀* 'to swim', locative phrases describe the location of the event ('swim near the village'). Compare:

(93) *Ó* *nú̱* *lɔ́ɔ́* *wó* *wē.*
3SG:PST+ come marker IN there
'He came to the market'.

(94) *Ó* *bɔ́* *lɔ́ɔ́* *wó* *wē.*
3SG:PST+ come.from market IN there
'He came from the market'.

(95) *Ó* *jɛ́* *lɔ́ɔ́* *wó* *wē.*
3SG:PST+ pass market IN there
'He passed through the market'.

(96) *Ó* *dɔ́* *lɔ́ɔ́* *wó* *wē.*
3SG:PST+ stop market IN there
'He stopped at the market'.

So each Beng verb has exactly one semantic slot for a location (contrasting with verbs of European languages that can have multiple locative modifiers that correspond e.g. to the source and the goal of motion, as in the English *The Liszt family left Vienna for Paris*). In Beng, if a verb is modified with more than one locative phrase, they always describe the same location:

(97) *Ó* *nú̱* *Àbìjâ* *wlá* *wē.*
3SG:PST+ come Abidjan house there
'He came home to Abidjan'.

The semantic rigidity of the combinations of verbs with locative phrases obviously places limitations on what can be expressed in a single verbal clause. For example, it is not possible to specify in one clause both the source and the goal of motion (*Antonio Canova came from Rome to Paris*), or the goal and the manner of motion (*The child ran to the village*). If it is necessary to express such complex meanings, one has to revert to complex syntactic structures, and juxtapose two or more clauses ('The child ran, it came to the village'). In this respect Beng represents a pattern typical for languages of Sub-Saharan Africa, cf. Cresseils (2006), especially his examples 8 and 9 from Tswana and Baule.

Locative phrases used as predicates or when modifying nouns, again, only denote location ('a field in the forest', 'the sheep are near the river'). Secondary uses of adpositions primarily used to describe movement events, as in the English *the man* ***from*** *Amsterdam*, are absent in Beng and the corresponding meanings have to be

expressed by other means (e.g. with the attributive marker *nə̰*, see 6.1). Interestingly, I managed to find one case in which the distinction encoded by source of motion vs. location oriented preposition in English (and similar European languages) can be expressed by different Beng postpositions: *ə̰ɲ̄ gbě lɛ̀ wó zrë̀* (with an IN postposution) translates as "road **in** our village", while *ə̰ɲ̄ gbě lɛ̀ mə̀ zrë̀* (with a CONT postposition) translates as "road **to** our village". It is obvious, however, that the distinction between the adpositions has distinct semantic grounding in Beng as opposed to English: Beng postpositions encode the actual physical location of the road ('inside the village' vs. 'in physical contact with the village'), while the English usage is based on the common PATH – MOTION metonymy.

The meanings of locative postpositions, and glosses for them, are as follows. Postposition *wó* IN can be translated as 'in, inside', *mə̀* CONT means 'on', in the sense of contact with a surface of the reference object, *ló* SUPER means 'over, above' or 'on TOP of', *dɪ́* APUD is 'near, around', *lù* SUB is 'under', *klɛ̄* POST means 'behind', but also 'with (someone)' as in 'the knife is with me', and *wɔ̄lì* POSS means 'in (someone's) possession'. Finally, the locative postposition *yé*, which is identical to the noun 'mouth', when combining with a container type of object, indicates a location of the edge of the object, e.g. 'on the edge of (a bowl)', 'on the bank of (the river)', 'at the entrance to (a tree hollow)'. Besides the productive 'edge' sense, *yé* is also idiosyncratically required by several nouns of locative meaning (*zrë̀ yé* 'on the road', *gbě yé* 'in the village', etc.).

10.3. The grammatical category of deixis

In Beng, the category of deixis characterizes only locative phrases. Regular NPs don't mark proximity, unless they contain a relative clause with a locative statement 'which is here'. The most common demonstrative element *bì* 'this, that' is unmarked for proximity.

Locative phrases (except for toponyms and deictic locative nouns themselves) are often accompanied by deictic locative nouns *wɛ̄* 'there', *nɔ̰̄* 'here' и *blɔ̄* 'right here, right there'.[13] The deictic element is usually not obligatory, but speakers tend to judge examples with a deictic as more natural than ones without it. For example, (98) is judged superior to (99), and (100) considerably superior to (101):

(98) *Ó* *tá* *klɛ́ɲ̀* *nɪ̰̀* *wó* *wɛ̄.*
3SG:PST+ go:L forest DEF IN there
'He went to the forest'.

[13] As an anonymous reviewer suggests, deictic doubling of locative phrases is probably induced by contact with Baule.

(99) *Ó tá klɛ́ŋ̀ nı̰̀ wó.*
3SG:PST+ go:L forest DEF IN
'He went to the forest'.

(100) *Nū wlá nɔ̰̄!*
come house here
'Come home!'

(101) *Nū wlá!*
come house
'Come home!'

The degree to which the deictic element is obligatory varies depending on the locative noun involved. The factors behind the usage of the deictics are yet to be explored; one of them could be the frequency of the locative noun: the more frequent the locative noun, the more freely it can occur without a deictic element. For example, a very frequent locative postposition *wó* 'in' freely occurs without a deictic, while with relatively rare locative postpositions like *dɩ́* 'near', deictics are more preferable. In a similar vein, deictic *wɛ̄* 'there', *nɔ̰̄* 'here', and *blɔ̄* 'right here, right there' are just preferable with the frequent locative noun *wlá* 'house', but obligatory with the rare *tùwâ* 'quarter'.

11. Coordination

The default way to conjoin constituents A and B in Beng is the construction *A nɑ̰̀ B lō*, literally 'A together with B'. This construction conjoins noun phrases (102b), adjective phrases, as well as adverbial constituents. Verbs and verb phrases never conjoin in Beng, so that the meaning of corresponding constructions of European languages has to be expressed via clause combination of one kind or another (102c). Clause-level conjunction in its turn has to be expressed via juxtaposition of sentences, or, alternatively, as temporal subordination (see 13.5). Such differentiation of conjunction patterns by the syntactic category of the conjunction is common in languages of Sub-Saharan Africa (Haspelmath 2005b), which is the biggest area with a systematic contrast between nominal and verbal coordination.

The first conjunct in a coordinate NP is doubled by pronouns of the existential series, the second by the non-subject series.

Disjunction, in contrast to conjunction, does not distinguish sharply between nominal and sentential domains; NPs, postpositional phrases, and full sentences are disjoined with the same marker (102b,c). The disjunctive coordinator is structurally a conditional clause *à lɛ́ ɛ́ nɩ̄*, literally 'if it is not', which can undergo shortening to

àlénɪ̰̄. So Beng has a remarkably compositional semantics of its disjunction, as indeed, Boolean disjunction in logic (A or B) is equivalent to a combination of a negation and an implication (not A => B). Sometimes one uses the alternate disjunction *nɪ̰̄ŋɛ̄ɛ̄* (104e). Extraposition of the second disjunct with the disjunction marker (104e) is common (though never found with overt *con*junction), and perhaps could be analyzed as sentential disjunction under ellipsis; more inquiry into the structure of such sentences is needed.

Examples in (102) illustrate uses of conjunction and disjunction. (102a) presents a coordinate structure with a wh-element:

(102a) *[Mɪ̰̄ nà̰ dé lō]* *fɛ̰̄* *ká* *gúà̰* *kā* *wlá* *wē*
2SG and who with Rel 2PL:PST+ stay 2PL house there

flɔ́ɔ̰̄ *ná̰?*
today TOP

'Who did you stay with at home today?' (literally 'You and who that you stayed at your house today?').

(102b) *Ḭ̄ŋ̄* *tɔ́* *lɛ̀* *ŋ̄* *dē* *nà̰* *ŋ̄*
1SG name DEF 1SG father and 1SG

dā *lō* *ɲɛ̰̄* *ŋā* *kà* *ɛ̄.*
mother with FOC 3PL:PST+3 put:L FOC

'My name, it was my father and my mother who gave it to me' (literally: 'it was my father and my mother who put it').

(102b) *Gblē* *ná̰* *Sìàlú* *ó* *plèŋ̀* *dō* *blè*
yesterday TOP Sialu 3SG:PST+ projectile one throw

zīē *yā̰á̰* *ló* *ó* *gbléŋmlèŋ̀* *dō* *dɛ̀.*
kapok this SUPER 3SG:PST+ hornbill one kill:L

'Yesterday Sialu threw a projectile onto this kapok tree and killed a hornbill'.

(102c) *Wà* *bèsé* *è* *yéwɔ̀* *[glɛ̄* *lɛ̀* *ló]*
2SG:HAB+3 machete DEF sharpen:L rock DEF on

à *lɛ́-nɪ̰̄* *[klàwá* *à* *lō].*
3SG:PST- COP:L:NEG-if.not whetstone DEF with

'She sharpens her machete on the rock or with the whetstone'.

(102d) *ŋó* *srɔ̀bɛ̀í* *à* *lɛ́* *ɛ́* *nɪ̰̄*
1SG:ST+ leave 3SG:PST- COP:L NEG if.not

ŋ̀ɔ́ *gū̱à̱* *wlá* *nɔ̱̄.*
1SG:ST+ stay house here
'I will either leave or I will stay at home'.

(102e) *mi̱-ó* *wápló* *klɛ̄* *nī̱ŋɛ̄ɛ̄* *mà̱nú̱ŋ́?*
2SG-ST+ fufu Post or rice
'Would you like fufu or rice?' (lit. 'Are you after fufu or rice?')

12. Clause structure

12.1. Tense, Aspect, Modality, Polarity

12.1.1. Polarity. The clause-final particle *ɛ́* is the default negation marker in Beng. The only sentence type that doesn't use it is the identity statement, marked by clause-final particle *ɛ̀* in the affirmative polarity and by *ní̱* in the negative polarity.

In a sequence of two or more negative particles *ɛ́*, which happens when both a matrix clause and its embedded clause are negative, the last one is replaced by an allomorph *nì̱* (103c).

Apart from the negation marker, polarity is also marked within subject pronouns, where it is expressed cumulatively with TAM. Tables 4 and 5 (section 5.3) indicate which pronoun series is used in what type of sentence, depending on polarity.

Finally, sometimes the verb form itself signals the presence of negation, thereby adding the third marker of polarity in addition to the negative particle and the pronoun series. Example (103a) exhibits all three exponents of polarity at once:

(103a) *Mà̱̌* *nū̱-sà* *ɛ́*
1SG:PST- come-PrfNeg NEG
'I have not come'.

(103b) *Ḿ̀* *nū̱-nà̱̄*
1SG:PST+ come-PRF
'I have come'.

(103c) *Mà̱* *pé* *[kɛ̄* *mà̱* *nú̱* *ɛ́]* *nì̱*
1SG:PST+3 say:L that 1SG:PST- come:L NEG NEG
'I did not say that I did not come'.

Out of the sixteen logically possible verb forms (8 TAM values × 2 polarity values), there are only six distinct finite forms. Just the four affixal ones invite some substantive labels. The remaining two are called the 'base form' and the 'low tone form', based on their formal properties. The usage of the six verb forms is summarized in Table 8.

Table 8. Usage of finite verb forms

TAM value	affirmative		negative	
preterite	low tone	V̀	low tone	V̀
habitual	low tone	V̀	low tone	V̀
conditional	base	V	low tone	V̀
optative	base	V	low tone	V̀
future	base	V	base	V
progressive	progressive			V-*lɛlɔ́*
perfect	affirmative perfect	V-*nā̰*	negative perfect	V-*sà*
stative	stative			V-*lɛ̀*

Beng has the so-called negative concord whereby words translating negative indefinites require negative polarity marking of the clause. In Beng, all such negative elements contain a reduplicated element. They include: *pɔ̄pɔ̄* 'nothing' (reduplication of *pɔ̄* 'thing'); *kɛ̀kɛ̀* 'no' (reduplicated form that does not have a non-reduplicated counterpart), and finally a construction that involves reduplicating a noun with the word *tɔ́* 'the rest' between the two copies: *sɔ̰̀ŋ̀ tɔ́ sɔ̰̀ŋ̀* 'nobody' (from *sɔ̰̀ŋ̀* 'person'), *pḭŋ́ tɔ́ pḭŋ́* 'not a weed' (from *pḭŋ́* 'weed'). Examples:

(104a) *ŋ̀ā sɔ̰̀ŋ̀ tɔ́ sɔ̰̀ŋ̀ yē-lɛ̀ ɛ́.*
1SG:ST- person rest person see-RES NEG
'I see nobody'.

(104b) *Mą̰ pḭŋ́ tɔ́ pḭŋ́ sò ɛ́.*
1SG:HAB- weed rest weed chew:L NEG
'I don't eat anything' (*literally* I don't eat a weed.)

(105) *Mą̰ drɛ̰̄ wò yrámą̰ kɛ̀kɛ̀ wó ɛ́.*
1SG:PST- work do:L time no IN NEG
'I never worked'.

12.1.2. Tense and mood. Mood in independent sentences encodes modality, i.e. the relation of the situation described in the sentence to the actual world. Beng has a relatively limited modality spectrum, distinguishing the indicative (for situations that hold in the actual world) and the optative (for situations that the speaker considers necessary or desirable). Imperative in Beng is minimally formally distinguishable from the optative (see 12.1.3). In addition to indicative and optative, Beng also has conditional mood, which is used only in embedded clauses.

Each statement has a time reference point, call it T. Depending on T's position on the time scale relative to the utterance time, we can talk about the past, the present, or the future time reference.

Only verb clauses express the full spectrum of TAM values. Adjective, adverbial, existential, and presentative types of clauses express only indicative, and, along with certain aspectual values in verbed clauses, are interpreted with present time reference by default.

When it is necessary to indicate past tense, one can use the clause-initial temporal shift marker *nạ̀* which replaces default present time reference with past time reference; one consultant also accepted the future interpretation of temporal shift:

(106) *Nạ̀ ŋ-ó pɔ̄ lú-ɔ́ló.*
DT 1SG-ST+ thing buy-PROG
'I was buying'.

(107) *Nạ̀ ŋ̀ pɔ̄ cị̀.*
DT 1SG:HAB+ thing cut:L
'I used to mow'.

(108) *Nạ̀ mā̀ŋ̄ ɛ̀.*
DT 1SG:EMPH это
'It was me'.

(109) *Nạ̀ ŋ̀ gɛ̄ŋ̄.*
DT 1SG:HAB+ beautiful
'I was handsome'.

However, the temporal shift marker is not obligatory for changing the time reference of sentences with default present interpretation. If the context explicitly refers to the time, this can suffice to shift the time reference of a statement, cf.:

(110) *Gā̀mlà ó gbě gbɔ́.*
chimpanzee ST+ village old
'Chimpanzee used to live in the village' (literally 'Lomg ago, chimpanzee is in the village').

(111) *Ŋ́ɔ́ klóó nā́, ŋ̄ dā̀ ò gbéné zɔ̀*
1SG:ST+ little when 1SG mother 3SG:HAB+ manioc pound:L
fɛ́ sēkpá.
day every
'When I was little my mother would pound manioc every day'.

In order to express various temporal and aspectual meanings in sentences that are normally expressed verblessly, they have to be paraphrased using copular verbs *yrä* 'to be located, to take place' (corresponding to existential and adverbial clauses) and *lɛ̄* 'to be, to make', corresponding to adjectival and identification clauses:

(112a) *Mą̄ŋ̄ ɛ̀.*
1SG:EMPH this.is
'This is me' (presentative).

(112b) *Ò-ó lɛ̄ mą̄ŋ̄*
3SG-ST+ COP 1SG:EMPH
'This will be me'. (copula verb)

(113a) *Ìŋ̀ gɛ̄ŋ̄.*
1SG:HAB+ beautiful
'I am handsome' (adjectival).

(113b) *Ìŋ̀ lɛ̄ gɛ̄ŋ̄.*
1SG:HAB+ COP beautiful
'Let me be handsome!' (copula verb).

(113c) *a. Ŋ́ó pɔ̄ú.*
1SG:ST+ field
'I am in the field' (adverbial).

(113d) *Ŋ́ó yrä pɔ̄ú.*
1SG:ST+ take.place field
'I will be in the field' (copula verb).

The copula verb *lɛ̄* 'to be' has an idiosyncratic peculiarity of tense interpretation, shared by no other verb, using the preterite form to express present tense:

(114) *Ɨ́ŋ́ lɛ́ bɛ̀ŋ́.*
1SG:PST+ COP:L Beng
'I am Beng'. (note the past tense form with present meaning)

12.1.3. TAM values and their expression. Verbal sentences formally distinguish eight TAM values, briefly characterized below. Table 9 gives a TAMP paradigm of a sentence along with structural formulae of TAMP constructions.

Notes. PST – preterite series, ST – stative series, HAB – habitual series, CND – conditional series; '+' – affirmative polarity series, '-' – negative polarity series; V – verb stem, V:L – low tone form of the verb (lexical tone changes to low).

Table 9. TAMP paradigm of the sentence ‘you play drum’ (‘you see drum’ in stative)

	affirmative	scheme	negative	scheme
preterite	mí mlą̀ dɛ̀	PST+, V:L	mǐ mlą̀ dɛ̀ ɛ́	PST-, V:L
perfect	mí mlą̀ dɛ̄ nā̰	PST+, V *nā̰*	mǐ mlą̀ dɛ̄ sà ɛ́	PST-, V sà
stative	(mḭ̄ó mlą̀ yē.lɛ̀)	ST+, V.*lɛ̀*	(mḭ̄ā mlą̀ yē.lɛ̀ ɛ́)	ST-, V.*lɛ̀*
progressive	mḭ̄ó mlą̀ dɛ̄ɛ̀lo	ST+, V.*[l]ɛ́ló*	mḭ̄ā mlą̀ dɛ̄ɛ̀ló ɛ́	ST-, V.*[l]ɛ́ló*
future	mḭ̄ó mlą̀ dɛ̄	ST+, V	mḭ̄ā mlą̀ dɛ̄ ɛ́	ST-, V
optative	(mì) mlą̀ dɛ̄	HAB+, V	mǐ mlą̀ dɛ̀ ɛ́	= preterite
conditional	mî mlą̀ dɛ̄	CND+, V	mì mlą̀ dɛ̀ ɛ́	= habitual
habitual	mì mlą̀ dɛ̀	HAB+, V:L	mì mlą̀ dɛ̀ ɛ́	HAB-, V:L

Preterite has past time reference, with perfective or habitual aspectual meaning. Beng does not mark telicity.

(115) *Íŋ́ zá pè.*
1SG:PST+ matter say:L
‘I said something / I used to say something’.

Progressive refers to an ongoing activity and has default present time reference:

(116) *Iŋ-ó kálè lú-ɔ́ló.*
1SG -ST+ peanuts buy-PROG
‘I am buying peanuts’.

A progressive statement accompanied by a clause-initial marker *ŋ́gǒ* produces the aspectual value of **cancelled result**, an unexpected derivative of progressive:

(117) *Íŋ́gǒ ɲrā-ló.*
NGO 1SG:go-PROG
‘I almost went’.

(118) *Lā ó bā̰ nā̰ ŋ́gǒ ŋlṵ̄ɛ̄lɛ́ŋ́ nṵ̀ŋ̀ ŋò-ó sròbɛ̀í-lɛ́ló.*
rain ST+ fall TOP NGO worm PL 3PL-ST+ appear-PROG
‘When it was raining the worms almost appeared’ (‘they started to appear but they can’t be seen anymore’).

The same element *ŋ́gǒ* marks the main clause of counterfactual conditional statements. For example, (119) contains no irrealis marker besides *ŋ́gǒ*:

(119) *Lā ó bā̰ dɛ́ɛ̄ ŋ́gǒ ŋlṵ̄ɛ̄lɛ́ŋ́ nṵ̀ŋ̀ ŋò-ó sròbɛ̀í-lɛ́ló.*
rain ST+ fall if NGO worm PL 3PL-ST+ appear-PROG
‘If it were raining now, the worms whould have been appearing’.

Expression of cancelled result, or ‘antiresultative’, by means of progressive (even in combination with an additional marker *ŋ́gǒ*) is typologically unique and deserves explanation, which shall likely involve the fact that progressive, unlike other aspectual meanings, has no implications about the result of an action, e.g. “John crossed the street” implies “John has been on the other side of the street” but “John was crossing the street” does not have such an implication (John might have changed his mind and never finished crossing). Usually, antiresultative include past, perfect, or perfective forms, cf. especially examples in Šošitajšvili (1998: 92-105).

Habitual marks regularly repeated events or stable states, and has default time reference to the present.

(120) *Ŋ̀ p̰ìŋ́ cḭ̀.*
1SG:HAB+ weed cut:L
‘I (usually) mow’.

Future has future time reference and is compatible with any aspectual meaning.

(121) *Ŋ-ó jó.*
1SG:ST+ talk[BSQ]
‘I will talk’.

Stative, or **resultative,** has default time reference to the present and refers to a state. For most verbs this is the resulting state of the event named by the verb; see more on the stative below.

(122) *Jrǎ ò-ó dɛ̄-lɛ̀.*
lion 3SG-ST+ kill-RES
‘The lion is killed’.

Conditional is used in certain cases in temporal and conditional subordinate clauses, see 13.5 for more detail.

(123) *M̰în m̰ī wɔ̄-lɛ́ŋ́ cḭ́ ná̰ m̰ì wàŋ̀ yè.*
2SG:CND 2SG hand-child cut[BSQ] TOP 2SG:HAB+ blood see:L
‘When you cut your finger you see blood’.

Optative expresses a wish when used in an independent clause:

(124) *Ŋ̀ wlá.*
1SG:HAB+ laugh[BSQ]
‘Let me laugh!’

