

To
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1, 2, 3, ...	Noun class numbers
1pl	First person plural
1sg	First person singular
2pl	Second person plural
2sg	Second person singular
3pl	Third person plural
3sg	Third person singular
AdjCd	Adjective Concord
Adv	Adverb
APPL	Applicative
CAUS	Causative
Cd	Concord
Cl	Class
CLIT	Clitic
COND	Conditional
COORD	Coordinator
COP	Copula
DemPro	Demonstrative Pronoun
DemCd	Demonstrative Concord
DET	Determiner
FV	Final vowel
GenCd	Genitive Concord
GprnCd	General Proform Concord
IM	Infinitive Marker
InfxV	Infix Vowel
IntPro	Interrogative Pronoun
LOC	Locative
Neg	Negative Marker
NumCd	Numeral Concord
ObjP	Object Pronoun
OrdCd	Ordinal Concord
PASS	Passiv
PAST	Past
PN	Person's name

POS	Possessive Root
PosPro	Possessive Pronoun
PosCd	Possessive Concord
Pref	Prefix
PREP	Preposition
PRES	Present
PROC	Procedure
PROG	Progressive
RelPro	Relative Pronoun
RELAT	Relationship
SP	Subject Pronoun
TAM	Tense Aspect Mood
VerbP	Verb Prefix
VR	Verbal Root

FOREWORD

In Africa, many languages are spoken, but the size of most languages is relatively small. Consequently, many of these languages have not been studied, although each language is a facet in the long history of humankind and is an exhaustible cultural resource.

Although there are several descriptions of Mopke, they are fragmentary. Dr. Atindogbe's work is an attempt to fill this gap with his careful approach to the language. I hope that this book, although small, will serve not only as research material for linguistics scholars, but also as a grammar manual for those who would like to learn this precious language, including those who have, or almost have, forgotten it.

Shigeki KAJI

PREFACE

There are a number of scientific publications on the Mokpe (Mokpwe, Bakweri) language. From Rogozinsky (1903), Lorch (1908), Ardener (1968) to Atindogbé (2004; 2012), passing through Hombert (1973), Gensler (1980; 1981a; 1981b), Hawkinson (1986), Kagaya (1992a; 1992b; 1992c), Connell (1997, with material collected in the 1950s by Edwin Ardener), etc. there have been several studies on the structure of Mokpe in the various compartments of linguistics: phonology, tonology, morphology, syntax and lexicon. However, none of these works is a coherent, homogenous bulk regrouping all these aspects in one volume (even small) and addressing the Mokpe language structure in a fluid way, with a discussion thread: grammar. So, the *A Grammatical Sketch of Mokpe* is my modest contribution to the noble enterprise to see the Mokpe language documented, described and ‘modernized’ for the native speakers, the scientific milieu and the general public. This is just the beginning of a more voluminous work, “*A Reference Grammar of Mokpe*” and this first attempt of a linguistically coherent work was a nice and rewarding experience. A number of reasons motivate this endeavor, but I will state just a few.

First, my primary goal is to provide a concise volume where the structure of the Mokpe language could be seen at a glance without having to turn many pages and to read savant terminology. This primary objective then set the pace for the methodology to be adopted: descriptive, structural and typological. I believe and hope that the absence of a sophisticated linguistic jargon will make this short version of the Mokpe language structure also accessible to non-linguistic knowledge readers. I am thinking, first and foremost, about the Bakweri children who are no longer speaking their language due to the exclusive reign of Cameroon Pidgin English as an unavoidable Lingua Franca of the Southwest Region, as well as English and French as the two official languages of Cameroon. My concern goes to the Bakweri students reading Linguistics who can now see how their language functions, how their language accommodate phonological processes such as assimilation, deletion, tone copying, etc. notions that look so unfamiliar and so abstract to them although they practice them in their everyday use of their mother tongue. My concern goes to students of linguistics interested in African languages and more precisely Narrow Bantu languages and who would like to see how phonological processes they have been discussing in other languages also operate in Mokpe. My concern goes to the authors who have attempted to provide an alphabet and orthographic rules to read and write Mokpe. May this contribution and my position regarding the alphabet be an inspiration to solve the problem of harmonization of the alphabets, considering the fact that the many alphabets

will not ease the reading and learning process. It is necessary to adopt one writing system once for good even if the latter will undergo adjustment as time passes. My concern finally goes to all the Bakweri people who are “struggling” to have their language and culture known by the children and the general public.

Second, my passion for descriptive linguistics as an essential component of Documentary Linguistics, and the assurance to know more about the “mystery” an under-described language is hiding from general linguistic knowledge was a determinant factor in this enterprise.

Third, the possibility of furnishing teaching material to university courses on the structure of the African languages as a means to know more about the individual languages of the world linguistic patrimony.

Fourth, the accomplishment of a duty as researcher and university lecturer whose mission cannot be dissociated from the one of the University he is working for, that is the provision of service to the community.

The book is divided in three main sections: phonology, morphology and syntax. In the section on the phonology, I presented the sound system of the language, the various current phonological processes, the tone system and an alphabet. The morphology is divided into two parts, the noun morphology and the verb morphology. Then the book ended with the simple and complex sentence structures, syntax. One particularity on this book is that it provides extensive examples on each phenomenon described. The examples are carefully selected to be representative of the phenomenon described on various criteria including:

- 1) The shape/structure of the word (nouns and verbs)
- 2) The noun class of the word (nouns)
- 3) The tonal class of the word (verbs)
- 4) The tonal class/subclass and group/subgroup of the word (both nouns and verbs)
- 5) The length of the utterance
- 6) The position of the word (nouns and verbs)

In short special care was put on the selection of the illustrations.

The *A Grammatical Sketch of Mokpe* started in 2005 with data collection, and this exercise has continued till the final version of this work. By 2007, the bulk of the work was done, and only the chapter on syntax was left. In the meantime, other duties and academic commitments did not allow me to go back to the grammar, finish the last chapter and do the final readings and adjustments. Fortunately, I had the opportunity to be invited as a Research Fellow at Kyoto University in Japan, from February to May 2012. That was the time I was able to complete what I started many years ago.

Two people are at the center of this endeavor, that I will never stop thanking for their quality and decisive contribution. First, I am grateful to Mr Lynonge Paul, my “many-in-one” consultant who understood at the early stage of this work my intention and gave me all the linguistic support. His role did not only consist of kindly providing data for the book but also to explain and research on the areas or questions he could not answer immediately during our elicitation sessions. Paul, thanks for your restless collaboration, thank you for your incredible patience in answering all my questions on your language, even those for which you had no immediate answer. I will then express my profound gratitude to Prof. Shigeki Kaji of the Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies (ASAFAS) of Kyoto University who made it possible for me to have the unique opportunity to stay at ASAFAS to complete this work. His utmost support throughout my stay in Kyoto and the indefectible assistance of his colleague Prof. Araki, of his collaborators Numata-san and Inai-san were valuable assets that contributed tremendously to the accomplishment of this task.

This work is a grammatical sketch and I am aware of its gaps and shortcomings. For example, I am conscient that there is still some works to do on the alphabet, the tonology and many other aspects, and these will be my next preoccupations on the language. However, in the meantime, may this contribution be seen as an important step forward in our knowledge of Mokpe and may it prove to be not only a useful continuation of works started by previous authors, but also a starting point for further research on the grammatical structures of Mokpe.

A GRAMMATICAL SKETCH OF MÒKPÈ (BAKWERI) , BANTU A20

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ABSTRACT This work, *A Grammatical Sketch of Mòkpè (Bakweri)*, is a linguistic description that emphasizes data showing the basic and relevant structures of the language. It covers four aspects: phonology, orthography, morphology, and syntax. Phonology studies the sound and tone systems of a language and revealed that Mokpe has seven vowels and 23 consonants, although Connell (1997) states 21. The phonological rules noted include: deletion, epenthesis, affricate and glide formation, and vowel assimilation. Tonally, Mokpe exhibits two lexical tones (low and high) and a grammatical high tone. The two basic tones combine to form either a rising or falling tone. The most prominent tonological processes are tone deletion, tone copy, tone simplification, and Meeussen's Rule. Based on the phonological study, 26 graphemes (unigraphs only) are proposed for writing the Mokpe language. These include 18 consonants, seven vowels, and two tones. The morphological study of the nominal and verbal systems of Mokpe revealed that the language retains many intrinsic traits of Narrow Bantu. The structure of the noun is a noun class prefix followed by a root. There are 13 noun classes numbered consecutively from 1 to 10, 13 to 14 and 19. They are grouped into nine genders (singular/plural pairs), with the odd-numbered classes being singular and even-numbered classes being plural: 1/2, 3/4, 5/6, 7/8, 9/10, 13/14, 14/10, and 19/8. Regarding the verbal morphology, the focus was on inflection and derivation. The verb denotes an action, process, or state and changes according to person, time, mood, and class in agreement with the noun class of the subject. Derivation is still very productive in Mokpe. Some verb meanings are obtained by combining the verb root with a suffix. As far as syntax is concerned, the study revealed that Mokpe is a subject-verb-object (SVO) language.

Key Words: Mokpe; Bakweri; Gammar; Bantu; Cameroon.

I. INTRODUCTION

Mokpe (Mokpwe, Bakweri) is spoken in the Southwest Region of Cameroon, largely in Fako Division, in the cities of Limbe, Muyuka and Tiko. A census of as far back as 1982 by SIL revealed that a population of 32,200 speak Mokpe (Lewis, 2009). This number is not far from what Mutia (2005: 217–218) advanced:

With a total population of just over 35,000, the Bakweri occupy about 85 villages in Fako division. The Bakweri are [...] divided into two main groups, namely *Vakpe va Lelu* (Upper Bakweri) and *Vakpe wa Mbenge* (Lower Bakweri). The Upper Bakweri are closer to the base of the Cameroon Mountain stretching from Mafanja in the West and to Ekona in the East. The Lower Bakweri inhabit the area along the Atlantic coast and

include the villages of Ewota, Kie, Bimbria, Batoke, Bakingili, Bomboko, and Sanje (in the West Coast), Bonjongo, and Mokunda.

However, considering the perfide influence exerted on the languages of the Southwest Region by the linguafranca Cameroon Pidgin English (Akum, 2011), this number might have dropped considerably. Indeed, the speakers also use Cameroon Pidgin English and/or Duala. Although the exact relationship between Mokpe, Wumboko, Bubia and Isubu, is not yet firmly established, it is alleged that literature may serve the four speech forms.⁽¹⁾ Guthrie (1967/71) classified Mokpe as a Narrow Bantu language of Zone A, precisely A22, under the Duala Group (A20).

The objective of the present work is to provide a simple descriptive grammar (a sketch grammar) of the language for teaching and learning purposes. The work is divided into three sections: phonology, morphology and syntax. The variety decribed here is the one spoken by the Upper Bakweri people. My field research assistant is a native of Gbassa/Bwassa (the father's village), and he grew up between Bwasa, Bova (the mother's village) and Buea, the capital city of the Southwest Region.

1. Location of Mokpe Speakers

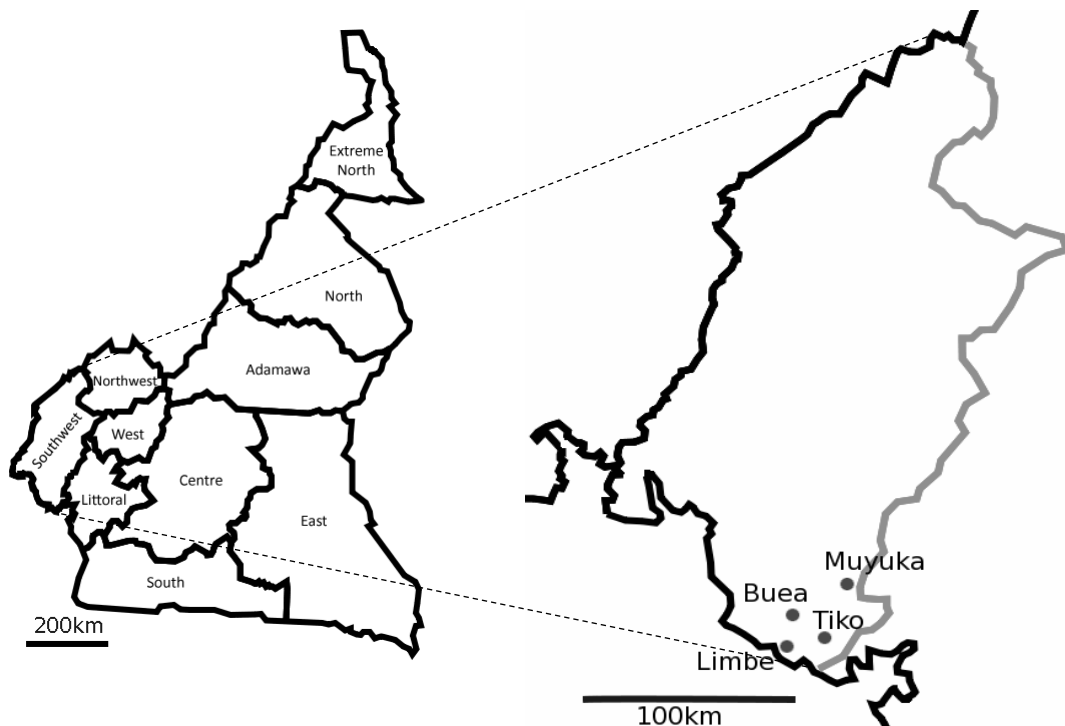


Fig. 1. Map of Cameroon (Southwest Region).

2. Mokpe and the Surrounding Languages

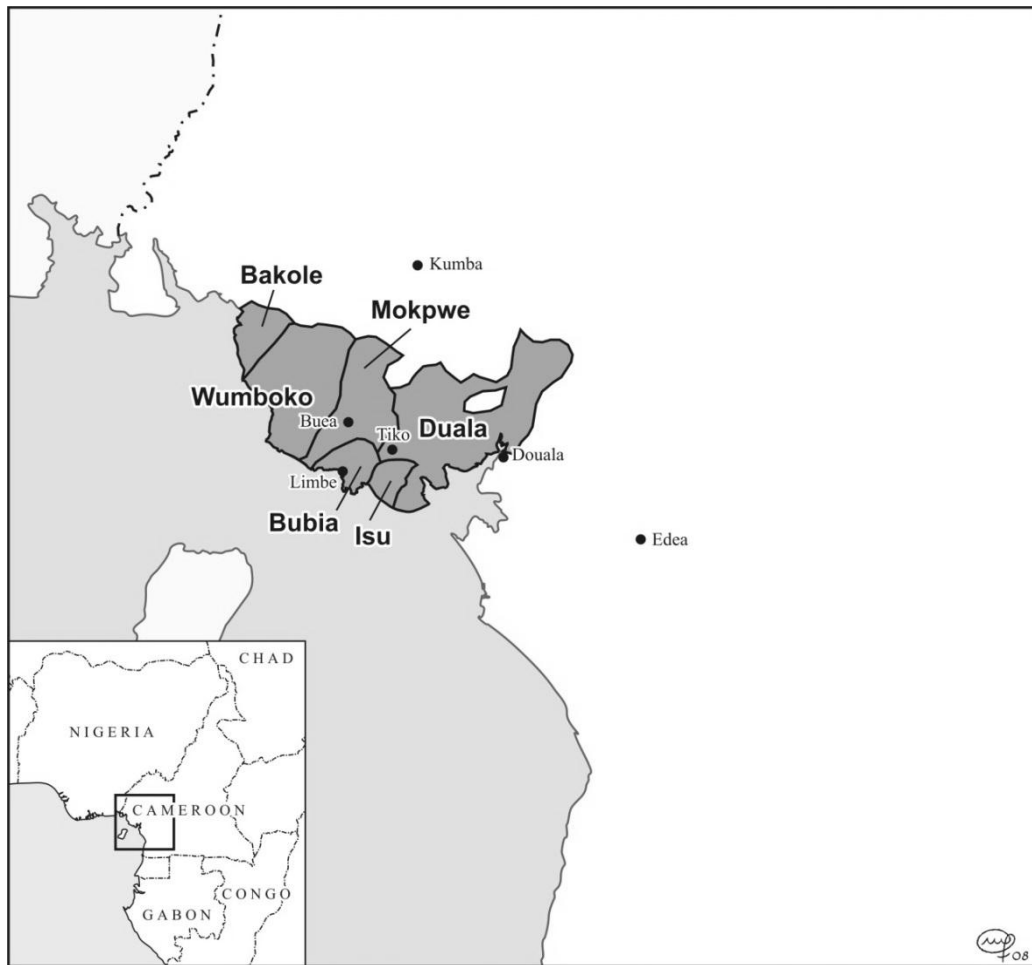


Fig. 2. Map of the Southwest Region with the languages surrounding Mokpe.

II. PHONOLOGY⁽²⁾

1. Consonants

Mokpe has the following consonant system:

		Labial		Alveolar		Post-alv/ Palatal		Velar		Labial- Velar
Nasals		m		n		ɲ				ɲm
Plosives:	plain	(p)	b	t				k		kp gb
	prenasalised		mb		nd	ndʒ		ŋg		ŋgb
Affricates						dʒ				ɲw
Fricatives		ɸ	β							
Approximants				l		j				w
Liquidified Fricative				zr						

The system above differs from what Connell (1997) presented in the brief grammatical introduction of his dictionary of the Mokpe language:

		Labial		Alveolar		Post-alv/ Palatal		Velar		Labial-Velar
Nasals		m		n		ɲ				
Plosives:	plain	(p)	b)	t	d			k		kp gb
	prenasalised		mb		nd	ndʒ		ŋg		ɲmgb
Fricatives		ɸ	β	s						
Approximants				l		j				w

It is obvious that I have six sounds (dʒ, zr, ɲm, ɲgb, ɲw, g) that do not exist in Connell's chart. On the other hand, I lack three sounds (ɲmgb, d and s), which are found in Connell (1997).

The six sounds missing in Connell's dictionary are exemplified here by the following words:

[ɲm]	ɲmándʒà	"sea"	[ɲgb]	ɲgbâ	"dog"
[dʒ]	dʒòlí	"firewood"	[ɲw]	lũɲwèlè	"to show"
[zr]	lĩzrò	"eye"	[g]	gàlé	"gari, tapioca"

As far as the /ɲmgb/ is concerned, we have not identified a single word where this sound appears in our corpus. Similarly, no word made up with this sound is found in Connell's dictionary. Note that this sound is split in two in my work: /ɲm/ and /gb/, illustrated by *ɲmánà* "child" and *gbààβá* "snake" respectively.

The sound /p/ is found only in borrowed words like *píjà* “pear,” while /b/ on the other hand is very uncommon. In our corpus, we found it in *libà* “to steal” and *bò* “selfishness” only. And, even then, it should be noted that *bò* freely varies with *wò* while *ibà* “steal!” (1st pers. imp.) can equally be said *ìwà*. Finally, /g/ is as rare as /p/, because it is only found in borrowed words: *gàlé* “gari, tapioca” (grinded and dry cassava).

It is worth recalling that the consonantal system of Mokpe creates a lot of controversy among researchers. In addition to sounds that may exist in one phonological description but not others (e.g. the divergence between my work and Connell’s own), there is the question of phonological representation of certain sounds.

For example, /s/ in Connell (1997) is phonemicized as /r/ in Kagaya (1992a). The phonetic reality that I represent in this work with the symbols /zr/ is equally found in Muzang (1997), but with three variants: [rz], [ʒr], [rʒ]. Indeed, many speakers will use [rz], [ʒr] or [rʒ]. I opted for /zr/, the liquidified alveolar fricative, because that is what my informants use. Ngoisah (2002), contrary to Muzang (1997) and me, uses /rz/. This sound is realised as /s/ in Bubia as shown in (4) below.

Mokpe	Bubia	Gloss
lǐzrò	lǐsò	"eye"
izròzré	isòsé	"crab"
lizròŋgá	lisòŋgá	"tooth"
jǎzrù	jǎsù	"chin"
èèzrè	èèsè	"bone"
mbúzrà	mbúsà	"back"
izràzrí	isàsí	"mat"
nìzrè	nìsè	"thirst"
zràlì	sàlì	"small"
lizrimá	lisimá	"cold"

On the other hand, Ngoisah (2002) and Connell (1997) consistently disagree on which of the phonemes /ɸ/ or /β/ appears where. A look at their respective data reveals that they contrast in all the words that they happen to have in common. There is no single word in which the two authors agree on the sound to appear. Consequently, I want to believe that the two authors may be investigating two separate varieties. The examples below illustrate this controversy:

Ngoisah (2002)		Connell (1997)		Gloss
IPA	Orthography	IPA	Orthography	

/ɸ/	ɸê	hwê	/β/	βê	vê	"be"
	ɸá	hwa		βá	va	"they"
	ɸè	hwè		βè	vè	"NCP, cl. 8"
	ɸéjà	hwejà		βéjà	vejà	"hear"
	káɸè	kahwè		káβè	kavè	"antelope"
	ɸàné	hwàné		βàné	vàné	"carry"
	ɸéwǎ	hwewǎ		βéwǎ	vewǎ	"two"
	gbàɸá	gbàhwa		gbàβá	gbàva	"snake"
	ɸándà	hwandà		βándà	vandà	"cover"
	liɸàtò	lihwàtò		liβàtò	livàtò	"cloth"
	nà ɸéli	nà hweli		nà βéli	nà veli	"I am"
	màlíɸá	màlíhwa		màlíβá	màlíva	"water"
	èɸámbo	èhwambo		èβámbo	èvambo	"plank"
/β/	βéjà	hveja	/ɸ/	ɸéjà	feja	"sore"
	βàálê	hvàalê		ɸàálê	fàalê	"light a fire"
	liβóá	lihvoa		liɸóá	lifoa	"to open"
	liβàβà	lihvàhvà		liɸàɸà	lifàfà	"broom"
	mòóβò	mòohvò		mòóɸò	mòofò	"head"
	èβù má	èhvùma		èɸù má	èfùma	"orange"

It is difficult to say that this disparity originates from a dialectal variation. One of our informants, although from the same region as Ngoisah, claimed to be surprised by the forms produced by the researcher. She perceives just the opposite sound. My main informant, for the same set of words, produced the sounds transcribed by Connell's.

2. Vowels

Mokpe has the following vowel system:

front	central	back	
i		u	closed
e		o	half-closed
ɛ		ɔ	half-open
	a		open

This system is identical to what is found in Connell (1997) and in Ngoisah (2002).

3. Tones

1. Lexical tones

Like most Bantu languages of the zone, Mokpe contrasts two lexical basic tones: the low (`) and the high (´). However, a downstepped high tone (ˈ), the falling (^) and the rising (ˇ) are equally noted. The falling and the rising are the results of the combination of the two basic tones. Example:

Low		High	
ɲmà	"year"	kó	"snail"
wòkpò	"beard"	ɲángá	"sand"
likpàmbà	"cassava"	ímbúndá	"friends"
Falling		Rising	
liβê	"breast (female)"	tũ	"room"
ɲô	"body"	limě	"to swallow"
		mǒlěngù	"sheep"

2. Grammatical tones

The language equally exhibits grammatical tones. This is illustrated in the paired phrases in (8), where the indefinite and definite articles are rendered by the low and the high tone respectively.

mòtò / bàtò	cl. 1/2	"a man / people"
mótò / bátò		"the man / the people"
mòóβò / mèóβò	cl. 3/4	"a head / heads"
mó'óβò / mé'óβò		"the head / the heads"
lizròŋgá / màzròŋgá	cl. 5/6	"a tooth / teeth"
lǐzròŋgá / mǎzròŋgá		"the tooth / the teeth"
lǐzrò / mǐzrò	cl. 5/6	"an eye / eyes"
lí'íizrò / mí'íizrò		"the eye / the eyes"
èlèlà / βèlèlà	cl. 7/8	"a duck / ducks"
élèlà / βélèlà		"the duck / the ducks"
ìwónì / βèwónì	cl. 19/13	"a cartridge / cartridges"
îwónì / βêwónì		"the cartridge / the cartridges"
wòzrô	cl. 14	"a face"
wôzrô		"the face"

Grammatical tones are also very productive in the verbal paradigm where it is used to distinguish between the past simple and the present perfect tenses. That is:

lìjòó “to laugh”

Past simple

nà mà jǒ	"I laughed"
ò mà jǒ	"you laughed"
à mà jǒ	"s/he laughed"
ì mà jǒ	"we laughed"
è mà jǒ	"you laughed"
βá mà jǒ	"they laughed"

Present Perfect

ná mǎ jò	"I have laughed"
ó mǎ jò	"you have laughed"
á mǎ jò	"s/he has laughed"
í mǎ jò	"we have laughed"
é mǎ jò	"you have laughed"
βá mǎ jò	"they have laughed"

lìdžáá “to come”

Past simple

nà mà dǔǎ	"I came"
ò mà dǔǎ	"you came"
à mà dǔǎ	"s/he came"
ì mà dǔǎ	"we came"
è mà dǔǎ	"you came"
βá mà dǔǎ	"they came"

Present Perfect

ná mǎ dǔà	"I have come"
ó mǎ dǔà	"you have come"
á mǎ dǔà	"s/he has come"
í mǎ dǔà	"we have come"
é mǎ dǔà	"you have come"
βá mǎ dǔà	"they have come"

lěmbà (> li + émbà) “to sing”

Past simple

nà mēmbá	"I sang"
ò mēmbá	"you sang"
à mēmbá	"s/he sang"
ì mēmbá	"we sang"
è mēmbá	"you sang"
βá mēmbá	"they sang"

Present Perfect

nǎ mēmbà	"I have sung"
ǒ mēmbà	"you have sung"
á mēmbà	"s/he has sung"
í mēmbà	"we have sung"
é mēmbà	"you have sung"
βá mēmbà	"they have sung"

NB: mēmbá > mà+émbà

NB: mēmbà (> mà+ émbà)

lìkê "to cut"

Past simple

nà mà ké	"I cut"
ò mà ké	"you cut"
à mà ké	"s/he cut"
ì mà ké	"we cut"
è mà ké	"you cut"

Present Perfect

ná ¹ máá kê	"I have cut"
ó ¹ máá kê	"you have cut"
á ¹ máá kê	"s/he has cut"
í ¹ máá kê	"we have cut"
é ¹ máá kê	"you have cut"

4. Realization of Segments

[illegible]

mw-	mw-íbè	"thief"	>	mù-	+	-íbè
				cl.1		Root
lw-	lw-àtù	"cloth"	>	l-	+	-ùàtù
				cl.5		Root

➤ Palatalisation

biphonematic

lj-	lj-ǎmà	"jaw"	>	lì-	+	-ámà
				cl.5		Root
lj-	lj-òβá	"door"	>	lì-	+	-òβá
				cl.5		Root

2. Vowels

	Mokpe		English		French
/i/	itámí	"shoe"	fit	lit	"bed"
/u/	lèlùwà	"market"	pull	cou	"neck"
/e/	ètò	"rat"	face [fers]	thé	"tea"
/o/	mòláló	"uncle"	note [noot]	numéro	"number"
/ɛ/	ɲmǎmè	"bat"	bet	père	"father"
/ɔ/	ndʒóló	"lizard"	boy	or	"gold"
/a/	màámà	"jaws"	adult	taper	"to tap"

5. Syllable Structure

Mokpe has two syllabic shapes: CV and V. The most common shape is CV. The CV is sometimes realised, C_{glide}V (i.e. CwV and CjV). In other words, the high vowels of the prefix (*i* and *u* in *lì-* and *mù-* for example) desyllabify when followed by another vowel.

CV		C _{glide} V		V	
mò	"arm"	ljò-βá	"door"	à	"s/he, it"
ɲgà-ndà	"nail"	ljǒ-ɲgó-ɲgó	"knee"	è-tò	"rat"
mà-zrò-ɲgá	"teeth"	mwà-ɲgá	"root"		
lì-ká-kù-mè-nè	"to stick"				

6. Phonological Rules

1. Deletion rules

Deletion, i.e. instances where a sound gets eliminated from the string of set of words appears to be the most salient segmental rule in Mokpe. This happens to both vowels and consonants. The cases reported here are of two types: deletions that are triggered by the environment, and deletions that are motivated by rapid flux of the speech. The deleted item is bolded.

➤ Deletions that are triggered by the environment

The first of two vowels following each other across morpheme or word boundary will get deleted if this first vowel is preceded by a coda.

Example 1

Deletion of vowel /i/ of the infinitive marker (IM) and of vowel /a/ of the subject pronoun 1st person (1sg):

a.	IM	Root		Infinitive	
	li-	+ émbà	→	lěmbà	"to sing"
	li-	+ òká	→	lòká	"to play"
	li-	+ úmbà	→	lǔmbà	"to close"
	li-	+ èndé	→	lèndé	"to go"
	li-	+ àgbá	→	làgbá	"to climb"
b.	1sg	Root		Present	
	nà	+ émbà	→	němbà	"I sing"
	nà	+ òká	→	nòká	"I play"
	nà	+ úmbà	→	nǔmbà	"I close"
	nà	+ èndé	→	nèndé	"I go"
	nà	+ àgbá	→	nàgbá	"to climb"

However, be careful! Do not be chocked to read or hear two distinct consecutive vowels, the subject pronoun 3rd person (3sg) and the vowel of the verb root:

3sg	Root		Present	
à	+ émbà	→	à émbà	"s/he sings"
à	+ òká	→	à òkà	"s/he plays"
à	+ úmbà	→	à úmbà	"s/he closes"
à	+ èndé	→	à èndè	"s/he goes"

à + àgbá → à àgbà "s/he climbs"

Indeed, there is no deletion in the instances above. Remember that deletion occurs if and only if the vowel that gets deleted is preceded by a consonant.

Example 2.

In the following nouns, the vowel of the noun class prefix /mò-/ (singular) or /wù-/ (plural) will delete in front of another vowel.

NC		Root		Output	
mò-	+	ólánà	→	mólánà	"woman"
mò-	+	únánà	→	múnánà	"man"
wù-	+	únánà	→	wúnánà	"men"

➤ Deletions that are motivated by the flux of the speech

a) The first of two vowels following each other across morpheme or word boundary will get deleted in rapid speech.

Slow speech		Rapid speech	
jòkpó á mbóli	→	jòkpá mbóli	"he-goat"
ṇàmà í ǂǎ	→	ṇámí ǂǎ	"two animals"
kémà í jáò	→	kémí jáò	"three monkeys"
Ìwàná é má ètǔ	→	ìwàná é mètǔ	"the mouth which is small"

b) Intervocalic /β/, /l/ or /j/ will get deleted in rapid speech.

Slow speech		Rapid speech	
βèòkpó βé mbóli	→	βèòkpó é mbóli	"he-goats"
βáǎná βámi	→	βáǎná ámi	"my children"
lízrò lǐ zrǎli	→	lízrò ì zrǎli	"the small eye"
èlèlà jǎmi	→	èlèlà ámi	"my duck"

c) Whole syllables get deleted in rapid speech.

Slow speech		Rapid speech	
ònô ṇmána wà múnána	→	ònô ṇmána múnána	"this boy (near me)"
mǐzrò mémá méně	→	mǐzrò méně	"the eyes which see"
èṇgbá é má èlómǎ	→	èṇgbá èlómǎ	"the dog which barks"
à βéli ndí mòtà wòowê	→	à βéli mòtà wòowê	"he is a bad person"
ébù má é βéli ndí jé'tí	→	ébù mé éli jé'tí	"the fruit is strong"

2. Epenthetic rules

When certain suffixes of the verbal derivational morphology are added to the verb root, an epenthetic consonant, the liquid /l/ or the nasal /n/ is inserted between the final vowel and the suffix. That is that case of the relationship morpheme -ελε.

/lũḡmà + ελε/ → [lũḡmèlèlè] "to come from (somewhere)"

to come +RELAT

/lizràèḡ + ελε/ → [lizràèḡèlèlè] "sign (sth for sb)"

to sign +RELAT

/liḡià + ελε/ → [liḡiánélé] "to mix sth with sth"

to mix +RELAT

/lirzàngá + ελε/ → [lirzàngánélé] "to bring together (people)"

to assemble +RELAT

In some other utterances, the glides /w/ and /j/ are inserted to break a sequence of two vowels.

èmúḡnà à ò báǎ èḡḡòḡndà áḡi → èmúḡnà à wò báǎ èḡḡòḡndà áḡi

"the man who will marry my daughter"

nà mà ò'ḡḡóḡwáné ḡbítí → nà mà wò'ḡḡóḡwáné ḡbítí

"I helped myself"

à ó'ḡḡwé (ḡḡó) wítí → à wó'ḡḡwé (ḡḡó) wítí

"kill yourselves"

3. Feature changing rules

➤ Affricate and Glide formation

The concord vowels /i/ and /e/, change respectively to [dʒ] and [j] before another vowel.

• /i/ → [dʒ]

ìliḡòàḡ è ì òkó → ìliḡòàḡ dʒòkó "one key"

ìḡḡní í ókó → ìḡḡní 'dʒókó "one bird"

ì òḡi ḡḡḡnà → dʒòḡi ḡḡḡnà "we have a man"

ì àzréjé likê → dʒààzréjé likê "we wanted to cut"

íwǒḡní éḡá í óḡwǎ → íwǒḡní éḡá dʒóḡwǎ

"the cartridge which kills"

wóǒlò wémá wó ì òḡḡóḡwání → wóǒlò wémá wó dʒòḡḡóḡwání

"the canoe which helps us"

• /e/ → [j]

ìzrù è òkó	→	ìzrù jòkó	"one wall"
èjémbé é ókó	→	èjémbé jókó	"one animal"
è òḃì màlíwá	→	jòḃì màlíwá	"you (pl) have water"
è àzréjé likê	→	jààzréjé likê	"you (pl) wanted to cut"

➤ Vowel assimilation

The vowel /a/ of the collective action suffix -na is realised /ɔ/ if the final vowel of the verb root is /ɔ/ and as [ɛ] if the final vowel of the root is /ɛ/.

/lɪŋwâ + na/	→	[lɪŋwânà]	"to die with ..."
/làgbá + na/	→	[làgbáná]	"to climb with..."
/linàngá + na/	→	[linàngáná]	"to sleep with..."
/lɪŋô + na/	→	[lɪŋônò]	"to drink with..."
/lɪjǒnó + na/	→	[lɪjǒnó]	"to laugh with..."
/likúlè + na/	→	[likúlènè]	"to finish with..."
/lèndéné + na/	→	[lèndéné]	"to go with..."

7. Tonal Rules

We have noted tone deletion, tone simplification and tone lowering, precisely, Meeussen's Rule.

1. Tone deletion

In some cases, when a vowel gets deleted, its tone does not survive but also get deleted. For examples of such cases, please turn back to all the instances of vowel deletion discussed above in (17, 18, 20). You will notice that each time a vowel is deleted, it goes with its tone. Let us however recall the examples for sake of convenience.

NC		Root		Output	
mò-	+	ólánà	→	mólánà	"woman"
mò-	+	úpánà	→	múpánà	"man"
wù-	+	úpánà	→	wúpánà	"men"

In these examples indeed, the vowel of the prefix erases with its tone and the noun surfaces with the high tone of the first vowel of the root only. Note that we had a low tone facing a high before deletion occurs.

2. Tone copy

The vowel /a/ of the collective action suffix -na copies the tone the final vowel of the root.

/liŋwâ + na/	→	[liŋwânà]	"to die with ..."
/làgbá + na/	→	[làgbáná]	"to climb with ..."
/liŋô + na/	→	[liŋônò]	"to drink with ..."
/liǰónó + na/	→	[liǰónó]	"to laugh with ..."
/linàngá + na/	→	[linàngáná]	"to sleep with ..."
/likúlê + na/	→	[likúlènè]	"to finish with ..."
/lèndéné + na/	→	[lèndéné]	"to go with ..."

Similarly, the causative, applicative and the process are all marked by the toneless suffixes -izɛ, -eja and -ea respectively. These morphemes replace the last vowel of the verb root and copy its tone.

/lőkòwà + izɛ/ to learn +CAUS	→	[lőkòwizɛ]	"to teach (cause sb to learn)"
/làndá + izɛ/ to buy +CAUS	→	[làndízɛ]	"to cause sb to buy"
/liŋwâ + eja/ to learn +APPL	→	[liŋwéejà]	"die for ..."
/lòŋgá + eja/ to grow +APPL	→	[lòŋgéjà]	"to look after" (a child)
/lèndé + ea/ to go +PROC	→	[lèndéá]	"to go to"
/liφàngà + ea/ to spoil +PROC	→	[liφàngèà]	"to become spoiled"

3. Tone simplification

In some other cases, more precisely when it is the vowel of a root which is deleted, the tone will survive and re-associate with the vowel of the prefix. This creates a contour tone which is simplified.