Imperative is largely formally identical to the optative:

(125) *Kà* *drŭ.*
2PL:HAB+ walk[BSQ]
'Go for a walk!' (to more than one addressee or to an elderly person)

There are however minor differences in subject pronoun realization between the imperative and the optative. Indeed, imperatives are peculiar compared to all other TAM values. First, in the imperative the 2SG subject pronoun is omitted. Second, 1PL imperatives distinguish the number of the addressee. When addressing a single person urging her to do something together with the speaker, one uses the regular 1PL pronoun *ą̄ŋ̀* (which one could also call 1st person dual). When the speaker addresses more than one person, or one elderly person in a polite way, Beng uses a combination of 1PL and 2PL pronouns *ą̄ŋ̀ kà* instead of a single subject pronoun to mark a request to something together with the speaker:

(126) *Ą̄ŋ̀* *drŭ.*
1PL:HAB+ walk:L
'Let's go for a walk!' (to one person)

(127) *Ą̄ŋ̀* *kà* *drŭ*
1PL:HAB+ 2PL:HAB+ walk:L
'Let's go for a walk together!' (to more than one addressee or to an elderly person).

Perfect has default time reference to the present and expresses perfect aspect (similar to the English Present Perfect).

(128) *Ńǰ* *nū̱-nā̱*
1SG:PST+ come-PRF
'I have come'.

12.1.4. Stative vs. perfect. Stative, or resultative, refers to a state; usually but not always this state results from an event denoted by the verb. Perfect refers to a recent event that hasn't yet lost its relevance to the speaker; usually the resulting state of that event is still present. So stative and perfect are applicable to similar classes of situations, and are interchangeable in many contexts without affecting truth conditions. Still, the two constructions have different semantics, and therefore also have some contrasting properties.

First, the perfect aspect refers to an event leading to the result state and combines with modifiers that describe that event (129); stative/resultative cannot (130):

(129) *Yrí* *lɛ̀* *ó* *drà-nā̱* *gblɛ̄.*
tree DEF 3SG:PST+ fall-PRF yesterday
'The tree fell yesterday' (and is still lying on the ground).

(130) *Yrí lɛ̀ ò-ó drà-lɛ̂ (*gblɛ̄).*
tree DEF 3SG-ST+ fall-RES yesterday
'The tree is fallen' (*yesterday).

Second, perfect and stative have pragmatic differences. Perfect is not used if the event of entering the resulting state is not relevant. For example, the verb 'to know' is usually used in the stative, since the event of getting to know something is comparatively rarely at issue. In an evidential scenario where the occurrence of an event is inferred from the resulting state ('the tree obviously fell as evidenced by the fact that it's lying on the ground'), again stative is used since the resulting state is more salient than the event itself. Similarly, stative/resultative is used to describe present results of distant events that are no longer relevant themselves. However, if the result of an event is the very fact of its occurrence ('Yes I have been to Paris'), the event can be relevant for an indefinitely long time, an in this case perfect (the so called experiential perfect), not stative, is used.

Third, while every verb can be used in the perfect, not all verbs occur in the stative. Verbs that enter the causative-inchoative alternation (see 12.2.2) are used in the stative intransitively but not transitively. Perfect is formed regardless of transitivity, compare:

(131a) *Ŋ́ ŋlṵ̄ trī-nā̰.*
1SG:PST+ head blacken-PRF
'I have colored my hair black'.

(131b) *Ŋ̄ drɔ̀ŋ́ ó trī-nā̰.*
1SG shirt 3SG:PST+ blacken-PRF
'My shirt has gotten black (dirty)'.

(132a) **Ŋ-ó ŋlṵ̄ trī-lɛ̀.*
1SG-ST+ head blacken-RES
('I have a black head'.)

(132b) *OKŊ̄ drɔ̀ŋ́ ò-ó trī-lɛ̀.*
1SG shirt 3SG-ST+ blacken-RES
'My shirt is black (dirty)'.

(133) *Ŋ́ klɛ́ drà-nā̰.*
1SG:PST+ bag drop-PRF
'I have dropped a bag'.

(134) *ŋ̄ klɛ́ ó drà-nq̄.*
1SG bag 3SG:PST+ drop-PRF
'My bag has dropped'.

(135a) **ŋ-ó klɛ́ drà-lɛ̂.*
1SG-ST+ bag drop-RES
('I have a bag dropped'.)

(135b) *OK ŋ̄ klɛ́ ò-ó drà-lɛ̂.*
1SG bag 3SG-ST+ drop-RES
'My bag is lying dropped'.

These restrictions have a simple semantic explanation if we assume that a clause describing an eventuality can't include among its syntactic arguments one that is not a semantic participant of the eventuality. Stative/resultative, as already mentioned, denotes a state. States that the causative-inchoative verbs introduce have only one semantic participant, the patient, expressed by the subject of the inchoative use of the verb and the object of the causative use. The event leading to that state can have either one participant, the patient, in the intransitive use or two, the patient and the causer, in the transitive use. In other words, in causative-inchoative verbs there is an asymmetry between the event and its resulting state: while the event can include the causer among the semantic participants, the result state normally won't. This lines up perfectly with the facts in (131-135): the stative, denoting a state, can only combine with the patient but not the causer that is not a participant of the state, so only intransitive usages are allowed. The perfect, which refers to an event, can combine with both participants of the event, so it is compatible with transitive uses.

As I just argued, admissibility of stative has semantic explanation; transitivity of the verb is a factor only as long as it correlates with the event structure. Indeed, stative construction is perfectly legitimate if both the subject and the object of the verb correspond to participants of the resulting state:

(136a) *ŋ-ó mī̱ dɔ̱̄-lɛ̀.*
1SG-ST+ 2SG know-RES
'I know you'.

(136b) *ŋ-ó mī̱ yē-lɛ̀.*
1SG-ST+ 2SG see-RES
'I see you'.

(137a) *Ò-ó ŋ̄ dz̲ī-nɛ̀.*
3SG-ST+ 1SG send.courier-RES
'I am his courier'.

(137b) *ŋ̀-ó lɛ́ŋ́ dòdó-lɛ̀.*
1SG-ST+ child put.on.back-RES
'I have a child on my back'.

Conversely, if a verb is intransitive but atelic, i.e. does not come with a natural resulting state, it does not form the stative:

(138) **ŋ̀-ó drù-lɛ̂.*
1SG-ST+ walk-RES
*('I am walked'.)

One more class of cases where the stative of a transitive verb is acceptable includes resulting states that are not simply caused by an agent's action but are maintained with the agent's involvement, cf. :

(139a) *Ò-ó à mɛ̲̄lá-lɛ̀.*
3SG-ST+ 3SG fall-RES
'He is keeping him on the ground' ('he is keeping him fallen'),

compare the simple preterite construction of the same verb :

(139b) *Ó à mɛ̲̀lá.*
3SG:PST+ 3SG fall
'He felled him on the ground'.

12.1.5. Periphrastic expression of tense and aspect. In addition to the fully grammaticalized constructions for TAM values described earlier, Beng also has periphrastic ways of expressing progressive and future tense. The alternative progressive construction consists of the stative series of pronouns followed by a verb phrase where the verb bears the event nominalization suffix and is accompanied by the postposition *mə̲̀*. This "progressive II" is structurally similar to the "progressive I" construction, with the difference that it employs postposition *mə̲̀*, not *ló* as the standard progressive I does. Another difference is that progressive I has phonological peculiarities (see 6.4) that no longer allow to clearly separate it into a combination of a nominalized verb form with a postposition; indeed, speakers do not perceive the *mə̲̀* progressive form as one word but as two (*pēlɛ̀ mə̲̀* 'saying'), the way they perceive the *ló* progressive form (*pēɛ̀ló*). There is a subtle semantic difference between progressive I and progressive II: the latter tends to imply that the eventuality has been going on for a while, so it could be labelled 'continual progressive', for example:

(140) *Ò-ó* *drɛ̰̄* *wō-lɛ̀* *mə̰̀.*
3SG-ST+ work do-NMLZ CONT
'He is working/ he has been working'.

Periphrastic future with intentional flavor, similar to the English *to be going to* construction, is expressed by combinations of verbs *tá* 'to go' or *nɨ̰̄* 'to come' and the goal converb:

(141) *ɲ́rá-ló* *dɛ̄* *cɨ́-yà.*
1SG:ST+:go-PROG (kind of a tree) cut-Gl
'I am going to cut down the *dɛ̄* tree'.

The auxiliary verb in the periphrastic future construction varies, producing slightly different semantics.

- The verb *nɨ̰̄* 'to come' in periphrastic future implies that the action will take place where the subject is now; the verb *tá* 'to go' implies that the action will take place elsewhere.
- The auxiliary can be in the progressive form or in the future. Progressive indicates the intention to start the action immediately, while the future form signals that the action would be started in the future.

12.2. Argument structure of verbal clauses

12.2.1. Subject. The syntactic subject in Beng has several features that distinguish it from other NP positions.

– The subject NP is doubled by subject series of pronouns.

– The subject binds reflexive pronouns in direct or indirect object positions:

(142) *Ò* *à-drə̰̀* *bò* *fìà* *sɔ̰̀ŋ̀* *sɛ̄* *mə̰̀.*
3SG:HAB+ 3SG-Refl raise:L better person all SUPER
'He believes himself to be better than all the people'.

(143) *Mɨ̰̀* *vɨ̰̀* *mɨ̰̄-drə̰̀* *nɨ̰̀.*
2SG:HAB+ love:L 2SG:Refl BENEF
'You love yourself'.

– The sentential subject binds the subject of the goal converb (used only with a few motion verbs, see 6.5):

(144a) *Ɲ́* *nɨ́* *drù-yâ.*
1SG:PST+ come:L walk-GL
'I came for a walk'.

(144b) **Íǰ drɛ̰̄ wò drù-yâ.*
1SG:PST+ work do:L walk-GL
(*I worked for a walk.)

– The sentential subject controls the null subject participant of verb nominalization with certain matrix predicates:

(145) *Mɪ́ pɔ̄ dè-lɛ́ ŋlṵ̄bì.*
2sgPst+ thing cook-NMLZ begin:L
'You began to cook'.

– The sentential subject controls the null subject of the locative nominalization used as a converb of simultaneous action:

(146) *∅ $_{i/*i}$ Drɛ̰̄ wō-yà nɑ̰́ ŋ-ó$_i$ ŋò$_i$ yè.*
work do-PLC TOP 1SG-ST+ 3PL see:L
'I saw them while working' (I, not them, was working).

When the subject of the converb is not null, it does not have to be coreferent to the sentential subject:

(147) *Ŋò$_i$ drɛ̰̄ wō-yà nɑ̰́ mɑ̰́$_i$ ŋò$_i$ yè.*
3PL work do-PLC TOP 1SG:PST+ 3PL see:L
'I saw them while they were working'.

(148) *Ŋò$_i$ trí-yá nɑ̰́ ŋ-ó dǎ ŋò$_i$ ló nɔ̰̄.*
3PL return-PLC TOP 1SG-ST+ find[BSQ] 3PL SUPER here
'When they will be going back I will find them here'.

12.2.2. Direct object and lability in Beng. Direct object in Beng always precedes the verb and can never be omitted. A transitive verb requires a direct object in the form of an overt NP, an object pronoun, or both. Direct object is equally obligatory with all derivatives of transitive verbs (goal converb, agent nominalization, nominalizations in *-ya* and *-lɛ*). If the object is semantically underspecified or irrelevant (as in *The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy*), one has to employ in the direct object position semantically empoverished nouns *sɔ̰̀ŋ̀* 'person' (for animate objects, including people and animals), *pɔ̄* 'thing' (for inanimate objects), *zá* 'matter' (for abstract objects). These nouns function essentially as indefinite pronouns. Examples:

(149) *Ŋ-ó pɔ̄ blɛ̄.*
1SG-ST+ thing eat
'I will eat'.

(150) *ŋ̀ɔ̀* *sɔ̀ŋ̀* *dɛ̀.*
3PL:HAB person kill:L
'They kill'.

(151) *Ó* *zá* *pɛ̀.*
3SG:PST+ matter say:L
'He said (something)'.

(152) *Dé* *fɛ̰̄* *ó* *pɔ̄* *cɪ̰̀* *ŋ̄* *bèsé* *ɛ̀* *lō* *nɑ̰́?*
who Rel 3SG:PST+ thing cut:L 1SG machete DEF with TOP
'Who has been cutting with my machete?'

With verbs *cá* 'to watch', *yē* 'to see', *klū* 'to dig', *klūklù* 'to dig, to clean up', *túà* 'to leave', and *wlā* 'to sweep', the semantically impoverished object can be expressed not only with the generic *pɔ̄* 'thing' but also with *blī* 'place' (*pɔ̄ / blī yē* 'to see (something)', *pɔ̄ / blī cá* 'to watch (something)', *pɔ̄ / blī wlā* 'to sweep (someplace)'); native speakers find no semantic contrast between the variants with *pɔ̄* and *blī* used as an underspecified object with these verbs.

Beng has a handful of A-labile verbs, i.e. verbs that occur both transitively and intransitively without any change in the semantic role of the subject. Here is a list of such verbs with examples of optional objects in parentheses: *(drɛ̰̄) blä* 'to stop (work)'; a recent Baule borrowing *(pɔ̄) fɔ̃tú* 'to give advice'; *(sɔ̀ŋ̀) kákà* 'to cause itching (in someone)'; *(pɔ̄) làmō* 'to step over (something)', *(zá) zázà* 'to argue (on something)'. All of these verbs except for the borrowing *fɔ̃tú,* show A-lability in only one word sense out of several. Two other lexically A-labile verbs of Beng are *(pɔ̄) klṵ́ɑ̰́* 'to steal (something)' and *(sɔ̀ŋ̀) pōpò* 'to ask (somebody)'.

Verbs *wlá* 'to laugh' and *wláwlà* 'to smile' are also A-labile, with the added direct object expressing the semantic role of stimulus ('to laugh **at someone**', 'to smile **at someone**').

A-lability is a regular property of manner of motion verbs in Beng. In their transitive use, the direct object takes the semantic role of path, as in the following example:

(153) *Ó* *pɔ̄ú* *drù.*
3SG:PST+ field walk
'He walked through a field',

where *pɔ̄ú* is a direct object; compare

(154) *Ó* *drú* *pɔ̄ú.*
3SG:PST+ walk field

'He walked in a field',

where *pɔ̄ú* is a sentential modifier.

The verb *gbā* 'to give' is A-labile in passive usages, see below.

There is another group of predicates, in addition to the verbs mentioned above, that exhibit a superficially A-labile pattern but differ in internal structure. Predicates of this group are idiomatic phrases that consist of a verb and noun in the direct object position, with an optional object filling essentially the noun's possessor slot. Such complex verbs include: (X) *gblóŋ́ dǎ* 'to pay a fine (optional object: with X)' (the word *gblóŋ́* is never used outside of this expression; *dǎ* is a polysemous verb which participates in many idiomatic expressions), (X) *kɔ̀ŋ̀ bō* 'to revenge (for X)' (*kɔ̀ŋ̀* 'revenge', *bō* 'to take out'), (X) *yé súá* 'to pray (for someone)' (*yé* 'mouth', *súá* 'splash'). In all of those the semantic object is optional, for instance:

(155) *Ó* *(à* *dē* *lɛ̀)* *kɔ̀ŋ̀* *bò.*
3SG:PST+ 3SG father DEF revenge V:L
'He took revenge (for his father)'.

In contrast to the limited scope of A-lability in Beng, P-lability, i.e. the alternation between the subject of an intransitive verb and the direct object of a transitive usage of the same verb expressing the same semantic role, is widespread. Most verbs that can have transitive uses (457 out of 553[14]) can also have intransitive uses characterized by P-lability. Semantically, there are three types of relation between the transitive and the intransitive usages:

- reflexive: *Ó lɛ́ŋ́ nı̰̀ zrò.* 'He washed the child'. – *Ó zrô.* 'He washed';
- (de)causative: *Ó kpı̰̀ŋ́ nı̰̀ tà.* 'He opened the door'. – *Kpı̰̀ŋ́ nı̰̀ ó tâ.* 'The door opened';
- passive: *Ó jrǎ lɛ̀ dɛ̀.* 'He killed the lion'. – *Jrǎ lɛ̀ ó dɛ̂.* 'The lion was killed'.[15]

The disctinction between passive and decausative can be hard to draw in practice: passive (*Jrǎ lɛ̀ ó dɛ̂.* 'The lion was killed') implies involvement of an agentive

[14] Units counted here and below are word senses, since different senses of the same verb often differ in the argument structures they admit.

[15] Agent cannot be expressed in the 'passive' usages of P-labile verbs in Beng, so according to Xolodovič (1970) this passive type should be called 'object quasipassive' ('passive' proper in Xolodovič's system is reserved to passives with an overt agent). However, this agentless type of passive is known to be typologically more common than the 'proper' passive with an oblique agent phrase, to the extent that Keenan and Dryer (2007) even call agentless passives 'basic' and generalize that if a language has any passives it has basic, agentless, ones.

participant[16], while decausative ('the door opened') does not imply the presence of an agent or even the fact of causation. But whether a statement logically implies a cause or an underlying agent's activity can be a hard judgment.

The boundary between decausative and reflexive is also somewhat blurry (Letučij 2006: 25). And indeed, under closer consideration reflexive usages of P-labile verbs reveal the availability of decausative or passive interpretation; for example, the paradigmatic case of reflexive interpretation, sentence *ó zrô*, normally interpreted as 'S/he washed (himself/herself)', can also mean 'She was washed (by someone)', and is used with this meaning when referring to ritual bathing of girls during initiation.

To summarize, the *a priori* distinction between the semantic types of P-lability turns out to be quite blurry in reality. It would be desirable to treat the three variants semantically in a uniform way as the alternation between 'S does V to O' and 'V occurs to O', and to leave to pragmatics the subtle questions on whether 'V occurs to O' impies an S that does V (passive), and whether that S is identical to O (reflexive).

12.2.3. Secondary object in Beng in the light of the typology of ditransitive constructions. Ditransitive constructions, i.e. clauses that realize a predicate with its agent, recipient, and theme (object of transfer), have not been subject to typologuical scrutiny until recently. I rely here on the terminology introduced in (Haspelmath 2006a). Haspelmath distinguishes three strategies of ditransitive marking: indirective (theme is marked as a direct object, recipient as an indirect object), secundative (recipient is marked like a direct object, theme as a 'secondary' object), and neutral (recipient and theme have the same marking). The main ditransitive strategy in Beng is secundative: the recipient takes the direct object position, and the theme (object of transfer) occupies a special postverbal secondary object position. The secondary object is a noun phrase, never followed by a postposition or a doubling pronoun, which immediately follows the verb. Unlike the secondary object of the ditransitive construction, other indirect objects are marked with postpositions. Most often the secondary object is a dependent of the verb *gbā* 'to give', but at least two other verbs, *blī* и *pōpò*, are also attested in the secundative ditransitive construction, compare:

(156a) *Ó* *mɪ̄* *gbà* *yí.*
3SG:PST+ 2SG give:L water
'He gave you water'.

(156b) *Ó* *ŋ̄* *pòpò* *wálí*
3SG:PST+ 1SG ask:L money

[16] More precisely, the participant whose semantic role equals that of the subject of the verb in the transitive usage.

'He asked me for money'.

(156c) *Mí̱* *à* *blì* *mlɛ̰̆.*
2SG:PST+ 3SG bury:L chicken
'You sacrificed a chicken for his funeral' (literally 'You buried him with a chicken').

From the viewpoint of case and adposition marking (so-called 'flagging'), the ditransitive construction in Beng is neutral: both the recipient and the theme are zero-marked. This is a strong areal trait of languages of sub-Saharan Africa (Haspelmath 2005a).

From the viewpoint of word order and pronominal agreement ('indexing') this construction is secundative: the preverbal recipient is doubled by object pronouns like preverbal direct objects of transitive verbs, while the ditransitive theme is never doubled with a pronoun:

(157) *Ó* *Kòlā* *(à)* *gbà* *lɔ́klɔ́* *bì* *lɛ̀* *(*à).*
3SG:PST+ Kola 3SG give:L child this DEF 3SG
'He gave this child to Kola'.

Beng, like the 22 languages from Haspelmath's sample with secundative indexing (Haspelmath 2006a: 12), has no agreement with the theme, not distinctive agreement marking that would contrast with that of the recipient.

Besides, the recipient, like the object of a typical transitive verb, has to be overtly expressed, while the object of transfer can be omitted. Moreover, personal pronouns, even emphatic ones, are banned from the secondary object postion:

(158) *Ó* *a̱ŋ̄* *gbà* *(*à-yā̱).*
3SG:PST+ 1PL give 3SG-EMPH
'He gave it to us' (pronoun after the verb is degraded).

Compare the superficially similar postverbal position of nominal predicate with the copular verb *lɛ̄* 'to be, to make' where emphatic pronouns can be used:

(159) *Ó* *lɛ́* *à-yā̱.*
3SG:PST+ COP:L 3SG-FOC
'It was him' (postverbal pronoun can't be omitted).

In case it is necessary to name the object of transfer with a pronoun, it can only be done periphrastically, in a structure that closely resembles one found in Baule (Creissels, Kouadio 1977):

(160) *Ó* *kā* *srà* *ó* *ŋ̄* *dā* *gbà.*
3SG:PST 2PL take:L 3SG:PST 1SG mother give:L

'He gave you (plural) to my mother' (literally: 'He took you, he gave to my mother').

The fact that personal pronouns can't be secondary objects contrasts them with non-pronominal NPs. In a sense, Beng shows "split ditransitivity". As in the other cases of split ditransitivity, as well as in many cases of split transitivity, it is the definiteness scale that determines the split, personal pronouns being an extreme point on the scale.