NC + Root	Vowel del.	Tone reass.	Tone Simpl.	Output	
βà- + ólànà	βà- + ' lánà	βálànà	βálànà	βálànà	‘women’

4. Meeussen's Rule (H-tone lowering)

In Bantu languages, there is a tonal process whereby the second of two successive high tones is systematically deleted or lowered. We must have noticed when we were briefly discussing the grammatical tones of the Mokpe language that two consecutive high tones result in the lowering of the second in the present perfect tense. In the example below, the tones on the subject pronoun are low except for the last subject pronoun "they" whose tone is high. The tone on the past marker (mà) equally surfaces with a low tone. Then there is no tone lowering. In the present perfect, on the contrary, the tense marker is high-toned (má) and it is lowered because it immediately follows high-toned subject pronouns.

lɪŋgbǎ "to give"

Past simple		Present Perfect	
nà mà ŋgbǎ	"I gave"	ná ¹ máá ŋgbǎ	"I have given "
ò mà ŋgbǎ	"you gave"	ó ¹ máá ŋgbǎ	"you have given "
à mà ŋgbǎ	"s/he gave"	á ¹ máá ŋgbǎ	"s/he has given "
ì mà ŋgbǎ	"we gave"	í ¹ máá ŋgbǎ	"we have given "
è mà ŋgbǎ	"you gave"	é ¹ máá ŋgbǎ	"you have given"
ǎà mà ŋgbǎ	"they gave"	ǎá ¹ máá ŋgbǎ	"they have given"

The phrases in column A below do not exhibit any lowering because the high tone of the noun root is preceded by a low tone on the noun class prefix (mò-, ŋm-) or by zero noun class and then zero tone). Lowering happens when the tone of the prefix turn to be high.

A (no H lowering)		B (H lowering, Meeussen's Rule)	
mòóβò mòndénè	"a big head"	mó ¹ óβò mááẏrê	"the whole head"
ŋmēmà mòzràlì	"a small heart"	mé ¹ émà mòndénè	"the big hearts"
ŋgbáẏrèlì ndénè	"a big cartridge"	í ¹ ŋgbáẏrèlì ndénè	"big cartridges"

Furthermore, we have cases of word boundary. When the last vowel of the first lexeme of the phrase is low-toned, there is no lowering of the following high-toned vowel. But in B such lowering occurs because there are two successive high tones.

A (no H lowering)		B (H lowering, Meeussen's Rule)	
kémà βókó	"one monkey"	ndẏjǎ ¹ βókó	"one road (path)"
lǐzrò lókó	"one eye"	èwòlò ¹ lókó	"one work"
lǐnà lókó	"one name"	lǐzròŋgá ¹ lókó	"one tooth"
wòzrô wókó	"one face"	wòŋgò ¹ wókó	"one brain"
ìlìβòànè dẏzókó	"one key"	ìnòní ¹ dẏzókó	"one bird"

ìzrù jòkó	"one wall"	èjémbé 'jókó	"one animal"
tòímá jòmà	"each thing"	tòímá 'dʒóŋgó	"each pot"
tòímá mǝβò	"each head"	tòímá 'múnánà	"each husband"
tòímá mòtò	"each person"	tòímá 'zráŋgó	"each father"
tòímá ɲàŋgó	"each mother"	tòímá 'lítô	"each ear"
tòímá ŋgbâ	"each duck"	tòímá 'línà	"each name"
tòímá ŋmâ	"each year"	tòímá 'ŋmánà	"each baby"

Finally in the examples below, the tonal structure of the wh-question is just the structural description of Meeussen's Rule.

H lowering, Meeussen's Rule

ó 'nú wélélê	"where are you from?"
ó 'né mbèzrà	"where is the boy?"
ó 'né lèlà	"where is the duck?"
ó 'né kémà	"where is the monkey?"
í 'má βóndó dʒá	"when do you come?"
í 'má βóndó dʒá βê	"when do you come again?"

8. The Alphabet

Following the some of the principles outlined in the *General Alphabet of Cameroonian Languages* (Tadadjeu et Sadembouo 1979), I propose 26 graphemes (unigraphs) to write the Mokpe language. There are 18 consonants, 7 vowels and 2 tones.

Consonants

p, b, t, k, g, ɸ, β, l, w, j, ʒ, m, n, ɲ, ŋ, d, r, z.

Vowels

i, u, e, ε, o, ɔ, a.

Tones

` (low) ´ (high)

1. Consonants: illustration

Phoneme	Grapheme	Examples		Initial position	Mediane position
/p/	p	píjà	"pear"	——	
/b/	b	bò	"selfishness"	lǐbà	"to steal"
/t/	t	tàmbá	"hat/cap"	lìtô	"ear"
/k/	k	kó	"snail"	likòkó	"to pound"
/g/	g	gàlé	"garri"	——	
/ɸ/	ɸ	ɸéjá	"wound"	káɸè	"antelope"
/β/	β	βétá	"five"	lìβélè	"to call"
/l/	l	lìwèndì	"knife"	èwùlé	"grass"
/j/	j	jütütù	"smoke"	lìβijà	"to know"
/w/	w	wúɸá	"day"	lìwówà	"to take"
/m/	m	mǒmè	"male"	kémà	"sing"
/n/	n	nà	"and"	mànònó	"fat"
/ɲ/	ɲ	ɲìɲì	"housefly"	mòòɲè	"ground"

Some of the graphemes will be used to write some single sounds.

Phoneme	Grapheme		Examples			
			Initial position		Mediane position	
/dʒ/	dʒ	(d + ʒ)	dʒùɲgó	"eagle"	βààdʒèdʒè	"mothers"
/kp/	kp	(k + p)	kpâ	"fall!"	wòkpò	"beard"
/gb/	gb	(g + b)	gbààβá	"snake"	ìgbê	"sun"

The single graphemes can also be utilized to write co-articulated sounds like [zr], [mb], [nd], [ndʒ], [ɲg], [ɲgb], [ɲm], [ɲw].

Phoneme	Grapheme		Examples			
			Initial position		Mediane position	
/zr/	zr	z + r	zràlì	"small"	ìzròzré	"crab"
/mb/	mb	m + b	mbówà	"village"	zrómbé	"star"
/nd/	nd	n + d	ndòndòkì	"needle"	mbòndò	"buttocks"
/ndʒ/	ndʒ	n + d + ʒ	ndʒàwù	"hunger"	ìlándʒò	"fruit"
/ɲg/	ɲg	ɲ + g	ɲgàtá	"basket"	ɲgàɲgà	"doctor"
/ɲgb/	ɲgb	ɲ + g + b	ɲgbázrèlì	"cartridges"	làɲgbá	"to shoot"
/ɲm/	ɲm	ɲ + m	ɲmǎmè	"bat"	lǒɲwà	"to kill"
/ɲw/	ɲw	ɲ + w	——	——	lǔɲwèlè	"to show"

In other words, the unigraphs will combine to form digraphs and trigraphs. That is the reason why graphemes such as *ɲ*, *d*, *r*, *z*, *ʒ*, which do not exist as single sound/phoneme in the language are included in the alphabet. I call them *auxiliary symbols*,⁽³⁾ because they help in the orthographic transcription of /nd/, /ɲg/, /dʒ/ and /zr/. Although the digraphs or trigraphs are made of 2 or 3 letters, they represent a unique phoneme, /mb/, /nd/, /ndʒ/, /ɲgb/, /ɲw/ etc.

2. Vowels: illustration

Phoneme	Grapheme	Examples		
		Initial position	Mediane position	Final position
/i/	i	ìndókó "pepper"	dʒítítí "darkness"	mbèḅèni "wind"
/u/	u	úɲwélê "show!"	ìwùɲgá "stomach"	mǎlèɲgù "sheep"
/e/	e	èlùwà "market"	èlèlà "duck"	èèjé "tree"
/o/	o	óɲwâ "kill!"	mèòndó "tails"	ɲmèó "egg"
/ɛ/	ɛ	èkè "metal"	dʒěmè "tongue"	"èmùnè "wave"
/ɔ/	ɔ	ò "you (sg.) "	màòɲgó "spear"	ɲgòndó "groundnut"
/a/	a	à "s/he"	ɲgàndó "crocodile"	lǐkpà "bag"

3. Tones: illustration

Phoneme	Grapheme	Examples		
		Initial position	Mediane position	Final position
/ ` /	`	èkòwò "skin"	mòkòyò "bachelor"	mòzràɲgò "peace"
/ ´ /	´	zrélè "burn"	múnyanà "husband"	ndʒèmbú "paralysis"

Like the consonants, the tones will combine to write the two contour tones, rising and falling.

Phoneme	Grapheme	Examples	Mediane position	Final position
	' + `	Initial position ôzré "under"	_____	òṅgâ "live, grow"
	` + '	Initial position lĩzròṅgò "to hunt"	βáǎnà "the children"	ṅmǎ "hoe"

4. Summary: the alphabet proper

The Mokpe alphabet is therefore made up of the following symbols:

Unigraphs

A	a	À	à	"he, she"
ß	β	ßétâ	βétâ	"five" dʒ
D	D ⁽⁴⁾	_____	_____	_____
E	e	Èlùwà	èlùwà	"market"
ε	ε	Èkè	èkè	"metal"
φ	φ	φéjá	φéjá	"wound"
G	g ⁽⁵⁾	Gálé	gálé	"garri"
I	i	Ìndókó	ìndókó	"pepper"
Ʒ	ʒ	_____	_____	_____
K	k	Kó	kó	"snail"
L	l	Liwèndi	liwèndi	"knife"
M	m	Mǎmè	mǎmè	"male"
N	n	Nà	nà	"and"
Ɲ	ɲ	Ɲìɲì	ɲìɲì	"housefly"
Ɔ	ɔ ⁽⁶⁾	Ɔgàtá	ɲgàtá	"basket"
O	o	Óṅwâ	óṅwâ	"kill!"
Ɔ	ɔ	Ò	ò	"you (sg.)" ⁽⁷⁾
P	p	Píjà	píjà	"pear"
R	r	_____	_____	_____
T	t	Tàmbá	tàmbá	"hat/cap"
U	u	Úṅwélê	úṅwélê	"show!"
W	w	Wúfá	wúfá	"day"
J	j	Jǔtùtù	jǔtùtù	"smoke"
Z	z	Zràli	zràli	"small"
`	`	_____	_____	_____
'	'	_____	_____	_____

5. Rules of orthography

The first orthographic rule states that some of the consonant graphemes above combine to form digraphs. These are:

k p → kp

g b → gb

z r → zr

m b → mb

n d → nd

n d ʒ → ndʒ

ŋ g → ŋg

ŋ m → ŋm

ŋ w → ŋw

ŋ g b → ŋgb

These combinations produce the following digraphs:

Digraphs

Zr	zr	Zràlì	zràlì	"small"
Mb	mb	Mbówà	mbówà	"village"
Nd	nd	Ndòndòkì	ndòndòkì	"needle"
Ndʒ	ndʒ	Ndʒàwù	ndʒàwù	"hunger"
Ŋg	ŋg	Ŋgàtá	ŋgàtá	"basket"
Ŋgb	ŋgb	Ŋgbáʒrèlì	ŋgbáʒrèlì	"cartridges"
Ŋm	ŋm	Ŋměmè	ŋměmè	"bat"
Ŋw	ŋw	Ŋwéejà	ŋwéejà	"die for something"

Note that all tones are marked.

Ndòndòkì	ndòndòkì	"needle"
Tàmbá	tàmbá	"hat/cap"
wúná	wúná	"day"

Wǔβà	wǔβà	"chicken"
Lìβà	lìβà	"marriage; wedding"
Ljǒŋgóngó	ljǒŋgóngó	"knee"
Úŋwélê	úŋwélê	"show!"

The marking of all tones allows the visualizations of Meeussen's rule.

ná 'máá ŋgbà	→	"I have given"
mó'óβò máázrê	→	"the whole head"
tòímá 'línà	→	"each name"
èjémbé 'jókó	→	"one animal"
ó 'né mbèzrà	→	"where is the boy?"

6. The Mokpe alphabets

For comparative reasons, I present below the five alphabets that have been proposed for the Mokpe language. My alphabet, although the shortest, can equally be used to write the language efficiently.

Table 1. The various alphabets designed for the Mokpe language

No.	Connell (1997)	Blay	Ekobena (2004)	Ngoisah (2002)	Atindogbé (the present work)
	a	a	a	a	a
	b	(b)	ch	(b)	b
	d	c	e	ch	β
	e	e	ε	e	d
	ε	gb	f	ε	e
	f	hf	gb	gb	ε
	g	hw	i	hv (β)	ϕ
	gb	hz	j (dʒ)	hw (ϕ)	g
	i	i	k	i	i
	j	j (dʒ)	kp	j (dʒ)	dʒ
	k	k	l	k	k
	kp	kp	m	kp	l
	l	l	mgb	l	m
	m	m	mb	m	n
	mb	mb	n	mb	ɲ
	n	n	nw	n	ŋ
	nd	nd	nd	nd	o

ng	nj (ndʒ)	nj (ndʒ)	nj (ndʒ)	ɔ
nj (ndʒ)	ny (ɲ)	ny (ɲ)	ny (ɲ)	p
ny (ɲ)	ŋg	o	ŋg	r
o	ŋgb	ɔ	ŋgb	t
ɔ	o	s (zr)	ŋm	u
p	ɔ	t	ŋw	w
s (zr)	(p)	u	o	j
t	t	v	ɔ	z
u	u	w	rz	,
v	w	y	t	,
w	y	,	u	
y	,		w	
,			y	
			,	

III. MORPHOLOGY: THE NOUN AND THE NOUN PHRASE

Generally, most parts of speech in Mokpe, as in most Bantu languages, are generally made up of a prefix and a root:

Prefix + Root

Some roots may lack a prefix. This may just be the result of some phonological process whereby the prefix gets deleted. We therefore have:

Root

1. Nouns

The noun has the following structure:

Noun Class Prefix + Root

There are 12 prefixes, arranged in classes numbered from 1 to 19 (without 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17 and 18), and grouped in 9 pairs as we shall see below following the singular/plural tandem. The prefixes bearing uneven numbers mark the singular, whereas those with the even numbers express plurality. The passage from singular to plural is done through the substitution of the singular prefix by the plural prefix.

The examples below show all the 12 classes of nouns, organised in pairs (sg/pl). The prefix is separated from the root by a hyphen. When there is no overt prefix, the root is preceded by nothing. When the prefix exhibits a variant, it is clearly spelled out through sub-classes labelled with letter b), c), etc.

1. Nouns of class 1 and class 2

class 1		class 2	
a)	mò-tò "person"	b)	βà-tò "persons"
	mò-mbákí "elder"		βà-mbákí "elders"
	mò-kòmí "slave"		βà-kòmí "slaves"
c)	ηm-ánà "child"	d)	β-ánà "children"
	ηm-èní "guest"		βà-èní "guests"
e)	mw-íbè "thief"	f)	βà-íbè "thieves"
	mw-imbà "witch"		βà-imbà "witches"
g)	m-ólánà "woman"	h)	β-álánà "women"
	m-òzròηgòzròηgò "hunter"		βà-zròηgòzròηgò "hunters"
	m-úpánà "man"		w-úpánà "men"

The 2 prefixes and their variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
mò- ~ ηm- ~ mw- ~ m-	βà- ~ β- ~ w-

Distribution of the variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
mò- before consonants	βà- before consonants and vowels
ηm- before vowels a and ε	ε and i
mw- before vowel i	β- before vowel a
m- before vowels o, ɔ and u	w- before vowel u

Basic prefixes for classes 1 and 2

Singular prefix (Class 1):	Plural prefix (Class 2):
mò-	βà-

2. Nouns of class 3 and class 4

class 3		class 4	
a)	mò-òndó "tail"	b)	mè-òndó "tails"
	mò-ómè "male"		mè-ómè "males"
	mò-zréwá "horn"		mè-zréwá "horns"

	mò-láló	"mother's brother"		mè-láló	"mother's brothers"
	mò-zrô	"river"		mè-zrô	"rivers"
c)	mò-òlí	"rope"	d)	mè-òlí	"ropes"
	mò-òpè	"ground"		mè-òpè	"grounds"
	mò-zròkò	"song"		mè-zròkò	"songs"
	mò-ólèngù	"sheep"		mè-élèngù	"sheep"
e)	ɲm-â	"year"	f)	mé-â	"years"
	ɲm-ă	"hoe"		mè-á	"hoes"
	ɲm-ěmè	"bat"		mè-émè	"bats"
	ɲm-ándzà	"sea"		mè-ándzà	"seas"
			g)	mì-í zrò	"eyes"
				mì-ínà	"names"
				mì-jà	"palm trees"
				mì-jò	"stoves"

Note: the singular forms of the words in (g) are found in class 5.

The 2 prefixes and their variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
mò- ~ mò- ~ ɲm-	mè- ~ mè- ~ mì-

Distribution of the variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
mò- before consonants and any root starting with vowel o	mè- before consonants and any root starting with vowel o
mò- before any root whose first vowel is ɔ	mè- before any root whose first vowel is ɔ, ε or a
ɲm- before vowels a and ε	mì- before any root whose first vowel is ɪ- and semivowel j

Basic prefixes for classes 3 and 4

Singular prefix (Class 3):	Plural prefix (Class 4):
mò-	mè-

3. Nouns of class 5 and class 6

	class 5		class 6		
a)	lì-tô	"ear"	b)	mà-tô	"ears"
	lì-já	"hand"		mà-á	"hands"

	lì-wò	"neck"		mà-wò	"necks"
	lì-wèndì	"knife"		mà-wèndì	"knives"
	lì-zròngá	"tooth"		mà-zròngá	"teeth"
	lì-βùmbú	"hair"		mà-βùmbú	"hairs"
c)	lj-ámà	"jaw"	d)	mà-ámà	"jaws"
	lj-ḡgóngó	"knee"		mà-ḡgóngó	"knees"
	lj-òβá	"door"		mà-òβá	"doors"
e)	l-ùùngá	"belly"	f)	mà-ùngá	"bellies"
	l-ùwàtù	"cloth"		mà-àtù	"cloths"
	l-ùútù	"rubbish heap"		mà-wútù	"rubbish heap"
	l-úmbú	"nest"		mà-wúmbú	"nests"

The 2 prefixes and their variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
lì- ~ lj- ~ l-	mà-

Distribution of the variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
lì- before consonants lj- before vowel o, ɔ or a l- before vowel u	

Basic prefixes for classes 5 and 6

Singular prefix (Class 5):	Plural prefix (Class 6):
lì-	mà-

Let us point out here that some words of class 5 take their plural in class 4. This leads to the pairing 5/4:

	class 5		class 4		
a)	lì-íẓrò	"eye"	b)	mì-íẓrò	"eyes"
	lì-ínà	"name"		mì-ínà	"names"
	lì-jà	"palm tree"		mì-jà	"palm trees"
	lì-jò	"stove"		mì-jò	"stoves"
	lì-kò	"plantain"		mè-kò	"plantains"

4. Nouns of class 7 and class 8

	class 7		class 8	
a)	è-èjà	"word"	b) βè-èjà	"words"

	è-èjé	"tree"		βè-èjé	"trees"
	è-èzré	"bone"		βè-èzré	"bones"
	è-èlélé	"dawn"		βè-èlélé	"dawns"
	è-zrù	"wall"		βè-zrù	"walls"
	è-lèlà	"duck"		βè-lèlà	"ducks"
	è-wókà	"compound"		βè-wókà	"compounds"
	è-zrózró	"thigh"		βè-zrózró	"thighs"
c)	è-èkè	"iron"	d)	βè-èkè	"irons"
e)	j-ǎlí	"leaf"	f)	βè-ǎlí	"leaves"
	j-ónó	"yam"		βè-ónó	"yams"
	j-ǎzrù	"chin"		βè-ǎzrù	"chins"
	j-òkpè	"dry season"		βè-òkpè	"dry seasons"
	j-òndò	"axe"		βè-òndò	"axes"
			g)	βj-ùṅgù	"mosquitoes"

Note: The singular of mosquitoes is dʒ-ùṅgù (class19).

The 2 prefixes and their variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
è- ~ è- ~ j-	βè- ~ βè- ~ βj-

Distribution of the variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
è- before consonants and any root whose first vowel is e	βè- elsewhere
è- before any root whose first vowel is ε or ɔ	βè- before any root whose first vowel is ε or ɔ
j- before all vowels except ε or ɔ	βj- before any root whose first vowel is u

Basic prefixes for classes 7 and 8

Singular prefix (Class 7):	Plural prefix (Class 8):
è-	βè-

5. Nouns of class 9 and class10⁽⁸⁾

	class 9		class 10		
a)	m-búzrà	"back"	b)	m-búzrà	"backs"
	m-búwà	"rain"		m-búwà	"rains"

	m-bòndò	"buttock"		m-bòndò	"buttocks"
	m-bèḃèni	"wind"		m-bèḃèni	"winds"
	n-dzúṅgù	"navel"		n-dzúṅgù	"navels"
	n-dzùmá	"war"		n-dzùmá	"wars"
	ṅ-gòndó	"groundnut"		ṅ-gòndó	"groundnuts"
c)	m-bàzrì	"maize"	d)	í-mbàzrì	"maize"
	n-dzééndzée	"thorn"		í-ndzééndzée	"thorns"
	n-dzòkù	"elephant"		í-ndzòkù	"elephants"
	ṅ-gàtá	"basket"		í-ṅgàtá	"baskets"
	ṅ-gàndà	"nail"		í-ṅgàndà	"nails"
	ṅ-gòṅà	"soup, sauce"		í-ṅgòṅà	"soups"
	ṅ-gbâ	"dog"		í-ṅgbâ or ṅ-gbâ	"dogs"
e)	-ṅô	"body"	f)	-ṅô or í-ṅô	"bodies"
	-ṅàmà	"meat"		-ṅàmà or í-ṅàmà	"meats"
	-ṅáàwè	"bee"		-ṅáàwè or í-ṅáàwè	"bees"
	-ṅàkà	"cow"		-ṅàkà or í-ṅàkà	"cows"
	-ṅìṅì	"housefly"		-ṅìṅì	"houseflies"
	-ṅìṅá	"louse"		-ṅìṅá	"louses"
g)	pùzrì	"cat"	h)	pùzrì	"cats"
	tàmbá	"hat/cap"		tàmbá	"hat/cap"
	kó	"snail"		kó	"snails"
	zròwè	"dust"		zròwè	"dusts"
	wúná	"day"		wúná	"day"
	zrómbé	"star"		í-zrómbé	"stars"
	kíṅgè	"king"		í-kíṅgè	"kings"
	kémà	"monkey"		í-kémà	"monkeys"
	wózrì	"horse"		í-wózrì	"horses"

The 2 prefixes:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
N ~ Ø	N- ~ Ø
	í-

Distribution of the variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
N- elsewhere	N- elsewhere
Ø- before nasals, voiceless	Ø- before nasals, voiceless

plosives (p, t, k), liquidified fricatives (zr) and approximants (w)	plosives (p, t, k), liquidified fricatives (zr) and approximants (w) í- no prediction possible, seems to be optional
--	---

Basic prefixes for classes 9 and 10

Singular prefix (Class 9):	Plural prefix (Class 10):
N	N

6. Nouns of class 14

Class 14, a singular class, surprisingly, has generally no fix or precise class as plural counterpart. These singular forms may take their plural prefix nowhere else than in that same class 14. In other words the plural forms are identical to the singular forms.

class 14		class 14 ⁽⁹⁾	
a)	wò-ndzà "freedom"	b)	
	wò-zrángí "cleanliness"		
	wò-zrúβé "bad luck"		
	wò-tání "brightness"		
	wò-líjá "meeting"		wò-líjá "meetings"
	wò-zrò "parrot"		wò-zrò "parrots"
	wò-mbá "type of tree"		wò-mbá "type of tree"
c)	w-òkpò "beard"	d)	w-òkpò "beards"
	w-òmbé "kite"		w-òmbé "kites"
	w-òlò "boat"		w-òlò "boats"
	w-ùlùlè "type of tree"		w-ùlùlè "types of tree"
e)	gb-àngó "care, caution"		
	gb-àká "herd"		
	gb-èngì "tapping of palm wine"		
	gb-ìndà "duration"		

Some singular forms can take their plural prefix from class 6 or class 10. The cases of singular nouns (class 14) taking their plural in class 10 also shows evidence of instances of nouns with double prefix.

class 14		class 6	
a)	wò-zrò "face"	b)	mà-zrò "faces"
	wò-kòmbò "beard"		mà-kòmbò "beards"

	w-ũ	"night"		mà-wũ	"nights"
	w-òṅgó	"brain"		mà-òṅgó	"brains"
c)	gb-ǎṅgú	"iron wood tree"		mà-ǎṅgú	"iron wood trees"
	gb-itó	"story"		mà-jító	"stories"
	gb-ààḃá	"snake"		mà-àḃá	"snakes"
	gb-ě	"tree"		mà-é	"trees"
d)	w-ómbé	"kite"	e)	í-w-ómbé	"kites"
	w-ũḃà	"chicken"		í-w-ũḃà	"chickens"
				dʒ-ũḃà	

The 2 prefixes and their variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
wò- ~ w- ~ gb-	wò- ~ w-
	mà-
	í-

Distribution of the variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix (wù- ~ w-):
wò- before consonants	wò- before consonants
w- before any root whose first sound is vowel u, o, or ɔ	w- before any root whose first sound is vowel u, o, or ɔ
gb- before any root whose first sound is vowel i, e, ɛ, or a	

Basic prefixes for classes 14

Singular prefix (Class 14):	Plural prefixes:
wò-	wù- (class 14)
	mà- (class 6)
	í- (class 10)

7. Nouns of class 19

	class 19			class 8	
a)	ì-nòní	"bird"	b)	ḃè-nòní	"birds"
	ì-tèṅgè	"pot (water)"		ḃè-tèṅgè	"pots (water)"
c)	ì-zrǎzí	"mat"	d)	ḃè-zrǎzí	"mats"
	ì-támí	"shoe"		ḃè-támí	"shoes"
	ì-zròzré	"crab"		ḃè-zròzré	"crabs"
	ì-ndókó	"pepper"		ḃè-ndókó	"pepper"

	ì-lùkà	"bottle"		βè-lùkà	"bottles"
e)	dʒ-ùṅgù	"mosquito"	f)	βj-ùṅgù	"mosquitoes"
	dʒ-ùṅgó	"eagle"		βj-ùṅgó	"eagles"

The 2 prefixes and their variants:

Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
ì- ~ dʒ-	βè- ~ βè- ~ βj-

Distribution of the variants:

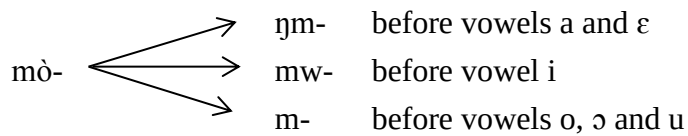
Singular prefix:	Plural prefix:
ì- before consonants	βè- before any root whose first vowel is ɔ or ε
dʒ- before vowel	βè- elsewhere
	βj- before vowel u

Basic prefixes for classes 19 and 8

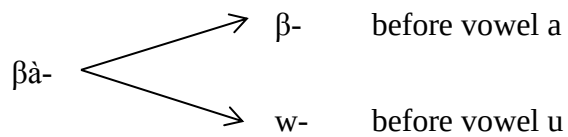
Singular prefix (Class 19):	Plural prefix (Class 8):
ì-	βè-

8. Summary of the morpho-phonological rules

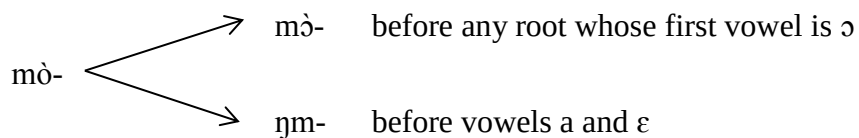
Class 1



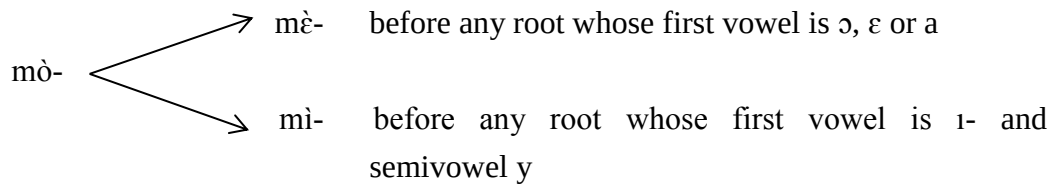
Class 2



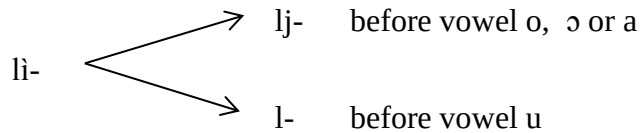
Class 3



Class 4

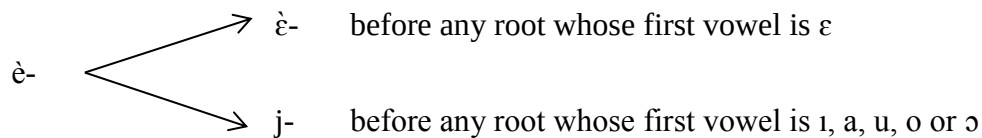


Class 5

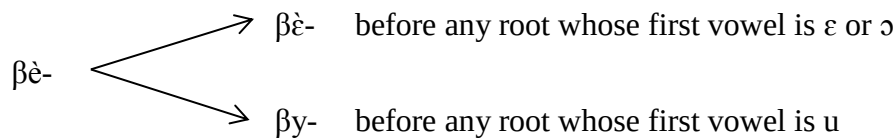


Class 6 (no rule)

Class 7



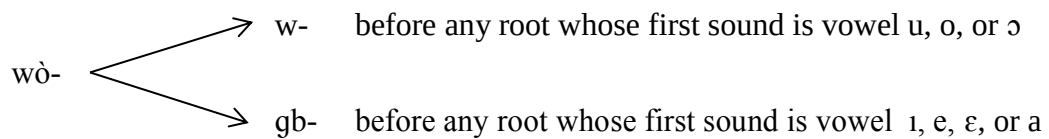
Class 8



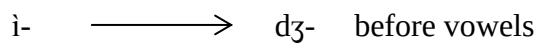
Class 9 (no rule)

Class 10 (no rule)

Class 14



Class 19



9. Summary of the paired classes

The Mokpe prefixes are therefore paired as follows:

Table 2. The pairing of Mokpe noun prefixes

Class Pairing or Genders	Prefixes: Sg/Pl
1/2	mò-/bà-
3/4	mò-/mè-
5/6	lì-/mà-
5/4	lì-/mì-
7/8	è-/bè-
9/10	N-/N- or í-
14/6	wò-/mà-
14/10	wò-/í-
19/8	ì-/bè-

10. Paired classes and meanings in Mokpe

We have identified the following meanings for the Mopke noun class prefixes:

Table 3. Meaning of Mopke noun class prefixes

	Scope of Meaning	Example	
Class 1/2: mò-/bà-	▪Active human beings	mò-/bàtò	"person"
	▪Member of ethnic group	mò-/bàkpè	"Bakweri man"
	▪Nationalities	mò-/bàkálá	"European"
	▪Human beings of verbal derivation	mò-/bàzròṅgòzròṅgò	"hunter"
Class 3/4: mò-/mè-	▪Nature	ṁm-/mèándzà	"sea"
	▪Animals	mò-/mèólèṅgù	"sheep"
	▪Human related	mò-/mèómè	"male"
Class 5/6: lì-/mà-	▪Parts of body	lì-/màwò	"neck"
	▪Household items	lì-/màwèndì	"knife"
Class 7/8: è-/bè-	▪Nature	è-èlélé	"dawn"
	▪Domestic birds	è-/bèlèlà	"duck"
Class 9/10: è-/bè-	▪Nature	mbúwà	"rain"
	▪Non wild animals	ṅgbà	"dog"
Class 14: wò-	▪Abstract nouns	wò-ndzà	"freedom"
	▪Parts of body	wò-zrô	"face"
	▪Reptiles	gbà-àbá	"snake"
	▪Special birds	wò-zrò	"parrot"
Class 19 ì-	▪Birds	ì-/bèndóní	"bird"
	▪Nature	y-/bèòkpè	"dry season"

11. Verbal nouns

Verbal nouns are formed by inserting a high tone on the first syllable of the infinitive form.

lǒṣwà "to kill"

l-ôṣwà l-á kíṅgè

5-DET.kill 5-Cd 9.king

"The killing of the king."

likê "to cut"

lî-kê l-á ṣàmà

5-DET.cut 5-Cd 9.meat

"The cutting of the meat."

12. Locative nouns

In Mokpe, there is no such thing like locatives or locative nouns, as it is the case in most Bantu languages, with the classes 16, 17 and 18 expressing "at/on a place", "towards a place" and "in a place". There is just one morpheme, /ó/, placed before a noun to mark all the various nuances of location.

ó mbówà		"in/to the village "
wêkí jélùwà	(èkí "place")	"at the market"
ó tǒṅgóngó	(tǒṅgóngó "near")	"nearby"
ôténá ndáwù	(ôténá "in", lexicalised)	"inside the house"
ó wòzró wó mbówà	(wòzró "front")	"in front of the village"
ô mbúzrà ndáwù	(mbúzrà "behind")	"outside the house"
ôṣmáṣnú	(ṣmáṣnú "top")	"on / on top of"
ôténì		"in / inside"
ôzré	(zré "down")	"under"
ôzré já téèlì		"under the table"
ômbúzrà		"behind"
ô mbúzrà jáámì		"behind mine"

13. *Abstract nouns*

Those nouns dominantly take their class prefix from class 9/10, but they also use prefixes from other classes. Although some of the prefixes they take are singular, they don't have plural counterparts.

mòṣṣèṣṣì	(cl. 3)	"joy, pleasure"
mèlákìzrèṣṣè	(cl. 4)	"forgiveness"
lěmèà	(cl. 5)	"agreement"
likákéṣṣé	(cl. 5)	"promise"
màtíjà	(cl. 6)	"cultivation, planting "
màkpázrì	(cl. 6)	"rapidity"
èzrólízrólí	(cl. 7)	"sorrow"
mbáki	(cl. 9)	"encouragement"
ndzàwò	(cl. 9)	"hunger"
ṣṣgíṣṣà	(cl. 9)	"force"
ṣṣòndzà	(cl. 9)	"permission"
kúmbà	(cl. 9)	"boastfulness"
lòṣṣgè	(cl. 9)	"life, growth"
wóṣṣgò	(cl. 14)	"fear"
wòndzà	(cl. 14)	"agression"

14. *Mass concept*

Like abstract concepts, uncountable nouns take their prefixes from the plural classes 6, 8 and 10.

màliwá	(cl. 6)	"water"
màwúdžà	(cl. 6)	"oil"
màjìdžà	(cl. 6)	"blood"
ṣṣèwóli	(cl. 8)	"spit"
mbàzrì	(cl. 10)	"maize"
ṣṣáṣṣgá	(cl. 10)	"sand"

15. *Nominal derivations*

Some nouns derive from the roots of the verb, either by maintaining the class 5 prefix or by taking a prefix from a different class.

When they maintain the noun prefix of class 5, they are identical to the infinitival form of the verb from every respect, or they use other strategies such as final vowel change or tone change.