Typologically, the combination of secundative strategy for pronominal elements (ban on pronouns in the secondary object position contrasts with the direct object position in transitive and ditransitive clauses) and a neutral strategy (in terms of adposition marking) for full NPs is in accordance with the universal tendency: higher ranked elements from the definiteness scale tend towards more secundative marking and lower ranked elements gravitate towards more indirective marking (Haspelmath 2006b: 15). For instance, Maltese uses the neutral strategy for personal pronouns, and the indirective strategy for other NPs (Comrie 2004). Another example is French that employs the neutral strategy for locutor pronouns (*me, te, nous, vous*) and indirective marking for all other elements (*le:lui, les:leur*, NP:*à* + NP).

The ditransitive construction alternates in a way that closely resembles P-lability. However, it is the secondary object, not the direct object, that gets promoted into the subject position. The direct object under such a 'passive' transformation is optional:

(161) *Wálí* *lɛ̀* *ó* *(mɪ̰)* *gbà.*
money DEF 3SG:PST+ 2SG give:L
'The money was given (to you)'.

12.2.4. Nominal predicate. Immediately following the main verb, one can also find the secondary predicate, expressed by an NP, an emphatic (focus) pronoun, an adjective phrase, or a stative verb form. Semantically, a nominal predicate can either depend on the copula verb *lɛ̄* 'to be, to make' or be a secondary predicate:

(162) *Ó* *lɛ́* *ŋ̄* *dɛ̄.*
3SG:PST+ COP 1SG father
'This is my father'.

(163) *Ó* *lɛ̀* *mɑ̰ŋ̄.*
3SG :PST+ COP 1SG:EMPH
'It was me'.

(164) *Ó* *à* *lɛ̀* *klóˊ.*
3SG :PST+ 3SG COP little

'He made it little'.

(165) *Ó* *à* *yè* *yātró-lɛ̀.*
3SG :PST+ 3SG see sit-RES
'He saw him sitting'.

(166) *Ó* *à* *lù* *klū-pɔ̀.*
3SG :PST+ 3SG buy dig- MEN
'He bought this to dig' (literally 'as a digging tool').

The subject of the nominal predicate is always coreferent to the direct object or to the intransitive subject of the main verb.

12.2.5. Sentential modifiers and arguments with postpositions. Many verbs (also adjectives in the comparative construction, see the section on adjectival clauses in 12.4) govern indirect objects with a postposition. Almost any postposition can be selected for, with the exception of *kṵ́mà* 'because of'. Psotposition choice can be idiosyncratic and lack semantic motivation. For instance, *gbɛ́* 'to exceed' selects for the postposition *mī* (used only with this verb), the verb *dă* 'to fall' when used in the sense 'to help' selects the postposition *dí* which usually expresses APUD localization 'near'), the verb *kàflɛ̂* 'to ask for protection' selects postposition *mà* (regular meaning CONT 'on'). Examples:

(167) *ŋ̀ɔ̀-ó* *gbɛ́* *bū* *mī.*
3PL-ST+ exceed ten P
'There will be more than ten of them'.

(168) *Ò-ó* *dă* *mī* *dí.*
3SG-ST+ fall 2SG APUD
'He will help you'.

(169) *ŋ̀ɔ̀-ó* *kàflɛ̂* *ŋ̄* *mà.*
3PL-ST+ trust 1SG CONT
'They will ask me for protection'.

Emotion predicates tend to require not a direct object but an indirect object with the benefactive postposition *nì* (X in the examples below stands for the NP argument of the verb): *fɛ̂ɛ̀ sí X nì* 'to be beware of X', *kókò X nì* 'to worry for X', *kpɔ̄ X nì* 'to hate X', *ɲrɔ̆ X nì* 'to be disgusted with X', *vī X nì* 'to love X', *yēŋ̄ X nì* 'to be afraid of X', *yēɲré X nì* 'to be ashamed for X'.

This is somewhat unexpected typologically, since crosslinguitically the argument of an experiential predicate marked like a benefactive is the experiencer, cf. literature

on dative subjects (Bhaskararao, Subbarao 2004), (Verma, Mohanan 1990), etc. On the other hand, the intransitive status of emotion verbs in Beng fits well into Tsunoda's transitivity hierarchy (Tsunoda 1985): Direct effect > Perception > Pursuit > Knowledge > Feeling > Relationship > Ability. In Beng, the line between transitive and intransitive verbs is drawn to the left of Feeling verbs, while in European languages this line is on the right of the Feeling class.

The emotion verbs listed above are just one semantically motivated class of Beng verbs that select for postpositions but translate as transitive verbs in European languages. In fact, Beng verbs that govern an indirect object which corresponds to a direct object in European languages are numerous. Examples (170-173) provide several illustrations:

(170) *Ó* *zú* *ŋ̄* *lù.*
3SG:PST+ offend:L 1SG SUB
'He offended me'.

(171) *Ó* *lîlá* *ŋ̄* *mə̀.*
3SG:PST+ beat.up:L 1SG CONT
'He beated me up'.

(172) *Ó* *mlɔ́* *ŋ̄* *lō.*
3SG:PST+ meet:L 1SG c
'He met me'.

(173) *Ó* *dá* *ŋ̄* *ló.*
3SG:PST+ find 1SG SUPER
'He found me'.

Of course, in some of those cases one can find metaphorical motivation for the particular postposition used, some of which even find analogs in better-known languages. For example, postposition *ló* selected by the verb *dǎ* 'to fall' when used in the sense of 'to find' has an exact equivalent in the Russian prefix *na-* in *najti* 'to find;' both *ló* and *na-* can be translated into English as *on*, and the Beng and the Russian expressions of 'to find' have similar literal meanings ('to fall on something' and 'to come/step on something'). In both cases the SUPER localization is motivated by the prototypical situation of finding a object on the ground, at the finder's feet. Postposition *lō* 'with' of the verb *mlɔ́* 'to meet' is motivated by the symmetry of the roles of two participants of the meeting event, etc.

At least 30 Beng verbs select an indirect object that corresponds to a direct object in English, French, and Russian (4% among the 705 verb senses in my database).

There are also converse cases, where a direct object in Beng corresponds to an indirect object in European languages, compare:

(174) *Ó* *pɔ̄* *bą̀* *ŋ̄* *mą̀.*
3SG:PST+ thing touch:L 1SG CONT

'He touched me **with something**' (literally 'He touched some thing on me'), compare transitive French *toucher*, Russian *trogat'* etc.

(175) *Ī̀ŋ̀* *lò* *ó* ***ŋ̄*** *sɛ̀.*
1SG neck 3SG:PST+ 1SG ache:L
'My neck ached' (literally 'My neck ached me').

In contrast to the direct/indirect object, subjects of Beng verbs are almost always translated into English, French, or Russian as syntactic subjects. We observe that subjects are more cross-linguistically stable as compared to direct objects. This fact can be seen as an argument for greater semantic grounding of the notion of subject. In Aleksandr Kibrik's terminology (Kibrik 2004), the Principal hyperrole expressed by the subject is no less semantically motivated than the Patientive hyperrole marked as the direct object, despite the greater semantic abstractness of the former that raises understandable doubts in its existence (Testelec 2003: 33).

Non-locative postpositions *nì, mą̀, lō, kʉ́mą̀,* and *wó* (*mą̀* and *wó* also admit locative usages) are used in semantically transparent ways to form modifiers of sentences or indirect objects.

The postposition *nì* has a general benefactive meaning:

(176) *Ī́ŋ̀* *bé* *mī* *nì.*
1SG:PST+ run 2SG BENEF
'I ran for you'.

(177) *Tá* *bā* *kló* *dō* *klū* *ŋ̄* *nì.*
go earth little one dig 1SG BENEF
'Go dig a bit of earth for me'.

(178) *Ɲrá* *báŋ́* *nì* *klá-yà* *ŋò* *nì* *flɔ́ɔ̄.*
1SG:ST+:go trap DEF set-GL 3PL BENEF tomorrow
'I am going to set traps for them tomorrow'.

As a spinoff of the benefactive meaning, *nì* can mark the role of addressee:

(179) *Ó* *zá* *bì* *lɛ̀* *pè* *mī* *nì.*
3SG:PST+ matter this DEF say 2SG BENEF
'He told me about this matter'.

The addressee is encoded with the postposition *nɨ̰* with the following predicates (X in the examples strands for the NP variable): *kɔ̰lì dă X nɨ̰* 'to express condolences to X', *flú X nɨ̰* 'to tell the truth to X', *fɔ̀tû X nɨ̰* 'to give advice to X', *klɔ̄ŋ̄ bí X nɨ̰* 'to tell a secret to X' (literally 'to stick a nail to X'), *lā X nɨ̰* 'to show X (something), to teach X (something), to introduce (someone) to X' etc. The only verb of speech that is not compatible with a *nɨ̰*-marked addressee is the intransitive *jó* 'to talk' which requires postposition *lō* 'with' to mark the addressee.

The postposition *lō* expresses the semantic role of instrument (132, 137), means (133, 135), comitative (134, 136) or manner (157):

(180) *ŋ-ó drɛ̰ wō-ɔ̀ló kpálé lō.*
1SG-ST+ work do-PROG hoe with
'I am working with a hoe'.

(181) *Ó ŋ̄ bòyə̰̀ mlɛ̰̌ dō lō.*
3SG:PST 1SG gift:L chicken one with
'He gave me a chicken'.

(182) *Dé ó yrā-lê mɨ̰ lō?*
who ST+ be.located-RES 2SG with
'Who lives with you?'

(183) *ŋ-ó nṵ̰ ŋ̄ bɛ̀ŋ́ nɨ̰ zɔ̂ dă à lō.*
1SG:HAB+ come 1SG barn DEF mat fall 3SG with
'I will make **of it** a mat for my barn'.

(184) *ŋ́ó nú́ lɛ́ŋ́ dùténéŋ́ pé lō.*
3PL:PST+ come:L child only just with
'They came with only one child'.

(185) *ŋ̀à zɨ̰ jɛ̌ tòŋɔ̀bí lō kā pɔ̄ú zrë lɛ̀ yé ɛ́.*
3PL:HAB- can pass car with 2PL field road DEF mouth NEG
'One can't drive a car on your field road'.

The postposition *mə̰̀* competes with the benefactive *nɨ̰* in addressee marking with several predicates: *yé súá* 'to pray', *klɔ̄ŋ̄ bí* 'to tell a secret', *ɲɨ̰mɨ́ŋ̀* 'to insist' etc. For example, *mə̰̀* is interchangeable with *nɨ̰* in the following sentence:

(186) *Ó à klɔ̄ŋ̄ bí-nə̰̄ ŋ̄ mə̰̀.*
3SG:PST+ 3SG nail stick- PRF 1SG CONT
'He told me about this as a secret'.

The postpositions *wó* 'in' and *klɛ̄* 'behind, after' have temporal meanings besides the locative ones:

(187) *mī̱ tá-lɛ́ klɛ̄*
2SG go-NMLZ POST
'after your departure',

bàāŋ̀ wó 'during the dry season', *kpāŋā wó* 'in the third month of the traditional calendar', *yímī̱ lɛ̀ wó* 'in Ramadan' etc. Postposition *wó* can also mark the stimulus of the following reaction predicates: *gblé X wó* 'to complain (to someone) about his action X', *dɔ̄ X wó* 'to accept X', *yé ká X wó* 'to discuss X', *kɔ̀ŋ̀ bō X wó* 'to take revenge for X', *wɛ̄ X wó* 'to agree with X', *yēdă X wó* 'to reply to (person) X'.

Lastly, the postposition *kṵ́mà* marks the cause of a situation:

(188) *Ó drá mī̱ kṵ́mà.*
3SG:PST+ fall 2SG because.of
'He fell because of you'.

12.2.6. NPs in postverbal position. There are a few classes of non-locative NPs that can occur postverbally. One case is temporal nouns:

(189) *Ó nṵ́ yrú.*
3SG:PST+ come:L night
'He came at night'.

Another case is NPs with numerals (or sometimes bare numerals) which exhibit a special case of quantifier float where the whole quantified NP (QNP) is floated:

(190) *Á̱ŋ́ nṵ́ sɔ̱̀ŋ̀ plāī̱.*
1PL:PST+ come:L person two
'We came, the two of us'.

Often a floated quantified NP is accompanied by a personal pronoun of the non-subject series. The pronoun marks the person and number of the referent that the quantified NP describes:

(191) *Á̱ŋ́ à wò ā̱ī̱ sɔ̱̀ŋ̀ plāī̱.*
1PL:PST+ 3SG do :L 1PL person two
'We did it, the two of us'.

In the absence of a pronoun the floated QNP is coreferent with the subject of a one-place predicate or the direct or indirect object of a transitive verb. (Speakers do not have an intuition on the interpretation of floated QNPs with the ditransitive verb 'to give': such examples do not seem to occur naturally and when presented with a constructed example, the speakers find it difficult to grasp its exact meaning.)

(192) *Ŋ́ó zú kā lù plāŋ̄.*
3PL:PST+ offend 2PL SUB two
'They offended the two of you' (*the two of them offended you).

Practically any NP with a numeral can be found in the floated QNP context, effectively binding one of the pronoun arguments of the verb. The grammatical number of the QNP is determined by the semantic definiteness of its referent (not by the formal marking as articles are typically absent from NPs with numerals): indefinite QNP are singular and require a singular pronoun, while definite QNPs are plural:

(193) *Mḭ́ à yè lɛ́ŋ́ ŋ̰āŋ̄.*
2SG:PST+ 3SG have:L child three
'You had three children'.

(194) *Mḭ́ ŋò yè lɛ́ŋ́ ŋ̰āŋ̄.*
2SG:PST+ 3PL have:L child three
'Your children were three in number'.

Besides the temporal NPs and QNP float, postverbal NPs include subjects of the verb *gṵ̄à̰* 'to remain', which allows almost any NP to be used postverbally as the semantic subject, while the surface subject position is filled by the "expletive" 3SG pronoun:[17]

(195) *Ó gṵ̄à̰-nā̰ Kòlā.*
3SG:PST+ remain-PRF Коля
'Kola remains'.

12.2.7. Adverbs. Finally, the postverbal position hosts adverbs such as *kpà̰* 'a lot' or *drúlɛ̀í* 'in the morning':

(196) *Àbá wálɛ́ lɛ̀ ó tɔ́ kpà̰.*
father yam DEF 3SG:PST+ yield:L much
'My father's yam produced a great yield'.

(197) *Ŋ́ nṵ́ drú-lɛ̀í.*
1SG:PST+ come:L morning-TEMP
'I came in the morning'.

[17] An anonymous reviewer notes that in many West African languages, 'remain' is the only intransitive verb allowing for a construction with an inverted subject and an expletive 3rd person pronoun in the canonical subject position. So the construction with postverbal subjects of 'remain' seems to be an areal syntactic feature.

12.3. Word order in verbal sentences

Beng has a strict Subject Object Verb order. Other constituents follow the verb. Their relative order is in turn subject to constraints.

The secondary object (theme in the ditransitive construction) cannot be separated from the verb by any constituent:

(198a) *Ó ŋmà wápló gblē*
3gs:PST+ 1SG:give:L fufu yesterday
('He gave me fufu yesterday'.)

(198b) **Ó ŋmà gblē wápló*

'He gave me fufu yesterday'. (198b) is acceptable only in the reading 'He gave me yesterday's fufu' where *gblē* 'yesterday' modifies *wápló* 'fufu').

Other elements that can't be separated from the verb include nominal predicates and indirect objects with a postposition selected by the verb, for example:

(199a) *Ò vi̱ wápló ni̱ Kòlā ku̱mą̀.*
3SG:HAB+ love:L fufu BENEF Kola because.of
'He loves fufu because of Kola'.

(199b) **Ò vi̱ Kòlā ku̱mą̀ wápló ni̱.*
3SG:HAB+ love:L Kola because.of fufu BENEF
'He loves fufu because of Kola'.

(200a) *Ó zú mi̱ lù Kòlā ku̱mą̀.*
3SG:PST+ offend 2SG SUB Kola because.of
'He offended you because of Kola'.

(200b) **Ó zú Kòlā ku̱mą̀ mi̱ lù.*
3SG:PST+ offend Kola because.of 2SG SUB
'He offended you because of Kola'.

Indirect objects that are not idiosyncratically selected by the verb can be separated. Separability correlates with the traditional argument vs. adjunct distinction but the real factor seems to be not the semantic obligatoriness of the participant, compare examples (201-202), but whether the postposition has its own sematic contribution or is syntactically selected by the verb.

(201a) *Ó à pè gblē ŋ̄ ni̱.*
3SG:PST+ 3SG say:L yesterday 1SG BENEF
'He told this to me yesterday'.

(201b) *Ó à pè ŋ̄ nı̨̀ gblē.*
3SG:PST+ 3SG say:L 1SG BENEF yesterday
'He told this to me yesterday'.

(202a) *Ó kɔ̀ŋ̀ bò [ŋ̄ lō] [à wó].*
3SG:PST+ nail take.out:L 1SG with 3SG IN
'He took revenge **for this** with me'.

(202b) *Ó kɔ̀ŋ̀ bò [à wó] [ŋ̄ lō].*
3SG:PST+ nail take.out:L 3SG IN 1SG with
'He took revenge **for this** with me'.

Another restriction on modifier ordering is that temporal modifiers never precede locative ones:

(203a) *Ó zrá nɔ̰̄ gblē.*
3SG:PST+ get.lost:L here yesterday
'He got lost here yesterday'.

(203b) **Ó zrá gblē nɔ̰̄.*
3SG:PST+ get.lost:L yesterday here

The relative order of both temporal and locative modifiers with respect to other sentential adjuncts is free:

(204a) *Ó zrá mı̰̄ kʊ́mą̰̀ nɔ̰̄.*
3SG:PST+ get.lost:L 2SG because.of here
'He got lost here because of you'.

(204b) *Ó zrá nɔ̰̄ mı̰̄ kʊ́mą̰̀.*
3SG:PST+ get.lost:L here 2SG because.of
'He got lost here because of you'.

(205a) *Ó zrá mı̰̄ kʊ́mą̰̀ gblē.*
3SG:PST+ get.lost:L 2SG because.of yesterday
'He got lost here yesterday because of you'.

(205b) *Ó zrá gblē mı̰̄ kʊ́mą̰̀.*
3SG:PST+ get.lost:L yesterday 2SG because.of
'He got lost here yesterday because of you'.

Complement and goal clauses (see 13.1) are always clause-final, although I was able to elicit marginally acceptable examples with a sentential modifier after such an embedded clause:

(206) *ˀĀ́ pè [kē mḭ̀ nṵ́ ɛ̰́] gblē.*
3SG:PST+3 say:L that 2SG:PST- come:L NEG yesterday
'He said yesterday that you hadn't come'.

However, embedded clauses always precede the negative particle *ɛ́* that occupies the ultimate rightmost position in the clause, as in (207):

(207) *Wà pé [kē mḭ́ nṵ́] ɛ̰̀.*
3SG:PST-3 say:L that 2SG:PST+ come:L NEG
'He didn't say that you had come'.

To summarize, the constituent order in simple clause is as follows:

Subject + direct object + verb + secondary object / nominal predicate / strongly selected postpositional phrase + modifiers + embedded clauses + negation.

12.4. Types of verbless clauses

12.4.1. Identity (presentative) statement. Identity statement has the structure NP + particle *ɛ̀* (*nḭ́* in negative sentences) 'this is', *ká ɛ̀* 'here is', *ɲɛ̰̄ɛ̰̀* 'now that's'. Examples:

(208) *Ŋ̄ dē ɛ̀.*
1SG father this.is
'This is my father'.

(209) *Mā̰ŋ ɛ̰̀.*
1SG:EMPH this.is
'This is me'.

With the addition of a second NP, such clauses become statements of reference identity or express nominal predication, compare:

(210) *[Lɛ́ŋ́ gɔ̄ŋ̄ yā̰á̰] [sɔ̰̀ŋ̀ jàté-lí bɛ́ɛ̄ dō] ɛ̀.*
child man this person respect-AG big one this.is
'This boy is very polite' (literally: 'This boy is a big respecter of people').

12.4.2. Adverbial clause. Aderbial clauses employ NP subjects doubled with stative pronouns or stative markers, followed by an adverbial predicate: a locative phrase, an adverb phrase, a postpositional phrase, or an NP headed by an adverbial noun. Examples:

(211) *Mi̱-ó gbòyō lɛ̀ wó.*
2SG-ST+ garden DEF IN
'You (singular) are in the garden'.

(212) *Kā-ā nɔ̱̄ ɛ́.*
2PL-ST- here NEG
'You (plural) are not here'.

(213) *Ā̱ŋ-ó wlá.*
1PL-ST+ house
'We are at home'.

(214) *Ŋ-ó à lō.*
1SG-ST+ 3SG with
'I am with him'.

12.4.3. Existential statements. Existential statements consist of the subject NP or a pronoun of the existential series, followed by particle *wé* (*wā* under negation):

(215a) *Wlù wé*
heat exist
'It is hot'.

(215b) *Wlù wā ɛ́*
heat exist.NEG NEG
'It is not hot'.

A distinctive series of subject pronouns is used in existential statements, compare:

(216) *Mā̱ŋ̄ wé.*
1SG:EX exist
'I exist'.

(217) *Mī̱ wé.*
2SG:EX exist
'You exist'.

(218) *Ò wé.*
3SG:EX exist
'S/he exists'.

When it is necesary to use an adverbial constituent restricting the domain of existential quanification in a statement of existence, an adverbial clause is used, e.g.