➤ The noun class prefix li- is maintained:

Fully identical to the infinitive form of the verb

lěmèà (éméâ)		"to agree (agree)"
lěmèà	(cl. 5)	"agreement"
likàkéné (kákénê)		"to promise (promise)"
likàkéné	(cl. 5)	"promise"

Vowel and tonal change

lòkà (òkâ)		"to play (play)"
lòkò	(cl. 5)	"game"
lòngà (òngâ)		"to live, to grow"
lòngê	(cl. 5)	"life, growth"
liβàngà (βàngâ)		"to run (run)"
liβàngí	(cl. 5)	"race"

Tonal change

litô (tô)		"to leak (leak)"
litó / mâtó	(cl. 5/6)	"drop"

The noun take a different class prefix:

likpézròfà (kpézrófâ)		"to become lame (become lame)"
mòkpézròfà / βàkpézròfà	(cl. 1/2)	"a lame (person)"
lìzròngò (íróngô)		"to hunt (hunt)"
mòzròngòzròngò / βàzròngòzròngò	(cl. 1/2)	"hunter/s"
lilàkíré (làkíré)		"to forgive (forgive)"
mèlàkìrèné	(cl. 4)	"forgiveness"
lǎlàfě (áláfê)		"to answer (answer)"
dǎlàfě / mààlàfě	(cl. 5/6)	"answer"
lìzràngófà (zràngófâ)		"to inherit (inherit)"
lìzràngó / bèzràngó	(cl. 5/8)	"heritage, property"
litíjànà (tíjáná)		"to hoe (hoe)"

màtíjà	(cl. 6)	"cultivation, planting"
liβòtéjá (βótéjà)		"to begin (begin)"
èβòtéli / βèβòtéli	(cl. 7/8)	"beginning"
likùmbá ηγèηγè (kùmbâ ηγèηγè)		"to boast (boast)"
kùmbà	(cl. 9)	"boastfulness"

16. Compound nouns

They are made up of other nouns, a noun and an adjective or they are done by reduplication. In the first two cases, the first noun of the compound determines the agreement system.

Noun + Cd + noun

ηmánà / βáǎnà		"child/ren"
múpánà / wúpánà		"male/s"
ηmánà wà múpánà / βánà βà wúpánà	(cl. 1/2)	"son/s"
mólánà / βálánà		"female/s"
ηmánà wà mólánà / βánà βà βálánà	(cl. 1/2)	"daughter/s"
ɲàmà		"meat"
màlíwà		"water"
ɲàmà màlíwà / ɲàmà dzá màlíwà	(cl. 9/10)	"fish"
dzòηγó / βèóηγó		"pot/s"
dzòηγó dzá m!áliwá / βèóηγó βé m!áliwá	(cl. 5/8)	"water pot"
mòléli / mèléli		"food"
dzòηγó dzá ¹ móléli / βèóηγó βé m!óléli		"cooking pot/s"

Noun + Cd + Adjective

ηγòndá	"cripple"
mòtò / βàtò	"person"
mòtò à ηγòndá / βàtò βá ηγòndá	"handicapped/s"

Reduplication (root + root)

mòzròηγòzròηγò / βàzròηγòzròηγò	(cl. 1/2)	"hunter/s"
ìzróβézróβê	(cl. 5)	"June"
ìkúlèkúlè	(cl. 5)	"tortoise"
élówàlòwà	(cl. 7)	"moon"
èmàngimàngì	(cl. 7)	"crowd"

èzrólízrólí	(cl. 7)	"sorrow"
ndz'ééndz'éé / índz'ééndz'éé	(cl. 9/10)	"thorn"
nìjì / nìjì	(cl. 9/10)	"housefly"
tímítímì / tímítímì	(cl. 9/10)	"freeborn"

17. Nominal loans

Loan nouns are perfectly integrated in the noun class system. They have adapted and follow all the principles that govern noun agreement in the language.

➤ They can be in class 3/4 and take the agreement accordingly.

mò-ótówà / mè-ótówà				"car/s"
mó-òtówà	ηm-âzrê			"the whole car"
3.DET-car	3-PRO			
mó-òtówà	mó	mà	ηmèzré	ηmêlê
3.DET-car	3.Cd	PAST	knock	yesterday
"the car knocked him yesterday"				

➤ They can be in class 9/10.

tàksí / tàksí				"taxi/s"
nà	mà	wóβá	tàksí	"I took a taxi"
1sg	PAST	take	9.taxi	

➤ They can be in class 9/10, but take agreement in a different class, e.g. class 3 or 7 as native nouns do.

môní	"money"				
jàwónò	môní	mó	má	βángá	βé-jà
today	9.money	3.Cd	PAST	spoil	8-thing
"today money has spoiled things"					

báísíkl / báísíkl		"bicycle/s"
è-báísíkl	j-àzrê	"the whole bicycle"
7.DET-bicycle	7-PRO	

pùzrí / pùzrí	"cat"						
étò	é	mà	lá	βένέ	ndí	nà	è-pùzrí

7.DET-rat Cd PAST eat COP.PASS CLIT by 7-cat
 "the rat was eaten by the cat"

➤ They can take the locative marker as any native nouns.

wíkì / wíkì "week/s"
 ó wíkì "in one week"
 LOC PAST

➤ They can enter predicative / locative constructions as any native nouns.

zrùkúlù / zrùkúlù "school/s"
 nà βèlì ó zrùkúlù "I am in school "
 1sg COP LOC 9.school

An example like *pùzrí* "cat" is an evidence that loan words are equally phonologically integrated in the language. Indeed, since the phoneme /s/ does not exist in Mokpe, the /s/ from the English loan [pusy] is changed to the Mokpe /zr/. That is one of the reasons why one cannot change or represent the Mokpe sound /zr/ to /s/ as many author did in the Mokpe orthography, since the language does not compromise those two sounds.

18. Marking syntactic relationship: agreement

Within a phrase or sentence, all constituents that are grammatically dependent on a specific noun have to be constructed within the same class as this noun.

é-nè	è-lèlà					"this duck (near me)"
7-DemCd	7-duck					
βé-nè	βè-lèlà					"these ducks (near me)"
8-DemCd	8-duck					
lí-zròngá	l-á	ɲw-ánà				"the tooth of the child"
5-tooth	5-CLIT	1-child				
má-zròngá	m-â	β-ánà				"the teeth of the children"
6-tooth	6-CLIT	2-child				
l-úwàtò	l-ângó	lí-téjà	ndí	nă	l-á'ámè	
5-fabric	5-POS	5.COP-red	CLIT	ADV	5-PosPro	
						"your fabric is red like mine"
má-àtò	m-ângó	má-téjà	ndí	nă	má- ¹ ámè	

6-fabric 6-POS 6.COP-red CLIT ADV 6-PosPro
 "your fabrics are red like mines"

19. The Nominal Prefixes of Mokpe, Urbantu and Protobantu

Table 4. Nominal Prefixes of Mokpe compared to Urbantu and Protobantu

Class Pairing	Mokpe	Urbantu	Proto-Bantu
1/2	mò-/βà-	*mu-/*va-	*mu-/*ba-
3/4	mò-/mè-	*mu-/*mi-	*mu-/*mi-
5/6	lì-/mà-	*li-/*ma-	*di-/*ma-
5/4	lì-/mì-		
7/8	è-/βè-	*ki-/*vî-	*ki-/*bî-
9/10	ø-/ø- and í-	*ni-/*lî-ni-	*ny-/*ny-
11		*lu-	*du-
12/13		*ka-/*tu-	*ka-/*tu-
14	wò-	*vu-	*bu-
15		*ku-	*ku-
16		*pa-	*pa-
17		*ku-	*ku-
18		*mu-	*mu-
19/8	ì-/βè-	*pî-	*pî-
20		*yu-	20
21		*yî-	21

2. The Noun Phrase

1. Qualifying the noun: adjectives

Although they are used as qualifiers of nouns and/or absolute pronouns, adjective can also stand on their own as independents constituents of a sentence.

ndénè	"big"
lètá	"strong"
likàká or kpápókpápó	"sour"
litě	"sweet"
lìzróṅgò	"deep"
wòòwê	"bad"
gbwámù	"good"

lǒndà	"full"
lìzróndzò	"dry"
lèéjà	"sharp"
litúnà	"blunt"

(1) Attributive use

In their attributive use, adjectives generally follow the nouns.

à	m	ìmá	è-βòndí	ndénè	"s/he dug a big hole"
3sg	PAST	dig	7-hole	big	
à	m	ìmá	è-βòndí	é-zróḡó	"s/he dug a deep hole"
3sg	PAST	dig	7-hole	deep	

Adjectives are in formal agreement with the noun they qualify.

Cl.	Prefix	AdjCd	Examples	
1	mò-	mò-	mólánà mòzràlì	"small woman"
2	βà-	βà-	βálánà βàzràlì	"small women"
3	mò-	mò-	ḡmēmà mòzràlì	"small heart"
4	mè-	mè-	mèēmà mèzràlì	"small hearts"
5	lì-	lì-	lìzróḡá lìzràlì	"small tooth"
6	mà-	mà-	màzróḡá màzràlì	"small teeth"
7	è-	è-	βèlèlà ndénè (> βèlèlà èndénè)	"big duck"
8	βè-	βè-	βèlèlà βèndénè	"big ducks"
9	N-	è-	kémà ndénè (> kémà èndénè)	"big monkey"
10	N-/í-	N-/í-	kémà ndénè (>kémà índénè)	"big monkeys"
14	wò-	wò-	wòḡḡó wò ndénè	"big brain"
19	ì-		ìḡnóní ndénè (>ìḡnóní índénè)	"big bird"
8	βè-	βè-	βèḡnóní βè ndénè	"big birds"

Note that the noun classes 7, 9, 10 and 19 which are all only vocalic drop before the adjective.

Cl.	Prefix	AdjCd	Examples	
7	è-	è-	èlèlà zràlì	"small duck"
7	è-	è-	èzrù ndénè	"big wall"
9/10	N-/ N-/í-	ì-/í-	ḡàmà ndénè	"big fish/es"
9/10	N-/ N-/í-	ì-/í-	kémà zràlì	"small monkey/s"
9/10	N-/ N-/í-	ì-/í-	mbúwà ndénè	"big (heavy) rain/s"

9/10	N-/ N-/i-	i-/i-	ngbázhèlì ndénè	"big cartridge/s"
9/10	N-/ N-/i-	i-/i-	βàkó ndénè	"big mountain/s"
9/10	N-/ N-/i-	i-/i-	wàná ndénè	"big mouth/s"
19	i-	i-	ìlìβòàni zràlì	"small key"

Despite the fact that adjectives are generally placed after the noun, we registered this case (which should be seen as a kind of grammaticalisation?) whereby the adjective *èkòká* is placed before the noun *mólánà*. That is: *èkòká mólánà* "big woman". Similarly, the noun *ηmánà* "child" can be used as adjective and is placed before the nouns.

Cl.	Examples	
7	ηmáné èlèlà	"small duck"
7	ηmáné èjé	"small tree"
9	ηmánâ kémà	"small monkey"
14	ηmáná wòngó	"small brain"
14	ηmáná wùzrû	"small face"
19	ηmáná inóní	"small bird"
10	βáná jàmà	"small fishes"
10	βáná ngbázhèlì	"small cartridges"
8	βáná βèzrû	"small walls"
10	βánáá jàmà	"small fishes"

(2) Predicative use

As a general rule, the predicative use of the adjective is done with the copula *éβéli* followed by the clitic *ndi*.

	èpòβíjā éβéli ndi kpánókpánó	"the lemon is sour"
	òno mújānā à βéli ndi wòowê	"the man is bad"
	émújānā à βéli ndi gbwámù	"the man is good"
	éβù má éβéli ndi tēngíl!éí	"the fruit is round"

However, they can be omitted without obstructing the meaning and the relationship of the adjective to the qualifying noun. In those instances, they are just like the attributives. Also, when the subject of the predicate is the neutral pronoun, "it" the concord precedes the adjective.

éβù má jé'tí	"the fruit is strong"
à mà wówá éβù má jét!í	"s/he took a strong fruit"
j-éti (>é-éti)	"it is strong"

dʒɔ!óŋgɔ dʒóndi	"the pot is full"
à βéli ndi likàzré dʒɔ!óŋgɔ dʒóndi	"s/he is lifting the full pot"
dʒ-óndi (>i-óndi)	"it is full"
βéálí βé zróndʒi	"the leaves are dry"
à βàné βéálí βé zróndʒi	"s/he is carrying dry leaves"
βé zróndʒi	"they are dry"
lúwèndi lééjà	"the knife is sharp"
à wóβi lúwèndi lééjà	"s/he has a sharp knife"
lééjà (>lí-ééjà)	"it is sharp"
lúwèndi lítúni	"the knife is blunt"
à wóβi lúwèndi lítúni	"s/he has a blunt knife"
lítúni	"it is blunt"

When the copula is in the past, the past tense marker is placed between the concord and the adjective.

èmbö ètè	"the banana is sweet"
à mà lá mbö ètè	"s/he ate a sweet banana"
è-mà-tè	"it was sweet"
éβòndé é zrónḡ	"the whole is deep"
à mimá éβòndí é zrónḡ	"s/he dug a deep hole"
è-mà-zrónḡ	"it was deep"

2. *Connexive*

Coordination is done with the morpheme *nà* placed between the two elements of the coordination.

ndive <i>nà</i> mbela βá βéli ndí βàòkèli	"Ndive and Mbella are players"
èṅgbá <i>nà</i> èṅgòmbá	"the dog and the porcupine"
βě̀nòní βéájě̀ <i>nà</i> èkúlù	"the three birds and the tortoise"

The morpheme *nà* is equally used to coordinate verbal nouns.

éβòndá é mà dʒà ó lõkànèà <i>nà</i> lilâ mólèélí ḡmáwú	"the time has come to taste and to eat their food"
--	--

3. *Apposition*

Many nouns can be juxtaposed using short breaks (symbolised here by a comma) in the utterance without necessarily being coordinated by *nà*.

è-ndzòó è mà ɲwáá ná mé-ànò lí-ǎnèlì nà lí-ìbà
 7-tiger 7.CD PAST die PREP 4-trick 5-violence COORD 5-teth
 "the tiger died because of tricks, violence and theft"

é-lèlà, ì-wúfà, è-ɲgbá, è-ndzòó nà è-ɲgòmbá
 7-duck 9-fowl 7-dog 7-tiger COORD 7-porcupine
 "the duck, the fowl, the dog, the tiger and the porcupine"

4. Nominal possession or associative constructions

In 'possessed-possessor' constructions (genitive constructions), the possessor noun is marked by a possessive or genitive concord (GenCd) that is in agreement with the head noun. The GenCd is generally followed by the low tone vowel /a/ which can be viewed as clitic of such constructions, which may be deleted depending on the environment. Indeed it deletes in classes 2, 3, 4, 8, and 14, but survives in classes 1, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 19, and triggers the change of the vowel /e/ to [j] and the vowel /i/ to [dʒ].

Cl.	Prefix	GenCd	Examples	
1	mò-	wà	ɲmèni wà à zrángó	"the guest of the father"
2	βà-	βá	βǎèní βá má ìzrángó	"the guests of the father"
3	mò-	mó	móòβò mó pàmà	"the head of the animal"
4	mè-	mé	méòβó mé pàmà	"the heads of the animal"
5	lì-	lí	lízròngá lá ɲmána	"the tooth of the child"
6	mà-	má	má zròngá má à βána	"the teeth of the children"
7	è-	é	élèlà já mòkálá	"the duck of the European"
8	βè-	βé	βélèlà βé βàkálá	"the ducks of the European"
9	N-	è-	èpàmà já ɲwána	"the fish of the child"
10	í-	é-	ìpàmà já ɲwána	"the fishes of the child"
14	wò-	wó	wǒngó wó mòtò	"the brain of the man"
19	ì-	í	ìlìβwàni dʒá ndáwò	"the key of the door"
8	βè-	βé	βé lìβwàni βé ndáwò	"the keys of the door"

In some utterances, another morpheme, *má*, was noted in the constructions (e.g. *βǎèní βá má ìzrángó* "the guests of the father"). The examples below are more instances of the morpheme *má*.

wóǒlò wá má kíngè	"the canoe of the chief"
wóǒlò wá má í kíngè (wóǒlò wá mí kíngè)	"the canoe of the chiefs"
móǒlò má má kíngè	"the canoes of the chief"
móǒlò má má í kíngè (móǒlò má mí kíngè)	"the canoes of the chiefs"

è-wàmbì j-à wòná nàṅgó j-à má kíngè
 7-eight 7-CLIT 10.brothers e-CLIT 9.chief
 "all the eight brothers of the chief"

Without being certain, one can say that the vowel /à/ noted above might be a remnant of a disyllabic morpheme **àmá*, the linking element of the two nouns in the genitive construction. This might be quite plausible as we can notice in the utterance above that the so-called clitic vowel /à/ does not delete after the PossCd. Consequently, one might posit that the utterances in square brackets below (left side column) are derived from the ones in slashes (right side) where the PossCd precedes the possible morpheme *àmá*.

[wóḍlò wá má kíngè] > /wóḍlò wó à má kíngè/
 [wóḍlò wá má í kíngè] > /wóḍlò wó à má í kíngè/
 [móḍlò má má kíngè] > /móḍlò mé à má kíngè/
 [móḍlò má má í kíngè] > /móḍlò mé à má í kíngè/

Then, the vowel of the PosCd gets deleted but its tone survives and replaces the tone of the vowel /a/ of the disyllabic clitic. Indeed, one can see that where the morpheme **àmá* is not used the PosCd does not undergo any change as in *wṣṅgó wó mòtò*, "the brain of the man". Thus, **àmá* is a morpheme whose usage is dropping maybe due to extensive language contacts.

Furthermore, note that the Mokpe genitive can be rendered not only as "the guest of the father" but also as "the father's guest". However, although we have a relationship 'possessed-possessor', Mokpe equally accepts constructions that reverse that order.

Cl.	Prefix	GenCd	Examples	
5	lì-	lí	lǐnà lá mòlèlì or è mòlèlì lǐnà	"the name of the teacher"
6	mà-	má	mǐnà má mòlèlì or ḃálèlì mǐnà	"the names of the teacher"
6	mà-	má	má zróṅá mâ ḃánà or ḃáānà má zróṅá	"the teeth of the children"
7	è-	é-	élèlà já mòkálá or è mòkálá élèlà	"the duck of the European"
8	ḃè-	ḃé	ḃélèlà ḃé ḃàkálá or ḃàkálá ḃélèlà	"the duck of the European"
	wò-	wó	wò zró wó ṅwánà or ìṅmànà wò zró	"the face of the child"

5. Numerals

(3) Cardinal Numbers

In Mokpe, numerals follow the noun they quantify. The numerals from one to five require a class prefix that shows class agreement. There are two roots for the numeral "two": -àké (class 2) and -βă (all the others classes).

-òkó	ηmánà mòkó	"one child"
-àké (for class 2)	βánà βá βàké	"two children"
-βă (for all the other classes)	màámà máβă	"two cheeks"
-jáò	βèwòlò βéjáò	"three works"
-nĩ	kémà ínĩ	"four monkeys"
-tâ	βèwóni βétâ	"five partridges"

More examples of numeral from one to five showing class agreement are presented below. The noun comes first and the numeral follows.

Cl.	Prefix	NumCd	Examples	
1	mò-	mó-	mòtò mòkó	"one person"
2	βà-	βá-	βátò βáβàké βánà βáβàké βálánà βáβàké	"two persons" "two children" "two women"
			βàtò βájáò βàtò βánĩ βàtò βátâ	"three persons" "four persons" "five persons"
3	mò-	mó-	ηmèémà mòkó	"one heart"
4	mè-	mé-	mèémà méβă mèóβò méjáò mèémà ménĩ mèóβò métâ	"two hearts" "three heads" "four hearts" "five heads"
5	lì-	lí-	lĩzrò lòkó	"one eye"
6	mà-	má-	mĩzrò máβă màámà májáò mĩnà mánĩ mĩzrò mátâ	"two eyes" "three cheeks" "four names" "five eyes"
7	è-	é-	èzrù jòkó	"one wall"
8	βè-	βé-	βèzrù βéβă βèlèlâ βéjáò	"two walls" "three ducks"

			βèwòlò βénĩ βèzrù βétâ	"four works" "five walls"
9	N-	β-	kémà βókó ndzìjá 'βókó kóngí 'βókó	"one monkey" "one road" "one time" or "once"
10	N-/i-	í-	kémà íḃă ndzìjá íḃă kémà íjáò ḡàmà ínĩ ḡàmà ítâ	"two animals" "two roads" "three animals" "four fishes" "five fishes"
14	wò-	wó-/wó-	wòólò wòkó wòḡgò 'wókó	"one canoe"
19	i-	í-	ìnòní 'dʒókó	"one bird"
8	βè-	βé-	βènòní βéḃă βèlìḃòàní βéjáò βènòní βénĩ βèwóni βétâ	"two birds" "three keys" "four birds" "five partridges"

While the agreement of all the other classes seem perfect and in accordance to the general tendency observes so far, class 9 shows a β- consonant whose origin cannot be explained.

After five, the other numerals are just placed after the noun they quantify without any morpheme materialising the link.

mòtówá	βèlìḃòàní mòtówá	"six keys"
lìzràmbá	íkíḡgè lìzràmbá	"seven chiefs"
wàmbì	màákpà wàmbì	"eight bags"
lùùwá	βèḃózáí lùùwá	"nine bottles"
lǝmè	mèlòḡgá lǝmè	"ten buckets"
mbàḡgè nà jòkó	βèkí mbàḡgè nà jòkó	"twenty-one places"
zràíjáò nà βéḃă	βèèzré zràíjáò nà βéḃă	"thirty-two bones"
mènìménĩ	βèálí mènìménĩ	"forty leaves"
mènìwàmbì	màwèndì mènìwàmbì	"eighty knives"
ègbê	mèzròkò ègbê	"hundred songs"

When used in counting, i.e. when the numeral does not have an overt head noun that it quantifies the first five numerals are prefixed with the pair of class 7/8. The singular numeral (one) takes the prefix of class 7, *é-*, while the plural numerals (4-5) take the

prefix of class 8, *βé-*. From six to ten, the numerals are just independent nouns. From eleven upwards, the numerals are composed of three morphemes except the multiples of ten. The counting is done by the addition of ten to one (for 11), ten to two (for 13), ten to three (for 13), etc. The addition is rendered by the coordinator *nà* "and"/"with" placed between the two numbers. After nine has been added to ten, there is a single noun to express the multiple of ten, and the addition process starts again till the next multiple of ten, etc. Note that from 11 to 15, the pair of prefix 7/8 is maintained no matter whether it is ten or any of its multiples.

jòkó	"one"	mbàngè nà jòkó	"twenty-one"
βéβă	"two"	mbàngè nà βéβă	"twenty-two"
βéjáo	"three"	mbàngè nà βéjáo	"twenty-three"
βénĩ	"four"	mbàngè nà βénĩ	"twenty-four"
βétâ	"five"	mbàngè nà βétâ	"twenty-five"
mòtówá	"six"	mbàngè nà mòtówá	"twenty-six"
lizràmbá	"seven"	mbàngè nà lizràmbá	"twenty-seven"
wàmbì	"eight"	mbàngè nà wàmbì	"twenty-eight"
lùùwá	"nine"	mbàngè nà lùùwá	"twenty-nine"
ljòmè	"ten"	zráíjáo	"thirty"
ljòmè nà jòkó	"eleven"	zráíjáo nà jòkó	"thirty-one"
ljòmè nà βéβă	"twelve"	zráíjáo nà βéβă	"thirty-two"
ljòmè nà βéjáo	"thirteen"	zráíjáo nà βéjáo	"thirty-three"
ljòmè nà βénĩ	"fourteen"	zráíjáo nà βénĩ	"thirty-four"
ljòmè nà βétâ	"fifteen"	zráíjáo nà βétâ	"thirty-five"
ljòmè nà mòtówá	"sixteen"	zráíjáo nà mòtówá	"thirty-six"
ljòmè nà lizràmbá	"seventeen"	zráíjáo nà lizràmbá	"thirty-seven"
ljòmè nà wàmbì	"eighteen"	zráíjáo nà wàmbì	"thirty-eight"
ljòmè nà lùùwá	"nineteen"	zráíjáo nà lùùwá	"thirty-nine"
mbàngè	"twenty"	mèniménĩ	"forty"

The base *mèni* is found in the multiple of ten from 40 to 90.

mènimétâ	"fifty"
mènimòtówá	"sixty"
mènilizràmbá	"seventy"
mèniwàmbì	"eighty"
mènilùùwá	"ninety"

The numerals hundred, thousand and million are the nouns below.

ègbê	"hundred"
ìkólí	"thousand"
ìlùnì	"million"

The privative adjective *tò* "no" functions as a quantifier used with either mass nouns or plural countable nouns to indicate a lack or zero quantity of something.

Cl.2	tò βánà	"no children"
Cl.4	tò mèóẏrô	"no rivers"
Cl.6	tò mǎnà	"no names"
Cl.8	tò βèwòṅgó	"no boxes"
Cl.10	tò kémà	"no monkeys"
Cl.6	tò màwúdzà	"no oil"
Cl.8	tò βèòlì	"no spit"

The adjective *tòímá* "each" is placed before the noun to mark individuality and singularity.

Cl.1	tòímá ṅmánà	"each child"
Cl.3	tòímá mòóβò	"each head"
Cl.5	tòímá 'lító	"each ear"
Cl.7	tòímá èzrù	"each wall"
Cl.9	tòímá mbèzrà	"each boy"
Cl.14	tòímá 'wóẏrô	"each face"
Cl.19	tòímá ìnòní	"each bird"

(4) Ordinal Numbers

Ordinal numbers are built using a three-part construction including the 3sg, the verb *lùkìzrè* "to make sth up" and the cardinal number. The expression means literally, "which leads one", "which leads two", "which leads three", "which leads four", etc.

à úkíẏré jòkó	"first"	à úkíẏré mòtówá	"sixth"
à úkíẏré βéβă	"second"	à úkíẏré lizràmbá	"seventh"
à úkíẏré βéjáò	"third"	à úkíẏré wàmbì	"eighth"
à úkíẏré βénì	"fourth"	à úkíẏré lùùwá	"ninth"
à úkíẏré βétâ	"fifth"	à úkíẏré lǝmè	"tenth"

However, when a noun is added to the construction, the ordinal for "first" changes completely into a genitive construction with the morpheme *wòẏrô* "face?" preceded by a concord and the head noun.

Cl.	Prefix	OrdCd	Examples	
1	mò-	wà	mòtò wà wòzrô	"the first person"
3	mò-	mò	mòóòbò mò wòzrô	"the first head"
5	lì-	lì-	liámà là wòzrô	"the first cheek"
7	è-	è-	èzrù jà wòzrô	"the first wall"
9	N-	è-	kémà jà wòzrô	"the first monkey"
14	wò-	wó-	wòólò wà wòzrô	"the first canoe"
19	ì-	í-	ilìbòàni dʒà wòzrô	"the first key"

è-ηgbèndè j-à wòzrô j-à ηmâ
 7-month 7-CLIT 14.first 7-CLIT 9.year
 The first month of the year

The "irregularity" starts and ends with the ordinal numeral "first". From "second" the regular formula is used. But interestingly, the plural form of the nouns ordered is also used. Then, the formula is: Numeral concord + úkíkré + plural form of noun + and plural form of equivalent cardinal number.

Cl.	Prefix	OrdCd	Examples	
1/2	mò-	à	mòtò à úkíkré bàtò báβă mòtò à úkíkré bàtò bájàò mòtò à úkíkré bàtò bánĩ mòtò à úkíkré bàtò bátâ	"the second person" "the third person" "the fourth person" "the fifth person"
3/4	mò-	mó-	mòóòbò múúkíkré mèóòbò méβă mòóòbò múúkíkré mèóòbò méjàò mòóòbò múúkíkré mèóòbò ménĩ mòóòbò múúkíkré mèóòbò métâ	"the second head" "the third head" "the fourth head" "the fifth head"
5/6	lì-	lí-	liámà lúkíkré màámà máβă liámà lúkíkré màámà májàò liámà lúkíkré màámà mánĩ liámà lúkíkré màámà mátâ	"the second cheek" "the third cheek" "the fourth cheek" "the fifth cheek"
7/8	è-	é	èzrù júkíkré bèzrù béβă èzrù júkíkré bèzrù béjàò èzrù júkíkré bèzrù bénĩ èzrù júkíkré bèzrù betâ	"the second wall" "the third wall" "the fourth wall" "the fifth wall"
9/10	N-	é	kémà júkíkré íkémà íβă kémà júkíkré íkémà íjàò kémà júkíkré íkémà ínèĩ (ínĩ)	"the second monkey" "the third monkey" "the fourth monkey"

			kémà júkízáré íkémà ítâ	"the fifth monkey"
14/5	wò-	wó-	wòólò wùúkízáré móólò máǵǵá wòólò wùúkízáré móólò máǵǵáò wòólò wùúkízáré móólò mǵní wòólò wùúkízáré móólò mǵtǵ	"the second monkey" "the third monkey" "the fourth monkey" "the fifth monkey"
19/8	ì-	í-	ìnòní dzúkízáré βénòní βéǵǵá ìnòní dzúkízáré βénòní βéǵǵáò ìnòní dzúkízáré βénòní βéńí ìnòní dzúkízáré βénòní βéǵtǵ	"the second monkey" "the third monkey" "the fourth monkey" "the fifth monkey"

6. Pronouns

Mokpe makes use of a variety of words that substitute for nouns, i.e. pronouns. These include: absolute pronouns (or/and subject concords), demonstrative pronouns, independent pronouns, interrogative pronouns and possessive pronouns.

Like in many Bantu languages, genuine absolute pronouns in Mokpe are for the 1st and 2nd persons singular and plural, i.e. for the senders and the receivers.

	Subject case		Object case	
1sg	nà	"I"	ìmbâ	"me"
2sg	ò	"you"	wâ	"you"
1pl	ì	"we"	ízáò	"us"
2pl	è	"you"	íǵò	"you"

The 3sg and 3pl, the substitutives, vary according to the noun they represent. We have the subject case and the object case.

➤ The subject cases prefixes or subject concord are as follows:

Cl.	Prefix	SP	Examples	
1	mò-	à-	èmolánà àlâ	"the woman eats"
2	ǵà-	ǵá-	ǵáálánà ǵálâ	"the women eat"
3	mò-	mó-	móòndó móóǵì líǵùmbú	"the tail has hair"
4	mè-	mé-	méòndó méóǵì màǵùmbú	"the tails have hair"
5	lí-	lí-	lízáǵǵá líké ǵàmà	"the tooth cuts meat"
6	mà-	má-	mǵzáǵǵá máké ǵàmà	"the teeth cut meat"
7	è-	é-	élèlâ éǵò màlèwá	"the duck drinks water"
8	βè-	βé-	βélèlâ βéǵò màlèwá	"the ducks drink water"
9	N-	è-	éǵǵâ èlómà	"the dog barks"

10	í-	í-	íngbâ ílómà	"the dogs bark"
14	wò-	wó-	wóǎngó wólùtèjà	"the brain thinks"
19	ì-	í-	ínòní íkòdòwà	"the bird flies"

➤ As for the object case prefixes we have:

Cl.	Prefix	ObjP	Examples	
1	mò-	mó-	nà mà ɲmɛ̀nɛ́ /mó-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ ɲmɛ̀ní wǎmì)	"I saw him/her" ("I saw my guest)
2	ɓà-	ɓá-	nà mà ɓ-ɛ̀nɛ́ /ɓá-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mà ɓáɛ̀ní ɓámì)	"I saw them" ("I saw my guests")
3	mò-	mó-	nà mà ɲmɛ̀nɛ́ /mó-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ móótó)	"I saw it" ("I saw the green snake")
4	mè-	mé-	nà mà méɛ̀nɛ́ /mé-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ méótó)	"I saw them" ("I saw the green snakes")
5	lí-	lí-	nà mà lénɛ́ /lí-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ lízrò)	"I saw it" ("I saw the eye")
6	mà-	má-	nà mà méɛ̀nɛ́ /má-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ mízrò)	"I saw them" ("I saw the eyes")
7	è-	é-	nà mà jénɛ́ /é-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ é̀lè̀là jámì)	"I saw him/her" ("I saw my duck")
8	ɓè-	ɓé-	nà mà ɓéɛ̀nɛ́ /ɓé-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ ɓé̀lè̀là ɓéámì)	"I saw them" ("I saw my ducks")
9	N-	è-	nà mà jénɛ́ /é-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ ɲàmà jámì)	"I saw it" ("I saw my animal")
10	í-	í-	nà mà dzénɛ́ /í-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ í̀nàmà dzámì)	"I saw them" ("I saw my animals")
14	wò-	wó-	nà mà wénɛ́ /wó-ɛ̀nɛ́/ (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ wóǎlò wénì)	"I saw it" ("I saw his canoe")
19	ì-	í-	nà mà dzénɛ́ /wó í-ɛ̀nɛ́ / (nà mɛ̀nɛ́ ínòní dzázrú)	"I saw it" ("I saw our bird")

(5) Dependent Possessive Pronouns

The dependent possessive pronouns are made up of a root preceded by a possessive concord (PosCd) which is in agreement with the head noun.

1sg	-ámì	"my"
2sg	-àṅgó	"your"
3sg	-éní	"his"
1pl	-áṣrú	"our"
2pl	-áṣnú	"your (pl)"
3pl	-áwú	"their"

The possessive pronouns require the prefixes below.

Cl.	Prefix	PosCd	Examples	
1	mò-	wà-	ḡmèná àmì or ḡmèní wămì /ḡmèní wà-ámì/ ḡmèná ṅgó or ḡmèní wàngó /ḡwèní wà-àṅgó/ ḡmèné éní or ḡmèní wění /ḡmèní wà-éní/ ḡmèná áṣrú or ḡmèní wáṣrú /ḡmèní wà-áṣrú/ ḡmèná áṣnú or ḡmèní wáṣnú /ḡmèní wà-áṣnú/ ḡmèná áwú or ḡmèní wáwú /ḡmèní wà-áwú/	"my guest" "your guest" "his guest" "our guest" "your (pl) guest" "their guest"
2	ḡà-	ḡá-	ḡàèná àmì or ḡàèní ḡámì /ḡàèní ḡá-ámì/ ḡàèní ḡàngó /ḡàèní ḡá-àṅgó/ ḡàèní ḡéní /ḡàèní ḡá-éní/ ḡàèní ḡáṣrú /ḡàèní ḡá-áṣrú/ ḡàèní ḡáṣnú /ḡàèní ḡá-áṣnú/ ḡàèní ḡáwú /ḡàèní ḡá-áwú/	"my guests" "your guests" "his wives" "our guests" "your (pl) guests" "their guests"
3	mò-	mó-	móḡḡò ḡwámì /móḡḡò mó-ámì/ móḡḡò ḡwàngó /móḡḡò mó-àṅgó/ móḡḡò ḡwéní /móḡḡò mó-éní/ móḡḡò ḡwáṣrú /móḡḡò mó-áṣrú/ móḡḡò ḡwáṣnú /móḡḡò mó-áṣnú/ móḡḡò ḡwáwú /móḡḡò mó-áwú/	"my head" "your head" "his head" "our head" "your (pl) head" "their head"
4	mè-	mé-	méòndó méámí	"my tails"

			méòndó méàngó méòndó méení méòḃó méázzú méòḃó méápnú mēḃḃó méáwú	"your tails" "his tails" "our heads" "your (pl) heads" "their heads "
5	lì-	lí-	lǐzròngá lámì /lǐzròngá lí-ámì/ lǐzròngá lánḡó /lǐzròngá lí-àngó/ lǐzròngá léní /lǐzròngá lí-éní/ lǐzròngá lázzú /lǐzròngá lí-ázzú/ lǐzròngá lápnú /lǐzròngá lí-ápnú/ lǐzròngá láwú /lǐzròngá lí-áwú/	"my tooth" "your tooth" "his tooth" "our tooth" "your (pl) tooth" "their tooth"
6	mà-	má-	mǎzròngá māmì /mǎzròngá má-ámì/ mǎzròngá mǎḡó /mǎzròngá má-àngó/ mǎzròngá méní /mǎzròngá má-éní/ mǎzròngá mǎzzú /mǎzròngá má-ázzú/ mǎzròngá mǎpnú /mǎzròngá má-ápnú/ mǎzròngá mǎwú /mǎzròngá má-áwú/	"my teeth" "your teeth" "his teeth" "our teeth" "your (pl) teeth" "their teeth"
7	è-	é-	élèlà á mì or élèlà já mì /élèlà é-á ámì/ élèlà á 'ḡó or élèlà já 'ḡó /élèlà é-á àḡó/ élèlà jéní /élèlà é-á éní/ élèlà jázzú (élèlà é-á ázzú/ élèlà á pnú or élèlà jápnú /élèlà é-á ápnú/ élèlà á wú or élèlà jáwú /élèlà é-á áwú/	"my duck" "your duck" "his duck" "our duck" "your (pl) duck" "their duck"
8	ḃè-	ḃé-	ḃélèlà ḃéámì ḃélèlà ḃé'àngó /ḃélèlà ḃé àḡó/ ḃélèlà ḃééní ḃélèlà ḃéázzú	"my ducks" "your ducks" "his ducks" "our ducks"

			βèlèlà βéáńú βèlèlà βéáwú	"your (pl) ducks" "their ducks"
9	N-	è-	ńàmà á mì or ńàmà jámì /ńàmà è-ámì/ kémà jàngó /kémà è-àngó/ kémà jéní /kémà è-éní/ kémà jázrú /kémà è-ázrú/ kémà jàńú /kémà è-áńú/ kémà jàwú /kémà è-áwú/	"my animal" "your monkey" "his monkey" "our monkey" "your (pl) monkey" "their monkey"
10	N-	í-	ínàmà dzámì /ínàmà í-ámì/ ínàmà dzàngó /ínàmà í-àngó/ ínàmà dzééní /ínàmà í-éní/ ínàmà dzázrú /ínàmà í-ázrú/ ínàmà dzáńú /ínàmà í-áńú/ ínàmà dzáwú /ínàmà í-áwú/	"my animals" "your animals" "his animals" "our animals" "your (pl) animals" "their animals"
14	wò	wó-	wǒǒlò wámì /wǒǒlò wó-ámì/ wǒǒlò wàngó /wǒǒlò wó-àngó/ wǒǒlò wéní /wǒǒlò wó-éní/ wǒǒlò wázrú /wǒǒlò wó-ázrú/ wǒǒlò wáńú /wǒǒlò wó-áńú/ wǒǒlò wáwú /wǒǒlò wó-áwú/	"my canoe" "your canoe" "his canoe" "our boat" "your (pl) canoe" "their canoe"
19	ì-	í-	ínòní dzámì /ínòní í-ámì/ ínòní dzàngó /ínòní í-àngó/ ínòní dzééní /ínòní í-éní/ ínòní dzázrú /ínòní í-ázrú/ ínòní dzáńú /ínòní í-áńú/ ínòní dzáwú /ínòní í-áwú/	"my bird" "your bird" "his bird" "our bird" "your (pl) bird" "their bird"

(6) Demonstratives

The demonstrative is constructed with a consonantic root (-C-), a nasal or prenasal, flanked with an affix on either side. I call this consonantic root the demonstrative pronoun (DemPro).