(219) *Pɔ̄ vɔ̰̄-lɛ̀ dō ó nɔ̰̄.*
thing rot-NMLZ one ST+ here
'There is something rotten here'.

Notably, the same pronouns are used under negation:

(220) *Mą̰̄ŋ̄ wā ɛ́.*
1SG:EX exist.NEG NEG
'I do not exist'.

(221) *Mɪ̰̄ wā ɛ́.*
2SG:EX exist.NEG NEG
'You do not exist'.

(222) *Ò wā ɛ́.*
3SG:EX exist.NEG NEG
'S/he does not exist'.

12.4.4. Adjectival statements. Adjectives can be used predicatively, combining with subject NPs or subject pronouns; an optional modifier specific to this clause type is comparison reference, discussed below. Examples:

(223a) *Ò gɛ̄ŋ̄.*
3SG:HAB+ beautiful
'It is good'.

(223b) *Wà-ā gɛ̄ŋ̄ ɛ̰́.*
3SG-ST- beautiful NEG
'It is not good'.

Some words can be predicates in structures of this type but are not admitted to modify nouns. I call such words predicative adjectives:

(224a) *Mɪ̰̀ jàà!*
2SG crazy
'You are crazy!'

(224b) **gɔ̄ŋ̄ jàà dō*
man crazy one
(intended: 'a crazy man')

Indirect object with predicative adjectives introduces the reference of comparison. It is marked with postposition *mə̀.*

(225) *Àságbě bɛ́ɛ̄ Gbágbě mə̀.*
Ouassadougou big Moussobadougou CONT
'Ouassadougou is bigger than Moussobadougou'.

With the adjective *gblɛ̄ŋ̄* 'tall' the reference of comparison can also take postposition *ló:*

(226) *Làŋ̀zè, mì gblɛ̄ŋ̄ Bēyə̄ ló.*
Lanze 2SG:HAB+ tall Beyan SUPER
'Lanze, you are taller than Beyan'.

12.4.5. WH question. Beng interrogative words usually occur *in situ*, but there is also a sentence type that provides an analog of wh fronting in the sense that the interrogative constituent takes the first position. Such wh clauses consist of a wh constituent accompanied by an optional relative clause. One could interpret such examples as instances of wh movement outside of the relative clause, but then for uniformity one should also accept that head nouns are always extracted from relative clauses that modify them. The head-internal analysis for all relative clauses has indeed been proposed on independent grounds (Kayne 1994), but has yet to earn wide acceptance. Here are two examples of wh-questions:

(227) *Pɔ́ [fɛ̰ ó sró dóbă lō ə̄ŋ̄ klɛ̰̂ wó nɔ̰̄ ná]?*
what Rel 3SG:PST+ exit:L monkey with 1PL land IN here TOP
'What happened to the monkey in this land?'

(228) *Dé [fɛ̰ ó ŋ̄ wálɛ́ klʊ̀ə̰̀ ná]?*
who Rel 3SG:PST+ 1SG yam steal TOP
'Who stole my yam?' (literally: 'who that he stole my yam?')

The exact same meaning can be expressed with wh-words *in situ*, in ordinary nominal or adverbial positions:

(229) *Dé ó ŋ̄ wálɛ́ klʊ̀ə̰̀?*
who 3SG:PST+ 1SG yam steal:L
'Who stole my yam?'

(230) *Kà yí yè má̰?*
2PL:HAB+ water see:L where
'Where do you find water?' (literally. 'you find water where?')

The special type of wh sentence must have originated in Beng as a result of interference with other languages. Compare the structure of wh questions in Baule, a language that many Beng actively use (quoted from (Creissels, Kouadio 1977: 227)):

(231) *Wān yɛ́ ɔ́ bā-lī ɔ̀?*
who CNS 3SG come-PRF CNS
'Who came?'

13. Complex sentences

13.1. Postverbal embedded clauses

This chapter describes various types of complex sentences attested in Beng. Two types of subordinate clauses, complement and goal clauses, can be properly embedded inside another clause in a postverbal position inside the main clause, while temporal and conditional clauses occupy a position before the main clause.

13.1.1. Complement clauses. Complement clauses are marked by comlementizers *kē*, *kēsá̱*, *sá̱* and *sâ̱*, which appear to be mutually interchangeable. Often, the complement clause is coreferent with a 3SG pronoun in an argument position in the same clause:

(232) *Ńŋ̀ à pè kē mí̱ nû̱.*
1SG:PST+ 3SG say:L that 2SG:PST+ come:L
'I said that you had come' (literally 'I said **it** that you came').

(233) *Ò-ó ŋ̄ nì̱ kē mì̱ nū̱.*
3SG-ST+ 1SG BENEF that 2SG:HAB+ come
'I want you to come' (literally '**It**'s for me that you come').

Such Beng sentences with complement clauses are reminiscent of the English sentences with embedded clause extraposition, and the 3SG pronoun seems analogous to the dummy *it* in English. The pronoun is not always present in sentences with complement clauses, but only when required by the argument structure of the main predicate. For instance, the verb 'to say' as in (232) is transitive, and requires the direct object position to be filled in, and the subject position is obligatory in the volitive construction in (233). In contrast, the intransitive verb *wé* 'to reply' does not select for a direct or indirect object with the semantic role of content of response, and it combines with a complement clause without any 'dummy' pronoun present:

(234) *Ó wé kē à nú̱ ɛ́.*
3SG:PST+ reply that 3SG:PST- come:L NEG
'He replies that he wasn't coming'.

Furthermore, complement clauses can combine with arbitrary verbs, adding the speech component to the sentence meaning regardless of whether the main verb has anything to do with speech:

(235) *Ó* *bé* *kɛ̄* *ó* *mlɛ̰̄* *yē-nā.*
3SG:PST+ run:L that 3SG:PST+ snake see-PRF
'He was running saying that he had just seen a snake' (literally: 'He ran that he has seen a snake').

13.1.2. Goal clauses. The main strategy of marking goal clauses uses complementizer *nɑ̰̀* followed by a clause in optative mood:

(236) *Zrūɑ́* *nɑ̰̀* *mḭ̀* *gbō* *pí.*
hunker for.to 2SG:HAB+ feces excrete
'Hunker down in order to defecate'.

(237) *Ŋ-ó* *sɔ̰̀ŋ̀* *cícá-ló* *nɑ̰̀* *wà* *wó* *cá* *ŋ̄* *nḭ̀.*
1SG-ST+ person search-PROG for.to 3SG:HAB+3 IN watch 1SG BENEF
'I am looking for someone to read me this letter'.

(238) *Ŋ-ó* *ŋʊ̀ɛ̰̀* *dă* *nɑ̰̀* *sɔ̰̀ŋ̀* *bì-lɛ̀* *ò* *gā.*
1SG-ST+ fetish fall for.to person this-DEF 3SG:HAB+ die
'I will pray the fetish for this person to die'.

Complementizer *nɑ̰̀* can be omitted if the subject or the direct object of the matrix clause is coreferent to one of the participants of the goal situation:

(239) *Ńŋ́*$_i$ *kpɛ̰̀-pɔ́* *lù* *ŋ̄* *lɛ́ŋ́* *gɔ̄ŋ̄*
1SG:PST+ play-Mns buy:L 1SG child man
nḭ̀ *(nɑ̰̀)* *ŋ̀*$_i$ *drɛ̰̄* *wō* *mḭ̄dàlɛ́* *lō.*
BENEF for.to 1SG:HAB+ work do calmness with
'I bought my son toys in order to work undisturbed'.

(240) *Ńŋ́* *kɔ́pɛ́*$_i$ *lù* *ŋ̄* *lɛ́ŋ́* *gɔ̄ŋ̄*
1SG:PST+ hoe buy:L 1SG child man
nḭ̀ *(nɑ̰̀)* *ò* *drɛ̰̄* *wō* *à*$_i$ *lō.*
BENEF for.to 3SG:HAB+ work do 3SG with
'I bought my son a hoe to work with'.

When such coreference does not hold, the complementizer is obligatory, compare (241) where the subject of the goal clause is not coreferent to the subject or the direct object of the matrix clause but to the indirect object:

(241) *Ŋ́ kɔ́pɛ́ lù ŋ̄ lɛ́ŋ́ gɔ̄ŋ̄*
1SG:PST+ hoe buy:L 1SG child man

*nɪ̰̀ nɑ̰̀ / *ø ò drɛ̰̄ wō*
BENEF for.to 3SG:HAB+ work do

'I bought my son a hoe in order for him to work'.

Sometimes, the goal semantics is expressed with the complementizer *kē* followed by a sentence in optative mood, but it has an additional semantic component in addition to the goal. *kē* is only compatible with a verbalized goal:

(242) *Ŋ́ kɔ́pɛ́ lù ŋ̄ lɛ́ŋ́ gɔ̄ŋ̄*
1SG:PST+ hoe buy:L 1SG child man

nɪ̰̀ kē ò drɛ̰̄ wō à lō.
BENEF that 3SG:HAB+ work do 3SG with

'I bought my son a hoe (saying) that he should work with it'.

Essentially, this goal usage of *kē* is a special case of its function, described in 13.1.1, of adding the speech component to the meaning of the sentence. The goal semantics in this case is just a pragmatic consequence of the optative.

13.2. Ways of encoding clausal arguments

Strategies of encoding clausal arguments include:

- complement clause with *kē / sɑ̰́ / kēsɑ̰́*, with various matrix predicates:

(243) *Ò-ó pɔ̀ kē mɪ̰̀ nṵ̄.*
3SG-ST+ necessary that 2SG:HAB+ come[BSQ]
'You have to come'. (literally 'It is necessary that you come'.)

(244) *Mɑ̰́ à là kē ó nṵ̂?*
1SG:PST+ 3SG ask:L that 3SG:PST+ come:L
'I asked if he had come'.

- nominalization is used in NP positions:

(245) *Mɛ̰̄ [mɪ̰̄ vɔ̄ŋ̄ dɔ̄-lɛ̀] mɑ̰̀*
begin 2SG hole build-NMLZ CONT
'Start to dig your yam field!'

(246) *Ó* *[sèwɛ́* *pē-lɛ]* *tùà*
3SG:PST+ paper say-NMLZ leave:L
'He stopped reading'.

- subordinate clauses with the goal complementizer *nə̰* or often asyndetical are used with predicates of causation:

(247) *À* *túà* *[ŋò* *drɛ̰̄* *wō].*
3SG leave 3PL:HAB+ work do
'Make them work!'

(248) *Ó* *mɪ̰̄* *gblè* *[nə̰̀* *ŋ̀* *tá* *mɪ̰̄* *lō].*
3SG:PST+ 2SG force:L for.to 1SG:HAB+ go 2SG with
'He forced you to go with me'.

- verb phrases with verbs in the base form are used with the verb *zɪ̰̄* 'can':

(249) *Mə̰̀* *zɪ̰̀* *yātrɔ́* *flɔ́ɔ̰̄* *ɛ́.*
1SG:HAB- can:L sit[BSQ] today NEG
'I cannot sit today'.

13.3. Serial construction

Beng has a very limited instantiation of the serial construction in the form of "*nʊ̰̄* or *tá* + verb phrase". The verb *nʊ̰̄* 'to come' or *tá* 'to go' has the same morphological form as the second verb:

(250) *Ó* *tá* *à* *wò.*
3SG :PST+ go:L 3SG do:L
'He went and did it'.

Another constraint on the serial construction is that it is used only in those TAM values where the verbs are not marked by suffixes: in the preterite, the habitual, the optative, and the conditional; so the two verbs not only have identical form but the form is suffixless. In other TAM constructions (perfect, progressive, stative, and future) a goal converb (see 13.4) of the second verb is used instead of the serial construction with identical verb forms:

(251) *Ó* *tá-nə̰̄* *drɛ̰̄* **wō-nə̰̄* */ *wō /* *OK wō-yà.*
3SG:PST+ go-PRF work do-PRF do[BSQ] do-GL
'He went and worked / He went to work'.

13.4. Converb constructions

A goal converb can depend on three verbs: with *tá* 'to go' and *nū̱* 'to come' it describes the goal of movement; with *bɔ̄* 'to come from' it depicts the subject's activity at the point of departure:

(252a) *Ŋ́* *nú̱* *drù-yâ.*
1SG:PST+ come:L walk-GL
'I came to walk'.

(252b) *(*Ŋ́* *drɛ̱̄* *wò* *drù-yâ).*
1SG:PST+ work do:L walk-GL
('I worked to walk'.)

(253) *Ŋ́* *bɔ́* *drù-yâ.*
1SG:PST+ come.from:L walk-GL
'I came from a walk'.

The goal converb cannot be separated from the motion verb by any constituent, behaving as a typical argument, rather than a modifier (see 12.2; compare (Gusev 2004)).

As mentioned in 6.2, the locative nominalization in *–ya* can be used to express action simultaneity, although this usage is rare:

(254) *Ŋ-ó* *jàtèlí* *kɛ́-ló* *drù-yá.*
1SG-ST+ thought V-PROG walk-PLC
'I am thinking while walking'.

13.5. Temporal and conditional clauses

This section describes subordinate clauses that precede the main clause and are structurally outside of it. Goal and complement clauses that are embedded inside the main clause have aleady been characterized; interestingly, the preposed vs. embedded subordinate clauses are marked with two distinct positional classes of complementizers. Embedded clauses (such as goal clauses) have a complementizer on the left edge; preposed subordinate clauses have a complementizer on the right edge. The distinction follows the predictions of J. Hawkins' theory of word order whereby the head of a subordinate constituent should gravitate towards linear proximity to the head of the superordinate phrase (Hawkins 1990).

13.5.1. Temporal clause: the topic construction. It is noteworthy that two common constructions (not counting juxtaposition) that express temporal relations between clauses are marked exacly like information structure relations of topic and focus. The main temporal complementizer is *nɑ̱́*, identical to the topic marker:

(255) *Gbɔ̃̌ŋ̀ ó tá pɔ̄ú ná̰ ó zrá klɛ́ŋ́ nı̰̀ wó.*
Gbong 3SG:PST+ go field TOP 3SG:PST+ get.lost forest DEF IN
‘Gbong went to the field and got lost in the forest’ (literally: ‘When Gbong went to the field, he got lost in the forest’. Beng’s fields are often located quite far from their villages, and there are even special temporary settlements for people working in those remote fields.)

(256) *Ŋ́ nṵ́ ná̰ ŋ́ zrô.*
1SG:PST+ come:L TOP 1SG:PST+ wash:L
‘I came and washed’ (literally: ‘When I came, I washed’).

The selection of TAM values in the main clause (after *ná̰*) follows general TAM semantics. TAM marking in the embedded clause adheres to special rules. If the situation of the subordinate clause precedes that of the main clause, as in (256), the preterite construction is used in the subordinate clause. Simultaneity of the two situations is marked in the subordinate clause by the future (sic!) construction, which has in this case progressive interpretation, or with a semantically appropriate construction with default present time reference (stative, adverbial clause, etc.). Clearly, this usage of the future construction reflects the fact that the future construction historically had a progressive meaning, even though it was replaced in the core progressive contexts by a newly grammaticized form in *-lɛló*, and was only retained in subordinate contexts and as a future form. Compare (255) and (257a):

(257a) *Gbɔ̃̌ŋ̀ ò-ó tá pɔ̄ú ná̰ ó zrá klɛ́ŋ́ nı̰̀ wó.*
Gbong 3SG-ST+ go field TOP 3SG:PST+ get.lost forest DEF IN
‘Gbong got lost when he was going to the field’.

(257b) *Ŋ-ó klóó ná̰, ŋ̄ dā ò*
1SG-ST+ little TOP 1SG mother 3SG:HAB+
gbéné lὲ zɔ̰̀ fɛ̰́ dōdō.
manioc DEF pound day some
‘When I was little my mother would pound manioc sometimes’.

Finally, conditional mood is used in the sense of habitual aspect:

(258) *Gbɔ̃̌ŋ̀ ô tá pɔ̄ú ná̰ ò zrà klɛ́ŋ́ nı̰̀ wó.*
Gbong 3SG:CND+ go field TOP 3SG:HAB+ get.lost:L forest DEF IN
‘When Gbong goes to the field he usually gets lost in the forest’.

Particle *fɛ̰́* when added to a temporal clause gives it a conditional flavor, which can be expressed in English with the complementizer *since*:

(259) *[Fɛ̰ ā pè wà-ā tá ɛ́ nɑ̰́],* *dé*
Rel 3SG:PST+3 say:L 3SG-ST- go NEG TOP who

ó blɔ̄ nɑ̰̀ ò à bɛ̄ srá ɛ̄?
ST+ here for.to 3SG:HAB+ 3SG trace take FOC

'Since he said he's not going, who's here to replace him?'

13.5.2. Temporal subordinate clause: the focus construction. Temporal sequence of two clauses can also be marked by a special construction marked in the same way as the focus contruction: clause A + *ɲɛ̰* + clause C + *ɛ̄*, meaning 'A, then C'. Example:

(260) *[Ŋó kpɑ̰̀ŋ́ nʊ̰̀ŋ̀ ŋò srà] ɲɛ̰*
3PL:PST whip PL 3PL take:L FOC

[ŋó nʊ̰́ ɑ̰̀ŋmô mɛ̰̀ kpɑ̰̀] ɛ̄.
3PL:PST+ come:L hyena beat:L much FOC

'They took whips and then came and beat the hyena hard'.

13.5.3. Conditional clause. The structure of conditional clauses is protasis + conditional complementizer + apodosis. There are two conditional complementizers, *déɛ̄*, used with protasis in affirmative polarity and *nɪ̰̄*, used with negated protasis. Before the protasis one can also find an optional marker *fɛ̰* or *ò dɔ̄ kɛ̄*, literally 'let it be set that…'

TAM marking in the apodosis follows the general semantics of TAM. Protasis exhibits some special rules of TAM marking:

- in case of a condition in the past or present that the speaker believes can be true ('real conditional'), the same TAM constructions are used as in independent clauses:

(261) *Fɛ̰ wǎ mlɔ̰́ à lō ɛ́ nɪ̰̄*
Rel 3SG:PST- meet:L 3SG with NEG if.NEG

wà-ā à jrɛ́ŋ́ dɔ̰̄-lɛ̀ ɛ́.
3SG-ST- 3SG enough know-RES NEG

'If he didn't meet her he doesn't know much' (the protasis exhibits regular preterite construction);

- in case of a condition in the future or a habitual condition without concrete time reference ('potential conditional'), protasis is marked with conditional mood (or more rarely with the appropriate indicative TAM constructions, future or habitual):

(262a) *Fɛ̰ ô srǒ déɛ̄ ŋó nʊ̰̄ gbɔ̀.*
Rel 3SG:CND arrive if 1SG-ST+ come also

'If he comes I am coming too'.

(262b) *Mḭ̄ gō sɔ̰̀ŋ̀ mà̰ dɛ́ɛ̄ Ècí ɛ̀ ó mḭ̄ yē-lɛ̀.*
2SG:CND hide person CONT if sky DEF ST+ 2SG see-RES
'If you hide from people, God still sees you;'

• in case of a condition that the speaker believes to be false (counterfactual condition), protasis is marked with optative mood when referring to past events, or appropriate indicative forms when referring to the present. Besides TAM, counterfactual conditionals are obligatorily marked with particle *ŋ́gǒ* after the conditional complementizer (this particle can also optionally appear with potential future conditions that only possibly can be false). Example:

(263) *Ŋ̀ yí ɲḭ́-lɛ́ lú dɛ́ɛ̄*
1SG:HAB+ water cool-NMLZ buy[BSQ] if

ŋ́gǒ wálí wā ŋ̄ wɔ̄lì drɛ̄ ɛ́.
NGO money ST- 1SG POSS anymore NEG
'If I had bought cold water, I wouldn't have money anymore'.

(protasis is marked with optative mood expressed by a combination of a habitual subject pronoun with the base form of the verb).

13.6. Relative clause

Discussion in this section follows (Paperno 2008b), omitting the relativizing function of nominalizations that have been briefly characterized in sections 6.2, 6.3, 6.6, and 6.7.

13.6.1. Head-external relative construction. Relative clauses are marked with the combination of a preposed particle *fɛ̰̄* (which can also be thought of as a relative determiner, see 13.6.2 for arguments to this effect) and a postposed marker *ná̰* that equals the topic marker. The *ná̰* element can be omitted before a pause, and is always omitted before another *ná̰* marker in the topic-marking function. The relativized position in the relative clause is filled by a resumptive pronoun that agrees in person and number with the head NP if a pronoun is possible in the given position or left empty otherwise. Rarely, when the noun phrase is topicalized and separated by a pause, the complementizer can, but does not have to, be omitted (264b).

As mentioned above, the most common complementizer in relative clauses is *ná̰*. Relative clauses can also employ a conditional complementizer *dɛ́ɛ̄ /nḭ̄* (*dɛ́ɛ̄* occurs after affirmative conditional clauses and *nḭ̄* after negative conditional clauses). Relative clauses with the conditional (*dɛ́ɛ̄*) differ in meaning from the main type of relative clauses (with *ná̰*) and include a conditional element in their semantics (246d). Unlike in relative clauses with *ná̰*, the statement expressed by a relative clause with a

conditional is not presupposed to be true. Relative clauses with *déɛ̄* (examples 264d,e) can be roughly rendered in English using words *whenever*, *whichever*, etc. All of the following examples come from real texts; all of them feature topicalization of the whole relative construction.

The conditional construction can be used to modify a noun with reference to a future event (264e), even when there is no sense of uncertainty as to whether this event will happen (uncertainty as to whether condition would hold seems to be a common meaning element of English conditionals). Compare (264e) to an analogous example but with a past event in the relative clause (264f), and no conditionality involved (the relative clause is presupposed true); *nɑ́* is used in this case. Examples:

(264a) *Ó blànâ [fɛ̰ ŋó à klà Kùàsí dɪ́ nɑ́] klʊ̀ɑ̰̀.*
3SG:PST+ banana Rel 3SG:PST+ 3SG put Kouassi APUD TOP steal:L
'He stole the banana that had been put next to Kouassi'.