Proximal	-n-	"this"
Distal	-ng-	"that"

The affix of the left side, the prefix, is definitely that demonstrative concord (DemCd) while the affix on the right side, the suffix, is the highly predictable vowels o, u, a, e, i. The distribution is done as follows:

- If the DemCd ends with the vowel /o/, then the suffix is /o/ for both the proximal and the distal;
- If the DemCd ends with the vowel /a/, then the suffix is /u/ for the proximal and /a/ for the distal;
- If the DemCd ends with the vowel /e/, then the suffix is /e/ for both the proximal and the distal;
- If the DemCd ends with the vowel /i/, then the suffix is /i/ for both the proximal and the distal;

Tonally, while the melodie for both the proximal and distal is L-H in class 1, it is H-L for the proximal and H-H for the distal for all the other classes. All this information is summaried below:

Vowel of DemCd	Suffix					
	Proximal			distal		
/o/	/o/	ò-n-ó mó-n-ò wó-n-ò	(cl.1) (cl.3) (cl.14)	/o/	ò-ηg-ó mó-ηg-ó wó-ηg-ó	(cl.1) (cl.3) (cl.14)
/a/	/u/	βá-n-ù má-n-ù	(cl.2) (cl.6)	/a/	βá-ηg-á má-ηg-á	(cl.2) (cl.6)
/e/	/e/	mé-n-è é-n-è βé-n-è	(cl.4) (cl.7) (cl.8)	/e/	mé-ηg-é é-ηg-é βé-ηg-é	(cl.4) (cl.7) (cl.8)
/i/	/i/	lí-n-ì í-n-ì í-n-ì	(cl.5) (cl.10) (cl.19)	/i/	lí-ηg-í í-ηg-í í-ηg-í	(cl.5) (cl.10) (cl.19)

The demonstratives require the prefixes below.

Cl.	Prefix	DemCd-Rt-suffix	Examples	
1	mò-	ò-n-ó ò-ηg-ó	ònó mòtò òηgó mòtò	"this person" "that person"
2	βà-	βá-n-ù βá-ηg-á	βánù βàtò βánγá βàtò	"these people" "those people"

3	mò-	mó-n-ò mó-ηg-ó	mónò ηmēmà mónḡó ηmēmà	"this heart" "that heart"
4	mè-	mé-n-è mé-ηg-é	ménè mèēmà ménḡé mèēmà	"these hearts" "those hearts"
5	lì-	lí-n-ì lí-ηg-í	línì lìzròḡá línḡí lìzròḡá	"this tooth" "that tooth"
6	mà-	má-n-ù má-ηg-á	mánù màzròḡá mánḡá màzròḡá	"these teeth" "those teeth"
7	è-	é-n-è é-ηg-é	énè èzrù énḡé zrù	"this wall" "that wall"
8	βè-	βé-n-è βé-ηg-é	βénè βèzrù βénḡé βèzrù	"these walls" "those walls"
9	N-	é-n-ê (è-n-ê) é-ηg-ê (è-ηg-ê)	énê kémà énḡê kémà	"this monkey" "that monkey"
10	N-	í-n-ì í-ηg-î	ínì kémà ínḡî kémà	"these monkeys" "those monkeys"
14	wò	wó-n-ò wó-ηg-ó	wónò wólò wónḡó wólò	"this canoe" "that canoe"
19	ì-	í-n-ì í-ηg-í	ínì ìnòní ínḡí ìnòní	"this bird" "that bird"

Note the presence of a floating low in class 9, *énê kémà* "this monkey" *énḡê kémà* "that monkey". That low tone creates a dowstep of a high in utterances like *énḡé 'jémbé* "that animal".

Also note that the DemCd for class 9 is the vowel /e-/ of class 7. However, although in the examples above the vowel /é-/ of class 7 and 9 all bear a high tone, the true tone of class 9 is low, /è-/. The high tone of the vowel /é-/ of class 9 is due to its position (initial) and its function as determiner. The real tone of class 9 is illustrated in the paradigm below where the demonstrative enters a presentative form. The vowel /é-/ (*èzrù é-ηḡê*) of class 7 is high while the one of the class 9 /è/ (*ḡàmà è-ηḡê*) is low.

Class 7		Class 9	
èzrù éḡḡê	"that is a wall"	ḡàmà èḡḡê	"that is a meat"
jòmà éḡḡê	"that is a thing"	mbóli èḡḡê	"that is a goat"
èβózrí éḡḡê	"that is a bottle"	mbòkò èḡḡê	"that is a chair"
èβùmá éḡḡê	"that is a fruit"	kòòḡà èḡḡê	"that is a calabash"
èwòlò éḡḡê	"that is a work"	tũ èḡḡê	"that is a "room"

èzrù ɛ̀ngê	"that is a wall"	ndáwò ɛ̀ngê	"that is a house"
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Interesting to also note is the fact that tonally, the morpheme for ‘that’ ends with a low tone when placed at utterance-end position:

Cl.1	ɲmána ɔ̀ngô	"that is a child"
Cl.3	mòóβò mɔ̀ngô	"that is a head"
Cl.5	lɪzrɔ̀ngá língî	"that is a tooth"
Cl.7	èlèlà ɛ̀ngê	"that is a duck"
Cl.9	ɲàmà ɛ̀ngê	"that is a animal"
Cl.14	wǎlò wɔ̀ngô	"that is a canoe"
Cl.19	ìnóní íngî	"that is a bird"
Cl.6	màliwá mángâ	"that is water"
Cl.8	βèwólì βéngê	"that is spit"

(7) Summary

The table below gives a summary of the qualifiers, associative constructions and pronouns concords.

Cl.	Prefix	AdjCd	GenCd	NumCd	OrdCd	PosCd	DemCd
1	mò-	mò-	wà	mó-	wà	wà-	ò-C-o
2	βà-	βà-	βá	βá-		βá-	βá-C-u/-a
3	mò-	mò-	mó	mó-	mò	mó-	mó-C-o
4	mè-	mè-	mé	mé-		mé-	mé-C-e
5	lí-	lí-	lí	lí-	lí-	lí-	lí-C-i
6	mà-	mà-	má	má-		má-	má-C-u/-a
7	è-	è-	é-	é-	è-	é-	é-C-e
8	βè-	βè-	βé	βé-		βé-	βé-C-e
9	N-	è-	è-	è-	è-	è-	è-C-e
10	N-/í-	N-/í-	é-	í-		í-	í-C-i
14	wò-	wò-	wó	wó-	wó-	wó-	wó-C-o
19	ì-	ì-	í	í-	í-	í-	í-C-i
8	βè-	βè-	βé	βé-		βé-	βé-C-e

(8) Interrogative Pronouns

The interrogative pronouns in Mokpe are generally autonomous words that function independent of the noun which they may accompany. They are placed before the noun.

➤ ímá "which?"

Cl.1	ímá ḡmána	"which child?"
Cl.2	ímá βána	"which children?"
Cl.3	ímá ḡmēmà	"which heart?"
Cl.4	ímá mēmà	"which hearts?"
Cl.5	ímá lizròḡgá	"which tooth?"
Cl.6	ímá màzròḡgá	"which teeth?"
Cl.7	ímá èlèlà	"which duck?"
Cl.8	ímá βèlèlà	"which ducks?"
Cl.9	ímá 'kémà	"which monkey?"
Cl.10	ímá 'kémà	"which monkeys?"
Cl.14	ímá 'wózrô	"which face?"
Cl.19	ímá ìnòní	"which bird?"

➤ ndzê "who?"

Cl.1	ndzê à βéli ḡmána	"who is a child?"
Cl.3	ndzê à βéli ḡmēmà	"who is a heart?"
Cl.5	ndzê à βéli lizròḡgá	"who is a tooth?"
Cl.7	ndzê à βéli èlèlà	"who is a duck?"
Cl.9	ndzê à βéli jàmà	"who is an animal?"
Cl.14	ndzê à βéli wólò	"who is a canoe?"
Cl.19	ndzê à βéli ìwóni	"who is a cartridge?"
Cl.5	ndzê à βéli málíwá	"who is water?"
Cl.8	ndzê à βéli βéwólì	"who is spit?"

The interrogative pronoun is placed after the personal pronoun in an attributive sentence.

ndzò òḡgò (ndzê òḡgò)	"who is it?"
mbâ ndzê	"who am I?"
wââ ndzê	"who are you?"
mòò ndzê	"who is s/he?"
ízrô ndzê	"who are we?"
ípô ndzê	"who are you?"
wóò ndzê	"who are they?"

➤ ó 'né "where?"

The interrogative pronoun ó 'né "where?" is bi-morphemic: the locative morpheme ó and the root né.

Cl.1	ó 'né môtô	"where is the person?"
Cl.3	ó 'né mòóβò	"where is the head?"
Cl.5	ó 'né lízròṅgá	"where is the tooth?"
Cl.7	ó 'né élèlà	"where is the duck?"
Cl.9	ó 'né èkémà	"where is the monkey?"
Cl.4	ó 'né wôzrô	"where is the face?"
Cl.9	ó 'né ínòní	"where is the bird?"

➤ mǎmé "what?"

mǎmélí móròṅgí /mǎmé βélí móròṅgí/	"what is the price?"
mǎm 'ó mǎéné /mǎmé ó mǎ èné/	"what did you see?"
mǎm 'óó mǎgbèé /mǎmé ó mǎ gbèé/	"what did you do?"
mǎmé	"what is it?"

➤ How many?

The pronoun -tí "how many?" is the only one which take a concord in agreement with the head noun.

(Cl.2) βánà βátí

βá-nà βá-tí

2.palm tree 2-IntPro

"how many children?"

(Cl.4) mèémà métí

mè-émà mé-tí

4.palm tree 4-IntPro

"how many hearts?"

(Cl.6) mǐjà mǎtí

m-ǐjà mǎ-tí

6.palm tree 6-IntPro

"how many palm trees?"

(Cl.8) βèóṅgó βétí

βè-óṅgó βé-tí

8.pot 6-IntPro

"how many pots?"

(Cl.10) kólà í tí

Kólà í-tí

10.kola 10-IntPro

"how many kola nuts?"

Thus, apart from -tí the other interrogatives can stand on their own. In other to be autonomous, -tí "how many?" will take the default prefix βé-.

ímá? "which?"

mámé? "what?"

ndžê? "who?"

ó 'né? "where?"

βé-tí "how many?"

(9) General Proforms

➤ -àzrê "all, whole"

The general proform -àzrê "all, whole" is a root that requires a concord that agrees with the head noun. Although the language uses the root -àzrê for "all" and "whole", the distinction between "all" and "whole" is done through the selection of the appropriate number concord: a plural prefix for "all" and a singular prefix for "whole".

Cl.	Prefix	GprnCd	Examples	
1	mò-	wà-	èmólánà wàzrê	"the whole woman"
2	βà-	βá	βáǎnà βâzrê	"all the children"
3	mò-	mó	mólòngá ñmâzrê	"the whole bucket"
4	mè-	mé	mélòngá méàzrê	"all the buckets"
5	lí-	lí	lītàngá lâzrê	"the whole foot"
6	mà-	má	mătàngá mâzrê	"all the feet"
7	è-	é-	ézrù jâzrê	"the whole wall"
8	βè-	βé	βézrù βéàzrê	"all the walls"
9	N-	è-	ìmbówà jâzrê	"the whole village"
10	í-	í-	ímbówà dzâzrê	"all the villages"
14	wò-	wó	wôzrô wâzrê	"the whole face"
19	ì	í	ínóní dzâzrê	"the whole bird"

The plural subject pronouns take the concord *βá-* irrespective of the person:

ìzrô <i>βâzrê</i>	"we all"
ìṇô <i>βâzrê</i>	"you all"
wô <i>βâzrê</i>	"they all"

Once again, one must distinguish between the /é-/ of class 7 and the one of class 9 /è-/.

Class 7		Class 9	
éèjé <i>jâzrê</i>	"the whole tree"	ètũ <i>jâzrê</i>	"the whole room"
ékí <i>jâzrê</i>	"the whole place"	èṅgbèndè <i>jâzrê</i>	"the whole month"
ézurù <i>jâzrê</i>	"the whole wall"	èmbówà <i>jâzrê</i>	"the whole village"
élùwà <i>jâzrê</i>	"the whole market"	èβàkó <i>jâzrê</i>	"the whole mountain"
éβózrí <i>jâzrê</i>	"the whole bottle"	èndáwò <i>jâzrê</i>	"the whole house"

➤ -ítí and *méné* "alone, self"

The expression of 'alone' is done with the root *-ítí* preceded by twice the corresponding independent pronoun. While the first independent is unbound, the second is attached *-ítí*. In the singular forms, it is the independent pronouns *mbá* "me", *wá* "you" and *mó* "him/her" which are repeated before the root *-ítí*, while in the plural forms it is the only concord *βá-*.

<i>mbâ mbítí</i>	/mbâ mbá-ítí/	"I alone"
<i>wâ wítí</i>	/wâ wá-ítí/	"you alone"
<i>mô ṁmítí</i>	/mô mó-ítí/	"s/he alone"
ìzrô <i>βítí</i>	/ìzrô βá-ítí/	"we alone"
ìṇô <i>βítí</i>	/ìṇô βá-ítí/	"you alone"
wô <i>βítí</i>	/wô βá-ítí/	"they alone"

Note that the morpheme *méné* can also be used for the plural persons.

ìzrô <i>¹méné</i>	"we alone"
ìṇô <i>¹méné</i>	"you alone"
wô <i>¹méné</i>	"they alone"

7. Prepositions and prepositional phrases

The preposition *nà* "with" is used in abstract nouns to indicate manner of action.

<i>nà ṅgínà</i>	"with force"
<i>nà ndzàwò</i>	"with hunger"

nà wóngó	"with fear"
nà wòndzà	"with aggression"
nà ìlì	"with sympathy"
nà mòpèngì	"with pleasure"
nà gbǎngò	"with care"
nà èzrólírólí	"with sorrow"
nà lùùwá	"with cry"
nèèjò /nà èjò/	"with laugh"

When used with the personal independent pronouns, it is a function word expressing agreement, sympathy or association (on the side of).

nìmbâ /nà ìmbâ/	"with me"
nòwâ /nà òwâ/	"with you"
nà mô	"with him/her"
nà ìzrô	"with us"
nà ìpô	"with you"
nà wô	"with them"

The preposition *nàá* "like" is used to express the idea "in the manner of", similarity and resemblance.

Cl.1	nàá 'ḡmána	"like a child"
Cl.3	nàá 'móóḡò	"like a head"
Cl.5	nàá lìzròḡgá	"like a tooth"
Cl.7	ně̀lèlà	"like a duck"
Cl.9	nàá 'kémà	"like a monkey"
Cl.14	nàá 'wózrô	"like a face"
Cl.19	nĩ̀nòní	"like a bird"

nìmbá /nàá ìmbá/	"like me"
nôwá /nàá òwá/	"like you"
nà mó	"like him/her"
nĩ̀zró /nàá í̀zró/	"like us"
nàá í̀pó	"like you"
nàá wó	"like them"

Some usual preposition phrases are worth noting. They refer to time, space or position.

lìwòtèélélé /lìwòtèjá éélélé/	"from the morning"
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nà wô	"among them"
nátèè èngómbé	"until the evening"
ó mbówà	"to the village"
ô mbúzárà jàámì	"behind mine"
ô mbúzárà mbówà	"outside of the village"
ô mbúzárà mòtò	"behind the man"
ô mbúzárà ndáwù	"outside the house"
ô zré já téèlì	"under the table"
óténá mbówà or ó mbówà	"in the village"
óténá ndáwù	"inside the house"
ówòzró wó mbówà	"in front of the village"
ówòzró wó ndáwù	"in front of the house"
wêkí jélùwà	"at the market place"
wě̀lùwà	"at the market"
wítí itèní	"in the mid"

IV. THE VERB AND THE VERB PHRASE

1. Verbal Inflection

The verb, like in any other language of the world, denotes an action (*lǎkà* "to pass"), a process (*lǒnà* "to grow") or a state (*liβé lókízáré* "to be sick"). Grammatically, it changes according to person, time, mood and class in concord with the noun class of the subject. Syntactically, it forms the predicate which can be verbal or non-verbal. Except for the first person of the imperative form, the verb stem must be preceded by a verbal pronoun and a/several temporal or modal modifier(s).

1. The isolated and infinitive forms

The isolated form of the verb is its shape without the infinitive marker *li-*. The infinitive marker in Mokpe is the class prefix *li-* which is attached to a root. This prefix is realised [l-] before roots starting with vowels and remains [li-] before roots starting with consonants. The examples below are selected according to the shape and length of the syllable as well as the tonal patterns of the verb.

Examples

a. Monosyllabic roots

lâ	"eat"	lilâ	"to eat"
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pkâ	"fall"	lipkâ	"to fall"
ɲó	"drink"	lipɲó	"to drink"
ndê	"go"	lèndê	"to go"
ɲwâ	"die"	lipɲwâ	"to die"
ɲgbâ	"give"	lipɲgbâ	"to give"

b. Disyllabic roots

íḃá	"steal"	líḃà	"to steal"
áɲgâ	"count"	láɲgâ	"to count"
énê	"see"	lénê	"to see"
dʒàâ	"come"	lidʒă	"to come"
jòô	"laugh"	lijô	"to laugh"
mèê	"swallow"	limê	"to swallow"
βélê	"call"	liβélê	"to call"
zrùmâ	"bow"	lizrùmâ	"to bow"
kóká	"bite"	likókà	"to bite"
timbá	"return"	litimbá	"to return"

c. Trisyllabic roots

ókówâ	"learn"	lőkòwà	"to learn"
ándzílê	"carry"	làndzílê	"to carry"
kpééjà	"enter"	likpéèjà	"to enter"
kààwá	"divide"	likààwá	"to divide"
liβówâ	"open"	lililβówá	"to open"
lùtèjà	"think"	lilùtèjà	"to think"
límirê	"extinguish"	lilimirê	"to extinguish"
kóngámá	"lie down"	likóngàmà	"to lie down"
nàɲgôzré	"lie down"	linàɲgôzré	"to lie down"
kàmbówâ	"pour"	likàmbówà	"to pour"
zróɲgizré	"dry" (fish)	lizróɲgizré	"to dry" (fish)

d. Quadrisyllabic roots

ókánéâ	"taste"	lőkànéâ	"to taste"
liìòzré	"sit down"	ljò'òzré	"to sit down"
épélélê	"expose"	lěpélélê	"to expose"

e. Compound verb forms

tíjà lùmbè	"slap"	litíjà lùmbè	"to slap"
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ókâ wóngó	"fear"	lőkà wóngó	"to fear"
zríngâ or zríngá ngòlì	"snore"	lizríngà ngòlì	"to snore"
zrùmá mâwó ngóngó	"kneel"	lizrùmá mâwó ngóngó	"to kneel"

While the tone of the verb prefix is always low, the tonal pattern of the base varies. However, this variation allows a classification of the verbs in tone groups (cf. subsection IV.3).

Note that the monosyllabic and disyllabic verb roots largely prevail in the language.

2. The verbal root templates

In the unmarked case, the verbal roots have the following CV templates:

Table 5. Mokpe verb syllable templates

CV shapes	Examples				
a. CV	ɲó	"drink"	ɲgbâ	"give"	
b. V.CV	íḃá	"steal"	ángâ	"count"	
CV.V	jòḃ	"laugh"	mèê	"swallow"	
CV.CV	ḃélê	"call"	zrùmâ	"bow"	
c. V.CV.CV	ókówâ	"learn"	ándzílê	"carry"	
CV.V.CV	kpééjá	"enter"	kààwá	"divide"	
CV.CV.CV	liḃówâ	"open"	nàngôzré	"lie down"	
d. V.CV.CV.V	ókánéâ	"taste"			
CV.V.V.CV	liíòzré	"sit down"			
V.CV.CV.CV	éɲélélê	"expose"			

3. The tonal groups of the verbs

The verbs in Mokpe can be divided into two tonal groups: low and high.

a. Low tone verbs

Infinitive

lɪŋgbă	"to give"
liǰḃ	"to laugh"
lòká	"to play"
likòówá	"to fly"
likàmbówá	"to pour"

Isolated form

ɲgbâ	"give"
jòḃ	"laugh"
òkâ	"play"
kòówâ	"fly"
kàmbówâ	"pour"

b. High tone verbs

Infinitive		Isolated form	
likê	"to cut"	kê	"cut"
liŋwâ	"to die"	ŋwâ	"die"
lěnè	"to see"	énê	"see"
lăkà	"to pass"	ákâ	"pass"
lũŋwèlè	"to show"	úŋwélê	"show"
lǒŋgèlè	"to remember"	óŋgélê	"remember"
liβóngà	"to forget"	βóngâ	"forget"
lizríimà	"to pull"	zríimâ	"pull"
litíndèlè	"to push"	tíndélê	"push"
lizróŋgizrè	"to dry" (fish)	zróŋgí zrê	"dry" (fish)

The identification of a low-toned verb vs. a high-toned verb is possible thanks to the first tone of the verb root of the infinitive forms.

Low tone verbs		High tone verbs	
lijǎ	"to laugh"	lipkâ	"to fall"
lidzǎ	"to come"	lizrâ	"to dance"
limě	"to swallow"	likê	"to cut"

In the isolated forms, the first tone of the verbs permits their classification into the appropriate tone group even if the apparently monosyllabic low-toned verbs double their vowels in order to carry the original low tone of the verb and the falling tone of the imperative or isolated form.

Low tone verbs			High tone verbs		
Infinitive	Isolated form		Infinitive	Isolated form	
lijǎ	jǎǎ	"to laugh"	lipkâ	pkâ	"fall"
lidzǎ	dzǎǎ	"come"	lizrâ	zrâ	"dance"
limě	měě	"swallow"	likê	kê	"cut"

Disyllabic verbs are tonally unequivocal whether in the infinitive or isolated forms.

Low tone verbs			High tone verbs		
Infinitive	Isolated form		Infinitive	Isolated form	
likèká	kèkâ	"taste"	liwótò	wótô	"dress"
litèmbé	tèmbê	"leak"	litémè	témê	"stand up"
lizrùmá	zrùmâ	"bow"	liβángà	βángâ	"run"

In disyllabic vowel-initial roots, the rising contour tone on the first vowel of the root in high-toned verbs is in fact a combination of a low followed by a high. The low tone is that stranded tone of the vowel of the verb prefix, and the high tone is the tone of the verb root. One can see that this stranded low tone is no longer present in the isolated form.

High tone verbs					
		Infinitive		Isolated form	
lì-énè	→	lě̀nè	"to see"	énê	"see"
lì-ákà	→	lǎ̀kà	"to pass"	ákâ	"pass"
lì-úṙwélè	→	lǔṙwélè	"to show"	úṙwélê	"show"
lì-óṙgélè	→	lǔṙgélè	"to remember"	óṙgélê	"remember"

As for the low-toned verbs, the vowel /i/ of the verb prefix *lì-* gets deleted and its low tone merges with the one of the first vowel of the root.

Low tone verbs					
		Infinitive		Isolated form	
lì-ìḃé	→	liḃé	"to cook"	ìḃê	"cook"
lì-òkà	→	lòkà	"to play"	òkâ	"play"
lì-àgbá	→	làgbá	"to climb"	àgbâ	"climb"
lì-àṙgbá	→	làṙgbá	"to shoot"	àṙgbâ	"shoot"

4. Compound verbs

Some verbs are made up of two morphemes, generally a verb and a noun.

mbáki	"encouragement"	
lṙgbá mbáki	"to encourage"	(to give encouragement)
ḃòndzà	"permission"	
lṙgbá ḃòndzà	"to allow"	(give permission)
ḃèzràzrà	"whisper"	
lǒḃà ḃèzràzrà	"to whisper"	(to tell whisper)
dzóḃi	"speech"	
lǒḃà dzóḃi	"make a speech"	(to tell speech)

5. The subject and object (independent) pronouns

When conjugated, the verb is preceded by a subject pronoun (SP). It appears in two forms: a full or plain form before consonant-initial verbal roots and in a truncated or

modified form before vowel-initial roots. The verb root can also take an object or substitute pronoun (ObjP), which is placed between the TAM and the verb root.

Table 6. Subject and object pronouns

Subject pronouns				Object pronouns
Full form		Modified form		
All other tenses		Present perfect		
1sg	nà	ná	n-	ìmbâ
2sg	ò	ó	w-	wâ
3sg	à	á	—	môô
1pl	ì	í	dʒ-	íʒrô
2pl	è	é	j-	ínô
3pl	βá	βá	β-	wô

Thus, the SPs [nà] and [βá] lose their vowel when they precede vowel-initial roots. The vocalic SPs [ò], [ì] and [è] change to [w], [dʒ] and [j] respectively when occurring before roots beginning with vowels. The 3rd person singular pronoun [à] does not undergo any change.

As far as the tones are concerned, the SPs generally bear a low tone, except for the 3rd person plural which is high-toned. This is what is obtained in all tenses, except the present perfect tense which commands that the SPs bear a high tone all through (cf. table 6 above).

In the conjugated forms, after the deletion of the vowel of the subject pronoun, its tone survives and docks onto the vowel of the root to create a contour tone.

Full form				Truncated/modified form	
1sg	nà	kòòwà	"I fly"	němbà	"I sing"
2sg	ò	kòòwà	"you fly"	wěmbà	"you sing"
3sg	à	kòòwà	"he flies"	à émbà	"he sings"
1pl	ì	kòòwà	"we fly"	dʒěmbà	"we sing"
2pl	è	kòòwà	"you fly"	jěmbà	"you sing"
3pl	βá	kòòwà	"they fly"	βěmbà	"they sing"

The presentative is formed as follows:

ìmbâ	"it is me"
òwâ	"it is you"
mô	"it is him"

íẏrô	"it is us"
íẏnô	"it is us"
wô	"it is them"

It is negated with the negative marker *ẏrèkété* placed before the substitute pronoun.

ẏrèkété ìmbâ	"it is not me"
ẏrèkété òwâ	"it is not you"
ẏrèkété mô	"it is not him"
ẏrèkété íẏrô	"it is not us"
ẏrèkété íẏnô	"it is not you"
ẏrèkété wô	"it is not them"

In a verbal construction where the subject is a noun, the 3rd person singular and plural pronouns always follow and agree in class with that noun:

Ndive à ßéli ndí mòòkèlì

Ndive à ßéli ndí mò-òkèlì

PN 3sg.Cd Cop 1-player

"Ndive is a player"

Ndive nà Jozro ßá ßéli ndí ßàòkèlì

Ndive nà Jozro ßá ßéli ndí ßà-òkèlì

PN COORD PN 3pl.Cd Cop 2-player

"Ndive and Josso are players"

Èṅgbâ èmà lá èwúfà

è-ṅgbâ è- mà lá è-wúfà

7-dog 7.Cd PAST eat 7-fowl

"The dog ate the fowl"

Íṅgbâ ímà lá èwúfà

í-ṅgbâ í- mà lá è-wúfà

10-dog 10.Cd PAST eat 7-fowl

"The dogs ate the fowl"

Móòtówà mómà ṅmèzré ṅmêlê

mó-òtówà mó mà ṅm- -èzré ṅmêlê

3-car 3.Cd PAST ObjP knock yesterday

"The car knocked him yesterday"

Mé-òtówà mémà ñmèzré ñmêlê
 mé-òtówà mé mà ñm- -èzré ñmêlê
 4-car 4.Cd PAST ObjP knock yesterday
 "The cars knocked him yesterday"

6. The indicative mood

(1) The defective verb *βéli / βé* "be"

Present

Positive		Negative	
nà βéli ndí	"I am"	nà zrêndzé	"I am not"
ò βéli ndí	"you are"	ò zrêndzé	"you are not"
à βéli ndí	"s/he is"	à zrêndzé	"s/he is not"
ì βéli ndí	"we are"	ì zrêndzé	"we are not"
è βéli ndí	"you are"	è zrêndzé	"you are not"
βá βéli ndí	"they are"	βá zrêndzé	"they are not"

Past

Positive		Negative	
nà mà βé	"I was"	nà zrí βê	"I was not"
ò mà βé	"you were"	ò zrí βê	"you were not"
à mà βé	"s/he was"	à zrí βê	"s/he was not"
ì mà βé	"we were"	ì zrí βê	"we were not"
è mà βé	"you were"	è zrí βê	"you were not"
βá mà βé	"they were"	βá zrí βê	"they were not"

Future

Positive		Negative	
nà βê ndí	"I shall be"	nà zrá ¹ βé	"I shall not be"
ò βê ndí	"you will be"	ò zrá ¹ βé	"you will not be"
à βê ndí	"s/he will be"	à zrá ¹ βé	"s/he will not be"
ì βê ndí	"we shall be"	ì zrá ¹ βé	"we shall not be"
è βê ndí	"you will be"	è zrá ¹ βé	"you will not be"
βá βê ndí	"they will be"	βá zrà βé	"they will not be"

(2) The defective verb *lǒβà* "to have"

Present / Present continuous

Positive

nǒβì	"I have"
ò óβì	"you have"
à óβì	"s/he has"
dʒǒβì	"we have"
jǒβì	"you have"
βóóβì	"they have"

Negative

nà zróβì	"I don't have / I haven't"
ò zróβì	"you don't have / you haven't"
à zróβì	"s/he doesn't have / s/he hasn't"
ì zróβì	"we don't have / we haven't"
è zróβì	"you don't have / you haven't"
βá zróβì	"they don't have / they haven't"

Past / Past continuous

Positive

nà mòβá	"I had"
ò mòβá	"you had"
à mòβá	"s/he had"
ì mòβá	"we had"
è mòβá	"you had"
βá mòβá	"they had"

Negative

nà zróβè	"I didn't have / I hadn't"
ò zróβè	"you didn't have / you hadn't"
à zróβè	"s/he didn't have / s/he hadn't"
ì zróβè	"we didn't have / we hadn't"
è zróβè	"you didn't have / you hadn't"
βá zróβè	"they didn't have / they hadn't"

Future 1 (near)

Positive

nǒβà	"I will have"
ò óβà	"you will have"
à óβà	"s/he will have"
dʒǒβà	"we will have"
jǒβà	"you will have"
βóóβà	"they will have"

Negative

nà ¹ zróβá	"I will not have"
ò ¹ zróβá	"you will not have"
à ¹ zróβá	"s/he will not have"
ì ¹ zróβá	"we will not have"
è ¹ zróβá	"you will not have"
βá zróβá	"they will not have"

Future 2 (far)

Positive

nà βéné	"I will have"
ò βéné	"you will have"
à βéné	"s/he will have"
ì βéné	"we will have"
è βéné	"you will have"
βá βéné	"they will have"

Negative

nà zrá ¹ βéné	"I will not have"
ò zrá ¹ βéné	"you w'll not have"
à zrá ¹ βéné	"s/he will not have"
ì zrá ¹ βéné	"we will not have"
è zrá ¹ βéné	"you will not have"
βá zrá βéné	"they will not have"

(3) Constructions with *-óβì* "have" (possession)

These constructions represent "have" in Mokpe. The infinitive form is *lǒβà* to "have" from the noun class prefix *lì-* and the root *-óβà*. Negation: *zrà óβì* → *zróβì*.

Positive	Negative
nǒβì wàná	nà zróβì wàná
"I have a mouth"	"I don't have a mouth"
ò óβì βàèní	ò zróβì βàèní
"you (sg) have guests"	"you don't have guests"
à óβì βálánà	à zróβì βálánà
"he has women"	"he doesn't have women"
dzǒβì múńánà	ì zróβì múńánà
"we have a man"	"we don't have a man"
jǒβì màlíwá	è zróβì màlíwá
"you (pl) have water"	"you (pl) don't have water"
wóóβì èwòlò	βá zróβì èwòlò
"they have work"	"they don't have work"
nǒβì βóndá	nà zróβì βóndá
"I have time"	"I don't have time"
nǒβì mààlì	nà zróβì mààlì
"I have money"	"I don't have money"
Kamarun à óβì ljǒmélá màmbówà	Kamarun à zróβì ljǒmélá màmbówà
"Cameroon has ten villages"	"Cameroon hasn't ten villages"
ékòmè jǒβì ljǒmélá màmbówà	ékòmè è zróβì ljǒmélá màmbówà
"the country has ten villages"	"the country hasn't ten villages"
lìnǒngè à óβì mbànggè à mèótówà	lìnǒngè à zróβì mbànggè à mèótówà
"Linonge has 20 cars"	"Linonge hasn't 20 cars"

(4) Obligation: to have + infinitive

Obligation is rendered through the morpheme *-ángáméné* followed by the infinitive form of the verb.

Present	
Positive	Negative
nà ángáméné lǐnà	nà zrá ¹ ángàmènè lǎβà
"I have to urinate"	"I don't have to walk"
wàngáméné likùmbá	ò zrá ¹ ángàmènè lǐnà

"you have to beat (drum)"	"you don't have to urinate"
à áṅgáméné liḃáṅgà	à zrá'á áṅgàmèné litíndèlè
"s/he has to run"	"s/he don't have to push"
dzàṅgáméné lăḃà	ì zrá'á áṅgàmèné liḃáṅgà
"we have to walk"	"we don't have to run"
jàṅgáméné lijòó	è zrá'á áṅgàmèné lijòó
"you (pl) have to laugh"	"you (pl) don't have to laugh"
ḃá áṅgáméné litíndèlè	ḃá zrá áṅgàmèné likàwá
"they have to push"	"they don't have to divide"

Past

Positive

nà mà áṅgáméné lilâ
"I had to eat"
ò mà áṅgáméné lěmbà
"you had to sing"
à mà áṅgáméné liḃélè
"he had to call"
ì mà áṅgáméné lizrà
"we had to dance"
è mà áṅgáméné likánè
"you (pl) had to pray"
ḃá mà áṅgáméné liḃáṅgà
"they had to run"

Negative

nà zrá áṅgàmèné lilâ
"I did not have to eat"
ò zrá áṅgàmèné likánè
"you (sg) did not have to pray"
à zrá áṅgàmèné liḃélè
"s/he did not have to call"
ì zrá áṅgàmèné liliḃówá
"we did not have to open"
è zrá áṅgàmèné lilíṅgáná
"you (pl) did not have to love"
ḃá zrá áṅgàmèné lìṅgbă
"they did not have to give"

(5) Verb ending

The verbal ending in the infinitive form in Mokpe is generally the vowel [a]. However, some verbs end with [ɛ] and [ɔ].

a. Ending with /a/	b. Ending with /ɛ/ and /ɔ/
lilâ "to eat"	límě "to swallow"
lĩḃà "to still"	lěné "to see"
lidză "to come"	lǒṅgèlè "to remember"
lipkâ "to fall"	liḃólèné "to loose"
lěmbà "to sing"	lǔṅwèlè "to show"
lilùtėjá "to think"	lijǒ "to laugh"
lǒkòwà "to learn"	lǒkò "to wash"

lilibówá	"to open"	likòkó	"to pound"
lèlìngáná	"to like"	lìbòzró	"to choose"
liwùndúwà	"to untie"	linòngó	"to follow"

However, note that when the verb is conjugated the final is still [a], [ɛ] or [ɔ], but also the vowels [e] and [i] in certain moods or tenses for verbs whose final vowel is originally [a]. In fact there is the phenomenon of vowel mutation in the language. This is illustrated on the table below.