(264b) *Zrë [fɛ̰ mɪ̰-ó à yé]$_i$ mɪ̀ mɪ̰ [zrë bì-è]$_i$ yā.*
way Rel 2SG-ST+ 3SG on 2SG:HAB+ 2SG way this-DEF walk
'Walk on the way you're standing on'.

(264c) *Ḭ̄ bábá nʊ̀ŋ̀ [fɛ̰ mɪ́ ŋò dè nɑ́], ŋmā ŋò yɔ̀.*
1SG sheep PL Rel 2SG:PST+ 3PL kill:L TOP 1SG:give 3PL other
'Give me the replacement for the sheep you killed'.

(264d) *Pɔ̄bɛ̄ [fɛ̰ ŏ yōnó déɛ̄] wà zìn gō é.*
scar Rel 3SG:ST+ forehead if 3SG:HAB- can:L hide NEG
'You can't hide a scar on your forehead' (literally: 'Whichever scar is on a forehead, it can't be hidden').

(264e) *Yrámɑ̰̀ [fɛ̰ bàāŋ̀ɑ́nɪ́ŋ́yé lè ô pɔ́*
time Rel end.of.rain.season DEF 3SG:CND come
déɛ̄], wà mɪ̀ wálé lè gá.
if 3SG:HAB- 2SG:HAB+ yam DEF pick
'When the rain season ends, gather yams' (literally: 'whenever there's end of the rain season, gather yams').

(264f) *Gblē [fɛ̰ ŋ́ zīē yɑ̰̈ ló wē cà*
yesterday Rel 1SG:PST+ kapok this on there look
sɪ́ŋ́ nɑ́] ŋ́ dóbà dō yè wē.
closely TOP 1SG:PST+ monkey one see:L there
'Yesterday while watching this kapok tree closely, I saw a monkey there'.

13.6.2. Head-internal fɛ̰-construction with dɛ́ɛ̄ and other arguments for treating fɛ̰-constructions as originally head-internal. Some properties of *fɛ̰* suggest that it is not simply a relative clause marker but a relative determiner. For instance, before *fɛ̰*, the definite article *lɛ̀* is blocked. After a demonstrative, *lɛ̀* is generally required, but *lɛ̀* is absent in the presence of a relative clause, cf. (265a) vs. (265b).

(265a) *[Pɔ̄ bì fɛ̰ mɪ̰́ à lù nɑ̰́]$_{NP}$, wà-ā gɛ̄ŋ̄ ɛ́.*
thing this Rel 2SG:PST+ 3SG buy:L TOP 3SG-ST- good NEG
'This thing that you bought, it is not pretty'.

(265b) *Pɔ̄ bì *(lɛ̀) wà-ā gɛ̄ŋ̄ ɛ́.*
thing this DEF 3SG-ST- good NEG
'This thing is not pretty'.

The interaction of *fɛ̰*-relativization with the expression of the definite article can be explained if *fɛ̰* is, at least historically, a determiner occupying the same position as the article *lɛ̀*. And *fɛ̰* does occupy the position of a determiner (after the head noun) in a rare variant of the relativization construction with *dɛ́ɛ̄*, in which a head NP with *fɛ̰* is found within the relative clause (such constructions are head internal):

(265c) *[Ô [pɔ̄ fɛ̰]$_{NP}$ srá dɛ́ɛ̄] wà klà à bɛ̄ló ɛ́.*
3SG:CND thing Rel take if 3SG:HAB- put:L 3SG place NEG
'He doesn't put things where they belong' (literally: 'whatever thing he takes, he doesn't put it in its place').

(265d) *[Tɔ̰̄ wā [sɔ̀ŋ̀ fɛ̰]$_{NP}$ mɑ̀ ɛ́ nɪ̄]*
curse ST- person Rel on NEG if
yròbítà wà sɔ̀bì ɛ́.
water.snake 3SG:HAB-3 bite:L NEG
'If there's no curse on a person, a water snake won't bite him' (literally: 'If a curse is not on whichever person…').

(265e) *[Mɪ̂ wlō [gbɛ̌ fɛ̰]$_{NP}$ wó dɛ́ɛ̄]*
2SG:CND move village Rel in if
ŋà gbōpì à yé ɛ́.
3PL:HAB- defecate:L 3SG in NEG
'One doesn't defecate in the village one is moving from' (literally: 'whatever village you are moving from …') .

These examples suggest that even when the head noun is outside the relative clause, *fɛ̰* might still be a determiner of the head NP.

Another instance of head internal relativization can be seen in relative clauses with presentative markers like *ɛ̀* 'this is':

(265f) *[[pɔ̄ fɛ̰̄]$_{NP}$ ɛ̀ ná̰]$_{Rel}$, wà-ā pɔ̄ bì-lɛ̀ dɔ̰̄-lɛ̀ ɛ́*
thing Rel this.is TOP 3SG-ST- thing this-DEF know-RES NEG
'This thing (lit. the thing that this is), he doesn't know this thing'.

Since *ɛ̀* cannot function as a full sentence on its own, we have to assign this relative clause a structure where the head noun is its subject. This construction is essentially idiomatic, functioning as a complex demonstrative. Such demonstrative relativizations form a closed class, so they could be treated as lexicalized relics of head-internal *fɛ̰̄*-relativization.

An additional piece of evidence comes from topicalization of phrases modified by relative clauses. Such topicalized phrases are never accompanied by an additional topic marker (*ná̰*), to which the complementizer *ná̰* at the end of relative clauses is phonologically identical. The topic marker *ná̰* can often be omitted, but it is usually present in topicalization of adverbial elements (265h). However, such a topic marker is not introduced if the topicalized adverbial is modified by a relative clause, compare (265g) vs. (265h). Topic markers are not used after relative clauses with the complementizer *déɛ̄*, either, compare (265i) vs. (265j).

(265g) *[Flɔ́ɔ̰̄ [fɛ̰̄ à lɛ́ɲ̀ nɪ̰̀ ó ŋ̄ wɔ̄lì ná̰]$_{Rel}$]$_{NP}$,*
today Rel 3SG child DEF ST+ 1SG at TOP

ŋ̄ vɪ̰̄-lí ɛ̀.
1SG love-AG this.is
'Today when I have her daughter she is my friend'.

(265h) *[Flɔ́ɔ̰̄]$_{NP}$ ná̰, ŋ̄ vɪ̰̄-lí ɛ̀.*
today TOP 1SG love-AG this.is
'Today she is my friend'.

(265i) *[Fɛ́ dō]$_{NP}$ ná̰ mɪ̰̄ nà̰ à lō kà blè mṵ̂ɲ́.*
day one TOP 2SG and 3SG with 2SG:HAB+ agree:L again
'Some day you and she agree again'.

(265j) *[Fɛ́ [fɛ̰̄ à tètè ó à bō à yúó*
day Rel 3SG self 3SG:CND+ 3SG take 3SG mouth

kē mà̰ sí nā̰ déɛ̄]$_{Rel}$]$_{NP}$
that 1SG:PST+3 take Perf if

mɪ̄	*nə̀*	*à*	*lō*	*kà*	*blè*	*mʊ̂ŋ́?*
2SG	and	3SG	with	2SG:HAB+	agree:L	again

'The day she (mother-in-law) says "I took her (your wife) away", will you and she agree again?'

The facts outlined above can be given a straightforward interpretation: the relativization marker *fɛ̰* is, at least historically, a determiner; the most widespread relativization strategy features an extraction of the NP with *fɛ̰* from the relative clause.

The original syntax of relative clauses could have been correlative which is still found in the cases discussed above, examples (265c-265f):

$[\ldots[\text{N } \text{f}\tilde{\text{ɛ}}]_{NP} \ldots \text{Comp}]_S\ S_2$

with the option of topicalizing the *fɛ̰* noun phrase:

$[[\text{N } \text{f}\tilde{\text{ɛ}}]_{NP} \ldots \text{Comp}]_S\ S_2$,cf. example (265j).

These types of sentences could have been reanalyzed as involving a topicalized noun phrase with a relative clause, extracted from the main clause S_2:

$[\text{N } [\text{f}\tilde{\text{ɛ}} \ldots \text{Comp}]_S]_{NP}\ S_2$

Undoing such topicalization gives the basic relativization pattern:

$[\ldots[\text{N } [\text{f}\tilde{\text{ɛ}} \ldots \text{Comp}]_S]_{NP}\ldots]_{S2}$, see example (264a).

The development proposed here is reminiscent of the scenario proposed by Nikitina (2012) for what she labels as 'the rise of clause-internal correlatives' in Southeastern Mande languages.

To summarize the argument of this section, relative clauses in Beng are originally head-internal, at least in the historical sense. The argument can also be interpreted in favor of analyzing relative clauses as originally head-internal in syntactic derivation (Kayne 1994). Historical and derivational interpretations of head-internal syntax of relative clauses are compatible but not isomorphic, reminiscent of the relation between historical and derivational processes in phonology.

There is one argument in favor of the historical rather than synchronic interpretation of the head-internal status of Beng relative clauses. One important piece of evidence used in the argument above was that the determiner *lɛ̀* is not used in the presence of a relative clause marker *fɛ̰*. However, the definite article *nɪ̰* (variant of *lɛ̀* after /ŋ/, see 8.3), is attested before *fɛ̰*:

(265k)

ŋ̄	*baba*	*lɛ̀*	*à*	*sə́nɪ̄ŋ̄*	*lɛ́*	*[à*
1SG	sheep	DEF	3SG	mark	3SG:PST+:COP:L	3SG

blɛ̀ŋ̀	*trōŋ̄*	*nı̰̀*	*[fɛ̰̄*	*ò*	*cɟ́-lɛ̀*	*nɟ́]]$_{NP}$*	*ɛ̄.*
left	ear	DEF	Rel	3SG:ST+	cut-RES	TOP	FOC

'The mark of my sheep is its left ear which is cut'.

Examples like this suggest that the incompatibility of *fɛ̰̄* and determiners is not strict, and the determiner status of *fɛ̰̄* might not be synchronically valid but could rather be a historical relic.

14. Information structure

This section gives a preliminary overview of the ways to express information structure in Beng. I do not attempt to undertake a proper semantic analysis of the constructions in question, only providing their rough equivalents in English.

Usually, a constituent F marked for its information structure status is located before the rest of the sentence S. If F is a verb phrase, which has to take the form of nominalization when topicalized or focalized, compare (266), F is replaced in the main clause S by the verb *wō* 'to do' in the appropriate form with a 3SG pronoun as a direct object. If F is a nominal or an adverbial constituent, the position that the constituent F would have occupied in a communicatively neutral sentence S' is left filled by a coreferent personal pronoun, except for the secondary object position from which personal pronouns are banned. Examples:

(266a) *$_{TOP}$[Sàāŋ̀ yrí lɛ̀]$_i$ $_{FOC}$[bàāŋ̀ wó]$_k$ ɲɛ̰̄ [ò$_i$ bà Ø$_k$] ɛ̄.*

saang	tree	DEF	dry.season	IN	FOC	3SG:HAB+	yield:L	FOC

'It's during the dry season that the *sàāŋ̀* tree yields fruit'.

(266b) *[Pı̰́ŋ́ cɟ́-lɛ́]$_i$ ɲɛ̰̄ [ó à $_i$ wò] ɛ̄.*

grass	cut-NMLZ	FOC	3SG:PST+	3SG	do:L	FOC

'It's mow that he did'.

The case described above, where the pragmatically marked constituent F can be inserted into a vacant position in the sentence S, is typical but far from universal. In reality many examples would not support such insertion. Sometimes the position in S is filled by a full-fledged syntactic constituent coreferent to F[18]:

[18] An anonymous reviewer notes that example 267 might not illustrate topicalization but a special correlative construction. Indeed, as discussed in 13.6 above, fronted relative constructions in Beng can have special properties, such as availability of complementizer *dɛ́ɛ̄* 'if' and possibility of head-internal structure. These properties can be seen as manifesting an independent correlative construction. On the other hand, in most cases correlatives are indistinguishable from the topicalization of an NP with a relative clause, and

(267) *[Zrë fɛ̰ mɪ̰-ó à yé]$_i$ mɪ̀ mɪ̰ [zrë bì-è]$_i$ yā.*
road Rel 2SG-ST+ 3SG mouth 2SG:HAB+ 2SG road this-DEF walk
'The road you stand on, walk this road'.

Second, the position F can host a whole clause that cannot be substituted for any constituent in S, compare a typical folktale ending:

(268) *[Nə̀ gə̄mlə̀ ò nū gʊ̄ə̀ klɛ́ŋ́ wó nə́]$_{TOP}$*
for.to chimpanzee 3SG:HAB+ come stay forest IN TOP

[à dɪ́-lɛ ó bɔ́ kpɪ̀ŋ́ mə̀]$_{FOC}$
3SG cause-DEF 3SG:PST+ come.from:L door CONT

ɲɛ̄ gə̄mlə̀ ó gʊ́ə̀ klɛ́ŋ́ wó ɛ̄.
FOC chimpanzee 3SG:PST+ stay:L forest IN FOC
'So Chimpanzee stayed in the forest because of the story with the door' (literally: topic 'For Chimpanzee to come and stay in the forest', focus 'the reason for this comes from the door', main clause '(that) Chimpanzee stayed in the forest').

Example (268) is quite typical: the content of a sentence can be divided entirely into the topic and the focus; the topic and the focus (expressed here as full clauses) are marked appropriately, followed by a syntactically obligatory but semantically redundant main clause that basically repeats the topic.

14.1. Topic

Let us now turn to specific information structure marking constructions of Beng. The first one, topic, is expressed by particle *nə́* placed after the topicalized phrase F that precedes the main clause S.

Information structure notions are notoriously hard to characterize precisely. The topicalized phrase F in Beng signals the theme of utterance, its 'aboutness'. In English, one analog of the Beng topic is the sentence-initial position of sentential modifiers as in *At the lab we conducted a few experiments* (as opposed to the more neutral *We conducted a few experiments at the lab*). Examples of topics:

(269) *[Gblɛ̄ nə́] tòŋòbî plāŋ̄ ŋó pá cēŋ̄ mə̀.*
yesterday TOP car two 3PL:PST+ hit:L each.other CONT
'**Yesterday** two cars collided'.

---

even, as argued in 13.6, the main relativization strategy probably arose in Beng through a reinterpretation of the correlative construction as a topicalized NP with a relative clause.

(270)

[Ḭ̄ŋ	*drɔ̀ɲḭ́*	*púú*	*lɛ̀]$_i$*	*gblí*	*dṵ̄-nā̰*	*à$_i$*	*wó.*
1SG	shirt	white	DEF	dirt	get.in-PRF	3SG	IN

‘My white shirt got dirty’. (lit.: ‘My white shirt, dirt got in it’.)

As (270) shows, the topic marker *ná̰* is sometimes omitted. Conditioning factors for its omission are yet to be studied. I observe preliminarily that topicalized noun phrases tend to be unmarked, while other types of constituents, in particular adverbial phrases (including temporal and locative) tend to have an overt topic marker.

14.2. Contrastive topic

The contrasted NP, which can be doubled by personal pronouns following general rules, occupies the possessor position of the vacuous noun *pɔ̄* ‘thing’ which is followed either by the definite article *lɛ̀* or by *drɛ̄ ná̰* and the main clause S. Contrastive topics do not have to be full NPs but can also be pronominal; combinations of personal pronouns with *pɔ̄* ‘thing’ are possessive pronouns, in which the final /ŋ/ obligatorily (1SG) or optionally (1PL) fuses with the initial /p/ (*mɔ̄, ā̰ŋpɔ̄//ā̰mɔ̄*). *pɔ̄ lɛ̀* can be translated ‘as for’; *pɔ̄ drɛ̄ ná̰* marks contrastive change of topic, translated roughly ‘and as for’:

(271)

Mɔ̄	*lɛ̀*	*ŋ́*	*nṵ̄-nā̰.*
1SG:POS	DEF	1SG:PST+	come-PRF

‘As for me, I have come’.

(272)

Dóbǎ	*pɔ̄*	*lɛ̀*	*wà*	*fâ̰*	*gblɛ̰̌-ɛ̀n*
monkey	POS	DEF	3SG:HAB+3	crack:L	squirrel-DEF

pɔ̄	*drɛ̄*	*ná̰*	*wà*	*sò*	*lóló*	*wē.*
POS	EMPH	TOP	3SG:HAB+3	chew:L	on.TOP	there

{in a discussion of animals that steal corn} ‘Monkeys tear it apart and squirrels eat it on trees’.

14.3. Focus construction

The focused constituent F is marked by a postposed particle *ɲɛ̰̄* and the main sentence S is followed by particle *ɛ̄* or *nâ̰*, so the two markers of focus embrace the main sentence. Analogs of focus construction in English are sentence-level pitch accent and it-clefts. Example of a focus structure:

(273)

[Gbè	*bɛ́~bɛ̄*	*ŋò*	*yé]$_i$*	*ná̰*	*[síéɲá̰á̰ŋ́tīī*
village	big~PL	3PL	mouth	TOP	coal
lō]$_i$	*ɲɛ̰̄*	*[ŋò*	*síé*	*tù ∅$_i$ ∅$_i$]*	*ɛ̄,*
with	FOC	3PL:HAB+	fire	plant:L	FOC

[gbè	*plé~plé*	*è*	*ŋò*	*yé]$_i$*	*nɑ́*	*[wlàŋ̀*
village	small~PL	DEF	3PL	mouth	TOP	wood

lō]$_j$	*ɲɛ̄*	*[ŋò*	*síé*	*tù ∅$_j$ ∅$_i$]*	*ɛ̄.*
with	FOC	3PL:HAB+	fire	plant:L	FOC

'In towns, they make fire with coal; in villages, they make fire with wood'.

The focused construction accompanied by preposed *sɑ́pē* 'except' expresses the meaning of 'only' in Beng:

(274) *Sɑ́pē wálé ɲɛ̄ mɑ̀ blè ɛ̄.*
except yam FOC 1SG:HAB+3 eat:L FOC
'I eat only yams'.

14.4. Non-syntactic expression of emphasis

The semantic effect comparable to that of topicalization and focalization can also be achieved by other means, in particular, by independent personal pronouns (pronouns of the focus series) *in situ*, i.e. in a regular NP position rather than in a topicalized or focalized position. Independent pronouns in NP positions are accompanied in NP positions by pronoun doubling, compare:

(275) *Sēsē ò mɪ̄ɑ̄ mɪ̄ sò.*
every 3SG:HAB+ 2SG:EMPH 2SG chew:L
'You, everyone bites'. or 'It's you that everyone bites'.

(276) *Mɪ̄ɑ̄ mɪ́ nū-nɑ̄.*
2SG:EMPH 2SG:PST+ come-PRF
'You, you came'.

(277) *Ɑ̀ɲɑ̄ ó nū-nɑ̄.*
3SG:EMPH 3SG:PST+ come-PRF
'Him, he came' or 'It is him who came'.

Exceptions to overt pronoun doubling are 1SG and 3SG pronouns that are not doubled by overt non-subject series of pronouns, apparently for phonological reasons.

The dectic marker *blɔ̄* 'right here', 'right there' used after a locative phrase has a similar effect to focusing the locative phrase:

(278) *Lɔ́mléŋ nʊ̀ŋ̀ ŋó kpɛ́ ɲémán blɔ̄ gblɛ̄.*
children PL 3PL:PST+ play:L 1SG:before there.FOC yesterday
'Children played right in front of my door yesterday'.

(279) *ŋ̀ɔ̀ klá mī̱ dí̱ blɔ̄.*
3PL put 2SG APUD here.FOC
'Put them right in front of you'.

(280) *Kàlà bɛ́ɛ̄ lɛ̀ ò-ó blɔ̄.*
old big DEF 3SG-ST+ there.FOC
'The elder is right there', compare

(281) *Kàlà bɛ́ɛ̄ lɛ̀ ò-ó wɛ̄.*
old big DEF 3SG-ST+ there
'The elder is there'.

15. Appendix. Sample texts in Beng

15.1. Text in transcription: Two people on a trip

The humorous story was recorded by Wolfgang Paesler in November 1981 from Kouassi Jean Clement, transcribed by Kouadio Kouadio Destin, and translated by Kouadio Kouadio Patrice into French.

1. *Sɔ̰̀ŋ̀ plāŋ ŋó tá blī-mà̰.*
person two 3PL:PST+ go:L place-CONT
'Two people went somewhere'.

Commentary. *tá blīmà̰* is an idiomatic expression 'to take a trip', literally 'to go someplace', related to the usage of *blī* 'place' as an indefinite pronoun.

2. *Ŋó sró wē ná̰ ŋó ŋò gbà pɔ̄-blē-lɛ̀.*
3PL:PST+ arrive:L there TOP 3PL:PST+ 3PL give:L thing-eat-NMLZ
'When they got there they were given food'.

Commentary. *pɔ̄blēlɛ̀* is structurally relativization of the direct object using event nominalization, literally 'thing eaten', or 'eating something', compare 6.2.

3. *Dō ȁ pè sá̰ ó ká̰-nā̰.*
one 3SG:PST+3 say:L that 3SG:PST+ get.satiated-PRF
'One of them said he was full'.

Commentary. The portemanteau pronoun *ȁ* contains the obligatory 3rd person direct object of the speech verb, literally 'He said it that he was full'.

4. *Dō-lɛ̀ drɛ̄ ȁ wɔ̄ pɔ̀ ó pɔ̄-lɛ̀ blè.*
one-DEF EMPH 3SG:PST+3 hand wash:L 3SG:PST+ thing-DEF eat:L
'The other one washed his hands and ate'.

Commentary. Here, the portemanteau pronoun *ȁ* contains a possessive pronoun, literally '**He** washed **his** hand'. Note juxtapotion of two clauses as the translation equivalent of verb phrase conjunction. Aslo notable is the usage of *drɛ̄* as a topic switch marker.

5. *Gɛ̄ŋ kló ná̰ dō lɛ̀ ó yúó bò.*
beautiful little TOP do DEF 3SG:PST+ oral.cavity extract:L
'After a little while, the first one yawned'.

Commentary. *Gɛ̄ŋ kló* is an idiomatic expression 'a little later'. It is marked by an overt topic marker, as usual with topicalized adverbial elements. *yúó bō* is an idiomatic expression 'to yawn'. The semantic motivation of the expression is transparent: when someone yawns, the oral cavity becomes visible.

6. *Pɔ̄-blē-lí lɛ̀ ā̀ là kēsá̱ ó lɛ́ lɔwā.*
   thing-eat-AG DEF 3SG:PST+3 ask:L that 3SG:PST+ COP:L how
   'The one who had eaten asked him what the matter was'.

Commentary. *ó lɛ́ lɔwā?* is the idiomatic Beng expression for 'why', literally 'How is it?'. The portemanteau pronoun *ā* includes a direct object: "**He** asked **him**". Note the specific event reference in the interpretation of the agent nominalization in *-lí*.

7. *À pè: pɔ̄pɔ̄.*
   3SG:PST+3 say:L nothing
   'He said: «Nothing.»'

Commentary. *pɔ̄pɔ̄* 'nothing' is derived by reduplication from *pɔ̄* 'thing'.

8. *Ó yúó bò mû̱ŋ́.*
   3SG:PST+ oral.cavity extract:L again
   'He yawned again'.

9. *Pɔ̄-blē-lí lɛ̀ ā̀ là mû̱ŋ́, ā̀ pè: pɔ̄pɔ̄.*
   thing-eat-AG DEF 3SG:PST+3 ask:L again 3SG:PST+3 say:L nothing
   'The one who had eaten asked him again', 'and he said: «Nothing.»'

10. *ŋ̀ɔ̀-ó blɔ̄ dɛ́ɛ̄ ā̀ pè yī ó ŋ̄ dɛ̀.*
    3PL-ST+ there.FOC if 3SG:PST+3 say:L hunger 3SG:PST+ 1SG kill:L
    'They were there, and the other one said he was hungry'.

Commentary. Here complementizer *dɛ́ɛ̄* 'if' is used in the sense of 'when'. The verb *dɛ̄* (base sense 'to kill') is used in the sense of 'experience' with nouns of feelings and senses like 'hunger', 'fear', 'heat', etc. as subjects, and the experiencer in the direct object position.

11. *Pɔ̄-blē-lí lɛ̀ ā̀ pè*
    thing-eat-AG DEF 3SG:PST+3 say:L
    'The one who had eaten said:'

12. *sá̱ mà̱ pé mī̱ nì̱ ɛ́?*
    that 1SG:PST-3 say:L 2SG BENEF NEG
    'Hadn't I told you?'

Commentary. The structure of the preterite TAM construction is obscured by high tone spread to the verb stem and the tone sandhi, whereby instead of the original *mă pè* (LH L) we see *mà̱ pé* (L H).

13. *Sá̰ ŋô tá blī mà̰ ná̰,*
that 3PL:CND+ go place CONT TOP
'That when one goes somewhere',

Commentary. Conditional mood is used here according to the general rule of marking habitual aspect in temporal and conditional clauses.

ŋà yḛ̀nrè pɔ̄-blē-lɛ̀ lō ɛ́.
3PL:HAB- be.ashame:L thing-eat-NMLZ with NEG
'one is not shy of eating'.

Commentary. The verb *yḛ̄nré* selects postposition *lō*. Note the interpretation of *pɔ̄blēlɛ̀* contrasting with the object nominalization interpretation in sentence 2.

14. *Ŋó zrɛ̈ ɛ̀ pòpò nyɛ̰̄ ŋó tá ɛ̄ ná̰,*
3PL:PST+ road DEF request:L FOC 3PL:PST+ go:L FOC TOP
'When they said goodbye and went away',

Commentary. To "request the road" is a common formula for guests asking permission to leave from their host in West Africa. Here the focus (and the topic) constructions are used to mark temporal sequence of events.

à gɔ̄ló lɛ̀ ó bédà zrɛ̈ lɛ̀ yé,
3SG friend DEF 3SG:PST+ lie:L road DEF mouth
'his friend lay down on the road',

Commentary. *zrɛ̈* is one of the nouns that requires locative postposition *yé* without the 'on the edge' meaning of the latter.

15. *nà̰ wà zḭ̀ yā drɛ̄ ɛ́.*
DT 3SG:HAB- can:L walk anymore NEG
'he could not walk anymore'.

Commentary. Particle *drɛ̄* is the way to express 'anymore' in Beng in the context of the negative particle *ɛ́*.

15.2. Text in orthography: Chimpanzee's house

This folktale was recorded by Wolfgang Paesler in November 1981 from Kouassi Jean Clement, transcribed ny Kouadio Kouadio Destin, and translated by Kouadio Kouadio Patrice into French. For comparison with 15.1, this text is reproduced in the orthography (Kouadio, Kouakou 1997) and in phonological transcription, to provide a sample of this orthography.

1. *Ganmlàn o gbèe gbɔ.*
   Gā̱mlà̱ ó gbě gbɔ́.
   chimpanzee ST+ village old
   'Of old, Chimpanzee used to live in the village'.

   Commentary. See 12.1.2 for discussion of time reference.

2. *O suo dɔ̀*
   Ó súó dɔ̀
   3SG:PST house build:L

   'He built a house',

fɛn sɔ̀nŋ̀ nùnŋ̀ ŋo tà à cà nan,
fɛ̄ sɔ̄ŋ̀ nū̱ŋ̀ ŋó tà à cà nā̱́,
Rel person PL 3PL:PST+ go:L 3SG watch:L TOP

'and when people came to see it',

Commentary. The sentence features a serial construction where one subject pronoun shares two verbs in the same (low tone) form.

3. *ŋo à pè san*
   ŋó à pè sā̱́
   3PL:PST+ 3SG say:L that

   'They said:

ganmlàn, min suo lɛ̀ o lɛ̀ gɛŋ.
gā̱mlà̱, mī̱ súó lɛ̀ ó lɛ̀ gɛ̄ŋ̄.
chimpanzee 2SG house DEF 3SG:PST+ COP:L beautiful

'Chimpanzee, your house is nice'.

4. *Drɛ o guan nan pɔ do.*
   Drɛ̄ ó gū̱ā̱-nā̱ pɔ̄ dō.
   but 3SG:PST+ remain-PRF thing one

   'But one thing is missing'.

Commentary. Note the postverbal subject NP with a preverbal subject pronoun, peculiarity of the verb *gū̱à̱* 'to remain'.

5. *Ganmlàn aà pè san: pɔ̀ pɔ́ pɔ̀?*
   Gə̱mlə̱̀ ā pè sə̱́: pɔ̀ pɔ́ pɔ̀?
   chimpanzee 3SG:PST+3 say:L that like what like
   'Chimpanzee said: «Like what?»'

   Commentary. *pɔ̀ X pɔ̀* 'like X' expresses comparison in Beng, usually occurs in nominal positions.

6. *Sɔ̀nŋ̀ nùnŋ̀ ŋo à pè san pɔ̀ kpìnŋ pɔ̀.*
   Sɔ̰̀ŋ̀ nṵ̀ŋ̀ ŋó à pè sə̱́ pɔ̀ kpí̱ŋ́ pɔ̀.
   person PL 3PL:PST+ 3SG say:L that like door like
   'The people said: "Like a door."

7. *Ganmlàn aà pè san:*
   Gə̱mlə̱̀ ā pè sə̱́:
   chimpanzee 3SG:PST+3 say:L that
   'Chimpanzee said:'

8. *pɔ fɛn ŋà sì kpìnŋ nan,*
   pɔ̄ fɛ̰̄ ŋà sì kpí̱ŋ́ nə̱́,
   thing Rel 3PL:HAB+3 call:L door TOP
   "The thing that they call door,"

manŋ màn nyrɛèn tɔ man sà do ɛ.
mə̱̄ŋ̄ mə̱̀ ɲrɛ̰̄ tɔ́ mə̱̄-sà dō ɛ́.
1SG:FOC 1SG:PST- this name hear-PRF- one NEG
"me, I have never heard this word."

Commentary. *ɲrɛ̰̄* is a demonstrative noun, here used as an appositive modifier of *tɔ́* 'name'. Adverbial *dō*, identical to the numeral 'one', combines with perfect aspect and means 'ever'.

9. *Aà pè san:*
   A̰ pè sə̱́:
   3SG:PST+3 say:L that
   'He said:'

nyrɛèn pɔ drɛn bɛɛ bì-lè màn zin à wo ɛ.
ɲrɛ̰̄ pɔ̄ drɛ̰̄ bɛ́ɛ̄ bì-lè mə̱̀ zḭ̄ à wō ɛ́.
this thing work big this-DEF 1SG:PST- can 3SG do NEG
"This big work, I can't do."

Commentary. Modal *zḭ̄* 'can' is exceptional as it combines with preterite subject pronouns while itself staying in base form, selecting a verb phrase in a base form, and

having present semantics. *zɪ̰̄* is also attested in the regular habitual construction, while still selecting a base form verb phrase.

10. *Nyɛn ganmlàn o wlo*
Ɲɛ̰̄ gə̰̄mlə̰̀ ó wló
FOC chimpanzee 3SG:PST move.out:L
'And Chimpanzee left'

o dà klɛŋ nìn wo ɛ.
ó dà klɛ́ŋ́ nɪ̰̀ wó ɛ̄.
3SG:PST+ reach:L forest DEF IN FOC
'and reached the forest'.

11. *Nàn ganmlàn ò nun guàn klɛŋ wo nan*
Nə̰̀ gə̰̄mlə̰̀ ò nʊ̰̄ gʊ̰̄ə̰̀ klɛ́ŋ́ wó nə́
for.to chimpanzee 3SG:HAB+ come remain forest IN TOP
'For Chimpanzee to stay in the forest',

à din-lɛ̀ o bɔ̀ kpìnŋ màn
à dɪ̰́-lɛ̀ ó bɔ̀ kpɪ̰̀ŋ́ mə̰̀
3SG cause-DEF 3SG:PST+ come.from:L door CONT
'the reason came from the door'

nyɛn ganmlàn o gùàn klɛŋ wo ɛ.
ɲɛ̰̄ gə̰̄mlə̰̀ ó gʊ̰̀ə̰̀ klɛ́ŋ́ wó ɛ̄.
FOC chimpanzee 3SG:PST+ remain:L forest IN FOC
'that Chimpanzee stayed in the forest'.

Commentary. The last sentence of this text was reproduced and discussed earlier as example (268).

16. Appendix. Word lists from Tauxier (1921)

This Appendix reproduces Beng data originally published by Louis Tauxier, as discussed in 3.2.3 above. The data come from a dialect which I label "Beng of Groumania neighborhood" (BG), different from the Modern Ouassadougou Beng (MOB) studied throughout the current work. The novelty of this publication is that all data from Tauxier (1921) are accompanied by MOB equivalents. This is intended to facilitate the use of Tauxier's old but unique data on the BG dialect for modern comparative studies.

16.1. Word list

I list here expressions from Tauxier (1921) in bold in comparison with identical elements from Modern Ouassadougou Beng in italics. In case MOB equivalents are

not related to those reported by Tauxier, they are given in parentheses. I generally retain Tauxier's original French translations, but when the meaning of the MOB equivalent does not exactly correspond to Tauxier's translation, I also provide an English equivalent of the MOB word in single quotes. When the MOB equivalent is unknown, I put a --- mark.

The list also includes information about the borrowing source of Beng words, both where noted by Tauxier and where it was possible to identify otherwise. I acknowledge Valentin Vydrin's help in identifying borrowings from Jula.

aba père *àbá*
Agni Agni ---
agniabiri enterrement *àŋa̰ blī* 'that.Emph bury'
agoba (ou **agogba**) poursuivre ---
alenngué iguane (d'eau) ---
anion lui *àŋa̰* (Emph)
apa lit *àkpâ* 'apatame'
avoninnlè sage ---
ba cuisse *gbá*
ba terre *bā*
baba mouton *bábá*
baba-da mouton, brebis *bábá dā*
babalé, babalegnn mouton, agneau *bábá lɛ́ŋ́*
baba-sia mouton, bélier *bábá síá*
babélé silure ---
bahoum épaule *bàŋ̀* 'bras'
bakaouté singe rouge *(káá)*
bala flûte ---
balanda banane *bláná* < Jula
balanda-ouaporo tô (à la banane) *bláná wápló*
bama, bamon chef de canton *bā mà* 'earth chief'
bân corde *bāŋ̄*
ban tambour gros ---
ban, baon société secrète --- BG < Jula
bandara non musulman *bànrà* 'Senoufo, Djimini, Tagbano'
banga-ouélé grêle *bàŋā wlɛ́*
banguiénn barbe *gbɛ̀ŋ̀ cɛ́ŋ́*
bani indigotier (liane) *bānɛ́ŋ́* 'liane'
banngo cheval *kpa̰ŋ̀ɔ̂* < Baoulé
banngo-da cheval, jument *kpa̰ŋ̀ɔ̂ dā*
banngo-lè cheval, poulain *kpa̰ŋ̀ɔ̂ lɛ́ŋ́*
banngo-nou cheval, pouliche ---
banngo-sia cheval, étalon *kpa̰ŋ̀ɔ̂ síá*
banon-bani caoutchouc (liane à) *bānɛ́ŋ́* 'liana'
batara biche-cochon *bātrā* MOB 'oryx'
batoubatou vite *bàtúbàtú*
bè danser *bɛ̌* '(a) dance'
bé famille totale *gbɛ̌* 'village'
bè fuir, s'enfuir *bɛ̌*
bè tam-tam (danses, etc.) *(mla̰)*
bégnn singe noir *bɛ́ŋ́*
béda coucher (se) *bèdă*
bégnn enfant *bɛ̄ŋ̄* 'fruit'
bégnn trompe *bɛ̀ŋ̀*
béhann-da chèvre *béyàŋ̀ dā*
béha-nnlè chèvre, chevreaux *béyàŋ̀ lɛ́ŋ́*
béha-nou chèvre, chevrette ---
béha-sia chèvre, bouc *béyàŋ̀ síá*
béhian chèvre *béyàŋ̀*
beïgnn menton *gbɛ̀ŋ̀*
bélé chaise *blɛ́ŋ́*

bélé hier *gblɛ̄*
béléfédou rasoir ---
bélenngo nord *blɛ̀ŋ̀ wó* 'on the left'
béléwa van ---
béma, béman chef de famille totale *gbɛ̌ mą̀* 'village chief'
abembousâ pas longtemps *à bɛ̄mō sá (é)* 'it has not been a while'
benndé manioc *gbéné*
béré biche-cochon *blɛ̄* 'duiker'
béré boisson *blɛ̌* 'wine'
Bérébéré doucement, lentement *blɛ̀blɛ̀*
bérémilli ivrogne *blɛ̌ mį̄lí*
béréna ivre *blɛ̀ ną́*
bétè faible *bɛ̀tɛ̀ɛ̀* 'soft'
bi case (à toit plat en terre) *bíɛ̀* 'fetish house'
bia lourd *gbíá*
biéso ivoire *bìé sɔ́*
bihé éléphant *bíɛ̀*
bilarigon hôte (qui reçoit) *blālí gɔ̄ŋ̄*
biliyé voir *blī yɛ̄*
bimbiribéré cidre (de mil) ---
bimbiri-ousi farine de mil --- (*ɲɔ̌ wìsɪ́*)
bimmbiri mil (gros) *(ɲɔ̌)*
binnzammbé minngo (fruit de) ?*gbį̄ŋ̄ zàŋ́ bɛ̄ŋ̄* 'odor ronier fruit'
binnzaon minngo ---
birané cadeau *(sàmâ)*
biri porc-épic *blí*
bô singe cynocéphale ---
bobéléri vautour (charognard) *àpètɛ̀ kùàsɪ́*, *gbɔ́ blɛ̄-lí* 'old eat-Ag'
bo-bona jadis, autrefois *gbɔ́gbɔ́ ną́* (topic marked)
bolo mosquée (enclos de prière) *blòŋ́* 'covered space'
bomboroso variole --- BG < Jula
bôn rocher *gbɔ̌*
bôni mauvais, méchant, laid *vɔ̄nį̀*
boro crapaud *(lɔ̀trɔ̀)*
Borofoué Blanc *blɔ̀fūé*
boso pêcheur *(dúwléŋ́-dɛ̄ŋ̄)* BG < Jula
boti termite *bóté*
boulounégnn coeur *blònį́ŋ́*
boumm derrière *(kpèmą̀)*
boungaïnn corbeille (de porteur) *?gbɔ́* 'dish to carry on the head'
bouo bambou --- BG < Jula
bouroféré papaye *bòflɛ̂*
bouroféré-iri papayer *bòflɛ̂ yrí*
bourouna sorcier (mangeur d'âmes) *blū ną̀*
bourouniè heureux *blòŋ́į́* (verb in MOB)
da oseille --- BG < Jula
dabodabo canard *dàbòdábò*
dada filet (p. la pêche) ---
dadignn' iguane (de terre) *dàdì̀ŋ̀* 'crocodile'
dakouè koba --- < Jula
dalo arc-en-ciel *dàló* 'rooftop'
damisa tomate-cerise *dį́mį́są́* 'aubergine amer' < Jula
danalla venger (se) *(kɔ̀ŋ̀bō)*
dango toge *dàŋ́ó*
danien cuivre rouge *(sùà gbō)* BG < Jula
daon guerre *dą̄ŋ̄*
dasana vaincu (*zɛ̄* 'to win')
dénéouo travailler *drɛ̄ wō*
dénéouoli travailleur *drɛ̄ wōlí*
dénévouori cultivateur *drɛ̄ wɔ̄lí* 'worker'
denndé escargot *dèné*
dennguélé natte *(zɔ̂)*
déou plomb ---
déré neuf, nouveau *drɛ̄*
dia bête *jàà*

diangouma chat *jã̱nmà̱* (compare Jula *jakuma*)
diara lion *jrǎ*
diasa cimetière *(blīyà)* < Jula *jása* 'fence'
diawafila oignon *jàflá*
diè pintade *jɛ̱̃*
diégnn calebasse (à cailloux) *jéɲ́* ɛ ~ e MOB 'rattle'
diénnétouga pigeon (domestique) --- < Jula
diéri griot --- BG < Jula
diérifoué héritier ---
dignn' javelot ---
dini demain *drɪ́ɲ̄*
dinnguéré caverne *dèŋ̀ yrɛ̃̄* mountain hole'
diobélilé (ou diobiliré) parler *jó*
diobiliré dire (*jó*)
diommbolo xylophone *jómló* < Baoule
do arreter (s') *dɔ̄*
do masque (religieux) *(ŋmlŏ)* < Jula *dó* 'secret society' (generic name)
dô serpent cracheur *dòò* 'cobra'
doba singe *dóbǎ*
dômm nager *dòŋ́*
dorongui boubou *drɔ̀ŋ̱ɲ́*
doû, douhou couteau *dŭ*
douniao jamais *drʊ́ŋ̱á wó (dō)* 'on earth'
douninien monde *drʊ́ŋ̱á* < Jula
dourou matin *drú*
dourou promener (se) *drú*
dowoué, dowouégnn gombo *dɔ̀wɛ̄ŋ̀*
dyabérina noyer (se) *yí à blē nā̱* 'it has gotten drowned'
édien loin *wàā à dɪ́ ɛ̱́* 'that's not close to it'
édiné obeir *(à drà̱ mā̱mà̱)*
egbana vieux *é gbɔ́ nā̱* 's/he has gotten old'
égeïnn bon *è gɛ̄ɲ̄* 'it is good'
égeïnn lâche ---
éguéré fort *è glë* 'it is strong'
épodôn intelligent *è pɔ̄ dɔ̱̄* 's/he knows things'
fain-ho moitié ---
fainkinnguisié semaine *fɛ̱̄ kēŋēsíéɲ́* 'eight days'
faon fourreau, gaîne *fãɲ̄*
fèmmbe fête *fɛ̱́ béɛ̄*
finnalolo lampe *(fìtrâ)* MOB < Jula *fìtinán,* BG < Jula *fìtinán* + *lòlō* 'pot'
finnsésé toujours *fɛ̱̄ sēsē*
fômm oeuf *fõɲ̄*
fôni fonio ---
fono aujourd'hui *flɔ́ɔ̱̄*
foué samedi *fùê*
fouroufou soufflet ---
fouroulé marier (se) *(lēɲ̄ wɛ̄)*
g'bé pays *gbě*
ga mourir *gā*
ga tuer *gā* 'die'
gâfâ pied *gā̱fã*
gafankokoli cordonnier, peaussier *gā̱fãɲ̄ kòkólí* 'sandal turn-Ag'
gakina rat (aulacode) *gā̱cíná̱* 'cane rat'
galanké tisser *glāɲ̄ cɪ́* 'cut/make loincloth'
gamana nain (de la brousse) *gā̱mlà̱* 'chimpanzee'
gamana singe chimpanzée *gā̱mlà̱*
gan jambe *gā̱*
ganfaon sandale *gā̱ fãɲ̄*
gankélé raconter *gā̱klɛ̄* 'news'
ganndi anneau de cheville *gā̱ dɪ́ ŋă*
gara indigo --- < Jula *gàra*
gara-iri indigotier---