Table 7. The mutation of the vowel [a] to [e] and [i]

Infinitive	Imperative			Indicative	
	1sg	1pl	2pl	Past Neg.	Present Perfect Neg.
lilâ "to eat"	lâ eat!	î lé let us eat!	é lê you, eat!	nà zrí lê I did not eat	ò zrí lélí you (sg) have not eaten
lìdžă "to come"	džá come!	í džě let us come!	é džè you, come!	à zrí džè he did not come	ì zrá džèlì we have not come
lěmbà "to sing"	ěmbâ sing!	džé jěmbé let us sing!	jěmbè you, sing!	è zré mbè you (pl) did not sing	βá zré mbí they have not sung
likòówá "to fly"	kòówà fly!	í kòówé let us fly!	é kòòwè you, fly!	nà zrí kòòwè I did not fly	ò zrí kòówí you (pl) have not flown

(6) The tenses

The conjugated verb is departed from the infinitive marker. For example, the verb *likê* "to cut" will be conjugated in the present, the past and present perfect tenses of the indicative mood as:

Present		Past (preterit)		Present Perfect	
nà kê	I cut	nà mà ké	I cut	ná 'máá kê	I have cut
ò kê	you cut	ò mà ké	you cut	ó 'máá kê	you have cut
à kê	s/he cuts	à mà ké	s/he cut	á 'máá kê	s/he has cut
ì kê	we cut	ì mà ké	we cut	í 'máá kê	we have cut
è kê	you cut	è mà ké	you cut	é 'máá kê	you have cut
βá kê	they cut	βá mà ké	they cut	βá 'máá kê	they have cut

The morphemes that enter the composition of conjugated verbs are the subject pronoun (SP), the tense-aspect-mood (TAM), the infinitive marker (IM), the negative

marker (Neg) and the verbal root (VR). The structure of a conjugated verb in the indicative mood, as we shall see below when discussing tenses, aspect and mood is then as follows:

Table 8. The structure of a conjugated verb in the indicative mood

Structure	Tense
1. SP + VR	Present, future
2. SP + TAM + VR	Past tense, Present perfect
3. SP + TAM + IM + VR	Present continuous, past continuous
4. SP + Neg + VR	Present, future, Past tense, Present perfect (Negation)
5. SP + Neg + TM + IM + VR	Present perfect continuous, past perfect continuous (Negation)

Note that the present and future tenses have zero markers. However, the future tense can be completed with a time adverb (underlined in the example below) in order to give the exact meaning.

nèndè <u>nmêlê</u>	"I will go tomorrow"
nèndè wózáí ßàá	"I will go in two days"
nèndè ô ngbèndè	"I will go in one month"

For the imperative mood, the structure for the affirmative is: (SP) + VR whereas the one for the negative form is: SP + NM + VR.

Table 9. The structure of a conjugated verb in the imperative mood

Structure	
1. SP + VR	Affirmative
2. SP + TM + VR	Negative

Example:

affirmative		negation	
lâ	"eat!"	ò zrí lá	"do not eat!"
îlé	"let us eat!"	ì zrí lá	"let us not eat!"
élê	"you (sg), eat!"	è zrí lá	"you (pl), do not eat! "

➤ Present simple

The affirmative form of the present tense is rendered with the zero morpheme. There is only the subject pronoun and the verbal root. The negative form of the present tense is done with the morpheme *zrà*.

Positive		Negative	
nà jò	"I laugh"	nà zrà 'lá	"I don't eat"
ò dʒà	"you come"	ò zrà jǒ	"you don't laugh"
à ɲgbà	"s/he gives"	à zrà 'lá	"s/he doesn't eat"
ì lùtèlì	"we think"	ì zrà lùtèlì	"we don't think"

➤ Present continuous

The positive form is done through the morpheme *βéli* followed by the verb at the infinitive mood. As for the negative form, it is done with *zrà* + the morpheme *èndʒé*, giving the contracted form *zréndʒé*, or with *zrà* + the morpheme *βéli*.

Positive		Negative	
ì βéli lilâ	"we're eating"	ì zréndʒé lilâ	"we're not eating"
è βéli lijǒ	"you're laughing"	ò zréndʒé lijǒ	"you're not laughing"
βá βéli lidʒă	"they're coming"	βá zrà βéli lidʒă	"they're not coming"

➤ Past simple

While the affirmative form is done with *mà*, the negative form uses *zrí*. Thus, *zrémbè* is a contracted form of *zrí* + *émbè*

Positive		Negative	
nà mēmbá	"I sang"	nà zrémbè	"I did not sing"
ò mà ké	"you cut"	ò zrí kê	"you did not cut"
à mà kòówá	"s/he flew"	à zrí kòòwè	"s/he did not fly"

➤ Past continuous

The affirmative and negative forms are rendered by *mà* and *zrí* respectively, and the morpheme *βé* marks continuity in the past.

Positive		Negative	
ì mà βé lēmbà	"we were singing"	ì zrí βé lēmbà	"we were not singing"
è mà βé likê	"you were cutting"	è zrí βé likê	"you were not cutting"
βá mà βé likòówá	"they were flying"	βá zrí βé likòówá	"they were not flying"

➤ Future

The future tense is not different from the present tense. Zero morpheme for the affirmative and *zrá* for the negative form.

Positive		Negative	
nà jò	"I will laugh"	nà zrá jǒ	"I will not laugh"
ò dzà	"you will come"	ò zrá dzǎ	"you will not come"
à émbà	"s/he will sing"	à zré mbá	"s/he will not sing"

Note however that the phrase can be completed with time adverbs to mark a more or less far future:

ò dzà /	wózí tâ /	ó wíki /	ó ngbèndè /	ó ñmâ
"you will come	in five days	in a week	in a month	in a year"

➤ Present Perfect

The present perfect is done with the morpheme *maa* whose tones vary according to the tonal shape of the verbal root and the tone of the subject pronoun. The negative form uses *zrí*.

Positive		Negative	
ná mǎá jò	"I have laughed"	nà zrí ¹ jó	"I have not laughed"
ǒ mǎmbà	"you have sung"	ò zrémbí	"you have not sung"
á ¹ mǎá kê	"s/he has cut"	à zrí ké	"s/he has not cut"
í mǎá kòòwà	"we have flown"	ì zrí kòówí	"we have not flown"
é ¹ mǎá lùtèjà	"you have thought"	è zrí ¹ lútélí	"you have not thought"

➤ Want (present) + Infinitive

To construct a sentence with “want” and a verb at the affirmative form (present tense), the verbal root *àzrà* is used with the verb at the infinitive form. In the past tense, it is either *àzréjé* or *mà àzrá*. Note that *àzrà/àzrá* or *àzréjé* are from *làzrá* “to want, to desire”.

a. Present: want + verb

nà àzrà lijǒ	"I want to laugh"
wà àzrà lidzǎ	"you want to come"
à àzrà lěmbà	"s/he wants to sing"
dzà àzrà likê	"we want to cut"
jà àzrà likòówá	"you want to fly"
ǎà àzrà likókò	"they want to think"

nà àzrà lilingáná	"I want to like"
βà àzrà liliβówá	"you want to open"

b. Past: wanted+verb

nà àzréjé lijǒ	"I wanted to laugh"
à àzréjé lěmbà	"s/he wanted to sing"
dzààzréjé likê	"we wanted to cut"

è mà àzrá likòówá	"you wanted to fly"
βá mà àzrá likókò	"they wanted to think"
nà mà àzrá lilingá	"I wanted to like"
ò mà àzrá liliβówá	"you wanted to open"
à mà àzrá lidzǎ	"s/he wanted to come"

➤ 'Impersonal' Verbal Forms

In the sense of Indo-European languages, impersonal verbal forms can be in two ways.

1) Using the word *mòtò* 'person' or *βàtò* 'people':

mòtò à lùtéli	"one thinks..."
βàtò à óβà émé	"one says that..."
βàtò βóβà émé	"people say that..."
βàtò βálùtèjà	"people think..."

2) Using *é ... ènèβè*. The structure is then:**Table 10.** The structure of Impersonal verb form

Structure		
1.	é + verbal root + ènèβè	affirmative
2.	é + zrá + verbal root + ènèβè	negative

Examples:

a. *lilùtèjá* "to think"

é lùtàènèβè	"it is thinkable"
é zrà lùtáénéβé	"it is unthinkable"
é zrèndzé nà ézrà lùtáénéβé	"it is not unthinkable"

b. lēmèjà "to accept"

But:

é gbèjàènéβè	"it is acceptable"
é zràgbèáénéβé	"it is unacceptable"
é zrèndzé nà ézràgbèáénéβé	"it is not unacceptable"

c. lě̀nè "to see"

é zrènéβé	"it is not visible"
é zrèndzé nà ézrènéβé	"it is not invisible"

However, note the morphemic sequence is not always present:

a. lě̀nè "to see"

jě̀nèjà	"it is visible"
é zrènéjá	"it is invisible"

b. étánê

étánê	"it is possible"
é zrátánè	"it is not possible"
é zrátánè	"it is impossible"
é zrèndzé nà ézrátánè	"it is not impossible"

Sometimes *é βéli* and *é zrèndzé* are used:

Positive		Negative	
é βéli wòlitó	"it is important"	é zrèndzé wòlitó	"it is not important"
é βéli díjà	"it is expensive"	é zrèndzé díjà	"it is not expensive"

7. The Imperative form

The meaning of the imperative is not different from what obtains in other Bantu languages. It expresses a strict order. In singular, it is identical to the infinitive form of the verb without the verbal prefix *li-*, and occurs without subject pronouns. The plural is marked by a systematic high tone on the subject pronouns. The tonal shape of the root is very unpredictable, depending on the structure of the verb.

8. The Hortative/Optative mood

The meaning here is calling somebody to act. The structure is the following:

íńá + subject pronoun (SP) + root (with vowel mutation for roots ending with /a/: i.e.: /a/ → [e]).

The examples comprise verbs of varied length and tone patterns. I also opposed the verbs ending with the vowel /a/ to those ending with the vowel /è/.

a. Roots ending with /a/

lěmbà "to sing" [émbâ]

íńá némbè "let me sing"

íńá dzé ěmbé "let us sing"

íńá bémbè "let them sing"

lìbángà "to run" [bángâ]

íńá ná bángè "let me run"

íńá î bángé "let us run"

íńá bá bángè "let them run"

lèèjá "to cry" [èèjâ]

íńá néjè "let me cry"

íńá dzêjé "let us cry"

íńá béjè "let them cry"

b. Roots ending with /è/

lěndé "to go" [ndê]

íńá néndè "let me go"

íńá dzěndé "let us go"

íńá béndè "let them go"

lìbélè "to call" [bélê]

íńá ná bélé "let me call"

íńá î bélé "let us call"

íńá bá bélé "let them call"

lìtíndèlè "to push" [tíndélê]

íńá ná tíndèlè "let me push"

íńá î tíndélé "let us push"

íńá bá tíndèlè "let them push"

Note that there is an assimilation rule whereby the verbal pronoun is assimilated by the vowel of the preceding morpheme:

íńá á èndè → íńá èndè "let him go"

íńá á gbèànè → íńá gbèànè "let him use"

íńá í gbèáné → íńí gbèáné "let us use"

íńá î tíndélé íńá tíndélé "let us push"

The negative form is done with either òzrìbèmé or òzrìné.

a. Roots ending with /a/

lěmbà "to sing" [émbâ]

òzrìbèmé / òzrìné némbè

"don't let me sing"

òzrìbèmé dzé / òzrìné dzé ěmbé

"don't let us sing"

òzrìbèmé / òzrìné bémbè

"don't let them sing"

b. Roots ending with /è/

lěndé "to go" [ndê]

òzrìbèmé / òzrìné néndè

"don't let me go"

òzrìbèmé / òzrìné dzěndé

"don't let us go"

òzrìbèmé / òzrìné béndè

"don't let them go"

liβáŋgà "to run" [βáŋgâ]
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé ná βáŋgè
 "don't let me run"
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé î βáŋgé
 "don't let us run"
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé βá βáŋgè
 "don't let them run"

lèèjá "to cry" [èèjá]
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé néjè
 "don't let me cry"
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé dzêjé
 "don't let us cry"
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé βéjè
 "don't let them cry"

liβélè "to call" [βélê]
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé ná βélè
 "don't let me call"
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé î βélé
 "don't let us call"
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé βá βélè
 "don't let them call"

litíndèlè "to push" [tíndélê]
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé ná tíndèlè
 "don't let me push"
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé î tíndélé
 "don't let us push"
 òzriβèmé / òzriyé βá tíndèlè
 "don't let them push"

9. Subjunctive mood

It expresses an order given in a relatively polite form, as a request, it occurs in final and intentional sentences. Just like in the hortative mood, the verb roots ending with /a/ change that vowel in /e/.⁽¹⁰⁾

➤ Simple structure, positive:

SP + root (/a/ → [e])

Examples:

a. Roots ending with /a/
 lěmbà "to sing" [émbâ]
 němbè⁽¹¹⁾ "I should sing"

lidzǎ "to come" [dzǎ]
 ná dzè "I should come"

liβáŋgà "to run" [βáŋgâ]
 βá βáŋgè "they should run"

lèèjá "to cry" [èèjá]
 Béjè⁽¹³⁾ "they should cry"

b. Roots ending with /è/
 lěndé "to go" [ndé]
 néndè⁽¹²⁾ "I should go"

litíndèlè "to push" [tíndélê]
 î tíndélé "we should push"

liβélè "to call" [βélê]
 βá βélè "they should call"

litíndèlè "to push" [tíndélê]
 βá tíndèlè "they should push"

➤ Simple structure, negative:

SP + *zrà/zrì* + root

Examples:

a. Roots ending with /a/

lěmbà "to sing" [émbâ]

nà zřém^hbá "I should not sing"

lidžă "to come", džă "go"

nà zrà džă "I should not come"

liβángà "to run" [βángâ]

βá zřì βángá "they should not run"

lèèjá "to cry" [èèjâ]

βá zřèjá "they should not cry"

b. Roots ending with /è/

lèndé "to go" [ndê]

nà zřèndé "I shouldn't go"

litíndèlè "to push" [tíndélê]

ì zřì tíndélé "we should not push"

liβélé "to call" [βélê]

βá zřì βélé "they should not call"

litíndèlè "to push" [tíndélê]

βá zřì tíndèlè "they should not push"

Complex structure (i.e. with preclause), without the relative clause marker.

Present tense positive:

Preclause + SP + root (/a/ → [e])

Present tense negative:

Preclause + SP + *zřì* + root (no vowel change for roots ending with /a/)

The structure of the preclause is:

SP + *má* (say)

or

SP + *lùtéli* (think)

Examples:

Positive

à má ná lê

"s/he says I should eat"

à má ó lê

"s/he says you should eat"

à má á lê

"s/he says he should eat"

à lùtéli î lê

"s/he thinks we should eat"

à lùtéli é lê

Negative

à má nà zřì lá

"s/he says I should not eat"

à má ò zřì lá

"s/he says you should not eat"

à má à zřì lá

"s/he says he should not eat"

à lùtéli ì zřì lá

"s/he thinks we should not eat"

à lùtéli è zřì lá

"s/he thinks you should eat"

à lùtéli βá lê

"s/he thinks they should eat"

lõfà

lilâ

"s/he thinks you should not eat"

à lùtéli βá zri lá

"s/he thinks they should not eat"

"to say"

"to eat"

Complex structure (i.e. with preclause), with the relative clause marker.

Present tense positive:

Preclause + *náěmá* + SP + root (/a/ → [e])

Present tense negative:

preclause + *náěmá* + SP + *zri* + root (no vowel change for roots ending with /a/)

The structure of the preclause does not change.

Examples:

Positive

à má náěmá ná lê

"s/he says that I should eat"

à má náěmá ó lê

"s/he says that you should eat"

à má náěmá á lê

"s/he says that he should eat"

à lùtéli náěmá î lê

"s/he thinks that we should eat"

à lùtéli náěmá é lê

"s/he thinks that you should eat"

à lùtéli náěmá βá lê

"s/he thinks that they should eat"

náěmá

Negative

à má náěmá nà zri lá

"s/he says that I should not eat"

à má náěmá ò zri lá

"s/he says that you should not eat"

à má náěmá à zrá 'lá

"s/he says that he should not eat"

à lùtéli náěmá ì zri lá

"s/he thinks that we should not eat"

à lùtéli náěmá è zri lá

"s/he thinks that you should not eat"

à lùtéli náěmá βá zri lá

"s/he thinks that they should not eat"

"that"

Note that the inflection of all the persons of the preclause does not change the structure of the subjunctive.

Positive

ì má ná lê

"I say I should eat"

ò má ó lê

"you say you should eat"

Negative

nà má nà zri lá

"I says I should not eat"

ò má ò zri lá

"you (sg) says you should not eat"

à má á lê	à má à zrí lá
"s/he says he should eat"	"s/he says he should not eat"
ì lùtéli î lé	ì lùtéli ì zrí lá
"we lùtéli we should eat"	"we think we should not eat"
è má é lê	è lùtéli è zrí lá
"you lùtéli you should eat"	"you (pl) think you should not eat"
βá má βá lê	βá lùtéli βá zrí lá
"they say they should eat"	"they think they should not eat"

The use of the preclause in the past adds the past morpheme to the structure. The subjunctive clause does not change. Also note that instead of the verb *má* (> *límà* "say") which was heavily used in the present tense, it is the verb *-òfá* (> *lǒfà* "say") which is used in the past. The structure of the preclause in the past is therefore:

SP + <i>mà</i> + <i>-òfá</i> (say)	or	SP + <i>mà</i> + <i>lùtéli</i> (think)
------------------------------------	----	--

Examples:

Positive	Negative
nà mòfá náěmá némbè	à mòfâ náěmá nà zrí lá
"I said I should sing"	"s/he said I should not eat"
ò mòfá náěmá néndè	à mòfâ náěmá ò zrí lá
"you said I should go"	"s/he said you should not eat"
à mòfá náěmá ná dzè	à mòfâ náěmá à zrá ¹ lá
"s/he said I should come"	"s/he said he should not eat"
ì mà lùtéjá náěmá î lé	à mà lùtéjâ náěmá ì zrí lá
"we thought we should eat"	"s/he thought we should not eat"
è mà lùtéjâ náěmá é lê	à mà lùtéjâ náěmá è zrí lá
"you thought you should eat"	"s/he thought you should not eat"
βá mà lùtéjâ náěmá βá lê	à mà lùtéjâ náěmá βá zrí lá
"they thought they should eat"	"s/he thought they should not eat"

10. Conditional mood

(1) Conditional 1

Conditional 1 or "real" conditional is formed with a will verb in the result clause and the present tense in the if-clause (*jéténá* "if").

Examples:

► Result clause positive + *jèténá*-clause positive

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. | à lâ jèténá ò dzéli | "s/he will eat if you come" |
| | βá lâ jèténá βá dz'éli | "they will eat if they come" |
| b. | némbà jèténá à jémbi | "I will sing if she sings" |
| c. | ì lâ jèténá wèndî | "we will eat if you go" |
| d. | nà lâ jèténá wiβê | "I will eat if you cook" |
| | ò lâ jèténá mólánà àmi à jìβê | "you will eat if my wife cooks" |
| | ò lâ jèténá niβê | "you will eat if I cook" |

Note the complete change of the morphological structure of the verb *lidzǎ* "to come", *dzàà* "come" which realized *dzéli*, and the ending the verbs *lěmbà* "to sing", *ěmbà* "sing" and *lèndé* "to go", *èndé* "go" which ends in a vowel /i/, i.e. *jémbi* and *wèndî* respectively. The verb *liβé* "to cook", [*βé*] "cook" would certainly also end with the vowel /i/. However, we don't have **wiβi* probably because the sequence /β/ + /i/ may not be a preferred sequence in the language. The appearance of the vowel /i/ at the end of certain forms is not strange. As rightly put by Deen (2001: 42):

[...]. Mood is marked as a suffix, and is always the final vowel in the verbal complex. This final vowel alternates three ways between the indicative [a], the subjunctive [e] and the negative [i].

Although the /i/ is not in the negative form in Mokpe, it confirms Deen's observation of a vowel /i/ being part of the vowel making mood in Bantu.

► Result clause negative + *jèténá*-clause positive

- | | | |
|----|--|--|
| a. | à zrá ¹ lá jèténá ò dzéli | "s/he will not eat if you come" |
| | βá zrà lá jèténá βá dz'éli | "they will not eat if they come" |
| | nà zrèndè jèténá à dzéli | "I will not go if she comes" |
| b. | nà zré ¹ m ¹ bá jèténá à jémbi | "I will not sing if she sings" |
| c. | ì zrá ¹ lá jèténá wèndî | "we will not eat if you go" |
| | nà zrá dzǎ jèténá à èndî | "I will not come if she goes" |
| d. | ò zrá ¹ lá jèténá niβê | "you (pl) will not eat if I cook" |
| | nà zrá ¹ lá jèténá wiβê | "I will not eat if you cook" |
| | ò zrá ¹ lá jèténá mólánà àmi à jìβê | "you (sg) will not eat if my wife cooks" |

► Result clause positive + *jéténá*-clause negative

nà lâ jéténá nà zrá 'wúzrèlì	"I will eat if I am not sound"
ò lâ jéténá bá zrí wǒngízréné	"you will eat if they are not ready"
à lâ jéténá bá zrà lǐngàni	"s/he will eat if they don't want"
ì lâ jéténá ò zrá lǐngàni	"we will eat if you don't want"
βá lâ jéténá ó zrèndzé mààlì	"they will eat if there is no money"

► Result clause negative + *jéténá*-clause negative (i.e. with *jéténá*)

βá zrà βǎngá jéténá nà zrá 'wúzrèlì	"they will not run if I am not sound"
βá zrèmbá jéténá bá zrí wǒngízréné	"they will not sing if they are not ready"
βá zrèjá jéténá bá zrà lǐngàni	"they will not cry if they don't want"
ì zrá làtá jéténá ò zrá lǐngàni	"we will not unite if you don't want"
à zríβé jéténá ó zrèndzé mààlì	"s/he will not cook if there is no money"
nà zráàndá jéténá nà zróβì mààlì	"I will not buy if I don't have money"
è zráàgbá jéténá èzróβì ngínà	"you (pl) will not climb if you don't have power"

(2) Conditional 2 ("unreal" conditional)

The simple form or present conditional (positive) of Conditional 2 with or without the *jéténá*-clause is made of the subject pronoun followed by the morpheme *ô* and the verb root.

SP + <i>ô</i> + verb root + (<i>jéténá</i> -clause)
--

The negation is done with *zrí*.

SP + <i>zrí</i> + <i>ô</i> + verb root + (<i>jéténá</i> -clause)

Examples without *jéténá*-clause:

Positive		Negative	
nô lâ	"I would eat"	nà zrô lá	"I would not eat"
ò ô lâ	"you would eat"	ò zrô lá	"you would not eat"
à ô lâ	"he would eat"	à zrô lá	"s/he would not eat"
dʒò ô lâ	"we would eat"	ì zrô lá	"we would not eat"
jò ô lâ	"you would eat"	è zrô lá	"you would not eat"
βó ô lâ	"they would eat"	βá zrô lá	"they would not eat"

Examples with *jêtená*-clause:

► Result clause positive + *jêtená*-clause positive

nô lâ jêtená wiβê	"I would eat if you cook"
ò ô lâ jêtená mólànà ámi à iβê	"you would eat if my wife cooks"
à ô lâ jêtená ò dzéli	"s/he would eat if you come"
dzò ô lâ jêtená wëndí	"we would eat if you go"
jò ô lâ jêtená niβê	"you would eat if I cook"
βó ò lâ jêtená βá 'dzéli	"they would eat if they come"

► Result clause negative + *jêtená*-clause positive

nà zrô lá jêtená wiβê	"I would not eat if you cook"
ò zrô lá jêtená mólànà ámi à iβê	"you would not eat if my wife cooks"
à zrô lá jêtená ò dzéli	"s/he would not eat if you come"
ì zrô lá jêtená wëndí	"we would not eat if you go"
è zrô lá jêtená niβê	"you would not eat if I cook"
βá zrô lá jêtená βá 'dzéli	"they would not eat if they come"

► Result clause positive + *jêtená*-clause negative

nô lâ jêtená nà zrá wözrèli	"I would eat if I am not sound"
ò ô lâ jêtená βá zrí wöngízárené	"you would eat if they are not ready"
à ô lâ jêtená βá zrá àzrá	"s/he would eat if they don't want"
dzò ô lâ jêtená ò zrá àzrá	"we would eat if you don't want"
jò ô lâ jêtená ó zrèngété mòní	"you (pl) would eat if there is no money"
jò ô lâ jêtená é zriβé mòní	"you (pl) would eat if there is no money"
jò ô lâ tò è zriβé mòní	"you (pl) would eat if there is no money"
βó ò lâ jêtená βá zrá tójí	"they would eat if they don't quarrel"

► Result clause negative + *jêtená*-clause negative (i.e. with *jêtená*)

nà zrô lá jêtená nà zrá wözrèli	"I would not eat if I am not sound"
ò zrô lá jêtená βá zrí wöngízárené	"you would not eat if they are not ready"
à zrô lá jêtená βá zrá àzrá	"s/he would not eat if they don't want"
ì zrô lá jêtená ò zrá àzrá	"we would not eat if you don't want"
è zrô lá jêtená é zriβé mòní	"you (pl) not would eat if there is no money"
βá zrô lá jêtená βá zrá tójí	"they not would eat if they don't quarrel"

Note that the *jêtená*-clause can equally be in the past.

nô lâ jêtená ò mißé	"I would eat if you cooked"
ò ô lâ jêtená mólàná àmi à mißé	"you would eat if my wife cooked"
à ô lâ jêtená ò mà dzàá	"s/he would eat if you came"

As for the composed form or simple past conditional, without the if-clause, is done with the verbal morpheme *ò má* at the beginning of the utterance. The morpheme *mà* between the subject pronoun and the root is the past tense marker.

ò má + SP + *mà* + verb root + (*jêtená*-clause)

The meaning of the sequential morpheme *ò má* is not yet clear. What is certain for now is that it comes exclusively with the composed form. It can therefore be considered as the "real" conditional marker. While in the positive form there is no vowel change, the negation is done with *zrí* and a change of quality in the root vowel.

ò má + SP + *zrí* + verb root (/a/ → [e]) + *jêtená*-clause

Examples: simple past conditional without the *jêtená*-clause

Positive	Negative
a. ò má nà mà lá "I would have eaten"	ò má nà zrí lê "I would not have eaten"
ò má nà mà gbèáná "I would have used"	ò má nà zrí gbèàné "I would not have used"
ò má nà mèmá "I would have sung"	ò má nà zrémbè "I would not have sung"
b. ò má ò mà káné "you would have prayed"	ò má ò zrí kánè "you would not have prayed"
ò má à mëndé "s/he would have gone "	ò má à zréndè "s/he would have gone "

Examples: simple past conditional with the *jêtená*-clause

► Result clause positive + *jêtená*-clause positive (i.e. with *jêtená*).

a. ò má nà mà lá jêtená à mißé	"I would have eaten if she cooked"
ò má nà mèmá jêtená à mèmá	"I would have sung if she sang"
ò má à mà kàwá jêtená à mà lɪŋáná té	"s/he would have divided if she wanted"
b. ò má nà màßélé jêtená à mà dză	"I would have called if she came"

ò má ò mà kánè jèténá à mà nùngbă	"you would have prayed if she
èkáàti jà màkánè	gave me the prayer book"
ò má à mëndé jèténá à mà dză	"s/he would have gone if she
	came"
ò má ì mà ké jèténá à mà lɪŋgáná	"we would have cut if she
	wanted"

► Result clause negative + *jèténá*-clause positive

- | | |
|---|--|
| a. ò má nà zrí lê jèténá à miβé | "I would not have eaten if she cooked" |
| ò má nà zrémbè jèténá à mèmábá | "I would not have sung if she sang" |
| ò má à zrí kàwè jèténá à mà lɪŋgáná | "s/he would not have divided if she wanted" |
| b. ò má nà zrá βélè jèténá à mà dză | "I would not have called if she came" |
| ò má ò zrí kánè jèténá à mà nùngbă èkáàti jà màkánè | "you would not have prayed if she gave me the prayer book" |
| ò má à zréndè jèténá à mà dză | "s/he would not have gone if she came" |
| ò má ì zrí jèténá à mà lɪŋgáná | "we would not have cut if she wanted" |

(3) Conditional 3

Conditional 3, often called "past conditional" uses the same morphemes as the simple past of conditional 2. The difference between the two lies in the conditional 3 deals with past situations with hypothetical results.

► Result clause negative + *jèténá*-clause negative

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| a. ò má nà zrí lê jèténá à zríβè | "I would not have eaten if she had not cooked" |
| ò má nà zrémbè jèténá à zrémbè | "I would not have sung if she had not sung" |
| ò má à zrí kàwè jèténá à zrí lɪŋgànè | "s/he would not have divided if she had not wanted" |
| b. ò má nà zrá βélè jèténá à zrí dzè | "I would not have called if she had not come" |
| ò má ò zrí kánè jèténá à zrí nùngbè | "you would not have prayed if she had not given the prayer book" |
| èkáàti jà màkánè | |

ò má à zréndè jêtná à zrí dzè "s/he would not have gone if she had not come"

ò má ì zrí kê jêtná à zrí lɪŋgàné "we would not have cut if she wanted"

► Result clause positive + *jêtná*-clause negative

- a. ò má nà mà lá jêtná à zríβè "I would have eaten if she had not cooked"
- ò má nà mèmá jêtná à zrémbè "I would have sung if she had not sung"
- ò má à mà kàwá jêtná à zrí lɪŋgàné "s/he would have divided if she had not wanted"
- b. ò má nà mà βélé jêtná à zrí dzè "I would have called if she had not come"
- ò má ò mà káné jêtná à zrí nùŋgbè "you would have prayed if she had not given the prayer book"
- ò má à mèndé jêtná à zrí dzè "s/he would have gone if she had not come"
- ò má ì mà ké kê jêtná à zrí lɪŋgàné "we would have cut if she wanted"

11. Infinitive phrases

Infinitive phrases are formed using the preposition *ó* preceding the infinitive form of the verb.

ó l-ɔŋwà mò-tò ó lì-làkízá lǒβè
PREP 5-kill 1-man PREP 5-forgive God
"to kill is human, to forgive is from God."

ó lì-kê l-á βè-èjé lí-dzàná è-tùmbà-tùmbà
PREP 5-cut 5-Cd 8-tree 5-bring 7-heat
"to cut the trees will bring heat."

ó lì-zrà dzòódzòó é-dzàná lìtê
PREP 5-dance too much 7-make tired
"to dance too much makes tired."

12. Gerund

When in the middle of the utterance, the gerund is the form of the verb in isolation, without modification.

lilâ "eat"

nà zrá lɪŋgàni lì-lâ dʒòó dʒòó

1sg Neg love 5-eat much

"I don't like eating a lot."

lòká "play"

ì lɪŋgàni lòká football

1pl love 5-play 9.football

"We enjoy playing football."

However, when at sentence-initial, the low tone of the prefix is replaced by a high tone.

likê "to cut"

lí-kê l-á bè-èjé lí-dʒàná è-tùmbà-tùmbà

5-cut 5-Cd 8-tree 5-bring 7-heat

"Cutting the trees will bring heat."

lìzrà "to dance"

lí-zrà l-á dʒòódʒòó lí-βéli liòtê

5-dance 5-Cd too much 5-COP tired

"Dancing too much makes tired."

2. Verbal Derivation

In Mokpe, some of verb meanings can be obtained through derivations, i.e. the combination of the verb root with a morpheme to form new words. Suffixation is very productive.

1. Applicative/Benefactive

The applicative/benefactive is marked with the toneless suffix *-eja* or *-ea* (the variant *-ea* was recorded by Kagaya 1992a) which replaces the last vowel of the verb root and copies its tone.

- a. *-èjà*: the last vowel of the root ends with a low tone

lɪŋwâ ŋwâ

liṅwéèjà	"die for ..."
litémè	"to stand, fight"
litémèjà	"to stand, to fight for (sb)"
liwówà	"to take"
liwówèjà	"take for ..."
lěmbà	"to sing"
lěmbèjà	"sing for ..."
lǒṅgò	"to look at, watch"
lǒṅgèjà	"to watch over"

b. -*éjà*: the last vowel of the root ends with a high tone

liḡbèá	"to work"
liḡbèéjà	"work for ..."
làndá	"to buy"
làndéjà	"to buy (sth) for (sb)"
lèndé	"to go", "to walk"
lèndéjà	"to go to" "to walk for"
lànná	"to fight"
lànnéjà	"to defend, fight for sb"
lòṅgá	"to grow"
lòṅgéjà	"to look after" (a child)

2. *Comitative / Associative*

Comitative actions are expressed with the toneless suffix *-na* which copies the tone of the final vowel. The vowel /a/ of this suffix can be realised /ɔ/ if the final vowel of the verb root is /ɔ/ and as [ɛ] if the final vowel of the root is /ɛ/.

a. Verb roots ending in a low-toned vowel

liṅwâ	"to die"
liṅwânà	"to die with ..."
likákà	"to tie"
likákànà	"to tie with..."
liṅô	"to drink"
liṅônò	"to drink with..."
likúlè	"to finish"
likúlènè	"to finish with..."

b. Verb roots ending in a high-toned vowel

làgbá	"to climb"
làgbáná	"to climb with..."
linàngá	"to sleep"
linàngáná	"to sleep with..."
lijǒ	"to laugh"
lijǒnó	"to laugh with..."
lèndé	"to go"
lèndéné	"to go with..."

3. Associative reciprocal

Associative reciprocal is done with two morphemes: the infix *-àá-* and the suffix *-ě*. The infix *-àá-* replaces the vowel /i/ of the verb prefix *li-* whereas the suffix *-ě* replaces, in the unmarked case, the final vowel of the root. Furthermore, the infix *-àá-* is realised *-àǒ-* when the root starts with the vowel /ɔ/, /o/ or /u/, by virtue of a height assimilation process. In other words, the infix *-àá-* is found exclusively in consonant-initial roots.

a. *-àá-* in consonant-initial roots + suffix *-ě*

litùná	"to cure, treat"
làátùně	"to cure each other"
likákà	"to tie, to bind"
làákákě	"to tie each other"
lilingáná	"to like, to love"
làálingàně	"to like, love each other"
likókò	"to stretch sth"
làákókě	"to stretch each other"
lilingèlè	"to coil"
làálingě	"to coil each other"
likùmènè	"to cover" (with a lid)
làákùmèně	"to cover each other"

b. *-àá-* → *-àǒ-* in vowel-initial roots + suffix *-ě*

lǒkizrè	"to injure (sb)"
làókizrě	"to injure each other"
lǒngò	"to look at, to watch"
làóngòně	"to look at each other"
lǒkànèà	"to listen"

làókànéłě	"to listen to each other"
lùḡmá	"to meet"
làók'ḡmáně	"to meet each other"

In some cases, the last vowel does not delete and instead of a replacement, there is simply addition of the suffix -ě onto the root. Then, the epenthetic consonant /n/ is inserted to break the hiatus.

lǒḡgò	"to look at, to watch"
làók'ḡgòně	"to look at each other"
lùḡmá	"to meet"
làók'ḡmáně	"to meet each other"
litê	"to shout"
làátêně	"to shout at each other"

Similarly, when the verb root ends with two vowels and the last is substituted with the suffix -ě, the epenthetic consonant /l/ is inserted to separate the two final vowels.

litémèà	"to defend sb"
làátémèłě	"to defend each other"
lǒkànèà	"to listen"
làókànéłě	"to listen to each other"

4. Causative

The causative is marked through the suffixation of the toneless morpheme *-izré* (the variant *-izre* was recorded by Kagaya 1992a). This morpheme replaces the last vowel of the verb root, and will take a low, a high or a falling contour tone on both vowels depending on the tone of the last vowel of the root.

- a. *-izré*: the last vowel of the root ends with a low tone
- | | |
|-------------|--------------------------------|
| lǒkòwà | "to learn" |
| lǒkòwìzré | "to teach (cause sb to learn)" |
| likákà | "to tie" |
| likákìzré | "to make tie" |
| litówò | "to quarrel" |
| litówìzré | "to cause sb to quarrel" |
| lìzrángà | "to clean" |
| lìzrángìzré | "to make clean" |

b. *-íẓré*: the last vowel of the root ends with a high tone

lìẓrèéá	"to repair, fix, arrange"
lìẓrèíẓré	"to make repair"
lìtítá	"to wet"
lìtítíẓré	"to make wet"
lìjìngá	"to shake"
lìjìngíẓré	"to make shake"
làndá	"to buy"
làndíẓré	"to cause sb to buy"

c. *-íẓrè*: the last vowel of the root ends with a falling contour tone

lìlâ	"to eat"
lìlíẓrè	"to feed, give food"
lìkpâ	"to fall"
lìkpíẓrè	"to make fall"

Sometimes, the last vowel of the root does not get deleted, and the tone of the causative marker is the copy of the last tone of the undeleted vowel. Interestingly, the tonal melody of the last vowel is maintained in the causative form.

likô	"to become dirty"
likóíẓrè	"to make dirty"
lìjǒ	"to laugh"
lìjòíẓré	"to cause sb to laugh"

5. *Reflexive verbs*

Reflexivity on the verb is marked by the insertion of the high-toned morpheme /á/ between the TAM marker and the verb root. This insertion triggers the change of the final vowel /a/ to /ɛ/ for the verb roots ending with /a/, but there is no change when the verb root already ends with vowel /ɛ/. Tonally, the verb root must bear high melody irrespective of the original tone melody and the number of syllables. This high melody is systematically lowered by the presence of the high tone of the reflexive morpheme /á/ by virtue of Meeussen's rule. Finally, the meaning of verb can be completed with the addition of the reflexive pronoun in final position.

a. Consonant-initial roots

ò màá ¹ tí ¹ jé (wítí)	lìtíjâ / tíjâ	"you slapped yourself"
nà màá ¹ dzá ¹ né (mbítí)	lìdžàná / džàná	"I brought myself"
à màá ¹ zró ¹ rzé (mbítí)	lìzròzrà / zròzrà	"I washed myself"

nà màá ¹ ké ¹ é (mbítí)	likê / likê	"I cut myself"
à màá ¹ té ¹ mbé (ɲmítí)	litèmbé / tèmbê	"s/he leaked himself"
à màá tín ¹ dé ¹ lé (ɲmítí)	litíndèlè / tíndélê	"s/he pushed himself"

When the root starts with a vowel, the reflexive morpheme /á/ drops, but transfers its high tone to the first vowel of the root, and Meessen's rule still applies.

b. Vowel-initial roots

nà mà ó ¹ ɲgó ¹ wá ¹ né mbítí	lɔ̃ɲgwàná / óɲgwánâ	"I helped myself"
nà mà ó ¹ ɲwé mbítí	lɔ̃ɲwà / óɲwâ	"I killed myself"
ò mà ó ¹ kí ¹ zré wítí	lɔ̃kà / ókâ	"you hurt yourself"
nà mà ó ¹ kí ¹ zré mbítí	lɔ̃kà / ókâ	"I hurt myself"
nà mà á ¹ ndé mbítí	làndá / àndâ	"I bought myself"
à mà á ¹ βá ¹ né (ɲmítí)	làβànè / áβánê	"s/he hung himself"
nà mà ók ¹ ízá ¹ ré mbítí	lɔ̃kízá / ókízá	"I washed myself"

When the sentence is in the present tense and consequently no overt TAM marker, the reflexive marker is placed between the subject marker and verb.

nàá ¹ lú ¹ wé (mbítí)	lilùwá / lùwâ	"I find myself"
wàá ¹ lú ¹ wé (wítí)		"you find yourself"
àá ¹ lú ¹ wé (ɲmítí)		"s/he finds himself"
dʒàá ¹ líɲgánê (ìzró wítí)	lilíɲgáná / líɲgánâ	"we love ourselves"
jàá ¹ líɲgánê (ìjón wítí)		"you love yourselves"
βàá ¹ líɲgánê (wó wítí)		"they love themselves"

6. Relationship

Relationship is expressed through the suffixation of the toneless morpheme -ɛɛ which copies the tone of the last vowel of the root. Since there is no final vowel replacement, an epenthetic consonant, /l/ or /n/ is inserted between the final vowel and the suffix. The consonant /n/ is inserted when the vowel sequence is /àè/ (i.e. /àè/ → [ànè]) and /l/ is inserted when the sequence is /èè/ (i.e. èè → èlè).

a. Verb roots ending in a low-toned vowel

lìfángà	"to spoil"
lìfángànèlè	"to spoil around, to spoil people, to ferment"
lìzràènè	"to sign"
lìzràènèlèlè	"sign (something for somebody)"
lũɲmà	"to come"
lũɲmèlèlè	"to come from (somewhere)"

b. Verb roots ending in a high-toned vowel

liφiá	"to mix"
liφiánélé	"to mix sth with sth, put together"
lùŋmá	"to meet"
lùŋmánélé	"to meet with person, in a place"
lirzàngá	"to assemble"
lirzàngánélé	"to bring together (people)"
làβizré	"to sell"
làβizrélé	"sell (something to somebody)"

7. *Process through predicate past participle*

The toneless suffix *-ea* marks process or inchoative state. It replaces the final vowel and copies the tone of the latter.

a. Verb roots ending in a low-toned vowel

liφàngà	"to spoil"
liφàngèà	"to become spoiled"
liwókà	"to dislocate"
liwókèà	"to become dislocated"
likándà	"to crack"
likándèà	"to become cracked"
lŭŋmà	"to come"
lŭŋmèà	"to be from"
liwéndè	"to snap"
liwéndèà	"to become snapped"

b. Verb roots ending in a high-toned vowel

lèndé	"to go, walk"
lèndéá	"to go to"
làndá	"to buy"
làndéá	"to be bought"
linàngá	"to sleep"
linàngéá	"to sleep out, for"
liβúndúwá	"to loosen"
liβúndúwéá	"to become loosen"

8. *Neutro-passive*

The neutro-passive or passive without agent is rendered by *-βá*, *-βέ* and *-βό* depending on the last vowel of the verb root. When the last vowel of the verb root is any vowel except /ε/ and /ɔ/, the morpheme is *-βá*. When the last vowel is /ε/ or /ɔ/ the variants *-βέ* or *-βό* are used respectively.

lǒφà	"to kill"
lǒφàβà	"to be killed"
lijà	"to bear" (a child)
lijàáβà	"to be born"
lɪŋgbǎ	"to give"
lɪŋgbàáβá	"to be given"
likákà	"to tie"
likákàβà	"to be tied"
lizrèéá	"to repair, fix, arrange"
lizrèáβá	"to be repaired" (by sb)
liφàné	"to hang" (generic)
liφànéβέ	"to be suspended"
liténènè	"to straighten"
liténèβè	"to be straightened"
lilímizrè	"to extinguish"
lilímizrèβè	"to be extinguished"
lòndzó	"to deceive"
lòndzóβó	"to be deceived" (by sb)
linòtó	"to twist"
linòtóβó	"to be twisted"

Examples:

a. *βá*

mó ¹ lélí mò mà láβá	cl. 3	"the food was eaten"
mí ¹ lélí mí mà láβá	cl. 4	"the foods were eaten"
líβáŋgí lì mà wínáβá	cl. 5	"the race was won"
mááŋgòlà má mà láβá	cl. 6	"the mangoes were eaten"
étò é mà láβá	cl. 7	"the rat was eaten"
βéwòló βé mà gbèáβá	cl. 8	"the works were done"
ímbòó í mà ŋgbǎβá	cl.10	"the bananas were given"

ínòní í mòngwáβá	cl. 13	"the bird was killed"
wóǎlò wó mà àndáβá	cl. 14	"the canoe was bought"
b. βέ		
mǎjè mó mònáβέ	cl. 3	"the land was cultivated"
méǎjè mé mònáβέ	cl. 4	"the lands were cultivated"
líǎná lí mà βéléβέ	cl. 5	"the name was called"
ézrù é mà tíndéléβέ	cl. 7	"the wall was pushed"
éèjé é mà kééβέ	cl. 7	"the tree was cut"
ímbóli í mà βízréβέ	cl. 10	"the goats were cut"
wóǎmbó wó mà lǐngáβέ	cl. 14	"the sugar was liked by us"
c. βó		
è mólánà à mòngǎóβó	cl. 1	"the woman was seen"
βátò βá mà βòzróβó	cl. 2	"the people were chosen"
è mòlí mó mǎndóβó	cl. 3	"the mountain was descended"
máidzá má mà jóβó	cl. 5	"the blood was drunk"
èbíá è mà jóβó	cl. 9	"the bier was drunk"
ínòní í mǎkóβó	cl. 13	"the bird was washed"
wóǎlò wó mà tózróβó	cl. 14	"the canoe was touched"

9. Morpheme stacking

It is possible to stack morphemes.

Causative + relationship

litimbá	"to return"
litimb-ízá	"to return sth, (money)", "to change, to substitute"
timb-ízá-l-élé	"to reply, exchange"
lǐfáng-à	"to spoil"
lǐfáng-l-èlè	"to ferment"
lǐfáng-ízá-l-èlè	"to make ferment"

Causative + comitative

lǐng-á	"to shake"
lǐng-ízá	"to make sth shake"
lǐng-ízá-né	"to shake strongly or to shake with ..."

10. Summary

Table 12. Mokpe verb derivational morphemes

Derivational event	Morpheme	Behaviour	Tone	Remarks
Applicative/Benefactive	-eja or -ea	Replaces FV of VR	Copies tone of FV of VR	-ea (Kagaya 1992a) na → nɔ/ ɔ#— na → nɛ/ ɛ#—
Applicative/comitative	-na	Adds to FV of VR	Copies tone of FV of VR	
Associative reciprocal	-áá- ... -ě	Infix: placed between VPr & VR. Suffix: replaces FV of VR	Fixed L-H tone sequence for both infix and suffix	-áá- → -á- / l — á, o or u Insertion of epenthetic l, n between FV & suffix -ě
Causative	-izre	Replaces or adds to FV of VR	Copies tone of FV of VR	-izre (Kagaya 1992a)
Reflexive verbs	-á-	Placed between TAM & VR	Fixed high tone	FV /-a/ changes to /ě/ Optional use of RP (refl pron)
Relationship	-ɛɛ	Adds to FV of VR	Copies tone of FV of VR	Insertion of epenthetic /l, /n/ between FV & suffix
Predicative Past participle (Process)	-ea	Replaces FV of VR	Copies tone of FV of VR	
Neutro-passive	-βá (~βě~βó)	Adds to FV of VR	Fixed high tone	βá → βó/ ɔ#— βá → βě/ ɛ#—

3. The Verb Phrase

There exist in Mokpe some morpheme used to specify the verbal action with regard to its phases, manner or quantity.

1. Marking of phase of action

(1) Durative

➤ *téjà bódá* or *ô bódá* "meantime"

téjà bódá / ô bódá à mà lá	"In the meantime, he ate"
téjà bódá / ô bódá à mà dʒàá	"In the meantime, he came"
téjà bódá / ô bódá à mà wówá	"In the meantime, he took"
téjà bódá / ô bódá à mëndé	"In the meantime, he went"
téjà bódá / ô bódá à mà tındélé	"In the meantime, he pushed"

➤ *ólămbèlè* or *ndí* "meanwhile"

ólămbèlè / ndí à mà lá	"meanwhile, he ate"
ólămbèlè / ndí à mà dʒàá	"meanwhile, he came"
ólămbèlè / ndí à mëndé	"meanwhile, he went"
ólămbèlè / ndí à mà tındélé	"meanwhile, he pushed"
ólămbèlè / ndí à mà wówá	"meanwhile, he took"

➤ *náòméné* "keep on"

nà mà lá náòméné	"I keep on eating"
nà mà dʒă náòméné	"I keep on coming"
nà mëndé náòméné	"you keep on going"
nà mà tındélé náòméné	"you keep on pushing"
nà mà wówá náòméné	"we keep on taking"

(2) Ingressive

➤ *é* "still"

nà é béli ndí mólèlì ⁽¹⁴⁾	"I'm still a teacher"
wè é béli ndí mólèlì	"you're still a teacher"
à é béli ndí mólèlì	"s/he is still a teacher"
ì é béli ndí bálèlì ⁽¹⁵⁾	"we're still teachers"

è é βéli ndí βàlèli	"you're still teachers"
βá é βéli ndí βàlèli ⁽¹⁶⁾	"they're still teachers"

➤ *òzríkùmbò* or *ô mbúzá βóndá* "previously"

òzríkùmbò nà mà βé mòléèli	"previously, I was a teacher"
òzríkùmbò ò mà βé ndí mòónèli	"previously, you were a farmer"
òzríkùmbò à mà βé ndí mòòkèli	"previously, he was a player"
òzríkùmbò ì mà βé ndí βàtò βá gbāmù	"previously, we were nice people"
òzríkùmbò è mà βé ndí βàléèli	"previously you were teachers"
òzríkùmbò βá mà βé ndí βàónèli	"previously they were farmers"

(3) Resultative

➤ *βiúkèli* or *óbèdžèlí* "on arrival"

a. à mëndé ó βiúkèli	"s/he walked on arrival"
à mà βàngá ó βiúkèli	"s/he ran on arrival"
à mà lá ó βiúkèli	"s/he ate on arrival"
à mà gbè éwòló ó βiúkèli	"s/he worked on arrival"
à mèmá ó βiúkèli	"s/he sang on arrival"

b. à mèé lá ó βiúkèli	"s/he ate it on arrival"
à mèé 'gbé'á ó βiúkèli	"s/he did it on arrival"
à mà ηwémá ó βiúkèli	"s/he sang it on arrival"
nà mèé ké ó βiúkèli	"I cut it on arrival"
ò mèé tíndélé ó βiúkèli	"you pushed it on arrival"

(4) Terminative

➤ *ô βóndá* "in/on time"

nà mà dǎ ô βóndá	"I came on time"
ò mèmá ô βóndá	"you sang on time"
à mëndé ô βóndá	"s/he went on time"
wěngà izrô émê má gbèá ô βóndá	"that is we who worked in time"
wěngà izrô émê má dǎ ô βóndá	"that is we who came in time"

➤ *kpílílí* "early"

ìzró ndí mǎ dzǎ éélélé kpílílí	"that is we who came early in the morning"
ìzró ndí ì mémbǎ éélélé kpílílí	"that is we who sang early in the morning"
ìzró ndí ì méndě éélélé kpílílí	"that is we who went early in the morning"
ìzró ndí ì mágbèá éwòlò éélélé kpílílí	"that is we who worked early in the morning"
ìzró ndí mǒngòáná éélélé kpílílí	"that is we who helped early in the morning"

➤ *wúŭná wāzrê* "all day long"

à mǎndé wúŭná wāzrê	"s/he walked the whole day/all day long"
à mǎ wángá wúŭná wāzrê	"s/he ran the whole day/all day long"
à mǎ lá wúŭná wāzrê	"s/he ate the whole day/all day long"
à mǎ gbèá éwòlò wúŭná wāzrê	"s/he worked the whole day/all day long"
à mǎmbá wúŭná wāzrê	"s/he sang the whole day/all day long"

(5) Habitual

➤ *jòkí* and *mǎ bé* "used to"

nǎ jòkí litíjǎ mólánà ámi	"I used to beat my wife"
ò jòkí litíndèlè mólánà àngó	"you used to push your wife"
ò jòkí liβǎné mólánà éní	"s/he used to carry his wife"
ì jòkí lǔmǎ βáálánà βázrú	"we used to send our wives"
è jòkí lilíngáná βáálánà βǎnú	"you (pl) used to love your wives"
βǎ 'jòkí làβízrè βáálánà βáwú	"they used to sell their wives"
nǎ mǎ bé lǒnà	"I used to cultivate"
βá ónèli βá mǎ bé lǒnà	"the farmers used to cultivate"

➤ *ngèlèngèlè* "always"

nǒngwànǎ mólánà ámi ngèlèngèlè	"I always help my wife"
ò βǎnè mólánà àngó ngèlèngèlè	"you always carry his wife"
à ànànǎ mólánè éní ngèlèngèlè	"s/he always beat his wife"
dzǔmǎ βáálánà βázrú ngèlèngèlè	"we always send our wives"
è βélè βáálánà βǎnú ngèlèngèlè	"you (pl) always call your wives"
βá 'língáni βáálánà βǎnú ngèlèngèlè	"they always love your wives"

➤ *jòkí / ɲgɛ̀lɛ̀ɲgɛ̀lɛ̀* "often"

à jòkí itjá mólánè éní	"s/he often beats his wife"
à jòkí lõgwànà mólánè éní	"s/he often helps his wife"
à jòkí itíndèlè mólánè éní	"s/he often pushes his wife"
à jòkí itjá mólánè éní lùmbè	"s/he often slaps his wife"
à jòkí lítè mólánè éní	"s/he often fucks his wife"

(6) Simultaneity

➤ *émá* "while"

è mbèzrà à lâ émá à èndê	"the boy eats while walking"
è mólánà à émbà émá à èndê	"the woman sings while walking"
è múpánà à gbè éwòlò émá à émbā	"the man cultivates while singing"
è mbèzrà è lâ émá jémbā	"the boy eats while singing"
è mòlèlì à zrâ émá à èndê	"the teacher dances while going"

In the past, a different morpheme is used.

➤ *zrì* "while"

nà mà lá zrì ná èndê	"I ate while walking"
ò mèmá zrì wáà lá	"you sang while eating"
à mèjá zráà ónà	"s/he cried while cultivating"
ì mà dǵǵàà zrâ	"we came while dancing"
è mà tíjá zrì jáà jò	"you slapped while laughing"
βà mà ké zrì βàà tìndèlè	"they cut while pushing"

➤ *nǎ* "as ..."

è mbèzrà à lâ nǎ èndê	"the boy eats as he walks"
è mólánà à émbà nǎ gbè éwòlò	"the woman sings as she works"
è múpánà à βéli ò likpèà nà émbà	"the man cultivates as he sings"
è mbèzrà à lâ nà émbà	"the boy eats as he sings"
è mòlèlì à zrá èngòmò nǎ èndê	"the teacher dances as he goes"

➤ Zero morpheme "and"

è mbèzrà à lâ à zrâ	"the boy eats and dances"
è mólánà à émbà à èndê	"the woman sings and walks"
è múpánà à gbè éwòlò à émbà	"the man cultivates and sings"

è mbèzrà è lâ é má í émbà (jémbà)	"the boy eats and sings"
è mòlèlì à zrà à èndè	"the teacher dances and goes"
èmbèzrà è lâ jèndè or	"the boy eats and walks"
èmbèzrà jèndè ì lâ	"the boy walks and eats"

(7) Sudden action

➤ *kàzrikàzrì* "quickly"

nà mà ké kàzrikàzrì	"I cut quickly"
ò mà tíndèlè kàzrikàzrì	"you pushed quickly"
à mà àbízá kàzrikàzrì	"s/he sold quickly"
ì mèá kàzrikàzrì	"we cried quickly"
è mà ɲgbàá kàzrikàzrì	"you gave quickly"
βá mòngá kàzrikàzrì	"they built quickly"

➤ *màkpázrì* "rashly"

à mà gbèá nà mà kpázrì	"s/he worked rashly"
nà mà ké nà mà kpázrì	"I cut rashly"
ò mà tíndélè nà mà kpázrì	"you pushed rashly"
à mà àbízá nà mà kpázrì	"s/he sold rashly"
è mà ɲgbàá ná 'má kpázrì	"you gave rashly"
βá mòngá ná 'má kpázrì	"they built rashly"

à mèé lá kàzrikàzrì	"s/he ate it quickly"
à mèémbá kàzrikàzrì	"s/he sang it quickly"
ò mèé tíndélè kàzrikàzrì	"you pushed it quickly"
nà mèé ké nà mà kpázrì	"I cut it rashly"
ì mèúmá nà mà kpázrì	"we sent it rashly"
βá mèóngá nà mà kpázrì	"they built it rashly"

(8) Repetition

To express repetition, Mokpe uses the adverb *βê* "again".

dʒà βê	"come again"
gbèá βê	"do again"
ómá βê	"send again"
émbá βê	"sing again"

lá βê	"eat again"
wówá βê	"take it again"
ímá 'bóndá ó 'dzá βê	"when do you come again?"

(9) Cumulative

The cumulation adverb βé "also" is used to indicate addition.

Mbá βé nààzrà lèégbèà

mbá βé nà àzrà l-é-gbèà

1sg.Obj also 1sg want INF-Obj-do

"I also want to do it"

Wà βé ò mèéndá ηgá

wà βé ò m- èéndá ηgá

2sg.Obj also 2sg PAST go there

"Did you also go there?"

Mbá βé nèndè ηmêlê

mbá βé n- Ø èndè ηmêlê

1sg.Obj also 1sg PRES go tomorrow

"I will also go tomorrow"

2. Quantification of action

(1) Intensive

➤ dʒòódʒòó "much, very very"

a. with lééjà "sharp"	
lùwèndì lééjà	"the knife is sharp"
lééjà	"it is sharp"
lééjà	"it is very sharp"
lééjà dʒòódʒòó	"it is very, very sharp"
lééjà dʒòódʒòó	"it is very, very, very sharp"
à wóβì lùwèndì lééjà	"s/he has a sharp knife"
à wóβì lùwèndì lé'èjà dʒòódʒòó	"s/he has a very sharp knife"
à wóβì lùwèndì lé'èjà dʒòódʒòó	"s/he has a very, very sharp knife"
à wóβì lùwèndì lé'èjà dʒòódʒòó	"s/he has a very, very, very sharp knife"

b. with lítúnì "blunt"	
lùwèndì lítúnì	"the knife is blunt"
lítúnì	"it is blunt"
lítúnì	"it is very blunt"
lítúnì dzòódzòó	"it is very, very blunt"
lítúnì dzòódzòó	"it is very, very, very blunt"
à wóβì lùwèndì lítúnì	"s/he has a blunt knife"
à wóβì lùwèndì lítúnì dzòódzòó	"s/he has a very blunt knife"
à wóβì lùwèndì lítúnì dzòódzòó	"s/he has a very, very blunt knife"
à wóβì lùwèndì lítúnì dzòódzòó	"s/he has a very, very, very blunt knife"

➤ dzòódzòó and idiomatic expression "too much, excessively"

a. dzòódzòó as "too much"	
à tò dzòódzòó	"s/he speaks too much"
à èndè dzòódzòó	"s/he walks too much"
à gbè éwòlò dzòódzòó	"s/he works too much"
b. Idiomatic expression "too much"	
à βéli ì lóngó	"s/he speaks too much"
à lɪŋgáni mètòwú	"s/he speaks too much"
à tòjizré zrájì	"s/he speaks too much"
à βéli mètòwú	"s/he speaks too much"

(2) Ability

➤ lítánè "be able to" (Affirmative)

nà táné litíjà mólánà ámi	"I am able to beat my wife"
ò táné litíndèlè mólánà àngó	"you are able to push your wife"
à táné liβàné mólánà éní	"s/he is able to carry his wife"
tánê lǔmà βáàlánà βázzú	"we are able to send our wives"
táné lilɪŋgánà βáàlánà βápu	"you (pl) are able to love your wives"
βá tánê làβízré βáàlánà βáwú	"they are able to sell their wives"

➤ làém̀bèné "not be able to" (Negative)

nà zrá 'tánè litíjà mólánà ámi	"I am not able to beat my wife"
ò zrá 'tánè litíndèlè mólánà àngó	"you are not able to push your wife"
à zrá 'tánè làndzilé mólánà éní	"s/he is not able to carry his wife"

ì zrá 'tánè lǔmà ßáàlánà ßáazrú	"we are not able to send our "wives"
è zrá 'tánè lìlǐngáná ßáàlánà ßápnú	"you (pl) are not able to love your wives"
ßá zrà tánè làßízrè ßáàlánà ßáwú	"they are not able to sell their wives"

(3) Negation of habitual

➤ òzrì "never"

The expression of "at no time", "not in any degree" as well as the permanent negation of habitual is done via the privative adverb òzrì "never".

òzrì lá	"never eat"
òzrì ßélé	"never call"
òzrì tǐndélé	"never push"
òzrì lìßówá	"never open"
òzrèndé	"never go"
òzrèmbá	"never sing"
òzrì kàwá	"never divide"
òzrì ɲgbǎ	"never give"
òzrààndá	"never buy"
òzrèèjá	"never cry"

3. Manner of action

➤ lǎṅgòà "carefully"

nà mà ké nà gb ǎṅgò	"I cut carefully"
ò mà tǐndélé né gbǎṅgò	"you pushed carefully"
à mà àßízrè né gbǎṅgò	"s/he sold carefully"
ì mèèjá nà gbǎṅgò	"we cried carefully"
è mà ɲgbàá ná gbǎṅgò	"you gave carefully"
ßá mǎṅgá ná gbǎṅgò	"they built carefully"

➤ *gbāmù* or *liliá* "well"

nà mèé ké gbāmù	"I cut it well"
ò mèé tíndélé gbāmù	"you pushed it well"
à mèá ¹ βízá gbāmù	"s/he sold it well"
ì mèú má gbāmù	"we sent it well"
è mèé ò ¹ gbá gbāmù	"you gave it well"
βá mèòngá gbāmù	"they built it well"

➤ *ndèmù* "nicely"

nà mèé ké ndèmù	"I cut it nicely"
ò mèé tíndélé ndèmù	"you pushed it nicely"
à mèá ¹ βízá ndèmù	"s/he sold it nicely"
ì mèú má ndèmù	"we sent it nicely"
è mèé ò ¹ gbá ndèmù	"you gave it nicely"
βá mèòngá ndèmù	"they built it nicely"

➤ *ínóngí* "restlessly"

a. nà mà ké nà jónjí	"I cut restlessly"
ò mà tíndélé nà jónjí	"you pushed restlessly"
à mà àβízá nà jónjí	"s/he sold restlessly"
ì mèèjá nà jónjí	"we cried restlessly"
è mà ngbàá nà jónjí	"you gave restlessly"
βá mòngá ná jónjí	"they built restlessly"

b. nà mèé ké nà jónjí	"I cut it restlessly"
ò mèé tíndélé nà jónjí	"you pushed it restlessly"
à mèá ¹ βízá nà jónjí	"s/he sold it restlessly"
ì mèú má nà jónjí	"we sent it restlessly"
è mèé ò ¹ gbá nà jónjí	"you gave it restlessly"
βá mèòngá nà jónjí	"they built it restlessly"

4. Summary

Table 13. Morphemes for phase of actions, manner or quantity

téjà βóndá / ô βóndá	"meantime"
ólămbèlè / ndí	"meanwhile"
náòméné	"Keep on"
é	"still"
òzríkùmbò / ô mbúzá fóná /	"previously"
ó ¹ fóná mbúzá / ó ¹ fóná jàkái	
βiúkèlì / óβèdžèlí	"on coming, arrival"
ô fóná	"in / on time"
kpílílílí / lăkèlè	"early"
wúŭná wâzrê	"all day long"
jòkí and mà βé	"used to"
í ó ¹ fóná džâzrê	"all the time"
ŋgèlèŋgèlè	"always"
ŋgèlèŋgèlè / jòkí	"often"
émá (present tense)	"while"
zrì (past tense)	"while"
nă	"as ..." / "like"
Zero morpheme	"and"
kàzríkàzrí	"quickly"
màkpázrí	"rashly"
džòódžòó	"much, very very"
litánè	"be able to"
làémbèné	"not be able to"
lăŋgòà	"carefully"
gbămù / lìliá	"well"
ndèmù	"nicely"
íjòŋgí	"restlessly"
nă	"like"

5. Time and locative adverbs

Here are the time and locative adverbs commonly used in Mokpe.

(1) Time adverbs

éélélé	"in the morning"
èṅgómbe	"in the evening"
èḃóndá wòzrô	"ago", "sometimes ago"
ímá 'ḃóndá	"when"
jàwónò	"today"
mó'ne ṅmâ	"next year"
nâṅgê	"now"
ṅmêlê	"yesterday", "tomorrow"
ó ṅgbèndè	"in one month"
ó ṅmâ	"in one year"
ó wíki	"in one week"
ó wòzrô	"after"
òzrí kúmbò	"short ago or a while ago"
ó'mééná mé jáò	"in three days"
wózrí jáò	"in three days"
wózrí nèjí	"in four days"
wózrí tâ	"in five days"
wózrí wă	"the day before yesterday"
wózrí ḃàá	"in two days"
wúũḃû	"in the night"

(2) Locative adverbs

ánù	"here"
áṅgâ	"there"
bjáná	"before"
ḃâzrê or jâzrê	"together"
nătèè	"until"
ô mbúzrà	"behind"
ô ṅmápú	"on"
ó tōṅgóngó	"nearby"
ô zré	"under"
ôténì	"in", "inside"
ó'né	"from"

V. SYNTAX

1. Simple Sentence Construction

Mokpe is an SVO language. In an affirmative indicative sentence, the verbal clause has the order of morphemes below:

Subject Pronoun - (Tense/Aspect) - (Object Pronoun) - Verb Root - Object

Examples:

- a. Nà lɪŋgáni è-ŋgòndò "I love a girl."
 1sg love +PRES 7.DET-9.girl
- b. Nà mà lá mbõ "I ate a banana."
 1sg PAST eat 9.banana

When the object pronoun is inserted into the verbal complex, the structure is then:

Subject Pronoun-(Tense/Aspect)-(Object Pronoun)-Infix vowel O-Verb Root

Examples:

lìzròzrá "to wash"

à	mà	n	ò	zròzrá	"he washed me"
à	m	ò	ò	zròzrá	"he washed you (sg)"
à	mà	m	ò	zròzrá	"he washed him/her"
à	mà	dʒ	ò	zròzrá	"he washed us"
à	m	è	è	zròzrá	"he washed you (pl)"
à	mà	βá		!zrózrá	"he washed them"
3sg	PAST	ObjP	InfxV	wash	

lìŋgbǎ "to give"

à	mà	n	ò	ŋgbǎ	"he gave me"
à	m-	ò	ò	ŋgbǎ	"he gave you (sg)"
à	mà	m	ò	ŋgbǎ	"he gave him/her"
à	mà	dʒ	ò	ŋgbǎ	"he gave us"
à	m	è	è	ŋgbǎ	"he gave you (pl)"
à	mà	βá		!ŋgbá	"he gave them"
3sg	PAST	ObjP	InfxV	give	

liβélè "to call"

à	mà	n	ò	βélé	"he called me"
à	m	ò	ò	βélé	"he called you (sg)"
à	mà	m-	ò	βélé	"he called him/her"
à	mà	dʒ	ò	βélé	"he called us"
à	m	è	è	βélé	"he called you (pl)"
à	mà	βá		βélé	"he called them"
3sg	PAST	ObjP	InfxV	call	

litíndèlè "to push"

à	mà	n	ò	tíndélé	"he pushed me"
à	m	ò	ò	tíndélé	"he pushed you (sg)"
à	mà	m	ò	tíndélé	"he pushed him/her"
à	mà	dʒ	ò	tíndélé	"he pushed us"
à	m	è	è	tíndélé	"he pushed you (pl)"
à	mà	βá		tíndélé	"he pushed them"
3sg	PAST	ObjP	InfxV	push	

That structure does not change when you use the imperative mood. The pronoun object is still intercalated in the verbal phrase.

lìngbǎ "to give" (Imperative)

ó	m	ò	ŋgbé	è-ból	"give him the ball"
ó	dʒ	ò	ŋgbě	è-ból	"give us the ball"
3sg	ObjP	InfxV	give	7.DET-9.ball	

As we can see in the examples above, the object pronoun is systematically followed by the infix vowel *ò*. If we admit that the object pronouns have the following shapes: *nà* "me", *ò* "you (sg)", *mò* "him/her", *ì* "us", *è* "you (pl)", *βá* "them", then the presence of the vowel *ò* triggers the phonological processes whereby the vowels of the object pronoun are either deleted or changed into consonant. This is illustrated as follows:

<i>nà</i>	→	<i>n</i>	"me"	(deletion of the vowel <i>à</i>)
<i>mò</i>	→	<i>m</i>	"him/her"	(deletion of the vowel <i>ò</i>)
<i>ì</i>	→	<i>dʒ</i>	"us"	(the vowel <i>i</i> become <i>dʒ</i>)

Also note the deletion of the vowel /a/ of the past tense marker at the 2sg and 2pl, i.e. *mà* → *m* in a sequence *mà* + *ò* (2sg) and *mà* + *è* (2pl).

As for the infix vowel /ò/, it assimilates to the vowel /e/ of the 2pl become, and deletes completely when it occurs in front of the 3pl *βá*.

It is equally very important to note that in vowel-initial verb root, the infix vowel /ò/ does show up and there are a series of phonological processes that are triggered by its absence depending on whether the verb root starts with the vowel /-i/, /-u/, /-o/ or /-a/.

- When the verb root starts with the vowel /-i/, the infix vowel /ò/ is absent and the following phonological processes occur, mostly on the object pronouns:

- ▶ the vowel of the 1sg deletes ($n\grave{a} \rightarrow n$), i.e. /a/ $\rightarrow$ [Ø]/__ i.
- ▶ a prothetic semivowel, /w/, is inserted between the 2sg and the vowel /i/ of the verb root, i.e. /Ø/ $\rightarrow$ [w]/ ò __ i.
- ▶ the vowel /ò/ of the 3sg $m\grave{o}$ deletes (i.e. $m\grave{o} \rightarrow m$) and the consonant /m/ becomes [ɲm] before the vowel /i/ of the verb root, i.e. /m/ $\rightarrow$ [ɲm]/__ i.
- ▶ the vowel /i/, the object pronoun of 1pl, is realised [dʒ] before the vowel /i/ of the verb root, i.e. /i/ $\rightarrow$ [dʒ]/__ i.
- ▶ the vowel /è/, the object pronoun of 2pl, is realised [i] before the vowel /i/ of the verb root by virtue of assimilation, i.e. /è/ $\rightarrow$ [i] /__ i.
- ▶ the vowel /á/ of the 3pl $\beta\acute{a}$ deletes before the vowel /i/ of the verb root, i.e. /á/ $\rightarrow$ Ø /__ i.

All these rules are illustrated in the example below:

lĩdʒòwà "to ask"

à	mà	n	idʒówá	"he asked me"
à	m	ò	widʒówá	"he asked you (sg)"
à	mà	ɲm	idʒówá	"he asked him/her"
à	mà	dʒ	idʒówá	"he asked us"
à	m	i	idʒówá	"he asked you (pl)"
à	mà	β	idʒówá	"he asked them"
3sg	PAST	ObjP	ask	

- When the verb root starts with the vowel /-u/, the infix vowel /ò/ is absent and the following phonological processes occur on the object pronouns:

- ▶ the vowel of the 1sg deletes ($n\grave{a} \rightarrow n$), i.e. /a/ $\rightarrow$ [Ø]/__ u.
- ▶ the vowel /ò/, the object pronoun of 2sg, is realised [ù] before the vowel /u/ of the verb root by virtue of assimilation, i.e. /ò/ $\rightarrow$ [ù] /__ u.
- ▶ the vowel /ò/ of the 3sg $m\grave{o}$ is realised [ù] before the vowel /u/ of the verb root by virtue of assimilation, i.e. /ò/ $\rightarrow$ [ù] /__ u.
- ▶ the vowel /i/, the object pronoun of 1pl, is realised [dʒ] before the vowel /u/ of the verb root, i.e. /i/ $\rightarrow$ [dʒ]/__ u.

- the vowel /á/ of the 3pl *βá* deletes before the vowel /u/ of the verb root, i.e. /á/ → Ø /__ u (*βá* → *β*), and the consonant /β/ is realised [w] before the vowel /u/ of the verb root, i.e. /β/ → [w] /__ u.