garankéli tisserand *glāŋ̄ cɻ́lí* 'loincloth cut-Ag'
gari, gali cadavre *gàlɛ̄*
gbé (ou **goué**) village *gbɛ̌*
gbé marteau *gbìdí*
gbé vert *gbé*
g'bèè gros, large *béɛ̄*
gbéma, gbémon chef de village *gbɛ̌ mą̀*
g'béné grand *blɛ̀ŋ̀* 'much'
g'béré milieu *gblī*
g'bérignn porte (en bois) *(kpɻ̀ɲ́)*
gbo ancien *gbɔ́*
geïnn, géeïnn bon, beau *gɛ̄ŋ̄*
agogon imiter *à gɔ́gɔ̀* '3sg imitate'
goli guitare *(jìtâ)* BG < Jula, MOB < French
golibo lutter *gòlí bɔ̄*
gon homme (mâle) *gɔ̄ŋ̄* MOB: 'man'
agongoué brave *à gɔ̄ŋ̄ gɛ̄ŋ̄* 'he is handsome'
gôngo tourterelle ---
gônngo pigeon (sauvage) *gòŋò*
gottogotouga sénégali ---
gounouboumban cervelle (*kʊ̀mā*)
gouro pirogue *glô*
gourofala pagaie *wlúflà* 'ladle for preparing kabato sauce'
agpain, akouin jouer *à kpɛ̌* '3sg play'
guélè enclume *glɛ̄* 'rock'
guélé pierre *glɛ̄*
guéré mardi *jólè*
guerrenguélé caillou *glɛ̄ŋlɛ́* 'gravel'
guésé coton *jèsé*
guésé-iri cotonnier *jèsé yrí*
Guimini Guimini *(bànrà)*
guini esprit (de la brousse) --- BG < Jula
guiti, guité, guitein plancochère, potamochère *jítɛ̌*
hain jour *fɛ̌*
hié bouche *yé*
hoûé jeudi *wùê*
hyenndi larme *yōnɻ́ɲ́*
hyi famine, faim *yī*
hya vendredi *yáà*
insonkalari groupe des ménages *ŋ̄ sɔ̀ŋ̀ klálɛ́* '1sg people team'
iri arbre *yrí*
iribégnn' fruit *yrí bɛ̄ŋ̄* 'tree fruit'
iri-gôn branche *yrí gòɲ́*
irikiépo hache *yrí cɻ́-pɔ̄* 'tree cut-Men'
irikôm écorce *yrí kóɲ́*
irinni racine *yrí nɻ̄ɻ̄ŋ̄*
irivôn fleur *yrí vʊ́ɲ́* 'tree flower'
ivono-méné serpent d'eau *yí vɔ̄ŋ̄ ló mlɛ̄* 'water hole SUPER snake'
kalakalouna vantard ---
kanien cire --- BG < Jula
kanion vous *kā ɲą̄* (Emph)
kanngala perdrix *káŋlà*
kanoubatou souvent *(yémą́yémą́)*
akara poser *à klá* '3sg put'
karagouon vieillard *kálá gɔ̄ŋ̄*
karamoro fabricant de gris-gris, marabout ---
kasisi, asisi nous *ą̄ŋ̄ sēsē* 'we all', *kā sēsē* 'you all'
kélennzô buffle *klɛ́ɲ́ zŏ*
kénékénéla circoncis *klɛ̨́klɛ̨́ ną́*
kenndéwa araignée *kènèwá* < Baoulé
ki cuir, peau séchée *cī*
kia petit *că* 'short'
kié pont *(pɔ̀ɲ́)*
kiébao célibataire *cɛ̀gbá ną́*
kiépala lèvre *yépláɲ́*
kinampili menteur *cɻ̄ną̀ pēlí*
kinapé mentir *cɻ̄ną̀ pē*

kirigon chef de famille totale *klí gɔ̄ŋ̄* MOB ‘king’
kirilegnn’ noble *klí léŋ́* ‘member of the Kli clan’
kissié lundi *kìsíè*
ko dos *kō*
kobali sacrificateur *pɔ̄ gbālí*
kobâré sacrifice *pɔ̄ gbālè*
kohou tortue *kòú*
koko taro *(màŋ̰àn̰í)* MOB < Jula
akoko gratter (se) *à kɔ́kɔ̀* ‘3sg scratch’
kokorobété rat (du Gambie) *kɔ̀klɔ̀bété* ‘centipède’
kolon puits (*yí yrɛ̄*) BG < Jula *kɔ̀lɔn*
koloninnga millepatte *klɔ̀níŋ̰ă*
kondoro brun ---
kônié chasser *kɔ̰̀nɪ̄ɛ̰̀*
kônié chasseur *kɔ̰̀nɪ̄ɛ̰̀-dēŋ̄*
konien, kognien caïman, crocodile *kòyà̰ŋ̀*
konoli voler (dérober) *klúa̰lí* ‘thief’
konosogolo autruche --- < Jula
kopè houe (a fer pointu) *kɔ́pɛ́*
kôri laver *(pɔ́)* BG < Jula *kòli* ‘washing’
korowè bonnet ---
korro hibou *klŭ*
koti scorpion (noir) *kō tīī* ‘black back’
koto poing *kɔ̀trɔ̀*
kouan fleuve *(yí báŋ́)* BG < Jula *kɔ̀* ‘brook, small river’?
koumbé tomate *(tòmátì)* MOB < French
kouroudiara ceinture de femme *klùjá* ‘loincloth with a belt’
kourousi culotte *klùsí*
koutoukou case (à toit en paille) ---
kowa hameçon ---
kyé année *kùé*
kyélado siècle *kùé làà dō* ‘one hundred years’
la médicament , gris-gris, gris-gris (contre les sorciers) *lá* ‘medicine’
la pluie, tempête *lā*
ala demander *à lā* ‘3sg ask’
ala interroger *à lā* ‘3sg ask’
labangbana tonnerre *lā bā̰bā̰ nā̰* ‘it has rained a lot’
lalo sauterelle *làlòŋ̀*
lamain fabricant de gris-gris, médecin *(lɔ̀trɔ̂)*
lamba vérole --- BG < Jula
lamoro parent *(sɔ̰̀ŋ̀)* BG < Jula *à lá mɔ̀gɔ* ‘his/her person’ (?)
lana feuille *láná*
lasié éclair *lā síé*
lasiri coutume --- BG < Manding *lásiri* ‘pregnance; origin, reason’
latirina nuage *lā trī nā̰* ‘it has gotten cloudy’
leï-allè faire l'amour *lēŋ̄ lɛ̄*
lékolo bilakoro (Jula ‘uncircumcised boy’) *lɔ́kló* ‘child’
lélé chanson *lɛ̀lɛ̄ŋ̀*
lèlè chanter *lɛ̀lɛ̄ŋ̀* ‘song’
lélédali chanteur *lɛ̀lɛ̄ŋ̀ dàlí*
lélégnn’ épine *lɛ̀lɛ̄ŋ̀*
lemmbélé minuit *lɛ̄mlɛ̀*
lémmbélé tabouret *léŋ́ bléŋ́* ‘child chair’
lengôn fils *léŋ́gɔ̄ŋ̄*
lenndali sorcier (se changeant en bête) ---
lenndinn fille *léŋ́ lēŋ̄*
lenngué-touroupon dot *léŋ́ nṵ̀ŋ̀ ʔtrōpɔ̀* ‘child Pl raise-Men’
lignn, li femme *lēŋ̄*
lignn’gala pagne (de femme) *lēŋ̄ glāŋ̄*
livuili chapeaux (en paille) *(kòwlɛ̀)*

lo captif, esclave, captif de traite *lɔ̌*
lô cou *lò*
lô kola *lò*
lô-iri kolatier *lò yrí*
lolé captif de case *lɔ̌ léɲ́* 'slave child'
lolo canari, pot *lòlō*
loloba argile ---
lommba fronde ---
louangarapo maintenant *(klēmą̀)*
malo riz *mą̀nṵ́ɲ́* < Jula
mama, manman grand'mère *mą̀mą́*
mana tambour *mlą̀*
manain mercredi *mlą̀ą̂*
manangbo tambour en forme de sablier *mlą̀ gbó* 'drum old'
manapô mulot *mlɛ́pó*
manapo souris *mlɛ́pó*
mandiga arachide *(kálè)*
manyon rêver, avoir un rêve *ɲɔ́*
massakou patate *(àlènà)* BG < Jula, MOB < Baule
m'ba canton, province *ŋ̄ bā* '1sg earth'
m'bésé, bésé matchette *bèsé*
m'bié sel *ŋ̄ bīē* '1sg salt'
m'bo mère *(ną̂)*
m'bôn encore *mṵ̂ɲ́*
amè frapper *à mɛ̄* '3sg hit'
mémbouna longtemps *ó bēmō ną̄* 'it has been a while ago'
méné poulet *mlɛ̌*
méné serpent *mlɛ̄*
méné-da poulet, poule *mlɛ̌ dā*
méné-da serpent python *mlɛ̄ dā*
ménéfômm oeuf de poule *mlɛ̌ fɔ̄ŋ̄*
méné-lé poulet, poussin *mlɛ̌ léɲ́*
méné-sia poulet, coq *mlɛ̌ síá*
ménésuo pouluiller *mlɛ̌ súó*
ami boire *à mī* '3sg drink'
ammi boisson *à mī* '3sg drink'
mien toi *mīą̄* (Emph)
miman comprendre *mī mą̄* '2sg understand'
miman écouter *mī mą̄* '2sg hear'
mimiso corps *mīsōŋ̄*
mini herbe *mlíɲ́* 'straw'
misiri mosquée *mìsrî* < Jula
mivoua uréthrite *mìèwá*
mokégnn poil *céɲ́*
molè étoile *mɔ̄ léɲ́*
môn lune *mɔ̄*
môn moi *mą̄ŋ̄* (Emph)
môn mois *mɔ̄*
monanvi nègre ---
môné dimanche *mɔ̄lɛ̀*
mougousawala chausson (*gą̄fā̄ŋ̄* 'shoes')
mouin tombeau *mùą̀*
mounou-ouele. crâne *ŋlṵ̄wlɛ́*
m'véli ami *ŋ̄ vī̄lí* '1sg love-Ag'
na épouse *nā̄*
n'ain mariage *(lēŋ̄ drē)*
nanamm langue *nąnąɲ́*
n'da mère *ŋ̄ dā* '1sg mother'
n'dékoro oncle (frère du père) *ŋ̄ dē-kló* '1sg father-little'
n'dérélinn soeur (grande) *ŋ̄ drélēŋ̄* '1sg older.sister'
n'dié père *ŋ̄ dē* '1sg father'
n'do sauce *ŋ̄ dɔ̌* '1sg sauce'
n'dôn oncle (frère de mère) *ŋ̄ dɔ̄ŋ̄* '1sg maternal.uncle'
n'dorongo frère (grand) *ŋ̄ drɔ́ŋɔ̄ŋ̄* '1sg elder.brother'
ndé neveu (fils de frère) *ŋ̄ dē léɲ́* 'paternal parallel cousin'
n'deï, n'deïnggn colline, montagne *dèŋ̀*
n'deï'nggn camarade *(gɔ̄lō)*

n'dèré grimper *drɛ̄ŋ̄*
n'di franc *(srê)*
n'dioté argent *jétɛ̀* < Baoulé
né-a-louinn fille ---
néné froid *nɛ́nɛ̰̀*
n'gani arc *(ŋúɛ̰̀)*
n'go corbeille *ŋ̄ gò* '1sg fish.trap'
n'gô huile de palme *(nrɔ̰́)*
n'gogaléda jurer *ŋó gàlɛ̄ dă* 'I swear by the dead'
n'goligana oublier *ŋ̄ wɔ̀léŋ́ gā nɑ̰̄* 'I forgot'
n'gon-noléïnn ver (de terre) ŋlṵɛ̰̀léŋ́
n'gouéna répondre (*yēdă*)
n'gouon fétiche *ŋùɛ̰̀*
n'gouon-bali féticheur *ŋùɛ̰̀ gbālí*
ni souffle *nɩ́ŋ́* 'soul'
niaguialé réfléchir *(jàtê)*
niamakéré sable *ɲɔ̀nmɔ́ntrɛ́*
niamantérililali, devin (se servant de sable) *ɲɔ̀nmɔ́ntrɛ́ līlálí ɔ̰* 'sand throw-Ag'
nié aigle (*mɛ̀ɛ̰̀)*
nié nez *ɲɛ́*
niénina pauvre *(jrà nɑ́)*
niépè moucher (se) ---
ninaba malheureux --- BG < Jula
nini ombre (d'un être vivant) *nɩ̄nɩ̰̄ŋ̄*
ninn, né fils *ŋ̄ léŋ́* '1sg child'
ninon, ninaon ombre (d'un être inanimé) *(nɩ́ŋ́)*
niolé rêve *ɲɔ̰́lɛ́*
niomihi salive *ɲɩ́mɩ́*
niomoûti mouche *ɲínmɩ́tīī*
nion sein *ɲɔ̰́*
niono-iri karité *ɲrɔ̰́ yrí*
nionon graisse *ɲrɔ̰́*
nionon karité (beurre du, fruit du) *ɲrɔ̰́* 'grease'
nio-ousi farine de maïs *ɲɔ̰̌ wìsí* 'millet flour'
niopinn cheveux *(céŋ́)*
nokia regarder *nɔ̰̌ cá* 'to look inside'
non ici *nɔ̰̄*
nôn ventre *nɔ̰̌*
nono lait *nɔ̰́nɔ̰́*
nonon-lè maigre *nɔ̰̀nɔ́lɛ́*
nou venir *nṵ̄*
noualou acheter *lú*
nouin incendier *ŋṵ̄ɑ̰̄* 'to burn'
nowa boyaux *nɔ̰̀wāɲ̀* 'intestine'
nyobéré cidre (de maïs) *ɲɔ̰̌ blɛ̌* 'millet wine'
n'zanalignn jeune fille *zānnànɲ̀ lēŋ̄*
n'zanango jeune bomme *zānnànɲ̀ gɔ̄ŋ̄*
n'zanangomm jeune *zɑ̰̄nɑ̰̀ɲ̀ gɔ̄ŋ̄* 'young man'
n'zaommbéï rônier (fruit du) *zàŋ́ bɛ̄ŋ̄*
n'zaon, n'zamm rônier *zàŋ́*
n'zélo papillon *(bàmàlímă)*
n'zéli vaincre *zɛ̰̄*
n'zéré sentier *zrë* 'road'
n'zérébè route *zrë bɛ́ɛ̄* 'big road'
n'zéri, n'zéli puissant, vainqueur *zɛ̰̄lí* 'win-Ag'
n'zi poisson, poisson dit capitaine *zɩ̰̀ŋ́*
n'zian, n'sien mari *ŋ̄ zɩ́ɑ̰́* '1sg husband'
n'zie fromager *zīɛ̄*
n'zié funérailles *zīɛ̄*
n'zieï commémoration *zīɛ̄* 'funeral'
n'ziri grand-père *ŋ̄ zrī* '1sg grandfather'
n'zo arbre (à fou) *zô* 'kind of tree'
n'zô boeuf *zŏ*
n'zô-da vache *zŏ dā*
n'zô-lè vache *zŏ léŋ́*

n'zomana savon *zạ̀mlậ*
n'zoro laver (se) *zrö*
n'zosié pique-boeuf ---
n'zô-tola boeuf, taureau *zŏ síá* BG < Jula
n'zou poitrine *zū*
n'zou frère (petit) *ŋ̄ zú* '1sg younger.sibling'
n'zoulé soeur (petite) *ŋ̄ zú-lēŋ̄* '1sg younger.sibling-woman'
oua-bè étroit *wàā béɛ̄* 'it is not big'
ouabia léger *wàā gbíá ɛ́* 'it is not heavy'
ouaguingo sud *wɔ̄ gēŋ̄ wó* 'on the right'
ouakénékénékaré incirconcis *wàā klɛ́klɛ́ kálè ɛ́* 'she is not circumcised'
oualé igname *wálé*
oualé-gon ignamier *wálé gạ̄* 'yam stem'
oualémanga bague (en fer) *wɔ̄lɛ́ŋ́ mạ̀ ŋă* 'finger CONT ring'
oualémanguiété bague (en argent) *wɔ̄lɛ́ŋ́ mạ̀ jétè* 'finger CONT silver'
oualémansua bague (en or) *wɔ̄lɛ́ŋ́ mạ̀ sùà* 'finger CONT gold'
oualè-ousi farine d'igname *wálé wìsí*
ouamm sang *wàǹ*
ouansébao collier (en verroterie) ---
ouanzivouélé cauri *wáníŋ́lé*
ouanzouguélélilali devin (se servant de cauris) *wáníŋ́lé līlálí* 'cowry throw-Ag'
ouaporo tô (à l'igname) *wápló*
ouara (ou ouala) maison *wlá*
ouara groupe des ménages *wlá*
ouara rire *wlá*
ouarakaara chef de groupe familial *wlá kálá* 'elder of a matriclan'
ouarama, ouaraman chef de groupe familial *wlá mạ̀* 'head of a matriclan'
ouara-ouara bleu (clair) *blúá*
ouata voyager *tá blī mạ̀*
ouatana colporteur ---
ouégnn mot, parole *wēŋ̄*
ouéré os *wlɛ́*
ouéré parc (à boeufs) *wlɛ̌ɛ̀* 'corral' < Manding *wèrɛ*
ouo bras *wɔ̄*
ouodakon ongle *wɔ̄dākóŋ́*
ouodaonou pouce *wɔ̄ dā ŋlū̱*
ouodinn bracelet *wɔ̄ dí̱ ŋă*
ouofo main *wɔ̄fã̄*
ouolé, ouoleignn. doigt *wɔ̄lɛ́ŋ́*
ouongué reposer (se) *wūēŋùè*
ouonion ils, eux *ŋò ŋạ̄* (Emph)
ouonou (ou mounou) tête *ŋlū̱*
ouousi farine *wìsí*
oupè pleurer *bú pɛ́*
ourou ancêtre *wlú* MOB 'fantom'
ourou chaud, sueur *wlú* 'heat'
ourouso captif de case *wlósó* 'slave clan'
pa manche *pá*
paa, pâ néré *kpā*
paa-ousi néré (farine du) *kpā wìsí*
paapoloum néré (gousse du)---
palé houe (à fer large) *kpálé*
palépa manche de daba *kpálé pá*
palo jour *pàló*
pangoloma poteau *(tùtùwá)*
parana-n'zi poisson-chien ---
parébéri, parébri vendre *plɛ́blɛ̄*
parko pork *kplàkô*
pégnalo débiteur *pèǹ ó à ló* 'he is in debt'
pégnn (ou pain) mortier *pɛ́ŋ́*
pégnn dette *pèǹ*
peïgnn bâton *pēŋ̄* 'bud'
peïnggn conte, fable *pɛ̄ŋ̄*
pélé soumbara *kplɛ̌*
pélégnn calebasse *plēŋ́* 'goblet'
pèlou voler (dans l'air) *pèlōŋ̄*

péné pilon *pénéŋ́*
péni fer *pēnɻ́ŋ́*
péninndo forgeron *pēnɻ́nɔ̌*
pénitè cuivre jaune *pēnɻ́ŋ́ tɛ́ɛ̱́* ‘red iron’
pénna créancier *pèŋ̀ nɑ̀*
pénon neveu (fils de soeur) *pènɑ̀* ‘cross-cousin’
péré métier à tisser *?pālī* ‘piece of tissue to put on one’s head to carry things’
pilana, parana chien *(sɔ́-nɑ́)*
pilana-da chienne *(sɔ́)-nɑ́ dā*
pirimmbiri bien portant *kplēŋ̄mlēŋ̄*
piti oreiller *piti*
pôba sacrifier *pɔ̄gbā*
pobéléré nourriture *pɔ̄blēlɛ̀*
pobiri, pobili gourmand *pɔ̄ blēlí*
apobiri manger *pɔ̄ blē*
po-dâ semer *pɔ̄ dă*
pohio caoutchouc *póyɔ́*
poho brousse *pɔ̄ú* ‘champ’
poho, poo brousse *pɔ̄ú* ‘field’
pomana tambour calebasse ---
ponon nombril *plɔ̀ŋ́* ŋ~0
poro peau *kpló*
poro tô *wápló*
poro-bégnn baobab (fruit du) *plɔ̌ bēŋ̄*
poro-iri baobab *plɔ̌ yrí*
poro-ouisi baobab (farine du) *plɔ̌ wìsí*
porotolo ? pourquoi? *(ó lɛ́ lɔ̀wā)*
potoroupo animal domestique *pɔ̄ trōpɔ̀* ‘thing breed-Men’
pouou blanc *púú*
poviè-iri caoutchouc (arbre à) --- BG < Jula
sain malade *sɛ̱̄*
sambasé tamarinier ---
sambé poison (volatil) ---
sanndé lièvre *sɑ́né*
sapobélé hydromel *sɔ́mɔ́ blɛ̌*
sara tabac (à priser) *srâ* ‘tobacco powder’ < Jula or Baule
asara prendre *à srá* ‘3sg take’
sarali fou *srálí*
asaramika habiller (s') *à srá mɻ̀ ká* ‘take it and put it on!’ (imperative)
sarandani devin, devin (se servant d'eau) *srāŋ̄ dàlí* ‘diviner consult-Ag’
sarapoum tabatière *(sra) kpōŋ̄* ‘tobacco calabash’
sei jaune *(dálé)* BG < Manding *sáyi* ‘jaundice’
sépé gris-gris *sɛ̀pɛ̄* ‘kaolin’
asésé insulter, injurier *à sɛ́sɛ̀* ‘3sg insult’
sî palme à huile *sī*
asi appeler *à sí* ‘3sg call’
asi attraper *à sí* ‘3sg take’
asi donner *à sí* ‘3sg take’
si-bélé vin de palme *sīblɛ̌*
sié feu *síé*
si-ouéré palmier (fruit de) *sī wlɛ́*
sirina gris-gris (pour attacher) ---
siya race *sīyà*
so dent *sɔ́*
so-déré porte (ouverture) ---
sofalé âne --- BG < Jula *sò-fali* ‘mule’
sombana-ousi poudre (à fusil) *sɑ́mlɑ́ŋ́ wìsí*
sômm animal sauvage *sōŋ̄*
sômm viande *sōŋ̄*
sôn champ *sɔ́* ‘yam patch’
son homme (mâle) *sɔ̀ŋ̀* MOB: ‘person’
songbana fusil *sɑ́mlɑ́ŋ́*
songolo-ouélé léopard, panthère *(jàtá)*
sopo miel *sɔ́mɔ́*
sopoda abeille *sɔ́mɔ́ dā* ‘mother of honey’, MOB: *sɔ́mɔ́ wlɛ́*