All these rules are illustrated in the example below:

lǔmèlè "to show"

à	mà	n	ùṁmélé	"he showed me"
à	m	ù	úṁmélé	"he showed you (sg)"
à	mà	mù	úṁmélé	"he showed him/her"
à	mà	dʒ	ùṁmélé	"he showed us"
à	m	è	úṁmélé	"he showed you (pl)"
à	mà	w	úṁmélé	"he showed them"
3sg	PAST	ObjP	show	

- When the verb root starts with the vowel /-o/, the infix vowel /ò/ is absent and the following phonological processes occur on the object pronouns:

- the vowel of the 1sg deletes (*nà* → *n*), i.e. /a/ → [Ø] /__ o.
 ► the vowel /ɔ/ of the 3sg *mɔ* is realised [ò] before the vowel /o/ of the verb root by virtue of assimilation, i.e. /ɔ/ → [ò] /__ o.
 ► the vowel /i/, the object pronoun of 1pl, is realised [dʒ] before the vowel /o/ of the verb root, i.e. /i/ → [dʒ] /__ o.
 ► the vowel /á/ of the 3pl *βá* deletes before the vowel /o/ of the verb root, i.e. /á/ → Ø /__ o (*βá* → *β*), and the consonant /β/ is realised [w] before the vowel /o/ of the verb root, i.e. /β/ → [w] /__ o.

All these rules are illustrated in the example below:

lǒṁgòwàná "to help"

à	mà	n	òṁgówáná	"he helped me"
à	m	ò	óṁgówáná	"he helped you (sg)"
à	mà	mò	óṁgówáná	"he helped him/her"
à	mà	dʒ	òṁgówáná	"he helped us"
à	m	è	óṁgówáná	"he helped you (pl)"
à	mà	w	óṁgówáná	"he helped them"
3sg	PAST	ObjP	help	

- When the verb root starts with the vowel /-a/, the infix vowel /ò/ is absent and the following phonological processes occur, mostly, on the object pronouns:
- ▶ the vowel of the 1sg deletes (*nà* → *n*), i.e. /a/ → [Ø]/__ a.
 - ▶ a prothetic semivowel, /w/, is inserted between the 2sg and the vowel /a/ of the verb root, i.e. /Ø/ → [w]/ ò__ a.
 - ▶ the vowel /ò/ of the 3sg *mò* deletes (i.e. *mò* → *m*) and the consonant /m/ becomes [ɲm] before the vowel /a/ of the verb root, i.e. /m/ → [ɲm]/__ a.
 - ▶ the vowel /i/, the object pronoun of 1pl, is realised [dʒ] before the vowel /a/ of the verb root, i.e. /i/ → [dʒ]/__ a.

All these rules are illustrated in the example below:

làṅgbá "to shoot, to throw"

à	mà	n	àṅgbá	"he shot me"
à	m	ò	wàṅgbá	"he shot you (sg)"
à	mà	ɲm	àṅgbá	"he shot him/her"
à	mà	dʒ	àṅgbá	"he shot us"
à	m	è	àṅgbá	"he shot you (pl)"
à	mà	βá	ǎṅgbá	"he shot them"
3sg	PAST	ObjP	shoot	

Even when the imperative mood is used, the infix vowel /ò/ still doesn't show up at all in a verb root starting with a vowel, and four of the rules identified above are equally observed.

lǒṅgòwàṇà "to help"

ó	n	òṅgówáné	"help me"
ó	mò	óṅgówáné	"help him"
ó	dʒ	òṅgówáné	"help us"
ó	w	óṅgówáné	"help them"
2sg	ObjP	help	

Also, when the object is the pronoun 'it', the infix vowel /ò/ does not surface in vowel-initial verb root. Note the insertion of the prothetic glide /j/ between the object pronoun and the verb root.

làndá "to buy"

nà	m	è	án ¹ dá	"I bought it"
à	m	è	án ¹ dá	"s/he bought it"
nà	mà	βé	! ¹ jándá	"I bought them"

à mà βέ ¹jándá "s/he bought them"
 3sg PAST ObjP buy

Thus the infix vowel /ò/ does show up in vowel-initial verb root, because the root already has its vowel. Thus, the vowel /ò/ which is intercalated between the object pronoun and the verb root is no longer necessary. This suggests that the structure SVO must have a vowel before the verbal root when the object is a pronoun. Let us call this infix vowel /ò/, a prothetic vowel which must be present each time a verbal predicate is constructed with an object pronoun.

When the pronominal object is 'it', there is variation according to referent because it is only in the correct context that it has meaning. The morpheme-by-morpheme analysis will give:

likótá / màkótá "bread/s" (cl. 5/6)

A: Ò óβì lĩ-¹kótá Do you have the bread? (cl. 5)
 2sg have 5-bread + int

B: ÈÈ nà l- -óβì Yes, I have it (the bread). (cl. 5)
 yes 1sg 5.ObjP have

A: Ò óβì mâ-kótá Do you have the breads? (cl. 6)
 2sg have 6-bread+ int

B: ÈÈ nà m- óβì Yes, I have them (the breads). (cl. 6)
 yes 1sg 6.ObjP have

èβùmá / βèβùmá "fruit/s" (cl. 7/8)

A: Ò óβì é-βùmà Do you have the fruit? (cl. 7)
 2sg have 7-fruit+ inter

B: ÈÈ n è óβì Yes, I have it (the fruit). (cl. 7)
 yes 1sg 7.ObjP have

A: Ò óβì βé-βùmà Do you have the fruits? (cl. 8)
 2sg have 8-fruit+ inter

B: ÈÈ nà βé óβì Yes, I have them (the fruits). (cl. 8)
 yes 1sg 8.ObjP have

ìṇàmà / íṇàmà "fish/es" (cl. 9/10)

A: Ò óβì ì-ṇàmà Do you have the fish? (cl. 9)
 2sg have 9-fish+ inter

B: ÈÈ n dɜ óβì Yes, I have it (the fish). (cl. 9)

yes 1sg 9.ObjP have

A: Ò óβì í-ṣàmà Do you have the fishes? (cl. 10)
 2sg have 10-fish+ inter

B: Èè nà dɜ́ óβì Yes, I have them (the fishes). (cl. 10)
 yes 1sg 10.ObjP have

2. Complex Sentence Constructions

Many other morphemes can enter the construction of sentence in Mokpe.

1. Qualification of the noun in the NP

À mà lá ṣòβìṣà j-à kpájókúpájó
 3sg PAST eat 9.lemon 9-Cd sour
 "S/he ate a sour lemon."

Ò m -imá è-βòndí ndénè
 2sg PAST dig 7-hole 9.big
 "You dug a big hole."

Ò mà bátá è-βùmá j- -é'tí
 2sg PAST harvest 7-fruit 7-Cd strong
 "You harvested a strong fruit."

Note: lilâ "to eat"
 límà "to dig"
 liβátà "to harvest"

2. Copula +predicate sentence

À βèlì ndí mò-tà wòòwê ndĩ à gbè é-wòlò gbámù
 3sg COP CLIT 1-person 1.bad but 3sg do.PRES 7-work 9.well
 "S/he is a bad person, but he works well"

Note: mòtò / bàtò "person"
 wòòwê "bad"
 ligbèá éwòlò "to (do) work"
 ligbèá "to do"
 èwòlò / βèwòlò "work"
 gbámù "well"

3. *Juxtaposition of complements*

À m òṅgó má-àtù, à mà àndá ndí l-ínì méné
 3sg PAST look at 9-fabric 3sg PAST buy CLIT 5-DEM only
 "S/he looked at the fabrics, she bought only this one"

Note: lǒṅgó "to look at"
 làndá "to buy"

À zr -énè zróṅgé w-àṅgó, à m -éné ndí wà-ámì
 3sg NEG see 9-father 2sg-PosP 3sg PAST see only 1sg-PosP
 "S/he did not see your father, he saw only mine"

Note: zrí NEG past
 lǐnè "to see"
 zráṅgó / zráṅgó "guest"

4. *Consequence*

È-ndzòó è mà ṅwáá ná mé-ànò lí-ǎnèlì nà lí-ìbà
 7.DET-9.tiger Cd PAST die because 4-trick 5-violence and 5-theth
 of
 "The tiger died because of tricks, violence and theth"

Note: ndzòó / ndzòó "tiger"
 liṅwâ "to die"
 ṅmànò / mènànò "trick"
 liànèlì / liànèlì "violence"
 lǐbà / lǐbà "theth"

5. *Circumstantial clause*

È-wúfà é mà ṅê mè-éǒ mé-éní è-ṅgbâ è mà -áká
 7.DET-9.fowl 7.Cd PAST lay 4-egg 4-POS 7.DET-9.dog 7.Cd PAST pass
 "When the fowl layed her eggs, the dog passed"

Note: wúfà "fowl"
 liṅê "to lay"
 ṅmèó / mèó "egg"
 ṅgbâ "dog"
 lǎkà "pass"

Èndálé	à	mà	jà	ɲmána	mó-lána	ó	ɲgbèndè	j-à	mbúzá
1. Endalle	1.Cd	PAST	give birth	1.child	1-male	LOC	9.month	9-Cd	behind

"Endalle gave birth to a baby girl last month"

Note: lɪpâ "give birth"
 ɲgbèndè / ɲgbèndè "month"

6. Destination, location

Ò	mà	-iká	mé-èó	óténá	kòòfà	dʒ-àzrê
3sg	PAST	put	4-egg	PREP	10.calabash	10-all

"S/he put the eggs in all the calabashes"

Ò	mà	-iká	mé-èó	óténá	tòímá	kòòfà
3sg	PAST	put	4-egg	PREP	each	9.calabash

"S/he put the eggs in each calabash"

7. Embedded (relative) clause

Kúlù	à	m	òṅgá	ó	mòṅè	à	mà	zràṅgó	áné	è-zràṅgó	ámì
1.	1.Cd	PAST	built	LOC	9.land	3sg	PAST	inherit	from	7-father	1.POS
Tortoise											

"Tortoise built on the land he inherited from my father"

Note: kúlù / kúlù "tortoise"
 lǒṅgá "to build"
 mòṅè / mòṅè "land"
 lizràṅgó "to inherit"

8. Conditional clause

N	ô	lâ	jêtená	w	iβê
1sg	Mood	eat	COND	2sg	cook +PRES

"I would eat if you cook"

Ì	zr	ô	lâ	jêtená	ò	zrà	àzrà
1sg	Neg	Mood	eat	COND	2sg	Neg	want +PRES

"We would not eat if you don't want"

Òmá	nà	mà	βélé	jêtená	à	zrí	dʒè
CLIT	1sg	PAST	call	COND	3sg	Neg	come

"I would have called if she had not come"

3. Relative Clauses

The relative forms use invariably the morpheme *émá* regardless of the noun class that the relative pronoun qualifies. It is placed just after the noun and precedes the verb concord.

è mólánà é má à jǒ	cl. 1	"the women who laughs"
βáǎnà é má βá jǒ	cl. 2	"the children who laugh"
mǒβò é má móβí líβùmbú	cl. 3	"the head which has hair"
méǒβò é má méóβí líβùmbú	cl. 4	"the heads which have hair"
íngbâ é má ílómă	cl. 10	"the dogs which barks"
wôngó é má wó lùtèjá	cl. 14	"the brain which thinks"
íwǒnì é má dzónwă	cl. 13	"the cartridge which kills"

The relative pronoun *émá* can be omitted.

lǐzròngá é má líké'é í nàmà	cl. 5	"the tooth which cuts meat"
lǐzròngá líké'é í nàmà		
éwòlò é má ékú	cl. 7	"the work which ends"
éwòlò ékú		
èngbá é má èlómă	cl. 9	"the dog which barks"
èngbá èlò		

An example of morpheme-by-morpheme gives:

Lǐ-zròngá	émá	líké'é	í	nàmà
5.DEM-tooth	RelPro	cut + PRES	9.Cd	9.meat
"The tooth which cuts meat"				

4. Questions

In Mokpe, apart from interrogative pronouns, there is no lexical device that indicates interrogation. In other words, the syntactic structure of an interrogative sentence is similar to the one of a declarative sentence. Interrogations or questions are rendered by a rising intonation at the end of the utterance.

Ò	ó'bí	éβùmà
Ò	ó'bí	é-βùmà
2sg	have	7-fruit

"Do you have the fruit?"

Ò óbì mākótá

Ò óbì mākótá

2sg have 6-fruit

"Do you have the breads?"

Ímá 'βóndá ó 'dʒá βê

Ímá 'βóndá ó Ø 'dʒá βê

IntP 9.time 2sg PRES come again

"When do you come again?"

Wáá mbèlè ánù nátèè èné èèjé ézròmbò

W áá mbèlè ánù nátèè è-né è-èjé é-zròm-bò

2sg TAM wait here until 7-DemPro 7-tree 7-roten-PASS

"Are you waiting here so that this tree get rotten?"

5. Copula and Existential Sentences

Non-verbal predicates are constructed with the copulative morpheme *βéli* which will take the meaning of quality, location and stabilisation depending on the particle that precedes or follows it. A concept like "origin" is equally presented under non-verbal predicates.

1. Quality: *βéli ndí* "be"

The morphemic sequence ... *βéli ndí* "be", positive form, generally expresses quality. The negation form is rendered with *zrá èndzè* → *zrèndzè*.

Positive	Negative
nà βéli ndí mòòkèli	nà zrèndzè mòòkèli
"I am a player"	"I am not a player"
ò βéli ndí ngàngà	ò zrèndzè ngàngà
"you are a doctor"	"you are not a doctor"
à βéli ndí mòónèli	à zrèndzè mòónèli
"s/he is a farmer"	"he is not a farmer"
ì βéli ndí bàlèèli	ì zrèndzè bàlèèli
"we are teachers"	"we are not teachers"
è βéli ndí bàòkèli	è zrèndzè bàòkèli

"you are players"	"you are not players"
βá βéli ndí zrángó	βá zrèndzè zrángó
"they are fathers"	"they are not fathers"

2. Location: *βéli ó* "be"

The morphemic sequence ... *βéli ó* "be", positive form, expresses location. The negation form is equally rendered with *zrá èndzè* → *zrèndzè*.

Positive	Negative
nà βéli wíwòngó ⁽¹⁷⁾	nà zrèndzè wíwòngó
"I am in the box"	"I am not in the box"
ò βéli wélùwà	ò zrèndzè wélùwà
"you are in the market"	"you are not in the market"
à βéli ó mbóà	à zrèndzè ó mbóà
"s/he is in the village"	"s/he is not in the village"
ì βéli ó ndáwù	ì zrèndzè ó ndáwù
"we are in the house"	"we are not in the house"
è βéli ó wàngá	è zrèndzè ó wàngá
"you are in the farm"	"you (pl) are not in the farm"
βá βéli ó tũ	βá zrèndzè ó tũ
"they are in the room"	"they are not in the room"
nà βéli ánú ¹⁸	nà zrèndzè ánú
"I am here"	"I am not here"
ò βéli ángâ	ò zrèndzè ángâ
"you (sg) are there"	"you (sg) are not there"

3. Stabilization with *éβéli ndí*: "it is"

The morpheme *éβéli ndí* is used as a stabilizer ("it is"), in nouns of all classes and independent pronouns. Negation here is rendered by *zrá èndzè* → *zrèndzè* for human and *zrá èkété* → *zrèkété* for non-human and the independent pronouns. When *zrèkété* is used the particle *é* preceding *βéli* / *zrèndzè* (*éβéli* / *zrèndzè*) drops.

a.	In noun of all classes	
	Positive	Negative
	é βéli ndí lóβè	é zrèndzè lóβè
	"it is God"	"it is not God"
	é βéli ndí zrángó	é zrèndzè zrángó

"it is a father"	"it is not a father"
é βéli ndí lìnùṅgè	é zrèndzè lìnùṅgè
"it is Linonge"	"it is not Linonge"
é βéli ndí mòléèlì	é zrèndzè mòléèlì
"it is a teacher"	"it is not a teacher"
é βéli ndí ḡmána	é zrèndzè ḡmána
"it is a child"	"it is not a child"
é βéli ndí èβùamá	zrèkété èβùamá
"it is a fruit"	"it is not a fruit"
é βéli ndí èzrù	zrèkété èzrù
"it is a wall"	"it is not a wall"
é βéli ndí mbóli	zrèkété mbóli
"it is a goat"	"it is not a goat"
é βéli ndí tũ	zrèkété tũ
"it is a room"	"it is not a room"
é βéli ndí lizròṅgá	zrèkété lizròṅgá
"it is a tooth"	"it is not a tooth"

b. In independent pronouns			
Positive		Negative	
ìmbâ	"it is me"	zrèkété ìmbâ	"it is not me"
òwâ	"it is you"	zrèkété òwâ	"it is not you"
mô	"it is him"	zrèkété mô	"it is not him"
í zrô	"it is us"	zrèkété í zrô	"it is not us"
ínô	"it is us"	zrèkété ínô	"it is not you"
wô	"it is them"	zrèkété wô	"it is not them"

Note that *zrèndzè* (negation) can also be completed with *ndí*. Then, the opposition human vs non-human (i.e. *zrèndzè* vs. *zrèkété*) is neutralised.

Negative	
é zrèndzè ndí lĩnà	"it is not a name"
é zrèndzè ndí èlèla	"it is not a duck"
é zrèndzè ndí jàmà	"it is not an animal"
é zrèndzè ndí ndzìjá	"it is not a way"
é zrèndzè ndí kémà	"it is not a monkey"
é zrèndzè ndí wǒlò	"it is not a canoe"

4. Stabilization with *ó βéli ndí*: "there is"

The morpheme *ó βéli ndí* is also used as a stabilizer ("there is"), but most of the time without *ndí*. Negation here is done with *zrá èndzé* → *zrèndzé*.

Positive	Negative
ó βéli ndzòmì	ó zrèndzé ndzòmì
"there is a problem"	"there is no problem"
ó βéli wòòlì	ó zrèndzé wòòlì
"there is money"	"there is no money"
ó βéli βóndá	ó zrèndzé βóndá
"there is time"	"there is no time"
ó βéli èlùwà	ó zrèndzé èlùwà
"there is a market"	"there is no market"
ó βéli mbówà	ó zrèndzé mbówà
"there is a village"	"there is no village"
ó βéli wàngá	ó zrèndzé wàngá
"there is a farm"	"there is no farm"
ó βéli tũ	ó zrèndzé tũ
"there is a room"	"there is no room"
ó βéli mòzrô	ó zrèndzé mòzrô
"there is a river"	"there is no river"
ó βéli èβózrí	ó zrèndzé èβózrí
"there is a bottle"	"there is no bottle"
ó βéli lĩpkà	ó zrèndzé lĩpkà
"there is a bag"	"there is no bag"

5. Stabilization with *-ŋg-*: "that is"

Apart from *éβéli ndí* and *ó βéli ndí*, stabilization is equally realised with *-ŋg-* where the hyphens are replaced by the class markers [ǎ], [ò], [mó], [lí], [é], [í], [wó]. The first vowel is identical to the second. The tone on the first vowel is always low, whereas the final tone is systematically falling.

a.	Positive (independent pronouns)		
	mbá òŋgô	"that is me"	(cl.1)
	wǎ òŋgô	"that is you"	(cl.1)
	mǒ òŋgô	"that is s/he"	(cl.1)
	ìzró òŋgô	"that is we"	(cl.2)

èṛó òṅgô	"that is you"	(cl.2)
ḃá ṅṅà	"that is they"	(cl.2)

b.	Positive (all noun classes)		
	ṅmèní òṅgô	"that is a guest"	(cl.1)
	ṅmēmà móngô	"that is a heart"	(cl.3)
	lĩzrò líṅgî	"that is an eye"	(cl.5)
	èwòlò éṅgê	"that is a work"	(cl.7)
	ṅàmà èṅgê	"that is an animal"	(cl.9)
	ìṇòní íṅgî	"that is a bird"	(cl.13)
	wǒlò wóngô	"that is a canoe"	(cl.14)

The negative forms of those phrases are:

a.	Negative (independent pronouns)		
	zrèkété ìmbâ	"that is not me"	(cl.1)
	zrèkété òwâ	"that is not you"	(cl.1)
	zrèkété mô	"that is not him"	(cl.1)
	zrèkété ízrô	"that is not us"	(cl.2)
	zrèkété íṅô	"that is not you"	(cl.2)
	zrèkété wô	"that is not them"	(cl.2)

b.	Negative (all noun classes)		
	zrèkété ṅmèní òṅgô	"that is not a guest"	(cl.1)
	zrèkété ṅmēmà móngô	"that is not a heart"	(cl.3)
	zrèkété lĩzrò líṅgî	"that is not an eye"	(cl.5)
	zrèkété èwòlò éṅgê	"that is not a work"	(cl.7)
	zrèkété ṅàmà èṅgê	"that is not an animal"	(cl.9)
	zrèkété ìṇòní íṅgî	"that is not a bird"	(cl.13)
	zrèkété wǒlò wóngô	"that is not a canoe"	(cl.14)

6. Stabilization with *ndzê à béli* "who is?"

Stabilization may also be realised with *ndzê à béli* ("who is?"), as shown below.
Negation: *ndzê à zrà èndzê* → *ndzê à zrèndzê*.

Positive	Negative
<i>ndzê à béli imbâ</i>	<i>ndzê à zrèndzê imbâ</i>
"who is me?"	"who is not me?"
<i>ndzê à béli wô</i>	<i>ndzê à zrèndzê wô</i>

"who are they?"	"who are not they?"
ndʒê à βéli mbèzrà	ndʒê à zrêndʒé mbèzrà
"who is a boy?"	"who is not a boy?"
ndʒê à βéli móβò	ndʒê à zrêndʒé mòóβò
"who is a head?"	"who is not a head?"
ndʒê à βéli lĩzrò	ndʒê à zrêndʒé lĩzrò
"who is an eye?"	"who is not an eye?"
ndʒê à βéli èlèlà	ndʒê à zrêndʒé èlèlà
"who is a duck?"	"who is not a duck?"
ndʒê à βéli kémà	ndʒê à zrêndʒé kémà
"who is a monkey?"	"who is not a monkey?"
ndʒê à βéli iwónì	ndʒê à zrêndʒé iwónì
"who is a cartridge?"	"who is not a cartridge?"
ndʒê à βéli wózrò	ndʒê à zrêndʒé wózrò
"who is a face?"	"who is not a face?"
ndʒê à βéli linòŋgè	ndʒê à zrêndʒé linòŋgè
"who is Linonge?"	"who is not Linonge?"
ndʒê à βéli èsèmè	ndʒê à zrêndʒé èsèmè
"who is Eseme?"	"who is not Eseme?"
ndʒê à βéli mbèlà	ndʒê à zrêndʒé mbèlà
"who is Mbella?"	"who is not Mbella?"
ndʒê à βéli mòzròŋgè	ndʒê à zrêndʒé mùsòŋgè
"who is Munsonge?"	"who is not Munsonge?"

7. Origin: -úwélélé (ndí)

The morpheme -úwélélé (ndí) expresses origin. The negation is done with *zrà úwèlèlè ndí* → *zrúwèlèlè ndí*.

Positive	Negative
nùwélélé ⁽¹⁹⁾ ó zrùkùlù	nà zrúwèlèlè ndí ó wàngá
"I am from school"	"I am not from the farm"
òwúwélélé wélùwà	ò zrúwèlèlè ndí ó tũ
"you are from the market"	"you are not from the room"
àwúwélélé ndí ó mbówà	à zrúwèlèlè ndí ó 'mótówà
"s/he is from the village"	"s/he is not from the car"
dʒùwélélé ndí ánù	í zrúwèlèlè ndí ó mōtówà
"we are here"	"we are not from the car"

jùwélélé ndí áṅgâ	è zrówèlèlè ndí é ṅgêkí
"you are there"	"you are not from the place"
βúwélélé ndí ó ndáwò	βá zrówèlèlè ndí ó mòzrô
"they are from the house"	"they are not from the river"
Paul àwúwélélé ndí ó ndzìjǎ	Paul à zrówèlèlè ndí ó ndzìjǎ
"Paul is from the street"	"Paul is not from the street"
Paul nà Peter βúwélélé ndó ndzìjǎ	Paul nà Peter βá zrówèlèlè ndí ó ndzìjǎ
"Paul and Peter are from the street"	"Paul and Peter are not from the street"

8. Passive with agent

Contrary to the passive without agent which is done with the suffix *βá* and its variants *βé* and *βó* (cf. section IV.2.8), the passive with agent is rendered by a sequential morpheme *βéné ndí*, irrespective of the vowel of the root, placed between the verb and the agent.

Èṅmǎnà à mà βélé βéné ndí nà ṅàṅgê	cl.1
"The child was called by the mother."	
βáǎnà βá mà zròzrà βéné ndí nà í ṅàṅgó dzáwó	cl.2
"The children were bathed by their mothers."	
Mǒṅè mó mǒnǎ βéné ndí nà è mòkálá	cl.3
"The land was cultivated by the white man."	
Méṅṅè mé mǒnǎ βéné ndí nà βàkálá	cl.4
"The lands were cultivated by the white men."	
Lí'βǎṅgí lì mà βǎṅgá βéné ndí nà ímbèzrà	cl.5
"The race was ran by the boys."	
Máìdzá má mà ṅó βéné ndí nà mó	cl.6
"the blood was drunk by him."	
Étò é mà lá βéné ndí nà è pùzrí	cl.7
"The rat was eaten by the cat."	
βétò βé mà lá βéné ndí nà í pùzrí	cl.8
"The rat were eaten by the cats."	

Èṅgbâ è mà zròzrà βéné ndí nà mô "the dog was bathed by her."	cl.9
ìṅgbâ í mà βòzró βéné ndí nà mô "The dogs were chosen by her."	cl.10
Í ^l támí í mà wótó βéné ndí nà èṇmána "The shoe was put on by the child."	cl.13
Wóǒlò wó mà tózró βéné ndí nà èzrángó "The canoe was touched by the father."	cl.14

6. Useful Expressions

hěi	"heh!"
ǎṅgówà	"attention!"
ǎṅgówà	"Take care!"
wǎṅgówà	"be carefull!"
wǎṅgówà	"watch out!"
ò gbé gbǎmù	"congratulations!"
! ^l é! ^l é	"yes!"
dzá! ^l é	"no!"
élélá gbǎmù	"good morning!"
ṅgómá gbǎmù	"good evening!", "good night!"
ndéi	"go, go away!"

VI. WORD LISTS

Each word we know, especially when it is the right word, is a powerful tool to express what we want. It is generally admitted that for basic communication, knowledge of vocabulary is more important than knowledge of grammar, structure or syntax. Indeed, it is possible to achieve very elementary communication skills in a language without knowing the structure or syntax of the target language, but with some basic lexical items. That is why I found it important to complete this grammatical sketch with a list of vocabulary. Obviously, it cannot replace huge works like Kagaya's (1992a) *A Classified Vocabulary of the Bakweri Language*, or Connell's (1997) *Mokpe (Bakweri) - English Dictionary*. It is an adjunct to these works and a completion of or confirmation to previous works.

This list is an extended version of the standard word list proposed by Morris Swadesh. It is organized in two sections, English-Mokpe and Mokpe-English. In each section, the words are grouped within constellations of part of speech: nouns, verbs and adjectives for easy and quick reference. In the list of nouns, the nouns are followed by their class number.

1. English - Mokpe

1. Nouns

	Singular	Plural
animal	èjémbé 9	βèjémbé 8
arm	mò 3	mèò 4
arrow	mòβàndzá 3	mèβàndzá 4
ashes	liwû 5	liwû 5
axe	jǒndò 19	βèòndò 8
back	mbúzrà 9	mbúzrà 10
bag	lĩkpà 5	măkpà 6
banana	ègbíé 7	βègbíé 8
banana	mbõ 9	ímbo 10
bark (of tree)	mòòwò mó èèjé 3	mèòwò mé èèjé 4
basket	ηgàtá 9	ínghatá 10
bat	ηmēmè 3	mèémè 4
beans	bíndzì 9	íbíndzì 10
beard	wòkpò 14	wòkpò 14
bee	jààwè 9	ínààwè 10
belly (external)	lùùngá 5	màùngá 6

bird	inóní 19	βènóní 8
blood	màjidzá 6	màjidzá 6
boat/canoe	wǒlò 14	wǒlò 14
boat/canoe	lǎndzì 5	màándzì 6
body	ɲô 9	ɲô or í'ɲo 10
bone	èèzré 7	βèèzré 8
bow (weapon)	likózá 5	màkózá 6
breast (female)	liβê 5	màβê 6
bush, farm	wàngá 9	íwàngá 10
buttocks	mbòndò 9	mbòndò 10
calabash	kòòfà 9	kòòfà 10
cassava	likpàmbà 5	màkpàmbà 6
cat	pùzrí (<i>loan, Eng.</i>) 9	pùzrí 10
charcoal	βíndí à líjò 9	βíndí à líjò 10
chicken	wǔβà 14	dzǔβà 10
chief	kíngè 9	íkíngè 10
child	ɲmána 1	βána 2
chin	jǎzrù 7	βèázrù 8
cloth (material)	lùàtù 5	mààtù 6
cock	mòmá wǔβà 9	wòmé βá wǔβà 10
compound	èwókà 7	βèwókà 8
cooking pot	dzòngó dzá 'mólélí 19	βèòngó βé 'mólélí 8
corpse	mwimba 3	mìimba 4
cow	ɲàkà 9	ɲàkà or íɲàkà 10
crab	ìzròzré 19	βèzròzré 8
crocodile	ɲgándó 9	ɲgándó 10
darkness	dzítítí 9	wítítí 10
daughter	ɲgòndò 9	íɲgòndò 10
dawn	éélélé 7	βéélélé 8
day	wúná 9	wúná 10
doctor	ɲgàngà 9	βààngàngè 2
dog	ɲgbà 9	íɲgbà 10
door	liòβá 5	màòβá 6
door (with palm leaves)	mòkòɲá 3	mèkòɲá 4
dry season	jòkpè 7	βèòkpè 8
duck	èlèlà 7	βèlèlà 8
dust	zròwè 9	zròwè 10
eagle	dzòngó 19	βèòngó 8
ear	litò 5	màtò 6
earth (soil)	mòɲè 3	mèɲè 4
egg	ɲmèò 3	mèò or mèjó 4
elephant	ndzòkù 9	índzòkù 10
encouragement	mbákì 9	mbákì 10
eye	lǐzrò 5	mǐzrò 6

fabric	lùwàtù 5	mààtù 6
fascies	lǒwá 5	mǒŋwá or mǒwá 6
fat	mànònó 6	mànònó 6
father	tátè 9	βààtátè 2
fear	wónḡó 14	wónḡó 14
feather	èzráí or èzrájí 7	βèzráí or βèzrájí 8
female	ḡmàlí 1	βàáí 2
fire	múná 3	míúná or mǐjúná 4
firewood	dzòlí 19	βèòlí 8
fish	ḡàmà mǎlíwà 9	ḡàmà dzá mǎlíwà 10
food	mòlélí 3	mèlélí 4
fowl	wúḡà 14	wúḡa14
friend	mbúndá 9	ím búndá 10
goat	mbóli 9	mbóli 10
God	lǒβè 9	lǒβè 10
grass	èwùlé 7	βèwùlé 8
grinding stone	lǐjé lí ndókó 5	màjé má ndókó 6
grinding stone	lǐjé lá 'lí'zríkà 5	màjé má 'lí'zríkà 6
ground	mòḡḡè 3	mèḡḡè 4
groundnut	ḡḡòndó 9	ḡḡòndó 10
guest	ḡmèèní 1	βàèní 2
hair (head)	lǐβùmbú 5	màβùmbú 6
hand	lǐjá 5	màá 6
hat/cap	tàmbá 9	ítàmbá 10
head	mòóβò 3	mèóβò 4
heart	ḡmēmà 3	mèémà 4
he-goat	jòkpá mbóli 7	jòkpá á mbóli 7
hoe	ḡmǎ 3	mèá 4
horn	mòzréwá 3	mèzréwá 4
horse	wózri (<i>loan, Eng.</i>) 14	íwózri 10
house	ndáwò 9	màndáwò 6
housefly	ḡḡì 9	ḡḡì 10
hunger	ndzàwù 9	ndzàwù 10
hunter	mòzròḡḡòzròḡḡò 1	βàzròḡḡòzròḡḡò 2
husband	múnánà 1	wúnánà 2
iron (metal)	èèkè 7	βèèkè 8
jaw	lǐǎmà 5	màámà 6
king	kínḡè 9	íkínḡè 10
kite	wǒmbé 14	wǒmbé 14
knee	lǐḡḡḡóḡḡó 5	màḡḡḡóḡḡó 6
knife	lǐwèndì 5	màwèndì 6
kola nut	lǐβèlú 5	màβèlú 6
lap	lǐβèβè 5	màβèβè 6
leaf	jálí 7	βèáí 8

leg	ɲmèndé 3	mèéndé 4
lie	mòlàngà 3	mèlàngà 4
lizard	ndzóló 9	ndzóló 10
louse	ɲɲá 9	ɲɲá 10
macabo	likàwò 5	màkàwò 6
machete	βáo 9	βáo 10
maize	mbàzrì 9	ímbàzrì 10
male	mòmè 3	mèómè 4
man	múnánà 1	wúnánà 2
market	èlùwà 7	βèlùwà 8
mat	izrázrí 19	βèzrázrí 8
meat, animal	ɲàmà 9	ɲàmà 10
money	mààlì 6	mààlì 6
money	ɲgèjété 9	ɲgèjété 10
money	wòlì 14	wòlì 14
monkey	kémà 9	íkémà 10
moon	élówàlòwà 7	élówàlòwà 7
mortar	mátà (<i>loan, Eng.</i>) 6	mátà 6
mosquito	dzùṅgù 19	βjùṅgù 8
mother	ɲàṅgó 9	íṅàṅgó 10
mother's brother	mòláló 3	mèláló 4
mount Cameroon	φàkó 9	φàkó 10
mountain	mòlí 3	mèlí 4
mouth	wàná 14	wàná 14
mud	lìzrándzà 5	màzrándzà 6
nail	ɲgàndà 9	íṅgàndà 10
name	línà 5	mínà 6
navel	ndzúnṅù 9	ndzúnṅù 10
neck	liwò 5	màwò 6
needle	ndòndòkì 9	ndòndòkì 10
new-born	ɲmèṅgé 3	mèèṅgé 4
night	wù 14	màwù 6
nose	mòβémbé 3	mèβémbé 4
notable	mòndénè 1	βàndénè 2
oil	màwúdžà 6	màwúdžà 6
old person	èkòkà mòtò 7	βèkòkà βé βàtò 8
orange	ilándzò 19	màlándzò 6
palm oil	lǐjà 5	mǐjà 6
palm wine	mímbá málìjà 9	mímbá málìjà 10
penis	jòkó 7	βèòkó 8
penis	tfólóló 9	tfólóló 10
pepper	ìndókó 9	βèndókó 8
permission	βòndžà 9	βòndžà 10
person	mòtò 1	βàtò 2

pig	ngòwá 9	íngòwá 10
plantain	likò 5	mèkò 4
porcupine	ngòmbá 9	ngòmbá 10
pot	dzòngó 19	βèóngó 8
race	liβàngà 5	màβàngà 6
rain	mbúwà 9	mbúwà 10
rainy season	èβùβà 7	βèβùβà 8
rat	ètò 7	βètò 8
read	lilàngà 5	lilàngà 6
river	mòzrò 3	mèzrò 4
room	tũ 9	ítũ 10
root	mwàngá 3	mèàngá 4
rope	mòòlí 3	mèòlí 4
rubbish heap	lùútù 5	màwútù 6
saliva	βèólì 8	βèólì 8
salt	ìkpá 9	ìkpá 9
sand	ńàngá 9	ńàngá 10
sea	ηmándzà 3	mèándzà 4
seed	mùàngá 3	mèàngá 4
seed	βòngò 9	íβòngò 10
senior/older	múlú ¹ lú 1	βàwúlú ¹ lú 2
sheep	mǒlèngù 3	mǐlèngù 4
shoe	itàmbí 19	βètàmbí 8
side	tóngóngó 9	tóngóngó 10
skin	mòòwò 3	mèòwò 4
sleep	línàngá 5	línàngá 5
smoke	lùtùtù 5	βiútùtù 8
snail	kó 9	kó 10
snake	gbààβá 9	mààβá 6
son	mbèzrà 9	ímbèzrà 10
song	mòzròkò 3	mèzròkò 4
soup/sauce/stew	ngòpà 9	íngòpà 10
spear (war)	lìjòngó 5	màòngó 6
speech	dzóβì 9	dzóβì 19
star	zrómbé 9	í ¹ zrómbé 10
stomach (internal)	ìwùngá 19	βèwùngá 8
stone	lìjé 5	màjé 6
story	gbitó 14	màitó or màjító 6
sun, sunshine	ìgbê 19	ìgbê 19
tablet	gbèé 9	màé 6
tail	mòòndó 3	mèòndó 4
theth	lǐbà 5	lǐbà 5
thief	mwǐbè 1	βàíbè or βàjǐbè 2
thigh	èzrózró 7	βèzrózró 8

thing	jǒmà 7	βěmà 8
thirst	ɲìzrè 9	ɲìzrè 10
thorn	ndzéeendzée 9	índzéeendzée 10
thread	mǒzrìngà 3	mězrìngà 4
tobacco	táǎkù (<i>loan, Eng.</i>) 9	táǎkù 10
tongue	dzěmè 9	dzěmè 10
tooth	lizròngá 5	màzròngá 6
tortoise	íkúlèkùlè 9	íkúlèkùlè 10
tree, stick	èèjé 7	βèèjé 8
trick	ɲmànò 3	mèànò 4
urine	lǐjàlì 5	mǐjàlì 4
vagina	sùbélélé 9	sùbélélé 10
village, city	mbówà 9	màmbówà 6
violence	liànèlì 5	liànèlì 5
vulture	wǒmbé 14	wǒmbé 14
wall	èzrù 7	βèzrù 8
war	ndzùmá 9	ndzùmá 10
water	màlìβá 6	màlìβá 6
water pot	dzòngó dzá 'málíwá 19	βèóngó βé 'málíwá 8
whisper	βèzràzrà 8	βèzràzrà 8
wife	mólánà 1	βálánà 2
wind	mbèβèni 9	mbèβèni 10
wine/beer (general word)	mímbá 9	mímbá 10
witch	mwimbà 1	βàimbà 2
woman	mólánà 1	βálánà 2
word	èèjà 7	βèèjà 8
work	èwòlò 7	βèwòlò 8
yam	jònò 7	βèònò 8
year	ɲmà 3	mèà 4