soron Dyoula, musulman *sóɔ́*
soso haricot *sɔ̌* < Jula *sɔ̀sɔ*
soua bananier *bláná súá*
soua or *sùà* 'non-iron metal'
soualignn' veuve *súálēŋ̄*
souhana riche *sùà nạ̀*
souo (ou sio) case *súó*
souoba mur *súó bā*
syé oiseau *sìèŋ́*
ta aller, partir *tá*
tâ tabac *tàà* < French
takara allumette *taklaŋ* < Jula *tákala*
talo pipe *tàà lō* 'with tobacco'
tazimmbo pêcher *tá zi̱ŋ́ bɔ̄* 'to go fishing'
téé (ou téein) rouge *tɛ́ɛ́*
téni hôte (qui est reçu) *téni̱ŋ́* 'foreigner'
tennde pigeon (vert) ---
tienngono poison *(bíá)* BG < Jula
timmbana tambour de village *?? mlạ̀*
tiômm, tiohon flèche *(ŋú̱ɛ̀ wlɛ́)*
tokobi sabre ---
tominé vagin *tɔ̰mlɛ̰*
tôn termitière *tɔ̄ŋ̄*
tona notable *tɔ́ ná* 'name ATR'
tonina paresseux *tɔ́ni̱ŋ́ ná*
topé moquer (se) *tɔ́ pē* 'to call names'
toro oreille *tróŋ́*
toro verge *trɔ̌* 'penis'
torommbou champignon *tróŋ́ púú* 'white mushroom'
torovi testicules *trɔ̀fī*
torowa hotte ---
tya biche rayée *cīyà* 'bushbock'
tyi bleu (fonce) *tīī* ='noir'
tyi noir *tīī*
viaon, viamm carquois ---
viendanani orgueilleux, insolent ---
avouè cueillir *à wɛ̄* '3sg gather'
ya marcher *yā*
yalo lever (se) *yāló*
yamm joue *yáŋ́*
yamm scorpion (jaune) *yāŋ̄* 'tarantula'
yara asseoir (s') *yrä*
yéramadoma plus tard, quelquefois *yrámạ̀ dō mạ̀*
yéré trou *yrɛ̄*
yéta taire (se) *yé tā*
yéti (ou yéki) ciel *ècí*
yétigboulé foudre, foudre (pierre de la) *ècí glɛ̄*
yi dormir *yī*
yibédona midi *yīgbíé dɔ̄ nạ̄* 'sun has arrived'
yi-bihé hippopotame *yí bíè*
yigbéboya est *yīgbíé bɔ̄yà*
yigbénzouya ouest *yīgbíé zūyà*
yii (ou yî) eau *yí*
yii, n'zan marigot *yí* 'water'; *záŋ́*
yiigbé soleil *yīgbíé*
yiômm front *yōŋ́* 'face'
yiômm grenouille
yonodi soir *yénɔ̀dɩ́*
yoroum pois souterrain *yròŋ̀*
youm visage *yōŋ́*
yourou nuit *yrú*
yourouyali hyène *yrúyālí* 'nocturnal being'
yovouéré oeil *yɔ̄wlɛ́*
azara jeter *à zrä* '3sg throw'
zazalè disputer (se) *zázálɛ́* (nominalization)
zini maïs *zri̱ŋ̀*
azon piler *à zɔ̰̄* '3sg pound'
zonzon moustique *zɔ̰́zɔ̰́*
zoû, zouhou margouillat *(tèŋmlèsìà)*
azou lancer *à zū* '3sg throw'
zoumounou magnan *zṵ̄mlṵ̄ŋ̄*

16.2. Phrases with MOB equivalent and gloss

BG **mon** **parana** ‘mon chien’, ‘my dog’

MOB *mą̄ŋ̄* *sɔ́-ną́*

gloss 1SG.EMPH tooth-ATR

BG **miem** **parana** ‘ton chien’, ‘your (sg.) dog’

MOB *mį̄ą̄* *mį̄* *sɔ́-ną́*

gloss 2SG.EMPH 2SG tooth-ATR

BG **anion** **parana** ‘son chien’, ‘his/her dog’

MOB *àɲą̄* *sɔ́-ną́*

gloss 3SG.EMPH tooth-ATR

BG **asisi** **parana** ‘notre chien’, ‘our dog’

MOB *ą̄ŋ̄ sēsē ą̄ŋ̄* *sɔ́-ną́*

gloss 1PL ALL 1PL tooth-ATR

BG **kanion** **ka** **parana** ‘votre chien’, ‘your (pl.) dog’

MOB *kā-ɲą̄* *kā* *sɔ́-ną́*

gloss 2PL-EMPH 2PL tooth-ATR

BG **ouo** **nion go** **parana** ‘leur chien’, ‘their dog’

MOB *ŋɔ̀ ɲą̄ŋ̀* *ŋɔ̀* *sɔ́-ną́*

gloss 3PL EMPH 3PL tooth-ATR

Note: GB word for *dog* corresponds to MOB *kpláŋ́-ną́* ‘possessor of fleas’. A common word for dog in MOB is *sɔ́-ną́*, literally ‘possessor of teeth’.

Ouomisipo ? ‘Comment t'appelles-tu?’ ‘What is your name?’

ŋɔ̀ mį̄ sì pɔ́?

3PL:HAB+ 2SG call:L what

literally: ‘what do they call you?’

Mibobikao? ‘De quel village es-tu?’ ‘What village do you come from?’

mį́ bɔ́ gbě kāpɔ̂ wó?

2SG:PST+ come.from:L village which IN

literally: ‘which village do you come from?’

Miboma? ‘D'où viens-tu?’ ‘Where do you come from?’

mí̱ bɔ́ má̱

2SG:PST+ come.from:L where

Mi yarama ? ‘Où vas-tu?’ ‘Where are you going?’

mī̱ yrá má̱

2SG ST+.go where

Note the presence of *yrá* as a contraction of a stative aspect marker and *tá* ‘to go’.

Manalémian ? ‘De quelle race es-tu?’ ‘What is your ethnicity?’

má̱ ná̱ lɛ́ mī̱ā̱?

where ATR PST+:COP:L 2SG.EMPH

In this and following five examples, note the reversal of predicate and subject.

Soron dé mien ? ‘Es-tu musulman?’ ‘Are you Muslim?’

sɔ́ɔ́ lɛ́ mī̱ā̱?

Muslim PST+:COP:L 2SG.EMPH

Kafiri lé mien? ‘Es-tu fétichiste?L ‘Are you pagan?’

(kafiri) lɛ́ mī̱ā̱?

pagan PST+:COP:L 2SG.EMPH

Benn'dé mien? ‘Es-tu Gan?’ ‘Are you Beng?’

bɛ̀ŋ́ lɛ́ mī̱ā̱?

Beng PST+:COP:L 2SG.EMPH

Hon-hon, Benn'dé mahi. ‘Oui, je suis un Gan’. ‘Yes I’m Beng’.

ŋ̀ŋ̄ bɛ̀ŋ́ lɛ́ mā̱ŋ̄

yes Beng PST+:COP:L 1SG.EMPH

Benndé lé mahi. ‘Non, je ne suis pas Gan’. ‘No I’m not Beng’.

bɛ̀ŋ́ à lɛ́ mā̱ŋ̄ ɛ́

Beng 3SG.PST- COP:L 1SG.EMPH NEG

Mé vinani ? ‘Es-tu content?’ ‘Are you satisfied?’

mí̱ vī̱ nā̱ à nì̱?

2SG:PST+ love PERF 3SG BENEF

literally: ‘Did you like it?’

Mi bourama ? ‘Es-tu fatigué ?’ ‘Are you tired?’

mí̱ blùà nā̱?

2SG:PST+ tire PERF

N'bourana. ‘Je suis fatigué’. ‘I am tired’.

ŋ́ blùà nā̰

1SG:PST+ tire PERF

Mamboura sâ. ‘Je ne suis pas fatigué’. ‘I am not tired’.

mā̰ blùá sà é

1SG:PST- tire PERF.NEG NEG

N'démi hi guén? ‘Comment vas-tu ?’ (à un homme) ‘How are you doing Sir?’

ŋ̄ dē mi̱ gɛ̄ŋ̄?

1SG father 2SG:HAB+ beautiful

literally: ‘My father, are you good?’

Ndami hi guén ? ‘Comment vas-tu ?’ (à une femme) ‘How are you doing Ma’am?’

ŋ̄ dā mi̱ gɛ̄ŋ̄?

1SG mother 2SG:HAB+ beautiful

literally: ‘My mother, are you good?’

Niguénn. ‘Je vais bien’. ‘I’m doing well’.

ŋ̀ gɛ̄ŋ̄.

1SG:HAB+ beautiful

literally: ‘I am good’.

Aniasâ. ‘Ce n'est pas fini’. ‘It is not over’.

à ɲā̰- sà é.

3SG:PST- finish- PERF.NEG NEG

Eniana. ‘C'est fini’. ‘It is over’.

é ɲā̰ nā̰

3SG:PST+ finish PERF

List of Notation and Glosses

´	high tone
`	low tone
¯	mid tone
ˆ	falling (high to low) tone
ˇ	rising (low to high) tone
¨	mid-high rising tone
˯	mid-low falling tone
!	downstep of the following tone
(X)	X is optional
*(X)	X is obligatory
X//Y	X and Y are free variants
+	affirmative polarity series
-	negative polarity series
1	1st person
2	2nd person
3	3rd person *or* portemanteau series contracted with a 3SG non-subject pronoun
AG	agent nominalization
APUD	localization APUD ‘around’
ATR	attributive marker
BENEF	benefactive postposition
BSQ	base form of the verb (often omitted from the gloss)
L	low tone form of the verb
CND	conditional series
CNS	syntactic marker of a construction
CONT	localization CONT ‘in contact with’
COP	copula verb
DEF	definite article
DISTR	distributive interpretation
DT	temporal shift
EMPH	emphatic particle
EX	existential series
FOC	focus pronoun series or focus construction marker
HAB	habitual series
IN	localization IN ‘in’
ITER	iterativity

MEN	means nominalization
NEG	negation
NGO	cancelled result or irreal conditional marker
NMLZ	(event) nominalization
P	postposition
POS	substantivized possessive series, also used as a contrastive topic marker
POST	localization POST ‘behind’
POSS	localization POSS ‘in the possession’
PST	preterite series
PRF	perfect verb aspect
PL	plural
PLC	locative nominalization
PROG	progressive form
RES	resultative/stative form
RFL	reflexive series
SG	singular
ST	stative series
SUB	localization SUB ‘under’
SUPER	localization SUPER ‘on, over’
TOP	topic marker
V	verb stem *or* verb within an idiomatic expression

References

Bearth, T. *Observations préliminaires sur la langue ngen ou gan.* Ms., 1979.

Bhaskararao P., K. V. Subbarao (eds.). *Non-nominative subjects.* 2 vols. Amsterdam – Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2004.

Carlson, G. *Reference to kinds in English.* PhD thesis, University of Massachusets Amherst, 1977.

Comrie, B. Some Argument-structure properties of 'give' in the languages of Europe and Northern and Central Asia. In: *LENCA-2. The Typology of Argument Structure and Grammatical Relations.* Kazan, 2004, pp. 13.

Creissels D. Encoding the distinction between location, source and direction: a typological study. In: Hickmann, M. & S. Robert (eds.). *Space in languages,* 19-28. Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2006.

Creissels D., Nguessan Kouadio. *Description phonologique et grammaticale d'un parler baoule.* Abidjan : Institut de Linguistique Appliquée, 1977.

Delafosse M. *Vocabulaires comparatifs de plus de 60 langues et dialects parlés à la Côte d'Ivoire et dans les régions limitrophes, avec des notes linguistiques et ethnologiques.* Paris : E. Leroux, 1904.

Flick E. *Rapport préliminaire sur l'étude du système des tons en langue N'Guin.* ms. Abidjan: SIL, 1979.

Gottlieb A. *Under the kapok tree: identity and difference in beng thought.* University of Chicago Press, 1992.

Gottlieb A., M. Lynne Murphy. *Beng – English Dictionary.* Bloomington: Indiana University Linguistics Club Publications, 1995.

Gottlieb A. *The afterlife is where we come from: The culture of infancy in West Africa.* University of Chicago Press, 2004.

Gottlieb, A., Phillip Graham. *Parallel worlds: An anthropologist and a writer encounter Africa.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.

Gottlieb, A., Phillip Graham. *Braided Worlds.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012.

Greenberg, J. *The languages of Africa.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966.

Gusev V. Ju. Celevye konstrukcii pri glagolax dviženija: aktanty ili sirkonstanty? In: *Meždunarodnyj simpozium «Tipologija argumentnoj struktury I sintaksičeskix otnošenij». Conference abstracts.* Kazan', 2004, pp. 142-144.

Haspelmath M. Ditransitive constructions: The verb 'Give'. In: Martin Haspelmath, Matthew S. Dryer, David Gil and Bernard Comrie (eds.). *The world atlas of language structures.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005a, pp. 426-9.

Haspelmath, M. Nominal and verbal conjunctions. In: Martin Haspelmath, Matthew S. Dryer, David Gil and Bernard Comrie (eds.). *The world atlas of language structures.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005b.

Haspelmath, M. Argument marking in ditransitive alignment types. *Linguistic discovery,* 3:1, 2006a, pp. 1-21.

Haspelmath, M. *Ditransitive Constructions in the World's Languages.* Course handout for Leipzig Spring School on Linguistic Diversity. Leipzig, 2006b.

Hawkins J. A. A parsing theory of word order universals. *Linguistic Inquiry,* 21, pp. 223–261.

Kayne R. S. *The Antisymmetry of Syntax.* Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994.

Keenan, E. L. and M. S. Dryer. Passive in the world's languages. In: Timothy Shopen (ed.). *Clause structure, language typology and syntactic description*. Vol. 1. Second Edition. Cambridge University Press, 2007, pp. 325-361.

Kibrik A. E. Kognitivnoe raznoobrazie predikatno-argumentnyx struktur i jazykovye strategii ix unifikacii. In: *Meždunarodnyj simpozium «Tipologija argumentnoj struktury I sintaksičeskix otnošenij». Conference abstracts.* Kazan', 2004, pp. 16-18.

Kibrik, A. E. Nominal inflection galore: Daghestanian, with side grances at Europe and the world. In: Frans Plank (ed.). *Noun phrase structure in the languages of Europe.* De Gruiter, 2003, pp. 37-112.

Kibrik A. E., Ja. G. Testelec. Bezhta. In: M. Job (ed.). *The indigenous languages of the Caucasus,* Vol. 3. North East Caucasian languages, Part 1. Ann Arbor, MI: Caravan Books, 2004, pp. 217-295.

Kouadio, K. D., Kouakou Y. *Syllabaire Bɛŋ: Edition préliminaire.* Abidjan: SIL, 1997.

Kouakou, Y. *Le syntagme nominal en bɛ̀ŋ́.* Rapport de D.E.A. Université de Cocody, Abidjan, 1997.

Letučij A. B. *Tipologija labil'nyx glagolov: semantičeskie i morfosintaksičeskie aspekty.* PhD dissertation. Moscow, 2006.

Murphy M. L. The Structure of Beng. In: Alma Gottlieb, M. Lynne Murphy. *Beng – English Dictionary*. Bloomington: Indiana University Linguistics Club Publications, 1995, pp. xii-xxiii.

Nikitina, T. Clause-internal correlatives in Southeastern Mande: A case for the propagation of typological rara. *Lingua* 122:4, 2012, pp. 319–334.

Nikitina, T. *Wan-French-Russian-English dictionary.* Ms.

Ory, M. *Esquisse phonologique du Bɛŋ (Côte d'Ivoire).* Mémoire de D.E.A, Université Paris III, 1981.

Paesler W. How to distinguish statement and question in Beng. *Journal of West African Languages*, XIX, 1, 1989.

Paesler W. *Principes de l'orthographe beng.* Ms: SIL, RCI, 1991.

Paesler W. Esquisse phonologique de beng parler de Ouassadougou (Sous-Préfecture de M'Bahiakro, Côte d'Ivoire). In: Inge Egner (ed.). *Esquisses phonologiques de trois langues ivoiriennes: beng, dida, yaouré* (Esquisses linguistiques ivoiriennes – 1). Institut de Linguistique Appliquée – ACCT. Abidjan, 1992.

Paesler W. *Field materials on the Beng languages.* Ms.

Paperno, D. Parlers décrits par Tauxier et Delafosse et le Beng moderne de Ouassadougou. In : Valentin Vydrin (éd.). Langues et linguistique mandé: 2e Colloque international, ST Petersbourg (Russie), 15-17 septembre 2008. Communications et résumés. Saint Petersburg, 2008a, pp. 113-120.

Paperno, D. Otnositel'nye konstrukcii jazyka ben. In : V. F. Vydrin (ed.). *Afrikanskij sbornik – 2007*. Saint Petersburg: Nauka, 2008b, pp. 306-319.

Paperno, D. Grammatičeskij očerk ben. In : V. F. Vydrin (ed.). *Mandeica Petropolitana II* (ACTA LINGUISTICA PETROPOLITANA. Trudy Instituta Lingvističeskix issledovanij RAN. N. N. Kazanskij (ed.), vol. VII. no. 2). St. Petersburg: Nauka, 2011, pp. 14-117.

Perexhval'skaya, E. V. *Dictionnaire mwan-français.* Ms.

Polivanova A. K. Vybor čislovux form suščestvitel'nyx v russkom jazyke. In : *Problemy strukturnoj lingvistiki – 1981.* Moscow: Nauka, 1983.

Prost A. *Les langues mandé-sud du groupe mana-busa.* Mémoires de l'Institut français d'Afrique Noire. Dakar : IFAN, 1953.

Šošitajšvili I. A. *Funkcii i status pljuskvamperfekta v glagol'noj sisteme.* PhD thesis. Russian State University of Humanities, Moscow, 1998.

Tauxier L. *Le Noir de Bondoukou.* Paris : Editions Leroux, 1921.

Testelec Ja. G. *Grammatičeskie ierarxii i tipologija predloženija.* Doctoral paper. Moscow, 2003.

Tsunoda T. Remarks on Transitivity. *Journal of Linguistics* 21, 385-96.

Verma M. K., T. Mohanan (eds.). *Experiencer subjects in South Asian languages.* Stanford: CSLI Publications, 1990.

Vydrin V. F. Ličnye mestoimenija v južnyx jazykax mande. In: *Mandeica Petropolitana* (Acta linguistica petropolitana. Trudy instituta lingvističeskix issledovanij, II:2). Saint Petersburg: Nauka, 2006, pp. 327-413.

Vydrin V. On the problem of the Proto-Mande homeland. *Voprosy jazykovogo rodstva – Journal of Language Relationship* 1, 2009, pp. 107-142.

Vydrine V. Goo: présentation d'une langue. *Mandenkan* 50, 2013, pp. 171-194.

Welmers W. E. The Mande Languages. In: *Monograph Series of Language and Linguistics*. Washington: Georgetown University, Institute of Languages and Linguistics 11, 1958, pp. 9-24.

Xolodovič A. A. Zalog. Opredelenie. Isčislenie. In: *Kategorija zaloga.* Leningrad: Nauka, 1970, pp. 1-26.

Denis Paperno. **Grammatical sketch of Beng**

The sketch provides a description of the Beng language on all levels of grammar. Individual sections are dedicated to phonology, morphology, and key aspects of syntax of the language, including simple and complex clauses. The paper is based on field work.

Keywords: Beng language, Mande languages, syntax, morphology, phonology, field description, pronominal series, reduplication, aspect, argument structure, information structure

Денис Аронович Паперно. **Грамматический очерк бен**

Данный очерк, написанный на основе полевой работы, содержит описание языка бен на всех грамматических уровнях. Отдельные разделы посвящены фонологии, морфологии и базовым аспектам синтаксиса, включая структуру простого и сложного предложения.

Ключевые слова: язык бен, языки манде, синтаксис, морфология, фонология, полевая лингвистика, местоименные серии, редупликация, аспект, информационная структура

Denis Paperno. **L’esquisse grammaticale du beng**

Cet esquisse est basée sur les données de terrain et représente une description du beng à tous les niveaux de grammaire. Il comporte des chapitres sur la phonologie, morphologie, les fondements du syntaxe, y compris la structuire de l’énoncé simple et complexe.

Mots clé : langue beng, langues mandé, syntaxe, morphologie, phonologie, linguistique de terrain, séries pronominales, aspect, structure informationnelle