2. Adjectives

bad	wòβê
big	lǒlòwà, ndénè
cold	lizrimá
dry	lìzróndzò
full	lǔndà
good	gbǎmù
hard	lètá
heavy	lilitá
hot	litùmbáná
left	ɲmàlì
long	lìwàwá
new	βéjà
old	mònùni

right	mǒmè
short	lǔtùwà
small	zràli
strong	lǐmbàmà
wet	lìtìtá
white	mbómí

3. Verbs

	<i>Isolation form</i>	<i>Infinitive</i>
abuse	βέηê	lìβέηê
agree	éméâ	lěmèâ
answer	áláφê	lǎlâφê
arrive	úkâ	lǔkâ
ask	ídzówâ	lǐdzòwâ
bathe	ókô	lǒkô
be born	jááβâ	lìjááβâ
be broken	òméâ	lòmèâ
be certain	φíjâ	lìφíjâ
be closed	úmbánâ	lǔmbànâ
be deceived (by sb.)	òndzóβô	lòndzóβô
be dislocated	wókéâ	lìwókèâ
be extinguished	límízzrêβê	lìlímízzrêβê
be fermented	φángéâ	lìφángèâ
be from	úηméâ	lǔηmèâ
be giddy, tired	òtô	lòtô
be given	ηgbááβâ	lìηgbááβâ
be gone	ηónηgô	lìηónηgô
be hard	ètâ	lètâ
be heard	wéénê	lìwéèè
be hot, boiled	túmbánâ	lìtúmbánâ
be killed	ónwáβâ	lǒηwàβâ
be long, tall	wâwâ	lìwâwâ
be mad, crazy	kpánâ	lìkpánâ
be painful, hot	òkô	lòkô
be quick	βámízzrê	lìβámízzrê
be quiet, silent	ándámâ	lǎndámâ
be repaired (by sb.)	zzréáβâ	lìzzréáβâ
be rotten	ηâmâ	lìηâmâ
be spoiled	φángéâ	lìφángèâ
be straightened	ténéβê	lìténèβê
be suspended	φánéβê	lìφánéβê
be tied	kákáβâ	lìkákâβâ
be twisted	nótóβô	lìnótóβô
bear (a child)	jâ	lìjâ

beat	tíjâ (tíà)	litíjâ (litíà)
beat (drum)	kúmbâ	likúmbâ
become cracked	kándéâ	likándèà
become lame	kpézárófâ	likpézárófâ
become loosen	βúndúwéâ	liβúndúwéâ
become snapped	wéndéâ	liwéndèà
begin	βótéjâ	liβótéjâ
bite	kókâ	likókâ
blow (mouth)	úṅgélê	lũṅgèlè
blow (wind)	tóngâ	litóngâ
boast	kùmbâ ṅgèṅgè	likùmbâ ṅgèṅgè
bow	zrùmâ	lizrùmâ
break	βéndê	liβéndè
break	gbâ	ligbâ
bring	džàná	lidžàná
build	óngâ	lõṅgâ
burn	zrélê	lizrélè
burry	íméjâ	lĩmèjâ
burst	úmúwâ	lũmùwâ
buy	àndâ	làndâ
call	βélê	liβélè
carry	àndžílê	làndžílè
carve	wèkâ	liwèká
catch	ṅàṅgâ	liṅàṅgâ
catch (animal)	lèmbê	lilèmbé
cause sb. to buy	àndízá	làndízà
cause sb. to laugh	jóízá	lijóízà
cause sb. to quarrel	tówízá	litówízà
cause sb. to sell	àβízáréléê	làβízáréléè
change	èṅgówâ	lèṅgówâ
choose	βòzá	liβòzá
clear	ùfâ	lùfâ
clear, cut grass	zrázá	lizrázá
climb	àgbâ	làgbâ
close	úmbâ	lũmbâ
come	džá	lidžá
cook	iβê	liβè
count	áṅgâ	lãṅgâ
cover	φándâ	liφándâ
crack	kándâ	likándâ
cultivate	ónâ	lõnâ
cut	kê	likê
dance	zrà	lizrà
deceive	òndžó	lòndžó

defecate	ɲâ	lɪɲâ
deny, disclaim	zròzrô	lɪzròzrô
descend	óndô	lɔ́ndô
descend	zrìwâ	lɪzrìwâ
die	ɲwâ	lɪɲwâ
dig	ímâ	lɪmâ
discover	φíjâ	lɪφíjâ
dislocate	wókâ	lɪwókâ
divide	kàwâ	lɪkàwâ
do	gbèjâ	lɪgbèjâ
drag, pull	kóówâ	lɪkóówâ
dream	nàɲgâ ndótó	lɪnàɲgâ ndótó
dress	wótô	lɪwótô
drink	ɲó	lɪɲó
dry	émbê	lɛ́mbê
dry (cloth)	támbê	lɪtámbê
dry (fish)	zróɲgí zrê	lɪzróɲgí zrê
dwell	lìjâ	lɪlìjâ
eat	lâ	lɪlâ
enter	kpééjâ	lɪkpééjâ
expose	éɲélélê	lɛ́ɲélélê
extinguish	límí zrê	lɪlímí zrê
fall	pkâ	lɪpkâ
fear	βéjâ	lɪβéjâ
fear	ókâ wóɲgó	lɔ́ká wóɲgó
feed	líí zrê	lɪlíí zrê
fight	ànâ	lànâ
finish	kúlê	lɪkúlê
fly	kòówâ	lɪkòówâ
follow	nòɲgó	lɪnòɲgó
follow	βálâ	lɪβálâ
fool	lúkélê	lɪlúkélê
forget	βóɲgâ	lɪβóɲgâ
forgive	làkí zrê	lɪlàkí zrê
fry	áɲgâ	lãɲgâ
gather	zràɲgâ	lɪzràɲgâ
get	lùwâ	lɪlùwâ
give	ɲgbâ	lɪɲgbâ
give birth	ɲâ	lɪɲâ
go	ndê	lèndê
go to	èndéâ	lèndéâ
greet	kómô	lɪkómô
grind	zríkâ	lɪzríkâ
hang	áβânê	lãβânê

hang (generic)	φàné	liφàné
have	βénê	liβénê
hear	βéjà	liβéjà
help	ónḡwánâ	lónḡwánâ
hit	liβâ	lililβâ
hoe, beat	tíjâ (tíâ)	litíjâ (litíâ)
hold	lèmbê	lilèmbê
hunt	íẏróḡḡ	lĩẏróḡḡ
hurt	ókâ	lókâ
inform	βílê	liβílê
inherit	ẏráḡóφâ	lĩẏráḡóφâ
jump	βándzâ	liβándzâ
kill	ónwâ	lónwâ
kneel	ẏrùmâ	lĩẏrùmâ
know	βíjâ	liβíjâ
laugh	jòô	lijô
leak	tô	litô
learn	ókówâ	lókówâ
lick	tèmbê	litèmbê
lie down	kónḡâ môẏré	likónḡâ môẏré
like	línḡánâ	lilínḡánâ
live, to grow	òḡâ	lòḡâ
look	ónḡô	lónḡô
look for	ónḡô or àẏrâ	lónḡô or làẏrâ
loose	wólénê	liwólénê
loosen	βúndúwâ	liβúndúwâ
lose	wólê	liwólê
lose (way)	tònâ	litònâ
love	línḡánâ	lilínḡánâ
make	ḡbèjâ	ligbèjâ
meet	ùḡmâ	lùḡmâ
mould (pot)	òḡḡóówâ	lòḡḡóówâ
move quickly	φíndzílê	liφíndzílê
open	liβówâ	lililβówâ
pass	ákâ	lákâ
pay	tánḡâ	litánḡâ
pierce	túwâ	litúwâ
pierce	ùḡmâ	lùḡmâ
plait	βindâ	liβindâ
plant	ónâ	lónâ
play	òkâ	lókâ
pound	kòkô	likòkô
pour	ẏròlê	lĩẏròlê
pour	kâmbówâ	likâmbówâ

pour (drinks)	kómâ	likómâ
promise	kákénê	likákénê
pull, drag	zríimâ	lizríimâ
push	tíndélê	litíndélê
put on	wótô	liwótô
quarrel	tówô	litówô
read	lángâ	lilángâ
refuse	βángâ	liβángâ
refuse (s.o. sth)	wùnâ	liwùnâ
remember	òngélê	lòngélê
repair	zrééjâ	lizrééjâ
reply	tìmbízzélélê	litìmbízzélélê
return	tìmbâ	litìmbâ
roast	túmbê	litúmbê
rotten	zròmbô	lizròmbô
run	βángâ	liβángâ
say	ófâ	lôβâ
see	énê	lénê
sell	àbízzê	làbízzê
send	ómâ	lòmâ
shoot	úṣmâ	lũṣmâ
show	úṣwélê	lũṣwélê
sing	émbâ	lěmbâ
sit down	lìí'ózzê	lìlìí'ózzê
sit, remain, stay	lìjâ	lìlìjâ
sleep	nàngâ	linàngâ
snap	wéndê	liwéndê
sow	kólô	likólô
speak	tóízzê	litóízzê
spit	zzô	lizô
split	kándâ	likándâ
spoil	φángâ	liφángâ
stand up	témê	litémê
steal	íbâ	lĩbâ
stick	kákúménê	likákúménê
stink	úṣmâ	lũṣmâ
straighten	ténénê	liténénê
summon	jówê	lijówê
swallow	mêê	limê
sweep	tútâ	litútâ
swell	ítâ	lītâ
take	wówâ	liwówâ
take off	úlê	lũlê
talk	óbâ	lôβâ

taste	ókánéâ	lőkànéà
teach	ókólê	lőkòlê
teach (cause sb. to learn)	ókówízrê	lőkòwizrè
tear	ɲááwâ	lɲàáwá
think	lùtèjá	lìlùtèjá
throw	βimbâ	lìβimbá
throw (mystic)	àṅgbâ	làṅgbá
tie	kákâ	likákâ
touch	tózirô	litózirò
travel	èndê	lèndé
try	kèkâ	likèkâ
twist	nòtô	linòtó
unite	dzónô	lidzónò
untie	wùndúwâ	lìwùndúwá
urinate	ínâ	lɪnâ
vomit	jówâ	lɪjówá
wait	ámbéle	lámbele
wake up	imówâ	limówá
walk	èndê	lèndé
want, to desire	àzrà	làzrà
wash	zròzrà	lìzròzrà
wash (wish soap)	ókô	lőkò
light	βàálê	lìβàálé

2. Mokpe - English

1. Nouns

Singular	Plural	
bíndzì 9	íbíndzì 10	beans
dzòṅgó 19	βèṅgó 8	pot
dzòṅgó dzá 'málíwá 19	βèṅgó βé 'málíwá 8	water pot
dzòṅgó dzá 'mólélí 19	βèṅgó βé 'mólélí 8	cooking pot
džěmè 9	džěmè 10	tongue
džítítí 9	wiítítí 10	darkness
džòlí 19	βèòlí 8	firewood
dzòṅgó 19	βèòṅgó 8	eagle
džóβì 9	džóβì 19	speech
džùṅgù 19	βjùṅgù 8	mosquito
èèjà 7	βèèjà 8	word
èèjé 7	βèèjé 8	tree, stick
èèkè 7	βèèkè 8	iron (metal)
éélélé 7	βèélélé 8	dawn
èèzré 7	βèèzré 8	bone
ègbié 7	βègbié 8	banana

èjémbé 9	βèjémbé 8	animal
èkòkà mòtò 7	βèkòkà βé βàtò 8	old person
èlèlà 7	βèlèlà 8	duck
élówàlòwà 7	élówàlòwà 7	moon
èlùwà 7	βèlùwà 8	market
ètò 7	βètò 8	rat
èwókà 7	βèwókà 8	compound
èwòlò 7	βèwòlò 8	work
èwùlé 7	βèwùlé 8	grass
èzráí or èzrájí 7	βèzráí or βèzrájí 8	feather
èzrózró 7	βèzrózró 8	thigh
èzrù 7	βèzrù 8	wall
èβùβà 7	βèβùβà 8	rainy season
gbààβá 9	mààβá 6	snake
gbèé 9	màé 6	tablet
gbító 14	màító or màjító 6	story
ìgbê 19	ìgbê 19	sun, sunshine
ìkpá 9	ìkpá 9	salt
ìkúlèkùlè 9	ìkúlèkùlè 10	tortoise
ìlándzò 19	màlándzò 6	orange
ìnòní 19	βènòní 8	bird
ìndókó 9	βèndókó 8	pepper
ítámbí 19	βètámbí 8	shoe
ìwùngá 19	βèwùngá 8	stomach (internal)
ìzrázrí 19	βèzrázrí 8	mat
ìzròzré 19	βèzròzré 8	crab
jàlí 7	βèálí 8	leaf
jǎzrù 7	βèázrù 8	chin
jǎndò 19	βèóndò 8	axe
jòkó 7	βèòkó 8	penis
jòkpá mbóli 7	jòkpá á mbóli 7	he-goat
jòkpè 7	βèòkpè 8	dry season
jǒmà 7	βěmà 8	thing
jònò 7	βèònò 8	yam
kó 9	kó 10	snail
kémà 9	íkémà 10	monkey
kingè 9	íkingè 10	chief
kingè 9	íkingè 10	king
kòòfà 9	kòòfà 10	calabash
lǎndzì 5	màándzì 6	boat/canoe
liànèli 5	liànèli 5	violence
lǐbà 5	lǐbà 5	theth
lijá 5	màá 6	hand
lǐjà 5	mǐjà 6	palm oil

lijòṅgó 5	màṅṅó 6	spear (war)
lijé 5	màjé 6	stone
lijé lá 'lí'zríkà 5	màjé má 'lí'zríkà 6	grinding stone
lijé lí ndókó 5	màjé má ndókó 6	grinding stone
likàwò 5	màkàwò 6	macabo
likò 5	mèkò 4	plantain
likózrí 5	màkózrí 6	bow (weapon)
likpà 5	măkpà 6	bag
likpàmbà 5	màkpàmbà 6	cassava
liláṅgà 5	liláṅgà 6	read
línà 5	mǐnà 6	name
lǐṇàlì 5	mǐṇàlì 4	urine
línàṅgà 5	línàṅgà 5	sleep
liòḃá 5	màòḃá 6	door
lìtô 5	màtô 6	ear
liwò 5	màwò 6	neck
liwèndì 5	màwèndì 6	knife
liwû 5	liwû 5	ashes
lìzràndzá 5	màzràndzá 6	mud
lǐzrò 5	mǐzrò 6	eye
lìzròṅgà 5	màzròṅgà 6	tooth
liḃáṅgà 5	màḃáṅgà 6	race
liḃê 5	màḃê 6	breast (female)
liḃèlú 5	màḃèlú 6	kola nut
liḃèḃè 5	màḃèḃè 6	lap
liḃùmbú 5	màḃùmbú 6	hair (head)
ljāmà 5	màámà 6	jaw
ljòṅgòṅgó 5	màṅṅóṅgó 6	knee
lǒwá 5	mǒṇwá or mǒwá 6	fascies
lǒḃè 9	lǒḃè 10	God
lùàtù 5	mààtù 6	cloth (material)
lǔtùtù 5	ḃiútùtù 8	smoke
lùṅṅà 5	màṅṅà 6	belly (external)
lùútù 5	màwútù 6	rubbish heap
lùwàtù 5	mààtù 6	fabric
mààlì 6	mààlì 6	money
màjidzá 6	màjidzá 6	blood
màlíḃá 6	màlíḃá 6	water
mànòno 6	mànòno 6	fat
mátà (loan, Eng.) 6	mátà 6	mortar
màwúdzà 6	màwúdzà 6	oil
mbákì 9	mbákì 10	encouragement
mbàzrì 9	ímbàzrì 10	maize
mbèzrà 9	ímbèzrà 10	son

mbèḅèni 9	mbèḅèni 10	wind
mbö 9	ímbö 10	banana
mbóli 9	mbóli 10	goat
mbòndò 9	mbòndò 10	buttocks
mbówà 9	màmbówà 6	village, city
mbúndá 9	ímbúndá 10	friend
mbúwà 9	mbúwà 10	rain
mbúzrà 9	mbúzrà 10	back
mò 3	mèò 4	arm
mòòlí 3	mèòlí 4	rope
mòòjè 3	mèòjè 4	ground
mǒlèṅgù 3	mělèṅgù 4	sheep
mòndénè 1	ḅàndénè 2	notable
mòjè 3	mèjè 4	earth (soil)
mòzròkò 3	mèzròkò 4	song
mòzròṅgòzròṅgò 1	ḅàzròṅgòzròṅgò 2	hunter
mímbá 9	mímbá 10	wine/beer (general word)
mímbá málìjà 9	mímbá málìjà 10	palm wine
mòkòná 3	mèkòná 4	door (with palm leaves)
mòláló 3	mèláló 4	mother's brother
mólánà 1	ḅálánà 2	wife
mólánà 1	ḅálánà 2	woman
mòlàṅgà 3	mèlàṅgà 4	lie
mòlélí 3	mèlélí 4	food
mòlí 3	mèlí 4	mountain
mómá wǔḅà 9	wòmé ḅá wǔḅà 10	cock
mǒmè 3	mèómè 4	male
mòòndó 3	mèòndó 4	tail
mòòwò 3	mèòwò 4	skin
mòòwò mó èèjé 3	mèòwò mé èèjé 4	bark (of tree)
mòóḅò 3	mèóḅò 4	head
mòtò 1	ḅàtò 2	person
mòzréwá 3	mèzréwá 4	horn
mǒzrìṅgà 3	mězrìṅgà 4	thread
mòzrô 3	mèzrô 4	river
mòḅàndzá 3	mèḅàndzá 4	arrow
mòḅémbé 3	mèḅémbé 4	nose
mùàṅgá 3	mèàṅgá 4	seed
múlú ¹ lú 1	ḅàwúlú ¹ lú 2	senior/older
múná 3	míúná or mǐjúná 4	fire
múnánà 1	wúnánà 2	husband
múnánà 1	wúnánà 2	man
mwàṅgá 3	mèàṅgá 4	root
mwĩbè 1	ḅàĩbè or ḅàjĩbè 2	thief

mwimbà 1	βàimbà 2	witch
mwimbà 3	miimba 4	corpse
ɲààwè 9	ínààwè 10	bee
ɲàkà 9	ɲàkà or ínàkà 10	cow
ɲàmà 9	ɲàmà 10	meat, animal
ɲàmà málíwà 9	ɲàmà dʒá málíwà 10	fish
ɲáŋgá 9	ɲáŋgá 10	sand
ɲàŋgó 9	ínàŋgó 10	mother
ndáwò 9	màndáwò 6	house
ndòndòki 9	ndòndòki 10	needle
ndzàwù 9	ndzàwù 10	hunger
ndzòkù 9	índzòkù 10	elephant
ndzóló 9	ndzóló 10	lizard
ndzééndzée 9	índzééndzée 10	thorn
ndzù má 9	ndzù má 10	war
ndzúŋgù 9	ndzúŋgù 10	navel
ɲìjá 9	ɲìjá 10	louse
ɲìɲì 9	ɲìɲì 10	housefly
ɲìzrè 9	ɲìzrè 10	thirst
ɲô 9	ɲô or í'no 10	body
ŋgàndà 9	íŋgàndà 10	nail
ŋgàndó 9	ŋgàndó 10	crocodile
ŋgàngà 9	βààngàngè 2	doctor
ŋgàtá 9	íŋgàtá 10	basket
ŋgbà 9	íŋgbà 10	dog
ŋgòndó 9	ŋgòndó 10	groundnut
ŋgòndò 9	íŋgòndò 10	daughter
ŋgèjété 9	ŋgèjété 10	money
ŋgòmbá 9	ŋgòmbá 10	porcupine
ŋgòɲà 9	íŋgòɲà 10	soup/sauce/stew
ŋgòwá 9	íŋgòwá 10	pig
ɲmà 3	mèà 4	year
ɲmă 3	mèá 4	hoe
ɲmálí 1	βáálí 2	female
ɲmánà 1	βánà 2	child
ɲmándzà 3	mèándzà 4	sea
ɲmànò 3	mèànò 4	trick
ɲmèèní 1	βàèní 2	guest
ɲmēmà 3	mèémà 4	heart
ɲmēmè 3	mèémè 4	bat
ɲmèndé 3	mèéndé 4	leg
ɲmèŋgé 3	mèéŋgé 4	new-born
ɲmèó 3	mèó or mèjó 4	egg
ɸàkó 9	ɸàkó 10	mount Cameroon

pùzrí (<i>loan, Eng.</i>) 9	pùzrí 10	cat
sùbélélé 9	sùbélélé 10	vagina
táǎkù (<i>loan, Eng.</i>) 9	táǎkù 10	tobacco
tàmbá 9	ítàmbá 10	hat/cap
tátè 9	βààtátè 2	father
tóngóngó 9	tóngóngó 10	side
tʃólóló 9	tʃólóló 10	penis
tũ 9	ítũ 10	room
wàná 14	wàná 14	mouth
wàngá 9	íwàngá 10	bush, farm
wòkpò 14	wòkpò 14	beard
wǒlò 14	wǒlò 14	boat/canoe
wóngó 14	wóngó 14	fear
wózrì (<i>loan, Eng.</i>) 14	íwózrì 10	horse
wòlì 14	wòlì 14	money
wǒmbé 14	wǒmbé 14	kite
wǒmbé 14	wǒmbé 14	vulture
wû 14	màwũ 6	night
wúná 9	wúná 10	day
wúfà 14	wúfà 14	fowl
wũβà 14	dzũβà 10	chicken
zròwè 9	zròwè 10	dust
zrómbé 9	í'zrómbé 10	star
βáo 9	βáo 10	machete
βòṅgò 9	íβòṅgò 10	seed
βèólì 8	βèólì 8	saliva
βèzràzrà 8	βèzràzrà 8	whisper
βíndí à líjò 9	βíndí à líjò 10	charcoal
βòndzà 9	βòndzà 10	permission

2. Adjectives

gbāmù	good
lètá	hard
lilitá	heavy
lĩmbàmà	strong
lititá	wet
litùmbáná	hot
liwàwá	long
lìzróndzò	dry
lìzrimá	cold
lǒlòwà, ndénè	big
lũndà	full
lũtùwà	short
mbómí	white

mǒmè	right
mònùnì	old
ɲmàlí	left
wòβê	bad
zràli	small
βépá	new

3. Verbs

Isolation form	Infinitive	
àgbá	làgbá	climb
áká	lākà	pass
áláφê	lālāφê	answer
ámbélê	lāmbèlê	wait
ànâ	làná	fight
àndâ	lándá	buy
ándámâ	lāndàmâ	be quiet, silent
àndíẏrê	lāndíẏré	cause sb. to buy
àndẏílê	lāndẏílé	carry
àngâ	lāngà	count
àngâ	lāngà	fry
àngbâ	lāngbâ	throw (mystic)
àzrà	làzrà	want, to desire
áβánê	lāβànê	hang
àβíẏrê	lāβíẏré	sell
àβíẏrélélê	lāβíẏrélélé	cause sb. to sell
ókô	lőkò	bathe
ókô	lőkò	wash (wish soap)
ókólê	lőkòlê	teach
óndô	lōndò	descend
òndẏô	lòndẏó	deceive
òndẏóβô	lòndẏóβó	be deceived (by sb.)
òngô	lōngò	look
òngó or àzrà	lōngò or làzrà	look for
òngélê	lòngélé	remember
dẏá	lìdẏă	come
dẏànâ	lìdẏànâ	bring
dẏónô	lìdẏónò	unite
émbâ	lěmbâ	sing
émbê	lěmbè	dry
éméâ	lěmèâ	agree
èndê	lèndé	travel
èndê	lèndé	walk
èndéâ	lèndéâ	go to
énê	lěnè	see

éṣélélê	lěṣèlèlè	expose
èṅgówá	lèṅgówá	change
ètâ	lètâ	be hard
gbâ	lìgbâ	break
gbèjà	lìgbèjà	do
gbèjà	lìgbèjà	make
íbâ	lìbâ	steal
ídžówá	lìdžòwà	ask
ímâ	lìmâ	dig
íméjà	lìmèjà	burry
ìmówá	lìmówá	wake up
ìṣnâ	lìṣnâ	urinate
ítâ	lìtâ	swell
íẏròṅgò	lìẏròṅgò	hunt
ìṣê	lìṣê	cook
jâ	lìjâ	bear (a child)
jááḃâ	lìjááḃâ	be born
jòḡ	lìjòḡ	laugh
jóíẏrê	lìjòíẏrê	cause sb. to laugh
jówá	lìjówá	vomit
jówê	lìjówê	summon
kákâ	lìkákâ	tie
kákáḃâ	lìkákáḃâ	be tied
kákénê	lìkákénê	promise
kákúménê	lìkákùménê	stick
kàmbówá	lìkàmbówá	pour
kándâ	lìkándâ	crack
kándâ	lìkándâ	split
kándéâ	lìkándéâ	become cracked
kàwâ	lìkàwâ	divide
kòkò	lìkòkò	pound
kólò	lìkólò	sow
kómò	lìkómò	greet
kê	lìkê	cut
kèkâ	lìkèkâ	try
kókâ	lìkókâ	bite
kómâ	lìkómâ	pour (drinks)
kóṅgà mōẏrê	lìkóṅgà mōẏrê	lie down
kóówá	lìkóówá	drag, pull
kòówá	lìkòówá	fly
kṣáṣnâ	lìkṣáṣnâ	be mad, crazy
kṣééjà	lìkṣééjà	enter
kṣéẏròḃâ	lìkṣéẏròḃâ	become lame
kúlê	lìkúlê	finish

kúmbâ	likúmbà	beat (drum)
kùmbâ ngèngè	likùmbá ngèngè	boast
lâ	lilâ	eat
làkízá	lilàkízá	forgive
lángâ	lilángà	read
lèmbê	lilèmbé	catch (animal)
lèmbê	lilèmbé	hold
líízá	lilíízá	feed
lí'ózá	lilí'ózá	sit down
lijâ	lilijá	dwell
lijâ	lilijá	sit, remain, stay
líímízá	lilímízá	extinguish
líímízáβê	lilímízáβè	be extinguished
lìngánâ	lilìngáná	love
lìngánâ	lilìngáná	like
liβâ	lilìβá	hit
liβówâ	lilìβówá	open
lúkélê	lilúkélé	fool
lùtéjâ	lilùtéjá	think
lùwâ	lilùwá	get
mèê	lìmě	swallow
nâ	lìjâ	defecate
nâ	lìjâ	give birth
nááwâ	lìjâáwá	tear
nàmâ	lìjâamá	be rotten
nàngâ	lìnàngá	sleep
nàngâ	lìnàngá	catch
nàngâ ndótó	lìnàngá ndótó	dream
nó	lìjô	drink
nòngô	lìnòngó	follow
nòtô	lìnòtó	twist
nótóβô	lìnòtóβó	be twisted
ndê	lèndé	go
nóngô	lìjónógò	be gone
ngbâ	lìjgbă	give
ngbááβâ	lìjgbâáβá	be given
ŋwâ	lìjwâ	die
ókâ	lőkâ	hurt
òkâ	lòkâ	play
ókâ wóngó	lőká wóngó	fear
ókánêâ	lőkànèà	taste
òkô	lòkó	be painful, hot
ókówâ	lòkòwâ	learn
ókówízá	lòkòwízá	teach (cause sb. to learn)

ómâ	lǒmà	send
òméâ	lòmèá	be broken
ónâ	lǒnà	cultivate
ónâ	lǒnà	plant
òṅgâ	lǒṅgà	build
òṅgâ	lòṅgá	live, to grow
òṅgóówâ	lòṅgòówá	mould (pot)
òṅgwánâ	lǒṅgwànà	help
òṅwâ	lǒṅwà	kill
òṅwáβâ	lǒṅwáβà	be killed
ófâ	lǒβà	say
òtô	lòtó	be giddy, tired
óbâ	lǒβà	talk
φándâ	lìφándà	cover
φànê	lìφànê	hang (generic)
φánéβê	lìφànέβê	be suspended
φángâ	lìφángà	spoil
φángéâ	lìφángèâ	be fermented
φángéâ	lìφángèâ	be spoiled
φíjâ	lìφíjà	be certain
φíjâ	lìφíjà	discover
φíndzílê	lìφíndzìlê	move quickly
pkâ	lìpkâ	fall
támbê	lìtámbê	dry (cloth)
tángâ	lìtángà	pay
tô	lìtô	leak
tóíizrê	lìtòíizrê	speak
tówô	lìtówô	quarrel
tówíizrê	lìtówíizrê	cause sb. to quarrel
tózrô	lìtózrô	touch
tèmbê	lìtèmbê	lick
témê	lìtémê	stand up
ténénê	lìténènê	straighten
ténéβê	lìténèβê	be straightened
tíjâ (tíâ)	lìtíjà (lìtíâ)	beat
tíjâ (tíâ)	lìtíjà (lìtíâ)	hoe, beat
tìmbá	lìtìmbá	return
tìmbíizrélélê	lìtìmbíizrélélê	reply
tíndélê	lìtíndèlê	push
tònâ	lìtònâ	lose (way)
tóngâ	lìtóngà	blow (wind)
tùmbánâ	lìtùmbánâ	be hot, boiled
tùmbê	lìtùmbê	roast
tútâ	lìtútâ	sweep

túwâ	litúwâ	pierce
úkâ	lǔkâ	arrive
úlê	lǔlê	take off
úmbâ	lǔmbâ	close
úmbánâ	lǔmbànâ	be closed
úmúwâ	lǔmùwâ	burst
úṅgélê	lǔṅgèlê	blow (mouth)
úṅmâ	lǔṅmâ	pierce
úṅmâ	lǔṅmâ	shoot
úṅmâ	lǔṅmâ	stink
ùṅmâ	lùṅmâ	meet
úṅmèâ	lǔṅmèâ	be from
úṅwélê	lǔṅwèlê	show
ùfâ	lùfâ	clear
wàwâ	lìwàwâ	be long, tall
wókâ	lìwókâ	dislocate
wókèâ	lìwókèâ	be dislocated
wólê	lìwólê	lose
wólénê	lìwólénê	loose
wótô	lìwótô	dress
wótô	lìwótô	put on
wéénê	lìwéénê	be heard
wèkâ	lìwèkâ	carve
wéndê	lìwéndê	snap
wéndéâ	lìwéndéâ	become snapped
wówâ	lìwówâ	take
wùnâ	lìwùnâ	refuse (s.o. sth)
wùndúwâ	lìwùndúwâ	untie
zrâ	lìzrâ	dance
zràṅgâ	lìzràṅgâ	gather
zràṅgófâ	lìzràṅgófâ	inherit
zrázrâ	lìzrázrâ	clear, cut grass
zrô	lìzrô	spit
zròlê	lìzròlê	pour
zròmbô	lìzròmbô	rotten
zróṅgízá	lìzróṅgízá	dry (fish)
zròzrô	lìzròzrô	deny, disclaim
zréáßâ	lìzréáßâ	be repaired (by sb.)
zrééjá	lìzrééjá	repair
zrélê	lìzrélê	burn
zríimâ	lìzríimâ	pull, drag
zríkâ	lìzríkâ	grind
zrìwâ	lìzrìwâ	descend
zròzrâ	lìzròzrâ	wash

zrùmâ	lìzrùmá	bow
zrùmâ	lìzrùmá	kneel
βálâ	lìβálâ	follow
βámí zrê	lìβámì zrê	be quick
βándzâ	lìβándzâ	jump
βángâ	lìβángâ	refuse
βángâ	lìβángâ	run
βòzrô	lìβòzró	choose
βéjâ	lìβéjâ	fear
βéjâ	lìβéjâ	hear
βélê	lìβélê	call
βéndê	lìβéndê	break
βénê	lìβénê	have
βéjê	lìβéjê	abuse
βíjâ	lìβíjâ	know
βílê	lìβílê	inform
βimbâ	lìβimbâ	throw
βindâ	lìβindâ	plait
βóngâ	lìβóngâ	forget
βótéjâ	lìβótéjâ	begin
βúndúwâ	lìβúndúwâ	loosen
βúndúwéâ	lìβúndúwéâ	become loosen
βàálê	lìβàálê	light

NOTES

- (1) This information is taken from Lewis (2009).
- (2) The symbols used are from the IPA chart.
- (3) The term is borrowed from Urs (1996) but is assigned a slightly different meaning here.
- (4) This grapheme, as well as R, r, and Ʒ, ʒ will never appear alone and will never appear at word-initial position.
- (5) This grapheme can appear alone and word-initially only in borrowed words.
- (6) This grapheme, as well as Z, z, cannot appear alone, but can be seen at word- or syllable-initial.
- (7) The second person singular is in fact [ò]. However, it is realised as [ɔ̃] when the following vowel (of the verb root) is either [ɔ] or [ɛ]. Note that this is the only instance where we find the vowel [ɔ] at word-initial position in the whole corpus.
- (8) Kagaya (1992a) and Connell (1997) identified a nasal prefix for classes 9 and 10, i.e. N-/N-. As you have noticed, the plural forms either maintains the N- prefix or take high-toned vowel í- as prefix. The high-toned prefix í- may be seen as a remnant of the original augment which remained in plurals. There seems to be absolutely no principle governing the use of that vowel as prefix. However, the tendency seems to be the use of N- prefix for both classes 9 and 10.
- (9) Some of these nouns do not have a plural counterpart because they are abstract words.
- (10) This reminds us of the following statement of Batibo (2005: 2): "The most common modal forms in Bantu languages include the indicative, usually represented by the suffix -a and the subjunctive, represented by the suffix -e.
- (11) Note that němbè is from nà + ěmbè.
- (12) From nà + éndè.
- (13) From βá + éjè.
- (14) It is also possible to have: nè é βéli ndí mòlèlì.
- (15) It is also possible to have: ì í βéli ndí βàlèlì.
- (16) It is also possible to have: βé é βéli ndí βàlèlì.
- (17) The morpheme ó of the locative abverb is realised w- when it occurs before vowels.
- (18) "I am here" can also be said: nà βé 'lànù. In fact, βéli ndí can be contracted to give βéli í or éli í. This happens mostly in rapid speech. For example we recorded ò éli í múpánà "you are a man." On the other hand, note that the morpheme ó of the locative abverb is deleted before "here" and "there."
- (19) The vowel [a] of the 1sg and 3pl is deleted before -úwélélé. For the 2sg and 3sg, the glide [w] is inserted between the subject pronoun and -úwélélé. As for 1pl and 2pl, their subject pronouns become [dʒ] and [j] respectively before -úwélélé.

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